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Folklore images in music education

Summary

This paper explores the phenomena of images as a foundation of experience. The focus is on music images as spontaneous activity of the unconscious in momentary conscious situations relating to music. A new perspective is given on folklore images as music forms of ancestral complexes and their manifestations through music categories of time and space. The implications of folklore images for music education, particularly for personal development and realisation of education potential, is explored and followed by an initial mapping of further systemic research.

Keywords: music images, unconscious, ancestral, folklore, education

Images

Contemporary research in analytical psychology and infant development demonstrates that human experience and perception are founded upon images. Images represent spontaneous activity of the unconscious in momentary conscious situations (Jung, CW 6: para 745). Images are our most authentic and immediate experience in reaction to a stimulus. They are unconscious facts. Images are a foundation for experience and comprehension. Expressed in a symbolic form, they contain the meaning both of the stimuli and of our experience. Image opens the way to what lies beyond it, toward what it symbolises (Corbin, 1983).

Jung states that 'the interpretation of its meaning can start neither from the conscious alone nor from the unconscious, but only from their reciprocal relationship' (Jung, CW 6: para 745). Images are psychically compelling (emotion, affect) and stir the beholder to realise what she perceives, i.e. to make it conscious.

Due to the fact that the origin of the images is in the objective psyche, and carry a more or less compelling libidinal charge, they have the power to engage individuals with universal meaning and initiate the process of personalization which can result in a unique expression and new consciousness. Taking into consideration that *the image is a condensed expression of the psychic situation as a whole* (Jung, CW 6: para 745), the nature of image is psychosomatic, thus involving our body and affect (coenesthetic mode). Each image is endowed with generative power; its purpose is to arouse (Samuels, 1986: 73) – in order to compel an individual to engage with the image, embody it and express it in one's unique way and thus participate in the energy transformation process which gives birth to new consciousness.

When the conscious mind participates actively ... or at least understands it intuitively, then the next image ... always starts off on a higher level that has been won and purposiveness develops. (Jung, CW 7: para 386).

Infant research shows how this immediate mode of perception and experience is the prime mode of being for infants, explaining how, adapting to impacts from the environment, it is modeled into an unconscious pattern of perceiving and experiencing throughout the life cycle.

Images from infant research and analytical psychology perspectives

Images are presented through the infant development concepts of the coenesthetic mode and representations of interactions that have been generalized (RIGs). They reveal the essential music nature of images.

1) Coenesthetic mode (Spitz, 1965) describes the non-verbal liminal realm of the infant and the environment (the mother/caregiver – infant dyad). It sheds a special light on deep psychosomatic experience in terms of 'totalities'. Basing most of his conclusions on empirical infant research, René Spitz provides insight into the nature of this early experience of the interactional world. 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' (Spitz, 1965: 134). It signifies the affective interchange between the infant and his caregiver and operates both on 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. 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. 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 (2005) 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. (Piha, 2005: 34–35).

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 immeasurable number of simultaneous, different, overlapping, and interpenetrating subspaces ... Speech and music are attempts to bind these spaces into one and the same comprehensible picture, into integrated connection with one another' (Piha, 2005: 38). 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.

2) Representations of Interactions that have been Generalised (RIGs). These 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" (Stern, 1985), 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. (Stern, 1985: 95).

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 (Stern, 1985: 97). 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* (Stern, 1985: 102) is present all the time, and both infants and adults 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. Given the coenesthetic nature of RIGs, we actually relate and experience through coenesthetic sensors in relation to *the other*, or to the underlying dynamics of an event. It involves the reactions and expectations of the evoked other – our historical way of reacting to stimuli, based on average experience or expectation (RIGs), and our present self.

Evoked other, or our historical self, from the perspective of Analytical psychology is rooted in the ancestral, cultural and collective layers of the unconscious. Biographical RIGs are therefore modeled or predisposed by the patterns of libidinal movement from these deeper layers which manifest to consciousness as images. Therefore, each image contains ancestral and collective unconscious patterns of its origin. It is in these layers where the individual is connected to the ancestral, cultural and collective depository of life (see *archetypes*: Jung, CW 8).

Music images

Meta-analysis of libidinal and music flow informs us about common underlying organizing principles which rule the dynamics of both our psychological and music experience (O'Brien, 2021). Psychic life is comprised of movement (Jung, CW 8). It is a movement of multi-dimensional categories, or layers of libidinal energy modelling different tensions, textures, temporal and special structures,

plans, intrinsically operating as a dramaturgy of the music flow. Jung expresses the dynamism of the psyche in terms of the thermodynamic laws (principles of entropy and equivalence), emphasizing the constellation of opposites as a generation of movement. *The opposites are the ineradicable and indispensable preconditions of all psychic life* (Jung, CW 14: para 206). 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. The dynamism of the flow is regulated by the universal organizing principles (from the deepest layer of the unconscious – collective unconscious), and then more specifically modelled through the ancestral and cultural unconscious, manifesting through RIGs in the most accessible – individual unconscious. RIGs thus provide the insight into the underlying biographical patterns of our fundamental libidinal choreography, the ways in which we are moved / the ways we move. The resonance to this movement, whether from within (emotion/*emovere*) or with regards to the environment, determines our experience of life, both inner and outer. The essential nature of resonance is best comprehended through music flow phenomena and evoked and mastered through music experience. Given the coenesthetic nature of RIGs, the resonance could be conceptualized as coenesthetic 'listening' (O'Brien, 2019) to the movement of *the other*, or to the underlying dynamics of an event. Our total being acts as a receptor of the coenesthetic music/libidinal flow of *the other*, where all the layers of our evoked, historical self are activated, together with our present self. We are inside the many planes and layers of a 'music score', experiencing it and expecting it both from our self as we consciously know it and with the participation of all our evoked others. The essential music nature of images could explain the wide spectrum of music impact to body and psyche which has been a focus of research of so many diverse scientific disciplines for more than a century. In order to understand and use the unique developmental impact of music in the framework of music education, focus is now directed to *music images*.

As stated, music images are spontaneous activity of the unconscious in momentary conscious situations in relation to music. They are symbolic forms of our deepest experience of music containing our evoked and present self. The evoked or historical reactions contain the underlying dynamics of cultural, ancestral and collective experience, informing us about the activated 'music DNA'. They are presented to consciousness as 'totalities', in coenesthetic mode, involving body and psyche. Music images can be conceptualized in different categories, in relation to historical and present self, according to Jung's structure of psyche (CW 8): individual/biographical music images, cultural, ancestral and collective. An illustrative explanatory example (via the analogy principle) would be a music formal type: on the collective unconscious level, it would be an empty formula (*facultatis praeformandis*) of movement (music flow), taking its more specific form in a certain historical style in a given culture and finally delivered by a particular com-

poser in a specific music piece in relation to the environment (a contemporary composer's school, culture and a collective *zeitgeist*).

Music folklore images

Music folklore/ancestral images are of particular interest due to the fact that they connect the deepest layers of the unconscious (where universal patterns of experience reside) with the individual, biographical layer which is more accessible to consciousness. As with heredity, analytical psychology studies the constellated ancestral *complexes* (energy clusters or values relevant for development, see Jung, CW 8) in terms of ancestral psychological genes which are activated in relation to psychological development (Castleman, 2004). These complexes predispose automatic unconscious reactions, expectations, evaluations, choices, decision making and behavior. Music folklore images are forms of our inner experience of music stimuli based on ancestral complexes. They inform us of activated patterns of the ancestral flow which affects our music experience. Music folklore images are composed of particular organizing patterns of music flow permeating all space and time categories (such as rhythm, melody, harmony, see О'Брајен, 2019б), physiological patterns of expression (nasal or percussion sound quality, for ex., see O'Brien, 2018). They connote underlying ritual context which is equivalent to the landmarks of the psychological maturation process (Jung, CW 9i). Psychological complexes are expressed musically as *intensities* (Jung, CW 8) recognisable in music space and time categories. These include: ordered flow of intensities with their composite charges (accentuation) as rhythm (O'Brien, 2021; Crossley-Holland, 2020); linear pitch sequencing as melody; vertical relations as harmony; and underlining meaningful relations based on the principle of equivalence. Furthermore, these music categories are tokens of the patterned choreography of tensions within the libidinal/music dynamics implying the automatic underlying expectations of experience, based on activated ancestral complexes. Therefore, music folklore images are a specific category of music flow organised by the principle of ancestral dynamics – specific a/symmetrical relations of music space and time categories which predispose our music experience. They are a musical evoked other from the ancestral layer of the unconscious, who also participate in the resonance process and affect our experience of music and life in general.

Implications for music education

Using the principle of analogy, implications for music education can be illustrated through a real life example which was reported to the author in her role of the adviser to the board of a charity supporting Roma children. The children had their first tour abroad performing their musical in Quebec (GRUBB, 2014). The young performers, all with very deprived backgrounds, were supported by world leading

artists to express their deep identities through music and it was their first trip abroad (cross continents) performing a musical which they had created. For many, it was a first experience of venturing outside their immediate local Roma community, let alone boarding a plane and staying in a hotel. As they were walking to the theatre in Quebec, one of the Roma boys, 8 year old, stopped in front of shop, staring for a full ten minutes into the window. Prompted by his peers and teachers to move along with them, he kept asking to come back to the shop because, he reported had seen something strangely familiar which had somehow spoken to him. It was a totem of the Quebec Native Americans. Psychoanalytically, the boy's psyche had been touched by the collective depository of human experience (the archetypal layer of the psyche) through an ancestral symbol. Thereby, new psychic value had been constellated, ready to be gradually integrated into his consciousness. The inner symbol had been projected onto the object in the outer world. The meaning of this psychic value was encapsulated in the symbolic image of the totem. From the psychoanalytic perspective, the image signified the goal of the boy's developmental cycle, encoded in its symbolic meaning. It was an image from a distant culture. In the psyche, that which is 'geographically far' is considered to be 'spiritually near'. Folklore images work in this way. They are rooted in the collective unconscious, the realm of universal human experience. Communicating through specific ancestral modes, they have the potential to connect personal experience to the deeper layers of the psyche i.e. to the collective cultural and global layers.

The deepest layer of genuine cultural identity is communicated through folklore music images (O'Brien, 2019c). To the extent that an experience of a particular music image stimulates an internal response (such as 'liking' or 'disliking'), it implies potential developmental significance. In the context of music education, it signifies the concept of relevant learning on a deep level. Not only does it suggest further exploration of the meaning and purpose of the folklore image for an individual and/or group, but it also secures the long-term memory. Information which is followed by an emotional reaction is stored in a long-term memory (McGaugh et al., 1996) and thereby becomes personalized knowledge of an individual. Furthermore, it implies a constellated energy from the pool of traditional (ancestral) heritage which is relevant for the present *Zeitgeist*, the mode through which the traditional content actually flows and thus presents a *living symbol* (CW 9i, para. 291). It is alive, living knowledge, *corpus et anima* (ibid.).

Music education curricula usually contain examples from both national music folklore and from other parts of the world. Through the deep experience of these examples, different facets of the deep cultural identity turn into 'excited' state, i.e. an individual connects internally with the relevant aspects of their own culture and tradition which are actually relevant to his individuation process. By becoming more oneself, the capacity to actually belong in a community and connect to others increases (Jung, CW 9i). Furthermore, experiencing the music folk-

lore of different cultures increases openness to the world and its archetypal potential. Through music transfer (Ivanović, 2007), these potentials then empower learning in non-musical subjects and the development of general competencies for life.

Music folklore images take a wide spectrum of forms. These include: an explicit music reaction such as an automatic bodily movement and accompanied with a sense of 'agreeableness' or 'disagreeableness', a visual experience, an evoked memory, or simply a positive or negative emotion (internal symbol) which might then be translated into a narrative. In order for narratives to mirror the evoked aspects carrying potential for development, the narratives should resonate with the images and to the extent possible, become their rational mirrors. Hence comes the well known rule in music education: *from sound to theory* (Ivanović, 2007). This stands in opposition to the imposition of narrative onto deep individual experience, which has the consequence of repression and the potential annihilation of the genuine aspects of self.

The curriculum comprises both music theory and music experience articulated through educational standards: knowledge and understanding, apperception, performance and creation (Ivanović et al., 2010). The implications of deeper understanding of music folklore images within the framework of music education can be conceptualized through these standards (e.g. in the diagnostics and selection of optimal teaching methods which resonate with the constellated dynamics of the group and the individual students at present). It can deepen understanding of students' reactions and preferences, as well illuminating background reasons for resistances or relative disabilities in performance. Thus tailor-made method and approaches can be designed to help students to develop their competencies. Furthermore, understanding music folklore images in this way can inform about student-centered selections of the music material suggested by the curriculum so that it resonates with particular groups at a given moments in time.

A further intrinsic aspect of music folklore images is their ritual background. The purpose of rites and rituals is to consolidate consciousness (Jung, CW 9i, para.47).

The rite as a symbolic act, giving expression to the archetypal expectation of the unconscious ... This is a natural fact demanding recognition, a question wanting an answer ... Rites give satisfaction to the collective and numinous aspects of the moment, beyond their purely personal significance (Jung, 1973: 208).

Rituals express the archetypal necessity of engaging with the multidimensional movement of life, past, present, future, individual, group, collective. The purpose of the ritual performance is 'to re-establish man's connection with his natural ancestry and thus with the source of life' (Jung, CW 12, para. 105). Each phase and significant event of the process of maturation and development is a

landmark of the libidinal flow (equivalent to music syntactic and semantic dramaturgy) which requires conscious participation and acknowledgement. Therefore, engaging with the ritualistic background of constellated music folklore images through the categories of all four educational standards (thus both through experience – apperception, performance and creating and theory – knowledge and understanding) provides the optimal space for facilitating this development and the realisation of the natural potential of the group and of individuals. Given that *playing* is an inseparable component of a ritual (O'Brien, 2021b), it also highlights this necessary ingredient of every teaching method which then makes an act of (music) education an act of artistic performance, *par excellence*.

In order to use the developmental and educational potential of folklore music images in the context of music education, the methodic approach would be analogous to Analytical psychology dream work.

1. Documenting music experience (Honoring the 'dream')

Providing the musical experience of the music folklore piece:

- Facilitating the students' narrative *in statu nascendi* (expressing their music experience without interpretation, staying close to the facts of the experience, focusing on images);
- Engaging in partnership with students in further exploration of the facets expressed in their original reactions to and experience of the piece, with emphasis on the documentation of the *images* (their internal emotional reactions, somatic happenings, and external images which the experience stimulated).

2. Working with folklore music images:

- Giving form to images produced as a result of the experience of folklore music (expressing them through the gradient / medium, most genuine and faithful to the original image of the music experience, i.e. bodily movement, music expression of different types, in a context which comes from students' imagination);
- Performing the piece.

3. Interpretation of images:

- Introducing the anthropological / historical context of the original folklore piece and looking into the musical expression of the context;
- Comparing it to the students' created forms based on their images;
- Discussing with students their findings (if the process is genuine there will be a meaningful relation between the two which would be encoded and based on the principle of equivalence).

It is in this liminal space where personal, group, cultural and collective meaning presents itself. The living symbol unites the universal and the personal through ancestral music images.

Further research

Systemic multidisciplinary research of the role of music folklore images in development and music education should be conducted in the following areas:

- Meta-analysis of music and libidinal flow with special focus on the ancestral complexes and their manifestation through music space and time categories;
- How do music folklore images predispose music experience with special focus on different aspects of the music flow dynamics (i.e. rhythmical, melodic patterns, tensions, etc.);
- Interpretation of music folklore images constellated for a certain group and individuals in relation to design of optimal teaching methods;
- Interpretation of music folklore images in relation to educational, psychoanalytic, sociological, anthropological research;
- Teleological dimension of music folklore images in relation to individual, group, cultural development and *zeitgeist*.

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ФОЛКЛОРНЕ ПРЕДСТАВЕ У МУЗИЧКОМ ОБРАЗОВАЊУ

Овај рад посматра феномен психолошких представа као основу искуства из перспективе аналитичке психологије. У контексту музичког образовања, проучава представе као спонтану активност несвесног у датој музичкој ситуацији. Поседна пажња усмерена је на фолклорне музичке представе као форме анцестралног комплекса и на њихову манифестацију у просторно-временским музичким категоријама. Развојни и образовни потенцијал фолклорних представа је посебно разматран у контексту улоге и значаја које имају у оквиру музичког образовања. С тим у вези је артикулисана и иницијална мапа области за будућа истраживања.

Кључне речи: музичке представе, несвесно, фолклор, развој, образовање