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## Orff-Schulwerk as Anthropology of Music

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### ***ABSTRACT***

In the last decades Ethnomusicology – or better, Anthropology of Music – has gone beyond the mere study of the musical products of other cultures. It investigates the whole of the interactions among the psychological, social and cultural factors that are at the base of any process of music production and reception. The question to be answered is: *how musical is man?* (John Blacking). For this purpose we have to take into account not only the music itself, but also the many different conceptions, uses, behaviours and functions regarding a music within its cultural context (Alan P. Merriam).

It is possible to establish an analogy between this wide, anthropological approach to the human being as a music maker and the pedagogical concept of the Orff-Schulwerk.

There are two kinds of consideration to be made:

1) We consider the process of teaching music in the first place as a way of bringing someone to enjoy and produce music. In the Orff-Schulwerk tradition we use many procedures that are common to those found by ethnomusicologists in many musical cultures of the world, such as oral learning, improvising, integrating music with movement and other arts, etc. The Orff-Schulwerk explicitly promotes the creative use of musical materials coming from one's own and other cultures; as a matter of fact, ever since its early beginnings in the 1920s it has been conspicuously inter-cultural.

2) Our focus is not only on the musical product: while teaching we need to take into consideration all the human – cognitive, physical, emotional, social, cultural, therapeutic – factors connected with the enjoyment of music. In this sense we say that the Orff approach is holistic, i.e. it addresses the whole person.

Anthropology means "the study of man": to say "Orff-Schulwerk as Anthropology of Music" means to say that we not only aim to develop the musicianship of our students, but also that we use music in order to enhance their personality and humanity.

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## Orff-Schulwerk as Anthropology of Music

### INTRODUCTION

*My starting question: if an anthropologist of music came in while I'm teaching children, what would he see? What observation grid would he use? What kind of "musical tribe" are we? What (musical) culture do I want to build in the classroom with my groups? What kind of musical person / adult / child do I have in mind?*

In 1973 John Blacking declared that ethnomusicology would be able to *provoke a revolution in the world of music and music education, if only it developed thoroughly the implications of its findings and became a method, and not only a field, of studies.*<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays ethnomusicology doesn't restrict itself to researching into specific musics, but widens its investigation to the analysis of the cultural, social, behavioral and psychological aspects of music making. Its reflection is centred on *how musical man is*, its perspective is anthropological, i.e. it takes into consideration all the factors that characterize human musicality, well beyond the mere musicological aspects. Ethnomusicology - and even more anthropology of music - both consider the various forms of human musicality in a wide perspective that can be useful to redefine the goals, the contents and the procedures of music education.

The area of music education I'm specifically referring to in this article is the Orff-Schulwerk approach, one of the main trends of basic music education, acknowledged at least since the '50s at an international level as an active and creative approach to music making. The principal traits of this pedagogical concept are the unity of music-movement-speech, the use of percussion and Orff instruments, the total (bodily, cognitive, emotional-affective) involvement of each person, the learning within and through the group. The Orff-Schulwerk methodology, because of its historical origins and constitutive structure, is very near to a concept of music and music education inspired by anthropology of music. In its pedagogical reflections and in the teaching practice the Orff-Schulwerk approach realizes some of the fundamental requirements of anthropology of music. I will present here, therefore, a reading of Orff-Schulwerk based on the coordinates of music-anthropological research, taking as a reference the model elaborated by Alan P. Merriam.

The perspective of ethnomusicology, indeed, pays attention to both *texts* and *contexts* and enables us to grasp the richness of this approach not only for its contents, but also for its processes and concepts. It is exactly this multi-dimensionality of the anthropological perspective on what happens in the learning community that allows us to appreciate all the constituent factors of the musical experience in the Schulwerk.

## 1. Anthropology of Music and Music Education

### **COMPARATIVE MUSICOLOGY, ETHNOMUSICOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY OF MUSIC: HISTORICAL EVOLUTION, FIELDS OF RESEARCH AND GOALS**

*Comparative musicology* started in Germany at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century with a group of researchers – the so-called School of Berlin: Curt Sachs, Erich von Hornbostel and others. Transposing on to culture Darwin's ideas about evolution, they conceived music in its various

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<sup>1</sup> Blacking: 1986, 28

cultural forms as the result of a long development whose peak was European music. The so-called *primitive musics* were to be considered as primordial states of a process that western societies had gone through: they could provide important information about the origins of music. The goal of the comparison between the different musical styles was to identify their distinctive traits and ultimately to grasp the *universalia* that are the foundation of the plurality of musical expressions in the world. The *vergleichende Musikwissenschaft* represented a strongly innovative approach that contributed to give dignity to "primitive music", to sustain the existence of universal structures in music, to propose new methodological procedures of description and analysis and to provide a first systematic classification of music instruments.

After 1950 the discipline was redefined as *ethnomusicology* (Jaap Kunst) and specified its contents and goals: the focus moved on to the ethnological aspects and to the direct investigation through field-research of many music cultures not yet observed. The objects of study in ethnomusicology are all broadly non-European cultures, European folk and popular music as well as all musical features of contemporary western societies, including classical music.

Beginning from the 1960s the approach of *anthropology of music* gained more and more importance. This approach assumes a high value for our subject because of its possible contributions to music education and to the training of teachers. In particular, the meaningful contribution of Alan P. Merriam (1964) has opened a new phase of ethnomusicological studies and has brought the attention, beyond musical systems, to music conceived as a cultural and human experience. Taking into account all these factors Merriam proposes a research model articulated on three analytical levels: the *concepts* (definition, origin, talent) associated with music, the *behaviours* (physical, verbal and social, as well as all forms of music learning), the *sound* (the musical system and the musical products). Beside the *usages* – the customs, the places, times and social rituals in which music is present – the investigation of the *functions* of music clarifies the reasons for the use of music in different contexts and the general goals it seeks to realize, explicitly or not: for example, expression of emotions, aesthetic pleasure, communication, physical responses, support of social institutions, social integration. The analytical model elaborated by Merriam is particularly important because it opens an integrated perspective on the various factors that transverse various societies, identifying music not only as product, but globally as culture.

## **AN INTERCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON MUSIC AND MUSIC EDUCATION**

Ethnomusicology resolutely affirms today that music is *not* a universal language. A certain piece of music or a specific music usage within a cultural context arouses in a person a net of meanings and experiences that can be very different from those of another person not belonging to that context. In spite of that, the semantic ambiguity of music makes it possible to stimulate the aesthetical and emotional sensitivity of different individuals and thus to activate some processes of sense-construction. Music is a possible *bridge between peoples*.<sup>2</sup> In comparison with linguistic barriers that deepen the separation, music as a form of non-verbal communication represents one of the most immediate and feasible channels to get, somehow, in contact. Though within some limits, music joins people. If the musical structures present only partially some elements of universality, then the unifying traits – the *universalia* – must be sought not only on a musicological level, but also on the anthropological level of conceptions, functions, motivations, behaviours and on the psychological level of the motor, cognitive and emotional processes implied in the music making.

The debate on interculturality in music education begins in the mid 1970s in the United States and soon after in the main European countries. A rich production of publications marks the change of perspective: there emerge new possibilities of exploring new repertoires and genres and of exploiting the potential of music in the dialogue among cultures. The contribution that ethnomusicology – or better, anthropology of music – offers to music education is manifold: it can

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<sup>2</sup> Adamo: 2001, 23.

put at teachers' disposal the knowledge of the musical forms and behaviours of mankind; it can raise the awareness of the anthropological aspects of music; it can open new pathways for a renewal and further development of teaching.

In order to describe a possible model of intercultural music education through the operative strategies to be used in teaching, we may define the following principles:

- to use music coming from a plurality of cultures, listening to, imitating or re-inventing the materials, with the goal of understanding their constructive logic and to widen the musical horizon of students;
- to use forms of music transmission and communication drawn from other cultures: oracy, improvisation, association of music, movement and other expressive media, etc.;
- to promote the development of individual and collective musical identities, viewing both the acquisition of specific *know-how* and the encounter between a music and a person with his/her motivation, interests and learning styles.

Let's consider now how the music-pedagogical concept of Orff-Schulwerk, in its historical development and present spread all over the world, embodies many of the theoretical and methodological issues hitherto presented, assuming the role of an intercultural and anthropologically founded approach to music education.

## 2. Orff-Schulwerk - Elemental Music and Dance Education: a reading in the perspective of Anthropology of Music

### **OPENNESS OF ORFF-SCHULWERK**

The theoretical foundations – music-historical, cultural-anthropological, psychological, pedagogical, didactic-methodological – of the Schulwerk were not built as a conscious construction by Carl Orff. The "theory" or "theories" of Orff-Schulwerk are, instead, the result of many contributions of different artists, pedagogues and teachers who have worked in the course of time on a fertile idea, initiated by Orff. *Orff-Schulwerk was created by an artist who was also an intuitive teacher of genius, but not an educational theorist nor an expert on method. Because it was never conceived as a curriculum for a particular standard or age group, it is a model that has stood the test of time, but also remains open.*<sup>3</sup> The vitality of the Schulwerk lies in the possibility to evolve and change over the decades, maintaining a constant reference to the anthropological roots of human musicality.

This constitutive openness allows different interpretations in different cultures, but makes it difficult to give a precise definition of Orff-Schulwerk. It is not a method in strict terms, but rather a methodological approach with a series of basic principles and criteria to be realized in many possible forms. There are no "sacred writings" or "manuals", but only texts to be taken as a possible orientation. There are no "works" to be imitated or performed, but only models to be paraphrased. And there is no "supreme leader" that has rigorously defined the subject in all its details: ... *the term "Orff's theories" can only refer to the openness of the approach. In a speech in 1963 Orff said: "Every phase of Schulwerk will always provide stimulation for new independent growth; therefore it is never concluded or settled, but always developing, always growing, always flowing".*<sup>4</sup> Orff-Schulwerk is today the uncompleted totality of contributions by many educators all over the world. It is a work in progress, a dynamic and diversified net of experiences sustained by a common idea.

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<sup>3</sup> Haselbach: 1993, 10

<sup>4</sup> Regner: 1993, 12. The quotation is in Orff: 1964

## **AN OBSERVATION GRID FROM ANTHROPOLOGY OF MUSIC**

Every learning group can be considered as a cultural group and therefore can be observed from an anthropological perspective. The teacher himself can be considered as an anthropologist / ethnologist who tries to understand, get in contact and interact with the community of people he has in front of him.

Based on this assumption I want to make an analysis of the music of an "Orff-Schulwerk cultural group" from an anthropological point of view, that can grasp its richness of meanings, from those strictly musical (the *text*) to those more broadly cultural (the *context*). In other terms, I want to point out the underlying concepts, the human experience and the different behavioural forms of this "tribe". These aspects are presented here following the guidelines of Merriam's research model.<sup>5</sup>

The levels of the analysis are:

- usages: contexts and actors (who what how when where);
- concepts: the vision of man / child; talent and musical competence; the concept of music; elemental music;
- sound / product: forms and types of "Orff-Schulwerk products"; limits and criterions of intercultural applications;
- behaviours: different learning forms, relationship between oracy and notation; play and music; interaction within the group; improvisation and creativity, integrations of different expressive media;
- psychological processes;
- functions of music: social, cultural, anthropological meanings of music making;
- the teacher as an active agent of culture.

## **USAGES**

The Orff-Schulwerk concept can be realized in different contexts, with different target groups and ages, in schools or in music schools, in social pedagogy, in therapy, in the arts.

## **CONCEPTS**

### **The vision of man**

It is essential to define the theoretical principles, the paradigms, the vision of man (of children, of disabled people) that constitute the basis of the pedagogical concept of the Schulwerk.

In extreme synthesis it can be affirmed that from a pedagogical point of view the Orff-Schulwerk lies on the line that goes from Pestalozzi to Froebel to the New Schools and the whole active pedagogy of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup>

Within psychology the roots of the Schulwerk can be traced back to Gestaltpsychology (Köhler, Lewin, Perls' and Goodman's Gestalttherapie, Burow's and Petzold's Gestaltpädagogik, Cohn's Themenzentrierte Interaktion), to humanistic Psychology (with the contributions of Maslow, Rogers and the pedagogic filiation of Thomas Gordon). Other important references have been, in recent times, H.Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and Csikszentmihalyi's theory of *flow*.

The most relevant principles of the vision of the human being in the Schulwerk can be so formulated:

- *The human being is more than the sum of its parts.* Every person has to be considered as an indissoluble unity of body, spirit and mind. The Orff-Schulwerk approach to music education can be defined as holistic<sup>7</sup>, in that it takes into account the whole person and her anthropological dimensions.
- *Man is an eminently social being.* He lives and grows through interpersonal relationships.

<sup>5</sup> Merriam: 1983, 50

<sup>6</sup> Ulrike Jungmair (1992) offers rich information about this development.

<sup>7</sup> This is a possible way to translate the German term *ganzheitlich*. As synonyms we may also use the words *total* or *integral*. The notion of *Ganzheitlichkeit* derives from the area of *Gestaltpsychologie*.

- *Man is conscious of him/herself.* In the centre of any learning process is the unique, subjective experience, the growth of each individual as a construction of meaningful knowledge, the positive fulfillment of the self. Each human being is free – at least to a determined extent – to decide for herself, to choose among alternatives and to change. Every man is free and responsible.
- *Man is creative.* Every person is able to discover and develop their own creative potential. Creativity is to be understood as the ability to work out one's own experiences and thoughts in new and significant forms.

### Talent and musical skills

Music belongs to everyone. Each person can express him/herself through music and dance at their own level. Through a suitable differentiation of the teacher's instructions each member of the group can be fruitfully integrated. The learning process is planned according to the skills, motivations and needs of the individuals.

### The concept of music: Elemental Music

The Orff-Schulwerk is characterized by an extraordinary breadth of vision about what can be thought of as "music". With regard to the product the possible references are manifold: not *one music*, but *all musics*. Furthermore, music is not only a sound object, but especially a lived experience, an encounter with other people, a whole set of behaviours, a means for promoting the person within the group: music must also be seen as culture.

One of the basic ideas of the Orff-Schulwerk approach is that of "elemental music": *when Carl Orff talked about the "idea of the Schulwerk" he meant "the elemental".*<sup>8</sup> Orff borrowed the concept of "primitive music" - with an undoubtedly positive connotation - from the comparative musicology of his time, essentially from Richard Wallaschek and Curt Sachs, and he subsequently replaced it with the term "elemental". According to Orff the sources of primitive/elemental music are to be found in the extra-European musical tradition, in the European popular and folk music, as well as in the music of children and in the expressive and creative potential of each person. The interest in the so-called *other musics* and, therefore, the principle of searching what is new and what goes beyond one's own referential background are deeply rooted in the Orff-Schulwerk since its origins. The character of intrinsic openness and adaptability of this approach have been confirmed by the international diffusion and by the variety of applications experimented with during the years in different countries.

"Elemental" is a blending of different expressive forms experienced in their fundamental phenomena. It is an active process of growth that goes through internalization, elaboration and invention of materials and ideas. Elemental music is the actualization of an original and central musical potential that is in each person, whether child, adult or disabled. Orff's concept, and later the whole Orff-Schulwerk tradition, aims at a kind of music that may be defined as *trans-cultural* or *trans-historical*, because it originates from the immediate musicality of the individuals. *Elemental music is closely connected with movement, dance and speech, arises through improvisation, requires an active participation and is not bound to a specific historical or cultural context. The adjective "elemental" points to an aesthetical practice that is already present in children, can be reactivated any time in willing adults and ultimately refers to intercultural, anthropologically founded constants of human expression.*<sup>9</sup>

With regard to the didactic-methodological approach, therefore, it is not important which music is chosen, but the possibility of building primary experiences through that music. *Elementarisation* (*Elementarisierung*<sup>10</sup>) is the kind of didactic reduction that does not imply "simplification", but much more experimentation, discovery, problem solving. To *elementarise* a certain music involves a

<sup>8</sup> see Regner: 1993, 14

<sup>9</sup> H.Regner, in Kugler: 2002, 285

<sup>10</sup> Jungmair:1992

process of revitalization of the material in open and dynamic situations. The starting point is the activation of the resources, imagination and motivation of students: they have to be enabled to retrace the birth of that music. The concrete experience and the figurative language precede the conceptualization and the use of technical terms. The materials are just a model, an example or an initial spark for active work.

## **SOUND / PRODUCT**

### **Inter- and trans-cultural character of the Orff-Schulwerk approach**

Orff-Schulwerk materials can be divided into a series of categories that can fuse in many different ways:

- Movement: body awareness; games and activities of movement with different goals; folk, ethnic and structured dances; creative movement; body percussion.
- Voice: games and activities for voice education; informal use of the voice: games on timbre, onomatopoeias; spoken voice: rhymes, texts, rap, chants, systems of syllables; singing voice: melodies, songs; voice and movement: sung dances, singing games, informal integrations of voice and movement.
- Instruments: activities for the development of instrumental technique; timbre: sound effects, sonorizations; rhythmic-melodic ostinati; basic tonal structures (drones on modes, fundamental harmonic patterns); instrumental pieces; integrations of movement, voice and instrumental action. The instruments are in first place percussion instruments and Orff instruments (xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels), but also other classical or ethnic instruments or even sound objects.
- Integrated forms of different media: music, dance and figurative arts, stories, elemental theater-music, interdisciplinary connections.

The *elemental instruments*<sup>11</sup> offer numerous advantages: they can be played with relative ease, allow an immediate possibility of musical expression and are, therefore, appropriate for a musical experience in a group.

It is furthermore important to point out that, just as through Orff's incentive to retrace the sources of one's own musical-cultural identity and tradition, so in many countries the Schulwerk has given an important contribution to the investigation of the local folkloric heritage, particularly of children's repertoires. Games, texts, songs and dances have been researched and practised in education. Many materials have been disseminated all over the world through the network of contacts and exchanges at an international level among Orff-Schulwerk educators. The possibility of the intercultural encounter is based on the idea and the experience of the elemental.

Historically, Orff-Schulwerk was born in Germany. Thanks to its openness and to the immediacy of the experience it offers, Orff-Schulwerk has been able to meet other cultures and to find new forms and integrations. Especially because of the accent on creativity – regarding both the students and the teacher – it has always offered spurs for autonomous elaboration, being always in evolution. The task of Orff's collaborators and successors has been to further develop the concept of elemental music and dance education. Each Orff-Schulwerk teacher is free and responsible to realize and adapt this basic idea according to his specific musical, cultural and anthropological context.

### **Limits and criteria of intercultural applications**

Many of the elemental forms and procedures used by Orff at the Günther-Schule and by the following Orff-Schulwerk tradition are similar to pieces and constructive rules typical of many musics of the world. The use of speech, the strong rhythmic component, the oral learning, the movement, the percussion ensemble, the group, the use of generative processes are a series of

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<sup>11</sup> It was the ethnomusicologist Curt Sachs in the 1920s that gave Orff some valuable indications about the association of percussion instruments and dance in many cultures of the world. The elemental instruments are *intercultural* from their very birth.

characteristics that make Orff-Schulwerk a really intercultural music education and an ideal foundation for growing aware of the diverse musical styles on earth. Despite the extreme adaptability shown by this approach in finding new roots in various countries, however, it is important to underline some limits in the possibility of its application to different musical cultures.

The problems concern:

- the reproduction of music coming from other cultures. Though a teacher can strive for a "bi- or poly-musicality" – the skill of speaking two or more musical languages – it is important to know that is difficult to really respect the native expression of a music culture;
- the process of elementarization starting from models of other cultures. The didactic reduction – whatever forms it may assume – should try to maintain the authenticity of the starting materials, trying to consciously filter the essential elements that express the proper sense of the original piece, without any trivial decontextualization;
- the transposition of world musics onto Orff-instruments. Using these instead of native instruments is in the best cases a compromise, that should anyway try to respect the original sound and atmosphere of a music;
- the relationship between language and rhythm in some cultural contexts. Some languages – for example, some Asian tonal languages - are based much more on pitch and melody than on rhythm. The Orff-Schulwerk typical progression from the spoken, accented word to rhythm cannot be generalized everywhere;
- the use of certain techniques of manipulating of music, such as improvisation. "Primitive musics" may require very high skills: some musical procedures that are only apparently free and spontaneous are, indeed, very complex. Not all musics can be elementarized.
- the emotional involvement and expression through the body. In some cultures the demonstration of feelings is not common or even not encouraged. In the same way the body may have different values and meanings in different countries or for different persons;
- the creative and student-centered learning process. The productive aspects of the Schulwerk require an environment that is disciplined, but yet open and permissive. This may be difficult to realize or even be unacceptable in cultures in which the norm is a strongly directive educational style. These two last observations may refer to applications in macrocultures as well in microcontexts – specific social or age groups or even individuals.

In the use of ethnic materials it is the awareness of the teacher that is crucial: depending on the group characteristics and his goals he will decide how to relate to the music and to what extent he will aim at either a philological performance (focusing on the product) or a complete redefinition of the starting ideas (focusing on the process and the experience of the individuals).

## **BEHAVIOURS**

### **Learning processes**

In Orff-Schulwerk activities there are a variety of behavioural forms that embody a holistic concept of music making. The principle of differentiation and contrast is not only applied to the musical elements but also to the processes, to the structure of the activities, to the states of psycho-physical activation and the quality of students' involvement. The forms of activity (*Handlungsformen*) that are employed are extremely varied. Orff-Schulwerk is a particularly flexible and effective approach to music education thanks to the wealth and the balance of different learning forms.

In Orff-Schulwerk learning means transmission/acquisition or also construction of knowledge; learning through the body, the senses and the perceptions or learning of concepts, i.e. mental, reflexive, verbal learning; learning through imitation and reception or intuitive, experimental and productive learning; sequential and programmed learning or learning through discovery and problem solving; learning of specific contents or global, multi-dimensional learning; individual learning or cooperative, group learning; cognitive or psycho-social learning. In any case learning processes intend to be meaningful and intentional.

## Relationships between orality and notation

Like many ethno-cultures Orff-Schulwerk privileges *oral learning*, using various procedures of direct (audio-oral-visual) transmission, imitation and memorization of musical materials. *Orality* concerns, furthermore, the way the musical materials and processes are conceived and treated: improvisation and composition do not imply the use of notation. Music theory, when explicitly used, is directly functional to music practice.

If notation is ever used, Orff-Schulwerk doesn't use only conventional notation, but mostly a variety of preparatory and complementary forms of sound representation/symbolization. Not one notation, then, but many different notations: gestural (the movement as score), verbal (onomatopoeic patterns, words or sentences used as mnemonics, systems of tonal and rhythm syllables, solmisation), graphic notations (representations of musical parameters, various types of representation of durations, pitches and sound structures).

## Play

Learning is playing. The insistence on the central role of play in learning is present since Orff's first articles of the 1930s: *Music education for children does not begin in the music class, but in the play time.*<sup>12</sup> Playing – with movement, with sounds, with forms – is the starting point, the context in which every action takes place. It is the means and the goal of learning.

In the Orff-Schulwerk approach playing takes different forms: in the terms of Delalande (1993) - with reference to Piaget - it is possible to experience music as a *sense-motor play* (the sensorial exploration of music instruments as sounding objects), as *symbolic play* (the representation of or the semantic reference to another non-musical phenomenon, such as the transalation of an image or of the events of a plot into sound), as a *play based on rules* (the organization of sound structures according to a combinatory system, as it happens in bound improvisation or in composition).

## Group interaction

Though Orff-Schulwerk may be applied as a series of criteria also to individual teaching, it is mainly thought of as an educational approach for groups. The forms of social interaction (*Sozialformen*) are manifold and foster the encounter, the exchange and the communication among the individuals: activities with a partner, within a small group, in the big group; processes of imitation in which the individual person is mirrored and confirmed by the group; problem-solving processes in groups that imply making decisions and cooperating with others.

Learning happens not only *within* the group, but especially *through* the group. A context like this, that balances the contribution of each person and the structured action in the group, favours important psychological processes ranging from the polarity of individualization to that of socialization. The whole Orff-Schulwerk tradition emphasizes the acquisition of psycho-social skills and the positive integration of single members within the group.

## Improvisation and creativity

In the Orff-Schulwerk approach learning through imitation/reproduction of models, based on the transmission of information and skills that proceed from the simple to the complex, is preparatory and complementary to learning through creative elaboration and production of ideas, based on the understanding of the syntax of a language and on the re-organization of its elements.

The environment in which creativeness develops is that of the group. Through the creative intervention the encounter with what is different opens to students the possibility to expand their own range of experiences. Working in couples or in small sub-groups has an enormous educational value: knowledge is a social construction, mediated by communicative relationships. The group is the ideal place for building new meanings shared by more individuals who express

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<sup>12</sup> Orff: "Gedanken über Musik mit Kindern und Laien" (1931/32), in Kugler: 2002, 173

and negotiate their own interpretations of the world. The first intercultural encounter happens among the members of the group. Moreover, it is through the enhancement of group creativity that a common culture can be produced.

### **Integration of different expressive forms**

Since its original conception Orff-Schulwerk has used a variety of expressive-communicative forms. Integration of languages means coexistence, interaction, fusion, overlap and harmonization of different media: music, movement and dance, speech (narration and poetry), drama, image... Much Orff-Schulwerk literature, especially American<sup>13</sup>, connects the use of many expressive forms with the development of a plurality of intelligences, referring to Howard Gardner's well known theory of multiple intelligences. Orff-Schulwerk conceives itself as an integrated education of different forms of intelligence: musical, bodily-kinesthetic, visual-spatial, linguistic, intra- and inter-personal, logical-mathematical. The underlying idea, now supported by the scientific investigations of Gardner and other developmental psychologists, is that of the interconnection of mental functions.

The multiplicity of expressive forms and therefore of intelligences offers a wide range of possible social interaction. Orff-Schulwerk is "integrative" not only with regard to the used media, but also with particular reference to the experience of intercultural integration among the group members. The trait of integration – understood in a broad sense – is one of the fundamental issues of Orff-Schulwerk and has a strong pedagogical and therapeutic value.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES**

It would be interesting to give an exhaustive reading of Orff-Schulwerk in terms of psychological processes taking place during the activities. Various themes should be studied in depth: the different types of teaching/learning, the psychomotor, cognitive and emotional-relational aspects, the role of motivation, the possible cognitive styles and strategies, the contribution to the development of personality and the construction of the individual and social identity, the psychodynamic aspects of the educational relationship.

It is important here to stress a basic notion that serves as a theoretical orientation for the Orff-Schulwerk: the concept of *Ganzheitlichkeit*, i.e. holism, derived by the Gestalt and Humanistic psychology. The subject, the whole person, is in the centre of the learning process. The ultimate aim is to contribute to the formation of identity and personality through sensory stimulation (sharpening auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic perception as the base for every further conceptualization), cognitive activation (developing new skills and new nets of mental representations), emotional involvement (promoting a subjectively meaningful learning that is deeply rooted in the needs of each student for growth and self-fulfillment). *Orff-Schulwerk aims to address the whole person so as to stimulate and foster body, soul and mind through a creative process in which experience, action and comprehension condition each other.*<sup>14</sup> Elemental music seeks to be a human experience in the vast meaning of the word.

### **FUNCTIONS**

The functions of music concern the reasons for the use of music in a particular context and the general goals it intends to realize. The functions answer the question: why? What goals does an Orff-Schulwerk teacher adopt for his students?

- To learn to know, perform and invent music of different genres balancing the attention to the product and the experience of the subject. The development of broader cognitive views, of an artistic sensitiveness and aesthetic taste and the development of skills for the realization of

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<sup>13</sup> see also Shamrock: 1985, 35

<sup>14</sup> Haselbach: 1990:191

products perceived as aesthetically valid are certainly one of the principal aims of music education, next to the global growth of the persons.

- To develop an integrated body awareness. The practice of elemental music intends to nurture a "musical body", a body that perceives and moves in diversified ways, that is voice and melody, movement and rhythm, that is dance of hands on the instrument. A body in interaction with other bodies through glance, contact, synchrony. Not an object-body (*Körper*), but a subject-body (*Leib*).
- To foster the growth of musical thought, in its various forms and expressions. The goal is to develop a musical intelligence that can be lively, bright, keen, dynamic, communicative, creative, open, well rooted in perception and oracy, ready to grow towards superior cognitive forms, harmonically integrated with other intelligences.
- To promote the expression of emotions. Music and dance are a powerful means – therapeutic approaches confirm this - to symbolically manifest interior states.
- To foster the musical identity, to develop the personality. Beyond the enhancement of specific musical skills, Orff-Schulwerk aims to express through music one's own world of meanings and values, and through total involvement to develop an harmonic personality.
- To promote the communication, socialization and integration in the group. Orff-Schulwerk stimulates the encounter, synergy, cooperation among group members. Music learning and psycho-social learning proceed next to each other.

## **THE TEACHER**

What type of "anthropologist of music" is the Orff-Schulwerk teacher? What are his skills, knowledge and basic characteristics?

With specific reference to ethnomusicology and to the rich possibilities of educative transpositions that this offers, it is essential that the teacher has a good musical training and a good knowledge of many different musical genres and styles; it is essential that he has an open musical mind. In the present context teachers need a wider musical experience than the one usually prescribed by the euro-centric academic training. If, as ethnomusicology affirms, there is not one music – one universal language - but many musics – a plurality of musical languages, systems and cultures – then a fundamental requisite for teaching is to become polyglot and to have a good orientation in the large horizon of world musics.

In his role, so to say, of an "active anthropologist" of music the teacher should be able to observe the culture of the group, to get in contact with students both at a human and at a musical level, to understand their ideas, perspectives and identities. Above all the teacher should consider himself a facilitator, the creator of a group culture, carrier of conceptions and values, initiator of a social, cultural and human experience through music.

From a psycho-pedagogical point of view the relevant personality traits and skills of the teacher may be synthetically (and not exhaustively) enunciated: the teacher is competent in his subject; has a strong inclination towards learning; is creative, constructive, emotionally ready to experiment new things; takes risks; is communicative at different levels, using different media and adapting his message to the recipient; has good management and leadership skills; is motivated and motivating; knows how to develop an atmosphere of trust with the group and in the group; is empathetic; has an open and functional teaching style; is able to activate growth processes in other people; is in contact with himself and his own emotions; is aware of the psychodynamic aspects of learning and teaching.

## **ORFF-SCHULWERK AS "APPLIED" ANTHROPOLOGY OF MUSIC**

Thanks to its intrinsic dynamic character Orff-Schulwerk has been able to renew itself in coherence with its fundamental principles. Today it represents within the field of music education one of the more vital concepts and methodological approaches, that can widen its own

perspectives and can adapt to changing contexts, keeping a strong connection to its humanistic roots.

Giving a conclusive answer to the question at the beginning of this work, the ethnomusicologist or the music anthropologist that observes the pedagogic idea and the educative practice of Orff-Schulwerk will find

- an essential openness to all musical traditions and cultures as well as the intention to create spaces of sharing through the elemental as a fundamental category;
- the given priority, beyond the specific musical learning, to the intercultural encounter in the group and to the quality of the human experience of all students.

And, on his side, what can Orff-Schulwerk offer to anthropology of music?

It can promote and disseminate in all educational institutions a concept of music and music education that is anthropologically founded; to guide ethnomusicological research in the identification of musical areas that may be interesting for music education; to collaborate in constructing intercultural materials and procedures for different learning contexts; to value and disseminate the knowledge of the cultural heritage of a country and in general of all the music of the whole world.

To say "Orff-Schulwerk as anthropology of music" means to affirm, therefore, the correspondence, analogy and transposability between the ethnomusicological survey of human musicality and the pedagogical approach of Orff-Schulwerk, aimed at developing that same musicality and humanity.

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