

## The New Faustian Music: Its Mechanistic, Organic, Contextual, and Formist Aspects

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Spengler's *Decline of the West* (1922) assumes that the Faustian Culture (Western Civilization) had exhausted its cultural possibilities by the end of the eighteenth century, but Spengler did not realize that, within the old Faustian European Society, a new world-view had emerged in 1800 in music and the other arts and sciences. The old Western Culture dated back to the tenth century A.D., but in 1800 its world-view had been metamorphosed and revitalized by Graeco-Roman learning, Near-Eastern, Indian, and Chinese influences. The new music reveals the invigoration, reflects the changes. A powerful analytical tool to examine the composers' role in the development of the new Faustian era, and particularly during the twentieth century, is available in Pepper's four metaphysical world hypotheses: Mechanism, Organicism, Contextualism, and Formism. The mechanical element is profoundly European and finds expression in polyphony and counterpoint. The organic element reveals the impact of Chinese philosophy and the covert influence of Indian ideas. Contextualism is the strongest of the four and derives from the powerful Magian (Near Eastern) presence of Christianity, 900-1800 A.D., and also from the Chinese writings which are even more contextualist than organic. Graeco-Roman literature has given the Faustian Civilization, and its new music, a powerful sense of classical form: formism.

### New Beginnings with Magian, Indian, and Chinese Elements

The "good old time" is gone, in Mozart we hear its swan song. How fortunate we are that his rococo still speaks to us, that his "good company," his tender enthusiasms, his childlike delight in curlicues and Chinese touches, his courtesy of the heart, his longing for the graceful, those in love, those dancing, those easily moved to tears, his faith in the south, may still appeal to some *residue* in us. Alas, some day all this will be gone—but who may doubt that the understanding and taste for Beethoven will go long before that! Beethoven was after all merely the final chord of transition in style, a style break, and not, like Mozart, the last chord of a centuries-old great European taste.

Beethoven is the interlude of a mellow old soul that constantly breaks and an over-young future soul that constantly comes; on his music lies that twilight of eternal losing and eternal extravagant hoping . . . (Nietzsche, 1966, p. 180)

I did not take full notice of this prescient statement of Nietzsche until I was ready to see it. For many years I had thought that the new music and the other cultural innovations in the early *twentieth* century marked the first emergence of the Faustian II world-view, supplanting the Faustian I outlook which had prevailed in Western Civilization since the tenth century A.D. But recently I made a study of modern painting in relation to the northern European Romantic tradition (Rosenblum, 1975), and now I realized that in Beethoven's time, rather than in Schoenberg's—that is, a hundred years earlier—the new Faustian world-style dawned upon the world.

The age of the dawning of a fresh civilization *Weltanschauung* is an era of unworldly ideas and of high ideals. The Romantic age—with new philosophies of idealism, reinvigorations of religious traditions, and the advent of the grand symphonic and *Lied* musical traditions—had a very considerable ideological ferment. The old sensate values had to accommodate themselves, and often yield, to ideational and idealistic values.<sup>1</sup> The three musical giants of the twentieth century, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Hindemith, all composed major religious works, and another giant, Anton Webern (1883-1945), “was profoundly religious,” wrote Stravinsky, after the publication of his letters, “in the simple holiness of his feelings toward each of God’s essents (a flower, a mountain, ‘silence’). . . .” (Stravinsky and Craft, 1960, p. 97). In the “spring-time” epochs of civilizational world-views occurs simultaneously a reinvigoration of religion. An unworldliness occurs, even in a worldly religion, or in the milieu of a secular (Faustian) world-view, an ideational quality, an idealism—and so it has been in nineteenth and twentieth-century Western Civilization. As civilizations go, it is revealed in typical artistic eccentricities (e.g., the harsh distortions of Picasso’s paintings or the strident dissonances of Stravinsky’s music).

The matrix of ideas, images, and values which form the unconscious nucleus of the Faustian II soul<sup>2</sup> are the core of a world-picture which has been

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<sup>1</sup>“Ideational” and “idealistic” are used here in Sorokin’s sense (Sorokin, R. *Modern historical and social philosophies of an age of crises*. New York: Dover Publications, 1963, pp. 197-202). He was stimulated by the advent of a renewed Western Civilization to make a threefold division between ideational culture, sensate culture, and idealistic culture. An ideational culture, says Sorokin, is typified by the other-worldly art of twelfth-century Europe. A sensate culture is typified by the worldly and sensuous art of the Renaissance. The third (a combination of the first two) is symbolized by the art of the high middle ages (1200-1300) in which the transcendent was synthesized with the worldly. He states that the early twentieth century marked the transition from a six-centuries-long sensate culture in Western Civilization to the new ideational or idealistic culture to appear before the end of the century. (In his theory, idealistic culture combines ideational and sensate cultural qualities; he cites Thomas Aquinas as an example.) But evidence points to the beginning of the nineteenth century as the probable point of transition. Sorokin was unduly impressed by the durability of the old sensate culture of Western Civilization, existing side by side with the new ideational culture, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In regard to the ideational or idealistic quality of the early era of a fresh world-view, the German idealistic philosophers, whose writing implied a subjectivism in art, played a tremendous role in the emergence of the Faustian II mind during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Schoenberg’s contemporary, Kandinsky, was influenced by Fichte’s idealism and Schelling’s spiritual philosophy.

<sup>2</sup>This is a word, “soul,” that Spengler (1939) constantly used in his references to the “Faustian Destiny.” By “soul,” in the phrase “Faustian II soul,” I refer to a more or less unified group of attitudes, insights, feelings, ideas, and images of the imagination by which a person unconsciously shares with others the Faustian II psychological world-view and which, if present, forms one of the constituent parts of one’s individuality. I don’t mean to imply that the Faustian “soul” is a subsisting principle of life or substantial in any way. A civilized person has several psychological configurations in his or her brain: the job-holder at work, the parent and spouse at home, the participant in religious culture (e.g., Catholicism), the participant in political culture (e.g., democratic nationalism), but he or she is also participating unconsciously in the Faustian II world-view of Western Civilization.

vigorously finding expression since 1800 and yet is destined, hundreds of years hence, to become "passé" and uncreative. But even after the "death" of the world-view, its insights and values will probably become part of the abiding fund of universal human culture, contributing to the advancing stream of human history.

The Faustian II world-view ever since its emergence around 1800, has introduced an organic way of seeing things, not only in philosophy and the sciences, but also in the arts, gradually qualifying the mechanistic of the old Faustian *Weltanschauung*. A mechanistic way of dealing with reality appears to be permanently at the heart of Western thinking because it is intimately tied to the technology, and the latter is central to the Faustian world-view. I will not treat of the mechanistic element of Faustian experience, except to point out the musical symbol of it in Western music, strikingly unique among world-civilizations; namely, the use of polyphony in the form of harmony, canon and counterpoint, but especially anticipated in the Fauxbordon and Discant of early Gothic times. Counterpoint, with its various voices singing or playing against each other, is a vivid musical analogue (e.g., in architecture) of mechanical forces: material thrusts, stresses, motions, and vectorially balanced inertias. The greatest Faustian II composers, Schoenberg and Stravinsky, are masters of contrapuntal techniques, musical "mechanics," as it were; though an organic quality has more influence in their music.

An organismic style of thought has assumed general priority over Faustian II mechanistic styles of thought, though neither excludes the other; Alfred Whitehead characterized his philosophy as "organic mechanism." Though mechanics is of the utmost importance in the physical sciences, including the biological disciplines, organic ways of thinking prevail in the foundational ideas; today, even machines and factory systems are conceived of organically as well as mechanically.

The Faustian II organismic ascendancy over the mechanistic quality is more accurately described as *contextualistic*; for, as Pepper has shown, organic thought is very close to thought in terms of contexts. An organicism can easily turn into a contextualism; an organically united whole may make room for contexts external to it, or itself become a changing context, acquire a historical quality, and possess a diversity of elements which are partly in conflict with each other, a fabric of parts rather than a simple organic interdependency. However, there is

a wide difference in the end or between an open 'horizontal' contextual world and a finally closed vertical, hierarchical organismic world . . . but yet the organismic world is still dynamic in its progressive phase, and the contextualistic does aim for gestalts and wholes in its experiential dealings with itself. But the latter insists on the final actuality of the changing events—and no final terminus to it. But constant chance for betterment (meliorism) and the joy of struggle and genuine creativeness in the cosmic novelty of the oncoming future—novelty mixed with control. (Pepper, Note 1)

I will be drawing parallels between elements of the Faustian II world-view and the world-views of the Magian (Near East), Chinese, and Indians. The Indian-like aspects of the new Faustian Culture, and the music associated with it, reflect the dominant organismic quality of the Indian Civilization. The Magian world-style (1300 B.C.-1000 A.D.-?), strongly present in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, conveyed contextualistic qualities to Western Civilization during the Faustian I phase (1000-1800 A.D.). As a result, when the Faustian II world-view was forming during the eighteenth century and emerging around 1800, its contextualistic character owed much to the Judeo-Christian (Magian) influences. But the contextualistic quality was relatively organic in its contrast with the dominant mechanism of Western Civilization. In addition, during the eighteenth century Sinification of Europe, Chinese ideas, themselves contextualistic, made a powerful impression on the gestating Faustian II world-view, and thus the Chinese influence strongly reinforced the Magian influence in the content of the new Faustian world-view. Pepper, shortly before his death in 1972, agreed with my designation of the Indian world-view as organismic and the Chinese and Magian world-views as contextualistic.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the impact of Indian organicism on Western Civilization in German, British, and American philosophical idealism provoked a powerful counter-response from the British and American analytical philosophers during the twentieth century, and a similar reaction from Western poets, painters, and composers.<sup>4</sup> The Greek heritage of *formism* within Western Classical studies and in the Faustian world-view provides an ideological, though unconscious, basis of formist responses—to be seen, for example, in Stravinsky's well-known "Neo-classic" music, as well as in other art-forms, such as the *symboliste* and imagist poetry at the end of the century.

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<sup>3</sup>In a letter to me Pepper wrote: "Your exposition of the major organismic and contextualistic traits of Indian and Chinese philosophy are very convincing and informative. And all your references to my treatment of these two movements with their close similarities in many respects . . . ." (Pepper, Note 2). Letter of May 1, 1971: "In the excerpt you sent me about the contextualistic tone of the Magian Culture I do not note anything out of line with my description of contextualism in *World Hypotheses* (Pepper). Your application of it to Magian Culture is novel to me . . . ."

<sup>4</sup>The foreign presence in Western culture, the too purely Indian elements of idealistic thought, is almost perfectly unknown to Westerners; and yet Indian ideas have been in process of domestication in the West since Alexander the Great's conquest of Northern India (c. 331 B.C.). When Indian writings were translated into western languages, around 1800, the German Idealists, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, and, later, British and American Idealists, were probably stimulated to create thoroughly Western idealistic philosophies. Space does not permit me to verify with historical evidence the chains of influence from China and India to the West. I have in my possession approximately 2000 photo copied pages which document directly, indirectly, or circumstantially these influences from East to West.

**Western Rationality:  
A Contextual and Organic Reason, with Chinese Affinities**

The new Western Culture is deeply rational, in an exceedingly complex way, and this taste for reason-in-complexity, this relish in concrete meaning—the *meaningfulness of the unique event or individual entity*—is reflected in the manner in which the polytonal idea has occurred in musical composition. A number of great tonal “arches,” “pillars,” or *centers* occur in the new music as a stabilizing influence in the absence of the single tonal *structure*. Stravinsky says that the title of his piano *Serenade in A* (1925) “does not refer to its tonality, but to the fact that [he] had made all the music revolve about an axis of sound which happened to be in A” (quoted in Smith, 1966b, p. 16). In the multitonal harmony of Bartok and Hindemith, the harmonic and tonal relationships are often so unique, diversified, or intricate, that it seems impossible for a person whose ear has been trained in Faustian I (i.e., “traditional”) music to discern any organic rational harmonic structure. Yet, the listener who is familiar with the new musical idiom has a strong impression of meaning and order. Schoenberg’s twelve-tone row, moreover, and its harmonic “laws” are relatively simple and systematic (though the structures of individual compositions are immensely complicated in comparison to the traditional diatonic systems). Webern carried this serial music in the direction of complexity far beyond Schoenberg. It is a mark of rapport with the new exploration of emotional experience in twentieth-century Western Culture that Schoenberg was accustomed to depart frequently from the strict system he had created, in accordance with his artistic emotions. The rational and objective Stravinsky, until his eighth decade, had rejected the twelve-tone-row—or any strict serial structure—and asserted that each score is unique in itself and possesses its own logic (Portnoy, 1954). He, Bartok, and Hindemith, although they kept tonal structures, were together with Schoenberg in the powerful Faustian II impulse for the logicity and rationality of the complex and the concrete. The same spirit has led our scientists to seek the meanings and necessities in the most complex phenomena of life and cosmic nature with the aid of computers and computer logic.

In Schoenberg’s concept of atonal music the term “tonal center” has become ambiguous, because any note may momentarily function as a relatively stable point of reference. It is a highly subtle element in the new music, and it is reminiscent of the Chinese civilizational world-view, if not of Chinese music. Generally speaking, contextuality is of the essence of Chinese musical feeling, and it is also present in Schoenberg’s music, inasmuch as it is the peculiar nature of atonal music that any description of the basic properties of an atonal work can only make sense within the *context* of the given work.

The Chinese desire of *subtlety* in music and painting is analogous to the paramount value for China of subtle relationships in all of nature. A similar

feeling for the relationships of things is probably present in twentieth-century music. But Western subtlety is an excursion into intricacy and complexity; it is not the Chinese nuance. It occurs in such varied music as that of Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Hindemith, Bartok, and Webern; and it has a Faustian II "physiognomic" affinity to the accuracy and precision of the exact sciences. The sensitivity to *relationships* of twentieth-century Western composers also intensifies the Faustian II curiosity, at once Western and Indian-like, in microscopic aspects of the world. The high valuations of relativities and of the minute divisions of things are also coupled at times with a propensity for wide abstractions, and almost scientific quests for exact musical statement. Together, all these predispositions exist in the complicated Faustian II music. A philosophic zest—akin to that of India—for abstract statement inspires, for example, the development into intricate *harmonies* of three- or six-note sets in serially composed music.<sup>5</sup> Harmony, whether tonal or atonal, has been peculiarly Faustian among the great world-civilizations, ever since the middle ages. But Webern created a very dense musical context despite his well-known frugality with musical notes, a wealth of musical materials in the smallest possible space. Here the Faustian II character has dominated.

The most distant relationship possible between two notes or two keys is the tritone; it is, consequently, a musical interval which is well suited to satisfy the Western taste for polytonality. Bartok made a customary use of the tritone, and to such an extent, that perhaps it would be impossible to work out any harmonic laws; although there have been studies of his harmonic idiom. The twentieth-century ear is receptive to the contextualist quality of the music, with its vivid fusions, and its organic quality.

The more or less spontaneous techniques of the trained Chinese painter and brush artist have, as it were, often been transferred to the exact techniques of musicology. It is as if brush-stroke by brush-stroke, line by line, and mass by mass, complete with the relations between these elements, the painting was translatable into Western compositions. The most subtle, delicate, and sparse Chinese ink drawing is comparable, in its frugality, to the contrapuntal music of Webern and also in its keen sense of the relations of the parts. The organic quality predominates in the truly simple Chinese ink drawings—whereas an internal context predominates in Webern's music.

One of the favorite devices of Chinese painting, particularly after Buddhism entered into the Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era, was the use of the empty spaces between the objects depicted in paintings. An empty interval served to create subtle tensions and relationships, in its own way as effectively as the typical Chinese repetition of thin brush-strokes. In the use of voids in post-Han paintings there is an ethereal quality, corresponding to both an Indian and a Taoist sense of transcendence. In more recent

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<sup>5</sup>The raga, however, cannot be equated with serialism.

centuries the Chinese and Japanese have continued to explore the idea of emptiness in religion and the arts. Thereby they have made evident, as a flower its seed, the ancient Indian origin of inspiration.

Is it a kind of "empty space" that one encounters in contemporary music in the *wide interval*? As employed in this century it typically takes the form of a chord or quick succession of notes (an arpeggiated chord) which cover several octaves. Schoenberg often covers four octaves in a very brief and swift musical sequence. These wide intervals arouse my remembrance of the way that voids aided the Chinese in their serene nature paintings. The intervals enable Western composers sometimes to create—unaware of the Chinese tinge in the Faustian II outlook—intervallic tensions which, in contrasting analogy to the axial tensions of Faustian I painting, are relatively gentle. Stravinsky turned away from the disarray of harmonic structures employed by late-nineteenth-century European composers, so that he could find fresh harmonies and sonorities which would fulfill his own bent toward formalism. Tensions used in combination with polytonalities, dissonances, rhythms, polyrhythms, and other devices thus give adequate musical outlet to the new cultural sense of the interrelationships of things.

### Western Formalism in Music versus Indian Idealism

Just as the new forms of Faustian II Reason, that is, the new notions concerning the nature of rational discourse, have ties with the predecessor, Faustian I Reason, so, too, in music, the polyphony of the twentieth century joins with that of the music which has existed since the middle ages. Despite the extraordinary complexity of Faustian II polyphony it is articulated so that various instruments and instrumental combinations in the best compositions keep their separate tonal values clearly distinguishable in the orchestral mass (Copland, 1968). In the "objective" or formalist musicians—particularly the Neo-classical, the most famous of whom are Hindemith and Stravinsky—this clear articulation of timbres, sonorities, and tones, independent contrapuntal lines, and the use of passacaglia, fugue, and canon, all derive from the Faustian I tradition, no matter how transformed.

If Igor Stravinsky and other composers had not championed the strand of Greek-like classicism in the Faustian II "soul," others would have felt the need to do so, without understanding exactly how momentous their defense would be. It is the nature of a civilizational world-view—especially during the burgeoning early years of its existence, in the prereflective consciousness of the historical actors—to be thoroughly intolerant of ideas and attitudes which would tend to destroy it if universally accepted. A civilization's cultural integrity is analogous to that of a normal human brain.

Western Civilization was well armed against an *idealistic* takeover of its "brain," since, for four hundred years, a university education had required a

complete reading of the Greek and Roman classics and thus a thorough grounding in Classical Reason, and this was utterly opposed to any world-denying world-view, dissolving all differences in one pantheistic whole.

Stravinsky was only one of several Faustian II Russians—Borodin and Glinka among them—who eschewed the idealistic Romanticism of late-nineteenth-century European composers; just as G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell were only two of the several European scientists, mathematicians, logicians, and philosophers who rejected idealism and sought classical clarity about the material world. British imperial India probably evoked—in the manner of a vaccination—an effective resistance of intellectuals against the attractions of East Asian idealism. But the greatest German Romantic philosophers had been thoroughly captivated early in the nineteenth century. Russian composers who shared Stravinsky's anti-Romantic mentality appear to have been insulated against the hundred-year-old Indianization.

One of the effects of the spirited response of westerners to the idealistic challenge was the emergence of a "formalism" at the beginning of this century in some famous schools of music, poetry, and literary and art criticism. "There is a considerable amount of indirect evidence of the growth and prevalence of contemporary formalistic attitudes, not only in the arts, but in culture generally (Meyer, 1967, p. 224; Richardson, 1980). If there should be a word, besides "Classical," which is perfectly appropriate to describe the Greek world-view, it will be "formalism" or "formism"; and to some extent this quality enters into the new Faustian rationalism, though it is only one of several facets of the intricate and complex idea of Reason which is in the core of our *Weltanschauung*.

Thus, the Greek strand of secular, rational clarity has a place in the Faustian world-view—a fact of great historical importance in the twentieth century. The formalists in music are matched by the analytical formalists in philosophy, particularly G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell. Some of the creative pioneers in the arts and letters at the end of the nineteenth century more or less deliberately revived a Greek Classicism and eighteenth-century Neo-classicism in their works, in order to satisfy a feeling of absolute conviction that Greek-like formalism was urgently needed in the structures of art and thought. The British analytical philosophers knew what they were fighting: the growth of idealistic philosophy—German idealism and its more recent British, American, and German developments. In all probability, the twentieth-century Neo-classical composers shared in the Faustian II love of Classical clarity, definiteness, and rationality—over and against Romantic organicism and emotionality.

But the creative innovators in Western Civilization were fighting over a more important issue than a mere "family disagreement" between the German-like idealists and Romantics and the English-like proponents of Classical down-to-earthness. All through the nineteenth century, and notably in



the early-nineteenth-century days of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, an "Oriental Renaissance," a rebirth in Europe of Indian Buddhist and Hindu idealistic thought was occurring.<sup>6</sup> A less effective "renaissance" occurred in Alexandria in the early centuries of the Christian era, giving rise to some of the most famous heresies and heresiarchs of the early Christian Church. In the twentieth century, as was the case with the prevalent world-view in the early Christian centuries, the opponents of idealism have been unaware that their reaction was actually a defense of the Faustian civilizational world-view, so that it would survive the onslaught of the powerful Indian world-view. In our case the unconscious defense of the Faustian II psychological *Weltanschauung* by creative pioneers of Western Culture was, in these circumstances, a necessary development. How suggestive is the dry, rational type of Faustian II music of this century, when one meditates on the fact of a similar type in the twentieth-century imagist and "purist" poets—Ezra Pound and Yvor Winters particularly notable among them: Winters entitled his greatest book of literary criticism *In Defense of Reason* (Richardson, 1977, p. 84; Winters, 1967). Their predecessors, the *symboliste* poets, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Rimbaud were French, whose country more than any other, keeps alive a powerful strain of Greek-like Reason.

The effect of Stravinsky's style of orchestration was to help to renew the sensitivity and perceptiveness of audiences whose taste had become corrupted as a result of the thoroughly undisciplined harmony arrived at by late romantic composers. The replacement of traditional harmony by a spare technique of pure tones, in which a rampant chromaticism was replaced by a relative frugality of instrumental sounds, thus drawing attention to the sounds themselves, implemented the revolution in twentieth century music. It was as great a change as the adoption of impressionist technique in nineteenth century painting (Richardson, 1971a, pp. 113-115).

### Faustian Contextual Complexity and the Asian Factors

The Faustian II character of "neo-classic" contemporary music lies in the musical *density*, rather than in the passion of utterance. It is a music "which takes its impulse from the realities of a passionate logic; which in its aloofness from the . . . preoccupations of life, strives rather to contribute from, design, a vision of order, and harmony" (Copland, 1968, p. 75).

Polyphony, canon, and counterpoint are intimately allied with each other, and they all came into existence between 1100 and 1400 A.D. in Europe. The medieval Gothic architects created a visual "counterpoint," a "frozen music" on the facades of their cathedrals. Yet the musical possibilities of multi-voices harmony transcend the Faustian I world-view; for we find in twentieth-

<sup>6</sup>Schwab (1950) has documented in his book, *La Renaissance Orientale*, influences which had already become powerful in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

century Western Civilization a successor to the old polyphonic Faustian I musicology which is far more concrete. It is analogous and parallel to a new totalized (i.e., concrete) philosophical rationalism. Haydn and Mozart used polyphony in their symphonies, but contemporary composers have transformed the technique by exalting the particular musical context—a concretization in the direction of complexity and musical density. Webern's epoch-making development of the sparse and attenuated musical line is only superficially a mere scattering of notes. He made his music richly complex by applying the serial technique to all the factors—canon, counterpoint, timbre, the instruments, rhythms, etc.—resulting in an intricate and nonrepetitive, structural pattern. The composer, Milton Babbitt, is aware of this new rationale in Faustian II music, one of extremely intricate determinacy; and thus "musical compositions of the kind under discussion possess a high degree of contextuality and autonomy. That is, the structural characteristics of a given work are less representative of a general class of characteristics than they are unique to the individual work itself" (Babbitt, 1978, p. 272; see also Richardson, 1971b, pp. 187-189).

The particular *context* of the individual musical composition as it unfolds contains relationships *within* the piece as well as references to musical items from the past which are used out of their original context (Smith, 1966a, pp. 89-90). Thus, the context, whether inner or outer, is one way of displacing single tonal centers and functional harmonies as primary organizing factors. "The twelve-toned method and the more general principles of serial organization are perhaps the most important subsidiaries of contextual (that is, contemporary) music, but the tradition admits many other things as well" (Smith, 1966a, p. 16).

Schoenberg described his first published completely pantonal music (1923) as a "method of composing with twelve tones which are related only with one another" (quoted in Smith, 1966a, p. 15). By thus relegating the diatonic single tonic scale to a secondary place, twentieth-century composers opened harmony to a vastly more complex organization than ever before.

Carter expresses a thoroughly Faustian II sense of rational complexity in describing his "Variations for Orchestra":

In this work I was interested in adopting a more dynamic and changeable approach. The general characteristics of the form are maintained—one pattern of material out of which a diversity of characters come, but the principle of variation is often applied even within the scope of each short piece. In some, great changes of character and theme occur, in others, contrasting themes and characters answer each other back and forth or are heard simultaneously. By these and other devices, I have tried to give musical expression to experiences anyone living today must have when confronted with so many remarkable examples of unexpected types of changes and relationships of character uncovered in the human sphere by psychologists and novelists, in the life cycle of insects and certain marine animals by biologists, indeed in every domain of science and art. Thus the old notion of "unity in diversity" presents itself to us in an entirely different guise than it did to people even a short while ago. (Carter, 1956)

Even at the least emotional and most rational level, our civilization takes a path parallel to our music. The techniques for investigating tremendous complexities in the sciences and the applied sciences, as well as in philosophical and religious systems of thought, are orderly and exhaustive. They must deal with the changing and the unresolved: such are the characteristics of existing facts and concrete essences, e.g., as philosophically investigated in the phenomenology of Husserl (Husserl, 1962).<sup>7</sup> Even God's knowledge, in a Faustian II theology, is changing and incomplete. "It is not even true the omniscient must know details of the future, unless it can be proven against Bergson, Whitehead, Peirce, James and many others, that the future has any details to know" (Hartshorne, 1963, p. 326). Twentieth-century man has transformed true knowledge from an object of mere understanding to the *ongoing experiencing* of reality. Yet the predecessors can be traced back to Kant (1724-1804).

How remarkable is the analogy between the new music and the complexity of Faustian II concrete Reason, whether, for example, in the calculations in immensely complex sciences or in hermeneutical phenomenology. The "skyscraper" chords (Machlis, n.d.) of contemporary music, for example, are really *polychords* in the service of a *multiplanal* harmony, a new counterpoint of chords, a polyphony where independent successions of chords are vertically combined—just as predecessors had combined single lines of harmony. "In such music the contrapuntal interplay is no longer between lines of single notes but between moving blocks of harmony which are heard on separate planes" (Machlis, n.d., p. 51).

The old Indian and later the Chinese, Buddhist, and Neo-Confucian ideas of a submicroscopic complexity underlying the appearance of things has greatly influenced the West. Such notions flowered in the West from the time of the Sinophile Leibniz to the present: thus was perpetuated a *Chinese-like Taoist "contextualist" affinity for the inclusion of inexplicable facts as part of the explicable* (Pepper, 1942, p. 234). This affinity to the Chinese may be seen, in a musical example, in the contemporary exploitation of vivid dissonances and sonorities of "atonal" music. Without being aware of the Chinese connection Smith (1966a, p. 90) recently wrote that "the twelve tone technique represented the first important attempt at a systematic solution to the problems raised by contextuality." Hindemith's harmonic theory addressed the same problems. In all the uses of the serial technique "the framework within which 'musical meaning' is created is the interaction of the various elements that are presented by the special context." This musical (and indeed metaphysical) notion enters into the twentieth-century acceptance of the aesthetic value of *unresolved conflict* as opposed to the integration of conflicting musical elements in the more profound aesthetic experience. It is reminiscent of Hegel's

<sup>7</sup>In his phenomenology, Husserl was deeply influenced by William James' philosophical assertion of the all-important complexity of the world (Wild, 1963, p. 46).

dialectical reason: concrete in its sublation of particulars and in its movement into novelty. Hegel lectured on Taoist philosophy—an interesting fact, in view of Lao Tzu's and Chuang Tzu's avowed relish for the presence of *unresolved disorder* in all things. It is a thoroughly contextualistic way of viewing things, whether musical or cosmic. But Hegel's philosophy was akin more to the organicism of Indian idealistic philosophy than to the contextualism of the Taoists or the new Faustians.

Thus the new music, like the new concrete Reason, has a deliberately organized complexity which is far greater than ever existed before—and more a "contextual" than an "organic" complexity. Yet a non-Western civilization—that of India—has had a vision of colossal complexity which was symbolized not only in their universally accepted atomistic theory of matter, but also in their music, in the thousands of possible raga-forms. Analogously in mathematics, their precocious development of logarithmic functions was suggestive of immense numerical complexity.

We find that the great composers of our time—e.g., Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartok, and Webern—have been inventors of extremely complex theories of composition. Beginning approximately 1800, the variety of instruments in the symphonic orchestra was greatly increased. But such nineteenth-century masters of harmony as Brahms, with his contrapuntal techniques, used harmonic systems which were relatively simple in comparison to the numerous variables of twentieth-century music: intervals, timbres, tonalities, variations, and juxtapositions of rhythms, sonorities, and instruments. What enables the music often to be symbolic of the new concrete model of twentieth-century Reason is not merely the rhythmic or melodic complexity. For that matter, primitive tribal music is exceedingly complex. The difference is the presence of theoretical reason in the new Faustian music, in contrast to the absence of musical theory in primitive societies.

### **Emotion as a Contextualist Element: Magian and Chinese-like Fusions of Contrast**

The fused quality of the textural strands in much of Faustian II music is a composer's form of emotional expression. One has only to listen to any of a large number of contemporary pieces in which extraordinarily colorful, emphatic, dissonant, or sonorous chords build up to climaxes. Contextualistic fusion is equivalent to emotional perception. William James identified emotion with fusion in aesthetic enjoyment (Pepper, 1942, p. 64); that is, he correlated feeling with vividly fused experience. No other Faustian II psychological predisposition, not even Reason, is more highly valued in Western Civilization than the capacity to experience intense feelings. This is the latter-day outcome (1800-?) of a historical dialectic which has its origin in the medieval amalgamation of Christian and Magian emotional intensity, on the

one hand, and the Faustian I world-view, on the other. The synthesis accelerated during the post-Renaissance centuries from the era of Händel (*Messiah*) up to the late eighteenth-century assimilation of the idea of emotion within the Faustian II world-view. Our aptitude for vivid feeling-experience is more than merely compatible with our Magian tendency to make "disorder" a part of "order," and so, too, is our instinct to include the inexplicable and the concrete within rational comprehension. The very contrast between disorder and order within an otherwise ordered musical work is exploitable for emotional expression. Intensity of the composer's feeling can find an outlet in a musical context of contrasts.

That such a contextualism should at once have Chinese affiliations and also be an excellent vehicle of the Magian-like emotionality of our world-soul is a strange coincidence; for nothing approaching the high value of the Faustian II idealization of emotion is to be found among the core ideas of East Asian world-views, except the Japanese. Western religiousness widens the gap between East and West. The tremendous Near Eastern (i.e., Magian) emotional bent, as conveyed by the Hebrew prophets and the Christian religion, has entered the innermost "soul" of Western civilization. But the religion is not the world-view; Christian emotion is not identical with Faustian emotion. In whatever civilization we Faustians find non-Christians exploiting intense emotional experiences, kindred feelings link us to them.

Thus the ugly and disorderly elements of the high tragedy of Sophocles and Seneca take on new value under the light of the new Faustian world-view; and the sublimity which is sometimes attainable by disorder-within-order and by ugliness-within-beauty is one of the enduring values of the Faustian II world. In this way art can extend beyond cultivated pleasure to the unpleasant emotions, not excluding the sad, the terrible, and the horrible. Part of the vivid fusions of sounds in contemporary music is compounded out of dissonant polytonalities; but an accumulation of perceptions and the fusion of them occurs in the *mind* of the listener, as well as in the music, as the listener's imagination amalgamates the successive "statements" of the musical work. The total context of a new work inevitably includes the composer's external references—e.g., musical items from an earlier historical context, or from an alien context—no matter how much at odds they may be with other elements of the work (Smith, 1966a, p. 90). The listener's awareness of contrasts of contexts, within a still broader context, is a natural strengthener of the Faustian II capacity for emotional art.

The new *Weltanschauung* is not a perfectly self-consistent or integrated metaphysical world-outlook; for, like all psychological world-styles, it is a *coincidentia oppositorum*. In particular, the "contextualistic" (Chinese-like) component of our culture rivals the "organic" (Indian-like) component in the new music. (Here, only relatively speaking; for the Chinese outlook, like the Indian, is thoroughly organismic.) Points of view, which can be ultimately

traced to the influence of Chinese ideas on the West, have a tremendous role in our music—in its polytonality, for example, but especially in the use of *motive centers*. “Webern’s first twelve-tone work represented a return to the quasimotivic contextual basis that characterized most of his earlier works” (Smith, 1966a, p. 93).

As for the direct influence of traditional Indian aesthetics, the latter has been dominated by the idea of the *beautiful*, probably with considerable reinforcement from ancient ideas originating in the Eastern Mediterranean. The emotion, the bliss of Indian aesthetic experience (*rasa*), is more akin to the pleasure of beholding beauty, rather than the feeling of awe in encountering the sublime.<sup>8</sup> In high contrast with the Indians is the central place of emotion in the Faustian II Civilization. A “contextualistic” way of composing music again shows a Chinese-like quality, inasmuch as emotional evaluations by their nature are oriented to an *unforseeable* future. Therefore, in proportion to their intensity, emotional evaluations enter *creatively* as musical contexts into the everchanging —i.e., never-being-finally-resolved—larger context of the music as yet to be composed.

### Concluding Remarks

A new music appeared in Western Civilization at the end of the Faustian I era (1000-1800 A.D.) which was also the beginning of Faustian II times. Romantic music, for example, reflected the influence of Indian organic ideas on the civilization’s world-view. The contextualist quality of the music stemmed partly from the impact of China on the West and partly from the Near Eastern or Magian world-view, conveyed by Christianity for a thousand years. The Faustian genius for mechanical thinking had found magnificent expression in Baroque counter-point music, and the new contrapuntal techniques, e.g., in Stravinsky’s works, also give eloquent expression to the Faustian II mechanical bent. But organicism, as in romantic and contemporary Neo-classic composers, now has priority over the mechanical paradigm. The rise of organicism stems from the influence of Indian and Chinese ideas. Indian notions have been present in the West since Alexander’s conquest of Northern India in 331 B.C. and since the flowering of thought in Alexandria, 0-300 A.D.: Indian “seeds” with Western “flowers.” China’s turn came during the eighteenth century Sinification of Europe. Thus India’s covert and China’s overt presence in the West decisively turned the Faustian world-view and Faustian music in an organic direction. Indian-like organicism found an outlet in Idealistic philosophies, and it was reinforced by the contextualism of the Chinese—itsself relatively organic. By 1900, Faustian writers and artists, unconsciously resisting an invasion of the West by the powerful Indian

<sup>8</sup>M.J. Ananda, in his *The Hindu View of Art* (n.d., pp. 163-165) compares the Indian aesthetic of beauty to that of Kant.

Culture, were on their guard against idealistic philosophy, i.e., an Indian-like idealism. A very Greek formism, which is part of Faustian II Reason, inspired the western "counterattack," the reassertion of the formist factor. Ultimately, this accounts for the Neo-classicism of Glinka, Borodin, and Stravinsky.

The Magian emotional element is prominent in Faustian II music, and it is far more intense than the Indian *rasa*. Schoenberg's music is richly organic in its extraordinary complexity—a Faustian II feature—but it is even more contextualistic in its fusions of sounds; its dissonance is correlative to its emotional intensity. In such ways the Faustian II family of musics, still young after 180 years, may be described by means of mechanistic, organic, contextual, and formist points-of-view.

### Reference Notes

Note 1. Pepper, S.C. Personal correspondence, March 2, 1972; (he died, age 81, May 2, just two months later).

Note 2. Pepper, S.C. Personal correspondence, March 2, 1972.

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