

Musical Image and Musical Hermeneutics, a possible tool for creative Piano (Music) teaching

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Abstract: Considering that many students do not let their imaginative potential fully develop during their formation years we will demonstrate in this paper that Intonasiya/Musical Image paired with Musical Hermeneutics may be an interesting alternative for a creative approach in piano teaching. To achieve that we'll plunge into the 19th century debate about the possibility of music to be able to represent, to have meaning, discuss the concepts of Intonasiya/Musical Image and Hermeneutical Windows and last but not least, advocate that these tools can be useful for Piano and music instruction stimulating creativity.

Keywords: Intonasiya, Musical Image, Musical Hermeneutics, Hermeneutical Windows, Creative Piano Pedagogy

Imagem musical e hermenêutica Musical, uma ferramenta possível para o ensino criativo de Piano

Resumo: Considerando que muitos estudantes ao longo de seus anos de formação não desenvolvem completamente seu potencial imaginativo, proponho neste trabalho que a Imagem Musical/*Intonazia* associada à Hermenêutica Musical possa apresentar-se como uma interessante alternativa para uma abordagem criativa no ensino de piano. Para tal, resgatamos o debate do século XIX sobre a possibilidade da música ser capaz de representar e significar, discutindo os conceitos de *Intonazia* de Boris Asafiev, Imagem Musical e o de Janelas Hermenêuticas de Lawrence Kramer, advogando que essas ferramentas possam ser de utilidade para um ensino de piano que estimule a criatividade e imaginação.

Palavras-chave: *Intonazia*, Imagem musical, Hermenêutica musical, Janelas Hermenêuticas, Pedagogia criativa do piano

Musical Meaning Representation and Narrative

Not always has the occidental tradition advocated Eduard Hanslick's thesis that the musical discourse was unable to carry a meaning (or to say in more modern terms, capable of representing). For instance, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) discussed in his *Dictionnaire de Musique Mimesis* and *Imitatio* as two different conceptions of the word imitation. For him *Imitatio* means the same or similar in many parts while *Mimesis* explores more deeply the matters of extra-musical things being imitated by music. This last one clearly argues that music is by no means less capable of *Mimesis* than other arts, for Rousseau, music, particularly the melody, was the last trace of a profound emotional language that once was known but now is lost. A language so profound that invoked a special dictionary to be again understood.

During the 19th Century the debate on the idea of an absolute music emerged mainly by Eduard Hanslick (On Musical Beauty) who appropriated an expression at first used in a pejorative manner by Richard Wagner and linked it to the concept of autonomous music. Hanslick declared that the instrumental music (particularly the classic style of the now called First Viennese School) was the zenith of that kind of music, therefore, he was contrary to the aesthetics of the affects, the one still rather influential at his time. For him, music that simply wishes to be nothing also than itself displays the highest quality and artistic value (*Tönend Beweigte Formen* or the sound mobilizes the form). The theme of a musical composition is its own content which leaves no space for meaning at all.

This notion of absolute music and its implications on art value are by no means unanimous in the 19th Century. Berlioz, Wagner, Liszt and many relevant aestheticians

such as E. T. A. Hoffmann, Wilhelm Heinrich and Ludwig Tieck either disagreed or had already positioned themselves contrary even before Hanslick had published his ideas. The programmatic music of Berlioz and Liszt suggests a definite approach with literature and even that can be easily traced in Schumann (*Kreisleriana op.16*) and early Brahms (when he signs Johannes Kreisler Jr. as in his *Variations op.9* as an example).

However, if Hanslick did not achieve much popularity as expected with the musicians, his concepts were not at all abandoned by the academic and musicological environment. Donald Tovey is a fine example of the resonance that Hanslick ideas had in musicology in the beginning of the 20th Century. That can be clearly seen in the positivistic approaches that musical analysis and musicology itself had privileged, at least in the English-speaking countries.

Almost a century after Hanslick, Susanne Langer (1957, p.26) developed her theory on the musical meaning by expanding the concepts of absolute music. When she initially agrees with the idea that all modes of human comprehension are forms of symbolic transformation and that music may serve as a paradigm of a symbolic system, she confirms Hanslick's position on defining these symbols as having a meaning, but not just associating them to nothing in particular, considering them as only non-discursive representations. Musical works, for Langer, may be credited with meaning but it is not possible to inform what exactly is that meaning. Langer understands that the matter that essentially non-representative as music is, for her, does not invalidate music to contain a semantic dimension. It is not about self-expression as would say Hanslick, but the formulation and representation of emotions, environments, psychological tensions and resolutions.

If the programmatic music may be the articulation of natural sounds in musical effects, in the other hand, a music that deliberately imitates the noise and turmoil of a market, rivers, nightingales and bells must not only expose an analogy, but above all, must share a logic form of the object it aims to represent. The musical image that emerges in these kinds of analogies must operate as a path on which one can apprehend the meaning of what is represented.

More recently the idea of music (instrumental music) being capable of expressing a semantic content, thus meaning, has been revisited by scholars in semiotic, hermeneutic and narratology deepening a refutation of Hanslick's ideas and mostly admitting that music is, in fact, capable of carrying a meaning. One of the main differences between this discussion and that of the 19th Century is that meaning has been replaced by a term that only began to be more widely used from the middle of the 20th Century: representation. In the last decades the term representation has been much more accepted and that brought new strategies to analyzing music once thought as absolute. That's for sure a great change if we consider that in the beginning of the 20th Century philosophers, musical theoreticians and art critics in general (not to say musicologists) were still much divided in parties about the question of representation and meaning in music.

It is a fact that the musicians in history have elaborated very subtle and complex mechanisms of representation through a vast catalogue of signs. If there are conventions on the meaning of the signs, then it is possible to establish a communication based on representation. They do not need the verbal language, on the contrary, they operate in our cultural tradition for that is the only way they can refer to non-musical objects.

Some of these mechanisms may be expressed by the Rhetorical Figures of the 15th and 16th Centuries (Johannes Tinctoris, Martin Luther, Wolfgang Figulus, etc.) that were applied by Burmeister, Muffat and mainly by Mattheson in the two succeeding Centuries. The affects of the modes and later the tonalities, the use of the name of Bach as to self-

representation in the case of *The Art of the Fugue* and many other works of the 19th Century may also serve as an example of these mechanisms. These examples display intrinsic modes of reference to non-musical objects. The degree in which one of them represents a meaning presupposes a wider knowledge of the musical code and the traditions.

Rhetorical figures are only recognizable to those familiar with them, since they work as a linguistic vocabulary. Musical figures that represent movement need *Einfühlung* from the listener that links them to a synesthetic image aiming to achieve an affective connotation. Suggestive melodic contours are translations of silhouettes (not always precise) representing the object only to the point that the listener is capable to elaborate metaphors on the “highness” or “lowness” of the vibration of sounds. Names of letters are only understood if the notational system is shared. For example, the German idea of representing B-A-C-H as the succession of the notes B flat, A natural, C natural and B natural has no meaning at all at a Latin nomenclature that does not name the notes by letters in alphabetical order. Only continuous exposition should be capable of organizing the representatives with their meaning or even create new meanings were an intuitive association is virtually impossible. Take for instance the music of Alexander Scriabin, particularly his last works, where there are clearly stated intentions of the composer for many of his pianistic resources such as thrills, quintuplets and *Volatas* and even for his choice of pitch-set for his Prometheus Chord. Without his own explanation it would be impossible to understand his complex system and thus to extract a chain of representations that may lead to a possible meaning, even if that meaning is merely intentional.

In the same way, instrumental music before typified as absolute music by Hanslick should then be capable of establishing a discourse by its strategies of narrative. It may tell a story based in the order of what we shall discuss soon, the Intonasiyas. The listener may identify the musical agents as the composer organized them by operating in an analogic perspective, by using a metaphor. Tempo, texture, intervallic content, rhythm, harmony, orchestration all these contributes to the construction of this narrative.

For sure, recent studies carried on by Hatten and Monelle, based on Ratner Musical Topics theory as much as Gjerdingen and the Partimenti have shown more clearly that the instrumental music was fully understood as meaningful, in the sense that the symbolic vocabulary that it encompasses may be translated as specific meanings, such the topics of Pastorale, Military, etc... As so, the musical gesture theory of Hatten supports not the meaning itself, but the form it arises from the very use of the topics and their interplay (troping). As for Gjerdingen, the idea of a pre-established Schema as the basis for compositional practice in the 18th Century completes the scenario, for it allows us to comprehend more profoundly the tonal system's rules as the basic grammar of all the music discourse of that era. That is clearly stated by scholar John Rice, as for his analysis of the Schema Hertz (2014), verifying that it was often associated to gentle and sweetness in the Galant Style.

However, for this paper, I wish to focus on the Intonasiya and Musical Image concepts. I do not intend to discuss more deeply about these authors, just mentioning them due to their importance for the many theories about musical meaning.

Tatiana Vendrova, way back in 1993, a Russian musicologist that worked as a researcher at the Laboratory of Music Education headed by Dimitri Kabalevsky, had already posed a very interesting question on how the musical imagery that can be organized and articulated by the Intonasiyas (and as I here propose also by musical hermeneutics) are important to musical education. In fact, I do advocate the idea that these may be very helpful tools in higher education, mainly in the field of performance pedagogy,

Why is it necessary to introduce the concept of intonation during the first stages of music education? Children must develop some reliable standards of judgment that they can use to understand any composition from a short piece to fragments to even 'whole movements of larger Works' (VENDROVA, 1993, p.23).

She also states that,

Understanding topics such as intonation in music, development of music, form in music, music image, and music forms is rather difficult for some teachers and consequently for their students as well. Experience shows that one of the most important and most complicated topics in the elementary school music classes is intonation in music, or what is generally called "elements of music" in the West (VENDROVA, 1993, p.23).

In fact, Intonasiya played an essential part of the musical educational process of the former Soviet Union. One of the main texts in this process was Kabalevsky's Syllabus, based on the principles of the also Russian musicologist Boris Asafiev, the former, responsible for the first systematic concept of Intonasiya. Even though there are substantial differences in the writings of Asafiev and Kabalevsky, it is a fact that the comparison of "life" and music is present in both authors.

Kabalevsky, as Asafiev, understood that music out of life was meaningless and alien to society, thus, inutile for the education of the ideal Soviet citizen (which, of course, his educational program also aimed to be a model for a future all-communist society). It had to consolidate moral values on the children by many means, one of which the simple analogy between music and speech. Thus music, as speech, should have different forms of intonation which pointed to different forms of significance and different facts and situations of life. Although this was originally meant to be of ideological nature, the idea is altogether very useful for music education, since it promotes on the educate a whole new perspective far beyond the mere ludic dimension that is found in music nowadays. As Vendrova states,

Many teachers have, stated that Kabalevsky's syllabus seems to respond to Asafiev's directive. The aim of the syllabus is to show students the regularities of music perception and to demonstrate how important it is to hear the main body of a composition, to follow its development, experience the collisions of contrasting groups of notes, and to feel and comprehend the process of the consolidation of a music form of different intonations or musical elements. All this serves to make the student's contacts with music purposeful and congruent with the nature of the art of music (VENDROVA, 1993, p.26).

Since I discussed two opposite views about the possibility of music being able to represent non-musical objects, thus be able to carry meaning or to represent (not specific one, but a chain of meanings) and we've seen that it is reasonable to accept that it can tell a story through narrative strategies (in a somewhat opposition to what Kerman back in the 80's called "positivism"), we present two important tools that may help in decodifying these representations and thus contributing to a construction of an interpretation and equally important for music pedagogy: the Intonasiya/Musical Image and the Hermeneutical Windows of Lawrence Kramer.

Intonasiya and Musical Image

There are two essential concepts that may lead to a broader understanding of Russian music particularly that of the Jdanovism (Socialist Realism - 1948-1953). These are the Intonazia (or Intonasiya) and the Musical Image. The concept of Intonasiya can

only be grasped if one accepts the possibility of music being capable of transmitting a meaning that can be if not effectively, at least closely translated. As we already stated, if the occidental academic tradition has in some ways denied that since the 19th Century, mostly due to Hanslick, the Slavonic academic musical tradition (mainly the Russians) followed an opposite path with surprisingly results both musical as pedagogical.

John Bell Young (2007), an American pianist that studied in the former Soviet Union wrote about his awe at seeing how easily Russian and Slavonic students mastered a great deal of complex music using this tool. Also, he was amazed by the ability showed by these musicians to naturally comprehend the concept of *Intonasiya* so deeply rooted in their native cultural traditions.

in Russia, *Intonasiya* has long enjoyed the status of an articulated concept used routinely in teaching. Though it is also understood, among Russian theorists, as a compositional technique that governs intervallic relationships [...] it became increasingly apparent that *Intonasiya*, as a generic concept, is so universally understood and accepted by every Russian schoolchild that no one even bothers to talk about it anymore. It's something one learns as easily and with no less assurance than riding a bicycle. It's a skill that, once learned, is learned for life. [...] Essentially, it is the codification of the musical tension that governs intervallic relations, in its attempt to adapt one genre, music, to another, speech, *Intonasiya* provides a mechanism for the expression - and experience - of musical affect. Like the baroque era's Doctrine of Affect, the concept proposes an aesthetic connection between musical expression and speech, and refers to the dynamic tension between notes. While its domain is that of micro-dynamics, *Intonasiya*'s aim is to sculpt the musical gesture as it assimilates inflection. From this perspective, it is an interpretive tool that allows the performer to illuminate the psychological dimensions of a composition (YOUNG, 2007).

In the beginning of the 20th Century, the concept of *Intonasiya* is finely theorized for compositional purposes by two important figures: Boleslav Yavorsky (1877-1942), himself a pupil of Taneyev, and by Boris Asafiev (1884-1949). Although Yavorsky was the first author to theorize the concept of *Intonasiya*, his main concern was to elaborate a theoretical composition system strongly influenced by the compositional techniques of the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin, being little or not at all minded at a Marxist approach of the term. However, it is from him that we learn one of the most concise and interesting definition of the term. For him (Yavorsky in Young, 2007), *Intonasiya* is "a principle of auditory gravitation. It is the smallest basic tonal unit in time and discloses the expressivity of a system, or motivic cell. It is, in effect, the unfolding in time of the potential energy of that cell." Yavorsky definition thus situates itself in a proto-scientific perspective.

A farther broader approach is provided by Asafiev. According to him (Asafiev, 1971, preface to Vol. II), "Musical form as a social perceived phenomenon is, at first, a way to socially reveal music in its process of intonation". From this statement we can foresee a careful reflection of the author about the relation between music and society from a Marxist point of view. We could expect no less considering the historical moment of Soviet Union and the apogee of the Stalinism which by then was fully engaged in controlling all cultural and artistic matters for propaganda.

The concept of *Intonasiya* must not be confounded with simple intonation, this mainly employed for tuning instruments or right pitching of the voice. It is a far more complex and dense concept as defined by Vendrova, since it engages the ultimate meaning of a work or even of a single structure in any given composition,

The Russian word *intonazia* has little relationship to the English word “intonation,” which is commonly used to refer to accuracy of pitch or ensemble tuning. Intonazia is similar in meaning to the English word “phrasing,” though the Russian word seems far broader ... “Intonation” broadly refers to components or elements of music including musical material, style, intervals, and melodic meaning. Apparently, “intonation” can also refer to music as a form of public consciousness. Instead of the traditional treatment of intonation as accuracy of vocal and instrumental pitch ... Asafiev set forth a much broader idea of intonation as the base of both music and speech. In colloquial speech, it is often difficult to grasp the meaning of sentences if they are devoid of intonation. In music, the sphere of intonation that comprises pitch, tempo, rhythm and timbre modifications seem to be the principal base of the real meaning of a music image. Intonation allows us to make sense out of music, and it helps music to reflect life. Thus, Asafiev called music “the art of intoned meaning.” (VENDROVA, 1993, p.24)

For Asafiev the main traditional forms of the tonal system such as the Variations and the Fugue use the repetitions as their main resource, which, for him, implies in an obvious manner the process of identifying a specific intonation. Others such as the Sonata (particularly the Sonata-Allegro form) uses the contrast where the feature of confrontation and opposition reflects the political and social conditions of the epoch of their thrive. Details such as cadences and dissonances contribute in a decisive manner to the Musical Image of each piece and are by themselves a product, a consequence of the Intonasiya of the society that produced them. Therefore, an intonation is necessarily representative of an era, a moment that, as society develops (a Marxist premise) it develops with it. For Asafiev the main proof of this theory is that in times of political stability certain rules and normalizations crystalize obliging composers to persistently champion the conservative taste of their audiences recurring to well-known and accepted intonations, thus the process of repetition is essential to the consolidation and absorption of new intonations by new audiences.

It is not at all difficult to compare the approach proposed by Asafiev with the interpretation of the cultural artifacts of the Russian Formalists, and even, at a second glance, of the Structuralists. This approach may be clearly detected in his early works and from the 30's on it tends more and more to resemble and even resonate the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin. Indeed, the concept of Intonasiya situates itself as a parallel to the concepts of sound in the Russian Formalism and in the concept of Intonation of Bakhtin. However, a complete absence of any reference is obviously justified since Bakhtin was arrested and exiled by the end of the 20's, being then a not very convenient reference for the politically agile and engaged Asafiev, which himself had great prestige in the 30's and 40's. Besides, Bahktin's ideas were only more influential after 1960, when Asafiev already had passed away. In any case, it is a fact that Bakhtin's works of the 20's and 30's that elaborates the concept of Intonation as an axiological category of the linguistic analysis very much resemble Asafiev's ideas about Intonasiya.

This feature in Asafiev's texts is clearly indicated by Dr. Valentina Khopolova,

Asafiev's development of the concept of intonation as a semantic unit in music paved the way for a language sematic approach to musical art. It must be said that the theoretician, most likely, was the first in Soviet musicology to bring out the term “musical semantics” (in the same work “Musical Form as a Process, Part I, written in 1925). However, he came up with the idea rather early – at that time, Russian musicology was not yet ready to solve the problem of semiotics. Asafiev's term “musical semantics” began to be associated with such spurious meanings, that as a result, in his book “Intonation” (1942-47) the author was compelled to disown it. The term reemerged in Soviet musicology only a few decades later (KHOLOPOVA, 2000, p.2).

Asafiev understood a plurality of possible interpretations of the Intonasiyas seeing this same plurality as a desirable condition,

the listeners, the masses, everyone to whom music is dear as the voice of reality and as ideationally cognitive activity, have created their own, authentic history of music, and have supported that which is essential in its development, i.e., that which is intonationally fresh and vital (TULL, 1976, p.945).

In order to have a more practical understanding of Asafiev's (Asafiev 1971) concept of Intonasiya we can divide them in three categories:

1st Category. Those which associations with life are immediately grasped such as rhythmic repetitions or simple patterns, a simple melodic contour and sonorities very close to the represented phenomenon. These Intonasiyas represents straightforward and easy associations with the meaning.

2nd Category. Those are the Intonasiyas that relates music to other arts. By this associations music gets empowered as the leading art in any of the possible combinations. It can be an Opera or a Ballet that have a programmatic principle or even texts or mottos related to the music. These are indirect associations with the fact, the phenomenon that are particularly rich in their expressive potential and might be effectively used for representing social causes or ideological discourses.

3rd Category. Those deal with the more distant associations, such as moods implied by the use of a specific mode in a folkloric song, a specific tonality in a baroque context or other stylistic resources that may evoke events, places or even historical events of social relevance (for instance, we may take a very Russian example like Tchaikovsky's use of the Marseillaise in his *1812 Overture*).

For Asafiev the third category of Intonasiyas is the dialectical synthesis of the first and the second. Although it maintains the bonds of the two first with the image itself it's the responsible to transmute its affects to a higher universal category (that must be abstract) surpassing the pragmatic and direct reference to the phenomenon.

Dr. Khopolova also has a relevant definition of the concept, and she also points out how Asafiev was able to apply this concept through all music universe transcending it form a mere compositional element, as it has been originally conceived.

Intonation in music is a unity of expression and semantics, which exists in an on-verbal-sonar form, which functions with the aid of musical experience and nonmusical associations. The historical novelty of Asafiev's "intonation" is the theoretician was in all likelihood the first to introduced into musical theory this concept, which pertained not to the "sphere" of composition, but to a broad field, which coordinates music with life. According to Asafiev, "Musical intonation never loses connection with either the spoken word or with dance or pantomime..." it presents itself as "comprehension of sound", belongs to a "specific social milieu" etc. (KHOLOPOVA, 200, p.3).

The concepts of Intonasiya and Musical Image are deeply imbricated. Both deal with the relation of music with the physical world, real and objective; let's say material to use a more specific Marxist terminology. They provide a tool to characterize music, which was doubtless very important and useful to the Soviets at Stalin and Jdanov's time, since they at last establish a method of correlation of an abstract music with a concrete ideological doctrine, that of the Social Realism. This should be a great Musical Image, constructed by an ingenious and skillful connection of Intonasiyas in order to guide the listener through a narrative, through a musical discourse.

Malcolm Brown, one of the major Soviet Scholars defined Intonasiya as:

defined in its primal sense as any phonic manifestation of life or reality, perceived and understood (directly or metaphorically) as a carrier of meaning. In other words, an “*intonasiya*” in its simplest form is a real sound produced by something, be it a creature or natural phenomenon (the moaning of a sick child, the ululation of the wind, a bugle call) with which meaning is associated or to which meaning is ascribed (BROWN, 1974, p.3).

We may conclude by this definition that the term as viewed by the author is very flexible. When one states that *Intonasiya* may be a sound produced by virtually any source, since all belongs to our reality, and that to this sound an association or a meaning (representation) is assigned, we logically operate in a social and cultural sphere. Thus, an *Intonasiya* such as a Trumpet tune may be understood in some cultures as a call for battle and in others as simply a Trumpet tune (of course, as far as the individual in that culture is aware of how a Trumpet does sounds like).

A short but maybe interesting aspect that could elucidate this strange concept as Brown has put to us can be observed in modern life. The cell phone tunes, simple, short frequently relate this concept to the one formulated by Yavorsky, that of the smaller basic unit. The meaning of a melodic sequence or rhythmic cell is assimilated through a repetition or even an arbitrary choice, conditioning the listener to assign a specific meaning to a particular sound event. We may not see our colleague’s phone, but we do know if it is a Samsung or a Nokia or any other, for its little but clearly associative tune (that is if the user chose to set that sound). Even if he did not, anyway he made a choice for a specific tune or sound that, for him, represents association either with a person (if he chose to have a specific tune for his family, friends etc.) or with a group (work, friends etc.). If this association may seem arbitrary or even random at times, it does carry a meaning that signifies, at least, in an affective sense, something to him when consciously chosen.

That’s exactly the main point. Since there are no specific meanings in any sound event, these can be created either collectively (by a culture) or arbitrarily (by an individual). If they are created collectively or even imposed they begin to form a part of a culture, and by that resides in the common knowledge that are perpetuated in that culture as long as the educational paradigm of that culture regards continuity through reproduction of its values through it’s canonic mechanisms.

A Musical Image results when an *Intonasiya* of the real experience transmutes itself in a musical phrase keeping its intonational characteristic and the properties of its essence to entice human emotions. The Musical Image of a work depends in the disposition of the *Intonasiyas* that can be evoked in polyphonical textures, phrases, motives, themes or any other musical structures in order to create a logical and descriptive sequence, a narrative. This image may become the objective musical reality capable of move emotions and affects.

With time and repetition specific *Intonasiyas* begin to blend themselves with concrete images due to the process of cultural absorbance. Just like the Musical Rethoric of the Baroque (although in much less codified manner) the Musical Image could create a vocabulary common to public and composers. Musical Image and *Intonasiya* work together as a bond, a link in this dialogue carrying on the abstract idea to an objective materialization through a method of teaching musical composition and analysis, and why not, performance.

In the 90’s Lawrence Kramer developed a term called

Musical Hermeneutics - Hermeneutical Windows,

that should be applied to music (more specifically that of instrumental nature), that kind of music that has neither words nor a program to support its narrative. Assuming that every music has a window that can be opened in order that the meaning may be elucidated, the author proposes a hermeneutical approach enabling a path to interpret the inherent musical meanings. These hermeneutics supports itself in the premise of expectative once it opens its windows whenever there is a rupture or discontinuity in the discourse. That obviously depends of one's previous knowledge and familiarity with the structure, the grammar rules of that discourse and the style in question which, of course, it's totally dependent of the cultural context.

A musical likeness has the "sonorous value" of a metaphor, and more particularly of a metaphor with substantial intertextual history. Once incorporated into a composition, such a metaphor is capable of influencing musical process, which is in turn capable of extending, complicating, or revising the metaphor. Thanks to this reciprocal semiotic pressure, musical representation enables significant acts of interpretation that can respond to the formalist's rhetorical question, "what can one say?" with real answers (KRAMER, 1996, p. 97).

Kramer admits that there is no possibility of defining a specific, absolute and unique meaning to music, once as a metaphor, this meaning is only possible to be known through successive analogies. However, this precise singularity of the metaphor is at the same time a problem and a virtue, for a literary text, for example, also has a somewhat obscure non-discursive dimension. The question emerges from the comprehension that, although music does not narrates a history, it does uses several strategies that are alike a narrative, strategies those that are not in any way exclusive of the literary discourse.

The very premise of narratology is the recognition that music cannot tell stories. This defect – or virtue – is not affected by the ability of music to deploy narratographic strategies or to perform narrativistic rituals; both the strategies and the rituals are migratory, easily displaced from the venues of storytelling. Nonetheless, music since the Renaissance has been used to accompany stories. (KRAMER 1996, p. 111).

For Kramer, a text is not understandable in itself. The construction of this understanding is necessarily built as a network of concepts and images that allow countless possibilities of interpretations.

We enable the interpretation of a text by depreciating what is overtly legible and regarding the text as a potentially secretive, or at least as a provocation to understanding that we may not know how to answer. The text, in its frame of reference, does not give itself to understanding; it must be made to yield to understanding. A hermeneutic window must be opened on it through which the discourse of our understanding can pass (Kramer, 1996, p. 97).

Kramer also compares the kind of musical meaning with the literary one stating that "Meanings are not more transparent in texts than in sonatas; they are only more articulate" (Kramer, 2007, p. 19) and that the mere fact that we cannot locate a direct lexical sort of referential meaning, he insists, does not let us off the hook of understanding deeper and inescapable cultural meanings" (Kramer, 2007, p. 19).

To open a Hermeneutical Window means finding particular moments or situations in music that interpretation may pass through. This is not a feature specific of music, it can contemplate extra-musical and intertextual factors. Kramer's own definition (1996, p. 9) of

the kinds of Hermeneutical Windows clearly states which are the most frequent moments that one can find any suggestion of a meaning that may help in the interpretative process.

- a. “Textual Inclusions. This type includes texts set to music, titles, epigrams, programs, notes on the score, and sometimes even expression markings. In dealing with these materials, it is critical to remember – especially with the texts of vocal pieces – that they do not establish (authorize, fix) a meaning that the music somehow reiterates, but only invite the interpreter to find meaning in the interplay of expressive acts. The same caution applies to the other two types”.
- b. “Citational Inclusions. This type is a less explicit version of the first, with which it partly overlaps. It includes titles that link a work of music with a literary work, visual image, place or historical moment; musical allusions to other compositions; allusions to the text through the quotation of associated music; allusions to the styles of other composers or of earlier periods; and the inclusion (or parody) of other characteristic styles not predominant in the work at hand.
- c. “Structural Tropes. These are the most implicit and ultimately the most powerful forms of hermeneutical windows. By Structural Tropes I mean a structural procedure, capable of various practical realizations, that also functions as a typical expressive act within a certain cultural/historical framework. Since they are not defined in terms of their illocutionary force, as units of doing rather than units of saying, Structural Tropes cut across traditional distinctions between form and content. They can evolve from any aspect of communicative exchange: style, rethoric, representations, and so on.” (KRAMER, 1996, p. 9).

This Hermeneutical Windows tend to appear in points of discontinuity of the work such as interruptions, absences, repeated patterns. These situations are based on excess or lack, and that of course means that they are related to a comparison with what one should expect from his knowledge of the style.

Musical Imagination and Pedagogy

To interpret a musical work means to bring forth the most relevant elements of the composition as understood as such by the performer. By command of his technique he must create a whole pallet of nuances (touch, agogic, dynamics) in order to express the music. In this process there is a constant interaction between a sensorial activity and imagination. In this case we can understand imagination in two different perspectives. The first deals with a mental projection of the desired sound quality which is about how our brain controls all the subtle and complex mechanism necessary to produce sound. The other (and this is the one that matters to us at the moment) deals with how one can project an idea about interpretation, about the representation the Musical Image of the work is evoking. Although both refer to the same term, we can see that they serve different purposes.

However, it is widely known that the pedagogical processes undergone by most of the music performance students (even at undergraduate level) seldom contemplates in a systematic basis the fundamentals of interpretation. Not rarely, they concentrate in reproducing a specific performance tradition, not enabling the student to consolidate a firm ground that is essentially interdisciplinary and demands high skills in musical comprehension (harmony, form, counterpoint etc..). It is questionable if that process could be smoothed and even enriched by the use of a tool of comprehension of the musical ideas in the work. That, perhaps, may be achieved by the use of both resources: either the Intonasiya and the Musical Hermeneutics as tools for that goal. In this case the student

could be thought to make his own interpretative decisions gaining much more autonomy and self-confidence.

As according to John Rink (2007, p. 26)

we can't deny that interpretation implies in decisions – conscious or not – about the contextual functions of certain musical aspects and the means to project them. Even the simplest passage – a scale or a perfect cadence, for example – will be modeled according to the performer's comprehension, of how it fit in a particular work and the prerogative expressed in which he or she dedicates to. These decisions may, without any problems be intuitive and not systematic, but not necessarily: many interpreters reflect carefully about how music “works” and about the ways to surpass the old conceptual challenges. This process is, on many aspects an analytical one – but what that means require some explanation (RINK, 2007, p. 26).

If these decisions must be made by the performer and there is not one but several different possibilities, we can wonder how do we know that we are making the most appropriate ones? If we assume that this question may be answered only by vague concepts like creativity and talent we may go on the wrong way, but if we think that our imagination can be educated and trained, grasping the central purpose (the Musical Image) of the work, then, we will again see that the use of Intonasiya and Musical Hermeneutics should be of great help. While the first activates the imagination setting links between the musical components and non-musical objects the second offers a method of how we may find the path to what the music may be attempting to represent.

The idea that all music has a central purpose, a Musical Image is suggested by Barnett when he states that,

Every musical composition, whether or not its title is as helpful as Debussy's, has a *central purpose* in expression to which all of its elements contribute. A familiar way of stating the same thing is to say that the composer strives for variety within unity. Often, too, we speak of “the subject” of a piece of music. It is essential for the performer to be convinced that he has discovered his central purpose or subject. Otherwise, his rendition, however skillful or even tasteful it is, will be fragmentary and jarring, will not reconcile all the elements of the musical score (BARNETT, 1972, p. 19).

Once more, we cite John Rink when reiterating the need of an analytical process more specific for performance let us aware of the danger of mere caprice in musical interpretation.

I proposed the term “informed intuition”, that recognizes not only the relevance of intuition in the interpretative process but also the fact that intuition itself is generally supported by a considerable amount of knowledge and experience – in other words, that intuition doesn't emerge from nothing less must it be a fruit of pure caprice (RINK, 2007, p.26) .

Young (2007) again tells us that the situation where this central purpose is not found in many piano classes independent of the technical skill of the player is more frequent than usually we think. He even suggests ways in which the Intonasiya may be used for appropriate instruction:

But how do we “use” intonatsiya in everyday pianistic life? Doubtless, some of you are familiar with the frustration of conducting a master class, or even a private lesson, only to hear an otherwise talented students play flatly, without expression, as if the musical terrain were the cornfields of Iowa or the Dutch low lands; there are no hills and valleys, no recesses and shadows, no mountains and vistas. For such people music is one big canvas where every note and every phrase are played with equal

importance. They demonstrate little if any feel for harmonic orientation, nor for the immanent tension and internal dramas that fuel the work at hand. Absent too is any sense of moving in a specific direction towards concrete compositional goals; in short, some students occupy a musical world devoid of compositional events (YOUNG, 2007).

Naturally there are many teachers that already work in the perspective of stimulating musical imagination in their pupils, but we still wish to see it more often. It should be as important in any book of Piano playing and interpretation (many really are dealing exclusively with technique) as finger technique is, since it is the very soul of interpretation. It should be trained since the very first contact with the instrument.

Final remarks

Intonasiya/Musical Image and Musical Hermeneutics can be either as a pair or even separate, a very interesting toolbox for revealing new paths for constructing interpretations and to teach performance in a stimulating way. The first instigates the imagination of the performer since it can correlate the musical motive, the cell, the structure to an external object. It articulates in the work with other Intonasiyas in order to produce a discourse, a narrative, whose strategies can be elucidated by the Hermeneutical approach. The second is a powerful tool to extract meaning (representation) from a musical text allowing the imagination to flourish.

As we've seen, this approach should be presented to the student as soon as possible. Just let us think that almost all methods already have in their first lessons at least one piece that contains a textual inclusion as a title. Even when one describes as a "five finger exercise" as neutral as that may sound, one is already inserting an external object (a Textual Inclusion, as it may have said Lawrence Kramer) that will articulate with the musical content of the work.

If to succeed in constructing an interpretation and realizing it through the performance is to make the right decisions as stated by John Rink, then we can gladly dialogue with Music Theory not to extract an analytical prescription, but above all, to be able to see music on other perspectives and enrich our skills. That should be the aim and ultimate goal of an intelligent and creative music pedagogy.

Notas

1 Intuition.

2 Boris Asafiev (1884-1949) occupied many important positions in Soviet Union. He was a Professor at the Leningrad Conservatory for almost twenty years and head of the History of Music Department of the Russian Institute for History of the Arts. As an active composer, musical critic and musicologist he is responsible for elaborating the theoretical basis that supported the methodology applied by the Social Realism, many years after its formulation. Among his vast literary work two main publications where the Intonasiya and Musical Image concepts are clearly explained must be highlighted, these are: *Musical Form as Process* (Leningrad, 1930) and *Intonasiya* (Leningrad, 1948).

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