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A praise of musical imagination

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A praise of musical immagination

1. Is this praise necessary?

In this writing I would like to achieve a praise of musical imagination, to sketch a sort of peroration for it. A lot of people will ask: but is this necessary? Or: why should we ever feel the need of a similar praise?

Indeed I think that one feels the necessity of this demand in the moment in which a reflection on musical aesthetics and a rethink of its problems is starting. There are today many motives that stimulate to a rethink: we have become by now aware that the music changes, and the change of music makes necessary, I believe, «to change music» also in the ways of «to think it», to intend its sense and its purposes.

Both from the point of view of the projects of musical composition and from that of the theoretical reflection, we start again to consider the music as a form of art rather than as any other thing. Noticing this seems quite strange. Nevertheless all the problems connected with artistic character of music and therefore with the specificity of his purposes and his destination, have been neglected for a long time because of intellectual orientations that have their origin in the Adorno's thought.

We now live *after Adorno* – and we feel something like a sense of relief, while we are saying this phrase.

Undoubtedly a lot of people think that Adorno's conceptions are valid not only in relationship to first fifty years of twentieth century but also that it is possible to consider Adorno as prophet of the end of second millennium. In this regard - they think - it is enough to read cunningly occasional late writings believing to find in them dazzling illuminations.

Such enthusiasm does not deserve consideration. Nevertheless there are also apparent commonplaces and persistent prejudices that have the same origin; they must be underlined with the purpose to offer a little contribution in order to liberate the potentialities of the current debate and the creative forces that face each other in it.

The intent of our praise is placed in this context. We want indeed collect some reasons that seem particularly important in

relationship to the purpose of «to change music» in a theory of music. These reasons will give a justification to the choice of the guiding thread of our considerations.

To the question “Why a praise of imagination is necessary?”, we answer first of all: on the one hand the expression "musical imagination" can get a meaning quite obvious, on the other hand it needs to be clarified, and in some respects similar expression should become the topic of a defense and of a peroration. A piece of music is work of imagination in the sense that it is the result of an "invention". No one will dispute this point. Somebody invented it as somebody invented the texture of a novel or a subject of a painting. But if we walk away a little from this generic remark, that is deprived of problems, we encounter immediately some difficulties.

Recalling the attention on imagination in the musical field, and particularly in the field of the reflection on music, creates a resistance that depends in part on specific nature of music, in part on our prejudices in relation to imaginative functions in general.

In fact we now understand what it means to imagine the plot of a story, and therefore what it means to propose a sequence of events that follow one another and are intertwined in various ways to each other. We also know right away what it means to imagine a character, his appearance, his psychology, his way of behaving. The imagination is immersed in a world of events that brings together fragments of reality, memory, lived experience, which are, however, organized according to new connections and collected in new networks of meaning.

The imagination relies on things, events, experiences. It relies on the past. It is in more or less hidden relationships with the desire. The imaginary object is actually very close, in its phenomenological structure, to the object of desire.

Here is the problem: an expression like "imaginary object" may seem rather inappropriate to music. The verb "to imagine" in the current language requires a direct object. If you are imagining, something is in your imagination. And it is possible to argue with some reason that imagining something, while

listening to a piece of music, is contrary to conveniences, if not a manifestation of coarseness and lack of refinement.

Is it fair to say in relation to music, with the same evidence, that imagination is supported by events and experiences? Where can we look, in music, memory or desire?

Conversely it is predominant the opinion that the composition is essentially a construction according to rules in some way similar to "grammatical rules." This is probably another reason to overshadow the element of the musical imagination. The important point is that there are rules, and that the work arises from their application. All the rest belong to the psychology of creation or to the psychology of fruition.

The temptation to marginalize the problem of the imagination in music, to think that it is irrelevant to aesthetic and philosophical reflection is therefore particularly strong. This temptation can take advantage of erroneous ways of thinking about musical analysis or misunderstandings and misconceptions related to developments in musical informatics.

The analysis of the compositional technique of a musical piece should perhaps be conceived primarily as the stage of a journey that begins with music and ends in music, i.e. as a analytical dissolution strictly considered according to a new interpretive synthesis, therefore, as a function of a possible execution.

Instead, this analysis is sometimes seen as a pure and simple dismounting of the piece that has no other purpose than "know how the piece is done". The musical piece is conceived as a mechanical device and our task should be to find out its springs, screws and cogwheels.

On the other hand, the search of an algorithm which is able to generate a certain style suggests the work is like to a theorem into a deductive system. We are then tempted by analogy between a piece of music and what logicians call a well-formed formula - and there is no need of imagination to create such a formula. It is true that a well-formed formula is only a condition of meaning, and then you need to add something to it to arrive at meaning. However, one can remark: the simple application of the rules is not enough, there must be the spark of

imagination for going beyond a product of a school work. This remark is superficially correct, but it is too weak and in many ways unsatisfactory. The opposition between rules and imagination is maintained, and imagination becomes again a marginal question: perhaps it is something of fundamental importance, but it is not worth talking about.

The idea that there is such opposition seems to be part of the theoretical essence of the problem. Somebody would say: the imaginative faculty acts in violation of rules rather than in their observance. Don't speak we of freedom of imagination, which in principle escapes all control? Stressing this point seems to have a particular meaning in relation to twentieth-century music. It could be argued that in the Twentieth Century the idea of the grammaticality of music has greatly weakened, and that this relaxation involves a liberation for the musical imagery. In its vagueness, however, this expression still remains with no real theoretical justification: its meaning is at the same time obvious and unclear.

Out-of-Time of musical imagination

Of course, the imagination comes in its own right in matters pertaining to the theory and philosophy of music, not only as a general recognition of the need for a creative spark, but as a problem that calls into question the same expressive power of music.

To make this point really clear, however, you must be able to rely on some general determinations, starting from the fundamental distinction between "fantastic" imagination and imagination that you could instead call "imaginative".

a) With "fantastic imagination" (or fancy) I mean the imaginative production of "figures", for example, a character in a novel, the unicorn which appears in the mythical novels or a landscape depicted in a painting;

b) With "imaginative imagination" I mean the metaphorising imagination whose formations are the result of an unification, of an "imaginative synthesis" (as I would say). The

imaginative synthesis produces still "figures", but in a way entirely different from the verbal production.

These two functions are based on the imaginative adding-value function (the Italian word which I use is "valorizzazione"), that is the ability to produce the transvaluation of facts in imaginative values. The music derives its expressiveness from the fact that it dates back to the roots of this process: in music there are no explicit images neither in the sense of the fantastic object nor in that of an explicitly formulated metaphor: and yet in the first approach to the sound material in order to compose a musical piece, this adding-value feature quickly becomes active: the first result is to make ambiguous the ontological status of the material, which becomes the unsteady foundation of a germinal imaginative process.

This feature acts of course also, and above all, outside a musical context.

The cry of the owl ceases to be a pure fact of the night, the cry of an animal perched somewhere in the garden: it begins instead to belong to the field of values of the night: this cry adds to the night a dark suspense.

The "natural" beautiful - to use this old terminology - turns into "artistic" beauty through a difference that may seem sometimes almost imperceptible, sometimes very deep. Almost imperceptible, because the perceptual experience itself, viewed from a completely independent artistic project, is not devoid of imaginative components, but also very deep because the value intended as a pure imaginative component of lived experience and the imaginative value which is integrated into an expressive project are entirely different things.

However, these remarks do not imply that our attention is unilaterally pointed in direction of semantics, and in particular of symbolism. Their purpose is not even to confirm the opposition between the scope of imaginary and that of the rules: as we have already shown, this opposition occurs by different routes and different angles. Instead we have to play a lively criticism to such opposition that, at a closer look, repeats old philosophical commonplaces: it proposes, in particular, the opposing pattern intuition / intellect. The word "intuition" here

takes on the character of a vaguely elusive inspired activity and the word "intellect" receives negative connotations, appealing to the idea of an abstract categorizing away from art and experience.

In truth, a similar opposition is not able to teach us anything, even terminology is misleading.

The music is close to the perceptual material, this is certainly the "concrete" on which the musical experience is based. But this statement can be misleading: we must add that this experience has its roots in the creative subjectivity, who lives in the fullness of his experiences which are emotional and intellectual together. Subjectivity is a creative subjectivity which thinks. It has many "thoughts", it has "opinions" and it continually compares these opinions with reality. The imagination does not take a step forward without this background of thoughts; an expressive project can take a shape only on this background. This project does not assume from the beginning the character of processing the material; the purpose is not the translation and the manifestation of these thoughts, and the imagination is not even stimulated by the desire to represent them.

On the contrary, the expressive project starts as a reflection on rules and techniques, as a test of possible ways of organizing the material: it begins with a reflection on the structures.

In fact the problem of the rules is very little a "merely intellectual" matter. A discussion about them should necessarily regard the structural forms of sound materials and the techniques of shaping and transforming them.

Of course the rules can be inherited from a tradition and be unified into a language, but it can happen that the "linguistic unity" has become a problem: the two situations are very different, but the substance of the matter does not change. In fact the idea of the rule should not be attributed only to the existence of a recognized linguistic unit, thus binding the rule to the notion of convention.

Certainly, if we talk about rules, we think first of all to the notion of convention: they exist because they are observed and

therefore there is a reference to a unity which we call common language. In addition, just like the result of an agreement, the rule may look like something that is imposed from outside: it contains the risk of an abstract application, as already prepared scheme which is simply stored and applied at the points provided for. But we must not forget that the problem of the rules occurs every time we are dealing with a perceptual *Gestalt*. This problem belongs entirely to the creation of a work intended as *Gestaltung* - that is, as an internal organization of the material. For this reason there is a degree of ambiguity when one says that the musical imagination is expressed more in the infringement of the rule than in its observance. This statement receives an obvious meaning only if one has in mind the linguistic stereotype, the scholastically iterated paradigm, "without imagination."

From the theoretical point of view it is important to note that the latencies of imagination, which manifest themselves in music and are part of its meaning, emerge through the action of internal relations, through tensions created by the syntactic combinatorial game: this game is not for nothing "abstract" precisely because it is able to generate these tensions. The mutual connections of structural and symbolic values represent the imaginative power and the mystery of musical expression. A piece of music may well appear as a well defined path. In fact, the sound path is undoubtedly well defined, and the sound events which happen in it are clearly identifiable: thus the differences of timbre and dynamics or the relations of affinity and contrast. But this path that we walk, while listening, goes through a landscape that draws its charm from vagueness and uncertainty, from the mobility of its borders; this landscape is occasionally illuminated by unexpected glows or suddenly it gets dark, and we see different possible directions that abruptly appear and disappear.

This landscape belongs to the musical imagery, it is a result, a projection of imagination in the field of music.

It is therefore necessary to take note of a particularly complex situation.

The imaginative operations have a double origin: thought and perception. Consequently, their ground is reality. With the word "reality", I mean the human world, the historical, social, and cultural context in which the artist is immersed, and from it he draws shapes and forms of expression which occur as premises from which he starts: this world is steeped in living experience of the artist, it influences his thoughts and his opinions, but it is also the subject of judgments and evaluations, decisions and stances. Of course, the universe of sound objects belongs to reality, they are object of the world, such as trees, animals, rivers and mountains.

However, the imagination leaps out the circle of reality. This jump characterizes art in general, it occurs wherever the imagination is in work: game, feast, myth, religion, rite. And even in music, its power acts with his whole energy.

The lived experiences of the author or of the listener have to pass in the background, and the sounds must to be extracted from the objective causal contexts in order to be integrated into another scenery: silence preceding the execution is the curtain which discloses it. The so often repeated remark that music has its own "temporality" takes one of its important meanings from the fact that silence is like the "once upon a time ..." of fairy tales; the story is placed in an immemorial past, it breaks the chain of time and the story is contained in an enclosed time, outside the objective temporality.

In music the chain of the time is broken first of all because the piece develops into a present that is only a closed flowing stream - in a sort of absolute present wedged in real present, without relations with it: therefore there is no real past or real future.

This peculiarity of "musical time" has sometimes been overstated in a metaphysical sense, claiming that musical time achieves the transition from a purely superficial and psychological dimension of temporality to its metaphysical-ontological one. We should instead give a correct phenomenological interpretation of musical time rediscovering its link with the imaginary.

Of course this has consequences in listening. As listeners we have to cut the threads of historicity, we must also go along the paths of music with the implicit consciousness of this peculiar extratemporality; the time of music is time-out-of-time, because music is an expressive production. A musical imaginary landscape can appear only on this condition.

The reality has been overcome in a completely different dimension, but of course the world is always present and it can sometimes become unexpectedly near, bursting on the scene of the imaginary. This eruption is not always similar to a disturbing extraneous noise. Sometimes it is involved in the tensions imaginative adding new meanings. When this happens, this incursion did not cause a fall outside the imaginative scene, but it can be a real upsurge of its expressive power.

When the context of the problem is properly defined, we should not worry about different and complex situations which may arise - we must not fear that fragments of our experience creep into the folds of listening, so loosening our neutrality of listeners.

3. A reflection on music needs an "historical-in-between" viewpoint

Now we can certainly reproduce the original question: why is it necessary to praise the imagination in a renewed reflection on the problem of aesthetics and music theory?

I believe that now must to be advanced the necessity of a philosophical reflection on music which proceeds in close proximity to problems of a music theory. Furthermore, this reflection must give the music theory that generality which was perhaps long forgotten.

Just the experience of twentieth-century music requires that this need is fulfilled, first of all because it is eminently characterized by questioning of the constitutive notions of musicality, both in relation to the sound matter and to the mode of its organization.

Of course, we often talk about a multiplicity of languages as a basic acquisition from the theoretical point of view and

from that of the practice of composition, but it is a mistake to assume that a weakening of instances oriented to a unitary consideration is a consequence of the gained awareness of the variety of languages. In this case the theory of music would be resolved and dissolved into a plurality of hermeneutics, consequently into a plurality of points of view which would change in changement of musical experience that is from time to time taken into account.

In this way the wealth of problems stemming from ability to see connections among similar problems with different solutions, would be lost, it would also become difficult profit by this diversity, first of all in theory, and perhaps also in creative work. We wish to emphasize with particular decision that pure and simple recognition of multiplicity does not imply at all the interest in the manifold. On the contrary. If you highlight the differences as if they exclude the common ground necessary for a meeting, then the neglect of this meeting is being enshrined in principle, rather its impossibility is theorized, creating a fertile ground for revival of prejudicial evaluation schemes.

The twentieth-century musical experience was often seen in highly reductive schematism. Therefore we must to think again this experience outside of those schematism in order to enlighten potentialities marginalized by unilateral visions. I believe that this task is still relevant and also an important reason for theoretical reflection.

However, just to achieve a far-reaching philosophical elaboration, it is not enough rely to our present time even to musical european tradition. It is necessary, instead, to assume what I would call a "historical-in-between" viewpoint that is able pass through different historical traditions drawing anywhere stimuli for a renewed reflection on the principles.

In short, with an example: we should be able to get in touch with sanskrit treatises written ten or twenty centuries ago, we should be able to feel ourselves in contemporaneity with those treatises, trying to figure out what music was for them, because this is what music even and still is.

4. Adornism and historicism

If from these reflexions, we consider Adorno's philosophical position, that we have noted in passing at the beginning as a long dominant standpoint, it is hardly necessary to say that very little we can find our needs fulfilled; they are not even proposed. Maybe they are indeed, for reasons of principle, implicitly denied.

Adorno's philosophy of music has always wanted to be a philosophy of modern (new) music: if you try to consider its production as a philosophy of music *sic et simpliciter*, perhaps you will be surprised by the scarcity of the themes and issues that you could draw from it. The truth is only apparently paradoxical: Adorno's philosophy of *modern* music lacks a philosophy of music.

Adorno did not target a philosophical reflection on music developed in close proximity to his theory. The Adorno's overall design, in relation to the issue of music, remains bound to the problem of providing a philosophical key for a very important cultural event in history of twentieth-century music.

As you know, this key is completely played in the field of a philosophical sociology. I want that you give to these words their due weight. It is important talking about a key, as well as emphasizing the reference to a philosophical sociology. Speaking of sociology in relation to Adorno means essentially to speak about a sociology derived from a philosophy of history.

Therefore, its investigation is undoubtedly addressed to the "meaning", but this meaning is already written in Adorno's philosophy of history, with its necessary unilateralities, constraints, limitations and restrictions. Moreover, at least in large part, the Adorno's success in Italy is due precisely to this circumstance: the hegelian structure of Adorno's position had a familiar tone to our culture steeped in historicist themes. I think that Adorno can be considered, as regards the scope of Italian culture, only an episode of our domestic historicism.

5. The metaphoric mask

Against this background, our praise of musical imagination takes a different emphasis. In the previous remarks, it was important to speak about the musical sense by putting the emphasis on technical and constructive work: imagination enjoys the techniques, it operates through the compositional possibilities of sound. Therefore in music the technique and the structure are particularly relevant.

However, we also drew attention to the fact that, without inconsistency, we can consider the composer as a "dreamer of sounds". The composition itself appears to us as a "reverie", to use a term loved by Bachelard; the dimension of listening as an adherence to this "reverie", to its dynamics of latent images. We adhere to a "world" whose form is not that of our world, because in it there are no facts or things, but directions of meaning and value.

Thus we made a connection between the the problem of meaning and that of imaginative function; in doing so, we have defended the necessity of an approach to the problem of meaning which is able of sticking to phenomenological surface and to the connections actually proposed by the musical construction. Grasping *imaginative vectors* - as we might say - within the work - represents the first step that obviously can be performed only if their existence was recognized.

But only the *first step*! There are contexts in which the compositional project is included that are not easily readable in the phenomenological surface. Understanding these contexts is crucial to penetrate in the complexity of the sense layers whose the work is constituted.

We might say that a phenomenology of the expression needs a dialectic expression. But the term "dialectic" must be deprived from any reference to a philosophy of history, indicating essentially the dynamics of relationship between imagination and reality. The character of these relationships and the degree of closeness or of distance from the world-horizon are not determined once for all.

This is an entirely another thing than disregarding the presence of internal expressive components based on imaginative values and conceiving the imaginative function as a purely capacity to produce metaphorical masks. The primary function of the adding-value operation, that is at the root of "figures" in the double sense in which we talked about earlier, is entirely replaced by transposition within music of meanings that lie no matter where.

In Adorno we find often evaluations that have this implicit assumption, and this occur especially because Adorno tries to avoid the objection of "reductionism" and theorizes a kind of social significance that invests primarily the formal aspects of the work.

I would like to emphasize that from our point of view, we tend to give importance to structural analysis of the musical piece because we require that attention is brought first of all to the perceptual Gestalt and to the rules of which it is the result. At the same time, this analysis necessarily must extend beyond the strictly phenomenological level for the fact that, while the musical work follows a well-defined path, instead the field of possible meanings that this route crosses is not bounded. This field bears the marks of historicity in various forms, which from time to time must be established and recognized.

In Adorno, instead, the reference to historicity, and so the field of the meaning, is exclusively determined by a philosophical-historical teleology, and necessarily this reference tends to a unique setting and to a unique determination. Consequently, the structural elements, the rules of articulation and of internal organization should be regarded as a purely technical matter, until we reach the philosophical enlightenment which proposes a metaphorical mask. But this mask is immediately removed as soon as Adorno disclose its claimed true social significance.

This enlightenment has the character of a key, completely unknown to author himself, whose ideas, designs and views must be, as we know, entirely dismissed as irrelevant; unknown to the listener, mostly considered as ensnared in the meshes of

the "administered society". It is known only to the "critic of culture" which reveals his enlightenment to us. We must assume that this critic is informed by the "spirit of the time", the absolute spirit which follows its path. I can not help but notice that not only the Adorno's position belongs to another age, but even the controversy against him seems old-fashioned.

As an example of what I mean by the word "key" I will just mention Adorno's interpretation of the recapitulation in the sonata-form in Beethoven's music. According to this interpretation, the recapitulation would be nothing but a metaphorical mask: a musical transposition of a gesture of renunciation to fulfillment of the bourgeois revolution [1]. In this formal character of sonata-form would be evident a conservative wish of social nature. This is simply grotesque.

In any case the idea that the imaginative landscape is exactly what needs to be removed from the surface of a piece of music to capture its meaning, is actually a very common temptation of historicism in general. But this idea doesn't concern only Adorno and historicism, but it penetrates widely inside the field of semiotics and hermeneutics.

6. Quotations and examples that show the reasons for the necessity of a praise

I would propose one last example on the subject under discussion. In the Nietzsche's essay *The Case of Wagner* (1888) [2] there is a point where he attacks the mythical content of the wagnerian musical drama as a mere "shell" [3], in which there is nothing other but "the real sphere of modernity" - precisely the sphere of bourgeois society, assimilating the wagnerian female characters to Madame Bovary.

Now, for a historicist critic, this passage represents a formidable interpretive insight, although it must be changed in its meaning. Of course, the Nietzsche's remark has a negative meaning and represents the collapse of a great illusion, so it has an aggressive and a derisory intention: for the historicist critic, instead, it corresponds to the pure truth, and Wagner's greatness lies no less than in the fact that the myth is according to Wagner

"metaphor and coating of reality" [5], a mere shell within which you can see a "robust realism" . And I do not speak of any one: all the quotations which follow are taken from Massimo Mila.

Here are some verbatim quotes that I refer - I must admit - with some discomfort and growing embarrassment: Fricka is nothing more than "an ordinary specimen of jealous wife". Brunhilde: "a generous girl which on the bench of the university would have certainly participated in the student movements of the year 1968". Siegfried: "a young hero, full of enthusiasm with illusions to conquer the world (...) and he breaks his neck". Wotan: " a disappointed middle-aged man, a tired husband, who dreams the good fights and then he lives of compromises to make career "[7].

Massimo Mila exclaims once: What do I care about Nibelungs or Ghibicungs? He answers with one word: "Nothing" [8]. A Monsieur de Lapalisse's answer: this would certainly be the answer of the common man if we ask him: "Do you care perhaps something about Nibelungs or Gibichungs?" But because this answer is made by one who studies things which belong to the field of artistic production, it seems to me almost sinister.

The same critic quotes approvingly the direction made by Chéreau of *Ring* at Bayreuth, conducted by Pierre Boulez in 1976 [9]. To it, the semiotician Jean-Jacques Nattiez has devoted an entire book [10], in which there is also the intention of an encounter between semiotics and hermeneutics [11]. Of course it is not here the place of discussing the matter. These wagnerian references have a purely illustrative purpose in relation to general problems that we have touched previously.

At least in part, the direction of Chéreau is certainly one of the many episodes that show a sociological interpretation in the field of musical drama: they have been the norm than the exception over the past thirty years. They can be regarded as a possible realization of a theoretical tendency in relation to which it is certainly required to recall the Adorno's name.

In fact Chéreau has read Adorno, at the urging of Boulez, and certain adornian features have remained in his direction [12].

Now, we wish to emphasize this point: the ground of this interpretative operation is the assumption that the meaning can only be given in two ways: either by reducing the scenic action to the historical present of the composer or to the historical present of the listener; possibly to both. In fact Chéreau creates scenes that appeal to the twentieth century and to the early nineteenth century [13]. The crucial point for him is get rid from the "out-of-time" imagination - firmly nailing down the imaginative operations to the ground of historical particularity.

I am grateful to Chéreau because he has formulated this point very clearly. He states: "I always said: I do not understand the word *Zeitlosigkeit* (timelessness). Every mythology is a mythology of a precise time "[14]. It is hard to say a foolishness greater than this.

A defense of the rights of imagination was really necessary, I believe, to reopen a wide-ranging reflection on aesthetics and theory of music.

Notes:

[1] Antonio Serravezza, *Musica, filosofia e società in Adorno*, Dedalo, Bari 1976, pp. 34-36. On this point you can see Adorno's *Introduzione alla sociologia della musica*, Einaudi, Torino 1971, p. 250-252.

[2] F. Nietzsche, *Il caso Wagner*, Mondadori, 1975.

[3] *ibid.* p. 24.

[4] *Between Wagner and Nietzsche*, Quaderni di M/R, 4. This is a speech at a conference on Wagner and Nietzsche, held in Turin in 1983.

[5] *ibid.* p. 31.

[6] *ibid.* p. 27.

[7] *ibid.* p. 25.

[8] *ibid.* p. 25.

[9] "When you realize the deeper reality that lies beneath the veil of myth and that makes the Ring of the Nibelung an ideal and eternal history of man, then we cannot reject this mirror of our life, and even the crazy staging of Chéreau at Bayreuth, in modern environment, with Fricka in evening dress

and Commendator Wotan like a fifty-year-old man who goes in search of adventures, don't appear so senseless"(pp. 25-26). Just the dullness, that Mila calls deep realism, gives universally human meaning to wagnerian drama - meaning which, as everyone knows, has been hidden by the myth!

[10] *Tétralogies. Wagner, Boulez, Chéreau. Essai sur l'infidélité.* Paris, Christian Bourgois Editeur, 1983.

[11] *ibid*, p. 12.

[12] *ibid*, pp. 76-78.

[13] The setting is the early nineteenth century and the rise of industrial society, and there are allusions to the twentieth century, New York, etc. Nattiez commented that "Chéreau reintroduces on the scene the industrial world in 1848 to stress that the myth of Nibelung, being narrated in this date, relates to that time", but in doing so he also tells to the spectators of 1976: "You see that I have not been bamboozled by what Wagner told in 1848 "(*ibid*, p. 79).

[14] The statement, quoted by Nattiez on p. 79, is contained in an interview with Boulez and Chéreau realized by Carlo Schmid under the title "Mithologie et Ideologies," published in the Bayreuth's Festival program "Rheingold 1977"

