TOWARDS A POLYAESTHETIC APPROACH

TO MUSIC EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Taking as its central premise the contention that there are different ways of validly conceiving music's nature and value, this thesis aims to demonstrate the need for eclecticism in the formulation of a philosophy of music education. Comprising the main body of this study is an in depth consideration of four different aesthetic points: (i) music as autonomous aesthetic object; (ii) music as social commentary; (iii) music as social mediator; and (iv) music as link to ultimate reality. The concluding chapter draws some conclusions as to what a 'polyaesthetic approach' implies in terms of music education's objectives, content and methods.

CONTENTS

PREFACE

The formulation of a philosophy for the teaching of music is an enterprise that has been assiduously pursued in recent times, both for the sake of securing a more central place for music in school curricula and in order to provide principles whereby more effective and purposeful music pedagogies may be made possible. A philosophy of music education is in large part a statement of one's beliefs about the nature and value of music, what is generally called an 'aesthetic of music'.

Notwithstanding the ubiquity of music, there is not, and probably never can be, unanimity as to what its precise nature is and what its values are. The fact that there are different ways of validly conceiving music implies that a philosophy of music education needs to be eclectic if it is to be accountable. This supposition forms the point of departure for the discussions which constitute this thesis, a study that has three primary aims: (i) to demonstrate the need for music education to be polyaesthetic; (ii) to explore different conceptions of music's nature and value; and (iii) to draw some conclusions as to what a polyaesthetic approach entails in terms of music education's objectives, content, and methods.

Except where specifically indicated to the contrary, this thesis is my own original work.

JEFFREY ERIC ROBINSON

1. THE NEED FOR POLYAESTHETIC MUSIC EDUCATION

1.1. What is meant by 'polyaesthetic music education'?

Whenever one chooses to use the word 'aesthetic', the problem of vagueness immediately presents itself, particularly when used as an adjective as in aesthetic sensitivity or aesthetic education. In conventional usage, it is a reference to a dimension of human experience incredibly resistant to explicit discourse, that being man's response to expressive forms (especially those that are man-created, e.g., art). Numerous attempts have been made to describe the precise nature of this response, most of which have concentrated on ascertaining the constituents of 'beauty' from which can be derived canons of 'taste' to guide us in our appreciation of works of art. Beauty is generally regarded as that combination of qualities, such as shape, proportion, and colour, that delights our senses and evokes a sense of significance that transcends utility or social necessity. But to say that beauty is the central issue in the experiencing of art is to present a view which is culturally and philosophically relative. If we wish to develop a more global perspective, it is necessary to broaden our concept of what an 'aesthetic' (noun) is, so that it embraces more than just a concern with questions of beauty and taste. The intent of this thesis is to demonstrate how music education can become more global by becoming polyaes-

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thetic in approach. To this end, the term 'aesthetic of music will be used in reference to any set of beliefs about the nature and value of music that is deeply held and that recognizes musical activity in some form as being significant and worthwhile.

A polyaesthetic music education is one that is eclectic in terms of its underlying assumptions about what music is and what its values are. It acknowledges that:

  (i) There are different ways of thinking about music that inform a profound belief in music's capacity for being intensely meaningful.

 (ii) No single aesthetic of music has universal validity.

(iii) Different musics require different aesthetic approaches if they are to be experienced fully.

 (iv) The experiencing of most musics is greatly enhanced when approached from more than one aesthetic viewpoint.

1.2. The need for polyaesthetic music education

The need for polyaesthetic music education arises largely from the multiform character of music itself. 'Pure' music (i.e. nonvocal, nonprogrammatic, nonritualistic, etc.) is more the exception than the rule when taking all of the world's musics into consideration. Music is genuinely a protean art; more often than not it is wedded to other media, such as language, dance, and drama. As such, an aesthetic which focusses exclusively on the intrinsic expressiveness of music is likely to miss the point with most

of the world's musics. Just as limited, however, is an aesthetic which fails to acknowledge that there is a significance to music that is <u>sui generis</u>, and that makes it possible to experience music meaningfully without reference to anything extrinsic to the sounds themselves. A polyaesthetic approach emphasizes both the pansocial and the socially contingent in music.

The question of aesthetic approach in music education is essentially a question of aims inasmuch as educational means must ultimately be determined so as to accord with educational ends. All educational aims are hierarchical; the achievement of each proximate aim (e.g. that of a single lesson) should reflect progress towards the achievement of broader, more encompassing goals. As such, the aims of music education should be subordinated to the aims of the entire education process, the latter being determined in relation to the living reality of the people concerned, reflecting their genuine needs and aspirations.

In a multicultural society there can be little unanimity as to what the ultimate aims of education should be, particularly in situations where class or intergroup antagonisms are rife. Whether as student, teacher, parent, or administrator, what one perceives the purpose(s) of

education and its constituents to be is always intimately connected to the specifics of one's day to day existence and is largely influenced by the norms and values of one's sociocultural milieu. While there may be agreement as to the value of certain components of the curriculum (e.g. those directly connected with literacy and numeracy), the situation is quite different with regard to subjects like history, social studies, literature, fine arts, and music.

The multiform, multifunctional nature of music is reflected in the myriad raison d'etres that are ascribable to music education, each of which may be deemed valid within certain contexts, and each of which generally reflects a particular perspective concerning the ultimate aims of education. For example, the Marxist aesthetic of 'Socialist Realism' regards as the primary educational function of art (including music), to develop social awareness and commitment to the proletarian cause; it is an aesthetic that accords well with the notion that the ultimate aim of education is the ideological transformation of the masses. Similarly, with an education programme that defines its goals in accordance with a religious world-view, the expected focus of music education will be the exploitation of music's potential as a spiritualizing or moralizing agent.

Figure 1 is an attempt to illustrate the connections between various conceptions of music's nature and value (inner ring), various goals for music education, (middle ring), and various, more comprehensive educational aims (outer ring). It is admittedly a simplification, the intent being only to reveal probable tendencies. What is important to note at this point is the extent to which overlapping and interlocking occurs. This is necessary inasmuch as there are several human qualities the cultivation of which will be a concern shared by music education programmes with different underlying aesthetics and with different orientations in terms of ultimate educational objectives. The interlocking of the segments in the outer ring of the diagram is to suggest that the comprehensive aims cited, far from being contradictory or counteractive, are actually mutually supportive and, in many respects, interdependent. The mutual integrality of self-actualization and social-amelioration is a good example.

Self-actualization, some might argue, is inappropriate as an ultimate educational aim in situations of socio-economic adversity, for it is only when the more basic human needs have been adequately satisfied that so lofty a goal can become a motivator of behaviour. Moreover, it is a goal that focusses attention on the individual and this may certainly seem inappropriate in circumstances where col-

POLYAESTHETIC MUSIC EDUCATION

SELF-ACTUALIZATION

SOCIAL AMELIORATION

SPIRITUAL EXCELLENCE

SOCIAL CONTINUITY

Aesthetic Sensitivity Imagination

Social awareness and commitment

Education of intuition Creativity

Ideological Transformation

Self-transcendence Inner realization

Morality

Citizenship

MUSIC AS

AUTONOMOUS AESTHETIC OBJECT

SOCIAL COMMENTARY

LINK TO ULTIMATE REALITY

SOCIAL MEDIATOR

Communion with the Divine

Assimilation of social norms, values & customs
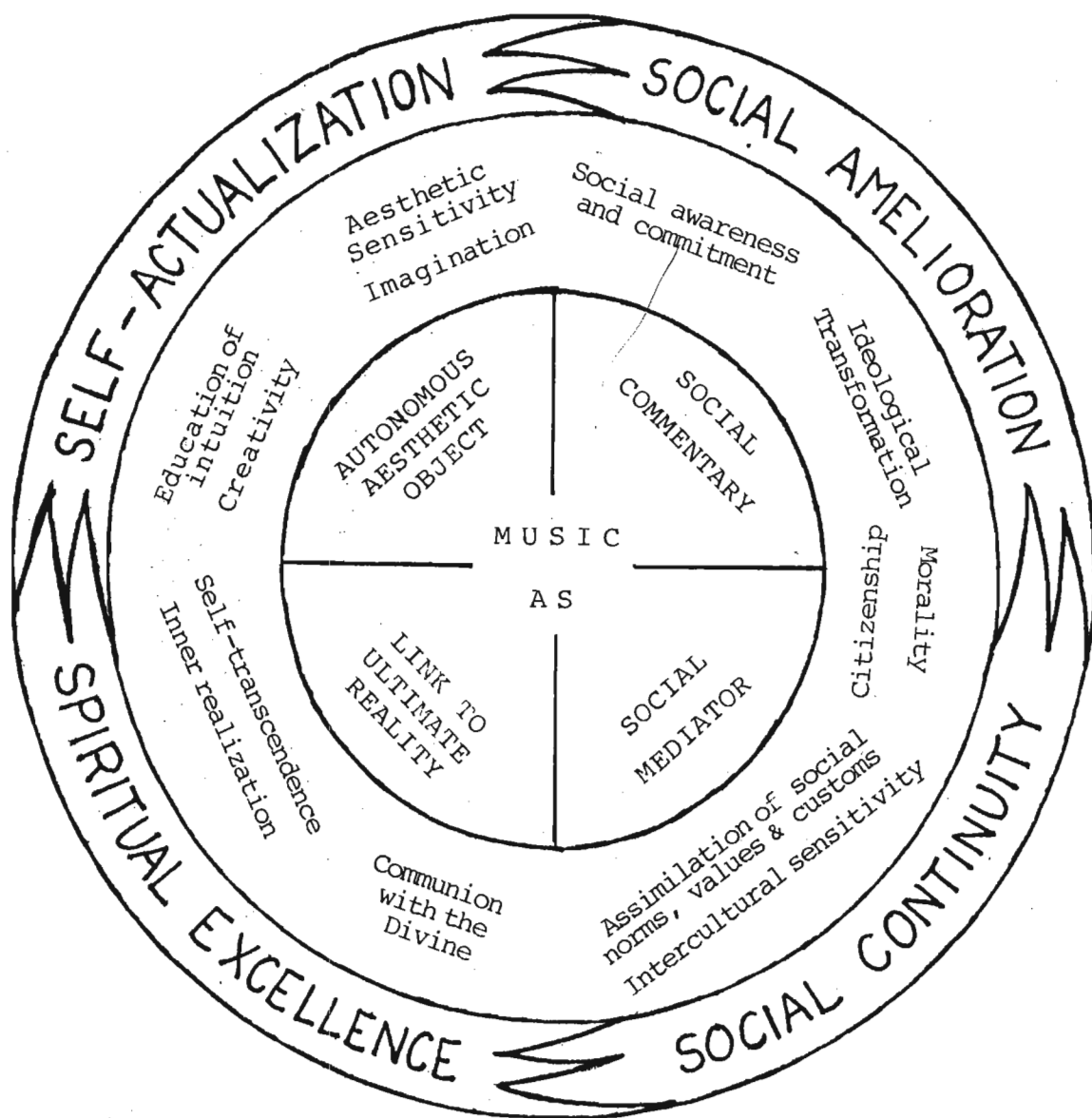
Intercultural sensitivity

Fig. 1

lective urgencies merit greater emphasis. At the same time,
however, it can be argued that education for self-
actualization is the only means of bringing about a bet-
ter future for all. The latter argument is one that the
philosopher and theologian Martin Buber suscribed to:

> For only those who realize with their life-substance
> will establish new, viable reality. · Success may depend
> upon the impetus of the troop, but upon the genuiness
> of the individuals depends what this success will an-
> nounce in the future: genuined victory or its counter-
> feit.[1]

It is likely that Buber, being a theologian, would have
taken this further by linking self-actualization with spir-
itual fulfillment, thus adding another dimension to the
educational gestalt.

Education must provide for the needs of both the indivi-
dual and society. That its ability to do so is greater when
it is multipolar in its aims is a premise that is a central
tenet of this thesis, for it is in the integration of these
aims that the need for music education to be polyaesthetic
is most clearly evident. The individual vs. collective
issue has become probably the most contentious topic in
contemporary educational debate, especially in this country
where it has extensive sociopolitical implications. We may

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[1]Martin Buber, "Education and World-View," in Point-
ing the Way, ed. Maurice Friedman (New York: Harper & Row,
1957), cited by Paul Nash, Models of Man (New York: John
Wiley & Sons, 1968), p. 460.

note as an example the education conference convened by the
Soweto Parents Crisis Committee (28-29 Dec., 1985, Uni-
veristy of the Witswatersrand) which gave rise to the
"People's Education" charter, a document which is explicit-
ly collectivist in orientation.[1] Pertinent to Buber's as-
sertion are what J.D. Vrey gives as the two essential as-
pects of authentic self-actualization: ·

   (a) individuation which means developing a strong indi-
       viduality; and
   (b) participation or social integration requiring ma-
       ture responsibility to his (sic) world.[2]

Neither the "irresponsable individualist" nor the "torpid
collectivist" are acceptable as educational models; the
ideal is the "autonomous and socially responsible indi-
vidual" who is at the same time an "accountable communal
man."[3]   A belief which will often manifest itself in the
ensuing discussions is that music education contributes
more effectively to the achievement of that ideal when it
is polyaesthetic in approach.

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[1]The charter, which in its terminology and emphases
has a distinctly Marxist flavour, states that, amongst
other things, "people's education" is education that
"eliminates capitalist norms of competition, individualism,
and stunted intellectual development (sic) and one that
encourages collective input and active participation by
all, as well as stimulating critical thinking and analy-
sis." Sunday Times (Johannesburg), 30 March 1986.

[2]J.D. Vrey, The Self-Actualising Educand (Pretoria:
University of South Africa, 1979), p. 16.

[3]Buber, "Education and World-View," cited by Nash,
Models of Man, p. 308.

Two different arguments against a polyaesthetic approach to music education which may be anticipated are:

(i) that it lessens the emphasis on the 'aesthetic in music,' i.e. that which makes music unique - the 'specificity' of music; and

(ii) that in its eclecticism and its attempt to reconcile different aesthetic viewpoints, it adopts a safe neutrality and, as such, is an ineffectual compromise that unwittingly serves to maintain an unacceptable status quo.

Other criticisms may also be levelled, but it is likely that they, like the above two, will emanate from a belief that music has one value in particular that is paramount, to which all others should be subordinated in a music education programme.

The first criticism mentioned can be supported with a rather convincing line of argument, especially when considered within the context of contemporary, institutionalized education with its propensity for compartmentalization. If music education is to justify its inclusion in the curriculum, it should demonstrate that it has something vital and unique to offer. Proponents of 'music education as aesthetic education' submit that music, as an art, offers important insights into "a major - perhaps the major - aspect of the human condition: subjective responsiveness".[1]

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[1] Bennett Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 37.

The assumption prevalent among many Western aestheticians is that the 'aesthetic in' music is the inherent capacity of 'artistically' constructed sound complexes to replicate the rhythms of tension and relaxation that allegedly characterize human feeling. Music education's function, according to this view, is to develop students' sensitivity to the formal qualities of music that give it intrinsic value as an isomorph or "tonal analogue" of feeling. It achieves this function best, however, when unfettered by extramusical (e.g. social, political, religious, etc.) concerns. Associative meanings draw attention away from music's self-contained significance. Moreover, they are meanings, it can be argued, that are easily accessible through other, more direct means (e.g. language and various forms of visual representation). This in itself may seem a sufficient reason for downplaying the extrinsic in favour of the intrinsic. The cultivation of such attributes as social awareness and religiousness could rather be left to other compartments of the curriculum, for example, Social Studies and Religious Education.

The fundamental assumption of the preceeding argument is that art (including music) is first and foremost a means of bringing feeling into the realm of objectively valid cogni-

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[1] Susanne K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 27. Chapter 2 discusses this aesthetic at length. It is being superficially dealt with here purely to emphasize its insufficiency as a philosophical foundation for the teaching of music.

tion. It is an assumption that loses considerable sub-

stance, however, as soon as we begin to move outside what

is primarily a Western frame of reference. There are, for

example, several long-standing art traditions in the East

where

> ... neither subjective feelings nor commitment to some-
> thing new play a decisive role. Instead, philosophical and
> metaphysical rules such as those connected with the es-
> sence of Zen and Tao are of prime importance. This re-
> sults in concepts of time and space, universe and vi-
> sions related to rules of thinking unlike the Western
> style based on mathematics and symmetry.[1]

Even more problematic is the issue of 'feeling' itself.

Those who, like Langer, conceive of music as an isomorph or

tonal analogue of feeling necessarily regard feeling as

something with an inherent pattern and logic all its own.

Yet, as Harold Osborne points out

> ... feeling is the most fluid and unstructured of men-
> tal conditions, not in general manifesting rhythmically
> repeated sequences of tension and relaxation.

Furthermore

> ... if the sequence of tensions and relaxations can be
> made to have some semblance of plausibility in relation
> to European music from about 1600 to 1900, it even more
> certainly gives quite a wrong picture of most of the
> world's music.[2]

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[1]Siegried Borris, "National Idioms and Universal Ele-
ments - Their Relation to Music and Music Education," ISME
Yearbook 8 (1981): 69.

[2]Harold Osborne, "Essay Review - Susanne K. Langer's
Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling," The Journal of Aesthetic
Education 18 (Spring 1984): 84.

But it is not only the fluidity of feeling or its seeming lack of structure that make it untenable to idealize music as its tonal analogue. It is more so the fact that feeling is so intricately integrated into the total complex of mental life that it is unfeasible to regard it as a faculty on its own. Music certainly evokes feelingful states in which one indwells without the aid of concepts or explicit extra-musical associations; but in the same way that feeling is an ever present constituent of consciousness, so also are concepts, and associations will invariably be made even if only tacitly.

Music heightens our awareness of feeling and enhances our capacity to feel, but it is more than just feeling that music embodies, and it is more than just 'insights' into the nature of feeling that the experience of music makes available. The same is of course true of all art.

Janet Wolff submits that "it is not possible to separate any 'pure aesthetics' from a sociological understanding of the arts."[1] Her assertion is unquestionably true with regard to the traditional musics of the world; but so also is it true of so-called 'absolute music' as many contemporary

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[1] Janet Wolff, Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), p. 12.

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sociologists of music are convincingly demonstrating. Her call for a "sociological aesthetics" has relevance for music education as it clearly does for musicology and music criticism. The premise on which she bases her arguments is one which serves well as an important tenet of polyaesthetic music education, that is,

> ... that the experience and evaluation of art are socially and ideologically situated and constructed, and at the same time irreducible to the social or the ideological.[1]

Wolff's premise makes us aware that with art there is always a dialectical tension between 'form' and 'content'. Form, many will argue, is the distinguishing factor in determining what is or isn't art. Be that as it may, there is invariably something which art (being a human, creative act) gives form to, even though that something (i.e. content) is not always clearly discernible.

As there is a dialectic between form and content, so also is there a dialectic between what is universal and what is socially relative in art. If one focusses solely on the universal aspects, then one is likely to overlook the many different meanings and functions art has in the lives of different people, meanings and functions that reveal new and exciting ways of getting the most out of art. Conversely, if one is concerned only with the socially relative aspects, one may lose sight of art's capacity to take

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[1]Wolff, _Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art_, p. 84.

us "below the surface differences and divisions of daily life to a point where the common humanity of people can be glimpsed and felt."[1] Art education that emphasizes both the pansocial and the socially relative in art affords "the vision and the comprehension of humanity, both in its extraordinary variety of expression and its fundamental sameness."[2]

With regard to the second argument against a polyaesthetic approach to music education mentioned on page 8 (i.e. that it is an ineffectual compromise - an attempt to find a safe neutrality),there may be a temptation to construe it as having a Marxist origin and intent, yet it is a criticism that could be levelled by anyone with a commitment to aesthetic monism and/or to the achievement of narrowly defined educational goals. Doctrinaire Marxists make little allowance for any form of aesthetic eclecticism, especially where accomodation is made for the Formalist notion of intrinsic (ideologically neutral) significance in works of art. On the other side of the coin are the ardent Formalists who, while acknowledging that art has social meanings and that sociological analyses reveal some inter-

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[1]Reimer, <u>A Philosophy of Music Education</u>, p. 50.

[2]Robert Redfield, "Art and Icon," in <u>Anthropology and Art: Readings in Cross-Cultural Aesthetics</u>, ed. Charlotte M. Otten (Garden City, N.Y.: Natural History Press, 1971), cited by Karen A Hamblen, "The Universal-Relative Dialectic in an International Perspective on Art," <u>The Journal of Aesthetic Education</u> 18 (Summer 1984): 102.

esting facts about art, nevertheless deny that these facts have any real bearing on the question of art's value. Neither extreme takes into consideration theological or cosmological precepts which for many of the world's cultures are integral to the art experience.

Aesthetic monism, in any form, is insufficiently comprehensive as a philosophical foundation for the teaching of music. In broadest terms, the purpose of music education is to optimize music's potential for being a formative influence in people's lives. Polyaesthetic music education, it is submitted, is comprehensive music education. By attending to both the universal and the relative in music, it enlarges the scope and significance of musical experience. By integrating a range of educational aims, it more fully engages the student as a totality - as self in relation to self, in relation to other selves, in relation to the world, and in relation to ultimate being.

Polyaesthetic music education is also the necessary response to the multicultural imperative that in varying degrees affects most nations, intensely so in the case of South Africa. It is heartening to note the growing support for 'multicultural music education' as evidenced by the increasing frequency with which it forms a key topic for forums such as the International Society for Music Education and the Council for Research in Music Education. It must be pointed out, however, that the fact that music curricula incorporate the musics of different cultures does not nec-

essarily mean that music is being taught polyaesthetically. Though not feasible, it is quite possible to deal with different musics without regard to their respective aesthetics. Polyaesthetic music education is as much concerned with music as a behaviour that characterizes a way of seeing the world and responding to it, as it is with music as a cultural artifact.

Making polyaesthetic music education a reality is no easy task. More than anything, it requires music educators who have an extensive and varied musical background and who have comprehensively, critically, and imaginatively explored and assimilated different conceptions of music's nature and value. There is then the formidable task of interpreting these conceptions into viable educational praxes.

The following four chapters examine respectively the four generalized aesthetics of music denoted in Figure 1, they being: (i) music as autonomous aesthetic object; (ii) music as social commentary; (iii) music as social mediator; and (iv) music as link to ultimate reality. Each of these has been so broadly formulated as to preclude the possibility of an exhaustive accounting within a single chapter. The intent, therefore, is to examine basic assumptions as they have been articulated by different theorists and/or as they are manifested in the music making activities of different cultures. Most important are those assumptions that have discernible implications for music education.

2. MUSIC AS AUTONOMOUS AESTHETIC OBJECT

The conception of music denoted in the above heading is essentially Western, having evolved in Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. Its underlying assumptions about the nature and value of music are summed up by the constituent terms: 'autonomous', 'aesthetic', and 'object'.

2.1. The idea of music as being autonomous

The primary assumption here is that in the experiencing of music it is not necessary to attend to anything but the sounds themselves. Music can be apprehended purely as patterned sound, meaningful in terms of its formal qualities only. As such, it can be regarded as self-contained and self-sufficient.

2.2. The idea of music as being aesthetic

The term 'aesthetic', in its adjectival form, has been defined as "belonging to the appreciation of the beautiful".[1] From this it follows, that to denote music as being aesthetic is to suggest that the experiencing of music is primarily a means of experiencing beauty, and that music's aesthetic value is to be determined by the extent to which it is beautiful.

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[1] The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 6th ed., s.v. "aesthetic."

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As a reference to the significance of art (including music), the term 'beauty' is too narrow and subjective. In view of this, various theorists have attempted to arrive at a more inclusive and objective definition for 'aesthetic' and have come up with an array of expressions as substitues for 'beauty', e.g. 'pleasure objectified', 'vital import', 'intuited quality', and 'significant form'.[1]

Notwithstanding the diverse emphases that characterize writings in the field of Aesthetics, there is general agreement that, in reference to art, the meaning of 'aesthetic' should be restricted to a significance or quality that is essentially ineffable and which is devoid of specific referential or contextual meaning, a type of nondiscursive, apractical import that gives a work of art universal accessibility, i.e., that makes it possible to value art without any knowledge of its sociocultural (or ideological) antecedents. To regard music as being aesthetic, therefore, is to focus attention on the sense of significance that music evokes which is exclusively attributable to its formal qualities.

2.3. The idea of music as being an object

The intent here is to bring attention to a propensity in thinking about the nature of music that is characteristically Western and which for long has influenced Western ap-

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[1] see _Britanica Macropedia_, rev. ed. (19   ), s.v. "Aesthetics".

proaches to music education, that being, the inclination to conceive of music as a mind-independent 'thing' - a 'noumenon' (thing-in-itself) as opposed to a 'phenomenon' (construct of mind). Christopher Small alludes to this inclination when he states as one of the assumptions to reject when experiencing non-Western musics,

> ... the idea of a musical composition as having an abstract existence apart from the performer and the performance, to which the performer aspires to present as close an approximation as he can, ...[1]

The objectification of music, that is, its detachment from anything extramusical, is deemed necessary if it is to be experienced 'aesthetically'. Hutchinson explains that

> As formulated by Western theory, music is normally - and in a real sense optimally - free of defined associations and "non-musical" functions. The Western conceptual separation of music from the immediate experiences and responses of daily life is well characterized by the Western aesthetic concept of "psychical distance," a concept ... in general descriptive of that passive, non-overt and internalized response exhibited (and demanded) in Western concert contexts. "Distance," in this prevailing Western aesthetic, has become associated with what is and is not art; sufficiently decreased "distance" - to the point of overt response and personal identification ... means non-art. Put in psychological terms, all art ... requires a psychological distance limit which marks that point beyond which aesthetic response occurs.[2]

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[1] Christopher Small, Music · Society · Education, (London: John Calder, 1980), p. 36.

[2] William Hutchinson, "Psychology and World Music." The World of Music 18 (January 1976): 5.

2.4. Disinterestedness and the aesthetic attitude

In Western aesthetic theory, the concept of 'psychical distance' has various correlatives, the most long-standing being 'disinterestedness.' Kant, in his Critique of Judgement (1790), referred to the latter as the distinguishing characteristic of 'taste' - "the faculty of estimating an object or mode of representation by means of a delight or aversion apart from any interest".[1] Disinterestednes, according to Kant, is necessary if judgements of taste (i.e., aesthetic judgements) are to be objective and universal.[2]

The concept psychical distance also has a correlative in the phenomenological term 'bracketing.'[3] Each is descriptive of a mental approach to the apprehension of objects whereby the mind is temporarily divested of any preconceptions (e.g., notions of value, function, purpose, cause and effect, etc.) - where the object is allowed to reveal itself as it is. With regard to the experiencing of art objects, this mental approach has been termed the 'aesthetic attitude.' Its essential ingredient is intuition, i.e., "immediate apprehension by the mind without reasoning."[4]

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[1] Immanuel Kant, The Critique of Judgement (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952 - original German edition, 1790), quoted in Wolf, Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art, p. 73.

[2] Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Aesthetics". Kant regarded universality as a necessity not only for judgements of taste, but also to save morality from nihilism, and to ensure the stability of scientific knowledge in the face of skepticism.

[3] A Dictionary of Philosophy, 1984 ed., s.v. "phenomenology".

[4] The Concise Oxford Dictionary, s.v. "intuition".

According to the Italian aesthetician Benedetto Croce, for
an aesthetic experience to be pure, it must be completely
drained of concepts - "concepts produce science," while the
"intuition of immediate qualitative expression produces
art."[1]

2.5. Absolute Formalism and Absolute Expressionism

The conception of music as autonomous aesthetic object is
in keeping with an aesthetic of art conventionally called
'Formalism,' a seemingly apt term given its preoccupation
with form and its inattention to content. However, to down-
play the importance of content (i.e., referential meaning)
in art does not necessarily make one a Formalist. In view
of the somewhat pejorative connotation the term has
acquired, it is necessary to recognize Formalism as an ex-
treme position in the theory of art.

In his A Philosophy of Music Education, Bennett Reimer sub-
sumes Formalism under the more comprehensive aesthetic of
'Absolutism.' There it becomes 'Absolute Formalism and is
distinguished from 'Absolute Expression,' the aesthetic to
which Reimer allies himself. Both share the view that "the
meaning and value of art are to be found in the aesthetic
qualities of art works" and not in the world outside.[2]

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[1]Benedetto Croce, Aesthetic as Science of Expression and
General Linguistic, 2nd ed., translated by Douglas Ainslie (London:
Macmillan , 1922), quoted in Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Aesthetics".

[2]Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 24.

Reimer portrays the Absolute Formalist approach to art as
for the most part intellectual, stating that it "was and is
primarily a reaction against the excesses of a romanticism
which indulges in fanciful, emotionalized interpretations
of art works."[1] His main bone of contention with Formalism
is that it fails to recognize any relation between art and
life. To more cogently characterize the Formalist position
he quotes Clive Bell.

> ... he who contemplates a work of art, inhabit(s) a
> world with an intense and peculiar significance of its
> own; that significance is unrelated to the significance
> of life. In this world the emotions of life find no
> place. It is a world with emotions of its own.[2]

Reimer also criticizes Formalism as being elitist and
esoteric. In music education this attitude is reflected in
the "policy of teaching the talented and entertaining the
remaining masses."[3]

With regard to Absolute Expressionism, Reimer points out
that while it "cannot accept non-artistic meaning as
central to art, it also cannot accept the formalist notion
of the intelllectual, removed-from-life nature of aesthetic
experience." The distinction between the two aesthetics
lies primarily with their respective conceptions of artis-

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[1] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 29.

[2] Ibid., p. 21, quoting Clive Bell, Art, (New York: G.P.
Putnam's Sons, 1914).

[3] Ibid., p. 23.

tic meaning. Formalists contend that art "means itself,"[1] a contention that is as enigmatic as the slogan 'art for art's sake.' If we are to agree with Cohen, a stimulus acquires meaning only "if it is connected with, or indicates, or refers to, something beyond itself, so that its full nature points to and is revealed in that connection."[2] Accordingly, all meaning is necessarily referential. With regard to music, Meyer provides an explanation for what he calls "embodied meaning." which he distinguishes from "designative meaning."

> ... music may be meaningful in the sense that within the context of a particular musical style one tone or group of tones indicates - leads the practiced listener to expect - that another tone or group of tones will be forthcoming at some more or less specified point in the musical continuum.[3]

Meyer's explanation, based on information theory, may explain how it is that inert sounds 'come alive' in the experiencing of music (not all music however), but it does not provide an answer to the question 'what does music mean?'

The Formalist may well argue that the question of meaning should be put aside entirely if the experiencing of art is to be genuinely aesthetic. Aesthetic experience, it may be

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[1] Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Music, Art of".

[2] Morris R. Cohen, A Preface to Logic (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1944), quoted by Leonard B. Meyer, Music, The Arts and Ideas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 6.

[3] Meyer, Music, The Arts and Ideas, pp. 6-7.

asserted, is but a distinctive sort of pleasure. This was a view held by Kant, later to be systematized as an aesthetic theory by George Santayana.[1] For Kant, aesthetic pleasure is superior to such common pleasures as "sensuous enjoyment" and "carnal indulgence" in that it arises out of the "harmonious interplay between two whole faculties of mind" - "Imagination" and "Understanding."[2] It is not that art means or expresses anything, but that as patterns beautiful in and for themselves, it engages the mind in a special, eminently worthwhile way.

While agreeing with the Formalist that the aesthetic in art is exclusively a product of its formal qualities, the Expressionist believes that form becomes genuinely significant only when it affirms something about the nature of lived experience.[3] This position may be summarized as follows.

> ... the aesthetic components in a work of art are similar in quality to the quality inherent in all human experience. When one shares the qualities contained in an art work's aesthetic content, one is also sharing in the qualities of which all human experience is made. The relation between the qualities of the art work and the qualities of human experience is felt by the perceiver of the work as "significance." 4

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[1] See George Santayana, The Sense of Beauty (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896).

[2] Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Aesthetics".

[3] The term 'Expressionism' is taken from a style of painting influenced by El Greco, Gaugin, and Van Gogh, which through the distortion of form and/or emphasis of colour, aims to depict emotions and responses that objects and events arouse in the artist. The term has also been used in connection with music of certain 20th century composers, e.g., Schoenberg.

[4] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 24-5.

From an Expressionist point of view, 'patterns' may well be beautiful 'in themselves', but cerainly not 'for themselves.' They are to be apprehended not for their own sake, but for what they reveal about the human condition, in particular, its subjective dimension.[1] As such, there is a referent and, as such, there is meaning (as indeed there must be if art is to be spoken of as 'expression'); but it is not meaning in the normal sense, where the referent is a clearly defined, concrete entity, i.e., where it is verbally objectifiable.

That art conveys nondiscursive meanings is taken by the Expressionist to be its raison d'etre and primary value. As John Dewey put it:

> If all meanings could be adequately expressed by words, the arts of painting and music would not exist. There are values and meanings that can be expressed only by immediately visible and audible qualities, and to ask what they mean in the sense of something that can be put into words is to deny their distinctive existence.[2]

The word 'immediately' is emphasized to reassert the primacy of intuition in aesthetic experience. According to Expressionists, the art symbol is unlike the word symbol in that it 'embodies' rather than 'designates'; it provides an "experience of" rather than "information about."[3] If one is to speak of knowledge as the end product, it must be quali-

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[1] what may variously be called: the inner life, feelingfulness, sentience, the emotive life, the realm of effect, etc.

[2] John Dewey, Art as Experience (New York: Capricorn Books, 1958), p. 74. (own emphasis)

[3] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 38.

fied as being intuitive, not conceptual.[1]

In attempting to identify what the referent is in artistic meaning, certain theorists have employed the concept 'dynamism,' taking as their epistemological starting point the assumption that "mental life consists of continual conative effort directed toward satisfaction in a goal which carries within itself a new want demanding further conative effort toward ... (etc.)."[2]   Langer was one such theorist, although her contention that art becomes expressive by replicating the dynamism of subjective experience has clear antecedents in the writings of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. It is a contention that affords prominence to (instrumental) music which, because it is the only art that is not "spatialized," presents fewer impediments to immediate apprehension.[3]   Langer speaks of music as a "tonal analogue of emotive life,"[4] a means of rendering the forms of sentience into aurally intelligible configurations.

> The tonal structures we call "music" bear a close logical similarity to the forms of human feeling - forms of growth and of attenuation, flowing and stowing, conflict and resolution, speed, arrest, terrific excitement, calm, or subtle activation and dreamy lapses - not joy and sorrow perhaps, but the poignancy of either and both - the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt. Such is the pattern, or logical form, of sentience; and the pattern of music is that same form worked out in pure, measured sound and silence.[5]

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[1]Croce claims to have "freed intuitive knowledge from any suggestion of intellectualism." Aesthetic as Science, p. 5.

[2]Osborne, "Essay Review," p. 83.

[3]For this reason, Schopenhauer looked upon music as a "copy of the will itself." contending that whereas the other arts "speak only of shadows," music "speaks of the thing itself." Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Music, Art of."

[4]Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 27.

Some of the weaknesses of the 'tonal analogue' supposition have already been articulated in Chaper 1 (pp. 11-12). Briefly, they may be summarized as follows:

  (i) It has little relevance to the aesthetic concerns of most musical cultures;

 (ii) Periodicity of tension-relaxation patterns is not a marked feature of many of the world's musics;

(iii) That feeling has a 'logical form' (such that it can be replicated in the patterns of music) is a questionable assumption;

 (iv) Subjective and objective reality are inextricably linked; as such, it is arguably untenable to treat feeling as a faculty that can be detached from the totality of mental life.

Langer's is but one of several aesthetic theories founded on the premise that the significance of art lies in its capacity to be expressive of relative constants of mental functioning. Particular emphasis has been given to her theory because of the extent to which it has influenced the philosophy of music education.[1] Notwithstanding the contestability of some of its assumptions, it is a theory that creates a strong case for the role of art in education.

2.6. The education of intuition

The primary value of art, according to Expressionist aestheticians like Langer, is that it objectifies what is es-

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[1] We may note the widespread impact of Reimer's A Philosophy of Music Education, a book that draws heavily on the writings of Langer.

sentially subjective and ineffable. Although the explanations they give for how this happens are contestable, it has to be acknowledged that art works do evoke a sense of significance that is profound, yet incredibly resistant to precise explication; one senses that something eminently worthwhile has been grasped, although it is unclear what that something is. Some may argue that this sense of significance is nothing more than titillation of the senses, mood enhancement, or emotional catharsis; but those who have established an intimate relationship with art recognize it as something much more. In Langer's words:

> A work of art ... may truly be said to "do something to us," though not in the usual sense which aestheticians rightly deny - giving us emotions and moods. What it does to us is to formulate our conceptions of feeling and our conceptions of visual, factual, and audible reality together. It gives us <u>forms of imagination</u> and <u>forms of feeling</u>, inseparably; that is to say, it clarifies and organizes intuition itself. That is why it has the force of a revelation, and inspires a feeling of deep intellectual satisfaction, though it elicits no conscious intellectual work (reasoning).[1]

"Life," as she points out, "is incoherent unless we give it form."[2] Art is a means to that end, as of course are language and other symbol systems. It is the 'feelingfulness' of life that art gives perceptible form to, and of all the symbol systems that man has created, art is indeed the most effective for this purpose. But it is not just that art gives coherence to the feelingfulness of life; it

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[1] Langer, <u>Feeling and Form</u>, p. 397.

[2] Ibid, p. 400.

actually conditions the way in which we perceive and re-spond to the world as a whole. "Life as we see, act, and feel it is as much a product of the art we have known as of the language (or languages) which shaped our thought in in-fancy;"[1] the reason being is that intuition (which art clarifies and organizes) is the sine qua non of reason, im-agination, creativity, and all other mental traits.

Another way of putting it is that "art modifies the tacit schemata which mediate subsequent experience."[2] This sup-position takes as its theoretical framework the epistemol-ogy of Michael Polanyi, which postulates that:

  (i) "all knowledge of must rest upon knowledge from an interpretive framework that is its defining ground;"

 (ii) "what we know from, we know tacitly;" and

(iii) "tacit, feelingful, intuitive knowing undergirds and gives meaning to all that we know explicitly."[3]

Langer's assertion that art clarifies and organizes intui-tion, together with the premise that intuitive knowing plays an essential role in all perceptual and conceptual activity, create a convincing argument for increasing at-tention to art in education. What Bowman says of the form-ative effect of art is noteworthy.

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[1] Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 399.

[2] Wayne D. Bowman, "Polanyi and Instructional Method in Music," Journal of Aesthetic Education 16 (January 1982): 80.

[3] Ibid, p. 76 & p. 80.

> As one attends to the art object, its powerful image serves to embody the diffuse constellation of tacitly held particulars from which he attends, conferring upon them a unity they do not possess of themselves. It provides a focus for the myriad emotions, ideas, sensations, and impulses which constitute our being, such that through it they are "refashioned and amplified into something new." One's self is existentially transformed. One's tacit interpretive schemata, the lenses through which he defines his world, are dramatically realigned. Such realignment amounts to nothing less than the attainment of new realities, new perspectives from which to view the world.[1]

Polanyi's theory of tacit knowing confers high value on art education by giving art cognitive status. This it does by dissolving the barrier that Western positivistic thinking has created between objectivity and subjectivity, and by bringing to realization the fact that intellection "ultimately depends on intuitive feelings of fit or coherence."[2] Moreover, it is a theory that avails itself to the extrapolation of valid instructional principles for art education as aesthetic education. Suffice to mention here the principle that art education should first and foremost "enhance the intuitive," a tenet which suggests that thinking _in_ art should take precedence over thinking _about_ it.[3] It is a tenet which takes as fundamental the assumption that the essence of art is the ineffable sense of feelingfulness which emerges neither through a detached process of analysis nor by attendance to referential or contextual meanings, but through the immediate, intuitive apprehension of formal qualities.

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[1] Bowman, "Polanyi and Music Instruction," p. 79, quoting from Michael Polanyi, _Personal Knowledge_ (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

[2] Ibid, p. 78.

[3] Ibid, p. 83.

3. MUSIC AS SOCIAL COMMENTARY

Music is a social phenomenon. It is more than often the creation of individuals, but those individuals who create music do so as beings who are historically and socially situated. This is as true for composers of so-called 'absolute music' as it is for those who compose protest songs. All music has social meanings, therefore, even though they may be covert, unintentional, or ambiguous.

Absolutist (be they Formalists or Expressionists) pay short shrift to music's social meanings as was made evident in the preceeding discussion. Attendance to anything extramusical is regarded as an impediment to the 'aesthetic' experiencing of music, which, it has been asserted, is an intuitive act requiring a 'disinterested' attitude. The Absolutist may well argue that if one is interested in understanding the social situations that generate different musics, one should rather utilize other, less ambiguous media. This is an argument which, as was pointed out in Chapter 1, appears to lend credibility to an exclusively Absolutist approach to music education.

The intent of the ensuing discussion is to demonstrate that attention to music's social meanings is essential if music's educational potential is to be fully exploited. To this end it is necessary to establish that both the socio-

logical and Absolutist approaches can coexist and be integrated in music education. Coexistence, it is submittted, is vital, for without the moderating influence of the other, each is susceptible to misuse in the pursuance (whether intentional or not) of ideological interests.

The perceived ideological complicity of Absolutism with Capitalism and of the Sociology of Art with Marxism has been often expressed, especially with regard to drama and the literary arts. In the author's view, this pairing-off is an unfortunate simplification. While it is probable that as socioeconomic systems, Capitalism and Marxism are irreconcilable, it is untenable to assume that a correlative schism need exist between their attendant aesthetics. It is significant that many Marxist aestheticians, (e.g., Adorno, Lukàcs, Althusser, and Marcuse) do acknowledge the relative autonomy of artistic modes of representation, even though they strongly assert the social and ideological construction of art and would regard any attempt to make light of art's social meanings as bourgeois deception. Herbert Marcuse, an opponent of doctrinaire Marxism, recognizes that

> By virtue of its tranhistorical, universal truths, art
> appeals to a consciousness which is not only that of a
> particular class, but that of human beings as 'species
> beings,' developing all their life-enhancing faculties.[1]

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[1] Herbert Marcuse, The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978), p. 29.

3.1. Music as social commentary ... why?

In broadest terms, it can be said that the ultimate value of developing social awareness, by whatever means, is 'morality.' In the course of history there have been several luminaries who in various ways have emphasized the moral value of art. Plato was one; his belief in the effect of the arts on character development was strong to the extent that he advocated strict censorship over the artistic materials used in education. For Plato, however, the character building effect of art has nothing to do with the development of social awareness, but is a product of art's formal qualities.[1] Tolstoy took a similar line by asserting that art is capable of transmitting specific, verbally identifiable emotions which in the case of 'bad' art are pernicious in their effects and which in the case of 'good' art are those conducive to Christian brotherhood.[2]

According to a sociological perspective, art can encourage morality by illuminating what is progressive and regressive in society as an inducement to appropriate social action. But the question again arises as to whether this didactic function need have a place in arts education when there are other, more explicit means of examining the social macrocosm. In connection with music education, this question acquires increased pertinence, for of all the

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[1] In music, for example, Plato alleged that certain 'modes,' rhythms, and instruments cumulatively affect character in specified ways.
[2] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 16.

arts, music (especially non-vocal, non-programmatic music) is the least explicit. It is for this reason that Kant ranked it as lowest in cultural value; and even though Hegel acknowledged "the peculiar power of music to express many nuances of the emotions," he, like Kant, "preferred vocal music to instrumental, deprecating wordless music as subjective and indefinite."[1]

The most articulate though often contestable arguments for a sociological approach to art are to be found in the writings of Marxist aestheticians. With varying degrees of conformity, they take as their theoretical framework Marx's 'historical materialism,' a doctrine that posits various laws thought to govern the evolution of society and human consciousness. Marx contended that social developments, including the emergence of new ways of thinking, are economically determined. From a Marxist perspective, then, it was not in any way fortuitous that the aesthetic of 'art for art's sake' gained prominence concurrently with the rise of advanced capitalism in 18th and 19th century Europe. As personal patronage was superseded by a free market, art became a commodity and, in so doing, lost much of the functional significance it had in feudal times. Supičič points out that music

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[1]Britanica Macropedia, s.v. "Music, Art of."

... became an increasingly autonomous activity, not necessarily connected with any external circumstances or extramusical purposes, performed mainly in concert form. This increased independence of music at a <u>social</u> level was matched by corresponding theories at the <u>aesthetic</u> level; these claimed full autonomy for music, not only from the extramusical content that it was supposed to 'transpose' into its own language, but also from other arts.[1]

The disconcerting consequences of art becoming a commodity, of 'commoditization' in general, and of the dangers inherent in an aesthetic that distances art from social concerns have been discussed at length by Marxist aestheticians and sociologists. Some of the more salient points they have raised are discussed below.

3.1.1. Reification

Reification is an elusive yet highly pertinent concept in Marxist discourse. To reify, according to the dictionary, means "to consider or make (an abstract idea or concept) real or concrete."[2] This definition ostensibly makes reification a synonym of 'objectification.' The latter term denotes a process whereby thought is clarified and made capable of being communicated in some tangible form. With reification, on the other hand, thought is given a concrete form, but in such a way that it acquires an 'unreal' character by being detached from its human context. This is what happens when a product of thought, e.g., art, becomes a commodity, i.e., a marketable 'thing.'[3]

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[1] Ivo Supičić, "Expression and Meaning in Music," <u>International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music</u> 2 (Dec. 1971): 197.

[2] <u>Collins English Dictionary</u>, s.v. "reify".

[3] The root of 'reify' is the Greek <u>res</u> meaning 'thing'; to reify is to 'thingify' therefore.

'Commodity fetishim' is what Marxism correctly identifies as the inevitable and most debilitating consequence of capitalism, a system in which product and process are almost immediately divorced from one another. The product becomes a fetish in so far as it is deemed to possess inherent value apart from its specifically human value. With commoditization, saleability becomes the primary criterion for determining value.

It is obvious that people do not buy music as a capital investment (even though they often do so with the plastic arts). But what they do buy and the criteria they use in making their selections are largely determined for them by an industry whose only concern is music's commercial value. Moreover, as music becomes reified so also does it become rarefied. Small laments that

> ... notwithstanding the enormous changes that have occured in Western music in this century, and despite the visions of a new society that these changes evoke, there has been no fundamental alteration in its attitudes and assumptions, any more than there has been in the societies that gave it birth. Art remains a commodity whose production remains in the hands of experts, which we purchase when we feel the need of it, and in whose making we have no more hand than we have in the manufacture of our breakfast cereal.[1]

The effects of the reification of music in modern industrial society are many and varied. Suffice to say here that for an ever increasing majority music is experienced, at best, as little more than a momentary catharsis and all too often as nothing more than an unobtrusive enhancement of the aural environment - a background for nonmusical activi-

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[1] Small, <u>Music. Society. Education</u>, p. 166.

ty (e.g., shopping, eating, having one's teeth drilled).
Both reflect attitudes toward music on which the music in-
dustry thrives and consequently attitudes that are in its
interests to promote. Both are what Adorno would identify as
symptoms of a "neutralized consciousness,"[1] which, accord-
ing to Ballantine,

> ... is not simply a consiousness neutralized in relation to music;
> it is above all the false and ideological consciousness which ari-
> ses out of and is actively propagated by the dominant class inter-
> ests of advanced capitalist society.[2]

It is not, however, only in "advanced capitalist society"
that the reification of music is evident. Small remarks
that

> ... Soviet culture is as committed as the most capitalist society
> to the art object in preference to the art process, as can be seen
> not only from the astonishing stone-for-stone rebuilding of impe-
> rial Leningrad after its destruction in the second world war, but
> even more clearly in the status of music in the Soviet Union. In
> the first place, its concert life, with its orchestras, opera and
> ballet companies, famous conductors and soloists ... is virtually
> indistinguishable from that of the west.[3]

Wherever it occurs, reification increasingly threatens to
render the experience of music impotent. Ultimately, the
only way in which its potency can be regained is by restor-
ing "the power of (musical) creation to each individual."[4]
The implications of this axiom for music education are
clear, namely, that there needs to be a realignment of em-
phasis from the musical product to the musical process.

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[1] Theodor W. Adorno, "Theses on the Sociology of Art," in
Working Papers in Cultural Studies 2 (Spring 1972), cited in Christo-
pher Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings (Johannesburg: Raven
Press, 1984), p. xvii.

[2] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. xvii.

[3] Small, Music Society Education, p. 165.

[4] Ibid, p. 166.

With music and art there is always a propensity to regard our own points of view as unquestionably valid. Moreover, as Ballantine points out, "The orientations we are most used to, and that therefore seem to us perfectly natural and 'obvious,' are invariably the ones we are least conscious of ..."[1] Thus, while we accept that different eras and different cultures produce different musics, we tend to overlook the socially and historically contingent nature of their attendant aesthetics. Small, Chernoff,[2] and others have demonstrated how Western aesthetic assumptions are inappropriate in the experiencing of non-Western musics. But it is also necessary to recognize their limitations with regard to Western musics including so-called 'art music.' It is here that the need for sociological perspective is clearly evidenced.

Absolutist aestheticians present a strong case for what they term the 'aesthetic experience' which, in its own way, allows one to transcend the anaesthetizing and 'ideologizing' effects of reified art. It must be acknowledged, however, that true aesthetes constitute a small minority in modern society, despite the efforts of arts educators. The majority remain at the mercy of a culture industry for which the edifying value of art is of no consequence whatsoever. For the masses the art experience is neither one of aesthetic transport nor of profound social insight, but one of light entertainment.

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[1] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 4.

[2] See John Miller Chernoff, African Rhythm and African Sensibil-

3.1.2. Alienation

More disturbing than reification's emasculative effect on the art experience are its broader psychosocial repercussions. Of these the most socially counteractive is 'alienation' - again a term often used by Marxist writers in emphasizing the pitfalls of the capitalist system. One such writer remarks that

> In a world governed by commodity production, the product controls the producer, and objects are more power-than men. Objects become the strange thing that casts long shadows, they become 'destiny' and the daemon ex machina.[1]

The individual living in the midst of such a world is progressively alienated from it and from himself. Consciousness itself becomes reified and loses autonomy. It becomes but an object among objects.

> Man, having been alienated from himself, becomes conscious of himself as a fetish, a mask, a bogey. The 'fetish-like character of the commodity' of which Marx spoke has transferred itself to man and has completely taken possession of him.[2]

Alienation manifests itself in an array of psychosocial conditions (e.g., desensitization, moral insensibility, apathy, distrust, etc.) all of which appear to be becoming more and more rampant in most capitalist countries. We may take as probable indicators, inter alia, the growing crime and suicide rates, the dwindling turn out of voters at election times, and the increasing pursuance of faddish be-

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[1] Ernst Fischer, The Necessity of Art: A Marxist Approach, trans. Anna Bostock (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1963) p. 82.

[2] Ibid, p. 90.

haviour. Whether alienation is uniquely a capitalist aberration and whether a socialist revolution is the only viable remedy are questions open to debate. Be that as it may, alienation is a cancer that the commoditization, reification, and 'rarefication' of art nourish. This is indeed unfortunate in that art can and should have just the opposite effect.

3.1.3. Fragmentation

Fragmentation is another, related condition of modern, industrial society which art can either abet or help to counteract. Through increased specialization and mechanization, man's field of vision has narrowed considerably, despite the extent to which the mass media have shrunk the world and made information infinitely more accessible. More and more people find themselves caught up in jobs that are only tiny components of much bigger processes neither the meaning nor functioning of which they are in a position to comprehend. Human activity is no longer regarded "as something which belongs to a greater whole, which extends both spatially and in time and which thus embraces the totality of our social, physical, economic, historical, and cultural world."[1] It is in this respect that we can perceive the primary shortcoming of the Absolutist aesthetic. Where the social dimension and social meanings of art are shrugged off as irrelevant, little if any contribution is made toward reconstituting that dynamic and necessary totality

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[1] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 21.

of life which has become fragmented in industrial society.

3.1.4. Ideological complicity

The Absolutist notion that art is to be experienced solely for its intrinsic meaningfulness is anathema to the orthodox Marxist for whom subjective responses have little value if they are not consciously linked to objective conditions (in particular those relating to the class struggle). To regard art as autonomous is to regard it as socially and politically neutral, and this, it is contended, reflects either an inability or a refusal to recognize one's own perspectives and interests. Allegedly "any cultural activity which claims to be neutral and which fails to engage critically with its subject matter, ultimately serves the values of the status quo;"[1] moreover, it is only the dominant class, because of its privileged conditions of existence, that can support an aesthetic which distances art from practical urgencies; in the ideological transformation of the masses, form must always be subordinate to content, even though it is "form" that "raises content to objectivity in art."[2]

Again it must be emphasized that orthodox Marxism is more the exception than the rule in the writings of reputed 'Marxian' aestheticians, most of whom would be (or are) re-

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[1] Richard Salmon, "Towards a Committed Musicology" (Masters Thesis, University of Natal (Durban), 1982), p. 52.

[2] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 24, referring to a statement made by Georg Lukács.

garded as 'revisionists' by their more doctrinaire col-
leagues. It is certainly naive and counterproductive to to-
tally reject a theory purely because of its perceived par-
tisanship, e.g., to summarily dismiss all Absolutist tenets
as bourgeois mystification. Nevertheless, it cannot be de-
nied that the artificial detachment of art form its social
context 'does serve ideological interests.[1]

Because of the advanced technical means for producing, re-
producing, and marketing art, which make it more immediate-
ly and widely accessible, the relationship between the con-
temporary artist and his audience has fundamentally changed
and cannot be understood apart from the forces of produc-
tion upon which he depends. It doesn't require exceptional
critical awareness to recognize that these forces (collec-
tively termed the 'culture industry') are often controlled
and manipulated so as to promulgate ideology (the South
African Broadcasting Corporation is by no means subtle in
this regard). Given the culture industry's stranglehold on
artistic production, it is evident that any aesthetic which
downplays or obscures social connections plays straight
into the hands of the ideologues despite whatever claims
to ideological neutrality its proponents may make. Again
the need for sociological perspective in our dealings with
art (especially in education where it can make a real dif-

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[1] ideological in the philosophical sense of "a set of ideas that
is false, misleading, or held for the wrong reasons but is believed
with such conviction as to be irrefutable." Colins English Dictionary,
s.v. "ideology".

ference) is clearly indicated. It is essential if art is to more fully assist industrial man to regain the totality of himself - that sense of psychosocial 'wholeness' which ideology subverts.

3.2. Committed music education?

Having discussed some of the social 'ills' symptomatic of industrialized society and the either curative or sustaining effect that the experience of art may yield, it is pertinent to reconsider a question raised earlier, that being, whether the socially didactic function of art need have a place in arts education when there are other more explicit means of examining the social macrocosm. In view of what has been said, it is submitted that the answer must be an unqualified 'yes.' While discourse is admittedly more straightforward than the subjective utterances of artists, art's 'message,' when it ultimately is discerned, is generally more vivid, profound, and enduring.

The adoption of sociological perspective does not mean, however, that arts education needs to be in any way 'deaestheticized.' Form is paramount if something is to qualify as art, even if one feels that it must ultimately be subordinated to content. Overcoming the "contradiction of appearance and reality ... in art is the achievement of form. Form ... raises content to objectivity ..."[1] More-

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[1]Ballantine, _Music and Its Social Meanings_, p. 24, paraphrasing Georg Lukács.

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over, the content of art, except where explicitly communi-
cated (as in prosaic literature and realist painting), re-
quires an understanding of and sensitivity to art's formal
characteristics if it is to be adequately grasped.

In setting down attendance to contextual meanings as crucial
in the experiencing of art, Ballantine acknowledges Lukács,
Adorno, and other Marxian writers for having "brought into
being a mode of discourse that posits the notion of a
dynamic, dialectical whole." This, Ballantine submits,
"meets the first prerequisite of making explict once again
that unity between art and society that was so fundamental
to all artistic activity before the bourgeois era."[1] He
further submits (with regard to music in this instance)
that

> Only within the perspective of such a method shall
> we begin to be fully conscious of ... the choices,
> evaluations, and discriminations that we make about mu-
> sic, and objectively of why we make them; only then can
> we intevene in these choices, and where necessary res-
> cue them from ideology.[2]

Sociological analyses of music are generally prompted by
extramusical interests, as well they should be. Music does
not exist for its own sake, but for the sake of people -
not only to entertain them, but hopefully to make them
better people; and one way in which people can become bet-

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[1] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 27.
[2] Ibid.

ter is to become more socially aware and committed. In his own case, Ballantine makes no apologies for his extramusical concerns and openly acknowledges the target of his 'musical' discussions to ultimately be "the ideology through whose sway the present order reproduces itself."[1] His approach is clearly Marxian (though by no means doctrinaire) and hence interprets the root causes of social problems in accordance with Marxist precepts. Those who do not embrace Marxism are likely to employ different categories of description; but problems are problems, and where forces inimical to people's psychosocial welfare run rampant, they become everyone's concern and must be exposed and counteracted by whatever means possible.

It is sadly ironic that music is subsumed under the rubric 'the humanities' and yet is so often conceived of and presented as being somehow remote from the pressing concerns of humanity. That a sociological perspective has yet to figure prominently in music education, however, is probably as much attributable to a paucity of methodological means as it may be to ideological complicity. With music, by comparison to the other arts, "the line between content and form is so blurred that resistance to sociological interpretation has always been strongest in this sphere."[2]

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[1] Ibid, p. xvii.

[2] Fischer, The Necessity of Art, p. 180.

There are, as a consequence, relatively few sociologists of art who make more than passing reference to music although their numbers are gradually increasing. The Sociology of Music, still very much in its teething stages, has yet to yield anything concrete in the way of music education praxes whereas Absolutist theory has be doing so for some time. Moreover, sociological treatises on music (often rather recondite) tend to present interpretations without making clear the modus operandi by which they become possible. It must further be recognized that sociological perspective in the experiencing and teaching of music, besides demanding at least a rudimentary understanding of musical concepts, requires a somewhat in depth knowledge of social and political history. As of yet, the acquistion of such knowledged has not been considered of particular importance in the training of music educators.

Theses problems do not, however, absolve music educators from integrating social awareness and committment with aesthetic sensitivity, creativity, and the like in the setting out of their educational aims. Even if there are no specific social or political objectives to which they feel committed, music educators must at least be concerned with counteracting those forces that increasingly render music irrelevant (not to mention their jobs).

Some comments as to possible means for optimizing the socially illuminative potential of music in education will be given in Chapter 6; but having just mentioned some of the problems facing music educators who are prepared to accept the challenge, it is apropos to submit here that if this potential is to be taken full advantage of it will necessitate a reappraisal of the criteria used in determining what musics are worthy of attention. The problems inherent in a sociological approach to music become increasingly acute as music becomes more pure and abstract. There are, of course, many musics where the line between form and content is not so blurred.

Firstly, it must be acknowledged that the majority of the world's musics are vocal. Moreover, there is a considerable wealth of music whose implicit purpose is to conscientize people or at least to sensitize them to disquieting facets of their social existence. Such music is mostly vocal and much of it employs popular idioms thus reaching large audiences. But inasmuch as it more than often fails to meet the purely musical standards imposed by 'art music,' it seldom finds its way into the music classroom. There are admittedly many contemporary music educators and educationists who have endeavoured to make a place for alternative musics in the curriculum, but too often this amounts to a modification of content, not of methods or aims. It is valuable in that it allows students to become conversant

with an increased range of musical styles, but with only a
superficial grasp of what these musics inform of social
significance. The end remains pretty much the same -
a conceptual understanding and appreciation of meaningful
sound patterns - not increased social awareness.

Notwithstanding their apparent indefiniteness and subjec-
tiveness, instrumental musics constitute an artistic realm
that can and should be approached sociologically as well as
aesthetically. In the case of Western 'art music,' many of
its recognized works had their geneses in an era whose
socioeconomic, political, and philosophical upheavals dra-
matically transformed the Western world. The French Revolu-
tion closed the door on feudalism and announced not only a
new democratic order, but an almost complete metamorphosis
of consciousness in which 'man' was radically redefined.
This metamorphosis, Ballantine alleges, had its musical
analogue in the supplantation of the "static Baroque style"
by the "dynamic sonata style of Beethoven and others."[1]

The logical assumption that sociologists of music abide by
in drawing such connections between musical and social
phenomena is that the feelingful states which composers
give expression to are not phenomena in abstracto, but are
subjective responses rooted in objective conditions. Ac-
cordingly, the works of skilful composers, in various ways

[1]Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 5.

and with varying degrees of awareness, afford us "an auditory image of the real, objective dynamics of their own particular historical age."[1] If we are to agree with this, music becomes more than just a means to aesthetic satisfaction, it becomes a unique and valuable way of seeing the world and responding to it. 'Art' music thus takes on new meaning and increased relevance.[2]

Before concluding the present discussion, having advocated a sociological approach to music and music education, it is necessary to deal briefly with its most conspicuous weakness, that being, its susceptibility to misuse. Sociological reductionism, like any other mode of interpreting human phenomena, requires objectivity and the avoidance of oversimplification. Notwithstanding Marxism's crucial contribution in articulating the need for a sociology of music and in supplying it with a theoretical framework, it cannot be overlooked that the range of its explanatory categories is rather limited and is too often reduced to a two-value, 'either-or' denotation (e.g., progressive-regressive, bourgeois-proletarian, authentic-false, ideological-non-ideological). Music is a complex phenomenon as it must be given the complexity of consciousness wherein it is preformed. Except where it is specifically intended as social and/or political commentary by the composer, it will generally have more than one set of meanings.

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[1] Ibid, p. 25.

[2] That such music is perceived as being irrelevant is without doubt the main reason that music educators have difficulty in getting students to take it seriously.

> As semiotics and hermeneutics have conclusively shown, cultural products admit of multiple 'readings.' Where political doctrine is not the intention of the artistic producer, it is more likely that the implicit meanings of the work will be found to be complex and even contradictory ones, relecting both the contradictory nature of consciousness and the relatively autonomous operation of the artistic system of representation.[1]

A classic example of contradictory interpretations of a single musical work (which had unfortunate consequences for the composer) concerns Shostakovich's modernist opera, <u>Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk</u>,[2] which was initially hailed by the Soviet press as another "success of Socialist construction, of the correct policy of the Party," only two years later to be debased as "petty-bourgeois formalist cerebration."[3] Such contradiction is perplexing given that the work is an opera and has the advantage of such explicit media as gesture, costume, stagecraft, and a libretto with which to make clear its partisanship. However, it is highly doubtful that either of these assessments derived from an in depth sociological investigation of the opera itself. The latter assessment is taken from an unsigned article entitled "Chaos Instead of Music," which Lebrecht alleges "was not just inspired but almost certainly dictated by Stalin himself,"[4] his criticism apparently lying not with the opera's political content but with the modernism of its music.

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[1] Wolff, <u>Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art</u>, p. 64.

[2] premiered 22 Jan. 1934 in Leningrad.

[3] Norman Lebrecht, <u>Discord: Conflict and the Making of Music</u> (London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1982), pp. 51-52.

[4] Ibid, p. 52.

The suggestion that music must be composed within certain stylistic parameters to be politically and socially correct is reminiscent of Plato's 'ethos' theory and is equally as far removed from any credible sociology of music. The type of sociology of music which Ballantine, among others, judges to be credible is one which penetrates into the sound relationships themselves and discerns there the formal structures wherein are 'encoded' the social dynamics of the composer's social milieu. In correlating sound structures with social structures, it becomes possible to answer questions such as: 'Why is this music as it is?'; 'What are/were the social forces that shaped it?'; 'What is its underlying ideology?'; or 'What visions of a potential society does it reveal?'.

There is actually considerable common ground between sociological and Absolute Expressionist[1] praxes. Both approaches seek to determine a composition's aesthetic qualities; but whereas the Expressionist is concerned with what they reveal about the 'inner life,' the sociologist's interest lies in what they reveal about the 'outer life,' i.e., supra-individual, objective realities. The Expressionist is at an advantage in that he does not need to specify verbally what the meaning referents are, for they exist in the subjective realm, he alleges, and are essentially ineffable. The sociologist, on the other hand, has to be to some

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[1] See Chapter 2, pp. 24-25.

degree specific (e.g., 'this stylistic device can be connected to that sociohistorical phenomenon'). Because of the indefiniteness of music, the connections that he makes are invariably susceptible to being declared tenuous.

Except when wedded to more explicit media (e.g, language), music can never truly speak for itself. Unless one is keenly aware of the particulars of its social situatedness, it is impossible to tenably ascertain what its social meanings are. With a sociological interpretation, therefore, there is always the danger that - in having to put the cart before the horse - a work's social meanings will become what the investigator wants them to be or, to put it differently, that he will see only what he wants (or has been indoctrinated) to see.

4. MUSIC AS SOCIAL MEDIATOR

The issue under discussion in this chapter is the manner in which music can and often does function as an important means by which members of a group (community, culture, society) organize and orientate themselves in relation to each other. Of music's myriad purposes, this is certainly its most long-standing and universal. The same may be said of art in general. In discussing the origins of art, Fischer points out that in the dawn of humanity

> Art was not an individual but a collective production, . . .
> Primitive society meant a dense, close-knit form of collectivism
> . . . Separation of the individual from the group or tribe meant
> death; the collective meant life and the content of life. Art in
> all its forms . . . was the social activity par excellence, common
> to all and raising all men above nature and the animal world.

Significantly, he adds that

> Art has never wholly lost this collective character, even long
> after the primitive collective had broken down and been replaced
> by a society of classes and individuals. [1]

Even under the aesthetic of 'art for art's sake' - where the experience of art is taken to be primarily an individual affair, and where subjectivity of expression is considered paramount - the essential nature of art quite clearly remains collective. If this were not the case, there would be no desire or need to make it accessible to others or to submit it to any stylistic norms. The fact that artists generally do wish to make their work accessible, and that they are willing to subject their creative impulses to sty-

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[1] Fischer, The Necessity of Art, pp. 37-38.

listic constraints, is explicable when we realize that "art
is the individual's way back to the collective."[1]

> The social or collective element has become subjectivized in the
> 'I', but the essential content of personality is and remains so-
> cial. . . Even the most subjective artist works on behalf of so-
> ciety. By the sheer fact of describing feelings, relationships,
> and conditions that have not been described before, he channels
> them from his apparently isolated 'I' into a 'we', and this 'we'
> can be recognized even in the brimming subjectivity of an art-
> ist's personality.[2]

Thus it can be said that virtually all art functions as a
social mediator, even if only subliminally. Music often ac-
complishes this at a more overt level, even to the extent
that in certain social contexts music is regarded as indis-
pensable to the maintenance of group integrity. With regard
to traditional African communities, Kwabena Nketia contends
that "a village that has no organized music or neglects
community singing, drumming, or dancing is said to be
dead."[3]

Even in Western industrial society there is no paucity of
circumstances in which music can be said to act as a social
'glue' - a means of affirming one's bond with the group.
Where this is probably most clearly evidenced is with con-
temporary youth culture. Young people, especially adoles-
cents, are on the whole at least as concerned with a work's
level of popular appeal amongst their peers as they are
with its intrinsic artistic merits or its effectiveness as

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[1] Ibid., p. 45.

[2] Ibid., p. 46.

[3] J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "Sources of Historical Data on the
Musical Cultures of Africa," University of Ghana, 1972. (mimeographed.)
quoted in Chernoff, African Rhythm, p. 36.

social commentary. Teachers of 'Music Appreciation' charac-
teristically bemoan the difficulties they have in extend-
ing their students' tastes beyond whatever music happens to
be on the 'hit parade'. As is the case with dress, hair
style, and manner of speech, music serves as an important
means of establishing group identity. It is by no means un-
common that a particular musical style or genre will be re-
jected, even scorned, because of its identification with a
another social group or generation. How often it is, for
example, that adolescents immediately 'turn off' as soon as
classical music is played; seldom are specifically musical
reasons offered for their adversion to such music.

When considering all the world's musics, one finds that
there are relatively few types which are or were created to
be experienced purely as inherently meaningful sound pat-
terns (as is supposedly the intention with 'absolute mu-
sic'). Moreover, despite the fact that the notion of the
'aesthetic attitude'[1] (as being the most rewarding approach
for experiencing music) is Western, it is an approach which
but a small minority of Westerners actively pursue, the
efforts of music educators notwithstanding. For the majori-
ty, music is a protean art, the actual sound structures be-
ing only one dimension of a larger, quasi-aesthetic whole.
In many cases the social dimension of this integrated whole
is at least as important as the aesthetic; often more so.

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[1] See Chapter 2, pp. 19-20.

We may now consider specific ways in which music functions as a social mediator. Four different ways will be discussed here, they being:

(i) music as a fad or fashion;

(ii) music as a social emblem;

(iii) music as an inculcator of social norms and values; and

(iv) music as a socially integrative activity.

4.1. Music as a fad or fashion

The term 'fad' most frequently carries the following meaning: "a rapid, sudden, and ephemeral collective adoption of novel behaviour which affects only superficial and trivial areas of life."[1] As indicated by such adjectives as ephemeral, novel, and superficial, a fad differs greatly from a custom or tradition which are behaviours (practices, habits) that are long standing and deeply entrenched - often to the extent that they carry the force of laws. Intermediate between fads and customs are 'fashions' which "belong to the same order of instability and irrationality as fads," but whose "instability and ephemerality are not so marked."[2]

Although the terms 'fad' and 'fashion' are most commonly used in connection with items of adornment such as clothes, hair styles, and jewelry, it is evident that objects and

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[1] A Dictionary of Social Sciences, 1964 ed., s.v. "fad".

[2] Ibid., quoting L.L. Bernard, An Introduction to Social Psychology (New York: Henry Holt, 1926).

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Fads and fashions are not, however, pursued only as a means of establishing collective footholds in a rapidly changing society. Both are often as not "elite-oriented imitations" that have the psychological function of counteracting anxiety concerning one's social status.[1] This explains why obsessive fashion consciousness and faddish behaviour feature most prominently in societies with class systems, where the yearning to rise above one's perceived station prompts the pursuance of superficial status symbols. It also explains why the desire to be 'in fashion' and to readily pursue fads is most pronounced in adolescence and early adulthood, stages during which the afore mentioned anxiety is most keenly felt.

In view of the disquieting social realities for which they are symptoms, fads and fashions are not behaviours one wishes to encourage. Nevertheless, they do constitue a significant dimension of the social and educational contexts in which many music educators find themseves. To ignore musical fads and fashions, or worse, to openly treat them with contempt, will likely have the negative effect of distancing the music educator from his students. In this regard, it is important to remember that while those who pursue musical fads and fashions may do so primarily for social reasons (e.g., status seeking, a desire to conform, etc.), they are nevertheless pursuing what, at some level, must be regarded as expressive forms and, therefore, as

[1] Ibid.

media with educational potential. This is true of even the most banal pop song, and there are many works having fad or fashion status that are, in fact, musically satisfying and/or which have something to say of social importance.

4.2. Music as a social emblem

The term 'emblem' is conventionally used to denote a visual and concrete symbol of a quality, idea, type or group (e.g., the dove is an emblem of peace). Music is neither visual nor concrete, but there are innumerable instances in which it serves an emblematic function. What shall be considered here is the manner in which music often acts as an emblem for a social group; obvious examples include national anthems, school songs, patriotic songs, and military anthems.

As is the case with visual emblems, a musical emblem may be no more than a shibboleth or trademark, i.e., a means of distinguishing one group from another, thus serving essentially the same function as a uniform or badge. Often, however, it is a strong attestation and nuturer of an individual's positive feelings toward and solidarity with the group to which he is a willing member.

So socially efficacious can a musical emblem be, that those whom it moves may find in themselves the courage to face any danger in affirming their allegiance to a group and in

fighting for its cause. As Tennyson wrote

> The song that nerves a nation's heart,
> Is in itself a deed.[1]

Numerous are accounts of a stirring anthem being the necessary impetus for a besieged battalion to achieve victory against seemingly insurmountable odds. In such instances, it is as if the music not only stands as a symbol for the group, but as an embodiment of the many emotions, sensations, aspirations, and values shared by its members, and which, by virtue of the music, become suddenly intensified and coalesced into a single, supra-individual vital spirit. The generation of this vital spirit is obviously a boon to the strengthening of a group's integrity and sense of purpose. It is not fortuitous, therefore, that societies the world over distinguish at least one piece of music (usually a song) as a musical emblem.

What decides if a musical work qualifies as a social emblem is its capacity to summon up the myriad emotions, images, and associations that collectively produce a strong sense of identification with the group. Many of the factors that account for this capacity are clearly extramusical; for example, the patriotizing effectiveness of a national anthem depends as much on its lyrics, its recognizability, and the context in which it is performed, as it does on its compo-

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[1] Epilogue to The Charge of the Heavy Brigade 1. 81

sitional artistry. It is unlikely, however, that a musi-
cal work will gain acceptance as a social emblem if it
fails to satisfy people's artistic sensibilities or if it
is stylistically inappropriate. Thus, while intrinsic qua-
lity is of secondary importance to the music's associatory
significance, there is nevertheless a relationship of in-
terdependence.[1]

4.3. Music as an inculcator of social norms and values

Norms and values are vital to the integrity and survival of
any social group and there are various ways in which music
aids in their transmission. Before examining some of these
ways, however, it is pertinent to obtain some terminologi-
cal clarity. Although not exact synonyms, 'norm(s)' and
'value(s)' are terms which sociologists tend to use inter-
changeably in reference to the beliefs, principles, and
standards of behaviour that members of a group share.
Chernoff defines norms and values as

> . . . the implicit expectations - . . . - with which peo-
> ple orient themselves to situations, what they take for
> granted about the nature of social life and what they
> respect as reasonable when they make judgements about
> appropriate behaviour.[2]

Chernoff's definition is useful in pointing out that norms
and values need not be explicit and discrete formulations
(as are laws for example); often they are tacit and indis-

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[1] When commissioned to write the Kenyan national anthem, Hyslop
demonstrated a sensitivity to this relationship by giving the anthem
an arresting modal-pentatonic melody which, although not expressly
African, is distinctly dissimilar to most Western antecedents.

[2] Chernoff, African Rhythm, pp. 154-155.

tinct forms of awareness that are inculcated by indirect
means. Similarly, when speaking of 'standards of behav-
iour', we are not only referring to what might be called
'manners', 'etiquette', or 'rules of propriety'. In the
more comprehensive sense in which it is used here, the term
'behaviour' encompasses all of the perceptual, conceptual,
affective, and reactional propensities that an individual
exhibits and which in the case of 'collective behaviour'
tend to be homologous from one member of the group to
another.

In the preceeding chapter it was submitted that music is
never devoid of social meanings, even so-called 'absolute
music'; "social structures crystallize in musical struc-
tures" as Ballantine puts it.[1] As such, music can tell us
something about the nature of the society from which it
comes - about its norms and values for instance. Pertinent
to the discussion at hand is the question 'who does it
tell?'. In the case of absolute music, it would seem that
only those with a high degree of sociological insight and
musical understanding are capable of ascertaining its pre-
cise social meanings. Sociologists of music, by virtue of
their insight and understanding, are able to reveal the
parallels that exist between musical and social phenomena.
Chernoff, for example, draws a parallel between the African

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[1] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, p. 5.

"aesthetic conception of multiple rhythms in music" and the African "religious conception of multiple forces in the world;"[1] and Ballantine links the "Bachian principle of extension by varied, motor-like repetition" to the European "pre-revolutionary conception of an unalterable human 'nature'."[2] Both are insightful, intellectually intriguing correspondences, but in both cases it is questionable as to whether the social phenomenon is in any way <u>attributable</u> to the musical phenomenon. Is it plausible to contend, for example, that Bach's compositions in some way helped to inculcate or even reinforce the conception of an unalterable human nature in the minds of his contemporaries?

Is it within the power of music to inculcate social norms and values? How that question is answered depends largely on what the term 'music' is taken to mean. Again we are reminded that most of what is called music is more than just arrangements of sounds in time. Certainly, when media such as language and movement are involved, music loses much of its abstruseness and becomes more communicative. And in the case of music as a collective activity, the fact of being a participant in a social situation implies that one is increasingly actualizing norms and values. But what can be said of 'absolute music', in which all that the mind is presented with is an arrangement of sounds in time?

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[1] Chernoff, <u>African Rhythm</u>, p. 156.

[2] Ballantine, <u>Music and Its Social Meanings</u>, p. 33.

The question which absolute music raises is difficult to answer, especially if we continue to think of music as an 'object of perception' rather than as an integrative 'act of perception'. Elliott reminds us that

> . . . there is no such thing as music or musical experience in a material sense. Rather, music is created by individual's personal application of a constellation of metaphors to inert sounds. The result is an experience of meaningful tones: sounds invested with qualities, characteristic tendencies, associations, and imagined intentions.[1]

What an individual gets out of a musical experience, therefore, is largely dependent on what he brings into it. What an individual brings into a musical experience is a vast and complex aggregate of concepts, associations, attitudes, feelings, and expectations that has been gradually evolving from birth and which has largely been shaped by social influences. The sound structure to which the individual attends provides a focus for these various constituents of his being, which may, as a consequence, be altered or modified depending on the particulars of the sounds heard (i.e., how they have been organized), the context in which they are heard, and the degree and quality of attention he gives them. Bowman speaks of a "realignment" of the individual's "interpretive schemata" which amounts to the attainment of "new perspectives from which to view the

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[1] David J. Elliott, "The Role of Music and Musical Experience in Modern Society: Toward a Global Philosophy of Music Education," plenary address to the XVI World Conference of the International Society for Music Education, 14 July 1984.

world."[1]   It may be true that the sounds to which he
attends are inert, but in most cases they are not random;
they have usually been 'composed' by another socially and
culturally situated being, more often than not within
stylistic parameters that give the composition a particular
social and cultural base. Consequently, as much as there
may be an attainment of new perspectives, there is also a
homologizing of existing perspectives with those that con-
stitute the world-view of a particular society or culture.

It is unlikely that music, without the aid of other media,
is ever capable of inculcating what may be called 'moral
norms' (e.g., conduct proscriptions like 'Thou shalt not
kill'). The same may be said with regard to specific philo-
sophical and religious conceptions, even though they may
have discernible parallels or analogues in musical sound
structures. There are, however, many types of less expli-
cit, tacitly held norms and values that vary from one
society or culture to the next, and whose actualization by
the individual is promoted by habitual contact with partic-
ular musical styles. Here may be included what have been
termed "cognitive norms,"[2] (e.g., modes of logic, aesthetic
sensibilities, concepts of time and space, and proclivities
in image and symbol formation).

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[1] Bowman, "Polanyi and Music Instruction," p. 79.
[2] A Dictionary of Social Sciences, s.v. "Norms".

What the experience of musically structured sounds does then, is not to reveal specific models of socially acceptable (or unacceptable) behaviour, but to condition the ways in which one perceives and interprets reality. When the music one habitually experiences is that of a particular society or culture, it has the effect of a social mediator in that one's perceptual and interpretive schemata are progressively homologized with those that are characteristic of the society or culture to which the music belongs.

4.4. Music as a socially integrative activity

In discerning ways in which music functions as a social mediator, we have thus far been dealing primarily with situations in which the individual stands apart, so to speak, from the musical stimulus. In such situations, while one may be active in terms of the degree and quality of interest taken, one's involvement in helping to shape the musical event is essentially passive. Music is most socially efficacious in situations of collective music making where the individual becomes an active participant, interacting with other individuals in the pursuit of common goals.

There are innumerable forms of collective music making, each with its own social dynamics, but despite their differences, they all involve people in situations in which individuality must to some degree be circumscribed. Cooper-

ation - a willingness to subordinate self interests to collective interests - is a <u>sine qua non</u> for the survival of any social group, and helping to inculcate cooperation as a norm is certainly the most fundamental and universal way in which collective music making is socially beneficial.

Music is, of course, by no means unique as an activity that cultivates an individual's willingness to cooperate; team sport is at least as effective in this regard. There is, however, another related norm which collective music making is particularly effective in cultivating, that being, the capacity to imaginatively enter into the feelings and thoughts of others. This capacity, what we may call 'empathy', involves much more than the subordination of self interests. In order to enter into the feelings and thoughts of another, it is necessary for one to transcend self. As such, the ability to empathize may be considered an indispensable constituent of an authentic social conscience, for it is through self transcendence - "a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful that exists in thought, action, or person, not our own"[1] - that it becomes possible to genuinely care for other people and to regard them as people in their own right, not merely as gratifiers or thwarters of one's own needs.

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[1] Percival Bysshe Shelly, "A Defence of Poetry," in <u>English Critical Texts</u>, ed. D.J. Enright and Ernst de Chickera (London: Oxford Univeristy Press, 1962), pp. 233-234.

The extent to which empathy plays a role in collective music making varies from one context to another. Let us compare, for example, two forms of music making that might take place in a music classroom: the first, a situation in which students perform from a written score; the second, a group improvisation. Both are situations that demand a high degree of cooperation if the result is to be at all successful; but it is in the group improvisation that the capacity of the participants to empathize is crucial. In group improvisation, although certain structural parameters may be determined in advance, a participant is not provided with an explicit set of instructions to ensure that his contribution successfully integrates with what the rest are doing. In order to interact effectively, he has to imagine intensely so as to be able to successfully anticipate where others are going, to know when to take the lead, when not to, when to be silent, when and where to effect changes, what changes he is expected to make, etc.

Although the terms 'empathy'. 'imagination', and 'creativity' are far from being synonyms, the mental conditions to which they refer are intimately related. Music making activities that involve and cultivate the capacity to empathize, therefore, are those that also engage the participant's imagination and creativity. When, however, the participant's attention is monopolized by the imposition of instructions to be followed, it becomes essentially impos-

sible to utilize these faculties. This is not to say that empathy, imagination, and creativity play no part in the playing or singing of written music, rather that it is only when the participant's level of technical competence is such that it is not necessary to devote all his mental energy to the accurate realization of the score, that empathy, imagination, and creativity can become operative as contributive forces in the shaping of the music.

"Cooperativeness and empathy are the prime constituents of a sensibility that universally makes it possible for individuals to successfully coexist. By providing a framework through which these qualities can be cultivated, collective music making aids the socialization process in a way that is transcultural and trans-historical." There are, of course, many ways in which it promotes socialization that are culturally specific. Music, after all, is a cultural expression, and the manner in which people involve themselves with it characterize and helps to shape a sensibility with which they relate to the world as a whole. Sociologists refer to this sensibility as a 'world-view'.

As an example of how different styles of musical involvement reflect and influence different ways of relating to the world, we can compare the Western 'aesthetic' approach, in which overt physical respondence is considered inappropriate, and the traditional African approach, which is profoundly kinaesthetic.

The Western notion of the 'aesthetic attitude' is supported by (and reciprocally propagates) a belief going back to Hellenic times, that sight and hearing are the primary aesthetic senses.

> Since the organs of sight and hearing are distance receptors, detachment from direct contact with the physical may be retained, for the other senses call attention to the body, so destroying the isolation of the contemplative mind.[1]

Africans do not traditionally regard such detachment as desirable, especially in connection with music. This may in part be attributable to the fact that indigenous African religions do not call on their adherrents to subjugate the physical dimension of experience. "African spirituality has its roots in sensuousness, in physiological response."[2] Indeed, African religions have been described as "danced faiths" in which "worship becomes a style of movement that manifests one's relatedness for all to see."[3] Moreover, Africans are not predisposed to a rationalism that devalues tactile sensation for not being of any direct relevance to the operations of reason.

By comparison to Westerners, Africans have a much more holistic approach to the senses, and with music, no clear distinction is made between aural impression and physiolog-

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[1] Robert Kauffman, "The Psychology of Music Making in an African Society: The Shona," The World of Music 18 (January 1976): 10.
[2] Groves Dictionary of Music, rev. ed., s.v. "Africa."
[3] Chernoff, African Rhythm, p. 144.

ical response. In watching African instrumentalists perform, it often seems as if the physical manipulation of the instrument is as important as the sounds produced in terms of the overall aesthetic effect. In one study of Nsenga kalimba (thumb piano) music, it was concluded that the 'style' of the music is determined, not by melodic or harmonic considerations, but by the physical patterns which the thumbs make.[1]

The aesthetic effect of most African music cannot be fully grasped until its rhythmic vitality finds physical expression through bodily movement. As Chernoff puts it: "One who 'hears' the music 'understands' it with a dance."[2] In this respect, Chernoff speaks of "conversational engagement" to emphasize that the relationship between music and dance is one of interaction and mutual integrality.[3] Westerners dance to music, and even when the music is specifically intended for dancing, its integrity is not usually dependent on what the dancers do. In traditional African contexts, however,

> . . . the dancers themselves often provide an important part of the music. . . This may be by audible means such as singing, clapping, stamping, making use of certain parts of the dance costume that are designed to sound; or by inaudible or visual means, by moving parts of the body in rhythmic patterns that add to the total musical expression, even if only on an individual level.[4]

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[1] Kauffman, "Psychology of Shona Music Making," p. 14, referring to John Blacking's "Patterns of Nsenga Kalimba Music," African Music 2 (1961).

[2] Chernoff, African Rhythm, p. 143.

[3] Ibid., p. 144.

[4] Hugh Tracey et. al., African Music Codification & Textbook Project (Rooderport, S. Africa: International Library of African Music, 1969), p. 27.

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The preceeding comparison demonstrates how different attitudes toward sense perception are characterized by different musical sensibilities. The Western attitude, which may be described as hierarchical and atomistic, emphasizes the senses of sight and hearing while relegating the tactile sense to an inferior status; it is characterized by a musical sensibility in which music is defined purely as a sound phenomenon and where aesthetic effect is judged primarily in terms of aural impression.[1] The traditional African attitude, by contrast, is holistic and integrative, and is reflected in a style of musical involvement in which the visual, aural, and tactile senses are equalized and unified. Each of these musical sensibilities has correlatives in other culturally characteristic proclivities (e.g., styles of religious expression, attitudes toward art, ways of showing affection and of demonstrating approval, linguistic devices, etc.).

Music is but one of many forms of cultural expression, each of which, in some or another way, manifest a way of seeing the world and responding to it. It is to be expected, therefore, that when a particular world-view typifies a society, it will reveal itself in the many different activities that members of that society pursue. For example, the characteristic world-view of 19th century Europe, with its emphasis on the individual, manifested itself in art

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[1] The attitude referred to here is Western, but not necessarily typical of Western peoples.

forms that placed a premium of subjectivity of expression, in political systems designed to guarantee the rights of individuals, in theological and philosophical views that challenged the notion of innate depravity and an unalterable human nature, and in educational approaches that were more child-centered and which, in time, changed the focus from knowledge acquisition to self-actualization.

Of greater significance than the fact that a world-view manifests itself in forms of social activity, is the fact that social activity inculcates in individuals the myriad attitudes, values, and proprensities that constitute a world-view. Musical activity, by virtue of the protean character of music as a cultural form, is comprehensive in its socializing effect, probably more so than most other forms of collective activity. This is certainly true in traditional African culture. Unfortunately, however, the 'commoditization' of music in modern times has diminished and, in many ways, corrupted its socializing function. What deserves close attention is the role that music education can play in reversing this trend.

5. MUSIC AS LINK TO ULTIMATE REALITY

The title of this chapter is necessarily vague in that it embraces a vast and complex array of beliefs concerning music's nature and value. These may be divided into two main categories denoted by the adjectives 'theological' and 'cosmological'. Theological and cosmological aesthetics of music are numerous and varied, yet it is possible to generalize one premise which the majority of them share, that being, that music can be a medium through which one may transcend the limitations of one's corporeal existence. In the theological sense, this entails the achievement of communion with the Divine. From most cosmological perspectives, the goal is a state of accute awarenes in which one transcends the world of phenomena and is able to intuit the 'true' nature of reality which in day to day existence is obscure. With theological and cosmological aesthetics of music, there is often a great deal of overlap, as there is between the belief systems that inform them.

The reason accounting for the brevity with which theological aesthetics will be dealt with is that the modus operandi whereby music acts as a spiritualizing medium in most cases is not expressly 'musical'. By this it is meant that the spiritualizing effect depends on more than just the interaction between mind and configurations of sounds. More

than often, religious music relies on the medium of language and it is usually the discursive aspect that is given higher status. If we examine the history of Christian church music, for example, we find that from the beginning there has been a concern, at times vociferous, to keep music subservient to the text, for it is the text that is considered to be the prime conduit through which the devout achieve spiritual union with their Creator.

Even in the absence of a text, religious music's efficacy as a medium for spiritual transport is generally as dependent on context as it is on any specifically musical qualities. In the context of a religious ceremony, music is usually only one of several components that interact in creating a ritual whole. Moreover, participation in a religious ceremony is a purposeful act that presupposes a degree of psychospiritual preparedness. As such, the power of ceremonial music lies largely in its ability to intensify and focus sentiments that have to a large extent already been aroused. Whether or not the music succeeds in bringing about spiritual transport may well depend on where it is placed in the sequence of events that make up the ceremony.

We must also remember that the effectiveness of religious music (and most other music) is more often than not a matter of the types of associations and images which the music evokes and which in the passing of time have largely become stereotypical. Prompted by the emergence of a 'heavy metal'

gospel group, a discussion was recently held on American television in which it was concluded that 'hard rock' music has no place in religion. The reasons given had nothing to do with the music's formal characteristics; rather, they were based on the panel's association of such music with an immoral life style. Stylistic appropriateness is a crucial factor whenever music serves a purpose that is not specifically 'aesthetic'.[1] Seldom, however, can it be argued that one style is <u>intrinsically</u> more appropriate than another. Fitness for purpose, rather, is determined firstly by familiarity with the style and thereafter by its association to related extramusical phenomena. In the preceeding chapter, the manner in which music frequently serves an emblematic function was discussed. Most religions have particular works (usually vocal) that qualify as musical emblems by virtue of their effectiveness in nurturing and collectivizing the spiritual zeal of their adherents. However, an emblem is only a symbol (albeit a potent one); as such, its power does not derive from within, but lies in the elicitation of strongly emotive associations.

From a rationalistic point of view, it seems unlikely that it is possible for any music to possess inherent power in the sense that it is capable of affecting people's psyches in a predetermined and uniform way. As was pointed out in

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[1] i.e., concerned only with the self-sufficient sense of significance that the experience of expressive forms affords.

the preceeding chapter (p. 61), music is not a strictily objective phenomenon; rather, it is an integrative act of mind whereby qualities, images, concepts, emotions, etc. are transferred to sounds. Although there may be a high degree of correspondence in the way a piece of music affects different people (which is attributable to similarities in their musical, social, and psychophisiological experiences), there will always be differences.

Whenever apprehension becomes focused, as in the act of listening to music, the mind automatically prepares itself by bringing about certain mental and physiological adjustments which facilitate the grouping of discrete stimuli into meaningful patterns and which consequently influence the type and quality of responses that are elicited. These adjustments collectively produce a disposition of expectation that has been termed 'the preparatory set'[1] and which in the case of listening to music arises out of: (i) the listener's beliefs about the nature and value of music in general; (ii) his previous experiences of music and the competencies, concepts, and expectations thus acquired; and (iii) his attendance to the particulars of the context in which the listening is taking place. Underlying these three determinants is the totality of accumulated experience which constitutes his life-world and which shape his world-

view. As such, the individual's musical aesthetic will to a large extent reflect his conceptions of reality as a whole. This point warrants emphasis as the discussion moves to the topic of cosmological approaches to music, for they are approaches informed by metaphysical assumptions that for many of us are foreign and recondite.

There are many aesthetics of music that are called cosmological because they in some way posit a correlation between the tonal and temporal relationships of music and the principles that are believed to underly the workings of the universe (including human thought and character). The ancient Chinese not only held to the idea of a correlation but actually regarded music as being crucial in maintaining the system of equipoises which they understood to pervade the cosmos. It is doubtful that there are many who continue to see the cosmic welfare as being a musical matter, but there still exists traditions of thought that regard music as a method of self-transcendence which makes it possible to become aware of and achieve equilibrium with the unity that is believed to underly all existence. According to Daniélou

> . . . in cosmological theory, the starting point of every form of being is harmony, a relation which is multiplied in more and more complex forms. When we recreate harmonies we rediscover the basic equations which are at the origin of the forms of being, where thought, sensation and form have not yet become separated. These are the patterns, the harmonies which, on the level of form, will constitute beauty, in the realm of feeling, emotion, and in the sphere of the mind, thought.[1]

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[1] Alain Daniélou, "Aesthetics and Indian Music," The World of Music 18 (January 1976): 18.

Daniélou's explication has interesting parallels to the 'tonal analogue' theory advanced by Langer.[1] Both suggest that the effectiveness of music lies in what it recreates or embodies, instead of what it refers to. In Langer's view, what music recreates is "the pattern, or logical form, of sentience;"[2] according to Daniélou, it is the 'harmonies' that unify different forms of being. In both cases, the modus operandi for the beholder is the immediate, intuitive apprehension of sound patterns, which is facilitated by the adoption of a contemplative, learned yet disinterested attitude.

Daniélou states that, from a cosmological view, music is

> ... above all a method of inner realization on a level where the different states of being are not differentiated, where we become aware that form and matter, emotion and intellect, pleasure and joy are but expressions of the same codes manifested on various levels.[3]

Accordingly, music can be conceived of as a form of yoga or meditation, i.e., a means by which one can exceed self and more closely approach "that state of perfection ... where being, perception and joy (sat-cit-ananda) form an indivisible whole."[4]

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[1] See chapter 2, p. 26.
[2] Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 27.
[3] Daniélou, "Aesthetics and Indian Music," p. 22.
[4] Ibid.

From what has been said about music being an integrative act of mind and about the importance of the preparatory set in determining music's effect, we can conclude that the type of musical experience which Daniélou eloquently describes is possible only when an individual is appropriately predisposed to it. One may expect that this necessitates an extensive grounding in cosmological systems of thought (e.g., Hinduism, Taoism, or Buddhism). Such a background is certainly advantageous, but not entirely essential. The primary requirement is a genuine open-mindedness, which is possible only if one is prepared to confront and attempt to sidestep one's assumptions both musical and philosophical. This is by no means an easy task, especially for Westerners who have been indoctrinated into a narrow, positivistic world-view and for whom music is too often nothing more than an entertainment. Perhaps it is a discontent with the limitations of positivistic thinking and with the materialistic bent of Western society that has prompted many Westerners to take an active interest in non-Western philosophic systems, especially Zen Buddhism. This interest has clearly manifested intself in the writings of several important authors (e.g., Jack Kerouac, Aldous Huxley, Carlos Casteneda, and Hermann Hesse) and has been influential in the works of many contemporary composers and performers (e.g., John McLaughlin, Paul Horn, and Carlos Santana), especially in the area of aleatoric music (e.g., John Cage

and Karlheinz Stockhausen). We may also note the increasing number of Westerners who have taken up transcendental meditation or who have become followers of Eastern sects.

Although it may not be necessary to be conversant with cosmological systems of thought, it is useful to at least be aware of certain fundamental assumptions, especially as they relate to music as a medium for self-transcendence. Firstly, it needs to be pointed out that the cosmological theory which Danielou makes reference to is but one of several and is not necessarily representative. It is also important to point out that most Eastern cosmologies are inextricably meshed with religious systems of belief.

The cosmology summarized by Danielou may be identified with Hindu philosophy although there is no single system of thought that can be said to typify Hinduism which is a complex and largely religious superstructure. The fundamental assumption of this cosmology is that the vast variety of phenomena that make up the cosmos (including subjective phenomena) may' be reduced to a limited number of factors and that the order of the cosmos can be explained in terms of these factors and the laws that govern their interaction. Danielou suggests that each of these factors has a genetic code (what he calls a 'harmony') which can be 'recreated' musically. Although not explicitly stated, we may surmise that the musical patterns that allegedly recreate these harmonies are the various <u>ragas</u> that form the

basis of much Indian music. Danielou's cosmology is plural-
istic and in the absence of a single, ultimate principle of
unity (the notion brahman for example), differs signifi-
cantly from others, in particular Buddhism.[1]

One of the basic and most intriguing precepts of Buddhist
thought is the contention that empirical reality is transi-
tory and lacks essence. Man's suffering (duhka) is attribu-
ted to his inability, reluctance, or refusal to stop cling-
ing to transitory phenomena, in particular his concept of
self. The opposite of duhka is nirvana, the ineffable and
ultimate reality which lies beyond the world of phenomena
and which can only be realized through meditation.[2] In his
influential novel Siddhartha, Hermanne Hesse weaves an ab-
sorbing story of a Brahmin's son who after a lifelong
struggle to find an answer to the enigma of life, finally
achieves his goal through meditation on the bank of a river.

> When Siddhartha listened attentively to this river, to this song
> of a thousand voices; when he did not listen to the sorrow or
> laughter, when he did not bind his soul to any one particular
> voice and absorb it in his Self, but heard them all, the whole,
> the unity; then the great song of a thousand voices consisted of
> one word: Om - perfection. . . .
>
> From that hour Siddhartha ceased to fight against his destiny.
> There shone in his face the serenity of knowledge, of one who is
> no longer confronted with conflict of desires, who has found sal-
> vation, who is in harmony with the stream of events, with the
> stream of life, full of sympathy and compassion, surrendering him-
> self to the stream, belonging to the unity of all things.[3]

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[1] A Dictionary of Philosophy, s.v. "Indian Philosophy." See also "Buddhist philosophy," "Hindu Philosophy," and "Jain philosophy."

[2] Ibid.

[3] Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha (New York: New Directions Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 110-111.

One does not need to have <u>nirvana</u> as a goal in order to benefit from a Buddhist-like approach to the experiencing of music. Neither is it necessary to limit onself to the few musical genres and works that are alleged to be meditative in intent. What is most important is the frame of mind with which one approaches the music. From a Buddhist perspective, this may be denoted as "no-mind," a completely effortless form of concentration.[1] It is by no means incorrect to equate 'no-mind' with the so-called 'aesthetic attitude' described in chapter 2. In both cases, terms such as 'psychical distance', disinterestedness', and 'intuition' are appropriately descriptive. In both cases, any conceptualization or forming of extramusical associations is undesirable and inappropriate. In this regard, music which is allied to visual or discursive media will be less effective though not necessarily unusable.

It has previously been suggested that an intense experiencing of music elicits a modification or realignment of the interpretive schemata through which one perceives and construes reality.[2] While this may be a consequence, in the truly meditative experiencing of music one's interpretive schemata are supposedly de-automatized.[3] In Buddhist terms, this means that one is no longer 'clinging' and is thus able to transcend empirical reality, what Hesse's Siddhar-

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[1] Beverly Lewis Parker, "The Sound of One Hand Clapping," International Society for Music Education (I S M E) Yearbook (19): 132.

[2] See chapter 1, pp. 29-30.

[3] Parker, "The Sound of One Hand Clapping," p.131.

tha achieved "when he did not bind his soul to any one par-
ticular voice and absorb it in his Self, but heard them
all, the whole, the unity . . ."[1]

Because one's interpretive schemata function mostly at a
subconscious and involuntary level, it is doubtful that
they can ever be fully de-automatized. If this did happen,
then music would present itself as a totally random and
meaningless almagam of sounds; indeed, all sense perception
would be a buzzing, booming confusion. If anything, music
tends to automatize perception, especially when it is
tonal, rhythmic, and structured according to predictable
forms. As such, meditation is probably more efficacious
when a single, unchanging entity is the focus of attention.
There is, of course, a wealth of music in which at least
one element is kept constant, passacaglias and works em-
ploying a drone being good examples. There is also music in
which changes of pitch, volume, texture, and tone colour
are minimalized or introduced gradually. Several contempo-
rary composers (appropriately called 'minimalists') have
adopted this approach, for example, Steve Reich, Philip
Corner, and Terry Riley, to mention a few. In Reich's case,
it is almost certain that much of his music is intended to
be experienced as a form of meditation.[2]

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[1] Hesse, Siddhartha, p. 111.
[2] Parker, "The Sound of One Hand Clapping," p. 133.

Aleatoric (indeterminate) music is another area in which Buddhist precepts are pertinent and often influential, for example, the idea that there is an underlying unity or condition of interrelatedness to the world that will manifest itself even when events are left to chance. Ballantine describes an experiment that was conducted at the University of Natal in which four musicians participated in a group improvisation, each in a separate, sound-proof room with a microphone connected to a four-channel tape recorder situated elsewhere. None of the participants were given any guidelines except to play musically; neither was there any exchange of ideas ahead of time. The resulting composite was apparently uncanny in the way that it made "musical sense." Moreover, it continued to make musical sense when the four channels were separated and recombined according to different time schedules.[1] Ballantine says nothing to suggest that this experiment was prompted by or set up to verify any Buddhist precepts. There are, however, aleatoric composers (e.g., John Cage and Jackson MacLow) who do acknowledge Buddhist thought as being strongly influential in their works.[2]

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[1] Ballantine, Music and Its Social Meanings, pp. 119-120. Ballantine does not qualify what he means by "musical sense," but we can take him on his word that all who heard the result agreed that "the musicians seemed unerringly to be playing as a group, responding to each other with what appeared to be uncanny sensitivity."

[2] Parker, "The Sound of One Hand Clapping," p. 134.

Parker makes the suggestion that aleatoric music

> . . . acts like a koan in that it jolts the conscientous
> listener into confronting his assumptions about music
> and the part he himself plays in his musical experien-
> ces. In doing this, the music achieves an aim that lies
> at the heart of Zen practice.[1]

Parker doesn't specify which Zen aim it is that the experi-
ence of aleatoric music helps to achieve. It may be that
she is referring to the idea that because phenomena are
transitory, one must assume responsibility for his own
actions and reactions rather than to simply let them be
automatized or conventionalized (which is what generally
happens with music that follows conventional formats).

Another way in which aleatoric music encourages a Buddhist-
like perceptual orientation is by forcing both the perfor-
mers and the audience (in many cases the two are not to be
distinguished) to focus on the present - the 'here and now'
- rather than to be orientated towards where things are go-
ing and where they are coming from (i.e., to be goal orien-
ted). When music is indeterminate, there can be no antici-
pating the direction it will take.

There is also music that is alleged to be a product of 'no-
mind'. Parker submits that

> Such music is analogous not only to the brushwork of a
> Zen artist but also to the shooting of a bow by a Zen
> archer or the movements of a participant in one of the
> Eastern martial arts.[2]

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[1] Ibid. In Zen Buddhism a 'koan' is "a problem or riddle that
admits no longical solution," Collins English Dictionary, s.v. "koan".

[2] Ibid., p. 132.

Perhaps the best example of no-mind music is Karlheinz Stockhausen's "ES" ("It").

> . . . ES reaches an extreme of intuitive playing in the instruction to play only when one has achieved the state of non thinking, and to stop whenever one begins to think. . . As soon as a player thinks of something (e.g., that he is playing; what he is playing; what someone else is playing or has played; how he should react; that a car is driving past outside etc.), he should stop, and only start again when he is just listening, and at one with what is heard.[1]

Cosmological aesthetics are capable of many manifestations in musical contexts, both in the way music is experienced and in the way that it is created. Perhaps more important than the fact that they encourage a rethinking about the nature and value of music that opens up an infinite range of musical possibilities, is that they promote a reappraisal of the attitudes and assumptions with which we define reality, the validity of which we tend to treat with dogmatic certainty. From the standpoint of music education, however, one may understandably be uncertain as to their interpetability into viable teaching strategies, especially in cultural contexts where the encouragement of fundamentally different approaches may be met with resistance. Even in contexts in which there is a receptivity to new and different ideas, it must be acknowledged that the assimilation of anything which is in anyway metaphysical or esoteric may well be beyond the grasp of many young people. The author has observed, for example, that notwithstanding the keen

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[1] Karlheinz Stockhausen, "ES und AUFWÄRTS," Deutsche Grammophon 2530 255, jacket notes.

interest with which many prospective music educators ex-
plore 'unconventional' modes of musical involvement as uni-
versity students, only seldom does it seem that their dis-
coveries significantly influence the ways in which they
subsequently teach music. The problem alluded to here is
not, however, one only of the educational viability of cos-
mological approaches to music, but is pertinent with regard
to the other aesthetic orientations discussed in this
thesis.

6. TOWARDS A POLYAESTHETIC MUSIC EDUCATION

In chapters 2 through 5, we have examined four different
orientations in thinking about the nature and value of mu-
sic, each of which, for different reasons, identifies music
as significant, worthwhile activity. The author's intent
has been to demonstrate that each has validity and deserves
in-depth consideration by music educators in order to more
fully exploit music's potential for making a difference in
people's lives. One point that the preceeding discussions
have hopefully made clear is that music is an incredibly
complex behaviour capable of many manifestations and that
its humanizing potential cannot adequately be accounted for
by any single aesthetic. As such, any form of aesthetic mon-
ism on the part of a music educator will likely result in
only a partial realization of this potential and is conse-
quently unacceptable as a philosophical foundation for the
teaching of music. This is true even where the content of a
music education programme is limited to the musics of only
one cultural tradition. In most cases, in fact, even a sin-
gle style, genre, or piece of music can be approached from
more than one aesthetic viewpoint and in doing so its sig-
nificance will almost invariably be enhanced.

The need for music education to be polyaesthetic is most
clearly indicated in programmes that aim to be multicultur-
al. It has already been suggested that it is entirely pos-

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sible to have a programme that is multicultural in content
without being multicultural in terms of methodology or aes-
thetic approach; one fears that such programmes may be more
the rule than the exception. The well known ethnomusicolo-
gist and performer Andrew Tracey once intimated to the au-
thor that his main criticism of attempts by Western music
educators to incorporate African music into their pro-
grammes is that the music is too often treated as just an-
other style that uses different scales, rhythms, forms, in-
struments, etc. As Chernoff has stated, "African music is
not just different music but is something different from
'music'."[1] The mistake that Westerners (and Western music
educators) often make is to think of music only in terms of
an array of sound phenomena. A point that has been made
more than once in this thesis is that a sound structure on-
ly becomes music by virtue of an integrative act of mind.
It has also been pointed out that the act of apprehending
structure in sounds is in most instances only one dimension
of a larger psychosocial process. This is clearly the case
with regard to traditional African music (the fact that
many African languages do not have a correlate for the word
'music' is sometimes cited as evidence of this). With these
points in mind, we may agree with Elliott "that music edu-
cation philosophy and practice could benefit from conceiv-
ing music as a behavior."[2] We should also find pertinent

[1] Chernoff, African Rhythm, p. 33.

[2] Elliott, "Toward a Global Philosophy of Music Education," p. 3.

Small's submission that

> . . . art is more than the production of beautiful, or
> even expressive objects (including sound objects . . .)
> for others to contemplate and admire, but is essential-
> ly a <u>process</u>, by which we explore our inner and outer
> environments and learn to live in them.[1]

In arts education the problem of converting philosophy into
practice is more pronounced than in most other areas of the
curriculum and becomes even more pronounced when one's ap-
proach is polyaesthetic. Much of the problem can be attrib-
uted to the fact that the educational objectives implicit
in one's philosophy of art are more than often incapable of
being stated explicitly which means, of course, that it is
extremely difficult to devise any systematic means of de-
termining the extent to which they have been achieved. It
is understandable, therefore, that many music educators
place undue emphasis on the acquisition of factual know-
ledge and the ability to follow clear-cut rules (e.g.,
those of 18th century harmony) even though the result is
usually one of "having musical understanding at the expense
of being musical."[2]

What is more than often an even greater problem is the edu-
cational reality in which a music educator is situated. Not
only are his efforts often impeded by unsympathetic atti-
tudes (in particular the notion of 'Music' being an educa-
tional frill that musn't take up too much of a student's

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[1] Small, <u>Music : Society : Education</u>, pp. 3-4.

[2] Elliott, "Towards a Global Philosophy of Music Education," p. 16.

time), but also by the imposition of requirements set down in syllabi he has probably had no say in the designing of. The latter is a problem that the author has too often encountered in this country where as a lecturer in Music Education he has continuously experienced the frustration of student teachers and graduates having little time or opportunity to try out the creative strategies they've explored at university because of rigid syllabus requirements. Most of the music syllabi for South African schools with which the author is aquainted are, in his view, culturally biased and loaded with superfluous content, particularly those prescribed by the Department of Education and Training (for Black schools). Unsympathetic attitudes regarding music's educational importance and syllabi that are ill-considered are symptoms of what is gradually being recognized as a fundamental misorientation in institutionalized education, that being its emphasis on knowledge rather than experience; students "are taught much about the world, but their experience of it, apart from the hermetic world of classroom and playground, is seriously impaired."[1] It is digressional to pursue this issue much further, but the point should be made that as essential as it is for music educators to carefully consider their assumptions about the nature and value of music, so also is it essential that

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[1] Small, Music : Society : Education, p. 5. Small presents artistic activity as a paradigm of what education (and society) could be (see p. 5). In advocating a radical departure from the status quo in education he has been strongly influenced by such illuminaries as Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, Everett Reimer, Jules Henry, Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner.

they acquire a clear mind as to what it means to educate.
An inability to effect educative, experientially based
learning can never be entirely blamed on the circumstances
in which a teacher finds himself. A committed teacher will
find the means of overcoming problems and of achieving his
educational function no matter how repressive circumstances
may be. The most formidable aspect of a polyaesthetic ap-
proach to music education, therefore, is the demands that
it places on the music educator. Even if one's philosophy
is based on only one of the aesthetic orientations dis-
cussed in this thesis the demands are nevertheless great.
In obtaining a clearer picture as to what these demands are,
this thesis will conclude with an attempt to discern what a
polyaesthetic approach implies in terms of music educa-
tion's objectives, content, and methods.

The common denominator for all aesthetics of music and ap-
proaches to music education is 'music'. From all that has
been said, however, it should be clear that it is untenable
to define music as a particular type of sound phenomenon,
especially if we are attempting to identify anything uni-
versal. As the composer Harry Partch observed

> Music . . . has only two ingredients that might be
> called God-given - the capacity of a body to vibrate
> produce sound and the mechanism of the human ear that
> registers it . . . All else in the art of music, which
> may be studied and analysed, was created by man or is
> implicit in human acts and is therefore subject to
> fiercest scrutiny.[1]

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[1] Harry Partch, _Genesis of a Music_, 2nd ed. (New
York: Da Capo Press, 1974), quoted in Small, _Music : Socie-
ty : Education_, p. 8.

Because of the profusion of diverse and divergent sound complexes that make up the world's musical repertoire, it seems evident that "the universals of music should not be sought in the immanent structures, but rather in the various behaviours associated with sound phenomena."[1] That music is an ubiquitous phenomenon suggests that beneath this profusion lies rooted in mankind's essential nature a "universal proclivity to invest sounds with meaning."[2] What explains the diverse and divergent styles and aesthetics of music is the fact that this proclivity has no universal or God-given prescriptions to determine why, how, or in what forms it should find fruition. What all approaches to music education should firstly be concerned with is helping each student to actualize this proclivity as fully as possible. A polyaesthetic music education is advantageous in that it increases the range of whats, whys, and hows, but regardless of one's aesthetic approach, what ultimately matters is that the act of investing sounds with meaning becomes an individual and personally significant act whose benefits are enduring. When this happens - when music becomes a mode of experience, rather than a body of knowledge - music is no longer only what others (i.e., the experts) do, but also what 'I' do.

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[1] Jean-Jacques Nattiez, "Under What Conditions Can One Speak of the Universals of Music?" The World of Music 19 (1977): p. 102.

[2] Elliott, "Toward a Global Philosophy of Music Education," p. 7.

6.1. The objectives of a polyaesthetic music education

If one is to denote an ultimate, all-embracing aim for polyaesthetic music education, it must be stated in the most general of terms. In various ways it has already been implied that its raison d'être is the optimization of music's humanizing potential. Because of the generality of this formulation, it is worthwhile to identify the more specifically definable objectives it subsumes and which are implicit in each of the aesthetics of music discussed earlier.

6.1.1. Music as autonomous aesthetic object

Bennett Reimer is probably the most widely read and influential proponent of 'music education as aesthetic education'. Basing his view on what he calls an 'Absolute Expressionist' aesthetic and drawing heavily on the writings of Susanne K. Langer, Reimer conceives the function of music education as follows:

> . . . music education is the education of human feeling, through the development of responsiveness to the aesthetic qualities of sound. The deepest value of music education is the same as the deepest value of all aesthetic education: the enrichment of the quality of people's lives through enriching their insights into the nature of human feeling.[1]

That there are weaknesses in this conception and in its underlying assumptions about, inter alia, art and feeling has been discussed at length. A more viable interpretation of the Absolutist aesthetic may be arrived at by changing the focus from 'feeling' to 'intuition'. To this end, Michael

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[1] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 39.

Polanyi's theory of 'tacit knowing' has proved especially useful.[1] In short, his epistemology reveals that all forms of conceptualization "rely indispensably upon our preconceptual powers for assessing coherence, pattern, meaning."[2] As such, intuition is the essential ingredient for imaginative and creative thought. The experiencing of expressive forms (e.g., music) "clarifies and organizes intuition;"[3] it "modifies the tacit schemata which mediate subsequent experience."[4] If we are to denote the ultimate aim of music education to be the development of aesthetic sensitivity, it may be asked 'to what end?'; answers such as 'self-knowledge' or "insight into human feelingfulness,"[5] though by no means empty platitudes, are vague. In light of what has been said of the integrality of tacit knowing to all forms of mental activity and of the manner in which attendance to the aesthetic qualities of artistic forms modifies one's tacit interpretive schemata, a more cogent statement of music's educational value is made possible: an intense and in depth experiencing of music enhances one's capacity to think imaginatively and creatively, not only with regard to music, but in all areas of life.

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[1] See chapter 2 (pp. 28-30). Two of Polanyi's works that are especially worth investigating are Personal Knowledge (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948) and The Tacit Dimension (Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday, 1966).

[2] Bowman, "Polanyi and Music Instruction," p. 80. Another excellent article that explores the implications of Polanyi's theory for music education is Sam Reese's "Polanyi's Tacit Knowing and Music Education," Journal of Aesthetic Education 14 (January 1980): 75-89.

[3] Langer, Feeling and Form, p. 397.

[4] Bowman, "Polanyi and Music Instruction," p. 80.

[5] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 39.

6.1.2. Music as social commentary

Many of the reasons underlying the need for sociological perspective in music education were identified and discussed in chapter 3 and in every respect are the same as those informing the same need with regard to musicology, musical criticism, the psychology of music, and virtually every other area of musical endeavour. In the most general and idealistic terms, a music education that gives due emphasis to music's social meanings heightens students' social awareness and thus makes a contribution towards counteracting the dehumanizing forces that in modern industrial society increasingly threaten the welfare of the individual and the society to which he belongs. Examples of such forces that were discussed in chapter 3 are: 'reification', 'alienation', and 'fragmentation'. All of these can to some degree be attributed to what Marxists call 'commodity fetishim', and all have in various ways become increasingly manifested in the ways in which modern, industrialized man involves himself with music and art in general. The primary aim of a sociological approach to music education is the revitalization of the social meaningfulness of music, not only as a means of counteracting the attenuation of music's status, but also (and more importantly) of encouraging a more critical social awareness.

6.1.3. Music as social mediator

In chapter 4 it was submitted that all music acts as a social mediator, that is to say, a means by which members of a social group (culture, society, community) relate to each other. There are innumerable ways in which music achieves this function, many of which are subliminal, and few if any of which are to any extent dependent on institutionalized music education. Nevertheless, the socializing potential of music is something that music education can optimize and channel in ways that are advantageous not only from the standpoint of one's own culture or society, but also interculturally. Making music more efficacious as a socializing agent is by no means inappropriate as an objective for music education.

6.1.4. Music as link to ultimate reality

To spiritualize essentially means to emancipate the psyche (will, soul, intellect, life essence) from its corporeal fetters. In the figurative sense with which it was used in chapter 5 (often interchangeably with 'self-transcendence'), spiritualization implies the achievement of a heightened state in which one is able to overcome 'egocentrism'[1] and the tendency to cling to material reality and conditioned ways of seeing the world. This heightened state can be characterized in many ways (no-mind, shutting off the internal dialogue, disinterestedness, psychical distance) as can its perceived benefits (communion with God, the reali-

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[1] not selfishness, but the propensity to interpret all percep-
tual phenomena in relation

zation of transcendent knowledge or truth, nirvana, pure joy). As was pointed out in chapter 5, there are many long-standing systems of belief which conceive music as a spiritualizing medium, a means of achieving self-transcendence. Most of theses systems are Eastern but have increasingly become influential throughout the world (in particular Zen Buddhism) and have in various ways and degrees become manifested in new approaches to composing and experiencing music. Given the range of experiential possibilities that may be extrapolated from a cosmological aesthetic of music, it is important that some accomodation be made for it in music education, especially in programmes that aim to be multicultural. This largely entails taking music out of the realm of art into the realm of metaphysics and philosophy, the implicit aim being to encourage a transcending (or at least a calling-into-question) of convention-bound ways of perceiving and interpreting reality.

6.2. The content of a polyaesthetic music education

Reimer reiterates a point often made by music educationists - "that the primary material for study at every stage of development be good music."[1] Of course the question which immediately arises is 'good for what?'. A polyaesthetic approach to music education recognizes that there are

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[1] Reimer, A Philosophy of Music Education, p. 114.

many valid ways of answering that question; 'good' music
is, <u>inter alia</u>, that which:

  (i) "in its sound complex of tendencies and inhibitions"
      is "expressive of the conditions of subjective real-
      ity;"[1]

 (ii) exercises one's intuitive powers and thereby devel-
      ops the ability to think imaginatively and creative-
      ly;

(iii) is socially illuminative and which therefore helps
      one to become more socially aware and committed;

 (iv) challenges one to reconsider and hence to broaden
      his assumptions and attitudes about the nature and
      value of music;

  (v) nutures one's sense of solidarity with a culture,
      peer group, or nation;

 (vi) inculcates culturally appropriate norms and values,
      or which homologizes one's perceptual, conceptual,
      and affective modalities with those of his culture;

(vii) encourages one to transcend culturally conditioned
      and automatized ways of interpreting reality and
      which promotes greater intercultural awareness and
      sensitivity;

(viii) brings one into a closer relationship with the Di-
      vine;

 (ix) induces a meditative state which allows one to intu-
      it ultimate and ineffable reality;

  (x) simply makes it feel good to be alive.

From a polyaesthetic point of view, virtually all music is
good and has educative potential. Even so-called 'muzak' or
'canned music' has value in that it says something impor-
tant about the consumerist nature of modern society.

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[1] Ibid.

A polyaesthetic music education, however, does not define its content only in terms of a musical 'repetoire'. Unless it is to be concerned only with the formal qualities of musical sound structures (which according to this thesis it should not be), music education needs to be interdisciplinary which implies that much of its subject matter will be extramusical.

6.3. The methods of a polyaesthetic music education

The task of developing effective teaching strategies that accord with a polyaesthetic approach to music is immense and it is beyond the scope of this thesis to do any more than offer a few generally applicable suggestions. Music as a school subject takes many forms (e.g., Music Appreciation, Music Theory, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Music History, etc.) and is offered to students of varying ages, aptitudes, and interest levels. There are, of course, many other variables that make each teaching context unique (e.g., class size, syllabus requirements, sociocultural milieu, timetable allocation, obtainability of material aids, supra-educational exigencies, . . . the list is endless).

Notwithstanding these many variables, there are two fundamental abilities the development of which should be the primary concern of music education whatever the particulars of its context may be; they are: (i) the ability to convey meaning through the medium of sound, and (ii) the ability to abstract meaning from 'musical' sound sources. What dif-

ferent aesthetics of music essentially do is to offer different opinions as to which types of meaning are most important in one's dealings with music, but regardless of one's aesthetic orientation, 'musicality' or 'musicianship' is always a matter of what one <u>does</u> or <u>can do</u>, not what one <u>knows</u>.

Although many will contend that it is incorrect to think of music as being a language, it is tenable to liken one to the other in terms of their essential function, that being, to convey meaning.[1] One does not learn a language for the sake of being able to say or write words, but so as to be able to convey meaning with words. Similarly, one shouldn't learn 'music' in order to have a theoretical and factual knowledge of it, but so as to be able to express oneself with it and to personally discern meaning in the musical utterances of others. But while it would be considered ridiculous to present a Shakespeare play to students who are incapable of composing a rudimentary essay, it is not in the least exceptional to find music teachers playing recordings of Beethoven symphonies to students who would be at a loss if asked to compose a simple melody.

It is perplexing that education programmes in the visual arts generally afford students ample 'hands-on' opportuni-

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[1] The term 'meaning' is used here in its most general sense as the "import" or "sense of significance of" something (Collins English Dictionary, rev. ed.). It covers both embodied and designative (referential) types of meaning and denotes ineffable, intuited qualities as well as explicit messages.

ties in which they are encouraged to express themselves through the manipulation of concrete materials, yet it so often obtains in music education that students are somehow expected to experience music meaningfully without being given much opportunity to create music for themselves.

It is often assumed that instrumental and vocal music programmes provide for a hands-on involvement with music. In a sense they do, but in many if not most cases, they do not offer opportunities in which the students themselves are involved creatively. In this regard, it is important to draw a distinction between conveying meaningful sounds and conveying meaning with sounds. The playing or singing of music can certainly be conceived as an instance of conveying meaningful sounds, but so also can the playing of a gramophone record. The fact that sounds are being conveyed does not necessarily indicate that the meaning(s) embodied in or designated by the sounds has/have been actualized or even apprehended by the performer. The author has observed in his experiences with instrumental music education programmes that students are often taught to play instruments only so as to become instruments (conveyance devices) themselves - not musicians! It is only when the performer is active in the creative process as a composer, improviser, or arranger; or when he personalizes another's creation through a sensitive and personally considered interpretation that we can rightly say he is conveying meaning with sounds - that we can rightly call him a musician.

With music there seems to be a prevailing assumption that creative involvement must be postponed until one has acquired a relatively high degree of technical proficiency and theoretical knowledge. Such an approach rarefies music by making musicality a long-term goal that few are expected to achieve. It also creates the impression that virtuosity is an end in itself. It is no small wonder, therefore, that many people regard music as something which only musicians do and are incredibly inhibited when it comes to any kind of creative musical activity.

Fortunately, there has been a great deal of effort on the part of many music educationists to remedy this incongruous state of affairs.[1] Consequently, there are several methods textbooks and curriculum guides that encourage and suggest viable means for allowing students "to make music in the present tense."[2] Especially noteworthy is the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Program (MMCP) with its concept of the music classroom as a laboratory where children explore music on their own terms and in accordance with their level of understanding by composing, performing, and evaluating

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[1] This condition (i.e, the domination of music by experts) is acute in Western society, but is, as one of the consequences of cultural colonization, becoming increasingly manifest in societies where creative involvement with music was previously considered a prerogative of all.

[2] Small, Music : Society : Education, p. 216. Elizabeth D. Oehrle has compiled an informative study which assesses the extent to which various music education texts encourage creative involvement on the part of students: "A Case for Creativity in Elementary Music Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Natal at Durban, 1983).

their own music.[1] The pedagogy of Carl Orff is another good example, as is the array of creative strategies suggested by Murray Schafer.[2]

There is, in fact, a sizeable number of publications that are useful in suggesting ways in which a music educator can effect creative, experientially based learning. All of those which the author has investigated, however, for the most part hold to the Absolutist notion of music as an autonomous art, with the result that emphasis is placed on musical form with but a modicum of attention to musical content (meaning). Such an approach is justifiable within the context of an aesthetic which idealizes a type of meaning that is ineffable, which is intuited (felt) rather than made objective. From an Absolutist standpoint, when sounds are patterned to form music, all that really matters is that they evoke a sense of 'rightness'; there is no need for them to express anything explicit.[3]

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[1] See MMCP Interaction and MMCP Synthesis (Bardonia, N.Y.: Media Materials, Inc., 1970).

[2] See: Carl Orff, "The Schulwerk – Its Origin and Aims," trans. by Arnold Walter, Music Educators Journal 49 (April–May, 1963): 69–74; Orff and Gunild Keetman, Music for Children, 5 vols. (Mainz, Germany: B. Schott's Söhne, 1956); and Murray R. Schafer, Creative Music Education (New York: Schirmer Books, 1976).

[3] The idea of form for its own sake may be seen to have the effect of detaching art from its human context, yet it is humanistic in that it encourages one to transcend a positivistic, utilitarian view of reality. An aesthetically sensitive person is not only sensitive to the formal qualities of art objects, but is capable of finding a self-sufficient significance (sublimity) in nearly all types of sensory experience.

That there is a need for music education to attend to music's content has been emphasized and rationalized already. How, it justifiably may be asked, can this be done when music lacks precise content? Even when it is the composer's intention to provide an auditory image of something concrete, it is still up to those who experience the result to associate sound structures with concrete phenomena, and it is unlikely that the associations they make will be congruent with what the composer intended unless they have been prompted by some form of verbal or visual suggestion, or unless the music contains themes with stereotyped associations.

It is important to realize, as has been pointed out more than once, that 'pure' music is exceptional when taking all the world's musics into consideration. In most musical situations, therefore, what one attends to is more than just an arrangement of sounds; as such, the discernableness of content is not so problematic. Where the content of music is most explicitly conveyed is in songs. However, attention to the words of songs is not generally considered to be an important concern of music education for the reason that it moves the focus away from the specificity of music; but what might seem digressive from the standpoint of an educators's subject may well be pertinent in terms of his objectives. A music educator should not be at all reluctant to take students outside of the realm of what is specifically musical if there is an educationally sound reason for doing so.

Another look at Figure 1 (p. 6) will remind us that there are several worthwhile objectives that music education can have, many if not most of which imply the need for the teaching of music to be interdisciplinary. If, for example, the development of social awareness is to constitute one of the aims of music education, it will be necessary to help students explore the relationship between music and society, and this will undoubtedly entail excursions into extramusical fields of study (e.g., sociology, anthropology, history). An interdisciplinary approach is essential if music is to be comprehended as something which is a part of a greater whole.

As important as it is for students to explore different ways of patterning sounds, so also is it important for them to explore different ways of relating to music that characterize different ways of perceiving and responding to the world around us. There are innumerable activities whereby they may be exposed to and engaged in alternative approaches to the experiencing of music. Experimental music,[1] for example, is particularly effective as a mode of active musical involvement that not only challenges one to transcend convention bound assumptions about music, but which can have the more far-reaching effect of jolting one out of his ideologically conditioned, taken-for-granted concep-

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[1] a generic term for music with few if any structural parameters and which is therefore largely indeterminate.

tions of reality. Ballantine has much to say about the social value of experimental music.

> One of the central themes in experimental music is improvization. And it is here that one sees so clearly the social aspect of experimental music, related both to the transformation of the music apparatus and to the desacralization of the musical work of art. Improvization makes cooperation and social behavior . . . into an aesthetic matter. By transposing concrete social issues and values in this manner into the sphere of the aesthetic, the audience may gain practice at observing social norms, the performer may gain practice at behaving in social ways, but in a sphere free from the payoffs or the penalties that accompany asocial behavior in everyday life . . .
>
> . . . in traditional music, the musical language is predetermined to a very great extent; it is a donnée and to that extent a kind of 'fate'. In experimental music, on the other hand, the notion of this pregiven 'fate' is radically overthrown; the horizons of the musical language are established anew with each piece, or at any rate each performance . . .
>
> . . . experimental music fulfills Adorno's criterion that in a world where the accepted realms and procedures of meaning are administered, art must not aim at 'formal conceptual coherence', but rather 'suspend' by its 'mere appearance', the 'rigid co-ordination-system of those people who submit to authoritarian rule'.[1]

There is, of course, the added advantage that when stylistic parameters are removed (e.g., having to use particular scales, chord structures, and forms; having to adhere to a constant pulse; having to use conventional instruments in conventional ways), students with little background can create music enthusiastically and without inhibition, thus gaining a hands-on experience of music they might otherwise miss. It is doubtful, however, that a 'free improvization'

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[1] Ballantine, Music and its Social Meanings, pp. 118, 119 & 121 respectively, quotes Theodor Adorno as cited in Phil Slater, "The Aesthetic Theory of the Frankfort School," Cultural Studies 6: 196. As Adorno saw it, the avoidance of 'formal conceptual coherence' is essential if art is to play a part "in the cause of the free individual repressed by the 'managed' societies of the world." Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians, s.v. "Adorno, Theodor W.").

approach can sustain a music education programme for very long. Music that is atonal, nonpulsatile, or without clear structure differs radically from the music which most students know and cherish, and it is certain that they will want their activities in the classroom to involve them with what they conventionally think of as music; but there are certainly many forms of 'determinate', conceptually coherrent music that students can explore in a participatory way which, like experimental music, open up new realms of experience while also promoting a broadening and variegation of one's world-view. The traditional musics of the world in most cases fit this description.

In recent years, numerous documentary films and other media resources have been produced that are especially effective in highlighting the ways in which different styles of musical involvement reflect different social and cultural orientations. Although they have yet to become widely accessible for use in education, particularly in this part of the world, such materials should be avidly sought out, for they are almost certainly the most effective means (aside from actual field-work) of exploring music in its context.[1] It is also pertinent to point out that there are occasionally films that run the cinema circuit (later to become available on video) that, while obviously not having a musically didactic intent, do afford an increased awareness

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[1] The author has not made a thorough investigation of how and from where they may be obtained, but would suggest contacting the various universities, esp. those with active programmes in cultural studies and ethnomusicology.

of music's sociocultural connections.[1]

The primary requisite for making polyaesthic music education viable is a teacher with considerable background, education- al insight, imagination, and a willingness to take risks. As has become clear in the course of the preceeding discus- sions, it is not only a musical background that is called for. In this regard, it is not erroneous to suggest that what may often prove most formative in the education of a music teacher will be his personal research into fields that are only indirectly related to music.

As an aid to a more critical and comprehensive examination of music's varied functions and values, Christopher Small's Music : Society : Education (frequently cited in this thesis) is a work that is highly recommended and which should be digested thoroughly. What he has done in his book is what music educators should be doing in their classrooms, that is, to present music not as "a collection of masterpieces to be contemplated and admired but as a human activity which takes place always within a social context."[2] Not only does he encourage a more eclectic and experientially based

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[1] The highly acclaimed film "Amadeus" may be offered as one exam- ple.

[2] From a description (author not given) on the back cover of the paperback edition (2nd impression,1984, of the 2nd revised edition, 1980). The subtitle of the book is: "A radical examination of the prophetic function of music in Western, Eastern and African cultures with its im- pact on society and its use in education."

approach to the teaching of music, but also incites a radical reappraisal of the time-hallowed assumptions of the Western scientific world-view and of institutionalized education's adequacy as a social ameliorant. It is hoped that the myriad discussions comprising this thesis will also promote a rethink concerning music's educative potential and the ways in which it can be more fully exploited.

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