



Harvey, Jonathan (1965) *The composer's idea of his inspiration*. PhD thesis.

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THE COMPOSER'S IDEA OF HIS INSPIRATION

Submission for the degree
of Ph.D.
at the University of Glasgow.

Preface

The sources from which I have made my quotations are specified in the notes. I have drawn upon most of the letters, theoretical works etc., of composers of the period which have been translated into English. The less important body of literature not translated I have also covered as well as I could, though no doubt there are omissions. I have used reliable anthologies such as Strunk's *Source Readings in Musical History*, and in this way have found translations of nearly all the most interesting writings. My own French, Italian and German translations are indicated by the untranslated titles in the notes.

The books which have played some part in shaping my ideas, apart from the composers' writings themselves, are: Evelyn Underhill, *'Mysticism'*, 1911; Rosamond Harding, *'An Anatomy of Inspiration'*, 1940; E. Newman, *'Art and the Creative Unconscious'*; Jung, *Psychological Types*; Freud, *'Civilisation and its Discontents'* et alia; Nietzsche, *'The Birth of Tragedy'*; Schopenhauer, *'The World as Will and Idea'*; G. Revesz, *'The Psychology of Music'*; Hanslick, *'The Beautiful in Music'*; Marganita Laski, *'Ecstasy'*; Arthur Koestler, *'The Creative Act'*; various articles by Hans Keller; S. Langer, *'Feeling and Form'*; Ortega y Gasset, *'The Dehumanisation of Art'*.

None of these, or any other books I have read, attempts any analysis or tabulation of the various aspects of inspiration in the process of composing. They supply generalisations which I have followed up deductively, and hints which I have developed into demonstrable facts. The original work has been the collecting and categorising in orderly succession of a large body of evidence, previously known but never synthesized, thus revealing a quite intelligible plan of the field of creative action in music.

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Introduction

This thesis is made out of composers' ideas. I have intruded only to clarify the ideas, arrange them in an intelligible order, show their background in the thought of the time, and extend them to their logical conclusion, if necessary. I have tried to be objective and have only used argument stemming from the composers' own milieu (thus the Apollo-Dionysus dichotomy dominates much of the second part, and Schopenhauer much of the third), and so it may be said that the thesis represents the voice of the average composer of the period, his idea of inspiration influenced by his own cultural atmosphere.

The period is 1700 to the present, chosen because during this period composers wrote down their views on the subject with amazing abundance. Previous to 1700 most of the aesthetics are left to theoreticians, or else they simply have not survived.

I wish to view the period as a whole and to consider Haydn in the same breath as Stravinsky; there is a strong uniformity about the period in aesthetic attitudes and I think even the music is sufficiently alike to be lumped into one bag without causing mental gymnastics. It represents the span of the concert hall programme today.

The thesis does not therefore attempt to isolate any one composer's, or even any one school's views on inspiration, the constant criss-crossing of the period in time brings to light what the generality of the composers thought, with an occasional eccentric dissenting here and there. My procedure was to glean all relevant statements from all available writings within the period and simply to arrange them under the headings they themselves suggested. They seemed to organise themselves neatly enough into several categories without regard to chronological position, showing clearly that inspiration and the role it plays in compositional procedure have not changed much over the period.

Yet they have changed, if only superficially, and the quotations must speak for themselves of these subtle differences in wording; the successions of examples quoted to illustrate one point will reveal a kaleidoscope of different shades of attitude, and the composer's name (and the implied cultural atmosphere

that goes with it) will be sufficient commentary on the quotation's distinctiveness.

The main tendency of the period as far as our topic is concerned is a movement from extroversion to introversion. The enormous crescendo in self-analytical writings throughout the period is accelerated and intensified by Freud and his transformation of what had been (to the romantics) a subject of poetry to a subject of science. Thus the reader of Stravinsky's views today demands to be told not just beautiful and mystical opinions, but harshly self-analytical truths. The literature of theoretical essays etc., is consequently richest this end of the period, whereas one relies mostly on letters at the other end.

If these pages seem to be dominated by a few composers such as Wagner, Schoenberg or Stravinsky, it of course in no way implies any superiority as composers, they have been represented in proportion to the amount of relevant opinions they have written.

Also, if arguments such as 'is music itself or something else?' are apt to recur, this is because some of the statements quoted tend to one side or the other, and the obvious solution (that it is always both) must only emerge dialectically. Contradictory opinions are sometimes held by the same composer, and here again it must be shown why they were held, dialectically.

I have naturally left untampered all translations, though some of them, such as W. A. Ellis's Prose Works of Wagner (1895) make strange reading now, yet he strove for a faithful reproduction of Wagner's meaning, finding, if possible, words of the same root as the German. All italics are the composers', and my interjections are in brackets.

Part I

THE COMPOSER AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

1.

The Two Sources of Inspiration

The term inspiration, when applied to musical composition, commonly denotes that which has given a composer a musical idea, whether this be a single motive or a whole work. It must be an unknown or mysterious source in order to warrant the name inspiration.

The unknown source is the unconscious, the mysterious source is the projection of the unconscious onto mountains, sea, human situations and activities, art, other music, or anything in the external world which rings a bell within the composer and mirrors his own deep feelings. This latter source is partially, because symbolically, known and understood, the former, however, is totally obscure.

2.

Direct Unconscious Source

First let us take the unknown and totally obscure source of inspiration, the direct action of the unconscious mind. This activity is often sharply divided from the everyday conscious activity of the composer; Tchaikovsky illustrates this point well: 'she leaves me' he writes of his Muse, 'only when she feels out of place because my workaday human living has intruded. Always, however, the shadow removes itself and she reappears'(1). 'In a word, an artist lives a double life: an everyday human life and an artistic life'(2). 'Without any special reason for rejoicing, I may be moved by the most cheerful creative mood, and vice-versa, a work composed in the happiest surroundings may be touched with dark and gloomy colours'(3). 'Sometimes I look curiously at this productive flow of creativeness which entirely by itself, separate from any conversation I may at the moment be participating in, separate from the people with me at the time, goes on in the region of my brain that is given over to music'(4). Thus a sharper division occurs in the artist than in ordinary men, because he is more than usually aware of his other, darker face.

The split between conscious and unconscious also occurs in the process of creation itself, 'one half of the personality emotes and dictates while the other half listens and notates'(5); and the half which emotes and dictates does so in an utterly

compulsive way - 'Kunst kommt nicht von können, sondern von müssen'(6) - it is only comparable to the state of extreme joy and purposefulness of the mystic. It is this unconscious activity within the process of creation that we must now examine.

Ecstasy is at the very root of inspiration, and for our present purposes we may simply imply by the word an intense sensation which involves and brings to light areas of the psyche which are normally deeply obscure, hence the sensation of duality, of standing outside oneself. This element is present in many remarks made by composers about the unconscious - 'I am the vessel through which Le Sacre passed'(7) wrote Stravinsky of that appallingly novel work; of his 3rd Symphony Mahler wrote: 'Try to conceive a work so vast, that in it the entire world is mirrored - one is, so to speak, only an instrument on which the whole universe plays ... In such moments I no longer belong to myself'(8); and elsewhere writes 'the creation and the genesis of a work is mystical from beginning to end since one - himself unconscious - must create something as though through outside inspiration. And afterwards he scarcely understands how it happened'(9). Some composers naturally assume that the unconscious is recipient of supernatural aid, others do not; for the present we will leave the matter open for the difference is largely one of overbelief (belief formed in accord with fashion or other external influence); the main point which will be shown later is that a sense of metaphysical awe accompanies the revelations of the unconscious. 'When the final shape of our work depends on forces more powerful than ourselves, we can later give reasons for this passage or that, but taking it as a whole one is merely an instrument. The power driving us is that marvellous logic which governs a work of art. Let us call it God' (Sibelius)(10).

This amazing force which 'lives us rather than we live it'(11) is best testified to by a list of relevant quotations: some are emotional in tone, others emphasise the clarifying properties of inspiration:-

Speaking of this condition in which the unconscious is master, Tchaikovsky writes: 'I would try vainly to express in words that unbounded sense of bliss that comes over me when a new idea opens up within me and starts to take on definite form. Then I forget everything and behave like one demented. Everything inside me begins to pulse and quiver: I hardly begin the sketch before one thought begins tumbling over another'(12). There is

something somnambulistic about this condition. 'On ne s'entend pas vivre'. It is impossible to describe such moments.'(13).

Of 'Dr. Faust' Busoni wrote 'I cannot feel it any other way, and I was led straight to this point in the same strange state of somnambulism in which the whole seems to have been dictated to me'(14).

'Intoxication, whether Dionysian or Apollonian, of an artist's fantasy increases the clarity of his vision'. (Schoenberg)(15).

'We have all experienced those clarifying moments when a phrase stood out, as it were, in bas-relief, inevitable, as though it had been presented to us suddenly, brought to truth complete, Minerva like. These are times of the greatest receptivity, when all the senses are alive and responsive to a marked degree. One is living in a state of inward harmony and vitality, as in a white, intense light wherein objects impinge on the retina with remarkable clarity. One ... grasps as with a fist a clotted bunch of notes hitherto dangling evasively. It is in fact a state of clairvoyance in which abstraction from one's environment and everyday life is momentarily complete'. (Bliss) (16).

'As for me'exclaims Beethoven 'why, good heavens, my kingdom is in the air. As the wind often does, so do harmonies whirl around me and so do things often whirl about me too in my soul'(17).

'When I am alone, and the musical strings begin to stir within me, strange whirling sounds take shape of chords until at last a melody springs forth, revealing to me the idea of my whole being ... Fool ... not to bide forever by thyself, to live for these unequalled blisses'. (Wagner) (18).

Wagner often referred to the blissful dream-state into which he fell when composing, a state very similar to Yeats's reveries 'between sleeping and waking' when symbols and ideas of immense significance float into the brain - in fact that is the phrase he uses for the famous moment in La Spezia when the prelude to Das Rheingold was conceived. He was visionary through and through, from early life to old age. For instance, these

experiences resulting from readings of E. T. A. Hoffman date from adolescence: 'on fire with the maddest mysticism, I had visions by day in semi-slumber in which the 'Keynote', 'Third' and 'Dominant' seemed to take on living form and reveal to me their mighty meanings' (19).

'All we know is that the moment of possession is the moment of inspiration; or to use Coleridge's phrase, 'the moment when the creator is in a more than usual state of emotion' (Copland) (20).

'Inspiration is a state of spirit, a state of mind, and - why not? - a state of ecstasy (in its rigorous sense of being carried away), in which all the mental, psychic and spiritual forces of the individual concur intensely for a single purpose, that of creating, composing or investigating in a total concentration of faculties in a given direction. We do not call all cases of concentration inspiration, but all cases of inspiration involve concentration ' (Chavez) (21).

'Music is a violent passion, like love, it can, without doubt, apparently deprive individuals who are possessed by it of their reason ... it remains yet to be proved that this pretended derangement is not a sublime exaltation, an exceptional development of the intellect and sensibility.' (Berlioz) (22).

'Poetic inspiration may be somehow connected with the intellect ... - musical inspiration is the absolute revelation of innermost secrets' (Strauss) (23).

'It is a manifestation of our unconscious which remains inexplicable to us' ... 'an impulse for which we are not, so to speak, responsible' (Honegger) (24).

'creature impulse ... blots out ... consciousness of the familiar sort' (Copland) (25).

'The Poet is the knower of the unconscious' (Wagner) (26).

'Music is the most ductile of all artistic media to express the depths of the subconscious' (Chavez) (27).

'Music must come from the shadows' (Debussy) (28).

This has illustrated the recording in words of some of those experiences which are supreme to the composer and which it is impossible to analyse since such a process would lead to something less than them; they are absolute and speak of ultimates, beyond dialectic in the Hegelian sense.

3.

Absorption

Many, if not most, of the composers in our period preferred their world of the unconscious to the real outside world, perhaps as an escape; once there, they find it richer, more exciting than the outside world and spend most of their time enjoying what it has to offer, and during composition itself they shut the door firmly behind them.

Mozart was perhaps the most musically absorbed composer who ever lived - 'You know that I am soaked in music, that I am immersed in it all day long, and that I love to plan works, study and meditate'(1). He even wonders if, when composing Idomeneo, he will 'turn into the 3rd Act, I'm so obsessed with it'(2). Haydn was much the same - '"Usually musical ideas are pursuing me, to the point of torture, I cannot escape them, they stand like walls before me. If it's an allegro that pursues me, my pulse keeps beating faster, I can get no sleep. If it's an adagio, then I notice my pulse beating slowly. My imagination plays on me as if I were a clavier". Haydn smiled, the blood rushed to his face, and he said, "I am really just a living clavier ..." '(Interview with Dies) (3).

Other examples:- 'I live entirely in my music; and hardly have I completed one composition when I have already begun another' (Beethoven)(4).

'it is as if the best in man could shut itself up and only half of him sallied forth dreaming' (into the daily routines of life) (Brahms)(5).

'How often I take night for day and day for night; how often I live in my dreams, and sleep in the daytime;' (Chopin)(6).

'I live and compose as a god' (Schubert)(7).

'Now I am occupied with my new symphony (for London) and wherever I go I have nothing else in my mind' (Dvorak)(8).

Elgar, quoting a theme from Gerontius:- 'This is what

I hear all day - the trees are singing my music - or have I sung theirs? I suppose I have?'(9).

Rimsky-Korsakov, of his summertime holiday in the village of Stelyovo: 'everything was somehow in:peculiar harmony with my pantheistic frame of mind at the time and my passion for the subject of Snyegorochka. A thick crooked knot or stump overgrown with moss appeared to me the wood demon or his abode; the forest Volchinyets - a forbidden forest; the bare Kopytyets hillock - Yarilo's mountain; the triple echo heard from our balcony - seemed voices of wood sprites or other supernatural beings' (10).

Gluck, writing 'Alceste': 'For a month now it has given me no sleep; my wife is in despair: it seems to me that I have a hive of bees buzzing in my head ...' (11).

Wagner writes to his Isolde/muse - Mathilde Wesendonck: 'I am living wholly in this music ... I live in it eternally. And with me ... you'(12). All his accounts of the creative process involve a feeling of immersion, often in the ancient symbol of the unconscious - water, such as 'diving up to the ears into the fount of music' (13).

Debussy: 'Pelléas and Melisande are my only little friends just now; besides, perhaps we are beginning to know each other too well and continually tell stories whose endings we know perfectly; and then, to finish a work, isn't this a little like the death of someone you love?'(14). The sufficiency of the world of imagination which absorbed the composer was perfect; exactly the same was the long tyranny Poe's 'The Fall of the House of Usher' held over him - he would not be surprised, he once wrote, to see the sister of Roderick Usher coming through his study door.

Tippett warns of this world of imagination, of the uncertainty of 'those depths of the psyche where the god - and devil - images also hibernate' (he has had reason to beware): 'the artist who has to animate his imaginative powers in order to create, thereby endangers partially or altogether at times his sense of reality' (15).

'I dream awake; dream and wake up 'scorched with ecstasy' as they say'(16). 'I am gay on the outside ... but inside some-

thing gnaws at me: some presentiment, anxiety, dreams - or sleeplessness - melancholy, desire for life and the next instant, desire for death: some kind of sweet peace, some kind of numbness, absent-mindedness '(Chopin)(17).

These passages simply assert the fact of imaginative absorption. The artist is traditionally a dreamer, contemplating another world. Later we will exemplify his preference for this world ('The Composer and the Ideal') and in the next section we will show the results of this preference being thwarted.

4.

Sterility

The other side of the coin may be termed sterility: it occurs when the door to the unconscious is barred and enrichment fades to apathy. This domineering unconscious which 'lives us' will ruthlessly keep us out - against it we are helpless. Here we may profitably draw a parallel with mystic writings at that stage when the mystic feels himself abandoned by God, by all spiritual refreshment, and extreme depression and inertia sets in. 'The Dark Night of the Soul' often follows a period of intense illumination and precedes the unitive life itself. In it the mystic has turned from elation and ecstasy and the superabundance of energy that goes with the apprehension of Reality to his own smallness, to aridity. St. Theresa wrote of herself 'her reason is reduced to such a state that she is no longer mistress of herself and can think of nothing but her affliction. Far from her Sovereign Good, why should she desire to live? She feels an extraordinary loneliness, finds no companionship in any earthly creature; nor could she I believe among those who dwell in heaven, since they are not her Beloved. Meanwhile all company is torture to her. She is like a person suspended in mid-air, who can neither touch the earth nor mount to heaven. She burns with a consuming thirst and cannot reach the water. And this is a thirst which cannot be borne, but one which nothing will quench: nor would she have it quenched with any other water than that of which our Lord spoke to the Samaritan woman; and this water is denied her'(1).

For the composer, communion with God is the act of creation in which he gives 'an image to an ineffable experience of (his) inner life'(2); separation gives parallel results.

'I am afraid that Turandot will never be finished ... When fever abates, it ends by disappearing, and without fever there is no creation; because emotional art is a kind of malady, an exceptional state of mind, over-excitation of every fibre and every atom of one's being, and so on, ad aeternum' (Puccini)(3).

'I often felt beautifully elevated, gently supported; generally I was silent, but it was from inner joy; even hope wound itself softly round my heart ... But the word resounded from farther and farther distance, till at last I could hear it no longer. Silence! now the old night holds me again; let it devour me altogether!' (Wagner)(4).

'Shall I ever again find a single thought within me? Now there is nothing - nothing. I feel as if I had never composed a note in my life, and that the operas could never have been really mine' (Weber) (5).

Mozart wrote in 1790, 'if people could see into my heart I should almost feel ashamed. To me everything is cold - cold as ice'(6). 1790 was a year of uniquely slender production for Mozart, it only bore K.589-594. Two of these six works were instrumentations of Handel, one was the obstinate Adagio and Allegro for mechanical organ referred to on the next page.

Haydn was subject to depressions during which he was 'quite incapable of finding even a single idea for many days thereafter'(7).

So were Brahms ('could fall sick with longing for a new fresh strain'(8)), and Smetana who once wrote of the world of imagination as 'veiled as though by a mist of depression and pain' (9). Elgar finished his life after his wife's death in pathetic apathy ('the old artistic 'striving' world exists for me no more'(10), and Rossini passed most of his in a similar, if more cheerful, state, a 'state of ever-increasing mental impotence ... music needs freshness of ideas; I have only listlessness and rages'(11).

'Do you really believe that one who creates with the spirit, who is the individualist type, keeps for any length of time the possibility of surviving, of giving himself to his art, of writing music? '(12). Thus Honegger incredulously asks whether it is not to be expected. Even the most consistently prolific composers would admit, one suspects, to periods of inferior inspirational fervour.

Necessity of Unconscious

Now we move to composers acknowledgement of the necessity of unconscious action for the act of composition. Some relied so heavily on unconscious aid that they could not accept commissions (like Smetana) or at least disliked them, like Berlioz. Some could be reasonably sure that they would receive inspiration, which was a fairly frequent visitor, but they all acknowledge that without inspiration of some sort, nothing much is possible.

Of the simple and complex respectively: 'Only one thing is certain ... without inspiration neither could be accomplished. There are times when I am unable to write a single example of simple counterpoint in two voices, such as I ask sophomores to do in my classes. And, in order to write a good example of this sort, I must receive the co-operation of inspiration' (Schoenberg)(1).

Mozart, in the more extrovert eighteenth century, blames the 'high-pitched ... and childish' mechanical organ for the lack of inspiration he feels: 'it is a kind of composition which I detest, I have unfortunately not been able to finish it ... And indeed I'd give the whole thing up, if I had not such an important reason to go on with it. But I still hope I shall be able to force myself gradually to finish it. If it were for a large instrument and the work would sound like an organ piece, then I might get some fun out of it'(2).

'Debts resemble inspiration in this respect, i.e. one must make use of the moment at once, whenever a noble work can be completed'.(Beethoven)(3).

'I must have time and leisure to wait for inspiration, which I can expect only from some remote region of my nature'. (Wagner)(4).

Of 'Tristan': 'people say "Go to work, then all will be right." Very well, in its way, but I, poor devil, lack routine, and if ideas do not come to me of themselves, I cannot make them'.(Wagner)(5).

'You imagine composing as altogether too easy a matter; it is only possible to start when we feel enthusiasm' (Dvorak)(6).

'In art, as in life, I am at the mercy of spontaneity. If I had to compose, not a note would come ... One Summer ... I made up my mind to finish the Seventh, both Andantes of which were on the table. I plagued myself for two weeks until I sank back into gloom as you well remember; then I tore off to the Dolomites. There I was led the same dance, and at last gave it up and returned home, convinced the whole summer was lost ... I got into the boat (at Knumpendorf) to be rowed across. At the first stroke of the oars the theme (or rather the rhythm and character) of the introduction to the first movement came into my head - and in four weeks the first, third and fifth movements were done' (Mahler)(7).

Even Richard Strauss who is often aligned with the Kapellmeister tradition, able to spin out music almost by craft alone, found the composition of his rather dull Alpine Symphony, composed while writing for the next libretto, rather unpleasant: 'in the meantime I am toiling away at a symphony, which I find rather less amusing than shaking down cockroaches'(8).

Infallibility of Unconscious

When inspiration comes, it is treated with reverence and trust, amounting in modern times to near worship, for with the breakdown of the old metaphysical certainties the visions of the unconscious are the one sure guide through a chaos of contradictions. The bypassing of reason in the arts is more obviously seen in the fine arts and theatre of our own day, yet in music a belief in the infallibility of the irrational forces in man is stronger than anywhere else, and increases gradually over the course of our period.

'Instinct is infallible. If it leads us astray, it is no longer instinct' (Stravinsky)(1).

'neither long experience nor the most beautiful talent ... instinct only - as old as the world ... can save you'(Debussy)(2).

'the creator must forever be instinctive and spontaneous in his impulses' (Copland)(3) ... 'have childlike spontaneity' (Vaughan-Williams)(4).

Liszt employs the analogy of the natural garden and the artificial garden: 'Why all this desire to stunt and control natural and artistic impulses? ... The first time the little garden-artist mislays his shears, everything grows as it should and must'(5). (For a revealing contradiction, cf. Schumann p.67).

(Art must be) 'the blossom of a natural culture, i.e. such a one as has grown up from below' (Wagner)(6).

'Creation should be as natural and inescapable as the growth of apples to an apple tree' (Schoenberg)(7).

'Imperious Necessity ... drives the artist to that fanatical stubbornness wherewith he cries at last: So it is, and not otherwise!' (Wagner)(8).

'Whether one is a good composer or not - one must be convinced of the infallibility of one's own fantasy and one must believe in one's own inspiration' (Schoenberg)(9).

In the 'somnambulistic condition' Tchaikovsky experienced, 'everything that flows from one's pen ... invariably good, and if no external obstacle comes to hinder the creative glow, the result will be an artist's best and most perfect work.'(10).

Wagner often used the idea of 'trust' in this sort of context: 'Here (in 'Tristan') in perfect trustfulness I plunged into the inner depths of soul-events, and from out this innermost centre of the world I fearlessly built up its outer form'(11).

'Trust your inspiration! There is no alternative' (Weber)(12).

'nothing is valid (in art) except what has sprung from the deepest faith of the innermost soul ... If the object alone has not inspired creation, it will never speak 'from heart to heart', and imitation is then nothing but the most superficial product of the most alien thoughts' (Mendelssohn)(13).

'in order to understand anything, one must first believe in something; that is the higher basis on which feeble understanding first erects the pillars of proof. Intelligence is nothing else than analysed faith! (Schubert)(14). This interesting remark of Schubert's not only Rousseau-like condemns the

superiority of reason over loving intuition but anticipates much later, Kierkegaardian notions involving fidelity and knowledge; it might come straight from Gabriel Marcel - 'I only find myself in other things and people, with fidelity'.

These then are the attributes of the unconscious in general, as it appears to the composer. He has found it exciting, intoxicating, lucid, as seductive and sometimes as fatal as a Siren, wayward, elusive, yet essential and infallible to the point of divinity.

In the next section we will turn to the process of composition itself, and the composer's more specific analysis of the roles played by unconscious and conscious composition in their work.

7.

THE PROCESS OF COMPOSITION

Musical invention may be very roughly divided into two types: 1. that which follows consciously from what has gone before, or is happening above or below, such as logical continuation of a set of notes or the addition of counterpoint, harmony, colour etc., to an already existing set of notes. 2. That which follows some unconscious, or partially-apprehended force, as when a composer knows his next passage is 'right', though he has not worked it out (unconscious unity), or when a composer follows some stimulus, such as Nature, poetry, character, national atmosphere, emotional experience etc.

The first type is that of musical logic which has its own laws, which, partially subjective though they may be, seem invulnerable and natural to the composer who abides by them, (to some extent they alter from age to age and from composer to composer). This is conscious calculation.

The second type is that which entails less effort and no calculation, or at any rate a different sort of calculation. It comes apparently of its own accord or is simply aided by some internal emotion or sensation, which in turn may be stimulated by some thing or some happening in the external world. This second type occupies perhaps the grander position of the two, for it is responsible for the initial conception of the work and all flights of imagination within the work. The first usually

serves to solidify and elucidate (and also to make the work playable), though with a Beethoven musical logic seems almost to lead the expressive element, the two are so closely linked. The second determines generalities of mood and shape, though of course these may be very clearly crystallised.

To illustrate the use of these types in compositional procedure we will examine two fairly detailed and analytical accounts. Busoni wrote: 'First comes the idea, then the conception, or one seeks for it, then follows the execution ...

In the opera I am now working on ... the Brantwahl, a change of scene occurs with a drop curtain between. The scene following shows a half-dark Weinstube in which the ancient mysterious Jew, Manasse, sits alone and silent, I used this intermission to paint with the orchestra a kind of portrait of this Hebrew. Old and surly, ghostlike and gruesome, rather a big imposing person, and above all an 'Orthodox'.

'Do you see now that I have the idea? From this there is a limit that an extremely old Jewish melody could be used as a musical motive - it will certainly be familiar to you from synagogue ritual. Thus the interval of time between idea and conception was considerably shortened for me'. (Presumably this stage would normally be the stage of musical inspiration 'concentration of my artistic 'I' ' as Dvorak said(1) when the composer absorbs himself with idea and waits for the notes to arrive, to be 'given').

'Now comes the execution, I wished this song, above all, to sound deep and gloomy. That determined the choice of instruments, and the right position for them determined the choice of key.

'In this way the execution advances further and builds itself up on Harmony, Characteristics, Form, Atmosphere, Colour and Contrast (with what precedes and what follows) and a hundred other details (viz. conscious calculation), until my Manasse stands there ready'(2).

D'Indy gives this account: 'The creator of any work of art ... demands ... three distinct periods of work, the conception, the planning, and the execution.

'The first is subdivided into two operations: the synthetic and the analytic conception. (D'Indy's synthetic = Busoni's idea, his analytic = Busoni's conception, his planning = Busoni's execution, D'Indy's execution being simply the act of getting it down on paper. D'Indy's account brings together the 'idea' (mood or movement to be expressed) and 'conception' (musical expression of it) of Busoni's account as being closely interrelated, especially in absolute music). 'These two undertakings generally succeed each other, but are nevertheless connected, and may modify each other in the sense that the nature of the idea (the personal element) may lead the creative artist to change the order of his preconceived plan: while on the other hand, the nature of the plan (the element of generality) may invoke certain types of musical ideas to the exclusion of others ...

'The second period in the creation of a work, which we call the planning or ordering, is that in which the artist, utilizing the elements previously conceived, decides upon the definite disposition of his work as a whole and in its minutest details.

'This phase, which still necessitates a certain amount of invention, is sometimes accompanied by long moments of hesitation and cruel uncertainties ... but it also brings him the full delight of feeling himself in intimate communion with the beautiful'(3). (Finally execution, simply writing and orchestration. This is the phase of conscious calculation).

What 'the musical conception must first seek to determine' is the 'ton d'ensemble' as Dukas calls it, 'the musical themes being of no account unless they are closely associated with the preliminary view of the whole, which must foresee their use and intuitively control their inter-relation'(4).

It is this preliminary view of the whole, or initial vision, however partial and incomplete, that we must first consider, — unconscious inspiration at its profoundest stage.

'the work of art is conceived whole. The inspiration

is not the theme but the whole work' (Schoenberg)(5).

'A creator has a vision which has not existed before this vision.

'In fact the concept of creator and creation should be formed in harmony with the Divine Model; inspiration and perfection, wish and fulfillment, will and accomplishment coincide spontaneously and simultaneously.

'Alas, human creators, if they be granted a vision, must travel the long path between vision and accomplishment; a hard road where, driven out of Paradise, even geniuses must reap their harvest in the sweat of their brows' (Schoenberg)(6).

'What the genius has ... is vision', writes Hindemith. He goes on to compare creative inspiration to a flash of lightning illuminating a vast landscape in all its detail, but no detail is concentrated on as in daylight, the suddenness gives a vivid vision of the totality; details would detract from the conception of the whole. 'A composer ... is always in danger of losing the original vision ... One of the characteristics of the talent of a creative genius seems to be the ability to retain the keenness of the first vision until its embodiment in the finished piece is achieved'(7).

The vision may be more or less musical, it may be so vaguely musical as to be still only feeling, the composer knows it will probably lead to music, more or less good according to the strength of the feeling. This famous vision of Stravinsky's was quite unaccompanied by any musical ideas: 'One day, when I was finishing the last pages of L'Oiseau de Feu in St. Petersburg, I had a fleeting vision which came to me as a complete surprise, my mind at the moment being full of other things. I saw in imagination a solemn pagan rite; sage elders seated in a circle, watched a young girl dance herself to death. They were sacrificing her to propitiate the god of spring ... I must confess that this vision made a deep impression on me'(8).

Similarly, Tippett describes his first visions of a scene (man rebuffed by girl) central to the conception of Midsummer Marriage. 'Even as I write now (two or three years later)), some of the excitement of these first pictures comes

back ... everything is accepted or rejected eventually according to whether it fits this preordained thing, which itself will not be fully known until it is finished'(9).

Elgar writes to Binyon: 'Thank you for allowing me to set your splendid poems. I fear I have been a very long time but ... it has taken me all this time to overtake the first careful rapture'(10). Elgar's significant variation on Herriok underlines the precision of inspiration as opposed to mere sensation.

Even music normally considered rather cerebral depends on visionary discovery, which is by definition opposed to cerebration: 'How does the series arise? Our - Schoenberg's, Berg's and my - series mostly arose when an idea occurred to us, linked with an intuitive vision of the entire work ... If you like - inspiration' (Webern)(11).

Finally, Wagner in his famous Beethoven essay describes how his inner vision becomes music: he uses as a comparison the notion that in sleep one has a deep dream, so deep it is never known in itself, and after it an allegorical dream which can be remembered by the waking mind; it is a go-between: 'the musician is controlled ... by an urgent impulse to impart the vision of his inmost dream; like the second, allegoric dream, he therefore approaches the notions (Vorstellungen) of the waking brain - those notions whereby it {waking brain} is at last enabled to preserve a record, chiefly for itself, {it is not particularly concerned with communication yet} of the inner vision ... Whilst harmony, belonging to neither Space nor Time, remains the most inalienable element of music, through the rhythmic sequence of his tones in point of time the musician reaches forth a plastic hand ... to strike a compact with the waking world of semblances ... Thus, though music draws her nearest affinities in the phenomenal world into her dream-realm {viz. human gesture, via movement via rhythm} ... this is only in order to turn our visual faculties inwards through a wondrous transformation, ... enabling them to grasp the Essence-of-things in its most immediate manifestation, ... to read the vision which the musician had himself behold in deepest sleep'(12).

This 'vision' is not the composer's, who visualises his music, it is rather the music's, which visualises or portrays

the unfathomable composer, or to put it more simply, the untranslatable unconscious composer's vision is translated (by the compromise of rhythm) into the conscious composer's music. Thus we arrive back at the beginning of the section with the idea of the sharp division within the composer making him almost a double personality.

Approach as in Mist

Sometimes 'the inspiration takes the form ... not of a sudden flash of music, but a clearly envisaged impulse toward a certain goal for which the composer was obliged to strive. When ... this perfect realisation was attained, however, there would have been no hesitation - rather a flash of recognition that this was exactly what he wanted'(1). Thus Sessions, in speaking of the Hammerklavier Sonata in particular, may introduce our next category, the gradual clarifying of a vague idea to the point of recognition as the striven-for goal.

'I usually recognise my find' (Stravinsky)(2). This sort of statement implies the process of quest and discovery and is very common among modern composers.

'Imagine a building that you are constructing, of which you perceive vaguely at first the general plan and which becomes progressively more and more precise in the mind ... 'I look first for the contour, the general aspect of the work. Let us say, for instance, that I see outlined in a very thick mist a sort of palace. Contemplation gradually dissipates this mist and allows one to see a little more clearly. Sometimes a ray of the sun comes and lights up a wing of this palace under construction: this fragment becomes my model' (Honegger)(3). And when satisfied with the work or passage he not only recognises it but recognises that 'there was no other solution'.

Britten once likened composition to approaching a house slowly in a mist also(4), and Wellesz says much the same: 'it is like approaching a tree in the mist; at first we see only the outline, then the branches and finally the leaves'(5).

By far the most eloquent witness to the 'clarifying'

method is furnished by Beethoven in his sketch books in which we see not only themes, but whole structures with their movements of arsis and thesis becoming more and more crystalline. That this subject was not discussed by older composers one may attribute partly to lack of analytical introversion, but mostly I think to the emphasis on creation rather than discovery, which latter, more modern attitude has tended to foster such statements as those quoted above.

2.

Actual Notes or Shapes 'Given'

The third way in which the unconscious presents material to the conscious mind is when actual notes are presented ready to be written down just as they are, or, a little less crystallised, when a musical shape is sensed with not all the notes filled in.

'When we talk about Einfälle {einfallen - to drop in, describes the unprompted appearance of ideas} we usually mean little motives, consisting of a few tones - tones often not even felt as tones but felt merely as a vague sense of sound' (Hindemith)(1).

'I have a visual impression simply of a musical shape without knowing the actual notes '(Rubbra)(2).

'The melodic idea which suddenly falls upon me out of the blue, which emerges without the prompting of an external sensual stimulant or of some spiritual emotion ... appears in the imagination immediately, unconsciously, uninfluenced by reason. It is the greatest gift of the divinity and cannot be compared with anything else' (Strauss)(3).

'at rare infrequent moments there flashes through a personality not only the vivid imaginative thought but also the creative ability to pin it down in a final and flashing setting: ... such moments with most of us ... only suffice for a few bars thought'(Bliss)(4).

'Yesterday ... suddenly for some reason or other, everything began to play and sing inside me after a long indifference to music. One theme, an embryo in B major, enthroned itself in my head and unexpectedly fascinated me to such an extent as to make me attempt

an entire symphony' (Tchaikovsky)(5).

'I sat down, began to improvise, sad or happy according to my mood, serious or trifling. Once I had seized upon an idea, my whole endeavour was to develop and sustain it in keeping with the rules of art'(Haydn)(6).

'we grub about in expectation of our pleasure {improvise} guided by our scent, and suddenly we stumble against an unknown obstacle. It gives us a jolt, fecundates our creative power ... Lucky find' (Stravinsky)(7).

'It is very nice indeed if you can pick out little melodies on the keyboard; but if such come spontaneously to you, and not at the pianoforte, rejoice even more, for it proves that your inner sense of tone is awakening'(Schumann)(8).

Finally, as an example of the same process occurring in response to a stimulus, Wagner gives advice to a young operatic composer on the birth of a Leitmotiv, a motive genuinely and mysteriously connected with the character concerned. 'Let him take a good look at the one character, for instance, which appeals to him the most this very day ... Let him set it in a twilight spot, where he can merely see the gleaming of its eye; if that speaks to him, the shape itself will now most likely fall a-moving, which perhaps will even terrify him - but he must put up with that; at last its lips will part, it opens its mouth, and a ghostly voice breathes something quite distinct, intensely seizable, but so unheard-of ... that he wakes from out his dream. All has vanished; but in the spiritual ear it still sings on: he has had an idea {Einfall}, a so-called musical Motive ... does it please X, Y, or displease Z? What's that to him? It is his motive, legally delivered to and settled on him by that marvellous shape in that wonderful fit of absorption'(9).

10.

Acknowledgement of Period of Gestation, Preparation

Many composers hold that the process of composing 'is continuous'(1), though sometimes in the conscious sphere and sometimes in the unconscious sphere. The absorption of external impressions from life and the turning of them into musical

expression becomes such a smooth process and happens so continuously that one cannot divide it any more than milk and water. Thus Mozart: 'I could scribble things off the whole day'(2), and Beethoven, 'my motto is always: Nullo dies sine linea; and if I let my Muse go to sleep it is only that she may be all the more active when she awakes'(3). 'The real composer thinks about his work the whole time; he is not always conscious of this, but he is aware of it later when he suddenly knows what he will do'(Stravinsky)(4).

To make Stravinsky more specific we may change his word 'work' to 'works', for they are separate works, one after another, sometimes overlapping, upon which the composer's mind is continuously in action. It is the history of the single work that must therefore be considered, from its very beginnings.

Composers have generally recognised that their inspirations are preceded by a period of unconscious preparation. During this period a certain psychic energy is evident in the unconscious mind (I feel a kind of restlessness ... as if I had gone through an illness' - Wellesz(5)) which has a purpose of its own. This purpose is usually a tidying-up me. That is to say, there is either some conflict to be resolved, or else there is some aspect of reality which is important to, yet baffles the mind; the mind must work until it can grasp this aspect of reality, understand, and make it part of itself, for the unconscious mind dislikes disorder. There are two ways in which it accomplishes this.

1. The psychic energy is a sort of unconscious police force which gradually collects evidence (memory) from day-to-day experiences and when it has the solution, suddenly reveals it to the conscious world; Koestler's 'bisociative' act which is the confluence of two unconnected frames of reference to form a higher synthesis. The occasion of the revelation may be a strongly conducive mood in harmony with the character of this collection of material which opens the valve, similarly an ecstasy, or it might be the last small shred of material to complete the picture, the straw to break the camel's back. Equally well it may occur in completely irrelevant surroundings for no apparent reason.

2. The unconscious also has another and more profound method of finding solutions. It involves regression to the infantile state of mind when the world was more of a unity, undivided by reason, united by instinct. Freudians and Jungians alike agree that the great work of art is an expression of a primitive answer to profound wishes of the age. The work of art stands for something greater than itself, some psychic reality which can be expressed only by symbol, not by description, such is its obscurity.

It is only the great composer who is able to delve into these primitive layers, and this is effected by his desire for progress, his dissatisfaction with existing symbols, the 'never-contented mind that ever broods the New' from which Wagner claimed to suffer. It involves his lowest instinctive and his highest mental activity (primitive, 'archetypal' feelings desiring expression and intellectual desire for more advanced rational order). The two must come into conscious opposition. The ego recognises its affinity with both and its own disunity. 'When the opposites are given a complete equality of right, attested to by the ego's unconditioned participation in both thesis and antithesis, a suspension of the will results; for the will can no longer be operative while every motive has an equally strong counter-motive by its side ...' 'Insupportable tension' leads to a regression to the source, viz. inactivity of consciousness leads to activity of unconsciousness 'where all the differentiated functions have their common, archaic root, and where that promiscuity of contents exists of which the primitive mentality still exhibits numerous reminders ... Since this content discloses a relation to both thesis and antithesis, it forms a middle territory, upon which the opposites can be reconciled'(6). Jung calls this the transcendent function. Ernst Kretschmer, a Freudian, comments: 'The process is dominated by the ego and put to its own purposes - for sublimation in creative activity. Thus inspired creation solves an inner contest, sometimes as a compromise between conflicting forces, sometimes as a defence against one particularly dangerous instinct. Where man seems to be at the peak of his activity, in creation, he is still sometimes inclined to bend his head to the Almighty and to be carried back to the period when dependence on objects in the outside world dominated his life'(7).

The solution of 'an inner contest' is in music the surmounting of some problem, as when a composer deliberately submits a difficulty to his unconscious and patiently awaits an answer without worrying further. Or it may happen quite unexpectedly, when a composer is delighted suddenly to find the solution to a problem he had given up a long time ago.

The other solution mentioned by Kris - 'the defense against one particularly dangerous instinct' - the contest between id and super-ego - is rather outside the scope of this thesis for it is medical rather than metaphysical; whereas the analyst would tell Beethoven he was sublimating his problems in an attempt to make his miserable world habitable, Beethoven would retort that he was aspiring to heights that he, the ignorant analyst, had never even dreamt of.

The other side of the coin where regression is concerned is the positive rather than the negative emphasis, the quest for the beauty and truth of the world of infantile unity for its own sake rather than the use of it for the process of reguler pour mieux sauter (as Koestler described it), the process of resolving conflicts. This involves the metaphysical emphasis and we will discuss it later.

Koestler, in his book 'The Creative Act' considers the ability of primitive organisms such as the flatworm or the early embryo of man to rise to virtually any challenge of re-adaptation such as amputation or even, in the case of the flatworm, being sliced into one segment, (because the primitive cells contain the code, the potential, of the whole organism not just of a specialised part), to be one end of the same scale of behaviour laws of which creative regression forms the other. 'Differentiation and specialization of the parts are necessary for the normal functioning of the whole; abnormal conditions call for radical measures which may include a retreat of the over-exerted part to a structurally less differentiated, functionally less specialised stage, if the whole is to survive. The 'part' may be the newt's amputation stump, or the unsolved problem in the scientist's mind which tortures and obsesses him. We have seen that such regressions are mostly pathogenic, but under favourable conditions they may redress the situation by re-activating potentials which had been

operative in the past but are inhibited in the adult - such as the regulative powers of the embryo in the womb or the undifferentiated total-pattern-responses of its nervous system. The period of incubation is a similar retreat, if not into the womb, at least into long-outgrown forms of ideation, into the pre-verbal, pre-rational games of the unconscious, the wonderland-logic of the dream. The challenge which sets the process going is in all cases a traumatic experience: physical mutilation or mental laceration - by data which do not fit, observations which contradict each other, emotions which disrupt approved styles in art: experiences which create mental conflict, dissonance, perplexity. The 'creative stress' of the artist or scientist corresponds to the 'general alarm reaction' of the traumatised animal; the anabolic - catabolic sequence of de-differentiation and reintegration corresponds to the destructive-constructive sequence in the creative act. The 'physiological isolation' of the over-excited part which tends to dominate (i.e. the amputation stump), corresponds to the single-minded and obsessive preoccupation with the idée fixe ... which monopolises the whole mind; it will either lead to its reorganisation by giving birth to a new system, or to the cancerous proliferation of a degenerate tissue of ideas'(p.463).

It is not the purpose of this thesis to crystallise a psychological theory of creation, and I doubt whether Koestler or anybody else could apply their theories comprehensively to music, with its intangible relationship to life, and go beyond the sort of general statement Koestler makes (about weaving threads into new patterns and so on), lumping it unsatisfactorily with its less aesthetically complex sister-arts.

In the present section we will exemplify how composers feel that some experience or wish has set them off on a course of creation which has been pursued completely unconsciously, perhaps by regression, perhaps by confluence of material in the memory. Of course the initial experience may be a vision (like Stravinsky's of the Rite of Spring) which is itself culled from the depths of regression, and the period of gestation between the vision and the finding of the music a few years later must involve continual regression to the

primitive levels.

Here are some examples:

Berlioz, writing of a performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* with Harriet Smithson as Juliet: 'After the third act, hardly breathing, in pain as if a hand of iron were squeezing at my heart, I said to myself, with the fullest conviction: 'Ah, I am lost'(8). And during the composition of his own work on the subject many years later: 'during those months, what a burning, exhilarating life I led! Ah! the joy of floating on the halcyon sea of poetry; wafted onward by the sweet, soft breeze of imagination; warmed by the rays of that golden sun of love unveiled by Shakespeare! I felt within me the godlike strength to win my way to that blessed, hidden isle, where the temple of pure art raises its soaring columns to the sky' (9). Similarly *The Fantastic Symphony* was inspired by the experience six months previous to its composition of two days' distracted wandering, having heard Harriet slandered by a friend.

Wagner's near ship-wreck off the coast of Norway made an indelible impression on him, later to emerge as '*The Flying Dutchman*': 'From my own plight he won a psychic force; from the storms, the billows, the sailors' shouts and the rock-bound Northern shore, a physiognomy and colour'(10). 'He ... never ceased to fascinate my fantasy'(11).

'I have never really been able to do anything whenever anything striking happens in my life; and it is precisely for this reason that I feed on memory'(Debussy)(12).

'I have always retained a sincere passion for Her (the sea). You will say that the ocean does not exactly wash the Burgundian hillsides ... and my seascapes might be studio landscapes! But I have an endless store of memories; to my mind, this is worth more than reality, the charm of which generally weighs too heavily on our thought' (Debussy)(13).

Faure wrote of the Andante of his second Piano Quartet: 'I remember wishing to set down - and even then it was almost unconsciously - the very remote memory of the sound of bells ringing one evening at Montganzay ... The tolling of these

bells drew out all sorts of ideas' (14). And in the next passage we see the confluence of Faure's memories and mental patterns working in a strangely autonomous, yet observable, way: 'Something very amusing has happened to me recently. Whilst I was thinking of a thousand different things of no importance whatsoever a kind of rhythmical theme in the style of a Spanish dance took shape in my mind. And this theme just went on its own way, so to speak, without bothering me in any way ... {it} developed of itself became harmonised in many different ways, changed and underwent modulations, in fact it germinated by itself. Obviously, it drew upon the store of my memories ever since I have been in the world - on all those musical textures which have become part of myself. But how strange is this unconscious functioning of the mind, this precise working out of an idea in this way! If I were to write it down it would have a very definite form'(15).

'When he {the writer, Stanford} was fourteen years old he tried to set a somewhat long dramatic poem as a song. He wrote the first three verses easily enough, but after that he could not progress an inch ... ten or eleven years later, when he had quite forgotten his early efforts, he opened a book at the same poem, sat down and wrote it straight off without a hitch. But the surprising proof of 'unconscious cerebration' came when, fourteen years after the song was written and published, he found the juvenile attempts in an old box, and the first three verses were ... practically identical with those of the completed song. His brain had remembered what he himself had wholly forgotten, and found the way out for him without his being in the least conscious of the process'(16).

Berlioz describes how he had difficulties for two months with a particular phrase. Its solution was 'found' with typical eccentricity during a walk by the Tiber, 'I fell into the water and was stuck in the mud up to my knees. After I had pulled myself out I started to sing the long-sought phrase and so the piece was done(17).

Mahler describes the same solution of long-borne problems: 'In the last movement of my second symphony it so happened to me that I actually searched through the entire world of literature back to the Bible ...

'How I got inspiration for this is profoundly significant for the nature of artistic creation.

For a long time I turned over in my mind the inclusion of a chorus in the last movement. {On account of Beethoven's ninth, he hesitated} At this time Bülow died and I was present at his memorial. The mood in which I sat there and thought of him who had passed away was exactly the spirit of the work which I was then mulling over. Then the chorus from the organ loft intoned the Kopstock chorale "Resurrection"! This struck me like a flash of lightning and everything appeared quite clear and distinct within me! The creator waits for this flash; this is the "holy conception"!

'... had I not already borne this work within me, how could I have had such an experience'(18)?

When Berlioz received a state grant to enable him to write his Requiem, this was the result: 'I had so long asked to try my hand at a Requiem that I flung myself into it body and soul. My head seemed bursting with the ferment of ideas, and I actually had to invent a sort of musical shorthand to get on fast enough'(19).

Similarly the genre of the Music-drama came to Wagner after half a lifetime's meditation: 'Whilst trying to picture to myself that Art-work in which all the single art-varieties should combine for their own highest completion, I lit upon a conscious glimpse of that very ideal which had unconsciously been forming in my mind and hovering before the longing artist'(20).

'the function of creation is ... primary through all the apparent manifestations of interest in other social activities: ... the artist is doing these other social activities to serve, if unknowingly, some still unmanifest needs of artistic creation' (Tippett)(21).

'What there I sought ('in realms of state and religion'), was really never sought beyond my art'(Wagner)(22).

Finally here is a case of the opposite process, the experience following the inspiration. Soon after Brahms finished the Four Serious Songs he was surprised to hear of Clara

Schumann's death; he considered the songs prophetic, that premonitions of her death had been deep inside him for a long time. He wrote to her daughter: 'Some such words as these have long been in my mind, and I did not think that worse news about your mother was to be expected - but deep in the heart of man something often whispers and stirs, quite unconsciously perhaps, which in time may ring out in the form of poetry or music'(23). (A similar case is furnished by Mahler's belief that his Kindertotenlieder were prophetic).

Finally we may touch lightly on those border-line cases, dreams, which have in many cases provided similar solutions of problems and confluence of memories: 'Whatever the role of dreams in relating memory and perception, I believe them to have been the ground for innumerable solutions in my composing activity'(Stravinsky)(24).

11.

Conscious Preparation for Inspiration

Now we turn to the deliberate utilisation of the unconscious and its preparation for the oracular function of producing the required answers that is expected of it. This is usually done in one of two ways: either information is fed into it for it to work on, or else what Marganita Laski calls 'trigger conditions' (conditions likely to stimulate elation or ecstasy) are sought.

There are plenty of illustrations of the first way, but few of the second. This is, I think, because to an artistic person the quest for 'trigger conditions', for beauty and aesthetic stimulation is so natural and unceasing that he is unaware of its being anything deliberate or functional. Tippett comes nearest to this in that passage where he says: 'the artist is doing other social activities to serve, if unknowingly, some still unmanifest needs of artistic creation' (1). The sort of example one finds of this sort of preparation is when Busoni specially visited a monastery in Trient because he 'wanted the atmosphere for my church vision'(2) in the opera Brautwahl. Debussy commented, 'one can never spend too much time constructing that special atmosphere in which a work of art should move. I believe that one should never hurry to

write but leave everything to that many-sided play of thoughts - those mysterious workings of the mind which we too often disturb'(3). And a more introspective attitude: 'before (the work) organises itself, builds itself up, and ferments in his brain, it must be preceded by much preoccupation, engrossment with self, a being-dead to the outer world'(Mahler)(4).

'Inspiration does not come without hard work any more than a crop of corn'(Debussy)(5), and it is as long growing.

'It is necessary to know a great deal, and then to make music from that which one does not know'(Dukas)(6).

A study of the laws of science (Leonardo-like) is the true preparation for art: 'Man must investigate art and nature (science); this is however not the goal of his relation to them - it is essentially a preparatory - if likewise important moment in them. Both are given him primarily for his enjoyment; he is to absorb the divine harmonies of nature, to breathe out in his art the melodies of his heart and the sighs of his soul'(Liszt)(7).

'When after long studies the soul takes command with such impetuosity, it does not leave the mind time to go astray'(Gretry)(8).

'I am like a steam engine: I need to be heated, it takes a long time to prepare myself for real work'(Honegger)(9). And later he writes: 'It is necessary to do much work to deserve this happy trigger ... to undertake one of these brief voyages into the domain of living music'(10).

Janacek of 'Katya Kabanova': 'I was caught by it. You know that terrible and sensitive thing in man, which is without end. Sheer misfortune ... This had to be made into a work ... I worked on it about a year. I carried it in my head, pondered - but then, how the writing went forward like a machine'(11).

'I composed Macbeth in the woods and mountains of Switzerland ... For a year I immersed myself in the poem, living and dreaming it. Then came the musical work which I completed rather quickly'(Bloch)(12).

Keber's pupil Benedict reports that 'the genius of the composer would sometimes long lie dormant during his frequent

repetition of words; and then suddenly the idea of a whole musical piece would flash into his mind like a sudden gleam of light into the darkness'(13).

Elgar writes of his preparations for 'The Apostles': 'I first of all read everything I can lay my hands on which bears on the subject directly or indirectly, meditating on all that I have sifted out as likely to serve my purpose, and blending it with my musical conceptions. Every personality appears to me in musical dress ... I involuntarily give to each a musical character ... I do not seek for character motives; they come in all places at all seasons'(14).

'I am in the throes of St. Ludmilla, and have nothing else in my thoughts ... this composing is a terrible business before you get down to it, and what a lot of thinking over and study it requires'(Dvorak)(15).

'When I find a poem that particularly interests me and arouses my emotion, I commit it to memory ... After some time I sing it quite naturally; the music is born'(Castelnuovo-Tedesco)(16).

Ernest Newman reports of Hugo Wolf: 'He would go to sleep, and in the morning the song would be already made by some mysterious alchemy - so full formed that in noting it down his pen could hardly keep pace with his brain'(17).

'a musical creator's mind can operate subconsciously with a row of tones' (Schoenberg)(18).

'The idea is like the seed corn; it grows imperceptibly in secret. When I have invented or discovered the beginning of a song ... I shut up the book and go for a walk or take up something else; I think no more of it for perhaps half a year. Nothing is lost, though. When I come back to it again, it has unconsciously taken a new shape and is ready for me to begin working at it'(Brahms)(19).

'Generally speaking we understand by musical inspiration the invention of a motive, a melody which occurs to one suddenly, unsolicited by the intellect, especially immediately after awakening in the early morning or in dreams, - Sach's

words in 'Die Meistersinger': 'Glaubt mir des Menschen wahrster Wahn wird ihm in Traume aufgetan'. Am I to believe that my imagination has been at work all night independently of consciousness and without recollection in the platonic sense? (i.e. of a former incarnation).

'My own experience has been this: If I am held up at a certain point in my composition at night and cannot see a profitable way of continuing in spite of much deliberation, I close the lid of the piano or the cover of my manuscript book and go up to bed, and when I wake up in the morning - lo and behold! I have found the continuation' (Strauss)(20).

12.

The Gap

Strauss's mention of Platonic recollection is interesting. 'The whole of research and learning is only recollection' (of experience in a former life) says Socrates(1), and he adduces from the evidence of inspiration the petitio principii if it did not come from a former life whence did it come? If we are not to believe this, and its modern psychological equivalent, the Jungian archetype, is rather too crude a source of knowledge to provide precise inspirations, where then does new knowledge thrown up in inspirations come from? Previously we have mentioned infantile layers of the mind and memories generally as supplying the store of old material for the new work. This may or may not be the whole story depending on whether or not inspiration is considered to involve God. Stravinsky, although profoundly religious, believes it does not; to Craft's question 'What does "creation" mean to you', he replies 'Nothing. Only God can create'(2). Busoni's view seems to hover halfway: 'through what suggestion the idea, the musical conception and the successful execution (which must be fashioned out of many ideas) are hit upon is a secret of inspiration, a thought which leads us ... into the sphere of Catholic mysticism ... The origin of the idea can sometimes be referred to something seen, heard or read previously. After all, any human work is only the elaboration of material existent on the earth'(3).

By far the greater number of composers simply believe inspiration does involve God. Here are a few examples: 'I must leave behind me what the Eternal Spirit has infused into

my soul and bids me complete'(Beethoven)(4).

'the gift was from above' (Weber, of 'Kampf und Sieg'(5).

'Consider it {new idea} as a gift from above (Schumann)(6).

'A good theme is a gift from God. "Deserve it in order to possess it"' (Brahms)(7).

'It is the greatest gift of the divinity and cannot be compared with anything else'(Strauss)(8).

'From my own experience I know that it {thematic unity} can be a subconsciously received gift from the Supreme Commander' (Schoenberg)(9).

'There is no-one great except him to whom God speaks, and in the moment in which God speaks to him'(Hello, quoted by Messaien)(10).

The immense gap between what has gone before and the astounding novelty and originality of the new masterpiece makes the mind stagger. This inexplicable leap from preparation to inspiration is at the heart of the subject. It seems to involve those primitive layers of the mind, the 'pure, unified self' we have mentioned and the metaphysical mechanisms which lurk there.

If all the components of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, musical and emotional, already existed in the world, and Beethoven merely rearranged them in an entirely new way, then we are indebted to him for a great discovery, the discovery of a new order of the components which form a new thing, the Ninth Symphony. Yet, we may ask, what caused this rearrangement, something 'beyond' or something already 'here', in a new arrangement? In this cause lies the mystery; whether the solution be metaphysical or physical it lies too deep in the psyche for the present author at least to discuss with clarity or certainty. Suffice it to say that in this gap occurs all that is responsible for progress and achievements of the imagination, or, as St. Thomas Aquinas says, 'since God is the universal cause of all Being, in whatever region Being can be found, there must be the Divine Presence'(11).

13.

The Second Source:

STIMULI TO COMPOSITION

A plethora of argument lies behind the simple assertions composers often make about what inspired them: when a work is inspired by the pine trees of Rome, for instance, we may wonder what tall, thin formations of wood have to do with vibrations in our ears.

'Art declines into handicraft if it is without the quality of human vibration. But what is not human? Without exception everything that is felt and undertaken by human beings is human'(Busoni)(1). 'Poetry and music express states of mind'(2) another composer writes, 'it {music} reproduces for us the most intimate essence, the tempo and energy of our spiritual being'(3) comments a third, and Schumann claims that it illuminates 'the very depths of the human heart'(4). Music, then, expresses a psychic reality, that is to say something to do with the 'mind', the 'soul', the 'heart', the 'spiritual being', the 'personality'. Music expresses the composer's psychic reality: this is important to emphasise, for every statement such as 'this piece expresses sadness' should always be understood as 'this piece expresses the composer's sadness, no-one else's (not even an operatic character's), nor sadness in the abstract.

It will be the function of this section to show how external stimuli, phenomenal or noumenal, are parts of the internal psychic reality and are simple projections of the same. One catches a glimpse of oneself in things that excite or have significance for one. In writing *Daphnis and Chloe*, for instance, Ravel stated that he was 'less concerned with archaism than the Greece of my dreams'(5). The factual Greece is only a background to the fantasy of Greece which is of immense importance to the composer, Greece has served to invoke a psychic reality already within the composer and bring it to light of day. In the composition this reality is brought into an even clearer light for all to see. In the words of Schopenhauer: 'Music is distinguished from all the other arts by the fact that it is not a copy of the phenomenon, or, more accurately, the adequate objectivity of the will, but is the direct copy of

the will itself, and therefore represents the metaphysical of everything physical in the world, and the thing-in-itself of every phenomenon. ... when the composer has been able to express in the universal language of music the emotions of will which constitute the heart of an event, then the melody of the song, the music of the opera, is expressive. But the analogy discovered by the composer between the two must have proceeded from the direct knowledge of the nature of the world unknown to his reason, and must not be an imitation produced with conscious intention by means of conceptions'(6).

14.

Musical Expression

Things that can be expressed by words are not wholly in the domain of music, though the two domains overlap. Mozart, for instance, could say quite naturally that words should not be set to music unless 'they can be perfectly expressed by it'(1), and soon after make the proviso that music must 'even in the most terrible situations ... never offend the ear ... in other words never cease to be music'(2). Music must perfectly 'express' objects, ideas, situations and so on, and yet follow autonomous laws of its own. These autonomous laws, the patterns of repetition, variation, tension etc., what Hapslick called Das Musikschön, become more and more related to human values and less and less apart and independent in composers' written views as we approach our own time. Thus what Mozart simply called music is now psychologically examined and found to be 'the tempo and energy of our spiritual being'.

'The thoughts which are expressed to me by music that I love are not too indefinite to be put into words, but on the contrary, too definite ... If you would ask me what I was thinking of when I wrote it, I would say, just the song as it stands'(3). Mendelssohn's famous assertion of music's right to speak clearly and entirely for itself implies this vast sphere in which words have no part but which is none the less real. Composers often feel frustration in letter-writing because words are not their first language, thus Chopin writing to his father on his name-day could only express his feelings

of love 'if they could be put into notes of music'(4)(similarly Mozart to his father(5)), and Berlioz tells Camille Moke 'I love thee more than poor language can express - Give me a hundred musicians, a hundred and fifty voices, then I can tell thee'(6). Brahms laments his verbal clumsiness to Clara Schumann and tells her 'I would gladly write to you only by means of music'(7). Music seems always to have been an expressional outlet for this basically shy and inhibited man. Tchaikovsky was inhibited about his emotional and love life, yet in many works, 'time and again'(8) he uses music as the perfect outlet, expressing everything fully yet secretly, far from social condemnation. Speaking more generally of expression he writes 'I wish no symphonic work to emanate from me that has nothing to express and is made up merely of harmonies and a purposeless pattern of rhythms and modulations ... Should it not express all the things for which words cannot be found, which nevertheless arise in the heart and demand expression'(9)?

There are words, though, which, to return to Mozart, can be 'perfectly expressed' by music. Here is an example provided by Busoni: 'Can a poor, contented man be expressed in music? 'Contented' is a soul state and can, 'poor' connotes a phase of terrestrial and social conditions not to be found in the eternal harmony'(10). Similar to Busoni's eternal harmony, but immanent instead of external, is the Wagnerian conception of Essences, to which we will refer later. Music expresses the pure Will, Necessity, or Instinct which governs oneself and all the world, and reveals the unity of oneself with all the world and hence the real nature, the essence of the world. To the musician, 'Music is itself a world's Idea, an Idea in which the world immediately displays its essence'(11). In this definition of music as an Idea, an Idea of the world, we see a sort of intermediary link between Platonism and the modern aesthetics of Langer etc., - the truly existing ideal form, and the virtual, symbolic little copy of the world (the work of art) complete and self-sufficient yet existing within the actual big world. To this we will return.

Let us beware of underrating the importance of extra-musical stimuli in our admiration and astonishment at the purely-musical logic of a work - this is usually, in recent times at least, the critic's mistake, rarely the composer's. Verdi asks incredulously of a critic whose new book he has

just read 'On the last page I read ... this phrase: "If you believe that music is the expression of sentiments of love, of pain etc., etc., abandon it ... it is not made for you!!!" And why can one not believe that music is the expression of love, pain etc., etc.,'(12)??

'People certainly err,' warns Schumann, 'if they suppose that composers deliberately take pen and paper with the purpose of sketching, painting, expressing this or that. Yet we must not too lightly estimate outward influences and impressions. Unconsciously an idea sometimes develops simultaneously with the musical image; the eye is awake as well as the ear; and this ever-busy organ frequently follows certain outlines amidst all the sounds and tones which, keeping pace with the music, may take form and crystallize. The greater the number of elements cognate in music, which the thought or picture created in tones contains, the more poetic and plastic the expression of the composition. And the more imaginatively or keenly the musician grasps these, the more his work will move and uplift us. Why should not the thought of immortality have seized Beethoven during his improvisations? Why should not the memory of a great fallen hero have excited a composition in him? Why could not the memory of bygone, happy days have inspired another?... Italy, the Alps, the sight of the ocean, spring, twilight - has music indeed not told us anything of these'(13)?

For the mature composer there is always something he wishes to express by music, however different it may be from anything else we know, in fact it is often so different that terms like 'pure music' are called on to describe it, but for exactness 'the tempo and energy of our spiritual being' is to be preferred! For him technique should be perfected in the same manner as one learns a language, in order that it may 'stand ready at (one's) call ... to impart a definite impression or emotion in keeping with (one's) inner pulse'(Wagner)(14). 'One kind of music is instinctive, made of feelings - that is my kind. Of course one must first learn the craft'(Ravel)(15). Technique is sometimes a stimulus to the perception of a new psychic reality to be expressed, technical absorption may open new worlds, but it is never absolute, always the vehicle for meaning. 'Art is as much a means of communication as language; they have a common origin and have served identical purposes'(Chavez)(16).

This must be remembered in thinking of Dunstable's 'divine' numbers, his mathematical metaphysics, as also of Beethoven's projected edition of his piano sonatas with the poetic ideas on which they were based, right down to Stravinsky with his famous 'music is powerless to express anything at all' (17). Stravinsky frequently contradicts this assertion, as when he talks of the progress of music: 'advance is only in the sense of developing the instrument of the language' (18), nevertheless we must acknowledge the meaning of what he says fully. In the same passage he asserts that music achieves an order between 'man and time', this order producing a unique emotion in us. Certainly the emotion is different, but that does not mean that the music is 'simply organised sound' that the 'emotions are not inherent in the music itself' (Lutyens) (19). The composer used the music to achieve this meaningful order, and if it does have meaning then it expresses something human however deep and unconscious that may be.

Hindemith's theory on the expression of emotions is similar, though he side-steps by emphasising that music represents a reflection in man of Divine Order.

The consciousness of music as a language reaches an extreme in the theories and practice of Janacek. In this passage music comes nearer to being sign rather than symbol than in any other music or theory, other extremes of programme music being usually subordinated to some rules of musical logic or other, but not so here; the exact imitation of nature is fundamental to the musical structure: 'For me, music emanating from instruments, whether in the works of Beethoven or of any other composer, contains little real truth ... when anyone speaks to me, I listen more to the tonal modulation in his voice than to what he is actually saying, what he is like, what he feels, whether he is lying, whether he is agitated or is merely making conventional conversation. I can even feel, or rather hear, any hidden sorrow. Life is sound, the tonal modulation of the human speech. Every living being is filled with the deepest truth. That, you see, has been one of the main needs of my life. I have been taking down speech melodies since the year 1897. I have a vast collection of note-books filled with them you see they are my window through which I look into the soul - but this is what I should like to emphasise: they

are of the utmost importance to dramatic music'(20). Wagner professed a similar, though more theoretical attitude, for instance he held that 'the musical instrument is an echo of the human voice, but so constituted that we can only detect in it the vowel resolved into the musical Tone, like that Ur-tone of all human speech'(21); it 'possesses a faculty of speech'(22).

15.

Stimulus of Music

Before starting upon an enumeration of phenomena which stimulate the composer to express them in music, I must slip in a brief reference to the stimulus of the medium of expression, the type of musical language to be used, the instrument or medium of performance, and the actual performer himself.

For every composer there is one can think of at least two others who influenced him. Composers only use what already exists, but in new ways, with new associations. I do not propose to list composers' acknowledged debts of gratitude, they only account for what is least original in his music; however, this account of some of Bartok's early debts will serve as a typical example: 'From stagnation I was aroused as by a lightning stroke by the first performance in Budapest of Thus Spake Zarathustra, in 1902. At last there was a way of composing which seemed to hold the seeds of a new life. At once I threw myself into the study of Strauss's score and began to write again myself.

(Then Bartok fell under the influence of folk-music). Meanwhile the magic of Richard Strauss had evaporated. A really thorough study of Liszt's oeuvre ... revealed to me the true essence of composing'(1).

A rather more unusual process, 'stimulus by exasperation!' is referred to by Janacek, speaking of Dvorak: 'One moment always revealed to me in a flash the secret of his creation. He had not words sharp enough for Skroup's 'Kde domov maj' - he would have composed a new Czech anthem - and not long afterwards he is composing the music on Skroup's motifs to 'Kajetan Tyl'. He is turning over the pages of

Berlioz's Requiem with every sign of imitation and soon he announces the publication of his own Requiem. I see him with Liszt's St. Elizabeth, and very soon London is listening to Dvorak's Saint Ludmilla. ... Was he influenced by the same exasperation to create his other composition, his chamber music' (2)? Related to this is Stravinsky's remark, 'whatever interests me, whatever I love, I wish to make my own (I am probably describing a rare form of kleptomania)(3).

Stravinsky, according to Robert Craft, will only listen to music that will be useful to him for the work in hand. Thus when writing The Rake's Progress he would play only the records of *Così fan Tutte* and only attend operas of Mozart, Verdi, Rossini, Donizetti, etc. Busoni, likewise, attended performances of Italian opera for his own opera's sake: 'I think I shall go -- that is exactly the kind of food I require, and perhaps it will make the Brantwahl flow again'(4).

Examples of pastiche are well known, but there is no real dividing line between the overt stimulus of another composer and the subtle absorption of his language into one's own. The influence of Bach, for instance, manifests itself on every phase of the scale, in verbal acknowledgement (from unashamed imitation to simply profound love) as in musical style.

The stimulus of an instrument or medium of performance is again the excitement of seeing something that can carry what the composer could say. In other words something already lurking within the composer suddenly perceives by what means it may be expressed. Rostropovich's cello and Benjamin Britten are one such example, Mühlfeld's clarinet and Brahms another, Vogl's voice and Schubert another. Stravinsky wrote: 'I finished a piano piece with Arthur Rubenstein and his strong, agile clever fingers in mind ... the different rhythmic episodes were dictated by the fingers themselves'(5). Examples may be multiplied. Nearly every piece of music written was stimulated to some extent, even if the degree of stimulation barely warrants the name inspiration, by some performer or body of performers previously heard.

Perhaps sheer preoccupation with the stimulus of instruments' sonority, somewhat regardless of the message they have to convey, reaches an extreme in modern ensemble 'chance' scores. As Donlez says 'in the case of ensembles we must think in terms of sound montages whose component parts may be assembled as desired'(6). The choice of instruments is the most inspired part of the composition.

Thirdly, the genre can excite and stimulate the composer as the ideal vehicle for his thoughts. 'I, for my part, feel at this moment the most urgent desire to write an opera, and yet I scarcely have the leisure to commence even any smaller work; but I do believe that if the libretto were to be given me today, the opera would be written by tomorrow, so strong is my impulse towards it. Formerly the bare idea of a symphony was so exciting that I would think of nothing else when one was in my head; the sound of the instruments has such a solemn and heavenly effect'(Mendelssohn) (7).

'I have an inexpressible longing to write another opera ... For I have only to hear an opera discussed, I have only to sit in a theatre, hear the orchestra tuning their instruments - oh, I am quite beside myself at once'(Mozart)(8).

There are many other such examples.

Objects

At the most prosaic end of the scale of stimuli to inspiration we may place objects. Unless they have great antiquity or some other revered association, ordinary objects taken at face value have few 'trigger properties' (that is, ability to trigger off deep emotion or inspiration). At best they suggest music by their formal, sculptural properties: Weber, for instance was inspired by the sight at a cafe of upturned tables and chairs 'Look there!' he said; 'does not that look exactly like a great triumphal march? Donnerwetter! What chords there are for the trumpets! I can use that! I can use that!(1). Apparently

he did use it, in Oberon. Similarly in Messaien the sharp forms of stalactites in a grotto 'determine a very exact musical response'(2) though one would expect this more from Messaien with his preoccupation with the form and symmetry of Nature than from Weber. Stravinsky, by means of Robert Craft, asks himself 'Has music ever been suggested to you by, or has a musical idea ever occurred to you from, a purely visual experience of movement, line or pattern?' His reply, 'Countless times, I suppose,'(3) suggests that apart from the two examples he mentions he has had in his composing an almost unconscious liaison with the world of shapes and movement. The movements of animals and humans have obviously had a great influence upon composers (though perhaps not the Germans), and observation of pieces' titles from Couperin's 'The Butterflies' to Ravel's 'Moths' is sufficient evidence.

Finally, colours have played a certain part in stimulating and accompanying music; Bliss says that when composing he always experiences a play of colour-sensation, and that such a play was especially vivid in his mind when working on his Colour Symphony, the movements being Purple, Red, Blue and Green respectively. Significantly the movements have such subtitles as - (Green's), 'The Colour of Emeralds, Hope, Joy, Youth, Spring and Victory,' thus showing the colour in his mind to be an abstraction from objects seen, with their emotional connotations.

Synaesthesia is a common enough quality and came into the arts (perhaps via Swedenbourg and, later, theosophy) in considerable measure in the nineteenth century. There were earlier examples, such as Gretry, who found that 'the lowered or flatted tones have the same effect on the ear as dark, gloomy colours on the eye; the raised or sharp tones have, on the contrary, an effect similar to that of the bright, lively colours. Between these two extremes we find, in music as well as in painting, all the colours which are appropriate to the description of varied emotions and characters'(4). This much is agreed upon by later composers, apparently there is a strong correspondence between interrelationships within the auditive range of vibrations (16 - 20,000 per second) and the visual

(451,000,000,000,000 - 780,000,000,000,000 per second), therefore colour may quite naturally suggest sound.

The theosophists, notably Scriabin and Cyril Scott in music, assign moral value to colours, and therefore to music according to the colours it evokes in the mind. This is how music 'which expresses nothing material, nothing moral, can yet have a moral and spiritual effect on its listeners'(Cyril Scott). Clear, light colours equal spiritual value, muddy murky colours equal spiritual depravity(5).

17.

Nature

'No-one could love the country as much as I do. For surely woods, trees and rocks produce the echo which man desires to hear'(Beethoven)(1). The echo which man desires to hear, himself found in the outer world, his inner unconscious found in the world which attracts him (Jung's definition of the extrovert attitude), is connected with nature throughout European culture from the early Renaissance (the discovery of Mother Earth) to the beginning of our own modernism with its disgust with materialism (the hangover of the discovery of Mother Earth) and its inward march to the unconscious itself.

'More feeling than tone-painting' Beethoven writes about his Pastoral Symphony, and although there are many examples of inspired tone-painting (Israel in Egypt, much of Haydn's The Seasons, the Prelude to The Rite of Spring representing 'the awakening of nature, the scratching, gnawing, wriggling of birds and beasts'), it is obviously the 'feeling' side of nature-inspired music which is most strongly reflective of the psychic reality within. Of his Spring Symphony Schumann writes 'I wrote this symphony at the end of winter with a spring-like urge ... I do not attempt to depict or to describe anything in it; but I do believe that the season in which the symphony was born influenced its structure and helped make it what it is'(2). Mendelssohn loved 'the serenity of nature, which is itself

mostly music'(3), and describes the Alban hills as 'a lovely vision ... No lack of music there; it echoes and vibrates on every side'(4). Here was an absorbed man, not internally like Mozart, but who saw in the world something of a musical unity, the 'many in the One' as Stravinsky would say.

With some composers the music seems to arrive concurrently with the vision of nature, with others, the feeling is remembered and stored in the notebook of strange and exciting feelings, to be expressed later in music, as we have already seen in the section on musical gestation. Busoni writes of Trient: 'The perspective at the end of the valley awakens a feeling of longing and seen in the morning or even at sunset it makes a great impression on the emotions. I believe, if it is properly absorbed by the soul it should be productive to the creative flow (later on)'(5). Ravel of his Rhine-steamer journey: 'Towards evening we went down to see the factories. How can I tell you about these great smelting castles, these great incandescent cathedrals and the wonderful symphony of travelling belts, whistles and terrific hammerblows in which you are submerged? And everywhere the sky is a scorching, deep red. On top of it all a storm broke. ... Ida who was terrified wanted to cry, and so did I - but from joy. How much music there is in all this! - and I certainly intend to use it'(6).

The sea seems to mirror the soul of man particularly powerfully, it is what Laski would call a unitive symbol - 'an object, event or idea that can be seen as far older than the life of man ... or than the life of mankind. Obvious and basic symbols triggering this type of ecstasy are sea, earth, mountains etc.'(7). (An odd instance of a unitive symbol is the six hundred year old group of Chestnut trees Chabrier mentions: 'What power! In the shade of such giants I don't think one could compose anything trivial'(8). In the sea man encounters the vastness of his soul, the metaphysical spark within - 'La mer est ton miroir; tu contempler ton âme Dans le déroulement infini de sa lame ...')

Debussy and Rimsky-Korsakov often mention the sea in their writings in ecstatic terms, and we know it played

a significant part in their, as in others', creative work. (cf. p. 26 Wagner's sea adventures); but of course it is hardly necessary to point out that here, as elsewhere, titles of compositions are the most eloquent testimony to the prominence with which Nature features in musical inspiration.

18.

Events

Events in the ordinary, as opposed to imaginary, world may rouse strong emotions in the composer, though these are, except in the field of religion, rite and magic, usually insufficiently profound to inspire music. The distinction here is between strong emotion which is usually quick and short-lived such as anger at an event unpleasant to the beholder, and profound emotion which strikes some deeper note of resonance within the beholder than what is merely advantageous or disadvantageous to his will, what Jung called archetypal emotion. As Wagner says 'man must reap the highest joy from the world of sense, before he can mould therefrom the implements of his art; for from the world of sense alone can he derive so much as the impulse to artistic creation'(1). That most sensual (in this sense) of composers Leos Janacek was inspired by an event frequently, for instance, in his piano sonata 'Street Scene 1. X. 1905', subtitled:

'The white marble staircase
Of the Beseda house in Brno ...
Indelibly stained with the blood of the simple
workman Frantisek Pavlik.
He came to demonstrate for a University
And was bayoneted by cruel murderers'(2).

The inspiration of political events is fairly strong among less metaphysically-inclined minds - Dallapiccola and his anti-Fascist works, Nono and Hiroshima, Shostakovitch and Leningrad, Britten and his visit to Belsen (apparent not only in the Donne Sonnets) and his self-identification with the tortured idealist Peter Grimes at the time of his conscientious objection(3) - to name only modern composers.

Schumann absorbs the world around him and by a process of regurgitation expresses it as music: 'Anything that happens in the world affects me, politics, for example, literature, people; and I reflect about all these things in

my own way - and these reflections then seek to find an outlet in music'(4).

Tippett adopts the reverse process and seeks in the world the missing pieces of his jig-saw, of which he only knows the outline of the picture. 'I know that somewhere or other, in books, in pictures, in dreams, in real situations, everything is sooner or later to be found which belongs for all the details of the work, which is, as it were, ordained'(5). Thus Schumann's suggesting that the 'world' inspires him, and Tippett's idea that he finds in the world manifestations of unformulated inspirations are two ways of saying the same thing, the more modern naturally emphasising the subjective and introspective aspects.

Also an event may provoke a composition and determine something of its form, tone etc., without actually inspiring the musical vision which is the core of the composition, as when it provides an occasion for a particular type of composition, a funeral, wedding etc. . 'Sometimes one may feel the need of celebrating either a private or a public event'(6) Britten said, and the need to celebrate with music is certainly one of man's oldest and most hallowed: 'and God will enlighten me' wrote Beethoven contemplating the composition of the Missa Solemnis, 'so that my poor talents may contribute to the glorification of that solemn day'(7).

19.

Fine Arts

Painting and sculpture, themselves the most refined expression of a psyche, sometimes prompt a piece of music, but works of fine art too near the composer in time do not usually do so, for one thing because both composer and painter wish to express roughly similar things through their different mediums, therefore they look upon each other's work as perfect in itself, absolute, leading nowhere beyond itself, and for another because the mystery of antiquity associated with a unitive symbol is absent, such as

Piero della Francesca's frescoes provided for Dallapiccola's *Due Studi*. Mendelssohn found this mystery in Venetian art 'I cling to the ancient masters, and study how they worked. Often, after doing so, I feel musically inspired and since I came here I have been busily engaged in composition'(1); Debussy (*Poissons d'or* etc.,) and Stravinsky found it in Japanese art, 'the graphic solution of problems of perspective and space shown by their art incited me to find something analogous in music'(2) - the Japanese Lyrics were the result.

20.

Literature

The connection between literature and music has always been strong, even apart from the setting of poems or libretti as vocal music. For examples one's mind turns naturally to the mid-nineteenth century, to Berlioz perhaps, with his life-long love of Shakespeare: - here is the inception of that love, when he watched his future wife playing Ophelia: 'Shakespeare, coming upon me thus suddenly, struck me as with a thunderbolt. His lightning opened the heaven of art to me with a sublime crash, and lighted up its furthest depths. I recognised true dramatic grandeur, beauty and truth. ... I saw ... I understood ... I felt ... that I was alive and must arise and walk'(1). This Shakespearean ecstacy lasted for a lifetime's activities. Examples are so well-known as not to need multiplication, but another interesting point is that literature seems to have led composers into a new world of feeling and consequently unprecedented originality. 'Ich fühle Luft von anderer Planeten' was rather a turning point in Schoenberg's career and indeed Stephen George's poetry seems to have been at least partly responsible. 'With the Songs after George', he wrote in his programme note for 'Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten', 'I succeeded in approaching an ideal of form and expression which I had envisaged for years, without having the strength or assurance to realise it. Now, however, I am conscious of having broken through the barriers of a past aesthetic ...'(2). Gluck was writing music almost as intense and original when he followed the dramatic emotions

of Alceste in 1767 'I have not placed any value on novelty, if it did not emerge naturally from the situation and the expression; and there is no rule I would not have felt in duty bound to break in order to achieve the desired effect'(3). Ravel was especially conscious of exploring new areas of feeling and selected his literature accordingly, for instance: 'Les Chansons Madeoasses seem to me to have a new, dramatic - voire erotique - element which the subject itself of Parny's songs has introduced to them'(4). The situation is clearly stated by Mendelssohn, speaking of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'I call it great luck to have had such a subject to inspire me ... What I could do as a composer I could do before writing the overture, but I had not yet before my imagination such a subject as that. That was indeed an inspiration ...'(5). Schumann comments by means of Florestan 'Had Shakespeare not existed, would Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream have seen the light - even though Beethoven had written many a one without title? The thought might make me sad'. To which Eusebius replies 'Yes, else why does it happen that so many characters only display their individuality after they have looked to others for support?' This slightly enigmatic statement is clarified by Raro 'Eusebius speaks true. Many people act freely only when they feel themselves conditioned'(6).

The growth in musical technique is attributed to new psychological exploration by Liszt, as by Wagner, and Liszt clearly regarded his tone-poems in this light: 'To enrich the form {of a piece} to enlarge it and make it serviceable, is granted ... precisely to those who make use of it only as one of the means of expression, as one of the languages which they employ in accordance with the dictates of the ideas to be expressed'. 'Is music unsuited to cause such natures {epic heroes like Faust, Cain, Manfred} to speak its language? ... could music do this in the drama? Scarcely. ... The interest which they {heroes passions} arouse attaches itself far more to inner events than to actions related to the outer world'(7). Hence the Tone-Poem. Wagner believed in submerging himself into the unconscious archetypal world of his subject and accepting all dictated to him, only correcting later. He attributes his development as a musician solely to the subjects he has lived through and expressed: 'the object of expression was the sole matter of regard in all my workmanship ... I no longer had to refer to the mode of

expression. Yet, I was absolutely driven to expand { 'my means of musical expression' } by the very nature of the objects I was seeking to express'(8).

Literature usually suggest a world of feeling which appeals to the composer, or as with Strauss, he perceives that world first and then finds it reflected in literature: 'From the moment when ... I saw from the deck of the Italian steamer the island of Corfu and the blue mountains of Albania, I have always been a German Greek, even to this day.

'For I can look back on artistic achievements which, like Elektra, Ariadne, Aegyptische Helena, Daphne and Die Liebe der Danae', do homage to the genius of the Greek nation'(9).

Literature and music never came closer than in the Romantic Age. Schumann considered one could illuminate the other, even though it was never dreamt of by the composer: 'The highest criticism is that which leaves an impression identical with the one called forth by the thing criticised. In this sense, Jean Paul, with a poetic compassion, can perhaps contribute more to the understanding of a symphony or fantasy by Beethoven, without even speaking of the music, than a dozen of those little critics of the arts who lean their ladders against the Colossus and take its measurements'(10). This naive faith in the interdependency of music and words is obviously rather too subjective to contain universal validity, yet as a reflection of what could happen in the Romantic era this curious note of Spohr's is worth quoting in confirmation: 'Jean Paul ... appeared to interest himself very much for this new composition { String Quartet Op. 45 No. 1 } and ascribed to it a highly poetic signification, of which while composing it I certainly never thought, but which recurred in a very striking manner to my mind at every subsequent performance of the quartet'(11). This sort of statement amply justifies Stravinsky's stern corrective 'If music appears to express something, this is only an illusion ... It is simply an additional attribute we have thrust upon it, which ... we have come to confuse with its essential being'(12).

21.

Poetry

In an earlier section 'Conscious preparation for inspiration' many instances of the effect of poetry on musical creation were cited in evidence of the fact that poetry is often set to music by the process of meditation on the poem followed by a natural receiving of the music from the unconscious in surprisingly large quantities. Poetry has inspired more music than any other extra-musical phenomenon; this is because it is often rich in trigger qualities to deep emotion and also because it is already half music with its rhythms and forms, seemingly crying out for fuller statement and elaboration. Burns, in contrary wise, felt music to be already half poetry and hummed over his old Scottish tunes until the words 'came' to him quite of their own accord.

Beethoven seems to have stated his thoughts on the inspiration of poetry, that is, if we can trust Bettina Brentans who tells Goethe of what Beethoven said: "Goethe's poems have great power over me, not only because of their content, but by their rhythm. I get excited, and put into the mood for composing, by this language that seems to build itself up like a work of higher spiritual beings, and to contain already the secret of its harmonies. It forces me to pour out the melody in all directions, from the burning point of my enthusiasm, I pursue it, passionately overtake it again ... I cannot part from it, and with eager joy I have to repeat it in all possible modulations, and in the end, at last, I am triumphant over musical ideas"(1). Stravinsky found the formal and rhythmic elements alone of Russian folk poetry a tremendous stimulus in 'Les Noces' - 'What fascinated me in this verse was the sequence of the words and syllables, and the cadence they create, which produces an effect on one's sensibility very closely akin to that of music'(2). He found both formal and spiritual elements a stimulus in a non-vocal work: 'The spirit and form of my Duo Concertante were determined by my love of the pastoral poets of antiquity, their scholastic art and technique ... a musical parallel to the old pastoral poetry'(3).

The emotional power of Goethe held many composers

in its thrall, there are at least six famous works inspired by Faust alone, and all who touched Goethe seem to have been enchanted and received the magical music from that daimon which Goethe believed worked on every man of genius according to his greatness. Curiously, he believed it was really external, a sort of Dionysus and no mere projection of himself. 'The daimonic is something that cannot be explained in terms of mind and thought. I do not find it in my nature but I am subject to it'. Walpurgisnacht was just such an inspiration to Mendelssohn who informs Goethe: 'when the old Druid offers up his sacrifice and the scene grows to immeasurable heights and solemnity, there is no need of inventing music; it is there already; everything sounds clear, and I started to sing the verses to myself before even thinking of the composition'(4).

Cases of immediate inspiration are frequent: Schubert was handed Grillparzer's 'Zögernd leise' and asked to set it; he merely took the verses to the window, read them through twice with deep attention and turning round, said 'I have it, its done already, and it will do very well'(5). Berlioz picked up Hugo's Les Orientales one day when it had been knocked on the floor - it was open at La Captive: he read it and exclaimed 'I can hear it' - His companion ruled him music paper and he wrote it down complete(6). Liszt tells Marie zu Sayn-Wittgenstein 'After reading Saar's poem "The loud voices of the day are silent" I immediately sang it: there remained only to write down the enclosed notation'(7).

Story, Situation

Frequently we find that the emphasis in the setting of words is on the situation or mood. 'I can conceive music (for a poem) only if I can conceive a mood that produces it'(Mendelssohn)(1). But of course this field of stimulus extends beyond the setting of poems to the setting of dramas - 'A good musician ought to surrender himself to all the characters he wishes to depict and, like a skilful actor, put himself in the place of the speaker, imagine himself in the localities where the different events he

wishes to represent occur, and take in these the same interest as those most concerned; ... he ought to know when the voice should be raised or lowered, by more or by less, in order to adapt to this his melody, his harmony, his modulation, and his movement'(Rameau)(2). As Tippet comments, when engaged on King Priam, ' ... it is not the words as such which the composer is setting, but the situations'(3), and Mozart's extreme fussiness over libretti ('looked through at least one hundred libretti and more'(4)) was due to the fact that most librettists ruined good situations by paying too much attention to the rhyming versification, etc., 'I mean, words or even entire verses which ruin the composer's entire idea'(5). The idea is his musical conception of the situation, born of his unerring dramatic perception. Indeed in opera, the situation is the supreme stimulus - 'What music must have above all' writes Saint-Saens, 'are emotions and passions, laid bare or set in action by what we term the situation. And where can one find better situations than in history'(6)? The stimulus of a basic situation on which an opera is based is powerful enough to see a composer through the entire work without worry. 'I should compose with utter confidence a subject that set my blood going, even though it were condemned by all other artists as anti-musical' writes Verdi(7); and Strauss appreciates the magnificent emotional shape, the powerful build-up of a libretto: 'When I first saw Hofmannsthal's inspired play (Elektra) ... I immediately recognised, of course, what a magnificent operatic libretto it might be ... and, just as previously with Salome, I appreciated the tremendous increase in musical tension to the very end. In Elektra, after the recognition scene, which could only be completely realised in music, the release in dance - in Salome after the dance (the heart of the plot), the dreadful apotheosis of the end. Both offered wonderful musical points of attack. ...

'But at first I was put off by the idea that both subjects were very similar in psychological content, so that I doubted whether I should have the power to exhaust this subject also'(8). As it turned out, Strauss wrote one of his most powerful works and managed to explore new, though related, psychic territory.

As a curious postscript, we may add the case of

Weber who was a brilliant improviser and whose dramatic imagination was readily inspired by a romantic story. Duke Emil August had him to stay and passed the time dictating 'as it were sentiments and images which I have to embody in my performances, so that he invents and relates whole romances while I illustrate them by music and, through tones, amplify them still further. So passes day after day, and I may rely on returning to my room every evening enriched by some new idea or impression'(9).

23.

Supernatural

Next we must consider that area of the psychic territory which deals in supernatural, magical and nightmarish ideas, which contains primitive, irrational awe, wonder and fear, the fear of Pan. To continue classical allusions we may call this the Dionysian element in man as opposed to the Apollonian. The simplest way to define Dionysian music is that it should make one's hair stand on end, as Housman demanded of all real poetry. Such crude physical symptoms are the clearest indication of a concept that is difficult to circumscribe in words.

The stimulus of the supernatural is the most extreme and obvious manifestation of the Dionysian in music. Poetry, legends, situations which already make us shudder in awe of the supernatural are increased in power tenfold by the spell of music. 'The Fantastic, Hell, Paradise, the Jinns, phantoms, ghosts, fairies - there in the domain of art! Try and prove to me that there could be art based on reason, truth, and fact ... As a musician, I declare that if you suppress adultery, fanaticism, crime, imprudence and the supernatural it would be impossible to write another note. I even go so far as to say that I would write better music if I believed everything that is untrue' (Bizet)(1).

Busoni admits the comic as an alternative: 'The opera should take possession of the supernatural or the unnatural as its only proper sphere of representation and feeling and should create a pretence world in such a way that life is reflected in either a magic or a comic mirror, presenting consciously that which is not to be found in real life'(2). Whereas Weber insisted that his librettist include the supernatural in Euryanthe, Beethoven wrote to the librettist

of his projected opera 'Aloine' '... now there must at all costs be magio - I cannot deny that on the whole I am prejudiced against this sort of thing, because it has a soporific effect on feeling and reason'(3). Mozart's Magic Flute is the extreme expression of this 'Apollonian' attitude, where we are advised to 'banish superstition and put on wisdom'.

The two attitudes called Dionysian and Apollonian will be discussed at greater length in the two next parts. In this section which instances the stimulus of the supernatural, the stimulus of the Christian religion should obviously receive attention; yet surprisingly composers do not talk much about this stimulus, though Liszt tells Wagner of the 'Gran Mass', 'I may say that I have prayed it rather than composed it',(4) and Stravinsky, in defence against modern abstraction emphasises the importance of belief in 'not merely 'symbolic figures', but ... the Person of the Lord, the Person of the Devil, and the Miracles of the Church! (5), for the composition of music in sacred forms. Best of all, Haydn tells how he composed the famous Agnus Dei of the fourth Mass: 'I prayed to God not like a miserable sinner in despair but calmly, slowly. In this I felt that an infinite God would surely have mercy on his finite creature, pardoning dust for being dust. These thoughts cheered me up. I experienced a sure joy so confident that as I wished to express the words of the prayer, I could not suppress my joy, but gave vent to my happy spirits and wrote above the misere etc., Allegro'(6). The composition of this joyful plea for mercy epitomises the beautiful and often misunderstood religiosity of the eighteenth century, one thinks of a similar expression of the felix culpa sentiment in our own tongue:

'If I were pure, never could I taste the sweets
Of the forgiveness of sins. If I were holy, I
never could behold the tears
Of Love ... O Mercy! O divine Humanity!'(7).

The reasons for our lack of material must be reverence, and the fact that religious experience is hardly expressible in words. And yet these reasons are not wholly adequate when we contemplate the amount and quality of the music the Christian religion has stimulated. We shall deal with other, subtler, connections between music and metaphysics later, but as far as the direct and emotional stimulus of Christian supernaturalism goes we must acknowledge ignorance and say

with Byrd ' ... there is a secret hidden power in the texts themselves; so that to one who ponders on things divine ... in some way, I cannot tell how, the aptest numbers occur as if of their own accord'(8).

There are many instances of the stimulus of non-Christian religions with their sometimes remote and mysterious power, Rimsky-Korsakov with his sun-worshippers being a good example; he writes, 'my enthusiasm for the poetry of pagan worship led (with May Night) to a series of operas in which the worship of the sun and of sun-gods was introduced ... though sun-worship had entirely faded before the light of Christianity, yet the whole cycle of ceremonial songs and games to this very day rests on the ancient pagan sun-worship which lives unconsciously in the people'(9). A fascinating might-have-been is Berlioz' apocalyptic idea which was perhaps too terrible and grand and supernatural ever to be accomplished, yet his words express well the sort of stimulus we are discussing: 'Here is my idea for an oratorio - the mere carcass, that you (librettist) must vitalise: 'The World's Last Day'. The height of civilisation, the depth of corruption, under a mighty tyrant, throughout the earth. A faithful handful of God's people, left alive by the tyrant's contempt, under a prophet, Balthasar, who announces the end of the world. The tyrant, in amused scorn, forces him to be present at a travesty of the Last Day, but during its performance, the earth quakes, angels sound gigantic trumpets, the True Christ appears, the Judgement has come'(10).

This is the deepest side of man's psyche from whence issue those phenomena he projects into the world as demons, gods, infernos, enchanted glades, paradises, and even thinks to find them in some remote mountainous or forest-darkened places. Yet they differ from previous stimuli to inspiration that have been discussed in that they come from within, they cannot be found with the senses, whereas the others have been found in the world and have been seen as a reflection of something within.

Music that pertains to the Dionysian is strange, exciting and perhaps wild or mysterious. Musical works

seem to be born nearer to this category than they are when they are old. Modern works have often seemed strange, new, wild, mysterious and exciting and composers are themselves excited by the strangeness of what they have written; yet with the passage of time this, the Dionysian aspect, tends to fade and other, more Apollonian aspects come into view (Jazz, which depends largely on the players being worked up to a fever pitch of inspiration and on a correspondingly direct emotional reception from the audience, is strongly Dionysian in our sense of the word, and its comparatively ephemeral nature is the result). For all except the real scholar immersed in another age as if he lived in it, 'modern music' alone makes any real appeal to the Dionysian element; and as Stravinsky says, if a man does not love modern music best, he is not a real musician. So we get back to Socratic madness, without which any man who comes to the gates of poetry 'shall be brought to nought by the poetry of madness, and see (the works of sanity's) place is nowhere to be found'(11). The problem concerned Wagner deeply, and he was such an extreme Dionysian as to declare that in future works should be destroyed as soon as they started to become Apollonian, or Monumental, as he called it, as this is an insult. To fulfil man's need for intoxication more and more new works must be written - he perceived '... the need of an ever fresh-born Artwork of the Future, springing directly from, and belonging only to, the present; an Artwork which shall not be fettered by the Monumental'(12).

A serialist composer has justified the twelve-tone technique with this same point. 'A note is foreign to the ear in proportion to the number of notes that have preceded it; it will sound most foreign if all the other eleven have been heard before it reappears. So, in spite of all its cold and mathematical appearance the twelve-note system seems to me to be an extraordinary expression of the search for the mysterious, strange and new' (13). But this can easily degenerate into a heretical abuse of information theory principles (desire for maximum information and minimum redundancy) if it is not balanced with a little of the Apollonian.

Most composers are ostensibly attracted to the system because they find, like Webern 'adherence (to the row) is strict, often burdensome, but it is salvation'(14); in other words it brings order into chaos, yet we may almost predict a young composer's success by ascertaining whether the 'mathematical' or the 'mysterious', the Apollonian or the Dionysian, attraction is uppermost in his serialist mind.

24.

Autobiography

We have been trying to show that stimuli are what they are because of a certain portraiture of himself the composer discovers in them. 'A composer transforms, in terms of music, whatever he absorbs from the outside and whatever he is congenitally; he depicts his present moment in music, so that, in reality, all music is autobiographical'(Chavez)(1). The things he absorbs from the outside change him, and yet there must be something already within him which can meet the new external object and into which it is absorbed. There is no real change, only continual self-discovery(2). The existentialist-minded Henri Pousseur sees art as a clarification, essential to life, of this interchange of man and world, a sort of rationalisation of Sartre's pour-soi en-soi process - 'The consciousness and the world, the object and the subject cannot exist separately, the one articulates itself through the other, it is their unceasing, complex reaction which makes all structure possible.

The work of art manifests ... this dynamic presence of man in the world. A painting, a poem, a piece of music are not primarily the representation of an exterior object, nor the expression of an inner sentiment, but a certain way of existing'(3). This rather extreme attitude results from an overbelief in the use of music to man, and cannot be considered an accurate description of music itself, though the first two sentences of the quote illustrate well the point we are making.

Many composers have vouched that their music as a

whole is autobiographical, or at least an 'objective correlative to personal experience', as Eliot demanded of poetry. 'I can write nothing about my works. Hear them played! In my music you will find myself'(4), wrote Weber; Mahler said 'My symphonies exhaust the content of my entire existence. Whoever listens to my music intelligently will see my life transparently revealed'(5). Schumann is more cautious, and perhaps the more usual standpoint may be gleaned from this passage: 'Mostly they (some 'older' compositions) are reflections of my agitated former life; the man and the musician at all times attempted to express themselves simultaneously, and I almost believe that this is still the case, except that I have learned to master myself, as well as my art, a little better'(6).

Of deliberate autobiography in the obvious sense there are of course many examples, one being Smetana's E minor quartet, of which he wrote 'I had wanted to give a tone picture of my life (he goes on to give at some length the autobiographical meaning of the various movements). That is roughly the aim of this composition which is almost a private one and therefore purposely written for four instruments which, as it were, are to talk to each other in a narrow circle of friends of what has so momentarily affected me'(7).

Wagner gives us abundant encouragement to regard his works as autobiographical, therapeutic and 'an objective correlative' (all aspects of the same thing), one after the other. In 'A Communication to My Friends' he gives a detailed account of his self-identification with The Flying Dutchman, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin and Siegfried. In describing the hesitations when beginning a work he writes: 'Only when his choice is made, when this choice was born from pure Necessity, - when thus the artist has found himself again in the subject of his choice, as perfected Man finds his true self in Nature, - then steps the Art-work into life, then first is it a real thing, a self-conditioned and immediate entity'(8).

Self-Delight

Before we tackle, in the next part, the composer's impulse to reveal himself to the world, we must consider simply his impulse to reveal himself, for he is frequently unconscious of any sort of audience and writes purely for himself, for the sheer pleasure of writing, or from an inward necessity.

Schoenberg wrote 'I believe that a real composer writes music for no other reason than that it pleases him. Those who compose because they want to please others, and have audiences in mind, are not real artists. They are not the kind of men who are driven to say something whether or not there exists one person who likes it, even if they themselves dislike it ... They ... would renounce composing if they could not find listeners'(1). This rather extreme adherence to Truth rather than Beauty ('even if they themselves dislike it') excepted, the passage is typical. Indeed, if it were not, the idea that music is a medium through which sincerely personal facts are communicated would be false, for consciousness of current audiences can lure the composer away from sincerity. Vaughan-Williams wrote: 'Music is, first and foremost, self-expression; without that it is a falsehood. I feel sure that a man marooned for life on a desert island would continue to make music for his own spiritual exaltation even though there were no-one to hear him'(2).

Music is not only fun to invent, it is worth doing for the sense of achievement, the happiness and pride it brings afterwards. Mozart's letters abound in a pride almost amounting to vanity, but not the vanity of the high-priest, as in more recent years; rather the pride of the child who is loved for his brilliance(3). It has been written by Chavez that the joy of creating a work of art, a little unit complete in itself, is the unconscious joy of emulating God, the Creator(4). This is the more modern, inward reason, the self-sufficiency of creation -

'Art can only be created for its own sake'(Schoenberg)(5). Yet in the joy of creation both these elements, pride in communication and pride in fulfillment of musical aims, have always been present either consciously or unconsciously.

As examples of the pleasure works give to composers, after completion, here are Wolf: 'I finished the second volume of the Italian song book with the twenty-second song yesterday ... My joy about this wonderful achievement is indescribable'(6), and Berlioz, writing of an even more violent joy to Heine: 'In the finale of Harold (at a concert in Brunswick) that ferocious orgy, in which the intoxications of wine, blood, joy, and rage vie with one another ... where brazen mouths seem to belch forth imprecations and answer suppliant voices with blasphemy, where there is laughter, drinking, blows, destruction, murder, rape ... Ah! what a drum roll in the heart! what wild shudders I felt in leading that astounding orchestra ...' (7).

26.

Truth

Truth, the expression of the real self, or the world as one sincerely sees it, has become more and more fashionable as Beauty has faded away. The beauties of the past have also changed, they are now seen as purveyors of truth; Mozart did not simply create a world, he discovered one, unearthed a psychic reality. Hans Keller, roughly allotting sexual energies for the creation of beauty, and aggressive energies for the propagation of truth (analysis is a form of aggression), accounts for the truthfulness of our age by showing that there is unprecedented frustration of the aggressive instinct (1). Hypocrisy is undoubtedly considered the supreme vice nowadays, especially in art: 'Beauty comes into being when the uncreative begin to miss it. Before that it does not exist, for the artist does not need it. For him truthfulness is enough'. (Schoenberg)(2). 'I can only know what the truth is for me today. That is what I am called upon to serve, and I serve it in all lucidity' (Stravinsky)(3). After Beethoven,

and until composers started talking about 'truth', the word 'heart' was the one most frequently used and forms a sort of transition between classical extroversion and our own 'psychological truthfulness'. For instance, Mendelssohn wrote in 1831: "Every day I am more sincerely anxious to write exactly as I feel and to have even less regard than ever for outside opinions: and when I have composed a piece just as it sprang from my heart, then I have done my duty; whether thereafter it brings fame, honour, decorations, or snuff-boxes etc., is a matter of indifference to me'(4).

Finally, Tippet takes up the theme of artistic duty and proclaims in no uncertain terms the importance of the discovery of Truth: 'There is no question in our day of the artist receiving a free mandate from society to create. The mandate of society is to entertain ... But the mandate of the artist's own nature ... is to reach down into the depths of the human psyche and bring forth the tremendous images of things to come. These images are not yet art. It takes a lifetime's work to mould them into works of art. For this the artist can have no reward but in the joy of doing it. He creates, because without art, in this deep and serious sense, the nation dies. His mandate is inescapable'(5).

27

Compulsion

'Believe in the necessity of what ye do(1)!' This was Wagner's war-cry, and he means necessity in the way Schopenhauer means 'will' (cf.p. 10PtIII) and in Leonardo's sense - 'Necessity is the theme and inventor of nature, its eternal curb and law'. Composing was for him as natural a process as the blossoming of a flower, so that the bee will be attracted, and pollinate other flowers and so propagate life. 'When this One Thing ('strongest need-urged impulse') is recognised by man as his fundamental essence, then to reach this One and indispensable, he has power to ward off every weaker, subordinated appetite ... Only the weak and impotent knows no imperious, no mightiest longing of the soul: ... If the individual, however, feels in himself a mighty longing, an impulse that ... forms the necessary

inner urgency which constitutes his soul and being; and if he put forth all his force to satisfy it; he thus will also lift aloft his own peculiar force, and all his special faculties, to the fullest strength and height that ever can lie within his reach'(2). Wagnerian necessity is essentially an urge to be oneself; a compulsion to create naturally. We may take it that when composers write of 'an invincible inward impulse'(3), being 'forced' by an inner urge for creation'(4), or 'a daily function which I feel compelled to discharge'(5), (important words in many composers' vocabularies), they are fulfilling an instinctive drive which, to give it its least flattering description, is a combination of sublimated anal and sexual creation, or which, to give it its more worthy and positive description, is the transcendental instinct, that powerful urge which gives man no rest, the 'divine discontent' of which an English composer has spoken(6) and to which Yeats refers in the lines: 'That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea'.

28

Ejection

The creative act 'alone satisfies me and fills me with a desire of life'(1), and 'is central to the life process'(2), Wagner and Copland speak: both are men for whom creation possesses 'a significance akin to that of religious experience'(3); from one angle at least they use their art in much the same way their ancestors used the church. The confessional was an essential feature of the church these men forsook, it helped to get rid of powerful forces within men by naming them, much as in primitive societies the power of one's tribal enemy's god was destroyed by the discovery of its closely guarded name and the utterance of this name.

To a certain extent the attraction of composing for the composer is that it allows him to objectify and so master dangerous forces within him. It is a release valve, solving problems of personal life. This, again, is a negative account of the art, and therefore must not be unduly emphasised.

Examples are often connected with the torments of love; for instance, Weber, spurred to pour forth his feelings in music after his sad affair with Frau Brunetti; Berlioz, separated from his idol Harriet Smithson before their marriage - he called the *Symphonie Fantastique* 'a clever revenge' for the extremes of pain he had suffered(4); and Wagner, his love for Frau Schröder-Devrient the singer doomed to be rejected, forced to Love the absolute for consolation, thus writing *Tannhäuser*, where a pure, ideal love wars with Venus: 'If at last I turned impatiently away (from his sensual love of Schröder-Devrient) ... so did that double revolt, of man and artist, inevitably take on the form of a yearning for appeasement in a higher, nobler element ... a pure chaste, virginal, unseizable and unapproachable ideal of love. What, in fine, could this love-yearning, the noblest thing my heart could feel - what other could it be than a longing for release from the Present, for absorption into an element of endless love, a love denied to earth and reachable through the gates of Death alone? When I reached the sketch and working out of the *Tannhäuser* music, it was in a state of burning exaltation that held my blood and every nerve a fevered throbbing'(5).

The failure of *Tannhäuser* caused, in its turn, more feeling which had to be got rid of, feelings of isolation, of being utterly misunderstood: 'The very feeling of this loneliness supplied me with the spur and the ability to address myself to my surroundings ... this could only proceed from a mood of well-nigh fanatical yearning, which itself was born of that feeling of isolation ... By the strength of my longing, I had mounted to the realms where purity and chastity abide ... it was not the warmth of life I fain would flee, but the vaporous morass of trivial sensuousness ... And so it was that, hardly had this blessed solitude enwrapt me, when it woke ... the desire ... from the dazzling brilliance of chaste sanctity to the sweet shadows of love's humanest caresses. From these heights my longing glance beheld at last - das Weib, the woman who now drew Lohengrin from sunny heights to the 'depths of Earth's warm breast'(6).

Similarly, The Ring was the release of his disappointment with beloved Germany when he returned from exile: its 'hostile chill' drove him into 'the primal element of Home, that meets us in the legends'(7).

Most of all, Tristan and Isolde is the supreme work of personal therapeutics. The affair with Mathilde Wesendonck was the direct cause of it and yet the positive side, as with every great work, is strongly in evidence also; Wagner used Mathilde because he wished to create a great love music-drama epitomising the love of Siegfried and Brünnhilde. During the writing of this libretto he saw her constantly and yet both knew that theirs was an impossible love, not only because both were married but on the higher plane because they knew all love must fade and for the sake of 'Tristan and Isolde' this must not happen - the work was to be the hymn to their love. Thus the work and life were inextricably mingled. They separated at a passionate peak ostensibly because their spouses brought things to a head, and on the other level because the only way in which the beauty and power of the love-story could remain strong was by cutting it at its height, symbolised in 'Tristan' by death. They part and Wagner writes the music in a white heat of inspiration. He writes to Mathilde, 'brave Tristan, Lady Isolde ... Help me, come to my angel's (viz. Mathilde's) aid. Here you will bleed no more, your wounds will heal and close. Here the world will learn how high and noble is the pain of love at its sublimest, how mournful is desire so agonising. And you will see me once more - radiant as a god, healed in heart and body ...

'I feel that when it is finished a marvellous epoch in my life will have found its completion. Henceforward I shall look out upon the world with a spirit renewed, with calm, deep and clear insight; and beyond the world I shall be gazing at you'(8).

Art had recoloured their relationship in purer, more perfect tints, they belonged to another world where their love was justified by its very ideality, only accessible to those who renounce this world. Professor Gilson says, speaking of these letters, 'This language reminds us

irresistably of another with which the masters of a spirituality not only purer but of a different order have long familiarised us'(9).

29.

Conscious Calculation

This section would be unbalanced without at least a brief consideration of what Busoni called the execution of the composition (cf. p. 16), that intellectual follow-through of inspiration which in most cases provides the bulk of the composition. Although it is a conscious process, that does not mean it is not helped by unconscious hints; indeed the distinction is often in practice blurred, 'a composer ... sometimes cannot tell whether he is inspired or whether he is doing mere routine work'(1); nevertheless many composers have commented on this conscious side of their work. Copland calls it 'the less divine afflatus that makes it possible for us to compose each day - to produce inspiration, as it were - a species of creative intuition in which the critical faculty is much more involved'(2). The type of composing witnessed to by Beethoven's sketch books must be understood as a quest for a goal dimly seen, yet nevertheless very real and powerful. In other words, some sort of unconscious vision is present, though very deeply hidden, and the conscious process is an attempt to reach it through reasoning power. Thus the 'flash of recognition' when it is 'right'.

The struggles of geni are as well known as their facilities. Mozart hints at this in his dedication of the 'Haydn' quartets - 'the fruit of a long and laborious study'. Schubert, according to Spaun's obituary, would explain in the plainest logic the composition of his works to his friends. Chopin, according to George Sand, would spend hours at a single bar. Dvorak frequently mentions hard work in his letters. No composer, however spontaneous, had an easy career.

The entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 31st July 1884 reads 'Worked, without any inspiration, but successfully'.

How is this possible? Schoenberg denies it (cf. p.10), yet he is also a champion of 'Brain' in music - 'He who really uses his brain for thinking can only be possessed of one desire: to resolve his task ... Two times two is four - whether one likes it or not'(3). In other words the vision is attainable by reasoning as well as by intuition and the process is the same in the conscious mind as in the unconscious. With serial technique, of course, as in fugal and contrapuntal writing, the calculation of the conscious mind reaches the complexity of mathematical thinking. The technique was aimed at and employed by Schoenberg quite naturally but also quite consciously. 'I was always occupied with the aim to base the structure of my music consciously on a unifying idea which produced not only all the ideas, but regulated also the accompaniment and the harmonies'(4). Roberto Gerhard takes this a stage further in a statement which would probably have received his master's approval - he quotes Eliot's view of the surface meaning of poetry - 'to satisfy one habit of the reader, to keep his mind diverted and quiet, while the poem does its work upon him; much as the imaginary burglar is always provided with a bit of nice meat for the house-dog'. In my view the use of the serial technique fulfills a comparable function in the creative process of the composer ... The complex intellectual work which serial organisation imposes on the composer fulfills ... a similar function of diversion which allows free play to the unconscious'(5).

Stravinsky's famous attachment to technique (which he defines as 'the whole man' (6) and calculation are all the more remarkable in a man who wrote 'The Rite of Spring' (cf. p.2), it is almost as if he has reacted in the extreme, the fervour of his prostration before Dionysus alone justifying the fervour of his subsequent prostration before Apollo. In 1935 he wrote comparing the ordered austerity of classical ballet to his own art, 'I am thus brought face to face with the eternal conflict in art between the Apollonian and the Dionysian principles. The latter assumes ecstasy to be the final goal - that is to say, the losing of oneself whereas art demands above all the full consciousness of the artist'(7). In 1940 he wrote that the 'Dionysian elements ... must be properly

subjugated before they intoxicate us, and must finally be made to submit to the law: Apollo demands it'(8). And in 1960 he goes still farther in answer to Craft's question 'You often say that to compose is to solve a problem. Is it no more ...?' He quotes Seurat 'Certain critics have done me the honour to see poetry in what I do, but I paint by my method with no other thought in mind'(9). Thus it is abstract order, or perhaps simply the discovery of abstract order in chaos which appeals to him. 'It is the idea of discovery and hard work that attracts me'(10). If Stravinsky contrives to give the impression of a uniquely intellectual and calculating man, we will later see how he contradicts it, though always remaining unique in his attitude to emotion.

30.

Self-criticism after Inspiration

Tchaikovsky tells Madame von Meek that conscious calculation is a stop-gap only; between the periods of 'somnambulism', when they dry up 'cold reason and technical knowledge have to be levied on for assistance'. This is the opposite of Stravinsky, it is the Dionysian approach. In any case, he says, the strain of constant ecstacy is too great, 'no artist could survive - the strings would snap' (1). It is inevitable that all, or nearly all, works are composed with an alternation of inspiration and calculation, one must be 'inside and outside the work at the same time' (2). A common pattern is that in which a passage is received as compulsive inspiration and then it is carefully checked over and revised by the cool hand of reason.

'During the moment of divine consecration we should abandon ourselves mercilessly to the first inspiration; but afterwards calm searching reason must have its due and with its bear's paws scratch out mercilessly any human imperfections that have crept in'(3). Schumann concludes the passage with this aphorism: 'What is wild may grow up wild; nobler fruits demand care'.

Strauss describes his usual method, wherein he is first 'given' a melodic phrase by inspiration, secondly he

expands it immediately, and thirdly the whole is then revised and shaped into its final form 'which must hold its own against the severest and most detached self-criticism'(4).

Wagner, as does Tchaikovsky, holds conscious calculation in considerable contempt, yet elsewhere admits his heavy dependence on it: ('owes its being to no human Need soever, but purely to itself ... quite incapable of answering any soul-need')(5).

'The naive (or 'natural', as in Schiller), truly inspired artist casts himself with reckless enthusiasm into his artwork; and only when this is finished, when it shows itself in all its actuality, does he win from practical experience that genuine force of Reflection which preserves him in general from illusions, yet in the specific case of his feeling driven again to art-work by his imagination, loses once more its power over him completely'(6). This is the nearest he ever approaches to Stravinsky and the Apollonians who revolted against him with such violence.

31.

Composers Advocate Conscious Powers

There are various other shades of sentiment expressed by composers on this subject, mostly delivered in the form of general advice as to the prerequisites of being a composer, and we will mention them one by one.

First, there is the common notion that 'to have a lovely thought is nothing so remarkable', the inner ringing and singing of Mr. M or Mrs. Y., as Hindemith puts it, may be just as great as any composer's(1); 'inspiration is found as a driving force in every kind of human activity', writes Stravinsky. 'But that force is only brought into action by an effort, and that effort in work'(2). 'That is the most difficult thing, that is, in fact - art'(Dvorak)(3).

Many have held prowess on this side of activities to be the ear-mark of genius, the famous association of genius with perspiration seems to be borne out by the remarks of all except the most extreme Dionysians, such as Wagner.

Goethe's equivalent to Edison's remark ('Genius is industry') was admired by Mendelssohn, Brahms and Strauss in writing and probably by many more in speech, for this is a characteristic of German art right up to Hindemith.

That composers have advocated intellectual effort will hardly surprise us, especially when addressing their pupils: 'It is the greatest madness to believe that serious study cripples the artistic spirit'(4), wrote Weber to a pupil (for such a belief was far from dormant at this time of romantic ferment), similarly D'Indy cautioned his pupils against the excesses of Debussy and Ravel in his essay advocating, and named, 'Le Bon Sens' - 'good sense, which alone can make us appreciate the notions of logic and balance without which there is no Art'(5) ... And Schumann advises a pupil on the carrying out of this conscious process 'persevere with composing mentally ... and keep on twisting and turning the principal melodies about in your head until you can say to yourself: 'Now they will do'. To hit upon the right thing all in a moment ... does not happen every day'(6).

Implicit in Weber's remark above is a fear that technique will, by its prosaic nature, somehow rob from the poetry of music. This is summarily disposed of by Busoni with the remark 'Have thunderstorms vanished from the world because Franklin discovered the lightning conductor'(7)? We may take this in both its meanings, (one) that composers can consciously construct music as breathtaking as the thunderstorm, and (two) that the knowledge of technique does not impede inspiration, nor the appreciation of inspired music. In fact Schoenberg and Wagner claim that it is the desire to understand one's own unconscious notions that leads to the study of technique. (Most students start by rationalising other composers' inspirations).

'The desire for a conscious control of the new means and forms will arise in every artist's mind; and he will wish to know consciously the laws and rules which govern the forms which he has conceived 'as in a dream'. Strongly convincing as this dream may have been, the conviction that these new sounds obey the laws of nature and of our manner of thinking - the conviction that order, comprehensibility, and form cannot be present without obedience to such laws -

forces the composer along the road of exploration. He must find, if not laws or rules, at least ways to justify the dissonant character of these harmonies and their successions' (Schoenberg)(8). And Webern echoes 'Don't write music entirely by ear - you must know why one progression is good and another bad'(9).

Wagner's interest in technique is of this kind: 'If the poet (by which Wagner means composer-dramatist), who thus speaks from unconsciousness to consciousness, would fain take count of the natural compulsion (Zwang) which bids him use this expression and none other, then he learns to know the nature of this expression; and in his impulse to impart, he wins from that nature the power of mastering this expression itself in all its necessity'(10).

Finally, we learn that strong emotions are not conducive to the composition of a work but we may safely take it that this refers to the 'execution' phase, certainly not to the 'idea' phase and even less to the 'conception', the initial vision (cf. p. 16). 'A frenzied Roland could not write Orlando Furioso; a loving heart cannot discourse of love ... In order to move something we must not stand on it'(Schumann)(11). 'Those who imagine that a creative artist can ... express his feelings at the moment when he is moved, make the greatest mistake. Emotions, sad or joyful, can only be expressed retrospectively'(Tchaikovsky)(12).

Berlioz wrote of Les Troyens 'Another danger that besets me in composing the music for this drama is in the fact that the feelings I am called upon to express are inclined to move me too deeply. This can bring the whole matter to naught. Passionate subjects must be dealt with in cold blood'(13).

'The artist, if the control over his medium is not to be lost, must not be moved when he wishes to move others' (Busoni)(14).

'I work very coolly, without agitation, without emotion, even. One has to be thoroughly master of oneself

to regulate that changing, moving, flowing chess-board orchestration. The head that composed Tristan must have been cold as marble'(Strauss)(15). (Contradicted fervently, of course, by Wagner's own writings: he would never leave the domain of the instinctive for one sentence, and speaks thus of the rational side of composition: 'even where he needs deliberation to shape the picture of his intuition to an objective work of art by aid of his own familiar technique, the decisive choice of his expressional means will not be settled by Reflection (Reason) proper, but rather by an instinctive bent that makes out the very character of his specific gift'(16). However, in a letter he does refer to the 'execution' phase in these words: 'before I go on to write a verse or sketch out a scene I am already intoxicated with the musical aura of my creation. I have all the notes, all the characteristic motives in my head, so that, once the text is ready and the scene laid out, the whole opera is already complete for me and a detailed musical treatment is more a quiet, considered completion of a work whose moment of actual creation is already over'(17).)

'I may affirm that emotion has never been present during the creation of those pages which are generally looked upon as the least imperfect of my production. Without any doubt the most favourable state for artistic creation (that state which the uninitiated look upon as a more or less divine fever) is simply an extremely lucid phase of cerebral activity'(Casella)(18). We must be chary of automatically assigning states of unemotional activity to conscious planes (Casella himself says the balance is equal between conscious and unconscious activity). In this latter quotation the composer is not talking about the execution as divided from the idea, but rather of that type of inspiration which is never permitted to subjugate the composer, the Stravinsky type. But Stravinsky's manipulations of a single motif are quite as inspired as Verdi's constant renewal of melodies (Chavez's example)(19), and it must be concluded that there are two tones of inspiration, one concerned with emotions and, on the plane of their crystallisation, with the musical expression of emotions, and the other the intellectual tone, where manipulations of less

referential meaning are worked out more smoothly and with greater 'rightness' (a more exact word is not possible, for that it is 'right' is all the composer knows).

32.

Chronologically Second

'Inspiration is in no way a prescribed condition of the creative act, but rather a manifestation, that is chronologically second'(1). Stravinsky's discourse on inspiration in the Poetics is worth careful consideration, for there is nothing else quite like it. He continues: 'Everything is balance and calculation through which the breath of the speculative spirit blows' (a perfect definition of our 'intellectual tone' of inspiration). 'It is only afterwards that the emotive disturbance which is at the root of inspiration may arise'. '... this emotion is merely a reaction on the part of the creator grappling with that unknown entity which is still only the object of his creating and which is to become a work of art. Step by step it will be granted him to discover the work. It is this chain of discoveries, as well as each individual discovery, that gives rise to the emotion - ... like that of the appetite causing a flow of saliva - this emotion that invariably follows closely the phases of the creative process'. Taken strictly at face value, this view seems closer to the sort of pride and pleasure composers feel about what they have written, mentioned above on page 60, than to any opening of the unconscious valve with its accompanying aura of revelation, emotion, trance or transcendentalism. Yet it seems more likely that Stravinsky is overstating his case in emphasis of his distaste for Wagner and Dionysus generally, and his quibble is really with the Dionysian associations of the word 'inspiration'. The intellectual tone his Muse adopts would not, to his mind, qualify for the word. But that there is something beyond plain calculation (obvious to all listeners) is shown more clearly by his later remark 'I can only start to work and hope to leap a little in my spirit'(2), and this, surely, is more than a 'manifestation!', and the fact that it is 'chronologically second' does not mean that it does

not affect what is chronologically third. Composers frequently set to work with no particular inspiration in any sense of the word but, as Schoenberg says, 'an artist need not necessarily fail if he has started something to which inspiration has not forced him. Often enough inspiration intervenes spontaneously and gives its blessing undemanded'(3). Ravel writes, 'in 1924, when I first took in hand the Sonata for violin and piano ... I had already determined its somewhat unusual form, the manner of writing for the instruments, and even the character of the themes for each of the three movements before 'inspiration' had begun to prompt a single one of these themes. And I do not think that I chose the shortest way'(4). Only when the composer has determined a few passages does the automatic hand of the unconscious begin to take over. Tchaikovsky is describing this inspiration which follows, and aids composition in this passage: 'The work progresses with inconceivable rapidity. Everything else is forgotten, the soul throbs with an incomprehensible and indescribable excitement'(5). Thus when a composer really gets 'into' a work an indissoluble chain is forged, it may have been constructed without much inspiration, but on reading it over, the composer is fired to write B; the next day he reads over A and B and immediately C springs to his mind, and then D, and so on, often in an ever-increasing rapidity and emotional excitement. If inspiration has not come by the time the composer needs to fulfill a commission, for instance, he may feel it is his 'duty' to commence the work nonetheless - 'he must not wait. Inspiration is a guest who does not care to visit those who are indolent' (Tchaikovsky)(6).

Notes

THE COMPOSER AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

2

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- 3 Ibid.
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- 5 Music and Imagination - Aaron Copland (1952 Norton Lectures), chapter III.
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- 7 Stravinsky, Expositions and Developments, Faber 1962, p. 147.
- 8 Mahler, letter to Anna Bahr-Mildenburg 18 July 1896. Alma Mahler, 'Gustav Mahler: Briefe' trans. S. Morgenstern.
- 9 Letter quoted by G. Révész, Psychology of Music, p. 199.
- 10 Sibelius, of his fifth symphony, quoted Etienne Gilson, Choir of Muses, p.180.
- 11 Michael Tippett, Moving into Aquarius, 1959, chapter entitled 'A Composer's Point of View.'
- 12 Letter dated March 1878 quoted Weinstock, Tchaikovsky, p. 170.
- 13 Letter dated 24 June 1878, R. Newmarch op. cit. p. 306.
- 14 Busoni - Letters to his Wife, trans. R. Ley, letter under '1915'.
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- 17 Letters of Beethoven, edited Emily Anderson 1960, p.462.
- 18 Richard Wagner's Prose Works, translated W. A. Ellis 1895, Vol. VII 'The Artist and Publicity' (article 1841) p. 134.
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- 27 Musical Thought, p. 51.
- 28 Unpublished conversation between Debussy and E. Guirand, October 1889, taken down by Maurice Emmanuel (exhibited in Debussy exhibition Paris 1962).

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- 2 Ibid., letter 384.
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- 4 Letters, p. 52 (1801).
- 5 Letters of Brahms to Clara Schumann, edited Dr. Litzmann (Arnold & Co. London), letter dated April 1872.
- 6 Chopin's Letters, collected Opieski, translated Voynick 1932, p. 30.
- 7 Schubert - A documentary biography, Otto Deutsch, in section '1818'.
- 8 Antonin Dvorak - Letters and Reminiscences, Otakar Sourek, translated R. F. Samson, p. 87.
- 9 Letters of Edward Elgar, ed. Percy Young, letter dated 11 July 1900.
- 10 Rimsky-Korsakov, My Musical Life, ed. C. Van Vechten, translated J. A. Joffe, p. 193.
- 11 The Collected Correspondence and Papers of Gluck, ed. E. H. Mueller von Asow, translated Stewart Thomson 1962, letter to Bailli du Roulet, librettist of 'Alceste', dated July 1775.
- 12 Wagner, letter to Mathilde Wesendonck, Autumn 1858, Venice.
- 13 Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt, translated F. Hueffer 1888, letter dated April 1853.

- 14 Letter to Pierre/Louys 22 Jan. 1895.
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- 2 Murray Schafer, 'British Composers in Interview', p. 97, interview with Tippett.
- 3 Letter to Giuseppe Adami, librettist of 'Turandot', 10 Nov. 1920, quoted Sam. Morgenstern, 'Composers on Music', p. 295.
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- 5 Carl Maria von Weber by Baron Max Maria von Weber, p. 368.
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- 12 Je suis compositeur, Introduction.

5

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Artist's Mandate'. An interesting feature of this Dionysus
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works that thrill them), the other Apollonian (works of
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beauty just as the most backward of the rear-guard have
hardly got over him as a thrilling modernist.
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- 5 Quoted in Manchester Guardian 2 February 1957.
- 6 On Music and Musicians, p. 259, letter to Kossmaly, 1843.
- 7 Letters and Reminiscences, p. 190.
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- 3 See, for instance, Letters, no. 452.
- 4 Musical Thought, p. 33.
- 5 Style and Idea, p. 51.
- 6 Letter to Frau von Lippenheide, 27 April 1896.
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- 4 Letters, letter dated July 1831.
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7 The Essence of Music, p. 181.
8 Style and Idea, p. 106.

- 9 Humphrey Searle, Conversations with Webern, Musical Times, 1940, p. 405.
- 10 Prose Works, Vol. II, Opera and Drams, p. 268.
- 11 On Music and Musicians, p. 51.
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- 19 Musical Thought, p. 31.

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- 4 Letter to 'The Chesterian' IX, January 1928, On Inspiration.
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Part II

THE COMPOSER AND HIS AUDIENCE

THE COMPOSER AND HIS AUDIENCE

Desire to Impress

Once again it will be seen that composers do not belong to any one category of attitude, but rather have something of every attitude in their make-up. Most young composers show a strong desire to impress before they have full confidence in themselves - to impress with technique or with what they have to say.

In the days of patronage the composer was intrinsically bound to impress; though with the feeling of security and success such as Haydn soon experienced at Esterhazy, the desire fades into a different sort of relationship. In London, where Haydn was at first not confident, he wrote the 'surprise' Andante for this reason: 'I was interested in surprising the public with something new, and in making a brilliant debut, so that my student Pleyel, who was at that time engaged by an orchestra in London (in 1792) and whose concerts had opened a week before mine, should not outdo me. The first Allegro of my symphony had already met with countless Bravos, but the enthusiasm reached its highest peak at the Andante with the Drum Stroke. Encore! Encore! sounded in every throat, and Pleyel himself complimented me on the idea'(1). Mozart was insecure and incompetent in worldly matters and his one security was his dazzling genius. His constant desire was to impress and astonish (then all would be well) and it was this desire, in part, which stimulated him. For instance, he wrote *Il Seraglio* to impress the Grand Duke of Russia who was shortly coming to Vienna and would be delighted to hear that Mozart had specially written this opera, and in such a short time 'the circumstances connected with the date of performance and, in general, all my other prospects stimulate me to such a degree that I rush to my desk with the greatest eagerness and remain seated there with the greatest delight'(2). The sound of applause runs jubilantly through his letters, and such sentences as 'indeed I should dearly love to show what I can do in an Italian opera'(3)!. It is paradoxical that such a profound and unworldly man should have felt himself under the world rather than above it.

Similarly Wagner wished to "show what he could do" in his early days (up to *Rienzi*), 'When I attended the dazzling performances of the Grand Opera ... a pleasurable warmth would steal into my brain and kindle the desire, the hope, yea even the certainty, that I, also, could one day triumph there'(4). The great high-priest started off surprisingly servile; this he frankly admits: 'Such lightly won success (of incidental music, 1835) much fortified my views that, in order to please, one must not too scrupulously choose one's means. In this sense I continued the composition of my Liebesverbot, and took no care whatever to avoid the echoes of the French and Italian stages'(5).

Smetana, piqued by criticisms of Wagnerianism, wrote 'The Bartered Bride' in order to 'prove to all my opponents that I knew my way about very well in the minor musical forms, a thing they disputed considering me to be too confirmed a Wagnerian to manage it'(6). To be patted on the back by their elders is the desire of all children and must therefore be regarded as the basis of whatever developments and changes ensue. Stravinsky suggests that this motive was partly, but not entirely, responsible for his musical creativeness when he tells how, before he could speak, he won praise for singing a song he'd heard in the country. 'Whether my career should be attributed entirely to the early realisation that love and praise can be won through a display of musical talent is another matter, however'(7).

One of the differences between major and minor composers seems to be that the former exhibit a degree of autonomy mixed with a more or less strong dependence on an audience, actual or ideal, whereas the latter, the minor composers have one of these two qualities in undue proportion. A glance at Spohr's Autobiography, for instance, will reveal a strong and burdensome awareness of the audience and very little else, just as Stockhausen's articles exhibit an attitude of undue autonomy. Catering for public taste is a sin that may be seen most commonly in pre-Beethoven days - the Telemans, Kaisers etc., - while their less successful colleague in Leipzig remains a supreme exception of sincerity and profundity.

As with Mozart, Weber had an 'over-anxious regard for public opinion', which according to his son 'was one of his tenderest points'(8), and indeed letters to his wife are full of 'brilliant success', kings being 'deeply moved', unending applause etc., yet again as with Mozart they also show evidence of many other powerful stimuli to balance the scales. Weber suffered from the conflict of the two desires - to please and to be truthfully himself - and only resolved the dichotomy by writing in two styles. He saw his championing of German opera as an act of courage - (in Euryanthe) 'I have not attempted to fall down and worship before the spirit of the age'(9).

Beethoven is the opposite to Mozart in that, of the great composers, he had an overweight of the autonomous attitude, especially, of course, in the deaf period. Yet in 1796 he wrote to his youngest brother 'my art is winning me friends and renown, and what more do I want? And this time I shall make a good deal of money'(10). Twenty-nine years later he wrote of Op. 124 'I was given much praise and so forth for it. But what is that compared with the great composer above - above - above - and rightfully the All-Highest, seeing that here below composing is only ridiculed, the dwarfs being the all-highest'(11)!!!??? Thus he started a different man from the defiant individualist he became, with his lofty scorn of the public. In between these stages we find frequent references to the 'novelty' of his music which he considers a virtue not only musically but also commercially; this illustrates our point that autonomy should be seen as an evolution from (or sometimes reaction against) audience-regard, the desire for praise.

If Beethoven was the first to wish to be worshipped as a leader it was partly that he had a great awareness of, and contempt for, the public (not simply that he was absorbed in his leader's "message") and was even prepared to undergo his period of "quarantine" (12), as Chavez calls it, in order eventually to be all the more honoured: he would have approved of Schumann's attitude: 'The public must sometimes be imposed upon for it considers itself the composer's equal as soon as

things are made too easy for it. But if a composer from time to time throws a stone in its way, and even at its head, all will simultaneously duck, feel terror, and in the end loudly praise him'(13). There is something calculating about all this, yet this element must be admitted and even condoned, as we admit basic selfishness. The error we are correcting is the notion that since Beethoven composers are less aware of the effect of their music on others than previously. This is untrue because in both cases composers are supplying to a public demand - before Beethoven, to please with beauty, and after, to lead with a message of truth. The Wagner-type is unthinkable in the earlier period and would have been merely ridiculed. The only exception is Bach who served the truth yet could not lead in his own day, he has had to wait to our day for a time of spiritual leadership he probably never desired.

2.

Desire to Please

The desire to please, more philanthropic than the desire to impress, has frequently been expressed by composers from Mozart ('music ... must please the hearer ... never cease to be music'(1) i.e. music is by its very nature pleasing!) to Messaien ('It is a glittering music we seek, giving to the aural sense voluptuously refined pleasures'(2)). Indeed Dvorak claims that composers have a 'mission' to please. Copland felt something of this mission when he adopted a simpler style after the 'difficult', European works - 'It seemed to me that we composers were in danger of working in a vacuum. Moreover, an entirely new public for music had grown up around the radio and phonograph. It made no sense to ignore them and to continue writing as if they did not exist'(3). Hindemith was a born missionary and constantly pleaded against difficult music which drives away cultured people 'who simply are not always in the mood to solve intricate musical problems'(4). Likewise Haydn saw his art as a source of comfort to others: when daunted by weakness and obstacles, he said, 'a secret voice whispered to me: "There are so few happy and contented people here below: grief and sorrow are

always their lot: perhaps your labours will once be a source from which the care-worn, or the man burdened with affairs, can derive a few moments' rest and refreshment". This was a powerful motive to press onwards ...'(5) And later he wrote 'I esteem myself most fortunate that God gave me these little talents wherewith I can give satisfaction to the amateurs of music, the more so because ... I can benefit my neighbour the poor'(6). Haydn's age was characterised by its unprecedented pursuit of happiness, as witness some of the title-pages of the day: *Reflexions sur le Bonheur*, *Epitre sur le Bonheur*, *Sur la Vie Heureuse*, *Système du vrai Bonheur*, *Essai sur le Bonheur*, *Della felicità*, *L'arte di essere felici*, *Discorso sulla felicità*, *Die Glückseligkeit*, *Versuch über die Kunst stets frolich zu sein*, *Traite de la Societe civile et du moyen de se rendre heureux en contribuant au bonheur des personnes avec qui on vit*, *La felicità publica*, *Of National Felicity*, *Of Happiness*.

Here, without further introductions, are more attitudes falling within this category:

'From my earliest childhood my zeal to serve our poor suffering humanity in any way whatsoever by means of my art had made no compromise with any lower motive; (except) the feeling of inward happiness which always attends such actions'(Beethoven)(7).

'I wanted ... to build dwellings for men in which they might feel at home and happy'(Grieg).

'The existence of formalism in several of my compositions is probably explained by a certain complacency and by insufficiently clear recognition that it is totally unwanted by our people ... I should like to express my gratitude to our Party for the clear decisions of the resolution, which help me to find a musical language comprehensible to our people, worthy of our people and of our great country'(Prokofiev)(8).

'Only from the fellow-longing of others, and at last, of many, can spring the force to feed his (composer's) higher effort, his effort directed toward the Art-work

itself'(Wagner)(9).

There are many remarks of the supply and demand sort, of which the following are typical. Mozart writes recitatives in operas 'for recitatives are now very popular'(10).

Of Prince Nikolas Galitzin's enthusiasm for quartets, Beethoven wrote in 1824: 'What an incentive to promote the composition of such works'(11).

Haydn wrote: 'The general and undeserved success of my Creation so inspired my sixty-nine year old soul that I have dared to compose yet another one, The Seasons'(12).

'My maxims have been vindicated by success,' writes Gluck, 'and the universal approval expressed in such an enlightened city (Vienna) has convinced me that simplicity, truth and lack of affectation are the sole principles of beauty in all artistic creations'(13).

'I would be willing to set even a newspaper or a letter etc., to music, but in the theatre the public will stand for anything except boredom'(Verdi)(14).

Wagner writes that Rossini told him 'that the small intrinsic value of his works was not chargeable to his natural gift, but simply to his public'(15).

For 'an effective ending in opera ... a crowded stage and big ensembles make bad 'curtains' ... a solo or a love-duet, ending either with a jubilant fortissimo or with a poetical 'dying fall', pianissimo, gives the best results'. (R. Strauss to Hofmannsthal(16), typical of his constant discussion of 'effects' in these letters).

Honegger can tell what will please the audience in this way: 'When an unforeseen obstacle stops me ... I sit down in the listener's chair and say to myself: 'After having heard what goes before, what would I wish for which could give me, if not the shiver of genius, at least the impression of success'. What, logically,

ought to happen to satisfy me?", ... Bit by bit, following this method, my score is completed'(17). This process is applied fairly generally, it epitomises the action of public upon composer.

To put these two chapters (and that entitled Self-Delight) into their true perspective, I shall quote a sentence by Carlos Chavez: 'Dialogue and Monologue are the terms of the contradiction, the monologue of a first person speaking to himself, enjoying by himself whatever achievements are the fruit of his own creative abilities, enjoying the mere fact that, in accomplishing the creative act, his pregnancy has ended in a sense of realisation and self-satisfaction; and the dialogue of the creative artist - first person - with this public - second person - from which is derived the intense happiness of having something to say and being able to say it in a way convincing and agreeable to others'(18). The two terms will always be present, and always fructify each other in their subtle interplay.

3.

For Connoisseurs or Disciples

When a composer desires to be more truly himself and therefore original, he frequently has to abandon the vision of packed halls enjoying what he writes for a more intimate vision. Half-way to this attitude is Mozart's famous passage where he writes that some parts of his piano concertos are for the satisfaction of 'connoisseurs alone', yet 'the less learned cannot fail to be pleased, though without knowing why'(1). and he kept other compositions 'for a small circle of music-lovers and connoisseurs'(2). Conversely and significantly, a composer of our own age, Hindemith, has written the exact opposite and professes to slip in little bits for the non-connoisseur(3).

There are odd examples of compositions confessedly addressed to an elite, such as Strauss's Capriccio and Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments (for 'those

and requests strongly to be spoken to in a brief and straightforward language.' ... 'Mature people think in complexes, and the higher their intelligence the greater is the number of units with which they are familiar'(10). And Chavez says 'We like quietude, rest, easiness, on the ground of our passive leanings, and for that matter we like comfortable, repetitional patterns; but we also like, and need and strive for, the new and the unknown, as the incurable seekers of new truths we naturally are'(11).

This is to write for the intelligent few, but the music of such avant-garde composers as John Cage is written more for a philosophical school than for the most advanced musicians of the age. The almost oriental philosophy of which his music is an expression must first be understood or at least assented to before the music has any meaning. Cage's rejection of memory in music as being tantamount to a desire for possession (12) would be welcomed by us if we were Buddhist monks, and that is virtually what we must become before we can be the sort of audience he is aiming at, (if audience is the word, for there can be no communication in chance itself).

Undoubtedly behind all these attitudes is the overriding idea of the 'ideal audience' varying from composer to composer in its nature and manifesting itself in such ideas, as 'an intelligent elite' 'the emotionally sympathetic and receptive' or simply and rather sadly 'posterity'; but it may be said that it is for the ideal audience that the composer mostly writes, either consciously or unconsciously.

4.

One Person In Mind

It may be a single person the composer writes for, either to impress (as Mozart wrote the Serenade for wind K. 375 'rather carefully' to impress Herr von Strack(1), or Brahms wrote early works to impress Schumann(2), (Rimsky-Korsakov similarly with Balakirev (3)) or to please as for instance Mozart wrote one symphony in D Major especially to please his father(4) (it was Leopold's

favourite key), or Chopin wrote to his friend Tytus Wojcieckowski - 'my thoughts turn to you before every action: I don't know whether it is because with you I learned to feel but whenever I write anything, I want to know whether you like it ...'(5). Similarly with Liszt and Marie zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, for whom he wrote a lot of music: 'I shall go back to work on your Elizabeth ... - I want so much to do something for you - and though I am only good at doing useless things, the thought of you gives them a price beyond compare'(6).

Wagner, in his turn, found Liszt a sympathetic target for his endeavours, especially during The Ring's composition, 'Whenever I have news of you, I am filled with new desire to commence some large artistic work ... the music of my Siegfried vibrates through all my nerves'(7). 'While I am composing and scoring, I think only of you, how this and the other will please you; I am always dealing with you'(8). Liszt quite obviously had an enormous effect on Wagner, not only because he understood the Dionysian excitement of Wagner's art and realised that it was no use trying to change him, he must go his own supreme way. He was one of the few who qualified for what every composer desires and of whom Wagner wrote: 'To these individuals I must turn and ask them whether they love me ... sufficiently ... to make it possible for me ... to be myself'(9). Later King Ludwig, with his enthusiasm and his money, was another; Wagner wrote of him:

'Thou art the gentle Spring that leaf-bedecked me,
That filled each branch and twig with quickening
sap,
Thine was the call that out of darkness becked me,
Set free my powers from chill of Winter's lap'(10).

Without any of these encouraging, understanding one-man audiences, that state we have earlier called sterility might have rapidly set in.

Debussy wrote to Vasnier 'You know when I work how doubtful I am of myself. I need someone on whom I can count, to give me strength. When something of mine pleased you it gave me strength'(11). Janacek was one of the few composers who worked most of his life in a vacuum, even his pupils would suggest 'corrections' to him, but he persevered, and when at last encouragement came in 1916 with a performance of Jenufa, he started to compose prolifically: 'You cannot imagine what pleasure your

letter gave me (praising Jenufa), I feel as if I were living in a fairy-tale. I compose and compose as if something were urging me on. I no longer saw any worth in my work, and scarcely believed what I said ... I now feel that my life is beginning to have some purpose, and I believe in my mission. You have given me strength'(12).

5.

The Muse

The role of the muse is a more complex one. She is both the stimulus of the work and the audience at which it is directed. As the stimulus, she is closely aligned with archetypal woman, she is seen as something far more wonderful and other-worldly than she really is, she has the power to awaken the deepest layers of the unconscious and shake the man with inspiration. She must not make a false move or she will be Ideal no longer. It has been said of Baudelaire and Mlle. Sabatier that he asked for a muse and she gave him Mlle. Sabatier, though not for lack of persuasion on Baudelaire's part who made his wish plain, sending her hymns

'A l'ange, a l'idole immortelle,
Salut en l'immortalite'.

The greater Muses, like Petrarch's Laura and Dante's Beatrice, have been glimpsed by their adorers perhaps once in a lifetime, and consequently retained their ideality untarnished.

In music, muses are generally to be detected only through composers' letters. First there is the type which performs the music of the composer, she inspires his emotions and becomes the imagined vehicle of them, for instance Haydn and Frau von Genzinger, Schumann and Clara, Brahms and Clara, Weber and Caroline his wife(2), both of these latter two acted as imaginary critics in the composer's mind with imagined favour or disfavour, also Wagner and 'Der Schröder-Devrient', though it was her singing of other's music that fired Wagner with devotion ('for many a long year, down even to the present day (1851), I saw, I heard, I felt her near me when the impulse to artistic production seized me'(3)).

Then there is the less active muse who simply is and that is enough. For Gluck there was Madame de Vaines,

wife of a french state official about whom he asked a friend 'Has she still that beautiful Circassian head? I often see her in my mind's eye, when I am working and do not feel sufficiently inspired; she must contribute greatly to the success of my operas'(4). Tchaikovsky and the unseen Mme. von Meck are another example.

There is evidence of the influence of women in Beethoven's creative life, but in general this runs against the grain of Beethoven's metaphysical outlook, (he swore celibacy as a young man), and his contempt of feminine emotion generally. The only really relevant passage in his letters is a possibly spurious passage which is nevertheless characteristically idealising: he writes to Josephine: 'Oh, who can name you - and not feel that however much he could speak about you - that would never attain - to you - only in music'(5). The 'you' must obviously refer to something quite essential and Schopenhauerean.

One naturally thinks of Chopin as a muse-worshipper, that is part of the creed of romanticism - 'I ... have my own ideal (woman), which I have served faithfully, though silently, for half a year; of which I dream, to thoughts of which the adagio of my concerto belongs, and which this morning inspired the little waltz I am sending you'(6).

Similarly Estelle, his first and inaccessible love, became Berlioz's unseen muse and remained with him all his life; Harriet Smithson was also an ideal woman, but it was Shakespeare's Ophelia Berlioz married, not Harriet, and in later life he would look back over the wreck of their marriage to that archetypal image which had once inspired "Symphonie Fantastique".

Wagner and Mathilde we have already discussed in Chapter 27. Suffice it to quote these lines Wagner sent her, testimony to the idealisation of their relationship which was used to 'discover' Tristan und Isolde, which latter was used to heal and embalm their intolerable anguish and ecstasy:

'All is blissful
Beyond pain's reach.
Free and pure
Thine to eternity -
The anguish
And the renunciation
Of Tristan and Isolde
Their tears, their kisses
In music's sheer gold
I lay at thy feet.
That they may give praise to the
angel
Who has raised me so high'(7).

6.

Desire to Share

The composer's desire to share as an impulse of generosity, without any specific audience in mind, is another shade of statement within this category. Beethoven simply says on more than one occasion, that he wishes - 'to reveal myself'(1). Schumann says that if you receive a gift from above ... 'It is your duty to share it with others'(2), and in more homely language, 'this gift will not be like the alms passed on to the beggar; it will be the sharing of a man's every possession with his friend'(3), (Hindemith), and the Stravinsky attitude lies somewhere in between these two: 'How are we to keep from succumbing to the irresistible need of sharing with our fellow men that joy that we feel when we see come to light something that has taken form through our own action'(4)!

'Art is a means of communicating with people, not an aim in itself'(Moussorgsky)(5). Between this statement and Stravinsky's above, lies a distinction. Both wish to 'share' in music, but the former wishes to share music and the latter to share his ideas etc., through music. It is the old artificial distinction between the more and the less referential, 'the tempo and energy of our spiritual being' and Night on a Bare Mountain, for instance. To communicate with people, the composer must employ a public, not private, scale of values, and the harmonic series is the most 'public' one possible in music, it is rational and intelligible as an order to everyone. In 1722 Rameau criticized his contemporaries for their astonishment 'at their not making themselves understood (unlike men of

Zarlino's time) because of the lack of intelligible-making Reason'(6). Reason means law and order, though it need not be conscious law and order, 'Whatever (composers) tell you ... it is safe to assume that although a conscious desire for communication may not be in the forefront of their minds, every move towards logic and coherence in composing is in fact a move toward communication. It is only a slight step when a composer tries for coherence in terms of a particular audience'(Copland)(7).

Wagner, as usual, took all this much further. First he considered sharing music a matter of profound brotherhood - 'I cannot conceive the spirit of Music as aught but Love'(8). Second, he was personally deeply dependent on being understood and accepted (this drama is brought into actuality in the person of Lohengrin) and when he felt himself rejected he wrote nothing for ten years, believing he had come to an end. Third, he developed the first point, the loving Liaison between public demand and the composer's fulfilment of their demand, to the extent that - 'the Folk (das Volk) must of necessity be the artist of the future'(9), which is not so ideal and unrealistic as one might think when the second point is borne in mind.

7.

Desire to Ignore Audience

As a postscript we may add a few remarks concerning an awareness of, yet aloofness from, the audience. This is partly a reaction against the dangers of too great a desire to please. Verdi, who exhibited a great desire to please and capture his audience, reacted against the loss of naturalness that the same thing created in his fellow composers: 'the day will come when one will no longer talk of melody or of harmony nor of German or Italian schools nor of past or future etc., etc., etc., then perhaps will begin the reign of art ... All the works of these young people are the fruit of fear. No-one writes with abandon ...' (1).

Wagner, near the end of his life, wrote 'the less (the artist) thinks of (the Public), and devotes himself

entirely to his own work, as from the depths of his own soul there will arise for him an Ideal Public' - 'for him', words which testify to a sadness and tentative disillusion with his audience, of which he really hoped so much. All this he calls 'the Good in art' and he defines the Bad as 'the sheer aim-to-please'(2). The subjective Ideal Public is a more recent audience as we have seen above. The composer is 'uncertain for whom, exactly, he (is) writing his music'(3) consequently he postulates an inexact audience, or simply projects himself - 'I know of no other absolute in this matter (producer and consumer relationship) than the power of such creative energies as I possess' writes Tippett; 'my passion is to project into our mean world music which is rich and generous'(4). To project without knowing where or into what he projects is not the desire to be cut off from the audience, but, as always, the desire to be cut off from all but the ideal audience.

8.

Moral or Didactic Aim

'Art particularises and makes actual ... fluent emotional states. Because it particularises and because it makes actual it gives meaning to la condition humaine. If it gives meaning it necessarily has purpose. I would even add that it has moral purpose'(1). This latter opinion has always been held, from Plato to Shakespeare and ever since; recently it has been questioned, though never, I think, by any great composers.

Mozart thought of it as enlightening one another(2) and Haydn as heightening 'the sacred emotions in the heart of the listener, and to put him in a frame of mind where he is most susceptible to the kindness and Omnipotence of the Creator'(3); both referring to religious music. A few years later the romantics banish any division between secular and sacred in art, religion is no longer only Christian it includes anything spiritual. Schubert says his aims are 'dissolving (people) to love, ... lifting them up to God'(4), presumably referring to his compositions in general. Until his black old age Elgar was full of moral zeal in his work, and the thoughts that the violin

concerto was 'human and right'(5), that the optimistic philosophy in 'The Apostles' may do some good'(6), that 'great charity (love) and a massive hope in the future'(7) was clearly expressed in the First Symphony, must have spurred him on time and again.

Wagner would have agreed with Haydn in so far as he said music must put the listener into a frame of mind where he is most susceptible to divinity. It is almost as if music is, as Pousseur said, 'a certain manner of existing' (of p.57 Pt.I) man enters into a different plane of time, of values and of consciousness, there is an entry into the lower levels of the mind not normally occupied by the ego; the greater the 'possession' of the music, the deeper the level. Writing 'The Ring' Wagner had this in mind: 'with all his (listeners) powers refreshed and readily responsive, the first mystic sound of the unseen orchestra will attune him to that devotional feeling without which no genuine art-impression is so much as possible ... he will now revel in the easy exercise of a hitherto unknown faculty of Beholding filling him with a new sense of warmth, and kindling a light in which he grows aware of things whereof he never dreamt before'(8).

As such, music is a moral force, source of spiritual refreshment,, filling 'each sphere of Nature with new life, teaching redemption - starved Mankind a second speech in which the Infinite can voice itself with clearest definition'(9). A modern counterpart to this is Tippett's manifesto theme - 'If, in the music I write, I can create a world of sound where some, at least, of my generation can find refreshment for the inner life, then I am doing my work properly'(10). He feels mankind's thirst, as did Wagner, and endeavours to give it a little assuagement. Likewise Boulez ecstatically hails indeterminism as liberation from robotism 'in an oppressed creative universe weighed down by petty abuses of power'(11).

Hindemith divides man's approach to music into two attitudes which should be combined and balanced against each other. 1. That deriving from St. Augustine wherein 'music has to be converted into moral power. We receive its sounds

and forms , but they remain meaningless unless we include them in our own mental activity and use their fermenting quality to turn our souls towards everything noble, super-human, and ideal'(12). This is akin to the Apollonian attitude, and greater understanding, a wider grasp, are the goals to which it aspires. 2. That deriving from Boethius wherein 'music is a part of human nature; it has the power either to improve or to debase our character'(13). This is akin to the Dionysian attitude and lays stress on music's 'fermenting quality' entering into the unconscious levels, and music as an experience of heightened existence. The Augustinian attitude commends understanding and knowledge, the Boethian spirituality and experience.

Having instanced Boethian attitudes above, let us now turn to Augustinian ones.

Respighi heads his book 'Orpheus' with this quotation from Trismegistus - 'Musica nihil aliud est quam omnium ordinem scire'(14). That is the aim, but in order to know, one must be taught, and teacher or messenger is the role assumed by many composers. Chavez defines a great composer as 'one who has many things to teach others, things that were not known before'(15); and Schumann, as one who should 'shed light into the very depths of the human heart'(16). Schoenberg defines him as 'living only in order to deliver a message to mankind'(17); has he produced 'something which fills a gap in the knowledge and culture of mankind'(18)? he asks: that is the criterion. The didactic attitude exists by implication far more widely than one might expect. Is not Purcell's Letter 'To the Reader' prefatory to 'Sonata's of III Parts' just this? (The Author) has faithfully endeavoured a just imitation of the most famed Italian Masters; principally, to bring the seriousness and gravity of that sort of Musick into vogue and reputation among our Countrymen, whose humor, 'tis time now, should begin to loathe the levity, and balladry of our neighbours'.

The 'aim ... to raise the taste of the public' (one of Beethoven's)(19) is a more generalised didactic

one, but to ignore the moral aspect also present is blindness, as Wagner is at pains to make clear. 'Could an effeminate and frivolous taste remain without influence on a man's morality? Both go hand in hand and act reciprocally upon each other;' he goes on to refer to 'active and energetic' Beethoven and the 'rich and lordly do-nothings' who are Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti (20). Recently, too, composers have called for qualities involving not just the musical man, but the whole man. Berio, for instance, speaking of electronic music - 'onto this renewal of material and form - which is concerned with subjects of acoustical research ever more far-reaching - are added also our spiritual problems, this being the sign of a renewal of conscience (not only musical) in the individual'(21).

2.

Desire to Move Audience

The aim of moving an audience through music has been voiced more often when the music involved the use of words, or at any rate the use of a strongly suggestive title. The aim was prevalent throughout Baroque and rococo opera, and Gluck wrote in 1777 'As I regarded music not only as the art of entertaining the ear but also as one of the greatest means of moving and exciting the senses ... I turned my attention to the stage, I sought deep and strong expression ...'(1) - not just entertainment music but heart music. Berlioz gave this definition of music, 'the art of moving intelligent men, gifted with special and practised organs, by combinations of tones'(2), and Wagner, going back to the idea of primitive man expressing himself to his fellow through vocal sounds finds in music (vocal music, and instrumental in so far as it is an imitation of vocal) a direct appeal to feeling. 'Tone is the immediate utterance of feeling and has its seat within the heart, whence start and whither flow the waves of life-blood. Through the sense of hearing, tone urges forth from the feeling of one heart to the feeling of its fellow'(3). That is the important thing, the uplifting emotion

experienced by the audience at the time; and one must, he frequently reiterates, beware of sober reason which later picks holes. Therefore the audience must not be made to 'reflect' or made to ask 'why'; nothing must be left to the imagination, lesser art addresses the imagination, 'the true Artwork can only be engendered by an advance from imagination into actuality, i.e. Sinnlichkeit'(4). It is extraordinary that such as Mallarmé and other worshippers of understatement should have found a strong appeal in Wagner when we consider this particular aspect; symbolism they have in common, but understatement was foreign to Wagner.

This rather extreme statement of the emotional Dionysian approach Wagner brings into line with the teacherly attitude mentioned above (cf. p. 16), dubbing this communication-through-feeling 'a desirable enrichment of our emotional impressions, and therewith of our powers of emotion'(5).

Schoenberg in his essay on Mahler expressed the opinion that 'a work of art can produce no greater effect than when it transmits the emotions which raged in the creator to the listener in such a way that they also rage and storm in him'(6), and Hindemith says rather coolly, 'the listener cannot avoid having emotional reactions, the musician must not attempt to neglect them'(7). He goes on to show the composer calculating his emotional effects 'he knows by experience that certain patterns of tone-setting correspond with certain emotional reactions on the listener's part. Writing these patterns frequently and finding his observations confirmed, in anticipating the listener's reaction he believes himself to be in the same mental situation'(8). To hold such an opinion is not only to be over-aesthetic but in Hindemith's case to be self-contradictory, for it omits the Boethian element.

Beethoven's alleged opinion that one should not be emotionally stirred by music ('only suitable for women'(9)), that music should fire one's mind, is only recommending a different type of emotion. When one's

mind is fired one is both moved and actively understanding patterns and new syntheses, intellectual pleasure is an emotion. Wagner emphasised feeling because in his works one is preoccupied with meaning on a far less intangible plane, thanks to the words, yet despite their different attitudes there is no difference of kind between the musical prowess of a Beethoven symphony and a Wagner music-drama or between their spiritual meanings; both involve feeling and intellect but the mind is, perhaps arbitrarily, distracted by one aspect predominantly. Wagner uses the word understanding in two ways, thus spotlighting the argument 'if (the Artist) be answered in terms of the Understanding, then it is as good as said that he has not been understood'(10). Hans Keller's aphorism 'Intellectual music is emotional music we don't yet understand' sums up the emotion/understanding relationship neatly and no more need be said.

ESSENCE OF THE WORLD

10.

Introduction

In this section we will discuss the creative view that music depicts the essence of the world; its relationship with the heading 'The Composer and his Audience' will become apparent as we consider the Dionysian unity of the world of essences; the individual is lost in the universal, the composer mingles not only with his fellows but with all creation, he feels a mystic affinity and consequently his compositions are like invitations to a brotherhood, invitations to a level of mind where all is unified. This is not yet explicitly metaphysical, though in many philosophies it is quickly developed into the metaphysical, but in the present section the strictly metaphysical will play little part, the emphasis will be psychological, essences existing in the mind and the mind in the world, leaving the metaphysical to the next part, 'Ideal World'.

Wagner must act as guide here, as in his writings

this attitude is most profoundly and clearly stated; it is the core of his philosophy and because of it he has been called the most extreme Dionysian of all music.

'There are abnormal natures in which the ordinary measure of the organ of perception - that is, the brain - is exceeded ... This organ of perception, which originally and in normal cases looks outward for the purpose of satisfying the wants of the will of life, receives in the case of an abnormal development such vivid and such striking impressions from outside that for a time it emancipates itself from the service of the will, which originally had fashioned it for its own ends. It thus attains to a 'will-less' - i.e. aesthetic - contemplation of the world; and these external objects, contemplated apart from the will, are exactly the ideal images which the artist in a manner fixes and reproduces. The sympathy with the external world which is inherent in this contemplation is developed in powerful natures to a permanent forgetfulness of the original personal will, that is to a sympathy with external things for their own sake, and no longer in connection with any personal interest'(1). This was Schopenhauer's 'genius' with a superabundance of will and enabling men through his art to 'grasp the Essence-of-things in its most immediate manifestment, as it were to read the vision which the musician had himself beheld in deepest (metaphorical) sleep'(2).

The nature of 'essence' must be allowed to emerge in the course of these quotations, any definitive description at this stage is bound to be incomplete and so to mislead.

11.

Music The Essence Of Things

The composer must have two abilities; first he must be able to perceive essences and second he must be able to impart his perceptions through music. 'His natural poetic gift is the faculty of condensing into an inner image the phenomena presented to his senses

from outside; his artistic, that of projecting this image outwards'(1). 'Not life, but life's true fount is what he thirsts for'(2) and knows that other men thirst for it too. 'O imagination! thou greatest treasure of man ... thou inexhaustible well-spring from which artists as well as savants drink!'(3) writes Schubert, and the well or fount is a common image of spiritual refreshment; it is in many literatures linked with the holy grail as the source of spiritual perfection.

Rousseau describes the second ability as the art of 'substituting for the unconscious image of an object that of the movements which its presence arouses in the heart of the beholder'(4) which is the nearest any eighteenth-century composer came to a theory of essences - 'movements ... in the heart' of course suggesting rather a passionate than visionary reaction, though 'image of an object' suggests that the subjective reaction extends not only to beautiful women but to the entire world where essential perception is in visionary 'movements'.

We must remember here Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony - 'more feeling than tone-painting'(5) and this was a classic example of essential perception for Schumann, one can tell the depth of his sympathy for this aspect of Beethoven in his comments on the Pastoral Symphony: 'it was not a single, short spring day that inspired him to utter his cry of joy, but the dark comminglings of lofty songs above us ... the manifold voices of creation stirred with him'(6). Music, for Schumann, although it speaks of the essence of many things, objects, relationships, situations yet 'speaks the most universal of languages, that through which the soul finds itself inspired in a free, indefinite manner, and yet feels itself at home'(7) and by this he means the blood-brotherhood of men's souls at the level of essences, where there is perfect understanding between all.

Liszt praises music for its ability to communicate on this subrational level - '(its) supremacy lies in the pure flames of emotion that beat one against another from heart to heart without the aid of reflection' and he goes on to describe essential feeling by means of

analogy - 'just as the God of the Christians, after having revealed Himself to the chosen through signs and miracles, now shows Himself to them ... Only in music does feeling, actually and radiantly present, ... liberate us ... from 'the demon Thought', brushing away for brief moments his yoke from our furrowed brows'(8). Thinking of this and of Rousseau's remark we may quote Hegel's view that 'The special task of music is that, in presenting any content to the mind, it presents it ... in the way in which it becomes alive in the sphere of subjective inwardness'(9).

An essence is thus a deeply emotional impression; Berlioz calls his music 'passionate expression' by which he means exactly this - 'an expression that eagerly strives to reproduce the most inward meaning of the subject, even when the subject itself is foreign to passion ... (like) profound calm'(10). He instances Heaven in The Damnation of Faust, Sanctus in the Requiem, etc.

Wagner also: 'The Musician looks quite away from the incidents of ordinary life, entirely upheaves its details and its accidentals, and sublimates whatever lies within it to its quintessence of emotional content - to which alone can Music give a voice'(11), music expressing the pure will as Schopenhauer would say. Likewise Busoni held that opera should create a concentrated, essential, 'pretence world ... presenting consciously that which is not to be found in real life'(12).

In his essay 'The relationship to the text' Schoenberg quotes Schopenhauer with approval 'The composer reveals the inmost essence of the world and utters the most profound wisdom in a language which reason does not understand'(13) etc.; he defends the purity of non-referential music and warns against adding 'programmes' on these grounds. As a quite different type of composer, probably ignorant of Schopenhauer and Wagner, wrote - 'it is these great patterns in sound ... which ... enable us to understand what is beyond the appearances of life'(14). The essence is superior to, more real than, the appearance, it is the world more

truly perceived.

To take this a little further is to get back to the attitude that 'art is ... a discovery of reality' ... 'something entirely new beyond what can be called the composer's feelings'(15)(Stravinsky). The discovery of yet unrevealed truth is not made and then subsequently put into music, rather is the discovery simultaneous with the crystallization into music. In other words, an essence is something strong but vague and cannot really be recognised until it is in a concrete form such as music. 'The Spirit of Music' as in Nietzsche's famous book, is what crystallises these vague essential feelings, helps us to believe in their reality, and thus gives birth to the 'tragic' outlook and identification with the world of essences. (Wagner read the book every morning before breakfast to get himself into the right frame of mind when working on *Götterdämmerung*).

Wagner found the spirit of music finally crystallised the essences that were only vaguely formulated in his Siegfried libretto - 'Curiously enough, it is only during composition that the real essence of my poem is revealed to me. Everywhere I discover secrets which had been previously hidden from me, and everything in consequence grows more passionate, more impulsive'(16).

It is an essence which is referred to in such statements as this: Craft asks Stravinsky 'The musical idea, when do you recognise it as an idea?' to which he replies 'When something in my nature is satisfied by some aspect of an auditive shape'(17). The essence is too vague to be recognised as more than a 'something in my nature' to which certain sounds mysteriously correspond.

12.

Art A Reflection of Life

This section differs from the ones on stimuli in that it is life as such that is discussed, on a deep, essential level, rather than specific aspects of life. Wagner may be permitted to set the tone with this striking

image: 'The dramatic Action (the music-drama of the future) is ... the bough from the Tree of Life which, sprung therefrom by an unconscious instinct, has blossomed and shed its fruit obediently to vital laws, and, now dissevered from the stem, is planted in the soil of Art; there in new, more beautiful, eternal life, to grow into the spreading tree which resembles fully in its inner, necessary force and truth the parent tree of actual life ... its objectification' (1).

'Art is subject to the selfsame laws as ever-changing life'(2), wrote Strauss; this has been taken quite literally by some modern composers, looking for new laws to replace the old; for example, Messaien, who takes the rhythm of the seasons, the form of the snow-flake and the structure of bird-song as his law-givers'(3). To some it is a reflection of patterns of Nature, to others 'its natural calling is to bear witness to the civilisation of an age and of a people'(Strauss)(4), to all it is a reflection of Life as it appears to man, a mixture of changing needs and fashions and unchanging forms and patterns. 'The art of music demonstrates man's ability to transmute the substance of his everyday experience into a body of sound ... Thus the greatest moments of the human spirit may be deduced from the greatest moments in music'(Copland)(5).

Berlioz writes to Wagner that unlike him he cannot be directly inspired by nature and real life: it is too all-absorbing - 'I only feel. I can but describe the moon from her reflection at the bottom of a well'(6). Similarly Rossini cannot compose on the materialistic level, 'all (must be) ideal and expressive, never imitative as certain materialistic thinkers have it'(7). Busoni defined music as 'Nature mirrored by and reflected from the human breast; for it is sounding air and floats above and beyond the air; within Man himself as universally and absolutely as in Creation entire'(8). Music is humanised, or idealised, Nature and therefore the essence of Nature.

There are also those (like Messaien, and many others old and new) who reflect life in a more directly imitative way, it has not been sifted though the ideal

('to imitate nature is the ... aim' Gluck(9)). Janacek is a good example; he said 'I do not play about with empty melodies. I dip them in life and nature'(10); his theories on the imitation of speech make him an extremist in this category (cf. p. 38 Pt.I). The electronic theories of Pousseur and others give the subject of the reflection of life a new aspect. Pousseur decries the ideal world, because 'the return to everyday life ... can only leave in its wake regrets, an acute nostalgia for the vanished, perfection, an invincible disgust for ordinary life. The new language, on the contrary, accepts our condition as it is, places itself at the centre of life, at the centre of the most specific human activity, that of creative work, which raises the riches of nature to the level of enlightened consciousness. Art is no longer cut off from life'(11). Many of these writers write with a glowing humanistic fervour; human happiness, freedom and fulfilment have become for them a part of music. Again, 'Man continues nature ... imitating and working as it does, transmitting the breath of life to the forms he imagines. Art is a new nature, situated on a higher plane than existence, but the laws which govern it are not new laws'(12).

13.

Communion With Race

The 'healthy desire in every artist to find his deepest feelings reflected in his fellowman'(1) as Copland has put it, is nowhere more paramount than in nationalistic music. Nationalistic music aims to express not the ideal world, the metaphysical psychic area, nor the purely-human psychic area which is common to all humans, but the equally strong racial sympathies which are an extension of family sympathies to one's fellow-countrymen with whom one will share the artistic communion of the music, and beyond them to the past of the country, its dead, its traditions and its culture and to the very earth itself. Chopin always carried a little silver box of Polish earth with him and in the same way he valued Polish national music in his exile and tried to gain refreshment from it; 'I have longed to feel our national music, and to some extent have

succeeded in feeling it'(2). Perhaps happy childhood with its unity of being, lured his longings towards Poland, yet more probably it was atavism, a desire to identify himself with Polishness, to commingle with Polish blood and earth.

Similarly many of the great nationalist composers sought to immerse themselves in the 'character' of folk music to the extent that (as Bartok recommends) the composer 'is able to forget all about it and use it as his musical mother-tongue'(3). In other, more Jungian words, the old mother-earth archetype is contemplated and reactivated until she can carry the conscious mind swirling through vivid expression after vivid expression by means of her own language, the essence of the racial past. Smetana, for instance, took a pride in the fact that he was a thoroughly Czech musician who only used folk-tunes for special purposes, yet his music sounded like Czech folk-music in idiom(4).

Tchaikovsky used Russian tunes with and without intent, he said, in any case he was 'drenched from earliest childhood with the wonderful beauty of Russian popular songs'. He continues, 'I am therefore passionately devoted to every expression of the Russian spirit. In brief, I am a Russian through and through'(5).

Rimsky-Korsakov used folk-tunes quite often, and as an example we may take a single work, Snyegurochka, in which he drew heavily from his own Collection. He wrote of this work 'in obedience to my pantheistic frame of mind I had hearkened to the voices of folk-creation and of nature (viz. bird-calls), and what they had sung and suggested I made the basis of my creative art'(6). 'My warmth towards ancient Russian custom and pagan pantheism, which had manifested itself little by little, now blazed forth in a bright flame. Immediately on reading it there began to come into my mind motives, themes, chord-passages, and there began to glimmer before me fleetingly at first, but more and more clearly later, the words and clang tints corresponding to the various moments of the subject. ... everything was somehow in peculiar harmony with my pantheistic frame of mind'(7). And he goes on,

in a passage already quoted under 'Absorption', to describe how every stump of wood appeared a demon, every echo the voice of a wood-sprite and so on. Folk-music here signifies a mingling with the deepest levels of the Russian communal soul, and this professed atheist found in statism (or unitive symbols as Laski would call them) the depths which gave his art excitement and mystery. Pantheism is, in its simplest form, the religion which informs all nationalistic art because in pantheism man is equal to and united with matter, if not in divinity, at least in wonder and magic. Man wishes to lose his individuality and become submerged in his kinship with the earth or more particularly the motherland. Wagner was a great nationalist, especially when away from Germany, though it was the profundity of his own German soul (evoked by German myth and culture) that he revered rather than the Germany he found outside his own front door. Tannhäuser was a legend about Home (Heimath) for the exiled Wagner, and on another level Tannhäuser's longing for the 'redeeming Woman ... here found expression in the idea: one's Native Home'(8). (Hence Wagner's idea of the German Jews as rootless parasites and unnatural imitators). 'This figure (Tannhäuser) sprang from my inmost heart ... the eye of the Folk has plunged it into its inner soul, and given it the artistic mould of Myth'(9), in other words the bare feeling has been clothed in the garments of a story. Writing Tannhäuser he said 'already I lived entirely in the longed-for, now soon to be entered, world of Home'(10).

However, when he got back, whatever he expected from Germany was far too ideal for real life: 'This Home, in its actual reality, could nowise satisfy my longing; thus I felt that a deeper instinct lay behind my impulse, and one that needs must have its source in some other yearning than merely for the modern homeland. As though to get down to its root, I sank myself in the primal element of Home that meets us in the legends of a past which attracts us more warmly as the Present repels us with its hostile chill'(11). The result was The Ring.

Let us take another example, from the nationalistic movement proper, Vaughan-Williams. In his writings he passionately extolled the Race Memory; it is more

important than a study of Bach or Beethoven. It epitomises the desired naturalness (in the Wagnerian sense) of music. 'Integration and love ... are the two key words'(12) - here we have the natural absorption of the mother-language and the brotherhood it implies. 'One day perhaps we shall find an ideal music which will be neither popular nor classical, highbrow or lowbrow, but an art in which all can take part'(13). This sentiment, like Wagner's 'Das Volk must of necessity be the artist of the future', expresses the hope for a brotherhood in which our deep-down similarities are emphasised and surface-level differences forgotten. But society, as Ortega y Gasset has said, will always and obstinately divide itself into the illustrious and the vulgar, childhood is the only exception on this earth. In this sense the artist's generous and idealistic propagation of brotherhood is a childlike action, and we have already discussed what regression has to do with aesthetic experience.

The continuing significance of a past culture for a man, its magically inherited presence is beautifully testified to by Bloch in this passage: 'It is ... the Hebrew spirit which interests me, the complex, ardent, restless, spirit which I feel pulsating through the Bible, the freshness and ingenuousness of the Patriarchs, the violence of the books of the Prophets, the fierce love of the Hebrews for justice, the despair in the book of Ecclesiastes, the sorrow and grandeur of the book of Job, the sensuality of the Song of Songs. All this resides in us, all this resides in me, is the best part of me. And this is what I try to feel within me and to translate into my music: the holy fervour of my race which is latent in our soul'(14). And Debussy went still further in observing a certain lack of freedom and individuality in himself, as if he were just part of a vast machine - 'our souls are inherited from a mass of unknown people who seem from afar to exercise a strange influence on our actions'(15); Wagner recommends this - 'We shall not win hope and nerve until we bend our ear to the heart-beat of history, and catch the sound of that sempiternal vein of living waters, which however buried under the waste-heap of historic civilisation, yet pulses on in all its pristine freshness'(16).

The nationalistic movement, only now dying out, was not a sudden desire for brotherhood. That was really only half the picture. The attraction of the new composer-audience relationship came after the realisation that here in folk-music was a new psychic territory to be explored; that was the exciting new discovery both musically, for tonality was beginning to become stale as a structural foundation, and also psychologically, as this territory was a 'hitherto unexploited' (as Grieg often enthusiastically repeated) element, a new depth of mind. With the depth of mind went the communication on a deep instinctive level, with all its Dionysian connotations. Why this movement was new, and what its profound psychological differences from the classical era were will be perfectly grasped by a cursory glance at Beethoven's harmonisation of Scottish folk-songs.

14.

Commingle With The World

From the brotherhood of racial instincts we move to the brotherhood of human instincts. 'Music is a cry of the soul ... Performances of a great musical work are for us what the rites and festivals of religion were for the ancients - an initiation into the mysteries of the human soul'(Delius)(1). Note the sense of religious awe which surrounds the depths of the psyche and their uncovering. 'The Matter of what the Word-Tone poet has to utter,' wrote Wagner, 'is the Purely-human (Reinmenschliche), freed from every shackle of convention' (2). Although this matter is the content of all his music, Wagner brought it to its conscious representation in the figure of Siegfried, 'the real naked Man, in whom I might spy each throbbing of his pulses, each stir within his mighty muscles in uncramped, freest motion: the type of the true human being'(3). In other words the epitome of what all humans have in common, natural and without distortion or superfluity.

Wagner considers his many mythical gods profound projections of human nature 'Who had taught men that a God could burn with a love toward an earthly Woman? For

certain only Man himself ... who, however high the object of his yearning may soar above the limits of his earthly want, can only stamp it with the imprint of his human nature'(4).

The profundity of the heart is his subject, a profundity which, like the Jungian sea-bed, connects everything in unity; it is the orchestra's job to portray this: 'The Orchestra is, so to speak, the loam (Boden) of endless, universal Feeling, from which the individual feeling of the separate actor draws power to shoot aloft to fullest height of growth: it dissolves the hard, immobile ground of the actual scene into a fluid, elastic, impressionable aether, whose unmeasured bottom is the great sea of Feeling itself.' Debussy evinces the same attitude in his emphasis on feeling and objectivity and self-abnegation, he aligns himself with universal feeling.

This indivisible Feeling is to be found in Mahler's aesthetic: 'I know that so long as I can sum up any experience in words, I can certainly not create music about it. My need to express myself in music symphonically begins precisely where dark feelings hold sway, at the gate which leads into the 'other world', the world in which things no longer are divided by time and space'(6). Wagner speaks of a similar 'other world' - 'it is this inner life through which we are directly allied with the whole of Nature, and thus are brought into a relation with the Essence of things that eludes the forms of outer knowledge, Time and Space'(7).

The Dionysian brotherhood with all creation reaches its all-time peak in Wagner's Beethoven Essay: in music 'the will feels one forthwith, above all bounds of individuality; for Hearing has opened it the gate through which the world thrusts home to it, it to the world ... the will perceives itself the almighty Will of all things: it has not mutely to yield place to contemplation (like the Apollonian plastic arts), but proclaims itself aloud as conscious World - Idea. One state surpasses his, and one alone, - the Saint's, and chiefly through its permanence and imperturbability; whereas the clairvoyant ecstasy of the musician has to

alternate with a perpetually recurrent state of individual consciousness, which we must account the more distressful the higher has his inspiration carried him above all bounds of individuality'(8).

The will, then, has a temporary experience of complete brotherhood with the world, 'beyond the bounds of time and space, it knows itself the world's both One and All'(9).

There is only one other composer who wrote in extreme Dionysian terms, Scriabin: 'I will to live. I love life. I am God. I am nothing. I wish to be everything. I have engendered that which is opposite to me - time, space and number. I myself am that which is opposite to me, because I am only that which I engender ... I will to be God ... The world, I am the search for God, because I am only that which I seek'(10). (This is music's equivalent of Schopenhauer's apostate follower, Nietzsche).

'Wir sind nichts; was wir suchen ist alles'
(Hölderlin).

'My me is God: nor do I know my selfhood except in God' (St. Catherine of Genoa, the attitude of Christian mysticism)(11).

'I must create in order to know myself, and since self-knowledge is a never-ending search, each new work is only a part-answer to the question "Who am I?" and brings with it the need to go on to other and different part-answers'(Copland)(12).

In other words, narrow individuality is nothing, but the deep, larger self which is in contact with the whole world, like Jung's sea-bed, is what we seek for - it is what, at heart, we are. We find it, in life as in composition, by the simple process of experiencing satisfaction or dissatisfaction: just as a composer is satisfied with a discovery for no completely definable reason, so in life something harmonises with our souls and causes us satisfaction.

Beethoven was more an Apollonian by nature,

but he will serve to illustrate this principle just as well as his opposite type. Everyone who visited him in his maturity noticed two elements in his character - his coarseness and abruptness and his transcendental idealism, his famous 'Blick nach oben'. He projected them into the world in the forms of the vulgar, coarse 'dwarfs' he saw all round him in Vienna and the ideal, good and noble people he postulates and writes for, yet never seems to meet in actuality. 'Believe me when I say that my supreme aim is that my art should be welcomed by the noblest and most cultured people. Unfortunately we are dragged down from the supernatural element in art only too rudely into the earthly and human sides of life'(13). As his mysticism deepened, these people he wrote for became less and less real, the brotherhood he sought became more and more a larger self and the real people around him more and more vulgar and unimportant. What he sought became increasingly himself, or rather, consciously himself, the 'schöner Götterfunken' within. His narrow individuality became increasingly irksome to him, for no human being bar the saint can detach himself completely from its exigencies, and Beethoven's efforts were directed towards the perfection of his art, he had no energies left for himself: his body was awkwardly left behind:

'The intellect of man is forced to choose
Perfection of the life, or of the work,
And if it take the second must refuse
A heavenly mansion, raging in the dark'.

Or, as Beethoven's greatest contemporary wrote in 1818, 'that pure, true and deep knowledge of the inner nature of the world becomes ... for him (the artist) an end in itself: he stops there. Therefore it does not become to him a quieter of the will, as ... it does in the case of the saint who has attained to resignation; it does not deliver him for ever from life, but only at moments, and is therefore not for him a path out of life, but only an occasional consolation in it.' The larger self is not something we may discuss further. All that can be said about it has been said many times in many religions and philosophies: its nature is vague, but well-known, especially to artists.

In all this discussion about mingling and brotherhood, it is perhaps surprising that the word

'love' has not yet been mentioned. The desire for unity is an expression of love. 'Eros ... aims at binding together single human individuals, then families, tribes, races, nations, into one great unity, that of humanity. Why this has to be done we do not know; it is simply the work of Eros. These masses of men must be bound to one another libidinally; necessity alone, the advantages of common work, would not hold them together'(14). Freud's division of all instinct into Eros and Death instincts emphasises the profound nature and importance of our composers' urge to commingle, it represents exactly half of his basic make-up. 'For music is truly love itself ... and while it is understood at one and the same time by a thousand different people, it contains but one basic truth'(Weber)(15). Lohengrin, for Wagner, symbolised 'one who, from the midst of lonely splendour, is athirst for being understood through Love'(16), for being accepted for what he is (the thirst of every revolutionary artist). 'Elsa ... was the Spirit of the Folk, for whose redeeming hand I too, as artist-man, was longing'(17). When the artist loves the world and the world loves the artist (on the artistic level) all is love, and characteristically Wagner abstracts the principle as the be-all of the artist's activity: 'The artist ... yields himself, not to a love for this or that particular object, but to Love itself. Thus does the egoist become a communist, the unit all, the man God ...'(18). Or in twentieth century terms: 'Egoism brings concentration, for concentration implies loneliness; but loneliness brings about the urge to communicate with others, and egoism then dissolves into altruism. By himself becoming "all things", the artist synthesizes, gives shape to new art forms, and thus attains communication with his fellow men'(Chavez)(19).

The use of legend and myth, though it might have been mentioned under 'Stimuli to Composition' is really an assertion of human brotherhood. Its strange, vice-like grip on its partakers, both creative and receptive, has already been noted - 'the creative artist ... knows he has become the instrument of some collective imaginative experience - or, as Wagner put it, that a Myth is coming once more to life. I know that, for me, so soon as this thing starts, I am held willy-nilly and cannot

turn back ...'(20) 'the more collective an artistic imaginative experience is going to be, the more the discovery of suitable material is involuntary'(Tippett)(21). 'through the legendary tone, the mind is forthwith placed in that dream-like state wherein it presently shall come to full clairvoyance, and thus perceive a new coherence in the world's phenomena'(Wagner)(22). This is the Dionysian level of universal brotherhood.

This same level of the psyche attracted Rimsky-Korsakov when he wrote of 'The pictures of the ancient pagan period and spirit loomed before me, as it then seemed, with great clarity, luring me on with the charm of antiquity. These occupations subsequently had a great influence in the direction of my own activity as composer'(23).

The belief in fundamental patterns existing in all humanity includes, of course, the above-mentioned archetypal humans, 'the purely-human' of which every hero in opera must partake to be sympathetic. Once again Wagner is the one who speaks most clearly of what I believe to be common to all composers; for instance, of the figure of the Flying Dutchman he wrote '(it) is a mythical creation of the Folk: a primal trait of human nature speaks out from it with heart-enthraling force'(24). And of Lohengrin 'this power gathered fresh force to itself ... chiefly by reason that I learnt to know the myth of Lohengrin in its simpler traits, and alike in its deeper meaning, as the genuine poem of the Folk ... After I had thus seen it as a noble poem of man's yearning - by no means merely seeded from the Christian's bent toward supernaturalism, but from the truest depths of universal human nature, - this figure became ever more endeared to me, and even stronger grew the urgency to adopt it and thus give utterance to my own internal longings: ... it became a dominating need, which thrust back each alien effort to withdraw myself from its despotic mastery'(25). Similar examples may be found from the other music-dramas.

Nietzsche wrote more clearly than anyone in 'The Birth of Tragedy' of the Dionysian force of myth-plus-music. 'Dionysian art (music) is wont to exercise two kinds of influences on the Apollonian art-faculty:

music firstly incites to the symbolic intuition of Dionysian universality, and secondly, it causes the symbolic image to stand forth in its fullest significance. From these facts ... I infer the capacity of music to give birth to myth ... the myth which speaks of Dionysian knowledge in symbols.' He goes on, 'Dionysian art seeks to convince us of the eternal joy of existence ... We are to perceive how all that comes into being must be ready for a sorrowful end; we are compelled to look into the terrors of individual existence ... We are really for brief moments Primordial Being itself, and feel its indomitable desire for being and joy in existence; the struggle, the pain, the destruction of phenomena, now appear to us as something necessary, considering the surplus of innumerable forms of existence which throng and push one another into life, considering the exuberant fertility of the universal will. We are pierced by the maddening sting of these pains at the very moment when we have become, as it were, one with the immeasurable primordial joy in existence, and when we anticipate, in Dionysian ecstasy, the indestructibility and eternity of this joy. In spite of fear and pity, we are the happy living beings, not as individuals, but as the one living being, with whose procreative joy we are blended'(26). I think it was above all Nietzsche who gave Schoenberg and Stravinsky the Apollo-Dionysus terminology they found so significant.

Notes

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24 Prose Works, Vol. I, A Communication to my Friends, p. 307.

25 Ibid., p.333.

26 Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, 1868. (Complete Works Vol. I, pp. 126-8).

Part III

THE COMPOSER AND THE IDEAL

1.

Formal Order

We must begin our survey of composers' attitudes to the Ideal with a preliminary survey of the simple attraction of order without any readily apparent metaphysical implications.

Gluck wrote to Marie-Antoinette in a dedication: 'The genre I am trying to introduce seems to me to restore to art its original dignity. The music will no longer be confined to the cold, conventional beauties to which composers have been obliged to adhere'(1). Stravinsky writes 'do we not, in truth, ask the impossible of music when we expect it to express feelings, to translate dramatic situations, even to imitate Nature'(2)? These two attitudes represent the familiar situation from which we shall start. The argument is eternal, neither side is right or wrong. Gluck sometimes wrote over-dramatic music and Stravinsky sometimes wrote too self-consciously unified music. Both were reacting. Haydn implies the more usual middle course in bringing together the concepts of beauty, science and freedom: 'The free arts and the beautiful science of composition will not tolerate technical chains. The mind and soul must be free'(3).

Haydn's statement supplies a norm from which we will now depart in quoting statements that emphasise one part of the creative picture at the expense of others. Science - knowledge - is one such part, emphasised by Hindemith here: 'Musica est scientia bene modulandi ... Once you lose this firm stand on solid ground, music loses its characteristics as an artistic manifestation, it becomes an individualistic vagary and as such has no validity except for the composer himself and his bewitched devotees. The scientia of music gives us a firm stand'(4). The first reason for the curtailment of freedom, then, is efficient communication. 'Contemporary' composers, as we have already quoted Rameau saying, are 'astonished ... at their not making themselves understood' because of their lack of intelligible-making Reason.

The second reason is that 'strength is born of constraint and dies in freedom' (Stravinsky)(5), by which he means that limitations ensure unity and therefore communication and the composer can then without further scruples

abandon himself to his imagination - 'the more art is controlled, limited, worked over, the more it is free'(6). One remembers Webern's Eureka cry when he felt serialism had limited and therefore ordered, the chaos of possibilities resulting from the dissolution of tonality. 'Adherence is strict, often burdensome but it is salvation'(7).

'It is the distinguishing characteristic of the artist ... that he sets himself new problems continually and looks for his satisfaction in the solution of them'(Busoni)(8); 'the artist's discipline is a mature discipline because it is self-imposed, acting as a stimulus to the creative mind' (Copland)(9). 'In the act of composition I have - especially since I reached maturity - been much more concerned with the solution of musical problems than with the description of this or that personal emotion '(Casella)(10). 'I am particularly desirous that there should be no misunderstanding as to my Bolero. It is an experiment in a very special and limited direction'(Ravel)(11).

Beethoven wrote of a coach accident he had 'Yet I felt to a certain extent the pleasure I always feel when I have overcome some difficulty successfully' and as if the writing of this external incident immediately suggested the profound workings of his own mind he continues 'Well, let me turn quickly from outer to inner experiences...'(12). Stravinsky is the most explicit example of this type: 'I am by nature always tempted by anything needing prolonged effort, and prone to persist in overcoming difficulties'(13). I can experience this feeling of pleasure in the very process of work, and in looking forward to the joy which any find or discovery may bring. And I admit that I am not sorry that this should have been so, because perfect facility would, of necessity, have diminished my eagerness in striving, and the satisfaction of having 'found' would not have been complete'(14). 'All creation presupposes at its origin a sort of appetite that is brought on by the foretaste of discovery. This foretaste ... accompanies the intuitive grasp of an unknown entity already possessed but not yet intelligible, an entity that will not take shape except by the action of a constantly vigilant technique'(15). The necessity of this process to Stravinsky is emphasised in this statement 'should my work suddenly be given to me in a perfectly complete form, I

should be embarrassed and nonplussed by it, as by a hoax'(16). Thus problems to be solved are a stimulus to the creative mind by way of being a challenge to it, and they are deliberately sought because freedom not curtailed is unbearable chaos.

Quite apart from order being seen as an antidote to what would otherwise be unbearable chaos, it is often seen as fascinating in itself, it is as alluring to composers as any of the other stimuli we have mentioned. Both Mozart and Beethoven write letters (the former to his cousin, the latter to Nikolaus Zmeskall) which lapse into pure word-pattern without discursive meaning. Their minds were constantly cogitating upon forms of repetition and symmetry, and these preoccupations must have manifested themselves in all sorts of activities, Mozart's billiards, Beethoven's observation of Nature, and so on. The fascination of Nature's forms for Messaien and others has already been noted. Here is an example of Stravinsky's fascination for form, in which the final phrase is particularly interesting for the understanding of his attitude: 'The fifth movement (of 'Movements'), for instance (which cost me a gigantic effort I rewrote it twice), uses a construction of twelve verticals. Five orders are rotated instead of four, with six alternatives for each of the five, while at the same time the six 'work' in all directions, as though through a crystal'(17). He also quotes a mathematician whose statement applies to music 'more precisely than any statement I have seen by a musician' - 'Mathematics are the result of mysterious powers which no one understands, and in which the unconscious recognition of beauty must play an important part. Out of an infinity of designs a mathematician chooses one pattern for beauty's sake and pulls it down to earth'(18). Stravinsky writes later 'The composer works through a perceptual, not a conceptual, process. He perceives, he selects, he combines ... All he knows or cares about is his apprehension of the contour of the form, for the form is everything'(19). As Arthur Koestler has gone to great lengths to show in his recent book, many of the greatest scientific discoveries have been made through selection by beauty rather than discovery by logic - a sort of noble tidiness was the cause of the scientist's arrival at the truth. That this tidiness is not only noble to man's mind but frequently mystical is apparent from a

study of the Pythagorean tradition of Ideal mathematics (having connections with all life and relating the macrocosmic symbol of the universe, the decade, to the microcosmic symbol of man, the pentacle union of 3 and 2 manifested concretely in architecture and music). Men of our century also have been fascinated by numbers to this extent, for instance Le Corbusier, Mondrian, Yeats - and perhaps also Schoenberg ... for instance in his essay 'Brahms the Progressive' he notices the correspondence between Brahms's birth 1833, Wagner's death 1883 and the date of his essay 1933 and asks 'Does not the mystic correspondence of the numbers of their dates suggest some mysterious relationship between them'(20)? In later life he was so superstitious of the number thirteen that he numbered bars 12, 12a, 14 (cf. Violin Fantasia), and on his deathbed at 76, he awoke at eleven o'clock one night, asked the date, was told that it was Friday the thirteenth, and before midnight he was dead. But here we are straying into mystical territory. The point we are emphasising is that numbers and proportion hold an invincible fascination for man and in music 'the mental pleasures caused by structural beauty can be tantamount to the pleasure deriving from emotional qualities'(Schoenberg)(21). And this pleasure, this 'desire to know, to comprehend must incite, inspire and drench every phase of (the composer's) work ...'(Hindemith)(22). Beethoven apparently favoured the term artistic for the description of that attitude which combined feeling and intellect with which one must approach music (23).

Affinities are seen in the outside world to these fascinating proportions, making for a closely justified connection between the concrete and the abstract, yet as in Plato's theory, the abstract is not abstracted or distilled from the concrete, it has an independent existence - the concrete is its manifestation. 'Nature is founded on Art and, again, Art is founded on Nature'(24). Beethoven wrote with reference to a harmonic process he was explaining to Prince Galitzin 'A system of tonal ... centres is given us solely for the purpose of achieving a certain order ... (or) form' writes Stravinsky (25), he notes that the ingredients for order are already latent in nature, it is up to the artist to concoct with them the real order in which they are made articulate. Wagner, curiously, agrees: 'holy

glorious Art, the daughter of the noblest Manhood (will) blossom in like fulness and perfection with Mother Nature, the conditions of whose now completed harmony of form have issued from the birth-pangs of the elements'(26). Liszt sees a continuous hierarchy of development from nature through man to art: 'Art, proceeding from man as he himself proceeds, it appears, from nature, man's masterpiece as he himself is nature's masterpiece'(27). Chavez calls this a projection of man, the throwing out of something like man, modelled to perfection as Nature has modelled him to perfection: 'Creation of form results from ... not so much the need for communication as ... the impulse to project our ego.... we live in a universe of creation, and we ourselves want to be able to create in our turn too; we ourselves have a given form and we want to give birth to creatures of a given shape, also'(28). The affinity of music with the world was very much in the front of Busoni's consciousness, 'Music is part of the vibrating universe'(29). (Cf. Pt II. p. 25).

These beautiful Forms (or Platonic Ideas) which are manifested in earthly things and which the composer tries to capture in a purer form in his music have an absolute and timeless value, as opposed to the 'language of music' which changes continually and eventually is out of date and, strictly speaking, incomprehensible. Busoni words the distinction thus 'there is an absolute, demonstrable beauty and perfection and there are things that please certain people at certain times and will be looked upon as beautiful by them' (30), and proceeds to extol the former and hastily condemn the latter (the opposite of Wagner, with his condemnation of the 'Monumental'.) As Chavez says 'archetype forms are for us beautiful in themselves. (That is why they are archetypes)')(31), and they remain so always, and so some composers have considered it a more worthy task to concentrate on the eternal elements of music with their Apollonian, Platonic, beyond-passion connotations than on the fluctuating elements with their Dionysian, Heraclitean, passionate connotations, though neither side may be entirely separated from the other. For Richard Strauss, ideal music was Mozart, and though in this passage he is not talking of his own aims we may take it that they are something fairly similar: 'Untrammelled by any mundane Form, the Mozartian melody is the 'Ding an sich.' It hovers like Plato's Eros between

heaven and earth, between mortality and immortality - set free from 'the Will' - it is the deepest penetration of artistic fancy and of the subconscious into the innermost secrets, into the realm of the 'prototypes.' (32). But here, again, we are straying into the metaphysical. A bad, yet more typical example of concentration on the eternal elements was provided by D'Indy: 'le bon son claims its rights when it knows how to eliminate from the work of art all excessive matter in order to keep only that which is eternal: the balance of the elements of beauty'(33).

Balance, neatness and logic are words frequently in composers' mouths; they imply but do not state the existence of the unconscious, archetypal symmetries we have been discussing. Mozart, for instance, sometimes used the analogy of the tailor's neatness to describe the neatness and effortless achievement he desired: 'Finally it occurred to me' (when extemporising a prelude and fugue) 'could I not use my lively tune (middle section) as the theme for a fugue? I did not waste much time in asking, but did so at once, and it went as neatly as if Daser (his tailor) had fitted it'(34).

'Everything is balance and calculation through which the breath of the speculative spirit blows'(35) - Stravinsky starts with the conscious elements and allows the rarer 'leaps of the spirit' to come through that framework if they will. The same method is more crudely put by John Cage: 'That music is simple to make comes from one's willingness to accept the limitations of structure. Structure is simple because it can be thought-out, figured-out, measured. It is a discipline which, accepted, in return accepts whatever even those rare moments of ecstasy, which, as sugar-leaves train horses, train us to make what we make'(36).

'Musical ideas must correspond to the laws of human logic; they are a part of what men apperceive, reason and express' (37) - Schoenberg, who also wrote 'for me the expression 'logical' evokes these associations: Logic - human way of thinking - human world - human music - human perception of natural law, and so forth'(38).

Henri Pousseur is aware of a 'new musical sensibility' within which he writes his music, which is presumably comprised

of composers for whom psychology has brought to the surface the pattern-making mechanisms of the mind; therefore one can write for these scientifically-studied mechanisms in full confidence of communicating with their owners: 'How well have the Gestalttheorie psychologists observed that perception is not a chaos of amorphous sensations to which only an intellectual act can give form, sense and coherence.'

The joy of the 'pattern-mechanism' in perceiving something sufficiently complex to make it interesting and stimulating to grasp, yet not so complex as to be chaotic, is well illustrated in Chavez's remark: 'we rejoice in the contemplation of an entity, complete in itself, complex in its expression, coherent in all its functions, beautiful in its parts, and harmonious in its ensemble' (40).

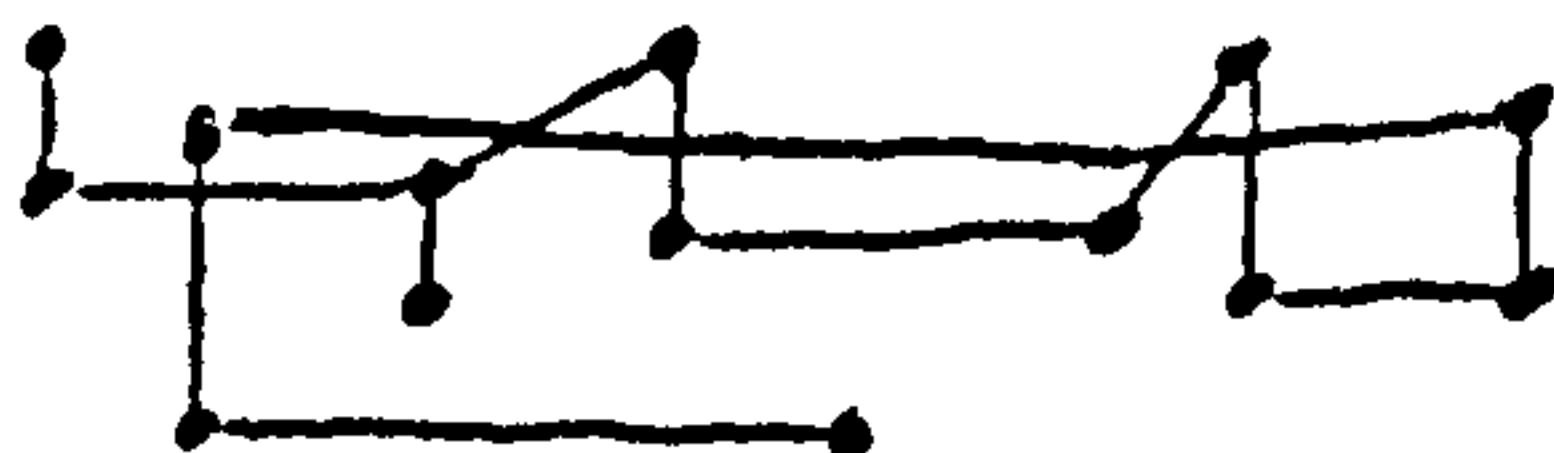
'The sole purpose', according to Stravinsky, that music has, is 'of establishing an order in things ... the co-ordination between man and time' (41), and presumably, though he says this in other contexts, between man and space, or man and proportion in the abstract - 'Weight and size' (42). The attitude implies a desire to grasp the world in terms of man, or rather of oneself (co-ordination), but with Stravinsky 'the world' must be understood as highly abstract, many removes from concrete existence.

In a daring article entitled 'Proportion' Busoni takes the possibilities of calculated balance, which he calls 'an aim', to their ne plus ultra. 'It is even conceivable that in the future an aim, developed to the highest point of pre-eminence, may take the place in art of the instinct which is fading gradually and produce compositions of a quality as alive as those produced by inspiration' (43). The final comment representing the various attitudes towards balance is also by Busoni, but it concerns the final articulation of the composer's thought, his performance of his work: 'Great artists play their own works differently at each repetition, remodel them on the spur of the moment, accelerate and retard, in a way which they could not do by signs - and always according to the given conditions of that "eternal harmony" ' (44).

2.

'Let there be Unity!'

Beethoven is supposed to have said 'Music gives the mind a relation to the Harmony. Any single, separate idea has in it the feeling of the Harmony, which is Unity' (1); and he wrote to someone who requested alterations, 'once one has thought out a whole work which is based even on a bad text, it is difficult to prevent this whole from being destroyed if individual alterations are made here and there'(2). We know that he usually sketched movements in toto, marking in the essentials of rhythmic motion till he could view the arsis and thesis as one entity like the architect's unbuilt building. We must mention here Schoenberg's famous dictum: 'the unity of musical space demands an absolute and unitary perception. In this space as in Swedenborg's heaven (described in Balzac's Seraphita) there is no absolute down, no right or left, forward or backward'(3). Stravinsky encourages us to take this attitude by drawing a diagram of his music (4), which seems to turn in on itself rather than proceed in any consistent direction:



Stravinsky's constant obsession (like Schoenberg's) is with unity, which has had a far-reaching influence on younger composers, though unfortunately they are not usually gifted with such fertile minds and therefore such an obsession can be unhealthy. 'The essential question that occupies the musician.... always and inevitably reverts back to the pursuit of the One out of the Many'(5). In his most recent writings he takes this yet further, saying 'construction must replace contrasts'(6), referring to serial construction. Electronic composers are of course faced with a baffling breadth of choice and so it is not surprising that, as Stockhausen writes 'a few composers have nourished the strong desire to submit radically to a unitary standard principle all the aspects of their compositions, and no longer to accept anything objectively existent which might in any way lead the composition into tendencies from which they had some time ago freed themselves once and for all'(7). (Hence total serialism).

Complementary to the Beethoven view of the whole there is the attitude which emphasises starting with a motive or germ and then viewing the possibilities and consequences resulting from it. 'The craftsman is proud ... of the profundity of his ideas and his capacity of penetrating to the most remote consequences of an idea'(Schoenberg)(8).

'Every motive - so it seems to me - contains like a seed, its life-germ within itself ... in each motive there lies the embryo of its fully developed form; each one must unfold itself differently, yet each obediently follows the law of eternal harmony'(Busoni)(9).

'... These germinal ideas ... seem to be begging for their own life, asking their creator, the composer, to find the ideal envelope for them, to evolve a shape and colour and content that will most fully exploit their creative potential'(Copland)(10).

'... ideas are themselves live beings, moving and acting, looking for their way out and for whatever they may need to achieve their end'(Chavez)(11).

Finally, the unity derived from the development of a 'germ' was perceived historically by Webern - 'there is this constant effort to derive as much as possible from one principal idea'(12) - and applied as twelve-note serialism, this being regarded as an even more concentrated development of the principle.

Some composers have noted that 'the subconscious is imbued with logic ...' as Chavez says; he goes on: 'Atavism has rooted symmetric rhythmical patterns very deeply in our subconscious'(13), and music is the manifestation of them in consciousness - 'musica est exercitium mathematicae occultum nescientio se numerari anima.' Liszt wrote 'art has ... an existence not determined by man's intention, the successive phases of which follow a course independent of his deciding and predicting. It exists and flowers in various ways in conformity with basic conditions whose inner origin remains just as much hidden as does the force which holds the world in its course'(14). And Schoenberg demands that the efficient use of this faculty

be the criterion in judging a composer: 'the capacity to fulfil instinctively and unconsciously the demands of constructive lawfulness in music should be considered the natural condition of a talent'(15).

Schopenhauer wrote: 'if we observe the strong and unceasing impulse with which the waters hurry to the ocean, the persistency with which the magnet turns ever to the North Pole ... if we see the crystal quickly and suddenly take form with such wonderful regularity of construction, which is clearly only a perfectly definite and accurately determined impulse in different directions, seized and retained by crystallisation ... if we observe all this, I say, it will require no great effort of the imagination to recognise, even at so great a distance, our own nature ... under the name will, as it is everywhere one and the same'(16).

Mahler wrote to his wife: 'that which draws us by its mystic force, what every created thing, perhaps even the very stones, feels with absolute certainty as the centre of its being, what Goethe here - again employing an image - calls the eternal feminine - that is to say, the resting place, the goal, in opposition to the striving and struggling towards the goal (the eternal masculine) - you are quite right in calling the force of love. There are infinite representations and names for it'(17).

Liszt's comparison of unconscious lawfulness with the law of gravity is significant, especially for the revolution which the coming of the classical ideal a few generations earlier achieved. Galileo, Kepler and Newton are familiar to us in their role of order-bringers and light-bearers in the age of the Enlightenment -

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night,
God said 'Let Newton be', and all was light.'

Mature Haydn and Mozart exhibit a new type of order, where widely contrasting elements of melody, rhythm and harmony are welded into one law-abiding equilibrium; this is a more highly developed and confident grasp of unity than the Baroque (Bach, always on the fringe, is excluded), which, broadly speaking, seeks unity in affective uniformity. One cannot help feeling that this new confidence in the reality of Law in the world resulted directly or indirectly

from Newtonian physics. This is the view of a German poet of the time: 'Legions of worlds glitter in the spheres assigned to them; and in those ethereal spaces, where stars without number move in their appointed orbits, all is obedient to a single Order. To conform to this Order, everything that exists was made; it rules alike the gentle zephyr and the raging tempest (cf. Mozart's 'even in the most terrible situations, must never offend the ear ... never cease to be music.'); it binds everything that exists with its charm, from the tiniest insect to man himself.'

'Our first law is the well-being of the whole creation. Happy shall I be if I never impair, by any fault of my own, the Universal Good, to maintain and contribute to which is the sole object of my existence'(18).

-3-

Metaphysical Order

We will now consider the more explicitly metaphysical attitudes towards order. The cosmic musica mundana of the Boethian tradition would be the obvious place to start any such enquiry, yet it is well out of our way and we must trace the tradition in our own period where its imprints are few but very important.

Beethoven's 'Music gives the mind a relation to the Harmony' is one such; Busoni's 'I endeavour to draw upon the Infinite which surrounds mankind and to give it back in created form'(1), as opposed to expression of personal feeling, is another; Hindemith's attitudes show quite explicitly the Boethian touch - (Noting the similarities between the measurement of music and that of the other sciences) 'this could lead us to the belief that there is some sound foundation in the ancient idea of a universe regulated by musical laws - or, to be more modest, a universe whose laws of construction and operation are complemented by a spiritual reflection in musical organisms.

'Harmonic ... melodic, and rhythmic laws, as worked out in a beautiful and most exalted composition, would transform the world's woes and falsehood into the

ideal habitat for human beings, who by the same process of musical ennoblement would have grown into creatures worthy of such a paradise'(2). This noble vision of Order and Paradise is very much in line with those of humanity's greatest seers: the first thing Beatrice explains to Dante as he enters Paradise is the law of universal (material and spiritual) gravitation. All things seek their time place, and in the orderly movement to it, and rest therein, consists the likeness of the universe to God - 'all things observe a mutual order.' The main impression Swedenborg got of paradise was of its wondrous order and organisation. With the doctrine of the Maximus Homo he compares it to the working of the human body wherein each member performs its allocated task in harmony with the whole. Schoenberg admired Swedenborg, Wagner Dante, Hindemith Boethius, and Stravinsky quotes with awe the mystical assertion made by Dionysius the Areopagite (in De Caelesti Ierarchia?) - 'the greater the dignity of the angels in the celestial hierarchy, the fewer words they use; so that the most elevated of all pronounces only a single syllable'(3). That Stravinsky has read such a book at all is significant, a new revival of metaphysical order is going on; as Stockhausen says 'the new function of music must be within its very essence, of sacred order'(4).

Platonic Ideas

The Idea is independent of the principle of sufficient reason, it bears no relation in causality to anything else. It has also nothing to do with the ordinary purposes of our lives, our instinctive will-to-live. A love of Ideas can only occur in a man who aspires above life and the blind will-to-live, who desires to forget himself and obtain objectivity, to transcend himself; and in this sense his is a metaphysical love.

All art is Idea, of course, but it is remarkable that Mozart has been especially loved as a harbinger of Ideas by many composers, undoubtedly because of his seemingly divine ability to balance extreme sensitivity

of expression (mirror of the will or instinct) with a high degree of Order. We have already discussed Strauss's view of Mozartian melody as the Kantian 'Ding an sich' etc., and he goes on to call all non-intellectual inspiration symbolical, as if inspiration automatically discovers Ideas: 'nor is that other sentence of Goethe's, 'I have always considered all my work and achievement as symbolical', any more than a paraphrase of that unconscious creative urge manifested in its purest and most immediate form in melodic inspiration, in so far as it is really 'inspiration' without any co-operation on the part of the intellect'(1). Busoni is also thinking of Mozart in writing 'from the depths of our hearts, therefore, let us be thankful to the select few who are privileged, at least on a small scale, through taste and form, inspiration and mastery, to set up a miniature model of that sphere from which all beauty and power flow to them. Mankind will never know the essence of music in its reality and entirety' (2), because, one may add, Ideas really have a metaphysical existence.

The attainment of objective contemplation of Ideas is nowhere better, more beautifully illustrated than in this letter of Wagner to Mathilde after their meeting later in life when 'Tristan' was completed and separation had become a long-accustomed fact: 'The dream of seeing each other again has been realised! ... I do not think I saw you clearly; thick mists separated us through which we scarcely heard the sound of each other's voice. You also, I fancy, did not see me: a ghost entered your house in my place. Did you recognise me? Oh, heavens, I begin to realise it: this is the road toward sanctity! Life itself, the reality of things take on more and more the shape of a dream: the senses are deadened, with eyes wide open I see nothing, my ears are keenly attentive but no longer hear the voice that speaks. We do not see the place where we are. Our eyes are fixed on distance. The present has no existence, the future is nothingness. - Does my work indeed merit that I should give it my entire being? What about you, what about your children - life must go on'(3). Wagner is naturally hesitant about taking the final steps of renunciation and throwing overboard all will-to-live. Here we see to perfection how a philosopher (Schopenhauer) has given a composer a terminology to suit exactly the

verbal expression of his innermost feelings thereby rendering him most unusually articulate.

5.

Aspiration

The pattern of the next few sections will be broadly a progression from aspirations to metaphysical aims to achievements of these aims. Aspiration through the use of music has always been sanctioned by religions, in the Catholic liturgy, for instance, the use of tropes was intended as a stimulus to speechless rapture in the celebrant and congregation; the power of words having been exhausted, the expression of the pure Ideal passed over to wordless melody. Composers have found in music wings to rise: 'Why, Daedalus, when confined to the labyrinth invented the wings which lifted him upwards and out into the air. Oh, I too shall find them, these wings' (Beethoven)(1)! 'Which power raises man the higher? Love or Music? ... Why separate them? They are the twin wings of the soul'(Berlioz)(2). 'We all, whether we are artists or not, experience moments when we want to get outside the limitations of ordinary life, when we see dimly a vision of something beyond. ... those whom we call artists find the desire to create beauty irresistible'(Vaughan-Williams)(3). Liszt spoke of 'that mysterious Jacob's Ladder with which art links heaven and earth'(4) - he thought of art always in Hegelian terms, 'ideal content' embodied in 'sensuous form'(5) - and it was the artist's duty to climb the ladder in order to bring higher things to earth. Schoenberg thought similarly of Jacob's Ladder, in fact he used many images for the Unspeakable; for instance in his Mahler essay he concludes with passionate longing 'but we must fight on, since the Tenth has not yet been revealed to us'(6).

Liszt, further, wrote 'Man ... feels himself impelled in perpetual alternation by an innate and sovereign longing for a satisfaction to which he cannot give a name'(7) and Schoenberg also wrote 'there is only one content, which all great men wish to express: the longing of mankind for its future form, for an immortal soul, for dissolution into the universe - the longing of this soul for its God. This alone, though reached by many different roads and detours

and expressed by many different means, is the content of the works of the great; and with all their strength, with all their will they yearn for it so long and desire it so intensely until it is accomplished. And this longing is transmitted with its full intensity from the predecessor to the successor, and the successor continues not only the content but also the intensity, adding proportionately to his heritage'(8). Just as Schopenhauer had dared give a name to Kant's Ding-an-sich, so Schoenberg names what to Liszt was something to which one 'cannot give a name.' The saint alone will achieve this, Schopenhauer says, the artist must long, and glimpse occasionally. 'It is not the restless strain of life, the jubilant delight which has keen suffering as its preceding or succeeding condition, in the experience of the man who loves life, but it is a peace that cannot be shaken, a deep rest and inward serenity, a state which we cannot behold without the greatest longing when it is brought before our eyes or our imagination, because we at once recognise it as that which alone is right, infinitely surpassing everything else, upon which our better self cries within us the great sapere aude. Then we feel that every gratification of our wishes won from the world is merely like the alms which the beggar receives from life to-day that he may hunger again on the morrow; resignation, on the contrary, is like an inherited state, it frees the owner for ever from all care'(9). In case it be suggested that these thoughts are exclusive to the Schopenhauer-Wagner-Schoenberg milieu let me quote one other great artist-philosopher, from quite a different age and culture, Leonardo:- 'Behold, the hope and desire of going back (repatriarsi) to one's own country and returning to the primal state of chaos is like that of the moth to the light ... But this longing is in its quintessence the spirit of the elements, which finding itself imprisoned as the soul within the human body is ever longing to return to its sender; and I would have you know that this same longing is that quintessence in nature, and that man is a type of the world'(10).

Proof of Wagner's alignment with Schopenhauer in this respect is scarcely necessary, but here, for the sake of completeness, is part of a letter he wrote Liszt about the great philosopher: 'If I think of the storm of my heart, the terrible tenacity with which, against my desire,

it used to cling to the hope of life, and if even now I feel this hurricane within me, I have at least found a quietus which in wakeful nights helps me to sleep. This is the genuine ardent longing for death, for absolute unconsciousness, total non-existence; freedom from all dreams is our only final salvation.

'In this I have discovered a curious coincidence with your thoughts; and although you express them differently, being religious, I know that you mean exactly the same thing' (Autumn '54)(11).

That the sentiment is not merely a personal consolation but also an entire philosophy of life and metaphysics of which art is part and parcel is readily seen by the briefest reference to Tristan; '... in one long breath the composer let that unslaked longing swell from first avowal of the gentlest tremour of attraction, through half-heaved sighs, through hopes and fears, laments and wishes ... to the ... most resolute attempt to find the breach unbarring to the heart a path into the sea of endless love's delight. In vain! Its power spent, the heart sinks back to pine of its desire - desire without attainment; for each fruition sows the seeds of fresh desire, till in its final lassitude the breaking eye beholds a glimmer of the highest bliss: it is the bliss of quitting life, of being no more, of last redemption into that wondrous realm from which we stray the farthest when we strive to enter it by fiercest force. Shall we call it Death? Or is it not Night's wonder-world, whence, as the story says - an ivy and a vine sprang up in lockt embrace o'er Tristan and Isolde's grave'(12)?

As Edgar Wind has shown, renaissance painters were familiar with and much attracted by the teaching of Hesiod, the Orphics and Plato (later repeated by Ficino and Pico) that Love is born in discord and turbulent passion, it grows in concord (love on earth), and its consummation is a discordia concors, a union of both which is when the mortal is loved by the god himself (divine love), but the love of the god means death (13). Thus Tristan would seem to be a traditional reformulation of the ancient doctrine.

Schubert dreamed of a similar death-in-love in his little poem 'My Prayer' which he wrote after a serious attack of illness:

'With a holy zeal I yearn
Life in fairer worlds to learn;
Would this gloomy earth might seem
Filled with Love's almighty dream.

4th
verse: Take my life, my flesh and blood,
Plunge it all in Lethe's flood,
To a purer stronger state
Deign me, Great One, to translate'(14).

- 6. -

Refuge

The 'capacity to create something new proceeds from a certain divine discontent'(1) is the way Cyril Scott put it, the discontent being that of the divinely-aspiring composer with the world as it is. Discontent with the world is apparent with none more than Beethoven, he tells his brothers in the Heiligstadt Testament that he would have committed suicide, but like a true Schopenhauerean before his time, he saw that suicide is no solution, his path lay in renunciation of the will and objectivity (of which art is the concomitant, and of which he said - 'this art - my refuge- Thank God')(2).

'One cannot help being doubly grateful for that Art which has a life of its own, far away from everything - a solitude to which we can flee and be happy'(3) was Mendelssohn's sentiment, and in his time of sterility he wrote 'At a time when everything else that ought to interest the mind appears repugnant, empty and vapid, the smallest real service to art takes hold of one's innermost being, leading one away from town and country, and the earth itself, and seems a blessing sent by God'(4).

What starts in Wagner as the figure of the Flying Dutchman ('a primal trait of human nature speaks out from it with heart-enthralling force ... the longing after rest from amid the storms of life') finishes up as the composer himself, who, unable to go deaf like Beethoven yet chose Venice for its silence, and negated all sharp lines and

hard edges in his rooms in order to turn from the world inwards - 'My ideal demands have increased, compared with former times, and my sensitiveness has become much more acute during the last ten years ('49 - '59) while I lived in absolute separation from artistic public life ... I recognise beyond all doubt that the act of creating and completing alone satisfies me and fills me with a desire of life, which otherwise I should not understand'(6).

It is perhaps a truism to say that modern artists in general are cut off from the world, certainly art looks inward, but so do most modern people and so there is a certain solidarity of attitude: Tippet (in discussing our world wars and modern corruption generally) coins one slogan that will do for many others like it - 'Contracting-in to Abundance,' renunciation of the world for the abundant life of the spirit.

7.

Sublimation

I use the word sublimation not in its strict chemical sense, nor in its Freudian sense which refers to a purely unconscious process, but in its more common, albeit debased, sense of conscious recanalisation of psychic energies into more spiritual directions - the renunciation of the will.

'Continue to raise yourself higher and higher into the divine realm of art. For there is no more undisturbed, more unalloyed or purer pleasure than that which comes from such an experience'(1), thus Beethoven advises a fellow composer. Of himself he wrote 'For you, poor B. no happiness can come from outside. You must create everything for yourself in your own heart; and only in the world of ideals can you find friends'(2). 'I have written many works indeed - but have gained by writing - practically nothing - I am more accustomed to direct my gaze upwards'(3). Schubert wrote: 'it is ... a period of fateful recognition of a miserable reality, which I endeavour to beautify as far as possible in my imagination (thank God)''(4).

'But thee, O sacred art, the gods yet will
In effigy to picture ancient glory,
To soften with the pow'r of song and story
The fate which ne'er our present grief can still'
(5).

Pain and suffering are often connected with the artist's struggle to renounce the will and have even become synonymous with genius, just as they are a necessary part of the development of a mystic. Schubert wrote 'Pain sharpens the understanding and strengthens the mind; whereas joy seldom troubles about the former and softens the latter or makes it frivolous'(6). And Beethoven, in a passage worthy of any of the great Christian mystics, wrote 'Man cannot avoid suffering; and in this respect his strength must stand the test, that is to say, he must endure without complaining and feel his worthlessness and then again achieve his perfection, that perfection which the Almighty will then bestow upon him'(7).

Busoni wrote 'admirable works of genius arise in every period ... it seems to me that of all these beautiful paths leading so far afield - none lead upward'(8). That he recommends by this exactly what the other composers and their mouthpiece Schopenhauer have recommended is made apparent in the following passage: '... A third point ... is the casting off of what is 'sensuous' and the renunciation of subjectivity (the road to objectivity, which means the author standing back from his work, a purifying road, a hard way, a trial of fire and water) and the re-conquest of serenity (serenitas) ... the smile of wisdom, of divinity and absolute music. Not profundity, and personal feeling and metaphysics, but Music which is absolute, distilled, and never under a mask of figures and ideas which are borrowed from other spheres'(9). The reference to The Magic Flute is apposite - only by purification will the reign of the Flute (i.e. music, harmony on earth) be accomplished, surely no theme could have been nearer Mozart's heart.

Wagner, writing of his own purification, found two models to follow in this respect, first Christ: 'Since I saw the modern world of nowadays a prey to worthlessness akin to that which then surrounded Jesus, so did I now recognise this longing ... as in truth deep-rooted in man's

sentient nature, which yearns from out an evil and dishonoured Sinnlichkeit towards a nobler reality that shall answer to his nature purified'(10). Then Dante: 'I followed Dante with the deepest sympathy ... I enjoyed the divine morning, the pure air. I rose step by step; deadened one passion after the other, battled with the wild instinct of life, till at last, arrived at the fire, I relinquished all desire of life, and threw myself into the glow in order to sink my personality in the contemplation of Beatrice'(11).

Undoubtedly Beethoven and Schoenberg had this in mind when they wrote: 'only art and science can raise men to the level of gods'(12) and 'music conveys a prophetic message revealing a higher form of life towards which mankind evolves'(13) respectively.

The feeling of breathing 'air from another planet', of inhabiting a purer, detached region of the universe is quite commonly experienced: 'sad to relate ... the artist is not allowed to be Jupiter's guest in Olympus every day: unfortunately, vulgar humanity only too often drags him down against his will from those pure ethereal heights' (Beethoven)(14).

Liszt - in praise of 'absolute' music: 'On the wings of the infinite art it draws us with it to regions into which it alone can penetrate, where, in the ringing ether, the heart expands and, in anticipation, shares in an immaterial, incorporeal, spiritual life ... that recalls to us the indescribable recollections that surrounded our cradles, ... that inspires us with all that ardour of thirsting after inexhaustible rapture with the blissful experience ... that takes hold of us and sweeps us into the turbulent maelstrom of the passions which carries us out of the world into the harbour of a more beautiful life'(15).

Wagner - of 'Tannhäuser': 'I felt myself outside the modern world, and mid a sacred, limpid aether which, in the transport of my solitude, filled me with that delicious awe we drink in upon the summits of the Alps, when, circled with a sea of azure air, we look down upon the lower hills and valleys. Such mountain-peaks the Thinker climbs, and on this height imagines he is 'cleansed'

from all that is earthly, the topmost branch of the tree of man's omnipotence'(16).

Saint-Saens, talking of musical experience generally: 'All those who have scaled the heights know the special impressions to which they give birth; there, where life ceases, where there is nothing but rocks and glaciers in the limitless azure, one experiences a sort of immense, superhuman happiness; one pities the town from which one comes, the civilisation to which one belongs; one no longer wishes to go down amongst men again'(17).

Mahler wrote: 'Unfortunately, this wonderful entering-into- possession-of oneself is undone the moment one returns to the noise and confusion of everyday life. The only thing then is to think oneself back into that blissful state, and to make it a practice at every opportunity to look back at that other world and to draw one breath of that other air'(18).

And finally Messaien: 'to raise upon the mountain the doors of our prison of flesh, to give our century the spring water for which it thirsts, there shall have to be a great artist who will be both a great artisan and a great Christian'(19). He must be both pure in his renunciation of the will, as a person, and as a musician he must be supremely skilful..

8.

Eden

If the renunciation of the will and the passions, exhibits predominantly Freud's death instinct, inward-moving aggression, we must now turn aside to consider briefly the attitude that corresponds to the other half of Freud's division, namely the Eros instinct. Just as we saw there was an idealism attainable by way of Thanatos, so there is also an idealism attainable by way of Eros. Both instincts may manifest themselves in every phase from debasement to metaphysics.

Yeats symbolised the two idealisms by two wells;

the dry well which only fills rarely and with difficulty and has a dried-up tree standing nearby represents complete mystical unity, the renunciation of the lower for the higher self (death instinct), the difficult way incompatible with human happiness; the other well, the full well with green tree represents Unity of Being, harmony within the two lower planes of existence, that of integrated personality and sensuality; this way is compatible with human happiness. In 'At the Hawk's Well' he symbolises his own spiritual failure to choose the difficult, higher way by Cuchulain's missing the dry well's water because he was asleep, although he had travelled far in search of it. Writing of William Morris with whom he compared himself he said: 'Shelley, Rosetti and ... the early Christians were of the kin of the wilderness and the dry tree, and they saw an unearthly paradise, but he was of the kin of the (full) well and of the green tree, and he saw an earthly paradise ... He wrote indeed of ... the heathen Grail (or well) that gave every man his own food, and not the Grail of Malory and Wagner'(1).

We may sense this ideal in E. T. A. Hoffman, whom Liszt quotes with approval: 'To Hoffman, music revealed "that faraway country which surrounds us often with the strangest presentiments and from which wondrous voices call down to us, waking all the echoes that sleep in our restricted breasts, which echoes, awakened now, shoot joyfully and gladly up, as though in fiery rays, making us sharers in the bliss of that paradise"(2).

According to Wagner, Lohengrin 'is the embodied wish of the yearner who dreams of happiness in that far-off land he cannot sense'(3).

French composers have frequently mentioned not only the ideal of beauty and human happiness but also the ideal sensual world: 'Music, and music alone, has the power of evoking at will imaginary scenes - that real yet elusive world which gives birth in secret to the mystic poetry of the night and the thousand nameless sounds of the leaves caressed by the moonlight'(Debussy)(4), and M. Croche says 'Music is a sum total of scattered forces. You make an abstract ballad of them! I prefer the simple notes of an Egyptian shepherd's pipe; for he collaborates

with the landscape and hears harmonies unknown to your treatises'(5).

Messaien writes 'It is a glistening music we seek, giving to the aural sense voluptuously refined pleasures' and goes on to speak of the 'charm, at once voluptuous and contemplative'(6) with which he associates the ideal sensual world ... 'Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté, Luxe, calme et volupté.'

For Berlioz, the ideal was more closely sexual than with any other composer of our period; here he describes an ecstasy experienced at the age of sixteen: 'On the horizon the Alpine glaciers shone in the rising sun. Here was Meylan; far over those mountains lay Italy, Naples, Posilippo - the whole world of my story. Oh! for the wings of a dove, to leave this clogging earth-bound body! Oh! for life at its highest and best; for love, for rapture, for ecstasy; for the clinging clasps of hot embraces! Love! glory! where is my bright particular star, O my heart? my Stella Montis?' And in 1858 he wrote to Ferrand, 'Last night I dreamt of music, this morning I recalled it all and fell into one of those supernal ecstasies ... All the tears of my soul poured forth as I listened to those divinely sonorous smiles that radiate from the angels alone ...

'So sings great Michael as, erect upon the threshold of the empyrean, he dreamily gazes down upon the worlds beneath.

'Why, oh, why! have I not such an orchestra that I, too, could sing this archangelic song'(7)?

Towards the end of his autobiography he apologises to the reader - 'always this wild desire to realise the impossible, always this frantic thirst for perfect love! How can I help repeating myself! The sea repeats itself; are not all its waves akin'(8)?

We may cautiously assert that Schubert also belongs to this category with 'My dream', as he does elsewhere to the former category with its emphasis on pain and purification. It is a brief allegorical tale, fairly typical of romantic literature yet undoubtedly, knowing Schubert,

deeply sincere, describing how he was twice banished from home to find ideal love and reconciliation at the mysterious funeral of a maiden: 'Only a miracle, however, can lead you to that circle, they said. But I went to the gravestone with slow steps and lowered gaze, filled with devotion and firm belief, and before I was aware of it, I found myself in the circle, which uttered a wondrously lovely sound, and I felt as though eternal bliss were gathered together into a single moment. My father too I saw, reconciled and loving. He took me in his arms and wept. But not as much as I'(9).

2.

Intimations of Divine

The power of art to intimate of things divine is, of course, fundamental to our topic, and in this section a few testimonies are gathered together (not that they have been altogether absent in previous sections - 'Metaphysical Order,' 'Sublimation' etc.)

Hans Keller, in an article on 'Moses and Aron' (1) wrote 'the artist ... is always a potential traitor to the ultimate secret, the bond between appearance and essence, between man and God: his dilemma is that he must and must not reveal it ('Sei verschweigen' three spirits warn Tamino). The dilemma often reaches its climax, and sometimes its solution, in music, which is the metaphysical art par excellence.' He then quotes Schoenberg's text for the second of Four Pieces for mixed chorus Op. 27:

'You shall not, you must!
You shall not make an image!
For an image confines, limits, grasps,
What shall remain unlimited and unimaginable,
An image desires a name
Which you can only take from the small;
You shall not worship the small!
You must believe in the spirit!
Spontaneously; undesiring
And selfless.
You must, chosen one, you must if you are to
remain chosen.'

This is also the central theme of Moses and Aron. Moses is in direct contact with the Unspeakable, he does not sing but is accompanied by pure music, absolute musical ideas. Aron, on the other hand, translates and falsifies the

message to the people; he sings to an orchestra rich in colouring and dance rhythms. Because Schoenberg refused to colour the truth he left the third act unwritten, and left his Psalm unfinished at an exactly parallel place - 'And nevertheless I pray (last words set) because I do not want to lose the rapturous feeling of one-ness, of unity with you' (unset).

The dilemma is not felt by many as acutely as by Schoenberg, though many 'purists' have sensed that referential music is not as profound or true as non-referential. Stravinsky means this sort of thing in writing of 'The absence of many coloured effects'(2) and 'the aristocratic austerity of its forms'(3) he so much admires in classical ballet, and also in his use of Latin 'I have always considered that a special language and not that of current converse, was required for subjects touching on the sublime'(4).

Mahler's belief was found in Goethe, whom he quotes: 'All that is transitory is nothing but images, inadequate, naturally in their earthly manifestation: but there, freed from the body of earthly inadequacy, they will be actual, and we shall then need no paraphrase, no similitudes or images for them; there is done what here is in vain described, for it is indescribable. And what is it? Again I can only reply in imagery and say: The eternal feminine has drawn us on - we have arrived - we are at rest - we possess what on earth we could only strive and struggle for. Christ calls this 'eternal blessedness,' and I cannot do better than employ this beautiful and sufficient mythology - the most complete conception to which at this epoch of humanity it is possible to attain'(5).

Mahler said of this eternally enticing ideal of which he must intimate to his fellows: 'Like a somnambulist he (composer) wanders toward them (goals) - he doesn't know which road he is following (it may skirt dizzy abysses) but he walks toward the distant light, whether this be the eternally shining stars or an enticing will-o'-the-wisp'(6).

For Schubert, great works of art 'show us in

the darkness of this life a bright, clear, lovely distance, for which we may hope with confidence'(7). 'Blissful moments brighten this dark life; up there these blissful moments become continual joy, and happier ones still will turn into visions of yet happier worlds and so on'(8).

Beethoven wrote: 'The true artist has no pride. He sees unfortunately that art has no limits; he has a vague awareness of how far he is from reaching his goal; and while others may perhaps be admiring him, he laments the fact that he has not yet reached the point whither his better genius only lights the way for him like a distant sun'(9).

Verdi wrote: 'The artist must scrutinise the future, see in the chaos new worlds; and if on the new road he sees in the far distance a small light, let him not be frightened of the dark which surrounds him; let him go on and if sometimes he stumbles and falls, let him get up and still press on'(10). There are similar passages by Busoni and Schoenberg (Jacob's Ladder).

Hindemith, humble before the Infinite like Beethoven, wrote: 'The ultimate reason for this humility will be the musician's conviction that beyond all the rational knowledge he has amassed and all his dexterity as a craftsman there is a region of visionary irrationality in which the veiled secrets of art dwell, sensed but not understood, implored but not commanded, imparting but not yielding. He cannot enter this region, he can only pray to be elected one of its messengers. If his prayers are granted and he, armed with wisdom and gifted with reverence for the unknowable, is the man whom Heaven has blessed with the genius of creation, we may see in him the donor of the precious present we all long for in the great music of our time'(11).

Busoni, more daring yet, writes: 'If Nirvana be the realm "beyond the Good and the Evil" one way leading thither is here pointed out (in his 'New Esthetic'). A way to the very portal. To the bars that divide Man from Eternity - or that open to admit that which was temporal. Beyond that portal sounds music. Not the strains of 'musical art.' - It may be, that we must leave Earth

to find that music. But only to the pilgrim who has succeeded on the way in freeing himself from earthly shackles, shall the bars be open'(12). (Schoenberg has said 'It seems that the Ninth is a limit. He who wants to go beyond it must pass away' - 'the love of the god means death.')

Schumann and others felt that 'music is always the language in which one can converse with the beyond'(13), it is not of the beyond and yet it can intimate of it. Faure, recalling the distant tolling of evening bells, muses, 'an incident such as this does in fact frequently promote a torpid state of mind, and a very agreeable one, in which thoughts merge imperceptibly into each other. Are we at this moment reaching out to that other world? This is in fact where music begins'(14). Mahler said 'all my works are an anticipation of the life to come'(15) and we clear up any vagueness here with this passage from a letter to his wife: 'If you will turn a sympathetic eye on Hoffman's Tales, you will find a new light on the relation of music to reality; for music, mysterious as it is, often illumines our souls with a flash of lightning, and you will feel that the only true reality on earth is soul. For any one who has once grasped this, what we call reality is no more than a formula, a shadow with no substance ... and ... this ... is a conviction that can hold its own at the bar of sober reason. ... I write rather at length on the subject because it has so close a bearing on my earnest desire ... to set up my God in place of the idols of clay.'(16). Thus the tradition which came prominently to the surface with Schopenhauer is again propounded, and the beyond is the true reality which is glimpsed on earth and seen in full clarity in renunciation, or death. But at present the full vision is denied us, as Charles Ives said, 'for the same reason that the beginning and end of a circle are to be denied'(17).

The definitive statement upon art as an intimation of the divine must come from the aged Wagner, writing in 1880: ' "Complete contentment, the truly acceptable state, never present themselves to us but in an image, in the Artwork, the Poem, in Music. From which one surely might derive the confidence that somewhere they exist in sooth" ... the starting point of very

serious inferences. The perfect likeness' of the noblest artwork would so transport our heart that we should plainly find the archetype, whose 'somewhere' must perforce reside within our inner self, filled full with time-less, space-less Love and Faith and Hope.

'But not even the highest art can gain the force for such a revelation while it lacks the support of a religious symbol of the most perfect moral ordering of the world, through which alone can it be truly understood of the people; only by borrowing from life's exercise itself the likeness of the Divine, can the artwork hold this up to life, and holding lead us out beyond this life to pure contentment and redemption'(18).

The divinity of the inner self, 'the Synteresis, or Fünklein - Spark of the Soul (mystical theology has many names and symbols for it) is the element in man which creates the divine part of the composition. Belief in the divinity of man was held, as we have seen by implication, by many composers; but it was held explicitly by two great ones, Beethoven and Wagner, in whose thoughts, it played an important and formative role.

Beethoven, in a statement of belief pertinent both to this and to his pursuit of the 'difficult way' of renunciation, wrote these words: 'We finite beings, who are the embodiment of an infinite spirit, are born to suffer both pain and joy; and one might almost say that the best of us obtain joy through suffering'(19).

Beethoven refers to music in such remarks as 'our striving is infinite, but vulgarity makes everything finite'(20), his vexation with daily life contrasting frequently with his joy in the life of 'the divine element in man'(21).

And Wagner: 'Religion ... lives, but only at its primal source and sole true dwelling-place, within the deepest, holiest inner chamber of the Individual'(22).

Applying this to music, the 'sea of harmony' in particular, he writes: 'The eye knows but the surface of

this sea; its depth the depth of heart alone can fathom ...

Man dives into this sea; only to give himself once more, refreshed and radiant, to the light of day. His heart feels widened wondrously, when he peers down into this depth, pregnant with unimaginable possibilities whose bottom his eye shall never plumb, whose seeming bottomlessness thus fills him with sense of marvel and the presage of Infinity. It is the depth and infinity of Nature herself, who veils from the prying eye of Man the unfathomable womb of her eternal Seed-time, her Begetting, and her Yearning; even because man's eye can only grasp the already manifested, the Blossom, the Begotten, the Fulfilled. This Nature is, however, none other than the nature of the human heart itself, which holds within its shrine the feelings of desire and love in their most infinite capacity'(23).

'Music ... transports us to the highest ecstasy of consciousness of our infinitude'(24).

Finally, Busoni combines the ideas of infinity, timelessness and immanence of divinity in this enraptured, yet exact assertion of faith: 'All, all melodies, heard before or never heard, resound completely and simultaneously, carry you, hang over you, or skim lightly past you ... If you focus your attention on one of them, you perceive how it is connected with all the others, how it is combined with all the rhythms, coloured by all kinds of sounds, accompanied by all harmonies ... Now you realise how planets and hearts are one, that nowhere can there be an end or an obstacle: that infinity lives completely and indivisibly in the spirit of all beings'(25).

10

Divine Intervention

To conclude, it would be fitting to draw attention to the final and most mystical phase of inspiration, that of direct divine intervention.

A belief that the hand of God has assisted the composition was held by naive and sophisticated alike, Haydn and Bruckner, Schumann and Schoenberg.

Haydn said, 'If my composing is not proceeding so well, I walk up and down the room with my rosary in my hand, say several Aves, and then ideas come to me again'(1). He often wrote Soli Deo Gloria at the end of his scores. The story is told that at his last public appearance, to hear a performance of The Creation, after 'And there was light' there was the loudest applause. 'Haydn made a gesture of the hands heavenward and said, "It comes from there." - He took his leave with streaming eyes, and stretched out his hand in blessing to the orchestra'(2).

Schoenberg said, 'Has the Lord granted to a (musical) thinker a brain of unusual power? Or did the Lord silently assist him now and then with a bit of his own thinking? 'From my own experience I know that it can ... be a sub-consciously received gift from the Supreme Commander'(3).

Such references to our topic as 'a supernatural force'(4) (Tchaikovsky), the 'supernatural origin'(5) of inspiration (Hindemith) etc., are scattered widely through the literature, and inscriptions assigning the glory to God alone are found in the scores of many (Haydn, Mozart, Weber, Bruckner, Dvorak, Elgar, Liszt, Messaien and Stravinsky are a few of them.) I have collected some statements relevant to divine intervention in the section entitled The Gap (p.32 Pt.I) and for further evidence I refer the reader to this. Thus in perceiving the ultimately mysterious nature of inspiration we should nevertheless observe that in the spiral from the 'direct unconscious source' of inspiration to direct divine intervention we have been dealing with one of the most concrete manifestations of metaphysical truth accessible to man.

Notes

THE COMPOSER AND THE IDEAL

Formal Order

- 1 Gluck, Collected Correspondence, dedicatory to Marie-Antoinette, July 1774.
- 2 Poetics, p. 77.
- 3 Haydn, Letter to Tonkünstlersocietät, Vienna, 1779.
- 4 A Composer's World, chapter III.
- 5 Poetics, p. 76.
- 6 Ibid., p. 63.
- 7 Webern, Towards a New Music, translated in The Score January 1961.
- 8 Busoni, The Essence of Music, p. 180.
- 9 Copland on Music.
- 10 Casella, article On Inspiration, The Chesterian Vol. XI January 1928.
- 11 Interview by M.D. Calvocoressi in Daily Telegraph, 16 July 1931.
- 12 Letters, p. 373.
- 13 Stravinsky, Chronicle of my Life, p. 185.
- 14 Ibid., p. 29.
- 15 Poetics, p. 51.
- 16 Ibid., loc. cit.
- 17 Stravinsky, Memories and Commentaries, 1959.
- 18 Expositions and Developments, 1962, p. 101.
- 19 Ibid., p. 102.
- 20 Style and Idea, p. 56.
- 21 Ibid., p. 97.
- 22 A Composer's World, chapter III.
- 23 Quoted by Joseph Rufer in 'Composition with Twelve Notes,' Bettina von Arnim reporting to Prince Herman von Pückler-Muskau on Beethoven's meeting with Goethe at Teplitz.
- 24 Letters, p. 1405.
- 25 Poetics, p. 41.
- 26 Prose Works, Vol. I, The Art-Work of the Future, p. 77.

- 27 Liszt, Berlioz and his 'Harold' Symphony, quoted Strunk op. cit. p. 854.
- 28 Musical Thought, p. 28.
- 29 Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music.
- 30 The Essence of Music, article What is happening at the Present Time? p. 44.
- 31 Musical Thought, p. 51.
- 32 Recollections and Reflections, p. 76.
- 33 Essay, Le Bon Sens, Vincent d'Indy, published 1943 Liege.
- 34 Mozart's Letters, 228b.
- 35 Stravinsky, Poetics, p. 50.
- 36 Incontri Musicali No. 3, August 1959, John Cage, 'Lecture on Nothing.' p. 131.
- 37 Schoenberg, Style and Idea, p. 109.
- 38 Letter to Hauer, 1923.
- 39 Incontri Musicali, No. 2, May 1958, Henri Pousseur, La nuova sensibilita musicale, p. 4.
- 40 Musical Thought, p. 36.
- 41 Chronicle of my Life, p. 91.
- 42 Conversations with Stravinsky, p. 132.
- 43 The Essence of Music, p. 34.
- 44 Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music.

2.

'Let there be Unity!'

- 1 Briefe und Gespräche p. 146, Bettina's report to Goethe, which she assured him, on the strength of her extraordinary memory, was very nearly verbatim, quoted by S. Langer in 'Form and Feeling.'
- 2 Letters, p. 323.
- 3 Style and Idea, Composition with Twelve Tones, 1941.
- 4 Conversations with Stravinsky, p. 108.
- 5 Poetics, Epilogue, p. 140.
- 6 Memories and Commentaries, p. 106.
- 7 Incontri Musicali No. 1. Dec. 1956, Karlheinz Stockhausen, a proposito di musica eletronica, p. 70.

- 8 Style and Idea, Brahms the Progressive.
- 9 Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music.
- 10 Copland on Music, 'Music as an Aspect of the Human Spirit.'
- 11 Musical Thought, p. 110.
- 12 Towards a New Music, The Score, Jan. 1961.
- 13 Musical Thought.
- 14 Berlioz and his 'Harold' Symphony, quoted Strunk, Source Readings, p. 854.
- 15 Quoted in Josef Rufer's 'Composition with Twelve Notes.'
- 16 Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, trans. Haldane.
- 17 Memories and Letters, letter dated June 1909.
- 18 Lyrische Gedichte, 1749, Uz. Quoted in 'European Thought in the Eighteenth Century' - Paul Hazard, p. 22.

3.

Metaphysical Order

- 1 The Essence of Music, 'Self-Criticism', p. 49.
- 2 A Composer's World, chapter V.
- 3 Poetics, Epilogue, p. 140.
- 4 Avec Stravinsky, Monaco 1958, contributory article by Stockhausen - 'Musique Fonctionnelle.'

4.

Platonic Ideas

- 1 Recollections and Reflections, 'On Inspiration in Music' 1940, p. 113.
- 2 The Essence of Music 1924, title essay, p. 200.
- 3 Letter to Mathilde Wesendonck, Lucerne, 4 April, 1859.

5.

Aspiration

- 1 Letters, p. 350.
- 2 Berlioz, The Life of Hector Berlioz, p. 271.
- 3 National Music, chapter I.
- 4 Letters to Marie zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, p. 233.
- 5 Hegel, The Philosophy of Fine Art, translated F.P.B. Osmaston, Vol. I, p. 154.
- 6 Style and Idea, p. 36.
- 7 Berlioz and his 'Harold' Symphony, quoted Strunk, Source Readings, p. 855.
- 8 Style and Idea, chapter II 'Gustav Mahler', p. 26.
- 9 Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, trans. Haldane.
- 10 Leonardo da Vinci, Notebooks.
- 11 Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt, letter written between September and December 1854.
- 12 Prose Works, Vol. VIII, Prelude to Tristan und Isolde (Programme note 1860), p. 385.
- 13 Edgar Wind, Bellini's Feast of the Gods, Harvard 1948, p.61.
- 14 A Documentary Biography, 'My Prayer', 1823 section.

6.

Refuge

- 1 Cyril Scott, The Philosophy of Modernism, p. 1.
- 2 Letters, p. 1320.
- 3 Felix Mendelssohn, Letters, 30 November 1839.
- 4 Ibid., January 1843.
- 5 Prose Works, Vol. I 'A Communication to my Friends,' p.307.
- 6 Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt; January 1859.
- 7 Moving into Aquarius, title of third essay.

7.

Sublimation

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- 4 A Documentary Biography, 1824 section, letter to Ferdinand.
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- 11 The Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt, June 1855.
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- 5 Memories and Letters, June 1909.
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- 13 Letter to Ritzhaupt, 1832; quoted Marcel Brion, Schumann
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- 14 Letter to his wife, 11 Sept. 1906, trans. E. Lockspeiser,
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- 15 Quoted by Mosco Carner in article 'Mahler in his Letters'
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- 22 Prose Works, Vol. IV, On State and Religion (1864), p.29.
- 23 Prose Works, Vol. I, 'The Artwork of the Future', p. 112.
- 24 Prose Works, Vol. V, Beethoven, p. 77.
- 25 Letters to his Wife, 1910. (cf. Boulez on indeterminism - 'this periplus immersed in uncertainty is perhaps the only way to try and fix the Infinite.' Incontri Musicali No. 3, p. 15).

10.

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- 2 Ibid., p. 49.
- 3 Style and Idea, pp. 71 and 109.]
- 4 Weinstock, p. 171, letter dated March 1878.
- 5 A Composer's World, Ch. VI.