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Understanding and Interpreting Philosophical Harmony:
(A musical offering of the otherness)

BIOGRAPHY: Dr. Marc Jean-Bernard has multiple careers as a university professor of philosophy and humanities, a classical soloist, and conductor. Born in Paris, he trained as a philosopher at the University of Paris I. Sorbonne, where he obtained with highest honors his doctoral degree under Prof. Jacques Bouveresse, with a thesis on Ludwig Wittgenstein. At the same time, he concluded superior studies of music and performed worldwide as a soloist and conductor. His strong interest and competencies in South American culture lead him to teach philosophy of language and aesthetics in Colombia for many years, where he was also the Dean of a Faculty of Music. As a philosopher, Jean-Bernard has academic and general papers published in French, English and Spanish. As a musician, he has recorded seven CDs. Following the model of his first Moral and Politics Philosophy teacher, Vladimir Jankelevitch, he continues a research unifying philosophical thinking and artistic activity. As such, he is currently tenure Professor of Humanities at the University of Puerto Rico, where he is also committed to the investigation of cultural organization.

ABSTRACT: 1) Ethos of the problematic: This paper aims to present a theoretical and dialogical perspective stressing the high relevance of cultural hermeneutics and aesthetics for the general problematic of Unity and Diversity. 2) Delimitation of the hermeneutical situation: The main goals of the investigation consist first in a semantic clarification of the complex contemporary language games of unity and diversity. This comprehensive approach confers to artistic thinking and aesthetics a primordial hermeneutic function. From a higher standpoint, we intend to contribute to the construction of a new, open theory of cultural harmony, in the deep richness of this metaphysical, musical, and political term. 3) Methodology and possible human worlds: The question of method can not be dissociated from the matter at hand, the way of the meditation and its style of thinking. The accuracy of cultural hermeneutics today consists of its skills in reaching a comparative and unclosed symbiosis of different ways of thinking, creating, and saying in Western and non-Western irreducible philosophical worlds. Far from mere analysis, the hermeneutic reflection reassumes the task of a construction of the concept of humankind. This problematic is connected, without metaphor, with an extended logic and philosophy of possible worlds. 4) Specific Topoi of the paper: The phenomenological inspiration of the Horizontverschmelzung can better give rise nowadays to a new polyphony, and a philosophical counterpoint, permitting us to reengage the functions of thought, ecstatic experience, music, poetry and aesthetical experience. As such, this paper will address the relevance of mysticism, the ontological experience and comparative aesthetics theories; and ways the unexpected grammars of Art and forms of life (metaphysic and religion in the artistic gesture) contribute to our understanding of Unity and Diversity.
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« ἐν τῷ ἐννοεῖται διαφόροις ἐννοεῖται»
“The hidden harmony is more perfect than the apparent”¹
Heraclitus

“Humanity is not an aggregate of individuals, a community of thinkers, each of whom is guaranteed from the outset to be able to reach agreement with the others, because all participates in the same thinking essence. Nor, of course, is it a single Being in which the multiplicity of individuals are dissolved and into which these individuals are destined to be reabsorbed.”²
Maurice Merleau–Ponty, 1948

“Musical Understanding is an expression of the life of mankind”³
Ludwig Wittgenstein, 1948

0. Ethos of the Problematic
The primordial aim in this lecture could be accurately described as a musico-philosophical investigation. Such a philosophical perspective seems to assume, after Nietzsche, Adorno, and Wittgenstein, that the blurring of the original unity between philosophy and music has to be rethought and overcome. This assumption, equally relevant for the Indo-Iranian, Japanese and Chinese cosmologies, is grounded, in western culture, on the constructive acknowledgment of the internal relation between the general theory of Lógos, and the theory of αρμονία for which the concept of musiké is one of the major dimensions.⁴

The 20th century provided, since the Nietzsche’s investigations concerning the essence of music, fundamental rediscoveries of the original link between mélos, rutmos and lógos, and generally between the essence of music and the essence of Saying. Their impact can be felt in the field of Greek philology or musicology⁵ and, obviously, in the field of the

¹ Heraclitus, Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker., Diels, Hermann., Berlin 1951
⁴ As a matter of fact, the history of ideas, and sometimes academic Aesthetics, show a permanent tendency to reproducing the misconceptions that have affected the transmission of the basic Greek concepts of philosophia, mathematica, lógos, armonia, stoikheion, rythmos, musiké and mélos. The origin of the term philosophy is connected with a geometrical thinking, developed by a culture (paideia eleúteros), where the theory of cosmic forms, the theory of lógos didonai (conceived later as acousmatic or mathematic) and the theory of musiké as a general philosophical theoretic are conceived as a theory of harmony. The very supposition of any “theoretic vision of music” attributed to the early Greek philosophers and music thinkers, is one of the most evident symptoms of a complete misunderstanding of the internal relation between Theorein and Musiké.
⁵ We are mainly referring here to the seminal contributions of Hermann Köller (in Glotta), Oskar Becker, the musicologists Johannes Gombosi, W. Broecker and specially Johannes Lohmann (in his articles of Lexis, 1948-1954 and Acta Linguistica III)
philosophy of music represented by thinkers or composers such as Ernst Bloch, Arnold Schoenberg, T. W. Adorno and most particularly in all periods of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s philosophical itinerary. It is, in effect, worth underscoring that Wittgenstein, beginning with his early Tagebücher, continuing in the Tractatus, the Philosophical Grammar and his last remarks concerning to the concept of understanding, provided the conditions of possibilities for a consistent Musical Thinking. These works give rise to a double construction of logical and musical thinking in the elucidation of proposition: “Musical themes are, in a sense, propositions. Knowledge of the essence of logic will, for this reason, lead us to knowledge of the essence of music.”

Such a prelude for a musico-philosophical approach to culture (holistic and differential) leads us to assume the range of musical thinking may transcend the limits of a grammatical elucidation. Obviously, thinking Unity and Diversity through the philosophical lekton of structural Harmony will start out by describing our language games with these concepts, by describing their grammars. However, the true ethos of the problematic of harmony does not lie in a mere ethical and methodological gesture. On the contrary, the possible sense of ethics, aesthetics, and otherness, can only be defined by the Kairos of the Other, the ante predicative apparition of the other’s Face. Unity of aesthetic and ethical experience through intersubjective encounter with the world is granted following the poetic terms of René Char, in the evidence of a Common Presence.

The controversial idea of Harmony, from its exaltation in Leibniz’s Monadology to its disqualification in Adorno’s Aesthetic Theory, passing through Rousseau or Victor Hugo, requires, a fortiori, a philosophical construction. Such a construction should face into account the multiplicity of its conceptual use in theology, ethics and aesthetics. In order to overcome the analogical misconceptions of closeness and regularity inherited from the prejudices of anthropology and aesthetic theory, we have need of a semantic clarification capable of leading us, through a conceptual genealogy, to possible new constructions. Understanding Harmony refers primordially, under these conditions, to the experience of listening ἀρμονία.

From this perspective, ethos will be also linked to codetermination between the generic concept of music—mēlos- and the primordial meaning of ethos, that is, for the body to be tuned in a certain way. Arguing a difference between cultivated and popular music (or culture), as R. Shusterman suggested, would not change at all the formal conditions of the hermeneutical problem. Such, one might say, was also the case – apart from all the contextual differences arising from mass culture- in Terpandro’s days, in Plato’s time or in Aristotle and Aristoxene’s. The secularization of musical traditions and their eventual perception as a degraded culture, Unkultur and music industry must itself be subject to define hermeneutic approach.

A close link can be traced between philologist and musicologist Johannes Lohmann’s interpretation of the Greek’ s system of music as a primary grammar, and Heidegger’s

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conception of it as a kind of “existential logic”. This affinity can point us the possible interconnections between philology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, ontology and Wittgenstein’s style of grammatical thinking.

Our theoretical and dialogical perspective, with its stress on the relevance of cultural hermeneutics, aesthetics and musical thinking for the problematics of Unity and diversity, will entail several methodological demands. These tasks can be equally formulated from a phenomenological, hermeneutical, or grammatical point of view. In any case, the crucial point is to provide a conceptual clarification of our way of using such categories as hermeneutics, aesthetics, and musical thinking.

A precise construction of their respective theoretical use will ensure the consistency of our main goal of understanding and interpreting culture. As a first Coda, we assume that, as the phenomenologist would say -and as Wittgenstein pointed in his Conference on Ethics-, a discourse in the first person will be effectively tuned with the tônos of the problem.

1. Delimitation of the hermeneutic situation
   (Perspectives of Cultural Hermeneutics)

After the relatively short intermezzo of the so called post modern post philosophy, philosophically thinking Unity and Diversity in the field of any morphology of culture and religion cannot consist, in constructing or deconstructing discursive topics already constrained by the limits of preconceived theoretical models. This poses the problem of the possible concurrence of mythology and demythologizing. As Wittgenstein observes in his Remarks on Frazer’s Golden Bough:

“We can only describe here and say: so is human life”.

Wittgenstein’s innovative remark is certainly consistent with a philosophical tradition of anti causal morphology concerned with stressing differences in anthropologic phenomena. A tradition involving such different thinkers as Aristotle, Goethe, Montesquieu, Condillac or Kant, and leading to C.S. Peirce, W. James, E. Spranger and R. Musil. However, in order to respect the independence of Wittgenstein’s description of the multiplicity of Lebensformen which articulate scientific or philosophical explanations, we must avoid any transcendental use of the categories of Sprachspiel, Lebensform or Grammar. In other words, the exercise of human investigation does not call the pragmatic transcendental foundation.

Even for Wittgenstein, description is a moment, never a philosophical Telos. These assumptions lead us to defining the grammar of the concept of hermeneutics and its distinctive relevance for what is to be thought.

Considering the current styles of philosophical discussion, we must first remark that the semantic domain of hermeneutics has branched out in such different methodological
directions that we can only use the term in a relative sense, and, indeed, in consciously open manner. Hermeneutics refers for us to a multiplicity of perspectives on understanding, a deep or speculative hermeneutics and finally a philosophical hermeneutics following the thread of language. After the era of Schleiermacher’s and Dilthey’s emphasis of understanding the function of strangeness following the model of the sciences of spirit, hermeneutics has not only included the full historical dimension, but also the language character of human experience of the world. In this line, completely developed by Gadamer in Truth and Method, the hermeneutic strategy has also integrated the philological study of conceptuality itself, and, above all, the Wittgensteinian concept of Sprachspiel. Analytic philosophy, pragmatics, Wittgensteinian anthropology conducted through language games and forms of life, are consistently articulated in contemporary Hermeneutics of Culture. It is, however, reasonable to think that this process of fusion is, in a sense, a logical development of the “traditional concept of Hermeneutics” exposed by Heidegger during his Fryeburg lectures (1923) concerning Hermeneutics of Facticity. Two years earlier, in the context of his Phenomenology of Religious Life, Heidegger had engaged a meditation concerning the aesthetic motive in Augustine and Neo-Platonism. There we find the young Heidegger stating that “Augustine produces the first Hermeneutics of high style.” This emphatic early thesis is in effect intimately related to the growing role of aesthetical experience in the phenomenological and hermeneutical tradition leading to Gadamer and Hans Robert Jauss. In this sense, the complete structure of the six books of Augustine’s De Musica is conceived not in light of any specific psychological or aesthetic purpose, but as a kind of neo-platonic formal aesthetic, where numeric theory and the doctrine of relations are engaged as a function of an axiological ordination: the Summum Bonum. Augustin uttered this in a rather oracular style, echoing the ethical sense of this primordial Cantare for our lives. It will be precisely this point that, in his own cammin della nostra vita, Dante’s poetic fictio will constantly recall, in reference to the Confession’s author.

At this point, it is well to recognize that our subject is not to draw a history of the hermeneutic spirit, a semantic genealogy of culture as such, of its structural morphology, nor of the general problem of cultural relativity. Where all these methodological problems cleared, true philosophical themes would still inhabit our minds in a metamorphic way, resounding in all our complicated forms of life, as the tension or the counterpoint between éthos and otherness, bodied forth as an irreducible affirmation of duty. The definite use of musical lexis is far from metaphorical. Its function corresponds internally to the outlines of an alternative ontology of the otherness. The appearance and entreaty of the Other has been effectively defined, at its deepest level, in the

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9 See also Lohmann, Johannes, Philosophy and Linguistic Science, in Erfahrung und Denken, 1965.
10 As an example of this rigorous fusion following the pragmatic turn, see Karl Otto Apel, Transformation der Philosophie, 2 vol, Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973 and Die Logosauszeichnung der Menschlichen Sprache.
12 Augustin, De Musica, VI, 1: “Illos igitur libros qui leget, inveniet nos cum grammaticis et poeticis animis, non habitandi electione, sed itinerandi necessitate versatos”
Heideggerian meditation of the *Dasein’s* resoluteness towards itself: “Only by authentically Being- their- selves in resoluteness can people authentically be with one another”\(^{13}\). However, if *Resoluteness* is a distinctive modality of the *Dasein’s Disclosedness*, it is so in the ontological horizon of Being- in –the- World. The experience of a *musical* understanding of otherness as opposed to simply an acoustic one, is connected with the *ontological* presence of the Other. Strangely, perhaps the most discerning intuition of this specific *tension* can be founded in Robert Musil’s description of Ulrich’s utopia of *Other Condition* in *The Man without Qualities*.\(^{14}\) In effect, the binomial opposition between *Soul and Precision* exposed by Musil’s view of *Kultur* in *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* and his *Essays* seems singularly adequate for an initial consideration of the *grammar* of Unity and Diversity. The philosophical and anthropological polarity already introduced by the young Musil springs from an obviously Nietzschean source. This *motive* is, however, one of the most *durchkomponiert* from a philosophical and narrative point of view. It expresses the Musil’s claim to a *real* fusion of this cultural polarity, while the same time flaunting a complete defiance (even an aversion) towards any scientific, philosophical, psychoanalytic or sociologic *dogma*.

The self articulation of ideas is possible through the monadic perspective of each fictional character. Thus the will for a perfect fusion in Clarisse’s mystic Love, or Ulrich’s and Agate’s utopia of the Millenary Reign, are connected with the sphere of reality in a new register. Harmony between Unity and Diversity is set forth in a kind of baroque intercession of concepts, illuminating the three ethical utopias that still make our world in 2004: the utopia of Inductive Thinking, the utopia of life in love and the utopia of the Other Condition. As Musil wrote in a late manuscript: “Overall problem: war. Pseudo realities lead to war. The *Parallel Campaign* leads to war!”

In the literary writing, *Possibilities* open up reality but “in a more subtle tessitura”. Such a skeptical emphasis of Culture’s myths echoes amazingly the distinction established by Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* between what can be *expressed* and what has to be silent, the *mystical*. For Musil, the grammar of anthropological and ethical unity can be heard most accurately through the voices of his literary characters. Likewise, the language games we play with these concepts and with our own concepts of understanding and interpreting arise from *aesthetic investigation*. In Wittgenstein’s case, the true *Opus Metaphysicum* was *music*. Thus, for him it is in the practice of *musical thinking*, music interpretation and appreciation, that the deepest signification of understanding, interpreting and translating a *Sprache* can be found. At the same time, the ethical and aesthetic possibilities of humankind can be exhibited in a sphere other than *theoretical*, scientific or philosophical *discourse*. This line of thought, focused on *Dichtung* or *Musikalische Gedanken* as opposed to celebrating an anti metaphysical or anti aesthetic position, conveys a *cultural hermeneutics*, understood in the most polyphonic and open sense. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty addressed the relationship between art and ontological experience through their diverse manners of thinking the painting gesture. Yet both stress that creation, always ever new, brings out Being’s self revelation and its fission. In this sense Merleau-

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\(^{13}\) Heidegger, Martin., *Sein und Zeit*, Neomarius Verlag, Tubingen, p 298

Ponty observed that painters such as Cézanne or Klee offer “a carnal essence or icon” giving visual existence to that which profane vision believes invisible.

In its widest sense, the musical gesture, projecting musical thinking in all its multiplicity and framed by its interpretation, realizes an ontological contrapunctus of such categories as expressible-inexpressible, visible-invisible, sense-non sense, finite infinite, order-chaos, universal-singular.

 Cultural hermeneutics, including in some ways the philosophical spirit of a definite Aristotelian and Musilian precision, establishes the effective counter play of Unity, Diversity and Otherness. Philosophical description is not conducted in the spirit of a skeptical rhapsody, nor is it necessarily aimed towards a “pre established disharmony”. Cultural hermeneutics, as the philosophy of mathematics and aesthetics, is not a mere description of an ontological absolute. Unity and plurality are categories diversely orchestrated by specific constructions in the following internally connected fields:

- a) Mathematics and Logic
- β) Quantum Physics and the Theory of Physics in general
- γ) Biology
- δ) Epistemology
- ε) Philosophy
- ζ) Aesthetics, particularly musical aesthetics and formal analysis
- η) Dialectical Theology
- θ) Mystical experience
- i) Political sciences
- κ) Law and the Theory of Justice
- λ) Anthropology in the broad sense

There is no consistent reason for the claim of a theory of unity among these cognitive fields. However, what is required is that we recognize the cross relations between our uses of the concept of unity. The primary use involves the link, recognized by Husserl, among the idealization of the diverse, the attribution of meaning and temporality. “Consciousness of time is the original location for the constitution of Unity in general”.15 Such a perspective is more complex than the mere assumption of a vague intuition. Rather, it leads to a pure generality whose derivations are pure possibilities, not facts or empirical experiences.

After Boethius’s Consolation of musical cosmic order, specified in his De Institutione Musica, only Leibniz offered a framework of the ontology of music as an invisible harmonization of Creation. In this sense, his presentation of music as a kind of unconscious experience16 is not only a metaphor. The ramifications of the hermeneutics of music as an ontological experience of Harmony is understood as a process of structural stability in all the above mentioned cognitive fields, the ontological dynamics of the play

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15 Husserl, Edmund., Erfahrung und Urteil, Hamburg, 1954, p 75-76 /see also § 90, Pure Generality and Necessity a priori, pp 426-427.
16 Leibniz, G.W., Principles of Nature and Grace, in Philosophical Essays, Indianapolis, 1989, p 212
of the world, the singular explosion of Being and its infinite resolutions. This reiteration of the ontological and cosmological relevance of harmony, obliterated during the secularization of culture, is key for interpreting the unity of ethics and aesthetics. An open hermeneutic problematizes both holism and cultural relativism, showing and constructing the multiple voices of the Invention of cultural harmony.

2. Methodology and possible human worlds

We could summarize this emphasis by indicating the importance of the following question: “what does it mean, what are the implications of understanding and interpreting an aesthetic or ethical gesture, an artistic or religious experience (eventually unified in musical thinking) – in their silences or in their many languages- as integrated culture, and as sign of humanity?” This interrogation, in its modulation, functions as an outline for hermeneutic methodology itself. Just as in the case of mathematics, the problem does not consist in penetrating the essence of unity, or describing its systematics, but in inventing it or constructing it. Remarking on how Augustine calls to mind in his Confessions (XI, 20) the variety of statements about duration, past, present or future, Wittgenstein pointes out the importance of directing our investigation towards the possibilities of phenomena:

«Es ist uns, als müßen, wir die Erscheinungen durchschauen: unsere untersuchung aber richter sicht nicht auf die Erscheinung, sondern, wie man sagen könnte, auf die „möglicherken“ der Erscheinunge»

Understanding is not achieved through a special kind of insight, but in the course of a synoptic view of the language forms in which we talk about them. The scope of the investigation of the possible transcends the status of possibility and probability. It opens the concept up for the philosophical consideration of ways to see and think unpredictable aspect of the world, in a sense stressed by Wittgenstein and Musil as well as by Merleau-Ponty or Emmanuel Levinas. It has been both a motive for enthusiasm and despair to ascertain that Wittgenstein’s grammatical approach of understanding through the virtually infinite language of music registres, in a constructive process, the many descriptive methods of Gestalt psychology and theories of perception.

Despite significant theorical differences, it appears that the logos of aesthetic world, in the many senses of this expression, constitutes a medium where logico-grammatical, transcendental and existential “phenomenology” may share a basic and fruitful concern. It is true that Merleau-Ponty didn’t thematise the ontological significance of music in his published works, he did strongly stress, in manuscripts like The Visible and the Invisible, the reversibility of sonority and listening, as a powerful crossover between visible and invisible dimensions of thought. Similarly, Wittgenstein worked extensively on his own kind of phenomenology, one concerning our concept of vision and perception, and our view meaning in visual perception and painting. From a methodological point

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18 Wittgenstein, L., Remarks on Philosophy of Psychology, Basil Blackwell, § 869
of view, a hermeneutics of culture is largely conceived as an unforeseeable morphological counterpoint between different approaches: the phenomenological, the grammatical and the analytical approach of semiosis through the play of lógos and thought. As such, the hermeneutical process can overcome the dogmatic secularization of the theorein, as well as the reduction of language (that is lógos) to the linguistic sphere. This integrative game reveals a tense harmony. In this spirit, Nelson Goodman’s description cognitive and artistic ways of worldmaking appears to be logically connected with a priori construction of possibility. The holistic determination of a world is not incompatible with its multiplicity. Understanding aspects, profiles and versions of a world lead to the comprehensive construction of other worlds and other’s worlds. Discerning a human world will start with a discovery of the other’s Face and with the unpredictable receptive and constructive experience of strangeness. As pointed by mathematicians like L.E.J Brouwer or Hermann Weyl and philosophers like Wittgenstein, the key is not to describe an absolute reality but to understand the sovereign possibility of constructive actions. As suggested early on by Emmanuel Lévinas, we can oppose the significance of the face to the conception of meaning and understanding determined by the notion of horizon. Nonetheless we must complete this transformation by the acknowledgment of face in its non visual dimension, as a kerugmatik experience through musical thinking, gesture and action. In this light, harmony must be rethought in its original key, outside of aesthetic and ethical discourses, in order to properly reinvent the play of Lógos and Harmonia. This proto harmony results from the tension and contrasts of opposites, as evoked by Heraclite’s subtle definition.

It is now time to consider some forms of this “palintropic” harmony in thethesaurus of musical thinking. The musico-philosophical unterweg to harmony differs fundamentally from an aesthetics of music. As suggested by Wittgenstein and by Adorno in his Beethoven, this line of thinking could be characterized as a musical hermeneutics of culture.

Interpreting the essential contribution of music19 to the problem of hermeneutical universality in this manner focuses on certain specific topoi. In the process we will refer mostly to examples of the 20th century innovation articulating both understanding and performance interpretation and characterizing music as an ontological harmony and an ethical experience of infinite trascendence.

3. **Autrui: An Infinite Ricercar**

“The principle of Art is infinite variation”

Robert Musil20

The melodic articulation of cognition, cosmography, theology, ethics, arts and especially music has been conceived through models of cosmic order: in the Egyptian Ma’at, the Vedic conceptions of the Châdogya, the Greek notions of Themis, Lógos and Harmonia, the platonic Idea of a wisdom of the world (Timaeus) and its later cosmological counter subjects in Hellenistic Greece, the Biblical order of Creation, the anthropological an

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19 Jean-Bernard, Marc., Text Zum Spielen, Critique, Editions de Minuit, 1979
20 Musil, Robert, Prosa, Dramen, spate Briefe, Hamburg, 1957, p 715
cosmographic determination of the Gospels, the final goal of creation by Allah, the Gnostic vision of an illusory world. We know that as Wittgenstein, Musil and, topically, Heidegger insisted, these philosophical models are more complex that any *Weltanschauung*. This points toward two theses:

α) Between the Egyptian, Greek, Old Testament, Rabbinic, Christian, Islamic, Hindu and East Asian’s axial conceptions, cultural hermeneutics can no longer be limited to any kind of Spenglerian *relativism, contextualism* or speculative *universalism*. What we have is a dialogue, a *counterpoint* of sources, a cross cultural translation and understanding.

β) This dialogue overcomes hermeneutic aporias through a creative *musical language game*, in which ontology is conceptually invented and experienced through the song (*Mélôs, Saman, Ming*...).

A musical hermeneutics of culture is, therefore, a *creative* hermeneutics, in which philosophy is understood as a *comparative* and conceptual *act of interpretation* in both the theoretical and the musical sense. In any culture, this gesture of interpretation requires thinking the *central* world experience, as well as wisdom of the world, understood as a mystical and aesthetic experience. Music is a privileged instance of this if we follow the philosophical tradition\(^{21}\) culminating in Nietzsche, Bloch, Wittgenstein, Adorno and Jankéliévitch, in saying that the pure concept of art is applicable primordially to music. This tradition has led us towards a meta empirical privilege of music as *mystery*. The project of thinking the *non categorical* from Philon and Plotinus to Mallarmé generates the Meta empirical paradox. Moreover, the significance and ambiguities of mysticism are always exposed to the risk of being associated with what Musil could call the “*Meingast*’s shadow”, that is to the theosophical and rhetorical versions of intuition and mysticism. Both Adorno and Wittgenstein escaped such an ironic risk by making the individual moment in music mystical, constructing *formal* constellations of semantic musical contents, and describing the primordially musical *aura* and *enigma* of authentic art.

Indeed, while for Hegel the true was the whole, for Adorno, Benjamin and Wittgenstein, the whole comes to be seen the false. Beethoven, a mainly Hegelian figure, intensely defends the musical *idea* as the whole, as fortress, as interpretation of the World’s spirit, an imageless image of dialectical totality. Yet, within the celebration of mystical experience understood as a unitary paradigm found in such works as the *Missa Solemnis* and late Sonatas and Quartets, we discover an equilibrium of the individual, a musical *homeostasis*.

After Wagner’s *Love duet and Liebestodt* in *Tristan und Isolda*, the musical transfiguration of Nietzsche’s *Midnight Song* from *Also Sprach Zarathustra* in Mahler’s third Symphony (IV) provides a precise example of transcendence\(^{22}\).

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\(^{21}\) From the Pythagoricians, Platon, Aristotle-Aristoxenes, Boethius, Wackenroder, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche represented by culminated by Adorno

\(^{22}\) Gustav Mahler, Symphonie III, iv, *Was mir der Mensch erzählt*, (*What Mankind tells me*)
This symphony, which Mahler had a time planned to name *My Happy Science*, exemplifies a double transfiguration:

a) The intersemiotical transfiguration of the poem “What Mankind Tells Me” which closes both “The Other Dance Song” and “The Drunken Song” chapters in *Zarathustra*

b) The musical (and critical) transfiguration of Nietzsche’s implicit hermeneutics of *dialectical unity* between Night and Day, Dream and Awakening, Nature and Man, Time and Eternity through a musical enactment of eternal return.

Understanding the evocative power of the poem through Mahler’s writing does not consist in the mere musical analysis (classical or Shenkerian), but in the act of reception and interpretation. It calls not only for the reading of music but eminently for the individual gesture of interpretation: conducting, singing, playing or teaching. The double transfiguration of the *Midnight Song* in the form of *an original musical thought* is accomplished through the play of language between *Lógos* and *Mélos*, Saying and Singing. Beyond any linguistic model, this play of language is due to the internal grammar and logicity of the writing. It manifests itself through *Harmony* (starting from mystical touches), through spiral musical reiterations of the apostrophe *O Mensch*, through an exceptional range of Dynamics and Timbre, and through Mahler’s own innovative style of instrumentation. This Panic way of thinking the mystical presence of Nature corresponds to another “musicalisation” of Nietzsche’s hermeneutics of cultural otherness: the Mahlerian reading of Chinese Poetry in the *Song of the Earth*.

Our second musical example follows the development of the ontological radiance of aesthetic experience through a translation of Arthur Rimbaud’s primordial *Thaumazein* facing Beauty, written by the contemporary composer Hans Werner Henze in his Cantata *Being Beauteous*[^23]. The hermeneutical gesture arises from a semiotic experience guided by the Wagnerian-Nietzschean claim of resonance among the arts. Nevertheless, Henze shows both elective affinities and strong differences regarding French traditions of Poetry sublimation. Through the formal process, the composer unveiled the floating connotations of the poem, unfolding a vision, *la Face Cendrée*. As a farewell (*meno mosso*), a melodic slow Walzer elevates the last verse into the light air towards an instant of grace, a transparent movement revealing the *ineffable*, *aphtegton*, *arreton*. I interpret this as, at the same time, *Anabasis* and *Anakoresis*. The vertiginous decrescendo from the high B pianissimo to C sharp, after having strangely made it dance, submerge the Vision into the same amorphic silence which preceded its apparition. The chiasm between music and the sense fugitively captures the radiance of *invisible harmony* in the same way as Rimbaud’s writing evokes the *Flesh* in the radiance of poetry. We have here a musical resonance of Illumination. For Henze as for Mahler, music and musical aesthetics are ontologically impure. Music is impure in the sense that, for Neruda poetry is impure. In its very essence, *Musiké* irradiates the colors of the *Musica di Piazza*, and echoes the rhythms of ethical and political conflicts. *Boulevard Solitude* and *El Cimarrón* exemplify the tense exposition of ethical despair in music. Following our methodological observations in section 2, a phenomenology of *Rhythmizing Consciousness* and

[^23]: Henze, Hans Werner., *Being Beauteous*, Schott, 1963
Intentionality\textsuperscript{24} is as relevant as a grammatical approach in the consideration of rhythm-objects, harmony and musical thinking in general.

Thus our third musical topos is dedicated to the musical idiosyncrasies of a composer, Leo Brouwer. Considering his Sonata for solo Guitar (1990) in three movements in my own version recorded in 1997, understanding and interpreting form and style in their specific unity, appears to be a task coextensive with the double gesture of thinking and performing styles and cultures. In this work, Beethoven and Padre Soler are both invited to a baroque but extemporal and numerological encounter (\textit{Fandangos y Boleros}). On the other hand, the \textit{Sarabanda de Scriabin} has to be performed (that is understood) as an integration of mystic experience as proposed by the pure harmonic schema and by polyphony\textsuperscript{25}. The Sonata is written in the classical notation used by Messiaen or Boulez. The central enigma of this strongly unified work cannot be dissociated from the fact that the composer’s musical thinking, far from the false cultural reconciliation of the Musical Industry, answers to Musiké, to the primordial Mélôs, at the foot of his genealogical tree. The rhythmizing consciousness active in the structures of afro Antillean music (and poetry), here constructs an infinite and always invertible counterpoint with European musical traditions.

The aura, in Benjamin’ sense, touches as much the individual as the universal, as is exemplarily the case in the mythical compositions of Villa-Lobos, Revueltas or Ginastera.

Our last musical topos leads us to the final questions concerning the intersubjective experience of thinking harmony across diverse cultural boundaries and through the primordial ontological offering of music. We can certainly consider the musical language offered, after Parsifal, by 20\textsuperscript{th} composers like Bartok, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud, Messiaen and Henze as the best examples of the “archaic” imperative of Mélôs and Harmony. In their works, the ineffable manifests itself without rhetorical usurpation, in the density of the construction and the richness of its possible significance. The idea of unity and diversity becomes in them not only a metaphysical, ethical or hermeneutical horizon, but a sensuous musical reality.

Nevertheless, what I would like to consider here as last locus for dialogue, is the interpretation (and performance) of a chamber work by Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu. It is a work of transparent complexity, offering within its dense technical and semiotic synthesis, the clearest possible simplicity. \textit{Toward the Sea}, in its first version for Flute Alto and Guitar, is a mystical triptych dedicated both to celebrate Hermann Melville’s thinking and \textit{Moby Dick}’s cultural and metaphysical connotations. The perceptive and dynamic state of sawari, the fusion of performance and meditation, will define the sonority of both instruments, beyond tradition and technology.

\textsuperscript{24} We refer to the fundamental essay by French phenomenologist Nicolas Abraham: \textit{Rythmes (…) Flammarion, Paris, 1985; Rhythmizing Consciousness: an Essay on the Temporality of Rhythm, in Rhythms, Stanford, 1995, pp 67-103.}

However, the most relevant significance of Takemitsu’s thinking has to be clarified within our hermeneutical approach. Just as for Debussy, recognized by the Japanese composer as his primordial “master”, the fundamental elements for Takemitsu were colors, light and shadow. But this sound aspect only makes sense through an explicit philosophical approach of music. The composer is operating a conscious double fusion: unifying Japanese conceptual traditions of composition, the spirit of interpretation (ashirai) and instrumental playing (sakuhachi), with Satie’s and Debussy’s harmonic freedom, Schoenberg’s constructions, Messiaen’s synesthesia theory and seven mode’s combination, Cage investigations and meditations. *Toward the Sea* has specific Debussy like intentional objects, dominated by the element of the sea or the water. They define the form of the work: *the Night, Moby Dick, Cape Cod*. The harmonic arpeggios, chords, and the perpetuum mobile suggestions of the guitar part, define the complex background for the pathos of the flute figures where Nature and Man are singing. The writing suggests “erotic” coincidence between the two players, recalling not so much Bergsonian duration but the effulgescence of Husserl’s protensions and retentions. *Towards the Sea* has to be understood, through the Interpretation and Reception of its hermeneutical gesture, as a philosophical expectation of the Other, and, accordingly to the composer, like all music, as a Prayer.

East Asian and European versions of the human gesture toward otherness and nothingness spring from the common sources of Saying and Singing. This vision is apophatically expressed in the East-West metaphysical dialogue, by Nietzsche, Watsuji, Heidegger, Tanabe or Nishida.

Perhaps this same philosophical intersubjective motive can be heard in another poetical tone, the Peitho of Claudel’s *Partage de Midi*26, so intensely beloved by the French composer Darius Milhaud: facing the *Risk of the Sea*27, the Face of Isé and the sculptural presence of Man in the *Transfiguration of Noon*.

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