The Renaissance of Romanticism

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> The Platonic ideal of truth, beauty and goodness is not a bad set of ideals to live by. But where has that gone? For thousands of years art was seen as a source of responsible moral and ethical leadership. Today taking that stance is almost seen as being comic."[1]

At the outset of the twentieth century humankind witnessed radical changes in almost every realm of human endeavor. As long-time New York Times music critic Harold C. Schonberg observed, the first two decades of the twentieth century brought us Sigmund Freud and his revelations of the subconscious, Max Planck and his theory of quantum physics, Albert Einstein and his theory of relativity, the inventions of Thomas Edison and the Wright brothers, painters Pablo Picasso and Wassily Kandinsky, and composers Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, and Claude Debussy.[2] New ideas, new values, new techniques, new rationales, and new modes of expression were the rage. Though it was Stravinsky who set the music world on its ear with his score Le Sacre du Printemps, it was to be Schoenberg and his acolytes Anton Webern and Alban Berg, along with French composer Edgard Varèse, who would exert the greatest influence on composers in the decades immediately following World War II. These influences would have lasting effects well into the new millennium. Nevertheless, as the American painter Jack Beal (b. 1931) remarks (above), they have left a troubling hole in the art and music of the post World War II era.

The human experience is, and has always been, predicated largely on the desire for spiritual fulfillment, love and beauty—defining aspects of Romanticism. Art that expresses or embodies these attributes will always find appreciative audiences and willing participants. In this regard, Romanticism is not dead. During the past three decades there has been a renaissance of sorts taking place in the realm of art music, as many composers have embraced the idea that tonal and quasi-tonal idioms remain highly effective in their expressive abilities and are far from being "exhausted." Music composed according to tonal principles continues to provide spiritual and aesthetic satisfaction to significant degrees.

American educator Allan Bloom asserted that whereas Romanticism

> …was a competition for experiencing the most exalted and sublime states, its successor school [Modernism] was a kind of auction in which the victor is the one who has the most terrible things to say about the human condition. Truth began to appear to be whatever was ugliest and most opposed to the gentle hopes of love."[3]

In this ethos, any attempt at creating or celebrating beauty as an expression of heart and transcendence was seen as Romantic "foolishness" and naïveté, in fact a deception bordering on being immoral. The justification for the ugliness of twentieth century art was that is was an expression or reflection of the ugly realities that engulfed us. The revolutionary mindset of the avant-garde viewed ideals of the "old world" as being impotent and no longer effectual in providing solutions to our seemingly intractable problems. This rationale also spawned new ideas about art, as the embrace of the new meant discarding the old. Robert R. Reilly, former director of the Voice of America, echoes Bloom's observation:

> The source of much 'originality' in modern art has not been in creation, but in destruction: a process of taking away what has been given not only by tradition, but by Nature itself. Of course, the principal premise of modern ideology is that wholesale destruction is the necessary ground for the truly new. True freedom [and] real creation demands the abolition of the past. Then one can create in the same way as God was once thought to have created—ex nihilo.[4]

The philosophical evisceration of Romanticism and the tonal idiom by hard-core modernists continued unabated for much of the late twentieth century. After Max Stirner declared that God was dead in 1845, Nietzsche, Wagner and other radicals of the era promulgated that idea with revolutionary zeal. Regarding the assault on religious virtue, contemporary philosopher and composer Roger Scruton avers, "The death of God really means the death of an old form of human community—a community founded on holiness."[5] Nietzsche, Freud and Karl Marx are considered the three leading exponents of "the school of suspicion," which asserted that any ruling class—religious or political—was suffering from a "false consciousness" that was inherently unjust and anathema to "natural law," and as such it had to be discredited.

"Left Brain" Music

In the decades immediately following World War II, the Schoenbergian aesthetics and rationale for what became known as "the Second Viennese School," with its predilection for indeterminacy and perceptual opaqueness, dominated the modern music scene. In keeping with the advances of scientific discovery, the use of electronic media in composition—a practice that dates back to the pioneering efforts of the early

twentieth century by Futurist/ avant-garde composers and electrical engineers such as Thaddeus Cahill, Leon Theremin, Olivier Messiaen, Ferruccio Busoni and Varèse—would give rise to innovative methods along with the attendant attitudes and aesthetics regarding musical expression. Busoni, considered a prophet of electronic music, believed that music should be free from the restrictions of traditional, common-practice musical syntax and conventional instruments. Referring to his conversations with Busoni, Varèse recalled how they would ponder the direction that music would go in order to free itself from the "straightjacket of the tempered system."[6]

By embracing the attitudes of Nietzsche's uber-mensch, intelligentsia's abnegation of religion—with its concomitant predilection for all things scientific—inevitably led to the creation of music that prioritized formulaic intellection over just about everything else. In the realm of art music, Schoenberg and his disciples held the belief that prioritizing intellectual processes and formulaic methodologies was a historical inevitability; the next lineal step in the evolution of music theory and composition. Schoenberg believed that emancipating dissonance from the "constraints" of common-practice pitch relations would give free reign to one's musical imagination.

Richard Taruskin, Richard Norton and other present-day musicologists suggest that this attitude was the result of a political and not-so-benign determinist mindset rather than a natural, organic evolution of musical style. Taruskin contends that the "emancipation of dissonance… owes its political vibes to the liberatory rhetoric of the dialectic," and had more to do with emancipating composers than musical style.[7] Schoenberg went as far as to declare that emancipating dissonance made it possible for anyone to be a composer. Dissonance treatment, for so long the measure of skilled compositional abilities by composers working in the tonal idiom, was no longer a factor in the dissonance-laden utterances of atonal music. The post-World War II era saw an explosion of what might be termed "left-brain music" as the compositional de rigueur of atonal serialism became the dominant rationale, almost tyrannically so. "Process" trumped aesthetics at nearly every turn, resulting in a complex and indeterminate musical idiom laced with heavy doses of acerbic melodies (tone rows) and discordant harmonies. Music became arcane and specialized to such a degree that it possessed little in the way of ingratiating aesthetics or communicative ability.

Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer Stephen Albert (1941-1992), whose compositional style juxtaposed traditional and modern techniques in an "accessible" fashion, recalled his early experiences with the atonal/serial movement:

> Starting back in the early sixties, I felt I was fleeing from a cultural funeral. People didn't see the caskets yet, but I saw them. The only honest thing was not to be a part of it - to resist it…. Once you brought the cultural bolshevism of the time, you were down the mindless trail of the avant-garde. Twenty-five years down the line I suspect that one will look back with mystification as to how people took the fifties to the seventies seriously except as some kind of sociological aberration.[8]

With history affording us the coruscating clarity of hindsight, we are now faced with irony that in a very real way the "straightjacket of the tempered system" had been replaced by the straightjacket of the formulaic methodologies espoused by the mid-century modernists. If, as Schoenberg suggested, greater exposure to atonality would eventually lead to its greater acceptance, the atonal, modernist idioms should be more widely accepted by now. Yet in reality they continue to be viewed as being arcane and increasingly subsidiary.

Relevance of the Past

Commenting on the state of contemporary music in 1974, composer-conductor and Darmstadt alumnus Pierre Boulez (b.1925), regarded as the leading exponent of new music in the post-World War II era, offered his views regarding contemporary culture:

> Our age is one of persistent, relentless, almost unbearable inquiry. In its exaltation it cuts off all retreats and bans all sanctuaries; its passion is contagious, its thirst for the unknown projects us forcefully, violently into the future; it compels us to redefine ourselves, no longer in relation to our individual functions, but to our collective necessity. Despite the skillful ruses we have cultivated in our desperate effort to make the world of the past serve our present-day needs, we can no longer elude the essential trial: that of becoming an absolute part of the present, of forsaking all memory to forge a perception without precedent, of renouncing the legacies of the past to discover undreamed of territories.[9]

Here we have the inveterate champion of contemporary art music basically saying that past traditions have little or no value in contemporary life. In fact, it is a "ruse" to attempt making the past seem important in any meaningful way, and "forsaking all memory" is a desired condition for humankind. The result of Boulez's assertion has contributed to the inexorable marginalizing of art music. As the art of musical composition became steeped in hyper-intellectualization, music born out of past traditions and its

attendant rationales was considered unimportant, even unnecessary. This dismissal is much to our collective loss. Is there nothing to be learned from the past? Does the music of Beethoven or Mahler have nothing to offer modern man?

Twentieth century American composer George Rochberg (1918-2005), whose compositional style evolved away from post-World War II atonality and toward a decidedly Romantic and accessible syntax, offers a sagacious rebuttal of Boulez's manifesto:

> The cosmology of the ancients and the primitives, expressed in magic, rites and rituals, which invested the world around them with signs and symbols of the unknown, paradoxically insured the survival of these peoples; for through their seemingly unsophisticated notions they preserved the sense of awe and mystery in the face of a cosmos into which man had seemingly stumbled. And we? Because we have lost that precious sense of the magic and mystery of existence, we have no cosmology—physics and astronomy are poor substitutes. Because we have no cosmology, we are faced with the problem of whether man can survive his own thoughtlessness and arrogance, his collective hubris. Mahler was the last composer to intuit that music belongs to cosmology and is supported by it.[10]

Nietzsche's anti-religious uber-mensch may have turned out to be the most arrogant of all. Even the progressive Richard Wagner (1813-1883), whose unholy alliance with Nietzsche in his revolutionary years reflected a staunch anti-Christian bias, did not entirely reject the importance of mythology as it pertained to establishing the basis of a humane cultural reality. Roger Scruton reminds us that through his study of medieval German literature, Wagner acquainted himself "with a culture in which people did not merely do things, but lived up to things," a culture that possessed

> a distinct category of human thought, as open to us… in a world of scientific skepticism, as it was open to the inhabitants of ancient Greece or Iceland. Myth dawned on Wagner as a form of social hope. It was a way of thinking that could restore modern man the lost sense of the ideal, without which human life is hopeless."[11]

Wagner's views of myths and their effects on musical "meaning" vis-à-vis the spirit of Romanticism reveals what could be said to be a defining attitude of the Romantic era; namely that the stimulus of one's innermost feelings and moods, be they the result of joy, suffering, melancholy, pathos, desire, hope, love, etc., is embryonic and elemental to the creative process, an occurrence in which that stimulus "usurps his whole being at the hour of conception."[12]

Of course, these various inspirations are the allegorical stuff of the myths and fables of every culture. For the Romantic composer they were a trove of inspirational source materials which, when expressed through one's craft and technique in original ways, resulted in music representing a sublime balance of heart and emotion (subject) with form (object.) Speaking to this ethos, Rochberg avers, "There can be no justification for music ultimately if it does not convey eloquently and elegantly the passions of the human heart. Who would care to remember the quartets of Beethoven or Bartok if they were merely demonstrations of empty formalisms?"[13] Citing the spurious claims of presentism (or futurism) regarding the prioritization of intellectualism in music as articulated by Boulez and all those epigones of the academy, Rochberg opines, "Like mushrooms in the night, there has sprung up a profusion of false, half-baked theories of perception, of intellection, of composition itself. The mind grows sterile and the heart small and pathetic."[14] The mid-twentieth century emphasis on the "research model" of composition, as opposed to the "communicative model" of the past, demonstrates the disinterestedness of many modernists in what heretofore had been the dominant and perhaps most humane aspect of music-making.

A Unificationist Perspective

The denigration of beauty in the late twentieth century seems decidedly inhumane and callous. In many ways the coarsening of contemporary culture can be attributed to the mindset that approaches beauty in such a cynical fashion. Is the desire for aesthetic beauty merely a vestige of a past age that has no meaning, purpose or benefit to modern man, as Boulez suggests? Do the tenets of religious belief have absolutely nothing to offer to a world rife with conflict, wanton selfishness and self-absorption?

Kant's Critique of Judgment (1790) proposed that the intelligible order found in nature pointed to the idea of a "supreme intelligence" and "divine purpose," something that was transcendent and beyond rational explanation. For Kant, that which was sublime and beyond explanation, be it in God's creation (nature) or man's (art), possessed transcendent properties, and the experience of transcendence could be a factor in the process of becoming more humane—individually and collectively. Although beauty and the pleasure derived from nature and art were beyond "pure reason," one's emotional response was nevertheless valid and universal. Kant posited that there exist three ways in which one could experience pleasure: though that which was agreeable, good and beautiful. He also acknowledged that the union of objective (truth)

and subjective (imagination) realities is what allows us to make aesthetic judgments with regard to art and music in the most efficacious way.

Exposition of the Divine Principle cites the importance of the attributes of truth, beauty and goodness in the process of the development of a higher self and an ethical society:

> When the body responds to the mind's emotion, intellect and will, its actions pursue the values of beauty, truth and goodness respectively. God is the subject partner to the human mind; hence He is the subject partner to human emotions, intellect and will. Desiring to realize his original value, a person responds to the perfect emotion, perfect intellect and perfect will of God through his mind, and acts accordingly through his body. Thus, he manifests the values of original beauty, original truth and original goodness.[15]

In this context it can be easily concluded that truth and intellect (knowing) should be harmonized with beauty and emotion (feeling) in such a way that goodness and will (doing) becomes the foundation for a moral and ethical society. Science, art and religion thus become interconnected, and in so doing provide the basis for building a culture of peace as well as artistic expressions that reflect and/or embrace that vision—"three branches of the same tree," as Einstein asserted.

Obviously, the aforementioned rationale of modernity in Western culture of the twentieth century is antipodal to what had been the accepted norm dating back to the early Christian philosophy and the Renaissance, a time when creating art based on religious convictions and scientific principles was celebrated as a reflection of humankind's ability to realize its fullest potential. Religion and science in the Renaissance period were not viewed as mutually exclusive entities but rather as correlative aspects which, that when conjoined and harmonized in artistic endeavors, could yield sublime expressions of great beauty and meaning. For Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), universally regarded as the western world's greatest composer of liturgical music, composing according the theories and principles of the tonal idiom, principles that were metaphysically in accord with the laws of physics that governed sound production (not to mention the entire universe), was an expression of religious belief. "Music's only purpose," Bach averred, "should be solely for the glory of God and the recreation of the human spirit."[16]

Such attitudes were very much a part of early Christian philosophy, as exemplified by the writings of Anicius Manlius Severinus Boëthius (ca. 480–524). His writings on music resonate with Greek philosophical tenets regarding the cosmology of music and the natural world as well as Greek views of music and its effects on the consciousness and behavior. In his seminal work, De Institutione Musica, he states:

> Music is related not only to speculation but to morality as well, for nothing is more consistent with human nature than to be soothed by sweet modes and disturbed by their opposites…Thus we can begin to understand that apt doctrine of Plato, which holds that the soul of the universe is united by a musical concord (Plato, Timaeus 37A). For when we compare that which is coherently and harmoniously joined together in sound, that is, that which gives us pleasure, so we come to recognize that we ourselves are united according to this same principle of similarity. For similarity is pleasing, whereas dissimilarity is unpleasant and contrary.[17]

Boëthius' perspective is in accord with Unification Thought's Theory of Original Image and the importance of morality and ethics as it pertains to art and those who create it. According to The Essentials of Unification Thought, art is considered a way of attaining "dominion over creation" and being a "co-creator" with God. As such, artists who have grown to perfection through the three stages of growth and resemble God in matters of heart as defined in the Divine Principle, would then use their talent to promote and foster conditions conducive to the realization of true love.

Though Saint Augustine expressed reservations about music in the church, citing "the danger of pleasure" and the "gratifying of the physical senses,"[18] Martin Luther (Bach's inspiration) offered a more favorable perspective:

> You will find that from the beginning of the world [music] has been instilled and implanted in all creatures, individually and collectively. For nothing is without sound or harmony…Music is a gift and largesse of God, not a human gift. Praise through word and music is a sermon in sound.[19]

Augustine's timorous distrust of music and its emotional effect on one's psyche and behavior was not without merit. Confucius, Plato and Aristotle shared similar concerns about the moral and ethical power of music. Eventually Augustine would concede that the spiritual power of music could raise one's consciousness and allow for a more devotional worship experience, thereby facilitating one's efforts towards becoming more "godly" in everyday life. In this context, the process of achieving mind and body unity centering on God—a central tenet of Divine Principle—would be expedited by having the proper attitude about music and its effects on the soul.

Axiology and Music

Like most deeply held views that claim certitude regarding a particular moral stance, the idea of music having moral and ethical power is viewed as inherently suspect in our post-modern age. Post-structuralists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida are basically progeny of Nietzsche. They have strenuously rejected the idea that there are absolute truths on which to base a moral and ethical vision. Truth for Nietzsche was an illusion based on an "a mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms." Yet as we understand, the moral and ethical view of art has been a common contention from antiquity into the late nineteenth century. Roger Scruton argues that the idea of art's possessing moral and ethical aspects remains a significant aspect of our collective cultural psyche. As Nietzsche's laudation of the prelude to Wagner's opera Parsifal illustrates, the power of music to affect one's consciousness is without question. It is hard to imagine that post-structuralists would deny the premise that art affects our consciousness and behavior, but rather than attribute that phenomenon to a particular set of objective principles—tonal theories, for instance—they relegate that power to the relativity of one subjective response to the music—our personal perspectives and interpretations. Absolutes are not part of the equation.

Commenting on the preponderance of "left-brain" intellection in art music in the post-World War II era, prominent German composer Paul Hindemith (1895-1963) averred that there were composers

> who flatly deny the ethic power of music, nor do they admit any moral obligation on the part of those writing. For them, music is essentially a play with tones, and although they spend a considerable amount of intelligence and craftsmanship to make it look important, their composition can be of no greater value, as a sociological factor, than bowling or skating.[20]

Hindemith, who cited Boëthius in his writings and who often worked in Baroque styles and forms, believed that composer who had become aware of the beacons that lead to truth and perfection regarding musical creativity "will then know about musical inspiration and how to touch validly the intellectual and moral depths of our soul. All the ethic power of music will be at his command and he will use it with a sense of severest moral responsibility."[21]

To the believer, the desire to create art is God-given. Unification Thought's Theory of Original Image speaks to that impulse:

> Everyone has an innate tendency and desire to invent new things, develop new ideas, and live a creative life. This is a refection of God's own character and ability to create new things, which is called Creativity. It was this character of God that enabled Him to create human beings and all things… God has given us His Creativity. In order to understand the purpose and nature of our creativity, we need to understand God's own Creativity.[22]

Acceding to this understanding may be seen by some as an attempt to anthropomorphize God, but rather it is an attempt to discover (or recover) our own divinity with regard to our ability to be co-creators with God. According to Divine Principle God possesses both masculine and feminine elements, thus by bestowing the attribute of creativity to His/Her children, the objects of His/Her love, God was acting as a supremely loving parent by sharing an intrinsic attribute of His/Her being with the ones He/She loved. By acting as co-creators with our Heavenly Parent, the principle of "creation in likeness" is realized in accord with the Theory of Original Image.

In this context, motivation, intent and freedom become crucial to the creative person. We do not create in a vacuum and as such, that which we create has consequences. As Unification Thought explains:

> God's creativity, with which He made the world, was given to man as a potentiality… God's creativity is based on Heart, whereas fallen man's usually is not… fallen man usually sets it up based primarily on reason. Consequently, his creativity has given rise to ill effects.[23]

Our potential as creative beings is then realized in the most godly and noble fashion when we create according to the ethical premise of living for the sake of a higher purpose. Understanding the "ethic power" of music vis-à-vis the axiological tenets of Unification Thought and Divine Principle allows the artistic person to become a responsive object to the prime source of creative energy—God.

Many composers of the Romantic era, Beethoven, Brahms, Liszt, Strauss and Puccini to name but a few, alluded to the experience of being an object or vessel of divine inspiration and guidance in their creative endeavors. Brahms would go as far to say that when he felt connected to God in his creative moments he would hear distinct themes, harmonic progressions and forms. Hindemith too was echoing the attitudes of antiquity regarding the importance of the "ethic power" of music and the "moral responsibility" of artists.

According to Confucius, “If one should desire to know whether a kingdom is well governed, if its morals are good or bad, the quality of its music will furnish the answer.”[24] The Chinese text The Spring and Autumn of Lu Buwei speaks about music and its cosmic properties, properties that Luther alluded to centuries later:

> The origin of music lies far back in time. It arises out of two poles: the two poles give rise to the powers of darkness and light. The powers of darkness and light undergo change; the one ascends into the heights, the other sinks into the depths; heaving and surging they combine to form bodies. If they are divided they unite themselves again; if they are united they divide themselves again. That is the eternal way of heaven. Heaven and earth are engaged in a circle. Every ending is followed by a new beginning; every extreme is followed by a return. Everything is coordinated with everything else. Sun, moon, stars move in part quickly, in part slowly…That from which all beings arise and in which they have their origin is the Great One; that whereby they form and perfect themselves is the duality of darkness and light…
>
> The bodily shape belongs to the world of space, and everything special has a sound. The sound arises out of harmony. Harmony arises out of relatedness. Harmony and relatedness are the roots from which music, established by the ancient kings, arose… Perfected music has a cause.
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> Justice arises from the true purpose of the world. Therefore one can speak of music only with one who has recognized the true purpose of the world.[25]

This enlightened perspective points to a plethora of important tenets of Divine Principle: give-and-take action, polarity, Origin-Division-Union, the Three Object Purpose, the relationship between the incorporeal and corporeal worlds, unity, subject-object relationships, spherical motion, the three stages of growth, freedom, the Purpose of Creation, and ultimately the manifestation of Individual Embodiments of Truth—individuals who attain their divinity by living for the sake of others.

Harmony of the Spheres

As mentioned previously, the concept of the cosmological interconnectivity of sound, celestial order, mathematics and ethics dates back to the philosophical tenets of the ancient Chinese and Greek cultures. The Greek concepts of the “harmony of the spheres” and the “harmony of the world” played heavily into the idea of the interconnectedness of the cosmos and the moral and ethical aspects of music. Aristotle asserted,

These are the effects of music: It awakes the remote counsel, brings closer the stray thought, and strengthens the tired mind. Music, therefore, causes the return (to the soul) of that which was lost; it makes us pay attention to that which was neglected, and that which is turbid becomes clear. He who has been exposed to this beneficial influence participates in every counsel and opinion, and finds the right one without error. He will fulfill his promise without delay.[26]

About two millennium later in Harmonices Mundi, Johannes Kepler held that a central set of harmonies governed the cosmos, including the production and realization of sound via scales and harmonic principles. This idea, a progeny of Greek philosophy, demonstrates that the idea of the macrocosmic interconnectedness of astronomy, sound, physics, mathematics and spirituality is a concept that has found credence for centuries. Kepler wrote:

> Now, Urania, let it sound louder, as I ascend to the heights by the harmonic scale of the celestial motions, where the tones and secret archetype of the world’s making are preserved. Follow me, you musicians of today, and judge the matter by your arts, unknown to antiquity. In these last centuries, after two thousand years in the womb, ever-prodigal nature has finally produced you to give the first true image of the universe. Through your ears she has suggested in her innermost bosom to the intellect, most beloved child of God the creator.”[27]

Ears as the gateway to the mind and heart as well as to a higher knowledge of “the true image of the world”; how utterly sublime!

Tonal Syntax and Unification Principle

The reference to “two poles” in Lu Buwei’s philosophical text is especially pertinent in the understanding of sound as it pertains to music, which is the practice of ordering sound—consonant and dissonant pitch relations (intervals) that are present in the overtone series as discovered by Pythagoras—in a meaningful and aesthetically pleasing (harmonious) fashion. Tonality as a musical syntax evolved from the monophonic music of the early Christian church in Europe. Although this type of tonal centricity can also be found in the folk music of Asia and the Middle East, it was in the Christianized West that the tonal idiom advanced to its richest and most fully developed expression.

As composers in Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance began to write polyphonic music—music with greater linear complexity in which multiple melodies would be intertwined in a harmonious fashion—the natural by-product of this technique was a vertical alignment of tones that yielded shifting but definite harmonic modalities. The evolution of harmonic syntax though the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, along with the experiments in tuning and interval modification (temperament) led to the development of theories which in turn gave rise to a codified system of major and minor scales and key centers. Similar to the development of natural languages, the rules and "grammar" of tonality were abstracted after usage, not before. It is the intrinsic, subconscious desire for communication, beauty and love that lies at the heart of the tonal syntax.

Composer Fred Lerdahl of Columbia University posits that certain musical syntaxes have "cognitive constraints" and as such do not easily allow for communication—Schoenberg's atonality, for instance., Having done extensive research in the field of cognitive science, Lerdahl argues that compositional grammar is not unlike the grammar of language in that "natural grammar" is born of a spontaneous impulse within a culture whereas artificial grammar is "a conscious invention."[28]

This is perhaps the most significant aspect of the tonal syntax, for ontologically, tonality (like natural language) is predicated on harmonious relationships of polar opposites, which in turn allows for cognition and communication. As Leonard Bernstein reminded us, that to the degree that music is a language, it is a metaphorical language, yet the similarities are striking. Whereas natural languages consist of polar opposites such as consonants and vowels (phonology/sound), nouns and verbs (syntax/order) and semantics and grammar (meaning and representation), the tonal idiom consists of its own corresponding polarities—consonance and dissonance (phonology), major modes and minor modes (syntax) and primary and secondary chord relations (semantics) which contribute to the communicative power of tonal music. Polar relations in tonality are not arbitrary but have distinct syntactical significance.

When various polar characteristics are manifested in a harmonized fashion, music begins to take on attributes that reflect divine characteristics. Saint Paul posited that God's invisible nature and deity could be perceived in the created world (Romans 1:20). This perspective was succinctly articulated by Unificationist theologian Dr. Young Oon Kim:

> It is in the transmoral dimension of aesthetic experience that beauty approaches God. All the laws from and within God—give and take, polarity, harmony—connect beauty from all cultures. And to the extent that they clearly amplify and substantiate God's nature they evoke a response of love and appreciation from man. Since God represents absolute love and freedom, beauty is never confined.[29]

If we take Kim's erudite view at face value, we then we have the basic framework to assess the metaphysical properties of tonal music as it pertains to aesthetics and values (axiology).

Music and Nature

Natural (Divine) law is manifested in the tonal syntax in a number of significant ways. Interestingly, Schoenberg did not dispute this. He conceded that the harmonic "ebb and flow" of polar opposites is that which gave tonality its "strong effect of cohesion"[30] and emotive power. He considered the concept of polarity to be natural and readily acknowledged that the lack of harmonic cohesion, especially with regard to the pitch sets and chord construction in atonal music, made it difficult to comprehend and derive pleasure from it. He believed that this was due in large part to the lack of "the external rounding-off and self-containedness that this simple and natural principle [polarity] of composition brought about better than did any of the others used alongside it."[31] He noted that the indeterminate harmonic and thematic characteristics of atonality do not easily supplant the natural implications and the resultant emotional impact of the tonal idiom.

The irony, of course, that in Schoenberg's attempts to avoid consonances and "simpler dissonances (diminished triads and seventh chords)—in fact, almost everything that used to make up the "ebb and flow of harmony,"[32] he was rejecting several fundamental principles of nature and the cosmos; namely polarity and correlation. In 1961 Theodore Adorno, a disciple of the neo-Marxist Frankfurt School and a staunch advocate of atonal serialism, acknowledged that the indeterminate musical utterances that were the result of Schoenbergian aesthetics created cognitive constraints and a condition where "it was difficult to avoid the sense of a certain monotony, of an excessive similarity in the numerous works composed from pitch particles and discrete individual sounds," music that "frequently seemed all too mechanical and lacking in tension."[33] The tension (and subsequent resolution of tension) that Adorno longed for is precisely that which gives tonality its cohesiveness and emotional richness—its aesthetic raison d'être. Beauty and meaning in tonal music is a direct result of the aforementioned phonology, syntax and semantics that is highly predicated on polarity and relational circumstances—consonance/ dissonance, major/minor, for instance.

Music and Physics

This scenario begs several questions: If tonality really was the best manifestation of nature in music, why try to supplant it with something that was unnatural? If the tonal idiom was the best we had, why the attempts to get rid of it?

French composer and organist Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) published his Traité de l'Harmonie in 1722 (the same year J. S. Bach published The Well-Tempered Clavier), and this theoretical discourse remains one of the most important documents on the subject of tonality vis-à-vis natural law and aesthetics. Unlike theoreticians before him, Rameau looked to science, specifically the overtone series and natural law, as a way to explain the nature of the musical phenomena that are evident in tonality. Influenced by the theories of Descartes and Sauveur, Rameau posited that there was an elemental relationship between the physics of sound (the overtone series) and the harmonic theories of tonal syntax. He asserted that chords (triads) were the primary elements in music, as opposed to melody or themes, because various chord types—major, minor, dominant 7ths, diminished—are found in the overtone series. For Rameau, the overtone series represented the sonic etymology of tonality. His theories, considered revolutionary in their time, would influence musical thought for centuries, and he became known as "the Newton of music."[34]

The functional relationship of tonic and dominant chords demonstrates and manifests the polar principle of opposites, in this case consonant and dissonant intervals, acting in a harmonious fashion—the "ebb and flow" that Schoenberg alluded to. Tonality is thus hierarchical and relational in that the aural center of a particular modality can be determined only when two or more pitches or triads exist in a subject-object relationship.

In the tonal syntax, a C-major triad, for instance, can serve several functions depending on the aural context (aesthetics) and theoretical function (law) in which it occurs. This is a manifestation of the Triple Objective Purpose as noted in Divine Principle. In the key of C major, the C-major triad functions as the tonic (I) chord. In the key of F-major that same triad functions as the dominant (V) chord. In the key of G-major the C major triad functions as the sub-dominant (IV) chord, and in the key of E-minor the same triad functions as the sub-mediant (VI) chord. One triad has four functions, in alternating modes of subjectivity and objectivity depending on the key center.

Musical architecture and form was influenced by the evolution of the tonal syntax as well. Sonata form, a musical structure that was prominent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, encompasses a dual-key tonal framework and has three distinct sections: the exposition, the development and the recapitulation. This tripartite musical structure is a manifestation of the Three Stages of Growth (formation, growth, completion) as well as the Principle of Polarity (subject-object) and Origin-Division-Union as articulated in the Divine Principle's Principle of Creation.

In the sonata form, the primary theme is stated in the exposition in the tonic (or home) key and a second contrasting theme is then presented in a contrasting key center, usually based on the dominant key (G major in the key of C major, for example.) These themes then undergo various permutations in the middle development section, often appearing in different keys centers or going through different harmonic sequences. In the recapitulation the original themes are restated in the "home" key. The two themes presented in the exposition have been referred to as masculine and feminine due to their contrasting characters, with the first theme usually strong, energetic and possessing high degrees of rhythmic intensity, while the second theme possessing greater lyricism but with more rapid harmonic progressions.

In addition to the polarity paradigm, Biblical numerology plays into the idiom of tonality, specifically the numbers 3 (representing heaven) and 4 (representing earth), and their multiples. There are two basic modalities: major and minor. The octave in Western music is divided into 12 equal parts (semitones). There are 7 pitches in the diatonic scale, with the 8th pitch being the start of a new octave—a new beginning. There are 7 "flat" major keys and 7 "sharp" major keys, each having a "relative minor" key counterpart. The basis of Western harmony is the triad, a vertical organization of 3 pitches consisting of major and/or minor thirds. The number 7 is also evident in the overtone series, as the 3-octave span based on any "fundamental" tone, consists of 7 intervals (known as partials) which results in a dominant 7th chord in tonal theory. These associations may seem to be superficial and somewhat arbitrary, but to those who believe in a supreme design and supreme Designer, they indicate that the idea of cosmic order is not the result of mere accident, luck, capriciousness or determinism.

Many things can be demonstrated as being objective in the art of music. Even if a great deal of what goes into aesthetic judgment and criticism is primarily subjective, it is the attempt to apply objective standards which makes any sort of arrival at a judgment meaningful (Kant's assertion). If assessment is primarily subjective, then any great art form can be rendered to be something very much less powerful and important than it actually is. English psychiatrist Anthony Storr contends:

> What we need to consider is not nature, but human nature… the universality of music depends on the basic characteristics of the human mind; especially upon the need to impose order upon our

> experience... musical systems are ways of ordering sounds. What is universal is the human propensity to create order out of chaos.[35]

Mr. Storr gets no argument from me on the "human propensity for order" aspect of his assumption. However, this is only a part of the equation, for it does not take into account that God played a role in creating the natural elements such as the overtone series, air, ears, the cerebral cortex, central nervous systems, etc., (the grand design.) These elements are required for the production, ordering and reception of sound that results in what we perceive as music. Schopenhauer believed that we are "pre-programmed" and that we are compelled to experience the world in space and time, with an understanding that there exists a "causal" dimension that governs our perceptive capabilities.[36] When sound is ordered according to tonal grammar, it affects our psyche in profound ways. As Divine Principle asserts, the fulfillment of God's ideal in any endeavor is accomplished only when God and humankind exist in a co-creational mode of subject and object.[37] A theory of music that is based, even tangentially, on the natural laws and principles that govern sound production can be considered to have "godly" attributes. Humans organize sound based on man-made methodologies, but humankind did not create the laws of acoustics nor the material concerns required for production, hearing and cognition.

The Emancipation of Consonance

In 1964 American composer Terry Riley composed In C, a composition that came to be seen as a response to the crabbed mannerisms of academic serialism. Riley's composition, which is quasi-aleatoric (from the Latin: alea, dice) in nature, launched what would become known as Minimalism, a musical style predicated on consonant harmonic and melodic materials and simple repetitive pulsations that go through gradual permutations, shifting and reiterations. Minimalism's emphasis on simplicity and consonance however, was not syntactically a full realization or recovery of tonality because it tended to avoid the "ebb and flow" of perceivable polar opposites, thereby short-circuiting any cathartic experience. It has been suggested that Minimalism has ushered in a new era of accessibility in art music via the "emancipation of consonance." While this may be the case, John Adams, a leading Minimalist composer, acknowledged that the overly static and jejune melodic, rhythmic and harmonic properties characteristic of the Minimalist style often result in "grand prairies of non-event."[38]

Though consonance is once again fashionable, it is the polar relationship of consonant and dissonant intervals, or tonic and dominant triads, which yields the cathartic experience that is highly evident in tonality. Compositional practices that avoid either consonance or dissonance, or that contain a preponderance of one over the other, often result in music that is soulless, unexciting and decidedly non-Romantic.

In the final two decades of the twentieth century there has been a reemergence of Romantic attitudes about art music in relation to religion, spirituality and the human desire for that which is aesthetically beautiful. The immense popularity of the music of Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (b. 1935) and Eric Whitacre (b. 1970), music possessing overt religious connotations and a tonality-based syntax, attests to a renewed appreciation of that which is aesthetically pleasing and uplifting—music based on certain "universals," natural and philosophical. It is in the renewal of the "communicative" aspect of music that it recovers a significant aspect of its divine purpose. Pärt acknowledges: "I could compare my music to white light, which contains all colors. Only a prism can divide the colors and make them appear; this prism could be the spirit of the listener."[39] Pärt's view is consistent with Unification Thought's Theory of Art, especially the concept of Requisites of Appreciation, in which the artist-appreciator relationship substantiates the truth/beauty/goodness paradigm:

> Creation and appreciation are not entirely different. Creation is closely related to will, and appreciation to intellect, but both activities are performed centering on emotion… An appreciator creatively adds his own way of thinking, individuality, ideas… to the work of art in order to establish a closer resemblance between the work and himself.[40]

According to Divine Principle, we experience joy from this creator-appreciator relationship "when we have an object, whether invisible or visible, in which our own character and form are reflected and developed, thus enabling us to feel our own character and form through the stimulation derived from an object."[41]

Many composers who continued to work in tonal, pan-tonal and extended-tonal syntaxes in the wake of the Schoenbergian revolution in the first half of the twentieth century—Britten, Shostakovich, Hindemith, Bartok, Prokofiev, Vaughan-Williams, Copland and Janacek, to name but a few—actually looked to Jazz and folk music for source material far more than to the concepts of Schoenberg or Varèse. Their rationale for doing so indicated an understanding that aesthetic beauty and emotional communication still mattered, and that tonal syntax remained an efficacious way to realize both.

When Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962) received a commission to compose a new work for the seventy-fifth anniversary of Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, her thoughts

regarding her work revealed a decidedly Romantic notion: “Curtis is a house of knowledge—a place to reach towards that beautiful expression of the soul which comes through music.”[42] Her resulting composition, Blue Cathedral, is a reflection of that notion. Stylistically it is not the Romanticism of Mahler or Strauss, but in spirit and syntax it clearly possesses a Romantic soul, for it is music of tenderness, passion and warmth—music that speaks to the totality of our humanity. Like other Curtis Institute alumni who composed in the spirit of Romanticism, most notably Samuel Barber (1910-1981) and Lee Hoiby (1926-2011), Higdon seemingly understands that expressive communication is most readily activated by a musical idiom that is aesthetically ingratiating.

T.S. Eliot’s view of “tradition,” and all that it implies aesthetically and socially, is now seen as being objectionable due to its pleading that one function of art is to impose order on the human condition. This is seen as a non-egalitarian and non-progressive—restrictive, in fact. Yet this Eliotic concept is one that the ancients easily ascribed to. As the music of Hoiby, Higdon, Whitacre, Pärt, and other composers who revere music’s ability to elicit the “beautiful expression of the soul” demonstrates, there now exists a more humane and “traditional” rationale evident among many post-modern composers. This should be seen as being a positive and necessary condition if art music is to make its way out of the margins of our contemporary culture and once again provide a way for humanity to engage in what Schiller called the “aesthetic education” of the soul. If music isn’t aesthetically ingratiating, any rationale for it to be socially relevant is unconvincing.

If, as Maestro Boulez suggests, the past has no ability to meet our “present day needs,” the music of Higdon, Pärt and Whitacre provides evidence to the contrary. Toward the end of his life, Claude Debussy, often considered the first “modern” composer, offered a countervailing view to Boulez’s when he confided, “The longer I live, the more I find it wrong to forget our past and listen to foreign [atonal] voices which don’t perhaps sing as well in tune as our own,”[43] and that music is not just “the expression of feeling, it’s the feeling itself.”

Romanticism is alive and well in the human condition. In fact, it could be said that it never really died, Nietzsche’s Zarathustrian obituary not withstanding. The artistic provocations of Andy Warhol’s soup cans or John Cage’s sitting at a piano with a stopwatch, no matter how novel, can never supplant our fundamental desire and need for beauty. As Schiller, Schopenhauer and Kant remind us, beauty possesses a transcendent facet that allows us to be in touch with our inner selves and thus can be seen as being essentially a necessity for developing altruistic and humane perspectives to guide us in our quest for fulfillment and joy—the purpose of life according to Divine Principle.[44]

Recommended Recordings

Lee Hoiby: Piano Concerto No. 2, MCC Recordings, MMC-CD 2038

Gian Carlo Menotti: The Saint of Bleecker Street, RCA, CD-91290

John Adams: Tromba Lotana, Nonesuch, CD-79144

Jennifer Higdon: Blue Cathedral, Telarc, CD-80596

Arvo Pärt: Magnificat, Harmonia Mundi, CD-907401

Johann Sebastian Bach: Magnificat, Bis, CD-1011

Jean-Phillipe Rameau: Keyboard Works, Decca, CD-468555

Ludwig van Beethoven: Missa Solemnis, Archiv Produktion (DG), CD-429779

Robert Schumann: Piano Concerto, RCA Victor Gold Seal, CD-60420

Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 9, EMI Classics, CD-69364

Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 1, Hänssler Classics, CD-93097

Eric Whitacre: Cloudburst, Hyperion, CD-LC 7533

Igor Stravinsky: Rite of Spring, Deutsche Grammophon, CD-435769

Edgard Varese: Ameriques, Decca, CD-443172

Arnold Schoenberg: Pierrot Lunaire, Deutsche Grammophon, CD-457630

Pierre Boulez: Piano Sonatas, Naxos, CD-8553353

George Rochberg: Transcendental Variations, Naxos, CD-8559115

Bela Bartok: Concerto for Orchestra, RCA Victor Living Stereo, CD-61504

Paul Hindemith: Symphonie-Mathis der Maler, DG 20th Century Classics, CD-423241

Ferruccio Busoni: Piano Concerto, Telarc, CD-80207

Johannes Brahms: German Requiem, Harmonia Mundi, CD-501608

Richard Strauss: Death and Transfiguration, London-Decca, CD-470954

Puccini: Songs, EMI Classics, CD-40748

Franz Liszt: Transcendental Etudes for Piano, Decca, CD-425045

Richard Wagner: Orchestral Music, SONY, CD-62403

Dmitri Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5, SONY, CD-61841

Sergei Prokofiev: Alexander Nevsky Cantata, Chandos, CD-10482

Ralph Vaughan-Williams, Symphony. No. 5, Virgin Classics, CD61105

Samuel Barber: Second Essay for Orchestra, Masterworks, CD-770278

Benjamin Britten: Les Illuminations, Decca, CD-436395

Aaron Copland: Clarinet Concerto, CBS Masterworks, CD-42227

Leos Janacek: Sinfonietta, London-Decca Jubilee, CD-430727

Terry Riley: In C, Da capo, CD-8226049

Olivier Messiaen: L'Ascension, Deutsche Grammophon, CD-4358542

Stephen Albert, Symphony No. 1, River Run, Delos, CD-1016

Claude Debussy: Suite Beramasque, Philips-Arkiv CD-412118

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