

Music on line or music in the City ? A stake for the Future City .

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Music has shaped the urban landscape for centuries . According to the ideas exposed by Sombart in his book on luxury and capitalism, in the 17 th and 18 th centuries, among luxurious places which appeared (coffee houses, theatres, stores) , there were concert halls and ballrooms . In Paris, these artists, the composers, were very well paid, more than writers . Music appeared in the Court then it was aped by aristocrats and financiers in the City . In the era of bourgeoisie, Opera houses and concert halls are fashionable places . There is even an imitation for the working class (bandstands, ballrooms) . We find in Adorno ' s books examples of what could be an history of Music in the City :

- The decline of Opera . Between the two world wars the talking movies trigger a decline of Opera . They are aimed at realism, and they display many details, while sound is added . Less people go to the Opera House, more people go to the cinemas . However Opera continues, but new operas are not created, only the old repertoire is played . For some reasons, there is an audience . Vocations of Opera singers are rare, and their formation requires very much time and is difficult, therefore they are very well paid . Today to show an Opera is very costly . It occurs during festivals, or in some big cities (Paris, London, Vienna) .
- Existence of centres . As it was heralded by Simmel, money pervading Society is favourable to Art . However artists are selected . The more capable musicians (conductors, orchestra musicians) are attracted by big cities (Paris, London, Vienna ...) . Only in these « international centres » , one can listen to music which is played in an excellent way . In smaller cities, there is no possibility, or there are mediocre orchestras . The explanation is people able to buy expensive tickets, to listen to music, in big cities .
- The end of chamber music, which was played and listened in private places, is evoked later in this article .

In the past, the role of Music in the City, has changed . Today, the question is posed because a new media (music on line) appears . Even, the survival of Music in the City, is a question . One can imagine Music in the electronic spaces, only (composed by computers, stored on servers, diffused through Internet) and anywhere (listened thanks to micro-computers and walkmen) . Perhaps, in all the public spaces, a background music which is not really « listened » . However this catastrophic scenario is improbable .

To treat this topics, we shall use two approaches :

- A classification of the « ways and places » , concerning listening to music .
- An investigation of the reasons why technology pervades music . Obviously, the more technology pervades music, the more music leaves the physical places in the City .

1 HOW AND WHERE TO LISTEN TO MUSIC ? A CLASSIFICATION .

We consider six kinds of listening to music :

1.1 Collective / aesthetic .

It is the case of festivals .

1.2 Collective / social rite .

In some cities, listeners frequently go to the same concert halls . Often, they listen to music played by the same orchestra . There is a program of each musical season that they accept (or approve) . They are requiring listeners . Perhaps, in big cities which are not international centres (world cities) some « municipal spirit » has a role, as listeners give support to local musicians, to be able to listen to music which is played in an excellent way, in their city .

1.3 Collective / consumption .

Music is listened by crowds, in places of the city . The urban landscape is treated as a decor. Technology (lighting, sono) is used . These parades are organized by scenographers . There are commercial purposes . Medias are involved . According to the ideas exposed in the Vauchey ' s works, these « listeners » are alone, even in a crowd . We shall describe this kind of listening more accurately, using notions from Adorno, as « entertainment music » or « musical fetishism » .

1.4 Domestic .

It is worth to resume the history of the relations private space / public space, which have changed because of the impact of technology, also . We have recourse to the theories of the French sociologist Flichy .

At the end of the 19 th century, in the industrialized countries (first, in the United States) the private housing, for families, appears . People go outside, mainly to work . It is the end of the time spent in the streets, the coffee houses etc ... The mutation was eased by the piano, phonograph, radio etc ... The piano has been a success, at the end of the 19 th century, especially in the United States . Thanks to improved manufacturing, the price was divided two or three times . People buy scores (successful songs) . They are played in the presence of the family . Later, the phonograph (a furniture) and the album of photographs will have the same role . Finally the radio set appears . In the fifties and sixties there is an upheaval because of transistor . The teenagers become autonomous (pocket money, love life, politics) . They listen to rock music in their bedroom, thanks to a transistor or a record player . It is the beginning of the « side by side » family . At the time of the TV set, it is going back to the collective life . In general, there is only one TV set in a home . The walkman (used in the home) strenghtens the teenager ' s autonomy . Today technology seems to strenghten this autonomy . The teenagers can download music on line and listen to it thanks to their micro-computer . They can even download movies and look at them on the screen of their micro-computer . A single ADSL access allows a family to use a TV set, several micro-computers connected to Internet, simultaneously . Each individual in the family can obtain what he wants,

music, movies, TV programs etc ... on Internet (provided that the cost is accepted) . Perhaps, the collective life could be strengthened by the « home cinema » . In a comfortable place in the house, there is a large screen on which movies are displayed . It is high definition images . The movies are downloaded at a low cost a few days after they are displayed in the cinemas . Of course, there is a single place in the house which is equipped with « home cinema » . Therefore to look at a film is an opportunity to be gathered .

There are explanations on the decline of music played and listened in private, in the Adorno ' s books, too . It is about chamber music . Chamber music (trio, quartet, lieder) appears in the 17 th and 18 th centuries . Aristocrats, who were amateurs but able to perform music very well, played it . This music allowed a good listening . Music was composed by the more talented composers for them . In the era of bourgeoisie, it continues . It declines at the beginning of the 20 th century. The opposition chamber music / symphonic music is an explanation of the aesthetic evolution of music from the 18 th century to the 20 th century . This music is played in a private space, and means friendship, reconciliation, . However the contradiction, which is present in Society, of the necessary authority and the wished spontaneity, can have a role . One of the musicians conduct the other (as the conductor conducts the orchestra) , therefore the group of musicians is sometimes temporary .

There are several reasons why the chamber music has disappeared :

- the rich professionals who played it in the past, work more today (for instance, doctors) .
- today flats and houses are constituted of small rooms, with low ceilings (bad acoustics) and narrow walls (neighbors are bothered) . Music listened thanks to record players is more suitable (the loudness of the sound can be tuned) .
- the record and radio allow to listen to music which is performed very well .
- there are also commercial reasons . Technology (recording, listening) allows to highlight the « sound » , and amateurs are unable to carry out this performance .

The fact that modern music cannot be performed by amateurs is a consequence . Since chamber music has disappeared, chamber music is no longer composed by composers .

From the Adorno ' s point of view, it is not worth to be nostalgic . It should be as to regret the craftman ' s works, in the era of industrial works . Of course, record player and radio allow to listen to music which is very well performed, anywhere, at a low cost . Today, it is also allowed by music on line .

1.5 Individual / consumption .

Here music on line is adequate . This listening can be described as a listening to « entertainment music » , according to the Adorno ' s ideas . The musical quality is mediocre . It has declined very much since the time of Offenbach ' s operettas . It is something like musical quality at the middle of the 19 th century . To compose it, by contrast with « serious music » , the resources of the division of labour are not used . It is an other story, if we consider technology (this topics is treated later in the article) . For commercial reasons, the products are standardized, classified by kinds (rock, sentimental songs ...) . The listeners ' tastes are pseudo-individual . Fashions are imposed through medias . Technology allows « effects » and the consequence is that the musical quality, the images, the « content » (symbols, messages) are mediocre . The audio-visual show creates an « atmosphere » , thanks to technology (sono, lighting, synthetic images) . It strenghtens the suggestive power of music (loud sound, repetition) . The goal is to condition the listeners . It could be compared to alcohol .

1.6 Individual / aesthetic .

According to Walter Benjamin, consumers have sometimes a collector ' s mentality . They believe they are endowed with an experience . They should be able to use « traces » , to understand facts . It should allow to achieve knowledge . Models are the « flaneur » , the hunter, the aged student etc ... In the era described by Benjamin (the end of the 19 th century) , it concerned literature . Today, it concerns TV programs or movies, too . Briefly said, the reader (or the watcher) can imagine that he has something to find, and he uses his experience, benefitting from « traces » to succeed in his search . The collector ' mentality is a way to « pseudo-activity » (this term is used by Adorno) or secondary roles . David Riesman, in his book « The lonely crowd » has described how young people who want to be autonomous thanks to their hobby, fail to be really autonomous . He cites the example of young people making cars by their own means, who finally are hired by car makers . An amateur can achieve some knowledge on a particular kind of music (he is able to speak of it and even to play it) , but he believes he innovates, and it is illusory . He is not able to change the tastes . If he has a role, it is under the control of commercial purposes (he speaks during a radio or TV program, or his opinion is taken into account by professionals etc ...) .

A consumer could use Internet, search engines etc ... to find and download music, in an illusory attempt to achieve knowledge on music . He should be what is called « culture consumer » by Adorno . At the opposite, professionals of several kinds (musicians, musicologists, students in cultural matters ...) could have recourse to music on line, not to create a knowledge, but as a useful tool . Of course, advantages are a vast repertoire at disposal, a low cost, practical aspects (rapidity, no physical move needed ...) .

2 WHY IS TECHNOLOGY PERVADEING MUSIC ?

Obviously, technology pervades music . Moreover, it is costly . It is easy to cite examples displaying that . Some electric guitars are very expensive . Often, in big cities, Opera Houses need to be subsidized (and technology is a part of the total cost, as it is very much used in scenography) . In Paris, a place for all kinds of shows, which is very well equipped (flexibility, lighting, sono, decors) is known as costly .

There are several reasons why technology pervades music :

- It is to hamper music performed by amateurs . When technology is used to produce music (recording) and to diffuse it, an excellent quality of the performance of musicians is provided, and amateurs are discouraged . The good quality of the recorded sound, matters, also . This phenomenon concerns other kinds of consumption products . Either technology, either the know-how, or the

both, are used to discourage self-consumption . It is worth to make a rapid comparison of three kinds of cultural products, gastronomy, clothes and music . In the restaurants, only know-how is used . A recent trend is to highlight this know-how, thanks to explanations given to the customers, on the inputs of food, the place where they are produced, how to use them etc ... Concerning clothes, it is mainly know-how which is used . The consumers follow a fashion changing frequently, without any delay . It is almost the end of the patrons allowing to make a clothe at home (or it is purely a hobby, or the clothe will be a gift) . However the technology is used : manufacturing technologies in the industrialized countries, transport technology allowing production at a low cost in emerging countries, characteristics of the product (stuck seams, particular materials ...) . If « smart clothes » (allowing to connect to networks, to display changing images and texts etc ...) are a success, manufacturing and repairing these clothes will be the task of technicians, only ... Concerning music, the two means are used (technology and know-how) .

- The repertoire of music which is distributed to a large public, is not so vast . For commercial reasons, « genres » which concern the way in which music is performed, are created . Technology is used to achieve this goal . The way in which a musician performs music, is highlighted thanks to the recording technology .

- The repeated and loud sound allows to trigger the listener ' s tiredness, needed to condition his reactions . Here the explanation is psychological . Culture is acquired (even if there is a basis of instincts which persists, according to Konrad Lorenz) . Therefore we find an explanation using the notion of « secondary signalling system » coming from the proponents of the conditioned reflex as Pavlov . In it are stored « active images » associated with pleasure or sore . It is inevitable, as it is the consequence of Education . The access to these images, triggering emotions, is easier when the human being is tired . It is proved thanks to experiments as hypnosis or use of narcotics .

- According to Adorno, a recipe of « musical fetishism » is to isolate an aspect of music and to highlight it (a nice voice, the sound of a particular instrument) . Here, recording technology is useful .

- There is the equivalent of « kitsch » art in music . The kitsch art is naive, aimed at triggering sentimental reactions, emotions . In general, these objects are manufactured products, and cheap . It corresponds to the « idealization of the world » according to Benjamin . When the private spaces and the public spaces were separated, in Paris, at the end of the 19 th century, the intimate space became the reflection of the world, in an idealist way . Flats and houses are full of curios and souvenirs, which are kitsch art . According to Adorno, today good composers compose a music of mediocre quality to earn money . Adorno calls this music « utilitarian music » . It is often music for operas, ballets, movies . This music is part of a show . The techniques of scenography (sound, lighting, decors etc ...) are used . The consequence is that good composers abandon the avant-garde music and compose utilitarian music, to earn money . The public service of radio seems necessary to give support to avant-garde music . The young composers need to be known, and the audience is small, concerning avant-garde music . In the usual conditions (diffusion of music depending on commercial purposes) , their music would not be diffused and listened .

- Technology is used in the avant-garde music . A characteristic of Modern Art is the domination of abstract structures and forms on any content . It does not like realism or sense . This artificial character is allowed by technology . Technology allows to explore a potential . Also, it is attracting the proponents of technology, even if today the young generations do not know tradition and do not resist novelty .

The more technology pervades music, the less music is listened in the City . No many people want to meet in a concert hall, to listen to music, which is performed according to aesthetic standards, by a good orchestra, using good instruments . Their interest is to escape the « effects » which are inevitable in many recordings (CDs, DVDs) . They give support to some musicians, and obtain to listen to the music they like . The musicians use their know-how .

Other places in the City are used, to play music . In big cities, Opera continues . In the case of ballets, shows etc ... it is « entertainment music » or « consumed music » . Obviously, the performance in a physical space is indispensable . There are also urban scenographies . Sometimes many young people meet to listen to music, and it is so noisy (it is a proof that the recipe of loud sound is used) that the meeting occurs ... in the fields . Technology has changed the link between Music and the City . Less people listen to music performed by musicians who are in the same place, and use their know-how (not technology) . In the case of electronic music, the music is not longer played by musicians . Concerning ballets,shows etc ... technology is used, but the presence of the audience is indispensable . During urban scenographies, the urban landscape is used as a decor .

3 THE FRANCFORT SCHOOL ' S IDEAS ON MUSIC .

A well known idea from the Francfort School is the transition from Art to cultural consumption . Take the example of thousands of young people meeting to listen to music, in the sixties and seventies . Now they have to pay money . Organizers have suddenly understood that security, comfort etc ... matter . Big firms, which want to promote their brand, sponsor these meetings . This money is useful to achieve a financial equilibrium, or to allow a small profit .

Marcuse has described the transition from Art to cultural consumption : end of transcendence, end of the distant artist, repressive desublimation . In the past, the Artist was in a kind of ideal refuge, having a vision of Society which was a protest against some abuses . At this time Art was for elites and the artist ' s protest was individual and ineffective . It was a mean to make his personal situation bearable . However, this protest existed and had a role in the elites ' culture. At the time of mass consumption, it has disappeared . This has consequences, for instance on the architecture, concerning concert halls and theatres (the scene above the audience is challenged) . Even in the restaurants, the razzmattaz has disappeared, the architecture has changed (less solemn) , the chef is no longer shrouded in mystery, but he gives advices on food to customers. Repressive desublimation means the end of the aesthetic sublimation . Its consequence was an ideal vision of Society and Life, but it was also a source of aesthetic emotions .

In the Adorno ' s works we find interesting ideas on two points : the listener ' s profiles and the present state of music .

According to Adorno, there are six profiles :

- Expert-listener . He is able to assess the musical value of a piece of music, thanks to a real knowledge . Often, he is a professional .
- Good listener . He is able to like good music, and has notions on the history of music, successive styles etc ... In the past, he was an aristocrat or a member of bourgeoisie playing chamber music . Now there are less good listeners .
- Culture consumer . His erudition is more apparent than real . He is a kind of snob .
- Emotional listener . Music provides him with emotions . He is not really interested in music . He seeks emotions .

- Resentment listener . He likes a particular kind of music, and chooses a standard in which he believes . For instance, it concerns choir singing, strict standards being chosen . Mimetic and spontaneous aspects of music are avoided . He believes in a community choosing a strict standard and imposing it . Perhaps he is frustrated because of his role in Society . He believes in an ideal social place, which is reflected in a particular music, supporting, consoling himself thanks to a permanent delight. There are archaic aspects in music (pre-musical aspects) . Even in the « serious music » there is sometimes an « angels music » .

- Entertainment listener . He listens a music of poor quality (according to aesthetic standards) . His goal is to benefit from pleasant instants, without any effort as a music listener .

It corresponds to our « ways and places » to listen to music :

- Collective / aesthetic . Expert listeners and good listeners, attending festivals .

- Collective / social rite . Good listeners .

- Collective / consumption . Entertainment listeners .

- Individual / consumption . Entertainment listeners .

- Individual / aesthetic . Expert listeners .

According to Adorno, the musical activity is not at a poor standard, but stagnant . He has analysed the decline of the quality of listening to music : decomposition (without taking into account the whole piece of music) , lack of concentration, poor standard from the point of view of musical aesthetics (even the « colourful » sound and the syncopation are concerned) .

We have an example, the songs . The singer is in the role of a person who is young, insolent (often) or self-assured (at least) , lonely, opportunist, a winner and experienced . All these qualities are not compatible, but it does not matter . Are represented the Loneliness, the Lucky Star, the Opportunity, the Victory . It is a few allegories, of a poor aesthetic standard (Walter Benjamin has shown the importance of allegory in modern art) . Here also there is a psychological explanation . According to Konrad Lorenz the instinct of enthusiasm, at the time of youth, has to settle, an object being chosen . A law of « influence » (as tiredness which eases influence) is that somebody believes what he wants to believe, more easily . Young people can be attracted by the representation of Loneliness as an ordeal, which is overcome thanks to luck or personal force . Konrad Lorenz has written that, fortunately, music, having not an accurate sense, cannot be an object of « militant enthusiasm » . Of course, but it is not the case of songs, of singers who are filmed, or songs which are listened while images are displayed .

4 CONCLUSION .

Music and the City have been narrowly linked for centuries . Today, obviously, less people listen to music (or play and listen to it), gathering in places, should they be private or public spaces . It is ambiguous . People are used to listen to music which is performed in a better way, thanks to technology . However there are consequences on the musical tastes .

The links between Music and the City were never « simple » , even at the time of the Court . There were quarrels and debates . Later, when the newspapers appeared, critics published articles which were often of an excellent quality . At the end of the 19 th century, not only the « serious music » was at a good aesthetic standard, but also the « frivolous music » was at its peak (the Offenbach ' s operettas) . The musical activity in the City was vivid . What happened ? The change was triggered by technology and mass consumption during the 20 th century . The old mediations have almost disappeared . Instead, there are the « signals from the market » . The problem stems from the fact that cultural products are not goods as the other . They require efficient mediations to allow an evolution of the tastes of the public, young artists who are original and talented inventing and diffusing new aesthetic forms . Today young composers choosing the avant-garde music earn very little money . According to Adorno musicians (composers and performers) often do not use their full own expertise . There are stars, in music, and often they prefer to highlight an original aspect of their talent, what they carry out very well, even if the standard of the music performed is lower . The tastes of the listeners are at a standard which is not very low, but is mediocre, and is stagnant .

There are still « expert listeners » (or good listeners) who listen to music in concert halls . They can obtain to listen to the music they like, without the inevitable tricks used when music is recorded . An opportunity for « expert listeners » and « good listeners » is the festivals . Those liking a particular kind of music can listen to it, each year, thanks to festivals . It is also the opportunity to enjoy a nice setting, to make a trip as a tourist in the surroundings etc ... For big cities which are not world cities, music performed in concert halls and during festivals is an interesting opportunity .

Otherwise are performed in the City operas (only in the big cities) and « musical kitsch » (ballets, shows ...) . During urban scenographies (if sound is used) the tastes of the public are tested (but it concerns « entertainment music ») .

Music on line will strengthen the choice of listening to music alone, or at home, but it was initiated before by record players, then CD players and DVD players . Expert listeners or even professionals could benefit from music on line, as it is cheap and practical . One can imagine a radio chain on Internet dedicated to avant-garde music . It would be a support given to young composers choosing it .

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