

The Mundus Imaginalis of Henri Corbin and the Relationship of *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* by Richard Wagner: an Elucidating Parallel

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Abstract: This report analyze the transdisciplinary relationship between Henri Corbin's concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis* and Richard Wagner's notion of *Wortsprache/Tonsprache*, exploring the parallels and intersections between these two philosophical and artistic perspectives. Through a structured analysis, the historical foundations and contexts of both concepts are examined, their interaction in terms of creative imagination, and their mutual influence on artistic and spiritual perception.

In the first part, the *Mundus Imaginalis* is explored, defined by Corbin as an intermediary space between the physical and spiritual worlds, with roots in Islamic philosophy and mysticism. This section highlights the central role of creative imagination in Iranian philosophy, emphasizing its function as a bridge between the material and the metaphysical, as well as its impact on spiritual and philosophical transformation. This concept redefines the connection between human experience and the divine, evidencing its relevance in both spiritual practice and transcendent thought.

Paralleling this, the idea of *Wortsprache* (language of words) and *Tonsprache* (language of sounds) in Wagner's work is analyzed, focusing on the interaction between word and sound in his musical dramas. Wagner conceives this integration as a means to create a unified form of art, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art) that transcends traditional boundaries between music, narrative, and philosophy. The philosophical and aesthetic influences, particularly the impact of German Romanticism, on the development of this theory are studied, along with concrete examples in his compositions and librettos, highlighting how these elements intertwine to generate a unique synthesis of artistic expression.

The second part of the report explores the interconnection between the *Mundus Imaginalis* and the conjunction *Wortsprache/Tonsprache*, focusing on the role of imagination as a common and transformative element in both systems. Parallels are established in their capacity to act as a bridge between the material and the spiritual, facilitating both creative and spiritual evolution. Furthermore, this interaction's influence on artistic and philosophical perception is analyzed, underscoring how both visions have shaped interpretation and understanding in their respective fields. The report concludes by highlighting the reciprocal influence of these concepts on the transformation of artistic and spiritual practices, illustrated by examples from the work of Corbin and Wagner.

Together, this interdisciplinary analysis reveals how the dialogue between Corbin's philosophical thought and Wagner's musical aesthetics offers profound insights into the role of imagination in artistic creation and

transcendental experience, linking seemingly disparate worlds within a framework of mutual influence and conceptual enrichment.

I. Foundations of the *Mundus Imaginalis* according to Henri Corbin:

definition and origin of the concept.

Henri Corbin, a French philosopher recognized for his innovative exploration of Islamic spirituality and mysticism, introduced the term *Mundus Imaginalis* to describe an intermediary realm between the physical and spiritual worlds. This concept, essential to his work, has deep roots in Islamic philosophy and, particularly, in the mystical tradition of Sufism. The *Mundus Imaginalis* is not a mere abstraction nor a symbolic construction; rather, it constitutes an ontological space where spiritual realities take form and manifest, acting as a bridge between the tangible and the intangible. Corbin developed this idea in the context of his study of Islamic cosmologies and the contemplative practices of Iranian philosophers, emphasizing the importance of imagination as a tool for accessing spiritual and transcendent truths.

The concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis* finds its origins in the philosophical and mystical tradition of Islam, specifically in Sufism, a movement that emphasizes direct experience of the divine through meditation, love, and spiritual purification. Sufism, also known as Tasawwuf, emerged in the Middle East in the eighth century and developed within both Sunni and Shia branches of Islam, incorporating a rich diversity of interpretations and practices. [2] Within this tradition, imagination is not seen as a faculty subordinate to reason, but as an essential means for perceiving spiritual realities. Corbin adapted and reinterpreted these ideas, integrating them into his philosophy to propose that the *Mundus Imaginalis* is a place where images acquire their own reality, independent of the physical and temporal limitations of the material world. [3]

One of Corbin's key contributions was his insistence that the *Mundus Imaginalis* should not be confused with the world of dreams or fantasy. Instead, he describes it as an autonomous ontological domain, accessible only through an active and purified imagination. Imagination, in this context, is not limited to the arbitrary creation of images; rather, it serves as an organ of spiritual perception, capable of grasping dimensions of reality that lie beyond the physical. This idea is deeply influenced by the teachings of Iranian philosophers and Sufi mystics, who considered that access to this realm was essential for understanding transcendent truths and the nature of the divine.

The term “imaginal” was coined by Corbin to avoid confusion with “imaginary,” which is often associated with the fictitious or illusory. According to him, the *Mundus Imaginalis* is a space where spiritual realities take concrete but non-physical form, enabling a direct interaction between the spirit and symbolic images. [6], [see *Mundus Imaginalis*]. This conception stems from Islamic cosmologies, particularly those found in the works of philosophers such as Avicenna and Suhrawardi. In both cosmologies, the imaginal world is situated between the sensible world (al-mulk) and the intelligible world (al-malakut), functioning as a bridge that connects the visible with the invisible. Corbin emphasized that this intermediate realm is not merely a theoretical construct but an experiential reality that can be accessed through spiritual and contemplative practices.

“Long ago, as will be reiterated later, Western philosophy, let’s say ‘official’ philosophy, caught in the wake of positive sciences, admitted only two sources of knowledge. There is sensory perception, which provides what are called empirical data. And there are the concepts of understanding, the world of the laws that govern these empirical data. Certainly, phenomenology has modified and overcome this simplifying epistemology. But the fact is that, between sensory perceptions and the intuitions or categories of the intellect, there remained an empty space. What should have occupied this space between the two, and which was already accepted as an intermediate value in other cultures, namely Active Imagination, was left to the poets in the West. That this active imagination in man [...] should have its own noetic or cognitive function, meaning that it gives us access to a reality of Being that would remain closed and forbidden to

us without it, is what a rational and reasonable scientific philosophy could not explain. [...] What characterizes the position of the [...] Ishrâqîyûn of the spiritual line of Suhrawardi (12th century) is a scheme of worlds that contrasts radically with the dualism just mentioned. For them, imagination is a cognitive faculty in its own right. Its mediating function allows us to know rightfully the region of Being that, without this mediation, would remain a forbidden region [...].”^{a)}

The relationship between the *Mundus Imaginalis* and Sufi philosophy is particularly significant, as both traditions share a vision of the universe as a hierarchical and multidimensional structure. In Sufism, different levels of existence are interconnected, and access to higher dimensions depends on spiritual purification and the activation of imagination. For Sufis, imagination is the means by which divine truths are revealed in forms comprehensible to human beings. This approach was adopted and expanded by Corbin, who argued that the *Mundus Imaginalis* is *not only a space of revelation but also a place of encounter between the human soul and spiritual realities*. In this sense, the *Mundus Imaginalis* becomes an essential realm for mystical experience and understanding of the divine.

Moreover, Corbin highlighted that the *Mundus Imaginalis* plays a key role in mediating between the individual and transcendence. In his studies on Iranian Islam, he underscored the importance of symbols, images, and representations in conveying spiritual truths. These images, which have their own reality in the imaginal world, allow individuals to access deeper levels of meaning and experience a more direct connection with the divine. This process is not merely intellectual; it involves the entirety of one's being, integrating perception, emotion, and intuition. In the context of Sufism, this integration manifests in practices such as meditation, singing, and dance, which seek to activate the imagination and open the path to the spiritual world. [2]

The originality of the concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis* lies in its ability to reconcile two seemingly opposing dimensions: the physical and the spiritual. By establishing an intermediate space where both dimensions interact, Corbin offers a framework that facilitates deeper insight into human experience and the nature of reality. In this perspective, imagination becomes a key tool for exploring the hidden dimensions of reality and discovering new horizons of meaning. This has profound implications not only for philosophy and religion but also for aesthetics, psychology, and other disciplines that seek to understand the nature of human experience. For instance, the *Mundus Imaginalis* can be seen as a source of inspiration for artistic creation, providing a conceptual framework for understanding how images and symbols can convey deep and universal truths.

In conclusion, Henri Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* represents a singular contribution to philosophical and mystical thought by offering a model for understanding the interaction between the physical and spiritual worlds. Based on the traditions of Sufism and Islamic philosophy, this concept redefines the role of imagination as an essential tool for perceiving higher realities. By establishing an intermediate space where images acquire their own ontological reality, Corbin opens new possibilities for spiritual exploration and mystical experience. His work not only enriches our understanding of Islamic cosmologies but also provides a bridge between the philosophical and

^{a)} « Il y a longtemps, nous le redirons ci-dessous, que la philosophie occidentale, disons la philosophie “officielle”, entraînée dans le sillage des sciences positives, n’admet que deux sources du Connaître. Il y a la perception sensible, fournissant les données qu’on appelle empiriques. Et il y a les concepts de l’entendement, le monde des lois régissant ces données empiriques. Certes, la phénoménologie a modifié et dépassé cette gnoséologie simplificatrice. Mais il reste qu’entre les perceptions sensibles et les intuitions ou les catégories de l’intellect, la place était restée vide. Ce qui aurait dû prendre place entre les unes et les autres, et qui ailleurs occupait cette place médiane, à savoir l’Imagination active, fut laissé aux poètes. Que cette imagination active dans l’homme [...] ait sa fonction noétique ou cognitive propre, c’est-à-dire qu’elle nous donne accès à une réalité de l’Être qui sans elle nous reste fermée et interdite, c’est ce qu’une philosophie scientifique, rationnelle et raisonnable, ne pouvait envisager. [...] Ce qui caractérise la position des [...] Ishrâqîyûn de la ligne spirituelle de Suhrawardi (XII^e siècle), c’est un schéma de mondes contrastant radicalement avec le dualisme que l’on vient de rappeler. [Pour eux, l’imagination] est une faculté cognitive de plein droit. Sa fonction médiatrice est de nous faire connaître de plein droit la région de l’Être qui, sans cette médiation, resterait région interdite [...]. »

Henri CORBIN, *Corps spirituel et terre céleste, de l’Iran mazdéen à l’Iran Shi’ite*, Ediciones Buchel/Chastel, Paris, 1979, p. 8-9.

mystical traditions of East and West, highlighting the importance of imagination as a vehicle for transcendence. [3] [4]

II. The Function of Creative Imagination in Iranian Philosophy

Within the framework of Iranian philosophy and the conceptualization of the *Mundus Imaginalis* developed by Henri Corbin, creative imagination occupies a central place as a bridge between the material world and the metaphysical. This concept, which Corbin introduced with the phenomenological term *imaginal*, must not be confused with what is merely imaginary or illusory; rather, it refers to an intermediate dimension that allows interaction between the sensible and the intelligible. *From this perspective, creative imagination is not only a cognitive capacity but a transformative means that opens the doors to introspection and spiritual transcendence.*

Corbin's vision of creative imagination is rooted in his deep study of Iranian philosophy, particularly within the context of the Sufi tradition and the thought of figures like Suhrawardi. According to Corbin, imagination is not a secondary or derived faculty but a fundamental axis that sustains the relationship between human beings and the higher realms of existence. In this sense, creative imagination acts as a "metaphysical bridge," connecting the tangible, limited material world with the infinite, transcendent spiritual realm. This bridge allows individuals to access the *Mundus Imaginalis*, a space that is not merely an abstraction but an autonomous ontological domain where spiritual and symbolic realities can be experienced with an intensity equivalent to sensory experiences. [1]

In Iranian philosophy, creative imagination not only has a descriptive role but also an active and transformative function. This translates into the capacity of the human mind to recreate and reconfigure internal experiences through images that not only represent but also generate knowledge. Corbin emphasizes that imagination can induce knowledge that is specific to its realm, knowledge that transcends the limitations of logical reasoning and approaches a direct understanding of spiritual truths. This conception underscores the importance of imagination as a means for deep introspection and spiritual change. Through this process, the human being not only passively observes spiritual dimensions but actively participates in their own transformation.

A key aspect of the *Mundus Imaginalis* according to Corbin is its ability to act as a mediating space between levels of reality. This intermediate domain is essential for understanding how creative imagination functions within the framework of Iranian philosophy. It is not merely a place where ideas or fantasies reside, but a space where images possess their own reality, allowing individuals to interact with the divine in immediate and personal ways. In this interaction, imagination is not limited to reflecting reality; rather, it transforms and reinterprets it, establishing new relationships between being and the spiritual world. Therefore, the *Mundus Imaginalis* is not just an abstract concept, but an experiential dimension that has practical implications for spiritual and philosophical life. [3] [4]

From this perspective, creative imagination also plays a crucial role in the realm of spirituality and religion within Iranian philosophy. For thinkers of this tradition, imagination is the means through which sacred texts and mystical experiences can be interpreted. In this sense, imagination allows individuals to transcend the limitations of literal language and access deeper, more symbolic meanings. This capacity for symbolic interpretation is essential to understanding how texts and spiritual experiences can transform the individual, leading them toward a state of greater knowledge and connection with the transcendental.

In the context of the transformative function of imagination, Corbin emphasizes the importance of love, sympathy, and other feelings as catalysts for spiritual knowledge. According to his vision, these emotions are not merely subjective or irrational; rather, they play an active role in opening the soul to new dimensions of reality. Creative imagination, within this framework, is not an isolated capacity but works in conjunction with other human faculties to facilitate a comprehensive and transformative experience. This holistic approach reflects the depth of

Iranian philosophy, which does not separate reason from emotion, nor the body from the spirit, but integrates them into a unified vision of existence.

The role of creative imagination in Iranian philosophy can also be understood as a dynamic process that involves both perception and action. On one hand, imagination allows for the perception of realities that lie beyond the reach of the physical senses. On the other hand, this perception is not passive; it involves the active participation of the individual, who interprets and makes sense of these experiences in the context of their spiritual life. This process of perception and action is what enables the transformation of the individual, leading them to a state of greater awareness and connection with the divine.

In broader terms, the conception of creative imagination in Iranian philosophy has significant implications for understanding the relationship between the material and spiritual worlds. In Corbin's view, these two worlds are not separated by an insurmountable abyss; rather, they are connected through the *Mundus Imaginalis*. This approach not only challenges traditional dichotomies between the physical and the metaphysical but also offers an integrative perspective that recognizes continuity between these levels of reality. In this sense, creative imagination is not only a means of accessing the spiritual but also a tool to integrate these experiences into daily life, thereby enriching human existence in all its aspects.

In conclusion, *creative imagination, as conceived by Henri Corbin, is a central element in Iranian philosophy that facilitates the connection between the material and metaphysical worlds, promotes introspection, and fosters spiritual transformation.* Through the *Mundus Imaginalis*, this faculty transcends the limitations of sensory perception and logical reasoning, allowing humans to interact with deeper dimensions of reality. This conception impacts not only philosophy and spirituality but also provides an integrative and transformative vision of existence that remains relevant in contemporary contexts. [1]

I. Impact of the *Mundus Imaginalis* on Spiritual and Philosophical Perspectives

The concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis* developed by Henri Corbin constitutes a fundamental axis for understanding the relationship between the divine and the human from a spiritual and philosophical perspective. This concept, which lies in an intermediate plane between material reality and purely spiritual reality, offers a way to understand how imagination is not simply a creative faculty limited to the realm of the subjective but an essential bridge to the transcendental. In this context, the *Mundus Imaginalis* not only transforms our conception of knowledge but also reconfigures spiritual and philosophical practices, allowing for a deepening of the relationship between the divine and human experience.

Henri Corbin, a French philosopher, theologian, and Orientalist,[5] explored the transformative power of imagination as a tool for accessing higher realities. He was deeply influenced by Allameh Mohammad Hossein Tabataba'i, "the great professor of theology and mysticism from Qom » as Corbin states in his work "En Islam Iranien" (Islam in Iran), 1971. [2] [4]

For Corbin, imagination is not reduced to a subjective capacity or a psychological projection; rather, it functions as a cognitive organ that allows for the perception of an intermediate ontological dimension, known as the *Mundus Imaginalis* or imaginal world. [3] This plane is essentially a space of real existence that allows for a deeper and more meaningful interaction with the divine. In this context, active imagination stands as an essential tool not only for spiritual exploration but also for acquiring philosophical knowledge, thereby redefining our understanding of the relationship between the human soul and higher realities.

II. The Concept of *Wortsprache*/*Tonsprache* in Wagner's Work [7]

The relationship between word and sound in Wagner's musical drama represents one of the fundamental pillars of his vision of musical drama as *Gesamtkunstwerk* (*total work of art*). [9] [10] The integration of word and sound in his operas not only reflects his attempt to overcome the limitations of traditional artistic forms but also seeks to establish a symbiotic relationship where both elements complement each other to create a unified and transcendent aesthetic experience. This innovative approach not only transformed the operatic landscape of the 19th century but also left a lasting legacy on the modern conception of interdisciplinary art. [8]

In the context of Wagner's musical drama, the term *Wortsprache* refers to the use of language as an artistic core. Wagner envisioned verbal language as the primary medium for conveying ideas and emotions directly to the listener.

“*Word-speech*, where it seeks to unfold into the highest, most meaningful expression, becomes *tone-speech*; it dissolves into the latter in order to present its own unmistakable content directly, with the highest intelligibility and corresponding affect.”^{b)}

However, what distinguishes his approach is the way he integrates the semantic meaning of the text with its phonetic and rhythmic dimensions, allowing the word itself to carry an inherent musicality.

“The language of sounds is the beginning and the end of verbal language, just as feeling is the beginning and the end of understanding.”^{c)}

This use of the word is not limited to its literal meaning; rather, it acquires an almost instrumental quality, capable of resonating with the other sound dimensions of the work. In his musical dramas, Wagner avoids the subordination of the word to the music, a common characteristic in traditional operas. Instead, both elements intertwine in a continuous dialogue, where each enriches and amplifies the other, creating a narrative that transcends the mere sum of its parts.

This means that the concept of *Tonsprache* refers to the language of sounds, that is, what is derived as sound from the language of words.

“The language of sounds is the language of feeling, and therefore the only universally comprehensible language, while verbal language is the language of thought, and therefore limited to specific peoples and times.”^{d)}

In this sense, *Wortsprache* –with its rhythms, intonations, silences and alliterations–, engenders *Tonsprache* in the act of re-reading the libretto Wagner composed previously. This is not music yet: it is a kind of “proto-music” that will be developed through the inner hearing of the composer until the composition of the score and the realization of effective music. For Wagner, music is not simply an accompaniment to the word; rather, it is an autonomous medium capable of deepening the emotions and meanings that words alone cannot express. Music,

^{b)} „Die Wortsprache wird, wo sie sich zur höchsten, sinnreichsten Kundgebung entfalten will, zur Tonsprache; sie löst sich auf in dieselbe, um in ihr ihren eigenen, unverkennbaren Inhalt unmittelbar, mit höchster Verständlichkeit und dem entsprechenden Affecte darzustellen.“

Richard WAGNER, *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft, Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*. Vol. 3. Leipzig: E. W. Fritzsch, 1871, p. 85.

^{c)} „Die Tonsprache ist Anfang und Ende der Wortsprache, wie das Gefühl Anfang und Ende des Verstandes ist.“ Richard WAGNER, *Oper und Drama*, J. J. Weber, Leipzig, 1851, p. 51.

^{d)} „Die Tonsprache ist die Sprache des Gefühls, mithin die einzig allgemein verständliche, während die Wortsprache die Sprache des Gedankens, mithin an bestimmte Völker und Zeiten gebunden ist.“

Richard WAGNER, *Oper und Drama, op.cit.*, p. 282.

in this context, becomes a bridge between the tangible and the intangible, evoking psychological and spiritual states that transcend the limitations of verbal language. This approach aligns with the Romantic idea that music is the art that most directly connects with the sublime,^{e)} and Wagner uses this quality to enhance the emotional and symbolic impact of his dramas.

Wagner's true innovation lies in the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache*, an integration that defines his vision of musical drama as an organic unity. This ideal manifests in the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. [10] Following the ancient Greek ideal, Wagner sought to merge all artistic disciplines—including poetry, music, dance, and set design—into a harmonious and indivisible whole. In this framework, words and sounds are not isolated or hierarchical elements but function as interdependent components that mutually enhance each other. Words provide conceptual and narrative precision, while the sound derived from words amplifies the emotional and symbolic depth of the work.

“I hear the song within me, and through it, I understand the word for the first time; but just as the word, so too does thought dissolve into it.”^{f)}

An emblematic example of this interaction can be found in the opera *Tristan und Isolde*, where the relationship between word and sound reaches an exceptional level of complexity and subtlety. In this drama, Wagner employs *Leitmotive*^{g)}—recurring musical themes associated with characters, emotions, or ideas—to establish symbolic connections that transcend the text. These *Leitmotive* not only complement the meaning of the words but often expand or contradict it, creating a multidimensional narrative that involves both the conscious and the subconscious. The famous “Tristan Chord,” for example, introduces a harmonic tension that is not resolved until the end of the opera, sonically reflecting the impossibility of love between the protagonists. This type of interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* demonstrates how Wagner uses music to articulate meanings that go beyond what verbal language can express. [9]

In terms of dramatic structure, Wagner also departs from the traditional operatic model based on arias and recitatives, opting for what he called the *Unendliche Melodie* (*infinite melody*). This approach consists of a continuous musical flow where the distinction between word and sound blurs, allowing both dimensions to integrate more organically. Instead of interrupting the dramatic action with autonomous musical moments, Wagner employs the uninterrupted flow of music to maintain narrative and emotional tension, achieving a cohesion that reinforces his concept of total art.

The interaction between word and sound in Wagner's works not only responds to an aesthetic quest but also has philosophical and metaphysical implications. In his essay *Opera and Drama*, Wagner argues that musical drama must reflect life itself, a synthesis of all aspects of human experience. In this sense, the union of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* is not merely an artistic technique but a symbolic representation of the unity between the rational and the emotional, the conscious and the unconscious. This approach finds parallels with broader philosophical concepts, such as the Romantic idea of the reconciliation of opposites and the quest for a transcendental wholeness.

The figure presented clearly illustrates how Wagner conceptualizes this integration. In the section of *Opera und Drama* dedicated to *Wortsprache*, the use of words as the central artistic element is highlighted, emphasizing their

^{e)} A fervent admirer of Schopenhauer, Wagner draws from *The World as Will and Representation* the principle that music is the form of the Will, and as such, an absolute value.

^{f)} „Ich höre in mir den Gesang, und durch ihn verstehe ich erst das Wort; wie aber in ihm das Wort, so löst sich auch der Gedanke in ihm auf.“

Richard WAGNER, *op.cit.*, p. 295.

^{g)} For the sake of linguistic consistency, we prefer to use “Leitmotiv” and its plural “Leitmotive” in German, rather than their Latinised forms, “Leitmotif” and “Leitmotifs.”

capacity to convey meaning and narrative structure. In the *Tonsprache* section, the role of sound as a derivative of the word is underlined as a tool to complement and enrich the artistic experience. Finally, in the integration section, it is shown how both elements interact to form a unified work of art, reflecting Wagner's ideal of a musical drama that transcends traditional divisions between the arts:

“Only in the most intimate fusion of poetic word with musical feeling does the work of art become truly one; for the word gives the feeling its most determined form, and the tone dissolves the word into the purest feeling.”^{h)}

In conclusion, the concept of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in Wagner's work represents one of the most significant contributions to the development of musical drama and aesthetic thought in the 19th century. The integration of word and sound not only redefines the possibilities of opera as an artistic form but also poses fundamental questions about the nature of human communication and the relationship between the rational and the emotional. Through his innovative approach, Wagner not only transforms the operatic practice of his time but also establishes a model for future interdisciplinary explorations in art. This legacy continues to be a source of inspiration and debate, demonstrating the enduring relevance of his artistic vision.

III. Philosophical and Aesthetic Influences on the Development of *Wortsprache* / *Tonsprache*

The relationship between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in Richard Wagner's work constitutes an essential core of his revolutionary artistic approach, an aspect that is deeply influenced by philosophical and aesthetic currents of German Romanticism and 19th-century intellectual movements. Wagner, who excelled not only as a composer but also as a librettist, developed a unique conception where word and music do not subordinate to each other but rather integrate into a creative synthesis designed to transcend traditional forms of artistic expression.

The concept of *Wortsprache* / *Tonsprache* can be understood as the dynamic interaction between verbal language and musical language. Wagner conceived of art as an integral and totalizing medium, an idea that aligns with the principles of German Romanticism, a movement that valued the union of different forms of expression as a means to attain the sublime. According to this view, word and music should fuse to create an aesthetic experience that appeals not only to the senses but also to the spirit and imagination of the viewer. In this context, Wagner departs from the conventional operatic tradition, in which music generally plays a subordinate role to the text, proposing instead that both elements be part of an egalitarian and symbiotic structure.

The aesthetic ideals of Romanticism profoundly influenced Wagner's artistic conception. This movement emerged as a reaction against the rationalism and neoclassicism of the preceding era, advocating the primacy of emotion, imagination, and the transcendental in art. Within this framework, Wagner's works are notable for their ability to evoke imaginary worlds that transcend the mundane, a characteristic that directly connects with the *Mundus Imaginalis* described by Henri Corbin. Corbin defines this concept as an intermediate space between the material and the spiritual, where images have an ontological character, meaning they are realities in themselves and not mere symbolic representations. Similarly, the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in Wagner creates an artistic intermediate imaginal space that serves as a bridge to the sublime, the immaterial, and the transcendental.

The influence of German Romanticism on Wagner is not limited solely to general ideas about emotion and imagination; it is also deeply rooted in the philosophical theories of figures like Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis. [12] These thinkers promoted the idea that art should reflect universal and spiritual truths, a principle that Wagner

^{h)} «Nur in der innigsten Verschmelzung des dichterischen Wortes mit der musikalischen Empfindung wird das Kunstwerk wahrhaft eins; denn das Wort gibt dem Gefühl seine bestimmteste Gestalt, und der Ton löst das Wort zur reinsten Empfindung wieder auf.»

Richard WAGNER, *op.cit.*, p. 304.

adopted and transformed in his quest for a total artistic synthesis. Schlegel, in particular, emphasized the importance of irony and fragmentation as tools for exploring the paradoxical nature of existence, aspects that can be observed in the narrative and musical structure of Wagner's works. Novalis, on the other hand, underscored the connection between art and spirituality, a notion that clearly manifests in Wagner's aspirations to transcend the material limits of conventional theatre. Schopenhauer was also a very important influence on his views regarding the value of music.

In addition to philosophical influences, the aesthetic currents of the 19th century also played a crucial role in the development of the *Wortsprache* / *Tonsprache* relationship. The aesthetic movement known as Aestheticism which valued beauty as the ultimate end of art, resonated with Wagner's ideals in his pursuit of an artistic experience that was not necessarily tied to traditional didactic or narrative functions. According to the principles of Aestheticism, art should exist for its own intrinsic value, an idea that Wagner applied in conceiving his works as musical dramas rather than mere operas, thus highlighting his intention to produce an integral aesthetic unity. [11]

Another relevant aspect that connects Wagner with German Romanticism is his interest in mythology and the archetypal. The stories Wagner chose for his works, such as the Norse and Germanic sagas, not only provided a rich source of narrative content but also aligned with Romantic ideas about the transformative power of myths. The use of these narratives allowed Wagner to explore universal themes such as love, redemption, and sacrifice, while simultaneously creating a context in which the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* could operate as a reflection of the inherent tensions and harmonies of the human condition.

Wagner's ability to integrate philosophical and aesthetic elements into his work is also reflected in his approach to orchestration and musical composition. In his musical dramas, the leitmotif becomes a key tool for establishing emotional and narrative connections between the various elements of the work. This resource, which assigns specific musical themes to characters, ideas, or emotions, arises from the imaginal interspace between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache*. The *Leitmotif* allow music to function as an extension of verbal language, thus reinforcing the idea that *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* are complementary dimensions of the same artistic reality. The implementation of this approach not only demonstrates Wagner's skill as a composer but also his profound commitment to creating a holistic artistic experience. The relationship between *Wortsprache* / *Tonsprache* and Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* becomes evident when considering the transformative impact both concepts have on the viewer's perception. Just as the *Mundus Imaginalis* operates as an intermediate space where images acquire their own reality, the synthesis of word and music in Wagner also generates an intermediate space that ultimately serves as an aesthetic realm in which the viewer can engage with ideas and emotions that transcend the tangible. This parallel underscores Wagner's ability to create art that not only reflects reality but also reconfigures it, inviting the spectator to participate in a process of active imagination.

In conclusion, the development of the concept of *Wortsprache* / *Tonsprache* in Wagner's work cannot be understood without considering the philosophical and aesthetic influences that shaped his artistic vision. From the ideals of German Romanticism to the principles of Aestheticism, Wagner appropriated various intellectual and aesthetic currents to build a body of work that transcends the traditional conventions of art and becomes a bridge to the transcendental. The interaction between word and music in his musical dramas not only reflects his skill as a composer and librettist but also his deep commitment to creating a total art form capable of evoking an imaginative space that, like Corbin's *mundus imaginalis*, operates as an autonomous and transformative reality.

IV. Examples in Wagner's Compositions and Librettos

The concepts of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* are at the core of Richard Wagner's artistic conception. These two notions, far from being independent, constitute a complementary system that seeks to fuse music, word, and drama into a superior aesthetic unity. In developing his theory of musical drama, Wagner not only redefined the

relationship between music and text but also established a paradigm that sought to transcend the limitations of traditional operatic forms. Here we analyze how Wagner conceptualized and applied *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in his compositions and librettos, highlighting specific examples that illustrate this artistic synthesis. [8]

Wortsprache represents for Wagner an essential vehicle for narrative and poetic expression within his works. Through the texts of the librettos, Wagner articulated not only the events of the plot but also the emotional states and symbols underlying his artistic worldview. However, Wagner understood that words alone were incapable of conveying all the emotional and spiritual depth required by his vision of total art. This recognition led him to conceive of *Tonsprache* as an indispensable complement, capable of inspiring, through his inner hearing, a re-reading of the opera's text. *Wortsprache* generates *Tonsprache*; through the re-reading of the libretto—previously written by him—rich in inflections, rhythms and alliterations, Wagner begins to hear sounds internally that are not derived from the text, but are inspired and provoked by it. This means that the re-reading of the text has not yet materialized into music, but it constitutes the trigger for the music. This process is enabled by his inner hearing, where the sounds evoked by the text, through poetic resources such as alliteration, begin to form a sound environment that anticipates the concrete musical experience. It is vital to emphasize that this “proto-music” is not the music that will later unfold in the opera; rather, it represents an essential preparation for the complete musical experience that Wagner intends to create. Thus, the text is not a mere accompaniment; it becomes an instigator of a sensory experience that prepares the listener for the musicality of the work. The alliteration and sounds in the librettos are not only tools that allow listeners to experience the dramatic evolution of the characters but, above all, they constitute the characteristics that Wagner considers indispensable to awaken his own inner hearing. We can then say that *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* are not just complementary elements, but that they mutually nourish each other, each one enhancing the other in the cycle of artistic creation. Understanding the relationship between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in this framework reveals that they are not two conflicting languages but rather a synthesis in which verbal language paves the way for the full musicality that will emerge on the opera stage. With this, Wagner offers us an operatic experience that goes beyond the mere sum of words and music, creating a space where both dimensions can intertwine and resonate in harmony. Within this context, the imaginal space between *Tonsprache* and *Wortsprache* emerges as the place of production for the “words” of this heuristic language, which manifests through the *Leitmotive*. These musical motifs act as dramatic units, establishing a link between sound and its meaning.

Unlike words in everyday language, where there is a common consensus regarding what they mean, the *Leitmotiv* require a “semantic baptism.” This process occurs when the orchestra performs the *Leitmotiv* at the very moment its referent appears on stage. At that moment, the *Leitmotiv* comes to life, and its meaning transforms into an aesthetic experience where music and narrative merge. The “semantic baptism” not only assigns a specific meaning to the *Leitmotiv* but also creates an emotional and symbolic connection with the audience. Through this bond, the listener is immersed in a world where the evocative sounds of *Tonsprache* and the narrative evocations of *Wortsprache* intertwine, enriching the operatic experience. The process of producing these *Leitmotive* in the imaginal intermediate space serves as a crucial bridge at the intersection of the language of words and the language of sounds. It allows Wagner not only to communicate ideas and emotions but also to create an operatic reality where music and text feed into and nourish each other, leading the listener to a profound and transformative experience.

An essential element to consider in this relationship is that *Wortsprache* is written: it is the opera's libretto, written beforehand by Wagner, where words and meanings are fixed in a concrete text. This libretto is the objective manifestation of verbal language, capable of expressing ideas, emotions, and narratives through its written construction. On the other hand, *Tonsprache* is not written. The music that will arise from it will be an evolution of subsequent development. What will ultimately be written is the musical score resulting from the entire creative process once the *Tonsprache* has been translated into music through prior hearing. In this sense, music is a realm of continuously moving and interpreting sounds that complements and simultaneously challenges the textual

fixation of *Wortsprache*. This contrast further underscores the causal relationship between both languages: while *Wortsprache* provides a structured framework, *Tonsprache* represents a dynamic flow of expression that is yet to be defined. The musical construction will emerge when the sounds produced by the creative process find their definitive form, giving rise to the complete operatic experience.

Given the complexity of the described semiotic process, it is clear that music is not limited to being an accompaniment for words but acts as an autonomous language that amplifies, underlines, and, at times, transcends the meaning of the text.

In his theoretical writings, Wagner emphasized above all the need for an organic interrelation between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache*. According to his conception, the musical drama should not be a mere juxtaposition of these elements but a profound synthesis in which word and music intertwine inseparably. This guiding principle is evident in the musical and dramatic structure of his most emblematic works, especially those that comprise the cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. For example, in *Das Rheingold*, which constitutes the first number of the cycle, Wagner uses *Leitmotifs*, or “main motifs”, to establish symbolic connections between characters, objects, and ideas that form the basis of the narrative. These leitmotifs function as elements of *Tonsprache*, but their meaning is enriched and clarified through their association with the text of the libretto, that is, with *Wortsprache*.

A particularly striking example of this interaction is found in the character of Wotan in *Die Walküre*, the second work of the cycle. The leitmotifs associated with Wotan not only reflect his authority and divinity but also his internal conflicts and ethical dilemmas. As the character evolves, the leitmotifs related to him also transform, adapting to the new emotional and narrative circumstances. Here, the *Tonsprache* not only complements the *Wortsprache*, but elevates it to a metaphysical plane, suggesting realities and meanings that go beyond the visible and tangible.

In practical terms, the implementation of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in Wagner's compositions required significant innovation in the musical and dramatic structure of his works. Unlike traditional Italian operas, which typically alternated between recitatives and arias, Wagner opted for a continuous approach in which the music flows uninterrupted, parallel to the dramatic development. This approach, known as *Unendliche Melodie* (*endless melody*), allowed Wagner to explore the expressive possibilities of the interaction between word and music in a deeper and more sustained manner. By eliminating the conventional divisions between the different sections of the opera, Wagner created a space in which *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* could interact in a more organic and fluid way.

In conclusion, the association of the concepts of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* is fundamental to understanding Richard Wagner's contribution to musical and dramatic art. By conceiving these elements as integral parts of an aesthetic synthesis, Wagner transformed opera into a medium capable of expressing emotions, ideas, and symbols in a way that no other art form had achieved before. Through examples such as *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *Parsifal*, it is clear that Wagner not only theorized about the relationship between word and music but also implemented it masterfully in his compositions and librettos. This approach has not only profoundly influenced the development of Western music but has also provided a theoretical and practical framework that remains relevant to studies on the interaction between different forms of artistic expression.

Integration of Word and Sound in Wagner's Operas

Concept	Description
<i>Wortsprache</i>	It refers to the libretto—the poetic text authored in advance by Wagner—which serves as the central semantic and dramatic foundation of the opera. <i>Wortsprache</i> retains a fixed form and is a primary creative element.

<i>Tonsprache</i>	This is a kind of “proto-music,” an inner hearing derived from the libretto. It constitutes the auditory imagination and latent musical potential inherent in the language. It is not yet notated music but functions as its inspirational source. <i>Tonsprache</i> is unwritten and fluid, representing another principal creative characteristic.
Composition	The transformative process through which both <i>Wortsprache</i> (the semantic dimension) and <i>Tonsprache</i> (the sonic essence) are synthesized into the actual, structured music of the opera. The intermediate space between <i>Wortsprache</i> and <i>Tonsprache</i> gives rise to the <i>Leitmotive</i> —the “words” of an <i>imaginal language</i> formed by the creative tension between <i>Wort</i> and <i>Ton</i> . The development of the <i>Leitmotive</i> coincides with the dramatic development of the characters and situations; here is where the music of the opera ultimately originates.

Interconnection between the *Mundus Imaginalis* and the *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* Nexus

V. Parallels in the Function of Imagination in Both Concepts

The relationship between the concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis*, developed by Henri Corbin, and the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* in Wagner's work reflects a deep connection between the imaginative processes underlying both frameworks. Imagination, understood as a bridge between the material and the spiritual, plays a fundamental role in how these ideas are articulated, providing a conceptual space where the sensible and the transcendent converge. This analysis seeks to establish parallels between the function of imagination in Corbin's philosophical thought and in Wagner's artistic language, highlighting how both approaches explore essential dimensions of the human experience.

The *Mundus Imaginalis*, as conceptualized by Henri Corbin, refers to an intermediary domain connecting the material with the spiritual, also known as the “imaginal world.” This concept finds its roots in the Arabic term *‘ālam al-mithāl*, which can be translated as the “archetypal world,” provided misinterpretations are avoided.[2] Corbin emphasizes that this space is neither purely physical nor completely abstract, but rather a plane of existence where spiritual realities manifest in symbolic forms, accessible through imagination. In this sense, imagination is not perceived as a mere creative capacity, but as an ontological faculty that allows the perception of the invisible and the transcendent [1]. This philosophical approach redefines imagination as an essential means of integrating the sensory with the spiritual, allowing for a richer and deeper experience of reality.

For his part, Richard Wagner introduces the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* as a central element in his artistic conception. In his work, these two types of language are not perceived as separate entities, but as complementary expressions of the same active imagination. As we have already stated, *Wortsprache* represents structured discourse, laden with semantic meaning, while *Tonsprache* is linked to the emotional and sonic language, capable of evoking feelings and internal states. Together, these languages create a synthesis that transcends the limitations of conventional communication, offering access to deep dimensions of human experience. In this context, imagination acts as the core that integrates these forms of expression, highlighting its capacity to mediate between the tangible and the intangible, the rational and the emotional.

The parallels between Corbin's and Wagner's conceptions are evident in the way imagination operates as an essential bridge between different dimensions of reality. Both in the *Mundus Imaginalis* and in the *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* interaction, imagination is positioned as a means to transcend the barriers between the

physical and the metaphysical. In Corbin's case, this imaginative bridge allows individuals to access an intermediate space where spiritual realities manifest symbolically. In Wagner's framework, the interaction between verbal and musical language symbolizes a connection between the material and the emotional, where imagination plays the role of catalyst for the integration of these dimensions. A notable aspect of this connection is the symbolic function of languages in both systems. In the *Mundus Imaginalis*, symbols acquire central importance, as they act as vehicles for the perception of spiritual realities. These symbols are not mere representations, but concrete manifestations of the invisible on the imaginal plane. Similarly, in Wagner's work, the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* is based on the capacity of musical and verbal language to evoke profound meanings, transforming human experiences into universal artistic expressions. In both cases, imagination is the force that makes this symbolic transmutation possible, allowing individuals to connect with broader dimensions of their existence.

Furthermore, the integration between the material and the spiritual in both concepts highlights the importance of creativity as a transformative process. In the *Mundus Imaginalis*, imagination not only creates symbolic images but also acts as a means for the individual's transformation, facilitating their connection with the transcendent. This transformative process finds a parallel in Wagner's artistic approach, where the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* transforms human emotions into artistic experiences, elevating the everyday to the sublime. In both cases, imagination is not limited to the creation of images or sounds but operates as a dynamic force that redefines the relationship between the human being and their environment.

It is important to note that both Corbin and Wagner explore imagination from a perspective that transcends the limitations of rational thought. For Corbin, the *mundus imaginalis* is a space where spiritual realities acquire perceptible forms, which requires an imagination that goes beyond the bounds of conventional logic. Similarly, Wagner uses the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* to express emotions and internal states that cannot be fully communicated through rational language. In both cases, imagination operates as a faculty that allows the individual to access dimensions of experience that would otherwise remain inaccessible.

The parallels between the *Mundus Imaginalis* and the *Wortsprache /Ton- sprache* interaction also underscore the importance of human experience as the central point of both concepts. In Corbin's thought, access to the imaginal world is not a philosophical abstraction but a personal experience that transforms the individual's perception. For his part, Wagner uses the synthesis between verbal and musical language to create artistic experiences that resonate deeply with human emotions, providing a means to explore the complexity of existence. In both cases, imagination becomes a fundamental tool for integrating the multiple dimensions of human experience, highlighting its capacity to connect the material with the spiritual, the rational with the emotional.

In conclusion, the interconnection between Henri Corbin's *mundus imaginalis* and the *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* relationship in Wagner's work reflects a shared vision of imagination as an essential bridge between different dimensions of reality. Both approaches highlight the transformative capacity of imagination, both in the philosophical and artistic realms, redefining its role as an ontological and creative faculty. The parallels between these concepts not only enrich our understanding of imagination but also invite deeper reflection on its function in human experience. By exploring the connection between the material and the spiritual, Corbin and Wagner offer perspectives that transcend conventional boundaries, demonstrating how imagination can act as an essential means to integrate and expand our perception of reality.

Parallels between Mundus Imaginalis and Wortsprache/Tonsprache

Concept	Description
Mundus Imaginalis (Henri Corbin)	Un imaginative bridge between the material and the spiritual, explored in philosophical and artistic contexts.
Wortsprache/Tonsprache (Richard Wagner)	The interaction between verbal and sonic language as expressions of imagination.
Parallels	Both concepts highlight imagination as an essential means of connecting different dimensions of human experience.

VI. Spiritual and Creative Transformation through Imaginal Interaction

The interconnection between Henri Corbin's *mundus imaginalis* and the concept of *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* developed by Richard Wagner represents a profound field of exploration in the realm of spiritual and creative transformation. Both theoretical frameworks, although originating from different disciplines, share an imaginal dimension that has the potential to transcend the barriers of everyday experience and open pathways toward higher forms of artistic expression and spiritual development.

Henri Corbin, through his concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis*, introduces a fundamental notion: the imaginal world as an intermediate space between the physical and the spiritual, where images are not simple representations but autonomous realities with the power to transform human perception. This imaginal world is presented as a bridge between the visible and the invisible, a place where the spirit can manifest concretely and where artistic creation acquires a transcendental dimension. Corbin argues that access to this world is not only a tool for spiritual understanding but also a source for creativity, allowing artists and thinkers to interact with higher realities that enrich their work and personal experience.

On the other hand, Wagner, in his exploration of the relationship between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* establishes a dialogue between two forms of expression that, in their interaction, create an artistic synthesis capable of transcending the limits of ordinary communication. The friction/complementarity of these two languages generates an intermediate imaginal space, which will serve as the cradle for the creation of the *Leitmotive*, the “words” of the imaginal *Tonsprache*. This relationship between conceptual word and the sound of the word, when understood as an imaginal interaction, allows art to become a vehicle for the transformation of both creator and receiver. Wagner, like Corbin, recognizes the capacity of the imaginal dimension to generate a profound impact on human perception and spiritual development.

The interconnection between these two concepts lies in their ability to foster spiritual and creative transformation through interaction with the imaginal world. Corbin and Wagner agree that art, when nourished by this dimension, transcends its aesthetic function and becomes a means of revelation and transcendence. In this sense, Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* can be understood as a theoretical framework that explains how Wagner manages to fuse language and its sound into a form of expression that goes beyond the material, connecting individuals with a higher spiritual reality.

A key aspect of this spiritual transformation is the access to altered states of consciousness that allow the individual to interact with the imaginal world. According to Corbin, these states are essential for coming into contact with the archetypal images that inhabit the *Mundus Imaginalis*. These images are not mere psychological projections; they are realities that possess an autonomous existence and can act as guides in the process of spiritual evolution. In Wagner's case, the interaction between *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* can facilitate a similar state, where the spectator or listener immerses themselves in an aesthetic experience that connects them with deeper dimensions of their being.

Artistic creativity, in this context, becomes a process of transformation that affects not only the creator but also the receiver of the work. In both Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* and Wagner's synthesis, art is presented as a means of accessing universal truths and experiencing a more intimate connection with the divine. This imaginal interaction allows artistic works to be more than mere cultural products; they become portals to higher realities that can inspire and transform those who interact with them.

In conclusion, the interaction between Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* and the imaginal relationship between Wagner's *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* demonstrates the transformative power of the imaginal dimension in art and spirituality. Both approaches offer tools to explore how artistic creativity can act as a catalyst for spiritual evolution, connecting individuals with higher realities and facilitating deep transformation in both creator and receiver. This interconnection not only enriches our understanding of art and spirituality but also opens new avenues for exploring human potential and its capacity to transcend the limits of everyday experience.

VII. Mutual Influence on Artistic and Philosophical Perception

The interconnection between Henri Corbin's concept of the *Mundus Imaginalis* and the imaginal relationship of *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* proposed by Richard Wagner represents a concert of ideas with significant impact on the artistic and philosophical realms. The analysis of this convergence reveals how both concepts, although originating in different contexts, share a transformative capacity in the perception and interpretation of reality, transcending the barriers between the material and the spiritual.

Henri Corbin, in his exploration of the *Mundus Imaginalis*, defines this notion as an intermediate space between the sensible and the intelligible, a realm where images are not merely representations but autonomous realities that interact actively with human thought. This imaginal world, according to Corbin, allows communication with spiritual and metaphysical dimensions, offering a bridge between the earthly and the transcendent. For his part, Wagner, in his theory of *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache*, also posits the existence of an intermediate imaginal space generated by the essential interaction between language as semantics and as the sound it produces, where words and sounds do not function solely as means of expression, but as vehicles for a deeper emotional and intuitive experience. *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache* intertwine to generate an artistic effect that transcends mere narration or melody, creating a space where emotions and ideas materialize in a symbolic dialogue.

The relationship between these concepts lies in their ability to reconfigure human perception, opening horizons toward an expanded reality. Both propose forms of interaction that are not limited by traditional structures of communication or art but invite a deeper, more holistic understanding of human experience. In the *Mundus Imaginalis*, images possess an ontological dimension that transcends their representative function, suggesting that art and philosophy can act as pathways to the eternal and the absolute. In Wagner's work, this transcendence is manifested in the ability of music and language to evoke emotional and spiritual states that connect the individual with something greater than their own subjectivity. Both Corbin and Wagner identify a space in which the interaction between seemingly disparate elements—images and spiritual realities, words and sounds—produces a synthesis that redefines the individual's experience.

From a philosophical perspective, this synthesis has profound implications. The *Mundus Imaginalis* introduces the idea that knowledge is not limited to the rational or the sensible but includes an imaginal dimension that allows for intuition and revelation. Wagner, by integrating *Wortsprache* and *Tonsprache*, challenges traditional notions of artistic expression, showing how art can be a medium for knowledge and emotional transformation. In both cases, human perception is expanded, allowing for a richer and more complex connection with the universe. This shared approach underscores the potential of art and philosophy to transcend the everyday and offer access to a deeper dimension of human experience.

The mutual influence between these concepts is also reflected in how they have been adopted and reinterpreted in different cultural and intellectual contexts. Wagner's work, with its emphasis on the integration of music and language, has been the subject of analysis from various philosophical perspectives, such as Friedrich Nietzsche's critique in *The Case of Wagner*.

“Wagner appears to be a genius, but a decadent genius: in him everywhere there is collapse, fatigue, the need for redemption as a problem... and how well he understands how to flatter with his music every state of exhaustion! ... He is the biggest “fascinator” for our *fin de siècle*.”¹⁾

Nietzsche, although a harsh critic of Wagner, recognizes the emotional and symbolic depth the composer achieves through his artistic synthesis [13].

As we can ascertain, Nietzsche does not deny Wagner's artistic achievement nor his emotional power, but questions its value as decadent within the context of late 19th-century European culture.

In terms of artistic perception, the interaction between the *Mundus Imaginalis* and *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* establishes a new paradigm for the creation and reception of artistic works. Both concepts converge in the assertion that art is not simply a representation of reality, but a way of accessing hidden dimensions of existence. In Wagner's case, music and language become tools to explore emotions and states of consciousness that cannot be fully described through rational means. In the *Mundus Imaginalis*, images function as doors to transcendent realities, inviting the spectator or participant to experience something beyond the physical. This shared perspective redefines the relationship between creator and receiver, fostering active participation and deep reflection.

In conclusion, the relationship between Henri Corbin's *Mundus Imaginalis* and Richard Wagner's *Wortsprache/Tonsprache* is a perfect example of how ideas from different fields can converge to generate new forms of perception and understanding. By exploring the interconnection between these notions, their capacity to transform artistic and philosophical experience is revealed, expanding the boundaries of the imaginable and the expressible. Both concepts, although originating in different contexts, share a vision of reality that invites profound reflection on the role of art and philosophy in the expansion of human consciousness.

¹⁾ „Wagner scheint ein Genie, aber ein decadent - Genie: in ihm ist überall der Zusammenbruch, die Müdigkeit, die Nothwendigkeit der Erlösung als Problem... und wie versteht er es, mit seiner Musik jedem Zustande der Erschöpfung Schmeicheleien zu sagen! ... Er ist unserem fin-de-siècle der grösste Fascinator.“
Friedrich NIETZSCHE, *Der Fall Wagner. Ein Musikanten-Problem*. In: *Kritische Studienausgabe (KSA)*, Band 6. Herausgegeben von Giorgio Colli und Mazzino Montinari. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag / de Gruyter, 1999, p. 27.

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