

MUSIC AS SONIC AND CINETIC GESTURE [LA MUSIQUE COMME GESTE SONORE ET GESTE CINÉTIQUE]

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GESTURE AS PART OF MUSICAL EXPRESSION

Evidently, gesture comes from the body, it is motion of it or part of it into space and also time. There is a spacial figure of gesture I can describe, even draw on paper. This figure has no reality in time or spread into it, it is motion that generates it. Gesture is so characterised by the temporal stream line of motion wich supports it. But gesture is not only motion, and all movement is not gesture. *It must be defined as intentional movement, more or less complex, with determined aim that gives, it a determined individual, social or historical meaning.* This point of vue is confirmed by different researches: Henri Wallon, 1949; Claude Cadoz, 1999; Hugues Genevois, 1999. Gesture, finally is always priorely determined by action, and finally by the aim, through the medium's constraints, either physical or human.

MIME EXPERIENCE

To have a clearer approach of these questions, mime seems to be the richest ground of observation. For instance, according to Étienne Decroux, mime tends to evoke mental life through motion only (*Paroles sur le mime*, p. 46). It is clear with Decroux that the art of mime is not only a mere imitation of shapes, forms and structures, for the inward comes first: "Because if men's shells would be alike, you should open them." (ibid., p. 115). Mime as to do with showing hidden feelings, able to give or start a corporal movement, and so move, resounding in our mind (ibid., p.155). Unity between gesture, attitude and thinking is the link with sensible and moving representation. This coherence gives the real sense of mimic. In this context the "body mass" must follow the "soul's emotion" (ibid., p. 102-103), so the corporal motion reveales a dynamic process in time, not a fix and rigid structure only copying emotions.

GESTURE'S EXPRESSIVE COMPONENTS

We will see D. Stern's interesting concepts, and related with music.

First of all is *vitaly affect*, and giving a long quote: "... many emotion characters don't fit into the existing lexicon or affect's taxinomy. These blurred characters are best translated by *dynamic*, kinetic terms as "merge", "faint", "fleeting", "explosive", "crescendo", "decrescendo", "burst", "lean", etc.

Surely perceptible by the enfant and of daily importance, even if temporary." [1] These vitality affects so are features linked with emotions, ways of beeing, and different ways of feeling inner emotions. It is, for instance, all between "explosive" joy and "fleeting" joy, feelings that can't be reduced to classical categorial affects, but sensitively color them for the subject. Giving another trnaslation of D. Stern's idea, we would say those feelings are mainly dynamic and temporal, and that is what makes their particularity. They are ways of feeling, belonging, before, beeing emotions or determined feelings.

Previous works have shown (Michel Imberty, 1981, 1997) that the notion of vitality affect in music is surely that of *dynamic vector*. Dynamic vectors are musical events carying temporal significations of orientation, progress, diminution, growth, repeat or return.

RECOGNITION, RESONANCE AND ATTUNEMENT: THE OTHER'S MIRROR

However, in order for the vitality affects to constitute the psychological basis of musical gesture's expressivness, they have to be identified by the auditor in a sonic form by a sort of spontaneous ampathy, giving the musical gesture it's sense. This is affective or emotional resonance that allows an interpersonal link between us and others, and built a *scheme of belonging* with someone in such or such circonstance. This emotional and affective resonance is what gives basis to *affect attunement* – according to D. Stern – so to say: this kind of mirror giving us a self reflexion through else and allowing us to recognise our self in other's expression.

So, the *affect attunement* is an essential process in creating interpersonal and intersubjective link. Another aspect of affect attunement directly concerns communication and expression in music. So that, when we understand – and correctly interprete – movements, mimics, other's attitude, it is at the light of our self feeling, *in the mirror*. A great part of our spontaneous social interactions can be understood as, through our body, our representations, our thoughts and our affects, a construction of the other's scheme as a double self. Searchers went far into this path, sustainning an hypothesis this mirror perception and understanding of the other is a real innate human aptitude,

[1] STERN D., *Le monde interpersonnel du nourrisson*. 1985. French trad., A. Lazartigues et D. Cupa-Pérard, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1989, p.78. We quote.

belonging to the genetic patrimony of the specie, or anyway, common to most superior animal species, but very developed in humanity. This gift has been described as “*behaviour’s musicality*”.

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

For all sorts of reasons from our work theme, we have analysed four musical pieces to demonstrate the above theoretical notions. These analysis show that, beyond musical systems and cultures in which these musics are included, the kinetic gesture shares the same expressive universe with sonic gesture. And also, their expressive components, though different, are modulated and colored psychologically by vitality affects, and temporally by dynamic vectors.

EXPERIMENTATION AND RESULTS

To complete previous analysis, two experimental parts have been proposed: (i) questionnaires to auditors (listening four musical pieces choosed), and (ii) interviews and observations with gestual creatives in mime art. Results of the first experimental part show a very clear acknowledgment of categorial affects, vitality affects and dynamic vectors supposed to be evoked by musical structures. Concerning musical piece n°1, for instance, subjects noted melancholy and/or nostalgia as categorial affects; melodic discontinuity and sound intensity in the span of vitality affects, and the slow tempo and repetition into dynamic vectors. This would plead for a certain universality in cognitive process, implied in this type of knowledge. Concerning the experimental second part results, we can quote that the *psychemes* [2] of tension and relaxation shown in musical analysis as well as in mime’s exercise and creation would find their expressive form through different degrees of energy (vitality affects) and quickness (dynamic vectors).

It so seems that music expressive material it gestual. And that is why it always sends back to recollection and/or remembrance of motory kinetic, physiological states at the origin of human sensations and emotions.

IS GESTURE A SPONTANEOUS FORM OR A REPRESENTATION ?

We have already stated that gesture communicates, expresses sensations and emotions. However, is it a spontaneous form or a representation form ? At first, one would think gestures are spontaneous, but if we considere gesture as an external consequence of inner sensations and emotions, kinetic gestures would consequently be representation of feeling. In this context, according to Wallon (1949, p. 183), *cenesthesia* would belong to immediate representation by imitation or ampathie. Besides, the same author insists (ibid., p. 175-76), that emotion is altogether motivation of action and comportemental *psychemes* finding expression in representations and individual and social codes.

One also find with Decroux, as we priorely quoted, that gesture is a representation where the body follows the mind to evoke soul hidden feelings. In this context, work of art’s specificity is also that of the represented object (ibid., p. 150); so that, to be efficient, this representation–mime can leave no place for spontaneity: We must so admit, there is, in every gestual creative artistic process a thoughtfull act, having to do with thinking and memory and different psychemes and shemes of representation, meaning that gesture in art could not be conceived as a spontaneous act or form.

Gestual creation (kinetic and/or sonic) recreates gestures with meaning. It is through attitudes and sensations’ representation these gestures can be shared with others. This sharing also implies an acknowledgment – as well as in psychism and affectivity – but also a code and a attunement.

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[2] We use “psycheme” signifying “sheme” ‘in English in Piaget’s prospect.