A STUDY OF THREE RELATED WORKS BY MICHAEL TIPPETT:
A CHILD OF OUR TIME
THE VISION OF SAINT AUGUSTINE
THE MASK OF TIME

THESIS

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Three works by Tippett stand together among his compositions because of their similarity of subject and performance medium. All are large works for soloists, chorus and orchestra, on meditative librettos, and intended for unstaged presentation. Only A Child of Our Time is given the genre designation "oratorio" by Tippett. An in-depth analysis of these works and the model for A Child of Our Time, Handel's Messiah, reveals that though they neither present religious subjects nor, in the case of The Vision of Saint Augustine and The Mask of Time, exhibit traditional formal divisions associated with oratorio, Tippett's works do indeed belong to the oratorio repertoire of the twentieth century.
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CHAPTER I

MICHAEL TIPPETT AND THE ENGLISH ORATORIO TRADITION

... I know that my true function within a society which embraces all of us, is to continue an age-old tradition, fundamental to our civilization, which goes back into prehistory and will go forward into the unknown future. This tradition is to create images from the depth of the imagination and to give them form, whether visual, intellectual or musical. For it is only through images that the inner world communicates at all. Images of the past, shapes of the future. Images of vigour for a decadent period, images of calm for one too violent. Images of reconciliation for worlds torn by division. And in an age of mediocrity and shattered dreams, images of abounding, generous exuberant beauty.¹

With these words Michael Tippett clearly reveals both his perceived role as an artist in twentieth-century society, and his relationship to the musical past. When as many distinct styles coexist as have throughout the twentieth century, statements like the one above become very important to understanding the reasons a composer creates music, and even to understanding what he considers music to be. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Tippett sees himself as continuing a long tradition of music in the West, rather than breaking with that tradition. Yet, even as he allies himself with the musical past, Tippett's reasons for creating music place him firmly in the current century. The

images he wants to communicate, those images of the inner world, are those of the subconscious mind which have been uncovered and explored only in the last century, though in many ways they are similar to the mystical images of past ages.

To convey his images, Tippett borrows formal procedures of earlier periods, so that his new images are set in a comprehensible framework. But in reusing older forms to express twentieth-century images, the question arises as to whether the form itself is actually retained, or if only the external features remain. The central question of this paper is whether Tippett has merely continued previous tradition or has transformed the forms of the past into something unique to this century.

Criteria for the Selection of Works Included in this Study

Michael Tippett has composed approximately sixty works in a wide variety of genres. Because a comprehensive study of all of his compositions is outside of the scope of this study, the decision was made to include only a single genre. The most obvious place where Tippett's ideology is expressed is in those works where he employs a text, the vocal works. Tippett's vocal works fall in four groups according the forces for which they are scored. The first group includes works for voice and accompanying instruments, a number of which are separate works like the cantata
Boyhood's End, while others are like Songs for Ariel, which is performed separately despite its genesis within Tippett's opera The Knot Garden. The second group includes works for chorus alone or for chorus and instruments. These works range from The Shires Suite for chorus and orchestra, to the Two Madrigals for a capella chorus (SATB). Third are the operas themselves: The Midsummer Marriage, King Priam, The Knot Garden, The Ice Break, and the unfinished New Year, scheduled to premier at the Houston Grand Opera in October, 1989. Finally, there remain three concert works for soloists, chorus and orchestra: A Child of Our Time, The Vision of Saint Augustine, and The Mask of Time.

These last three works are the ones that will form the basis of this study. Remarkably, they display several unifying characteristics outside of demanding similar forces. The most obvious similarity is that all three address some aspect of man's relationship to time. A Child of Our Time contemplates the relationship of a single man to evil in his own time; The Vision of Saint Augustine recreates that saint's experience of eternity; and The Mask of Time centers on the mortality of man. A second similarity is the presence in all three of extended passages of music where the chorus vocalizes on vowel sounds. However, the ways in which these works are dissimilar will become more significant than their similarities in determining to which genre these works belong, whether a traditional
form or a new one. One way they differ is in their position in the overall chronology of Tippett's works. *A Child of Our Time* (1945) is a product of the Second World War, a relatively early period in Tippett's career. *The Vision of Saint Augustine* (1965) falls in the middle of Tippett's opera production, after *The Midsummer Marriage* and *King Priam*, and before *The Knot Garden* and *The Ice Break*, and twenty-one years after *A Child of Our Time*. *The Mask of Time* was written after the second two operas, and having premiered in the spring of 1984, is one of Tippett's latest complete compositions. The operas also differ in the composition of each libretto. *A Child of Our Time*, outside of the title and the spirituals, was written by Tippett. *The Vision of Saint Augustine* is compiled from the *Confessions of Saint Augustine*, the *Bible*, and includes an Ambrosian hymn. *The Mask of Time* is partly original, and partly compiled and paraphrased from at least sixteen different sources.

These differences will be outlined in detail and will form the substance of this paper. In an effort to gain a historical perspective, a fourth work will also be included in this study. It is a work of two centuries previous, Handel's *Messiah*. This is the tradition that Tippett attempted to recreate with *A Child of Our Time*. Therefore it will be the standard of comparison for the other works.
The Nature of the Study

Four areas are essential to the study of texted music. The first is the study of the words themselves. This includes a study of their sources, the meaning of the symbols they employ, and the way in which they are compiled. Secondly, the music must be studied for those features which are unique to it, such as the tonal relationships between movements or the intervalic bases on which the harmony is built. Next, the relationship of the text to the music must be addressed. Do they function as a unified whole, or does one predominate? Or do they trade off in importance? The last question to be asked is what are the images Tippett is attempting to communicate, and do the words and music match the intent? That is, is the medium appropriate to the message? The answer to this question will determine if Tippett is indeed using traditional means to convey his message or if he is wedding elements that have never before been united. These questions will be asked of all of the works previously named, after which it should be possible to draw some general conclusions on how closely Tippett has followed the tradition of oratorio music, and whether his works are examples of an on-going tradition or unique to the twentieth century. Are Tippett's works oratorios or do they belong to an different, possibly new, genre?
An Overview of the English Oratorio Tradition²

To assess accurately Tippett's contribution to Western music, it is first necessary to take a look at the tradition he is attempting to emulate.

The history of the English oratorio, outside of a few notable examples, begins and ends with Handel. Before Handel's arrival in London, sacred dramatic music was confined to brief dialogues. John Hilton may have composed his English dialogues, The Dialogue of King Solomon and the Two Harlots and The Dialogue of Job, God, Satan, Job's Wife, and the Messengers as early as 1616, but the genre never really developed. Several of the dialogues, including In Guilty Night by Purcell, are related to the verse anthem, but a fully dramatic rendering was never achieved. Thus, when Handel arrived from the Continent his audiences had no experience of the oratorio.

English oratorio was created by Handel almost by accident. His first oratorio, Esther, was probably composed about 1720 for the Duke of Chandos. Originally it was a masque, though an unusual one due to the substantial use of

the chorus and the biblical subject matter. It is uncertain whether or not it was staged. Handel wrote no other oratorios until after he was honored with a new production of Esther for his birthday in 1732. Bernard Gates, Master of the Chapel Royal, staged the performance of Esther for the Philharmonic Society at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, and it was a great success. The title-page of the libretto called Esther "an Oratorio or Sacred Drama."³

Soon after this private performance, a public one was announced. Since the production was not put on by Handel, the score used must have been pirated. Handel quickly put together a rival presentation of "The Sacred Story of ESTHER: an Oratorio in English. Formerly composed by Mr. Handel, and now revised by him with several Additions . . . ."⁴ Handel's reworking of Esther was an attempt to lure audiences away from the unauthorized production to his own. At first, Handel planned to use essentially the same forces as Gates had used in his production for the Philharmonic Society. However, Bishop Gibson, dean of the Chapel Royal, objected to the use of the boys of the Chapel for a production in the immoral atmosphere of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. He also objected to the staging of a

³Dean, op. cit., 219.

sacred story in a secular theater. Handel compromised by using mature performers and by not staging the performance. Thus, Esther conformed to the continental oratorio practice, familiar to Handel from his years in Italy, and became the first English oratorio.

Handel's success with Esther encouraged him to produce two more oratorios, Deborah and Athalia, in 1733, but Handel returned to his first love, Italian opera seria, during the next five seasons. He produced no more oratorios until the Italian opera lost favor with the English public and Handel's company failed financially. In 1738, Handel returned to the oratorio and composed fourteen new oratorios by 1752.

Despite Handel's success with the oratorio, he did not found a school of oratorio writing. His works did, however, become the mainstay of the large provincial choral festivals which were held through the rest of the 18th and the 19th centuries. The most important of these festivals were the Three Choirs Festival and the festivals at Birmingham and Leeds. Often only sections of the most popular oratorios were performed, and Messiah was the most frequently used. New oratorios, though few in number, were composed in the 18th century after Handel's death by composers such as John Christopher Smith, John Stanley, Thomas Arne, the elder John Morgan, Charles Avison, Samuel Arnold, and Luffman Atterbury.
In the 19th century, selections from, and sometimes complete oratorios by, foreign composers began to appear at English festivals. Most popular during the first half of the century were Haydn's *Creation*, Spohr's *Calvary* and *The Fall of Babylon*, and Mendelssohn's *St. Paul* and *Elijah*. Later, compositions by Saint-Saëns, Gounod, Liszt, Raff, Franck and Dvorak were heard. The most influential oratorios on the English composers of the period were those by Handel and Mendelssohn. These new composers were generally conservative, and none of their works have remained in the standard repertory. Representative examples include Crotch's *Palestine* and *The Captivity of Judah*, Sterndale Bennett's *The Women of Samaria* and Sullivan's *The Prodigal Son*, *The Light of the World*, and *The Martyr of Antioch*.

In the 20th century, Elgar made an early impact with *The Dream of Gerontius*, first performed in 1900 at the Birmingham triennial Festival. Elgar introduced into the oratorio such late romantic procedures as richer harmony and leitmotif, but was unable to keep the genre alive. His later oratorios were unsuccessful, and were followed by few successors. Two important exceptions are Vaughn Williams' *Sancta Civitas* and William Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*.

Handel's oratorios have remained the standard by which oratorios are judged. Because he both created the genre and brought it to its height, any English composer who wishes to revive the genre must take Handel's oratorio as his
archetype. Tippett did this by modelling *A Child of Our Time* on *Messiah*.

**Characteristics of the Handelian Oratorio**

In choosing *Messiah* as the model for *A Child of Our Time*, Tippett chose one of the oratorios which least conforms to the typical Handelian model. For Handel, the term "oratorio" designated a three act, unstaged, dramatic musical entertainment based on a sacred subject. It fused elements of the English anthem and masque, French classical drama, Italian opera seria and oratorio volgare and the German Protestant oratorio. It was usually performed in a theater or concert hall, and concertos were often performed between the acts. The division into three acts and the unusual prominence of the chorus distinguish Handel's oratorios from those of the continent. Also, though Handel's oratorios functioned as an opera substitute, it was not for the same reasons as in cities like Rome and Venice. In London, unlike on the continent, the opera houses remained open during Lent and Handel competed with them for an audience. Handel's oratorios were generally performed during Lent due to their subject matter, not due to any monopoly on the market.

The librettos of Handel's oratorios all have subjects from the Old Testament or the Apocrypha, except *Theodora* and *Messiah*. In this they follow practice on the continent.
In fact, most of Handel's subjects had been previously used there. English audiences were very receptive to these stories, seeing a parallel between themselves and the people of Israel: both were nationalistic, lead by heroic leaders, had special protection from God, and worshipped Him with pomp and splendor.

Handel's librettists were strongly influenced from the start by classical drama. Both *Esther* and *Athalia* are based on tragedies from Racine. This element helps to account for the major role given to the chorus. German Protestant oratorios also gave a large role to the chorus. Handel used the chorus in two ways, both as a character in the drama, and as a commentator upon the action.

The music itself is closer to that of the Italian opera seria than that of the German Protestant oratorio. Handel's choruses display a wide variety of choral compositional techniques, from homophonic passages to fugue, and often vary in kind within a single piece. In this they display a similarity to German oratorio writing of this period. However, Italian opera style is predominant in the arias and ensembles, though the forms are freer and the da capo aria becomes increasingly rare. The orchestral pieces that open the oratorios are most frequently French overtures, as with Handel's operas, and those within the body of the oratorios usually set mood or give the impression of action or of the passage of time.
Handel's Messiah deviates from the above standards in several ways. First, the libretto is non-dramatic. It depicts no individual characters and is instead narrative, descriptive and reflective. It is made up entirely of quotations from the Bible, though not exclusively from the Old Testament. Because of this, John Brown, one of Handel's contemporaries, said the following of it:

... though that grand Musical Entertainment [Messiah] is called an Oratorio, yet it is not dramatic; but properly a collection of Hymns or Anthems drawn from the sacred Scriptures: In strict Propriety therefore, it falls under another Class of Composition.  

Messiah is also unusual in the use of the chorus. In most of Handel's oratorios, the chorus, though prominent, is of secondary importance in relationship to the soloists. Messiah and Israel in Egypt are the only oratorios in which the chorus carries the leading role.

Therefore it is apparent that the application of the term oratorio to Messiah is one of Handel's exceptional uses of the term. Other works that are exceptions to the above descriptions include Israel in Egypt, the Occasional Oratorio, and a miscellaneous benefit program of 1738 announced as "Mr. Handel's Oratorio."

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Michael Tippett, in using Messiah as his model has already moved, then, one step away from the traditional use of the genre designation as adopted by Handel. Whether he moved completely out of the tradition can only be decided by closer study of his works.
CHAPTER II

THE LIBRETTOS

Although only a single component of a complete oratorio, a libretto deserves study as a discrete unit because of its difference in medium from the music to which it is set. Both the way the words are put together and the meaning they convey are derived from processes which are essentially non-musical. While the number of words and the length of word groupings may correspond to the musical form the composer desires to use, the order in which they appear directly relates to the meaning they give, a specific and denotative meaning which is impossible for music alone to express.

Librettos should also be considered separately because they are traditionally written or compiled by someone other than the composer himself, and thus the author may influence the composer's ideas about the finished work. This influence may be direct, as in the collaboration between Jennens and Handel on Messiah, or indirect as when verses from Eliot or Yeats influence Tippett to write similar verse. The libretto is essentially a literary form which takes a secondary place to a musical one.
The Structure of the Librettos

Librettos are created in three different ways. The first way is for the librettist to write a completely original text. The second way is to compile lines from other literary works into a new one. The third is a compromise between the first two, where both original lines and lines from other sources appear together. None of the works in this study is completely original, though in *A Child of Our Time* the only reused material is the Negro spirituals, which appear essentially intact. Two of the works, *The Vision of Saint Augustine* and *Messiah*, are compilations from other sources; *The Mask of Time* is partly compiled, partly paraphrased, and partly original.

*Messiah* is the most unusual of the texts as far as its composition because it exhibits several layers of compilation. All of the texts are from the Bible, but some are from the Old Testament and some are from the New Testament. Each Testament is itself a compilation of many books and letters, and *Messiah* uses texts from thirteen individual books. The number of discrete sources from which lines were borrowed jumps, however, to nineteen if each of the Psalms quoted is counted as the individual song that it originally was. *Messiah*, therefore, has lines from nineteen original sources written over a span of approximately 1500 years, some of which, like the lines from *Job*, reflect a much older oral tradition. The lines which make up the libretto were then
extracted and arranged by Jennens approximately 1300 years after the final compilation of the Biblical texts was complete. In compiling the text Jennens chose lines from many different genres. The Psalms were originally songs, Isaiah, Haggai, Malachi, Zechariah, and Lamentations were prophetic books, Matthew and John were narrations on the life of Christ, Romans, I Corinthians and Hebrews were letters, Job was an epic poem, and Revelation was apocalyptic literature. Thus, a variety of types of literature was united into a libretto which was appropriate for a musical setting.

The Vision of Saint Augustine has a similar variety of elements and a similar time span over which they were written. Like Messiah, The Vision of Saint Augustine has quotations from both the New and the Old Testaments, though they are fewer in number than those of Messiah. However, they are somewhat different from those chosen for Messiah in that they, or other parts of the passages from which they are taken, appear in The Confessions of Saint Augustine. The majority of the text comes from The Confessions, Book VIII, Chapters 8-10 and Book IX, Chapter 10. A third element is the Ambrosian hymn Deus Creator omnium, also mentioned in two separate places in The Confessions. Indeed, the attribution in The Confessions is the main authority on which authorship of Deus Creator omnium is given to Ambrose. So, though the individual lines of The Vision of
Saint Augustine have many different origins, they are all related to The Confessions, which was written by Augustine while he was Bishop of Hippo (A.D. 395-430). The actual lines used in The Vision were then compiled by Tippett himself to suit his musical ideas.

A Child of Our Time has texts from a time span much shorter than the two examples above, and includes only two separate elements brought together by Tippett. The first element is the Negro spirituals, which are traditional songs of American blacks, most dating from the time of their enslavement, approximately 1600-1863. The second is Tippett's own text which was begun in 1939 and completed before the work's premiere in 1944. The total period of time between the writing of the first of the texts and the finished product was only four hundred years, rather than around one thousand for Messiah and The Vision of Saint Augustine.

The Mask of Time exhibits the shortest gestation time of all, the earliest text quoted being that from Shelley's "The Triumph of Life" which was begun in 1822, never to be finished. However, many of the ideas expressed are far more ancient, especially those from the I Ching. Still, the issue that The Mask of Time confronts is clearly an issue that has only been addressed in the Twentieth Century. The Mask deals directly with the threat of nuclear annihilation, a possibility not experienced by previous generations,
and therefore not specifically a subject of any writings prior to this century. However, that explanation of its short gestation period is not entirely satisfactory since writers of many generations have faced the subject of their own mortality. Revelation, for example, from which come several lines of Messiah, was written to the Jews when they were facing genocide at the hands of the Romans. Technology, though, and its destructive potential is the prime enemy in Tippett's mind, and the ability of technology to destroy mankind in this century is unprecedented.

Like A Child of Our Time, The Mask of Time is partly original and partly compiled. Unlike A Child of Our Time, the compiled parts are not from a previous musical tradition but rather from literary sources. Three twentieth-century authors are quoted and acknowledged at the beginning of the score. Quoted in the libretto are parts of Yeats' poem "High Talk", Annie Dillard's Pilgrim at Tinker Creek and Mary Renault's The Mask of Apollo. Like the texts in Messiah, the lines these authors have written are in completely different literary genres. "High Talk" is a poem, The Mask of Apollo is a novel and Pilgrim at Tinker Creek is a personal reflection on the ways of nature. Tippett, however, owes a large part of the libretto to other sources that were first revealed in the program notes for the first record-
These other sources include both books and poems. The books are *The Invisible Pyramid* by Loren Eisley, *The Ascent of Man* by Jacob Bronowski, *Centuries of Meditations* by Thomas Traherne, *Shelley: The Pursuit* by Richard Holmes, *Shelley's "The Triumph of Life": A Critical Study* by Donald H. Reiman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages* by J.B. Friedman, *Descent and Return: the Orphic Theme in Modern Literature* by Walter A. Strauss, and *Change: Eight Lectures on the I Ching* by Helmut Wilhelm. The poems include "Metaphor as Degeneration" by Wallace Stevens, "The Waste Land" by T.S. Eliot, "The Triumph of Life" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, "Requiem" and "Poem without a Hero" by Anna Akhmatova and the ninth sonnet of Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus*. Tippett took these many disparate elements and chose from them those lines which reflected his view of the world, its history and its future, and his view of the place of the artist in that world.

**The Meaning of the Librettos**

Perhaps more important in studying a libretto than understanding its genesis is gaining a clear understanding of the meaning of the text. What idea is the librettist presenting? Interpretation is relatively simple in the case

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1Michael Tippett, record jacket notes for Michael Tippett's *The Mask of Time* performed by Faye Robinson, Sarah Walker, Robert Tear, John Cheek and the BBC Singers, Symphony Chorus, and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Andrew Davis (EMI CDS 7 47705-8, 1987).
of Messiah, for it presents the basic beliefs of the Christian Church, a subject much debated and widely understood. Conversely, The Mask of Time is the most enigmatic. This is possibly due to the fact that dealing with nuclear destruction is a problem man has only had to face in the past generation and also due to the wide number of ideas of various authors that he attempted to reconcile into a unified whole.

Messiah is a condensation of the message of the Bible. It presents the idea of the redemption of sinful man through the sacrifice of the sinless Christ, who was both fully God and fully man. Part I opens with the prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, narrates the events surrounding his birth and describes his ministry among the people. Part II describes his rejection by man, his resurrection and ascension, the spread of the Gospel by his disciples, and his return to judge the earth. Part III meditates on the mysteries of future events surrounding the resurrection of the faithful and ends with a hymn of praise for the Redeemer, Christ. Thus, the theme of Messiah is essentially one with that of Western Christianity. Handel, being a devout Christian who, although living in England, remained a Lutheran all his life, would be very familiar with the meaning inherent in the texts chosen by Jennens. It is likely that Handel and Jennens shared a single viewpoint and were able the express a common ideal in the writing of
Tippett, on the other hand, was his own librettist, and thus was not influenced by the kind of direct collaboration which may have influenced Handel. That is not to say that he was uninfluenced by other writers, but rather that outside influences on Tippett were of a more indirect, secondary nature. At one point in his life Tippett was personally acquainted with T.S. Eliot, who influenced Tippett both through his own works and by introducing Tippett to other authors, like Yeats. Jung was also very influential on Tippett's writing.

The message expressed in *A Child of Our Time* is strongly reminiscent of the writings of Jung. *A Child of Our Time* deals with the problem of evil and darkness both in the individual and in society. Like *Messiah*, *A Child of Our Time* is divided into three parts, the first lines of each part serving as a sort of introduction to the drama which follows. Part I opens "The world turns on its dark side./ It is winter." The imagery here is not particularly explicit, but the alto soloist, who represents Jung's anima, or feminine archetype, explains:

> Man has measured the heavens with a telescope, driven the gods from their thrones. But the soul, watching the chaotic mirror, knows that the gods return. Truly, the living god consumes within and turns the flesh to cancer!

Tippett's meaning is now clear. The rise of technology has caused man to deny the existence of that part of himself
which cannot be measured.

The barrenness of the age lies in the deprivation of man's imaginative life once he has put all value into machines. As man becomes more and more capable scientifically, the debasement of the world of imagination produces human beings who find it harder to use decently the material abundance thus provided. . . . The outbreaks of student protest all over the world have perhaps less to do with any specific political issues than with a widespread impatience with a society that appears to have little time for dreams.  

The words of the anima in the next scena complete the idea. "Reason is true to itself;/ But pity breaks open the heart." Tippett intended this whole first section to function similarly to the Prologue in Heaven from Goethe's Faust, "i.e., everything seen in the most general terms in relation to the cosmos."  

More clear are the opening lines of Part II:

A star rises in mid-winter. Behold the man! The scape-goat! The child of our time.

Couched in quasi-biblical terminology, the announcement places the role of savior squarely on the shoulders of the boy. As the section progresses, it becomes increasingly clear that the boy, the child of our time, cannot redeem even himself because his dark side takes him over. The opening lines take on an ironic twist.

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3Sir Michael Tippett, Music of the Angels; Essays and Sketchbooks of Michael Tippett, compiled by Meirion Bowen (London: Eulenburg, 1980), 123.
Part III begins, "The cold deepens. The world descends into the icy waters where lies the jewel of great price." These lines offer hope that all is not lost. The descent of the world into the icy waters is a metaphor for the journey of the soul through its own darkness to at last reach its goal. The goal is spelled out in the lines, "I would know my shadow and my light, / so shall I at last be whole." Clearly this is one of Tippett's "Images of reconciliation for worlds torn by division." 4

Though Tippett had the idea for an opera or oratorio on the subject of man's inhumanity prior to 1938, his ideas did not coalesce into a usable plan until the events surrounding World War II began to influence him. The dramatic incidents in this oratorio are based on the final days of Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish Jew living illegally in Paris, who, in 1938, shot a Nazi official after receiving a letter from his sister. It told of his parents' suffering on the Polish-German border after the Nazis had rounded up Polish Jews living in Germany to send them back to Poland. The Poles would not let them reenter the country since they could not speak Polish and could not be absorbed into the Polish economy. Many died of hunger or committed suicide at the border. Grynszpan's retaliatory shooting of the Nazi official led to the famous Crystal Night pogrom, named after

4Tippett, Moving into Aquarius, 155.
the broken glass from the windows of Jewish businesses which littered German streets the next morning. Thousands of Jews were arrested, shops were looted, and synagogues were burned. Tippett believed that the only way to avoid such behavior was through personal integration. He writes:

Jung shows that there is as a psychological fact a central or centralizing predilection of the mind, an archetype of integration, of the union of opposites, of diety maybe, taking often the image of a human figure, the incarnation of a God or Savior, of Christ or Buddha. This archetype he [Jung] finds endlessly active in the human psyche, even in periods like the present when the overt public values are entirely those of scientific materialism. So beyond mere hope, I believe there is now reasonable knowledge that our desperate need and longing, as the tension of opposites grows greater, will force a re-animation of the archetype of God as savior.  

For Tippett the artist, re-animation of this archetype, through the composition of *A Child of Our Time*, was the most appropriate response to the events of World War II.

The *Vision of Saint Augustine* postdates *A Child of Our Time* by nearly twenty years. Not surprisingly it reflects different concerns than *A Child of Our Time*. The central idea placed before the listener is this: Does man have the capacity to transcend his ordinary experience of time, and can music be a vehicle for such an experience? Tippett chose as subject matter one of the most widely known literary accounts of a transcendent experience. The

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5 Michael Tippett. *Moving into Aquarius*, 120.
Confessions of Saint Augustine⁶ has been widely circulated in the West since its writing around 400 A.D. and the two visions recorded there are central to the rest of the book.

Tippett focuses on the second vision, the vision of "the eternal life of the saints . . . which eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered man's heart to conceive."⁷ This vision intrigued Tippett because it was an explanation of the relationship between time and eternity, and of the nature of time. Time was, for Augustine, a construct inherent in the creation of a universe ex nihilo. Creation, unlike the God which made it, had a beginning and an end. This duality, temporal creation versus non-temporal deity, allows "the possibility of a relationship, or dialogue, between God and the world, or between Eternity and Time."⁸ Transcendent experience is, therefore, a point at which man can have contact with God.

The transcendent qualities of music fascinated Tippett. He was interested both in the means by which music expressed or dramatized a transcendent experience, and in whether or not it could direct the listener to a transcendent experience. The Vision of Saint Augustine is an experiment both in conveying musically the transcendent experience of

⁷Ibid.
⁸Tippett, Music of the Angels, p. 61.
Augustine, and in aiding the audience in experiencing its own vision. The Vision of Saint Augustine is, like Messiah and A Child of Our Time, divided into three parts. In Part I, the stage is set. The circumstances leading up to the vision are narrated and commented on. In Part II, the vision is experienced and described. Part III asks a question: If man could fall silent and shut out his experience of this world, would he "Enter into the joy of your lord?" The Latin word "sileat" (silent) is a verbal motto for this section, being often repeated, as "lux" (light) in Part II becomes an image of the vision. Part I has no similar word use.

The text itself is distributed in an unusual way. Unlike in Messiah and A Child of Our Time, there are no smaller divisions, such as arias or scenas, within the texts of each part. The three sections proceed continuously from beginning to end. However, the text is divided between solo and chorus, the soloist taking the narrative from Book IX, Chapter 10 of The Confessions and the chorus commenting on it. The texts of the chorus also illustrate Augustine's concept of time. For Augustine, present, past and future exist only in the mind. He writes:

If the future and past exist, I want to know where they are. And if I still lack the strength to know this, nevertheless one thing I do know, which is that, wherever they are, they are not there as

9Matthew 25:21 and 23.
future and as past, but as present. . . . the present time of things past is memory; the present time of things present is sight; the present time of things future is expectation.¹⁰

Thus the words of the chorus are memories and expectations of Augustine, taken from earlier and later sections of The Confessions, along with other texts that would have been well known to Augustine. Often the texts of the chorus are suggested by a single word in the narrative text, as in Part I where the word "garden" is answered with two texts from the fourth chapter of Song of Solomon:

A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Awake, 0 north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

These texts are not in the narrative from The Confessions, but were chosen by Tippett to illustrate how Augustine's mind might have recalled them from his memory into association with his present experience. Perhaps most interesting in this libretto, however, are those parts where the text falls into syntactically meaningless syllables. These occur at the point of the vision in Part II and at its recollection in Part III. Here, vowel sounds from a prayer in the ancient Gnostic gospel Pistis Sophia combine with the final syllable of "alleluia" to elaborate on the vision. It is perhaps here that Tippett's meaning in

¹⁰The Confessions of Saint Augustine, pp. 271 & 273.
the oratorio is most clear. There are things which music can express that words cannot. Transcendence is one.

The libretto of *The Mask of Time* is perhaps the most difficult to understand of all the librettos. Many of the ideas included in it are difficult to understand without some additional explanation and research. *The Mask of Time* returns to the format of division of the major parts into smaller units found in *Messiah* and *A Child of Our Time*. But, unlike all the rest, *The Mask of Time* divides into only two parts, not three. Also unlike the others, in *The Mask of Time* Tippett makes no attempt to sketch any sort of plot or action. Although the work flows along a sort of cosmological time-line the only event which is specifically referred to is the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima, and this event is more important for what it symbolizes about the condition of man than for its historical significance. This work is a commentary on the history of man to the present day, and a proposal for an appropriate response to the nuclear age.

The work opens before creation, where there is sound without vibration, divine presence without matter. As in *The Vision of Saint Augustine*, in No.1 "Presence," time and eternity meet as this pre-existant sound brings forth creation. No.2, "Creation of the World by Music," describes creation as if it were a long distant memory being recalled. Next, in No.3, "Jungle," the animals come forth in all their
splendor and grotesqueness, and finally, in No. 4, man appears on the scene. In first four movements, the temporal and the eternal, the natural and the supernatural, the sacred and the ordinary are all in harmony. The angels fly through the sky and the Skygod speaks to man in the thunder. Tippett was fascinated by the men of ancient times because for them art and religion were one and the same. He writes:

A few miles from where I live is Avebury, one of the fascinating relics of our distant past. It is a strange place, full of magic, where certainly art and religion were practiced together. . . . Once we are inside this sort of sanctuary, we feel the necessity, the drive, the instinct to make such a place were this kind of ritualistic art could occur, and where all the functions that we think art has are comprehended, is something so fundamental and deep-seated in human beings that there is no doubt that it must have existed always.

So Tippett recreates the unity of this earlier time as a picture of what paradise might be like.

But in No.5, "Dream of the Paradise Garden," this ideal is lost. The text states, "It was a sweet communion corrupted now to the cold indifference of the watching stars." The Ancestor no longer speaks with man and the dragon, man's protector, has become the snake which returns to his hole. The cause of this loss is the "reversal of a nineline." This is a reference to the I Ching, the Book of Changes, where a yang line was indicated by nine and a yin line by six. The yang line is whole and named "firm," while

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11 Tippett, Moving into Aquarius, p. 148.
the yin line is divided and called "yielding." The I Ching states, "As the firm and the yielding lines displace one another, change and transformation arise." Man has lost his paradise and his relationship to the Ancestor due to an Eden-like fall. Yet, man seems to realize what has been lost. The soloists call for a return to that paradise even as the chorus recalls its beauty.

Part II opens with No.6, "The Triumph of Life," after the unfinished poem by Shelley, in which the poet, "moral navigator on the sea of life," sees a vision of life after the fall. Tippett writes:

The unstoppability of life on this earth...is in [sic] indeed a triumph. But the 'blindness' of the force is frightening. Against this 'blindness' and 'fear' the romantic hero (e.g., Shelley himself) asserts his individual immortality.12

No.7, "The Mirror of Whitening Light," is perhaps the most unusual section of the libretto because it contains words that are not heard except by those who are musically well educated. In the horn parts of the introduction there appears a traditional chant, whose Latin words are written into the score, but whose meaning would be heard only by those familiar with the chant. It is Veni creator Spiritus, and its text is as follows:

Veni, creator Spiritus, Mentes tuorum visita,

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12 Tippett, record jacket notes for Michael Tippett's The Mask of Time, II, 46.
Imple superna gratia Quae tu creasti, pectora.

Come, O Creator Spirit, come, enter our minds and fill our hearts, Implant in us grace from above: May your creatures show forth your love.13

It is a hymn generally associated with Pentecost and important religious ceremonies, and one which was sung in processional marches every day during the Council of Constance (1414-1418) when the Catholic Church was trying to elect a Pope to end the Great Schism. It is a text clearly at odds with the text which follows:

Fire and arithmetic, flash upon flash of mirrored mind to mind unbind the structured atom to a whiteness that shall blind the sun. Or Shiva dancing our destruction.

By juxtaposing two such opposite texts, Tippett states his belief that our scientific endeavors have led us to our own destruction while our spiritual endeavors could have led us to "the domain of imagination and revelation."14 He obviously sees science as neither amoral or neutral. Elsewhere he has written that the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, "has pinpointed the ethical ambivalence of a supposedly neutral, rational, empirical, pure science."15 The aftermath of the explosion is retold in No.8, "Hiroshima, mon amour":

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14Tippett, record jacket notes for Michael Tippett's The Mask of Time, II, 46.

15Tippett, Moving into Aquarius, 164.
All us now confused always
and I am powerless to tell
who is man and who is beast
whether I must wait for death.16

But hope is not gone, and memory may keep total
destruction at bay:

I shall remember always and ev'rywhere shall
never forget come fresh evil days.17

No.9, "Three songs," gives Tippett's response to the nuclear
age. In "The Severed Head" a paraphrase of Rilke states the
imperative for the artist. Rilke's words, "Nur wer dich
Leier schon hob auch unter Schatten darf das endliche Lob
ahnend erstatten," become, "who alone already lifted the
lyre among the dead, dare divining, sound the infinite
praise." The work of the artist continues as before, though
perhaps changed by what has passed. For the common man, it
is also his place to pick up where life left off. "If
there's nothing left where we've to go, return brings good
fortune. If there's still something where we've to go,
hurrying brings good fortune."18 Tippett's belief that
men must learn to live with the reality of the modern age is
finally stated in the words of another author, in a

16Anna Akhmatova, Selected Poems, trans. with an
introduction by Richard McKane (London: Oxford University

17Akhmatova, op. cit., 104.

18Tippett's paraphrase of a line from the I Ching found
in Hellmut Wilhelm's Change: Eight Lectures on the I Ching
trans. from the German by Carl F. Baynes (Princeton:
paragraph from a novel. In *The Mask of Apollo*, the young actor sees the statue of Zeus and understands its message: "O man, make peace with your mortality, for this too is God."

In comparison to the Handelian norm, Tippett's librettos do not qualify as oratorios. Though in all the librettos except *The Mask of Time* the tripartite structure remains, the texts are no longer dramatic incidents taken from the Old Testament or the Apochrypha. Tippett's librettos can only be termed spiritual in the loose sense that they deal with metaphysical issues concerning the nature of man and his place in the scheme of creation. Man is no longer led by heroic figures who are under the direction and protection of God, but rather is left on his own to deal with the products of his darker nature. Tippett's works also cannot function as an opera substitute as Handel's oratorios did. Their librettos are so different in nature that it is unlikely they could attract a similar audience, or that they could be considered for staging as many of Handel's oratorios have been. However, these works by Tippett show a close line of descent from *Messiah*, an oratorio which is atypical of Handel. *Messiah* shares with them the purpose of making a statement about man's nature and his relationship to creation. The meditative nature of much of *Messiah* is what first drew Tippett to the form, and it is this aspect which he exploits. Both
Handel's *Messiah* and Tippett's works are really philosophy or theology, rather than drama, communicated by the medium of words with music.
Unlike a libretto, which can be separated from the music and can be studied independently, the music cannot usually be fully understood without some reference to the text it sets. Although essentially musical processes can be and are incorporated into it, the music for an oratorio is primarily illustrative of the text, and therefore formally bound to it. Furthermore, because oratorio texts have traditionally been set according to certain guidelines, the question of whether Tippett's works are oratorios can be most profitably studied through direct comparison with similar sections of Handel's Messiah.

The simplest and most obvious comparisons are those between Messiah and A Child of our Time. The music of Messiah consists of certain musical conventions common to the late Baroque, most of which can be directly related to similar sections in A Child of Our Time. Messiah includes all of the following musical forms: sinfonia, secco recitative, accompanied recitative, arioso, arias of various forms including da capo arias, and choruses. All of these except arioso have analogues in A Child of Our Time.

The secco recitatives are the simplest of the forms.
They are made up of a melody line which carries the narrative in rhythms close to natural speech, and an accompanying figured bass line to be realized by continuo instruments. The first to appear in Messiah\textsuperscript{1} precedes No. 8, Air and Chorus, "O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion," and begins, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive." It is sung by the alto soloist, although each of the other soloists can have similar passages.\textsuperscript{2} The secco recitatives in A Child of Our Time\textsuperscript{3} are all given to the bass soloist, whose function as narrator is similar to the role of the Evangelist who narrates both of Bach's Passions. (Messiah has no narrator). The narrator enters first in No. 4, "Now in each nation." As in Messiah the music consists of only two lines, the speech-like melody and the bass line. Here the bass is taken by cello alone, although the harpsichord's function of filling out the chord structure is imitated by rolled chords in the strings, which appear at the opening of each phrase. Also, although the cello line does support the voice, it does not indicate tonal chord progressions as it does in Handel. Tippett does not confine his narrator only


\textsuperscript{2}The only secco recitative for bass is an alternate version of No. 6.

\textsuperscript{3}Michael Tippett. A Child of Our Time, oratorio for soli, chorus and orchestra (London: Schott, 1944).
to this type of setting, however, and at the narrator's last appearance in No. 20, he adds a second cello and a double bass. These instruments sustain triadic harmonies that a harpsichord would have provided for Handel.

With the adding of instruments, Tippett approaches accompanied recitative. Like secco, accompanied recitative has a vocal line which approximates natural speech but the accompaniment is provided by the entire string section, and the rhythm and meter are somewhat less flexible. Messiah, after the opening sinfonia, begins with No. 2, an accompanied recitative for tenor, "Comfort Ye." This recitative, like many others in Messiah, introduces an idea which will be elaborated by the following aria or chorus. Only one similar introductory accompanied recitative appears in A Child of Our Time. It is No. 24 "The dark forces rise," which leads directly into the spiritual "O! by and by I'm going to lay down my heavy load," with the words, "they cry for peace." Clearly, the spiritual is their cry for peace in the same way that "Glory to God," chorus No. 15 in Messiah, is the song of the "multitude of the heavenly host praising God" mentioned in recitative No. 14, "And suddenly there was with the angel."

All of the other examples of accompanied recitative in A Child of Our Time are included in the sections Tippett titles scenas. In these sections Tippett takes the idea of accompanied recitative one step farther than Handel does in
Messiah. In No. 15, all of the soloists sing, one after another, each with a different group of instruments. The mother begins with the strings and clarinet, to which are then added flute and horn. The boy continues with horns and trumpets. Violin, viola, cello and oboe accompany the aunt, and strings, English horn, horns, and trombones accompany the uncle. The boy then ends the scena to the accompaniment of trumpets, trombones and strings. Handel has included no such extended passages of accompanied recitative where several soloists interact in Messiah. He also includes no instruments other than strings as accompanying instruments for the recitatives, although the use of more instruments was not uncommon during the Baroque. Tippett again uses fuller orchestration in No. 17, where the shooting of the official is narrated by the bass with string accompaniment, while the alto comments on the events to the accompaniment of strings, English horn, bassoon, oboe and flute.

This kind of interaction between characters also appears in connection with the scenas in Part I and Part III. In Part I, No. 3, an accompanied recitative for alto answers the questions of the chorus; "Is evil then good? Is reason untrue?". Again in Part III, the bass responds with accompanied recitative to the questions of the chorus. In this scena the accompanying instruments are English horn, horns, trombones, and strings during the first three
statements and flute, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bassoon, contrabassoon, horns, trumpets, trombones, timpani and strings in the final statement. Thus, Tippett's use of accompanied recitative is more flexible and highly developed than that of Handel in Messiah. In fact it is closer to the kind of recitative between characters found in Handel's more standard oratorios and operas.

Arioso, of which there are two examples in Messiah, does not appear in A Child of Our Time. Handel's ariosos are short solos, both for tenor, each with only a single line of text which is repeated several times. Tippett's solo movements carry more lines of text and are of a larger scale, so are more appropriately compared to Handel's arias.

Messiah and A Child of Our Time contrast significantly in the number of arias they have, Messiah having sixteen and A Child of Our Time having only five. However, both composers display quite a bit of formal flexibility in their treatment of the arias. This is particularly notable for Handel, who was writing Messiah during the height of the popularity of the da capo aria. Only four arias in Messiah are full-fledged da capo arias. They are: No. 20, "He was despised," No. 43, "The trumpet shall sound," and two alternate arias, No. 16a, "Rejoice greatly," and No. 34b, "How beautiful are the feet." The other arias are generally in simple sectional forms, with ABAB and AA' schemes being the most popular, each
represented four times like the da capo.

Tippett had far fewer arias to compose, so fewer formal designs were necessary. Tippett's arias are all through-composed or some variation of ABA form except for No. 23, "What have I done to you my son?" This aria is closer to Handel's AA' form because the first four measures of the introduction repeat exactly when the voice enters; the rest is through composed. The other through-composed arias are No. 2, "Man has measured the heavens," No. 7, "How can I cherish my man in such days?" and No. 27, "The soul of man."

Each of these arias is unified by similar means. One way is by the immediate repetition of a vocal phrase, the second time beginning on a different note. In No. 2, the melisma on the word "measured" (m. 9/1) is first sung beginning on C-flat, then repeated on D-flat, with a slight variation on the last three notes (see Fig. 1). In No. 7, a variation of this idea occurs when the second phrase (m. 52/3-53/7) begins identically to the first but is then altered to reach a climax a step higher. Although repetition at the whole step is the most common, other intervals are also used. No. 27 opens with repetition at the

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4 Measure numbers are given by rehearsal number, then measure number as they appear in the scores listed in the footnotes. Thus (m. 9/1) corresponds to the first measure after rehearsal number nine in the score listed in foot note three.
minor third, and the second vocal line of No. 7 (mm. 53/10-55/6) repeats at the fourth. By using this kind of repetition Tippett unifies his arias while still providing each word or line with an appropriate vocal melody. Handel does much the same thing in many of his arias, perhaps most notably in No. 3 where the melody line rises on the words "Every valley" and immediately repeats, somewhat varied, up a major third. This rise depicts the exalting of the valley in the same way that the descending melody of the next phrase depicts the mountains and hills being made low.

Another unifying factor in these through-composed arias is the use throughout of a distinctive rhythmic motive. The
most consistently used motive is, in 2/4 time, eighth rest, quarter note, eighth note, which appears in nearly every measure of No. 2 (see Fig. 2). No. 6 is notable for its tango rhythm in the first vocal section (mm. 43/4-44/7), while No. 7 features the motive, in 3/4, dotted quarter note, eighth note, quarter note. Handel also used rhythm as a unifying characteristic in arias like No. 36 "Why do the nations rage," where the steady sixteenth-note movement slows to eighths and quarters only at major sectional cadences.

Fig. 2--Use of a distinctive rhythmic motive

2. The Argument

Tonal organization, however, was one of the main means Handel used to unify his arias, and somewhat surprisingly for a composer who is generally tonally flexible, Tippett also includes long sections of tonally stable material in his arias. Handel's arias are organized around the standard tonic-dominant relationships of the late Baroque. Again, the
da capo aria displays the normal scheme. Taking No. 20 of Messiah, "He was despised," as an example, we see that the aria's A section opens in E-flat, then moves to the dominant B-flat before returning to E-flat. The B section opens in the related key of C minor and moves to G major, the dominant of C, in which the B section ends. The A section then repeats. Tippett's tonal relationships in general are not as standardized as Handel's, though some of the arias have tonally stable sections. In No. 6, "I have no money for my bread," for example, an eleven measure pedal on C (mm. 42/3-43/3) continues from the introduction into the first vocal section, which is clearly in C minor, and even contains a IV-V-I cadential progression in mm. 43/9-44/2 (see Fig. 3).

Fig. 3--IV - V - I Cadential progression
Similarly, No. 7, "How can I cherish my man in such days?" has a long d pedal at the first entrance of the voice (mm. 50/7) which helps establish D minor though an e-flat accidental keeps the tonality from being as strong as in No. 6. In Tippett's music such long tonally stable sections are exceptional.

In two of the arias contrapuntal features and the use of ABA forms help create unity. Both No. 6 and No. 22 have A sections that are independent of the vocal music, and that function as introduction and postlude. The Allegro agitato introduction of No. 6 returns varied at the end of the aria, only this time over a b pedal, down a fourth from the original e pedal. It is also shortened from twenty-two to seventeen measures and a four-measure cadence on new material is added. In No. 22 "The boy sings in prison" the introduction is a two-voice canon for violin beginning on g, which is then taken up by two flutes an octave lower. The canon returns at Tempo I (m. 97/4) beginning on b-flat, a major sixth lower than previously, and leads this time into the final cries of the boy which form the bridge into No. 23.

Thus, Tippett's arias are cast in simple ABA or through-composed forms unified by a variety of tonal, contrapuntal, and rhythmic elements. In the choruses, by contrast, the contrapuntal element comes to the fore. The choruses of A Child of Our Time fall into four catagories
according to their counterpoint and texture. They are those with four-part imitative counterpoint, those with soloists and choir together, a double chorus, and, perhaps most important in linking *A Child of Our Time* with *Messiah*, two fugues.

The largest number of related choruses are those which are made up of several sections of imitative counterpoint. They include No. 1, "The World Turns," No. 9, "A Star Rises in Midwinter," No. 13, "We Cannot Have Them in Our Empire," and No. 26, "The Cold Deepens." Significantly, the opening chorus of each of the parts falls into this group. All of these choruses share characteristic approaches to the use of counterpoint. The opening section of No. 1 shows the first approach. The voices enter in succession, each with a similar motive, although the intervals are not identical. The voices continue independently of each other until they reach a point where homophony takes over and then they cadence together (see Fig. 4).
Fig. 4—Contrapuntal texture leading to a homophonic cadence
The second kind of imitative counterpoint is displayed later in this chorus (mm. 6/9-7/1) where the soprano and tenor, and the alto and bass voices form two pairs, the tenor and bass doubling the soprano and the alto. This creates a kind of two voice counterpoint (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 5--Counterpoint with octave doublings
These two types of counterpoint are a significant unifying factor, particularly between the opening choruses, though the second type of counterpoint does not appear in No. 9, and the paired voices in No. 26 have non-imitative counterpoint.

These types of counterpoint are also used in No. 13, "We cannot have them in our empire," with the difference that when there are four independent voices with successive entries the voices do not cadence together. Also, though their overall structure is more complex, the choral sections of the choruses with solos and the double chorus also use these two types of counterpoint. Imitative counterpoint with successive entries which then move to a more homophonic texture is quite common in Handel's Messiah, appearing in many of the choruses including the first, No. 4, "And the glory of the Lord," where the second half of the first phrase, "shall be revealed," is imitated by all the voices at least once, sometimes in counterpoint against the first half-phrase until all the voices come together and sing the whole phrase homophonically. Imitative counterpoint with voice pairing is much less common, though it does appear in measures 79-83 in the same chorus. Thus Tippett utilizes similar means to compose choruses as those Handel employed, although Tippett's counterpoint is without the strong tonal structure found in Handel.

The second largest group of related choruses are the
choruses with solo sections. There are three, No. 3, "Is evil then good?," No. 28, "The words of wisdom," and No. 29, "I would know my shadow and my light." These choruses display types of counterpoint similar to those in the first group, but also exploit the possibilities available when soloists and choir combine. The first such chorus is No. 3, which really begins at m. 17/2, the instrumental Interlude before No. 3. Its overall structure is:

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Despite the return of the interlude which could function as a sort of ritornello, the two choruses in No. 3 share no music and are unrelated except by the action of the drama. Indeed, this scena perhaps should be seen as beginning at No. 2, The Argument, an aria for the alto soloist which is then questioned in the B chorus. This chorus develops a single idea in two part counterpoint with octave doublings, to which the soloist of No. 2 responds with a single phrase. The Interlude then begins again, this time leading to Chorus D, "We are lost," in which the chorus reflects on the statement of the soloist. Unlike Chorus B which is short and exclamatory, Chorus D develops three different musical motives in the following manner:
"We are lost"  "We are as seed"  "We are carried"

2-part counterpoint; octave doublings ST/TB successive entries of imitative counterpoint voices enter paired; second voice imitates the first at the fourth

The second solo and chorus casts the soloists and chorus in roles similar to those they play in Nos. 2 and 3. Again the soloist states a proposition which the chorus questions. The soloist then responds to the chorus. Here, however, none of the choral sections become as complex or developed as in Chorus D of No. 3. Rather, all of the statements of the choir except for the final one exhibit a single pattern. Like chorus B of No. 3, the counterpoint is in two parts with the tenor doubling the soprano at the octave and the bass the alto. These two pairs then converge until the chorus is singing in unison. This occurs in all but the final statement, where the pairs remain independent. Thus all of No. 28 is a dialogue between the bass and the chorus.

The final solo and chorus, No. 29 The General Ensemble, begins, like No. 3, with an instrumental piece, this time marked Preludium. The soloists enter in succession -- Tenor, Bass, Soprano, Alto -- each singing a single phrase alone. This music is then immediately repeated by the choir. The four solo phrases are taken by the same voice part as previously, with each of the other voices embellishing and
imitating the original solo line. These two sections are contrasted by a third section of new music. It is sung by the soloists on the vowel sound "ah", rather than on a text. George Hansler suggests in his dissertation *Stylistic Characteristics and Trends in the Choral Music of Five Twentieth Century British Composers,* that Tippett uses melismas to mark cadences. This function has already been noted on a small scale and here it is exhibited on a much larger scale. Thus, this B section is not only a wordless commentary on the coming of spring, a metaphor for the achieving of personal wholeness, but also a melismatic cadence for the entire work. Only the final spiritual, "Deep river", remains to be sung.

In each of these choruses with soloists, then, soloists have been combined with the choir in such a way that a dialogue could be set up whereby the chorus, representing humanity as a whole, could speak. In Handel's *Messiah* such dialogue is not possible because neither individual nor archetypal characters exist. However, *Messiah* does have similar musical treatment, although in only two cases are solos and choruses specifically linked. Both show the greatest degree of similarity to No. 29, the General

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Ensemble. No. 8, "O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion," has a chorus that both continues and extends the solo to which it is linked. In No.38a, "How beautiful are the feet," the soloists both sing material similar to the following chorus, which also includes new material. However, in neither of these is the music of the previous solo exactly retained, nor is a third independent section added as in the General Ensemble. Also, neither is a particularly apt analog for what occurs in two other choruses, Nos. 3 and 28. Both of these choruses were perhaps designed on a different model than Handel's, though still a Baroque one, namely the Passions of J.S. Bach.

Scena No. 3, if it is seen as linked with No. 2, and even No. 1 if one acknowledges them to be linked through Tippett's Prologue in Heaven idea, comes closer to approximating the structure found in the first section of Bach's St. John Passion than any structure in Messiah. The St. John Passion begins with a chorus (No.1), "Herr, unser Herrscher, dessen Ruhm in allen Landen herrlich ist." In No.2 the evangelist picks up the narration which is then interrupted by the next chorus "Jesum von Nazareth" a four-measure chorus in G minor, which is repeated after the next section of recitative. This time it is set up a fourth in C minor. No. 2 then ends after two more lines of recitative. This type of structure allows a freer dialogue between single and group characters, a kind of dialogue that
does not exist in Messiah.

The St. Matthew Passion also contains a close analog for chorus No. 11: The Double Chorus of Persecutors and Persecuted. No. 11 includes the kind of paired imitative entries that have been seen in other choruses, but in this chorus the first choir (the Persecutors) takes the main text while the second choir (the Persecuted) questions the first choir. The first chorus of the St. Matthew Passion, "Kommt, ihr Tochter," follows the same scheme, with the first choir being questioned by the second (see Figs. 6 and 7). In Messiah, "Lift up your Heads," No. 30, is the only chorus which approaches a double chorus, and it is edited as such in Watkins Shaw's 1959 Novello edition. In it, however, the text is divided between the full chorus and the semi-chorus (as Shaw names them) and the two choruses do not sing at the same time. The semi-chorus sings the first half of the text and the full chorus the second half. So, like the free forms of the solo and chorus movements and the bass narratives, the double chorus of A Child of Our Time shares more similarities with the Bach Passions than with Messiah.

Fig. 6—Questioning Chorus in *A Child of Our Time*
Fig. 7--Questioning Chorus in the St. Matthew Passion
The final two choruses share a form familiar to both Bach and Handel, the fugue. The first fugue is No. 5 "When shall the userers city cease." It has an extremely chromatic subject that incorporates an augmented second (see Fig. 8).

Fig. 8--Chromatic fugue subject with an augmented second

In the exposition it enters first in soprano on C, then in the alto on F., in the tenor on C and finally in the bass on F. The exposition is immediately followed by a stretto section where the voices enter soprano, bass, tenor, and alto on G, C, D and G respectively. The second half of the text then enters and cadences the first main section. After a grand pause, the second exposition begins, the
voices entering alto, soprano, bass and tenor on a, d, b-flat, and e-flat. After a signature change the original stretto section and the second half of the text repeat exactly, except up one full step. Thus the fugue falls into two main sections, the second part of each being the same material.

The second fugue is No. 19 The Terror. Its subject is equally chromatic as the one in No. 5, outlining a major seventh, a diminished third and a diminished triad. This fugue is less complex formally, though, consisting of a single exposition, an episode with one entry of the subject, and a final entry which is heard simultaneously with all three of the previous countersubject motives (see Fig. 9). Bringing in all the countersubjects creates a four part texture which then reduces to two-part counterpoint, soprano and tenor, and alto and bass voices being paired. The final cadential melisma has all the voices singing in unison. In the opening exposition the voices enter tenor, alto, soprano, and bass on c, then g respectively. The only entry of the subject in the episode is in the alto on f-sharp. The final entry on c rounds out the structure of the chorus, being a reference to the opening. Thus the overall structure of the chorus is:

A fugue episode a final entry

By using fugue in these two choruses Tippett has made
Fig. 9--Fugue subject with three countersubjects
obvious his interest in baroque techniques of composition, while at the same time adapting them to the twentieth century. Handel composed two fugues for *Messiah* also, and included fugal sections in several other of the pieces, such as the middle section of the Hallelujah Chorus "and he shall reign" and the final "Amen." Bach is also well known for his use of fugue. Tippett, while retaining the formal device of spacing the voices a fourth or a fifth apart, has left behind the tonal opposition of tonic and dominant, and none of Tippett's subjects could be considered to be in a particular key due to their highly chromatic nature. They, and the resulting harmony, are unmistakable products of the twentieth century.

A similar fusion of styles occurs in Tippett's treatment of the spirituals. The idea of including spirituals in the oratorio came out of the use of the chorale in the Passions of Bach. Tippett wanted, like Bach before him, to reach his audience through something already familiar to them. Ian Kemp describes how Tippett chose the Negro spiritual to replace the chorale:

He lit on this imaginative solution in an unexpected way, hearing a black singer on the radio singing the spiritual 'Steal Away' and being suddenly aware, at the phrase 'the trumpet sounds within-a my soul', of being moved by something far deeper than the spiritual appeared to deserve in tune or text. The spiritual epitomized a fundamental emotional experience, not limited to oppressed blacks in nineteenth-century
America but understood everywhere. Tippett's spirituals thus help to draw the audience into the drama. They also provide major points of cadence, bringing tonal stability to Tippett's style of frequently shifting tonal centers. Because of their cadential function, it is not surprising that each of the parts ends with a spiritual. The other two spirituals appear in Part II at important points which will be discussed later. The influence of the musical style of the spirituals goes beyond facilitating major structural cadences, however. Tippett "used the interval of a minor third, produced so characteristically in the melodies of the spirituals when moving from the fifth of the tonic to the flat seventh, as a basic interval of the whole work." The use of this characteristic interval helped bridge the gap between Tippett's own style and the style of the spirituals. When including the spirituals, Tippett was not satisfied with just borrowing the harmonizations from the collection he ordered from America, but rather reharmonized them and added solo parts. Ian Kemp writes:

Tippett always intended to harmonize the spirituals in the purest way possible. What did present compositional problems to him was the manner of presentation. He eventually found a model for this in the recordings by the Hall

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7 Ian Kemp, Michael Tippett: The Man and His Work (London and New York: Da Capo, 1984), 158.

8 Sir Michael Tippett, Music of the Angels; Essays and Sketchbooks of Michael Tippett, compiled by Meirion Bowen (London and New York: Eulenburg, 1980), 172.
Johnson Choir mentioned above. They introduced him to the practice of using 'leaders' in the choral sections, as well as to the solo plus response form of the central sections, the spirituals as a whole therefore being cast in the ternary shape of chorus, solo, chorus. This means that when the tenor solo, as in 'Steal away' is the 'leader' ... he is given the responsibility of articulating the tune and carrying the chorus with him. It is remarkable effect, suggesting a desire to sway and encourage rather than control, and as such entirely in keeping with the emotional climate of the spirituals as a whole."

Thus Tippett integrated the spirituals into his own compositional practice while preserving their unique qualities and exploiting their familiarity to the common man.

The only sections of A Child of Our Time which have thus far not been discussed are the purely instrumental ones. They are the Interlude between the alto solo No.2 and the second chorus, "Is evil then good?" in Part I, and the Preludium to the General Ensemble in Part III. The Interlude as noted above is really part of a larger complex extending from the beginning of No. 2 through the end of No. 3. It is curious that when its musical material comes back in No. 3 it is not marked Interlude again. In each appearance it forms a bridge from the alto solo to the next chorus, though neither the solos or the choruses share material.

The Preludium on the other hand is plainly introductory to the General Ensemble, in which the boy (and therefore by

9 Kemp, op. cit., 172.
analogy humanity in general) finds unity and wholeness after the struggle. In this it shares similarites to the Pastoral Symphony in Messiah which sets the scene for the revelation to the shepherds. The preludium's inclusion also adds weight and importance to this final ensemble before the last spiritual. Though it shares no music with the Interlude, a feature common to both is the use of canon, here a three-voice canon, one voice imitating at the fifth and one at the octave.

Finally, though it may seem from the preceding description that A Child of Our Time is merely a string of unrelated recitatives, arias and choruses, there is a unifying plan. All of the Parts are constructed according to a single plan, and so parallel each other (see Fig. 10). All open with a metaphoric chorus which foreshadows the action to come. Each ends with a spiritual which speaks of finally leaving behind the troubles of this world. Just prior to each final spiritual is a series of solos reflecting on the action just completed. In Parts I and II the parallel is most obvious, each having first a tenor then a soprano solo. In Part III the General Ensemble preceeds the final spiritual and it incorporates solos by all the soloists.

Between the opening chorus and this final series of pieces, the form of each part adapts to the requirements of the drama. Part I and Part III parallel each other again at
Fig. 10—Parallelism between the three parts of *A Child of Our Time*

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the beginning, each following the opening choruses with an alto solo and a scena. In Part I, the dialogue of the scena is between the alto and the chorus and is part of a larger complex as noted above. In Part III the dialogue is between the bass soloist and the chorus. At this point the three parts diverge according to the demands of the drama. In Part I a recitative and a chorus appear between the scena and the ending solos. In Part III only the Preludium appears between the scena and the General Ensemble. However, because the majority of the action takes place in Part II, twenty-one numbers appear between the opening chorus and the concluding solos.

Rather than having a solo and scena before the action begins in Part II, the narration begins immediately after the first chorus. Then the double chorus parallels the questioning scenas of Part I and III. At this point the sequence of events necessitates an overarching unification so that this entire section of Part II, prior to the closing solos, does not disintegrate into an unorganized succession of numbers. Once again Tippett looks back to the Baroque for a model to follow. The formal device he chooses is the arch form (see Fig. II). It is centered on the spiritual "Nobody knows" No. 16. The numbers on each side of No. 16 form pairs, marked by brackets in Fig. 2. Each pair consists of two numbers of similar function. Thus the pairs No. 12/ No. 20 and No. 14/ No. 18 are both pairs of recitatives given to
Fig. 11--Arch Form in Part II of *A Child of Our Time*

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11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Double Narrator Chorus Narrator Scena Spiritual Scena Narrator Chorus Narrator Spiritual of the Self-righteous

"Away with they cannot have" "Where we "And the "O my "Nobody knows" "The "They "Burn "Men "Go down "burn" were Moses" becomes"terrible ashamed" "vengeance"
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the bass as narrator. Pair No. 13/ No. 19 are both choruses of the persecutors advocating action against the persecuted. Two scenas make up the pair of No. 15/ No. 17, the first of which describes the motivation of the boy's action, and the second the action and its meaning. The most dissimilar pair is No. 11/ No. 21, a chorus and a spiritual which promote opposite views. In No. 11 the persecutors advocate doing away with the persecuted, while in No. 21 the oppressed are calling for release. This arch form takes the central plot coherently from beginning to end. In one sense it is not a baroque arch form, because none of the pairs share musical material. Yet the parallel functions in the pairs give continuity to the overall formal design.

Clearly Tippett reinterpreted and transformed the Baroque formal designs of Bach and Handel in creating his oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*. With *The Vision of Saint Augustine* Tippett moves far from these models and employs a completely different approach to its composition. He apparently realized how far he had come and therefore did not give *The Vision of Saint Augustine* the genre designation oratorio. Yet despite the new approach *The Vision of Saint Augustine* shares characteristics with *Messiah*.

The similarities between *The Vision of Saint Augustine* and *Messiah* are for the most part external. Like *Messiah*,

The Vision of Saint Augustine was composed for an unstaged, concert setting and employs a soloist, chorus and orchestra in presenting a contemplative, rather than dramatic, text. More significant are the differences between the two. Even a cursory glance at the score of the The Vision of Saint Augustine will show the most obvious difference between it and Messiah. Unlike Messiah and A Child of Our Time, The Vision of Saint Augustine is not divided into individual numbers within each part. Rather each part is through-composed, moving uninterrupted from beginning to end. It is as if the model for this work was the music-drama of Richard Wagner rather than the baroque oratorio of Handel. Yet, unlike Wagner's music-dramas, The Vision of Saint Augustine was never meant for a dramatic staging. Only one character speaks, though with two different voices, the baritone soloist giving a narrative account of the circumstances surrounding Augustine's two visions, and the chorus adding a gloss of related words and experiences that could have been called to his mind as Augustine told the story of his visions. Thus the libretto, by presenting a single stream of conscious thought with all its associations and recollections included, demanded a continuous musical setting far removed from the individual numbers required by late baroque oratorio.

This does not mean, however, that Tippett had to compose new music throughout the work. Rather certain
thoughts which recur in the libretto are set to similar music. The first of these recurring sections uses one of the most ancient chants of the church, Deus Creator omnium. This Ambrosian chant was quoted by Augustine in The Confessions, and Tippett incorporates it into his own contrapuntal style. The chant falls naturally into two halves, the second half having only minor changes from the first. Because of this, at the chant's first appearance at two measures after rehearsal number 7, an AA' structure emerges from the more freely structured music which precedes it. In addition to reusing the basic chant melody, the second A also reuses the accompanying contrapuntal material but with a change. Five of the lines, those of the baritone soloist, the women of the chorus, the harp, the bassoon, and that line which is divided between the flute and the oboe (which the oboe plays alone in the first A) are this time set a full step above their original starting pitch. Other lines (those of the cello, double bass and timpani) are set a third higher than originally. However, the second half of the chant remains on the same pitch level as the first (see Figs. 12 and 13). Clearly, Tippett is continuing his practice of immediately repeating material at a new interval, as he did in several of the individual numbers of A Child of Our Time, as well as continuing his practice of giving primacy to contrapuntal techniques rather than to harmonic ones. The harmony results from the counterpoint,
Fig. 12--First half of Deus, Creator omnium
Fig. 13--Second half of Deus, Creator omnium
Deus Creator omnium appears again in Part I, at rehearsal 33. This time the note values have been doubled in length over those at its first appearance. The accompanying figures which appeared in the strings, the women's chorus and the timpani have also been retained and doubled in time value. However, new chorus and wind parts have been added and the solo line deleted. Also, only the first three phrases of the chant are used. Next, the second half of the chant comes in after a twelve measure interlude, in the original note values. Much of its original setting has been retained, though a new solo line has been added and some of the wind parts have been left out. At both this and the first appearance of the chant, the chorus brings in the chant after a reference to God has been made by the baritone soloist, as if this chant and its description of God were inseparably linked with Augustine's own concept of God. Such linkage of related thoughts allows Tippett to build unity into the composition by reusing previously heard material.

The final appearance of the chant Deus Creator omnium is in Part III, at rehearsal number 177. It is nearly identical to the first appearance of the chant, but once again the final phrase of the first half of the chant is left out, despite the fact that the note values are not doubled. More significantly, the entire second half of the chant is left unheard, as if by this point Tippett believes
a reference to the chant is enough to recall the whole to the listener's mind. *Deus Creator omnium* and the music Tippett sets with it are not the only sections of music which appear in several places in *The Vision of Saint Augustine*. At rehearsal 43 Tippett sets the following text:

Solo

Et praeterita obliviscentes
In ea quae ante sunt extenti

And forgetting the things that are past
And reaching towards those that are before all Time

Chorus

Praeterita oblitus, non in ea
Quae futura et transitura sunt
Sed in ea quae ante sunt non
Distentus, sed extentus, non
Secundum distentionem, sed
Secundum intentionem sequor
Ad palman supernae vocationis.

Having forgotten things past, and not seeking the transitory things to come, but reaching towards those that are before all Time (not by dispersal but by concentration of energy) I press towards the crown of my heavenly calling.

The music used to set these words appears again both in Parts II and III. In Part II at rehearsal number 124, the Chorus takes the text originally given to the solo, while the soloist takes the words, "et dum loquimur et inhiamus illi," (and while we were thus talking of eternal life and panting for it). This section of music is reduced from sixteen measures to eight but leads into an almost exact
repetition of the musical setting of "sequor ad palman supernae vocationis," the only change being the deletion of a line for viola.

At rehearsal number 189 in Part III, this same music sets the following texts:

Solo

Sicut nunc extendimus nos et in
Rapida cagitatione attingimus

Just as we two had but now reached out and in a flash of the mind touched

Chorus

In ea quae extenti, secundum intentionem

And reaching for those things that are before all time, by concentration of energy

Here, as in Part II, the chorus repeats text previously heard, while the soloist continues the narrative from The Confessions. The common idea coming out of the narrative which seems to recall earlier words and music is the idea of reaching for the eternal (those things that are before all time). Not surprisingly both of these sections in Parts II and III come just prior to the music Tippett used to depict the vision.

The music of the vision itself first appears in Part II when the narrative reaches the point at which the vision actually occurs. It returns in Part III when Augustine asks if such a vision prolonged could be what was meant by the Biblical passage "Intra in gaudium domini?" (Enter into the
joy of your lord?). To depict the vision, Tippett interrupts the narrative and allows the chorus and orchestra to take over. Tippett's music for this section consists of a group of ten ostinati of different lengths which repeat over a twenty-five measure section. Use of these ostinati gives the music a timeless quality, as if there is no real beginning or end to it. Indeed this section comes to a somewhat abrupt stop with a full measure rest, since no time would come when all the ostinati would cadence together. The words of the chorus enhance the timeless quality, since two of the voices sing on Alleluia and the other on Greek syllables from an ancient Christian prayer, the *Pistis Sophia*.

The music of the vision in Part III is identical to that in Part II except for two aspects. The first is the solo line, which, unlike previously, continues the narrative. The second is the addition of rests. These rests appear simultaneously in all of the lines of the orchestra and the chorus, creating holes in what was originally a continuous texture. The soloist sings alone during these rests, continuing the musings of Augustine on the meaning of the vision. The use of these rests may be related to a second way Tippett unifies the music of *The Vision of Saint Augustine* which is discussed below.

All the examples cited so far have been of sections of music which appear in two or more of the Parts. Tippett also unifies each Part by reusing music within it which appears
in no other part. In Part I, all the music which is reused appears almost immediately after its first statement, which, as we have seen, is a common feature of Tippett's compositional style. In Parts II and III, however, certain sections of music reappear after much longer periods of time, and are reused more than once. As before, the music which is reused is related to a recurring thought or idea. In Part II there are two recurring thoughts. The first is the idea of Light (O lux) which, with its associated music, appears at rehearsal numbers 90, 93, and 96. At each of these numbers the music set to the text, "O lux" remains the same though its opening pitch rises each time (from e-flat to f to G) and the solo line against which it is set changes. The second recurring thought is the idea of "cara aeternitas," beloved eternity, which occurs at rehearsal numbers 105, 123 and 142. The music at 105 and 142 is essentially the same except for the deletion of the solo at 142. At 123 only the second half of the music is heard and the original note values are doubled.

In Part III the idea that recurs is that of silence, "sileat." It appears in seven places, at one before rehearsal 154, one before 156, one before 161, one before 164, one before 166, one before 171, and at one before 176. The music is not identical at each of these places, but the similarities are unmistakable, even at 176 where the text set is "taceant," rather than "sileat" (see Fig. 14).
Fig. 14--The first and final appearances of the "sileat" motive.
This idea of silence may also have been the reason why rests appear in the music of the vision in this part, Part III, the rests serving as a kind of aural illustration of the silence necessary to experience the vision.

In addition to these examples where recurring music is directly related to recurring ideas, some purely instrumental music also repeats. The instrumental postlude to Part I, which begins at rehearsal 68, divides exactly in half, the second 52 measures (from rehearsal 77) being a transposed repeat of the first 52. Similarly, the postlude to Part II divides into three parts, the second two being variations of the first.

The music of The Vision of Saint Augustine is clearly outside of the tradition of the oratorio, though the external form and something of the purpose remain. In The Mask of Time,\(^{11}\) a mixture of the through-composed style of The Vision of Saint Augustine and the traditional division of numbers appears. Again Tippett does not give this work the genre description oratorio, despite its retention of the outward form of the oratorio.

At first glance, The Mask of Time appears to follow the traditional oratorio pattern of larger parts divided into individual numbers. The Mask of Time is divided into two parts, with five individually titled numbers in each

part. Further subdivision occurs in Part II, No. 9, whose title is "Three Songs", and which contains precisely that. Closer inspection, however, reveals that several of the numbers are linked into larger units than their outward numbering would suggest, and that certain of the movements are related through the reuse of music from a previous movement.

Of the twelve individually-numbered movements, six are included in a linked pair and thus do not stand alone. Numbers one and two, seven and eight, and the third song of number nine and number ten are all composed so that the first movement flows uninterrupted into the second. In all these pairs none of the music of the first number reappears in the second.

A similar proportion, half of the twelve numbered movements, share some music with one or more of the other movements. No. 1 Presence, is the most frequently quoted, with all of its major themes being heard in a later portion of the work. Parts of Nos. 2 and 3 are also heard later. By movement three, however, earlier parts of the work are already being replayed. At rehearsal 93, the opening of No. 1 returns for four measures when the chorus sings the word "sound" as they did at the beginning. At rehearsal 95, the figure which accompanied the chorus' singing of the word "time" at rehearsal 14 in No. 1 reappears for three measures just prior to the line, "and time unfurls across space." The
word "space" (which appears at rehearsal 95) also is set exactly as it was in No.1 at rehearsal 15. As in The Vision of Saint Augustine, reuse of earlier music is related to recurring thoughts and ideas.

No. 4, "The Ice-Cap moves South-North", has only one quotation, at rehearsal 147-148. It is similar to the quotations in No. 3 in that it is the repetition of the musical setting of a single word, here the word is "resounding," which was first heard in No. 1 at rehearsal 7-8. This setting of "resounding" covers twelve measures, the second six being a variation of the first six, and is identical in both appearances. Part II opens with a six measure quotation of the figure which originally accompanied the words, "A barnacle goose high up in the stretches of night" at rehearsal 9 in No. 1. Only the orchestral music is reused in Part II. It is heard a second time in this same movement at rehearsal 279, this time leading into different music than that with which appeared at the beginning of Part II. A second quotation in this movement (No. 6 The Triumph of Life) is taken from movement three. First heard at rehearsal 75, the spoken sounds "bizz wazz whizzing wazz whizzing wings" are heard in the same rhythmic pattern as before, but with new orchestral accompaniment and with the addition of the chorus. Finally, at rehearsal 289, a third quotation, this time taken again from No. 1 appears. Originally heard at rehearsal 7, it has already been
repeated once in No. 3, as mentioned above. Like it was in No. 3, this setting of the word "resounding" is heard exactly as it was in No.1.

The final movement which quotes any previous material is No. 9, No.1, the first of the "Three Songs" entitled "The Severed Head". Its first quotation is from rehearsal 17 in No.1, which reappears at rehearsal 414. Originally an eight-bar setting of the words "turning, returning," only the first four bars are reused. They are quoted exactly as they were first heard, that is with the orchestra accompanying paired voices in the chorus (ST and AB singing the same music an octave apart) but this time Tippett adds two soloists singing the same music a fifth above and two beats behind the chorus. A second quotation is heard at rehearsal 419. These two measures were first heard just prior to the setting of "turning, returning" but now appear after it. They are also scored in the same way as at their first appearance except for one addition. The addition is a soprano soloist who sings in unison with the tenor on the same music he sang before. The opening of the work is heard once again at 427 when the word "sound" makes its third appearance. This time only three measures of the original are heard. The final quotation, at rehearsal 437, is the only quotation from No. 2. First found at rehearsal 41, nine measures of the orchestral accompaniment are borrowed and given new vocal parts. In the fifth measure,
however, at the word "singing" the original vocal parts return, though the choral text "and the poet singing:" is replaced with the vowel sound "ah."

Thus, both through the linking of movements and the return of various sections of music Tippett has unified the musical setting of *The Mask of Time* to a larger degree than is typical of the baroque oratorio. Yet at the same time much of the music is through-composed, and not all of the opportunities for unification are exploited. Six of the movements, Nos. 5, 7, 8, 9/2, 9/3, and 10, neither quote or are quoted in any other movement. Notice that four of these, Nos. 7 and 8, and Nos. 9/3 and 10, are included in the linked pairs mentioned above. It is also interesting to note a place where Tippett foregoes an obvious opportunity to use a quotation to unify his music. As mentioned above, at rehearsal 95 the accompanying figure from rehearsal 14 reappears when the concept of "time", the word originally sung above the figure, is about to be mentioned again in the line "and time unfurls across space." Time is again mentioned at rehearsal 436. Any similarity between this and the other two settings of "time" is so slight as to be completely missed by the listener. At 436, the meter has changed, "time" sung three times rather than once, the orchestral accompaniment is completely new and the tonal center has changed. The only real similarity is in the sustained note values of the voices and in their spacing.
What were originally dotted half-notes are now whole notes and rather than being spaced a perfect fifth apart (basses and altos on b-flat, tenors and sopranos on f) the voices now appear a diminished fifth apart (the basses and altos now on b rather than b-flat). Had Tippett at this point reused the original accompanying figure as he did at 95, the alliance between the concept of time and that figure would have been very clear. As it stands, the relationship between the first appearance of the word "time" and subsequent ones is ambiguous.

In the through-composed movements Tippett unifies the music in many of the same ways he unified the music of his other works. For example, in No. 5, the first movement which neither quotes or is quoted in another movement, Tippett opens the movement with a fugal section. The fugue begins with solo viola stating the subject on e-flat, which is then imitated in stretto by a second viola on b-flat, and in inversion by the double bass on c. In the fourth measure (one before rehearsal 158) the chorus enters and the fugal imitation begins on new material, first being heard in the soprano I part, then soprano II, then tenor I and tenor II. The altos and basses sing non-imitative lines and the section cadences six measures after rehearsal 160. At 161 a second contrapuntal device unifies the section. Here the men's chorus enters one measure after the women's chorus in canon. These four measures along with the previous fugal
section are heard again at rehearsal 208, where Tippett adds two solo lines, soprano and tenor, to the fourth measure and following. Canon is also found in this movement at rehearsal 202 between the chorus and the bass soloist. These contrapuntal devices are found in five other movements, Nos. 1, 6, 7, 8 and 10. So as in his previous works Tippett employs contrapuntal devices that were widely used in the baroque to unify his music.

A second device Tippett continues to exploit to unify his music is the varied repeat. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is in No. 6 The Triumph of Life where all the music from rehearsal 252 to rehearsal 263 is based on a single two-measure accompaniment figure. The figure is first heard played by the orchestra alone at 252. It is then transposed and extended by one measure. At 253 these five measures are transposed and played by the orchestra again. At 254 the three-measure version is heard before the two-measure one, both on new pitches, and this time with solo and choral parts added. From this point the vocal parts continue with through-composed material over various transpositions and variations of the accompaniment figure until rehearsal 263, 53 measures after it all began. And Tippett is not yet through with this figure which returns at rehearsal 265, 268, 269 and 277. This is the most extensive section built around a single figure that Tippett uses in The Mask of Time, but much of the unborrowed music of this
and other movements is constructed along similar, if less complex, lines.

The Mask of Time shares two other significant stylistic characteristics with A Child of Our Time and The Vision of Saint Augustine. The first is the incorporation of a traditional melody into Tippett's own contrapuntal style. In A Child of Our Time, as will be recalled, Tippett used Negro spirituals and in The Vision of Saint Augustine he used the Ambrosian chant Deus Creator omnium. In movement seven of The Mask of Time, Tippett again employs this device by introducing Veni creator Spiritus into the orchestral prelude and interludes. It first appears in the horn parts at rehearsal 302, where Tippett has written the words into the score and marked the part to be played "as though word-singing." Thus, unlike in the other two works, Tippett has included words which are not heard except by those who recognise the tune and know the words and their meaning, or by those who are following a libretto which has included them and their translation with a note as to where they appear in the music. The second two appearances of the chant are even more obscure than the first, being hidden by their range and rhythm. Clearly, Tippett's concept of the audience's associating with the performance through the use of familiar music has gone from a more obvious approach to a highly arcane one. That is to say, that while many people in the audience would recognise the Negro spirituals by their
style if not by knowledge of the pieces themselves, in the case of *Veni creator Spiritus* the impact of these words and their music will be lost to all but the musically well-educated or possibly the Catholic parishioners and clergy who recall the pre-Vatican II liturgy, and who could pick the chant out of the canonic chorale-prelude-like texture of the prelude and the two interludes.

The second style characteristic which *The Mask of Time* shares with the two earlier works is the use of the melisma as a cadential figure. As before, Tippett uses melismas at major sectional cadences as well as at less important internal cadences. An example of a melisma at an internal cadence is the melisma on the word "oriflamme" at rehearsal 97. This melisma marks the end of the chorus part of number three, Jungle, and is followed by an eight-measure instrumental postlude. The most important cadential melisma is at the end of the work and indeed incorporates all thirty-five measures of number 10, "The singing will never be done." Tippett sustains this melisma by creating a set of repeating, four-bar fugal entries in the chorus over which the four soloists sing a different melismatic figure. This second figure is five bars long and repeats over the fugal entries. Tippett thus creates a kind of phase shifting often associated with the music of minimalist composers like Philip Glass. This technique lends a feeling of timelessness appropriate to the title of this number. As the musical
figures will never cadence together, Tippett breaks this section off by abruptly beginning a related two-bar figure which repeats three-and-a-half times before the final bar of rest. Tippett describes the ending of the work in a note below the final score: "The sound is 'cut off' as though by the closing of a door."12 Clearly he wishes to convey the impression that "The singing will never be done" and the performance has not really ended.

12Tippett, The Mask of Time, 578.
CHAPTER IV

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LIBRETTOS AND THE MUSIC

The main question of this chapter is how the words and the music of the works under consideration function, whether in harmony or disharmony. Included in the consideration of this question is the question of the relative importance of each to the other, that is, which at any particular point in a work is considered to be of primary importance. Ideally, the music and the words should be so in harmony that the text and the musical structure are equally intelligible. However, such a balance is rare, and in works as long as those under consideration, is perhaps even undesirable, since an alternation of importance between the words and the music can be used to bring variety and interest to a work.

The problem of the balance between words and music in Handel's Messiah is addressed through the opposition of recitative and aria, as well as the opposition homophonic and contrapuntal sections in the choruses. In the recitatives and homophonic sections, the words predominate in such a way that the text need only be set once and the music is merely an enhancement of them. In the arias and contrapuntal sections of the choruses, the musical procedures, such as da capo repeats and fugal entries, are
predominant, and the texts are generally stated at least twice, if not more frequently. Thus, both the words and the music have their time to come to the fore, and the opposition of these two types of relationships create variety within a lengthy work. Also, due to Handel's genius, generally at no time is either the text completely obscured by the music or is the music made so subservient to the text that it becomes banal.

In *A Child of Our Time*, this same kind of balance is struck, since as the musical study of the last chapter has pointed out, the musical structures of this work are directly related to those of *Messiah*. Thus, when the words are meant to predominate, Tippett uses a recitative type setting and states the text only once, and when the musical processes are important, he states the text several times. Tippett, however, includes a section where the relation of the words to the music is different from anything found in *Messiah*. This is the melismatic cadence at the end of the piece. It is a place where there are voices but no words, not merely because the musical processes have come to a climax, but because music can express emotions that words cannot describe. Using voices in connection with this music brings this emotion one step closer to the listener without giving it the definite meaning inherent in words. This is Tippett's way of portraying transcendence.

*The Vision of Saint Augustine* brings this type of
portrayal of transcendence one step closer to the listener, while at the same time retreating one step further from him in the music not directly related to transcendence. Both the advance and the retreat are related to the use of text, but in this work, unlike any of the others, a foreign text. All the text of *The Vision of Saint Augustine* is either in Latin or Greek, two languages no longer widely known. Thus, although use of a text in the ecstatic sections makes their meaning somewhat more apparent, putting the entire work in a generally unknown language distances the entire work from the audience.

The general effect of this decision is to place the entire work in something of a middle ground where the words and the music achieve a more even balance throughout, though there is still some alternation of importance of the kind seen in *Messiah* and *A Child of Our Time*. One reason this more homogenous type of setting can be used effectively in this work is that it is the shortest of all the works, both in duration and amount of text to be set. Of all of the works, *The Mask of Time* is the least successful in maintaining a good balance between the words and the music. It has all the same difficulties with text setting found in *Messiah* and *A Child of Our Time*, and is set in a more complex twentieth-century idiom than *A Child of Our Time*. In addition, it lacks a well-proven style for clarifying text, like the sparse accompaniment of recitative, for times when
the text is only sung once. Thus, much of the text of the soloists is obscured by heavy orchestral accompaniment and by an extreme range in the vocal lines which can obscure diction. However, many of the orchestral and choral sections are quite effective in bringing out the text and/or the musical structure.

The Mask of Time also has a relationship between text and music unique to itself in the chorale-prelude-like interludes in No. 7. In this section the music is written specifically to enhance a text that is never sung. Though the rhythm and the range of Veni creator Spiritus is different in each of the three settings, the tune and its related text are unmistakable, and are the basis of each canonic setting. So, in a sense, the form of the music is a directly influenced by a text that is never heard. In this situation it is difficult to decide which of the elements, text or music is predominant.

A second question to be asked in this chapter is whether the type of musical setting Tippett has given his works is appropriate to the subjects addressed in his librettos. In general Tippett has only two choices after the decision to use a libretto has been made. That decision is whether or not to use a staged or an unstaged setting. Considering the nature of the librettos, a staged setting that would have any interest at all would be possible only in A Child of Our Time, where the shooting of the official
would have some dramatic impact if staged. Even to stage this libretto, however, it would have to be significantly altered as even this turning point is recounted by the narrator rather than directly experienced by the boy.

More importantly, however, most of the climactic points in Tippett's librettos involve an inner, psychological drama that is difficult to portray on stage. Even in *The Vision of Saint Augustine*, where the vision of eternity is directly related in the words of Augustine himself, there is too little action surrounding the vision to make an interesting stage production. And a staging of *The Mask of Time* would be impossible considering the vast periods of time it covers and the lack of well-defined characters. Thus, a staged production of any of these works in their current form is unlikely. Moreover, Tippett's objectives in these works are directly opposed to what staged performances do best. Opera at its best is a dramatic performance designed to make the audience feel the same emotions that the characters on the stage are portraying through indirect identification with them. Tippett, on the other hand, seems to be more interested in making his audience do two things: to think about the human condition and to experience transcendence for themselves. Tippett intends that the people in the audience understand and, through the experience of actually seeing visions, enhance their own lives by a more direct interaction with the text and music. Tippett writes:
Our mortality is the one inescapable feature of our existence: the triumphal chariot of Life will throw each one of us, powerful or puny, into the ditch. Nevertheless, in coming to terms with this vision we are always conditioned by our time, and therefore have to keep it all in balance since it is not an absolute. We are, in short, actors constantly finding ourselves at the beginning of the drama.¹

Helping his audiences find the balance is Tippett's main objective, and as his entire audience cannot directly participate in a staged drama, staging is an inappropriate medium for his objectives.

¹Tippett, record jacket notes for Michael Tippet's The Mask of Time, II, 40.
CHAPTER V

THE ORATORIO QUESTION

The final question to be answered is whether or not the three works by Michael Tippett are true oratorios or members of a separate, possibly new, genre. As the opening chapter pointed out, English oratorio began as an unstaged, dramatic work with many similarities to Italian opera seria. Messiah, however, does not fit this model and still retains the appellation oratorio. It also served as the model for Tippett's works, especially A Child of Our Time. So if Messiah is to be considered an oratorio, what of Tippett's works?

A Child of Our Time is definitely an oratorio. It is called such by Tippett, and as the previous chapters have demonstrated, its parallels with Messiah are extensive. Since Messiah continues to be labeled an oratorio despite its differences from the rest of Handel's oratorios, A Child of Our Time must retain that label.

By naming these two works oratorios, the number of works the term oratorio encompasses broadens beyond those exhibiting the characteristics common to Handel's other oratorios. Don Michael Randel, in The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, defines oratorio this way:

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An extended musical drama with a text based on religious subject matter . . . intended for performance without scenery, costume or action. As a result, most oratorios place special emphasis on narration, on contemplation, and, particularly in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, on extensive use of chorus.¹

This definition fits Handel's standard oratorios, though several could be effectively staged, while at the same time including all of Tippett's works. Tippett's librettos are contemplative in character if not overtly religious, and use the correct performance situation and media. Also, there appears to be no radical new development or addition to any of these works which would take them outside this definition. The texts reflect twentieth-century concerns, far removed from those of the eighteenth century, but a change of subject material does not make these works fall outside of Randel's definition.

One might still ask if Tippett's works fit the general definition of oratorio why Tippett declined to name The Vision of Saint Augustine and The Mask of Time oratorios. One possible explanation is that Tippett wanted his audience to listen to his works without any preconceived notions of either their subjects or their style. The term "oratorio" has long been associated in the popular mind with both Christian sentiments and music more or less in the style of

Handel. Tippett's works, even when dealing with an historically Christian figure and event like *The Vision of Saint Augustine*, are not meant to present a specifically Christian message, but rather a more universal one. Deleting the term "oratorio" would aid in removing otherwise automatic associations from the mind of the audience.

In the final analysis, however, Tippett's implied wishes aside, all of these works are indeed oratorios. They exhibit all the necessary characteristics and no particularly radical ones. Though their subjects are of a specifically twentieth-century nature, their performing media and their compositional nature are in the tradition of Handel. *A Child of Our Time*, *The Vision of Saint Augustine* and *The Mask of Time* show Tippett to be continuing the long tradition of English oratorio writing.
INDIVIDUAL NUMBERS IN TIPPETT'S WORKS

A Child of Our Time

Part I

1. Chorus
2. The Argument
   Interludium
3. Scena
4. The Narrator
5. Chorus of the Oppressed
6. Tenor Solo
7. Soprano Solo
8. A Spiritual

Part II

9. Chorus
10. The Narrator
11. Double Chorus of Persecutors and Persecuted
12. The Narrator
13. Chorus of the Self-righteous
14. The Narrator
15. Scena
16. A Spiritual
17. Scena
18. The Narrator
19. The Terror
20. The Narrator
21. A Spiritual of Anger
22. The Boy sings in Prison
23. The Mother
24. Alto Solo
25. A Spiritual

Part III

26. Chorus
27. Alto Solo
28. Scena
29. General Ensemble
30. A Spiritual

The Vision of Saint Augustine

There are no individual numbers in The Vision of Saint Augustine.
The Mask of Time

Part I

1. Presence
2. Creation of the World by Music
3. Jungle
4. The Ice-cap moves South-North
5. Dream of the Paradise Garden

Part II

6. The Triumph of Life
7. Mirror of Whitening Light
8. Hiroshima, mon amour
9. Three Songs
   1. The Severed Head
   2. The Beleaguered Friends
   3. The Young Actor Steps Out
10. The singing will never be done
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