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Fighting Duel-ism: A Glenn Gould Context

by

Lee M. Harris, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of English

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

January 5

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submitted by Lee M. Harris, B.A.

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Abstract

This thesis proposes that the various creative activities of Glenn Gould be considered as part of an overriding attempt to communicate from a non-dualistic position. Gould's conception of technology and its potential is viewed within the context of a larger preoccupation with material form and its propensity to evolve and generate meaning on a variety of levels. All his work draws inspiration from the musical concept of polyphony and is consequently examined through a wide range of scientific and cultural perspectives including post-Newtonian physics, biology and computer science. In addition, Gould's relationship to certain historical phenomena such as Pythagoreanism, Marxism, individualism, and technological evolution is considered. Concurrently, his concern with ecstatic experience and its relationship to personal growth, moral process and the symbolic order is analyzed, particularly with respect to notions of subjectivity and self-reference.

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Table of Contents

	Page
Acceptance Sheet	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Table of Contents	v
Fugal Prelude: A Volley of Loose Cannons	1
Chapter I: Personality	2
Chapter II: Polyphony	27
Chapter III: Pythagoras	45
Chapter IV: Pain	66
Works Cited	80

Fugal Prelude: A Volley of Loose Cannons

They were offered the choice between becoming kings or the couriers of kings. The way children would, they all wanted to be couriers. Therefore there are only couriers who hurry about the world, shouting to each other--since there are no kings--messages that have become meaningless. They would like to put an end to this miserable life of theirs but they dare not because of their oaths of service. (Kafka, 175)

PERSONALITY

Among the posthumous tributes to Canadian creative artist Glenn Gould, an international piano competition in his hometown of Toronto merits special notice. The winner of this event was a Canadian musician whose "gala" performance of a Bach keyboard concerto--and subsequent recording of other Bach compositions--paid homage to the artist whose 1956 LP recording of the "Goldberg" Variations created a global celebrity thereafter linked to the great baroque composer. A touching tribute, yet is there not irony in the notion of a contest purporting to laud the career of a man who believed that "competition . . . is the root of all evil" (Reader 41)? This was not the isolated, "off-camera" remark of an otherwise staid member of the musical establishment; on the contrary, Glenn Gould had been busily articulating such views for the nearly two decades that followed his much-publicized retirement from the concert stage. Geoffrey Payzant's pioneering book Glenn Gould: Music & Mind makes note of the fact that as early as 1964--the date of Gould's pivotal departure from live performance--the "ratio of talking to playing in his life was by then much in favour of talking" (19). The idea of a commemorative piano competition is symptomatic of a failure that lends credence to a 1986 Piano Quarterly article entitled "Glenn Gould: Did We Really Hear Him?" (Wait 60-63). The present reappraisal is offered as further redress for the implied affront; it contends, moreover, that the cultural significance of his legacy leaves more at stake than a simple issue of personal vindication would suggest.

Gould's life and work abound with apparent contradictions. There is no doubt, for example, that the strangeness and complexity of his

personality served to create what the media business calls "good copy;" on the other hand, Gould once likened his career to a "neomedieval anonymity quest on behalf of the artist as zero" (Reader 319). From the latter perspective, initiating an assessment of his artistic output with reference to his personal make-up may appear as ironic as the case of misguided homage cited above; the answer to such a charge, however, lies in a recognition of the emphasis he placed upon an understanding of the role of personality in art and in the artistic process; that is, the deeper value of his work may not be dependent on a personal knowledge of its creator, but it can be argued that the current reception of his creative efforts has much to do with his admittedly flamboyant persona. The concern is not with his psychological make-up per se, then, but rather the relative importance such factors play in the cultural tenor of the day.

These distinctions are worth drawing. How far Gould's commercial success, for example, was dependent upon an exploitation of his propensity to make "good copy," and to what extent his own behaviour could be implicated in such a contradiction are questions of inherent interest; indeed the centrality of moral considerations in Gould's thought recommends their inclusion in this study. Nonetheless, his own declared focus merits serious and open-minded consideration: to create an environment in which a cult of personality is as far as possible diminished as a component of critical judgement.

This philosophical concern grew naturally out of his vocational experience. Considering the litany of critical reviews (cited in the Otto Friedrich biography) obsessed with Gould's concert platform manner, it is

small wonder the pianist should reflect upon the prevailing ethos of his profession and its relationship to the public. Characteristically, Gould made no attempt to deny that his eccentricities were to a degree distracting to his listeners; his practise of singing while performing, for example, is the subject of this Andrew Kazdin reminiscence:

Gould told me that he was not in any way "proud" of these sounds and was not pleased that they infiltrated his recordings; he just couldn't do anything to stop them. (108)

The significance of the mannerisms, however, is ultimately one of relative emphasis; Kazdin himself notes that the vocalizations "faded into the background when I concentrated on the music" (109).

The medium of recorded sound appealed to Gould on many levels, not least of which was the technological possibility of removing his physical presence from listeners and critics, especially like the one who referred to the pianist's stage presence with typical condescension: "[t]he discovery of new drugs and vitamins can cure such contortions, much as the witches exorcised them centuries ago" (qtd. in Friedrich 60). The decision to embrace recording thus appears to stem from the arbitrary reality of Gould's physical and emotional makeup; the philosophical merits of this decision, however--which Gould continuously developed and exploited--should not be judged solely on the personal criterion from which they arose. In point of fact, the recording process only solved the problem of visual image, and those of an aural variety--such as his famous creaking chair or his humming--were never resolved by technical means. Andrew Kazdin's solution of "concentrating on the music" is important because it is seen to coincide with Gould's own artistic practise:

The whole secret of what I had been doing was to concentrate exclusively on realizing a conception of the music, regardless of how it was physically achieved. This new self-consciousness was very difficult. (qtd. in Friedrich 60)

Gould believed the deepest value of music can only be realized through a state of intense, undivided attention, and that any untoward distraction thus poses a danger to the performer as much as the audience. "Self" consciousness in this context is a moral shortcoming: to be distracted by a concern with one's image is a function of the ego that serves to block the intuitive component of creativity necessary for the conduct of both professional art and everyday life. What must be understood at the outset, however, is that these notions never exist independently or without qualification in the Gouldian worldview: that is to say, self-effacement is not necessarily a denial of individuality, nor intuition a denial of rational reflection; concentration, moreover, may not be simply a function of will.

The great celebrity surrounding Gould's often puckishly self-publicized quest for privacy may be ironic in the extreme, but in itself neither invalidates the profundity of his reasoning--to be explicated over the course of this investigation--nor confirms the suspicion of personal duplicity entertained by his harsher critics. Indeed, much of Gould's creative opus is directly concerned with examining the nature of contradiction, and the multitude of errors engendered through an inappropriate conception of the function of "logical consistency." That his own life came to embody certain contradictions and became a target for unsympathetic critics is a fact, moreover, which frequently engaged his own sense of humour. These cursory remarks are simply a reminder that the

acknowledgement of contradiction means little without a proper evaluation of the context in which it occurs; the focus of the present chapter is the contention that much of the criticism directed at Gould employs the very myths and misconceptions regarding human personality that he was attempting, through his work, to dispel.

In Gould's creations, the coexistence of opposing terms is illuminated through the incessant play of a subtle, well-wrought conceptual counterpoint derived from the polyphonic forms with which he was so familiar. The efficacy of such a "musical" thought-model in dealing with the paradoxical character of contemporary issues, moreover, lends a sense of historical inevitability to a project often implicitly belittled as the ravings of an overly pretentious minstrel. Again, such evaluations are grounded in pervasive images concerning personality and identity. Relevant here are some thoughts of the poet Irving Layton, cited by Canadian critic P.W. Powe in his book A Climate Charged:

Today the image counts for everything. It separates and distorts and reduces you to a moment. And sometimes my image is all that people know... (97)

Yet if Gould was to insist that people not "know" him in the conventional sense at all, then his firm embrace of the technological media sets in motion a contradictory dynamic made apparent by Powe's comments on Marshall McLuhan (in another chapter of the same book):

McLuhan himself became a mythic figure: and myth-making was, as he wrote, the central condition of the electronic media. Yet he also became for many a vulgarizer, a charlatan, an enthusiast of pop trash, an apologist for the new technologies. (21)

Gould's acceptance of the irrepressibility of technological evolution, coupled with the adoption of an inimical moral stance vis-a-vis many of these same implications, seems to define a dilemma: given a desire for privacy, a dislike of the superficialities of the "image," and an electronic medium that seems to thwart the former as it accentuates the latter, how is it possible to fulfil an equally compelling demand to communicate? The challenge created by this apparent incompatibility is to find a way to redefine human values in concordance with the new technological reality, especially one that precludes appeal to some mythological, non-technological past.

Redefinition is the key term. Given the scale and rapidity of change in human thought brought about by the natural sciences, and haphazardly disseminated to a world already heterogenous in its development, it is little wonder that the era of electronic communication is also the era of non-communication. Words whose meaning formerly represented a social consensus seem to have lost authority because there is on the one hand a widening gulf between shattered, time-worn patterns of thought and the living experience these patterns are intended to convey, and on the other hand a real social disparity in the varying perceptions of the aforementioned gulf. Communication is a difficult business at the best of times; Martin Buber's statement from I and Thou, that in "the work of art realisation in one sense means loss of reality in another" (17), acknowledges the inherent dilemma of language in its status as a typographical system of "translation." But in times when the basis of human knowledge shifts as profoundly as the upheaval implied by

Darwinism, relativity, quantum mechanics and micro-electronics, the natural problem of communication is foregrounded in the extreme.

Language and its limitations have become a predominant intellectual concern. Sometimes this concern with linguistic impotence seems to reflect a corresponding sense of meaninglessness; often it claims to herald the banishing of meaning to an exclusive realm of subjective experience, where "hierarchy" denotes only an inevitable and reprehensible abuse of power. Sculptor John Dann wrote that "[c]ommunication on the most intimate level was of the highest importance to Glenn Gould. He gave of himself unreservedly" (McGreevy 187). Thus in spite of the cultural climate, Gould laboured ceaselessly in his chosen capacity as a professional communicator. Such a use of language requires a sensitivity to the accretions of history that bond to words and enable them to evoke entire complexes of conditioned response, somewhat as the interpretation of an individual composer's works is often mediated by age-old, unquestioned traditions of performance. But this analysis is also an intuitive venture, to the extent that it involves self-analysis, or the ability to gain insight into aspects of one's own conditioning.

Tim Page, in his wonderful anthology The Glenn Gould Reader, astutely assigns as a "Prologue" the convocation address Gould delivered at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music, in which the speaker eloquently articulates his notion of the "negative". Gould urges that his listeners

never cease to be aware that all aspects of the learning you have acquired, and will acquire, are possible because of their relationship with negation--with that which is not, or which appears not to be. (3)

Speaking specifically about music, Gould later muses over just "how much of its operation is the product of the purely artificial construction of systematic thought" (4).

This recognition can be extended beyond music to include "those purely artificial but totally necessary systems which we construct in order to govern ourselves--our social selves, our moral selves, our artistic selves, if you will" (4). What is characteristically Gouldian is the turn immediately taken:

Don't misunderstand me: when I say "artificial" I don't mean something that is bad. I mean simply something that is not necessarily natural, and "necessarily" takes care of the provision that in infinity it might turn out to have been natural after all. But so far as we can know, the artificiality of system is the only thing that provides for music a measure of our reaction to it. (4)

Again there are echoes of Buber, who argues that

form is disclosed to the artist as he looks at what is over against him. He banishes it to be a "structure." This "structure" is not in a world of gods, but in this great world of men. (I and Thou 41)

Gould's discourse is also relational, in that the "value" is not synonymous with the "structure," or "system", but resides in a creative process ultimately derived from moral considerations. The catalogue of "selves" which Gould describes are in effect social constructions to be utilized but which only define the living reality of any given individual to the extent their artificiality goes unnoticed. In the convocation speech quoted above, Gould tells the prospective graduates:

it would seem to me that your success as teachers would very much depend upon the degree to which the singularity, the uniqueness, of the confrontation between yourselves and each one of

your students is permitted to determine your approach to them. (Reader 5)

The lack of such an approach, he warns in the next sentence, will find the educator "menaced by that overreliance upon the susceptibly positive attributes of system" (5).

Gould's remarks may be said to give a precise indication of his notion of individuality. The self may be a social construct, but it is also a particular, concrete instance of social elements, the site where the possibility of a creative encounter between artifice and negation can be realized. It is not the uniqueness of the individual per se that is valorized, because that is a mere commonplace of existence; what is acknowledged, in Gould's view, is that the all-important process of self-reflexivity is discouraged in proportion to the degree it encounters "system" insensitive to that uniqueness. In other words, individuality must be respected for the reality it represents, not worshipped as an independent value. Gould wrote with reference to his love of Richard Strauss' music:

it is essential to acquire a more flexible system of values than that which insists upon telling us that novelty equals progress equals great art. (Reader 108)

This has elements in common with T.S. Eliot's "conservatism;" yet before it can be shown that Gould's notion of personality cannot fit into habitual formulations of a conservative-revolutionary dichotomy, a focus on certain similarities will be instructive. Eliot, in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent," speaks of

our tendency to insist, when we praise a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else. In these aspects or parts of his work we pretend to find what is

individual, what is the peculiar essence of the man. (48).

A later sentence reinforces the parallel: "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (53). In his desire to exorcize subjectivity from aesthetic judgement, however, Eliot finds recourse in something called "Tradition," in which the "existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves . . ." (50). This "Tradition," moreover, "cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labour" (49).

A comparison with Gould's portrait of Arnold Schoenberg is instructive.

The world proclaimed him a revolutionary, but Schoenberg was in fact a profoundly conservative man who was preoccupied in maintaining tradition, convinced that his own work represented the logical continuation of the Austro-German romantic school. . . . Schoenberg's use of the word "tradition" invariably implied German tradition. . . . (Reader 144)

Tradition in this sense, then, implies a necessary choice of context, which in Eliot's case meant a selection of recorded "literary" history with which to identify. In another article on Schoenberg, Gould wrote:

I do not believe that a language like that of Schoenberg, which tries so hard to be logical, to trumpet its logic with organic proof of a *raison d'être*, is a language which in the true sense of the word is complicated. (110)

This "secondary" complication has its counterpart in some poetry, for example, where the level of literary allusion--of such density as to be impenetrable to all but a few specialists--is not necessarily indicative, for all its abstruseness, of what Gould calls "the complex realities of art" (88): "those in which the process of rational decision

is closely allied with the instinctive process" (110). Apropos of the modernist trend towards complexity, Henry Miller wrote in his little book on Arthur Rimbaud:

The cult of art reaches its end when it exists only for a precious handful of men and women. Then it is no longer art but the cipher language of a secret society for the propagation of meaningless individuality. (37)

The process of contextualization is a necessary adjunct to understanding, but such a process is never absolutely bound by the artificial parameters of a particular system--in this case that of "the whole of the literature of Europe" (Eliot 49)--or of the world, for that matter. In the final analysis, Eliot's "Tradition" seems an Hegelian-like abstraction, the fanciful ego-creation of an erudite professional poet who did not recognise that personality and tradition, in his terms, are not mutually exclusive. When Gould states in his convocation address that the "problem begins when one forgets the artificiality of it all" (Reader 5), and ponders whether "the whole exercise of music is a demonstration of reflex operation" (5), his theoretical distance from Eliot becomes clear.

Language, like music, is also a system--albeit of fantastic complexity--whose "artificiality" must be duly respected, and whose division into separate realms of aesthetic and non-aesthetic stands as an arbitrary valuation of limited usefulness. The inescapable formalism of thought will receive attention later with reference to the work of Richard Hofstadter. Eliot partitions off an aesthetic realm because the implication of his emphasis on context would otherwise necessitate the

inclusion of more complex and perhaps more disturbing realities than he would care to admit.

Communications technology contributes to a movement away from this kind of aestheticism by confronting the homogeneity of various cultures with new perspectives, thereby highlighting the closed and artificial nature of their respective evaluative criteria. In an article entitled "The Prospects of Recording," Gould recognised that the

transmission of events and sounds around our planet has forced us to concede that there is not just one musical tradition but, rather, many musics, not all of which are concerned--by our definition of the word--with tradition. (Reader 348-9)

The primacy of moral over aesthetic considerations does not allow a portrayal of this situation as simply a competition between various aesthetic traditions, however; instead Gould speculates about the demise of the "cult of art" altogether, along with an eventual breakdown of the dichotomy between professional artist and "lay" consumer. Aesthetic judgements are often made by those whose appeal to authority rests on the utilization of a specialized body of knowledge, and whose "self-sacrifice" in acquiring that knowledge is often touted in order to conceal the reality of a more selfish motivation. W.H. Auden wrote in an essay entitled "Reading":

A poet or novelist has to learn to be humble in the face of his subject matter which is life in general. But the subject matter of a critic, before which he has to learn to be humble, is made up of authors, that is to say, of human individuals, and this kind of humility is much more difficult to acquire. (14)

The following exchange in one of Gould's published self-interviews acknowledges the magnitude of this difficulty:

g.g.: Mr. Gould, are you saying that you do not make aesthetic judgements?

G.G.: No, I'm not saying that--though I wish I were able to make that statement, because it would attest to a degree of spiritual perfection that I have not attained. (Reader, 321)

Gould recognized the inherent danger of a situation in which professional "artists"--and more insidiously, critics--have become the arbiters of taste on behalf of a passive, consumer "public," and he has specifically stated that he is "not happy with the hierarchical implications of that kind of terminology" (Reader 318). Gould offers a brief historical overview regarding this situation by referring variously in his writings to a "post-Renaissance" condition in which the practices of specialization and individualism attain their present cultural prominence. The following crude outline helps define an aspect of Gould's professional dilemma as a musician, as well as intimate an explanation of his predilection for a certain repertoire.

Gould points out that "the medieval status of the musician, one who created and performed for his own enjoyment, has long since been supplanted . . ." by a trend toward specialization, resulting in "distinctions that separated composer and performer and listener. . . ." (Reader 352). This development is also linked to individualism; for with the growth of specialization, the "uniqueness" implied by this narrowing of function becomes increasingly a part of the identity of the person it defines. Seen in this light, individualism appears an inevitable psychological compensation for the social reduction of human beings into functions; the result is an unfounded glorification of personality. Karl Marx is one of a number of nineteenth century critics to note the deleterious effects of such specialization; more recently, Michel Foucault

has elaborated the notion of the individual as a function of power, as in Discipline and Punish, where "discipline" in its penal or subordinating sense "locates" the person subjected to it both literally and figuratively. Thus when Gould refers to the Western world's "odd attachment to freedom of movement, freedom of speech," such desires can again be viewed as products of a displacement motivated by an unconscious sense of social diminution.

There are practical limits to the use of such "explanations," however; the salient point with respect to Gould's "story" is that if the professional creator-artist's identity arises from his/her function as artist, then it follows that the product of such functioning--the creative artifact--will also be a reflection of that unique "personality;" furthermore, the function of the recreative performer will have been necessarily reduced to a mere "reproducer," or at best a scrupulous scholar of the composer's "original" intentions. The romantic tradition subsequently added its own compensatory lustre to the role. The intent here, at any rate, is not to provide an exposition of the complex historical analyses that have contributed to the current understanding of authorship and subjectivity. More important in this context is Gould's assertion that as a result of new electronic technologies,

this whole question of individuality in the creative situation--the process through which the creative act results from, absorbs, and re-forms individual opinion--will be subjected to a radical reconsideration. (Reader 352)

The reasoning behind such an assertion about technology will be considered later; the point here is Gould's expressed faith in the possibility of a better future, evinced by his claim that technology is fostering, in

addition to a new kind of performer, "a new kind of listener--a listener more participant in the musical experience" (Reader 347). And to the degree such experience shares that radical reconsideration cited above, it will ultimately affect the way in which art is judged and consumed. This "new listener" was in fact a prophetic construct; since the time of Gould's article (April, 1966) the explosion of MIDI technology (musical instrument digital interface) has immersed the amateur in an almost limitless range of creative opportunities that may one day render obsolete traditionally prohibitive musical skills such as physical dexterity, or certain types of memorization.

Gould is circumspect in his claims, however, and concludes it "is a dangerous oversimplification to suggest that under the influence of electronic media we could retrograde to some condition reminiscent of the pre-Renaissance cultural monolith;" in other words, professionalism can and will continue to exist, but in an altered climate, in which art will exist under the umbrella of a moral and social responsibility not exclusively the purview of the specialist. This is, in effect, the democraticized version of an attitude towards art and morality that harks back beyond Plato's Republic, and which prompts Gould to remark, with droll understatement, of one contemporary manifestation: the "Soviets are a bit roughhewn as to method, I'll admit, but their concerns are absolutely justified" (Reader 323).

Allusion to the Soviet brand of "Marxist" social organization (the article quoted was published in 1974) is significant, if only to underscore the apparent powerlessness of so-called capitalist countries to impose any moral control over the dominant, "market-driven" social

discourse. It is clear that in such a situation, any alteration of accepted views on the "identity" problem will not

be achieved without some harassment from those who resent its implications. After all, what are the batteries of public relations men, advertising executives, and press agents doing if not attempting to provide an identification for artist and producer in a society where duplication is everywhere and where identity in the sense of information about the authors means less and less? (Reader 352)

Yet if "resentment" seems a rather subdued portrayal of the reaction provoked by such potential change, perhaps the less than imposing image of the Gouldian artist-rebel should also be acknowledged:

He should be permitted to operate in secret, as it were, unconcerned with--or, better still, unaware of--the presumed demands of the marketplace--which demands, given sufficient indifference on the part of a sufficient number of artists, will simply disappear. And given their disappearance, the artist will then abandon his false sense of "public" responsibility, and his "public" will relinquish its role of servile dependency. (Reader 318)

The question arises: does being "unconcerned or unaware of the demands of the marketplace" not imply an ignorance of the market system, whereby the artist either retreats into an insipid aestheticism, or at best becomes an unwitting dupe on behalf of the brokers of real power? Edward Said has praised Gould "the musician" because

he never recoils from the comic possibility that high counterpoint may only be a parody, pure form aspiring to the role of world-historical wisdom. (McGreevy 48)

Said's contribution to the commemorative anthology Glenn Gould Variations soon follows with a broader appraisal of Gould "the thinker:"

Gould never reflected on the unflattering complication of an enterprise such as his, which

depended ultimately on giant corporations, and anonymous mass culture, and advertising hype for its success. That he just did not look at the market system, whose creature to some degree he was, may have been cynical prudence, or it may have been that he somehow couldn't fit it into his playing. It was as if the real social setting of his work was one of the things that Gould's contrapuntal skills were not meant to absorb, however much these skills assumed the system's complaisance. (McGreevy 53-4).

A different perspective comes from Andrew Kazdin's anecdotal evidence:

Just mention the whole question of recording artist's royalties--an area that seemed to obsess him--and . . . he would admit that his espousal of socialism and equality as a lifestyle was a theoretical argument. . . . (99)

Kazdin and Said are both logically consistent in their formulation of contradictions with respect to Gould's life and work, but they also share certain widely held assumptions about the human "personality" that may actually serve as an impediment to constructive social discourse. Aestheticism and Marxism mark two vital, historically important thought-patterns whose posited "contradictions" have, with time, become institutionalized stumbling blocks to an expanded understanding of human conditioning--such as Gould's insights into the ramifications of technology would seem to offer. Said's notion of a "world-historical reality," for example, is the product of a useful but limited theoretical frame derived from nineteenth century materialist philosophy, that has been injudiciously propelled into a new and incompatible scientific context.

A major source of confusion in much of this thinking revolves around the idea of "hierarchical levels." There are two points to be considered. It is true that human biological needs are the most primary, or "basic" in

terms of physical survival, but the first problem arises when this hierarchy is analogously applied to the hierarchy of cognitive function, resulting in the fallacious conclusion that mental functions have somehow less basis in physical events. Karl Marx wrote in an 1844 essay entitled "Estranged Labor":

The whole character of a species--its species character--is contained in the character of its life activity; and free, conscious activity is man's species character. (113)

Marx goes on to say that "in degrading spontaneous, free, activity, to a means, estranged labor makes man's species life a means to his physical existence" (114). The first point is that there appears to be an essential split between "physical existence" and "spontaneous, free, activity" that suggests a dualism Marx is otherwise at pains to avoid.

Yet even if the existence of such a transcendent gulf is denied--thereby preserving Marx's truly innovative non-dualistic premise--there is a second problem that arises concerning an understanding of the processes that underlie human cognition and which in turn produce the ultimate focus of Marxist philosophy: human behaviour. Discussing the operation of the brain in terms of "low" and "high" level descriptions, Richard Hofstadter--in his book Godel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid--postulates

that thought processes can be thought of as being sealed off from neural events in the same way that the behavior of a clock is sealed off from the laws of quantum mechanics or the biology of cells is sealed off from the laws of quarks. (350)

Within the realm of scientific description there is shown to be a kind of break in continuity between levels, each of which generates "meaning" that cannot explained in terms of the others but--most importantly--whose

actual interdependence is not in doubt. In this way Hofstadter argues that the symbol-handling system that is the brain may have various levels that do not "agree" in terms of a unified, elementary description but that nonetheless share some profound, structurally unified overview. His non-dualistic analogy of human intelligence and computers reaches a rousing climax later in the book:

There is no reason to believe that a computer's faultlessly functioning hardware could not support high-level symbolic behavior which would represent such complex states as confusion, forgetting, or appreciation of beauty. It would require that there exist massive subsystems interacting with each other according to a complex "logic". (577)

Whether it is possible to "skim off" human intelligence without completely replicating lower functions (a topic discussed by Hofstadter) is not relevant here; the main point is to suggest that traditional Marxism--and much of the rhetoric it has spawned--is, for all its formalist pretension, in fact guilty of an enormous and unjustified "abstraction." A comprehensive "system" like the one proposed by Karl Marx is in this sense analogous to a type of formal system--described by Hofstadter--as the Propositional Calculus (181-97). In this system, basic elementary components called "atoms" are typographically related through propositional reasoning; that is to say, reasoning that employs the words "and," "if," "then," "or," and "not" (181). When theorems of the system are read, however, the "atoms" are not interpreted: a function Hofstadter calls "semi-interpreting" (189). The author then explains

the key idea of the Propositional Calculus: it produces theorems which, when semi-interpreted, are seen to be "universally true semisentences", by which is meant that no matter how you complete

the interpretation, the final result will be a true statement. (189)

In other words, the "inner" context of the atoms themselves is irrelevant to the interpretation; in a like manner, the "revolutionary" aspect of Marxist "system" posits a "true" (moral) outcome of its prepositional logic without reference to the actual structure of the "atoms" (brains) involved. Such a concession, however, is not tantamount to the cliched, anti-Marxist appeal to "human nature" as a fixed, inviolable entity, frequently grounded in a biological rationale (itself an unwarranted denial of mutability); it merely admits the possibility of a different and more complex understanding of human society.

The point here is to suggest that, given the complexity of the human brain, it is unlikely that any oversimplified notion of determinism that rigidly postulates human behaviour as the "rational" outcome of a biological or economic discourse will provide a satisfactory integration of symbolic levels. Marx, on the other hand, went to great pains to engage the so-called "political economists" on their own terms: that is, within the "science" of economics. Having employed his immense philosophical talent to essentially moral ends, he arrives at his famous position that the abolition of private property constitutes the supreme soteriological act in a material world.

What is at stake then is not historical or economic analysis per se, but rather the unified conception of personality--based on a "classical" scientific model--to which such analysis is applied. It may be that the symbolic order from which moral values is derived is of a complexity that is not accessible to a linear logic, but which is nonetheless intimately connected to something not alien to our sense of "reason;" it is the

contention of this paper that such is the discourse to which Gould has directed his considerable talents. The effect of such an analysis, however, is to remove economic discourse from its pre-eminent status over all other conditions in the moral universe: a process parallel to the democratization of aestheticism, whereby the esoteric mysteries of an academic "priesthood" no longer has exclusive claim as moral specialist.

It seems unfair to condemn Gould for summarily ignoring the present collective configuration of power and its relation to inefficiency, global eco-genocide, war, exploitation of labour, unemployment and poverty. The issue, at any rate, is not to doubt the usefulness of close analysis of such matters; critics like Said, however, miss the point. Gould's wealth and relative freedom of action do not automatically convict him of indifference to "the world-historical process." Gould's uniqueness lies in his sensitivity to the force of the socialist critique of capitalism, which he sought to deal with by reaffirming the personal and concrete reality of the individual in terms of a powerful materialist analysis of the mind. Gould was not an anti-materialist; but both as "maker" and "analyst" he was disturbed by the limitations of a materialist solution which he felt had not succeeded in encompassing the material reality of the creating individual, any more than Eliot's impersonal "tradition" would encompass it.

Said's critique goes even further, as when he writes of Gould: "[y]et he was far from being a pastoral idiot-savant despite his affinity for the silence and solitude of the North" (McGreevy 54). Andrew Kazdin,

too, embraced the notion of Gould as naive, one-dimensional genius, only to reject it:

For only a fleeting instant, it has crossed my mind that Gould was a kind of idiot savant, exhibiting genius-like knowledge and talents on one particular subject but evidencing subnormal intelligence everywhere else. I convinced myself that this could not be the case with him because his superior knowledge extended past the scope of music and reached into literature, philosophy, politics, and history. Still, even within the areas he excelled in, I would accidentally run into an "air pocket" of childish naivete. (124)

Such critiques, for all their apparent objectivity, might even be viewed as attempts to disarm the transgressive nature of some of Gould's ideas by recourse to his "personality". Surely "affinity for silence" and "air pocket of naivete" are in normal usage so far removed from the notion of the "idiot-savant" that their linkage in this context should arouse suspicion of a much deeper, concealed motivation; moreover, such language can be seen to exploit cliches about the nature of art and artists which may well be in the user's interest to perpetuate.

The exigencies of communication require sensitivity and intelligence; the ability to appreciate the intricate history of words, as well as the dynamic historical and psychological context into which they are spoken (such a context may include "economics"). Gould is acutely aware not only of the necessity of this process, but also the responsibility of the speaker to achieve an appropriate formalism of expression in order to safeguard--inherently flawed though it is--against misinterpretation. This is what he means when he is critical of "the Occidental notion that one can successfully separate word and deed" (Reader 323); freedom of speech in this context shifts from being a

servant of the ego (freedom of "self"-assertion) to being a servant of truthfulness (as opposed to truth). Words that flow into a dynamic situation are "acts," and because it is not possible to ever know precisely what one is saying or to whom, the necessity to speak involves a risk: a risk, however, that can be minimized by an attention to form, and a willingness to listen.

One side of the balance scale of communication, then, is the concept of control, which is in turn the product of analysis. Andrew Kazdin misinterprets Gould's intentions when he views his long-time collaborator's obsession with control as a morally dubious attempt at "self"-concealment, rather than a willingness to embrace the rigors of formal expression.

Perhaps the ultimate in media control came about when an author named Geoffrey Payzant set about the job of writing a biography of Gould Somehow Payzant wrote the book without extensive interviews with Gould (or any of his intimates) and based his point of view solely on Glenn's writings, recordings, and other personal creations. It was perfect for Gould. All the fruits of a lifetime of media control came home to flower at once. (87-8)

Payzant proceeded from an understanding of Gould's position, however; that is to say, any total abandonment of formalism is not an escape into "freedom," but rather an escape into the rigid formalism of the "self".

This leaves the other side of the metaphorical "scale", and the responsibility it implies, which is nothing but the challenge of everyday creative life: entrance into the breathtakingly elusive domain of self-referentiality. This "self" is composed of the very same "communal" language that has created the contextual analysis it plans to enter, but the formality of that context is never grasped by logic alone, as

Hofstadter's observations demonstrate: a new, "higher" logic is necessary, and Gould's word for such an organizational tool is "intuition". The result of such reorganization requires a reconfiguration of language, a new use of words, a new attitude to their expressive capabilities or lack of precision. The real, "world-historical" power of words, however, lays on us a burden of usage: communicate effectively. Silence in the sense of no communication is moral deficiency; and yet there must be silence, if communication is ever to occur. The personality must be silent; otherwise the airwaves are simply filled with the lifeless echo of dead words, "social selves." Only in silence--the suspension of the person--can there be awareness. John Cage acknowledged this with his most memorable aphorism: "I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY AND I AM SAYING IT" (51). True, there is nothing to say, but the saying of it, in Gould's terms, represents the whole complex, painful business of conscious life--not as easily accomplished as the roll of a die (though both death and chance are indeed required).

Occasionally, both sides of the communication scale are balanced, however, and the burden of communication is lifted as if by its own gravity: such is the status of Bach's Goldberg Variations in the "personal" world of Glenn Gould:

It has, then, unity through intuitive perception, unity born of craft and scrutiny, mellowed by mastery achieved, and revealed to us here, as so rarely in art, in the vision of subconscious design exulting upon a pinnacle of potency. (Reader 28)

POLYPHONY

The structure of Bach's Goldberg Variations can be said to have meaning insofar as it represents at one or more levels of reality what Hofstadter defines as a recoverable, "information-preserving transformation" called an isomorphism (9). Furthermore, "the more complex the isomorphism, in general, the more "equipment"--both hardware and software--is required to extract the meaning from the symbols" (82). There are obvious limits, however; no matter how appealing the structure, no matter how suggestive of many levels of "resonance", such a structure will of necessity be limited, bound by its own material form. It may indeed contain isomorphic elements that are initially inexpressible or unconscious; sometimes these connections may be discovered or analyzed at a future time, rendering new meaning and new perspectives about the world and the present structure of the human brain, whether individually, to groups, or to brains in general. When Gould comments that "art is not created by rational animals and in the long run is better for not being so created" (Reader GGR), he appreciates the fact that the products of conscious system will generally be less likely to serve as a source of potential meaning than those conceived with the aid of intuitive perception. Yet even when the existence of such "unconscious" isomorphisms are acknowledged--including those produced by changes in the environment (which theoretically could be infinite but are in practise limited by the varying degrees of stability of the world "outside")--it must be maintained that structures as such can only represent a limited amount of meaning.

A simple illustration of both verbal and musical isomorphism, as well as a warning of the moral danger posed by particular isomorphic structures can be found in Canadian poet-musician Jane Siberry's seemingly whimsical "pop"-song entitled "Everything Reminds Me of My Dog". The narrative voice of this composition essentially itemizes a catalogue of objects and situations that remind her of her pet canine; for example: "Sunsets remind me of my dog" (9). The verb "remind" expresses the relation as an isomorphism, because the meaning produced is a function of some quality of the object under consideration (sunsets) that represents "transformed" information about the dog (the song never completes the specific "equation", but an example for "sunsets" would be: the peaceful demeanour of the dog as it "sinks" to the floor for a nap). The fact the dog reminds her of everything, however, implies that it functions--for the singer, at least--as an exceedingly powerful isomorphic symbol. The listener, alternatively, is driven to question the profundity of such meaning; to ask what "structure" there is in the dog-context that enables the whole world to be interpreted isomorphically through it. The answer, presumably, is the relation of "love". "Love", however, can be understood in two senses: on the one hand, an "openness" of feeling inspired by the dog may ultimately reflect an intuition that all things are intimately connected on some profound level of existence; on the other hand, there may be a love marked by a psychological attachment to the particular dog that creates an extremely shallow world-view, limited because it is centred around the arbitrary (in its application to the world) collection of attributes that are "defined" by the dog. The intellectual result of such a world-view may be exceedingly complex, involving a great deal of

complicated abstract thought--energized by the power of the attachment--but which nonetheless renders little isomorphic meaning about the more general structure of the world. These are in effect Gould's notions of real and apparent complexity.

Music, like language, is a semiotic system also able to convey meaning. The effectiveness of Siberry's composition is manifest through its accompaniment of each dog-isomorphism by an obsessive melodic phrase harmonized to a simple IV-V progression which--by its lack of tonic resolution--supports the notion that the "ego" is asserting itself in the guise of the object of affection; in other words, the attachment to the dog is rendered musically as an apparent lack of ego. Only when the prepositional phrase "if you remind me of my dog" is resolved with "we'll probably git [sic] along" (emphasis added) (9), does the harmony finally modulate to the tonic, thereby linking "we" with an ego that has been implicit in the musical structure from the start.

In a more complex way, the Goldberg Variations' structure contains a translated moral discourse, elaborated by Gould in the liner notes to his 1955 recording. The Variations, however profound, remains a "system" nonetheless; therefore any "attachment" to that system in a psychological sense will be limiting, any interpretation of the "world" or "reality" through such a vehicle ultimately as obsessive and wrong-headed as the "ego" of Siberry's song (despite Gould's two recorded versions of the Goldbergs his almost universal practise of recording a particular piece only once could be interpreted as an expression of the necessity for "moving on"). Marxist thought also provides a moral analogy that links this negative notion of attachment with concepts of "ownership" and

"identity". Yet attachment can occur to any structure (even one expressing non-attachment); it may be instructive, then, to contrast this with the implications of the opposite process: namely, detachment.

Detachment that is simply withdrawal from the world is inappropriate if this implies a lack of concern with the self and its relations to that world. If, on the other hand, the modulation to the tonic is made--the relationship between the individual ego and the world is made more explicit by the particular encounter with system--then behaviour can be modified. The withdrawal, then, is seen to be from "society" in an external sense only; that is to say, the individual, in isolation, becomes aware of him/herself as a concrete instance of the social world. Gould expresses this form of detachment through his use of the religious expression "in the world but not of the world," which plays an important role in his work, most explicitly in the radio documentary on a Mennonite community entitled The Quiet in the Land (Trilogy). The nature of self-referentiality compels a realization that effective moral discourse is not simply a function of "objective" reason, even of an order of fantastic complication. Gould's emphasis on system, however, is an acknowledgement that intuition in his sense is not an escape from formalism, but rather partakes in the expressed purpose of Hofstadter's treatise to offer

new insights into the seemingly unbreachable gulf
between the formal and the informal, the animate
and the inanimate, the flexible and the
inflexible. (26)

Systems of thought that encourage moral process should be regarded as one regards good friends: limited, but capable of inspiring positive growth. Such friendship is effective when it shares a common commitment to honesty, and this "selfless" quality of relation which unfastens the

straight-jacket of "subjective vs. objective" thought is contrasted with the dual-ism of the "concerto" idea in this Gouldian critique:

Perhaps, however, there is, in human nature, some intuitive perception of coherent formal patterns which individuality per se cannot bestow, and collectivity per se cannot deny; if so, it renders the hierarchical divisions and competitive impulses of the virtuoso concerto psychologically naive and architecturally destructive. (Reader 347)

This is a fascinating statement; it places the popular romantic penchant for the virtuoso concerto in a very broad intellectual context, and deftly underscores the depth of Gould's creative endeavors. Western culture has become a battlefield of antonyms: spiritual-material, individual-collective, conservative-radical, classical-romantic, spontaneous-disciplined, artistic-scientific, emotional-intellectual, feminine-masculine--all taking their place among the legion of abstract autocrats vying for sovereignty over the Empire of Truth; here the illusory "separation of word and deed" is exposed in all its gory malevolence, inscrutably binding the most brutish domestic violence with the smartest multi-national bomb. It seems apt Niels Bohr chose the conciliatory noun "complementarity" to marshall the forces of understanding spawned by the new physics; a definition of the term appears in the appendix of Paul Buckley and F. David Peat's book of interviews with prominent physicists:

When two descriptions of an event do not overlap common sense would dictate that an error has been made; Bohr's complementarity, however, would indicate that a profound truth is being approached. (153)

It is possible in this light to more fully appreciate the analogy provided by baroque musical conception. Being forthright about having

"developed a resentment pattern in relation to those tunes . . . which represent and which characterize the spirit of their respective compositions" (Reader 48), Gould finds disfavour--evident in his review of a book entitled The Interpretation of Bach's Keyboard Works--with a then-prevalent homophonic interpretive bias:

To the author, the "interpretation" of Bach means the solution of those problems that govern the flow of melodic line But none of these problems can be seen in proper perspective when viewed in the single dimension of its linear aspect. (Reader 30)

What is lacking here is an awareness of that multi-dimensionality described by Hofstadter--that complementarity--whereby "each note in a canon has more than one musical meaning; the listener's ear and brain automatically figure out the appropriate meaning, by referring to context" (8).

This is not to minimize the centrality of linear context for the baroque; on the contrary, Gould maintains the "nature of the contrapuntal experience is that every note has to have a past and a future on the horizontal plane" (Reader 36). Fugal development is in this respect analogous to the causal continuum of historical evolution, and thus forever subject to a process of chronological analysis. On the other hand, there co-exists a vertical dimension which seems to represent another level of causality, based in a psychologically oriented, experiential dimension of tension and resolution, or "inner" harmony. The intriguing aspect of Bach's harmonic language, for Gould, is that it eschews the new enlightenment rigor of "classical" sonata logic, where "the question of vigorous, masculine tonic themes and gentle, feminine dominant themes . . ." (Reader 38) allies itself with the emerging

autonomy of the tune in its historical struggle for "liberation." Such unambiguous logic, however, imposes a rigidly deterministic harmonic fate on its material; Bach, alternatively, "manages to determine his harmonic vocabulary on an almost piece-by-piece basis" (Reader 18).

Such flexible methodology is possible because the fugue

is not a form as such, in the sense that the sonata . . . is a form, but rather an invitation to invent a form relevant to the idiosyncratic demands of the composition. Success in fugue writing depends upon the degree to which a composer can relinquish formulae in the interests of creating form. . . . (Reader 16)

This emphasis on the "individual" solution is reminiscent of a parable recounted by Martin Buber and attributed to a certain Rabbi Susya: "In the world to come I shall not be asked: 'Why were you not Moses?' I shall be asked: 'Why were you not Susya?'" (Hasidism 140). Evidently, however, Bach did not become Bach--in Gould's terms--without a struggle: due to his early lack of

technical facility to cope with the purely harmonic consequences of what he was doing, there's a breakdown of communication between the vertical and horizontal dimensions. . . . (Reader 36)

Communication is thus portrayed as the necessary function of a "technical facility" not defined by any pre-existing methodological conception; that is to say, the vertical hierarchy of "inner" values cannot run off by itself, as it were, incognizant of its relations with the historical realities of contextual analysis, but neither can their true alliance be reduced to a completely "graspable" formalism. Gould's own recreative technique for an out-of-sequence recording of the opening aria of the

Goldberg Variations--described on a CBC radio broadcast--gives evidence of such a creative submission to discipline:

I then turned to that ingenuous little sarabande and found that it took me twenty takes in order to locate a character for it which would be sufficiently neutral so as not to prejudge the depth of involvement that comes later in the work. It was a question of utilizing the first twenty takes to erase all superfluous expression from my reading of it and there's nothing more difficult to do; the natural instinct of the performer is to add, not to subtract. (CBC rebroadcast, date ?)

It is instructive to compare an alternative conception of a technologically enhanced self-sacrifice whose moral quality stems from a diametric orientation toward freedom and the ego; in this scene a very young G. Gordon Liddy forces himself to confront the image of an habitual source of fear:

There was just one word for the Hindenberg: awesome. Ecstatic, I drank in its colossal power and felt myself grow--swelling with strength. Fear evaporated and in its place came a sense of personal might and power. (13)

The fundamental question again arises: what is the bridge between the exiled dualities of western thought? Faith and commitment are apparently involved--a faith, more specifically, that is reasonable; a commitment that is both voluntary and inescapable. The pragmatism of a non-dualistic outlook symbolically returns humankind and its central nervous system to the bosom of nature, healing a wound of separation that has driven the species--in all its pride--to the edge of extinction. Seeds sown by physicists early in the twentieth century have produced a belated blossoming of human consciousness, with renewed roots in the dynamic system of relations from which it arose. It is no longer prudent

to rely upon a species-poor athleticism, groomed to negotiate with a deft "religious leap" the ever-widening abyss of chaos. When Gould states that the "purpose of art is not the release of a momentary ejection of adrenaline but is, rather, the gradual, life-long construction of a state of wonder and serenity" (Reader 246), he concurs that culture (in the broadest sense) can no longer afford to dance to either the monotonous drumming of a biological beat or the ghastly strains of pathological abstraction.

Ironically, the implicit foundation of the "computer age" does not rest upon such dehumanizing, hierarchical confusion:

In short, it amounts to faith that the brain operates in a way which is, in principle, understandable. It is a piece of reductionist faith. (Hofstadter 572)

The entire thrust of Hofstadter's massive thesis, however, also lends credibility to the notion that formal systems are open-ended, and never completely free from the pregnant entanglements of ambiguity; therefore he chides those "who see in anything smacking of numbers or exactitude a threat to human values" (575). In a similar vein, Gould's article on "The Prospects of Recording" takes issue with musical performance informed by an apprehension "that clarity could be an enemy of mystery . . ." (Reader 337).

British physicist Stephen Hawking also muses over a fundamental correspondence between mind and universe, noting that

ever since the dawn of civilization, people have not been content to see events as unconnected and inexplicable. They have craved an understanding of the underlying order in the world. (13)

Far from providing justification for anthropocentric delusion, the assumption of underlying order can serve as an accurate measure of the absurdity and vanity of human thought, for the whole question of honesty or lack thereof is predicated on a belief in the mind and its specific relation to an order in which it perceives itself as participant. In a fundamentally capricious universe, such a notion of honesty and the values it may engender--including the possibility of access to "deeper" levels of communication--becomes meaningless.

Robert Pirsig's consideration of French philosopher-mathematician Henri-Jules Poincare adds dimension to this portrait of a scientifically compatible faith. "Mathematics," Pirsig paraphrases, "doesn't merely make the most combinations possible according to certain fixed laws The true work of the inventor consists in choosing among these combinations so as to eliminate the useless ones" (240). Such invention, moreover, is achieved by a hypothetical perspective Poincare called the "subliminal self."

Mathematical solutions are selected by the subliminal self on the basis of "mathematical beauty," of the harmony of numbers and forms, of geometric elegance. (240)

This seems, ironically, to bring the whole question of values back to the realm of aesthetics, thereby subverting an insistence on the primacy of morality; the contradiction, however, is only inescapable if there remains unwillingness to accept the hazards of Gould's pilgrimage to the elusive "neutral character" of the self.

Other writers have found ways of expressing a similar conception of the brain and its potential for growth:

He is thirsty, and is cut off from a spring by a mere clump of bushes. But he is divided against himself: one part overlooks the whole, sees that he is standing here and that the spring is just beside him; but another part notices nothing, has at most a divination that the first part sees all. But as he notices nothing he cannot drink. (Kafka 185)

One possible interpretation for Kafka's "clump of bushes" is the ego, and its inability to submit to the reality of its own formality (and hence limitation); the ability of self-observation, however--to take "notice" of its own structure--is represented, paradoxically, as the key to a larger vision. Geoffrey Payzant is helpful in defining Gould's understanding of this special awareness:

He uses the word "ecstasy" with the strict meaning I have mentioned: a condition in which an individual has some sense of standing outside himself To respond passively, or to respond merely by adding one's voice to the voice of a howling mob at a spectacle, is to shirk a responsibility to oneself, to miss an opportunity to come to terms with oneself. (64-5)

In Pirsig's terms, such a commitment comes under the aegis of "caring:"

And it occurred to me there is no manual that deals with the real business of motorcycle maintenance, the most important aspect of all. Caring about what you are doing is considered either unimportant or taken for granted. (25)

Thus there exist various attempts at articulating a quality of moral process that hints at the resolution of what Pirsig identifies as an endemic "noncoalescence between reason and feeling" (149).

Perhaps the most crucial component involved in such a resolution is an understanding of the changing context of the physical sciences with respect to notions of determinism and causality; there is nothing in Gould's thinking more characteristic of this evolution than his

reflections on the concept of spontaneity, as it applies both to musical improvisation and the recording process. Spontaneity for Gould is not simply a function of a linear conception of time, whereby the highest degree of "freedom" is equated with an exclusive awareness of the exigencies of the "present" chronological moment. The spontaneity-forethought dichotomy breaks down, in fact, with a recognition that the "programmed" nature of thought is a function of the past, and further, that the demands of the "uncontrolled" present are not of necessity conducive to the kind of awareness embodied in the Gouldian "polyphonic" ideal.

Arthur Stanley Eddington quotes several definitions of determinism in his book New Pathways in Science before commenting: "It is important to notice that all three definitions introduce the time element. Determinism postulates not merely causes but pre-existing causes. Determinism means predetermination" (76). Quantum physics introduces chance into the most fundamental levels of physical phenomena, however, resulting in a scientific shift of expectations whereby "the probable prediction is an end in itself; it is not an approximate attempt at a certain prediction" (77). On the other hand, Eddington is quick to maintain that the "rejection of determinism is in no sense an abdication of scientific method" (73). These factors contribute to the following analysis:

The future is never entirely determined by the past, nor is it ever entirely detached. We have referred to several phenomena in which the future is practically determined; the break-down of a radium nucleus is an example of a phenomenon in which the future is practically detached from the past. (83)

The basic philosophical shift in certain assumptions of science has corresponding repercussions in the realm of psychology; discontinuities introduced by physics urge Eddington to comment with respect to the problem of Free Will, "that the door is not barred and bolted for a solution less repugnant to our deepest intuitions than that which has hitherto seemed to be forced upon us" (74). New conceptions and theories regarding the nature of time and thought have also enabled a thinker like Gould to plausibly put forward an argument--referring in the following excerpt to the artistic career of Richard Strauss--"that man can create his own synthesis of time without being bound by the conformities that time imposes" (Reader 92). Gould harbours a sceptical attitude toward any method of historical analysis, however widely accepted, whose pronouncements are unduly authoritarian: in this case the practise of judging art in terms of a linear standard of technological evolution.

On the other hand, Gould refers to the concept of "originality" as a matter of statistical analysis (surprisingly reminiscent of the new physics), yielding what he designates simply an "imitation-invention ratio" (Reader 94):

Within this statistic no work of art is ever genuinely "original"--if it were, it would be unrecognizable. All art is really variation upon some other art, and the more we divorce the application of terms like "originality" from those analytical observations to which they can profitably apply, the more uncertain is the ground upon which we erect our evaluations of art. (Reader 94)

Ultimately, the indeterminacy implied by improvisatory experience exists not as an exclusively pursued ideal, but rather as part of a complex

process of interaction, as the following remarks from a CBC radio broadcast imply:

Within every creative person there is an inventor at odds with a museum curator, and most of the startling things that happen in music are the result of some momentary gain by one at the expense of the other. The free-form extension which improvisation implicitly commends supplements and lends perspective to the controlled compositional experience which underlies musical theory. It brings one back to an encounter with certain primeval tenets of the idea of music. It reminds one that the will to communicate is antecedent to the urge to formulate communication; that for the composer even as for the listener there are limits to immediate comprehension, to complete understanding of the "why" of his process, and that very deficiency augurs a certain tolerance in their relationship. Above all it suggests to us the importance of distinguishing between sentiments inspired by genuine reaction and impression and those aroused by the need to react and to feel impressed. . . . (CBC rebroadcast, date ?)

The "deficiency" of understanding which Gould posits as inherent to the creative act is related to his own notions of positive system and negativity, as well as British physicist David Bohm's conviction, for example, that even

physics is primarily concerned with unambiguous communications; rather that all concepts are ambiguous, and that there are certain unambiguous abstractions that can be made from our ambiguous concepts. (Buckley 128)

And as Gary Zukav writes in his layperson's guide to physics, The Dancing Wu Li Masters, "the dilemma of having to talk in classical terms about phenomena which cannot be described in classical concepts is the basic paradox of quantum mechanics" (202). Earlier in the book, Zukav describes

a significant philosophical product of this dilemma by posing the arch-question of modern physics:

How can mutually exclusive wave-like and particle-like behaviors both be properties of one and the same light? They are not properties of light. They are properties of our interaction with light. Depending upon our choice of experiment, we can cause light to manifest either particle-like properties or wave-like properties. (93)

The common denominator between this "scientific" line of thought and Gould's aesthetics--as represented here--is the notion of dualism. According to David Bohm,

There has to be a very big change in our way of thinking. I believe that quantum mechanics and relativity both point, to some extent, to what step is needed. Fundamentally, the step is to be free of this division between the self and the world, the observer and the observed. (Buckley 144)

Returning to the imagery of Gould's radio broadcast, the job of the museum curator is not only to preserve but to analyze and evaluate artifacts inherited from the past, and since human thought is one such artifact--manufactured by culture, biology, etc.--the job description must be broadened to include self-analysis. The inventor, on the other hand, must not act merely as sorcerer's apprentice, but rather must claim responsibility for the act of creation and its consequences, must as far as possible strive to overcome the "deficiency" that very act has spawned. Nor is this an elite occupational hazard; rather it is an obligation bound inextricably to the use of language in general. Zukav writes:

It appears that we have attempted the impossible, to disown our part in the universe. We have tried to do this by relinquishing our authority to the Scientists. (92)

Indeed, Eddington's chapter entitled "The Decline of Determinism" concurs: the "two aspects of human freedom on which I would lay most stress are responsibility and self-understanding" (89).

The focus of Gould's quest from this perspective becomes the attempt to reflect on and articulate from an experience of "genuine reaction and impression," to question whether such a vantage point is possible, and if so, to attempt to communicate in a creative way (none other is possible). It may be worthwhile in this context to consider in greater detail Gould's reticence to accept the use of aleatoric compositional techniques as theorized by composers such as John Cage.

Speaking of a contemporary piece "which is indeterminate with respect to its performance" (38) as well as aspects of its composition, Cage posits that

each performer, when he performs in a way consistent with the composition as written, will let go of his feelings, his taste, his automatism, his sense of the universal, not attaching himself to this or to that The performer therefore simply does what is to be done, not splitting his mind in two, not separating it from his body, which kept ready for direct and instantaneous contact with his instrument. (39)

In his laudable desire to promote a state of awareness not based on psychological attachment, Cage argues that the employment of chance will help create form--"the composition as written"--that in effect "contains" non-attachment. Yet such a representation is in the last analysis merely another externally applied "system" that short-circuits the paradoxical relation of freedom and responsibility through its own attachment to the "idea" of chance.

This is not to belittle the philosophical significance of chance, nor does it necessarily imply a critique of Cage's music per se. It can serve to highlight, however, that certain assumptions in the Cage quotation above are based on an unambiguous conception of time, the limitations of which have been suggested not only by Gould, but fundamentally by modern physics. David Bohm has said:

I think that the main questions to be considered are: "what is time?" "what is movement?" "what is thought?" I believe that time is entirely constructed by our way of thinking. You find time only by recalling images of what has been. Those images must be based on what is in the brain, but the "what is" is implicit or enfolded. Remembering the past consists of unfolding this image into a series, and we say "that's the way it was." (Buckley 139)

If "living in the present" is interpreted solely as a function of "live performance," "improvisation," "in touch with the body," etc., there is a risk the varying demands of the moment will encourage a counter-productive uniformity of perspective ironically dominated by the past. Such linear chronology does not afford the degree of complexity made possible, Gould argues, by recording technology:

By taking advantage of the post-taping afterthought, however, one can very often transcend the limitations that performance imposes upon the imagination. (Reader 339)

Response-ability means flexibility in the face of change, but such "presence" of mind can only become truly polyphonic if it includes sensitivity to the "inner" environment, to the "tape-loop" redundancy of biological, cultural, and personal programs. "Performance" implies a separation between the audience that hears and the self that performs. David Bohm comments on the changing perception of the latter:

The thought of the self has always been built around the idea that the self is an eternal substance, either material or spiritual, or both, and sometimes called the soul. I think our views of matter and our views of ourselves are implicitly related. (Buckley 141)

The physicist Henry Pierce Stapp--quoted in Zukav's book--also articulates, from the position of modern science, a position in which the physical world and that of mind are inextricably bound:

According to the new view, the complete description of nature at the atomic level was given by probability functions that referred, not to underlying microscopic space-time realities, but rather to the macroscopic objects of sense experience. The theoretical structure did not extend down and anchor itself on fundamental microscopic space-time realities. Instead it turned back and anchored itself in the concrete sense realities that form the basis of social life . . . (39)

This is a world which, from an older vantage point, is a world cut loose from its scientific and philosophical moorings; a world which uncomfortably challenges the individual to fashion his or her own bearings as it flaunts the deficiencies of sense and the frailty of existence; a world bedeviled, as it were, by "the many sides of truth" (Reader 91). Given this historical "reality," is it not expedient to find in a derisive, omni-present irony the greatest reassurance--that by transforming the uncertainty of commitment into the status of a universal principle, it is possible to forego the ignominy of a possibly fraudulent faith? Is the suggestion of a "transfiguring light of ultimate philosophical repose" (Reader 91) a cunning conservative euphemism for the sheen of gold--or, alternatively, can it represent the expression of a lived experience not tethered to the certitudes of either religious creed or classical science? The career of Glenn Gould is predicated on a love

of polyphony: the art of multiple voices, and, inevitably--multiple questions.

PYTHAGORAS

The preface to Geoffrey Payzant's "biographical" study contends that "Gould is not a pianist who takes time away from the piano to think. He is a musical thinker who makes use of all available means to thought, including the piano" (ix). It is the concern of the present chapter to elaborate within a broad context--beyond the scope of even Payzant's usage--what is implied by the epithet "musical thinker." The humble niche reserved for music within the contemporary syllabus of a typical North American elementary school is clear measure of the cultural change that has transpired over the course of Western civilization; a consideration of such evolution is crucial to an understanding of the deeper significance of Gould's thought. Hugo Leichtentritt explains in his book Music, History and Ideas:

In the Bible music and medicine, the art of healing sickness, are closely connected by mysterious magical ties; music has the power of calming as well as exciting the passions. The Greeks intensified and systematized this doctrine by basing on it their entire system of public education. (16)

The status of music as symbolic of an epistemological interconnectedness is reinforced by considering the derivation of its name from the word "Muses," representing "Greek deities of poetry, literature, music, and dance; later also of astronomy, philosophy, and all intellectual pursuits" (Hammond and Scullard 704). In particular, close connection with literature should be stressed, for nearly "every form of Greek poetry was, or had at some time been, associated with music: even the poems of Homer were originally chanted. . ." (Hammond and Scullard 705). One of the most intriguing things Mikhail Bakhtin has to say about

the transition from oral to written culture occurs in a simple sentence at the outset of his essay entitled "Epic and Novel:" "Of all the major genres only the novel is younger than writing and the book: it alone is organically receptive to new forms of mute perception, that is, to reading" (3).

"Mute perception" acknowledges the split that the birth of the novel delineates: music, the world of transient sound, is about to part company with the realm of print, the silent, "permanent" world of ideas. Moreover, this change is seen by Bakhtin as a technological one, a product of "writing and the book." The greatest virtue of the typographical system is its ability to store information in a medium that is not subject--once "fixed"--to the psychological sifting and ordering which characterizes bio-computer memory; hence, the written word appears more "objective" in that it does not foreground the initial process of translation or "coding," and further, its relative permanence and "repeatability" highlights the "reality" and "stability" of the world of ideas as opposed to the "thing-world" of which the message is composed.

Music, on the other hand, seems to represent an altogether different realm of experience, despite the fact it too acquired the use of typography. There are several obvious reasons for such an outcome; Leichtentritt notes, for example:

It was only very late, comparatively speaking, that a practically useful notation of music was invented, certainly thousands of years after the invention of the letters of the alphabet. (3)

The use of such a system was lost to the middle ages, moreover, thereby delaying even further the technological advancement of music (Leichtentritt 4). There is, at any rate, no pretence in music to a one-

to-one correspondence with the external world as exists with language, for musical reference seems directed "inward" to the reality of psychological or emotional states, or at best toward general, unspecified classes of "external" things or events capable of eliciting such states.

Finally, music as sound always presented an impenetrable technological barrier, in that no medium existed that could store it; while visual typographical storage imparted an "objective" permanence to the thoughts it represented, musical typography always implied a "subjective" arbiter for their continued existence in the form of a performer. Musical art seemed inherently closer to the transitory, the ephemeral flux of experience, and always availed itself of an "improvisatory" element which allied it more closely with the eternally changing present than that of the written word.

Yet Bakhtin's discussion about epic and novel makes a valid case for an inversion of these temporal distinctions between the genres (with the assumption that epic and music are inseparable parts of oral culture)--a predicament that underscores, if nothing else, the inherent difficulties in any conceptualization of time. As David Bohm has said:

Movement is fundamental and time is an order which we derive. Movement is the fact with which we begin. You cannot specify movement unambiguously. . . . (Buckley 139)

In Bakhtin's terms oral culture is defined by its special relationship to the past: "[i]n ancient literature it is memory, and not knowledge, that serves as the source and power for the creative impulse" (15). "Memory" here, however, is not being employed in its ordinary usage, but rather refers to an "absolute past" that "is not to be confused with time in our exact and limited sense of the word; it is rather a temporally valorized

hierarchical category" (Bakhtin 18): in short, it is "mythological". On the other hand, the novel appears to break down the barrier of an epic past that "is locked into itself and walled off from all subsequent times," by desacralizing (with the aid of humour) a "tradition" which "isolates the world of the epic from personal experience, from any new insights, from any personal initiative in understanding and interpreting, from new points of view and evaluations" (Bakhtin 17). The novel, alternatively, is noteworthy for creating "a zone of contact with the present in all its openendedness" (Bakhtin 7).

"Tradition" in the above sense presupposes a kind of unanimity between participants, a community of listeners that shares the same body of presuppositions; in this sense, as well, the epic experience is a public one, and within this reality the individual cannot exist as a source of "personal initiative." The novel thus heralds the movement towards individual freedom which comes as a result of the breakup of a monolithic, a-historical epic consciousness. "For the first time in artistic-ideological consciousness, time and the world become historical. . . ." (Bakhtin 30): that is to say, the technological revolution of "writing and the book" resulted in a mode of thought that viewed the present moment as capable of being expressed as the result of a causal analysis.

Depending on the choice of language, therefore, the epic state of mind is either an intense experience of the present or a ritualized ideological construction of the past; conversely, the novel presents a creative, open-ended exploration of the present, or a static, typographical blueprint. In addition, the discussion engenders

conflicting views of subjectivity: with the epic, the notion of a public experience of wholeness of time and cosmos is analogous to what is now often termed a private state of "psychological presence;" with the novel, the solitary reader encounters the present most effectively or "realistically" by attempting an ever-expanding understanding of the external "forces" that unfold on the temporal plane of history. It is clear that the nature of these paradoxical constructions of time and subjectivity must come under even greater scrutiny if the Gouldian proposal of "communication" is indeed an intelligible possibility, or to what extent such a dialogue exists in Gould's own creations.

It is necessary at this juncture to consider the transition from oral to literate culture in terms of a wider historical process of technological evolution, as proposed, for example, by Marshall McLuhan, a fellow-Canadian of whose work Glenn Gould was well aware. For McLuhan, the phonetic alphabet--"with its abstraction of meaning from sound and the translation of sound into a visual code" (22)--is only one stage of a long process of altering human beings' "ratio of senses" in favour of a dominantly visual mode of experience whose next great technological milestone was the invention of the moveable-type printing press. "With the instressed concern with one sense only, the mechanical principle of abstraction and repetition emerges into explicit form" (McLuhan 18-19).

In retrospect, the privileging of the visual seems dependent on the fact it offered the best method of storing information: a system of differences based on olfactory information, for example, has obvious shortcomings (magnified even further in light of our hereditary abilities vis-a-vis other mammals). This last point is important not only to

emphasize a degree of "naturalness" inherent in technological evolution, but even more importantly to illuminate the "technological" character of nature. The "ratio of senses" of which McLuhan writes is not a fixed function which the artifice of humankind alone has altered; rather, human intervention is part of an even larger technological evolution that must include the achievements of biology. For example, Mircea Eliade has speculated about the cultural ramifications of the "technology" of bipedalism:

It is because of man's vertical posture that space is organized in a structure inaccessible to the prehominiens: in four horizontal directions radiating from an "up"-"down" central axis. . . . It is from this original and originating experience--feeling oneself "thrown" into the middle of an apparently limitless, unknown, and threatening extension--that the different methods of orientatio are developed; for it is impossible to survive for any length of time in the vertigo brought on by disorientation. This experience of space oriented around a "center" explains the importance of the paradigmatic divisions and distributions of territories, agglomerations, and habitations and their cosmological symbolism. (Stone Age 4)

In his book The Gutenberg Galaxy McLuhan credits another Canadian, Harold Innes, as "the first person to hit upon the process of change as implicit in the forms of media technology" (50). The thrust of what was to become McLuhan's signature aphorism--"the medium is the message"--also appears in Gould's writings, as in the following reflections about the evolution of sound recording technique:

One can't simply assume by going to stereo or, as we will now shortly do, to quadraphony, you can use the quadraphonic perceptions or the stereo perceptions in order to do a better job with the problems that grew out of mono techniques. You can't make a rationale for the new modality out of those solved problems. (Reader 388).

The new world of electronic media is creating an historical watershed symbolized by another McLuhan precept to attain cliché status--that of "the global village." Here the "new modality" signifies diametric change to the deeply entrenched "visual" rationale that is traced through the pages of The Gutenberg Galaxy and amplified with the use of such terms as "abstract," "fixed," "sequential," "specialized," "lineal," etc. Yet even as McLuhan articulates the coming of the new mass "audile-tactile" "post-literate" world of "simultaneity" and "synaesthesia," he betrays legitimate concern at the prospect of a total loss of values which an overturning of the old seems to imply. His vitriolic discussion about "primitivism" and "irrationalism," with particular reference to Mircea Eliade (67-71), is symptomatic of this concern and, as a reaction to social trends, somewhat justified.

On the other hand, the partial failure of McLuhan's own communicative strategies and public reception--mentioned earlier (pg. 6) in a quotation from the critic P. W. Powe--may in part be the function of an inability to arrive at a more thorough, non-dualistic position; that is to say, the either/or dilemma of a spiritual-bestial dichotomy still haunts the deeper levels of his thought. This is not to diminish the brilliance of his insights into the nature of technological conditioning, but rather to try and identify the source of his pessimism vis-a-vis civilization's capacity to withstand a total retrogressive slide into barbarity (which, it may be argued, two world wars had already accomplished). Gould's accomplishment lies in his sense that the present cultural crisis is a crisis of dualism--not technology per se--and further, that it is chiefly through a revolutionary embrace of modern

technology that the "spiritual" reconciliation of opposites can best be achieved.

The most brilliant aspect of Gould's career--its very cornerstone in terms of the present study--is the realization that modern technology will ultimately decontextualize a long history of thinking about music:

One of the certain effects of the electronic age is that it will forever change the values that we attach to art. In fact, the vocabulary of aesthetic criteria that has been developed since the Renaissance is mostly concerned with terms that are proving to have little validity for the examination of electronic culture. (Reader 92)

For the first time in human history, the ephemeral, spontaneous, world of sound can now be stored and exactly replicated, thus subjecting it to the same analytics previously the domain of the visual. This is not simply an abstraction of music, a process which to some extent occurred with the blossoming of more precise methods of notation; it applies analytics and forethought to the actual sounds themselves.

Gould's reputation rests in large part with his interpretations of history's greatest musical polyphonist; it is interesting in light of that fact to note that, according to McLuhan

polyphony was to have effects in music comparable to movable types and mechanical writing in language and literature. For especially after the printing of music quantification and measurement became necessary as a means of keeping the singers of various parts together. (200)

It will be argued here that Gould's musical achievement was what might be termed the "tactilization" of Bach: in other words, the most linear, "abstract" music was suddenly subjected not only to an unprecedented degree of audile-tactile awareness (Gould's effects are not merely the result of digital dexterity; he even sings!), but that this result was

achieved with those very analytic and technological tools considered inimical to the world of "oral" experience. The piano itself is the most mechanical of instruments, and Gould exploits its tactile capabilities by consciously curtailing "that smug, silken, legato-spinning" (Reader 21) aspect of its sonority so loved by nineteenth century composers and many twentieth century listeners.

The most important issue, of course, is his use of the analytics of electronic technology; the microphone, for instance, is frequently lauded for its "dissective" capabilities. Yet the above allusion to problems of sonority should not be prematurely abandoned, for in it lies a powerful opportunity to explore both the heart of dualistic thought and the manner in which Gould's work is frequently misconstrued. McLuhan "would suggest that 'touch' is not so much a separate sense as the very interplay of the senses" (65); this is strikingly analogous to the position of "music" suggested earlier with reference to its etymology. And just as in this sense the spirit of the Muses represent the bridge, the medium of communication, the common denominator between various activities of the human brain (such as art and science), so the musical-tactile awareness of Gould strives for a state not confined to the world of touch in its limited status as sensuality.

This is one interpretation of "Puritanism" in its Gouldian sense, for sensuality by itself is a function of biology (a topic to be expanded next chapter); it is also a warning to those who would extract from his obsession with "form" anything smacking of philosophical idealism, or conventional "spirituality", as the following excerpt corroborates:

this magnificent indifference to specific
sonority is not the least among those attractions

which emphasize the universality of Bach. There is nonetheless a real tactile awareness about most of the forty-eight preludes and fugues. . . [emphasis added] (Reader 21)

This view is also explicit in his assessment of Sibelius as "a passionate but antisensual composer" (Reader 438). To this extent, Gould is focusing on the negative side of his relationship to Romanticism. Interesting and profitable as it may be, it is not necessary here to attempt to define or examine with precision what is meant by the term Romanticism, for in the present context, the widespread social phenomenon of finding a general unity--in opposition to their contraries--between emotion, Nature, spontaneity, sensuality, individualism, freedom and love represents a dualistic reality independent of the historically positive gains of the "irrational" as manifest through a lineage of gothic romance, German and English poetry, French symbolism via Poe, surrealism, etc.

It must also be emphasized that sensuality per se is not of necessity a negative valuation (admittedly not stressed by Gould). On the other hand, it is currently in the interest of various individuals to maintain a cultural context in which the dualistic tension between emotion and intellect, matter and mind, freedom and constraint predominates, and indeed, such misunderstanding is regularly exploited by advertisers, politicians, "religious" representatives, "entertainers," educators, and "radical" theoreticians, often with the aid of the very technologies that are slowly undermining the position being promoted. This may be ironic, but not irreconcilably paradoxical: any cultural change of enormous magnitude is bound to be resisted, any "new modality" met with the "rationale" of the old.

Central to the changes being effected by the revolution in physics and its microelectronic progeny is a new conception of both time and subjectivity:

By far the most important electronic contribution to the arts is the creation of a new and paradoxical condition of privacy. The great paradox about the electronic transmission of sound is that as it makes available to the most enormous audience, either simultaneously or in a delayed encounter, the identical musical experience, it encourages that audience to react not as captives and automatons but as individuals capable of an unprecedented spontaneity of judgement. (Reader 99)

This statement of Gould's bears a relation to the Bakhtin essay cited earlier.

The world of the epic was distinguished by an oral, "public" experience that recreated a shared set of assumptions, a "mythology," whose function was often, as Eliade has suggested, to re-live the moment of creation itself.

Every religious festival, any liturgical time, represents the reactualization of a sacred event that took place in a mythical past, "in the beginning." Religious participation in a festival implies emerging from ordinary temporal duration and reintegration of the mythical time reactualized by the festival itself. Hence sacred time is indefinitely recoverable, indefinitely repeatable. (Sacred 68-9)

As the visual, linear world of typographical technology came into its own, however, the novel and its analytic possibilities gave rise to new dimensions of private space. Eventually "creation" occurs in this sphere by a "creative individual," trapped in a temporal continuum punctuated primarily by "belief" in various authorities (including a classical Reason), and torn between the temporal experience of the body and the

abstract symbols of Reason. By the time of romanticism, only a handful of "truly creative" individuals were left on the earth (the great artists), graciously funnelling through their "works" an ecstatic experience denied to the greater part of humanity.

Electronic simultaneity, however, restores an oral world by undermining the "tradition" of the linear world: that is, the mythology of the spontaneous, creative individual (spontaneity is no longer a function of a linear time, nor is the individual per se creative). The present world thus appears hanging in the balance between two entirely different orders. On the one hand, there is a desire to cling to the old rationale with the use of the "new modality." Much "pop" music positively exploits electronic technology--in ways so-called "serious" music was slow to assimilate--but nonetheless exhibits a tendency to revert to nostalgic forms of tribalism through its rejection of form, its insistence on public spectacle or an illusion of "live" performance, and its ritualistic worship of personality (the hero). "Serious" music valorizes the dead personality, seeking to recreate with the aid of scholarly exactitude the intentions of the great, as if the sacrality of their documents is assured by strict adherence to a priori principles on the one hand, and mystic communion through a live, "shamanic" interpreter on the other. These two cultural "camps" are in this sense a graphic illustration of the dualistic divide, of two antithetical worlds both clinging to their respective positions in an age-old historical battle.

The synaesthesia to which Gould aspires uses the new technology, exploits analysis, but in addition is analogous to epic sensibility to the degree that it realizes that not only all art, but indeed all thinking, is

re-creative: the mind is like a computer that manipulates "programs" from a store of "memory." These programs are the modern version of "tradition," of mythology, with the exception that they are now internalized in the world private experience. The crux of attaining mythic time--psychological presence--is thus a problem of self-reference, which, like David Bohm's understanding of movement, is a process that can be experienced, but never unambiguously described. The paradox implicit to Gould's musical productions is the fact his use of playback, editing, and analysis results in an unprecedented spontaneity, a sense of improvisation that infuriates the purist precisely because it presents one level of performance that defies a preconceived system of analysis.

This raises a very important question: is there any necessary or verifiable connection between Gould's theoretical engagement with notions of self-emptying, negativity, etc., and the music he created? Or, phrased another way, is there any proof his playing is not simply self-indulgent? To answer with an unqualified yes would be less than prudent; since he was an inveterate debunker of authority, even the oracularity of the present essay must not in good faith claim exemption from an overriding Gouldian irony. Certainly he never advocated the idea of a single correct interpretation, as his reaction to Walter Carlos' first synthesized Bach album confirms:

For him the scores of Bach are just what they should be for all of us, in fact--an excuse to build an infinite variety of pertinent performance systems. (Reader 433)

The ultimate value of art, more importantly, derives from an interactive process for which demonstrable proof has little bearing.

On the other hand, the artifacts of science also inhabit a domain of probabilities rather than certainties, tested experientially and valued proportionately to the breadth of the contexts in which they participate. Gould's piano playing bears an interesting relation not only to his own thought, but also, it is contended, to a number of vital cultural and philosophical issues; the less arbitrary such a context appears, the less it defies both the reader's experience and sense of reason, the more it commends an open-minded "experimentation" that is at any rate the necessary precursor to sound judgement.

With such an apologia in hand, the merits of Gouldian improvisation can be respectfully submitted. Gould's Bach is not anti-architectural because his great sense of rhythmic urgency and propulsion--abetted by a dislike of rubato, legato, pedal effects and dynamic chiaroscuro--highlights the polyphony both in its articulation of separate strands, and in the mathematical patterning of which these strands are comprised. Yet over an analytic rationale--that also exhibits concern with harmonic design--there operates a level of tactile diversity and shifting dynamics that defies method: it is this that so irks the advocates of linearity, and fits so elegantly into the historical context promoted here.

Gary Zukav, in an apparently unrelated context, writes:

The world view of particle physics is that of a world without "stuff," where what is = what happens, and where an unending tumultuous dance of creation, annihilation and transformation runs unabated within a framework of conservation laws and probability. (194-5)

There is hardly a better descriptive phrase for Gould's legacy of homage to the eurhythmic extravagance of J.S. Bach than this "unending creation within a framework of law;" implicitly related are the processes of life

and thought as well, symbolic of a world where mechanical determinism has given way to "a world of sparkling energy forever dancing with itself" (Zukav 194), "a picture of chaos beneath order" (Zukav 194).

These thoughts are offered in support of the thesis that Gould's enduring popularity may be a function of the ability to present some commonly shared intuition about the world rather than a self-interested exploitation--his love of profits notwithstanding--of personal image. The testimonial of the violinist Yehudi Menuhin, that "[n]o supreme pianist has ever given of his heart and mind so overwhelmingly while showing himself so very sparingly" (McGreevy 33), may further reinforce the suggestion that Gould's intuition was more likely a product of listening than performing, of awareness than egocentrism.

A consideration of the problem of self-reference is not only crucial to an understanding of the aforementioned "mythological" dimension of personality (recognition of those formative "stories" that operate outside the "system" of conscious thought), but to dualism as well. Richard Hofstadter has rendered a great social service by promoting the work of Kurt Godel and its enormous cultural implications. In terms of the human mind, self-growth is embedded in a particular paradox, whereby what is implied by the new perspective cannot be logically deduced simply in terms of the old: in other words, growth necessitates a sort of quantum discontinuity--a chance "jump" to a different framework--as suggested, for example, by the word "intuition." In terms of the most formal domain--that of number--Hofstadter explains:

The proof of Godel's Incompleteness Theorem hinges upon the writing of a self-referential mathematical statement, in the same way as the

Epimenides paradox is a self-referential statement of language. (17)

The ultimate outcome of this mathematical "trick" was that "Godel showed that provability is a weaker notion than truth, no matter what axiomatic system is involved" (19). Like the earlier discussion of Gould's musical artistry, the real value of his offerings may not be of an order that is subject to "proof;" on the other hand, acknowledging that the brain is a formal system also admits that certain perspectives born of "chaos" will yield more "meaning" than others.

Godel's importance--and hence Hofstadter's--in the context of this study is the presentation of a link between number and morality, through a complex of concepts that includes self-reference, formality, intuition, growth, and paradox. The truly amazing correlation is that such a list precisely defines, in cultural terms, what would otherwise fall under the umbrella of "Pythagoreanism:" a worldview which is itself further characterized by an insistence on the mystical and scientific union of number and music. Walter Burkert, in his treatise Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism, is quick to emphasize that "[t]he renown of Pythagoras as the inventor of mathematics and mathematical natural science is explicable as a distortion of perspective. . ." (14). The Pythagorean use of certain archaic elements with respect to number is a crucial distinction:

Number and mathematical science are by no means equivalent. Numbers go back in origin to the mists of prehistoric times, but mathematical science, properly speaking, did not emerge earlier than sixth- and fifth- century Greece. People knew numbers before mathematics in the strict sense; and it was in the pre-scientific era that the "number mysticism" arose. . . . (Burkert 466)

Moreover, Burkert suggests that the composition of Plato's dialogues represent a pivotal event in the historical genesis of the natural sciences:

Aristotle emphasizes the difference that, while Plato separates the numbers, as ideas, from the sensible world and even sets between them the mathematical realm as a realm of its own, for the Pythagoreans things "are" numbers, they "consist of" numbers. (31)

David Fideler's introduction to a reprinting of The Pythagorean Sourcebook and Library, (compiled and translated by K.S. Guthrie), elaborates on this pre-Platonic understanding:

For the Pythagoreans, Number is a living, qualitative reality which must be approached in an experiential manner. Whereas the typical modern usage of number is as a sign, to denote a specific quantity or amount, the Pythagorean usage is not, in a sense, even a usage at all: Number is not something to be used; rather, its nature is to be discovered. (21)

Fideler notes that this distinction--characterized as one of transcendence versus immanence (34)--has an effect on notions of what constitutes philosophical practise:

For the Pythagoreans, truth manifests itself through the world of physical phenomena; for example, the Pythagoreans no doubt felt that through experimentation on the monochord one could experience the divine principles of harmony which underlie the structure of the cosmos. (35)

Plato thus marks the beginning of a process whereby number is abstracted first from the world of direct experience, and later, from the world of moral value (quality), where it was left to preside over relations in the physical, "external" world (quantity). It is fascinating to consider that the analogy used by Erwin Schrodinger to describe electrons is in fact that which underlies musical string behaviour as

well, thus providing a graphic link between two essentially non-dualistic epochs:

Stimulated by de Broglie's discovery, Schrodinger hypothesized that electrons are not spherical objects, but patterns of standing waves. (Zukav 99)

Plato, indeed, becomes an historical watershed for many of the thinkers cited in this study, including McLuhan, who notes that "Socrates stood on the border between that oral world and the visual and literate culture" (23).

Bakhtin writes in a similar vein:

We possess a remarkable document that reflects the simultaneous birth of scientific thinking and of a new artistic-prose model for the novel. These are the Socratic dialogues. (24)

Finally, Robert Pirsig is most emphatic about the dangers implied by this great cultural transition:

Plato hadn't tried to destroy arete. He had encapsulated it; made a permanent, fixed Idea out of it; had converted it to a rigid, immobile Immortal Truth. (342)

Here is the very antithesis of the world of particle physics described earlier. By contrast, Gould's "musical" thought appears more attuned to the remnants of a Pythagorean legacy, and while there are indeed striking similarities to be found, it is important to stress that such congruities are helpful only insofar as they serve to illuminate an understanding solidly anchored in the contemporary technological experience. To ignore this is to misapprehend Gould's premise: it is in the very nature of technology to produce new context; further, the goal of moral process, in human terms, is to strive to create a sense of

psychological silence in which the individual's awareness of this context can evolve correspondingly.

Pythagoreanism is closely related to the earlier phenomenon of Orphism; W.K.C. Guthrie suggests of its lyre-playing founder that "he took over the religion of Dionysos from outside, because he saw possibilities of modelling it on new lines" (emphasis added) (34). Moreover, the "atmosphere of calm which surrounds him differs strangely too from the normal habits of the wild mountain-god whose religion he adopted" (40). This is surprisingly reminiscent of Gould's relationship to his inherited role of nineteenth century concert virtuoso. There is also a parallel--albeit slightly whimsical--between Orpheus' enchantment of animals and Gould's bequeathal of part of his estate to the Toronto Humane Society; more importantly, perhaps, Fideler quotes Iamblichus on certain Pythagorean practises:

They took solitary morning walks to places which happened to be appropriately quiet. . . . They considered it turbulent to mingle in a crowd as soon as they rose from bed. . . . (36)

At this point, Fideler succinctly expresses the shared ethos that forms a cultural bridge spanning two-and-a-half millennia:

Rather than transcend the world, Pythagorean religiosity held as its goal to exist within the cosmos in a state of emotional repose and intellectual awareness. . . . (36)

Finally, there is a deeply resonant statement from one Theon of Smyrna, a Pythagorean who wrote that "Unity is the principle of all things and the most dominant of all that is: all things emanate from it and it emanates from nothing" (Fideler 21). Here is an image of the Gouldian

"negative" from which all creativity springs; here, too, an echo of that baroque musician for whom Gould had the most profound affinity:

Essentially for Bach art was a means of expressing that state of belief in which experience could be natively guided, in which only the obstructions and temptations of the world could thwart the immutable totality of existence. . . (Gould, CBC rebroadcast, date ?)

For Gould as for the followers of Pythagoras, there is above all a consequential link between the ascetic life and the ecstatic experience. Self-denial means the abandonment of ego, and thus an attempt to clear away the obstructions, the artificial, "self"-contained divisions which shatter the universal unbrokenness and impinge upon the unknowable with an image of grand delusion and pride. It is a quest for which Gould finds the electronic age--with its complex network of simultaneous connections, its calculated distractions and myriad "temptations"--not at all unsuitable.

PAIN

Pain occurs in different contexts, but in each case its presence delineates structural limitation. When an organism is healthy, these limits may indicate, for example, the possible range of motion of a limb beyond which injury would result. When an organism is not healthy, these structural limitations are defined within narrower parameters. Pain, moreover, defines structural limitation within a mental context; its special status with respect to memory prevents certain disadvantageous circumstances from being repeated, and the result of such structuring of behaviour may increase long-term chances of survival. Survival appears to be the primary biological value, but due to the interconnectedness of the "biosphere" as a whole, the hierarchy is necessarily global in view; that is, individuals may be sacrificed for the good of the species, and species may be sacrificed for the good of a larger context.

The varying "drives" or "instincts" that comprise the emotional life of animals are also part of a complex, interactive system which the ethologist Konrad Lorenz refers to as the "parliament of instincts" (72). What is more, this "neuro-physiological organization which we call instinct functions in a blindly mechanical way. . ." (73). It is the context in which the animal finds itself that ultimately determines behaviour, by offering stimuli whose relative importance are in accordance, again, with the "values" of survival; for example, "[t]here is only one drive of which it can be said that it generally subjugates all others -the escape drive. . ." (75).

Despite this markedly "mechanical" aspect of the "decision-making process," human beings often look upon ancestral relations with a certain

envy or nostalgia, in large part the result of a confusion centred about the word "spontaneity." Significantly, music lies at the heart of this cultural malaise; for purposes here the ornithological symbolism surrounding jazz great Charlie Parker--uniting the exploits of "nature's" vocalists with the "improvisatory" genius of the "human" instrumentalist--presents a useful image for consideration. "Living in the present moment," in the sense of being attuned to the ongoing exigencies of competitive survival is obviously a necessity, but such a notion of reactive flexibility only applies to a very narrow band of environmental information that is selected over the course of evolution, imposing severe structural limits to a broader "awareness."

Spontaneity in the biological sense is something quite different; it is related to an instinctive pattern's need to act, even if the stimulus normally eliciting it is withheld. Lorenz explains that

the whole organization of instinctive motor co-ordination does not behave like a machine which, as long as it is not used, remains passive for an unlimited time and 'waits' till somebody presses the button of its elicitation. It resembles a horse which may need bit and spurs to make it obey its master, but which must have daily exercise to keep down its superfluous energy. (77)

In human terms, what is often implied by "spontaneity" is the ability to either react to change, or to act in a manner that is not hidebound to the limitations of ritual or tradition. Gould points out that such terminology, when applied to improvised music, however, is overly simplistic:

After all, the primary difference between music made up on the spur of the moment and music carefully and conscientiously written down is not in the nature of the materials used, but rather

that under the duress of the improvisatory situation a musician can't possibly be as thoughtful and as perceptive about the choice and disposition of his material. (CBC rebroadcast, date, ?)

Such a statement qualifies the whole notion of "improvised" music; clearly, at its best, as in the music of Parker, the scope of possible choices actually functions within a carefully structured harmonic and rhythmic situation where the "instincts" which determine those choices are themselves the product of immense discipline and forethought.

This illuminates the fact that what is best about jazz or any other art, for that matter, is not necessarily explicable in terms of a biological analogy of competition. The "survival" context imposes severe limits because of the particular "values" which it creates; this is one of the arguments used by Gould to counter criticism about the "non-spontaneous" nature of recorded as opposed to live performance, because

many of the supposed virtues of the performer's "unified conception" relate to nothing more inherently musical than the "running scared" and "go-for-broke" psychology. . . . (Reader 337)

There is a legitimate connection between music and biology, on its most basic level due simply to the medium of physical vibration through which its various effects (and affects) are conveyed; but Gould is also correct in pointing to certain relations between biology and the cultural context in which music occurs. Such linkage, of course, has long been recognized by the social sciences; Lorenz explains vis-a-vis the biological notion of ritualization, that "certain movement patterns lose, in the course of phylogeny, their original specific function and become purely 'symbolic' ceremonies" (47). The ethologist then goes on to

explain how behaviour can become "'schematized' in a manner strongly reminiscent of symbols in human cultural history" (51).

The concept of pain described earlier has an important relationship to the analysis which follows, in that historically, the heroic figure is one that often transgresses the limits imposed by pain in order to fulfil a more global "social" value: the soldier perseveres to protect his people from destruction, the knight endures to serve his lady, etc. Live concerts in the nineteenth century virtuoso tradition and those of the great rock-star variety both present ritualized versions of essentially biological phenomenon, but with important differences. With respect to the performance of so-called "serious" music, young performers offer themselves as possible sacrificial victims in a culturally competitive milieu (most achieve their initial "break" by winning a musical "competition") whereby a fingerslip could spell the literal end to their career and livelihood. Only after a long initiation of conquering the great monsters of the repertoire does the successful artist finally attain the status of Hero (whose exploits are later recounted by the critic-bard) who, by virtue of their heroic risk of--if not life--at least limb, has earned the love and praise of a grateful populace. The ritualistic nature of this process, however, also assures that the public is safe; if there are actual casualties, they are always taken from among the ranks of the warriors.

It is parenthetically interesting to again note that this process incorporates an element of the Bakhtinian "present" while retaining the "public" context of the epic; in the final analysis, it is the listening

group--even though composed of individuals--that is the arbiter of the symbolic "life or death" of the performer at any "live" occasion.

The rock concert, in general terms, is more closely linked to the epic sensibility, in that the "success" of the performance is more assured; the performer has already attained mythic status, and what transpires instead is a ritualization of biological spontaneity: that is, the tremendous release of the audience's pent-up energy is given a set of stimuli which allows release in the relative safety provided by the ritualized framework, just as the ritualized behaviour of ducks is used to control aggression (similarly, the verbal content of the "aggressive display" is directed "outward," often toward the negatively valued side of a dualistic polarity). At the price of largely relinquishing an analytical relationship to the event, the audience often achieves a greater level of participation and physical exhilaration. The rock-hero becomes a symbolic victor of biological spontaneity over the dulling forces of social restraint, while the concert pianist is victorious over the biological competitiveness also inherent in the world of culture (in its broadest sense).

It is now possible to link these notions to the idea of physiological pain. By successfully facing the threat of pain these victors respectively assert the "individual" against hostile, impersonal or anti-personal forces which impinge upon them, or alternatively break free en masse of an imposed, "Foucauldian" individuality. The assertion here is that Gould's use of technology is intended to address another level of pain--another context--which has developed in the course of evolution, but whose "values" cannot be elicited on the basis of a model

of biological competition. This other level of pain is of a psychological variety not in accordance with the image of a warrior victorious over external forces; on the contrary, such pain is alleviated only to the degree the individual can be removed from the competitive, "public" environment with its concomitant praise and censure.

Gould claims to have been deeply influenced by a French-Canadian theologian, Jean Le Moyne, who liked to conceptualize technology in terms of a network. In an interview with the pianist Artur Schnabel, Gould paraphrases Le Moyne in the following manner:

This network has circumscribed the earth in such a way that we can no longer go to nature, we can only go to nature through the network. But when we do that, we realize that technology exercises a great charity on our lives. (Reader 289-90)

This does not mean that humans cease to be biological creatures; it simply allows a different, distinctly human context to be realized. Further, this very process should in no way be construed as something "unnatural;" on the contrary, the great wonder is its supreme concordance with nature's own evolutionary methodology.

A closer look at On Aggression will clarify this. The most profound aspect of this thesis is the chapter entitled "The Bond," in which Lorenz traces

the ingenious feat of transforming, by the comparatively simple means of redirection and ritualization, a behaviour pattern which, not only in its prototype but even in its present form, is partly motivated by aggression into a means of appeasement and further into a love ceremony which forms a strong tie between those that participate in it. This means neither more nor less than converting the mutually repelling effect of aggression into its opposite. Like the performance of any other independent instinctive act, that of the ritual has become a need for the

animal, in other words an end in itself. Unlike the autonomous instinct of aggression, out of which it arose, it cannot be indiscriminately discharged at any anonymous fellow-member of the species, but demands for its object the personally known partner. Thus it forms a bond between individuals. (148)

Thus within the instinctive-emotional structure of particular species, nature has effected a functional rearrangement--a technological advance--whereby certain behaviours have been taken out of their original biological context to function in one that creates a new "value." The overall biological goal of survival has not been subverted, but rather functions now in terms of the new context.

Furthermore, if it is agreed, with Teilhard de Chardin, that evolution presents an unfolding story of life becoming increasingly aware of its own processes (self-reference), then clearly the technology which Gould self-consciously employs to take music out of a specific, competitive context can with some justification be considered a "natural" extension of the Lorenzian one. The appearance of individualized bonding in the case of birds, however, did not alleviate the "demand that intra-specific aggression must not be weakened in either of the partners" (Lorenz 148). This aggression is essential, for on the biological level, "[w]hat directly threatens the existence of an animal species is never the 'eating enemy' but the competitor" (Lorenz 18).

The human brain exhibits a high degree of flexibility, and the complexity of its behaviour is not "mechanical" to the extent that the instinctual organization of other species appears to be. The control of aggression, moreover, has in the course of evolution tended to reside increasingly in the cultural domain, with its own levels of ritual and

organization. Yet clearly human beings are biological creatures, and the necessity for coming to terms with this reality presents a perennial hazard to the student of culture. The dualistic thought which created an irreparable fracture between biology and spirit has long been characterized--by commentators such as D.H. Lawrence, for example--as untenable.

Gould makes the following important statement in an essay entitled "Music and Technology:"

And evolution, which is really the biological rejection of inadequate moral systems--and particularly the evolution of man in response to his technology--has been anticarnivorous to the extent that, step by step, it has enabled him to operate at increasing distances from, to be increasingly out of touch with, his animal response to confrontation. (Reader 355)

This is an ambiguous statement, and needs to be addressed carefully; it makes the error, mentioned above, of equating competitive-aggressive relationships with predaceous ones, and further hints at a dualistic tension (overvaluation of the rational, on one hand, with a denial of biological spontaneity on the other) out of character with Gould's thought as it has been developed here. What is more, speculation as to Gould's sexual proclivities (celibacy, for example) as well as a self-professed asceticism tend to reinforce notions of "repression," "sublimation," etc., that are not of necessity components of a non-dualistic outlook. Several points can be made. Firstly, it has been maintained here that the whole notion of the "tactile" can in fact be viewed as a reintegration into a multi-sensual mode of perception that may indeed be in some sense more "animal-like;" what is more, love (bonding) and aggression are more closely related to each other than are either to the procreative drive,

and therefore the cessation of aggression does not imply, in biological terms, a denial of the spontaneity of the sexual appetite.

Secondly, the notion of passive self-reference represents an attempt to observe the realities of experience with as little reference as possible to cultural norms on the one hand, or to the desires and dictates of the ego on the other; in other words, it does not imply an attempt to either deny or suppress existing levels of biological spontaneity. Thirdly, Gould's ideas are in agreement with an important aspect of Lorenz' work, as in the latter's statement that "[d]iscriminative aggression towards strangers and the bond between the members of a group enhance each other" (162).

The opportunity afforded by technology has, for Gould, profoundly moral implications:

I simply cannot feel that any good can come of this cultivation of the herd in music listening. . . . We talk a lot about this question of individuality and what it means in the listening process--whether in fact there is such a thing as a listener who can form judgements that are uniquely his own. I don't think this was possible while concerts existed. . . (CBC rebroadcast, date ?)

Gould wants to claim--and this is the interpretation offered for his "evolution" statement--that there exists a distinctly human context that can only be realized with reference to the structure of individual brains as they relate to themselves, and further, that technological development has created the new context even as earlier bio-technology created individualized bonds between two or more members of an intra-specific group.

This acknowledgement of the "personal" context is inherent to the notion of psychological pain being advanced here. Psychological pain imposes structural limits defined by the ego, but unlike its physical counterpart, it does not oscillate along a relatively fixed zone of tension on behalf of an equilibrium that is beneficial to the health of the organism; instead, mental pain offers an on-going series of limits in which health is conceived as a function of their dissolution. Rather than duelling external forces, the triumphant warrior is seen submitting to internal forces to which only a solitary, silent witness can be privy.

A hostile, competitive environment is simply not conducive to such a recognition of the implicit limitations of the conscious mind. Gould said that in his very first encounter with broadcasting in 1950, he

discovered that in the privacy, the solitude--and if all Freudians will stand clear--the womblike security of the studio, it was possible to make music in a more direct, more personal manner than any concert hall would ever permit. . . I've not since been able to think of the potential of music--or for that matter of my own potential as a musician--without some reference to the limitless possibilities of the broadcasting and recording medium. (CBC rebroadcast, date ?)

What is true of the performer is also true of the listener; the multiplicity and control of playback circumstances presents an opportunity for involvement more consonant with these functional realities of the human mind.

Just as simultaneous reception tends to provoke unproductive comparisons and encourages conformity, preservation and archival replay encourage detachment and non-conformist historical premises. (Reader 350).

Here "historical premises" could equally serve as reference to the internal life of the individual auditor, who carries within an "officially

sanctioned" chronology of events, distinguished by their emotional intensity and their causal role in the "conditions" of the present.

John C. Lilly's experiments with the "isolation tank" have led him to similarly relate a sense of detachment with an ability to grow and transcend the limits of one's "belief."

This is the situation when one is freed up from one's environment, from one's surrounding reality, and all of the usual forms and patterns of stimulation are attenuated to the minimum possible level. (13-14)

Transcending belief, however, always implies entrance into the uncharted realm of the undefined, where new limits lurk to be discovered. Psychological pain is the resistance of the ego, the formulated, structured, truly artificial I-context that cannot tolerate, as Gould characterizes it, "the suspended, perpetually transient, unknowing condition of man" (CBC rebroadcast, date ?).

Time cannot be linear for the human brain because an individual is the site of a simultaneous interaction of time-spaced events, integrated in memory by the biological interpreters, Pleasure and Pain, and mixing with whatever catalytic structures of culture are at hand. Among the "primary" experiences must certainly be counted those initial bonds of parental relationship; equally cardinal, however, is the fact of mortality, the archetypal condition of "unknowing."

It may not be completely fanciful to imagine the religious dimension--what theologian Paul Tillich called the area of "ultimate concern"--as a further, autonomous emotion caused by the evolutionary decontextualization of "love;" that is to say, an experience of love not of a biological order, but still part of a reality which includes the

physical functioning of the brain. As Mircea Eliade puts it: "the experience of the sacred constitutes an element in the structure of consciousness" (Stone Age 5). The structure of thought seems to be related to the way energy is stored and utilised in the human organism, and if structural types like that described by the word "hate," for example, more closely resemble group behaviour patterns described by studies in ethology, perhaps an unprecedented degree of "non-competitiveness" may represent the best hope for a realigned, humanized biological spontaneity, as it were, and one, moreover, that may come to function as a strategy of species survival.

It remains to be seen how profound the effects of the new revolution will be, and if it can survive the transition from older modes of thought; there exists, at any rate, an interesting historical analogy in the Pythagoreans and their relationship to another pivotal moment in human development. Bertrand Russell writes in his History of Western Philosophy:

The success of Dionysus in Greece is not surprising. Like all communities that have been civilized quickly, the Greeks, or at least a certain proportion of them, developed a love of the primitive, and a hankering after a more instinctive and passionate way of life than that sanctioned by current morals. (35)

Though in the present context the word "civilized" would be better replaced with something like "technologized," the analogy remains clear. The current revolution may well represent a cultural event of almost unprecedented magnitude, and Glenn Gould's work, it is contended here, cannot be fully appreciated when evaluated in terms that apply to an earlier context. Any era of profound change will experience a feeling of

genuine loss, nostalgia, and conflict so fundamental as to render communication ineffectual. Gould's response was to seek to utilise the new technological situation in order to create a new human context whereby passion, instinct, and understanding were not seen as irreducible, irreconcilable opposites, and in this sense his outlook appears strikingly Pythagorean.

Human survival depends upon such reconciliation; in Teilhard de Chardin's terms, the noosphere is presently burning a hole in the atmosphere, thereby destroying the biosphere in a gruesome display of interconnectedness. This image is most graphically conveyed in one of Gould's most splendid creations, the radio documentary Idea of North, where the narrator W. V. Maclean describes a pivotal change in human history, symbolized by humankind's relationship to the stark, beautiful, and forbidding world of the arctic; in this climactic speech, the argument is put forward that the common historical enemy of the arctic traveller--Mother Nature--has been supplanted by a new, universal foe: that of Human Nature.

Here, in this image of the "noosphere," a crucial Gouldian concept is embodied, which elucidates both the similarities and differences from those Romantics who also lay claim to the virtues of solitude. The key is found in a statement made earlier by the narrator:

the person that makes the trip [North], more often of course, is going to realize that before long, he's going to be up--ha!--against himself; not against his fellow travellers, no, so much, but he's going to have to be up against his own, sad--self. (Trilogy)

Romantics such as Wordsworth intuitively recognized in their embrace of pastoral solitude an important truth about human consciousness. Within

the limits of current materialist thinking, however, they were unable to express it without recourse to a dualistic reality for which the Spirit of Nature served as operative symbol. With the renewed possibility of an end to Western dualism implicit in the new science, Gould has been able to articulate a more functional role for the romantic intuition whereby the entire human estate is seen as part of a more unified reality. The Romantics in their rebellion against the squalid material and social environment of the industrial revolution learned to distrust the world of human artifice. Glenn Gould reminds us such distrust is, in the interests of a more beautiful world, unnecessary--and in the end, unviable. For in his view, the Self--just because it is so enmeshed in the material reality of the world--contains its own potential for renewal.

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