‘The Application of Paradigmatic Analysis to Music of Different Genres and Styles’

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ABSTRACT

After a review of the principles of paradigmatic analysis in Nicolas Ruwet’s work on a Geisslerlied (14th-century monody), I shall show ways in which this method may be applied also to homophonic composition (Debussy’s La cathédrale engloutie), to Romantic music (the cor anglais solo from Wagner’s Tristan), to an electro-acoustic as well as an atonal piece (Dhomont’s Points de fuite; Boulez’s Anthèmes), and to music of the oral tradition (an Uldeme milling song from Chad). My presentation will explore how these analyses may be used to identify creative and perceptual strategies in these musics, and will conclude with observations about musical universals.