

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

**Construction of the Compositional Persona  
in Modern Musical Cultures:  
Aesthetic Meaning of Avant-garde Music**

by

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ABSTRACT

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The issue of musical meaning has been addressed by numerous studies. However, most of them fail to grasp well the complex and flexible nature of actual musical listening because they attempt to explain aesthetic experience by models that come from other fields, such as compositional technique, music analysis, philosophy, and sociology. This thesis aims at proposing a model of explaining the aesthetic experience of music from a listener-oriented point of view instead of these prescriptive models, and examining the aesthetic meaning of European post-war avant-garde music by the proposed model.

In Chapter 1, I discuss the intentionality of aesthetic experience, making reference to phenomenology and reception theory. Chapter 2 criticises the absolutist aesthetics and attempts to enlarge the range of aesthetic meaning. In Chapter 3, based on the cognitive theory known as ‘conceptual blending’, I argue that aesthetic experience is metaphorical in nature, and that conceptual blending can be identified in listening experience through analysing critical discourse. In the next two chapters, I examine the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music through discourse analysis. Chapter 4 deals with culturally formed blends: the issues of modernism and composer’s intention. They are not fundamental aspects of aesthetic experience, but play an important role as environment surrounding it. In Chapter 5, I propose the idea of the *compositional persona* as the fundamental mode of blending in listening to music. Analysing the critical discourse makes it clear that the compositional persona is constructed from various kinds of images and concepts, and that it is a fertile mental space in which various concepts are connected into a network. The discourse analysis also reveals that the grounds of the aesthetic meanings of avant-garde music are rooted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musical culture.

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## Preface

The problem of music aesthetics is its vulnerability to reduction to other theories. Music aesthetics, I believe, should be faithful to our actual listening experience and explore the logic proper to musical pleasure. In reality, however, aesthetic experience has been discussed mostly in contexts other than musical or indeed any other experience. When Immanuel Kant, for example, thinks over aesthetic judgement, his real interest is not in exploring human aesthetic consciousness itself, but rather in resolving a philosophical issue, that is, bridging between human intuition and rationality. Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysics of Will, again, had a great influence on Romantic musicians. However, it seems a bit exaggerated for us to say that music lets us reach the inmost nature of the world and human beings; indeed it is hard to understand that as the distinction of an experience at all. Theodor W. Adorno's sociological interpretation of twelve-tone music exposes brilliantly the essence of New Music. Yet we may wonder whether we ever listen to music of Schoenberg in order to recognise the alienation of the modern rational subjectivity, or even how we would set about it.

Besides such frameworks from other disciplines, even that of musicology sometimes makes it hard to approach listening experience directly. When we listen to music in a concert hall or at home by radio or CD, for example, we scarcely care about the issues of music analysis such as the progression of harmony, the musical form, the development of motives, and the *Urfinie*. Although it is certain that they are cultural representations essential for our concept of music, they are sometimes not very relevant to our listening experience. Nevertheless these formalistic concepts have been conceived to be the ideal goals of understanding of music, and not a few scholars addressing music aesthetics, including Peter Kivy and Stephen Davies, have attempted to explain aesthetic meaning on this formalistic assumption.

In the sense that they apply existing schemes from other fields (or even from musicology) without criticising them, a lot of studies of aesthetic meaning would be characterised as 'prescriptive' and 'top-down'. The prescriptive approach may be able to examine deeply a particular aspect of musical experience. But it often fails to grasp

well the complex and contradictory nature of actual musical listening, which is both arbitrary and restrained, both tangible and inscrutable. This happens mainly because it tries to adjust listening experience to a model that comes from other fields, such as compositional technique, music theory, philosophy, sociology and literary criticism. Far from that, it sometimes forces a set of rigid regulations on listening to music, talking about what is desirable behaviour for listeners and how they should listen to this and that piece of music.

If top-down stories are not suitable to talk about our listening experience, then, some might say that the empirical approach to musical perception, a bottom-up approach, would be useful. In so far as musical listening starts with perception of sounds, we may say that the perceptual approach is faithful to our listening experience. But the problem is that our aesthetic experience does not stay in, but goes beyond the perception of sound gestalts. Here the perceptual study of music is faced with its limit. It cannot explain well the most attractive characteristic of musical meaning, that is, the very openness to other things than sound. To put in another way, when we listen to music, what comes across to our mind is not only a mere collection of sounds, but also various kinds of images, including emotional states, natural objects, and dramatic scenes. The musical imagination stretches far over the realms of sound, and may lead to various philosophical, sociological, and theoretical stories, at the end.

Taking this openness into consideration, it is clear that the study of perception cannot reach to the rich field of images. On the other hand, the philosophical consideration of musical meaning, as we have mentioned at the beginning, goes past the field, carries the various images away into the realm of philosophy, and fuses them with philosophical context. Thus what we need now is to fill in the gap between the empirical level and the philosophical level, between the bottom-up and top-down approaches. The field after perceiving sound and before transforming into terms drawn from or shared with other disciplines—this intermediate place is the focus of this thesis.

In order to connect both poles, I will start by reflecting on the phenomenon of musical listening without presuppositions, to put it in a phenomenological way, bracketing for the moment apparently self-evident interpretations of listening to music. Starting from the empirical pole, I will observe how a mere series of sounds is transformed into various images and ideas, and proceed to present a descriptive model,

not a prescriptive one, of musical understanding, which can address both its multi-dimensionality and plurality. Based on the cognitive theory known as ‘conceptual blending’, I shall propose a hypothesis that musical experience is the metaphorical construction of a *compositional persona* by the listener. I shall show that this concept is founded on cognitive reality, accommodates cultural aspects, allows flexibility and creativity to aesthetic experience, and prepares the way to other fields such as music analysis and philosophy.

I use the concept of compositional persona to explore the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music. I focus on this music because it is the most problematic among other kinds of music in considering its meaning for the listener. From the perceptual point of view, this music appears as a collection of unfamiliar and even unpleasant sonorities and jagged contours. Music analysis can present the detailed blueprint of the highly elaborated compositional techniques, and therefore reveal the significance of avant-garde music to some extent. However, it is almost impossible for the listener to recognise the fine musical structure. In the philosophical interpretation of this music, the enterprise at the structural level is often associated with the issue of the essence of human beings and the world, but we always feel perplexed with the gap between such a lofty discourse and our actual listening experience. That is to say, the existing approaches to musical meaning, which concentrate mainly on the compositional technique and the historical background, have failed to grasp properly the aesthetic field of avant-garde music, and have dismissed the issue of its aesthetic meaning. It is necessary, therefore, to investigate avant-garde music from a listener-oriented perspective. Analysing listening experiences of avant-garde music with the concept of compositional persona will lead to revealing some dismissed facets of this music. Thus, this thesis aims at, in the first place, presenting the model of the mechanism of listening to music, and then, examining the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music by means of the model.

The whole discussion consists of two parts. In Part I, which consists of three chapters, I will locate my standpoint within the map of the modern music aesthetics and make clear my attitude in discussing the musical meaning of avant-garde music. In Chapter I, I will define the term *aesthetic* in terms of a listener-oriented perspective, and discuss the characteristics of aesthetic experience, making reference to phenomenological study, reception theory, and Arnold Berleant’s discussion of

‘environment’. Chapter 2 deals with the range of musical meaning. It criticises the absolutist attitude and attempts to enlarge the field of view towards more particular and fleeting, but vivid meanings. In Chapter 3, I outline the model of human cognitive system that has been developed since the 1980s in the field of cognitive linguistics. Based on this general model, I argue that aesthetic experience is essentially metaphorical, and that we can identify the act of conceptual blending in listening experience through analysing the critical discourse about music.

In part II, I will proceed to discuss concrete issues in listening to avant-garde music. Chapter 4 deals with culturally formed stories around avant-garde music. Although they are the very factors that often prevent us from seeing directly our listening pleasure, we should not ignore them because they certainly have a great influence on the listener. Firstly, I criticise an attitude to interpret avant-garde music in the context of modernism. Secondly, I show that the myth of the composer’s intention functions very strongly in listening to avant-garde music, through analysing the critical discourse. Then I characterise the myth as construction of a fictional composer by the listener: construction of the *composing persona*.

In Chapter 5, the last one of this thesis, I will propose the idea of the *compositional persona* as a key concept for our listening experience. Examining the theories of the musical subject proposed by Edward Cone, Carolyn Abbate, and Naomi Cumming, I articulate the notion of the compositional persona, and explain its relation with the composing persona. In the second section of this chapter, I analyse the critical discourse to show how the compositional persona is constructed by the listener of avant-garde music. In this analysis, I also observe how various images and concepts are generated by conceptual blending, and how they are related with each other to make a multiple network. The analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 makes it clear that the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music is supported by the frameworks rooted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musical culture. Finally, I will conclude that constructing the compositional persona is a fertile space that can accommodate various kinds of images, integrate them, and be further metaphorically transferred to go beyond the realm of aesthetic experience.



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## Part I

## Chapter 1

### Describing Aesthetic Experience

In using the adjective *aesthetic*, I am indicating a listener-oriented point of view in thinking about musical meaning. This usage is not very odd, if we just recall Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten who established the discipline ‘aesthetics’ as the ‘science of sensory cognition (*scientia cognitionis sensitivae*)’ in his *Aesthetica*, the first volume of which was published in 1750 in Frankfurt am Main (trans. 1988: 2). The word ‘sensory cognition’ here means not a mere physiological matter, but rather one form of human understanding of the world, in contrast with another superior form of understanding: the logos. In Section 116 of his *Reflection of Poetry*, he mentions the parallelism of logical understanding and sensory cognition:

The Greek philosophers and the Church fathers have already carefully distinguished between *things perceived* and *things known*. It is entirely evident that they did not equate *things known* with things of sense, since they honoured with this name things also removed from sense (therefore, images). Therefore, *things known* are to be known by the superior faculty as the object of logic; *things perceived* [are to be known by the inferior faculty, as the object] of the science of perception, or aesthetic. (trans. 1954: 78. Supplemented by translators.)

Baumgarten’s most remarkable insight is that even the inferior faculty has its own logic of understanding the world, one distinct from that of the logos, and that it plays an important part in human life. In contrast with the conceptual and logical articulation by the logos, he says, sensory cognition grasps things in a ‘clear’ but ‘confused’ way. The clarity refers to directness and certainty in our experience. However, we are faced with a difficulty in explaining where and how this clarity arrives. It is this mysterious nature of aesthetic experience that Baumgarten calls ‘confused’. He also attempts to explain this nature of the aesthetic logic as ‘extensive clarity’, which results not from a single coherent logic but from the interaction of various operations in our sensory and imaginary fields. In examining how poetry can achieve extensive clarity, for example, he adduces the following components: strong impressions, vivid images,

remembrances, wonder, fiction, prevision, progressive representation, instinctiveness, allegory, sonority, metre, rhythm, and imitation. In so far as Baumgarten sees the nature of aesthetic logic as rich and vivid but unarticulated and multi-dimensional, it may be said that the purpose of this thesis is to explore the ‘clear but confused’ logic of listening to music. However, the contrast with the logos is not the only issue that should be considered about the nature of aesthetic experience. In this chapter, I will characterise our aesthetic experience from a listener-oriented point of view.

## 1. Aesthetic Meaning and Poietic Meaning

In considering musical meaning, in the first place, I differentiate the meaning of listening to music from that of composing music. I will call the former *aesthetic* and the latter *poietic*.<sup>1</sup> In making a distinction between these two kinds of meaning, my conception is close to one that is found in the semiological analysis of musical meaning by Jean-Jacques Nattiez (trans. 1990). He sets out three dimensions of signification in music: ‘poietic’, ‘neutral’, and ‘esthetic’. The poietic dimension concerns the relationship between the composer’s creative acts and the result, a piece of music. ‘By “poietic”’, says Nattiez, ‘I understand describing the *link* among the composer’s intentions, his creative procedures, his mental schemas, and the *result* of this collection of strategies; that is, the components that go into the work’s material embodiment’ (p. 92). The poietic meaning of music, thus, refers to the meaning obtained from the composer-oriented point of view. The second dimension, the neutral, refers to materially embodied forms that are accessible to our senses. Nattiez calls it also a ‘material trace’, which exists between the poietic process and the esthetic process, and which is ‘not itself the bearer of an immediately decipherable meaning’, but without which ‘meaning(s) could not exist’ (p. 15). Finally, the esthetic dimension, as Nattiez terms it, is the object of my concern. It is generated by the process of an active perception and of construction of meaning by a listener who is confronted by a

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<sup>1</sup> By this distinction, I do not intend to deny any creative aspects in listening to music. As for creativity, what I should like to say here is that the creativity of listening to music is different from that of composing music. I will discuss listeners’ creativity in the next section of this chapter.

musical symbolic form. It refers to ‘how this or that aspect of sonorous reality is captured by their [listeners’] perceptive strategies’ (p. 92).

There are, at least, two obvious differences between his classification and mine. Firstly, I will not set out the parallel to Nattiez’s neutral level because this material level obtains meanings, I believe, only when it is read in either the poietic or aesthetic context.<sup>2</sup> Posing this level would be a requirement from the semiological thinking, based on the distinction of *signifier* and *signified*, that is a striking feature of Nattiez’s theory. However, I will not pursue such a semiological approach to musical meaning here. The second difference is that of term: *aesthetic* and *esthesis*. As mentioned in *Music and Discourse*, Nattiez uses the term *esthesis*, which would not be a very popular one, after Paul Valéry. Valéry, and therefore Nattiez, employs this term because it ‘can signify more properly the faculty of perception’, because it can better avoid being confused with various irrelevant connotations, such as Romantic ideologies of ‘art for art’s sake’, than the term *aesthetic* (p. 12). Nattiez’s preference for the scientific, neutral-like appearance of the term conforms again to the nature of semiology. By contrast, I will use the term *aesthetic*, not *esthesis*, avoiding the scientific, physiological tone of the latter, because of my assumption that while our listening experience surely starts from actuating our perceptual faculty, it is also surrounded and significantly influenced by a lot of ideologies and prejudices.

The important point is that there are unmistakable differences between the poietic meaning and the aesthetic meaning of music. Nattiez argues that there is ‘a certain discordance between the poietic and the esthesis’:

The esthetic process and the poietic process do not necessarily correspond. ... The poietic cannot leave traces in the symbolic form per se; if it does leave such traces, they cannot always be perceived. In the realm of music, the most obvious example is doubtless the Schoenbergian tone-row—not to mention Webern’s or Boulez’s self-conscious musical structures. ... On the other hand, the listener will project configurations on the work that do not always coincide with the poietic process....  
(p. 17)

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<sup>2</sup> In reality, Nattiez also does not emphasize the neutral level in his writing.

This discordance has been demonstrated by a series of experiments by Robert Francès. They demonstrate that the tone-row cannot be perceived by listeners, regardless of the extent of their musical training. Francès concludes that ‘serial unity is of a conceptual rather than a perceptual order: impeded by the melodic movement, the rhythm, the harmonic organisation of notes, it survives audition with great difficulty’ (1958: 144).<sup>3</sup>

The difficulty in perceiving the poietic process of a piece of music, however, tends to be used as grounds for criticising the music. Although admitting the difference between ‘compositional grammar’ and ‘listening grammar’, Fred Lerdahl (1988) maintains, ‘The best music arises from an alliance of a compositional grammar with the listening grammar’ (p. 255). Thus he criticises Boulez’s *Le marteau sans maître* because ‘there is a huge gap...between compositional system and cognised result’ (p. 231). This type of criticism is very typical one that is directed towards modern music.<sup>4</sup> Yet we can deflect such a criticism now, based on a series of experiments on *perception of music*.

In most of such attacks on modern music, there is an implicit or explicit presupposition that tonality is the basic condition of music because the process of tonality can be perceived by the listener. However, this seems to be far from a self-evident fact. The discordance between the poietic and the aesthetic possibly applies not only to atonal music, but also to tonal music. On the basis of a series of experiments in tonal closure, for instance, Nicholas Cook suggests that ‘the influence of tonal structure over listeners’ responses is restricted to a maximum time scale, possibly on the order of 1 min’ (1987: 203).<sup>5</sup> Other results against the perceptual reality of tonal structure have been reported also by Rosner and Meyer (1986) and Dikken (1994). Even if it would be still an open question whether tonal structure is really perceptible or not, it is certain that sound structures are not often recognised by listeners, whether in the case of tonal or atonal music, and therefore that the discrepancy between the poietic structure and the aesthetic reality cannot become a valid basis for evaluation of a musical piece.

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<sup>3</sup> For other experimental studies on perception of atonal music, see Dowling 1972; Bruner 1984; Krumhansl, Sandell and Sergeant 1987.

<sup>4</sup> For example, see Smith and Witt 1989.

<sup>5</sup> For the further experiments confirming this result, see Tillmann and Bigand 1996.

These experimental studies, more importantly, lead us also to a suspicion of the very idea that good music has a good formal structure, which listeners should recognise. Such a formalistic and prescriptive attitude has been firmly embedded into modern musicology, above all, by the development of Schenkerian theory in America, which corresponded to the spirit of the times characterised well by New Criticism in the middle years of the century. In his *Structural Hearing* (1952/62), one of the earliest English-language books using Schenker's ideas, for example, Felix Salzer claims that 'the ear has to be systematically trained to hear not only the succession of tones, melodic lines and chord progressions but also their structural significance and coherence' (vol. 1: xvi). This is because 'the conceptions of musical continuity, coherence and structure' represents the very 'body' of the language of Western art music, even though the style, say, the 'appearance and dress', has changed depending on the times (vol. 1: 6).<sup>6</sup> According to his claim, the listener should hear a piece of music neither emotionally nor in total immersion, but from a distance so that he or she can recognise the musical structure and therefore the true content. However, we only have to think about our own musical experiences to realise that Salzer's 'structural hearing', according to which ear training is the basis of an understanding of music, is completely different from an ordinary mode of listening to music, that is, the attitudes of most listeners who enjoy music in a concert hall or at home through CD, radio, and TV.

Although Salzer may stand at an extreme pole, modern musicology has been dominated by structural thinking. This formalistic attitude is one of the topics that Joseph Kerman attempts to criticise in his *Contemplating Music*.

Their [Analysts'] dogged concentration on internal relationships within the single work of art is ultimately subversive as far as any reasonably complete view of music is concerned. Music's autonomous structure is only one of many elements that contribute to its import. Along with preoccupation with structure goes the neglect of other vital matters—not only the whole historical complex referred to

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<sup>6</sup> Salzer also says, 'In whatever style this musical language happens to express itself, whether in instrumental music, in song or opera, whether the style is gothic, baroque, classic or impressionistic, the basic characteristics of musical direction, continuity and coherence are the same and constitute a common denominator' (vol. 1: 282).

above, but also everything else that makes music affective, moving, emotional, expressive. By removing the bare score from its context in order to examine it as an autonomous organism, the analyst removes that organism from the ecology that sustains it. (1985: 73)

It may be said that such a formalistic theory of music ironically demonstrates that poietic structure cannot adequately explain our musical pleasure. However, this does not mean that I am criticising music consisting of complex sound structures or musical theories based on structural thinking. There are many ways in which human beings take part in music. Listening to music is one way, and composing and analysing are another. As Cook clearly articulated, the criticism and theory of music is also ‘an integral part of the productional process’ in our culture (1990: 3). What is important here is that the poietic and the aesthetic represent different kinds of human act, that they each have their own proper logic, and that a prescriptive attitude toward aesthetic experience cannot give us an adequate grasp of its nature.

Traditional discourses about listening to music have been modelled after poietic logic including not only technical matters but also historical, cultural and biographical facts about composers. In the next section, we move into the issue of the composer’s intention in aesthetic experience, to open a more free space for the aesthetic logic, unrestricted by poietic principles.

## **2. Aesthetic Meaning and Intentional Objects**

It is in the Romantic era that the demand arose that the listener be loyal to the intention of the *composer*, now conceived as the *genius*. Such a composer-centred view is best crystallised in the hermeneutic concepts of Schleiermacher’s *Nachbildung* and Dilthey’s *Nacherleben*. In the context of Romantic thought, as Ian Bent says, ‘The highest form of understanding is that of “re-constructing” ... or “re-experiencing”’ (1994: ii, 11). These concepts are clearly based on the underlying ideas that a work of art contains the hidden thoughts of the author, which the reader should discover and understand, and that ‘every text, whatever its language, and however close to or remote from our experience, is in some degree “foreign” to us’ (Ibid.: ii, 3).

While Romantic scholars attempted to find ways in which they could reduce the



distance between the author and the recipient, hermeneutics in the twentieth century has shifted its course, and emphasised the existence of the distance itself. For Hans-Georg Gadamer, understanding a text is a ‘fusion of horizons’, that is, on the one hand, of a historically situated author and, on the other, an equally historically situated recipient. This makes room for different interpretations of a work of art. The shift to the reader-oriented view is marked most decisively by the development of reception aesthetics in literary theory from the 1960s. The centre of the first stage of this movement was a group of scholars, called the Konstanz school because some of them taught at the University of Konstanz in Germany, including Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser.<sup>7</sup> They stand against the idealistic concept of the work of art and the static hierarchy authorised by the author’s intention, and focus on the creativity of the reader, and the plural and transitional interpretations of a work of art.

In his essay, ‘Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory’, one of the most famous manifestos of this school, Jauss criticises an idealistic and objective attitude in literature study to evaluate literature according to ‘an already sanctioned canon’ and to set simply ‘the life and work of the writers one after another in a chronological series’ (trans. 1984: 4). He explains this as follows:

For the quality and rank of a literary work result neither from the biographical or historical conditions of its origin, nor from its place in the sequence of the development of a genre alone, but rather from the criteria of influence, reception, and posthumous fame, criteria that are more difficult to grasp. (Ibid., 5)

And he maintains the importance of the reader, who had up to then been considered a mere passive subject. ‘In the triangle of author, work, and public the last is no passive part, no chain of mere reactions, but rather itself an energy formative of history’ (Ibid.: 19).

Another influential manifesto is *The Act of Reading* by Iser. He analyses how a literary work is actualised in the process of reading, in other words, in a dialectic interaction between text and reader, from the phenomenological point of view. He emphasises the importance of subjectivity in our value judgement: ‘...the would-be

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<sup>7</sup> For the historical background around the Konstanz school, see Introduction by Paul de Man for Jauss trans. 1982. Suleiman 1980 surveys the development of the audience-oriented viewpoint in literary studies.

objective judgements rest on a foundation that appears to be every bit as “private” as those that make no claims to objectivity, and this fact renders it all the more imperative that these seemingly “private” processes should be investigated’ (1978: 24). And it is the very subject, that is, the reader, who elucidates one of the potential meanings of a text, who constructs the networks of the foreground and background in the text, and who brings the text into the existence in the world.

### *The Intentionality of Aesthetic Meaning*

This shift of perspective did not happen suddenly in the 1960s. The basis of reception theory was prepared by two of the most important conceptual movements in the twentieth century: phenomenology and linguistics. The former offers an approach to the creativity of the recipient, and the latter to the text as a locus of meanings. Phenomenology, established by Edmund Husserl, is based on the idea that all meanings in the world are constructed by the act of consciousness of a subject. It will be useful to consider briefly its theoretical basis here in order to obtain a good understanding of the creative nature of reception. It is a Polish phenomenologist, Roman Ingarden, who was one of the most influential predecessors of reception theory, particularly applied to music. His most important thesis is that the musical work is identical neither with certain real experiences of the composer or listener, nor with its score, but is a purely intentional construction. He formulates this simply as follows: ‘a musical work is not a real but a purely intentional object’ (trans. 1986: 119). Because the problem of the identity of the work of art is too involved to be treated here, and is not the point in question, I shall instead turn to his discussion of the aesthetic experience.

Based on the thesis that ‘a musical work is a purely intentional object’, he discusses the nature of aesthetic experience in his essay ‘Aesthetic Experience and Aesthetic Object’ (trans. 1985). In the first place, he rejects the idea that in aesthetic experience ‘the object ... is *identical* with an element of the real world and the object of our activities or cognition’ (p. 107). Real objects and cognitions, he says, ‘serve as a *starting point* and as a basis for some aesthetic objects to be built’, and ‘soon we pass from it to something else, which in the *course* of an aesthetic experience only is being *constituted*’ (p. 112). We should notice here the stress put on the phrase ‘in the course of’. This means that aesthetic experience is a process:

[A]n aesthetic experience is not...a *momentary* experience, a momentary feeling of pleasure or displeasure, arising as a response to some data of sense perception, but a *composite process having various phases and a characteristic development* which contains many heterogeneous elements. (p. 113)

Having defined the fleeting and heterogeneous nature of aesthetic experience, Ingarden moves into the issue of how this experience proceeds, how ‘the transition from the sense perception of a real object to the phases of the aesthetic experience’ takes place (p. 113). He calls this transition a ‘change of attitude’ from a practical one to an aesthetic one. The change of attitude, according to Ingarden, is caused by essential moments in perceiving a real object. That is, the moments when ‘we are *struck* with a peculiar quality or with a multiplicity of qualities or, at last, with a Gestalt quality’ (p. 114). And these qualities evoke in us an emotion, which Ingarden calls a ‘preliminary emotion’. This emotion, although it is a ‘fleeting one’, strongly touches us, excites us, stirs us up, and leads us towards ‘an intuitive intercourse with qualitative essences’ of the work of art (p. 117). This is a shift of perspective from what really is to how it appears. In the shift, it becomes a matter of indifference whether the thing really exists or not. To quote Ingarden, ‘the conviction of the existence of the thing perceived...is deprived of its binding power, is—to use an expression of Husserl—“neutralized”’ (p. 118). In the neutralised world, moreover, the quality of events becomes the most important matter: ‘the quality...becomes, as it were, freed from this formal structure...to become in the further phases of the process of the aesthetic experience *a center of crystallization* for a new object: an aesthetic object’ (p. 118). It is in the very sense of causing this change of attitude that Ingarden calls aesthetic experiences ‘active’, ‘intensive’, and ‘creative’, even though they do not ‘evoke any changes in the surrounding real world’ (p. 118).

Once the attitude is oriented toward ‘qualities’, says Ingarden, we can and want to see ‘a harmony of qualities’. He presents two kinds of formation of the harmony: categorical structures and qualitative harmony structures. This would be a problematic aspect of Ingarden’s theory, for it suggests that he premises something like the preestablished harmony as the goal of aesthetic experience. However, here is not a place to argue such an important epistemological issue relating to Kantian idealistic philosophy. I should rather like to focus my attention upon the nature that he attributes to the process of seeing or seeking the harmony. The desire to see the harmony, which

is stirred in us by the preliminary emotion, changes its direction and object moment by moment, with appearance of new qualities:

The particular phases of the aesthetic experience are in various ways dominated by the particular elements, one time some of the elements prevailing, another time the others. This whole process is characterized by a peculiar *searching disquietude*, a changeability full of dynamism. (p. 126)

In this little essay, Ingarden presents almost all of the essential characteristics of aesthetic experience. It is interaction between a subject and a work of art. It is intentional, fictional, creative, multi-dimensional, progressive, qualitative, fleeting, and individual. Such a way of characterising aesthetic experience is a basis for current studies based on the audience-oriented and, by extension, listener-oriented point of view. The issue of the creativity of the listener is pursued most exhaustively by phenomenologists such as Don Ihde and Thomas Clifton.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, not a few scholars pay attention to the role of the listener in constructing the aesthetic meaning of music. In this way we have a way of thinking that the listener may create any aesthetic meaning of a piece of music regardless of that aimed at and implied by the composer.

This listener-centred, phenomenological perspective is indispensable for building a descriptive model of our listening experience. Without it, we would not be able to find any basis for explaining the complexity and variability of actual aesthetic meaning. As everyone observes, the meaning of a work of music is far from being unitary, but varies subtly and widely depending on the conditions around the listener, such as the era, nationality, culture, class, prior experience with music, and mood at the occasion. We can never have the same experience twice from listening to a certain piece of music. In the Romantic way of thinking, these different interpretations of a piece of music are considered to be the result of a lack of understanding, and as a diversion from the authentic meaning. That is, all interpretations are arranged into a hierarchy that is strongly dominated by the only ideal interpretation, the composer's intention. In this system, we, the listeners, always feel ourselves alienated because our unsteady subjective judgements tend to be dismissed as unessential by the ideal

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<sup>8</sup> Cf., Ihde 1976; Clifton 1983.

interpretation. However, we are actually pleased with our own findings on the piece, no matter how banal or sensuous they are. Moreover, it is because of the very diversity of our personal experience that we want to listen to a piece of music again and again. By describing the actual listening experience, I intend to depict the open field of listening, where one ideal hierarchy should not be built permanently, but instead every interpretation is freely related with every other to generate new interpretations further and further. To do so, we must start with the fact that the aesthetic meaning of a piece of music is constructed afresh by each interaction between the listener and the music; that is, it is an intentional construction.

### *The Death of the Author and the Isolation of the Listener*

So far we have seen that phenomenology and reception theory provide us with a theoretical basis for describing our aesthetic experience properly. However, they cannot be a panacea that will resolve all the problems. Because a theory is a particular perspective from which we look at reality, it is natural that some things can be seen well and others cannot be seen well in the light of that theory. Reception theory gives us a perspective by which we can see well the vast realm of possible interpretations. On the other hand, it makes some facets of our listening experience obscure. Instead of obtaining a guarantee for the creativity of the listener, above all, we seem to lose a way of explaining a feeling of communication during our listening experience, a feeling as if we hear voices from outside us. Put in another way, reception theory tends to ignore the fact that we are often led to construct the meaning of a piece of music as a representation of the composer's voice.

The basic premise of reception theory is articulated well by Roland Barthes' famous motto 'the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author' (trans. 1977: 148). This motto sounded and perhaps still sounds as if it declares the triumph of the recipients over the author. In fact, it has been cited again and again in such a context. Having lost its initial revolutionary impact, however, it seems to say also another thing: the recipient is now cut off from contact with the Author. In both Romantic aesthetics and reception theory, the listener seems to be isolated. In the former, the aesthetic meaning of a piece of music is, as it were, a secret garden owned by the composer, where the listener cannot enter and can only look through a little crevice in the wall. The listener is isolated from the divine realm of creativity. Through

‘the death of the Author’, the listener, in turn, gets hold of his/her own garden. But although now apparently permitted everything and dominated by nobody, he or she is still alone in the garden because the Author is dead.

A feeling of isolation, however, would be one of the most inappropriate words to describe our listening experience. The principal feelings during listening to music are those expressed by the passive voice: we are moved, stirred, penetrated and addressed by music. We feel it to represent the presence of Others, and encounters with Others. The aesthetic meaning is surely an intentional object, but this does not necessary mean that it is a story within a purely self-conscious realm. Rather we construct it intentionally as something like a message from outside us. We should not ignore that we actually feel ourselves to be hearing voices of a composer, whether historical, implied, or fictional one, when we listen to a piece of music. The fact that the polemics around the ‘intentional fallacy’ have not finished yet means, at least, that not a few people are reluctant to eliminate completely the influence of the author’s intention in their aesthetic experience.<sup>9</sup> It would be almost impossible for us, at least, living in twentieth-century Western musical culture, to suppose any situation listening to a piece of music without any consideration or imagination about the composer. In this respect, we cannot neglect the presence of the composer. But this creates a difficult problem: how we can re-locate the composer in the aesthetic experience after reception theory, without ascribing to him or her an absolute authority that controls the listener’s listening pleasures. This is one of the most important problems that I attempt to resolve by presenting a model of listening to music.

Thanks to the development of reception theory, we now understand well that there are plural ontologies of a work of art<sup>10</sup>, and that ‘the multiplicity of contexts, the shared horizons of belief, knowledge, and expectation’ makes ‘any understanding, however fleeting, of minds or of texts, possible’ (Suleiman 1980: 45). Starting from this point, we should find out a way to open up the closed realm of the listener and text,

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<sup>9</sup> For example, Haimo 1996 raises a question to the intentional fallacy. He refers to the original debate in literary theory (p. 177, notes 25-27), and also the debate in musicological context (p. 177, note 28).

<sup>10</sup> Cf.: ‘This creating by the listener does not usually negate or supplant the creativity of the composer who wrote the piece. Instead it creates another ontology of the work—a realized version, replete with meaning for that listener, as distinct from the notated version that the composer created’ (Citron 1993: 172-173). Bohlman 1999 also discusses the ‘multiple ontologies of music’.

to make it full of other voices.

### 3. The Environment of Aesthetic Experience

#### *Aesthetic Distance?*

In the previous sections, we have sought to eliminate certain prejudices concerning aesthetic experience; firstly, that of structural listening and, secondly, that of the composer's intention. This part deals with the problem of aestheticism or aesthetic distance, an attitude that separates the idealistic world of art from the ordinary and daily life. This will provide a perspective that opens the formalistic, text-centred attitude towards a more dynamic and multi-dimensional field of aesthetic experience. Although the listener's conscious act is surely the basis for constructing every aesthetic meaning, it is also true, at the same time, that we cannot think about any pure conscious act that is absolutely autonomous from the external world. Aesthetic experience is not purely inner experience, but is mediated in a complex way by culture, society and ideology.<sup>11</sup>

The tendency to distance aesthetic consciousness from everyday life is articulated clearly by Kant, who establishes the modern discipline of aesthetics in his *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. He characterises the aesthetic judgement as a subjective and disinterested one,<sup>12</sup> and therefore not a matter of arbitrary, individual likes and dislikes: 'Judgement of taste', says Kant, is 'accompanied with the consciousness of separation from all interest', and therefore 'must claim validity for every one', namely 'subjective universality' (trans. 1914: 56). Such a subjective but universal agreement is brought about, according to Kant, by the harmony of imagination and the logos.

Kant's 'disinterestedness' and 'universality' is the mainstay of modern aesthetics. It was consolidated through Hegel's dialectics of art, where art should be raised and be absorbed into religion, and was diversely developed up to the highest degree in the Romantic era. As the motto *l'art pour l'art* symbolises well, Romantic art longs for an absolute kingdom of art, where art is completely liberated from any limitations of

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<sup>11</sup> For the criticism of aestheticism, see Berleant 1991.

<sup>12</sup> See Part 1, Division 1, §§1-2 (trans. 1914: 45-48).

worldly affairs. Even before 1800, for example, Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder (1773-1798) praised the eternity of musical experience in his small essay 'The Wonders of Music'.

Now music seems to me like a phoenix which for its own joy lifts itself up easily and boldly, swaggeringly floats upwards with obvious pleasure, and delights both Gods and mortals with the momentum of its wings. Now I think music is like a child that was lying dead in its grave—a reddish ray of sun from Heaven gently removes its soul, and it enjoys, thus turned into heavenly ether, golden drops of eternity, and embraces the primordial images of man's most beautiful dreams.  
(trans. 1989: 133)

'The land of music' is, for him, 'that of faith, where all our doubts and sufferings lose themselves in a sea of sound, where we forget all of man's croakings, where no verbal jabbering...makes us dizzy, but all the fear of our heart is at once healed by gentle touch' (Ibid.: 134).

In *The World as Will and Idea* by Schopenhauer, music is clearly differentiated from the other arts by its non-materiality. While the latter are concerned with the various external phenomena, the former is concerned with the origin of all the phenomena in the world, with the Will. 'Music is thus by no means like the other arts, the copy of the Ideas, but the *copy of the will itself*, whose objectivity the Ideas are' (trans. 1987: 150). Therefore, the artist is a person who has a special talent to leave worldly phenomena and even his/her own ego. A talent to touch directly with the Will, namely, genius, is, according to Schopenhauer, 'the power of leaving one's own interests, wishes, and aims entirely out of sight, thus of entirely renouncing one's own personality for a time, so as to remain *pure knowing subject*, clear vision of the world' (Ibid.: 146). What the genius expresses and the listener is moved by is, as a matter of fact, 'the infinite number of possible melodies', but it is 'always in universal, in the mere form, without the material, always according to the thing-in-itself, not the phenomenon, the inmost soul, as it were, of the phenomenon, without the body' (Ibid.: 154).

It is such a divine nature that Romantic aesthetics attributes to music as its essence. And it is in the same Romantic era that aesthetics became highly developed as a discipline. Thus the term *aesthetic* acquired a more or less metaphysical tone, as a



result of which aesthetics is sometimes looked at askance in the modern scientific world. In such a context, aesthetics has been criticised as an old-fashioned discipline. For example, Carl Dahlhaus says in the preface to the English version of his *Aesthetics of Music*, ‘As a whole, music aesthetics represents...the spirit of cultivated bourgeois music lovers, a spirit that arose in the eighteenth century and is threatened in the twentieth with collapse’ (trans. 1982: vii). However, since we have defined the term *aesthetic* in opposition to *poietic*, and have decided to start with neutralising this term, such a criticism would be irrelevant here. What is important here is, rather, the tight connection that has been historically made between the aesthetic and the absolute and universal. Although this connection is surely characteristic of Romanticism, it remains, sometimes latently, in arguments on music in the twentieth century.

In Romantic aesthetics, it may be said that the power between the universal and the private is well balanced. In this respect, Romanticism seems to follow Kant’s schema of the aesthetic as subjective but universal. In the twentieth century, however, the balance becomes lost. The distrust of the subjective has gradually grown, and the reliance on the objective has increased. This tendency is embodied, in the clearest form, in formalism. In a more obscure form, however, it even has some relationship with reception theory.

In the nineteenth century, contemplation of the autonomous value of music gave rise to an emphasis on the coherence of music in itself. This developed into a formalistic attitude that pursues the secret of structural unity as the core of aesthetic meaning.<sup>13</sup> Here the listener is expected to take an *aesthetic distance* in order to reach the true meaning of a piece of music. That is, the listener should not be involved in his/her sensory pleasure, but should distance his/herself from his/her own immediate experience. Although there are several differences in their focuses, Romantic aesthetics and formalism share an attitude to seek the essence of music in an absolute realm that transcends the empirical and ordinary world. God, for the former, is

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<sup>13</sup> The concept of the autonomous work of music is closely related with issues such as the emancipation of music from the extra-musical functions, the raise of absolute music, the authority of the composer, and the genius. These problems will be discussed in Chapter 4.

replaced by the organic unity for the latter.<sup>14</sup> The most problematic issue here is that the element of the private is deleted from aesthetic meaning through this transformation from God to structure. In formalism, the nature of aesthetic meaning is drawn together into a single pole, the autonomous musical structure. Because I have already mentioned how the formalistic attitude is distanced from our actual experience, I will not repeat the criticism of formalism here. I will just point out that disinterestedness and universality cannot reach aesthetic experience without the collaboration of subjectivity.

### *Subjectivity, Text, and Environment*

We may say that reception theory is a project to take the subjectivity back. It attempts to break the autonomy of the text by the power of the subjectivity, as we have seen in the previous section. However, reception theory is still influenced by the objectivism of the formalistic attitude in that it restricts the scope of the recipient's dialogue with the text. This is also a bequest from the linguistic tradition that is one of the theoretical bases of reception theory. Although the authority of creating the aesthetic meaning is certainly moved from the structure of the material to the subjectivity that constructs the structure, it is still the structure, whether objective or intentional, that is essential for the aesthetic meaning. John Neubauer suggests that formalism, in its own way, provides the basis for the death of the Author:

Musical analysis and New Criticism, the dominant modes of mid-century, focused on 'the work in itself', its internal features; they questioned the notion that art was 'expression' and they rejected the 'genetic fallacy' that scholarship was to recover authorial intentions. Both musical and literary scholarship turned against the idealistic view that the author's transcendental subject was the defining origin and centre of artworks, and maintained that one could identify a core of stable meaning in artworks without reference to the originating subject behind them. (1992: 7).

Reception theory would not have been possible without formalistic identification of musical meaning with structure. Because all possible meanings are grounded in the

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<sup>14</sup> The writings that typically reflect this spirit include Rudolf Reti's *The Thematic Process in Music* (1951), Allen Forte's *The Structure of Atonal Music* (1973), and Wallace Berry's *Structural Functions in Music* (1976).

text, consideration of constructing aesthetic meaning can concentrate just on the dialogue between the recipient and the text. However, as we have seen in the previous section, the image of this dialogue is too isolated and stoic in comparison with the actual listening experience. This isolation is caused by, on the one hand, its phenomenological attitude of concentrating on inner consciousness and, on the other, its linguistic attitude of placing the text at the centre of all meaning. In reality, however, the model of a closed static dialogue is interrupted by various voices, by a fictional composer, by different elements from the social, cultural, and individual situation. As Cook says, 'no interpretation takes place in a vacuum' (1996b: 109). Here we have to turn to the importance of the environments that surround the dialogue between the listener and the text.

I use the term *environment* here in the sense given by Arnold Berleant. In his *The Aesthetics of Environment* (1992), Berleant discusses the aesthetic concept of *environment* neither as a mere geographical concept, nor as something *outside* a person such as cultural and spiritual settings, but as a surrounding field inseparable from living human beings. In defining the term, he says as follows.

'The' environment...dissolves into a complex network of relationships, connections, and continuities of those physical, social, and cultural conditions that describe my actions, my responses, my awareness, and that give shape and content to the very life that is mine. For there is no outside world. ... Nor is there an inner sanctum in which I can take refuge from inimical external forces. The perceiver (mind) is an aspect of the perceived (body) and conversely; person and environment are continuous. (p. 4)

That a person reaches some aesthetic meaning means necessarily that he or she is led to construct a network of relationships with his or her environment. To put it another way, in constructing aesthetic meaning, the listener inevitably exists in the environment; and the environment needs the listener as a focal point in order to appear as such. Here we cannot identify the clear boundary between the subject and the

environment.<sup>15</sup> My own subjectivity is always penetrated by the environment, even though I am absolutely distinguished from the world, from Others. And the environment is always a particular environment for someone at a particular time, even though the world would continue to exist without me.<sup>16</sup> By introducing the concept *environment*, I do not intend to nullify the distinction between the listener, the work of music, and various social and cultural restraints. Rather I use this term in order to stress the fact that aesthetic meaning is never intrinsic to sound itself but is impossible without a particular situation.<sup>17</sup> In this thesis, I will use the term *environment* in the sense of the network of all possible factors in which the listener and the musical work are thrown. One of the most important factors of the environment would be cultural representation, which is often called ‘ideology’ or ‘story’. However, among the three poles of the listener, a piece of music and culture, it would be also ambiguous which is in the centre and which is the environment. In the ordinary case, we would think that the listener is the focal point of aesthetic meaning. However, from the absolutist point of view, the centre is the musical work, and from a sociological point of view, the stories are the most powerful principles. That is to say, the aesthetic meaning is dispersed across these three poles, or the network of relationships between them.

The problem of the environment, although vaguely suggested by Kant’s *sensus communis*, has been almost ignored in Romantic aesthetics and formalism. In phenomenology and reception theory, although its influence in constructing meanings

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<sup>15</sup> From a postmodernist point of view, Kramer also claims the importance of merging the inside into the outside: ‘At the same time the difference between text and context, the aesthetic and the political or social, the “inside” and the “outside” of the musical moment, the hermeneutic and the historiographical, would be (re)constituted as provisional and permeable boundaries destined to disappear in and through the heteroglot weaving of musicological discourse’. (1995: 18)

<sup>16</sup> Berleant’s *environment* is very close to Husserl’s *Lebenswelt* and Heidegger’s *Dasein*. However, Berleant stresses the ambiguity of the boundary between the subject and the world more than the others.

<sup>17</sup> The idea that the meaning is generated by the relationship between the person and the environment has a close connection with the ecological approach of human perception. Berleant mentions James J. Gibson’s theory of ‘affordances’. See Berleant 1992: 149-154.

has been sometimes mentioned,<sup>18</sup> it has not become the main subject of the argument: the focus is always in the end on inner consciousness. In reality, however, our consciousness is not free from everything. Firstly, we cannot evade our biological, physical and instinctive restraints. Moreover, we cannot escape the influence of our cultural and social environments. When Lawrence Kramer calls music a ‘cultural trope’, he presents us with a perspective that enables us to see the culture’s constructing power of meanings to the greatest extent.<sup>19</sup> He claims that ‘musical representation has significant, definite, interpretively rich ties to both musical processes and cultural processes’ (1995: 68). The problem of the Author would become a good example, again, to see the importance of culture. Because we are living in the present European musical culture, where we still believe that a work of art is a crystallisation of the inner spirit of the great composer, it is almost impossible for us not to think of the work as an expression of someone other than us.<sup>20</sup> Even if we now know that we may construct any meanings as we like, we still imagine the composer whom we have never seen, and his or her life and personality. That is to say, what has been called ‘composer’s intention’ has always been the fictional Author, which is an interpretive construct that links subject, text and environment. In this way aesthetic meaning is constructed by the listener, under the strong but sometimes latent influence of the cultural environments.

### *Beyond Relativism*

When we attempt to integrate phenomenological attitude and cultural perspective

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<sup>18</sup> For example, Gadamer throws a light on the interpreter’s prejudices, and evaluates them as the necessary products of his/her historical existence. Each interpretation is, for him, taken within a particular historical context, and the chain of interpretations forms ‘effective history (*Wirkungsgeschichte*)’.

<sup>19</sup> For the concept of ‘cultural trope’, see Kramer 1995: 34-35. Concrete analyses of ‘trope’ in several pieces of music are found in his *Music as Cultural Practice 1800-1900* (1990), in which he uses the term ‘structural trope’ to refer to a concept similar to ‘cultural trope’.

<sup>20</sup> The concept ‘the great composer’ strongly dominates as the solid authority in the culture of art music from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. On the other hand, in the field of popular music, because the authority is broken up into several poles such as the composer, performer, and producer, the locus of authority is rather vague. However, here is another kind of power that differentiates the sender clearly from the receiver: the aura of ‘star’. For the problem of authority in popular music, see Cook 1996a.

within the kind of hermeneutic approach I am advocating, we have necessarily to face one problem: the relativism of meaning. In both phenomenological and cultural terms, every meaning could have its own context and significance, and therefore, it seems that everything is permitted and we should not accept any models that may lead to the establishment of an ideology. In that case, what we can and should say about aesthetic experience might be that it starts from perceiving sounds, from which we construct intentionally various networks of feelings, images and concepts, mediated by the environment in different ways. This is surely safe because it speaks about only the horizon of possibilities, that is to say, the background of our actual experience. A fear of adhering to any particular principle in this regard has penetrated 'post-modern' culture. For example, Kramer is suspicious of the unworldliness of aesthetic experience: 'It follows from this that musical immediacy...cannot ground the putative unworldliness of music.... What's more, musical immediacy cannot be taken uncritically as the authorizing locus for the study of music' (1995: 17). His point here is to point out the danger of accepting such a Romantic ideology uncritically and excluding the possibilities of listening mode other than it. However, Kramer seems to fail to see that the very immediacy was the actuality for the listeners, at least, in the Romantic era. Romantic listening is identified by immediacy and unworldliness, the Romantic ideologies. That is, the actual experience is generated through what we select from the sea of possibility, and we cannot stay for ever within the sea. What is selected is often called an *ideology* in a derogatory sense, but I would rather like to call it a *story* or a *myth*. We cannot live without any stories. And a particular story common to most people in a community may be called a myth. And if we attempt to think about our *actual* listening experience, we should examine what has been selected, what presuppositions sustain the experience. For it is the very result of the selection that reveals our actuality.

This means that we need to examine the myths that operate in a musical culture at a particular time and place to understand better the music and ourselves. In doing so, we should be careful not to attribute any universality to the story, and not to forget that it is a story. From such a point of view, I will present in this thesis a particular model that will be effective in explaining the aesthetic experience of avant-garde music in the twentieth-century Western musical culture. It will be a mere story, but one that reflects the actual relationship between the music and us.

## Chapter 2

### The Range of Musical Meaning

In the previous chapter, aesthetic experience has been characterised as an individual, divergent and creative process in which the listener's consciousness interacts with sounds and environments in different ways. Developing this point of view, this chapter will deal with musical meaning. In my use of the term *musical meaning*, I am indicating whatever emerges and will be developed from our experience of listening to music. This includes mental images, intellectual ideas, and emotional and physical reactions. In other words, it includes both, so to speak, intra- and extra-musical objects. Thus I use the term in such a comparatively unrestricted manner because it is necessary for describing the multi-dimensional and variable actualities of our listening experience. Surveying some current theories of musical meaning critically, I will present a perspective to look at such a broad range of musical meanings.

#### 1. The Polemic on Form and Content

The history of consideration of musical meaning has developed by a dialectics between absolutism and referentialism. To borrow Leonard B. Meyer's definition, the absolutists claim that 'musical meaning lies exclusively within the context of the work itself, in the perception of the relationships set forth within the musical work of art'; and the referentialists consider that 'in addition to these abstract, intellectual meanings, music also communicates meanings which in some way refer to the extramusical world of concepts, actions, emotional states, and character' (1956: 1). This duality reflects a basic scheme of the accounts of musical meaning, which we can find in numerous writings under various names.<sup>1</sup> When we consider the actual listening

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<sup>1</sup> This duality is expressed in various ways by different authors. For example, Bent 1994 sets analysis against hermeneutics, and calls the former 'technical' and the latter 'elucidatory'. In Kerman 1985, it is described as the confrontation between positivistic analysis and criticism.

experience, however, the polemic around absolutism and referentialism seems to be not very relevant. In fact, musical meaning easily changes depending on the perspective. From one perspective, music would be purely sound constructions. From another, music would be a mysterious power that moves us. That is, music can accommodate both kinds of meaning. Thus we should not restrict the range of musical meaning either to the form or to the content.

Even in Eduard Hanslick, who has been considered as an extreme absolutist, we can find both the absolutist's perspective and the referentialist's. His famous phrase in *The Beautiful in Music* (trans. 1974), 'The essence of music is sound and motion' (p. 67), has been quoted again and again; and becomes the maxim of modern music aesthetics. In the following sentences, for example, Hanslick paraphrases this motto:

I only protest against the intrusion of the feeling upon the province of *science*, in other words—that I take up the cudgels against those aesthetic enthusiasts who...in reality only dilate upon their tinkling opium-dreams. ...the beauty of a composition is *specifically musical*—i.e., it inheres in the combinations of musical sounds and is independent of all alien, extra-musical notions. (pp. 11-12)

This sounds extremely formalistic, and he surely treats the structural as essential, and the emotional as secondary. The Kantian idealistic tradition let him seek an unchangeable core of musical meaning, which 'is not contingent upon, or indeed of any subject introduced from outside, but that consists wholly of sounds artistically combined' (p. 66).<sup>2</sup> In this context, Hanslick declared, 'The *form* (the musical structure) is the real *substance* (subject) of music' (p. 128).

However, in order to understand Hanslick properly, in the first place, we should take into consideration the historical situation in which these words were uttered. It was an era in which the aesthetics of emotion had reached the height of its popularity. In order to fight against the prevailing tendency, he must have used very strong language. And his aggressive expressions easily led to misunderstanding of his idea, and to identifying him with a pure absolutist who rejects all extra-musical factors from

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<sup>2</sup> The following sentence of Hanslick shows the influence of Kant's concept of *disinterestedness*: 'the beautiful, strictly speaking, *aims at nothing*, since it is nothing but a form which, though available for many purposes according to its nature, has, as such, no aim beyond itself' (p. 18). Kivy points out the relationship between Kant and absolutism (1984: 143).



musical meaning. In reality, however, he never denies that music has affective effects on the listener. What he criticised is not ‘the expression of some specific feeling’, but the tendency to consider such an expression as the principal meaning of music. Furthermore, he admits that music has ‘an undefined and demonical power’ and can send ‘a thrill through every nerve of our body’ (p. 108). In music, according to Hanslick, there is a ‘mysterious fusion of two antagonistic principles’, that is, the intellectual and the sensuous, which is comparable with the ‘equally mysterious links in the invisible telegraphic connection between mind and body’ (p. 109). From reflecting on these remarks, we may say that the aim of *The Beautiful in Music* is not to change over from referentialism to absolutism, but rather to assimilate the former into the latter. In this respect, Hanslick has been misunderstood from the beginning and perhaps until recently.<sup>3</sup>

The ideology or story of absolutism has dominated that of referentialism throughout the twentieth century. As Leo Treitler observes, ‘If there is a single word that can express what is for the modern period the essential attribute of “Western music”...that word is “form”, flanked by all its qualifiers (rational, logical, unified, concise, symmetrical, organic, etc.)’ (1991: 287). The spread of absolutism in this century, however, does not indicate its essential superiority over referentialism, but simply implies that the former is a more powerful story than the latter today. From a critical point of view, Carolyn Abbate argues that the absolutistic attitude is far from objective and general, as has been believed, but rather is a story conditioned historically:

The distinction between this modern phase...and the earlier custom of programmatic analysis does lie in the modern fear of excessively specific analogies between musical events and the drama that music is said to express. This fear is, itself, historically conditioned. Declarations that some musical gestures represents one phase in an ongoing Napoleonic battle have come to seem shameful and shoddy, but claims that the same gesture represents an event-sequence that can be constituted in more abstract terms—described as existing within the paramusical areas of music history, musical form, composer psychology—are

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<sup>3</sup> For understanding Hanslick, see Kivy’s ‘Something I’ve always wanted to know about Hanslick’ and ‘What was Hanslick denying?’ (1993: 265-275, 276-295); Davies 1994: 203-221.

viewed as far less objectionable. (1991: 25)

That is to say, the controversy concerning form and content is not concerned with a problem of musical essence at all, but of cultural self-representation, in other words, what I have called myth. This seems to be endorsed implicitly also by the fact the controversy has not ceased even now.

From the standpoint of the listener, music has both form and content, which are equally relevant to our aesthetic experience. The real question to be resolved is not which of them is the more essential aspect of music, but how music can appear in these different guises simultaneously, how wide a range of meanings music can hold. That is, we should turn more attention to how music represents than to whether it does. However, the object of musical representation differs each time. Therefore, if we try to answer the latter question, we cannot but mention each result of an individual musical experience one after another, the alternative being to talk in a very abstracted way. Roger Scruton points out the inseparability between musical meaning and a particular experience:

Expression must be grasped in the *particular* experience of the *particular* work, if it is to be grasped at all. In which case, the only way to identify *what* is expressed by the last movement of the ‘Jupiter’ Symphony, is to play the last movement of the ‘Jupiter’ Symphony. (1997: 151)

In the first place, I should like to turn my attention to how one or another particular meaning emerges in our listening experience. After understanding the mechanism of constructing musical meaning, we can then go on to the question of what music can represent.

## **2. The Absolutist Attitude to Musical Meaning**

In current arguments on musical meaning, the dominance of the absolutist attitude still continues to work. Not a few scholars start with the question of how the subordinate emotional dimension of music may be derived from the essential formal one. To borrow Meyer’s expression again, most recent theorists of musical meaning, including Meyer himself, may be called ‘absolute expressionists’ because they believe

‘that expressive emotional meanings arise in response to music and that these exists without reference to the extramusical world of concepts, actions, and human emotional states’ (1956: 3). From the aesthetic point of view, namely, from the listener-oriented point of view, we can easily infer that there is a limit to such an absolutistic approach in order to describe the actual construction of musical meaning. For the starting point of this approach, the concept of sound structure ‘without reference to the extramusical world’, is myth based on a theory of poietic representation, and would as such be inconsistent with the aesthetic one.

Absolute expressionists do not reject the possibility of music being interpreted as something extra-musical. However, they treat such a kind of meaning as merely supplementary, as Hanslick did, and in fact do not fully discuss it. Peter Kivy’s *Music Alone* (1990) would provide a good example for it. As the subtitle ‘Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience’ implies, his main interest is in the ‘purely musical’ experience. Because Kivy attempts to solve issues of musical meaning within the realm of the purely musical, namely, ‘music alone’, his answer is considerably constrained. Although he admits that music arouses emotional responses in our mind, he restricts the range of these responses to ‘general’ or ‘objectless’ emotions, such as ‘fear’, ‘grief’, and ‘joy’.<sup>4</sup> However, at the same time, he notes that Mahler’s symphonies are sometimes felt as being expressive of the ‘neurotic’, which is very specific. Explaining this, he says that such a quality comes from information additional to ‘the pure musical structure’, that is, from the critical discourse and the listener’s knowledge about Mahler’s life. Thus, he admits the possibility of specific emotions contributing to musical meaning, but dismisses them as non-essential: ‘it seems profoundly wrong to me to hear the neurotic in Mahler’s music...as part of the aesthetic or musical fabric’ (1990: 180).

That is to say, Kivy refuses to take great account of our specific emotional responses to a musical piece. With regard to a phrase from Bach’s trio sonata, he

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<sup>4</sup> The difference between ‘general’ and ‘specific’ emotions, however, seems to be vague and not very reasonable. Kivy himself says that although ‘pomposity’ is a specific emotion, music can come to embody it as an expressive property ‘because there is associated with it a fairly recognisable, “gross” behaviour pattern—pomposity struts and postures’ (1990: 179). Then, he admits also that the distinction between them, between ‘what emotions music can and cannot be expressive of’, is ‘a rough, ragged line’ (Ibid.: 179).

compares two ways of describing it with each other. One characterises the phrase as ‘in large note values, chromatic and descending’; another as ‘slightly melancholy’ (1990: 181-82). And he claims that the former is more essential than the latter.

Thus if you were to ask me what aesthetic role that melancholy quality plays in the fugue, I would reply, ‘None at all’. ... And if, finally, you were to press me for a method by which to tell when an expressive property is aesthetically operative in a work of pure instrumental music, I could but reply that there is no hard-and-fast rule, no formula. One does it case by case. ... It is a ‘story’ about a descending chromatic theme in whole notes.... That is all. The ‘melancholy’ and ‘happiness’ are simply the fuzz on the peach (although helpful, perhaps, as I indicated before, in pointing out features to the musically naïve). (1990: 183-184)

Because it is ‘case by case’, because it does not fall into any rules, he does not include the emotional, story-like interpretation of music into his theory of musical meaning. Because the attempt to interpret ‘is easily defeated by the stringent semantic requirements on successful linguistic interpretation’, says Kivy, only the ‘pure, abstract musical sound’ is allowed to become the basis of a theory of musical meaning, after all (1990: 9-10). For Kivy, while structural properties of a musical piece are essential, emotional properties are secondary. In this respect, as Cook accurately points out, Kivy shares the very same standpoint with Hanslick.<sup>5</sup>

However, if such ‘case by case’ stories are irrelevant to our aesthetic experience, how do we enjoy music? If we refuse to place the stories within the range of musical meanings because they always change and do not fit well in a theory, it would become just a theory for a theory, not for musical meaning. In reality, the listener’s knowledge and critical discourse seem to be far from non-essential in the construction of musical meaning.<sup>6</sup> They constitute a significant part of the environment of listening to music. Indeed perhaps the most attractive moment in listening to music is, I believe, when you feel some specific emotion, imagine some concrete image, find words to express what

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<sup>5</sup> For Kivy’s absolutistic attitude, see Cook 1994b; 1998: 86-92. The Hanslickian attitude can be found also in other writers’ writings on musical meanings. Cf., Davies 1994; Krausz ed. 1993.

<sup>6</sup> For example, Kramer says, ‘If Edvard Munch’s painting “The Scream” were entitled “The Toothache”, it would be quite a different work. ... In music, the most common designators consist of texts for vocal settings, titles, programs, and epigraphs; and musical allusion to sonorities, styles, or specific works’ (1992: 140).

you are feeling. By contrast, Kivy's argument about musical meaning limits it to a very abstract level of musical experience. His tendency to withdraw to a static formalistic realm is criticised also by Cook as follows.

...if we hear the music this way, in the light of contingent knowledge, we are no longer hearing it as pure music, as 'music alone'. For Kivy, that is the end of the argument. To me, however, it seems more like the beginning, because it raises the question: do we *ever* hear music alone, and if we do, can we be justified in regarding this as the paradigm case of musical listening? A negative answer to both these questions is suggested by the fact that our musical culture invests a great deal of time and effort in an apparent attempt to ensure that we *don't* hear music alone.... (1998: 91)

Kivy, and other absolute expressionists also, seems to make the issue of musical meaning too complicated by restricting their own view to the purely musical. In considering the fact that we are emotionally moved by music, they are led to ask in a strange way: 'How can music possibly "possess" emotions?', 'How can musical sounds be happy or melancholy or angry?'. As Kivy himself admits, these are questions that have puzzled many scholars for a long time, and on which there is not yet much agreement among them. Kivy himself provides an answer that music can mean only general and non-specific emotions, through its resemblance to some aspects of human behaviour, voice and physiognomy (1980: Chapter 6). Stephen Davies claims almost the same: 'the expressiveness of music consists in its presenting emotion characteristics in its appearance' (1994: 228).<sup>7</sup>

As I see it, it is not surprising that these questions are very difficult to answer, or to put more precisely, almost impossible to answer. For *music itself* does not possess actual emotions, and *sounds themselves* can neither be happy or melancholy or angry, nor have emotional appearances. Sounds can just be given fictional emotions by the listener in a certain environment. It is true that the property of sounds is one factor from which musical meaning becomes possible. Yet sound alone cannot reach most aesthetic meaning without any collaboration with the listener and the environment. We

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<sup>7</sup> It is clear that their accounts are under the influence of the tradition of Susanne Langer and Nelson Goodman. According to the former, music is an iconic symbol of *the forms of feeling*; for the latter, music *exemplifies* emotional properties.

might feel that a piece of music directly represent a particular feeling, but it is just a part of the wide range of musical meanings.<sup>8</sup> The absolutists' approach to musical meaning cannot throw light on more comprehensive and concrete meanings very well.

### 3. Broadening the Range of Musical Meaning

#### *From Structure to Context*

There is no doubt that the formalistic tradition makes scholars concentrate upon abstract musical meaning. This attitude shares some aspects with another important tradition in the twentieth century: semiotic thinking. Semiotics aims at bringing speculations on meaning into a systematic and rigorous science through preparing general rules which function, implicitly or explicitly, in the complex and ambiguous world of signification. For example, in the preface to his *Music and Discourse*, Nattiez calls existing musicology, musical analysis and music aesthetics 'less specialized or "scientific"', and claims the necessity of musical semiotics as a 'general theory' (trans. 1990: ix-x). Raymond Monelle also stresses the scientific nature of semiotics:

'Musical theory' is a long-established discipline; it is the repository of technical language, standard forms, techniques of analysis which lies behind every description of music in words. The semiotics of music is merely an alternative theory, which attempts to replace the view of established tradition with systems and approaches which are more radically scientific and logical, more comprehensive, more universal. (1992: 21)

In the light of science, the most important task would be to establish rational rules that can be applied to almost every case, even if the appearances of phenomena are different from one to another. This tends to result in concentrating upon abstract and stable aspects of musical signification, such as the structure or syntax of music.

In the semiotic approach, there is another aspect that may work as a drawback in

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<sup>8</sup> Roger Scruton says that musical meaning emerges not from certain stable rules, but from the relationship between plural factors. '...there are no definite rules of expression in music, no rules of the form "if the music has features A, B, C then it will be expressive". For to be expressive is to have a certain character, and that character is not determined by any one physical feature of the music but rather by the totality of its features operating together.' (1983: 51)

thinking about aesthetic meaning: a highly analytical thinking. It provides us with several tools with which we can precisely observe individual factors in musical phenomena: *signifier* and *signified*; text and context; icon, index, and symbol; syntax, semantics, and pragmatics; denotation and connotation, etc. However, these tools sometimes make it difficult for us to see a musical phenomenon as a whole. In this respect, the analytical attitude of semiotics would be opposed to our environment-oriented one. In addition, because most tools in semiotics are by nature language-based, music is often treated as a deviation or a special case. For example, the concepts of *signifier* and *signified*, although they contribute very much to analysing the signification of natural language, may cause a difficulty in analysing the signification of music. For, in music, the two of them seem to be unable to divide clearly, or the concept *signified* seems to be invalid.<sup>9</sup> This pair of concepts may be very useful to show how natural language signifies something, and how a musical signification differs from a linguistic one, but is not very effective in exploring the signification proper to musical phenomena.

However, some recent studies of musical semiotics seem to recognise the limit of the formalistic attitude, and attempt to broaden the field of view to see not only universal meanings derived from the structural sphere, but also local and fictional ones constructed from the environment. Meyer is one of the most important scholars who turn to factors other than structural meaning in the music of the twentieth century. Although his attitude is still absolutist,<sup>10</sup> his theory stimulates the development of cultural and empirical study of musical meaning. His explanation of the emotional response to music in his *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1956) is based on Gestalt psychology. He starts with the psychological thesis that 'Emotion or affect is aroused when a tendency to respond is arrested or inhibited'. When a tendency is disturbed or suspended, we feel uncertainties and anxieties. This state of tension is released at the point of the resolution. The scheme of 'expectation—tension—release' is his basic tool of explaining musical meaning. He says, 'Affect or emotion-felt is aroused when

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<sup>9</sup> Thus music has been sometimes characterised as 'signifier without signified'. For the inappropriateness or difficulty of applying the concept of sign to music, see Faltin 1972; Kneif 1974; Escal 1979: 23-26; Monelle 1992: 13-21.

<sup>10</sup> For example, he says, 'the form of the affective experience will be similar to the form of the musical work which brought it into being' (1956: 256). This has a very similar tone with that of Kivy.

an expectation—a tendency to respond—activated by the musical stimulus situation, is temporarily inhibited or permanently blocked’ (p. 31). This theory, therefore, requires ‘the customary or expected progression of sounds’ as a norm, deviations from which stimulate emotional or affective response (p. 32). For Meyer, this norm is ‘the materials and their organisation as presented in a particular musical style’ (p. 44).

Here, it is obvious that the starting point of his theory is the sound organisation. In that he finds a basis for aesthetic meaning in the comprehension of normative sound structures, Meyer’s idea may be said to be close to ‘structural hearing’ such as Salzer’s. However, there are some differences between them. Firstly, the former is based on the surface of sound features, the latter on the deep structure. In this respect, Meyer seems to provide a model of musical understanding more conformable to the reality of listening than that of Salzer. More importantly, Meyer turns his attention to the force of culture and learning in the formation of the norms. For him, the sound organisation is never an a priori principle for musical meaning, as in case of the *Urfonie*, but rather a posteriori one, namely, a cultural and psychological construction.<sup>11</sup>

In stressing the significance of context, which we may call the environment, Meyer presents a perspective to enlarge the range of musical meaning, and to explain the variability of it. In more recent studies of musical meaning, the focus has been gradually shifted from a pure musical perspective towards the environment of musical experience. Here we can see two main topics in these studies. One is the cultural and historical environment, and another the psychological and cognitive environment.<sup>12</sup> Cook illustrates precisely this shift in his review-essay ‘Putting the Meaning back into Music, or Semiotics Revisited’ (1996b). He points out that the earlier attempts of music semiotics, represented by the literature such as *Fondements d’une sémiologie de la musique* (1975) by Nattiez, were ‘heavily influenced by structural linguistics and embodied a strong impulse towards formalization’ (p. 106). However, Cook maintains that the semiotic approach should have a potential to explore not only the syntactical but also the semantic field of music. It is as examples of such a broader perspective to

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<sup>11</sup> In his recent book, Meyer argues that human behaviour and, therefore, musical styles are constrained physically, biologically, psychologically, and culturally. See 1996: 8-23.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Swain suggests that the ‘variable but bounded’ semantic range may be explained well by a model resembling that developed in perceptual theory, namely, by the ‘feedback or circular relationship’ between the ‘contextually-oriented’ semantics and ‘stimulus-oriented’ semantics (1996: 140).



musical meaning that he considers Robert Hatten's *Musical Meaning in Beethoven* (1994), and Eero Tarasti's *A Theory of Musical Semiotics* (1994).<sup>13</sup> Considering these two books along the lines of Cook's review, we will survey these two approaches enlarging the range of musical meaning.

### *In Cases of Hatten and Tarasti*

One of Hatten's tools is the concept of 'expressive genres', which is based on the concept of 'topic' that has been developed by Leonard Ratner and Kofi Agawu.<sup>14</sup> This concept refers to the culturally formed 'correlation' between musical features and images. Hatten's expressive genre is more abstract than Ratner's topic. It is determined by style (high/middle/low) and mode (major/minor). The combination of both elements generates, for example, the 'buffo', 'galant', 'tragic', and 'pastoral' styles, and the transition from one to another also produces 'expressive genetic schemata' such as 'heroic epic' and 'religious drama'.<sup>15</sup> Another tool is the concept of 'markedness', an asymmetrical valuation that inevitably occurs when we grasp things by means of the form of opposition, and functions like the foreground opposed to the background.<sup>16</sup> It is not fixed but changes contextually. That is, a certain marked feature at a certain situation may become unmarked in the next situation, and vice versa. The constellations of the marked and unmarked make the basic character of the expressive genre more delicate and elaborated. With the interaction of cultural and cognitive semantics, he attempts to explain the growth process of musical meanings in Beethoven's music.

In terms of examining possible associations with sound structure in eighteenth-century European culture, Hatten seems to achieve his aim successfully. He

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<sup>13</sup> In his review of Tarasti's book, Monelle also contrasts 'the tough positivistic stance of Nattiez's *Fondements*' with 'Tarasti's inventive hermeneutic approach' (1996: 147).

<sup>14</sup> See Ratner 1980 and Agawu 1991. Ratner defines *topics* as 'characteristic figures' that are associated with various feelings and affections, or that have a picturesque flavour (p. 9). He adduces important topics in Classic music, such as minuet, march, military and hunt music, singing style, brilliant style, Turkish music, storm and stress, and fantasia (pp. 9-29). Agawu develops the concept of topic further in Chapter 2 of his book, where he lists 27 topics for analysing Classic music.

<sup>15</sup> For Hatten's notion of 'expressive genre', see 1994, Chapter 3.

<sup>16</sup> As a familiar example of markedness, he mentions that caused by the opposition between major and minor. See 1994, Chapter 2.

provides a ‘moderate and sensible’, to borrow Cook’s expression, explanation about meaning other than the purely musical. However, what Hatten offers seems, once again, to be an explanation of meaning in terms of *sound structure*. Explaining the aim of his markedness theory, Hatten says, ‘What is proposed by a semiotic theory of markedness is the grounding of musical relationships in the cultural universes of their conception, in order to address the expressive significance of formal structure in a richer way’ (p. 66). Pointing out Hatten’s absolutist attitude, Cook writes ‘Hatten seeks to add an expressive dimension to analytical practice’ (1996b: 112). Here we can see a possibility of developing Hatten’s theory further: to examine the cultural and historical environment of factors other than the formal structure. For example, we may talk about other aspects of sound, such as the timbre, density, and texture. And there are many other factors functioning in the musical phenomenon. We may take into consideration also the conceptions around music itself, such as the work of music, the creative composer, and the history of music. The prevailing ways of thinking about musical phenomena are definitely one of the most vital forces that construct musical meanings.

While Hatten attempts to ground his theory of musical meaning on culturally formed correlations, Tarasti turns to a more cognitive aspect of musical meaning. He aims at demonstrating the cognitive reality of musical narrativity on an objective basis of sound structure. Firstly, he analyses musical events into three dimensions: spatiality, temporality, and actoriality. The interaction of features in each dimension, according to him, produces the modalities of music, such as ‘being’, ‘doing’, ‘will’, ‘can’, ‘must’ and ‘know’. And it is the combinations of these modalities which construct musical narrativity. Although musical modality has been discussed by such scholars as Coker 1972, their works are sometimes criticised as being too subjective or too simplistic. Therefore, Tarasti attempts to ground musical modality in the contextual cognition of the formal features of music, in order to meet the requirements of objectivity and complexity. He explains his intention as follows.

...let us repeat that modalities are not invented or introduced unexpectedly, without objective, empirical bases in the text itself. It is the temporal, spatial, and actorial articulations on the previous level of the generative course, that, so to

speak, produce the modalities or allow them to emerge. It might be tempting to try studying the prefigurements of modalities on a concrete and detailed level in the musical discourse.... But such an enterprise might lead to a ‘dictionary’ of modalities whose validity would certainly be questionable, because the modalities are first and foremost of a contextual nature. (1994: 288)

What is remarkable in Tarasti’s book is that he attempts to ground our aesthetic experience from a listener-oriented point of view. It is a fact that we sometimes feel as if music narrates something, as if music talks to us. By placing cognitively/aesthetically constructed images and ideas at the centre of the musical meaning, Tarasti is successful in approaching the issue of aesthetic meaning directly. In spite of his effort, however, his aim of objectively theorising modality seems to be not very successful. Cook points out this: ‘The trouble is that these linkages [between specific musical features and emotions] do not seem to be very tight’ (1996b: 115). Cook’s criticism is addressed not to Tarasti’s characterisation of musical events itself, but to the way of grounding it. When Tarasti seeks to ground musical narrativity in its formal features, even though not in the absolute sound structure, we cannot but feel a kind of uncomfortableness in his explanation. For instance, Cook questions Tarasti’s analysis of Liszt’s *Vallée d’Obermann*: ‘why should the *omission* of the “frustrating” D#/E ♭ at the end of the piece contribute to portraying the frustration of Sénancour’s hero?’ (1996b: 116). Here we may be suspicious of explaining the narrativity of music only in terms of the formal features. ‘Music’s autonomous structure’, says Kerman, ‘is only one of many elements that contribute to its import’ (1985: 73). If we actually feel as if music narrates and we cannot completely consent to Tarasti’s explanation, there would be something wrong in the way of his explanation. Namely, we should re-examine his basic strategy of grounding musical signification: sound—structure—meaning.

As I have shown in Chapter 1, musical structure is not always a perceptual fact, but rather a cultural representation or myth constructed in the theoretical perspective. When both the structure and narrativity are myths, we may wonder whether there is any necessity to consider the former as the cause and the latter as the result; whether they emerge from, as it were, the polymorphism of a certain arrangement of sounds. Specifically, I should like to suggest 1) that the perceptual reality of sound arrangement would lay the foundations of aesthetic experience; 2) that musical structure is constructed in the theoretical perspective and the musical narrativity in the

imaginative; 3) that the former may ground a part of the latter, but never the whole of it; and 4) that structure and narrativity are not in a causal relationship, but rather in a parallel one. From these considerations, we would be able to conclude that in order to ground the aesthetic meaning of music we need to examine the process of transformation from sounds, not from the formal structure, to narrative and other imaginary constructions. This process should be made active by means of some cognitive and imaginary perspectives, which are different from theoretical, poetic, and even cultural ones.

Hatten and Tarasti are both basically absolutist in their attitude, as has been shown. Because the basis for their theories, the musical structure, is an already highly elaborated story, it cannot provide a good ground for all kinds of aesthetic meaning. In saying this, I do not mean that all semiotic studies are absolutist. In the respect that they focus on other kinds of meaning than music alone, their methodologies are highly suggestive. Through examining their theories, we can find two directions to broaden the range of musical meaning: firstly, cultural and historical stories around music, and secondly, cognitive and imaginative stories around sound. However, in so far as it is the science of sign and text, its main concern will stay in the realm of sound itself. Since our listening experience starts from perceiving tones, exploring the realm of sound should be one of the important tasks for the theory of musical meaning. Yet the construction of meaning does not become possible only by sound itself, as we have seen before. If we take only musical sound into consideration, we will not go beyond the realm of 'music alone', after all. In so far as understanding the term *music* as the pure sound structure is concerned, the famous phrase by Stravinsky surely hit the mark:

...I consider that music is, by its very nature, essentially powerless to *express* anything at all, whether a feeling, an attitude of mind, a psychological mood, a phenomenon of nature, etc.... *Expression* has never been an inherent property of music. That is by no means the purpose of its existence. If, as is nearly always the case, music appears to express something, this is only an illusion and not a reality. (1990: 53)

I should like to focus on the very illusion, as Stravinsky terms it, in our aesthetic experience. This illusion, which has often been a focus of suspicion, would be the very

meaning that we construct in the ordinary circumstances of our listening. Thus, I should proceed towards the problem how the field of this illusion is opened up.

## Chapter 3

### Metaphorical Conceptualisation of Music

#### 1. The Metaphorical Nature of Human Cognition

##### *Towards Aesthetic Reality*

So far we have discussed how the aesthetic meaning of music is constructed intentionally, culturally, and multi-dimensionally. Now we turn to searching for a way to analyse this aesthetic meaning. First of all, such analysis must reveal how sound is transformed into meaning in a particular environment. As we have seen in the previous chapters, listening to music is not only a matter of processing the sonic information, but also of weaving various images and concepts around the sound. The transformation of sound into meaning has been discussed by many aesthetically-based scholars in terms of imagination or fantasy.<sup>1</sup> Although imagination is an important concept in highlighting the creativity of the aesthetic experience, I would prefer to avoid it here. For this term may easily lead us to the traditional attitude of distancing aesthetic from ordinary experiences, unreal from real, and intuition from reflection.<sup>2</sup> This does not mean that I ignore the difference between imagination and thought, and deny the freedom of the imaginative world. However, as seen in the previous chapter, detaching the aesthetic from its environments obscures some important aspects of it. In order to investigate these aspects, I should like to begin by charting the transition from the ordinary to the imaginative, without assuming that the latter must be consigned to an autonomous and unworldly realm<sup>3</sup> for the latter. Insofar as we are surely moved by

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<sup>1</sup> Imagination also seems to be a key concept in a new trend of musicology. It may be said that a main purpose of new musicology is to demonstrate that from the socio-cultural point of view, music 'is more fantasized than heard' (Kramer 1995: xiii).

<sup>2</sup> One basis of such an attitude might be Kant's *Einbildungskraft*. For Kant, imagination is the ability intuitively to see an object in its absence. Although he attempts to create a bridge between imagination and reason, including perception and memory, in the end he categorises imagination as the opponent of the logos. We can find a similar attitude also in Collingwood and Scruton. See Collingwood 1938, Chapters 10 & 11; Scruton 1974, Part II.

<sup>3</sup> This phrase is after Kramer 1995: 16-17.

music and feel something, the aesthetic experience is not a mere illusion but an actual fact, that is, the aesthetic reality.

In recent decades, rethinking the idea of the reality has also become an urgent task in the natural sciences. Research into human cognition, in particular, has demonstrated the shortcoming of the traditional, static view of reality. The affordance theory of James Gibson may be considered the most outstanding attempt to propose an alternative. Although there have as yet been only a few musicological studies directly adopting such an approach,<sup>4</sup> it is certainly reflected in music psychology.<sup>5</sup> Presenting a neurological model of perceiving music, for example, Carroll-Phelan and Hampson (1996) stress the necessity for an ‘associative’ memory subsystem in the processing of musical stimuli.

Stimuli in any modality are capable of triggering vast amounts of associated information. In the case of musical stimuli, these will range from factual and nominal association to more personal, idiosyncratic and emotional ones. Suppose one is listening to Chopin’s Nocturne No.15 in F Minor. During this activity, a wide variety of cognitive and affective processes could be brought to bear, ranging from recall of the name and identity of the tune, awareness of the Polish origin of the composer, specific episodic memories of piano lessons when a child, emotional responses to the piece, and so on. Thus...we take this subsystem to include both semantic and episodic associations. (pp. 549-550)

Dibben also suggests the importance of associative representation in atonal music: ‘It seems likely that associational properties of the music play a far greater role in the formation of structural representations’ (1994: 25). Differentiating the mental reality from the physical one, Agmon maintains that the former never completely ‘fall within’

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<sup>4</sup> However the recent computer-oriented music research, based on connectionism, is closely connected with the newest result of neuroscience. Cf. Leman 1992. As an example of adopting Gibsonian ecology, see Kaipainen 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Such an attitude is in line with the phenomenological critique of psychologism. Clifton clearly points out the limitation of the empirical approach: ‘Strict empiricism concerns itself either with physically existing individuals or with an interpretation of perception based on sense data or sense impressions. Such a theory formulates a restricted definition of experience, since it chooses not to account for memory, anticipation, feeling, values, or a host of other nonphysical and nonsensory constituents of experience’. (1983: 15)

the latter, although both correspond in some way. He argues that the correspondence between the domains is very little in the case of music: 'Musical reality ... is not constrained to reflect physical reality consistently. Physical reality, therefore, is much less of an issue at its higher levels'. (1990: 287)

Thus our target would become the mechanism of the 'associative representation', the logic of the 'musical reality', which would be involved with a cognitive stage beyond mere perception. As such a complicated stage, Gerald M. Edelman (1989), a famous neuroscientist, presents the comprehensive notion of 'higher-order consciousness', which assimilates also cultural norms and individual imagination. According to him, conceptual categorisation needs, at least, capacities of perceptual categorisation, long-term memory and learning; and it 'goes far beyond perceptual categorisation' (p. 142). In using the term 'concept', he does not imply only 'mental images' or 'language of thought', but also a capacity to 'connect one perceptual categorisation to another even in the absence of the stimuli that triggered these categorisations' (p. 141). He explains this further:

Concept formation requires the capacity to deal with relations, a capacity that needs to include many abstract spatial and temporal cues. Above all, these relations are varied. They include those based on immediate perceptual categorisation, on bodily and external events, on motion in relation to time and space, on feeling, and memory. The categorisations and generalisations reflected in concepts are much richer, more abstract, and therefore less immediate than those seen in perceptual categorisation. They may involve the memory of much earlier or more distant events, various degrees of explicit quantitative difference, analogy..., and less than immediate reference to various objects. Concepts may involve judgements made in absence—judgements made about classifications of stimuli long past. (p. 142)

The idea of 'judgements made in absence' is a key element in constructing aesthetic reality. When listening to music, we connect factual sound events with absent things and events such as other sounds in the same or a different piece of music, composers' intentions, dramatic scenes, feelings and various images. Thus, in the next section, we will see how we connect things and events 'in the absence of the stimuli', that is, how the system of human conceptual categorisation works.



### *Cognitive System and Metaphor*

The word ‘conceptualisation’ might sound too intellectual to be treated as a key term of aesthetic reality. It sometimes refers to a rational and theoretical attitude, as opposed to ordinary musical listening. For example, in his book *Music and Conceptualisation* (1995), Mark DeBellis maintains that ‘the way an ordinary listener, untrained in music theory, hears music is nonconceptual’, whereas the hearing of trained music analysts is typically ‘conceptual and theory-laden’ (p. 1). For him, ‘conceptualisation’ means the structural interpretation of musical events in the manner of music theorists such as Schenker or Lerdahl and Jackendoff. Although this is surely a way of conceptualising music, I will use the terms ‘concept’ and ‘conceptualisation’ in a broader manner. In the following part, these terms will be used, as in Edelman’s book, to refer to any way of categorising events and things in terms of our own rational and imaginative world. Thus we can say that ‘conceptualisation’ is a basic framework of human experience. In the field of cognitive linguistics, in fact, the notion of ‘concept’, in its broader sense, has played an important role. In *The Body in the Mind* (1987), Mark Johnson explains the difference between the classical view and the recent view of ‘concept’, as follows.

On the classical view, concepts exist by themselves, objectively. They are characterised only by their relation to states of affairs in the real world, or possible world. They are thus independent of any imaginatively structured way of conceiving a domain of human experience. Empirical studies indicate, on the contrary, that most human concepts are defined and understood only within conceptual frameworks that depend on the nature of human experience in given cultures. Such concepts are neither universal nor objective in any sense acceptable within the classical view. (pp. xi-xii)

What I should like to discuss here is, of course, not ‘objective’ concepts on the classical view but ‘experiential’ or ‘metaphorical’ concepts.

One of the earliest works giving much attention to the metaphorical nature of our conceptual systems is George Lakoff and Mark Johnson’s *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). The most striking point of this work is found in their claim that our act of conceptualisation of the world is fundamentally ‘metaphorical’ in nature.

The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of the intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor. (p. 3)

Based on expressions in everyday language, they demonstrate that the basic structure of our thought and action is metaphorical. For example, as clues for our way of understanding 'the mind', they adduce the following statements. (p. 27)

We're still trying to *grind out* the solution to this question.

My mind just isn't *operating* today.

Boy, the wheels *are turning* now!

I'm *a little rusty* today.

We've been working on this problem all day and now we're *running out of steam*.

In these sentences, they find a metaphor that structures the notion of the mind: 'The mind is a machine'. On the other hand, the mind is understood also by another metaphorical structure: 'The mind is a brittle object'. From this metaphor, the next statements come out. (p. 28)

Her ego is very *fragile*.

You have to *handle him with care* since his wife's death.

He *broke* under cross-examination.

She is *easily crushed*.

The experience *shattered* him.

I'm *going to pieces*.

His mind *snapped*.

What is important here is to see that these expressions are not just a matter of language. Unreflectively and perhaps unconsciously, we think of the mind 'as having an on-off state, a level of efficiency, a productive capacity, and internal mechanism, a source of energy, and an operating condition' or as something likely to fall to pieces or 'cause dangerous consequences' (p. 28). That is, both metaphors are models embedded in the operation of the mind in our ordinary life. In Johnson's formulation, a metaphor 'is a process of human understanding by which we achieve meaningful experience that we can make sense of', enabling us to 'understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of another domain of *a different kind*' (1987:15). To understand something, therefore, does not mean to perceive external reality in objective terms,<sup>6</sup> but rather to find metaphorical correspondences between it and other things.

The above mentioned examples concern metaphorical mapping within our conceptual systems. They illustrate that a concept is enriched by interaction with other concepts. Therefore, we may say that concepts rely on each other for their development. But this raises a question about the origin of these concepts. By way of addressing this problem, Lakoff and Johnson suggest that 'the prime candidates for concepts that are understood directly are the simple spatial concepts, such as UP' (p. 56). In line with this idea, Johnson (1987) has further developed a theory of the emergence of concepts. He proposes that our concept systems are based on the recurrent abstract structure of our perceptual and bodily activities. He calls these recurring patterns 'image schemata': he exemplifies that the *verticality* schema emerges from our daily experiences concerning up-down orientation.

We grasp this structure of verticality repeatedly in thousands of perceptions and activities we experience every day, such as perceiving a tree, our felt sense of standing upright, the activity of climbing stairs, forming a mental image of a flagpole, measuring our children's heights, and experiencing the level of water rising in the bathtub. (p. xiv)

Although these experiences appear totally different, they can be categorised into

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<sup>6</sup> Sweetser discusses this problem in the context of mediating between objectivism and subjectivism: 'Since such metaphorical connections are not based on objective similarities, my understanding of meaning cannot be an objectivist one. But neither is it subjectivist: rather, I assume that the real world exists, but our only access to it is through our experience, both physical and cultural'. (1990: 13)

one domain because of the structure of verticality common to them. This categorisation could include not only bodily activities themselves, but also their associations. For instance, activities concerning *up* may result in reaching a dangerous, gratifying, or bright place. On the other, *down* activities may be accompanied with a feeling of secureness, inferiority, or darkness. Thus, the concept *up* can be formed, based firstly on bodily experiences but accommodating these mental images. These bodily and mental elements connect the concept *up* with other activities not directly related to verticality, such as happiness or excitement.<sup>7</sup> In this way, networks of concepts become more and more complicated and enriched.<sup>8</sup>

In that image schemata—recurring structures of our bodily experiences—provide us with the foundations of our conceptual systems, our way of understanding the world is, at least, at its very initial stage prescribed by our biological and physical capacities. However, image schemata work only at the basic level. More complex and rich mappings are carried out under the influence of cultural conventions and within the realms of individual imagination. Lakoff and Johnson point out the diversity of such metaphorical conceptualisation. They see, on the one hand, the value systems of a culture as ‘the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture’ (1980: 22). On the other hand, there are also such metaphors as ‘are outside our conventional conceptual system’ and ‘are imaginative and creative’ (ibid.: 139). That is to say, our act of constructing meaning is mediated biologically, culturally and individually. We should pay attention here to the fact that the boundaries between biological, cultural, and individual realms are not clearly determined, but rather vague. Lakoff and Johnson deny that there is ‘a clear distinction between directly [bodily] emergent and metaphorically emergent concepts’, or that ‘every concept must be one or the other’; no concept ‘purely emergent nor purely metaphorical’. Rather, they suggest that a concept ‘appears to have a directly emergent core that is elaborated metaphorically’ (1980: 69). This would be also true of the relationship between the culture and the individual: no interpretation can be either purely cultural and

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<sup>7</sup> For a wide range of meanings concerning the image schema of *up-down*, see Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 14-21.

<sup>8</sup> For the detailed discussion of the mechanism of the emergence of concepts from image schemata, see Johnson 1987, Chapters 2, 3, and 4. Gibbs and Colston 1995 attempts to demonstrate the cognitive reality of image schemata.

conventional or purely individual and imaginative. That is to say, the metaphor, the mechanism of our understanding, is a compound made up of our physical ability, learning capacity and creative imagination.

There are other important aspects that Lakoff and Johnson mention as the nature of the metaphor. Among them, the following two principles are important in our context: ‘coherence’ and ‘highlighting and hiding’. Firstly, ‘coherence’ has a close relation with the fact that experience and concepts are essentially ‘multidimensional’ in structure. For example, think about the metaphor ‘Argument is war’. This metaphor, say Lakoff and Johnson, suggests that our experience of *argument* has the following dimensions in common with the concept of *war*: participants, paths, stages, linear sequence, causation, and purpose. (Argument can bear the phases of having a position, planning strategy, conflicts, attack, defence, retreat, and victory.) Metaphorical statements based on these principles<sup>9</sup> will generally not be ‘consistent’, in the sense that they do not mention the same thing. However, neither will they conflict with each other; rather, they ‘fit together’ to construct the metaphorical concept ‘Argument is war’ (in Lakoff and Johnson’s term, they are ‘coherent’ with one another). In other words, the metaphorical conception gives a structure and, therefore, coherence to our diverse experiences: it forms experiential gestalts that are ‘multidimensional structured wholes’ (p.81).

The multidimensionality of our experience is closely related to the second principle to which I referred the ‘partial nature’ of metaphorical conceptualisation. For example, the metaphor ‘Argument is war’ does not talk about all aspects of our experience of argument, but about only part of it. Lakoff and Johnson explain: ‘In allowing us to focus on one aspect of a concept (e.g., the battling aspects of arguing), a metaphorical concept can keep us from focusing on other aspects of the concept that are inconsistent with that metaphor’ (p. 10). Thus, conceptualisation is always accompanied by the highlighting of some particular aspects and the hiding of others. This partial nature of cross-domain mapping implies that our way of understanding the world is itself always partial. ‘A human being’, to borrow Mark Turner’s literary expression, ‘does not have a God’s-eye view. A human being has always only a single

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<sup>9</sup> For example, Lakoff and Johnson mentions the following sentences: ‘Your claims are indefensible’, ‘He attacked every weak point in my argument’, ‘His criticisms were right on target’, ‘I demolished his argument’, etc. (1980: 4)

view, which is always local' (1996: 116). This localisation of our understanding provides a good explanation of the plurality and fluidity of meaning. Since our view is always local, we have always the chance of discovering previously unseen aspects or structures of any object or situation.

### *Blended Space and Emergent Structure*

The mechanism of partial mapping has been further investigated by Mark Turner and Gilles Fauconnier. They present the notion of the 'conceptual blend' to theorise metaphorical mappings in detail.<sup>10</sup> Whereas in Lakoff and Johnson's theory 'metaphor carries structure from one conceptual domain (a source) directly to another (a target)', their new 'many-space' model consists of two input spaces (source and target) and two 'middle spaces'. One is 'a generic space, which contains skeletal structure that applies to both input spaces', and the other is 'a blended space, which is a rich space integrating, in a partial fashion, specific structure from both of the input spaces' (Turner and Fauconnier 1995: 183-184). The point of this new model exists in the 'blended space'. To illustrate this notion, they mention an event such as 'a catamaran in 1993 is trying beat the record sailing time from San Francisco to Boston set by a clipper in 1853' (p. 185). They analyse this event in the following way.

A newspaper reports that as it went to press, the catamaran was 'barely maintaining a 4.5 day lead' over the clipper. We showed that this formulation could not refer to either of the actual runs in 1853 or in 1993, but had to combine them in a new counterfactual mental space in which both boats are sailing simultaneously. We called such a space *a blended space*. It is only in this blended space that 'maintaining a lead' could make sense. In each of the actual runs there was only one boat, and thus, there was not even the possibility of a lead. But in the blend, it does make sense to compare the relative positions of the boats as a single time; this comparison provides true information about the two original runs. The blend does much more than just make the positions easy to compare. We find that the blend is structured by a frame that was absent from the two input spaces and is not a logical consequence of their composition—a match race between contestants over a single course with a winner and a loser. (p. 185)

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<sup>10</sup> For the definition of 'blend', see also Fauconnier 1997, Chapter 6.

The important points are that the blended space is formed in terms of partial elements of each input space, and that these elements form new relations that are absent from the original input spaces (e.g. ‘a match race’). Fauconnier calls this newly formed relation ‘emergent structure’ (1997: 150). ‘This emergent structure’, says Fauconnier, ‘is not in the inputs—it is part of the cognitive construction in the blend’ (p. 170). That is to say, blending does not mean a mere extraction of structures common to both input spaces nor a simple juxtaposition of several elements in the input spaces, but rather integration of partial aspects of the input spaces to generate new meanings. Fauconnier stresses that the emergent structure can be often ‘counterfactual’. In line with Lakoff and Johnson’s notion of the metaphorical concept, he says that “‘Fictivity’ is a crucial component of cognition and shapes everyday thought—scientific and artistic alike’ (p. 164).

With the idea of conceptual blending, we can analyse more precisely what happens in the phenomenon that we previously called ‘metaphorical transfer’. The individual metaphorical statement is a description of the blended space. The creativity of metaphorical transfer is clearly demonstrated in terms of the emergent structure. And we can say that the conceptual system is a certain relationship between the input spaces and the emergent structure that is fixed by culture and learning. Although it is remarkable that the notion of blending offers such clear definitions, it brings us to a more important issue: it demonstrates clearly that meaning is constructed already behind language, rather than being articulated with it. First blending occurs, and then its emergent structure is partially described by language. Although language may be the clearest mirror to reflect the process of cognition, it can reflect only the surface of the act of conceptualisation and there always remain unmentioned factors and structures in the blended space. (It is because of these still latent factors that any metaphor may have innumerable alternative expressions). In this way a sentence such as ‘Argument is war’ is not itself a metaphorical concept a label to describe the mental space of the metaphor; language merely provides the clues to investigate a certain cognitive act in a given situation.<sup>11</sup>

This conclusion, however, should not be taken as indicating the impossibility of our exploring the realm of cognition. On the contrary, we have the useful map at hand:

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<sup>11</sup> For the difference between the traditional linguistics and cognitive linguistics, see Preface of Fauconnier 1994.

we need to find out what are the input spaces, which elements connect them, which elements are blended together, and what new structure is formed in the blend. Moreover, we know that we will be able to reach at least hypothetical answers to these questions through the careful investigation of linguistic statements.

## 2. Searching Conceptual Systems about Music

### *Critical and Theoretical Discourses on Music*

It may be said that the listening experience is not a good object to investigate, for it is a very individual matter, always fluctuating and relating to many factors in a complex way. Moreover, the most severe difficulty is caused by the fact that the listening experience cannot be observed directly from the outside. From the standpoint of a psychologist, Sloboda mentions this difficulty:

When I go to a symphony concert or listen to a gramophone record there may well be a lot of *mental* activity, but there is not necessarily any observable physical activity. The principal end-product of my listening activity is a series of fleeting, largely uncommunicable mental images, feelings, memories, and anticipations. When trying to understand what happens during music listening, the psychologist, therefore, is at a considerable disadvantage. (1985: 151)

However, cognitive science suggests a way to approach hidden mental activity: through uttered and written language, which reveals the structure of metaphorical conceptualisation resulting from blends between mental spaces. Accordingly, it is very likely that the discourse around avant-garde music will provide useful clues about its aesthetic conceptualisation. By 'discourse', I refer to every kind of verbal description, including concert reviews and CD notes as well as theoretical study and analysis. Before moving on to the analysis of such discourses, however, I should like to think about the validity of discourse analysis in investigating the aesthetic meaning of music.

There has been a tradition of distrusting criticism in musical aesthetics and theory. It was and still is a widespread idea that language cannot tell the essence of the musical work, or that the significance of music subsists in a realm beyond what language can



articulate.<sup>12</sup> Although it is beyond the scope of this section to discuss the origin and development of such views, we can say at least that they have been reinforced by formalism since the end of the nineteenth century. Condemnation of cliché-based criticism is found in Hanslick, as mentioned in Chapter 2, and in Schenker and Schoenberg as well.<sup>13</sup> Even though they drew upon the grammatical aspect of the language, they never considered its metaphorical nature. Bent observes that in the formalistic tradition description and metaphor were conceived to be confused, and quotes a symbolic phrase written by Hans Keller in 1956: ‘The descriptive is senseless, the metaphorical usually nonsense’ (ed. 1994: i, p. xi).

Joseph Kerman raised an objection against this deep-rooted view in his *Contemplating Music* (1985). Criticising the positivistic tradition in musicology, he expresses the restoration of music criticism, of ‘a kind of musicology oriented towards criticism’ (p. 19).<sup>14</sup> Interpreting this project in a radical manner, Lawrence Kramer, one of the key figures in the so-called ‘New’ musicology, attempts to reveal the ‘immediacy-effects of music’ by critical and metaphorical description:

...what we call musical experience needs to be systematically rethought, ...the horizons of our musical pleasure need to be redrawn more broadly, and...the embeddedness of music in networks of nonmusical forces is something to be welcomed rather than regretted. Those projects can only be achieved through modes of hermeneutic and historical writing that are always also critical...: modes of writing that, while conceding and indeed affirming their own ‘rhetorical’ and ‘subjective’ character, rigorously seek to position musical experience within the

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<sup>12</sup> For example, Daverio reports that Schumann, as a critic, said little about Beethoven’s late works, and presumes that this was because of his attitude to the verbal description of music. Schumann wrote in *NZfM* in 1838 that ‘no words can be found’ for the work’s greatness, and that ‘verbal interpretation and explanation can only run around’. (1993: 37)

<sup>13</sup> See Botstein 1997. ‘Since fin de siècle Viennese concertgoers were dependent on routinized extramusical associations, as Schenker observed in 1894, an “unmusical criticism” reigned. An “immorality” dominated musical life. ... Both men [Schenker and Schoenberg] shared a particular contempt for performance practices that obscured musical structure...’. (p. 17)

<sup>14</sup> It should not be forgotten, however, that his purpose was not to replace modern structural analysis with criticism, but rather to find a way of combining them (see 1985: 18-19, 148). In this respect, his viewpoint is different from that of the scholars of ‘New’ musicology, who attempt to deconstruct the positivistic approach to music.

densely compacted, concretely situated worlds of those who compose, perform, and listen. (1995: 17-18)

In focussing upon aspects of music discarded by formal analysis, and stressing the importance of subjective language in musical life, my standpoint is surely closer to that of the new musicology than the positivistic attitude. On the other hand, I do not agree with the former on all points. What I intend by introducing discourse analysis is not a mere restoration of the subjective. Although the claim of New musicology that the objectivity of formal analysis is a mere ideology is well founded, it seems to be forgotten that analysis is itself as metaphorical as critical discourse. Musical analysis is one way of metaphorising sounds, and music criticism is another. By criticising formalistic discourse, New musicology seems to accept uncritically the traditional dualism that the analysis is scientific and objective while criticism is imaginative and subjective. However, as we have seen in the previous sections, this very dualism has prevented us from seeing an important part of aesthetic meaning. It may be said that critical discourse has been under an unfair accusation of being ‘metaphorical’ and never able to reach the essence of music. On the other hand, if it were seen as having gained access to musical meaning because of its metaphoricity, this would equally be unfair praise. Both criticism and theory have their limitations; they represent different modes of conceptualisation. What is to be criticised is not the act of analysing music itself but the myth that it is the only way to reach the true content of the musical work.

### *Discourse as the Trace of Aesthetic Conceptualisation*

Now we acknowledge all kinds of discourse as metaphorical. However, questions still remain. Is discourse really a relevant means of approaching musical meaning? How far can we trust language? To answer these questions, we need remember the *intentionality of aesthetic meaning*. What is musical meaning depends on how we conceptualise a series of sounds as music. Language can only partly represent what and how a piece of music is. But what it does reveal is how the listener understands the music, or constructs the sounds as music. And while different listeners will use different words, there may be coherent structures between what they say. Insofar as it represents the trace of metaphorical blending in the writer’s mind, discourse about music is a valuable means for investigating the latent constellations of sound, imagination and environment.

The validity of discourse analysis has already been demonstrated by recent work in music theory. Since the 1990s, the study of music theory as a mode of conceptualisation has become one of the most stimulating topics within the discipline. Some musicologists attempt to adapt the concepts of metaphorical conceptual system directly to the analysis of music theory. For example, using the concept of image schemata, Janna Saslaw (1996) reinterprets the modulation theory of Hugo Riemann. From the analysis of Riemann's theoretical writings, she suggests that his modulation theory is basically structured by 'source-path-goal' and 'container' schemata, and is characterised by metaphors such as 'Cadential progression is conflict and resolution', 'Return is a smooth path', and 'Modulation is a bumpy path' (pp. 225, 229). She treats these images as 'a significant indication of conceptual and perceptual structures' (p. 236) in Riemann's way of understanding music. And she successfully demonstrates that Riemann's act of talking and theorising about music is the metaphorical conceptualisation of music, and therefore that it highlights certain aspects of music by means of blending between sounds and the concepts of force, container, and path.

Lawrence M. Zbikowski (1997) also discusses the metaphorical nature of music theory and analysis.<sup>15</sup> He compares three analyses of the theme from the first movement of Mozart's piano sonata, K. 331, by Edward Cone, Leonard B. Meyer, and Robert Morgan. He maintains that the discrepancies between these three analyses 'reflect the role played by conceptual models' in their music theory. According to him, Morgan grasps musical organisation through the concept of a 'chain-of-being' hierarchy, and treats the overall structure as the most important musical level. On the other hand, Meyer's analysis starts with the musical surface; this implies that he is thinking in terms of the concept of an 'atomic' hierarchy. Finally, Zbikowski sees Cone's analysis as an example of the blend of these two conceptual models. Based on this analysis, he concludes that the image offered by conceptual systems 'reveals not only those aspects of musical experience that are important to a culture or subculture at a given historical moment, it also gives an indication of what counts as a particularly clear or compelling model for a given writer' (p. 218).

The conceptual system is concerned with not only the elaborated theoretical thinking about music, but also a more general realm. In her essay 'Analytical Fictions'

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<sup>15</sup> For a theoretical discussion about the cognitive nature of music theory, see also Zbikowski 1998.

(1994), Marion Guck argues the metaphoricity of musical analysis itself.<sup>16</sup> Examining analytical writings by Edward Cone, Allen Forte and Carl Schachter, she demonstrates that each of analysts chooses words to animate their fictions about musical works. Cone's fiction is that 'the composer, rather like a novelist, creates a persona whose mental experiences the music depicts' (p. 220). Forte's story is that 'the composer-engineer performs certain acts that combine components/elements to create a musical artefact' (p. 223). And Schachter's story consists of 'the process of expansion, motion toward a center, the tension associated with that motion's interruption', and the close of the passage as 'longing and nostalgia' (p. 226). These observations lead her to the conclusion that music analysis is as much the outcome of analysts' personal involvement with musical works as is music criticism:

music analysts are not simply communicating the musical facts by way of a neutral, transparent language. We choose words, and thereby shape texts in particular ways in order to persuade our readers or listeners...to adopt our way of looking at things. ... Since stories of involvement are unavoidable, each of us needs to consider what story to tell. (pp. 229-30)

Moreover, musical analysis is construed as a cultural myth as well as an analyst's fiction. It is Cook's *Music, Imagination, and Culture* that strikingly exposed the cultural nature of music analysis to view. In the Introduction, he mentions that 'A Schenkerian analysis is not a scientific explanation, but a metaphorical one; it is not an account of how people actually hear pieces of music, but a way of imagining them' (1990: 4). The most remarkable point of his claim is that, neither lapsing into the cul-de-sac of relativism nor into an easy subjectivism, he evaluates musical analysis as what gives our musical culture its identity. Experiencing music as form is far from the objective attitude, but it does not lose its significance in our musical life because it characterises in a very special manner our way of imagining and conceptualising musical sounds. As Marsden and Pople say, 'The existing body of music theory is

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<sup>16</sup> Her former essay, Guck 1981, is also notable in that it raised the question of the 'objective' appearance of music analysis and pointed out the significance of metaphorical description, as early as 1981. She concluded that 'An appropriate metaphor can lead to analyses that describe the multiplicity of patterns in which each event takes part, as well as suggesting how these patterns are related' and that the metaphor has the advantage of expressing complex and sometimes contradictory relations in musical events at once (1981: 41).

essentially a nonformalised cognitive theory' (1989: 30). In this postmodern era, musical analysis, along with other kinds of discourse about music, has reconsidered its claim to objectivity and universality. But it fills the role of narrator instead, telling how we interact with musical sounds in a particular cultural and individual conceptual system.<sup>17</sup>

We are now in a position to conclude this chapter. Any discourse about music—whether theory, analysis, criticism or even scribbles in someone's diary—is the trace of musical conceptualisation. As Cook points out, 'not only formalised theory, but also all other thinking or talking about music, consists of metaphors or fictions' (1990: 242). Of course, it cannot present the complete figure of a musical work. Rather it is always local in dual sense: in the sense of the locality of language, and that of our cognitive system. That is, we can see things only from a particular perspective and, moreover, can describe only a part of the view from that perspective. However, it is this very particularity that constitutes each individual, each society and each culture. To choose something, whether consciously or unconsciously, gives birth to the meaning of the living world. Discourse about music may be said to be the shadow of music itself. From its shape, direction, and colour, however, we can know a lot of things about the sources of the light: where they are, how bright and how distant they are, how many they are, and so on. These matters are sometimes invisible to us when we turn toward the light directly and are blinded by its brightness. To locate the light sources of the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music through analysing discourse—this is the task to be carried out in the next part.

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<sup>17</sup> In ethnomusicology, it is a major premise that writing about music cannot be separated from cultural conventions and personal experiences. Defining the ethnography of music as 'writing about the ways people make music', Anthony Seeger says that 'ethnography is not defined by disciplinary lines or theoretical perspectives, but rather by a descriptive approach to music going beyond the writing down of sounds to the writing down of how sounds are conceived, made, appreciated and influence other individuals, groups, and social and musical processes' (1992: 89). As notable attempts to locate a body of musical theory—or, better still, conceptual system—within insider ('emic') discourse, Seeger adduces Charles Keil's *Tiv Song* (1979), Ruth M. Stone's *Let the Inside Be Sweet* (1982), and Steven Feld's *Sound and Sentiment* (1982; rev. 1990). We can include also Seeger's *Why Suyá Sing* (1987) in the list.

## Part II

## Chapter 4

# The Environment of Avant-garde Music and the Myth of Composing Persona

### 1. The Avant-garde and Modernism

As we have seen in Part I, the traditional aesthetics of music has treated aesthetic meaning from the poiesis-oriented point of view and in a prescriptive manner. In this sense, it may be said that the true aesthetic meaning of any music has not been talked out yet, and now should be re-examined carefully. It is avant-garde music, however, that is most problematic, and under the most pressing necessity of being investigated in the listener-oriented and descriptive attitude. For it is in this music that the contradiction between a prescriptive aesthetics and actual listening experience becomes most emphatic.

I use the term avant-garde music<sup>1</sup> to refer to the Western music of the 1950s and 60s, which was composed under the spirit of exploring new ways of organising the sound material systematically. This spirit appeared in the most concentrated form in the Darmstadt International Summer Courses for New Music.<sup>2</sup> Gianmario Borio summarises the avant-garde movement as follows.

Serial technique, electronic music, mobile and variable forms, new notation,

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<sup>1</sup> For the origin and usages of the term *avant-garde*, see Dahlhaus trans. 1987: 14-22; Borio 1993: 8-22.

<sup>2</sup> The courses started in 1946 under the direction of Wolfgang Steinecke. They were held annually up to 1970, and now every two years. We can know the outline of the activity through the journal *Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik*. The most important composers in the course contributed also to *Die Reihe*, which was published by Universal Edition from 1955 to 1962. Its English version was published from 1958 to 1968. In 1996, the course celebrated the fiftieth anniversary, and books and articles that recall and re-examine its history appeared. The following are the most comprehensive among them: *Von Kranichstein zur Gegenwart: 50 Jahre Darmstädter Ferienkurse*, ed. Internationalen Musikinstituts Darmstadt, Stuttgart: DACO Verlag, 1996; Gianmario Borio & Hermann Danuser (eds.), *Im Zenit der Moderne: Die Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik Darmstadt 1946-1966*, 4 vols, Freiburg: Rombach, 1997.

instrumental theatre and speech compositions involved taking leave of the past's reservoir of knowledge and the creation of a culture of music-making and hearing based on foundations that were completely new. (1996: 368)

Avant-garde music was a proving ground of compositional techniques, musical thinking, and aesthetics after the collapse of European bourgeois culture resulting from World War II.

It was Olivier Messiaen's *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*, which was composed in 1949 in Darmstadt, that opened the new era of the post-war generation. This piece, which organises non-pitch parameters such as duration, dynamics, and attack in a modal manner, stimulated young composers such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Boulez and Luigi Nono to embark on total-serialism. It attracted the composers, on the one hand, because it gave them the means to organize parameters other than pitch systematically; and, on the other hand, because it was also the means to determine the process of composition automatically. That is to say, total organisation by the series and automatism in composition are two sides of the same coin. For the avant-gardists, the automatism meant the possibility to go beyond their historically formed consciousness and to open a new field of expression. Boulez, for example, planned to give his first total-serial piece *Structures I* the subtitle 'At the edge of the fertile land', borrowing the title of a painting by Paul Klee. In addition to the interest in automatism, the impact of the American composer John Cage's use of chance procedures led the avant-garde composers to turn to aleatory music and mobile form. The devotion to the radical experiments on musical language itself, however, brought about the problem of the absence of communication. Therefore, in the mid-1960s and the 1970s, the focus of attention shifted gradually from compositional procedure to perceptual effect. This change is reflected by the paradigm shift from modernism to postmodernism. In this way, the avant-garde movement, which had been endorsed by progressivism, was dissolved in the era of plural values.

Avant-garde music seems to refuse all the factors that have been offered as grounds of aesthetic pleasure in traditional discourse. Fluent and pleasant melodies, consonant chords, and well-designed rhythm—these are the very factors that avant-garde music attempts to eliminate from itself. Although European music used to be organised by tonality to achieve the whole structure of departure-development-return, avant-garde music attempts to avoid both this formula



and tonality. It is full of jagged melodies, dissonances and convulsive rhythm. It makes the listener uneasy through the absence of any sense of the return to 'home'. For such music, the traditional aesthetics of music seems unable to provide any theory to explain its aesthetic meaning. From the viewpoint of the connection between sound and feeling, the sonority of avant-garde music is often associated with negative feelings such as fear, anxiety, and unpleasantness. Again, because avant-garde composers attempt to keep their distance from the traditional formula as much as possible, Meyer's theory of expectation-deviation is not very useful. In serial music, the coherence of the whole piece appears to be secured by the series. However, even if a piece of music is composed from a single series, it is almost impossible for the listener to follow the process of the serial transformation.

It is also obvious that structural analysis and the explanation of compositional technique do not provide good grounds for investigating the aesthetic pleasure of avant-garde music. We do not need to repeat here the discussion in Chapter 1 about the difference between poietic and aesthetic meaning. In case of tonal music, as we have seen, it would not be very easy to answer whether the tonal structure is a perceptual reality or not. As regards avant-garde music, however, we can avoid this delicate problem. Even in twelve-tone music, it is clear that we cannot identify the arrangement of pitch series. It is almost impossible even for musicologists to analyse the serial structure of Boulez' and Stockhausen's musical works, even with the score in hand. Moreover, we often cannot distinguish total-serial and aleatory music, when we do not read the comments by composers or critics.<sup>3</sup>

The contradiction between traditional theories and actual experience is so clear that few people have taken the time to examine the nature of its aesthetic meaning thoroughly, as we have attempted in the previous part. Such people rather attempt to explain why avant-garde music betrayed traditional aesthetic principles. The most important and prevailing way of explanation is to see avant-garde music in the context of modern rationalism. It was T. W. Adorno who offered the most sophisticated theory about modernity and modern art, in particular, music. Because it is not necessary for the purpose of this thesis to enter into a detailed discussion of his highly complicated thought, I will give only a bare sketch of its most immediately

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Lachenmann calls avant-garde music in the 1950s 'the kingdom of unheard-of perception', stressing the imperceptibility of avant-garde compositional technique. (1980: 21)

relevant aspects here.<sup>4</sup> The basic conception of his theory is to grasp human activity as a dialectic between nature and rationality, between subjectivity and objectivity. The activity of composing is, firstly, a dialectic between musical material and compositional system. The composer arranges tones according to some pattern to organise the whole piece of music. That is to say, he or she rationalises the musical material. The process is also dialectical at another level: in the composer's mind. Composing can be defined as articulating subjective creative desire into objective forms made up of sounds. In other words, pathos is ordered by logos. Rationalising nature is indispensable for our life, and the basis of all technology, science, and culture, including music.

According to Adorno, however, rationality is a double-edged sword. Originally, the act of rationalisation is a means to make human life more safe, comfortable, efficient, and free. In the era of high modernism, however, rationalisation itself becomes the end: it decays from 'means-rationality' to 'ends-rationality'.<sup>5</sup> The decay of rationality causes the problem of the alienation of the human subject. While we may believe that we control both inner and outer nature by rationality, we are in reality in the contrary situation: our subjectivity is controlled by the demand of rationalisation. This is the 'dialectic of Enlightenment', which is the fate of human beings within modern, technological society. Accordingly Adorno's aim is to resist the decay in rationality to which I have referred.

For Adorno, new music reflects the alienation of the human subject. In his book *Philosophy of Modern Music*, Adorno says as follows: 'Twelve-tone technique is truly the fate of music. It enchains it by liberating it. The subject dominates music through the rationality of the system, only in order to succumb to the rational system itself'. (trans. 1973: 67-68) Nevertheless, he takes sides with New Music, for it does not hide the fact that it is trapped in the dialectics of rationality, so directly showing the listener how rationality invades subjectivity. That is to say, the music does not conceal the decline of rationality by means of smooth, pleasurable sonorities, but

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<sup>4</sup> For a detailed study of Adorno's philosophy of music, see for instance Max Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

<sup>5</sup> For the decay of rationality, see Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* [with Max Horkheimer], trans. J. Cumming, New York: Herder & Herder, 1972.

reveals the true situation of human beings in modern society through its rugged and astringent quality. So Adorno evaluates New Music as 'true', and sets his hopes on its power to criticise the present state of affairs and to break the chains of ends-rationality. He places New Music on the opposite side of a utopia where human races can coexist with rationality, but sees the possibility that, through its negative essence, music may become a force that leads us towards this utopia.

Adorno's theory had a great influence on his contemporaries and the following generation. Most studies of avant-garde art share his standpoint in that they characterise it as an alienated existence, whether they evaluate it positively or not. Peter Bürger, for example, talks about the story of the avant-garde and modernity in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. The following citation from this book seems almost a paraphrase of Adorno's theory.

The avant-gardiste work neither creates a total impression that would permit an interpretation of its meaning nor can whatever impression may be created be accounted for by recourse to the individual parts, for they are no longer subordinated to a pervasive intent. This refusal to provide meaning is experienced as shock by the recipient. And this is the intention of the avant-gardiste artist, who hopes that such withdrawal of meaning will direct the reader's attention to the fact that the conduct of one's life is questionable and that it is necessary to change it. Shock is aimed for as stimulus to change one's conduct of life; it is the means to break through aesthetic immanence and to usher in (initiate) a change in the recipient's life praxis. (trans. 1984: 80)

Going beyond tradition and exploring a new realm is a story that has been told about creative activities of every kind of art in every era. However, in avant-garde art, says Bürger, the rejection of tradition is no longer the means to express artistic originality, but the end of artistic activity. As a result, avant-garde art cannot have any other meaning than giving shock and making people awake.

Antoine Compagnon (1990) also argues that avant-garde art was driven by the modern imperative of pursuing the new. And she mentions another four motives that are derived from this obstinate persistence in the new. They are belief in the future, reliance on theoretical thinking, stripping of the sacredness from high art, and

eagerness for negation.<sup>7</sup> Compagnon says that all of these motives bring about both the significance and the fall of avant-garde art because they are paradoxical in nature. That is to say, in so far as avant-garde art continues to reject tradition and to seek innovation, it is led ultimately into the void of self-negation, at last.

These stories lead to another one: the story of lost subjectivity. For example, Peter Faltin (1979) says that the belief in progress and rationality caused the crisis of music in 1960s. In avant-garde music of the Darmstadt school, according to him, the factor of expressing the inner world of composer's subject is suppressed by rational thinking. And he evaluates the developments of the 1970s as an attempt to restore this lost subjectivity. Helmut Lachenmann has a similar opinion. For him, the world of avant-garde music is centred on the organisation of sound material, and dismisses the act of 'expressing oneself'. Such music, says Lachenmann, 'means only flight, resignation, self-betrayal' (1980: 22).

Attempts to seek the new, the rational, the autonomous, and the progressive resulted in the loss of humanity, subjectivity, and comprehensibility. This is a familiar story of modernism, which appears to explain the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music in place of the story about compositional procedure. We can say that it points out some important factors for understanding this music. Modernism is the *Zeitgeist* that deeply penetrated avant-garde thought. It was, as it were, the environment for the composition of avant-garde music. And it was also the environment of the listener in the 1950s and 60s. Moreover, modernism is still an important factor in today's environment, though it has to some extent changed in the intervening decades. That is to say, while the poetic logic and the aesthetic logic are distant from each other, modernism has a consistent story to tell about both. But it is a story that does not describe properly the actual experience of the listener. We still find that there is a gap between the explanation and our experience. We do not listen to avant-garde music just in order to recognise our alienation of society. Its sonorities

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<sup>7</sup> Compagnon mentions the third motive in consideration of Marcel Duchamp and American pop art. Although this factor applies to Cage and American experimental music, it would not be true of European composers in Darmstadt. They rather seem to pursue elitism radically. As for the fourth, she links it to the issue of deconstruction in postmodernism. However, I think that this motive applies also to modernism because the pursuit of the new necessarily means the negation of what has been done already.

may be harsh and unpleasant but for the listener who receives the music as an aesthetic object, at least, the listening experience is neither inhuman nor intolerable. We listen to avant-garde music because we want to encounter the aesthetic nature that is peculiar to it. It is this specific nature that we need to understand better.

It seems that the gap between modernist art theory and the listening experience originates from two premises. Firstly, modernism latently retains the classical and romantic aesthetics that embodies a happy collaboration of subjectivity and objectivity. That is, instead of questioning the relevance of traditional aesthetics, it almost always sees avant-garde art as straying beyond what a work of art should traditionally be. The harsh and unpleasant sonority of avant-garde music is implicitly compared with the smoothness and beauty of classical music and so treated as a kind of distortion. When self-expression is placed at the core of musical meaning, as in romantic aesthetics, chance music (in which the arrangement of tones is random) is characterised as a withdrawal from meaning. Thus the following question becomes the starting point for criticism: why is avant-garde art so distorted? In this respect, we can say that the modernism story plays its part brilliantly. And it is certain that there are a lot of people who feel avant-garde music to be distorted. From the descriptive point of view, however, it is quite an open question whether the classical aesthetic should be regarded as an ideal, and whether avant-garde music should accordingly be seen as a distortion. In contrast to the prescriptive approach of modernist theory, a descriptive approach might rather mean asking why it is that, when listening to avant-garde music, we do *not* perceive it as the form of distortion that traditional aesthetics would suggest.

The second premise is that social structure determines the meaning of art. This statement itself would not be wrong, but the problem is that it is overemphasized by modernist theory. The social and cultural environment is an important element in the construction of aesthetic meaning, as we have discussed before. But it is only one element contributing to the meaning of music. Moreover, the story of alienation and the restoration of human subjectivity seems to be too complicated and analytical, and too sociological and philosophical. It is the issue of listening to music what we are seeking to consider, not its sociological analysis. In this way, the artistic theories of Adorno, Bürger, and Compagnon are again prescriptive, in the sense that they apply the logic of sociology to aesthetic experience. Their story seems to be more a result

of blending aesthetic experience and sociological and philosophical reflection than a descriptive explanation of the former. That is to say, it represents a sophisticated interpretation constructed after the actual experience of avant-garde art. Our focus of interest, by contrast, is the aesthetic experience itself.

## 2. Construction of Composing Persona

We are now ready to consider the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music from the descriptive point of view. Because we cannot rely on the existing prescriptive stories about this music, we should begin by observing carefully the listening experience in order to find the conceptual systems functioning there. As we have argued in Chapter 3, discourse analysis is the appropriate method for this task. In this section and the next chapter, I will analyse critical discourse about the following pieces of avant-garde music: Boulez's *Structures I* (1951-52) and *Éclat* (1965), Stockhausen's *Piano Piece XI* (1956) and *Kontakte* (1959-60), and Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1957-58) and *Variations I & II* (1958, 61). I take these pieces as my illustrations in consideration of the following points. Firstly, they are well known examples of avant-garde music. This is necessary if we are to collect as many materials about the pieces as possible. Secondly, they represent a variety of compositional style. *Structures I* is one of the earliest pieces that apply total-serialism thoroughly. *Éclat* is an example of aleatoric music. *Piano Piece XI* is famous for its mobile form, while *Kontakte* relates to *Momentform* and the combination of live performance and electronic music. As regards Cage's chance operations, I take three pieces as examples because the number of published statements about the listening impression of his music is limited. Finally, I did not select pieces that have texts, as these readily bring with them associations that may not be directly related to the sonorities, but may control the whole impression of the piece. The materials are mainly from concert reviews in music journals, but include excerpts from notes on CD and analytical studies as well.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> All materials are listed in Appendix. In the following text, the quotation from these materials is designated by the abbreviation in the list with square brackets. When I cite sentences from them, I mark relevant words by bold type.

### *Criticism against Avant-garde Music*

In the first place, I examine some examples that criticise the pieces for their incomprehensibility. Criticising the pieces means that the writers could not construct any aesthetic objects from the musical piece. About Cage's *Variations II*, for example, a writer says that most of listeners 'understood nothing about the long pause at the beginning' [C-V2-1970b]. Another writer confesses that 'I could make nothing of the first of Boulez's *Structures*' [B-S-1965]. Such reactions to avant-garde music would not be very unusual. We should examine what they refer to by saying 'understanding nothing'. Knowing what prevented the listeners from understanding the piece will provide clues to what is required for the construction of aesthetic meaning.

The most hostile criticism seems to come from disbelief in the too complicated method of composition. A writer says cynically, 'Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Klavierstück XI* continues to arouse **interest and curiosity**—partly, to be sure, **because of the way it is printed**' [S-P-1959]. For him, the technique of chance is merely 'esoteric', and does not promise any fertile land for music. A similar tone can be found in a review of Cage's *Variations I*: 'What results from the flight from form and the cult of chance result is nothing more than the discomfort of **this vain search for new forms**, which turns into **grimace and self-ridicule**. The listener would **be amused**, but disappointed' [C-V1-1969]. Their point is that music by Stockhausen and Cage is a mere intellectual play with tones, which might arouse curiosity but does not move the listener as music. It would be easy to cast them off as obstinate traditionalists. In the history of Western music, a new technique is always attended with attack. So, we can finish the discussion by saying that because the paradigm of the writers is different from that of avant-garde they could not understand the musical works at all. However, we should look more carefully at what listening impression is caused by the difference of paradigm.

The writer criticizing Piano Piece XI declares that it is 'overly long, disorganized, and quite dreary' [S-P-1959]. The reviewer of *Variations I* says 'the fragments **appear suddenly**, with explosive loudness, and **without breaking off**' [C-V1-1969]. Both statements indicate that the writers could not articulate the flow of sound into parts interrelated with each other. They could neither organise nor categorise the sound events. Another writer criticises Boulez's *Éclat* for having abandoned 'both

linear interest and rhythmic coherence' [B-E-1966c]. This statement also means that he could not find any relationship among the succeeding sounds. Discontent with the difficulty in articulating sounds is expressed also in the following commentary about Boulez's *Éclat*:

If composition is **the ordering of our experience into meaningful sound**, Boulez does not compose; to offer the Stravinskian doctrine that music gives meaning to time by **enabling us to experience it by filling it with a meaningful pattern**, suggests that he doesn't compose either.... [B-E-1966c]

The issue of meaning is closely tied to the paradigm at work, and what is meaningful in the avant-garde myth is a question that we should take up later. Having noticed that understanding music means, for the reviewers, not a mere perception of a series of tones, but categorizing them into an organised whole, let us turn to the next point.

The following sentence is from a review of Boulez's *Structures I*: 'The impact of this "movement" (on me) was that of a series of nasty explosions, seemingly **without purpose or continuity**, caused by one pianist or another—sounds yielding neither pleasure nor interest' [B-S-1965]. The lack of 'continuity' is related to the problem of organisation, but the term 'purpose' seems to suggest another phase of understanding music. This becomes clearer in the next statement about *Éclat*:

All Boulez's music, except that for piano solo or duet, is to my ear ravishingly beautiful, but the suspicion remains that it is **mindlessly beautiful**. ...it [*Éclat*] gives the impression of being **without the workings of human intelligence**; it has the infinite charm of **natural sounds**, the dawn chorus, or we are sometimes tempted naughtily to think, of *Bell Across the Meadow*—if anyone still remembers Ketelbey. [B-E-1966a]

The point of this reviewer would be that music should be a series of sounds attended or controlled by human intention. For him, a mere beautiful sonority is not enough to be called music; music should be what is felt to be the result of 'the working of human intelligence'. Some writers complain that the intention is hidden behind the sounds and remains a 'secret' for them. 'I listen hoping to be let **into the secret**, and am always disappointed' [B-E-1966c]. 'I did not, I fear, stumble upon **the secret of this music**. Here and there my ear caught a beautiful sonority, and now and again handful of bars cohered into a comprehensible pattern. But for the most part I was at



a loss....' [B-S-1956]. In speaking of a 'secret', they clearly see it as the composer's. For them, understanding music means being able to make contact with the purpose and intention of the composer.

Music is a construction of sound well organised by the composer's intention—this seems to be a basic conceptual principle of music for the above-mentioned reviewers. This is too classical an approach for avant-garde music. For example, Cage repeatedly stressed the importance of 'opening the doors of the music to the sounds that happen to be in the environment' (1978: 8). He devoted himself to 'discovering means to let sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expressions of human sentiments' (Ibid.: 10). He resisted understanding music as 'something that is being said', and attempted to divert people's attention to 'the activity of sounds' in itself (Ibid.: 10). As regards his own *Kontakte*, Stockhausen explains that it 'tells no consistent story, and is not composed according to a "red thread" that the listener must follow from the beginning to the end in order to understand the whole'. In this work, there is 'no dramatic form with exposition, contrast, development, climax and finale'; and 'each *Moment* is a centre that is an autonomous existence whereas it is combined with the other Moments' (1963: 190). Here, the concept of the 'organised whole' seems to be no longer in effect. In his famous essay 'Alea', Boulez also argues about 'the rejection of a pre-established structure', 'the desire to create a self-renewing kind of mobile complexity, specifically characteristic of music that is played and interpreted', and 'the need to destroy all immanent structure' (trans. 1991: 29). Having read these new poetic ideas, we are tempted to think that the above-mentioned reviewers are captured by a too rigid way of listening to music, and it is a natural result that they could not reach the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music. And we might also think that the favourable reviews would show a new paradigm of musical meaning. A further examination of this critical discourse, however, shows that this is too simplistic an argument.

### *Avant-garde Music and Composing Persona*

Now we shall focus upon the discourse about Cage's music. As far as can be judged from his writings, there seems to be a great distance between his music and such concepts as the 'organised whole' and the 'composer's intention'. A glance at

the reviews of his music, however, shows that their main theme is still Cage's thoughts, purpose, and intention. For example, *Variations II* is a work 'wherein **that composer exerts his endless ingenuity** to place himself in a position wherein he is "dealing with things I literally don't know anything about"' [C-V2-1968]. The notes on the CD give a warning of 'misunderstanding' the purpose of graphic notation, and explain Cage's intention:

The most common misunderstanding of these indeterminate graphic and pictorial scores is that they give license to improvise. This is not their intention.

Realization is not improvisation. ... Responsibility is never abdicated—Cage's works are an ongoing metaphor for the necessity of individual responsibility within a freely defined environment. Anarchy is no chaos. [C-V2-1994]

The notes on *Concert* also emphasise the importance of removing 'value judgements from the decision-making process', and say that 'the choices... **should** never be made according to personal wishes, but instead **must** always employ objective strategies' [C-C-1993b]. As 'a good strategy' for choice, the writer mentions 'tossing a coin'. Obviously, the writer speaks in such an unhesitating voice through the authority of the composer.

From these commentaries, we can see that the writers place the understanding of Cage's music and his thoughts in almost the same category. This attitude can be observed from the fact that most of the space in the reviews is occupied by the explanation of Cage's ideas about noise and music. This becomes clearer in analytical discourse, which examines in detail the methods of interpretation and the composer's purpose behind them. Among others, Pritchett points out the importance of players' ability to understand Cage's ideas:

The extravagance of the *Solo for Piano* was made possible by David Tudor's meticulous way of working: Cage knew he could entrust such an idiosyncratic score only to an equally idiosyncratic performer. The importance of Tudor's abilities to Cage's work is immediately apparent if one compares the *Solo for Piano* to the instrumental solos of the *Concert*: the relative simplicity of the latter was necessary since they were to be performed by players Cage barely knew. [C-C-1993a]

Furthermore, he adds the following commentary in the notes.

In fact, the premiere performance [of *Concert*] was a disaster for just this reason. The instrumentalists, who had been coached by Cage before the concert, disregarded his instructions at the performance and, in Cage's words, 'acted like idiots'. [C-C-1993a: 221]

By analogy, this suggests that whether the listener can experience Cage's music as something aesthetic depends on the extent to which he or she understands Cage's ideas.

We might suspect that such an attitude is a mere influence from the poiesis-oriented point of view, and conclude that we should not take these statements literally. However, it is a fact that listeners gain satisfaction from listening to the music in terms of Cage's story about noise and silence. It is certainly a way of constructing aesthetic meaning in Cage's music, though there are also other ways to listen to it aesthetically. What is more, it is questionable whether Cage's music is really emancipated from the composer's intention as compared with classical and romantic music. It is true that his music is free from conventional form, material and content, from traditional value systems. On the other hand, it requires the listener to open his or her ears to natural sounds, noise, and silence. That is to say, his music is composed clearly with the purpose of eliminating traditional systems and establishing a 'new ear'. Thus, it would not be accurate to say that there is no intention in Cage's music. Rather we should say that he has an earnest intention to eliminate historically constructed formulae from his works, and to emancipate them from his conscious control.<sup>9</sup> In this sense, avant-garde music would be supported by the strong personality of the composer, far from being a suppression of authority.

Although the issue of Cage's poietics is an interesting topic, we must return to the problem of aesthetic meaning. The listener's interest in the composer's thoughts and personality can be found in critical discourses on Boulez and Stockhausen as well. Quotations from the composer's writings appear frequently. Much space is used to explain the compositional procedure and to probe the composer's philosophy behind it. A reviewer says about *Kontakte*, 'the listener **should share the composer's conceptual view**' [S-K-1968a]. Some depict the dominance of the composer in the following way: 'It is hard to imagine a performance with any but the

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<sup>9</sup> Cage himself describes his creation as 'a purposeful purposelessness' (1978: 12).

composer-conductor himself in charge, **holding the reins** of nine interacting freedoms in his two independent hands' [B-E-1966b]; 'If *Structures* falls acceptably on the ear today, that is because Boulez...remained **the master of his machine**. ... Once Boulez had made his initial experiments, he started to manipulate the series so as to give direction to the shapes that it assumed.' [B-S-1986a]

Having seen these reports from the actual listening scene, we can say with fair certainty that the image of composer is an indispensable factor for the construction of aesthetic meaning in avant-garde music. A series of notes are blended with the composer's thoughts and so give rise to the composer's voice. I will call this phenomenon the construction of the *composing persona*. Introducing this new term, I intend to distinguish it from what is referred to as the composer's intention or expression in traditional aesthetics. The composing persona does not refer to the historical composer as such, but to an image constructed by the listener as the authoritative voice behind the sound events, that is, as a fictional composer. We have seen already in Part I that the true intention of the historical composer is always distant from the aesthetic experience. The problem of traditional aesthetics is that it sets as the goal of interpretation a poietic secret that is beyond the listener's reach. In actual experience, however, this does not seem to be a very important issue. Rather, aesthetic satisfaction seems to come from the vividness with which the listener can construct an image of the composer from the music and other information.<sup>10</sup> In other words, we construct a persona that we merely assume to correspond with the historical composer. It is in order to stress this fictional nature that I use the term *composing persona*.

Although the composing persona plays an important role in the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music, it is not a concept peculiar to this music. Rather, transferring a piece of music to a composing persona is a conceptual process that has been nurtured in poiesis-oriented culture. That is to say, the composing persona is a complicated metaphorical network in which many historically formed concepts, such as the musical work, absolute music and genius, are blended together. According to J. Peter Burkholder, 'classical craftsmanship and a distinct musical personality' are the

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<sup>10</sup> This would be related to the fact that popular musical works have often been accompanied with romantic and dramatic episodes of the composer that are often fictional. Stories about Beethoven's *Moonlight* sonata and symphonies *Eroica* and *Pastoral* are good examples.

most important distinguishing factors of music from the romantic era (1983: 133). He points out that in the romantic century 'each composer was considered to speak with an individual voice', and individuality was seen as fundamental to a work's 'lasting value' (Ibid.: 119). We should note here that the romantic composer is expected to exhibit a 'distinct musical personality' in the way of handling musical structure. In the romantic era, deviation from classical standards becomes a prominent sign of the composer's originality, in other words, of the composing persona.<sup>11</sup> Behind the pressure to innovate in terms of musical structure, on the other hand, we can see a concept of 'the more highly elaborated the more perfect'.<sup>12</sup> This leads to the idea of the 'inevitable progress' of musical language, which was often declared in order to defend twelve-tone music by Schoenberg and his adherents.<sup>13</sup>

The network of concepts continues to stretch out. Since the composer is seen as a person who has a special ability to know the inevitable development of history, he is to be compared to a genius or even God who knows the fate of the world. There is a strong force to mystify the concept of the composer. Examining this process of mystification, Lydia Goehr points out that Beethoven was described 'not as a human, but as a God', and J. S. Bach as a 'Saint', 'Demi-God', and 'Musical High Priest' (1992: 208).<sup>14</sup> The composer is elevated to a lofty world, from which the absolute disparity between the composer and the public emerges. Marcia J. Citron summarises this process as follows:

In Western music the figure of the composer has been privileged above most other structures. This larger-than-life entity stems from Romantic notions of the composer as genius. Creativity is likened to divine miracle and removed to a metaphysical plane beyond rational empiricism. The composer, as divine agent, becomes an object of awe. Ideologically he inhabits the sublime and as such is

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<sup>11</sup> Beethoven has been often treated as one of the first modern and liberated composer because of his free choice of material and structure. Cf. Goehr 1992, Chapter 8. Rose Rosengard Subotnik characterises his music with 'an intrusion of Beethoven's personal presence' (1991: 182).

<sup>12</sup> Carl Dahlhaus points out that the germ of such progressivism is found already in Johann Nikolaus Forkel. See Dahlhaus trans. 1987:21.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Schoenberg's statement that 'The method of composing with twelve tones grew out of a necessity' (trans. 1975: 50). See also Webern trans. 1963: 42; Stuckenschmidt trans. 1959: 49, 82.

<sup>14</sup> For the construction of the myth of Beethoven, see also Burnham 1995; Cook 1993, Wallace 1986.

distanced from the trivialities of daily existence. (1993: 113)

The distance between the composer and the public brings up the familiar concept of the genius not being understood by the public. Popularity is no longer a sign of the composer's gift because the true gift can be understood only by a limited number of people. Here we find a basis for the formation of an elitist circle where the composer is placed at the top of a hierarchy. A good example of such elitism would be The Society for Private Musical Performances, founded by Schoenberg in 1918.<sup>15</sup> The Society was a sacred area where the composer's intention should not be violated in any way. Performance in the society was understood, to borrow Christopher Hailey's phrase, as 'realisation' and listening as 'a contemplative immersion', neither being seen as an act of interpretation that creates new meanings (1997: 169).

All these factors, involved in the concept of the composing persona, can also be found in the avant-garde music scene. Devotion to innovation in musical form and material, emphasis on originality, respect for the composer as genius, disregard of and from the public, a small circle of adherents, the authority of the composer's intention—these are the very characteristics of avant-garde music. In the sense that the composing persona and related concepts developed, in particular, during the romantic era, we may say that avant-garde music has a very romantic concept of music as its basis. Radical resistance against tradition, imperceptible 'esoteric' composing methods, complicated philosophies of music, and unpleasant sonorities—if all of these produce some aesthetic meaning, it is because they can be absorbed in the cultural metaphor of the composing persona. In so far as this metaphor holds, we should not overlook the avant-garde's reliance upon Romanticism. The composing persona is an important environmental force that transforms avant-garde musical works into aesthetic objects.

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<sup>15</sup> For the policy of the society, see Meibach 1984.

## Chapter 5

### Construction of Compositional Persona in Avant-garde Music

#### 1. Listening Experience and Compositional Persona

##### *Compositional Persona and Composing Persona*

In the previous chapter, we have seen that the concept of the composing persona plays an important role in understanding avant-garde music. In that the composing persona is a conceptual system that has been formed during the Romantic era, we can say that the aesthetic ontology of avant-garde music is supported by the poiesis-oriented conceptual systems of European musical culture.<sup>1</sup> This gives a good account of the aesthetic experience of avant-garde music from the standpoint of the environmental force. However, the question still remains. Does the aesthetic experience of avant-garde music depend only on this environmental condition? Does the music itself not lead the listener into constructing aesthetic meanings? If there is no cause for our aesthetic satisfaction in the sounding phenomena of individual musical works, it becomes very difficult for us to find out the significance of listening to actual sounds. It is true that some scholars attribute the significance of avant-garde music mainly to the theoretical thinking that is implicit in it.<sup>2</sup> However, it is also a fact that some people perform and listen to avant-garde music by preference. Thus, it would be natural to suppose that there are other conceptual systems more directly rooted in sonority. In this chapter, we shall further examine critical discourse about avant-garde music, and extend our observation to conceptual systems functioning at a more fundamental level of musical understanding.

Before proceeding to this analysis, however, I should like to propose a hypothesis about such a fundamental conceptual system. It is that a piece of music tends to be understood in terms of an analogy with human nature. I call this

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<sup>1</sup> On this point, Elmar Budde says that the avant-garde music is surrounded by ‘an aura of the objective and the authentic’ (1993: 56).

<sup>2</sup> For example, Burkholder says, ‘Cage’s music...is far more often talked about or written about than played, and for good reason: this thinking is far more interesting than his music’ (1983: 132).

humanisation of the musical work the construction of the *compositional persona*. The compositional persona is a fictional object constructed by the listener, just as the composing persona is. While the latter is the authoritative voice of a fictional composer behind a piece of music, however, the former is imagined as the voice of the music itself. The compositional persona is metaphorically constructed from the prominent features of musical events, just in the same way as we are acquainted with other people through their gestures, appearance, and ways of talking and behaving. The hypothetical concept of the *compositional persona* can explain the process of constructing the *composing persona*. If a piece of music were metaphorically transferred into a humanised object, it would be very natural that the metaphorical network is further blended with the historical composer to form the composing persona. In other words, the compositional persona and the composer are blended with each other because they share a generic space, a common structure of personhood. By introducing the compositional persona, the composing persona can be explained as not only an environmentally defined meaning but also a musically rooted one.

Moreover, the concept of the *compositional persona* seems to fit in with the essential nature of our listening experience. As I argued in Chapter 1 Section 2, we feel ‘the presence of Others’ in music, and listen to music as if we had a ‘dialogue with Others’. As an aesthetic object, music is full of the voices of Others. The compositional persona would offer a good explanation for the feeling of Otherness that irresistibly fascinates the listener. In some studies of musical meaning, the issue of music and its Others has been brought into focus, and it is notable that most of them mention the personification of music in some sense. I would like to make a few remarks concerning these studies before moving on to the main task. This will help to define the concepts of the compositional persona and the composing persona more clearly. The studies of the personification of music can be classified into two types. In the first type of studies, the personhood of music is discussed in relation to the historical composer; we can adduce the theory of Edward T. Cone as its example. On the other hand, the second type of studies attempts to argue the personification of music without reference to the actual composer; Carolyn Abbate and Naomi Cumming have contributed important studies on this line.



### *Theories of Compositional Persona*

In *The Composer's Voice* (1974), Cone develops the theory of the 'musical persona'. He starts from observing the familiar metaphors about music: music as language, utterance and gesture. Then he poses the question 'who is to be conceived as responsible for the activity?' (pp. 3-4). To answer this question, he proposes the notion of the musical persona. Taking a Lied by Schubert as example, he claims that the listener recognises 'the vocal persona' and 'the instrumental persona'. According to him, the listener integrates these two personae into the 'complete' musical persona, which is the 'representative of the composer's voice' (p. 12). Cone explains the relationship between the musical personae and the composer as follows:

The complete musical persona is to be inferred from the interaction of the other two, so let us call it an *implicit persona*. Although its medium is a compound arising from a mixture of the vocal and the instrumental, it is held together by the unifying power of the musical line. As the vehicle of the composer's complete message, it can also be called *the composer's persona*. Note, however, that this means not 'the persona of the composer' but 'a persona of the composer'; for the persona of each composition is uniquely created by and for that composition. (p. 18)

It is remarkable that Cone directs his attention to the fact that music appears before the listener as something talking and acting, and therefore he attributes the persona to the music itself. In this way he succeeds in characterising music not as a static organisation of sounds but as an animated sonorous object. He proposes the intriguing formulation that 'music is a form of utterance' (p. 159). With regard to this point, Abbate says that 'Cone's book is effective as an interpretative reanimation of idea about musical composition, in insisting upon a conception of music as "sung" through time, as originating in an oscillating, sonorous body' (1991: 12). This leads to the idea that the musical persona has an ability or intention to implicate the listener in its own world. Citing Alban Berg's Violin Concerto, Cone states that music is a subject making approaches to us:

They [musical personae] are not mere elements of design, transformed into sound by human energy applied to mechanical contrivances; they are imaginary intelligences expressing themselves in the symbolic gestures of sound through

the aid of sympathetic musicians-*cum*-instruments. (1974: 114)

Here it is obvious that Cone attributes to music an Otherness that is constructed imaginatively or metaphorically. In this respect, his views have much in common with our listener-oriented standpoint, and Cone's musical persona is quite similar to the concept of the compositional persona in our terms.

From the listener-oriented point of view, however, there seems to be a problem in the relationship between the musical persona and the composer. Cone considers the musical persona 'the vehicle of the composer's complete message'. We can see here a confusion between poetic and aesthetic logics. For the concept of the musical persona is directly connected to the Classical scheme of musical semantics: musical meaning is conveyed from the composer, through the musical work, to the listener. After the last quotation, Cone continues:

The thoughts and attitudes they [musical personae] convey and the experiences they undergo are basically human, for...all roles are aspects of one controlling persona, which is in turn the projection of one creative human consciousness—that of the composer. (p. 144)

If we discuss musical meaning from the standpoint of poiesis, there would be no problem in his argument at all. In the sense that a piece of music originates from the composer, we may say that it is 'the projection' of the composer's consciousness. In addition, Cone provides an explanation for the diversity of music's aesthetic meaning as apprehended by the listener: the musical personae cannot be completely controlled by the composer, but rather go beyond his or her control. Cone says of them that 'They are not mere puppets, controlled by the composer's strings. They are more like Petrouchkas, brought to life by the composer, but thenceforth driven by their own wills and desires' (pp. 22-23). The composer constructs 'the mind of the composition' (p. 57), but after that the musical personae take on their own life. For the composer, Cone's story precisely describes the process of composition and its aftermath.

From an aesthetic point of view, however, we cannot remain content with this explanation. There are three problems with it. The first problem is that Cone ascribes the origin of the musical persona to the composer. This means that, according to Cone, musical meaning is in essence constructed by the composer. This is a story

about poetic meaning, not about aesthetic meaning. We have already seen that the aesthetic meaning is constructed by the listener; the origin of the aesthetic meaning is not the composer but the listener.

Secondly, Cone considers that the musical persona is constructed by means of a one-way system: from the composer to the musical work and to the listener. This attitude restricts the variety, fluidity and multidimensionality of aesthetic meaning.<sup>3</sup> Such meaning is the result of the networking of various dimensions: biological, individual, historical and cultural. Although we have just claimed that meaning is constructed by the listener, this does not necessarily mean that it has no relationship to the historical composer (in Cone's terms, the composer's voice). The composer's voice is mediated by the cultural environment, and can reach the listener only indirectly and partially. That is to say, aesthetic meaning emerges by means not of a simple one-way system, but of a complicated multiple-way system.

The third point is the difference between Cone's composer's voice and our composing persona. As listeners we cannot hear the composer's voice directly. We may feel we actually hear the composer's voice, but it is always a fictional voice that appears as if it were the true one. In the aesthetic realm, historical fact does not occupy an authoritative position that determines the music's meaning. The composer's voice, as defined by Cone, lies outside the environment of the listener, who is tempted to weave the imaginative construction of the composing persona because he or she recognises that the music is the historical composer's work. In the aesthetic world, then, the compositional persona can never directly encounter the composer's voice; we only hear, as it were, the echoes of the latter.

While Cone talks about the authoritative voice of the composer behind the music, Abbate attempts to hear voices other than the composer's in the narrating voices of the music itself. The theme of her *Unsung Voices* (1991) is the examination of 'a sense of certain isolated and rare gestures in music...that may be perceived as modes of subjects' enunciations' (p. ix). And she continues, 'what I mean by "voices" are potentially multiple musical voices that inhabit a work—not the creative efforts of the historical author, or even the utterance of a virtual author' (p. x). From these

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<sup>3</sup> On this point, Abbate says, 'The work created by "composer's voice" is in Cone's view essentially monologic...and monophonic—not, of course, literally (as a one-line melody), but in that all its utterances are heard as emanating from a single composing subject'. (1991: 11-12)

sentences, we can say that Abbate's musical voice is neither the composer's voice in Cone's terms, nor the composing persona, but something close to our concept of the compositional persona. The next phrase makes clearer her descriptive attitude to the musical meaning: 'music is written by a composer, but made and given phenomenal reality by performers' (p. x). We may rephrase this by saying that music is written by a composer, but made and given aesthetic reality by listeners. Moreover, Abbate points out that the musical voice is not a perceptual reality but an aesthetic one: 'Music has...musical voices that distance us from the sensual matter of what we are hearing, that speak across it' (p. xii).

Although lying at the core of musical meaning, says Abbate, musical voices tend to hide from our inquiry. They have been 'overlooked' and, therefore, 'unsung' to us (p. xiii). However, there are rare moments when the silent subjectivities of the music appear before us with their own voices. According to Abbate, these are when we sense that the music is narrating. We should note here that by 'narrative' Abbate does not mean a general cognitive scheme for identifying a piece of music with a plot, as recently proposed by such scholars as Gregory Karl, Fred E. Maus and Anthony Newcomb.<sup>4</sup> For Abbate, narrating refers a mode of representing something that is characterized by the presence of a narrating subject which serenely observes the events concerned.<sup>5</sup> That is to say, to experience music as narrating means that we feel '*distance or disparity* between the musical fabric and the phenomenal objects it is said to express' (p. 26). To put it another way (and at the risk of over-simplification), when music narrates, in Abbate's terms, there is a distance

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<sup>4</sup> They attempt to examine the musical meaning in terms of the idea of musical plot, which is often called as 'narrative' or 'story'. They interpret a piece of music as a plot that consists of the beginning, progression and end, or as a drama performed by the protagonist and antagonist. On the conceptual system blending music and drama, I will discuss in the next section. On the confusion in the usage of the terms 'narrative' and 'narrativity' in recent studies on musical meaning, see Nattiez 1990 and Kramer 1991.

<sup>5</sup> Thus Abbate uses the term 'narrative' in the sense of diegesis, which forms a counterpart to the concept of mimesis. Mimesis is a mode of representing something by imitating it. In the mode of mimesis, the presence of imitating subject becomes almost transparent, and there seems to be no distance between the subject and the represented. (The problem of diegesis and mimesis was addressed by Plato in his *The Republic*, Book III. For the explanation of these concepts in the context of modern literary theory, see Genette trans. 1980: 162-85.)

almost similar to that between the signifier and the signified in language: sound designates something that is distanced from it, in the same way that language does. Understood this way, musical narrative becomes a rare and unusual event, as Abbate repeatedly claims. Even if the sonorous musical fabric is experienced in terms of narrating voices, moreover, the body from which the voices should emanate remains absent: 'because the locus of voice is now not a character, not human, and somehow not present', Abbate writes, the moments of musical narrative have an 'uncanny effect' (p. 11).

Although this idea of the rare moment of musical narrative is a very interesting one, to argue such a complicated issue of music semantics would take us beyond the scope of this thesis. Here I would like to mention only the point that the musical voices are essentially 'unsung', that is, that the compositional persona tends to hide from us. It is for this reason that traditional aesthetic approaches have failed to recognize music's voices. Even when we assume the presence of 'a single speaker', as it were, we consider it as 'identical to the author'; otherwise, we dismiss it 'as mere delusion', and move on to the musical work itself (p. xii). Thus we might see the compositional persona as a more latent conceptual system than the composing persona is and therefore one that figures in critical discourse only implicitly. But this would not necessarily mean that the former is less important than the latter: rather, as we have argued, the compositional persona is a fundamental locus to which other concepts and images gravitate.

While Abbate focuses exclusively on the unique moment when the compositional persona narrates and, therefore, a unique mode of designation in music, Cumming attempts to reveal how the latent compositional persona 'might actually inhere in a musical work' (1997: 7), and how it penetrates our aesthetic experience. In her article 'The Subjectivities of "Erbarne Dich"' (1997), she starts by mentioning her experience of listening to Bach's St. Matthew Passion: she 'was riveted by the poignancy of the violin's musical utterance', and could not 'readily hear the work in a state of detachment and "aesthetic distance"' (p. 5). Then she poses the question of what it is that creates 'such involvement', what 'allows a personal, and emotionally-charged, form of identification to take place' (p. 5). She argues that such an experience is not a mere 'arbitrary whim' of the listener, but can emerge from the relationship between the listener and the 'subjectivity' of the musical work: 'There is

a “subjectivity” in the work itself, with which a listener may become actively engaged, not following his or her own impulses but guided by those of the work’ (p. 7). She also maintains that this subjectivity is not ‘a fanciful labelling of something that could be more accurately labelled using a structural term, but an indicator of mental involvement that links a structure with a specific kinaesthetic image and its affective connotation’ (p. 9).

Explaining her concept of the musical subject, Cumming enumerates several of its important features; I will mention just two points that are relevant in our context. Firstly, on the evidence of descriptions of music, she claims that its subjectivity appears in the forms of ‘voices’, ‘gestures’ and ‘volition’ (pp. 7-11). Here she mentions several kinds of metaphor: the vocal grain such as ‘warm and rich’ and ‘nasal and restrained’, kinaesthetic images possessing direction, energy, and emphasis, and the unfolding of the will. This will be helpful to us when we analyse critical discourse concerning avant-garde music in search of the hidden or absent compositional persona. We may be unable to see the compositional persona directly, but be able to hear its voices, see its gestures, and feel its will.

Secondly, such metaphors are synthesised to form ‘the experience of an active agent or “persona” in a musical work’ (p. 11). To put it another way, ‘a musical “subject” can emerge in time as an integration of various “subjectivities” in the work’ (p. 11). This will be important for us when we attempt to identify the process of metaphorical transference from sound to aesthetic meaning. That is to say, the compositional persona may emerge only when the listener can adequately synthesise such metaphorical constructions as voice, gestures and so on. Here we can imagine a process in which the network of metaphors is built up from the local level of a mere arrangement of tones to the global level of compositional persona. The compositional persona is not, then, a prescriptive meaning that is inherent in the musical work, like the composer’s intention in the traditional aesthetics, but a hyper-blended mental space that is constructed by the listener.

## **2. Conceptual Systems in Listening to Avant-garde Music**

Having observed the characteristics of the compositional persona, we are now

ready to analyse critical discourse about avant-garde music, and to see how the compositional persona is embedded in our aesthetic experience. If the compositional persona is essentially an 'absent' object, as Abbate and Cumming propose, we can expect that the compositional persona appears less explicitly than the composing persona does. This suggests that it may be difficult for us to grapple squarely with the compositional persona without preparation. Therefore, we start with some more explicit, and perhaps more simple, metaphors that may embody aspects of the compositional persona, and then move on to the issue of how they relate to one another.

As we have mentioned above, Cumming classifies visual metaphors into three types: voices, gestures, and agent. I would like to modify her classification into a more general one that can accommodate a broader range of metaphors. For the three metaphors mentioned by Cumming are related closely with the essence of the compositional persona, and, therefore, already highly personalised. If we assume that there are several stages of blending from the perception of tones to the recognition of the compositional persona, her three metaphors are at a stage quite close to that of the construction of the compositional persona. However, I would also like to pick up on other metaphors that may be closer to the stage of perception, before complete personification. They may not connect directly with the personification, but surely lay the foundations of it. In so far as we aim to describe the process of the formation of aesthetic meaning by means of a bottom-up approach, we should take simple and primary metaphors into account as well as complicated and hyper-blended ones. We shall now look carefully at some examples of critical discourse under the following headings: movement, processes, and grain.

### *Blend with Movement*

It is a cardinal experience for us to feel movement in music. Even a simple melody goes up and down, flows, or jumps. Because this is very natural for us, it might be not easy to conceive of the sense of movement being the result of a metaphorical blend. However, if we observe a melody carefully and objectively, we can quickly see that the melodic quality lies not in the individual tones but in the relationships between them. That is to say, 'one cannot point to any *thing* that actually moves' (Lochhead 1989/90: 84). Musical movement is not an objective fact,

but already an imaginative reality.<sup>6</sup> Scruton clearly points out the metaphorical nature of musical movement.

The conclusion that we should draw is that, while we hear movement in music, this is a fact about our experience, which corresponds to no actual movement in the auditory world. ... If we take away the metaphors of movement, of space, of chords, as objects, of melodies as advancing and retreating, as moving up and down—if we take those metaphors away, nothing of music remains, but only sound. (1983: 84)

In other words, when we transfer the dots of sound into a series of movements, we stand at the starting point of aesthetic experience.

In our musical experience, there seems to be several dimensions of blending with movement.<sup>7</sup> In the most fundamental dimension, musical motion has been often discussed as a problem of cognitive reality. For example, Albert S. Bregman examines musical motion in comparison with the visual phenomenon called ‘apparent’ or ‘stroboscopic’ movement. He says that it seems natural ‘to look for an analogy between auditory sequences composed of discrete changes in *frequency* over time and visual sequences that are composed of discrete changes in *position* over time’ (1990: 174).<sup>8</sup> This primal stage of musical listening is the focus of those music psychologists who study the grouping of sounds in musical perception. As we have already dealt with these studies in Chapter 1, we mention here only that the laws of Gestalt psychology are mainly effective in this stage. Moreover, the construction of musical motion is not only a problem of psychology, but also one of cultural and social conditions. With regard to the problem of structuring music, Cook (1990) presents instructive examples that show the influence of the listener’s cultural and social background on musical perception.<sup>9</sup> There is no need to go into details about the biological and cultural dimension. We need only to remember here that the

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<sup>6</sup> On the metaphoricity of the musical line, see Cook 1990: 22-26.

<sup>7</sup> The multi-dimensionality of the metaphor of musical movement is pointed out also by Lochhead. She suggests that ‘a higher-level concept of musical motion rests on a lower-level concept of the generation and perception of sound.’ (1989/90: 84, n.6).

<sup>8</sup> Gjerdingen (1994) also examines the musical motion as ‘apparent rather than real’, and proposes a cognitive model of the apparent-motion effect in music.

<sup>9</sup> See, in particular, pp. 135-52.



conceptual system is mediated biologically, culturally, and individually, and that there is continuity between the first two and the last dimension

Because every conceptual system has its root in ‘image schemata’ formed in our bodily experience, there is nothing surprising in the close relation between cognitive study and the conceptual system of musical movement. Rather, we should conceive that this relation shows the fundamentality of musical motion to musical meaning. In fact, if we did not have a language for movement, it would be almost impossible for us ever to explain what happens in a musical work. In the commentaries on avant-garde music, for example, the fundamental metaphor of movement is used in the following way:

...the group themselves must **flow forwards**... [S-P-1975]

In the evolution of a naturally overtone-rich sound certain partials will emerge more strongly than others; some early, some late, some **rising to a peak** and abruptly **falling away**, others **rising more slowly and persisting longer**.

[S-P-1976]

At the same time the **action** of these forms depicts a second level of association, wherein **motion and quiescence** contrast. [S-K-1963]

The music **presses strongly forward towards** a climax where all the second-group instruments join the violas in a single powerful utterance;

[B-E-1971c]

It is worth looking carefully at the last example. As I have shown through the use of bold type, it is certain that the metaphor of musical movement is used in this sentence. However, the point of the sentence is obviously not the forward movement as such, but rather other aspects: *strong* driving force, movement to *a climax*, and *a powerful utterance*. The metaphor of musical movement lies behind these metaphors, and works, so to speak, as a sceneshifter. This seems to be in accordance with the fact that the motion metaphor is directly rooted in the perceptual dimension. Perception of sound is the basis for the construction of musical meaning, and the former is indispensable for the latter, but it is not sufficient. The same applies not only to the case of the musical movement but also to that of other metaphors.

However, it would be a bit hasty to move on to other types of metaphor at this point. I would like first to look at a few metaphors that are derived from musical

motion. Firstly, the concept of movement is easily blended with that of force and energy. The image of physical phenomena is one of the outstanding metaphors that appear in the discourse about avant-garde music:<sup>10</sup>

Rather, one hears **recoil from impulse**, approach and recession, sonic forms of **attraction and repulsion**, and ingress and egress of sound objects. [S-K-1963]  
This initial **burst of energy** gradually peters out in both instrumental and electronic activity, leading via a short passage of droning electronic sound with built-in Doppler effects, which sound like distant propeller aeroplanes, to section III. ... It [section IXB] is followed by a rapid succession of short episodes depicting different aspects of **accelerated** frequency..., **a sensation of great speed** (IXE) and of **great interior or textural energy** (IXF)... [S-K-1976/90]  
But in spite of its technical complication...the work made a considerable impact through **the explosive force of its violent outbursts**, alternating with sudden silence. [B-S-1957]  
Both passages might be likened to what are called '**Brownian movements**'.... [B-S-1966]

The mental spaces of abstract images of energy, then, put out their feelers towards those of various substantial objects, such as machine and natural object; the second of the above-mentioned sentences, for instance, mentions 'propeller aeroplanes'. The following are other examples:

A brief melody, based perhaps on the mirror series, is heard, the last note **bounding like a ping-pong ball in slow motion**.... [S-K-1976]

The excitement is that of **a steelworks**, where something is being made, noisily but necessarily, a series of disconnected processes working to a common end.

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<sup>10</sup> This may be influenced by the avant-garde composers' preference for physical images. The most typical example is found in Stockhausen's famous essay '...How Time Passes...' (trans. 1959). Here he attempts to unify duration and pitch by means of the frequency that is common to both, and proposes the concept of 'the scale of duration'. We can easily attack his argument from two points of view. From an aesthetic point of view, he completely ignores the difference between the aesthetic and even perceptual realities of duration and pitch. From a scientific point of view, also, identifying duration with pitch is out of the question. However, such a criticism is irrelevant because Stockhausen does not aim at any physical truth. He is referring to an imaginative space in which duration is continuous with pitch; he uses physics as the basis for his conception, but goes beyond it.

[S-K-1968b]

If the charm of the music is undeniable..., that is less the result of a perfectly clear and transparent ‘geometry’ than of the more mysterious charm to be found in our awareness of many distributive forms found in nature: the unhurried **dispersion of passing clouds, the twinkle of pebbles in the bed of a mountain stream, or the breaking of surf against a rocky coast.** [B-S-1966]

Today, *Éclat* seems like a **brilliantly cut diamond whose facets dazzle in a constantly changing manner.** [B-E/M-1990a]

Finally, I would like to mention blending between musical motion and human gesture or countenance, which we may call the personified version of the movement metaphor. As the image network is developed to accommodate increasingly human spaces, the metaphor of musical motion takes on a new dimension: that of emotion and feeling. Gesture is something more than a mere motion of the human body, and countenance is more than a mere motion of the human face. They are always accompanied by the agent’s emotion and intention. To put it more precisely, for the observer, at least, it is very difficult to see a gesture without assuming a corresponding emotion and intention.<sup>11</sup> Thus, when people talk about musical gesture, the emphasis begins to shift from the motion itself to the emotional states attributed to it. This can be seen in the following examples.

[The] music of *Éclat* is occupied with **frenetic trills** and **nervous figurations** for its scintillating nonet.... [B-E/M-1995]

Boulez also was oddly unable to catch the elusive spirit of the piece, tending either to exaggerate expressive nuances (especially in his handling of the ensemble of violas, who too readily become **voices of anxiety, nonchalance or interrogation**) or to chop rhythms without gaining the jagged movement which should give the work **a lift of nervous excitement.** [B-E/M-1979b]

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<sup>11</sup> This must be partly because people naturally learn the close connection between gesture and emotion from their experiences of everyday life. That is to say, the connection is formed socially and culturally. On the other hand, Clynes (1977) maintains that emotion has ‘genetically programmed dynamic forms’ (p. xx). His ‘sentic’ study is an attempt to identify experimentally the dynamic forms that characterise each emotion. Although opinions vary as to his whole theory and result, his study is noteworthy in the respect that it proposes evidence of the uninterrupted correspondence between emotion and movement.

At figure 26 the *mouvement perpétuel*, by then on the viola, is **brusquely interrupted** by an arpeggio on the piano—as if wishing to resume its resonant role. [B-E/M-1991]

Gradually a **melancholy mood settles on the piece**, reflected in the complicated, sometimes **angry** transformations which follow in section XI. [S-K-1976]

It is a long skein of **scrappy, raspy, ratty, humming, wailing, and whispering sounds**, some of them extremely subtle. [C-V2-1968]

These reports about musical gesture and emotion tell us that the reporters see and hear the compositional persona, whether consciously or unconsciously. Here, music becomes the agent of the frenetic gesture and the nervous behaviour; it feels melancholy and anxiety; it hums, whispers and wails. Music is no longer mere physical movements, but a subject who acts, feels and enunciates, who has the body and mind. At the moment when subjectivity is given to music, therefore, the range of musical expression is drastically widened. Mediated by the concept of movement, the whole space of the human body and mind, a vast and fertile land producing a limitlessly wide variety of meanings, is given to music.

### *Blend with Process*

Looking further at verbal statements on music, we can see that there is another conceptual system other than musical movements and gestures, which provides the more elaborated meanings for music. In listening to a piece of music, we do not only feel various musical gestures one by one, but also tend to relate them with each other. That is to say, the succession of plural musical movements is easily blended with the concept of process, a series of various events organised as a whole. And the concept of musical process gives rise to a further set of possible meanings.

Events are 'organized' to the extent that they are arranged or controlled for some purpose or by some principles. It is certainly a common way of grasping a piece of music to attempt to identify the characteristics of each musical gesture and to discover the principles that link them. In a review of *Éclat* [B-E-1965], for example, the author grasps the whole piece as 'a chain of complexes'. These complexes are, according to him, balanced by 'a subtle **play between areas** of more or less static or dynamic effects'. Such effects are achieved by '**the opposition** of complexes composed of dry, rapidly moving figurations, of more fluid complexes made of

sustained notes, chords, or trills’ and by ‘**the interplay** of pedal-like vertical sonorities enlivened by figured interjections’. Another writer characterises the same piece in the following way:

*Éclat* is built according to characteristic principles of **antinomy**, moving outwards in **ever-widening ripples of contrast**. There are the obvious contrasts of timbre, dynamic and speed; the further, less obvious contrasts of movement with stillness, regularity with irregularity, sound with silence. [B-E/M-1970]

For these authors, *Éclat* is no longer a mere succession of individual gestures, but a united entity that is sewn up by the strand of interplay and contrast.<sup>12</sup>

But a problem arises here. Looking at these statements, we cannot but have a suspicion that they came not from the listening experience, but rather from analytical thinking. The following examples may confirm this suspicion. A reviewer of *Éclat* says that ‘**The opening and the close** are written-out music, **framing** a series of episodes’ [B-E-1966b]. In another essay on the same piece [B-E/M-1971a], it is divided into ‘five sections in **an arch form** (A-B-C-B-A)’. The nature of the A section is, according to the author, dynamic, and ‘the central section is static, and the B section have something of both qualities’; in the C section, ‘the A-B-C-B-A form is repeated at **a lower level of organization**’. As in the argument concerning musical movement, we may say that there seem to be several dimensions of blending between music and process, and that the metaphor of musical process reaches analytical thinking at the most developed stage. But music analysis is the result of the poiesis-oriented attitude, as we have discussed in Part I: does it not follow then that the concept of process is distant from aesthetic meaning, from the compositional persona?

I would like to maintain, however, that the conceptual system of musical process is still an important element in the aesthetic field. Although it is a fact that analytical thinking is a highly developed form of the process metaphor, there are other forms that are closer to the compositional persona; it is not just that, because analytical thinking pervades the environment of our aesthetic experience so strongly, we fail to observe other aspects of it. This becomes clear from the following two

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<sup>12</sup> Lochhead (1992) stresses the concept of ‘repetition’ as a principle for organising music into a whole; Kielian-Gilbert (1990) discusses the importance of ‘analogy’ in organising our experience.

considerations.

Firstly, the history of music analysis shows that there is a wide spectrum of images from the concept of a simple process to formalistic analysis. Tracing the outline of the history of music theory and analysis, Bent (ed. 1994) mentions mental spaces that have been assimilated into modern analysis. He refers to ‘four models ... that the eighteenth century held out for musical structure: *rhetoric* (music as gesture and strategy) and *syntax* (music as language)...; physiological *anatomy* (music as a body with limbs) and *mechanism* (music as a system with functioning parts)’ (p. 1). In that they both suggest the existence of a speaker, the first two are related to what I referred to as the metaphor of musical gesture. The last two seem to compare music to an object rather than a person. However, the images of physical body and machine still invoke the concept of an organic whole.<sup>13</sup> Bent observes that the development of the theory of harmony in the nineteenth century points ‘to the *human mind* as the organizing principle of musical harmony’ (p. 11). Between musical process and music analysis, then, there are spaces for various concepts that can transform a series of sounds into the equivalent of a living organism.<sup>14</sup>

It might seem as if the image of organism is too romantic for avant-garde music. For the environment that surrounds avant-garde music, including many writings by the composers, serves to lead listeners towards more objective matters such as architecture, mathematics and physics.<sup>15</sup> Even in such a harsh environment, however, the conceptual system of the musical organism continues to live persistently. The next extract suggests that a piece of music exists as an organism having its own will:

The essential character of *Éclat/Multiples* derives its intense energy from self-perpetuating rhythmic cells that **continually reproduce their own likenesses in the changing circumstances of their environment**, and the

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<sup>13</sup> On the issue of organicism in biology and music analysis in the eighteenth century, see Montgomery 1992.

<sup>14</sup> The fact that music analysis conceals the concept of musical organism has been clearly demonstrated in recent studies on Schenker analysis; see, in particular, Solie 1980, Snarrenberg 1994. Schenker is discussed also in the context of the metaphor of plot (Littlefield and Neumeyer 1992).

<sup>15</sup> It is interesting, however, that Stockhausen speaks about ‘an organic effect’ when he explains the process of the composition of his *Kontakte*: ‘Then we remade all the part, with every duration lengthened in the ratio 2:3, so that it had a more organic effect: otherwise everything stayed the same.’ (Kurtz trans. 1992: 103)

sinewy strength of the music lies in the very circumscription of its developments—in its refusal to admit the intrusion of any expression extraneous to its central purpose. ... The present form of *Éclat/Multiples* is clearly **an evolutionary one**; nevertheless, each of its ‘variations’ is independent of the others and complete in itself, so that the design of each tutti section and of the work as a whole is evidently to **evolve from the sum of its individual parts**. [B-E/M-1986]

The second argument about mental spaces other than analytical thinking concerns blending between music and plot. As we have mentioned briefly, recent studies of the musical plot can be evaluated as attempts to re-discover the latent images behind formal analysis. Guck’s essay of 1981 is one of the earliest studies to deal with the rhetorical description of music, which she claims can provide ‘the means to approximate faithfully the complexities of our perceptual manipulation of pieces’ (Guck 1981: 41). It was Newcomb (1987), however, who introduced the concept of ‘narrative’ as an alternative to formal structure in exploring musical meaning. He defines narrativity as ‘modes of continuation’ (p. 167), and compares the process of Schumann’s music and ‘certain narrative strategies in novels of his time’ (p. 168). Analysing the last movement of Schumann’s String Quartet in A, op. 41, no. 3, Newcomb argues that it is based on a transformation of the ‘paradigmatic plot’ (p. 171) of the rondo, in other words, a mode of connecting elements that is typical of the story of the rondo. Maus, too, sees metaphorical transfer of sounds as the basis of the musical plot:

Listeners can hear musical succession as story-like, because they can find something like actions, thoughts, and characters in music. ...Musical events can be regarded as characters, or as gestures, assertions, responses, resolution, goal-directed motion, references, and so on. Once they are so regarded, it is easy to regard successions of musical events as forming something like a story, in which these characters and actions go together to form something like a plot. (1991: 6)

Here it seems reasonable to suppose that the metaphor of the musical plot is a developed form of the process metaphor, in turn suggesting the existence of the musical persona as an absent teller of the story or as a character in the story.

There are a lot of examples indicating that the listener hears a story even in avant-garde music. As the simplest example, we can see that the term 'climax' is used by various authors. In most reviews and essays, the motives, phrases and sections are treated as characters in a drama in which they act, interplay, compete and change places with each other. Here we have to question, again, whether the concept of story really suits avant-garde music. For this music has often been characterised as resisting the traditional process of story and presenting a new way of organising a series of events.

For example, Lochhead points out that 'Most current concepts of temporal structure do not take into account the passage of time, before/after relations, and the role of the future and past' (1986: 51). Her argument would point, at least, to a basic characteristic of the poietic logic of avant-garde music. A good example is the notion of Momentform as presented by Stockhausen. He explained his new way of thinking as follows.

You know, there is a general tendency in literature as well to think that the thread of Ariadne, the idea that one should be able to follow the development of characters in a drama or a novel, is something very old-fashioned. Instead we find characters changing to such an extent that you don't recognize them as individual any more.... So character development, continuity of the character, no longer seems to be important any more: what really matters is the way he appears, the manner of playing. (1989: 56)

The process of Momentform is instantaneous, and 'everything has presence to the same degree' (Ibid. 60). Stockhausen deconstructs the traditional notion of music as a coherent continuity into a series of independent moments. Thus, the notion of Momentform seems to be essentially in contradiction to the concept of plot. Nevertheless, critical discourse concerning his *Kontakte* includes the most dramatic and romantic descriptions among the whole series of examples that I collected. One writer says, 'The image is in part a romantic one: a fight to the death against a storm-rent horizon' [S-K-1968b], and another 'there is a noticeable sense of farewell about the work as a whole, despite its high spirits. One has the feeling that this is the end of an era' [S-K-1976]. The temptation to hear music as story seems to be too strong for the listener to resist it. I cannot say for certain whether the conceptual



system of plot is a fundamental cognitive schema for human beings or not. However, when we see that almost every writer describes the characteristics of musical events along the temporal flow as something with a beginning, development and end, we may say that blending between music and plot is a very strong mode of understanding music.

Finally, I would like to add one thing about the relationship between music analysis and the other metaphorical concepts. As scholars such as Newcomb and Maus have argued, the concepts of musical organism and plot surely provide a basis on which music analysis has been developed. On the other hand, they can be also the results of blending music analysis and listening experience. For example, when we look at Karl's analysis of Beethoven's *Appassionata* (1997), we have a strong impression that his dramatic analysis is a kind of paraphrase of traditional formal analysis. He divides the whole movement into parts and relates them with each other, on the basis of motivic workings and tonal relationships. Instead of using traditional technical terms, he calls the principal theme the 'protagonist', the second theme the 'antagonist'; and classifies the whole process into several dramatic events: enclosure, disruption, subdivision, counteraction, interruption, integration, divergence, withdrawal, realization and transfiguration. Such a way of description may certainly give the reader more approachable and rich images than the traditional one can. However, we should not think that this happens only by the force of the concept of plot. It is only when we obtain a detailed map of the musical process by means of analytical thinking, and return to the aesthetic field with the map in hand, that this rich field of images opens up. That is to say, the act of metaphorical blending is not a one-way one, from sounds through the concept of plot to music analysis; instead it cycles between plural mental spaces, between the aesthetic experience and its context, including the analytical-theoretical one.

### *Blend with Grain*

The third type of conceptual system involved in the understanding of avant-garde music is concerned with a more delicate realm of aesthetic meaning than that of musical gesture and organism. It is what Cumming refers to as 'a feeling of involvement'. Blending with movement and process can construct sounds as human acts with purpose or plot just as blending with organism constructs it as a human

body organised purposively, and so secures a wide range of aesthetic meanings for music. However, this is not sufficient to explain our listening experience. When we take pleasure in listening to music, we do not observe the action of the compositional persona at a distance, but are involved in the action and invited to feel the mind of the compositional persona. The compositional persona is invisible but tangible. Its voices are addressed to the listener. They are voices calling us.

I borrow Roland Barthes' conception of 'grain' to designate the realm of musical tangibility. For Barthes, the grain is at the core of the aesthetic experience of music. With this concept, he addresses 'the impossible account of an individual thrill that I constantly experience in listening to singing' (1977 trans.: 181). By saying 'thrill', he refers to the whole range of somatic sense in listening to music. He explains this mysterious sense as follows:

Something is there, manifest and stubborn...., beyond (or before) the meaning of the words, their form...., the melisma, and even the style of execution: something which is directly the cantor's body, brought to your ears in one and the same movement from deep down in the cavities, the muscles, the membranes, the cartilages, and from deep down in the Slavonic language, as though as single skin lined the inner flesh of the performer and the music he sings. ... The 'grain' is that: the materiality of the body speaking its mother tongue; perhaps the letter, almost certainly *significance*. (Ibid.: 181-82)

The grain does not refer to the observable features of musical events such as temporal flow, including musical gesture, plot and organism. Rather it is something that germinates in the 'materiality' or mass of sonority.

In this sense, we can consider the concept of musical grain as blending between music and materiality. For sound does not have entity, weight, and volume, from an objective point of view. However, we feel grain in music just as we hear movements in music. In fact, we find that many critics mention the grain of music, in its literal sense: 'The density of the whole of the *Structure Ia* can better be represented in the following diagram, which reveals the contrast of **thick and thin textures** adapted in Part A...' [B-S-1975]; '...the movement of these forms rear and front, in symmetry and distortion...., **sharp and blunt, rough and smooth**, open and perforated' [S-K-1963]; 'There is one passage, lasting perhaps half a minute or so, where, I

gather, he was mainly pre-occupied with the change-over from **furry** to **wooden sounds**' [S-K-1960]. The feeling of surface can be developed into that of musical mass. The term 'density', used in the above-mentioned example, suggests a blend of music and mass, leading to descriptions such as the following: 'Listening to it I realized the meaning of **weightlessness** allied to sound' [S-K-1963]; 'there was to be a constant lightening of the sound: sombre noises at the beginning of the piece, and **light ethereal** sounds at the end' [S-K-1992b]; 'The listener gets the clear impression of a more **compressed** discourse than in the preceding passage, because there the tempo seems **tighter**...and also because of the increasing instrumental **density**' [B-E/M-1991]. These indications of the somatic sensation of music's surface and mass suggest not only that musical events are accompanied by the sense of grain (as shown by the words in bold type), but also that it is the central aspect of our listening experience.

In this respect, metaphors of grain seem to be similar to those of feeling that we have mentioned in relation to musical gesture. In that the grain concerns the quality of sound events, it plays a role similar to the metaphors built into many of the adjectives and adverbs used to characterise musical gestures, dramas, and organisms. The examination of critical discourse suggests that metaphors concerning quality and nature play a significant role in the aesthetic experience. For example, the following quotation is a description of *Kontakte*:

After a short hiatus, the music opens with a **vigorous** resumé of some of the principal types of electronic sound, ranging from the **dense flux** of section IB to the **comically nasal exclamation** of ID and the **solitary complex** tone of IF. This initial **burst of energy** gradually peters out in both electronic and instrumental parts, and leads via a short passage of droning electronic sounds with built-in Doppler effects, which sound like **distant** propeller aeroplanes, to section III. ...Section III's sound-world is **static** and **contemplative**, like *Refrain*, but the electronic sounds have an inner life which makes them appear to issue **outward in straight lines** from a central source, like beams of light from a light-house. The instrumental parts here are also **spare** and **austere**. [S-K-1976]

This is only a part of the description. We can see here various concepts that we have mentioned before: movement, plot, form, temporal flow, machine, animated object,

gesture and so on. It suggests that this music accommodates these various kinds of metaphors and, therefore, is metaphorically constructed as an agent, a compositional persona. However, the most important point of these sentences is not to locate the compositional persona, but to represent how it behaves to the listener. Articulating the whole act of the persona into each stage is a ground on which the author tells of his immediate impression of the persona. For him, music behaves in various manners and with various expressions. The point of listening experience is to feel such musical grains, and the focus of critical discourse is on what words the author selects in order to represent the expression and grain of music. In most of the above-mentioned examples, the same thing can be found. The issue of how far this can be generalized as a principle of aesthetic significance in avant-garde music needs further consideration, as does its relationship to the critical discourse surrounding Classical and Romantic music. I can only assume here that metaphors of grain, like other metaphors of quality, fulfil a more important role in constructing aesthetic meaning than metaphors of process and movement.

On the other hand, I would like to differentiate the musical grain from other metaphors of quality. Remember Abbate's argument here. She locates the core of music's aesthetic meaning in the voices enunciated by an invisible body. And 'body' invokes a somatic existence as the locus of subjectivity. That is to say, the musical voice needs not only subjectivity, intention and feelings, but also a physical body, even though we can never see it. I emphasise the concept of musical grain because it is the very materiality of grain that secures the physical locus for the compositional persona. Without this materiality, musical gestures would remain merely abstract and shallow motions. But the grain suggests that music has a surface, and the surface suggests the existence of a body behind it.

Thus, the metaphorical sense of the musical grain implies an immediate contact with the musical body, a direct knowledge of the compositional persona. Perhaps this naïve sense of touching might form the basis for a highly elaborated philosophical consideration of the immediacy of musical meaning. For example, Cumming mentions as a possible foundation of musical pleasure 'a common psychological desire to overcome a need for signification and to experience the immediacy of an imagined primordial union with the Other, without the rupturing distance of the sign' (1997: 39). The issue of immediacy is argued also by Don Ihde, who uses the term

‘surroundability’:

...I suddenly find myself *immersed* in sound which *surrounds* me. The music is even so *penetrating* that my whole body reverberates, and I may find myself absorbed to such a degree that the usual distinction between the senses of inner and outer is virtually obliterated. (1976: 75)

And he formulates the pleasure or ‘darkness’ of music as ‘in the *loss of distance* which occurs in dramatically sounded musical presence’ (Ibid.: 159).

However, the concept of musical grain has another element that leads to a division between listener and music, for sensing a surface means that there is a boundary which resists the listener’s ears. Just as a physical surface resists our hands and skin, the musical grain forms an invisible but tangible boundary that divides the listener from the musical subject. We can touch and feel the surface, but we can neither break into it nor peek inside it, as we might wish. This sense of distance may be the origin of the application of the term ‘narrative’ in describing musical meaning. The concept of narrative, in general, presumes the ‘discrepancies...between story and discourse’, between the narrated story and the narrator (Maus 1991:23). When Abbate characterises the musical subject’s voices as ‘unsung’, she seems to designate the distance between the compositional persona and ourselves. By virtue of this distance, the musical surface is transformed into a boundary that divides the self from the Other. A persona whom we can touch directly and whose existence we feel very close but, at the same time, with whom we can never completely identify and can be never completely fused—this would be the basis for the representation of the Other in music.

The consideration of music and its Others is a very interesting and important issue, but to argue this matter would carry us into the realm of philosophy and away from that of aesthetic experience. We shall just point out here that the concept of musical grain has two complementary aspects, those of direct involvement and of distancing, and that these aspects create a rich foundation for blending between the compositional persona and the philosophy of the Other. And the simultaneous immediacy and distancing of the musical grain transforms a series of sounds into something that touches and moves our mind and body as we listen to music.

The fact that music has been often discussed as a fictional Other contributes to

locating the compositional persona, the hidden musical subject. The concept of the musical Other provides indirect evidence for the existence of the compositional persona, just as the composing persona does. However, it is not easy to adduce a few sentences in order to demonstrate the formation of this concept, as we have done for other local conceptual systems. We can indicate individual gestures and utterances in critical discourse. But we cannot indicate the compositional persona in a few sentences because it is too complicated a mental space. Of course, we may identify some symbolic words such as 'inner life', 'living organism' and 'powerful utterance'. However, what I refer to as the compositional persona is not simply a structured space but a hyper-blended one that includes plural mental spaces and their relationships. That is to say, it is a space that can accommodate a whole critical approach or even several such approaches to a particular piece of music. All the metaphors I have discussed embody an element of the compositional persona, but none of them can signify it completely. The concepts of movement, process and grain are to the compositional persona as behaviour, utterances and tone of voice are to our personality. The compositional persona is not a concrete image that is directly connected with some specific musical figuration, but a network that integrates individual metaphors. And it is the very multi-dimensionality of the concept that provides a fertile ground for further blending with such other realms as composition, analysis, theory, and philosophy.

### **3. Compositional Persona as a Network of Conceptual Systems**

In Part I, we examined some theoretical frameworks for the description of music's aesthetic meaning. In Part II, we saw that the aesthetic experience of avant-garde music is mediated by various kinds of mental spaces. In conclusion, we integrate these arguments under four headings, summarising how the aesthetic meaning of avant-garde music is grounded on the compositional persona.

- *A Network of Conceptual Systems*

In this chapter, we observed the conceptual systems functioning in listening to avant-garde music under three categories: movement, process and grain. The system of metaphorical transfer is not a mere bundle of routine schemata, but an

ever-developing network of all possible metaphors. Even at the local category, there are several dimensions of blending, and sounds are mapped into different mental spaces depending on the listener. For example, the concept of musical movement subsumes both the movement of physical objects and human gesture, which can be further blended with a wide range of feelings, intentions and other characteristics. Moreover, the network of blending also spreads across the categories: musical process can develop from the succession of musical movements, while the sense of grain can accompany both musical movement and process.

There is neither a clear boundary nor an absolute hierarchy between categories. For one listener, *Éclat* may appear as a labyrinth-like process; for another, as a series of glittering explosions. It is meaningless to question which metaphorical image is better in understanding this piece. The most important point is how the metaphor can transfer a mere series of tones into vivid images for the listener. Therefore, even when a listener arrives at images completely different from those Boulez talks about his work, they are still aesthetic meaning of the work, and as such merit serious attention. In the field of aesthetic imagination, in theory, any kind of metaphorical transformation is permitted.

The model of metaphorical blending, therefore, provides a good explanation of the nature of our aesthetic experience. According to this model, the temporality and variability of musical meaning can be treated as its essential nature. The process of blend is mediated by a lot of factors surrounding the listener at the moment of perception, including both historical and cultural myths, and individual situations. A particular environment activates a certain pattern of blending, but there are always other potential patterns, and another environment will activate another pattern. In so far as the environment determines the pattern of blending, the pattern will be different. Thus, it is impossible for us to talk about one and only true meaning of a piece of music.

The model of metaphorical blending can neutralise the hierarchy not only of interpretations of a piece of music but also of approaches to musical meaning. We have several ways to approach musical meaning: music aesthetics, music analysis, music theory, sociological and philosophical studies of music, and music psychology. Each activity has its own perspective—its own intentionality—towards musical phenomena. Music analysis, for example, highlights the aspect of structural

relationship in a piece of music. In the modern formalistic environment, the structural phase has been considered to be the most important and essential element of music, from which its other effects on our mind should come. However, we reach another point of view now. There is no absolute centre of meaning in the metaphorical network. From one angle, we can see one aspect of music. From another, another aspect appears. Each aspect may place restrictions on other ones, but cannot decide them completely. A piece of music is constructed by plural facets and the interaction between them. We cannot reduce the musical phenomenon to any single element. In this sense, music is essentially a multi-dimensional construction.

We can consider a musical work as a network of potential images and concepts, originally developed from the perception of a network of sounds. Each time we listen to music, certain mental spaces and certain mappings between them are activated in a certain environment. The metaphorical quality of these conceptual systems and their ability to be further transformed secure the flexibility of music's aesthetic meaning and, at the same time, its transient nature.

- *A Cyclic Blend between Concepts and Environments*

In reality, however, we tend to impute a specific meaning to a piece of music; and to consider one angle to be essential. In other words, we can see things only from one angle at a time. Intentionality, the basic structure of our consciousness, opens, on the one hand, the free space for a metaphorical blend. On the other hand, it always leads us to a restricted view. One aspect of such restrictions is what is sometimes called historical and cultural myths, which lead people to adopt a standardised attitude and evaluation.

This network of conceptual systems for music originates from the perception and cognition of a musical work. In this sense, we may say that aesthetic meaning is determined by the musical work. However, as we have seen in the case of avant-garde music, historical and cultural environments also play an important role in the construction of aesthetic meaning. The myths of modernism and of the composing persona, in particular, have a great influence on the listener.

Although both myths have been highly developed in the context of poiesis-oriented and sociological or philosophical thinking, one of their components is obviously the concept of musical process, which is a listener-oriented metaphor. Thus the environmental force works not only in the external conditions. There is



some internal element that activates it too. That is to say, the environmental—apparently external—influence partly depends on our internal ability to accept it. The composing persona is certainly a metaphor constructed historically and culturally and accepted as a form of transformation of the compositional persona by present-day listeners. In the case of avant-garde music, however, the distinction between the external and the internal becomes more vague. Sometimes, the composing persona seems to be the more basic mental space from which the compositional persona develops. There is no absolutely external element in the metaphorical network. The conceptual system is always continuous with the environment, and the act of blending continues to cycle between them.

The cyclic blend can be observed in the intentionalities to the musical work too. Much interpretations of avant-garde music is constructed by philosophical as well as aesthetic intentionality. Some interpretations of Boulez's works, for example, clearly presuppose that the music should reflect the French post-modern thought of Derrida, Barthes, and Foucault, aiming to demonstrate that Boulez presents the musical embodiment of such thought. We have eliminated such philosophical interpretations from our consideration, as a result of the prescriptive attitude to music they embody or their irrelevance to aesthetic perception. But this does not mean that the meanings constructed by non-aesthetic intentionalities have no relation to the aesthetic meaning of a piece of music. Such philosophical interpretations can influence our aesthetic intentionality to avant-garde music. In present-day musical culture, it is fairly difficult for us to listen to avant-garde music without thinking about its philosophical implications. The same applies to the relationship between the analytical and aesthetic intentionalities, between the analytical and philosophical, so on. It is this multi-dimensional and cyclic structuring of metaphor that results in the successive growth and elaboration of music's aesthetic meaning.

- *The Compositional Persona as the Locus of Aesthetic Meaning*

In our musical culture, the metaphorical networking develops towards the metaphor of the compositional persona. The compositional persona refers not to a specific mapping system between one mental space and another, but to a space in which various conceptual systems and intentionalities are assimilated. It does not have its own body, as it were, but is a locus where the various local metaphors are blended. This seems to correspond well with Abbate's 'unsung voices' and

Cumming's 'absent' subject. The compositional persona not only represents such an aspect that has been stressed in the recent post-modern context. It also grounds the traditional concepts of the musical work and musical structure. It may be said that the metaphor of the compositional persona works behind almost all issues of musical meaning in its modern context—such as the expression of feeling, structure, and enunciation. Its ability to transcend perception and to be transformed into different cognitive realms gives an inexhaustible depth and breadth to the aesthetic meaning of music.

The compositional persona is important for our aesthetic experience because it provides a ground for generating new relationships between mental spaces, which are isolated from each other before being integrated into this hyper-blended space. Indeed the concept of persona is so rich a space that it readily goes beyond the field of musical perception and cognition. Once the compositional persona is constructed, it immediately attracts various concepts in the poietic and philosophical realms, so appearing in the form of the composer's intention, the spirit of the era, or music's Others.

When music is transformed into persona, it becomes characterised by its non-materiality in comparison with the real human beings. This seems to correspond with the facts that music was praised for its non-materiality in the Romantic era, and that the phenomenologists have focussed their attention on the way in which sound surrounds and penetrates the listener. That is to say, being brought into the space of the compositional persona, music becomes an invisible Other.

- *The Compositional Persona and Avant-garde Music*

The compositional persona, including the components of musical gesture, process and grain, is not a newly constructed conceptual system, but one deeply rooted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century culture. A further expression of the compositional persona was particularly cultivated during the Romantic era: the figure of the composer as author, in other words, the composing persona. It follows from this that the aesthetics of avant-garde music is largely based on that of Classical and Romantic musical culture.

Its reliance upon this aesthetic tradition has been overlooked because the discourse surrounding avant-garde music has portrayed it as a radical resistance to

the traditional concept of music. From this poetically-oriented point of view, the conclusion presented here does not seem to match the radical nature of avant-garde music. However, placing the compositional persona at the core of musical meaning does not necessarily entail imposing traditional restrictions upon it. As we have argued earlier, the compositional persona is not a fixed conceptual system but a locus of possible relationships. It is accordingly a concept with the flexibility to correspond to quite different types of music. Therefore, it seems that the uniqueness of avant-garde music's aesthetic meaning is shown not at the level of the conceptual system itself but that of the relationships that emerge within the system.

Although this issue lies outside the scope of this thesis, it would be useful to present at least some hypotheses based on the metaphorical conceptualisation that surrounds avant-garde music, at last. Firstly, we should bear in mind the increased importance of the environmental force in avant-garde music. As we can see from the parallel with conceptual art, understanding the historical context seems to become more important in appreciating modern art than in that of any other eras and cultures. There may be some persons who could instinctively enjoy, for example, Cage's music without any explanation of his concepts or of twentieth-century music history. But most of us approach the compositional persona of the music with the help of such explanations. In the construction of avant-garde music's meaning, the metaphorical blend seems to flow much more from the composing persona to the compositional persona than in the opposite direction.

Secondly, it would be a valid assumption that the musical grain plays a more important role in avant-garde music than in Classical and Romantic music, and perhaps that it takes the place of the musical process in Classical and Romantic tradition. We can see this tendency in the critical discourse concerning avant-garde music. Focusing on grain may appear to be a current against the humanisation of music. The critics scarcely talk about emotion and feeling, such as sorrow and delight, nor dramatic stories. Instead, they mention the texture and density of sounds. We should turn our attention, however, to the fact that sounds are treated not as some kind of inorganic matter but as living substance. In other words, the listener's focus shifts here from the irresistible calls of unsung voices of invisible musical mind to the tangible impress of an invisible musical body. This assumption would be worth further close consideration because a similar kind of shift can be recognised in

twentieth-century culture in general: a shift from ego to alter egos and living worlds in phenomenology; from analytical thinking in modernism to comprehensive and morphological thinking in postmodernism; from mind to body in neuroscience.

We should not return here to the dichotomy of soul and body. What I refer to as the musical body is not the same as the traditional concept of musical structure, which stands against the emotional meaning of music. Rather, I understand it as the locus from which all of musical meaning can emerge metaphorically, including form, action, enunciation and emotional call. In this thesis, I have discussed this in terms of the compositional persona and musical Others. The model of the compositional persona, then, gives us a broader perspective that can grasp the relationship between plural realms treated as separate and opposed in traditional aesthetics.

It would be impossible, however, to depict the whole network, including both a local meaning that emerges vividly before us in our environment and the numerous alternatives behind it. However, this should not be seen as a limitation of the model of metaphorical networking. Its significance for the consideration of musical meaning is rather to secure for us a working space to concentrate upon a restricted point of view. That is to say, according to this model, we can examine a particular group of metaphors without necessarily imputing authority to them. The authorised meanings imputed to avant-garde music in modernist culture were not mistaken: that is what the music meant at the time. We can recognize such meanings, but we can now see them as representing simply a particular possibility within a developing metaphorical network. The concepts of the composing and compositional persona also enable us to recognize the historical and cultural continuity between Romanticism and the avant-garde, and provide a framework for further investigation of the conceptual systems that surround avant-garde music: its relation to the human body, for instance, might be understood in terms of complex network of interaction between the acts of listening, composing, and performing. But that is something to pursue on another occasion.

## Appendix

### The List of Reviews, Notes, and Essays on *Structure I, Éclat, Piano Piece XI, Kontakte, Concert for Piano and Orchestra, and Variations I & II*

#### Pierre Boulez

##### *Structure pour deux pianos, premier livre (1951/52)*

- B-S-1956 'London Music: Some First Performances'. *Musical Times*, (Aug 1956): 429-50.
- B-S-1957 Searle, Humphrey. 'Opera and Concert Notices: Yvonne Loriod and Pierre Boulez'. *Musical Times*, (May 1957): 271.
- B-S-1960 Ligeti, György. 'Pierre Boulez'. *Die Riehe*, 4 (English version, 1960): 36-62.
- B-S-1965 Hastings, M. D. 'Edinburgh Festival'. *Musical Opinion*, 89 (Oct 1965): 19.
- B-S-1966 Pousseur, Henri. 'The Question of Order in New Music'. *PNM*, 5/1 (1966): 93-111.
- B-S-1975 Brindle, Reginald Simith. *The New Music: The Avant-garde Since 1945*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975. pp. 25-33.
- B-S-1978 Griffiths, Paul. *Boulez*. London: Oxford University Press, 1978. pp. 21-27.
- B-S-1978 DeYoung, Lynden. 'Pitch Order and Duration Order in Boulez' *Structure Ia*'. *PNM*, 16/2 (1978): 27-33.
- B-S-1981 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music: The Avant Garde Since 1945*. London: J M Dent & Sons, 1981. pp. 57-60.
- B-S-1986a Heyworth, Peter. 'The First Fifty Years'. In *Pierre Boulez: A Symposium*, ed. W. Glock, London: Eulenburg, 1986, pp.3-39.
- B-S-1986b Rosen, Charles. 'The Piano Music'. In *Pierre Boulez: A Symposium*, ed. W. Glock, London: Eulenburg, 1986, pp.85-97.
- B-S-1987 Stacey, Peter F. *Boulez and the Modern Concept*. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1987. pp. 23-26.
- B-S-1991 Jameux, Dominique. *Pierre Boulez*. Trans. S. Bradshaw, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991: pp. 269-84.
- B-S-1992 *Pierre Boulez: Structures pour deux pianos*. (CD) Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky. Wergo WER 6011-2.
- B-S-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. pp. 37-41.

##### *Éclat*, for 15 instruments (1965); *Éclat/Multiples*, for 27 instruments (1966- )

- B-E-1965 Kohn, Karl. 'Current Chronicle: Los Angeles'. *MQ*, 51/4 (1965): 702-08.

- B-E-1966a Pirie, Peter J. 'Broadcasting: Boulez's Eclat'. *Musical Times*, 107 (Jul 1966): 620.
- B-E-1966b Porter, Andrew. 'The Prom Festival : Boulez, Carter, Ives'. *Musical Times*, 107 (Oct 1966): 883-84.
- B-E-1966c R., H. 'The Promenade Concerts'. *MR*, 27 (1966): 330-31.
- B-E/M-1970 Gill, Dominic. 'Music in London'. *Musical Times*, 111 (Dec 1970): 1239.
- B-E/M-1971a Griffiths, Paul. 'Boulez reflects: Eclat/Multiples'. *Musical Times*, 112 (Aug 1971): 753-54.
- B-E/M-1971b Griffiths, Paul. 'Music in London'. *Musical Times*, 112 (Sep 1971): 878-79.
- B-E/M-1971c Chanan, Michael. 'First Performances: Boulez's Eclat/Multiples'. *Tempo*, 95 (1970/71): 30-33.
- B-E/M-1978 Griffiths, Paul. *Boulez*. London: Oxford University Press, 1978. pp. 52-57.
- B-E-1979a *Crumb: Night Music; Boulez: Eclat; Dlugoszewski: Fire Fragile Flight; Berio-Weill: Surabaya Johnny*. (LP) Orchestra of Our Time, Cond: Joel Thome. Candide, CE 31113.
- B-E/M-1979b Griffiths, Paul. 'Music in London'. *Musical Times*, 120 (Dec 1979): 1022.
- B-E/M-1981 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music: The Avant Garde Since 1945*. London: J M Dent & Sons, 1981. pp. 276-81..
- B-E/M-1984 Hayes, Malcolm. 'Recordings: Boulez: Eclat-Multiples; Rituel (CBS 74109)'. *Tempo*, 148 (Mar 1984): 30-32.
- B-E/M-1986 Bradshaw, Susan. 'The Instrumental and Vocal Music: Eclat; Eclat/Multiples'. In *Pierre Boulez: A Symposium*, ed. W. Glock, London: Eulenburg, 1986, pp. 200-06.
- B-E/M-1990a *Boulez: Rituel; Eclat/Multiples*. (CD) Ensemble InterContemporain, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Cond: Pierre Boulez. Sony, SMK 45839.
- B-E/M-1990b MacDonald, Calum. 'Recordings: Boulez: Rituel; Eclat/Multiples (Sony SK45839)'. *Tempo*, 175 (Dec 1990): 51-53.
- B-E/M-1991 Jameux, Dominique. *Pierre Boulez*. Trans. S. Bradshaw, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991. pp. 335-42.
- B-E/M-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. pp. 214-17.

## Karlheinz Stockhausen

### *Piano Piece XI (1956)*

- S-P-1959 Helm, Everett. 'Current Chronicle: Germany'. *MQ*, 45/1 (1959): 100-04.
- S-P-1968 Smalley, Roger. 'Music in London: Stockhausen'. *Musical Times*, 109 (Apr 1968): 350-51.
- S-P-1969 Smalley, Roger. 'Stockhausen's Piano Pieces'. *Musical Times*, 110 (Jan 1969): 30-32.
- S-P-1972 Walsh, Stephen. 'Recitals: Stockhausen'. *Musical Times*, 113 (Jan 1972): 67.
- S-P-1975 Harvey, Jonathan. *The Music of Stockhausen*. London: Faber and Faber, 1975. pp. 77-78.

- S-P-1976 Maconie, Robin. *The Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen*. London: Marion Boyars, 1976. pp. 100-05.
- S-P-1987 *Stockhausen: Klavierstücke I-XI*. (CD) Herbert Henck, Wergo: WER 60135/36-50.
- S-P-1989 Burge, David. 'Stockhausen's Klavierstücke Revisited'. *Keyboard*, 15 (May 1989): 104-07.
- S-P-1992 Kurtz, Michael. *Stockhausen: A Biography*. Trans. Richard Toop, London: Faber and Faber, 1992. pp. 86-93.
- S-P-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. pp. 104-05.

*Kontakte*, for electronic sounds, piano and percussion (1959-60)

- S-K-1960 Stadlen, Peter. 'The ISCM Festival at Cologne'. *Musical Times*, 101 (Aug 1960): 484-86.
- S-K-1963 Cohn, Arthur. 'Stockhausen's *Kontakte* on DGG'. *American Record Guide*, 29/12 (1963): 952-55.
- S-K-1968a Hopkins, G. W. 'Stockhausen, Form, and Sound'. *Musical Times*, 109 (Jan 1968): 60-62.
- S-K-1968b Walsh, Stephen. 'Radio'. *Musical Times*, 109 (Feb 1968): 162.
- S-K-1968c Sadie, Stanley. 'Music in London: New Music'. *Musical Times*, 109 (Mar 1968): 251-52.
- S-K-1968d Walsh, Stephen. 'Drowned with Tape'. *Music & Musicians*, 16 (Apr 1968): 47.
- S-K-1974a Griffiths, Paul. 'Music in London: 20<sup>th</sup>-Century'. *Musical Times*, 115 (Feb 1974): 153-55.
- S-K-1974b Jack, Adrian. 'Modern'. *Music & Musicians*, 22 (Feb 1974): 44-47.
- S-K-1975 Harvey, Jonathan. *The Music of Stockhausen*. London: Faber and Faber, 1975. pp. 88-91.
- S-K-1976 Maconie, Robin. *The Works of Karlheinz Stockhausen*. London: Marion Boyars, 1976. pp. 134-45.
- S-K-1978 Roberts, David. 'Music in London: Proms'. *Musical Times*, 119 (Oct 1978): 877.
- S-K-1992a Kurtz, Michael. *Stockhausen: A Biography*. Trans. Richard Toop, London: Faber and Faber, 1992. pp. 100-04.
- S-K-1992b *Stockhausen: Kontakte*. (CD) David Tudor (pf), Christoph Caskel (perc), Wergo: WER 6009-2.
- S-K-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. pp. 142-45.

**John Cage**

*Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1957-58)

- C-C-1968 Mann, William. 'Music in London: Arts Laboratory'. *Musical Times*, 109 (Mar 1968): 252-53.
- C-C-1971 Limmert, Erich. 'Das Musikfest für junge Leute in Hannover'. *Melos*, 38 (Mar 1971): 109.
- C-C-1989 Hughes, David. 'Dances on a Plane'. *Musical Times*, 130 (Nov 1989): 676-77.
- C-C-1992 *The Barton Workshop Plays John Cage*. (CD) Barton Workshop,

- Etcetera Records: KTC 3002.
- C-C-1993a Pritchett, James. *The Music of John Cage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. pp. 112-23.
- C-C-1993b *Cage: Concert for Piano and Orchestra; Atlas Eclipticalis*. (CD) Orchestra of the SEM Ensemble, Petr Kotik (cond), Joseph Kubera (pf), Wergo: WER 6216-2.
- C-C-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. pp. 97-98.

#### *Variations I (1958)*

- C-V1-1969 Stuckensmidt, H. H. 'Bitterer Schönberg, süsser Tschaikowsky'. *Melos*, 36 (May 1969): 220-21.
- C-V1&2-1971 Heindrichs, Heinz-Albert. 'Vielfalt und Konzentration bei den Wittener Kammermusiktagen 1971'. *Melos*, 38 (Jul-Aug 1971): 299-302.
- C-V1&2-1993 Pritchett, James. *The Music of John Cage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. pp. 135-37.

#### *Variations II (1961)*

- C-V2-1968 Frankenstein, Alfred. 'Electronic Music: Masterpieces and Other Pieces'. *High Fidelity*, 18/2 (1968): 42, 45.
- C-V2-1970a Rixmann, Gerd. 'Frankfurt aus der Suche zu neuer Freiheit'. *Melos*, 37 (Mar 1970): 107-08.
- C-V2-1970b Hohlweg, Rudolf. 'In Avignon wimmelt es von Jugend'. *Melos*, 37 (Oct 1970): 419-20.
- C-V2-1981 DeLio, Thomas. 'John Cage's *Variations II*'. *PNM*, 19/2 (1980-81): 351-71.
- C-V2-1991 Teitelbaum, Richard. "'Live" Electronic Music'. In *John Cage*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz, New York: Da Capo Press, 1991. pp. 139-42.
- C-V2-1994 *The New York School 2*. (CD) Hat Hut Records: hat ART CD 6146.
- C-V2-1995 Griffiths, Paul. *Modern Music and After*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. p. 201.



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