



Emília Araújo & Eduardo Duque (eds.) (2012)
Os tempos sociais e o mundo contemporâneo. Um debate para as ciências sociais e humanas
Universidade do Minho: Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade / Centro de Investigação em
Ciências Sociais
ISBN: 978-989-8600-07-3

El Sistema: a subjectivity of time discipline

GUSTAVO BORCHET

University of Glasgow

gustavo@gborchert.com

Abstract:

The creation of a youth symphony orchestra by the economist, former politician and passionate music practitioner José Antonio Abreu, in the late seventies, has evolved into a social initiative overwhelmingly acclaimed by the general public and legitimated by a large number of world institutional powers that has more recently spread to many other parts of the globe. El Sistema, as it is commonly known, seeks to socially include poor communities around the world by promoting music education focused on the experience of symphonic performance. This article critically approaches the Venezuelan program by discussing the subjectivities surrounding the symphony orchestra that made it symbolically representative of the ideals of discipline and productivity according to the social rationality of industrial capitalism. Moreover, it defends the preponderant role of the modern construct of linear time, fundamental for such rationality, in the disciplining of intuition in symphonic performance..

Keywords:

El Sistema, symphony orchestra, time, intuition, modernism, performance

Introduction

The dynamic set by rapid industrialization during the first half of the nineteenth century in Western Europe yielded the emergence of new institutional forms that eventually spread to other parts of the world. Whilst being materializations of the rhythm of modernity, such institutional forms dialectically functioned as instruments to reinforce a social rationality based on the modern linear perception of time. From this same dynamic, the symphony orchestra arose as an artistic institution that has endured deep cultural changes up to the present day.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the orchestra had matured into its current format seen throughout the world's concert halls. A number of subjectivities surrounding the symphonic concert that emerged during the same period defined much of the ritual that took place in the space of the bourgeois theater. Bigger in size, with its repertoire gradually consecrated and reified in the fixed score, both of which were legitimized by the myth of authenticity fiercely re-enforced by the omniscient figure of the *maestro* – the personification of the 'law' which strictly dictated the conduct of musicians and the audience, the symphony

orchestra came to represent the ideals of discipline and production in industrializing society. Nevertheless, such ideals relied on a construct without which the new goals of production and accumulation would not have thrived – linear time. Moreover, as the foundation for the process of commodification, a process from which music was not spared, the modern construct of time gradually permeated Western musical practice and consequently the ritual of the classical concert, yielding a new synergy to orchestral performance in which spaces for the exercise of free intuition became scarce.

On the path to 'global' capitalism, one of the new social roles assumed by the orchestra has given new life to its symbolic value. The subjectivities that have legitimated it in modern Western society have been revived in the discourse of an initiative born in Venezuela, known as El Sistema, which seeks to fight the devastating consequences of social exclusion in urban impoverished areas with music programs focused on the collective practice of the symphonic ensemble. The initiative has not only been overwhelmingly acclaimed by the general public but has also gained wide support from world institutional powers. Moreover, in the recent years El Sistema has been implemented in socially and economically troubled communities in a number of countries.

This article critically addresses El Sistema's proposal by comparing the program's institutional discourse with the subjectivities surrounding the symphony orchestra and its model of performance that conferred much of its symbolic, 'universal' value in modern society, among which is the construct of linear time.

Brief History of El Sistema

In the mid-seventies, José Antonio Abreu, a Venezuelan politician, economist specialized in petroleum, and a passionate music practitioner, had the idea to create a youth symphony orchestra in response to the lack of opportunities for young Venezuelan classical musicians to perform.

From its inaugural rehearsal with eleven participants in a garage in the city of Caracas, the group rapidly grew with the addition of other young musicians from different parts of the country. The initiative readily evolved into the first National Symphony Youth Orchestra of Venezuela, which less than one year after its creation was acclaimed at the Festival of Youth Orchestras in Aberdeen, Scotland.

José Antonio Abreu, however, had a much more ambitious goal than simply creating a symphonic ensemble for young musicians; he envisioned the orchestra as an instrument for social transformation. Abreu believed that the experience of orchestral performance nurtured a sense of cooperation, solidarity and collectivity among poor communities helping them to overcome their deteriorated condition. In the words of José Abreu (in Majno, 2012: 62) himself, 'I do not just want to train better musicians – I want to form better people'. This idea, thus, took the orchestra from the limits of the bourgeois theatre to the complex reality of Venezuela's socially demised *barrios*.

The international recognition gained by the Venezuelan youth orchestra during the Aberdeen festival, the local reputation acquired in the group's performances in Caracas, together with Abreu's idealism, eloquence and political influence, made then-President Carlos André Pérez embrace the initiative. However, the social character of Abreu's idea fell

outside the scope of a simple artistic institution; the role played by the orchestra went well beyond the musical functions expected from a regular symphonic ensemble. In order to avoid the commonly elitist policies of cultural government institutions, Abreu's program was thus placed under the Ministry of Youth at the time, keeping consistent with his vision of the symphony orchestra as an instrument to change society.

In 1979, the Foundation for the National Youth Symphony was established by the Venezuelan State with the purpose of promoting high quality music education and facilitating the program's access to institutional funds necessary for its maintenance. A couple of years after the creation of the *Fundación del Estado para el Sistema Nacional de Orquestas Juveniles e Infantiles de Venezuela (FESNOJIV)* in 1996¹, which aimed at spurring and developing youth orchestras in the country, as well as fostering their members' training, El Sistema entered a phase of significant expansion, and despite more recent institutional changes, it keeps growing at an ever faster pace.

Structure

In over three decades of its existence, the Venezuelan program has assisted more than two million children in a country of almost 30 million people and it currently has about 370,000 students enrolled in various community-based centers spread throughout Venezuela.

A center, or *núcleo* as it is commonly known, constitutes the cell of El Sistema's structure. There are approximately 285 núcleos (FundamMusical Bolívar, 2012d) in Venezuela, and they function as community programs offering free music education to socially deprived children and adolescents. Although El Sistema is essentially an all-inclusive program, about 70% to 90% of the participants come from lower social strata (Tunstall, 2012: 36). They are selected according to their socioeconomic situation or any special condition such as belonging to a minority group (IADB, 2007: 27).

El Sistema is primarily funded by the Venezuelan State, a partnership that has endured several administrations from diverse political spectrums. Aside from government support, the program receives monetary help from private donators, as well as from world political and financial institutions. In the past decade, El Sistema's budget has consistently increased, going from the US\$ 61.2 million in 2006, of which 91% came from the Venezuelan government (IADB, 2007: 4), to US\$ 120 million in 2010 (Tunstall, 2012: 36). A loan of US\$150 million was granted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in 2007 for the expansion of the program – a scheme guaranteed by Venezuela's oil export revenue. The financial help aims at increasing the number of youngsters enrolled in the program from 245.353 to 500.000 by the year 2015 (IADB, 2007: 2).

In 1995, José Antonio Abreu was appointed by UNESCO as a special delegate for the development of a world system of youth and children's orchestras and choirs (FundamMusical Bolívar, 2012a). Since then, El Sistema has been expanding swiftly and not only in its home country. The goal of promoting the Venezuelan program around the globe has become a

¹ In 2011, FESNOJIV was renamed as *Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar* (FundamMusical Bolívar).

tangible reality in the past years as over 25 countries, from 'developing' economies to prominent ones, have adopted it – all generally modeled after El Sistema's method and goal: To use the symphony orchestra as a tool for social transformation.

Throughout the years, El Sistema has been overwhelmingly validated by a number of world institutional political powers as a transformational program. Its unanimous recognition has also come from relevant corporations in the music industry. Approximately fifty-nine awards and distinctions have been conferred to the program's creator, José Antonio Abreu, recognizing his successful initiative, among which are the *Echo Klassic Special Prize* from the Cultural Institute of the German Music Industry Association, 2011; the Technology, Entertainment, and Design (TED) Prize, 2009; the Foundation for Ethics and Economics Blue Planet Award, 2008; the UNICEF National Goodwill Ambassador, 2004; Order of Merit of The World Future Society, 2003; the UNESCO Artists for Peace, 1998; UNESCO International Music Prize, 1993 (FundamMusical Bolívar, 2012a).

Further legitimizing the program, these institutions have enthusiastically praised El Sistema for providing children and youngsters 'with inspiration and a new social context', for 'creating a future for music', 'for founding (...) a program that has provided thousands of Venezuelans youngsters with the tools to leave poverty', 'for serving as a model for other countries', for 'making the wish come true' and 'for spreading harmony throughout the world' (FundamMusical Bolívar, 2012a).

In his TED Prize acceptance speech, Abreu spoke of his wish to create a pedagogical program to form teachers in the El Sistema method, an idea on which a group of American musicians and educators had already been working. During a visit to the New England Conservatory in 2007, Abreu expressed his excitement about forming a partnership with the NEC, as well as other American institutions. In a speech that perhaps more closely resembled the Monroe Doctrine discourse of 'America for the Americas' than the recent political talk between the Venezuela of Hugo Chávez and the United States, Abreu (in Tunstall, 2012: 143) went on to state that 'the New World (...) is nothing less than all three Americas. And so what we are in the process of creating is really an expression of a new, transcontinental social and musical culture'. In 2009, such a partnership was sealed with the launching of the NEC's postgraduate program to form teachers in El Sistema's method – the Abreu Fellows Program. Despite the NEC's subsequent withdrawal from its commitment, this drawback does not seem to have significantly shaken the program's structure: At the time, there were already 40 núcleos running in the United States, and the formation of an El Sistema USA Professional Association is currently under way. More recently, Bard College in New York, the Longy School of Music and the Los Angeles Philharmonic have joined forces and created a Master's program also based on El Sistema's methodology.

Although the first years of El Sistema in the United States were somehow turbulent, nothing really seems to get in the way of the program's ever-faster pace of global expansion. As a matter of fact, El Sistema's long life, according to its institutional discourse, can be explained by the capacity of the program to promptly respond to adversities; or in the words of its founder, more in line with contemporary ideology: To adjust to the '(...) ever-changing circumstances of the modern world' (Abreu in *El Sistema*, 2009). Such capacity, supposedly due to the often-proclaimed flexible character of its pedagogical model, may be

suggested by the program's incursion into new social spaces: In 2007, a pilot program put the symphony orchestra 'behind bars'; the idea seeks to use the transformational power of ensemble playing to reduce violence in prisons, as well as to re-socialize inmates.

Methodology

Given such worldwide acclamation, one might begin to wonder what differences separate El Sistema's methodological model from other music educational programs.

Despite the fact that the Venezuelan program has expanded its curriculum to include other genres such as regional folk music and jazz, El Sistema is essentially a classical music program. What then makes it apparently so different from other programs? The answer may seem obvious from the perspective of its organizers: El Sistema is a socially committed initiative; in reality, it has never intended to be a regular music program. It seeks to transform society by offering music education to the excluded lower stratum. Music, therefore, is presented as a tool for social transformation; a way of enhancing human capital and, thus, overcoming poverty.

However, El Sistema does not strictly follow the average curriculum adopted by the majority of conservatories. Neither can it be said that the perception of broadening access to music education may yield positive social results is, per se, an original idea. What, in fact, makes El Sistema somehow distinct from other programs is, as put by the prominent American educator and El Sistema USA consultant Eric Booth (2010: 5), its 'ensemble-all-the-time pedagogy'. According to the program, 'the backbone of El Sistema student training is preparation for participation in orchestral ensembles, which are at the soul of the Núcleo community and culture' (Fundamusical Bolívar, 2012b). In Venezuela, 'the words "núcleo" and "orchestra" are often used interchangeably', explains Tricia Tunstall, a music educator and author of *Changing Lives, Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music* (200).

Although El Sistema has been around since the mid-seventies, popular music only made it into the curriculum in 2006, when adopted by the núcleos *Calabozo Antonio Estévez and San Juan de Los Morros* (Fundamusical Bolívar, 2012c). However, a clear sign of how much Western classical tradition permeates El Sistema's pedagogy is found in a comment by Bolivia Bettome, director of institutional development and international affairs, when addressing the concern over the possible disappearance of the Venezuelan's folk traditions due to the program's emphasis on classical music:

'As Sistema musicians have worked within the folk idiom, new and more complex versions of the traditional musics [sic] have evolved. It's become kind of our own, particularly [sic] Venezuelan chamber music'. (Bettome in Tunstall, 2012: 183)

Students are accepted in the program as early as pre-school age, when the activities are especially designed for the children to start developing their rhythmic sense. To keep consistent with its pedagogy, the introductory classes are also seen as an opportunity to introduce the children to the classical music universe, one of which they will soon be part once joining the orchestras. Thus, paying honor to the hall of 'the great classical composers',

these small introductory groups are named *Baby Mozart*, *Baby Corelli*, *Baby Haydn*, *Baby Vivaldi* (Tunstall 2012: 157).

Still before being introduced to musical instruments, the children join the 'paper orchestras', a kind of ensemble simulation in which they start developing body movement awareness, learning how to hold an instrument, as well as how to position themselves in reference to the conductor – all by playing with *papier mâché*-made violins, violas, etc. As suggested by Eric Booth (2008: 4), this is also used as an opportunity for the children to be introduced to '(...) the music they will be playing in few years'.

As repeatedly pointed out by El Sistema's organizers, the program does not have a rigid methodology. It does not adopt one specific existing method of music education, allowing the núcleos to adapt the lessons according to student and community necessities.

By the age of seven, the pupils start their instrumental instruction. However, with ensemble playing as the core of El Sistema's proposal, the preparation for becoming part of the núcleo's orchestra begins even before. Throughout every stage of their music education, whether singing, playing on the recorder, or on the instrument of their choice, students are constantly in touch with the orchestral repertoire. Whereas the program is flexible with regard to its methodology, its curriculum is, to a certain extent, consistent among the núcleos around the country, allowing for the interchangeability of pupils between ensembles. In some specific sessions children learn '*the kind of discipline practice that prepares*' for the orchestra (Tunstall, 2012: 161, my emphasis). In those occasions, 'the teacher is as ruthless as any symphony conductor about their entrances and cutoffs being exactly, precisely together' (Tunstall, 2012: 163).

In the words of El Sistema's deputy director for institutional development and international affairs, the program's '(...) pedagogy has thus far focused more on performing than on creating music' (Rodrigo Guerrero in Tunstall, 2012: 35). El Sistema's foremost focus on symphonic performance is remarked by a flutist member, who explains that the difference between American traditional conservatories and El Sistema is that the primary goal of the former is to prepare soloists, whereas of the latter is to create orchestras (Tunstall, 2012: 148). As one might wonder, what is in the institution of the symphony orchestra that makes it the heart and soul of the Venezuelan social inclusive program? For David Ascanio (in Tunstall, 2012: 71), a concert pianist and a former El Sistema teacher, it is not just about children playing music, but the orchestra giving a sense of life to young people, in the deepest possible way'. According to Jessica Balboni (in Tunstall, 2012: 138 and 139), former L.A. Philharmonic director of educational initiatives, playing in orchestras '(...) can give children a strong sense of their own efficacy in the world'. For José Antonio Abreu (*Crashendo!*, 2012), the founding father of El Sistema, 'an orchestra is a community where the essential and exclusive feature is that it is the only community that comes together with the fundamental objective of agreeing with itself. Agree on what? To create beauty...'.

Social Rationality

As stressed by José Antonio Abreu (in Tunstall, 2012: 71), El Sistema '(...)' is not an artistic program but a human development program through music. Why, then, is El Sistema so overwhelmingly acclaimed as an effective social program?

To *Play and To Fight*, El Sistema's maxim, suggests the program's struggle to create an opportunity for the socially excluded population of Venezuela's deprived barrios to overcome poverty. However, the fight against inequality is far from easy to win. Notwithstanding the fact that Venezuela's Human Development Index has risen since the 1980's, the country's deep inequality does not differ much from Latin America's overall situation. Venezuela's oil abundance vis-à-vis the living condition of the majority of its population resembles the common pattern that has haunted the continent since its colonization; a pattern in which scarcity in the lower stratum is not the result of the country's lack of resources, but a situation sustained by an ever-enforced policy of unequal distribution of wealth. According to the United Nations, Venezuela's HDI has gone up from 0.582, in the 1980's, to 0.731 today, which places the country in the so-considered high level. However, when adjusted according to its inequality, this number drops down to 0.540 (UNDP, 2011). In the first half of 2006, when Venezuela's HDI was already considered high, poverty affected 33.9% of the households and extreme poverty 10.6%. By the time El Sistema applied for the IADB loan, over 70% of the country's youth lived under such conditions (IADB, 2007: 3).

For José Abreu, El Sistema's pedagogy positively affects three fundamental spheres of life. First, it improves the personal-social level by contributing to the enhancement of self-esteem and confidence. Second, the work in the orchestra or choir provides the child 'with a noble identity and makes him a role model for his family and community' (Abreu in TED, 2009). The pupil becomes 'a better student (...) because it inspires in him a sense of responsibility, perseverance and punctuality that will greatly help him at school' (Abreu in TED, 2009). The third effect is that the participants and the surrounding community, by sharing the 'spiritual world that music produces in itself, which also lies within itself' (Abreu in TED, 2009), can overcome material poverty.

Although El Sistema's proposal is founded on Abreu's highly idealized understanding of music as the number one antidote against 'prostitution, violence, bad habits, and everything degrading in the life of a child' (Abreu in TED, 2009), a much more pragmatic rationality, however, seems to underlie the program's ideology. As overly stressed by its institutional discourse, the positive impact of its pedagogy is reflected in the enhancement of the participant's productivity outside of the program. Based on such rationale, El Sistema estimates that by the end of its expansion plan in 2015 the school dropout rate will have decreased from 6.9% to 3% with a 3% increase in attendance. According to the IADB loan proposal, for every dollar spent on the program, US\$1.34 is returned in social dividends, which staves off future social problems such as drug and alcohol abuse, as well as violent crimes (Sistema Australia, 2012a). As a general result, by 2015 poverty should have fallen from 59% to 55%. Nevertheless, El Sistema's discourse around productivity is reiterated by the program's prediction of a 9.3% increase in individuals working in the formal sector as an effect of its expansion (IADB, 2007, Annex 1: 1).

The program statistics go even further to demonstrate El Sistema's favorable cost-benefit relationship. Still according to the IADB proposal, the cost of a participant in the program is less than half of the cost of a student attending school for the same amount of hours (2007: 24). Moreover, as put by the organization, El Sistema is cheaper than any other type of extracurricular activity that would assist the same number of participants, for the same amount of time, yielding the same results (IADB, 2007: 23). Comparing the program with other alternatives, El Sistema USA's consultant Eric Booth (2010: 11) argues that:

'Indeed sports may be able to make a similar case for a high functioning community, and yet sports tend not to show such radical improvement in short periods of time, cannot embrace 200 players on a team, and do not take on the variety of challenges found in an orchestral repertoire.'

Although Venezuelan social spending per-capita does not differ much from other countries in the region, its social development rate appears to be higher, which is possible thanks to the wide spread of music education in the country, according to the IADB proposal (2007: 3).

El Sistema's appealing statistics are, nevertheless, mere predictions strongly dependent on a favorable macroeconomic situation, 'without a collapse in international oil prices or any other significant external shock' (IADB, 2007, Annex 1: 3) that could affect Venezuela's economy. Despite some positive numbers that pointed to a better performance of its participants in school, the program's overall optimistic claims are not substantiated by any sign of change in the social structure of the Venezuelan society since the creation of El Sistema. The explanation for any prospective favorable outcome sounds quite idealistic, which suggests that El Sistema tries to compensate the lack of clearer evidence of its effectiveness with an eloquent rhetoric based on absolute claims.

Such claims are often pronounced by the program's supporters. For Abreu (in Booth, 2008: 11), 'material poverty can be completely overcome by spiritual richness'. 'The vicious cycle of poverty', as he explains, 'can be broken when a child in poor material possessions acquires spiritual wealth through music' (Abreu in Tunstall, 2012: xii). Still in his views, only art, besides religion, can provide an answer to what he sees as a current 'world spiritual crisis'. Art, thus, is capable of responding 'to mankind's deepest aspirations and [to the] historic demands of our time' (Abreu in Sistema Australia, 2012b). The orchestra, the core element around which El Sistema's pedagogy orbits, assumes a much broader role than of just an artistic institution. In the words of Abreu (in Tunstall, 2012: xii), the nuclei's symphony orchestras are '(...) examples and schools of social life'. They constitute new ideal spaces, microcosms of social harmony made possible by the high values intrinsic to the Western classical repertoire acquired by the participants.

El Sistema is then founded on the premise that 'teaching children to play orchestral music together can save lives and heal societies' (Tunstall, 2012: 270). The program is perceived by Tricia Tunstall (2012: xii) as '(...) a form of re-creating social life and challenging poverty through music.'² Such statements, however, are founded on the

² El Sistema in fact attempts to produce an ideal social environment. Every step is taken in the núcleos to create a classless perception (Tunstall: 172).

preconception that the re-creation of social life is achieved through beauty as experienced in the orchestra; as put by Eric Booth (2010: 12), ‘the experience of beauty expands the definition of beauty, makes it more inclusive, which enables us to actually see a more beautiful world in which we live’. For Booth (2010: 11), ‘spending thousands of hours throughout the growing years dedicated in unselfish, full collaborative commitment to the power of creating excellence and beauty together seems to create healthy individuals’.

Although El Sistema has proven to be pretty successful in training high-quality Western classical musicians throughout the years, its overwhelming acclamation is a result of its supposed effective method to fight the devastating consequences of a problem that has significantly worsened in many regions of the globe in the past thirty years or so, namely, social exclusion. A large number of world-renown institutions and authorities have praised El Sistema as the ultimate tool for rescuing long-marginalized communities. This is in fact an idea that permeates the whole initiative, as Rafael Elster (in Tunstall, 2012: 35) again remarks: ‘most of the kids won’t be musicians. But they will be citizens’. A question, nevertheless, is still left to be answered: what does the program understand a citizen to be?

For Dalouge Smith (in Eger, 2012), CEO of the San Diego Youth Symphony, ‘El Sistema is really a new way of thinking about music education. It is about building a community and productive citizens through the group experience of ensemble and orchestra’. Once again, the idea of productivity seems constant throughout El Sistema’s institutional discourse; it is commonly evoked to punctuate the program’s effectiveness as a social inclusive initiative. According to FundaMusical Bolívar’s discourse, the improvement of the participant’s performance in other spheres of social life is made possible thanks to specific skills acquired in the orchestral practice. Such argument is often evoked to justify the emphasis given to Western classical tradition as opposed to any other musical genre or even non-musical activities; the symphony orchestra can provide the students with social skills that will serve as a way out of poverty.

In the Inter-American Development Bank proposal (2007: 8), El Sistema is said to have transcended ‘the artistic world to become a social development project that aspires to imbue citizens from a very early age with civic values and teamwork (...)’. Still according to the document, the program is capable of improving human capital by training individuals in good behavior (IADB, 2007: Summary and 5). The proposal’s vague notions of ‘civic values’ and ‘good behavior’ seem to be linked by El Sistema’s ideological discourse to the concepts of discipline, punctuality and responsibility – behavioral improvements not only emphasized by the program, but often reported by the parents of participants (IADB, 2007: 5). Indeed discipline and productivity seem to be widely acknowledged, as well as unanimously praised, as a key feature of El Sistema’s pedagogy. Lennar Acosta (in Tunstall, 2012: 29), director of the Los Chorros núcleo, explaining the program’s dynamic says that ‘(...) everything is provided by El Sistema. All we ask of them is that they learn to be disciplined. To be respectful. And to be excellent’.

When trying to explain how the key element in El Sistema’s pedagogy – the symphony orchestra – promotes the skills believed to be necessary for the inclusion of poor communities, the various positive discourses about the program again seem to hold on firmly to vague claims. For Tricia Tunstall (2012: 175), the orchestra is ‘(...) a model for social

life in which collective goals and high individual ideals are synergistically related'. However diffuse, such argumentation is never unaccompanied by the assertion over the disciplining force of the symphonic performance. By being part of the ensemble, Tunstall (2012: 175) explains, 'children are simultaneously learning the discipline they will need to be successful orchestral musicians and the social and emotional skills that will make them successful in family and community life'. Following the same line, for Abreu (in Tunstall, 2012: 70) the orchestra is a 'model of community' because besides promoting solidarity, it teaches 'social discipline'. In an attempt to explain this assumption, El Sistema's founder goes even further trying to establish an analogy between musical performance and society:

'(...) to sing and to play together means to intimately coexist toward perfection and excellence, following a strict discipline of organization and coordination in order to seek the harmonic interdependence of voices and instruments. That's how they build a spirit of solidarity and fraternity among them, develop their self-esteem and foster the ethical and aesthetical values related to the music in all its senses' (Abreu in TED, 2009).

Subjectivities Surrounding the Symphony Orchestra

José Antonio Abreu (TED, 2009) sees the program's symphony orchestras as 'creative spaces wherein new personal and social meanings are constructed'. The orchestra, since its appearance at the end of the seventeenth century, has gradually been conceptualized as 'a new kind of social organization' (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 507), and as such, it has assumed different symbolic values throughout the centuries. A number of metaphors have been used to refer to the ensemble, and each one of them spoke closely to the values and ideals held by the society of the period in question.

The symphony orchestra – the central element in El Sistema's pedagogy – is seen, according to the program's discourse, as a community in which people are brought together by the common goal of creating beauty. 'Participating in beauty', as put by Booth (2010: 13), 'gives us a location, with others, beyond literal, beyond material scarcity, inside eternal truths and aspirations, in a community that creates meaning in harmony with great creators from the past and present who are our colleagues, our friends'.

The metaphor of the orchestra as an idealized community dates far back to the late eighteenth century. It emerged from the efforts to instill its musicians with a sense of collectivity; an attempt to relegate every trace of individuality and yield to the common goal of a good performance (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 394). The ensemble's assumed harmonious character, a construct of the same period, emerged from frequent associations between the orchestra and nature seen as imbued with a sublime condition.

Although associated with an ideal of community, the orchestra throughout the eighteenth century resembled a caricature of court life (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 342). Towards the period of the French Revolution, the ensemble was associated with the ideals of cooperation and education (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 514). Later, in post-revolutionary France, a number of musical institutions dedicated to the education of the working-class

spread out as an attempt by the State to change the life-style of the lower classes without necessarily altering the current social structure (Weber, 1975: 93).

With the boom of concert life in the main European capitals at the turn of the nineteenth century, the orchestra underwent significant changes in its structure, evolving eventually into the contemporary format known nowadays. It gradually incorporated new symbolic meanings, among which 'as a large-scale, unified organization with centralized leadership that signified the wealth, power and legitimacy of the ruler and the state' (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 529). In the first half of the century, public musical events in France were also seen as a tool for taming the morals of the working class and keeping them off the barricades (Weber, 1975: 110). The size of the orchestras gradually grew during this period in comparison to that of their counterparts in the Classical period. Such big ensembles were featured in 'monster concerts played for larger and socially more diverse audiences' than orchestras in previous periods. Interestingly enough, these giant orchestras, ranging in some cases from 400 to 1000 musicians, would play the same repertory – from Palestrina, Handel and Gluck to Berlioz – executed before by smaller groups. 'In their size and their complexity they represented the wealth and the organizational capacities of an emerging industrial society' (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 338).

Whereas in the eighteenth century the orchestra resembled the life of the courts, in the second half of the nineteenth century the symphonic ensemble proved itself to be an institution that would persevere a number of social changes yet to come.

The transformations in the structure of the symphony orchestra seen in the nineteenth century significantly affected symphonic performance. A new regime of discipline arose from the changes that occurred during the process of the institutionalization of the symphonic ensemble. Such regime, however, was not limited to the space of the concert theatre and represented the intensification of deep and gradual transformations in society that followed the end of the Middle Ages. The effusive emotional manifestations seen in eighteenth century audiences were gradually replaced by an introspective mode of behavior (Vincent-Buffault, 1986). A new type of sensibility arose from the social dynamic of the period; emotive outbursts were supplanted by a rationalized way of experiencing sentiments (Vincent-Buffault, 1986).

The new regime of discipline was imposed upon every participant in the 'ritual' of the concert – from the audience to the musicians. Such discipline was enforced with the help of a new character whose function became symbolic of order: the maestro. The former timekeeper, once part of the orchestra, ceased playing and became a silent musician whose job was to create '(...) the order needed to avoid chaos in production' (Attali, 1985: 67). His authority was not only exerted over the ensemble, but was also extended to the audience, who started being educated in the new norms of conduct (during this period, attendees started being fiercely reprimanded for clapping between the movements of the musical piece). As put by Elias Canetti (1962: 395), 'the immobility of the audience is as much part of the conductor's design as the obedience of the orchestra'. By the mid-nineteenth century, such figure was paradoxically perceived by the general audience as the co-creator of the music being played (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 341). This perception is suggested by the romantic composer Hector Berlioz, who saw the orchestras as 'machines endowed with

intelligence but subjected to the action of an immense keyboard played by the conductor under the direction of the composer' (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 521). Canetti offers an interesting view about the subjective construction around the authority figure imbued by the *maestro*.

'He is omniscient (...). (...) His attention is everywhere at once, and it is to this that he owes a large part of his authority. He is inside the mind of every player. (...) He is the living embodiment of law, both positive and negative. His hands decree and prohibit. His ears search out profanation' (Canetti, 1962: 396).

The emergence of the conductor, along with subjectivities that legitimated his authority, had a great impact on the synergy of the ensemble. The changes had widespread effects that went from the disposition of the musicians on stage to the loss of their autonomy over interpretation. In reality, the 'stripping' of the musician's ascendance over their musical parts was the result of a broader transformative dynamic. Starting in the eighteenth century, as the orchestra gradually underwent structural changes, the legitimacy of improvisation in concert music became a heated debate. Gradually, the extra notes in the form of ornaments frequently heard in concert performances were seen with much skepticism due to the impracticality of their use by larger ensembles. As the number of musicians grew, precision, as well as synchronicity, became an issue that had to be taken into serious consideration. Although such concern was indeed the object of much justifiable debate, the disappearance of improvisation in classical music was the result of a much longer and deeper transformational process that cannot be abstracted from the establishment of capitalism in Western society. As commerce and accumulation started dictating much of our culture's dynamic, it did not take too long for music to become one more aspect of life to enter into the stream of commodification.

The increasing concern over the standardization of technical aspects such as bowing, dynamics, intonation, together with the suppression of embellishments, led to a more uniform type of performance. The instrumentalists of a symphony orchestra started being seen as a members of a social group sharing a common goal, and as a theorist from that period explains it, 'people in a social group communicate their feelings through the power and unity of their expression. (...) A ripieno part must be played in exactly the same way by all the musicians who communally perform it' (Heinrich Christoph Koch in Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 394). Thus, power and exactness became the main concern of an orchestra musician (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 394) (characteristics often highlighted in performances of El Sistema's orchestras by commentators, such as a journalist who described the precision of the Venezuelan youth ensembles as '(...) almost a machinelike' (Wakin, 2012: 2)).

However, as pointed out by Spitzer and Zaslav, these changes followed a broader disciplining tendency seen at the dawn of the nineteenth century that reinforced social behaviors such as sobriety, uniform dress, neatness, as well as punctuality. By the second half of the century, the practice of improvisation in Western classical music had disappeared, and a new subjectivity that emphasized fidelity to the composers' original intent legitimized the idea of text fixity – all of which paved the path for the perennial 'celebratory procession' of the Western canon of great musical works.

The uniform character of the symphonic ritual that emerged in the nineteenth century is not only restricted to the repertoire and the instrumentation required to play such works, but as it should seem obvious to the frequent spectator of those events nowadays, it is also flagrant in the orchestra's dress code, the posture of the players on stage before, during, and after the performance, the audience's behavior, as well as the interaction between all the participants involved. All of which speaks intimately to the ideology industrial society; such characteristics reiterate the idea of interchangeability of people as with commodities in capitalist societies (Small, 1996: 86).

As modernity increased its pace into the second half of the nineteenth century, changing life in European capitals, symphonic concerts became 'the most important foundation for the unified elite within musical life' (Weber, 1975: 44). A new web of meanings redefined the symphonic ensemble; as Spitzer and Zaslav (2004: 384) explain:

'a disciplined orchestra was no longer an aggregation of individuals making music in parallel; it was a single social unit, audibly and visibly acting as a group. Orchestral discipline functioned both as a means to an end, the successful performance of ensemble music, and as an end in itself, a demonstration of the power of social unity.'

The Symphony Orchestra and the Modern Construct of Time

An important change in the perception of the symphony orchestra is brought out by Spitzer and Zaslav; the new metaphors used to describe the ensemble in the nineteenth century no longer made reference to a group of people.

'As the orchestra developed and matured as an institution, it was perceived less as an aggregation of individuals, more as a single impersonal entity, sometimes superhuman, sometimes subhuman, but characteristically non- or even inhuman. By the mid-nineteenth century the orchestra had become a thing' (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 525).

It is indeed not a surprise that under the cultural dynamic of industrialization such an emphasis on precision, exactness and power could only lead to associations like the one made by a commentator at the time, for whom 'the individuals in an orchestra (...) must unite into a "single mechanical body"' (Ignaz Ferdinand Cajetan Arnold in Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 396). However, such mechanical character seen in the symphonic performance was often associated with a type of 'device' whose popularization in the eighteenth century was indicative of deeper changes in the life of Western society: the clock.

At the turn of the Renaissance, a new perception of time began to emerge from the new social dynamic that gradually permeated the routine of all individuals. As commercial activities increased and capitalist relations of production were slowly established, the cyclical character of agrarian societal life faded away. By the late eighteenth century, the geometrical perception that had organized social life since the Renaissance was superseded by a new construct of linear evolution, for which time and movement became more important than space, according to the German sociologist Henning Eichberg (in Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 527).

As a socially conditioned activity, music was not spared from the transformations of that period. The eighteenth century saw the consolidation of tonal harmony, turning a new page in the process of Western music rationalization. The concept of linear time came to be represented in Western classical music by the 'game' of tension and release of harmonic progression, the motivic development of melody and the new musical forms. As precisely pointed out by Christopher Small (1996: 88):

'The proliferation of clocks, watches and time-checks in our society bears witness to a need, certainly over and above the actual requirements of everyday affairs, to know what time it is; articulative devices in music such as introductions, perorations, transitions, recapitulations, as well as whole temporal structures such as sonata, rondo, da capo aria and so on, are all devices for helping us to keep our bearings on time.'

Gradually, the new time construct dictated much of the social dynamic, which imposed a new discipline on the everyday life of individuals. Comparisons between the orchestra and the temporal transformations in society were often made. Again, the symphonic ensemble became symbolic of one more aspect of modernity, and orchestral performance associated with the new pace in social life. In the first half of the nineteenth century, '(...) workers in textile mills or clerks in offices carried out the same tasks side by side with their fellows, though not so closely coordinated in time as orchestra musicians (Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 530). However, the aforementioned aspects of concert music are best synthesized by Johann Nikolaus Forkel (in Spitzer and Zaslav, 2004: 519) at the end of the eighteenth century:

'The music of an orchestra can be considered just like the mechanism of a clock. It stops at the end of each movement, like a clock whose mainspring has unwound or whose weight has reached bottom. To continue operating, each needs to be set in motion again. Setting the tempo for the orchestra at the beginning of a movement is like winding up the musical clock.'

The Symphonic Concert as a Rite

Christopher Small adds an interesting perspective to the idea of personal and social meanings emerged from the dynamic of the symphony orchestra. For him, the whole event of a symphonic performance, from the production to the final social gathering in the space of the concert hall, has a clear ritualistic function. It is a ritual in which ideal relationships are enacted to reaffirm a specific type of social organization. These relationships result from different types of interactions established not only between the individuals participating in the event, but also between them and the whole apparatus involved in the making of the spectacle. All of which is sustained by a symbolic economy of values and beliefs shared in our culture and present in every single aspect of the musical happening. The reenactment of idealized social relations during a Western classical concert represents for Small the reiteration of the dominant values in industrialized societies. To illustrate this assertion Small (1998: 36-37) points out a common, however often overlooked, phenomenon:

'In countries outside the industrial heartland of Europe and the United States of America, an early sign that the conversion to the industrial philosophy and the social relationships that belong to it has taken place and become interiorized is often the takeover of the country's musical culture by Western-style musicking. As the relationships of industrial society take over and a middle class develops that has grown prosperous on the wealth generated by industry, so professional symphony orchestras appear in the major cities, along with opulent centers for the performing arts built to house their performances.'

The symbolic meaning of the symphony orchestra in industrialized societies has also been approached by Jacques Attali (1985: 66), who sees the constitution of the orchestra and its organization as:

'(...) figures of power in the industrial economy. The musicians – who are anonymous and hierarchically ranked, and in general salaried, productive workers – (...) are the image of programmed labor in our society. Each of them produces only a part of the whole having no value in itself.'

Nevertheless, the comparison between the symphonic ensemble and industrial philosophy is refuted by Spitzer and Zaslav, who argue that such analogy would not apply to eighteenth century orchestras. Indeed, early ensembles did not share the same structure of the later ones. Neither were the constructs about them the same as the ones about their nineteenth-century counterparts. Notwithstanding Spitzer and Zaslav's important remark, the analogy established by Small and Attali seems valid for the argument presented in this article as the structure after which El Sistema's orchestras are modeled did not mature before well into the nineteenth century. Such structural model, thus, speaks closer to the changes in society that occurred in this last period.

By the mid-nineteenth century, then, the symphony orchestra became an institution which, despite the more critical approach to Western classical tradition in scholarly works in recent years (not to mention the genre's supposed moribund state as professed by some critics), has managed to keep its prestige among the general public. The ritual of concert music held the values that conferred an identity to the emerging middle class in that period, elevating the symphony orchestra to the top of the musical world's 'hierarchy'. Such ritual is well synthesized by José Miguel Wisnik (1989: 42-43, my translation):

'The inviolability of the written score, the horror of making mistakes, the exclusive use of melodically tuned instruments, the silence demanded from the audience, all makes one hear traditional erudite music as representative of a sonorous drama of melodic-harmonic tones within a chamber of silence, wherein noise would ideally be excluded (the bourgeois concert theater turned out to be this chamber of representation). Such representation depends on the possibility of enclosing a universe of sense within a visible frame, a box of verisimilitude that must be, in the case of music, separated from the paying audience, and ringed in silence. The (free) admission of noise in such a concert would create a continuum between the sonorous scene and the external world that would threaten such representation and would endanger the socially located cosmos in which it [the representation] is practiced (the bourgeois world), where the admission of conflict with the condition of being harmonically resolved is enacted through the constant movement of tension and repose articulated by the tonal cadences.'

The subjectivities described by Wisnik have shaped much of the ritual of classical concert since the nineteenth century. They enforced a new disciplining regime on the musical aesthetic experience from both the perspective of the players, as well as of the audience. Such regime, however, was part of a broader phenomenon; it reflected a new social rationality emerged from industrialization. One factor, though, was determinant to the establishment of the new rationality – the modern concept of linear time. The escalating demands of life in society required a high level of coordination among individuals made possible only by their adjustment to the social rhythm of the period. Gradually, the disciplining force of linear time was felt in every single sphere of life.

Any rite is a type of performance during which values believed to be essential for the survival of a society are reenacted. By celebrating such values it reminds us of who we are, or more precisely, who we believe ourselves to be. To this day, the re-enactment of the symphonic concert within the space of the bourgeois theater symbolically reiterates some of the values that legitimize a specific social rationality. Every ritual shares the function of social cohesion, which, consequently, imbues it with a certain disciplining character. Nevertheless, despite such character, rituals may eventually be broken and subverted, and assume a different meaning.

Richard Schechner (2002) suggests that the act of performing may allow individuals to experience a singular moment during which the performer (or performers) is transported to a different state of mind. Borrowing from Van Gennep's conceptualization of the distinct phases in the rites of passage, Schechner (2002: 57) classifies such state as liminal: '(...) a period of time when a person is "betwixt and between" social categories or personal identities'.

Notwithstanding the cohesive force of the ritual, this so-called liminal state can also yield a form of trance in which behaviors and ties enforced by social conventions may loosen. For Helena Wulff (2006: 126), the liminal phenomenon is an experience of integration, an optimal state during which "mind and body" become fused (...). Wulff sees such state as intensely driven by intuition. Discussing dance performance, she explains that during these moments 'dancers really are "able to move without thinking"' (2006: 137).

The instance of being able 'to move without thinking' is understood by Robert and Michèle Root-Bernstein (1999) as a moment in which intuition, in the form of feelings, momentarily precedes reason. A transitory state strongly guided by imagination, explained by the composer Igor Stravinsky (in Root-Bernstein, 1999: 2) as an 'intuitive grasp of an unknown entity already possessed but not yet intelligible'. Victor Turner (in Schechner, 2002: 57) adds, however, that at the same time that such state, when achieved in a performance, could yield a feeling of collective bond, in a ritualistic context it could conversely represent 'a possibility for ritual to be creative, to make the way for new situations, identities, and social realities' by deconstructing current social structures. Thus, this flux of intuition has the potential to threaten the social cohesive force of a ritual.

Alfred Schultz perceived the interactions between people in music-making as a temporal phenomenon. For him, such moments are instances of 'sharing of the Other's flux of experiences in inner time' and 'experiencing this togetherness as a "We"' (Schultz in Wulff,

2006: 133). Shultz's reference to an 'inner time' experience resonates with Gilles Deleuze's writings on the phenomenon of time. In his collection of essays entitled *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze (1990) draws from the different perceptions of time in classical philosophy to introduce the concept of Aion. According to Deleuze, for the Greeks the idea of time was not merely reduced to chronology, as generally perceived in our culture. A non-linear concept of temporality existed in opposition to Chronos – the sequence of past, present and future. As explained by Deleuze, whereas Chronos is formed by a long present whose recurrent effort is to control our impulses, confining past and future, respectively nostalgia and aspirations, in the idea of now, Aion works as a deconstructive force that acts upon Chronos' extensive present 'with all the power of an instant' (Deleuze 1990: 165). In Deleuze's words:

'Whereas Chronos expressed the action of bodies and the creation of corporeal qualities, Aion is the locus of incorporeal events, and the attributes which are distinct from qualities. Whereas Chronos is inseparable from the bodies which filled it out entirely as causes and matter, Aion is populated by effects which haunt it without ever filling it up' (1990: 165).

Aion, thus, is the non-chronological, temporal experience of intuitive flux, a 'time without numbers' as so precisely described by Julio Cortázar's character Johnny – a jazz musician obsessed with the contingent experience of time during performance – in the short story *El Perseguidor* (1959). For Johnny, to play yielded a new temporal experience; an 'empty' time in which ideas could be endlessly produced without ever filling it up, years could be remembered within minutes. A time, explains Johnny, under which our lives could expand a thousand times more than the average lifespan, were it not for the invention of the clocks, he adds. Aion, thus, is the time that allows us to experience the 'togetherness as a We', as put by Schultz, and concomitantly surfaces as a corrupting force that makes '[the] way for new situations, identities, and social realities,' as believed by Turner.

The various subjectivities involving Western classical performance enforced a new discipline on the musical aesthetic experience within the limits of the bourgeois theater. As 'fidelity', 'precision' and 'exactness' became central concepts in performance, new constructs such as the 'inviolability of the written score' and 'the horror of making mistakes', as described by Wisnik, started dictating the ritual of symphonic music. All of which set the foundation for the construction of the 'imaginary museum of musical works', as Lydia Goehr (2007) has called it.

The new subjectivities around the symphonic event guaranteed, to a certain extent, the cohesive force of the ritual in which the new relations of production, from which the bourgeoisie ascended as the new ruling class, were symbolically legitimated. Among the constructs that started defining modern life, one which was also ritualized during the concert, proved to be highly efficient for the cohesion of the symphonic 'liturgy' – the modern perception of time. As the concept of linear time pervaded Western music practice, it became the most effective disciplining force in the ritual of symphonic concert. The pervasion of music by linear time was much more than just a sign of another sphere of life entering the process of reification: It represented an attempt of the new cultural dynamic set by capitalism to reach into the remote realm of human subjectivity. The non-linear temporal

experience yielded by the free exercise of intuition during performance ceded, for the most part, to the fixity of the printed 'work', as precisely described in the words of the modernist icon, Igor Stravinsky (1970: 127):

'conductors, singers, pianists, all virtuosos should know or recall that the first condition that must be fulfilled by anyone who aspires to the imposing title of interpreter, is that he be first of all a flawless executant. The secret of perfection lies above all in his consciousness of the law imposed upon him by the work he is performing.'

Nineteenth-century modernism, thus, moved to suppress the corrupting force of non-linear time by reducing the space for the exercise of free intuition during performance.

Final considerations

The ritual of the classical concert in the nineteenth century symbolically represented the affirmation of a new social structure. In the same period, the symphony orchestra with its new paradigm of performance came to symbolize the ideals of discipline and production in accordance to the new social rationality enforced by the imperatives of accumulation. As seen by Attali (1985: 66),

'(...) the constitutions of the orchestra and its organization are figures of power in the industrial economy. The musicians – who are anonymous and hierarchically ranked, and in general salaried, productive workers – (...) are the image of programmed labor in our society. Each of them produces only a part of the whole having no value in itself.'

More recently, the symphonic ensemble has reached out to social spaces beyond the concert theater. In the pace of globalization, the ideas that invested Western classical tradition with a sense of universality have regained new vigor in the discourse of El Sistema – a program, as put by Eric Booth (2010: 13, my emphasis), '(...) built on a foundation of the quintessential truths of art'. Moreover, the synergy of symphonic performance that symbolically represented discipline and productivity in capitalist societies has become, in the paternalist eyes of the Inter-American Development Bank (2007: 10), an alternative '(...) for the non-criminal use of free time among its beneficiaries'. A 'free time' that in most instances is not a product of their own choice but a condition enforced upon them by the social rationality of 'global' capitalism.

El Sistema, however, claims to open the way for the socially excluded to become citizens. Its pedagogical model, 'a dynamic structure (...) in a constant state of flux, adapting to the ever-changing circumstances of the modern world', promises to respond to the 'historic demands of our time'. Such response is suggested by David Holt (in *Sistema NB Program* c. 2009), president of Modern Enterprise Ltd., a sponsor of the program's counterpart in New Brunswick, Canada: 'in the long-term Sistema [New Brunswick] will help create a better quality of workforce in our province (...)'.

By reducing the complex causes of social exclusion to lack of discipline and low productivity, as FundaMusical Bolívar's discourse seems to suggest, the program re-enforces a subjectivity in which the disadvantages of certain groups are comprehended as a

consequence of their own failure, for personal or cultural causes, to increase their human capital by adjusting to a specific social dynamic (Harvey, 2006: 42). A social dynamic whose pace in the past thirty years or so has increased in response to the imperatives of a new phase of accumulation. A dynamic whose rationality requires a level of social discipline in accordance to peremptory demands of production and consumption (all of which are 'facilitated' by new technologies). Such rationality reduces the rich and vast scope of human life to the ephemerality of the market. A market whose logic seeks to confine human passions to the 'now' of Chronos.

The ritual of modern symphonic concert reenacts this logic by limiting the 'intuitive flux' during its performance. A logic that El Sistema seems to embrace, as shown in the words of Eric Booth (2010: 11): 'Ensemble music, and good instruction, produce satisfaction and confidence that free exploration cannot'. For Booth (2010: 12-13, my emphasis), in the symphonic ritual 'beauty carries greetings from other worlds, and when we receive them in experiencing beauty we enter an expanded, inclusive present tense – reaching back to re-connect with the past by recreating it anew in the present'. A present that annuls in the 'now', as described by Deleuze, any potential for future change in the current social rationality.

Notwithstanding the critical approach offered herein, it is not the intention of this article to close this debate but rather to pose a question for continued reflection: Is the instrumental use of the symphony orchestra by El Sistema truly a tool for the inclusion of demised populations around the globe or is it a subjectivity of social discipline emerged from the dynamic of contemporary capitalism?

References

- Attali, Jacques (1985). *Noise. The Political Economy of Music*. Trad. Brian Massumi. *Theory and History of Literature*, v. 16. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Booth, Eric (2010). *El Sistema's Open Secrets*. Retrieved from: http://www.americanorchestras.org/images/stories/edce/El_Sistema_essay.pdf (accessed on 11/02/2012).
- Booth, Eric (2008). *Thoughts on Seeing El Sistema*. Retrieved from: http://www.americanorchestras.org/images/stories/lld_pdf/elsistema_Booth.pdf (accessed on 11/02/2012).
- Cannetti, Elias (1984). *Crowds and Power*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Cortázar, Julio (1959). *El Perseguidor*. In Julio Cortázar, *Las Armas Secretas*. Buenos Aires.
- Crashendo! (2012). *Online video. Sistema Australia*. Retrieved from: <http://sistemaaustralia.com.au/crashendo.html> (accessed on 08/02/2012).
- Deleuze, Gilles (1990). *The Logic of Sense*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Eger, John M. (2012) (2 April). *There is Something About El Sistema*. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-m-eger/-there-is-something-about_b_1390248.html?ref=arts (accessed on 10/04/2012)
- El Sistema (2009). *Film. Dir by Paul Smaczny and Maria Stodtmeier, Germany. EuroArts Music*. [TV] Sky Arts 2 (23/01/2012).

- Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (Fundamusal Bolívar) (2012a). *El Sistema as a Model*. <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/el-sistema-as-a-model.html> (accessed on 30/01/2012).
- Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (Fundamusal Bolívar) (2012b). *El Sistema Methodology*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/el-sistema-methodology.html> (accessed on 30/01/2012).
- Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (Fundamusal Bolívar) (2012c). *Guárico Folk Orchestra*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/guarico-folk-orchestra.html> (accessed on 30/01/2012).
- Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar (Fundamusal Bolívar) (2012d). *Venezuela Bursting with Orchestras*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fesnojiv.gob.ve/en/orchestral-and-choral-nucleos.html> (accessed on 30/01/2012).
- Goehr, Lydia (2007). *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, David (2006). *Neo-liberalism and the restoration of class power. Spaces of Global Capitalism. Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. London: Verso.
- Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) (2007). *Venezuela. Proposal for a Loan for a Program to Support the Centro de Acción Social por la Música, Phase II*. Retrieved from: <http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=1002635> (accessed 11/02/2012).
- Majno, Maria (2012). From the Model of El Sistema in Venezuela to Current Applications: Learning and Integration through Collective Music Education. *The New York Academy of Science*. 1252, 56-64.
- Root-Bernstein, Robert and Michèle (1999). *Sparks of Genius: The Thirteen Thinking Tools of the World's Most Creative People*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Schechner, Richard (2002). *Performance Studies : An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Sistema Australia (2012a). *About Us*. Retrieved from <http://sistemaaustralia.com.au/about.html> (accessed on 08/02/2012).
- Sistema Australia (2012b). *Industry Liason* [sic]. Retrieved from <http://sistemaaustralia.com.au/liason.html> (accessed on 08/02/2012).
- Sistema NB Program (c. 2009). *Online video. Sistema New Brunswick*. <http://www.nbyo-ojnb.com/sistemamb/en/Video2.html> (accessed on 10/05/2012).
- Small, Christopher (1998). *Musicking. The Meanings of Performing and Listening*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Small, Christopher (1996). *Music, Society, Education*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Spitzer, John. and Neal Zaslaw (2004). *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stravinsky, Igor (1970). *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- TED (2009) (February). *Jose Antonio Abreu: The El Sistema music revolution. Online video of TED Prize acceptance speech*. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/en/jose_abreu_on_kids_transformed_by_music.html (accessed 18/12/2011)
- Tunstall, Tricia (2012). *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music*. New York: Norton.
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (2011). *National Human Development Reports for Venezuela* (Bolivarian Republic of). <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/VEN.html> (accessed on 16/05/2012).
- Vincent-Buffault. Anne (1986). *A história das lágrimas*. Trad. Helena Moura. Lisboa: Teorema.
- Wakin, Daniel J. (2011) (4 October). *Los Angeles Orchestra to Lead Youth Effort*. The New York Times (online). Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/05/arts/music/los-angeles-philharmonic-to-lead-a-sistema-style-project.html> (accessed on 15/05/2012)
- Weber, William (1975). *Music and the Middle Class : The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna*. London: Croom Helm.
- Wisnik, José Miguel (1989). *Os som e o sentido: uma outra história das músicas*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras.
- Wulff, Helena (2006). Experiencing the Ballet Body: Pleasure, Pain, Power. In Suzel Anna Reily (Ed.). *The Musical Human: Rethinking John Blacking's Ethnomusicology in the Twenty-First Century*. (SOAS Musicology Series). Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited.