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**Toward an ‘Integral’ Approach to the ‘Literary-Musical’
Text**

Summary

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SUMMARY

KEY WORDS: aesthetics of music, *figurae musicae*, “acoustical metaphorism”, “presentational symbol”, myth, discursive poesis, “plasticizing” (significational) metaphor, “revelatory” (trans-significational) metaphor, sense, musical semiotics, “textual sign”, semiotics of musical-theatre.

1. Preliminaries

1.1. Main objectives

The interdisciplinary character of this research and the unavoidable conceptual parallelism between the literary aesthetics and the musical aesthetics impelled us to a comparative-contrastive approach and to circumscribing their common and unitary epistemological and hermeneutical framework.

The object of our research is represented by a broad and syncretic domain – both at the discursive level and at the scenic performance level – that involves two distinct universes of art creation: the literary and the musical. Due to this fact, the main objectives considered in this thesis were, inevitably, the following:

(1) To identify the aesthetic meaning of musical-theatre, whereby the music itself became image and form of human experiences and sentiments;

(2) To give a general outline of the aesthetic-musical vision developed along three stylistic-musical periods (Baroque, Classicism, and Romanticism);

(3) To emphasize the main procedures for creating the musical libretto;

(4) To identify the poetic characteristics of libretto as text and its degree of poeticity;

(5) To establish a hierarchy in the relationship between the literary text and the music in order to see in what degree is the music faithful to the literary text;

(6) To establish to what extent could the opera libretto be framed within the category of the poetic theatre;

(7) To present some aspects concerning the relationship composer - librettist and to see which are the modalities of construction of libretto as a kind of text that could propose or accept the music;

(8) To identify the way of approaching the trope within a literary and musical text, the sonorous images of the literary text, and the way they are particularized and emphasized within the musical theatre;

(9) To understand the prosody elements – rhythm, measure, rhyme – both as a sort of pillars for delineating the dramatic characters, respectively the conflicts between the personages at the level of musical discourse, and as a mould, endowed with melodicity and exploited all the way by the music;

(10) To determine to what extent the trope could be legitimated in music through the intensity, the time value and the force of the sound, and, on the other side, in the text of the poetic theatre through the deepness of the relation expression – content;

(11) To establish in which degree there could be find a relationship between the musical “signs” and the development of communication by means of the “linguistic signs”. On this account we make reference to the well known theoretical literature (which seems to be very poor so far) and attempt to approach the musical artistic act in the perspective of the general semiotics.

(12) To define the semiotics of musical discourse and to evaluate its specific contribution to the general semiotic discourse;

(13) To specify the operational framework and the starting point for developing a (possible) musical semiotics, respectively musical-theatrical semiotics;

(14) To approach art as a semiotics phenomenon and musical “sign” as an autonomous kind of sign, with the function of “sign-synthesis”.

1.2. Research methods

In order to accomplish the above mentioned objectives, we firstly attempt circumscribing the general conceptual framework from where we could afterward proceed to an ascending inductive research method – that is from particular toward general – as far it concerns both the micro-structural level of every chapter and the macro-structural level of the thesis.

The vision on the symbiosis text-music in the process of cohabitation between the two cultural worlds also imposes an analytical, horizontal, but ascending approach, whose starting point is to be found within the act of creation itself. This approach will be developed in parallel to the launching of the artistic act outside its core-source, toward its exterior world, the world of scenic performance.

From this perspective, we continuously stressed in our the thesis the truth that arts is an act of creation with autoreferential character, which arises, firstly, in the name of the art, and only afterwards in the name of the conventions imposed by any communicational act.

In addition to some concrete solutions in approaching the relationship text-music, the main objective of our research is to account for some new aesthetical, semantic and semiotic perspectives, able to open themselves toward new scientific conceptualizations of this generous and complex domain.

On the other hand, due to the risk of losing sight of the main object and the reference objectives of the present research, we do not propose in this thesis to cover the whole aesthetical, semantic and semiotic conceptual framework through an exhaustive survey to the existing literature of the fields.

The perspectives of an integralist approach to the libretto as literary text presupposes the projection of a few new theses in close relationship to the musical domain. On the one hand, this fact greatly narrows down our research field, since there is lack in the literature of strictly oriented works toward this kind of poetic and semantic approach. On the other hand, due to the innovative character of our research and to the still unexplored domain it covers, this fact opened out the way for finding new convergences concerning the rapport between the literary text and music.

2. Toward a literary-musical aesthetics

2.1. Perspectives on the “genesis” of the aesthetical research aria and of the literary-musical artistic act

The first chapter of the thesis is *in primis* an aesthetical-musicological approach to the genesis of the musical artistic “object”. This approach is counterbalanced in our research by the new aesthetic perspectives on the emergence and development of the artistic act in general, and of the musical one, in particular.

The anthropological and aesthetical necessity, that becomes prominent in the emergence of any artistic musical product, constitutes the major premise we assume. This premise will also determine the main direction of the research, leading us to emphasize the historical and philosophical particularities in diachronic and synchronic perspective, from the syncretism of arts in Primitive Age to the emergence of the first musical lyric opera and beyond. The first chapter also proposed new approaches to the

artistic symbol, respectively to its modalities of articulation in the process of creation and reception.

In this broader historical perspective, our research is firstly a comparative study, focused on aesthetical, stylistic, poetic and semiotic coordinates, which are grounded on the works of the most important stylistic musical periods: The Baroque, the Classicism, and the Romanticism.

Bearing in mind the objectives of the present research and the global structure of the thesis, we present in the following some of the general conclusions which result from its logical development.

The thesis initially bears the form of a literary framing text, because of its first chapter – **Conceptual framework** – who is both meant to ground the present thesis and to circumscribe the entire epistemological field. Firstly, from the perspective in which the concept of *beauty* and *art* as study objects of aesthetics were approached, we could distinguish sharp confinements of these concepts according to different periods and styles, fact that allow as legitimately referring to the *ideal of beauty in Antiquity, in Classicism, Romanticism*, etc. Yet, both *beauty* and *art* form the unity in diversity, circumscribing in time “a proper scientific framework”. Stefan Angi states: “Acest numitor comun constă în *caracteristica relațională* atât a conceptului de frumos, cât și a celui de artă. Așadar, *frumosul* este întreprins cu ajutorul unor concepte polare, relaționale cum sunt *realul și idealul*, respectiv *exteriorul și interiorul, figurativul și non-figurativul, plasticul și expresivul, spațialul și temporalul* etc., în termeni relaționali, care ființează doar în intercondiționarea reciprocă a componentelor la nivelul perechii respective. Acești termeni devin valabili atât în sfera generală a *frumosului*, cât și în cea particulară a artei. Așadar, *frumosul și artisticul* pot fi surprinși, deopotrivă, ca obiecte ale esteticii în cadrul corelării lor esențiale. Nu sunt deci nici realul, nici idealul ca atare, ci sunt relații ale acestora în diferite ipostaze.”¹ For example, *beauty* would have to answer not to one question only, but to two, namely: how is the real? and how would (or must) be the ideal?

Nonetheless, it is important to consider the fact that the object of aesthetics also compresses, in its algorithm, an historical coordinate. Therefore, it was necessary for us to use a historical research method, which could follows up its emergence, its culminant point and its extinction in time. The correct identification of the historical

¹ Ștefan Angi, *Prelegeri de estetică muzicală*, vol. I, Editura Univ. Oradea, Oradea, 2004, pp. 11-12.

moment in which the considered artistic phenomenon evolves represents the first step for any efficient analysis.

The research should also have a structural character, apart from its already mentioned historical one. *The structural method* approaches transversally the phenomenon, but the discontinuity becomes the one who characterizes the whole analytic demarche as soon as all features and illustrative rapports for the analysed phenomenon are exposed and, especially, when the phenomenon is set down within the broader context it belongs. In this way, the analyses could also be hierarchically valued and organized in order of their importance.

Finally, through its relation to critics, aesthetics builds the fourth dimension of its correlation. The aesthetical critic – be it literary, musical or art critic in general – colligate both the praxis of aesthetical research and its finality or the degree of completion of that praxis. Therefore, the final objective of our investigation is the examination of aesthetical taste and judgment – with reference to the act of creation, interpretation and reception as well.

Concerning “the emergence of the aesthetical-musical area” the fundamental problems had still not found a general accepted solution. The attempt to explain this “emergence” through the development of a strikingly force field, as a result of “the encounter between the real and ideal”, between the real object and its imaginary correspondent, seems to be prevalent.

These phenomena certainly create the adequate medium for the development of an aesthetical activity or vice versa: as soon as the proper spatial, temporal and imaginary valences have been identified, an “aesthetical field” could be circumscribed.

When applying this theory to the musical domain, the most important components in establishing “the aesthetical field” are: “*the ideal*”, “*the real*”, and “*the organizing median of the emotional*”². These components represent three essential moments of the “field”, whereof *the real* and *the ideal* “se condiționează punctiformic (ca puncte-focar) la limitele câmpului, câtă vreme *medianul* organizatoric ocupă un spațiu central, între cele două limite ale *câmpului*. Se nasc astfel doi poli care au proprietăți relaționale, intercondiționându-se reciproc de la *real* la *ideal* și invers. Câmpul central al emoțiilor este un median organizatoric în și prin care se realizează

² *Ibidem.*

crearea de raporturi între cei doi poli. [...] Cele trei componente care, pe urmă, înmulțindu-se și subnuanțându-se, populează întregul mediu al *câmpului estetic*, acționează în conformitate cu trăsăturile unei «matrici generative»: acțiunile efectuate dinspre real înspre ideal vor fi simultane, iar intervențiile medianului emoțional asupra acestora permanente.”³ This so often mentioned concept of „real” could mean the environment (when it is about the applied arts or the art of design, of urbanistic, of gardening, etc.) or could concern the artistic activity proper (the alleged real of fine arts).

This conceptual-philosophical, stylistic framework (or, in other words, aesthetical framework) becomes crystallized when approaching two major coordinates – in fact, two different aesthetical visions --, which were spread throughout the ages in order to establish the origin of cultural act in general, respectively of musical one.

The first general coordinate concerns the syncretism of arts (dance, music, text) in the primitive age as support for officiating the magical rituals, and, thus, as first emergent manifestation of the musical artistic act.

This conception strikingly restates the much earlier rapprochement between the genesis of aesthetics and the magical praxes. Whatever the type of magic the primitive man might embrace (“*mimetic*”, “*ornamental*”, “*the ceremony of magical transmission of sickness on the enemy*”, “*the transitive magic of amulets and totems*”, “*the magic of the names*”), it represents “the conviction according to which the primitive man replaces the proper control of reality with the illusion of this control”⁴. The primitive man replaces the real with the illusion of it, or, more precisely, the essence is replaced by the appearance. This appearance is anyway extremely perfect and expands itself, at the level of the phenomenon, over all details. Let us remember however the operational importance of the moment of identification and of replacement, which would symbolize, in this specific case, the quintessence of artistic generalization. The rapprochement of this vision to the crucial process, approached in rhetoric through the notion of *metaphor*, seem to us of real interest as well. Any artistic activity would be reduced, from this angle too, to a metaphorical transfer from the symbolized to the symbolizing one and/or vice versa: the transfer from an expressive mental context to another expressive mental context; idem, from an emotional state of mind to another. Therefore, the magical activity appears to be

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 48-49.

⁴ G. Thomson, *Aeschylus and Athens*, Lawrance and Wishart, London, 1950, p.11.

correlated at this point with the genesis of the metaphorical phenomenon, as basis or origin of the creative activity in general.

The second major coordinate, which apparently seems to rule out the first one, refers to a symbolic-mythic perspective, based on philosophical grounds (Hegel, Kant, Cassirer, S. K. Langer, L. Blaga) and is meant to ascribe to myth the genetic essence of art and of metaphorical phenomenon.

As a matter of fact, the two major coordinates reveal themselves within our theoretical chapter as mediated by a broader general framing of the musical cultural act within the framework of arts in general, with special reference to the literary creation. Thus, the subchapter titled **Philosophical-cultural framing of the act of literary and musical creation** opens the philosophical and aesthetical horizon that anticipates the theses from the third subchapter, theses which are oriented toward the musical domain, and marks at the same time, at the theoretical level, the passage from aesthetics to poetics, respectively to the semantic and metaphorical categories, as initially proposed by L. Blaga and re-evaluated within our Centre of integralist studies afterwards. In this way, we assumed the position of the director of this Centre (which is at the same time the scientific advisor of our thesis) concerning the complementary dimensions and the essential actuality of Blaga' and Coseriu's theoretical contribution within the nowadays international cultural context: if Lucian Blaga circumscribes the theoretical framework for the new vision on the fundamental "metaphorical" nature of human creativity in general, Coseriu grounds this framework, through the definition of the "metaphorical creation within language"⁵. Blaga's theory of metaphor is grounded, of course, on his philosophical conception about "the horizon" of human existence and consciousness, but also on the theses concerning a certain "spatial horizon of unconscious", especially when referring to that kind of act of creation that is oriented toward mystery and for revelation. By means of this kind of "horizon" Blaga explains the cultural variety and, at the same time, the unity and the stylistic consistency from within cultures. To this level of unconscious the philosopher also relates a new metaphorical category, which can be found at the phonological and metrical level within the word, respectively within poetry, and which he calls "acoustic metaphor". The acoustic of the word constitutes, in fact, the basic feature

⁵ Vezi Mircea Borcilă, *Tra Blaga e Coşeriu. Dalla metaforica del linguaggio a una poetica della cultura*, în *Romania culturale oggi*, a cura di Nicoleta Neşu, Bagatto Libri, Roma, 2008, pp. 253-271.

that relates text to music and it is the first level which is intuitively exploited by the art-making subject.

In order to exemplify the way of functioning of the “acoustic metaphorism” within the complex and deep process of sense articulation at textual level, we sketch below a complementary account to the theoretical framework presented here and refer to the exploitation of the same “expressive” (or metaphorical) dimension by the great linguist Sextil Puscariu. More precisely, we correlate the linguist’s analysis on Mihai Eminescu’s poem *Rugaciune* with the analysis of one of the most recent Romanian choral composition, which uses the verses of the same poetic text. On this occasion we notice how “the musical profile” of the text anticipates the sense revealed afterwards through the metaphor proper, and how the melodic line, which overlaps the text of the poem, follows the same rhythmic modulation, respectively metrics, which it unconsciously takes over from word and verse. We thus become aware how the poet and the composer, two creators of two different universes of creation, gave value to the same intuitive background, which is located at a very deep level of human “unconscious horizon”.

The first and the third chapters (**The emergence of the “aesthetical-musical research area”**, respectively **A philosophical-aesthetical perspective on the musical act**) bring forth the conceptual tools meant to establish the status of the artistic creation within the broader context of other cultural manifestations, their parameters of evaluating and comprehending, and, especially, the defining of the artistic phenomenon in general.

Taking as a starting point Cassirer’s theory – which anticipates the aesthetical conception of the *presentational symbol* and defines it both as a preliminary and preparing stage of thinking – we thus discover that the interaction between the receiving subject and the artistic act is made possible by a special perceptive channel, called “presentational perception” by S. K. Langer, which is able to take over the *form* of the artistic act, whatever the material and physical properties of the “aesthetic object” in itself would be (and without losing sight of the other perceptible properties).

The theory developed by S. K. Langer in *Feeling and Form* is already anticipated by her previous volume, *Philosophy in a new key*. According to this theory, there is another kind of symbol beside the language’s symbolism (characterized by discursivity), called by the aesthetician “presentational symbol”

and considered as specific to art. The difference between the two symbolizing systems consists in the polarizing, and, thus, opposed perception of the reason: on the one hand, there is a reason that operates with specific “univocal” symbols of “denotation”, which are the result of the codified conventions and which are connected through sequentiality and calculus; on the other hand, somewhere in our deepest insight, an abyssal rationality is covered up, and it is this rationality the one who establishes the relationship between elements by means of intuition and who bears “the form” of polisemic senses, in order for it be externalised. In the same *Philosophy in a new key*, “the new key” or “the new solution” proposed by Langer (in line with Kant, Hegel, Cassirer) is the individuation of the symbolic forms, able to express the variety of human experiences. Thus, in similar vein to her forerunners, Langer directs her attention to myth and considers it an ontological originary form, the existential condition of human being, which, unlike animals, is doomed to creation. The distinction between the discursive and presentational symbolism is better and better delineated in *Mind*, where the author’s aim is to investigate “the commonplace” of any human production: the articulation of human lived experience in the shape of “the form”. As the author demonstrates, the capacity of abstracting forms or, more precisely, of assigning meanings proper takes place at the level of that already mentioned sensuous ‘insight’.

The art will hence mirror the internal emotion that produced it, due to the intuitively established accord between the emotion and the artistic object, which finds in it its origin. Moreover, both emotion and artistic object share and mutually accept the *form* that is meant for them. We become thus aware of the fact that we face with a “non-discursive symbol”, which articulates that what is indescribable and what cannot be discursively transposed, i.e. emotions such as “hate”, “fear”, “love”, etc., that acts intuitively, but similar to a logic system of thought at the level of consciousness.

Under the impact of some, by that time bold ideas, of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Langer considers that human “discursive thought” is able to give, by means of the language, logical images of distinct states of affair, experienced and lived by human being in the real world. But on the other hand, the American aesthetician feels certain about the mistake that can occur when one come to the conclusion that every meaning proper is translatable in a propositional language. For these reasons, when referring to the principal cultural-artistic manifestations, the author proposes a “non-discursive symbol”, which passes through the following phases:

(1) The first degree of objectivation, represented by the ‘form of the sentiment’, able to establish constitutive sense relations, which are the ground of any artistic form (see above);

(2) Any form of feeling takes shape through *the elaboration function*, specific to the human mind and thus the unified sentiments within their particular form permeate the knowledge area, more precisely they determine an extension of it toward the pre-categorial dimension (see above);

(3) The last degree of objectivation takes place through the signifying form that crosses, in a first phase, the symbol and bestows on it the symbolic form, which becomes responsible afterwards for both organizing and structuring our vision of the world, and implicitly for the change of our perception about reality.

(4) The created cultural object represents, on no account, the first level of the creation, but the outcome of an intimate sense by means of which the experiences take shape.

The two approaches (recorded as 1, respectively 2) do not mutually invalidate, but, on the contrary, they refer to different moments, where the second one integrates the myth’s perspective within a superior phase of art genesis and evolution.

2.2. The placement of the trope within the context of rhetorical musical aesthetic

The next chapters of our thesis (**Elements of Baroque aesthetics**, **Elements of Classical aesthetics**, and **Elements of Romantic aesthetics**) develop and specify the line of our ideas so far through the focalisation on the rhetoric and musical aesthetic, characteristic to the three extended periods (The Baroque, the Classicism, the Romanticism), that contributed to the organizing and structuring of our investigation throughout the thesis.

In agreement with Valentina Sandu-Dediu, five concepts are essential for the Baroque period in music (the end of the 16th century – the first half of the 18th century): “spaciousness”, “teatherness”, “embellishment”, “movement” and “monumentality”⁶. The strictly musical reference points that mark this territory and evolve on a Renaissance background – although as reaction against this ground,

⁶ Sandu-Dediu, Valentina, *Alegeri, atitudini, afecte, Despre stil și retorică în muzică*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, R.A., 2010.

wherefrom the Baroque also emerges, but using an absolutely opposed material – are synthetically considered in our present account:

Firstly, we consider the re-evaluation and the redefining of classic music from the perspective of the social impact. It did not correspond to some content that could be determined by the preoccupation of the epoch or able to wake up an emotional echo within the multitude of “unspecialised” people, which were unable to follow the subtlety of the conjunction of an incredible big number of madrigal “voices”, whose literal sense couldn’t be perceived any longer. Such kind of music could not interfere with the ordinary life of those people who were not professional musicians and who were fully content with the diversity in rhythms of the popular dances, respectively of the songs that inspired the public or private festivities of the time. The popular music, in the form of dance movements and songs, will constitute one of the most important elements of the “musical reform”, initiated at that time and which during the 17th century will transform the aspect and the role of the music. The importance of the musical folklore is also acknowledged by genre publications that first appeared at that time.

The second essential landmark is constituted by the resurrection of the idea of “monody”, taken over from the ancient Greek culture, which explains the emergence of the opera around the year 1600, and which seems to bring to the fore the elements of antique tragedy. The “re-emergence” of this new genre gives birth not only to the accompanied melody that determines the emancipation of the homophony, but also to the instrumental accompaniment, encouraging thus the sonorous narrative. Consequently, there is another point of the famous “*riforma melodramatica*” that is brought into the effect. The “*riforma melodramatica*” was conceptualised within the Florentine circle, as we know, and it is characterised by the poets’ attempt to dress the intelligible word with an expressive melody, corresponding to the literary content. As a result of its conceptualising, “the dramatic style” was discovered, where one single melodic line – the melody or the monody – stands out against the instrumental accompaniment, rather than being covered by the polyphonic labyrinth. This kind of accompaniment represents the harmony, which becomes from now on opposed to the polyphony. The Florentine “monodic” style has been developed and extended very

quickly within the entire Europe and has become the musical style of the epoch. “The Baroque music”⁷ will thus dominate the sonorous world until Romanticism.

In addition to the previous landmarks, the objectivation of the tonality in the two modes, *major* and *minor*, respectively *Ionic* and *Aeolic* it has to be also considered. At the end of the 17th century emerges the “sonorous temperament”, theorised in the works of Andreas Werckmeister (*Musicae mathematicae hodegus curiosus oder richtiger musicalischer Weg-Weiser*, 1686; *Musicalische Temperatur*, 1691). At the same time, as a consequence of these works, “the temperate system” (the dividing of the octave in 12 equal semitones) was applied to the keyboard instruments.

A distinct landmark is constituted by the development of instruments construction industry, which leads to the development of the instrumental genre such as: *suite*, *sonata (da chiesa, da camera, trio-sonata)*, *toccat*a, *prelude*, *fugue*, *fantasia*, *concerto grosso*, *solo concert*, etc. and to the emancipation of vocal-instrumental genre such as: *opera*, *oratorio*, *cantata*. Under these circumstances, the cameral assembly, the string orchestra, the modern orchestra come also into existence.

Finally, the theorizing of new concepts and musical practices in different works are also recorded: Rameau’s *Harmony Treatise* (1722) establishes the basis of tonal harmony; J.-J. Fux’ *Gradus ad Parnassum* (1725) proposes the concept of “firm counterpoint”. The intensive corroboration between musical theory and practice became natural for this period. The immixture of the musical practice is perceived both as a form of an immediate answer to the new signals the theoreticians sent and as a sort of acknowledgement of new discoveries. At the same time, the two volumes of Johann Sebastian Bach’s (1722-1744) *The Well-Tempered Clavier* will be firstly published and the musical theories concerning the tonal and temperate possibilities of the clavier (through “enharmony”) take shape. Bach’s volumes are also representatives for the Baroque fugue style.

Resting upon the reliability of this tonal structure, “the music of the Baroque” – classic in its character – gave birth, over the span of two centuries, to all known genders, from opera music to the instrumental one, proving thus its importance in the development of the musical act throughout the century.

⁷ In musicology, the term „Baroque music” has been introduced only in the first half of the 20th century, especially by Robert Hass study, which goes though by the name of *The music of the Baroque*. See Mircea Nicolescu, *Händel*, Editura Muzicala a Uniunii Compozitorilor din R.P.R., București, 1963.

From the viewpoint of the artistic musical product achievement, the musical rhetoric – that science that gave birth to important treatises in Renaissance and Baroque – represents an essential dimension of the composition of this epoch, especially through its system of rhetorical figures. The musical treatises of the Baroque consider the composition firstly as a rhetorical art and thereby the Baroque offered authentic compendia of musical figures, similar to that of ancient oratory. *Figurae musicae*, as they have been called within the epoch, were thought as bridging the stylistics and rhetoric and herein playing different roles: ornamental role (*ornamentum, color, flos*), the role of plastic and revelatory sensitizing of text, due to their rational, imagistic and affective⁸ character, and inspiring role (*fons inventionis*) for the composer.

The Early Classicism represents a new approach to the theory of affects that implements the *sensible* or *gentle* style (“empfindsamer Stil”) as replication to the *rococo* style from architecture and plastic arts, certifying the usage of a subjective musical language. In opposition to the Baroque polyphonic and austere stile (“stile grave”), this language was full of emotion, very simplified, and shows its preference toward an accessible stile, a natural melodic discourse, where the melody is elegant and variable, in tune with the quick shift in affects.

The proper classical period in the history of music is very short. This period distinguishes by order, clarity, and architectural precision as well as by harmony and unity, Apollonian spirit, stability and reason, but also by an exchangeable character, since it is the epoch of the stylistic interferences, difficult to be diachronically confined.

As we have seen, *the metaphor of the oration* that defines the musical Baroque and Classicism is gradually replaced after 1800 by *the organic metaphor* of the Romanticism, when the musical opera is perceived as a living vegetal organism, that develops its form through the intimate adherence of parts to the whole, of forms to the germinal thematic idea, similar to the oak who grows up from a acorn. The audience becomes increasingly irrelevant in Romanticism and the music increasingly independent from the affects and rhetorical norms. Therefore, the ideal of Romanticism is to convert the musical artistic product into an autonomous, autoreferential one.

⁸ See Lucian Blaga, *Trilogia Culturii*, EpLU, București, 1969, pp. 275-289, pp. 389-492.

Whatever the period it is, one can notice that the musical theoretical tradition presents the tendency to situate the category of metaphorical at the level of “figures of speech” or of “tropes” and it is conceived of as having a strong “flourishing” character, in line with the poetics and stylistics of rhetoric descent. From this rhetoric perspective, the musical trope itself seems also to be justified by elements of expression such as intensity, time value, expressivity, intenseness of the sound and *agogica*.

3. The presence of the poetic element within literary-musical texts

3.1. Preliminaries

The third chapter that plays a central position within our research and has a mediating role between the other two domains (aesthetics, respectively stylistics of art and the semiotics of musical theatre) approaches the major directions in tackling the libretto as text either from a philological perspective (with finality at the level of expression) or from the perspective of the “integral poetics” (with finality at the level of content).

The first subchapter, devoted to the specific aesthetical cultural object, proves its relevance both from an integrative perspective and due to its bridging role between the three approached domains of our research. The distance between Blaga’s theoretical elaborations concerning the culture creation (perceived as a unitary whole), and the theory of language in “integralist” view (grounded by E. Coseriu and understood as cultural science) seems to be only temporally marked. Blaga’s theory – implicitly developed by E. Coseriu after more than a decade – proposes a “mutation” of the metaphorical phenomenon from the territory where the rhetorical poetics has bordered it to the heart of the cultural creation. The theory that defines the “metaphorical creation within language” – developed by E. Coseriu in the form of an “integral” transgressive conception and active beyond the category of the semiotic and symbolic (further developed by the mentor of the Centre of integralist studies of the Babes-Bolyai University, Prof. Mircea Borcila) – finds its applicability at this new level too -- the level of the text which is created exclusively for music and in confluence with the “musical discourse” that follows it. We become thus aware of the fact that “metaphorical” literary-textual and musical “creation” is part of the “cultural competence” in general.

3.2. Philological, respectively integral approach to the libretto as literary text, with finality at the level of expression, respectively at the level of content

As a result of the necessary argumentative demarche, done in order to define the musical theatre as *genus proximum* (see the subchapter **The libretto – a border literary genre**) and to legitimate our option for the linguistic and textual tools in Italian (see the subchapter **Italian language – ‘the language of the music’ *par excellence***), the second part of our research (**The text of opera libretto and its poetic characteristics**) follows the line from expression to content, in other words, from exterior to interior. On the strength of our conclusions to these three subchapters, we are now able to define libretto as follows: **literary text having narrative intrinsic elements and, consequently, simultaneous parts of the action, which allow construing polyphonic moments in music**, but, most of all, articulating “*transsignificational*” new “*imaginary worlds*”, to whose construction their cronotopic dimension largely contributes. The libretto is thus the result of an incredible and successful melange of epic and dramatic genre, of literature and music. The process of libretto creation has known different phases throughout century that cannot be distinguished only by means of their temporal dimension, but rather by means of their social, human dimension. **In fact, the libretto is the result of “the collaboration” between the representatives of two distinct worlds, respectively between the literary creator and the composer.**

The second part of the chapter (**The phonetic, morphosyntactic, lexical and rhetoric analysis of the Baroque libretto, The phonetic, morphosyntactic, lexical and rhetoric analysis of the Classical libretto, Libretti, librettists and composers of the 19th century**) precedes the deep analysis from the final part of our thesis and focuses on an philological-rhetorical kind of analysis of libretto as text, emphasizing on the relevant elements of the expression of the Baroque, Classical and Romantic libretto. We notice how the musical-dramatic text preserves the prosody principles of composing the poetry thereby the libretto receives the attributes of a *poetic theatre*, which it also appropriates itself. It becomes thus clear how the librettist will create the literary text from the perspective of a possible musical text, where the librettist becomes aware of his second, but essential role in the creation of the new musical universe that cannot be achieved in another way. This interdependency appears not

only at the interdisciplinary level, but also within the process of creation. The study of the procedures of expression, predominant in rapport to the whole thesis, proves to be a significant and necessary phase in our analysis, with finality at the level of content. The rapport expression-content establishes the link between musical rhetoric, librettistic semantics and a possible musical semantics.

The subchapter titled **A semantic integralist perspective on the libretto as text** develops the content analysis of literary text of the libretto, carried out on metaphorically significant text instances and analysed using diaphoric, endophoric and epiforic strategies. The chosen text instances are relevant, at the same time, for the three stylistic periods: The Baroque – exemplified here by Monteverdi and his opera *L'incoronazione di Poppea*; The Classicism – exemplified by Mozart and his opera *Così fan tutte*; the Romanticism – exemplified by Giuseppe Verdi and his opera *Falstaff*. The metaphorical dynamic of Monteverdi and Verdi's operas, developed at the micro-textual level, reveals a strongly anchored in the metaphorical mode of type II textual typology, respectively in the *significational* or *plasticizing* metaphor (IIA). The complete transgression, i.e. the irreducible disanalogy, carrying a new imagined world, becomes accessible at the end of the macro-structural analysis of the opera *Così fan tutte*. In this opera, the literary text will hypostasize the metaphorical, transsignificational, revelatory senses (IIB) on account of a large number of metaphors of type A2, of some disintegrating tensions of the phenomenal world I and of the sharp dissociations of semantic levels. The libretto as literary text proves thus its poetic intrinsic value, long disputed when detached by the musical discourse.

This extended second part of our thesis closes up with a pilot subchapter (**A semantic integralist perspective on the musical-theatre**), devoted to a semantic-integralist analysis on the whole cultural artistic object, respectively on the musical theatre. Our demarche follows here the same dynamics of metaphorical motion as the one already identified in the libretto of the opera *Così fan tutte* and in parallel with the metaphorical dynamics of the musical discourse by means of the same semantic dia-endo-epiphoric strategies. We discovered an 1 to 1 correspondence between the two overlapped levels, which determined us to reconsider both the position of the literary text in comparison with the music (from the viewpoint of amplifying and accompaniment of the textual sense) and the defining formula for the *transsignificational metaphor*: $(a + b) = x$. The mystery will be attained within the process of creation of musical-theatre by doubling the terms of the equation so that on

the strength of text –music *sintonia* the equation would be: $(a^2 + b^2) = x^2$ vs. $(a + b)^2 = x^2$ or $2(a + b) = 2x$.

Due to this conscious modality that operates with the aid of an extraordinary artistic inspiration we assist to a real process of increase of mystery and of metaphorical “revelatory” sense articulation, which will expand *the communication with the self* toward *the communication with another*, process in which the mystery does not evanesce, but becomes shared and revealed to another.

This time we notice the emergence and the development of a process evolving on suspended and simultaneous levels, and a re-equation, respectively a doubling of all referential fields in order to increase and, at the same time, to hypostasise a new possible world, distinguished by the first one through its expression modality.

4. The theoretical framework of the semiotics of the musical theatre

The fourth chapter attempt to situate the semiotics of musical-theatre within the framework of the general semiotics. This last perspective is based on E. Coseriu’s contributions and attempt of establishing the existence of a global linguistic sign, which can be found at a superior level to the level of language, at which the “textual sense” emerges.

The final chapter of our research titled **Toward the semiotics of musical-theatre** refers to some possible broader semiotic framing of musical-theatre. As anticipated within our *Preliminaries*, this investigational demarche was thought from the beginning under the form of a demonstration, with ascending character and following the line from interior to exterior. This demarche seemed to us justified due to the interdisciplinary objective of the thesis as well as to the approached domains: linguistics and music. When referring to a cultural-artistic object, the exclusion of the third dimension, namely the fulfilment of the interior act of creation through the exterior manifestation of it – the scenic performance –, seems to be inevitable. This last part of the thesis aimed at finding a place for the semiotics of the musical-theatre. From this angle, the theories based on the semiotic categories comprise themes which are strategically located within this last part of our research. Thus, it comprises:

(1) A short history of the musical notation with certain role in emphasizing the old relationship between the code of the language – the alphabet – respectively the

fundamental unity of the language – the word – and the name of every note, respectively music.

(2) A theory of the musical sign from the perspective of general linguistic, supplemented and adapted by a first “integralist” *excursus*, linked to the text linguistics and to “the textual sign”, which corresponds to the active linguistic sign at a different level of the language and has the following structure: “*significato e designazione* costituiscono insieme il *significante*, mentre il *senso* costituisce il *significato* dei segni testuali” (see above - E. Coseriu, *Linguistica del testo*, 1997). This theory is in perfect concordance with the grounding of the category of the “metaphorical” in integralist key, singularized at textual level.

(3) An aperture in musicological perspective on the musical semiotics, grounded on Jakobson’s communication functions, which is toned afterward on the strength of the second “integralist” *excursus* (the approached theme are the types of “communication” proposed by E. Coseriu and his rejection of Jakobson’s “poetic function”). We discussed extensively here the second type of communication theorized by Coseriu, namely “Comunicarsi a qualcuno” sau “entrare in relazione con l’altro”. In other words, this type of communication presupposes that *the self* communicates with *himself* and call him *you*. Since our approach is based on a new conception about language and discursive poesis – already legitimated by the analyses on literary texts done within the Centre of integralist studies from Cluj – this is also the starting point in the rejection of Jakobson’s poetic function. Hence we underlined that within the musical libretto as well as within any other artistic-cultural product, the communication, more precisely, *the transmission of messages* and contents to a third person, cannot have finality in itself.

(4) An overview on the semiotics of theatre, respectively on the semiotics of theatrical performance, as it was theorized within the national and international literature, mostly in the works of Miruna Runcan, Keir Elam and Anne Ubersfeld. This sequence opens the further perspectives presented in the last section of the thesis, suggestively entitled **Convergences and perspectives**. Here we attempt to summarize and to propose new hypotheses, shortly presented, concerning a new semiotics of musical-theatrical performance.

Final considerations:

- (1) In conclusion, from the viewpoint of the theoretical frameworks that attempt to establish the place of the musical aesthetic “object” within the context of the artistic cultural creation, one can firstly identify the presence of a “presentational” symbol, able, on the one hand, to define and to enclose any artistic manifestation and, in our specific case, any musical-cultural product, and, on the other hand, to re-evaluate the place of art in rapport to the magical primitive practices, and to acknowledge the mythical-philosophical genesis of the cultural act.
- (2) Secondly, from the viewpoint of the integralist theoretical frameworks, able to highlight the poetic features of the literary text and, in our specific case, of the musical-literary text, one can identify a complex degree of textual poeticity both of metaphorical type IIA (plasticizing, “significational” metaphorical type) –as a result of the analysis at the micro-textual level – and of metaphorical type IIB (revelatory, “transsignificational”) – as a result of the analysis at the macro-textual level. Both metaphorical types show finality at the level of content, but also at the level of expression – which is acknowledged by our phonetic, morphosyntactic, lexical and rhetoric analysis. The chapter **The text of opera libretto and its poetic characteristics** anticipates and prepares, at large, the emergence of a typology of musical text. Our typology is based on the textual typology proposed by Emma Tamaianu-Morita⁹ and M. Borcila’s typological model, which, at their turn, are both grounded in E. Coseriu’s integral theory.
- (3) Thirdly, from the semiotic viewpoint, one can identify the essential feature of the musical-theatrical performance: its multi-layered structure, the concomitant interaction of many sign layers, of many semantic layers and its tendency of developing in the interior of an aesthetic-textual macro-sign, of the scenic performance. From the perspective of a communicational act, the latter addresses *to*

⁹ For a detailed account of these typologies, see Emma Tămăianu-Morita, *Fundamentele tipologiei textuale. O abordare în lumina lingvisticii integrale*, Editura Clusium, Cluj-Napoca, 2001.

another, in order to communicate him that experiences and states which have been previously revealed only at the level of the creative *self*, of the “lyric intuition”. Taking as a starting point the varied “signs relations” identified by E. Coseriu – relations which, due to the multi-layered structure of the musical-theatrical performance, can be very well adapted to its skeleton – one can notice that all relationships that take place between sign during the artistic performance, play, at semiotic level, the role of determining the production of the global sense within the cultural musical act. On the other side they play also the role of demonstrating and acknowledging the existence of a “representational” musical-theatrical semiotics. Already in the creation phase, there is no exclusion, but interaction between signs at different layers with the aim of initially creating *a presentational aesthetic sign*. With the text of the libretto, the produced *sense* is spreading, as in case of the sonorous waves, toward the other members of the relation, creators themselves within the broader project of semantization: the musical-theatrical performance.

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