



# 'THE THINKING REED': ARNOLD SCHOENBERG AND ADOLF LOOS

YEHUDA SAFRAN

"Wer das Tiefste gedacht, liebt das Lebendigste."  
"Who the deepest has thought loves what is most alive."

The beginning of the second stanza of Friedrich Hölderlin's Poem, *Sokrates and Alkibiades*, translated by Michael Hamburger.

From Berlin on 10 December 1930 Arnold Schoenberg sent a letter-telegram to Adolf Loos in Prague on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday and in it he declared, *'in the service of ideas the lesser and greater achieve their best by living and working so as to serve as a model to those who strive toward the same goal.'*<sup>1</sup> Only in Balzac's novel *Le Chef d'œuvre inconnu* has there ever been a comparable attempt to portray such a goal and model: the predicament of the artist obsessed by 'substantiation' and a 'thought to be expressed' in bourgeois society. Probably from something said by Delacroix, Balzac imagined a painter who wants to express life itself by colour alone, and keep his masterpiece hidden. When Frenhofer dies, his friends find nothing but a chaos of colours, of elusive lines, a whole wall of painting. Cézanne was moved to tears reading *Le Chef d'œuvre inconnu* and said he himself was Frenhofer.<sup>2</sup> This was repeated with naturalistic cruelty in Zola's novel *L'œuvre* and echoed in Camus' short story 'The Artist at Work'. Camus' painter disappears and leaves behind a canvas incised with the ambivalent word *solidaire* or *solitaire*, in which the *d* or *t* cannot be distinguished. This spells out the dilemma of individual experience irreconcilably divorced from social bonds. When the solitary experience is no longer associated with an analogous heaven, but with its dialectical opposite, it is closely linked with an existential hell.

Following a similar incomprehension to that with which Cézanne refused to be reconciled with his own distorted partial reflection in Zola's novel, so as to break off his long-standing relationship with him, Schoenberg found his imaginative biography in Thomas Mann's *Dr Faustus* to be a threat. Schoenberg, without complete success, tried to turn Mann into a detractor and an enemy. In *L'œuvre* the disease which afflicts the painter's child represents a natural retribution, for unnatural forms of art. In *Dr Faustus* disease is a means provided by the devil to induce creativity in an artist inhibited by knowledge. Apart from the hero Adrian Leverkühn's disease which is more akin to Nietzsche's, the same meningitis which kills the child in Zola's novel kills Leverkühn's nephew 'Echo', a child of epiphany. Finally, on 10 June 1950, Mann added in a letter to Alberto Mondadori, 'Twelve-tone music is a brilliant attempt to reimpose order and lawfulness on music which was falling into subjectivity and arbitrariness. It aims at objectively strict composition. The figure of Adrian Leverkühn has nothing whatsoever to do with Arnold Schoenberg in character, fate, circumstance.'<sup>3</sup>



In November 1930 Schoenberg first introduced himself to Mann with a request that Mann sign an appeal, because 'Adolf Loos wishes nothing more dearly than that six or seven of the outstanding men of the day should sign it and so exert their influence in order that his longing to teach may be fulfilled.' To this Schoenberg added, 'I would most warmly urge you to comply with this request if for no other reason than that Loos is so ill that one may be doing it for a dying man.' Mann initially hesitated. Schoenberg persisted. 'I don't want to influence you (I have not that presumption) but I do want to carry out my mission to the best of my ability.' He lent Mann an autographed copy of Loos's *Ins Leere gesprochen* (1897-1900) and explained, 'I should be very glad if it enabled you to gather some impression of Loos: what he knew before 1900!' This

A Dürer: *Melancholia*, 1514

E Delacroix: *Jacob wrestling with the Angel*, 1861, in the Chapel of the Holy Angels, Church of Saint Sulpice, Paris

time Mann's answer was positive: 'A man with a vigorous, independent, distinguished mind, no doubt of that!'<sup>4</sup>

In Mann's description fifteen years later in *Dr Faustus* of the musician's method we find an approach to a preoccupation which can be seen to apply not only to Schoenberg but also, *mutatis mutandis*, to Loos. 'That song,' says Leverkühn, 'is entirely derived from a fundamental figure, a series of interchangeable intervals, the five notes B, E, A, E-flat and the horizontal melody and the vertical harmony are determined and controlled by it, in so far as that is possible with a basic motif of so few notes. It is like a word, a key word, stamped on everything in the song, which it would like to determine entirely. But it is too short a word and in itself not flexible enough. The tonal space it affords is too limited. One would have to go on from here and take longer words out of the twelve letters as it were, of the tempered semi-tone alphabet. Words of twelve letters, certain combinations and interrelations of the twelve semi-tones, series of notes from which a piece and all the movements of a work must strictly derive. Every note of the whole composition, both melody and harmony, would have to show its relation to this fixed fundamental series. Not one might recur until the other notes have sounded. Not one might appear which did not fulfil its function in the whole structure. There would no longer be a free note. That is what I would call "strict composition".'<sup>5</sup> Mann's account of the twelve-tone method devised by Schoenberg brings out, like no other account, the devilish way in which a musician — or, for that matter, an architect — is driven to the extreme point of abstraction in order to recover concrete and individual experience.

The narrator Zeitblom remarked with respect to this passage, 'the whole disposition and organization of the material would have to be ready when the actual work should begin, and all one asks is: which is the actual work? For this preparation of the material is done by variation, and the creative element in variation, which one might call the actual composition, would be transferred back to the material itself together with the freedom of the composer. When he went to work, he would no longer be free.' Leverkühn replied: 'bound by a self-imposed compulsion to order, hence free.'<sup>6</sup>

Although Schoenberg protested to the contrary — he rejected the proposition stated by Theodor W Adorno in *Der Philosophie der neuen Musik* (Tübingen, 1949), — and insisted that he was no iconoclast. He rejected the notion that what he had done offered the 'only way forward' he expressed admiration for composers as diverse as Bartók, Gershwin, Ives, Milhaud, Shostakovich, and Sibelius. Yet formal inevitability and priority of content remain — Schoenberg was aware of the manifest conservatism represented primarily by Stravinsky, whose neo-classical approach with its retrieval of earlier musical modes he sarcastically rejected. Greatly assisted by Adorno during their close neighbourly relationship in Hollywood during their years of exile, Mann not only rendered an accurate characterization of Schoenberg's work and method, but also, more importantly, he succeeded in providing a comprehensive account — because imaginative — of the predicament of the contemporary, isolated artist and musician. Thus some of the characteristically Loosian logic and dedication to truth above all are fulfilled in authentic method, with imaginary results.

Contrary to the Wagnerian ideal of the unified work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) in which the attempt was made, and is still being made (see the travelling exhibition of 1982-1983 *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk*) to overcome the threat of completely secularized political culture, by means of all-encompassing stylistic devices, Loos' and Schoenberg's ideal of wholeness would not express itself in folklorism as a natural unit in an ultimately total unity with nature. Their ideal was neither Apollo nor was it Christ nor Siegfried. They regarded each form of expression as distinct and set apart: it could be subject to nothing other than the possibility of its own making, the sole arbiter of its own form. This search for relative autonomy, for emancipated forms of art, could not be but the expression of a wholly new kind of need — a need for a new kind of man. The sudden break in continuity came hand in hand with frequent shocks to the whole structure of society through the permanent crisis, world wars, and permanent revolution. The pressure and constraint of social categories on men's personal lives were and are felt more painfully than in previous social orders. At the same time, the precepts which transmit the pressure appear less self-evident, far less binding,

S Mallarmé: *Un Coup de Dés* (A Dice-Throw), Paris, 1897; the text that follows can also be read across two pages; English from *Penguin Poets* edition, Harmondsworth, 1965.

C'ÉTAIT  
une stellaire

CE SERAIT

pire

non

davantage ni moins

indifféremment mais autant

RIEN

de la mémorable crise  
ou se fut  
l'événement

NOTHING / of the memorable crisis in which the event might have  
HAVE TAKEN PLACE / an ordinary elevation dispenses absence /  
to disperse the empty action which otherwise by its falsehood might  
every reality is dissolved /

## LE NOMBRE

### EXISTÂT-IL

autrement qu'hallucination éparsé d'agonie

### COMMENÇÂT-IL ET CESSÂT-IL

sourdant que nié et clos quand apparut  
enfin

par quelque profusion répandue en rareté

### SE CHIFFRÂT-IL

évidence de la somme pour peu qu'une

### ILLUMINÂT-IL

## LE HASARD

Choix

la plume

rhythmique suspens du sinistre

s'ensevelir

aux écumes originelles

naguères d'où sursauta son délire jusqu'à une cime

flétrir

par la neutralité identique du gouffre

agony's scattered hallucination / were it to begin and end emerging  
some profusion / were it to be enumerated / evidence of the total  
worse / no / more nor less / but as much indifferently / CHANCE /  
itself in the original foams whence lately its delirium sprang up to

accompli en vue de tout résultat nul

humain

N'AURA EU LIEU  
une élévation ordinaire verse l'absence

### QUE LE LIEU

inférieur clapotis quelconque comme pour disperser l'acte vide  
abruptement qui sinon

par son mensonge  
eut fondé  
la perdition

dans ces parages

du vague

en quoi toute réalité se dissout

than in earlier societies.

'... in Europe between 1911 and 1925,' wrote Gottfried Benn, 'there was no other style but the antinaturalist. There was no reality either, at most there was its mask. Reality, that was a Capitalist concept... the mind had no reality!'

On the occasion of Schoenberg's fiftieth birthday on 13 September 1924, a commemorative volume was published by Universal Editions as a special issue of *Musikblätter des Anbruch*. Loos contributed an uncompromising article later included in the book *Arnold Schoenberg and his Contemporaries*. Loos ended with the lapidary sentence: 'Perhaps centuries must pass before people begin to wonder what it was that so bewildered Arnold Schoenberg's contemporaries!' The volume was rounded off by Berg's long essay, 'Why is Schoenberg's music so hard to understand?' Berg showed that the works which Schoenberg had composed since 1909 were hard to understand not because of their so-called 'atonalities', but because of their general structure: 'The wealth of artistic resources once again used throughout this so-called "atonal" style, the summing up of all the possibilities offered the composer by the music of whole centuries: in a word, its immeasurable wealth.'

Schoenberg's and Loos' never ending struggle to secure reception of their work, their great achievement as teachers was not only dependent on the richness of individual talent but, as education necessarily is, an effort to open up the way from an individual experience towards larger forms of life and its tributaries. Immediately after the First World War 'when the possession of five rational senses was threatened right and left', Schoenberg wrote 'when the whole world looked only to suicide for help, and only to its fantasy for a new, better reality, building in the air bomb-proof castles meant to protect the brain from the assaults of hunger: at the time when it could cost a man his head to refrain from saying the things that would satisfy the parties', he wrote his contribution to a symposium published in 1919 by Adolf Loos, under the title *Guidelines for a Ministry of the Arts*. in sharp contrast to Futurist and Dada manifestos, part of this manifesto amounts to nothing less than an outline for the way in which a radically planned 'Arts Council' was to be formed. The intelligentsia with whom Adolf Loos and Arnold Schoenberg like Mann's Adrian Leverkühn, were bound to come into contact were rushing headlong into fascist barbarism, performing on the way a grotesque, snobbish death-dance.

Nietzschean unworldliness and monk-like repudiation of the affairs of contemporary man opened the door to the devil in the artist's work and life, for the link that binds the quest for truth and life with social practice had been severed from the outset. The sincere Schoenberg, like Leverkühn, is a tragic victim, but that does not alter the objective character of his development, which in Leverkühn's case, leads to fascism along with the society whose product it is. Schoenberg's and Loos' life and work manifests how inevitably full of contradiction is the social function of art in bourgeois society.

With Karl Kraus in 'the darkness of this time', Loos and Schoenberg felt that all other forms of thought are inter-subjective and require the creative aspect of the language, our ability to come up with unexpected varieties of expression equally comprehensible, which suggests an ultimate intelligibility founded and grounded in language itself. They felt an eradicable truth in its ultimate wisdom and its power to heal our disease. Such an assumption has the highest priority among people who no longer hold a form of life in common. Wittgenstein observed that Augustine 'describes the learning of human language as if the child came into a strange country and did not understand the language of the country: that is, as if it already had a language, only not this one'. (*Investigations* par. 32).

As it is with some of Loos' monumental work, no work could exhibit greater concentration and consistency of formal structure than Schoenberg's and Webern's shortest movements. Their brevity is a direct result of the demand for greater essential clarity, this demand precludes the superfluous. As Adorno expressed it, 'the work, the age, and illusion are all struck by a single blow'<sup>8</sup>. Music, compressed into a moment, architecture comprehended in its essential spatiality, in 'an eruptive revelation of negative experience' destroys all decorative elements and, therewith symmetrically extended works.

been accomplished in view of every void human result / WILL  
EXCEPT THE PLACE / some lower lapping of waves as if abruptly  
have founded perdition / in these regions of the wave in which

Far from being an *expressivo* composer of a decayed mode of Romantic expression which originates in the Wagnerian *expressivo* style, elements of which exist in Schoenberg's earlier works, Schoenberg since the break with tradition — at least since the 3 Piano Pieces (opus 11) and the George songs, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* (opus 15) — differs in quality from Romantic expression precisely by means of that intensification which thinks this expressiveness through to its logical conclusion. Rather than expressiveness which the composer allotted to his musical structure in the same way as the dramatist did to his theatrical figures, without expressed emotions claiming to have immediate presence and reality within the work; the extraordinary revolutionary moment for Schoenberg is the change in function of musical expression. Passions are no longer simulated, but genuine emotions of the unconscious, of shock, of trauma are registered without disguise in the medium of music. In *The Genesis of the Novel* Thomas Mann wrote: *'We had Schoenberg to our house one evening, . . . he told me about the new trio he had just completed, and about the experience he had secretly woven into the composition — experiences of which the work was a kind of fruit. He had, he said, represented his illness and medical treatment in the music, including even the male nurses and all other oddities of American hospitals. The work was extremely difficult to play he said, in fact almost impossible, or at best only for three players of virtuoso rank; but on the other hand, the music was very rewarding because of its extraordinary tonal effects. I worked the association'*, Thomas Mann wrote, 'impossible and rewarding' into the chapter on *Leverkühn's chamber music* (page 172).

These emotions attack the taboos of form because these taboos subject such emotions to their own censor, rationalizing them and transforming them into images. Schoenberg's early formal discoveries were closely related to the content of expression. These innovations serve the breakthrough of the reality of this content. For Julia Kristeva (*La révolution du langage poétique*) the principal drama of Mallarmé *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*, is similarly on the conflict between its syntactic system and the energies of the unconscious mind which press towards an outlet within the phonetic substance of the text:

'... des suppressions de divers constituants syntaxiques sont compensées par la répétition de phonèmes ou de groupes phoniques qui remplacent la proposition agrammaticale ou discutable par un "rythme" — un dispositif sémiotique — fonctionnant comme une nouvelle "unité" sémiotique, non-phrastique. En même temps, les déplacements et les condensations qui s'opèrent à partir de ces phonèmes ou groupes phoniques vers d'autres lexèmes du même texte ou d'autres textes, remplace l'univocité du sens propre, théoriquement, à la phrase grammaticale, par une ambiguïté chargée qui atteint un polymorphisme sémantique.'<sup>9</sup>

The final atonal works were compared to psychoanalytical dream studies. In the very first publication on Schoenberg, Wassily Kandinsky called the composer's paintings 'acts of mind'. Adorno suggested that the scars of this revolution of expression, are the blotches which have become fixed in his music as well as in his pictures, as the 'heralds of the id against the compositional will'. 'The tremolo passages in the first piano piece from Opus 19 or Measures 10, 269 and 382 of Erwartung are examples of such blotches' (Adorno pp 39).

The heteronomy of the 'scars and blotches' challenges music's facade of self-sufficiency. Loos' Tristan Tzara House exemplifies this negated homogeneity. This facade is based on the fact that in traditional music and architecture formally defined elements are employed as if they were an inviolable necessity in each individual case; or that this facade appears as though it were identical with alleged language form.

In Loos' and Schoenberg's oeuvre the conventional legality is contradicted. The criticism directed towards decorative elements, towards conventions and towards abstract universality of conventional language in music and architecture are all of one mind.

If music is privileged above all other forms by the absence of pictorial imagery, then it nonetheless has participated in the illusory character of the bourgeois work of art; this it does by means of specific interests with the dominant modes and conventions. Nietzsche in one of his occasional remarks pointed out that the essence of the great work of art lies in the fact that it might be totally different in any of its given moments. 'The definition of the work of art in terms of its freedom assumes that conventions are binding',

EXCEPTÉ

à l'altitude

PEUT-ÊTRE

aussi loin qu'un endroit

EXCEPT / in the height / PERHAPS / as far as a place merges with to a certain obliquity through such a gradient of fires / towards it with forgetfulness and disuse — not so much that it does not number manner of stars of a total addition in formation / watching / doubt-final point which consecrates it / Every thought gives off a Dice

says Adorno. 'Only at the outset where such conventions guarantee totality beyond question could everything in actuality be different: precisely because nothing would be different' (Adorno pp 40). Most compositions by Mozart, for example, would offer the composer alternatives without forfeiting anything.

Nietzsche's positive position on aesthetic conventions is consistent with this possibility of constant change and his wisdom is the ironic play with forms whose substantiality has diminished<sup>10</sup>. Anything which does not lend itself to this play was in his eyes suspect as plebeian and Protestant: the truth of this argument is definitely discernible in his polemic against Wagner. As Adorno has observed, not until Schoenberg has music accepted Nietzsche's challenge. Schoenberg's compositions are the first in which nothing actually can be different: they are *case-studies and constructions in one*. There is in them no trace of convention which guarantees any freedom of play.

Schoenberg's attitude towards play is just as polemic as is his attitude towards illusion. He turns against the music makers of New Objectivity as he does against the decorative elements of Romanticism, not unlike Adolf Loos' criticism of the Bauhaus. In a long and important letter to his first teacher, Leverkühn speaks of his 'abandoned' habit of finding something funny in the most serious and moving of musical passages. 'I may have tears in my eyes at the same time, most damnable at the most mysterious and impressive phenomena. I fled from this exaggerated sense of the comic into theology, in the hope that it would give relief to the tickling — only to find there too a perfect legion of ludicrous absurdities'.

'Why does almost everything seem to me like its own parody? Why must I think that almost all, no, all the methods and conventions of art today are good for parody only?'

Just as apocalyptic imagery is closely associated with a religious heaven, the architectural tower and the winding stairway (Loos' Chicago Herald Tribune) are equal to (Schoenberg Jacob's Ladder) so its dialectic opposite is closely linked with the hell that man creates on earth, the central themes of demonic imagery is parody, Dr Faustus — the mocking of the exuberant play of art by suggesting its imitation in terms of 'real life'.

As in a demonic parody, Dr Faustus, the actual killing of the divine takes the demonic form of tragic and ironic structure. The

fusionne avec au-delà

hors l'intérêt quant à lui signalé	en général de feux	selon telle obliquité par telle déclivité
vers ce doit être le Septentrion aussi Nord		
<b>UNE CONSTELLATION</b>		
froide d'oubli et de désuétude pas tant qu'elle n'énumère sur quelque surface vacante et supérieure le heurt successif sidéralement d'un compte total en formation		
veillant doutant roulant	brillant et méditant	
avant de s'arrêter à quelque point dernier qui le sacre		

**Toute Pensée émet un Coup de Dés**

beyond / apart from the interest marked as to it in general according must be the Little Bear also to the North / A CONSTELLATION / cold on some empty and upper surface the successive shock after the ing / revolving / shining and meditating / before stopping at some Throw.

terrible facts of our time are released into imagination.

When the social bond is reduced to that of a mob, no longer a purgatorial fire but a world of malignant demons, spirits broken from hell, appears in this world in the form of the *auto da fé*.

In a lecture which Schoenberg drafted for Radio Frankfurt in February 1932 he told how, at the time of composing *Four Songs for Voice and Orchestra* (Opus 22, Berlin, October 1913—Vienna, July 1916), he had almost overcome the main difficulty caused by his renunciation of all links with traditional tonal relationships, but said that in setting to music such poems, which have unusual expressive power, he had had only his inner sense to guide him. (Reich p. 87 f). It led him far beyond anything achieved before.

Whether it was Delacroix's 'Jakob ringt mit dem Engel' hanging in Vienna or Strindberg's autobiographical fragment, 'Jacob wrestling', we could say of Schoenberg what he had said of Dehmel's art: 'what it taught us was the ability to listen to what goes on inside us, and to be a man of our own time for all that. Or rather, just because of that, since in reality time was within us rather than outside us. But it also taught us the opposite: how to be a man of all time, simply by being a man' (Reich p. 88).

Parody is born of the eclipse of the infinite. Mann's imaginary composer is saved from the geometry of *hic et nunc* by the devil, from Faust's Wagner fate, a being who 'has no wide horizon; the absolute bourgeois hems him in', and who is 'a bourgeois himself without poetic ironies, to whom a big cracked mirror has been given' (Henry James, *Daumier, caricaturist*).

From the perennial comic gesticulations, in contrast with the Interpreters of Dreams R. Wagner and Freud's *Flectere si nequeo superios, Acheronta movebo* (*If I can't stir the gods above I will stir those underneath*) — Schoenberg and Loos 'neither beast nor angel' deliver by wrestling with the angel.

Between January and March 1932, Webern gave a series of eight lectures at a private house in Vienna; his account of the path that led to twelve-tone composition was based on deep personal experience. The lectures have been published under the title '*The Path to the New Music*' (English edition, Theodore Presser Co. and Universal Edition, London, 1963). At the end of the final lecture Webern said<sup>11</sup>:

'... As we gradually gave up tonality an idea occurred to us: "We don't

want to repeat, there must constantly be something new!" Obviously this doesn't work it destroys comprehensibility. At least it's impossible to write long stretches of music in that way. Only after the formulation of the twelve-tone law did it again become possible to write longer pieces.

*We want to say 'in a quite new way' what has been said before. But now I can invent more freely; everything has a deeper unity. Only now is it possible to compose in free fantasy, adhering to nothing except the row. To put it quite paradoxically, only through these unprecedented fetters has complete freedom become possible!*

*Finally I must point out to you that this is so not only in music. We find an analogy in language. I was delighted to find that such connections also often occur in Shakespeare, in alliteration and assonance. He even turns a phrase backwards. Karl Kraus' handling of language is also based on this; unity also has to be created there, since it enhances comprehensibility. And I leave you with an old Latin saying:*

S A T O R  
A R E P O  
T E N E T  
O P E R A  
R O T A S

*One possible translation of the Latin saying 'Sator Arepo tenet opera rotas' is 'Arepo the sower keeps the work circling'.*

And here it is echoed in Leverkühn's words:  
*'The decisive factor is that every note, without exception, has significance and function according to its place in the basic series or its derivatives. That would guarantee what I call the indifference to harmony and melody.'*

'A magic square,' I said. 'But do you hope to have people hear all that?' 'Hear?' he countered.

1 A Schoenberg: *Letters*, translated by E Wilkins and E Kaiser, ed E Stein, London, 1964, p 146

2 See M Merleau-Ponty: *Sens et Non-sens*, Paris, 1948, 'Cézanne's doubt'.

3 T Mann: *Letters of Thomas Mann, 1889-1955*, translated and selected by R and C Winston, London, 1975, p 429.

4 Schoenberg: op cit, p 144 f.

5 T Mann: *Doctor Faustus (The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn as told by a friend)* translated by H T Lowe-Porter, London 1949, p 186.

6 ibid, p 188

7 W Reich: *Schoenberg, a critical biography*, translated by L Black, London, 1971, p 150.

8 T W Adorno: *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, translated by A G Mitchell and W V Bloomster, London, 1973, 'criticism of the extensive scheme is interlocked with the criticism of the content, in terms of phrase and ideology. Music, compressed into a moment, is valid as an eruptive revelation of negative experience. It is closely related to actual suffering.', p 36.

9 J Kristeva: *La Révolution du langage poétique*, Paris, 1974, p 219, quoted also in M Bowie: *Mallarmé and the Art of Being Difficult*, Cambridge 1978, p 88. In an important essay, 'Ars Nova', included in *The Sirens' Song*, Brighton, 1982, translated by S Rachinovitch, Maurice Blanchot stresses the problem of fragmentation as 'the problem of maturity, for the artist as well as for society. Walter Benjamin says that, in the history of art, an artist's last works are always disasters because, for a great master, the works he has completed are less important than the fragments at which he works all his life: his magic circle is inscribed in such fragments', p 188; 'This New Music unanimously censured by culture, has been mainly influential on the arts in its endeavour to be highly structured and yet not structured around a centre, to reject the very notion of a centre and of unity so that the composition tends towards infinity. Such a tendency can but alienate cultured society.', p 189; Blanchot's text unfortunately came to my attention by the time I had already written mine.

10 T Mann: Doctor Faustus: 'The prohibited difficulties of the work lie deep in the work itself (...). It no longer tolerates pretence and play, the fiction, the self-glorification of forms'.

'Certain things are no longer possible. The pretence of feelings as a compositional work of art, the self-satisfied pretence of music itself, has become impossible and no longer to be preserved — I mean the personal notion that prescribed and formalized elements shall be introduced as though they were the inviolable necessity of the single case (...), the pretence of the bourgeois work of art (...). It is all up with the once bindingly valid conventions, which guaranteed freedom of play.'

For what is freedom? It is only 'another word for subjectivity, and some fine day (...) she despairs of the possibility of being creative out of herself.', the Devil's speech, p 234f.

11 Reich: op cit, p 135.