TOWARDS AN EARLY EXPERIENCE OF SURREALIST AESTHETIC: RE-THINKING *THE RITE OF SPRING*

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Abstract

This study examines The Rite of Spring as a work that challenges the structural and aesthetic boundaries of modernist music, exploring its potential affinities with surrealist aesthetics through specific formal and rhythmic configurations. Rather than relying on linear historical continuity, the relationship between music and the arts is conceptualized as an aesthetic field shaped by belated and transversal reappearances. The transitional space between The Rite of Spring and surrealist aesthetics is explored through the lenses of psychoanalysis, music-aesthetic theories, and philosophical reflection—not to assert a direct connection, but to investigate the resonant interplay between unconscious processes and musical form. In this context, rhythmic and formal structures are approached as surfaces of aesthetic and psychic tension. Employing the concept of somathemes, the analysis traces how unconscious impulses may be inscribed in rhythmic patterns. Through an interdisciplinary framework, this study proposes an alternative way

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of thinking about musical form and meaning in relation to modernity and its cultural aftermath.

Keywords: Modernity, Psychoanalysis, Dialectics, Aesthetics, Somathemes.

INTRODUCTION

Modernism seeks to question and critique metaphysics, yet it often finds itself compelled to do so by means of metaphysical tools. This paradox reveals the ambivalent structure that modernism simultaneously strives to overcome and—perhaps inadvertently—perpetuates, in an effort to displace it through a radical weakening. The avant-garde movements within modernist art also carry a similar duality: their persistent pursuit of novelty and the unknown aims to challenge and transcend tradition. Yet this very pursuit frequently ends up reproducing the desire for innovation within a confined and predetermined framework.

At this juncture, surrealist art—which both encompasses and seeks to transcend the aesthetics of avant-garde movements—reconsiders modern thought through a critical approach that unfolds across the dimensions of the object, the subject, and society. Surrealism interrogates the structure of reality by staging a disruption, particularly through the object, as a means of engaging with the unconscious. In this context, Gardner explores the transformation of the concept of 'reality' in the modern age and its creative implications—ranging from the epistemological crises introduced by Einstein's theory of relativity, to Freud's account of irrational drives and repressed desires within the human psyche, and further to the radical shifts evident in the works of artists such as T.S. Eliot, Pablo Picasso, and Igor Stravinsky.[1]

From this perspective, Western art and music emerge not merely as vehicles of technical or aesthetic expression but as media that reflect social values, tensions, and transformation processes. In the context of modern Western art music, original stylistic approaches have introduced new dimensions to elements such as tone colour, timbre, tonality, polyphony, and form.[2] In other words, in its confrontation with tradition—marked by formal and structural ruptures—music has positioned itself as a space of internal aesthetic transformation and a site of intensified interaction with other artistic movements. Thus, this modernist musical atmosphere, shaped

1 Howard Gardner, *Creating minds: An anatomy of creativity seen through the lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Ghandi* (New York: Civitas Book, 2011).

2 Beatrice Ramaut-Chevassus, *Müzikte Postmodernlik*, trans. İ. Usmanbaş (İstanbul, Pan Yayıncılık, 2002), 104.

by uncertainty and discontinuity, exerts its effect not only at the level of form but also at the level of consciousness and sensorial experience. In this regard, as with surrealist aesthetics, its engagement with sensory and psychic conflict may be understood within a coherent and meaningful framework.

Within this modernist framework, Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* represents a transition from early Russian musical thought to neoclassicism and the emerging serialist tendencies.[3] Furthermore, *The Rite* has also been associated with Cubist[4] and Fauvist[5] artistic movements. In this context, the musical and choreographic aesthetics of the work can be interpreted as developing in parallel with both the avant-garde movements of the period and the internal aesthetic transformations of Western art music. However, especially when considering the artistic milieu surrounding Stravinsky during his Paris years, it is also possible to read the work through a lens that resonates with the rising surrealist aesthetic of the time. Indeed, through its effort to disrupt collective perceptions of established objects and systems of meaning within a given culture, Surrealism provided an aesthetic framework that brought together these avant-garde movements.[6]

Indeed, in the dynamism of Western efforts to forge social pathways out of crisis, psychoanalysis emerges as a shared ground and catalytic force in the interplay between early modernist movements such as Dadaism and Cubism, and Surrealism itself.[7] Moreover, Surrealism is not confined to its historical moment as a singular artistic practice; as Strom demonstrates in a study focused

3 Pieter C. Van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and the Rite of Spring: The beginnings of a musical language* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: UCP, 1987).

4 Özlem Onuk, "Cubism, Stravinsky and Rite of Spring," *American Journal of Educational Research and Reviews* 2 (2017), 1-10.

5 Pierre Boulez, "Stravinsky Demeure," in *Musique Russe*, vol. 1, ed. P. Souvtchinsky (Paris: Bibliotheque Internationale de Musicologie, 1953), 142-43. My association of Boulez's reading with Fauvist aesthetics is drawn from his characterization of "une sclérose dans tous les domaines: harmonique et mélodique, où l'on aboutit à un académisme truqué, rythmique même, où l'on voit se produire une pénible atrophie."

6 The interpretation offered here—that Surrealism functioned as an aesthetic framework that gathered together avant-garde movements by challenging cultural perceptions—draws on and extends the conceptual scope developed in these works. For similar arguments, see Eric Sellin, "Simultaneity: Driving force of the surrealist aesthetic," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 21 (1975), 10-25; Daniel Robbins, "Abbreviated historiography of cubism," *Art Journal* 47 (1988), 277-283.

7 Nitansha Nema, "Psychology in art: The influence of Freudian theories on surrealist art," *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 4 (2017), 200-215.

on diverse cultural contexts, it constitutes a mode of thought with the potential to evolve in new forms continually.[8] In this regard, its emphasis on psychic automatism has significantly influenced postmodern and contemporary art, while its interrogation of aesthetic fixity has allowed it to maintain critical relevance.[9] Therefore, the relationship between *The Rite of Spring* and Surrealism is not merely chronological, but may be understood as an early rehearsal enacted within a dialectical spatio-temporal field shaped by aesthetic functionality and the capacity for transformation.

Although not traditionally considered together, the association of Surrealism with *The Rite of Spring*—and more broadly with the context of Western art music—may give rise to a number of critical questions. The relationship between Stravinsky's Rite and surrealist aesthetics, especially when examined within the disciplinary confines of music, inevitably prompts a series of reflections. The surrealist movement led by André Breton represents an aesthetic that both synthesizes and surpasses a range of earlier avant-garde traditions (such as Dada, Symbolism, and Futurism). In this sense, Surrealism embodies a character that is at once inclusive and, at the same time, delimiting in accordance with a particular aesthetic consciousness. How, then, might a work like *The Rite of Spring* be meaningfully related to surrealist aesthetics?

One may first be inclined to ask: within the boundaries of Breton's manifestos, to what extent can a temporal and abstract form such as music be legitimately related to Surrealism?

In seeking an answer to this question, it is crucial to acknowledge that Surrealism represents an intellectual and aesthetic rupture far too expansive to be confined to Breton's writings alone. While Breton's inclusive stance toward the avant-garde served an important historical function, the conceptual force of Surrealism—especially in its emphasis on the unconscious, psychic deviations, and the aestheticization of the irrational—extends well beyond its original temporal frame. As such, surrealist aesthetics should not be traced through historically fixed forms, but rather through their structural and affective resonances.

8 Kirsten Strom, ed., *The Routledge companion to Surrealism* (New York & London: Routledge 2023).

9 For similar arguments, see Stephen Westfall, "Surrealist Modes among Contemporary New York Painters," *Art Journal* 45 (1985): 315-318; Artem A. Andreev, "Surreal and futuristic trends in parascientific works," *Vestnik slavianskikh kul'tur* [Bulletin of Slavic Cultures] 62 (2021), 143-151.

A second question may arise: given that modernist music already breaks from tradition by disrupting conventional aesthetic structures, would associating a work with surrealist aesthetics not constitute an arbitrary expansion of meaning?

The answer to this lies in the nature of the aesthetic rupture itself. Not every modernist break entails an aesthetic production directly linked to the unconscious. For instance, while the dodecaphonic system represents a formal and structural innovation, *The Rite of Spring* exemplifies a ritualistic framework that destabilises tonality, introduces rhythmic asymmetry, and, in conjunction with choreography, provokes a shocking aesthetic experience that activates unconscious responses.[10] From this perspective, *The Rite* may be viewed not only as a modernist rupture, but also as generating a psycho-aesthetic field that resonates with surrealist aesthetics. Thus, what is decisive here is not the mere existence of aesthetic rupture, but the specific sensory and psychic effects that such a rupture sets into motion.

Thirdly, because Breton's definition of Surrealism and its aesthetics focuses more on mental processes than formal qualities, it offers a framework whose boundaries are inherently diffuse. In this context, might it not seem ambiguous to interpret a work such as *The Rite of Spring*—with its distinct temporal and contextual aesthetic features—through the lens of surrealist aesthetics? This question points to the fragility of the balance between the definitional clarity and the historical-conceptual flexibility of surrealist aesthetics. Indeed, Breton's definition—particularly in its emphasis on unconscious processes—articulates an aesthetic domain grounded less in specific style or form than in intellectual resonance. However, this does not render the concept arbitrary; rather, it transforms Surrealism into a mode of thought capable of engaging with various disciplines in a contextualised manner. This study aims not to define *The Rite of Spring* as inherently surrealist but to highlight potential resonances between specific structural and affective patterns within the work and the aesthetic logic of surrealist thought. As in previous associations with Cubist or Fauvist aesthetics, this approach is situated within the broader trajectory of *The*

10 see Allen Forte, *The harmonic organization of the Rite of Spring* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1978); Adriano De Matteis & Goffredo Haus, "Formalization of generative structures within Stravinsky's The Rite of Spring," *Journal of New Music Research* 25 (1996), 47-76; Severine Neff, et al., The Rite of Spring at 100 (Bloomington: IUP, 2017).

Rite's transitory relationships with multiple contexts in art history. What is at stake here is not the fixed boundaries of aesthetic categories, but how this work may be positioned within interpretive spaces opened up by contemporary artistic thought.

Finally, it is necessary to address a more philosophical objection:

Adorno argues that aesthetic evaluations of music should be grounded not in the plastic arts or literature's conceptual frameworks but in music's internal aesthetic categories.[11] In this context, would interpreting music through an interdisciplinary concept such as Surrealism contradict Adorno's philosophy of music?

At this point, exposing the methodological tension between the two approaches becomes crucial. Adorno's modernist aesthetic perspective foregrounds the autonomy of music, advocating for a focus on its immanent formal logic, historical development, and structural tensions. His method, known as *immanent critique*, seeks to uncover the meaning of a musical work by analysing its inner structure while illuminating its historical and social dimensions. Yet this very approach reveals a contradiction at the moment it acknowledges music's political effect, while still attempting to derive that effect solely from within musical form. Put differently, music's relationship to the social cannot be fully accounted for through formal analysis alone.

Adorno's comparison between Stravinsky and Schoenberg may be considered a clear example of this contradiction. According to Adorno, the repetitive rhythmic structures and visual/ritual representations in Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* reduce music to an effect-driven, almost plastic form, thereby depriving it of its autonomy and rendering it a regressive tool that dulls the senses.[12] By contrast, Adorno argues that Schoenberg's dissonant and formally challenging music provides an aesthetic space of resistance to the contradictions of modernity—one that confronts the suffering subject and fosters the potential for critical consciousness.[13] In this formulation, even the formal dimension of music is granted aesthetic-political meaning. Yet Adorno's position ultimately be-

11 This problematic is built upon Adorno's essay, see Theodor Adorno, 'Looking back on surrealism,' *Notes to literature vol. 1* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 88.

12 Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music* (New York: Seaburry Press, 1973), 154-5.

13 Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music,* 133; 399.

comes a one-dimensional reading that does not extend beyond the formal. Later sociologists have criticised this inconsistency.[14] Most notably, DeNora contends that Adorno's emphasis on musical autonomy overlooks the social practices and listener experiences that shape music's meaning. For DeNora (2003), musical meaning emerges not only through form, but also through use, perception, and socio-cultural context. [15]

In this light, associating *The Rite of Spring* with surrealist aesthetics should not be seen as a *colonisation of meaning* imposed upon Adorno's method, but rather as a productive opportunity to make visible the limits of that method. Ultimately, the question is not whether music can be related to other disciplines, but on what plane and through which conceptual pathways such a relationship is established. To draw a connection between *The Rite* and surrealist aesthetics is to suggest that the psychic and intuitive effects embedded within its musical structure may find conceptual resonance within surrealist modes of thought. This approach does not deny musical autonomy; on the contrary, it seeks to explore the intellectual resonances that musical immanence may generate in relation to other aesthetic domains.

Numerous examples throughout art history demonstrate that intuitive traces of a movement often surface aesthetically before the movement itself is formally defined. Breton's retrospective embrace of figures such as Lautréamont, Jarry, and Rimbaud as precursors of Surrealism is a prominent example of this retroactive construction of meaning. Yet rather than relying solely on such acts of appropriation, one might consider Aby Warburg's concept of *Nachleben*, which posits an aesthetic memory in which images and gestures reappear not through linear continuity, but in delayed and transversally reactivated forms. In this sense, although *The Rite of Spring* precedes the formal emergence of Surrealism, it may nevertheless be seen as an intuitive carrier of this aesthetic memory.

Within this framework, the relationship between *The Rite of Spring* and surrealist aesthetics is explored not only on the level of Freudian and Jungian theories of the unconscious but also through the critical engagements that modern thought establishes with

14 Adorno, *Looking back on Surrealism*, 88-104.

15 Tia DeNora, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2-3.

knowledge, reality, and the production of meaning. In this regard, surrealist aesthetics is further examined—throughout the following sections of the study—within its contextual and historical links to psychoanalysis, as well as its confrontational relationship with post-Enlightenment critiques of reason and with the dialectical systems rooted in Hegelian and Platonic traditions. Additionally, a conceptual layer is introduced that expands the imaginative and symbolic spaces opened by surrealist thought through the porous relationship between body, mind, and aesthetics within the musical creation process.

Finally, the aesthetic ruptures that emerge in the work's rhythmic construction, melodic ambiguity, and formal tensions are analysed in detail.[16] These interpretive-analytical readings are approached through the conceptual lens of Barthes's notion of *somathemes*,[17] which allows for an exploration of unconscious dimensions embedded in musical structures. Accordingly, the method of this study aims to reveal this multilayered complexity through conceptual analysis and critical, interdisciplinary theoretical inquiry. Ultimately, *The Rite of Spring* is approached not only as a work that challenges the limits of modernist music but also as a singular intellectual space in which perceptions of reality, formations of meaning, and transformations of aesthetic experience intersect with surrealist aesthetics.

INTERSECTIONS WITH PSYCHOANALYSIS

From its very inception, Surrealism has maintained strong connections with psychoanalysis at both theoretical and practical levels. Heavily influenced by Freud's concepts of the unconscious and psychoanalysis, surrealist art fundamentally reflects a desire to explore and express the unconscious processes of the human

16 This article does not include direct excerpts from the score in the analysis section. Instead, it employs a reference system based on the rehearsal numbers used in the 1967 orchestral edition of *The Rite of Spring* published by Boosey & Hawkes, indicated with the letter 'R'. This approach allows for a technically traceable mode of musical analysis. The decision to omit visual excerpts from the score is deliberate, made to foreground the text's theoretical structure and maintain its conceptual cohesion and density.

17 Roland Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, trans. R. Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

mind.[18] Surprenant notes that Freud's theories of dreams and the unconscious began to arouse significant interest within French intellectual circles and the artistic and literary spheres as early as 1907.[19] Surprenant also highlights that from this point onward, a number of important articles and translations of Freud's writings enabled broader public engagement with his ideas.[20] Given the close relationship between Freudian psychoanalysis and the artistic expressions of the surrealists, it is hardly surprising that Breton championed the notion of psychic automatism:[21]

> …believes—and will continue to believe with all his heart—in the artificial repetition of that ideal moment in which, seized suddenly by a force 'greater than himself', man is thrown into immortality by an act of self-defence.

Surrealists may be said to represent a belief in discovering the foundations of a pure civilisation through the exploration of the inner self. Within this framework, the irrational behaviour of the human being is highlighted as a reflection of unconscious imagery, which manifests in works of art in a spontaneous and improvisatory manner. In this sense, Surrealism—especially in literature and painting—gave rise to unconventional works in which artists projected their internal chance findings through automatism. In parallel with this framework, as Malt points out, while Surrealism promotes subjective freedom, it also clearly carries a transformative potential for addressing the realities of social existence.[22] As Adorno observes, Surrealism is not merely a representation of the unconscious, but a means of destabilising and reconfiguring reality through aesthetic and technical devices, producing effects of shock and estrangement:

> In the face of total reification, which throws it back upon itself and its protest, a subject that has become absolute, that has complete control of itself and is free of all consideration of the empirical world, reveals itself to be inanimate, something virtually dead. The dialectical images

18 George Melly, *Paris and the Surrealists* (New York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 1991).

19 Celine Surprenant, "Freud and psychoanalysis," *Marcel Proust in context*, ed. A. Watt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 107–14.

20 Surprenant, "Freud and psychoanalysis." 107.

21 Alfred Breton, *Surrealist Manifestolar*, trans. Y. Kafa, A. Günebakanlı, & A. Güngör (İstanbul: Altıkırkbeş Yayınları, 2009), 103.

22 Johanna Malt, "The surrealist object in theory," *Obscure objects of desire: Surrealism, fetishism, and politics*, ed. J. Malt (Oxford: OUP, 2004), 76-112.

> of Surrealism are images of a dialectic of subjective freedom in a situation of objective unfreedom.[23]

Adorno's interpretation of Surrealism is tied to his understanding of art as both an autonomous object and a vehicle for social critique. In this sense, the notion of a direct expression of the unconscious carries a more complex aesthetic-political tension than is commonly assumed. The surrealist aesthetic, grounded in the ideal of automatism, thus presents a structure that is at once liberatory and inherently contradictory. Ultimately, the framework proposed here for understanding the interaction between Surrealism and psychoanalysis does not aim to situate it solely within a contextual narrative of influence. Instead, it highlights the aesthetic and technical vectors that reflect the broader challenges Western culture faces in a time of transition.

This underlying artistic essence—and its interplay with other domains—inevitably finds expression in Stravinsky's creative process. Through its thematic direction, compositional construction, and Nijinsky's choreography, *The Rite of Spring* renders the past accessible for new affective experience. In this sense, the audience reactions recorded in its early performances in Paris and the United States may also be viewed through this lens. Therefore, the context linking Surrealism and *The Rite* necessitates an inquiry into modes of artistic expression and their embeddedness within social interactions.

Described as a 'Scythian-accented Fauvist work' with strong ties to Russian folklore, *The Rite of Spring* represented a profoundly disorienting force for French audiences accustomed to the aesthetic world of German opera and music—particularly that of Wagner.[24] *The New York Times* article that begins with a quotation from the *Le Figaro* review (June 2, 1913) is replete with striking expressions concerning the Paris performance held on June 7, 1913.

> Since the article by Alfred Capus, irregular scenes have continued to unfold at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, where Russian ballet is being staged. The Rite of Spring was met with a storm of whistles. Yet the director, Monsieur Gabriel Astruc, devised a new strategy to silence the uproar. As happened again the other night, when whistles mingled

23 Adorno, *Looking back on Surrealism*, 88.

24 Lourié, Arthur, and S. W. Pring. "The Russian School," *The Musical Quarterly* 18 (1932): 519-20.

> with applause, Monsieur Astruc ordered the house lights to be turned on. The booing and whistling immediately ceased. Well-known opponents of the ballet were unwilling to take part in a dishonourable role.[25]

Representing prehistoric Russian tribes driven by primal instincts, the ballet was described by Jacques Rivière as a *ballet biologique*.[26] Having recently gained attention in the field of choreography, the young dancer Vaslav Nijinsky—assigned by Diaghilev to choreograph the work—faced harsh criticism from the Parisian audience.[27] In response to the critiques directed at Nijinsky's choreography for the November 1, 1913, performance of *The Rite of Spring*, Rivière offered a compelling perspective grounded in a deeper understanding and evaluation of the ballet:

> We are witnesses to the movements of man at a time when he did not yet exist as an individual. These beings still mass together; they move in groups, in colonies, in layers; they are held [as individuals] in a frightening indifference by society; they are devoted to a god they have made together and from whom they have not yet learned to distinguish themselves. Nothing of the individual is painted on their faces. Not for an instant during her dance does the Chosen One betray the personal terror that must fill her soul. She is accomplishing a rite, absorbed by a social function, and *without giving the slightest sign of comprehension or interpretation*, she acts according to the will and convulsions of a being more vast than she… .[28]

Despite criticism and protests, *The Rite of Spring* was performed five more times in Paris, due to Diaghilev's deliberate insistence—yet audience reactions remained unchanged.[29] Following the social upheaval it provoked across Europe, *The New York Times* article dated April 20, 1924, presents a detailed review of the work's performance by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the United States:

25 New York Times, "Parisians hiss new ballet," June 7, 1913, https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1913/06/08/100627576.pdf (accessed: February 20, 2024).

26 Klara Móricz, *In Stravinsky's orbit: Responses to modernism in Russian Paris*, vol. 26 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 87.

27 see Peter Hill, *Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 26-30; Michael Oliver, *Igor Stravinsky* (London: Phaidon Press, 2008), 55-8.

28 Richard Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian traditions: A biography of the works through Mavra*, vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press,2016), 994.

29 Onuk, "Cubism, Stravinsky and Rite of Spring," 5-6.

> The music is, perhaps, too primitive. But it is not imitative; it is psychologically a representation of the past, as if we were not to live, but to review our past in a conscious way. Stravinsky did not so much say, "Come, we are savages!" as he says, "Come, we were once savages; let us see how we were once savages; let us see how it was, we intellectual people!" He says, "This is not the music we played, but how we felt.[30]

The article underscores how costume and music—causing some audience members and even musicians to leave the concert hall—served as instruments of emotional and intellectual provocation. At the same time, it gestures toward the idea that the work might, over time, invite deeper and more sustained discussion:

> …Anyone who has followed the course of "psychoanalysis" and the violent revulsions it has caused will perhaps understand why certain patrons and patronesses, and certain musicians, were leaving the hall before the end of the piece. It was too painful to be introduced to the grinning skeleton and the old anatomical things that had seemed all concealed, and dropped, tacitly, so long from social recognition that they seemed non-existent; and to face the fact that there is still a lot left in us that is not quite so nice as would appear from the outside.[31]

The controversial premiere of *The Rite of Spring*, a work that would come to shape the very foundations of contemporary music, and the years that followed, coincided—as Móricz observes—with a period in which the capricious human type of the era appeared hopelessly unfit to attune itself to the sound of the work.[32] In this regard, the closing of the article offers a striking example of how the interaction between dance and music produces a probing, interrogative expression:

> …We dance no "Rites of Spring," now, but we have our own dances. The "Rites of Spring" is only a further proof that dancing is sex, and no dancing is, properly speaking, a moral thing. Let Stravinsky not despair, at any rate he will not be done to death by premature and popular praise. For myself I should like to now hear the piece many many times before forming any fixed opinion.[33]

30 *New York Times*, "Stravinsky and Psychoanalysis," April 20, 1924, https://www.nytimes.com/1924/04/27/archives/stravinsky-and-psychoanalysis.html (accessed: February 20, 2024).

31 *New York Times*, "Stravinsky and Psychoanalysis,"

32 Móricz, *In Stravinsky's orbit*, 97-122.

33 New York Times, "Stravinsky and Psychoanalysis,"

Pasler highlights the efforts of Nijinsky and Roerich to expand Stravinsky's music through a "raw and primitive" sensibility, one that stood apart from the prevailing aesthetic concerns of their time.[34] While Nijinsky's choreographies were regarded in the West as inaugurating a new, anti-realist phase, the reception was notably different among Russian art critics, who favoured nationalist and realist artistic principles.[35] Among Nijinsky's Russian admirers, the poet Nicolai Minsky initially aligned his critique of Nijinsky's choreography with the ideals of Acmeism, a literary movement advocating for directness and the aesthetic expression of everyday reality. However, Minsky appears to have departed from this position following his experience of *The Rite of Spring*. In an article published in *Utro Rossii* on June 12, 1913, he writes:[36]

> Although the starting point for his ballet [is] clearly the real, his goal [is] - thoroughly aesthetic. Through rhythm, he tears real movement from the everyday [movement] and makes it not only the object of art but artificial, almost automaton-figurative.

Minsky's statement underscores the impact of Nijinsky's conscious departure from classical ballet choreography in order to align more closely with the music and rhythm of *The Rite of Spring*. In a similar vein, Adorno argues that Stravinsky deliberately employed rhythm in a manner akin to the randomness of a dice throw, thereby disrupting musical structures and confronting the listener with an unexpected—even unsettling—sensory experience.[37] From Adorno's perspective, the rhythmic character of *The Rite* is excessively structured and stripped of emotional expression, lacking the conditions necessary for producing melodic coherence. In this context, the musical randomness and instability in *The Rite of Spring* allow it to be perceived as a kind of entity emerging from nature—one that eludes human control during creation or composition.[38]

34 Jann Pasler, "Music and spectacle in Petrushka and The Rite of Spring," in *Confronting Stravinsky: Man, musician, and modernist* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020), 71-4.

35 Hanna Järvinen, "Great horizons flooded with the alien light of the sun: Le Sacre du Printemps in the Russian context," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 31 (2013), 1-28.

36 Cited in: Järvinen, "Great horizons flooded with the alien light of the sun," 18.

37 Theodor Adorno, "Stravinsky and the restoration," in *Philosophy of new music*, ed. R. Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 127.

38 Adorno, "Stravinsky and the restoration," 114.

In light of these performances and interpretations, *The Rite of Spring* may be viewed as a form of critique produced by art's multilayered expressive capacity against prevailing social norms. From a choreographic perspective, the work stages a pagan ritual in which a chosen individual is compelled to sacrifice herself for the community's welfare and is, in turn, celebrated and sanctified by that community.[39] Such scenes—which lie outside what is normatively accepted by society—bear striking parallels, through the lens of Freud's (2020) analysis, to the idea of a sacred object [*totem*], often symbolised as an animal, being protected through various behaviours [*taboo*] enacted by the group.[40] These totems, identified with a shared ancestor, provide the basis for moral and religious order among group members. Thus, the chosen figure may be perceived as a symbol of purification and renewal, ensuring the preservation of social cohesion. In this Freudian framework, the choreographic narrative of *The Rite* may have triggered in its viewers a mimetic re-enactment of ancestral behaviours and the repetition of ancient prohibitions—thereby activating deeply embedded neurotic responses. In this sense, the sacrificial ritual enacted in *The Rite* functions as a reflection of the collective identity represented by the totem.

Following Freud's anthropologically grounded theoretical framework, which explores forms of social law and belonging, a striking example of how the figure of the chosen one may be received within the realm of individual aesthetic experience appears in a 1924 *The New York Times* article. The author's statement that "the dance is sex itself" gestures towards a psychoanalytic confrontation with the instinctual associations triggered by aesthetic perception at the time.[41] In parallel, the myth constructed in *The Rite of Spring*, particularly the moment when the chosen maiden is compelled to sacrifice herself, activates what Sugarman interprets as a conflict of drives within Freud's dual concepts of *Eros* and *Thanatos*.[42] According to Sugarman, *Thanatos* is not merely an

39 Martin Zenck, "Ritual or imaginary ethnography in Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps?" *The World of Music* 40 (1998), 61-78.

40 Sigmund Freud, *Totem ve Tabu*, trans. Z. A. Yılmazer (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür, 2020).

41 This example does not claim to offer any generalisation or representative data; instead, it presents an aesthetic framework in which the relationship with the unconscious—observed through staging and choreography—may be theorised based on a historically situated individual response.

42 Susan Sugarman, *What Freud Really Meant: A Chronological Reconstruction of his Theory of the Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 87-104.

aggressive drive but represents the organism's tendency to return to a state of reduced stimulation—to dissolve tension and resolve complex desires.[43] In this context, the sacrificial figure may be read as a representation of *Thanato*s: the ritual moves toward dissolution, a bodily erasure. Conversely, the aesthetic bond forged with the audience mirrors the integrative tendency of *Eros*, as Sugarman describes it—the impulse to unify and cohere. *The Rite of Spring*, then, may be understood not merely as an enactment of mythical violence, but as an aesthetic interface for the intertwined workings of life and death drives. In this regard, the audience's response emerges as an instinctual reaction to the narrative represented through the synthesis of music and choreography. The interpretive frame thus evokes instinctual realms that lie beyond everyday morality, constructing a psychodynamic space of confrontation that exceeds conventional aesthetic boundaries. Ultimately, such indirect or symbolic expressions align with Freud's (1923) notion of art as a space for sublimation—one in which repressed drives find indirect articulation.[44]

At the same time, it is possible to argue that audience responses such as discomfort or even disgust manifest themselves as a form of confrontation. Within Freud's conception of the uncanny [*das Unheimliche*], such responses emerge when repressed contents from the unconscious—once forgotten—resurface in altered but familiar forms.[45] Freud defines the uncanny as a state of unease arising when the subject is faced with something both known and yet alien.[46] Such an experience is profoundly unsettling and potentially transformative, not only because of what the viewer sees or hears, but also because it forces an encounter with the repressed within. In this sense, Stravinsky's transposition of an ancient and primal dance into a modern aesthetic form establishes a connection with the deepest strata of the unconscious—triggering a psychoanalytic process of catharsis in which the audience is compelled to confront itself.

Rather than aiming to generate universal psychological generalisations, these analyses—extending from the historical and con-

43 Sugarman, *What Freud Really Meant*, 97-103.

44 Sigmund Freud, "The Ego and the Id," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* vol. 19, ed. & trans. J. Strachey (London: Hoghart Books, 1923), 12-66.

45 Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, trans. D. Mclintock, (London: Penguin, 2003).

46 Freud, *The Uncanny*, 124-134.

ceptual intersections of Surrealism and Freudian psychoanalysis to *The Rite of Spring*—focus on the potential relationships that the work's specific aesthetic patterns may establish with the unconscious.[47] The theoretical framework proposed here does not assert a claim to truth; instead, it seeks to interrogate, on an interpretive level, the aesthetic possibilities of confronting the unconscious through art, as mediated by historically documented audience responses and individual reactions.

Ultimately, it is possible to conclude that *The Rite of Spring* resonates with the kind of reality Breton described as one that "creates hallucinations for a humanity estranged from its essence."[48] In this light, Whittall's characterisation of *The Rite* as "a modernist paradigm where internal contradictions clash but never quite cohere into synthesis" may be understood not only as a modernist analysis, but also—albeit indirectly—as echoing the core dynamic of surrealist dialectics.[49] Although Whittall does not explicitly situate this reading within surrealist thought, his emphasis on the persistence of structural conflict closely aligns with Surrealism's aesthetic of tension that opposes Hegelian synthesis. Whether this affinity arises from an intuitive proximity or a conscious theoretical distance, Whittall's analysis reveals *The Rite* as staging an irrational, fragmented internal struggle rather than achieving rational unity. Thus, despite its historical precedence to Surrealism, *The Rite* exemplifies an aesthetic rupture that bears conceptual affinities with key surrealist orientations through its confrontation with the unconscious and its drive to dismantle rational totalities.

THE LENS OF SURREALIST DIALECTICS

When surrealist aesthetics is considered in relation to psychoanalysis and as part of a broader philosophical critique of modern epistemology, its intellectual positioning becomes more clearly articulated. Modernism and its critiques have produced striking and unsettling theoretical frameworks, often in opposition to the

47 The reason for focusing specifically on Freudian psychoanalysis lies in the fact that Freud's theories of repression, desire, and dreams had already been widely discussed prior to the emergence of the surrealist movement.

48 Breton, *Surrealist Manifestolar*, 103, emphasis mine.

49 Arnold Whittall, "Spring awakening," *The Musical Times* 154 (2013), 95.

aesthetic forms that evolved under Enlightenment rationalism and its dialectical legacies. In this sense, modern art appears reactive, as if composed of competing factions striving to articulate a new aesthetic of their own. This condition can be examined more deeply by tracing it back to the epistemological rupture initiated by Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, which forms part of the broader critique Western thought has levelled against its Ancient Greek scientific and philosophical foundations.

Kant (2022) argues that when attempting to produce knowledge independently of experience, human reason may fall into error and generate contradictions [antinomy] when engaging with metaphysical concepts.[50] Kant treats metaphysical concepts as necessary assumptions to support our obligations within the framework of moral law and ethical principles.[51] In this regard, it may be argued that he aimed to provide a more solid foundation for metaphysical inquiry by employing a priori experiences—those which make experience possible—through aesthetic, analytic, and dialectical processes in producing objective knowledge. In other words, although a priori reasoning might construct logically coherent antitheses, it can nevertheless produce conflicts, and its conclusions—if not verified by sensory experience—can be misleading [paralogism]. In this regard, Kant offers a framework for employing a priori reasoning through analytic and dialectical processes in the production of objective knowledge.[52] His critique of the logical arguments that support the metaphysical claims of Ancient Greek philosophers and their successors in the Western tradition leads to a redefinition of the nature of knowledge and the capacities of practical reason.[53] In doing so, Kant formulates a critique of the Greek conception of *logos*, leaving a profound and lasting impact on subsequent Western philosophy.[54]

50 Immanuel Kant, *Saf Aklın Eleştirisi*, trans. N. Pektaş (İstanbul: Gece Kitaplığı, 2022).

51 Taşkıner Ketenci, "Kant felsefesinde metafizik ve insan doğası," *Kaygı* 4 (2005), 92-103.

52 Nefise Barak, "Immanuel Kant'ın Saf Aklın Eleştirisi eserinde diyalektik kavrayışı," *Ethos* 13 (2020), 42-43.

53 see Philipp Kitcher, "Kant's philosophy of the cognitive mind," *The Cambridge companion to Kant and modern philosophy*, ed. P. Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 169-202; Clinton Tolley, "The place of logic within Kant's philosophy," *The Palgrave Kant handbook*, ed. M. C. Altman (London: Palgrave 2017) 165-187.

54 Georgia Apostolopoulou, "From ancient Greek logos to European rationality," *Wisdom* 7 (2016), 118.

In the context of Kant's transcendental dialectic, this tension reveals a kind of dialogical relationship—a conflict or a search for resolution—between the Enlightenment and the modern age. Despite the limitations Kant imposed on metaphysical speculation, both Freud and Jung developed theories of the psyche that, in their ways, proposed an extraordinary extension of a priori reasoning into new scientific and systematic domains. Freud's theory of the unconscious and Jung's conception of archetypes each represent attempts to interpret the human subject's inner world and unconscious dynamics. In this respect, the twentieth-century discipline of psychoanalysis—which aimed to engage with what might traditionally be regarded as metaphysical elements within a scientific framework—may be seen as a response or counterpoint to Kant's transcendental dialectic.

From the early stages of modern art and thought, the turn toward the chaotic and seemingly irrational nature of the human subject found expression in works concerned with exploring mental life—particularly within Surrealism. In this regard, surrealist thought functions as a critique of rationalism, which upholds scientific knowledge and reality within the limits of objectification, by asserting that human experience and creativity cannot be confined to a narrow frame. Put differently, surrealists argue that the scientific conception of "reality" cannot offer a complete depiction of the human mind and its experiences, precisely because it neglects metaphysical dimensions such as the unconscious, dreams, and intuition. In his Surrealist Manifestos, Breton describes the most striking qualities of surrealist images—despite their immeasurable variety—as follows:

> … What takes the longest to translate into the language that is used is something entirely haphazard; this is because it seems to contain an enormous number of contradictions, or one of its words is strangely hidden; ... because it justifies a ridiculous picture of itself, or because it is of the kind that gives rise to hallucinations, or quite naturally, it wears the mask of the abstract becoming concrete or the concrete becoming abstract, or because it implies that certain physical properties are being denied, or it provokes laughter.[55]

Breton's articulation brings surrealist elements into the realm of theory by legitimising the irrational through the logic of opposi-

55 Breton, *Surrealist Manifestolar*, 44-5.

tion. Gauss interprets this stance as a rejection of the rationalist conception of reality—grounded in empirical data—which he sees as a significant obstacle to individual expression.[56] Yet, the notion of individual expression is reframed within Surrealism. The artist does not seek to reflect emotional tensions or aesthetic and ethical concerns from the personal psyche. Instead, they attempt to discover archetypal dreams that emerge from the collective unconscious and to channel these into the artwork.[57] In this sense, Surrealism upholds the belief that humanity advances through innovative and unconventional thought. It thus turns to the imagination—and by extension, to unconscious processes—as its vital source.

As Gauss also observes, the contradictions in surrealist thought do not result in synthesis through identity and affirmation, as in Hegelian dialectics; instead, they continuously expose internal conflict and paradox.[58] Surrealism, by its very nature, cannot produce a dialectical framework in the Platonic or Hegelian sense.[59] In other words, while dialectics in Plato and Hegel aims at producing order and meaning, surrealist dialectics lays bare the irrationalities and tensions of the unconscious without seeking to resolve them.

Interestingly, rather than indicating a direct historical continuity, one may establish a structural and conceptual affinity between the dialectical logic of Surrealism and Adorno's notion of negative dialectics. Adorno challenges the Hegelian system's mode of meaning-production through "identity" and "synthesis."[60] His theory of negative dialectics resists the absolutisation of identity by producing a consistent awareness of non-identity and making

56 Charles Edward Gauss, *The aesthetic theories of French artists: From realism to Surrealism* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1966), 84.

57 Gauss, *The aesthetic theories of French artists*, 91.

58 Gauss, *The aesthetic theories of French artists*, 5.

59 In Plato, dialectic [*dialaghestai*] refers to the process of reasoning and dialogue aimed at attaining true knowledge [*episteme*] by ascending toward the metaphysical "realm of ideas." These dialogues unfold through the interplay of opposing views, yet rather than producing synthesis, they culminate in a form of psychic illumination. The principal difference between Platonic and Hegelian dialectics lies in their orientation. While Plato emphasises ascent toward the world of ideas and individual understanding, Hegel centres his dialectics on historical evolution and the transformation of social structures. In Plato, oppositions function as tools for individual inquiry in pursuit of truth, whereas in Hegel, they are situated within a universal and abstract framework that seeks resolution and synthesis.

60 see Theodor Adorno, *Negatif Diyalektik*, trans. T. Bora (İstanbul: Metis yayınları, 2016), 164–65; 233–34.

contradiction visible.[61] This frame of resemblance—akin to Aby Warburg's notion of *Nachleben*—relies on the conceptual potential of encountering difference to comprehend Surrealism's structural engagement with contradiction. What converges surrealist thought with negative dialectics is its resistance to rationalist–positivist modes of knowledge production and its tendency to sustain contradiction not as a transitional step toward synthesis, but as a generative tension in itself.

Surrealism, particularly in its manifestos, positions itself outside rationalist and synthesis-driven systems by voicing a clear opposition to the rational constraints imposed on social life:

> While a specific function of Surrealism is to examine—through a critical lens—the conceptual binaries of reality and unreality, logic and illogic, thought and impulse, knowledge and "fatal" ignorance, usefulness and uselessness, it nonetheless shares at least one important feature with historical materialism: a tendency to take the "monumental failure" of the Hegelian system as its point of departure. Ultimately, I find it impossible to impose any restriction upon a practice of thought that has been made obedient to negation and to the negation of negation.[62]

In the Hegelian process, the conflict between thesis and antithesis culminates in a new and higher synthesis incorporating both elements.[63] However, for the surrealists, synthesis is not the reconciliation of rational and irrational elements but rather a zone where this conflict remains perpetually unresolved.[64] This condition underlies the constant transformation seen in surrealist works, compelling the viewer or reader to question their perceptions and assumptions perpetually.[65] In Surrealism, irrational and unconscious processes disrupt the everyday reality or the conventionally accepted meaning of an object [thesis]. This transformation dislocates the object from its familiar signification, assigning it a new and unexpected meaning [antithesis]. At this point, surrealist art stands as a representation of subjective originality and autonomy. It may thus be argued that the emergence of this new

61 Adorno, *Negatif Diyalektik*, 162-3; 170-1.

62 Breton, *Surrealist Manifestolar*, 80-1.

63 see Michael Rosen, *Hegel's dialectic and its criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Enric Trillas, & Itzar García-Honrado, "A reflection on the dialectic synthesis," New Mathematics and Natural Computation 15 (2019), 31-46.

64 Gauss, *The aesthetic theories of French artists*, 88.

65 Strom, *The Routledge companion to Surrealism*, 29.

meaning within the artwork functions as a tool to question and expand the boundaries of traditional conceptions of reality:

- Thesis: Objects and events are traditionally confined to socially sanctioned meanings and functions. These meanings are shaped and maintained by normative structures and collective conventions.
- Antithesis: Surrealism disrupts these habitual meanings by destabilising the object or event through unconscious processes such as automatic writing, dream analysis, or chance operations.
- No Synthesis, but a New Reality= Surreal: In classical dialectics, a synthesis emerges between thesis and antithesis—a resolution that integrates both poles into a new conceptual unity. However, in surrealist dialectics, synthesis remains elusive or intentionally deferred. What takes its place is a sustained tension—a continuous interplay between thesis and antithesis that resists closure. This new meaning, drawn from the depths of the unconscious, may appear irrational or illogical. Consequently, the object's interpretation is not resolved but perpetually reconfigured, requiring the viewer or reader to reassess its significance in ways that disrupt the stability of representational logic.

RESONANCE BETWEEN SURREALISM AND MUSIC

Psychic automatism, which occupies a central place in surrealist aesthetics, emerges as a creative strategy particularly applicable in literary and visual arts. The artist's conscious suspension of thought, judgment, and control mechanisms allows for the uncensored participation of inner drives and repressed desires in the creative process. In this sense, automatism becomes an expressive modality through which the artist reconstructs the experience of selfhood, blurring the boundaries between subject and image. In visual arts, automatism operates as the direct projection of the unconscious onto the material surface—through line, stain, shape, or colour. Since this form of expression unfolds through physical gestures and intuitive responses, the relationship it establishes with the viewer is often sensory and immediate. The form, figure, or blot that takes shape as an object exerts a direct visual impact; it ena-

bles the aesthetic effect—whether jarring, unsettling, or enchanting—sought by automatism to be felt more swiftly and viscerally. In this context, the visual image precedes meaning; interpretation is constructed afterwards or projected by the viewer.

Much like its counterpart in the visual arts, literary automatism emerges as a creative process wherein the artist suspends conscious control. Yet the primary medium here is language, inherently laden with structural, cultural, and social constraints. No matter how freely the writer aims to associate, the words employed are already saturated with layers of meaning from the outset. This makes the workings of automatism within the literary realm more indirect and multilayered. Repressed desires or unconscious images do not surface straightforwardly; instead, they glide, clash, or distort themselves within the folds of language. As a result, the products of literary automatism are often marked by seemingly incoherent syntax, abrupt associative leaps, and imagery detached from causality. In contrast to the sensory immediacy of visual automatism, literary automatism seeks the unconscious within the inner voids, fissures, and folds of language.

In music, however, the time-based structural mediation between production and perception complicates the operation of psychic automatism in the way it functions within visual or literary arts. Musical expression inherently requires sound to be temporally organised through rhythm, bound to sequences and structural cohesions. This necessity introduces a kind of formal mediation that limits the possibility of directly and uninterruptedly expressing unconscious impulses in the compositional process. Indeed, in a composition as structurally dense as *The Rite of Spring*, one observes the pronounced dominance of deliberate technical devices and compositional planning. Yet this does not imply that the unconscious cannot seep into the process—either indirectly or, at times, even directly. On the contrary, the question of how psychic automatism might operate in music opens up a more nuanced field of inquiry precisely because of this mediation. In this context, how the unconscious manifests within musical creation can be rethought not solely through form, but also through the intuitive, corporeal, and ritual elements embedded within that very form.

According to Langer, music operates as an incomplete symbol because it involves deeply internal processes that cannot be fully

articulated through conscious conceptualisation.[66] In other words, Langer attributes to music a symbolic function—akin to that of language or ritual—in shaping sensory experience, positioning it as a product of unconscious processes. She further integrates this idea with Freudian psychoanalytic theory, arguing that art and imagination function as symbolic modes through which unconscious desires, fears, and conflicts are expressed.[67] From this perspective, it is plausible to consider that collective and primal symbols arising from the unconscious may organically guide musical expression, transcending the composer's subjective limitations.

In the case of *The Rite of Spring*, the aesthetic turn towards archetypal domains such as Scythian mythology may be interpreted as a manifestation of intuitive contact with unconscious imagery. At this point, Jung's distinction between two artistic modes of creation—the "psychological mode" and the "visionary mode"—offers valuable insight. According to Jung, the "psychological mode" involves the artist's conscious engagement with the creative process and personal identification with the material, whereas the "visionary mode" refers to a creative impulse emanating from the psyche—that is, from the unconscious—which takes shape through the artist's hands.[68] Jung's framework thus establishes an important context for understanding the unconscious not as a passive background, but as an indirect yet decisive agent within the creative process.

In this context, the musical creation process emerges as a multilayered phenomenon where formal or technical mastery intersects with psychic dimensions. The composer is not merely a craftsman but a subject entangled in life's traumas, desires, and intuitions. From this perspective, it is plausible to argue that impulses overflowing from the personal or collective unconscious often provide the contextual depth that renders the composer's technique and aesthetics unique. In other words, the composer's technical knowledge and inner world should not be seen as opposing forces, but as intertwined processes within musical creation. To consider musical composition in conjunction with the subject and uncon-

66 Susanna Langer, *Philosophy in a new key: A study in the symbolism of reason, rite, and art* (Harvard: Harvard University Press 1954), 195.

67 Langer, *Philosophy in a new key*, 167-8

68 Carl Gustav Jung, "On the relation of analytical psychology to poetry," *The spirit in man, art, and literature* vol. 15, eds. G. Adler & R. F. C. Hull (New York, 1966), 65-83.

scious associations offers a contextual framework that aligns with the aesthetic depth of *The Rite of Spring*. This approach neither absolutizes the technical notation [the object] nor the composer [the subject]. On the contrary, it conceptualizes both composer and musical work as connected through a permeable relational plane between structural technique and unconscious impulses. Such a relation enables us to reflect on the creative process not solely as a formal act, but as one that is also intuitive and psychically resonant.

Through this conceptual lens, music—as an aesthetic object—can be understood as forming a multilayered relationship of indirect but effective immanence with psychic automatism. This emphasis on indirectness does not aim to dismantle the compositional framework of music but rather opens it to interpretation through various strands of critical music theory. Adorno, in particular, reads the structural tensions, deviations, and unresolved conflicts within musical form as aesthetic echoes of social contradictions. In this sense, music is not merely an organisation of sounds, but a latent expression of repressed historical or cultural strata. Barthes, by contrast, conceptualises music as a space where desires and unconscious impulses—those not directly representable—become layered at a bodily and sensory level.[69] His notion of the *somatheme* denotes the body resonances within musical structure: sensory textures that signal the physical traces of unconscious desire.[70] Taken together, these perspectives suggest that the unconscious relates not only to the inner drives of the creative subject but also to the aesthetic and corporeal tensions embedded in musical form. Music, then, is neither purely a technical structure nor simply an emotional narrative—it is a multilayered aesthetic domain in which the unconscious and the bodily become immanently articulated through form.

More precisely, this relationship of immanence can be understood as the composer's transformation, distortion, and contradiction-laden reshaping of the musical object through the free operation of the unconscious rather than the dictates of conscious rationality. In this sense, the composer figure becomes not merely a formal architect of the musical object but also its distorter, estranger, and internaliser. Within the compositional logic of Western art music,

69 Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, 245–260; 267–276.

70 Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, 302; 307.

the subject [the composer] has traditionally occupied a central and hierarchical position — as the rational, constructive force who consciously bestows meaning upon the musical work. From a surrealist perspective, however, the composer reconfigures the musical object not as a purely formal language of expression but as a psychic aesthetic field shaped by unconscious associations and inner contradictions. In this framework, the composer is positioned as a dual agent: rational insofar as they articulate rhythm, tonality, melody, and temporality; yet simultaneously transformative, in that they channel elements from the unconscious into the very structures they construct. The resulting musical work thus comes to embody a new reality — one in which structural, aesthetic, and sensory codes are fractured and where the unconscious both emanates from and speaks to itself. Crucially, this approach does not posit the unconscious as directly or objectively represented within the musical object. Rather, it seeks to conceptualise an aesthetic terrain in which unconscious impulses acquire presence through indirect, yet jarring, forms of immanence.

Certain aesthetic orientations in modernist music — particularly those predicated on the destruction of tonality or on structural complexity — may generate a striking sensory effect. Yet this effect does not necessarily align with the kind of aesthetic experience associated with surrealism. For instance, the dodecaphonic structure presents an aesthetic encounter that primarily engages the intellect: it demands cognitive effort to navigate formal complexity. In other words, it remains a continuation of the traditional musical work centred on the composer as a reasoning subject. What surrealism suggests, however, is not this rationalist lineage but an aesthetic trauma zone in which the musical work collides with the unconscious of its creator. In this context, a musical work must not only be formally innovative but also psychically disorienting and transformative — a space where aesthetic experience unsettles rather than merely challenges.

In conclusion, the intersection between the unconscious and psychic automatism in *The Rite of Spring*'s compositional process may be rooted in the latent stratum of an ancient Scythian myth and the involuntary, subjective interactions it provokes. Archetypal themes drawn from ancient [Scythian] society and sacrificial rituals seem to resonate, as in Jung's notion of the "visionary mode," with collective images embedded in historical and social codes—images that exceed the personal unconscious of the com-

poser.[71] It is therefore plausible to suggest that these themes infiltrate the creative process involuntarily or semi-consciously, triggering a narrative layer within the work. When considered in this light, Stravinsky's music emerges as a space of aesthetic transmission where psychic automatism becomes immanently embedded and the unconscious collides with myth.

SURREALISTSCAPES OF THE 'RITE'

The psychoanalytic frameworks that influenced surrealist thought and practice, alongside Gaston Bachelard's conception of rhythm, propose a dynamic spatiotemporal fabric in which continuity is not a natural or spontaneous flow but rather constructed through the linkage of discontinuous moments via habits, resistances, and creative ruptures.[72] For Bachelard, each rhythm interacts with others, and the resulting multiplicity of rhythms forms a dialectical relationship that reflects an unforeseeable harmony arising in temporal contexts.[73] Similarly, Hess's theory of rhythm posits that rhythm is the first perceptible element to emerge in the evolutionary history of music; in so-called 'primitive melodies,' rhythm becomes the primary element due to its biological roots, which grant it a direct affective power.[74] Morgan, in turn, approaches rhythm as a principle of spatial organisation that underlies the structural relationships of a musical work—governing the horizontal (temporal) and vertical (spatial) positioning of sounds within a particular arrangement.[75] Ultimately, rhythm can be defined as a foundational phenomenon that shapes the perceptible flow of time in music while simultaneously constructing its spatial articulation—bridging time and space in a mutually transformative relation, and thus playing a constitutive role in the organisation of both life and consciousness.

71 Jung, *On the relation of analytical psychology*, 65-83.

72 Jonas Rutgeerts, "Revisiting rhythm analysis: How rhythm operates in the work of Gaston Bachelard and Henri Bergson," *Parrhesia* 31 (2019), 93-96.

73 Rutgeerts, "Revisiting rhythm analysis," 95.

74 M. Whitcomb, Hess, "Space and time in music," *The Open Court* 10 (1927), 597-598.

75 Robert Morgan, "Musical time/musical space," *Music theory, analysis, and society: Selected essay*s, ed. R. Morgan (New York: Routledge, 2015), 101-105.

The theoretical and conceptual relationships that address the biological and sensory aspects of rhythm enable one to interpret the unpredictable rhythmic structure of *The Rite of Spring* as a visceral and instinctive force. Indeed, the rhythmic pulses and accompanying chords in the *Augurs of Spring* section are described by Stravinsky as the "biological heartbeat" of the music and dance.[76] In this respect, the rhythmicity in *The Rite* opens up a space for evaluating the resonance between surrealist thought and the unconscious. However, this interpretive framework gains its full significance only when positioned in dialogue with the historical and theoretical approaches to compositional processes and aesthetic ideals within Western art music tradition. While the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions regard music as a mathematical reflection of cosmic order,[77] Cartesian and Humean perspectives tend to ground musical creation in metaphysical and deductive systems born of rational thought.[78] Contrasting these rationalist models, *The Rite* is not only a manifestation of order but also an expression of chaos and corporeal violence; particularly, the unpredictability of its rhythmic structures and the grotesque quality of its choreography suggest a creative process that is not divorced from nature but one that actively reshapes it.[79] Within this layered historical context, the rhythmic and structural patterns observed in *The Rite* call for analysis not only at the formal level but also as aesthetic forces that may evoke unconscious responses or sensory-affective interpretations.

In the first part (*Adoration of the Earth*), the introductory passage opens with melodic and rhythmic elements that evoke a pastoral portrayal of nature. The rhythmic texture structurally complicates the *Introduction,* retains an unresolved tension within itself and embodies a motion that carries this tension forward into the next

76 Marija Simonović, "Fire as a first cause of phenomenon in Gaston Bachelard's The psychoanalysis of fire and Igor Stravinsky's The Rite of Spring," *Kwartalnik Młodych Muzykologów [Young Musicologists Quarterly]* 3 (2021), 52.

77 Ulrich Michels & Gunther Vogels, *Müzik Atlası*, trans. S. Uçar (İstanbul: Alfa Basım, 2021).

78 see Francesco Barale & Vera Minazzi, "Off the beaten track: Freud, sound and music. Statement of a problem and some historico-critical notes," *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 89 (2008), 937-957; Donald A. Hodges & David C. Sebald, *Music in the human experience: An introduction to music psychology* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

79 see Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (London: Faber & Faber Ltd., 1964); Adorno, *Stravinsky and the restoration.*

unit. The extended *Introduction* between *R1* and *R11* particularly highlights rhythm's precedence and structural autonomy.[80]

The most striking feature in this section is that rhythm assumes a constructive role independently of melodic development. In terms of rhythmic freedom, one can observe, between *R4* and *R5*, the metric ambiguity generated by the placement of melodic figures in the oboe and flute groups within the bar. This rhythmic construction transcends traditional *arsis–thesis* relationships and produces a bodily and temporal fluidity that perpetuates unresolved tension.[81] Consequently, the melodic line, as if tossed among the rhythmic clashes, fails to fully assert itself within the meter. In this form, the rhythm-dominated *Introduction* resembles a primitive *quasi ballabile* that signals a body on the verge of movement, leading into the *Augurs of Spring*.

The pastoral atmosphere of the *Introduction* gives way to rhythmic and accentual patterns in Augurs of Spring that bear the traces of ritual intensity. The metric structure in this section generates such a dense rhythmic tension that it renders the classical *arsis-thesis* accents difficult to identify. It is often ambiguous whether the beats fall on strong or weak pulses; the accents within the measures shift positions, and the expected resolutions are continuously deferred. For instance, the accentual irregularities observed between *R13–R18* and *R18–R21* prevent periodic groupings and constantly redefine the rhythmic ground. When combined with the dissonant structure of the 'Augurs chord', this condition creates a persistent expectation of rational resolution in the listener; thus, the motif gains a dynamic structural role that propels the music forward. Additionally, the passage between *R16–R18*—accelerated by the chromatic figures in the flutes and clarinets that almost simulate a *glissando* effect—further intensifies this internal tension. At *R19*, with the insertion of a Russian folk melody, the melodic material

80 The rehearsal numbers referenced here correspond to the Boosey & Hawkes 1967 orchestral score edition of *The Rite of Spring*, used as a positional mapping format throughout the analysis.

81 In Ancient Greece, arsis–thesis was a rhythmic practice used in choral or solo passages to enhance the text's emotional impact and enable the ensemble to perform the musical-dramatic narrative in a synchronized manner. In Western art music, this structure gradually evolved into an abstract theory of accentuation and phrase organization. What Stravinsky appears to do is to confront the legacy of arsis–thesis with a time perception inspired by ancient ritual and to re-embody it in the process. Thus, structures that might seem like modernist deformations may in fact be read as musical traces of a return to an atavistic and unconscious ritual temporality.

becomes more pronounced and *arsis-thesis* type accents begin to reemerge. However, even these accents are not fixed in the traditional sense; each rhythmic figure differentiates itself through its internal tension, forming layered metric conflicts.

Between *R13* and *R21*, the prevailing metric irregularity and rhythmic density gradually give way, starting at *R22*, to a more directional and stabilised rhythmic structure. Dominated by a *trill*-like effect, this section recalls the ostinato heard earlier at *R15*, which reemerges and continues into *R24*, now reinforced by the addition of persistent sixteenth-note figures. The folk melody introduced at *R25* appears markedly more directional and cohesive in contrast to the earlier fragmented melodic material, though still displaying minor metric displacements. Between *R28* and *R31*, the descending sixteenth-note gestures gain prominence, eventually stabilising from *R31* onwards, effectively replacing the eighth-note-based patterns that characterised the opening of *Augurs of Spring*. From *R33* onward, the return of chromatic, *glissando*-like motion—previously heard in the introductory stages—creates a cyclical formal reference. This return contributes to a sense of structural closure, offering a more internalised and controlled field of motion compared to the earlier metric disorientations.

This structurally fragmented yet intensifying pattern reaches its most dramatic articulation—both thematically and rhythmically—in the *Ritual of Abduction* section. As a musical parallel to the ritual scene where the men of the tribe abduct young girls, this section introduces a highly charged and conflictual musical landscape. Opening forcefully at *R37* with a stressed downbeat (*thesis*), the music erupts with dissonant clusters of quaver-based rhythmic figures, which are driven by tremolo and chromatic surges that create an undulating, turbulent flow. At *R40*, a dominant motif played by the horns in 9/8 confronts an ostinato in the first violins confined to a fixed register. This ostinato, producing an accent every four notes, superimposes a duple metre over the underlying triple rhythm. Initially perceived as simple, this figure engenders a 4-against-3 polyrhythmic clash when performed in conjunction with the other instrumental parts. It exemplifies one of the work's most prominent metric dissonance cases. The rhythmic tension, constructed around strong–weak beat oppositions, temporarily resolves at *R43*, when a Russian folk melody is introduced tutti on strong beats. This clarity momentarily stabilises the rhythmic field, rendering the folk tune a new structural anchor. At *R44*, the horn

and first violin again enter into a 4-against-3 conflict. However, the subsequent folk melodies between *R45* and *R47* continue the tension on another plane—through abrupt changes in articulation that break and interrupt the continuity, generating a series of dramatic ruptures.

The Rite of Spring's first part, characterised by an escalating intensity and a progressive level of conflict, establishes a dramatic trajectory through rhythm and thematic development. This trajectory, however, is punctuated by a series of structural discontinuities that simultaneously limit the escalation of tension and provide a counterbalancing flow. In this sense, the passages analysed above may be read as stages within a broader model of structural continuity, extended through variation.

Although the sections contained in *The Sacrifice* diverge formally from the sections of the first part, they continue to follow two fundamental strategies of rhythmic development that become increasingly evident throughout the work. Accordingly, the rhythmic design of this final part may be understood as built upon two core principles of compositional evolution:

- Development through repetition and rhythmic variation: This approach typically utilises metrically challenging or unconventional one-bar motifs. These short figures are reiterated with slight rhythmic modifications, creating a process of incremental variation. While such patterns do not necessarily result in complex formal structures, the processes of repetition and alteration contribute to establishing a palpable rhythmic flow and escalating tension within the music.
- Development through the simultaneity of motifs: In this second strategy, multiple independent motifs are introduced and layered over one another. Once the initial motif becomes perceptible, a second and a third motif enter, each unfolding in its own loop and generally without responding directly to the others. This independence creates a rhythmically dense texture that evolves over time. Although the motifs remain within the same tonal framework—thus generating a sense of familiarity for the listener—this layered structure produces a level of rhythmic saturation that complicates linear perception.

The tension–release duality within *The Rite of Spring*'s rhythmic architecture reveals an aesthetic in which melody is often relegated to the background. In this context, both the Lithuanian folk tune

no. 157 from Anton Juszkiewicz's collection (used in the first part opening section), and various Russian folk melodies,[82] are subjected to fragmentation, distortion, and rhythmic displacement. As such, the melodic material ceases to function as a folkloric representation; instead, it emerges as a disjointed, affective trace of collective memory. As evidenced in the work of Van den Toorn and Taruskin, *The Rite*'s depiction of an archaic ritual is not driven by a civilising or aestheticizing intent.[83] Rather, it manifests as a raw and unmediated mode of expression that resists the sublimation of archetypal resonances. This representational logic is further amplified through Nijinsky's choreography, which renders these gestures visible on the bodily and visual planes.

The consciously structured yet viscerally disruptive aesthetic of *The Rite of Spring* suggests that its mythical dramaturgy may interact with unconscious processes through rhythm, allowing them to permeate the work in indirect but affectively potent ways. This in turn deepens the sensorial experience of the listener. One may thus argue that the work harbours the potential to evoke a space of unconscious resonance for the audience of its time. The permeability between compositional structure and sensorial affect can be interpreted through Roland Barthes's concept of *somathemes*. As Barthes emphasises, rhythm and accent are not merely formal conveyors of melodic contour or harmonic direction, but also signifiers of bodily desire and affective tension.[84] Rhythm here becomes more than a matter of timing: it emerges as an expression of tactile, sensual, and desirous embodiment.[85] Within this framework, musical form and structure constitute not only an aural field but also a representational site where the corporeal and the emotional are deeply intertwined.[86] de Assis similarly underscores how the notion of *somathemes* designates the discovery and interaction of unconscious desires that shape music's sensual and aesthetic quality.[87] Shaped by the assumption that the body constitutes the

82 Richard Taruskin, "Russian Folk Melodies in The Rite of Spring," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 33 (1980), 501-543.

83 see Van den Toorn, *Stravinsky and the Rite of Spring; Richard Taruskin, Stravinsky and the Russian traditions: A biography of the works through Mavra* vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).

84 Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*.

85 Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, 267–271.

86 Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms*, 245–246; 286–293.

87 Paulo de Assis, "Rasch24: The somatheme," *Artistic research in music: Discipline and resistance: Artists and researchers at the Orpheus Institute,* ed. J. Impett (Leuven, 2017), 25.

first and unfiltered site of encounter with the unconscious, the *somathemes* may be understood as a bodily reaction evoked through rhythmic accentuation. Relatedly, de Assis associates Barthes's use of the plural form *somathemes* with the idea that music generates multiple bodily figures, which in their accumulation and interaction produce complex textures and meaning.[88]

The interpretative framework established through the concept of *somathemes* rests on the premise that musical works' formal and aesthetic configurations—through their systematic yet unique combinations—can generate experientially accessible zones shaped by archetypal and unconscious impulses operating at the threshold between body and mind. Although formal structure, rhythmic specificity, and the deliberate suppression of melodic continuity through metric disruption are all conscious compositional decisions, they function as a surface of tension that allows for unconscious interaction to emerge. Based on the dramatic and formal analysis of the work, the differentiated sections are associated with figural intensities that may signal unconscious resonances. Inspired by Barthes's *somathemes*, this analytical-interpretive approach focuses on the theorised and structurally traceable manifestations of unconscious aesthetic experience. Within this context, the first part (*Adoration of the Earth)* offers a particularly fertile terrain for examining rhythmic and metric tensions at their most intensified. The sections *Introduction*, *Augurs of Spring*, and *Ritual of Abduction*, due to their dense rhythmic and formal complexities, are thus identified as key zones in which the bodily-affective dimensions of the *somathemes* approach may be most effectively theorised.

Swerve Figure (*R1–R11*)

In the first part (*Adoration of the Earth*), the passage from *R1* to *R11* is characterized by a progressively more complex rhythm that sustains an unresolved internal tension while maintaining formal autonomy. This intricate rhythmic structure prevents melodic lines from fully asserting themselves within the metric framework. For instance, between *R4* and *R5*, the melodic figures in the oboe and flute groups illustrate a sense of metric uncertainty caused by the placement of rhythmic accents within the bar. Under the intense rhythmic pressure generated in this context, the melody is pushed to the background, evoking a distinct sense of 'swerve.'

88 Assis, "Rasch24: The somatheme," 16.

Here, the displacement from a stable rhythmic axis creates what can be understood as 'swerve figures', which guide the listener toward the *quasi ballabile* character of the *Augurs of Spring*. Rather than suggesting a clear dance form, this transition implies the tentative gestures of a bodily ritual—a movement that emerges out of the prior rhythmic instability.

Explosion Figure (*R13–R21*)

In the *Augurs of Spring* section, the passage between *R13* and *R21* presents a metrically unstable structure marked by intense rhythmic tension, characterized by shifting and the continual deferral of resolution. Each accent heard in this passage gives the impression of an 'explosion'—a sudden release of previously accumulated pressure. Yet these bursts of energy never consolidate within a stable metrical framework; instead, they remain suspended, refusing closure. Structurally, the anticipated resolution is persistently postponed, preventing the explosion figure from reaching full culmination. In this sense, the musical form generates a field of tension that oscillates at the rupture threshold.

Threshold Figure (*R22–R36*)

Following the metrical instability and rhythmic density of the previous passage, the section beginning at *R22* transitions into a relatively more stable and directional rhythmic texture. With the sixteenth-note patterns gaining textural continuity by *R24*, and the folk melody becoming more prominent at *R25*, a new field of tension and resolution expectation begins to emerge. Between *R28* and *R31*, descending patterns intensify this trajectory, reinforcing a sense of structural grounding. However, the reappearance of *glissando*-like transitions at *R33* interrupts this progression, reintroducing ambiguity. As such, the passage resists full resolution while also moving beyond the prior sense of dispersion. It neither settles nor collapses; rather, it hovers in a state of temporary repose, defined by an inner oscillation. In this sense, it may be conceived as a 'threshold figure'—a structural and affective space suspended between instability and closure.

Writhing Figure (*R37–R47*)

The Ritual of Abduction begins with an explosive accent at *R37*, launching into a turbulent and intensely fluctuating flow. Between *R40* and *R42*, the evolution of rhythmic structures through metrical conflict maintains this dual quality of fluidity and instability. The *tutti* passage beginning at *R43* introduces a fleeting sense of

release, thanks to the continuity of a folk-derived motif, which momentarily stabilizes the rhythmic texture despite ongoing metric shifts. However, from *R44* onward, structures reminiscent of *R40* reappear, repeating with varying degrees of intensity. Between *R45* and *R47*, abrupt articulative breaks within folk-derived segments generate dramatic interruptions, shifting the tension to a new level.

Crucially, this section—corresponding to the "abduction" of young women by male dancers—hints at a tension suspended between erotic pull and resistive retreat. The writhing figure thus emerges not as a progression or culmination of the previous swerve, explosion, and threshold figures, but as their unresolved and entangled amalgam. It reflects a state of emergence—one that wavers between release and implosion, gesturing toward both but achieving neither. This complex and unfinalizable configuration embodies what may be called a 'writhing figure.'

Although the sections of *The Sacrifice* contain crucial structural textures that contribute to the overall work, they continue the strategies of rhythmic variation and simultaneous motivic layering rather than introducing overt metric conflict or formal rupture. Yet in terms of archetypal convergence and psychic tension, the *Sacrificial Dance of the Chosen One* stands apart. This section lends itself to analysis within the framework of bodily figures and unconscious associative domains.

Confrontation Figure (R142–R201)

The Sacrificial Dance of the Chosen One serves not only as the climax of the second part but also of the entire work. In this sense, it may be divided into four principal rhythmic phases, each of which—much like the *Introduction* of the first part—presents a structure that becomes progressively more intricate and intensified. In other words, what is at stake here is not the reconfiguration of the rhythmic material per se, but the continuous transformation of its metric–kinetic positioning and degrees of density.

The first rhythmic phase spans *R142–R148* and reflects the cyclical structure of metrical patterns composed of pairs of 2- and 3-beat measures. Within this phase, rhythm assumes a percussive character, advancing through broken metric patterns and unexpected accents. Discontinuity emerges as a structural hallmark of the rhythmic fabric.

The second phase begins at *R149* and extends to *R162*, presenting a stratified texture composed of multiple layers. These layers

are marked by dynamic contrasts, producing a persistent interplay between tension and resolution. Metric and expressive symmetries within this section reveal the fragmentation of rhythm both at the structural and perceptual levels. At *R167*, the material from the first phase returns with minor structural alteration, and a brief seven-bar reprise occurs at *R180*. While this moment might suggest a temporary release of rhythmic tension, it in fact prepares the ground for a more substantial escalation in intensity.

The third phase begins at *R181* and transforms into a zone of intense rhythmic acceleration and conflict. Interestingly, the initial rhythmic phase reappears twice within this section as brief insertions; however, rather than stabilizing the structure, these re-entries function as interjections that further intensify the overall density. As the rhythmic texture escalates in a chaotic manner, this section marks the culmination of rhythmic tension. The fourth and final phase begins at *R189* and features a reconstruction of the rhythmic forms from the first phase—this time reconfigured within complex and symmetrical metric frameworks built from distinct groupings of note values. At this point, rhythm not only breaks free from regular metrical boundaries but also transforms the metre itself into a vector of instability, shaking the very foundation of the structure. The thematic insistence of the initial rhythmic phase, dominant since the beginning, is carried into the finale through a seemingly endless repetition. Yet this persistence does not resolve into closure, but rather produces an effect of exhaustion—an erosion of energy through relentless rhythmic attrition.

The Sacrificial Dance section can be described as a figurative space where the accumulated tensions throughout the work erupt to the surface, forcing a confrontation with what has been repressed. This passage functions as a climactic moment of latent reckoning. It can be seen in direct continuity with the earlier figures of 'Swerve, Explosion, Threshold and Writhing'—states of becoming that were either unformed, incomplete, or directionless. In this sense, the analysis previously concluded with the 'Writhing figure' in the first part (*Adoration of the Earth*) reveals itself to be a structurally transitive element, one that extends its effect into the second part and acts as a carrier of unresolved tensions.

The persistent pressure generated by rhythmic repetition and metric density in the Sacrificial Dance section bears the pain of this confrontation; the demanding 'confrontation figure' represents

the space in which that pain finally erupts. Ultimately, the figure that drives the music toward an irreversible point of exhaustion is not merely a fragmented aesthetic experience but rather a spatio-temporal encounter in which the subject clashes with its existential condition — an unresolved yet inevitable reckoning.

The confrontation figure may be considered both as a consciously constructed form and as the outcome of a stream of free associations rising from the inner world. Given the nature of *The Rite of Spring*, which oscillates between the instinctual and the structural, it becomes evident that the conscious and the unconscious remain inextricably intertwined within the music. In this regard, the confrontation figure does not signify a resolution; rather, it marks a boundary where simultaneous tensions are indefinitely suspended—a threshold where not meaning, but being, vibrates. In this sense, the creation and aesthetics of *The Rite* can be interpreted as an aesthetic reservoir that precedes and anticipates the surrealist logic, which continuously defers meaning and activates unconscious resonances.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored how the rhythmic structure of *The Rite of Spring*, through its mythical nature and ritualistic representation, may constitute a precursor to the surrealist aesthetic, particularly in its engagement with the unconscious. This approach draws attention to the unpredictable, discontinuous, and intuitive nature of artistic and human processes. In this framework, *The Rite* and surrealism have been considered through their intersection with psychoanalysis. From this perspective, *The Rite*, in terms of its aesthetic and societal impact at the time, is interpreted as establishing an indirect link with surrealism's impulse to confront the unconscious and dismantle rational unities. Beyond psychoanalytic references to the unconscious, The Rite's innovative musical techniques and aesthetics are evaluated as producing a generative field of unresolved tension. In this regard, it can be seen as a forerunner to the aesthetic-philosophical critique of rationalist epistemologies that is inherent to surrealism's unique dialectic.

The aesthetic-philosophical orientation of *The Rite* has been expanded through the lens of psychic automatism, unconscious

impulses, and ritual representations within the compositional process. This expansion enabled the rethinking of the composer not merely as a constructor of form, but as a permeable subject through whom unconscious contradictions and intuitive drives infiltrate the musical structure. Thus, the musical work is reconfigured as an aesthetic field in which psychic processes are embedded with an indirect yet unsettling immanence. The theoretical and philosophical resonance between *The Rite of Spring* and surrealist aesthetics has been opened to analytic-interpretive inquiry, especially through its manifestation of rhythmic dissonance. The tension–release dialectic in *The Rite* has been approached as a conceptual framework for tracing intuitive and unconscious impulses inherent in the creative act. Within this framework, rhythmic dissonance is interpreted as a spatiotemporal experience of confrontation—an unresolvable, ongoing becoming. In this sense, *The Rite* unfolds within a fluid domain shaped by both conscious and intuitive forces, constituting an alternative mode of thinking. Ultimately, *The Rite of Spring* invites reconsideration as a musical space in which surrealism's core principle of sustained contradiction is realized as an unresolved, intensifying economy of aesthetic density.

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SÜRREALİST ESTETİĞİN ERKEN BİR DENEYİMİ ÜZERİNE: *BAHAR AYİNİ*'Nİ YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK

Öz

Bu çalışma *Bahar Ayini*'ni modernist müziğin yapısal ve estetik sınırlarını zorlayan bir eser olarak ele almakta ve özgül biçimsel ve ritmik düzenlemeleri üzerinden sürrealist estetikle potansiyel yankılarını incelemektedir. Müzik–sanat ilişkisi, doğrusal tarihsel sürekliliğe dayandırılmaksızın, gecikmeli ve kesişimsel yeniden belirişler tarafından şekillenen bir estetik hafıza alanı olarak kavramsallaştırılmaktadır. *Bahar Ayini* ile sürrealist estetik arasındaki geçiş alanı, doğrudan bir aidiyet iddiasında bulunmaksızın, psikanaliz, müzik-estetik kuramları ve felsefi yansıtım yoluyla çerçevelenmektedir; amaç, bilinçdışı süreçlerle müzikal form arasındaki yankısal etkileşimi araştırmaktır. Bu bağlamda ritmik ve biçimsel yapılar, estetik ve psişik gerilimin yüzeyleri olarak yorumlanmaktadır. *Somatheme* kavramından hareketle yapılan çözümleme, bilinçdışı itkilerin ritmik yapılarda nasıl iz bırakabileceğini takip eder. Disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşımla çalışma, modernite ve onun kültürel artalanı bağlamında müzikal form ve anlam üzerine düşünmenin alternatif bir yolunu sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modernite, Psikanaliz, Diyalektik, Estetik, Somathemes.