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# VIEWS

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## ***WHO IS LISTENING?*** **A PSYCHOANALYTIC VIEW ON LISTENING PHENOMENA**

**Abstract:** A consideration of scientific research in the fields of infant observation and psychoanalysis opens new ways of appreciating human reactions to music. The process of evaluation and the very nature of listening are addressed. The research describes how deeply unconscious complex reactions to music shed new light on the question of the 'objective' evaluation. Who is listening intrapsychically? Which intrapsychic content evoked by the exposure to music lends the ear in the process of listening and renders immediate evaluation? Exploration of the interplay between developmental and archetypal dynamics in connection with music flow invite new perspectives.

**Key words:** music, psyche, listening, development, mirroring, coenesthetic experience, unconscious, archetype.

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Infant observation and the maturing process of adults illustrate the pivotal importance of early experiences and their impact on one's entire life. Early learning models how we experience and relate to significant others and to life in general. According to scientific research,<sup>1</sup> one of the major factors in the creation of formative patterns in the earliest period of life is sound. Exposure to sound, and *listening*, suggests complex and many layered processes.

*Listening* brings together time and space where the archetypal core of the individual interacts with the environment. Interaction with sound evokes the earliest patterns of relating and experiences of life, which are deeply unconscious. This time-and-space begins *in utero*, through the baby's participation in the mother's ways of experiencing life, and through the sound sensations of the environment outside of the mother's body. These first learning experiences of an individual, together with post-natal experiences form the fundamental choreography of relating and experiencing life. The fact that infants react to sound stimuli to which they were exposed before the formation of the ear emphasises the complex nature of sound experience. Sound is not just that which is heard. Hearing is not only a process in the aural system, whereas listening seems to reflect profound sediments of our being. In order to explore the psychological process of listening, the lenses of psychoanalytic, developmental and Jungian psychology will be used in looking at the meaning of sound for human psyche.

Humans, just like animals, experience sound not only through ears but through reactions of their entire bodies.

Hearing is basically a specialized form of touch. Sound is simply vibrating air which the ear picks up and converts to electrical signals, which are then interpreted by the brain. The sense of hearing is not the only sense that can do this, touch can do this too. If you are standing by the road and a large truck goes by, do you hear or feel the vibration? The answer is both. With very low frequency vibration the ear starts becoming inefficient and the rest of the body's sense of touch starts to take over. For some reason we tend to make a distinction between hearing a sound and feeling a vibration, in reality they are the same thing. It is interesting to note that in the Italian language this distinction does not exist. The verb *sentire* in the Italian language means to hear and the same verb in the reflexive form *sentirsi* means to feel.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Norman Weinberger, <http://www.musica.uci.edu/index.html>, *MuSICA Research*, 2001, Stuart Feder, et al., *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Music*, Madison, International Universities Press, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> Evelyn Glennie, *Hearing essay*, 2015, [www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay](http://www.evelyn.co.uk/hearing-essay)

In her music performances and in her lectures, above cited Evelyn Glennie<sup>3</sup> lives the world of music in the manner described by Rene Spitz<sup>4</sup> as *coenesthetic communication*. This phenomenon sheds more light on the experience of sound and its significance in the earliest formative period of life. The main framework for gaining insight into the factors which create experiential, and thus fundamental behavioural patterns of an individual is the mother/caregiver - infant dyad. The quality and dynamics of this relationship are so critical that they affect not only the individual's sense of right to existence,<sup>5</sup> but physical survival itself.<sup>6</sup> Scientific research has focused on the phenomenon of mirroring to explore this fundamental relationship. Coenesthetic communication, which is deeply analogous to music, is perhaps the deepest layer of mirroring. As such it shows the nature of sound as immanence.

## 1. Mirroring

The terms 'mirror' and 'mirroring' appear in different contexts in psychology, sometimes with different meanings. For example, Foulkes states:

In the development of a baby, the so-called 'mirror reactions' help in the differentiation of the self from the not-self. The reflections of the self from the outside world lead to greater self-consciousness, so that the infant Narcissus eventually learns to distinguish his own image from that of other images. The mirror reactions are, therefore, essential mechanisms in the resolution of this primary narcissism.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dame Evelyn Glennie is one of the most acknowledged world percussionists who performs both a wide range of classical repertoire, but also broadens the scope of sound and music experience due to her unique artistic ways. It was also because of her severe hearing impairment that she became interested in these explorations. She performs barefoot in order to experience the sound vibrations. She is also the first person in music history to have created and sustained a career as a solo percussionist.

<sup>4</sup> Rene Spitz, *The first year of life: a psychoanalytic study of normal and deviant development of object relations*, New York, International Universities Press, 1965.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Edinger, *Ego and archetype*, Boston & London, Shambala, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> As a result of infant observation, Spitz discovered that infants who had good physical conditions (food, hygiene, etc.), but were not treated with affection and emotional care, experienced severe disorders and even death. He described this phenomenon through the term *hospitalism*. Rene Spitz, "Hospitalism—An inquiry into the genesis of psychiatric conditions in early childhood", *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 1, 1945, 53–74.

<sup>7</sup> Siegmunt Foulkes, Alan Parkin, "Out-Patient Psychotherapy: a Contribution Towards a New Approach", *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 3, 1957, 44–47.

In a quite different vein, Lacan<sup>8</sup> postulates a preverbal and pre-symbolic “mirror stage” of human development, between the ages of 6 and 18 months, in which the baby discovers her reflection as rigid totality. This reflection forms the basis of a false ego called ‘I’, as opposed to the true self to be discovered later. In *imitation* oriented approaches, such as Erickson’s hypnotherapy, Roger’s person-centered method and more recently, neuro-linguistic programming, mirroring includes reflecting or matching gestures, body language and sometimes words.<sup>9</sup>

Winnicott’s concept of mirroring is a shift from the early psychoanalytic instinctual satisfaction paradigm to one of *communication*. This emphasizes the social realm in which the mother’s facial expressions are critically important as a source of mirroring and feedback to the infant. If the mother mirrors him, the infant sees himself in her face and gets to know himself. “What does the baby see when he or she looks at the mother’s face? What the baby sees is himself or herself. In other words, the mother is looking at the baby and what she looks like is related to what she sees there.”<sup>10</sup> How an infant has been looked upon in early life may significantly affect what he sees in other people later. In *mirroring*, each element of the infant’s experience can be seen as *inhabiting a maternally provided form*, which has been adapted or tailored to the experience by the mother’s imaginative identification.<sup>11</sup> Following Winnicott’s mirroring concept, according to Fonagy’s research, the baby has an emotional or physical experience which is sensed within her own body.<sup>12</sup> This “mirroring” experience is a “secondary representation” of the primary physical experience, an outside view of an inside experience. The role of the mother/caregiver is that of a co-author of the developing self.

Stern describes the inter subjective field emphasizing affect attunement, or “recasting [...] of an affective state”.<sup>13</sup> The mother portrays the essence of the

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<sup>8</sup> Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, transl. by Alan Sheridan, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1977.

<sup>9</sup> Ernest Rossi, *The Collected Papers of Milton H. Erickson*, NY, Irvington Publishers, 1980; Carl Rogers, *Client-centered therapy*, Boston, Houghton-Mufflin, 1951, Marco Iacoboni, Mazziotta John, “Mirror neuron system: basic findings and clinical applications”, *Annals of Neurology*, 62, 2007, 213–218; Jaime Pineda, “Sensorimotor cortex as a critical component of an ‘extended’ mirror neuron system: does it solve the development, correspondence, and control problems in mirroring?”, *Behavioral and Brain Function*, 4, 2008, 47.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, London, Tavistock Publications, 1971, 131.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth Wright, *Mirroring and attunement: Self-realization in psychoanalysis and art*, London and New York, Routledge, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Fonagy, et al., *Affect regulation, mentalization and the development of the Self*, New York, Other Press, 2002.

<sup>13</sup> Daniel Stern, *The interpersonal world of the infant*, New York, Basic Books, 1985, 161.

infant's state within the intuitively created form that she enacts for her baby. Sharing of affective states happens before the sharing of mental states that reference objects, i.e. things outside of the dyad.<sup>14</sup> Three processes are necessary for the experience of inter-affectivity: first, the parent must be able to read the infant's emotional state from his overt behaviour; secondly, the parent must perform some behaviour that is not a strict imitation, but nonetheless corresponds in some way to the infant's overt behaviour; and thirdly, the infant must be able to read this corresponding, parental response as being relevant to its own original emotional experience, but without the response being somehow only a simple imitation of the infant's behaviour. It is only by means of the presence of these three conditions that the emotional states within one person may be transmitted to another, and that they can both sense, without using language, that a transaction has occurred.<sup>15</sup> This description of the inter-subjective field of the initial mother – child dyad could be a remarkably accurate description of the dynamics of music communication in a jam session. For example, in musical improvisation, a musician makes a statement and the other musician reacts, making another statement that could be similar or very different to the initial statement, but with a deep *inherent musical logic* connection (equivalence principle). Musical logic in this sense stands for the matching in the dyad. This is the extent to which a *maternally/initially provided form*<sup>16</sup> or affect attunement has been constellated. This allows the musician who made the initial statement to feel that his statement was heard, acknowledged and understood. At the same time, the first musician learns about the unique ways of the other who is different, but connected. Among musicians, this creates a feeling of a deep connection and mutual understanding, without having even looked at each other or spoken a word. They do not even have to be in the same physical space. (It is worthwhile noting that sound, the mother's voice and music are the most essential transitional objects transcending the mother – child dual union). In time, while improvising, musicians learn about their respective styles and become more tuned into the minute, subtle nuances and movement intentions. They learn about each other's *way of*

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<sup>14</sup> Trevarthan and Hubley, 1978, cited in Stern, 1985, 133.

<sup>15</sup> D. Stern, *ibid.*, 139.

<sup>16</sup> According to Jacoby, apart for the symbolic quality, this dynamic form is activated within the category of time, as the temporal order and its processes (rhythmically repeated patterns that regulate the physical and emotional states of the infant), and associated affective states. "These processes regulate tension and relaxation, they direct movements, perceptual stimuli and shared attention, and bodily sensation. These are the basic patterns which express themselves ... in music and dance." (Mario Jacobi, *Jungian psychotherapy and contemporary infant research: Basic patterns of emotional exchange*, London and New York, Routledge, 1999, 62).

*movement*. They attune to their respective initial choreographies, underlying patterns of experience and unconscious *expectations* of how the movement should evolve.

With regard to the quality of attunement or matching in the dyad, especially regarding unconscious expectations, it is important to emphasize that the mother's reflection of the infant's state is not only a 'real' reflection of the child, but the mother's own fantasy of the child and what he will become. Thus, from the imitation mirroring that reaches some layers of interconnectedness, we find here a deeper modeling of the child. It is an *interpretation* of the infant's identity. As in musical spontaneous communication process, it is the interpretation of the musicians' statements which determine the flow. The interpretation is, however, largely unconscious and automatic, being based on the underlying patterns of experiences. In relation to the initial dyad, taking into consideration the inborn archetypal potential, this is a powerful imprint of the future child's sense of who he is. In Jung's view, what actually automatically interprets the child's identity or, in later life the identity of *the other* in general, is to a great extent the unconscious background and complexes of the parents.<sup>17</sup> It is their own unconscious expectations of how *the way of the movement* should be.

### 1.1. Music mirroring

Spitz's coenesthetic communication describes the non-verbal liminal realm of the infant and the environment (the mother/caregiver – infant dyad) and takes the understanding of the mirroring phenomenon to a deeper layer. His description of the *dyad field*, the nature and content of coenesthetic communication, is analogous to the multi-layered phenomenon of music flow. It also sheds a special light on humans' deep psychosomatic experience of music in terms of "totalities". The term *coenesthetic communication* refers to primal relating patterns at a deeper level. Basing most of his conclusions on empirical infant research, René Spitz provides closer insight into the nature of this early experience of the interactional world. Starting from Freud's primary and secondary processes, Spitz speaks of coenesthetic (from Greek *koinos* for common or general, and *eisthesis* – sensitivity); and diacritic organisation (*diacrinein* – to separate or distinguish). During the coenesthetic mode of functioning in the first six months of life, "perception takes place on the level of deep sensibility and in terms of totalities, in an all-or-none fashion".<sup>18</sup> It signifies the affective interchange between

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<sup>17</sup> Carl Jung, *The Development of Personality*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1938.

<sup>18</sup> R. Spitz, *The first year of life...*, op. cit., 134.

the infant and her caregiver and operates both on the expressive and receptive levels. Spitz speaks about infant expression through non-verbal signals, of which adults seem not to be conscious. Infant reception operates through conditioned reflexes which evoke the vegetative system.<sup>19</sup> Somatic manifestations are visceral and postural. The diacritic mode of functioning evolves from the coenesthetic mode and becomes an integrated sensory organisation by the second year. It is located in the cortex and involves cognition.

In the first months of life infants are exposed to changes in equilibrium, tension, vibration, rhythm, intensity, contact, time duration, voice timbre and tone, etc. They register impressions, not through separate sensory channels, but by the coenesthetic organisation of their bodies. It is interesting to note that the medical meaning of 'visceral' refers to the vital internal organs of the body, such as those within the chest, including the heart or lungs, or abdomen, including the kidneys, liver, pancreas or intestines. Language reflects these impressions in universal idioms such as; 'gut feeling', 'heart ache' and 'to get something off one's chest'. Piha draws a direct link between coenesthetic functioning and artistic and scientific modes, regarding the link between scientific and artistic processes (primarily musical) as *intuition*. She sees intuition as an integral mode of archaic coenesthetic thinking:

In my view, the non-discursive intuitive mode of thought used by artists forms an integrated bridge to the archaic coenesthetic world of experience described by Spitz (1965). This hypothetical sphere of early impressions, dominating particularly during the first six months of life, is marked by vague, [...] comprehensive categories – tensions, equilibriums, temperatures, postures, touches, vibrations, rhythms, durations, pitches, tones, etc. – in which neither perception and affect, nor somatic and psychic, have yet been differentiated. In general, the adult is hardly aware of them, and they are difficult to express rationally.<sup>20</sup>

She articulates these amodal perceptions through everyday activities and situations that all humans perform: why do we immediately realize that a person's look or voice is warm and soft, and therefore friendly? How could vision or hearing mediate qualities of temperature or touch, on which we base our interpretations of emotions? This has to do with experiences that take no heed of the boundaries between sensory modalities, and that a linguistic metaphor connects us with. Piha considers music as the closest medium of coenesthetic functioning.

As a result of her research and psychoanalytic work, she considers the experience of sound and music a special category. It is "*comprised of an immeasur-*

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>20</sup> Heiki Piha, "Intuition: A bridge to the coenesthetic world of experience", *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, Vol. 53, 2005, 34–35.

able number of simultaneous, different, overlapping, and interpenetrating sub-spaces. [...] Speech and music are attempts to bind these spaces into one and the same comprehensible picture, into integrated connection with one another".<sup>21</sup>

Spitz initially thought that such an undifferentiated and non-verbal appraisal of a situation or a person disappears in adulthood. He suggests that coenesthetic communication tends to diminish throughout the course of our development, and is replaced by a diacritic, conscious perceptual experience. "Our deeper sensations do not reach our awareness, do not become meaningful to us, we ignore and repress their messages".<sup>22</sup>

According to later research in infant development and analytical work with adults, this archaic mode of experience does not actually 'disappear'. It instead exists alongside our other modes of comprehension that are just closer to our consciousness. We constantly experience these amodal inputs through our deepest, immediate reactions and perceptions. For example, we experience a person as 'cold' or 'warm'; something is 'dry', 'fulsome' or 'empty'. People could be 'sharp' or 'soft' We feel them 'distant' or 'close' and a mind could be 'open' or 'closed'. It is from this form of archaic mode of experience, of the undifferentiated mode of infant relating that our adult comprehension and relating predispositions evolve. In other words, this is the source of development of our unconscious *music style of relating* to others and to life itself. These kinds of information or related impressions regarding the person or situation are automatic; they precede our cognition and are based on our innate ability to assess in a natural, primal way, the essence of which is musical.

*Musical mirroring* extrapolates the fundamental content and dynamics of the primordial relational patterns, closely reflecting its dual body-mind nature. The primordial, relational patterns between an infant and the mother are analogous in nature to musical flow phenomena and the dynamics of music communication.<sup>23</sup> The music flow and dynamics of libidinal energy are both regulated by the first and second laws of thermodynamics. The principles of coherence and equivalence are the formative principles of the dynamics of music and psyche.<sup>24</sup> The music flow is multi-layered and multidimensional, comprising different planes and categories (for example; tonal, textural, and thematic) with a special notion to time-space properties which are inseparably tied. Music analysis in-

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>22</sup> Gabor Csepregy, *The clever body*, Calgary, CAN, University of Calgary Press, 2006, 26.

<sup>23</sup> Nada O'Brien, *Music and The Unconscious*, Belgrade, *Dosije Studio*, 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Berislav Popović, *Music form or Meaning in Music*, Belgrade, Clio, 1998; C. G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1981.

forms about the constructional universality of music form in the way of initial formative principles “immune to the changes in the civilisational outlook of the world”,<sup>25</sup> modelled to life through the biographic *way of movement* of the individual composer, style and *zeitgeist*. Respectively, the initial mother – child dyad models universal underlying patterns of experience giving the archetypal patterns of libidinal movement a set of interactive biographical forms. It is through these forms that libidinal energy flows in its multiplane coenesthetic spectrum. The mechanistic aspect of movement *interferes* with the space-time properties of the libidinal energy.<sup>26</sup> The analogy between music and libidinal flow is remarkable in that they both comprise instinctual, somatic and symbolic nature, transcending to the *verbal self*. The following statements by Einstein illustrate this analogy, and also bring together the positions of Stern, Spitz and Piha:

*The Theory of Relativity was a music thought that came to me [...] The theory of relativity occurred to me by intuition, and music is the driving force behind this intuition. My parents had me study the violin from the time I was six. My new discovery is the result of musical perception. My perception is musical.*<sup>27</sup>

In praise of Neils Bohr’s work on the structure of the atom, Einstein described it as the *highest form of musicality in the realm of thought*.<sup>28</sup>

Einstein’s process of articulating the initial archaic, amodal perception reflects the stages of development described by Stern: from *the emerging self* in the first months of life, through the *core* and *subjective self* to the *verbal self* when the infant is *creating “a new domain of relatedness”, but one which “moves relatedness onto the impersonal, abstract level, intrinsic to language and away from the personal, immediate level”*.<sup>29</sup> It is through the archaic, musical ways of being that the new knowledge comes, ready to be *listened to* and eventually spoken to the world.

## 2. Evoked Listening

As explained, the primal mode of experience and patterns of relatedness are based on coenesthetic organisation, which is analogous to the nature of the or-

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<sup>25</sup> B. Popović, *ibid.*, 368.

<sup>26</sup> Carl Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, *op. cit.*, para 41.

<sup>27</sup> As cited in: Shinicki Suzuki, Waltraud Suzuki, *Nurtured by love. A new approach to talent education*, Miami, Warner Bros Publications, 1969, 90.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Schlipp (Ed.), *Albert Einstein: Autobiographical notes*, La Salle, Open Court, 1979, 171.

<sup>29</sup> Daniel Stern, *The interpersonal world of...*, *op. cit.*, 162–163.

organisational principle of music and the dynamics of the music flow. The space of sound is where the unique archetypal potential and environment are manifested. Amodal perceptions in the earliest period of life gradually form the predisposition for our experience and relationship with the world in a generalised form. These *Representations of Interactions that have been Generalised*, or “RIGs”,<sup>30</sup> are the pivotal tokens of the organising principle of infant life experience and, subsequently, (proto) narratives and metaphors in adults. They enable the mechanism of making links across different modalities of experience. Basic units of RIGs are episodes, or smaller, coherent chunks of lived experience.

An episode is made of smaller elements or attributes. These attributes are sensations, perceptions, actions, thoughts, affects, and goals, which occur in some temporal, physical, and causal relationship so that they constitute a coherent episode of experience. Depending on how one defines episodes, there are no lived experiences that do not clump to form episodes, because there are rarely, if ever, perceptions or sensations without accompanying affects and cognitions and/or actions. There are never emotions without a perceptual context. There are never cognitions without some affect fluctuations, even if only of interest. An episode occurs within one single physical, motivational setting; events are processed in time, and causality is inferred, or at least expectations are set up. An episode appears to enter into memory as an indivisible unit.<sup>31</sup>

Stern emphasizes that the generalized episode is not a specific memory. It does not describe an event that has actually ever happened in exactly that way. It is a structure about the likely course of events, based on average experiences.<sup>32</sup> RIGs are therefore responsible for our deeply rooted, unconscious expectations of sensations, body states, feelings, actions, actually, for the main part of the quality of our experiences. They are the building blocks of our expectations of how the movement should evolve.

According to Stern, during the first few years, the infant lives in memories of former interactions, regardless of whether the caregiver is physically present or not. Even if the caregiver is present, the infant is actually at the same time also with a regulating *historical other* (or the image of the sum of interactional experiences). The time dimension of RIGs is complex: Stern feels that the infant has to deal both with its past, lived experience of togetherness with the caregiver, his subjective experience and, at the same time, the actual presence of the other. Thus, the *evoked companion*<sup>33</sup> is present all the time, and both infants and adults

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 102.

are seldom (if ever) alone. It seems that we are all the time in a state of *interaction*, in a preverbal flow of amodal mental, affective and bodily sensations which knit the overall inner predisposition for each specific experience and interaction.

Our psychic life is comprised of *movement*. It is a movement of multi-dimensional categories, or layers of libidinal energy modelling different tensions, textures, temporal and spatial structures, plans, intrinsically operating as a dramaturgy of the music flow. Jung expresses the dynamism of the psyche in terms of the first law of thermodynamics, which states that energy demands two opposing forces. The opposites are the ineradicable and indispensable preconditions of all psychic life.<sup>34</sup> The relationship between the opposites generates movement, and although they are logically split and in conflict, they co-exist in an undifferentiated, cross-modal way in the natural state within the unconscious. RIGs provide the underlying biographical patterns of our fundamental libidinal choreography.

Given the coenesthetic nature of RIGs, we actually relate and experience through *coenesthetic listening* to the movement of the *other*, or to the underlying dynamics of an event. Our total being acts as a receptor of the coenesthetic sound of the other, resonating to the vibrations of the dynamics of the inner movement of the libidinal energy flow. Given the fact that the predisposition for our *listening* is based on our RIGs, the quality of our resonance is dependent upon *evoked listening*. Evoked listening signifies the 'historical' way of reacting to stimuli, based on average experience or expectation (RIGs). Evoked listening thus functions to evaluate the specific ongoing interactive episode. In this view, taking into consideration developmental psychology and the psychoanalytic perspective, music phenomena are comprehended both as artistic expression of our aesthetical facet, and the deep formative choreography of our being.

Therefore, *who is listening?* What do we hear? Do we always only listen through the filters of evoked listening?

### **3. The structure of the *inner ear*: the view of Jungian psychoanalysis**

The life of adults and infants is perhaps most deeply understood through the combination of developmental psychology and psychoanalysis. Stern's scientific breakthroughs, rooted in empirical infant observation and analyzed on a deep level represented a pivotal shift both in psychology and psychoanalysis.<sup>35</sup> With

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<sup>34</sup> C. G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963, para. 206.

<sup>35</sup> Stewart Scott, "Reconstructing the Infant: Review of 'The Interpersonal World of The Infant' by Daniel Stern.", *ACAT News, Autumn*, 2001, [https://www.acat.me.uk/reformulation.php?issue\\_id=33&article\\_id=390](https://www.acat.me.uk/reformulation.php?issue_id=33&article_id=390) (accessed 20 May 2018).

this in mind, the next step will be to look at the underlying formative patterns of RIGs themselves.

RIGs are formed as a result of our reaction with the infant environment. The “environment”, however, comes under shrewd analytical scrutiny in the Jungian view: “Nothing exerts a stronger psychic effect upon the human environment, and especially upon children, than the life which the parents have *not* lived. [...] Children are educated by what parent *is* and not by his talk.”<sup>36</sup>

The greatest part of what a parent *is* is his unconscious make up. Given the dynamic nature of the psyche, the initial imprint on the ways of moving will be made by the inner paradigmatic choreography of the parents and the environment. More specifically, it is the *unconscious*, unrealized, “unlived” libidinal dynamic paradigm that leaves the strongest modelling imprint on an infant. It is the *way of movement* of the initial *field* of the infant which models the inherent forms of experience and relating. In terms of libidinal energy impact, unconscious forces have the greatest potency, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Thus ‘the field’ in which an infant grows up has the most powerful modelling effect. This is the original interactive, intersubjective field which becomes our deepest automatic trigger reactions and determines our behavioural patterns in adult life. This is the original interactive, intersubjective field which determines our automatic behavioural patterns in adult life.

In order to understand the strongest modelling force – the unconscious life of our caregivers, as well as the environment, we need to take a closer look at the structure of the unconscious as such. Jung discovered that the unconscious is comprised of the interwoven layers of the collective, cultural and individual dynamic matrixes. “The collective unconscious contains the whole [...] heritage of mankind’s evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual.”<sup>37</sup> The collective unconscious was initially referred to as the *objective psyche* in comparison to the personal unconscious as a *subjective psyche*.<sup>38</sup> Primordial structural elements of human psyche (archetypes) reside in the collective unconscious. They are “the systems of readiness for action”<sup>39</sup>, primordial patterns of libidinal choreography.<sup>40</sup> These universal ways of movement have unique

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<sup>36</sup> C. G. Jung, *The Spirit in Man, Art and Literature*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1966, para 4.

<sup>37</sup> C. G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, Vol. 8, op. cit., para 342.

<sup>38</sup> C. G. Jung, *Psychogenesis of Mental Disease*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1960, para 576.

<sup>39</sup> C. G. Jung, *Civilization in Transition*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1964, para 53.

<sup>40</sup> Fairy-tales and myths, for example, which share a universal plot and characters (arche-

manifestations depending on external triggers, and form “real exponents”<sup>41</sup> of the core cultural identity and *Zeitgeist*. Furthermore, they reside in the layer of the individual unconscious through *complexes*: “images of a psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is, moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of consciousness.”<sup>42</sup> RIGs in many respects show how complexes are formed, triggered, retained in memory and related to certain states of being (i.e. sensations, affects, emotions). At the centre of a complex is an archetype, which provides a direct link between the deepest layer of the unconscious (the collective unconscious) and our consciousness (Ego). Therefore, complexes are considered to be the *via regia* to the unconscious.<sup>43</sup> The ego is constantly exposed to this form of libidinal energy, and it is through this dialogue between Ego and complexes that we become aware of the unconscious dynamics and extend our consciousness. Complexes are splinter psyches and behave like autonomous independent beings, therefore we do not have complexes, but *complexes have us*.<sup>44</sup> This is due to the general underlying fact that libidinal energy, which is unconscious, has greater energy potential. Thus, we listen to music with the *ears of our complexes*. The way they provide immediate, automatic, unconscious resonance, stirring the whole ‘package’ of coenesthetic reaction, is based on our RIGs. From this context we can infer that the evoked listener comprises various complexes, which are triggered by music stimuli.

Therefore, is our listening always historical? Is there an *independent ear* which can listen to music apart from the historical one?

### 3.1 *The archetypal ear*

The intrinsic dynamics of natural development (the individuation process)<sup>45</sup> demands constant psychological differentiation, which gives birth to individual personality. Different developmental phases allow deeper layers of libidinal

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typal figures), or innate instinctive behavior (for example, animal babies’ complex knowledge immediately upon birth).

<sup>41</sup> C. G. Jung, Vol.10, para 325.

<sup>42</sup> C. G. Jung, Vol. 8, para 201.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, para 210.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, para 200.

<sup>45</sup> Individuation is a natural process of psychological differentiation towards the synthesis of the self. (Jung, Vol. 9i, para 278). If consciously pursued, it leads to the realisation of the self as a psychic reality greater than the Ego. (Daryl Sharp, *C. G. Jung Lexicon*, Toronto, Inner City Books, 1991, 69). Individuation is an internal and subjective process of integration and at the same time equally indispensable process of objective relationship. (Jung, Vol. 16, para 448).

energy to be potentially integrated and produce a new consciousness. One of the major developmental challenges is the dominance of unconscious automatic patterns built on historical coenesthetic experiences. “The more past experience there is, the less relative the impact or change any single, specific episode will have. History builds up inertia.”<sup>46</sup> However, this one-sided dominating pattern is compensated by the intervention of archetypal libidinal forces, which marks the nodal points in the individuation process. The archetypal interference enhances our (coenesthetic) senses, which then enables experiences beyond historical inertia. Our *archetypal ear* can, thus, actually listen to music beyond its historical limitations in terms of evoked biographical, cultural and *zeitgeist* automatic resonance, and hear the music for what it is. *What music is* in this case is heard through primordial mirroring and, given the nature of archetypal experience, remains inexplicable. As with RIGs, however, there are determining evaluation criteria, and they are in the *expectation* of how the music flow should develop, this time from the archetypal perspective: “The archetype in itself is empty and purely formal, nothing but a *facultas praeformandi*, a possibility of representation which is given a priori.”<sup>47</sup>

The quality of the experience is therefore determined in relation to the *expectation* of the music flow dynamics – the entelechy of the archetypal germinal agent (*musicus movens*), and the actual music perceived. *What music is* is the result of a conjunction between the archetypal and the environmental through the particular constellation of complexes triggered by certain music stimuli. Therefore, it is always *what it is* and *what it should be*, outlining the potential new developmental cathexis on the map of the individual, cultural and collective opus.

## Conclusion

The nature of sound is coenesthetic and evokes the formational aspects of our being. The listening process is thus multilayered, engaging the different facets of our personality which process and evaluate music stimuli from different perspectives of our psyche. The listening process engages both the properties of our consciousness and unconsciousness with its complex individual, cultural and collective layers in respect to the latter. The way that the archetypal core of personality moves is modeled by the mother/caregiver – child dyad or the environmental field of the infant. The field models the archetypal libidinal dynamics into inherent ‘maternal’ formal patterns, specific for the individual, as

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<sup>46</sup> D. Stern, *ibid.*, 113.

<sup>47</sup> C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 9i, Princeton, Princeton University Press 1968, para 155.

premises for experience and relating. These formal patterns are the foundational formulae of our automatic reactions, expectations and immediate (unconscious) evaluations. Given that the way of the movement in the initial field was the main (in)formative medium of existential importance, modelling the way we are, our patterns of listening are also modelled accordingly. The unconscious life of our psyche is a vital historical counterpoint to our conscious way of being, carrying at the same time the seeds of our future actions. Therefore, the historical ear of our early formative experiences, or the ear of our subjective psyche will listen to music differently than will the ear of our objective (archetypal) psyche. The expectation of how the music flow should evolve from the developmental perspective will be based on our RIGs, which are, again, modelled by the unconscious background of our caregivers. The automatic experience from this perspective is subjective and reflects the underlying patterns of early experiences. The listening experience from the archetypal perspective is based on the universal patterns of movement and reflects the 'expectation' of the fulfillment of the objective potential which the music dynamics carries. However, the process of discerning which ear is listening at a given moment, thus being able to distinguish among the rich music score of our inner historical being, determining our reactions, evaluations and expectation criteria, reflects the extent of our own self-awareness and our position in the musical opus of life.

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## Summary

Scientific research in psychoanalysis and developmental psychology highlight the significant roles of sound and music in human development. Both the psychoanalysis of music and Jungian analytical psychology inform the role of music and sound in the early formative period, which is of critical importance for modelling the reactive, relational and behavioural matrix of the individual. Music flow and libidinal energy are modelled by universal formative principles. The dynamic of the music flow is therefore a primary (and primal) reflection of the movement patterns of libidinal energy, i.e. of the psychological experiences in general. Listening is a multilayered process which to the greatest extent takes place in the unconscious currents of the psyche.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the unconscious experience of music, a special focus is required on the facets of the psyche which are engaged in processing the music experience during listening, in the early formative period. These facets are also responsible for the reactions to music stimuli and are the foundation for the evaluation of the music experience.

During the formative period there is a significant interaction between archetypal content of the individual and the environment (family field, culture, *Zeitgeist*). The next level of the listening process can be observed in the complex interplay between the collective unconscious, early formative patterns and the field of consciousness. Herein lays the discernment of the psychic sources of listening. A polyphonic structure of automatic reactions and listening qualities are founded on the deep organizational principles of the psyche. The subjective and objective evaluation from the perspective of the multilayered listening process in relation to the subjective and objective psyche, signify not only the degree of consciousness development, but also the richness of the insight into music phenomena.