" From semio-ethics to semiotics of speech in music & musicology: a few theoretical (and utopian) projections " (p. 23-31)

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From semio-ethics to semiotics of speech in music & musicology: a few theoretical (and utopian) projections.

Abstract: Situated in the domains of language philosophy, generalised-linguistics, and semiotics—and to some extent also in the philosophy of science—, Semio-ethics is a field-of-research whose leading proponents are Italian theorists Susan Petrilli & Augusto Ponzio (2003, 2010), and which is concerned with the improvement of living conditions through critical examination of the value of being. Semio-ethics therefore focuses primarily on the Other. Our contribution endeavours to apply the tenets of this global, semiotic vision to the study of Musical Meaning. This theoretical and speculative hypothesis proposes a means by which the field of musical semiology may definitively evolve beyond the *communication model*, —the paradigm from which it emerged in the post-1960s theory of *Linguistic turn*—, towards something which we will call the "interpretation of musical speech." Beginning with an overview of semio-ethics and some of its key concepts, we will outline the nature of musical semiotics as it relates to present-day practice (as opposed to focusing upon the corpus of related theoretical texts).

INTRODUCTION

Situated in the domains of language philosophy, generalised-linguistics, and semiotics—and to some extent also in the philosophy of science—, Semio-ethics is a field-of-research whose leading proponents are Italian theorists Susan Petrilli & Augusto Ponzio (2003, 2010). Numerous fields-of-study contributed to the creation of the theoretical foundation that gave rise to this vast epistemological field. Worthy of note at this point are the linguistic and scientific works of Charles Sanders Peirce, Thomas Sebeok and Roland Barthes, as well as the philosophical research of Mikaïl Bakhtine and Emmanuel Levinas[1]. As noted by Petrilli and Ponzo, semio-ethics does not represent a branch of semiotics; rather, it may be viewed as a philosophical *attitude* vis-a-vis the world of signs & signifiers, which undergoes constant enlargement and diversification. The texts, objects, habits & social interactions which constituted the primary *object* of generalised semiotics are progressively superseded by diverse life-forms, collaborative, digital creations, cyber-networks and immersive platforms which render our use of signs, and our interpretation thereof, additionally complex.

Semio-ethics, a field concerned with potential means for improving living conditions through critical examination of the value of being, focuses primarily on the Other. If we accept that *otherness* is a crucial fundamental in any given society, we may observe that it acquires a peculiar dimension within the context of globalisation. The Other has never been closer, whilst at the same time, being increasingly distant, *virtual*, or even invisible. How, therefore, are we to incorporate Otherness in our local and general semio-spheres (Lotman, 1996, 1998, 2000)? How are we to derive meaning from the world, whilst at the same time respecting the multitude and diversity of signs? Inevitably, some of them are utterly foreign to us; how are we to respond as this space becoming broader, more organic and reticular? How might we foster new forms of communication and social exchange? What meaning should we give to

this illusion that gradually inserts itself between reality and its representation, as in the case of new immersive experiences (such as virtual reality, for instance)? And finally, what is our relationship with *meaning* when the distinction between human and non-human beings —a distinction that is of absolute primacy in the traditional notion of society—, is blurred by bio-semiotics? (Sebeok, 1995)[2]

In order to answer these questions, semio-ethics emphasises a return to *care,* to careful listing to the self and others. It touches upon extant notions of critical thinking, activism, and the importance of responsibility vis-a-vis signs & signifiers globally, in any and all aspects of life. Semio-ethics is an invitation to broaden our conception of signs, i.e. to consider them as entities which transcend communication, speech, and the unequivocal meaning between significant and signified. It is an invitation to exercise critical thinking towards signs, to go beyond established conventions and value judgments. (Ponzio, 2010)

Our contribution will attempt to apply this global vision of the world of signs to the domain of musical meaning. (Semio-ethics has thus far been largely ignored in this field.) (Esclapez, 2014)[3]. This theoretical and speculative hypothesis proposes a means by which the field of musical semiology may definitively evolve beyond the *communication model*, —the paradigm from which it emerged in the post-1960s theory of *Linguistic turn*—, towards something which we will call the "interpretation of musical speech." Beginning with an overview of semio-ethics and some of its key concepts, we will outline the nature of musical semiotics as it relates to present-day practice (as opposed to focusing upon the corpus of related theoretical texts).

Semio-ethics: Perspective of the Other

Semio-ethics offers a unique perspective on the study of signs, in that it is not merely a compendium of pre-established rules and principals; rather, it represents a general vision which addresses the question of interactions between semiotics and ethics (Fontanille 2007).

In the tradition of Aristotelian aesthetics, it presupposes that discrete and collective actions are dependent upon interrelations between the action itself and the various associated components which give rise to meaning (objectiveness, speaking/gesturing to the other, context, presence of the other in the self), as opposed to any pre-established values. Petrilli and Ponzio prioritise the movement of signs beyond their primary function or political, cultural or aesthetic doxa into the realm of the 'unclassified,' or 'unordered'. In critical analysis of our globalized world, semio-ethics represents an opportunity to move beyond Identity Humanism, which has largely defined Western thought since the 18th Century.

Semio-ethics as a philosophical project of is founded upon an acknowledgment of difference and separation from the *other*, emphasising reflection upon this difference while affirming the importance of recognising our *own* selves. It is difference, or rather, the *indifference*, (Jullien, 2012) which lies at the heart of the project: how are we to differentiate ourselves from each other without conflict, disregard, or self-identification? It is a question of thinking "beyond" what we believe we know, without implying transcendence or metaphysics.

Eduardo Kohn's book, *Comment pensent les forêts* (2017), is very much in line with this position. Taking Peirce's theory of semiotics as a starting point, Kohn proposes that we imagine a semio-anthropological 'beyond human,' which frees the symbolic function from its singular role in communication. Kohn liberates the force of cues and icons, which become ways of escaping towards other possible forms of inter-subjective and inter-species'

exchanges. 'These encounters with other forms of being force us to admit that seeing, representing, and perhaps knowing, or even thinking, are not exclusively human' (Kohn, 2017:19). This assumption only becomes possible when we conceive – as Jakob von Uexkül did – that every organism communicates using models that were constructed within the context of a specific ecological niche (Uexküll [1956] 2010).

Semio-ethics therefore constitute a political project, in the sense that Pétrilli and Ponzio position themselves firmly against all forms of glottocentrism,[4] or anthropocentrism that would prioritise a conception of meaning strictly based upon words and intentions. In other words, a recognition that communication and social exchange may also be effective through non-verbal means, which enriches semiosis, and widens the possibilities of meaning. For Petrilli and Ponzio, the human being is a 'semiotical animal;' this allows us to assume that other types of semiosis (such as animal- or biological semiosis) are not foreign to him.

The epistemological territory of semio-ethics cannot be separated from globalisation and its secondary-effects—be they technological, economic, cultural or social—which Petrilli and Ponzo consider as *pharmakon,* a remedy as well as a poison (Stiegler 2010). The posture of the aforementioned Italian researchers differs from critical studies about globalisation, which are numerous (*e.g.* Abélés, 2008). In the very acknowledgment of adverse effects of globalization, they see the possibility of its circumvention. The responsibility of the individual, vis-a-vis life, culture and the *other,* is at the centre of this semiotic posture, widely influenced by the ethical philosophy elaborated by the Bakhtine Circle in the 1920s. The writings of this collective are one of the main sources of the researchers' work: they invite us to be responsible actors of globalisation, with free and critical thinking. Consequently, Pétrilli

and Ponzio are sceptical about disciplinarity and the hyper-specialization of knowledge, which was also questioned in the 1990s (*e. g.* Morin, 1990).

CONCEPTUAL MIGRATIONS

This dynamic model for understanding signs, or the semiosphere, leads to a renewal of methods and modes of acquiring knowledge, as well as rules of production and analysis of meaning. In this sense, semio-ethics constitute a practice, a knowledge-base with ethics and responsibility as its source. From this context, we will propose *different* ways of understanding musical signification, thanks to "conceptual migrations" developed from what Edgar Morin calls "migratory notions" (1990). Within the global context of semio-ethics presented above, we will retain four notions: attention, listening, signification and interpretation.
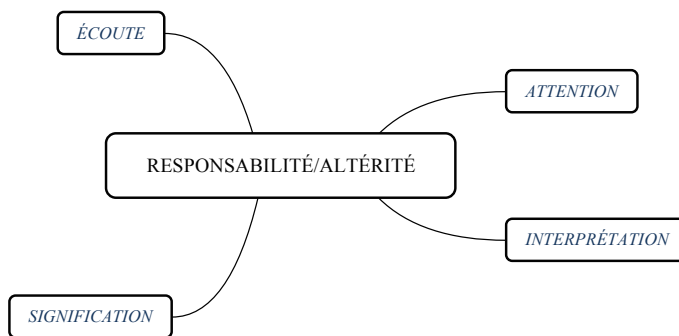
Figure 1
Cartography and transposition: on some of the "migratory notions"

Attention prioritises what is being experienced; it implies a distancing from the linearity of Western conception of time and History. In a chronological and abstract way, History is represented as a succession of events: Past-Present-Future, the time of experienced History (the time of consciousness) must have as its starting point the notions of 'attention,' and

'middle,' as evidenced by Bernard Stiegler, who applied Husserlian phenomenology to social philosophy (2010) [5]. The focus on the present is a tendency which is positioned *between* retention of the past and protention which is to come, implying a sharing of our space-time. It is both "*psychological attention*, perceptive, cognitive (being alert, aware, concentrated), and *social attention*, practical, ethical (being careful, taking care)" [6]. *Attention* refers to *care* (Zielinski, 2010). It is to be conceived as a disposition, but also (and primarily) as a practice, based on an ethic of detail, relief, and fragment. Being careful necessitates taking care of things and people, principally those which first seem insignificant, and which are, in this sense, unclassifiable. Attention demands an active listening of the *other*. The philosopher and sinologist François Jullien proposes not a question of the *otherness*, but rather, of the *interval*, the *gap* (2012). The divide presupposes a fertile and adventurous distance; it is a transient place. It is a communal place for human beings, whilst difference supposes a comparison or classification founded upon a common frame which serves as a reference by which any and every form of life is relative. **Listening** is, also, a practice. Listening requires both a negation of value judgments and a willingness to enter into a dialogical relationship with the other, letting him/her/it surprise, and, through this irruption in our personal world, letting us understand him/her/it as radically *other* (Levinas, 1974). Listening leads us to acknowledge our semantic variance, and to focus on attention, freed from other interests outside the understanding of this distance and interval, attempting in this way to resist the myth of *sameness,* of unity, or of fusion. This time of the *rediscovered instant* cannot be consummated with univocal signification, as proposed in Saussurian linguistics in the beginning of the 20th Century. Indeed, univocity between significant and signified has the effect of verticalising signification. In contrast, **signification** which is connected to listening and care, becomes what Kohn describes as: "a vast range of significant differences, between qualities and beings" (2017 : p. 13) which compels us to develop a series of relationships which "precede

the usual categorization and communication process inserted in historical and linguistic frameworks" (2017: *ibid*.). Signification (and its multiple facets: verbal, but also non-verbal…) opens the sign to **interpretation**, as if immersed in the unknown. It stimulates a capacity of response which does not seek to close, judge or classify, but rather, to listen to what is being outlined beyond words (Zielinski 2010). Interpretation becomes an attentive reading and questioning of the other, and of the self. These four *migratory notions* must be understood in a non-hierarchical way. They are in constant interaction with one another; they are edifices of experience which manifest the space of intersubjective exchange which is particularly applicable to artistic practice.

These four 'kernels' serve to expand the map of secondary notions:

Figure 2
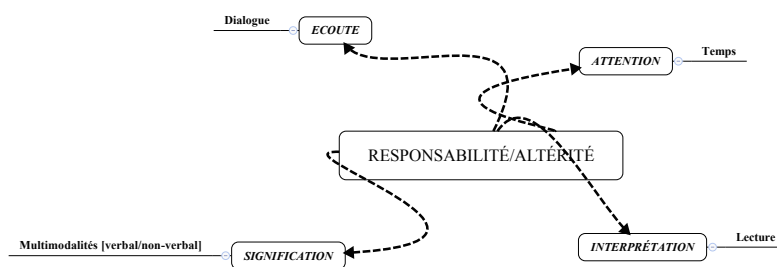Cartography & Transposition: 'migratory' and 'secondary' notions

Awareness, listening, signification and interpretation operate in close proximity to music and musicology. They concern what happens between interpreter, musicologist, analyst, artist, and listener. Might not the semiotics of the *speech* of musical works presented here might provide an opportunity to reimagine the field of musicology?

Towards a semiotic 'speech' in musical works

Following this introduction, it is now necessary to attempt to apply the tenets of semio-ethics to the field of musical signification, towards a semiotics *speech* in musical works.

The notion of *speech* is commonly used in reference to Saussurian semiology, and to the language/speech dichotomy that determines the way in which language functions. Our definition, however, will follow the more focused perspective of Emile Benveniste (1966, 1974). Speech is the discourse which is in play, and the channel through which the subject emerges. It embodies a competence and the individual actualization of society (Dosse, 1992). In his *History of structuralism,* François Dosse underlines the marginalisation of Emile Benveniste's theses in the structuralist context of the late-1960s. Benveniste, the French exception (1992, p. 57-70), had nevertheless started elaborating his thesis as far back as 1946. Dosse also describes the extent to which the development of linguistic enunciation and the philosophy of language are a consequence to the events of May, 1968. The latter tolled the bell of archaic modes of conceiving and understanding the world; a return of meaning after the hegemony of the sign, a return to presence, alterity, body, to the 'instant,' and to emotions. Thus, the notion of *speech* suggests a return to works themselves, conceived of as fields of singular presence, referring to norms and historical codes, but also to actions which negate questions of the creative act, of representation or expression, prioritising instead a focus upon exploration, inauguration and invention. In this sense, the idea of the *work* as a completed entity—autonomous from the world—, is called into question by actions, which, receiving and conceiving that *work,* define it as a particular mode of presence (Vecchione, 1992, 2008. Esclapez & Hauer, 2001). In the field of contemporary art, Jean Cristofol proposes that art can be thought of as "work of forms" as opposed to a "production of objects" which give rise to a thought-process and a specific set of functions (2005). These hypotheses conceive of music (and of art) as a singular form of *speech*, which creates, by its presence, a plurality of possible

worlds. Musical (and artistic) works give us the opportunity to experience something which is not to be reduced merely to context, intention, and technical/technological conditions. In this sense, art is not communication; it is an exploration and interpretation of reality, according to a particular set of modalities; this contradicts the univocal dichotomy of the signifier and signified.

As with semio-ethics, defining musical works as instances of 'speech' demands a conception of musical meaning that instantiates a dialogue between several 'actors': composers, listeners, performers, musicologists, etc. These instances are individual, but also collective, and were derived from their contextually-determined social, economic or cultural milieux. They no longer refer only to the "composer, performer, listener" continuum, which would otherwise reactivate in musicology the above-mentioned schematic of communication. Rather, this dialogue creates a complex network of experiences which is to be deciphered rather than decoded.

This shift towards practical and discursive questions is not new; we cannot however, in the context of this writing, trace its genealogy. We will recall that, from Aristotle to John Dewey or Bruno Latour, numerous theorists (founders of the pragmatic trend) conceive of, or have conceived of, interactions between the sciences, arts and action in the world. In this sense, practice has no aim beyond the act transforming the subject, social interrelations, or even the natural environment.

It is neither a question of opposing theory and practice, nor of merging them; rather, the aim is to think of them as *others*, in their mutual distance and mutual fecundity. Neither is it about inaugurating a system of values between several significant facts, but instead, to recognize the diversity of symbolic systems as cognitive systems (in the broad, non-computational sense), which are characteristic of a certain culture and historical context. That which constitutes

meaning is no longer the relationship between a subject and a signifying object; rather, it is the content of the action, and the values invested therein (Panier, 2008). From there, semiotic speech in works of music may be conceived of as the study of a practical field which explores the world outside of conventional topos, and which traces the course of musicology as an action.

Awareness

The question of awareness, as defined above, calls historical writings into question; more precisely, it questions the distance between the past and that of the contemporary historian. Foucault stated for instance that, for Clavel "whatever escapes History is the instant, the rupture, the tearing, the interruption" (Foucault, 2001, p. 790). The writing of History is a delicate problem which was a subject of discussion, after the Annales school, of a whole generation of thinkers (mostly French: Michel Foucault, Paul Veyne, Jacques Le Goff, Paul Ricoeur ou Jacques Derrida). For Michel Certeau in particular, the writing of History is concerned with meaning and *distanciation*. Situated between science and fiction, this practice establishes an equilibrium between the Historian's subjectivity and the various collective traces of the past (Dosse, 2003). It also implies a paradoxical relationship towards the *other,* in the sense that he is absent. From this perspective, awareness is a critical practice which allows the past to situate itself in a paradoxical space that is not entirely concerned with authenticity. This interspace is the one of Ethics, revisiting the junction between subject and object, and favouring the porosity between researcher and the events to be studied. For Daniel Charles, History is significant only in a "complete time," in other words, it includes the three dimensions of time in an equidistant manner: past, present, and future (Charles, 2001).

Musicology, broadly defined as the discourse on music, was invented in the late 18th Century, in accordance with the structures of pre-existing historical sciences. With a progressive widening of its scope in the 1970s, musicology absorbed perspectives from Textual & Critical Sciences (Vecchione, 1992), or from ethnomusicology. In doing so, it was forced to re-evaluate some of its core tenets. Placing a particular focus upon on musics of the *other*, musics judged to be of minor importance (such as Pop, or the work of forgotten composers), the relationship between improvisation and notation, the question of periodicity of History and its chronology etc. were largely overlooked in the pages of the official History. In the last quarter of the 20th Century, these and others gained institutional recognition, a phenomenon that indicated a significant shift in musical and musicological values. Indeed, artistic modernity of the 20th Century conceived of creation as a production favouring originality and the *unheard.* The end of the 20th Century, on the other hand, presented the act of creation as one of continuity, of *re-writing*, *re-configuration* and *re-composition.* Art music, for instance, has opened itself to musical practices of the many *others* (early music, improvised, traditional, experimental): oral traditions & improvisation gave rise to the emergence of hybrid processes. Before the 18th Century, the creative act was almost exclusively conceived of relative to religion; in the times of modernity, it progressively metamorphosed into an aesthetic value. It is now, in contrast, recognised as a collective action, one which is fundamentally inter-disciplinary. Improvisation, recordings, re-writing, adaptation, repetition, as well as 'workarounds,' 'covers,' or the exaltation of all things 'vintage,' are some of its most current trends. Creation unfolds here as a game with *ideas of others*, or with *other ideas* ([FR: idées autres]). Hybridisation, appropriation, decontextualisation are notions with which the musicologist may now enter into a dialogue.

It would be excessive to attempt to mention all those who contributed to this development, and who are now active in the various international networks of research. We will only

mention (recognising the incomplete nature of this list) those whom we consider to be the pioneers of this 20th Century musicology of the *other*: Boris de Schlœzer, André Souris, André Boucourechliev and Charles Rosen (Esclapez, 2007). The hybrid position occupied by composers and performers, i.e. between theory and practice, constitutes a musicological specificity. They are researchers who are only too happy to muddy the waters of linearity and causality in the official historiography. Pre-occupied with the nature of forms, they create an ecological space between creator and listener (in the widest possible sense). Once a historian, the musicologist has become an attentive observer of emerging, unclassifiable musical practices, conscious of their History, but also: 1.) of the fact that they may open new avenues and are worthy of examination, and 2.) of his/her epistemological vantage point. The musicologist studies an *object* which, although present in a historical context, cannot become attached on account of its impermanent nature. The observer is therefore responsible for being aware of these emergences, as imperceptible as they may be. Semiotics of the *speech* of musical works must therefore be attentive to *everything that produces signs*, i.e. to the multiple *words* which works as practices bring into being. In this sense, semiotics of the *speech* of works practices the study of practices.

Listening

If, like carefulness, listening is one form of experience and knowledge of the world, then it is no less a singular practice which opens the semiotics of *speech* of works towards sounds of the world. This opening constitutes, for the practices of our times, an essential aesthetic turn, inasmuch as it upends the hierarchy in order to value sound & listening over the historically proclivity for the visual (Pardo Salgado, 2014). The second half of the 20th century, as heir to the first Avant Gardes, saw an exploration of new territories which obscured the distinction between music and sound (Schaeffer, 1966). Brian Eno ([1999] 2005), for instance, describes

the research that was undertaken, following on the footprints of John Cage, in United Kingdom and the U.S by composers and performers such as Cornelius Cardew, Christian Wolf, and himself. In the mid-1960s, this lineage yielded a culture of musical experimentation that profoundly undermined the barriers between sound and music which had existed for centuries. This phenomenon offered composers the opportunity to discover *the sound of earth* (Pardo Salgado, 2014). Noises, soundscapes, and sound installations are deemed 'musical,' giving rise to a critical examination to the definition and nature of music (Schaefer, [1977], 2010). Despite the fact that credit for the fruit of these explorations is often taken by sound artists as opposed to composers and performers, we are nonetheless observing a broadening of musicological discourse, such that there is now considerable study on the emergence of noise in contemporary music (Spampinato, 2008 ; Solomos, 2013), and its presence in the more general context of art and the world (Szendy, 2001 ; Sterne, [2003] 2015 ; Deshays, 2006 ; Barbanti, 2011). This aesthetic turn toward the *sounds of the earth* suggests, according to Petrilli and Ponzio, a perception which prioritises the *signifying* material, rather than the *signified* (object). The semiotics of the *speech* of musical works seek to experience and to *taste* sound. In this sense, they relate to Roland Barthes' *plaisir du texte* ('pleasure of text'), *grain de la voix* ('grain of the voice'), and inter-subjective listening, which he contributed to contemporary aesthetics (1973, 1982). If sound is a projection, a resonance and vibration, then listening is the primordial threshold to most subjective aspect of sound as a sign. This subjectivity is not merely the acknowledgment of the ways in which we attribute a meaning to things and to beings; it is also a place for memory, absence, disappearance, imperceptibility, and impermanence. Philosopher Roberto Barbanti (2011) explores, for instance, the foundations of a sonic ecology, based on Heideggerian hermeneutics, which implies three modes of *being in the world*: co-existence, continuity, and ontological complicity (2011, p. 11-18). This third notion is, for him, essential for an ecology of sound which hypothesises a

porosity between the perception of a sound and the sound itself. The notion of the act of listening is therefore shifted towards a question of relationship: sound is an intermediary apparatus which connects people, things, and noises of the world, in a manner which is local, and silent. Sound is a critical space where interdisciplinary artistic practices and creative acts may emerge. To arrive at a *speech* of musical works requires: 1.) to not separate music from sound (regardless of its various forms), 2.) to not reduce the historical and aesthetic importance of orality (musics of oral tradition, but also improvised & experimental music, etc.) vis-a-vis notated forms, and 3.) to no longer study music detached from the context from which it emanated (concerts, performances, rituals, installations, processions etc.). Semiotics of *Speech* of musical works *listens*, in order to "reach music reality" (Vecchione, 2007). It endeavours to listen before attempting to identify, or classify. It listens in an attempt to better understand what is foreign to us, to observe the *aural* nature of musics, and their power to reach our ears in the first place.

Meaning

The position of Petrilli and Ponzio suggests that the study of meaning ought to extend beyond notions of communication, meaning, message or code—principles inherited from Saussurian post-structuralism—, in order to be able to deal with the non-verbal domain. Semio-ethics seeks to offer and an alternative to Saussurian semiology, or even Greimassian semiotics,[7] which were applied to music by Eero Tarasti (2006) and Márta Grabócz (2009). Indeed, the use of linguistic theory in the field of music has been particularly commonplace since the early 1960s (the years of the *Linguistic turn*). On one hand, music appears to share important similarities with verbal communication (i.e. temporal linearity as its main vehicle, same organs of transmission & reception, grammar, transcription); these parallels are the object of on-going research, notably in the work of Fred Lerdalh and Ray Jackendoff (1983, 2006). On

the other hand, all early philosophies of music (Pythagoras, Plato) broadly discussed this relationship. Between the fields of semiotics, psychology, cognitive- & neuro-sciences, countless musicological studies have been dedicated to hypothesised links between music and language. Musical *meaning*, however, resists this association; the musical sign cannot be reduced to a set of verbal operations. Musical meaning refers to that which is felt, and that which is heard when the performing musician challenges the degree of uniformity in our subjective reasoning, a notion which Robert Francès described as 'pre-reflexive' in 1959.

Music invades the body, possesses it, and, in this sense, *speaks* the world in a non-verbal manner. Musical meaning refers to the Peircian notion of the *first* ([FR: priméité]) [8], and to the conception of *being* in its totality. It is *possible* because, as a practice, it is experienced in a sort of intemporal instant which corresponds to emotional life, in its most archaic, but also utopian sense. For Francesco Spampinato, musical meaning is essentially metaphorical, and implies a musicology of 'contact' (2008). According to Bernard Vecchione, music is a fiction (Esclapez, 2016). The study thereof implies both a profound reflexion on the linguistic nature of music as non-verbal form of expression, and a theory of the imagination, on yielding a dialectic between reality, perception and imagination (Francastel, 1967), without forgetting that the musical sign (as with any other form of sign) may be expressed by non-humans (animals, plants) which exist in particular semiospheres. This observation relates to recent scientific studies in ethology and botany, e.g. the works of Peter Barlow (2012), or the initial writings on zoo-musicology, initiated by François-Bernard Mâche (1983) and elaborated upon by Dario Martinelli (2007). Mention should also be made of the relevance of the writings of Leonella Grasso Caprioli (2012) on ecomusicology. From this perspective, our goal is to conceive of musical meaning as a tangle of *speeches* (sounds, gestures, signals, clues) which problematises the relationship between signifier and signified, allowing their diffraction, their lack of symmetry, and their anarchical nature to flourish. Semiotics of the *speech* of musical

works proposes to rediscover this life which is being led, that which has made of music—in all its forms—, a place of *speech in action,* as opposed to a message charged with meaning.

Interpretation

We do not refer here to the question of the interpreter—who is nonetheless essential in giving meaning to music, and whose body participates in the shared act of listening; rather, in line with the hypotheses of Petrilli and Ponzio, interpretation is to be understood as a critical space, and a reading of the *speech* of musical works. It is a matter of questioning the situation of the musicologist who deals with this *speech.* Musicology as a mode of interpretation finds itself at the periphery of hermeneutics, and goes beyond academic musicology. Since it would be impossible in the present contribution to provide an exhaustive list of works which question the historiography of contemporary musicology, we primarily refer here to the writings of Bernard Vecchione. These works, from as early as the 1980s, place musicology in the field of musical/historical anthropology, and in the semio-hermeneutics of music (2007).

For Vecchione, the very term *musicology* is insufficient to describe what is at stake in the discipline, situated at the crossroad of historical, philosophical, humanistic and social critical sciences. He opts instead for *musicological reality*, which implies a dialogue between musicologists, works of music, practices and context. Musical reality constitutes a complex whole, conceived of as an *eco-form*, i.e. as a highly complex anthropological domain where musical forms address problems (whether intentionally or not) imagined by their authors, conceived through interactions which gives rise to reconfigured and reconfiguring context, to be read by the musicologist. For Vecchione, acknowledging that the discourse on music is fundamentally hermeneutic allows us: 1.) to take a certain distance from strictly

historical/analytical musicology, and 2.) to embark upon musicological study which is perfectly suited to the object it is pertaining to study.

Between the progression, the quest, and pure chance, pragmatic musicology is an interleaved space of musicology as an interpretive science. (Vecchione, 2008). The musicologist here plays with critical distanciation: between the principal of *letting things be*, the desire to reach an anthropological grounding based upon the fiction that music is offering, and the deployment in a discourse which may, in turn, constitute the universal basis of accepted knowledge.[9] Semiotics of *speech* enter into dialogue with musical works and with their most silent characteristics; the intention of their practitioners, the fiction of the world they place upon the stage, the shared listening they imply, and the modes of enunciation and production they establish.

CONCLUSION

Semiotics of the *speech* of musical works constitutes an ethical and philosophical project which attempts to create an alternate space which seeks to better grasp music, outside the framework of established modes of assessment. Attentiveness, listening, meaning and interpretation are at the heart of this project, which represents an apparatus which creates meaning. This term, 'apparatus' ([FR: *dispositif*]) is used in humanities and social sciences, but also in the sciences of art; it is coming to replace the term *structure*, which was the norm for former generations. From Foucault (1975) to Deleuze (1989), and then to Giorgio Agamben (2007), the meaning of notion has evolved progressively from its initial foucaldienne one, which associated it with the production of knowledge, or to relationships to power. Its appropriation in the field of performance studies and practice by contemporary practitioners of art and music—by those at the forefront of sound art, experimental music and

digital installations—, invites us to make use of it with care, but also with enthusiasm. (Guelton 2016).

The *apparatus* proposed by the semiotics of *speech* of musical works concerns *live* experience. By *Live experience* here, we imply not only a technical, sonic, aesthetic and spatial apparatus, but also a critical one which fosters the emergence of a network of possible relationships which come into being between musicology and musical works as activities practices. The apparatus in the field of contemporary arts invites us to reconsider interactions between works, spaces and bodies.

Indeed, as repeatedly stated by Paul Ricoeur since his 1939 conference about *awareness*, and over the course his long process of elaboration of his philosophical anthropology (In Michel and Porée, 2013), perception is the prerequisite of interpretation. Attributing meaning to an artwork, whatever that may be, implies both a situated perception, an embodied cognition, and the acknowledgment of the space/environment from which the signifying event emerges. The meaning of a work does pre-exist as if it were derived from a corpus of codified data.

Semiotics of the *speech* of works view meaning as a local and unique 'situation,' as a territory and a space, where the various instances of the apparatus evolve in a fluid and dynamic manner.

Thinking of the *situation* implies continuity between sciences and practices, leaving space for interdisciplinarity: of various disciplines, practices, and scientific cultures.

Semiotics of the *speech* of works often link, in novel ways, humanities & social sciences with mathematics & natural sciences, in order to restructure the knowledge-continuum in an organic way.

They invite us to focus our attention towards works, regardless of origin, in order to better interpret their content, to hear them, and to attribute meaning to them.

The *live* experience prompts us to practice *non-passivity*, a notion which often comes about through the utopic path of research from outside of institutional frameworks.

How are we to remain attentive without possessing? To listen without judging? To accept a plurality of meaning without classifying?

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[1] In the article 'Semioethics' (Routledge, 2010), the two theorists acknowledge the extent to which Levinas provided the basis for their approach, notably in his three essays written between 1964 and 1979, published together under the title '*Humanisme de l'autre homme*' (1987).

[2] Biosemiotics takes into account the enitre pectrum of the living entities, from bacteria, to plants, to humankind. It establishes a connection between the work of C. S. Peirce, cybernetics, and biology.

[3] Thanks to recent work on bio-semiotics, Eero Tarasti in his 2006 publication '*La musique et les signes*' has opened new musicological perspectives.

[4] Generally speaking, glottocentrisme is an attitude which places all importance upon one language while disregarding others. Petrilli and Ponzio use this term to describe the extent to which, since Saussure, verbal expression has been the primary focus of research, at the cost of all other forms of expression (pre-verbale, for example).

[5] Attention, retention and protention form consciousness. If 'chronological order' describes a *retention of the past*, *attention to the present* and *protention of what is to* come, then the logical and phenomenological order (i.e. the order in which such presents itself to the psyche) forces us to begin with *attention*, which connects each of the three components. 'Attention,' sourced online via : *http://arsindustrialis.org/attention*, [accessed in November 2017].

[6] *Ibid*. [Accessed 23rd November, 2017].

[7] To be understood as Musical Semiotics, inspired by the semiotic narrative of A. J. Greimas (1917-1982), founder of the Paris semiotic school.

[8] In reference to the 'first ; of C. S. Peirce's semiotics (1839-1914), one of the three categories of experiences with a second and third. The quality of 'firstness' suggests that the phenomenon is grasped in its singular manifestation.

[9] One may find variants on the dialectic between factual logic and fictional logic in the writings of Christian Hauer, Kofi Agawu, or Gianmario Borio (published in the work, '*Sens et signification*' under the direction of Márta Grabócz (2007)). A prolongation of the hermeneutic triangle, as described my Paul Ricœur may also be observed.