

## THE QUOTATION IN TIBERIU OLAH'S *SINFONIA GIOCOSA* (!?)

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**SUMMARY.** The study starts with a brief debate on the nature of a text as interference space of preexisting texts or, on the contrary, as an original and autonomic reality. Different aspects of music quotation are then considered: cognoscibility, defamiliarization, incorporation of cultural associations and meanings, visibility, position and integration. The case study (analysis of Tiberiu Olah's *Symphony No.4*) reveals an interesting way of incorporating the quotation. The main quotation, deriving from *Ode to Joy*, is clearly presented only in the end of the Symphony, although its deep structure (the trichord) constitutes the basis of the whole work. Even this late appearance is not a simple quotation; the Beethovenian fragment is transformed, the affirmation turning into a painful and uncertain interrogation. Beside the famous quotation, there are many others, more or less audible, coming from a variety of authors and music spheres (opera, religious music, chamber music, patriotic song, film music). Despite their diversity, the quotations are fastened by a common DNA (the trichord), the work acquiring thus a teleological, centripetal, ordering function.

**Keywords:** quotation, intertextuality, *Ode to Joy*, trichord, Tiberiu Olah

### **The text - interference space of preexisting texts or original and autonomic reality**

“Everything is connected”, says Barenboim in his recent book<sup>2</sup>. And the new theories emerged in physics in the century that just ended demonstrate essentially the same thing, paving the way for a spectacular paradigm shift which, among other things, overturns one of the fundamental theses of classical physics: the observer's independence (*the subject*) in relation to the observed reality (*the object*). Both the theories of relativity and the principle of indeterminism prove the impossibility of separating the

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<sup>2</sup> Daniel Barenboim: *Everything is connected: The Power of Music*, 2008, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, Great Britain.

subject from the object, reality being the result of the interaction created between the two<sup>3</sup>.

In this context, the emergence of the theory of intertextuality – coming from the territory of semiotics and literature (Julia Kristeva<sup>4</sup>, Michel Foucault<sup>5</sup>, Roland Barthes<sup>6</sup>, Harold Bloom<sup>7</sup>) – seems to have been a necessary and ineluctable consequence. At the heart of the new theory resides the idea of *relation* (“[L]a signification du langage poétique s’élabore dans la relation”<sup>8</sup>), involving a multitude of branches and derivations. To point only those relating directly to the text, it is about the relation between a text and other texts, between author and the texts covered by the latter and, perhaps most important, between text and reader.

In Julia Kristeva or Roland Barthes’s visions, any text is composed of a multitude of quotations: “[T]out texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d’un autre texte”<sup>9</sup>; “The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture”<sup>10</sup>. And the melting pot, in which all text elements are fused and unified, is no longer represented, in Barthes’s conception, by the creator, but by the receiver, which thus acquires the status of *pivot*: “there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> See Mark Delaere, P. H. Daly, *Mutations in Systems in the Natural Sciences and Music in the First Half of the Twentieth Century, International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, Vol.21, No.1 (Jun., 1990), 3-28, published by the Croatian Musicological Society. See also the study realized by Weizmann Institute of Science from Israel, published by E. Buks et al. in *Nature*, Vol. 391, Febr. 1998, 871-874, in which it’s demonstrated that, at the level of particles, the act of observation affects reality. See also the so-called “observator effect”.

<sup>4</sup> The term was used for the first time by Julia Kristeva, in the essay *Le Mot, le dialogue et le roman*, 1966, republished in J. Kristeva, *Séméiotiké : recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Seuil, Paris, 1969.

<sup>5</sup> Michel Foucault, *What is An Author?*, conference presented to the French Society of Philosophy in 22.02.1969.

<sup>6</sup> Roland Barthes, *The Death of the Author* (1968), in *Image - Music - Text*. Ed. and transl. Stephen Heath, Hill and Wang, New York, 1977, 142-148.

<sup>7</sup> Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1973), *A Map of Misreading* (Oxford University Press, New York, 1975).

<sup>8</sup> J. Kristeva, *Pour une sémiologie des paragrammes*, in *Séméiotiké: recherches pour une sémanalyse*, 126.

<sup>9</sup> J. Kristeva, *Le mot, le dialogue et le roman*, in *Séméiotiké: recherches pour une sémanalyse*, 85.

<sup>10</sup> R. Barthes, 146.

<sup>11</sup> R. Barthes, 148.

Between the absolute originality of the artistic work and the text as omnipresence of the quotation, the truth is, as always, in the middle<sup>12</sup>. As quantum is both wave and corpuscle, as each of us is a whole and also a part<sup>13</sup>, any text (musical, in our case) is an agglomeration of quotations/takings-over/influences and also a new structure, more or less original and coherent than thereof<sup>14</sup>. And the author's central place cannot be taken by the receiver, but can be shared with this latter, the "hard core" being rather represented by a triadic relation (author-opera-receiver), recalling of Pierce's semiotic triangle<sup>15</sup>.

Moreover, as most important ideas, the notion of the receiver's crucial role is not new<sup>16</sup>; to provide an example of a fairly recent date, more than a hundred years ago, the esthetician and music critic Eduard Hanslick drew attention to the role played by the receiver in decantation of meaning<sup>17</sup>, outpacing with subtle intuition some of the conclusions that neurologist Antonio Damasio would reach regarding the sensory- physiological- emotional- rational interdependence<sup>18</sup>. Neither Hanslick's observations are new, the empiricist philosopher John Locke noting in 1690 that objects have only a few primary qualities ("solidity, extension, figure, mobility, motion or rest, number, bulk, texture, motion, size, and situation"<sup>19</sup>), the others, secondary, not residing in the objects themselves, but in the different sensations they produce in us through the mediation of these primary qualities.

<sup>12</sup> See the principle of complementarity, of the coexistence of opposites.

<sup>13</sup> Werner Heisenberg, *Partea și întregul (The Part and the Whole)*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Ravel urged young composers to imitate because originality (if any) shall come to light by itself.

<sup>15</sup> Regarding the importance of ternary structuring, see Basarab Nicolescu.

<sup>16</sup> As intertextuality theoreticians assert, what seems new is nearly always the rediscovery / reformulation of something already existing; completely new ideas are *rara avis*, they just migrate from a visible area to a shaded one, in order to return with force in the foreground at a given moment, following a spiral or cyclicity of the yin-yang type.

<sup>17</sup> "Music may reproduce phenomena such as whispering, storming, roaring, but the feelings of love or anger have only a subjective existence. Definite feelings and emotions are unsusceptible of being embodied in music. Our emotions have no isolated existence in the mind. (...) They are, on the contrary, dependent on physiological and pathological conditions, on notions and judgments (...). Only by virtue of ideas and judgments – unconscious though we may be of them when our feelings run high – can an indefinite state of mind pass into a definite feeling. (...) The colour, the sound, or the plant as such, are not related to our emotions, but only to the meanings we ourselves attach to them. (...) The definite character of our emotions implies a psycho-physiological relation" (Eduard Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music*, London, Novello and Company, 1891; transl. by Gustav Cohen; 33-40).

<sup>18</sup> Antonio Damasio, *Eroarea lui Descartes; emoțiile, rațiunea și creierul uman (Descartes's Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain, 1994)*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Ed. P.H. Nidditch; Oxford University Press, The Clarendon Edition of the Works of John Locke, 1975, Book II, Chapter VIII, 9-10. See also Robert A. Wilson, *Locke's Primary Qualities*, in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 40, No. 2, April 2002, 201-228.

Consequently, this study shall try to overcome certain dichotomies, canvassing them in the spirit of inclusion. The musical text shall be regarded both as interference space of preexisting texts and original and autonomic reality. The analysis shall start from the purely musical data offered by the score (let us say 'objective data'), but shall pass, in the endeavor to decant an extra-musical sense, both through the filter of the composer's certain statements, and by that of correlations inspired to the receiver, in the awareness that, on the one hand, any analytical approach is a 'work-in-progress' and a subjective assumption, tributary to temperament, education and personal experience of the analyst, but on the other hand, there is that 'universe of universals'<sup>20</sup> thanks to which, be it even partially, the meaning of an artwork can be decrypted also under the 'general human'<sup>21</sup>, transgressing the inevitable individual variations and identifying their common denominator.

### Aspects of the presence of quotation in musical texts

In the attempt to trace the main coordinates of quotations in a musical text, I took into consideration six issues. Three of them seem to be defining in obtaining the balance between the part and the whole: *cognoscibility*, *defamiliarization* and assuming the *ensemble of associations and meanings* incorporated by the quotation.

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<sup>20</sup> Leonard B. Meyer, *A Universe of Universals*, in *The Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Winter, 1998), 3-25.

<sup>21</sup> Delimiting the meanings connotative (subjective) from denotative (cultural objective) in music seems a challenging, if not impossible enterprise. Ch. Rosen's claims that in music there is no denotation stage ("Musical phonemes act directly without first being strained through an abstract system of denotation". See Charles Rosen, *Art has its Reasons*, in *New York Review of Books*, 17 June 1971, 38). Yet, the existence of some patterns in perception, affectivity and thinking, especially in the case of patterns circumscribed to a certain cultural area, leads to the decantation of some meanings shared in common, based on which musical communication is built. The theory of universal facial expressions is revealing in this regard (see P. Ekman, P.; W. V. Friesen, *Constants across cultures in the face and emotion*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (17), 1971, 124-129; P. Ekman; W.V. Friesen; M. O'Sullivan; et al, *Universals and cultural differences in the judgments of facial expressions of emotion*, in *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology* 53 (4), 1987, 712-717), whose contestants refer rather to the accuracy of the results and less to substance assertions.

Perhaps future research should also include the fact (acknowledged in neurology) that any thought or emotion determines not only a chemical response that remains stuck within the borders of each body, but also a bioelectrical one that goes beyond the boundaries of the body, forming an energetic field (electromagnetic) which is propagated in space independently of our will and whose influence is exercised on all those with whom it comes into contact (see Dumitru Constantin Dulcan, *În căutarea sensului pierdut: Creierul și noua spiritualitate*, Ed. Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, 29-61). We can say that, embodying the principle of analogy and isomorphism, we are, just like quanta, a kind of strange mixture between wave and corpuscle.

With regards to the first aspect (*cognoscibility*), going back to the perspective offered by J. Kristeva and R. Barthes (the quotation as omnipresence), I think it is necessary to ask ourselves: Does all the elements that can be identified as being “taken over”<sup>22</sup> simultaneously meet the condition of “quotation”? I think that, in order for a structure to be perceived as a quotation, *its origins must be unique and clearly traceable*, beyond the level of 'common place' and placing themselves on an upper plateau either in terms of extent (phrases shall be grasped as 'quotations' sooner than cells or motifs) or in terms of phrase profile pithiness (in which case there can be recognized as 'quotations' even smaller units, such as cells or motifs). From the perspective of source uniqueness, in traditional music (oral) we cannot talk about quotation, but rather about a 'loan' as take-over (variant) of some patterns/formulas. So do manifest the take-overs discernable in the early consistent forms of music laid on paper that have made their way until nowadays: the Christian liturgical chants from the Middle Ages. It was not until the Renaissance that the 'loan' gradually became 'quotation', composers often starting from an *initium* with clearly traceable identity and generator role, proving their skills by its elaboration<sup>23</sup>. As the temporal compass between the composer and the quotationd music widens, creators increasingly tend to turn to quotation as a way of declaring their respect, appreciation for the author/source (as happens, for example, in the case of themes with variations built on the same principle of the generating initium) or to assert their filiation, family or cultural ancestry (such as the Bach 'dynasty', in which, by taking over fragments from the musical heritage of predecessors, family members strengthened their awareness of being part of an inseparable whole<sup>24</sup>). Of course, the degree of cognoscibility is variable, no quotation being identified as such by all potential receptors<sup>25</sup>.

However, no matter how familiar the quotation would be to us, its reception shall be made in a context different from the original, which will open the way to *otherness*. Therefore, any quotation will be a hypostatization of the couple *familiarity-otherness*. While the '*familiar*' is attached to the first aspect (cognoscibility), forming a common platform between the composer

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<sup>22</sup> The definition of quotation given by David Metzger (“the placement of parts of a pre-existent piece in a new composition or performance”, in *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, chapter IV (“The promise of the past”), Cambridge University Press, 2003, 384) remains rather ambiguous in this regard.

<sup>23</sup> J. Peter Burkholder, article *Borrowing*, in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London: Macmillan Publishing, 2001, Vol. IV, 5-41.

<sup>24</sup> Karl Geiringer, *Artistic interrelations of the Bachs*, in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Jul., 1950), Oxford University Press, 363-374 (“a loyalty that made each member of the family (...) feel a part of an inseparable unit”, 374).

<sup>25</sup> John Fallas, *Into the New Century: Recent Holloway and the Poetics of Quotation*, in *Tempo*, Vol. 61, No. 242 (Oct., 2007), 2-10; published by Cambridge University Press: “Any given quotation will be recognized by some listeners and not by others”, 5.

and (certain) receptors, the *otherness* underlies the second aspect: 'defamiliarization'<sup>26</sup>. Essential process and even purpose of the artistic endeavor, defamiliarization means proposing a different perspective, a different way of perception; the means within composer's reach vary from the simple insertion of a quotation, to deformation, creation of new connections, revelation of some unexpected potentialities etc.

The third aspect relates to the conscious, intentional use of the quotation in its double hypostasis of *strictly musical structure*, but also of *ensemble of cultural associations and meanings*, as David Metzger underlines: "When a musician borrows from a piece, he or she draws upon not only a melody but also the cultural associations of that piece. (...) Those manipulations provide a means to comment on cultural topics and to reconfigure fundamental cultural relationships"<sup>27</sup>. In this respect, the twentieth century was witness to a dramatic shift in perspective: if, in the 50s, the integral serialism, in its vectorial evolution, rejected any dialogue with the past, starting with the '60s, there was a reaction of opposite direction, recuperative, the quotation becoming a trend sometimes taken to extremes by the technique of collage. One of the chapters of Metzger's book is dedicated to studying how composers like Stockhausen (in *Hymnen*, 1967) and Berio (in the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement of *Sinfonia*, 1968) incorporated the quotation (in the version of agglomerations rather attachable to the technique of collage) wanting to (re)establish a dialogue between past and present<sup>28</sup>, through the creation of familiar landmarks that would stimulate, "invigorate auditors and save them from the passivity to which society forces them"<sup>29</sup>. But the conscious use of the quotation's extra-musical valences involves not only inserting it in the form of an audible 'lifebelt'. It is necessary to create relationships, connections, a ratio between the quotation (part) and the work (as whole). And the ratio is established by formulating an attitude that can range from assertion (the quotation represents the work, supports its meaning, resonates with it) to denial (the quotation is deformed, parodied, placed in a divergent context) or problematization (reflection, debate, taking into discussion – the most

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<sup>26</sup> The term was first used by Viktor Shlovsky (1917), in the essay "Art as technique". Shlovsky considers that *defamiliarization* (seeing in another way what seems familiar) is, more or less, the aim of any art, drawing the source of the idea back to Aristotle ("poetic language must appear strange and wonderful"). See V. Shlovsky, in *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, Ed. Lee T. Lemon, Marion J. Reis, 783.

<sup>27</sup> Metzger, quotation in Carl Wiens, the review of the book *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, in *Music Theory Spectrum*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Fall 2008), 382-393.

<sup>28</sup> See David Metzger, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-Century Music*, chapter IV ("The promise of the past"), 108-159.

<sup>29</sup> L. Berio, quotation in D. Metzger, 136 ("invigorate listeners and rescue them from the passivity forced upon them by society").

germinating attitude in the defamiliarization process). Insufficient clarification of the relationship between quotation and work indicates a dilution, an imprecision of compositional will/intention, leading to the perception of quotation as mechanically, quasi-arbitrary, randomly incorporated reality<sup>30</sup>.

In addition to these three aspects I deemed as defining, I think other three need to be considered: *visibility*, *positioning* and the *degree of integration/expansion* of the quotation.

With regard to quotation *visibility*, the opinions of researchers are divided. While Metzger believes that *prominence* is a *sine qua non* quality of quotation<sup>31</sup>, Ph. Keppler leans only on what I would call the case-limit, of the exclusive use of quotation, in the form of a *secret comment* targeted at a restricted and select sample of audience<sup>32</sup>.

Referring to quotation *positioning* (initial exposure), we shall identify several situations: as a starting point (initium) or as 'stage'/phase occurring along the way or as destination. If in the first hypostasis, the quotation generally acquires the function of a *motto*/subtitle, in the version of the final exposure can also fulfill the role of coagulant element, of retrospective decantation of the meaning (reminiscent of the subtitles suggested at the end of Debussy's *Preludes*).

Finally, if we consider the *degree of integration, absorption, expansion* of the quotation in the musical work, it results a scale ranging from the episodic use to treating as generating, determinant and 'contaminating' element of the whole speech. Yet we cannot talk about the degree of integration/expansion without correlating it with the *number* and *heterogeneity* of quotations. It is true that any fragment of the speech is an 'integral part' thereof. But a musical work has limited absorption capacity, determined by the balance between unity and heterogeneity. In order to make communication possible, "the supreme principle of any idea rendering is the law of comprehensibility", says Webern<sup>33</sup>; and for comprehensibility to be achieved, *coherence* is needed, translated in the balance between predictability and surprise, between similarity and diversity, as a reflection

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<sup>30</sup> "Proof of borrowing is incomplete until a purpose can be demonstrated. If no function for the borrowed material can be established, its use remains a mystery and the resemblance may be coincidental. Reliance on the borrowed material as a theme, structural element or point of prominence makes its function clear." (J. Peter Burkholder, 8).

<sup>31</sup> Metzger, 384: "Quotation is also set apart by the prominence of borrowing, which is made to stick out from the surrounding music".

<sup>32</sup> In this form, the quotation becomes a compositional artifice characteristic of the romantic era. See Philip Keppler, Jr, *Some Comments on Musical Quotation*, in *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Oct., 1956), 473-485 (474, 478), Oxford University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Anton Webern, *Calea spre muzica nouă* (1960), Ed. Muzicală, București, 1988, 23.

(mimesis) of the world order, logic<sup>34</sup>. If, in principle, the more the thematic material is reduced, the greater the coherence of the musical discourse shall be<sup>35</sup> (provided that relations between elements are discernible not only through the study of the score, but also by the receiver, through the simple audition), then an extreme diversity of the material shall inevitably lead to the decline in coherence, despite the cognoscibility of the inserted fragments. As L. B. Meyer remarked, the chefs-d'oeuvre "persuade and convince not because they are validated general propositions about the phenomenal world, but because the patterns and relationships they present possess internal integrity and autonomous coherence"<sup>36</sup>. From the perspective of creating unity and coherence, of 'organic' integration and not just formal, the abundance of quotations dooms them to the status of foreign objects, instruments increasing heterogeneity and entropy<sup>37</sup>. Thus, works like those mentioned above (*Hymnen* by Stockhausen; the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement from *Sinfonia* by Berio) fail, in the opinion of Susan Bradshaw, in a form of musical cannibalism, in which musical fragments from diverse sources are swallowed un-chewed and then regurgitated<sup>38</sup>. More gentle, but equally unconvinced by the sustainability of the musical endeavor, Metzger comments as follows: "What is left at the end of *Hymnen* is a monumental emptiness. (...) What is left in the final measure of the third movement of Berio's *Sinfonia*, mere threads. All (...) works conclude with depleted, if not erased, forms of the past"<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Olguța Lupu, *Tiberiu Olah – Croquis in a mirror. Correspondences between his Correspondences between his musicological ideas and his activity as a composer*, in *Musicology Today*, No.13, 2013, 9.

<sup>35</sup> "Developing from a *single* main idea everything that follows, this is the strongest coherence" (Webern, 43). "Cohesion is, of course, the one that cannot miss from anywhere, when something must make sense. Cohesion, in general, means to bring as much connection as possible of parties between them" (Webern, 52).

<sup>36</sup> L. B. Meyer, *Concerning the Sciences, the Arts and the Humanities*, in *Spheres of Music*, the University of Chicago Press, 2000, Chicago, 24.

<sup>37</sup> "In the last forty years the extensive use of musical quotation and juxtaposition of contrasting styles has created an unprecedented level of heterogeneity in the musical language". Catherine Losada, *Between Modernism and Postmodernism: Strands of Continuity in Collage Compositions by Rochberg, Berio, and Zimmermann*, in *Music Theory Spectrum*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Spring 2009), 57-100 (57).

<sup>38</sup> Susan Bradshaw, *Class of '45*, in *The Musical Times*, Vol. 136, No. 1825 (Mar., 1995), 139-141 ("It is difficult to avoid a suspicion that the decline of modernism as a certain pathway to the future was indirectly responsible for the onset of a nostalgic form of musical cannibalism - of a tendency to ingest bits and pieces of the past (or the ethno-elsewhere) before regurgitating them as (at worst) an unabsorbed mish-mash of stolen traditions even less honest (because more knowing) than the poverty-stricken recyclings of the pop music industry", 141).

<sup>39</sup> Metzger, 152.



### **Case study.**

#### **The quotation in *Sinfonia giocosa* (!?) by Tiberiu Olah**

Completed in 1991 (as the *Obelisk for Wolfgang Amadeus*), Olah's fourth *Symphony* bears an exciting and at the same time problematizing title, the exclamation and question marks already representing a first step in the aforesaid defamiliarization process, as an assertion ("*Sinfonia giocosa*") and its questioning are brought face to face (by the punctuation marks "!!?" inscribed by Olah himself in the musical score manuscript from the Library of the Romanian Composers' and Musicologists' Union).

Seen in the light of the musicologist-receiver, the work is not easily decrypted, requiring repeated auditions alternated with the study of the score, in a process of gradual discovery, along which the thrill of encountering with music does not dissipate, but increases in intensity.

*Sinfonia Giocosa* is composed of three parts, between which there is no tempo contrast, this being maintained throughout the work. From the very first audition, the listener enters the game familiar-unfamiliar, the parts II and III creating, on the one hand, the feeling of new, and on the other – of "déjà écoute". Only the call to the musical score can explain this contradictory feeling: as in other works by Olah (*Obelisk for Wolfgang Amadeus*, but also former works, such as *Timpul cerbilor*, the cycle *Armonii*, *Rime I pentru Revelația Timpului*, *Rime II*, *Sonata pentru vioară, percuție și bandă*, *Incontri spaziali* etc.), the first two movements are conceived as complementary parts, built on heterophony grounds, being reunited by overlapping in the last movement. The procedure specific to Olah, is an evolution in spiral and can be regarded as an *extensive quotation*, in integrality and simultaneity, of the first two movements, the two complementary halves forming together a reality perceived as new and familiar at the same time. Although apparently spatial, overlapping is one of the favourite means through which Olah organizes musical time, thus revealing the consensus of apparently different entities. The "tuning" of multiple layers can be viewed as a metaphor of the harmonization with ourselves, with our past, with the universe that surrounds us. In this process, memory plays a key role, converting, by connections created with earlier phases of the discourse, the vectorial in circular, the diachronic in spatial stratification.

From the viewpoint of the musical material, the first elements with which the listener comes into contact are different variants of diatonic trichords, originally exposed as adjacent steps, subsequently appearing as scattered, spatialized in different octaves (a technique also characteristic of Olah). The three hypostases in which the diatonic trichord is exposed in the first part exhaust the combinatorial possibilities in the equal-tempered European system: semitone-tone; tone-semitone; tone-tone. Without doubt, all the three structures sound familiar, however not as quotations (with

identifiable source), but as general patterns, sound archetypes. The construction logic of the work is disclosed only in the Coda of the last part, where there are inserted, with maximum visibility, two sentences from the *Ode to Joy* (the end of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*) – e.g. 1.

**E.g. 1**

Beethoven, final movement

*Allegro assai*



Olah, 3rd movement, m. 126-136

♩ = 60



Placed directly on the original sounds, the two phrases are rhythmically deformed by augmentations and, decisively, by the insertion of interruptions (pauses) that give the impression of a gradual, burdensome reconstruction, as if sprung from one's depths, and also creates a space for reflection and interrogation.

The use of quotation with multiple cultural meanings is not a new experience for Olah. After he had projected extensive architectures starting from archetypal structures (proto-cells of folk origin in *Cantata pe texte ceangăiești* or in *Infinite Column*; major triad and pentatonic in *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Symphony "Adventures with major triads and pentatonics"* or in the *Quintet "Adventures with major triads"*), the composer explores, in various expressive registers, the idea of incorporating the quotation: *PaROdiSSINlana* (1973), conceived as a musical joke on themes of Rossini; *Metamorfoze pe un Capriciu de Paganini* (1980); *Harmonies IV* (1981), citing an excerpt from the *Chamber Symphony* by Enescu. Yet the opuses of the last period distinguish themselves through the special dramatic force, Olah resorting to musical phrases drawn from the works of Beethoven or Mozart, which become the constructive basis for significant meta-stylistic approaches: *The 3<sup>d</sup> Symphony* - 1989, *The 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony – Giocosa (!?)* - 1991, *Obelisk for Wolfgang Amadeus* - 1991<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> O. Lupu, *Tiberiu Olah*, in *Actualitatea muzicală*, No.12/2012, 9.



Thus, the quotation acquires the value of a *motto*, which is not asserted, as usual, at the beginning of the work, but is brought as a haven, as the key to (re)reading the whole, being in fact a concealed initium, whose generator role is decrypted only at the end. The entire symphony can be regarded as playing the role of a Beethovenian introduction, at the end of which there arises the theme, which emerges as a convergence point, of reuniting the beginning with the end, having simultaneously generative, integrative and synthetic capacities. In this way a formidable organicity of construction is revealed, whose cohesion (detectable both auditory and by the study of the score) recalls of the holographic principle, as a two-way reflection between micro and macro universe.

But surprises do not end here. Re-auditing and researching the score reveal the incorporation also of other quotations, less obvious than the fragment from *Ode to Joy*, but still quite explicit.

The first is the beginning of the overture to the opera *La Forza del Destino* by Verdi, which begins with one of the already exposed trichords (e.g. 3):

**E.g. 3**

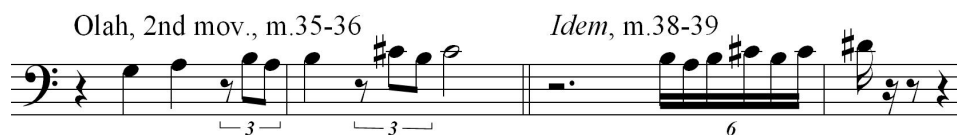


The second, undetectable at auditory level, but only through research of the score, is a strange hybrid of the two famous motifs of *String Quartet No.16 in F major, Op.135 (Muss es sein? Es muss sein!)*, the beginning of Franck' *Symphony* and, possibly, the Enescian musical cryptogram (E-Es-C or G-E-Es-C) (e.g. 4):

**E.g. 4**

The following is a self-citation, the fragment “The trumpeters rend the air” (Răsună trompeții) from the music for the film *Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul)*, being a genuine and unmistakable musical autograph (e.g. 5):

**E.g. 5**



Olah, the suite "Mihai Viteazul", "Rasună trompeții"



Further, the revelations came not from personal observations, but through Olah's own statements in the interview realized by Monica Cengher<sup>42</sup>, in which he speaks, concerning this symphony, not just about the fragment from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, but also about the *Genovese Psalm No. 42*, about the phrase "Cheerful earthly Paradise" from the old *Romanian Royal Anthem* or about the correlation between the aforesaid *Genovese Psalm* and the first 8 sounds of a well-known song, composed by Chaplin.

Bewildering. I had never heard about the *Genovese Psalms*, I did not know too many songs composed by Chaplin, nor the former *Romanian Royal Anthem*. I learned that the *Genovese Psalms* represent one of the largest collections of chants of the Reformed Church, made during several decades in the sixteenth century (Clément Marot being among the authors), completed in 1562 and used in Geneva as the main collection of chants in the Reformed Church. The first 8 sounds of Psalm No. 42 (on the words "As the deer pants for streams of water") are the following (e.g.6):

**E.g. 6**



Chaplin's song starting with the same sounds is *Smile* (e.g. 7):

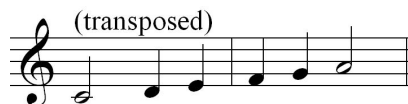
**E.g. 7**



<sup>42</sup> Tiberiu Olah at 70 years - Music impels to introspection.

As for the *Romanian Royal Anthem*, the indicated melodic line ("Cheerful earthly Paradise") has a hexachord path as well, but ascending (e.g. 8):

**E.g. 8**



Consequently, the common denominator of the three indicated sources is the hexachord, representing, nonarbitrary of course, the juxtaposition of the two trichords.

These three quotations seem to be falling within the exclusivist category. For the 8 common sounds of *Genovese Psalm No. 42* and Chaplin's song *Smile* (of which the last 6 represent, at the same time, the recurrent reading of the verse from the *Royal Anthem*) occur with utmost discretion, at celesta, in a structure<sup>43</sup> that seems a heterophony extension of one of the Beethovenian theme motifs (especially as it appears transposed in D Major) – e.g. 9. The repeated auditions did nothing but confirm the fact that the fragment is undetectable at auditory level, in which case the gesture of its insertion could be interpreted either as a way of addressing to a very select sample of connoisseurs (lecturers of the score and not simply auditors) or (rather) as dialogue between the composer himself and music itself.

**E.g. 9**



<sup>43</sup> Similarly, the 6 sounds of the verse "Cheerful earthly Paradise" are not cited anywhere as such, but occur (possibly) in two hypostases (in addition to the recurrent one, already specified): as anhemitonic trichords, exactly on the same sounds, in successive sections of the symphony (2<sup>nd</sup> mov., m.32-33); as hexachord line, but to which the optimistic, expansive note of the original (ascending movement and the intervals of Major 2<sup>nd</sup>, Major 3<sup>rd</sup>, Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>, Major 6<sup>th</sup>) appears as if converted into its complementary or its negation, by the descending movement of a Locrian hexachord, extended through the addition of a diminished 7<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> mov., m.86-89).

Knowing that Olah is “the advocate of a logical, causal, directional discourse”<sup>44</sup>, in which every compositional decision has to be a justified consequence of the previous audible path, being able to answer to the “unforgiving *why?*”<sup>45</sup>, I wondered, of course, what would be the purpose of this multitude of quotations, some declared and some not, some visible, others only ciphered in the concealed folds of the score?

Built concentrically, the work starts from the tragic and dramatic connotations (expressed through the motif of *Force of Destiny*, assertion-interrogation hybrid *Muss es sein? / Es muss sein!*, the call to fight from the self-citation). During the three movements, there advances in spiral, the Verdian motif and the self-citation becoming clearer audible by increasingly precise focusing of the objective.

In the Coda of the last movement, when tensional accumulation is taken to the extreme – by the prominent appearance of the Beethovenian fragment transformed into interrogation and accompanied from shadow by the structure that merges the *Genovese Psalm No. 42*, Chaplin’s song and the recurrence of the *Romanian Royal Anthem*’s melodic line –, the circle closes (as time exposure of the musical text), but also reopens in the receiver’s consciousness, the whole suddenly gaining another meaning. What is easily highlighted is the extreme economy of means, the only construction stone being the trichord. During the three movements the material densifies, information accumulates. But, despite this, the iron coherence of the microstructure creates a negentropic, organizing process that finally culminates with the appearance of the Beethovenian quotation. In this way, Olah’s work opposes to the increasing trend of entropy, heterogeneity that usually results from the incorporation of various quotations.

Perhaps less obvious, but equally important is the *consensus* of the extra-musical dimension. From a certain perspective, the work can be seen as an affirmation of genealogy, progeny, cultural affiliation, all quotations belonging to the great family of European music. Moreover, self-citation can be interpreted also as an autobiographical clue, referring to a more accurate geographical and cultural localization (the augmented 4<sup>th</sup> – from Bihor, Romania – being specific to his native region).

On the other hand, the symphony constitutes a *demonstration*, with purely musical means, of the world’s inner unity and coherence. Olah selects, from the multitude of musical structures of European spring that have as DNA the trichord, only *certain musical characters* (quotations), which serve his dramaturgical purpose.

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<sup>44</sup> See O. Lupu, *Tiberiu Olah - Croquis in a mirror. Correspondences between his musicological ideas and his activity as a composer*, in *Musicology Today*, no.13, 2013, 9.

<sup>45</sup> Olah, in the interview realized by Monica Cengher.

As if to prove that what seems separate, distinct, may turn out to be part of the same whole, Olah uses quotations belonging to different stylistic and historic areas: opera music (Verdi); film music (Chaplin; Olah); chamber music (Quartet Op.135); symphonic music (Ode to Joy); religious music (the Genovese Psalm); patriotic music (the Romanian Royal Anthem). The fact that Olah considered necessary to inscribe under the notes of Ode to Joy also the words of Schiller<sup>46</sup> is revealing in the sense of clarifying the meaning and intention, especially in the context where the other musical structures referred to in the interview are accompanied by text as well (the first verse of the *Genovese Psalm No. 42*, "Cum dorește un cerb izvoarele de apă"/"As the deer pants for streams of water"; the first words of Chaplin's song, **Smile** though your heart is aching"; the *Romanian Royal Anthem* verse "Raiul vesel pământesc"/"Cheerful earthly Paradise").

Through significance of the quotations that it incorporates and the manner it integrates them, as pieces of a giant puzzle, the work acquires a teleological, centripetal, ordering function. Result of a meta-stylistic vision with interrogative and problematizing accents, the ultimate sense refers to axiological reconfigurations: joy, harmony are not self-understood; they are the fruit of tears and can be lost at no time; therefore they must be cherished and continuously rebuilt, through a tireless effort of revaluation, transcendence, search of the essential.

*Translated by Ștefania Hovoruha*

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<sup>46</sup> The original "alle Menschen werden Brüder, Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt. Deine Zauber binden wieder, Was die Mode" is slightly modified by Olah through the shift *alle*→*die* and the addition of some question marks: "die Menschen werden Brüder? Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt. Deine Zauber binden wieder, Was die Mode??".



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