

# **The Soul of the Song**

## **On the Relationship Between Quoted Collective Material and Transcendental Resonance in the Music of Charles Ives :**

### **In Search of a Literal Definition**

1. Purpose : to seek a language for the literal description of realities normally consigned to the field of metaphysics; to define the relationship between the personal mind and the collective mind; to use Ives as a test case.

The purpose of this paper is to seek out an articulate language, composed of a vocabulary of literal terms, which is capable of describing, objectively, the numinous aspect of musical experience. To define the nature of the relationship between the personal mind and the collective mind will be our primary task. It is hoped that it will be possible to show how the mind of man exists in an ego-defined consciousness state of personal autonomy, and, at the same time (or alternate times) exists as a particle in a higher shared state of corporate consciousness. We will be using the music of Charles Ives as a test case, since Ives' music is particularly suited to this type of treatment, the transcendental resonance with which he is able to invest his quoted collective material being a particularly good example of an effect that obtains whenever a composer makes contact with the higher collective mind.

The difficulties involved with writing a paper on this subject are numerous, including the scope of the project, the complexity, but most of all the defensive attitude it is difficult not to take when writing about universals in this formalistic academic climate. It is hard to feel that the verdict in my case is not already in the second I use a term from the metaphysical lexicon. Still, I know that Ives would call me a sissy and a Rollo if I did not forge ahead with courage on an enterprise I think to be important, and, moreover, completely capable of rational discussion. All of us will readily admit that we experience responses to music which touch the irrational corners of our consciousness, we just run into trouble trying to devise objective descriptions of the experience. If it is possible to chart these distant corners, the possibilities for a raised consciousness of music will be significantly enhanced. This seems to me like it would be a good thing.

2. The mechanism of transmission of higher spiritual energy into the physical is capable of transposing consciousness from one dimension to another.

I have already written extensively, elsewhere, about the mechanism through which psychic realities are conveyed into the material world. This research can only briefly be referred to here, but, to summarize, it is my experience that man is a multi-dimensional being whose consciousness, intelligence, and sense of self exist on several vibratory planes at once; that the experience of music has the potential of mobilizing energies native to the various planes resulting in an energizing intercourse between them. Furthermore, there are processes to which we can subject ourselves which predictably catalyze this intercourse. These processes can be described in literal terms and duplicated in the experience of the subject. The bottom line is that, once these energies are set in motion, they will amplify the subject's experience of musical energy at least one full quantum leap (you might say octave) above the mundane consciousness state. The subjective consciousness, so expanded, will experience an intensification of its own sense of finite ego definition, but it will also experience itself in relation to a larger, more inclusive, collective self.

The main argument of this paper is that the celebrated use of quoted material in Ives' music, is one of the ways that the composer makes himself a channel for the transmission of higher spiritual energy; that his sacrifice of petty ego in deference to the higher vibratory motives of the collective unconscious allows his music to become a link between higher worlds and the lower physical dimension. I hope to demonstrate that this channeling of spiritual energy does not depend merely or even mostly on the tunes themselves, but on the contexts, the settings or frames, Ives creates for their presentation. It is my contention that the tunes, as presented by Ives in his inimitable style, become more significant than their sources, and transcend the level of locally referential (stylistic) paradigm, ascending to a higher level of depersonalized (idealized) spiritual resonance. In this way, these tunes become more than mere representations of local cultural artifacts; they are raised to the vibratory level of archetypal (mythological) symbols of universal truths. As such, the symbolic reality of the icons is transmuted into living, moving, transforming spiritual energy which is capable of passing from higher worlds, through the higher mind of Ives the composer, the channel, through the higher mind of us, his audience, his witnesses, into this lower world, thereby radiating outwards its benevolent beams and raising human consciousness.

### 3. Efforts to reconcile science and mysticism, less recently and more recently.

Let us agree at the outset that I am not proposing that anybody take anything I say on faith. To take something on faith may not be such a terrible idea, but I have taken great pains to back up my premises with supporting literature from respectable, acknowledged experts in psychology, cybernetics, and physics. There is a growing body of literature (I do not know whether this literature is on the cutting edge, or the lunatic fringe) which more and more clearly points to empirically demonstrable evidence of supernatural forces which touch the corners of our familiar material dimension; this literature is gradually forcing us to expand our confining, restricted definitions of material reality to account for phenomena which bridge the gap between this world and the next. The reticence on the part of academics to participate in the discussion of subjects concerning supernatural realities is understandable, since nobody likes to go out on a limb, but, really, it is high time that a scholar be permitted to use the terms

"supernatural", "spiritual", and "channel" without being accused of part-time witchdoctoring. Indeed, the vocabulary is the main problem--the terminology for what I am describing is still indebted to the mid-late-19th century jargon of mysticism and magic, which, thanks to Walt Disney and Billy Graham, is still too much of a leap for most contemporary intellectuals to handle.

At this time, the language for describing the mechanism whereby this higher energy is transmitted (transmuted ?) into the lower world, has been only slightly upgraded to depend on the jargon of psychology, which furtively lurks in the shifting shadows of the no-man's-land between pharmacology and friendly persuasion, looking for the science that must be there somewhere. This language began to be developed during the period subsequent to the Transcendentalist movement; there was a serious effort to reconcile the mystical and the empirical under a single intellectual umbrella. This trend toward legitimizing occult knowledge through science, though vastly reinforced, recently, was in the air even as early as Ives' youth. The Concord transcendentalists set the stage for a number of developments in psychology and physics which have a direct bearing on the music of Ives and (parenthetically) one of the main theses of this paper. Rosalie Perry, in summarizing the intellectual climate of America in the early part of this century, vis a vis the relationship between empirical knowledge and the so-called "universals", states in her book, *Ives and the American Mind* (1974, Kent State University Press) :

If the rise of the unconscious altered the system of "absolute" knowledge, physics and physiology reinforced the conclusions of the timelessness of the unconscious. Einstein substituted events for particles; each event had to each other a relation called "interval" which could be analyzed in various ways—according to one way, two events might be simultaneous, according to another, one event might be earlier than the other. The choice in interpretation was entirely arbitrary. Matter, according to this theory, is not part of the ultimate material of the world, but just "a convenient way of collecting events into bundles," as Bertrand Russell puts it.

At the same time that physics was asserting that matter was less material and physical phenomena possibly discontinuous, psychology was suggesting something analogous—that the mind was a kind of sieve for ideas rather than a "storehouse." Physics and psychology thus approached each other. While William James' criticism of consciousness was a kind of groping in the dark, it illustrated the characteristic shift in the period, the transfer from substance to process, from matter to method. ( p. 101)

[Please bear in mind the notion of the mind as a "sieve rather than a storehouse", because the concept of the mind as a receptacle for ideas rather than the originator of ideas will play a crucial role in playing out the personal/collective mind scenario further down. A supernatural conception of the collective mind requires that it consist not of ideas or thoughts expressed in a literal vocabulary, (since a literal vocabulary depends on the existence of material referents, referents that have no reality in higher planes), but on the dynamic relationship of articulated identities. The collective mind seeks a higher unity between parts which may exist on a lower level of personal anomaly. It must be stressed therefore that the collective consciousness is not a vocabulary of symbols, but a complex of relationships whose only outlet to the physical dimension is through a set of symbolic icons whose significance is super-referential because it is summary not anomalous. Thus, the personal mind in contact with the higher collective mind becomes a receptacle of archetypal symbols whose literal meanings derive from their origin in the material world, but whose non-literal meaning (resonance) comes from its dynamic form. The "sieve" comes in as a function of time, as when becomes a more or less accidental subset of what.]

More recently, writers have attempted to devise concepts that interpret the collective unconscious idea in more practical, or sociological terms. Christopher Ballantine, in his article, "Charles Ives and the Meaning of Quotation in Music", (Musical Quarterly, April 1974) suggests some imaginative distinctions between the "personal unconscious", the "collective unconscious", and the "social unconscious". He distinguishes between those artifacts of personal memory which relate to the private world of dreams and those symbols which unmask the universal mind :

Dreams, we might say, tap the private unconscious (leaving aside the rather different question of the Jungian "collective" unconscious); music (in varying degrees all the arts) taps the social unconscious. Dreams show the points of growth in the personal unconscious; music the points of growth in the social unconscious. Dreams deal with

distortions in the person because of repression ; music with distortions in society because of oppression. Dreams unmask the ideology of the individual; music unmasks the ideology of society. (p. 171)

These fairly bold claims for the political relevance of music, are helpful in that they at least acknowledge a relationship between musical symbology and real life. They also make a crucial connection between dream states and other mind states not clearly defined by ego. (The relationship of dream reality to supernatural reality has long been an established assumption in metaphysical writing; thus, did Freud initiate the first well-known efforts to bring the language and methods of science to bear on a subject whose literal definitions too-easily slip away into the astral haze.) They do not, however, get us any closer to definitions of mystical realities, because they do not acknowledge a relationship between dream states and collective symbology, and since it is easy to argue that a social ideology is "all in your mind" anyway. The upshot here, the strong implication by omission, is that different states of consciousness are all private subjective states that are not shared, that do not trespass the boundaries of ego definition.

Rosalie Perry seems to support this demi-metaphysical position, and makes this remark about the merely psychological aspect of Ives' transcendentalism :

Ives' preoccupation with Transcendentalism was not so much an indication of his aspiration to divinity as it was an attempt to delve into the subconscious. The subconscious, a transitionless flow, opened the door to Ives' stream-of-consciousness technique, which was a third meaning of the past that paralleled the doctrine of the unconscious advanced by such medical men as Morton Prince and William James. (Introduction. p. xviii)

Perry thinks a lot of this stream-of-consciousness connection, but once again, she makes no effort here to relate the personal state of mind to a superpersonal state of mind. In fact, she even goes so far as to claim "Ives' preoccupation with Transcendentalism was not so much an indication of his aspiration to divinity as it was an attempt to delve into the subconscious." This is, of course the single most contradicted statement about Ives that could possibly be made. Ives and Emerson have no problem relating the divine to the subconscious. It is science that has this problem. Nevertheless, the effort here is to put the divine in a context where it can happily coexist with science, which is also what I am trying to do.

In this same vein, Perry goes on to explain how the meta-physical concepts of transcendentalism led to the increased involvement of science in these basic philosophical issues, leading to so-called "Realism" :

Briefly, philosophical realism is defined as "the theory of the reality of abstract or general terms, or universals which are held to have an equal and sometimes a superior reality to actual physical particulars. . . . Realism is as real as, if not more real than, the realm of existence, or actuality." (p. 58-9)

Realism was one offspring of Transcendentalism. Emerson embraced the common, the familiar, and the low because he saw in them the link to a higher world. "Every natural

fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact," wrote Emerson. He recommended the study of nature as one of the best ways to gain knowledge of the Absolute or Over-Soul, the essence that pervaded all things. Thus the practical and spiritual world were united and the groundwork laid for America's belief in science and progress as a means to utopia. . . . As in literature, determining what constitutes realism in music is a messy affair. But although the design is complex, there is a "figure in the carpet." This figure seems to have four points : first, a subject matter chosen from the interests and ideals of the common people; second, a technique exploring the subjective, subconscious side of man; third, exactness and universality of representation; fourth, a fundamental, moral orientation. (p. 56-57)

We will return, later, to the subjects of common ideals and moral orientation, but notice how this "extended transcendentalism" includes in its *modus apparandi* ideas of "technique exploring the subjective, subconscious side of man" and "exactness and universality of representation". These concepts will become important features in the literal definitions we hope to evolve by the end of this paper. Notice in particular Emerson's assertion that "Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact." This insight is supportive of my description of the collective mind as articulated by icons whose summary referents originate in the material dimension. To put this another way, every relationship created by the dynamic flow of higher energy illuminates, not the material thing, but our experience of the thing. Thus, inversely, every material thing may refer back to some spiritual reality which essentially has nothing to do with the material thing. This concept has a direct bearing on our interpretation of quoted material in Ives' music, since the objective reality of the quoted tune is not spiritually resonant at first, but only becomes so through Ives' treatment of it.

#### 4. Deeper explorations of mind states.

As psychologists get closer to vivid, precise descriptions of the involvement of the "self" with complex outward stimuli, the more careful must they become in noticing every slightest undulation of conscious recognition. As psychologists and philosophers get more and more focussed on what precisely happens during a subjective experience, we get more writing like this beautiful passage from Henri Bergson's *Time and Free Will* (1912, George Allen and Company, LTD., London) :

If jerky movements are wanting in grace, the reason is that each of them is self-sufficient and does not announce those which are to follow. If curves are more graceful than broken lines, the reason is that, while a curved line changes its direction at every moment, every new direction is indicated in the preceding one. Thus the perception of ease in motion passes over into the pleasure of mastering the flow of time and of holding the future in the present. A third element comes in when the graceful movements submit to a rhythm and are accompanied by music. For the rhythm and measure, by allowing us to foresee to a still greater extent the movements of the dancer, make us believe that we now control them. As we guess almost the exact attitude which the dancer is going to take, he seems to obey us when he really takes it: the regularity of the rhythm establishes a kind of communication between him and us, and the periodic returns of the measure are like so many invisible threads by means of which we set in motion this imaginary puppet. (p. 12)

Notice, in this quote, how the experience of rhythm and anticipation transforms the outward event of the dance into an inner event whose personal-subjective reality, again, points to a higher-subjective reality by virtue of the psychic connection created between the audience and the dancer by "so many invisible threads".

Perry contributes a thought on psychological process from the medical arena, a comment that holds a clue to the mystery of how redundancy affects the mental organization of structure :

Associations, Prince later taught, were best thought of as aspects of neurological habit. The repetition of "ideas, sensations, emotions, and organized physiological processes" together caused a tendency for each element to excite all the others." (p. 41)

This quote is especially exciting to me because it supports the theory of redundancy as the cause of psychological regression that I first discovered in Tony Bastick's *Intuition* (1982, John Wiley and Sons, New York). The excitation of mental elements through redundant activity is the singlemost important "visible" (sic) phenomenon which leads to the influx of "invisible" energies into consciousness. Psychological regression is the condition (a psychological state that is measurable, quantifiable) necessary for the doors between the higher and lower mind to open.

Indeed, the foregoing four quotes all shed varying shades of light on the idea of process. Of importance are the comments concerning "repetition", "rhythm", "transition" and "invisible threads". The process of connecting the collective mind to the personal mind depends on several conditions we normally associate with hypnosis, principally relaxation and repetition (redundancy). These two conditions are necessary in order for the mind to regress to a so-called preconscious state and become receptive to the inner whisperings of the collective consciousness, so that the collective images may be projected onto the stage of literal consciousness. Hence, "repetitions" must occur in a smooth "rhythm" so that there may be a "transition" from one state of attention to another, connecting the impressions of the subjective consciousness by "invisible threads" to more universal associations.

Transcendentalism and its subsequent philosophical offshoots (if they would admit the pedigree) are concerned with "flow". Seamless progression from one state to another is a primary article in the transcendental catechism, as it is, indeed a main feature of Ives' music, both in the short run, in how he proceeds from one idea to another, and in the large-scale formal plan of any "cumulative-form" (Burkholder) composition. One of the fascinations of Ives' music is its fluidity of form and idea. Perry, commenting on the "realist" phalanx of Ives' philosophy points out :

This realism is not based on the "spectator" theory of experience but on the consciousness of man's involvement actively in a moving world of action and reaction. Ives interpreted the everyday world as a diversity of means for carrying out a unitary purpose that was situated in an ultimate realm beyond the here-and-now. The world's variety of things was thus a transcendental unifier that infused them all with its single spirit. By this mode of interpretation all the world became viewed as a set of instrumentalities. . .



Bergson's Creative Evolution taught that energy could manifest itself in sudden mutations without orderly progression from previous forms, an idea that reinforced intuition and spontaneity. (p. 37 )

Here there is still a mechanized materialistic tinge to the whole idea that wants to get scientific, but cannot get the connection right. "Instrumentalities" is a term implying usefulness, or, rather, refers to the fragmented aspects of a wayward unity that needs articulation in the physical to affirm its existence.

The reference to Bergson, however, points us in the right direction. Bergson, in examining the nature and causes of the various intensities of feeling, makes an elegant argument for the physicality of thought on the one hand,

Perhaps the difficulty of the problem lies chiefly in the fact that we call by the same name, and picture to ourselves in the same way, intensities which are very different in nature, e.g. the intensity of a feeling and that of a sensation or an effort. The effort is accompanied by a muscular sensation, and the sensations themselves are connected with certain physical conditions which probably count for something in the estimate of their intensity : we have here to do with phenomena which take place on the surface of consciousness, and which are always connected, as we shall see further on, with the perception of a movement or an external object. But certain states of the soul seem to us, rightly or wrongly, to be self-sufficient, such as deep joy or sorrow, a reflective passion or an aesthetic emotion. Pure intensity ought to be more easily definable in these simple cases, where no extensive element seems to be involved. We shall see, in fact, that it is reducible here to a certain quality or shade which spreads over a more or less considerable mass of psychic states, or, if the expression be preferred, to the larger or smaller number of simple states which make up the fundamental emotion.

Clear, merely logical, a natural common sense estimation of "psychic weight".  
But then, here using the rhythm of architecture as a generic example of any art rhythm, he turns around and gives us this brilliant insight :

The symmetry of form, the indefinite repetition of the same architectural motive, causes our faculty of perception to oscillate between the same and the same again, and gets rid of those customary incessant changes which in ordinary life bring us back without ceasing to the consciousness of our personality : even the faint suggestion of an idea will then be enough to make the idea fill the whole of our mind. Thus art aims at impressing feelings on us rather than expressing them; it suggests them to us, and willingly dispenses with the imitation of nature when it finds more efficacious means. Nature, like art, proceeds by suggestion, but does not command the resources of rhythm.

There are several concepts here that have a direct bearing on the theory I am proposing. The idea that symmetry of form rids us, through incessant change, of the consciousness of our individual personalities supports the connection drawn, some pages back, between redundancy and the state of psychological regression which liberates archetypal symbols from their latent or preconscious residence to full consciousness. Still more important is the statement that art aims at impressing feelings on us rather than expressing them. Since Hamlet (or was it Aristotle ?) first held a mirror up to nature, artists have been expressing themselves (or so they said, often enough). Oscar Wilde held up the mirror of man for nature to look into, with equally immodest and not quite truthful consequences, philosophically speaking. The notion that art should dispense with the imitation of nature when it finds more efficacious means is a strikingly original idea, and does so much to clarify the relationship of the plastic media of art with the selective thought processes which organize the materials into coherent structures. The point is that the artificial rhythm of human thought can create the psychological environment in which material of a supernatural origin is revealed.

And why is it possible to impress rather than express feelings? Because feelings come from areas of higher mental reality. Feelings are not chemical responses to external stimuli, they are the momentary experience of a higher mental process taking place as the mind perceives the dynamic relationships between the inner perception of experience and the literal representations in collective memory. Thus, a feeling may be a very specific complex of personal responses to an eccentric set of stimuli, or it may be a much more numinous experience based on responses to collective material invested with a set of literal meanings of a much more universal character. As the artificial rhythm of creation generates the cumulative inertia necessary to regress the mind and mobilize the energies of higher consciousness, the feelings presented for contemplation may be of an eccentric anomalous character, or they may resonate with universal significance. The doors between the higher and the lower open, and the wider the gap, the higher the vibratory rate of the incoming energy, therefore the higher the level of abstraction. As the subject perceives the relationships revealed by the higher mind, he is drawn into the process itself and identifies with the referential material and the non-referential energy. A feeling, then, is not a response to a stimulus, it is a revelation of a cosmic analogy, staged in the conscious mind, which we can relate to personally and ideally.

Emerson had a deep intuitive understanding of the nature of revelation as we can see from this quotation from his essay, *The Over-Soul* (Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays*, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston and New York, 1893) :

We distinguish the announcements of the soul, its manifestations of its own nature, by the term Revelation. These are always attended by the emotion of the sublime. For this communication is an influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life. (p.263-4)

And again for more comment on the relationship between the action of the higher consciousness on the lower, he makes this comment :

The soul knows only the soul; the web of events is the flowing robe in which she is clothed. (p.257)

Now this, as we well know, is the metaphysical jargon which we, in our modern cynicism, find so quaint and naive, and inappropriate to academic writing. But notice how similar to the language of this paper the language of these two quotes is. The "web of events" is analogous to the summary definition of material referents in the inherited iconographic language of the collective mind, and the "announcements of the soul" are the abstract relationships obtained from the dynamic action of the higher mind on the organization of these icons, but the fact is that I have not improved on the language that much, I have merely added some reflections on the feasible description of the mechanism for the "influx of the Divine mind into our mind", but have left the basic experience couched in the same vague metaphysical phraseologies.

Let us turn to some music to see if we can become clearer.

5. Charles Ives is good test case because : 1. he is very concerned with religious issues, and 2. his use of collective material is a major style trait.

So far, we have been hinting, fairly vaguely, at some kind of psycho-mystic theory, by simply pointing out that other people have done that. It would be nice to get down to some more concrete (ha ha) examples of the interplay between consciousness states, especially as they play a part in the experience of music . As a subject for this experiment, this operation in the numinosocratic laboratory, there could be no better choice than Charles Ives, because no other composer was more vocal in his pronouncements concerning the religious origins of his works. Ives could barely speak a sentence about his music without lapsing into the jargon of Emerson's transcendentalism--this to the annoyance of many who wish Ives would talk more directly, more often, about the purely technical aspects of his musical construction. Still, Ives does not help us much in devising a literal vocabulary for describing the numinous experience, because he, like Emerson, is too willing to stop short of attempting to articulate the ineffable. Ives is not to be blamed for this any more than Emerson is--there simply wasn't the body of knowledge on this subject in 1860 or even 1920 that we have now. For Emerson and Ives, certain things had to be taken on faith, and, in an age when faith was not looked upon with suspicion, that was good enough. In the 20th century, faith went with the Apostle Thomas to Missouri, and since, at first, so many things could not be shown, people lost faith. Currently, this trend is being rapidly, cheerfully reversed, and anyone who hasn't noticed is simply behind the times.

Of course, an estimation of the collective mind as expressed in the music of Ives is best approached through examining the specific psychic content of his quotations. The collective resonance, being non-dependent as it is on literal expressions, is not only manifested through the use of "familiar" material (familiar being by no means always collective), but it will be easiest to describe the collective resonance which comes to radiate from a musical structure if it already has an inherited archetypal association.

6. Critical estimation of Ives' quotation dwells on musical description, de-emphasizing transcendental resonance.

The quotation aspect of Ives' music is the most written-about feature of his work, since it is its most obvious and, in many ways, its most problematic distinction. If we had only the small percentage of his works which do not feature profuse quotations, like the Robert Browning Overture, The Unanswered Question, Tone Roads, or Over the Pavements, etc., for comparison with the work of his contemporaries, Schoenberg, Varese, Cowell, Harrison, Stravinsky, et al, Ives would be found to share much common ground, ahead of them all, to be sure, but not so far ahead as to be outside a more or less mainstream tradition. In fact, Burkholder, in his *All Made of Tunes*, (1995, Yale University Press, New Haven) points out that Ives' use of quotation is not even without ample precedent in the music of many of his immediate (and not so immediate) predecessors :

As these composers' [ Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky] uses of existing music become better understood, it increasingly appears that borrowing is much more widespread and significant in the music of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries than we have thought. In such company, Ives's more thoroughgoing and diverse uses of existing music make him seem, not an exception, but a paramount case of a common condition. . . . Ives's increasing dependence on borrowed music provided a way to write music of exceptional individuality that nonetheless had strong ties to tradition, both in using familiar tunes and styles (and the tonal gestures they inevitably invoked) and in extending and transforming the traditional methods of reworking existing music. No earlier generation is more diverse or more characterized by individuality than composers born from the 1860s through the 1880s and Ives's famous individualism puts him right in the mainstream. (p. 416-418)

While it might be possible for certain of Ives' more abstract works to be confused with one or other of his approximate contemporaries, it is in the area of quotation that Ives is truly, and unmistakably Ives. This is a problem, because many of us don't know what to make of this. The use of an inherited cantus firmus is hardly a new idea, but Ives' blatant, extravagant glorification of quoted material is present in his work to an extent that is truly anomalous. Is he arranging patriotic songs? Is he stealing tunes because he can't write them himself? Is there a point to it beyond the mere reference to the Americana? Are we supposed to feel something external to the music? Why these tunes and not others? Does it matter if we know the tunes? These questions and more arise

around the subject of quotation, and our answers to these questions in large part determine how seriously we take Ives altogether.

The literature is filled with papers which attempt to somehow come to grips with Ives' quoting. The majority of these works, however, tend to drop the ball just when it gets interesting; that is, after the tunes and the processes by which they are permuted and transformed are described, the conclusions to be drawn are left implicit.

In his article from *Perspectives of New Music*, Volume 6/2, Spring/Summer 1968, "Charles Ives' Quotation, Manner or Substance", Dennis Marshal provides us with this typical description of an Ives context :

An excerpt from one of the composer's preliminary sketches for the passage beginning at rehearsal letter S reveals the composer experimenting with the contrapuntal combination of "The Red, White and Blue" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". The melodic similarities in the second and third full measures undoubtedly influenced his decision to combine these particular tunes. (p. 55)

In Burkholder's non plus ultra dictionary of Ives quotations, he typically says things like this typical saying:

Others have found in this theme part of the Valhalla motive from Wagner's *Die Walküre* (mm. 9-10) and a cadential figure from the second movement of Brahms's First Symphony (H175, shared between flute and first violin at mm. 16-17 of the Ives), and part of the hymn *There is a Happy Land* (H57, arranged by Lowell Mason) in the accompaniment to it (violin II, mm. 15-17). Each of these alleged references is quite brief and very different in rhythm or harmonic context from its putative source, and nothing in the sketches suggests that any resemblance was intended. (p. 114)



As you can see from these and some 50,000 other examples I could produce, Ives analyses consist mostly of dry genealogies of tunes. To be sure, this can be interesting enough, since the way Ives combines and changes tunes can be very fascinating indeed. My gripe is how little is concluded from these analyses. Once the smoke has cleared, the significance of these permuted quotations is so often glossed over with a flip paragraph or two, with no serious effort to analyze the ultimate effect the quotation has. So many of these writers seem so enthusiastic about Ives, but are only capable of making slightly implicit suggestions of why.

#### 7. Ives Transcendentalism is ignored or misunderstood.

It appears to me that most Ives scholars find only the technical aspects of Ives' constructions worthy of consideration, while the philosophical and religious fervor behind the music is ignored or down-played. Musicians are so over-awed by Ives' musicianship, they find it difficult to account for other more abstract qualities they know are in there but do not want (or are unable) to deal with. Clayton Henderson, in his article, "Ives' Use of Quotation", (*Music Educator's Journal* , October, 1974) typically begs the question :

Ives usually intended his pre-existent music to be a vehicle for his philosophical tenets, to convey description, or to serve a thematic or structural role. The lines of demarcation between these uses are much less distinct than might seem apparent.

Needless to say, they are not indistinct to me.  
Here is another Burkholder quote :

General William Booth and From Hanover Square North take the overall progression of cumulative settings, from fragments to wholeness and from vague intimations to direct statements, and adapt it to a specific sequence of events. Among the other cumulative settings, only *The Camp-Meeting* and *The Innate* have texts, and only *The Fourth of July* and the *Fourth Symphony* finale . . . are programmatic. The others . . . are essentially about the tunes they adopt as their themes, and the emotional resonance that these hymn tunes had for Ives is conveyed principally by the musical form. Although open to extramusical interpretation, this approach continues the primacy of musical over extramusical concerns seen in the other borrowing procedures discussed so far: using an existing work as a model for a piece in the same genre and style; writing variations on a tune; setting a tune to a new accompaniment or using it as a *cantus firmus*; transcribing a piece for another medium; or reshaping a tune into a theme for a work in traditional form. (p. 266)

There are several observations in this paragraph which attract comment, in terms of my theory of redundancy and psychological regression, or even in terms of the Bergson's reflections on rhythm-- like the nature of the sequencing that reveals the tune gradually over time, from "vague intimations to direct statements", and especially the comment that "the emotional resonance that these hymn tunes had for Ives is conveyed principally by the musical form". One's analytical teeth ache to bite into this question in detail, but the mere statement about emotional resonance without an in-depth discussion of the emotional resonance is just about all we ever get.

Ives uses his sources in a thoroughly systematic way. Every one of his themes paraphrases an American vernacular tune. These are developed in turn, providing material for transitions and development sections. At the, same time, many transitional sections, including at least one in each movement, paraphrase transitions or episodes in the music of Bach, Brahms, or Wagner. The American sources, then, are identified with the thematic material, the European sources with episodes and transitions. (p. 104)

This one too, calls to me for more comment because the nature of identity and movement are, as we have already seen, crucial concepts in the transcendentalist vision. It is an extremely sharp observation to notice that themes (music of identity) are American, and transitions (music of movement) are European, yet once having observed it, Burkholder leaves the reader to come to his own conclusions about why. Perhaps he thinks it is really neat! but he does not even give us that much.

The connection between this statement,

His approach to composition seems to have been in essence a process of elaboration. Whether working out a technical experiment, creating a musical analogue to a text or a program, or reworking borrowed material, he followed a similar pattern of elaborating a central, usually simple idea that served as the starting point.

and Transcendentalism should be obvious enough, but no reflection on this correlation is suggested. It makes me think that these writers are so turned off to Transcendentalism they do not even know what it is. It is almost as if they were analyzing the structure of a poem written in Chinese, in terms of its syntax and statistical distribution of overall shape, without using a dictionary to understand the literal meanings of the words. The effect of the transcendentalist attitude on the subject is to create an emotional climate of inarticulate wonder and oneness, but the road to this state is paved with plenty of literal meanings indeed, and to let the philosophical analogies in Ives' music go unnoticed seems pretty lame. This may not be a fair thing to say about people who have tried so hard to understand Ives and promote his "cause", but read this example of a comment on Ives' Transcendentalism that occurs at the end of a University of Illinois B.M. Dissertation, *The Violin Sonatas of Charles Ives and the Hymn*, 1965, by Lee Rosen :

The hymn was one of America's focal points. It served, in a sense, to unite individual men and transcend them to the desired spiritual goal. What Ives did was to take this established point of equal association and place it in an artistic context of the highest nature. (p. 30)

This is not only the world's most illiterate paragraph, (written by an undergraduate in 1965, to be sure), but points up an attitude I have surmised in even the best writing on Ives, namely a discomfort in dealing with the Ives iconography as such. Everybody knows a paper on Ives has to mention Transcendentalism, but they would rather focus on the music and leave the philosophy for somebody else. With Ives, possibly more than any other composer, this is just not possible. This Burkholder quote takes the cake :

The symbolism of this sonata leaves its meaning open to interpretation, which Ives invites through his ruminations in *Essays Before a Sonata* on the nature and limits of program music and on his famous distinction between "substance" and "manner." But this is not typical of Ives's program music, nor of his uses of existing music. The majority of Ives's programmatic works represent concrete things and happenings, not abstract ideas. Outside this sonata, only a few pieces operate on such a symbolic level, notably the *Second String Quartet* finale and the *Fourth Symphony* among works that use borrowed material, and *The Unanswered Question* and the unfinished *Universe Symphony* among works that do not. These are among his most famous pieces, perhaps because audiences and critics find Ives's mystical side particularly appealing. But they should not lead us to misread mysticism into Ives's more down-to-earth musical pictures. (p. 357)

This quotation reveals a gross insensitivity to even the structural dynamics in Ives which are always aimed at transcending the merely graphic aspects of his tone-painting and making the pictures resonate symbolically. Ives' criticism of Debussy was that Debussy saw nature from a distance, he did not get right down in there with the potatoes. To Ives, getting down there with the potatoes meant mingling his personal essence with the corporate essence of nature, and not coming up until a spiritual catharsis had taken place. To say "the majority of Ives's programmatic works represent concrete things and

happenings, not abstract ideas" simply shows that Burkholder has a shallow notion of what an abstract idea is, and that he has no notion of what the symbolic pictures in Ives represent.

8. Ives' dramaturgy is pretty well understood. Three types of analogy, on a continuum, may be observed.

It is no surprise that the critical estimation of Ives' dramaturgy is pretty right on. It is no surprise because the psychology of events in Ives is pretty clear, as it would be with any good story-teller. Basically, understanding Ives' narrative is by way of analogy. Perhaps a good distinction to make would be between, 1. analogies between onomatopoeic musical events and story-telling, 2. analogies between formal events and idealized concepts (percepts?), and 3. analogies between essential alchemical effects on the physical and their identities in higher realities.

Analogies of the first type (onomatopoeia) abound and are easy to comment on, although even in the straightforward business of tone-painting, Ives can be seen as trickier than normal, as Burkholder rightly points out :

For his pieces about life experiences, Ives had developed the convention of music sounding in at least two simultaneous layers. The foreground represents the events themselves, and the background, often in many layers varying audibility, evokes the noises of the environment that one may notice or ignore but are nonetheless always there. Their presence in the music is an essential part of Ives's attempt to render the multi-layered feel of life . . . In a piece about remembered events, there is also a background hum, but it is not the hum of traffic or natural noises; it is the cloud of memory, as each remembered event, person, or thing recalls others aroused involuntarily by their association with or resemblance to the first. Ives signals this through quotation. When Ives is remembering, one tune will suggest another that resembles it in melody or rhythm, or with which it is associated by common genre or use in similar circumstances. The result is a collage of half-heard and half-remembered tunes that is a wonderfully true musical evocation of the way human memory works. (p. 380)

Analogies of the second type (formal-to-ideal) are the most representative of Ives' Transcendentalism since they occur as Ives takes his material and seeks its essence. Therefore, form becomes the energy-catalyzing impetus resulting in gross analogies which refer to general (collective) categories. An example is this one from Burkholder which, furthermore, provides a justification of the term "Cumulative Form" which Burkholder seems to have coined.

A cumulative setting like this may be compared to an extended gloss on a text, a ruminative, interpretive sermon on a verse of scripture that is stated in full only at the end. Such a setting explores and gradually clarifies the implications of the tune taken as its subject, as a sermon might explore the ramifications and clarify the ultimate meaning of a text. Part of the purpose of such scriptural exegesis in a gloss or sermon is to encourage a similar struggle with the meaning of the text on the part of the reader or listener, inviting a continuation of the process that the interpreter only begins. For a

listener who knows the text of the hymn that Ives uses for his theme or who recalls the feelings associated with singing or hearing the tune, the way is open for associating verbal and emotional meanings with the music. (p. 148-149)

The archetype as expressed by genre is another way in which Ives uses form to create analogies. The sharp juxtaposition of disparate styles is one of Ives' main compositional riffs, and the effect of this riff is to strip the stylistic quotations of their referential pedigrees and get to the essential relation between the musics. The fact that Ives' permutations of tunes very often start sounding like other tunes, possibly unintended tunes, merely emphasizes the fact that the collective mind contains a vast library of inherited artifacts which all tend toward the same ultimate truth. Indeed, if thematic ambiguity did not occur at an Ives climax, we would not feel that Ives is doing his job. This, by the way, is one of the things that makes Ives scholars' obsession with melodic genealogy seem so ridiculous; not that it should not be done (somebody has to) but that when all is said and done, the tunes become hollow containers like cocoons which have given birth to the miracle of life and then been left behind.

Here is Burkholder again :

The importance of genre in creating meaning is illustrated by *A Song—for Anything*, mentioned above as the model for *On the Counter*. Its three texts were originally set to the tune in apparent sincerity, and each text belonged to a different popular genre: church solo, love song, or college song. Ives's decision to print the song with all three texts in *114 Songs* resulted in a new, composite work that fit none of these genres and was instead an art song about different types of popular song. As Joseph W. Reed has observed, in this form it is a "disquisition on genre," one that demonstrates that the music can manipulate the listener in exactly the same way no matter whether God, a beloved, or Yale is the object of the singer's devotion. With each new text, the song changes genre. With all three, it changes function, from a sentimental song in one or another traditional genre to an ironic commentary that exposes the power of sentimental music to influence our feelings. (p. 281)

The third type of analogy is the big one. When we speak of alchemical effects and their identification in higher reality, that is as transcendental as it gets, and as difficult to justify in reasonable academic jargon. "Alchemical" is a tricky word to just toss out as I did--in metaphysical writing, it refers to transformation from one dimension to another. Thus, when the energies of the higher mind act upon the referential material of the personal mind's language, the referents of that language become transformed becoming symbols, no longer of material realities, but of higher realities. Thus, the identity of higher realities which, people are fond of saying, cannot be expressed in words, ends of being manifested through collective symbols.

Notice I do not say expressed through collective symbols. Recall the brief discussion of Bergson, above, where we saw that art impresses feelings on us--the feelings are not presented to our minds for objective contemplation, rather the dynamic movement of higher energy, restructuring the referents, as it is, makes an actual impression on our sensory apparatus at a super-normal vibratory rate, and the living reality of the energy itself touches our being on physical, mental, and spiritual levels. If all this is perfectly clear, then it will be evident that to speak of an analogy at this stage of aesthetic perception is something of an oxymoron, although it cannot be denied that, in a

certain sense, something is being represented by something else. This last type of analogy is the true subject of this paper, and a discussion of this analogy as it invests collective musical material with supernatural resonance must bring the paper to a close.

#### 9. The transcendental resonance of collective material in the music of Charles Ives.

To recapitulate the theory on which these reflections are based :

1. Man is a multi-dimensional being. We have several analogies to this principle in the field of physics, not the least of which is the wave-particle dichotomy, which states that matter can be both substance and process. Hence it is not a difficult leap to think of what I have been calling "personal consciousness" as the substantial consciousness, and what I have been calling "higher consciousness" as the "process-of-becoming" consciousness. The remarks I have made describing higher consciousness as a relationship creating energy is consistent with this language.

2. The intercourse between the two dichotomous states of consciousness (let us not get into whether there are more than two) is initiated in the lower consciousness by the excitation of the mind through the application of redundant mental activity. This redundancy initiates the process of psychological regression, a condition in which preconscious material comes forward onto the stage of literal consciousness. The psychological process termed, by Bastick, recentring is the technical mechanism for this regression. There can be no doubt that the recentring experience is one of a kind of mental relaxation, which is what allows the doors, which usually close off the literal consciousness from communication with lower mind states, to open. The lowered vibratory rate of the mental inhibitory mechanism, however, allows mental material of a higher vibratory rate to become available. It is the change in vibratory rate of the conscious material, as with the particle-to-wave transition, that allows the quality of consciousness to change.

3. As the mind changes gears, as it were, the process-of-becoming dimension of the self emerges. This is where it gets really tricky. The term "preconscious material" is always used in describing the mind stuff that emerges in states of psychological regression, but there is no real good reason why this material should be termed collective. I have not read any theories about this (though they must be out there), but I am bold enough to venture a guess myself : remember the idea of the relationship-describing dynamic of the process-of-becoming mind--remember that this is a high-vibratory state of being. Remember also that the preconscious material that emerges during psychological regression is normally thought of as "primitive" or "unformed" material. Freud's whole theory is based on the idea that man's animalistic motives are revealed in dream states, which are the same primitive mind states as the trance states of preconsciousness. Therefore, people have a tendency to share similar collective material precisely because we are a social race and we do share so many cultural experiences, the basic ones of which we all share in common. Therefore, we will habitually associate higher-vibratory consciousness states with primitive psychic material.

Let me hasten to add that this sharing is not only the accidental sharing of common social experiences by virtue of propinquity, we also must remember that the

higher mind state is a high-speed, non-localized state of being. The implication here is that we will tend to share the same space with other process-of-becoming beings at the same time, especially since we are acting on the same idealized preconscious material. There is no doubt in my mind that the experience of the collective mind operating on collective material is a shared experience, bringing the subject into intimate communion with all the higher minds of all the human beings who ever enjoyed this experience. If the boundaries of time topple during this experience, as I suspect they do, we are coming into contact with every being who ever will enjoy this experience as well.

#### 10. Analysis of "The Camp Meeting" from 114 Songs .

Thus endeth the theory. Now let us turn to a brief analysis of the song, "The Camp Meeting", to see if we can get a sense of how the traditional song "Just As I Am" becomes transformed by Ives' setting.

This song is subtitled "from a movement of Symphony No. 3", and is therefore indebted to "O, For A Thousand Tongues", one of the main themes from that work. The song begins with a longish meditation on fragments from the opening motive of "Just As I Am", which happens to consist of three diatonic whole steps. The first motive of the song, g a c, in 8th notes, is actually a lot more like "Amazing Grace" than either of the two songs previously mentioned, but remember the point I have stressed repeatedly in my criticism of other Ives analysis, that the genealogy of the tune is not of critical importance, not because it is not important to know it, or even, as Burkholder asserts, to know the words, but because the reference on any level to hymn tunes has the power to evoke the whole library of familiar tunes (and feelings) associated with that tradition. Therefore, the fact that the opening does not really sound like any of the three tunes mentioned confirms Ives' preparatory strategy. He is veiling his references with his personal style of paraphrase and mean-tone modulation to establish an ambiguous harmonic and thematic environment which will be clarified later.

As to the subject of evoking familiar feelings or memories associated with the quoted hymn tunes, let it be said that Ives does not stoop to letting the familiar music "speak for itself", he is busy, right from the start, using the music to speak with his voice. The collective resonance will have to wait. Remember Bergson : the artificial structural rhythm will eventually create the context in which the experience of the familiar will become accelerated to a super-familiar vibratory rate. But I anticipate myself.

The first recognizable thematic fragment from "O For A Thousand Tongues" occurs in the pick-up to m. 4. The quotation is from the second phrase of the song, "the glory of my God and King", (significantly occurring at the beginning of the second phrase of Ives' song). The reference lasts for one measure, then drifts away into another unrelated harmony. This feint away from Bb to bbminor reverses itself almost immediately leading to a stock cadential I6/4 formula in Bb (m. 5) which winds up on a suspiciously "Tristanesque" F7 chord.

This event is the first occurrence of psychological regression discernible in the piece. The redundant sequence of the ascending 4th, hinted at in the opening motive, then emphasized in m. 1, twice in m. 2, permuted in m. 3 (the g of m.2 prolonged evoking the high c in the middle of m.3), and finally the drop to f in the pick-up to the second phrase



of "O For A Thousand Tongues", at the end of m. 3. This stacking of 4ths is thinly disguised, but the sequential nature of the opening is enough to establish a case for the presence of redundancy. Thus, the emergence of the hymn quotation m. 4 and the stylistic cliché m. 5 confirm one of the basic premises of my theory, that redundancy will tend to draw forth preconscious material. Notice that the two iconographic references progress from the specific ("O For A Thousand Tongues") to the general. From this it can be estimated that even collective material exists in preconsciousness in a hierarchical ordering.

The pick-up to m. 6 is the first clear reference to "Just As I Am". Having lost personal consciousness in the cliché episode, Ives starts the song over again using the same sequential idea, this time using a hymn reference that is more transparently veiled. The sequence proceeds along the same harmonically abstruse lines as the opening, but there is a vaguely familiar moment in the first beats of m. 7; I cannot identify it, though it is a generic moment which might not actually be anything. Anyway, the interrupted sequence continues until the middle of m. 8 where a slightly more eccentric chord progression (bminor to Bb major to Eb) grabs a breath after a downward trend before continuing on back up in the same direction as the opening sequence, climaxing on a D chord (these harmonies, by the way, are the same ones that comprise the opening of the 3rd Symphony ).

The vocal entrance m. 10 begins with a quotation from "Just As I Am". The next page, m. 10-15, repeats the pattern of the two opening sequences in the piano introduction; there is a sense of a latent hymn content in the voice part which keeps peeking out and then retiring behind an obscure harmonic setting or a melodic permutation that leads the ear away from the expected melody. It might worth pointing out that such a quotation-permutation is much less an example of psychological regression than the previously highlighted moment, because this is, like the piano opening, music of identity not iconography. By this I mean that, at this point, Ives is still indulging his personal ego by consciously manipulating borrowed material. In this case, the material has (mostly) lost its collective resonance and is merely serving Ives' conscious purposes of tonal ambiguity and text setting. We will have to wait for another climax before this material dons the radiant garb of higher mind. This is not to say that the sporadic emergence of recognizable fragments of the tune (m. 10, end of m. 12, end of m. 13, end of m. 14), always interrupted by eccentric melodic excrescences, is not in some way fascinating, it is just good solid, feet-on-the-ground music-making, it is not illumined with higher vibratory resonance. The feinting references to the tune in this case are examples of wit, a subset of regression, to be sure, but lower in the hierarchical order than the type of depersonalized regression noted earlier.

At this point, some remarks of Ballantine may be in order, since he reviews some typical processes to which the mind, in varying preconscious states (in this case dream states, which are very close to the trance states of creative activity), subjects its preconscious material :

1. The dreamer "chooses" fragments of his past, which achieve symbolic import in the dream.
2. These fragments are "never--not even when it seems so to us--a mere repetition of preceding experiences or events"; they have been distorted by such processes as (in

Freudian terminology) "condensation" and "displacement," and as symbols connoting a wide field of associations they are woven into the fabric of the dream and establish the dialectic of the "dream-text."

3. The "dream-text" has primacy over the symbols inasmuch as it organizes them and their relationships and provides the framework according to which "the whole context surrounding the symbol is drawn into the question and examined." (p.169)

This paragraph supports many of my theory's claims in general, and with specific reference to the energy going on in this song from m. 10-15. The process going on here, can clearly be identified as "displacement" since the melodic identities are alternating with melodic disguises creating a "dream-text" which poses the known quotations in dialectic opposition to the composed interpolations. Thus the quotations become secondary to the formal attributes of the context, though these attributes are more rationally conceived than inspired. When the moment of inspiration arrives, the dream-text will call into play one massive infusion of recentring energy which will transform the collective material completely, instead of partially, out of the material referential arena.

The third page of this song (m. 16-21) does exactly that, raises consciousness to a superhuman vibratory rate. Redundancy pushes the song to its dynamic climax, m. 18, by way of the repetition of the sound world of the song's opening. In this case, as with Beethoven, formal redundancy carries more force than momentary redundancy. The review of the opening material of the song creates the climate in which the ego's appetite for expression is supplanted by the higher mind's relationship-seeking motives, and the material, by virtue of repetition and condensation, becomes compressed into a ball of more intense psychic radiance. This radiance wipes out the ego's control over things and leads to the denouement of the phrase, m. 19-21, in which the descending minors 3rd on "humbly" and "yielding" is repeated four times. There is an interesting relationship between this moment and the first page. On the first page we had two vestiges of collective hierarchy, one a specific quotation, and one a generic quotation. Here, we have one occurrence of formal redundancy, and one example of momentary redundancy. There is definitely an elegant balancing of proportion going on. I do not know if it is conscious or preconscious.

In any case this period of repetition leads, as we expected, to a moment of psychological regression (m.22-28) where a hymn tune is recalled in its entirety. There is a lovely Schubertian accompaniment, completely appropriate, completely unoriginal, which completes the collective package. For these seven bars time is suspended and the preconscious material shines forth. Now, why is this not a mere rehashing of a nice old song? Well, in anybody else's hands it would be, but this song does not occur as a conscious ego expression, it is evoked by the formal processes mobilized throughout the course of the entire preceding "dream-text". Even if the song was hinted at from the beginning, even if Ives knew he was going to use it, its final emergence in context is as much a surprise to him as it is to us, because he has lost himself in the process-of-becoming consciousness that ordered the climactic events. "Just As I Am" is not an old song it is a carrier of all the hope, humility, and devotion of a generation of Americans who sang that song and gave it their best attention. As it emerges from the collective memory, not the personal memory, it brings with it the heart of a people, impressed in the articulate form of an archetypal symbol. As such it has no vulgar connotation but a

nobility and largeness that it never had when it was sung outside Ives' magnificent context.