

action/Number scores). A decision once made must be allowed to run its course until the next recitation.

The temporal point of rest is when the last composition has ended, and before the improvisation begins. It should be understood that the entire paragraph is an improvisation rite, and at this point the ritual part ends and the improvising part begins. No formal components (not even the Ode Machines or the action/Number Scores) should be allowed to overrun this point of rest and spill into the improvising part. They are all a prelude to an accord to the 'prescribed spontaneity apparent in Nature'.

Firelighting Component

The following inspirational text is from the book of Kiwang-Sze, XIV. 3, translated from the Chinese by James Legge.

Pei-măn Khăng asked Hwang-Tî, saying, 'You were celebrating, O Tî, a performance of the music of the Hsien-khih, in the open country near the Thung-hing lake. When I heard the first part of it I was afraid; the next made me weary; and the last perplexed me. I became agitated and unable to speak, and lost my self-possession.' The Tî said, 'It was likely that it should so affect you! It was performed with (the instruments of) men, and all attuned according to (the influences of) Heaven. It proceeded according to (the principles of) propriety and righteousness, and was pervaded by (the idea of) the Grand Purity.'

The Perfect Music first had its response in the affairs of men, and was conformed to the principles of Heaven; it indicated the action of the five virtues, and corresponded to the spontaneity (apparent in nature). After this it showed the blended distinctions of the four seasons, and the grand harmony of all things; — the succession of those seasons one after another, and the production of things in their proper order. Now it swelled, and now it died away, its peaceful and military strains clearly distinguished and given forth. Now it was clear, and now rough, as if the contracting and expanding of the elemental processes blended harmoniously (in its notes). Those notes then flowed away in waves of light, till, as when the hibernating insects first begin to move, I commanded the terrifying crash of thunder. Its end was marked by no formal conclusion, and it began again without any prelude. It seemed to die away, and then it burst into life; it came to a close and then it rose again. So it went on regularly and inexhaustibly, and without the intervention of any pause: — it was this which made you afraid.

In the second part (of the performance), I made it describe the harmony of the Yin and Yang, and threw round it the brilliance of the sun and moon. Its notes were now short and now long, now soft and now hard. Their changes, however, were marked by an unbroken unity, though not dominated by a fixed regularity. They filled every valley and ravine; you might shut up every crevice, and guard your spirit (against their entrance), yet there was nothing but gave admission to them. Yea, those notes resounded slowly, and might have been pronounced

high

high and clear. Hence the shades of the dead kept in their obscurity; the sun and moon, and all the stars of the zodiac, pursued their several courses. I made (my instruments) leave off, when (the performance) came to an end, and their (echoes) flowed on without stopping. You thought anxiously about it, and were not able to understand it; you looked for it, and were not able to see it; you pursued it, and were not able to reach it. All-amazed, you stood in the way all open around you, and then you leant against an old rotten dryandra-tree and hummed. The power of your eyes was exhausted by what you wished to see; your strength failed in your desire to pursue it, while I myself could not reach it. Your body was but so much empty vacancy while you endeavoured to retain your self-possession: — it was that endeavour that made you weary.

In the last part (of the performance), I employed notes which did not have that wearing effect. I blended them together as at the command of spontaneity. Hence they came as if following one another in confusion, like a clump of plants springing from one root, or like the music of a forest produced by no visible form. They spread themselves all around without leaving a trace (of their cause); and seemed to issue from deep obscurity where there was no sound. Their movements came from nowhere; their home was in the deep darkness; — conditions which some would call death, and some life; some, the fruit, and some, (merely) the flower. Those notes, moving and flowing on, separating and shifting, and not following any regular sounds, the world might well have doubts about them, and refer them to the judgment of a sage, for the sages understand the nature of this music, and judge in accordance with the prescribed (spontaneity). While the spring of that spontaneity has not been touched, and yet the regulators of the five notes are all prepared; — this is what is called the music of Heaven, delighting the mind without the use of words. Hence it is said in the eulogy of the Lord of Pião, "You listen for it, and do not hear its sound; you look for it and do not perceive its form; it fills heaven and earth; it envelopes all within the universe." You wished to hear it, but could not take it in; and therefore you were perplexed.

I performed first the music calculated to awe; and you were frightened as if by a ghostly visitation. I followed it with that calculated to weary; and in your weariness you would have withdrawn. I concluded with that calculated to perplex; and in your perplexity you felt your stupidity. But that stupidity is akin to the Táo; you may with it convey the Táo in your person, and have it (ever) with you.'