

PRELIMINARIES TO A THEORY OF ARCHETYPES IN MUSIC

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1. The study of different “musical languages” — especially of those considered traditional (folkloric) — evidenced more and more clearly the existence of some common elements (apparently unimportant details or organological, musical and functional particularities etc.).

2. Beyond the first naïve hypotheses concerning “influences” and “loans” though the existence of these unifying processes sometimes activating on large areas cannot be neglected, the latest explanations are focussed on a possible “polygenesis”, motivated by panhuman “common factors”¹. (Generally speaking, the interest in folklore — frequently so superficially considered — can be understood as a more or less intentional tendency of looking for these “common factors”).

3. As a matter of fact, researches in ethnology and history of culture etc. refer to some common (or having a common scheme or background) data, topics, images, myths, rites etc., often forgotten or resumed without any apparent reason in unrelated ethnic groups. At a narrow level, the phenomenon proves similar to the „behavioural patterns” of some isolated individuals.

4. C. G. Jung’s theory on the *archetypes of collective unconscious*², though centered on the human psychic, seems to be an optimal starting point in the study of basic musical patterns.

5. It is no use to state that any mechanical approach of these theories in music is possible. Jung’s reference to the nature of art³ (concerning the creator, creative process, product, audience etc. — even if the above elements are not defined or analysed accordingly) and the place and rôle attributed to the collective unconscious in this context etc. stimulate us to try to clarify the archetypal basis of music.

6. Without precisely defining the archetype, Jung frequently refers to it, discussing and using this term in his most relevant works⁴.

7. Musical archetypes (MA_s) must be delimited from the existent psychophysical data. Actually, these data, circumscribing “the area of musical perception” (frequency, intensity, time thresholds of

the “musical configuration” etc.), are not supposed to affect MA_s themselves, but their concrete, overt forms and “images” in different “musical languages”.

8. The “first” MA considered is the very *sinusoidal sound* (selected from the possible series of natural sounds), while the “last” one represents *the function*⁵, *the rôle of music* in any individual or collective life. Between the two extremities, an infinity of MA_s could practically be detected — either pure or complex “musical behavioural patterns” — whose hierarchy and taxonomy prove impossible.

9. MA_s do exist in the human psychic, therefore in nature, too. The primary sense of A could be the “*resonance*” (in metamusical terms) between a “psychic scheme” — selected as convenient (economical) by comparison to others — and the corresponding natural phenomena suggesting it. We could speak of a man “*re-integration*” in the *cosmos cycle* by means of some unconscious “mechanisms”. The essence of this “resonance” is *energetic* (accumulation, amplification), as in the case of the rite⁶. Some of its aspects are theoretically supported by Lupasco’s three types of matter⁷ or by the brain waves⁸ (α , β etc.).

10. This proposition — even too brief and controversial — also refers to the distinction between creator, creative work, product and audience. There is an unique MA which achieves “the resonance” many-

sidedly (MA is described as a potential, emission, individualizing process, musical-pattern expression, transfer, reception etc.).⁹ It is noteworthy that referring to the "oeuvre" in terms of alchemy¹⁰ (as a "demiurgic creation" having archetypal valences), Jung describes the states of the matter while subject to any change, the rôle of meditation, imagination (as a creator-cosmos fusion), concentration etc., indirectly defining a genuine "altered state of consciousness" in A. M. Ludwig's¹¹ acception.

11. It is improper to state that MA "evolves".¹² What is changeable is its "image" within a concrete creation, musical culture etc.¹³

12. There is a MA at the level of each analytical musical factor, whether traditional or not (if paradigmatic or syntagmatic points of view are considered, besides melodies, rhythm, architecture, timbre, dynamics etc. — i.e. all these elements are contributing to its definition).

13. The relation between MA and other approaching notions, such as model, scheme, pattern, invariant, substratum, abstraction, Gestalt, symbol etc., is beyond the scope of the present study, because the specific of some emergent problems. Therefore, we only state that a MA — as any A — being with difficulty directly represented — can be suggested by a symbol.

14. The action of MA is closely related to the level of the unconscious. MA communicates itself — in a purely instidictive way — "before" music semiotical neocoding occurs. The esthetic criterion is *superordinated*, too. (A MA maintains its communicative valence even when a "musical language" is either "incomprehensible" or esthetically "refused").

15. The sense of MA cognition is the sense of cognition in its general acceptation.

16. A first MA-list could, by using heterogeneous defining criteria, consist of the following terms :

Elements of arithmetical or geometrical order (numbers having special meaning) : 0, 1—13, 17, 21, 22, 24, 40, 72, 100 etc. ; derived notions such as binary, ternary, quaternary ; arithmetical and geometrical progressions, series, ratios, proportions —

for example, Sectia Aurea ; point, curve, straight/parallel and perpendicular lines ; angle, circle, ellipse, centre, spiral ; triangle, square, pentagon, hexagon etc., axis, pole, symmetry, 1, 2, 3 . . . n-dimensional space etc.

Locations : North, South, East, West, up, down, right, left, in front of, back etc.

"Materials" : earth, fire, air, water, stone, iron, gold, silver etc.

Binary or male-female oppositions (yang-yin) : white-black, warm-cold, dry-wet, harsh-soft, day-night, morning-evening, light-dark, father-mother, vertical-horizontal, ascending-descending, sun-moon, sunrise-sunset, paradise-hell, God-devil, peace-war, affirmation-negation, birth-death, dynamic-static, near-far, continuous-alternative, full-empty, explosion-implosion, tension-relaxation, figure-background etc.

Natural elements : grass, leaf, flower, fruit, tree, wood, spring, waterfall, river, lake, sea, wave, sky, star, ray, halo, smoke, mist, wind, rain, tempest, flash, rainbow, twilight, mountain, cave, summit, island desert, gulf, egg, seed, cloud, butterfly etc.

Symbolic objects etc. : ring, cross, crown, archway, wen, lock, crossroad, chain, column, scale, window, thread, mirror, bone, head, serpent, tail, wheel, niche, bridge, knot, veil, gate, cup, sieve, crystal, carpet, roof, church, channel, house, knife, mouth, grave, belly, blood, pillar, door, vestment, wall etc.

Abstract notions or actions, "states", attributes etc. : purification, eternity, putrefaction, vertigo, silence, force, confluence, balance, stop, hesitation, expectation, dream, chaos, remembrance, cry, arabesque, circumambulation, mandala, return, surprise, change, transfiguration, break, labyrinth, echo, interdiction, place, play, unity, collage, jump, reflex, overlapping, link, deep, aggression, collapse, travel, cyclic, germination, split, twins, son, friction, burning, dissolving, vanishing, gestation, gravity, digestion, blind, orgy, recipient, sleep, space, ondulation, vegetable, viscid, fly etc.

17. The most pregnant binary opposition concerning A is plus-minus dyade (musically expressed by crescendo, ascendent melodic line, accelerando/diminuendo, descendent melodic line, rallentando ; it is noteworthy that these general expressions do not refer to dynamic variation, sounds, mode, melodic formu-

las). Similarly, any MA could be musically expressed by an infinity of concrete "images" according to norms, rules of the "musical language". (An unitary "structural complex", consisting of relatively stable associations¹⁴, seems to be specific to MA although it can be divided into components corresponding to musical structures).

18. Another possible point of view is that all is arbitrary, conventional, historical, therefore relative¹⁵, excepting the "play" of positive-negative tension in "musical language"; also, it is possible to define some MA_s at the level of any musical structure¹⁶.

19. A series of A_s found by Jung¹⁷ can be directly or indirectly recognized; an exact "approach" of them is tentative when the "artistic oeuvre" is considered as an "individuality" during its genesis¹⁸.

20. Other generally applicable archetypal areas of cognition (art included) are the logical questions which grammar "answers" to — who, what, when, where, how etc. —, sentential connectives (or logical operators) — conjunction, disjunc-

tion, negation, implication, equivalence etc.¹⁹.

21. MA_s are objective, fundamental, more "nature" than "culture". They pass through the "cultural crust" (sometimes hypertrophic) of an epoch (as the music of the first decades of the 20th century).

22. In the present study, the frequent reference to C. G. Jung's conception was strongly motivated by the need of finding a synthetical viewpoint on music, "profounder" than the analytical-technical ones commonly used. This outlook is related to the level of the "unconscious psychic roots" of the art of sounds, clearly distinguished from both psychic-acoustic and esthetic levels. If a distinction among these levels would not be artificial, then it would be possible to state that the archetypal perspective "precedes"²⁰ the last ones (semiotics included, the archetypes constituting its nucleus). In such terms, the meaning of art could be conceived as the esthetic modelling (concretely sensory, according to a conventional, "historical", "cultural" language) of some archetypes of collective unconscious (fundamental, "natural", "eternal" data).

¹ « Dès 1875, Gevaert affirmait catégoriquement : « L'existence de l'échelle pentaphone chez des peuples d'origine différente et de civilisations très inégale a déjà été signalée depuis longtemps. Mais ce qu'on ne semble pas avoir remarqué jusqu'à ce jour, c'est que ce phénomène est universel... Le fait montre qu'un même principe a partout présidé à la formation du système musical. Il s'agit là de manifestations d'une loi générale, conséquence de l'organisation physiologique de l'homme » (C. Brăiloiu, *Sur une mélodie russe*. in C. Brăiloiu, *Opere*, I, București, 1967, p. 313).

« Puisque la musique est du son humainement organisé, il devrait y avoir un rapport entre les structures de l'organisation humaine et les structures du son produit résultant des échanges humaines » (J. Blacking, *Le sens commun*, Paris, 1980, p. 35).

² « L'image primordiale, que j'ai ailleurs appelée « archétype » est... toujours collective... L'image primordiale est un sédiment mnémique, un *engramme* qui doit son origine à la condensation d'innombrables processus analogues les uns aux autres. Elle est en premier lieu un dépôt, donc la forme fondamentale typique d'une certaine expérience psychique continuellement répétée » (C. G. Jung, *Types psychologiques*, Genève, 1965, p. 434).

³ « Seule cette partie de l'art qui concerne les processus de création artistique peut être objet d'étude psychologiques, nullement celle qui constitue l'essence même de l'art » (C. G. Jung, *L'âme et la vie*, Paris, 1963, p. 260).

⁴ « La notion d'archétype... dérive de l'observation, souvent répétée, que les myths et les contes de la littérature universelle renferment des *thèmes* bien définis qui repaissent partout et toujours... Ce sont ces images et ces correspondences typiques que

j'appelle représentation archétypiques... Elles ont leur origine dans l'archétype qui, en lui-même, échappe à la représentation, forme préexistente et inconsciente qui semble faire partie de la structure héritée de la psyché et peut, par conséquent, se manifester spontanément partout et en tout temps. En raison de sa nature instinctuelle, l'archétype est situé en dessous des complexes affectives et participe à leur autonomie » (C. G. Jung, *La conscience morale dans la perspective psychologique*, paru dans : *Aspects du drame contemporain*, Paris, 1970).

« L'archétype en lui-même est vide ; il est un élément purement formel, rien d'autre qu'une *facultas praeformandi* (une possibilité de préformation), forme de représentation donnée a priori. Les représentations elles-mêmes ne sont pas héritées ; seules leur formes les sont » (C. G. Jung, *Les racines de la conscience*, Paris, 1971, p. 167).

« Les images originelles constituent les formes représentatives les plus générales et les plus reculées dont dispose l'humanité... elles constituent comme la précipitation d'expériences humaines, perpétuellement renouvelées... /elles/ ont leur existence fondée dans les particularités mêmes des systèmes vivants, qu'ils sont purement et simplement une expression de la vie, manifestations dont l'existence et la forme échappent à toutes les tentatives d'explications... /elles sont/des/ dominantes de l'inconscient collectif ou archétypes » (C. G. Jung, *Psychologie de l'inconscient*, Genève, 1963, p. 124, 128, 129, 140).

⁵ This function of music is not so homogeneous as apparently is, even in a well-defined space-time frame. The meaning of music can embrace in different "musical languages" a ludicrous, sensorial, mobiliz-

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ing, meditative, rationalist-technical, philosophic etc., dominant in individual or collective life.

⁶ If the rites can be conceived as concentrating collective energy to a certain purpose, then their meaning can be enlarged. "The rites, being nothing else than the *bringing into operation of the symbols*, have *natural power* on the astral world which includes all the flourish of the physical world as potential... The word *symbol* initially means *résumé, quintessence*; so, committing a symbolic ceremony, we attract the secondary cause toward the orbit of our will" (Comte de Larmandie, *Magie et Religion*, in M. C. GHYKA, *Estatică și teoria artei*, 1981, p. 160).

⁷ See S. LUPASCO, *Science et art abstrait*, Paris, 1963.

⁸ See D. CONSTANTIN, *Inteligența materiei*, București, 1981.

If the musical therapeutic effect is related, besides the MA-action, to a cultural component, then the reactivity of plants to music can be understood rather as a "resonance" originating in some common physical structures.

⁹ "L'artiste est l'interprète des secrets de l'âme de son temps, sans le vouloir, comme tout prophète, parfois inconsciemment, à la manière d'un somnambule. Il s'imagine parler du fond de lui même, mais c'est l'esprit du temps qui parle par sa bouche et ce qu'il dit existe puisque cela agit. Le façonnement de l'image primitive est, en quelque sorte, une traduction dans la langue du temps présent, traduction par laquelle chacun devient capable de retrouver l'accès aux sources profondes de la vie, qui lui serait interdites autrement. C'est là qui git l'importance sociale de l'art; il travaille continuellement à l'éducation de l'esprit du temps en faisant surgir les formes qui lui font le plus défaut" (C. G. Jung, *L'âme et la vie*, op. cit., p. 269).

¹⁰ See C. G. JUNG, *Psychologie et alchimie*, Paris, 1970.

¹¹ A. M. LUDWIG, *Altered states of consciousness. Trance and possession states*, Montreal, 1968, p. 69, 70, 77-83.

¹² On the other hand, they are developing and differentiating. "Tout archétype est susceptible d'un développement et d'une différenciation infinis. Il peut, par conséquent, être plus ou moins développée" (C. G. Jung, op. cit., p. 14).

¹³ For example, one can consider that "the minimal art orientation" tends to use the simplest "images" of an A, in order to obtain a maximal psychologic effect.

¹⁴ For example, an association between nasal timbre and chromatic untemperate intervals as in the "modal" melodic system from Indian traditional music. (See A. Daniélou, *Traité de musicologie comparée*, Paris, 1959.)

¹⁵ Therefore no musical test can ignore "the cultural information" of the receiver (for example, a small tierce interval intoned by an electronic generator cannot produce the same effect as the identical interval played by flute if the subject is not familiar with electronic music).

¹⁶ These would be not proper MA_g, but their components; each of them could participate in contouring several MA_s. A first taxonomy would include two categories: the "material" and the "temporal". The "material" archetypal components refer to four main physical qualities of sound - pitch, duration, intensity, timbre. Space-orienting formulas are applicable to pitch and intensity (up/down, respectively near/far, assimilable to acute/grave, respectively forte/piano); a binary division or a continuous "scale" is not applicable to timbre. The "temporal" archetypal components refer to evolvment/nonevolvment dichotomy (assimilable to notions such as order, life, male, cardi-

nal, fire/air symbols etc., respectively disorder, entropy, female, immobile, earth/water symbols etc.). Here also are included formal schema (AB, ABA etc.), sonata-like "models" (rondo, lied etc.) too, relationships between two proximal terms, i.e. all the things connected with the "syntagmatic axis" (being highly abstract, these archetypal components can be applied to any temporal structure - for example, to other arts such as dance, theater etc.).

¹⁷ "Citons en particulier ceux de l'ombre, de la bête, de l'anima, de l'animus, de la mère, de l'enfant, du vieux sage, à côté d'un nombre indéterminé d'autres archétypes qui reflètent d'autres situations individuelles précises" (C. G. Jung, *Psychologie de l'inconscient*, op. cit., p. 195).

¹⁸ If we considered the "œuvre" - or ideas, motives, characters - as organisms coming into being, evolving, individualizing, disappearing etc., we could recognize (by an extremely generalising process, frequently used by Jung) in "Selbst" A - the main coercitive factor of oeuvre cohesiveness, in *persona/ombra* A - the principle of order, redundancy, prediction, respectively the principle of disorder, entropy, surprise, interdiction, in *animus/anima* A - the principle of male-female energetic complementarity or yang-yin etc. At such a general level, a whole series of archetypes, symbols or archetypal components could be applicable to music. (Here we refer to some suggestions offered by P. Klee's approach, *Das bildnerische Denken*, Basel/Stuttgart, 1956, confirmed by S. Niculescu, *Interferențe posibile*, in *Arta*, tome XXVII, 1980, no. 9-10, p. 56).

However much deviated from music these formulations appear, they reveal new senses interpretable at the structural and semiological level. ("Jung a montré que le symbole du cercle est une image archétypale de la totalité de la psyché, le symbole du soi, alors que le carré est le symbole de la matière terrestre, du corps, et de la réalité... Le carré est la figure de base de l'espace, le cercle, et particulièrement la spiralle, celle du temps... Tandis que le ternaire relève de la symbolique de la verticale, le quaternaire appartient à celle de l'horizontale. L'un unit les trois mondes. L'autre les sépare, en les considérant chacun à son niveau") (A. Chevalier, A. Gheerbrant, *Dictionnaire des symboles*, Paris, 1973).

¹⁹ Or the principle of symmetry. "The symmetry, common to music and plastic arts - including architecture and many organic or non-organic forms - .../could be/ bilateral, translational, rotative, cyclic, helicoidal (Fibonacci's famous series too), ornamental etc. In music, symmetry is found at all levels - in spatial structures (modes etc.), in temporal structures (monovocality-plurivocality alternance in heterophony), in forms (ABA structure etc.); (S. Niculescu, *Interferențe posibile*, op. cit., p. 57.)

"All the aspects of symmetry are based on an invariance of a configuration of elements related to a group automorphic changes" (H. Weyl, *Simetria*, București, 1966, p. 5).

"The group theory cardinal to modern mathematics states... the intelligibility of nature and, according to us, of art too (musical, plastic etc.). The group is a mental exercise, intelligence having a rational intuition of the group" ... Thus, the group seems to be a necessary condition of the experience, "a meeting point between world and thinking" (J. Ullmo, *La pensée scientifique moderne*, Paris, 1969, in S. Niculescu, op. cit., p. 57).

²⁰ A musical œuvre deliberately avoiding a serie of MA_s would unintentionally use others (for example, MA of chaos). An artificial musical construct can be "rejected" as art either in archetypal or esthetic terms.