



OXFORD JOURNALS
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Musical Genius--Evolution and Origins of a Concept--II

Author(s): Edward E. Lowinsky

Source: *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Oct., 1964), pp. 476-495

Published by: [Oxford University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/740957>

Accessed: 07/04/2013 10:17

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Oxford University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Quarterly*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

MUSICAL GENIUS—EVOLUTION AND ORIGINS OF A CONCEPT—II

By EDWARD E. LOWINSKY

IV

IN the Middle Ages the theorist of music outranked not only the performer, but also the composer. This is understandable if we take into consideration the medieval view of music as a liberal art. Music was defined as a science or discipline. St. Augustine called it *scientia bene modulandi*,⁵⁵ the science of good singing, Cassiodorus *disciplina vel scientia quae de numeris loquitur*,⁵⁶ the discipline or science that deals with numbers. St. Augustine's term *modulari*, too, refers actually to numbers, i.e. to proportion, both in rhythm and in melody. Music, as one of the four arts of the *quadrivium*, together with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, was considered a mathematical discipline, whose three forms of organization—melody, rhythm, harmony—were all reduceable to exact mathematical proportions. In this resided its nobility. Since it took a theorist to understand and demonstrate the mathematical nature of music, the theorist occupied the highest place in the musical hierarchy of the Middle Ages.

Considered in its practical function medieval music received its status from its role in the divine service. It had its firm foundation in Gregorian chant. Legend ascribed the perfection of the chant to Pope Gregory's having dictated the melodies under inspiration by the Holy Ghost, symbolized in old illuminations through the white dove whispering into the Pope's ear.⁵⁷ In this legend we perceive the medieval idea of inspiration. Pope Gregory is neither the inspired artist in the Romantic

⁵⁵ *De musica libri sex, Oeuvres de Saint Augustin*, ed. by G. Finaert and F.-J. Thonnard, Bruges, 1947, *Lib. I, cap. II*, p. 24.

⁵⁶ *Institutiones Musicae*, in Gerbert, *Scriptores ecclesiastici de musica sacra potissimum*, 1784, facs. ed. 1931; I, 16.

⁵⁷ See the illumination in a 13th-century manuscript reproduced in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, V, 778, in the article on *Gregor I*. See also Plate 34 there for the sculpture of St. Gregory with the dove at the Cathedral of Chartres.

sense nor a simple craftsman. He is the medium through which divine inspiration works. And divine inspiration chose him not because he was musical, but because he was pious.

Indeed, the theological framework of medieval thought ruled out the possibility of a concept of human creativity. The medieval definition of creation was *creare ex nihilo*. St. Thomas Aquinas put it succinctly: “To create means to produce something out of nothing.”⁵⁸ From this premise the two conclusions follow logically that “God alone creates” and “no mortal being can create,” or in St. Thomas’s terse Latin: *Solus Deus creat* and *Nullum corpus potest creare*.⁵⁹ But St. Augustine had already maintained: *Creatura non potest creare* (“The creature cannot create”).⁶⁰ St. Thomas’s definition of creativity is particularly significant for the medieval composer of polyphonic music since his technique of composition was based on what St. Thomas called *materia praejacens*, the pre-existing material of the cantus firmus drawn from the chant as well as from other sources.

The medieval view of the act of artistic creation is lucidly expressed by the 13th-century theorist Johannes de Garlandia, who put it this way: “Any art is a collection of many rules. The term art derives from the word *arto*, *artas*, which is the same as *restringo*, *restringis*, to restrict, because it limits us and constrains us lest we do otherwise than it teaches us.”⁶¹

In the medieval view, then, the more closely a composer adheres to the rules the better his work is. The work of genius, therefore, representing the unique, the singular, would have to be necessarily suspect to the medieval critic. Thus Odo of Cluny, tenth-century abbot, in his dialogue on music has the disciple say:⁶² “Since I have difficulty in finding even a few melodies which violate these rules, I have no doubt

⁵⁸ “Creare nihil aliud est quam absque materia praejacenti aliquid producere” (*Summa Theologica*, I, q. 45.2 ad 2. et 3.o et q. 46.1 ad 5.). I owe my acquaintance with this passage to Erwin Panofsky’s discussion of Dürer’s conception of genius in his *Albrecht Dürer*, 3rd ed., Princeton, 1948, I, 281.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* I, q. 45. 5. o.; and q. 45. 5. c.

⁶⁰ St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, III, 9 (*Patrologia Latina*, XLII, col. 877), quoted by Erwin Panofsky, in his study *Artist, Scientist, Genius: Notes on the “Renaissance-Dämmerung,”* in *The Renaissance, Six Essays*, New York, 1962, 121-82; 171.

⁶¹ *Introductio Musicae*, Coussemaker, *Scriptorum de musica medii aevi*, t. I, 157: “Ars cujuslibet scientie est collectio multorum preceptorum, etc. Dicitur autem ars ab hoc verbo *arto*, *artas*, quod idem est quod *restringo*, *restringis*, quia artat nos et astringit ne aliter faciamus quam ipsa docet.”

⁶² Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, New York, 1950, p. 115.

that their scarcity and, so to speak, furtive singularity are the work of presumptuous and corrupt singers," whereupon the master is made to answer: "A rule, certainly, is a general mandate of any art; thus things which are singular do not obey the rules of art."

This is still the philosophy of the late medieval *Meistersinger*, in which Wagner's Beckmesser is rooted. It is a decidedly rational world in which the contrast between craftsman and genius has no place—indeed, is not even dreamed of.

One of the most enlightened and open-minded of medieval theorists, the Parisian Johannes Grocheo, writing around 1300, after enumerating the musical parts of the Mass, described the composer's procedure as follows: "In composing the aforesaid parts the artist must receive the text or subject matter from another person, the theologian or scribe, whereupon the musician must apply to it the appropriate form. Thus do the various crafts [*artes mechanicae*] support one another, as becomes evident in the shoemaker's or the tanner's workshop."⁶³ Obviously, Grocheo conceived of the composer as of a craftsman whose work may rightly be compared to that of a shoemaker. All of this is in harmony with the views of Boethius, fountainhead of the medieval philosophy of music, who had declared in his book on music, in the chapter "What is a musician?": "It is much greater and nobler to know what one does than to do what one knows,"⁶⁴ and who, in speaking of the composer, said with ill-concealed contempt that he was driven to composition not by speculation and reason but by some natural instinct.⁶⁵

If anything was suspect to the medieval mind it was *instinctus naturalis*. Thus the Middle Ages could not fail to place not only the performer but also the composer below the theorist, indeed, did not deem the composer worthy of the name of *musicus*. How natural instinct was slowly rehabilitated until it was embraced by Jean Jacques Rousseau as Nature's most precious gift to man would make an interesting chapter in the history of ideas. How it gained status in the realm of music two centuries before Rousseau we shall have occasion to see later.

⁶³ "Sic enim ad invicem se iuvant artes mechanicae, ut in sutoria et corii praeparatura sensui fit apertum" (Ernst Rohloff, *Der Musiktraktat des Johannes de Grocheo nach den Quellen neu herausgegeben*, Leipzig, 1943, p. 66).

⁶⁴ "Multo enim est maius atque auctius scire, quod quisque faciat, quam ipsum illud efficere, quod sciat . . ." (Boetii *De institutione musica*, ed. G. Friedlein. Leipzig, 1867, *Lib. I. cap. 34*, p. 224).

⁶⁵ "non potius speculatione ac ratione, quam naturali quodam instinctu fertur ad carmen. Atque idcirco hoc quoque genus a musica segregandum est" (*ibid.*, p. 225).

V

The Renaissance, the late 15th and the 16th centuries, brought about a complete reorientation of music. The balance of ideas changed. Increasingly, music was considered more as sound than as number, more as expression of human emotions than as **handmaiden** of theology. 

At the very time when the composer began to emancipate himself from the **double dominion of mathematics and theology**, and to acknowledge as his new masters human emotion and free imagination, **at the time when composition based on a pre-existing cantus firmus gave way to free musical conception kindled by the poetic text**, we encounter the **idea of musical genius in the writings on music.**

As if mindful of St. Thomas's concept of the *materia praejacens*, the Swiss humanist and theoretician of music Henricus **Glareanus**, in his *Dodekachordon* of 1547, asked an unprecedented question. Living in the age of vocal polyphony in which, for example, Josquin's Mass on the old chant of the *Pange lingua* was an object of intense admiration by far exceeding that held for the Gregorian melody itself, he posed the question: **"Shall we not consider him who invented the melody of the *Te Deum* or the *Pange lingua* a greater genius than him who later composed a whole Mass on it?"**⁶⁶

In answer to this question Glareanus says:

In both [the melodic inventor and the contrapuntist] this is to be ascribed more to the energies of genius, and to some natural and inborn talent than to craftsmanship. And this can be proved through those who never studied music, and nevertheless show a miraculous ability in inventing melodies, as is apparent in our vernacular [folksong], the Celtic or the German; but also through those who are masters of counterpoint although they were often poorly taught—to say nothing of the other disciplines. From this it appears certain that neither is possible for a man unless he is born for it, or, as the people say, unless his mother gave it to him—which is just as true for the painters, the sculptors, and the preachers of the Divine Word (for about the poets there can be no doubt) and for all works dedicated to Minerva.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ "Qui primus invenit Tenorem, Te Deum laudamus, aut alium quempiam, ut Pange lingua, sit ne ingenio praeferendus ei, qui postea integram ad eum Missam composuerit" (*Lib. II, cap. XXXVIII*, p. 174: *De praestantia Phonasci ac Symphonetae*).

⁶⁷ "utrique id viribus ingenii accidere, et naturali quadam ac ingenua virtute, magis quam arte. Cuius rei causa videtur, Quod plerumque etiam qui Musica nesciunt, in Tenoribus inveniendis mirum in modum valeant, ut apparet in lingua Vulgari nostra, vel Celtica, vel Germanica. Rursus quod in addendis vocibus qui valent, et ipsi plerumque male musica didicerint, ut nihil de alijs dicam disciplinis. Patet igitur neutram certe homini possibile, nisi ad hoc nato, et, quod vulgo dici solet, nisi mater dederit: Id quod de pictoribus adeò verum est, sculptoribus item, ac

This is only the first part of the answer, but it is just as remarkable for its anticipation of the Romantic notion of the genius of folksong and folk singer as for that of the modern system of the arts. Glareanus appears to be the first writer to group together music, painting, sculpture, eloquence, poetry, and, as he says, all other arts dedicated to Minerva.⁶⁸

But in direct answer to the question whether thematic invention

Divini verbi Concionatoribus (Nam de Poëtis non est dubium) de omnibus denique Minervae consecratis operis.”

The word that we translate as “genius” is the Latin *ingenium*. Edgar Zilsel, in his *Entstehungsgeschichte des Geniebegriffs* (Tübingen, 1926, p. 251 ff.), has pointed out that the term *ingenium* as characterizing extraordinary inborn talent was unknown in the Middle Ages. The word was used in many meanings ranging from art and intrigues (see the Italian *inganno*) to legal document and instrument of war (“engineer”). Only in the Renaissance did it assume the meaning of outstanding talent; it was so used by Alberti, Leonardo, Aretino, and countless other writers of the period.

However, the weight of Glareanus’s statement rests not on the interpretation of *ingenium*, but on his distinction between extraordinary natural talent and craftsmanship, and on his insistence that the former far exceeds the latter in importance.

⁶⁸ P. O. Kristeller, *The Modern System of the Arts*, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XII, 4, Oct. 1951, 496-527; XIII, 1, Jan. 1952, 17-46. Kristeller has shown that the modern system of the fine arts comprising painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry came into being in the 18th century. Except for Leonardo da Vinci’s comparison of the various arts in the *Paragone*, which, however, has come down to us only in scattered notes from pupils, Kristeller has found only one author — and that as late as 1600 — who wrote “the most explicit comparison between poetry, painting, and music that I have been able to discover in Renaissance literature.” The author is Jacobus Pontanus, Bohemian Jesuit, in the third edition of his treatise on poetics (*loc. cit.*, XII, 517-18). “In stressing the affinity between the three arts as forms of imitation aiming at pleasure, the author goes beyond his classical sources. He argues for the status of painting as a liberal art, as many others had done before, but also places musical composition (not musical theory) as a separate art on the same plane with poetry and painting. The passage is quite remarkable, and I should like to think that it was influential, since the work was often reprinted, in France also, where much of the later discussion on these topics took place.”

To be sure, Glareanus speaks of the arts only from the standpoint of his view on the pre-eminence of genius over craft in the artist. But it is noteworthy that his enumeration of the arts is more comprehensive, although fifty-odd years older, than that of Pontanus: he adds to painting, poetry, and music — he too speaks of musical composition, not of theory — sculpture and eloquence, and he hints at the incompleteness of his enumeration by speaking of the remaining arts dedicated to Minerva.

What might have been Glareanus’s source of inspiration? Considering that he was first and foremost a humanist, that he knew Greek — of which he boasts repeatedly — it is probable that he was acquainted with Plato’s *Ion*, the dialogue in which Socrates is presented as speaking of precisely the same combination of arts: painting, sculpture, music, poetry, and all of this in relation to Ion’s profession, the recitation of Homer, for which Glareanus substitutes eloquence in the divine service.

or addition of voices deserves greater praise he writes: "If it is true, as Aristotle holds, that he who discovered the beginnings of a discipline deserves chief praise, whereas it is easy to add later to it, then I do not see why that older artist, the simple creator of the simple melody, should yield to him who more easily adds to the invented than invents himself."⁶⁹ And then Glareanus speaks, again in surprisingly modern terms of psychological observation, of that strange **power of melody** which, he says, "**affects everybody's heart, remains thoroughly fixed in man's mind, and finally clings so strongly to our memory that it often steals upon us unconsciously, indeed we may find ourselves singing it as we awaken from sleep.**"⁷⁰

How close is Glareanus here to a Romantic writer like **E. T. A. Hoffmann**, who praises melody as "**the first and the most excellent part of music, which affects the human heart with magic power . . .**"⁷¹

The distinction between inborn talent and craftsmanship acquired through training is not to be found in medieval writings on music. It sets the Renaissance apart from the Middle Ages. The earliest document known to me so far to make this distinction is a letter written by the renowned Bolognese theoretician Giovanni Spataro to Giovanni del Lago, a Venetian musician, and dated April 5, 1529. In it we find these sentences:

The written rules can well teach the first rudiments of counterpoint, but they will not make the good composer, inasmuch as the good composers are born just as are the poets. Therefore, one needs almost more divine help than the written rule; and this is apparent every day, because the good composers (through natural instinct and a certain manner of grace which can hardly be taught) bring at times such turns and figures in counterpoint and harmony as are not demonstrated in any rule or precept of counterpoint.⁷²

⁶⁹ "Verum enimvero, si, ut Aristoteles perhibet, vere laudem meruit, qui cuiusvis disciplinae principia reperit, reliqua enim perfacile est (inquit ille) superaddere, non video quare prior ille artifex, vocis simplicis (ita nunc Tenorem appellare placuit) simplex plastes, cedere ei debeat, qui non tam facile invenit, quam inventis addit" (*ibid.*, p. 175).

⁷⁰ "Si quis Tenorem naturalem invenire queat, qui omnium menteis afficiat, qui hominis animo insideat, qui denique ita haereat memoriae nostrae, ut saepe ne cogitantibus quidem nobis subrepat: in quem perinde atque è somno experrecti prorumpamus . . ." (*ibid.*, p. 174).

⁷¹ "Das Erste und Vorzüglichste in der Musik, welches mit wunderbarer Zauberkraft das menschliche Gemüt ergreift, ist die Melodie" (*Über einen Ausspruch Sacchinis und über den sogenannten Effekt in der Musik*, *op. cit.*, XII, 3-13; 9).

⁷² "le regole scripte possono bene insegnare li primi rudimenti del contrapuncto, ma non farano el bono compositore: imperoche li compositori boni nascono cosi come nascono li poeti: pertanto quasi piu ci bisogna lo aiuto del celo: che la regula scripta: et questo, ogni giorno, è apparente: perche li docti compositori (per instinto

Spataro's letter contains a clear separation between the foundations of musical composition, which can be learned, and the irrational qualities inherent in great works of music, which cannot be learned. Evidently Spataro knows the aphorism *Poeta nascitur non fit*, which became so popular in the poetic theory of the Renaissance.⁷³ Characteristically, Spataro uses the term *instinto naturale*, employed in a deprecatory sense by Boethius to designate that irrational power in a great composer which guides him in the regions uncharted by rules. Whereas Boethius conceived of natural instinct as of a lower form of awareness, Spataro opposes it to rational learning as a higher, and almost divine, form of awareness.⁷⁴ Whereas Odo of Cluny held everything suspect that does not conform to a well-established rule, Spataro sees the special merit of great composers in their ability to invent such "turns and figures in counterpoint and harmony as are not demonstrated in any rule."

The Florentine theorist Pietro Aaron was a friend of Spataro's; he figures frequently as writer and addressee in Spataro's correspondence. We need not be surprised, therefore, to find in his *Lucidario* of 1545 (last chapter of the second book) views directly related to those expressed by Spataro sixteen years earlier:

There is quite an argument among some people of limited understanding that composition in music be nothing else but a craft . . . And since they consider this

naturale: et per certa gratia: et modo: el quale quasi non se po insegnare) aliquando in li soi contrapuncti: et concertati, aducono termini, li quali da alcuna regola: et precepto de contrapuncto non sono demonstrati" (MS. Vat. Lat. 5381, f. 158r). The first scholar to draw attention to this passage was Knud Jeppesen in his article *Eine musiktheoretische Korrespondenz des früheren Cinquecento*, in *Acta musicologica* XIII (1941), 3-39; 24.

⁷³ Cf. William Ringler (Part I of this article, note 15).

⁷⁴ In this Spataro was preceded by Baldesar Castiglione, who in his *Il Cortegiano* has the Count uphold the independence of a great artist against Signor Federico's insistence on imitation of the great masters. The Count asks Federico who should have been Homer's model, and whom did Boccaccio and Petrarch imitate, and he goes on to say that the true master of these great writers was their genius and their own inborn judgment ("Ma il lor vero maestro cred'io che fosse l'ingegno ed il lor proprio giudicio naturale"). And he persuades Signor Federico to the point where the latter is willing to admit that, in the choice of genre, and the display of style and temperament, every artist follows his own instinct ("s'accomodi allo instinto suo proprio"). This passage, to which my attention was drawn by E. Zilsel (*op. cit.*, p. 232), occurs in the first book of *Il Cortegiano* (ed. by Bruno Maier, Turin, 1955, pp. 147-50). It is of interest that Castiglione's book, though completed in 1514, was published in 1528, one year before Spataro's letter was written. In 1512, two years before Castiglione completed his book, the younger Pico wrote in a letter to Bembo: "The young birds follow in flying each their own genius and natural inclination. Likewise every man possesses from birth on his own, native instinct" (see Zilsel, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-16).

divine art only from the outside and superficially, they claim it to be an easy matter . . . if this were so, it would follow that he who practices more and works harder in composition has more grace and mastery in this art. Yet, we observe precisely the opposite, for experience teaches that some who have practiced the art of composition for a good part of their lives are surpassed by others who have been composing for a short time only. Wherefore one may believe that good composers are born and cannot be made through study and long practice but rather through heavenly influence and inclination: graces, to be sure, that heaven grants to few in large measure . . . whence it appears that if one desires to compose good and sweet harmony one needs something more than the mere understanding of consonant intervals . . . And even as we see that one and the same figure and form treated by different sculptors in marble or in other material has as much more perfection in the one than in the other as their creators differ from one another in excellence, likewise, I say, it happens in this our harmonic faculty, which many of our composers possess. Each one of them knows the material, i.e. the musical intervals, and gives them a fitting harmonic form which differs in excellence, in sweetness and loveliness according to the composer's individual skill and natural grace. And from such arguments and demonstrations one may conclude that the art of composition consists in something more than mere practice and experience.⁷⁵

What was expressed as an aperçu in a private letter in 1529 is now, in 1545, treated at length in a published book. One term deserves our special attention. Aaron speaks of composition as a “divine art,” by which he obviously means an art so marvelous that it can be compared only to the works of the divine creator. **When the term *ars divina***

⁷⁵ “Egli è gran questione tra alcuni veracemente poco intendenti, che il comporre in Musica non sia altro, che una pratica . . . Et percioche questi tali considerano questa divina arte solamente alla scorza, & superficie, essi dicono essa essere cosa agevolissima . . . ove così fosse, egli seguiterebbe, che colui, il quale più praticasse, & più si esercitasse in comporre, avesse più gratia, & cognitione di tal arte, Ilche tutto si vede essere in contrario, percioche egli si è veduto per esperienza, che alcuni haranno esercitato buona parte della loro vita l'arte del comporre, & poi da altri, che quella per picciolo tempo haranno praticato, saranno state superate . . . la onde si può credere che i buoni compositori nascono, & non si fanno per studio, ne per molto praticare, ma si bene per celeste influxo, & inclinatione, Gratie veramente, che a pochi il ciel largo destina . . . per laqual cosa appare, che volendo bene, & soavemente comporre l'harmonia, altro ci vuole, che la semplice intelligenza & cognitione de consoni intervalli . . . Et si come veggiamo, che per diversi scultori nel marmo, o in altra materia essendo introdotta la istessa figura, o forma, esse tra loro tuttavia haranno tanto più di perfettione l'una dell'altra, quanto gli artefici di esse saranno più eccellenti l'uno, chell'altro, Il simile dico avvenire di questa nostra harmonica facolta, nella quale veggiamo ritrovarsi molti compositori, da ciascuno de quali la materia, ovvero distanze musiche essendo conosciute acconcie alla forma harmonica essa le è data in più eccellenza dall'uno, che dall'altro, & con maggior soavità, & dolcezza prodotta secondo che l'uno ha più cognitione, & gratia in tal facolta dell'altro, Et per tali argomenti, & dimostrazioni si conchiude che l'arte del comporre l'harmonia consiste in altro che nella sola pratica.”

occurs in a medieval treatise, as it does in that of Johannes Grocheo, it is used to contrast the perfection of God's art with the imperfection of the *ars humana*.⁷⁶ Now the term is chosen to express the notion that no facet of human activity comes closer to God's creative nature than artistic work.

It has been pointed out that, in a parallel development, the epithet *divus*, applied in the Middle Ages only to saints, was transferred by the secular urban society of the Renaissance to secular celebrities.⁷⁷ Aretino appears to have been the first to use the term in a letter to "the divine Michelangelo." It is precisely at the same period that the term *divinus* enters into writings on music. In 1542 the Venetian Sylvestro Ganassi del Fontego⁷⁸ speaks of the Flemish composer Nicolas Gombert, the Emperor's chapelmaster, as *huomo divino in tal professione*. And in the second part of the same work, published one year later, he calls Adrian Willaert *nuovo Prometheo della celeste Armonia*.⁷⁹ The same Aretino who had called Michelangelo "divine" speaks in his *Marescalco* (Act V, Sc. 3) of Willaert as *sforzo di natura*, miracle of nature.⁸⁰ All of these expressions point to a concept of creativity based on the new ideas of originality and inventiveness. Insofar as Man is creative in this new sense he partakes of God's nature and may therefore properly be addressed as "divine."

The Renaissance already knew something of the distinction between *avoir du génie* and *être un génie* made by Diderot. Indeed, it is in this period that we hear, for the first time in the history of music, of composers of an extraordinary personal and psychological constitution.

The same agent who, in writing to Ercole of Ferrara about Isaac and Josquin, conceded that Josquin was the better composer, also remarked that as a person he was difficult, in his relations with both other musicians and his patron, that he composed only when it pleased him and not when commanded. And from the poet Serafino dall'Aquila's sonnet of 1503 addressed to Josquin we know of the master's fits of melancholy and despair. We hear from Manlius of his outbursts of temper during rehearsals, from Glareanus the anecdotes of his witty musical responses to forgetful or demanding patrons, but also of his

⁷⁶ "Semper enim potest ars humana et eius opus meliorari, cum numquam naturam vel artem divinam attingat" (*op. cit.*, p. 41).

⁷⁷ Edgar Zilsel, . . . *Geniebegriff*, p. 276 ff.

⁷⁸ *Regola Rubertina*, Venice, 1542 (facsimile ed. by Max Schneider, Leipzig, 1924), Part I, Ch. XI, p. XII.

⁷⁹ See the letter of dedication (p. A III).

⁸⁰ See Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal*, Princeton, 1949, I, 322.

unending search for perfection that made him go over his compositions again and again, changing, polishing, refining.⁸¹ A picture emerges of an altogether original character, endowed with a strong temperament and a deep sense of obligation to his genius, an individual utterly unwilling and unable to compromise in matters of his art.

The anecdotes concerning Josquin and his noble patrons suggest also that a new relationship between artist and patron is in the making: here are **the beginnings of an equality between the aristocracy of talent and the aristocracy of blood and rank.** The incredibly familiar tone of Orlando di Lasso's letters⁸² to his patron, Duke Wilhelm V of Bavaria, with whom he drank, played, and joked, is an illustration of this new relationship between an artist and a prince in the later course of the century. The letters, written in a **hodgepodge** of tongues—one communication to the duke of February 16, 1574⁸³ mixes French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Latin in the first sentence — partly in prose, partly in rhymes, display a spontaneity, wit, and lack of inhibition that reminds one vividly of Mozart's letters, except that **Mozart wrote such letters to close relatives, whereas Lasso wrote them to his duke.** These same qualities are mirrored in his ribald chansons and in the broad and crude humor of the *villanesche* and *moresche*. They stand in strange contrast to the intensity of religious feeling expressed in the master's motets. The mental collapse of the artist, a few years before his death, has been variously interpreted.⁸⁴ Certainly, **the conflict of religious earnestness with an unbridled vitality,** a spirit of secular gaiety and merriment, and an occasional anti-clericalism bordering on the blasphemous,⁸⁵ must often have become almost unbearable, particularly in the composer's late years, which coincide with the growing intensity of the

⁸¹ All pertinent references and quotations are now conveniently assembled in Helmut **Osthoff's** monograph *Josquin Desprez*, Tutzing, 1962, the letter of the Ferrarese agent on p. 52, Serafino's poem on pp. 34-35, Manlius's story on p. 82, quotations from Glareanus on pp. 41-43, 89-90, etc.

⁸² A. **Sandberger**, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der bayerischen Hofkapelle unter Orlando di Lasso*, Leipzig, 1894-95, III, 247-97 (**52 letters by Orlando di Lasso**).

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 253.

⁸⁴ A. Sandberger (*Zur Biographie Orlando di Lassos*, in *Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Musikgeschichte*, Munich, 1921, pp. 1-33; 22) ascribes it to overwork; W. Boetticher (*Orlando di Lasso und seine Zeit*, Kassel-Basel, 1958, pp. 665-66) believes it was a stroke, a thesis not borne out by the medical reports cited (to say nothing of the uncertainty whether the undated report of Dr. Mermann concerning an unnamed *vir musicus* really refers to Orlando).

⁸⁵ See Edward E. Lowinsky, *Music in the Culture of the Renaissance*, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XV (Oct. 1954), 509-53; 526-28.

Counter-Reformation. It is this tension that must have had a bearing on the artist's feverish creative activity and on his collapse.

Carlo Gesualdo, finally, is a representative of the free artist. Born a prince, and hence economically and socially independent, he was in his own employ, as it were, accountable only to himself. The freedom of his style, praised, as we saw above, as a model of expressive music by Giovanni Battista Doni, is a reflection of his independence as well as of the fierce and uncontrolled temperament that led to the well-known tragic events of his life.

Josquin, Lasso, Gesualdo, however different they were in character and as artists, share one essential quality: they are musical geniuses whose extraordinary gifts are matched by an extraordinary personality; they exhibit immense strength of feeling, spontaneity, originality, independence as human beings and in social intercourse with others; they are great individuals, and each one of them was hailed in his time as the foremost representative of an expressive style of music.

That the connection between a new personal style in music and a strong personality was not lost on their contemporaries we may surmise from the anecdotes about musicians that begin to circulate in the 16th century; we deduce it also from a new form of homage to great musicians, the poems addressed to composers. Poetic eulogies, known from the 15th century, become almost a genre in the 16th. However, an awareness that artists in general are almost a species of human beings by themselves is also slowly crystallizing. As early as 1544 Antonfrancesco Doni, in his entertaining and witty dialogue on music⁸⁶ accompanied by a few motets and over two dozen madrigals for four and eight voices, expressed a view of the artistic personality that must have been current for some time in the literary circles of Italy: "Musicians, poets, painters, sculptors, and their like are all real people, attractive, and often cheerful, though at times eccentric when the fancy strikes them."⁸⁷ And then Doni proceeds to tell humorous stories on the clash between artists and ignorant and presumptuous Philistines—*plebei*, as he calls them—stories that prove that the Renaissance created not only the image of the "artist," but also its foil, that of the "Philistine," the man who compensates for lack of culture by presumption and arrogance.

⁸⁶ *Dialogo della Musica di M. Antonfrancesco Doni Fiorentino. In Vinegia appresso Girolamo Scotto, 1544.* For a lively sketch of Doni's personality, work, and in particular his dialogue, see Alfred Einstein, *The Italian Madrigal*, Princeton, 1949, I, 193-201.

⁸⁷ "Musici, Poeti, Dipintori, Scultori, et simili sono tutti gente reale piacevoli, et allegri bene spesso, pur talhora fantastichi; quando il ghiribizzo stuzzica loro il cervello" (*ibid.*, p. 6).

This is an anticipation of a contrast well known from the artistic world of the 18th and 19th centuries. As it becomes permissible for the **genius to break rules of art**, so it becomes more or less acceptable that he, as a person, transcend the norms of ordinary social behavior also. **As long as a composer was a craftsman he worked for and within society.** Neither his work nor he himself could be set outside the **pale of normality.** The emergence of the genius with his claims to personal and artistic independence, while leading to the heights of Western art, also held **the seeds of alienation between artist and society.** An accommodation was achieved only in those periods in which society regarded art as so essential to its mode of living that it was willing to grant the artist the independence he needed, and in which the artist could identify himself sufficiently with the general ideals of his society to place his art in its service.

In medieval writings on music the subject least talked about is the composer. It is not only that individual composers are rarely mentioned, medieval treatises show no interest whatever in the composer as a peculiarly gifted individual whose inner processes differ from those of other mortals.⁸⁸

As the 16th century progresses, the irrational aspect of the compositional process gains increasing attention. Spataro, as we saw, used the term *instinctus naturalis* to account for the marvelous inventiveness and originality of great composers. Other writers change this term to *inclinatio naturalis*. Hermann **Finck**, in a treatise published in **1556**, which, significantly, stresses the importance of an expressive rendering of the text, **reserves the title of *musicus* for the composer:**

But only composers deserve that title. I consider those as composers who, as the learned agree, were carried to that field of study by natural inclination, and who cultivated their natural talent from tender youth on through art, practice, and varied and frequent exercises . . . And if it is of importance in the other disciplines who your first teacher and mentor is, certainly in this art it is of greatest significance that he who by nature burns with a love of music use an experienced

⁸⁸ It is true that Filippo Villani in his celebrated work *De civitatis Florentiae famosis civibus* (ed. by G. C. Galletti, Florence, 1847, pp. 34-35) gives high praise to a few Florentine composers, and in particular to Francesco Landini. But curiously, Landini and his contemporaries are extolled for their excellence as performers only, a virtue rendered more miraculous in Villani's eyes by Landini's blindness. The great composer is praised for his virtuosity on the organ, for his mastery of countless other instruments, for his invention of a new string instrument notable for its sweet sound, even for his excellence in grammar, dialectic, and poetics, whereas his creative work is barely mentioned in a five-word note: "Vulgaribusque Rhythmis egregia Multa dictaverit . . ."

teacher and devote himself totally to imitating him.⁸⁹

Next to early and rigorous training we discern three irrational elements in Finck's characterization of the composer: natural talent, natural inclination, and enthusiasm, for this is surely what he intends to convey with his expression: "by nature burning with a love of music." And all three elements — talent, inclination, enthusiasm — carry the adjective *naturalis* or *a natura*. Not training and exercise alone make the composer, but an inborn quality that cannot be rationally accounted for except as a gift of Nature.

It is well to recognize, however, that what is translated here as enthusiasm is by no means the same thing that Plato had in mind when he spoke of the *furor poeticus*, a concept that has played a significant role in the literary criticism of the 16th century.⁹⁰ To be sure, Finck's "enthusiasm" shares with Plato's *furor poeticus* the element of emotional intensity with which poet or musician embraces his chosen art, but what separates the two concepts is the element of rationality. In a famous sentence in the dialogue *Ion* Plato says:

For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him . . . for not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine . . . and therefore God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and holy prophets, in order that we who hear them may know that they speak not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us.⁹¹

It seems almost as if Plato placed the poets in such divine company so as the more easily to banish them from the society of human beings in his *Republic*. His concept of inspiration is remarkably close to that of the Middle Ages as revealed in the miniatures of Pope Gregory alluded to earlier.

But the Renaissance theorist, however strongly he may stress irrational

⁸⁹ "Sed solis artificibus haec appellatio convenit. Artifices autem intelligo, ut apud doctos receptum est, qui naturali inclinatione ad hoc studium feruntur, naturaeque bonitatem a teneris statim annis, arte, usu, variisque ac crebris exercitiis excoluerunt. Ac si quid in reliquis disciplinis momenti habet, quo quis primo monstratore, ac ceu manufactore utatur: In hac certe arte plurimum referre videtur, ut a natura amore Musicae flagrans praeceptore utatur perito, ad cuius imitationem totum se componat" (*Practica musica*, Wittenberg, 1556, beginning of *Liber quintus*).

⁹⁰ Cf. Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, Chicago, 1961, Ch. VII, *Platonism*.

⁹¹ *Ion*, 534; the translation is taken from Benjamin Jowett, *The Works of Plato*, New York, n.d., Book IV, p. 287.

elements, never abandons the idea of a rational and practical mastery of the musical craft as an indispensable basis for the work of genius. Indeed, Finck stresses the necessity for the young genius to grow up in the workshop of an older master, whose compositions he should take as models for his own.

This is apparent even in those formulations in which, finally, the *instinctus naturalis* and the *inclinatio naturalis* are elevated to the *impetus naturalis*. Lampadius, Protestant cantor in Lüneburg and author of a textbook on music published in 1537, describes the process of composition in these words:

As poets are stirred by a certain natural impulse to write their verses, holding in their minds the things that are to be described, so the composer must first contrive in his mind the best melodies and must weigh these judiciously, lest one single note vitiate the whole melody and tire his listeners. Then he must proceed to the working-out—that is, he must distribute the contrived melodies in a certain order, using those that seem most suitable.⁹²

We have here one of the earliest descriptions of the process of composition as we conceive of it today. Lampadius distinguishes three phases, first melodic invention: here the musician is stirred by some inward power; then careful evaluation: here the esthetic judgment passes on the work of inspiration; and finally elaboration: here the composer proceeds to work out the purified melodic ideas—he selects, he rejects, and he organizes. This is much the same working process as described by Roger North and, more articulately, by Friedrich Nietzsche, the latter using for illustration, as we saw, the most extraordinary documents of the creative process available to the music historian: Beethoven's sketchbooks.

To be sure, the distinction between invention and elaboration, which doubtless goes back to Cicero's division of invention, disposition, and elocution, is an old one in music theory. It was about 1260 that Franco of Cologne, famed theorist, described the composition of a conductus as follows: "He who wishes to write a conduct ought first to invent as

⁹² "Quemadmodum enim Poetae naturali quodam impetu, ad condenda Carmina, excitantur, habentes in animo res, quas descripturi sint, inclusas etc. Sic etiam oportet Componistam prius quasdam, in animo, clausulas, sed optimas, excogitare, & quodam iudicio easdam perpendere, nè aliqua nota totam vitiet clausulam, & auditorum aures taediosas faciat. Deinde, ad exercitationem accedere, hoc est, excogitatas clausulas, in ordinem quendam distribuere, & eas, quae videntur aptiores, servare." (*Compendium musices*, Bern 1537, chapter on composition f. G. Vv). For more information on this passage and the treatise as a whole see Edward E. Lowinsky, *On the Use of Scores by Sixteenth-Century Musicians*, in *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, I (1948), 17-23; 19.

beautiful a melody as he can, then . . . using it as a tenor is used in writing discant":⁹³ first melodic invention, then contrapuntal elaboration. But Franco's precepts are those of a craftsman, who, absorbed in producing a beautiful piece of work, is utterly unconcerned about the inner processes that lead to the work of art.

Nevertheless, it is at this point, where for the first time in the history of polyphony all parts including the tenor are freely invented by the composer himself, that we encounter in the writings of one theorist of extraordinary perception a beginning awareness of a novel departure in the process of composing. In a remarkable passage Grocheo distinguishes between the composing of polyphony based on a cantus firmus and freely conceived polyphony, specifically between organum and motet on the one hand and the conductus on the other. The process of composing over a cantus firmus he calls *ordinare*, for the projection of free polyphony he reserves the term *componere*: "But I say 'order,' because in motets and organum the tenor comes from an old, pre-existent chant, but is subjected by the artificer to rhythmic mode and measure. And I say 'compose,' because in the conductus the tenor is a totally new work and is subject to mode and duration according to the artificer's will."⁹⁴

Yet, this fine and rare distinction still does not amount to anything more than a recognition of two different procedures by one and the same craftsman. It does not mean recognition of two types of musician, or two types of creativity. Specifically, medieval theory does not admit that a composer may at times disregard rules with impunity, indeed that this may make him a better composer. This idea begins to take shape in Renaissance writings. Zarlino, for example, in his celebrated *Istitutioni harmoniche* of 1558, states that poetic license is allowed to the composer as well as to the poet.⁹⁵ In later centuries this "poetic freedom" becomes an integral part of the concept of genius. Hermann Finck, too, allows

⁹³ "qui vult facere conductum, primum cantum invenire debet pulchriorem quam potest; deinde uti debet illo, ut de tenore faciendo discantum . . ." (Coussemaker, *Scriptorum de musica mediæ ævi*, I, 132; the translation is taken from Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History*, New York, 1950, p. 155).

⁹⁴ "Dico autem *ordinare*, quoniam in motellis et organo tenor ex cantu antiquo est et prius composito, sed ab artifice per modum et rectam mensuram amplius determinatur. Et dico *componere*, quoniam in conductibus tenor totaliter de novo fit et secundum voluntatem artificis modificatur et durat" (Rohloff, *op. cit.*, p. 57).

⁹⁵ "Però, secondo che alli Poeti è concesso alcuna volta di far contra le Regole metriche, & di usare una locutione per un'altra, & una sillaba lunga in luogo di una breve, o per il contrario; così sarà lecito al Musico alle volte, di poter porre in carte alcune cose, contra le date Regole. Ma non però li sarà concesso il troppo continuarle; si come etiandio non è permesso al poeta di usar spesse volte cotali licenze" (III, *cap.* 57, p. 235).

exceptions to the rules; he ascribes them specifically to the composer's individual genius: "it must be considered that the limits of the modes cannot be so strictly observed in polyphonic music [opposed to plainchant] because of the diversity of musical *ingenia*, for every composer has a certain individual and peculiar judgment."⁹⁶

The last testimony I wish to invoke with regard to the emergence of the idea of genius in the musical philosophy of the Renaissance is the description of Josquin's teaching of composition as presented by the Flemish theorist Adrian Petit Coclico in his *Compendium musices* of 1552. Josquin des Prez was to the Renaissance musician the very incarnation of musical genius. Coclico based his right to speak of Josquin's teaching, thirty-one years after the latter's death, on his own claim that he had been a student of the great master. Whether this be true or not does not matter here, for we are concerned only with Coclico's view on the nature of the composer. Here is what he reports on Josquin's method:

Those in whom he observed an acute mind and a gay spirit he taught with few words the rules of composition with three, then with four, five, six, and more parts, always giving examples which they should imitate. Josquin did not consider everybody cut out for the study of composition; he decided that only those should be taught who were carried by a singular natural impetus to that most beautiful art, for he used to say that there exist so many lovely compositions that hardly one in a thousand could compose anything as good or better.⁹⁷

And again, when enumerating the requirements for the student of

⁹⁶ "Quin et illud cogitari oportet, tonorum metas non ita stricte in figurali cantu observari posse propter ingeniorum diversitatem. Quilibet enim symphonista suum quoddam et peculiare habet iudicium . . ." (*op. cit.*, *Liber quartus de tonis* in the chapter *De Modo cognoscendi tonos in figurali Cantu*).

A new emphasis on the legitimacy of exceptions to the rules, if justifiable by the musical context, appears in the first great Renaissance treatise on counterpoint, Tinctoris's *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, completed in 1477. The author concludes his work with the famous eight rules of counterpoint. Similar rules, though not in this completeness, had been formulated by earlier writers, but never before were so many exceptions legitimized for reasons bearing on artistic freedom, esthetic choice, stylistic context. Indeed, it would be more correct to speak of Tinctoris's "rules and exceptions," the latter being often more revealing than the former.

⁹⁷ "Quos autem animadvertit acuti ingenij esse & animi laeti his tradidit paucis verbis regulam componendi trium vocum, postea quatuor, quinque, sex etc. appositis semper exemplis, quae illi imitentur. Non enim omnes ad componendi rationem aptos iudicavit Josquinus, eos tantum eam docendos statuit, qui singulari naturae impetu ad pulcherrimam hanc artem ferrentur, qui multa dulciter composita esse aiebat, quibus similia aut meliora, vix unus è millibus componere posset" (*Compendium musices descriptum ab Adriano Petit Coclico discipulo Josquini de Pres . . .* Nuremberg, 1552, facsimile ed. by M. F. Bukofzer, *Documenta musicologica IX*, Kassel, 1954, f. F IIv).

composition, Coclico lists in the first place the ability to improvise a counterpoint and in the second place “that he be led to composing by a great desire and that he be impelled to composition by a certain **natural impetus** so that neither food nor drink can please him before he has finished his musical work. For when the inner impetus urges in this way one can achieve more in one hour than otherwise in a whole month. **Useless are composers who lack these singular raptures.**”⁹⁸

Like Finck, Coclico is certainly no Platonist. There is no suggestion of a “divine furor” in his statement — most literary treatises dealing with the *furor poeticus* stem from the second half of the 16th century and were published after Coclico’s treatise⁹⁹ — nor is there any evidence that our valiant Flemish theorist — a few Greek quotations in his letter of dedication **notwithstanding** — ever laid eyes on a Platonic dialogue. Instead, he speaks of natural impetus, of inner drive, of the raptures of musical inspiration in terms of actual experience and observation.¹⁰⁰

Coclico’s ideas are formulated in a framework of decided opposition to the whole philosophy of medieval theory. In a complete reversal of the medieval hierarchy of musicians Coclico pronounces as “kings of music” **not the theorists but those who combine theory with practice, who understand thoroughly the art of composing, who know how to embellish a composition and how to express all emotions in music.**¹⁰¹

As **hinted** at in the last paragraph of the first instalment, the two ideas, of music as expression and of musical genius, go together historic-

⁹⁸ “Secundum, ut ad componendum magno ducatur desiderio, ac impetu quodam naturali ad compositionem pellatur, adeo ut nec cibus nec potus ei sapiat, ante absolutam cantilenam, nam una hora plus conficitur, cum impetus ille naturalis sic urget, quàm alias in integro mense. Inutiles itaque sunt componistae, quibus desunt singulares hi motus” (*ibid.*, f. L IIv).

⁹⁹ Bernard Weinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 272 ff. As the first treatise that “lies entirely within a framework of Platonic presuppositions” and deals approvingly with the Platonic “furor” the author mentions Francesco Patrizi’s *Discorso della diversità dei furori poetici*, published one year after Coclico’s treatise on music, i.e. in 1553.

¹⁰⁰ Nothing demonstrates more forcefully the contribution that the Renaissance writers on music make to the concept of genius than Zilsel’s claim (*op. cit.*, p. 238) that Renaissance literature boasts only one figure who proclaimed the idea of “poetische Naturkraft” and who anticipated the concept of genius of 18th-century writers, namely Aretino, plebeian, unlearned, and no respecter of persons (in a letter written in the year 1537). However “unlearned” he may have been, his statement quoted by Zilsel that poetry emanates from *furore* shows that, unlike Coclico, he was affected by the Platonism of the Italian learned society of his day.

¹⁰¹ “In tertio genere, sunt Musici praestantissimi, & ceterorum quasi reges, qui non in arte docenda haerent, sed theoriam optime & docte cum practica coniungunt, qui cantuum virtutes, & omnes compositionum nervos intelligunt, & vere sciunt cantilenas ornare, in ipsis omnes omnium affectus exprimere . . .” (*op. cit.*, f. B IVr).

ally and conceptually. Therefore it is significant that the Renaissance theorists who come closest to the modern concept of genius also stress the new idea that music serves to express human emotions. Not only do these two concepts go hand in hand, they converge in their attitude towards “the rules.”

In transcending the rules genius opens new vistas and music gains new dimensions of expressiveness. Any musical device, to reach the sphere of emphatic expression, must border on the limits of the permissible or, indeed, cross over them. Any work of genius must exceed the limitations of the ordinary. Yet, the extraordinary and the impermissible need the ordinary and the permissible as the organic background without which they lose their meaning, their significance, and their effect. This is why Zarlino, in the passage referred to earlier,¹⁰² advised the composer not to persist too long in the use of “licenze,” for he understood that a series of breaches of rules will never amount to a work of art. Genius knows how to endow the breaking of a rule with that same sense of necessity that the rule itself embodied; **the disregard of convention is not the goal, but a byproduct of his work.**

The Renaissance is the first epoch in European intellectual history that recognized that neither observation of rules nor practice and experience make the good composer, that great composers will find felicitous turns and figures not demonstrated in any textbook, that there are artistic elements of manner and grace that defy definition, and that rules, teaching, practice, experience are all superseded by the inborn talent, the *ingenium* of the individual, who is driven to his art by a natural impetus so strong that it overcomes hunger and thirst, so powerful that it may put the composer into a state of ecstasy, and that in such a state of heightened awareness and activity the composer’s mind can achieve more than in long periods of ordinary work. For all this the composer must enjoy, according to some writers, divine help and heavenly inspiration.

The Renaissance drew a clear line of demarcation between craftsman and genius. Glareanus even goes so far as to delimit the nature of genius from that of talent — a question that occupied the attention of later thinkers a great deal. He already suggests the classical definition found in 18th-century writings by attributing greater *ingenium* to the inventor of new melodies than to the contrapuntal elaborator of a given melody. **Invention and originality distinguish genius from talent. Talent imitates; genius creates.**

¹⁰² See note 95.

The medieval definition of creation as making something out of nothing is now replaced by the concept of creation as making something new, something that the world had not seen or heard before, something fresh, original, personal. Nothing illuminates more sharply the heightened confidence of the Renaissance in man's unlimited abilities than his belief that the artistic genius reaches up to God Himself, sharing with Him in the joy of creation. And nothing confirms more poignantly that the sun has at last set over the Renaissance than the fact that musical composition as practiced today by some has left behind the concept of creativity as we have known it since the days of the Renaissance. Unquestionably, a historic necessity lies behind the new experiments. Unquestionably, they furnish a needed experience. But are they a sufficient answer to our deepest questions? Are we returning to a concept of music as a mathematical art? Or are we actually turning music into a concept of mathematical science? Are we searching for a new objective order in which the computer replaces invention? Are we delivering ourselves to total organization? or to chance? And in so doing are we exchanging meaningful communication for a game of solitaire?¹⁰³

"It takes enough prophetic sense to interpret the past," warned a historian of music, "it is better not to dabble with prophesying the future."

¹⁰³ After these lines were written, I found in the essays of two American composers an expression of the same concern. In the first issue of *Perspectives of New Music* (Fall 1962) Elliott Carter, in an article on *The Milieu of the American Composer* (p. 149) writes: "A definite break with the past on every level seemed urgent to the younger European composers. This attitude led to the applications of various arithmetical plans or methods of random which take no account of the special order related to the human ear and, through it, the human abilities to discriminate, organize, and remember patterns of sound. Their position, to us, represents an unwillingness to admit the possibility of highly purposeful communication." And in his *A Note from the Underground* (*ibid.*, p. 153) — the title alone gives us pause — Seymour Shifrin meditates on the implications of twelve-tone procedure, which, he finds, he must reject for his own work, because phrase, articulation, form appear to him sacrificed to the all-inclusive interest in structure. "The ambition to make explicit great and noble thoughts through a multitude of degrees of articulation has proven a most promising method of work in the past. Is it at all conceivable that Beethoven might have totally prefigured a work of the structural-formal qualities of the *Eroica*? It is clear from his sketch books that what initial plans he might have had for the work underwent most serious revision in the light of his hearing an implication here or his seizing an opportunity there. It is, I believe, in the interaction of the small and the large, of establishing expectancy — violating it, and spinning out the consequences — that we have our best chance of cultivating both mind and ear toward an eloquent as well as elegant structure-form relationship." In this "note from the underground" I hear the most promising voice of the future. That both speakers should be composers abundantly blessed with talent and originality adds to the significance of their statements.

May we be so careless, nevertheless, to venture the guess that if our civilization is to survive, it will be through the recovery of our faith in the ability of Man, if not freely to choose and mold his future, at least to influence it, to set a course steering clear of the Scylla of “total organization” and the Charybdis of “chance,” for only a course affirming the possibility of choice, decision, and creation would seem worthy of human existence.

