

The influence of recording and the record industry upon musical activity, as illustrated by the careers of Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti and Sir Simon Rattle.

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Summary

The objective of this study is to determine the nature of the influence of recording and the recording industry upon musical activity.

Sound recording is a major communications medium of the twentieth century. Yet there has been limited research into the influence of recording and the changes that it has driven. This study seeks to address this gap in understanding.

The method chosen for the study was three separate case studies of the conductors Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti and Sir Simon Rattle. Each of these musicians had a major recording career, and in Rattle's case continues to do so.

The data used in the study was collected from three sources: firstly through interviews with those possessing professional experience of the case-study subjects and of the record industry; secondly from archival documentation; and thirdly through published press interviews and commentaries.

The analysis of commonalities and differences between the case study subjects indicated that each was generally in control of their involvement with recording, rather than the reverse. Three areas were identified as being of key importance: the relationship with record companies and with personnel within these; control over repertoire decisions; and mastery of the act of recording.

Based on the experience of the three case-study subjects, a model of the influence of recording has been constructed. This relates each stage of the technological development of recording to its immediate consequences and to 'meta-consequences', or the more far-reaching influences of recording. The principal 'meta-consequences' are seen as being: an increase in knowledge; changes in performance standards; and the introduction of the idea of ethics into recording, with a re-emphasis upon the importance of the musical 'act'. The study concludes with a

discussion of possible future areas of research into the influence of recording and the record industry.

Publications and conference presentations arising from this study

- Patmore, D. (2000). 'Sir Thomas Beecham, EMI and the formation of the London Philharmonic Orchestra'. Paper presented at the *Association of Sound Recording Collections Conference, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, U.S.A., June 3rd 2000*.
- Patmore, D. (2001a). 'Technology and change: how recording technologies have changed the ways in which music is recorded and confronted'. Paper presented at the *British Library / University of Sheffield study day 'Music and recording: a century of change', British Library, London, March 24th 2001*.
- Patmore, D. (2001b). 'EMI, Sir Thomas Beecham and the formation of the London Philharmonic Orchestra', *Association of Recorded Sound Collections Journal*, **31**, No.1, pp. 11-27. (Revision of Patmore, 2000).

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The subject of this study is the influence of recording and the record industry upon musical activity, especially in the field of classical music. The lenses through which this influence is examined are the careers of three conductors, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti and Sir Simon Rattle.

The origin of the study lies in several diverse circumstances. Firstly I have possessed a strong fascination for gramophone recordings since my earliest years. One of my first memories is playing 78rpm records on an old family wind-up gramophone. Secondly since my middle teens I have gradually built up a collection of recordings of classical music that now exceeds eleven thousand units. The professional reviewing of new recordings which I have done since 1979 has stimulated this interest.

In 1994 I obtained an MBA from the University of Sheffield and started to consider the possibility of undertaking further academic research. As my plans progressed it seemed most sensible to focus upon a subject for which I had very great interest. This was undoubtedly recordings and the record industry.

One particular aspect of the industry exerted a strong interest, and this was the influence that it might or might not have exerted upon musical activity, over the course of its development from the end of the nineteenth century to the present day. This interest, and a parallel concentration of knowledge upon conductors with substantial recording careers, was stimulated by the appearance of two books written by the arts columnist Norman Lebrecht. These were 'The Maestro Myth' (Lebrecht 1991), and 'When the Music Stops' (Lebrecht 1996). The first of these suggested that the age of the great conductor was temporary and had now passed, and the second strongly argued that the recording industry had exerted a negative influence upon

music, together with the growth of other activities such as that of artists' management.

At the same time the academic study of the history of recording took a major, if ultimately temporary, step forward in 1996 with the foundation of the 'Centre for the History and Analysis of Recorded Music' by Dr. Jose Bowen at the Music Department of the University of Southampton. Using computer programmes, Dr. Bowen analysed in great detail different recorded performances of key repertoire works to highlight the differences in interpretation by conductors of both the same and different historical periods.

Thus at the end of 1996 there was considerable public debate and discussion about the record industry, its history and influence. It seemed to me that here was a subject that presented a fresh area for research. Although recording, together with photography, film, radio and television, stands as one of the great communication technologies of the twentieth century, no work had been published of which I was aware that sought to explain and analyse the influence of this medium, in the same way that had already been undertaken extensively in the field of the cinema, for instance. A certain amount of preliminary research had been done in the field of popular music, from the perspective of cultural studies, but nothing comparable had been written in relation to classical music.

With all these points in mind, and with valuable assistance from academic colleagues, I therefore formulated the fundamental research question: 'what is the influence of recording and the record industry upon musical activity?' With this in mind the next step was to select meaningful ways of tackling this question.

The preferred option was to do so through the recorded legacy of conductors who had established significant recording careers. The purchase by the University of Sheffield of the music library of Sir Thomas Beecham in the summer of 1997 presented an obvious choice in the form of Beecham. Not only had he recorded from 1910 to the end of 1959, many of his recordings remain even today as outstanding examples of what may be accomplished in the recording studio.

To complement Beecham Sir Simon Rattle was selected. A brilliant young British conductor, who like Beecham started his recording career when very young, and moreover did so with the company with which Beecham was most closely identified, EMI.

Finally, in the autumn of 1997 Sir Georg Solti died, an event that generated a large amount of media coverage. It quickly became apparent that Solti provided ‘the missing link’ between Beecham and Rattle, in that he stood midway between them, having been active in the recording studio from 1947 to 1997. Thus he had been involved with recording at key points of technological change, namely the introduction of the long playing record, stereophonic sound, digital recording and the compact disc. Furthermore he had worked exclusively with a competitor to EMI, the Decca Record Company, and so provided a valuable contrast to the corporate setting of Beecham and Rattle.

Having settled upon the three subjects through which to articulate the basic research question, the specific theme of the research was formulated as ‘the influence of the sound recording process and the sound recording industry as illustrated by the careers of three prominent conductors: Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti, and Sir Simon Rattle.’ Three basic research hypotheses were developed to support the research question and theme. These were:

- (i) recording had been a key factor in enabling these conductors to enhance their relationships with orchestra; to realise more fully their musical intentions; and to support their career development;
- (ii) the degree and type of influence exerted by the record industry had differed in time, as the technology of the recording industry has developed and changed;
- (iii) this influence has been expressed through the following areas of activity: finance, performance standards, repertoire, interpretation, and education.

These hypotheses, together with the basic research question, therefore formed the backbone of the research and analysis of which this thesis is the manifestation.

The structure of the thesis is straightforward. Chapter two reviews the literature on the history and influence of recording, on each of the three case study subjects and finally upon the role of the record producer, this function being seen as a significant but often unrecognised influence. Chapter three discusses in detail the methodologies adopted for the study, which were primarily archival and interview research, and the form of data analysis used to investigate the material obtained through the extensive programme of interviews.

Chapters four, five and six are concerned respectively with each of the three case study subjects: Beecham, Solti and Rattle. Each chapter seeks to analyse the work of the conductor in question along the same set of parameters: these are, with occasional variation: the individual, interaction with musicians, repertoire decisions, the act of recording, the use of records, the relationship with the producer, and performance standards and interpretation.

Chapter seven presents a cross-case analysis by focusing upon commonalities and differences within the case-study group, in relation to: the record industry, repertoire decisions, and interaction with records and recording.

Finally, chapter eight draws conclusions from the foregoing analyses, and constructs a model for the influence of the recording industry. This includes both the immediate consequences of technological innovation and what I have termed 'meta-consequences'. These are essentially the paradigmatic changes driven by the identified immediate consequences. In this respect the study breaks new ground, arguing that recording has been a powerful device for change, in the ways in which music is received, confronted and performed; at the same time, however, it has been driven and harnessed by the individual. The study concludes with a brief outline of possible areas for future research into the history and influence of recording.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The review which follows is concerned with the literature on three subjects, each of which is intended progressively to tighten the focus upon the fundamental research topic: the influence of sound recording and the recording industry upon musical activity, as illustrated by the careers of the conductors Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti, and Sir Simon Rattle.

The first section covers general histories of the record industry to provide a brief context. The second section is concerned with the literature on the influence of recording, both in theoretical and in practical terms. The final, and most extensive, section is concerned with the literature that exists on the lives and work of the three specific research subjects, and upon the role of the record producer. Prior to these, a simple historical overview of the evolution of sound recording from its invention at the end of the last century to the present day is given. Throughout the review the concentration is upon the classical music sector of the record industry.

2.2. The History of the Record Industry

2.2.1. Historical overview

Ehrlich (1998) has suggested that the history of recording may be divided into five periods. These are:

- *Period 1: 1877 - 1907*

This saw the invention of the recording cylinder. The cylinder was initially marketed as a toy or as a piece of office equipment. When sold commercially (as opposed to leased) it was most often to be found in humble retail outlets such as toyshops and

hardware stores. The repertoire recorded reflected its origins: ballads, brass band tunes, and 'novelty numbers'.

- *Period 2: 1907-1927*

By 1907 the cylinder had yielded, as the preferred commercial sound carrier, to the acoustic disc. This was easier to duplicate, to manufacture in quantity, and was sold more cheaply. In order to achieve greater respectability and commercial penetration, classical music, predominantly in the form of operatic excerpts, was used to give recording companies and their products respectability and greater social acceptance. This repertoire, although limited in popularity, helped to push both recordings and recording machines into more prosperous outlets, especially music and piano shops. The gramophone was promoted as a musical instrument, and the repertoire recorded in the classical field expanded to include instrumental items as well as more opera and songs. Recordings of orchestral music were very few in number, because the recording techniques of the time were not sophisticated enough to be able to cope with such a mass of sound.

- *Period 3: 1927 -1950s*

The invention of electrical recording - the microphone and the electric turntable - improved the quality of reproduction. The slump of 1929 and subsequent depression encouraged consolidation and reduced competition, leaving only a handful of companies active in Europe and the USA by the outbreak of the Second World War. The prices of records remained high in terms of real disposable income. The repertoire gradually expanded to include the traditional 'musical appreciation' canon of 'great works'. Throughout this period broadcasting was both a significant competitor for listeners and a positive influence in stimulating sales through greater awareness of the principal recording artists.

- *Period 4: 1950s - 1980s*

The introduction of tape recording, the long playing record, and stereophonic sound allowed for a more extended playing time, which could accommodate without a break a high proportion of the 'musical appreciation' canon. Moreover the record could do so in greatly improved sound, with reproducers manufactured for different

levels of retail price. Post-war demand for the new format was substantial: both the number of companies producing recordings and the recorded repertoire expanded greatly into rival and duplicate performances of the 'great works', and into areas of repertoire beyond these. The live performance of music gradually yielded to the gramophone in terms of fees, productivity and breadth of repertoire.

- *Period 5: 1980s onwards*

Compact discs and digital recording have expanded the market further and made recording easier - the studio has lost its dominion. Niche markets have grown up, while the established global markets show signs of weakening in the face of fragmentation. Copyright expiry has led to the reissue of old performances, which are commonly compared to contemporary performances - a new phenomenon. As more forms of distribution are developed, the commercial emphasis may start to shift to the licensing of 'intellectual property' and away from the production of the tangible object - the hard disc. The musical nexus - the repertoire of 'musical appreciation', the established genres of performance and accepted ideas of interpretation - are giving way to a more varied and multi-faceted reality, driven by the growth in niche interests on the part of consumers, empowered by new technologies such as the Internet.

2.2.2. General histories

For an industry as large and as influential as the recording industry, it is surprising how small the literature is on its history. The first history of any substance was Gelatt (1977), a revision of a work originally published in 1955, and timed to coincide with the one hundredth anniversary of Edison's invention of sound recording apparatus. Gelatt came from a journalistic background, and his history is a racy amalgam of technological history, record industry anecdotes, and broad information on progressively increasing sales volumes. As such it provides a simple synthesis of some of the industry's principal growth trends. A weakness, encountered in most works on this subject, is a concentration upon the Anglo-Saxon experience of the industry, the origins of the industry, and the proportion of the global record market accounted for by the Anglophone countries.

Miller and Boar (1982) follow where Gellatt has led, but add a further dimension with a large number of illustrations which graphically chart how the actual act of recording has changed as the various technologies have developed. Photographs of early recording sessions have a particular, if often unrecognised, story to tell. They explain how and why musicians performed at recording sessions in the way that they did, for instance in terms of their physical relationship to the often peculiarly placed recording horn of the acoustic process, and in terms of the size and instrumentation of ensembles.

Gronow and Saunio (1998) built upon these previous accounts and added to them by adopting a truly international perspective to the evolution of the record industry in terms of geography and repertoire, as well as technology. The authors' approach to their task is unusual and highly successful. A collage of short sections is built up which successfully addresses the overall span of the industry's growth. Individual segments are devoted to the growth of the record business in India and South East Asia, the changes wrought by the introduction of new technologies, the overall growth in global sales of sound recordings, and the influence of previously shadowy figures such as the recordist (the term used for the person who was later to become the sound engineer) and the producer. In the final section Gronow and Saunio seek to address in outline some of the long-term influences of recording, notably the idea of recording granting the musician immortality, and that it constitutes a collective memory both of and for society.

Day (2000) provided the most far-reaching history of recording to date, considering both the changes in technology and the impact of recording on key areas such as repertoire and its extension. Day highlighted the speed at which performance styles change, and the ability of recording now to document, either consciously or unconsciously, such changes. More deeply he pointed out that recordings constitute historical documents, and that academia had yet to come to terms fully with this aspect of recording. Day's ideas are considered more fully in Chapter 8.

2.2.3. Technical histories

Two works that concentrate on the technical evolution of the industry are Read and Welch (1976) and Butterworth (1977), the latter another centenary production. The former is a massive piece of scholarship, focusing particularly upon the early days of the industry, and the fascination exerted by the various early recording technologies. The commercial exploitation of these, and the artists who formed part of this process, are of a lesser concern to the authors. Butterworth is a straightforward piece of reportage.

Two small illustrated monographs that visually chart the evolution of the industry's technologies are Copeland (1991) and the Royal Scottish Museum (1977). An interesting phenomenon highlighted by both these publications is the constant presence of the claim that each progressive development of sound recording presents the true actuality of the sounds being recorded. No matter how primitive these sounds might be to present-day ears, contemporaries were often prepared to believe these claims.

Morton (1993) describes the origin of tape-recording manufacture in the USA. His article is a potent snap-shot, illustrating the frequently haphazard and chance ways in which new technologies have been introduced and developed, and how their gradual commercial exploitation has taken place. Morton (2000) considers more broadly the technical history of sound recording, and the cultures which grew up around the various technologies.

2.2.4. Company histories

The histories of the various companies that have driven the growth of the record industry are miscellaneous, determined in most cases by personal enthusiasm or rising public interest, rather than academic interest.

The three notable exceptions to this observation are Jones (1985), Martland (1992) and Davidson (1994). Jones (1985) outlines the history of The Gramophone Company from its creation to the merger with the Columbia Graphophone Company

that created EMI in 1931. It unusually considers the growth of the company in purely business, as opposed to aesthetic, terms. It therefore provides a very sharp focus on the reasons for the company's success. The presence of capital, leadership and innovation are all seen to have been significant factors. International turmoil is also seen as being commercially destructive but technologically productive.

Martland (1992) is a detailed study of The Gramophone Company's early years, and concentrates upon its growth prior to the outbreak of the First World War, although the period up to 1916 is also covered in outline. Martland highlights certain key factors in the company's success. These include the immediate global domination of the market enjoyed by the company and its American affiliate, the Victor Talking Machine Company; the relatively decentralised structure adopted in relation to subsidiaries throughout Europe and further afield; and the skilful ways in which popular taste was satisfied through numerous different types of recordings, while retail growth and market penetration were developed through the medium of classical, and particularly operatic, music. Martland acknowledges the need for an assessment of the broader cultural impact of the gramophone (p.363).

The extraordinary story of 'Les Editions de L'Oiseau-Lyre' is told in Davidson (1994), the biography of the Australian benefactress Louise Hanson-Dyer who founded this company. Initially the company published printed editions of music, but soon moved into the production of gramophone records. Davidson's research also throws light on the economics of recording classical music, as does, more broadly, Martland.

These two latter works contain the most detailed analysis of the workings of a record company. Different aspects of individual companies are revealed in several other works, most of which possess an individual focus.

Martland's book (1997) is a broad history of EMI, and was commissioned to celebrate the company's centenary. Lavishly illustrated, it is a chronicle of the milestones in the company's development, and is explanatory rather than analytical. Lewis (1956) by contrast offers direct entry into the mind of the founder and head of

Decca Records, Sir Edward Lewis. Written as a polemic against capital controls to be introduced by the Conservative government of the time, Lewis seeks to demonstrate the importance of the free flow of capital between the USA and England. His means of showing this is to outline the history of the Decca Company, and to illustrate how it has worked closely with partners in America. The work reveals Lewis's skill in understanding the needs of the record industry, and its development through technological innovation. A pendant to it is Culshaw's (1979) brief article to mark Decca's fiftieth anniversary, and a tribute to its head, written by a key member of its post-war staff.

The world of popular music has produced a number of histories of various record companies. Particularly prevalent have been the small American companies that were founded after the war, and which served niche markets not catered for by the major companies, such as rhythm and blues, soul, and jazz. These books have been written for the popular market. They include Floyd (1998) (Sun Records), Gillett (1974) (Atlantic Records), Collis (1998) (Chess Records), and Benjaminson (1979) (Motown Records). More detailed, and originating from a doctoral thesis is Bowman (1997), which describes the rise and fall of Stax Records. Mabry (1990) (Ace Records) is written specifically from the point of view of the company as a business.

Certain common factors emerge from these histories. Among these are: the entrepreneurial enthusiasm of most of the founders, who sought both to make money and to satisfy their musical passions; the sensitive contact with specific niche markets that over time become large enough to deliver substantial sales and profits; and the extraordinarily small amounts of remuneration received by performers, especially immediately after the Second World War. These works highlight the long-term influence of companies such as these in reflecting and forming musical taste.

In contrast to the post-war development of smaller labels, Davis (1974) provides an inside glimpse on the workings of one of the largest American record companies, Columbia Records. Clive Davis, as the Managing Director of Columbia, had the vision to drive it beyond the mass market of a vast 'middle-of-the-road' catalogue, to include the emerging and different musical styles of the late sixties. These were

epitomised by artists as different as Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, and Barbara Streisand. The combination of shrewd development, hard negotiating and an extensive promotional network brought great rewards to Columbia and its parent CBS, before Davis was summarily dismissed in 1973.

Finally, certain works look at the growth of the recording industry in specific geographical locations. The most substantial of these is Millard (1995) which provides an overview of the growth of the industry in the United States of America. Kinnear (1994) examines the substantial activity of the Gramophone Company in India prior to the First World War. Ojha (1992) presents a more contemporary analysis of activity by the recording industry in the same country. Beng (1978) considers the growth of recording in Malaya up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

2.2.5. Miscellaneous works

Three very different works provide individual perspectives on the development of the record industry. Pollard (1998), through outlining the first seventy-five years of the magazine 'Gramophone', presents a bird's eye view of the development of the classical music record industry, especially in the United Kingdom. This presents a view of the industry as seen from the inside, and is strongly based on personality. Lehamieu (1982) considers more objectively the role of this same publication in terms of informing and reflecting the taste of the British middle-class intelligentsia during the inter-war years.

Lebrecht (1996) is a recent, apocalyptic, view of the record industry. Lebrecht's basic thesis is attractive, that encroaching corporatisation has sucked the life-blood out of that part of the classical record sector that is controlled by multi-national companies. In this respect Lebrecht highlights the parallels with the popular music recording industry, parallels that are further reinforced by the growing importance which he ascribes to smaller independent companies, epitomised by Hyperion Records.

2.2.6. Conclusion – the history of the record industry

This review of the historical literature indicates that research in the field of the history of recording is fragmented and split along a number of different dimensions. Not considered here at all are any of the numerous books and articles that consider recordings by genre, as these are generally preoccupied with aesthetic priorities. Many of the company histories are also concerned with these factors, and they have been included more for the incidental information which they reveal about company formation, activity and decline. What is clear is that issues of influence have not been addressed, perhaps because the musical message of recordings is so powerful and ever present. It is the purpose of the next section of the review to consider the small literature on the subject of influence.

2.3. The Influence of Recording

2.3.1. Introduction

The literature on the influence of recording is small, but nonetheless contains some significant works. Although the millennium has provided the opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the last century, the fact remains that no single work has yet been published that seeks to consider in detail the influence of recording and of the recording industry. Thus, in the works cited in the following section, the presence of recording is tangential rather than central. The section is divided into three parts: the first is concerned with theoretical debates on the influence of recording. The second looks at more pragmatic accounts. The third section considers writing on the influence of recordings on musical performance, and the evidence that recordings provide concerning musical performance.

2.3.2. Theoretical accounts of the influence of recording

Little has been written from a theoretical point of view on the artistic and social impact of recording technology and its commercial organisation.

The two outstanding contributions to this field are those of Walter Benjamin (1970) and Theodor Adorno (1959, 1978, 1991), writing before and during the Second World War respectively.

Adorno's disciple Walter Benjamin focused on the influence and meaning of contemporary cultural forms, particularly photography and film. Many of his observations in relation to these artistic forms, capable of multiple duplication and mechanical realisation, can equally be applied to sound recording. Benjamin's key point is that mechanical reproduction and its creation eliminate the 'aura' or contact between performer and audience that creates a performance. To compensate for this 'shrivelling of the aura' (p.233) the cult of the star personality is developed to substitute for this loss, and the personality thus created becomes a commodity. Furthermore the mechanical apparatus used by reproductive media creates a new reality through its 'thoroughgoing permeation of reality' (p.236). Fascism, present when Benjamin was writing, introduces aesthetics into political life, violating the various mechanical apparatuses that are used to support ritual values and concepts such as those noted above.

Benjamin thus makes two fundamental observations: firstly that in the name of art mechanical media create a new artistic reality, and secondly that the same media, which are neutral, can be used for both creative and destructive purposes. He suggests that the mechanisation of art lacks the moral dimension inherent in original artworks as a result of new forms of mediation, be they technical or commercial.

Adorno's attention was drawn to recording while he was living in the United States as a refugee from Germany. Adorno (1991) abhorred the mechanisation of music, which he saw as inducing the fetishes of consumption and comparison in place of actual participation by the individual in musical creation or recreation. He did not, and could not, foresee the expansion during the second half of this century of the recording industry and the related growth of choice outlined in the previous section.

Adorno (1959) was alert to the dangers of fetishism, stimulated by the process of commoditisation inherent within the record as an artefact (the transformation of the

performance into a permanent artefact to be bought and sold as a commodity). He saw recording and its principal participants, such as Toscanini, as creating both a fossil culture which denied the value of what he took to be real culture, and cultural stars who become cult figures in their own right. Moreover, he saw in Toscanini, with his insistence upon exactitude in all musical areas, 'the barbarism of perfection', to quote the pianist Eduard Steuermann (Adorno 1991 p.39): the pursuit of technical accuracy at the expense of interpretive individuality. Both Benjamin and Adorno were strongly influenced by contemporary political events, notably the rise of fascism in Germany.

A later commentator and follower of Adorno and Benjamin, George Steiner (Steiner 1998), has continued to reflect upon the relationship between art and politics, but at a more distanced level of sophistication. Steiner poses the central ethical question of how one can listen positively to music performed by a self-confessed Nazi supporter? He argues that it is not possible to relate these characteristics to each other. Each exists in its own right and has to be accepted as such. This viewpoint represents a move away from the standpoint of Steiner's predecessors to a more pragmatic position that recognises the separation of the mechanical media from those who use them.

Further commentary upon Adorno's ideas has been undertaken by the American academic, Edward Said (Said 1991). Said, recognising the dangers of mechanisation, identifies the Canadian pianist Glenn Gould as a musician who employed the battery of mechanical media - radio, television and film as well as sound recording - 'to enable performance to engage or to affiliate with the world itself' (Said 1991 p.29). For Said, Gould used the same process that *can* lead to formulaic thinking to *challenge* such thinking. Said also seeks to set this process within its historical context, the influence of Toscanini as experienced through recordings. In this way he develops Adorno's ideas whilst still acknowledging his insights. The recording career and ideas of Glenn Gould have stimulated considerable interest, and will be considered later.

The Canadian writer Marshall McLuhan in two works, McLuhan (1964, 1967) alludes to the idea of recordings possessing influence within the larger discussion of the power of the printed word and of the other mass media of radio and television. His brief observations in relation to sound recording are not specifically developed. However McLuhan did highlight two key points: that technological developments may affect the form, content and reception of the messages communicated, and that investigation was required to show how audiences received and comprehended these messages.

2.3.3. Historical accounts of the influence of recording

In terms of practical analysis of the impact of recording in artistic and social terms, a key text is that by Chanan (1995). In broad terms Chanan, supported independently by Martland (1992), identifies the following basic factors:

- recording offers the opportunity of enhancing the earnings of musicians who are recorded through royalty-based contracts;
- recording can spread the fame of a musician widely, as far afield as the distribution systems of the industry permit;
- this fame can be further exploited, using global transport systems for touring. The personal appearance enhances promotion, and so fame, sales of recordings and hence earnings. Recordings thus support the living presence of the performing musician.
- recordings, by virtue of their permanence, can create a form of immortality for performing musicians, which prior to the invention of sound technology had been denied to them.

The earnings potential of recordings has proved to be of great interest to musicians, balancing material advantages against the immaterial advantages of potentially eternal reputation. These two factors working together go a long way to explaining the creation of the recording 'star', as they do in other twentieth century media, notably films. This by-product of recording is also considered by Inglis (1996) in terms of levels of stardom achieved by musicians who either reflect or contest contemporary ideologies.

Chanan pursues these themes further, and notes the following characteristics and consequences of sound recording:

- The physical separation of listening from performing makes the performance disembodied and transportable. This alters ways of listening. Significantly, by enabling musicians to hear themselves, recording helps to change the nature of interpretation, leading to changes in musical speech and language through examples of different performing and interpretive styles.
- Through recordings, different musics, which had previously in general been the property of particular social groups, become common property. Recording has made it possible 'for music of every kind to enter every corner of daily life in every corner of the world' (Chanan 1995 p.9). The opportunities for musical cross-fertilisation thus become limited only by the technical and distribution systems of the industry.
- Prior to recording changes in musical fashion caused whole epochs of the musical past to be buried as compositional and performance styles gave way to new ones; following the growth of recording the reverse has occurred. The neglected past of composition has been rediscovered, adding to the sum of contemporary musical knowledge, and exerting influence upon the musical development of societies. This process of rediscovery applies not only to music itself, but also to different modes of interpretation, and to the role of performers.
- The reproduction of music through recording, and the latter's commercial organisation, creates a continuing and growing demand for more and more music, 'beyond the capacity of any national music industry to supply' (Chanan 1995 p. 44). Hence the persistent appetite of the industry for different forms of music and the growth of numerous niche markets. The adoption of different niches by consumers in turn highlights the personal adoption of different life-styles. The combination of continuous personal creativity, global distribution systems and 'niching' creates a virtuous spiral of ongoing musical renewal and its concomitant commercial exploitation: an ideal economic formula.

Horowitz (1987) constitutes a powerful study of the influence of recording in exerting pressure upon public taste and individual careers. Horowitz analyses the

latter part of the career of the conductor, Arturo Toscanini, in terms of his relationship with the Radio Corporation of America, the owner of both the NBC radio network and the RCA-Victor record company. The extraordinary degree to which RCA was able to broadcast, to distribute and to advertise through a monolithic system, throws into relief the relationship between broadcasting and recording, and the impact that this may have upon reputation. A difficulty with Horowitz is that the concentration upon the personality of Toscanini overshadows the more indistinct understanding of the ways in which influence was exerted through the various media representing himself and his work.

Siefert (1995), through the medium of a case-study of the career of the tenor, Enrico Caruso, indicates in practical terms the immediate effects of a successful recording career upon the artist, in the form of greatly enhanced earnings, wider fame, and improved career opportunities. In addition Siefert touches upon the longer-term and more deep-rooted consequences, including how ‘the published discourse during this period [1900-1915] contributed to legitimising sound recording within musical culture and the music industry’ (p.421).

This observation is brought up to date by Burnett (1996), who in providing an analysis of the record industry, as it was at the time of writing, demonstrates that it has become the dominant influence upon musical culture. Burnett recognises that contemporary technologies, such as digitalisation and the Internet, will exercise considerable change on the way the record industry is organised, and seeks to consider the nature of these changes. In particular he highlights the potential which these new technologies offer for the transfer of control of creation, marketing, distribution and sales from the major record companies to artists themselves – a trend which has in fact grown rapidly since Burnett was published. Burnett also hints at the possibilities offered by contemporary technologies for a change in the balance of power between supplier and consumer.

A brief and synoptic view of the influence of sound recording during the current century is given in Morgan and Ehrlich (1999), a transcript of a broadcast from the

BBC. This short analysis throws up several important examples of influence but more considered analysis was clearly impossible in the time permitted.

Perhaps the historical importance of recording has been most eloquently expressed by the American historian Jacques Barzun, who has written: 'In short the whole literature of one of the arts [music] has sprung into being - it is like the Renaissance rediscovering the ancient classics and holding them fast by means of the printing press. It marks an epoch in Western intellectual history.' (quoted in Gelatt (1977) p. 301).

2.3.4. The influence of recording on musical performance

The study of the influence of recording and recordings upon musical performance is in its infancy. This area can be broken down into three separate but related strands. Firstly the use of recordings to study different, and particularly historical, performance styles. Secondly the use of recording to achieve deliberately synthetic performances. Thirdly the formal study of the direct role of recordings in communicating and stimulating new or different performance styles. Each of these strands will be considered briefly.

2.3.4.1. Recordings as indications of past performance practice

The key work in the study of recordings as guides to historical performance practice is Philip (1992). This seminal work is based on research undertaken by Philip using a large collection of pre-war 78rpm records donated to the University of Cambridge's Music Library. In this research Philip analyses the performances contained on these records in minute detail, breaking down the interpretation of performances into their constituent components. Not only are basic musical factors such as tempi, dynamics and balance considered closely, but Philip also examines in detail the actual playing of individual instrumental sections within the orchestra, such as strings and woodwind. The result is a picture of the different styles of orchestral performance during the third of Cyril Ehrlich's five periods for the history of sound recording: that of electrical recording, stretching in this case from 1926 to 1939.

The importance of this work is two-fold. Firstly it highlights the differences in performance practice between now and the period of study in a non-judgmental manner. It establishes that there was a different, consistent and coherent style of orchestral performance (allowing for regional variations) from that practised subsequently. The role of recording as a chronicler of different performance styles is clearly established.

Secondly Philip raises the possibility that present-day ideas of past performance practice are misguided: that ideas relating to strict tempo, for instance, which essentially are a contemporary reaction to the performance style dominant at the turn of the century, have no basis in available aural evidence. Philip suggests that, given the degree to which performance practice has changed in the short time that sound recording has existed, it is not possible to know with any degree of certainty how music was performed in the periods prior to recording. The best we can do is to surmise about certain stylistic characteristics of the era immediately prior to the invention of recording, as indicated by those elderly performers whose playing was captured at the dawn of recording, such as the violinist Joachim. This pertinent observation has major implications for the study and practice of period performance.

Bowen (1999) develops this historically driven view of recorded performances. Bowen argues that whereas 'music' has previously been considered to be notes or symbols on paper, it should be considered as an amalgam of the written text and the actual performance. This argument reasserts the role of the performer in realising the composer's intentions. Taken to its logical extreme, it suggests that each performance will be different because of the unique chemistry between the composer and the performer. Bowen argues that recordings are the vehicle whereby the views of different interpreters are captured and stored, and that these are the fullest realisations of any 'music' that we can know. It is this continuous variety which gives the gramophone recording, in whatever guise, its perpetual attraction.

This aesthetic is a logical extension of the ideas put forward by Philip. It is supported by several doctoral studies, which examine the different interpretations of specific pieces of music, for instance Braun and Gan (1978) and Allen (1980), or the

interpretive styles of major composers and conductors, such as Bela Bartok (Yong, 1997) and Arturo Toscanini (Leyden, 1968). The driving force behind much of this work is the desire to understand what different musicians have had to say about particular works, and how they have said it.

2.3.4.2. Recordings as performance

A second approach to recording and its influence upon performing style is given in the work of the Canadian pianist Glenn Gould, to which reference has already been made (Gould 1966, 1987). Gould challenged the notions of textural fidelity, and the centrality of human interaction with music through performance, by proposing the use of recording technology to create synthetic performances. To give a practical example, he created a performance of the Fugue in A minor from Book One of J. S. Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier* that was constructed out of separate 'takes': tape recordings of performances played in different styles. The result married these different styles into a whole.

Gould's ideas push back the boundaries of interpretation. The concept of authenticity is an immediate victim, and even the primacy of the performer alongside the composer now gives way to the presence of a third partner, the technology which makes the synthesised performance possible (in this instance, tape editing). Referring to the roles of the producer and engineer he wrote: 'That the judgement of the performer no longer solely determines the musical result is inevitable' (Gould 1966, p.11).

Gould may be seen as seeking to maintain the freshness of musical rediscovery in the face of the fetishism of performance that disturbed Adorno. His philosophy represents a major argument against the idea, as demonstrated in the writing of the American composer, conductor and teacher, Gunther Schuller (Schuller 1997), that it is indeed possible to create a performance wholly faithful to the composer's wishes.

Gould's ideas of using recordings to develop new ways of performance have not been assiduously taken up in the classical music world. In other fields however the same ideas are common currency, for instance in the popular music industry where

remixing and sampling are normal practice, and where it is not unusual for a band to release different technical realisations of the same song (Tankel, 1990). This is a further practical example of the point made earlier, that the technology of recording has now become an integral part of musical culture.

2.3.4.3. The influence of recordings upon performance

The final strand in this discussion is concerned with the influence of recordings directly upon musical performance. A good example of this is seen in the influence of post-war German and Austrian recordings upon the growth of the authentic performance movement in England during the 1970s. Bultmann (1998) has described how the German 'Archiv' label grew out of attempts to re-establish the German recording industry after the Second World War. Its editorial policy was deliberately academic. The label divided the history of music into distinct 'research periods', and the recorded performances were realised as closely as possible to the original, through the use of appropriate texts, instruments and styles. The initial level of awareness of authenticity was variable, but attempts at different styles of performance were clearly made, informed by what historical knowledge then existed.

More pronounced variation followed in the recordings of another German label, Telefunken's 'Das Alte Werk', which recorded musicians in Vienna who were consciously seeking to explore historically aware styles of performance. The leading protagonists in this approach were the Viennese cellist, and now conductor, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, and the Dutch keyboard player Gustav Leonhardt. These recordings were studied by young instrumentalists in England, many of whom used them to move forward in time from the era of their own specialisation, that is of English viol music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They thus fertilised ground prepared through a different style of string playing from that of the twentieth century.

Two key drivers of this alternative approach to performance were David Munrow and Christopher Hogwood. Munrow concentrated mainly on the early music repertoire, not performing music written after the close of the seventeenth century, and was especially expert on the performance of medieval and renaissance music. Hogwood by contrast worked in the field of eighteenth-century repertoire, which he

approached from practical experience as a musician performing alongside Munrow in the field of 'early music' on the one hand, and as a performer of the eighteenth-century repertoire on the other.

Stimulated by the Telefunken recordings in particular, Hogwood sought to reproduce the music of the eighteenth century in the light of contemporary scholarship relating to period performance practice. The experience of this was powerful. Sommerich (1998) has pursued this theme in an interview with an early participant, the viola player Trevor Jones: 'It was terribly exciting to find yourself playing in an orchestra using old instruments. There was a completely different string sound which I heard for the first time in the flesh - I had heard it on disc - and that was exciting.'

Recordings had thus directly stimulated a new approach to performance, which was then taken up by the recording industry and popularised and disseminated across the world. Peter Wadland, a producer at the English Decca company who was responsible for the L'Oiseau-Lyre label, commenced recording Hogwood's performances, which initially appeared only on records. The first of these was made in 1973, with the first public performances following three years later in 1976. These performances met the commercial criteria of distinctiveness and innovation, and it soon became clear that with 'period performance' Decca had a success on its hands. Wadland made over 300 records with Hogwood before his death, and the repertoire was extended to include the first recording of such mainstream repertoire as the complete Mozart symphonies.

2.3.4.4. Conclusion – the influence of recording

The review undertaken above has sought to consider the literature that exists on the influence of recording along the parameters of theory, reality and the relationship between recording and musical performance. As with the earlier review of the history of recording, it is clear that the field is fragmented and diverse, both factors militating against any consolidated account. A further factor, hinted at by certain works in the review, such as Horowitz (1987), is that the influence of recording changes in its nature as the dominant technologies used by the industry progress

through their own cycles of growth and decline. This is a theme that will be more fully investigated in the body of the thesis.

2.4. The literature of the three case studies: Beecham, Solti, Rattle

2.4.1. Introduction

This section reviews the literature that has been published relevant to each of the three case studies. These are concerned in turn with the three conductors: Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti, Sir Simon Rattle. In the case of each of these studies, the literature is considered in the following order: autobiographical, biographical, memoirs of those who have worked with the subject, press interviews, and finally articles that have appeared in specialist magazines. The role, function and influence of the record producer in the field of classical music is also considered.

2.4.2. Sir Thomas Beecham

2.4.2.1. Preliminary remarks

Not surprisingly, the longer the time since the start of the subject's career, the greater the volume of material that exists about the subject. This is especially true of Sir Thomas Beecham. The Sir Thomas Beecham Society of America has regularly produced a journal devoted to the life and work of Sir Thomas, entitled 'Le Grand Baton', since its formation in 1964, three years after Sir Thomas's death. The sheer volume of miscellaneous material about his life and career is therefore so great that the review which follows is selective, considering only that material which has some direct relevance to Beecham, recording, and the general issue of the influence of recording.

2.4.2.2. Autobiography

Sir Thomas Beecham's autobiography, entitled 'A Mingled Chime' (Beecham 1944), was written while Beecham was living in America during the Second World War. It is a memoir of his life and career up to the final settlement of his father's estate in 1924. It considers in detail his activities before the outbreak of the First World War,

and therefore the formative period in his career when the foundations of his future success were laid. His childhood, education, and early years as a musician are all covered in some detail, as are his first dealings with various orchestras, and the highly successful seasons of opera and ballet at Covent Garden and elsewhere. The need for him to have complete control of an orchestra, and to work closely with orchestral musicians whom he knew is strongly apparent. Although Beecham was active in the recording studio relatively soon after the establishment of recording in England, making his first records in 1910, his memoirs make only the briefest mention of this activity. This signifies the relative lack of importance ascribed to recording both during the period covered by the book and at the time when it was written.

2.4.2.3. Biography

To date three biographies of Beecham have been published (Reid, 1961; Jefferson, 1979; Blackwood, 1994). Only that by Jefferson appears to have received the support of the Beecham family. All of them share a common weakness in their reliance upon the material already published in 'A Mingled Chime'. Thus they are all heavily weighted towards Beecham's pre-First World War activities. Key periods, such as the formation of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the wartime years in America, and the formation of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, are sketchily considered, and in general the career from 1924 onwards is not analysed in any depth. In some cases the narratives are unintentionally misleading, for instance in Jefferson's account of the circumstances surrounding Beecham's departure from the Seattle Symphony Orchestra. For the purposes of this research, this incident is significant as it highlights some of Sir Thomas's attitudes towards recording. Beecham sought to convince his Seattle critics that his performances with the Orchestra were as good as those of the same repertoire on commercial recordings, by comparing these to live recordings of his Seattle concerts. This incident is covered in detail in Wiseman (1978). The biographies are useful in providing a chronology of Beecham's life, but they do not go into detailed discussion of his character and career, being in all cases straightforward narratives.

2.4.2.4. Memoirs

For detailed discussion of Beecham's character, and his strengths and weaknesses, the various memoirs of those who worked with him are invaluable. The most important set of memoirs is contained in Proctor-Gregg (1976). This contains much first-hand material from the orchestral musicians who played with Sir Thomas at different stages of his career. The cumulative effect of these memories is to create a strong sense of what it must have been like to have performed music with Beecham. The wit and mercurial character of the man come powerfully to the fore.

To these recollections may be added the separately published memoirs of individual musicians, the majority of which are written by wind players. Flute (Jackson 1968), Clarinet (Brymer 1979), Bassoon (Camden, 1982) and Bass Clarinet (Temple Savage 1988) have all left revealing accounts of the actual circumstances of being employed by Beecham, and working with him, as have the viola players, Shore (1938) and Tertis (1974). In addition these memoirs provide considerable insight into the changing conditions under which musicians have worked during the course of this century.

Shore (1938), one of the earliest works to consider the phenomenon of the twentieth-century conductor from first hand, is valuable in that Beecham is compared with other contemporary conductors of the first rank, notably Toscanini and Furtwangler. The effect of these comparisons is to heighten the individuality of each and therefore the differences between them.

Two memoirs by those active in the music profession, but not actually as performers, provide further first-hand accounts of working with Beecham. Cardus (1961), written immediately after Beecham's death, contains material on Beecham's war-time visit to Australia. Geissmar (1944) is more substantial. Geissmar was Furtwangler's secretary, and was taken on in the same role by Beecham after she had been forced to flee Nazi Germany. Geissmar worked assiduously with Beecham in the pre-war management of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Earlier recollections of Beecham are contained in Smyth (1938) and Ronald (1935). Beecham had been an ardent advocate of the music of Ethel Smyth, conducting the first performances in England of her opera 'The Wreckers' in 1909. Later he seems to have lost interest in her work. The conductor Sir Landon Ronald was an observant commentator on the London musical scene, as well as being one of the earliest music advisors to The Gramophone Company, being engaged in this role by Fred Gaisberg as early as 1902. His memoirs contain first-hand material on the difficulties of obtaining good performances from orchestras riven by the deputy system, against which Beecham fought so strongly. Ronald observantly describes Beecham as a 'will-o'-the-wisp'. In addition to his reminiscences, Ronald also describes how he sought to promote the gramophone at the highest levels of society, thus bearing out in fact the ideas of Siefert (1995).

More substantial are the two volumes of memoirs devoted to the work of the record producer Walter Legge, Schwarzkopf (1982) and Sanders (1998). (These are also considered later). The former contains Legge's first-hand recollections of working with Beecham, notably at Covent Garden during the 1938 and 1939 opera seasons. The latter reproduces Legge's musical criticism written for 'The Guardian' in the 1930s, and therefore is an invaluable indication of both current taste and activity. It contains many letters and memoranda relating to Legge's activities as a record producer with Beecham in the 1930s. It also touches upon the formation by Legge in 1946 of the Philharmonia Orchestra, which directly stimulated Beecham to form the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

2.4.2.5. Interviews

A number of interviews with Beecham exist in different formats: print, audio-tape, and video-tape. Of the written interviews, the most valuable is that with Lord Boothby, originally published in the American magazine 'High Fidelity', and reprinted in the magazine's Silver Jubilee Anthology (Clark, 1976). Boothby asked Beecham his opinion on whether or not the technologies of the twentieth century had been 'a good thing as far as music is concerned.' Beecham's abrupt reply 'Well, certainly records have. And I think radio has helped'. This indicates a distinct change of heart from dismissive comments reported in Beecham's first biography, in which

he is quoted as saying during the 1920s: 'Improvement in the gramophone is so imperceptible...that it will take quite 5,000 years to make it any good.' (Reid, 1961).

Even more revealing are the interviews which Beecham gave for Boston Radio in 1952 (Mosier, 1952), and for Granada Television with the theatre director Peter Brook in 1958 (Brook, 1958). The revelation of these interviews lies as much in the character and demeanour of Sir Thomas as in the comments that he actually makes. In terms of content, Beecham discusses contemporary music in both interviews as well as conductors and the art of conducting.

An adjunct to the interviews conducted with Beecham is the collection of press articles devoted to him in specific publications. The most valuable of these is Gilmour (1988) which brings together material about Sir Thomas published in 'The New York Times' over a period of fifty years. Also compiled by the same author are Gilmour (1978), which repeats the process for the Seattle years, and Gilmour (1979) which presents a collection of press reports on the major tour of the United States which Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra undertook in 1950. All this material is valuable in that it displays at first hand how contemporaries in a foreign country viewed Sir Thomas. In addition the chronicle on the 1950 tour sketches the conditions of touring, and Beecham's mastery in varying concert programmes in order to maintain freshness and vitality.

2.4.2.6. Institutional histories

Two of Beecham's greatest legacies are the orchestras that he formed in 1932 and 1946, and which are still active today: the London Philharmonic and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestras. The history of the former (Pirouet 1998) acknowledges Beecham's role in creating it, but does not examine in any detail the actual circumstances surrounding its formation and the motivators driving Beecham at this time. Of more immediate relevance are the books by Thomas Russell, the first manager of the Orchestra after Beecham dissolved the company running the Orchestra in 1940 (Russell, 1942; 1944). Russell, a convinced Communist, stood at the opposite extreme of the organisational spectrum from Beecham, a fact which

became painfully clear when Beecham returned from America to conduct the Orchestra in 1944 – a relationship which did not last.

The Royal Philharmonic Society has had two histories written about its illustrious past: Elkin (1946) and Ehrlich (1995). Both of these are invaluable for highlighting the actual extent of musical activity in London, the nature of concert promotion, and the changes which took place in both these fields during Beecham's life. Of parallel importance are Pearton (1974) and Kenyon (1981), histories of the London Symphony and BBC Symphony Orchestras respectively. It was the determination of Lord Reith to create a permanent, salaried orchestra and the reluctance of the LSO to participate in Beecham's plans for a permanent orchestra, that galvanised him into forming the London Philharmonic Orchestra, aided by capital from the newly formed EMI.

Another perspective on Sir Thomas's relationship with an orchestra, as a guest conductor, is given in Toobin (1975). Toobin was the General Manager for the Symphony of the Air, the reincarnation of the NBC Symphony Orchestra which had been dissolved by NBC after Toscanini had retired. Beecham was engaged by the Orchestra and appeared with it in New York in 1957. Toobin describes in some detail Beecham's rehearsal tactics on this occasion.

2.4.2.7. Beecham and recording

A number of articles have been written on different aspects of Beecham's recording activities, although to date no major overview of Beecham and his involvement with the recording industry has been attempted.

The critic Lyndon Jenkins has written two overviews, both of which appeared in the magazine 'Gramophone' (Jenkins 1987, Jenkins 1990). Partial surveys have also been published in the journal of the Association of Recorded Sound Collections (Warren 1983, Butler 1993). The stimulus for the appearance of all these articles has in general been the reissue of particular recordings conducted by Sir Thomas. They therefore tend to concentrate upon issues of availability and repertoire rather than considering either in detail or analytically Beecham's work in the studio.

For this one must turn to Vaughan (1979). The author acted as assistant conductor and choirmaster to Sir Thomas throughout the early 1950s. His balanced assessment of Beecham in the studio avoids the extremes of adulation and criticism. Two articles that discuss the actual circumstances of Beecham recording, both featuring an opera as the work being recorded, are Bicknell (1961) and Price (1995). The former is significant in that the author, David Bicknell, was the principal link between Sir Thomas and EMI, both throughout the post-war era and immediately before 1939. Price considers the circumstances surrounding the recording of 'La Boheme' in New York in 1956. The historian of the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, Paul Jackson, in Jackson (1995), considers Beecham's place within the stream of European conductors who came to the USA in the wake of Nazi aggression.

2.4.2.8. Miscellaneous items

The final category of literature relevant to this study is that represented by the performance calendars (listings in chronological order of all Beecham's performances) and discographies devoted to Beecham. To date the Sir Thomas Beecham Society has published three performance calendars (Parker 1985, Benson 1990, Benson 1998). These demonstrate the extent of Sir Thomas's activities in the concert hall and the opera house, the nature of the repertoire that he conducted and how it changed, and his skill in programme building.

Gray (1979, 1998) covers in great detail all of Beecham's commercial recordings, providing details of location, date, matrix numbers and commercial release numbers. While this information may appear to be arcane, much can be deduced from it. For instance a study of matrix numbers indicates the number of times Beecham recorded a segment of a work, and therefore relative levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Recording dates and session details indicate which recordings were scheduled for re-recording, as well as the volume of work actually undertaken by Beecham and his orchestras. From this can be deduced the level of income earned by the orchestra, and the part recording played in the overall financial structure of the orchestra. Brown (1975) complements Gray's work, as it contains details of 'off-air' recordings, talks and interviews not covered in the latter.

Of equal importance is Stuart (1997), a highly detailed discography of the recordings of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Stuart demonstrates clearly how the London Philharmonic Orchestra, in addition to its operatic and concert work, acted as a recording orchestra for EMI during the period 1932 to 1939. It thus represented a new phenomenon in English musical life. The realisation of this possibility by Beecham was significant.

2.4.2.9. Conclusion

This overview of the literature associated with the life and work of Sir Thomas Beecham indicates that, while overall a considerable amount of material is available for study, there still remain significant gaps. There does not yet exist a biography of Beecham that examines in equal depth all the various parts of his career, both in terms of chronology and of type of activity. Secondly no detailed overview of Beecham's recording activities exists, apart from the information provided in the various discographies. What does exist, however, provides a bed-rock upon which further research concerning the relationship between Beecham and recording may be undertaken. Much raw material of value exists in the EMI Archive at Hayes, Middlesex, where the Beecham file constitutes the largest single file devoted to an individual artist. This material was consulted for the present study.

2.4.3. Sir Georg Solti

2.4.3.1. Introduction

The literature concerned with Sir Georg Solti is considerably smaller than that relating to Beecham. Solti died in 1997, thirty-six years after Beecham, and his career lasted effectively fifty-one years, from 1946 to 1997. Beecham was active as a conductor from 1899 to 1960, and so his career lasted for ten more years than did that of Solti.

Nonetheless the material available on Solti is telling, and touches on several additional issues in even higher profile. These include the changes wrought by technological innovation, principally stereophonic sound in this case; the importance of the producer, namely John Culshaw, who worked closely with Solti; and the interlinking of musical careers with the development of record companies.

The material on Solti is discussed in the following order: autobiography, biography, memoirs, interviews, followed by a short conclusion.

2.4.3.2. Autobiography

Shortly after Solti's death in September 1997, his autobiography was published in London. Indeed he died immediately after finalising the proofs of this publication. Solti (1997) was written in conjunction with Harvey Sachs, the respected biographer of Arturo Toscanini and Arthur Rubinstein. It contains much new material on Solti's childhood, and on his career up to and during the Second World War. These include the unexpected revelation that he had conducted at Covent Garden immediately before the war, for a touring ballet company.

The post-war years contain less new information. Some of the comments made in relation to recording in general, and to his close links with the Decca Record Company in particular, do not always elide exactly with information obtained through primary research. The overall impression is that in this work it is the public persona of Solti the international conductor that is on display. Taking this into account, however, this is still a valuable resource.

2.4.3.3. Biography

Apart from Solti's autobiography, only one other biographical book on Solti has been published: Robinson (1979). This forms part of a small series considering the careers of major mid-century conductors, and is divided into two sections. The first considers Solti's life and career, and the second his recording achievements up to the date of publication. The author, an experienced Canadian broadcaster, makes some shrewd and penetrating comments on the latter.

The sense of the projection of a specific image, referred to earlier, is strongly felt in the television biography made by the BBC to coincide with his eighty-fifth year (BBC TV, 1997). Lasting an hour and a half, this traces Solti's career in detail, and places him squarely in the line of the great central European conductors, with many references to the various influences of Bela Bartok, Arturo Toscanini, and Richard Strauss. This lineage was clearly of great importance to Solti.

Two excellent articles that succinctly summarise Solti's career, and propose his most outstanding recordings, are Greenfield (1987) and Greenfield (1992) respectively. The author's long familiarity with Solti is strongly apparent, as is his admiration for his achievements in the recording studio.

The 'official' view of Sir Georg may be seen in various promotional publications produced by Decca Records, of which 'Solti – a career', produced to mark his eightieth birthday in 1992 (Decca 1992), is representative. This reinforces the image of Solti as an extremely successful international conductor by presenting in sound and print highlights from his many recordings in the Decca catalogue.

Finally brief mention should be made of an early promotional leaflet, probably produced by Solti's agent (Freebain 1964), in which Sir Georg's recordings are given equal prominence with his work in the opera house. At this point in his career opera was his dominant activity.

2.4.3.4. *Memoirs*

Of central importance are Culshaw (1967) and Culshaw (1981). The author of both, John Culshaw, was the producer at Decca Records responsible for many of Solti's recordings. Culshaw (1967) tells the story of the recording of the different parts of the 'The Ring', and casts valuable light on Solti's relationship with key personnel at Decca (especially Maurice Rosengarten), with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and more generally with other recording colleagues. A related publication to this is 'The Golden Ring' (BBC 1964), a film by Humphrey Burton of the recording of 'Götterdämmerung'. This contains revealing footage of Solti's relationship with Culshaw. Like Beecham and Legge in the 1930s, the relationship between producer and conductor was productive and mutually beneficial, but did not last throughout both careers.

Culshaw's own autobiography (Culshaw 1981) remained unfinished at his death. It ceases at the time of his departure from Decca Records. The generally buoyant and enthusiastic tone of the earlier work is here replaced by a more astringent view of his

colleagues. Nonetheless the detailed background which this work provides to the early years of Solti's career is invaluable.

Reference has been made earlier to the memoirs of the founder of Decca Records (Lewis 1956), which are also useful in indicating the culture of this company.

2.4.3.5. Interviews

The interviews with Solti both published and broadcast reinforce the idea of Solti's inheritance of particular strands of the twentieth century musical tradition. Two text based interviews are contained in Matheopoulos (1982) and Chesterman (1990). Neither contains much original material, and the views expressed by Sir Georg are entirely consistent with those contained in his autobiography. Chesterman asks certain questions relevant to Solti's recording career, and receives a virtually identical response to that contained in the autobiography: that once Solti had made a recording, he never went back to it. These general views are also aired in a television interview given just before his death (Performance TV, 1997).

In addition to what may be termed 'biographical' interviews, the specialist record press has published a number of interviews with Solti linked to the release of specific recordings and to landmarks in his recorded career. Kerner (1976), given to mark the release of the recording of Bizet's opera 'Carmen' and Solti's long relationship with Decca Records, contains insights into Solti's studio technique. Johnson (1989) includes Sir Georg's views on using live concert performances as the basis for commercial recordings, within the context of recently issued recordings made with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Two interviews with Sir Georg made late in his career contain nuggets of information. Breiner (1997) appeared in the French record magazine 'Diapason'. In it Sir Georg gives a more romantic view of recording than in the Anglo-Saxon interviews. Here he clearly acknowledges the artificiality of recording, and suggests that major recordings such as that of 'Das Rheingold' (1958) have opened the doors to greater knowledge. In the sense that this opera had never been recorded in full before, this claim is correct. Funnell (1997) focuses upon Sir Georg's fiftieth

anniversary with Decca Records, and his long-term relationship with this company. A benefit of this, as Solti notes, is that, 'For the last fifteen years 'No' has never been said.' Furthermore the link with Toscanini is reinforced through a quote from the *maestro* exclaiming on hearing one of Solti's early recordings, a Suppe overture, 'He's excellent!', to which Solti added, 'I'm very proud of that.'(p.36).

Tolansky (1996) makes use of an interview with Harold Nash, who played the trombone in the Covent Garden Orchestra throughout the Solti era. Nash explains how Solti put the Orchestra 'centre-stage', and built up a strong sense of 'event'. This interview is valuable as involving an orchestral musician who worked with Sir Georg.

More extensive is Furlong (1974) – an account of a year in the life of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, when Solti was the Orchestra's Music Director. As with several other works already considered, the style is journalistic, but the content relevant. In this case the care with which Solti made his recordings is immediately apparent.

2.4.3.6. Conclusion

Although the biographical material available on Solti is less in quantity than that for Beecham, this material is equally as valuable. Both Robinson (1979) and Greenfield (1992) give considered assessments of Solti's recording career and its highlights. Beecham still lacks this. Solti's autobiography, prepared at the end of his career rather than two-thirds of the way through, presents a complete picture of his life, as he himself saw it. Again this is lacking with Beecham: the detailed picture of Beecham during and after the Second World War, and up until his death, is still fragmented.

Finally the constant promotion of Solti's recordings and the cumulative effect of one company doing this, Decca Records, mean that there is a reasonable amount of material available indicating at first hand Sir Georg's interaction with the recording process, and chronicling how this changed as the technological options increased in number and improved in quality. During Beecham's lifetime the distance between

the conductor and the commercial exploitation and promotion of his recordings seems to have been greater.

2.4.4. Sir Simon Rattle

2.4.4.1. Introduction

Although Sir Simon Rattle's conducting career to date is already of a long span, almost twenty-six years, he is only at about the half-way mark relative to Sir Thomas Beecham and Sir Georg Solti. It is therefore not surprising that the literature devoted to his life and career is concentrated in the ephemeral area of newspapers and magazine articles rather than in anything more considered.

The volume of what does exist is considerable. It testifies to the interest that Rattle generates as a creative musician, in addition to the assisted promotion of himself as a recording artist by his record company, EMI. with whom he has a long-standing exclusive contract. His appointment to the position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in June 1999, with effect from the autumn of 2002, has increased this attention to an international level.

In contrast to the two earlier reviews, the structure adopted here will be: biography, interviews, and a short conclusion. The autobiography section has been eliminated as no material exists in this category.

2.4.4.2. Biography

The central biographical text to date on the life and career of Rattle is Kenyon (1987). Written sufficiently far into Rattle's leadership of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to demonstrate the musical and political benefits of this, Kenyon seeks to analyse Rattle's transformational qualities, as well as the more usual musical strengths and weaknesses. The predominant source for this work is the local Birmingham press, which gives his account immediacy, but at the same time reflects a specific point of view. Kenyon also provides a valuable account of Rattle's behaviour in the recording studio, as well as verbatim discussions with Rattle on his attitude to recording. While this book now stands, at the time of writing (2000) at what may be considered to be the mid-point of Rattle's career, and although it is

thirteen years old, the overall portrait of Rattle sketched by Kenyon does not appear to have changed significantly in the light of later press interviews and the interviews carried out as part of this research programme. The driving motivation continues to be a passion for music, expressed by Rattle in highly emotional terms. Perhaps the only characteristic that has developed is the tightening of focus and the iron determination to satisfy this motivation.

Kenyon may be supplemented with a number of newspaper and magazine articles which have commented on key stages in the development of his career. These articles include Mills and Beadle (1993), *Classic CD* (1996) and Jaffe (1997). As a group these report more on significant recent events, such as Rattle's early encounters with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, than with longer term issues or analysis. The trigger for these articles is generally the issue of a specific recording. Kenyon (1999) both summarises the career to date and considers briefly the potential consequences of Rattle's move to Berlin from 2002.

As with Solti and Beecham, Rattle has been the subject of several broadcast documentary programmes. The most illuminating of these is that transmitted on November 9th 1996 by BBC Radio Three (BBC Radio 1996). This broadcast covers in detail the circumstances around his debut with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. In addition it contains valuable analytical comments from those who have worked closely with Rattle, in a number of different positions. The contribution by Rattle's long-term agent, Martin Campbell-White, is instructive. The television documentary 'Moving On', broadcast on BBC Television Channel 2 on December 27th 1998 (BBC TV 1998) sketches Rattle's career, and reports in detail on the final international tour which Rattle undertook as Chief Conductor of the Birmingham Orchestra. This culminated in his farewell performance of Mahler's Second Symphony in Birmingham on September 6th 1998, which was broadcast live on television (Channel 4 TV 1998). The former programme contains short interview extracts with many of Rattle's close colleagues. A rounder picture of his personality emerges here than from the earlier radio biography.

Smith (1996), a concise history of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, is a useful institutional history that incorporates Rattle's period in Birmingham. Dense with detail, this sets Rattle's achievements in Birmingham clearly in context. In addition Smith portrays the extent of local feeling towards the Orchestra in particular and music in general.

2.4.4.3. Interviews

Throughout his career Rattle has given many interviews to the press. These give an insight into his views on a number of matters, including recording, and enable any changes in his perspective on this subject to be charted.

Many of these interviews have appeared in 'Gramophone' magazine, and have been linked to the forthcoming issue of recordings conducted by Rattle. Stringer (1979), Keener (1980, 1983, 1984), Seckerson (1988, 1992), Soames (1991), Cooper and Cowan (1997) are typical of this genre.

The first of these is revealing in that even in 1979, at the beginning of his recording career, and before he had started to work as the Chief Conductor of the City of Birmingham Orchestra (1980), Rattle is making points that later reoccur regularly. These include the idea of the unreality of the musician's life and the need to reconnect with life outside music, for instance through sabbatical periods devoted to other studies. A further revealing insight is the idea of using recording strategically: to quote Rattle directly, ' 'Would you like to make a record?' they say. What can you possibly do to make an impression?' ' In relation to Mahler's Tenth Symphony, the release of which is the reason for the interview, he said: '...of these types of piece, it's the only one I could make any contribution to.' Rattle clearly was already thinking beyond the idea of just making a record to deeper issues of capability and reputation.

This interview also gives clear indications of Rattle's preferred recording style: 'I am very much a 'long-takes' man'... 'Recording is a very, very good discipline'... 'I am beginning to feel less and less happy about how people go straight in without performing a work first.' These comments point towards attitudes which will be

considered more fully later, including the issue of how to achieve the character of a live performance in a recording, the idea of using recording to improve performance standards, and the belief that extensive preparation and performance are required before a recording is created. A final quote indicates a feature of Rattle's conducting which has consistently set him apart from his contemporaries: 'Performances are often under-characterised. The concert hall should be a place for risks.' (All quotes from p.1272).

Interviews with Rattle have appeared in many other specialist magazines. These include Marin (1986), Kupferberg (1992) and, most valuable, Remy (1992). The last named considers Rattle's relationships with major European orchestras such as the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras. Significantly, an area of extended discussion relates to repertoire, and to the need for these ensembles to pay more heed to the music of the twentieth century. Also considered in this interview are issues around period performance, and Rattle's relationship to certain other contemporary conductors, specifically Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Badal (1996) is of interest, in that, although made relatively early in Rattle's career (1984), it indicates certain continuing preoccupations. These include the importance of recordings to Rattle as a child; the preference for musical honesty rather than technical perfection in a recording; an interest in earlier styles of performance, such as those directed by Stokowski; and a realisation of the interpretive traditions enshrined in old recordings, such as those conducted by Fried and Furtwangler. Rattle is highly conscious of the changes in performance which have been preserved by recordings, and of the passage of time. The importance of risk, referred to earlier in Stringer, here is applied to recording as well. Rattle's sense of the recording as 'an event' is very strong in this interview: 'There's no point in recording something unless it's good...I think a recording has got to be an event.' (p.77).

As indicated earlier, a number of key themes continue to appear in interviews with Sir Simon Rattle. The appointment to Berlin sparked much interest in 1999. Among the more considered interviews of this period are Whitley (1999) (pre-Berlin),

Sweeting (1999), and Duncan (1999). In Duncan, Rattle returns to the idea of the unreality of the musician's life and focuses in particular upon that of the conductor. Other pertinent comments in this interview relate to the financial side of a conductor's career. Here Rattle acknowledges the fees paid to conductors, and applauds the fact that these are either stabilising or reducing. Another constant in both these and in earlier interviews, such as Remy, is concern about the influence of Herbert von Karajan in a number of significant areas: finance, repertoire and style.

2.4.4.4. Conclusion

As Sir Simon Rattle's career continues to develop, it is reasonable to assume that many more interviews will appear. In a sense therefore the review above is no more than an interim report, highlighting certain key elements of his personal philosophy, particularly those that relate to recording, and that have already featured significantly in his career.

Kenyon (1987), Smith (1996), and the articles and interviews cited, indicate the closeness with which Rattle and recording are now associated. This situation did not exist to the same degree with Beecham, especially prior to the Second World War. The difference indicates the extent to which recording and conducting have in some instances become inter-locked, as the industry has developed, and the importance of the record press in communicating knowledge about contemporary conductors.

Although the printed material published on Rattle is not great, it is sufficiently extensive to allow a detailed portrait of him to emerge. His attitudes towards recording are clearly delineated, with certain key themes – the desire for the intensity of the live performance, the discipline imposed by recording, and the knowledge contained in old recordings – emerging clearly. Much of this information is confirmed through the first-hand interviews of the research programme, together with a more three-dimensional picture of his character and behaviour.

2.5. The Producer

2.5.1. Introduction

The literature on the role and influence of the producer within the field of classical music recording is small, existing predominantly in the form of autobiographies. This brief review considers these, together with the limited biographical material that exists.

2.5.2. Autobiography and biography

Although he might be surprised to see himself described as a record producer, one of the first to occupy this role was Fred Gaisberg. Working for Emile Berliner, Gaisberg came to England from America in 1898 to set up The Gramophone Company. He made numerous international tours to add to the local catalogues of the Company, the most famous of which was that to Italy in the Spring of 1902, when he recorded the famous ten sides sung by Caruso in Milan. Martland (1994) tells the full story of this episode. Gaisberg always resisted offers to place him in more static, managerial roles, and so he became the Company's first 'Artists' Manager', effectively responsible for deciding on both the artists and repertoire to be recorded by the Company. His position and influence were increased by the merger between The Gramophone Company and the Columbia Graphophone Company to form EMI in 1931. He remained a dominant force in the recording of classical music in Europe up to the outbreak of the Second World War. Gaisberg (1946) is an entertaining memoir of his exploits from the earliest days of recording to the end of the Second World War. Much of Gaisberg's recorded legacy continues to sell to this day, a testament to the artistic and commercial qualities of his decisions. Moore (1976) is a straightforward biography, drawing on Gaisberg's own autobiography and on the reminiscences of his family and of those who worked with him.

The creation of EMI in 1931 was one of the most significant changes to the structure of the record industry to take place before the explosion of activity stimulated by the introduction of the long playing record in 1948. The magnetism and memoirs of Gaisberg have created an impression that Columbia was a second string to HMV (The Gramophone Company's predominant classical label) before the merger.

However this was not so. Columbia had built up a substantial catalogue of classical recordings. In the company's last years as an independent entity, the chief producer for classical recordings (and therefore the person responsible for Sir Thomas Beecham's recordings at this time) was Joe Batten. Batten (1956) describes his varied career. It is clear that Batten did not possess Gaisberg's vision. His memoirs vividly evoke the transient nature of the industry in its early days. Batten's casual consideration of musicians who are now seen as major figures, such as Stravinsky, is startling, and brings into focus Gaisberg's long-sightedness in relation to Elgar. Moore (1974) discusses this relationship in depth.

The two dominant figures in the British classical music recording industry after the Second World War were Walter Legge and John Culshaw. Legge's widow, the singer Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, has collected together Legge's major miscellaneous writings in Schwarzkopf (1982). Inevitably these give Legge's perception of all the events and individuals described. The musicians considered in depth include singers such as Lotte Lehmann, Rosa Ponselle and Schwarzkopf herself; the conductors with whom Legge worked most closely, Beecham, Karajan, and Klemperer; and the Philharmonia Orchestra, which he founded and managed from 1945 to 1963. In addition there are two valuable bonuses: a sketch by the critic Edward Greenfield of Legge working in the studio, and a detailed discography of all the recordings produced by Legge, compiled by Alan Sanders. The discography, in particular, shows the huge range of repertoire and the exceptional performance standards that he brought to the recording studio.

Even more revealing are the collected memoranda, letters and miscellaneous journalism collected together in Sanders (1998) which show Legge at work. The correspondence with Furtwangler and Walton, for instance, displays the different priorities of producer and musician, and the tactics Legge employed to achieve his own objectives. The criticism which Legge wrote during the 1930s as the second music critic of 'The Guardian' to Neville Cardus also allows the reader to witness the development of Legge's musical taste and of his personal standards.

Grubb (1986) contains the memoirs of Legge's final assistant, Suvi Raj Grubb, who went on to become a producer in his own right. The comparison between Grubb's *modus operandi* and that of other producers shows the differences of approach among producers to the task of ensuring a satisfactory recorded performance, and the degree to which Grubb himself, like Legge, was prepared to intervene in musical decisions.

Culshaw's memoirs (Culshaw 1981), and his history of the recording of the 'The Ring' cycle conducted by Solti (Culshaw 1968), have already been mentioned in connection with Solti's career. Culshaw (1981) is broad-ranging, and offers a lucid if slightly jaundiced view of his principal employer, the Decca Record Company. Its greatest value lies in the insights that it provides of Culshaw's working methods as a producer. The culture of Decca at the time when Culshaw was active there allowed him to see projects through from first to last. The result was frequently the production of recordings that possessed unique characteristics in comparison with the competition.

Record production in the USA often represented a different set of issues from those encountered in Europe. American record companies were more strongly profit driven, whereas in Europe classical divisions were tolerated as long as they did not make a loss. Other, less tangible, benefits for record companies might accrue from them, such as prestige and critical acclaim. This difference in attitude is clearly seen in the memoirs of Charles O'Connell (O'Connell 1947), the first full-time classical producer for RCA, the largest record company in the USA throughout the 1930s. O'Connell's memoirs are frequently concerned with settling old scores: for instance with Toscanini, RCA's major classical recording artist up until his departure from the USA in 1954. Away from the subject of individual artists, O'Connell contains much useful information, especially in the area of the financing of orchestral recordings in the USA. The orchestras often themselves provided the capital for recording in return for future royalty payments. Such a system contrasted with the English flat fee payment system.

One of O'Connell's most distinguished successors at RCA was Jack Pfeiffer. Elliott (1992) contains Pfeiffer's philosophy of recording, which represents a balance between the potential perfectionism of limitless takes and the immediacy of the unique performance.

Active in the fields of jazz and popular music, the record producer John Hammond has been credited with effecting major social and cultural change in America through his unswerving espousal of the work of black musicians. Hammond broke the unofficial apartheid that existed in the pre-war world of American jazz by creating mixed race jazz groups especially for recordings. His autobiography, Hammond (1977), is a frank memoir that recognises the power of sound recording as a communications medium, and on a personal level, the intense interest that it can stimulate.

Bishop (1988) provides a brief outline of the work that a record producer may actually expect to have to undertake when in the employ of an international record company. Intervening structural changes to the record industry have already made this to some extent a historical document.

2.5.3. Conclusion – the producer

The value of the literature that exists on the role of the producer lies at several levels. Firstly it describes some of the different ways in which record companies have worked. Secondly it demonstrates the diverse approaches that individuals have brought to the role of producer – there is no standard articulation of it. Thirdly, the literature indicates the degree to which the producer is involved (or not) in the actual creation of the final product, the record.

2.6. Summary

This chapter has discussed the literature on the subject of research, that is the influence of recording and of the record industry as illustrated by the recording

careers of Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti, and Sir Simon Rattle. The literature on the role of the record producer has been briefly considered.

The survey has indicated that very little research has been undertaken into the specific subject of the influence of recording and the record industry upon musical activity. At the same time it has shown that recording played an increasingly important part in musical life as the twentieth century progressed.

The next section considers the methodologies used to investigate the subject of the ways in which recording has exerted influence, as seen through the careers of the research subjects.

Chapter 3

Methodology

‘The problem [of a research project] and its particular solution are analogous to those by which fresco painters solved problems of representing the different temporal moments of a story in the singular space of the wall. The problem is to produce in a two-dimensional space framed as a wall a world of action and movement in time.’

- Dorothy Smith: ‘The everyday world as problematic: A feminist sociology.’ (quoted in Fontana and Frey (1994) p.370).

‘Interpretation is an art that cannot be formalised.’

- Norman K. Denzin: The Art and Politics of Interpretation (1994), p.512.

3.1. Introduction and Outline of Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how the research question with which this thesis is preoccupied was reached, to explain and to justify the research methodologies used, and to outline the actual processes of the research. Having defined the research question, it considers the epistemology, validity checks, design, and methods derived for the research, followed by an account of the data collection and data analysis processes. It outlines the solutions adopted in the face of problems encountered with the latter, and concludes with an outline of the method of data organisation adopted for the writing of each case study.

3.2. Development of the Research Question

3.2.1. Summary

This section considers the origin and development of the research question, and the genesis of its final state.

3.2.2. Origins and development

The initial objective of the research project was to investigate any linkage between the marketing of recordings of performances of classical music and of the musicians who featured on them. In particular, did success as a recording artist and its attendant processes have an influence on the performers and the performances recorded? The precise subjects of research were to be the recorded careers of Sir Thomas Beecham and Sir Simon Rattle. Both conductors recorded substantially for the same company, EMI, and represented the opening years of the industry and its more recent phases of growth. The mode of research was to be the case study.

During the period devoted to the review of the literature associated with the subject it became apparent that the initial research objective was nebulous. It would be very difficult to establish any linkages of the kind anticipated, if indeed any such linkage existed in the first place. In addition it became apparent that the original proposal did not cover a significant historical period in the development of the record industry. To be precise the proposal did not take into account the period between the death of Sir Thomas Beecham in 1961 and Sir Simon Rattle's first commercial recordings in 1975.

Work that had been undertaken on an experimental basis during the first year of research into the recording activity of the conductor Sir Georg Solti showed that his career fitted neatly into this gap, Solti having been active as a recording artist between 1947 and 1997. In addition, as one of the most prolific and successful of recorded conductors, his career would also fit well into the general area of research as it was then broadly defined. I therefore decided to include Solti's career within the research plan, again in the form of a case study.

3.2.3. Refining the research question

By the end of the first year the research subject had been substantially modified. The focus of the research question had, at this point, become the changes in musical activity wrought by the finance injected by the record industry into the musical life of this country. This was to be exemplified by the careers of the three conductors who were now the specific subject of research: Beecham, Solti, and Rattle. Thus at this point a specific research question had been identified, and this was to be investigated through three case studies. In addition at this point a fourth case study was also planned, on the changing role of the record producer.

As will be described later in this chapter, interview guides and detailed schedules of questions for interview were developed with this research objective clearly in mind. The interview guides and questions were supported by reference to other areas in which the influence of recording and the recording industry might be perceived. As the research interviews progressed it became increasingly apparent that the influence of recording upon musical activity was far wider than simply financial. By the end of the interview process sufficient data had been collected for the research focus to be widened to a more multi-faceted examination of the degree to which recording and the recording industry have influenced musical activity and continue to do so.

3.2.4. Final aim of the study

The final research question therefore which this study seeks to address is: ‘to what extent and in what ways has recording and the recording industry influenced musical activity, as illustrated by the recording careers of Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti and Sir Simon Rattle?’

The recording careers of the three conductors therefore act as lenses through which answers to the research question are sought. The rationale for choosing these conductors is based firstly on history, in that between them they cover the growth of the record industry from its inception to the present day, and secondly on achievement, in that each of them has been (and in Rattle’s case continues to be) highly significant as a recording conductor.

3.3. Epistemology

The two basic research philosophies encountered within social sciences research are positivism and phenomenology. These philosophies differentiate themselves in relation to their individual positions as to what constitutes acceptable knowledge (Bryman, 1989).

Positivism is founded upon the concept that the social world has an external reality and so can be measured through objective instruments. In contrast to positivism, phenomenology takes reality to be socially constructed rather than to be determined objectively. Both positivism and phenomenology have dependent research paradigms, with values, methodologies and solutions that provide models for research. The key features of each of these philosophical paradigms have been listed by de Vaus (1991).

Table 3.1. The key features of each of the philosophical paradigms

	Positivistic	Phenomenological
Basic beliefs:	The world is external and objective. Observer is independent. Science is value free.	The world is socially constructed and subjective. Observer is part of what is observed. Science is driven by human interests.
Researchers should:	Focus on facts. Look for causality and fundamental laws. Reduce phenomena to simplest elements. Formulate hypotheses and test them.	Focus on meanings. Try to understand what is happening. Look at the totality of each situation. Develop ideas through induction from data.
Preferred methods include:	Operationalising concepts so that the phenomena can be measured. Taking large samples.	Using multiple methods to establish different views of phenomena. Small samples investigated in depth or over time.

(Source: de Vaus, 1991)

As will be apparent from the outline given on the genesis of the research question, the initial bias of the research proposed, and the general area with which it is concerned, leans towards a phenomenological philosophy.

The relevant literature suggests that there are three additional factors that have an influence upon research design. These are: firstly, the research objectives; secondly, the background to the research; and thirdly, the practical constraints which external factors impose upon the researcher (Bryman 1988, Yin 1994). Consideration of these three factors indicated that a qualitative approach to answering the research question would be appropriate.

In particular, given the paucity of written source material, it was felt that the pursuit of the research subject would require considerable dependence upon interviewing those with first-hand knowledge and experience of the research area. It was anticipated therefore that different explanations would be given for the same phenomena, as in fact proved to be the case, with the accumulation of a considerable volume of rich data. Clearly no definitive explanation would be possible or even feasible. This understanding therefore supported the phenomenological philosophy adopted for the research.

Over and above these practical considerations, there are further factors influencing the outcome of research which have suggested in general terms that a phenomenological philosophy would be most appropriate. To quote Van Maanen (1979): 'The results of ethnographic study are thus mediated several times over – first, by the field worker's own standards of relevance as to what is and what is not worthy of observation; second, by the historically situated questions that are put to the people in the setting; third, by the self-reflection demanded of an informant; and fourth, by the intentional and unintentional ways the produced data are misleading.' (p.549). All of these points were believed to be pertinent in this instance.

It was felt that to pursue the research question from a positivist perspective would be inappropriate. To attempt to measure influence of the type being here considered would not be feasible. On the other hand a phenomenological point of view reflects

both objectives and means of research: to seek to understand what has happened in the past through small samples investigated both in depth and over time. Fontana and Frey (1994) have pointed out that the 'commitment to maintain the integrity of the phenomena and preserving the viewpoint of the subjects as expressed in their everyday language is akin to phenomenological and existential sociologies.' (p.370).

Denzin (1994) goes beyond Van Maanen's position, suggesting, as with Richardson (1991), that no 'discourse has a privileged place, any method or theory a universal and general claim to authoritative knowledge.' (p.501). Denzin suggests that all social science enquiry has to be seen as in some way 'tainted' by influence. 'The age of a putative value-free social science appears to be over.' (p.501). Going beyond Glaser and Strauss (1967) and the concept of grounded theory, he suggests that, as part of the post-modern experience, the writer and the interpretation developed by the writer through the act of writing become part of the research process itself. In essence it is the writer who through binding together memory and field notes with his or her writing creates a reality that has its own validity. Out of what Denzin calls a 'thick description', whereby context, intentions and meanings of the research experience are considered, 'arises a text's claims for truth, or its verisimilitude.'(p.505).

Denzin suggests that many factors shape interpretation: genre, narrative and style, personal culture and paradigmatic conventions. In the research undertaken in this project no claim is made for absolute truth. What is suggested is one set of circumstances causing another set of circumstances. More and different information and ideas may lead at other times to other interpretations.

With such a philosophical outlook, a positivist approach to the research question would not be feasible. The assumption behind the phenomenological philosophy adopted is that, even if ultimately what is to be suggested may at a later point be adjusted in some way, it does at the least aid the understanding of the influences of one of the most culturally pervasive phenomena of the twentieth century. To quote Brian Turner (Turner 1994), an analyst of crisis: 'I cannot claim any final authority for my own interpretation of our work.' (p. 201).

3.4. Reliability and Validity

3.4.1. Introduction

While a phenomenological perspective acknowledges perceptions of truth as being multi-faceted, a further important methodological issue to be considered in preparing the design of the research has been the research design's trustworthiness in relation to collecting the data that is required to address the research question. Yin (1994) has pointed out that the criteria used to achieve construct validity, external validity and reliability need to be robust, to overcome any scepticism that might flow from the apparent absence of objectivity compared to the natural sciences. A phenomenological perspective may encourage such scepticism. This section therefore addresses the issues of validity within the process of research design.

3.4.2. Validity: construct validity

Yin (1994) defines construct validity as ensuring that the selected measures of the changes being studied do indeed reflect the specific types of changes that are the subject of the research. He suggests several tactics to support construct validity including firstly multiple sources of evidence and secondly the establishment of a chain of evidence. A third tactic that is recommended is that key informants review drafts of the research document.

As will become apparent from the detailed account of the research design process, elements of Yin's tactics were adopted. Firstly, the range of information sources was designed to be as wide as practicably possible, particularly in terms of those interviewed and their respective functions. Secondly a chain of evidence was sought in historical terms, by adjusting the number of cases from two conductors, as originally planned, to three. This change allowed for an unbroken historical continuum of experience to be investigated (in other words the unbroken development of the record industry). Thirdly the original plan for a fourth case study, on the record producer, permitted the introduction of different but related perspectives.

The different roles of those interviewed in relation to both the research subjects and to the record industry, the different sources of information employed, and the historical continuum in which these were all placed would thus support construct validity through triangulation. Yin is very clear on the benefits of triangulation: ‘With triangulation, the potential problems of construct validity also can be addressed, because the multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon.’ (p. 92). The third recommendation, for a review of the draft research document, has also been built into the research design.

3.4.3. Internal validity

The purpose of internal validity is to ensure that the logic by which event x leads to event y is sound. Eisenhardt (1989) stresses the importance of discovering the underlying theoretical reasons as to why relationships exist, in order to sustain the internal validity of findings. Yin (1994) adopts a similar position and proposes a further three tactics to assist with the establishment of internal validity within the research process. These tactics are: pattern matching, explanation building, and times-series analysis. Pattern matching compares an empirically based pattern with either a predicted one or several alternative predictions (p.106). Explanation building, which is a type of pattern making, seeks to analyse the case study data by building an explanation about the case (p.110). This is often done in narrative form. In effect the researcher stipulates a set of causal links about the phenomenon being studied. These may reflect insights into social science theory and if correct can assist in theory-building (p.111). Lastly time-series analysis seeks to trace changes over time. Yin maintains this as ‘a major strength of case studies’ (p.113), as they are not limited to assessments of a specific situation.

These latter two procedures, explanation building and time-series analysis, were established within the research design, with the first tactic, explanation building, becoming a significant activity during the phase of data analysis. An overall analytic method, ‘the programme logic model’, was employed to develop further the building of explanations, and is considered in detail at paragraph 3.11.3. The case study method and the research process’s longitudinal historical perspective supported time-series analysis. The change in the number of case studies from two to three, already

referred to, had the benefit of strengthening the time-series analysis of the research data by creating an unbroken historical time continuum

3.4.4. External validity

In order to achieve external validity, Yin (1994) recommends that a theory must be tested through replications of the findings in a second or even third situation. The increase in the number of case studies pursued was intended to assist in addressing this issue. However because only one case study in each time period was selected, external validity was not possible to demonstrate precisely in those situations where there was no overlap of experience in the individual case studies. Triangulation of evidence through the use of different data sources was intended to assist with this issue. Secondly, because different recording technologies introduced at different times have produced different consequences, complete external validation is not possible. Given the phenomenological bias of the research this situation was accepted, and the methodology adopted, the case study, was chosen partly to address this point.

3.4.5. Empirical validity

Empirical validity arises from the intimate linkage with empirical evidence. Eisenhardt (1989) makes the point that empirical validity is likely to be a strength of the case study method. Thus, through the adoption of this research method which is described in greater detail shortly, the acquisition of empirical evidence was *per se* built into the research design.

3.4.6. Reliability and auditability

Reliability is an issue that requires a heightened level of awareness in phenomenologically orientated research. Reliability is understood to exist within a research project when ‘applying the same procedure in the same way produces the same results and is present when a researcher can follow the procedures outlined by an earlier researcher and obtain the same or similar results’ (Robinson, 1999, p.72).

Reliability may be fragile when replication may be limited. Hartley (1994) develops this point by stressing the possibility of research being the product of both the researcher's prejudices (and enthusiasms), and prior expectations. This danger is particularly strong within the context of a phenomenological research philosophy, and even more so when a post-modern perspective is present, as considered by Denzin (1994).

Hartley (1994) advises guarding against this weakness in two ways. Firstly through the researcher recognising his or her own presuppositions, and in analysis consciously seeking to set these aside. This technique is known as 'bracketing' in phenomenology. Hartley suggests that researchers 'should allow themselves to be surprised by the findings.' (p.31). Secondly she suggests that at the stage of coding in the case study, inter-rater comparisons should be used by co-researchers or by independent researchers. While neither the latter approach, nor the similar 'test-retest' approach proposed by Bryman (1989), was possible in this instance, the adoption of a case-study protocol was intended to result in similar conclusions being reached by other researchers.

The case study protocol states the general rules and procedures to be adopted during data collection and analysis. Yin (1994) suggests that an effective case study protocol will contain the following elements:

- An overview of the case study project
- Field procedures
- Case study questions
- A guide for the case study report

These procedures were designed into the research process in this instance.

Secondly the existence of the case study database, containing the data obtained from the actual research, has two further benefits. Firstly it enables other researchers to review the data directly, and secondly this supports the construct validity of the research by allowing the chain of evidence to be followed (Robinson, 1999). This process forms part of the auditability of the research. The guideline, as defined by Yin (1994) and as intended by inter-rater comparison or independent validation, is

‘to conduct the research so that an auditor could repeat the procedures and arrive at the same results.’ (p.37). In practical terms the use of the N-Vivo programme for data analysis, containing full transcripts of all the research interviews, and the portability of the programme, supported the potential for auditability.

3.5. Research design

3.5.1. Introduction

The nature and aim of the research proposed suggested that the most appropriate research methods to be adopted would be the case study, supported by document analysis. The reasons for the selection of these research tools were largely practical. Firstly the research area was new, with little primary research having been conducted into it, and with a limited secondary literature. Secondly information is available through the memories of those individuals who have been, or continue to be, involved with the record industry, and therefore by extension with the subjects of the case studies. Thirdly important archives in relation to one of the possible case study subjects, Sir Thomas Beecham, existed at the University of Sheffield and at the EMI Archive, located at Hayes, Middlesex. The following sections therefore consider in detail the case study and document analysis as methods of research, and the reasons for the selection of the particular cases that have formed the subject of research.

3.5.2. The case study

3.5.2.1. Definition

Yin (1994) defines a case study as ‘an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.’ (p.13).

Hartley (1994) goes more deeply into the contexts within which case-studies are particularly appropriate: ‘Case study analysis has allowed the tracking of change over time, as a response both to historical forces, contextual pressures and the dynamics of various stakeholder groups in proposing or opposing change.’ (p.211). She argues that case studies are particularly appropriate in areas of both original and

emergent theory. In areas where new processes or behaviours are little understood, case studies are an effective method for generating hypotheses and building theories. A further benefit is that the case study approach will work best when the identification of the research question and the theoretical framework is tentative: as the research concepts are repeatedly examined against the data, so the issues and theory may shift.

Eisenhardt (1989) is equally as strong as Hartley on the circumstances in which the case study is an effective research method. The case study approach 'is especially appropriate in new topic areas.' (p.532). Eisenhardt amplifies this assertion by arguing that the building of theories from case study research does not rely on previous literature or empirical evidence. It is therefore appropriate when little is known about a phenomenon, and 'current perspectives seem inadequate because they have little empirical substantiation.' (p.548). All these points were pertinent in this instance.

3.5.2.2. The general and specific benefits of a case study approach to research

Having already established the nature of the case study, this section considers the general benefits of the use of this method, after which further specific advantages are also considered.

In terms of general benefits or appropriateness Yin (1994) suggests that case studies will be a preferred method of research where the questions that are being asked seek explanatory answers: 'how' and 'why'. He points out that the case study overlaps with histories, but that the case study has the advantage that it can encompass a wide range of data, including documents, artefacts, interviews and observations. Elements of these might not be available for the preparation of histories. Moreover the catholic approach of the case study allows for analytic generalisation. It is not concerned with statistical generalisation drawn from the enumeration of frequencies. This characteristic in turn makes the case study appropriate for new areas of study, thus reinforcing its relevance to the area of research in this instance.

In addition to case studies being appropriate to new areas of study, they are relevant as a method of enquiry into societal theories, that is those theories concerned with international behaviour, cultural institutions, technological development, and marketplace functions. These headings neatly encapsulate many of the key components of the record industry and its development, and hence of the broad research field.

3.5.2.3. Process factors

In recommending the case study as a method of research into new areas and especially those connected with societal development, certain actions have been identified that enhance the chances of success.

Paton (1980) makes the point that several case studies may be compared and contrasted to create a coherent report. In contesting the view of Dyer and Wilkins (1991) that single case studies allow for greater depth of analysis, Eisenhardt (1991) argues that multiple case studies represent a robust research strategy, in that they support the development of theory characterised by methodological rigour and comparative logic. Separate case studies may both confirm, through replication, specific theories, and allow for richer theory-building by extending the area of analysis: ‘...good theory is fundamentally the result of rigorous methodology and comparative, multiple-case logic.’ (p.627). This point has already been referred to in the section concerned with reliability and validity.

In addition to working with several case studies Yin (1994) recommends the construction of a preliminary theory relevant to the topic of research as a means to commence research through case studies. He points out that this separates the case study as a method from those of ethnography and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). He makes the point that ‘the relevant field contacts depend upon an understanding – or theory – of what is being studied.’ (p.27).

3.5.3. Company documentation and the benefits of its analysis

The use of company documentation as an aid to analysis is a familiar tool within the field of history but has received relatively little attention within the field of social science as a research methodology. However, by presenting at first hand evidence often either forgotten or obscured it constitutes a rich resource for research.

Forster (1994) considers in detail the benefits and techniques of analysing company documentation. He suggests that company documents reveal many different aspects of activity. Firstly they act as a record, and can therefore be used alongside events recalled in 'interview' either to provide corroboration or a different point of view. Secondly, as they are a by-product of the communication between individuals and groups working within organisations, and with those external to the organisation, documents provide a rich insight into different employee, group, and external interpretations of both events and activities. Thirdly documentation assists the process of triangulation. Documents may help to counteract bias and supply further information.

Thus documents and their analysis provide three straightforward and tangible benefits, which in turn amplify the already considered benefits of the case study.

Documentation has a further, deeper, significance. Forster makes the point that documents are '(con)textual paradigms...they define understanding of particular problems, prescribe appropriate behaviours and different ways of 'getting things done' in organisations' (p.149). They thus share the attributes of paradigms described by Kuhn (1962), and can be arranged as 'systems of understanding in the same way as other manifestations of behaviour (Saussure,1974).' (p.149).

Both in terms of what they contain, and what they do not contain, documents show what was, and what was not, thought to be important to those who created and received them. A 'caveat' which Forster perceives as a potential weakness or danger, that they must be seen as 'context specific', may also be a strength. By being highly relevant to a specific context, they reveal a great deal about that context. 'The meaning of the situation is, in itself, a *sui generis* reality, which is not reducible to a

few independent and dependent variables.’ (p.150). The study of company documents in this context is therefore one of hermeneutic interpretation.

In articulating this form of research, the analysis moves from meaning to analysis, with the assumptions of the audience being clearly identified. In this context the analysis of documentation reveals aspects of the prevailing culture, people, management, and of communication and power relationships.

For these reasons – both in terms of specific and of inferred information – company documentation was believed, in this case, to be a process of research that would throw valuable light upon the research question. More prosaically, alongside the interviews with those active in the field, company documentation was in fact one of the very few sources of additional further information. It therefore had a practical as well as theoretical relevance.

3.5.4. Case study selection

The points made above indicated that the case study would be a highly appropriate method of researching the basic question of the influence of recording and the record industry upon musical activity, or as it was at the point of planning the field research, the relationship between the financial elements of recording and musical activity.

Recording has gone through several phases of technological evolution. Each of these has had definite implications for the acquisition and use of capital by record companies. The musician has been, and continues to be, a central focus for the use of much of this capital.

It therefore made sense firstly to select as the case study subjects those musicians who between them encompassed the development of the record industry in an uninterrupted line. This the choice of Beecham, Solti, and Rattle did. Beecham’s first record was made in 1910, and Rattle is today active in the recording studio. Secondly each of the three musicians selected has been and is a central focus for recording activity. Their recording careers therefore would illustrate any differences clearly.

Two further practical reasons pointed to the selection of Sir Thomas Beecham as the subject of a case study. In 1997 the University of Sheffield purchased from Sir Thomas's widow a large number of documents. These consisted mainly of Sir Thomas's music library: orchestral parts, often marked up with bowings and dynamics by either Sir Thomas or under his direction, and conducting scores. In addition the archive contains a selection of press cuttings relating to different points in Sir Thomas's career. Thus material existed which supported a detailed study of this major musician. Secondly, at the EMI Archive at Hayes, Middlesex, there exists very extensive documentation of Sir Thomas's career with EMI, for whom he recorded between 1932 and 1940, 1944 and 1950, and 1955 to 1959. Beecham occasionally referred to EMI as 'the old firm', and it was the one record company with which he was most closely associated throughout his life. The existence of the 'Beecham file' therefore represents a valuable additional source of information about Beecham's activities and attitudes in relation to recording.

Sir Simon Rattle was originally selected as a case study subject because he is one of the few conductors still to have a contractual relationship with a record company. As this company is EMI, it was thought possible to achieve an overlap in information gathering during the research process, especially at the stage of interviews. In addition Rattle has already created a substantial catalogue of recordings, predominantly for EMI. Finally given the likelihood of continuing career progression it was felt that Rattle's future would be of interest and relevance. This proved to be the case. In the summer of 1999, two years after the initial research proposal had been developed, Rattle was appointed as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, with effect from the autumn of 2002.

Sir Georg Solti did not feature in the original research proposal, as has already been noted. However at the point when the research project actually started, in the autumn of 1997, Sir Georg died. As a result a considerable amount of press coverage of his life and work was generated. Initial study was undertaken into his recording career, and after six months, it was fully apparent that this encapsulated a number of key factors relevant to the research subject. His recordings have been artistically and commercially successful; his relationship with one record company, Decca, was

unbroken over fifty years; and he had a creative relationship with several of his record producers. In addition Solti's career provided an historical bridge between the death of Sir Thomas Beecham in 1961 and the start of Sir Simon Rattle's commercial recording career in 1975. Thus by including Solti within the research project, historical continuity (and overlap in two key areas, the introduction of the long-playing record and of stereophonic sound) was achieved.

At the point at which the actual research design was undertaken it was anticipated that a fourth case study, examining the role of the record producer, would be undertaken. This proved eventually not to be feasible because of limitations of length. However prior to this decision being taken all the actual research relating to the producer had been undertaken in the form of reading, interview and document analysis. As a result this knowledge was used within the context of the three conductor based case studies. The inclusion of information relating to the role of the producer supported the triangulation of the data collected and analysed, and hence assisted the validity of the research.

Thus the final research programme was based upon three case studies of three conductors, each of whom had established a successful conducting career. Taken together these stretched from the dawn of the recording industry to the present day.

3.6. Data Collection

3.6.1. Introduction

This section considers the theoretical justification for the actual processes of research undertaken, and why the decisions relating to detailed avenues of enquiry were taken.

3.6.2. Qualitative research

Jick (1979) has argued that qualitative methods can be successful in drawing out data and suggesting theories to which other methods may be blind. Secondly, qualitative methods may give the researcher greater insight into the contexts of the research

being undertaken. Thirdly, the use of different qualitative sources allows for triangulation of information: by examining the same phenomenon from different perspectives actuality is checked and greater understanding becomes possible. Jick quotes Weiss (1968) for a powerful summary of the immediate benefits of qualitative data: 'Qualitative data are apt to be superior to quantitative data in density of information, vividness, and clarity of meaning – characteristics more important in holistic work, than precision and reproducibility.' (pp.344-345).

Cassell and Symon (1994) point out that qualitative methods allow the researcher considerable flexibility, and in particular permit adjustments of approach, as progress within the research is achieved and modifications made. They also comment upon the sensitivity of qualitative methods in analyzing change, particularly organisational change. While immediate organisational change is not the subject of this particular research project, the broader theme of it is change within the specific field of twentieth-century musical activity. The type of changes being considered, as the research developed, could only be revealed in detail through qualitative methods. Certainly, quantitative methods are very helpful in providing measures of scale, for instance in terms of record sales, but for fuller causative analysis qualitative methods were felt to be preferable.

3.6.3. The methods of qualitative research.

3.6.3.1. Outline of methods

Yin (1994) presents a clear analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the primary sources of evidence used in qualitative methods of research. These are: documentation; archival records; interviews; direct observations; participant observation, and physical artefacts. The sources selected for this study were the first three. In addition, although they did not feature as precise subjects of research, the recordings by each of the conductors, in other words physical artefacts, were a constant background to the other three methods. A detailed knowledge of these artefacts relating to each case study subject was required to achieve specificity, for instance in dialogue with the producers responsible for some of them, and the orchestral players whose musicianship is enshrined within them.

3.6.3.2. The interview

The two key strengths of the interview as a research method are firstly that interviews can be targeted directly onto the case study subject, and secondly that they can generate insight. To quote Yin (1994): ‘the interview provides perceived causal inferences.’ (p.80). A further advantage related to insight is more specifically identified by King (1994): the suitability of the interview as a means to examine topics in which different levels of meaning are to be explored. Experience in the field showed that a variant of this advantage was the development and awareness of different levels of meaning as the interview process progressed. This enlargement of perception reflects the point made by Kvale (1983) that the purpose of the interview is to gather from the interviewee both description and interpretation of the meaning of what is described. King (1994) suggests that the goal of the qualitative research interview is to see the research topic from the interviewee’s perspective, and to understand how this perspective has been reached. Fontana and Frey (1994) emphasise this point and warn prospective researchers of taking their role for granted. As Hartley (1994) suggests, theory can be creatively developed through an examination of differences, including those arising from interviews.

There are however disadvantages associated with the interview as a method of research. Yin (1994) suggests that the most notable of these is bias, arising either from poorly constructed questions, or from the response of the interviewee. The interviewee may repeat inaccurate information as a result of poor recall. The lack of awareness by the interviewee, or poor reflexivity, may result in the interviewee telling the interviewer what the latter wishes to hear. King (1994) also points out that interviews are highly time intensive: the preparation, execution, transcription and analysis of interview data together generally require considerable amounts of time from the interviewer, as well as demanding time from the interviewee for the interview itself. A further disadvantage may be a sense of data overload, produced by the large volume of material generated through the interview process.

King (1994) defines the three types of interview: unstructured, semi-structured and structured. Structured interviews exist most comfortably within the world of surveys and experiments and therefore fall within the field of quantitative research.

Unstructured interviews, or the qualitative research interview to use the term employed by King, are helpful where meaning is sought from the interviewee of phenomena. They have been used in certain fields of qualitative research, such as ethnography and the development of grounded theory. Douglas (1985) goes as far as to suggest lengthy interviews lasting a day or more. (Quoted in Fontana and Frey (1994) p.363).

The third type of interview, the semi-structured interview, lies between the unstructured, fully qualitative, interview, and the structured interview. In the semi-structured interview a schedule of questions is developed. These questions are 'open' and allow for flexibility in both the order in which they are asked, and the response and train of thought of the interviewee. King suggests that this type of interview is appropriate where the opinions of the interviewee are not well known in advance and cannot therefore be easily quantified.

The approach to interviewing taken in this instance conformed most closely to King's third category, that of the semi-structured interview, or 'structured open response' interview. A schedule of question topics was created following the review of the relevant literature, and this schedule was used as a master plan for each interview. In many cases two phenomena then occurred. Firstly the interviewee might anticipate one of the interview topics, and even in some cases the related questions. In this case I generally took the decision to adjust the interview schedule in order to allow the interview to proceed naturally rather than artificially. The second phenomenon was that the interviewee would stray into areas not directly covered by the schedule but potentially relevant to the general research area. In this instance I would normally seek to follow the interviewee, and often this approach did yield both new information and new insights. Occasionally, however, it was the equivalent of going down a 'blind alley', with the provision of information unrelated to the research subjects or research topic (as defined by myself). In this case the direction of the interview had to be reasserted through the questions subsequently asked.

3.6.3.3. Documentation

The benefits of company documentation as a source of research information have already been considered. In this section the use of a broader range documentation is considered, together with a description of the documentary sources used.

Yin (1994) defines the strengths of documentation as being: stability, unobtrusive, exact and providing broad coverage. Documents can be repeatedly reviewed, they are not created as a result of the case study, they generally contain names, references, and details of an event, and they may cover a long span of time, many events and many different settings.

The disadvantages associated with the use of documentation may include difficulties associated with retrievability, biased selection, the bias (possibly unknown) of the author, and access.

Within the context of qualitative research the purpose of the use of documentation is 'to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources', (Yin 1994, p.81). As with interviews, contradiction exposed through a study of documentation can stimulate the researcher to make further enquiry or to develop theories associated with the possible reasons for dissonance.

Eisenhardt (1989) builds upon this point. She strongly emphasises the importance of linking any emergent theory back to existing literature and documentation, as it is likely to enhance internal validity, generalizability and the level of theory building that might be achieved from case study research. She makes the point that where findings employed in theory building have come from a limited number of cases, this linkage to the existing literature is particularly important.

In this research project four distinct types of documentation were made use of. Firstly all the normally published material that could be reasonably accessed on the subject was read. This analysis formed the backbone of the traditional literature review. Secondly extensive use was made of reviews of recordings conducted by the case study subjects that have appeared in the monthly magazine 'The Gramophone'.

This publication commenced in 1923, and is the closest that the classical record industry has to a 'journal of record'. It is a significant source of reference and of critical opinion relating to recordings and musicians.

The third form of documentation used was interviews published in the popular press. This source was particularly relevant to the study of Sir Simon Rattle. As immediate access to Sir Simon himself was denied, press interviews, of which there are many, proved to be valuable sources of information, with high levels of internal consistency. These documents were viewed at the offices of Sir Simon's agency, Askonas and Holt. The fourth source of documentation was broadcast material: that is radio and television documentaries relating to different aspects of the research subject in general, and to the case study subjects in particular. Consisting of sound and vision rather than the printed word, they allowed for different aspects of the interviewees' behaviour to be observed, such as the body language and verbal inflection of each of the three case study subjects, in addition to opinion through spoken responses.

3.6.3.4. Archival records

Archival records carry many of the same benefits for research as documentation, as well as similar dis-benefits. As well as providing exactitude and stability, they extend the coverage that documentation provides. In cases of internal disagreement, for instance as revealed through detailed archival records, they provide a variety of perspectives, albeit distanced by time. These in turn allow for greater richness of interpretation, and encourage creativity of theory building by confronting the researcher with disagreement.

The disadvantages already noted in relation to documentation as a research resource apply even more strongly to archival records. Access can be highly limited in terms of geography, time and permissions. Secondly, retrievability is only possible at the time of direct contact with the archive material. There is generally very limited opportunity for 'going back'. Finally, it is important to be able to develop an awareness both of the general culture of which the particular archives form a part, and of the special organisational culture influencing the archival documents held and

analysed. Thus prior background research on the company, organisation, or individual whose archives are to be examined is helpful.

For this research project three archives were consulted. The most extensive was that belonging to EMI and based at the company's research laboratories at Hayes, Middlesex. Permission was sought and granted to consult the file relating to EMI's dealings with Sir Thomas Beecham. This turned out to be the largest file in the archive, extending to over twenty box files of correspondence. The file started at the point of the formation of EMI out of the merger of The Gramophone Company and The Columbia Graphophone Company in 1931, and proceeded past Sir Thomas's death in 1961 to the present day. The level of detail revealed by this file was great: EMI had a culture of committing every significant decision to paper, and of retaining and filing all paperwork. There seems from its earliest days to have been a realisation within the Company that this material would be a valuable support to the actual recordings made by the company, the continuing exploitation of which has always been one of its key strengths. The Beecham file added to the depth of research possible for this particular case study.

The second archive to be consulted was the Beecham Archive at the University of Sheffield. This predominantly contains Sir Thomas's orchestral parts and scores. However there are within it also several boxes and scrapbooks of press cuttings. Unlike EMI, Sir Thomas did not appear to possess a culture of retaining papers or documents relating to his career and activities. Therefore what has been retained and preserved in this archive is sporadic and haphazard. Nonetheless what is available does supplement the material that is also presented through the published literature, documentation, and other archival records. This material is useful in two ways: firstly, as an illustration of the ways in which Sir Thomas used the press to promote his particular concerns and thereby highlighting what these concerns were, and secondly, as an indication of the press's reaction to these concerns, as well as to his activities, both as a member of 'society' and as a musician.

The third archive consulted briefly was the Ormandy Archive in the Van Pelt Library of the University of Pennsylvania. This consultation was made firstly because there

are few archives containing extensive correspondence relating to an individual conductor, and, secondly, because the conductor Eugene Ormandy was, unlike Beecham, punctilious in preserving his correspondence: this archive is therefore extensive. Thirdly, because Ormandy had a prolific recording career, the archive contains significant correspondence with his record producers. It therefore throws direct light onto the role of the record producer, as well as the linkages between recording company plans and those of conductor and orchestra.

3.6.3.5. Artefacts

The fourth research resource utilised has been the actual commercial recordings made by the three case study subjects, and those produced by certain record producers.

These recordings are significant in that their creation and exploitation are the subject of all the correspondence in the Beecham file in the EMI Archive, and of much in the Ormandy Archive. A knowledge of the recorded output of the conductors in question is therefore essential to understand fully the references that are contained within the archival records. More broadly a knowledge of the recorded output of the case study subjects provides the central context for the research itself. Finally, certain technical aspects of recording (such as stereophonic sound) can be a significant factor within the research analysis.

An example of this is the congruence of the commercial introduction of stereophonic sound in 1958 and the consumer and critical reactions to this, with the creation of significant recordings by Sir Georg Solti, and the effect that these two factors (technology and favourable consumer reaction) combined had upon his career. A similar situation may be seen in relation to the introduction of the Compact Disc in 1983 and the recording activities of Sir Simon Rattle, who at this point was establishing himself as the principal conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Both the Orchestra and Rattle had pre-existing recording relationships with EMI, and the substantial market demand which built up in the seven years after the introduction of the CD stimulated increased recording activity by record

companies in general. Both orchestra and conductor were therefore to benefit from this historical and technological development.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the recording is itself, or has been largely to date, an artificial creation, put together by musicians and technicians in the studio, under the guidance of the producer. The producer is therefore, together with these other two groups of key players, often the uncredited creator of an artificial reality. It is not possible to study the work of the producer without an acknowledgement and understanding of what they produced, that is their recordings. It is however important to stress that the thrust of this research is not musicological, and so there are few references made to the musical qualities of the recordings mentioned in this research. The recordings and their genesis have been studied for what they signify in relation to the influence of recording upon musical activity, the primary subject of the research .

3.6.4.Variation

Eisenhardt (1989) stresses that ‘a key feature of theory-building case research is the freedom to make adjustments during the data collection process.’ (p.539). An example of such an adjustment might be the addition of questions to an interview schedule. Eisenhardt justifies this freedom on the grounds that the researcher is seeking to understand each case both individually and in as much depth as possible.

This point is made because as the research progressed it became clear firstly that certain initial theories were either not tenable or not significant, or both, and secondly that the detailed information required to progress the central idea at that time might not actually be available. Thus in this particular instance, the initial concentration upon financial factors, to the exclusion of other factors, was demonstrated by certain key players not to be especially significant. In addition it was causing for myself a form of myopia which was obscuring more significant insights. Finally, while a certain amount of financial information could be gleaned from archives and documentation in particular cases, this type of information was haphazard, and was certainly not available equally throughout all of the case studies. Indeed it proved to be an increasingly sensitive subject the closer one got to the

present day. Thus the research question was changed to look at the case study subjects more broadly, in the light of the information received during the course of the research process. Where appropriate interview questions were adjusted to reflect this change.

3.7. Data Collection: general

3.7.1. The stages of data collection

The three stages of data collection were:

- Stage 1: October 1997 – January 1999: literature review, and preliminary documentation and archival investigation.
- Stage 2: February 1999 – September 1999: pilot interviews followed by full interview programme.
- Stage 3: May 1999 – July 1999: detailed archival investigation.

3.7.2. Background: sector familiarisation

As a background to the statement of time periods above it may be pertinent to note that I did not start the project with a blank knowledge base. Since my early adolescence I have amassed a large collection of recordings and have been a consistent reader of the popular critical press for classical music recordings. In addition between 1970 and 1975 I worked for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, and therefore during this period had direct contact with one of the case study subjects, Sir Georg Solti. This was between 1970 and 1971, during his last year as Music Director of the Royal Opera Company.

From 1979 onward I have reviewed recordings regularly for a number of different publications. In 1989 in addition I started to write feature length articles on the work of individual conductors, such as Wilhelm Furtwangler, Hermann Scherchen, Herbert von Karajan, and Gunther Wand. Thus by the time I came to study formally the impact of recording and the recording industry upon musical activity, I had acquired a deep background knowledge of the three case study subjects who were conductors and of the record industry in general. However, this had been gained in

an unstructured manner and as a result of my enthusiasm for recording as a medium through which to access music, and for listening to performances of outstanding musicians, either 'live' in the concert hall and the opera house, or through recordings and broadcasting. What I had never done, and what the research project allowed me to do, was to consider the key issues of change and influence generated by recording as a technology in a systematic and academically disciplined manner.

3.7.3. Oct 1997 – Jan 1999: literature review and preliminary documentation and archival investigation

The literature reviews for each of the case study subjects, Beecham, Solti, Rattle, and that intended initially to examine the role of the record producer, followed a similar pattern. All formal published material was examined, as well as selected reviews for recordings published in 'The Gramophone'. In addition, using the 'Music Index' all interviews or articles, published since 1978 in periodicals devoted to recording and which related to the case study subjects, were examined at the National Sound Archive in the British Library. In the case of Beecham, issues of 'Le Grand Baton', the journal of the Sir Thomas Beecham Society, which contains reprints of many interviews, was consulted. All this material is considered more fully in the preceding chapter, devoted to the review of the literature on the research subjects.

During the summer of 1998 two archives were consulted: the Ormandy Archive at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Beecham Archive at the University of Sheffield. These archives were helpful in providing an initial orientation towards the subject areas of the role of the producer, and of Sir Thomas Beecham's career.

Thus by the end of this period, January 1999, I had familiarised myself with a considerable amount of printed material. In addition I had moved through and discarded one potential focus of research, which was the possible effects of the commodification of music through sound recordings upon the marketing of recordings. This was succeeded by what was intended to be a more tightly focused subject for research, the financial consequences of recording, supported by reference to other areas where I believed that recording and the recording industry may have been influential.

3.7.4. Feb 1999 – Sept 1999: pilot interviews followed by full interview programme

3.7.4.1. Development of interview questions

During January 1999 the research area was defined in terms of a broad theme and specific subsidiary themes.

The broad theme at this point was defined as: ‘the relationship between the process of sound recording and the recording industry, and musical activity’. This theme, although at times expressed slightly differently, remained a constant throughout the interview programme.

The specific subsidiary themes were defined as: ‘the influence of the sound recording process and the sound recording industry upon musical activity as illustrated through the careers of three prominent conductors, Sir Thomas Beecham, Sir Georg Solti, Sir Simon Rattle, and the changing role of the record producer.’

From these themes, three hypotheses were proposed. These were:

1. Recording has been a key factor in enabling these conductors:
 - To enhance their relationships with orchestras.
 - To realise more fully their musical intentions in general, and specifically on record, in the concert hall, and in the opera house.
 - To stabilise and support their career development, and that of certain orchestras.
2. The degree and type of influence exerted by the record industry has differed over time, as the technology of the recording industry has developed and changed.
3. This influence has been expressed in the following ways at different times:

finance: recording has provided capital in the form of advance payment contracts and retrospective royalties (Beecham and Rattle).

performance standards (i): the capital provided by recording has driven up standards of performance by stabilising orchestras and by attracting high calibre instrumentalists (Beecham and Rattle).

performance standards (ii): recording has provided an opportunity to drive a 'step-change' in orchestral capability (Rattle).

technique: recording has required technical skills in conducting appropriate to the relevant technology that has determined those who have been successful as recording conductors (Beecham, Solti).

repertoire: recording has provided the opportunity to extend the musical repertoire in line with the capability and preference of the conductors being studied (Beecham, Solti, Rattle).

education: recording has created an archive of performances from different times and in different styles which have an enduring educational value (Rattle).

interpretation: recording has extended the range of interpretative 'options' available to the public and to musicians (Beecham, Rattle, Solti).

technology: each technological innovation introduced by the recording industry has driven market growth that has in turn had financial and artistic consequences. The major innovations have been electrical recording for 78rpm records, the long playing record and tape recording, stereophonic sound and the compact disc. (Beecham, Solti, Rattle).

career: the opportunities provided by the record industry have enhanced the role and career of the conductor in general and of the conductors being studied (Beecham, Solti, Rattle).

The headings in italics constituted the subject headings from which interview questions were developed. These detailed questions are listed at Appendix A.

As a result of the experience of conducting the pilot interviews, certain adjustments of emphasis were then made. In particular the shift away from an emphasis upon financial issues started at this early point. This process is discussed in greater detail at section 3.10.2. However these eight basic subject headings remained constant throughout the interview process.

3.7.4.2. Identification of interview subjects

Five headings for the functions to be investigated through interview for each of the conductor case studies were created. These headings were: biographical, production, marketing, agent, and orchestral player. For the final case study, as originally planned but not executed because of space restraints, and concerned with the role of the record producer, a different set of categories of interview type was created. This set consisted of: production, overview, commentators and orchestral managers. These functions related most closely to the research subject in terms of every-day activity.

The intention was to interview for each case study individuals representing each of the different functional categories identified. This would provide a number of different perspectives, thus assisting a wider range of data collection and supporting the triangulation of evidence. At the same time by interviewing those occupying the same functions over time, a consequence of the sequential nature of the case studies, it would be possible to gain a sense of any changes occurring within these functions. This proved to be true for instance in the field of production. The overall objective was to achieve a rounded programme of interviews, which included a representative selection of different interview types.

Through this process a total of forty-three individuals was identified as being suitable for interview. Several of these individuals were targeted for more than one category of interview type. These individuals are listed at Appendix B. During the process of seeking access, practicality dictated that some of these individuals be dropped from this list, namely those based in the USA. In addition access was also denied in two cases, regrettably one of these being Sir Simon Rattle himself, the only one of the case study subjects actually alive. During the course of the interviews certain

interviewees suggested other, hitherto unidentified, subjects for interview. In certain circumstances, when this occurred, these later subjects were added in preference to those initially identified.

Thus to summarise, forty-three individuals were initially identified as interview targets. Four targets based in North America were eliminated, access was denied to a further two targets, and ten targets were dropped in favour of the additional targets selected. Nine further interview targets were identified during the course of the interview process. Thus thirty-six individuals were interviewed. Two of these chose not to be interviewed in person, but submitted written responses to the detailed interview schedule of questions prepared for the relevant case study. Of the final thirty-four interviewed in person, twelve were interviewed in relation to more than one case study subject. Insofar as was practically possible the initial balance sought between interview type and number of interviewees was maintained. Appendix B lists these changes.

3.7.4.3. Transcription

In the great majority of interviews, and where the interviewees were agreeable, the proceedings were tape-recorded. In the six instances where the interviewee did not wish to have the interview recorded, a detailed note of the responses was dictated immediately after the interview, using the interview guide as a prompt for the recollection of the responses of the interviewee to each interview subject area.

Mrs Hilda Betts of the University of Sheffield's Leisure Management Unit transcribed each interview and tape recall. With each interview lasting between approximately forty-five minutes to one and a half-hours, and generating an average interview time of approximately one hour, the transcriptions generated between twenty and thirty pages of text per interview.

3.7.5. May 1999 – July 1999 Archival analysis

While the process of interviewing was being undertaken, in parallel I made two visits to the EMI Archive at Hayes, Middlesex. Each visit lasted for two days. During the first visit I concentrated upon the correspondence relating to Sir Thomas Beecham's

career between 1931 and 1940. This period covers the formation of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, much recording activity by Beecham and the Orchestra, the outbreak of the Second World War, and Beecham's departure from the United Kingdom.

The second visit to the EMI Archive covered Beecham's return to the United Kingdom in 1944, his recordings for EMI with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the subsequent formation of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in 1946, and his recording activity for EMI up to 1950, when he chose not to renew his contract with EMI and turned to Columbia Records of the USA instead. I then studied the period of disengagement from Columbia Records, and his return to EMI. This covered the years 1954 to 1957.

The method adopted in tackling a resource as large as the Beecham file in the EMI Archive was to use the main headings of analysis derived from preliminary reading and the pilot and early interviews to guide me to those documents that I thought might be revealing and relevant to the study. At the same time I was alert to any other papers that struck me on immediate sight as being potentially pertinent.

The study of the archives threw a great deal of light upon the research subject in several ways. It showed at first hand the critical importance of capital, in the form of advance royalty payments, to the formation of both the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The archive also demonstrated that Beecham was less capricious than he has at times been portrayed in terms of decisions relating to repertoire, and of his awareness of commercial pressures. It was clear from the comments, especially those encountered in the archive of Mr. David Bicknell of the Artists Department of HMV, that Beecham had very high standards. He therefore produced less than the average music per session, and took great care in listening to test pressings before giving his approval for commercial release.

3.8. Data Collection: detail

3.8.1. Prior conceptual framework and detailed questions.

As will have been seen from what has already been written, a broad conceptual framework had been developed before the interview programme began. Eisenhardt (1989) makes the point that the specification of constructs may 'shape the initial design of theory-building research' (p.536), and this was certainly the case in this instance. Hartley (1994) strongly recommends the creation of a conceptual framework prior to interview, even if this may subsequently change as new information comes to light.

King (1994) recommends that an interview guide be prepared, which draws out the topics to be covered based on a study of the relevant literature, the interviewer's own personal knowledge, and informal preliminary work, for instance through unstructured discussions with those possessing experience of the subject area.

Yin (1994) has emphasised the importance of restricting the questioning for individual case studies to the case and the interviewee, and if appropriate to findings across multiple cases. Questions which either embrace the entire study and its possible outcomes, or which go beyond the scope of the study have no place within the interviews relating to individual case studies or cross-case interviews.

As Van Maanen (1979) has pointed out interviewees can only be 'as good as the questions put to them', (p.545). It became apparent during the pilot phase and during the preliminary phase of the interviewing that, firstly, the initial focus of the research at the start of the interview phase had been made too tight, and, secondly, that the questions asked under each of the interview headings should be adapted to allow fuller replies from the interviewees. This development of awareness will be described in the next section.

3.8.2. Pilot interviews

In preparing for the interviews I adopted the procedures recommended through the University of Sheffield's 'Research Training Programme'. While I was familiar from

past professional work with normal interviewing procedures, for instance for appointments or for appraisals, I had not previously undertaken this particular type of interviewing, and therefore carefully prepared for each stage of the process.

In the framing of the questions the steps recommended by Yin (1994) were followed. In addition to knowledge gained from the review of the relevant literature, two experts in the field were consulted on the proposed broad research subject. They were Mr. Timothy Day, the Curator of Western Art Music at the National Sound Archive at the British Library, and Dr. Jose Bowen, in 1998 a Lecturer at the University of Southampton, and now a Professor at the University of Georgetown, Washington DC, USA.

As a result of these conversations and other discussions, the pursuit of the effects of commodification upon the marketing of recordings and the careers of musicians was abandoned. Expert advice indicated that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to identify sufficient concrete evidence to pursue this theme. The focus of the study was therefore sharpened to consider the influence of recording and the record industry, particularly from a financial perspective, upon musical activity. (This was the first of the changes of focus to the research topic).

Thus the interview schedule prepared for the first four pilot interviews, all of which were concerned with Sir Thomas Beecham, concentrated heavily upon financial issues, such as royalty payments, the volume of sales, and the volume of orchestras' incomes which related to recording fees. The first interviews were conducted with four people who had been close to Sir Thomas. They were: Denis Vaughan, his musical assistant during the 1950s; Denham Ford, his secretary; Felix Aprahamian, a musical adviser during and after the Second World War; and Peter Andry, who had produced some of his later recordings for EMI.

The response of these interviewees to the initial schedule of questions was clear. When detailed financial questions were put to them, they did not possess the information sought nor did they expect to do so. There was a strong sense that in pursuing this subject at such a specific level I was 'barking up the wrong tree'.

However when the subject turned to slightly more general topics, such as the issues of recording and performance standards, decisions relating to repertoire, and the interaction between conductor and orchestra, and between conductor and record producer, the interviews yielded much valuable information.

As a result of this experience I found it more productive to adopt the semi-structured approach to those interviews that followed the pilot interviews. Thus for each topic area within the interview guide, I formulated in general two basic questions which sought the interviewee's opinion of the topic in broad relation to the case study subject. If, as a result of these questions, a considerable amount of further information was forthcoming, I would pursue this line of questioning in detail before reverting back to the interview guide and the remaining scheduled questions.

A further refinement that I introduced half-way through the interview process was to link specifically the interview topic questions to the case study, after having introduced the topic generally. This process sought to formalise the random experience of when detailed information had been forthcoming in relation to the interview topic, and as described in the previous paragraph. It had two consequences. Firstly, it introduced the interviewee both generally and gently to the topic in relation to the case study subject. Then it would focus down sharply onto the case study subject, seeking if possible concrete examples. While this had the disadvantage of lengthening the interviews, it did have the benefit of pulling out of the interviewees as much detailed information as possible, as well as precise examples.

3.8.3. General interview programme

Having learned from the pilot interview process that the research question had been drawn too tightly, a slightly more general approach to the subject was pursued during the remaining interviews. Thus the final formulation of the research question, namely 'what is the influence of recording and the recording industry upon musical activity?', was reached. The general reaction of most interviewees was that this was a central question to ask, and one that either had not been considered at all in the past, or if it had been considered, had proved difficult in the extreme to answer, because of

the pervasiveness and ubiquity of recording, and therefore the difficulty of isolating specific consequences. This problem was to reappear in the stage of data analysis.

In general those whom I approached for an interview gave access freely. The only two persons who denied personal access were Gwydion Brooke, who played the bassoon in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for Sir Thomas Beecham, and who has withdrawn from professional music, and Sir Simon Rattle. Mr. Brooke did however provide valuable information in two telephone conversations. It was perhaps unfortunate that the request to interview Sir Simon Rattle antedated his appointment to the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra by only four weeks, and therefore became entangled with the extensive publicity that flowed from this. A second attempt to achieve access during the autumn of 1999 was similarly unsuccessful, again the reason given being that the pressure of prior engagements made a meeting impossible. As has been stated earlier, in the face of this considerable 'gap' in the research data, extensive use was made of the media interviews given by Sir Simon to newspapers and magazines, copies of which are held at his agent's office.

By the end of the data collection period I had amassed two thick lever arch files of interview transcripts, and further files of notes taken from archival, document and literature analysis.

The next section of this chapter will therefore be concerned with the steps taken to analyse all this data.

3.9. Data Analysis

3.9.1. Introduction

'Classification is Ariadne's clues through the labyrinth of nature' (Georges Sand: 'Nouvelles Lettres d'un Voyageur' (1869), quoted in Paton (1980) p.300). Paton (1980) himself provides a most succinct and pithy portrayal of good analysis: 'An interesting and readable report provides sufficient description to allow the reader to understand the analysis, and sufficient analysis to allow the reader to understand the

description.’ (p.343). Yin (1984) also stresses the value of description, suggesting that it is a step towards identifying the causal links to be analysed, and beyond this, towards a pattern of complexity that may justify explanation.

3.9.2. Structure of analysis

In this research project the structure chosen for analysis has been a variant of the multiple case version of the single case (Yin 1994). This format allows for separate narratives for each of the cases, and a section for cross-case analysis and results. The variation, in this instance, consists of the attempt to combine description and analysis within each case, rather than description alone, before proceeding to analysis. In principle this approach seeks to achieve the appropriateness described by Paton (1980) earlier: not to overwhelm the reader with description, but at the same time to provide sufficient background information to make the analysis intelligible.

This method combines two structural models described by Yin (1994) as linear-analytic and theory-building structures. The linear-analytic structure follows the traditional form for a thesis, with findings from the data that has been collected and then analysed following the sections concerned with the literature review and methodology and preceding conclusions and implications. With theory-building structures, the sequence of chapters, or in this case the sections devoted to the individual cases studied, follows a theory-building logic, with the cases seeking to provide a sequential explanation of the basic phenomenon being investigated. The threads of theory-building identified in each case study chapter are then drawn together in the sections devoted to the cross-case analysis and the conclusions of the study. The latter presents the theory constructed through the research in its purest form.

3.9.3. Analytic strategy

The purpose of an analytic strategy is to achieve a satisfying analysis by treating the evidence fairly, to produce compelling analytic conclusions, and to rule out alternative interpretations (Yin 1994).

The strategy selected for this research is that of the program-logic model developed by Joseph Wholey (1979). Wholey applied this concept to tracing events when a public policy intervention was intended to produce certain outcomes. To quote Yin 'The intervention could initially produce activities with their own immediate outcomes; these immediate outcomes could in turn produce some intermediate outcome and in turn produce final or ultimate outcomes.' (p.118).

The program-logic model stipulates a chain of events over time, thus allowing for pattern-matching and time-series analysis. It is a useful analytic technique for explanatory case studies.

The case study description and analysis provide the empirical data which supports the logic model developed. The analysis has to consider rival chains of events, as well as the potential significance of 'spurious external events' (Yin, 1994, p.119). If the data supports the initial proposals and no rivals can be sustained, the analysis may claim to have identified a causal effect.

In this instance the model was appropriate, in that different recording technologies were seen to have caused immediate and identifiable consequences over time. These in turn had driven more general and far-reaching consequences, which were termed 'meta-consequences'.

With a strategy based on the program-logic model, and a structure which seeks to combine description and analysis (or linear-analytic and theory-building characteristics) leading to the overall building of theory, a clear theoretical model for the classification of evidence is required, to follow Ariadne's journey effectively. In this case template analysis was selected as an appropriate system to follow.

3.9.4. Template analysis

The methodology of template analysis has been very clearly described by King (1998). Put simply the researcher produces a list of codes, or a 'template', representing themes identified through the analysis of textual data. Some of these will have been selected prior to the analysis, others following the preliminary

research actions. As the analysis of the data progresses, further codes will be added, as well as some of the initial codes being modified. In this instance the initial set of codes was derived from the interview guide, with the template then being used to develop an interpretation of the interview data. In this sense the philosophical orientation of the process was phenomenological, and consistent with the overall philosophy of the project.

The benefit of template analysis is that it is a flexible procedure, which allows the researcher to adapt it simply to his or her requirements. The codes may be straightforward, for instance concerned with description, or they may relate to more ephemeral phenomena such as perceptions.

Codes may be organised hierarchically. Texts may therefore be analysed at different levels of specificity, with higher order codes producing an outline of the direction of the interview, and lower-order codes permitting more fine-grained or detailed analysis. In addition the process allows for parallel coding of pieces of text, with the same excerpt classified to two or more different codes.

The dis-benefits of template analysis include excessive complexity, following from over-enthusiastic coding of data. The only boundary known by the technique in these circumstances is the limits of the researcher's endurance. Over-complexity resulting from excess coding can achieve the opposite of the aim of template analysis: inappropriate organisation of data leading to opaque analysis. This trap, known as 'the coding trap', is considered in more detail below.

Appendix C lists the template and codes as they stood at the commencement of analysis, that is the beginning of October 1999. Appendix D lists the template and codes as they stood, together with the sub-headings developed for each code set, at the end of the initial period of data analysis, that is the end of December 1999.

In the next section I describe the technique used to execute the template analysis, and the experience which ensued.

3.9.5. Data analysis

To undertake the first stage of data analysis, that is the interrogation of the interview data and the coding of the various elements into both pre-existing and new codes, the computer package 'N-Vivo' was used.

'N-Vivo' is a development of the various 'NUDIST' data analysis computer packages. The principal difference between it and its predecessors is that it allows for the creation of 'free' nodes, or containers of specific types of data, rather than requiring data to be coded to nodes that have been arranged in pre-existing hierarchies. This allows for a more subtle and sensitive analysis to be formed. The package also allows for the construction of different hierarchies and of non-hierarchical sets, as well as for the graphic modelling of ideas.

Using a list of categories created from the interview guide to generate an initial set of nodes, all the interview data was coded between the beginning of October and the end of December 1999. In effect the template or codings adopted were the same initially as those headings used for the construction of the interview questions. As the coding progressed a considerable number of additional nodes was created, and several, ever increasingly complex, models were built. This process has been described by one of the designers of 'N-Vivo', Professor Lyn Richards, as one of 'atomism', in that it encourages the maximisation of categories, rather than synthesis (Richards 2000). The result is that 'the researcher has to strain to draw in those disparate threads again and again (like macrame).' (p.1).

Professor Richards quotes Barry Turner in drawing the distinction at this point of the research process between theory emergence and theory construction. 'Coding is great for category emergence, but if it becomes mere data disposal (this goes there) it won't ever support theory construction'. (p.1). The recommended tactic to cope with this situation is to cease to code, to view the data and to think about it.

Both Professor Richards and another researcher in this field of qualitative research systems, Dr. Silvano di Gregorio, recommend that at this point the researcher moves from coding to the exploration of and reflection on categories. In other words to stop

coding and to read and review the data, giving time to one's self to think about it. The aim is to keep thinking about and exploring the categories, and to rework them, with the intention of achieving a change of focus to one that is sharper (and more lifelike).

Dr. di Grigorio (2000) points out that the software packages have put the prime emphasis upon coding, hence creating 'the coding trap' 'You don't have to get caught up in it but the structure of the software leads you to.' (p.2). This was the position that I had reached at the end of December 1999. I had fallen fully into 'the coding trap', and was more preoccupied with locating information within codes than with perceiving theory emerging from the coding of this information.

3.9.6. Strategies to deal with 'the coding trap'

Dr. Linda Gilbert of the University of Georgia, who has undertaken research into the effects of using qualitative research computer packages on researchers, suggests several tactics for coping with 'the coding trap' (Gilbert 2000). These include:

- Reflecting on the categories and any hierarchical organisation of them
- Maintaining strong focus on the research questions
- Coding by themes across multiple documents, as opposed to coding multiple themes in multiple documents
- Creating internal memos extensively within the documents
- Doing unrelated activities, especially those that stimulate creativity
- Working 'in' and 'out' of the software, balancing computer coding with complementary manual analytic methods.

Dr. Gilbert suggests that an altogether simpler tactic is consciously to avoid the expectation created by the software of coding thoroughly. By not coding at a micro-level one avoids getting drawn in to 'the coding trap'. She draws a parallel between effective qualitative analysis and painting: 'If you watch painters, they constantly change their viewing distance as they work – they move close to examine detail and do work, and they move back to see patterns and make decisions.' (p.2). Marshall

(2001) who analyses 'the coding trap' in detail, also recommends temporary withdrawal, which she terms 'the scholarly walk', as an effective tactic in dealing with this problem (p.7).

King (1998) suggests several simple tactics for moving from theory emergence to theory construction. Three of these tactics are: listing codes, selectivity, and openness. King suggests that a comparison of frequencies between codes can suggest areas which the researcher may examine more closely, while recognising that qualitative patterns of themselves cannot directly say anything meaningful. Conversely the absence of one code or set of codes in the analysis of a transcription may suggest that explanations might be sought for this exception.

Selectivity, or more precisely unselectivity, is very similar to 'the coding trap'. In essence the researcher may become completely unselective, particularly if seeking to maintain an open mind and not to bend the analysis to prior assumptions. King is very clear here, urging the researcher to identify those themes of direct relevance to the fulfilment of the objective of 'building an understanding of the phenomena under investigation.' (p.131). The converse of selectivity – that is disregarding all themes which are not of direct relevance to the research question – is openness. King emphasises that excluded or marginal themes may cast significant light upon the interpretation of the research's central themes.

3.9.7. Coping with the 'coding trap'

The procedure adopted to cope with the 'coding trap' reflected some of the strategies outlined in the previous paragraphs. Having completed the process of coding of interview texts, during which the template, codes and emergent sub-headings were developed (as listed in Appendix D), I then ceased the process of data analysis and drafted the two chapters concerned with the literature review and methodology.

This constituted a break of three months, so that when I returned to data analysis I was mentally refreshed and had considered how I was going to continue this process. Using King's suggested tactic of listing codes, each set of data relevant to a particular case was interrogated in full, with what was believed to be the most

relevant information isolated. From this information a similar format was constructed for each of the three conductor case studies, using a template with a reduced set of over-arching codes, relevant to all the three case studies, and following in sequential terms the process of recording. This final set of headings is listed at Appendix E.

Each of the three case studies was constructed in this manner. The cross-case analysis was formed using similar headings that analysed the ways in which each case was either similar or divergent and sought to explain these phenomena. From this analysis the conclusions of the study were drawn, in terms of identifying both the consequences and meta-consequences driven over time by specific recording technologies, and as illustrated by the careers of the three case study subjects.

3.10. Conclusion

The chapter has described in detail the methodological systems adopted for this thesis, and the actual processes of data collection and data analysis. The next chapter is concerned directly with specific research, namely the recording career of the conductor Sir Thomas Beecham.

Chapter 4

Beecham and the recording process

4.1. General Introduction and Sources

‘That Thomas Beecham has joined the directorate of the National Gramophone Co., is significant [in] that the Marathon record is going to make a bold bid to educate the public to a very high standard of music; other than Landon Ronald whose fame rests partly on The Gramophone [Company] – HMV of course – no name carries more weight in English musical circles.’

This extract from an industry news column ‘Notes and News’ in an unidentified trade magazine, dated February 1913, is the first document to greet the enquirer into the Beecham files held at the EMI Archive. It indicates succinctly that Sir Thomas Beecham became involved in the recording industry in a business as well as an artistic capacity very early in his career. Another source indicates that Beecham was in fact an active investor in this company, and hence his directorship (Denson, 1979, p.5).

The extract also highlights the potential educational role of recording, and mentions the record label with which Beecham was to be associated for much of his recording career: ‘His Master’s Voice’. This label formed part of EMI, the company created out of the merger of The Gramophone Company and the Columbia Graphophone Company in 1931.

The analysis which follows seeks to identify the ways in which Beecham interacted with the process of recording, especially from the perspective of the influence, if any, of recording and the recording industry upon musical activity as undertaken by him. The material upon which the analysis is based has been taken largely from interviews with those who worked with Sir Thomas, either wholly in the context of recording, such as producers and engineers, or partly so, as in the case with musicians who

played with him. Where material from an interview is used an asterisk follows the name of the interviewee. In addition material from the archives of EMI and the University of Sheffield is considered. In order to provide a context for the analysis, an outline of Beecham's recording career is provided at Appendix F.

Those who kindly agreed to be interviewed in relation to Sir Thomas Beecham and his involvement with recording were:

- Peter Andry, who assisted Victor Olof at EMI from 1956, and who produced several of Sir Thomas's later recordings;
- Felix Aprahamian, who as an employee of the London Philharmonic Orchestra worked with Sir Thomas on his return to England at the end of the Second World War, and later assisted in the preparation of several of Sir Thomas's recordings at different stages of Sir Thomas's career;
- Alan Blackwood, Beecham's third biographer;
- Jack Brymer, the first clarinet in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra from its formation in 1946 to Sir Thomas's death in 1961;
- Denham Ford, Sir Thomas's secretary between 1949 and 1952;
- Anthony Griffith, the recording engineer, who worked on several of Sir Thomas's recordings and thus had a close familiarity with both his recordings and recording methods (Mr. Griffith is also reputedly the last engineer alive to have recorded using the wax-based method);
- Alan Jefferson, Beecham's second biographer;
- Lyndon Jenkins, the music critic, who has made a special study of Beecham's recordings, and has written extensively on them;
- Harry Legge, a viola player in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra during Sir Thomas's period of control, and later the Orchestra's Chairman following his death;
- John Lucas, who is currently preparing the fourth biography of Beecham;
- Alan Sanders, an authority on the 78rpm record catalogue, the recording industry, and the producer Walter Legge;

- Denis Vaughan, a double-bass player with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and later Sir Thomas's musical assistant, and chorus master for several of his recordings, and who has pursued an active career as a conductor;
- Malcolm Walker, an employee of EMI in several different capacities and a former editor of 'Gramophone' magazine, the son of the bass Norman Walker who performed with Beecham, and a source of extensive knowledge about the recording industry.

Shirley, Lady Beecham, kindly contributed information through answering a questionnaire that drew upon the schedule of interview questions contained in Appendix A, pp. i-iv. The bassoonist Gwydion Brooke, who performed extensively with Sir Thomas for many years, declined to be interviewed in person, but did assist with two short telephone conversations.

4.2. Introduction to Analytical Perspectives

The perspectives on Beecham and the processes of recording which follow start with opinions as to Beecham the man. After consideration of his relationship with musicians, the issue of repertoire selection is discussed. This is followed by sections devoted to the act of recording, Beecham's relationship with the producer, his use of records, and performance and interpretation. Finally the question of the influence of recording upon performance standards is considered.

The purpose of this kaleidoscopic approach is to examine those aspects of recording activity through which some level of influence upon musical activity may be discerned. In addition a logical continuum of ideas has been sought, parallel to the act of recording itself, in an attempt to give the analysis some coherence.

4.3. Beecham the Man

In an interview given in 1945 Beecham states his credo: 'As a musician I shall be guided by my artistic conscience, and I shall work to my own standards.' (Baxter, 1945, p.11).

Throughout his life and career Beecham was an individualist: he held allegiance to no one, and was very clear about what he wanted and in general about how he was to get it. To quote the bassoonist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Gwydion Brooke*, 'Tommy gave the orders' (Telephone conversation with Gwydion Brooke, 26.2.99) and 'he loved music' (Telephone conversation with Gwydion Brooke, 3.3.99) – these were his two guiding principles throughout his life.

Beecham's background as a member of the industrial aristocracy of the North of England created the preconditions which in many ways determined his career. In terms of character it gave him the psychological independence and confidence to focus upon doing those things which were of importance to him personally. His strong interest in music and ability were evident from his time at the public school Rossal, where he was the only boy ever to have been permitted a piano in his study (Jefferson, 1979, p.21), and in music lessons could read any Beethoven Sonata at sight (Jefferson, 1979, p.20).

His conducting debut with the Halle Orchestra and without prior experience in 1899, aged just twenty years old, clearly gave him a taste for the podium. In the immediate years that followed he favoured composing as a possible career. Composition has often been a point of entry into conducting: Furtwangler, one of the few conductors whom Beecham openly admired, was also active as a composer throughout his life. However, experience conducting the Denhof Opera Company, and a realisation that his talents as an executant musician might be greater than his creative ability, focused Beecham's sights upon conducting as the path that he wished to follow.

The second key precondition that his background gave to him was personal wealth. The volume of money that he spent on his musical activities was prodigious. His

father's investment in the seasons of opera at Covent Garden and at His Majesty's Theatre in 1910 was sufficient to earn him a knighthood the following year (Jefferson, 1979, p.121). Further seasons, including the British debut of Diaghilev's Ballets Russe were to follow shortly, all funded from the family fortune. Throughout his life Beecham stoutly maintained his independence in the financing of his activities.

Right from the early days of working with the New Symphony Orchestra Beecham had the money to pay what was necessary in order to enable him to conduct. He not only created the financial 'packages' necessary to form the Beecham Symphony, London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras, he would also invest substantial sums in the running costs of these Orchestras himself. To quote the composer Eric Coates, who played the viola in the Beecham Symphony Orchestra: 'Beecham had acquired practically every well-known principal string, wood-wind and brass instrumentalist he could lay his hands on.' (Coates, 1953, quoted in Denson, 1979, p.11). Beecham recognised that ultimately he had to pay for his pleasure.

The industrial and commercial background of Beecham's family supported this understanding, and gave him the ability to see what he was doing through the eyes of a businessman as well as those of a musician. This is a rare convergence of skills. The period between 1920 and 1923 when he had to withdraw from the world of musical performance in order to stabilise the family estate after the unexpected death of his father in 1916 was a formative influence in this respect.

Beecham recognised value in relation both to himself and to those with whom he chose to work. Prior to re-negotiating his contract with EMI in 1937 his sessional fee for conducting recordings was £60, which was increased to £100 each session in 1937 upon renewal of his contract (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 9.4.37 written by David Bicknell to Sir Thomas Beecham, and Letter of 12.6.37 written by David Bicknell to Sir Thomas Beecham). Many years later, for the recording of another opera, Puccini's 'La Boheme', recorded in New York in 1956, he was paid a fee of \$5,000, together with an ascending royalty on future sales of the recording

(EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 15.2.56, RCA). Beecham's record companies for their part recognised his value to them. As the record historian Alan Sanders* pointed out in interview, EMI, who held the rights to advertising on the front page of the specialist magazine 'The Gramophone' for many years after the Second World War, frequently placed Beecham on the cover to promote the sales of new releases.

When it came to engaging musicians, Beecham 'employed the best available instrumental talent, and trusted it' (Felix Aprahamian quoted in Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.33), 'with complete disregard for expense' (Ben Horsfall quoted in Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.70). He was renowned for paying the best fees to orchestral musicians in London. In August 1946 Walter Legge, in an internal memo to Mr. Brenchley Mittell (the head of recording operations at EMI) wrote: '...the terms he is offering to star players are such that he is bound to get a strong team.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 21.8.46, written by Walter Legge). Beecham was offering in this instance a fee of six pounds for one concert and a rehearsal, for playing with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, against Legge's five guineas with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

It was the patrician and paternal aspect of Beecham's character, drawn from the unique circumstances of his birth and the era during which he grew up, which placed him at odds with the culture that prevailed after the Second World War in England. The rise of the committee-driven style of organisation, best exemplified by the Arts Council and its wholesale espousal of the 'not for profit' company as the preferred structure for arts organisations, was anathema to Beecham. He had already expressed his horror at this in his dealings with the BBC before the Second World War. It explains his inability to sustain any relationship with either self-governing bodies, such as the London Symphony Orchestra before the Second World War, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra after it, or with independent musical organisations such as the Royal Opera House, as constituted from 1946 onwards. Beecham did not share the responsibility of leadership easily, nor did he want to.

The factors which kept Beecham active during these changing times were his business acumen and his entrepreneurial sense of where resources could be found in

addition to his own. Both in 1931 and in 1946, these were to be located partly in the record industry, and partly in other institutions which reflected his own style of management, such as the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, founded and initially run by another eccentric autocrat, John Christie.

Alongside Beecham's extremely clear-headed and practical grasp of the realities of the financial and business mechanics of music, as organised during his lifetime, he himself displayed unusual artistic characteristics. His assistant Denis Vaughan* has categorised Beecham as a high romantic in terms of musical preferences and style. His adoration of the music of Frederick Delius is testimony to this. The EMI files contain many references to the great personal interest that he took in all the recordings of music by Delius that he conducted. His simultaneous participation in the Delius Trust enabled him to use the Trust's funds to finance recordings of music by Delius precisely at the time when these funds were most needed, for instances during the early, often difficult, days of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The triple benefits to Delius, the Trust, and the Orchestra well illustrate the type of arrangement which attracted Beecham.

The musicians with whom Beecham worked commented frequently in interview upon two personal characteristics. Firstly, he was 'very fussy, very particular' (Harry Legge*). At any particular moment he was very precise and clear about what he wanted, and certainly knew what he did not want. The second characteristic was that he was always altering his interpretations. He held no rigid preconceptions, but would always be adjusting performances to suit local and specific circumstances. New players or a different hall acoustic might cause him to change markings in the orchestral parts between rehearsal and performance, or between different takes (or sessions) of a recording.

These two characteristics also indicate a certain impulsiveness, another trait noted by his secretary Denham Ford*. Beecham often left things to the last moment, and could appear to be capricious in the way that carefully laid plans would be swept aside. Those who worked closely with Beecham, such as Norman Millar, the Manager of the RPO during the 1950s, were adept at coping successfully with these mercurial

changes of decision (Vaughan, 1979, p.1681, and Stevens, 1979, give good accounts of Beecham's behaviour in this respect).

By character and disposition Beecham was a big figure in music during the twentieth century, but also an isolated one, as one of his biographers Alan Blackwood* pointed out in interview. He knew about other musicians, and was aware of what was going on around him, as indicated for instance through his at times rather harsh wit. When asked his opinion of the conductor Herbert von Karajan he is reputed to have replied that he thought he was 'a musical Malcolm Sargent', thus 'knocking for six' two significant contemporaries (Brymer*).

Beecham's colleagues, such as Felix Aprahamian*, were clear that, while aware of his contemporaries, he was not influenced by them. Denham Ford* went so far as to suggest that he feared other conductors. This attribute may explain the employment of second level, if effective, musicians in his opera companies, such as Percy Pitt and Clarence Raebould, as well as the level of many of the guest conductors employed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra when Beecham was himself absent. This had the coincidental effect of binding his players ever closer to him when he returned to conduct them 'after months of musical famine' (Brymer*). Yet, when it mattered, for instance in the selection of his successor at the RPO, Beecham's decision (to appoint Rudolf Kempe) could not have been bettered.

All these factors help to explain the uniqueness of Beecham. His life and career followed no previously determined path: he really did create his own destiny, and that of those around him. It is this unusual combination of circumstances and the consequent uniqueness of his career that gives it such interest. As another expert on Beecham, Lyndon Jenkins*, noted, he was much more than just a conductor, as this role is perceived today. He was a good leader, an excellent speaker, a practical and effective businessman, and in eighteenth-century terms an aesthetic connoisseur. Music he enjoyed greatly, and it was here that he focused his disparate but powerful energies.

4.4. Beecham and Musicians

‘They all loved Tommy’ (Alan Blackwood*). This comment sums up Beecham’s relationship with his musicians. Not surprisingly, given his long association with orchestral musicians, he had a good grasp of their particular psychology. This is confirmed not only by those who played with him, but also those who observed him in rehearsal and performance in the recording studio, such as the engineer Anthony Griffith*.

For his part Beecham adored his musicians and was very loyal to them. To quote two distinguished players who knew him well: ‘In addition to his complete love of music, Tommy undoubtedly had quite an affection for the men who were able to produce these noises.’ (Gwydion Brooke, quoted in Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.42) and: ‘...he generally knew everything about everybody who played for him. He loved characters, and I knew several who were employed not for their playing abilities but because he liked them, and they once had been good.’ (Frederick Riddle, quoted in Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p. 104).

Although at times his efforts to maintain employment were foiled by external circumstances, such as the deteriorating political circumstances in 1938 and 1939 which resulted in unpaid fees, the affected musicians still came back to play with him after the Second World War (Harry Legge*). Beecham’s own interviews give evidence time and again of his pride in those who played for him. At its peak this is exemplified by his praise for the violinist Albert Sammons: ‘Albert Sammons is the best leader I ever had in any country in the world’ (Dougherty, 1979, p.46).

The key to Beecham’s relationship with his musicians lies in the fact that, like Furtwangler, he treated the members of his orchestras as colleagues. Neither conductor sought to dominate. In this respect he followed the lead of the great exemplar for early twentieth-century conductors, Artur Nikisch. Beecham would converse with his players and would take suggestions from them (Griffith*). As the clarinettist Jack Brymer* mentioned, he encouraged his section leaders to play as individuals, notably in solo passages, and he – the conductor - would follow.

Beecham was disarmingly simple about this, saying simply 'I let them play' (Sanders*). On a more practical level, Beecham would often show consideration, for instance asking the leader if he was comfortable before starting (Jefferson*).

Beecham's sensitivity to atmosphere was acute. Many contemporaries have observed how he would 'chop and change' repertoire in the middle of recording sessions (for examples see Vaughan 1979, p. 1681, and Bicknell, 1961, p.38), and mention has already been made of his unpredictability. If a recording was not going well, or the instrumentalists were not providing what he wanted, he might return to a piece of music still incompletely recorded, or he might pepper the dialogue with jokes to lighten the atmosphere. His understanding of the psychology of orchestral musicians enabled him to keep orchestras fresh and on their toes, when with many other conductors they would have wilted.

One of the key attributes used to achieve this was his unpredictability. Beecham exploited his impulsiveness, and this trait caused him to be unpredictable. Both qualities kept the musicians alert. They never knew what was going to happen next. Unpredictability, the variety of experience that ensued, and respect were the key attributes in drawing the best from his players. Sanders well summed up the key difference between Beecham and other conductors: 'I think the players knew that he respected them. I think that was the big difference.' (Sanders*).

Beecham reinforced this mutually satisfactory relationship between himself and his musicians by paying extremely well, as has already been noted. Many of the orchestral players, and others in a position to comment, affirmed that musicians did not play for Beecham in his orchestras solely because he paid well. Harry Legge* and Jack Brymer* as musicians, and Denis Vaughan* and Lyndon Jenkins*, all confirmed that it was the joy of playing with him that was the primary attraction, not the money which he paid to them. Yet, at the same time, both Brymer* and Denham Ford* have suggested that the additional income which came from recordings was a factor in attracting the best musicians. Recording of itself paid better than normal concert work (Ford*), and musicians relied on this extra income 'to earn a decent salary' (Brymer*).

Thus while Beecham was undoubtedly the primary factor in attracting the best musicians, he made himself and his orchestras doubly irresistible by offering the players whom he respected good terms of employment. As their respective recording schedules show, both the LPO and the RPO were extremely active in the recording studio. This was and still is one of the best sources of 'session' income for orchestral musicians. Recordings were an important element in the rota of work that Beecham created for his orchestras. It paid his musicians well, and bound them even more closely to him, in both practical as well as personal terms. Together with his unique personality and individual way of working with musicians, it became a key part of a totality of opportunity that was attractive to orchestral musicians.

4.5. Repertoire Decisions

4.5.1. Introduction

The issue of how repertoire was selected for recordings by Beecham changed during his lifetime. As he became more eminent during the last decades of his life, and as the demand for recordings grew, especially after the Second World War, so he became the dominant force in the selection of repertoire. The critical technological innovations that stimulated demand for records were firstly the introduction of the long playing record (1948 in the USA and 1950 in the United Kingdom) and secondly of stereophonic sound (1958). At the outset of Beecham's career the situation was less clear-cut.

4.5.2. Influences upon Beecham relating to repertoire decisions

In the EMI Archive there is a note from the minutes of the Repertoire Conference dated March 7th 1935 relating to a shortfall in the provision of recordings by Beecham, due by July 1st 1935. This reads: 'It had been arranged that the repertoire for two of these sessions would be chosen by ourselves and for the third session by Sir Thomas.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Minute of Repertoire Conference, 7.3.35). The existence both of the minute and of the Conference itself indicates that the recording company, in this case the HMV label of EMI, kept a firm hand on the issue of repertoire. At the same time the minute also illustrates that repertoire

selection with a musician of Beecham's eminence was certain to be a matter of 'quid pro quo', or give and take.

This is also the view of Felix Aprahamian* who worked closely with Beecham on recordings both after the war and at the end of his life. He strongly believed that Beecham was aware of the market, and, more particularly, took advice from Walter Legge. Both Peter Andry*, who produced recordings by Beecham at the end of the latter's life, and Lyndon Jenkins*, who has studied his recording career extensively, concurred with the idea that Beecham was conscious of current conditions.

Another example of the recording company seeking to determine repertoire in the years before the Second World War is given in a memo of 1937 from Walter Legge (then assisting with artists' management for the Columbia label) to a Mr. Francis, who had prepared the previously quoted minute of the Repertoire Conference. Legge wrote: '...I had to 'phone Sir Thomas to tell him that it was not wished that he should record the 'Paris' Symphony and to ask him to make another choice. His reply was to the effect that he was delighted his contract was nearly up as he had had enough of our Damned Company and some of the people in it. He agreed, however, to record the "Tragic" Overture (Brahms).' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 23.3.37, written by Walter Legge).

Beecham's dislike of 'bending the knee' to his record company may also be seen in the fact that he rarely undertook to conduct the accompaniment for concerto performances and for singers. Among the few artists whom he did accompany before the war were the soprano Dame Eva Turner and the violinists Jascha Heifetz and Josef Szigeti. In fact Szigeti specifically asked for Beecham to accompany him in the premiere recording of Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto. Writing to Joe Batten in a letter dated April 16th 1935 he commented: 'I am now writing to ask you to talk this over with Sir Thomas whose style and rehearsal method (an economy) would suit this score admirably.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Letter of 16.4.35, written by Joseph Szigeti to Joe Batten).

Throughout all these negotiations, a factor to be taken into account was Beecham's already noted ability to change his mind quickly. A year after being asked to conduct Brahms instead of Mozart, David Bicknell wrote in a letter of January 12th 1938 to a colleague at RCA in America about Beecham recording the 'Paris' Symphony: 'This work has been for a long time on Beecham's proposed repertoire and he still seems anxious to do it, but as he is somewhat capricious in these matters, we cannot say definitely when the recording will be available.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Letter of 12.1.38, written by David Bicknell to RCA). It was in fact made during 1938 and released in December of that year. Beecham had a clear idea of what he would like to record (Sanders*), but did not ignore the suggestions put forward by his record company, even if at times he might have preferred to do so.

4.5.3. The 'Society' model of marketing and its influence upon repertoire

An ingenious means of extending the recorded repertoire during the post-depression phase of the 1930s was provided by one of the great marketing strategies of the classical music record industry: the 'Society' concept of Walter Legge. At its simplest Legge's idea was to pre-sell recordings of defined repertoire to subscribers. This model, coming after the collapse of the record industry during the Great Depression, helped to strengthen the recorded classical music catalogue with sets devoted to the lieder of Hugo Wolf, the operas of Mozart, and the piano sonatas of Beethoven. The volume of sales sought by Legge and his colleagues was, to contemporary eyes, small. Generally a pre-order of 500 sets was sufficient to justify the commercial investment required.

Legge involved Beecham in 1937 in his plan to record Sibelius's Fourth Symphony as part of the Sibelius Society issues. Previously Beecham had only recorded Sibelius's Violin Concerto with Heifetz and the Incidental Music to 'The Tempest'. Despite a chequered history in its creation, the final recording proved to be most successful (For further discussion of the genesis of this recording, see Legge, 1982, pp.54-55, 164-165; Amis, 1989; Sanders, 1998a, pp.82-3). It certainly helped to establish Sibelius firmly within Beecham's symphonic repertoire, and remains one of his outstanding recordings of the era prior to the Second World War.

The Society model enabled Beecham to record repertoire of which he was especially fond, notably that of Delius and later Mozart. The multiple 78 rpm sets of music by these composers recorded by Beecham have stood the test of time and continue to be commercially re-released to the present day. However the sales were initially low. A note dated March 4th 1941 in the EMI Archive shows the following cumulative sales figures for the first three volumes of the Delius Society sets:

Table 4.1. Delius Society Sales 1934 –1940 (in the United Kingdom).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Vol. 1</u> (Dec 1934)	<u>Vol. 2</u> (Dec 1936)	<u>Vol. 3</u> (Dec 1938)
1934/5	600(?)*	-	-
1936	100	380	-
1937	94	227	-
1938	62	66	270
1939	49	47	219
1940	<u>41</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>51</u>
Total	<u>c. 946</u>	<u>772</u>	<u>540</u>

**Sales figures for the first volume prior to 1936 are not available. This figure is derived from the number of orders received for the second volume after volume one had been issued, indicating the initial take-up of the first volume.*

(EMI Archive: Beecham file: Note of 4.3.41, ‘Delius Society, Sales of Complete Sets’.)

These figures indicate why repertoire was a subject over which EMI took great care – classical music did not sell in large numbers, whereas popular music did.

Vaughan* suggested that Walter Legge saw recordings as standing as ‘a testament’, commenting that ‘He [Legge] always wanted to convince the performer that they were giving their testament’ (a point reiterated in Sanders, 1998a, p.277) and encouraged his artists to do likewise. This view concurred well with the Society idea, and may have encouraged Beecham to take this view occasionally as well, or there may simply have been a coincidence of view in specific instances. Certainly the care which he took over his Delius recordings indicates that he saw these as a personal testament. To quote Legge: ‘He must have known subconsciously that his own death

would be the death blow to the proper performance of Delius's music.' (Legge, 1982, p.168).

4.5.4. The influence of Beecham upon repertoire decisions

While it may be reasonable to suggest that prior to the Second World War, with the exception of the Society issues, repertoire was more often than not decided by the record company in close consultation with the artist, after the Second World War circumstances changed. Beecham embarked on an extensive recording programme for RCA Victor and EMI, initially with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and subsequently with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Although EMI was consulted, effectively RCA gave Beecham *carte blanche* as to repertoire, so anxious was the company to have some recordings conducted by Beecham. RCA's initial contract with Beecham had been signed in 1941, with effect from 1942, but the first recordings were not made until 1944. Because of the reciprocal relationship between the two companies, whereby they shared release rights of recordings made by each company in their own respective territories, Beecham was in effect recording for two companies, as well as making recordings financed by the Delius Trust. The results were marketed and distributed by both companies.

An indication of the type of problem that could arise in these circumstances in relation to repertoire decisions is given in a letter from David Bicknell to Mr. Gilbert of RCA, dated September 18th 1947, concerning the claim by Beecham that RCA had approved repertoire about which EMI knew nothing. 'He is providing magnificent performances of these works and I do not wish in any way to discourage him, but I shall be obliged if you will tell me as soon as possible whether you have agreed to my additions or amendments to the list referred to above. We are in a tricky position as he usually springs these suggestions on us at short notice.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Letter of 18.9.47 written by David Bicknell to Mr. Gilbert of RCA). A week later, on September 25th Gilbert cabled Bicknell as follows: 'Additional recording Strauss and Liszt works positively not promised Beecham.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Cable of 25.9.47 from Gilbert of RCA to David Bicknell).

Beecham was using the ambiguities created by recording in England for an American company to play both companies off against each other. Thus at this point Beecham felt himself to be in a sufficiently strong position to determine elements of the repertoire which he would record with his orchestra. The high level of activity was providing much-needed income for the RPO, keeping it busy, and was providing promotional and commercial exposure on both sides of the Atlantic.

It would be wrong even here however to give the impression that Beecham exclusively recorded what he wanted. Jack Brymer has graphically described Beecham's internal struggles conducting recordings of the music of Elgar, which he did not like and which almost made him physically sick (Brymer*). Beecham was above all extremely professional.

Beecham did not renew his contract with RCA in December 1949, and signed instead a three-year contract with its rival company, the American Columbia Records Incorporated (CRI). In 1952 he signed a further three-year extension to the end of 1955, after which he again contracted with EMI with effect from 1956. As with his previous relationship with RCA and EMI, Beecham appears to have largely determined what he recorded for CRI. At the time of his contract renewal in 1952 CRI sought a new partner for the marketing and distribution of its recordings in Europe and changed from EMI to Philips Electrical. Beecham had at times a difficult relationship with Philips. However he was by now sufficiently eminent to get his own way, if perhaps at the expense of a productive working relationship with Philips.

4.5.5. Beecham and EMI: 'The Rice Hotel' memo and beyond

By 1956 Beecham was a major musical icon and EMI were extremely glad to have him back, working 'for the old firm', to use his own words. Denis Vaughan has said that Beecham was very keen to lay down through recordings his interpretive style for each of the major schools of operatic composition: Handel, Mozart, Wagner and the French and Italian schools (Vaughan*). This desire is exemplified most dramatically in what might be called 'The Rice Hotel' memo. This is a note of a discussion between Sir Thomas and David Bicknell, held at The Rice Hotel in Houston on March 25th 1955, to discuss the repertoire that he would record with EMI from 1956

onwards (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Hand written note, no date, by David Bicknell on writing paper headed 'The Rice Hotel', Houston, Texas, and memo of 5.4.55, written by David Bicknell).

Beecham confirmed that in making a new contract it would be 'with a view to recording major works of which he was particularly fond and of which adequate recordings did not exist at the present time.' He did not wish to exclude the recording of standard orchestral works, 'but he wished to give preference in his remaining years to the recording of the works which are given below.'

The list produced by Sir Thomas was as follows, and is quoted exactly as it appears in the typed record of the meeting.

Figure 4.1. Extract from the memorandum of conversation with Sir Thomas Beecham at the Rice Hotel, Houston, Texas, on Friday March 25th, 1955.

‘The list produced by Sir Thomas was as follows:

- * Seasons (Haydn)
- * Seraglio (Mozart)
- * Mass in C minor (Mozart)
- X(Missa Solemnis (Beethoven)
(Symphonies (Beethoven)
- * Schubert A flat Mass
- * Messe des Morts (Berlioz)
- Prise de Troie (Berlioz)
- Trojans (Berlioz)
- Solomon)
- Hercules) Handel
- Saint Cecilia Ode)
- Pique Dame (Tchaikovsky)
- Prince Igor (Borodin)
- Iphigenie en Tauride (Gluck)
- * Carmen)
- Fair Maid of Perth (Bizet)
- X(Manon (Massenet)
(Romeo et Juliette (Gounod)
- Stabat Mater (Dvorak)
- Coq d’or (Rimsky-Korsakov)
- Creation (Haydn)

- Irmelin) (Partially financed by Sir Thomas)
- Magic Fountain) Delius
- Koanga)

X (one of these two groups to be reserved for Angel)’

(Angel was the relatively newly established EMI subsidiary in the USA. It became increasingly important as the only outlet for EMI recordings in the USA following the company’s break with RCA in 1957. The asterisks in the typed memo do not appear in David Bicknell’s handwritten note, apart from one against ‘Pique Dame’.)

(EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memorandum dated 5.4.55 of discussion held on 25.3.55 between Sir Thomas Beecham and David Bicknell, The Rice Hotel, Houston, Texas)

David Bicknell, acting in behalf of EMI, was clearly determined to secure Beecham for his company once again. He emphasised ‘that it was hardly necessary for him to

explain the recording facilities which EMI and only EMI could place at his disposal, because they were well known to him. That we were quite willing to consider favourably the list of recording which appeared, at first sight, to be an admirable one...'

For a conductor of seventy-six years of age this was an ambitious repertoire, and it was quite an achievement that so much of it was recorded. The following complete recordings were made from the repertoire on Beecham's list: 'The Seasons', 'The Seraglio', 'Solomon', and 'Carmen'. It also puts into context Vaughan's remark that Beecham was sorry EMI gave the conducting of its complete recording of Wagner's opera 'Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg' to Rudolf Kempe rather than to himself (Vaughan* and Vaughan, 1979, p.1680). 'Die Meistersinger' does not feature on The Rice Hotel list of preferences.

The Rice Hotel list indicates that Beecham missed conducting opera in addition to orchestral music, as he had done frequently up until 1939. After this date, recordings, together with the occasional guest engagement such as those at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires in 1958, were his principal outlet for conducting this repertoire. In 1956 he was happy to agree to RCA's suggestion that he record Puccini's 'La Boheme' in New York.

One final shaft of light can be thrown onto the issue of repertoire. Towards the end of his life Beecham was pleased with the recording of 'Carmen' made with the French National Radio Orchestra. He asked Felix Aprahamian to suggest further repertoire that he might record with the Orchestra. These included Faure's 'Dolly Suite' which Beecham had not conducted before, although he told Aprahamian: 'Played it once as a piano duet with the old man himself.' (Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.37). The resulting recording was extremely successful. When the leader of the French orchestra was asked how Sir Thomas achieved such results, he replied '*C'est un dieu*' ('He's a god') (Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.39).

4.5.6. Repertoire decisions: conclusion

Thus, as the recording industry matured, the decisions as to repertoire moved paradoxically away from the industry to, in this case, the artist, as Beecham's eminence continued to grow, driven by factors of age, activity and reputation, and reinforced by the recordings which he had already made. This pattern will be replicated in the case study devoted to the career of Sir Georg Solti. A second factor, indicated by Bicknell's comments to Sir Thomas contained in The Rice Hotel memo, was the competitive desire of rival recording companies to gain the services of a major international figure at a time when the market for recordings was growing.

It may therefore be inferred that the influence of the recording industry on repertoire decisions is not fixed at all, but is highly contingent upon specific circumstances operating at specific times and relating to the artist, the record company and the state of the market. In the case of Beecham it may be argued that overall the repertoire which represents him on disc, certainly after the Second World War, is a reasonable reflection of his preferences, rather than those of the companies for whom he recorded. In terms of influence therefore, from 1944 onwards Beecham was the dominant partner in the area of repertoire decisions.

4.6. Recording

4.6.1. Introduction

Not surprisingly, given the topic of research, the interviews with those who came into contact with Beecham in the context of recording contain many descriptions, opinions and explanations of his behaviour in the recording studio. Given that today recordings produced in a studio can be subjected to considerable manipulation, it is easy to see with the benefit of hindsight the recording studio as some sort of alchemical musical laboratory where the soul of the musician undergoes changes over which the musician may or may not have control. This would appear to be a *prima facie* example of the influence of recording upon musical activity. Did the process of recording have an influence upon Beecham?

4.6.2. Beecham's unpredictability in the recording studio

One characteristic upon which all witnesses are agreed, either through interview or through archive documentation, is that Beecham was unpredictable in the studio. Recordings of works would be stopped halfway, other works would be rehearsed or recorded, and at times even totally different and unexpected works would be substituted for those scheduled. The apparently sudden and arbitrary decision to record Richard Strauss's 'Ein Heldenleben' in 1947 during a session supposedly devoted to a Mozart symphony is an example of this trait (Ford, 1998).

4.6.3. Explanations: organisational and financial

Many explanations have been suggested as to why Beecham behaved in this way. On a practical level, those involved with production tended to see the reasons as organisational and financial. By switching items being recorded within a session Beecham was obliging the record company to continue its relationship with himself and his orchestra beyond the time which it might originally have contemplated for the purposes of recording (Andry*). This in turn helped to stabilise the existence of his orchestras in two ways. Continuity between sessions required the orchestra to use, wherever possible, the same instrumentalists, thus maintaining the high performing standards that Beecham required. Secondly the extra money which recording sessions provided secured the presence of the best players. Continuous recording therefore created a virtuous circle which maintained the personnel of the orchestra at a high executive level. However Sanders* has warned against developing too far the idea that recording played a very prominent role in driving up standards.

4.6.4. Explanations: musical

A second explanation often given for the changing of repertoire during recording is musical. To quote Alan Sanders*: 'He was not an artist who was unhappy in the recording studio.' Beecham did see the studio as just that: a place in which art, in this case music, might be created. It was therefore akin to a workshop. In the studio he could make music if he wished without interruption. The engineer Anthony Griffith* attested to Beecham being very clear about what he wanted, and being very

particular about getting it. This could have two consequences. Either he might go on and on with different takes to get what he wanted - Harry Legge* gave as an example the re-recording of the difficult horn passages in Mozart's Serenade K. 131- or if he felt the preconditions for a good performance did not exist, he might change to another piece of music. This might be because either the instrumentalists were not giving him what he wanted, or the orchestral balance might not be satisfactory, or indeed he himself might not have felt in the right frame of mind. A further explanation, derived from some of these factors, might be that orchestral parts needed altering, in which case time had to be allowed for this and therefore another work needed to be substituted.

This general view is corroborated by Vaughan: 'Sir Thomas often avoided trying to record something just because it had been planned, when he knew it would not be a success on that day.' (Vaughan, 1979, p.1681).

4.6.5. Explanations: technology: wax and tape recording

The organisation and technology of 78rpm recording would encourage a mixed bag of repertoire during recording sessions. If a particular side of a multi-part recording needed to be re-recorded then it would have to be slipped in during the recording of other works, hence giving the impression of 'chopping and changing' during the session. The advent of tape recording made the possibility of perfection easier, because it did not necessarily require lengthy additional takes in the way that the wax based 78rpm recording technology, referred to by Beecham above, had.

Andry*, in the context of recording onto tape, referred to Beecham occasionally asking him 'to gild the lily' or to improve the recording by synthetic methods. Incidentally, as Sanders* suggested, there is no evidence that the short timings of individual 78rpm sides encouraged Beecham to adopt different, faster, tempi. Beecham's mastery of recording in the 78rpm medium is demonstrated by his ability to achieve the same balance and tempi in different locations and at different times (Brymer*). In fact, his desire for perfection, and the consequent care which he took, at times resulted in slightly slower performances (Griffith* and Vaughan*).

4.6.6. Recording as a means to ‘perfection’

Beecham himself wrote revealingly about recording in his autobiography. ‘Here the purely intellectual and technical elements take precedence over the emotional, owing to the cardinal necessity of securing a perfect balance...Every bar is the bondservant of a tyrant to whom the correct playing of each note, a flawless pitch, and a discreet scheme of dynamics are the supreme consideration.’ (Beecham, 1944, p.50).

Griffith* suggested that Beecham was very reluctant to leave any imperfections on his recordings for fear of adverse reaction from critics. The critical apparatus encouraged the idea of perfection, and the techniques of recording made multiple attempts possible. These factors in turn encouraged the performer, in this case Beecham, to record one take after another, or to reject matrices with which he was not satisfied. This is borne out by the evidence of the great care with which he undertook the task of listening to test pressings. Ford, his secretary, recalls Beecham’s various homes being littered with test pressings, and in the EMI Archive there are frequent comments from David Bicknell about Beecham and test pressings. For instance, in a letter dated March 29th 1946 from HMV to its American partner RCA, the correspondent wrote: ‘As you are no doubt aware, Sir Thomas is most exacting as to his acceptance of Masters.’ (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Letter of 29.3.46 from HMV to RCA).

4.6.7. Synthesising Beecham’s behavioural characteristics in the studio

There thus exist contrary descriptions of Beecham in the studio: in the first Beecham is a meticulous taskmaster, seeking for perfection. In the second he breezes into the recording studio and treats recording like any other musical activity with his orchestra. Brymer* suggested that a record was simply that: a record of what happened in one place on one day with a particular group of people. In this sense a sound recording stands as the aural parallel of a photograph. Arahamian* said that for Beecham recording was a ‘day-to-day’ affair. Brymer* made the same point. Recording was ‘what happened this week’. Brymer provided* impressive evidence for the efficacy of this approach: the Beecham recording of Rimsky-Korsakov’s ‘Scheherazade’ was slipped in when the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was

recording Haydn symphonies in Paris, with amazing success. Both in technical and musical terms this remains an outstanding recording. The 1947 recording of 'Ein Heldenleben' is another example of the unexpected or the unpredictable producing excellent results.

In contrast to this description of Beecham taking things as they come and adjusting accordingly, there is Harry Legge's* description, already mentioned, of him going on until he had got what he wanted from his players. Griffith's* descriptions corroborated this view. This second approach indicates a desire for perfectionism, a characteristic that became more pronounced when recording. This version of reality stands alongside the descriptions of Beecham taking great care during recording sessions, and adopting the various tactics already considered such as changing repertoire in mid-session.

Although there is no specific evidence, it is possible to synthesise these two versions of reality in a way which is consistent with what we know about Beecham's behaviour outside the studio. He was generally unpredictable and frequently changed his mind, often in the pursuit of higher standards. His approach may have been unorthodox but it did frequently achieve the results that he desired.

Recording, like concerts, was something that 'was expected of one' (Harry Legge*). It was thus part of the daily round of musical life, and so in this context it may be seen, as Brymer* and Aprahamian* described it, as part of the orchestra's day-to-day existence. At the same time Beecham, either in the recording studio, concert hall or opera house, was frequently very clear and very particular about what he wanted. He employed two tactics to achieve this. Either he would change what he and the orchestra were doing, until such time as the particular circumstances that he felt were required, could be achieved, or he would press on and get what he wanted through persistence. Both these characteristics were displayed in the studio. The desired end result in both instances was performance of a high standard.

4.6.8. The difference between recordings and concert performances

While there are different descriptions of Beecham's behaviour in the studio, and various explanations for this, there is a considerable body of opinion which suggests that many of his recorded performances differed from his concert performances, although opinion is not clear-cut on this point. Reference has already been made to the care with which Beecham listened to his recordings before agreeing to their release.

Denis Vaughan* suggested that listening to one's performances is like looking in a mirror. After a while one gets to know oneself extremely well. The purpose of listening to test recordings is to hear if a performance is adequate in one's judgement or might be improved. Although Jack Brymer* strongly made the case in favour of Beecham's spontaneity in the studio, he also suggested that Beecham was at times rather inhibited by recording, and that he was looking for 'slightly more perfection'. Griffith* also made this point strongly: recording was both a means to perfection and a driver to perfection, because the means (and the critical apparatus) existed.

Griffith* confirmed that frequently the most spontaneous and often the best takes were the first ones, when the musicians were fresh. On the other hand Beecham was generally more deliberate and careful in the recording studio than in the concert hall. Griffith timed with a stopwatch Beecham's performances in concert of works to be recorded in the studio, and his timings showed Beecham to be always slower in the studio, as well as being often more particular in what he wanted. The same point is made anecdotally by Vaughan*, who suggested that comparisons of live and recorded performances of the opera 'Carmen' and Bizet's 'L'Arlesienne' Suite show a verve and panache in the live performances which do not exist in the studio recordings.

Sanders* and Jenkins* maintained that Beecham's studio recordings, because of the immense care that he took with them, have 'more finish' than his live performances. Thus the studio and the live recordings are often different; each having their own merits. Occasionally the spontaneity of the live performance is married to the polish

of the studio performance, such as with the recording of Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Scheherazade', and the result is a masterpiece of performance.

4.6.9. Recording: conclusion

The evidence therefore suggests that the technical apparatus of recording and the atmosphere of the studio, in which theoretically perfection might be possible, did result in Beecham on occasion conducting performances that were different from those given in the concert hall. At the same time Beecham sought assiduously to achieve the vigour of the live performance. And hence one reason for the various strategies that he adopted when recording to maintain or to raise standards of performance. More often than not the quest for perfection resulted in beautifully polished performances which have their own merits. But these are different from live performance, attendant with both accident and ecstasy.

In this instance therefore it is clear that however hard he tried to minimise its negative aspects, the apparatus of recording did influence Beecham in that it caused him to prepare and to create performances that were subtly different from his live concert performances. In general he used the studio to seek to achieve a higher degree of perfection than might be possible in the concert hall. Because of his musical genius the recorded performances are no better or worse than the live ones – they are often simply different.

4.7. The Producer

4.7.1. Introduction

Just as the technological development of recording has seen an increase in the degree to which recorded sound can be manipulated alongside the gradual expansion of the market for recordings, so the role of the record producer has changed and developed as the record industry has grown. The producer has now become a key figure in the process of recording.

4.7.2. The two models of the producer: musical supervisor and musical director

There are basically two models of the record producer. In the first the producer is the equivalent of the musical supervisor, ensuring that everything musical is satisfactory at a recording session. This role seeks to mediate the needs of the performer and of the record company in the production of a recording. In general the producer in this model works to plans already conceived by someone higher in authority within the organisation. This is the model with which Beecham worked after the Second World War, and predominantly during the inter-war years.

The second model is of the producer who conceives of artists and repertoire to be recorded, and drives through all that has to be done to bring this combination successfully to market, including supervising the recording sessions themselves to the extent of influencing the recorded interpretation. In this role the producer has both greater autonomy and responsibility. Generally specific organisational factors have allowed this model to operate.

The two outstanding examples of this type of producer are Walter Legge and John Culshaw. Legge was able to operate in this way because essentially he seized power. Culshaw operated like this because of the unusual *modus operandi* of Decca Records. Here artists were contracted to the company, generally by Maurice Rosengarten, and then it was up to the producer to use them in terms of repertoire and performance.

Beecham had limited experience of this latter model of the producer, notably with Legge before the Second World War, in relation to the recordings of Sibelius's Fourth Symphony and Mozart's opera 'The Magic Flute', both of which were driven by Legge, and who realised that Beecham's participation would permit the latter project to proceed: 'I knew I would win because nobody would risk offending Beecham.' (Legge, 1982, p.157).

Beecham also worked with Culshaw towards the end of his (Beecham's) career, although within the context of the first model of the producer, not the second.

Neither producer appears to have directly influenced his interpretations, although Legge came closest, by apparently getting him to re-record the Fourth Symphony of Sibelius, although arguably the decision to re-record this work may have been Beecham's after he had listened to the initial test pressings. In general Beecham's personality was such that the second model of producer behaviour would have been incompatible to him.

4.7.3. Beecham and the musical supervisor

It is not surprising that Beecham should have had such wide experience of the different types of producer, given the fact that he made his first recordings in July 1910, and his last in December 1959. During the intervening period the record industry had expanded greatly. Beecham's early electrical recordings were made for the Columbia Graphophone Company, before its merger with The Gramophone Company in 1931. From 1927 the musical supervisor for Columbia was Joe Batten, whose memoirs indicate that Beecham was not prepared to tolerate interference on the musical side in his recordings. So swift were Beecham's tempi in his recording of Gounod's 'Faust' that Batten renamed the work 'Fast'. Beecham claimed 'it was not speed but *rubato*.' (Batten, 1956, p.114). To quote Sanders*: '...he [Batten] was not able to influence Beecham in any kind of way'. Beecham saw the producer in these circumstances as described by his secretary Denham Ford*: '...to ensure the music was in place and the side breaks [for 78 recording] were marked.'

After the merger between the Columbia Graphophone Company and The Gramophone Company that created EMI, Beecham worked with several musical supervisors, the most prominent of whom were Lawrence Collingwood and Walter Legge. Collingwood, himself a distinguished conductor (Walker, 1985), worked extensively with Beecham before the Second World War, and Beecham thought highly of him (Griffith*). He was employed on an 'ad hoc' basis by the Artists' Management Department, headed by Fred Gaisberg, and supported by David Bicknell from 1937, to ensure that musically the Beecham sessions ran smoothly. This he seems to have done very well. Anthony Griffith*, himself at times a producer as well as an engineer, suggested that the key to the success of producers such as Gaisberg and Collingwood was that they looked after the artist and acted as a second

pair of ears. He described Collingwood as very courteous. He never made a scene, was very polite, and basically let the musicians get on with performing (Griffith*).

4.7.4. Beecham and Walter Legge, the musical director in the making

In contrast Walter Legge was quite different. to Collingwood, and in later years in particular he was determinedly interventionist. However before the Second World War he was a middle-level employee of EMI and so was making his way in the record world. In addition he was also a music critic for 'The Guardian'. This role gave him great insight into both performance quality and current trends. It was his undoubted talents as an impresario that drew him to Beecham. The opportunistic side of both men is seen in the production of Beecham's recording of 'The Magic Flute', made in Berlin in the autumn of 1937.

This was put together remarkably quickly: on September 10th 1937 the German branch of EMI, Electrola, was predicting limited sales for such a recording and recommending either Bohm or Furtwangler as the conductor (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Letter of 10.9.37 from Electrola, Berlin, to Rex Palmer, EMI). But Legge and Beecham managed to get the work completely recorded between November 8th and 12th 1937, with retakes on February 24th and March 2nd 1938. The success of this recording and the productive relationship which Legge and Beecham struck up (the Sibelius Fourth Symphony was incidentally recorded alongside 'The Magic Flute' in late October and December 10th 1937) led Beecham to engage Legge as his artistic assistant for the international summer seasons of opera at Covent Garden during 1938 and 1939, of which Beecham was the artistic director (Legge, 1982, pp. 158-159). This experience undoubtedly helped to form Legge in many ways. The relationship between the two was not to last however.

Following disagreement as to who would control artistically Legge's new Philharmonia Orchestra in 1945, Beecham decided to create the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. After this they did not work together. The direct influence of Legge upon Beecham in the previous period would have been very limited. As Alan Sanders*, Legge's biographer, noted, Legge had not produced any orchestral recordings when he came to work with Beecham, and there is no question of his being in any way

authoritative. His relationship with Beecham seems to have been based on mutual self-interest: both were in positions to help each other.

4.7.5. The post-war experience

Beecham's relationship with his producers after the war seems to have been similar, and if anything with him even more in the ascendant. He did not work exclusively with one producer. In the immediate post-war RCA/EMI recordings several producers were used, notably Lawrence Collingwood. With CRI many of his recordings were produced by David Oppenheim. After his return to EMI in 1956 his recordings were produced by Victor Olof and Peter Andry. In all of these instances the producer appears to have acted largely as the 'musical supervisor' as in the pre-war years, although Olof's sleeve-note to Beecham's stereo remake of 'Ein Heldenleben' indicates that it was his suggestion to Beecham that the latter conduct re-record this work. Olof wrote: 'When in 1958 I invited Sir Thomas to consider this project, he seemed a little diffident, but never quite revealed his innermost thoughts regarding his hesitation. However, after some persuasion he agreed to commence operations.' (Olof, 1961).

Olof had been engaged by Beecham to assist with the formation and management of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra its early days. It is interesting to note that Olof was offered the position of head of HMV's Artists Management division in the early summer of 1956, just six months after Beecham's return to the label. His transfer from Decca to HMV catapulted Culshaw into the equivalent position at Decca and so paved the way for Solti's rise as one of Decca's star opera conductors.

The influence of a producer upon a successful recording is always hard to determine, but it seems to be more than coincidence that two of Beecham's most successful recordings were produced by experts in this highly specialised field: Puccini's 'La Boheme' by Richard Mohr and Handel's 'Messiah' by John Culshaw. Both recordings were made at the instigation of RCA and in relatively circumscribed circumstances. Recollections of the two point to similar characteristics. Beecham was 'a pussycat' according to Mohr in relation to the recording of 'La Boheme' (Price, 1995, p.21). As with 'The Magic Flute' the whole project was put together

with remarkable speed. 'There were no rehearsals: they just went into the studio at Manhattan Center and did it...The result, in nine working days and twenty-nine and a half hours of sessions, was one of the opera albums deserving to be called 'great' – a 'Boheme' for the history books.' (Price, 1995, p.21).

For 'Messiah', recorded by Decca in 1959 as part of its reciprocal arrangement with RCA, Culshaw acted as executive producer, that is with overall responsibility for the project, rather than as a direct line producer, responsible for individual sessions. Because of conflicting priorities, the actual day-to-day production was left with James Walker. Culshaw, having set up the project, interceded only at times of crisis, for instance when Beecham asked for Joan Sutherland to be replaced: her place was taken by Jennifer Vyvyan. Like Mohr, Culshaw in his memoirs indicated that Beecham was very easy to get on with (Culshaw, 1981, p.213). When Beecham later approached Culshaw with the proposal that he conduct some French light opera repertoire for Decca, he entranced Culshaw: '...it was the talk of a master, and an enthusiast: there was no trace of the flippant, irreverent Beecham of so many legends.' (Culshaw, 1981, p.235).

4.7.6. Beecham and the producer: conclusion

It is clear that, however influential the producer may be today, throughout Beecham's recording career he, Beecham, was the dominant partner in his relations with all those adopting this role. Denis Vaughan* suggested that those who stood behind Beecham, such as David Bicknell, did not have the obsessive drive that Legge had. Vaughan commented that 'the difference between Legge and Beecham was that Legge thought that you should be able to create a performance that would be moving no matter how you felt, and so he trained his people to do that.' (Vaughan*). He infers that Beecham suffered in such a way by not having a figure like Legge driving him on in the studio. But it is clear from other evidence that Beecham would not have tolerated such pressure or interference. In the recording studio Beecham was the dominant partner in this key relationship. Certainly here the influence is that of Beecham upon this key aspect of the recording process. Perhaps the last word on this subject is best left to David Bicknell: 'He was used to getting his own way, and only

the best would do for him. He could never be persuaded to accept compromises.’ (Bicknell, 1961, p.38).

4.8. Recordings

4.8.1. Introduction

As has already been noted, Beecham’s career as a musician grew and flourished alongside the development of the recording industry. This section examines his interaction with recordings themselves, to see if anything may be deduced from this relationship in terms of influence.

4.8.2. Beecham and other conductors and their recordings

Those who knew Beecham well or who worked with him, and who were interviewed as part of this research programme, were all agreed that firstly Beecham was not influenced by other conductors and secondly that he rarely listened to recordings, apart from test pressings and particular personal favourites.

Felix Aprahamian* and Denham Ford* were both clear that Beecham did not like to listen to other conductors. Aprahamian maintained that Beecham had little sense of history in terms of interpretive variety or of period performance. Indeed at the end of his life he was vociferously hostile to those who might hold a contrary view to the appropriateness of his reorchestration, with Sir Eugene Goossens, of Handel’s ‘Messiah’ for the RCA recording produced by John Culshaw (Culshaw, 1981, p.233). His epithet about musicologists is well known: ‘They can read music, but they can’t hear it’ (Stevens, 1979, p.30). It succinctly sums up his attitude to the theoretical aspects of performance.

Denham Ford*, who acted as Beecham’s secretary for three years from 1949 to 1952, had no recollection of Beecham listening to other conductors’ records. Similarly Peter Andry*, who produced some of Beecham’s last recordings, did not believe Beecham to be influenced by recordings nor by other conductors whose work was contained in recordings. Thus it may be inferred with reasonable confidence that

Beecham was not subject to influence in this way, and that the gramophone through recordings was not a vehicle of influence.

4.8.3. Beecham's use of recordings as historical legacy

Where the gramophone record did featured in his life, as distinct from the actual act of recording, was as a document of record. Previous instances of this have already been noted: he saw his Delius recordings as having an unique documentary value because of his close association with the composer (Legge, 1982, p.168), he wanted to leave recordings conducted by himself as documents of the principal schools of grand opera (Vaughan, 1979, p.1680), and at the end of his life, of French light opera (Culshaw, 1981, pp.234-235).

The subject of Beecham's allegiance to Delius and his recordings of his music appeared in an interview which he gave with Boston Radio in 1952. In this he maintained that the sale of his recording of the Delius Piano Concerto (made in 1946 with his second wife, Betty Humby-Beecham, as soloist) 'was more than twice as large as that of any classical composer' when compared to the other recordings recently made by him, including music by Mozart and Richard Strauss: 'that seems to signify recognition on the part of somebody' (Mosier, 1952). Without reference to specific sales data it is not possible to verify this claim, but it seems optimistic in the light of the competition and of the pre-war sales figures for the Delius Society issues (even if these were only for the United Kingdom). What the remark does display is pride in his recordings generally and in his association with Delius: these recordings were important to Beecham.

4.8.4. Beecham's use of recordings as testimony

Another incident in Beecham's career indicates that he saw the record as simply but vitally as a record of an event. This incident took place in 1943 during his second season with the Seattle Symphony Orchestra (Wiseman, 1978 and Epperson , 1999, provide two accounts of this episode). At the beginning of the season Beecham's concerts were subject to vigorous criticism by the local critics. Beecham countered by announcing to the audience as October 10th 1943 that 'your orchestra has today

given two of the finest performances I have ever heard in my life.’ (Wiseman, 1978, p.6). Beecham was to demonstrate what he actually meant by these words, with the emphasis upon the word ‘heard’ and so on recordings, four nights later on October 14th. What he did on this occasion was to play recordings which had been made of the concerts that had been disparaged by the critics alongside commercially available recordings of the same repertoire, and he asked the audience to vote on the merits of each performance.

The unfortunate critics were in the audience, and to quote one of two published eye-witness accounts, that of R.W. Wiseman, ‘they maintained a stony silence as the audience voted again and again for the Seattle performances.’ (Wiseman, 1978, p.6). At the end, according to another eye-witness, the cellist Gordon Epperson, who was actually a member of the orchestra at this time, Beecham commented to the audience: ‘By now, ladies and gentlemen, it must be perfectly clear to you that you have no one writing criticism in Seattle who knows anything at all about music’ (Epperson, 1999, p.19). The Orchestra failed to sue the newspapers that published these reviews and, as he had threatened to do in such circumstances, Beecham resigned shortly afterwards. Clearly this attempt to go over the heads of the critics and to appeal directly to the audiences of the Seattle Symphony Orchestra was dependent upon the existence of both commercial studio and ‘live’ recordings.

In 1955 Beecham again used the comparison between the recording of a live concert and commercial recordings to counter adverse criticism. Frank Howes, the music critic of ‘The Times’ described as ‘a travesty’ a performance of Bach’s Third Brandenburg Concerto given at the Royal Festival Hall on January 18th 1955. This formed part of the programme to have been given originally by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Wilhelm Furtwangler in the first of two concerts. Following Furtwangler’s death, Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra had agreed to take over both the dates and the same programmes, and dedicated the concerts to Furtwangler’s memory (Howard, 1999, provides details of this episode). In a letter to ‘The Times’ published on January 22nd 1955, Beecham compared the speeds of his performance as recorded, with the commercial recordings by the Boston Symphony, Danish, Boyd Neel, and Stuttgart Chamber Orchestras, and

having done so, wrote: ‘...if I am to be convicted of the misdemeanour of ‘travesty,’ there stand in the dock beside me the vast majority of my colleagues and their orchestras over the long period of time to which I have referred.’ (Howard, 1999, p.5).

These two incidents demonstrate Beecham’s sensitivity to criticism, and his use of recordings as a method of record and of rebuttal through comparison. Beecham was very aware of the ability of recordings to support him in this way. His third wife, Shirley, Lady Beecham has described why tape recordings of Beecham concerts given in London during the 1950s were made. ‘One of the critics took him to task one day about playing something so fast. Well, when the performance is over, it’s in your ear. Whether you heard it fast or whether you didn’t, nobody can prove it. So Sir Thomas said, right, from now on we will record everything, so that if there is a query we can play it back to the offending critic.’ (Butler, 1993, p.52).

4.8.5. Beecham’s use of recordings for profit

A further example of Beecham using the recording of live performances, but with a different purpose and outcome, is given by the recordings made, for possible later broadcasting, of opera performances given at Covent Garden during the 1939 International Opera Season immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War. These were recorded by the Philips-Miller recording system, an early system of recording programmes for broadcasting (Morton, 2000, provides details of this system, p.52-53). The quality of these recordings was quite good as is shown by for instance the reissue of Beecham’s performance of ‘The Bartered Bride’ (‘Smetana: The Bartered Bride’, recording of the performance of May 1st 1939, London: Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Standing Room Only SRO-830-2, 2 CDs).

When Beecham was staying in America during the war he sought to exploit these recordings commercially. In 1943 he encouraged RCA’s head of classical music, Charles O’Connell, to appraise them with EMI, with a view to their commercial release. RCA must at this time have been anxious to issue recordings conducted by Beecham, having made two advances of \$5,000 already, and with no recordings to show for these payments. An internal memo indicated that ‘The recording amounts to

14 hours...There are 3 complete operas, and 7 parts of operas.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 20.10.43).

The tapes rested with the liquidator of the London Philharmonic Orchestra Concerts Society, formed and controlled by Beecham, and which had gone bankrupt in 1940. Beecham's solicitor Philip Emanuel was visited by a member of EMI's staff delegated to deal with this matter. The internal memo, dated January 10th 1944 to Sir Robert McLean, and copied to Alfred Clark, is revealing: 'I had Emanuel seen, and he stated that he was not going to put himself into any danger for Beecham who did not care what he did...He, Emanuel, was not prepared to create difficulties for the liquidator.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 10.1.44 from Mr. Duncan to Sir Robert McLean).

Beecham made another attempt at exploiting these recordings in 1946 through Walter Legge, who had been closely involved with the administration of the 1939 season. In a memo of June 25th 1946 to Mr. Mittell, Legge commented laconically 'Beecham looks to these spools for spoils' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 25.6.46 from Walter Legge to Mr. Mittell, p.1). EMI was reluctant to pick up this proposal, concerned as it was about the necessity to gain copyright clearance for commercial release, as opposed to broadcasts, from all involved, and about the involvement of artists such as Gigli, who had an existing catalogue of EMI recordings (EMI Archive: Beecham file: An undated and unattributed memo on file adjacent to Legge's memo of 25.6.46 gives casts for five operas: 'Don Giovanni', 'The Bartered Bride', 'Il Trovatore', 'Aida', and 'Tannhauser'. Of these only the recordings of 'Don Giovanni' and 'Tannhauser' have not been re-issued on Compact Disc).

4.8.6. Beecham and recordings: conclusion

Thus for Beecham commercial recordings were not a source of learning either in relation to music or to the different interpretive possibilities that they might contain. The first he gained from his own personal study of scores, which was deep as well as broad, as shown by Culshaw's recollection of his final interview, with Beecham liberally quoting from obscure French operas (Culshaw, 1981, p.234). The second

came from his own personal sense of style and musical taste and correctness, as shown for instance by his arrangements of music by Handel.

The technology and techniques of recording were valuable to Beecham as a means of creating additional income and as a means of refuting hostile criticism, in addition to their musical value. The memo from Legge to Mittell clearly states Beecham's intentions: 'In the 1939 Grand Season at Covent Garden Beecham commissioned Phillips Miller to record certain performances in their entirety and the most popular scenes from other operas. This was done with a view to selling these recordings to broadcasting stations.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 25.6.46 from Walter Legge to Mr. Mittell, p.1). Legge confirmed that the complete 'Don Giovanni' recording had been sold for broadcasting to Australia and to Japan for £750 in each case (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 25.6.46 from Walter Legge to Mr. Mittell, p.1). This early use of recordings of live performances to create subsequent income was ahead of its time. It attests to Beecham's strong business understanding of the potential uses of the technology of recording. In terms of influence, Beecham sought to use recordings to assist him, either financially or critically. He did not use recordings to gain interpretive insight.

4.9. Performance and Interpretation

4.9.1. Introduction

Having considered Beecham's approach to repertoire, the act of recording, the producer and the record itself, this next section examines Beecham's approach to performance and interpretation. Characteristics already identified in the context of Beecham as man and musician come to the fore in this section.

4.9.2. Performance as creation

All the interviewees were agreed that for Beecham nothing was fixed. He was always wanting to experiment and to try out new things, be they new concert halls, new players or new ideas (Jenkins*). This trait may explain his openness to new

technologies, such as the Philips-Miller recording machine described in the previous section, and his quick realisation of the different ways in which such devices and their outputs might be used.

Beecham was always searching for ways of doing things better (Sanders*). Interviewees are agreed that he had no sense of ‘the one right way’ (Sanders) – he was always changing the things around him, be they musical or for instance domestic: ‘In the fifteen years since the end of the war, he changed homes eight times to my knowledge, not counting his brief stays in hotels or in houses furnished by other people.’ (Bicknell, 1961, p.42).

This mercurial side to Beecham’s character expressed itself musically in terms of seeing the performance of music ‘as an act of creation’ (Brymer*). In this respect Beecham’s approach to performance was similar to that of Furtwangler, who viewed music as being in a constant state of becoming. To quote the violist Frederick Riddle: ‘Beecham was always striving to find a better one [performance] than the last.’ (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.104). However, the results which the two conductors achieved through this approach to interpretation were inevitably completely different, reflecting as they did their strong and individual personalities. In practical terms ‘if he had done it next week it would have been different again’ (Brymer*).

4.9.3. Performance and risk

A concomitant of this philosophy was that risk-taking was important: ‘music is not worthwhile unless it is risky.’ (Brymer*). This may explain why two of his most famous recordings – ‘The Magic Flute’ (Berlin, 1937) and ‘La Boheme’ (New York, 1956) - were successful: both were produced under tight time constraints and at relatively short notice. The characteristic of risk-taking also explains Beecham’s impetuosity in live performance, typified by his comment immediately before the opening concert by the London Philharmonic Orchestra in October 1932 to the Orchestras’s leader, Paul Beard, ‘Come along, Mr. Beard. Let’s show ‘em what we can do!’ (Jefferson, 1979, p.88). Another aspect of the related characteristic – the avoidance of routine – is illustrated by his programming of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra’s tour of America in 1950. For the latter half of this two month tour,

Beecham constantly kept changing the programmes performed (Vaughan*). It was this variety and unpredictability that kept his musicians on their toes. As one of them, Edmund Chesterman recalled: 'I remember every morning travelling to a rehearsal or recording, and wondering, always with zest, what would happen that day. Something always did!' (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.49).

4.9.4. Performance and style

Vaughan* held that Beecham believed the conductor's function to be twofold. Firstly to illuminate the music to be performed, by clearly grasping and demonstrating its structure, and secondly to illuminate the composer, through an understanding and exemplification of the composer's style. Inevitably attitudes to style change over time, and Beecham's understanding of style, for instance of Haydn and Mozart, is now at odds with prevailing views. Yet he himself had a very clear idea of what he considered the appropriate style to be. At the same time, again to refer to Vaughan, he was constantly exploring style. Within this overall view, he himself said that he valued the following qualities: 'charm, romance, mystery and vitality' (Beecham, 1953). Frederick Riddle noted that Beecham 'was always listening for the "tune".' (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.104)

His grasp of style was particularly valued by other conductors: Vaughan* quoted Josef Krips as saying that he played Beecham's recording of 'The Magic Flute' regularly to remind himself of Mozartian style; and Griffith* recalled that, when he was acting as an engineer for Walter Legge's recording of 'The Marriage of Figaro' in Vienna the conductor Herbert von Karajan would play Beecham's pre-war recording of Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in E flat on a small portable gramophone close to the podium, to remind himself of Mozartian style. As Vaughan has written, Beecham's stylistic authority stands out in his recordings (Vaughan, 1979, p.1680).

4.9.5. Methods: employing the best musicians

Beecham's way of indicating what he wanted was achieved through several methods. Firstly, he would surround himself with first rate musicians and then would improvise with them (Vaughan*). The quality of the musicians that he employed was

paramount: to get the best he needed the best. To quote Felix Aprahmian: ‘Beecham employed the best available instrumental talent, and trusted it.’ (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.33). The importance of having players with a positive musical personality in order to get the best out of this method is highlighted in a letter written to Goddard Lieberson of CRI while Beecham was in Seattle in 1942. In this letter Beecham commented critically upon the test pressings of recordings, made in New York that year, which he had recently received for consideration: ‘For really tip-top results there are too many weak or dull players in the band.’ (Letter of 19.9.42 from Sir Thomas Beecham to Goddard Lieberson).

4.9.6. Methods: the marking of orchestral parts

Secondly, Beecham would indicate what he wanted through the marking of orchestral parts (Aprahmian*). He would change the parts after rehearsals and after hearing test pressings (Aprahmian*), and after hearing playbacks on tape (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.38). The orchestral parts were Beecham’s means of expressing his preferences (Aprahmian*). Aprahmian* described his technique for both recordings and concerts. He would start by playing the work through without major stops. Then he might either continue or call a break. If recording on tape he would then listen to the playback (this was of course impossible to do with wax based recordings, and hence the importance of listening to the test pressings – these would usually take about two weeks to prepare). The parts would be marked with new indications, generally for a concert through emendations by the Librarian, often between the morning rehearsal and evening performance. Either re-recording or the concert would then take place.

Denham Ford’s description of this process is graphic: ‘If he was doing a major symphony [in a concert], Sibelius Two or Brahms or Beethoven’s Seventh, what he would do, he would have a run through in the morning. Then he would take the score home with him, spend the whole afternoon putting in pencil marks through the score. Bring it back to poor old George Brownfoot [the RPO’s Music Librarian]. The classic [request]: ‘Mr. Brownfoot...just a few marks...’ About two hundred of them spread throughout the score!’ (Ford*). The effect on the musicians was immediate:

‘When they came to play it in the evening they had a totally different set of markings than they had [had] in the morning; which is what kept them on their toes.’ (Ford*).

This technique, not without risk, was also highly suited to the environment in which Beecham and his orchestras worked, where extra rehearsals had to be paid for. The emphasis placed upon the markings in the musicians’ parts not only helped to keep both interpretation and performance fresh, but also enabled performances to be given with limited rehearsal and so cost – further evidence of Beecham’s practicality.

The habit of listening to playbacks during recording sessions caused Beecham’s American record producers concern as they felt he was wasting valuable time. This anxiety reflected the difference between American and English recording practice. In England trade union regulations allowed for only sixteen minutes of music to be recorded for release in every three hour session. In America, more music could be recorded over a four-hour session, as long as a set pattern of breaks was observed. Conductors in America therefore sought to record as much as possible during each session. This was not how Beecham worked at all.

David Bicknell commented in an internal memo of August 1947 concerning Beecham’s current recording activity that ‘Progress at the sessions has been slow (on many occasions I consider much too slow)’ but ‘that the care taken musically and technically to achieve results has borne fruit. All the records approved for issue are musically above reproach.’ (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 21.8.47 from David Bicknell to Mr. Mittell p.2). These comments reflect both the great care that Beecham took when recording and the occasional slow pace of recording.

An examination of Beecham’s orchestral markings show that they are liberally marked with ‘hair-pins’. The use of these markings enabled Beecham to be ‘precise but impulsive’ (Blackwood*). Traditionally these are used to indicate a change in dynamics through either a *crescendo* (getting louder) or a *diminuendo* (getting softer). However his musicians are clear that these markings ‘are more about phrasing than dynamics’ (Harry Legge*). In addition they allowed Beecham subtly to alter the internal dynamics of the orchestra. ‘...very often you would find a

passage that was marked *mezzopiano* in the original, would be *mezzoforte* in your part and *pianissimo* in other people's part, because he would want their particular line to stand out.' (Brymer*).

The emphasis upon line and dynamic shading which such a preoccupation indicates, has been noted by several observers. Griffith* commented that Beecham was good with line and accuracy, and Walter Legge noted that Sibelius referred to Beecham as a 'first fiddle part' conductor (Amis, 1989). While this may have been meant as a criticism, it also illustrates the clear emphasis that Beecham placed upon phrasing.

4.9.7. Methods: the eyes

In addition to changes in the orchestral parts and the use of 'hair pins', the third technique which Beecham used to achieve what he wanted was visual eye contact. Many interviewees commented upon Beecham's 'hypnotic' stare or gaze (Brymer and Aprahamian*). The violinist Ben Horsfall graphically described this aspect of Beecham's technique '...never at any time could I escape his penetrating gaze.' (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.71). This characteristic has also been noted as a feature of other contemporary conductors, such as Leopold Stokowski (Smith, 1990, pp. 80, 82, 83, discusses this aspect of Stokowski's conducting in detail). The power of visual contact in essence again involves risk, as the instrumentalist does not definitely know what the conductor wants. He or she can only surmise from a perspective informed by rehearsal and more general experience.

The use of eye contact is itself part of the fourth characteristic, the ability to generate charisma, or atmosphere through individual presence. Vaughan* suggested that this is a powerful tool in the conductor's arsenal: '...once you have got to give out so that 200 people get it straight off, then you get used to using your charisma in a much more effective way.' An example of the capacity to use charisma in this way is the atmosphere which Beecham generated when recording Delius's 'A Mass of Life'. 'I remember when he did [the] 'A Mass of Life' recording for instance. There was a hush over the studio for all three evenings of the recordings. He created an atmosphere which you could feel in the whole thing...he brought it with him.' (Vaughan*).

4.9.8. Methods: gesture

The fifth, and most common, means of communication used by Beecham was gesture. Aprahamian suggests that ‘it was the gesture that made the performance.’ (Aprahamian*). Beecham’s gestures were not those of the typical ‘four in a bar’ time-keeping conductor. The musician Maurice Johnstone recalled: ‘He could convey style and prasing and rhythm simply by his unothodox geature and demeanour.’ (Procter-Gregg, 1976, p.81). A study of videotapes of him rehearsing and performing, for instance those contained in the Granada Television documentary ‘Sir Thomas at Lincoln’s Inn’ (Granada TV, 1958), made in 1958, show that his physical gestures were often concerned with shaping phrases and making points of emphasis. In other words they were more about interpretation rather than just keeping the orchestra together and on course. This style may have changed over time. A newsreel of Beecham rehearsing the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 1932 shows a much more precise style of gesture (British Movietone News, 1932). (Although the commentary of the programme from which this excerpt was taken (BBC TV’s ‘Face the Music’) gives October 7th 1932 as the date of filming, and the date of the debut of the London. Philharmonic Orchestra, the soundtrack consists of a cut version of the end of the final movement of Tchaikovsky’s Third Symphony, ‘The Polish’. This work was first performed by Beecham and his new orchestra on December 11th 1932, at the Queen’s Hall, London, where the excerpt was filmed. The filming may therefore have taken place at a rehearsal for this concert, possibly on the morning of December 11th, following the successful first two months of the Orchestra’s existence. I am most grateful to Denham Ford for supplying me with a copy of this newsreel excerpt and to John Lucas for pointing out the possible discrepancy about its dating.)

4.9.9. Methods: verbal communication

The sixth and final method of communication was verbal. Unlike conductors of other schools, Beecham did not emphatically demand from musicians the musical points that he wanted. Rather, as Jefferson commented, ‘he would subtly suggest alternatives to musicians.’ (Jefferson*). This is borne out by many of those who played with him. The flautist Gerald Jackson for instance wrote in his memoirs

‘Beecham...lets you play and then persuades you to improve, or perhaps to alter cherished notions.’ (Jackson, 1968, p.82). This observation also reflects the relationship of respect in which Beecham generally held his musicians.

4.9.10. Performance and interpretation: conclusion

Thus in summary Beecham possessed an armoury of tactics to obtain what he wanted in performance. These were used to achieve the results which he sought. The only difference between his approach to live as opposed to recorded performances, but a significant difference, was the greater care that he took in recording. As a result the occasional loss of spontaneity was frequently balanced by an increase in polish ‘or finish’ (Sanders*).

It is apparent that in terms of human contact Beecham was wholly proactive in achieving what he sought, in alliance with his carefully selected musicians. In the context of recording Beecham took the prevailing technology, be it the system of test pressings for the wax based process or the tape playback for taped recordings, and absorbed it into his normal way of working. His long experience of working with these technologies also gave him the ability to use them productively. They became part of the process by and through which he performed and interpreted music. In certain respects, such as the greater level of exactitude and more measured tempi achieved through extensive rehearsal and the effects of repetition, these technologies did have an influence upon his performance style.

4.10. Performance Standards

4.10.1. Introduction

Several factors with which Beecham was closely connected combined to raise performance standards during his lifetime. Firstly, as already had been noted, he employed the best musicians and ‘let them play’ (Aprahamian*). He paid his players above the average, recognising that this would be the quickest way of securing quality of performance.

Secondly where he could he sought institutional longevity and continuity. Once Beecham had created an organization, he generally achieved a prolonged existence for it, despite immediate day-to day problems such as lack of working capital. It took severe environmental shocks, such as the financial consequences of the death of his father, and the outbreak of the Second World War, to disrupt his association with the institutions that he had created.

4.10.2. Variety and continuity of work

Beecham achieved stability of employment for his orchestras by securing a variety of work. For the Beecham Symphony Orchestra this was based essentially upon opera and ballet performances, and concerts in London and the regions. For the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and later the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Beecham was able to add recording to the work schedule, partly replacing the family resources upon which he had been able to call up to 1916 and the death of his father.

Continuity of employment, together with the additional rehearsal and preparation time which recording provided, and to which Beecham responded positively where this might not always be the case with live performances, drove up performance standards. Vaughan, a close observer of Beecham after the Second World War, was clear that recording ‘helped to raise these [standards]’. (Vaughan*).

Beecham was keenly aware of effect of these factors in combination, as his negotiations around the formation of the London Philharmonic Orchestra demonstrate. His aim here was to create an orchestra that could rival the major orchestras of Europe and America. As Fred Gaisberg noted in a memo of a meeting held with Beecham in 1931 to discuss the formation of a new orchestra, to be backed in part with a contract from the newly formed EMI, Beecham believed that ‘with the support of the Merger Group there would now be an opportunity to assist in founding a really first-class Orchestra.’ (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 23.11.31 from Fred Gaisberg to Mr. Lack).

4.10.3. The importance of recording finance

After the Second World War, Beecham and Walter Legge formed respectively the Royal Philharmonic and Philharmonia Orchestras. The irony that both were recording initially for the same company, EMI, but for different labels, HMV and Columbia, has been little commented upon. It illustrates the enormous financial difference that recording was then making to the orchestral life of England. The Philharmonia almost certainly would not have existed without its function as a recording orchestra, and the Royal Philharmonic, which initially had financial difficulties even with its recording income, would have been severely hobbled without the finance which recording provided.

The internal EMI memo prepared by David Bicknell for Brenchley Mittell, dated August 21st 1947 (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 21.8.47 from David Bicknell to Mr. Mittell, pp.1-6), illustrates the significance of the recording industry in both driving up standards of performance and in providing finance for musical organisations. This document reviews the company's relationship with the RPO after the first year of its existence. In terms of standards, the results had been very good. 'All the records approved for issue are musically above reproach and taken in the aggregate represent, in my opinion, the highest technical standard of orchestral recording which either we or RCA Victor have achieved.'

Bicknell goes on to show that, although progress in recording had been slow, sales had been healthy. Within three months of issue 2500 to 3000 units of each release had been achieved, after which sales had dropped to 50 to 100 units sold per month, '...varying with the popularity of the work....The next impression to be derived is that in spite of the slow progress made and the high rate of orchestral fees (the highest this Company has paid up to the present time), in practically all instances the cost of orchestral fees should be recovered after three months' sales in this country.'

Bicknell's next sentence is amazingly prophetic: 'All further sales, wherever derived (which should be steady as these are standard works and are likely to remain on the catalogue for many years) will bring in additional profit to the Company, only diminished by payment of artists and copyright material.' These recordings were

therefore creating a profit well ahead of the normal rate of return for classical music recordings, and indeed, at a rate of approximately three months to break even would be warmly applauded even today.

However the RPO's finances were precarious. Bicknell continues 'The various officials who have assisted Sir Thomas since the Orchestra was formed have resigned in succession – all told me that the orchestra lives from hand to mouth. The secretaries are constantly at their wit's end to find funds with which to meet the contracted payments to the men, and the future is very uncertain, although a full programme is announced for 1947/48.'

The nub of the matter is reached in the next paragraph: 'There is no doubt that without our assistance, and particularly the assistance of the RCA Victor Company, the formation of this orchestra would have been impossible. We are the only substantial backers of the orchestra and it was largely the knowledge that we were prepared to guarantee a substantial number of sessions that persuaded the leading players to join the orchestra.' In other words, it was the promise of recording activity that underpinned both the quality of the orchestra, through attracting the best players, and its permanence, through the slate of sessions promised. Recording drove quality, and was initially crucial both to the orchestra's existence and to establishing and maintaining performance standards.

There is much more within this six page document which sheds valuable light on Beecham in the studio – for instance about his choice of repertoire (adventurous), the care with which he recorded, and his uniqueness as a conductor. But for the purposes of this section it has been quoted to illustrate powerfully how recording drove up standards of performance.

4.10.4. Performance standards: conclusion

Although space has been devoted to considering the two memoranda written by Fred Gaisberg and David Bicknell in some detail, this has been done in order to show the critical role which recording played in improving and sustaining standards of performance. This was achieved through the formation firstly of the London

Philharmonic Orchestra, and secondly the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. In both instances the influence of the recording industry was decisive in terms of formation and continuity. The aural evidence provided by the recordings, which both these orchestras made, indicates clearly that their performance standards were extremely high. The evidence provided by the institutional data in the EMI Archive, by the literature on the formation of both orchestras, and by the interviews with those who worked in different capacities with Beecham, clearly shows the role which finance from recording played in creating and keeping the Orchestras afloat, in terms of permanence, and in enabling them to maintain their high standards, through the employment of first class instrumentalists.

4.11. Conclusion

The discussion of Beecham's interaction with the recording process indicates that, where human relations were part of the process, Beecham was invariably the dominant partner. He led in repertoire decisions, especially after the war, he did not tolerate interference from his producers, and he enjoyed a strong and productive relationship with his orchestral musicians.

On the other hand the technology of recording, and particularly the consequences of working in the studio, and remaking recordings, either through choice or the demands of the technical system, did influence Beecham's performances and interpretations. These became more polished, and more considered.

At the same time the financial aspect of recording proved to be a powerful mechanism through which performance standards were improved, by encouraging continuity of employment among orchestral musicians, and the engagement of the best available.

Beecham thus was dominant in areas of immediate decision. He also saw the potential for the recording industry to assist him in raising standards of orchestral

performance. He consciously exploited this influence, thereby acknowledging its existence.

Chapter 5

Solti and the recording process

'He was the child of the record business' – John Mallinson

5.1. General Introduction

The subject of this chapter is Sir Georg Solti and his interaction with the record industry and recording. Solti has been seen by many as a distinguished conductor whose career was significantly assisted by his involvement with the record industry. The quotation above from one of his own producers succinctly encapsulates this view.

The purpose of the chapter therefore is to examine this relationship in detail and to seek to establish whether or not recording and the record industry were significant influences upon musical activity as undertaken by Sir Georg. More specifically it will seek to isolate and identify any major changes which came about through this association.

The format adopted is similar to that used for the chapter concerned with the recording career of Sir Thomas Beecham. Individual sections relate to: Solti the man and his relationships with musicians; his interaction with record company personnel and producers; repertoire decisions; the act of recording; and the use of records. In addition, the chapter includes a short section on promotion and reputation. A concluding section ties together these various strands. An outline of Sir Georg's career is contained at Appendix E.

As with the previous chapter concerned with Sir Thomas Beecham, the purpose of this analytical framework is to isolate and to examine those elements of recording where some level of influence upon musical activity may be discerned.

5.2. Sources

The sources used throughout the chapter are predominantly interviews with those individuals who kindly agreed to participate in the research process and who, in different ways, were closely linked to Sir Georg. They are:

- Jack Boyce, who worked as Head of Marketing for the classical division of Decca Records, and who like Gordon Parry, was a key figure during the recording and commercial release of the separate parts of Wagner's 'Der Ring des Nibelungen' conducted by Solti and produced by John Culshaw (henceforth referred to as 'The Ring');
- Robert Cowan, a music critic and record reviewer;
- Michael Haas and James Mallinson, who worked as producers for Decca Records, and who separately produced many of Sir Georg's recordings from 1976 to his death in 1997;
- Ray Minshull, who worked as a producer at Decca before succeeding John Culshaw as the Head of Artists and Repertoire [A&R] for the Company's classical music division, and who kindly provided written information through answering a questionnaire;
- Gordon Parry, who worked as a recording engineer with Decca Records and specifically on Solti's recordings from 1957 to 1971, and who, like Jack Boyce, was a key figure throughout the recording and release of the Decca/Solti 'Ring' cycle;
- Lady Valerie Solti, who met Solti in 1964 and married him in 1967;
- Malcolm Walker, a former editor of 'Gramophone' magazine and discographer;
- John Willan, a senior record producer with EMI before becoming the Manager of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, a post in which he had considerable contact with Sir Georg when he was the Conductor Emeritus of the Orchestra.

Paul Moseley, the Head of Marketing for Decca Records at the time of Sir Georg's death in 1997, also kindly provided some helpful background information.

Wherever the name of any of these sources appears with an asterisk in relation to a quotation, it indicates that the latter has been taken from the interview with that source.

Other sources that have been used include the various printed memoirs, biographies, interviews, articles, advertisements and reviews relevant to Sir Georg and his recording career. These sources are identified individually within the text of the chapter through endnotes, with detailed information on sources being contained within the formal bibliography. Throughout the chapter, all discographical information has been taken from the unpublished discography of Solti's recordings prepared by Paul Davey (Davey, 1992), and kindly supplied by Michael Gray.

5.3. Solti, the Man and his Relationships with Musicians

'...you see it is a little more than being good...what is the extra ingredient? The extra ingredient is image' - Robert Cowan

In considering Solti the man it is necessary to distinguish between the image and the reality. Like his mentor, the conductor Arturo Toscanini, Solti was very conscious of being 'the maestro', especially towards the end of his life. Study of his early recordings and their promotion by Decca Records shows that at the time of his first Wagner operatic recordings he was already being portrayed by Decca in their advertisements during late 1957 in the same visual and written styles as those employed for many other eminent conductors. Solti would be photographed with his head bowed, in deep study of the score. The copywriting attached to such images sought to establish and reinforce his position among the great conductors, and described him as 'one of the great Wagnerians of our time'. (See *The Gramophone*, **XXXV**, 414 and 415, November and December 1957: Decca advertisements for 'Die Walkure' Act III and the 'Todesverkündigung' scene, Act II, for examples of both text and image respectively.)

Decca, for whom Solti recorded loyally throughout his career, consistently maintained this image of Solti in its promotion of his recordings. In essence he was portrayed as a great Central European ‘maestro’, who regularly delivered revelatory recordings of the core symphonic and operatic repertoire. As will be seen later there were occasionally interesting diversions from this stereotype, but broadly it was sustained throughout his life and career.

In human terms this image is often translated into that of an individual who stands aloof, and distant from everyday reality. A rival of Solti, Herbert Von Karajan, in fact deliberately cultivated such an image (See Vaughan, 1986, and Osborne, 1998). However, those who worked with Solti attested to the reality being very different from this stereotypical image. Both in terms of personal relationships and professional conduct, Solti was described as warm and giving. ‘He was ever so kind...He was also very receptive and very interested, and I think this may be another reason we worked together so well.’ (Haas*). He was ‘...a very human person. Very lovely man. But that did not tend to come over...’ (Mallinson*).

Solti had the capacity to relate positively and strongly to people. ‘I think that he liked working in the recording studio with people who liked him.’ (Haas*). On a more general level ‘he loved the buzz of the performance, and the adulation of the audience’ (Valerie Solti*), a comment which neatly encapsulates Solti’s humanity as well as his conformity to the character of the ‘maestro’.

Colleagues commented often on the degree of effort which Solti put into preparing himself for his work. ‘He worked on the scores, he prepared himself’ (Parry*). ‘Solti spent a prodigious amount [of time studying]...It took a long time to learn a new score...penetrating to the essence, into the area behind the printed notes’ (Mallinson*). ‘Solti always did his homework. The most prepared conductor that I have ever worked with...never did anything on the wing... there was never a musical motive or a musical idea that he had not thought about or recognised, or incorporated into what he was doing.’ (Haas*).

As a concomitant to this very high level of preparedness, Solti was always very clear and decisive about what he wanted. To quote James Mallinson*, 'he would have a very clear concept of what he wanted to achieve and he would try and achieve it no matter what.' His widow, Valerie Solti*, reiterated the same point: 'He had a very clear view of what he wanted.' Willan* was even more explicit: 'Solti was clear how he wanted it to go. If he could not get it, it would irritate him.'

Solti as an individual was thus a warm and interested person, as well as being a highly professional musician. By training, experience and preference he identified strongly with the Toscanini school of conducting. Solti had worked with the great Italian conductor as a repetiteur on 'The Magic Flute' at the Salzburg Festival in 1937. The Toscanini approach to music making was founded upon deep study and a very clear idea as to the direction of the performance. For Toscanini the function of the conductor was to achieve as far as possible the creation of this personal vision in practice. Solti's personal intensity and preferred interpretive approach could therefore cause him to be highly demanding with orchestras, to the point at which they might react negatively. To quote John Willan*: '...in the rehearsal he would stop and say to the brass, "what is the matter with you gentlemen, why can't you play this the way I want it? It was OK in Chicago last week"...[it was] like a red rag to a bull.'

With such high levels of preparation and desired outcomes, it is not surprising that Solti drove his orchestras hard. His interaction with orchestras assisted strongly in aligning him with the stereotype of the 'maestro'. In certain circumstances the combination of his intensity and traditional working methods could produce a creative friction that gave the resulting performance strong character. Valerie Solti* described this process vividly in relation to Solti's interaction with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. '...the Vienna Philharmonic may have had a rehearsal at the Opera, gone home, had a large lunch and arrived at three o'clock, really honestly not wanting to perform. And along came this vibrant, dynamic [man]...It worked but it was almost working by combustion or friction because they did not appreciate his enthusiasms at that time in the afternoon...He did not appreciate their feelings...but there were some absolutely fabulous recordings made in Vienna.'

Thus Solti's whole approach to conducting stood at odds with that of Beecham, for instance. For Beecham the interaction with the orchestra was a process of collaboration. For Solti it was a 'complete dictatorship' (Willan*). Solti himself fully acknowledged this side of his character. As one of his published interviewers Helena Matheopoulos has written: 'Solti stressed that this ability to transmit his will to orchestras is a conductor's most essential gift.' (Matheopoulos, 1982, p. 407). Whereas Beecham sought to achieve his musical objectives by suggestion, Solti did so very directly.

The next section considers how Solti interacted with the key components of his recording career: the record company with which he was most closely associated, Decca Records, its senior executives, and the producers with whom he worked.

5.4. Relationships with Record Companies and Producers

5.4.1. Decca Records and Sir Edward Lewis

The record company with which Solti found himself after the Second World War was by traditional corporate standards unorthodox, and had a very different management style to that of Electric and Music Industries Ltd., the record company with which Beecham had the most involvement. Decca was dominated by the personality of Sir Edward Lewis, a stockbroker who had created The Decca Record Company out of The Decca Gramophone Company in 1929 (see Culshaw, 1979, and Lewis, 1956) and who had gradually and assiduously built it up into a major rival to EMI.

In 1937 Decca purchased the Crystalate Company and with it came a brilliant engineer, Arthur Haddy. During the Second World War Decca secured a contract from the government to develop a system that could record submarine signals. The result was 'full frequency range recording' (ffrr), which extended the range of recorded sound up to and occasionally beyond the limits of human hearing at twenty kilocycles. When applied to the recording of music the result represented a

significant advance in recording technology. Technology and the engineers were thus a key part of the team ethos that developed at Decca under Lewis: ‘they loved the music and what they were doing. They had wonderful ears and great talent’ (Valerie Solti*).

Lewis’s entrepreneurial skills, when combined with the international contacts of his associate Maurice Rosengarten and Arthur Haddy’s engineering knowledge, placed Decca at the forefront of the English recording industry immediately following the Second World War. Decca began to manufacture the long playing record (LP) for the American market as early as 1948, and introduced the LP into England in 1950, together with the hardware required to play it. EMI was not to follow suit for another two years, thereby allowing its competitor to gain significant commercial advantage and diminishing its own position.

The character of the company was unusual. Jack Boyce* described it graphically: ‘it was a swashbuckling type of place in which to work...[one could do] damn well anything.’ Gordon Parry* was attracted both by its development of ‘ffrr’ and by its ‘unorthodoxy’. The management style of the Chairman, Sir Edward Lewis, was one of letting employees ‘get on with it’ (Boyce*). Another description was provided by Ray Minshull*, who succeeded John Culshaw as head of the classical music division: ‘it [Decca] was run very clearly as a (benevolent) Dictatorship by the Chairman, by Rosengarten, by Haddy, and the A&R Manager. Committees were not encouraged, but advice from colleagues was not ignored.’

5.4.2. Maurice Rosengarten

A key figure in both Solti’s career and the development of Decca Records after the Second World War was Maurice Rosengarten. Rosengarten was a Swiss entrepreneur of great ability who held the Decca sales franchise for Switzerland and Germany after the Second World War. In 1950 he formed the Teldec record company through a partnership between the German record company Telefunken and Decca (Sanders, 1998b, pp. 8-9.). Amongst other activities, Rosengarten also ran an artists’ agency. His close relationship with major European musicians, assisted during the Second World War by his Swiss nationality, and his close contact with Sir Edward Lewis

soon brought him to the centre of Decca's plans for classical music. Lewis correctly saw the creation of an international catalogue of classical music recordings as being well suited to exploiting the technological advances of both 'ffrr' and the long playing record. He therefore invited Maurice Rosengarten 'to control this bold venture' (*Records and Recording*, 3, 9, June 1960, Rimington van Wyck advertisement, p. 8. The advertisement continued: 'Much credit is due to Mr. Rosengarten for his enterprising handling of so tremendous a task.').

Rosengarten was a business man who loved negotiating, '...he was always trying to get a good deal' (Valerie Solti*). He did not have a detailed knowledge of classical music, and did not seek to impose his views as to repertoire upon the company. To quote Minshull*: 'He [Rosengarten] did not pretend any more than Sir Edward to have any classical music knowledge, and left artistic decisions to his classical A&R Manager.' What he was concerned about was 'getting the best artists for Decca...the repertoire decisions he left either to the artists or the producer' (Valerie Solti*). Gordon Parry* provided a vivid description: 'He was the Sam Goldwyn. Knew nothing about music...he was only interested [in] where the money could be made. But he had an ambition to have all the best artists under his wing. Without him the catalogue for Decca could not have been created.'

Solti, who had been based in Switzerland throughout the Second World War, fully understood the opportunities for recording that Rosengarten could make available to him. He allied these to his own ambitions. Rosengarten described their first meeting in Zurich in 1946: 'The first thing he said as he came in was that he wanted to conduct.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.29). Shortly afterwards Solti was appointed to the Musical Directorship of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich and Rosengarten saw promise in him. 'He was so sure of himself that I decided he must have the makings of a great conductor...He promised that he would do his best, and he has kept that promise.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.29).

Valerie Solti* confirmed Rosengarten's central position in giving Solti the opportunities he sought: 'Rosengarten saw this man and wanted I think to help.' Yet at the same time Solti was not close to Rosengarten. Gordon Parry* commented that

‘Rosengarten always referred to him with John Culshaw as “your friend Mr. Solti”.’ Valerie Solti* also described her husband’s surprise and pleasure at being invited to visit Rosengarten at his home shortly before his death in 1975. Solti fully realised Rosengarten’s importance to Decca, commenting after one of his last visits to see him ‘what is going to happen to this company when [he dies]?’ (Valerie Solti*).

The linkage with Rosengarten was fortuitous for Solti in two key ways. Firstly it enabled him to gain a foothold with a record company – even if this was as a pianist accompanying the distinguished violinist Georg Kulenkampff. It was ‘important to be offered this, to be able to do something at all’ (Valerie Solti*). The second factor lay in the unique way in which Rosengarten worked, particularly in relation to artists and repertoire, and the consequences of this for Solti.

Thus once Solti had entered into a relationship with Decca the potential for working in repertoire in which he excelled, notably that of opera and of the two ‘Richards’, Wagner and Strauss, in theory presented itself, although not immediately, and provided he could establish a good relationship with the company’s senior producer. This he was to do with John Culshaw, who became the senior producer responsible for classical music recordings at Decca in 1956, in succession to Victor Olof.

5.4.3. Victor Olof

In the early days of ‘ffrr’ Decca did not employ a producer for its classical recordings. The recording arrangements seem to have been made between Rosengarten and Harry Sarton, effectively the overall Head of Artists and Repertoire for the whole company. (Sarton died in 1951 to be replaced by the more interventionist Frank Lee.) In the studio the balance engineer would double as the producer. One of the engineers in question, Kenneth Wilkinson, has described how the position of producer within the company evolved. ‘It was during those days that Victor Olof formed the Beecham Orchestra [the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra] and he used to be there on the sessions, and eventually came into the control room and sort of helped out with the score. That is when he was approached to join the company as a producer. He, basically, was the first classical producer we had.’ (Gray, 1986, p.108).

Olof thus soon became the person within the company who took decisions relating to the repertoire to be recorded by the artists signed up by Rosengarten. Olof had been the producer of Solti's first recording session, with Kulenkampff in Zurich on February 1st 1947. They were both on the threshold of important careers in the record industry.

The producer with whom Solti was to form a close working relationship, John Culshaw, described Olof's view of Solti as a musician in 1950. 'Olof had serious reservations about what he thought was an uncontrollable brashness in Solti's general approach to music...He had decided that Solti should not be let loose on any more Haydn symphonies.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.35). This was a reference to Solti's first orchestral recording for Decca with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, of Haydn's Symphony No. 103, made at the end of August 1949 and produced by Culshaw.

In 1956 Olof moved from Decca to become a senior producer with EMI, to work with amongst others Sir Thomas Beecham. John Culshaw replaced him. Prior to this change, for the initial period of his long association with Decca, from 1947 until 1956, Solti was not able to determine the repertoire that he might record and that would show 'what he could do.' As Culshaw had recognised as early as 1949 and 1950, when he had heard Solti conduct Richard Strauss's 'Der Rosenkavalier' and Richard Wagner's 'Die Walkure' respectively in Munich, this was the operatic repertoire (Culshaw, 1967, p.32).

During Olof's regime at Decca the recording of opera was dominated in the German wing by conductors such as Krips, Bohm and Knappertsbusch, and in the Italian by Alberto Erede. To quote Gordon Parry* as to Solti's relative influence: 'George in those days would not have got a look in, although he always wanted to...wanted it very much...he had got a five year contract but I mean nobody except John would have [considered him for] recording operas.' Parry* also described Olof and inferred at the difference between Olof and Culshaw as creative producers: 'He [Olof] was a good musician, but not a great producer...the notes were all there, but...he did not contribute positively.'

Thus up until 1956 the influence of recording upon Solti was limited. He had successfully embarked on a recording career thanks to Rosengarten. The critical reception of Solti's early recordings was variable up until the end of 1955, notably in the symphonic repertoire. Only in the recording of operatic music, such as overtures by Suppe and Rossini, was the critical reception uniformly enthusiastic. (Reviewers in *The Gramophone* described as follows firstly Solti's recording of Four Overtures by Suppe: 'The playing is real, musical, intelligent and interested. Excellent value is always given to the notes – nothing is skimmed.' (Hubert Foss, *The Gramophone*, **XXIX**, 342, November 1951, p.131), and of Overtures by Rossini: 'First-rate, both of them, with every player on his toes (which is the only position in which to play Rossini) and the result is of both charm and virtuosity.' (Trevor Harvey, *The Gramophone*, **XXXIII**, 392, December 1955, p.265). These opinions were shared by other commentators.)

Circumstances in terms of personnel at Decca and the repertoire chosen for recording did not allow Solti to shine fully as a conductor. Thus recording had little influence upon Solti and his career during this period. However the departure of Olof, the promotion of Culshaw, and the commercial introduction of stereophonic sound were shortly to alter this situation significantly. Solti was 'in the right place and the right time' (Parry*), although he may not have immediately realised this.

5.4.4. John Culshaw

The rapport between Solti and Culshaw was strong from the start. Culshaw wrote of their first collaboration in the studio, recording Haydn's Symphony No. 103 and the Overture to Verdi's 'La Forza del Destino' in August 1949, '...there remains only a vague recollection of Solti's vitality and enthusiasm and co-operation [with production and technical staff] – a realisation that making a record could be more than a routine business of putting so many notes of music into a groove.' (Culshaw, 1967, p. 32).

For a short while, between 1953 and 1955, Culshaw left Decca and worked to set up an European classical music recording programme for the American label Capitol.

As part of this he recorded the Brahms' Requiem with Solti in November 1954 (Davey, 1992, p. 2.) with the forces of the Frankfurt Opera, of which Solti was the General Music Director at the time. This recording was made under difficult circumstances, as Capitol's engineer proved to be incapable of handling the task (Culshaw, 1967, pp. 47-49). Despite this handicap, a recording was completed that was released in the USA.

Culshaw later wrote of what he learned from working with Solti during this episode. 'I came to understand what an extraordinarily adaptable and professional man Solti had become throughout his years of theatrical experience. Nothing on earth would persuade him to accept an artistic result lower than the best he could get within the time available and with the forces at his disposal.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.48.). Thus Culshaw was enthusiastic about Solti both as a musician and as a colleague at a critical time, immediately prior to a significant increase in his own influence.

Denis Vaughan* has suggested that producers such as Culshaw viewed their projects as their 'babies', often seeing them through from inception, recording and production, to marketing, promotion and selling. Valerie Solti* described how they had 'a grand passion' for their work. This approach was implicitly encouraged by the organisational culture fostered by Sir Edward Lewis. Jack Boyce described* Decca at this time: 'If you [had] got the right person...Lewis gave permission...' It was 'much more simple.' The only formal committee was the international repertoire committee, dominated by Lewis and Rosengarten, that met annually in November. This simplicity enabled producers to identify strongly with their projects.

Culshaw was unusual among producers in that he saw the recording as 'an art form in itself...and that is what he believed in.' (Parry*). With the vast apparatus of technical paraphernalia that recording required at this time, it was not difficult to conceive of recording in similar terms to film. The raw material of film is edited film stock, manipulating photographed forms of fact and fiction to create an artificial reality designed to evoke specific emotions. The parallel with sound recording from approximately 1948, using tape that could be edited, was obvious.

In addition Culshaw brought into play certain other key characteristics. Firstly he had a strong sense of what the market would accept, critically often in anticipation of it. Jack Boyce* described this understanding from his own perspective as head of the classical music marketing function at Decca during Culshaw's period as the senior producer of classical music: '...he...had this deep sense of what the market wanted...where it should be going.' This understanding, or instinct, when linked to the ability to articulate distinctive repertoire choices, which came into play from June 1956 onwards after Culshaw had replaced Olof, enabled him to push successfully for the creation of recordings such as the various parts of 'The Ring' cycle and Britten's 'War Requiem'. To many contemporaries both projects initially appeared to have limited commercial appeal, but in fact went on to become best-sellers.

The technical bias of Decca also came powerfully into play in the work of Culshaw. To quote Jack Boyce* again, '...as soon as John heard of stereo he was there...[not] as EMI did and point two microphones...and say 'this is all they can do'...Not at all. Mixing mikes all over the place. Mixing to get the right sound which they wanted onto the disc. He saw the potential...[of] moving them {singers} around so that they [sounded] absolutely fabulous.'

Unlike his immediate rival Walter Legge, Culshaw gathered around himself an excellent team of like-minded individuals. Parry* described him as a natural leader 'very open to democratic opinions...We would sit down and discuss things for ages...if it did not work out [he would] be prepared to evaluate it'. Another notable leadership characteristic, the opposite of intervention, and identified by James Mallinson* was 'this amazing ability to know when [to] stand out of the way.' An example of Culshaw's open-mindedness is the development of the idea of recording the first part of 'The Ring', 'Das Rheingold'. To quote Parry* once again: '...everyone said "why don't you do 'Walkure'? Why don't you do anything else but the 'Rheingold' [which] has never been a popular thing.'" I was the one who said, "Look this is the beginning of stereo, it {Das Rheingold} has all the noises that people will want to show their hi-fi off.'" '

Culshaw possessed two other important and essential characteristics – he had ‘a marvellous insight into music, which the conductors respected’ (Parry*), and also great charm. ‘John was an arch diplomat’ (Parry*). These, and the foregoing traits, really came into play with the final, and perhaps most fundamental, description of him – that of impresario. Gordon Parry*, a close eye-witness to the whole of this period, described this graphically: ‘All the great producers of that period were not exactly musicians in themselves. They were, if you like, impresarios.’ Not only did Culshaw conceive of his projects, he actively promoted them throughout the period of gestation, production, manufacture, promotion and distribution.

Thus after Culshaw moved into the key production position at Decca in the summer of 1956, Solti became one of the team through which Culshaw brought to fruition his particular vision for recording. This participation gave Solti the opportunity ‘to show them what he could do.’ (Parry*).

5.5. Repertoire Decisions

5.5.1. Introduction

The decisive event within the recording career of Sir Georg Solti was the recording of Richard Wagner’s operatic tetralogy ‘Der Ring des Nibelungen’. This marked a major turning point in Sir Georg’s recording career. There are therefore two perspectives to examine in relation to repertoire decisions. These are his recording career before the recording of ‘The Ring’, and his recording career after ‘The Ring’ had been released. The first part of the tetralogy ‘Das Rheingold’ was recorded between September 24th and October 8th 1958 in Vienna. The final part to be recorded, ‘Die Walkure’, was committed to tape between October 24th and November 19th 1965, again in Vienna.

At the time of recording ‘Das Rheingold’ Solti was General Music Director of the Frankfurt Opera, one of Germany’s second-rank houses, albeit with a distinguished history. He was in the process of making a name for himself internationally. By the time ‘Die Walkure’ was released in England in the summer of 1966 he had been

Music Director of the Covent Garden Opera Company for five years (from the autumn of 1961), and the invitation (for the second time, the first having been made in 1963) to become Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was to be made the following year, in 1967. One of Solti's biographers, Paul Robinson, described Solti's position in European music making at this time, 'After Karajan, the most celebrated conductor at work in 1967 was Solti.' (Robinson, 1979, p.44.). His career had greatly developed during this period from directing a leading second rank German opera house to being considered as Music Director of one of the world's finest orchestras.

5.5.2. The recordings before 'The Ring'

Solti's first orchestral recordings for Decca were two symphonies and two overtures. The Overture to 'Egmont', by Beethoven, was recorded with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra in June 1947, and released as a Decca 'K' series 78rpm record. In 1948 and 1949 Solti also made two recordings with the Bavarian State Opera Orchestra (the Bayerische Staatskapelle) for the German company Deutsche Grammophon. These were initially released on the company's 78rpm Polydor label in Germany. The first of them was of Kodaly's 'Hary Janos' Suite (1948) and the second was of excerpts from Richard Strauss's opera 'Elektra' (1949). Given Solti's expertise in Richard Strauss's operatic music at this time, and his close identification with the music of the two pre-eminent Hungarian composers of the period, Bartok and Kodaly, it may reasonably be surmised that the repertoire of these two German recordings reflected his own preferences.

For Decca the Overture to 'Egmont' was followed by the recording of the Overture to Verdi's 'The Force of Destiny' in August 1949. At the same sessions Solti recorded Haydn's Symphony No.103. The Haydn symphony was followed a year later with another recording for Decca, of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony, again with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. This was made in November 1950. Culshaw was under no illusion that while Solti, as fine executant musician, could turn his hand to this music, it did not represent him at his already considerable best. 'I longed to work with him again on something which...offered more scope than Haydn.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.32).

Paul Davey's highly detailed discography for Solti (Davey, 1992) does not list a producer for the Beethoven recording. Given Culshaw's position with Decca at this time, and the comment quoted above, the impetus to record the Haydn and Beethoven Symphonies probably emanated from Victor Olof and Solti. The influence of Olof and Rosengarten may be discerned in the proposal that Solti's next recording should be of Overtures by the operetta composer Franz von Suppe. To quote Culshaw: 'I became aware of what had been quite implicit in his relationship with Decca: he did not get on with Victor Olof, who was in charge, artistically, of the classical catalogue...he [Olof] felt that Suppe Overtures would be more in keeping with Solti's abilities.' (Culshaw, 1967, p.35). Culshaw also hints at some degree of participation by Rosengarten in this decision: 'At a guess, the deed was done by Zurich' (Culshaw, 1967, p. 35).

Thus the decisions as to repertoire to be recorded rested largely with Victor Olof, and he exercised this power proactively, and presumably in the light of his views as to what was the best balance between an artist's capabilities and the needs of the Decca catalogue. Until Olof left Decca in June 1956, Solti was restricted to recording a diet consisting of Hungarian music, by Bartok and Kodaly, symphonies by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Tchaikovsky, and operatic overtures by Verdi, Suppe and Rossini. Clearly Solti agreed with this repertoire, but, as already has been noted, his ability to influence decisions was limited. To quote Culshaw: 'Olof had staunchly opposed his work as a conductor' (Culshaw, 1981, p.187).

The critical reception of this repertoire was mixed. While the Suppe Overtures were well received, especially in the USA, the recording of the Mendelssohn's Third Symphony received less favourable reviews, as did Solti's accompaniment to Mischa Elman's performance of the Beethoven Violin Concerto. The initial recordings of music by Hungarian composers were praised, but later issues provoked an adverse reaction. The recordings of Mozart Symphonies and operatic overtures were admired.

His two final recordings of this period, made in Paris during May 1956, were received in a similarly varied manner. His reading of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony

was ruled out of court by the critics in October 1956 on account of poor orchestral playing. However the Second Symphony of Tchaikovsky, released in January 1957, was highly praised and was preferred to the performance led by Sir Thomas Beecham. The EMG Newsletter put the comparison well: ‘The rough vigour and fire of this version suit the extrovert character of the work much more than does Sir Thomas’s somewhat gentlemanly approach to it.’ (*EMG Monthly Newsletter*, **26**, 12, December 1956, p.5).

As soon as Culshaw took over from Olof he proposed the recording of ‘Die Walkure’ with Solti conducting: ‘Memories of the Solti ‘Walkure’ in Munich began to stir again, and at the international repertoire meeting in November [1956] I put forward the idea that we should record the work complete in 1957. To my great joy it was approved.’ (Culshaw, 1967, p.69). This quotation illustrates powerfully the critical influence held at this time by the producer. It was Culshaw’s proposal to record ‘Die Walkure’, not anyone else’s; and the stimulus was his vivid recollection of Solti’s performance in Munich during the summer of 1950. Solti’s involvement in repertoire planning up to this point was no more than collaborative and, if the case of the Suppe Overtures is anything to go by, consisted of agreeing to the repertoire proposals put forward by Decca. In this instance the influence of the record company was dominant.

The importance of repertoire lies partly in the impact of the critical reception of a recording. To quote the record producer Markos Klorman ‘A bad review can destroy a recording; a good one will only help it.’ (Verbal comment made in conversation with the author, 19.06.00). Thus if a musician through force of circumstances ends up recording repertoire in which his or her capability may be limited, the risk of critical dismissal may be greater than might be the case with repertoire in which they can really shine musically. Solti during this period was in danger of entering this zone of critical aversion.

5.5.3. The recordings during and after ‘The Ring’

The projected 1957 complete recording of ‘Die Walkure’, referred to above, changed because Kirsten Flagstad would not undertake the role of Brunnhilde at the

beginning of Act II (Culshaw, 1967, p.70). She did however agree to recording Acts I (as Sieglinde) and III and the 'Todesverkündigung' ('Announcement of death') scene in Act II (as Brunnhilde). Solti successfully conducted the last two parts of the opera in May 1957 in Vienna. However his weak position in relation to influence is seen in Rosengarten's decision (and significantly not Culshaw's) to give the subsequent recording of Act I to Hans Knappertsbusch. This decision would have been made during the summer of 1957. Knappertsbusch at this time had a major reputation as a Wagner conductor. In 1957 he conducted a particularly fine 'Ring' cycle at the Bayreuth Festival. By contrast Solti was relatively untried and would still have been very much the junior partner, even though he has satisfactorily substituted for Karl Bohm in Vienna as the conductor of Decca's recording of Richard Strauss's opera 'Arabella', also made during May 1957. The First Act of 'Die Walkure', conducted by Knappertsbusch, was recorded in October 1957, prior to the commercial release of the 'Die Walkure' extracts recorded earlier and conducted by Solti.

The critical success of the recording of Act III and the scene from Act II of 'Die Walkure', released firstly in December 1957 in monophonic sound and secondly in December 1958 in stereophonic sound (thus enabling the recording to be favourably reviewed a second time), marks a major shift in the balance of influence held by Solti in relation to the repertoire which he recorded. This was heightened by Culshaw's frustration at working with Knappertsbusch. Solti by this time was adept at the techniques of recording, whereas Knappertsbusch was not, despite his longer experience. Culshaw wrote of the October 1957 sessions: 'The truth was that Knappertsbusch took very badly to recording conditions, and, no matter what we did, the genius which he so certainly revealed in the theatre refused to come alive in studio conditions.' (Culshaw, 1967, pp. 78-79; pp. 78-80 describe some of Culshaw's experiences of Knappertsbusch and recording.). The inability of Knappertsbusch to conduct a satisfactory recording Act I of 'Die Walkure' left the way clear for Solti to be named as the conductor for 'Das Rheingold', recorded a year later during September and October 1958.

In September 1958, immediately prior to the recording of 'Das Rheingold', Solti recorded Beethoven's Fifth and Seventh Symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, despite Culshaw's concerns about his suitability to this repertoire. This was repertoire that Solti wanted strongly to record: to quote Culshaw, '...the opportunity to record Beethoven symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic attracted him even more than the prospect of 'Das Rheingold'.' (Culshaw, 1981, p.187). In the event these recordings were not successful and Solti did not return to this repertoire for another fourteen years, apart from recording Beethoven's Third Symphony, the 'Eroica', with the Vienna Philharmonic during the following May of 1959, the final instalment of this foray into the core symphonic repertoire,

Gordon Parry* commented on this episode in interview: 'Where John gave way and let him conduct his own [choice of] symphonies [it would have been] much better to have waited. Solti in the end agreed with all this.' Nonetheless the example is instructive firstly in demonstrating the shift in decision making power as to repertoire in Solti's favour, and secondly the speed at which such changes take place. The change of key personnel, combined with artistic success and critical acclaim, quickly altered Solti's position.

Between the recording of 'Das Rheingold' in 1958 and its great success on release in March 1959 both in terms of critical reaction and high international sales, and the recording of 'Die Walkure' as the final instalment of the Solti 'Ring', made in October and November 1965, Solti's recorded repertoire expanded to consist of four strands. That of operatic excerpts, such as overtures and interludes, remained, as did music by his teacher Bartok. In addition there started to appear key elements of the symphonic repertoire: in addition to the Beethoven Symphonies already mentioned, Mahler's First and Fourth Symphonies, Bruckner's Seventh Symphony, and an unreleased recording of Stravinsky's 'The Rite of Spring'.

The fourth strand is that of recordings of complete operas, made for both Decca and RCA: 'Tristan und Isolde' (1960), 'Aida' (1961), 'Salome' (1961), 'Un Ballo in Maschera' (1962), 'Siegfried' (1962), 'Rigoletto' (1963), 'Falstaff' (1963), 'Gotterdammerung' (1964), 'Don Carlos' (1965) and 'Die Walkure' (1965). This

repertoire was ideally matched to Solti's talents as a conductor and to his work throughout this period at Covent Garden. Its publication reinforced his reputation as a pre-eminent operatic conductor. Clearly by the time he had established himself at Covent Garden, with highly successful productions of 'Arabella' and 'Moses und Aaron' during 1965, he was in control of all major repertoire decisions for recordings.

From 1967 onwards Solti's recordings balanced the major works of the operatic canon with the most important elements of the symphonic repertoire. Solti's development as a symphonic conductor may be charted through this latter part of his discography, paralleling his move to Chicago.

The process for arriving at repertoire decisions for recordings at this time was clearly outlined by Ray Minshull*: '...whoever ran the A&R department would discuss Sir Georg's own proposals alongside others which may have been put forward by our major markets, and arrived at an agreed list of priorities.' The way in which Solti's priorities were articulated was described by Lady Solti*: 'He has a plan of what was to be done. So he would say when he made a new contract "Within this contract period I would like to record this, that and another."' 'Lady Solti* also pointed out that 'it was not always possible, because maybe 'that' had been promised to another conductor.'

Those who worked with Solti towards the end of his career were clear as to where the 'locus' of influence lay. Michael Haas* stated in interview that 'there was room for him to expand where he wanted, without any problems from the company whatsoever. He had the great luck though to be able to more or less call all the repertoire shots during his lifetime.' This perspective was confirmed by James Mallinson*: '...basically [he] did anything he wanted. Fortunately most of what he wanted was worth doing.'

At the same time Solti recognised that the longer he stayed with Decca, the more sway he would have over repertoire decisions: 'the more senior he became, the more he had the choice' (Lady Solti*). This comment clearly indicates the very

considerable benefits to be derived from working with one company for an extended period, rather than flitting from one to another. The longer monogamy is maintained the greater the mutual interest of both partners in sustaining the relationship, and exploiting its fruits.

Once Solti had established himself as a marketable proposition in the field of classical music recordings, by demonstrating powerfully what he could do well through the opportunities provided by John Culshaw, he was quickly able to become the dominant influence in repertoire decisions. The influence of the recording industry in this instance was thus to provide a platform from which Solti could demonstrate to an international audience his great capability as a conductor, especially in this particular repertoire. This is the key point about the relationship between John Culshaw and Georg Solti. It was forcefully made by Gordon Parry*: ‘...many people have said “Oh well, of course John Culshaw made Solti.” This is not true. He gave him the opportunity to show what he could do.’

Solti himself was characteristically understated about the importance of recordings and repertoire in the development of his career. When asked by Robert Chesterman if it was recording ‘essentially that established your present position [in 1978] at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’, he replied: ‘I wouldn’t say ‘essentially’. But, of course, it helps, naturally. I wouldn’t deny the fact of good luck. You get a chance or two. You have to use the chances. If you don’t, you’re lost. I had some successes, because I recorded pieces which were important, operas which until then were unheard, the ‘Ring’ cycle of Wagner, complete, on record.’ (Chesterman, 1990, p.47).

5.6. The Act of Recording

5.6.1. Introduction

This section considers Solti’s working methods as a recording conductor. Before examining his approach to recording in detail, two conditioning sets of circumstances are considered. These are firstly the prevailing aesthetic for recording, developed

predominantly by John Culshaw and which emerged as a dominant force at the time of Solti's breakthrough recording of 'Das Rheingold' of 1958, and secondly Solti's own personal attitude towards recording. Solti's work initially in the recording studio and later through the use of live concerts as the basis for commercial recordings is then considered.

5.6.2. The Culshaw aesthetic

As noted earlier, and as clearly stated by Gordon Parry, John Culshaw developed a clear concept of the sound recording as an art form in its own right: 'That's what he believed in.' (Gordon Parry*).

The idea of the sound recording as an artificial entity, different from the live performance, and if successfully articulated, improving upon reality, legitimised the technical possibilities created by the introduction firstly of recording on tape and secondly of reproduction through the long playing record.

With 78 rpm and wax based recording technologies the primary objective had been to achieve a note-perfect rendition of a work, or part of a work, lasting approximately four minutes. In the case of Sir Thomas Beecham, the objective would be the creation of a performance, through much repetition if necessary, that achieved the level of what he believed to be a satisfactory interpretation.

Tape and the LP extended the possibilities of recording considerably. The use of tape allowed the producer or musician to make several significant changes to the performances created in the studio. Firstly, tape accelerated the process of improvement made possible by recording through the ability of the musician to hear himself or herself. In the 78rpm process usually about two weeks elapsed between the act of recording and the production of test pressings from the wax masters. Instant tape playback enabled the musician to check the performance against the written score of the composer and to rectify mistakes immediately.

Secondly, tape editing and re-recording allowed for mistakes to be dealt with artificially, for instance through the super-imposition of a correctly pitched note in

place of an incorrect one. Thirdly, and moving beyond improvement, tape recording, through the accumulation of many different ‘takes’ and so choices, allowed for re-interpretation at the post-production stage.

Fourthly, tape recording and the electronic manipulation of sound permitted the introduction of effects which could be utilised within the context of certain types of performance, most notably opera. Thus, for instance the voice of the singer taking the role of Gunther in ‘Götterdämmerung’ could be subtly altered when he wears the Tarnhelm, the magic helmet which in the staged performance of the opera changes his appearance to that of the opera’s hero, Siegfried. An aural equivalent to this dramatic ‘coup de theatre’ became possible in recording through the electronic manipulation of the singer’s voice, and the capture of this upon the recording medium of the time, tape.

Another example of the possibilities which tape recording and electronic manipulation opened up was the introduction of music employing different spatial relationships. Benjamin Britten’s ‘War Requiem’ was composed with three different aural perspectives in mind, each of which had its own distinct character, in terms of dramatic relevance as well as of sound. These different perspectives may be effectively recreated for the listener through the medium of a well-produced sound recording.

After the introduction of tape recording the most significant technical developments were the long-playing record and stereophonic sound. The long playing record was developed by the Columbia Recording Corporation (CRC) under the leadership of Edward Wallerstein, as a competitive weapon in its commercial battle with its larger rival, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA). Wallerstein was always insistent that the LP should play for a minimum of seventeen minutes, on the basis that approximately ninety per cent of the standard classical music repertoire could be accommodated within this time frame on a double sided record (Rooney, 1998, p.31).

Culshaw was not the only record company executive to realise that the LP also offered the opportunity for the catalogue to be extended to include works which in the 78 rpm format would simply have been too unwieldy for commercial exploitation. HMV's recording of Wagner's 'Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg', made at the Bayreuth Festival in 1951 and issued in 1952 on 34 78rpm discs, or 68 sides, was essentially unfeasible in the 78 rpm medium, but the production of such a work was completely feasible when it was reduced, as Decca issued it at this time, to six LPs, or 12 sides.

Stereophonic sound added greatly to the realism of the recording by spreading the orchestra across an aural horizon of one hundred and eighty degrees. Although Culshaw's adoption of the 'Sonic Stage' labelling of certain stereophonic recordings, most notably the Solti performances of Richard Strauss's opera 'Salome', was later regretted and presented as slightly 'tongue in cheek', the label contained more than a grain of truth. Stereo did create a 'sound stage' for the listener, within which location and movement could be clearly apprehended. As such the new 'stage' created by developments in the technology of recorded sound made a perfectly acceptable substitute to the real (operatic) stage for the listener. 'Sonic Stage' was a logical outcome of the aesthetic possibilities presented by the use of stereophonic sound and electronic manipulation.

Culshaw thus came to develop his aesthetic of the recording as a legitimate artificial creation, with its own particular technologies. It only needed mediation by the recording equivalents of the film producer and film director to create an artefact parallel to the motion picture, also made through the manipulation of synthetic material that recorded specific elements of a manufactured reality. He was assisted in the development of this idea by certain factors, notably the emphasis placed upon technological innovation within Decca.

This came about through the leadership of Arthur Haddy. Haddy held a significant position within the Company, and led it in the adoption of stereophonic sound. The combination of Haddy and Lewis was potent. Ray Minshull* recalled: 'Sir Edward Lewis financed the enormous amount of technical research which was carried out by

our superb recording staff under the inspired direction of Arthur Haddy, and led to our leading position, first with the LP, then with stereo, and finally with digital recording.’ To quote Michael Gray: ‘By 1959, it was clear that stereo was going to be the future of Decca Records.’ (Gray, 1986, p.108).

Technological innovation was as much (if not more so) a driver within the company as purely artistic considerations within the classical music division, for which Culshaw was responsible beneath Rosengarten. The culture of the Company thus welcomed projects that demonstrated its technical prowess, as ‘Das Rheingold’ did, and as Gordon Parry had foreseen.

The difference that these various technical developments made to the act of recording heightened the essential difference between a recording and a performance. This was well described in interview by the producer John Willan*. ‘There is a different discipline to being in the studio from being in the concert hall. Obviously [with] live performance...you get one stab at it and that’s that. You are doing it in an open environment rather than a closed environment. In a recording studio I think that from a performer’s point of view one of the things that must be quite interesting for them...is the ability to actually dissect a piece and put it together [through recording in sections], then go and listen. Can’t do that with a performance unless it has been broadcast.’

The aesthetic thus developed by Culshaw recognised as completely legitimate the possibilities opened up by the technological innovations associated with recording, and which added a new dimension to musical expression. Gordon Parry* has described this change: ‘It is something that grew from the fifties into the sixties as recording [became] an art form in itself. In other words it was a performance for recording, [different] from the theatre or concert hall.’ Here Culshaw and Parry were claiming completely new high ground for recording. Parry* made the telling point in interview that ‘You should never look at a record as being sort of the poor relation of a live performance.’

Solti developed as a recording artist precisely in parallel to the introduction of the technological developments which both gave rise to the Culshaw aesthetic and which drove its practical articulation. By demonstrating his great musical acumen, his comfort with the new technology, and an openness to Culshaw's team-based approach to working, Solti was the obvious candidate to lead musically many of the projects which Culshaw wished to develop to demonstrate his aesthetic of recording. His productions of 'Das Rheingold', 'Salome' and 'Siegfried', all conducted by Solti, are perhaps the most pre-eminent of these. By the time these recordings and the aesthetic ideas driving them had begun to wane in influence, Solti had established himself sufficiently strongly elsewhere to be no longer dependent upon them for the further development of his career.

Parry* summed up both the difference between live and recorded performance and Solti's place within the development of the latter: '...people tend to tape live performances from the concert hall or from the theatre. But I think that it is less exciting than when you have created the thing for a recording [recorded] performance...completely different approach and technique. And Solti understood that far more than any other conductor apart from Bernstein.'

5.6.3. The Solti aesthetic

As a musician Sir Georg Solti came firmly out of the Hungarian/Italian mould as personified by preceding conductors such as Fritz Reiner and Arturo Toscanini. Reiner and Solti shared the same musical education at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, and even some of the same teachers in Bela Bartok, Zoltan Kodaly, and Leo Weiner. The priorities of this schooling included a high level of technical accomplishment, great accuracy of performance, and a clear sense of architecture within the performance.

Solti revered Toscanini. The invitation from Toscanini to work with him on his performances of 'The Magic Flute' at the Salzburg Festival in 1937 was clearly a significant milestone in Solti's development as a musician. The key characteristic which the two musicians shared was the firm belief that it was the conductor's function to recreate in performances the realisation of his or her own musical

conception of a work as strongly as possible, guided by the written markings of the composer. In the pursuit of this objective, it was essential to have the ability to superimpose upon other musicians one's own conception: 'I firmly believe that the essential quality of a conductor is, first of all, that power to project your imagination to other people.' (Robinson, 1979, opposite p.90).

The Solti aesthetic was therefore founded upon a very clear conception of the performance of individual pieces of music, and the idea that it was the function of the conductor's collaborators to bend entirely to his will. This aesthetic stands a long way from that of Sir Thomas Beecham, whose views upon performance and interpretation were constantly changing, and who looked to the musicians with whom he worked to give prodigally of their own musical ideas and instincts. Mallinson* described this element of Solti's character colloquially: 'He was a bit of a control freak.' The same point was made by John Willan*: 'Solti was clear how he wanted it to go. If he couldn't get it, it would irritate him...so it is not a partnership really with the orchestra.'

Solti and Culshaw were therefore a very good match for each other. Solti's musical aesthetic was ideally suited to Culshaw's technical vision, principally because both were founded upon the idea of achieving a highly defined conception of a piece of music through the medium of recording, using musical and technical means. To quote Jack Boyce*: '...he was the right conductor and in the right place. And Decca really to my mind was the right company for him because a lot of producers would never have got all that out of Solti and on to disc.'

This adoption of technical means to achieve a musical end went hand in hand with the ideas, firstly, of articulating a precise musical vision, and, secondly, if it achieved this end, of the resulting recording being a definitive statement upon the part of the conductor. Lady Solti* expressed this point of view clearly: '...if it [the recording] was right...he would then look at [it] as the definitive statement of his reading or his interpretation of a work...that was very, very important and so had a particular quality.' Neither Solti's style as a conductor nor his conception of individual works

changed greatly during his lifetime, apart from his understanding of the Symphonies of Mahler.

In the pursuit of the creation, both through musicians and technicians, of the conductor's personal vision, Solti relished the process of discovery and analysis previously referred to by John Willan. To quote Lady Solti* again: '...he really enjoyed the rehearsal and this unravelling, this learning, this doing it, this trying to fulfil the concept.' In his willing participation in the technical aspects of recording Solti stood in a not dissimilar relationship to recording as did Glenn Gould.

From this idea of the record as a definitive statement, it was just a short step to seeing the record as something even more than this. Lady Solti* suggested that Solti saw his recordings 'like a legacy...it was a documented record of what he did.' Like Toscanini, Solti was never satisfied in his pursuit of the ideals that he envisioned. Lady Solti* quoted a number of comments by Sir Georg reinforcing this belief, for instance: 'The moment I am satisfied you know my career is over'...'If I am satisfied then I am finished.'

5.6.4. Solti in the studio

Solti's way of working, instilled through the powerful training of the Liszt Academy, his experience at the Budapest Opera, and his time as a refugee during the Second World War in Switzerland, where the few opportunities that came his way had to be exploited to the full, made him an ideal recording conductor.

Firstly, as has already been noted, he was extremely well prepared. Secondly Solti was able to adapt quickly if circumstances or results in the recording studio were not in line with his conception. Parry* made the telling point that Solti 'was not stubborn' in this process of adjustment. 'If he came to realise...[having] heard the first tape... it was not as he intended [it] to be...he was quick to re-rehearse and change it. Tremendous differences between the first and second take. You could not cross edit...'

Lady Solti* commented on Solti's keen desire to listen to the playbacks of the takes of his recordings, to the extent of marking clearly in his conducting scores the different characteristics of each take. '...he listened to playbacks all the time. So in a session...he would record, he would do a take and immediately he would go into the control room and listen to it...See his scores here [examining one of Solti's conducting scores]...Look "take 92".' Parry* made the same point: 'He used to write and scribble in his scores in different colours, according to which [take]...rather like a painting...I think the first one was black, the second one was red, the third green.' These markings may be clearly seen in the conducting scores which Sir Georg used for his recordings, such as that for 'La Traviata.'

The third characteristic that Solti displayed in the studio, in addition to his high levels of preparedness and flexibility, was the ability to generate extraordinary levels of intensity quickly. This was a significant factor in the production of recordings, in that Solti was able to stimulate performers to concert pitch or even beyond speedily, and thus ensure that the limited time available for recording was used to the maximum. Like the two earlier characteristics this ability made him especially well suited to recording. Lady Solti* illustrated this trait: 'He could create intensity...He would come in at three o'clock in the afternoon and jump in with a climax and do it.'

Solti was quite relaxed about using the technical flexibility of recording technology to adjust a recorded performance, if this was necessary because of external, constraining factors, such as a lack of time. Parry* remarked that 'if he could not hear something he would alter the balance or ask us to alter it if it was a subtle thing to achieve exactly what he wanted to hear.'

In addition to cosmetic technical adjustments, and rethought interpretations, Solti was agreeable to exploiting the potential of contemporary recording techniques to overcome potentially disabling problems such as the illness or absence of participants. Lady Solti* mentioned as an example of this the recording of the final trio in Solti's recording of Richard Strauss's opera 'Der Rosenkavalier' in which the individual voice of Regine Crespin as the Marschallin was later over-dubbed because of her illness at the time of recording. 'The trio from 'Rosenkavalier' was a

wonderful piece of editing on the part of Jack Locke [the engineer who pulled the performance together]’ (Lady Solti*).

It is thus clear that Solti was highly adept at the techniques of recording in the studio. He could achieve performances of great intensity through his personal character. His high levels of preparation, flexibility and willingness to use the opportunities presented by the technologies of recording, ensured that little time was wasted when he was present in the recording studio, a factor of importance for his record company, Decca.

On Solti as a recording conductor the verdict of Gordon Parry*, who worked closely with both Culshaw and Solti, is highly apposite: ‘he knew more of what recording was about than any other conductor.’ One of his later producers, Michael Haas*, gave a similar opinion: ‘He knew how to record extremely well.’

At this level of sophistication it may be crude to suggest that recording influenced Solti’s activity as a musician. That it did do so is clearly obvious from the foregoing analysis, for instance in terms of the adjustments made to improve the artistic quality of a recording. But at the same time Solti was happy to use recording to further his own musical aims. He was fortunate in that in his case the opportunity occurred for recording technology and musical execution to be fused to form a new version of reality, with which he became closely identified. The producer, in the shape of John Culshaw, was the midwife to this process.

In Solti Decca may have got more than it bargained for, and as it turned out, to its advantage. Michael Haas* suggested this in an illuminating remark that hints at the difference which Solti made as a *recording* conductor, rather than just as an outstanding executant musician: ‘I think he was a hidden bonus. They [Decca] thought they were going to get a great *kapellmeister* who would give the performance that they needed because they wanted to record ‘The Ring’...But they ended up with Solti, and the result is that Solti made his mark.’ Culshaw also quotes Rosengarten as saying at the time of the writing of ‘Ring Resounding’: ‘The biggest

surprise for me was the way Solti emerged as a great Wagner conductor; I did not expect that at all...' (Culshaw, 1967, p.30).

These comments infer that Solti brought much more to the process of recording 'The Ring' than would have been the case with other contemporary candidates. The difference was the way in which Solti identified closely with the developing aesthetic of John Culshaw, and brought to it his own individual vision and musical capability. The combination of all these factors proved to be formidable, artistically, technically, and, as a result, commercially.

5.6.5. Solti and the 'live performance' as recording

Towards the end of his career Solti took to recording concert performances for commercial release in place of recording in the studio. In effect this meant a final abandonment of any espousal to the Culshaw aesthetic, or the potential to realise this. The Culshaw aesthetic entered a period of rapid decay after Culshaw left Decca to work for the BBC in 1967, although Culshaw himself continued to generate interesting ideas, such as that future recording technology might allow the listener to interact with recordings, for instance over questions of balance (Culshaw, 1966, p.27). A number of reasons have been given for Solti's change of working method.

The most straightforward is that provided by Lady Solti*: 'In the end he liked only to do live recordings...because it was less tiring for him.' This explanation was also given by Ray Minshull*: 'Solti's dynamism ensured that he was normally very tired after about two hours of recording, even though sessions were scheduled to last three hours or (in America) up to four hours.'

James Mallinson* offered an alternative explanation for the shift, based on the greater ease of working and less expense that the recording of live performances permitted. Again Ray Minshull* corroborated these as being further factors. 'In the same way as Karajan and Bernstein insisted on moving in this direction, the main reason was to avoid the need to give two or three performances in one sitting of the same work in the recording studio, when the physical effort involved could be most efficiently and effectively channelled when it was focused on a single (public)

performance. Repeats [of the performance] simply gave the possibility of correcting minor faults in the original.’

Michael Haas* worked closely with Solti on a number of recordings taken from live performances and he offered an explanation that combined all these factors. ‘I think at some point or another he simply realised that spending six hours a day...doing these recording sessions was just wearing him down. And he thought that perhaps it was the way to kill two birds with one stone and just document these pieces [and] final concerts. I think it was a learning process for him as it was a learning process for me: how, what transfers easily and what does not transfer easily.’

Not mentioned in any of these explanations but also a factor that must have been influential was the development of the technology of recording to the point whereby the specialist apparatus developed for recording (about which a considerable mythology had grown up) could be collapsed into smaller and more portable equipment. In the late 1950s when Decca began to record in stereophonic sound the Company had only one tape recorder which was used for stereophonic recording, an Ampex 350-2, that ran at 15 ips (Gray, 1986, p.104). Similarly Decca used only one stereophonic mixer, developed by Ray Wallace, until the late 1950s (Gray, 1986, p.103). This valuable equipment would travel around the major recording locations of Europe in a specially designed recording van.

However, by the beginning of the last decade of the century, because of the advent of digitalisation and its widespread adoption for recording, and advances in miniaturisation, the bulky equipment required earlier for recording had been superseded by equipment that was more generally available, more compact and easier to transport. Above all, it produced in live performance environments results that were all but indistinguishable from those previously obtained in the studio. Thus the continuing technological development of the recording industry served to undermine the aesthetic that John Culshaw had developed. When combined with other factors related, as in Solti’s case, to issues of finance and convenience, the case for recording in the concert hall rather than the studio began to look much stronger. This move had been anticipated by the gradual transformation of recording

orchestras, such as the Philharmonia Orchestra, into normal concert giving bodies (See Pettitt, 1985).

Haas* also pointed out that the increasing mobility of conductors, and the relative earning power per day that this represented, also played a role in the shift from studio to concert hall for recording: ‘...as it became more and more complicated to schedule sessions [because of conductors travelling to many different engagements] it became technically possible to do a patch session following live concerts. I think that people decided really what we have here is the best of both worlds. We can do a live concert, and [for] all of those things that did not work, we can have a three hour patch session and we will do from here to there and from here to there.’

Whether or not the result was better or worse than a studio recording was a matter of personal preference. Within the recording industry itself live recordings have until very recently been perceived as second best and commercially weaker than studio recordings. As John Willan* commented: ‘Live recordings are not felt to have any sort of weight in the market at all.’

Similarly Michael Haas* suggested that the two functions of performing and recording are in fact different, on the basis that the end results are not the same, and in Solti’s case, met with mixed success. ‘Solti then began to turn his concerts into recording sessions...it did affect the attitude towards performing, I think possibly negatively, because performing and recording are two different goals which you are trying to achieve. And I think that trying to combine them into one goal takes away from either or the other.’ This comment neatly encapsulates the fundamental aesthetic issue, the difference between recording in the studio and performing in concert, and Solti’s migration from the former to the latter.

Whereas Solti had developed as a recording conductor from 1948 to 1958, that is from the period marked by the introduction of the LP to the first commercial releases of stereophonic recordings, with the recording of live performances he had no comparable period of apprenticeship. He jumped into it cold, and at a time when he

was fully established as one of the world's greatest conductors. To quote Haas*: 'Solti was new to the game of trying to record live performances.'

Because of the factors outlined above, by the time Solti began to use his live performances as the basis for recordings, the Culshaw aesthetic had eroded to the point whereby it stood clearly as a distinct chapter in the history of recording. Indeed Solti's move to using live performances in this way represented a final 'death-knell' of Culshaw's vision. While there is still clarity about the difference between studio and live recordings by those with detailed knowledge (such as record producers and musicians) this distinction is not necessarily shared by the public. The recordings therefore presented to the public at the end of Solti's career were subtly different from those created by Culshaw, and at their zenith epitomised by the recordings of 'The Ring'.

The escalating costs of recording in the studio have also been a persuasive factor in encouraging the move to recording in the concert hall and opera house. The only other conductor to have completed a studio recording of 'The Ring' has been Herbert von Karajan. His interpretation was released by Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft in parts between 1966 and 1970. It thus appeared shortly after that of Solti, which was re-released as a complete cycle in 1968. More recently, and significantly, two projected studio recordings of the cycle, conducted by Bernard Haitink and Christoph von Dohnanyi, remain unfinished and so incomplete.

In publicity the pre-requisites of recording live were seen by Solti to be, firstly, a high degree of orchestral virtuosity, secondly, a silent audience, and thirdly, a conductor able to maintain consistency of tempo (Johnson, 1989, p.40). Solti saw improvements in interpretation as well: '...I've really fallen in love with the idea of recording live. This sort of work [Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony] is very much better if you're not breaking it up. The *modo grosso* is essential...the sense of architecture is so important.' (op cit.). In the same interview Solti also mentioned Decca's concern regarding the quality of recorded sound. 'My company [Decca] didn't believe that a good enough sound could be produced with a full concert hall.'

But I like the sound we got very much, and the advantages in the quality of the performance are enormous.’

It may thus be argued that the continuing technological development of recording has driven both the construction and destruction of an aesthetic that transformed the constraints of recording into a productive code of practice, still preferred by certain respected practitioners. To quote James Mallinson*: ‘I am not very keen on live recordings, because most of the time they don’t really work...what works in a live performance is not necessarily what works on record.’

Arguably, although Solti’s later recordings have been respectfully received, in the light of history he may be seen as the master of the recording aesthetic developed and promulgated most persuasively by John Culshaw. Careful manipulation of price has ensured for instance that the Solti recording of ‘The Ring’ is not only still in the catalogue but also sells consistently well, while rival versions, many of which have been taken from live performances, have fallen by the wayside. Culshaw worked with many other conductors, including Herbert von Karajan, with whom he produced recordings of such major operas as ‘Aida’ and ‘Tosca’. Yet only in his collaboration with Solti were his ideas for the musico-dramatic representation of opera through recording fully expressed.

Recording and the recording industry thus exerted through the prevailing technology and through John Culshaw’s ideas a powerful influence upon musical activity, stimulating a mode of music-making that in its purest form was new and different, and that attracted great critical and popular approval. Arguably studio recording at this level has left an indelible mark upon expected standards of ‘finish’, especially in the performance of orchestral music. Solti through historical and personal circumstances mastered the skills necessary to make the most of this new way of working. In reality it proved to be relatively short-lived, and dependant for its full realisation upon individuals, such as Culshaw, and a level of creative thinking, exemplified by the ideas of Glenn Gould, that the record industry took little interest in cultivating. The absence of such individuals as Culshaw, the continuing development of technology, and the pressures of time and money have rendered the

studio recording an increasingly rare event, especially of orchestral music. What Michael Gray has appropriately called 'The Golden Age' (Gray, 1986) - the period when Decca created its unique stereophonic sound - may come to be seen as a distinct historical episode in the relationship between music and technology, with Solti as its musical Siegfried.

5.7. The Use of Records

5.7.1. The general use of records and recording

Solti was clear in both interviews and in his memoirs that he did not listen to his own recordings. In answer to Robert Chesterman, when asked if he listened to the recordings that he had made in the past, Solti's reply was clear: 'Very, very seldom. Usually I don't listen to anything. I make a recording, I listen carefully to the tapes, I choose carefully what I would like to hear and that's it...I listen mostly for negative reasons, to see what's not right, how to avoid traps, with my own and other people's recordings.' (Chesterman, 1990, p. 47). In this context Solti's attitude to his recordings is very similar to that of listening to the playbacks at a recording session.

In an interview with the critic Stephen Johnson he made the same point, with subtle additions: 'I don't listen to my records at all because my taste is always changing. After a while you don't hear the good points any more, you just hear the bad things...when I come to record a work I buy a new score and I start completely from scratch.' (Johnson, 1989, p.40). Thus, the public position on Solti's relationship with his own recordings was clearly that he did not listen to them for pleasure, and that when learning a new piece of music, the score was the absolute starting point.

From these comments it may be deduced that his use of records was limited, possibly because his interviewers do not appear to have asked him if he listened to recordings in general. Further investigation revealed this in fact to be the case. Jack Boyce* was clear that Solti was strongly involved with records, even if he confirmed that he did not listen to his own recordings: 'That was George – it was sensible for him to say "no". I don't think it was like that at all.' Lady Solti* was especially helpful on this

issue. She confirmed that Solti definitely did not enjoy listening to his own recordings: ‘if he went back to something he would put on a recording and say “Oh goodness me, the tempi is awful, frightful, why did nobody tell me.”’ But at the same time she confirmed that he used the gramophone frequently: ‘he used it a great deal.’

Solti liked both to listen to his own rehearsals and to performances led by other conductors. Lady Solti* observed: ‘...he loved to...listen...if it was contractually possible...to what he was doing in rehearsals.’, referring to the recording of Solti’s rehearsals and, if musicians’ union rules allowed, their preservation through recording. In this context Solti used recordings as part of the process of meticulous preparation that has already been noted. This level of preparedness even extended to working with orchestras whose output was most likely to be recorded, that is radio orchestras, and so could be subsequently studied in detail by himself, prior to performing with a world-class ensemble. (Solti conducted the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra on several occasions prior to major concerts and recordings, in the same repertoire.) Lady Solti* confirmed that he would contact orchestras, such as the BBC Philharmonic, offering his services: ‘...so he was doing it with them, [a] wonderful way of learning. And then when he felt ready...[he went] for the big exposure [i.e. the recording] because after all that was [the] document.’

This use of recording as a method of preparation is clearly extreme, if remarkably practical. It may be open to only a very few conductors. Yet at the same time it both confirms and demonstrates the very high standards of preparation and performance which Solti set himself, and the value of recordings as a method of study and education.

Lady Solti* also confirmed that Solti was familiar with the recordings of many of the major conductors with substantial recording careers. ‘...he would listen to a recording made by Toscanini, Furtwangler, Bruno Walter, Karajan, Kleiber...[who made] very few recordings but he admired him very much. [It was the experience of hearing Erich Kleiber conduct Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony in Budapest that first ignited in Solti the wish ‘to make my life in music, whatever the consequences’ (Solti, 1997, p.25)] He listened to them...to give him the idea of what they had

done...He did not always agree with their interpretations but he knew that these were serious favourites, so he would listen to that, to get a view, not to copy them but to see “Now where is...what are they doing with that?” ’

This use of recordings is now openly acknowledged amongst conductors of the generations that followed Solti, possibly because of the clear historical gap that exists between their own work and that of the conductors to whom they might listen. In Solti’s case the generation which he admired was immediately prior to his own, that of Toscanini and Erich Kleiber. He also listened to slightly older contemporaries of himself, notably Herbert von Karajan.

Conductors of Solti’s generation were reluctant to acknowledge the use of recordings as a mechanism for learning, although this practice was common among conductors as soon as private recording became feasible. Not only did Solti like to listen to his rehearsal recordings, to his playbacks and to recordings by other conductors, we know (as noted earlier) that Karajan and Krips, for instance, would listen to Beecham’s Mozart recordings to remind themselves of his ‘Mozart style’. In addition anecdotal evidence exists to suggest that once the technology was in place for ‘off-air’ recording, from approximately 1935 onwards, many conductors in the USA would arrange for the broadcasts of concerts conducted by Toscanini to be recorded, so that they could study his work both repeatedly and in detail (verbal comment made by Michael Gray in conversation with the author, ARSC Conference, May/June 2000). Certainly in England before the Second World War composers were arranging for private recordings to be made of broadcasts of their music (see unsigned note to CD: ‘Bantock: The Song of Songs and other historical recordings’, Dutton Laboratories CDLX 7043).

Lady Solti* offered an interesting explanation for this phenomenon. She suggested that conductors study the recordings of other conductors because of the relative professional isolation of this role. ‘There is not a forum where they can meet each other. There is no question of them playing string quartets together and things like that, like another musician would, [or] like a scientist can exchange ideas...There was not any [forum]...There just isn’t [any] but the gramophone.’ This concept of

the gramophone as part of the process of learning through the consideration of different interpretive points of view is now more easily acknowledged. It clearly formed part of the process of learning and improvement that Solti set himself, alongside other aspects of his musical character, such as his great accomplishment as a pianist.

A further concrete example of this emphasis upon self-education is given by his invitation to the conductor Andrew Parrott, a specialist in the field of baroque as well as pre-baroque music, to advise him on stylistic issues, prior to recording Bach's B minor Mass (confirmed by Solti's personal assistant, Charles Kaye, in a telephone conversation with the author, 12.7.00). This incident also makes very apparent Solti's desire to consider new avenues of approach as part of the process of preparation.

5.7.2. The use of records – the case of the Elgar Symphonies

In February 1972 Solti recorded Elgar's First Symphony with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and in both the promotion and advertising of this issue the relationship with the composer's own recording of the same work was strongly emphasised. The impetus for this seems to have come from the critic Edward Greenfield. At the time of the recording Greenfield wrote in 'Gramophone', 'It is some years now since Solti told me of his ambition to conduct this Symphony, and I suggested at once that he should hear the composer's own recording which so passionately develops on what is contained in the score. Since then World Record Club has reissued that historic recording on LP, and Solti has taken advantage of that.' (Greenfield, 1972, p. 1694).

Solti's identification with Elgar was also associated with the knighthood conferred upon him in the summer of 1971. In the advertisement for the initial issue of the recording, Decca's copywriters wrote: 'It is appropriate that Solti's first recording since becoming a British citizen should be the greatest English symphony.' (*Records and Recording*, **15**, 10, July 1972, p.59). The linkages with Solti's more usual repertoire, his European antecedents, and the English romantic repertoire were then firmly made: 'He brings to Elgar's great work the passionate commitment so notable in his performances of the German Romantics, and reveals it as a work of truly

European Stature.’ (op. cit.) This approach neatly fused the English character of the music with Solti’s style as a conductor and his recent preferment.

When Solti came to record the Second Symphony of Elgar in February 1975, reference to the composer’s own recording of the same work was again emphasised by both critics and Decca. Jerrold Northrop Moore wrote in his review of the recording’s first issue in ‘Gramophone’: ‘...he has studied the composer’s recording, and he says, “very much”...Yet it is no slavish imitation.’ (Moore, 1975, p.39). In ‘Records and Recording’, the critic Lionel Markson wrote of the same issue: ‘The publicity machine has made sure we know that Solti studied Elgar’s own recordings of his two Symphonies before himself recording them for Decca.’ (Markson, 1975, p.35).

An eloquent commentary upon the relationship between Solti and the Elgar Symphonies was given by James Mallinson*. He said that these works were ‘completely out of his *fach* [repertoire], and then suddenly there he was doing very wonderful Elgar. His two Elgar symphonies are probably two of his finest recordings. In a funny kind of way, because I think he was at his most open-minded when he came to Elgar...He came to Elgar [with] no preconception...he just looked at this music...It is useful if you have someone like Elgar conducting his own music.’

Lady Solti* added significant detail to this observation: ‘...what he did when he was preparing a new work, or preparing something...for example, when he was doing Elgar, there is this recording of Elgar conducting himself...and it was so important for him, because he could hear the tempi as it was. Sometimes the tempi is written in the score and changed. And so that was very important for him [to hear the tempi adopted by the composer].’

This example of linkage between a contemporary and a ‘historical’ recording is an early example where, possibly because the actual composer is involved, public reference to the recording is seen as wholly legitimate, and in some way a ‘seal of approval’, just as in previous circumstances reference to the printed score has always

been the touchstone of respectability. It therefore represents a clear-cut example of a recording being utilised as an impetus to learning, and therefore as an undeniable influence. At the same time it is clear that reference to the recordings of Elgar in this instance is seen as a means of achieving stylistic congruity with the composer's recorded performance and his musical 'traits', rather than simply as a route to copying the composer's direction. Recording as a legitimate means of learning is consequently acknowledged, reflecting the point made by Jose Bowen and Timothy Day that music is only fully realised in performance (See Bowen, 1999, and Day, 2000). Thus recordings become 'texts' of comparable importance to written and printed scores.

Recording is thus recognised as a powerful influence upon twentieth century music making. At the same time, if the performance tradition being studied is one in which spontaneity and therefore variation of performance play a part, to study a recording – 'a moment fixed in time' – too assiduously may result in one element of that particular performing tradition, variation, being lost. For instance, to imitate the stylistic details of a performance recorded 'live in concert' and conducted by Furtwangler, who valued both the unique improvisation of the moment and a personal long-range understanding of a work, as guided by the theories of Heinrich Schenker, may be to forfeit one's own personal view of a piece of music for a copy of a performance.

5.8. Promotion and Reputation

One of the key business phenomena of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been the growth of promotion as a separate and significant element of activity. The growth of the mass media had been a key stimulus to this pursuit. Effective promotion lay behind the success of Beecham's Pills, the basis of the Beecham family fortune, and the generator of the money which financed Sir Thomas Beecham's musical activities prior to the death of his father Joseph in 1916. Beecham was an effective promoter of his recordings, always ready to push them, for instance in interview, as in the Boston radio interview of 1952 (Mosier, 1952). In

1938 he also made a number of promotional broadcasts with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, which he introduced as well as conducted, for Radio Luxemburg (See CD: 'Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart. Conducting The Beecham Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra', Symposium 1096-1097).

Solti likewise took an active interest in the promotion of his recordings, as was confirmed by several interviewees. Jack Boyce*, in charge of the promotion of Decca's classical recordings from 1962 in succession to Terry McEwen, confirmed that Solti was very involved in this process: 'My God , yes...we went through things that we were going to do...it was great having him there...he would thoroughly enjoy it all.' As an example of Solti's practical involvement Boyce* recalled Solti's active participation in the demonstrations which Decca arranged in London and Manchester to promote the different parts of 'The Ring' recording. Boyce emphasised these as representing a significant part of the overall promotional plan: 'Decca...[was] one of the first companies getting out and doing [a] really good demo.'

Boyce* confirmed the importance of achieving exposure on radio, especially BBC Radio 3. He drove the negotiations to realise Gordon Parry's idea (Culshaw, 1967, p. 192) for a television programme to be made around the recording of 'Götterdämmerung': 'I spent months talking to TV people.' This idea was sold originally both to Douglas Terry, at this time in charge of Granada TV in Manchester and to Humphrey Burton at the BBC. Both eventually agreed to the project, coincidentally on the same day, and Decca went with the BBC as they proposed to extend the time of the programme from thirty to fifty minutes (it finally ran for ninety).

The only way in which the production could be made a reality was through all those involved agreeing to waive any residual payments. The negotiation of this agreement was successfully conducted with all the artists and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra by Culshaw, another example of both the teamwork which he engendered at Decca, and the level of commitment which he brought to his projects. To quote

Boyce*: ‘...it was John’s province to get all the artists and the orchestra to forego the residual sums...John just bent over backwards to be co-operative. ...God knows what it was worth to Decca. Must have sold an incredible amount.’ Parry* recalled that ‘the artists did it because they wanted to promote the recording. It was a marvellous plug.’ Solti fully played his part in making this film a forceful document of the recording experience, and more particularly an excellent advertisement for the finished product.

Lady Solti* confirmed Solti’s interest in seeing that his recordings reached an audience: ‘...if he worked at something, he wanted to know that people would hear it and see it...he was always very keen on the marketing..’ James Mallinson* corroborated this, and gave an eye-witness example of the strength of Solti’s interest: ‘...he realised the importance of it all. He actually even realised what his own marketing potential [was]...I have sat in marketing meetings with Solti and the marketing staff. Solti would say “this is what you ought to do.” ’

Other slightly less flattering pictures of Solti’s interest and involvement in promotion, but perhaps equally realistic, were given by Ray Minshull* and John Willan*. Minshull, when commenting about Solti’s relationship with Decca in general, stated: ‘Such complaints as he had were always directed at any lack of publicity or insufficient royalty income!’ Willan was even more direct: ‘Solti worked the business like hell. Everything he did was totally calculated...All his Grammys were all lobbied like hell...he had more Grammys than anyone [has] ever had.’

While this comment may not be factually accurate, it illustrates from a different perspective the degree of awareness that Solti possessed as to the importance of promotion. In his autobiography Solti commented: ‘I’ve always felt the English are not good at selling. I was never given anything even vaguely resembling the promotion that EMI gave Karajan or that Deutsche Grammophon later gave Karajan, Bernstein and Karl Bohm.’ (Solti, 1997, p.114).

The promotion of recordings may be seen to be important from three perspectives. Firstly, as indicated by Lady Solti, to ensure that work accomplished is effectively

and appropriately presented, distributed and sold. Secondly, as may be deduced from the comments made by Ray Minshull, to generate income in the form of royalties on sales. The scale of the classical music record market, even at approximately 5% of the global total (IFPI, 1997, p.4), makes the potential income from royalties very considerable, especially in the USA. This is the largest single market for sound recordings, accounting for approximately 40% of total sales (IFPI, 1997, p.4). In July 1986, three years after the introduction of the CD in 1983, 'Gramophone' noted that Solti was the first Decca artist in the field of classical music to achieve sales in excess of one million CDs, Herbert von Karajan being the first classical artist ever to exceed that figure (*Gramophone*, **LXIV**, 758, July 1986, p.135). With a royalty arrangement in place related to the sale of CDs, this level of sales clearly also represented a significant source of income.

The third factor on which record promotion and sales can have a significant bearing is a musician's career, particularly in terms of future appointments. Parry felt that Solti's operatic recordings were a 'real' factor in his appointment to the musical directorship of Covent Garden, as did Boyce: 'Obviously, there had been quite a bit of manoeuvring to get him there. It is a great thing to have your conductor as the Music Director.' Mallinson* strongly believed that recording was a factor in Solti's appointment to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra: 'the Chicago appointment - absolutely no question at all.'

Ray Minshull* made a similar point in more general terms: 'A long-term recording contract was seen as a virtual necessity for major appointments with any Symphony Orchestra for most of my career...Orchestras needed the additional incentive of the income from recording sessions to persuade the best musicians to join and stay with them. This was most important in the relationship between Orchestral Managements and their musicians.' The expectation of such work was described by John Willan* in terms of Solti's appointment as Conductor Emeritus of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. 'This is now his Orchestra and he will bring it work.'

The experience of Solti indicated that recordings and their effective promotion, provided of course that they were of a high standard in the first place, may exert an

important influence in several ways. By acting as a distribution channel for the demonstration of a musician's capability, they constituted an invaluable 'calling card' which was acceptable internationally. At the same time, if successful in achieving significant sales, recordings generated for the individual income on a continuing basis (as Beecham clearly saw – 'that actuarial as well as musical mind', to quote Felix Aprahamian (Proctor-Gregg, 1976, p.37), and assisted powerfully with the process of career development. They showed what a musician could do, and with a conductor might offer the promise of further work to the conductor's orchestras. This in turn could help to attract a higher calibre of instrumental soloist. Thus recording might create and push upwards a virtuous spiral of continuous improvement.

5.9. Conclusion

The influence of recording and the record industry upon Solti's activity as an executant musician, and upon his career, was extremely strong.

Firstly, recording gave Solti the opportunity to show the world what he could do, and, by virtue of the industry's commercial organisation, distributed this evidence on a global basis. Solti is one of the first conductors in whose career recording activity is fully integrated from the earliest days. This is both an accident of history - 'he was the right conductor and in the right place' to quote Jack Boyce* - and a reflection of Solti's desire and ability to become highly adept as a recording conductor.

Secondly, recording and the record industry developed an aesthetic, based on the technical capabilities of recording, which had a profound influence upon the perception of music. The idea of synthetic adjustment to musical performance that recording technology made possible produced the 'Culshaw aesthetic'. This used recording as a creative means of performing and capturing works for the gramophone.

The creativity that flowed from the development and adoption of this aesthetic was remarkable, producing recordings of works, notably in the operatic repertoire, that have withstood the test of time in commercial as well as artistic terms. It made these works accessible and appealing to a far greater audience than the composer could possibly have initially envisaged.

Recording, by its commercial nature, has a strong appetite for new repertoire. The 'Culshaw aesthetic' also exploited this appetite and sought to develop it in a creative way. Culshaw's recording of Benjamin Britten's 'War Requiem' was an outstanding example of this process.

The articulation in commercial terms of the 'Culshaw aesthetic', of which Solti became a master, had two influences. Firstly, it provided a powerful platform for Solti as a recording conductor, as has already been noted, and which he commanded alone. Secondly, it constituted a heightened example of the power of recording to extend knowledge of the musical repertoire on a global scale.

These two aspects fused in terms of public perception, and created a position of influence for Solti. From this, Solti was able increasingly to record what he wished (and thus to control his career more directly), and to build a career at the highest level. In effect recording and live performance became interdependent, and created a virtuous spiral. This was highly beneficial as long as the commercial framework within which all this activity took place could be sustained. In Solti's case this proved to be the case.

In addition, recording created a means of studying performances which had not existed before. Clear examples exist in Solti's career of the use of recordings to assist the development of his own interpretations, most notably those of music by Elgar (interpretations which stand among those for which he received the highest praise), and to extend the possibilities of preparation by using recordings to hear and to study his own work as a conductor. In effect Solti used it as a new form of rehearsal, with the result of heightening standards of performance. This use of recording was an

extension of Richard Strauss's advice to listen to operatic rehearsals with orchestra other than in the pit.

Thus, recording and the record industry provided a platform for the demonstration of musical skill, and created a new aesthetic that extended repertoire and both required and demonstrated heightened executant skills. By so doing it stimulated the growth of career and reinforced achievement, at the same time as shifting influence into the hands of the musician, partly by making available new avenues of personal promotion, linked to the sale of recordings nationally and internationally. Lastly, it provided a means of study that improved standards of performance.

None of these factors would have existed without recording, and this stark fact is the measure of its influence. The career of Sir Georg Solti constitutes a fine example of the various means through which recording has changed musical activity. Recording has become an integral part of musical life in ways that simply did not exist a century ago, when the conductors of the generations previous to his own learned and practised their craft. The trick is to see, as Solti did, the ability to record not as an optional extra for the contemporary conductor (whatever the prevailing aesthetic of recording), but to view it as an essential element within the armoury of the successful musician.

Chapter 6

Rattle and the recording process

6.1. General Introduction

As with the previous sections concerned with Sir Thomas Beecham and Sir Georg Solti, this chapter follows a similar structure. After a brief consideration of the salient characteristics of Sir Simon Rattle as an individual, there follow sections which seek to establish through a series of different perspectives whether or not recording and the recording industry have exerted influence upon musical activity within the context of his career.

The perspectives taken are: Rattle's attitude to recording; repertoire decisions; the act of recording; the relationship with the record company; views on and use of records; and recording and performance standards. A brief final concluding section attempts to isolate those areas in which recording and the recording industry may be seen to have exerted influence, and those areas where such influence is absent. Each section is bounded by a summary and conclusion.

6.2. Sources

The material for these analyses flows from three sources. These are:

- (1) Secondary literature published on Rattle's life and career;
- (2) The numerous interviews which he has given both to the general press, predominantly in the form of the 'broadsheet' newspapers, and to specialist music and recording magazines;
- (3) Interviews with those who have worked closely with Sir Simon in different capacities.

Those interviewed in category (3) were:

- Rona Eastwood, a member of the artists' management team that supports Rattle at his agency, Askonas/Holt Ltd.;
- James Jolly, the editor of 'Gramophone' magazine;
- Andrew Keener, the producer of several of Rattle's recordings after John Willan;
- Nicholas Kenyon, the author of the only biography of Rattle published to date, and currently the Director of the BBC Promenade Concerts;
- Theo Lapp, at the time of interview, July 1999. the Vice-President of International Strategic Marketing at EMI Classics, the record company with which Rattle has most closely been associated;
- David Murray, the producer of Rattle's recordings for EMI from 1983 to 1998;
- Ed Smith, the manager of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) throughout Rattle's period as Music Director of the Orchestra (1980-1998);
- Malcolm Walker, a former editor of 'Gramophone' magazine and discographer;
- David Whelton, the Managing Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra;
- John Willan, the producer of Rattle's earliest recordings for EMI from 1977, prior to Andrew Keener and David Murray, and subsequently the Manager of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

All written sources are identified by means of endnotes, with full bibliographical details given in a separate appendix. The majority of the material that first appeared in interviews published in newspapers and magazines has been taken from the files held by Sir Simon Rattle's agent, Askonas-Holt, which kindly granted access to them. In many instances it has not been possible to identify the precise page number of the publications in which the material first appeared and from which the relevant cutting was taken. However date and title of publication have been given in all instances.

The comments made in the course of the research interviews are identified by means of the source's name being mentioned in direct relation to the comment itself and identified with an asterisk. An outline biography of Rattle is provided at Appendix H.

6.3. Rattle the Man

6.3.1 Preamble

This section seeks to isolate those characteristics of Sir Simon Rattle's behaviour which have a direct relevance to his recording career. The description is not intended to be exhaustive. The three principal characteristics that emerge and that are of overriding importance are: firstly, the clear and decisive nature of his decision making; secondly, the possession of a highly strategic view of his career; and thirdly the predominance throughout his career to date of the idea of learning, and its importance to him both as an individual and in the sense of the collective. From this last characteristic flows an acceptance of risk and failure, as well as of success.

6.3.2. The gift of music

Even the most cursory reading of Sir Simon Rattle's biography shows that he is phenomenally gifted as a musician. Music and the urge to perform have been present from his earliest childhood. Those who came into contact with him during his formative years as a student and as a young musician had no doubt at all about this. John Streets, the Head of the Opera School at the Royal Academy of Music, commented on his reaction to his very first musical encounter with Rattle, at a piano rehearsal of Stravinsky's opera 'The Rake's Progress': 'I thought, 'Heavens, this is good.'" (Kenyon, 1987, p.43). Another experienced musical observer, Stephen Gray, for many years the manager of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, is quoted in the same source as saying 'I don't think I've ever met anyone quite as gifted in every way.' (Kenyon, 1987, p.69). More poetically a similar observation was made by one of his piano teachers, Douglas Miller, a pupil of Godowsky, who when asked by Rattle's father about his playing of a piece by Rachmaninov, replied: 'I have no doubt Simon has a better idea of how it should sound than we have. He seems to have a direct line to the composers.' (Kenyon, 1987, p.35).

Closely tied to his enormous ability is the urge both to learn and to improve as a musician. This characteristic was clearly described by the American critic Peter G. Davis, writing in 'New York' magazine at the time of Rattle's debut in New York with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra in 1985, and again quoted in Kenyon:

‘...Rattle prefers to work methodically at being the best musician he knows how to be...’(Kenyon, 1987, p. 173).

Given the musical gifts that Rattle displayed very early in his life and the desire both to learn and to improve, his success as an executant musician may not in retrospect be surprising. As his agent Rona Eastwood* commented: ‘He was always going to get there [i.e. be successful] by his own route.’ While this in theory may be both a reasonable and a realistic comment, other personal characteristics certainly assisted his progress as a successful musician. These are considered next.

6.3.3. Decision and strategic thinking

Rattle has been highly decisive throughout his career to date. In interview Nicholas Kenyon* observed ‘Simon is, I would say, unique in the amount of decisiveness that he has over what he does.’ Rattle is very clear about what he will and will not do. John Willan commented upon this decisiveness, both in Kenyon’s biography and in interview, in relation to repertoire decisions for recording, an aspect of Rattle’s personality that will be considered in greater depth later. More recently a number of observers have commented upon the determination with which this decisiveness is associated. Kenyon* mentioned for instance Rattle’s ‘flinty’ determination to record with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). In an article about Rattle published by the Financial Times, the critic Andrew Clark quoted a London agent who has known Rattle for a long time as follows: ‘He’s no soft touch. His personality is not so much enigmatic as invisible. There’s a core of pure steel.’ (Clark, 1999).

This decisiveness is allied to a strong sense of the strategic. Rattle’s decisions are geared to the long-term. Another profile of Rattle, written by Joanna Pitman and published in ‘The Times’ in 1996, described him as ‘highly strategic in his career-planning’ (Pitman, 1996, p.11). In considering his two major appointments to date, the Music Directorship of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) and of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO), his active desire to fill these posts was made known to the relevant decision makers (CBSO: Kenyon, 1987, p. 110; BPO, Clark, 1999).

At the same time this strategic view of his career has as its objective not the pursuit of fame and money, but the growth of musical understanding through performance. The composer and conductor Oliver Knussen made the following comment about Rattle's long-term relationship with the CBSO: 'Someone taking a stand like that, and saying he'll grow with it at the expense of more prestigious guest engagements, is marvellous...the conductor is growing into the repertory with the orchestra; it's unique, and it's how it should be done.' (Kenyon, 1987, p.213).

6.3.4. Risk, failure and learning

Alongside the elements of decisiveness and strategic vision already noted, Rattle positively relishes risk, and sees this and failure as essential parts of the learning process. Rattle is clearly opposed to the idea of maintaining the 'status quo' in performance and interpretation, and is more interested in pushing forward boundaries, be these of repertoire, performance quality or orchestral structures. In a recent interview given with the French newspaper 'La Tribune' he said to his interviewer: 'La véritable interprétation est école de liberté, et la musique s'arrête toujours quand le dogme commence,' (*'True interpretation is based on freedom and music always stops when dogma starts.'*) (Olgan, 1999).

Similar sentiments, pointing up even more the centrality of risk to his personal philosophy, may be seen in an interview given in February 1999 with John Whitley in 'The Daily Telegraph': 'It is certainly necessary to have the extremists – to swing very far in one direction. Thank goodness for people who will go out on a limb and take risks to discover something very valuable.' (Whitley, 1999). Rattle is not interested in the comfortable, and appears to be most committed when pushing in the direction of a new quest, whether it be reconstructing the CBSO, planning and directing over ten years the massive 'Towards the Millennium' series of programmes of twentieth-century music, or his first cycle of Beethoven symphonies. In an interview at the time of his farewell concerts with the CBSO in 1998 he commented on the nature of his relationship with the Orchestra: 'I didn't want to get to the stage where it became a habit. If an orchestra stays on a flat path, you've had it.' (Allison, 1998). Risk and the innovation associated with it are essential to the maintenance of an upward trajectory.

Alongside this idea of risk and pushing forward, Rattle is sufficiently realistic to acknowledge that there will be failures as part of the process of risk-taking and discovery. In 1994 he stated: 'Almost all musicians have areas that are easy for them, but it doesn't mean those are the ones they will do the best. With some pieces of music one is fated to fail.' (Fairman, 1994). More recently he has commented, 'We all have lots of failures, and part of the point of trying something is to see how well you can fail.' (Sweeting, 2000, p.24).

These various attributes, such as the openness to risk and failure, are different sides of the act of learning. Learning is central to Rattle's personal and professional philosophy, and is something about which he clearly cares deeply. At the time of the reductions proposed in 1998 to the provision of music education in British schools, he wrote an article attacking these plans that was published in 'The Observer'. Although written as a direct response to specific circumstances, this contained key elements of Rattle's personal philosophy: 'The beneficiaries of music include everyone, of whatever ability...why do our politicians treat the arts as if they were some kind of luxury add-on to people's lives? How dare they transfer this flawed thinking to education, proscribing our children's growth...In all their many forms, they have proved to be the factor which has enabled so many people to move off the runway and fly....Music...is a treasure chest which can and must be made available and accessible to enrich every life.' (Rattle, 1998).

Comments in many interviews over a long period of time are equally revealing. In 1996 he said to the critic Edward Seckerson: '...education is a dangerous word, but it never stops...what you want to do is somehow to give people their way in, but then engage their imagination.' (Seckerson, 1996). On a personal level Rattle is quite clear about the place of learning within his own life: 'You learn in increments. Every month I am learning some great truth and wonder how I managed without it before.' (Fairman, 1994).

6.3.5. Conclusion

Rattle thus places a very high premium on learning, both for the individual and for society, and recognises risk and failure as well as success as being essential

concomitants of education. When combined with the decisiveness and strategic vision already noted, one is confronted with an interesting and unusual phenomenon: an individual who is clear-sighted about where he wishes to go, is firm on how he is to get there, and who places priority on learning and risk as two of the key tools to assist this journey. In other words the voyage is one of discovery, with the overall objective being an enhanced understanding of music. In such a context the tried and trusted, the known and understood, are of less importance at times than the new and unknown.

Recording, as with everything else connected with music, has a place in this universe, but Rattle puts it in its place. It does not drive his philosophy, but is instead driven by it. Thus in general terms Rattle uses recording to articulate aspects of his philosophy. It only moves to exerting influence when such influence in turn reflects a higher strategic objective. In general, therefore, Rattle exploits recording's ability to improve. An instance of this might be using recording to assist learning, either about repertoire, or about performance. Recording is not 'a thing in itself' but a means to an end, and the end in this case is to support Rattle's personal philosophy.

The next section examines in detail Sir Simon Rattle's attitudes towards recording.

6.4. Rattle and Recording

6.4.1. Preamble

It is clear from a detailed reading of the numerous interviews which Rattle has given to both the general and specialist press that he does not see records and recordings as an end in themselves, but as a means to an end, whatever that might be. He has suggested that in some senses recording may be seen as being 'anti-music', in terms of being used for profit, and of preserving mediocre performances. For himself, if he is to make a recording, he feels that he personally must be able to contribute something of value, and that in addition such a contribution needs to be placed within a performance of exceptional, rather than usual, technical quality.

Rattle strikes at the heart of the ontology of recording. He recognises the inherent and fundamental dilemma that exists between music and recording. Music is essentially a manifestation that is variable: composers are flexible, and often change aspects of their creations with ease and without excessive concern. A contemporary example of a composer concerned with compositions as ‘work in progress’ rather than as finite creations is Pierre Boulez. Performers generally recognise that their performances will change either in the short-term or the long-term. With one or two notable exceptions, such as the conductor Arturo Toscanini, change and variation are ‘givens’ in musical performance and activity. Yet by its very nature recording reifies music. By preserving the musical act it petrifies it. Technology pins down the constantly changing nature of a performance to a precise moment in time and saves that moment of musical iteration alone.

In such circumstances, for Rattle recording can only usefully be seen as adjunct to the actual performance of music itself, and only serves those purposes that support the live performance. The most useful of these is as a vehicle for learning. The following section considers these ideas in greater depth.

6.4.2. Recording and the live performance

Rattle’s views on recording have been clearly enunciated by him ever since he commenced recording during the latter half of the 1970s, and especially from the time of his first major recording, of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony, a work with which he has closely associated himself from the early days of his professional career. This recording was made in June 1980 and released in December of the same year.

In an interview with the pianist Imogen Cooper and critic Rob Cowan, published in 1997, Rattle stated: ‘I don’t necessarily know whether I’m a recording artist – I would rather think it’s one of many means to an end.’ (Cooper and Cowan, 1997, p.16).

Retrospectively he enlarged on this comment in an interview published in 1996. ‘I think recording is a step on the way to the real thing – which is a live unrepeatable experience of which the only repetition is whatever peculiar patina is left on people’s

memories and the walls of the building.’ (Seckerson, 1996). Thus for Rattle the fundamental objective of music, or music making, is the live performance, which by its very nature is unique. Recording cannot be a substitute for this. (However the same recording may mean different things to the individual listener at different times.)

6.4.3. The dangers of recording: commercialisation and standardisation

In November 1984 Rattle gave an extended interview with the American writer James Badal on the subject of recording. The contents of this are very revealing. On the issue of the ephemerality of music Rattle is very clear: ‘I think the greatest danger of recordings is that one can be standardised and that one can think having done a piece, that then, there it is!...music is always changing; it was not meant to be captured; it was not meant to be the same each time. Music was not meant to sound like gramophone records.’ (Badal, 1996, p.74). He made the same point even more forcefully fifteen years later in 1999: ‘I do think that there are certain things – such as human discourse, friendship and music – which are meant to be live.’ (Whitley, 1999).

Rattle is well aware of the several dangers associated with recording in relation to income and reputation, and the distorting effects that these may exert upon musicians.

In the interview just quoted he also said: ‘The problem with the new technology is that musicians have used it for profit rather than for lifting the art. Karajan was a great man, a great conductor, but he’s got a lot to answer for.’ (Whitley, 1999). Rattle goes on to suggest that as part of the development of the financial machine that Karajan’s recordings constituted, he (Karajan) encouraged the expectation that ‘electronic reproduction would provide the best of all possible musical worlds.’ (Whitley, 1999).

In essence the promotion of Karajan’s recordings (and in this Karajan is by no means alone) denied what for Rattle is the essence of music, its live performance. Another consequence laid at Karajan’s door by Rattle is an over-riding emphasis upon core

repertoire: ‘...the core repertoire, which means the 20 pieces Karajan played all the time. These are dreadful words.’ (Sweeting, 2000, p.24). The huge demand created by technological innovation has led to overproduction of recordings. Many recordings of core repertoire have been produced with little distinctiveness, and with limited deviation from the interpretive ‘norm’, thus producing standardisation.

In pursuit of improving standards Rattle recognises that the standardised or generalised rendition ‘will not do any more – you know, it’s like really good airport food: however good it is, it simply won’t do.’ (Pitman, 1996, p.10). Sixteen years earlier, Rattle directly attributed this standardisation to recording: ‘Sometimes, I think, the greatest disservice the gramophone has done us is to provide performances which are almost indistinguishable.’ (Keener, 1980, p.812). The implications of this belief for the musician’s individual performances, and for Rattle’s in particular, are both clear and acknowledged: ‘I wouldn’t want to inflict another second- or third-rate recording of Beethoven’s Seventh on anyone. I think there are plenty of second- or third-rate recordings without my adding another one. Who knows, it could be worse.’ (Badal, 1996, p.77).

An inevitable consequence of excessive recording and the availability of many mediocre performances is that ‘there are too many recordings. They’re too alike. Most of them have no reason to be made – including most of mine. You should earn the right [to record].’ (Griffiths, P. 1995). This excess of supply is related back to the essential impermanence of musical performance: ‘There are enough bad recordings of things without my adding to them. In many cases, recordings are only snapshots, the best you can do at a given time. Music’s not really meant to be caught in time. It’s meant to be communicated directly to a group of people.’ (Pettit, 1995).

Rattle recognises the dangers of the commercialisation of music, of which recording is a central part. In relation to the star system (personified most powerfully by Herbert von Karajan) he commented in 1996: ‘I react very badly to this. It is something that can’t go on, just as the recording industry as we know it can’t go on. Things are changing, and it won’t necessarily be bad.’ (Whitley, 1996). (In this

comment Rattle was referring to the contraction then being experienced by the mainstream classical recording industry.)

6.4.4. The circumstances for justified recordings

If music is essentially a live experience, and if, as a result of extreme commercial development, there is an excess of recordings, in the sense that there is a surplus of mediocre performances on record which have little or no justification, what then are the circumstances for Rattle under which recordings might be justified? Rattle has set out an ideal: ‘There should be an ideal world where people are going around, listening to performances, and deciding: This is the moment when it has to be taken. It doesn’t need to be planned five years in advance.’ (Griffiths, 1995).

Although this approach is utopian and is acknowledged to be so by Rattle, an example of the philosophy which it represents actually being put into practice exists. In an interview with Andrew Keener for ‘Gramophone’ Rattle related how in 1982 he had contacted EMI with the proposal to record Rachmaninov’s ‘Symphonic Dances’ at the point at which the *rubato* [spontaneous rhythmic variation] within the performance ‘had got to the stage where they (the CBSO) could judge that as one person, with me sitting in the auditorium.’ (Keener, 1983). Initial problems of cost were overcome by turning the hour normally used for rehearsal prior to a performance at the Aldeburgh Festival into a recording session – ‘and we have what I would call a real record, an accurate reflection of how we do the piece.’ (Keener, 1983).

In Rattle’s interview with Badal, given a year later, he expanded on the beliefs resulting from recording an entire work in single takes, in this case Sibelius’s Second Symphony: ‘We [that is Rattle and the CBSO] were all very excited by the cumulative sense of the recording and the feeling that this is how we play, at that moment that was what we wanted, and that there was nothing cosmetic in the process.’ (Badal, 1984, p. 75).

6.4.5. Conclusions

Rattle's attitude to recording is therefore considerably different to that of musicians of previous generations who have been able to make use of, or participate in, this still relatively young technology.

Unlike many conductors, but with the exception of certain distinguished figures such as the Rumanian Sergiu Celibidache, Rattle sees recordings as often standing in stark contrast to the moment and act of performance. He is prepared to recognise the consequences of this and has developed a practical logic that accepts the recording of a performance when it has reached a point of exceptionally high quality.

Rattle sees the commercialisation of recording as having led firstly, to the excessive production of recordings. Secondly, in order to stimulate the sales which commercialisation requires, recording has often been put forward as a musical substitute for the live performance, but this cannot be so. And thirdly, as part of the same process of commercialisation, an excessive number of recordings has been produced. This has resulted in the publication of many mediocre performances and has also led to the standardisation of performance: many published performances possess little that is remarkable.

Rattle is not prepared to acquiesce in these processes and dislikes some of the personal consequences of the process of commercialisation. As will become apparent in the next section, any recording with which he is involved must not only contain a musical performance on the highest level, but must also be of repertoire that is distinctive.

From this analysis it is apparent that Rattle has a good grasp of the potential negative influences of recording and the record industry. It is to his credit that far from succumbing to these influences, or seeking to justify them, he has sought to create a logic that exploits the positive aspects of recording. This is focused upon using it as a platform to display higher than usual standards of performance, often in works that would not otherwise be available to the public. Rattle's use of repertoire in recording is driven by this aesthetic. Aware of the power of the medium of recording, Rattle

seeks to avoid being influenced by it on a number of different parameters. Instead his objective is to use this power of influence in productive ways.

6.5. Planning: Repertoire Decisions

6.5.1 Preamble

A study of the factors determining the repertoire decisions made by Sir Simon Rattle indicates that these have several different objectives. They include the following goals, and may or may not be combined, depending upon the precise circumstances of each decision.

- Rattle has ‘something to say’ in relation to the interpretation of the proposed work;
- The performance to be recorded will demonstrate enhanced orchestral capability;
- The proposed repertoire is either of new music or of music of the twentieth century;
- The repertoire to be recorded will act as a stimulus to learning and to greater knowledge by the public in terms of unusual repertoire, or by the orchestra in terms of enhanced performance.
- In making these decisions past experience indicates that Rattle can be both pragmatic and single minded.

The existence of these objectives became apparent from a close study of the different sources employed in the research process. They were most apparent in the many press interviews that Rattle has given. These had the advantage of often being highly focused upon the genesis of particular recordings or musical projects, such as his first complete performance of the Beethoven symphonies. The interview frequently had been arranged to provide potential audiences with interesting and relevant background to either the creation of the recording or of the project, and could thus be highly revealing.

Kenyon (1987) was also a most useful source in that, unlike the interviews referred to above, it contained long stretches of interview on more general topics, which allowed Rattle to be both open and reflective to Kenyon's perceptive questioning.

Thirdly and finally, many of the points made in these printed sources reappeared in the personal interviews undertaken as part of the research, and could be pursued as part of these. The use of the N-Vivo computer programme for data analysis facilitated the identification and isolation of these points.

Each of the different objectives relating to repertoire identified above, and which are major factors in the decision as to which works to record, is next considered in greater depth.

6.5.2. Repertoire strands: Having 'something to say'

Much of the interview evidence directly relating to the idea of only choosing to record those works where the performer can definitely make some sort of contribution to the knowledge of the work in question comes from the early stages of Rattle's career. The logic of this standpoint relates as well to over-production in the classical music recording industry, with excessive numbers of recordings available of the basic repertoire.

Rattle's position was clearly put by him to the journalist Robin Stringer in an early interview given in 1979, prior to the recording of Mahler's Tenth Symphony. In relation to this Rattle commented 'of those types of pieces, it's the only one I could make any contribution to.' (Stringer, 1979). In the same interview the idea of using recording strategically had clearly already been considered: 'You can imagine my problem. "Would you like to make a record?" they say. What can you possibly do to make an impression?' (Stringer, 1979). For Rattle recording of itself has limited value – there needs to be a firm objective behind the decision to record, and therefore the repertoire to be recorded.

Even at this relatively early date, Rattle's personal philosophy is clear: 'It's very much up to the conductor to change things. One asks oneself, "Do I do this eccentric

thing which I believe in or do I just bend?’’ The way to knowledge is to take the risk.’ (Stringer, 1979). The sense of the individual voice raised against standardisation, and the idea of risk-taking as a means of extending understanding is here quite apparent. Rattle’s logic and preferences take him to works outside the mainstream repertoire, and which he can interpret with unusual skill.

6.5.3. Repertoire strands: Orchestral development

One of the key moments in Rattle’s recording career was his insistence that EMI agree to record Nicholas Maw’s vast orchestral work ‘Odyssey’ as a condition of his renewing his exclusive contract with EMI, as reported in 1991. He commented at the time, ‘I decided to make it a condition of signing my new contract.’ (Soames, 1991). This has generally been interpreted as indicative of Rattle’s commitment to contemporary music and so fulfils the logic described in the previous section. While this is true, it also relates directly to his wish to see the achievements of the City of Birmingham Orchestra reflected through its recorded repertoire.

Nicholas Kenyon* made this point in interview: ‘Simon was absolutely insistent that the recordings that he did with the CBSO reflected the full range of their repertory. And so...he insisted on doing the Nicholas Maw ‘Odyssey’...which was a representation of the repertory which he wanted to cultivate.’

The same determination to use local forces was noted by John Willan*. He recalled that he had proposed an alternative orchestra for the recording of Britten’s ‘War Requiem that Rattle was to conduct: ‘ ‘How about the Philharmonia, Simon?’’... ‘‘No, Birmingham.’’ Absolutely single-minded.’

The consequences of the demonstration of high standards of orchestral capability are considerable. In non-specific terms it shows what conductor and orchestra have achieved together. This in turn will have further benefits, through the international distribution of recordings. The orchestra becomes a known entity, which on the back of its recordings, may feasibly tour to countries previously thought to be artistically beyond its reach. Smith* emphasised this point in interview, considering recording to be an ‘enormous’ factor in the global recognition of Rattle and the CBSO: ‘...our

first tour to Japan in 1987 and to America in 1988...seven or eight years into his tenure as our Music Director...was entirely on the basis of his recorded repertoire and his recording exposure.’ The issue of recording and performance standards is considered in greater detail later, at section 6.9.

6.5.4. Repertoire strands: new music

Rattle’s desire to feature new music significantly reflects the fact that this is the repertoire with which until recently he has been most comfortable, as much as displaying any proselytising zeal. Both Kenyon* and Murray* concurred on this point. ‘These people [Simon Rattle and Esa-Pekka Salonen] came to conducting through Mahler, Janacek, Schoenberg, Prokofiev, Bartok...the orchestral showpieces of the twentieth century were what they cut their teeth on...They did not learn, like all those pre-war conductors did, the classical repertory as the essential bit of conducting.’ (Kenyon). ‘His centre of gravity is up until, I would say, five or six years ago, very much in the twentieth century. I would suggest that now [1999] his centre of gravity is both twentieth century and late eighteenth century.’ (Murray).

In this context the conductor is very much leading both audience and orchestra into those areas which he or she knows best. New music is not an unwelcome extension of the traditional repertoire, but the very core of it for certain conductors, such as Rattle, born in the second half of this century.

6.5.5. Repertoire strands: unusual juxtapositions

Rattle’s pragmatism may also be seen as reflecting his penchant for unusual juxtapositions, and for using the elements of these and the juxtapositions themselves to push forward the boundaries of knowledge and of experience. The critic Jeremy Beadle noted Rattle’s fondness for juxtapositions in an article published in ‘Classic CD’ magazine in 1993: ‘He thrives on juxtapositions...as well as themed evenings and series. Rattle’s innovative Mahler-Strauss and subsequent French music concert series with the Philharmonia caused a minor revolution in London programming and ‘Towards the Millennium’ certainly won’t be the last.’ (Mills and Beadle, 1993, p.21). Rattle made this preference very clear in an interview in 1996, and also used it

to highlight the versatility of the CBSO: 'They can turn in the space of three weeks as they did in March, to do Stockhausen, to West Side Story the next week, to Haydn on period instruments the next week.' (Pitman, 1996, p.10).

This catholicity of repertoire, and the fondness for extreme juxtaposition, has a practical application. In the summer of 1998 Rattle recorded two works for EMI: Szymanowski's opera 'King Roger' and Leonard Bernstein's musical 'Wonderful Town', with the CBSO and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group respectively, the latter being an off-shoot of the CBSO. The ability to tackle such a diverse brace of works must be attractive to a record company, who may expect a quick return from Bernstein to counterbalance the longer return on investment to be expected from Szymanowski. This was noted by Jolly*: 'You can...see in these two...a pay-off.'

A further, and very important, consequence of encouraging orchestras to develop the range of their repertoire is to prevent them being squeezed by specialist performance groups active at both ends of the chronological spectrum of repertoire. By developing greater versatility of performance, orchestras such as the CBSO are also ensuring for themselves a place in the future.

6.5.6. Negotiation

The 'single-mindedness' and 'flintiness' of Rattle, already noted, is one aspect of his negotiating style in relation to repertoire. Eastwood*, his agent, commented that 'it is only very few flagship artists that have the luxury of being able to record "King Roger"...he had to stand quite firm on that one.' The similar stance on Nicholas Maw's 'Odyssey' has already been noted.

To counterbalance this determination to see works in which Rattle strongly believes recorded, it is also necessary to take into account the position of the record company. Several interviewees hinted at Rattle's awareness of this. Murray*, as close as anyone to Rattle's recording plans, commented: 'I am not so sure that one should simply, in a longer recording relationship, assume that what conductors record will accurately reflect their entire wishes. Certainly in the last eight years to do with

Rattle, there has been a strong downturn in the record industry. All conductors, all artists have had to take on board that their wishes of what they would like to record have to be balanced against what the company thinks is commercially viable. There are very many more projects thrown out than those recorded.'

In this context the juxtaposition of repertoire already noted and the desire to force boundaries forward are actively helpful. Combined they give the record company and the musician a wider range of options from which to choose, and as already has been noted, the opportunity to balance the familiar and potentially commercial with the unfamiliar and possibly uncommercial, at least in the short-term.

Thus the primary purpose of learning through extending knowledge of the repertoire has as a secondary benefit an increase in the range of options relating to works which may be considered for recording.

6.5.7. Using recordings as learning devices

Mention has been made already on several occasions of the potential which recordings possess as aids to learning in the broadest sense.

This strand in repertoire planning may be seen in comments relating to several repertoire proposals that ultimately were not successful, in that they did not (or have not yet) reached fruition. In an interview with the American critic Herbert Kupferberg, published in the magazine 'Stereo Review' in November 1992, Kupferberg noted that Rattle 'would like to see his Millennium series [the long-term 'Towards the Millennium' series of concerts] better represented on records, with perhaps one CD devoted to each decade' (Kupferberg, 1992).

Such a proposal cannot have been made from a purely commercial perspective. The desire to see such repertoire strands recorded has to be seen therefore as an initiative to increase accessibility to the works being performed in the concert series. This purpose was served in 1996 when, as part of the presentation of a seven-part television series devoted to the music of the twentieth century, entitled 'Leaving Home', EMI released two CDs illustrating the series with 28 excerpts from key

works. These were performed by the CBSO and Rattle, who introduced the programmes. A book based on the television programmes' scripts also accompanied this project, (Hall, 1996), thus further reinforcing the value of the CDs, as well as the television programmes themselves.

Rattle's commitment to new music as a realm of experience to be made more generally available has been clearly put in his own words: '...those prepared to meet the challenge of new music have found themselves taken into worlds that are exciting and rewarding.' (Anonymous, 1996, p.38). Essentially he seeks to share these new worlds with a broader public through the medium of recording.

6.5.8. The use of television and video

It is interesting to note that where the commercial record industry has balked at the production of recordings of contemporary music on a large scale, constrained as it is by commercial criteria, the television companies of the United Kingdom have been less circumspect. For them, with a large stretch of time to fill with programmes, Rattle can command reasonable audience figures through his strong powers of communication. In addition programmes featuring contemporary music satisfy regulatory demands for an arts presence in programming.

In his biography of Rattle, Kenyon noted that between 1986 and 1987 Rattle and the CBSO made television programmes featuring contemporary music that would not be a commercial proposition on disc, notably Berio's 'Sinfonia' and Henze's Seventh Symphony (although the latter was recorded through commercial sponsorship). This use of television has continued with the seven-part series on twentieth-century music made for Channel Four, 'Leaving Home', already mentioned.

It was followed by a two part series for London Weekend Television's 'South Bank Show' in 2000, in which Rattle and the CBSO were able to preserve some of the later work in the 'Towards the Millennium' concert series. In these programmes Rattle dissected in rehearsal two works, by Judith Weir and Simon Holt, especially commissioned for the last segment of the series, and first performed in March 2000.

6.5.9. Conclusion

Although as Rona Eastwood's comments indicate there are battles both lost and won in the arena of repertoire, it is clear that Rattle makes his own decisions, rather than articulates those of his record company. John Willan* described the situation: '[EMI] realised that if Simon had such a very clear idea of what he wanted to do, they should respect that if they wanted to be with him in ten or twenty years.' (Kenyon, 1987, p.81). Rattle's pro-active stance in relation to repertoire has been clear from the earliest days of his recording career, as the comments quoted earlier in relation to the choice of recording Mahler's Tenth Symphony, in 1979, indicate.

The decisions made by Rattle as to repertoire to be recorded serve several purposes: firstly, to increase knowledge and understanding, especially of contemporary music; secondly, to reflect high levels of interpretation and performance capability; and thirdly, to improve performance standards. The negotiating tactics used to achieve these objectives are clear-sighted and balanced.

Broadly speaking Rattle is controlling and utilising the medium to achieve objectives that he has recognised and set. He is not permitting the medium either to use him or to change his beliefs.

6.6. Doing: the Act of Recording

6.6.1. Preamble

Sir Simon Rattle's attitude to the act of recording is different from that of his predecessors. Whereas in the past, to simplify matters greatly, conductors have tended to record works as proposed by record companies, with both preparation and performance being undertaken within the record company's studio time (especially in the United Kingdom), now for Rattle there has to be a broader purpose to the recording. In this case, once the repertoire has been decided upon, what is paramount is the quality of the performance.

6.6.2. Old and new ways of recording

Particularly during periods of commercial expansion, when the demand for new recordings that can demonstrate new technologies has been intense, record companies would book orchestras for extended periods, and rehearsals and recordings were all done within the time for which the orchestra was hired. This practice was especially common with record companies using English orchestras: Westminster Records booked the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra for sessions in this way with the conductor Artur Rodzinski, and the Readers Digest Organisation did likewise with the same orchestra. Essentially the record company was seeking to secure a performance of a reasonable standard from a conductor and orchestra whom it was assumed would be able to produce such a performance from 'scratch' within the allotted time. Beecham and Solti worked in this way, although both would occasionally link recordings to live performances.

With Rattle the situation is completely different. Murray* made this point forcibly in interview: '...in a Rattle situation that is completely unacceptable. The fact is that we only ever made about two recordings in my fifteen span, where we had to rehearse [and] record. And they were in situations where we had to do a solo recording and the soloist had cancelled. So he then used the first two days just to rehearse. In general the situation was that things were well run in concert. Maybe the process started even two years before the recording.'

Murray* went on to describe the benefits of the system used by Rattle. These relate to the prior preparation and performance of the work to be recorded in a concert situation. 'Having a lot of concert activity, of doing that piece...it is in their bones and then you immediately get a higher level of interpretive and musical ability from the first take, because they know exactly what they are doing with the piece.'

6.6.3. The first recordings and changing systems

Rattle's earliest recordings for EMI were made under what might be termed 'the old system', and proved to be a hard training ground. The recordings in question were of

Stravinsky's 'Pulcinella' and Suites Numbers One and Two, made with the Northern Sinfonia in March 1977 and January 1978.

Willan* commented that Rattle found the matching of tempi between takes at these sessions extremely difficult: 'I was having to play a click track after him or beat it out on a table over the headphones so he would hear the tempo of the tape. Then he would go in and do it; but he learned very fast.'

The close link between conductor and orchestra that developed, as Rattle grew into his position as Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, quickly opened an avenue that allowed recordings to be made in a more coherent way. As Murray indicated, Rattle was soon only prepared to record works that had become embedded within the orchestra through frequent performance. Rattle explained his position clearly in his interview with James Badal, given in 1984 only six years after the completion of the 'Pulcinella' recording: 'I will no longer record works that have not been played by the orchestra and myself many times in performance.' (Badal, 1996, p.75).

One of the reasons for recording only when the work is in the performers' 'bones' is to ensure consistency of tempo and so to allow for cross-cutting between different takes or performances. Murray* discussed this: 'the importance of knowing a piece well enough that you instinctively [that this without the aid of a metronome or a click-track] always take the same basic tempo...is crucial. That is why performance before-hand is so vital to a good recording artist...because all that will have settled down.'

Murray went on to give a concrete example of how Rattle had developed the capability to maintain consistent tempi and direct a performance that was worth preserving. In 1992 following the scrapping of a studio recording of Mahler's Seventh Symphony because of Rattle's personal dissatisfaction with his conducting, the same forces recorded it at the Snape Maltings, using two public performances given on consecutive days as part of the Aldeburgh Festival. It was a combination of these performances that was issued commercially.

6.6.4. Refinements in recording technique

Having developed a philosophy of recording that allows both conductor and orchestra to give of their best, Rattle has refined his recording technique further. Murray* described how Rattle works against the tendency of orchestras not to give of their absolute best in the recording studio, knowing that retakes are possible, by rehearsing in the recording session ‘and then in one take [he will] put fifteen points right...because the orchestra know that they have not got time to do this zillions of times...there are not many conductors who can take those calculated risks.’

The benefit of this technique is that in addition to improving deliberately on what has gone before, it also helps to generate an approximation of the intensity of the live performance.

6.6.5. A new form of recording practice

The chapters devoted to Beecham and Solti have sought to demonstrate that they both consciously used the recording studio to achieve a higher level of performance than was generally then attainable in public performance. In addition they were prepared to use the opportunities for electronic manipulation and editing to improve on studio performances in terms of for instance balance and instrumental accuracy.

Rattle, while being aware of the cosmetic opportunities for improvement that current recording technologies allow, seeks to achieve in his recordings a heightened level of performance beyond that which might be achieved in the studio under the ‘old system’. In other words, because of the close link with his orchestra, and because of the greater understanding achieved through many performances, the objective with a recording is to capture that performance which is a summation of all this experience.

In this sense the artificial aesthetic to which Rattle’s predecessors were accustomed had been superseded by an alternative which is once again more closely rooted in the actual live performance with an audience present.

Smith* made the interesting point that the process of performance followed by recording, if followed in turn by further performances, could result in performances which *exceeded* the recording in quality. In other words the process of improvement was continuous: ‘...the difference between pre-recording and the post-recording concerts was extraordinary. In a sense we were almost using the recording sessions to give even better concert performances than live concert performances – not consciously and deliberately but the effect was really tangible.’

Just as repertoire is used as a device to extend performance capability, so recording itself, as will be considered in the sections on recording and orchestral performance, plays a strong part in improving understanding and performance.

6.6.6. Conclusion

Rattle’s approach to recording is different from that of past conductors. It is rooted in the potential for achievement in the live performance. In this sense Rattle is no longer bound to the same degree as were previous conductors such as Beecham and Solti by technology. Neither is recording used to create the synthetic reality that at its peak is the basis of the Culshaw aesthetic.

Rattle has restored the primacy of performance. He seeks to achieve the enhanced reality, earlier attained in the studio, through what might be termed the heightened live performance, gained through even more knowledge than was previously acquired with the extensive time for preparation and performance in the recording studio.

Whereas often Beecham and Solti’s recordings were improvements upon their live performances, Rattle now may exceed in subsequent live performance the standards achieved in his recordings. The influence of the recording process in improving performance standards has been acknowledged, and in turn used as part of the process of enhancing the live performance.

6.7. Doing: the Relationship with the Record Company

6.7.1. Preamble

Simon Rattle's first recording session with EMI took place in November 1977, and the great majority of his recording activity has taken place with this company. Because of the different operating procedures of EMI from those of, for instance, Decca, Rattle's relationship with the staff at EMI has been different to that of Solti with John Culshaw. Rattle's clarity and purpose of decision-making have reinforced this difference. In effect Rattle has not allowed himself to be influenced by either personality or process, and has himself exerted considerable influence.

6.7.2. EMI's operating procedures

Because of historical factors, EMI's operating procedures for the planning and production of recordings has been different from those of its only major British rival, Decca, absorbed by Polygram in 1979. These factors are outlined below .

Following the merger of The Gramophone Company and the Columbia Graphophone in 1931 to form EMI, the dominant influence in the International Artists Department gradually came to be Fred Gaisberg. Gaisberg's main preoccupation was signing distinguished artists to the company and negotiating agreement with them on the repertoire to be recorded. Although himself very experienced in studio work, he did not supervise all the recordings which were produced as a result of his negotiations. In the case of Beecham's pre-war recordings for the Columbia label for instance, the conductor Lawrance Collingwood, for a time Music Director of the Sadlers Wells Opera Company, was frequently called upon to act as a musical supervisor for the session. Collingwood's work involved ensuring that timings for side breaks were agreed and marked in parts, and that the Company had secured recordings within each session of a sufficiently long timing and of a high enough musical and technical standard to justify the sessions.

Following his retirement Fred Gaisberg was succeeded by his assistant David Bicknell. Bicknell was in turn succeeded by Peter Andry. This position is today occupied by Peter Alward, whose current title is Senior Vice-President Artists and

Repertoire [A and R], EMI Classics. The function of this role continues to be, as it was with Fred Gaisberg, the negotiation of repertoire to be recorded by those artists who are contracted (generally at the instigation of this role holder) to the company. Final decision-making continues to be by committee, as again has long been the case with EMI. Rattle's relationship with EMI has therefore to a large extent been mediated through Alward.

The producers for many of Rattle's extant recordings have been John Willan and David Murray, both of whom have been interviewed and who have clearly described the nature and purpose of their work. Again this is very similar, albeit with progressively greater technical sophistication, to the function undertaken by, for example, Lawrance Collingwood.

6.7.3. Working with the Head of Artists and Repertoire

In June 1996 the critic Hugh Canning wrote an article for 'The Sunday Times' on changes then taking place in the recording industry, which gave a clear insight into the nature of the relationship between Rattle and EMI. Canning discussed the relationship between EMI and Rattle with Peter Alward, who commented: 'When Simon Rattle signed his new contract at a time when two other labels wanted to pinch him from us, he agreed to make one record fewer a year [reflecting the increased financial pressures under which EMI was then operating]. He has never been the sort of artist who makes excessive financial demands. The younger generation is much more understanding about the economic realities. There is an element of joint risk-taking.' (Canning, 1996).

This comment ties in with the previous analysis which has indicated that repertoire decisions have been made by Rattle, not from the point of view of maximisation of sales, but from the perspectives of making a distinct musical statement, demonstrating performance prowess, or assisting with the process of learning across several different parameters. Although ultimately Alward's decisions have to result in profits for his company EMI Classics, and so dividends for the company's shareholders, this objective has to be balanced with Rattle's aims, which are different. In the same article Alward also described the effects of financial explanation to artists:

‘When they see the figures, they think they would rather record the piece and take less up front than not get to do it at all.’ (Canning, 1996). Alward was also described by Rattle’s agent Rona Eastwood* as a champion for his plans within the company itself: ‘I am sure that in the case of Rattle, Peter protects Simon from an enormous lot of in-house scrapping [and] that Peter does fight for Rattle projects to happen.’

For his part, Rattle’s priorities for recording have been very clear since his earliest encounters with the record industry. In his 1979 interview with Robin Stringer he made the following points: that he wished to record works where he could make a ‘contribution’; that ‘it’s not too good to record many things’; that he was unhappy about recording a work without having performed it previously; that he was concerned about the ‘safety’ and consequent ‘under-characterisation’ which typified far too many recordings, resulting in standardisation and an absence of risk in the concert hall. (Stringer, 1979).

In interview his biographer Nicholas Kenyon* showed how these views had developed into a very clear set of priorities that determined different phases in the relationship with EMI. ‘I have never met anybody who was clearer about what his priorities are...he is the sort of person who is absolutely able to say ‘no’ to anything that he does not want to do...especially in his relationship with EMI he is able to say, categorically, this relationship is going to depend on my doing X, Y, and Z, because I think it is necessary in my relationship with the orchestra, and my profile and so on. Once all that has been agreed, he will absolutely go for it in the most charming and lively way.’ Kenyon* also pointed out that his record company takes him seriously ‘because he is good at what he does’ and because ‘his decisions have been shown to be right.’

Thus Rattle has established a powerful and positive relationship with EMI. The Head of A and R at EMI plays a pivotal role in the development of a particular musician’s recordings, and sets out the company’s position to the artist, and the artist’s to the company. In this sense, decisions as to what to record are arrived at through negotiation, with an understanding of the respective priorities of each side.

6.7.4. Working with the producer

The majority of the recordings currently in the catalogue and conducted by Rattle have been produced by David Murray. Because the A and R and production functions are split at EMI, Murray's role is quite different from that say of John Culshaw when he recorded with Solti. From 1956 Culshaw occupied the twin roles of Head of A and R, and of Senior Producer. (Perhaps more accurately he was Head of Repertoire, and Maurice Rosengarten was Head of Artists.) Previous testimony indicated that Solti was employed largely to do what Culshaw wanted: notably to record 'The Ring'. With Murray and EMI the roles are reversed. To quote Nicholas Kenyon*: 'David Murray, I would have thought, would have regarded himself basically as someone who did what Simon wanted.'

Murray* himself was clear that he valued the trust which Rattle placed in him, notably in relation to the preparation of the final edited version of performances which formed the basis of the commercial release: 'Rattle, who did not have right of approval, but because it was Rattle, gave right of approval, [and] never heard tapes after the first edit. He never heard the final version until it was in the shops because he trusted me. I made all the decisions.' Thus in this instance the producer was working to produce a finished product which accurately reflected the musician's wishes, and was trusted by the musician to do this.

John Willan*, who also produced recordings by Rattle, reiterated the importance of having the trust of the artist: 'It is vital to have a relationship with the artist where they trust you musically.' He also stressed the importance of this trust extending to the producer acting on behalf of the artist within the company: '...the first rule as a producer is to have a good relationship with the artist, so the artist feels that they are brokering the artist's best interests with the record company, so the producer wears two hats.' The second hat worn by the producer involves representing the company's interests to the artist.

Just as it is important for the producer to have a good relationship with the artist, so it is vital for the artist for their part to be on good terms with the producer. Smith* confirmed that this was the case with Rattle: '...particularly in recording the role of

producer is significant...Simon always had a very good relationship.’ Smith* went on also to point out that if the producer and the conductor do not have such a relationship the results can be poor: ‘...it can be disastrous if the producer is a twitchy person and you have a twitchy conductor and that transmits to an orchestra...you are in for trouble.’

The fact that EMI sustained this relationship says much for its own management. It may also partly be explained by the relative inexpensiveness of making the initial recordings with the CBSO, created under an agreement whereby the orchestra’s services were provided at no cash cost to the record company. As the relationship with Rattle developed, continuing sales and re-exploitation of his recordings increased the value of this initial investment.

In an article in the ‘Financial Times’ published in 1994, which examined EMI’s relationship with Rattle, the author Richard Fairman noted that ‘after 17 years with EMI Rattle’s recordings have only recently gone into profit’ (Fairman, 1994). This article also made the key point that ‘the pay-back on investment with classical musicians has to be counted not in years, but in decades.’ (Fairman, 1994). David Murray* pointed out in interview that although Rattle’s recording programme has shrunk in recent years, reflecting the general down-turn in activity, ‘the means of presenting back catalogue has grown, so there has always been a presence.’

6.7.5. The nature and benefits of the relationship

The basis of the relationship between musician and record company, as typified by Rattle and EMI at least, is one of trust. Rona Eastwood* put this clearly: ‘...it has to depend on trust’. She also made the point that as with all relationships ‘it is not one without tension.’ In this context the role of the agent is significant, brokering ‘some sort of happy accord whereby the record label is 100% happy and the artist 100% happy. Sometimes it simply can’t be done.’

The evidence of the presence of trust, and through this of mutual loyalty, is strong. For its part for instance EMI agreed to record Nicholas Maw’s ‘Odyssey’. Short term commercial thinking would have given a negative decision to this proposal.

Eastwood* made the point that 'it is a testimony to EMI's loyalty that they persevered with what for certainly for many years was non-commercial for them.' This type of long-term thinking was described by the then Managing Director of EMI, Roger Lewis, in 1994 as looking 'at our relationship in an enlightened and mature way,' (Fairman, 1994).

This view-point has in turn encouraged Rattle to be loyal to the company. James Jolly* commented in interview in relation to EMI's willingness to scrap recordings with which Rattle was dissatisfied, such as the original recording of Mahler's Seventh Symphony, 'I am sure that probably why Rattle is loyal to EMI is because they have been prepared to do these things.' Loyalty to the record company on the part of the artist is important to it. To quote Alward: 'Company loyalty does count for a lot' (Jolly, 1991).

The development and nature of the relationship can be further seen in Rattle's decision to stay with EMI even when his recorded output with the company was scheduled to diminish slightly, as Peter Alward noted in 1996 (Canning, 1996). This flexibility sustains the relationship, and so when the company has had to reduce its artists' roster, Rattle has remained on it, partly because of the promise of things to come. A further result is that there is an even greater level of interest and attention on the part of the record company. To quote Eastwood*: 'For the handful of fortunate artists who are still on the books, I think there has been a sharp increase of focus.'

This increase of focus continues the process already seen in terms of promoting the musician in new geographical territories. A notable example of this is Germany, where Rattle's appointment as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, announced in June 1999 and with effect from 2002, will be a further step in developing and promoting this awareness.

6.7.6. Conclusion

The split in function exemplified by EMI's structures shifts the balance of power away from the record company and moves it towards the artist. The Head of A and R essentially protects and extends the company's commercial interests, seeking out the

best artists and activities that will translate into a satisfactory commercial return, dependant upon the company's current protocols for return on investment. The producer's function is to ensure that the product required by the company, the recording, is of a high musical and technical standard.

The artist can negotiate on a purely musical level with the producer, and at the level of repertoire planning with the head of A and R. In reality these distinctions are unlikely to be so clear-cut. However the artist's priorities can be negotiated separately with each functional representative, rather than get confused as they did with Solti and Culshaw, and possibly latterly with Solti and Ray Minshull.

In essence the artist is able to exert greater influence, at the appropriate time and in the appropriate place. Rattle's requirements in terms of performance are clearly known and the producer is trusted to deliver these. The producer does not expect the musician – in this instance at least – to deliver his, the producer's, vision. This however was at times the case with Solti and Culshaw.

In the studio therefore Rattle's influence is dominant. On the issue of A and R it is also dominant, but at the same time this is placed within the context of negotiation or 'quid pro quo'. If EMI wants to renew Rattle's exclusive contract, then Rattle wants to record Maw's 'Odyssey'. If Rattle wants to record Szymanowski's opera 'King Roger' then how about Bernstein's 'Wonderful Town' to balance the books?

This type of negotiation is no different from that which Legge had with von Karajan, suggesting Tchaikovsky ballet suites to balance Karajan's repertoire preferences (Sanders, 1998, p.174). It is, however, quite different from Solti's early relationship with Decca, where the company's preferences were much more emphatically realised, such as when Olof proposed that he record Overtures by Suppe. Only after roles had changed at Decca, and Solti had shown what he could do in the recording of the operatic repertoire and in comparison with other contemporary illustrious conductors, and when he had achieved international success and reputation in his career, could he determine more fully the repertoire to be recorded. This point was reached relatively late in his career.

Rattle is very clear about what he wishes to record and why, and thus enters negotiations strongly armed, and as Eastwood confirmed, prepared 'to stand quite firm'.

In this instance therefore, of the relationship with the producer, Rattle's influence is dominant. In relation to A and R it is clear-sighted, and strongly negotiated if not wholly dominant. Broadly the relationship between artist and record company is based on trust and loyalty. At the same time there is no question of Rattle recording anything which he does not want to. In this instance therefore the musician exerts influence, not the medium.

6.8. Listening: Rattle's views on and use of records

6.8.1. Preamble

Rattle is very aware of recordings and what they contain, and has been since his early childhood. He has a sophisticated view of how they may be used. As with many other aspects of his musical life, recordings for him exist primarily as aids to learning and to deeper understanding. The age of a recording simply adds to the increasing and different perspectives which records make available to the musician and to the interested listener.

6.8.2. The growth of record consciousness

Kenyon's biography of Rattle illustrates the importance which recordings played in his early life. His mother worked in a record shop at the time that she met his father (Kenyon, 1987, p.25). As a child Rattle would perform percussion 'concerts' to the accompaniment of recordings selected from the local library (Kenyon, 1987, p.29). In interview with Badal, Rattle remembered that 'as as teenager, I found records of Furtwangler, Kleiber, Toscanini, Bruno Walter...an enormous inspiration.' (Badal, 1996, p.71).

An early interview, with Andrew Keener, referred to the existence of a substantial record collection: '...a large, used record collection prompted talk of formative

recordings, in which the old Karajan/Philharmonia issues featured prominently.’ (Keener, 1980). The same interview quoted Rattle in discussion about these particular recordings: ‘They’re marvellous – that ‘Pictures from an Exhibition’ is very special...I doubt whether you’d hear it any better now...the influences were so rich at the time of the recording – Cantelli and Furtwangler were still associated with the orchestra – on record at least...’ (Keener 1980).

In interview Smith* described Rattle’s view of records. These echoed the comments above: ‘I think in a sense Simon would treat them as being like a museum catalogue.’ This applies both to recordings of the past, and to his own recordings: ‘Simon’s disc of Mahler Ten done in Bournemouth...is a historical photograph.’

Rattle’s perspective on recordings is part of a wider phenomenon in which interest in past performance practice has increased. Recordings are seen as a guide to aspects of such practices, and a part of the process of learning about them. A good example of this understanding and awareness in another contemporary conductor was given in interview by Jolly*: ‘Someone like Chailly [Riccardo Chailly, the Music Director of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam] is quite interesting because he has obviously made a considerable study of Mengelberg...he talks eloquently about Mengelberg’s performances...he probably uses a lot of the scores that have Mengelberg’s writing on them.’

Another conductor with an interest in performances of the past, and a close colleague of Rattle, is Oliver Knussen. Kenyon* described their interaction with recordings: ‘Ollie [Knussen] is a voracious consumer of recordings. You know as far as I can gather they all sit around and discuss them...particularly all those American recordings...Stokowski, Toscanini.’

6.8.3. The use of recordings

Recordings serve two separate learning functions for the conductor. Firstly, they can stimulate understanding by showing how conductors of previous generations have tackled specific musical problems. Secondly, they can assist in extending awareness of repertoire. To quote Kenyon*, recording ‘...is now one of the resources which

conductors can use to prepare their performances, in a way that was not possible in the old days...arguably with the explosion of repertoire you need that now...the range of stuff that Furtwangler did in his life [was] probably narrower.'

Interviewees offered similar perspectives as to why Rattle might listen to recordings. For Murray* Rattle listens to recordings 'as a source of stimulation, either to confirm what he believes about a piece...or just for the experience of hearing that particular famous recording, of what happened.' Willan* was very direct and close to Rattle's own point of view: 'If he thinks that to listen to a scratchy old Bruno Walter Beethoven recording is worthwhile, he will listen to it, and would be interested and stimulated by it. He may disagree with it.'

In a 1995 interview Paul Griffiths asked Rattle if he listened to records. He replied: 'not my own at all. I like to steal other people's good ideas. I tend to perform pieces and then listen to recordings, because often you can't tell what the solutions are until you've found the problems. Also, if you listen first, you pick up people's idiosyncrasies, and what's important to me is to own it.' Eleven years earlier he had made virtually the same comment: 'I listen to recordings out of interest to find out how Mr and Mrs X get around a particular problem.' (Badal, 1996, p.72). Study of the work in question thus precedes the examination of other musicians' approaches to it through the medium of recordings

In listening to recordings, particularly old ones, Rattle is using them to learn, not only to discover solutions to problems, but also to gain insight into different interpretations, in order to spread the boundaries of interpretive possibility. 'I think it's important to listen to old recordings and not say when those things come unexpectedly upon you 'Oh, but that's ridiculous.' Actually sit and ponder why, at that particular time, that was deemed to be necessary.' (Badal, 1996, p.74).

6.8.4. The art of learning

Recordings therefore need to be seen within the wider context of learning. Recordings are not things in themselves but are one educational resource among several. For instance, Willan* commented that musicians of Rattle's generation go to

the concerts and rehearsals of other conductors. 'I sat in the concert hall on a number of occasions when Simon was in there listening to Klaus Tennstedt doing Mahler, or listening to Bernard [Haitink] doing Wagner.'

An even more concrete example of the learning process, which also involved recording, is given by Rattle's teacher John Carewe. In Kenyon's biography, Carewe discussed Rattle's preparation for his first performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: 'I think he knew that his role model in this had to be Furtwangler. Obviously he wasn't going to do it in the same way as Furtwangler - nobody could - but he realised (and I'm sure he sifted through the various recordings of the piece) that of all the conductors of this work it was Furtwangler who provided the insight.' (Kenyon, 1987, p.79).

Rattle himself confirmed his study and admiration of Furtwangler in his interview with Badal: 'He [Furtwangler] understood all the foundations of harmony, counterpoint, and structure, and so his departures [from the written text] were all structural and all organic to the music. As a young conductor, you can listen, and it's like being set free.' (Badal, 1996, p.73). Thus, through listening to recordings and through questioning the musical actions and decisions contained within recordings, one's own musical understanding and creativity, or reactivity, may be significantly enhanced.

6.8.5. The dangers of recordings

However, the use of recordings may have a dark side, and Rattle has also a developed awareness of this. 'What I'd learned from listening to Klemperer's recordings, from talking to Giulini, from watching Kurt Sanderling at work, didn't square with my experience of working with early instruments. Playing Mozart recently with Alfred Brendel, whom I adore, I realised how far my instincts... have moved away [from the style of the performances quoted]. I loved doing it, but it was a bit like doing somebody else's performance.' (Griffiths, P. 1995).

In the same interview Rattle mentioned the occasion when he had sought to demonstrate, in the television programme 'The South Bank Show' several years

previously, the impossibility of playing at the speeds indicated by Beethoven's metronome markings in the 'Eroica' Symphony. To illustrate this point he had actually attempted to conduct at these speeds. He recalled about this moment: 'I can see it was without doubt the only place...where the face of Beethoven peeps over the parapet of this serious, solemn young man trying to be 60. It was wild and thrilling – just like Beethoven.' (Griffiths, P. 1995).

Rattle here acknowledges that recordings, and by extension received wisdom, may stand in the way of the individual's instinctive reaction to a piece of music. He developed this point in another interview with Edward Seckerson published seven days after that just quoted: 'Any thinking musician of my generation cannot help but be a product of the gigantic flux of performing styles which have informed the last 40 years...The remembrance of things past – remembered interpretation, remembered emotion – is a real problem for young musicians tackling core repertoire today.' (Seckerson, 1995).

The contemporary musician may be familiar with old recordings, but ultimately must find his or her own way to the core of the music's meaning, with recordings as an aid, but one which must not be allowed to overwhelm instinct. To quote Rattle directly: 'I just think that you have a duty towards that music and that you have to be able to look that music straight in the face without being embarrassed.' (Badal, 1996, p.77). Rattle perceives that this influence of recording can pose an acute risk to musicians: 'They can...act as a contraceptive to musicians who may become too terrified to take a risk or play a wrong note.' (Badal, 1996, p.78).

6.8.6. Conclusion

Records therefore have value in demonstrating how different musicians from different periods have tackled musical issues and problems that are also common or of interest to contemporary musicians. In this sense they have extended the range of knowledge open to contemporary musicians, and in particular have increased awareness both of repertoire and of interpretive possibilities. Music is now perceived as a pluralistic universe.

Conversely the dangers of recording lie in it being seen as demonstrating a particular way of acting musically, or then being used too slavishly as an influence. Rattle is aware of these dangers, and seeks pro-actively to resist them.

At root the musician must seek to perform through a combination of knowledge and instinct. The individual must exert influence, not be influenced. Recordings are simply a resource to inform the musician's own interpretation.

Rattle summed up the position in his interview with Badal: '...I think there are equal benefits and dangers. If records become something that dampens your sense of adventure about music-making, then I think they're probably doing a criminal act. If they bring music to a wider audience, they are giving untold benefits.' (Badal, 1996, p.78).

6.9. Improving: Recording and Performance Standards

6.9.1. Preamble

This section looks particularly at the role recording may play within the process of improving standards of orchestral performance. Sir Simon Rattle consciously used recording to improve the standard of the CBSO. This was part of a long-term plan to realise a strategic vision. At the same time Rattle has recognised that there are limits to what may be achieved. The ideal that he seeks is orchestral playing that is comparable to that of a string quartet.

6.9.2. The origins of the relationship with EMI

During the phase of Rattle's career before he became an exclusive EMI artist, he did record for other companies alongside EMI. In March 1977 he began the Stravinsky 'Pulcinella' sessions already mentioned, his first recording sessions with EMI, and in July 1977 with the London Symphony Orchestra he accompanied the Russian pianist Andrei Gavrilov in recordings of Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto and Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand. During the period prior to exclusivity with EMI he also recorded for the Open University, Enigma, Decca/Argo and Decca/Headline.

The commencement of his relationship with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra was fortuitous from the point of view of recording, in that EMI had already established a relationship with this orchestra. It had published a number of successful recordings with Rattle's predecessor as Music Director, Louis Fremaux.

Smith* explained in interview the nature of this relationship between orchestra and record company. It was based on the ability of the management of the British regional orchestras 'to provide the services of the orchestra in return for free time...instead of having to pay for recording sessions, one day of recording, six hours [of] two three hour sessions, could be compensated by one and a half free days. So you did not have to actually pay any money.' In other words, in return for a day's recording, members of the Orchestra received a day and a half's paid free-time.

Smith went on to discuss the commercial application of this arrangement: 'EMI were the only company to exploit it...some pretty good orchestras [were recorded] for next to nothing.' Rattle was at this time working with these orchestras, so it was to be expected that he might feature in recording plans involving them and EMI, as proved to be the case: 'Simon's early work was with orchestras like the Northern Sinfonia, ourselves, Bournemouth. So I think it was a natural thing that EMI should have started with him and he with EMI...in the early stages I think EMI began recording with him in just the same way as they recorded with Simon's predecessors.'

Essentially the principle was the same as that behind the recording of orchestras in the USA before and during the Second World War. The orchestra's management achieved the profile for the orchestra that recording gave, and the record companies were able to publish recordings without the need for substantial investment in the form of orchestral fees 'up front'. If a record was commercially successful both parties benefited: the record company could look forward to profits, and the orchestral association would receive a royalty on sales achieved, as well as the profile desired.

The union arrangement for the recording of regional orchestras active at this time therefore acted as an influence and an incentive for EMI to record Rattle conducting

the CBSO, just as it had done with his predecessor, Fremaux. Rattle progressively recorded more and more with the CBSO, although during the early years of his Music Directorship he also recorded with the Philharmonia Orchestra. From 1982 the proportion of records made with the CBSO became high. These recordings are outlined below for the six years 1981 to 1986 inclusive:

Table 6.1. Sir Simon Rattle: volume of annual recordings, 1981-1986.

<u>Year</u>	<u>CBSO</u>	<u>Other orchestras</u>
1981:	CBSO: 1 recording	Philharmonia: 1 recording
1982:	CBSO: 4 recordings	Philharmonia: 1 recording
1983:	CBSO: 2 recordings	Nil
1984:	CBSO: 6 recordings	Los Angeles Philharmonic: 1 recording
1985:	CBSO: 2 recordings	Philharmonia: 1 recording
1986:	CBSO: 5 recordings	London Sinfonietta: 1 recording

These simple statistics show that Rattle and the CBSO within the first six years of their relationship had made 20 published recordings. This number of recordings far exceeded the recorded output of any other English regional orchestra for a similar time period. As has already been noted, this was valuable in creating a national and international platform for both Rattle and the Orchestra. The fortuitous advent of the Compact Disc, the increase in demand and the expansion of the market for recordings which this fuelled, may also account for some of this notable increase, alongside the union agreement already discussed. Between 1981 and 1995 global sales of recordings, all formats taken together, increased by 64% (Gronow, 1998, p.193). Record companies needed to feed this increase.

The combination of the timing of technological innovation, the presence of a favourable financial model for recording, historical links between record company, conductor and orchestra, and high and improving performance standards from Rattle and the CBSO created a set of circumstances which resulted in previously unattained levels of recording activity by the Orchestra. The resulting recordings had valuable benefits in both the short and long term. At the same time Rattle continued to maintain a recording presence, albeit limited, with other groups, a characteristic of

his career to date and arguably a sensible one. Rattle used these recordings to drive up the performance standards of the CBSO.

6.9.3. Long-term planning and the place of recording

Rattle's long relationship with the City of Birmingham Symphony was sustained by a series of long-term plans. These had slightly different objectives, but a common characteristic was to seek through these plans to improve the standard of playing and of performance by the orchestra. An example of one such plan was the 'Towards the Millennium' series of concerts in which the music of an individual decade between 1901 and 2000 was each year reviewed and performed. To quote Nicholas Kenyon* in interview: 'Towards the Millennium'...All those different things were part of a big plan to make the CBSO better.'

The function of recording within these plans was to generate a significant change in the playing of the orchestra. Two interviewees concurred on this point, which was explicitly made by Rattle in his interview with Badal in 1984: 'I use recording now as a tool in orchestra building, as well as a remarkable discipline for us and as a place where one simply has to solve the problems.' (Badal, 1996, p.76). In the same interview Rattle related recording to the more general task of developing standards. 'It's an enormous incentive for everybody to be working to their best. I think that's what one must be aiming for with an orchestra all the time. Give them the opportunities and places where they must give their best and better. And then one can jump from plane to plane. As one reaches a certain height, then that is the expected standard. Then one can move on from there and for me, in a way, that is the most important aspect of my recording.' (Badal, 1996, pp.76-77).

Kenyon*, from the perspective of looking back on the recordings such as that of Mahler's Second Symphony, to which Rattle could only have been looking forwards in the interview just quoted, reiterated Rattle's objective and its successful attainment: 'I think they were more important in the process than they were successful as recordings...The Mahler 2 is a good example of something which probably did push on the orchestra to a tremendous extent, but may not for all time be thought of as successful.' Kenyon* succinctly located the recordings and their

purpose with the comment, 'I think he saw it as an ongoing process rather than as creating a set of finished artefacts.'

Smith* looked at the issue in more detail and showed how improved performance was directly related to the additional time for preparation that recording provided: '...the opportunity to study a big Mahler symphony in depth over five days, seven three-hour sessions...is one which has reaped enormous benefits in the quality of performance and understanding of the musicians. Musicians usually have perhaps two days' rehearsal, then you do a concert and then perhaps repeat it once or twice, but to record, to actually immerse yourself in something for the best part of two weeks...it would not be too far fetched to say that recording has been a lever in the process of improving performance.'

Thus recordings provided Rattle and the CBSO with the opportunity to work in greater depth on the preparation of a piece of music, in the same way that they did for Beecham. The difference between the approach of the two conductors was that for Beecham the improved performance was the greater realisation of the music, whereas for Rattle this heightened performance was important in itself and was placed within the longer term context of a general and permanent improvement.

6.9.4. The benefits of improved performance

The benefits of recording went beyond simply improved performance. The commercial nature of the music industry allowed for this improvement to be consciously sold, notably to foreign buyers. In essence the commercial release of recordings of the CBSO in these heightened performances distributed knowledge of the new and higher standards that the orchestra had reached beyond those territories where the orchestra could normally be heard. Smith* put this clearly: '...it [recording] has universalised the message about what he has achieved in orchestral standards and training...people all over the world, if they can get the CD...can make up their own minds.'

In addition improved standards, and the linkage with a long established brand such as EMI with its associations of quality, enabled the Orchestra to secure tours to

countries such as Japan. To quote Smith*: ‘I think we were probably the first regional orchestra from the UK to tour Japan and to persuade the promoters that “here was a young man whose recordings you can hear, and see the investment that EMI have put into him. You may not have heard of the CBSO but trust us and trust Rattle and EMI”...Without that I don’t think we would have got into [the international circuit].’

Another pecuniary factor that flowed from the increase in the number of recordings was that when the old recording for free time union agreement changed to additional cash payments, the Orchestra’s players found themselves with higher salaries. Smith* confirmed that recording can be attractive to a player in considering joining an orchestra ‘in terms of a package for a job you can offer a player. On average in Simon’s hay-day years... in the early 90s, suddenly our players would be picking up an average of about £1100 a year [for recording].’ Although the level of recording is now less, the additional activity and its consequent income, in combination with other factors, made playing for the CBSO a financially attractive proposition, and thus assisted the recruitment of higher calibre players than would otherwise have been the case. Beecham had previously recognised this benefit of recording.

Recording, or rather successful recording, may thus create a virtuous spiral which links performance standards with opportunities for enhancing income. Firstly, the act of recording may be used to drive up standards, with the resulting recording acting as a calling card. The touring which may in turn result generates further additional income for the orchestra, and at the same time stimulates increased sales of recordings. This virtuous circle of influence has been further assisted by the development during the twentieth century of global transport systems, making it easier for musicians to travel internationally.

6.9.5. Limitations

The improvement of performance standards however cannot go on indefinitely: there are limits beyond which the same performers cannot go. Smith* commented in interview that as the CBSO’s standards rose, so Rattle would require more and more time for rehearsal, most likely as part of his own personal urge to achieve ever higher

standards. 'The standards that the orchestra was able to deliver would in time mean that we could do things a lot quicker...but as time went on he wanted more and more rehearsal time...I could not understand it...but I suppose the better you get the more there is to achieve.'

Although the recording process may be used as an instrument of improvement, the driver of it is still human.

6.9.6. The ideal

On a number of occasions Rattle has remarked that the ideal performance by an orchestra that he seeks is comparable to that of a string quartet. In an interview with the Viennese newspaper 'Die Presse', published in 1996, he put this point quite baldly: 'For me the ideal in music is a good string quartet. Somehow or other the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is the world's biggest string quartet...I always ask the musicians to play chamber music, to play their phrases as their pleasure and mood dictate.' (Sinkowicz,1996).

In the same year, and in the context of the CBSO's Beethoven cycle, Edward Seckerson asked Rattle to nominate the Orchestra's finest hour. Rattle's reply was revealing. He replied that the cycles performed with the Orchestra that year 'was the moment all of us realised that, yes, we really could play like a string quartet.' (Seckerson, 1996).

6.9.7. Conclusion

Recording may assist in the process of moving towards the attainment of the ideal for performance in broad terms. The depth of preparation and concentration which 'working in the studio' allows may force up standards, that eventually may, as in the case of the CBSO, reach an extremely high level in certain performances.

The key point is that it is the act of recording itself that helps to produce these results. The actual product of 'working in the studio', the published recording, is secondary, in that the decisive moment has by then passed. Thus the long-term

improvement in performance is for the record company an ancillary consequence, whereas for the Music Director and the orchestra itself it may be the most important consequence – as Kenyon pointed out at the beginning of this section. Rattle's balanced view on this was well expressed in an interview with the pianist Imogen Cooper and the critic Rob Cowan: 'Recording is a wonderful thing, but for me the music still actually has to go out into the air; if they happen to catch it in the ether, then that's great.' (Cooper and Cowan, 1997, p.16).

Not only has the process of recording forced up performance standards, in addition the resulting product, the record, has served a further useful purpose among several in opening up avenues for additional work through international touring. At the same time the improvement in performance standards at some point is finite, dependant upon the demands and vision of the conductor as well as the capability of the players, although ideals of performance may still at times be achieved.

At root, as both Beecham and Rattle as well as many other conductors have found, recording provides the time and focus, beyond that which is normally available, and through which performance standards may be significantly improved. In this respect it may be deemed to be a highly influential process.

6.10. Conclusions

6.10.1. Introduction

This chapter has sought to identify those areas where the record industry and recording may be seen to have exerted an influence upon musical activity.

6.10.2. Influence

The analysis has indicated that recording has been an influence in the case of Sir Simon Rattle in the following areas:

- It has potential as a resource for learning, but it can both develop and restrict, depending upon how it is viewed by the user;

- It can show the way both to diversity of repertoire and to diversity of interpretation;
- It can be part of a programme to improve the standards of performance;
- It can assist in the process of attracting high calibre players, by enhancing earnings through recording fees;
- It can make the achievements of both conductor and orchestra known in geographical territories where they would normally have no physical presence.
- In summary therefore recording may be used to sustain learning and diversity, to improve standards, and to develop national and international awareness.

6.10.3. No influence

In the case of Rattle, recording and the record industry have not been influential in terms of:

- the producer being a dominant influence;
- the industry, through the record company, deciding upon the immediate repertoire to be recorded;
- the technology playing a determining role;
- the act of recording determining the nature of the performance recorded, as was the case with both Beecham and Solti.

6.10.4. Final conclusion.

Sir Simon Rattle has used recording for musical ends. At every point he has been in control of the medium and has used it in ways closely allied to long term strategic objectives. His understanding and use of the medium stand as important examples to other musicians of the ways in which it may be utilised to achieve musical ends. At the same time he is aware of and accepts the commercial imperatives with which the record industry must live if it is to flourish.

Chapter 7

A comparison of the three case studies, on Beecham, Solti and Rattle, to establish commonalities and differences in the analytical parameters used in these case studies.

7.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts a cross-case analysis, employing the parameters selected as the headings for the development of the three case studies, on Beecham, Solti and Rattle. These parameters are those arrived at following the period of data analysis and subsequent reflection, and are listed at Appendix E. They were used to develop each of the individual case studies contained in the previous three chapters.

For ease of handling these parameters have been re-ordered in this chapter into three broader categories. The first of these is the record industry, and the sub-categories of this are:

- the nature of the relationship with the record company;
- the relationship with the Head of Artists and Repertoire;
- the relationship with the producer.

The second category is concerned with repertoire decisions.

The third category is concerned with activities associated with records and recording. The sub-categories of this are:

- the use of records;
- the act of recording;
- the relationship between recording and performance standards;
- performance and interpretation.

The parameters concerned with each of the case-study subjects as individuals and their relationship with musicians have not been included within the cross-case analysis.

The purpose of the analysis, as before, is the exploration of whether or not recording and the record industry have influenced musical activity. The cross-case analysis of commonalities and differences seeks to illuminate further this question.

Within the analysis there are few clear-cut distinctions between each of the case study subjects. Instead there are a series of shifting patterns in which at different times and in different circumstances commonalities between two of the three subjects may be discerned. Where such patterns have been observed they have been treated as a sub-commonality. Only where similarities are observed in all three cases are these termed commonalities.

As in previous chapters, information derived from research interviews is denoted by an asterisk next to the name of the informant.

7.2 Commonalities and Differences: the Record Industry.

7.2.1. The nature of the relationship with the record industry: monogamy and promiscuity with record companies

7.2.1.1. Sub-commonality: monogamy: Solti and Rattle

Both Solti and Rattle enjoyed monogamous relationships with their record companies, with slight diversionary interests at the start of their respective recording careers. Solti recorded for Deutsche Grammophon in 1949, while establishing himself with Decca. Rattle recorded for several labels, the Open University, Enigma,

Decca/Headline and Decca/Argo, before settling down with an exclusive contract with EMI.

The benefits of monogamy have been clearly stated. From Solti's perspective it gave him first choice in repertoire decisions. Although he was tempted to sign with other labels, Lady Solti* stated that he believed he would not have enjoyed in such circumstances the freedom of decision that he possessed at Decca, especially during his last fifteen years with the company. Solti himself confirmed this point in an interview published just before his death in 1997: 'For many years now I've never had a wish that wasn't fulfilled. For the last 15 years "no" has never been said.' (Funnell, 1997, p.32).

Similarly for Rattle loyalty with one company has brought considerable benefits. By being flexible in the face of the company's requirements for retrenchment in the late 1990s, notably in relation to repertoire and finance, and by remaining with the company, Rattle has sustained his position, where others (such as the pianist Peter Donohoe) have fallen by the wayside. As his agent Rona Eastwood* pointed out, those that remained on the company's books, after a period of thinning out, benefited from the increased focus and attention upon their recordings that followed. In effect, the company increased its promotional and artistic support of those, fewer, artists with whom it remained contractually linked.

From the company's perspective monogamy with a particular conductor encouraged the continuous exploitation of that musician's back catalogue of recordings. Both Decca and EMI have been assiduous in maintaining recordings conducted by Solti and Rattle in their respective catalogues, albeit often at different price levels, whereas this has not always been the case for musicians with whom each organisation has parted company. Contemporaries of Solti and Rattle, for instance the conductors Lorin Maazel and Daniel Barenboim, have both held contracts with several major record companies, and the continuing availability of their recordings has been more haphazard.

In a sense the maintenance of a monogamous situation creates a virtuous spiral, whereby new recordings and the promotion associated with them support the already existing recordings in the catalogue. The more extended in terms of time this relationship becomes, the easier it is for the less successful recordings to be traded off against the more successful. Where the monogamous state is broken, for whatever reason, this situation may no longer apply, with recordings vanishing from the catalogue.

7.2.1.2. Promiscuity: Beecham

In contrast to Solti and Rattle, Beecham was more promiscuous in his relationships with the record companies for whom he worked. In 1931 following the take-over of the Columbia Graphophone Company by The Gramophone Company, Beecham sought an alliance with the holding company, EMI. He proposed that what was to become the London Philharmonic Orchestra record for both labels, HMV and Columbia, simultaneously. This would have resulted in a greater volume of contracted activity than would have been achieved through working with one label only. Prior to this he had recorded for several different labels during the acoustic era: The Gramophone Company in 1910, the Odeon Company in 1912, and Columbia from 1915 up to 1931.

In 1942, having signed a contract with RCA Victor the previous year, he recorded for the American Columbia Company. In 1949 he left RCA for Columbia/USA, renewed his contract with the same company in 1952, and returned to EMI in 1956, following negotiations during 1955. Even at the end of his life, in 1960, he was approaching another company, Decca, with the proposal that they record operas together. Beecham's eminence throughout his career made him an attractive proposition for rival record companies, and enabled him to go where he wished more easily than would be the case with many other musicians.

The reasons for Beecham's promiscuity are clearly documented at a public level, and are inherent in the production figures for the recordings made by Beecham from 1944 onwards firstly for RCA/EMI and subsequently for Columbia/USA. In 1949 Beecham was concerned about RCA's adoption of the 45rpm record and the poor

reproduction that this gave, in the face of the manifestly superior long playing record that Columbia/USA had pioneered. With the same company and its European partner of the mid-1950s, Philips, Beecham complained of the inconvenience of recording dates and locations imposed upon him by Philips, and above all by the latter's lack of interest in giving a recording commitment to his orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, over and above the dates when he himself conducted it.

The issue of work for the Orchestra was fundamental to Beecham. By 1949 and 1955 for both EMI, and for Columbia/USA and Philips, he had recorded such a large amount of material that future recordings were a less attractive proposition to each label. In effect if Beecham was to continue to maintain the current level of recording work, with the enhanced income that it brought both to players and to the Orchestra's administration, he had to seek a new recording partner. Hence his promiscuity. The 1956 contract with EMI allowed not only for fifty sessions for Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic together, but also for a further twenty-five for the orchestra alone. At the same time Beecham's continuing eminence as an individual, a factor which distinguished him from Solti and Rattle, undoubtedly assisted him in initiating change when he so wished.

7.2.1.3. Summary: the relationship with the record company: monogamy and promiscuity.

The evidence of the case studies indicates that a monogamous relationship with a record company is likely to yield considerable benefits for a musician. The longer a musician stays in a relationship with a record company the larger the catalogue of recordings which the company has created with the artist becomes. The continual promotion of this catalogue reinforces the public *persona* of the musician. At the same time the record company has a larger vested interest in seeing that the musician remains associated with it. Consequently it is likely to become increasingly adaptable in issues of repertoire, depending upon the overall commercial environment within which it is operating at any one time. This is certainly the evidence from the Solti case study.

Where the model breaks down is when the musician is producing or wishes to produce more recordings than the record company can handle commercially. If, as in the Beecham case study, this is driven by the need to maintain a schedule of work to support an orchestra financially, then promiscuity is the only option that will allow the musician and orchestra to maintain their level of earnings. The disadvantage for the first record company is that while continuing to exploit recordings already made, it may find itself in competition with another, second, company which is publishing newer recordings by the same artists. The alternative for the first company, of simply increasing the commercial backlog of recordings by the same musicians by making further recordings, may not be financially attractive nor have commercial logic.

This latter set of circumstances, as exemplified by the Beecham case study, is highly specific, and is unlikely to be generalisable, whereas the benefits of monogamy may be. An earlier example of the mutual benefits of monogamy may be seen for instance in the recording career of the tenor Enrico Caruso. Caruso recorded for The Victor Company and its affiliate The Gramophone Company for the rest of his life after his initial recordings in Milan of 1902. His recordings sold in huge quantities, to the mutual benefit of both parties, Caruso being paid a royalty on each record sold.

The continuing promotion of Rattle by EMI is a further example of the benefits of monogamy. Each major event in Rattle's career – for instance a musical appointment, or a record industry award – is followed by a defined promotional 'push' of the catalogue of existing recordings featuring him. In this way the event increases the promotional profile of the musician, and the record company seeks to use this opportunity to maximise further its investment in the artist. Increased sales in turn increase the value of the artist to the company. This virtuous circle is seen in other media industries, such as the cinema.

7.2.2. The nature of the relationship with the record industry: the relationship with the Head of Artists and Repertoire.

7.2.2.1. Sub-commonalities: Beecham and Rattle at EMI.

Both Beecham and Rattle maintained close links with one record company, EMI, although as has been shown, Beecham interspersed this relationship with liaisons

elsewhere. They therefore had similar experiences in their interface with the company. This relationship was in the first instance mediated predominantly through the Head of Artists and Repertoire, or the Head of the International Artists Department, as it was called before the Second World War.

Although Beecham negotiated his initial contract with EMI in 1931 through Fred Gaisberg, much of his later day-to-day contact was through David Bicknell. Bicknell was Gaisberg's assistant from 1937. He continued to work for EMI after the Second World War, until his retirement, some years after Beecham's death. It was Bicknell who negotiated the contract with Beecham that saw his return to the company in 1956. Bicknell was most closely associated with the HMV label within EMI. He was not as active as a producer in the same way as was Walter Legge, his opposite number within the Columbia marque at EMI.

Rattle has worked predominantly through Peter Alward, who currently holds the position of Senior Vice-President, Artists and Repertoire, EMI Classics. Alward has talked in print about the nature of this relationship, and much of Bicknell's correspondence exists in the EMI Archive.

From this material it is clear that this relationship is fundamental, primarily because issues of repertoire and fees are negotiated by the artist through this function. The philosophy of Gaisberg, based on treating artists and their wishes with great respect, was maintained after his death. Bicknell's personal closeness to Beecham was clearly a major factor in alerting him to Beecham's dissatisfaction with the Columbia/USA and Philips arrangements during 1954 and 1955. This in turn led to his return to EMI with the new contract referred to and effective from the beginning of 1956.

Alward has commented upon the sense of realism that artists adopt when confronted with the detailed financial costs of making records. He has praised Rattle for his realism and agreement to adjust the levels of his recording activity to reflect diminished resources within EMI Classics. In an expanding market, however, Rattle has pushed for projects in which he believed strongly, for instance the recording of Nicholas Maw's 'Odyssey'.

The relationship with the position of Head of Artists and Repertoire is of great importance in sustaining the necessary levels of trust between musician and company. The significance of this relationship is highlighted by the different experience of Solti. Because of EMI's separation of the functions of Head of Artists and Repertoire and producer, issues of repertoire and fees are kept separate from the musical issues encountered in the recording studio. The division of responsibility that follows certainly benefits the artist, and clarifies for the company issues around the management of its relationship with the artist.

7.2.2.2. Difference: Solti at Decca.

For Solti at Decca the relationship with his recording company was different from that of Beecham and Rattle at EMI. Inevitably both companies had different corporate cultures. EMI had developed an effective bureaucratic culture that supported it as a large organisation with diverse interests and an international presence. Decca by contrast had struggled throughout the 1930s, but had succeeded in exploiting its subordinate position during the late 1940s and early 1950s. An example of this was its advocacy before EMI of the long-playing record, when in advertisements it portrayed EMI as resisting the progress which it embraced. Decca continued to be strongly influenced by its founder and Chairman, Sir Edward Lewis, right up until its sale to Polygram in 1979. It was far less bureaucratic than EMI, and in some respects much more dictatorial. Personal position and power counted for great deal. As Jack Boyce* observed, if you could gain the support of the right person in the organisation, you could generally proceed with your plans. At EMI, as Walter Legge was eventually to discover, the power of the committee rather than of the individual, was considerable.

Thus, for an artist contracted to Decca, much more emphasis lay in the relationship with the Head of the Classical Division. From 1949 this was Victor Olof, with whom Solti did not 'get on', and from 1956 John Culshaw, with whom he already had a close relationship. The power of this position, which had initially grown out of Olof's assistance to the Decca engineers on classical recordings made after the war, developed because of the personal role of Maurice Rosengarten.

As has already been discussed Rosengarten negotiated the contracts with individual artists for Decca, but rarely entered the arena of repertoire discussions. These he left to the Head of the Classical Division. The latter therefore was often faced with a commitment to a particular artist on the part of the company, but with details of repertoire and recording still to be decided. Given the centrality of repertoire to the success or failure of recordings, both in terms of standards of performance and appeal to the market, this vested a considerable amount of power in the Head of the Classical Division. Essentially if this post-holder, as a producer, did not like the musical results of a recording, they were able to block or to reduce an artist's repertoire preferences, and hence reduce their chances of establishing or maintaining their position with the public successfully. Solti's experience with Olof illustrates this point.

Solti's relationship with Rosengarten remained firm throughout the latter's life, if slightly distant for much of the time. While this secured Solti's general position with the company, it still left issues of repertoire in the hands of the Head of the Classical Division who also acted as a producer, especially for large-scale recordings. As will be seen in the following section, concerned with repertoire, this had considerable consequences for Solti, both beneficial and less so.

The *modus operandi* of Decca differed from that of EMI, and especially of the HMV wing. The dominance of Rosengarten in issues only of contractual importance, such as fees, placed greater power in the hands of the production function, and therefore shifted it away from the artist. In effect this role adopted some of the traditional Artists and Repertoire functions. If the relationship with this post-holder at Decca was poor, it could make it more difficult for the artist to establish himself or herself in their preferred repertoire, with consequent commercial and critical ramifications.

7.2.2.3. Summary: the relationship with the Head of Artists and Repertoire.

From the evidence of these case studies the relationship with the Head of Artists and Repertoire, or the senior managerial position in a record company dealing with these issues, is dependant upon the individual circumstances of each company, their history, culture and structure.

In the case of Beecham and Rattle, the balance that existed between the Head of Artists and Repertoire and the producer allowed purely musical issues to be dealt with by the latter. Correspondingly issues of repertoire and finance were dealt with separately and before musicians entered the studio. Musical and business issues in relation to the creation of recordings were kept separate.

This was not the case with Decca, where musical opinions on the part of the producer had a direct influence upon the issue of repertoire recorded. In this latter instance, therefore, the influence of the industry was greater than in the former, where a more balanced situation existed and continues to do so.

Thus the degree of influence exerted by the record industry at the level of the Head of Artists and Repertoire is contingent upon factors specific to each company. Depending upon these, influence may or may not be directly exerted upon musical activity.

7.2.3. The nature of the relationship with the record industry: the relationship with the record producer.

7.2.3.1. Sub-commonalities: Beecham and Rattle

A sub-commonality existed in the way Beecham and Rattle worked with their record producers. The major factor in determining this was the culture and organisation of EMI, where, as already noted, there was a functional split in the HMV division at least between the Head of Artists and Repertoire and the producer in the studio.

For Beecham the producer, or musical supervisor, was present to ensure that the side breaks required by the 78 rpm wax recording process were agreed and clearly marked in scores and parts, and that, insofar as was possible with someone of Beecham's temperament and standards, the required number of sides were produced in each session.

Anecdotal evidence makes it clear that Beecham was in command. When Lawrence Collingwood, whom Beecham greatly respected, congratulated him on a masterly performance of a piece by Delius, Beecham insisted on repeating it because of a

slight imperfection. Throughout the correspondence in the EMI Archive there are notes about the high standards set by Beecham and the corresponding low level of productivity from his recording sessions. Often recordings of particular works took more than their allotted time. Bicknell noted that on average Beecham produced two sides per session, or approximately eight minutes of music, compared to the expected average of four sides, delivering approximately sixteen minutes. Beecham would take great care and so might be slow in recording, or he might feel that circumstances demanded a change of repertoire. After the Second World War the first Beecham recording of 'Ein Heldenleben' was partly recorded at sessions initially intended for a Mozart symphony (Ford, 1998).

In general Beecham saw the record producer, ensconced in 'the cave of harmony', as he dubbed the control room, as there to assist in the production of the recording, and as part of the team which Beecham himself was leading.

In the case of Rattle the situation was not dissimilar. Nicholas Kenyon* suggested that the function of the producer of many of Rattle's recordings, David Murray, was essentially to do largely what Rattle as the conductor wanted. In interview Murray* laid considerable emphasis upon his enjoying the confidence of Rattle, for instance in the area of translating the final mixes of a recording to compact disc, and in relation to all the intermediate technical stages involved, such as editing. John Willan*, who was Rattle's first producer, also laid great emphasis upon the absolute necessity of a trusting relationship between artist and producer. This was a characteristic which other interviewees, such as the producer Andrew Keener*, also emphasised.

Thus Beecham and Rattle viewed their producers as functionaries who existed to assist in the process of ensuring the production of a satisfactory recording of a piece of music. In general terms the conductor and his wishes remained pre-eminent.

7.2.3.2. Differences: Solti

For Sir Georg Solti, working at Decca, the situation initially was not nearly so clear cut. As already noted, the Senior Producer when Solti commenced recording for Decca, as an accompanist to the violinist Georg Kulenkampff, was Victor Olof.

Given Rosengarten's fondness for negotiating contracts, but lack of detailed knowledge of classical music, repertoire decisions fell to Olof. He viewed Solti as 'brash' and restricted his repertoire to areas in which Solti at times had difficulty in shining, or which might have been felt to be 'pot-boilers' for a musician of Solti's standing, even in the early 1950s. This repertoire included symphonies by Mendelssohn and overtures by Suppe. It is to Solti's credit that he kept at it during the Olof years, itself an indication of his commitment to recording.

Olof's replacement by John Culshaw assisted Solti greatly as it placed in a position of power someone who believed in Solti as an operatic conductor and who trusted him strongly. Solti's years of greatness date directly from Culshaw's assumption of the role of Senior Producer at Decca in June 1956. But again the fact has to be faced that essentially Solti was assisting Culshaw in his dream of recording the first 'Ring' cycle in the studio, rather than he (Solti) himself determining repertoire. Culshaw was shrewd enough to recognise a fresh Wagnerian voice in Solti having heard him conduct in Munich in the summer of 1949. Solti realised that here was a major opportunity. As he remarked in an interview with Robert Chesterman: 'You get a chance or two. You have to use the chances. If you don't, you're lost. I had some successes, because I recorded pieces which were important, operas which until then were unheard.' (Chesterman, 1990, p.47). Even though he shone in the recording of Act III of 'Die Walkure' of 1957, the intended first episode of a 'Ring' cycle with the legendary Kirsten Flagstad, as already noted Decca chose Hans Knapperstbusch to conduct Act I of the same opera the following autumn, with little success.

By the time Decca had got to recording 'Das Rheingold' in 1958, after the success which Solti had made of conducting the 'Die Walkure' excerpts and 'Arabella' in 1957 both musically and in terms of studio technique, and their excellent critical reception, Solti was beginning to be able to make demands upon the company, such as recording certain Beethoven Symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra immediately prior to the 'Rheingold' sessions.

The success of the 'Die Walkure' excerpts, 'Arabella' and 'Das Rheingold' helped Solti to secure the musical directorship of the Covent Garden Opera Company.

Decca had been down this road before: it had recorded Rafael Kubelik, who had been musical director at Covent Garden between 1955 and 1957, during this period with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Even so, as is apparent from the television film made during the recording of 'Gotterdammerung', it was Culshaw who was in command, encouraging and persuading Solti, who was quite flexible, to adjust interpretive points to conform more closely to Culshaw's preconceptions, and his ideas of what suited the recorded performance best.

After Culshaw's departure from Decca for the BBC in 1967, his place was taken by Ray Minshull. The nature of the relationship between Minshull and Solti is not so clear-cut as it was with the producers who came before and after him. By the time the point had been reached when Solti's recordings were being handled by younger producers such as James Mallinson and Michael Haas, the relationship between conductor and producer had developed into one very similar to that which existed between Beecham and Rattle and their respective producers.

7.2.3.3. Summary: the relationship with the record producer

In terms of influence, the Decca way of working and the presence within the company of strong characters in the form of Sir Edward Lewis, Maurice Rosengarten, Victor Olof, and John Culshaw, meant that the recording industry through these individuals exerted a strong influence upon Solti during the early years of his career (although the roles were to be reversed later) in a way which was not the case with Beecham and Rattle.

The fact that it was so was caused by a combination of historical circumstance, organisational culture and structure, and personal character. It would not therefore be appropriate to generalise outwards from this particular instance. Nonetheless the different influences exerted during the formative period of Solti's career remain.

7.2.4. Summary of the analytical parameter: the record industry: commonalities and differences

The analysis of the relationship of the three case study subjects and their record companies indicates that a monogamous relationship with a record company is of

benefit to a musician, and that where the Artists and Repertoire and producer functions are separate, the balance of power rests more easily with the musician. Where these functions are not separated, the power over repertoire and recording held by the producer, with personal preference at times driving issues of repertoire, shifts the balance of influence away from the musician.

Although it has not been studied in depth, the parallel career of Walter Legge would appear to corroborate this point of view. Legge had very definite views on how a performance should go. Grubb commented on his giving musical ‘notes’ to Karajan during their last session together, recording Sibelius’s Fifth Symphony (Grubb, 1986, p.10.). Furthermore, it was Otto Klemperer’s refusal to allow Legge to attend one of his piano rehearsals for the recording of ‘The Magic Flute’, presumably on the basis of not wanting Legge interfering with or commenting upon his interpretation, that was one of the triggers for Legge’s resignation from the Columbia arm of EMI (Grubb, 1986, p.25.). With Legge, the Artists and Repertoire and producer functions were very closely linked.

Thus in terms of the influence of the producer, the exercise of such influence may at a significant level be contingent upon the allocation of responsibilities within the relevant recording company, as well as the personal character of the individuals involved. Where these factors allow for a concentration of power with an individual, then considerable influence upon musical activity may be exerted. The post-war careers of John Culshaw and Walter Legge powerfully illustrate this point.

7.3. Commonalities and Differences: Repertoire Decisions

7.3.1. Introduction

This section looks at commonalities and differences in the area of decision concerning repertoire to be recorded. Given the long-term influence of the recording industry, the decision as to what is to be recorded is *prima facie* an issue of importance. Repertoire decisions reflect either an influence of the industry upon

musical activity, or, alternatively, the reverse, with current musical activity and its practitioners in various forms influencing the industry.

7.3.2. Commonalities: Beecham, Solti and Rattle

Each case study indicates that once a musician is established, repertoire decisions tend to reflect those areas of repertoire to which the relevant musician is most committed and through which he or she can give the musical performance that most accurately reflects his or her musical personality.

Thus throughout the period after the Second World War Beecham recorded repertoire which at times, and in detail, very much reflected his personal preferences. Two examples of this, which on the surface did not look to be commercially attractive, were the 'Faust' Symphony of Liszt, recorded during 1958, and Faure's 'Dolly' Suite, one of the last works to be recorded by Sir Thomas, at the beginning of December 1959 in Paris.

Similarly towards the end of his recording career Solti exercised full control over repertoire decisions for his recordings. Decca clearly went to considerable trouble and expense to realise these. An outstanding example of this was Solti's recording of Richard Strauss's opera 'Die Frau ohne Schatten', reputed to be the first classical music recording of a single work to have cost in excess of one million dollars, and which took over two years to record (Greenfield, 1992a).

In Simon Rattle's career to date his attitude to repertoire selection has consistently been rigorous. A major concern has been the avoidance of mediocrity of performance, and of a continuation of the repetition of repertoire and of the standardisation of performance, found generally across the classical music recording industry.

A commonality exists therefore, certainly between Beecham and Solti, in that during the final parts of their careers they were able to determine the repertoire that they were to record. For Beecham this was the period 1944 to 1959, and for Solti 1982 to 1997. In both cases each period was also noticeable for the presence of technological

innovations which drove market growth. As Rattle has not yet reached the end of his natural life a firm parallel in this instance cannot be drawn.

A further commonality that does exist however between all three is that the music to be recorded is generally that with which the executive musician has a strong musical identification at that time. This in turn, at this level of capability, in most instances translates into performances of outstanding merit. In Beecham's case the relevant repertoire was that of Frederick Delius, Mozart, and French music of the nineteenth century. For Solti it was the operas of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss. For Rattle it is at present the music of the twentieth century.

7.3.3. Differences

7.3.3.1. Introduction

The differences in the experience of the three case-study subjects in determining the repertoire which they recorded relate closely to three factors: the evolution of the record industry, with both technological and consequent market factors determining the degree to which the company or the musician might have influence over repertoire decisions; the eminence and age achieved by the musician; and finally the attitude of the musician to the recording environment itself. In the following sections, the differences in experience of each of the case-study subjects are considered. Beecham's career is considered in greater depth than those of Solti and Rattle as a wider range of factors interact with it.

7.3.3.2. Beecham

Beecham's recording career breaks down into four distinct periods, in each of which the degree of influence which he had over repertoire decisions was different. Each of these periods is next considered separately.

7.3.3.2.1. The acoustic period 1910 – 1925

The first of these periods was that of acoustic recording technology, during which Beecham recorded intermittently (between 1910 and 1925). The over-riding characteristics of this period were two-fold. The first of these was the preference for short pieces of music, reflecting the relatively crude methods and short time-spans of

recording and sound reproduction, both of which were based on acoustic processes. The second characteristic was the high proportion of works recorded which were also in Beecham's concert repertoire at the time of recording. In other words the record company would record what was immediately available. However, the repertoire recorded did extend beyond that which was currently 'available', to items which did not appear in the current repertoire.

An example of these two factors is the repertoire which Beecham recorded with the London Symphony Orchestra at the beginning of his association with the Columbia Graphophone Company in 1915. Several of the pieces recorded (the Overture to 'The Magic Flute', the Minuet from 'Manon', and one of the Polovtsian Dances from 'Prince Igor') appear in concurrent concert programmes. Also recorded were the Waltzes from Act II of Richard Strauss's 'Der Rosenkavalier', which was not in Beecham's concert repertoire at this time.

During the acoustic period, therefore, repertoire decisions reflected firstly what was in the current concert repertoire, and secondly items not so represented and therefore selected especially for recording. No evidence has been seen which indicates how decisions were actually arrived at during this period, but the influence of the musician at the least would have been felt in the case of the concert items. The most likely explanation of the choice of non-concert items would be as the outcome of a negotiation between artist and record company, rather than as a request or demand from the company. 'Der Rosenkavalier' had been conducted by Beecham prior to the outbreak of the First World War.

At this point in the evolution of the recording industry recordings were seen as ephemeral artefacts, and it is therefore unlikely that Beecham chose items for concert performance with an eye to them being suitable for recording, although no evidence exists to corroborate this supposition. Nonetheless the fact that he recorded additional items outside his concert repertoire tends to support it.

7.3.3.2.2. The first electrical recording period: 1926-1931

The second period of Beecham's recording career lasted from 1926 to 1931, the period during which he made electrical recordings for the Columbia Graphophone Company. The new electrical recording process, by greatly improving the level of aural fidelity, made the recording of orchestras a much more feasible and attractive proposition. For the first time an orchestra could play for a recording seated as it was for a concert, and the reproduction gave a reasonable semblance of the orchestral sound heard in a concert hall.

The correctly anticipated increase in demand for orchestral recordings, which also demonstrated well the superiority of the new recording process over the old, saw a decisive move on the part of Columbia away from works currently in Beecham's concert repertoire, to the recording of works especially for the gramophone. In addition this move extended to the recording of longer works than had been common with the acoustic process. Given the similar timing for individual side lengths, the presence of many shorter works in the recorded repertoire continued. Works currently in the concert repertoire were not entirely absent from the recording studio.

Among the complete works recorded by Beecham at this time were Handel's 'Messiah', Gounod's 'Faust', Mozart's Symphony No. 34 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 2. Only the last named appeared in a concurrent concert programme, and that was ten months earlier than the recording.

The apogee of the record company driving repertoire during this period was the recording of Atterberg's Sixth Symphony, made in August 1928. The recording represented the world premiere performance of the work. It was made in advance of the first public performances so that it could be available for sale at the time of these. This recording reflected both the move by the record industry into a controlling position when it chose to claim this role, and more specifically the promotional drive of the Columbia Graphophone Company under Sir Louis Stirling.

The change to electrical recording strengthened the record companies' involvement in repertoire decisions. While not completely supine in the acoustic period, during

the first wave of electrical recording they became more pro-active. Consequently the musician's influence over repertoire diminished. Now the musician was often engaged to record specifically what was proposed by the record company.

7.3.3.2.3. The second electrical recording period: 1932 – 1940

During the third recording period, following the merger of the Columbia Graphophone Company and The Gramophone Company to form EMI, repertoire selection was achieved by a process of negotiation. The upshot of this was exemplified by a minute of the Repertoire Conference of March 7th 1935 in the EMI files: 'Mr. Francis stated that there were 3 sessions to be taken before 1st July 1935 under Sir Thomas Beecham's contract. It had been arranged that the repertoire for two of these sessions would be chosen by ourselves and for the third session by Sir Thomas.' (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Minutes of Repertoire Conference, 7.3.35). As in the previous period, the balance of power in these decisions lay more with the record company than with the musician. Another anecdotal example of the exercise of this influence is Beecham's anger in 1937, already referred to, at being required to record Brahms in place of Mozart.

The move away from duplicating concert activity was compounded by the construction of the Abbey Road studios, and the preference of EMI for recording in these rather than 'on location' in the concert hall or opera house. After the 1934 Leeds Festival, during which a number of test recordings were made, Beecham commended the results to EMI and suggested that the Leeds Town Hall represented the type of location that was well-suited to recording, especially when linked to public performances. But EMI's response, while polite, emphasised its preference for its own studios. The potentially beneficial linkage with public performances was not acknowledged. A similar reaction was discernible to the 'location' recordings made at Covent Garden during the 1936 and 1937 seasons. As with the Leeds recordings, several sides of miscellaneous excerpts were commercially issued. Most of the masters of these test recordings were formally destroyed in June 1939. The full acceptance of the idea of recordings of complete works, made 'on location', as being commercially viable was still some way off.

The state of the market for recordings during the 1930s was fragile. Sales slowly picked up after their collapse in the wake of the Wall Street Crash of 1929. But in general EMI was cautious with its recording plans. Its control over repertoire reflected this carefulness. Beecham in turn responded warmly to Walter Legge's 'Society' model of marketing, through which advance subscriptions for recordings of distinct repertoire strands were collected before production, and to the value at which recording costs were automatically liquidated. The 'Society' model made possible the recording of music then considered to be of specialised interest. This model enabled Beecham to record the music of Delius, which was close to his heart, but which was not an immediately attractive commercial proposition.

7.3.3.2.4. The era of the American connection, the long playing record and stereophonic sound: 1942 – 1959

Beecham's years in the USA during the Second World War saw a marked change in his attitude to recording. By the time he returned to England in 1944, determined to make recordings through EMI to satisfy his contract with RCA, which he had signed in 1941, he was much more influential in the matter of repertoire decisions than he had been during the previous period of recording. A key factor in this change was RCA's urgent need for recordings following the Petrillo ban on recording by Union musicians between 1942 and 1944. RCA's requirement for records to sell meant that they did not linger over repertoire proposals. For his part Beecham would exploit this necessity, for instance substituting different works from those planned for recording, and playing off EMI against RCA in his desire to record works not actually agreed by either.

The end of the Second World War saw record sales increase sharply. There was subsequently a lull at the time of the long playing record versus the 45 rpm disc dispute between Columbia and RCA in 1949, which followed Columbia's introduction of the long playing record in 1948. From the beginning of the 1950s sales rose consistently with the firm adoption of the long playing record by the market. The introduction of stereophonic sound towards the end of the decade maintained this growth.

The combination of a constant demand for recordings and Beecham's popularity with the record buying public, as well as his increasing eminence as 'a grand old man of music', meant that throughout this period, and particularly after he moved from EMI to American Columbia in 1950 and back to EMI in 1956, he had quite a free hand in repertoire decisions. David Bicknell's memo recording the Rice Hotel discussions of 1955 indicated clearly that EMI was prepared to agree to his repertoire preferences with a high degree of commitment. At the same time Beecham was open to 'one-off' recording proposals such as the RCA/EMI 'La Boheme', made in New York in 1956 – a shrewd suggestion to RCA on the part of Beecham's agent Andrew Schulhof.

Throughout the 1950s there do not appear to have been quarrels specifically about repertoire with the two record companies to which he was contracted – Columbia/USA and Philips, and EMI. During this final period Beecham was recording what he wanted to, subject to the financial investment of the record companies, rather than what the record companies wanted. Disagreements and complaints, as already noted, focused upon much more immediate issues.

7.3.3.2.5. Beecham: summary

Beecham's recording career and involvement with repertoire decisions is like a parabola. To start with the musician has quite a high degree of control over repertoire, reflecting the idea of the sound recording at this time as essentially an ephemeral entertainment medium, which exploited whatever was immediately available and likely to possess commercial appeal or topicality. As technology advances, the industry becomes more interventionist in this area, encouraged to do so by market conditions. The combination of further technological advance and a more buoyant market, as well as an increase in personal distinction on Beecham's part, saw the record company loosen its hold on repertoire, and largely hand over the decision making to Beecham during the last decade of his life. In this area, the greater the success achieved by the recording industry, the more control the musician achieved over repertoire, with a corresponding reduction in the direct influence of the record company over repertoire.

7.3.3.3. Solti

7.3.3.3.1. The three career phases

Solti's recording career breaks into three phases: the first, when he was seeking to establish himself, lasted from 1947 to 1956; the second, the era of the supremacy of the stereophonic long playing record, lasted from 1956 to 1983; and the third, from 1983 to his death in 1997, was dominated by the compact disc.

During the first phase Solti established himself with the Decca Record Company, an organisation with an autocratic culture. This was personified at this time by Victor Olof, the Senior Producer for classical music recordings until 1956, who made clear his opinions about the suitability or otherwise of particular artists and repertoire for recording by Decca. Thus, during this period, Solti's recorded repertoire reflected a compromise between his own personal preferences, the company's (that is to say largely Olof's) perception of his strengths and weaknesses, and Decca's need to build a catalogue for the long playing record, in competition principally with EMI. The result, as has been noted, was a set of repertoire strands based on operatic excerpts, classical and romantic symphonies, and twentieth century Hungarian music. Solti would have liked to record opera, reflecting his principal professional activity from 1946 onwards, but Decca did not permit this. Here the record company was clearly in command.

The second phase in Solti's recording career saw the replacement of Olof by John Culshaw in 1956, and Solti's immediate integration into Decca's large-scale operatic recordings both by design (the excerpts from 'Die Walkure') and by accident (replacing Karl Bohm as the conductor of 'Arabella'). These gave Solti the opportunity that he needed to demonstrate fully his skill as a conductor and strengths as a musician. Before long, on the back of the critical and commercial success of the 'Die Walkure' and 'Arabella' recordings, he was flexing his muscles in the area of repertoire, for instance exerting his wish to record the larger Beethoven symphonies, despite Culshaw's scepticism. Control over repertoire was now beginning to pass into Solti's hands.

At the same time Solti's earliest operatic recordings were also distinctive because they were the first to be released by Decca in stereophonic sound, and the competition in the operatic field, principally EMI, was slow to adopt this medium. Decca was shrewd enough to be recording in stereo before the commercial manifestation of this new sound medium had been finally decided upon by the record industry. Solti was thus pushed forward by technological innovation in an area without significant competition. Interest in stereo helped to boost sales, thus enhancing his reputation and so influence. Throughout this second phase Solti's repertoire is dominated initially by major works in the Italian and Austro-German operatic canon, and after his move from Covent Garden to Chicago, by major works in the late-romantic symphonic repertoire.

During the third phase, from 1983 to his death in 1997, Solti was recording what he wished. At the same time, the introduction of the compact disc in 1983, and the three-fold increase in record sales that followed in the period up to 1990, helped Solti to become the conductor with the second highest CD sales after Herbert von Karajan (Anonymous, 1986).

7.3.3.3.2. Summary: Solti

Solti's move into the position of being able to influence the repertoire that he recorded was aided by the presence of key decision-makers in Decca, namely Culshaw; by the corresponding opportunity to record repertoire very well suited to his talents as a musician; by the introduction of innovation, in the form of stereo and the CD, with resulting increased sales; and by the ever-increasing existence of a large and continuously reissued back catalogue of recordings featuring himself as conductor. The combination of these factors enabled Solti progressively to increase his grip on decisions. As had happened with Beecham, as the record industry developed fast, so paradoxically the grip of the musician on this key area was strengthened, and that of the record company reduced. The only constraint on the musician's decision making was the level of capital available for recording. In Solti's case, as the recording of 'Die Frau ohne Schatten' indicated, at the extreme the capital that could be made available was extensive.

7.3.3.4. Rattle

Rattle's appearance on the recording landscape in 1975 took place long after Solti's in 1947, and especially so after Beecham's in 1910. His attitude towards the making of records therefore reflected this distance in time and the developments that had taken place during this period.

Whereas Beecham and Solti were happy to record a work and be paid for it, and in Beecham's case to work with a record company to secure the existence of his orchestra and the best players within it, Rattle took a much more sceptical view of recording. This in turn strongly influenced his attitude to repertoire decisions. By the time Rattle came to make records, he was well aware of the record industry's high levels of repertoire duplication and of the consequent comparisons likely to be made by the public and critics.

In the face of this new historical awareness Rattle developed a philosophy towards the choice of repertoire far more thorough-going than that of Beecham and Solti. The key elements of this were:

- Rattle should 'have something to say' about the repertoire to be recorded, to counteract the problems of over-production and standardisation of performance;
- The repertoire to be recorded should reflect his personal preferences;
- The repertoire should support 'learning' by Rattle himself, his orchestra, the CBSO, and ultimately the audience.

Thus while Rattle will have to negotiate with his record company, especially at a time of commercial contraction, over repertoire, such discussions are likely to be bounded by the above factors. Within these boundaries alternatives more or less attractive to both record company and musician are likely to be generated, but whatever Rattle finally records is likely to be characterised by some or all of these factors.

Rattle has therefore adopted both an historically informed and practically strategic approach to the issue of repertoire selection. It is less opportunistic than that of

Beecham and Solti during the early years of their respective recording careers, and more firmly focused on Rattle's needs as a musician.

7.3.4. Summary of the analytical parameter: repertoire decisions

The fore-going discussion of the influence of the case study subjects upon repertoire decisions suggests that influence over repertoire will be determined by:

- The state of the market for recordings and the corresponding degree of control sought by the record company;
- The attitude of the musician to recording and especially the degree to which he or she wishes to record: the greater the wish the more influence will lie with the record company.

The case studies suggest two further factors:

- that those technological innovations which boost sales result in musicians having greater influence over repertoire decisions, because the record company is more relaxed about the overall financial position, since it is keen to exploit the favourable commercial circumstances created by the presence of a new technology;
- that if increasing age elides with increasing sales greater freedom in decision making will pass to the musician.

The degree of influence of the recording industry over repertoire appears to be geared to market conditions on the one hand, and to the attitudes of the musician on the other. Poor conditions see an increase in control, while good conditions see a loosening of it. The willingness or desire of the musician to record, or not to record, will likewise determine the degree of influence which the record company will have over the repertoire decision, and through this more broadly upon musical knowledge and activity.

7.4. Commonalities and Differences: Recordings and Recording

7.4.1. Introduction

This section considers commonalities and differences in four areas of activity associated with recording itself, as opposed to the interaction with the record industry in terms of functions and decisions. These areas are:

- The use of records
- The act of recording
- Performance standards
- Performance and interpretation

As previously noted in other areas of analysis sub-commonalities are discernible between two of the case study subjects, if not between all three.

7.4.2.1. The use of records: sub-commonalities: recordings as a testament: Beecham and Solti

The first sub-commonality, between Beecham and Solti, is their shared view that in certain circumstances they were creating an artistic testament. Beecham felt this in relation to his recordings of Delius. Given his close friendship with the composer and the degree to which he had promoted his works this is understandable. While Beecham may not have felt such a high level of ownership in relation to the music of Mozart, (although when listening to the congratulatory telegrams being read out at his seventieth birthday lunch, he is reputed to have murmured: ‘What, nothing from Mozart?’ (Atkins and Newman, 1978, p.48), examples have already been given of how later, distinguished conductors, notably Krips and von Karajan, used Beecham’s recordings to refresh their sense of Mozartian style. At the time of the 1955 meeting at the Rice Hotel, Houston, to discuss the repertoire that might be recorded on Beecham’s return to EMI, Beecham made it clear that, as he was getting on in years, ‘he wished to give preference in his remaining years to the recording of the works which are given below...’ (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 5.4.55 written by David Bicknell of conversation with Sir Thomas Beecham at the Rice Hotel, Houston, Texas, on 25.3.55, p.1.). His assistant Denis Vaughan* in interview

suggested that Beecham wished to leave a legacy of recordings of the principal operatic schools, to show they should be performed.

Solti also saw his recordings as a testament, but in his case this reflected a more specific situation: they represented his personal testament rather than a grammar of style, as was Beecham's intention. Lady Solti indicated that the preparation prior to a recording would be intense and extensive. In most cases once the recording had been accomplished, there was little further to be said. The personal testament had been made. Solti would move on to the next project. Only in certain specific cases, about which he was completely open, would he wish at a later date to record a new and different perspective upon a work, in this instance experiencing the changes of view not uncommon with many concert artists. For instance Wagner's 'Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg' was recorded for a second time, with a different orchestra and cast. At his death Solti was preparing for a second recording of 'Tristan und Isolde', first recorded in September 1960.

7.4.2.2. The use of records: commonalities: recordings as a learning resource: Solti and Rattle

Records have been used by both Solti and Rattle as a learning resource. Research shows that both conductors listened extensively to recordings made by conductors of earlier generations. As the recording catalogue has grown for historical reasons, and as attitudes to 'learning' through recordings as a resource have become more open, so the role played by recordings in acquiring knowledge of different performance styles has become clearer. Ed Smith's* reference to the idea of Rattle regarding recording as a 'museum catalogue' is thus especially apt.

Records have been used both to gain a deeper understanding of how musicians have individually tackled specific works - for instance Elgar conducting his own symphonies - and more generally how a greater sense of stylistic diversity and appropriateness may be developed. An example of this is Solti and Rattle consulting with specialists in the performance of baroque music, Andrew Parrott and William Christie respectively.

Beecham did not use records in this way. For obvious historical reasons there was no legacy of recordings for him to refer to. In the case of contemporary musicians of similar stature, such as Furtwangler and Toscanini, he would have been familiar with their work from first-hand experience. He worked closely with Furtwangler, for instance, in planning the 1937 international opera season at Covent Garden, and would have been familiar with Toscanini's performances, if only through his concerts and broadcasts for the BBC before the Second World War in England, and for NBC during the war years in the USA. Beecham however clearly understood the power of recording when he commented that it would have been useful had it 'appeared on the scene 200 years earlier' (Reid, 1961, p.203).

7.4.2.3. The use of records: differences

Over and above these two sub-commonalities, each of the three conductors studied used records in individual ways. These are briefly considered below.

7.4.2.3.1. Beecham

Beecham had a highly pragmatic view of the efficacy of records. He himself used recordings, both 'live' and commercial to berate music critics in Seattle in 1943 and in London in 1955. This reflects a belief in recordings as highly practical artefacts, with an immediate documentary use quite divorced from their commercial exploitation.

At the same time Beecham was highly conscious of their potential for this latter purpose. Although the great majority of his recordings were made for established companies, there are two instances in which he sought to go beyond these normal circumstances and use recordings in relatively new ways.

In 1938 he recorded a set of 'lollipops' with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, for use in programmes to be broadcast by Radio Luxemburg which were sponsored by Beecham's Pills. Beecham also provided brief spoken introductions to each piece for broadcasting. (These recordings are contained in the two CD set: 'Sir Thomas Beecham conducting the Beecham Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra', Symposium 1096-1097.) In this instance Beecham was

simply mirroring the family tradition for vigorous promotion. The use of classical music for advertising in such a direct way was uncommon prior to the Second World War.

In 1939, performances at the international opera season at Covent Garden were recorded under the auspices of the company responsible for the London Philharmonic Orchestra (the pit orchestra for the season of which Beecham was artistic director), using the Philips-Miller recording system. This was used by broadcasting organisations as it provided good quality recordings lasting for up to an hour without interruption. The purpose of these recordings was their subsequent sale to overseas broadcasting companies in return for payment. The sale of one recording, of 'Don Giovanni', was accomplished to Australia and Japan (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 25th June 1946 written by Walter Legge to Mr.(Brenchley) Mittell, p.1).

During the height of the Petrillo ban on recording in the USA, when Beecham was seeking to honour his contract with RCA, and later following his return to England in 1944, he sought to negotiate the issue of these recordings on a commercial basis through EMI. Ambiguities over artists' payments and copyright clearances were to make this impossible. The linkage with the previous performance-related recordings, made at Leeds (1934) and Covent Garden (1936 and 1937) persisted. Once again the use of recordings in a new way was being suggested by Beecham. In both these instances his strong entrepreneurial streak is evident.

7.4.2.3.2. Solti

Solti's individual and personal use of recordings was more closely associated with Rattle's idea of them as learning devices. Towards the end of his life Solti contracted with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, whose Chief Conductor for this period was Solti's former deputy at Covent Garden, Sir Edward Downes, to give performances of works which he was later to conduct under more 'high profile' circumstances.

These works included Richard Strauss's 'Four Last Songs', prior to the commercial recording of them made in June 1990 with Kiri te Kanawa and the Vienna

Philharmonic Orchestra, and Mozart's 'Requiem', prior to its performance and international television from Vienna on the two hundredth anniversary of Mozart's death in December 1991.

This method of working had two distinct advantages. Firstly, it gave Solti the opportunity of conducting these works directly with an orchestra. Secondly, it resulted in the production of legitimate recordings from the broadcast performances which Solti could then study both in depth and repeatedly prior to the later performances. As a way of working this use of a radio orchestra exemplified the extraordinarily high levels of preparation which Solti would undertake. It was also a logical extension, using contemporary technology, of Richard Strauss's advice to conductors always to listen to the orchestra playing from different parts of the opera house or concert hall, in order to hear the balance and other musical characteristics that the audience will encounter.

7.4.2.3.3. Rattle

Rattle does not at present use recordings in either of the specific ways adopted by Beecham and Solti. He works within the accepted framework of the commercial media industries. If he has one distinctive characteristic that is different to Beecham and Solti in this area, it is the emphasis which he lays upon the value of recordings as resources for learning. This facet, which extends to video as well as audio recording, has already been considered in detail. In turn it reflects the existence of a general archive of performance through recording, on a scale unknown to either Beecham or Solti at a similar point in their lives.

7.4.2.3.4. The use of records: differences: summary

Each of the three conductors used records over and above the general purpose of their commercial manifestation, which is primarily linked to personal enjoyment and edification. There is little evidence that any of the three used recordings for this purpose. Beecham's use was fixed upon his dislike of criticism and his entrepreneurial streak. Solti's use reflected his preoccupation with personal preparation and learning. Rattle's use, posited mainly in the earlier part of his career, reflected a more generalised concern for learning. As might be expected, therefore,

the use of records by these individuals reflected their own personal priorities at a practical level. Their various uses indicate the potential versatility of recording as a technological phenomenon, beyond its purely commercial application in the mass market. In each of these different manifestations, records or recording have had an influence, be it commercial or didactic.

7.4.2.4. Summary: the use of records

The use to which records may be put certainly exceeds their straightforward commercial exploitation. Beecham and Solti have used them as ways of leaving a musical testimony, and Solti and Rattle have used them as ways of learning, in Solti's case in addition prior to the creation of that testimony.

Further uses have reflected the individual characters of each case study subject. For Beecham they presented the opportunity to promote the family company, and to berate his critics. For Solti, in conjunction with a radio orchestra, they presented the ultimate 'test drive'. Rattle, by contrast, has yet to use recordings outside their normal methods of usage in any particular way, other than as a means of encountering different interpretive view-points.

The over-riding factor common to the various ways in which each conductor has used recording is learning: either to demonstrate, as in cases of Beecham and Solti, or to acquire knowledge, as in the cases also of Solti and Rattle. The pedagogic potential of recording, as opposed to its commercial exploitation, is an area of activity in which recording is likely to have lasting value.

7.4.3. The act of recording

7.4.3.1. Introduction

As with the previous section there are internal commonalities within the group of three conductors being studied. In addition there are several overall commonalities across the group. These are specific characteristics which contribute to a high level of effectiveness in the act of recording, especially within a studio environment.

7.4.3.2. Overall commonalities: preparation, precision, and intensity

Beecham, Solti, and Rattle all share three characteristics in the act of recording. Firstly they are all extremely well prepared. For instance, interviewees commented upon the effort that Solti put into learning scores and preparing himself for recording, ‘to get beyond the notes’ in the words of one of his producers Michael Haas*. Rattle stated that neither he nor his orchestra, the CBSO, would enter the studio until both are completely familiar with the music to be recorded through previous performances. Beecham’s orchestral parts indicate the level of detail to which he himself expected his orchestras to work.

Secondly, once in the studio all three were extremely precise and consistent in the performance of the work being recorded, even if Beecham himself might choose, for reasons already noted, to switch between repertoire items unexpectedly during recording sessions. Musicians who played with Beecham, such as Brymer, commented upon his ability to establish the same balance and tempi across different recording acoustics, and over extended periods of time. Solti was almost fanatical in the exactitude which he insisted upon from himself and his players. For instance he pointed out that for a good live recording ‘you need a conductor who can keep the same speeds three times’ (Johnson, 1989). David Murray* commented on Rattle’s similar ability to maintain tempi almost exactly across different performances, each of which was being recorded. This ability to maintain exactitude of musical performance is an essential feature of successful studio recording.

Thirdly, each conductor in their own way was able to generate abnormally high levels of intensity in the recording studio. Beecham achieved this through his control of atmosphere, either with jokes and threats or simply a consciousness of his personal presence. Both Gordon Parry* and Lady Solti* gave vivid illustrations of Solti’s way of jumping straight into a recording sessions with great intensity, really driving an orchestra forward with extreme vigour. Indeed, as Solti became older, one of the stated reasons for his preference for live concert performances as the basis for recordings was that, because of the intensity which he brought to studio recordings, he would be tired out after two hours, while in the USA sessions normally lasted four hours. Rattle’s approach was less personal and more technical. An example of this

given by Murray* was Rattle's cramming of a large number of musical adjustments into a short space of recording time at the end of a session. This technique induced an artificially high level of intensity with the orchestra as further time for retakes did not exist.

7.4.3.3. Sub-commonalities: listening: Beecham and Solti

A sub-commonality shared by Beecham and Solti was their enthusiasm for listening to playbacks. For Beecham, listening to test pressings of recordings made before the advent of tape recording was the equivalent of listening to tape playbacks and therefore was integral to his experience of the process of recording. Through listening to test pressings and playbacks Beecham was able to make adjustments for his own musical satisfaction and from the perspective of the listener rather than of the conductor on the podium. His secretary Denham Ford* recalled that Beecham's various residencies would often be littered with test pressings which he was continuously having to tidy away. When recording in America his producers were fazed by his desire to listen to playbacks, seeing this as lost and financially valuable time within the recording process. As noted already with Solti, this was geared to achieving the maximum amount of recorded material within a four-hour session. Beecham's complaints about his relationship with Philips included the slow production of test pressings for him to hear, and that he had no one with whom he could discuss them (EMI Archive: Beecham file: Memo of 25.1.55 written by David Bicknell, of a conversation with Sir Thomas Beecham, Lady Beecham, Mr. (Norman) Millar, Mr. (Brenchley) Mittell, and Mr. (David) Bicknell) at the Ritz Hotel, on 21.1.55, p.1).

Solti similarly laid stress on listening carefully to playbacks and test pressings. Lady Solti* illustrated how he would annotate his scores in immense detail from take to take. Parry* pointed out that Solti, again like Beecham listening from the perspective of the ultimate audience, might adjust his performance dramatically from one take to another, if he felt that the evidence of the playback demanded such adjustment, to the extent that they were quite different and not interchangeable.

Rattle's attitude to listening to playbacks was less marked. While he would also listen to the 'mixed down' versions of his recordings, Murray* noted that frequently he would leave final adjustments in the hands of his producers, and trusted them to come up with a satisfactory ultimate version. On the other hand Rattle asked for a recording which he found to be unsatisfactory on listening to a test, that of Mahler's Seventh Symphony, to be re-recorded. It is perhaps significant that Rattle's contract with EMI, according to Murray*, did not include the right of final approval, while Beecham was particularly insistent for this power to be included in his contracts.

7.4.3.4. Commonalities and sub-commonalities: summary

The key commonalities in the act of recording were therefore: very high levels of preparation; precision and consistency, especially in matters of tempi and balance; and the ability to generate high levels of intensity. Beecham and Solti also took great interest and care in listening to the results of their recordings, be these in the form of test pressings in the 78rpm format, or the more immediate tape playbacks effected during the course of a recording. Rattle did not share this enthusiasm.

7.4.3.5. Differences: introduction

Not unexpectedly, each conductor also had individual behaviours that they brought to bear upon the act of recording, beyond the commonalities already noted. These are considered next.

7.4.3.5.1. Beecham

Harry Legge*, who played the viola in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, pointed out that Beecham, in line with his musical character, could be both persistent and mercurial in the recording studio. An example of the former was the LP recording of the minuet from Mozart's Divertimento, K 131, which featured difficult horn parts, and which Beecham insisted upon repeating many times until satisfied. At other times he would cease recording one work and take up another in mid-session. Thus within the commonalities of preparation, precision and review, Beecham's behaviour could be unpredictable.

7.4.35.2. Solti

Solti was different from Beecham and Rattle in his whole-hearted participation in the ‘Culshaw aesthetic’. He was prepared to go along with Culshaw’s ambition and ideas for using recording in creative and dramatic ways. In general the objective was to heighten the theatrical effect of a recording, especially of opera, and at the same time to create a performance that required the technology of the gramophone – for instance through the manipulation of different perspectives and actual vocal tone – for its full realisation. It could therefore only exist through the gramophone. More generally Solti was quite open about making the musical adjustments necessary in a recording to create a performance that ‘spoke’ effectively through recorded sound and reproduction.

Beecham did not become involved with any productions driven by such ideas. His opera recordings were made for either RCA or EMI, both of whom maintained a conservative approach to production. Yet at the end of his life he did approach John Culshaw with proposals for some opera recordings. These were regrettably thwarted by Decca’s close relationship with Ernest Ansermet who claimed prior rights to the French operatic repertoire, then Beecham’s area of interest.

7.4.3.5.3. Rattle

Rattle viewed the mechanics of recording with greater suspicion than Solti, as is consistent with his belief in the primacy of the act of performance. Adjustments and alterations made possible by electronic manipulation he saw as constituting an element of falsehood. His preference has been for the live performance, and he has been happy to tolerate a recording that is a by-product of such a performance, as has been the case with his published recordings of certain Mahler symphonies: the Seventh (from the Aldeburgh Festival), the Ninth (a radio broadcast from Vienna) and his second recording of the Tenth (from the Berlin Festival).

7.4.3.6. Differences: summary

While the three conductors shared certain common factors in relation to the act of recording, their high levels of individuality resulted in several pronounced differences. One of the distinguishing differences was the extent to which each was

prepared to participate in the creation of a performance in which the technologies of recording played a part.

Peter Andry* noted that Beecham might ask him to ‘gild the lily’ and make certain alterations. But Beecham’s background was essentially one of getting it right for 78rpm recordings when artificial assistance was not available. At the other extreme Solti was prepared to participate, as were other great conductors such as Leopold Stokowski, in the creation of performances specifically for the gramophone.

Rattle has not gone as far as this, representing a distinct move in the field of classical music recording away from the artificial mechanics and technological interventions of John Culshaw and Glenn Gould, to a re-establishment of the primacy of the actual unvarnished, but highly prepared, public performance.

7.4.4. Recording and performance standards

7.4.4.1. Introduction

Recording has brought with it two fundamental attributes. Firstly, it allows the musician to hear himself or herself and others repeatedly after the moment of utterance. Secondly, it has provided finance in the form of both capital and revenue through its commercial organisation, in the shape of the record industry. Both these attributes have been used together to greater or lesser degrees to improve performance standards by interested musicians. Within the group of three conductors studied both these aspects have not been utilised by all three as a general commonality. Within the group, as previously noted, certain sub-commonalities exist, in addition to differences. The issue of listening to recordings with different objectives has already been considered. Therefore the linkage between finance and performance standards is now considered below.

7.4.4.2. Sub-commonalities: the use of finance from recordings to drive up performance standards: Beecham and Rattle

7.4.4.2.1. Introduction

This is a huge subject, really demanding a separate study of its own. However, both Beecham and Rattle to a lesser degree, used finance from recording to drive up

orchestral standards. The following section considers briefly the interaction of recording and improvement in orchestral performance standards.

7.4.4.2.2. Beecham

Prior to the advent of electrical recording, the recording of orchestras was not sufficiently frequent for it to make much of an impact upon the overall financial position of orchestras. Income before 1926 came from engagements by third parties for performances, direct promotions and related box office income, and private subvention. This formula sustained the New Symphony Orchestra and the Beecham Symphony Orchestra, Beecham's two orchestras prior to his withdrawal from the musical scene in England in 1920. The advent of electrical recording, and its more faithful reproduction of the orchestra, stimulated the interest of record companies in recording orchestras. The combination of improved reproduction and the increased supply of recordings in turn stimulated demand. As a result the symphony orchestra became a permanent and constant fixture within the European recording schedules of the two major companies, the Columbia Graphophone Company and The Gramophone Company.

The merger of these two bodies in 1931 to form EMI created an organisation that Beecham, as an entrepreneur, recognised would have sufficient capital to contribute significantly to the financing of his proposed new orchestra, which eventually was to become the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The combination of EMI offering fees to players higher than those for live concerts, and on a regular basis, was a very strong inducement both in attracting the best players, and in assisting in the maintenance of the Orchestra as a permanent body.

The result was an innovation in English musical life: orchestras made up of high-calibre musicians who worked together on a regular and consistent basis. Beecham's orchestras, the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, set very high standards. These were recognised by critics and public alike, in relation to both concerts given and recordings made by these orchestras.

For the first time English orchestras could be compared with the best of those on the European continent, such as the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras, and with the great American orchestras. Walter Legge took the financial involvement of EMI even further with the formation of the Philharmonia Orchestra. This was highly dependant for income upon recording fees from Columbia/EMI, whose artistic policy and practice were also controlled by Legge.

Effectively the record industry, and at the same time broadcasting through the BBC and the creation of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, drove key changes in the structure and standards of orchestral playing in England.

7.4.4.2.3. Rattle

Rattle's experience with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra was not dissimilar, although the degree of the importance of income from recording was less than in the case of Beecham's last two orchestras. This reflected the new factor of subsidies from central and local governments. As has already been noted, when Rattle started to make recordings with the Orchestra, the arrangement for the Orchestra to record was based not on a financial transaction between company and orchestra members, but upon a time-based contract. Orchestra members gained a day and a half of free time in return for providing a day's worth of recording. This use of an alternative currency – time in place of cash – was a good example of a 'win-win' situation. Firstly, as no cash was involved, the record company, in this case EMI, was more prepared to record a regional orchestra than might otherwise be the case. For the orchestra as a body this had the benefit of raising its artistic profile both nationally and internationally. This benefit also applied to the conductor featured in these recordings. For the players extra time was gained without loss of income.

Rattle's period as music director of the CBSO was characterised by a set of clear strategic visions, all of which had the common purpose of seeking to raise the performance standards of the orchestra. One of the ways in which he sought to do this was to increase the pay of the orchestra's members. A key plank of the orchestra's development plan, put to the Arts Council and Birmingham City Council for additional funding in 1986, was the increase in pay to players. One of the stated

pre-conditions for Rattle's contract renewal laid down in the strategy was: 'Improved pay and conditions for the orchestral musicians so as, first, to attract the best possible talent to Birmingham, and then to retain it rather than have the CBSO used as a stepping-stone.' (Kenyon, 1987, p. 215).

Ed Smith* noted in interview that, by the end of the 1980s, when the growth of record sales, stimulated by the CD, were about to peak, cash recording fees had been introduced in place of the previous arrangement. They accounted for approximately an additional £1100 per annum in the pay of a player in the orchestra. Combined with the additional subsidies from the Arts Council and Birmingham City Council negotiated by Rattle and Smith, the CBSO was a relatively well paid orchestra. It thus was able to attract players of a calibre higher than was usual for English regional orchestras.

Rattle was also quite open about using the opportunities presented by recording to create a 'step-change' in the quality of the playing of the CBSO. In interview with Nicholas Kenyon in 1986 he stated: 'For me, the important thing about recordings is that they are the most effective way to make the orchestra play better. We make great strides when we do a difficult record.' (Kenyon, 1987, p. 74.).

Through the combination of Rattle's capability as a conductor, higher playing standards, and Smith's effective management, the orchestra was able to move forward in competition with its other regional rivals, and through its recordings to place itself upon the international musical stage. ('Le Monde' noted at the time of a CBSO tour to Paris in 1984 that Rattle's reputation in France at that time 'was built entirely on his records.' (Kenyon, 1987, p. 133).

The decline in recording activity that followed upon the period growth (1983 to 1990) meant that this additional income has not been sustained. But at the time recording definitely played a role in developing the performance standards of the orchestra.

7.4.4.3. Recording and performance standards: differences

7.4.4.3.1. Introduction

The only difference in this area is simply that Solti did not use recording, and the financial benefits that flow from recording, in the same way that Beecham and Rattle did. The difference between Solti on the one hand and Rattle and Beecham on the other is considered briefly below.

7.4.4.3.2. Solti

Solti's three long-term appointments were at the Frankfurt Opera House, Covent Garden Opera Company, and Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

In the former two, Frankfurt and Covent Garden, he employed the forces for which he was responsible in various recordings. The Frankfurt forces were conducted by him in the 1954 recording of the Brahms 'Requiem' for Capitol. The Covent Garden chorus and orchestra performed in complete recordings of Verdi's 'Don Carlos' and Gluck's 'Orfeo'. The orchestra alone recorded two discs with Solti: one, of operatic excerpts (made before his appointment), and the other of ballet music by Gounod and Offenbach, shortly after. In addition he recorded a selection of operatic excerpts with the orchestra and soloists for a special album produced by Decca to mark the first twenty-five years of the Covent Garden Opera Company. When these productions are set against the large number of contemporaneous recordings made by Solti with other orchestras, principally the Vienna Philharmonic and Chicago Symphony Orchestras, but also including the London Symphony Orchestra, it is clear that the decision to involve the Royal Opera House did not form part of any effectively articulated strategy pursued by Solti. (However he did indicate in 1961 at the start of his term as Music Director of the Royal Opera Company that he would be open to plans to record complete operas with the Covent Garden Company (*Records and Recording*, 4, 10, July 1961, p.17).

In Chicago high standards, or certainly the basis for high standards, existed on Solti's arrival in 1969. Considering Solti's recordings with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a whole, they achieve a remarkably consistent standard of performance. Income from recording was undoubtedly a significant financial factor for the

orchestra as an institution, but it would not have appeared to have had such a pronounced effect upon performance standards, if at all, as it clearly did in the instances of Beecham and Rattle. In essence, recording with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra reflected an established standard rather than drove it upwards.

John Willan* in interview also pointed out that when Solti was Chief Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, he did not bring to it the volume of recording work that it might have anticipated would follow from his appointment. Furthermore Willan* noted that Solti would criticise the Orchestra for not achieving the same standards that he was used to in Chicago.

These comments indicate that for recording Solti expected to work with an orchestra of an exceptionally high standard, and that he did not see recording as part of the financial 'mix' that could be used to improve performance standards on an on-going basis. In this respect his view of the recording process was less strategic, and more focused on himself as a conductor, than was the case with Beecham and Rattle.

7.4.4.4. Summary: recording and performance standards

Beecham, with his commercial and entrepreneurial background, recognised and grasped the opportunities which the commercial development of recording presented in 1931 to help establish an orchestra, the London Philharmonic, equal to the standard of the best in Europe and America. Continuing growth in the recording industry enabled him to repeat this process in 1946 with the formation of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Rattle's priorities, like those of Beecham, were focused on artistic standards, and the development of these. While the opportunities offered by recording were less significant than those encountered by Beecham, they were nonetheless recognised by Rattle and integrated into his various strategic visions for his orchestra, the CBSO.

Solti by contrast did not relate the financial potential of recording to the standards of orchestral performances by the orchestras with which he was associated. He sought to record with the best groups possible, and the financial consequences of a recording

for artistic standards, in either the short or long term, do not seem to have been a factor for him.

Nonetheless the examples of Beecham and Rattle are sufficient to show that there can be, if circumstances permit, a powerful synergy between the financial resources provided by the recording industry and the artistic standards attained by an orchestra.

In this respect recording and the recording industry have been highly influential. In the case of Beecham and the formation of his last two orchestras, the consequences of this influence have been long-term, and continue in the present existence of both these bodies.

7.4.5. Performance and interpretation

7.4.5.1. Introduction

Recordings permit an understanding and, in certain circumstances where appropriate documentation such as conducting scores exist, an analysis of conductors' ideas relating to performance and interpretation. While there is a danger of generalisation for the sake of completeness, the approaches of the three conductors being studied are briefly considered below. As before, there are sub-commonalities and differences.

7.4.5.2. Sub-commonalities

7.4.5.2.1. Introduction

The three conductors did not share a common approach to performance and interpretation. However it is possible to detect a commonality of approach shared by Beecham and Rattle, which is different to that of Solti.

7.4.5.2.2. Sub-commonality: Beecham and Rattle

Both Beecham and Rattle shared an admiration for the conductor Wilhelm Furtwangler. Furtwangler in turn adopted an approach to performance and interpretation heavily influenced by Artur Nikisch, who drew upon the performing tradition established by Richard Wagner and continued by Hans von Bulow. Put

simply, this tradition is based upon a template of performance for a particular work which may however be varied slightly in the act of performance.

While both Beecham and Rattle had the ability to recreate a performance for recording with great technical exactitude, their attitudes to the performance of specific works were not fixed. The performance and interpretation of a work was a developing and changing process throughout the musician's lifetime.

Beecham would often adjust his view of individual works. The idea of a 'fixed' interpretation was not strongly developed, reflecting his acknowledgement of the influence of changing circumstances, be they individual players within an orchestra, different recording locations, or his own personal state of mind. The constant re-marking of orchestral parts is evidence of this continuing variation of interpretation.

The changes in performance that Beecham might demand are demonstrated most vividly by the considerable differences in his performances of the same work recorded live in concert and in the studio. The most extreme example of this difference is his conducting of Bizet's 'L'Arlesienne' Suite in concert at the Proms in 1954, and in his studio recording of the same work, made in 1956. The former possesses considerably greater vigour and faster tempi, and exemplifies also the greater musical risks that Beecham would be prepared to take in concert performances.

Rattle's insistence that performances should be well 'run in' before any recording is undertaken clearly acknowledges that a higher standard of performance is likely to be achieved after a set of performances. Ed Smith* indicated that performances by the CBSO could continue to improve in concerts given after a recording had been made. Thus for Rattle, as for Beecham, the performance of a piece of music is not fixed but continuously shifting. This approach to performance is similar in nature if not degree to that of Furtwangler and of Beecham.

Unlike Beecham, however, Rattle's concert performances do not differ greatly from his recordings, illustrating the existence of a continuum of performance, within

which both live performance and recording may co-exist. The variation between the risks that Beecham took in his live performances and the care that he exacted in the studio does not exist within Rattle's performances. The consistency between Rattle's concert performances and recordings reflects also the technological advances in recording made since Beecham's time.

7.4.5.3. Differences

7.4.5.3.1. Solti

Solti's attitude to performance and interpretation did not possess the flexibility of approach which characterised those of Beecham and Rattle.

The Hungarian pedagogic tradition in which Solti was steeped, passed on to him by Kodaly, Bartok and Leo Weiner at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, laid emphasis upon exactitude. Another conductor who displayed a similar musical character to Solti, and who trained in the same tradition as well as preceded him as music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was Fritz Reiner.

The second major influence upon Solti was the experience of working with Arturo Toscanini. Solti acted as a répétiteur for the rehearsals of 'The Magic Flute' conducted by Toscanini at the Salzburg Festival in 1937, and played the celeste in the orchestra for these performances. The Toscanini aesthetic was based much more strongly upon an inflexible view of music. The conductor's purpose was to impose this view upon an orchestra through his or her own personal force of will. The importance of the presence of these characteristics within a conductor was repeatedly emphasised by Solti in interviews. His attitude to performance and interpretation stood at variance to those of Beecham and Rattle. For the latter two conductors performance is a process of revealing music in present time through collaboration with members of an orchestra.

This characteristic may, as with Beecham, be clearly seen in a comparison between Solti's recordings of concert performances and his studio recordings. Here the variation noted at times in Beecham's performances is far less great. (Although in interview Haas* did comment that 'he acknowledged that certain things that he did in

concert were vulgar on recording, and he would remove them.’) In general the record and the concert are simply two facets of the same phenomenon, which is the conductor’s fixed conception of a piece of music.

7.4.5.4. Summary: performance and interpretation

The attitudes of Beecham and Rattle towards performance and interpretation allowed for variation, while that of Solti was less tolerant of difference. No view is taken as to the correctness or otherwise of these two positions, which are both revealed by recordings and which may be studied through them. The key points are firstly the existence of two different schools of performance and interpretation, and secondly the preservation of the evidence of this difference through sound recordings, as exemplified in both live concert performances and commercial studio recordings.

7.4.6. Summary of analytical parameter: records and recording

Two of the four ways in which records and recording have been analysed – the use of records and the relationship with performance standards – illustrate that both in pedagogic and financial terms recording as a technology and as a commercial system has exerted a strong influence upon musical activity.

At the same time the two other aspects considered, the act of recording and different approaches to performance and interpretation, indicate that the individuality of the performer, at the least in these three specific instances, remains strong. Recording has not compromised their individual musical visions. Instead it has been used to extend it: Beecham used the studio to achieve greater exactitude, Solti to realise more fully his musico-dramatic vision, and Rattle as part of the process of developing and improving his interpretations. In no case can it be seen that recording has in some way *diminished* the quality of their musical activity.

7.5 Conclusion

The commonalities established between Beecham, Solti and Rattle as a result of the cross-case analysis and the use of the parameters and their various sub-categories are summarised in tabular form at Table 7.1.

The next section seeks to explain more broadly influence of recording, as revealed by the cross-case analysis, and to draw conclusions from the overall analysis so far undertaken.

Table 7.1: Summary of key commonalities and sub-commonalities across the three case studies of Beecham, Solti and Rattle.

	<i>Beecham</i>	<i>Solti</i>	<i>Rattle</i>
Record Industry			
* Monogamy		4	4
* Relationship with Head of A & R	4		4
* Relationship with producer	4		4
Repertoire Decisions			
* Influential when established	4	4	4
* Close identification between musician and repertoire	4	4	4
Records and recording			
* Recordings as testament	4	4	
* Recordings as direct learning resource		4	4
* Pedagogic use of recordings	4	4	4
* Preparation, precision and intensity for recording	4	4	4
* Use of recording finance to change orchestral performance	4		4
* Change over time of performance	4		4

Chapter 8

Conclusions

8.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to locate the present study within the context of the existing literature on the influence of recording and the recording industry, and to draw conclusions from this and from the study itself. The aim, as previously, is to seek to understand the influence of recording and the recording industry upon musical activity. The cross-case analysis has suggested that issues of influence are in certain instances unlikely to be generalisable, in that they reflect the character and personality of the various conductors studied. Nonetheless an attempt is here made to construct a model of the influence of recording and the recording industry. From this model, certain major key consequences will be abstracted, identified and discussed.

8.2. Locating the Study within the Current Literature

8.2.1. Introduction

The current literature on the influence of recording and the recording industry sets the scene for further detailed research, of which the current study is an attempt. The literature relevant to the conclusions that follow will be considered within the two broad categories of recording historiography created to date: firstly, that concerned with classical music and recording history in general, and, secondly, that concerned with popular music and recording.

These two particular aspects of the literature on the history of recording are specific sub-sets of the more general writing considered earlier in the literature review, and are relevant to the conclusions of the study.

8.2.2. The literature on the influence of the recording of classical music

The interaction of recording and classical music has been considered most recently by Day (2000). Day emphasises certain key consequences: notably the great expansion of the knowledge and experience of musical repertoire made possible by recording, and the fact that recordings constitute historical documents which may be used in a number of different ways. These may include entertainment for consumers, and education for musicians, for whom recordings are a means to study both past performance practice and repertoire preferences.

Day convincingly demonstrates that recordings are in effect a new form of documentation, and that to date there is little agreement as to how to approach, to understand and to use this form of knowledge. He notes that musicians make use of recordings often for practical purposes, but that this is often not the case with musicologists, nor with historians (Day,2000, pp.228ff.). Day in addition makes clear the artificiality of the process of making recordings over the first one hundred years of the technology's existence, and its distance from the normal forms of musical utterance.

Both Day (2000) and Philip (1992) highlight the fact that performance styles which have been preserved through recordings have in certain instances been simultaneously different, such as the differences in American and European performance styles during the early 1950s. They also highlight the fact that there has been a large degree of variation within broad performing styles, as these have developed historically, and have been captured at different times by recording. As an example of this Day highlights the variations in the performance on record of the music of Webern (Day, 2000, pp. 178-185). Gronow and Saunio (1998) obliquely reinforce this fundamental point by highlighting the scope of the record industry in terms of musical styles and geographical spread and penetration.

In other words the historical research that has been conducted so far into the history of recording and its influence has confronted and examined the variations in performance which recording has revealed, and the extension of musical knowledge

that it has made possible, most notably in terms of musical repertoire. Issues of possible linkage, causation and influence have yet to be considered in detail.

8.2.3. The literature on the influence of the recording of popular music

The literature on the interaction between recording and popular music is considerably more developed than that on the interaction between recording and classical music. Because of the nature of much popular music, through which many adolescents define themselves both in relation to and in opposition to their forebears, much of this writing is based on ideas rooted in oppositions. Thus Chapple and Garofalo (1977) suggested that popular music has been commodified and colonised by the structures of business. They argued that the commercial system, of which popular music is a part, has neutralised the creativity which is the initial spark for much popular music (Chapple and Garofalo, 1977, p.300). Harker (1980) also adopted this perspective.

More specific studies that relate to several different genres of popular music have indicated that smaller independent record companies, by concentrating on certain niche markets, provide innovation and new products that are then absorbed by the larger commercial organisations. They thus lose their artistic independence by becoming part of the corporate structure. This paradigm has been identified in relation to the genres of rhythm and blues (Gillett, 1974), rock'n'roll (Chapple and Garofalo, 1977), salsa (Manuel, 1991), punk rock (Laing, 1985) and world music (Wallis and Malm, 1992). Burnett (1990) suggested that there is a symbiosis between these two different branches of the record industry, and that some independent record companies are committed to working within the existing system and wish to grow within it. This view has been broadly supported by Negus (1992). Alternatively Hesmondhalgh (1996) maintained that the independent/corporate, or minor/major dichotomy existed in some cases through a wish on the part of the independent companies to present a genuine alternative to the products of the commercial mainstream. A detailed study of one particular record company, Wax Trax!, by Lee (1995) supported Burnett's ideas of symbiosis, with an independent company recognising and working within the system created and represented by the corporate sector.

The realism of Burnett (1990) and of Lee (1995) shifts the focus away from the oppositional characteristics noted by earlier writers, and seeks to provide an alternative explanation for the relationship between independent and large record companies. At the same time Frith (1988 a, b) suggested that music, and especially popular music, does not exist in a pure state but is the product of various technological, corporate and creative (in terms of the producer) interventions. Frith adopts a determinist posture, arguing that the nature of cultural production determines the possibilities of cultural consumption (Frith, 1988a, p.5). This viewpoint is partially supported by Vignolle (1980) and Hennion (1983), who suggested that employees of record companies 'do not manipulate the public so much as feel its pulse' (Hennion, 1983, p.191) and that ideas about repertoire and business interpenetrate and grow as part of this process. Although open to the criticism of being vague, this interpretation of what happens in the production of recordings has the ring of truth about it. It is supported by the research undertaken as part of this study, and by the ideas of Bourdieu (1986). Bourdieu suggested that 'jobs and careers have not yet acquired the rigidity of the older bureaucratic professions.' (Bourdieu, 1986, p.151). Although writing in relation to jobs within the contemporary cultural industries, this description definitely explains the position of classical music record producers of the 1950s and 1960s, notably Walter Legge and John Culshaw. Both were able to exploit the lack of bureaucratic formality in their respective organisations.

It is a characteristic of all these writers that they seek to explain the dynamics of creation within the popular music recording industry. Their intention is to locate the creative spark and the place of institutions in relation to it. The writing of Hirsch (1970), who categorised the recording industry as a 'system model', is indicative of this line of thought.

Hirsch, in contrast to the French writers already mentioned, sought to portray the recording industry as a model whose functionaries are concerned with ordering and prioritising material as part of the process of delivering this to the public. The truth probably lies to a greater or lesser somewhere between Hirsch (1970), on the one hand, and Vignolle (1980), Hennion (1983) and Bourdieu (1986) on the other.

Frith carried his deterministic argument to the point whereby he suggested that recording, and more precisely sound recording, *is* twentieth-century popular music, arguing that it 'is a form of communication which determines what songs, singers and performances are and can be.' (Frith, 1988a, p.12). Frith must be saluted for attempting to establish a causal connection between recording and the record as the means and outcome of production on the one hand and those who feature on the recording on the other.

By contrast, the research undertaken in this project indicates that the participants studied – Beecham, Solti, and Rattle – have largely used recording to satisfy their own priorities, and that far from being the creatures of recording, they have specifically used it for particular purposes, especially Beecham and Rattle.

8.2.4. Key points of the present study

It is a contention of the present research that the existence of recording technology and of its commercial exploitation has stimulated an involvement by the three conductors studied, and that this involvement with recording has in turn resulted in both identifiable reactions and consequences. It is further proposed that these reactions and consequences reflect the influence of the developing technologies of recording.

The three conductors studied have overlapped in their careers, that is Beecham and Solti, and Solti and Rattle, thus creating an historical continuity. In addition between them they cover the technological and commercial development of recording from 1910, when Beecham made his first recording, to the present day, with Rattle currently a major recording artist. They thus illustrate collectively and individually the influences that are deemed to be the most significant. While the precise circumstances of the career of each are not generalisable, their careers do illustrate broader aspects of historical influence that are generalisable.

As will already have been noted from earlier comments, the influence of recording and the recording industry has varied as technologies have emerged and have in turn been replaced by new and different technologies. Two types of consequences have

flowed from this process of evolution. Firstly, particular technologies have produced immediate and identifiable consequences. Over and above these immediate consequences, the simple fact that sound could be reproduced mechanically in different forms has produced what I have termed ‘meta-consequences’, the impacts of which have in certain circumstances been considerable, and the nature of which are only now beginning to emerge.

These immediate consequences are considered below in relation to each of the case study subjects. The more general meta-consequences are then drawn from the immediate consequences. A graphic illustration of the nature of this process of influence is attached at Figure 8.1, located at the end of this chapter.

8.3. The Immediate Consequences and Meta-consequences of Recording, as revealed by the three Case Studies: Beecham

8.3.1. Wax recording: immediate consequences

Between 1910 and 1952 Beecham recorded using the wax based technology of the 78 rpm record, notably in England. This had two immediate consequences. Firstly, because of the nature of the plant involved, in most instances it was necessary to record in a studio especially built and equipped for the purpose of recording music using the wax technology. EMI’s Abbey Road studios are a pre-eminent example of this type of building. The second consequence was that, because of the uncertainties around the fidelity of the recording system, it was necessary to check recordings before their release, to ensure that they met the musical standards sought by both the record company and the musicians recorded, if they had the right of rejection. The key consequence of this was that musicians listened to recordings of themselves performing, often with a critical ear. This had been impossible prior to the advent of recording: there was no means by which to achieve this feat. It explains also the extreme reactions of von Bulow (fainting) and Patti (tears) when first hearing themselves through recordings: this was an accomplishment hitherto thought to be impossible.

From listening to oneself as a musician, there flowed three further consequences. The first was a heightened awareness of performance during recording. Secondly came the emphasis upon exactitude. Thirdly, in the case of Beecham at least, recording made the musician more reflective and self-critical. Beecham took the greatest care in listening to his test recordings, be they from 78rpm or tape masters. Subsidiary consequences included the great care which Beecham took with recorded performances, often greater than with his concert performances where he was at times considerably more spontaneous, or even at times irresponsible.

8.3.2. Wax recording: meta-consequences

The meta-consequences of this process were firstly, the *preservation of performance*, and, secondly, through this the creation of a *testament*. The testament reflected both how a musician believed certain repertoire should be performed, for instance Beecham and Delius, and, more simply, how he or she performed music in general. The existence of past performances through their preservation by recording, and at times of a testament consciously created as such, has established the essential pre-conditions for knowledge, and what is in effect a new form of knowledge.

This knowledge is of increasing interest to subsequent generations, for instance in terms of ‘how did he or she perform this?’ or ‘what did they listen to?’. Immediate contemporaries, certainly during most of the twentieth century, did not generally see recordings in this historically informed way. For those purchasing a recording as a commercial commodity the most usual characteristics sought are either entertainment or the ability to spark an emotional or aesthetic reaction of some sort. (Curiosity as to performance or repertoire may also be factors.) As time progresses the uses to which recorded knowledge is put change. The key point however is its preserved existence, as a testament.

8.3.3. Electrical recording: immediate consequences

The introduction of electrical recording techniques in 1926, by extending the frequency range which recording could both encompass and reproduce, directly stimulated an increase in the recording of orchestral music. This demonstrated

effectively the aural superiority of the new system, in much the same way that the operatic voice had been particularly well suited previously to acoustic recording, with the voice aimed directly at the recording horn.

The consequence of this increased interest by recording companies in orchestral performance was the introduction of substantial capital into the then existing musical infrastructure. The availability of this finance, and in 1927 the introduction of sound into films, with subsequent consequences for the employment of musicians (an increase in unemployment and insecurity), were recognised by Beecham as levers which could help him to achieve his goal of creating a permanent orchestra to match the best of those heard in continental Europe and America. The above-average session fees which recording also paid ensured that, through their recording programmes, Beecham's orchestras could attract the best instrumentalists available. Thus in 1931/32 and later in 1946 Beecham was able to form the London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras. In both instances he used, firstly, the forward commitment of backing from EMI and RCA as a financial bulwark to make the orchestras both stable and permanent, and secondly the expectation of high individual fees from recording to attract the best players.

The consequence of both of these factors was a definite change in performance standards. Within a year of its formation the playing of the London Philharmonic Orchestra was at its best comparable to that of international competitors. The same could be said of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Walter Legge took the involvement of recording finance even further, running the Philharmonia Orchestra, also formed in 1946, almost exclusively on the basis of recording fee income.

8.3.4. Electrical recording: meta-consequences: combining testament and performance standards

The existence of a testament and of performances of a high standard have created musical 'yardsticks' by which other performances are and will be judged. An immediate and accessible method of comparison has been created by recording. Two further and immediate meta-consequences have flowed from this: firstly, because of the need to listen and the consequent self-consciousness, a loss of individuality in

performance has frequently occurred. Secondly, an emphasis upon higher technical standards has at times reinforced the loss of character in performance as already noted. These consequences were not inevitable: Beecham for instance was able to use the urge for greater technical accuracy to reinforce the personal character of his performances (for instance in his recordings of symphonies by Mozart).

8.3.5. Summary

Thus the first two great technological innovations of recording, the 78 wax-based production of recording and electrical recording, created the conditions for the preservation of musical utterance, and the establishment of a testament. Capital flowing from the commercial desire to use orchestras to demonstrate the improved sound of electrical recording combined with immediate economic and social circumstances to change standards of orchestral performance, by assisting in the creation of the orchestra as a permanent body, and by attracting the best instrumentalists. The upshot of both improved standards, and the creation of a testament, was the establishment of the wherewithal for an increase in knowledge. Subsequent generations were to recognise this for itself, and, as distinct from the immediate attractiveness of recordings as a commercial product, the initial manifestation of music commodified through recording.

8.4. The Immediate Consequences and Meta-consequences of Recording, as revealed by the three Case Studies: Solti.

8.4.1. Introduction

Sir Georg Solti began to make recordings as tape recording was becoming established as the 'norm' for recording, as opposed to the old wax-based process. The technology for tape recording had been in existence since 1929, when the Blattner Company demonstrated its 'Blattnerphone', which recorded on a flat steel band. The earliest surviving musical recording on plastic-based tape, developed by the German company BASF, was made by Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra while on tour in Germany in 1936. This tape was to be used on AEG's 'Magnetophon', an early tape recorder. These recording and play-back machines

were used extensively in Germany during the Second World War for broadcasting purposes. Following the importation of several Magnetophon units after the war into the USA the manufacture of tape recorders was undertaken commercially, and they soon became standard equipment for most record companies, from approximately 1948 onwards. Morton (2000) considers these developments in detail.

The long-playing record followed soon after. It was initially introduced into the USA by Columbia/USA in 1948. Decca began to sell the first long-playing records in the United Kingdom in 1950. Decca was also a driving force behind the introduction of stereophonic sound encoded onto 33 1/3rpm discs in England in 1958, following upon its first appearance in this form in the USA during the same year. Stereophonic sound had been available commercially through two-track tape recordings in the USA from 1955 (Dearling, R & C, and Rust, 1984, p.204). The first stereophonic recordings of classical music had been made by RCA in 1954 (Pfeiffer, 1999, p.2), although once again EMI had made some experimental stereophonic recordings of Beecham and the LPO as far back as January 1934 (Griffith, 1979).

Each of these technological innovations had specific consequences, with which Solti, as a practising musician acting in the midst of all these developments, was to be involved. These are considered next.

8.4.2. Tape recording: immediate consequences

Tape recording made possible manipulation of the recorded musical performance in a way that hitherto had been impossible. Throughout the overall period under consideration, that is from the point of the introduction of tape recording to the present day, there have been three different types of manipulation.

The first of these involved minor adjustments to the performance recorded, through for instance the cutting into the master-tape of a correct note when an inaccurate one had been played in the recording. Beecham would be referring to this process when he would ask a producer 'to gild the lily', for instance to replace a split horn note (Peter Andry* in interview). This level of adjustment, advocated by experienced

producers such as Jack Pfeiffer, sought to maintain the character of an interpretation, but eliminated the most obvious technical blunders.

The second level of adjustment was much more severe, and only became widespread with the advent of digital and computer driven editing techniques from the 1980s onwards. At this level a large number of small edits and interventions into the performance could and would be made, as many as several hundred during the course of a single movement for instance. The purpose here was to 'rebuild' the musical performance: effectively to create a new, artificial, entity out of the recorded performance, but without making it clear to the public that this was what in fact was happening. This process was described by one currently active producer in interview as 'getting a performance to stand up and walk' (Andrew Keener* in interview).

The third level of adjustment is to create consciously an entity which can only be made and experienced through sound recording and sound reproduction technologies. A prime example of this attitude to the use of post-war recording technology, and in which stereophonic sound also played a key role, was John Culshaw's production of Wagner's 'The Ring of the Nibelungs', which was conducted by Solti. Recording technology was used in this production to achieve for instance a balance which allowed both voice and orchestra to be heard clearly, to adjust the individual tone colour of a singer where the dramatic circumstances required this (Gunther in 'Götterdämmerung'), and to achieve a sense of spatial distance, again as suggested by the composer (The Ride of the Valkyries in 'Die Walküre'). Essentially Culshaw sought to reinterpret Wagner's stage directions in purely aural terms.

The recreation through recording technology of a piece of music was taken to its extreme by the pianist Glenn Gould. Gould saw recording as a means not only to create new forms of performance but also as a valid alternative musical experience to the live concert. At its extreme this envisaged the listener interacting with a synthetically constructed musical performance, replayed in the comfort of his or her home. Gould thus conceived of new performances created through recording technology, and which were adding to the history of performance and listening.

8.4.3. Tape recording: meta-consequences

The meta-consequences of the adoption of tape recording, and all that it might assume in both analogue and digital forms, were two-fold. Firstly, it introduced the idea of ethics into the recording process. Quite simply, should technology be used to 'improve' what purported to be a live performance? Should the public be made aware of the level of change that has taken place or not?

An indication of the intensity of personal emotion which could be generated by the application of recording technologies to performances from the classical music repertoire was given when Culshaw created the phrase 'Sonicstage' to encapsulate his ideas of producing recordings as drama. This was first used in conjunction with the production of the recording of Richard Strauss's opera 'Salome' conducted by Solti and issued in 1962. In the booklet issued with this set, Culshaw explained what he meant by 'Sonicstage': 'an altogether new technical approach...through which every desirable detail in the score might become audible in its correct proportion to the rest of the vast orchestra...and to the voices.'

Culshaw commented that an acoustic manipulation designed to illustrate the stage directions for a black cloud to cross the stage at the point when Salome has kissed the mouth of John the Baptist was 'an effect as legitimate and as dramatically necessary as the dimming of the stage lights in a theatre production.' He concluded: '...we believe it [Sonicstage] represents a huge forward step in the quest for the technical-artistic alliance that will finally establish stereo recording as a legitimate operatic medium.' (Culshaw, 1962).

The practical application of this philosophy in the recording of 'Salome' provoked controversy in the correspondence columns of 'The Gramophone' where the rights and wrongs of such intervention were hotly debated, particularly in relation to the balances achieved. One correspondent, Mr. Macleod commented: 'Some of the staccato brass passages resemble the barking of dogs, so much so that at one point I turned round to see if my dog had made a remark.' (*Gramophone*, **XL**, 470, July 1962, p.91). To which the following month Mr. Hull replied: '...if Mr. Macleod's dog can really make sounds like the magnificent Vienna Philharmonic brass, I would

like to buy it from him...all praise to Decca for what I sincerely believe is the greatest operatic recording ever made.' (*Gramophone*, **XL**, 471, August 1962, p.120).

In general this form of conscious intervention provoked a strong reaction. The reception and attitude of recording *cognescenti* to Leopold Stokowski's 'Phase Four' recordings, also made for Decca Records, and which were even more interventionist in their manipulation of sound, were also extreme. Although not recognised as such, interested consumers were registering a position in relation to the ethics of recording.

The second meta-consequence flowing from the use of tape-recording techniques was the development of the idea of recording being a credible alternative to the live 'musical utterance'. This built upon and moved forward from the idea prevalent since the beginning of recording that a recorded performance was indistinguishable from a live performance of the same work. Edison heavily promoted demonstrations seeking to show this, and similar live and recorded performances were common in the United Kingdom before the First World War.

In its new form however the recorded performance dispensed with any allegiance to the live performance and declared unilateral independence. For Glenn Gould the artificially constructed performance heard in surroundings of the listener's choosing was a completely legitimate alternative to the concert hall experience of a performance. Both for him had equal musical validity. Furthermore technology had the potential to allow the listener to inter-relate creatively with the performance. John Culshaw echoed these sentiments in an article written for the magazine 'Records and Recording' in 1966, which built upon Gould's ideas prophesying the death of the concert hall (Culshaw, 1966, p.28).

8.4.4. The long-playing record: immediate consequences

The introduction of the long-playing record (the LP) from 1948 onwards had a very powerful influence upon musical perception. Firstly it stimulated an enormous growth in the repertoire committed to disc. As Timothy Day has noted (Day, 2000, pp.92ff.) this process was assisted by the sudden efflorescence of small labels, which

quickly grasped the significance of the LP in assisting them to promote highly specific artistic policies and priorities. Two examples of these companies were the Haydn Society of Boston and the Concert Hall Society of New York. The latter was specifically modelled upon the Limited Edition Book Club and sought to introduce to the public previously unrecorded works of musical merit (David Josefowitz*, founder with his brother Sam, in interview). The Haydn Society existed to publish printed and recorded editions of previously unknown works by Joseph Haydn (Robbins Landon, 1999, pp.33-59).

The process of repertoire expansion has continued unabated, and was given a powerful fillip by the commercial introduction of the Compact Disc (CD) from 1983 onwards, with its longer playing time: 74 minutes for the single-sided two channel CD as opposed to approximately 60 minutes for the double-sided LP.

The expansion of repertoire had three consequences. Firstly, it proved to be a stimulus for the growth in numerical terms of the audience for classical music. Secondly, it gave audiences the opportunity to acquire greater knowledge, initially of musical repertoire, and latterly of performance, through comparison. Thirdly, the progressively more convenient commodification of music that initially the LP and then the compact cassette and the CD assisted, helped to make the acquisition of recordings appetitive. The cult of collecting, vigorously supported by the popular record press, with its regular recommendations for purchase, and the BBC, with precisely targeted sound features, such 'Building a Library' broadcast weekly on Saturday mornings, positively stimulated the acquisition of recordings. Greater knowledge and comparison inevitably followed.

This process was assisted by the progressively easier availability of these recorded media and their content, which was a direct result of their greater lightness and increased recording time, characteristics of both the LP and the CD. This greater convenience was also to initiate a process whereby, through improved ease of market entry for smaller companies, the grip of the major companies upon the classical music recording market was gradually loosened. The introduction of the CD was to accelerate this process considerably. The availability of a greater variety of repertoire

and of performances, both the result of increased competition, was also to loosen the idea of the one 'great performance' captured on and available only from a specific label. (Toscanini and RCA present the paradigm for this perception, as brilliantly illustrated in Joseph Horowitz's book 'Understanding Toscanini' (Horowitz 1987).)

Thus the LP and later the CD saw an expansion of knowledge, initially about repertoire. The expansion fed upon itself through the idea of collecting, and was stimulated by increasing ease of availability, a consequence of miniaturisation. The parallel existence of broadcasting, and its own extensive development, served to amplify further knowledge acquired through recordings.

For the practising musician, if he or she so chose, this situation allowed for considerably greater knowledge of performance and interpretation. As early as the late 1930s and early 1940s conductors in New York were employing recording agencies to record Toscanini's broadcasts for personal study (Michael Gray* in conversation, June 2000). (Recordings made in the late 1930s, of a performance of 'La Traviata' at the Metropolitan Opera with Rosa Ponselle and of 'Tristan und Isolde' at Covent Garden with Beecham conducting, were later found in Lawrence Tibbett's spittoon and Sir Thomas Beecham's son's greenhouse respectively, indicating a sense of limited value given to recordings of this nature by those of the generation which created them!)

As the repertoire expanded on record, and as the number of recording companies increased, so it became possible to compare performances. This process was further stimulated when comparisons became possible not only across present time but back to past time through the re-publication of older recordings.

8.4.5. The long-playing record: meta-consequences

The meta-consequences of these two phenomena, the expansion of repertoire and of recorded performances, were considerable. Firstly, the expansion of the repertoire, and the associated greater convenience of format and increase in the number of companies, saw a substantial growth in the market for recordings. The following statistics illustrate this growth:

Table 8.1. Sales of LPs in the USA: 1949-1995.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Value of sales</u>	<u>Volume of sales</u>
1949	\$ 173 million *	
1957	\$ 277 million *	
1960	\$ 600 million *	
1978	\$ 4,131 million **	
1981		593 million units ***
1995		1100.5 million units ***

* Gronow and Saunio, 1998, p.96; ** Gronow and Saunio, 1998, p. 137;

*** Gronow and Saunio, 1998, p.193.

The increasing number of recordings and greater distribution combined to stimulate greater knowledge among the public, albeit within the niche interested in classical music, of initially the classical music repertoire and, subsequently, of performance at a general level. This growth in the domestic use of recordings has created competition for the live musical performance and for musical participation, not unlike the scenario pictured by Gould and Culshaw.

For the musician the potential knowledge encoded within recordings has stimulated greater learning and knowledge, specifically about interpretation. Both Solti and Rattle, as indicated by this research, have used recordings to confront many different interpretations. This knowledge has led to an understanding and acceptance of many different interpretive options. Whereas fifty years ago Furtwangler's Bach and Handel performances were conducted in a style not dissimilar to that of his Mozart and Beethoven, those by contrast conducted by Sir Simon Rattle for instance are stylistically widely different. Stylistic plurality is accepted as a 'given', and the variations of performance illustrated by recordings have been a powerful stimulus to the acceptance of this variation.

Thus the expansion of repertoire and of performance made possible by the long playing record and successor formats, has, firstly, stimulated a growth in the market for recordings and, secondly, has made possible, through the availability of this new form of knowledge, learning about past and present performances.

The range of knowledge which recording has created is a new phenomenon, and one which did not exist either at the inception of recording, or for the first fifty years or so of its existence. (The first book on the collecting of 'historic' recordings, by P.G. Hurst, was not published until 1946). Conscious learning from this knowledge, or the application of this knowledge, is still therefore a relatively new phenomenon.

A frank assessment of the importance of recordings in acquiring knowledge was given by the conductor Sir Charles Mackerras in an article in the magazine 'Records and Recording', published in 1959. This was written at a time when the catalogue was still relatively small in relation to what it was later to become, and few purchasers thought to buy more than one copy of a particular work.

Mackerras not only reminisced about the significance for him of records when he was a schoolboy living in Australia, but also confirmed the value of recordings in keeping him abreast of current and different musical trends across the world, and in assisting him in deepening his own musical interpretations. He wrote: 'I also like comparing various performances of the same work, which without the aid of the gramophone would take years of intensive concert going. For this reason I often duplicate my recordings of important works...it is fascinating to analyse the differences in the Beethoven recordings of Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Sir Adrian Boult and Klemperer, all first-class in their own way and yet each conductor has something different to contribute to each work. If a young musician can digest all the important points in these performances he will really have learned something about Beethoven!' (Mackerras, 1959, p.11).

Few musicians have been as publicly open as Mackerras in acknowledging the importance and value to them of recordings, and the very practical ways in which they assist development by making available different aspects of musical knowledge.

There is a further consequence of the growth of sales for gramophone recordings, which is touched on in Appendix I. This relates to the earnings which may be made from recordings by musicians, especially when income is calculated as a royalty payment on the value of retail sales. The theoretical information given in Appendix I

indicates that firstly, payment under this option is likely in the long term to be considerably greater than a flat recording fee, especially when either the artists's reputation is growing or when the market itself is experiencing growth; and secondly that income from this source becomes significant once a very large catalogue of recordings has been created, as was the case with Sir Thomas Beecham and Sir Georg Solti. Appendix I also indicates that, with the introduction of state subsidy for the arts, the relative importance of recording income has become less compared to income that may be earned from performance fees. This change was also mentioned in certain interviews, notably that with Haas.

8.5. The Immediate Consequences and Meta-consequences of Recording, as revealed by the three Case Studies: Rattle

8.5.1. Digital recording and miniaturisation: immediate consequences

Sir Simon Rattle's recording career commenced at approximately the same time as the introduction into commercial sound recording of digital recording techniques, or 'pulse code modulation' as it was originally known. The initial musical fruits of his exclusive recording contract with EMI started to be published in 1983, the same year in which the Compact Disc (CD) was launched, employing a reproduction system using digitalisation.

A second highly influential innovation that was also launched and developed rapidly during the same period (1975 to 1985) was the Sony 'Walkman', for the playing of compact cassettes. This device, and its numerous imitators, accelerated the acceptance of the idea of music accompanying the individual wherever he or she went: music became even more a part of everyday life, especially on the move, albeit at the price of social interaction. A parallel development to the 'Walkman' was the widespread installation into cars of compact cassette players as a standard piece of equipment, further emphasising the connection between listening and travelling, as well as expanding the usage of recordings.

These innovations both reflected and stimulated the trend towards miniaturisation of equipment. Miniaturisation for the consumer made it easier to listen to music,

without an appreciable loss of sound quality. Demand for recordings was thus further stimulated. At the same time miniaturisation and digital recording techniques had consequences for the actual process of recording. As the fidelity of the techniques improved and the size of recording equipment diminished, gradually the necessity of recording in the studio itself lessened. Recording plant was easily transportable and could be used to record in the concert hall and the opera house without difficulty. Not only was the sound captured generally of equal quality to that previously attained in the studio, but also the length of recording 'takes' increased dramatically from about 17 minutes (the maximum length of time possible for studio tape recorders at the time of the recording of the Solti 'Ring') to over 60 minutes. It thus became completely feasible to record whole works in concert, at a level of 'studio' acceptability.

The consequences of these technological innovations were quickly recognised and adopted. In 1982 Rattle sought to record Rachmaninov's 'Symphonic Dances' immediately prior to a concert at the Snape Maltings in what would normally have been a rehearsal period, and to record Mahler's Seventh Symphony again over two concerts at the Aldeburgh Festival in 1991.

Solti began to record 'live' from his concerts in Symphony Hall in Chicago, initially with symphonies by Shostakovich. Solti as an individual found recording within the American studio system, where sessions last for four hours with a fifteen minute break in each hour, very tiring as he got older. Consequently recording 'live' had the benefits of exploiting the concentration of effort made at concert performances. Most of the later recordings conducted by Leonard Bernstein were made in similar circumstances. In the words of one of his producers, Michael Haas*, the development of a full understanding of recording from live concerts as opposed to in the studio 'was not easy', and Solti initially sought to turn his concerts 'into recording sessions', with for instance requests to the audience for absolute quiet.

Both Solti and Rattle mastered the art of recording to the point whereby they could precisely maintain tempi across different performances, thus making inter-cutting between different performances and recordings feasible. Rattle's producer David

Murray* pointed out that this capability was absolutely essential in these circumstances. (Yet at the same time in the studio, with different balances, Solti could adjust a performance between takes quickly and decisively to achieve a better studio performance.)

A further benefit of recording 'live' is that it may be cheaper in certain circumstances. One area where recording from actual performances rather than in the studio has become more prevalent is opera. This indicates that lower costs may be a factor in using contemporary recording technologies, as well as the fact that it is simply possible and easier to do so from a technical perspective.

The shift out of the recording studio, for the performance of orchestral and operatic works in particular, has been accompanied by a change in the perception of the recorded performance. Conductors such as Rattle now clearly refer to performances as comparable to a 'photograph' – the sense is conveyed by the comment 'I think recordings are snapshots of performances at a given time.' (Seckerson, 1992, p.41). This point of view stands in contrast to that of Solti, who once he had recorded a work suggested that he had said what he had to say about it and was ready to move onto the next assignment.

The recording has gradually ceased to be a 'portrait' – a formal definitive statement – and has become a 'photograph' – a moment in time captured simply as such, albeit with equal effort and intensity of execution as would be given to the former. Recordings to a certain extent have shifted from being seen as 'timeless' – for instance the perception of Solti's 'Ring' recordings – to being bounded by 'time'. 'Unique' events, such as Furtwangler's recordings of 'The Ring' made from performances at La Scala, Milan, in 1950, and for Rome Radio in 1954, and studio recordings are now seen as equally acceptable by both the general public and the recording industry. By contrast John Willan* noted in interview how even in the middle 1980s, when he was producing recordings conducted by Klaus Tennstedt, 'live recordings were seen as "second best"' to studio productions.

In this way the technologies of miniaturisation and digitalisation have, by making it easier to record from a live performance, brought recording closer to the musical

‘act’ or ‘utterance’. In a recent interview the American conductor James Levine expressed the shift clearly: ‘...this business of putting together ad-hoc combinations and going into a studio – maybe it works for some people, but something central gets lost along the way...Sometimes I make a recording in the studio, a beautiful job technically, then I hear a live radio tape of that same opera – of a particular passage sung by the same singer – and I think to myself that even with all the energy and money we had, all the technical carryings on that went into the studio session, we got nothing of any essence that I can’t hear in the live version.’ (Cowan, 2000). Levine went on to point out that an effective combination was to marry recordings of live performances with ‘patches’ made at a studio session, or non-public performance, shortly afterwards. This is in fact not far from Beecham’s suggestion to EMI that it use location recording - for instance in Leeds Town Hall in conjunction with concerts for the Leeds Festival - as the basis of commercial recordings, as opposed to working in the recording studio.

At the same time digital recording, and especially the adoption of digital recording techniques, has made it possible to go much further in the area of manipulation of the recorded performance than was previously possible with tape recording and tape editing. Digital manipulation now makes it possible not only for errors to be corrected, but for the actual ‘musical utterance’ itself to be altered. For instance in the field of antique operatic recordings, Caruso’s recordings may now have accidents eliminated to provide a more polished, if completely inauthentic, performance. The critic John Steane noted this development when reviewing a reissue of recordings by Caruso in November 2000: ‘In every copy I have heard of ‘O paradiso’, the last note, the G flat, meets with a misfortune just before the end. Not in this version however’ (Steane, 2000).

Audio engineers specialising in the restoration and transfer to new media of old recordings, such as the American Seth Winner*, have confirmed in conversation how they are able with current technology to smooth out or rebuild fractured wave patterns describing sounds. A danger therefore exists of applying current ideas of what constitutes a satisfactory performance to recordings made when different

standards were prevalent. In this way the actual nature of the sound document may itself be significantly altered.

Thus the ability to intervene in the musical performance has become much greater as a result of digital technology, just as, at the same time, this technology has also made it possible to capture with greater fidelity the musical utterance in performance.

8.5.2. Digital recording and miniaturisation: meta-consequences

The meta-consequence of the changes outlined above are two-fold. Firstly, the musician has a choice to do several things. One might be to record in the studio and to manipulate either marginally or extensively. The result might be termed ‘the musical utterance adjusted’. Another might be to do what is probably most common at the present time: to record the same performance ‘live’ on several occasions and to mix the best of each, as well as allowing some studio time to polish up those moments which had been scuffed in the live performance. This might be termed ‘the musical utterance improved’ and is similar to Beecham’s ‘gilding the lily’. The third alternative is to record the live performance, and accept it, warts and all, for what it is. This is truly the recording as a ‘photograph’, or ‘the musical utterance at a point in time’.

Musicians are not generally free to decide exactly which of these alternatives or philosophies of recording they may wish to adopt. Commercial and competitive pressures, felt most keenly by record companies, might result in an insistence upon a high or low level of ‘tidying up’. For instance, as far back as the 1960s the producer James Mallinson recalled in interview how, as a young producer, he had ‘tidied up’ a recording by the pianist Wilhelm Backhaus. Backhaus rejected this improvement on hearing the finished tape, on the grounds that it was not ‘him’: that it did not present an authentic aural picture of Backhaus as a musician and a pianist.

In essence the musician may adopt an ethical response. Rattle has commented on his unease about ‘cutting up’ pieces of performances, and has suggested that it is not a natural process: ‘I think it does a disservice to the music to cut it into little tiny bits and then pretend when it’s stitched together that it’s going to be anything more than

stitching.’ (Badal, 1996, p.77). Comments such as these betray a natural preference for at least the basis of recordings being the live performance, with these being judged to be more genuine or in some way more truthful, even if adjusted slightly at certain specific points.

Some musicians may be quite happy at severely adjusted recordings being published as reflecting their individual capabilities, whereas others may balk at this. The moral dilemma remains at root with the musician as the technology allows for different avenues of approach to be pursued. The choice is essentially with the musician and with the representatives of the recording organisation involved.

In the comments of conductors such as Rattle and Levine it is possible to discern a distinct change in ‘mind-set’, as characterised by Professor Cyril Ehrlich* in conversation, with an increasing emphasis upon the musical ‘utterance’ as the basis of published recorded performances, rather than the studio performance and associated manipulation. This change may also, although there is no evidence to indicate this, constitute a reaction against the loss of individuality caused, firstly by the process of listening and consequent emphasis upon exactitude, and secondly by the techniques of manipulation which made such exactitude even more possible by artificial means.

Overall there appears to be a distinct move back to the unvarnished musical ‘act’ as the genuine basis of performance and so as the preferred mode for recording. This represents a reaction against the ideas propagated by Gould and Culshaw, and a return to the primacy of live performance as the basis of the musical experience.

8.6. The Relationship between Recording and the three Case Study Subjects

The brief survey earlier of the literature on the influence of recording in the area of popular music indicated that the view of current historians was that recording exerted influence *upon* the musician.

The evidence of the current research has indicated that in the context of the three case study subjects – Beecham, Solti and Rattle – the reverse has applied. The case studies and cross-case analysis have indicated that recordings and their commercial aspects have provided a number of different opportunities that each conductor has grasped. The nature of these opportunities has hopefully been clarified by the analysis presented in the current chapter.

Thus for Beecham recording presented opportunities for him, firstly, to improve the quality of his performances, using the additional rehearsal and performance time presented by the current studio system; secondly, to create consciously a testament of the music with which he closely identified, for instance by Delius; and, thirdly, to use the capital available from the recording industry to create and sustain not one but two symphony orchestras. Beecham does not appear to have allowed himself to have been influenced by recording: instead he used it to further his own artistic objectives.

Solti used recording to demonstrate his powerful capabilities as a conductor. Allied with a strong creative presence – John Culshaw – he was happy to participate in technological developments and experiments, which in turn drew attention to his conducting, and so supported positively the development of his career as an international conductor. The appearance and continuing availability of these recordings at a time of an expanding market reinforced this aspect of their influence. At the same time Solti used recordings to deepen his own interpretations, most notably in the case of the Elgar Symphonies, where reference was made to the composer's own recordings. For Solti recording therefore offered both practical and musical opportunities which he clearly grasped.

Rattle has been more circumspect than either Beecham or Solti in his encounter with the recording industry, and as such has been very clear about using it to meet his own requirements rather than the other way around. By his own admission he has used the selection of repertoire to demonstrate what he and his orchestra, the CBSO, could perform exceptionally well. He has used the benefits of contemporary technology to capture such performances in the circumstances that he feels are most appropriate, generally in the concert hall. Furthermore he has brought an ethical perspective to

recording, seeking to balance the commercial demands and technical requirements of recording and the recording industry with what he feels is most appropriate in relation to the musical 'act'. For Rattle the performance is of primary importance, to which the requirements and techniques of recording, where possible, must yield.

Thus each of the three conductors has pro-actively used recording in ways important to each of them individually.

8.7. Summary

From the conclusions drawn above from the research undertaken into the recording careers of Beecham, Solti and Rattle, it is possible to draw out several key points.

Firstly, the reification of the musical utterance has permitted the creation of a personal testament. In addition it has created a general body of verifiable knowledge that has existed only since the beginning of recording activity at the end of the last century.

The commercial exploitation of this reification has introduced into the existing musical infrastructure capital (in different forms, for instance fees, royalties and advance payments) which may or may not be used as part of a process of changing performance standards.

The potential for the manipulation of the recorded musical performance, through tape recording and latterly digital manipulation, has introduced into the process of recording an element of choice for the musician, the record producer and the record company. The basis of this choice is whether or not to publish the unvarnished 'live' performance or to improve it either through synthetic means (for instance through digital manipulation) or the interpolation of improved 'takes'. This process, or potential, has given rise to the idea of the recording as a feasible performance experience in its own right. Glenn Gould has been the most notable exponent of this philosophy.

The passage of time and the accumulation of various ‘testaments’ has allowed for comparison and so both knowledge and the accumulation of knowledge. This has been used by musicians such as Solti and Rattle as the basis for deeper learning about the potentials for the performance of specific pieces of music, and has allowed for greater insight into the various options for interpretation and performance. Such knowledge has extended learning, both in terms of widening historical boundaries, and in terms of greater knowledge as to how the works of a specific composer might be interpreted in different ways.

In addition, the knowledge acquired from recordings has stimulated a shift of thought in which music is seen as being most truly expressed and experienced in performance, both recorded and live, rather than through the printed or written text. The latter may alternatively be seen as a surrogate for performance, rather than as the determinant of performance. The essence of this idea, eloquently expressed by Jose Bowen (Bowen, 1999), is that music is only fully realised in performance, be it recorded or live.

This philosophy both reflects and perhaps influences the return to the emphasis upon the pure musical ‘utterance’, which has also been made much more feasible for recording through the technical innovations of the last twenty-five years. Current recording technologies, and their commercial application, allow for the concert hall and opera house performance to be acceptable as the basis of recordings. This has stimulated an emphasis upon the primacy of the immediate musical ‘act’ and a reaction against manipulation and the mechanistic creation of a performance.

At the same time this technology also allows for far more manipulation to take place to both old and new recordings than was previously possible. The resultant choice creates a moral dilemma for all participants within the record industry, and especially within the arena of classical music. Will the unsullied musical act become dominant in recording, as is technically feasible, with the implication of demonstrable individuality and representing a return to the philosophy of performance dominant before recording, or will the ease of manipulation encourage the dominance of

synthetic performances of classical music? Will the first century of recording come to be seen as a period of aberration when musicians were compelled to adjust to the primitive demands of recording technology, or will it come to be seen as the start of a process which has changed the nature of performance from what it was prior to the advent of recordings? These are the fundamental questions which the future of recording will answer.

8.8. The Future

Certain directions of future development are perceptible. The music industry and particularly the recording industry is currently convulsed by issues of distribution and copyright protection thrown up by the Internet. One thing is clear and that is distribution of recorded sound will become easier either through a restructuring or expansion of the retail process, or through the Internet itself becoming the means of distribution, or a combination of the two.

Secondly the ending of the copyright on recordings made from 1950 onwards from 2001 in Europe as a result of the fifty-year copyright restriction will stimulate further the re-publication and proliferation of old as opposed to new recordings. 1950 saw the start of the process of both large-scale expansion of the recorded musical repertoire and the growth of small specialist labels, frequently involved in pursuing particular strands of specialist repertoire.

The ability to republish these recordings, albeit from secondary sources, thus creates a third consequence: the continuation and expansion of the process of greater knowledge being acquired both about different strands of repertoire and about different approaches to interpretation and performance. This trend has already been noted by Day in his survey of different approaches to the performance of early music (Day, 2000, pp.174-178, 249-252). The increase in the number of recorded performances initially created after 1948 both for the long playing record and in stereophonic sound, will see the continuing growth of 'second edition' publishers of

recordings just as at the beginning of this century republishers of literature such as the 'Everyman Library' and the 'Oxford Pocket Library' established themselves.

The greater availability of earlier recordings is also likely to stimulate a keener understanding both of the processes and influences of recording, and especially of the interaction of these with the musician. To this extent there may be a growth in the range and intensity of judgements made about the degrees of influence exerted by technology and by commercial factors. Such a process may already be seen in assessments of the interaction in the USA between black musicians and the recording industry during the inter-war years by Nelson George (George 1988).

8.9. Areas for Future Study

The above prognosis suggests certain discrete avenues for further academic study. These may include the following:

- The study of the inter-relationship between individual musicians and recording and the record industry. Such studies may analyse performance styles as revealed by recordings, or where live and studio recordings exist, the degree of difference, if any, between the two, and from this the degrees of influence exerted by the recording process. Comparison of recordings and marked texts, such as conductor's scores (an area already profitably pursued by Dr. Raymond Holden), is another likely area of academic study in relation to individual musicians.
- The study of interpretive schools. The pioneering and extremely valuable work of Robert Philip has shown that performance styles change rapidly. It may therefore be fruitful to track such changes through the differences in the performance practice of distinct schools of musicians. German conductors of the same age as Richard Strauss, such as Max Fiedler, Oskar Fried, Hans Pfitzner and Max von Schillings, made a sufficient number of recordings for these to be compared with the succeeding school, epitomised by Wilhelm Furtwangler, Erich Kleiber, and

Otto Klemperer, and for these two schools of conducting to be compared and different performance styles to be analysed.

- A third area of study of significance is that of the business history of sound recording. In the field of popular music this is well advanced, even if often at an anecdotal level. Both Dr. Peter Martland (Martland 1992) and Paul Kildea (Kildea 1996) have researched the business affairs of The Gramophone Company and of Benjamin Britten to great effect. The cultures and practices of organisations both large and small, such as the English record clubs of the late 1950s and early 1960s, will help to reveal the true influence of such organisations and the recording industry's influence in general upon the cultural life of this century.
- A fourth, related, area is the study of the infrastructure which has supported the record industry and most notably that of the popular press which has reviewed recordings and disseminated information about recording activities. The work of Lemahieu (Lemahieu 1982) and Pollard (Pollard 1998) in relation to 'The Gramophone' magazine is indicative of what might be achieved in this field. The popular press supporting the record industry in both the United Kingdom and United States has always been extensive if rapidly changing, and extends in addition into popular guides and to broadcasting.
- A fifth and central area is the study of individuals within the record industry, the key players who helped to determine and to drive change. Among producers subjects for such research might include Walter Legge, John Culshaw, John Hammond, Kurt List, Lawrence Collingwood. Jerrold Northrop Moore's biography of Fred Gaisberg is a model of this type of research. A second category of individual to be studied would be the individual entrepreneurs who drove the creation of small independent labels. The influence of labels such as Remington and Westminster in the USA during the 1950s, and of Saga, Delta, and Hyperion in the United Kingdom during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, have been greater, in terms of expanding knowledge of repertoire and of performance, than might at first sight be anticipated. The need to seek out performances for

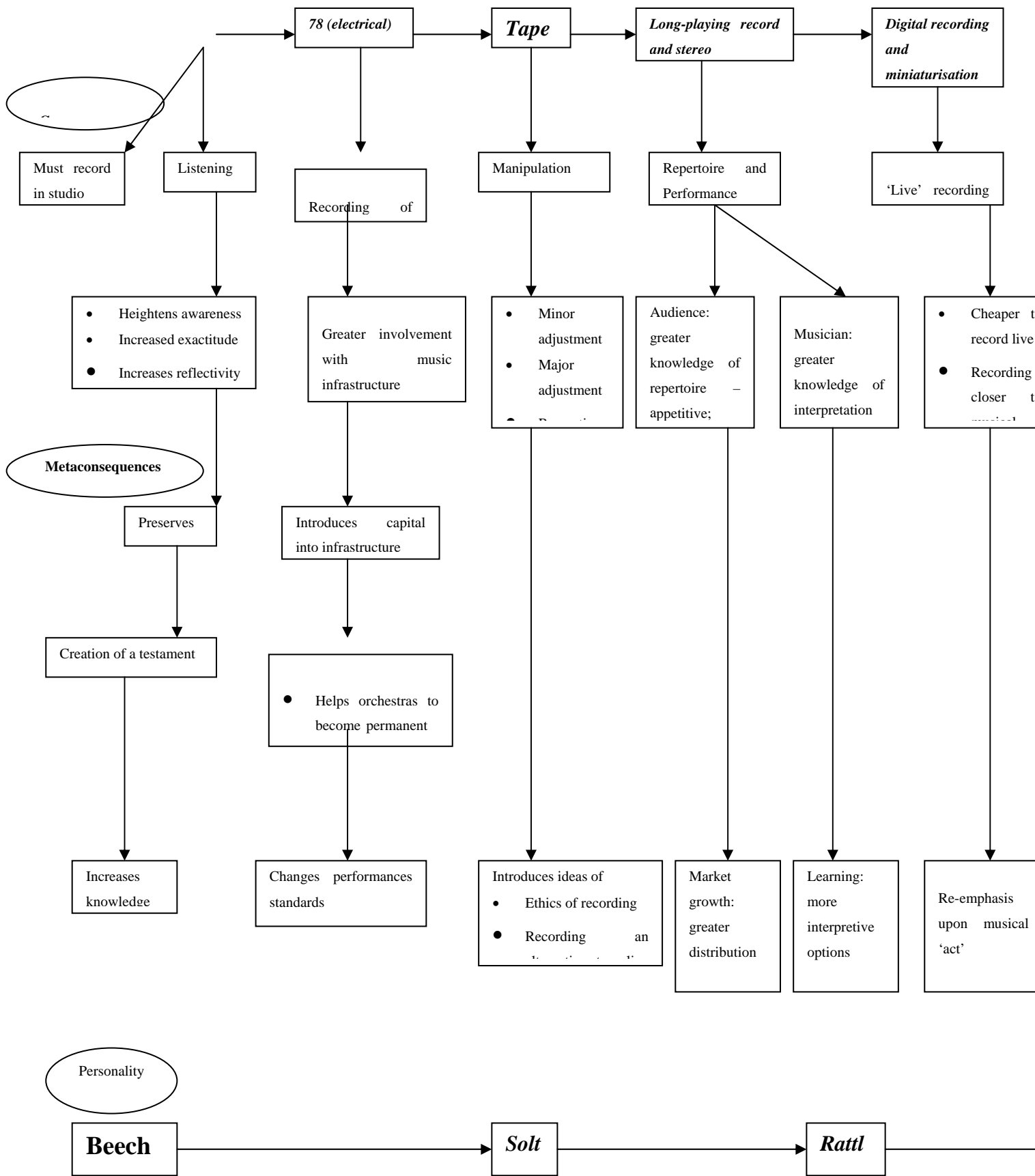
licensing rather than original recording, and the achievement of sales through keen pricing, both in the face of limited resources and competition from the major companies, stimulated innovative actions in artistic and business terms which justify further investigation. This work would essentially be concerned with the development of the record industry as a branch of the history of publishing.

- The sixth and final category of potential future study would be concerned with the leaders of the major corporate organisations, such as Goddard Lieberson at Columbia / USA, Sir Edward Lewis at Decca Records, and Sir Joseph Lockwood at EMI. These men led organisations which both reflected and drove public taste and knowledge. The brief autobiographical sketch by Lewis (Lewis 1956) and Clive Davis's autobiography (Davis 1974) indicate that the personal drivers for these individuals were significant and influential. For instance the composition of Leonard Bernstein's 'Mass' – which represented a major change of musical direction for Bernstein as a composer – is directly attributable to the influence of Clive Davis, when he was head of the recording division of CBS, Columbia Records.

The above simply sketches some of the areas of possible future study into the history and influence of recording and the record industry. That such study is required, and the potential importance of it in aiding an understanding of the dynamics of recording as a new form of knowledge, has been revealed, it is hoped, by the present study, the objective of which has been to go beyond Puck's idea of 'this weak and idle theme / No more yielding than a dream' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, V, 2) to consider and analyse recording as a concrete and distinct reality.

For the author the task of undertaking the study and the analysis involved has resulted in a much deeper understanding of the many different ways in which recording has been and may be used by musicians. At the same time it has revealed how recording technologies and the commercial organisation of the recording industry have exerted influence in different ways and at different times. By examining these various influences through the medium of three different case

studies, each separated by time, it has been possible to map the evolution and development of recording in ways that have revealed what was previously dim and shadowy, as logical and coherent. Arguably the invention and development of recording have been two of the most profound influences upon music-making and the organisation of music during the twentieth century. If the present study has helped to clarify understanding of these influences, then it will have achieved its purpose.



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