

Repetition and difference

Variation as a double

A quick glance is enough to see that repetition in tonal music is more than a practice, it is the very condition of music's possibility. Everything repeats, notes, motifs, phrases, harmonic structures, rhythmic patterns, melodic substrates, everything in incessant variation.

The problem is how to understand variation. Is there variation of a model (rhythmic, melodic, harmonic)? Or is the variation the model? Is there a repetition of the Identical? The question will be how variation can cross that formal procedure that always wants to refer it back to an initial model, crossing it to make it work the other way around. What we're talking about is making the One refer to the multiplicity of variation.

The double, a term used so often in the 18th century to refer to variation, is not a copy. It doesn't belong to the more or less disguised becoming of the Same. The double is a new becoming. The musical variation that interests us does not respond to principles of sameness and identity. It is a continuous return and repetition of difference. Or that's what we're asking.

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4 musicians

historic bagpipe/recorder/baroque flute, harpsichord, theorbo, viola da gamba

Rochers je ne veux point
Le beau berger Tircis

Jacques Martin Hotteterre (1674-1763)
Airs et brunettes

Suspendez vos regrets plaintive Tourterelle
Touy qui sçus consoler
Songés vous a ces instans
Iris, si vous volez charmer

JeanBaptiste de Bousset (1662-1725)
VII Recüeil d'airs nouveaux

Une jeune pucelle

Pierre Dandrieu (1664 – 1733)
Noëls. O filii, chansons de Saint Jacques, Stabat mater, et carillons

Rochers vous etes sourds
L'autre jour ma Cloris

Jacques Martin Hotteterre (1674-1763)
Airs et brunettes

Je suis chramé d'une Brune
La bergere Celimene
J'aime un brun depuis un jour
Berger prens soin de mon Troupeau

Michel Pignolet de Monteclair (1667-1737)
Brunettes Anciennes et modernes

More information

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