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**FROM THE CREATIVE DRIVE TO THE MUSICAL  
PRODUCT: a psychoanalytic account of musical creativity**

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**Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Psychoanalytic Studies in the Humanities; University of Kent at Canterbury**

*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of*

*Clive Ratcliffe Dunn*

*The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night.'*

from *The Ladder of St. Augustine*, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



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# FROM THE CREATIVE DRIVE TO THE MUSICAL PRODUCT: a psychoanalytic account of creativity

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is the result of a life's work dedicated to re-introducing people of all ages to their inherent musicality which, more often than not, has been denied and invalidated by society's rigid adherence to the reified status of 'creativity'. The main premise *sine qua non* is that creativity is no more, and no less, than the re-realization of things that already exist, and that it is indeed the ubiquitous mode of *Eros* itself (*libidinal energy*).

In explaining the means whereby the existents of music *per se* are imprinted in the minds of us all, and then why only certain people choose to manipulate these existents into musical compositions, we proceed from the universal experience of intra-uterine life. The importance to us all of sound-impingement upon the fetus is explained, for it is revealed to be foundational to the genesis of the Self. However, as each one of us has different sound-experiences, the affective reactions to those experiences inform our unconscious attitudes towards music. These are revealed in our projections into 'the containing space of music'. Furthermore, it is posited that, *in utero*, not only are we initiated through sound-impingements into that which is dissonant to the Self (necessitating integration), but we also acquire three paradigmatic schemes of reference which thereafter inform all that we do. Our aesthetic sense is rooted here too, through tactility and even visibility.

Choosing the *mode d'emploi* of musical composition is first dependent upon extrinsic environmental factors, but the *imperative* to compose arises intrinsically. The *process* though, is one available to us all, as we already possess the necessary mental function. This is explicated by Freud as *the dream-work*.

The thesis culminates in a three-way synthesis predicated upon the dynamics of the transference and counter-transference, between the *work* that takes place in psychoanalysis, the tripartite teleology of a musical *work* from composer to performer and listener, and the musical structure known as *sonata form*. The first movement of Beethoven's third symphony, the *Eroica* is used as exemplar.<sup>1</sup> Appendices are designed to accommodate information pertaining to both disciplines, while comments are to be understood as the opinions of no-one else but myself.

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the material for Chapters VII and IX is taken from the Dissertation for which I was awarded the Degree of Master of Arts, University of Kent, 1995. (*qv* Bibliography; Dunn, 1995). I first mooted the idea of music as a containing space in Stanton and Reason (eds.) 1996.

## INTRODUCTION

*As far as I can see, we know about as much about what psychologists rather knowingly call the “creative process” as Socrates knew after he had completed the interrogation of Ion: which is to say, nothing at all.*

*Some people get bright ideas; most people don't.*

*And the people who get them tell us they do not know how or why: they just pop into their heads.<sup>1</sup>*

### **In the Beginning.**

I think it would be true to say that this thesis has been almost fifty years in the making. It would be about that length of time ago that I unhesitatingly took up the offer of learning a musical instrument – an offer made by Miss Williams, the music teacher at my school, when she was setting up the first orchestra the school had ever possessed, during those economically stringent years of the first post-war decade. The options presented to us were violin or 'cello. To my knowledge, no-one in my school in those days even played a recorder, let alone anything as sophisticated as a flute or clarinet, and brass instruments were for boys and men in bands. Though we all sang, and there were a fortunate few who had piano lessons, none of us actually set eyes on any woodwind, brass or percussion instruments in the general run of events.

On that fateful day (the offer would never again be repeated to my class) I asked to play the 'cello – I stood up to ask, as that was considered to be polite when addressing a teacher. Miss Williams looked me up and down, taking in my fairly exceptional height for a thirteen-year-old. I have not forgotten her words, ‘You’re a big girl – you can play the viola’. The *viola*? I had no idea about the viola! Was it bigger or smaller than a violin? I couldn't even tell my parents what it was when I asked them that night if I could sign up for lessons. In retrospect, I think my father might have known, but I doubt that my mother did, although she had played the piano briefly as a young adult.

My first lesson was a revelation – the feel of the instrument, the smell of the resin, the thrill of the bow on the string – a true synaesthetic, crystallizing experience. How could I not delight in what I was doing? So, one thing led to another – rapid progress, examination successes, then – piano lessons as well! We had no piano at home at that

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<sup>1</sup> Kivy.1993, p.68.



time, so every night after school, although my school was a walk, a train journey and a cycle ride away from home, I stayed in the music room to practise. Halfway through my sixth-form course, came another opportunity of a life-time. I was persuaded to audition for the Birmingham School of Music.<sup>2</sup> The Principal, Dr.Christopher Edmunds, heard my efforts on viola (three years tuition) and piano (less than a year), tipped back his chair, put his hands behind his head and said, 'If you leave school now, I'll take you'. So I did, and he did.

And that was the beginning of this thesis. If I, from an 'unmusical' household – if I, whom no-one had ever suspected might be 'musical' could, after being given an instrument to play (which was not of her own choice) find myself within a few years taking instrumental diploma examinations alongside those who had been tutored from early childhood – how many more of 'me' might be out there, unrecognized for want of opportunity?

That troubling question became the focal point for all my subsequent efforts as a school music specialist. I had (in the *passé* sense with which it is now regarded) a *vocation*. Eventually, I was to teach every age-group and every level of intellectual achievement, but I never came across a child who did not respond to music; however, I came across (and still do) many, many writers, musicians, teachers, parents and pupils who believed that 'to be musical' was an inborn characteristic with which one was either lucky enough to be endowed, or not.

### **Defining the Problem.**

*Teaching Music Through Individual Composition: a Music Course for Pupils Aged Eleven to Eighteen*, was written as a result of my work in a school where, over a period of time, I developed my strategy of encouraging all pupils to compose their own music. Some of the compositions were quite outstanding – yet I had no more idea of how they managed it than Peter Kivy, whose words head this Introduction. But I had proved that 'ordinary children', given the tools with which to accomplish it, could just as well

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<sup>2</sup> Now called the Birmingham Conservatoire.

compose their own music as they could paint a picture or write a story. I am reminded of the Venda people of South Africa, who: ‘ ... stress the functional effectiveness of music. Music is a social experience more than a technical experience, and the Venda, while recognizing that some people are better performers than others, do not consider the possibility of anyone being unmusical’.<sup>3</sup>

Why, I often asked myself, could this fact not be more generally recognized (by educationalists and lay persons alike) to be true? In addition, as I worked with my young composers, any remaining vestiges of didacticism were necessarily replaced by facilitation and dialogue – I could only ‘teach’ strategies for development of ideas into full-length compositions – I could not provide their ideas for them. Thus, my despair that ‘creativity’ was not considered a much wider activity than was acknowledged, my curiosity as to the foundations of my pupils’ ideas within their individual personality structures, together with curiosity about the very nature of the ‘creative process’, fuelled the investigative imperative. But, as this specific thesis eventually began to be formalized, and the nature and focus of the enquiry clarified, it transpired that it would possess many different (and controversial) aspects from similar enquiries undertaken by others heretofore.

Because some of my pupils had decided for themselves that they needed to devote extra time for musical composition if they were to feel fulfilled, I began to analyze the creative process in terms of the different stages that revealed themselves within this time-span. Consequently the need arose for this thesis to be structured in four parts, taking in the *drive* to create, the specifically chosen *mode of music* for the drive, the *process of music composition* and, finally, the reaction of others to the completed *product*. The title *From the Creative Drive to the Musical Product* reflects this goal-oriented procedure. Moreover, the pupils’ first compositional attempts were mostly *pastiche* (reflecting past musical styles with which they were familiar and which, for them, constituted ‘good music’ with which ‘teacher’ might be pleased); yet, after my encouragement to greater self-expression, their work became endowed with plentiful doses of dissonance. This dismayed some listeners and delighted others. I wanted to know why that was.

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<sup>3</sup> Radocy and Boyle. 1988, pp.313-4.

Eventually, the problems emerged mostly disguised as *possibilities* to be investigated. Firstly (bearing in mind our formative experiences are Eurocentric), we mount a challenge to cultural shibboleths such as *genius*, *gift*, *talent* and *sublimation* on the basis that we believe they do enormous damage to individual achievement within the education system. Secondly, that *aesthetics*, as generally understood, was a discipline constructed on false foundations. This was interwoven with the third suggestion - that pre-natal life provides us with fundamental schemes of reference, and the fourth - that intra-uterine acoustic wave impressions have teleological implications which go largely unrecognized.

The fifth possibility was that 'sound' *per se* is an illusory phenomenon, as is the perceived difference between consonance and dissonance; sixthly, arose the possibility that, musically speaking, perceived dissonance, unresolved, becomes 'the secret life of our self-hate'.

The seventh possibility, that perceived dissonance within the Western European tonal system has been allocated 'its proper place' because it is considered dissident and in need of careful control has, as a corollary, that the 'Dionysian', affective duo of physical gesture and vocal utterance is likewise controlled, with some unfortunate results. (As many other writers have done, we will find it effective to invoke Dionysus, the Greek god of wine and revelry, and in contrast to Apollo, the Greek god of the sun, music, poetry and medicine – considered to represent all that is balanced and rational). From this, the eighth possibility was derived (arising directly from teaching experience) - that young composers must accept unresolved dissonance, as if participating in *a rite of passage*.

Finally, the ninth possibility is that the creative process is paradigmatic, and that therefore there are 'non-artistic' manifestations of creativity.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> To paraphrase Roy Harris, reviewing in The Times Higher Education Supplement of May 4<sup>th</sup> 2001 *Grammars of Creation* by George Steiner (published by Faber in 2001): '... we must be ushered out of the library, the museum, the art gallery, the university, and into the street, the factory, or the football match'.



## The Methodology.

Quite clearly, these are problems whose solutions require an inter-disciplinary voyage in largely uncharted waters. Some of the disciplines are fairly obvious – musicology, acoustics, neuro-biology, embryology, philosophical aesthetics and branches of psychology such as behavioral and cognitive (the latter being rather unhelpfully bound to technopomorphism – the brain as a computer). But there always has been an unmeasurable aspect to music, which constitutes its supposed ‘mystery’, and which is detectable within the above possibilities once the empirical has been identified: ‘Mysteries conceal a truth, but direct curiosity to unveil it’, wrote Arnold Schönberg.<sup>5</sup> And the composer Leonard Bernstein, in speaking of his work *The Age of Anxiety* (classified as his second symphony and written in 1949) in which he used words by W.H.Auden - accorded great importance to the ‘mystery’: ‘I discovered, upon rereading, detail after detail of programmatic relation to the poem – details that had “written themselves” wholly unplanned and unconscious. Since I trust the unconscious implicitly, finding it a source of wisdom and the dictator of the condign in artistic matters, I am content to leave the details in the score’.<sup>6</sup> The use of the word *condign* (which means *fittingly deserved*) shows his exceptional insight into the ‘mystery’; furthermore, it guides our thoughts on the matter towards the discipline of psychoanalysis.

In fact, psychoanalytic theory proves to be the facet *sine qua non* of the methodology. It appears to be the one discipline that has not yet been fully and effectively brought to bear upon the problem of creativity in general, and musical creativity in particular. But its metapsychological thetics distances it to a degree from those disciplines mentioned above, which are mostly predicated upon the ‘testability’ of scientific hypotheses. The essentiality of psychoanalytic theory lies first and foremost in its referential nature which grants it wide applicability, while the ideographic and descriptive character of its terminology greatly assists its role as a synthesizer. It is rooted in investigative method, yet operates, as Jean Laplanche puts it (1987), ‘extra-murally’, chiefly through analogy which, far from being a hindrance to enquiry, is the mediator that effectively re-locates argument in fresh objects.

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<sup>5</sup> Stein. 1975, p.401.

Hopefully, therefore, we will concede that metapsychology is capable of lending an elegance of expression to bio-physical discourse, making the whole easier to understand and, ironically, although it might appear to add a further layer of complication, its intense focus makes the methodology simpler : ‘Putting Freud to work ... means following in his footsteps, accompanying him but also criticizing him, seeking other ways – but impelled by an exigency similar to his’.<sup>7</sup>

However, Freud himself realized that psychoanalysis would not be popular, although:

‘ ... the psycho-analytic mode of thought acts like a new instrument of research. The application of its hypotheses to social psychology enables us both to raise fresh problems and to see old ones in a fresh light and contribute towards their solution’.<sup>8</sup> Therefore we here adduce the concept of the unconscious, not as a physical, proven fact, but as an ideographic concept that provides a hook upon which to hang phenomenological explanations. Clearly, we know dreaming demonstrates that the brain does not stop when consciousness ceases. It works on. This is the unconscious mind made manifest.

Of course, the possibility of there being a part of the mind which generally remains inaccessible to consciousness is denied by some (even those who appear supremely confident academically and intellectually, and whose ideas generally carry weight). This, however, is not so much a problem of psychoanalysis *per se* - it is rather more a problem for those in denial. In fact, the world of empirical science can probably be accused of denying its roots, which are, as in the case of psychoanalysis, embedded in imagination, conjecture, possibilities and uncertainties – those fluid, unpredictable substrata which lie at the heart of the brain-mind dichotomy, as well as at the heart of creativity. We do ‘know’, but we usually seek, and fail to find, complete answers on the surface of ‘knowledge’ – for ‘knowledge’ of that sort is never our own. So, as Wilfred Bion anticipated: ‘The problem is to determine just how far we can go in accepting deductions from the *sensa* as having, in the field of psychoanalysis, the same validity as *sensa* have in physics or philosophy’.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Peyser. 1987, p.160.

<sup>7</sup> Laplanche. 1999, p.147.

<sup>8</sup> Freud. S.E.XIII, p.185.

<sup>9</sup> Bion. 1963, p.10.



Therefore the work of Freud seems to sit uneasily in our culture – it is a radical and disruptive cultural challenge, inhabiting everywhere, yet nowhere in particular. His ideas do not constitute a fixed body of knowledge, for they have a lively existence outside ‘the analytic frame’ – they remain as a constant reminder of his presence in cultural discourse and, even though we must re-vision them from time to time, some of his writings still form a firm base from which to depart. Yet Freudian theory does not control the argument – it contributes to it and, although it might appear that he is not always consistent in the terminology used to define ideas throughout his *oeuvre*, and although this might be an inconvenience, his work is not to be disregarded on this account.

But Freud openly admitted he had a problem with music: ‘... works of art do exercise a powerful effect on me ... (but) I am almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure from music’.<sup>10</sup> We shall not embark upon an account of his actual contacts with music and musicians in the present context, but it is remarkable how little has been written about music by the psychoanalytic community over the last century, compared to the amount of its involvement in history, myth, art, literature, film and now to some extent, even the cyber-world of electronic technology. Methodologically speaking then, the problem of psychoanalysis and music is one of lack of previously published thoughts about the two together. Therefore it will be necessary to refer to other activities such as painting in order to find analogous, rather than direct references to music. Hence the likely number of quotations in the text of this thesis for, when one is attempting to re-think a subject which has forever puzzled minds, one is going to need the weight of other minds as well as one’s own behind it.

### **Further Challenges.**

Early European psychological research had reduced all mind-functions to simple biological or neurological processes, and in some ways, we appear to be returning to that here, but with all the advantages of increased scientific knowledge about biological growth, genetics and adaptation to the environment. The *uncertainty principle* of

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<sup>10</sup> Freud. S.E.XXIII, p.211.

modern physics has undermined determinism, as it itself determines we will not end up with the outcome we try to determine. But we must continue to acknowledge scientific advances at the same as, in the present context, ensuring that the parental duo, Brain and Body, and their progeny, Mind, continue to function as a formidable triad of familial interdependence.

Thus, we will find it necessary to start from the premise that we all have an equality of sorts, and so we should never assume that someone can't do something until it becomes irrefutably obvious – even then you do not preempt this conclusion by *suggesting* that something is impossible. (Who can say that those with 'special needs', for instance, are not just de-potentialized?)<sup>11</sup> Anton Ehrenzweig (from whom we hear a great deal later) quoted the artist and teacher Alan Davie, who: '... once said how easy it was for him to make completely inexperienced, untaught adolescents (he taught very experienced silversmiths for a time) produce near masterworks, and how difficult, if not impossible, it was to make them realize how good they were ...'.<sup>12</sup>

But first, the following, written as near to our time as 1992, by someone who was widely regarded as a guru where 'musical creativity' is concerned, epitomizes the challenges faced by those of us attempting to change attitudes: 'The unmusical person, as one would expect, is less psychologically aroused (by music) than the musical person'. And: 'Although Freud was unmusical ...'.<sup>13</sup> Based on received opinion, this demonstrates a complete unawareness (or disregard) of the core of the problem. We will find that it actually suits most people very well to linger in the dark contemplating 'the mystery of creativity', while any attempt to throw light on it by providing a more egalitarian definition is greeted with incredulity: 'The conception that everything can be properly brought into question and made the subject of rational deliberation and choice is itself a foundation of the rationalist view of progress. Hatred of this idea is evident in the current demands of conservatives in Britain and the United States to reimpose conventional morality, respect for tradition and obedience to authority in many spheres'.<sup>14</sup> This attitude constitutes one of the most formidable hurdles to overcome by

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Appendix I.

<sup>12</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.105.

<sup>13</sup> Storr. 1992, pages 29 and 151.

<sup>14</sup> Elliott and Frosh. 1995, p.225.

persuasive argument. Any new definition of creativity must therefore be extremely persuasive, and its universality closely argued for we will find that, whether we like the idea or not, in 'creating' we all ingest ourselves, Uroborus-like as it were, beginning with the tail-end of our experiences – that which lags the furthest behind.

Conservatism of a similar kind also renders traditional aesthetics impotent in the face of changing perceptions, as the quest for 'beauty' has received precious little assistance from the turn of events in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The tide of 19<sup>th</sup> century romanticism which consolidated traditional aesthetics found it easy enough to ignore (render unconscious) the unpleasantly exploitative foundations upon which affluence rested,<sup>15</sup> but once economic depression and warfare impinged directly upon the relative coziness of European homes, 'modern art' cut a swathe through complacency. Dismissed as 'ugly' (and rendered unconscious) for it presented unresolved conflict, it nevertheless joined unresolved dissonance in music in insisting upon a place in the aesthetic canon. The challenge in this instance, is to show how composers, too, are rendered impotent unless they can acquit themselves within the new canon.

But is it 'new'? We must also show that our pre-natal life has always presented us with our first aesthetic experiences: 'We cannot take the newborn child as a *tabula rasa* but must consider the possibility that emotional experiences, their symbolic representation in dream thought, and their impact on the structuring of the personality, may commence in utero'.<sup>16</sup> The challenge for pedagogy therefore (which we will find particularly relevant in the 'teaching' of musical composition) is perhaps to accept that the absence of an awareness of the importance of the unconscious, also renders the teacher largely impotent in the face of the child's need for understanding.

Thus, the meaning and function of music can only truly be understood by relating it to the depth of the whole psychological layer that is activated through its presence. But it is in the discovery of the various constituents of this 'whole psychological layer' (which we will hereafter refer to as the *unconscious mind*) that we will be able to situate

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<sup>15</sup> The word *aesthetic* is informed by two Greek words - *aisthesis* and *aistanomai* which mean an experience of the senses or of perception. Clearly, such experiences cannot all be 'beautiful'.

<sup>16</sup> Meltzer and Williams 1988, p.8.



effective responses to the above mentioned possibilities. Our aim will be to posit a fresh hermeneutic upon which we can predicate a new theory - of creativity as a ubiquitous paradigmatic form of human behavior.

### **Constructing the Hermeneutic.**

There are nine possibilities lined up for consideration, each of which invites further investigation and amplification and, though there will be overlaps, and though the proposed nine chapters will not be exactly synchronized with the nine possibilities, the possibilities will be roughly deal with in that order. Possibilities (i), (ii) and (iii) will begin the section designated for an exploration of the *Drive*, although (iii) will also form the pivotal point between the *Drive* and the *Mode* (therefore between the general and the specific). The *Mode* will be devoted to a consideration of the specific *mode d'emploi* of music, taking four of the nine chapters to do so – each of which will amplify a particular aspect. By the time we have explored the third section of the thesis, the *Process*, we will have reached possibility number (ix) which, to do it full justice, will also take us into the final section – a consideration of the *Product*. The *Product* will be worked out in one, final chapter, divided into two parts – when the seeming illogicality of that early decision will be explained.

The result of this format is that we will be able to consider each chapter almost as a discrete essay on the topic in question which, perhaps, can be read as such. The highlighting of key concepts will provide sign-posts (and they are enlarged upon in Appendix IV), with bibliographical citations made appropriately. The footnotes are generally confined to references with, occasionally, subsidiary information (especially when we reach Part 3 – *The Process*) – on the grounds that it is wiser to interrupt the reader through footnotes than to expect too many qualifying points to be retained at any one time in the text during a complex argument.

The first in a series of appendices will provide the location for examples from my personal experience. The other appendices are considered necessary due to the presence of two discrete subjects within the discourse, in order that those principally familiar with

either music or psychoanalysis can refer to the information therein as they wish. However, any opinions expressed in the appendices are not necessarily to be understood as representative of any viewpoint other than my own. Thus the text will be written in the first person plural, leaving the first person singular for comments and examples.

The *Conclusion* will set out to do exactly what its name implies but, as we are working in the area of speculative knowledge, where theoretical constructs depend upon original assumptions, we acknowledge the fact that we may only be able to create a theoretical structure within which new and interesting perspectives will be discovered. From the possibilities, therefore, some may emerge as foundational, eventually being accepted as viable theoretical constructs, while others may generate new themes that will only be of use as spring-boards for future enquiry. Of course, the whole thesis will beg many questions.

### **Emerging Themes:**

Preliminary research has revealed that, first and foremost, it is the work of Sigmund Freud which will form the backbone of the psychoanalytic component within this opus, even though Brent Logan, a researcher into intra-uterine psychic development, takes issue with him in the following manner: 'Very young people – particularly prenatals – have been long discriminated against by adults presuming definitional incompetence. Despite expected professions of endearment, this hubristic if unspoken attitude stems from pandemic ignorance of early biological as well as psychological knowledge, in large part influenced by Freud's unenlightened regard for infant abilities and the Victorian era's suppression of bodily concerns, especially matters procreational'.<sup>17</sup> However, few psychological discourses now fail to make appropriate use of Freudian descriptive terms such as *ego*, *repression*, *acting-out*, *working-through*, *narcissistic personality* – even *Oedipal complex*. But we will discover just how important to our enquiry is his opus of 1900 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which we will need to follow with, and enhance by, Anton Ehrenzweig's *Psychoanalysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing* and *The Hidden Order of Art*.

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<sup>17</sup> Brent Logan. 1989, first page.

Of the post-Freudians, we do not anticipate being able to draw so readily upon the writings of Jacques Lacan, because he is located firmly within the French *Structural-linguistic* tradition, which places him at one remove from our intention to examine the pre-verbal environment of the pre-nate. However, the very humanistic work of Jean Laplanche, already cited above, is a different matter, and we may well wish in the end that we had more time to enlarge upon the contribution he will make to this thesis. The British-based psychoanalysts, such as Wilfred Bion, Donald Winnicott, Melanie Klein, Hannah Segal and Marion Milner will all be the subject of significant, though not extensive, citations, while Martin Stanton's on-going contribution is such that it will merit separate acknowledgement. All of these provide themes worthy of further attention in the present context – Bion's *alpha and beta elements*, Winnicott's *transitional object*, Klein's *object relations theory*, Segal and Milner's views on creativity, and Stanton's unique ideas on trauma.<sup>18</sup>

However, a most important alternative viewpoint on creativity could be provided from the writings of Carl Gustav Jung. Occasionally in the present text, we might provide a tantalizing glimpse of this alternative, but it would take a complete re-working of the present planned thesis in order to accommodate Jung's stance. As equally unsure of himself as Freud when confronted with music, Jung is often seen, though, as a champion of composers and all that they stand for, whereas Freud is not but, at the time of writing, no-one appears to have satisfactorily explained what it is about Jung's work that attracts in this manner. Maybe composers who feel in some way validated by Jung are acting unconsciously, and cannot therefore analyze what is going on. Nevertheless, we will undoubtedly find a place in this thesis for some of Jung's scholarship regarding alchemy, but it might be some time before we can embark upon an extensive analogy between Jung's work and the composition of music, according it the degree of attention it deserves.

From a first glance at the idea of a 'Dionysian duo' of affective gesture and utterance, arises another theme, which is focused upon the transformation of affect into dance and song. Again, it will be all too briefly dealt with here, but its thetic potential remains highly significant.

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<sup>18</sup> For these, and other concepts, cf Appendix IV.



When we arrive at the third part of the thesis, the *Process*, we will be embarking upon a new critical method of music analysis, based on the concept of the latent ideas behind the manifest score. This is unique to this present work, but it may well have, later on, negative as well as positive ramifications. On the positive side, greater insight into composed musical works – on the negative, a return to the projection of programmatic elements into music in the now discredited manner of musicologists such as Donald Tovey.<sup>19</sup>

Then the fourth part, the *Product* will launch us into seeking invariants or invariant elements among the differences between music and psychoanalysis, thereby establishing a mutual critical relationship between the two, so that one changes the other, and neither can be viewed in the same way again. As a result, for example, the psychoanalytic concept of the *transference* may well finally find its true identity as a general cultural phenomenon. In any case, adding music in this way to the general cultural significance of psychoanalytic theory, will open up a highly fertile area of ground, ready to be seeded with ideas.

Finally, it will be obvious from the opening paragraphs of this introduction that, as far as pedagogy is concerned, much remains to be done to address inequalities of opportunity and expectation; this is an area of concern which will be both overtly addressed from time to time, as well as revealed on a covert agenda. We owe it to young people to challenge entrenched pedagogical attitudes which operate to their detriment so, if we manage to present arguments which will effect changes, we must surely accord top priority to their dissemination.

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<sup>19</sup> For example, the seven-volume *Essays in Musical Analysis*, first published in 1935 by Oxford University Press.

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# **PART 1**

## **The Creative Drive**

# I

## GENIUS, GIFT, TALENT: a reappraisal

*“Eccentricities of genius, Sam,” said Mr. Pickwick.<sup>1</sup>*

Mr. Pickwick’s pithy comment contains much more than its face-value as a snippet of conversation in a famous book. In fact, it accords well with this chapter’s generative impulse by drawing attention to the degree with which nineteenth century romanticism, with the power of a sledgehammer, completed the demolition of the ancient concept of *genius*. By emphasising it as something often set apart from socially acceptable norms, romanticism reified it, to suit its own particular blend of conscious and unconscious motives.

In contrast to *genius* though, the other concepts of *gift*, and *talent*, though changed over time, have remained relatively stable and confined almost entirely within the domain of social acceptability. But, in spite of the criticisms we will level against pedagogy, the best of modern educational methods can prove that ‘creativity’ is something possessed by everyone, so it becomes paramount to effect this present reappraisal as a preliminary to any examination of the wider concept of creativity. Unfortunately, though, it looks like taking many more years before society as a whole changes its damaging attitudes and ceases to regard creativity as a rare attribute of the few.

My own definition of creativity, which will be used throughout this thesis both implicitly and explicitly, is that creativity is a re-realization of existents – giving that which already exists a new identity, a new reality. That means that musical composition, which lies at the core of this thesis, although usually considered to be confined to the Western European music tradition, can still be considered to be a universal; no matter into which cultural society one is born, all forms of musical expression involve re-realizations. Musical traditions that are entirely orally transmitted, for example, are never free from

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<sup>1</sup> From *Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens.

alterations and improvisations. It follows, therefore, that virtually every human act, whether concerned with concrete objects or with abstract thought can be classed as 'creative'. Thus we must examine the value-judgements which, by having elevated certain re-realizations above others, led to the construction of the hierarchies of quality and achievement to which the familiar epithets of genius, gift and talent now apply.

European-based cultures, the main concern in the present context, thrive on hierarchical, as opposed to more egalitarian structures. Less individualistic cultures do not produce such stratification of achievement, in fact, for some, the concept of 'a work of art' is not understood at all, so it is beginning to dawn on post-modern Europe that different attitudes towards achievement are possible, even desirable. Indeed, for those seeking a way to redress some of the iniquities perpetrated under hierarchies, such hierarchical systems are valid targets for deconstruction. Not only are the hierarchies of genius, gift and talent just as exclusive as any other, but they also exhibit the rigid resistance to challenge which is peculiar to assumptions. Exclusion from, and not inclusion in, is rather assumed to be inevitable, and informs a sense of destiny both individually and collectively. But it is seldom acknowledged exactly how distorted the system is, particularly by the whole complex issue of the place of women in patriarchal societies.

Occasionally, however, genius, gift and talent have had to open their doors to the unexpected, necessitating an accommodating re-shuffling. Ask any musician now to state whom they might consider to be 'the greatest composer' and, invariably, they will reply in this manner: 'Of course, with the exception of Johann Sebastian Bach, I think ...'. However, the elevation of Bach to the absolute summit of any hierarchy of composers – indeed to have him floating up and away *super* summit is largely attributable to the work of Felix Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn is credited with the re-discovery of the music of Johann Sebastian for, by the time he was born, the 'modern' music of the sons Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach and Johann Christian Bach had already eclipsed that of their father. Johann Sebastian holds his present supreme position purely by chance. Friedrich Nietzsche stated the obvious: 'The order of rank of greatness for all past mankind has not yet been determined'.<sup>2</sup> Thus, awareness of the existence of all which is unrecognized and unsung, together with

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<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche (1881), p.221.

the importance of chance, presents everyone with a moral imperative to examine assumptions, as Ernst Gombrich put it: ‘The captain on the bridge who could have left the sinking ship but stayed must have been a hero; the man who was trapped in his sleep and drowned may also have been heroic, but we shall never know’.<sup>3</sup>

Johann Sebastian Bach though, has from then on been singled out for special treatment, but the quality and excellence of his music (which is a consolidation of influences of others such as Buxtehude, Praetorius and Schütz) is not in question – only society’s attitudes towards the man. Susan McClary, writing in *Talking Politics in Bach Year*, exposed a political agenda: ‘Many factors have had a hand in (this) recasting of Bach as icon: the German nationalists of the early nineteenth century who wanted covertly to colonize the world culturally by means of “absolute music” (that is, German music with the ideology camouflaged); those nostalgic for periods of strong religious authority; music theorists who derive their rules and norms from a study of his music ... Why do we still need to locate perfection, universality, extra-human truth in this music ... What is our sense of the history of the bourgeoisie that we want to cling to its early documents as “divinely inspired” (a bizarre aspiration, to be sure, for secular humanism), that we do not want them to have been constructed by us, that we want our regulations to have extra-human authority ... eighteenth-century music ... hides its social agenda inside what appear to be pure, self-contained patterns of tones’.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, in the context of Western European art-music, a reappraisal of genius, gift and talent is long overdue, and it is obvious that much more is involved than just Anglo-centric semantics. The moral imperative here is to rein in our propensity to allocate qualitative judgements and value-judgements, for ‘chance’ is a fickle friend of both. All those who are driven towards the mode of music deserve to be assisted in equal measure, so that (to paraphrase Claude Debussy) all the little Dr. Graduses might perceive Parnassus to be within their reach.<sup>5</sup> We must cast aside the possibility of this being an impossible task and, holding fast to that underlying principle, step into an ideal world - then be bold enough to examine the reasons for our assumptions. However, we find that

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<sup>3</sup> Gombrich. 1960, p.18.

<sup>4</sup> Leppert and McLary. 1987, pp56-57 and n.

<sup>5</sup> *Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum* is the first piece in *The Children’s Corner Suite* by Claude Debussy. *Gradus* = step; *Parnassus*, a mountain in central Greece, held to be the sacred place of Apollo and the Muses.



exploring the three epithets which head this chapter is as deceptively simple as following the course of a river; the numerous tributaries which flow into the main stream can divert attention, when it is the actual points of conflation which are important. Stepping-stones are necessary to bounce us across the centuries, highlighting the differences accrued over time, but this whole exploration, nevertheless, can be disturbing for us, as the secrets of the landscape are revealed, and we discover just how deep the river runs.

To begin with, the source of *genius* did not arise in concrete reality - genius has always been an 'idea'. As a fact, it would have been sterile – as a mythologized fact it would have been potent enough, but its very lack of a factual foundation has immeasurably increased its potential for mythologization – though it is not wholly myth as we shall see. As an idea, genius is imaginary, consisting of a multi-layered series of images – it is assumed to be a whole-thing, and is persistently communicated as such via the medium of language. Despite its etymologically fertile root in the Latin *genere* (to generate), genius is an illusion.

The perception of genius as a whole-thing demonstrates its qualities as a deceptive, seductive *fascinosum* to which we cling, and places it convincingly within the unconscious mind at a Lacanian *point de capiton* – a point of illusory fixed meaning in the signifying chain.<sup>6</sup> It has more than a toe-hold in the unconscious symbolic order – the realm of culture – its shifting relationships and coalescences within the signifier/signified dyad are strongly indicative of that placement. However, its wealth of reference, acquired over centuries, and its resultant manifold meaning, is also typical of the archetypal forms suggested by Jung.<sup>7</sup> The history of genius in European-based culture, from its appearance as part of every person's endowment, to its present status as an avatar is, in fact, a history of every age appropriating the idea anew and shifting its meaning to reinforce its cultural ethos.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Jacques Lacan. Cf Appendix III. For the concept of the *signifier*, see Appendix IV.

<sup>7</sup> For the concept of *archetypes*, see Appendix IV.

<sup>8</sup> For an exploration of the cultural history of genius, cf Murray, 1989. Cf also *The New Oxford Companion to Music*, *The Oxford English Dictionary* and *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

In ancient Greece and Rome, genius most likely originated as constituting part of a narcissistic self-image, for then, genius represented a universal birthright – it symbolized immanent plenipotential. It was considered not only to reside in every person, but also in every place (*genius loci*); one presumes a family genius protected the hereditary line, and a *genius loci*, the family home. This was based on an earlier belief of the genius of the male and the *iuno* of the female united in one household – at the same time vertically permeating the clan as a whole. A polarized duality was thus present in the concept at a very early stage, where it has remained as a consistent, inviting the accretion of other oppositions, as we will see. Essentially, however, it was an early attempt to define the motivating human life-force, and it was considered valuable enough to be worshipped.

But, by the nineteenth century, the original idea of a genius as everyone's immanent plenipotential, had ceased to exist. A genius had become a single person riven with opposites, largely confined to a 'cerebral' role, and 'inspired' to produce great works of art, poetry, literature, music or science - masculine, but 'different', 'chosen', 'supernormal', 'inspired by God' (or the devil) and depicted as 'wild of hair and eye' – the stereotypical 'eccentricities of genius'. Romantic sentimentality coddled and flattered its precocity, yet rejoiced that it 'suffered for its art', preferably in uncalled-for circumstances of poverty and degradation – far removed from the comforts of 'normal' homes. Isolated thus from our own pretences, genius, an agglomeration of unconscious projections - comprised divinely-bestowed gifts, secret arcane practices, at least a modicum of devilishness, a certain raffish disdain of *bourgeois* values, and heroics. *Genius* took on all the aspects of The Other.

In the interim, unfortunately forgotten (or, maybe, conveniently) have been the chance advantages possessed by the select few. Only very occasionally does an impoverished childhood lie in the background of a 'genius', - more often than not there has been access to a foundational education, opportunity for choice of *modus operandi*, and time to carry out what one wishes to do. We might wonder, therefore, if any of the lauded, distinguished contributors to their chosen field have, in the past, stopped to consider whether one of their household servants might not be as equally capable as they, given the same advantages. By the same token, surely a *frisson* of discomfort ought to accompany our reading of the following today: '... just this guy composing silently up

in his room. He'd go through these periods of not talking, because he was so involved in what he was doing ... if you opened the door, he'd be sitting at his desk in front of an enormous piece of orchestral sheet music. I don't remember being told to keep quiet – he didn't mind you walking in and playing at all. He was so absorbed in what he was doing, he wouldn't even notice ... my mother ... gave up her career as a singer ... Dad can't remember the chaos involved with little children – probably because my mother was always there, clearing it all up'.<sup>9</sup>

So what caused the immanent plenipotential, proudly possessed by everyone to be relocated to its present position as a benison bestowed at birth upon a select few? If we turn again to the ancient world, we see the philosopher Longinus perceived the necessity for both education and time, for he suggested that emulation of the laudable achievements of others held the key to elevated thought. Yet, concerned as he also was with the concept of the *sublime* (held to be that part of the realm of transcendence which eludes our comprehension) he reasoned that great products of the imagination could not result from merely learning 'the rules of the game'.<sup>10</sup> He felt the source of the sublime lay within a nexus of moral, emotional and imaginative qualities of the mind – an important *mélange* which, in the present context, leaps to the fore two millennia later. The seed of another later idea was also sown in these early times: Plautus indicated that genius might be a singular incarnate producing excellence (a noun with its Latin root of *celcus*, meaning *lofty*), rather than an in-born commonality: '*Ut saepe summa ingenia in occulto latent*'.<sup>11</sup> Yet not until the present day would it become possible to conceive of restoring the hidden, the unrecognized and unsung from obscurity via the medium of education and a more egalitarian *zeitgeist*, even though certain fixed attitudes still remain formidable objects to progress in this direction; for example, Anthony Storr, whose extensive writings on creativity we have already noted, as recently as 1992 was moved

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<sup>9</sup> Adam Birtwistle, artist, writing about his father, the composer Sir Harrison Birtwistle. (*Sunday Times*, 1-11-98).

<sup>10</sup> Because the trail leading back to his true identity became lost, he is now generally known as *Pseudo-Longinus*, and he is thought to have lived during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

<sup>11</sup> *How often the greatest geniuses lie hidden in obscurity!* Plautus, *Captivi* (*The Captivities*), 1. 165. (Act 1, sc.2). Taken from *Stevenson*. 1964, p.760.

Plautus, 254-184 BC, was an Italian comic dramatist.



to this hyperbole: 'Composers who are as gifted as Mozart and Haydn are, *of course*, far superior to the ordinary person ...'.<sup>12</sup>

Additionally, the ancient world must bear some responsibility for inferring a close relationship between genius and *daimon* – the latter, a direct transliteration of the Greek for a *divinity* became, over time, considered as a spirit inferior to the former, yet still superior to man. Taken up by Christianity and anthropomorphosed into the doctrine of opposing angels and demons, angels became messengers of God and agents of 'good', while demons became messengers of the Devil and agents of 'evil'.<sup>13</sup>

Angels exist in the Zoroastrian, Islamic and Judaic traditions as well as the Christian, and are benevolent, spiritual masculine beings who mediate between the opposing realms of the sacred (transcendent and unquantifiable), and the profane (quantifiable time and space, cause and effect). The importance of this ingredient as the idea of genius became secularized, is much more apparent at the time of the Enlightenment in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (a resonance of the bond secured in the unconscious between cerebral imagination, morality and the sublime), while a formative congealing of genius and demon occurs later, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The tangential, Christian *guardian angel*, or *hafazah* of Islam (possibly guarding one from 'demonic possession') persisted throughout, clearly identifiable as a projection of the original idea of genius.

Until the Christian transmutation of genius into angel, there were obvious parallels with ancestor worship, spirits which reside in places and objects, with Shamanism, and with all manner of religious beliefs world-wide. In these surviving cultures, something of the original, subjective, conception of genius is retained along with their people's sense of individual spiritual dignity. Christianity, though not alone among world religions in this, has forever found itself in conflict with such thinking, but Christian dogma impacted the most on European culture as it became its major religion.

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<sup>12</sup> Storr. 1992, p.120. My emphasis. Of this book, Michael White of *The Times*, wrote: 'This book is a gem'. (quoted on the cover of the paperback edition).

<sup>13</sup> A revealing and erudite account of the development of this particular aspect is provided by Hans Jonas (1958).



Also of fundamental importance is the wider, but nevertheless still huge problematic in monotheism, of an external, male God as Creator, responsible for all 'gifts'. Two very important points emerge here. First, though it could be posited that artists have frequently depicted Christian angels as devoid of many overt characteristics of the masculine, in favor of a more 'feminine' appearance, it is obvious that opportunity was snatched from the female by the suppression of *Sophian* wisdom. *Sophos* implied an amalgam of wide-ranging knowledge and skills, which included seamanship, carpentry, musical and poetic ability, and the wisdom of the seer, and the Greek feminine proper noun *Sophia* contained its personification. Mythologically, *Sophia* is linked to the archetypal *Great Mother* – the spirit of the totality of all that is corporeal and non-corporeal (matter and spirit together) - existing beyond time and space in the *pleroma* (which can be understood as the ineffable plenitude).<sup>14</sup> For music, we need only examine the case of Hildegard von Bingen, relegated to obscurity for many centuries, though recently much interest has been generated in her work, via the women's movement in general and musicologists in particular. The loss to Western European cultural history of those women whose achievements will never be known is, without question, utterly shameful. To digress a moment - Lucy Green illustrates one of the modern results of our inherited masculine hierarchy; she wrote: 'The percentage of women registered as composers ... is c.15%. The membership of the Musicians Union is currently 32,757 men and 7,623 women.'<sup>15</sup>

The second point relates to the second epithet, *gift*. This is generally associated in the modern mind with beneficence. That has not always been so, for a *Grecian gift* was a term used to describe something handed to one by an enemy – therefore of which one might be suspicious, as a sinister motive for the gift might well exist. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a gift could mean a bribe or other corrupting influence while (and it is worth mentioning), even earlier, in the period of 'Old High German' (before 1100 AD) *Gift* had already acquired its present meaning in German of *poison*.

Now it can be argued that the persistence of the idea of *gift* in the present context owes something of its origins to the unconscious nature of sexual symbolism lying concealed

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<sup>14</sup> For more about *Sophian wisdom*, cf Appendix I. For *Great Mother* and *Pleroma*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>15</sup> Green. 1993, p.49. For Hildegard von Bingen cf Appendix III.

behind any idea of the creative drive (as *libido*). This is not new - in fact, Hans Jonas wrote (describing the possible effusions of displaced repression of sexuality): ‘... we find the sexual soul-imagery throughout the language of later Hellenistic piety, which is saturated with the spirit of supranatural religiosity. The ‘sacred marriage’ of the mystery-cults is an example; and many Christian descriptions of the action of grace and the diffusion of the Holy Spirit in the soul belong to the same circle of metaphors’.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, in the Bible, from Old and New Testaments together, out of a total of 28 references to *gift*, fifteen are attributed to St.Paul, whose writings undoubtedly helped to expand the existing idea that a gift was a miraculously bestowed faculty from a supernatural source. St.Paul said: ‘But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after his manner, one after that.’ And: ‘Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit’.<sup>17</sup>

Enter the alchemist. During the middle ages, in a general climate of ‘non-understanding’ in a modern, scientific sense, those who had the education and the time to pursue an interest in manipulating and transmuting basic terrestrial materials, namely metals, were considered to possess supernatural powers. The process was known as alchemy, the participators were known as *adepts*, and they inherited the practice from ancient Greek traditions via the Mohammedan influence in Spain. To almost everyone else, their work was solitary (therefore both secret and mysterious), both destructive and constructive and, because it involved changing the very nature of matter, thought obviously achieved with the assistance of ‘the hand of God’, or of the devil himself. The latter was often suspected, especially in terms of Gnosticism,<sup>18</sup> and because the experimental work was often downright dangerous; in the general confusion, certain rituals thought to be evilly contaminated commanded the lingering description ‘black magic’.

The adept’s work was seen by Jung as analagous to the work of the psyche, or the unconscious mind. Working with the *prima materia* – heating base materials together with a liquid in the *vas mirabile* – Jung thought reflected the attempt to unify the opposites in the unconscious. Following the ancient Chinese philosophy of opposites

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<sup>16</sup> Jonas. (1958), p.284.

<sup>17</sup> *St.Paul's first letter to the Corinthians*, Chapter 7, v.7; and Chapter 12, v.4. (Authorized version). For etymology of *spirit*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>18</sup> For *Gnosticism*, cf Appendix IV.

*yang* and *yin*, these were, respectively ‘masculine’ light, dryness and warmth (and of differentiated consciousness) and ‘*Sophianic* feminine’ dark, cold and moist (the undifferentiated unconscious wherein is the ‘ineffable plenitude’). Successful combinations symbolically unified both masculine and feminine in the *hieros gamos* (chemical marriage), which also signified the union of matter and spirit, but, most importantly for European culture, a combination which was clearly reflected in the doctrine of the union of Christ with the Church, symbolized in the earthly marriage union of bride and groom – the bride waiting for the groom and, it is therefore supposed, for fulfilment. Although one of the most difficult links to challenge by its very nature, this can throw a great deal of insight onto the separation of genius as ‘other-than-us’, in its identification with masculine intellectual and moral superiority, and therefore with both the Freudian *super-ego* and the *ego idéal*.<sup>19</sup>

*Genius*, then, not only welcomed the accretion of the adept but also, because already primed to receive opposing forces, it absorbed the symbol of mystical union, therefore forging a further unconscious link with the transcendent realm of God. This established a phallic hierarchy in Western minds, with Zeus or God at the pinnacle and, in descending order, lesser deities, mortal kings, loyal vassals and subjects. Indeed, it is highly likely that genius enjoys its status as it helps to secure the ego through fantasy. Expressed in the mode of Jacques Lacan, genius feeds on the enigmatic desire of the *Other*, as ‘wanting something from me, and I am important enough to give it’ - as in a gift coming from God.

What, though, if God as a pre-existent creator did not do as is written in the Old Testament: ‘So *God created man in his own image*; in the image of God created he him; ...’,<sup>20</sup> but rather, as has been hinted, ‘Man created God in his own image’? Thomas Hardy allocates to ‘the voice of God’ the following question to man: ‘Wherefore, O Man, did there come to you/ The unhappy need of creating me - /A form like your own – for praying to?’<sup>21</sup> The importance of this antinomianism is obvious, but it involves wading deep into theological argument, which is clearly not practical here. Nevertheless, it must be considered, albeit in simplistic terms.

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<sup>19</sup> Further elucidation of these Freudian concepts will be found in the next chapter.

<sup>20</sup> *The Book of Genesis*. Chapter 1, v.27. Emphasis mine.

<sup>21</sup> Hardy, Thomas: poem entitled *A Complaint to Man*.



The classical ideation of immanent genius as a life-force was accompanied by polytheistic beliefs, so that recognition of one's own genius was to recognize a dynamic Self, but one that had to exist alongside a multitude of other objects in the natural world - each possessing its own genius. These early, polytheistic, projections constitute part of our psychological inheritance, lingering on as superstitions. Consequently, of course, if such projections are withdrawn, the Self is bound to be strengthened as genius is relocated as an immanence: Wilfred Bion wrote: 'Projective Identification is a splitting off by the patient of a part of his personality and a projection of it into the object where it becomes installed, sometimes as a persecutor, leaving the psyche from which it has been split off correspondingly impoverished'.<sup>22</sup>

By the same token therefore, the monotheistic projection to a single God must surely also deplete this store of self-hood. If all the centrifugal energy of polytheism becomes centripetal, then coalesces monotheistically into one who is re-projected as a separate, all-mighty being, we become completely dependent upon this single creator-God, who 'made us', for giving us back the personal dynamism we lost in projective energy. Furthermore, as in the powerful accounts of the Garden of Eden, the Tower of Babel and the Prometheus myth, we are even 'punished' for using this returned 'gift' because we 'know too much', as a supreme creator-God apparently cannot tolerate his supremacy being challenged by humans becoming 'knowledgeable'. But we have a choice; in the words of Goethe: '...man's power to free himself from his myths by recognizing them as projections of his own unconscious, of his power to break the chain of events that seems to determine his present ... by a reorientation of outlook'. In Jungian terms, the withdrawal of projections of divine images contributes to the course of one's *individuation*.<sup>23</sup>

In this respect, neither the projections of polytheism nor of monotheism could be considered desirable so, clearly the alternative is not to abdicate total responsibility for our own self-hood, our own dynamism. Yet if, as we have suggested, the linking of

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<sup>22</sup> Bion. 1967, pp.36-37.

<sup>23</sup> From *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (1787) by Goethe (cf Appendix III); quoted in *The Encyclopedia Britannica* Vol.20, p.135. For *Individuation*, cf Appendix IV.

genius with the Godhead is maintained, that is exactly what we have done – we have indeed failed to exercise the right to direct our own dynamism, and so we must bear the consequences of non-fulfilment of our potential. On the other hand, though, abdicating responsibility also absolves us from the hard task of achievement – an easier life beckons; yet assuming responsibility for that which is within ourselves poses a great dilemma for (as we shall see when we examine the 19<sup>th</sup> century value-judgements of social acceptability) we don't always like what is within ourselves. In fact, it is often that which is most inimical to us that is accrued in the unconscious, and then rejected by the process of projection. The qualitative status of that which we discard therefore not only bears crucially upon the identification of genius as other-than-ourselves, but also informs our collusion with the conventional view of it: ' ... even if a majority do make easily and naturally the socially adapted response within their community, they are in fact prisoners of the choice ... But to be thus prisoners within a dominant social attitude is to make a sacrifice inside the individual psyche; the sacrifice of those sensibilities and apprehensions which have virtually no social status – none, at least, when pitted against the terrific overwhelming power of the socially conventional'.<sup>24</sup>

Truly, then, *gift* is a word which needs to be challenged, especially as in one sense it has come to mean an in-born 'natural' attribute, a 'birth-present', without which one cannot fulfil a desire to achieve something one, in fact, wishes to do. In this sense, it has an affinity with the original idea of genius. But a gift can also be withheld - we might find ourselves waiting forever for 'the gift'. The danger is that, frustrated ourselves, we then frustrate the *genius* in others by various constrictive, deterministic means – we proliferate the hindrances to little Dr. Graduses on their route to Parnassus, and that is not something of which society should be proud. One tree may grow as high as another – but not if it is stunted by root or branch-pruning – one person may be able to achieve as much as another, but not if hindered.

It can be categorically stated that there is now no good reason for maintaining the particularly pernicious place of *gift* in education – where almost every discipline is said to be possible for those who are 'gifted' in that direction – a formidable psychological barrier for all aspirants to overcome (which, of course, many never do – they live out

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<sup>24</sup> Bowen. 1995, p.301.

their lives contemplating what they might have done if only they had been ‘gifted’). It has indeed poisoned pedagogy and, as Alfred Adler also put it: ‘If we reproach a human being, undermine his self-respect so far as his relationship to society is concerned, cause him to abandon all hope of accomplishing anything, ruin his courage, and then find that he actually never amounts to anything ... we must admit that it is we who have caused all his sorrow!’<sup>25</sup>

Returning to the specifics of alchemy, a further analogy other than the mystical union is possible. As we have seen, genius is closely associated with spirit; *talent*, on the other hand, is more often associated with a material gift. When an adept attempted a union of spirit and matter, he hoped to create a new substance from the union – the gift of the spirit united with the material gift – the one in the service of the other and vice versa.

Alchemy itself declined somewhat in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance and, as Jung wrote: ‘... the symbolical unity of spirit and matter fell apart ...’,<sup>26</sup> thus the term *techné* from classical philosophy, which had included both the fine arts and the useful arts, became more exclusively attached to the latter. Furthermore, the concept of ‘the artist’ arose in the Renaissance, and from that time on, the achievements of the artist were elevated above those of the artisan. We therefore begin to understand more fully the present split categorization of *genius* as one whose intellectual and spiritual questing lies largely within the mind, thus leaving *talent* as the province of one who works consciously with matter. This concept of talent re-surfaces later, as the split assumes the quality of a schism at the time of the Industrial Revolution.

But as the Middle Ages slipped into the Renaissance, it remained true that, whatever the achievement or the classification, without education it was not possible to pursue anything other than a utilitarian existence. Largely as a result of the establishment of monasteries and the nobility, clerics, noble courtiers, gentlemen ‘of high social standing’ and ‘of independent means’ were all educated, particularly in the classic languages of Greece and Rome. This promoted a kind of first-order division among the population, separating individuals who were conversant with language other than the vernacular, from those who had no choice other than the vernacular – particularly as Latin became

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<sup>25</sup> Way. 1956, p.151.



the language of European academe and remained the language of the Church for many centuries. The general populace mostly could neither read nor write at all, so they were robbed of a crucial tradition of learning.

A second-order division was based largely on value-judgements. For example, consider the cleric who, within a Christian monastic tradition, found his learning, and his skill in illuminating manuscripts highly regarded - his work bore the stamp of high moral purpose - a moral purpose which it was his particular duty to serve by virtue of his acquired skill.<sup>27</sup> And away from religious establishments, certain noble courtiers, young men self-motivated to produce poetry, or song, served 'the elevated morality' of maintaining an uplifted spirit among the higher nobility they attended. Emotion was their trade, whether it be heroic acclaim, the brooding melancholy of love, or a sensuousness tinged more than a little with eroticism, and their education rendered it possible for them to manipulate the raw materials of poetry and music to suit their varied purposes. Many travelled extensively as *troubadours* from court to court, city to city, sometimes ostensibly to learn 'at the feet of great teachers' in a pre-university Europe, but mostly, one suspects, in a spirit of self-indulgent idleness in the warmer parts of the continent.

The Italian Renaissance saw alchemy and natural curiosity begin to come together into the wide-ranging discipline we know as science (the solar-centric *Copernican Theory* was published in 1543), but one of the important legacies of alchemy is an encrustation of character to the blossoming symbolic anthropomorphism of genius – a solitary *man*, mysteriously divinely or devilishly gifted, involved in processes both arcane and esoteric, at which non-adepts could only marvel. However, the greatest debt owed to the Renaissance is perhaps in the field of the arts, as *humanism*, its germinating force, cast a backward look at the paganism of ancient Greece and Rome and liked what it saw. Architecture favored the ancient styles, and a more sybaritic life-style was adopted in Italy as the influence of the church declined.

During the Renaissance then, the reputation of the painter and the sculptor, hitherto honored as artisans, rose in proportion to the wealth and status of commissionees and,

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<sup>26</sup> Jung. C.W. 9i, para.197.

through the academies of art, an intellectualization of the artistic process was initiated. Here, methods and processes were taught through disciplined study, application and conscious thought, and much was made of man's capacity for achievement in various fields of endeavor. Freed from the theological *letters* of the medieval schoolmen, *Litterae Humaniores* (humanities) signified the new learning and released the energies of the well-educated and those driven to express the greater freedom of the individual, such as the composer Claudio Monteverdi, and artists Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

The latter (for example), was the *divino artista* - receptor of divine inspiration – having taken *in* the gift of God's *spirit*.<sup>28</sup> God worked through man's imagination - He may have provided the capacity for great creative achievement, but an individual man himself could now also elevate himself as a creator – and thus a demi-god. Unfortunately, Arnold Schönberg (whose writings on music are extensive, but imbued with his personality, which appears to rejoice in his self-awarded elevated status as 'artist' rather than 'artisan') appears to endorse this: 'But nobody can give voice to an idea unless he could also think of it, and the true art of composition (like true science) will always remain a secret science ... It has to be so, not just because the initiated are forbidden to make it known, but, particularly, because the others are unable to grasp it'. And: ' ... secret science is not what an alchemist would have refused to teach you; it is a science which cannot be taught at all. It is inborn or it is not there'.<sup>29</sup> Igor Stravinsky, on the other hand, held a more post-modern view: 'I simply maintain that inspiration is in no way a prescribed condition of the creative act, but rather a manifestation that is chronologically secondary'.<sup>30</sup>

It was largely the backlash against the desperately corrupt Church of Rome that landed Northern Europe in the Protestant Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a movement that involved 'truth' once more being invested in theology, but via a strict, fundamental interpretation of the Bible. However, it seems incongruous that this climate should also foster a greater sense of individual ego than had existed before, but this was possibly the

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<sup>27</sup> The relationship to music of the expressive art of manuscript illumination is discussed in Chapter IV.

<sup>28</sup> Inspiration is thus a more important word than is often realized – its reflects exactly the premise we are building here – that we have come to accept it as a 'gift' from 'God'.

<sup>29</sup> Stein. 1975, p.375 and p.386. We further address this controversial view in Chapter VI.

<sup>30</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p. 65.



first Christian era when no earthly authority was felt to intervene between man and God, and when it was even possible to possess the freedom to interpret the Bible in individual ways. Collectively, many different sects assembled under the Protestant umbrella, all aspiring to honor the teachings of the Bible with a 'correct' interpretation of 'The Word of God'. This individual and collective subjectivity set group against group, sect against sect, in a kind of anarchy of which paranoia was the hallmark and 'witch hunts' a terrible manifestation, when all that hinted at the alchemical arts became infamous.

Undoubtedly, this mix of frenetic religious rigour and individualism spawned many of the ideas around which the Enlightenment was formed. Education, and a totally different attitude to the church strengthened the individual ego of man and ensured that he demand knowledge, freedom and happiness. He could even create these for himself – certainly the latter two fired a revolutionary spirit for 'the Rights of Man'. In fact, a synthesis was sought between ideas of God, of nature and of man, fuelled by the powers of reason, and for about a hundred years, not only was there a revolution in the arts, philosophy and politics (as in the English Reform Acts, of which the first was passed in 1832), but also the revolutions of war – in America from 1776-1783, and France in 1789, whose National Assembly adopted the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* in that year.

The tensions thus generated were expressed in some measure by the *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress) movement in Germany,<sup>31</sup> which began as a literary phenomenon exalting nature, human subjectivity and individualism, and the expression of feeling. Its impact on the music of the time was immense. Josef Haydn who, once there, never quite managed to free himself from employ at the Hapsburg Court of Esterhazy, complied with the almost histrionic gestures of widely spaced melodic notes in the openings of some of his sonatas and symphonies, coupled with frequent moments of anguished dissonance contrasted with the delicacy of decorated melodic lines.

This was the legacy taken up by Ludwig van Beethoven, and interpreted artistically by the painter Caspar David Friedrich. In the latter's work, rational thought had met its

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<sup>31</sup> Also known as the *Genieperiode* of the *Kraftmänner* (power-men).

opposite, for it appeared to depict man's helplessness against the forces of nature – and a return to an altered concept of the sublime. Both aspects were contained within the music of Franz Schubert – many consider his last, (perhaps aptly titled) song-cycle *Winterreise* (*Winter Journey*) to be his finest achievement. It depicts, in words by Wilhelm Müller, the complete isolation of someone alienated, not only from the natural world, but also from the transcendental.

With this quotation: ‘... the truth that mastery of life is not conferred at the end of the “apprentice years” and henceforth an inalienable possession, but a ceaseless wandering in which the goal turns out to be the way, and the way the goal’, Goethe seems to have created an elision between the *Sturm und Drang* and the Romantic Age that was to follow.<sup>32</sup> In his writings, he adulated Shakespeare as a genius, and the nineteenth century saw the apotheosis of the genius as a highly individual character of supreme achievement, loaded with all the accrued projections of the past. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Schönberg's influential writings also contained this rather unfortunate statement: ‘I believe the artist is born of “I must”, not of “I can” ... So the genius really learns only from himself, the man of talent mainly from others’.<sup>33</sup> But clearly, we are, at the turn of a new millennium, still held in thrall by the same apotheotic figure.

Any doubt that this might be so can easily be dispelled. Nowadays, any mention that one might be questioning the shibboleth of genius is frequently met with incredulity, followed by an amazed: ‘But what about Mozart?’ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is, more often than not, the composer cited under these circumstances (Johann Sebastian Bach's music, I suspect, is to the taste of a more restricted audience than is that of Mozart, although, by the end of this thesis, we will have sufficient understanding of paradigmatic musical structures to realize that the music of both J.S.Bach and Mozart conforms to the one structure to which we can most easily relate). But so far, it has been possible to trace the encrustations of *genius* with, I trust, a degree of credence, and it is now time to add one more, which has been waiting in the wings. This is from the realm of absolute myth: the genius as hero archetype.

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<sup>32</sup> From *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre* (*Wilhelm Meister's Travels*) by Goethe, written between 1821 and 1829. Quoted in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol.20, p.137.

<sup>33</sup> Stein. 1975, p.365.

'These hero myths vary enormously in detail, but the more closely one examines them the more one sees that structurally they are very similar. They have, that is to say, a universal pattern ... Over and over again one hears a tale describing a hero's miraculous but humble birth, his early proof of superhuman strength, his rapid rise to prominence or power, his triumphant struggle with the forces of evil, his fallibility to the sin of pride (hybris), and his fall through betrayal or a "heroic" sacrifice that ends in his death ... In many of these stories the early weakness of the hero is balanced by the appearance of strong "tutelary" figures – or guardians – who enable him to perform the superhuman tasks that he cannot accomplish unaided'.<sup>34</sup>

While we scan the life of Mozart, we are confronted with the notion that the hero archetype remains a manipulative force in the arena of opinion. Mozart, born in Salzburg in 1756 during the Enlightenment, was the son of Leopold, a violinist in the orchestra of the Archbishop of Salzburg (becoming deputy *Kappellmeister* when Wolfgang was seven years old.) Both positions might be considered 'humble', for it is well documented that such employments mostly bore no greater status than that of servant. Wolfgang had a sister, Maria Anna ('Nannerl'), five years older than he, and an accomplished keyboard player – interestingly, although also taken by Leopold on 'concert-tours' with Wolfgang, she fades into obscurity, and we do not know whether she also composed much music. Leopold was, undoubtedly, a 'tutelary figure' for, without his consistent and rigorous tuition, neither of the children would have become so adept at music. Wolfgang probably began composing as early as five years of age, but his mal-adaptation to some of life's practicalities bears witness to the relentless focus forced upon him.

Taken by Leopold around the courts of Europe, the young Wolfgang was a favored performer, and an object of admiration. During his adolescence he became familiar with most of the prevailing styles of music (for all the major cities of Europe possessed their own distinctive style) and by virtue of his constant travels and the opportunities he had to mix with prominent musicians of the day. By his twenties, Wolfgang was in the employ of the new Archbishop of Salzburg, who was a man of rather mean musical tastes, and was not encouraging of Mozart's sophisticated cosmopolitanism. Over the

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<sup>34</sup> Jung (1964). 1978 ed., p.101.



years this relationship went from bad to worse – Mozart wasn't being challenged musically, and was in constant trouble with the Archbishop for being frequently absent from the city.

Mozart received from the Archbishop an order to go to Vienna, where he was treated as a servant and refused permission to give concerts. This became too much and, at the age of twenty-five, Mozart expressed his frustration in no uncertain terms, and was ordered to leave the Archbishop's court. His marriage, and the difficulties he encountered subsequent to his departure from the court are well known, as is, of course, the merely modest success at the time of what are now seen as his outstanding symphonies and operas. Of course, his death in 1791 was, by today's standards, untimely; he probably died of something like rheumatic fever, but the conspiracy theories surrounding his death will continue – was he, as some would claim, murdered by a jealous rival? Mozart's burial in a pauper's grave was not an uncommon fate in 18<sup>th</sup> century Vienna – it is said that his wife, Constance, was too distraught to arrange a 'proper' funeral.

Some of Mozart's difficulties have been exaggerated, and the blame for them (as befits a hero), often laid at the door of someone else. Mozart possessed a certain arrogance of manner and a deep desire to be accepted at the Viennese court, which probably led to his enthusiasm for membership of the Freemasons. However, accepting the greater human frailty of the man is not in any way to detract from his achievement as a composer – an achievement matched in some way by one of his sons, Franz Xaver Wolfgang Mozart (1791-1844), who decided to call himself Wolfgang Amadeus – but who has heard of him now? It is Wolfgang, the father, who will remain forever on a pedestal – yes, well-deserved acclaim – but, because his life matches almost detail for detail the archetypal hero's life, his position as genius seems unassailable.

But there are rituals, sacred rituals, surrounding heroes. For a composer, the sacred ritual is the concert – for the audience, that is a quasi-religious experience in the 'temple of music'. The initiate could be said to have been the young Mozart – but in a modern context, it can be any musician featured individually. A modern context, too, provides a 'priest', in the person of the conductor of the orchestra, whose authority is played out at the altar of the podium with esoteric, hieratic gestures which mediate between what has

been composed by a demi-god and the aural experience over which he presides. The soloist, as initiate, 'crowned with a crown of palms', is lauded and responds by bowing (akin to genuflecting in obeisance) to the audience; he is 'clad in the mystic mantle' of music, and the assembled crowd pays homage, identifying with the young 'god', as psychic changes occur in the participants. Akin to a 'divine drama', a concert may be witnessed, one may take part in it, be emotionally moved by it, or may see oneself identified with the 'god' through the ritual action: 'And as in the most holy of mysteries, they say, that the mystics at first meet with the multiform, and many-shaped genera; (evil demons) which are hurled forth before the gods, but on entering the interior parts of the temple, unmoved, and guarded by the mystic rites, they genuinely receive in their bosom divine illumination'.<sup>35</sup> Slightly more difficulty may be encountered in trying to attend comparable scientific or artistic ritual but, in both those cases, as indeed with composers, secrecy and isolation play a correspondingly bigger part in the mystique of heroic genius.

Meanwhile, what has happened to *talent*? The Industrial Revolution began around 1760 in England, and can be seen as a partner to the continental intellectual Enlightenment, in that rational, scientific thought was placed at the service of engineering, and the English agrarian and handicraft economy gave way to the domination of the machine. Education was not needed to operate machinery to order, nor had it been to grow crops or make handicrafts. But education was needed to turn inventive ideas into reality. This was the province of the mind and, as we have seen, the genius is mind-orientated. Let the genius have his province of abstract thought – the actual manipulation of existents in the material world into manifest, (even 'beautiful') products of the abstractions, is the province of the artisan and the craftsman – their 'gift' is *talent*; their products not so 'original', maybe, but inherently practical and utilitarian. This is the schism mentioned earlier.

*Talent*, unlike *genius*, always seemed to be anchored in the concrete and, from the first, was tied up with material, not cerebral, production (composers are 'geniuses', performers are 'talented').<sup>36</sup> Often associated only with Jesus' parable of the talents, its Biblical references in fact begin in the Old Testament: 'Of a talent of pure gold shall he

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<sup>35</sup> From T.Taylor (1995) *The Theology of Plato* Vol.VIII. Quoted by Newton. 1996b, p.4.

make it, with all these vessels'.<sup>37</sup> A talent was then a unit of considerable weight (approximately 57 lbs.Imperial) and remained a unit of weight until roughly the time of ancient Greece and Rome, whence it became a unit of currency, a coin of specific value. However, Jesus' parable is probably the single most important influence on our modern concept of talent, and it is still being interpreted in the light of that influence – it is a very well-known parable. Jesus apparently spoke of a master who gave each of three servants respectively five talents, two talents and one talent before he went on a journey and, upon his return, asked each what they had done with their gift. Two had invested theirs to make double the talents, were congratulated and seemingly given an equal share in the reward, for this was said to both in turn: 'I will make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord'. The third was considered slothful: 'And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ...', because he had not returned the single talent with usury, but had merely buried the coin to keep it safe (yet is not 'usury' considered risky – indeed, unlawful?).

Now a surprising thing emerges. In defense of his action, this servant said to his master: 'I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine'. What was he afraid of – the unlawful nature of usury, or should our suspicion be aroused that the master is not entirely honest? Should sympathy be offered to this third servant, for not wishing to do anything with a gift which he suspected might not rightfully be his master's to give? Perhaps we should remind ourselves at this point that, if our own immanent plenipotential is invested in an all-mighty, who may, or may not, return it to us (with usury?), does not this talent in fact belong to us – is it not from us that it might have been acquired by the master in the first place? Is the master's gift not a return of our own, depleted Self?

Further light can be shed if, as mentioned earlier, we reflect now on the fate of the religious beliefs enshrined in Gnosticism, whose roots grew in the soil of the Greek word *gnosis*, with its meaning referring to knowledge of things of the spirit. A conflict between these beliefs and the doctrines of the early Christian Church was bound to arise, in view of the exclusive role allocated to the Trinity and the importance of the role of the

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<sup>36</sup> For the etymology of *talent*, cf Appendix IV.



Holy Spirit within that. The Church added Manichaeism to the Gnostic heresy; named after Mani, a Persian seer of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, its followers believed in a conflict between the forces of Light and Darkness, and the co-existence of God and the Devil. Their ideas lingered on in Europe and Asia until the Middle Ages, having a bearing upon alchemy.

Similar to angels, these religions had *aeons*, who involved themselves in the conflict, also in a conflict between matter and spirit. There was a hierarchy of *aeons*, with Christ as the perfect, spiritual, *aeon*, while lower and lower in the hierarchy came those responsible for matter. The Gnostic looked on the material world with a jaundiced eye – indeed it was held to be a product of error. *Gnosis* was said to reside in the divine light beyond the universe – Christ was a divine emanation, who assisted initiates towards the light, passing through the spheres of the *archons* – maleficent, world-governing powers, created at the same time as the material world by a sub-ordinate deity, or demi-urge. Interestingly, the *archons* were supposed to imprison the divine spark in human souls held captive in material creation. It does not take a great leap of the imagination to see how this all links with the hierarchy of genius and talent.

Of course, for those brought up in the Christian tradition, familiar with the parable of the talents ‘the master’ has always been a metaphor for God. The usual interpretation of the story presumes that the moral of the story stares one in the face – God’s beneficence gives us that with which we must do something – without it, we can do nothing, and at one stroke we have the idea that talent is dependent upon a gift from a master. But we cannot be certain from the story as it stands whether the master in the parable had more than three servants, so that he only selected a few to receive his gifts. If it is supposed that he had only three, so everyone received a gift, the accepted interpretation still poses the problem of the idle talent. When we describe someone as ‘talented’ – does it not suggest that everyone else is bereft, and will never be able to do that which the fortunate few can?

Unless we are convinced that everyone possesses ‘a talent’, and we actively seek to dig it up if it appears to be buried, the accepted interpretation of the parable is a terrible legacy

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<sup>37</sup> *The Book of Exodus*; Chapter 25, v. 39.

to pass on to children. It is a particularly baleful legacy with reference to the arts, which have so much proven benefit to children's general education. It is clear, though, that some would prefer it that way, otherwise greater thought would be given to the telling of the parable. Call it what you will, the 'divine spark' continues to be imprisoned in utilitarian materialism. Counteracting this, and especially its influence upon music education, has motivated my life's work – and this entire thesis.

No wonder *talent* remains rooted in the material world – it seems as if a monetary value can always be applied to its products. Unlike *genius*, where the mind has apparent freedom to ideate with existents, with talent, one is only free to ideate, as it were, around the ideations of others. In other words, one must master the craft of manipulating existents situated in the Real – that Lacanian substantive, refined over many years, but which 'has connotations of matter', and is 'the domain of whatever subsists outside symbolization'.<sup>38</sup> Thus photography, carpentry, wood-turning, smithing, building, sculpting, painting, performing music composed by someone else, gardening, sewing, cooking, etc., attract the epithet *talent* – one's ideations in the field may even result in embellishment of one's craft to the point of 'the beautiful', a concept which is considered to have its origins in a magnificent purposefulness and, crucially, intelligibility.<sup>39</sup> 'The sublime' is withheld for the genius. Though it is *gift* which binds *genius* and *talent*, they are split apart by the opposing buoys to which they are anchored – the *Imaginary* or the *Real*.<sup>40</sup>

*Genius*, thus separated was, by the birth of the Romantic Era, thoroughly anthropomorphosed – an image frozen in time by poets and philosophers. A genius was in almost every respect other-than-us. In a distortion of Longinus' *mélange*, he was a singular, usually solitary man, divinely inspired and in touch with the sublime. His achievements were considered to be matchless, and most likely arrived at in conditions of poverty or, at the very least, necessitating an heroic struggle against difficulties. His morality was often suspect – indeed, because he was other-than-us, a touch of dubious morality was almost *de rigeur* – if he did not seem at first glance to be so inclined, then the search was on to find it in him. Syphilis doesn't come from a celibate life, and it was

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<sup>38</sup> Evans. 1996, pp.159-160.

<sup>39</sup> Edmund Burke (1729-1797) wrote a treatise *On the Sublime and the Beautiful* in 1757.

<sup>40</sup> For the importance attached to the concepts of *Imaginary* and *Real* by Jacques Lacan, cf Appendix IV.

the 'disease of genius' – after all, Schubert, Nietzsche and Baudelaire all had it, so a 'Bohemian' life-style was absolutely acceptable – ' ... the languid melancholy of decadence ... '41 - because that conflicted nicely with *bourgeois* values and, if a genius died an early death after a lingering disease the picture was complete – especially if he 'went mad' first.

The specific reasons why the reification of such a bizarre figure was completed in the nineteenth century, lie in the impact of the content and application of scientific thought. The machine age of the Industrial Revolution spawned consequences of an intensely practical nature – where to live, where to find work, how to expand one's wealth and then what to do with it – and, for many, how to survive the abject poverty in which one might find oneself; however, far less tangible (and therefore much more discomfiting) was the overwhelming intellectual challenge posed by the content of the work of Charles Darwin - and especially by his Theory of Evolution. The roots of this theory were, in fact, embedded earlier by his grandfather Erasmus and others, but the impact of the theory is difficult to over-estimate on a society whose intellect was still largely in thrall to the Church. Darwin's exposé of living organisms' dependence upon adaptability to survive changing circumstance by gradually changing themselves, often rendering them unrecognizable in comparison to their earlier state, unequivocally threatened the Church's teaching about creation and man's dominant, God-ordained position in the natural order.<sup>42</sup>

But that was not all. Although another of Darwin's theories, that of *pangenesis*, is less well-known now it has become obsolete, the social structure of England during his life was such that one can imagine the anxiety it generated. Briefly, *pangenesis* was an attempt to explain inherited characteristics; every cell in the body was held to contribute towards 'germ-cells' which would find their way to the gonads, and so assist the transmission of physical and mental characteristics. Darwin's idea may have been seriously flawed, but it particularly resonated with those whose drive and zeal had achieved for them considerable status as industrialists, who were thus able to reap great financial reward and access to the kind of property ownership which had hitherto been the province of the aristocracy. This newly-created 'middle-class' was, naturally,

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<sup>41</sup> Gibson. 1995, p.144.



extremely keen to maintain the position they had attained. Throughout all the newly-industrialized nations, they constituted 'the meat in the sandwich' between the aristocracy, to whose position of inherited wealth and influence they aspired, and the 'laboring' class, from whose position they had risen (and who now worked in their factories, and in their homes as servants, condemned to '... the fatal exactitudes of narrow routine'.<sup>43</sup> Though they expended considerable energy inducing certain qualities in their children which they felt would ensure the perpetuation of their new-found wealth into ensuing generations, underneath the surface of their virtuous conformity, and fuelled by conflicting feelings of inferiority and superiority, lay the suspicion that their status was vulnerable to malevolent influences beyond their control.

The theory of *Pangenesis* didn't help to assuage their fears, therefore to protect its wealth from dissipation, a family had to ensure that the physical and mental well-being of its members was of the first order, so that 'weaknesses' would not be passed on to the next generation. Together with Darwin's revelation that man was not suddenly created as a entire, recognizably human, being, but gradually evolved within the mammalian order, sprang the unease that what might *progress*, might also *regress*, and so, every effort had to be made to ensure that family traits which were deemed to be undesirable were not bequeathed to its descendants. It surely is no coincidence, therefore, that the nineteenth century saw a proliferation of institutions such as prisons, workhouses and 'lunatic asylums', within which men and women were segregated, virtually eliminating the risk of their procreating, for what was feared most of all was 'mental or moral degeneracy'. More than one family contrived to consign its 'bad blood' to asylums, an act of extreme cruelty often inflicted upon unmarried mothers, for example. (It is salutary to ponder upon the sheer size of some of these places – the number of people incarcerated therein must have formed a considerable percentage of the population of the time).

Not surprisingly in this *zeitgeist*, and for the first time, *genius* was Janus-faced; not only was it openly admired, but it was also inwardly feared lest it be tinged with 'degeneracy'. Introspection, even a dabble in mysticism, was considered essential for creative thought, and was therefore allowable in an artist; it was not, most definitely not,

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. The book of *Genesis* Chapter 1, vv.26-28.

encouraged in those who were, or who wished to be considered, rational, of sound mind, God-fearing, self-disciplined, practical, earnest and sensible. The irrational nature of the experience of artistic genius in particular was feared, as it was redolent of malevolent ‘daimonic man’ – and it bolstered people’s conviction that there was no need to integrate their own irrationalities into their personalities. Certainly, by treading a path which differed from the new norms of the practical middle classes, a genius was thus a symbol of that which the *bourgeoisie* feared, and trusted themselves not to be. Was not a genius other than perfect, lacking moral rectitude, of devilish intent – indeed, was he not also ‘mad’?

The pathologization of genius was complete; an enormous literature grew up based on this premise, contributed to by many scholars (whom one might consider to be traitors to their profession as scholars) who took the view of *genius*, not only as consisting of a kind of ‘madness’, but actually accepting that a genius was ‘born, not made’. What the acceptance of this doctrine of determinism does, is to provide a wonderful, unconscious, excuse to exonerate ourselves from blame for our own apathy, and absolve ourselves from the guilt engendered by the disinclination not only to encourage others, but also to rectify our own under-achievement. The idea of each individual’s immanent plenipotent genius was completely over-ridden.

But if one were able to lift the outer cloaks of false modesty and self-deprecation which lie upon the shoulders of so many who are eager to laud the achievements of those they believe to have been given the garments of the priesthood of genius and of the acolytes of talent, what might we find? Undoubtedly, most would be seen to possess robes of considerable splendor which, for some reason, they dare not, or are not willing to, display. This metaphor, resonating as it does with religious ritual and obeisance, humility and ‘knowing one’s place’, reminds us of the human propensity to collude in these rituals which, we are told, will be sure to yield the benefits we want if we are but prepared to postpone our desire until the after-life.<sup>44</sup> Yet to say (as many do) something like: ‘... we know – absolutely know – that locked in a room with Einstein no amount of encouragement, training, motivation and the rest of it would have allowed us to reach

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<sup>43</sup> Strachey. (1918), p.117.

<sup>44</sup> The ability to sustain the tension of postponed desire is discussed in Chapter III.

the theory of relativity instead of Albert ... ', is to miss the point entirely.<sup>45</sup> One is not a lesser person because one's achievements are less intensely focused – in the final analysis one is only beholden to one's own immanence. But one must never enchain the immanence of another.

However, intellectual subjugation of the general population does exist, and still throws into sharp relief those who can afford to be permitted a share of 'the divine spark' which 'emanates from God'. Though social factors which contribute to under-privilege and under-achievement also play a part, much blame can be laid at the door of education. In Great Britain, a series of Acts of Parliament during the last 130 years have enabled all to be entitled to a free education – at first, this merely ensured the basic reading and writing skills; this improved, until 1944, when an Act laid down the requirements for provision of full-time education for all children up to the age of fifteen - but all Acts were seriously flawed. Inevitably, the provisions of the 1944 Education Act were based on the persistence of the idea of 'giftedness'. A tripartite system of secondary schools was organized; grammar schools for those selected by 'intelligence test' (there is, under this system, even a category of intelligence classified as 'level of genius!'), technical schools for those were thought not so capable of working with their brains as 'with their hands', and secondary modern schools for 'the rest'. Most children suffering from physical disability or mental impairment were outside the education system altogether at this stage. As the balance rose in response to the elevation of 'brain power', the potential of the many was debased. Even the system of comprehensive schools, introduced in the late 50's to redress this philosophy and which, ideally, sought to educate non-selectively, was thwarted by the continued existence of grammar schools and the public school system. With such obvious built-in prejudice against achievement and expectation, how can anyone not be persuaded that *genius*, *gift* and *talent*, as they are understood at present, are false constructs?

Bertrand Russell, (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Russell of Kingston Russell) who received the type of education reserved for boys of his class – public school and Trinity College, Cambridge, is often himself described as a genius. I wonder if he recognized the irony when he wrote: 'Though many still sincerely believe in human equality and theoretical

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<sup>45</sup> From *Which Genius said that Genius doesn't exist?* Written by Andrew Roberts in the *Sunday Times*;



democracy, the imagination of modern people is deeply affected by the pattern of social organization suggested by the organization of industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which is essentially undemocratic ... To formulate any satisfactory modern ethic of human relationships, it will be essential to recognize the necessary limitations of men's power over the non-human environment, and the desirable limitations of their power over each other'.<sup>46</sup>

Such 'power over each other' is often subtly wielded in education, in ways that have been indicated, principally by the stranglehold on pedagogy of the concept of giftedness. Russell, however, may not have been as aware as he should of a particular aspect of culture which was generated in Great Britain as a direct result of the Industrial Revolution. Not only was it a consequence of clusters of high-density population existing in areas of heavy industry but also, in an era when coal miners and manual workers in general had no means of getting to work other than walking, it reflected the close-knit geographical nature and spirit of these industry-specific communities. Certainly within living memory, the cultural phenomenon of 'the works' brass band' was endemic throughout British industry.

The individual miners or factory workers in the best of these bands displayed a musicianship and a technical ability quite the equivalent of anyone in a symphony orchestra (the difference is one of kind, not of degree) but, for reasons of snobbery, they were never accorded equivalent respect. Even if virtually all of these bands were, until recent times, limited to male membership only (so were symphony orchestras),<sup>47</sup> nevertheless they comprised a multitude indeed and, it should always be remembered, band members could only practice after they had done a full shift's manual work. Manual work seldom protects the ability of muscles to respond with the micro-finesse needed by the string-player or the pianist and, possibly for this reason alone, brass band members far exceeded in number those playing more 'acceptable' instruments. Yet no greater evidence exists anywhere in Western Europe for the idea that playing an instrument and reading music can be in anyone's repertoire of abilities if they so choose

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13-9-98.

<sup>46</sup> Russell. (1946) p.700.

<sup>47</sup> The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra agreed only in the last few years to admit women members for the first time. However, they had had a female harpist for many years, but her TV appearances alongside her male colleagues were reduced to showing her hands only!

- if they are not persuaded otherwise. The numerous male-voice choirs also sustained by these same communities should not be forgotten either. Needless to say, government policies have ensured, not only the decline of these industrial communities in recent years, but also the musical opportunities that went with them.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, one cannot conclude without pointing the way towards a possible answer to the problematic raised in this chapter – the question of the eminent individual (or, indeed the eminent *work*, which survives criticism and analysis over time, and still has the power to inspire). Nowhere here is the existence of eminence denied, but we prefer to highlight some of the factors that contribute to its inevitability, as well as the psychological imperatives which accord it a specially illuminated status. Genes and the environment are the obvious twin human determinants, neither of which can yet be said to possess the greatest influence on what we become. However, we are duty bound to ensure that the pedagogical environment is such that everyone can fulfil their own, genetically informed, immanent plenipotential. The entirely unnecessary persistence of *genius*, *gift* and *talent* as givens constitutes one of the greatest barriers to this, and it is a barrier which should no longer have place - neither in the present, nor ever again in the future.

As far as music is concerned, if musical ability were innate, ‘gifted’ musicians would get by with doing less practice than those ‘less gifted’. The Psychologist, Michael Howe, has done an extensive and timely investigation into this, and many other widely-held assumptions of this nature. For example, he found that the highest-performing conservatoire students have probably done treble the amount of music practice overall than the less-proficient (ten thousand hours instead of about three thousand); in addition, the first group were mostly likely to have had more parental involvement and encouragement, as well as beneficial peer-group recognition of their musical interests. Of course, long hours of practice require adequate support-systems and there are several professional instrumental recitalists who, as adults, are still accompanied when they perform, by one or both of their immensely devoted and supportive parents. Howe wrote: ‘The belief that certain individuals can be said to have been born to be geniuses is not one that is supported by firm evidence, and the innate gifts or talents that are

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<sup>48</sup> Further comment in Appendix IV.

commonly believed to be possessed by a minority of individuals who are thereby imbued with a capacity to excel in particular areas of expertise are probably mythical rather than real'.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, if we are to replace the three epithets, we need to replace them with a more satisfactory word that takes these (and other findings we adduce to later chapters) into account. *Gift* should certainly go – it is totally redundant. *Genius?* - its time has gone; we must now begin to accept that providing equal opportunity for all will produce real freedom of choice which, plus personal motivation, will result in something we can call *ability* - which is also a suitable replacement word for *talent*. Paul Pellay's phrase pre-echoes the next chapter, and describes both: 'Talent must be formed from inchoate desires'.<sup>50</sup> If someone of acquired high ability could be said to have 'fulfilled their immanent plenipotential', then they possess 'emanent' ability (and a few examples from personal experience are cited in Appendix I). But we may well have to resort to a neologism in the end.

The Australian composer and ethnomusicologist, Percy Grainger, is quoted as saying: '... "every born creature is artistic", and that most people are held back from music-making by "a thousand and one ideals, rights and wrongs"'.<sup>51</sup> Finally, Raymond Cattell wrote a compelling foreword to Anthony Kemp's book *The Musical Temperament*, in which we find this summary of Kemp's recent findings: 'There is a general pattern of deviation (from the norm) among all truly original people: low super-ego strength, high radicalism, high self-sufficiency, marked dominance ... (Kemp) demolishes the myth that great musicians all showed a startling early brilliance. They grew up gradually, like the rest, but went further'.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Howe. 1999, p.200.

<sup>50</sup> Dr.Paul Pellay, composer and writer on music, quotation from a conversation with RD.

<sup>51</sup> Balough, T. 1988, p.71.

<sup>52</sup> Kemp. 1996.



## II

### THE CREATIVE DRIVE AS *URTRIEB*: the emergence of the sensate Self.

*The first time Carlo hits Paula, he does it to shut her up and it works so he does it again and it goes beyond that and becomes enjoyment, his creativity goes into it.*<sup>1</sup>

The previous chapter was conjoined to the Introduction in terms of the foundation of both in personal experience – together, they appear rather like the *exposition* section of sonata form.<sup>2</sup> In that sense, the concluding statement of chapter one provides a theme which cannot be ignored – to wit, if some ‘go further’ in fulfilling their immanent plenipotential, the starting-point for all must be similar. To argue this, we must put *genius*, *gift* and *talent* to the back of our minds and concentrate on revealing the generative roots of universal human experience. Only when these are established, will we be able to develop reasons why the composition of music becomes a specific *modus operandi* for some people. In fact, the present chapter is transitional - presenting the opportunity for elucidating some central tenets of psychoanalytic theory.

Our starting-point for this, is the moment where equality of one person with another is perhaps least arguable – that is the moment of conception – everyone’s ‘starting point’. From this point, when the sperm successfully penetrates the egg (in Sándor Ferenczi’s term - *Die Amphimixis*) and these two existents contribute to a new reality, *our physical bodies are formally created from the multiplication of their own acquired content*. In death, the disintegration of the physical body initiates new realities for the existents that constituted it in life. This awesome, total primacy of creativity never relinquishes its imperative on the individual.

Genius, we suggested, was an early attempt to define this life-force. *Eros* (Freud’s preferred term) was another. Freud also used the term *Id*, (the Nietzschean *Das Es* -

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<sup>1</sup> Roddy Doyle, writing about his book *The Woman who Walked into Doors*; published by Jonathan Cape, 1996. Quoted in *The Guardian*, 9-4-96.

<sup>2</sup> Sonata form provides a vibrant metaphor in this thesis; cf, for example, Chapter VII and Appendix IV.

literally “*It*” in Latin), but that came to be related more to *Instinkt*. Another key word in psychoanalytic theory is *libido*, but: ‘... the concept of libido itself has never been clearly defined’.<sup>3</sup> Carl Jung’s opinion that libido is a term for generalized mental energy, is opposed to Freud’s insistence that it possesses a sexual character – a dichotomy in which Jung’s definition appears to be the most useful in the present context. Perhaps the term *libidinal energy* is effective in describing the force behind the implicit creative drive - all re-realizations of existents are therefore accomplished by libidinal energy.

Thus, in this context, we will take care to distinguish between libidinal energy (which is directed by *libidinal interest*) and *libidinal interest* itself, while avoiding the usual confusion between carnality, sexuality, desire, instinct and Freud’s anthropomorphic *Eros*: Elderfield explained: ‘... Eros is a condition, not a desire, ... it persists even in the absence of desire, that even when desire is forbidden or unrewarded, carnality endures and must be endured’.<sup>4</sup>

The reality is, therefore, that the creative drive itself is responsible for our emergence, not us for it, and we hold it in guardianship. Nothing is more inherent than the creative drive, not even those two biological *supremos* - the determinants of genetics and gender - who subjugate the embryo under their own agendas; furthermore, we must not make the common mistake of ignoring human metapsychology, by assigning a wholly biological function to embryonic development.

In psychoanalytic theory a basic misunderstanding arose between the two terms commonly used for the *drive* - *Instinkt* and *Trieb*, probably due to the exigencies of translation. Although their different etymological roots ought to have prevented the assumption that they are synonymous, and although Freud himself used them as quite separate one from the other, we read: ‘The distinction has hardly ever been drawn in the psycho-analytic literature, however, especially since “instinct” is used to translate both words’.<sup>5</sup> *Instinkt* has quite a lot in common with the concept of ‘immanent plenipotential’, in that it originally meant ‘intuitive power’, and only later did it come to

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<sup>3</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.239. Even the OED defines the term *libido* with reference to psychoanalysis!

<sup>4</sup> Elderfield. 1992, p.68.

<sup>5</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973. p. 214. For further elucidation of the Freudian *Instinkt*, cf. Appendix IV.

mean 'impulse'. That is where the confusion lies, for its earlier connotation as something passive awaiting an impulsive, activating force, became tangled up with the impulsive force itself. We should correctly regard instinct as an innate pattern of behavior, but inanimate until it meets a centripetal, *im*-pinging, *im*-pulsive stimulus to which it responds.

The impulsive stimulus is the *Trieb*, etymologically related to *Drive*. The impulse to ontogenesis is encapsulated in the moment the sperm penetrates the immanent plenipotential of the ovum; growth is achieved through cell division and, before long, the need becomes paramount to supplement what is already there, through the process of nourishment - libidinal energy demands we 'acquire' so that we can multiply our cellular structure through a re-realization of the nourishing elements. Thus, as 'our physical bodies are formally created from the multiplication of their own acquired content', we are already participating in the first, and possibly the greatest, human paradigmatic experiences, for we will see that the essential nature of the first two 'generative roots of universal human experience' are set to become abstract *schemas*.<sup>6</sup>

The first, generative, paradigm is binary both in process and product: *incipits motivate immanence* (related to the logical concept of *cause and effect*). After the dawn of consciousness, sperm aiming itself towards egg enters human culture in the two symbolic images of *linearity* and *modularity*, and acquiring connotations of masculine and feminine respectively. (In popular symbolism, an arrow pierces the heart). The creative drive therefore, even as it ensures the biological development of the embryo, is also ensuring the genesis of the binary imagery we later deploy in absolutely every aspect of living. No aspect of play, imagination, abstract or concrete thought, dreaming, utilitarian or leisure activity is excluded from the expression of either linearity or modularity, or both together, as we pursue the course of these activities - even though we may enlarge and amplify them to the point where discrete recognition of each one is difficult.

We call upon abstractions of linearity and modularity in advanced disciplines such as mathematics, and applied mathematics like architecture, and they manifestly inform art



(specially demonstrated in genres such as cubism, and in the work of individual painters like Piet Mondrian). However, they first appear quite strikingly in children's art: '... at the age of three the child is producing its first circles. Now that they are produced in a pure form, the circles look empty and the child begins to fill them up with spots and dashes. This gives rise to the idea of *crossing out the circle – the child draws bold lines upon it, this way and that*. While all this has been going on the child has also learnt to make crosses and to combine crosses to make a star shape. When the circle is being crossed out, the star shape turns out to be a perfect fit and can be used to make a satisfying symmetrical pattern. This double cross inside a circle gives a basic aggregate of mandala design ... of pre-representational drawing ... its occurrence is universal and frequent ...'.<sup>7</sup>

The second paradigm arises from the first, and is ternary; *the creative drive motivates re-realizations, inevitably effecting change in that which has been incited* is, in effect, a rider to psychoanalytic theory, which accorded the creative drive the abstract ternary structure of *impulse, aim, object*. This ternary (or *triadic*) paradigm has the privileged, extra role of providing a 'central space', which includes the factor of time, thus allowing the introduction of variables that will influence outcome.<sup>8</sup> (Due to its potential for analogy, we will encounter many manifestations of the idea of a 'central space' in the mind during the course of this thesis – it becomes a metaphor for *imaginative time*, which partakes of the duality of modularity and linearity respectively).

We realized that binary and ternary were 'the two generative roots of human experience', and to see how the ternary works biologically, we can flesh out the abstract with the concrete example of the first physical experience of need – the need for nourishment (the incipital cause), the absorption and digestion of nourishment (a process over time) and the physical growth resulting from that process (the effect). But it is philosophically questionable whether there can be such a thing as a purely biological

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<sup>6</sup> We will refer in later chapters to these 'first great paradigmatic experiences', but especially in *The Fifty Minute Symphony* (Chapter IX).

<sup>7</sup> Morris. 1962, pp.124-5. My emphasis.

The archetypal forms of modularity and circularity, as they appear in music will be examined later on in this thesis.

<sup>8</sup> Cf Appendix IV for psychoanalytic theory's alternative terminologies. We are reminded that experience is a property of space-time.

Also cf Appendix IV for *aleatoric*.

human experience, for even the most primitive form of awareness transforms the biological into the psycho-biological, and therefore the metaphysical.<sup>9</sup> The academic, Elizabeth Cowie stated: ‘As soon as need becomes desire it is adrift from mere function, of feeding in order to live’;<sup>10</sup> a case of essential libidinal energy resulting in inevitable libidinal interest.

At about three weeks gestational age, the first embryonic heartbeat is initiated and, of course, its operative mode is binary. However, that tends to disguise the triadic nature of its self-creating, developmental function for, even at that moment, the heart has still to develop its full structure of valves and chambers. Thus, in the same manner, not only are all embryonic parts, as David Chamberlain said: ‘pressed into service as they become available’,<sup>11</sup> but a pattern is set that is common to all musculature – as it operates it is, at the same time, developing the ability to continue operating. We will come to realize as we progress in this thesis, just how fundamental is this functional quality of the triadic paradigm, viewed as an extension of the binary.

Between the sixth and the tenth week embryonic musculature becomes ready to initiate body movements, so a fetus at ten weeks gestational age can move its head, arms and legs, take its hand to its head, face and mouth, open and close its mouth and swallow.<sup>12</sup> ‘The fifth week marks brain-body coordination through reflex activity. The first neuronal growth spurt between 8 to 18 (weeks) establishes the fetal protobrain, its essential elements differentiated sufficiently so that infant exercise ... progresses by the tenth week’.<sup>13</sup> At first these movements are spontaneous and endogenous, but as early as eight weeks gestational age, touching the fetus with a hair results in it producing a series of protective movements. It is extremely important not to underestimate the psycho-biological significance of the endogenous stage; musculature and co-ordination are both required to be at the service of libidinal interest when spontaneous sensory pleasure is made possible by the sensitivity of the skin (which becomes the first sensory receptor).

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<sup>9</sup> For *Cartesian dualism*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>10</sup> In Laplanche, 1992, p.123.

<sup>11</sup> Chamberlain. *The Fetal Senses*. (Pages not numbered). Unfortunately though, Chamberlain complied with received opinion, denying himself an understanding of the pre-heartbeat period: ‘The *first dramatic motion*, one that has come to symbolize life itself, is the first heartbeat ...’. (My emphasis).

<sup>12</sup> The age at which an embryo (2 weeks after conception) is generally called a fetus is at 8 weeks after conception.

<sup>13</sup> Logan. *Infant Outcomes of a Prenatal Stimulation Pilot Study*. (Pages not numbered).

Then, by fourteen weeks, all prototypical fetal movements are present, including movements necessary for breathing, and: 'Hands are busy interacting with other parts of the body and with the umbilical cord'.<sup>14</sup> Knowing this, we cannot fail to appreciate the possibility that an aesthetic sense is just as fundamental to the human condition as is any biological process.

Modern Western European aesthetics was born in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as part of Romanticism, whose roots in Germany were laid down by a generation of young, educated idealists. This is another instance of a distorted inheritance from the Greeks – when *aisthetikos* was defined as things perceptible by the senses – so at least some of these are bound to be disagreeable. But Romanticism decided that an aesthetic sense equated with a feeling for 'beauty', and certainly not with anything disagreeable – consequently, 'utility' did not equate with 'beauty' - and never with 'the sublime'. (Its divisive social agenda is now obvious to us, as the 'cerebral' could be defined as 'beautiful', along with products of 'arts and crafts', but nothing could be included that was manufactured in William Blake's anti-Christ vision of 'those dark, satanic mills.'). Thus, according to Theodor Adorno: 'For its consumption of art the bourgeois household has devised the idea of the sensitive person'.<sup>15</sup> A result of that, was the belief that only education could provide 'cerebral input' of a kind rarified enough to teach a sensitive appreciation of the arts – and that meant one had to be verging on educated adulthood before developing an aesthetic sense at all. Quite simply, even now, the notion that everyone possesses an aesthetic sense is not wholly accepted, while the notion that an aesthetic awareness might begin pre-natally is considered very strange indeed, if it is considered at all.

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Yet, as we examine the remarkable sensate development of the fetus, we find that the sense of smell is theoretically possible between eleven and fifteen weeks, with taste coming in somewhere around fourteen weeks - indeed the amniotic fluid contains many odoriferous and tasty substances: '... babies (fetuses) registered changes in fetal breathing and heart rate when mothers drank coffee, whether it was caffeinated or decaffeinated'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Chamberlain (*The Fetal Senses*).

<sup>15</sup> Adorno. 1963, p.40.

<sup>16</sup> Chamberlain (*The Fetal Senses*).



As we will examine much more in the next chapter, the sense of hearing begins early, but it begins with skin and skeletal sensation. As the vestibular and cochlear apparatus becomes available, hearing becomes amplified and provides a profound means of fetal access to environmental stimulus as it develops from the first experimentally proven responsive listening at sixteen weeks, to virtual full development at twenty-four weeks: 'Thus, the present results provide direct evidence for the human brain's very early ability to discriminate complex sounds and also demonstrate the cerebral processes underlying this discrimination'.<sup>17</sup>

The fetus' eyes remain closed until about the twenty-sixth week: 'However, the fetus is sensitive to light, responding to light with heart rate accelerations to projections of light on the (maternal) abdomen'. We now know that, at full gestational age, a fetus possesses far more impressive visual resources than was hitherto realized. In addition, not only do we know that the fetus can feel pain due to skin receptors, but also that: '... prenatals with their eyes still fused seem to be using some aspect of "vision" to detect the location of needles entering the womb, either shrinking away from them or turning to attack the needle barrel with a fist'. The concomitant fact that fetuses do not have air, through which vocalizations due to pain might reach us, has not prevented us discovering that they respond to painful stimuli: '... with vigorous body and breathing movements as well as hormonal rushes'.<sup>18</sup> This has far-reaching implications for the present thesis, as we will discover in later chapters.

So, if all senses are potentialized in the womb, we should, quite clearly, include this stage in any examination of the development of an aesthetic sense. Here might begin the perception of things as objects to be appreciated, for it is the experience of an object which objectifies it and, if we take Roger Scruton's statement that: 'Aesthetic experience is a form of knowledge, and is to be defined in terms of its object', not only do we find his view given an extra dimension, but also our own hypothesis strengthened.<sup>19</sup> Fortunately for the fetus however, it possesses no cultural prejudice which permits views such as 'beautiful' or 'ugly' – it can only 'judge' by its sense perceptions of syntonicity,

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<sup>17</sup> Cheour-Luhtanen *et al.* 1996, p.478.

<sup>18</sup> Chamberlain. 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Scruton. 1974, p.4.

although we will find a certain amount of evidence to suggest later, that cultural aesthetic prejudices are reinforced by personal environmental imprints.

Reminding ourselves at this point of the primary paradigm and its symbolic equivalent in linear and modular forms, we can appreciate that, abstracted from the actual, the form of the curvi-linear umbilicus is cylindrical, therefore linear, while the containing space of the ovoid uterus is circular, and therefore modular. Thus the tactile sense supports the existing bodily sense of binary form (instigated both via the heartbeat and the pulsating umbilicus; also *cf* p.61 below), for the uterine environment is one in which the two fundamental forms of the curve and the cylinder are first encountered spatially. On the other hand, in contrast to those strongly differentiated, fertile images, the undifferentiated, qualitative judgement that the whole uterine environment is 'warm' can only be made by comparing it with what is experienced post-natally – it never fully enters consciousness, so its symbolism is vague - we speak of 'maternal warmth', or 'returning to the maternal hearth and home' for example. In between these two qualitative symbolic extremes, lie all kinds of other sense impressions leading directly to post-natal preferences, which may, or may not be subject to symbolization later on.

It is of considerable significance to learn that the fetus' eyes do not open until week twenty-six, and that, at birth, the range of vision is at least six to ten inches – the perfect distance for the child at the breast. While in the womb, therefore, we can assume that vision has a reasonable chance of being utilized in the fetus' discovery of what lies within that space. We then realize that the placenta is a looming intra-uterine presence, which leads us to rediscover the fascinating possibility that the placental form, with its branching blood-vessels, is indeed a possible inspiration for the later, ubiquitous, symbol of *the tree of life*.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps *the archetypes of the collective unconscious* do actually begin here. Certainly, when we gather together what we have explained so far in this chapter – universally experienced binary and triadic forms, to which are added many intra-uterine aesthetic experiences (the early genesis of which has seldom, if ever, been addressed in this manner before), we begun to understand why Jung imagined the existence of *the collective unconscious*. He was very near the mark. In fact, as our exploration of creativity gathers pace, we will find ourselves continually uncovering

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<sup>20</sup> For *tree of life*, *cf* Appendix IV.

other manifestations of these first unconsciously imprinted paradigms, for they comprise the forms we employ in all re-realizatory structures – including dreams. It has now even been discovered that the pre-nate dreams (REM sleep has been observed as early as 23 weeks gestational age)<sup>21</sup> – this has considerable implications, if we propose that this might consolidate the archetypal images of the collective unconscious.

Naturally, though, in order for us to do that, our intra-uterine sensations must have been established through a triadic series of developmental stages, traversed as soon as the biological facilities became available. First, we passively receive them, then we actively respond to them as they occur, finally we ‘remember’ them once they have occurred. The essence of the sensate being which we thus become through this triple process is captured in the metaphysical form of the *Self* - a sensate Self emerging through the establishment of universal paradigms.

Sometimes, the work of Jung (although the younger of the two) can be viewed as supplying the foundations upon which Freud’s carefully constructed structures can be placed, and this is a case in point. Freud assigns less importance to the Self than the Ego. The latter, in his model, is formed with the dawn of appreciation of one’s separate existence within the ‘real’ world, and is therefore a later acquisition. For Jung, the Self is, as it were, not only our beginning, but also our end, for it is formed pre-ego and, ideally, it is to the Self which we return in reflective, later life (in the process of individuation): ‘... its personification is this personal being who represents the higher unity of conscious and unconscious ... I have elected to call it the “self”, by which I understand a psychic totality and at the same time a centre ...’<sup>22</sup>

In the Jungian model, then, the Self accords with genius, and one’s ‘immanent plenipotential’ and is therefore linked with the personal God-image - expressed by Samuels, Shorter and Plaut thus: ‘This primary self contains all the innate, archetypal potentials that may be given expression by a person. In an *appropriate* environment, these potentials commence a process of deintegration emerging from the original unconscious integrate’. But they also say: ‘Lest the self appear to be entirely benign, Jung emphasised that it should be likened to a daemon, a determining power without

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<sup>21</sup> REM – Rapid Eye Movement. Reported by Chamberlain (*The Fetal Senses*).



conscience; ethical decisions are left to man'.<sup>23</sup> Such decisions are made by the ego and the super-ego so – in fact, we will discover that the environment is always 'in a state of appropriateness' for either one or other of what are considered positive or negative innate potentialities to be manifested, for *libidinal interest* comes to be invested in all of them.

We will return to the intra-uterine world in the next chapter but, for now, we must pursue the role of libidinal energy in setting up some post-natal structures. The moment of birth, of course, unleashes for the child a torrent of environmental sense-impressions, all with a deterministic role for the manifest personality and the metaphysical Self. Furthermore, the infant's very presence in this extra-uterine environment assures a re-ordering of existents – it takes up space formerly filled with air – it takes in this air, transforming it and returning it to the environment as a new reality (and it certainly re-orders the existence of its parents!). Libidinal energy is devoted to the 'instinct' for survival in this new phase of life, and must aim towards adaptation to its challenges (survival, as Darwin posited, being dependent upon adaptation). Thus, at birth, the need for nourishment to survive is translated, for the first time, into a physical sensation of hunger, which cranks up a commanding motor response designed to enslave the mother's attention and obedience to the demand. The post-nate, in adapting to its new psycho-biological state, presents to the world the function of its creative drive in no uncertain terms.

The infant needs food, it must be fed, it demands to be fed – in this respect its life is dependent upon its utter selfishness, of which narcissistic craving is the hallmark. Fuelled by the energy biologically synthesised from previous feeding, the infant's motor apparatus is in full swing as it gestures and utters - flailing its limbs and crying lustily with wide-open mouth; this dramatic scene is the manifestation of its instinctual drive to stay alive. Instinctively the aim of the drive is towards the object which should arrive *molto allegro*, to satisfy it – and when it does, the drama is over immediately. It is thus Self-affirming to be fed as soon as the craving begins, for then the breast is a source of pleasure. However, only in the most fortuitous of circumstances is it possible for the breast to appear at the moment of first demand so, in the interim, the infant is forced to

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<sup>22</sup> Jung. C.W. 9i, para.248.

confront three alien concepts – the first two are the physical pain of hunger and delayed satisfaction, but it is the existence of the third – the passing of time - which actually thrusts the infant, alone, into ‘the central space’.

We find it hard to imagine the possibility of, one day, being able to assess the pre-nate’s relationship to measurable time, but we realize that, as a neo-nate, the infant certainly confronts time with a vengeance when it waits for the breast to appear. Even if only a minute elapses between the first moment of demand and the first moment of satisfaction, a minute represents proportionately a much longer period of life-time for the infant than it does for the mother. Naturally, this places the infant in crisis as its sense of Self suffers a degree of destabilisation surviving the gap which looms between the two states. The drive to create its Self through the multiplication of its own acquired content is no longer automatic, and the infant must adapt to circumstance; although its survival is aided by its ability to get the message through to mother loud and clear, this takes time: ‘Tension, traumatic anxiety, biological hunger, ego apparatus, and homeostasis are near-biological concepts that are relevant in the earliest months and are the precursors, respectively, of anxiety with psychic content, signal anxiety, oral or other drives, ego functions, and internal regulatory mechanisms ... The adaptive point of view is most relevant in early infancy – the infant being born into the very crest of the adaptational demands upon him’.<sup>24</sup> Later on in life, we will demonstrate our unconscious longing for this everlasting maelstrom to stop, by inventing the concepts of *stasis* and ‘a changeless God’.

It is obvious that, once the pangs of hunger are felt, the desire for nourishment will not go away – it will intensify, and so, while busy gesturing and uttering to draw attention to its need, the infant must also cope with, and learn to adapt to, the gap to which it perceives no end. In fact, what is suggested happens is that the infant learns to imagine the re-appearance of the absent breast - it hallucinates the breast as something separate from itself, in a significant and quite remarkable feat of adaptation.<sup>25</sup> Though this psychic operation may be considered a far from satisfactory solution to the problem in practical terms, if it is a credible suggestion, it has very clear implications for the infant’s

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<sup>23</sup> Samuels *et al.* 1986, p.136 and p.135. My emphasis.

<sup>24</sup> Mahler, Pine and Bergman. 1975. P.5.

<sup>25</sup> For *part-objects*, cf Appendix IV.

development of what might be termed *imagination*; it is certainly an intriguing idea which should remain within the realm of the informed adult's range of possibilities. Freud wrote: '... the thought-material, which is brought forward in the optative mood ... it takes the step from the optative to the present indicative; it replaces "Oh! If only ..." by "It is". The "It is" is then given a hallucinatory representation ...'.<sup>26</sup>

We can therefore take the triadic, paradigmatic *impulse, aim, object*, one stage further. With the thwarting of the aim, we find that the central space is filled with unresolved tension, flanked either side by tension instigated and tension resolved, as the essence of that early hallucinatory experience settles itself into the unconscious mind as a power-dynamic, which suggests *memory*. Donald Winnicott, who wrote at length about the various representations of the central space, said: 'This intermediate area of experience, unchallenged in respect of its belonging to inner or external (shared) reality, constitutes the greater part of the infant's experience and throughout life is retained in the intense experiencing that belongs to the arts and to religion and to imaginative living, and to creative scientific work'.<sup>27</sup> Given, therefore, no more than the average environmental advantage of being fed adequately, every time the infant's hallucination of the breast results in its appearance in reality and satisfies its desire for nourishment, the sense of omnipotence over its environment is reinforced; indeed, this universally-experienced, illusory state of uncertain control of the primary need for survival, without doubt informs a person's sense of omnipotence, potency and potential.

Now we might try to look at the infant's *fort-da* game from another point of view - as a manifestation of a transitional, ambivalent attitude to the tension of the central space; its omnipotence-tested/omnipotence-satisfied 'to-and-fro' form, idealizes the binary and attempts to deny the tension of the triadic paradigm.<sup>28</sup> It is one of the first, courageous, attempts to manipulate existents into new reality by reinforcing omnipotence, which will thereafter no longer be bound just to the pure need for survival, but can progress to changing one's environment to adapt for continuing survival and, later, to just pleasing oneself.<sup>29</sup> The libidinal energy of the bio-metaphysical Self is channelled into adaptation

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<sup>26</sup> Freud wrote this with reference to the *dream-work*, from *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*. S.E.VIII, p.162.

<sup>27</sup> Winnicott. (1958). 1992 ed., p.242.

<sup>28</sup> For the *fort-da* game, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>29</sup> Cf Abraham Maslow (Appendix III).



of externals; ideally, that energy persists until a desire is transformed into action, and persists again until the desire is satisfied in a closure of the triadic.

Thus, once the breast is 'under control', why not other objects too? Physical development allows this before long. Too hot? Kick off a cover. Too bright a light? Shield one's eyes. Bored with the dangling fluffy toy? Give it a push. These are major environmental changes for one stuck in a cot or pram and, indeed, are prototypical play activities. Yet the initiation of imagination must be assumed to bear the burden of sufficiency until the infant has enough understanding of body/verbal-language to be able to accept its mother's reassurances that its wait for the nourishing breast will not be endless. Later still, it will be possible to replace hallucination of a desired object by articulated wishes through language, and in Lacanian theory, this is the point at which the signified is replaced by the signifier, and from thence, language becomes the tool of articulation of the imagination: 'The imaginary is the psychoanalytic register *par excellence*, but psychoanalysis has taught us to find traces of it in language where words overlap with symbols multiplied a hundredfold'.<sup>30</sup> But, as we have seen, paradigmatic imprimaturs are already at work, and libidinal interest has ensured that an aesthetic sense precedes pragmatism.

But psychoanalysis adds another twist to this developmental stage, from the object relations work of Melanie Klein, whose theory it was that the breast is not seen by the infant as part of the mother at first, but is only, in her terminology a *part-object*. Thus, by arriving quickly after the possible onset of the hallucination, the 'good' breast-object is considered by the infant to be under his control; the converse is also true – hallucination cannot be sustained in the face of frustration so, in the case of the 'bad' breast eluding the child, it is perceived as controlling – indeed, persecuting. It therefore takes on an imaginative quality in the central space, which leaves it open to ambiguity, as the practicalities of life begin to affect the narcissistic and omnipotent Self. However, if the infant appears to itself to have some success in challenging the environmental reality of the absent object, by changing it into a new reality of the present object, its omnipotent Self becomes a metaphysical point of fixation. Donald Meltzer wrote: 'Omnipotence is a more difficult thing to conceptualize. First of all, its very existence

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<sup>30</sup> Lemaire. 1977, p.61.

rests upon a denial of impotence ... Where helplessness exists vis-à-vis objects in the outside world omnipotence is likely to be generated in dealings with internal objects ... the meaning these objects have for the self, they are “seen as” containing all possible knowledge and all possible means of action’.<sup>31</sup> And, as we will see, it will be with this world of internal objects that we concern ourselves later in our musically-informed discourse.

So, emerging, struggling, as it were, out of the ‘primeval soup’ of the narcissistic, omnipotent Self, is the Freudian Ego, as desire is forced into being tempered within an environment which is not necessarily felt to be benignly disposed – and it remains differentiated thereafter. Establishing that there might be an economic *quantity* of tension, and that the *quality* of the tension would be valued by the organism as pleasant or unpleasant, Freud was enabled to posit the formation of the Ego (*Das Ich* - the ‘I’). In fact, Freud came very close to the idea that re-realization is the essence of creativity, in which the Ego is crucial: ‘... the psychical apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the external world *and to endeavour to make a real alteration in them*. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced ...’. (He termed this new principle *the Reality Principle*, and implied that it modified the forgoing *Pleasure Principle* through which the basic, instinctual *Id* functioned.)<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, he wrote: ‘Thus art constitutes a region half-way between a reality which frustrates wishes and the wish-fulfilling world of the imagination – a region in which, as it were, primitive man’s striving for omnipotence are still in full force’.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, the Ego is a metaphor for pragmatism, and its formation signals the presence of the strategy of adaptability – the second bio-metaphysical stage.<sup>34</sup>

The libidinal drive itself, however, having been bolstered by narcissistic omnipotence, now begins to use the tempering Ego as its message-bearing servant to mediate between the external ‘real’ world and that which has been imprinted upon the sensate Self (now taking a ‘back seat’) so that re-realizations in the environment begin to be informed by

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<sup>31</sup> Meltzer. 1994, pp.209-210.

<sup>32</sup> Freud. S.E. XII, p.219.

For further reference: *Pleasure Principle*: cf Freud, S.E.XVIII, p.7, and cf Appendix IV. *Reality Principle*: cf Freud. S.E.XVI, p.357.

<sup>33</sup> Freud. S.E.XIII, p.188. We note that Freud does not regard creativity as re-realization, and therefore as a part of every-day life.

personal imprimaturs. This functional mode of the Ego is considered by many not only to exercise a central influence in the choice of creative mode, but also, and perhaps particularly, in the creative process itself.<sup>35</sup> A degree of omnipotence is characteristic of the Ego, as if some has leaked through the sluice-gate into this newly-established operative agency, but it is not always necessary to see omnipotence *per se* as a negative quality. Often, while one is in the process of creating a new reality, one becomes aware that a feeling of omnipotence is present, but it is vulnerable to tempering – in this regard, the frequent swings between euphoria and despair are very familiar.

The blame for some of the inhibition falls upon the shoulders of Freud's third agency - the *Super-ego*. Its genesis is inspired by parental relationships, and its almost humanoid image contains the functions of moralistic conscience, critical observance and temperance towards an ideal, therefore defining its role largely as an inhibitory agency, similar to that of the dream-censorship which Freud had written about more than twenty years earlier.<sup>36</sup> So perhaps, as Hannah Segal suggested: 'In the same way in which the fear of an *external* authority can make us afraid to speak, the fear of an *internal* authority can make us afraid to think'.<sup>37</sup> It is rather like a stern parent permanently in residence in the unconscious – a parent who professes to 'lead us not into temptation', 'to deliver us from evil' and, hopefully, 'to forgive us our trespasses'. Although with the following quotation Anika Lemaire was writing about Lacan's research into psychosis, the point she makes is apposite: 'In psychoanalysis, one finds cases of children whose peculiar experience of relationships with their parents have destroyed this intuition of individuality, thereby barring access to language and to the "I".'<sup>38</sup> Inhibitions surround possible ventures into the central, imaginative space, therefore everything that is experienced sensually is reacted to as if it were a 'thing' in the 'Real'.

The Ego thus finds itself up against the demands of a socializing Super-ego which tries to orders us into compliance, not with our own 'norms', but into the 'norms' of the adults who surround us. It is therefore with greater difficulty than we have probably met

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<sup>34</sup> Freud's topologies, *cf* Appendix IV.

<sup>35</sup> *Cf* Chapter VIII, where Anton Ehrenzweig's account of the role of the Ego in creativity is examined.

<sup>36</sup> Further reference: a re-appraisal of the super-ego role can be found in Freud, S.E.XXII, Lecture xxix. For an alternative view, *cf* Appendix IV.

For dream-censorship: *cf* Freud, S.E.V, chap.VII.

<sup>37</sup> Segal. 1988, p.219. My emphasis.



before that we struggle to enter the third stage of our bio-metaphysical development – that of being free to exercise our own choice of creative mode. Yet, help may be at hand, in the form of the Freudian *Ego-ideal* and the *Ideal-ego* which (unlike the separate Super-ego's foundation in wariness, are based much more on admired, loved objects). They are more like companions to the Ego. Freud wrote of the Ego-ideal: 'What man projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal'.<sup>39</sup>

Projection was seen in the previous chapter as a strategy that depletes immanent plenipotential, and therefore, as Freud suggested, operates in favor of the Ego-ideal. Identification, however, at least in its positive aspect, is a character-strengthening dynamic, involving a qualitative absorption and assimilation of the characteristics of another, to a point where the subject 'becomes', for good or ill, to some extent like the other, and creates an Ideal-ego or, in modern parlance, a *role-model*. But the balance between the two is delicately poised, as in neither case have we got entirely helpful influences at work for, as Anna Freud suggested, even our Ideal-ego can inflate towards megalomania or become infected with identification with an aggressor.<sup>40</sup> It is clear though, that for good or ill, both are imbued to a degree with narcissistic omnipotence, and can influence the passage of libidinal energy (and therefore libidinal interest) towards the third bio-metaphysical stage of *choice*.

That being the case, we have now reached the point when we must challenge the orthodoxy of *sublimation* which, like *genius*, *gift* and *talent*, has insidiously woven its way into our thinking. Sublimation is also a cultural construct, kept alive by those who believe creativity to be confined to a few specialized areas of activity located firmly within the province of 'the other', as a result of a specific 'gift'. Most common perceptions of creativity are fallacious because of a failure to recognize the creative drive's first two stages (when the 'survival instinct' aims towards adaptation). The crucial third stage therefore goes unrecognized too; this is when the objects of re-realization are ultimately *selected* by the subject – in a process of adaptation to choice. Furthermore, the implicit suggestion in sublimation is that the available amount of

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<sup>38</sup> Lemaire. 1977, p.54.

<sup>39</sup> Freud. S.E. XIV, p.94.

<sup>40</sup> Cf Anna Freud (appendix III) and Freud, A; (1936).

libidinal energy is as controlled as water in a canal, unnaturally channeled and diverted, rather than as water in a river, free to make its own route and to overflow occasionally because it has water enough and to spare. In fact, it should be obvious that, throughout all three bio-metaphysical stages from pure survival - then through adaptability to choice, *libidinal energy* remains a constant presence; it is the emergent *libidinal interest* which is flexible. After all, the libido has always had other things to do as well – such as keeping the subject alive. There is a crucial difference between diversion and overflow.

Sublimation, therefore, is the fourth ill-conceived term.<sup>41</sup> As Ellenberger (1970) explains: ‘... what for the geneticist are “positive manifestations of a biological radical” may be “sublimation” for the psychoanalyst’.<sup>42</sup> Within psychoanalytic theory, the assumption has been that ‘creative artists’ - engaged as they are perceived to be, in a ‘diverting’ activity - suffer from a diverted ‘sublimated’ instinct. Freud is often cited as having discovered the very ‘instinct’: ‘(*Sublimation*) ... Process postulated by Freud to account for human activities which *have no apparent connection with sexuality* but which are *assumed to be motivated by the force of the sexual instinct*. The main types of activity described by Freud as sublimated are artistic creation and intellectual inquiry. The instinct is said to be sublimated in so far as it is diverted towards a new, non-sexual aim and in so far as its objects are socially valued ones’.<sup>43</sup>

To be fair, the above reference to Freud does not do justice to the careful analysis of Freud’s position which follows in the same publication (as a quick reference therefore, it is misleading, but it probably serves Freud’s critics well). The difficulty in explaining his view lies in the diffuse manner with which he expressed it, indicating that he must have found the concept unsatisfactory: ‘The lack of a coherent theory of sublimation remains one of the lacunae in psycho-analytic thought’.<sup>44</sup> Freud, a victim of the *zeitgeist*, could not conceive of himself as ‘creative’ so, for him, creativity was never more than a

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<sup>41</sup> For the confused etymology of *sublimation*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>42</sup> Ellenberger. 1970, p.867. This quotation is probably not entirely representative of Ellenberger’s views, as he wrote earlier: ‘Psychic energy has its source in the instincts and can also be transferred from one instinct to another (sublimation is but one among other various processes)’. P.704.

<sup>43</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.431. My emphasis. Joan Peyser quotes Leonard Bernstein: ‘... Bernstein discussed Freud’s theory of sublimation, an idea that holds that a person makes art to the degree that he can suppress his sex drive and redirect it into his work. Bernstein did not believe this to be valid. “If there were anything to it,” he went on, “Wagner could not have f\*\*\*\*\* as many women as he did and put on paper all the notes that he did”.’ (Peyser. (1987). 1988 ed., p.334).

<sup>44</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.433.



diversion; because he held that the sexual instinct is distinct from the instincts of self-preservation, he imagined sublimation to be caused by an ego-conflict, awakened as a defense against sexuality. He therefore tried to account for his understanding of creativity by suggesting that it began as an aim of the sexual instinct, but its drive was diverted instead, towards a non-sexual object, and this forms a core argument in his study of Leonardo da Vinci.<sup>45</sup>

But, if we continue to follow Freud's apparent stance on sublimation, we will eventually confront the unfortunate nexus of 'genius' and psycho-pathology – particularly psychosis, and what Freud called *actual neurosis*. This, as we have seen, is an essential nexus in the Romantic anthropomorphology of *genius* – which reached its height during Freud's lifetime. He thought that the aetiology of the *actual neuroses*, which he gradually defined as anxiety neurosis, neurasthenia and hypochondria, lay in the frustration of the sexual instinct through absence or inadequacy of satisfaction. Psychosis, on the other hand was the nosological category that included certain types of hysteria, hallucination and paranoia.<sup>46</sup> There is no argument here against those categorizations *per se*. Indeed, Freud himself never made a hard-and-fast connection between these perceived states of mind and creativity, but popular opinion held that these states were virtually essential traits of the creative personality. Therefore, for those whose social conditioning enforced the belief that sexual energy was in some measure undesirable, the idea that it could be 'sublimated' - transformed into something more or less 'respectable' (even if the person doing the transforming wasn't!) - was a considerable comfort.

However, there should be no doubt that libidinal interest is at work in all those nosological categories, which will inevitably result in some re-realizations being deemed 'socially unacceptable'. This obviously touches on issues which lend themselves to much more lengthy discussion than is possible here, but one point remains paramount – that what is considered 'socially unacceptable' varies enormously from person to person, due to entanglement within the fluid world of value-judgements which permeates processes of socialization. Although, in severe cases of disturbed mental life, libidinal interest undoubtedly cathects with objects which negatively influence the well-being of

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<sup>45</sup> Freud, S; *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*. (1910). S.E.XI, pp.1-55.



oneself or of others, this is one reason why *sublimation* is such an unsatisfactory term; not only does it deny the universality of creativity, but it also creates endless problems of moral compromise by excluding from the category of creativity, acts such as suicide and murder. By doing so of course, it greatly mitigates against our understanding of the motives for, and judgement of, these acts.<sup>47</sup> Certainly, re-realizations as a result of disease are also manifestations of the creative drive, and are generally indicative of the presence of that state of dis-ease. That accounts for the fact that many pathological states are particularly responsive to therapies perceived as ‘healing’; those based on constructive re-realizations such as art, craft, drama, music, play, gardening and, in psychoanalytic clinical practice, the ‘fundamental rule’ of *word-association*.<sup>48</sup>

*Sublimation*, therefore, like *genius*, *gift* and *talent*, was a convenient term which suited the *zeitgeist*; it reinforced persistent prejudices, and so has since proved resistant to shifting perspectives – to the point where, even now, it is widely assumed to be correct in its application. In the interim, Jung wrote: ‘Sublimation remains, for the present, a pious wish fulfilment invented for silencing inopportune questions’.<sup>49</sup> *Sublimation* confines creativity to a very narrow band of the ‘socially valued’, and it simply is not true in this day and age (if it ever was) that artistic creativity and intellectual enquiry are the only socially-valued re-realizations (in any case, certainly not all ‘modern art’ or ‘modern music’ is socially valued). In addition, it has an unfortunate corollary in that most damaging of all theories – that ‘creativity’ *per se* has an aetiology rooted in pathological states. Even in this post-modern age, that view seems to support the work of the geneticist in his search for a ‘creative gene’; one wonders whether he will somehow eventually declare himself rewarded - or may we hope that he will quietly abandon the quest as fruitless. Michael Howe writes: ‘... the simplistic notions of genetic causation that come to mind whenever one sees newspaper accounts of the search for “the gene for intelligence”, or “the” gene for any other complex psychological attribute ... They reflect a model of genetic causation that is far too simple to represent what actually takes place ... There are no direct one-to-one relationships between genes

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<sup>46</sup> Cf Freud. S.E.III.

<sup>47</sup> For enlargement of assumptions, and further thoughts about creativity, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>48</sup> *Word-association*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>49</sup> Jung. C.W.15, para.53.

and psychological characteristics, and the popular idea that there are genes “for” complex traits is simply wrong’.<sup>50</sup>

Freud always hoped that psychoanalysis would help to solve some of the riddles of the human condition as a whole, and so he wrote the following, which echoes the longing thoughts of so many: ‘If we could at least discover in ourselves or in people like ourselves an activity which was in some way akin to creative writing!’ And: ‘We laymen have always been intensely curious to know ... from what sources *that strange being*, the creative writer, draws his material, and how he manages to make such an impression on us with it and to arouse emotions of which, perhaps, we had not even thought ourselves capable’.<sup>51</sup> Of course, it is always an uphill task to persuade people to question long-held assumptions: ‘A generation ago ...’, wrote Peter Aston in 1976, ‘... the British composer was viewed by his compatriots as something of an oddity; ... after all, weren’t all the real composers Viennese and dead? I mean, whoever heard of living next door to a composer? What does he do for a proper job?’.<sup>52</sup> In challenging their assumptions, one is subjecting people to all the risks and uncertainties of ‘the central space’ – with the reassuring goal of their certainties removed, their sojourn in the central space appears endless. Sometimes it is no good even placing an alternative viewpoint as a goal for their thinking, as it will be rejected, purely because it is strange, and they don’t wish to go to an unfamiliar ‘home’.

Such a situation confronts us in this thesis for, if the received opinions about genius, gift, talent and sublimation are removed from beloved ideas of what constitutes creativity, how can a conclusive meaning be given to the concept of creativity at all? The notion that all re-realizations are creative, and therefore we are all ‘creative’ is, to some, novel, surprising, shocking, risible – depending upon the personal, unconscious, reasons for holding to the faulty assumptions in the first place. Furthermore, as we have seen, finding the notion credible that everyone is ‘creative’, also entails entertaining the thought that fundamental binary and ternary paradigms and prototypical aesthetics are imprinted pre-natally, and that the Jungian collective unconscious and its archetypes is a

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<sup>50</sup> Howe. 1999, p.201.

<sup>51</sup> Freud. S.E.IX, p.143. My emphasis.

<sup>52</sup> Dr.Peter Aston, born in Birmingham in 1938, composer and academic. Taken from *The Composer* (the journal of the British Music Information Centre) Summer 1976.

more than credible metaphor for the pre-natal paradigms and aesthetic experiences. In addition of course, everyone's emergent, fully sensate self includes 'structures' for which the Freudian anthropomorphs are metaphors.

Nevertheless, if our post-natal environment favors adaptability, then our cultural environment becomes the garden in which we play and exercise our choice; our 'Selfish' preferences can then emerge and become apparent to others. Without doubt, many factors, including pedagogy, have the potential to extrinsically 'kick-start' this process, and maintain the primacy of the creative drive as a motivating force for the *mode d'emploi* to operate immanent plenipotential until intrinsic motivation takes over: 'Teachers at St.Patrick Elementary School in Kingston (Ontario) were skeptical when first asked to participate in music and arts workshops, saying, "I'm not an artist!" ... Three years into the project, the responses were different – "I'm amazed by what I can create".'<sup>53</sup>

Unfortunately adverse factors often have the opposite effect - they reverse the process by stifling new realizations of existents, thwarting omnipotence, denying immanent plenipotential in favor of 'giftedness', and declaring richly imaginative strategies such as metaphor and analogy to be irrational, because they are unquantifiable. Some are indeed prevented from 'going further'. The International Society for Music Education has published its *Declaration of Beliefs* – the fourth of which reads: 'ISME believes that all learners should receive the finest possible music education, all learners should have equal opportunity to pursue music, and the quality and quantity of their musical education should not depend on their geographical location, social status, racial or ethnic identity, urban/suburban/rural habitat, or wealth'.

If that were indeed so, in Western European culture, everyone's available choice of creative mode could include the composition of music. Anthony Kemp writes: 'In other cultures where less emphasis is perhaps placed upon the new and the innovative, the notion of the composer as a specialist who drives the "world of music" does not occur'.<sup>54</sup> Our culture demands composers, but they only fulfil that role by virtue of the creative

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<sup>53</sup> From the publicity leaflet *Teachers as Artists*; (the Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario).

<sup>54</sup> Kemp. 1996, p.194.



mode they have been able to choose. Born into a different culture or circumstance they might have chosen the mode of body-painting or snow-carving. We all, if born into other cultures might find our libidinal energy, if not our libidinal interest, involved in spinning, weaving, wood-carving or making pretty straps for cowbells. Exploring the specific, personal, reasons for choosing to compose music will involve us in the next several chapters. But we owe it to Stravinsky to give him the final word here: 'Since I myself was created, I cannot help having the desire to create'.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p.65.

## **PART 2**

### **The Creative Mode**

### III

#### ADAPTING TO AN ILLUSION: between incitement and symbol

*The soft eye-music of the waving bough.<sup>1</sup>*

‘Having the urge to create’ implies that one is being ‘driven’ to re-realize existents, by a Self-ish force which one finds hard to resist. Having ‘the urge to compose music’ therefore, indicates that libidinal interest has cathected onto music, making the re-realization of the elements of music an aim of libidinal energy. If we accord the work of Jean Laplanche the respect it deserves, we should understand that the components of music have perhaps, in the Freudian sense (which Laplanche has updated), first been *repressed*, so that the forces which bind (*cathect*) them to the unconscious can be activated.<sup>2</sup> This means that the Self has responded to a strongly-felt need to adapt to these elements then, in some cases of course, libidinal interest focuses on musical composition as a *mode d’emploi* for the libidinal drive later on. In this chapter, therefore, we deepen and develop our investigations into the pre-natal world, in order to understand the implications for music of this notion.

Music is, of course, constructed from the elements of sound, and is dependent upon sound for its audible manifestation. But working in this medium plunges the composer into a paradox, for sound, as such, can be said not to exist at all. Perhaps the word ‘sound’ should always be placed in inverted commas, for we continually deceive ourselves as to its true nature – in fact, sound is an illusory phenomenon. Referring to the quotation at the head of this chapter, the reality is that someone who is deaf is no more disadvantaged than the rest of us who, sitting behind double-glazed windows, can only imagine the ‘sound’ of the wind as we watch the branches of trees being swayed by the movement of air outside. The vibrations within the air exist right enough – that is not an illusion, but the double-glazing ensures that those same air-movements (waves)

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<sup>1</sup> This poetic phrase was written by someone who became deaf; I came across it many years ago, and unfortunately neither made a note of the title of the book, nor of the author’s name.

<sup>2</sup> Cf Laplanche, 1999; and Appendix IV for *cathect*.



do not reach our aural apparatus and translate into subjective percepts of what we call 'sound'. However, if we open the window, and if our aural apparatus is good enough for the job it is designed to do, then we are exposed to the effect of the air-vibrations caused by the leaves on the trees as they are tossed together by currents of air. But no two people sitting by the opened window will pick up these waves as aural vibrations in exactly similar manner - consequently each of them will be differently affected. Of the perception of 'musical sound' Stephen McAdams writes: 'Another assumption ... that is implicitly psychological is the notion that there is an identical correspondence between some specific external, or physical, property (string length) and the resulting internal, or perceptual, property (sensation of pitch). This "naïve realism", as it is called in philosophy, has been systematically modified in Western thought by the development of psychological methods for investigating the relations between physical facts ... and facts of sensation'.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, in 'The soft eye-music of the waving bough', what could the deaf person's *concept* be of the word 'soft', other than a tactile *percept*? We should take this as a warning not to regard our sense impressions as harbingers of 'truth', for their messages are often more synaesthetic than differentiated. Jung, in fact, linked our faulty perception with the psychic mechanism of projection: 'Projection ... carries over subjective contents of any kind into the object ... colour is a subjective experience as you know. The same when I hear a sound, that is a projection, *because sound does not exist in itself*; it is a sound in my head, it is a psychic phenomenon which I project'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Epicharmus, as early as the fifth century BC wrote: 'The mind sees and the mind hears. The rest is blind and deaf'.<sup>5</sup> *Percepts*, as we will see, are mostly the unconscious harbinbgers of conscious *concepts*.

An example is needed to clarify the notion of sound as illusory. Let us suppose that we can ask a clarinettist to perform Mozart's concerto for clarinet and orchestra; if they can play it from memory, so much the better, for that will mean that they will have done sufficient practice for most of the essentials of performance to have become as automatic as, say, driving their car along the familiar road home after the concert. Thus, their

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<sup>3</sup> McAdams. 1987, pp.3-5.

<sup>4</sup> Jung. C.W. 7, para.152-3. My emphasis.

<sup>5</sup> Epicharmus (450 BC); quoted by McAdams and Bigand. (eds.). 1993, p.v.

breathing will be regulated to accommodate the musical phrasing, and the pitch and duration of each note learned in order to incorporate their own linear melody into the containing harmonic frame with overall rhythmic security. They will also know every degree of 'tongued' articulation necessary for what they interpret as Mozart's wishes regarding timbre, tempo, dynamic and 'expression'. Their body-language will aid the conductor in the responsible task of ensuring cohesion and balance between soloist and orchestra – indeed, if the soloist's body-language is perfected to a subtlety which communicates tempo and phrasing to the orchestra without distracting the audience, the presence of a conductor can be dispensed with.

However, we will impose one restriction upon the soloist. They must perform the concerto without the reed in the mouthpiece of the instrument. Virtually impossible to do with a double-reeded instrument such as the oboe or bassoon, where only the reed is placed between the lips of the player, a clarinettist on the other hand, positions the single reed against the actual mouthpiece of the instrument, and the two are placed between the lips as one unit. Minus the reed, we know that, no matter that everything listed above for an effective performance was accomplished - including the all-important regulated breathing, 'tonguing' and body-language – as far as the audience was concerned, the soloist would be making a useless effort, for there would be nothing to 'hear', and the soloist would be creating an illusion. It would probably not be possible to detect, merely by looking, that the reed was missing, and not everyone in the audience would know exactly how vital that reed is. They might not know that the clarinettist does not blow a stream of air *through* the instrument – in other words, does not seek to *replace* the air in the instrument – but, in fact, makes the reed itself vibrate which, in turn, disturbs the existing column of air present within the cylindrical column of the body of the clarinet. The vibrating reed is the essential acoustic wave incitive, and it is the acoustic wave which reaches our aural apparatus and is there translated into the 'sound' of the instrument.

But what is this 'sound' which would be missing? The incitives are there, embedded in the player's technique for, apart from a strangely unfamiliar, localized impediment to performance, the clarinettist would be able to co-ordinate the tonguing and fingering technique as usual, and, once immersed in the performance, might not even regard the

performance as furnishing an illusion. Neither is it the notation that is missing – those symbols have been learned and memorized – nor is it the relationship with the orchestral music – that, too, is learned and memorized. What would be missing is Mozart's dialogue with the audience – in fact, Mozart's own, 'internal dialogue' with his created work as he committed it to paper – the manifest of his imagination.<sup>6</sup> The constituents of this dialogue are all that which instrumental technique is required to realize – what might be called the *aesthetic element*, the *prosody*: phrasing, the pitch and duration of each note, the co-ordination of their own linear melody with the containing harmonic frame, and nuances of timbre, tempo, magnitude and 'expression'. They are realized in response to the symbols of notation, *whose sole purpose is to stand for what does not exist* and, in doing so, should alert us to the illusion.

Yet if sound, as such, is an illusory phenomenon – if it does not even exist, how can we justify the central tenet of this thesis, that creativity - musical creativity - is a re-realization of existents? Therefore, in composing music, what is it that composers think they are investing with a new reality? What causes the mind to turn an illusion – a mere *sign* that something is happening (the sight of the trees moving) into something that is subjectively so full of meaning (the 'sound' of their movement), so that to choose to compose music, therefore, is to take this subjective response and harness it to the super-charged horse-power of libidinal energy - and then invest it with the symbolism of musical notation?

To answer these questions we must now look back over our shoulders to the previous chapter, and retain the principle that there is a connection to be made between the notion of adaptability to the environment as suggested in that chapter, and the present concern of how a preference for re-realizing 'sound' might come about. Adaptation requires a period of time, so 'between incitement and symbol' we must allow for this. Through casting that retrospective glance at the previous chapter, we will also be reminded that adaptation founds the 'central space' in which is accumulated our pre-natal aesthetic impressions. These impressions are *qualitative* – in addition they (and other experiences yet to be mentioned) possess important teleological implications; all in all they function

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<sup>6</sup> For further comment on this, cf Appendix IV.



within a special analogous designation of the central space ‘between incitement and symbol’ which, for the present, we can call *the aesthetic space*.

So, resuming our discussion of the intra-uterine environment, we find that there is a growing body of extremely specialized research generated by the increased awareness of the general importance of fetal life, especially since the advent of ultra-sound, which has made visual assessment of fetal responses possible. Certainly, ‘sound’, because initiated by acoustic wave-vibrations which can travel through air (or gas), solid or liquid media (there is no better way of describing the wave-formations than the ubiquitous ‘stone-thrown-into-a-pool-effect’), allows us our first experience of its effect *in utero* – but the fetus perceives it as a whole-body impingement via skin sensors. That does not mean, however, a ricochet effect, as if the receptor was virtually unyielding (as a billiard ball ricochets from the side of the table), rather the vibrations induce a compression wave, followed by rarefaction: ‘The same phenomenon (that) occurs in a “Slinky” toy. Push one end back and forth. There will be movement running along its length, but obviously each coil remains in the same relative position’.<sup>7</sup> However, the medium does not quite honor the integrity of the initiatory vibration - it changes it according to various resistances, and our subjective perception effects a further, psycho-biological, revision. The amniotic fluid certainly allows the transmission of vibration through compression, above a certain dB level, but also, equally certainly, somewhat distorts its quality, compared to that which is experienced *ex utero* (and which constitutes for us a ‘norm’).<sup>8</sup>

But recognizing the importance of the impact of acoustic waves upon the fetus, and trying to assess any adverse effects so caused, is fraught with difficulties and, to date, findings have conflicted. For example, some research concluded that: ‘Analysis of factors affecting displacement of cochlear sensing cilia in utero show that, for equal sound pressures, sound intensity and sound vibration are about 4000 times less in amniotic fluid, compared to that produced in air. Further protection is provided by viscous and hydrodynamic features of the ear. The estimated effect on cilia vibration by the mean sound pressure registered in utero, about 90dB, corresponds to that produced

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<sup>7</sup> Handel. 1993, p.75.

<sup>8</sup> dB stands for *decibel* – a measure of power ratio. A 10dB increase indicates a hundred-fold increase in power. The difference in dB level is accounted for by resistance, so that approximately twice the dB level is necessary for the same magnitude of sound to be effective *in utero* as *ex utero*.

postnatally by an airborne sound registering about 40dB, which would not be hazardous'.<sup>9</sup> However, we also have access to results from placing a specially designed microphone in the amniotic fluid: 'What we heard was everything ... everything that was going on in the room, as well as inside the mother's body. The high frequency from the ultrasound machine could be heard from inside as could the chatter going on between us. A nurse pushed open the door and said something to one of the technical people. There was no mistaking her distinctly female voice, coming from fifteen feet away'.<sup>10</sup> Thus: '... (some) results suggest that the fetus might be exposed to considerably higher sound pressure levels than earlier presumed'.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore: 'Analysis of the sounds transmitted from the outside world to the fetus have shown that the fetus receives sound of more than 40 decibels, regardless of the means of transmission or of the position of the mother. Below this threshold, many parameters are involved, such as the position of the mother, the method of sound transmission ... ,' (and the next phrase has been emphasized in order to stress its psycho-biological importance within a later context) '... *but the mother's voice always seems to have priority*'.<sup>12</sup> In fact, Whitwell states: 'There is very little distortion of the mother's voice as heard by the fetus whereas other external voices sound more muffled, especially in the higher frequencies. According to Rubel (1984), the fetus is responsive first to lower frequencies and then the higher ones'. And (my emphasis again): '... after the sixth month, *the fetus moves in rhythm to the mother's speech* and that spectrographs of the first cry of an abortus at 28 weeks could be matched with his mother's'.<sup>13</sup>

'Hearing', wrote John McLachan in 1994, 'requires the transduction of compression waves in air into nerve impulses, and this is achieved by means of cells with delicate hairs on their surface. When these hairs are deflected the cell membrane depolarizes to initiate a nerve impulse'.<sup>14</sup> The vestibular system which controls balance and body movements is differentiated from the cochlear systems (allowing acoustic vibrations to

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<sup>9</sup> Arulkumaran, *et al.* 1992, pp.43-5. (Abstract: conclusions).

<sup>10</sup> Satt p.1.

<sup>11</sup> Nyman, *et al.* 1991, p.803.

<sup>12</sup> Klopfenstein, *et al.* 1993, pp. 39-44 (Abstract). My emphasis.

<sup>13</sup> Whitwell. 2000, p.2. The fact that the fetus responds first to lower frequencies is probably due to the immaturity of the fetal body – greater sensitivity is needed for the skin perceptors to register faster compression waves; but it is interesting in terms of theories of the unconscious to note that lower (slower) frequencies are the earliest to be registered by the psycho-biological Self. My emphasis.

be transmitted) at around 4.5 weeks to 6 weeks gestational age. At 7.5 weeks the auditory ossicles start to grow, and between four and five months gestational age, the ear of the fetus already appears adult-like in shape and relative size (although there are still a number of internal structural differences between the fetal ear and that of the adult). A more detailed development, is outlined by Shahidullah and Hepper (1993), who write: 'The innervation of the inner hair cells of the cochlea begins at 12 weeks of gestational age ... and between 11 and 13 weeks of gestation the stereocilia of the hair cells, responsible for the transduction of acoustic energy to neural impulses, begin to develop ... The latter stages of synaptogenesis involve the outer hair cells which receive efferent innervation around 20 weeks of gestation, with mature synapses appearing between 24 and 28 weeks ... although a movement was not observed at 15 weeks of gestation in response to presentation of a sound-stimulus, *logically it cannot be assumed that the fetus is unable to "hear"*.'<sup>15</sup>

The latter is a very important point in our appreciation of sound-impingement upon the Self, leading us to closely consider what the psychological impact of such immaturity of the system might mean, for such a lack of adaptation might well exacerbate the negative effect of such stimulus: 'Vibration is the most potent stimulus capable of inducing changes in fetal motility as well as in fetal heart rate ... such stimulation produced aversive reactions similar to those induced in the neonate by pain after twenty-eight weeks of gestation'.<sup>16</sup> We return to Shahidullah and Hepper: ' ... For a fetus to respond to an acoustic stimulus requires not only a functioning auditory system in order to perceive the stimulus but also a functioning motor system and a neural link between the sensory and motor systems. The fact that no response was observed at 15 or 20 weeks of gestation may thus be due to immaturity of the auditory, motor or sensori-motor system. Since fetal movements commence at around 7 weeks of gestational age and by 14 weeks of age the fetus exhibits a diverse range of movements (De Vries et al., 1985), it is unlikely that the lack of response at these earlier gestational ages is due to motor immaturity alone ... a certain maturity of the sensori-motor system (is required). *If this stage of development has not yet been reached, the fetus will be unable to respond*

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<sup>14</sup> McLachan. 1994, p.229.

<sup>15</sup> Shahidullah and Hepper. 1993a, p.141. For more detail from Experiment 1, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>16</sup> Piontelli. 1992, p.35.



*appropriately even though its auditory development may be sufficient to detect the stimulus, thus auditory abilities may be underestimated using this method of testing*'.<sup>17</sup>

The ability of the fetus to move is endogenously generated and does not arise from exogenous stimulation. Reactive motility (evoked motility) begins remarkably soon after, and is a developmentally significant, while movements in general become increasingly differentiated, purposeful, and recognizable as initiating and practising the post-natal repertoire. Normally, the senses are all functioning pre-natally, and in the previous chapter we learnt that activities such as breathing, REM, hiccups, swallowing and micturition can all be observed through ultrasound, but we should also be aware of the many variables (such as the effect of the mother's anxiety or fear responses, her drinking or smoking). In the next chapter, we will examine the extension of the startle response into distinguishable gesture and utterance – an extension which, possibly due to neurological damage from alcohol and tobacco-related chemicals transferred to the fetus, can be delayed, while behavioural and cognitive problems may result in the older infant (Joffe, 1969).

Without doubt, therefore, the vibration-induced bodily sensation of repeated compression/rarefaction cycles experienced *in utero* is of fundamental psycho-biological importance, and it offers a challenge to all those who appear to ignore pre-natal experiences - like Leslie Feher, who wrote in 1980: 'The (*birthing*) contraction combines two opposite processes – pressure and release – and is thus the forerunner of all later dichotomies'.<sup>18</sup> In fact, our intra-uterine introduction to 'sound' leads us directly back, by analogy, into the binary paradigm we considered in the previous chapter - it fits the binary model as a tension/release pressure dynamic – albeit one of many cycles per second. However, through this dynamic we are introduced to the single origin of our perception of both pitch and rhythm, for below twelve cycles per second, pitch and rhythm are undifferentiated – only above approximately twelve cycles per second do vibrations begin to be perceived as pitch – slower than that, they are felt as rhythmic impulses. For example, the note A sounding at 440 cps, if decelerated 1000 times provides a regular rhythm with a periodicity of just over 2 seconds (0.44 cps). This is an issue to be examined in the next chapter, when we consider more carefully our

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<sup>17</sup> Shadidullah and Hepper. 1993a, p.138. My emphasis.

<sup>18</sup> Feher. 1980, p.196. My emphasis.

affective responses to impingements, especially those responses which manifest as gesture and utterance; at present though, we are attempting to build up a picture of sound-impingement upon the fetus as an *impact*, which leaves an *imprint* upon the body. We realize that the actual impact of compression is ephemeral – it immediately resolves into its opposite – but it leaves behind subjective mnemonic traces of affect as the fetal mind is personalized through its own, unique genesis, for: ‘Sounds, colours and everything else that traditional philosophy relegates to the status of what it calls secondary qualities are, properly speaking, the creation of the sensorial imagination (of the capacity of the sensorial part of the psyche to set into images the X that shocks it ...).’<sup>19</sup>

That the fetus is capable of differentiating the varied sound-impingements can be deduced from studies, especially those which show the differentiation of voices, so perhaps we can here posit the existence of a fetal differentiation of sound-impingements, based on the important neuro-psychic process of *habituation*. There appear to be two possible main categories which, for reasons to be explained, we might term *Primary* and *Secondary* sound (secondary sound is subsequently subdivided into three). These are distinguishable within the combination of the *quasi* ‘white noise’ in the uterus (which consists of vibrations from the mother’s alimentary and gastrointestinal activities, her breathing and her voice) and the whole invasive range of externally produced environmental sounds, where both regular and sporadic elements are present.

The first category is limited to those sounds that are, without doubt, habituated with the greatest of ease – the maternally-generated sounds that are co-existent with ontogenesis. Of those, the diastolic/systolic maternal heart-beat is pre-eminent - not crisply ‘consonated’ as the heart-beat is often thought to be, but with a more diffuse binary sound-envelope (‘wow-wow’ rather than ‘lub-dup’). The maternal heart-beat generates the arterial compression/rarefaction pulsations which eventually are in counterpoint with those of the fetus’ own heart, which beats at roughly twice the speed of the mother’s, and therefore at a higher pitch; a sub-category of this paradigmatic habituated sound would consist of the compression/rarefaction pattern of the mother’s breathing: ‘Conceivably, cardiogenesis simultaneous with inception of the neural tube – well before

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<sup>19</sup> Elliott and Frosh. 1995, p.20.

apparent physiological need – may be evolution's overlayment of function by developmentally advancing a process which serves as the archetypal vertebrate governor providing a constant source of bipolar patterning (pulse, pause, pulse, pause), hence imprintable, to the beginning brain'.<sup>20</sup>

But, apart from the fetal heartbeat, other binary experiences are exogenously generated, however much they are concomitant with ontogenesis - and so we can rightly say that they don't quite 'belong' to it - they are an insidiously, passively, acquired experience. Nevertheless, libidinal interest is aroused, causing this narcissistic acquisition. One is therefore fully justified in suggesting that they comprise the infant's first 'possessions' (along with the intra-uterine, archetypal shapes of the 'circle' and the 'cylinder') – the incipit donates *quantity*, but the adaptive/imaginative mechanism generates the all-important *qualitative feeling-tone*.

However, because from a fetal perspective these binary experiences insinuate paradigmatically into the utterly subjective, they remain unobjectified or, at least, their objectification is postponed, and the continuous nature of these compression/rarefaction binary measures, which neither leave a gap between compression and rarefaction, nor, indeed, between one binary event and another, is an aspect of their form which must be borne in mind when we refer later to their teleology. Therefore, it is to these fundamental, habituated binary measures, of which an abidingly passive receptability is such a characteristic, and which set up a definite neuronal patterning (mnemic traces), that we will give the name *Primary Sound*.

*Secondary Sound*, therefore, consists of all other sound-impingements, for none of them is as fundamentally habituable as those just mentioned. All secondary sound is random, discontinuous, and impinges upon the fetus with an element of surprise, thus dispensing with passivity in favor of a greater degree of active adaptation. '... one feature of sound (abruptness of onset) ... probably renders an attention-demanding quality to sound for all animals.'<sup>21</sup> The phenomenon of *fetal conditioning*<sup>22</sup> (another mode of adaptation) is responsible for the further sub-division of secondary sound into two, extremely

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<sup>20</sup> Logan. 1986.

<sup>21</sup> Carterette *et al.* 1974, p.434.

<sup>22</sup> There is an American pre-natal 'learning' program called *A Sound Beginning*, directed by Dr. Brian Satt.



significant sub-categories. That there may be a third category, which we will call *addictive sound*, seems at the time of writing to be less certain; nevertheless it will be explained later on.

The first sub-category of Secondary Sound is principally characterized by the mother's voice. Important advances in understanding the fetal response to voices have been made.<sup>23</sup> The human body, in acting as a resonator for the voice, ensures that the fetus' reception of the maternal voice will be subject to some difference from *ex-utero* reception. However, as the mother begins to speak, it will always be an unexpected event initially, though, due to conditioning, the fetus will quickly relax that first tense moment; a sort of: 'What's that? ... Oh, it's only her again!'<sup>24</sup> We might wonder, indeed, if after a while, this particular habituation does not lead to the fetus having a sense of control over the mother's voice – libidinal interest just beginning to sow the seeds of narcissistic omnipotence.

What is specially interesting though (in the light of that thought) is that mother's voice, together maybe with other familiar ex-uterine sounds – perhaps the voices of the father or of siblings, and repeated, everyday household sounds – can form a sub-category of eventually habituated sounds, with a similar psycho-biological effect – tension, pause, release; this situation is analogous to the post-natal situation of a carer asking an infant to 'Listen!' The pattern is: 'Listen! (or, ssh!) ... what's that?' The carer pauses, holds up a hand to an ear or a forefinger in the air, the eyes widen, and the breath is sharply inspired and held. These mimic a reaction to a scent of danger, and are mirrored by the infant. Relaxation and expiration come with the identification of the sound ... 'it's a bird!' Habituated secondary sound therefore, goes a lot further in aiding the definition of the sensate Self, in initiating and maintaining a part-separation from the immediate environment and, in the act of 'conditioning', generates different neuronal patterning from that of primary sound, certainly aiding, as Winnicott suggested: ' ... the infant's attainment of unit status: the infant has already become a person with a limiting membrane, with an inside and an outside'.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Cf De Casper *et al*, 1984. Fifer and Moon, 1994.

<sup>24</sup> For an enlargement of the Laplanchian position *vis à vis* the enigma posed within the *imaginative space*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>25</sup> Winnicott (1958). 1992 ed., p.269.

Thus, though whatever lies within this habituated category of secondary sound may be basically pleasurable, secondary sound is something which is *not* possessed by the child in the same way as is primary sound, although, once habituated, it may relate to the child as though it is a part-possession - partly subjectified, partly objectified.<sup>26</sup> In this respect, habituable secondary sound, first 'belonging' exclusively to 'the other' is, eventually, 'shared' with the fetus, as it produces a one-way monologue between the initiator of the sound and the 'imagination' of the pre-nate, who has no means of communicating a response, other than by a primitive motor reaction. Here, perhaps, lies the prototype of the 'transitional object' in the Winnicottian sense (as in Winnicott *Playing and Reality* 1971): 'In other words, a "transitional experience" can be thought of as a potential space – one that involves the interplay between "me" experiences and experiences involving phenomena beyond the child's omnipotent control'.<sup>27</sup> Omnipotence, though, *in statu nascendi*.

Therefore we eventually reify sound, and remove it from its roots in illusion. Furthermore, the fact that libidinal interest is invested in sound-impingements because of the necessity to adapt to their presence, and because this is all so foundational to the unconscious mind, the libidinal interest remains tightly bound throughout life: 'Certain auditory stimuli may be of prime importance before birth, because they can be molded by imprinting. As is well known, especially from studies in behavior of newborn and young animals, at critical periods as organism, when exposed to certain stimuli, will tend to remain close to these stimuli ...'.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, this phenomenon is further compounded by the presence of the second sub-category of secondary sound, which contains all sound-impingements that fall outside the parameters of habituated sound altogether.

This category consists of those random vibrations of sound which are not only a surprise initially, but which confront with arbitrary pitch-levels, duration and dynamic intensity, and always remain enigmatic: 'What's that?' without the 'Oh, it's only her again!' There is therefore no seemingly finite gap filled with 'imagination', only an

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<sup>26</sup> I choose my words with care; the relatively clumsy wording 'partly objectified' is designed to avoid confusion with the clearly understood psychoanalytic concept of 'part object' – something which is more characteristic of the second sub-category of secondary sound – an explanation of which follows. Yet, if this category of secondary sound could, in fact, be said to be a 'part object', it, too, could be beneficent or persecutory.

<sup>27</sup> Emde and Kubicek. 1997, p.126.

unpredictable void filled with psycho-biological tension – all the activity is there in the startle response (the prototype of gesture), but no significant passivity to follow as a consequence of adaptation. Because such vibrations of sound are never ‘conditioned’, never habituated, they impinge upon the fetus with the unpredictable force and consequence of an invasion by a persecuting alien object.

The pendulum has swung to the further extreme from primary sound. Primary sound is a Self-possession whose objectified status is seriously in doubt; habituated secondary sound is a part-possession - partly subjectified, partly objectified; the status of non-habituable secondary sound, on the other hand, has a quite different feeling-tone, and it remains as an non-possessed object, alien to the subject. Every impingement of non-habituable secondary sound is, in a sense, traumatic – the answer to ‘What’s that?’ never comes.

In psychoanalytic clinical practice, where the teleology of affect is a crucial issue, an attempt is made to re-establish the relation between the memory of the traumatic event and its affect, so facilitating the discharge of affect in abreaction. Psychoanalytically, affect is an apt word, coming as it does from the Latin *afficere* (to do to), for it reinforces the relative activity of the alien object compared to the relative passivity – the enforced reception – of that, or whom, to which it is done. But pre-nates are actually capable of prototypical gestural responses: ‘... in the last trimester of pregnancy, the pre-nate’s learning state shows movement from abstraction and generalization to one of increased specificity and differentiation. During a bonding session using music, the pre-nate was observed moving her hands gently. In a special musical arrangement, where dissonance was included, the subject’s reactions were more rhythmic with rolling movements’.<sup>29</sup> We discover (and it will be explained at greater length later) that a particular affect is the aftermath of the trauma of non-habituable secondary sound; it has its own teleology, within the realm of music itself.

If, then, non-habituable sound impingements induce an affective response in the fetus, which is manifested as gesture, then it surely follows that it might also possess the capability to utter a cry. We know that the fetus responds to painful stimuli, and we

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<sup>28</sup> Fisch. 1983, p.142.



know the neo-nate will cry if it experiences a particularly startling sound, but we cannot be certain whether the fetus, if experiencing the bodily sensation of pain, as well as attempting to physically withdraw from the source, does not also at the same moment *attempt* a cry. The inefficiency of the latter response over the former *in utero* is obvious but, as soon as the infant is born, the two work together, for the post-nate exhibits quite a variety of mood responses – from the stiffly flailing limbs which accompany the anxious cry of hunger to the fine stroking movements of its hands and contented murmuring when satisfactorily put to the breast. These important utterances are soliloquies, the movements are gestures, and they are synchronized in response to affect.

That we live in a far noisier environment than ever before has become a cliché, but the consequence of this is the necessity for greater feats of adaptation. It is not just an increase in the amount of non-habituable sound that needs to be considered, but a difference in quality, magnitude, and the length and type of exposure to which many people are submitted, and which are thought to promote certain difficulties for young children: ‘According to more recent observations, auditory experiences which at this early stage deviate from the normal (e.g. in conditions of stress) may later influence, in the very young child, certain social functions which are transmitted through the auditory system’.<sup>30</sup> And Radocy and Boyle make a succinct comment: ‘The danger to hearing is not just propaganda from people who do not like particular musical styles or are unduly bothered by noisy environments. Musicians who plan rehearsals of large groups in small rooms, stand near powerful speakers while they perform, or feel that they must be totally “bathed” in sound must consider the risks they may be creating for themselves and others’.<sup>31</sup> We might add – what if one of the musicians were a pregnant woman? Whitwell wrote: ‘There are numerous reports about mothers having to leave war movies and concerts because the auditory stimulus caused the fetus to become hyperactive.’<sup>32</sup>

Babies are generally quite tough – they are ‘survivors’ - but it is not a romantic notion to suggest that various bits of babies are very sensitive – eyes and ears, for example but, equally importantly, their emotional responses to adversity. If they are exposed to an

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<sup>29</sup> Whitwell. 2000, p.5.

<sup>30</sup> Fisch. 1983, pp.142-3. For further comment on the adverse effects of some sounds on the fetus, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>31</sup> Radocy and Boyle. 1988, p.66.

<sup>32</sup> Whitwell. 2000, p.3.

over-abundance of environmental impingements, the teleological implications are serious. Because much environmental sound is redundant,<sup>33</sup> part of the function of adaptation is to filter this out, leaving us with imprinted paradigmatic patterns as familiar frames of reference; unfortunately, these can be masked by persistent noise. Apart from physiological noise damage itself: 'This may have a much more deleterious effect as far as future social function is concerned'.<sup>34</sup> One of the many implications of defensive measures an infant makes against such possible tensions, might be a defense against all sound-impingements, with obvious consequences for its communications with others, and with teachers in particular.

Perhaps, though, it is not always overtly non-habituable sound which is the culprit, but the hypothetical third sub-category of secondary sound, which might be termed *addictive sound*. Ironically, the teleology of this hypothetical sub-category of secondary sound is probably the most obvious of all the categorizations, though it would appear not to relate, in the first instance, to Western European music at all, but to have its foundation in other cultures to which the repeated beats of drums, stamping feet and rhythmic vocalizations constitute their own frames of reference. It is not a value-judgement to suggest that, absorbed into Western culture, this is a frame of reference that is mainly manifest in 'popular music' (a genre which has removed it so far from its original elegant and comforting domestic roots). Nevertheless, we are justified in having severe reservations about the wisdom of exposing the fetus to such unrelenting stimulus, for some of the suggested harm it does may well be related to the fact that its insistent beat denies prosody – and therefore the mother's voice (see below). Though we will have to wait for another occasion to pursue that line of enquiry, we can certainly imagine here and now, that the amplification of 'pop' music to the decibel level it often achieves, cannot be without detriment to a fetus and to a young child.

So, still remaining for a while longer with non-habituable sound, we have now reached the point where a greater consideration of the teleological implications of primary and other categories of secondary sound can be considered – confining the argument to the implications for music. Non-habituable secondary sound, as we have explained, creates a dynamic of open-ended, unresolved tension. These particular percepts are never

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<sup>33</sup> Cf also Chapter IX (part ii).

benign, integrated 'possessions' of the Self, but the opposite; it is therefore entirely appropriate to call them 'dissonant' to the Self. By so doing, we draw them in closer to their affinity with the dynamic of unresolved, manifest dissonance in music. Psychoanalytically, we are at the heart of all that is untranslatable, because it is enigmatic (the Freudian/Laplanchean *primal repressed*) although attempts are made by the psyche at adaptation through translation, by allowing emergences (*Vorstellungen*) in associative circumstances. Libidinal interest is deflected: '... displaced from the pathogenic idea – which is bound to the traumatic event – on to another idea which is regarded by the subject as insignificant ... (or) converted into somatic energy, while the repressed idea is symbolised by a bodily zone or activity'.<sup>35</sup>

However, there is one further twist which our perverse human natures make, and that is, to turn what has been originally an 'alien attack' on us, for which we cannot be held to account, into something for which we feel we are to be blamed. In the unconscious, where the mnemonic traces of these events are situated, that which is dissonant to the Self, and which is very much to be abhorred, turns out to be that which is to be abhorred about ourselves. Unresolved dissonance, therefore, becomes 'the secret life of our self-hate' - and what a potent teleology that has. No wonder unresolved dissonance in music is such a problematic (Chapters V and IX take this up at greater length). Furthermore, if we remind ourselves that we inhabit a cacophonous environment from time to time, which is a dissonant environment with a decibel level above that which we find congenial (and from which we take, if we can, a mixture of conscious and unconscious defensive avoidance action as we fail to adapt), it is certainly possible to imagine equivalent fetal reactions and consequences too.<sup>36</sup>

Less of a problem for us, however, is that part-possession, the tripartite tension/tension sustained/tension resolved dynamic of habituated secondary sound. Relating subjectively both to the Self, and objectively, later, through the Ego's relations with the world, it allows imaginative space between, and is analogous to resolved dissonance in music. This dynamic, it will be remembered, is situated in the intra-uterine arena in

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<sup>34</sup> Fisch. 1983, p.149.

<sup>35</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.200.

<sup>36</sup> Piontelli (1992) has confirmed adverse reactions to certain pieces of music that fetuses find uncongenial, but it is obvious that experiments to determine reactions to cacophony would be ethically undesirable.



which the voice of the mother is dominant, and this has implications more far-reaching than are often considered. *For the pre-nate, the mother is a voice!* The implications of that notion are enormous. Yet the most frequent consideration is given to the fact that the post-nate recognizes the mother's voice at an earlier stage than it does the voice of its father, or anyone else; but the value of that discovery pales into relative insignificance, even though it suggests that the mother's voice is an earlier part-object, in the Kleinian sense, than the breast.<sup>37</sup> However, even which voice is recognized first becomes less important if we consider what that voice (even when angry) has to offer the child, especially pre-natally. In fact, its pre-verbal pitch-profile, rhythmically-patterned, fluctuating magnitude of sound offers many applications of paradigmatic frames of reference. In short, it offers *musicality* (alternatively known as *prosody*) – all the living, vital ingredients of prose, poetry and music – and locates them within the pre-nate's aesthetic space. One further consideration – it is the aesthetic prosody of the mother-tongue (in the sense of language *per se*) which is imprinted; if the mother herself speaks another language to her baby, the infant reacts with surprise.

Working back through the categories, therefore, we have arrived at primary sound, that subjective possession of the Self – unceasing binary patterns of compression/rarefaction which regulate the general, but soothing intra-uterine dissonance. The outcome of this universal experience bifurcates into cultural specifics post-natally.

For the first, we turn to nursery rhymes, nursery songs, lullabies and folk-song. We tend only to remember a few; however, once a possible link with those most easily recalled has been established with the paradigmatic pattern of primary sound, their attraction becomes obvious. Also, by the same token, the isolation of those that languish in archives is understandable - they don't align easily with this dynamic of maximum adaptation.<sup>38</sup> The most familiar – those that children never tire of repeating – are those which align most satisfactorily with the compression/rarefaction (tension/resolution) dynamic; in fact, they align both in their equal phrasing as well as in their underlying iambic rhythm. Furthermore, if they are read out loud, they will be seen to accord with

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<sup>37</sup> The disappearance of that voice in a loss situation should be, of course, more than just a passing interest in any study of effect. Cf Appendix IV.

<sup>38</sup> Of the 800 rhymes in Iona and Peter Opie's *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* (1984) very few could be said to be in common use.

the average rate of adult breathing (inspiration followed by expiration), and one will adjust one's rate of breathing to fit the preferred speed of reading – all of which reflects the intra-uterine rhythm of primary sound.<sup>39</sup>

The second, and most controversial of the culturally specific bifurcations of primary sound, is the connection with spoken language (although, eventually, music *per se* and language employ functionally autonomous systems in the brain). Language is certainly a field which the non-expert enters at their peril, for it is a subject beloved of scholars, and the research, particularly into its origins, is never-ending. Therefore, the brief contribution to the debate which is here posited is made in a spirit of humility.

If it can be agreed that the compression/rarefaction dynamic, however we might express it, is a fundamental paradigm, perceived as a building-block of the metaphysical Self, then it follows that, as a learned frame of reference, it is a dynamic primed to give access to analogous situations. If, also, we can accept that it is a possession of the pre-nate, we can perhaps also accept that the post-nate retains its binary pattern as a mnemonic trace, which can be dynamically abreacted. While allowing for the appropriate developmental stage to be attained, we nevertheless find that infants, if speech is closely directed towards them, will mimic adults' conversational mouth-shapes, as early as three months of age; and sooner or later, amid the infant's vocalizations made in 'vocal play', will appear clear bi-syllabic sounds. These may be considered as a much-reduced version of this dynamic – but an extremely important one.

Adult carers, if they are at all ready to enter into two-way communication with an infant, will be eagerly awaiting this stage. They will then pick up on anything which sounds like ba-ba, pa-pa, da-da, ma-ma or na-na and immediately react by assuming that the infant has identified one of the main adults in their lives. Given that these sounds may well have been used by the adults in question, as they confront the infant with 'baby talk', it only takes a second or two for them to be convinced that the child has spoken their 'name'.

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<sup>39</sup> For examples and expansion of this idea, cf Appendix III.

Perhaps, though, such sounds should be regarded in a different light. The infant is merely engaged in soliloquizing vocal play – *ur-play*; indeed, always has been with burbling and gurgling, whose undifferentiated nature appears to be akin to the ‘white noise’ of the intra-uterine sound-world. But advances in physical development make it easier to isolate certain sounds from ‘white-noise talk’; this is reflected in a greater clarity in the manifest, and also reflects a generalized progress in discriminatory activities. Furthermore, however, there is no doubt that the bi-syllabic sounds so produced possess a similar sound-envelope to the heartbeat sounds with which it has become familiar pre-natally and which, as we have suggested, becomes a learned frame of reference.

It is still crucial though, to recognize that these bi-syllabic sounds are the child’s possession, a conclusion we can draw from observation. That is to say, in spite of the amount of undivided attention the infant receives, we are unlikely to see it making direct eye-contact with the adult at the time it is first considered to be uttering any one of the bi-syllabic sounds. Thus, when the adult pounces delightedly upon the first one uttered by the infant, as proof that the child has identified a family member, they are, in fact, purloining that sound from the child, and returning it to them imbued with a ‘meaning’ which, as far as the child is concerned, was unintentional in its uttering. Indeed, that the infant generally responds with direct eye-contact upon having its possession returned to it in that manner, is a sign that it recognizes the happening as a two-way communication. Thereafter it tosses this possession to and fro with impunity, usually delighted with its new-found attachment.<sup>40</sup>

Ma-ma, pa-pa, ba-ba, na-na, have meanings which are similar around the world, indeed they appear almost universal. This certainly suggests that these particular sounds are child-driven, motivated by the libidinal interest children everywhere have invested in them. ‘Language’ (though imposed by adults) we can posit therefore, as arising from the Self, from the first ‘Self-possession’ and, as Dylan Evans paraphrased Lacan: ‘It is the mother who first occupies the position of the big Other for the child, because it is she who receives the child’s primitive cries and retroactively sanctions them as a particular

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<sup>40</sup> Cf Appendix IV for an amusing cultural verification.



message'.<sup>41</sup> Although Lacan probably did not realize it, the maternal heartbeat is, in his terms, a fundamental signifier.

Winnicott arrives at a similar conclusion, but from a different standpoint; that of the *transitional object*: '... an infant's babbling, or the way an older child goes over a repertoire of songs and tunes while preparing for sleep come within the intermediate area as transitional phenomena, along with the use made of objects that are not part of the infant's body yet are not fully recognised as belonging to external reality'.<sup>42</sup> In Winnicottian terms therefore, the above bi-syllabic sounds might become the first 'not-me' possession, perhaps an initiation into the 'false Self'. However, Susanne Langer came closest to the present argument about language in answering her own, specific question: 'What gives a child the present stimulus to talk? ... There must be immediate satisfaction in this strange exercise, as there is in running and kicking. The effect of words on other people is only a secondary consideration ... Speech is, in fact, the readiest active termination of that basic process in the human brain which may be called symbolic transformation of experiences'.<sup>43</sup>

Remembering to differentiate *music per se* from *musicality*, we can posit that language *per se* may, in fact, be a branch of the tree of musicality (of which music is the first branch to grow). Consequently, this sheds a new light on the aphorism that music is a language, for it places language as a derivative of musicality. Placing language first, allows it to 'foreclose' music, which it clearly does not do. But in the alternative location where, as it were, it takes second place (a position it is not used to being in!) language can be seen in its true light - as the conscious, *conceptual* representative of a pre-existent unconscious *perceptual* aesthetic space, beyond the Symbolic and in the Real - where it finds its own operative field.

In fact, discursive language, prised away from its binary phonemic origins becomes bound to the ego, and is thereafter burdened with its structural form of premises and consequences, making it inadequate for the representation of the *qualia* of human

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<sup>41</sup> Evans. 1996, p.133.

<sup>42</sup> Winnicott (1958). 1992 ed., p.230.

<sup>43</sup> Langer. 1941, p.44. Naturally though, I might take issue with her notion of speech being: '... the readiest active termination ... .'

affective experience. 'Poetic' speech, in which the singularities of the symbols and metaphors only have relative meanings; and linguistic utterances, such as the echolalia of infants or the mentally confused, which have no inherent (only immanent) meaning, are the prosodic, 'musical' devices for expression of sensation, not of representation. Consequently, and most importantly, the belief in the primacy of spoken language is, at the very least, under threat; indeed, it is far more likely, eventually, to prove to be an entirely unsustainable belief altogether.<sup>44</sup>

'Composed' music, on the other hand, is a political organization of sound-vibrations and, though possibly forming part of our intra-uterine sound-world, is generally not our primary experience of sound. Unfortunately for those who believe that, by playing music to a fetus they can manipulate that fetus' response to music and even produce a 'genius', what has been experienced by the fetus in terms of sound-vibrations, even sometimes before the mother has pregnancy confirmed has, by now, left its imprint upon the child's Self-who-feels - it has already played in its own 'aural theatre of fantasy'. The fetus undoubtedly responds to music,<sup>45</sup> but it already has a few, pre-symbolic, 'learned frames of reference' within the parameters of what I have called primary and secondary sound, which will inform that response. Nevertheless: '... adults have been known to display an uncanny knowledge of particular music to which they were exposed during the fetal stage, and prenatal experiences of sound have been recalled during primal therapy ... Empirical evidence exists of auditory discrimination, memory and learning in the infant, from as young as three months prior to birth'.<sup>46</sup>

We also note that, in recent years, Jenny Saffran, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Infant Learning Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the United States, has initiated research into what the lay press calls 'Perfect pitch, the gift of being able to pick out musical notes without referring to a tune or scale'.<sup>47</sup> She has discovered that every baby may be born with this ability, which diminishes once melodies are

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<sup>44</sup> Apparently, both Charles Darwin and Richard Wagner thought that music was the source of language. Herbert Spencer thought the opposite.

<sup>45</sup> The Governor of Georgia, USA, has apparently initiated a scheme, linking with the Sony company, to supply mothers of infants with a CD of music by Bach, Beethoven and Mozart, among others, based on research which shows that listening to classical music can enhance brain development. We have seen (above) how the music of Bach and Mozart conforms to the tension/tension sustained/tension resolved paradigm (the mother's voice). For an example of a young infant's responses to music, cf Appendix I.

<sup>46</sup> Woodward *et al.* 1992, p.61.

introduced to the child. Apparently, among those who retain the ability, are those who learn an instrument at an early age, speakers of languages in which pitch changes meaning, and those who are blind. The research enlarges on what is known about neuronal patterns being related to pitch in the brains of birds and dolphins but, in humans, it would seem that chance is heavily implicated in the retention of the natural ability – once again making ‘gift’ an entirely inappropriate epithet to use when that ability is found in anyone.<sup>48</sup> But, of interest in the present context, she is quoted as saying: ‘... we may not have dedicated hardware just for language. The structure is probably general to many complex forms of learning, including music’.<sup>49</sup>

To summarize. We bring into the world from our intra-uterine life therefore, a possible tactile, even rudimentary visual aesthetic from the ovoid womb and the curvi-linear umbilicus, as well as a possible archetype in the placental ‘tree of life’; perhaps even, musically speaking, the prototype of the concept of melodic linearity and cyclic harmony. In addition, we bring experience of three vibration-induced, basic dynamic systems; from primary sound we get tension/resolution without pause (‘comfort music’), while from secondary sound we get tension/sustained tension/resolution (the basis of ‘classical music’, with its controlled structures), also addictive sound, and tension without resolution (considered a more modern dynamic). From habituated voices we receive the notion of prosody, and from our first Self-possession of primary sound we acquire ego-centric discourse, but at the price of losing the possession of tension/resolution. Now we find we may all be born with ‘perfect pitch’.

We therefore all carry into maturity the universal, sensate experiences of that early Self-who-feels, in the form of mnemonic traces, neuronal patterning, learned frames of reference and archetypal forms - and therefore *schema* in readiness for the future:

‘ “Imaginative reality” ’ refers to a process in which the child makes use of what is familiar in the remembered past in order to try out a world of new possibilities in the present that, to some extent, are oriented towards the future’. Between the ages of two and three, the child displays adaptation to the tripartite paradigm of tension/tension sustained/tension resolved, as they develop the ability to utter narratives (but without

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<sup>47</sup> *The Times*; 21-2-2001.

<sup>48</sup> Cf Appendix IV for further comment on perfect pitch.

<sup>49</sup> *Newborns Blessed with Perfect Pitch*, Tim Radford in *The Guardian*, 21-2-2001.



losing gesture): '(The almost-two) child engaged a vivid scenario of imaginative pretence, expressing it with gestures and single words'.<sup>50</sup> But, though we laud the child's verbal language acquisition, we might also pause to think of the loss it entails later – in music therapist Kay Sobey's words: '... there is a loneliness of dwelling in a world of language-users whose capacity to relate to feelings is blunted'.<sup>51</sup> And another music therapist quotes: 'Words divide, tones unite. The unity of existence that the words constantly breaks up, dividing thing from thing, subject from subject, is constantly restored in the tone'.<sup>52</sup>

So, to conclude this chapter, we must return to the title: *Adapting to an Illusion: Between Incitement and Symbol*. We can make out a case for 'sound', if not actually a wholly illusory experience in the strict sense of the word, being at least partly illusory. The impact of acoustic waves is not, in its first instance, an auditory percept, neither is it deterministic in the sense that it results in an absolute. In the previous chapter we considered the second activity of the creative drive to be the 'adaptability stage', and we can now understand that psychic adaptation is what happens between the object-induced initiatory moment of the acoustic wave and the subject-received effect - what happens, indeed, in the space between the universal and the personal. Because the psycho-biological mechanisms of apperception and *affect* encompass both positive adaptation and mal-adaptation, this becomes crucial to our understanding of what the composer thinks they are investing with a new reality.

We now understand that the composer is not giving a re-reality to the *incitement*, but to the *affective response* – the contents of the 'space between', where the illusion lies. Between incitement and symbol, in fact, lies the aesthetic space – this is what composers are actually working with in their re-realizations, and what we, the audience, relate to in performance. The composer is thus 'casting out' an object – in a re-realization of what does not exist 'in reality' only what exists as an illusory phenomenon within – yet a re-realization of what is unconsciously possessed: 'Aesthetic expression is objectification of the non-objective.'<sup>53</sup> The symbols of musical notation coming, as they do, upon the

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<sup>50</sup> Emde and Kubicek. 1997, p.115 and p.118.

<sup>51</sup> Sobey. 1992, pp.20-21.

<sup>52</sup> Howat; 1992.

<sup>53</sup> Adorno. 1970, p.163.

present scenario last of all, stand for this illusion in all its aesthetic detail; in fact, Susanne Langer has called music ‘an unconsummated symbol’.<sup>54</sup> Musical symbolism provides for the cognition of prosodic linearity of melody, circularity of harmony (in dissonance resolved and dissonance unresolved), for rhythm, pitch, tempo, duration, magnitude, timbre and ‘marks of expression’. But the act of applying symbols in this manner does not, in itself, place music *per se* (as is often stated) in ‘a pre-symbolic’ category; rather, it is the aesthetic foundations of music which are pre-symbolic – the affective response to the illusory nature of acoustic wave-formations.

We all possess the illusion, but we do not all have access to the same symbols – they are taught as cultural acquisitions. This summary therefore casts a shadow over another of the shibboleths of modern psychology – that of Abraham Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of needs’ - another phallic hierarchy which should probably now be considered past its prime. But it is also one that has continued to inform pedagogy to the detriment of most people, whose in-built, personal aesthetic experiences have thus neither been validated nor absorbed into their educational curriculum.<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, not all those who do acquire the symbols choose to place them at the service of the creative drive, though most of us like to enjoy the fruits of the composer’s labors. We may now have an idea of *what* the composer chooses to symbolize, but it brings us no nearer to the answer of *why* they make that choice. *How* the acquired aesthetic elements (which have entered into the unconscious imaginations of us all) end up informing the choice of the few, is the investigation left to further chapters.

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<sup>54</sup> Langer. 1941, p.245.

<sup>55</sup> Cf Gillott, 1999.

## IV

### MUSIC AS A CONTAINING SPACE

#### i

#### The Role of Affect

*Illiteracy had dried up her sympathy and atrophied her imagination ...  
when God came to her, He had no more imagination or affect to give.<sup>1</sup>*

Coping with *affective responses* is a large part of the psychoanalyst's 'stock-in-trade', as from a Freudian perspective, affects are the qualitative *feeling-tone* aspect of an incitement: '(affects) ... correspond to processes of discharge, the final manifestations of which are perceived as feelings'.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, Freud's teleology of affective response will be granted the specific context of music but, whereas Freud argues that each *instinct* expresses itself in terms of affect through the medium of ideas, we will present an argument based on our preferred term of *libidinal interest*. We will maintain that, because of the manner in which sound-impingement on the fetus/infant is universally discharged in the 'startle response' (a phenomenon which is foundational to this chapter), the generated affect is inevitably bound up with the pre-nate aesthetic experience of the curvi-linear and the three tension paradigms (outlined previously) – in other words, through direct sensate experience, the intra-uterine world contains our first *knowing*, from whence our ideas for *doing* will come.

Furthermore, we will demonstrate the teleology of this complex aesthetic through a brief historical survey of Western European music, and will show how and why music *per se* differentiated itself over time. Secondly, we will examine what grounds there are for positing that music is a containing space.

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<sup>1</sup> From *A Judgement in Stone* by Ruth Rendell. Century-Hutchinson, London. 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Freud. S.E. XIV, p.178.



Affect, though, is possibly the one remaining component of music that consistently fails to co-operate with the physicists as well as the psychologists. Because music's fundament, *sound*, is, as we have discussed, an illusory phenomenon; music itself is a true phenomenon which has defied objective study. The composer, Paul Hindemith wrote: 'There is no doubt that listeners, performers, and composers alike can be profoundly moved by perceiving, performing, or imagining music, and consequently music must touch on something in their emotional life that brings them into this state of excitation. But if these mental reactions were feelings, they could not change as rapidly as they do, and they would not begin and end with the musical stimulus that aroused them ... Real feelings need a certain interval of time to develop, to reach a climax, and to fade out again; but reactions to music may change as fast as musical phrases do, they may spring up in full intensity at any given moment and disappear entirely when the musical pattern that provokes them ends or changes'.<sup>3</sup>

More than twenty years after that was written, the problem had not gone away. As Peter Kivy wrote in 1989, seeming to lack faith that a solution might be found: 'There must be some new combination of the latest results in psychology, physiology, and the psychology of music to show how sounds in general, and musical sounds in particular, interact with the human organism to produce emotional reactions of the appropriate kind. Perhaps there may be, but I do not know about them, and I think that a little preliminary reflection on the possibility suggests that this is a blind alley'.<sup>4</sup> Kivy is looking for empirically-based 'results' – an approach that has never worked, while, in this instance, Hindemith's concentration on feelings could be much closer to what is actually going on.

Unfortunately, he missed the point by throwing the onus onto music – 'music must touch on'- for, actually, there must be something *built in to music itself* for us to 'touch on', to identify with, in order that we experience a commonality between what he calls our 'feelings' and what we might call the particular 'feeling-tone' of a section of music. Yes, our feelings take time to develop, but the onus is therefore on us for, as Ray Jackendoff suggested, music is a form of re-presentation of an event: ' ... symbol systems (of music) and computations are in some way homologous to brain organization

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<sup>3</sup> Hindemith. 1961, pp.44-45.

<sup>4</sup> Kivy. 1989, p.30.

and brain *events*'.<sup>5</sup> If only Jung had applied the following useful little phrase to music: '... offers a hook to our projections and lures them out',<sup>6</sup> it would have been clear for all to see that it is we who are initiating Kivy's 'emotional reactions' in what is called *centrifugal identification*.<sup>7</sup> Our emotions thus turn back and re-act the feeling-tone of earlier experience – in that reverse chronology, it can only mean one thing – music re-acts the affect for us.<sup>8</sup>

However, to proceed, we must first allay the confusion that exists between emotion and affect – a confusion which Jung compounded for the psychoanalytic community by tying them together: 'I use emotion as synonymous with affect'.<sup>9</sup> Only later in his career (in 1935) did he appear to have modified this view: '... emotions and affects ... they are just events ...'.<sup>10</sup> But to say that emotion and affect are 'events' places them in a time-frame and, in fact, we will find that *affect* arises as an *inner* response to incitement, and what we call *emotion* is motion-*ex*; it demonstrates the movement outward of the inner affect. It is crucial, in fact, to think of affect and emotion as possessing an unconscious eliding, sequential, relationship which takes aesthetics into account on the way. If we therefore consider at this point the fetal/infant startle response to a sound impingement, we can observe that Freud's *quantitative* 'economic model' of discharge of energy - his *quota of affect* - makes sense.<sup>11</sup> The startle response is a function of the human nervous system informed by both 'nature' and 'nurture' - nature has provided the means, in the form of separate neuronal pathways in the brain from the organs of perception, while nurture (the environment) supplies the incipit.

The constituents of the startle response are therefore successively internal then external as the subject satisfies the narcissistic interests of the libido by adapting to the sound-impingement. At first, there are chemical changes in the subject's body, then the typical, external muscular reaction becomes visible. The temporality of these events guarantees time for the incipit to produce an additional response – an affective *feeling-tone*; it is

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<sup>5</sup> Jackendoff. 1992, p.128. My emphasis.

<sup>6</sup> Jung. C.W.18, para.519.

<sup>7</sup> Cf Appendix IV.

<sup>8</sup> One could use the psychoanalytic term *abreaction*. Laplanche and Pontalis (1973, p.1) suggest that is the: 'Emotional discharge whereby the subject liberates himself from the affect attached to the memory of a traumatic event ...'.

<sup>9</sup> Jung. C.W. 6, para.681.

<sup>10</sup> Jung. C.W. 18, para.42.

this feeling-tone which is then unconsciously *introjected* by the subject. The incipit then 'disappears', becoming a mnemonic trace, a 'lost object' behind the enduring affect. Importantly though, we need not ascribe to Jung's view that: 'Affects always occur where there is a failure of adaptation',<sup>12</sup> for the affect, as it were, *is* the adaptation, and it is during this period of adaptation that the cause-and-effect continuum is subverted.

In the Freudian model, the continuum is continually subverted, because causal incipits are forever destined to be separated from their *effects*; in other words, never again will the affect give a true account of itself. Freud maintains that the introjected affect struggles to escape its cathexis and to project its feeling-tone onto another object which will be a suitable vehicle for its expression, through the mechanisms of transformation, displacement or exchange of affect. But projection operates economically too for, in largesse, its excess of libidinal interest leads to *idealisation* - when the preferred object's qualities are perceived as perfect: '... the projection of the imago on the object ... endows the object with compelling reality ... exaggerated value ... the object can gain "magical power" over the subject'.<sup>13</sup> *Affect* is therefore the foundation of all feeling-tone, influencing mood, and pathological states such as depression, apathy and hostility, but, in addition, it induces what has been called an *appetitive state*.<sup>14</sup> This secures its narcissistic link with the concept of libidinal interest, and the 'exaggerated value' which undoubtedly influences the choice of *mode d'emploi* of the libidinal drive.

Composers thus find themselves still in touch with the incipit, back beyond, as it were, the aesthetic space in which sound-impingements have been schematized through the paradigmatic forms. Thus, music *per se* arouses in them an 'appetitive state', it is the object with 'magical power'. Behavioural psychologist Regina Pally writes: 'Emotionally arousing information and personally relevant information are more likely to be encoded than is neutral or irrelevant information ... (in the brain) the amygdala itself does not do the encoding, but gives a signal to other areas involved in attentional focus and memory encoding, such as the hippocampus, when information is emotionally

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<sup>11</sup> Freud. S.E.III, p.60.

<sup>12</sup> Jung. C.W. 6, para.808.

<sup>13</sup> Jung. C.W.8, para.521.

<sup>14</sup> Young, P.T; *Feeling and Emotion*. In Woolman (Ed.). 1973, (pp.749-771).



or otherwise significant to the organism, as if to say “This information matters; pay attention to it and encode it!”<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore (to go back to our differentiation of emotion from affect) we can now perceive emotion, and its extreme form, passion, as an effusive excess of affect that has not remained thoroughly grounded in the aesthetic space – it is the ‘end-game’, manifested as happiness, surprise, anger, sadness, disgust and fear.<sup>16</sup> To its credit, it has partly *survived* disguise and dissimulation, thus providing us with a deeper insight into the pleasurable or unpleasurable nature of the original incipit.

Now we must investigate further how the collective experience of music *per se* becomes to be irredeemably predicated upon such subjectivity. The subjectivity is, as we have seen, rooted in the intra-uterine initiation into aesthetics via the curvi-linear forms first perceived through visual and tactile sensations and the pressure-wave incipits of the three tension paradigms, which become *schemae* with multiple applicability. Between them, they make reference to all that is ‘musical’, consequently it is as if every ensuing sensate experience - in its passage from incipit to conscious perception - and every symbolic expression of experience (in whatever mode) must first pass through this pre-symbolic ‘theatre of musicality’. Specifically in terms of music though, linear melody, modular harmony, pitch contours, phrasing and level of magnitude all find their original affective paradigmatic basis here so, when the subject experiences the reflexive ‘startle response’ to sound-impingement, the accompanying physical movement of gesture takes on all the aesthetic qualities of a melodic contour.

Yet there is another, neglected, aspect of the startle response, and that is *utterance*. This occurs a fraction later than the reflexive gesture. Furthermore, there is obviously a time before which the pre-nate will not be physically capable of utterance<sup>17</sup> but we cannot assume that the mental *disposition* to utter in response to the impingement of stimuli is experienced, nor whether there might not exist a degree of frustration at the inability. We know the fetus gestures *in utero*, as the progress of its motor responses is easily discerned there, but it probably has to wait until it is born before it has an opportunity to

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<sup>15</sup> Pally. 1997, p.1227.

<sup>16</sup> List of six emotions taken from Gleitman. 1991, p.484.

<sup>17</sup> Cf Chapter III.

get gesture and utterance working together effectively.<sup>18</sup> From then on, though, gesture and utterance are the basic media for the expression of affective response, working in partnership, prototypically, to promote the affective state of the moment. However, research from David Chamberlain (1989) reveals that ‘cries’ have been heard from *in utero* (*vagitus uterinus* – disturbingly, mostly as a result of obstetric procedures), and that aborted fetuses at 23 weeks have cried. This means that babies can cry for about half of intra-uterine time.

But if we proceed a little further in the lives of infants, we realize that they are continually increasing their level of utterance to match gesture – they begin to vocalize, in soliloquizing *ur*-play with their imprinted intra-uterine sound-world. The two increase in scope together; a child at play is constantly ‘on the move’ physically, chattering away to itself - movement and vocalization, gesture and utterance in tandem. From time-to-time the child may communicate with a carer, and, indeed, spend longer and longer periods engaged in this, but for a long time, it also soliloquizes and physically moves in appropriately personal *inner* affective partnership, as Ernst Gombrich explained: ‘The child first enjoys unselective babbling, the rhythmical utterances of noise which are still close to organic rhythms in laughter or in play. But with this play there also appears the pleasure in increasing mastery, to which Freud in his analysis of verbal jokes attached such importance. Baby language still bears the traces of this mastery emerging from repetition in words such as papa, mama, gee-gee or ta-ta ... Not that the adult ever forgets the pleasures of sheer phonetic play’. In his next sentence, Gombrich gives as much importance to ‘childish’ songs as we gave to them in the previous chapter, but he does so from a different and, to us, ultimately a very important view-point: ‘The jingle, the nonsense syllables, the “hey and a ho and a hey nonino” of Shakespearian songs, *are the equivalent in language of the flourish in ornament and in dance*’.<sup>19</sup>

However, this kind of spontaneous behavior – a sort of ‘playing with inner musicality’ should not be confused with a *measurable response* to extraneous music. David

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<sup>18</sup> It is argued, of course, that an infant’s movements are ‘automatic’ – sometimes with the additional adjective of ‘uncontrolled’. Yet, the movements which accompany an angry cry are typical of those associated with tension, while those accompanying contentment are typically more gentle and relaxed.

<sup>19</sup> Gombrich. 1979, p.290. My emphasis. From a chapter entitled *Some Musical Analogies*. He even goes on to draw examples of compression/relaxation phrase structures in songs (8 bar sentences etc.); for example, as in *John Brown’s Body*.

Hargreaves points out: ‘ ... researchers seem to agree that most newborns can discriminate between sounds on the basis of numerous acoustic parameters, particularly intensity and frequency.’ And: ‘ ... results suggest that somewhere between three and six months, babies start to respond actively to music rather than to receive it passively. They begin to turn towards the source of sound, and to show manifest pleasure and “astonishment”. Soon after this, music consistently produces bodily movements ... ’<sup>20</sup>

Further research projects exist into the way 6-11 month old infants process complex auditory patterns – like the following, which supports the inference that infants extract pitch contours of melodies and spoken utterances, ‘... ignoring many of the details within such contours ... One task that lies ahead is to specify the features associated with such enhanced processing, features that can be considered “natural” and, therefore, belonging to the set from which musical universals would be drawn ... we would argue further, that some organisations are more “natural” or robust than others ... and that the natural organization may prevail throughout life’. Interestingly, they also argue, these ‘natural’ and universal principles of pattern perception are also called into play by composers. What they call ‘infant-directed speech’, that is ‘ ... a kind of singsong that captures the infant’s attention and promotes possible affect ... seem to have special status or perceptual priority for prelinguistic listeners ... Later, infants can use contour information to track phrasal and clausal units and also to distinguish utterance types (questions vs. statements)’.<sup>21</sup> (It should be noted that the ‘question and answer’ analogy is often called upon to identify simple phrase-patterns in music, and that it corresponds to a tension-release ‘comfort music’ dynamic as outlined in the previous chapter).

In addition, it has been established that responses to acoustic stimuli are similar in pre-nates and post-nates, and are carried through from one state to the other: ‘When responses to sound and vibration were examined postnatally in the same subjects who had been tested pre-natally, similarities in overall responding were found. The neonate, like the fetus, responded reliably to both the vibrator and the complex noise, whereas responding to the tone (pure sine-wave tone) could not be differentiated from spontaneous activity observed during control trials. This finding suggests a continuity in

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<sup>20</sup> Hargreaves. 1986, p.61 and p.63.

<sup>21</sup> *Listening Strategies in Infancy*; Trehub *et al*, in McAdams and Bigand. 1993, pp.312-313. Cf also Stone *et al*. 1972.



pre- and postnatal response to the same kind of stimulus materials between the late fetal and early neonatal periods'.<sup>22</sup> (Researchers have suggested that a benign response to a sine-wave tone is due to it possessing non-stimulative properties). We have every right to infer from such research projects, that responses are indeed initiated *in utero*, and that the affective response remains the same in the neo-nate – a further inference would be, of course, that such responses are never relinquished by the autonomic nervous system. Research conducted by Sears (1957) showed that there are changes in muscle tension in response to music,<sup>23</sup> and Radocy and Boyle state: 'Concomitant with aesthetic experience are changes in blood pressure, respiration and electrodermal response'.<sup>24</sup> There is every reason to suppose, then, that the inner partnership of gesture and utterance is established to continue throughout life, and therefore every reason to suppose that partnership is of great significance.<sup>25</sup> We will now explore its teleology.

It is interesting to note in this regard, that young children, sometimes without prompting, adopt words with multiple meanings to describe music – words which suggest an innate feeling for gestural contour, such as *up, down, high, low* etc. (These terms are, of course, also part of established musical terminology, and have to be taught if children have not had an opportunity to feel their appropriateness for themselves). For the child, the womb is their first resonating chamber – their own body, their second, and so: '... it is easy to trace our primary musical responses to the most primitive movements of our being ... to those movements which are at the very basis of animate existence'.<sup>26</sup>

But we find culturally specific constraints putting a brake upon overt expression of the two together, and we can maintain that, generally speaking, utterance (in the form of language) is the more frequently allowed of the two. Gesture is too 'Dionysian' for some societies. It is therefore logical to assume that gesture pays the price when society privileges utterance – and vice versa, so (as both are affect-based), whichever one is suppressed or discouraged limits the overall expression of affect, thus: 'Physical

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<sup>22</sup> Kisilevsky and Muir. 1991, p.22.

<sup>23</sup> Sears, W.W; in *The Effects of Music on Muscle Tones*. In Gaston, 1957.

<sup>24</sup> Radocy and Boyle. 1988, p.199.

<sup>25</sup> There is a species of the primates, the lemurs, of which a particular branch utters what can only be called *song*. They project this loud, clear sound, with the same muscle movements in the face as a human being might. Perhaps we are destined to 'sing'.

<sup>26</sup> Sessions. 1941; *The Composer and his Message*; In *The Intent of the Artist* Ed. Centeno, A. Princeton University Press. NJ. p108. Quoted in Feder *et al*; 1990, p.183.

responses seem to decline during the later pre-school period ... Moog found that 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds were increasingly likely to sit and listen attentively to music, rather than to make spontaneous movements in response to it'.<sup>27</sup> Later on, as adults, only under certain circumstances may we display the complete affective response, for example, literally 'dance and sing for joy', or 'cry, and wring our hands in despair'. We may jump up and down and cheer at a football match, or pace up and down muttering to ourselves when under some sort of stress. So-called 'road rage' is a modern example of the affective duet, but it is wisely not encouraged. As a result, therefore, both positive and negative affects are frequently banished from overt display, but their survival is ensured as an inner experience - bolstered by the libidinal interest inspired by their original incitement. We will now enter the aesthetic space ourselves and explore how that relates to Freud's theory of the transformation, displacement or exchange of affect, together with the notion that affects operate paradigmatically, and therefore analogously.

Frequently, one comes across statements in which this line of thought is embedded; for example, Peter Kivy wrote: 'The weeping willow, more distantly perhaps, but no less recognizably, bears a likeness to human posture in dejection';<sup>28</sup> he could just as effectively have used 'gesture' instead of 'posture', for we certainly project onto this tree a gesture with a contour appropriate to weeping and mute dejection. John Elderfield, working in the domain of art rather than music provides a second example: 'Dance, (the artist) Matisse said, provided: "expressive movements, rhythmic movements, elements that were already alive".'<sup>29</sup> These two analogies demonstrate projections based upon a remarkable, unconscious understanding of the original affects which underpin each one – the history of Western European dance, in fact, from folk dances to the formalism of classic ballet and ballroom dance with its specially composed music, demonstrates an increasingly stylized imprisonment of dance's affective, Dionysian genesis – its spirited *genius*.

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<sup>27</sup> Hargreaves. 1986, p.65. The reference to Moog is from: Moog, H. *The Musical Experience of the Pre-school Child*. Trans.C.Clarke. Schott, London. 1976.

<sup>28</sup> Kivy. 1993, p.234.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted by Elderfield. 1978, p.56. Matisse's paintings entitled *Dance I* and *Dance II* are particularly well-known. Many will also know of Isadora Duncan, whose exceptionally expressive dance was virtually uninhibited Dionysian gesture. Rudolf Laban later captured the essence of freely expressed gesture. Cf Appendix III.

The freedom to indulge in overt displays of the Dionysian partnership of movement and utterance is generally denied us. Thankfully, though, there are still examples to be found of an original Dionysian integration, which we can enjoy vicariously. Music historians have long suggested that the roots of much Western European music lie in the East so, remaining faithful to that notion, we can call to mind the expressive arts of India. Even in a fleeting impression it is possible to appreciate that the music of the *raga* (a word meaning *feeling* or *passion*) though stylized, co-ordinates with their dance gestures, for both occupy us *temporally*; yet the *spatial* art that is the patterns of their artistic designs also reflects the same gestural contours which, when being executed, like dance and the movements of the musicians, are also temporal. Importantly, these arts are integrated temporally and spatially through the execution and display of a basic curvi-linear contour decorated<sup>30</sup> and, through them, we can begin a journey through time, towards an understanding of their differentiation into discrete art forms of the present – particularly, of course, into music.

The melismatic decoration which is so characteristic of Indian monody, in fact developed a most interesting and wide-ranging history, although the principle of a decorated contour was not, of course, confined to India, neither was the principle born there. It is, however, a principle which has travelled remarkably well, and which has been flexible enough to express emotional moods in the various cultures it has infiltrated. For example, we find its off-shoots in the decorated melodic contours of Jewish *Kletzmer* music, the Bulgarian device of jaw tremolo, Spanish *Flamenco*, in the idea of variation as a salient characteristic of French folk melody, in Gaelic music of the Scottish Highland bagpipes and Irish fiddle music – then, of course, in Jazz, that wonderful body-beat, impulsive genre, which married syncopated Africanisms with improvised decoration (composing in the fast lane!).<sup>31</sup> It should not be assumed, however, that the present common intervals of the tone and the semitone were the only intervals in use – intervals smaller than a semitone were commonplace and greatly assisted the expressive nature of the music.

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<sup>30</sup> Cf Wade, 1983.

<sup>31</sup> Cf Appendix IV for an enlargement of the cultural spread of gesture/contour.



The integrated art forms prevalent in India (which had itself assimilated both Hindu and Muslim traditions) is similarly at its most evident in the arts of Islam which, of course, arrived in Iberia and were also brought to the attention of the West at the time of the Crusades. In Iberia, Islam's clash with Christianity was more than just a fundamental religious issue – it was cultural too, and particularly enriching for the mutual art of manuscript illumination, which drew strength from the encounter; their respective designs display this interaction in a remarkable fashion. The word *interlace*, for example, perfectly describes the more geometric patterns that have always been prevalent in Islamic design, as well as the intricate ground-pattern of some 'folk dances', the weaving of Maypole ribbons, and the interwoven star shape of interlocked swords in Morris dancing. It is clear from the writings of Gombrich, that his thoughts have followed a similar trajectory: 'Anglo-Irish ornament, the arabesque or the rocaille come to mind as such typical "end products" of a long sequence of what Kubler calls "linked solutions",' and: 'It is well to remember that, while the style of interlace came to an end at the time of the Book of Kells, there is no such dramatic termination of the arabesque ... it may have settled into a splendid convention which is still practised in the East'. Later in the same passage he wrote: ' ... we have the example of music to show how an art form transcended its social setting to create a world of its own. Up to a point this even happened to the art of ornament ... '.<sup>32</sup>

Around 1650, the word *arabesque* (a term introduced into Europe during the Moorish conquest of Spain) entered the English language from the French. It describes a particular contour which became differentiated from the integrative arts of music, dance and design - its affective, feeling-toned Dionysian gesture emancipating itself in flourishes which were overtly expressed in illustrative art (especially calligraphy) as natural vegetative forms. It is no wonder that the devotional art of book illumination took on the same natural forms; gestures of obeisance, of rapture, of perceived visions with, in Islamic religious art, the suppression of bird, animal and human images, resulted in the delights to the eye of their effusion of devotional emotion. Gombrich clearly had an inkling of what we might believe to be the origin of the arabesque in suppressed gesture: 'It is as if, having formed a letter on constructive principles, *there was still so much surplus energy which needed an outlet* that the hand showed off its mastery of

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<sup>32</sup> Gombrich. 1979, pp.210-211.

regular movement in the swinging scrolls and loops. One is reminded of the “florid” gestures of the courtier we still see imitated in the acting of Elizabethan comedies ... In fencing, the flourish accompanies both thrust and parry ... though not all duellists improvise a poem at the same time like Rostand’s *Cyrano*’.<sup>33</sup> In the closing sentence of the book, before the epilogue, Gombrich says: ‘ ... we must still pursue the implications of this analogy, which links the arts of space with the arts of time’.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps the *arabesque* has furnished us with, as Gombrich suggested, an analogy which deserves to be pursued further. Its importance did not escape John Elderfield in his writing on Matisse: ‘The arabesque is therefore a crucially important sign because it will weave the surface as a web of signs, as a whole ... (Matisse) was pleased to be told that their (arabesque’s) total effect suggested the play of muscles in action. The web of signs produces an equivalent to corporealization fabric. Signs mean condensation, they give access to the character of things’.<sup>35</sup> By inference therefore, in the present context, arabesques, through their gestural contours, give access to the essential character of *affect*. Adducing their symbolism to the service of music we find it transformed into the principle of the overarching phrase – at first in monody, and later in the complex weaving of monody into polyphonic structures: ‘(the *arabesque*) ... whose elaborations, foliate and circlicued have their counterparts in music in ornamentation and complex figuration’.<sup>36</sup>

Another vital strand in the history of Western music is said to emanate from the chants of the *cantor* in the Jewish synagogue, from which three distinct styles of psalmody are thought to have come. They are *direct*, *responsorial* and *antiphonal*, and are mostly sung syllabically. But a further style was present, which was transferred into the Christian Church under the title *cantillation*; this was the way that prose sections of the Bible were presented, and consisted of a much more decorated, hieratically-gestured style. Early Christian music is frequently referred to as *plainchant*, but there were different styles, some more elaborated than others, and it was the more elaborated which incurred the displeasure of the Church fathers, thus the more conservative Roman chant

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<sup>33</sup> *Op.cit.* p.239. My emphasis.

<sup>34</sup> *Op.cit.* p.284.

<sup>35</sup> Elderfield. 1992, p.27.

<sup>36</sup> Brown, M.E; In *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 1980. Vol.1, p.512.

was favored above the Gallican of Gaul and the Mozarabic of Spain. Learning these chants was far from easy as musical notation was in its infancy (the words, after all, were what mattered most to the Church) and was concerned only with pitch, not temporal value: 'Christian composers did not write their melodies down ... even when they did eventually put pen to parchment the symbols they used were chiefly an aid to the memory in showing the shape of the melody'.<sup>37</sup> Singing masters resorted to the fundamental contours of physical gesture to indicate when the next note of the chant should be sung and whether it should be higher or lower while, sometimes, the traditional chants were embellished by the higher voices improvising a *discantus supra librum* at the same time.<sup>38</sup> But part-music as such did not appear until the ninth century.

Now the twin principles of a decorated gestural contour, and its history have been established in this context, a necessary brevity now requires us to advance to the Renaissance, and we will find that a secondary re-integration has taken place, between sacred and secular music through their commonality of the embellished contour. There even emerged hybrid forms classified as *musica practica* – music for ritual and occasion and *musica speculativa* – 'metaphysical music', which was non-utilitarian. But in sacred music embellishment was formally transformed into variation, particularly through the music of Guillaume Dufay, who introduced the very important device of a 'head motif' upon which subsequent variation would be based. On the other hand, *a capella*, imitative polyphonic textures, which distracted attention away from monody, were regarded as detrimental to the expression of words, as they emasculated the musical, gestural expression of affect-based utterance by restricting it to abstract contours.

This fuelled the ready interest in the Classical world, and a return to the ideals of Greek theatre, where choruses were sung and instruments accompanied, expressing tragedy through lyrical, musical gesture. The Renaissance period had already seen the rise of word-painting, particularly in madrigals – everything was in thrall to the mood set by the words of the text, but now came the *stil rappresentativo* – the idea of representing *anima in corpo*. This encouraged free phrasing and rhythm, pauses for effect, and unusual

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<sup>37</sup> Harman. (1958) 1988 ed., p.24.

<sup>38</sup> This practice lingers into the present – in fact, I am not alone in conducting choirs by 'molding' their phrasing with gesturing the contour in the air, as this results in a more expressive performance than one where the 'beat' alone is 'conducted'.



intervals for emotional effect in an overt attempt to express the emotions and the passions through a single vocal line which would follow the natural inflexions of a text, and which would be accompanied quite simply. Members of the Florentine *Camerata* set themselves up to promote this style, which coalesced into opera.

In contrast to sacred music, which used Latin, opera singers would be expected to perform the words of the mother-tongue, but with great feeling, and to ornament the most important words – a style which reached its apotheosis in Baroque opera, where the florid decoration of the stage sets reached out again to the gestural contour of the *arabesque*. *The doctrine of the temperament and the Affections* – first revealed in the operatic aria, especially in the Neapolitan School represented by Alessandro Scarlatti, dictated that only one emotion should be portrayed in any one aria, but, consequently, even individual instruments were accorded character, such as the ‘modest’ flute and the ‘pompous’ horn. This controlling hand was not destined to last, but the evidence of this principle remains, particularly in the sumptuously florid music intended for the *castrati*: ‘... who were the first real virtuosi in the history of music, and in Neapolitan opera virtuosity was ranked higher than in any other art form before or since’.<sup>39</sup>

Yet we cannot ignore the composer Claudio Monteverdi, a Cremonese who spent the last thirty years of his life in Venice. One cannot do justice to the stature of Monteverdi in a sentence or two, but it is recognized that he introduced so many fundamental changes into composed music, that it could never be the same again. As far as expressive vocal lines are concerned, one quotation probably says it all: ‘The single surviving fragment from his opera *Arianna* (1608) ... “Arianna’s Lament” (“Lasciatemi morire”) moved the entire audience to tears at the first performance, and not only became the most famous monody of the first half of the century, but set such a fashion that hardly any serious opera of the next 150 years omitted a single lament’.<sup>40</sup> The affect locked in to this music still has the power to move audiences to tears.

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<sup>39</sup> Harman and Milner (1959). 1988 ed., p.441.

<sup>40</sup> *Op.cit.* p.376. One of the finest ensuing laments was by Henry Purcell – *Dido’s Lament* from *Dido and Aeneas*; the vocal line is so cunningly suspended above a repeated ground bass, that the bass line is unconsciously absorbed by the listener in all its affective, falling chromatic (gestural) contour.

But before that, instrumental music began to tackle, head on, the supremacy of the voice in a kind of *anschluss* – in Elizabethan times, for example, music was written ‘for voices or viols’, for such factors as ecclesiastical and aristocratic patronage brought instrumental music ‘indoors’, and encouraged technical development across the whole range of instruments themselves. Raucous ‘outdoor’ instruments such as shawms and racketts, for example, gradually gave way to oboes and bassoons respectively, while the soft-toned viols and clavichords reflected the intimacy of the house. While the vocal utterance of singing was not exactly pushed aside by this sea-change, it was eventually forced into a more equal partnership with instrumental music where, musically speaking, it has remained.

Instrumental music of the Baroque period has had to bear the description *absolute music*. Carl Dalhaus wrote: ‘The metaphysical prestige of absolute music came about via a transfer of the poetic idea of unspeakability’,<sup>41</sup> almost as if this music utters nothing (for *absolute music* is the dubious term used to describe Western European instrumental art music that is supposed to be devoid of a ‘program’ or ‘narrative’). Yet it is a mistake to think that no emotion was meant. The main focus, as far as music written for instruments was concerned, was not in any theme itself (which was frequently borrowed from another work – either the composer’s own or someone else’s), but in what the composer could do with it. But, by the late Baroque, composers established the mood of a piece at the beginning by a ‘motto’ whose contour and dynamic was crucial to the expression of that mood – a recall of the *head motif* of an earlier age.

It was not long, though, before the composer took charge of the ornamentation as well and, after the Baroque period, instrumental music assumed so much importance that the art of embellishment barely survived in the up-and-coming world of orchestral music; virtually its only home was in the cadenza of the concerto. Because, therefore, in the advancing Classical period, more and more Dionysian elements in the arts came, so to say, under the control of Apollo, succumbing embellishment to practical and aesthetic pressures, affective gesture had to display more cunning to be expressed. The *Stil*

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<sup>41</sup> Dalhaus. 1989, p.146. Cf Appendix IV for an example of *transformed unspeakability*.

*galant* of the seventeenth century was insufficient as it had knocked some rough corners off spontaneous musical gesture, producing something altogether more polite and formulaic (using small devices with gestural contours like ‘sighs’, for example) - a kind of ‘musical etiquette’, in which sense it transformed the expression of affect in Germany into the rather pleasantly sentimental *empfindsamer Stil*. Vocal music frequently set its own limits because of the importance the text already possessed in expressing a mood or a notion – Franz Schubert though, certainly enlarged the expressive scope of song accompaniments, as they seem gesture-driven and given equal status with the text. In instrumental music, titles became important in indicating the affection, while ‘slow movements’ derived their particular melodic style from operatic aria but, as Wilfred Mellers wrote: ‘In the course of this book I refer, for instance, to a melodic phrase as “caressing”. Of course, the adjective is a metaphor; but is it valid and relevant? When I looked at the score I decided that just possibly it was valid; for the contour of the phrase describes a curve that looks like the curve of a caressing hand; it is a physical gesture in time’.<sup>42</sup>

We have in various ways occasionally to refer to *entrapment*, for example of dissonance (for which classical tonality is responsible) and we will see in more detail in the next chapter how dissonance is related to affect. But as the Classical period gave way to the Romantic, the *Sturm und Drang* movement was a result of the resurgence of Dionysian extremes into the tidy world of Apollo. That which we have called the ‘head motif’, ‘Baroque motto’ etc. entered into the music of Josef Haydn as a dramatically-gestured opening figure (especially prominent in his piano sonatas) perfectly suited to the variation and development expressive of the swiftly-changing moods of *Sturm und Drang*: ‘The motive’, wrote Arnold Schönberg, ‘generally appears in a characteristic and impressive manner at the beginning of a piece. The features of a motive are intervals and rhythms, combined to produce a memorable *shape or contour* (muscle memory) which usually implies an inherent harmony’.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Mellers (1957). 1969 ed., p.x.

<sup>43</sup> Schönberg. 1967, p.8. My emphasis. I prefer the French form of *motif* to *motive*, although the latter does tie in the musical idea with *libidinal energy* in an interesting way.



But it was Beethoven who took final control of the Classical period and thrust it into the Romantic age. The flood of ideas which constitute the background to Romantic music cannot possibly be outlined in a small space, but that it was a time when musical gesture was composed to fit all manner of affect-laden situations is not in question (as befitted a period which was beginning to come to terms with the manifestations of the unconscious mind). The closest analogy we might employ is architecture, for, just as the 19<sup>th</sup> century spawned no true architectural style of its own, but imitated past styles with excessive enthusiasm, so all that had gone before to make up composed music was utilized and magnified to excess. Gesture and utterance may well have been controlled within certain familial and societal dynamics, but they effused in music. Exciting music mirrored gestures of excitement and, particularly in the music of Richard Wagner, tapped into taboos of barely disguised erotic actualities.

There is scarcely any need to state that that largesse changed after the Great War of 1914-1918. Composers appeared to break previous musical convention by either organizing notes in 'rows' seemingly as tidy and cold as the war graves themselves, or stood accused of randomly splashing them about like poppies in a Flanders field. That is not to denigrate either serial or pointillist music, but, in general, the contrast could not have been greater with what went before. But of what else could the post-war gestures consist - and surely all utterance was stilled after the poetry written by the likes of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon.

Poetry, of course, is a form of utterance whose musicality is beyond question. This is because, like music and art, *poesis* takes both its form and its imaginative content from the aesthetic space; where its overall contours, such as phrasing, and the small, motivic contour units of rhythm (see below) are also attracted into the tension paradigms. Unfortunately, Gombrich quotes Nietzsche without a reference, but the quotation itself is entirely apt: '... it was Nietzsche who spoke of poetry as a dance in chains'. Nietzsche's metaphor is open to an interpretation which not only accords with the view that the gestures of dance precede the utterances of poetry, but also that being 'in chains' generally implies that one has been placed in chains by another. We can thus maintain that language (which we have suggested previously, robs the subject of part of its Self) is, in fact, what is partly responsible for constraining the affective partnership - placing

‘dance in chains’. Poetry, therefore, being an attempt to express subjective affect in words, is using a medium which can never be the true property of the subject – consequently, it will *always* impede the path of affective expression, leaving it unresolved in the unconscious mind of the poet.

That is not to say, though, that artists and composers are less dissatisfied with their work than writers or poets. Every attempt to abreact affect through the re-realization of existents is destined to partly fail, as the gesture/utterance partnership, which would be able to abreact the affect with immediate effect, is practically always subject to constraint. Nevertheless, poetry continues to struggle with words and would practically disappear if it were to be released from them, yet, through its engagement with their sound-patterns, it comes very close to an ideal expression of unconscious affect through the gestural contours of those patterns. Peter Kivy (although not writing specifically about poetry) suggests a closeness over and above that of the gestures of art: ‘Why sound patterns should exhibit such a saturation of expressive quality, over and above that which abstract visual patterns seem to possess, I do not know. But that they do seems to be generally acknowledged’.<sup>44</sup> Of course, sound impingement on the pre-natal body is such a primary initiator of affect, it therefore follows that sound, in the form of music, is the medium into which affective gestural response will be most effectively transposed – moreover, we mentioned (above) that gesture is the first response to startling, with utterance following on a moment later. This over-determined expression of affect is bound to emerge in condensed, concentrated form in poetry, and to appear all the greater for that. But poetry’s struggle with utterance not only lends it a particular poignant piquancy, but also magnificence and heroism.

But what are the sound-patterns, and what is their teleology – does it lie exclusively in the art of poetry? The sound-patterns are, of course, those utterances which are first presented pre-linguistically (such as crying, sobbing, moaning, mumbling, babbling, chuckling, laughing, sighing, screaming or shouting) and which are clear, spontaneous expressions of the effusion of emotion. As such, their roots are in affect and therefore, like gesture, they form part of the content of the aesthetic space. At first it may appear that utterances of this nature do not have much in common with gesture – they are, after

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<sup>44</sup> Kivy. 1993, p.357.

all, an alternative outlet for affective emotion – however, just as gestures each possess their own contour, so do utterances. By linking the contours of gesture with arabesques, we may have implied that all gestures take time and are *legato* in execution, but of course, many are relatively short and *staccato*; they do, however, tend to be either one or the other.

The contour of a single crying sound, one sob, one short moan, mumble, babble, chuckle etc., can be visualized clearly, but that is not what generally happens, except perhaps for the last three in the list (sigh, scream or shout). Utterances tend to come in clusters, so, then, do their contours – each cluster consisting of a string of similar short utterances and, by inference, a string of similar small contours. Yet there is an overall contour to each cluster which does reflect the *legato* gesture, indeed, it is in this overall contour that the partnership of gesture and utterance is so readily observed. If we go back to the moment of incitement of the underlying affect, which precipitates the partnership, and follow once again the journey of transformation the affect must take in order to be expressed, we will find that, in the aesthetic space, the overarching contour is sustained by the partnership and, musically speaking, is transformed into monody which, in turn latches onto the three tension paradigms. But the partnership also splits dramatically – when the small contour units of utterance are transformed into *rhythm*.<sup>45</sup>

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, rhythm developed as a defining characteristic of music as tonality succumbed to the emancipation of dissonance. It is its extreme dissonance which contributes to effectiveness of one of the most emotive pieces of music to emerge as a stated expression of the affective notion of war - Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*. Written in 1960 for string orchestra, its sound-world owes allegiance neither to rhythm nor melodic line; the source of its inspiration lies, in fact, in the new sonorities available at the time from electronic music, such as massive glissandi and note-clusters, from which Penderecki produced a quite new string sound. Gesturally, its contours are perfect for the task. From the terrible 'scream' which opens the piece, it weeps, mutters and wrings its hands through to the end. *Threnody* lies about as far from Peter Kivy's statement as is possible to get: 'It is open to any operatic hack to write music expressive of simplicity or heroism,

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<sup>45</sup> For an example, cf *Utterance* in Appendix IV.



divinity or hysteria, and, as we all know, this was so clearly recognized by the seventeenth and eighteenth practitioners of the art that many of them compiled veritable dictionaries of expressive figures, not unlike the cue sheets and compendia provided in our own century for organists and pianists who accompanied silent films'.<sup>46</sup>

But, for the present day, composer Dominic Muldowney demonstrates that gesture in music is sometimes understood for what it is. Having worked with Harrison Birtwistle at the National Theatre from 1975-1982 (one of the results of their collaboration was the astonishing, unforgettable score for Aeschylus' trilogy *The Oresteia*), Muldowney said: '... what's rubbed off is not the sound of his music but a much more abstract and simple thing: how gestural it is, and how simple those gestures are'.<sup>47</sup> Some of the most expressive instrumentalists also unwittingly comply with gesture - the contemporary pianist, Rolf Hind, is as much a joy to watch as he is to listen to, for each time he performs a piece of music, he seems to begin the performance in advance of his placing his hands on the keyboard. He unselfconsciously effects an initial gestural approach to the first note which becomes an integral part of the music itself.

That an understanding that gesture exists in music has not, however, benefited research into one particular, crucial aspect of Western art music. Considerable effort has been made in the past in the domain of psycho-acoustics, with limited results; but we are still no closer to an explanation of one of the great musical clichés (irredeemably associated with the 'hack' writing which concerned Peter Kivy, above); that is, what could lie at the root of the perception that we project feelings of sadness onto a minor key, and a more positive feeling onto a major key?

To bring gesture to bear on a possible solution, we must first outline the difference, harmonically, between the major and minor – a difference which turns out to be surprisingly small for, basically, it hinges upon one semitone's difference between a major tonic chord and a minor chord built upon the same tonic. If we take C major and C minor, for example, a C major chord consists of C (the tonic, or first degree of the scale of C), E (the third degree) and G (the fifth degree) sounded simultaneously. A chord of C minor consists of C, E flat and G. The third degree is lower by one semitone.

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<sup>46</sup> Kivy. 1993, p.163.

Now if 'lower' is indicative of a tendency to droop sadly, then that might be a sufficient explanation for some, but that would surely only be the case when the sound of the minor was experienced relative to the sound of the major.

We need to find an explanation which covers the eventuality that the minor chord will be sounded without being able to compare it with the major. Taking from this chapter's emphasis on the transformation of affect the idea of a melodic contour, we should sound the notes of the minor chord, not simultaneously, but one after the other instead (a melodic version): C, E flat, G; in addition we should first fill into our contour the 'missing' intervening notes thus: C, D, E flat, F, G. Next, if we then shape the contour with a hand in the air, it will, in terms of tones ('whole steps') and semitones ('half steps') be: tone plus semitone plus tone plus tone. We thus find we are obliged to hesitate in our upward movement quite early on in the contour, and this becomes even more apparent if we draw the contour out on paper. But transfer the contour to a gesture involving the whole body posture, and that second, small step assumes a quality of submission and obeisance – even of defeat. Psychologically, hardly a posture to encourage *joie de vivre* (and we can recall the intervals of a tone lowered to semitones in the 'Blues' genre).

It is not wise, though to miss out all reference to the major. Taking the major triad, its upward contour does not present the same small step so soon, instead we have tone plus tone plus semitone plus tone. There is much less of a bodily gesture of submission in that contour – the semitone, *in coming higher up in the hierarchy* allows, as it were, a mere tilt of the head to the fifth degree. Even in descending order, when the major triad (G down to E, down to C) produces the semitone early on: tone plus semitone plus tone plus tone (the minor, G down to E flat, down to C: tone plus tone plus semitone plus tone) it still produces a lesser effect than the minor, which falls further in the first move down. This extraordinary phenomenon of the different affect hidden in the falling tone plus semitone as opposed to the submissive rising tone plus semitone in music, is built in to our culture, for the falling tone-and-a-half constitutes the classic children's sing-song calling motif: 'coo-ee', or 'Ma-ry', or 'com-ing' etc. and, with thumb on nose and

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<sup>47</sup> Griffiths. 1985, pp.161-2.

finger-waggle 'ner-ner'!<sup>48</sup> So in concluding this interesting solution, we can suggest that the feeling of sadness induced by a minor key,<sup>49</sup> is directly related to its hierarchical gestural contour. It is an interesting solution which deserves more space for enlargement – but that will have to wait for another time.

Finally, we must now pay attention to our metaphysical proposition of music as a containing space. To give Jung his due, his writing on alchemy provides perfect metaphors for this, which range from the prosaic to the potent, such as: 'The motif of the vessel is itself an archetypal image which has a certain purpose. A vessel is an instrument for containing things'. Or the womb image (one of the strongest in the present context): 'For the alchemists the vessel is something truly marvellous – a vas mirabile ... It is a kind of matrix or uterus from which the filius philosophorum, the miraculous stone, is to be born'. And: '... the circle and the Hermetic vessel are one and the same, with the result that the mandala ... corresponds to the vessel of transformation'.<sup>50</sup> We will find, in fact, that music can be a containing space for all that happens between incitement and symbol – that the musical existents for transformation are our affective responses to sound-impingements. It is a containing space which subsumes both affect and aesthetically-based prosodic patterning, and it enables identification with the aesthetic abstracts and the concretization thereof. The transformed 'new reality' of a composition is therefore affect plus aesthetic, and there are no symbols until it is written down. All language, as well as Western European art music, is manifest in symbols whose purpose is the same - as affective, aesthetic signifiers.

There is, of course, unlimited potential in the metaphor of a containing space; such a space of course can be large or small, both a receptacle and a resource, protective and defensive, rigid or 'plastic'; it can be opened or closed, filled or emptied, plundered or replenished. Normally, though, a container has to exist prior to the contained, and so our argument stalls at the gate of the problem of non-literal space and at the equally non-literal mind/body problem of location, yet we have been unable to escape this

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<sup>48</sup> The Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky adopted the 'falling minor third' as it is known as the main motif to illustrate children playing in *Les Tuilleries* – one of the pictures in his *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

<sup>49</sup> An analysis of the contours of the ancient Greek *modes* from which were derived the major and minor scales of tonality, will reveal their character in the same way.

<sup>50</sup> Jung. C.W. 18. para.407; C.W. 12, para.338; C.W. 14, para.12.



particularly persistent metaphor of 'space', as in *illusory space*, *adaptive space*, *aesthetic space*, and now, *containing space* – each of which appears to be analogous to the other. Robert Young has a similar, but general, concern as he addresses the problem of 'mental space': '... "mental space" has a pleasing ring to the psychoanalytic ear. It conjures up a congenial place for thinking, for reflecting, for rumination, for nourishment. It connects readily to comforting boundaries – containment, being held in mind. It also connotes capaciousness, relative freedom from being crowded, from mental claustrophobia ... most interesting is the place of our most basic feelings in human nature, and the best way of representing them in a world of minds and bodies'.<sup>51</sup> Mental space, therefore, appears ready to contain that which we cannot yet fully cognate and to which 'the appliance of science' has not yet been effective. But from time to time it is plundered by science and, at the present time, it is into this space that the geneticists are peering for evidence of determinism.

Obviously, as already stated, when mention is made of music as a containing space, the implication is that the container existed prior to the acquisition of the contained. Music, of all the arts, is encountered as a temporal experience and, though we think it is an aural stimulation it is, as we have argued, primarily a bodily one; it exudes a sense of being *alive* – almost *homomorphic* or, at the very least *homologous* (*cf.* Jackendoff, above). However, it should never be forgotten that: 'Precisely because musical sound is abstract, intangible and ethereal – lost as soon as it is gained – the visual experience of its production to both musicians and audience alike (is important) for locating and communicating the place of music and musical sound within society and culture ... Music, despite its phenomenological sonic ethereality, is an embodied practice, like dance and theater'.<sup>52</sup> (Perhaps the success of opera lies in its marriage of gesture with utterance, all contained within a very visual aesthetic space – opera is a triumphant Dionysian display of displaced and transformed affect). It is as if we unconsciously imagine music *to understand the feeling-tone of the gestural contour of our reflex actions*, and so music seduces into its space that which accords with what is already there in terms of matching aesthetic content. It is primed to receive our projections of introjected affect - as Jung might have said (substituting 'music' for 'personality'): 'Whenever such attributes are conferred upon a personality we may conclude with

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<sup>51</sup> Young. 1994, author's Preface.

certainty that such a personality is a symbol-carrier, or an image of projected unconscious contents'.<sup>53</sup>

We therefore recognize that music is made up from those gestural and utterance templates for melody and rhythm which have been emotionally inscribed, by virtue of libidinal interest, within our pre-symbolic psyche. In its culturally specific forms, music not only becomes both an agency of transformation, displacement and psychic exchange, but also the containing space wherein these changes take place. By those means, music is able to initiate a self-perpetuating system, whereby affects and emotions, not only those induced by music itself, are projected on to later experiences of music; this, the process of attraction, enfolding and entrapment, means that the containing space is constructed over a period of time by the garnering of its own affect, and then is placed within the parameters and dictates of the post-natal unconscious. 'For wherever the hand moves, there the glances follow; where the glances go, the mind follows; where the mind goes, the mood follows; where the mood goes, there is the flavour (*rasa*)'.<sup>54</sup> And in a complex article, *The Intermediate Performance Between Talking and Singing – from an Observational Study of Japanese Children's Musical Activities in Nursery Schools*, Fumiko Fujita wrote: 'Most of the "rhythmical talking" produced by both of the children's groups was accompanied by their movement. This fact supports the writer's former study which suggests that Japanese children's movement is shaped by the expressive uttering of word-syllables'.<sup>55</sup>

For composers, analogous identifications are active in encounters with musical structures, and it is thus that music teases out their affective responses and seduces them into compliance with itself: 'But the full extent of these projections from the unconscious became known through analysis of those obscure and inexplicable feelings and emotions which give some intangible magical quality to certain places, ... moods of nature ... works of art ... ideas ... certain people'.<sup>56</sup> Affect resides until needed, as we have seen, in the unconscious – charged with tension which can be expressed, in the Freudian model, through the hierarchical system from the unconscious, towards the pre-

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<sup>52</sup> Leppert 1993, pp.xx-xxi.

<sup>53</sup> Jung. C.W.6, para.305.

<sup>54</sup> Coomaraswamy (1917). 1977 ed., p.8.

<sup>55</sup> Fujita. 1990, p.143.

<sup>56</sup> Jung, C.W.18, para.519.



conscious strict inhibitory function and on into the conscious mind. Here an even more strictly-controlled level is achieved, whose function, in the case of composed music, is to designate appropriate notational symbols. Symbols, as it were, re-present an affect, with a mere backward glance at the original incipit; thus, the affect draws the symbol back into connection with the first embodied incitement, but it can only do that at the price of its original identity being lost. Adorno wrote: 'A ... model for understanding expression is to think of it not in terms of subjective feelings, but in terms of ordinary things and situations in which historical processes and functions have been sedimented, endowing them with the potential to speak'.<sup>57</sup>

Thus the container is plundered for 'our ideas for doing': 'We shall see in fact that the urge for playful movement, for the discharge of motor impulses, is rarely far from the surface in the formation of signs and letters, and results in those flourishes and scrolls which are an essential part of decorative art. The student of pattern will not be surprised to see these products of playful exuberance frequently assigned a relatively low rank in the hierarchy of the arts. The shaping of a flowing script is a higher achievement than the doodling of flourishes, and drawing, in its turn, a more complex skill than lettering. But even the art of drawing, as so many critics have stressed, is still rooted in the soil of natural organic movement'.<sup>58</sup>

In this chapter, the central space has become more clearly defined in terms of its operative function: '... this personal inner world becomes the infinitely rich core of the self'.<sup>59</sup> The next chapter will discuss to what extent the *vas* will also accommodate dissonance. Pleasure and unpleasure alike - is it all transformed, displaced or exchanged? In answer, we might find, in fact, that affect meets up, not only with the gods, but also with the demons.

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<sup>57</sup> Adorno (1970). 1984 ed., p.159.

<sup>58</sup> Gombrich. 1979, p.14.

<sup>59</sup> Winnicott (1958). 1992 ed., p.269.





## V

### MUSIC AS A CONTAINING SPACE

#### ii

#### Making Room for Dissonance

*Is this a dagger, which I see before me.  
The handle towards my hand?  
... or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain? <sup>1</sup>*

We harbor many illusions about music. One of the most pernicious is that we can clearly distinguish between ‘consonance’ and ‘dissonance’ – that consonance and dissonance are unarguably different, and that they exist as physical, proven facts. Of course, dissonance, in a broad sense, can be understood by every adult as describing some experiences which are felt to be of an unsympathetic nature (Freudian *unpleasure*)<sup>2</sup> and, it is probably true to say, every adult possesses their own ‘dissonance threshold’ – their upper level of endurance - somewhere along an undefined continuum. In the present context, therefore, that which impinges above the threshold we can call *overt dissonance* – especially that which conforms to the third tension paradigm – unresolved dissonance. But, as far as Western European art music is concerned, the ‘Utopian Ideal’ is for music to be ‘consonant’ (Freudian *pleasure*), and that fits the prevailing, limited perception of aesthetics, where the struggle has been, not to make aesthetics more inclusive, but to try to elevate still further certain aspects with reifications of ‘beauty’ and ‘the sublime’. But, while above the dissonance threshold lies unendurable overt dissonance, below the threshold lies *covert dissonance*, as we will see.

Thus, in this chapter we find that, though we can offer a plausible division between consonance and dissonance, in fact, both possess the same physical properties, so our

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<sup>1</sup> From *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to Freud’s *Pleasure Principle*; cf above, p.44, and Appendix IV.

differentiation is historically and psychically informed and only has a slender foundation in physics. The historicity of the two in composed music is linked to an increased control over those elements in music perceived as overtly dissonant. As a result, overt dissonance has always been allowed a place, but on condition that it is strictly rule-bound, and therefore under control. After all, what is the pleasure of consonance that it could be separately defined without the presence of its polar opposite? Who would be thought 'socially desirable' if others were not confined to prisons for the 'socially undesirable'? In the same vein, musicologists have commented upon the 'politicization' of tonality<sup>3</sup> - the social analogy is apposite, for it suits both individual and collective ideals to have control over that which threatens to be uncontrollable *because it is always present*, and yet which, musically speaking, allows for a finite period of imagination within certain paradigms of tension/tension resolved.

There was a particular period in Western European musical history when control of overt dissonance so satisfied the *Zeitgeist*, that its control permeated music to a degree witnessed neither before nor since. Although strict modal counterpoint (for which theorists took as their model the style of Palestrina) appears intensely rule-bound to all music students, nothing can quite equate with the tonal system regarding the number of rules and their exceptions which accumulated as the system gathered momentum,<sup>4</sup> and the neatest alignment with the *Zeitgeist* was seen during the so-called 'classical period' (roughly 1740-1830), occupied principally by Germanic composers taking their cue from Johann Sebastian Bach, who died in 1750. At this time a prime focus of culture was on the 'Apollonian rationality' of the ancient, classical world of Greece and Rome, but revolution was being played out on the political stage in several countries, with fear of revolution spawning oppression. Under such conditions, dissidence poses a threat – it is, in fact, dissonant to the prevailing order. We shall discover in this chapter that musical dissonance is as dissident as it is secretively all-embracing so, like political dissidence, it is thought by many to need binding by the chains of authority. Then we can all live with an illusion of security: '... aesthetic feelings (of beauty) served to fake the history of mankind and to keep in blissful oblivion the primeval urges and memories which are still

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<sup>3</sup> Cf Shepherd, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Cf Appendix IV for explanation of the systems of *modality* and *tonality*.

stirring uneasily in our unconscious minds and break out in the periodic upheavals of our wars and revolutions'.<sup>5</sup>

J.S. Bach was instrumental in establishing the tonal system and Mozart conformed to it superbly well - thus it is surely no accident that they are both placed at the top of the 'genius' tree. Beethoven frequently appears more cunning in his use of overt dissonance than either Bach or Mozart – his appeal is, of course, massive, and his high place in any hierarchy is undisputed - but general reverence for Beethoven is leavened by 'the surprise factor' which disturbs some. In his music, imprisoned dissonance is never far from scaling the walls.<sup>6</sup> His older contemporary, Haydn's dissonance stands at the door of the cell, unlocking it for Beethoven.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, that consummate trawler of the individual and collective unconscious, Richard Wagner, is generally only acceptable to those who can bear to expose themselves to such psychic scrutiny.<sup>8</sup> But Wagner, of course, is highly implicated in the struggle for overt dissonance to free itself from its tonal prison – with him, it has almost scaled the walls and is beginning to cross the minefield outside the walls of the prison.<sup>9</sup>

These 'winds of change' released a scent of danger into the air, somewhat dispersed by the music of French composers Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, who brought a touch of exoticism to permeate the world of Germanic tonality in the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This came into French music via the Paris *Exposition* of 1889, where Debussy heard a Javanese *gamelan* orchestra for the first time; its particular sonorities captivated his imagination and broke the spell for him.<sup>10</sup> Rather ironically, the music of Ravel appears to have the ego-driven, richly ornamented, gestural contours of the very 'Germanic' music of Hungarian composer Franz Liszt as a springboard, but Ravel is forever musicologically conjoined with Debussy in terms of creating different musical textures which 'face East', rather than West. But because all contemporary textbooks on harmony were based on the Germanic system, music students were generally taught

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<sup>5</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.68.

<sup>6</sup> Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*, embodies this. Cf Appendix IV.

<sup>7</sup> Cf the 'overture' to Haydn's oratorio of 1798 *The Creation*. Appendix IV.

<sup>8</sup> Cf Appendix IV for further comment.

<sup>9</sup> There is a sense in which the Germanic system of dissonance resolved, after a short, or relatively short period of sustained tension, accords with German syntax – the (sometimes comically-imitated) structural device of waiting through a lengthy sentence to receive the verb at the end.

<sup>10</sup> For *gamelan*, cf Appendix IV.



from no other source (a situation which some think has barely changed to this day). Thus, only composers prepared to effect a major re-think of their methods received alternatives with any degree of enthusiasm, causing certain rights to be conceded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to *dodecaphony* and *atonality*.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, as we are now much more aware, not only is European culture virtually alone in its requirement for composers, it is also virtually alone in its *angst*-ridden desire to control overt dissonance. But what few people realize is, in fact, that all music, however controlled, with very few exceptions is imbued through and through with dissonance, both overt and, more interestingly, covert.

As we reasoned earlier, all 'sound' is an illusory phenomenon, so it is no surprise to find that relatively few people know that they harbor an illusion about the overall dissonance of music, neither should it be a surprise to find even fewer who realize they also hold an illusion about 'the sounds of nature'. In fact, the sounds of the sea, of running water, the dawn chorus or the rustle of leaves are all dissonant, for it is true that any bombardment of acoustic energy from simultaneous, but different sources produces a dissonant 'smear'. This is due to: '... the additive superposition of the sound waves generated by each event. Each event contributes a time-varying frequency and intensity pattern, but the integrity and connectedness of each pattern is lost physically among the other patterns in the overall wave. The acoustic wave is thus inherently ambiguous, because each event loses its identity when it is woven into the acoustic wave'.<sup>12</sup> Consonance, and certainly in the sense with which is applied to music, is a 'false creation' of the mind, reflecting far more our preferences, and even more, our desires for an ideal. Not even the sounds of the Garden of Eden, or of Arcadia, were 'consonant'; Adorno was uncompromising: 'Dissonance is the truth about harmony'.<sup>13</sup>

Only electronically produced sounds are able to supply us with pure sine-wave tones that are, mathematically speaking, consonant. However, the realities of music itself (and of nature) are such, that in practically no circumstance will we find consonance which conforms to the electronic 'ideal', and thus we are forced to confront an important issue. That is, the desirability or otherwise of perpetuating the myth of consonance, by allowing it to remain as a sacrosanct 'given' in musicological discourse without, at the

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<sup>11</sup> For *dodecaphony* and *atonality*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>12</sup> Handel. 1993, p.185.

<sup>13</sup> Adorno, (1970). 1984 ed., p.161.

very least, offering a deconstruction in terms of its physical properties. We will find, as a result, the hitherto bi-polar arrangement of consonance and dissonance can no longer be scientifically sustained, while Schönberg (whose role in securing the emancipation of dissonance was flawed when he re-subjected it to the strict control of dodecophony) nevertheless understood the issue psychologically. He wrote: 'What distinguishes dissonances from consonances is not a greater or lesser degree of beauty, but a greater or lesser degree of *comprehensibility* ... dissonant tones appear later among the overtones, for which reason the ear is less intimately acquainted with them. This phenomenon does not justify such sharply contradictory terms as concord and discord. Closer acquaintance with the more remote consonances – the dissonances, that is – gradually eliminated the difficulty of comprehension and finally admitted not only the emancipation of dominant and other seventh chords, diminished sevenths and augmented triads, but also the emancipation of Wagner's, Strauss's, Mussorgsky's, Debussy's, Mahler's, Puccini's and Reger's more remote dissonances'.<sup>14</sup>

The mathematical principle that governs the idea of consonance involves the number of cycles per second which form the acoustic wave (its *frequency*). We are familiar with this physical property in a musical context; for example, notes an octave above a fundamental will have a frequency of double the number of cycles per second of the fundamental, while the fifth above the fundamental will have a frequency half-way between the two - a phenomenon that is easily generated electronically. Nevertheless, 'musical' non-electronically generated sounds consist of *complex tones*, that is, of more than one frequency component, due to the structure of instruments – indeed of virtually all acoustic wave incitements. Complex tones have a clear relationship to what we call *timbre* – of which more later.

However, *frequency* should not be confused with *pitch*, which is only a determinant of the perception of consonance/dissonance as a result of harmonic arrangements of single pitch-classes (notes). Pitch, as a resultant of particular rhythmic frequencies, is itself a psychological perception, involving a physical reaction of the audial apparatus stimulated and informed by such acoustic wave frequencies. The 'I hear the same note as you' phenomenon (another illusion) shows that most of us perceive an individual pitch-

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<sup>14</sup> Stein. 1975, p.217.

class as being within a relatively very small range of frequency-perception, and that its complexity is generally not an issue in pitch discrimination.

On the other hand, an opportunity to hear Tibetan *overtone singing*, is an opportunity to begin to appreciate complex tones, for this type of vocal production encourages the audition of the fifth (not sung *per se*) as it emerges above the sung fundamental. There are other musical phenomena, linked to timbre, based on similar premises of revealing the *partials* that are normally 'hidden' from audition, ranging from sympathetic vibrations of strings, to incorporation into the design of instruments themselves (the clarinet is a good example – or *mixture stops* on organs). Bela Bartók included among the six volumes of piano pieces called *Mikrokosmos*, one entitled *Harmonics (Obertöne)* in Volume Four. It begins with a chord of B major being held down without sounding, followed by a sudden, staccato, fortissimo chord played an octave lower. The 'open strings' of the held chord resound sympathetically and, as the piece develops along the same lines, more upper partials are heard resonating. They are quieter than the fundamentals, but what is usually hidden is thus revealed.

But even though some musical tones do possess partials which are in an integral mathematical relationship with the fundamental (an *harmonic* relationship), the instruments employed in producing such fundamentals are incapable of producing a sound which can be verified as absolutely 'pure', scientifically speaking. Certainly, the complex tones of music display, at best, only varying degrees of harmonicity, for many possess partials in a non-integral mathematical relationship (an *inharmonic* relationship).

This is where scientific probing parts company with psychologically-driven auditory perception, leaving the whole problem of consonance versus dissonance to be exacerbated immediately one musical tone is placed in a harmonic relationship with another. At this point, as we contemplate the intervallic structures so formed, there is no doubt about the subjectivity of our perceptions. Radocy and Boyle, who enter into the subject in some depth, explain: 'Difficulties with consonance theories and judgements obviously are related to psychologists' and musicians' inability to agree regarding a definition. Musicians generally regard consonance as a relatively restful and passive state of auditory sensation while dissonance is a relatively agitated and active state ...



physical theories, resorting to numerical relationships, beats, fusion and genetics, are all lacking because of incorrect interpretations of physiology or failure to consider mistuned consonances. Musicians may merely use the terms consonance and dissonance as qualifying adjectives for interval names ... simply extra labels ... Van de Geer; Levelt, and Plomp (1962)<sup>15</sup> found that nonmusicians evaluated (rather than named) intervals in terms of consonance-dissonance, euphonius-diseuphonius, and beautiful-ugly'.<sup>16</sup> Even so, it is important to remember that such evaluations alter over time, as individual's attitudes change through adaptation, and their 'dissonance threshold' of endurance is raised.

This becomes an even more complicated subject when the differences between, say, *equal temperament* and *just temperament* are taken into account, not to mention the fine adjustments to tuning (and thence to intervallic equivalences) which string players are able to make as they play; to many string players, the pianoforte, with its fixed tuning, is always disagreeably 'out of tune' throughout its entire range. The latter is not just a matter of opinion, for the phenomenon is due to another 'hidden extra' which one gets with harmonic intervals – that of the *beat*, the name given to the pulsation caused by the asynchrony of peaks and troughs of simultaneous acoustic waves.<sup>17</sup>

Of course, it is one thing to make out a convincing case against the existence of consonance, but quite another, by so doing, to attempt to invalidate people's perception of their actual experiences of listening to or partaking in musical performance. In any case, it would be quite wrong to suggest that some music or sections of music are ineffective in promoting a relaxed and contented frame of mind by virtue of their harmonic construction. Therefore, there must be other factors at work to produce the effect of being ill-at-ease with certain harmonies, which scapegoats 'dissonance' as a cause of this feeling, as opposed to the appellation 'consonance' to the *causa bona* of well-being - the psychic whims that frequently result in perceived dissonance being crowded out of the aesthetic discourse - and out of the aesthetic space altogether.

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<sup>15</sup> Van de Geer *et al.* 1962, pp.308-319.

<sup>16</sup> Radocy and Boyle. 1988, p.45.

<sup>17</sup> For *equal temperament*, *just intonation*, and *beat*, cf Appendix IV. Also cf Appendix I for an example of one child's specific reaction to the *beat*.

Decisive factors are best found within a further contemplation of the sounds inherent in the natural environment, and how they might relate to composed music. The *Beethovenweg* which ascends up the narrow wooded valley of the *Bach* out of Heilingenstadt (now subsumed into the Viennese suburbs) pays tribute to Beethoven's legendary walks there, during which he is supposed to have conceived the ideas for his Sixth Symphony, the *Pastoral Symphony*. Normally, this symphony would almost be the last of his works to be cited in connection with dissonance, but in this instance it serves a very specific purpose – that of further drawing our attention to the secretive nature of dissonance.

Although there was clearly a real attempt by Beethoven to translate some of the bucolic atmosphere, including bird song, into the Pastoral Symphony via the orchestral timbres of the day, its verism first passed through the 'rose-tinted' filter of the composer's Arcadian desires. Set in the key of F major, the same key he used for his *Spring Sonata* for violin and piano, this symphony is, for Beethoven, remarkably devoid of tension-inducing devices – indeed, it can give the impression of bordering upon the pleasantly soporific in places. But in the fourth movement he introduced a thunderstorm and, for a while, the music becomes a concentrate of accumulated, pent-up energy - the timpani fairly crackled into life in Beethoven's day, as wooden timpani sticks got to work on the taut calf-skin drumheads.<sup>18</sup> As the storm retreats into the distance, the timpani also withdraw, as it were, to a more discrete audio-distance. Nature, idealized, journeyed up the *Beethovenweg* from *Awakening of cheerful feelings upon arrival in the country*, through to *Thunderstorm* and thus to *Happy and grateful feelings after the storm*.<sup>19</sup>

Until the fourth movement, the overall, contrapuntal dissonance of the natural environment is only hinted at within Beethoven's simple and restrained textures – the rustle of leaves and the sounds of the brook are not depicted by, for example, quiet string tremolos, rapidly and randomly executed, but are transformed and idealized into curving, gestural, melodic fragments underpinned by harmonies well within the musical canon of the day. The storm, though, sees the harmonic canon stretched a point or two in the direction of overt dissonance, especially as the tension mounts with the increasing

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<sup>18</sup> Modern, plastic-headed timpani do not produce a sound equivalent to this.

<sup>19</sup> Translations from the German of Beethoven's own titles to the first, fourth and final movements, respectively.

magnitude of sound. However, this manifest dissonance must be sought in minutiae within the texture, as the various instrumental strands clash momentarily one with another, with notes which are gone in a split second. Nevertheless, the harmonic canon dictated that such dissonance be resolved, and this, Beethoven was careful to do – inharmonic relationships, as it were, are restored to harmonic relationships in rapid exchange. But two of the factors which emerge as significant in deciding a verdict of consonance or dissonance are the same in music as they are in nature. They are timbre and magnitude of sound.

*Timbre* is dependent upon an accumulated cloud of dissonant overtones. It is a distinguishing quality of the complex audio experience which results from a totality of incitements inherent in acoustic waves (whether within the natural environment or in the present context of musical instruments). Of course, in terms of the latter, it is also dependent upon the instrument's physical properties and the instrumentalist's personal playing technique. 'Timbre is a multidimensional property ... so quantitative measurement of timbre beyond the most general and global level inevitably must employ multidimensional methodology'.<sup>20</sup> Whatever the musical genre though, by virtue of the secretive, hidden nature of partials, consonance is a term which never merits validation here.

It would seem though, that the specter of consonance haunts both natural and musical textures for another reason apart from timbre – but only to the point at which the magnitude of sound generated by acoustic incitements becomes uncomfortable. Going back to the example of the 'silent' clarinet in Mozart's concerto for clarinet and orchestra (chapter III), we can extend that imaginary situation even further, to a situation based on a similar premise, in order to illustrate the effect of magnitude. This time, we must imagine a large band of wind and brass instruments; the woodwind in this band are confined to the flute and single-reeded clarinet and saxophone families of instruments (therefore no oboes or bassoons), and there will be no trombones or percussion. To best illustrate the point in question, this imaginary band ought to perform a piece of music written in a contemporary idiom, fully orchestrated, with a texture created by aleatoric methods, and a high magnitude of sound.

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<sup>20</sup> Radocy and Boyle. 1988, p.68-69.



However, like the aforementioned performance of the Mozart, no woodwind instrument will use a reed, the flute family will blow into, instead of across the mouthpiece, and no brass instrument will be allowed a mouthpiece, but they will all otherwise perform the music as written. Because the instruments are thus rendered impotent with regard to their conventional sound, the audience will hear only the clatter of the keys and valves, which will become marginally more pronounced the 'louder' the players perform.<sup>21</sup> This effect will probably promote amusement and interest among those for whom it is an unexpected, hitherto unheard characteristic of these instruments. It will not actually be loud, it will not be regarded as unpleasant, for it will be, in fact, much more akin to natural environmental sounds than 'music'. The question of dissonance will scarcely arise.

Now there will be a second performance of the same piece of music; this time reeds and mouthpieces will be put back in place, and all the instruments will be played in the conventional manner. We can imagine what a difference will be made to the audience's perception of the music, for this time it is likely to be considered about as far removed from sounds of the natural environment as it is possible to get. In addition, it is not likely to be favorably received by many people for, whereas the random nature of the relatively quiet clatter of the keys in the first performance encouraged few perceptions of unpleasantness, this time, as each instrument resumes its full resonance and overtone cloud, the magnitude of the sound certainly will. The audience probably felt no need to unravel the random confusion to find familiar points of reference in order to process the music cognitively in the first performance, but in the second performance they are quite likely to be attempting this adaptive process – and possibly failing. Dissonance would now become an issue in evaluation, and one might even hear the word 'cacophony'. It would surely also be true to say that, though some might remove themselves from the situation altogether by walking out of the performance, the majority of the audience would be likely to politely stay put, but feeling trapped and thus unable to avert their 'aural gaze'.

If it can be broadly accepted that such an experience as just outlined would result in an evaluation of the conventional performance as unpleasant, disagreeable and dissonant

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<sup>21</sup> Some composers have deliberately exploited the key and valve-rattle as an integral textural device in

music, then that particular combination of timbre, magnitude and perceived confusion is clearly important. It follows, therefore, that in the failed, or only partly successful, search for familiar frames of reference within the confusion we can be taken back to a similar situation in pre-natal life, where we were in a situation of being unable to escape at all from the tensions of secondary sound – tensions which, we recall, were either resolved after a delay, or were never resolved at all. The imaginary piece of music we have just heard falls into the latter category, while Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* lies in the former, and it is almost certain that, along with the illusion of consonance, the *Pastoral Symphony* would be held to earn a rightful place in the aesthetic space, and thus into the containing space of music, while the aleatoric wind music probably would not.<sup>22</sup> Adorno wrote (and it is certainly applicable to the Beethoven): The discordant moment, dynamically honed to a point and clearly set off from the mass of affirmative elements, becomes a stimulus of pleasure in itself.<sup>23</sup>

But, having selected out that which is perceived as consonant, we find it is not easy to let back in again those dissonant elements which have been cast aside. Thus, the tonal system, upon which Beethoven's music is predicated, is attractive, indeed seductive because, in its beneficence, it not only allows such *frissons* of manifest dissonance and finite periods of tension, but also eventual relaxation onto a 'home note' (the 'key-note', or *tonic*) in the 'home key'; this is the *fort-da* game played out in music, and is comforting (particularly in the light of our discovery in chapter III that its paradigmatic form tension/tension sustained/tension resolved, epitomizes 'the voice of the mother'). Moreover, this particular habituated pattern is so ingrained that, for most people brought up in the Western European music tradition, it fosters the irrational notion that it actually epitomizes music itself – a notion which is supported by tonality's attempt to validate its existence by aligning itself with the natural harmonic series. The lid has been placed on the container, in an attempt to exclude the perceived 'ugliness' of the unresolved dissonance of aleatorism – indeed of almost all unresolved tension and dissonance – especially when tangled up with certain timbres and levels of magnitude. Why?

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their music.

<sup>22</sup> A familiar phrase would probably be used: 'It might be played by instruments, but is it music?' This equates with: 'What passes for painting these days any child could do – but is it Art?'

<sup>23</sup> Adorno, (1963). 1992 ed., p.59.

What we seem to be left with at this point, therefore, is overt dissonance entrapped within its controlling musical environment of tonal resolution, and a containing space of music which might, or might not, give it sanctuary if it escapes. These two spaces are, as it were, on either side of a no-man's-land and, if dissonance is to be released from confining individual and collective psyches, it must be prepared to negotiate the mine-field of cognitive dissonance. Anthony Kemp writes: '... the theory of cognitive dissonance, which maintained that authoritarian personalities are particularly unable to withstand highly dissonant cognitions. People of this type tend to adapt their perceptions to assimilate only those facts that are consonant with their conceptual framework ... these people favour order and reject everything that might bring disequilibrium ... the more field-dependent person who uses repression and denial as a form of defence in blocking out conflicting experiences. Conversely, the field-independent person is able to operate more comfortably with thoughts, feelings, and ideas that are in conflict'.<sup>24</sup>

This suggests that successful, libidinal adaptation to all three tension paradigms is required before unresolved dissonance in music can be accepted. Clearly, it is always going to be the case that some will adapt better than others, because the unresolved dissonance of much 20<sup>th</sup> century music undoubtedly awakens unconscious fears and defenses, set down during the intra-uterine state of helplessness in the face of the category of non-habituable secondary sound. The original threat to the Self posed by this helplessness was not then conducive to adaptation through libidinal interest, so unresolved dissonance remains in limbo, continuing to cause pre-ego purgatorial conflict, and is still not in a position to be integrated into the range of existents available for re-realization. We saw in Chapter III that it is the non-possession of this category of sound-impingement which designates its perception as an object alien to the fetal subject; thus, understanding the later experience of unresolved dissonance in music *per se* as an exacerbation of such a pre-verbal (suppressed utterance) *trauma*, casts it in a whole new light.

Nowadays, such has been the high profile in public consciousness of *trauma* (from the Greek, meaning *wound*), it is at least understood that trauma is not a momentary

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<sup>24</sup> Kemp. 1996, p.61.



experience, but that it trails in its wake an after-effect which, for the victim, carves a path they are destined to follow into the future. The victim, as it were, must face both ways - yet no-one escapes trauma:

*Time present and time past  
Are both present in time future  
And time future contained in time past.  
If all time is eternally present  
All time is unredeemable.*<sup>25</sup>

*Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* (PTSD) has become one of the most 'allowable', 'acceptable', states of mind in recent years – a medical 'norm', making its first appearance in that behemoth catalogue DSM III in 1980, as a result of studies of American Vietnam War veterans.<sup>26</sup> However, possibly the first to consider it an affective state suffered by soldiers was the Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi who, in 1916, as Martin Stanton points out: '... transferred back to Budapest as director of a neurological clinic whose main task is to treat shell-shock victims. He writes up his preliminary views on the psychoanalytic treatment of war neuroses, which are published the following year (*Über zwei Typen der Kriegsneurose*, *Zeitschrift*, iv, pp.131-145)'. It was Ferenczi who metaphorized certain traumas as *teratomas* within the psyche: 'Medically, a teratoma is a tumour, made up of various types of tissue, which may or may not be malignant ...'.<sup>27</sup> The metaphor emphasizes the lingering affective state of traumatization as a container of material essentially unwanted, indeed, as 'alien' to the Self.

Freud, who had a lively friendship and correspondence with Ferenczi, some seventeen years his junior, wrote about trauma in 1917 in his usual practical and sympathetic manner, in terms which still apply today: '(The) term "traumatic" has no other sense than an economic one. We apply it to an experience which within a short period of time presents the mind with an increase of stimulus too powerful to be dealt with or worked

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<sup>25</sup> Eliot, T.S; from the first stanza of 'Burnt Norton' from *Four Quartets*.

<sup>26</sup> *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. American Psychiatric Association, Washington DC.

<sup>27</sup> Stanton. 1990, p.25. and p.174. Stanton writes in the present tense for the 'diary' events in the book.

off in the normal way, and this must result in permanent disturbances of the manner in which the energy operates'.<sup>28</sup>

But (because so much psychoanalytic thought still has not succeeded in divesting the concept of trauma from a singular application to sexual trauma), to explain the applicability of the concept of trauma to non-habituable secondary sound, appears to necessitate the adduction of more metaphors from a seemingly infinite chain of associations. Stanton coins his own metaphors – rather than *teratoma* he uses the term *bezoaric effect*,<sup>29</sup> but when he expresses the initiation and fixation of the trauma as *contundor* and *idée fixe*, he uses both as quasi-musical referents. He writes in other contexts: 'What emerges then in the progressive attempts of traumatized people to represent or "narrate" their trauma, and forge some direct contact with their pain, is a form of psychic contusion'.<sup>30</sup> And: 'As with a physical contusion, where a blow from outside the body provokes various forms of internal disruption including progressive blood coagulation, psychic contusion develops a similar reactive process of disruption, blockage and coagulation ... The process is articulated through blocks of coagulated traumatic material - or contundors – which shift and intensify like the colours of a bruise. Contundors carry the primal impact of the trauma and coagulate primary sensory (visual and auditory) material ... they can be cumulative, as repeated trauma ... '. Significantly, he adds in an end-note: 'To "contund" in Old English means to beat from the outside'.<sup>31</sup>

However, a bruise, though contunded and unwelcome is, nevertheless, a possession of the bruised, formed from their own body-elements. Although, for the sake of clarity, we have already recognized that non-habituable sound-impingements on the fetus are never subjectified, there is a sense in which they are – a sense based on the metaphors of the *teratoma* and the *bezoaric stone*. For the contunded fetus, there is a possibility of such impingements allowing a subjective phantasy experience in that infinite space which follows the startle response to the acoustic incitive: ' ... of taking in an object which is subsequently felt to be present inside the body, taking up space and being active there'.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Freud. S.E.XVI, p.275.

<sup>29</sup> For *bezoaric*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>30</sup> Stanton. 'The False Dichotomy Between Applied and Clinical Psychoanalysis; in *Confronting the Challenges to Psychoanalysis*'. In Friedlander, 1995(b).

<sup>31</sup> Stanton. 1997, pp.79-80 and p.86n.

<sup>32</sup> Hinshelwood. 1991, p.321.

*Introjection* is our objective description of that process. Thus, our contention that 'sound' is an illusion is strengthened. We find that the true nature of 'sound' is one of absolute fluidity – a psycho-physical state which commands the mind to continuously endow it with a fresh identity by activating unconscious phantasies in 'the theatre of musicality'.

Unresolved dissonance is therefore imbued with an unwelcome degree of subjectivity, it is an unwanted possession, forced on us as a heavily-catheted trauma, bound to the unconscious by its feeling-tone.<sup>33</sup> We cast it as an enemy and charge it with hating us; therefore, in that perverse manner which is part of the human condition, we suspect we deserve to be hated. Principally, because it is non-conforming and is not ego-syntonic, dissonance does not fit in with the ego's relations with the outside world; this imbalance causes great discomfiture, and unresolved dissonance becomes *the secret life of our self-hate* residing in the unconscious. Already identified as secretive, it has beaten a path to the psyche by stealth - we will surely try to rid ourselves of it later on (compression must be followed by rarefaction), but to unbind it, it must first be displaced. But any conscious effort we expend trying to exclude it from our experience of music - from the containing space of music - constitutes a useless rearguard action.

Thus it might appear that the only course open to the individual psyche is to ally itself with the collective, and to retreat to the control strategy of resolved dissonance with all its rules and regulations. The 'hidden agenda' of tonal authority in music is then revealed – it is suppression of what has been inflicted on us, and which we have turned against ourselves. Even so, that such a 'mighty oak' should grow from the apparently 'small acorn' of intra-uterine experience of unresolved dissonance may seem a bold claim to make. But, before one dismisses the whole argument on that basis, it is as well to acknowledge that its paradigmatic abstract – tension/tension sustained/tension unresolved – is at once recognizable as a *schema*, a learned frame of reference which, like the reactive phenomenon of trauma, is 'trigger-happy'. (Contemporary music, of course, in which unresolved dissonance has a central role, therefore contains many moments that constitute 'triggers'). Seeking a resolution in terms of the paradigm, probably lies at the core of most 'therapeutic needs'.

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<sup>33</sup> Wilfred Bion's idea of *beta elements* fits in neatly with these theories. Cf Appendix IV.



So, though there have been many different expressions of the problem, we can see that Stanton's exposition of trauma is among the latest in a long line of attempts to theorize that which is recognized through clinical practice to be true. The actual point of contact within psychoanalytic theory concerns the unresolved nature of some initial impression embedded in the unconscious, which has initiated an affect that is far from being a determinant in itself. For Freud, *Nachträglichkeit* is the psychic mechanism of deferred re-action involving a revised version of the original experience; for Jung, it is *Zurückphantasieren*, when the subject attempts an interpretation of the past in phantasy; for Lacan, it is an insinuating and dislocating sensory experience, informing somatic processes; and for Laplanche it initiates *Afterwardsness*, which is an advance on earlier, more uni-directional thinking, because more in tune with idea of the subject 'facing both ways'. But for all of them, the economic balance within the psyche, as it were, has tipped towards the unequal tension/resolution dynamic, so that there is material in the unconscious which remains unresolved, enigmatic and unprocessed.

Now we are drawn nearer to understanding why music appears to be so necessary in human life. In the previous chapter, I posited that music could be considered as a 'vessel of transformation'. It seduces into its containing space all affect of gesture and utterance (and affect's emotional consequence) which resonates with the aesthetic content already established therein. Making room for dissonance in that case, must be a two-stage process. First, dissonance resolved; this presents few problems unless, as is suggested, some 'freeze-frame' their aesthetic compliance at an even earlier point on the adaptability continuum. Second, however, is the much greater problematic of locating the general paradigm of affective, unresolved dissonance.

Without doubt, music therapy (whose practice re-vitalizes suppressed gesture and utterance through melody and rhythm), is often successful in alleviating the consequences of this problematic, and the following passage might have been written with this very point in mind: 'Alexandra township ...', ('a ramshackle space that barely contains its 350,000 inhabitants within its two square kilometres in Johannesburg'), '... has been plagued by violence and the community has become fragmented, with suspicions (founded and unfounded) that some of the perpetrators reside within the township. The children of Alexandra live with the uncertainty and unpredictability, with

the absence of a clearly identifiable “enemy”, and with violence that lacks form or pattern. In addition, they experience their parents, and adults in general, as being helpless and unable to offer either protection or sound explanations about the destructive turbulence and when it might end ... the trauma is ongoing, with little or no “aftermath” for dropping defences and recognising what has occurred ... the children are invited, through music, to be fully themselves, and their acts are acknowledged as presenting both their internal and external worlds ... Thus, a child whose “behaviour” (both musical and non-musical) is extreme and quite bizarre is accepted and contained through the music ... ’.

However, in music therapy as in psychoanalysis, the term ‘cure’ is used ill-advisedly (as in Eliot’s ‘ ... All time is unredeemable’). Instead, a possibility is acknowledged of a *transformation of affect* through gesture and utterance reunited and validated. The above extract continues: ‘The overwhelming impression of being with these children is one of boundless, unchannelled energy, which fits comfortably within the realm of chaos. This feeling of chaos can best be described as a state of ongoing, sustained group disintegration. However, this chaos is not without its own kind of order: Winnicott (1988) explains that the moment at which some kind of order becomes discerned within chaos is the moment when chaos represents an alternative to rigid, clearly defined order, when chaos leads to order, rather than being the absence of order. Thus, in the music therapy session, the children’s energy regularly spills into disorder and chaos which (unless anyone might be harmed or the instruments damaged) I have learned to allow and contain. This is based on my understanding that *energy, in whatever texture, needs to emerge: by allowing it to be expressed, in whatever form it takes and without attempting to mould it ... a “natural” order and integration emerges quite easily from the chaos*’.<sup>34</sup>

Whether or not the author of the above, Mercedes Pavlicevic, is familiar with Jung’s writings on alchemy, the transformative process from ‘chaos’ to ‘emerging integration’ she describes during the course of her article, links very neatly to the alchemical process. It thus serves to remind us not only of the role of music as a containing space – a *vas*, but also kindles our interest in the possibility that the trauma of unresolved dissonance might

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<sup>34</sup> Pavlicevic.1994, pages 4 and 7. My emphasis.

stand a chance of being transformed into something we can bear. Returning, therefore to the alchemical term *vas mirabile*, Jung, from the benefit of his extensive studies into the imagery of the *vas*, wrote: ‘It is a kind of matrix or uterus from which the filius philosophorum, the miraculous stone, is born. Hence it is required that the vessel be not only round but egg-shaped. One naturally thinks of this vessel as a sort of retort or flask; but one soon learns that this is an inadequate conception since the vessel is more a mystical idea, a true symbol like all the central ideas of alchemy’.<sup>35</sup> He adds a footnote, quoting from an ancient (referenced) source: ‘... the vas is a “sphaera, quam cribum vocamus” (sphere, which we call a sieve)’. The vessel as a ‘sieve’ can be understood as a metaphor which correlates not only with the permeable nature of music’s containing space, but also with Winnicott’s *limiting membrane*: ‘... of every individual who has reached the stage of being a unit (with a limiting membrane and an outside and an inside) it can be said that there is an inner reality to that individual, an inner world which can be rich or poor and can be at peace or in a state of war’.<sup>36</sup>

Jung exposes several variants of the alchemical process itself as, naturally, it was perceived differently over the centuries by the various adepts whose writings he explored so thoroughly. Although each of the following terms has more than one meaning and, as they appear in different treatises they may be placed in a different order, it is, nevertheless, not hard to spot the similarity between the transformative alchemical process they describe and the passage of ‘unprocessed’ material from the individual unconscious ‘through the theatre of musicality’ to manifest music itself. Ascribed to the sixteenth century alchemist Josephus Quercetanus, the process is: *Calcinatio, Solutio, Elementorum separatio, Coniunctio, Putrefactio, Coagulatio, Cibatio, Sublimatio, Fermentatio, Exaltatio, Augmentatio, Proiectio*.<sup>37</sup> Here we have *calcinatio* (death), followed by *solutio/elementorum separatio* (separation of the elements), *coniunctio* (union of the opposites), and so on, until *exaltatio* is reached with the gaseous release of the essences.

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The reference to Winnicott is taken from *Human Nature*, published by Free Association Books, London.

<sup>35</sup> Jung. C.W. 12, para.338.

<sup>36</sup> Winnicott (1958). 1992 ed., p.230.

<sup>37</sup> Jung. C.W.12, para.340.



Pavlicevic (above) writes of chaotic, suppressed, gestural and utterance energy allied to a sense of individual and collective dis-integration but, as this energy is expressed, a new order emerges and a re-integration is thereby effected through the transformation. But Quercetanus' use of the term *proiectio* is not what one might imagine – a projection of the essence to the outside. Rather surprisingly, perhaps, it is the other way round; that is to say the adepts were projecting their own unconscious contents into the process. Now the analogies are even more striking: 'As a result of the projection there is an unconscious identity between the psyche of the alchemist and the arcane substance, i.e., the spirit imprisoned in matter. The "Liber Platonis quatorum" accordingly recommends the use of the occiput<sup>38</sup> as the vessel of transformation because it is the container of thought and intellect ... The assumption underlying the train of thought is the causative effect of analogy. In other words, just as in the psyche the multiplicity of sense perceptions produces the unity and simplicity of an idea, so the primal water<sup>39</sup> finally produces fire, i.e., the ethereal substance – not (and this is the decisive point) as a mere analogy but as a result of the mind's working on matter'.<sup>40</sup>

Though alchemical analogies *per se* need no apologia, we still need at this point to strengthen the connection between them and the work of the composer. The following passage is therefore pertinent: '... alchemy is concerned with a mystery both physical and spiritual ... The dramatization sets forth in powerful imagery the violent and agonizing process of transformation ... The drama shows how the divine process of change manifests itself to our human understanding and how man experiences it – as punishment, torment, death and transfiguration'.<sup>41</sup> (*elementorium separatio, calcinatio, putrefactio, exaltatio*). The alchemical process is revealed as an obvious analogy for our necessary acceptance of unresolved dissonance, through narcissistic, libidinal adaptation - lest we are destined forever to live with our libidinal drive unable to penetrate the defenses we erect against it.

Composers, in particular, but also performers and listeners, must therefore find a way of allowing music to transform the uncertainties of unresolved dissonance, and so, in the

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<sup>38</sup> The back of the head, or skull.

<sup>39</sup> A metaphor sometimes used in alchemy to denote the original material, the *prima materia* in the *nigredo* state of 'chaos'.

<sup>40</sup> Jung. C.W.12, para.376.

<sup>41</sup> Jung. C.W.13, para.139.

process of transformation, the ‘demonic’, alien contondors in the unconscious must be projected into the *vas mirabile* of music and, provided the work is courageously seen through to its end, the transformation will be seen in the release of the essences. Music’s containing space must receive from us our projections of self-hate in order for this transformation to take place – what we then take out from music’s containing space will be imbued with libidinal interest – we will have adapted – and music itself will have cut: ‘ ... the secret tie between the wound and the weapon ... ’.<sup>42</sup>

The idea that a composer ‘must’ accept unresolved dissonance is, however, a 20<sup>th</sup> century idea – and a late 20<sup>th</sup> century idea at that, as a direct consequence of ‘certain rights having been conceded to dodecaphony and atonality’ (see above). But, as we have also seen, it actually means accepting the true reality of the nature of sound, and dispelling the illusion. A young composer today, assuming a background in Western European art music, will have realized and most likely will have been taught (initially at least), that dissonance within the tonal system has been allocated its ‘proper place’, and that its use is only authorized under certain controlled conditions – and it is virtually certain that dissonance will not have been explained as constituting the essential ingredient of the experience of sound.

However, it is recognized that a large number of composers do not fully adopt unresolved dissonance as the primary fingerprint of their work, while there are several who have done so in the past, but have, either through the demands of commissionees (as they hold the purse-strings, their views are crucial!) or from personal preference, made the decision to change their style to accommodate more resolved dissonance than perhaps they utilized when younger. Nevertheless, unresolved dissonance remains the musical hallmark of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, for it fits the *Zeitgeist* – the post-world-war, post-imperialist nuclear age, where uncertainty about the future is probably based on more dreadful possibilities than ever before. As in the case of the aforementioned township children, societies as a whole are all more inclined towards de-stability and even paranoia in an age when enmities have become less clearly defined.

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<sup>42</sup> Jung. C.W.11, para.561. We will examine the particular response of the listener to unresolved dissonance, in Chapter IX, but one reminiscence of Schönberg is worth quoting at this point: ‘A Viennese society refused the first performance of my String Sextet, *Verklärte Nacht*, because of the “revolutionary” use of one – that is one simple uncatalogued dissonance.’ (Stein. 1975, p.131).

Composed music is not alone in re-realizing its existents to reflect something more than a past era, and so that means coming out of imprisoning, archetypal curvi-linear womb-forms and eschewing the harmonic circularity and melodic linearity of tonal predictability. This, I believe, constitutes an essential 'rite of passage' for a young composer – and one which many appear to have embraced enthusiastically by the time their work reaches the ears of the public. Hans Werner Henze's wry humor leavens his serious comment on this: 'When one is young, one experiments with everything in life, one sets oneself against the status quo, attacking obstacles that later be seen to be non-existent, or can be understood and dealt with. I would rather not comment on the experimentation of older ladies and gentlemen'.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, that unresolved dissonance frequently alienates the public is true because, as we have seen, it is not only based on a primary alienation within the unconscious of the composer, but it is also an affect which receives the projections of listeners in music's containing space. But, through adaptation to unresolved dissonance, the composer eventually finds what really is 'theirs' – "this trauma is mine; this is my-self".<sup>44</sup> Henze wrote: '... my father, in his Nazi uniform, roaming drunkenly through the woods with his party cronies bawling out repulsive songs ... These are traumatic memories'.<sup>45</sup>

As a result, I can see no justification for encouraging young composers to remain in a time-warp outside their own musical *Zeitgeist* (even though this begs the question of whether one is thus merely shifting the pupil's perspective from conformities of the past to those of the present). Not only is it a 'rite of passage', but a 'right of passage'. A young composer has a right for their Self-as-it-is to be heard – this though, being only as old as the pupil, has to be verified in the present, and therefore, the tonal authoritarianism of the past denies today's young pupils the 'need to be heard'. We owe it to them to 'make room for dissonance', so that they work with their own truth, not struggle to comply with an illusion.

Nevertheless, remembering that unresolved dissonance festers in our unconscious as 'the secret life of our self-hate', we will have been involved in an integrative as well as a

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<sup>43</sup> Henze. 1982, p.163.

<sup>44</sup> For examples from my own teaching, cf Appendix I.

<sup>45</sup> Henze. *Op.cit.* p.35.



transformative process, as we will have allowed that which the young person does not like about themselves, to merge with that which they prefer us to see. Marion Milner wrote: ‘ ... the essence of painting is that every mark on the paper should be one’s own, growing out of the uniqueness of one’s own psycho-physical structure and experience ... ’.<sup>46</sup> In Jungian terms, the *shadow* and the *persona* will have met up with each other, beginning the psychic process which he called *individuation*.

Between the incitement of the trauma and the overt musical symbols of notation lies the aesthetic space - the space of adaptation - and that is subsumed into the containing space of music. Unresolved dissonance, though it sneaks in, merits as much recognition as constituting the subject as does anything else of a more benign nature. Music as a containing space, was understood by Adorno, though he did not state it specifically as such: ‘The site of all musicality is a priori an interior space and only here does it become constituted as an objective reality. It is to be numbered among those things for which over forty years ago a gestalt psychologist coined the rather unattractive name “psychic object-world” ... It is doubtless enacted in an interior space, in the imagination, and to that extent in the subjective mind ... But ... In it the external objectivity returns as the objectivity of the subject itself’.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Milner. (pseud. Field. 1950) 1971 ed. p.162.

<sup>47</sup> Adorno (1963). 1992 ed., p.310.

## VI

### COMPOSING MUSIC: from choice to imperative.

*Richard Wagner, I hate you, but I hate you on my knees.  
Can you help me resolve that one, Dr.Freud? ...  
I have the feeling that Wagner ... retained all his life that infantile feeling  
of being the center of the universe.<sup>1</sup>*

*A man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conqueror, that  
confidence of success that often induces real success.<sup>2</sup>*

In Western European culture, as surely as everywhere else, the epitome of the potential of us all to re-realize existents, is seen in the fortunate child at play. Given emotional and environmental security, adequate space and, if available, water, sand, paper, tools, play bricks, pots, boxes – perhaps plasticine and paints as well – an infant's creative drive – its *Urtrieb*, busies itself with enlarging the child's physical body, developing its brain and informing its plenipotential. Through a sense of omnipotence, self-directed challenge, task-oriented success, prototypical problem-solving and mastery of materials comes pride in achievement. This all happens concurrently, and is frequently accompanied by the unselfconscious prosodic utterances of babbling and chattering.

The school child continues to develop adaptive play strategies, but which are more obviously an imaginative mixture of the practical, the imitative and the fantastic, while there is a greater likelihood of the play of older children being a co-operative venture with others. Though, as adults, we imagine we are more sophisticated due to our increased ability to use more intricate tools and materials, we still like to think that we might maintain throughout life, this kind of Utopian freedom.

But limits to freedom are set from infancy - first by physical immaturity, then by considerations of environmental safety and security, financial restrictions and living conditions; later, both overt and covert discouragement by adults and peer groups takes

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Peyser (1987). 1988 ed., p.14.

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud; cited in Jones. 1953, p.5.

effect, while the perceived necessity for a formal education steals time. Practically no-one escapes the loss of this freedom to re-realize existents, although we do not always appreciate just how great the loss is. Apart from physical immaturity, which is intrinsic, constraints upon opportunity for re-realizations are generally extrinsically generated; there is, as it were, a flow of adverse energy directed towards us which is initiated extrinsically, but which we introject, and convert to intrinsic constraints as we are gradually inducted into specific familial and societal cultural canons.

Nevertheless, for those who have been fortunate enough to experience a close approximation to a childhood ideal of play, a beneficial foundation to character will have been laid down in spite of the later burden of constraints. That is not to incline to the rather simplistic idea, as some do, that 'creativity' is 'play' *per se*, while 'all else' is functional – rather it is to emphasize the unrelenting nature of the *Urtrieb*, for, as adults, we also multi-task with such superficial attention to each element that we can converse with ourselves and others while doing so (or tolerate background music or noise); also, like the child, we too will fall silent when engrossed in a single activity which demands great concentration. In fact, the *Urtrieb* is so 'economically affluent' that it can accommodate both multi-tasking and 'dove-tailing' activities, as well as the strictly focused effort demanded by high achievement.

As we make our way through this foundational stage of adaptability to the next, consequent phase of *choice*, the greatest burden we will have to bear in the long-term is adaptation to the fulcrum of the extrinsic/intrinsic axis of motivation if we are to fulfil the potential of the choices we make. The pivotal point of this fulcrum is circumstantial opportunity; thus the purpose of the present chapter is both to ascertain how particular personality characteristics become established during the process of adapting to opportunity, and how, in turn, those characteristics might influence an individual's choice of the *mode d'emploi* of musical composition.

But choice does not guarantee success. Adaptability to circumstance, in fact, comes at a price to the Self – that price is the establishment of the ego, whose influence is crucial to success. When opportunity for change or advancement slides into our lives, the most effective operative mode of an individual ego is as a reinforcing agency for the



maintenance of its own strength and in the securing of personal identity, so opportunities can be eagerly grasped. Sadly, for some individuals, the ego remains fragile, opportunity is seen as a threat, and the *status quo* springs to its defense. Thus the ego needs the kind of strength which comes from flexibility, acquired through courageously tackling reality issues as they occur. It will not be strong if only built on the unstable foundation of pretentious bombast, which, in the end, will brook no 'loss of face' and so defends mightily against all-comers. Clearly, the young child needs help to develop a strong and flexible ego, yet it will by no means have accomplished that by the time it goes to school.

For most of us, formal education is an important source of opportunity to hone our choices, though adaptation to the demands of school means a partial abandonment of freedom of Self, in favor of conformity and attachment to certain values outside one's control. Nevertheless, school can at the same time be as exciting for some as it is intimidating for others, and almost all of us have been thrown into its melting-pot of new experiences, new relationships, its triumphs and its disappointments. Alfred Adler, whose writings make it apparent that he was among the first of the psychoanalytically famous to put himself into a child's shoes, paid particular importance to what is called *self-esteem*. Far from perceiving the environment as a determinant, he saw it through the interpretative eyes of the affected individual, thus loosening up the rigidity of determinism and allowing light to be shed upon the reasons why some individuals adapt better than others to circumstance. Although it took many decades before pedagogy thought this notion to be of importance, we now realize that protecting pupils' self-esteem is part of the job of a teacher - no teacher should disparage any personal interest held by a child; to the contrary in fact, such personal preferences should be constantly, and discretely looked for and their development observed, because children often exhibit early signs of field-specific interests. Adler wrote, for example, that there may be children: '... for whom the ear is the dominant organ. Here a psychic fund of information based more particularly upon acoustic values is created'. He continues by listing motor activity, olfactory or gustatory stimuli and musculature as areas of specifically concentrated interest. As a result: '... we can say that a child who does not

approach the world with a heightened interest in some one organ or organ group, whether these be his sense organs or his locomotive apparatus, hardly exists'.<sup>3</sup>

Validating the child's interests will undoubtedly enhance their self-esteem and strengthen their egos, and the full benefit of opportunity for the child can only ride on the back of an ego that says 'go on – you can do it!' In turn, positive feedback for achievement must ride on the back of *real* achievement; by that, is meant *achieving* the status of, say, a Grade 3 pianist by dint of one's own efforts and thoughtful, responsible practice (because your teacher has taught you to apply learned skills for yourself), rather than *attaining* the status of a Grade 3 pianist because your teacher has instructed you how every single note and nuance in the score *ought* to be played.<sup>4</sup> Then if the child succeeds through effort made, the parent should not take the credit, and the parent should reward the child for the new status *achieved*, not just *attained* – this develops *chutzpah*, which is the courage to take a risk. To encourage is to induce optimism, to discourage – pessimism, as: 'The feeling-tone connected with his point of view directs the child in various ways. There is the way of optimism, in which the child is confident of easily solving the problems which he meets. Under these circumstances he will grow up with the characteristics of an individual who considers the tasks of life eminently within his power. In his case we see the development of courage, openness, frankness, responsibility, industry, and the like. The opposite of this is pessimism ... Here we find timidity, introspectiveness, distrust, and all those characteristics and traits with which the weakling seeks to defend himself. His goal will lie beyond the boundaries of the attainable, but far behind the fighting front of life'.<sup>5</sup>

But, given that in general, influences upon a child's development are benign, the lure of the aesthetic space upon an individual child may prove to be very strong indeed and, having acquired a libidinal interest in music, they may indeed decide to write some of their own. This is to be welcomed for, even if the child is saying (of the music they already know) something like: 'I could do better than that!', to denigrate this display of

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<sup>3</sup> Adler. 1928, p.46.

<sup>4</sup> For information about *graded examinations*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>5</sup> Adler. 1928, p.25.

narcissistic-omnipotent determination, will be to thwart their plenipotential.<sup>6</sup> We must allow the child to access the gestural and prosodic contours which lie latent in the containing space of music, waiting to be brought out into the light of understanding, so that the containing space becomes their own 'secret garden' which they can explore in moments when they are alone.

Martin Nass wrote of this stage in the child's development of choice (we should pass over the word 'gifted' as inappropriate, but recall that 'sensorimotor' aligns with gesture and utterance): 'In her outstanding work on the development of the gifted, Phyllis Greenacre (1957) talks about their hyperacuity to sensory stimulation, their intense empathic ability, and their retention of sensorimotor styles which enable them to build up projective motor discharges for expressive function. I feel that this ability to retain an earlier developmental mode of understanding the world (Piaget 1954) enables them to continue a freshness of experience, a capacity to maintain a closeness to body processes and body rhythms and to use these developmentally earlier modes to re-organize experiences and present it to others via their particular gifts'.<sup>7</sup>

Howard Gardner (whose work on *different intelligences* is of exceptional pedagogic importance for, as with Michael Howe [1999], it dispenses with the idea of 'gift', or that 'intelligence' is either determined or bound solely to the intellect) is also of the mind that encouraging libidinal interest can be so easily achieved – and so easily stifled: 'The quality of these early years is crucial. If, in early life, children have the opportunity to discover much about their world and to do so in a comfortable, exploring way, they will accumulate invaluable "capital of creativity", on which they can draw in late life. If, on the other hand, children are restrained from such discovering activities, pushed in only one direction, or burdened with the view that there is only one correct answer or that correct answers must be meted out only by those in authority, then the chances that they will ever cast out on their own are significantly reduced'.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Dr. Alan Sroufe

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<sup>6</sup> Even those famous composers whose musical interests were not actively encouraged by their families, such as Alexander Borodin and Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, maintained their private interest, and they received sufficient peer encouragement later on for this early handicap to be surmounted.

<sup>7</sup> Nass. In Feder *et al.* 1990, Vol.1, p.267.

He makes reference to: Greenacre, P. *The Childhood of the Artist: Libidinal Phase Development and Giftedness*. In *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, Vol 12 p.47-72. Int. Universities Press New York 1957. And Piaget, J. *The Construction of Reality in the Child*. Basic Books, New York. 1954.

<sup>8</sup> Gardner. 1993, p.31. For more detail about his work, cf Appendix IV.



of Minnesota University, USA, has been involved in extensive research covering relationships between bonding with care-givers and the later establishment of competence. Very briefly, results show that harsh backgrounds and environments of a moderately stressful nature can produce outcomes of resilience and competence; on the other hand, from risky environments one can only struggle for competence. 'Bad' parenting and hazardous environments are likely to lead to maladaptation and a lack of resilience and competence.

Also, different intelligences frequently lie dormant, stifled and buried in assumptions. A recent educational research initiative has revealed some heartening results in a primary school in London's most deprived borough, Lambeth. The *World Class Tests*, designed for nine and thirteen year-olds, aim to reveal specific abilities such as problem-solving (which fall into Gardner's categories of different intelligences). Pupils from the school in question: '...outscored the brightest pupils from a high-performing suburban school ... gaining an average score of 134 for each pupil, compared with the suburban pupils' 119'. One of the Lambeth teachers commented: 'Often the potential in pupils from inner-city schools such as this is not acknowledged. The children were thrilled'.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, in the United States exists the Scholastic Assessment Test that largely determines university entrance there. Now, in Britain, the National Foundation for Educational Research has piloted the same tests. A test score of 1200 points or above would be favorable for Harvard, Oxford or Cambridge, and thirty pupils from poor-performing state schools reached that level: 'In the normal run of things these youngsters would not even be looked at by any of our top universities, let alone Oxford or Cambridge. Could it be that under the American system in this country, ambitious, talented children who have been let down by poor teaching would be better able to compete?'.<sup>10</sup>

Melanie Klein's work with children generally justifies the respect it commands, but of course it was written in the *Zeitgeist* of the 1930's and 40's, when authoritarian attitudes to children were still the norm. She wrote at length about a child in a manner that, we

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<sup>9</sup> From *Hidden Talent in the City*, by Sally Morris. *The Times*, 24-5-2001.

<sup>10</sup> From *Colleges in Search of Hidden Talents*, by Margarett Driscoll. *The Sunday Times*, 4-3-2001. (The word *talent* won't disappear!).

hope, would horrify present-day educators, but which supplies a perfect example of stifling. Fritz was: ‘... the son of relations who live in my immediate neighbourhood. This gave me the opportunity to be often in the child’s company without any restraint. Further, as his mother follows all my recommendations I am able to exercise a far-reaching influence on the child’s upbringing’. She went on to explain that Fritz was a ‘slow developer’, but, at the age of about four and a half, he began to blossom – and then all the usual childhood questions seemed to tumble out of him all at once. But then she appeared to regard his confidence with a jaundiced eye, whereas, perhaps nowadays, I hope we might be more inclined to assure him that he was certainly showing signs of being able to achieve all these things one day: ‘Anything that was being spoken of – any skill or handicraft – Fritz was sure that he could do perfectly, even when the contrary was proved to him ... *even under the pressure of proof to the contrary*, he would assert, “If I am shown how just once, I can do it quite well!” So in spite of all the proof to the contrary he was convinced he could cook, read, write and speak French perfectly’.<sup>11</sup> But why, we may ask, should it be deemed necessary to *prove* to such a young child that he ‘couldn’t’ do these things?

That Melanie Klein cared very much for Fritz’ well-being is obvious throughout, and her carefully structured observations bear witness to this (even though some of her interpretations of his behavior and conversation might appear to be extreme). But in the light of the previous statement, it is intriguing to read the following, with which we are almost all bound to agree: ‘... so many children who by their extraordinary pleasure in asking questions, and the number of them – or who by their constant investigations of the “how” and “why” of everything – fatigue those around them, yet after a time give it up and finally show little interest or superficiality of thought respectively ... prevented the significant intellectual development for which as children they seemed destined’.<sup>12</sup> While Klein could be accused of double standards in this case, she provides a useful example of how easy it is to stifle the creative drive - one only has to inculcate the idea that the adult world knows best and, in all manner of subtle ways, impart the message that it is not possible to achieve without ‘the gift’ and therefore justify one’s criticism of the child’s early, naturally clumsy attempts.

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<sup>11</sup> Klein. 1948, p.14 and p.15.

One manifestation of stifling, though often missed, is *self-handicapping*, which is the name given to that extrinsically generated and intrinsically rooted de-motivating force which comes to dominate the lives of many more people than might at first be supposed, and is the residue of certain kinds of adult messages. Its origins lie in the formation of: ‘ ... a vulnerable competence image or uncertain sense of self-esteem ... the sine qua non of self-handicapping behaviour ... ’, while a large amount of blame for this psychic situation can be laid at the door of: ‘ ... parenting styles that blocked or inhibited the development of a sound, experience-based competence image ... ’; pampering (for example): ‘ ... deprives a child of an opportunity to act in a manner reflective of competence ... it is often far more disruptive to chronically fear disconfirmation of a favourable competence image for want of opportunity – and ultimately the ability – to test it ... pampering undoubtedly instigates a number of self-handicapping disorders by preventing children from becoming desensitized to failure ... this ... deprives him or her of an opportunity to learn important coping skills ... an awareness that failure need not prove devastating and may, in fact, afford valuable lessons that can serve an adaptive function in the future ... pampering motivates many children to self-handicap as a means of averting “disaster”.’<sup>13</sup>

So a child must be supported and encouraged, but not pampered. No false sense of worth should be instilled, but, instead, a sense of worth and self-esteem based on the knowledge that status has been achieved and the effort, not the status, rewarded with praise. Probably the most malign of the influences of this type is the parent who unconsciously elevates the child to the status of a narcissistic love-object; effectively this establishes a ‘false self’ constructed upon the basis of the intertwining of love and admiration, sometimes to the extent that the child will incur the displeasure of the parent for exercising initiative and choice. As adults, such children will be prone to prolongation of narcissistic self-love, and might be forced to place their omnipotence at the service of grandiosity – an outward stance which appears to belie the neurosis – unless the evasive tactics themselves become noticeable to others. And, the authors suggest, such evasive tactics include alcoholism, hypochondria and various other strategies employed in the maintenance of a secure competence *image*.

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<sup>12</sup> *Op,cit.*, p.34.



However, for some fortunate children, a school education is very effectively reinforced by the home, to the extent that pastimes, hobbies, outings, access to books and technology for example, add 'the gilt to the gingerbread' and enable the range and scope of potential interests to be increased. As far as extending the opportunities for choice to include the composition of music, reinforcement can come from private music lessons - provided the utmost care is taken over the selection of a teacher. Sad to say, this is an area of teaching where adventurous spirits tend to be rather thin on the ground, so conventional ways of doing things and received opinions are rife. Neither is this state of affairs improved by parents who direct their children towards certain 'pleasant-sounding' instruments and towards certain types of music, even though it is absolutely unfair to the child who has to actually do the practice to have their preferred instrument denied them for these reasons alone (however, in defense of parents, it takes a great deal of tolerance to bear with trumpet practice in a small house with insubstantial dividing walls!).

Of course, no-one can compose music in the Western European tradition without 'adequate knowledge' – of notation, harmony, counterpoint, idiomatic instrumentation and orchestration – while to be judged a 'capable' composer one needs a historical perspective in order to be equipped to satisfy one's preference for an *avant garde* or reactionary output. Therefore, opportunity for a suitable theoretical education must exist before anyone can even contemplate becoming a composer. As Alexandra Lamont has suggested, from the induction into the personality structure of pre-natal paradigms, through to formal training and explicit understandings, implies negotiating and assimilating early musical experiences and the acquisition of a listening grammar, school music and figural understanding, specific musical activities which reinforce formal understanding – a continuum where one gleans the satisfaction of music as a basic human activity, music is fun, music is rewarding and music is valuable.<sup>14</sup> This is an expensive and lengthy journey which many, for various reasons, abandon along the way, but which must be maintained to the end by composers.

Steve Montague, one of our foremost contemporary composers, wrote what was ostensibly a set of guidelines for young people who have become set further in their choice to become composers, but this assumed a great deal of progress had already been

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<sup>13</sup> Higgins *et al.* 1990, pp.154-155.

made due to the aforementioned support and availability of tuition. Condensed from a longer article, the list remains demanding, and an effective demonstration of the impossibility some young people have in fulfilling their ambition. Montague recommends absorbing all that goes on around one, for inspirational 'triggers'; one should read books about music and musicians, aesthetics, and all the relevant music periodicals; one must play an instrument well - and play in various ensembles; professional master-tapes should be made of one's compositions which, together with bound scores, should be sent to many in the performing profession; one should meet conductors and promoters, take a short business course, be in touch with new technology, learn to touch-type, gain social skills, and go to many festivals and music gatherings. But the money a student would need to do all this was never mentioned.<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, we should now examine those particular personal characteristics which, on the surface, have been found to be most conducive to the choice of musical composition as a *mode d'emploi* of the creative drive, and which are therefore based upon the aesthetic and affective foundations we have previously explored. However, by and large, we could reject as spurious much of what has been written in the past (and which still continues to be written) about dead composers whose mental dispositions have only been gleaned from surface biographical accounts, in favor of the more disciplined approach which the modern-day psychologist is able to apply to studies of the living. Therefore, in spite of his apparent reification of musical creativity, we can nevertheless gainfully read Anthony Kemp's Cattell-inspired tabulations and conclusions, for they can be taken as constituting numerous characteristics of most of the contemporary composers familiar to us as friends and acquaintances, and will therefore serve as a guideline for further inquisitive thought.

To begin with, Kemp links Cattell's factors of ergic tension, ego strength and conscientiousness to Freud's *id*, *ego* and *super-ego* topology, for Cattell himself was far from dismissive of psychoanalytic theory (both he and Eysenck used the Jungian concepts of extraversion and introversion).<sup>16</sup> Kemp himself undertook a pilot study

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<sup>14</sup> Lamont 1999.

<sup>15</sup> *The Young Composer's Guide to Fame and Fortune*, in *New Notes*, the bulletin of The Society for the Promotion of New Music, July/August 1997. pp.1-2.

<sup>16</sup> Kemp. 1996, p.7.

(1979) involving a comparison of male student composers (there was, he admits 'a dearth of female composers in higher education at the time') with performing musicians and non-musicians, which yielded the following personality traits for composers: Self-sufficiency, expediency, and Cattell's 'subjectivity' (a combination of imagination and radicalism), 'naturalness', aloofness, and 'artlessness' (naiveté).<sup>17</sup> Among musicians, apparently, only in composers will 'radicalism' be found (but that may be an indulgence of the student years, expediently tempered when the commissions arrive!). Though the mental state of anxiety is not mono-faceted, and Kemp is not clear as to his application of the term, he apparently found lower levels of 'anxiety' among student composers than among performers (which, on the face of it, will surprise no-one familiar with the stresses imposed by making a living through performing music). However, he draws the conclusion that: '... the differences between the composers and the performers, being of the same order as those between the performers and non-musicians, indicate that the temperamental requirements of composition make serious and additional demands upon the individual over and above those of performance'.<sup>18</sup>

Another study by Kemp undertaken in 1981 was with professional composers (members of the Composers' Guild of Great Britain), and this time '... a small group of 10 women was recruited'. The male composers showed: '... independence, dominance, imagination, lack of discipline along with the addition of higher intelligence. The female composers supported the male independence: they also shared the student's introversion (self-sufficiency), which the men did not'.<sup>19</sup> However, to confuse self-sufficiency with introversion seems to deny several characteristics of both – they may be inter-dependent to an extent, but the self-sufficient person may appear introverted while working, but extraverted when relaxing afterwards; this seems to fit our experience of composers much better.

In reading this list, though, it must be borne in mind that comparisons were being made with performers (who must discipline themselves to regular practice) otherwise traits

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<sup>17</sup> I find naiveté a puzzling trait to ascribe to composers for, even if its intended meaning in the Kemp/Cattell classification is one of youthful, inexperienced optimism leading to a misplaced trustfulness, it could only possibly apply to their very early student days, for the post-war years have not treated the composer kindly – they have very quickly to learn the hard lessons of 'the market place', which includes self-publicity, otherwise their work will not be recognized at all.

<sup>18</sup> Kemp. 1996, p.196.



such as 'lack of discipline' can be misunderstood. Drawing the conclusion that, perhaps, sitting at the piano practising for hours at a time is 'more disciplined' than the sometimes grindingly slow process of honing a musical idea into shape on a blank sheet of manuscript paper (as Paul Patterson remarked, 'I'll be lucky to compose five minute's worth of music a week') is a shaky bit of relativism to say the least. Furthermore, 'higher intelligence' is suspect, too, in the post-Howard Gardner-world of 'different intelligences'.

Gardner's insightful writing ought to be more influential than it is, but it is of clear importance to the present context: 'What may distinguish creative individuals is their ways of productively using the insights, feelings, and experiences of childhood ... Individuals who ultimately make creative breakthroughs tend from their earliest days to be explorers, innovators, tinkerers. Never satisfied simply to follow the pack, they can usually be found experimenting in their chosen métier, and elsewhere as well. Young musical performers, for example, often reveal their gift for composing by a constant effort to "rewrite a piece" according to their own preferred specification; budding scientists do not brook received wisdom, but rather demand to see for themselves. Often this adventurousness is interpreted as insubordination, though the more fortunate tinkerers receive from teachers or peers some encouragement for their experimentation'. (We are reminded of Klein's relationship with Fritz, above). Finally, though Gardner does not seem to have reached the stage of accepting the general nature of creativity, his definition of 'creative individuals' is clear: ' ... a person who regularly solves problems, fashions products, or defines new questions in a domain in a way that is initially considered novel but that ultimately becomes accepted in a particular cultural setting'.<sup>20</sup>

Kemp found that professional composers: ' ... intuitively understanding complex problems ... particularly insightful, creative, and visionary; conceptual, symbolic, and metaphorical; idealistic, complex, and deep ... '.<sup>21</sup> He therefore recognizes some changes that have taken place from the student years, when young composers exhibit huge personal enthusiasm for their work achieved through 'introversion' (or self-

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<sup>19</sup> Kemp. 1996, pp.199-200.

<sup>20</sup> Gardner. 1993, p.33. and p.35.

<sup>21</sup> Kemp. 1996, p.204. Quoting from Myers, I.B; and McCaulley, M.H; *Manual: a Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.); Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologists Press. 1985.

sufficiency?), individualism, bursts of energy, love of complexities and the new, with little desire to influence others (a 'take it or leave it' stance, which can involve them in negative transferences with teachers; Beethoven with Haydn, for example). Once they turn professional, they perceive the need to liaise with people (necessary if they want their works performed more than once, and if they are at all dependent upon the goodwill of commissioners).

In addition, Kemp provides an important developmental profile: '... turning their energies inwards, needing time for reflection, solitude and separation; ... the importance of the musician's internal and symbolic life and of a particularly well-developed musical memory. The point was made that this turning inwards, involving the development of a rich internal world of musical creativity, could be perceived as the locus of the composer's powers of imagination and innovation and sense of omnipotence. This pattern of the autonomous introvert's mind is further enriched by the presence of high levels of sensitivity, feelingfulness, imagination and radicalism ... It is within this kind of personality structure that the composer finds his or her own identity and the sense of drive, ambition and autonomy'.<sup>22</sup>

General agreement thus seems to offer an adequate working list of possible character traits of composers *of the present day*:<sup>23</sup> self-sufficiency, independence (with aloofness and introversion as subjective judgements upon these), expediency, imagination, radicalism, naturalness and spontaneity (misconstrued as *naiveté*?), dominance, lack of discipline, higher intelligence, open-minded, receptive, flexible, with the ability to link and to evaluate subjective ideas. Thus, the dispositions required of the composer are apparently all mental – to compose music needs no physical prowess, and with the rise of the computer as a composing tool, even physical disability is no real barrier to getting the notes onto paper.

Finally, though, to conclude this peroration on disposition, we might remind ourselves of the alchemical adept, working with the *prima materia* in the *vas mirabile*: '... the Rosarium says ... the following psychological and characteriological qualities (are required) of the artifex: he must have a most subtle mind and an adequate knowledge of

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<sup>22</sup> Kemp. 1996, pp.205-206.

metals and minerals. But he must not have a coarse or rigid mind, nor should he be greedy and avaricious, nor dissolute and vacillating. Further, he must be firm in purpose, persevering, patient, mild, long-suffering and good-tempered'.<sup>24</sup> Music is one of the most difficult subjects in the school curriculum to teach successfully, but if we can provide, through opportunities for listening and performance, a true empathy for the subject – certain pieces of music may appear imbued with the ineffable, may be transcendently *numinous*. Such strong empathy still ensures, even strengthens the young person's sense of their own identity while, at the same time they are projecting affect into music's containing space: 'Projection may be required to draw the object into the orbit of the subject, but it will be introjection of the object which facilitates the empathic response'.<sup>25</sup>

In fact, the adolescent's need for self-definition which re-surfaces and re-runs at this time is admirably served by music. As a result of opportunity, they may consciously be able to say 'I am a musician' but, like everyone else, they also unconsciously deploy music as a containing space – if they are fortunate enough, their awakened pre-verbal needs can be expressed through music because, finally, technical expertise enables them to answer the call of the aesthetic space and, if they possess a character disposition such as has been discovered to accord with the demands of the composition of music, this choice can therefore be made with confidence: 'I am a composer'. Given, therefore, that the pupil survives the hazardous rite of passage which is the school music curriculum, and that, according to research such as Kemp's, they have acquired a pertinent disposition, they may well have had awakened their latent, unconscious links with the *vas mirabile* of music, which can transform indigenous, archaic sense-impressions into the desire to become an adept in their own right.

Making a choice of *mode d'emploi* is a Self-ish act, as it places the Self at the center of what one does – it takes the created object and makes it recognizably yours. But it also places the subject in a new environment for, once the choice has been made, the composer leaves behind what we have termed the foundational adaptability stage and he, or she, enters the stage of *pregnance*: 'The subject finds himself placed between an inner

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<sup>23</sup> An important distinction, in my view.

<sup>24</sup> Jung. C.W.12, para.384.

<sup>25</sup> Samuels *et al.* 1986, p.114.



and an outer determinant, whence arises the possibility of choice and relative “subjective freedom”.<sup>26</sup> Although we cannot completely accept the determinism implied in this quotation, it illustrates well the spirit of the moment for, having made the choice, the composer is confronting the fulcrum of the extrinsic/intrinsic axis, the pivotal point of which, as has been suggested earlier, is circumstantial opportunity.

What happens next is perhaps surprising. Whereas, up until this moment we have witnessed a *progression* towards the present state of affairs – now the composer must accept a *regression* – and accept responsibility for the consequences. Stravinsky stated: ‘To the urge to create I first respond with fright ...’.<sup>27</sup> But almost all that is essential to fulfilling the task of composition lies within, so, as it were – an *enantiodromia* gets under way as extrinsic motivation yields to its harvest of intrinsically-bound motivation. If then, what Winnicott said is true of us all, it is certainly true of composers: ‘... regression reaches and provides a starting-place, what I would call a place from which to operate. The self is reached. The subject becomes in touch with the basic self-processes that constitute true development, and what happens from here is felt as real’.<sup>28</sup>

Now a composer clearly enjoys communicating, but, once theoretical expertise has been gained, the possibilities exist for a different type of communication other than words. The composer communicates the nature of their inviolate self in a one-way outpouring - a monologue which, in effect, recalls the infant’s expression of pre-verbal co-ordinated gesture and utterance. Their strong and flexible adult ego learns to be satisfied with *pregnance* - at the same time tolerating ambiguities and uncertainties. This inevitably marks ‘the point of no return’ where *choice* becomes *imperative* for, to compose music is to engage in an internal dialogue not only with the tension/release paradigms, prosody and dissonance, but also with all the suppressed gesture and utterance of infancy onwards, which (as we saw in Chapter IV) finds its outlet in melodic and rhythmic contours respectively. Schopenhauer writes, not of the imperative, but of the *Will*, which we can surmise as the same concept: ‘Therefore music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a copy of the will itself, the objectivity of which are the Ideas. For this reason, the effect of music is so very much more powerful and

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<sup>26</sup> Jung. C.W. 6, para.404.

<sup>27</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p.87.

<sup>28</sup> Winnicott. 1958, p.290.

penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence'.<sup>29</sup>

However, all work demanding the intense individual effort of finding an objective, also demands a degree of solitude in which to achieve this. Researchers in the *Genesis Project* suggest that, for example: 'Compositional activity seems to occur most frequently in association with feelings of tranquility, security and relaxation; composers tend to work in blocks of two or three hours at a time and sometimes longer; and it is not uncommon for a composition to be written in chunks of 50, 100 or 300 bars or more'.<sup>30</sup> That sounds a lot, but, depending on the speed of performance, those 300 bars might still represent only 15 minutes of music if in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time at 60 crotchets a minute. Furthermore, a full orchestral score of 300 bars of complex music could not possibly be composed in one sitting. Obviously, opportunity to withdraw from general social intercourse during this period enhances the opportunity which leads to fulfilled achievement.

This is the *Faustian bargain* whereby a conventional family and social life is exchanged for the achievements of solitude. Composers must become natural 'garret-dwellers', which is why mental self-sufficiency (or, as has often been the case in previous eras, the ability to command the service of others – and/or a wife - to cater for everyday needs) is now a paramount requirement. Yet no-one personally unfamiliar with the need for the particular type of solitude required by all those involved in complex re-realizations will fully understand it, so 'normal' society may take the withdrawal as something odd – even as an affront – which is what prompted Colin Wilson to write his book *The Outsider*.

Undoubtedly it is sometimes thought that composers (and writers) *retreated* rather than *regressed*, but the most useful way of regarding the quest for solitude is to accept that it partakes of both - the first is basically a physical withdrawal, while the second is a psychic journey so, according to Ehrenzweig: 'The artist has to learn to trust his unconscious and its hidden logic and coherence. He may have to suffer much pain,

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<sup>29</sup> Schopenhauer (1818-19). 1966 ed., Vol.I p.257.

<sup>30</sup> Andrews *et al.* 1999. (Graf) 1947, and Bennett (1976), outline a process: initiatory idea (preparation), making a brief sketch (incubation), elaboration and refining (illumination) before revision to the final score (verification).

anxiety and doubt in order to complete his secret development'.<sup>31</sup> Few composers, though, secrete themselves away to the same extent as the ascetic composer Pierre Boulez, but he epitomizes the way physical and psychic withdrawal are integrated. His biographer wrote: 'Boulez ... rising before dawn and working throughout the day, living the life of a religious celibate, ignoring clothes, entertainment, and food, moving without friends, permitting no dialogue. Boulez says that throughout his life he has refused to define himself through interaction with others'.<sup>32</sup> Henze, on the other hand, possessed of a very different personality, explains: 'Discoveries and inventions result less from experiments and research than from aiming at unknown musical objects when composing. The research is directed inwards, towards the composer's self, not outwards; it takes on, outwardly, the shape of the inward idea'.<sup>33</sup>

'Is a musical concept born consciously or unconsciously?' wrote Shostakovitch, 'It's difficult to explain'.<sup>34</sup> So far, we have followed the teleology of the creative drive in terms of the egoistic *progress* towards choice, and we have allowed for its specific encounters with the aesthetic space, which inform its choices. But we can posit that an opposite state of egoistic *regress* is established at the same moment as the ego is challenged by the *enantiodromia* of extrinsic to intrinsic motivation – when the balance tilts on the fulcrum of opportunity from privileging the conscious, to privileging the unconscious – 'I am now a composer'. A prerequisite for this regress is the ability to withdraw projections from composed music manifests, thereby detaching the symbol from the aesthetic, and allowing the aesthetic to attempt to re-establish connections with its affective source in the embodied Self. It is here that the ego yields to the plenipotential *Idea*. It is not, of course, a 'musical' idea, but only a possible pre-echo of one, for its immanence inhabits that precarious space of non-deterministic, illusory phenomena.<sup>35</sup>

As a consequence of positing this regress, we find we can no longer entertain the concept of a 'repressed unconscious' in the exact Freudian model, but if we turn to Jean Laplanche, we find he has placed an alternative, cogent argument at our disposal; for

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<sup>31</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.205.

<sup>32</sup> Peyser. 1976, p.26.

<sup>33</sup> Henze. 1982, p.164.

<sup>34</sup> Volkov (1979). 1981 ed., p.117.

<sup>35</sup> Cf Chapter III.



him, an unconscious element is not: ‘ ... a representation to be referred to an external thing whose trace it would be, but that the passage to the unconscious is correlative with a loss of referentiality. The thing- or word-presentation (or, in more modern and more accurate language: the signifier), in becoming unconscious, loses its status as presentation (as signifier) in order to become a thing which no longer presents (signifies) anything other than itself’.<sup>36</sup> In other words, as we have discovered in the regress, the acoustic wave vibration of primary sound. It is not, in itself, music; furthermore, all music, divested in this way of its illusions and its significations as such, effectively *returns to its place in the various aesthetic paradigms* alongside the drive, as *thing-in-itself*.

The *Idea*, then, is the immanent ovum, the modular cell unit which is like: ‘ ... a language with unlimited possibilities ... a universe that finds itself in perpetual expansion’.<sup>37</sup> We have been brought back, not only to the fundamental, biologically constructed forms of linearity and modality, but also to their related metaphysical, archetypal potentialities. This is the source of the latent which, because it cannot be ignored, will find its way into the manifest.

If it was *choice* that initiated the regress, it is the *imperative* that initiates the ego’s allegorical ‘return journey’ with the idea, from the unconscious latent to a conscious working into a manifest, which involves negotiating the illusion by attempting to restore the idea to its affective relationship with the aesthetic and eventually reuniting the idea with the symbol. It seems as if we have been witness to exactly that which Laplanche regards as Ptolemeian centri-petalling: ‘ ... we can only observe a return to centering: there is something in me which I’ve split off from, denied, but which I must re-assimilate’.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, because, in accessing the idea, a composer re-visits the site of primary sound and habitable secondary sound, the idea, like those categories of sound-impingement, assumes the attributes of an acquired possession. Then, as it ‘passes through’ the aesthetic space it acquires not only a specific musicality, but also: ‘a multiplicity of unconscious elements which may be organised in different meaningful

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<sup>36</sup> Laplanche. 1999, p.90.

<sup>37</sup> Peyser. 1976, pp.25-26.

<sup>38</sup> Laplanche. 1999 p.67.

sequences, each having its own specific coherence at a particular level of interpretation'.<sup>39</sup> This *over-determination* transforms it into an object.<sup>40</sup>

The object thus confronts the subject with an obligation to be recognized and to be dealt with; it evokes, in fact, a reaction akin to the 'stranger reaction' experienced in childhood: 'In addition to anxiety, the stranger evokes mild or even compellingly strong curiosity ... curiosity and wonderment ... compete with wariness, sobriety, and anxiety reactions ... he seems to realise more and more clearly his relative smallness and his helplessness ...'.<sup>41</sup> As a fetus is in biological conflict with its mother, so one might consider that this makes all ideas dissonant to the Self, and that they are therefore objects to be disposed of. They are thus existents in their own right, in a sense relying upon re-realization to re-order them away from the subject - hence the imperative.

'Disposing' of the idea/object becomes the composer's work of creating the manifest, and is achieved by using the symbols of musical notation to answer the call of the aesthetic space in an attempt to connect the affect with its original imprint - turning *impressions* into *expressions*. Thus the composer dare not relinquish the attempt to retain mastery over the idea/object until it is apparently disposed of in this manner. 'The subject inserts his self - in whole or in part - into the object in order to harm, possess or control it'.<sup>42</sup> The method employed in this process is far from being wholly conscious, and no-one to date has come closer to identifying this process than either Freud or Anton Ehrenzweig - ironically, Freud achieved it unconsciously, while Ehrenzweig gave an account which is overt in its purpose. We will explore both in the ensuing chapters.

But the extraordinary strength of the imperative is perhaps nowhere better expressed than this: 'The book is called The Diving Bell and the Butterfly. The writer, Jean-Dominique Bauby, was editor-in-chief of the French magazine Elle. He suffered a massive stroke and found himself completely paralysed, unable to speak, able to move only one eyelid, no other part of his body. He wrote his book by working on every sentence over and over again in his head, learning each sentence by heart, while he

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<sup>39</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.292.

<sup>40</sup> The composer, Richard Rodney Bennett, spoke of his ideas as 'found objects'. (Forum, Royal Academy of Music, 1996).

<sup>41</sup> Mahler *et al.* 1975, p.223.

<sup>42</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.356.

waited for his transcriber to turn up. When she was at his bedside, he dictated the text of his book, not one sentence at a time, not even one word at a time, but one letter at a time, fluttering his one moveable eyelid a pre-arranged number of times for each letter of the alphabet ...'.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Howard. 2000, p.33.



## **PART 3**

### **The Creative Process**

## VII

### FREUD'S *DREAM-WORK* AS A PARADIGM FOR THE COMPOSITION OF MUSIC

*By picturing our wishes as fulfilled, dreams are after all leading us into the future.  
But this future, which the dreamer pictures as the present,  
has been moulded by his indestructible wish into a perfect likeness of the past.<sup>1</sup>*

Generally speaking, both for psychoanalysts and musicians, the title of this chapter presents an unfamiliar synthesis.<sup>2</sup> However, one wonders why the few hints that have been made are still assigned to relative obscurity. As early as 1952, C.V.Ramana wrote: 'In some ways musical production can be compared with the dream process, with its similar mechanisms of condensation, displacement, symbolization, and transformation'.<sup>3</sup> In addition, David Abrams, writing in Feder *et al*, 1993 (page 303) suggested that Max Graf (the father of Freud's child analysand 'Little Hans'), made structural links with Freud's topographical theory of the conscious, preconscious and conscious, and the composing process. However, Graf does not seem to have included the dream-work as a synthetic possibility. Sufficiently detailed references to Graf's work are not made by Abrams for the lead to be followed at the present time and, in any case, we might consider it only to be of historical interest now. More recently, Jerome Oremland (1997) has also made an analogy between dreaming and artistic creation.

To date, though, we can find no evidence to suggest that the present working-out of this synthesis is not unique. Indeed, the idea that the dream-work as expounded by Freud in 1900 in *The Interpretation of Dreams* could be a universal paradigm for *all* the productions of the creative drive has, so far as can be ascertained, not been posited before. Some of the reasons for this are obvious. In terms of the number of people who have been involved in an academic exploration of creativity, especially in an exploration of musical creativity, maybe comparatively few will have read Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Among others who have read it, not fuelled by that specific

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<sup>1</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.621.

<sup>2</sup> But *cf* Dunn, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Ramana. 1952, pp.229-242.

inquiry, the primary concern will probably be with the application of its textual detail to the discipline of psychoanalysis *per se* – any synthetic link, such as the one posited here, simply not being on their agenda.

But, to intrude a personal note, my own first reading of *The Interpretation of Dreams* provided me with what Ferenczi called that ‘Aha!’ experience.<sup>4</sup> For example, I instantly recognized two of Freud’s terms for the operations of the dream-work - *condensation* and *displacement* as being analogous to techniques used by composers in developing their basic ideas and motifs and, indeed, these were among the techniques I suggested my pupils adopt when confronted by the problem of development of their own compositional ideas. In fact, the term *condensation* gives way in music to devices such as *imitation*, *stretto* and the modern layering techniques of *sonic music*; while *displacement* is clearly implicated in those, as well as in *transposition*, *modulation* and *orchestration*. Both are devices of *development* and *variation*. Freud’s view of both presents similarities and differences; *condensation* represents a nexus of associations in the formation of a single idea, and *displacement* represents a transference of affect or meaning from one idea to another, while Roman Jakobson’s linguistic terminology for the two is *metaphor* and *metonymy* respectively, which was taken up by Jacques Lacan.

Understandably though, it was particularly revelatory (for it has always been the case that understanding the *product* of the dream-process and the creative process has appeared to be easier than understanding the actual *process* itself) to think that *The Interpretation of Dreams* might be the text within which lay, concealed in its rich language of metaphor, a possible answer to the enigma of the creative process itself.

Dreams have always formed the backbone of psychoanalytic *inquiry*; in other words their purpose within the psychoanalytic frame has been as a clinical tool for probing the unconscious. So far however, the rich findings, from Freud onwards, have been largely a wasted resource, (though Jungian techniques have fared rather better in that respect). Anthony Stevens, psychiatrist, Jungian analyst and author, has set out to remedy the situation by contrasting the dynamism of dreams related in clinical practice, with the dryly scientific explanation of dreaming as a storage process of long-term memory from

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<sup>4</sup> Cf Appendix IV.



short-term material. He stresses the revisionary, adaptive nature of dreams as the brain plays around with material in as busy a manner as it does by day, so that: ‘ ... past response patterns and experiences are not only being added to; they are being adapted to make them more responsive to the demands of the present ... out of “all our yesterdays” our dreams prepare the wardrobe for tomorrow’. He even resorts to a musical metaphor, but his most important statement comes at the end of the following quotation: ‘Highly practised in the skill of transposition, the dream can move whole memory systems into another key, or take two apparently different systems and detect hidden harmonies between them. Such is its virtuosity that it can hear old themes in new variations and improvise original motifs upon them. *This helps to explain how it is that in dreams we are all musicians, artists, playwrights, poets, actors, Metteurs-en-scène*’.<sup>5</sup> But why should that be only in dreams?

Freud struggled with the enigma of creativity but, because he was of an era when ‘creative artists’ were considered somehow to be different from everyone else, he was unable to appreciate that the universal nature of dreaming provided a workable hypothesis for solving the problem. He seemed to be content with the conjecture (for he could not have known from personal experience of music): ‘ ... (dreams) can resolve doubts and problems and be the source of new inspiration for poets and musical composers’.<sup>6</sup> It was suggested at the end of the previous chapter that Freud *unconsciously* came very close to identifying the nature of the creative process, for it is certainly true that this present, previously unexploited, synthesis of the dream-work as a paradigm for creativity in general (and therefore the composition of music in particular) came tantalizingly within his reach.

The following extract from *The Interpretation of Dreams* contains the clues, couched in Freud’s evocative use of language: ‘The deepest and eternal nature of man, upon whose evocation in his hearers the poet is accustomed to rely, lies in those impulses of the mind which have their roots in a childhood that has since become prehistoric. Suppressed and

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<sup>5</sup> Stevens. 1995, p.95. My emphasis.

<sup>6</sup> It seems as if Freud missed an opportunity to further discuss creativity along the lines suggested here. Cf Appendix IV.

forbidden wishes from childhood break through in the dream behind the exile's unobjectionable wishes which are capable of entering consciousness ...'.<sup>7</sup>

Such is the potency of that quotation that it clearly justifies wider application of Freud's seminal work. Therefore, without detriment to the substance, we will rearrange its constituents to mirror the order in which the present argument has unfolded so far, and which will continue to unfold in this chapter and beyond. Thus, we will put in first place, 'eternal nature', then 'impulses of the mind', 'roots', 'prehistoric', 'wishes' (suppressed and forbidden), 'from childhood', 'exile', 'unobjectionable wishes', 'break through', 'capable of entering consciousness', 'the poet is accustomed to rely', and 'evocation in his hearers'.<sup>8</sup> This arrangement provides a more realistic succession of the constituents of the quotation in 'psychic time'.

However, the first question to be addressed is: *what is a dream, that it can be promoted as a creative paradigm?* Although we can never know for certain, sufficient evidence exists for us to believe not only in the 'eternal nature' of dreams (they have surely been part of human experience for all time) - but also in their universal, unrelenting nature – something they share with the *Urtrieb* itself. Universal, because we all dream – unrelenting, because of their 'insistence' that 'they dream us' rather than 'we dream them'.<sup>9</sup> Yet, just as a composer will, largely unwittingly, project their own style in a series of 'fingerprints' (which become recognizable to listeners through familiarization), everyone's dreams will be a personal account of something going on in their mind of which they are mostly unaware: 'Each dreamer has a favourite style in his dream-language and the style itself often reveals their personality. "Le style c'est l'homme", said Buffon. It applies to dreams as well as to art. The very style of the dream, like the style of a personality, reflects the broad combination of object relationships, anxieties and defences that mould one's personality'.<sup>10</sup>

Neurologically, the dream-material resides in the brain's neocortex, which controls implicit, unconscious memory - we also know that dream-deprivation has serious

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<sup>7</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.247.

<sup>8</sup> This last phrase forms the basis of Chapter IX (ii).

<sup>9</sup> '... mir hat geträumt ...'. Freud. S.E.IV, p.48.

<sup>10</sup> Segal. 1991, p.11.

consequences, which suggests that libidinal interest is invested in dreams - and that it does not like being thwarted. Dreaming, in fact, reflects our irresistible urge to make sense out of sense experiences; it seems to be an adaptive strategy, by providing for us an opportunity to experience the freest form of re-realization we will ever know. Each dream-scene shackles together an uncountable number of individually-informed motifs and cultural determinants in forging amazing works of fiction in autobiographical mode, while the gesturing, uttering ego contrives to be at the center of the action: 'Dreams are completely egoistic. Whenever my own ego does not appear in the content of the dream, but only some extraneous person, ... my ego lies concealed, by identification ... I can insert my ego into the context'; and: 'When I am in doubt behind which of the figures appearing in the dream my ego is to be looked for, I observe the following rule: the person who in the dream feels an emotion which I myself experience in my sleep is the one who conceals my ego'.<sup>11</sup>

Without doubt, the dream occupies a unique place in the enclosed and personal world of the psyche. It gives a new reality to psychic existents but, as we shall see, it adopts a cleverly selective, conserving manner while doing so, for even a lifetime of dreams is not sufficient to use up the supply of potential material, which daily accumulates *quasi-exponentially*. Perhaps, therefore, dreams demonstrate a solution to the problem of storage of the welter of experiential detail which assails us from infancy, for we recall that experiences, beyond an immediate affective stage, can also be stored in the mind as abstractions, paradigms, or 'frames of reference'. We can therefore imagine that in dreams' re-realizations: ' ... it is a question ... of getting hold of ready-made structures already present in the mind'.<sup>12</sup>

When Freud stated that: ' ... a dream is a structure with a meaning ... ', it is not usually realized that he also hinted it might be an open-ended structure: 'In the unconscious *nothing can be brought to an end*, nothing is past or forgotten'.<sup>13</sup> In fact, a moment's thought will reveal that a remembered dream *never ends* (in the sense that the process does not determine an outcome). We wake up, as it were, to a question mark – to an

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<sup>11</sup> Freud. S.E.IV. pp.322-3, and p.323n. For Freud, the ego tends to adopt a defensive role as it intertwines with the preconscious system and the *dream-censorship*, but for Anton Ehrenzweig, it is also pro-active in creativity (*cf* Chapter VIII).

<sup>12</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.590.

<sup>13</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.525 and p.577.



uncertain conclusion – to our now familiar paradigm of ‘tension unresolved’. On the face of it this aspect of dreams does not seem to be a problem, but if ‘drawing things to a conclusion’ is seen to be desirable in other fields of activity, we need to examine the propensity of dreams to do the opposite.

Either dreams are open-ended because they ‘sense’ the increasing presence of the conscious mind as we awake, or we awake to put an end to invasions from the unconscious at a salient point in the dream. In both instances dreams withdraw from further open revelation. In one sense, they have stated ‘the truth’, ‘nothing but the truth’, but not ‘the whole truth’, so we sense an unresolved tension or, to put it another way, we sense an ‘unhealed wound’. Yet, perhaps this lack of closure allows us, through conscious introspection, to discover that which lies beneath the surface (we will be reminded of this later, when we address Freud’s term *secondary revision* in respect to the composition of music). In music of course, the firmest closure of all is called a *perfect cadence*.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, it remains a *foreclosure*.

Both the dramatic content and the narrative structure of the dream lend it an undeniable theatrical quality: ‘... a setting into images (*mise en images*), this being the central dimension of dreaming ... that is to say: the creative work of the imagination, the presentation and presentification as visible and possibly audible of that which is in itself neither visible nor audible (the ultimate X being, here again, the drive)’.<sup>15</sup> For Freud, this seems to serve a clear purpose in confining libidinal energy to activities (such as some gestures and utterances) which might otherwise be harmfully acted-out in reality: ‘No matter what impulses from the normally inhibited unconscious may prance upon the stage, we need feel no concern; they remain harmless, since they are unable to set in motion the motor apparatus *by which alone they might modify the external world*. The state of sleep guarantees the security of the citadel that must be guarded’.<sup>16</sup>

Certainly, ‘modifying the external world’ is the act of creativity, as in ‘re-realizing existents’, and suggests an implicit desire to do so. However, as we shall see later in this

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<sup>14</sup> This is a typical ending of the tonal system, consisting of two chords, the penultimate chord being based on the fifth scalar degree of the key – the ultimate on the first degree, the ‘home-note’.

<sup>15</sup> Elliott and Frosh. 1995, p.25.

<sup>16</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.568. Emphases mine.

chapter, this highlights the most significant difference between dreams and other re-realizatory processes; throughout their process dreams *always* ‘modify the *internal world*’ whose contents, of course, were once exogenous, whereas other re-realizations are eventually located *externally*, while remaining driven by the contents of the *internal world*. But, with Freud’s delightful phrase ‘prance upon the stage’, we are linked to the whole, previously explored, issue of mental space and its multiplicity of metaphors and analogies – space for biological adaptability, psychic development through hallucination and imagination, and the formation of abstract concepts such as aesthetic space and ‘the theatre of musicality’; in short: ‘Through the metaphor of the private theatre, the dream appears as a *mise-en-scène* or staging of affect-laden representations in which the dreamer’s internal objects relate to each other ... the subject’s affective history, which psychoanalysis, unlike the neurosciences, consider to be central to the meaning of the dream’.<sup>17</sup>

In our dreams, it is *affects* which are extended into the complete gamut of emotions and on to their apotheoses in the expression of passions; passions, and their arousal by emotions underpinned by affect, are of course displayed in dreams in what Scherner called *pictorial effusion*.<sup>18</sup> This being the case, the mind is forced, is ‘impulsed’ to adopt a selection process each time we dream, so we find remembered dreams are admixtures of experiential affect extracted from our total life-history right up to the *dream-day*, selected by a process of *over-determination* (see below) and aligned with suitable paradigms which can cathect with theatrical poemagogic and mythopoeic imagery. On the stage of that theatre, therefore, our ego becomes free to express, in both gesture and utterance, that which may not be allowed in waking life.

We have already explored the possibility of aural experiences forging paradigms and aligning with analogies, so we only need to change some key words in the previous paragraph for it to gain credibility with the process of musical composition, thus: In music, affects are extended into the complete gamut of emotions and on to their apotheoses in the expression of passions - passions, and their arousal by emotions underpinned by affect, are of course displayed in music in ‘aural effusion’. This being the case, the mind is forced, is ‘impulsed’ to adopt a selection process each time we

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<sup>17</sup> Mancia. 1999, p.1209. For further comment, cf Appendix IV.

compose music, so we find compositions are admixtures of experiential affect extracted from our total aural life-history right up to the *composition-day*, selected by a method of *over-determination* and aligned with suitable paradigms which can cathect with theatrical poemagogic and mythopoeic aural imagery.

So, to make a final point in answering the question 'what is a dream?' it is worth repeating that, as we have recalled in earlier chapters here, historically far too much emphasis has been placed on the spurious link between 'creativity' and pathological states of mind. Even though Freud suggests that the dream-process is *similar* to a mind-process observable within his own defining categories of neurosis and hysteria, the very fact of the universality of dreams should act as a brake upon extending that posited similarity towards the risible belief that all dreamers are 'neurotic'. It should of course be taken to mean that the dream-process may be regarded in its abstract form as a *schema* applicable to other mental operations. In other words - that the dream-process is a paradigm. And so, if we take Freud's explicit suggestion that dreams are not pathological phenomena: '... (they are) part of the normal structure of our mental instrument ...',<sup>19</sup> we certainly pave the way for a better understanding of creativity *per se* as a normal mode of the operative mind.

The second question awaiting consideration is: *how can we reconcile musical creativity with Freud's controversial theory of the 'wish-fulfilling' function of dreams* (an inkling of which was inherent in the quotation heading this chapter)?<sup>20</sup> This reminds us of a fundament of psychoanalytic theory – that a portion of the mind – the unconscious - is devoted to that which we either do not know about any more, or that which we would rather not remember at all – in the Freudian model *the suppressed and forbidden*. First, however, we must distinguish between what Freud called the *latent* and the *manifest* areas of dreaming, which can respectively be described as the immanent material from which the wish is drawn, and the theatrical drama which we recount as the dream itself. These two divisions provide, musically speaking, an unequivocal analogy to the immanent ideations from which specific compositional material arises (the *latent*), as distinct from the material arranged into the completed *manifest* score.

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<sup>18</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.335. Freud quotes from: Scherner, K.A; *Das Leben des Traumes*. (1861), p.166.

<sup>19</sup> Freud. S.E.V, pp.607-8.

<sup>20</sup> For *wish-fulfillment*, cf Appendix IV.



Although a composer might harbor for years 'a burning desire' to write a particular piece – a desire uncontaminated by commercial reasons – in today's world, that is a fairly unlikely situation, for a composer nowadays must earn a living like anyone else, and is generally reliant upon specifically commissioned work. Fulfilling commissions leaves little time for self-indulgently embarking upon a composition for which no fee has been arranged, and no performance guaranteed. Seen in this light therefore, a commissioned composition not only takes on the role of an objective problem to be solved, but also lessens the likelihood of anything much of the composer's subjective, psychic reality being revealed in the manuscript. Schönberg was fortunate if he never had to do otherwise than comply with this first sentence: 'I believe that a composer writes music for no other reason than it pleases him'. And he was somewhat judgmental in his second: 'Those who compose because they want to please others, and have audiences in mind, are not real artists ... They are not creators who must open the valves in order to relieve the pressure of a creation ready to be born'.<sup>21</sup>

But Paul Patterson, whose reputation rests, not only upon the quality of his music, but upon his ability to satisfy commissionees, speaks for most composers today: 'I have always worked to commission – I have never had time to write for myself'.<sup>22</sup> So, a compromise is reached and sadly, the 'burning desire' may have to lie dormant, even if it is only *significant* of a deeper, inaccessible wish – a true imperative inhibited from direct action existing in the unconscious and seeking an outlet in gesture and utterance. But the question is, how far can this role of the commissioned *problematique* cathect with an unconscious wish and bring it nearer to '*imperative-fulfilment*'?<sup>23</sup>

Problems to be solved require imagination, which is a mind-activity involving both *lateral thinking* – that dynamic register which can be as irregular, unpredictable, wild, enthusiastic, adaptable and contemplative as the unconscious mind itself - and its more conscious counterpart, *vertical thinking* which implies a logic verging on mathematical precision. The more the former, however, engages with the actual unconscious, beginning, as it were, with the conscious mind resigning itself to a temporary back seat,

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<sup>21</sup> Stein. 1975, p.54.

<sup>22</sup> In conversation with R.D.

<sup>23</sup> Cf Chapter VI.

the greater the chance will be of the imperative-fulfilment synchronizing with the *problematique* (something which is re-addressed in the next chapter).

This engagement tends to induce a dream-like mode of subjective, anti-logic of fiction and phantasy which, because of its unhindered flexibility, is the mode most likely to be able to forge new and productive connections between prescribed tasks (such as commissioned works which nestle in the mind as unsolved problems) and unconscious wishful impulses.<sup>24</sup> These connections will align themselves along associative pathways which are strongly personal, so that the result comes just a little nearer to the imperative. Freud quotes Ferenczi: 'Ferenczi (1911), in the course of a discussion of some other observations upon the directing of dreams, remarks: "Dreams work over the thoughts which are occupying the mind at the moment from every angle; they will drop a dream-image if it threatens the success of a wish-fulfilment and will experiment with a fresh solution, till at last they succeed in constructing a wish-fulfilment which satisfies both agencies of the mind as a compromise".'<sup>25</sup>

So if we remain true to Freud, and don't prematurely dismiss his theory of wish-fulfilment, we might ultimately find that that is indeed the engine which drives both processes – the dream as well as musical composition. That a dream *is* wish-fulfilment is commonly held to be the central tenet of Freud's deductive account of dreams but its later form appears as 'The *attempt* at the fulfilment of a wish' – a crucial difference.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, because a wish can have a personal history which extends, as we have seen, back into the 'prehistoric' era of the fetus, and because wishes are disguised in the dream by virtue of the unconscious mind's operative mode of metaphor, we come to appreciate not only Freud's suggestion that wishes might indeed be 'indestructible', but also his dictum that: '... a wish which is represented in a dream must be an infantile one'.<sup>27</sup>

For example, such a wish, as strong in *affect* as an imperative, is the need for the breast. However, because the post-nate does not *know* what a real breast is in terms of its

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<sup>24</sup> For the psychoanalytic usage of *phantasy*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>25</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.572. This paragraph was added to his text by Freud in 1914. Ferenczi,S. (1911) *Über lenkbare Traüme*.

<sup>26</sup> Freud. S.E. XXII, p.29. Cf Appendix IV. My emphasis.

<sup>27</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.553.

properties, but only recognizes it as a source of nourishment fulfilling the need to satisfy the aching void of hunger; when it is hallucinated in the space between need and satisfaction it has already taken on an abstract approximation of its true nature (metaphor). The irony is, that that process accords it an enhanced quality which its biological function alone does not achieve. 'The breast' (as something to be apprehended in its own right later on) is thus already a source – an abstract property perceived by the senses of touch, smell, taste, sight and, ideally, the security of the mother's enclosing arms and the soothing sound of her voice. These are the aesthetic qualities and potentialities of the breast, and as such they loiter throughout life in the aesthetic space where they mingle and coalesce with the even earlier acquired aesthetic shapes of the curvi-linear and the modular.<sup>28</sup> In the case of a dream, they are assigned to visual images and, in the case of composed music, to aural experiences. In both cases, as we have seen, affect is thus transformed into emotion and maybe into passion.

We must now take note of two essential words from the preceding paragraphs – *compromise* and *represented*, but postponing discussion of *representation* until a more suitable moment, we will address *compromise* immediately. Quite obviously, not all dreams are fundamentally attuned to the most basic aesthetics of images and mnemonic traces like the breast – overtly promoting a display of breast *per se*, however deeply felt the unconscious longing for such might be felt within the psyche. This is partly due to the breast being discovered to be an object in its own right at some point in childhood, when it generally becomes more or less *tabu*, according to prevailing cultural impositions. The longing is thus compromised and the actuality concedes to the aesthetic. But this, for any creative re-realization of existents, is by far from being a disadvantage, as all the breast's 'breastness' is thereby released into the service of the imagination where sensual qualities can cathect with mode-specific ideas. Therefore, the wish for the breast actually surfaces into manifest dreams and more conscious re-realizations in disguised, but greatly enriched form.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> For further comment on the *modular* and *curvi-linear* in music, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>29</sup> Freud tends to speak of the disadvantages of *compromise-formations*, especially in terms of clinical practice when he maintained that psychological symptoms were compromises, informed by the process of repression failing to allow a wish full expression.



But of course, the breast, as has been said, was only an example. All wishes probably undergo a similar compromise, for Freud recognized much more varied inspiration in the adult dream-world: '... dreams are hypermnesic ...'; and: 'It is moreover a familiar observation that, even in those whose memory is not normally of a visual type, the earliest recollections of childhood retain far into life the quality of sensory vividness ... the attraction which memories couched in visual form and eager for revival bring to bear upon thoughts cut off from consciousness and struggling to find expression. On this view a dream might be described as a substitute for an infant scene modified by being transferred onto a recent experience. *The infantile scene is unable to bring about its own revival* and has to be content with returning as a dream'.<sup>30</sup>

The *recent experience* which Freud mentions often comes in plural form, which he calls *day's residues* – those events, both apparently insignificant or of considerable import from the dream-day which clearly linger on in the mind and attach themselves to the dream-scene that night, either because they have cathected with the unconscious dream-wish, or because they are bound by association with it. They frequently supply a goodly amount of material to feed a dream and, by analogy, there should be no difficulty in recognising that a composer might accumulate day's residues in the form of musical memories, or other traces whose aesthetic qualities lend themselves to transformation, and which will unconsciously, even obsessively, insinuate themselves into a composition. Thus: 'If we wish to classify the thought-impulses which persist in sleep, we may divide them into the following groups: 1) what has not been carried to a conclusion during the day ... 2) what has not been dealt with ... what is unsolved; 3) what has been rejected and suppressed during the daytime ... 4) what has been set in action in our unconscious by the activity of the preconscious in the course of the day ... 5) the group of daytime impressions which are indifferent and have for that reason not been dealt with'.<sup>31</sup>

The writer, John Bowen, expresses this in his own way: 'The essential elements ... They are part of us, part of all that has ever happened to us ... And usually they come in disguise. It is as if there is a wall dividing everyday consciousness from another imaginary world existing simultaneously. Sometimes suddenly there is a gap in the wall,

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<sup>30</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.589 and .p.546. My emphasis.

so that we can see and hear what is happening on the other side. Then – for a writer – the two worlds come together. Ideas and characters, snatches of dialogue, images and moments of action, all part of that other world, spill into everyday'.<sup>32</sup> In another of Freud's inventive metaphors, a day-time thought is the *entrepreneur* of a dream, providing idea and 'initiative', while being dependent upon the capitalist, in the shape of the unconscious wish, to provide the wherewithal to carry out the imperative. Henze wrote of his opera *River*: 'Much from the refugees (from fascism in Chile) has gone into River. But the music is also filled with my own experiences. It is informed by the fear of the police which has pursued me through life, in boarding-schools, barrack-yards, and detention cells. It can identify with the young deserter, it weeps with each victim, and hates and despises the world of the fascist bourgeoisie ...'.<sup>33</sup>

With the wishful purpose of the dream now addressed, and the type of material for the dream posited, there remains the third question to be asked, towards which all previous material has been directed: *can Freud's posited process of the dream-work itself provide such an effective paradigm for the composition of music that we are able to offer a convincing argument for its adoption as a universal creative paradigm?* And, by the *dream-work*, Freud intends us to understand the complete, unconscious operation by which all the material, whether from day's residues, wish-allusions and even biological stimuli from the sleeping body, is brought together to be compromised and re-arranged into the phantasmagoria of the manifest dream. Freud is quite clear about the procedure although, in order to present it logically (as it needs to be for the present purpose) necessitates deducing it from different places in his texts and extracting the detail from his highly readable explanations and examples.<sup>34</sup>

Although one of the attributes of the unconscious is its timelessness, nevertheless a linear progression can be detected in the dream-work procedure, which Freud predicates upon the existence of two different psychic operations, which he calls the *primary*

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<sup>31</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.554.

<sup>32</sup> Bowen. 2000. p.81.

<sup>33</sup> Henze. 1982, p.233.

<sup>34</sup> My own deduction is set out in comparative manner in Appendix II. It is regrettable that a simplification of Freud's ideas is all there is space for here. By not touching upon the minutiae and nuances in his writings, justice is barely done to his work in the field of dreams.

*process* and *secondary revision*.<sup>35</sup> The primary process of the dream progresses in the unconscious from sensory impressions, mnemic traces, through to the final selection of dream-elements via the accumulation of dream-thoughts.<sup>36</sup> The progression of dream-thoughts into established elements is as a result of *over-determination*, as a parliamentary representative might be elected by the most numerous number of supporters: ‘... the elements of a dream are determined by the dream-thoughts many times over ...’,<sup>37</sup> and we are bound to recognize that over-determination has its roots in that central space of sustained tension, where lurks aesthetics, and where there is unlimited room for the wish to pick up all the ‘loose ends’ of desire, and where *psychically* intense elements are replaced by *sensory* intensity in the manifest dream, so that: ‘In most dreams it is possible to detect a central point which is marked by peculiar sensory intensity ... This central point is as a rule the direct representation of the wish-fulfillment ...’.<sup>38</sup>

The primary process drifts to an end after the construction of the dream elements, and the ego takes over the act of secondary revision, ensuring their unconscious transportation into the dream. But for the purposes of alignment with the composition of music and other re-realizations, we must emphasize a different structure. In these cases, the *primary process* is also achieved unconsciously, but the *secondary revision* can be said to equate with Freud’s *secondary process* of the conscious mind. Nevertheless, this facile chronology should, in both cases, be tempered by the concept of *regression*.<sup>39</sup>

Regression (introduced as the composer’s *regress* in the previous chapter) is introduced here in order to counter any suggestion that the ego works uni-directionally. There is a broadening of the scope of the dream-work as the ego traces and re-traces memories simultaneously throughout the procedure, while various libidinal cathexes are ordered and adapted into *ideations* for the dream: ‘Intentional recollection and other constituent processes of our normal thinking involve a retrogressive movement in the psychical

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<sup>35</sup> Strictly speaking, Freud does not regard secondary revision as part of the dream-work (*cf* S.E.V, p.490n).

<sup>36</sup> It is not easy to deduce from the text whether the i) dream-thoughts precede the elements or whether ii) it is the other way round – especially as Freud (translated) also uses the word *element*, rather than perhaps *component* to indicate the constituents of the dream-thoughts! I have decided on balance that the former progression is the most likely.

<sup>37</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.283.

<sup>38</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.561.



apparatus from a complex ideational act back to the raw material of the memory-traces underlying it. In the waking state, however, this backward movement never extends beyond the mnemonic images; it does not succeed in producing an hallucinatory revival of the perceptual images ... We call it “regression” when a dream idea is turned back into the sensory images from which it was originally derived ... In regression the fabric of the dream-thoughts is resolved into its raw material.<sup>40</sup>

Not quite to the raw however, in the case of the composer, for though the origin in notes, cells and motifs of the fissional material for sketches and themes might be apprehended as a series of retrograde steps from sketches back to motifs, to cells and to individual notes or instrumental timbres – because they are only the Idea’s *representatives*, there will still be a point beyond which understanding ceases and the thought will loom: “I really can’t think where *that* idea came from!” Freud wrote: ‘There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unraveled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the content of the dream. This is the dream’s navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown ... It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-wish grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium’.<sup>41</sup>

It might now appear that, at last, all is set ready for the dream-elements to be transposed into the fabric of the manifest dream but, in his dream-analyses, Freud spotted a not inconsiderable, metaphorical couple of obstacles to this, the first of which he called the *ensorship* and the second, the *preconscious*. Only when we realize just how difficult it is to unravel dream-scenes in an attempt to reveal their ‘messages’, do we recognize the existence of something within ourselves that is at work even during our dreams when we are asleep, which is utterly devoted to dissimulation - and thus perhaps cease to regard the *ensorship* concept as faintly ridiculous: ‘The inhibition of affect, accordingly, must be considered as the second consequence of the censorship of dreams, just as dream-

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<sup>39</sup> We will explore further the *ego* and *regression* in the next chapter.

<sup>40</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.543.

<sup>41</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.525.

distortion is its first consequence'.<sup>42</sup> We will return in a moment to the concept of *affect*.

The role of the *ensorship* (which Freud first mentioned to Fliess in 1897<sup>43</sup>) seems to be as a tool of distortion, preventing wishes – even those already compromised – from exposure in the manifest, and pre-figures the anthropomorphic *super-ego*. In Freud's model, it is responsible for anti-thetical dream-thoughts (often the ego's reaction to a disagreeable fragment of memory), for a seemingly indifferent 'feeling-tone' to ideations, as well as for displacements and substitutions. The dream-thoughts: '... usually emerge as a complex of thoughts and memories of the most intricate possible structure, with all the attributes of the trains of thought familiar to us in waking life. They are not infrequently trains of thought starting out from more than one centre, though having points of contact. Each train of thought is almost invariably accompanied by its contradictory counterpart, linked to it by antithetical association'.<sup>44</sup> The *preconscious*, on the other hand - though not so dissimulative, is nevertheless similarly anthropomorphosed, but as a sycophant, in expedient servitude to both the ego and super-ego. It guards the gates between the unconscious and conscious, and between the primary process and secondary revision of the dream-work: 'In consequence of the belated appearance of the secondary processes, the core of our being, consisting of unconscious wishful impulses, remains inaccessible to the understanding and prohibition of the preconscious ... (which directs) along the most expedient paths the wishful impulses ...'.<sup>45</sup>

Consequently, *affect* stands little or no chance of direct expression in the manifest, for all its importance in according sensory impressions psychic quality. It is turned back at the gates of secondary revision, remaining firmly within the confines of the latent material. Yet this action generates a surprising response, as all attempts to inhibit the release of

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<sup>42</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.468.

<sup>43</sup> 22-12-1897. S.E.1, p.273.

<sup>44</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.312.

<sup>45</sup> This pertinent quotation continues: '... (wishful impulses) exercise a compelling force upon all later mental trends ... a wide sphere of mnemonic material is inaccessible to preconscious cathexis. Among these wishful impulses derived from infancy, which can neither be destroyed nor inhibited, there are some whose fulfilment would ... no longer generate an affect of pleasure but of displeasure; and it is precisely this transformation of affect which constitutes the essence of what we term "repression" ... they become subject to the primary psychological process and their one aim is motor discharge or ... hallucinatory revival of the desired perceptual identity.' (S.E.V, pp 460-461).

affects in dreams by diminishing them or turning them into their opposites, results in an over-determined concentration, and they become masters of disguise – veritable chameleons in order to slip past the censorship. They cloak themselves in a variety of ideations, most of which express a degree of apparent indifference to the original affect: ‘... ideational material has undergone displacements and substitutions, whereas the affects have remained unaltered’; and: ‘... the release of affect and the ideational content do not constitute the indissoluble organic unity ... but that these two separate entities may be merely soldered together ...’.<sup>46</sup> Reminding ourselves of the rearrangement we made of the constituents of Freud’s statement on dreams, we do indeed find our dreams contain ‘exiled’ parts of our experience as our wishes thus become ‘unobjectionable’, ‘breaking through’ obstacles and resistances, so as to become ‘capable of entering consciousness’ via a remembered dream.

The final, ironic, disguise is the presentation in the manifest dream of the archaic wish in the present tense. But such visual sequencing in dreams is at a disadvantage when compared with music – music can make even more of: ‘... propinquity in time as representing connection in subject-matter’,<sup>47</sup> as composers can create contrapuntal layers of ideas. Examples abound, especially as in many a *bel canto* operatic ensemble (where the characters all appear to be ‘talking’ at once) or, more specifically, in the final section of Wagner’s Overture to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, or in Luciano Berio’s *Sinfonia* (where he integrates his own material with that from the scherzo of Gustav Mahler’s second symphony, together with words by Samuel Beckett).

However, given that, in his own model of dreams, everything is worked out in the unconscious, Freud eventually makes a couple of surprising, related statements about the dream-thoughts (having made a clear distinction between them and the dream-work proper): ‘The dream-thoughts are entirely rational and are constructed with an expenditure of all the psychical energy of which we are capable’; and: ‘... perfectly rational dream-thoughts, of no less validity than normal thinking’.<sup>48</sup> When we have become accustomed to thinking that unconscious processes are *irrational*, this certainly takes us aback. Yet, it is in his explanation of the first statement that Freud makes his

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<sup>46</sup> Freud. S.E.V, pp.460 and 461.

<sup>47</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.247.

<sup>48</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.506 and p.597.



greatest (albeit unwitting) contribution to this discussion about the dream-work as a universal creative paradigm, for he goes on to say: 'They (the *dream-thoughts*) have their place among thought-processes that have not become conscious – processes from which, after some modification, our conscious thoughts, too, arise ... The *dream-work* is not simply more careless, more irrational, more forgetful and more incomplete than waking thought; it is completely different from it qualitatively ... it does not think, calculate or judge in any way at all; *it restricts itself to giving things a new form*'.<sup>49</sup>

Although we can be forgiven for allowing Freud his moments of confusion, 'giving things a new form' is clearly what happens in any re-realization of existents, and so, provided enough distortion has taken place between the traces of 'pre-historic' sensory impressions and the formation of dream-elements, the dream-wish, with all its bewildering accretions, modifications and disguises, is at last placed at the service of the dream-work. It is then grudgingly allowed to enter the stage of secondary revision in preparation for the manifest - which must bear the stamp of intelligibility: 'There is an intellectual function in us which demands unity, connection and intelligibility from any material, whether of perception or thought, that comes within its grasp; and if, as a result of special circumstances, it is unable to establish a true connection, it does not hesitate to fabricate a false one ... In all these cases it can be shown that a rearrangement of the psychical material has been made with a fresh aim in view; and the rearrangement may often have to be a drastic one if the outcome is to be made intelligible ...'.<sup>50</sup>

It is interesting to note that Freud calls a 'freshly constructed unity' a 'composition' - using the term 'composition' to describe the representation of consonance, of 'common attributes', freshly constructed by the dream-work in an act of unification (S.E.IV, p.320) - and so we have now reached the point in the argument where the analogy between dreaming and other re-realizations must be strengthened.

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<sup>49</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.506-507. My emphasis. This is taken from a lengthy passage, which absolutely pays for reading in its entirety, for it contains the nub of the whole hypothesis, and in it Freud is careful to distinguish between the *dream-thoughts* and the *dream-work*. It is a passage, though, which is criticized for illogicality, on the grounds that 'giving things a new form' must involve a degree of thought, calculation and judgement.

<sup>50</sup> Freud. S.E. XIII, p.95. Strictly speaking, Freud does not regard secondary revision as part of the dream-work proper. It is more directly purposeful.

At the beginning of this chapter we stated that two unconscious processes were the preserve of both the dream and musical composition – *condensation* and *displacement*. Both are implicated in the unconscious mind's *considerations of representability* of material for the manifest, because allusions to 'pre-historic' percepts are preferred rather than direct references. *Displacement* appears to be the activity which precedes condensation; it clearly has a crucial bearing upon the diffusion of intensity of affect along associative pathways in order that affect be prevented from cathecting with any one idea which would exclusively exemplify it, and so it initiates disguises which would fool the censor. If we remember that we posited the Dionysian duo of gesture and utterance being transformed in musical expression, we are bound now to relate that to their displacement away from 'reality' and into the dream (where we gesture and utter freely). Displacement, of course, achieves this by feigning indifference to the original affect – in other words, psychical intensity is transferred onto indifferent material, providing yet another reason for not trusting the manifest musical score to reveal a composer's 'poetic reality'.

Displacement, therefore, is firmly located within the remit of the primary process. The location of *condensation*, on the other hand, is more problematic, for it results in apparently disparate elements being combined into a single unity, as well as serving to reinforce common elements and similarities. Basically it stands at the cusp of the shift between the primary process and secondary revision – its transformative influence extending in both directions. 'In the process of condensation ... every psychical interconnection is transformed into an intensification of its ideational content', while one of its most obvious musical roles lies in the construction of transitional or 'bridge passages' in *sonata form*, where logical connections are made between first and second ideas (subjects) to maintain the flow of the music. To sum up these two devices: '... material, stripped of a large extent of its relations, is submitted to a process of compression, while at the same time displacements of intensity between its elements necessarily bring about a psychical transvaluation of the material'.<sup>51</sup> The secondary process of our conscious mind cannot strongly influence displacement (metonymy – based on affective dissimulation), but it certainly can influence condensation (metaphor).

But now, as this argument too has reached the same cusp, we must urgently take note of one fundamental difference between secondary revision of dreams and its analogous state in other re-realizations of existents; that is, in dreams we remain asleep and our unconscious minds still hold sway over our thoughts, while composing music and doing almost anything else is dependent upon our being awake and conscious of what we are doing. Consequently, we must explore the different paths taken by dreams and musical composition towards their common goal of creating intelligible manifests, and certainly from this cuspid vantage point we can look at the dream-elements as analogous to the motifs which a composer has accrued in the mind, and predict that the dream-elements will proceed towards the formation of dream-images. On the other hand, musical motifs will go on to inform the 'sketches' which most composers find essential to consciously construct, for: 'It is the nature of our waking thought to establish order in material of that kind, to set up relations in it and make it conform to our expectations of an intelligible whole ... ', yet the heavy hand of the censor has done its work: 'In our efforts at making an intelligible pattern of the sense-impressions that are offered to us, we often fall into the strangest errors or even *falsify the truth about the material before us*'.<sup>52</sup>

The compilation of sketches in composition is immediately preceded by a state of mind which can be called 'reflection', something like day-dreaming, in which ideas emerge – ideas which composers generally admit 'appear to come from nowhere'. Freud has an answer ready: '... the man who is reflecting is also exercising his critical faculty; this leads him to reject some of the ideas that occur to him after perceiving them, to cut short others without following the trains of thought which they would open up to him, and to behave in such a way towards still others that they never become conscious at all and are accordingly suppressed before being perceived ... (this state) bears some analogy to the state before falling asleep ... As we fall asleep, "involuntary ideas" emerge ... they change into visual and acoustic images'.<sup>53</sup> To quote one composer: 'I seem to slip into a state of day-dreaming, and then the ideas come. I can then work on them'.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.595 and p.389. For an explanation of *sonata form*, and to avoid confusion with the *sonata principle*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>52</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.499.

<sup>53</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.102.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Max Edlin, composer and lecturer; forum discussion, UKC. 6-3-99. For personal comments, cf Appendix IV.



The involvement of the state of day-dreaming in the creative process, therefore, becomes one of the clearest signs that composing music has, at the stage of secondary revision, parted company from the sleeping-dream state – yet, according to Freud the two states never really lose sight of each other: ‘They (day-dreams) share a large number of their properties with night-dreams ... Like dreams, they are wish-fulfilments; like dreams they are based to a great extent on impressions of infantile experiences; like dreams, they benefit by a certain degree of relaxation of censorship. If we examine their structure, we shall perceive the way in which the wishful purpose that is at work in their production has mixed up the material of which they are built, has rearranged it and has formed it into a new whole’; and: ‘But dreams differ from day-dreams ... in the fact (generally) of their ideational content being transformed from thoughts into sensory images, to which belief is attached and which appear to be experienced’.<sup>55</sup> This is not far from suggesting that the day-dreamer – the composer - is a step or two removed from the experience of the sensory image, and merely imagines that they have mastery over the material. On the other hand, the sleeping dreamer dreams on without any conscious influence upon the formation of dream-images and dream-content.

However, even though Freud’s words are so close to our cause here, we must go a little deeper into the comparison, especially in the light of a hypothesis raised earlier in Chapter 3 – the hypothesis that between the incitement and the symbol lies the aesthetic space. For now, the most important point raised in that chapter was the suggestion that sound *per se* is an illusory phenomenon, because this brings us face to face with the properties of the material a composer works with during the stage of secondary revision. Sound’s only contact with ‘reality’, we recall, is the singular one of the initiatory incitement of the acoustic wave – the integrity of that first moment is thereafter honored by nothing. We retain as a mnemonic trace only our personalized, qualitative response to its perception – not the quality of the incitement itself. Let loose in the aesthetic space the after-shocks of the initial incitement resonate along with the after-shocks of all other perceptual and experiential incitements and, sometime later, a ‘wish’ is conceived in this space. For the composer the ‘wish’ becomes the ‘idea’, which we described in the previous chapter as ‘the immanent ovum’ – ‘the source of the latent’ and ‘the imperative’. The progress of the dream-wish we now know. By the time the dreamer or

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<sup>55</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.492 and p.535.

the composer has reached the stage of secondary revision of material, both are dealing with an illusion yet, with hindsight, upon waking, the dreamer generally understands this – the composer generally does not.<sup>56</sup> Although: ‘It sometimes happens that the sharp eye of a creative writer has an analytic realization of the process of transformation of which he is habitually no more than the tool’.<sup>57</sup>

But how does this affect the *process* of a composition? Secondary revision, for the composer, is the conscious working upon the illusion that has presented itself in the form of material ripe for the drafting of sketches. This begins with the first taking up of tools such as pencil and paper, in order to work on the material which now *appears* to be external – that is to say in Freud’s words, the motor apparatus is set in motion ‘to modify the external world’. Marion Milner explains: ‘... the artist, by embodying the experience of illusion, provides the essential basis for realizing, making real, for feeling as well as for knowing ...’;<sup>58</sup> by having, we would remind ourselves, from the first sensate experiences *in utero* been involved in the psychic exchange between subjective feeling and objective knowing. These subjective/objective exchanges are the experiences which Freud, in the passage whose re-organization has fuelled the progress of this chapter, suggest are the elements upon which: ‘... the poet is accustomed to rely ...’.

Having reached this point in the process, the composer, through libidinal interest, must now harness the motivation of the *Urtrieb* in the service of the wish, in the kind of action which Marion Milner called ‘contemplative action’.<sup>59</sup> The ego plies its trade between the unconscious and conscious mind, subduing the wish within the ‘public face’ of the manifest score as the composer decides which of the conformist symbols of music notation will best suit what is to be revealed of the purposive and imperative Idea: ‘I myself consider the totality of the piece as the idea: the idea which its creator wanted to present’.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> For further comment, *cf* Appendix IV.

<sup>57</sup> Freud. S.E.IV, p.246.

<sup>58</sup> Milner (pseud. Field, 1950). 1971 ed., p.139.

<sup>59</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.140.

<sup>60</sup> Stein. 1975, p.123.

That is a decision made during the final, external act of *concretization* when, as we can now see, the manifest becomes, not a true representation of an unconscious wish, but only a collective *symbol* of its individually ordained ambiguity, phantasy and mystery. This is exchanged for a consciously considered display of the esoteric and arcane, for the symbols of music constitute a grammatical structure of indirect representation which is only available to its adepts. We can concur when Freud says that the dream is a *rebus*, for so is a musical composition, but the rebus of the dream never ceases to develop as even the dream-symbols themselves are plastic. The rebus of music, however, relies upon the plasticity of the *material*, the progress of which is halted by the relative rigidity and specificity of the symbols. This is the outcome of the ‘dream-work’ in the aesthetic space - the epilogue in the theatre of musicality - and now the curtain descends. The composer seldom leaves ‘the end of the dream’ open - seldom ends with a ‘question mark’ - certainly, within the confines of the tonal system and in many, many instances after the historical decline of that system, the ‘dream’ is deliberately foreclosed.

So, just as ‘The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind’,<sup>61</sup> so might be an analysis of a composer’s output – or indeed, an analysis of any *re-realization of existents*. However, even if the Freudian model of the dream-work does provide a convincing paradigm for creativity *per se*, it might be appreciated that analysis of the composer’s works can only tentatively begin to reveal the personality that lies hidden behind the music. All else is spurious conjecture and a travesty. Occasionally, we come across a composer who appears to have something of Freud’s ‘sharp eye of a creative writer’, and who has: ‘... an analytic realization of the process of transformation of which he is habitually no more than the tool’ – Gustav Mahler, for example wrote (of his first symphony, completed in 1887 at a time when he was involved in two successive love affairs): ‘...the symphony begins at a point beyond the love-affair; it forms the basis, i.e. it dates from earlier in the composer’s emotional life. But the real life experience was the reason for the work, not its content ... The need to express myself musically – in symphonic terms – begins only on the plane of obscure feelings, at the gate that opens into the “other world”, the world in which things no longer fall apart in time and space ... the reason why a composition

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<sup>61</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.608.



comes into being at all is bound to be something the composer has experienced, something real ...'.<sup>62</sup>

This is as near as we can get to Freud's 'perfect likeness of the past' – we have covered our re-arrangement of Freud's statement – the 'eternal nature' of the libidinal drive, the 'impulses of the mind', the foundational, 'prehistoric' 'roots' of affect, the suppressed and forbidden 'exiled' 'wishes' that date 'from childhood' and which thus manifest as 'unobjectionable wishes' which 'break through' to become 'capable of entering consciousness'. The 'poet is accustomed to rely' on these which, in their turn, cause 'evocation in their hearers'. We have come full circle.

Thus, after so many speculations about creativity, especially in the last hundred years, has the answer, in fact, been lying under our noses all the time – in the Freudian concept of the dream-work? Even if that is the case, though, we must still turn back onto each composer the responsibility for fulfilling their own plenipotential.

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<sup>62</sup> Letter to Max Marschalk, critic and composer, (26-3-1896). Quoted by Kennedy. 1974, pp.115-116. 1887 was the year after Freud returned to Vienna from working with Charcot at the Salpêtrière in Paris, to set up in private practice as a consultant in nervous diseases – thirteen years before the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Mahler's first symphony was premièred in Budapest, and he did not settle in Vienna until 1897. He married Alma Schindler in 1902 and, although she, too, composed music, it has fallen into obscurity.

## VIII

### A POST-FREUDIAN SYNTHESIS

*The rareness of cases where we can verify the existence of unconscious perceptions running underneath surface perceptions, or occurring in an absent-minded state, concedes our assumption that they are inaccessible to consciousness ...*

*All the evidence of psycho-analysis testifies to the complexity and wealth of unconscious mental processes, and points to an equal wealth in unconscious perceptions of which we know next to nothing. We may perhaps attribute them to an altogether different perception and memory system or rather to many such systems overlying each other. In the inarticulate state of consciousness such as exists in a dream or in creative divination we may tap those hidden and variously structured memory systems.<sup>1</sup>*

We left the composer at the end of the previous chapter with the unenviable task of 'fulfilling their own plenipotential'. We might venture to suggest that this is indeed what everyone is unconsciously striving to do in their own way, but composers are no different from the rest of us in being burdened by elements in their personal unconscious that are imbued with all the aforementioned hindrances of access. The composer is certainly not alone in waiting for a chink in the defenses which will allow 'the muse' to rummage around in the unconscious for ideas.

Paul Patterson, constantly working to commission (and who had, only a few days before, been present at the world première of his latest *opus*) recently said: 'I am going to tuck myself away for the weekend to get ideas for my next piece'. In this situation there is great pressure 'to deliver' and thus little opportunity for idling around 'waiting for the muse to appear' - performance deadlines have to be met to tie in with engaging performers, booking venues and rehearsal schedules, with the publication of concert programs and the printing and selling of tickets; somehow promoting an even greater moral pressure than delivering a book manuscript to a publisher by an agreed date. Thus, *functionalism* (*Gebrauchsmusik* is the familiar German term) becomes the compromise by reifying unconscious material and making the manifest appear dependent on necessities imposed by the external world. The price composers often pay for earning a living is thus a lessening of opportunity to express the wishes of their internal world.

We impose pressures of this nature upon school and tertiary-level students too. Given the inexperience of youth, examination systems create intense pressures of a similar

nature upon candidates – especially if ‘creative work’ is demanded of them and, so teachers are obliged, however reluctantly, to ensure that pupils eventually conform to the system so that their access to the greater relative freedom of the tertiary stage is not compromised. Consequently, maintaining a high standard of composition work, means a method has to be found that enables pupils to minimize the time they need for the ideas to flow, especially if they are not to sacrifice their individuality of musical expression in the service of the system. That means the unconscious mind has to be called upon for the ‘dream elements’.

A method does exist for this which, in a musical situation, is equivalent to that described in another context - thus: ‘I have little doubt that doodling techniques are so lively because they arouse unconscious fantasies. Far from being casual, the artist works with utmost concentration and vigilance as his whole personality, conscious as well as unconscious, is participating in the act of artistic creation.’ Though few established composers will admit to adopting the doodling method on the piano themselves, for various reasons, pupils’ ‘doodlings’ on their favorite instrument frequently throw up ideas which they enjoy developing later on.<sup>2</sup>

The above quotation was written by Anton Ehrenzweig in 1956.<sup>3</sup> Ehrenzweig was born in Vienna in 1908 and was thus a younger contemporary of Freud though, unlike Freud, his interests not only embraced art, but also music. He studied law, psychology and art and came to England in 1938, taught at the Central School of Art and Crafts in London, and became a lecturer in Art Education at Goldsmith’s College, University of London, where he remained until his death in 1966. Although many living artists, such as David Barton, Alan Davie, Stephen Newton and Bridget Riley talk of the profound effect his teaching ideas had on their work, he remains a relatively obscure personality among the pantheon of artistic achievers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (a fate which seems often to befall those who combine their own creative work with teaching, however much of a beneficial influence they bring to bear upon the creativity of their pupils). Musicians and

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<sup>1</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.21.

<sup>2</sup> For an example of ‘doodling’, cf Appendix I.

<sup>3</sup> From the transcription in *The Listener* of January 12<sup>th</sup> 1956, of a BBC broadcast talk given by Ehrenzweig.



composers too, of the stature of Michael Tippett and Alexander Goehr, also fell under his spell.

But Ehrenzweig's work was publicly recognized to a certain extent for, as well as making several broadcasts, he wrote two books. The first, *The Psycho-Analysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing* was published in 1953, but it is sadly, and undeservedly, now out of print; the second, published posthumously in 1967, is *The Hidden Order of Art*.<sup>4</sup> As befits a 'rounded' personality, Ehrenzweig the artist was also Ehrenzweig the student of psychoanalytic theory, and a knowledgeable listener to music, which makes his unique contribution to the theoretical synthesis of these three disciplines glow with credence and practical usefulness.<sup>5</sup>

Hailing from the post-Freudian era of psychoanalysis, Ehrenzweig was heavily influenced by current theories. These, which were dominated by those of Melanie Klein he quotes extensively (especially the aggressive-depressive ideas of the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position); in turn, they were inherited from analysts such as Karl Abraham who promulgated the 'oral' and 'anal' explanations of human character. Margaret Mead's anthropological findings were attractive to him, as was the work of analyst Hannah Segal, but more especially, the therapeutic theories of art which Marion Milner derived from her work as an analyst meant a great deal to him. Philosophically, he was strongly influenced by the fashionable *Gestalt* theorists. His knack, though, was to apply all these influences to his two major concerns – the progress his students made towards individuation<sup>6</sup> through their artistic work, and his own intellectual interest in analyzing the creative process from both an historical and pedagogical point of view.

Because Ehrenzweig was working in tertiary education which, in the 1950's, remained rampantly highly selective of students, he can be forgiven for failing to spot that creativity is a universal characteristic of the human condition; he does not seem to have

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<sup>4</sup> For further comment on Ehrenzweig's writings, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>5</sup> There are some of Ehrenzweig's concepts which have proved difficult at present to imagine in a musical context. *Automatic form-control* is one which is best left just to stand related to painting. (cf. Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.33).

ever questioned the shibboleth of creativity being only a trait of 'high culture' and a special accomplishment of the few. Predicated upon Kleinian ideas, he promotes the idea (one which still lingers) that creativity is universally influenced by guilt and reparation, a theory which, like 'mourning and creativity' should definitely now be sidelined as just one of many possibilities informing creativity for some people. Furthermore, possibly directly as a result of these influences, Ehrenzweig is also drawn to the polarized Freudian model of Eros-Thanatos.<sup>7</sup> More in tune with modern thinking though, he promotes a good understanding of psychotic and schizophrenic art, while impressing us with the notion that 'normal' art is not that far removed – a brief explanation of his position is that he believes the difference to lie only in the degree of unconscious coherence fuelling the daring *de-differentiation* of established existents before they can be truly *re-integrated* into a new scenario.

Nevertheless, limited though his influence may be at the present time, and in spite of some striking contradictions in his books (he is not the first author, and won't be the last, to suffer from careless editing) his writings are potentially so illuminating that they form the basis of this present post-Freudian appraisal. Without doubt, and because Ehrenzweig's career was based on practical as well as theoretical pedagogy – primarily as an artist, but an artist with a wide knowledge of Western European music and Jazz – the stance he takes *vis à vis* Freudian psychoanalysis is to be seriously reckoned with. Yet, of course, he was a man of his time, so from both of his books we should be selective, only promoting those ideas which, from practical experience, appear to remain relevant today, and therefore throw real light upon the questions posed in this thesis. We find there are five main points, which we will consider in the following order: *thing-free depth perception*; the concept of *good Gestalt*; *syncretic thought*; *de-differentiation* and *the minimum content of art*.

But, to begin with, it is clear that Ehrenzweig supports the topological notion that the unconscious is *sub limen* as, for him, it is the *depth mind*, while the conscious is the *surface mind*, and he uses those terms in preference to unconscious/conscious, while the

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<sup>6</sup> *Individuation* is a Jungian concept (*cf* Appendix IV); Ehrenzweig barely mentions Jung in his writings; he seems to prefer what he calls the more: '... ordered progress of a complex science like psycho-analysis ... I myself was not really helped by Rank, Graves or Jung'. ([1967]. 1993 ed., p.181).

<sup>7</sup> For further comment *cf* Appendix IV.



Freudian *preconscious* is barely mentioned and one can assume it has become an irrelevant issue for him.<sup>8</sup> All the same, he finds no disagreement with Freud, that the depth mind is the 'internal world' of repressed wishes; even one of the most striking of the aforementioned contradictions concerns this. We read that: 'Creativity remains closely related to the *chaos* of the primary process'; while earlier in the same book he wrote: 'The chaos of the unconscious is as deceptive as the chaos of outer reality'; yet, later: 'The artist has to learn to trust his unconscious and its hidden logic and coherence'; and: '... remove the taint of chaos which has adhered to the primary process for far too long'.<sup>9</sup>

This 'internal world' he calls also a *thing-free* space, which is his way of making clear that its contents are undifferentiated, that is to say in the manner of the mind of the infant who has not yet conceptualized objects in the external world. Thus, for the child, conceptualizing, or *thing perception*, means to separate by differentiation. This, Ehrenzweig maintains, has biological and physiological implications which can more clearly be understood in terms of visual perception where the cone cells of the retina ensure a differentiated focused clarity at the center of our visual field, while the rod cells on the periphery give us an undifferentiated 'cloud' in our peripheral vision. *Thing-free depth perception*, therefore (the first point we are to consider) disregards the biological and physiological function of clear perception in favor of an overall vagueness, to the maximum benefit of the creative drive, as we shall see later.

Ehrenzweig suggests that in *thing perception*, we are dealing with what is 'real' to us. The psychoanalytic *Real* is, of course also an important Lacanian concept, yet although the two men were contemporaries, there is no suggestion on the part of Ehrenzweig that he had ever encountered Lacan's work. Dylan Evans (1996) reminds us that: 'the (Lacanian) real is undifferentiated', and were it not also for Evans' quoting the philosopher Hegel that: "everything which is real is rational (and vice versa)", we might find Ehrenzweig's use of the word 'rational' in this context to be extremely confusing, used as we are to limiting the use of that word to the propensities of the conscious

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<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, a more imaginative description of the preconscious would be hard to find: 'Preconscious material is kept waiting in an ante-room of consciousness ready to intrude whenever a possibility offers itself.' ([1967]. 1993 ed., p.269).

<sup>9</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.35. (my emphasis), and p.205; p.262.



mind.<sup>10</sup> For example, Ehrenzweig writes: ‘The “rational” principle of thing perception succumbs to its rival, the “abstract” gestalt principle, which directs perception towards the abstract good gestalt instead of guiding it to the meaningful form’. (But): ‘As a general rule thing perception proves the stronger in combat with the abstract principle of “good” gestalt’.<sup>11</sup> This confusion can, nevertheless be waded through, by recalling the effect that sound-impingements have upon the fetus. That they are ‘real’, and that their contribution to the ‘real Self’ is formative, we have closely argued, yet they remain *percepts*, not *concepts*. In the Ehrenzweigian sense, it is the *percepts* that are no-things.

Ehrenzweig posits that differentiation is achieved through the perception of *constancies* between objects (a process which he does regard as ‘biologically useful’) he terms it *primary reification*: ‘The real things impress us first by their constancy; ... They also excel by their intense plastic quality which sets them off from our “flat” perception of abstract gestalt formations, such as geometrical shapes. Most important of all, they have the quality of externality, i.e. of their separateness from the internal world of the mind’,<sup>12</sup> (and thus we are all the more reminded of fetal sound-impingements). As a result of this process, in a neat suture binding Freud to cognitive psychology, Ehrenzweig maintains that non-constancies are repressed once the constancies are isolated (as in Freud’s previously discussed notion of *condensation*) – non-habituable secondary sound (tension unresolved) being a good case in point.

Now we are led to the ideas of the *Gestalt* theorists, representatives of a branch of perceptual psychology which originated in Germany during the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and which spawned the rather confusing aphorism: ‘the whole is more than the sum of its parts’. Ehrenzweig called frequently upon gestalt theory. He maintained that the differentiating process which leads to the individualization of objects is a ‘bottom-up’ process from the depth mind to the surface mind – a process when that which is non-constant is gradually eliminated - ‘left behind’ discarded (and repressed). In other words, the unconscious gives up its thing-free material to cognitive development, sacrificing much detail in so doing, while the conscious mind rejoices that it has secured a grip on that quality which is the most striking property of an object. Musically

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<sup>10</sup> Evans. 1996, p.159.

<sup>11</sup> Ehrenzweig.. 1953, p.219.

<sup>12</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.144.



speaking, Ehrenzweig supports this argument by reference to a fundamental note and its overtones, for the most striking quality of a note is its fundamental, while the overtones constitute the detail generally inaudible to consciousness that is sacrificed.<sup>13</sup> That process, as we reasoned earlier, lies at the heart of the illusory quality of sound, and we will return to it later on.

It would be useful to digress from Ehrenzweig's own hypotheses at this point. We might take an interesting plunge back towards the archetypal linear and modular intra-uterine forms, and make the suggestion that the surface mind's preoccupation with gestalt forms conforms well to the idea of linearity, while the gestalt-free depth mind is a modular space. Indeed, we can see that child art, in fact, with its clear thing-constancies, harks back to those biological, pre-natal libidinous experiences of linear and modular forms.<sup>14</sup> Surely, the modular (uterus) is the first to be experienced and the first to be artistically expressed by the child, while the linear (umbilicus) is the second - a perceptual development which pre-echoes the later development of linear gestalt from the modular space of the thing-free depth mind,<sup>15</sup> and which recalls the 'vertical' nature of Freud's *secondary process* in the dream-work versus the 'modular' *primary process*. We see this in a young child's first attempts at a portrait of mother, which is inevitably as a 'circle' with rudimentary hands attached - later on, 'straight' lines will appear extending from the body with the hands on the end. Legs and feet appear later still.

Next, according to Ehrenzweig, in the dynamic process of refining our perceptions to the detriment of detail - after *primary reification* comes *secondary reification*, which endows the unconscious thing-free form elements with a new conscious meaning. This posited process might be related to the Freudian model of the dream-work, where the primary process is that which promotes dissimulation through condensation and displacement, and free psychic energy begins to be bound, so that secondary revision can present elements more clearly in new, consciously acceptable meanings. But Ehrenzweig goes further than that, for he has thus drawn upon the Freudian concepts of

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<sup>13</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.viii. Cf also Chapter V.

<sup>14</sup> For more comment on *Gestalt perception*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>15</sup> In this sense, of course, it is the progress towards the perception of abstract gestalt forms which can be thought of as *linear*, not the abstract forms themselves. However, in the history of formal Western European Music at least, the situation appears to have been reversed - the shape of melody is linear, and that almost certainly predated 'modular' harmony.

*perceptual identity* and *thought identity*, which appear only in the substantial final, summative chapter of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. About this, Freud wrote: ‘... the aim of this first psychical activity was to produce a “perceptual identity” – a repetition of the perception which was linked to the satisfaction of the need’. He added a footnote: ‘(perceptual identity) i.e. something perceptually identical with the “experience of satisfaction”.’<sup>16</sup>

Thought identity, on the other hand, is the responsibility of the secondary process (the conscious mind) which Freud said: ‘... has abandoned this intention (perceptual identity) and taken on another in its place ... Thinking must concern itself with the connecting paths between ideas without being led astray by the intensities of those ideas ... Accordingly, thinking must aim at ... restricting the development of affect in thought-activity to the minimum required for acting as a signal’.<sup>17</sup> By the word ‘signal’ we may now be reminded of the creative process as outlined so far in its progression from affective stimulus to presentation through symbols, and particularly its dissimulative nature which robs the affect of its integrity. In a quotation translated from the French of Daniel Lagache, this whole dynamic is brought clearly into line with Ehrenzweig’s exposition of reification and gestalt abstractions: ‘... the task of objectifying identification, which preserves the individual identity of each object of thought, is to oppose syncretic identification’.<sup>18</sup>

*Syncretic thought*, the third point we must consider, is certainly one of the most important of Ehrenzweig’s concepts, although it appears infrequently in the texts. Lagache, together with Ehrenzweig, posits it in opposition to the differentiations of objective thought. Ehrenzweig wrote: ‘Piaget has given currency to the term “syncretistic” vision as the distinctive quality of children’s vision and of child art. Syncretism also involves the concept of undifferentiation ... More important, syncretistic vision is never entirely destroyed and can be shown to be a potent tool in the hands of the adult artist’.<sup>19</sup> With this single quotation we are transported into the core of Ehrenzweig’s advance over his main sources of influence, and we will see that he

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<sup>16</sup> Freud. S.E.V, p.566 and n.

<sup>17</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.602.

<sup>18</sup> From Lagache,D. ‘*La Psychoanalyse et la structure de la personnalité*’; *La Psychoanalyse*, 1958. VI, p.51. Quoted in Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.306.



possessed an understanding of the creative process over and above that which had existed before and, indeed, that which generally exists at present. It is an understanding which seems never to have penetrated general consciousness – it retains to this day its esoteric status, when it could do so much to redress the imbalance in pedagogy (where, as we have been forced to consider earlier, the traditional idea of creativity being a ‘gift’ for the few rather than a universal, still lingers detrimentally).

We need to consider the elements of Ehrenzweig’s statement in reverse order. First, the implication is that ‘the adult artist’ has perhaps some control over whether syncretic vision is a tool or not. At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, practically a half-century after Ehrenzweig was writing, we have become, not only familiar with the manifestations of ‘modern art’ (many of which have received condemnatory opprobation) but also with the continuance of ‘realistic art’. The latter, Ehrenzweig posits, possesses its own, conscious gestalt as a result of the operational predominance of the analytical surface mind, fearful of resurgences from the unconscious. It is created according to ‘rules’ of what constitutes ‘good art’ while a more relaxed hand is prevented by the super-ego. The adult ego finds the super-ego barring its way to the freedom of playing around in the aesthetic space (thinking syncretically).

Secondly though, the supreme flexibility of syncretistic vision survives, most likely without us being aware of it. If we return to the idea of the differences between central and peripheral vision, we will realize that peripheral vision, with all its dream-like vagueness and object-undifferentiation, is continually with us, and only faults in our ocular mechanism will banish it: ‘... twilight conditions reveal to us the dream world swimming in the peripheral fringe of our daylight vision’.<sup>20</sup> We ‘blinker’ horses in order that they are not startled by the fears attendant upon objects in the field of peripheral vision and so we decry ‘blinker vision’ as a human impediment, certainly when we apply it to a state of mind – as in the unbending manner of someone whose inability or unwillingness to think syncretically is obvious to us.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.6. This, his second book *The Hidden Order of Art* was recently out of print, but it has now been re-printed by The University of California Press.

<sup>20</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.204.

<sup>21</sup> When reading Ehrenzweig, we should beware of the confusion that might arise when comparing his understanding of peripheral vision as *eidetic* (from the Greek *eidōs* – form[in the mind]), with the modern psychological interpretation. Cf Appendix IV.



Children, until their pre-pubertal development of analytical skills, most naturally will express themselves artistically in gestalt-free forms, albeit with strong hints of the primary reification of constancies. At the same time, their art is generally enhanced to their great satisfaction by lively 'scribbling' achieved with considerable freedom of movement. The 'unreality' of the result is of no consequence to them, what they are doing in their spontaneity, is as much 'real' to them as is the 'reality' of conformist art to those adults who cannot bring themselves to a greater freedom. The flexibility of syncretic vision or thought over analytic vision or thought is child art's greatest advantage; indeed, in a significant reversal of Western European orthodoxy on the matter, Ehrenzweig considers analytic vision to be cruder and much less sensitive. More recently, we tend towards the terms *lateral thinking* rather than syncretic, and *vertical thinking* rather than analytic, although the more modern terminology does not do full justice to the concept of syncretism. Syncretic vision or thought is criticized for imprecision because it deals with undifferentiated elements – however, when inspiration and innovation is called for, it is exactly what is needed. On the other hand, when we need to be precise, we should be able to apply analytic skills.

Ehrenzweig knew that, without syncretic thought, re-realizations would be merely ill-considered re-shufflings, for syncretism neatly captures all the hitherto mentioned properties of a dynamic unconscious, and not only places them at the service of creativity, but also (as he is a great pains to explain) at the heart of the psychoanalytic process itself. Syncretic thought is both accurate and impartial in its registration of perceptual detail, though it persists in paying more attention to those details which one's conscious mind would prefer to ignore – details which represent, as it were, so many peas under the mattress of the princess in the fairy-tale. For this reason, of course, you ask a child at your own risk to draw a picture of you – it may be as 'unrealistic' as a Giacometti sculpture, but it will appear, nevertheless, to be just as devastatingly accurate. Therapeutically too, children are encouraged to express trauma through art, as they are unable to be hypocritical about their experiences. Syncretic thought is the true operative style of the aesthetic space, which preserves the fertility of motifs by resisting the finality of a 'result' in advance of tension being 'resolved' by recourse to the 'good gestalt' of closure: 'A truly fertile "motif" - in music or drama as well as in the visual

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arts – often has something incomplete and vague about its structure. It bears the imprint of the undifferentiated vision which created it in the first place and which guides its use ... (but) The gestalt law of “closure” ruling our surface vision will always strive to round it off and polish its structure prematurely and so may cut off its further development’.<sup>22</sup>

Syncretic thought is capable of restoring to us that which is rightfully ours to use. Musically speaking, therefore, we can have total access to the containing space of music and to all the archetypal and paradigmatic structures which form its aesthetic foundations; right back to the point in our ontogenesis when pitch and rhythm were undifferentiated in the compression/rarefaction pulsations of the maternal heartbeat. Modularity, linearity, the three tension paradigms, co-ordinated gesture and utterance and, finally (because the mother has these very same structures imbedded in her Self) the aesthetically rich prosody of the mother’s voice – these are all available – for their location in ontogenesis bound them to *Eros*, the libidinal drive. Libidinal interest remains cathected to them throughout life in spite of repression and, in the Freudian model which was foundational to Ehrenzweig’s thinking, it is always possible for the ego to gain release from super-ego restraints and allow access to everything.

Having access to ‘everything’ means, for the composer, having access to their immanent plenipotential. It makes it possible for the composer to abandon the gestalt-informed illusion that sound consists of a fundamental tone which is somehow superior to its overtones (provided they can confront ‘the secret life of their self-hate’ and release unresolved dissonance from its prison). However, if that were taken to its logical conclusion, syncretic thought as applied to music would result in all composed music emulating the ‘white noise’ of the intra-uterine environment – clearly, this does not happen. The reason for that is the libidinal interest invested also in archetypal shapes and paradigmatic schema. The percepts of modularity and linearity provide frameworks for harmony and melody (always provided that harmony is inclusive, not exclusive, and melody is allowed to arise from its pitch-basis in rhythmic utterance): ‘... melody arising out of the rhythmic energy of the body’, as the composer David Matthews said of Andrew Keeling’s composition for piano quartet *Reclaiming Eros*. Next, the three tension paradigms are available as formative frameworks for composed music, and

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<sup>22</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., pp.48-49.



prosody is a resource to be tapped for the undulating contours of the manifest. But it must never be forgotten that our percepts are subject to conceptualization and utilization in the dissimulative manner of the dream-work, so that every composer's work is inevitably a pale reflection of the immanence of syncreticism.

Ehrenzweig understood though, that composers are no different from others in being held in thrall to the illusory nature of sound, and that, likewise, they cannot escape the influence of suppressed overtones. Although overtones are rarely accessible to our conscious perception, he realized that they actually present themselves disguised within our perception of *tone-colors*. He wrote: '... inaudible overtones are not freaks of nature, but physically ordinary sounds. On a graph of sound-waves, the overtones are registered in the same way as the normal consciously audible tones'. Clearly linking this to the assertive 'laws' of tonal harmony, he continues: 'The overtones are repressed owing to the specific structure of the chord into which they fit, a chord which corresponds to the characteristic multiple sound waves emitted by most solid things ... The tone color varies according to the composition of the inaudible overtone chord which in turn is the function of the different substance of the sounding thing ... tone color greatly facilitates the acoustic differentiation of the real things'.<sup>23</sup>

The substitution of tone-colors for overtone perception is a displacement, in the Freudian sense. Interestingly, contemporary wind instrument techniques have returned to the overtone series, in the device known as *multiphonics*. These are produced by fingering combinations and *overblowing*, so chords are produced with the fundamentals more or less on equal terms with the overtones. For the majority of listeners, this effect is regarded as distinctly unpleasant, for the accepted and well-known 'tone color' of the instrument vanishes, to be replaced by a raucous sound akin to that produced by medieval shawms and racketts. Ehrenzweig now seems justified in his theory – we do actually prefer our overtones displaced onto conventional tone-color.

Freeing-up the overtone series, and releasing overtones from their repression in the conventional rules of harmony was of course a major preoccupation with many composers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (together with general harmonic freedom and greater

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<sup>23</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, pp.153-4.



rhythmic complexity, reflecting the gradual emancipation of gesture and utterance). This, as Ehrenzweig appreciated, was paralleled by painters: ‘The destruction of the “constancy of color” in the Impressionistic color revolution came with a considerable impact. (Yet) as we would expect, this emotional impact was matched by strenuous efforts to restrict the new freedom of color by scientific laws’.<sup>24</sup> In these analogies, we can see why the gestalt theories attracted Ehrenzweig, for they quite neatly describe the way sudden ‘revolutions’ in creativity become subject almost immediately to adverse comment and suppression, with ‘good gestalt’ seemingly triumphant as new, restrictive, rules are established to contain what are perceived as dangerously liberal practices.

Of course, as we outlined earlier, a prime musical example is the total release of the semitone and emancipation of dissonance at the dawn of twelve-tone music at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; paradoxically though, it was the composers themselves who appear to have been scared out of their wits by the release of these dissident prisoners, for they very soon thought up a most rigid set of rules which so restricted the process that its descent into mannerism was inevitable and, after a brief exposure, it expired. Virtually no composer writes serial music now. Perhaps we should consider the possibility that the New Viennese School of composers<sup>25</sup> whose genre that was, could not completely shake off their musical inheritance (which came from tonal Germanic Romanticism) without a great deal of unconscious guilt, even though they finally accomplished what their musical forefathers had been working towards. Tonality, after all, as we have seen several times before, has an iron, authoritarian grip upon our unconscious relationship with music.<sup>26</sup> One cannot allow the full, spontaneous release of the contents of one’s aesthetic space if one is constantly criticized for not foreclosing everything with a perfect cadence,<sup>27</sup> yet: ‘If a child has been properly supported in his aesthetic standards on the syncretistic level, the later awakening of his analytic self-criticism will no longer be quite so harmful ... We have only to prevent him from destroying his earlier syncretic powers which remain so important for the adult

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<sup>24</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.246.

<sup>25</sup> Schönberg, Berg and Webern.

<sup>26</sup> For further comment, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>27</sup> ‘I won’t tolerate unfinished paintings!’ attributed to Adolph Hitler, Jew and icon (cited in *Kunstdiktatur im Dritten Reich* P.O.Rave, Hamburg, 1949) and in Newton 1996 (p.9). The horrifying thought occurs to me that Hitler harbored a personal need to ‘finish’ his re-realizations – in ‘the final solution’. Newton also observed: ‘Hitler’s irrational hatred of Modern Art was rooted in a terror that his pathologically ordered State would be over whelmed by a genuinely radical and emancipatory force.’ (*op.cit.*, p.108).



artist. This might only be achieved by surrounding the child with an adult environment of works by highly spontaneous artists such as Picasso, Klee, Miro, Matisse etc. This environment can sustain his old syncretistic vision side by side with his (developmental) analytic awareness'.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, if we learn, as adults, not to fear the state of undifferentiation, we can effectively learn to *de-differentiate*, by relaxing our grip on the calcified assumptions which so frequently constitute 'knowledge'. This is the fourth point: *de-differentiation*, as Ehrenzweig explained, is: '... a dynamic process ... first, experiences of "vagueness", then a gradual dissolution of precise space and time, and in the end, ... complete blankness occurs, still replete with intense emotional experience, the much vaunted "full" emptiness of low-level vision'.<sup>29</sup> This is surely akin to day-dreaming.

Both our music and art will spring into life thereafter as we eschew the analytic in favor of the greater spontaneity of the syncretic, while it is to be regretted that the inhibiting fear remains for many, that their adult control will be lost, and too much 'life' will be revealed. Indeed, in the eyes of some, to be imagined to be regressing to 'child art', 'primitive art', or 'jungle music' ('any child could do that!') is to court ridicule. Freud's secondary revision of the dream-work is operative in that case, as the super-ego makes certain that the symbolism most significant to the Self is 'forgotten' first, even though some symbols will try masquerading as 'unimportant' details, thus: 'When we awake and try to recollect a past dream we do not remember it in its initial vagueness and incoherence characteristic of depth perception but in a more compact and clearer form, and incidentally those vaguenesses and incoherent details which are most readily polished off contain the most important symbolism. As our mind lingers on the dream memory it gains in clarity and compactness and those details which drop out first are sure to be the most important; Freud had only to observe which details would be suppressed first in order to know where he had to start his analysis'.<sup>30</sup>

How can we ensure, therefore, that children can retain more than just a token remnant of syncretic thought when their libidinal interest cathects onto actual musical structures?

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<sup>28</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.10.

<sup>29</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.270.

<sup>30</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.50.



Returning to the problem of young composers invariably writing *pastiche* at first; if only the conventional school 'music for listening' curriculum were to be reversed, and children were first immersed in music of the present they would be more likely to resist the persuasive, sometimes oleaginous pull of tonality, in favor of the spontaneous. Unfortunately, there is a far from general appreciation that: 'The slow evolution of an artist's personal "style" will be based on (the) constant articulation of his own inarticulate form creations ... Only the strongest among the artists will carry this burden with ease and give freedom to his unconscious creative mind to bring forth new inarticulate forms ...'.<sup>31</sup> Yet of course, it does take time for a young composer to gather this kind of strength.

Ehrenzweig was a mentor to the artist and teacher Alan Davie at the Central School for Arts and Crafts in London in the 50's, and Davie recalls his encouragement for, what undoubtedly were at the time, revolutionary teaching methods: 'I was working in the Jewellery Department where I was doing experiments in the teaching of adolescents in a class called Basic Design, and he was particularly interested in my unorthodox methods, whereby a lot of exciting work was being done through the liberation of the unconscious, and break down of usual teenage self-consciousness, whereby I was able to allow the free spontaneity of the child to continue through the difficult teenage period'.<sup>32</sup>

No wonder Ehrenzweig was interested in Davie's methods, for he was in the process of writing his first book at the time – a book which already demonstrates his debt to Freud. Some fourteen years later he was to write what is clearly a most important phrase in the present context: 'Art is a dream dreamt by the artist ...'.<sup>33</sup> We already now take for granted Ehrenzweig's knowledge of the Freudian psychoanalytic inheritance, and his (sometimes confusing) personalization of its concepts. But we soon realize that he applies his knowledge to a wide-ranging exploration of artistic phenomena – which includes an exposition of what he believes to be the essence of the creative process itself, and as we examine his explanations, we shall appreciate all the more his debt to psychoanalytic theory, and the elucidation it holds for him. Furthermore, we shall find

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<sup>31</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.75.

<sup>32</sup> Written by Davie for the Conference *Art's Hidden Order: Anton Ehrenzweig's Influence on Modern Art*, at the University of Sheffield, September 1996.

<sup>33</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.79. For further comment by Ehrenzweig on dreaming, cf Appendix IV.



that we can add Ehrenzweig's hypotheses to the previous synthesis between the Freudian dream-work model and the composition of music if we take seriously his definition of what constitutes *the minimum content of art*; that is, the inseparable nature of the product from the process, where the process of creating is always reflected in the form of the work of art. This is the fifth, and most important point.

The *minimum content of art*, for Ehrenzweig, is art's integrity. He sees it in terms of art's totally integrative genesis in a mind which, through syncretic thought, can access, confront and bring to a manifest whatever material may be brought from the unconscious. The concept of the minimum content of art is thus a summation of all our previous explanations. Such a process proceeds in fits and starts, but Ehrenzweig, using psychoanalytic terminology, explains its energetic dynamic thus: '... one can distinguish three phases in creative work: *projection*, followed by partly unconscious *integration* (unconscious scanning) which gives the work its independent life, and finally the partial *re-introjection* and feedback on a higher mental level'.<sup>34</sup> Ehrenzweig goes on to expand his tripartite dynamic adjectivally, informed by Kleinian theory; first there is 'fragmented' projection which is schizoid in character, then a 'manic' phase of unconscious syncretism and integration. The secondary revision occurs in the final 'depressive' feedback as the work is re-introjected into the surface ego.

But, to complicate matters, Ehrenzweig supposes that there are two dynamics working at the same time. The second is this, which involves the depth/surface topology of unconscious/conscious (or latent and manifest): 'Every act of creative thinking involves the *disintegration* of "concrete" thing perception into the "abstract" images or ideas of creative thought. ... the first phase in creating the "abstract" thought is a return to the undifferentiated thing perception of the child ... The second phase "reifies" this undifferentiated perception into *a new concept of external reality*, i.e. an "abstract" thing'; (redolent of the paradigms).<sup>35</sup> He attributes this particular dynamic to the work of the ego, which shifts fruitfully from differentiated to undifferentiated material passing, (in that direction at least) through the fearful, 'destructive' stage of de-differentiation, but which makes it possible for a composer to access the affective, feeling-toned outcomes of original impressions of 'sound' on the body.

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<sup>34</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.57. My emphasis.



In terms of the new synthesis which we have just embarked upon, it might be reassuring to return to the foundational paradigm of Freud's dream-work. In this we saw, how, in thrall to a wish, the dream-elements became dream-thoughts, to which day's residues were adduced. This is achieved by the unconscious, *primary process*, by which time in musical composition we have arrived as far as creating motifs. Musical motifs are not yet themes, in terms of classical *sonata form*, (which provides us with one of the best example of controlled thematic use). They are fragments which may, after a process of conscious 'sketching', be expanded by the composer into themes. The presentation in the exposition section of two contrasting themes, separated by a *bridge passage* or *transition*, is the norm in stylized sonata form.

The projection of which Ehrenzweig writes, and which he maintains is the essential 'manic' dynamic of the first stage, is the attempted paranoid-schizoid elimination by the ego of what it perceives to be obnoxious material which has offended the super-ego; such split-off fragments of the self are then projected into the work. We might conclude from this that, in musical terms, he broadly means dissonance; in the Freudian model we have reached what he describes as repressed material – in the Kleinian it represents that which is anally cast out and scattered. But does this projection of split-off material into the work strengthen or impoverish the ego, which plays such a vital, mediating role in re-realizations?

It is, of course, a different type of material from one's 'immanent plenipotential' which is projected into the 'Creator God', and which depletes the omnipotent Self. Again, it depends upon the receptacle of the projection. Ehrenzweig writes: 'Projection does not lead to ego impoverishment, but to growth and greater strength of the ego'. He is here discussing the projection onto the mother of the persecuting fragments of the childish (in the sense of 'infant') Self, when a benign mother will assimilate the manifestations of these anxieties in so-called 'temper tantrums', and not return them 'unprocessed' to the child. However, he also wrote later in the same work: '... paranoid-schizoid anxieties lead to excessive splintering of the self and to massive and undirected projections (projective identifications) into the void. This squandering of the ego's substance may lead to its permanent impoverishment'. He continues in the same passage by suggesting

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<sup>35</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.168. My emphasis. To avoid confusion over *abstract*, cf Appendix IV.



a different receptacle, but one which mimics the actual mother's 'containing space'; he now means us to understand that the more fortunate child: '... prepares a "womb" in his unconscious into which the split-off material is repressed. After due transformation into symbolic representations the repressed material can gain re-entry into the surface ego'.<sup>36</sup>

We are now about to consider Ehrenzweig's second stage in the process – the stage of unconscious scanning which precedes the emergence of a new manifest, and at this point we are undoubtedly reminded of several concepts hitherto discussed. The trigger to our memory has been the 'womb in the unconscious', which equates with the general 'theatre of musicality' and the specific 'containing space of music' within the larger 'aesthetic space'. This is the space for Ehrenzweig's second stage *syncretic thought* process; it is the space of free-floating tension, between the incitement and the resolution, containing material jostling for expression - archaic material, both benign and malign, which we have posited as dating as far back as the pre-natal state.<sup>37</sup> Also accumulated are: 'The old infantile urges (which) have become the repressed wishes of the adult. To gratify them, the artist builds up his world of phantasy'. Then, pre-echoing one of the main tenets of this thesis: 'The young baby carries in itself inborn phantasies of psychotic virulence that run counter to its rational conscious experience. Conscious thought and unconscious phantasy are thus developing side by side in counterpoint, fed by the same stimuli impinging from the outside world and from inside the growing body. Creative work simply injects new and controlled stimulation into an utterly flexible unconscious phantasy'.<sup>38</sup>

In any re-realization, while the final outcome might be reasonably accurately determined beforehand, it can never be entirely accurately predicted. A most important aspect of the process lies in one's ability to bear the sustained tension of the second stage, necessarily lingering in the aesthetic space - thus delaying the outcome: 'The creative searcher is, of course, extremely concerned about the effect his interim decisions might have upon the end result, but he must be able to bear the suspense'.<sup>39</sup> There must also have been a

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<sup>36</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.104 and p.192.

<sup>37</sup> For further comment, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>38</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.67 and p.261.

<sup>39</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.48. Ehrenzweig was obviously familiar with Schönberg's opera *Moses and Aaron* (said by some to be 'incomplete', and in this context, wrote a very telling phrase which I believe came from his personal unconscious as he compiled his text: 'To remain in the desert, never to reach the promised land,



concomitant, temporary relaxation of the surface functions while de-differentiation takes place and the more 'archaic' level of undifferentiation is approached in the aesthetic space. Ideally, the conscious mind, in the later process of secondary revision, must be able to accept as part of the final product, the split-off and repressed material it finds there. The conscious intellect, managed by the super-ego, only gets in the way of potentializing minimum content: '... the disturbing intervention of the constantly worried, frightened intellect ... But a rightly-functioning intellect almost always does the opposite of what is appropriate to a true feeling. A true feeling must not let itself be prevented from going constantly down, ever and anew, into the dark region of the unconscious, in order to bring up content and form as a unity'.<sup>40</sup>

But as the re-realization nears readiness in the mind, the surface mind must be presented with this material in 'acceptable' form; this results in a battle with repression and highlights the work of the super-ego. Ehrenzweig realizes that it is not the original 'untranslated' affects which are repressed at this point, but rather the secondary articulation (translation) *processes* which alone could make these affects understandable to the conscious mind. From this point of view he suggests that 'accidents' that crop up during the work could well be the expression of parts of the artist's personality that have become split off and dissociated. For example, a 'new work' by a composer may, when it is perceived as finished, present some surprises – new techniques, decorative touches, which were 'found' in the containing space of music and then unconsciously employed in the process; if, however, they are then copied too frequently, they cease even to become 'fingerprints' and, instead, degenerate into mannerisms – a kind of protective mechanism. From its ready armory the super-ego has mobilized 'style' so that the split-off and repressed material is checked in its devious passage to surface consciousness.

Thus, for those who are perhaps considered to be (or consider themselves to be) 'creatively handicapped', it is no good trying to re-realize the existents of art or music, even if their libidinal interest is thus focused, for they probably can neither: '... tolerate the genuine emotional experience of self-destruction which accompanies the creative ego

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is the fate of Jewry as a whole ...'. ([1967]; 1993 ed., p.254). No wonder he understood the unresolved tension of the aesthetic space so well.

<sup>40</sup> Stein. 1975, p.444.



rhythm on its swing downwards, and (thus they) desperately cling to their surface functions',<sup>41</sup> nor fully integrate the split-off material on a conscious level. In addition, together with the 'swing downward' towards a temporary fusion of surface and depth functions, must go an elimination of all existing clichés and mannerisms (Ehrenzweig calls it 'lumber') – previously frozen into a style-driven 'good gestalt' which we recognize as so beloved of 'rigid' personalities.<sup>42</sup> For all re-realizations ('socially acceptable' or otherwise) the ego must break away from the super-ego and the *False Self* - then the boundary between inner and outer reality collapses, the ego regresses to the pre-split, pre-ego *True Self*<sup>43</sup> which has access to all affect, and where 'there is no other god but my immanent plenipotential'. The *True Self* thus finds itself once again in the 'womb' with all that containing, aesthetic space to play in.

Ehrenzweig's third stage he calls the *depressive feed-back stage*. This is the stage of secondary revision when the super-ego has done its work. Although, earlier, we implied a criticism of Ehrenzweig's (among many others') adduction of the Kleinian idea of *guilt and reparation* to the creative process, there is a sense in which it is useful.<sup>44</sup> The *caveat* remains however, that it cannot possibly be the dynamic underpinning all re-realizations – rather, it would appear to have been much more a dynamic, musically speaking, informing the part-conscious act of thematic fragmentation (for example, in some classical sonata form expositions, especially bridge-passages and codettas, prior to their destruction in the development and their restoration in the recapitulation). But Ehrenzweig was not to know that the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century would see far less of these rigid musical structures, as the electronically-inspired 'texture music' of Stockhausen or Penderecki, or the 'atomically structured' music of someone like Birtwistle became more common. Nevertheless, if Melanie Klein's posited two-stage development of children (paranoid/schizoid and the depressive position) have any general credence at all, it is that, in applying them to creativity, some re-realizatory acts may involve an unconscious re-stirring of the *affect* associated with the progress which allegedly took place from the first stage to the second in infancy.

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<sup>41</sup> Ehrenzweig (1953). 1993 ed., p.189.

<sup>42</sup> For further comment on the 'destructive' phase of creativity, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>43</sup> Cf Appendix IV.

<sup>44</sup> Yet Ehrenzweig himself wrote: 'The lack or the defiance of guilt feelings characterizes the heroic attitude ...'. ([1967]. 1993 ed., p.244).



But we cannot ignore the importance Ehrenzweig attaches to this dynamic, which is based on 're-pair-ation', for in this third stage, material from the unconscious has been re-articulated, 're-paired' in new links and given new focus. It is now approved by the super-ego ready for the manifest and for re-introjection into the ego in the process of secondary reification (or, in the Freudian model, secondary revision). The manifest, though, is concerned with symbolization; symbols transform material into what is acceptable to the conscious mind, epitomizing the narrow focus of conscious attention, in direct contrast to their formative excesses: 'What is important for the lucid ordering of the work – for its crystallization – is that all the Dionysian elements which set the imagination of the artist in motion and make the life-sap rise must be properly subjugated before they intoxicate us, and must finally be made to submit to the law: Apollo demands it'.<sup>45</sup> In fact, only a partial re-introjection into consciousness occurs – the rest remains repressed and forms the unconscious foundation of the work. (We might also consider that the inevitable fact of there being a remainder in the unconscious, accounts for the seemingly compulsive need for repeated acts of re-realization in similar mode - as in Freud's *compulsion to repeat*).

Re-realizations though, as we have seen, are unlike dreams, in that this third stage is at least partly conscious. The flexible ego suppresses some of its reality functions and anyone involved in a creative act (whether socially acceptable or unacceptable) will recognize that they 'lose themselves in what they are doing', while they gain conscious control over their material and move towards the manifest – 'the fulfillment of their dream', as it were. Making an analogy with the mode of musical composition for this third stage is reasonably simple. In sonata form, which is the musical model in question, this third section is known as the *recapitulation*. The bare bones of this section consist of a repetition of the two themes which were announced in the exposition, but less contrasted than before, for they have both been integrated into the tonic key. They were torn apart in the development section and are now repaired, neatly and tidily – suggesting a mind-set which finds such a dynamic quite congenial.

But then came Beethoven. Of all the composers of the classical period, it was Beethoven who was the greatest non-conformist. In Beethoven we find the most intact

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<sup>45</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p.105.



sense of the heroic Self, complete with its omnipotence and plenipotential.<sup>46</sup> Even though he claimed to owe allegiance to God, one does not imagine him having depleted his Self in obeisance – rather that he felt they might be working together for the good of mankind. He does not bow the knee in abject penitance, for he does not feel guilty – he does not destruct, therefore he has nothing to repair. That needs qualification. The most striking manifestation of his maturing status was, appropriately enough, the *Eroica* symphony,<sup>47</sup> (to which we will devote considerable attention in the next chapter). From the first, this symphony breaks the most firmly established of the ‘rules’ of sonata form – that is to say, the opening theme (formally known as the *first subject*) is not a theme at all; it is incomplete, consisting as it does, of eight notes which are then stopped in their tracks by a downward semitone shift – indeed, it is only ‘melodic’ by virtue of its linear treatment of the ‘modular’ chord of the tonic key.<sup>48</sup> From that moment on, the chord and the subversive semitone are used in the longest first movement constructed by any composer up to that time, in a subtle alteration of sonata form which accommodates Beethoven’s favorite *modus operandi* of motivic development and re-ordering of material. So, by the time he reaches the recapitulation, he really has not ‘repaired’ anything – there was precious little to repair in the first place. So he waits until the post-recapitulation *coda* before revealing the complete theme. Thus, even by limiting ourselves to this one example only, a warning shot has been fired across the bows of a Kleinian-based theory of creativity, which, like those alternative theories which privilege melancholy, should not be taken at face value.<sup>49</sup>

However, before we imagine we have quite exhausted Ehrenzweig’s structural and dynamic theories of the creative process, and usefully aligned them with the Freudian model of the dream-work and the musical form of sonata form, it is as well to point out that, interwoven into his account is a further analogy which has not yet been mentioned in this chapter. While it could not be said to be of exceptional importance it is,

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<sup>46</sup> In fact, we saw in Chapter 1 how Mozart has been extrinsically raised to the status of a hero – there is no evidence that he believed it of himself. Beethoven, on the other hand, certainly appears to have believed it *intrinsically* of himself; the mind-set is quite different.

<sup>47</sup> Symphony no.3 in E flat major, Op.55 (1803).

<sup>48</sup> It could perhaps be argued that the melodic treatment of the tonic chord is ‘destruction’, but if we consider that the melody proceeds thus: E flat – G – E flat – B flat<sub>1</sub> – E flat – G – B flat<sup>1</sup> – E flat, it is a conjunct construct as far as the chord is concerned; in other words, it is smoothed out as one might roll out a lump of dough into a ribbon of pasta.

<sup>49</sup> For further comment, *cf* Appendix IV.



nevertheless, imaginatively illuminating and may, for some, appear to redeem the value of the role of destruction/reparation and tragedy/melancholy in the creative process.

Quite early on in *The Psycho-Analysis of Artistic Vision and Hearing*, Ehrenzweig introduces us to the analogy he makes between creativity and myth. Thereafter, in order to present a coherent, albeit brief, picture of his analogy, we have to unravel his references to myth from the ensuing text of both books. The first reference he makes refers to Nietzsche's first book *The Origin of the Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1872 – usually just known as *The Birth of Tragedy*), and he writes: '(Nietzsche's) Dionysian art principle, both chaotic and destructive, corresponds to the unconscious form play of the depth mind; his Apollonian form principle which moulds the Dionysian breakthrough into the images of dreams and art corresponds to the gestalt functions which articulates the chaotic break-through of the depth mind.' (and, as he later says: '... transmuting the Dionysian form language of the depth mind into aesthetic style components, mannerisms and ornaments ... and so forced us, by our own conscious enjoyment of art form, to destroy its Dionysian Power').<sup>50</sup>

The imaginative power of myth calls forth from Ehrenzweig what he claims to be a neologism: 'I have called the tragic images of creativity "poemagogic".' In the light of the previous paragraph, his use of the adjective 'tragic' to describe unconscious depth-mind imagery can be understood, for Dionysian destruction is philosophically linked, through Nietzsche, with dramatic tragedy. Nevertheless, we cannot allow another contradictory thought of Ehrenzweig's to go unnoticed in the light of this, for he wrote later on in the same book, still with reference to the ego-abandoned space of the depth mind: 'Creativity is always linked with the happy moment when all conscious control can be forgotten'.<sup>51</sup>

But Ehrenzweig does not limit his mythological analogies to Apollo versus Dionysus, as he also enlarges, at considerable length in a single chapter, upon the mythical trilogy of *The Self-Creating God, The Scattered and Buried God, The Devoured and Burned God*, where the self-creating god is Dyonisus himself (therefore complete, one might add, with his intact plenipotential). He makes an abstract from this myth: 'Poemagogic images, in

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<sup>50</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.57 and p.73. Nietzsche wrote at length about the creative process, cf Appendix IV.



their enormous variety, reflect the various phases and aspects of creativity in a very direct manner, though the central theme of death and rebirth, of trapping and liberation, seem to overshadow the others'.<sup>52</sup> The self-creating god in death and rebirth is a metaphor for his first stage of the creative process, when the ego begins its regression to the unconscious; the scattered and buried, trapped god is the metaphor for the second stage of syncretic thought which takes place entirely in the unconscious; the devoured and burned god, but liberated, is analogous to the third stage, after the super-ego has intervened to damage the integrity of the unconscious elements as they emerge towards the manifest.

Adding to the complexity, Ehrenzweig also adduces this mythological structure in his appraisal of Klein's theory of damage and reparation, and adds even more by recalling the late Freudian idea of Eros and Thanatos, (causing us to bear many metaphors and analogies in mind simultaneously): 'The creative act generally makes restitution for an initial destruction of the self and the outer object in a basic interaction between Eros and Thanatos.' Then, invoking Melanie Klein, he writes: '... self-destructive Thanatos urges ... reach an absolute "maximum of sadism" (and of self-destruction) in about the second year. They then gradually subside with the simultaneous development of the child's libidinous ties with reality which allow him to abandon his cruel half-conscious phantasies'.<sup>53</sup> But surely, nothing can eliminate these phantasies? To use a previous metaphor, they remain as 'peas under the mattress', informing all our future acts of re-realization.

Though we do not have to agree with all his ideas, there is no doubt that Anton Ehrenzweig greatly enhanced our understanding of the creative process. But he also contributed to a wider debate, as David Maclagan pointed out: 'Ehrenzweig believed that the artist's deep involvement, in the successive stages of their creative work, with the translation from an initial chaos and confusion of forms to a later, more conscious ordering, was comparable to the work done in clinical psychoanalysis. Above all, by adopting a structural or formal approach to art, rather than one based on symbolism or

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<sup>51</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.xiii and p.44.

<sup>52</sup> *Op.cit.*, p.177. 'As Charles Stanford apparently used to say to his students: "Now you have to murder your darlings" – i.e. abandon all those subjective, fanciful notions that can't really be justified within the presentation'. Quoted by Tippett. 1991, p.267.

<sup>53</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.258 and p.260.

iconography, he established the basis for a modern psychoanalytic aesthetic'.<sup>54</sup> Ehrenzweig's mapping of the clinical psychoanalytic process alongside the process of creativity is an aspect of his work to which we will not make exact reference, but it will crucially inform the synthesis with which the next chapter is concerned.

Finally, we revisit our hypothetical composer from the previous chapter, who bears the responsibility 'for fulfilling their own potential', and ponder the impossibility, according to Ehrenzweig, of them ever achieving that state: 'The artist can never achieve his real intention. The Apollonian artist fails who tries to equal the great masterworks by preserving a tradition of beauty and style; in the eyes of a later generation he is only an epigone; the revolutionary Dionysian artist wants to destroy the narrow restrictions of style and measured beauty, but as his work is transfigured into beauty and harmony it serves again as a standard to restrict the freedom of future artists, Dionysian and revolutionary like himself'.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> From Maclagan's introductory abstract to the conference *Art's Hidden Order: Anton Ehrenzweig's Influence on Modern Art*, University of Sheffield, September 1996.

<sup>55</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1953, p.60.

## **PART 4**

### **The Created Product**



## IX

### THE FIFTY-MINUTE SYMPHONY

*Most people listen emotionally: everything is heard in terms of the categories of late Romanticism and of the commodities derived from it ... music really only enables them to have a good cry. This is why they love the expression of longing more than happiness itself.*<sup>1</sup>

#### i

### The Opening Movement

Theodor Adorno, the author of the above quotation (whose didacticism can nevertheless irritate) was right to ascribe such importance to the period of late romanticism (roughly 1860-1910) as it was at that time that a radical change took place in the general accessibility of Western European art music. Music 'to play' extended into music 'to listen to', and rivalry was rampant between towns and cities as they all vied with each other to build concert halls on as grand a scale as they could possibly afford. These were veritable 'cathedrals' – temples of worship to the composer's genius and for the rituals appertaining to the musical muse; when possible, they were built with organs, replete with vast arrays of pipes.<sup>2</sup> That degree of civic pride also left a beneficial legacy of equally splendid buildings for art galleries, museums, libraries and colleges, which supported the movement towards accessibility of learning for everyone. Consequently, composed music was thereby made public in the way of painting, sculpture, antiquities and literature, and became the subject of similar curiosity.

Some people however, by virtue of educational opportunity, were able to stake their claim to learning well before the rest of the population; Sigmund Freud (the so-called 'father of psychoanalysis') was obviously one, and another was a contemporary of his - Heinrich Schenker (the 'father' of musical analysis). Of the two, of course, Freud is by far the better known, yet the work of them both bore testament to the *Zeitgeist*, which became intensely curious about those things that lay beneath the surface of personal and

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<sup>1</sup> Adorno (1963). 1992 ed., p.50.

<sup>2</sup> For comment on the 'overtone cloud', cf Appendix IV.

cultural manifests. This curiosity was bound in some respects to a structuralist aesthetic, via a sense that only that which was demonstrably coherent was considered 'beautiful' - and both Freud and Schenker explored, within their own disciplines, the deeper foundational structures which underpinned this apparent coherence. We can now regard the work of the two men as separately contributing to a particular *genre* of cultural investigation.

*Genres*, frequently finding themselves beholden to a particular *Zeitgeist*, are formed through similarities, which may, or may not, become constancies. Surprisingly, this does not always ossify them - instead, it can potentialize their formative elements and release their fertile energies ready for service in the future, when, if we think about it, we actually find them subject to Freud's four essential mechanisms of the dream-work (*condensation, displacement, considerations of representability and secondary revision*). Consequently, it should not be a surprise to find a slightly younger contemporary of Freud and Schenker, Arnold Schönberg, composing music whose dodecaphony not only relied heavily on structure, but whose ability to write about it effectively seals the bond we wish to forge in this chapter between psychoanalysis and music analysis. He wrote: 'The method of composing with twelve tones purports reinstatement of the effects normally furnished by the structural functions of the harmony. (Yet) it cannot replace all that harmony has performed in music from Bach - and his predecessors - unto our time: *limitation, subdivision, connection, junction, association, unification, opposition, contrast, variation, culmination, declination, ebbing, liquidation, etc.*'<sup>3</sup> And, as psychoanalysts will probably recognize, those devices are also formative elements underpinning an analysand's manifest.

Having, in the two previous chapters, posited Freud's dream-work as a paradigm for the composition of music, and then examined Ehrenzweig's post-Freudian assessment of the creative *process*, we now turn to a consideration of the *product* - the manifest. In this chapter we intend to synthesize the progressive work of clinical psychoanalysis with the progress of a musical 'work' (through the abstract analogy of *narrative*), thus to highlight and validate the Ehrenzweigian concept of *the minimum content of art* - the 'inseparable nature of the product from the process, where the process of creation is

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<sup>3</sup> Stein. 1975, p.245. My emphases.



always reflected in the form of the work of art'.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, we immediately discover that the very word *work* embodies the process it signifies, especially in its relation to our now familiar tripartite paradigm of (i) tension, (ii) tension sustained, (iii) tension resolved.; first (i), there is *the work to be done* in terms of the Idea (introduced in chapter VI); (ii), there is the psycho-physical operation of *the work in progress* (chapter VII); and (iii), there is *the work* as an object which exists as the Idea made manifest (the present chapter).

Furthermore, as exemplar, we will take the first symphony in which this premise is clearly embodied; it was composed by Beethoven in 1803, and is his Third Symphony, Opus 55 in E flat major - the *Eroica* - an iconoclastic work which changed the symphonic concept and the *sonata principle* for ever.<sup>5</sup> When we listen to Beethoven's manifest, we are inexorably drawn back into the latent via its particular 'narrative' style – the culturally inscribed tripartite form of (i) *exposition*, (ii) *development* and (iii) *recapitulation* and, in fact, a good case can be made for the *Eroica* being the first *metapsychological symphony*; perhaps (in spite of all that has been written, say, about the psychology of the symphonist Gustav Mahler) - the only one.<sup>6</sup>

Music, we realize, is the art that is conspicuous by its relative absence in any debate with psychoanalysis – even though (as we saw at the end of the previous chapter) David MacLagan credited Ehrenzweig with establishing, at least thirty years ago, the basis for 'a modern psychoanalytic aesthetic'. This is an aesthetic with a distinctive teleology – that of an autobiographical narrative expressed through its minimum content: 'With analysis the autobiography constructed in earlier times is stripped back to its

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<sup>4</sup> But to accomplish this we will need to remind ourselves of the 'deep structures' of music which we have been at pains to reveal in the previous chapters; these were such abstract concepts as *archetypal linear and modular forms*, *libidinal interest*, the *three tension paradigms* (especially the multiple variations on *the central, adaptive space*), *gesture and utterance*, *affect*, the *Freudian dream-work model* for the composition of music, and the *syncretic thought* processes as explained by Ehrenzweig. Finally, there was the adduction of the Jungian, metaphysical dimension of *myth*, in Ehrenzweig's personalization of human affective states within the figures of Dionysus and Apollo. This is a large number of concepts for anyone to keep in mind, but some will have their turn again as we unfold *The Fifty-minute Symphony*. For an explanation of the title, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>5</sup> For *sonata principle*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>6</sup> There are other quasi-metapsychological works, such as Richard Strauss' tone-poems *Ein Heldenleben* (*A Hero's Life*), and *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, but these possess much more overt 'programs', without which the music would not make sense. As for the *Eroica* symphony, it does not matter whether it ended up being dedicated to Napoleon or not (with the possible exception of the second movement *Marcia*



foundations, and its original composition and manufacture exposed to those who would look ... This historical exercise proceeds simultaneously with, and is intrinsic in, the therapeutic process.’<sup>7</sup>

However, as we make the analogy between psychoanalysis and music we find we are constantly faced with the necessity to draw upon experiences gained from other disciplines to validate our cause - the writer, Joanna Hines, for example: ‘In what ways do writing and counselling complement each other ... The first and most obvious link is that the urge to engage in both occupations has its origins in a similar source – the desire to create at least a semblance of order from confusion ... In the counselling situation it is never as neat as that; the counsellor or therapist knows only as much of the story as people choose to tell, and the narrative continues long after the course of work is completed.’<sup>8</sup> Of course, the narrative modes inherent in a musical composition and in analysis are decidedly different; the composer’s narrative is *virtual*, while the analysand’s is an *actual* narrative, usually expressed verbally in the first person. Furthermore, the analysand’s narrative is largely confined to utterance for, within the analytic situation, its pre-verbal, a-verbal companion, gesture, is generally denied – *no matter how much libidinal interest may have been invested in it from intra-uterine days*.

But there is another difference. When anyone suggests that a writer (or a composer) is trying to make sense out of inner chaos or confusion – they are projecting onto them a type of chaos familiar to that presented by analysands to their analysts. This perception has its faults, because the fact lies unrecognized that the writer’s and composer’s material has, when presented, been subject to both unconscious primary and conscious secondary processes.<sup>9</sup> The analysand, on the other hand, mostly does not yet know the confidence born of secondary process revelation, although material is sometimes presented by the analysand in an obviously ordered and rationalized manner. Hence Freud’s insistence on the *fundamental rule* of free association; a method he entrusted

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*Funebre* – Naoleon, of course, was not dead in 1803!). For further comment on the concept of *the work*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>7</sup> Frank. 1991, p.23.

<sup>8</sup> Hines. 1995, p.96.

<sup>9</sup> Schönberg expressed this rather brutally: ‘... one must ... in all circumstances, use force on nature, on the material – sounds: that one must force them to keep to a direction and succession laid down by us.’ (Stein. 1975, p.253). (It has frequently crossed my mind that there might be an element of sadistic

with the eventual revelation to consciousness of the unconscious elements that evolve into themes from which the narrative will be constructed. (Thus mirroring the dream-work process which the composer's work has already undergone).<sup>10</sup>

For the analysand therefore, only a relatively narrow channel of expression of affect exists, increasing the difficulties already there by virtue of affect's dissimulations. As the analysand is limited to the small, rhythmic, contours of utterance, their actual narrative will, inevitably, appear 'fractured'. Their unconscious struggles to redress the balance, by attempting to supply the smoother contours of suppressed gesture – will compound the affective dissimulations by imparting a strong fictional dimension to their narrative. The result is: 'We leave childhood having constructed an autobiography. From an infinite number of impressions, potentially organized in an infinite number of ways, a relative few have been selected and worked over. This history is significantly a product of much the same unmistakable familiar unconscious processes as are responsible for dreams, myths and fantasies ...'.<sup>11</sup>

Freud had an explanation for ready-prepared narrative: 'There are patients who from the very first hours carefully prepare what they are going to communicate, ostensibly so as to be sure of making better use of the time devoted to the treatment. What is thus disguising itself as eagerness is resistance. Any preparation of this sort should be disrecommended, for it is only employed to guard against unwelcome thoughts cropping up'.<sup>12</sup> However much this sounds like disapproval, he was not in a position to offer the above alternative explanation of the importance of gesture, as it simply had not occurred to him (even now we tend to reduce gesture to mere 'body-language'). Thus the Freudian analytic model adds to society's inhibition of gesture, as the analysand is lying down without eye contact with the analyst: '... my patient's extraordinary conflictual investment in seeing and not seeing, hiding and being seen, which was to become a dominant metaphor in the analysis'.<sup>13</sup> This means that, for the analysand, the

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manipulation of material in all re-realizations - including 'the sublime arts', but that the tables are turned at some point in the work process – when the work itself turns tyrant).

<sup>10</sup> Cf Chapter VII.

<sup>11</sup> Frank. 1991, p.22.

<sup>12</sup> Freud. S.E.XII, p.136.

<sup>13</sup> Smith. 1995, p.67.



unspeakable still lies at the heart of the affect, as gesture is contained within inner experience and affect remains tightly bound to its dissimulations.

Analysands then have to *work through* via utterance alone which, within the psychoanalytic frame means language, so by this means, they are surely never able to access the absolute subjectivity of the pre-verbal. Most of which is almost literally 'crying out' to be 'translated' is inaccessible through language; yes, there are resistances, but there are also confines. Maybe they are surmountable, not through formal language, but through *sound* - literally, *sound out* the untranslatable first, then maybe discriminate with formal language;<sup>14</sup> maybe, in fact, an astute analyst will pick up on available gesture by observing and listening, as Ogden suggests, 'to the music of what happens'.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps, therefore, a therapeutic practice should have facilities, not only for psychoanalysis/psychotherapy, but also for music, drama and art therapies. At the moment, these therapies are not fully integrated. *Working through* compounds the problem of suppressed gesture – *acting out* on the other hand, may be considered undesirable, but it does at least provide an outlet for the complete Dionysian integrate.<sup>16</sup>

Music therapy has proven value of course, for it has the capacity to release affect through improvisation (reuniting gesture and utterance) – a musical experience which releases libidinal interest, and therefore affect, spontaneously through its feeling-tone.<sup>17</sup> However, an established composer has had the good fortune to possess a formal training in music, which has supported the equal status of both gesture and utterance; not only therefore, do composers work a-verbally, but also the libidinal interest they invested in gesture has more or less been kept intact right from the intra-uterine situation. This means that affect is much more directly accessible for them, as they work absolutely in the aesthetic space, closer to the intra-uterine, primordial state of pure form and, though affective dissimulation still exists for them, the virtual narrative mode of music more

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<sup>14</sup> For further comment on *utterance*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>15</sup> Cf n37 and n56, below.

<sup>16</sup> For *acting out*, cf Appendix IV. On the other hand, the 'Dionysian integrate' of gesture and utterance may have surfaced in the work of analyst Sándor Ferenczi – he was known for giving distressed patients an empathic embrace. Emery (1995, p.267) calls him '... the Dionysus of psychoanalysis'.

<sup>17</sup> While observing patients at work in the music therapy situation, one is struck by the frequency with which the almost total suppression of both gesture and utterance exists at the start of treatment. Gesture is generally first released through the manipulation of instruments like drums, which also allow utterance in the form of rhythm (certainly, in the case of children, the therapist will probably encourage a rhythmic version of the child's name to be tapped out first) – but, without doubt, gesture is the first to find release.



easily bears the responsibility of affective expression. For them, ‘all the talking is over’, for we might suggest that, through *musical* gesture the ‘unspeakable has been spoken’ and the composer (or the music therapy patient) has *abreacted* the affect.<sup>18</sup> Thus, within a musical work, narrative is metaphorical (*virtual*): ‘Music stands to emotional life not as a literal record or report but more a general map of the region, some of it unvisited. So even if music reveals emotional life to us, it need not be taken to reveal actual occurrences in any individual’s personal history’.<sup>19</sup>

Both the actual narrative of the analysand, and the virtual narrative implicit in the musical work unfold within controlling environments – the consulting room, and the concert respectively. Both environments are ‘theatres’ for the ‘playing out’ of dramas with their own rituals, and both situations are complicated by the two-way interplay of personalities involved. This interplay is called, in psychoanalytic terminology, *transference* and *counter-transference*.<sup>20</sup> So we can now suggest that there are three remarkable analogies to be made between the characters in these two different situations. We have already begun to address the narrative aspect of the drama (and will return to that later) but, in so doing, we have also implied a similarity between the composer and the analysand – a similarity which we will now posit as our first definite analogy.

That, though, is an alignment which needs to be exercised with caution, for psychoanalysis generally draws into its orbit those whose lives are functioning less satisfactorily than they would like (and then some of that perceived malfunctioning is pathologized). In contrast of course, we have made out a good case in previous chapters for there being little, if anything, pathological about the composer’s chosen way of life.<sup>21</sup> Composers (perhaps hopefully) expect their *works* to be ‘analysed’, but generally they do not physically take themselves into the psychoanalyst’s consulting-room in larger numbers than any other section of the population. Furthermore, this highlights another apparent difference between the work of the composer and the analysand. The composer appears to have the teleology of the actual composed work clearly set out already – when

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<sup>18</sup> For *abreaction*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>19</sup> Levinson. 1990, p.294.

<sup>20</sup> For *transference/counter-transference*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>21</sup> Cf Chapter 1, with reference to *genius*. There is no suggestion, however, that composers never seek analysis, though we should not assign undue importance to those highly publicized analyses of Gustav Mahler or Leonard Bernstein for example.



the work is finally exposed, it is complete (perhaps apart from a bit of pre-publication 'tweaking' here and there) and it waits, mute, to be transmitted to performer, listener, critic and publisher: 'The musical entity thus presents the remarkable singularity of embodying two aspects, of existing successively and distinctly in two forms separated from each other by the hiatus of silence'.<sup>22</sup>

From our explorations into the process which the composer's work has undergone we know that, contained in the manifest score is a wish, an idea, affect, gesture and utterance, emotion, all of which have been manoeuvred into elements, themes, and feeling-tone. As we saw, this is a process analogous to the Freudian dream-work model, which takes into account both the primary process and secondary revision - unlike a dream, though, the composer's work generally ends conclusively. Conversely, the analysand is usually, as like as not, still mired in the primary process. Now, although we will probably stand accused of over-simplification on one count, and of over-complication on another, we will posit that the initiatory experience of the narrative of both composer and analysand is the first, expository stage (and that it therefore neatly corresponds to the *exposition* in actual sonata form). Subsequently, the linear teleology of the narratives as objects, propels them both into the next stage, fuelled by the psychoanalytic notion of the *transference*, where each narrative object confronts 'the one who listens'.

In the analytic situation, 'the one who listens' to the narrative is the analyst, but we will find it useful to consider as our second analogy, aligning the special interpretative role of the analyst with the performer/interpreter of the composer's work (although it makes sense to elucidate this analogy principally in the context of a *live* performance of music, as in a recital by a solo performer,<sup>23</sup> for that most closely reflects the responsibility the

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<sup>22</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p.161. *Transmission*, together with *dialogue* and *interpretation* (which could be considered analogous to Freud's *transformation*, *displacement* and *exchange*) are the three terms explored in Schlesinger (1994).

Between composer and performer are two more figures, though not so much in evidence now as in earlier times - copyist and editor - each of whom must also honor the integrity of the work. It could be said that there is also an 'hiatus of silence' between the analysand's affective disorder, and the unburdening to the analyst.

<sup>23</sup> Only in a live performance do we find the same instantaneous reactions to manifest material, which can justify the analogy with the analytic frame. Listening to recorded music involves a personal choice of manifest which is not available to the analyst, and which may not be available at all times to the concert-goer.



analyst has to the analysand in the analytic frame). *Transference* is the principle forward-thrusting informant of these relationships between the analysand/composer and analyst/interpreter or performer/interpreter.

But the analyst has two inter-woven, yet very specific roles – one as interpreter, and the other as listener. Because, therefore, we are left with the concert-goer as the third element in the teleology of the musical work, we must take the listening role of the analyst and align it with the *concert-goer* (listener to music). That constitutes our third analogy, and *counter-transference* is the principle (though not exclusive) informant of this reciprocal relationship between analyst-listener/concert-goer and analysand/composer.<sup>24</sup> We will return to that aspect later.

Now though, because the responses of the performer/interpreter and analyst/interpreter to the narratives comprise certain changes, modifications and variations, we can suggest comparing this with the *development* section in actual sonata form. The virtual ‘developmental space’ is therefore inhabited by the intermediary figures of the performer/interpreter of the musical manifest and the analyst/interpreter (both of whom must, of course, be listeners as well). Nothing which enters into this space can be said to be ‘in fixed and final form’,<sup>25</sup> but the least the composer and analysand can expect, is that this space should honor the integrity of their work, and that it will be ‘dealt with’ sympathetically. It takes courage for the composer to relinquish the manifest and place it at the mercy of others – a form of courage equalled by the analysand who, so often, unconsciously regards this space as a fearsome void. Jean Laplanche clearly understands the anxiety: ‘The problem of the addressee, of the anonymous addressees, is

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Of course, a conductor is also an interpreter, but the individual nuances of interpretation which are the privilege of conductors and orchestral musicians together within the collective, introduces another layer of concern which would be inappropriately addressed here.

<sup>24</sup> Concern may be aroused that the second and third alignments were founded more on expediency than accuracy, but judgement should be reserved until the argument has been completed and the concept of counter-transference addressed.

<sup>25</sup> Sam Richards demonstrates the extent to which a work’s further potential is generally misunderstood, by writing: ‘*The composer produces the fixed and final form and detail of a piece of music. The performers take on the role of operatives, devoting much time and energy to realizing that piece ... The musical composition is seen as a thing in itself and is, if not literally at least metaphorically, an object of exchange for sale. The business side of music then comes into play: agents, promoters, recording companies, concert halls ...*’. (Richards. 1992, p.38. My emphasis).



an essential part of any description of the poetic situation. The addressee is essentially enigmatic, even if he sometimes takes on individual traits'.<sup>26</sup>

The composer, though, unlike the analysand, is confident enough to present the actual work as a modular, virtual narrative, expecting it to retain its intrinsic 'wholeness' as it sallies forth on a basically linear trajectory. The work has libidinal interest invested in it - it is exposed as a whole object, subject to idealization – hence the expectation. Thus, although one knows in talking to composers about their music, that performers, listeners and critics can all be responsible for contributing meaning to detail in the work about which the composer professed to be previously unaware, the intention of the composer in presenting the manifest is most definitely *not* to have any overall 'meaning' sorted out for them. But maybe, the unconscious expectation on the part of composers that their music will arouse libidinal interest in others, through ego-syntonicity, can be misplaced - particularly when performers (such as orchestral musicians) are given no say in what they play. Joan Peyser commented on this, with reference to new music: 'In fact, musicians with one orientation who are forced into doing something else captivated the interest of a German psychologist, Eckhard Weisenhutter, who confirmed his prejudice against new music with a study he conducted in 1974. Even allowing for the slipperiness of such a study, the conclusions, as expressed by Cologne director Wolfgang Becker, suggest that something in the Cologne Radio Symphony, that bastion of new music, seems to be happening – or, rather, not happening: "Dr. Weisenhutter interviewed the musicians of the Cologne orchestra and found them beset by psychogenic illnesses. The players are impotent. They hate new music. After playing it they cannot engage in sexual activity. This is understandable, for musicians are emotional people and if a musician is not convinced of the validity of what he does, his sexual life is bound to suffer".'<sup>27</sup>

The ideal then, for composer and analysand alike, is that the performer/interpreter and analyst/interpreter will be 'nurturing parents' for their narratives – they will enter into a dialogue, they will understand what is being related to them, and will help in the elucidation of the enigmas therein. Moreover, it might be said that the performer/interpreter needs to understand the nature of the suppressed gesture and

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<sup>26</sup> Laplanche. 1999, p.224.

utterance within the music's manifest before a performance with any degree of integrity or credence can be given. The analyst/interpreter must unconsciously recognize the libidinal interest invested in manifest affects and, like a caring parent, therefore act as mediator for the 'child' by protecting its ego as it faces the outside world: 'The analyst allows himself to become a projection of the patient, as he (the analysand) tries to explain himself to possible unfriendly outsiders; the uncaring "they" who habitually misunderstand'.<sup>28</sup> This is the epitome of *transference*, but neither the composer nor the analysand is in a position to take anything for granted, and they both issue an unconscious plea for the virtual development to be a safe containing space: 'The child crying, "Watch me, watch me", is not begging for attention; he is pleading for existence itself. They will remember, they will hold it, keep it, make it true'.<sup>29</sup>

Listening, of course, is a continuous process for all the characters, just as it is in an actual staged drama, so the third analogy embedded in the teleology of the narrative (that between the listener to the performed musical work, and the specific listening role of the analyst) might seem to be a nonsense. Yet, when we align this with the *recapitulation* in actual sonata form it begins to make sense. The recapitulation is like the re-capturing of the exposition, but in an altered state due to the re-actions of those involved in the drama and, by virtue of the *counter-transference* phenomenon, the directional thrust of the work is indeed turned round, back towards the work of the expositor. As Alvin Frank wrote: '... we analysts are privy ... (to) the reconstruction of the personal autobiographical drama through our applications of transferential process, experience, examination and resolution'.<sup>30</sup> What the composer seeks from the listener is 'feedback' which is essentially counter-transference under another name and which, likewise, can be either positive or negative. The recapitulation is, in fact, the stage which secures sonata form as a cyclic form; we experience, as it were, a *re-volution* – one turn of the wheel creating a new scene.

The counter-transference is exactly what its name implies, and its inevitability arises from one of the most basic of our previously explored psycho-biological paradigms.

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<sup>27</sup> Peyser. 1976, p.248. For further comment, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>28</sup> Schlesinger. 1994, p.34.

<sup>29</sup> Montgomery. 1989. p.143.

<sup>30</sup> Frank. 1991, p.22.



From the performer's or analyst's point of view, transference from the composer or analysand is compression, and must therefore be followed by rarefaction (counter-transference); this is of the gravest concern in the actual analytic situation, for the counter-transference appears unavoidable – indeed, once initiated, it becomes part of the unconscious activities of both parties. But what use would it be for this pendulum to be locked into a continuous swinging imbued with the same energy with which it was probably initiated? Laplanche and Pontalis suggest ways in which this swinging pendulum might be stilled: ‘ ... by means of (the analyst's) personal analysis so that the analytic situation may ideally be structured exclusively by the patient's transference ... To exploit the counter-transference manifestations in a controlled fashion for the purposes of the work of analysis ... (Suspended Attention) ... To allow oneself to be guided, in the actual interpretation, by one's own counter-transference reactions, which in this perspective are often not distinguished from emotions felt ... ’.<sup>31</sup>

However, if these solutions are adopted, the situation between analysand and analyst will not align so well with that of the composer and listener - for seldom does a listener to music suspect that their reactions to a composer's work are almost entirely dependent upon the contents of their unconscious, and it would be a rare listener indeed who, having discovered that propensity within themselves, would be prepared to adjust to the manifest accordingly, because: ‘ ... there is a continuing pull towards our own assumptions and predilections, away from the depth of the patient's experience ... a conceit, a belief in the greater “wisdom” of what is only my own vantage point’.<sup>32</sup> The tension set up by narrative elements is borne by the analyst with *suspended attention* in their dual role of interpreter and listener – purely as listener, there is little enough control over the manifest; as interpreter, there exists an additional internal struggle to control it. In a live performance of music, the listener (short of walking out of a performance) is likewise devoid of control – the flow of the narrative is unstoppable. So there is nothing to prevent a massive internal struggle on the part of the listener's ego, compounded by the super-ego, as they try to make sense out of the unremitting nature of the musical manifest transferred onto them – a struggle that precipitates them into *counter-transference*. As we shall see in the second part of this chapter, this radical notion will prove to have implications for music of fundamental importance.

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<sup>31</sup> Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.93. For the notion of *suspended attention*, cf Appendix IV.



One aspect of the listener's counter-transference is an attempt to find 'meaning', in the sense of according music a 'program'. But music's containing space is not full of ready-made 'meanings' – it is, however, full of aesthetic frames of reference primed to receive affective, projective identifications.<sup>33</sup> The composer Roger Sessions outlined four stages in the listening process, each of which supplies an increasing differentiation of detail to the listener, and therefore an increased tendency to become interested in the virtual narrative via identification with appropriate aesthetic *schemae*. First, he suggested, comes *hearing* (in an aural equivalent of *searching* rather than merely *looking*); second comes *enjoyment*, which he likens to a sense of having been in communication with the music; third is *musical understanding* which essentially means to him a liberation of the ear, so that it might become possible to inwardly reproduce the music, which leads to the final stage of *discrimination*, and the possibility of acquiring a synoptic view of the music: 'He may even represent it to his consciousness in a more concentrated form – as a condensed memory of sounds heard and felt ...'.<sup>34</sup>

Most analysts would have no problem in equating the above with their own listening experiences, though they would word it differently. In Herbert J. Schlesinger's paper *How the Analyst Listens*, we even sense an implicit understanding of virtual sonata form, for he wrote: 'We may assume that information arises from three sources; firstly, background knowledge the analyst has about life in general, about psychopathology and psychoanalysis in particular, and from specific knowledge about the patient' (exposition); 'secondly, what the analyst currently hears from the patient (and sees)' (development/transference); 'and thirdly, what the analyst senses from his own cognitive, affective and somatic reactions to the patient's conscious and unconscious communications and demands'; (recapitulation/counter-transference).<sup>35</sup>

But after the actual recapitulation in the sonata principle, comes the *coda* which ends the movement. Yet, this generally presents a false conclusion, as other movements of the symphony follow. For the composer, the virtual narrative presents a false stability in that, through its contact with the performer and the listener, it will undergo many new

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<sup>32</sup> Schwaber. 1995, p.271.

<sup>33</sup> For *projective identification*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>34</sup> Sessions. 1950, p.97. For further comment on *synoptic facility*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>35</sup> Schlesinger. 1994, pp.31-37.

initiations, developments and re-assessments: 'Although the composer may aim at a certain sound effect, good music will never depend on achieving precisely the effect which the composer has in mind, and will remain open to a great number of different interpretations'.<sup>36</sup> And, as analyst Thomas Ogden, in his comments on Robert Frost's poem, *Acquainted With the Night*, said: 'In this poem of cycles, of endings that are beginnings, there can be no final word'.<sup>37</sup>

We have already established that the analytic relationship, like that between the composer and the listener, is one of communication through sound, not sight. Music is also a ritualistic, participatory art - like analysis. Both have their overtly passive sides, but within, both are covertly seething with transference and counter-transference structures. Just as creativity - the re-realization of existents - does not stop when the composer puts the pen down, we should not imagine that psychoanalysis is 'uncreative', in the sense of there being no 're-realizations', indeed, re-realization is absolutely fundamental to what is achieved in psychoanalysis.

We now go on to the third element of this chapter's unfolding synthesis, which is to take the characters and their roles in the drama as outlined above, and place them in the context of the unfolding drama of an actual sonata principle movement - to wit, the first movement of the third symphony of Beethoven, the *Eroica*. As was mentioned earlier, we chose this exemplar as it embodies Ehrenzweig's principle of the *minimum content of art*, which is the inseparability of the product from the process.

Of the opening of this movement Richard Wagner wrote: 'Beethoven did not present a completed melody but the "act of its birth"'.<sup>38</sup> Whether he wrote those words ante- or post-composition of his *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is uncertain, but that he did choose the same tonic triad with which to open the *Ring* cycle as Beethoven chose for the *Eroica* is a fact. Wagner's astonishing prelude to *Das Rheingold*, the first drama of the *Ring* cycle, is a long peroration based on a numerical expansion of the number of instruments brought into play as the *Ur*-triad of E flat major gradually evolves from the

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<sup>36</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1962, p.472.

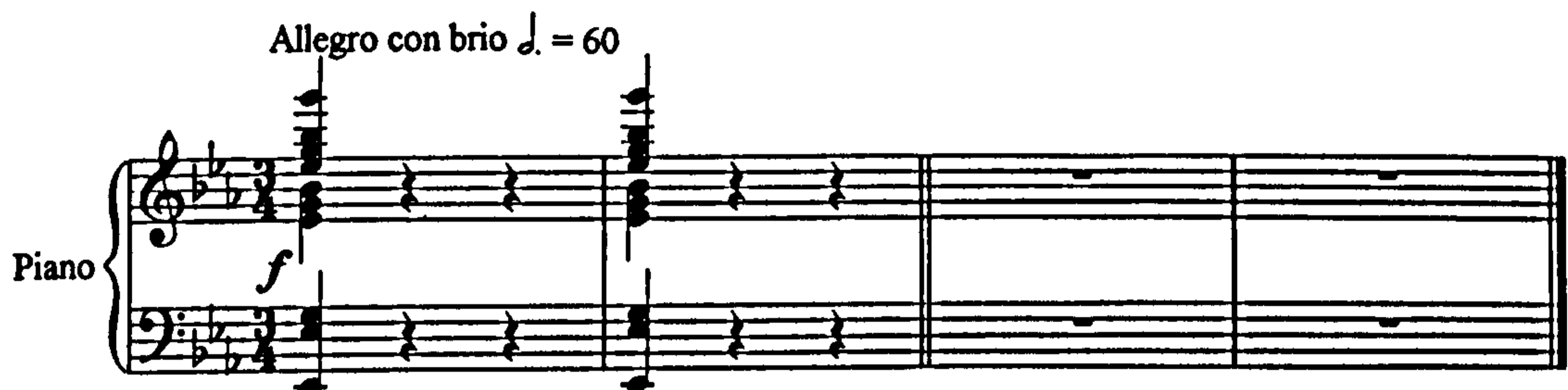
<sup>37</sup> Ogden. 1999, p.983.

<sup>38</sup> Wagner, R; *Samtliche Schriften und Dichtungen* vols.XI-XVI, 312; published Leipzig, 1888. Quoted by Westernhagen. 1976.



lowest possible rendering of the single note of E flat. The growth which he demonstrated as a possibility from this one note can only have as its forbear, Beethoven's equally astonishing idea to derive a whole symphony from the same single triad. (Beethoven's contemporary, Goethe, called such a centrality the *Urstoff* – from which organic growth would proceed through metamorphosis, evolution, variation and osmosis). This *Ur*-triad is thus the *Idea*.<sup>39</sup>

Beethoven actually begins the movement with announcing this tonic ('home') chord.



It is played twice, standing vertically proud as a complete entity, then is immediately collapsed and split into its three separate notes to form a theme eight notes long, the gestural contour of which is stopped in its tracks by a downward shifting semitone, thereby injecting the first dissonant moment.<sup>40</sup>



Wagner recognized that the eight notes thus presented do not form a complete gestural melody and, later, Schönberg realized that the distinction between *theme* and *melody* makes a tremendous difference to the construction of a movement in sonata form, as: ‘... a melody can be compared to an *aperçu*, an “aphorism”, in its rapid advance from problem to solution ... melody avoids intensifying the unrest; it supports comprehensibility by limitation, and facilitates lucidity through subdivision; it extends itself rather by continuation than by elaboration or development. It uses slightly varied motive-forms, which achieve variety by presenting the basic features in different relationships’.

<sup>39</sup> Cf Chapter VI.



Schönberg clearly prefers the advantages of a theme, for he continues: ‘ ... in contrast, a state of repose will scarcely be reached or attempted early in a theme; it will generally sharpen its problem (bringing it to a point) or deepen it ... The formulation of a theme assumes that there will follow “adventures”, “predicaments”, which ask for solution, for elaboration, for development, for contrast ... A theme is not at all independent and self-determined. On the contrary, it is strictly bound to consequences which have to be drawn, and without which it may appear insignificant’. But he admits a simplification: ‘This description necessarily exaggerates the difference between melody and theme. Hybrid forms exist ... (time has) widened the concept of theme and melody in creative minds ... ’.<sup>41</sup> However, all that he says about ‘sharpening the problem’ is absolutely applicable to the climax in the development of the *Eroica* first movement.

Now, if we can accept there is a difference, we will find that a theme, in that sense, has ‘potential’ its posited insignificance suggests it will grow into something bigger than itself. Its potential is ‘immanent’ – calling to mind a Self which, as we saw in Chapter I, also possesses ‘immanent plenipotential’. Thus, the *Eroica* title of the symphony need not only refer to the actual figure of Napoleon, but to the metaphorical idea of the ‘heroic Self’ as well. This is the Self which, through the mode of music, the composer is able to keep relatively intact, but also the Self which the analysand is most likely to hold in less than satisfactory esteem.

Melody bears all the hallmarks of complete legato gesture, as we posited in Chapter IV, and it generally does not easily lend itself to the kind of fragmentation which satisfies the demands of development – it prefers to shift and re-locate as a more or less whole object. A theme, on the other hand, is distinguished by its motivic nature, and the fact that it can be fragmented into much smaller contours gives it an affinity with utterance. Utterance is the narrative mode of the analysand, and where the opening theme of the *Eroica* relates to that, is in the ensuing travails of its fractured utterances. It is never revealed in its complete, melodic form until the coda – of which more later. As it stands

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<sup>40</sup> Earlier, we argued the illusory nature of ‘dissonance’, and its perception as a phenomenon that is non-syntonic to the Self and to the ego. However, to avoid the alternative clumsiness of expression, *dissonance* is used in the context of this chapter.

<sup>41</sup> Schönberg. 1967, pp.102-103.

then at the gateway to the exposition, replete with analogous relationships, it bears witness to the divided and dissonantly-disturbed, once heroic *prima materia* 'it-self'.

The second theme is based on two collapsed triads, upon different fundamentals, F and B flat; its fracturing fault lines lie between individual higher wind instruments and the first violins, and it is dance-like in its expression in contrast to the *gravitas* of its generative root.

oboe 1      clarinet 1      flute 1      violin 1

*p dolce*

Violoncello

*p*

The affective quality within the exposition shifts again as themes three and four are spawned from the same material – but the feeling-tone of theme three is quite aggressive.

Violin I

*f*

The subversive dissonance of the semitone is everywhere, but can be lost if one is not examining the score or is not attuned to listening for it. As an integral part of the musical structure, due to the modulations, now appears the note most antithetical to E flat – the note A natural (which will be found to underpin the devastating effect of the developmental climax). Theme four is of special interest, for so much of the initiatory triad seems to have been lost – it has a distinctly secretive character, for only after study is it possible to suggest that it is the first clarinet 'hiding' in the contrapuntal texture of the announcing phrase, that is voicing its main idea. Seemingly tired of mere utterance,



it is more gestural, projecting a yearning feeling aided by the dissonant semitone decorating the melodic contour.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for Clarinet in Bb, and the bottom staff is for Violin 1. The Clarinet part begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*) to a fortissimo (*sf*) dynamic, then a decrescendo back to piano (*p*) with another crescendo (*cresc.*). The Violin 1 part starts with a fortissimo (*sf*) dynamic, followed by a decrescendo to piano (*p*). Both parts feature melodic lines with slurs and accents.

*À propos* of this kind of detail Schönberg wrote a passage describing some of the structural devices to be found in an actual sonata form exposition; if one were to scan the list without knowing its context, one could imagine either a composer's virtual narrative or an analysand's actual narrative as the object of the description, such is their affinity. He says: 'Some, at least, of the following features can be expected:

**LOOSE STRUCTURE:** direct and immediate repetition of segments, juxtaposition of contrasting segments, often with an overlap; little or no recurrence of earlier features within the section.

**SPINNING OUT:** derivation of succeeding motive-forms from preceding ones, leading to sequences, condensation and liquidation. Chain-like interconnexion.

**EVASION OF DEFINITE CADENCES** until the end of the whole exposition. This device contributes to the harmonic momentum, and helps to join remotely related motive material. Incidental modulation may derive from this technique, without disturbing the essential stability.

**CODETTAS**, or even a definite **CLOSING THEME**, at the end of the group, marking the end of the exposition'.<sup>42</sup>

Beethoven provides a lengthy *codetta* at the end of the exposition, which acts as a transition between the exposition and the development without suggesting closure in any

<sup>42</sup> Schönberg. 1967, p.204.



way. Through its 'chain of associations', it is both thematically and rhythmically summative of progress made so far, which has been purely expository – nothing has yet been resolved. Now, something happens which may not, at first, appear to possess any rational significance at all. The exposition is repeated, exactly as it was first time round *except for the two opening chords*, which we suggested were a metaphor for the original entirety of the immanently plenipotential Self. We might reason that stylistic convention had prevailed, as it had been the custom for symphonic expositions to be repeated, but the radical Beethoven was not given to conventional observances. (Peter Kivy wrote a whole book *The Art of Repetition* without being able to come up with an answer as to why composers initiated this repeat in the first place). However, if the repeat was deliberate on the part of Beethoven, and made after due consideration of iconoclastic alternatives, perhaps he was indeed the first composer to accord it a deeper significance.

The significance given to this repeat by Beethoven just *may*, in fact, be metapsychological. Making an analogy with Freudian psychoanalysis, the nearest theoretical concept would appear to be *the compulsion to repeat*, which Jacques Lacan redefined it in the light of his linguistically-oriented work, by treating it first as a problem of insistence of signification, then as an unconscious wish for the return of something pleasurable. Closest of all, though, comes Jean Laplanche, with his: '... return to centering; there is something in me which I've split off from, denied, but which I must re-assimilate.'<sup>43</sup> In accordance with the Laplanchean model, therefore, assuming the first two opening chords do represent the *prima materia* of the Self, there needs to be a re-centering before the composer/analysand sends the material into the 'void' of the development.

In fact, given that the few short phrases admitting us to the development, once the repeat of the exposition is over, are formed from an ingenious inversion of a dim echo of the first theme, their tentative nature does project a certain reluctance to 'move on'. We

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<sup>43</sup> Laplanche. 1999, p.67. *Of the compulsion to repeat*, Laplanche and Pontalis write: '(Freud said) "... a thing which has not been understood inevitably reappears; like an unlaidd ghost, it cannot rest until the mystery has been solved and the spell broken".' [S.E.X, p.122]. They continue: '*Transference phenomena emerging during the treatment serve to confirm this necessity for the repressed conflict to be re-enacted in the relationship with the analyst*'; (1973, p.79. My emphasis), which relates particularly well to the current position in our argument. There are other works of Beethoven though, with no repeat of the exposition – one example is the Piano Sonata Op.57 *The Appassionata*, composed in 1805; another, the String Quartet



notice Beethoven so arranged them in order to accommodate the traditional repeated exposition without any loss of the music's flow, so it becomes as easy to go back as it is to progress. Therefore, just as earlier we suggested it took courage for an analysand to toss their expository narrative into the 'void' we can suggest that the repeated exposition not only has a re-centering function, but that it also serves to delay that fearful moment. For both narratives then, the exposition has established the potential of the material, which now goes forward into the *development*. We are now in the 'central space', where tension is sustained – this being the reason for the importance of the psychoanalytic notion of transference, for as we stated earlier, transference arises from the necessity for the narratives to be held and nurtured amid an environment perceived as unstable. Although this wider application of the concept of transference rests on the Freudian model of the analysand imitating childhood patterns of behavior towards significant adults (what Laplanche calls *en plein*); it also now takes on a more abstract character - *en creux* (hollowed out). He writes: 'If we interpret a transference moment, it is not to attack it as a defence, nor to resolve it; it is in the end to make it evolve, to help in its evolution'.<sup>44</sup> In other words, it is no longer perceived by psychoanalysts so much as a hindrance, but more as a psychic phenomenon providing space for psychic change. Nevertheless, we will find that re-volution would be an even better word to use.

In the actual *Eroica* development section, the fractured nature of the narrative continues. By now, even the most inexperienced listener, if attentive, should be aware that the opening theme is forever teasing by its lack of cadential closure, as Beethoven's use of elided phrases allow no pause for reflection, and no respite from the changes and variations in the material. Schönberg actually prefers the term *elaboration* to *development* for this, believing that germination and growth seldom occur in that central space, but of great interest in the present context though, is his nomenclature for this section – he calls it the 'working out' – the *Durchführung*. On the surface, this is very similar to the Freudian concept of *working through* (*Durcharbeitung*), which has been defined recently: 'Working through takes place in the interval between the time the patient becomes aware of something that the analyst has told him and the moment he accepts it with conviction ... Insight leads to working through, and working through

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Op.59 No.1 (the first *Razoumovsky* quartet), written in 1806. (Mozart's Piano Sonata Op.18 lacks the repeat as well).

<sup>44</sup> Laplanche. 1999, p.217.



consolidates insight'.<sup>45</sup> However, Schönberg's term appears to be a conflation of *working through* and *acting out* which, in terms of the present argument, is quite significant, as it suggests a re-uniting of utterance and gesture – the essential Dionysian integrate mentioned above. Furthermore, we can see that Schönberg's reasoning that: '... variation requires a new and special effort',<sup>46</sup> takes us back to one of our posited origins of integrated gesture and utterance - in the structures of theme and variation which inform Indian music and dance.

The Schönbergian effort is described thus, in passages which are remarkably analogous to free-association analysis – but can anything be achieved if gesture is not re-joined to utterance?: '... the *Durchführung* is usually considered the most characteristic feature ... one expects this section to be devoted to development only of the most important themes from the first division, (but) sometimes the elaboration deals with themes which were unimportant or subordinate at their first appearance; and occasionally an idea appears which, though deriving from the basic material, never appeared before as formulated'. And: 'The thematic material may be drawn from the themes of the exposition in any order. Often a small number of features, formerly inconspicuous, dominate the entire division. Some of the segments remain for a time in a single region (key). Some are repeated in a sequential or quasi-sequential relationship. The various sections may be strongly contrasted in rhythmic features, thematic material, structure, length and tonality. In many elaborations the earlier segments are the longer and more stable ones ... Occasional "roving" passages, which pertain to no definite region, are interspersed among the more stable passages, somewhat resembling transitions. Segments overlap freely, the end of one coinciding with the beginning of the next ... Deceptive progressions are also useful'.<sup>47</sup>

In the *Eroica*, indeed, that is exactly what happens, but for 'the idea which never appeared before as formulated' we must wait a while, as the first 110 bars of the development are devoted to creating a rising, sustainable, tension. Rhythmic changes

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<sup>45</sup> Bateman and Holmes. 1995, p.177.

<sup>46</sup> Stein. 1975, p.129. I have never forgotten one of the questions I chose to answer in my final examinations as a student: *Variation is the Essence of Development*. One of the examiners must have read Schönberg – I hadn't, although I found it an intriguing twist to the conventional view we had been taught. It was probably fortunate for me, therefore, that I did discuss it from an affirmative view-point!

<sup>47</sup> Schönberg. 1967, p.201 and p.206.



and keys remote from the tonic give familiar motivic utterances new perspectives, but all the time, the dissonance of the semitone is insinuating its way into consciousness as, from its first, brief subversive appearance, it has come to gain an increasing hold on the narrative. There is even a small *fugato* – a way of consciously organizing musical material into counterpoint – which has *fugue* as its much bigger ‘parent’ (we are reminded of Freud’s cautionary dictum, quoted earlier: ‘There are patients who from the very first hours carefully prepare what they are going to communicate’). But the profound moment of insight comes in three bars – numbers 276-279, at which point the tension can be sustained no longer. An A minor chord (notes A+C+E) is sounded simultaneously with note F (only a semitone from E).



The first flute, the horns and trumpets and the first violins, the most piercing sounds in the orchestra, are given the note F, which is pounded out antagonistically with the A minor chord in a rhythmically displaced accent. The original tonality of E flat has been replaced by its absolute opposite, and the semitone, logically pursuing the course set by its initial subversive shift, synchronistically and triumphantly devours the triad. Gesture and utterance are reduced to three slashes, until nothing of the Self is left – it has all been transferred onto ‘the Other’.

This kind of numinous moment of transformation is well recognizable within the analytic frame. Donald Meltzer and Meg Harris Williams, for example, use a model set out by Wilfrid Bion – the *alpha-function* which, briefly, maintains that the self seeks expression of emotion through creating symbols that make dream-thoughts possible as a foundation for rational thinking processes (which includes language). As in dreams, though, interpretation is open to a wide range of ‘meaning’: ‘But as the condensation proceeds, and finally results in a highly condensed symbol ... the meaning is now “contained” ... It must now be “read” or understood ... for it pinpoints the zone of conflict ... But it casts its shadow before ... it mobilizes the forces against the truth ...

They are the forces which reverse the process of alpha-function and cannibalize the evolving symbol'.<sup>48</sup>

Marion Milner wrote: 'And the inescapable condition of true expression was the plunge into the abyss, the willingness to recognize that the moment of blankness and extinction was the moment of incipient fruitfulness, the moment without which the invisible forces within could not do their work'.<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately, the 'incipient fruitfulness' of Beethoven's antithetical chord has frequently been unobserved, for many scholars have posited that the next melody to appear is a 'new idea'. This is a mistake. It is, of course, 'the idea which never before appeared as formulated'. Then, after this shattering climax, via a repeated chord in the strings in which is incorporated residual dissonance, the 'incipient fruitfulness' quietly leads us into the key of E minor (the *dominant* – i.e., built on the fifth degree of 'the Other' of A minor), for theme 5. Neither exactly melody nor theme (neither gesture nor utterance alone) it is one of Schönberg's 'hybrids' (above) – its outline is triadic and it quite clearly borrows its rhythmic patterns from themes 2 and 3, and its syncopated accompaniment from theme 3.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Oboe 1 and Violin 1. The Oboe 1 part is written on a single staff in the upper register, featuring a complex, syncopated melody with many accidentals (sharps and flats). It is marked with *sfz* (sforzando) in two places. The Violin 1 part is written on a single staff in the lower register, also featuring a complex, syncopated melody with many accidentals. It is marked with *p* (piano). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The two staves are connected by a brace on the left side.

But its hybrid nature means we can perhaps anticipate a reconciliation of both gesture and utterance within the Self. From his sketchbooks we know that Beethoven had this theme completed before he tackled any of the material in the development, so he knew his goal in advance. (We know, too, that he conceived the final movement of the symphony first). Thus, 'the minimum content' is set out for us and, as Ehrenzweig might have said of this moment: 'In order to develop a beautiful motif of this kind it may

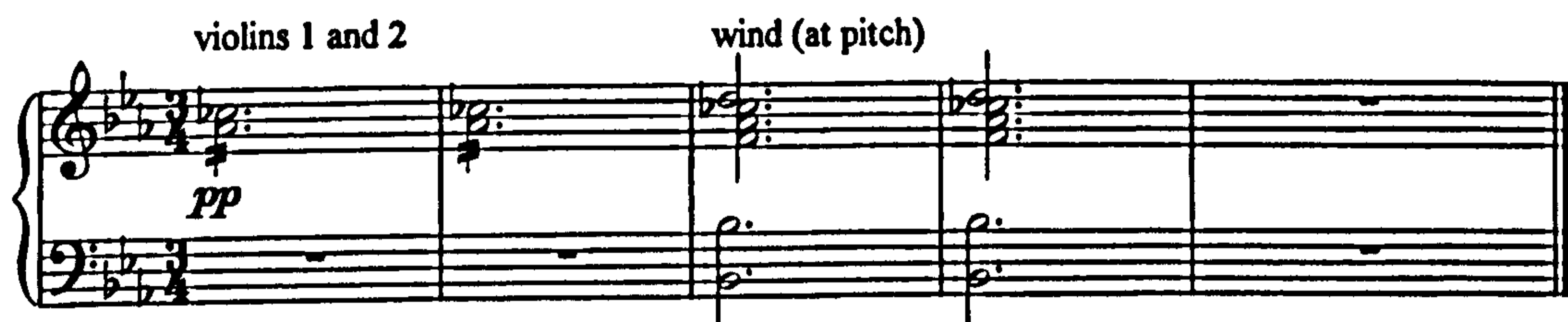
<sup>48</sup> Meltzer and Williams. 1988, p.229. Bion's *beta-function* (cf Appendix IV for *beta elements*) involves those elements of: '... raw sense data, rejected as material for alpha-function ...'. (*Op.cit.* p.230). In other words, the incipits of affect. The whole section of the book devoted to this concept deserves attention in the light of the present thesis.

<sup>49</sup> Milner (pseud. Field, 1950). 1986 ed., p.205.



become necessary first to fragment and distort it so that it can enter lower and undifferentiated levels of image-making'.<sup>50</sup>

The triadic nature of theme 5, with its hints of a restoration of gesture, thus points towards a reconciliation. Then, 'on cue' as it were, the first theme of the exposition is tentatively resurrected, first in C major, then C minor (*cf* major-minor gestures in Chapter IV), finally finding itself restored to the tonic of E flat. Its time, though, has not yet come, for it undergoes further key changes accompanied by striding octave leaps in the lower strings, before we are given the impression that the development is nearing its end and we are about to enter the recapitulation. The semitone is subdued, creating moments of poignant dissonance, and the anticipatory tension is held in an especially quiet passage (*pp*), with condensed and intensified elements of the triad and the semitone:



'Psychoanalytic inquiry, in permitting the transference to unfold, in permitting hopes, wishes, fantasies to emerge, unencumbered by tests of reality, by reminders of what is or is not rational or magical, allows the patient to re-open possibilities previously hidden if not closed. It is not the relinquishment or renunciation of childhood wishes that makes treatment effective, but their discovery and elucidation, the search for their meaning, and the re-establishment of their historical continuity ...'.<sup>51</sup> Without doubt, the recapitulatory phenomenon of counter-transference helps to validate the re-establishment of the Self – it replenishes what has been, in effect, returned absolutely to an Ehrenzweigian *percept* – it returned to a no-thing by having transferentially voided its Self into the Other.

The expectations surrounding the *recapitulation*, arising from the work of composers pre-*Eroica*, are that it will repeat the material of the exposition, in the same order, but with the most important themes homed in on the tonic key. The rigidity of this

<sup>50</sup> Ehrenzweig. 1967, p.51.



expectation still confounds the reactions of musicologists, conductors and critics as they contemplate one of Beethoven's most radical ideas which appears at this moment – they entirely miss its metapsychological significance. Shamefully, in the past, some have even regarded it as a mistake, and have sought to transpose it to 'make it fit'. This particular idea of Beethoven's forms the cusp of the change between the development and the recapitulation; its ambiguity being predicated upon its location in neither one nor other of those spaces.

Known as the *cumulus*, it consists of an audacious *pianissimo* pre-echo of the first four notes of theme 1, played by the second horn (bars 394 and 395), in its original key of E flat major. Underneath it though, the harmony is still on the dominant axis, but formed by two notes only – B flat and A flat together – the A flat in semitonal dissonant relationship with the G of the tonic chord, which gives an harmonic effect of extreme incongruity.

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is labeled 'violins 1 and 2' and has a dynamic marking of 'ppp'. The bottom staff is labeled 'horn 2 (at pitch)' and has a dynamic marking of 'pp'. The key signature is E-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 3/4. The horn part plays a pre-echo of the first four notes of the first theme.

(Examination of the sketchbooks reveals that Beethoven planned this thematic entry early on in his work on the symphony, and it remained unchanged throughout all twelve sketches for this section of the movement). Then, in the first few bars of the recapitulation, the tonic key is 'properly' established, before other keys infiltrate again and have their say.

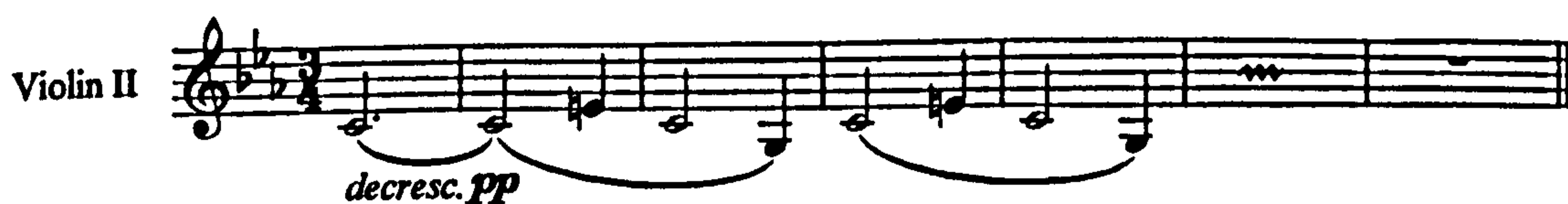
But we have, by virtue of the *cumulus*, not only been made re-aware of the *prima materia*, but also the work's ultimate destination – a return to the Self which it symbolized. 'Our task is to discern our participation as seen from within the patient's perspective, no matter how discrepant this may be with our own perception of ourselves ... It is striking that when a patient *feels something of the essence of himself is being recognised* and articulated ... this can elicit a profound sense of familiarity and further

<sup>51</sup> Schwaber. 1990, p.279.

recollection'.<sup>52</sup> The importance of the *cumulus* cannot therefore be over-estimated, and the only way Beethoven could emphasise its importance for his listeners, was to use it to shock them out of any complacency into which they might have sunk since the brutality of the climax. This is 'composer-power' and is destined to change transference into counter-transference: 'It is sometimes said that when the analyst is on the right path he can anticipate what the patient is going to say. I find the right path is also frequently paved with surprises that the patient is somewhere other than where I thought'.<sup>53</sup>

The four notes of the *cumulus* do not slip downwards though; instead, this time, the semitone serves to turn a dominant seventh chord into the tonic key which kick-starts what is at first a reasonably conventional recapitulation with themes 2, 3 and 4 re-appearing. All the while, however, the original theme makes itself felt by reiterations of a few notes here and there. But, though the changes from the exposition have been subtle, the emotional feeling-tone of the music is quite different, just as though something *has* survived from the ashes of affect (indeed, that counter-transference should be accorded an emotional basis is no longer surprising, given that we have posited in Chapter IV that emotion is not fully grounded in the aesthetic space and, once we are in the recapitulation we have 'passed through' that space). The end of the recapitulation is heralded by a typical elision between bars 550 and 551, which maintains the forward thrust of the music, and so Beethoven reaches the lengthy *coda* of the movement.

But the teasing does not stop – indeed the coda begins in playful, relaxed mood with first, four notes of the theme, then five in the tonic key. Suddenly, though, the key shifts downwards to D flat major for the first five notes again, *forte* – a silent bar for the woodwind – then an equally unexpected downward shift of a semitone to C major and those five notes again, *fortissimo*, before that same motif takes over in a 'rocking motion':



<sup>52</sup> Schwaber. 1995, p.276. My italicized emphasis.



'In the middle and late periods of analysis, surprise may shift the work dramatically ...  
, 54

This marks the moment when Beethoven's narrative rushes on to its inevitable apotheosis. Throughout the recapitulation and coda, the expository material is urged, bit by bit, back into reconciliation with the tonic key of the original motif until, on the last beat of bar 630, there appears the anacrusic note of the theme in the first horn. At last we have what we have been waiting for – the full flowering of this theme. It now becomes apparent that we have never before had it presented to us in its entirety. From the first few bars of the symphony, when progression of the theme further than eight notes was sabotaged by the downward semitone shift, we have not known it in full.



There is deep satisfaction in its appearance now. For such an important moment in the symphony, we are astonished by Beethoven's simple texture at that point; the dynamic level is *piano* for a most delicate orchestration, basically consisting only of violins with a very few notes on viola, oboe and second horn: 'A psychic quietening seems to take place which is not synonymous with an acceptance of society's norms ... The process of termination has been likened to a new beginning ... (the analysand) has to surrender his need for the analyst to act as container'.<sup>55</sup>

Only now is it revealed to us that the complete theme is actually melodically gestural in contour. It consists of two phrases – eight notes (nine counting the anacrusis at this first appearance) centered on the tonic chord and eight notes centered on the dominant chord. Its inherent 'rocking' motion takes us back to one of the most simple paradigms, yet to a

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<sup>53</sup> Smith. 1995, p.69.

<sup>54</sup> Smith. 1995, p.72. This is a reading of the symphony in which the second movement makes considerable sense. It is a funeral march for Napoleon, but Napoleon wasn't dead. A hero, then, is being mourned – psychoanalytically, the loss of the original hero, now restored, together with mourning for the time between.

<sup>55</sup> Bateman and Holmes. 1995, p.178-9. Only the salient points have here been utilized from a condensed and informative section on *Termination*, the focus of which is entirely on the analytic frame.



surprising manifestation of it. The first phrase is actually *tension resolved* (tonic key), *then* tension (dominant), so we are still left wondering when the tension will cease. There is, in fact, something uncanny between this particular reversed manifestation of a primary paradigm and Thomas Ogden's perspective on Robert Frost's poem *Acquainted with the Night*. First, he quotes four lines, all which follow the same paradigmatic pattern, thus: ' "I have been one (tension resolved) ... acquainted with the night ... "' (tension). And, as he says: 'This "walking poem" ... manages to get into language what it sounds like and feels like to be alone, talking to oneself "in one's head" and in one's body (in the sensations and rhythms of breathing and walking and being). The sound of the voice in this poem is not the sound of story-telling or of the narration of experience; it is a sound that is as close as I have encountered in any poem to the background sound of being'.<sup>56</sup>

Beethoven presents us with the complete theme four times in close succession, accompanied by the transformed feeling-tone of theme 3, which has been turned upside-down into a statement of pure joy:



'I should think the end point of an analysis might be indicated not by fewer surprises, but rather by the patient's more autonomous capacity to sustain the potential for curiosity and surprise, and thus to extend the work in his or her own surprising ways'.<sup>57</sup> Theme 3, we should remind ourselves, with its accumulation of tiny motivic contours, was utterance – and it still is. Together theme 1 and this transformed theme 3 accompany each other in a final Dionysian dance – gesture and utterance reconciled. The dance over, we are transported to the end of the movement in the ensuing 27 bars. Finally, there are two statements of the tonic chord, just as at the beginning, although differently arranged. We remember what Laplanche wrote (above): ' ... there is something in me which I've split off from, denied, but which I must re-assimilate'. The

<sup>56</sup> Ogden. 1999, pages 981 and 991.

*prima materia* has been re-united with the immanently plenipotential Self – and both are indistinguishable from the *Idea*.

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<sup>57</sup> Smith (1995) p.77.



### Coda: Don't Applaud Yet!

As we mentioned earlier, the *coda* is a false conclusion. There are 'other movements in a symphony' – generally three more in fact, and Beethoven made no exception of the *Eroica* in this respect. But, as we know, Beethoven dedicated the second movement (*Marcia Funebre*) to Napoleon – and Napoleon was still living. Furthermore, Beethoven did not erase his original dedication to Napoleon on the title-page of the score, until the score was written. One might speculate, therefore, that Beethoven's identification with Napoleon as hero, which informed the complete symphony, was only able to be withdrawn once the symphony was complete. Having brought to consciousness his own heroic self through the music of the first movement, perhaps Beethoven had the strength to withdraw his projections, and to expunge Napoleon as an object of libidinal interest by re-casting him in opposition to himself, as anti-hero. So, as many psychoanalytic writers have found: '... the narrative continues long after the course of work is completed',<sup>58</sup> for, certainly at the psychotherapy department of the Maudsley Hospital (London): '... two-thirds of patients make further contact following "termination".'<sup>59</sup> The transference/counter-transference pendulum of interdependencies is hard to resolve – theoretically it might appear impossible. Certainly (having posited an analogy between music and psychoanalysis, largely based on music's alignment with the dream-work), like a dream, analysis will prove to be just as open-ended.

For composers and performers, the continuing narrative thrives within the teleology of the work as an object. First of all, we all like to be thanked. From our earliest childhood we all like the 'feedback' of approval, gratitude, applause, recognition for effort – indeed recognition of Self.<sup>60</sup> These are all counter-transference reactions on the part of those onto whom we have transferred that part of ourselves invested in the manifest product, and they serve to replenish the Self depleted by transference. Because of this, we still have a vital issue to examine with regard to the fate of the *actual*

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<sup>58</sup> Hines. 1995, p.96.

<sup>59</sup> Bateman and Holmes. 1995, p.181.

<sup>60</sup> Even those whose re-realizations are anti-social or even homicidal have been known to say: 'Now I am somebody'.

narrative of a composer, which is the counter-transference onto the work from the *listener*, and thence back to the composer. Once again, we find that an analogous situation can help us to understand a musically-based dynamic; in *The Audience as Analyst*, William Jeffrey wrote of a TV drama: 'Author Dennis Potter has written an exceptional psychoanalytically informed television series in The Singing Detective ... a production that forces the audience into a role of analyst ... (they) can experience aspects of an analyst's experience ... which at times has transference like qualities'.<sup>61</sup>

So, as with drama, so with music, for what is being played out at this point, in a constant unconscious/conscious flux, is the amount of narcissistically-controlled libidinal interest a composer invests in a work, as contrasted with the amount and, perhaps even more importantly, the *quality*, of libidinal interest counter-transferred from the listener. The unconscious mediation between the two is predicated upon ego-syntonicity: 'A work of art bestows only the warmth one is able to dispense on one's own account, and almost every artistic impression is, ultimately, a product of the listener's imagination. It is indeed released by the work of art, but only if one has available receiving apparatus tuned in the same way as the transmitting apparatus. To convert an artistic impression into an artistic judgement, one must be practised at interpreting one's own unconscious feelings; one must know one's leanings and the way one reacts to impressions'.<sup>62</sup>

Although the analysand/composer casts the analyst/listener (like the analyst/performer/interpreter) in a metaphorical role, it is a subtly different role this time, for the casting bears much more expectation as 'the one who knows'. This is certainly the case with the relationship that exists between critic and composer, which is similarly formulated as a counter-transference. Criticism of Western music dates as far back as Plato, and reached a vituperative nadir in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) was an eminent music critic in his day, whose work was infested with such satire and irony that *Schadenfreude* was the surely the most prominent reaction of the reader. He wrote an article in 1894 for *The Scottish Musical Monthly*, entitled *How to Become a Musical Critic* (note the adjective!). It begins: 'My own plan was a simple one. I joined the staff of a new daily paper as a leader writer. My exploits in this department spread such terror and confusion that my proposal to turn my attention to musical criticism was

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<sup>61</sup> Jeffrey. 1997, p.451.



hailed with inexpressible relief, the subject being one in which lunacy is privileged. I was given a column to myself precisely as I might have been given a padded room in an asylum ...'.<sup>63</sup>

Nicholas Slonimsky, in his wonderfully acerbic book *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, gathered together some of the more cantankerous, counter-transfereential outpourings of writers on music. He explained: 'The art of musical invective flourished in the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, when music critics indulged in personal attacks on non-conformist composers. Nowadays, a critic will say that the music he doesn't like is ugly, but he will not say the composer himself is ugly. And he will not defame the composer by comparing him with a member of an "inferior" race'.<sup>64</sup> It has to be said that Shaw stopped short of that kind of defamation.

It is obvious that some of 'those supposed to know' actually ought to have known better, as Schönberg reasoned from his own experience: '... what is expert judgement unless one shows it off? For this reason, I also take it to have been the expert judges, not the art-lovers, who received my *Pierrot Lunaire* with such hostility when I performed it in Italy ... it was characteristic that the loudest disturber of the concert was identified as the director of a conservatoire ... he could not refrain from exclaiming: "If there had been just one single honest triad in the whole piece!"'.<sup>65</sup>

Fortunately, adverse criticism is not always damaging to the life of a piece of music and, through further hearings, the unfamiliar and strange in new music will become less of a problem for us. However, critics must take some responsibility for limiting the number of potentially familiarizing performances of new music by the way in which they write after premières. Of course, few of them will realize that they are often exposing, not so much the composer's 'failings', but their own. Donald Meltzer wrote: 'So the aesthetic critic's prime responsibility in holding the dream for the reader, is to show by example

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<sup>62</sup> Stein. 1975, p.195.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Laurence, (Ed.). 1981, p.339.

<sup>64</sup> Slonimsky, 1969, p.7. For further examples, cf Appendix I.

<sup>65</sup> Stein. 1975, p.97. As a result of our present investigations into the importance of re-uniting gesture and utterance in music, we can now understand *Pierrot Lunaire* as a direct manifestation of this unity, because Schönberg's use of *Sprechgesang* (speech-song) is a method of voice production which conflates the rhythmic contours of speech with the smooth contours of conjunct melody by the singer employing *portamento* (smoothly 'sliding') between every note.



how it is possible to think with the book, rather than showing what to think about it. To do this he has to avoid both intrusive curiosity (converting the aesthetic object into a secret), and also, buttressing himself through judgement and evaluation (as if he were self-elected guardian of the object)'.<sup>66</sup> Schönberg spoke of: '... the nonchalance with which critics play with lives, even when they have recognized that they will have to take an artist seriously.' And: 'We always see and recognize only ourselves, only, at most, our own being, as often as we think we are describing the essence of a thing outside ourselves. And these laws, which are, at best, those of our intellectual capacity, we apply as a yardstick to the work of the creator! On the basis of such laws, we judge the work of the great artist!'<sup>67</sup>

However, there isn't a composer, performer or listener (or critic!) anywhere who has not, at some time, found themselves bemused by a musical work which later on has become beloved to them. A concert-goer wants an ego-syntonic experience, that is to say, the containing space of music has absorbed their extra-musical associations as well as those from music itself, and so performed music acts as a conduit for the 'affective flow' between them and the manifest. 'Free musical associations' are stimulated from the aesthetic space, which take the form of sensations (feelings related to speed, intensity, mood etc.) subjective to the listener and which are not secure properties of the music: 'He had recently come across the paintings of Georgia O'Keefe and was struck by their immediate emotional impact, and by what she said: "I made you take time to look at what I saw and when you took time to really notice my flower you hung all your own associations with flowers on my flower and you write about my flower as if I think and see what you think and see of the flower – and I don't".'<sup>68</sup>

Ascribing properties to objects is part of the counter-transference phenomenon, but all is well with the work if the listener finds the work appealing enough to nurture because it mirrors, like Narcissus, *the libidinal interest they have in themselves*. That means that there is an unconscious expectation for their ego, which is as fragile as Narcissus' mirror of water, to be itself nurtured within music's 'parental' containing space. However, if

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<sup>66</sup> Meltzer and Williams. 1988, p.181.

<sup>67</sup> Stein, 1975, p.452. Schönberg's writings remind us that composers are not passive in the face of transference/counter-transference phenomena. From the Renaissance, many have been active polemicists and the history of music journalism is full of composers who have founded journals themselves.



what is reflected to them from a particular musical work's containing space does *not* accord with their self-directed libidinal interest, naturally, they don't 'like the music'; the work is 'sent back' to the composer containing all the affect that is not wanted within themselves: 'It should be noted that there is never any dispute when the listener takes pleasure in the work he hears. The least informed of music lovers readily clings to the periphery of a work; it pleases him for reasons that are most often entirely foreign to the essence of music. This pleasure is enough for him and calls for no justification. But if it happens that the music displeases him, our music lover will ask you for an explanation of his discomfiture. He will demand that we explain something that is in essence ineffable'.<sup>69</sup>

Some psychoanalysts believe these types of reactions to be linked to imprinted feelings of disgust, almost as if someone were being confronted by an overflow of sewage into the street; of course, we are all tormented by the 'rubbish' within ourselves – 'the secret life of our self-hate, and so: '... projection is excreting, spitting, regurgitating, vomiting and breathing out'.<sup>70</sup> All the expectations that went hand-in-hand with the transference are tossed back to the work – and thereby to the composer. Slonimsky reckoned that a new work had to be in existence for twenty years before more than a few listeners would regard it as anything other than a monstrosity, and then a further twenty years would elapse before it stood a chance of acceptance into the main repertoire – meanwhile habituation to its genre, or to the work itself, would have reaped the desired benefit. He cited Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* as a case in point, which was greeted by a 'riot' at its first performance in Paris yet, thirty-nine years after its première, another Paris performance was greeted with wild cheers (meanwhile, a critic had re-named the work *Le Massacre du Printemps*).

We should not ignore what other disciplines have to offer towards this puzzle. In fact, if we examine what *Information Theory* has to tell us, we will find it reflects our posited theory of the tension paradigms. Information Theory explores the amount of information individuals can absorb from sensory messages (a *message* being something

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<sup>68</sup> Levin. 1987, p.138.

<sup>69</sup> Stravinsky. 1970, p.63. Of course, to the composer, their own music *is* ineffable – 'too great for words' (OED). Further comment, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>70</sup> Fordham. 1969, p.118. For 'the secret life of our self-hate' cf Chapter V.



imparted in a structure and which is, scientifically, measured in *bits*). Radocy and Boyle suggest that: 'The greater the amount of information conveyed via the sensory message, the greater the uncertainty of meaning or response'. This fairly simple idea leads towards the concept of *perceptual redundancy* - referring to the amount of information which falls into a familiar, habituated pattern and which therefore does not attract 'the element of surprise'. Habituated material is classed in this case, as 'redundant', which Radocy and Boyle explain as: 'Perceptual redundancy, which will vary with the individual listener, relies heavily on (long term) memory of previous experiences with the style and allows the individual listener to create psychological order out of the melody or harmony, thus developing expectations and meaning or understanding'.<sup>71</sup>

As far as music is concerned, if much of what is heard is already habituated via the paradigms of tension/tension resolved, or tension/tension sustained/tension resolved, perceptual redundancy is high and, particularly in the first instance, the music will be so predictable as to allow 'easy listening' – even maybe flagging attention. If, though, most of what is being heard is new, perceptual redundancy is low, as the perceptual information is too great for immediate understanding (tension unresolved). Such music is non ego-syntonic, and is said to have little or no meaning: 'The conditions under which a statement constitutes a piece of information for someone depends essentially on what that someone already is'.<sup>72</sup>

As we found earlier, listeners adopt certain listening strategies to satisfy the ego's wish for syntonicity, for its lack provokes the sort of anxiety that resurrects negative counter-transferences. They apply what background knowledge they might possess, they struggle to engage with the music in the aesthetic space and they search for 'meaning' via increased discrimination. However, all this is thwarted for them if perceptual redundancy is low, and there is too much to be filtered out of the confusion of newness (we recall Ehrenzweig's *Gestalt* process). Counter-transference has always been at its most intense when a listener has been confronted with unfamiliar music, as we saw in the comments of critics, above. But what is a composer to do – please themselves, or please others? Henze wrote: 'Occasionally it becomes difficult to find your way around:

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<sup>71</sup> Quotations from Radocy and Boyle, 1988, p.170 and pp.171-2. For further information on *perceptual redundancy*, cf Appendix IV.

<sup>72</sup> Elliott and Frosh. 1995, p.24.



does what you do still belong to you, or is it already what the entrepreneurs want? Perhaps slowly and without your recognizing it you begin to repress from your music what you wanted but which others thought inappropriate'.<sup>73</sup> And Marion Milner, with great insight into this very problem of counter-transference from audience back to composer, as it were, wrote: '... when a person chooses to make the artist in himself the basis of his relation to society and becomes professionally "an artist", then if he does not make his dreams comprehensible so that more than a small coterie can share them, then he earns the fierce animosity of those who feel themselves shut out. I thought those who do not understand the artist's creations are liable to indulge in the righteous indignation of the child who feels he himself has been good and given up his earlier enjoyments, but sees another child who has been less docile and obedient and yet is getting away with it'.<sup>74</sup>

The dry wit of Pierre Boulez illustrates how a change in the quality of counter-transference might be initiated: 'Asked how he planned to persuade New York subscribers into some understanding of new music, Boulez replied: "By exciting the curiosity of the snobs. And I am not against it, I must say. I did it in Paris and it worked very well. To start, you always find two hundred fanatics. They are very easy to find, too easy sometimes. What is important is to raise the number. If you have a few, people will think, 'I must go there. I should know about it. I think I must go and see what it is. I don't want to seem backward.' And, finally, gradually, these people came".'<sup>75</sup> And when 'these people' come, for some, it might be possible for their super-egos to allow a different perspective on the music to develop; in others though, that will be more difficult. One of the aspects of a critical, controlling super-ego is guiltily critical self-observation, based on the introjection of the actual criticism of the parent. This is destined to lead to an inflexible ego, ossified by its defences, so it manifests a preference for other-directedness, social approval, conformity and dependence more than an inner-directed independence of its own making. A distinct dislike of any form of introspection due to a deeply-feared internalized aggression, means a difficult and traumatic period of adaptation would be necessary to face up to the existence of their own counter-transference onto musical works and composers, so reactionary views prevail. As

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<sup>73</sup> Henze. 1982, pp.39-40.

<sup>74</sup> Milner (pseud. Field, 1950). 1971 ed., p.134-5. For an example cf Appendix I (*Panic*).

<sup>75</sup> Peyser. 1976, p.255. *Introducing new music*, cf Appendix IV.

concert promoters know, even the fear of a possible ‘aural trauma’ in listening to unresolved dissonance within music keeps audiences away – it is as if those absent listeners – perhaps with low ‘dissonance thresholds’ - are unconsciously trying to avoid having awakened by such music, something they dare not find out about themselves.

To a certain extent it is true to say that this problem is a modern one, probably directly as a result of greater access to music for everyone – until the early nineteenth century, practically the only music performed *was* new music, performed to a few. But let us not delude ourselves into imagining our age is any different in its response to music of its time than was any preceding age – we know that a lot of Beethoven’s music was difficult and challenging for his performers and audiences, and we all need to be patient to wait for our own adjustments to the newest narratives. By the very act of ‘speaking with their own voice’ all composers will be re-realizing existents in their own way, and some are bound to transgress the present in so doing – we have to catch up with them.

Thus, if the counter-transference from listener and performer back to the work and thence to the composer is positive, the composer can be touchingly grateful, for it indicates that the narrative has fulfilled, not only its linear teleology, but also its cyclic potential. Henze commented: ‘It had been an indescribable feeling to hear my music played by professionals, cleanly in tune and absolutely faultless from beginning to end. It was if a problem had been got out of the way, a misfortune banished, a riddle solved. So from now on, everything, dark and bright, as soon as it touched the psyche would be written down in the sign-language of musical notation, like a question. The answer would come from the sound itself when the music was played’.<sup>76</sup> Also, within the analytic frame, a cyclic mutuality between analysand and analyst effects a similar validation of the analysand’s re-realization of existents – the *minimum content* of which is achieved through the reciprocation of libidinal interest. Yet, not only the analysand is enlightened; it was in fact an analyst who wrote: ‘... I went on with what I had learnt from him, separately, to find myself’.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Henze. 1982, p.39.

<sup>77</sup> Schwaber. 1995, p.280.



## CONCLUSION

*... why is it so important to my own psyche that I compose music? ... And why is the creative impulse never satisfied; why must one always begin anew? ... it seems to me, that each added work brings with it an element of self-discovery.*

*I must create 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?".<sup>1</sup>*

In the Introduction to this thesis, it was explained that an important motivation for writing it came from a desire to know from whence came my pupils' extraordinarily fertile ideas for musical compositions. Secondly, I discovered that their acceptance of unresolved dissonance constituted an essential rite of passage if they were to progress beyond *pastiche* and start to reflect their own *zeitgeist*. But, since the very beginning of my teaching career, I had experienced first-hand the fact that every child responds to music – and that there were absolutely 'no exceptions to prove the rule'. If that was the case, I reasoned, there must be socio-cultural reasons for the failure to give credence to my view that the so-called 'musically talented' children were but the tip of a very large iceberg of undiscovered and unfulfilled musical potential. There are certainly socio-cultural consequences. Richard Morrison wrote recently, after he had seen prisoners at Pentonville working with the London Sinfonietta: '... a lot of first-class artists, actors and musicians are working in prisons now. They won't turn criminals into saints. But they might divert pent-up energies and festering resentments into positive self-expression. And, as we saw ... they might help to restore an inmate's dignity, his sense of social worth. Deprive prisoners of that and you might as well dig out the old signs saying "Abandon hope all ye who enter here".'<sup>2</sup>

Consequently, this thesis began with a re-assessment of the socio-cultural constructs of *genius*, *gift* and *talent*;<sup>3</sup> we found that (to paraphrase St.Paul) 'the greatest of these is *gift*' – that is, *the gift of opportunity*. Subsequently we progressed to the vitally important notion that every human act of re-realizing existents has a right to be called *creative* (ultimately being predicated upon choice). The rest of the thesis was organized

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<sup>1</sup> Copland. 1952, pp.40-41.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 5-10-2000.

<sup>3</sup> As an aid to understanding the flow of argument within this concluding chapter, I have italicized key words as they first appear, in the manner adopted throughout the thesis.

under the umbrella of nine *possibilities*, in an attempt to answer the questions, posed by the composer Aaron Copland, placed at the head of this concluding chapter.

The first thing to realize is that one gets nowhere with an enquiry into creativity unless creativity is regarded as an everyday, commonplace event, because dividing the population into those who 'create' and those who don't cannot credibly be done. Moreover, for example, why are the products of the composer, the artist or the playwright generally held to be of a higher order of creativity than the products of the chef who is responsible for producing the pre-concert or pre-theatre meal? So, in the post-modern age there is every reason to question such long-held assumptions, so that we can take a fresh look at what it means to be 'creative'; we must take it out of the esoteric and accord it the new definition which emerged at the beginning of the first chapter of this thesis: *to be creative is to give existents a new reality*.

Immediately, we see that this applies to virtually every human act. This view will not meet with universal approval, largely because when, by reifying genius and transforming it into an avatar, we did two things. First, we diminished our responsibility towards fulfilling our own plenipotential and awarded ourselves an easier life; second (and perhaps worse) we encouraged pedagogy to abandon all hope of assisting others to fulfil their *immanent plenipotential*. The consequence was the comforting hierarchy of achievement which remains, virtually unmoved, to this day. Robert Hughes (cited as 'the world's leading art critic') has apparently said recently: 'I don't mind being accused of being an elitist. I am an elitist. There are some works of art that stupid people will never understand because they weren't made for stupid people. And there are a lot of stupid people. Why should anyone assume that any work of art can be reduced to the level of comprehension of a contemporary eight-year-old?'<sup>4</sup> Such an opinion, which invalidates a young person's viewpoint (as well as harming their sense of self-worth if that kind of opinion becomes known to them) also succeeds in placing certain art-forms in a ghetto, as Henze knows from experience: '... the "Darmstadt style" ... developed in line with the prodigious orchestral and financial resources of the radio stations – in the sense that pieces that did not require at least sixty rehearsals were regarded as dubious, superficial and frivolous'. And: 'On reflection, I can begin to understand my differences

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<sup>4</sup> *Sunday Times*. 20-8-2000.



with the Darmstadt School ... I have often thought that their attempt to make music non-communicative had something to do with the ruling class's belief that art is a thing apart from life, better kept that way, and without any social dimension'.<sup>5</sup>

Ironically, though, as far as music is concerned, the backlash of the view that assumes only a few 'gifted ones' can understand composed music (let alone write it!), is the present wave of Philistinism sweeping through Western European culture. Generally, education has seen personal expectations, based on acquired skills, soar to previously unconsidered heights – but not where composed music is concerned. Of course, being a composer is unlikely to be a generally popular career, for various reasons, but it is surely true to say that very large numbers of the school population are still forcibly shut out from 'the ghetto' of musical opportunities because assumptions are made about their 'giftedness'. Consequently, they don't even consider listening to composed music, let alone performing or writing it – so, in return, composed music is 'shut out' by them.<sup>6</sup>

But, once *genius*, *gift* and *talent* have been exposed as illusions and cultural constructs, the ubiquitous nature of creativity, which we seek to promote instead, has to be justified. This we find is possible, provided we consider creativity not as an emergent, but as the *Urtrieb* itself. Towards the end of the thesis, we examine the ideas of Anton Ehrenzweig, and suggest that the most important was his notion of *the minimum content of art (the inseparable nature of the product from the process)*. However, although we did not state it in those terms as early as Chapter II, essentially, in positing there that *our physical bodies are formally created from the multiplication of their own acquired content*, we find we hold a similar view. This process, whereby we ourselves are formed from the re-realization of existents, epitomizes the creative imperative of the *Urtrieb*.

Now though, for the first time, we found ourselves confronting psychoanalytic theory as we tried to sort out exactly what we meant by the term *Urtrieb*, for we considered it unwise to assign a wholly biological function to embryonic development. We therefore made a decision to replace metapsychological conceptualizations such as *Eros*, *Id*, *Instinkt*, *Libido*, with one which seems to impart a single, viable, alternative, i.e *libidinal energy* - for that encapsulates the apparent driving-force of a *Trieb* while allowing for

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<sup>5</sup> Henze. 1982, pages 44 and 49. For reference to *Darmstadt*, cf Appendix IV.



specific *libidinal interest* to be invested in its various *modes d'emploi* from time to time. We then reasoned that there are three bio-physical stages of development informed by libidinal energy; the first is *survival*, the second, *adaptation* (these two are interdependent) and the third is *choice*, reflecting Freud's trajectory model of the drive - *impulse, aim and object*. Adaptation requires a period of time, and gives us the first inkling that that time allows for something to be going on in it – such as the introduction of variables, which will disturb direct cause and effect by influencing outcome. What we posited as a result was an abstract 'central space' in which adaptation could take place - a metaphysical concept which assumed great importance as we proceeded chapter by chapter.

Thus, because of adaptation, libidinal interest (an increasing essential for survival) is certain to become bound to personally-experienced variables which, in turn, are certain to be formative of a sense of *Self*. On the other hand, 'personally experienced' should not be taken to mean that which is not 'universally experienced' as well, and we proposed several percepts to which we all must adapt and, in that sense, adaptation literally means *incorporation*. So, as we are being corporeally formed, it could be said that the first externally-generated experience we encounter in adaptation is the maternal heartbeat, along with the intra-uterine atmosphere of 'white noise'. The maternal heartbeat, although possessing a more diffuse sound envelope than we might imagine is, nevertheless, a binary structure of compression/rarefaction, which is reinforced when the embryo apprehends its own. We suggested *that this binary formation is our first paradigmatic experience*.

Other experiences follow. Because our skin is our first sensory receptor, it is through the skin that the intra-uterine environment impinges. We cannot place an exact chronology on these first perceptions, but we can suggest that the ovoid uterine shape and the curvilinear form of the umbilicus provide us with perceptions of *modularity* and *linearity* respectively. Furthermore, we can suggest that these are foundational aesthetic experiences imprinted upon us and upon which we will continuously call, as frames of reference, during life *ex utero*. Aesthetic theory has hitherto ignored the possibility of pre-natal life providing us with aesthetic awareness, by eschewing all that might be of

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<sup>6</sup> Yet there are exceptions. Cf Appendix I for an example.



carnal content, in favor of 'the beautiful' and 'the sublime'. Yet, strangely, those two adjectival nouns are frequently directly related philosophically to a womb-like syntonicity. Certainly, as we have put forward, the obvious placental form of the mysterious *tree of life*, together with other archetypal images of the Jungian *Collective Unconscious* could be said to originate in intra-uterine sensate experiences of a universal nature.

But there is more to the adaptive, central space than the apprehended aesthetic forms. As we said, it is a space in time, and so we pressed a further argument, which set it out as an imaginative space, wherein memory might first arise. Then it was at this point that we temporarily left our consideration of the intra-uterine state, in order to consider the post-natal role of libidinal energy in establishing certain structures in the Freudian model of the mind. The idea of the adaptive space led us towards *Ego* development (and thus into consideration of the *Super-ego*, *Ego-ideal* and *Ideal-ego*). Then the post-Freudian, Kleinian model drew us towards the adaptive space as somewhere for imagination to develop, based on the idea of our propensity to hallucinate a desired object. A sense of *omnipotence* can be aroused in the fulfillment of this imaginative strategy, which will be put to good use later on. Anthony Elliott wrote: '... psychical functioning depends upon somatic drives passing into representational space, which in turn constitutes itself as a fantasy fulfilment through a forming of images'.<sup>7</sup>

We posited the third bio-metaphysical stage as being *choice*, which we can now understand as being predicated upon the amount of libidinal interest placed at the service of a particular *mode d'emploi* (it is, after all, libidinal interest which the mode employs). But we did not proceed further without a critique of the concept of *sublimation*, which we were then able to argue was possibly based on an etymological misunderstanding even though, in fact, *sublimation* actually becomes an irrelevance once the *Urtrieb* is defined in terms of the constancy of libidinal energy. Its messenger, libidinal interest is, at it were, part of the diversions of the river's natural energy.

So we returned to the intra-uterine state, venturing for the first time into the phenomenon of 'sound'. That we placed the word 'sound' in inverted commas suggests that it is not

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<sup>7</sup> Elliott and Frosh. 1995, p.37.

what it seems and, indeed, that proves to be the case, for we were able to hypothesize that sound *per se*, is an illusory phenomenon. We based this hypothesis on the fact that incipits produce a compression wave which, when it reaches our aural apparatus, is translated in an entirely personal manner, as the *quantity* of the incipit is transformed by our sensory perception into an *affective quality*. Therefore, we reasoned, 'sound' as such is an illusory phenomenon. Inevitably, this phase of our enquiry took us further from universals and deeper into the significance of the personal, as we found the *in utero* Self responded to a strongly-felt need to adapt to sound-impingements. Moreover, the compression wave, as received by the fetus, constitutes a special experience, as the whole fetal body acts as a receptor – certainly before the aural apparatus is well developed. The logical outcome of this hypothesis is to proceed further into analyzing the *affective* nature of this fetal experience, for it must surely impinge upon the Self in a manner that will forever leave a mark – a *mnemic trace*, in fact.

There exists now a great deal of scientific evidence to support any metapsychological investigation of the effect of sound impingements upon the fetus. The benefit of adducing metapsychology, however, lies in its special teleological vision – thus we attempted to determine particular outcomes from particular causal effects, as we considered the fetus trying to *habituate* the sound-experiences which impinge upon it with surprising strength. What we came up with were more paradigmatic experiences to complement that already advocated. The first was clearly stated to be the mother's heartbeat set against a background of 'white noise' – the binary form of tension/tension resolved, which causes no problems of habituation, and to which we gave the name *primary sound*. However, as all other sound-impingements are externally generated, their eventual habituation can be called into doubt. We called all of these, *secondary sound*. Less doubt, though, exists as far as oft-repeated every-day sounds are concerned, but we considered that even some of the most easily habituated took a moment or two of fetal time to be recognized (mother's voice etc.) – time in which tension would build. Thus we have secured the second important paradigm – the *triadic* tension/tension sustained/tension resolved (which, we will notice now, is a very important, potent power-dynamic, called upon post-natally in the emergence of the imaginative space as outlined above). Furthermore, we realized that '*the mother is a voice*'.



But there is another category of secondary sound provided by non-habituable sounds. These are always random, discontinuous and unexpected and provide for tension/tension sustained/tension unresolved. (We suggested a third, but as less certain, in the shape of *addictive sound*, exemplified by the insistent beat of 'pop' music).

The teleology of these categories of fetal sound-impingements provided a link between various elements of the remaining chapters, but we did reason immediately that primary sound was the property of the subject, i.e. it became a possession of the fetus due to its syntonicity. It only became objectified when its manifestation in infant babbling was purloined by a carer and handed back to the infant imbued with 'meaning'. Due to this, we place language, not as a phenomenon out of which music arises (music is a language), but quite the reverse – *language, in fact, is a music*, as the prosodic outlines from which the inflections of language are derived, are laid down through the experiences of primary and secondary sound. On the other hand, secondary, habituated sound, only becomes a part-possession of the subject, while non-habituable secondary sound will never be a possession of the subject as its unresolved tension accords it the status of an alien object. As such, it rejects libidinal interest, because there is a narcissistic failure of omnipotent control and it causes many problems associated with music *per se* later on in life.

The composer, though, apparently has few 'problems' with music (but we found that to be only partly true). However, by virtue of the argument pursued so far, we realize that the composer does not give a new reality to the sound-incident, but to the adapted, affective response to its feeling-tone for, between incitement and symbol lies the aesthetic, imaginative space. This allows for the true nature of affect to become operative, for affect hides its initial cause behind a cloak of dissimulation. The composed *manifest*, therefore is a re-realization of what is unconsciously possessed by the composer, whereas the symbols of music notation represent all the aesthetic detail of the illusory nature of acoustic wave-formations. The libidinal drive is constant, as has been noted, but the composer has placed libidinal interest invested in affective (as *qualitative feeling-tone*) response to sound, at the service of choice.

The conclusion we have just come to therefore accords a special place to music *per se*, for music aligns itself with the three paradigmatic forms previously expounded. However, the binary paradigm leaves no room for imagination, no room for desire. Tension/tension sustained/tension resolved, on the other hand, *founded on the prosody of the mother's voice*, does allow space for imagination and desire – but it forecloses both. Nevertheless, the fact that we have posited the fetal experience as *the mother is a voice*, not only accords this paradigm a particular importance, but also renders it an exceptionally fertile one for further investigation.

But, paradoxically, only the third paradigm, which creates psychic difficulties for us by virtue of its 'unresolved tension' and its open-endedness, allows our imaginations to fly free. Throughout our lives, then, we have an unconscious-informed choice – do we align ourselves with the second paradigm, or the third? Richard Bach, in writing *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, let us know which he preferred.

Following on from this, we formulated two further ideas. The first, is the consequences for music of the affective startle reflex (the *Moro Reflex*) seen as *a partnership between gesture and utterance*. The second defines the original metaphysical 'central space' in terms of its operative function *vis à vis* music – to wit, that music itself is *a containing space*.

We pursued a cultural-historical appraisal of gesture and utterance in order to establish its importance, culminating in the thought that gesture is transformed into melodic contours, and that smaller, decorative contours are transformed utterance, translated into rhythmic patterns (a thought which is closely related to the Freudian model of *transformation, displacement and exchange of affect*). This all adds to the previously recorded aesthetic contents of the imaginative space then, *en bloc*, as it were, is becomes ripe for projection onto music, which is itself formed from those self-same elements. Thus, a two-way flow of projection into and extraction from, music is set up – we unconsciously identify with music via our affective inner life, which makes music a containing space for affect – in Jungian terms, analogous to the *vas mirabile* of alchemy. It can therefore be plundered by the composer. As if in summary, Donald Meltzer wrote: '... the fetus begins to have a lively if limited mental life ... His interest and attention



are drawn to three types of experience: those of his container (being largely auditory and kinaesthetic), the sound of his mother's voice, and the more muffled sounds of other external persons and things. His imaginative response to the emotions stirred by these impingements, coupled with the growing attention to his own body and its capacities, takes a symbolic form in the mode of song and dance, in which rhythm is overwhelmingly important'.<sup>8</sup>

But this left the problem of *unresolved dissonance* unaddressed. Due to its foundational paradigm of tension/tension sustained/tension unresolved, unresolved dissonance is felt to be non ego-syntonic, so it eventually becomes *the secret life of our self-hate*. In the manner of a trauma, it remains an unprocessed enigma, and we acquire a 'dissonance threshold'. Nonetheless, what we term dissonance in music is a further example of sound furnishing us with an illusion, for that which is generally posed as its opposite – consonance – could be said not to exist. Because of the overtone phenomenon, all but very few sound-incitements are dissonant, yet we prefer to deny that fact by simply not 'hearing' the dissonant cloud of which virtually every sound consists.

Perceived dissonance is the perceived dissident in music and has been controlled by the rules of 'classical' harmony, yet it exercises its right to exist in music's containing space, and it must be restored to the young composer in order that they remain true to their *Zeitgeist*. Aaron Copland, who posed the question heading this concluding chapter: '... why is it so important to my own psyche that I compose music?', developed a compositional style which, like Stravinsky's, accommodated much of what we have set out up to now, for it ranged from tonal tunefulness (the simple phrasing of which reflects the binary paradigm), through a neo-classic phase (tension/tension sustained/tension resolved), to a style which included considerable unresolved dissonance in Schönbergian serialism. It comes as no surprise to learn that the latter collection of works, which include *Connotations* and *Inscape* (orchestral works written in the 1960's) have proved far more problematic for audiences than, say, his *Appalachian Spring* of 1944.

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<sup>8</sup> Meltzer and Williams. 1988, p.60.

All composers plunder the containing space of music in individualistic ways, and they all end up formulaic, but hopefully writing to their own formulae - formulae that are psychologically informed. If that was not so, and the art of musical composition was genetically determined, there would be quite a problem of differentiating one composer's music from another's; to all intents and purposes, music would all sound much the same.

In recent years, the individualism of composers has been the subject of psychological research, in an attempt to define those characteristics which might distinguish them from other people. We know that this is not the whole story, for circumstantial opportunity must be taken into account; even so, this research has thrown up much that is useful. To begin with, opportunity to develop 'different intelligences' and field-specific interests (with essential theoretical expertise attached) provides choice, but choice does not guarantee success. Opportunity is generally provided by an appropriate education, but problems within the drama of the transference can prevent the extrinsic motivation provided by a teacher from become intrinsic. Furthermore, the subject needs not only to have retained enough of a sense of omnipotence to adapt to fresh ideas, but also an ego which is flexible, as a rigid ego which regards opportunity as a threat to the *status quo* is as limiting as a weak ego which says, "Oh, I could never do that!" Only a flexible ego will be able to access the contents of music's containing space without fending most of it off.

What is called *self-handicapping*, therefore, is an ego/super-ego problem, and frequently is exacerbated by rewards for *attaining* status rather than *achieving* status (a crucial difference). The remedy is a secure sense of self-definition, as in 'I am a composer', but even then, the composer must be able to tolerate ambiguities, uncertainties and the tension of pregnancy while, most likely, submitting to the 'Faustian Bargain' of isolation while work is in progress; this is both a physical withdrawal and a psychic journey – as Michael Tippett expressed it: 'I feel the need to give an image to an ineffable experience of my inner life. I feel the inner life as something that is essentially fluid'.<sup>9</sup> Here, the composer hopes to find the *Idea*, at which point *choice is transformed into imperative*, and the *process* of composition can begin.

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<sup>9</sup> Bowen. 1981, p.156.



Two main influences were brought to bear upon our examination of the compositional process – Freud and Anton Ehrenzweig. Freud’s complex, but erudite account of the dream-work provided an entirely credible analogy with the process of musical composition, which Ehrenzweig’s post-Freudian hermeneutic fine-tuned. We are of the opinion that the analogy with the Freudian model of the dream-work provides the wide-ranging debate on musical creativity with a uniquely original contribution - one which has been hinted at by other writers, so one we hope that will lead the investigations down an interesting new path, for many of the existing investigations are appearing rather jaded now, and are clearly getting nowhere. There is no good reason at this point in time, for example, for anyone to be still writing about ‘the mystery of music’.

With the dream-work analogy we returned to the ubiquitous nature of creativity, for dreams are the ubiquitous creative mode of the mind as its owner sleeps. Dream research suggests they have an adaptive, organizing function, yet dreams are the cinema of the mind – they are fantastic works of fiction in which gesture and utterance are reunited in partnership again – they are the most unfettered, free form of re-realization we can experience, incorporating ego-syntonic and non ego-syntonic affects alike with impunity. Dreams employ all paradigmatic frames of reference, from archetypal symbols based on mnemonic traces, the aesthetic forms of modularity and linearity, tension paradigms, the prosody of speech – even actual music (which may be uniquely composed by the dreamer as they sleep). Therefore, we can posit with conviction that they are compiled with paradigmatic creative processes – provided we bear in mind that *a dream never ends; we always leave a dream with its tensions unresolved*. Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams* of 1900 actually deserves to have much more attention paid to it than appears to be the case at the present time – it is very much wider in its applicability than it is given credit for.

Through making this analogy, we discovered that the composer’s Idea constitutes a wish, whose affective foundation has been *over-determined*. Briefly, the creative process of dream and music proceeds thus: *dream-elements*, in the shape of tiny motive utterances begin to form *dream-thoughts* (motifs) in a series of unconscious maneuverings, called by Freud *condensation* and *displacement*. The dream proper continues with a process called *secondary revision*, which is still unconscious, but in musical composition,



secondary revision is the conscious ordering of *the latent material* into the manifest. In both instances, appropriate symbols are selected for the transmission of the Idea. Copland might just as well have asked, ‘... why is it so important to my own psyche that I dream as well as compose music?’

Next, we looked at the contribution made to the argument by the artist and music-lover, Anton Ehrenzweig. Although, during his life, Ehrenzweig failed to realize the ubiquitous nature of creativity, his writings provided us with several fresh notions. For example, he enabled us to throw more light on the illusory nature of sound – particularly in relation to dissonance, for he used to gestalt model of unconscious preferential differentiation of certain detail, to illustrate our repression of overtones in favor of the fundamental in a musical note, maintaining too, that we relegate the overtone series to the phenomenon of *timbre*. Further, gestalt surface (conscious) concepts (such as *timbre*) are in opposition to depth perception (unconscious) percepts – an operative mode which he calls *thing-free depth perception*. All this leads to a mode of thinking which Ehrenzweig regards as essential in creativity, and that is *syncretic thought* – an ego-mode which is usual in childhood, but which adults lose in their scramble for *Gestalt* concepts. But, he maintains, adults can learn to *de-differentiate* (a ‘desirable’ regression), thus demolishing their citadels of rigid gestalt concepts and freeing-up their creativity.

In a potent analogy, Ehrenzweig sets out the creative process as a mythological tale of death, burial and resurrection; this draws us even closer to our own basic premise that creativity is the ubiquitous aim of libidinal energy but, in spite of the importance of all these notions, we eventually realized that the most important of all Ehrenzweig’s ideas was *the minimum content of art* for, as we explained earlier, it aligns perfectly with our own idea that *our physical bodies are formally created from the multiplication of their own acquired content*. And it was this major alignment which thrust us into the complexities of a new synthesis in Chapter IX,<sup>10</sup> after which we considered some of the problems people have in accepting unfamiliar music.

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<sup>10</sup> Only after I had made the decision to cast Chapter IX in two parts rather than present two separate chapters, did the chapter title *The Fifty Minute Symphony* resonate with that decision. For some reason, composers since Beethoven do not like progressing beyond the composition of nine symphonies. However, both Beethoven and Mahler have had their incomplete tenth symphonies completed by scholars.



The first intention of the final chapter though, was to effect a synthesis between the progress of Freudian analysis and the progress of a musical 'work', as Schönberg's list of structural musical operatives were found to be common to both situations. Our second intention was realized through the concept of *the work*, and involved aligning the composer with the analysand, the performer/interpreter with the analyst/interpreter, and then the music listener/critic with the analyst/listener. The third synthetic link was our alignment of the tripartite *sonata principle* with the extremely important triadic paradigm of tension/ tension sustained/ tension resolved (founded on the prosody of the mother's voice). Then, although introducing the psychoanalytic concepts of transference and counter-transference as well, seemed on the face of it merely to be adding further complications, that did, in fact, serve to elucidate and validate the complete syntheses.

Yet there was more, in the shape of the first movement of Beethoven's Third Symphony, the *Eroica*, with its extraordinary, fresh, re-realization of the *exposition, development* and *recapitulation* of classical sonata form. Without it however, it would not have been possible to tie together all the ideas presented in this entire thesis under the umbrella of Ehrenzweig's *minimum content of art*, which has proved to encapsulate the absolutes of the creative process - *the inseparable nature of the product from the process*. We found this also included the psychoanalytic method, for re-realization is absolutely fundamental to what is achieved in analysis.

Therefore, we realized, not just our physical bodies *are formally created from the multiplication of their own acquired content* but if we concede a slight adjustment to the wording, we can state unequivocally that *everything is formally created from a re-realization of its own acquired content*.

Reluctantly we must conclude. We now understand that we have been 'dreaming', and have brought to consciousness an Idea, a wish and an imperative but, like a dream, it remains unfinished - such is its paradigmatic nature. But: ' ... "To work a concept is to vary its extension and comprehension, to generalize it through the incorporation of features outside it, to export it outside its region of origin, to take it as a model or

inversely to find a model for it, in brief, to confer on it gradually, through regulated transformations, the function of a form”.’<sup>11</sup>

Though we may regret that many questions still remain open, we are reassured that we may have paved the way for new paths of research in the future. Thus, even though we too, like Ehrenzweig, may have founded a fresh hermeneutic, it will most likely be for others to bring it to greater fruition.

*‘All we can say now is that the mysteries of creation and of human creativity seem one’.*<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Roudinesco (1986). Trans.1990, p.389. She quotes from Georges Canguilhem’s *Cahiers pour analyser*.  
<sup>12</sup> Ehrenzweig (1967). 1993 ed., p.222.



# **APPENDIX I**

## **Examples**

# APPENDIX I

## EXAMPLES

### Introduction:

#### Depotentialized?:

*'A Life in a Day of Philip Ross ... Philip Ross has Down's syndrome and cannot speak ... Now 45, he is able to express himself, one letter at a time, with a Lightwriter, an electronic keyboard. This story is the culmination of many hours of hard work over several months ... "I love to paint. I've sold a couple of paintings for £100. Good, eh? Work at what you love and you will succeed! When I am sad I use big strokes. When I'm happy, bright colours, smaller marks, more control. I'm in the middle of an arty feature single-handed at the moment. I'm trying to achieve different colours and real fancy shapes, stars and tearing soul. I like blood red, stars and silver-rich colours, real arty-smarty. My mood affects my work – there is pain in my heart and painting releases my soul ...".'*<sup>1</sup>

### Chapter I:

#### Joanna:

Joanna was one of about a hundred eleven-year-old girls in their first year at the Grammar School at which I was Head of Music. Like many of them, she had learned to play the recorder at primary school and, shortly after her arrival at my school, she began lessons on the flute, although she also continued tuition on the recorder. Eventually, her enthusiasm for music began to grow, and so piano lessons were arranged for her as well, courtesy of the school's bursary fund for music. A piano had to be found for her too, and a kind benefactor had given the school an upright piano which was available for a pupil who showed sufficient motivation to warrant its loan to them – it was our 'roving' piano – moved about every four or five years to another child's home.

However, Joanna's musical accomplishments were not considered outstanding – in fact, so many pupils were involved in music at the school, that it was an unusual child who did not take part in some musical activity or other. Joanna was a good, all-round musician, willingly involved in the music department's ethos of maintaining a buoyant structure which would accommodate the musical aspirations of every pupil. She played in ensembles, gave solo performances at concerts, sang in choirs, and chose music as a subject in public examinations. By conventional, 'hierarchical' standards, she would have been considered to be 'moderately talented', but probably not 'gifted', in the sense of being an obvious candidate for a place at a leading conservatoire of music (she herself admits to being a 'bad' pianist).

During Joanna's time at the school, I was putting the finishing touches to my own method of teaching class music through the composition of music – a method from which children younger than Joanna were to benefit to a greater extent than those in her 'year'. Briefly, I made sure that all children had 'hands-on' experience within a classroom situation, so that they understood the essentials of music theory in a practical way. Gradually, they progressed from group improvisation with instruments and voices, to composing short pieces in partnership with a

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<sup>1</sup> Sunday Times. 22-10-2000.



friend, to notating their work, and then to individual notated compositions. Many of the children, by the age of sixteen, were involved in composing quite sophisticated pieces lasting three or four minutes, for a variety of instruments. Once they reached this stage, I had to find time to tutor them individually, but the rewards were great.<sup>2</sup>

Joanna, though, reached the age of sixteen without producing notated compositions, for my method was not yet functioning throughout the school. However, when she was in her first year of 'Advanced level' studies, details were sent to me of *The Kent Young Composer of the Year* event, which comprised a series of workshops for pupils whose submitted compositions had impressed the panel of judges (led by the composer, Paul Patterson). I suggested to a rather surprised Joanna that she try her hand at a composition to submit to the event, so wrote, in the space of a couple of weeks, a piece for solo flute *Anima* (her own title). The first I saw of this composition, was when it was complete – it was, most definitely, 'all her own work'. Consequently, *Anima* won Joanna a *Kent Young Composer of the Year* award at a special concert and ceremony at the University of Kent at Canterbury, and Patterson was so impressed with her ability, that he encouraged her (and another pupil of mine at the same time<sup>3</sup>) to apply for one of the coveted undergraduate places for the study of composition at the Royal Academy of Music. They both gained a place, and Joanna excelled as a composer, winning eleven prizes during her four years as an Academy student. She now balances a teaching career with fulfilling commitments as a composer – *et voilà* – 'talent'!

Michael:

As I write this thesis, I am involved in teaching an individual pupil to play the viola. Michael is twelve years old, and actually began playing the violin about six years ago, transferring to viola after five years. He is academically above average for his age, particularly in reading and mathematics, and he enjoys the study of musical theory. Nevertheless, stringed instruments are immensely difficult to play, for they require delicate balances between physical and mental capacities at all levels. Early on Michael found his personal difficulties lay in maintaining a sense of underlying pulse while appreciating that this pulse is what is divided up in the symbols of notation used for each beat. Furthermore, it is one thing to understand the underlying principle of this, but quite another to achieve in practice. Coupled with that, he did not find it easy to accomplish the physical co-ordination necessary to make the many, different, fine movements of hands, arms and fingers on both bow and violin at once, neither to read music which he had not seen before.

Despite having an excellent sense of pitch, Michael's difficulties prevented him from making rapid progress 'playing tunes' so, given different circumstances, he, and his parents, might easily have been told he was 'not talented'. However, our patience has been rewarded. Having endeavored to teach Michael a good technique for both bowing and fingering, so that he feels secure in his ability to tackle new music, and helping him to overcome his weaknesses, I gained new insight into such problems, and was interested to discover that his difficulties with rhythm and pulse, physical co-ordination and sight-reading were all connected.

The main solution to Michael's problems of co-ordinating what his brain was telling him he should do, but what his body seemed unable to accomplish, seemed to lie in his eye-movements. As a rapid reader, he was already at that stage in reading when one does not take in the individual letters of a word, or, indeed, the individual words of a sentence, but his eyes were darting along with the typically jerking movements of an accomplished reader. I explained to him that he needed to take a couple of steps back from this acquired skill in reading words, to the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf Dunn. 1992b.

<sup>3</sup> Hélène Godfrey, who had been composing music since the age of eleven, and also won the title *Kent Young Composer of the Year*.



stage when every symbol on the page had to be regarded – then that must be done with as smooth an eye-movement as possible. Now, there is no holding him back – he is playing in such a manner that anyone listening to him would, by the hierarchical standards with which we are now so familiar, say that he possesses *talent*.

Matthias:

My third example lies outside my own immediate sphere of influence. Matthias is the youngest son of long-standing Bavarian friends. Several members of both sides of the family play instruments – mostly the piano or the recorder, and Matthias expressed a wish to have piano lessons like his older brother. This was duly arranged. However, after a few lessons, which he enjoyed, his teacher told his parents that it would be better if he did not continue, *for he could not sing in tune!* This was reported to me when I was paying them a visit, and Matthias, who was listening, said: ‘*Niemals will ich Klavier spielen!*’ (I never want to play the piano!). This was said quite ferociously, and left me feeling very angry that the family had come across a teacher who, firstly, did not seem to appreciate that some boys in particular (as well as some girls) appear to find this skill quite hard to master in their early years, and secondly that it can be taught - with patience. So, Matthias is ‘not talented’?

### Chapter III:

Nursery Rhymes and songs – examples of paradigmatic forms:

#### Tension/compression/inspiration

Hush-a-bye baby  
When the wind blows  
When the bough breaks  
Down will come baby,

Bye, baby bunting,  
Gone to get a rabbit skin

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake,  
Bake me a cake  
Pat it and prick it  
And put in the oven

#### Relaxation/rarefaction/expiration

on the tree top.  
the cradle will rock.  
the cradle will fall.  
cradle and all.

Daddy’s gone a-hunting,  
To wrap the baby bunting in.

baker’s man,  
as fast as you can!  
and mark it with B,  
for Baby and me.

Even if they are not metered iambically, some still tend to conform to the same pattern:

Baa, baa, black sheep,  
Yes, sir, yes, sir,  
One for the master,  
One for the little boy

have you any wool?  
three bags full.  
and one for the dame,  
who lives down the lane.

Twinkle, twinkle,  
How I wonder  
Up above

little star,  
what you are.  
the world so high,



Like a diamond  
Two older, familiar songs:

Summer is  
Loud now sing  
Groweth seed  
And spring the wood

in the sky.

a-coming in,  
cuckoo!  
and bloweth mead,  
a-new.<sup>4</sup>

*Greensleeves:*

Alas, my love,  
To cast me off  
For I have lovéd  
Delighting in your

you do me wrong  
discourteously  
you so long  
company.

One from Shakespeare:<sup>5</sup>

Where the bee sucks  
In the cowslip's bell  
There I couch  
On a bat's back  
After summer  
Merrily, merrily  
Under the blossom

there suck I,  
I lie;  
when owls do cry.  
I do fly  
merrily (merrily)<sup>6</sup>  
shall I live now,  
that hangs on the bough.

And two folk-songs:

Blow the wind southerly,  
Blow the wind south  
Blow the wind southerly,  
Blow bonny breeze,

southerly, southerly,  
o'er the bonny blue sea.  
southerly, southerly,  
bring my lover to me.

Speed, bonny boat,  
Over the sea  
Carry the lad  
'Onward!'

like a bird on the wing,  
to Skye.  
that is born to be King,  
The sailors cry.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This is a familiar 'round' from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but was probably also a dance, for it reflects the faster rate of breathing when dancing. The words are transcribed into modern English.

<sup>5</sup> Ariel's final song in *The Tempest*. Act V Scene 1.

<sup>6</sup> An extra merrily is placed here because of a rhythmic hiatus.

<sup>7</sup> Obviously, much more analysis of this nature would need to be done in order to establish if the pattern suggested is one that is sustained throughout the repertoire but, for the present, I regard it as a persuasive idea, predicated upon the notion that neuronal patterning is a non-specific determinant – a 'plastic' learned frame of reference.

But there is another way of introducing nursery rhymes to the infant, and that occurs earlier in post-natal life than reading to them. Rocking a baby in one's arms to soothe it to sleep, while chanting a rhyme, is another universal mode of behavior,<sup>8</sup> and would appear to be undertaken at something like twice the speed of the breathing pattern. This breaks up the phrasing outlined above, in the following manner – L standing for a movement in one direction, and R for the movement in the other direction. One example will suffice:

Hush-a-bye baby		on the tree top.
L	R	L
When the wind blows		the cradle will rock.
L	R	L
When the bough breaks		the cradle will fall.
L	R	L
Down will come baby,		cradle and all.
L	R	L

This clearly adds another rhythmic layer to the words, and those familiar with musical convention will recognize that L and R correspond to what is called the rhythmic *beat*. Later in childhood, it will be possible to take this speeded-up iambic structure as a basis first for marching, then for skipping steps and dancing the gallop.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly too, these rhymes and songs are the easiest melodies of all to harmonize within the tonal system (even though *Summer is a-coming in* and *Greensleeves* are both modal), for they require just one of the three primary triads to underpin each strong accent (the L and R beats) – no need for accented dissonance – in fact, the use of the word ‘tension’ in any sense with reference to the above examples is to court criticism, but it is justified as an analogy. Perhaps music aimed at adults which bears the same simple structure, leads one towards the epithet ‘comfort music’: ‘... much of the organization of classic music reveals, by its regularity, symmetry and simple harmony, its relation with, if not derivation from, popular and dance music. Construction by phrases of the same length, especially if their number of measures is two, four or eight times two, and if subdivision into two equally long segments adds a certain kind of symmetry, contributes much to memorability; knowing the first half, it is almost possible to conjecture the second half’.<sup>10</sup>

#### Pre-linguistic sounds:

There are, of course, many sounds made by the infant which are not linguistically objectified – some of these are bi-syllabic, and I have examined several recorded examples.<sup>11</sup> A ten-week-old boy, recorded as he woke up one morning, repeated ‘a-a’ then there was a rather ‘snuffly’ pause

<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately, it is a mode of behavior in danger of being lost. I happen to think it is a desirable thing to do, but my experience teaching young children tells me that large numbers of them do not have that tradition behind them. As I go on to delve deeper into the teleological implications of this tradition, it may be appreciated that my concern at its absence in the lives of so many is justified.

<sup>9</sup> I am irritated by the suggestion that some children are ‘rhythmically illiterate’ – no child is, in my view. In other words, the basic iambic pattern is a learned frame of reference for us all, but reinforcement in infancy consolidates it, so that, when physical co-ordination is at a stage for the child to be able to manage marching, skipping and galloping, it will call upon this learned frame of reference to be able to accomplish those movements. *Kindermusik* classes for infants are based on this premise, and are highly effective in achieving that result. Later, in school, even those who have not had the same advantages can, with practice, accomplish the same – but it may take time and patience. All too often there is little time and, under pressure of time, teachers are forced to abandon the effort. It is therefore inexcusable to label those thus disadvantaged as being ‘not musical’.

<sup>10</sup> S and I p409

<sup>11</sup> ECD 7 and 92.



as if he were listening, before he began 'a-a' again, but anxiety took over and he began to cry. At nine months, a baby girl was laughing and playing with obvious amusement, saying 'he-he' many times over, with a strong emphasis on the 'h'. At 27 months, a little girl was babbling and vocalizing within a considerable pitch-range as if in imitation of inflected speech, and with clear vowels; ba-bop, ba-bop-boo, de-de, ti-ti, ha-ti, ba-bu, bu-pa, da-du (the last, repeated very quickly!). I also personally observed a 13-month-old German boy 'whimpering', pointing, and saying repeatedly: 'u-huh' and 'ock-y'. His parents could not relate these sounds to words he might have heard. It is certainly possible that all these sounds have semantic significance in some languages.

A young infant's responses to music:

Naturally, I have taken a keen interest in my (first) grandchild's responses to sound and to music. During pregnancy, her mother, who is naturally friendly and chatty was, more often than not, surrounded by people to whom she would be talking. My son (Jessica's father) is equally talkative, given the chance, and they both have well-modulated voices, laugh a lot, and are not given to shouting. The television and the radio are not switched on excessively, and they don't listen to loud music. Neither of them play musical instruments, although both did as children. This background would seem to be ideal.

Born on March 1<sup>st</sup> 2000, Jessica exhibited an immediate and dramatic response to different sounds, which could only be described as interest and curiosity. Within days she tried to turn her head in the direction of each 'new' voice and (though this may have happened earlier) at the age of three weeks I observed her tip her head backwards towards the sound as her father entered the house, calling 'hello' from the hall, and I am told she always responded to his voice from her first days.

From the beginning, I sang her a welcome whenever I saw her, using the 'falling minor third' interval so common in children's songs and games. In addition, I sang many nursery rhymes and moved her in time to them – all of which she enjoyed. Jessica made rapid physical progress and, at the age of seven months, was well able to stand up while holding onto furniture, and at the age of nine months she was walking round the room – still holding on to things for another month – then she was freely walking. This meant that she could move herself to music, which she did from seven months, and which she has continued to do ever since - whenever she hears music she sways, moves about and gestures with her hands in the air. Now, she selects the right button on the tape-recorder and turns her music tape on whenever she likes. All of this is accomplished with broad smiles.

At the age of about seven months she spent some time with me on my own and, to give her a change of activity, I sat her on my lap while I watched a half-hour program on television which featured the music of Bach. Jessica was riveted – she sat absolutely still whenever the music was quiet, and swayed from side to side when it was more lively. Towards the end, she wriggled to get down from my lap, and stood on the floor holding on to the chair. At that moment, the most lively piece in the program burst forth with trumpets and drums. As far as she was able, she jiggled up and down to the music, and laughed. She had concentrated on the complete half-hour's program.

Two months later, I was in the car with the family – Jessica in her car seat and, at that time, she took a great delight in singing. This took the form of long notes of continuous pitch, to a loud 'ah' sound. We all found it amusing, but I decided to imitate her, so we had about five minutes of my singing along with her – then everyone joined in. At first, we all sang Jessica's notes, then I started to sing at a slightly different pitch – Jessica cottoned on immediately in imitation. I have no idea how long this went on, but it got us about twenty miles along a main road.



I have introduced Jessica to the piano – her parents don't own one yet – but she loves to play it while sitting on my lap. She plays all the notes she can reach, sometimes 'banging' as all children do, but alternating that with the most delicate placing of single fingers on notes. She like to hear me play her favorite nursery rhymes. I have also let her hear a tuning-fork close to her ear, and then played the same note on the piano. She listens very intently.

Jessica's maternal grandfather used to play the recorder so, when she was about thirteen months old, he decided to get it out and play it to her. Very quickly, she asked to have it – he gave it to her, and she held it the 'right way up', put it in her mouth and blew immediately, making a good sound. It has been said that such young children can't 'blow' in this way – but the recorder now is one of her favorite toys (I'm not so sure if her parents like it to the same extent!). I bought her bongo drums for her first birthday, and she was intrigued to hear me tap out the rhythm of her name.

Jessica will be given every opportunity to play music if she wishes, but I am convinced we need do no more at present than we are, for she lives in a very satisfactory aural environment, with everyone around her talking and singing with her. We will see if this translates into a deep interest in music later on.

## Chapter V:

### Pupil 1:

From my own work with young composers of school age I present two examples of students whose adaptation to unresolved dissonance was not without difficulty for, generally speaking, long before composers' works are heard in public concerts, there will have been a considerable apprenticeship within the transference/counter-transference relationship with teachers.. However, no pupil of mine (and some were composing with real commitment at the age of eleven) composed in any other genre other modal, then tonal for their first attempts, but as they grew older and were exposed to more music of a different nature, I began to expect them to 'stretch their wings' and to enter their own 'musical time'. The first example is a girl who, at the age of sixteen, composed a three-movement sonata for flute and piano. We worked on it together, for she needed, quite naturally, some guidance as to methods of expanding her ideas - basic compositional techniques in fact.

She was herself a fine pianist and viola player, but she had apparently for some years been in a state of mild depression, for which she received medication. I was aware that she fended off dissonance, because she used to say she only wanted to write 'beautiful music', but, mindful of my (perceived) obligation to enlarge her musical horizons, I tried to encourage her to be more interested in unresolved dissonance. During one session, I demonstrated note-clusters to her<sup>12</sup> and she rounded on me, saying: 'Mrs.Dunn – all you like are bangs and crashes!' Negative transference swung in to replace the positive, and this was a defining moment for both of us, for: 'Loud noises may mobilize archaic memories of fearful sounds stemming from a stage in the individual's development "when noise was something material, perhaps of an acutely threatening or ... engulfing or devouring corporeal nature".'<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Note-clusters, generally speaking, can be said to be random collections of notes sounded simultaneously, achieved on the piano by playing with the fists, the flat of the hand, or even with the forearm. Occasionally one meets with the request to place a plank of wood along all the keys at once and then to press it down – a fairly dramatic sound effect – especially with the dampers raised from the strings! The audial experience of the consequent vibrations is detectable for at least fifty seconds.

<sup>13</sup> Feder et al Vol.I, p.288. Quoting Niederland W.G: *Early Auditory Experiences, Beating fantasies and Primal Scene*. The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child. Vol.18 1958, pp.471-502.



This pupil's outburst against a teacher would have been thought inconceivable to anyone else in the school, for she was normally placid and compliant. It obviously represented a display of distress, and so I could not bring myself to insist on any further adaptation to unresolved dissonance on her part, though I suspected that, given time, she would eventually do so, as signs were already evident in the flute sonata. After she left school, she went to study music at Cambridge University, by which time she was writing music in a *pastiche* of Ravel. Sadly, her work was derided by her tutor, who was not prepared to countenance a slow development; the result was she became impotent with regard to all her studies and, to my knowledge (for we still keep in touch), she has not composed since.<sup>14</sup>

#### Pupil 2:

Another pupil, far from being depressed, was a lively and communicative girl who, at the age of fifteen, was composing quite regularly. However, she too, was writing *pastiche*, although quite flamboyant *pastiche* – rather in the Romantic style of Rachmaninov. I tried to judge the moment when I could tactfully suggest that she be more true to her time and, because she possessed greater resilience than the previous pupil, I felt able to be more insistent that she become harmonically adventurous. She was struggling one day to complete her latest piece for piano, which was turning out to be a long peroration in the style of Rachmaninov (again!), and I told her, in fact, to abandon it. I asked her, instead, to go away and come back next time with the most unusual chord she could find on the piano – we would then analyze it and assess its potential for development. She was none too pleased and, rather dramatically, 'flounced out'.

According to her sister, she arrived home saying something like 'I hate Mrs.Dunn!' – she sat down at the piano and started banging around on it muttering uncomplimentary things about me. However, in a short space of time, she 'happened' upon a particular chord – she obviously liked it so she wrote it down and, as meek as a lamb, brought it to me to hear. It was, indeed, an exciting chord to work with and, to cut a long story short, she developed a very contrapuntal and atonal movement for a string quartet from its elements – with which she won a prize as 'Kent Young Composer of the Year'. She went on, first to study composition at the Royal Academy of Music, where her work was highly regarded, and then at King's College, London.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### An example of a child's reaction to the 'beat':

'Valerie, who does not walk or talk, is eight years old. She has a developmental delay similar to *cri du chat* syndrome ( ... [giving] the child a cry like the mewing of a cat) ... her attention was drawn to the keyboard ... One day, having selected a sound like an organ for her, we watched as (after some tentative exploration of the keys) she held down two fingers on adjacent notes (a major second interval). By virtue of the "organ" voice selected, this harmonic interval continued to sound at the same volume until she released the keys, which she seemed reluctant to do. She seemed absorbed by the continuous "beat" set up by the dissonant sound of the two notes – the throb of the conflict between the sets of vibrations.

We noticed how Valerie revelled in this dissonant sound, for she moved her head up and down while appearing to be listening intently. If she landed on a concordant interval she would quickly abandon it but, if it was dissonant, would hold it on, moving her head up and down and wriggling her feet in excitement.

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<sup>14</sup> I know of at least one other, now successful composer, to whom the same thing happened as a student at the same Cambridge College, with the same tutor. His work was rescued, ten years later, by the sympathetic tutoring of an experienced professional composer in London, and he is now a successful, published composer.



On one occasion not long after this had started, I sat on a low chair on the other side of the keyboard so that I could see Valerie's face as she played. She held her head down until she found a dissonant interval. As its beat filled the air she raised her head, stared straight into my eyes, her normally unfocused expression cleared, and for a long, magical moment we communicated our mutual appreciation of music'.<sup>15</sup>

## Chapter VIII

### 'Doodling':

As a result of my own teaching, I can vouch for the success of 'doodling'. A piano was placed in one of the school's entrance halls and, as I invariably arrived at school about one hour before the official start of the school day, I was able to enjoy the sight and sound of two young pupils, neither of whom had formal knowledge of playing the piano, daily seated at this instrument together working out their own, improvised piano duets. This went on for at least a year. They never seemed to notice me and I never 'woke them from their dream'. They felt they had to arrive early, because during the school day, every one of the dozen or so pianos and keyboards was in constant use.

Many of my young composers gleaned compositional ideas from their 'doodlings' – indeed, I used to encourage it – but I called it *improvization*, and suggested they have a tape-recorder running while engaged in the activity, so that they could later recall fertile ideas and motifs.

## Chapter IX part ii:

### 'Musical Invective':

In Slonimsky's book we find lists of adverse comments on music we now take for granted, such as: 'Beethoven always sounds to me like the upsetting of bags of nails, with here and there an also dropped hammer. (From John Ruskin's letter to John Brown, dated February 6, 1881)'.

'In search of ear-rending dissonances, torturous transitions, sharp modulations, repugnant contortions of melody and rhythm, Chopin is altogether indefatigable ... Had he submitted this music to a teacher, the latter, it is to be hoped, would have torn it up and thrown it at his feet – and this is what we symbolically wish to do. (L.Rellstab, *Iris*, Berlin, July 5, 1833)'.

'Then came *Iberia* by Debussy. Ah! This is no longer the Spain of Bizet or of Chabrier! What fog, what nostalgic vision! But perhaps there is a typographical error in the program. I have it! The first letter of the title fell off, and one must read *Siberia*. Then everything becomes clear. (René Brancour, *Le Ménestrel*, Paris, June 28, 1913)'.<sup>16</sup>

### *Panic*:

Someone who 'got away with it' with probably the modern equivalent of *Le Sacre du Printemps* was Harrison Birtwistle, with *Panic* – commissioned for the 'Last Night of the Proms.' in 1995, by Sir John Drummond (whose last night as Director of the Proms. it also was). *Panic* is a Dionysian orgy of aesthetic space – it links improvisation (the drum kit) with notated music for

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<sup>15</sup> Dunn. 1992a, p.110.

<sup>16</sup> Slonimsky. 1969, pages 52, 83 and 306 respectively.



solo saxophone and everyone else. It aroused huge controversy, and many thought the composer was 'getting away with it', but *Panic* does not lack 'meaning', for no judgement would be passed upon it at all if it did: '*Panic* is indeed the most extreme example of this kind of "dramatic flow" in Birtwistle's output and is perhaps the only one of his pieces to end with an affirmative "bang" – to reach some kind of goal rather than dissolving away'.<sup>17</sup>

## **Conclusion:**

A different type of 'depotentialization':

Being 'shut out' from composed music has been the fate of far too many children I have encountered in my career - their immanent plenipotential having been thwarted through lack of opportunity. The efforts I and some of my colleagues have made to try to rescue the situation for such children have been intense and continuous. It is sometimes deeply frustrating and depressing. However, my involvement with organizing music festivals has resulted in my inaugurating a program of work-experience for local young people. One school in a deprived area (considered to be a 'failing school'), and from which these pupils came has not had a permanent class-music teacher for some time.

Two of the boys were 'on duty' for a string quartet concert – which surely would have been considered by many adults as an unsuitable event for them to attend ('they will be bored – they will not understand the music' etc. etc. Even I was anxious lest they would feel they had had a wasted Saturday evening). After the concert, one of them said 'I really liked the James MacMillan' (MacMillan's first string quartet, a modern, dissonant work); the other said 'I liked the Schubert' (the *Death and the Maiden* quartet). My only comment would be, thank goodness we didn't allow assumptions about the kind of music they might enjoy to rule our judgement.

As for their futures, the first boy is now determined to fulfill his ambition to be an actor, while the second boy, having stated his wish to compose music, has already had guidance from a professional composer, and I am teaching him theory and composition – his first piece is short, but complete.

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<sup>17</sup> Bruce. 1996, p.12.

## **APPENDIX II**

**The Dream-work Process:  
an analogy with the composition of music**



## APPENDIX II

### THE DREAM-WORK PROCESS: an analogy with the composition of music

*The diagram is to be understood from the bottom up*

	<b>DREAM (<i>Freud</i>)</b>	<b>MUSIC (<i>Dunn</i>)</b>	
U N C O N S C I O U S	<p>manifest dream</p> <p>dream-content</p> <p>dream-image</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>secondary <u>revision</u></i></p>	<p>manifest, completed score.</p> <p>theme/section.</p> <p>sketches</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>secondary <u>revision</u></i></p>	C O N S C I O U S

some attributes and functions of the conscious (*the secondary process*): in this context, the chief function is the presentation of something comprehensible through its general attributes and functions, which include temporality; increasing levels of differentiation, selection and definition; rationalisation; substitution and distortion; inhibition; synthesis of perceptual data from external stimuli ('day's residues'; recent acquisition of intriguing sounds); sense of 'reality'; Jung's concept of the *Persona* (mask).

The *preconscious* ('censorship') is located here.

U N C O N S C I O U S	<p>dream-elements</p> <p>dream-thoughts</p> <p>latent material/mnemic traces</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>primary process</i></p>	<p>motifs</p> <p>notes/cells</p> <p>latent material/ mnemic traces. memory-bank of <i>affective</i> sounds.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>primary process</i></p>
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some attributes and functions of the unconscious (*the primary process*): timelessness; instinctual (*Id*) impulses; de-differentiation and diffusion; irrationality; retention of memory traces; psychical ('poetic') reality; syncretic thought; exemption from mutual contradiction of ideas; Jung's concepts of the *Shadow* side of personality, and of archetypal activation (*animus, anima* etc.).

## **APPENDIX III**

*Personae*



## APPENDIX III

### PERSONAE

#### A

Abraham, Karl: German psychoanalyst, born in Bremen in 1877. He formulated ideas of human development classified in stages of libidinal advances, which could be interrupted by fixations, thus hindering psychological maturation. He died in Berlin in 1925.

Adler, Alfred: Psychiatrist, born in Austria in 1870, he died in Scotland in 1937. Strongly associated with Sigmund Freud at first, he later split from strict Freudianism, formulated a genre of individual 'self-esteem' psychology, and established a range of child-guidance clinics.

Adorno, Theodore: German philosopher, born in Frankfurt am Main in 1903; died in Switzerland in 1969. He had a knowledge of music, sociology and psychology. One of the founders of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, he supposedly shunned authoritarianism, yet his writings can be exceptionally didactic in tone, and stylistically severe.

#### B

Bach, Carl Phillip Emmanuel: Fifth child of Johann Sebastian. Composer, keyboard player (especially of the clavichord) and author of *Essay on the True Art of Keyboard Playing*. His output of sonatas and symphonies places him among those composers developing sonata form, which he graced with the new *Empfindsamer stil* ('sensitive' style). 1714-1788.

Bach, Johann Christian: Eighteenth of Johann Sebastian's twenty children. 'The English Bach'. He lived in London for the second half of his life and his prodigious output included symphonies, keyboard concertos and chamber music, most of which demonstrated his facility as a melodist. He introduced the clarinet into the English opera orchestra.. 1735-1782.

Bach, Johann Sebastian: German composer, 1685-1750. Chiefly known as organist of St.Thomas' Protestant Church in Leipzig, his astonishing career as performer, teacher and choir-master is, nevertheless, absolutely overshadowed by his compositional output, which epitomizes all the genres that were flourishing at the time (*cf* Buxtehude, Praetorius and Schütz). In his hands, the tonal system was a demonstrably effective tool, placed at the service of his unerring sense of form and balance.

Bach, Wilhelm Friedman: 1710-1784. Eldest son of Johann Sebastian. Composer and virtuoso organist who worked first in Dresden then in Halle. He wrote sonatas and symphonies and a number of church cantatas.

Bartók, Béla: Composer, born in Hungary in 1881, died in New York in 1945. He is credited (together with Zoltan Kodaly, 1882-1967) with contributing to the exposure of Eastern Europe's rich heritage of folk music. Because of this, it could be said that his musical language leans towards the prosody of the Finno-Ugrian language-group. He is clearly indebted to Beethoven, whose late quartets lean towards the same east-of-Vienna musicalities, and Bartók's music possesses a similar rhythmic vitality.



**Beethoven, Ludwig van:** Composer, with heroic aspirations channelled into humanitarian ideals; born in Bonn in 1770, died in Vienna in 1827. His life and work is inspirational to many and exceptionally widely known, but fresh avenues of exploration into his compositions could well begin with his deafness and the mythopoeic content of his music.

**Bennett, Richard Rodney:** British composer, pianist, prolific in several genres, from operas to film music, born in 1936. His solo cabaret-style performances, singing songs to his own accompaniment are extremely entertaining!

**Berg, Arnold:** Austrian composer, 1885-1935. One of the 'New Viennese School', who came gradually to dodecaphonic music, yet never abandoning his early lyricism. His two operas *Wozzeck* and *Lulu* (completed by Friedrich Cerha) and his violin concerto are possibly the works for which he is chiefly remembered.

**Berio, Luciano:** Composer, born in Oneglia, Italy in 1925. An exponent of a branch of 'new notation', distinguished by its functional clarity, to enable performance of 'extended instrumental techniques'. His *Sequenza* for female voice is a wordless soliloquy which, whether he knew it or not, is in fact an excellent demonstration of staccato rhythmic syllables functioning as tiny contoured motifs set within overall contoured phrases of monodic chanting (*cf* Chapter IV).

**Bernstein, Leonard:** American composer, conductor, lecturer, writer and broadcaster. Born in 1918, he died in 1990. His *oeuvre* is distinguished by its eclecticism and its involvement with contemporary issues but, as it ranges from Broadway shows to symphonies, it cannot be easily classified – always a problem for critics.

**Bingen, Hildegard von:** 1098-1179. German Composer. Hildegard was the tenth child in a noble family who, following tradition, 'gave' her to the Church. She managed by this means to gain an education, and learned Latin, became a singer, composer, naturalist, physician and founded a convent. Recently, much interest has been generated in her work, via the women's movement in general and musicologists in particular.

**Bion, Wilfred:** British psychoanalyst, born in India in 1897. He served in the army in the First World War, and then studied medicine, later specializing in psychiatry. In 1956 he became Director of the London Clinic of Psycho-Analysis, moving to California to teach 20 years later. He died in 1979. His contribution to psychoanalytic theory is immense, with his work on the analysis of group dynamics proving particularly discerning.

**Birtwistle, Harrison:** British composer born in 1934. The uncompromising nature of his sound-world is, more frequently than not, perceived as alienating, and detrimental to the cause of new music. However, his music is one step removed from being either motivic or cellular – it is atomic – constructed from the smallest particles, which gives it an individual logic.

**Bizet, Georges:** French composer, 1838-1875. His music is melodic, imaginative and colorfully orchestrated – epitomized in the opera *Carmen*, which hints at the verism Puccini excelled in later.

**Borodin, Alexander:** Russian composer, born in St.Petersburg in 1833, and died there in 1887. One representative of a disparate group of composers who were not primarily destined to study music. Borodin was an MD, a professor of chemistry, and he founded a School of Medicine for Women. He was a champion of romantic nationalism through music, and composed two symphonies leaving a third incomplete, but it is through the success of his opera *Prince Igor* that he is chiefly remembered.



**Boulez, Pierre:** French composer, conductor and writer, born in 1925. Probably reflecting the French structuralist aesthetic and his Schönbergian inheritance, his music is written according to clearly defined structural rules which accommodate a gamut of musical qualities including pitch, duration and loudness. As Director of the *Institut Recherche et Coordination Acoustiqu/Musique* in Paris ('IRCAM'), he has great influence on many younger composers.

**Bruckner, Anton:** Austrian organist, teacher and composer, 1824-1896. As a composer he was primarily a symphonist with nine published (the last one unfinished), but he has been accused of transferring a little too much of his organ style onto the orchestra, for his music is sometimes relentlessly homophonic (*cf* Denis Arnold 1991); one longs for the relief of counterpoint, a style with which Bruckner apparently struggled.

**Buxtehude, Dietrich:** Danish organist and composer, born c.1637. For most of his working life he was organist in Lübeck, where he died in 1707. His music influenced several North German composers, principally J.S.Bach, who travelled to Lübeck to learn from him, and whose own style is partly a legacy of that influence.

## C

**Cage, John:** American eclectic composer, 1912-1992. One of an inventive group of 'West Coast' composers, many of whom were interested in Eastern music and philosophy. He studied with Henry Cowell and Arnold Schönberg, but he is credited with being largely responsible for introducing aleatorism into music.

**Cattell, Raymond:** Psychologist, lecturer and writer. Born in England in 1905, he has worked extensively in America. He is known as an influential theorist of learning and personality.

**Chabrier, Emmanuel:** French civil servant turned composer, 1841-1894. Although some of his music was decidedly Germanic in style, his salon pieces for piano were sparkling and original, and admired by Ravel and Satie.

**Chopin, Fryderyk:** Pianist *extraordinaire*, and composer; born in Poland in 1810, died in Paris in 1849. Not always receiving the critical acclaim they deserve, his piano works are remarkable for their concentrated form and harmonic construction. For the psychoanalytic theorist, they represent, together with the music of Beethoven, one of the best examples of transformed *affect* – but one needs to analyze the harmony to discover those subtleties.

**Copland, Aaron:** American composer, born in 1900, died in 1990. His music, neither strictly tonal, modal or atonal, is a convincing mix of neoclassic sensibility with American influences permeating the melody and orchestration.

**Cowie, Elizabeth:** Lecturer at the University of Kent. Her research interests are in Film Studies and Women's Studies – women in film; psychoanalysis and the study of the position of women, etc.

## D

**Darwin, Charles Robert:** English naturalist (1809-1882), who sailed around the world collecting specimens and data. As a result he formulated such theories as *pangeneses*, *evolution* and *natural selection* but, like Freud and Jung, he has fallen foul of the conservative religious establishment in the Western world.



**Davie, Alan:** British painter, poet, musician, silversmith and jeweller, born in 1920. He found 'creativity' in everyone, and the influence of his work has extended to psychoanalytic theorists and, to some extent, to teachers.

**Davies, Peter Maxwell:** British composer, born in 1934. A member (with Harrison Birtwistle and Alexander Goehr) of 'the Manchester School', so his music shares with theirs a certain uncompromising style. However, though he is a fully paid-up member of the *avant garde*, as it were, his music has a vitality which transcends much of the difficulty experienced in coming to terms with it. He has concentrated a lot of his work in the Isles of Orkney, where he has lived for many years.

**Da Vinci, Leonardo:** Though chiefly revered as an artist, his wide range of achievements established his personification as 'Renaissance Man'. Da Vinci was born in Vinci, Italy in 1452; he died in Cloux, France, in 1519.

**Debussy, Claude:** French composer, 1862-1918 (he died in England), felt his desire to break the Wagnerian grip on his music to be validated once he had heard Indonesian gamelan at the Paris exhibition of 1889. He managed to combine an intensely-felt romantic descriptiveness, and novel orchestrations, with classic structural forms such as the so-called *golden section*.

**Delius, Frederick:** English composer, born in 1862, died in France in 1934. There is an underlying sentimentality in his music which does not seem to accord well with modern times. As a result of contracting syphilis, he became unable to write his music down, so Eric Fenby acted as his amanuensis. He composed at the piano, which resulted in different overtones when the music was orchestrated, detrimentally affecting (for some) their perception of his sound-world.

**Dufay, Guillaume:** c.1400-1474. Flemish composer, who benefited from the patronage of various French courts. His prolific compositional output reflects many of the *avant garde* harmonic and textural styles of the day, bridging the medieval church tradition and the early Renaissance.

**Dvořák, Antonin:** Czech composer, 1841-1904, chiefly remembered as a symphonist who, like his contemporary, Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) used classical forms and wrote rewardingly well for all instruments. His attractive compositional material was strongly imbued with a folk-melodic style, reflecting the nationalistic sentiments of the time.

## **E**

**Ehrenzweig, Anton:** 1908-1966. Artist, teacher, lecturer, broadcaster, writer, with a strong interest in Western European art music. His main influence lies in his perceiving a strong relationship between psychoanalytic theories of the unconscious mind and his own ideas on the creative process as regards art and music. His views found favor with such eminent artists, musicians and teachers as Alan Davie, Alexander Goehr, Bridget Riley and Michael Tippett. He worked closely with Marion Milner.

**Elgar, Edward:** 1857-1934. Began his musical career as a violinist in Worcestershire (one of his pupils was my uncle Michael, the brother of the poet, Siegfried Sassoon). He was self-taught as a composer but, as a practical man, he learnt a lot from arranging music, especially for the prison orchestra he went in to conduct. A composer of music in the symphonic tradition, he has ironically become the champion of English nationalism; in fact, his music is solidly Germanic in



tradition and character – the musical device of leitmotif, for example, permeates his choral works.

**Eysenck, Hans Jürgen:** British psychologist, born in Germany in 1916. His main work was the classification of personality traits, which took in the Jungian concepts of introversion and extraversion, together with a more general definition of neuroticism and psychotism.

## **F**

**Ferenczi, Sándor:** Psychoanalyst with an individual, liberal style, born in Hungary in 1873, who first became an MD in Vienna specializing in neurology and psychiatry. He visited the USA in the company of both Freud and Jung. His observations on ‘shell-shocked’ soldiers in the First World War informed his original theories on trauma. He died in 1933.

**Freud, Anna:** The youngest of Sigmund Freud’s six children, born in 1895. She became a child psychoanalyst, accompanying her parents to London in 1937, where she took charge of War Nurseries for children from the bombed East End of London. She was a devoted exponent of her father’s ideas, although she developed a clear theoretical base of her own in what can loosely be called ‘ego psychology’. She died in 1982, and her legacy is the Anna Freud Centre for children in London.

**Freud, Sigmund:** Born in Freiburg, Moravia in 1856, his family moved to Vienna, where he was educated and became an MD. He first specialized in neurology, and gained experience in Paris with the physician Charcot. However, he abandoned contemporary treatment methods (including hypnosis) in favor of ‘the talking cure’ as he called his new science of the mind, psychoanalysis. As a result, he coalesced the hitherto unfocused philosophies of the unconscious mind, and gave them a credible structure. However, although his work has assumed enormous cultural significance, and has many devotees who see its faults as well as its benefits, Freud remains an outstanding example of one whose life’s work is frequently vilified purely on the basis of received opinion. He escaped Nazi persecution and died in London in 1938.

**Friedrich, Caspar David:** Painter, whose visual expression of existential isolation was outstanding for his time. He was born in Griefswald, Germany in 1774, and died in Dresden in 1840.

## **G**

**Gesualdo, Carlo:** (Prince of Venosa) born c.1561, died in Gesualdo in 1613. Italian madrigal composer, whose experimentations with chromaticism lend a dramatic and erotic tone to his music and, when the listener realizes he murdered his wife and her lover, his style of music seems even more to suit the man.

**Goehr, Alexander:** Composer, academic, and BBC producer. Born in Germany in 1932, he was brought to England with his family in 1933. His music, though associated with ‘The Manchester School’ of Birtwistle and Maxwell Davies, is more correctly discerned as taking its polyphonic serialism from Schönberg, while its ‘classical’ elements are Germanic.



Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von: 1749-1832; *Sturm und Drang* German poet, novelist, playwright and philosopher. His most famous work, *Faust*, is a poetic and philosophical allegory of his own life as all of those things – the whole imbued with a quest for knowledge and experience and therefore standing at the gateway to Romantic individualism.

Gombrich, Ernst: Fine Art specialist and writer; a Professor Emeritus of the University of London, he was born in Vienna in 1909. His writing is imbued with philosophical traditions and knowledge of psychoanalytic concepts.

Grainger, Percy: Australian-born composer and concert pianist, 1882-1961, who became an American citizen in 1918. He has a reputation for light-weight music, but Benjamin Britten arranged a performance at Aldeburgh of Grainger's *Shallow Brown* for baritone and small orchestra, which gave the lie to that impression. He was also a lecturer, writer and ethnomusicologist who collected many hundreds of folk-songs, largely from Britain and Denmark.

## H

Haydn, Josef: 1732-1809. Composer who was fortunate in having the wealthy and musically literate Esterházy family as patrons, although it was the custom for court composers to be numbered among the servants, and the Esterházy palaces were isolated from Vienna itself. Haydn turned his circumstances to his advantage, engaging many musicians to perform the stylistically individual, sophisticated music he was writing. Full of wit, sparkle and dramatic tensions in its own right, Haydn's music nevertheless provided the foundation upon which Beethoven was able to build.

Henze, Hans Werner: Born in Germany in 1926. A symphonist and composer of music-theatre, he has published autographically-tinged writings on music, which explain his reasons for preferring most things Italian to German, and he lived for a time in Italy, his socialist ideals informing his directorship of the festival *Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte Montepulciano*.

Holst, Gustav: 1874-1934. Gustav's ancestry was Swedish. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London, under Charles Stanford but, eschewing that type of Germanicism, developed one of the most individual voices in English music, with folk-song a considerable influence. He wrote no symphonies, but his output includes opera and other choral works, with *The Planet's Suite* by far the most well-known of his orchestral works. Like Elgar and Tippett, he had a wide experience of teaching.

Howells, Herbert: 1892-1983. English organist, teacher and composer – like Holst, a pupil of Stanford, and his works retain some Germanic character, together with a pastoral flavor. Chiefly remembered for his choral music, it is popular with choirs but, where an orchestra is also used, the orchestration is often overloaded with detail.

## I

Ireland, John: English composer, 1879-1962. Like Holst and Howells, a pupil of Stanford, and he himself was one of Benjamin Britten's teachers. There is little in his music which reflects Germanicism and his background as an organist. Instead, one is struck by his interest in modal music, especially in the Celtic tradition and in Tudor music. Small-scale chamber works, piano pieces and songs form the major part of his output.



## J

Jung, Carl Gustav: 1875-1961; the Swiss founder of Analytical Psychology. At first, Jung associated with Freud (from 1907-1912), but there were fundamental differences in the two men's approaches to researching the unconscious mind, and their split friendship resulted in the two 'camps' that exist to this day. On the surface only, Jung's approach appears to be the more imaginative of the two, but that frequently has the unfortunate result of his ideas being the subject of unfocused thinking. In fact, his *oeuvre* depicts an astonishing scholarship, for it takes in a vast range of anthropological and cultural detail, while overall, he promotes the idea, not only of a personal unconscious, but also of a collective unconscious. Concepts of *introversion* and *extraversion* are his, as is *individuation* – the responsibility a person has to integrate their unconscious (the *shadow*) with their conscious *persona*. On a non-clinical, theoretical level however, the work of Freud and Jung is complementary.

## K

Keeling, Andrew: British composer and lecturer, born in 1955, whose career spans playing in rock and pop bands before formally studying composition. His interests include Jungian analytical psychology.

Klein, Melanie: Child psychoanalyst, born in Vienna in 1882, who came to live in London in 1926. Her theories had a base in Freudian thought, but she greatly extended knowledge of the unconscious minds of children during their first year of life. She died in 1960 and her legacy is the important one of *object relations*, and the developmental stages of *paranoid/schizoid* and *depressive position*.

## L

Laban, Rudolf: Dance theorist and teacher. Born in Bratislava, died in Weybridge, England, in 1958. Devised a choreographic notation system *Labanotation*; also *choreutics* which tabulates 12 primary directions of human movement derived from geometric figures; also *eukinetics*, which classified dynamic and expressive movements. He greatly influenced sports science in diving and ice-skating, also industrial production anthropology.

Lacan, Jacques: Doctor of Medicine, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, he was born in Paris in 1901 and died there in 1981. A self-declared Freudian, he introduced Freudian theory into France. His own contribution to theory was based on the linguistic structuralist model informing his concepts of the unconscious involving signifier/signified and metaphor/metonymy. His clinical methods remain amongst the most controversial ever reported.

Lagache, Daniel: Intellectual, who entered the *École normale supérieure* in 1924, the same year as Jean-Paul Satre. Like Lacan, he thought language to be important in the structuring of personality. He became a professor at Strasbourg in 1937, and began to attempt a synthesis of psychoanalysis and psychology. In the 50's he became embroiled in a now famous, long-running schismatic ideological dispute which involved Lacan, among others.

Laing, Ronald David (but always known as 'R.D.Laing'): British psychiatrist, born in Glasgow in 1927, and famous for his insistence that mental disorders such as schizophrenia merited alternative, more sympathetic treatment that was the norm. He died in St.Tropez in 1989.



Laplanche, Jean: Psychoanalyst (analysed by Lacan), lecturer, writer and renowned Burgundian vintner, he is Director of the *Centre de Recherches en Psychanalyse et Psychopathologie* in Paris. As a theoretician, he expands and re-applies Freudian thought to suit contemporary needs.

Ligeti, György: Composer, born in Transylvania in 1923. With Ligeti's music one enters a very modern, individual, polyphonic sound-world, clearly rooted a distance away from traditional Germanic familiarities. Leavened with wit and excitement, his music frequently makes great demands upon performers (such as in the Piano *Études*).

Liszt, Franz: 1811-1886. Without doubt, Liszt was the pianistic equivalent of a 'pop idol' in his day, and is said to have been the first pianist to mount solo recitals. His over-weening narcissism seeped into his compositions which are triumphs of display over a general paucity of material. The performer, not the music, is the most important element. He was also a writer and a mystic, who became an *abbé* in the Roman Church.

Lutoslawski, Witold: Polish composer born in 1913. His music is typically cast in finely-wrought dense polyphonic textures with elements of aleatoric writing demanding new notation symbols poised within a general atonality. He has had considerable influence on Penderecki and the British composer Paul Patterson, for whom modern Polish music has provided inspiration. He died in 1994.

## M

MacMillan, James: Scottish composer, born in 1959. He has been influenced by Peter Maxwell Davis, with whom he shares a belief, born out in practice, in the value of music education. His own work is informed by socialism and devout Roman Catholicism, and combines serious intent with colorful orchestration and dramatic content.

Mahler, Gustav: Born in Bohemia in 1860, he died in Vienna in 1911. Few composer-conductors have been the subject of so much psychological supposition when, in reality, his life apart from his music was fairly typical for one in his time and situation. His compositions are undeniably late-romantic in terms of their Proustian ideational development and eventual length.

Maslow, Abraham: Humanistic psychologist and philosopher, specializing in theories of self-actualization. He proposed the famous *heirarchy of needs*, which posits a continuum in human behavior informed by satisfaction of physiological needs as being essential to fulfilment of psychological and spiritual needs. He was born in New York in 1908 and died in California in 1970.

Matthews, David: It is rare now to find a family produce more than one successful composer, but David (Artistic Director of the Deal Festival) and his younger brother Colin (Director of the Aldeburgh festival) are proof of the possibility. Born in London in 1943, David initially read classics before studying composition privately. His musical language arises out of his respect for Michael Tippett, and his compositions demonstrate a fine balance between ascerbic dramatic expression and an accommodating gentleness, spiced with appropriately-placed wit.

Mead, Margaret: American anthropologist, famous for her writings on the subject, 1901-1978. She had a particular interest in the peoples of Oceania, and documented her experiences carefully. Although there is much merit in her seminal work, it has now fallen somewhat out of favor by scholars.



Meltzer, Donald: Psychoanalyst within the Kleinian object-relations inheritance, although he continues to make a distinguished and quite personal contribution to psychoanalytic theory. His concerns lie with problems of 'interior spaces', internalization, identification and evacuation, and how they might relate to conditions such as autism.

Mendelssohn, Felix: German composer and conductor, 1809-1847, whose creative promise shone early and then appears to have been stifled by 19<sup>th</sup> century sensibilities. His finest output was composed before he was 21 and demonstrated a classical clarity of form and instrumentation, which was his entirely individual hallmark. It really is hard to imagine such idiomatic finesse as the string octet (1825) coming from the same pen as the relentlessly bourgeois *Elijah*, premièred at the Birmingham Festival in 1846.

Messiaen, Olivier: French composer and organist, born in 1908. Three strands coalesce in Messiaen's music – his Catholic faith, his love of nature (particularly bird-song of which he was an avid notator) and his interest in different modal scales. Consequently, his music cannot be mistakenly identified as belonging to someone else. His vast *Turangalila* Symphony expresses it all in a splendidly exotic, erotic and humorous mix. He died in 1992.

Michelangelo (full name: Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni), the 'divine artist' - painter, architect and sculptor. Born in Caprese, Italy in 1475, he died in Rome in 1564. All his work demonstrates the Renaissance obsession with perspective combined with a return to the idealized forms of classical times. This results in a seductive realism – the unique splendor of which (the Sistine Chapel ceiling, for example) was to inform art and art commentary up to the present time. Furthermore, Michelangelo's reportedly uncouth manner contributed not a little to the cult of the genius.

Milner, Marion: (pseudonym Joanna Field), psychologist and psychoanalyst, with a particular interest in those who feel their artistic creativity to be unsuccessful. She worked with Anton Ehrenzweig, whose ideas informed her pioneering work in art therapy. She died in 1998.

Mondrian, Pieter: Dutch artist, born in 1872; he died in New York in 1944. His early work is a collection of landscapes, portraits and still-lives. His interest in theosophy and mysticism informed his desire to access the essential nature of things; this is at its most striking in his series of 'tree' paintings, which demonstrate a 'journey' from realism to abstraction.

Montague, Steve: American composer, born in 1943, who has been resident in England since 1974. His main interest lies in electronic music (he was a Fulbright Fellow with the Polish Radio Electronic Studio in 1972), although he also accepted some influence from the minimalists, such as Terry Riley. His music is energetic and dramatic, with a direct 'narrative' impact.

Monteverdi, Claudio: 1567-1643. Italian composer, the power of whose music lies in its faithfulness to any text that it accompanied, the instrumental flamboyant delicacy, and his ability to perceive the direction in which he could advance the arts of monody and dissonance. This led to the establishment of the *seconda prattica*, where the words set assumed greater importance than they had in the *prima prattica* where the excellence of the part-writing itself was paramount.

Mozart, Leopold: Violinist and composer, 1719-1787, *Kappelmeister* to the Archbishop of Salzburg, and the father of Wolfgang Amadeus and Maria Anna ('Nannerl'). His own compositions eclipsed by those of his son, Leopold nevertheless had an influence, especially upon violin playing, for which he wrote a text book.



**Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus:** Born in Salzburg in 1756, died in Vienna in 1791. Composer, who live unhappily in the employ of the Archbishop, and of whom it might be said that his 'Dionysian' personality contrasted uneasily with his 'Apollonian' compositional abilities. Rather like J.S.Bach, he made his musical inheritance the tool of his own prowess – his compositions displaying a finely-wrought balance between form and content.

**Muldowney, Dominic:** Composer, born in Southampton in 1952. He studied with Jonathan Harvey, Bernard Rands and Harrison Birtwistle, taking over musical directorship of the National Theatre from Birtwistle in 1981, and where he remains. An outstanding characteristic of his style is polyrhythm which, in his case, seems to be a natural extension of his musical influences – Stravinsky and Walton.

**Mussorgsky, Modest:** 1839-1881, Russian composer, and another who started out as a civil servant. The opera *Boris Godunov* and the (originally for piano) *Pictures at an Exhibition* remain his most well-known works. They demonstrate his particular brand of nationalistic focus.

## **N**

**Nietzsche, Friedrich:** Classical scholar, philosopher and amateur composer, born in Prussia in 1844. He died in Weimar in 1900. Probably the most misrepresented of philosophers, he effected a strong critique of Christianity, conformism and nationalism.

## **P**

**Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da:** Born c.1525, died in 1594; Italian composer, who wrote in the Netherlandish polyphonic style before developing his own, which was later taken up by the Austrian Johann Fux (1660-1741) and codified in his *Gradus ad Parnassum*. Since then Palestrina's style has been held to be the most desirable of all types of church music – yet to become a 'style' is ultimately destructive.

**Patterson, Paul:** British composer, lecturer and teacher, born in 1947. Typical of his post-war generation, he got his musical opportunities through his state school, and became the youngest professor of composition at the Royal Academy of Music since Arthur Sullivan a century earlier. His output is prodigious and extremely varied – he is a superb orchestrator, his music can be profound as well as witty, and he has a reputation for being able to write to satisfy even the most demanding commission. He travels the world promoting contemporary music, and generously continues to support the careers of numerous ex-students.

**Penderecki, Krzysztof:** Polish composer, born in 1933. An exponent of new sonorities derived from experiences of electronically-generated sounds, he uses, like Berio, a particularly clear set of new notation symbols. Unfortunately though, few musicians can be bothered to read them – consequently some of his finest works such as the *St.Luke Passion* could well be confined to an early recording. Latterly, however, he has been termed a 'new romantic', as he has returned to notating his compositions traditionally, inevitably restricting his adventurous spirit.

**Praetorius, Michael:** German composer, born c.1571. He principally served in the court of the Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, going with him on his travels. Consequently, he met Heinrich Schütz in Dresden, from whom he learnt the current Venetian antiphonal style, which had arisen under the influence of the unique architecture of St.Mark's basilica. He died in 1613.



**Puccini, Giacomo:** Italian composer, 1858-1924. A composer of opera, in the genre known as *verism* on account of the realistic nature of the plots (for example, *Madam Butterfly*). Stylistically, his musical textures owe something to both Wagner and Debussy, but he was also a true melodist in the Italian tradition.

**Purcell, Henry:** 1659-1695; English composer whose music, in terms of its perfect marriage of form and content has seldom been surpassed by any British composer. He absorbed influences from Italy and France like a sponge, yet transformed them into something unique and special, employing exquisitely-timed resolved dissonances to do so. His crowning glories are his ground basses, where overlaid shifting harmonies and melodic phrases cause the regularity of the bass-lines to be effectively obscured from all except the knowledgeable listener, without detracting one iota from the affective quality of the music.

## R

**Rachmaninov, Sergei:** Composer, pianist and conductor born in Russia in 1873, died in California in 1943. Like other Russian 'romantic' composers, his music is often thickly-textured and steeped in exoticisms – harmonically and in orchestration. He was one of the first composer-performers to make extensive gramophone recordings.

**Ravel, Maurice:** 1875-1937, Swiss-Basque (usually recognized as French!) composer. He had a remarkable capacity for musico-stylistic mimicry, without once forfeiting his own musical integrity. In other words, Lisztian, Debussyian and gamelan sonorities slip from his pen like wisps of mist, and Spanish modal conventions are fully brought to bear in the scintillating *Rapsodie Espangole*.

**Reger, Max:** Composer and organist, born in Bavaria in 1873, died in Leipzig in 1916. His music, exceptionally chromatic and contrapuntal, teeters on the edge of atonality, but it has never found much favor outside Germany. Unfortunately, the overtones which one gets from a nineteenth-century organ limit the potential appreciation of his clearly-constructed contrapuntal textures.

**Rimsky-Korsakov, Nicolai:** Russian composer, 1844-1908, whose early career was in the Navy. There is no mistaking him as a 19<sup>th</sup> century music nationalist, for he employs similar imaginative stimuli, melodic preferences and vivid orchestral colors (he wrote a treatise on orchestration).

**Russell, Bertrand:** British philosopher, mathematician, logician and writer (1872-1970). He won a Nobel Prize for literature. A vehement pacifist, he twice went to prison for his beliefs.

## S

**Scarlatti, Alessandro:** Italian composer and violinist, 1660-1725; it makes a refreshing change to learn that at least one famous composer came from 'a poor family' (*New Oxford Companion to Music*), albeit that it was probably snobbery that sparked criticism of his appointment as *maestro di cappella* to the Viceroy in Naples. His output is similar to his contemporary, Handel (1685-1759) in that it consisted mostly of operas, oratorios and cantatas; stylistically, he was responsible for establishing ternary forms.



**Schenker, Heinrich: 1868-1935, gave his name to a type of musical analysis based upon his own method of understanding tonal structures. Briefly, he posited three 'layers' of musical structure, which he termed foreground, middleground and background, a view inspired by the techniques of strict counterpoint and which idealizes voice-leading as a goal-directed teleology. He clearly distinguished between these foundational structures and what he saw as the decorative elements within music. His views remain controversial, but they have provided music analysts with an alternative model to that based on form alone. It can be seen that his work bears relationship with both Freud and Chomsky.**

**Schönberg, Arnold: Composer and writer, born in Vienna in 1874, died in Los Angeles in 1951. A violinist and 'cellist, he had no early tuition in composition. Fully steeped in the Germanic tonal tradition, he felt a great responsibility not to betray that tradition, and wrote of the moral necessity for the composer of remaining true to their inner ideas. Thus his journey into atonality and its fully worked-out consequence of twelve-note serialism, can be seen as a logical progression of the emancipation of dissonance, which seemingly became inevitable post-Wagner.**

**Schopenhauer, Arthur: Philosopher whose complex ideas on the motivation of the human life-force influenced Nietzsche, Freud and Thomas Mann. His most famous opus is *The World as Will and Representation* (1818-1819), in which he expounded his theory that the ultimate reality is to be found in the nature of will. He was born in Danzig (Gdansk), Poland, in 1788, and died in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, in 1860.**

**Schubert, Franz: Austrian composer, 1797-1828. Possibly the first major composer to work as a 'freelance', he did not live to experience international acclaim of his music. In his short life he achieved an astonishing output, which included nine symphonies and over six hundred songs. Arguably the greatest melodist of the Germanic classico-romantic tradition his music, while allowing the full gamut of affective expression, exhibits a controlled finesse - a finely-wrought balance.**

**Schütz, Heinrich: German composer, born in 1585 – directed by his parents (like so many) to study law. However, the Landgrave of Marburg enabled him to go to Venice to study with Gabrieli at St.Mark's. His chief place of work as Kapellmeister was Dresden, although he was for a time in Copenhagen, and also back in Venice – most likely to meet Monteverdi. Were it not for Schütz, J.S.Bach's music would not be as it is, for the Venetian antiphonal style was only one of many Italian influences foundational to the music of both men. Schütz died in Dresden in 1672.**

**Segal, Hannah: Psychoanalyst born in Poland in 1918, she settled in London, via a sojourn in Paris and in Edinburgh, where she gained an MD. She was sympathetic to both Freudian and Kleinian thinking, but her considerable contribution to psychoanalytic thought lies in her ideas on dreams, day-dreams and phantasy, and how they relate to creativity.**

**Sessions, Roger: American composer and academic, 1896-1985, whose compositions are generally lengthy (operas and symphonies), and reflect neo-classic sensibilities combined with the rigors of serialism.**

**Shostakovitch, Dmitry: Russian composer, 1906-1975, whose moral bravery in the face of Soviet control of the arts is now legendary. He was capable of writing music to reflect a huge range of feeling, from the slight to the most profound and, though he voiced the idea that his music expressed the whole truth about himself, it would nevertheless be fascinating to examine the manifest in terms of the psychoanalytic theory of the repressed unconscious.**



**Sibelius, Jean:** Finnish composer, 1865-1957, whose first studies were in law. Finland's geographical proximity to Russia lent its efforts at self-determination a particular edge, which Sibelius translated into music informed by his own interest in the folk culture of his country. A great symphonist in the Beethovenian mould of motivic development, Sibelius felt a growing alienation from many 20<sup>th</sup> century musical genres, and composed little in the last thirty years of his life.

**Spencer, Herbert:** British sociologist and philosopher with a wide range of ideas and a strong preference for a scientific mode of thought. One of his main tenets was that all phenomena are to be interpreted according to the principles of evolutionary progress. He was born in Derby in 1820 and died in Brighton in 1903.

**Stanford, Charles Villiers:** Composer, teacher, conductor; born in Dublin in 1852, died in London in 1924. Eschewing all indigenous Irish influence, his music is unfortunately largely an 'academic' reflection of Germanic tonality, to the extent that he did not seem to develop an individual voice.

**Stanton, Martin:** British psychoanalytic psychotherapist, lecturer and writer, who has made a special study of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He is a Council member of the London Centre for Psychotherapy, and he founded the pioneering Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

**Stockhausen, Karlheinz:** German composer, lecturer and conductor, born in 1928. He was one of the first to be involved in *musique concrète* (recorded sounds transformed electronically to form the building-blocks of compositions) and has had a foundational influence on the development of electronic music as a discrete genre. His many compositions also exhibit a considerable range of non-electronic influences.

**Storr, Anthony:** British psychiatrist, writer and lecturer, 1920-2001. He wrote extensively on creativity and is widely quoted. However, in the light of recent psychological research, some of his views now appear reactionary.

**Strauss, Richard:** Bavarian composer, 1864-1949, whose true political affiliations remain a constant source of interest. His musical style is imbued with melodic line, counterpoint, chromatic harmony and rich orchestral textures, though the whole can be related easily to classical forms. His philosophical understanding of Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* raises his tone-poem of that name to the status of apotheosis of the genre.

**Stravinsky, Igor:** Born in Russia in 1882, he died in New York in 1971. The most eclectic of all 20<sup>th</sup> century composers, and possibly the most widely influential, whose musical output in many ways bears close correspondence to the varied output of the painter Picasso. The range of influences on his own music was massive – from Russian folk-music to serialism; yet everything he assimilated eventually bore the stamp of his wiry, disciplined brand of neo-classic refinement.

## **T**

**Tippett, Michael:** British composer and teacher, 1905-1998. He took some time to find his voice as a composer, but he found primary inspiration in the music of Beethoven and the then neglected Henry Purcell and the English madrigal school. His transfer of the latter two's rich harmony and polyphony into his orchestral music lent its luxuriant chromaticism a sinewy clarity. His several operas demonstrate the extent to which further influences were added from Stravinsky and Messiaen.

**Tovey, Donald:** British musicologist, composer and pianist; 1875-1940. His *Essays in Musical Analysis* (1935-1939) were a foundational genre; they are certainly illuminating, but are now considered to be in a romantic, rather than a scholarly cast.

## **W**

**Wagner, Richard:** German composer of the greatest possible influence. 1813-1883. A devotee of Beethoven's music, he took the boldness of Beethoven's formal, motivic and harmonic ideas into new paths; his music dramas are 'symphonic', as the voices are expected to adopt a textural function equivalent to an instrument – both being servants to the unfolding narrative. Motifs (*Leitmotifs*) become highlighted within the texture rather than developed in an unfolding stream, but they are as chameleons, changing to suit dramatic circumstance.

**Webern, Anton:** Austrian composer, conductor and broadcaster. 1883-1945. Like Alban Berg, Webern was a pupil of Schönberg (The New Viennese School), and adopted serial techniques in 1924. However, he was fascinated by symmetry and small musical structures such as palindrome and canon, all of which lent his music a sparse tautness which cleanses the musical palate. He was in analysis with Alfred Adler.

**Winnicott, Donald:** Born in Plymouth, Devon, in 1896, he was a child analyst, lecturer, writer and broadcaster, and an admirer of Melanie Klein's work. However, his kindly, empathic manner brought him many patients and a fame of his own, especially through his work on mental health in war-time evacuation hostels and, theoretically, with his concepts such as the child's need for a *transitional object* to help overcome feelings of separation. He died in 1971.



# **APPENDIX IV**

## **Concepts and Comments**

## APPENDIX IV

### CONCEPTS AND COMMENTS

*In alphabetical order. Comprising a brief explanation of key concepts with the occasional further comment. Opinions are to be understood as the views of no-one but myself.*

*The Roman numeral which is in parenthesis after each head-word denotes the chapter to which the concept or comment chiefly pertains.*

#### A

*Abreaction (IX):* ‘... (whose) origin was sometimes to be found in the circumstances – usually of a social nature – which oblige the subject to restrain his reactions’. (Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.2). In a severe form, motor reaction does indeed re-surface in deeds of aggression unconsciously designed to re-realize something in the environment which the perpetrator regards as being contrary to their felt needs at the time; common sense tells us that much milder versions of this condition are possible too, of course – but we suspect all will be related to ‘felt needs’. Abreaction is therefore closely related to *acting out* (which possesses a broad definition), also to *the compulsion to repeat*: ‘... abreaction through recollection, affective discharge and verbalization is, beyond and deeper than the undoing of repression, a lifting of unconscious processes (unconscious memory traces) onto a higher level of integration, a transformation of primary into secondary process’. (Leowald. 1955, p.209).

*Abstract/gestalt (VIII):* It is desirable to address the confusion inherent in Anton Ehrenzweig’s use of the word *abstract* and, ironically, he provides the solution: ‘We have therefore to distinguish between the growing awareness of a truly abstract gestalt (which belongs to a higher level of development) and the seeming “abstraction” of an imperfectly differentiated thing perception which is valid only on a lower level. Similarly, in speaking of “abstraction” in the artistic language, we have to make clear to which evolutionary level we are referring.’ (1953, p.177).

*Acting out (IX):* I have adopted a wider application of the term than is accepted in the strictly Freudian model. Freud wrote: ‘... the patient does not remember anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, but acts it out. He reproduces it not as a memory but as an action; he repeats it, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it.’ There follows various examples, then: ‘We soon perceive that the transference is itself only a piece of repetition, and that the repetition is a transference of the forgotten past not only onto the doctor but also on to all the other aspects of the current situation. We must be prepared to find, therefore, that the patient yields to the compulsion to repeat, which now replaces the impulse to remember, not only in his personal attitude to his doctor but also in every other activity and relationship which may occupy his life at the time ... if, as the analysis proceeds, the transference becomes hostile or unduly intense and therefore in need of repression, remembering at once gives way to acting out ... he repeats everything that has already made its way from the sources of the repressed into his manifest personality – his inhibitions and unserviceable attitudes and his pathological character-traits.’ (S.E.XII, pp.150-151).



**Aha! Experience, The (VII):** A Ferenczian concept. 'This is the moment when intellectual understanding (*Einsicht*) combines with emotional experience (*Erlebnis*), and the full meaning of an important factor in life emerges. In the psychoanalytic setting, it is when a number of interpretations connect and "dawn" on patient or analyst in a major way. They feel tremendous physical pain, joy or release, as well as major insight into their lives'. (Stanton. 1992, p.194).

**Aleatoric music (II):** Literally, *music of chance*. It was a genre which rejoiced in the equal validity of all sounds, although its proponents generally advocated certain parameters within which improvisation on conventional and non-conventional instruments might take place. Initially inspired by the work of American composer John Cage (*qv*), a wave of semi-aleatoric composition spread across Europe in the 1960's. Called *space-time notation*, it consisted of motifs, either of musically unrelated shapes like dots and dashes, or conventional notation, bordered as if in 'boxes'; these were often required to be repeated several times within a time-frame marked in seconds on the score.

**Alpha and beta elements (Intro.):** Concepts introduced by Wilfred Bion to explain why some psychic elements are readily adapted into dreams (alpha elements), while others are not transmuted in this way (beta elements). For him, beta elements '... lack the valency necessary for true integration' – they are feelings which inform phantasies and transmute into a 'factual', quasi-psychotic state, where '... thoughts are things, things are thoughts.' (Bion. 1963, p.41 and p.22 respectively).

**Anacrusis (IX):** An unstressed note or group of notes at the start of a phrase of music, forming a 'weak beat' immediately prior to a strongly-accented beat.

**Archetypes (I):** An important concept in Jungian Analytical Psychology (Jungian analysts do not call themselves psychoanalysts). They are 'Universal images that have existed since the remotest times' (Jung. CW.9i, para.5) and frequently manifest themselves in dreams, when they absorb characteristics of personal significance to the dreamer. According to Jung, there are archetypal personalities, such as *shadow*, *anima*, *wise old man*, *mother*, *child*, *trickster*, as well as *archetypes of transformation*, such as places, ways, means. In this thesis we have posited the origins of certain archetypes as lying in pre-natal sensate experience.

**Atonality (V):** cf. *Dodecaphony*.

**Authoritarianism (VIII):** The extremes of Germanic authoritarianism were of course seen in Fascism, as they are always to be found in Totalitarianism. Thus is encouraged: '... an anachronistic type of genre painting designed to act as an aesthetic disguise of underlying social antagonisms.' (Newton. 1996, p.36). The same repressions are brought to bear on music. A 'Romantic' gloss is spread thickly over rural life, and 'folk-song' is promoted at the expense of almost everything else, except perhaps 'acceptable classics'. However, the folk-songs themselves are frozen into a rigid style where all spontaneity is lost. This happened in Great Britain at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when folk-songs were merged with Nationalism to produce *The National Song-book*, possibly the most heavily promoted school music book of all time. Highly stylized art and music is created as an impenetrable defense against further spontaneity, as its utter conformism can be embraced by the most inwardly-seething personalities, whose libidinal interest is entangled with what they can least bear about themselves and who therefore project libidinally onto others. Anthony Burgess, author of *A Clockwork Orange* said: "From the film *A Clockwork Orange* youth did not learn aggression: it was aggressive already. What it did learn was a style of aggression, a mode of dressing violence up in a new way, a piquant sauce to season the raw meat of kicks, biffs and razor slashings" (*Observer*, 1993) ... a style used in a disconnected and mannerist way to hide threat is, as Burgess suggests, a very dangerous thing.' (Newton. 1996, p.101).



## B

**Beat (V):** (also cf. Appendix II). This is the physico-aural phenomenon perceived as a pulsation (compression/rarefaction) when two notes at very close interval are sounded simultaneously; they need to be held for a moment or two for the effect to register. The wider away from each other the frequencies are, the faster the beat. The beat is the device assisting piano tuning or similar, or in 'tuning up' instruments (and is why string players play adjacent strings together when tuning). Any invasion of the 'beat' in an ensemble of string players is literally felt as mild physical discomfort to the players, and most string players will admit to compromising their standards of tuning when performing in an orchestra or with a keyboard instrument.

**Bezoar stone (V):** This is a remarkably efficient metaphor for lingering traumatic affect.

'The operative analogy here is with the production of the bezoar stone, which is a calculus or digestory ball produced by camels, antelopes and deer that have to survive in difficult mountainous or desert terrain. Such animals periodically cough up a ball of undigested food, which they repeatedly swallow again for further nutritive processing. When the ball can provide no more nutrition, the animal finally discards it ... Such stones are highly treasured as works of art by nomadic tribes in the Middle East.' (Stanton. 1997, p.84).

**Binding/cathecting (III):** The word *cathect* (from the Greek) was used by Freud's translator, James Strachey to translate the German *Besetzung* (occupy), and is frequently used as a synonym for *bound* (*decathect* and *unbind* being the opposite mechanisms). In 1895 Freud first used the term *besetzung* in an attempt to explain how affect becomes 'detached' from an unpleasant experience onto something relatively 'harmless', and in *The Interpretation of Dreams* of 1900, Freud explains that cathected energy is involved in his three psychic systems of unconscious, pre-conscious and conscious.

Freud's concept of free and bound energy has been taken up by Laplanche and clarified in the light of his own practical clinical experience. Briefly, Laplanche is careful to distinguish two types of repression – primary and secondary, which coincide with the mechanisms of the unconscious and conscious respectively. In his re-assessment, he accords primal repression a definition which directly impinges upon those pre-natal aesthetic experiences that, in this thesis, have been related to Jung's archetypes. He says: ' ... the primal repressed, made up of unconscious prototypes, characterised by the fixity and the effect of attraction they exercise, not on each other but on the representations which come within their reach ... '. (Laplanche. 1999, p.106).

**British Telecom and fort-da (qv) (III):** The makers of a TV advertisement, probably unwittingly, stumbled upon this phenomenon. The advertisement featured someone, whom we can take as the child's grandmother, sitting with the child on her knee, without eye-contact. They sat by a table upon which was a picture-book and, nearest to the camera, a bowl of bananas. Grandmother urged the infant to look at the pictures, using a fair bit of baby-talk. Suddenly the child reached out a hand towards the bowl of bananas and said 'na-na' (still no eye contact with Grandmother, but a clear directed look at the fruit-bowl). Cut to grandmother sitting making a telephone call. It is obvious she thought the child had identified her in the usual baby-talk word for grandmother – *na-na* – and she was bursting to tell someone about this momentous event. (Using a BT telephone of course!).



## C

***Cartesian Dualism (II)***: This is the name given to the manifestation of the error made when the mind is considered as separate from the body. Far too frequently, for example, all the different forms of psychotherapy are faced with patients for whom conventional medicine has failed, due to a lack of recognition that the mind and the body are medically inseparable, and therefore that many ailments are psychosomatic in nature.

***Cathecting (III)***: cf. *Binding*.

***Centrifugal identification (IV)***: This term is used by Laplanche and Pontalis (1988 p.357). It is their stated preference to overcome the confusion caused by Melanie Klein's adoption of the term *projective identification* (*qv*), which her particular linguistic logic renders ambiguous. Laplanche and Pontalis suggest *centrifugal identification* where the subject projects out to the object that which comes from within himself, while *centripetal identification* draws out of the object that which the subject wishes to make one within himself. In the context in which it appears in this thesis, I am clear that *centrifugal identification* is what I intend; I don't deny that the alternative operates within the mode of music, but it does so in another situation.

***Composers' comments (VII)***: Richard Rodney Bennett has remarked that he can hear things in his early pieces which came to fruition later (akin perhaps to 'fingerprints' mentioned in Chapter VI), but also said: 'if nobody asked me to write music anymore it would be tragic ... I would think I didn't have a function anymore'. (Forum at the Royal Academy of Music, March 1996). Shostakovitch said: 'As a rule, I hear the score and write it down in ink, finished copy, without rough drafts or studies – and I'm not saying this to brag. In the final analysis, everyone composes as best suits him, but I've always seriously warned my students against picking out tunes on the piano. I had a near fatal case of this disease, improviser's itch, in childhood. Mussorgsky is a tragic example of the dangers of piano composition. Very tragic – while he plinked away, so much great music was never written down'. (Volkov. 1981, p.177).

***Comprehensibility (V)***: This accords with the later work of Anton Ehrenzweig (cf. Chapter VIII) who, in a psychoanalytically informed explanation, demonstrates how 'accidents' in manifest art-forms are surges from the unconscious, subjected later to reification. Thus, 'dissonant' chords eventually become accepted material to be resolved within the harmonic canon. Radoocy and Boyle (1988. pp.70-71) re-locate the debate in scientifically-based psycho-acoustics: 'Consonance and dissonance judgements depend heavily on training and experience, but there may be some physical basis for consonance as a tonal phenomenon because of the basilar membrane (part of the audio apparatus) alignment of tonal components'.

***Counter-transference (IX)***: That counter-transference should be accorded an emotional basis is no longer surprising, given that we have posited in Chapter IV that emotion is not fully grounded in the aesthetic (central) space for, once we are in the recapitulation (wherein lies counter-transference) we have 'passed through' that space.

*Counter-transference* was either poorly understood, or resisted in the early days of psychoanalysis; it is the initial unconscious reaction of the analyst (or teacher, or, for that matter, any partner in a dialogue) to the approaches of the analysand. However, the transference/counter-transference is best appreciated as the *essential* unconscious traffic between any two subjects in dialogue. Of course, it also accounts for many an aggressive or defensive reaction to what is said by one or the other.

***Creation, The; by Josef Haydn (V)***: Composed in 1798, this oratorio has an orchestral introduction (unsurprisingly entitled *Representation of Chaos*) which is an undoubted masterpiece of controlled overt dissonance as, from its first moment, a peroration of hitherto



unrivalled, shifting harmonic ambiguity is initiated. Unless one is able to become familiar with the score on a theoretical level, one misses the import of the 'harmonic chaos' this portrays – not to mention the skill of the composer in writing it. The 'surprise factor' is a feature of the so-called *Sturm und Drang* period (storm and stress), and both Haydn and Beethoven were caught up in its artistic manifestations.

*'Creative Drive' – considering a different perspective (II)*: As we have reasoned, that which we imagine to constitute the contents of the unconscious is not, as many psychoanalysts would have us believe, exclusively 'repressed' material of a non ego-syntonic nature. We have posited that much is laid down for us from our embryonic days onwards in terms of sensate experiences which have given us paradigmatic forms and aesthetic *qualia* – not all of which is malign by any means. Our libidinal interest in certain of these experiences was aroused, and will come to be deeply informative of the re-realizatory choices we make.

Nevertheless, if that which is perceived as affectively dissonant to the Self, and therefore non ego-syntonic, is also 'repressed' into the unconscious then, without the intervention of a moralistic super-ego (*qv*), it, too, will certainly be available for the ego's rôle as an agent of re-realization. The 'different perspective' is, therefore, that this may have disastrous consequences for the subject and the 'others' in the subject's orbit; which argument leads us into an ethical area which becomes impossible to avoid.

Because we are here discovering that an unconsciously-instigated, libidinal interest in 'sound' lies at the root of the composer's desire to re-realize the existents of 'sound', it follows that others will have libidinal interest cathected onto different existents. We should not be surprised to find that human beings can murder as well as make music, when libidinal energy within an individual aims towards making existents conform to a new reality by creating an 'other-free space' - eliminating a fellow-human 'other' in an act of pre-meditated self-interest, or self-affirmation.

However, depending upon the values of society at any one time, the boundaries between that which is acceptable and that which is not, shift dramatically. Opprobation falls upon the individual who eliminates another 'without sanction', as it were, in contrast to the approbation accorded to individuals within the collective whose eliminations of others is sanctioned by governments in time of war – unless they find themselves accused of 'crimes against humanity'. Their creativity is exploited by those who regard the strategies of battle as beneficial to their cause – they present them with medals, laud them with honors and even suggest that some of their planning strategies designed to eliminate an arbitrary 'other' are 'works of genius'.

But all re-realizations involve a kind of 'destruction' (which is the feared, denied element in the process, so it is understandable that socially acceptable re-realizations are thought to be 'sublime-ated'). But we should not forget that the composer Carlo Gesualdo (*qv*) was also a murderer. In suicide, the multi-faceted emotion of anger is largely enfolded centripetally in to oneself, and one places oneself as the central character in one's own created tragic drama, the final scene of which one is destined never to witness. In an act of murder, one's anger is either centrifugally dispersed until a hapless victim or victims are found to be contingent to the staging of the tragedy, or it is linearly concentrated upon creating a new reality - of space minus one particular 'other'. The creator of the latter scenario generally lives to witness the tragedy played out to some sort of conclusion, taking overt action, more frequently than not, to avoid being center-stage.

*Creativity; assumptions (II)*: Anthony Storr demonstrates the extent to which certain assumptions have infected popular psychology; he writes authoritatively: 'In our explorations of creativity various types of "psycho-pathology" have been outlined and the ways in which these dynamic constellations provide the motive power which activates the creator have been demonstrated'. It gets worse: 'The less gifted find other, less obviously creative, solutions ... '. In fairness to Storr, he does appear in a later paragraph to modify this view slightly, but by then, I believe the damage has been done by virtue of his didactic mode of presentation. (Storr [1972]. 1991 ed., p.252).



Moreover, when I was a young music student in the late fifties, a fellow-student confessed to me that an aunt had cut him out of her will, purely because he had chosen to study music, which she claimed was the most immoral of all the arts! She could not have known how hard we all worked – we were left with little time for ‘immorality’!

## D

**Darmstadt (Conc.):** This principally refers to the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik* (International Summer Courses for New Music) which were initiated in 1946 by Wolfgang Steinecke. Also in the same year was founded what is now known as the *Internationales Musikinstitut Darmstadt*, an international information center for new music. Hans Werner Henze openly criticizes the hermetic nature of the proceedings there: ‘... the technocrats of Darmstadt ... there was one frustrating thing about the so-called “night studios” – hardly anybody listened to these broadcasts around midnight! The music never thus reached the majority of listeners – for whom a composer should after all be writing – and as a result there was no interaction from the public. This led to isolation, and hardly any attempts were made to minimize or overcome it. On the contrary, this hermetic production process carried with it a certain aura; these “night studios” took control over music, and composers acquiesced. The line of least resistance had been found; the possibility of complete agreement between composer and functionary. This did a considerable amount to promote the “Darmstadt style”; naturally it also developed in line with the prodigious orchestral and financial resources of the radio stations – in the sense that pieces that did not require at least sixty rehearsals were regarded as dubious, superficial and frivolous’. And: ‘On reflection, I can begin to understand my differences with the Darmstadt School ... I have often thought that their attempt to make music non-communicative had something to do with the ruling class’s belief that art is a thing apart from life, better kept that way, and without any social dimension’. (1982. pp.43-44 and p.49 respectively).

**‘Destructive’ phase [of creativity] (VIII):** Anton Ehrenzweig explains this effectively without, however, calling upon a further psychoanalytic concept in elucidation. That is to say, the compound term *sado/masochism*. Briefly, the sadist is motivated by a desire to control and generally feels no need to appreciate the victim’s suffering. The masochist, on the other hand, is generally thought to be the passive victim of the sadist’s attentions. It is therefore interesting to consider (particularly in the light of some creative acts not being manifestations of dissonance integrated), whether the ‘sadistic’ manipulation of accessible material does not, at the same time, also result in a psychic *volt face* as the sadist is masochistically victimized by the persecutory untranslatable, dissonant material which cannot be integrated. It would not be too far-fetched, therefore, to suggest that the composer sadistically controls the material in a way that is the norm in all re-realizations. Thus, the idea of reparation might be given a stronger profile.

**Different Intelligences (VI):** Howard Gardner’s concept. In the present context, he eschews the concept of intelligence being linked to creativity, rather he prefers *convergent* and *divergent* thinking abilities as useful categories (1993, p.20). It is implied that divergent thinkers are creative thinkers – such people engage in broad-based ideas, networks and enterprises, have a sense of purpose or will, and affective ties to elements and problems of material. The teaching method introduced during the 60’s, that of investigating and presenting work based on a single ‘topic’ (‘project work’) was an attempt to encourage both types of thinking in children; however, it was seldom a success because the philosophy behind this type of learning experience was never explained to teachers.

Gardner also makes a statement which implicitly draws together the notion of a strong, but flexible ego with the phenomenon of the obviously successful person who is judged ‘to be creative’: ‘... the dialectics among the individual person, or talent; the domain in which the individual is working; and the field of knowledgeable experts who evaluate works in the domain ... unless some kind of rapprochement can be arranged among individual, domain, and field, an



ultimate decision about an individual's creativity cannot be made ... What seems defining in the creative individual is the capacity to exploit, or profit from, an apparent misfit or lack of smooth connections within the triangle of creativity ... areas of asynchrony ... I have hypothesized that an individual will be judged creative to the extent that he or she exhibits several asynchronies and yet can stand the concomitant strain'. (1993, pp.380-381).

*Dodecaphony and Atonality (V)*: The first of these is the mature Schönbergian system of composing with a set note-row made up of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale (*serial* music). *Atonality* is its close relation, but has a looser application, in that a note-row is not functionally designated; rather, the music just does not conform to any system of key or mode – it is, therefore, not serial.

*Dream; reason for (VII)*: Of course, the possibility exists that, due to the state of sleep inhibiting motor activity, dreaming is the compensatory activity, rather than cessation of motor activity being a consequence of dreaming. Freud hints at this: '... the preconscious is concentrated upon the wish to sleep ... (The probability is that the system has protected itself against the invasion by diminishing its own excitations.)' (S.E.V, p.573). There can be no justification for making an exact analogy with the composition of music in this case. However, as is widely recognized, the practical application of skills such as consciously writing with pen or word-processor cannot proceed from start to finish of a project without one or more periods of refraining from this physical effort, and we find that these periods of physical inactivity often give rise to further useful ideations. Freud said: '... modifications in our mnemonic and ideational material may take place during the night unobserved by our consciousness. We are often advised that before coming to a final decision on some subject we should "sleep on it".' (S.E.IV, p.181).

## E

*Ehrenzweig on dreaming (VIII)*: 'It is the privilege of the artist to combine the ambiguity of dreaming with the tensions of being fully awake.' (1967. [1993 ed.] p.12). This reminds us of Freud's monograph *Creative Writers and Daydreaming* (S.E.IX), in which he discusses the topic of *phantasy*. Unfortunately, many a teacher has decried a child's daydreaming because it does not see its value; in fact, it seems quite likely that the 'day-dreamer' is developing the ability to usefully traverse the border between surface and depth functions (learning to think 'laterally').

*Ehrenzweig writings (VIII)*: Everyone who has sufficient interest in creativity to have read Anthony Storr's *The Dynamics of Creation*, should also read Anton Ehrenzweig. Storr's work almost amounts to a Freudian critique, which establishes in the mind of the reader an impression that a Freudian perspective on creativity is deeply flawed – there is no evidence in the book, for example, that Freud's model of the dream-work might be considered worthy of application in other modes of mind activity. Ehrenzweig gives Freud his due - at least, in expounding a great number of ideas of his own, it is clear that his intention is to recognize the organic potential of Freud's thought. It is to be regretted, though, that neither of Ehrenzweig's books contain an adequate bibliography.

*Eidetic vision (VIII)*: Anton Ehrenzweig writes: 'Peripheral vision has been called eidetic because of its easy malleability'. ([1967]. 1993 ed., p.274) and: 'What is called "Eidetic" vision is the flexible vision of children, primitives, of artists, and significantly also of twilight vision ... another name for the gestalt-free mode of unconscious perception ... Nevertheless the credit for treating phenomena of distortion as visual reality must go to Eidetic Psychology'. (1953, p.207). The psychologist Henry Gleitman posits that eidetic visual memory (sometimes called *photographic memory*) is possessed by roughly 5% of children, and experiments show that they have remarkable powers of visually detailed memory. The ability declines in adults, but that



gestalt-free detail of the eidetically-visual child certainly could be as flexible and fertile as Ehrenzweig suggests. Gleitman explains that eidetic vision is: '... relatively long-lasting and detailed images of visual scenes that can sometimes be scanned and "looked at" as if they had real existence outside ... there is no reason to believe that this form of imagery is an especially useful form of mental activity. Contrary to popular belief, memory experts don't usually have eidetic imagery ... (it is) a rare and elusive phenomenon'. (Gleitman. 1981, pp.272-3). That the two views conflict is obvious, but only because Gleitman has not extended his understanding into the 'unprovable' area of what constitutes 'usefulness' when it comes to creative thought. Ehrenzweig himself wrote: 'It is not the artist who has to learn from the psychologist, but rather the psychologist from the artist, particularly from the irrational forms of "modern" painting and music which may reveal to us the innermost working of unconscious perception'. (1953, p.192).

**Enantiodromia (VI):** Jung uses this term to identify the view that everything that exists turns into its opposite. For example: 'I use the term enantiodromia for the emergence of the unconscious opposite in the course of time. This characteristic phenomenon practically always occurs when an extreme, one-sided tendency dominates unconscious life; in time an equally powerful counterposition is built up, which first inhibits the conscious performance and subsequently breaks through the conscious control'. (CW.6, para.709).

**Enigmatic Signifier (III):** Laplanche's extremely important concept of *the enigmatic signifier* (which itself is a critique of Lacan's lengthy, critical descriptive of the Saussurian *signifier*) as a prime ingredient of the unconscious mind, ought, perhaps, to be founded on the pre-natal experience of the mother's voice, within what Laplanche calls: '... the primal, asymmetrical adult-child situation'. (Laplanche, 1999. P.92.). After all, in this special category of secondary sound, the 'central imaginative space' leaves plenty of room for the enigma to take root.

Its importance is highlighted if we substitute our preferred term *libidinal energy* for *sexual energy*; we can then proceed to enlarge upon Laplanche in terms of the second paradigm we introduce – the triadic one of tension/tension sustained/tension resolved. By this means we can incorporate Laplanche's notion of the *enigmatic message from the Other* which, from our point of view, is the sound which instigates the tension (compression), sustains the tension, and is then resolved through habituation/recognition. Libidinal interest has thus effected adaptation, in the service of Eros. However, if tension is *unresolved*, it is as if libidinal energy must involve itself with never-ending adaptation. In the end, it will be fully depleted, flowing out, unbound, uncontrolled, as it were, from an unstopped gap. Without repletion, total depletion (biological cell apoptosis) occurs, and death is inevitable. Rarefaction has triumphed.

**Eros and Thanatos (VIII):** Freud never wrote about *Thanatos* as the 'death instinct', but only about 'destructiveness' (*Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 1920 and *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* 1937 – actually not long before Anton Ehrenzweig wrote his first book). Freud opposed this to *Eros* (the name of the Greek god of love). *Thanatos* was probably first used in psychoanalytic literature by Paul Federn (1871-1950).

**'Experiment I' (III):** With reference to the effect of sound on the fetus. 'The sound stimulus was generated by a synthesized function generator which produced a broad-band sound stimulus of 80-2000 Hz at an intensity of 110 dB (A) measured 1cm from the speaker face. The signals were fed into a modified headphone ... When placed on the maternal abdomen an effective seal between the maternal skin and the speaker was formed so that the sound could not be heard by the mother. A BBC microcomputer controlled the presentation of the stimuli. The ultrasound was connected to a video recorder which recorded all observation for future analysis'. (Shahidullah and Hepper. 1993, p.136).



## F

*Fetus; adverse affects of sound-impingement (III)*: There is also some research by Kenneth Gerhardt at Florida University, USA revealing the possibility of damage to the unborn child if the mother is involved in noisy activities, such as 'pop' music, mowing the lawn with a power mower, riding in power boats, or by exposure to noisy workplaces. Thus, it might be suggested, fetal exposure to a modern in-car stereo which, as we all know, can be excessively strident – certainly above the 40dB lower limit of fetal sound-awareness (see above) must surely induce an adverse fetal response. Piontelli (1992) writes about adverse fetal responses to certain types of music, but if I, even indoors, can perceive the sounds coming from a car in the street not so much as 'sound' (why do they never play Vivaldi?) but as heavily stressed vibrations which impinge bodily, how much more so would a fetus, riding inside its mother inside the car itself? One might also make the assumption that the home lives of these stereo-addicts are equally devoid of quietude. It would be interesting to know if any research has been done with regard to this in relation to specific *attention deficit disorder* in children. How many of those so diagnosed have been bathed in an adverse sound environment from embryonic stage onwards?

*Fidelio (V)*: Beethoven revised his only opera in 1814 to the version we know today, and it is a political commentary upon the repressive régime of Metternich's Vienna. It has metaphorical undercurrents though, involving archetypal figures such as *animus* and *anima*, which would benefit from interpretation within a Jungian framework.

*Fifty minute symphony [The] (IX)*: This is an allusion both to the timing of the Freudian analytic hour, and to the length of some late romantic symphonies. Perhaps of significant interest for *The Fifty Minute Symphony*, the conductor, Roger Norrington, who purports to interpret speed indications exactly as the composer intended, in recording the *Eroica*, fitted it into exactly 43 minutes and 29 seconds. Herbert von Karajan's recording gets close – 47 minutes and 40 seconds! Bruckner's 4<sup>th</sup> symphony (1874) takes 67 minutes with Karl Böhm, and Mahler's 8<sup>th</sup> (the so-called *Symphony of a Thousand*) is a huge 81 minutes, twenty seconds under Claudio Abbado.

The time-limit of the Freudian 'analytic frame' is supposedly strictly adhered to. It includes the preparatory entry of the analysand into the consulting room and lying on the couch with the analyst sitting behind. During the sessions, the analysand undertakes to abide by *the fundamental rule* which: '... lays it down that whatever comes into one's head must be reported without criticizing it ...'. (This was derived from the idea of *free association*. cf. Freud. S.E.XII, p.107).

Since Freud's time there have been many variations on this theme, some of which have not helped the cause of psychoanalysis. Other variants have been less subject to criticism – one can see why, for example, the Hungarian analyst, Sandor Ferenczi sought to empathize with, and to offer a comforting arm around the shoulders for, his analysands.

It should not be forgotten, though, that access to both analysis and the symphony is still not universally possible – although broadcast and recorded music has increased accessibility to the latter. Only people whose lives allow time and money for 50 minutes have access – in spite of a few existing methods of financial support, lack of sufficient money is still a real drawback to participation for some.

*Fort-da (II)*: The *fort-da* game is the German name for the infant activity of tossing away an object out of its reach, and then waiting expectantly for someone to retrieve it for them, so that it can do the same all over again. It is often a playful activity between child and carer – a ternary form pattern that the infant loves to repeat - (tension [impulse to throw]/tension sustained [will the toy be returned to me?]/relaxation [it has been returned, thank goodness!]). It is a paradigmatic activity.

For example, watch a child play with a pile of play-bricks. Sooner or later it will stack one on top of the other, anticipating its collapse (tension); the stack wobbles for a time – maybe even



more bricks can be added (tension sustained) – then there is the achievement of the expected, sudden collapse. This is often accompanied by a long cry of ‘aaaah!’, but descending in pitch, and an expression of pleasure, with a desire to repeat the process.

Only now do I realize I employed something of the same game in teaching *Kindermusik* classes. Western European music’s pulses of two beats and three beats in a bar are not easy for some young children to feel, so I devise a ball game to help them. Two beats in a bar were imprinted by the children bouncing balls (down-up, etc.) mirroring the actions required to conduct two beats in a bar, and the *sound* of bounce-catch reinforcing one-two. But three beats involved myself interacting with a child, thus: an angled bounce of the ball towards the child, who then threw it back to me, so the *sound* was bounce, catch, catch, and the formation, triangular, like the conductor’s beat. From the moment my throw hit the floor, to the moment I caught the returning ball from the child, there was considerable tension for the child, and always great relief when it went right – my ‘fielding’ skills were often tested to the limit to make sure the tension was ‘resolved’ (especially as I would be seated on a chair at the same level as the children, and they were not slow in sometimes making it difficult for me!). (cf. also *British Telecom*).

*Free Association (II): cf. Word Association.*

## G

*Gamelan (V):* This is the indigenous music of Indonesia, dating at least from the Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. It is a generic term for an orchestra of instruments such as gongs and gong-like instruments, with a wide range of metallophones and a smaller range of drums (whose use is often relatively discreet). Gamelan playing is, at its core, a democratic way of making music, and it is exceptionally well integrated into the culture of Indonesian society. There are no ‘composers’ in the European sense at all in that culture – but there are highly regarded makers of instruments.

Surprisingly, Sir Francis Drake, in circumnavigating the globe, visited Java in 1580 and was the first European to record his experience of hearing the ‘*aurora borealis*’ of gamelan’s unrelenting dissonance. He noted in his logbook his reaction to the music: ‘... which though it were of a very strange kind, yet the sound was pleasant and delightful.’ (Arnold. 1991. Vol I., p.934). Sir Francis Drake (1543-1596) lived in a pre-tonal era of music – whether or not he was thus less prejudiced in his musical tastes is impossible to speculate, but it is interesting to imagine that he might well have been.

It is now possible for us to experience playing in a gamelan orchestra – one can apply to the several organizations in the western world which now own one and run courses for those interested (such as the Royal Festival Hall in London). It is a highly instructive experience – and a humbling one for anyone brought up in the Western European tradition, for there is no notation – one must commit to memory all its complexities of rhythm and pitch. It should be noted, though, that Javanese gamelan differs from the Balinese in one important respect – Javanese instruments are played with wooden beaters, and Balinese with metal hammers. This makes Balinese gamelan a harsher aural experience, with a more prominent dissonant cloud. However, all gamelan timbres are haunting and, afterwards, though one’s enjoyment of tonal music may not wane, one might suspect that tonality is ‘hiding something’ of the true nature of sound.

*Gestalt (VIII):* Anton Ehrenzweig writes: ‘I submit that the abstract gestalt perception is grafted on our perception as a late-comer which, as so often happens in mental functioning, revives an archaic mode of perception’. (1953, p.218). The ‘archaic mode of perception’ is, as we have seen, rooted in the biological; the blastocyst and the uterus are modular – the umbilicus, a later development, is linear. The retina is histologically an outgrowth of brain tissue – the rod cells are peripheral (linear) and inform the repressed vagueness of peripheral vision which needs to be differentiated to be perceived properly, while the cone cells are central and more highly developed (modular) and allow immediate, differentiated perception (cf. *op.cit.*, p.211).



Perhaps to adapt we must repress – a timeless Self without the linear time of the ego/superego dyad would not survive – we must have the linear as well as the modular. A ‘blinker’ mind, operating as it were with the modular cone cells only, does not adapt. The difference between *thing* and *gestalt* perception lies in the quality of the former. The latter is somewhat primitive and more archaic in its simplified abstractions, perhaps indeed harking back to the original modular and linear. Thing perception (gestalt-free) ‘... represses form experiences according to its own biological exigencies’. (*op.cit.*, p.218).

**Gestural contour (IV)**; further thoughts: I have long been interested in the idea of the journey across continents of this musical principle, but this is the first exposure I have allowed of it in print. It is necessarily sketchy but, over time, its implications have become obvious to me in some detail. I await an opportunity, for example, to enlarge upon the idea that the polka and the ‘sophisticated’ Viennese waltz are culturally informed parodies on Turkish Janissary music and the folk *landler* respectively, while a particular gesture of the raise of a knee on the fourth beat of a movement sequence which appears in Morris dancing and, in a different form in Irish dancing, can also be traced back to the Janissaries. *Morris*, as many believe, is a corruption of *Moorish*. There is even a suggestion that *Flamenco* derives from the music of Flemish gypsies, being brought to Spain by Charles V (1516-1556). I have Jonathan Cross, in his book on Harrison Birtwistle (2000) to thank for, not only demonstrating how this influence lingers in the music of a contemporary composer, but also for pointing out that one of the most highly developed forms of Scottish Highland music for the bagpipes is the *piobaireachd*, which comprises decorative figurations imposed upon an *Urlar (Ur-linie)*. Through the word *urlar*, one is reminded of the Schenkerian concept of the *Ur-linie* in musical analysis, which means the entire melodic contour of a tonal piece – the ‘original line’; of which an etymological derivative might be the French mediaeval *lai*, a sophisticated strophic song with different melodies for each verse.

**Gnostic (I)**: Pertaining to the Gnostic religion, whose doctrines are denied by ‘orthodox’ Christianity for their heresy – among other things, they challenge the infallibility of God. *Gnosis*, the Greek word for *knowledge*, is appended to this religion, which tells ‘... a tale of light and darkness, of knowledge and ignorance, of serenity and passion, of conceit and pity, on the scale not of man, but of eternal beings that are not exempt from suffering and error ... the sterner discipline of biblical creed weathered the storm of those days, and both Old and New Testament were left to inform the mind and imagination of Western man ... our art and literature and much else would be different, had the gnostic message prevailed’. (Jonas [1958 and 1963]. 1992 ed., pp.xiii-xiv).

**Graded music examinations (VI)**: No matter what their age, instrument, or level of attainment, instrumentalists and vocalists can prepare to be individually examined in their speciality, at a level of expertise and musicianship graded from 1-8 in ascending order of difficulty (there are also exams. for music theory, general musicianship etc.). Candidates have a number of examination boards from which to choose appropriately, who all charge a fee and award certificates. The great benefit is in candidates being able to assess their progress in accordance with agreed standards, while not being subject to direct comparison with any other candidate.

**Great Mother (I)**: One of Jung’s archetypal figures, ‘The concept of the Great Mother belongs to the field of comparative religion and embraces widely varying types of mother-goddess’. (Jung. CW.9i, para.148). And: ‘To this category belongs the goddess, and especially the Mother of God, the Virgin, and Sophia ... Demeter or Kore ...’. (CW.9i, para.156).



## I

*Illusion; dreamer versus composer (VII)*: The listener to the eventual manifest musical product, more frequently than not, imagines that the composer has 'stated their mind' with veracity – *ipse facto*, Beethoven was 'shaking his fist at fate' and Mahler's music was 'bound to be inspired by mourning and loss'. '... it is fair to say that the productions of the dream-work ... are not made with the intention of being understood ...'. (S.E.V, p.341), and in a passage which could equally as well apply to the composer as to the listener, Freud wrote: 'If a dream carries on the activities of the day and completes them and even brings fresh ideas to light, all we need do is to strip it of the dream disguise, which is the product of dream-work, and the mark of assistance rendered by obscure forces from the depth of the mind ... the intellectual achievement is due to the same mental forces which produce every similar result during the daytime. We are probably inclined greatly to overestimate the conscious character of intellectual and artistic production as well ... But it is the much-abused privilege of conscious activity, wherever it plays a part, to conceal every other activity from our eyes.' (S.E.V, p.613-614).

*Imaginary, The (I)*: A Lacanian substantive, one of the three *Orders* (the *Imaginary*, the *Symbolic* and the *Real*). 'The imaginary is the realm of image and imagination, deception and lure. The principle illusions of the imaginary are those of wholeness, synthesis, autonomy, duality and, above all, similarity. The imaginary is thus the order of surface appearances which are deceptive, observable phenomena which hide underlying structure; the affects are such phenomena'. (Evans. 1996, p.82).

*Imaginative space (III)*: This is but one description we have allocated to the central section of the time-frame set up as we adapt to the tripartite paradigm of tension/tension sustained/tension resolved. We allocate the 'central space' several different nomenclatures throughout the thesis as we align various other concepts to this fundamental paradigm.

*Individuation (I)*: is a Jungian concept. He maintains that one's conscious mind becomes dissociated from the unconscious: 'It is therefore necessary to integrate the unconscious into consciousness This is a synthetic process which I have termed the "individuation process".' (CW.9i, para.83). He generally considers it to be the main psychic task of the second half of life, and it involves withdrawing one's projections back into one's own understanding.

*Ineffable (IX)*: Of course, to the composer, their own music *is* ineffable – 'too great for words' (OED). In the present context, we realize the listener to music generally remains silent so, as in analysis, the silences allow the greatest ease of flow of the transference/counter-transference. Silence is the invisible third party which, in between movements of a piece of music, for example, can be desecrated by coughing and shuffling – itself partly a defense. In the concert hall, of course, there is no equivalent to the averted gaze of the visitor to an art gallery or, indeed of the analyst in the Freudian model of the analytic frame. But any performance of *Poème Symphonique* by György Ligeti provides an excellent opportunity to observe listeners' reactions (titles are used precisely in order to receive projections – but this one gives nothing away). It is a piece for 100 clockwork metronomes set out on the platform during a concert interval and started up before the audience return; they enter to the already steady ticking, when all they can do then is sit and wait for the metronomes to stop ticking. They stop in a pre-arranged order, and as they cease one by one until, finally, only one is left, many individuals invariably begin to physically react to the tension of waiting by shuffling, looking around, or clearing their throats.

*Instinkt (II)*: Freud prefers a somewhat limited 'classical' understanding of *Instinkt*, such as is manifested in animals' fear of danger. For him, that produces an analogous situation in humans, but one that is constituted by primal phantasies (*cf.* Laplanche and Pontalis, 1973). Altogether, it is a complicated theoretical issue, which has far-reaching implications for psychoanalysis, but



which has unfortunately led to the lay person's gross misunderstanding of Freud's work as being concentrated on 'sex'. Of course procreation is part of the human condition, which should be partly considered as a separate function of *Instinkt* from that of self-preservation but, for reasons which Freud well documented, the liberating concepts of *libido*, *libidinal energy* etc. have become entangled with judgemental, neurotic complexes about the sex act itself.

*Introducing new music (IX)*: Indeed, if one becomes involved in attempts to introduce new music to audiences, one finds that Boulez is right - you have to lead them to the performance in the first place. After that, the problem of leading them into the music itself can be achieved through an appraisal of its stylistic history (for example, Beethoven – Bartók – Webern – Lutoslawski – Maxwell Davies). Thus, one is constructing a 'narrative', the present is seen to have a past and then even the future seems less threatening (a traditional 'music appreciation' approach, which tends to concentrate on the form and content of a single work, while ignoring stylistic history, is therefore much less effective). Good concert programming will result in many coming to relate well to new music, through an illustrated historical exposé of its stylistic expressions.

An additional stimulus to interest in the new, is an opportunity to meet with composers, so it follows that, if a composer is convivial and shows a genuine interest in the listeners, they in turn are more likely to adopt a positive attitude to the music. There are, of course, composers who project a 'take it or leave it attitude'; unfortunately, because: '... both snobbery and immaturity at time foster prejudices which certainly differ from discrimination in any real sense' (Sessions. 1950, p99). Such composers are more likely to have acolytes than devotees or apostles.

## J

*Just intonation (V)*: This is a system whereby tuning is based on audial criteria, and therefore on small-number ratios, '... but, taking into account both major and minor scales, one ends up with ... at least 30 discrete frequencies for each octave.' '*Equal temperament* is the process of reducing the number of tones per octave by altering the frequency of the tones from the exact frequencies of just intonation.' (Olson.1967. p.39 and p.46 respectively).

## L

*Listening; brain function (IX)*: The left side of the brain involves itself with linear-based, analytical functioning, but its related audial apparatus is the right ear, while the right side's involvement is more 'modular' and holistic, and its audio apparatus is the left ear. This means that the right-side audio apparatus deduces that which is more linearly-constructed and conjunct, such as traditional melodic forms, which are then processed and set against suitable linear frames of reference, before either accepting or rejecting them as such. The left-side audio apparatus will effect the opposite – it will pick up that which is more diffuse, and the right side of the brain will absorb it as disjunct detail. Even an appreciation of conventional harmony involves this latter process, as it entails perception of the inner relationships between sounds. (*cf.* also *perceptual redundancy*).



## M

**Mnemonic trace (II):** A residual 'imprint' of a past affective experience, residing in the unconscious.

**Modality (V):** The system of modes, which are scales dating at least from ancient Greece, and whose configurations of tones and semitones are different from those of the major and minor tonal system which was prised out of them. The modes, which were classified by the Greeks in terms of their affects, were not only used in the sacred music of the church, but also completely dominated 'folk music' (to this day; in fact, most of the music of The Beatles is modal). Certain modes seem more prevalent in certain countries – for example, the Phrygian mode in Spain, the Lydian in Hungary, and the Dorian and Aeolian in England. Most young children's improvised melodies are modal. Tonality is the musical system of the musically educated.

**Modular and curvi-linear in music (VII):** We have also seen how it might be possible for someone to be drawn into music as a preferred mode of re-realization, and thus how they plunder the containing space of music for material to accord with the paradigms of tension/tension resolved, tension/tension sustained/tension resolved, or tension/tension unresolved. In musical mode, the aesthetic of the curvi-linear is realised in melody, and the aesthetic of the modular in harmony. Counterpoint is a flowering of the curvi-linear, while harmony is informed by the modular. The more 'strict' is the counterpoint, or the more homophonic the harmony, the greater the shift towards the curvi-linear.

**Mother's voice – possible effect on the child of losing the mother (III):** The realization that dawned as this thesis progressed, that, for the fetus, *the mother is a voice* (cf. also chapter IV), is clearly of profound significance and worthy of further study. Two effects spring to mind as I consider two of my friends. The first concerns someone whose mother died before she (the child) had, as they say, 'entered into language'. While we should not assume that a child, even at this early developmental stage, does not possess an understanding of the spoken word, particularly as it might directly relate to them, it is more likely to be the prosody of the voice to which the child most clearly relates (as in 'it is not so much what is said, but the tone of voice in which it is said'). If this particular manifestation of prosody vanishes from the child's life, it is as if music itself has gone. I am not in a position to suggest that the person in question has a particular psychic configuration as a result of this, but I know she is, in a manner of speaking, an avid user of 'music's containing space' (cf. Chapter IV).

The second friend (whom I have known for a far shorter time) had a mother who was both deaf and dumb (and a father who was deaf) – therefore the loss takes on a different aspect. Once again, but even less so in this instance, I am not in a position to comment on my friend's psyche (others who know her say she is 'very neurotic'); however, she has clearly not been able to develop a concept of 'the mother as a voice'. It could be related to *transformed unspeakability* (qv below).

**Mozart's working practice (III):** It was often claimed, even attributed to Mozart's own account, that he was able to conceive a complete work in his head before committing it to paper – this is now realized to be an inaccurate account of his working-practice although, unlike Beethoven's well-documented struggles with his material, Mozart does seem to have possessed a greater facility to 'through-compose'. Many composers confess to be more in the Beethovenian mould – even relishing a first performance as an opportunity to evaluate their work for subsequent revision or minor alteration.



## N

**Nietzsche; more on creativity (VIII):** 'Apollo's music was a Doric architecture of sound – of barely hinted sounds such as are proper to the cithara. Those very elements which characterize Dionysiac music and, after it, music quite generally: the heart-shaking power of tone, the uniform stream of melody, the incomparable resources of harmony – all those elements had been carefully kept at a distance as being inconsonant with the Apollonian norm. In the Dionysiac dithyramb man is incited to strain his symbolic faculties to the utmost; something quite unheard of is now clamoring to be heard: the desire to tear asunder the veil of Maya, to sink back into the original oneness of nature; the desire to express the very essence of nature symbolically.' ([1872]. 1956 ed., p.27).

These various metaphors can be made to tie in quite well if we remember that Nietzsche related *Apollonian* to what we know as the 'conscious, rational gestalt' and *Dionysian* to the unfettered, irrational surges from the unconscious. Anton Ehrenzweig likens these two gods to Eros and Thanatos (*qv*) respectively. Certainly, in psycho-biological terms – differentiation and adaptation are on-going tasks of the libidinal drive (Eros) and entropy and apoptosis are the consequences of adaptive failure (Thanatos is therefore possibly less of an instinctual drive than Eros, but it is a useful metaphor for the biological, even if less satisfactory for the psychological. It is a discontinuity of Eros).

## O

**Object relations theory (Intro.):** One of Melanie Klein's important concepts, which distinguishes her and her followers from Freudian-based ego-psychology, by positing that man does not seek abstract *pleasure*, but *objects*. It extends into identifying *whole* or *part objects* as forming elements in the psyche. **Part-objects (II):** The breast is the most familiar of the part-objects – its abstract form is a psychic informant, but it begins by announcing its presence to an infant as an actual object separate both from the mother and from the child itself, yet taking on, in the mind of the infant, either benign or malign qualities.

**Orchestral musicians; difficulty of playing music one does not like (IX):** One can either presume there were no female members of the orchestra at the time, or that their response to new music was either ignored or somewhat different from the men! It should not be forgotten that time spent rehearsing uncongenial music should be added to the length of the performance, to give the true total of the misery-quotient. However, without suggesting my experience exactly paralleled that described, I can certainly vouch for the fact that playing music uncongenial to oneself is an unpleasant experience - one not confined to contemporary music. On one occasion, many years ago, I was playing in a performance of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*, and a more badly-written classico-romantic viola part can scarcely be imagined. Playing the viola demands a level of physical energy which considerably exceeds that required for the violin, a fact which Mendelssohn chose to ignore, or simply did not know, for he provides a number of bars rest throughout the whole oratorio which barely enters double figures, and some of the writing is far from idiomatic for the instrument. In short, for the viola player, *Elijah* is a tedious, exhausting experience, barely worth the effort even for the money! At one particularly awful point in the score, my colleague and I simultaneously turned towards each other, each muttering to the other 'never again!' I have never since accepted an engagement for *Elijah* – and neither has he.

**Overtone (V):** A physical property of all acoustic wave vibration, though most people are unaware of their existence. The answer to that can possibly be found in Ehrenzweig's idea that only constant properties of things remain after the process of differentiation – in other words, there are those whose minds only register the fundamental note in a cloud of upper partials, because the overtones are repressed. (*cf.* Chapter VIII).



Overtone series are most obvious (though still unrecognized) in the pealing of English church bells, and in the sound of church organs. These instruments (along with their megalithic versions beloved of civic buildings) spawned one of the great paradoxes in the worship of music – when played at full-stretch the air hangs thick with enough overtones which, were each one a snowflake, would bury the whole caboodle under metres of snow yet, more frequently than they would care to admit, that dissonant cloud (as are the dissonant sounds of nature) is regarded as quite splendid by music lovers who claim not to tolerate dissonant music! The French composers Debussy and Messiaen are among those who chose to directly expose the overtone series in their piano music.

## P

*Perceptual redundancy (IX)*: This discriminatory procedure can be very satisfactorily related to the concept of habituation and the three tension paradigms outlined in Chapter III. The left hemisphere of the brain (in right-handed people) processes specialized linguistic functions, and the right hemisphere is involved in musical perception. As the three tension paradigms become more complex in one's unconscious, the right hemisphere seems to lose its dominance in processing musical information in favour of the left, as neuronal activity shifts its emphasis. The tension/tension unresolved paradigm seems imprinted in the right hemisphere, and the tension/tension sustained/tension unresolved finds itself a place in the left. (*cf. also listening; brain function*).

*Perceptual system (VII)*: Or the *perception-consciousness system* in the Freudian model. (*cf. also Topologies*). Freud explains that this is dominated by sensations reaching the psychic apparatus from inside as well as outside, and which imprint themselves somewhere along the pleasure-unpleasure continuum. He posits it as actually opposed to the unconscious-preconscious system, where mnemonic traces can be heavily inscribed and become informative (a type of determinism). (*cf. SEV p.611 and 613 for preconscious, and p.612 and 615 for conscious*).

*Perfect Pitch (III)*: Most musicians agree that possessing perfect pitch is both a curse and a blessing. It can be re-acquired with practice, and is a useful ability in composers. 'Relative pitch' where different pitch-classes can be related to, say, a given key-note (tonic) has a better all-round usefulness.

*Phantasie (VII)*: Originally, the German word *phantasie* was used psychoanalytically as a collective noun in *quasi* synonymity with *imagination*. By contrast, the French *fantasie* denotes a more specific, singular imagined scene. (There is a sense in which Freud's concept of *primal phantasies*, which include intra-uterine existence, can be invoked in support of the present argument, although I suggest that he was incorrect in assuming they are phylogenetically inherited). His stance on *phantasie* as such, however, *vis á vis* dreams and thence musical composition, is pertinently expressed thus: '... phantasies, like any other components of the dream-thoughts are compressed, condensed, superimposed on one another, and so on ... they often make their way complete into dreams and ... still more often clear glimpses of them can be seen behind the dream.' (S.E.V. p.493).

On the other hand, Jung calls fantasy-thinking 'unadaptive' (CW.5, para.20), yet in the same paragraph he goes on to say: '... it is useless for all practical purposes, but in the long run the play of fantasy uncovers creative forces and contents, just as dreams do.' (note the different spelling). Neither, however, appears to recognize the 'theatrical' nature of phantasy in the sense of its providing a baroque effusion of symbols designed to disguise (the unbearable nature of?) 'truth'. I suspect the 'theatre of musicality' of weaving the same spell.



**Pleasure Principle (II):** The operative, self-serving mode of the instinctual *Id* in the Freudian model. *Pleasure Principle* is, in fact, the translator's rendering of the German word used by Freud, *Lustprinzip*, but, while it purports to be as faithful as possible to Freud's suggestion that one's *Id* drives are motivated by the necessity to relieve internal tensions, it also has to accommodate within the prevalent interpretations of the word *Lust* as hedonistic pleasures of the senses (pleasure, joy, delight, lust, carnal pleasure), definitions which are more temperate (fancy, inclination, wish, longing, mirth, fun). This is clearly unsatisfactory, and inevitable leads to value-judgements of the nature which have also affected *libido*.

**Pleroma, The (I):** Jung does not clearly define this concept, but in Gnosticism it signifies completeness and fullness, as in the spiritual universe being the abode of God and of the totality of divine powers and emanations. The sea is often considered a manifestation of the Pleroma.

**Projective Identification (IX):** This is Melanie Klein's effective, but easily misunderstood term, to describe the unconscious mechanism utilized when '... the subject inserts his self – in whole or in part – into the object in order to harm, possess or control it'. (Laplanche and Pontalis. p.356). Basically, she is referring to the projection of something inside the subject felt to be 'bad' – it is also an ego-impoverishing dynamic (but *cf. centrifugal and centripetal* identification), and which many feel lies at the heart of racism.

**Psychoanalysis and music (VIII):** One can only regret once more that psychoanalysis, from its inception to the present day, has found it so hard to come to terms with music. For example, at a conference at the Anna Freud Centre in London, several knowledgeable and erudite speakers presented papers in which concern for the psychic welfare of children was clearly shown. However, although it would have been entirely appropriate to do so, the proven benefits of music were barely mentioned at all; my question as to why music should be so neglected was met with what can only be described as a stunned silence.

## R

**Real, The (I):** Another of the Lacanian *Orders* of the unconscious mind (*cf. Imaginary*). 'The real ... is impossible to imagine, impossible to integrate into the symbolic order, and impossible to attain in any way'. (Evans. 1996, p.160). In other words, it has resonance with Bion's *beta elements (qv)*. From the point of view of this thesis, it is the elements which, have invaded the unconscious, remain forever the fixed and immutable core of the psyche. Very 'real' for the individual, in terms of their foundational effect upon the personality, even though the fact of their existence is inaccessible to consciousness.

**Reality Principle (II):** The second operative mode of the unconscious in the Freudian model (*cf. Pleasure Principle*). But here, the latter finds its energy being bound (*binding/cathected, [qv]*) in the service of the ego, whose rôle partly it is to promote realistic aims for the libidinal drive.

**Reveries, day-dreams (VII):** Marion Milner wrote: 'I think it is a pity that the expressive word "reverie" has been so largely dropped from the language of psycho-pathology, and the overworked word phantasy made to carry such a heavy burden of meaning. For the word "reverie" does emphasise the aspect of absent-mindedness ...'. (1950. p.163). As such, then, it would accord with Anton Ehrenzweig's thinking re *de-differentiation* (*cf. chapter VIII*).



## S

**Signifier (I):** The concept of the *signifier* came to psychoanalysis from linguistics via Jacques Lacan, and refers to the psychologically-informed mental image of a *conceptual referent* (an object). Signifiers shift references in the unconscious, and Lacan maintained the *signifying chain* is never complete – one can always add another signifier to it. A *point de capiton* is an unconscious, consolidating, fixing-point in this chain.

**'Soft eye music' (III):** A musician, for example, is likely to accord a particular association to 'soft', because the juxtaposition of 'soft' and 'music' in the context of the quotation which heads chapter III (although probably conjuring up for everyone a scene of a sunny, warm, intermittently breezy day in spring or summer) would probably suggest the quiet rustle of leaves, rising and falling in magnitude as the wind decrees. If, on the other hand, a different image is presented, such as: 'The ... eye-music of a host of hungry branches clawing at the air', with what word might a deaf person replace 'soft'? 'Loud' would probably not fill the space for them. But both for those of us who are deaf, and those of us who can 'hear', visual and tactile senses allow us to share a similar affective experience of the wind outdoors, and that there is a chance our *Treffpunkt* will be on the common ground of poetry.

**Sonata principle/sonata form (II):** *Sonata* (sound) as opposed to *Cantata* (sung). The *sonata principle* is the abstract term for a particular structure of instrumental music that has a long history culminating in its consolidation in the Classical period and which, as befits its place in the Enlightenment, reflected in its tripartite (paradigmatic) shape (A-B-A) like the two columns in Greek architecture supporting the pediment in the middle. It is a complex principle which is realized formally in themes and their contrasting, varied treatment, and was generally adopted for the first movements of symphonies, concerti and sonatas. In those specific contexts, it is referred to as *sonata form*.

**Sophia (I):** Sophia, the ancient epitome of Wisdom in all things (who, therefore, was thought to understand that which was still 'darkly mysterious' to pre-scientific man). 'According to the Gnostics, it was not the Primordial Man who was cast out as a bait into the darkness, but the feminine figure of Wisdom, Sophia Achamoth. In this way the masculine element escaped the danger of being swallowed by the dark powers and remained safe in the pneumatic realm of light, while Sophia, partly by an act of reflection and partly driven by necessity, entered into relation with the outer darkness'. (Jung, CW.13, para.452).

The loss to Western European cultural history of those women whose achievements will never be known is, without question, utterly shameful. For example, Lucy Green's paper (1993) illustrates one of the results of our inherited masculine hierarchy; she wrote: 'The percentage of women registered as composers ... is c.15%. The membership of the Musicians Union is currently 32,757 men and 7,623 women'. (P.49).

**Spirit (I):** The word *spirit* comes from the Latin verb *spirare*, to breathe, and leads to *in-spiration* – that which is the result of taking in the spirit, and which will lead to that which we call 'a creative act'. There are many etymological (and echoic) associations between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin words relating to 'spirit'. For example, the Greek *neuma* is a divine nod of approval, signifying power, and a divine presiding spirit. *Pneuma*, also Greek, is wind, as is *anemos*, with its Latin equivalent *anima* (spirit). We find *neumes* to be the name given to early symbols of music notation – when they designated a series of notes to be sung in one breath.

**Sublimation (II):** The term is alchemical in origin, signifying a reaction between two substances which forms a vapor – a spirit. The word *sublimation* is poorly applied to creativity in general, for it is etymologically ambiguous. The Latin prefix of *sub*, together with one meaning of the word *limen*, as 'threshold', present the analogy with that which is 'underground' – therefore a specious association with 'that which is driven underground' is almost inevitable



(as in *subliminal* – beneath consciousness). However, its correct etymology is apparently in the complete Latin verb *sublimare*, with its meaning of ‘to lift up’, or ‘to elevate’. If, therefore, in using this term, Freud meant that the sexual instinct is ‘driven underground’ while ‘creativity’ is raised up as a transcendent, that fits in well with his historically contingent thinking about creativity.

Norman Brown (1959) wrote of the confusion: Freud’s notion of sublimation as a “way out” as a way of satisfying the instincts in a manner satisfactory to the ego ... in fact, Freud always assumes that one of the chief aims of psychoanalytic therapy is to replace repressions by sublimations ... (but) he says, not all of the libido can be sublimated’. (pp.140-141).

**Super-ego (II):** From a strictly Freudian point of view, the Super-ego’s genesis within the unconscious is closely related to the rite of passage of the Oedipus complex, a most important manifestation of the triadic paradigm in the life of a young male child. It is an anthropomorph, with a controlling, regulating function on the subject, and comes about through an unconscious introjection of authority figures. It is the ‘conscience’, as it were.

**Suspended attention (IX):** is the desirable mode of listening recommended to analysts by Freud, which complements the analysand’s *free associations*. Thus, musically speaking, the listener should ideally not allow unconscious reactions to impede the flow of expounded ideas from the composer. Freud wrote: ‘... everyone possesses in his own unconscious an instrument with which he can interpret utterances of the unconscious in other people.’ (S.E. XII, p.320).

**Syncretic process (VIII):** The ego dips down to the undifferentiated intra-uterine world of the Self where the sound-impingement experience was paramount, before the ego was formed by reality-perception. The feeling of ego-abandonment and ‘mystic union with the universe’ induced by a regressive libido withdrawing from the external world, is often referred to as the *oceanic feeling*. It is a term used by Ehrenzweig, who reminds us: ‘While the mystic, however, remains statically in his calm religious rapture, the creative mind is able to reify transitively the thing-free vision into a rationally comprehensible idea or image.’ (1953, p.171).

**Synoptic facility (IX):** Peter Kivy disagrees with the concept of a synoptic facility: ‘... one instantaneous synoptic view. The feat is impossible – perhaps even logically, as some have claimed of God’s supposed atemporal perception of temporal events.’ (1993, p.58n). But I know the *Eroica* ‘in my head’ – it is the perfect performance, and probably takes less than one minute. Ask someone who has conducted it many times for a particular event in that symphony and they can probably recall it instantly – they do not need to go through the whole work to find it, as a computer might. A composer will most likely have a synoptic view of each of their compositions – this may even be something like the over-view they possess of a work before it is committed to paper.

**Synthesis between music and the dream-work (VII):** It is possible that, had Freud been of a mind to further discuss creativity, he might have explored a similar synthesis to the one presented here. (cf. Appendix I) for, fourteen years after *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he added the following passage to it in 1914: ‘In discussing the part played by the unconscious in artistic creation, Eduard von Hartmann (1890, I, section B, Chapter V) made a clear statement of the law in accordance with which the association of ideas is governed by unconscious purposive ideas, though he was unaware of the scope of the law. He set out to prove that “every combination of sensuous presentations, when it is not left purely to chance, but is led to a definite end, requires the help of the unconscious” ... and that the part played by conscious interest is to select the most appropriate idea among the countless possible ones. It is the unconscious which makes the appropriate selection of a purpose for the interest and this “holds good of the association of ideas in abstract thinking as well as in sensuous imagining and artistic combination” and in the production of jokes ... even if one in appearance completely abandons his train of thought to accident, or if one abandons oneself entirely to the involuntary dreams of fancy, yet always other



leading interests, dominant feelings and moods prevail at one time rather than at another, and these will always exert an influence on the association of ideas ... In semi-conscious dreams always only such ideas as correspond to the main (unconscious) interest of the moment occur”.’

## T

**Talent (I):** It should be noted that the OED uses the word *talent* in defining *charisma* (from the Greek *kharis* [favor, grace] ) as a ‘divinely conferred power or talent’. This suggests a passivity, as opposed to the more ‘active’ derivation, in a modern context at least, of *charisma* in *charity* (which enters English from the Latin *caritas*). Surprisingly pertinent to this discussion of the fate of immanent plenipotential, the latter has diverse meanings of ‘dearness, high price, scarcity, high esteem, regard, respect, love, affection’, which leads one to question further the motives for Christian Theology’s selective application of *genius*, *gift* and *talent*.

**Tonal system (several chapters):** Briefly, this comprises the system of major and minor keys, based on equal temperament, which dominated Western European music from roughly 1650-1910, and which evolved from the previous system of modes (*cf. modality*).

**Topologies (II):** ‘Topography ... (a) theory or point of view which implies a differentiation of the psychical apparatus into a number of subsystems ... they may be treated, *metaphorically speaking*, as points in psychical space ... Two different topographies are commonly identified in Freud’s work ... the Unconscious, Preconscious and Conscious (systems, and) the three agencies of Id, Ego and Superego’. (Laplanche and Pontalis. 1973, p.449; my emphasis). Freud is accused of reductionism and structuralism as if they were errors in cognitive processes when, without his attempts to classify all the cogs in the wheel of the mind, we would probably have been left bereft of these topographical terms which have since proved so useful (even to his critics).

**Transformed unspeakability (IV):** In the classical repertoire, I believe the idea of *transformed unspeakability* to be particularly manifest in the music of Beethoven written after about 1802 (i.e. after he had come to terms with his encroaching deafness). This is the point of departure for his device of including *quasi recitative* elements in his piano sonatas (and we should not forget its importance to the structure of the ninth symphony) but the remarkable slow movement of his 4<sup>th</sup> piano concerto is possibly the most profound expression of that which cannot be transmitted through words. Beethoven gives its *ritornello* structure a linguistic dimension - as a dialogue. The strings represent, in their *ritornello* unison voice and jerky rigidity, the dominant participant in a dialogue who, at first, does not allow the more modest piano to even finish a sentence. However, the smoother, quieter lyricism of the piano which slightly changes its message at every entry, is eventually persuasive enough to silence the strings altogether.

**Transitional object (Intro.):** A term introduced by Donald Winnicott to conceptualize an infant’s ‘Not-Me’ object ( [1958] 1975, p.231), such as its thumb, a piece of blanket, a favorite soft toy – this must go everywhere with the child. It probably represents a link between itself and its mother – a small security in a world which it greets with a mixture of interest and trepidation.

**Tree of Life (II):** This is one of the most ancient human symbols: ‘Another equally common mother-symbol is the wood of life, or tree of life ... Numerous myths say that human beings came from trees, and many of them tell how the hero was enclosed in the maternal tree-trunk, like the dead Osiris in the cedar-tree’. (Jung. CW.5, para.521). The indigenous population of America, for example, regards trees as ‘people who don’t move’. Jung devotes a whole section of CW.13 (*Alchemical Studies*) to *The Philosophical Tree* (and *cf.* frontispiece figs.).



*True and False Selves (VIII)*: are Donald Winnicott's concepts – the first, he maintains to be the only real and true fount of creativity. Stephen Newton suggests: 'The False Self is the social, conventional and mannered self compliant to society's demands and with a defensive role to hide and protect the True Self.' (Newton. 1996, p.94). It is important to maintain a libidinal interest in one's True Self.

## U

*Utterance (IX)*: It might take a sea-change in attitudes for some to appreciate the therapeutic qualities of vocal utterance devoid of 'meaningful language', as that is usually considered to represent a symptom of mental malaise, rather than an efficacious form of treatment in its own right. But the work of R.D.Laing came close to this ideal so, I believe, did the composer Luciano Berio in his *Sequenza for Voice* – an exposition of vocal 'jibberish' in 'extended vocal techniques' which is profoundly moving, though its performance is often greeted with embarrassment.

## W

*Wagner (V)*: Far too frequently, the music of Wagner is called upon to accompany cinematic images about the Second World War. It provides far too simplistic a link. We have to recognize the folly of Adolf Hitler and his ilk in adopting Wagner's music in a mode of triumphalism as a symbol of their errant ways – the rise and fall of the Third Reich was, if only they had realized it, 'predicted' in the *Ring* cycle.

Of National Socialism, Jung wrote: 'The Hitler movement literally brought the whole of Germany to its feet, from five-year-olds to veterans, and produced the spectacle of a nation migrating from one place to another. Wotan the wanderer was on the move. (CW 10, para.373). And: 'Give an archetype to the people and the whole crowd moves like one man, there is no resisting it'. (CW18, para.372). Wagner's music itself now appears to be a close neighbor of archetype – a stereotype.

*Wish-fulfilment (VII)*: In 1899, Freud opposed wish-fulfilment to reality: 'It is enough for a dream to be the wish-fulfilment of a repressed thought ...'. (Letter to Wilhelm Fliess. 19.2.1899. S.E.I, p.278). He is often mis-quoted on this, for he later modified it to '... the *attempt* at the fulfilment of a wish'. (S.E.XXII, p.29).

It is of interest to note that modern neuroscientific research has discovered that libidinal wishes are controlled by the ventromesial quadrant of the frontal lobes, the masses of fibres within which control the flow of dopamine – this is an area that is stimulated by drugs such as cocaine, amphetamine and L-Dopa; drugs which initiate frequent vivid dreams. Dreaming itself only begins when the stimulus that incites the dreaming process attracts what is known as 'appetitive interest' (basal fore-brain dopaminergic activation). This, to all intents and purposes, is 'wishing'. Freud would have rejoiced to know that!

*Word association (II)*: or, more correctly, *free association*, was developed by Freud as a mode of analysis because of his belief that, by allowing a patient to speak whatever might come to the forefront of his consciousness, a chain of associative thoughts might be encouraged to emerge which would eventually reveal unconscious desires. Closely aligned to the patient's presentation of dream-material, free association was believed by Freud to articulate unconscious wishes through the medium of language – in other words, language articulates the imaginary (*qv*), which is itself constituted of desire founded on hallucination, and takes us back to the operative condition of the mind in childhood. It thus reverses the process in which we have explained the creative drive is involved, and also explains why we think that this, and other re-realizing processes (such as those mentioned above) are effective therapeutic tools: 'For the



infantile is the source of the unconscious, and the unconscious thought-processes are none other than those – the one and only ones – produced in early childhood’. (Freud. S.E.VIII, p.227).

*Work, The (IX)*: I feel I should dedicate this to David Reason of the University of Kent, who has, more times than I can remember, asked me to define the concept of ‘the work’; I suspect he knew I would have to confront it sooner or later – I don’t like to think I actually *resisted* tackling it, but he left me to find out for myself that I would become embroiled in it. In Jerrold Levinson’s article *What a Musical Work Is* (1980, pp.5-28) he infers that a musical work is an *implicit type structure*, which is transformed into an *initiated type structure* in performance. *Implicit type structures* is an abstract term covering all consistent structures, e.g. space, whereas *initiated type structures* are inconsistent – e.g. all the possible human-initiated uses of space. This pins labels on the obvious, without addressing the problem of the interaction of form and content.

*Work’s Band, The (I)*: ‘Works’ of course, was a euphemism for the specific factory or mine, for example, where one worked. Fortunately, the distinguished reputation of such bands as the Black Dyke Mills Band and the Foden Motorworks Band has lasted even the decimation of British manufacturing industry itself. In recent years, the film *Brassed Off*, although sentimentalized, illustrated these results of the decline only too well. It featured the virtuosic Black Dyke Mills Band. There have always been some eminent British composers prepared to write music for these bands – notably Edward Elgar, Gustav Holst, John Ireland, Herbert Howells and, more recently, Harrison Birtwistle and Paul Patterson.

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Recordings:

Symphony No.3 in E flat major, Op.55, the *Eroica*, by Beethoven. The London Classical Players, conducted by Roger Norrington. CDC 7 49101 2.

Fetal heartbeats: ECD 028

Baby chatter: ECD 07 and ECD 092

Singing games: ECD 093