

**Milhaud and the French Musical Tradition
with reference to his works 1912-31**

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the

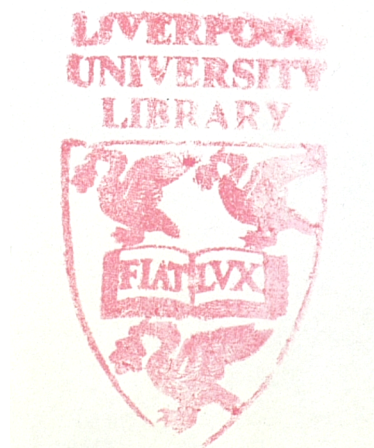
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Abstract

Milhaud believed that being part of a tradition involved an understanding and acceptance of his own musical heritage. At the same time, it did not prevent the composer from shaping the future direction of the tradition within which he worked. It is this dichotomy between originality and the past which is the key to a fuller understanding of Milhaud's writings and music.

The thesis begins with an exploration of the notion of identity and tradition in France from 1871 to Milhaud's generation. It goes on to investigate Milhaud's concept of tradition through an examination of his prolific writings on music, and considers his motivations and the inconsistencies involved in promoting the concept of a pure French music. This leads into a thorough examination of Milhaud's early works, from 1912 to 1931, in which he attempted to reinvigorate French music by developing a robust style. The concluding chapter considers Milhaud's place within the French musical tradition, appraising his contribution of polytonality as the Latin way forward in the early twentieth century, and examining the ways in which he enriched his tradition without breaking with the past. These achievements are placed alongside Schoenberg's development of the twelve-note system within the Teutonic tradition.

The thesis focuses on the works between 1912 and 1931 because this period spans the crucial years which mark the emergence of his mature style. It is also during this period that Milhaud's most important writings on tradition appeared. I have concentrated on Milhaud's vocal works and on his works for small ensembles, which reveal his preoccupation with instrumental combinations and contrapuntal polytonality.

Rather than giving a chronological account of Milhaud's early career as a composer and writer on music, the thesis considers why he was so preoccupied with tradition

and his own place within it. It also shows the extent to which his often contradictory views on the French musical tradition related to his own musical practice, and considers how his works reflect the balance between innovation and tradition.

To Martin for his love and support.

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Preface

"A Frenchman from Provence and Jewish by religion", you know better than anyone that even if art has no homeland, musicians have one. You wrote yourself: "For every true heart, all human works will be alive if they are fully realised; but each race, each country carries with it a whole past which weighs on an artist, and the great opposition of races exists in all musicians".

Your vast output, moreover, testifies in its diversity to a tradition already well established; but you do not think, for all that, "that a tradition imposes itself on the musical destinies of people like a one-way road where there is nothing one can do but follow it".¹

In this open letter to Milhaud, Roland-Manuel touches at the heart of Milhaud's notion of tradition by stressing the importance of nationality. For Milhaud, inheriting a tradition involved an understanding and acceptance of his own musical heritage. At the same time, it did not prevent the composer from shaping the future direction of the tradition within which he worked. It is this dichotomy between originality and the past which is the key to a fuller understanding of Milhaud's writings and music.

The thesis begins with an exploration of the notion of identity and tradition in France from the end of the Franco-Prussian war in 1871 to Milhaud's generation. Chapter 2 investigates Milhaud's concept of tradition through an examination of his prolific writings on music, and considers his motivations and the inconsistencies involved in promoting the concept of a pure French music. This leads into a thorough examination of Milhaud's early works, from 1912 to 1931, in which he attempted to reinvigorate French music by developing a robust style (chapters 3-5). He achieved this by adopting new approaches to text setting and melody, rhythmic declamation

¹ "Français de Provence et de religion israélite", tu sais mieux que personne que si l'art n'a pas de patrie, les musiciens en ont une. Tu l'as écrit toi-même: "Pour tout coeur sensible, toute oeuvre humaine sera vivante si elle est pleinement réalisée; mais chaque race, chaque pays apporte avec soi tout un passé qui pèse sur un artiste, et les grandes oppositions de races se retrouvent chez tous les musiciens".

Ton oeuvre immense, aussi bien, porte témoignage en sa diversité d'une tradition profondément vécue; mais tu ne penses pas pour autant "qu'une tradition s'impose aux destinées musicales d'un peuple comme une voie unique dans laquelle il n'y a qu'à se laisser aller". (Roland-Manuel, cited in Milhaud, 1962, 1)

and contrapuntal polytonality. The concluding chapter considers Milhaud's place within the French musical tradition, appraising his contribution of polytonality as the Latin way forward in the early twentieth century and examining the ways in which he enriched his tradition without breaking with the past.

I have chosen to focus on the works between 1912 and 1931 because this period spans the crucial years which mark the emergence of his mature style.² It is also during this period that Milhaud's most important writings on tradition appeared. I have concentrated on Milhaud's vocal works, which have been largely neglected hitherto and on his works for small ensembles, which reveal his preoccupation with instrumental combinations and contrapuntal polytonality. I have made only passing reference to the more popular works, such as *Le boeuf sur le toit*, and to his operas since the latter have been explored in Jeremy Drake's thesis on the operas of Darius Milhaud (1984).

This is the first musicological study to examine Milhaud's early works in relation to his writings. There has so far been very little scholarly work devoted to Milhaud, despite the ground-breaking work carried out by Paul Collaer (in French), Jeremy Drake (in English) and Jens Rosteck (in German). There are also a few purely analytical studies of Milhaud's music, although analysis is used in this thesis as a means to an end. I have focused principally on primary sources, including several unpublished articles by Milhaud and other contemporary documents. Moreover, the majority of Milhaud's manuscripts are in Mme Milhaud's possession and many are kept in the bank. Understandably, she is reluctant to release manuscripts and it was only half-way through my third year of study that I was given access to the *Alissa* manuscript in its 1913 version. The discovery of a second *Alissa* manuscript (also from 1913) in April this year gave further insight into this rare instance of Milhaud

² I have made one exception to this in the case of *Caroles* (1963) because it provides a useful comparison with his earlier English text settings.

revising his original conception. This necessitated extensive revisions to Chapter 3, but these manuscripts provide an invaluable insight into Milhaud's musical development and compositional process, and have been fully integrated into this thesis.

The thesis does not set out to give a chronological account of Milhaud's early career as a composer and writer on music. Rather, it attempts to probe deeper into the composer's mind to consider why he was so preoccupied with tradition and his own place within it, when many of his contemporaries were advocating a break with the past. I have tried to explain where his belief in identifiable French musical characteristics sprang from, and to place Milhaud in the context of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries from Debussy and Satie to Stravinsky and Schoenberg. I have also tried to show the extent to which his often contradictory views on the French musical tradition related to his own musical practice, and to consider how his works reflect the balance between innovation and tradition.

Figure i (From the autograph manuscript of Milhaud's *Alissa*, 'Prelude', 1913a)

This image shows a handwritten musical score for the 'Prelude' of Milhaud's *Alissa*. The score is written on multiple staves, with some staves containing dense musical notation and others being mostly blank. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *f.*, *pp.*, and *fff.*. There are also handwritten annotations and corrections throughout the manuscript, including the name 'Milhaud' at the top right and the number '1413' at the bottom right. The paper shows signs of age and wear, with some ink bleed-through from the reverse side.

Figure ii (Illustration of Satie listening to Milhaud playing the piano from across the street in 1915, see Volta, 1994)



Chapter 1: The French Tradition

I: The French Classical Tradition

What does it mean to be French in music? Does a musical tradition exist which one can call French? Where does this tradition begin? Was it interrupted with Berlioz? Was it lost or found after him? And finally, where have we got to at the present moment?²

This problem of French identity and tradition which concerned Paul Landormy in 1904 had been a pressing issue since the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, and remained of primary importance to Milhaud in the 1920s. Landormy linked the issue of French musical identity with the existence of an almost tangible musical tradition. Yet despite the appearance of something almost determined and evolutionary in its development, the French musical tradition was largely constructed in the late nineteenth century out of a deep national and musical insecurity, and a desire to give roots, validity and direction to French music. I believe it is important to examine the degree to which that tradition was based in historical and artistic fact, and to decide whether the purpose it served was sufficient justification for its existence.

The quest for a French identity was not isolated; it was influenced by a similar literary quest in the late nineteenth century, which, in turn, was closely connected to political events and movements. It is in this context that Milhaud's own writings and compositions need to be assessed.

France's defeat by Prussia in 1871 was a severe humiliation. France, the aggressor, had been put in her place by her dreaded neighbour; Paris had been occupied and Alsace-Lorraine had been lost. Not only was the Prussian victory perceived as a personal triumph for Otto von Bismarck over Napoleon III, but it brought about the unification of Germany and, in the French perception, a strengthening of an already

² Mais qu'est-ce que d'être français en musique? Existe-t-il une tradition musicale que l'on puisse appeler française? Où commence cette tradition? S'est-elle interrompue avec Berlioz? S'est-elle perdue ou retrouvée après lui? Et enfin où en sommes-nous à l'heure présente? (Landormy, 1904, 394)

oppressive power.

The internal situation in France from 1871 was chaotic. The main divisions arose between the Provinces and Paris and between the Monarchists and Republicans - symbolised by the periodic shift of power between Versailles and Paris.³ The Commune of Paris was formed in 1871 because of Parisian resentment towards the power of the predominantly land-owning National Assembly which seemed to ignore the very different needs of city life in favour of their own provincial interests. The Commune's revolt against the Versailles -based government was counteracted on 28 May 1871 by the brutal massacre of those who had only suspected associations with the Commune; it was an incident which left deep scars in French political life. (Rich, 1977, 186-8)

The instability was exacerbated because of a deep-rooted fear of autocratic leadership. Léon Gambetta (1838-82), who had played an important military role in a final resistance against the German armies after Paris' occupation, emerged as a strong unifying force from 1877, but because of his potential strength, he aroused distrust from both sides and his government only lasted three months. (Rich, 193) Another influential figure, Georges Boulanger (1837-91), came into prominence in 1886 and took advantage of the growing nationalism among both radical republicans and monarchists, uniting these disparate elements in a desire for a war of revenge against Germany. Although a republican, he thought that national strength could be achieved through a constitutional monarchy. He was admired by many for his potential for firm leadership. However, the suspicion this aroused in the 'opportunists' (the moderate republicans), leading to his subsequent dismissal by them, only fuelled his support elsewhere. His by-election victory in Paris in 1889 was a triumph for his essentially

³ In 1871 Thiers's National Assembly moved from Paris to Versailles and in 1879, after the failure to re-establish a monarchy, the government transferred back to Paris. This trend, indicative of deep national insecurity, continued with the shift from monarchism to republicanism in 1875 and back again in 1885.

right-wing nationalist policies. Yet his failure to act immediately upon a unique opportunity to gain political control on the night of his victory (27 January 1889) brought about his downfall.⁴ Once again the opportunity for strong leadership had been thwarted.

Boulangier's significance exceeded his failed attempt to achieve power. He gave rise to what was known as 'Boulangism', which in many respects was a convenient umbrella under which Jacobin nationalists, patriots, extreme radicals and royalists could unite, each hoping to achieve their particular, often narrow and frequently contradictory aims. Boulangism was symbolic of a rekindled hope, pride and a sense of national identity, which frequently bordered on unhealthy chauvinist attitudes.

The aspiration for a strong political and national identity, promised by Boulangism, spilled over into the literary world. Many writers in the 1890s were both politically active and held nationalist views. Claude Digeon remarked that the effect of the 1870 defeat was felt, not by the generation of writers of the time, but by the generation twenty years later. (Digeon, 1959, 387-8) One of the most prominent politically active writers was Maurice Barrès (1862-1923), who converted to Boulangism in 1889 and became a politician in Nancy, where the anti-German feeling was particularly strong. Charles Maurras (1868-1952) soon became associated with Barrès and Jean Moréas (1856-1910) upon his arrival in Paris in 1885 and from 1891 he wrote for the royalist journal *La gazette de France*. In 1891 he became part of the nationalist literary group, the 'Ecole Romane' founded by Jean Moréas.⁵ Moréas laid out the group's aspirations in his preface to *Le pèlerin passionné* (1891); they aimed to find a French poetry true to its race, to the 'idéal de romanité' and thus free from foreign (German) influence. In order to achieve this purity they sought for a return to

⁴ He is reported to have spent the night with his mistress instead of securing a *coup d'état* and was forced to flee the country.

⁵ Other writers in the group included Ernest Raynaud (1864-1934), Raymond de La Tailhède (1867-1938) and Maurice Du Plessys (1864-1924).

national sources: to the French classical past. The return to classicism involved the espousal of order, clarity and simplicity, which in their view were French characteristics. Romanticism, including naturalism and symbolism, had led the French tradition from its true lineage and it was therefore necessary to look to a more distant past for models - from the eleventh century with the *trouvères* to the seventeenth century with Racine and La Fontaine. (Messing, 1988, 7) It was through these writers that nationalism and classicism became associated in the 1890s.

In 1899 Charles Maurras founded the 'Action Française' which also held nationalist and royalist views. By associating order with classicism, it linked political authoritarianism with classical literary aims. The organisation was pro-Catholic and thus anti-Semitic and anti-Dreyfus. Romanticism, in their view, was a deviation from the Hellenic-Latin tradition inherited by the French. (Paul, 1972, 46-9)

Fundamental to the notion of a French classical tradition was the revival of a Golden Age. The dissatisfaction with the present caused writers and musicians to rediscover a past which projected a stronger French self-image. The chosen historical moment was, almost unanimously, seventeenth-century France during the reign of Louis XIV. In this respect there was a greater agreement than within the Anglo-Irish scene where Ruskin had chosen Gothic art; Pater, the Renaissance; Yeats, Byzantium; and T. S. Eliot, the Metaphysical poets as their various Golden Ages. There were many reasons for the unanimity in France, one of which was the symbolic strength of Louis XIV's reign; this was crucial at a time of disaffection with republicanism and the desire for a constitutional monarchy. Although the intelligentsia were unwilling to disregard all the benefits of the French Revolution and constitutional reform, there was no other French monarch worthy of such elevation.

The overt exuberance of Louis XIV's reign instilled a pride in France as a great nation, but this was inseparably bound up with a new-found enthusiasm for the French

language. As Benedetto wrote in his article on 'The Legend of French Classicism':

it was only during the reign of Louis XIV that France became aware of being a nation, and a great nation, literarily. Since, prior to that time, the French did not feel they possessed a true national language of their own, endowed with the requisites that were then believed to be inherent in the two classical languages, they did not feel before then, despite all the immense riches of their literary past, that they had an authentic, great literature worthy of standing comparison with the great literatures of antiquity. (Benedetto, 1966, 129-30)

The French language had, for historical and genealogical reasons, been in the shadow of Latin, and the French had long had an elevated view of ancient Greek civilisation, literature and language. The 'Pléiade' writers of the sixteenth century were among the first to appreciate the potential of the French language, and in an individual way François de Malherbe (1555-1628) resolved to refine poetic language, aiming for simplicity in metre, vocabulary and imagination, although he is said to have fallen short on the latter. (Howarth, 1972, 294) The formation of the Académie Française in 1635 marked a watershed in the development of the language, its primary concern being the standardisation of French. The guiding principles governing the writing of the Academy's *Dictionnaire* which began publication in 1694, were clarity and consistency. Other dictionaries appeared about the same time, one by César-Pierre Richelet in 1680 and another by Antoine Furetière in 1690. Claude Favre de Vaugelas's *Remarques sur la langue française* (1647) was a further indication of the prevalent desire for standardising the French language and it gives a useful insight into the spoken and written conventions of the time. (Howarth, 294)

The principles underlying the standardisation of the language became the very ideals of French classicism; purity of language and sentiment, discipline, refinement, decorum, regularity and balance were recognised as its characteristic qualities. The insistence upon these qualities was partly a reaction against baroque art. Mourgues defined the baroque sensibility as

poetry in which, although the problems of the age are reflected, the

perfect poise between intelligence and sensibility is either destroyed or not achieved or not attempted, with the result that the poet has a distorted vision of life, distorted through imagination and sensibility, without any apparent care for proportions or balance. (Mourgues, 1953, 74)

The description acts as a perfect foil to the classical ideals; proportion, balance, pure and precise expression had replaced distortion and imbalance. Most striking, however, is the resemblance of this baroque definition to T. S. Eliot's theory of the dissociation of sensibility which he presented in his essay on 'The Metaphysical Poets' (1921). Eliot described his Golden Age - the Metaphysical poets of sixteenth-century England - as the time when the intellect (thought) and emotion (sensibility) were in perfect balance. This equilibrium became disrupted in the seventeenth century by writers such as Milton and Dryden and a sentimental age began from which English poetry has never recovered. (T.S. Eliot, 1975, 64-5) The similarity may indicate Mourgues's likely familiarity with T. S. Eliot, but it could also suggest something about the function of a Golden Age in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It suggests that there are certain periods which are perceived as ideal and truer to a particular tradition, and that they act as standards by which to model the present. The periods which precede or follow these are seen as deviating from an ideal progression; seventeenth-century French art redressed the baroque imbalance just as seventeenth-century English poetry created one for Eliot. Similarly the desire to return to classical models in the 1890s was partly a reaction to the perceived imbalance created by the romantic era.

The qualities characteristic of seventeenth-century French literature were not only a reaction against baroque art, but were, in turn, due to a conscious adoption of ancient Greek ideals. This was particularly evident in the theatre, where subject matter, dramatic form and construction reflected Greek models. Racine's knowledge of the Greek tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides in both *Iphigénie* (1674) and *Phèdre* (1677) is unmistakable and the latter has been described as the epitome of French classicism:

Altogether, this play is the perfect example of that 'creative imitation' which was central to the theory of seventeenth-century classicism... and from the moment of Racine's creation onwards, *Phèdre* stands as a truly French masterpiece. (Howarth, 314)

The Greeks were not only a standard for the French; there was a strong sense that the French were heirs to the Greek classical tradition and that the Greek ideals were not merely assimilated, but that the process itself was somehow particularly French. The age of Louis XIV was seen as the modern continuation of the great civilisations of antiquity. The special nature of this era was recognised long before the late nineteenth century; as early as 1687 Charles Perrault wrote a poem entitled 'Le siècle de Louis le Grand' and Voltaire frequently referred to it as an Augustan age, most notably in his *Siècle de Louis XIV* (Benedetto, 130-1). The French Golden Age became not only the model of classicism, but of Frenchness too.

Although the age of Louis XIV was regarded as a special case, the ideals held by a nation are subject to the changing requirements of a particular time. The periodic flux between baroque, classical and romantic art is evidence of changing tastes and perceptions. It is perhaps only possible to pinpoint the values on which the arts are based at a particular historical moment. Thus the Golden Ages chosen by the late nineteenth-century French intelligentsia or by T. S. Eliot, recognising the value of the balance between intellect and expression, reveal as much about Golden Ages as the qualities perceived to be lacking in the present. Often the strength of the need outweighed the importance of historical accuracy. The creation of a Golden Age and of a national tradition had an aetiological function: to explain and give meaning and direction to the present. This was certainly the case in late nineteenth-century France.

By the 1890s, classicism was perceived as an integral part of Frenchness and André Gide was explicit on this point:

Classicism appears to me, at this stage, so much of a French invention, that I would easily make the two words synonymous: classical and

French, if romanticism, too, had not also managed to make itself French; at least it is in its classical art that the French genius has become most fully realised.⁶

Thus the glorification of seventeenth-century France was an admission that certain periods of artistic history were more French than others and that the compulsion of a particular age was to realign itself in order to be true to its heritage. This was the generally perceived, if less accurate, function of acknowledging a Golden Age. Out of this arises a sense of lineage and a responsibility to be true to an almost tangible line of descent called tradition. Jean Moréas, Landormy and Milhaud, for example, viewed the French tradition in this way - as a canon reaching back to the seventeenth century and including the names of those who they felt embodied these ideals. The functional nature of the canon is clear: each group, writer or musician constructed a line of descent that was convenient to them and in that way they could secure their own position within the French tradition.

By way of contrast, T. S. Eliot and Stravinsky believed that tradition was a fluid and changing canon; the present was constantly acting upon and transforming the past. This flexible notion of the present acting on the past is clear from Stravinsky's *Poétique musicale* (1942, 70) and Eliot's essay 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919, 38-9). In contrast with many French writers and musicians, including Milhaud, they showed greater acceptance of the changeability of the past and by so doing reveal their greater historical awareness.

There was a danger in viewing classicism as an innate part of the French make-up, especially at a time of national insecurity and resentment towards their German neighbour. It was convenient and attractive to view classicism as French because of the strong association of romanticism with the German literary and musical arts.

⁶ Le classicisme me paraît à ce point une invention française, que pour peu je ferais synonymes ces deux mots; classique et français, si le romantisme aussi n'avait su se faire français; du moins c'est dans son art classique que le génie de la France s'est le plus pleinement réalisé. (André Gide, 1924, 66-7)

There was a temptation to blame Germany when they began to tire of the prevalent style, although the artistic dominance of Germany had been considerable in France, as will be seen. It was primarily on account of the shared anti-German sentiment by France and Britain that the Entente Cordiale of 1904 was established between these two nations who traditionally had been suspicious of each other's foreign policy: they had found a common enemy.

The danger arose when the emphasis was placed upon inherent racial attributes; the notion of belonging to a tradition, not by adopting a particular style, or through great effort, but by virtue of one's nationality. There was a tendency among French writers and musicians to view tradition as inherited through nationality and this contrasts sharply with Eliot's opinion that tradition and one's place within it was something consciously attained through effort. (Eliot, 1975, 38)⁷ In addition, the focus of classical periods upon 'pureté' of style and language sometimes overlapped into a consideration of national purity or, at best, exclusivity. This budding chauvinism is apparent in the work of many writers and composers, including Barrès, Maurras, and, to some extent, Debussy and Milhaud.⁸ The insistence upon stylistic purity, in the name of classicism, enabled writers and composers to speak about a French art free from foreign influence, and in many cases it exposed their fear of a German-dominated art. Furthermore, the desire for a pure French art involved many contradictions because of the input other cultures had made throughout history to the melting-pot of French cultural life.

Moreover, the synonymy of classicism with excellence, perfection and nobility has encouraged chauvinistic interpretations. (Benedetto, 127 and Moreau, 1932, 1-22) It is easy to understand the attraction to a period in their national past which had been

⁷ This was understandable since T.S. Eliot left his native U.S.A. and strove to align himself with the European literary tradition.

⁸ There will be a more thorough examination of the effects of French classicism upon music in Part II of this chapter.

so described and the desire to buttress their own artistic endeavours by consciously aspiring to such goals of perfection and excellence. Yet it encouraged a sense of French artistic and national superiority. Henri Peyre, writer of several works on French classicism, reveals this when he says:

We have likewise modified, clarified or enlarged our conception of French classicism and, insofar as it was useful, of the 'eternal' classicism, of which French classicism is perhaps one of the most beautiful instances and the most pure amongst all of modern literatures.⁹

Although he admits that other nations have classical literary periods, French classicism is superior, second only to that of the ancients. Once more the purity of classicism and of French art is held up for praise; it is pure because it most closely resembles the ancients, and in following such a model, it remains self-contained and free from outside influences. It is possible that the sense of supremacy among French writers has led to a glorification of their tradition and explains why their literary and musical criticism is, on occasion, more appreciative than critical in a scholarly sense.

An understanding of the political climate and of French literary classicism is essential in placing the French musical tradition in its proper context. The desire for a French national identity grew out of a deep insecurity in French political and artistic life. By elevating a successful era in their past, and adopting the classical ideals of that period, French writers were able to regain a sense of belonging to and continuing an accepted tradition of greatness. At times this attempt revealed a chauvinistic side in their insistence upon a pure art free from foreign influence and in an over-inflated view of their national superiority. In comparison, it will be seen how French composers, like Milhaud, fashioned a musical identity for themselves, and that numerous contradictions were involved in promoting a self-contained French music.

⁹ Nous avons également modifié, précisé ou élargi notre conception du classicisme français et, dans la mesure où cela était utile, du classicisme 'éternel', dont le classicisme français est l'une des faces, la plus belle peut-être et la plus pure dans l'ensemble des littératures modernes. (Henri Peyre, 1942, 9)

II: The French Musical Tradition

The French musical scene was seriously affected by the political upheavals of the 1870s. In numerous musical writings of the time and after, the events of 1871 were described as a disaster¹⁰ which changed the course of French music. Gustave Bertrand described the effect of the defeat on the musical world:

This book was almost finished, a large part was even printed by the month of July 1870... How many literary studies and works of art [were] so brutally interrupted by the sudden thunderbolts of the national disaster, without respite and without mercy!¹¹

The impact was substantial enough to interrupt the publication of his book and demanded immediate attention; it was impossible to separate musical from political events. Yet the French were unwilling to capitulate and their political humiliation kindled a new sense of purpose, like a phoenix rising out of the ashes. Bertrand's reaction is one of the earliest to be published and to acknowledge a sense of inferiority to the Germans: 'If they have defeated us, it is because they are first in everything.'¹² Yet a strain of determined optimism emerges. Rather than catastrophes diminishing a nation's artistic capabilities, it is as a result of these that Renaissances occur, for example, in literature after the First Republic. In fact, he concludes on a hopeful and challenging note: 'Faith and Hope, even on the human level, are the most important virtues for regeneration, for salvation!'¹³ Bruneau, reporting on the state of French music well after the event (at the Commission organised for the 1900 Paris Exposition) made a similar claim: 'Following these disasters, a completely new

¹⁰ See Bruneau (1901) 95-6; Brenet (1913) 16; Masson (1913) 8.

¹¹ Ce livre était déjà presque terminé, même imprimé en grand partie au mois de juillet 1870... Combien de travaux littéraires et d'oeuvres d'art ainsi brutalement interrompus par les coups de foudre précipités, sans trêve et sans merci, du désastre national! (Bertrand, 1872, i)

¹² 'S'ils nous ont vaincus, c'est qu'ils sont les premiers des hommes en toutes choses.' (Bertrand, ii)

¹³ 'la Foi et l'Espérance sont, même dans l'ordre humain, les premières vertus de la régénération, du salut!' (xxxii)

generation arose'¹⁴ which he believed had been 'fortified by the symphony in which Berlioz had sown the good seed in a field which we will see expanding.'¹⁵

Furthermore, Paul-Marie Masson, introducing his report on contemporary French music in 1913, pinpointed 1870 as the beginning of contemporary music.

The beginning of the contemporary period of French musical art, this final date of 1870, as important in our political as in our artistic history, should be chosen in preference to all others.¹⁶

Clearly, there was a strong sense, at the time itself and retrospectively, that 1870-1 signified a new departure. In many respects the defeat represented an awaited opportunity for stock-taking; there had been a growing dissatisfaction with the state of French musical life from the mid-nineteenth century, in particular with the apparent domination of opera at the expense of instrumental music. In his *Mémoires*, Berlioz complained that 'the composer who would produce substantial works in Paris outside the theatre must rely entirely on himself'. Having deplored the sketchy performances, the lack of rehearsals, the concert halls, the expense of employing players, the tax collectors, shaky performance practice and insufficient number of times works are performed, he concludes, 'he must, in the last analysis, have a great deal of time and money to spend - not to mention the humiliating expense of will-power and spiritual energy required to overcome such obstacles.' (Berlioz, 1969, 469-70) Berlioz's complaints reflect his own considerable frustrations at the lack of acceptance of his works and the difficulties he had in securing performances, yet they reveal the very real and continuing difficulties faced by a French composer in his own country.

Charles Gounod, in his memoirs, expressed a similar view about the considered importance of the theatre in France, but without any bitterness:

¹⁴ 'Au lendemain de ces désastres, une génération très nouvelle se leva'. (Bruneau, 1901, 96)

¹⁵ 'fortifiée par la symphonie dont Berlioz avait semé la bonne graine dans le champ que nous verrons s'élargir.' (Bruneau, 1901,96)

¹⁶ Le début de la période contemporaine de l'art musical français, cette dernière date de 1870, aussi importante dans notre histoire politique que dans notre histoire artistique, devrait être choisie de préférence à toutes les autres. (Masson, 6)

There is really only one route for a composer to follow in making a name for himself, and that is the theatre. Religious and symphonic music certainly belong to a superior order to dramatic music, ideally speaking, but the occasions and the ways of making oneself known through it are exceptional and only reach an intermittent public, instead of a regular public like that of the theatre.¹⁷

Significantly, he considered symphonic and religious music superior to dramatic music, but the necessity to prove himself in opera appeared an exciting challenge:

What an open field for the fantasy, the imagination, for history. The theatre possesses me. I was almost 30 years old and I was impatient to try my strength on this new field of battle.¹⁸

In his *Harmonie et mélodie* (1885), Saint-Saëns wrote that before 1870

a French composer who had the audacity to venture on to the path of instrumental music had no other way of getting his works performed than putting on a concert himself and inviting his friends and critics there. As for the public, the real public, there was no need to think of it; the name of a composer, both French and living, printed on a poster had the effect of making everyone flee.¹⁹

Saint-Saëns's view is noteworthy because he was at the forefront of musicians who strove to redress this perceived imbalance in French musical life. Jeremy Cooper (1983) has taken issue with the views expressed by these musicians. His thesis sets out to prove that despite this perception, the performance of instrumental and chamber music did not begin in France in 1871 and that there was an already thriving outlet for instrumental music in the numerous concert series and societies. Joël-Marie

¹⁷ Pour un compositeur il n'y a guère qu'une route à suivre pour se faire un nom: c'est le théâtre. La musique religieuse et la symphonie sont assurément d'un ordre supérieur absolument parlant, à la musique dramatique; mais les occasions et les moyens de s'y faire connaître sont exceptionnels et ne s'adressent qu'à un public intermittent, au lieu d'un public régulier comme celui du théâtre. (Gounod, 1896, 175).

¹⁸ Quel champ ouvert à la fantaisie, à l'imagination, à l'histoire! Le théâtre me tenait. J'avais alors près de trente ans, et j'étais impatient d'essayer mes forces sur ce nouveau champ de bataille. (Gounod, 175-6)

¹⁹ un compositeur français qui avait l'audace de s'aventurer sur le terrain de la musique instrumentale n'avait d'autre moyen de faire exécuter ses oeuvres que de donner lui-même un concert et d'y convier ses amis et les critiques. Quant au public, au vrai public, il n'y fallait pas songer; le nom d'un compositeur, à la fois français et vivant imprimé sur un affiche avait le propriété de mettre tout le monde en fuite. (Saint-Saëns, 1885, 207) This passage also appears in his article 'La Société Nationale de musique', *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris*, 46 (October 1880) 318.

Fauquet's book *Les Sociétés de musique de chambre à Paris de la restauration à 1870* (1986) includes an exhaustive list of programmes for these concerts. Such studies are crucial in helping to construct a complete picture of concert life before 1871 and in bringing to light the discrepancies between the contemporary perception of events and retrospective statistical evidence. But the availability of the latter should not negate the value of the former: Berlioz, Gounod and Saint-Saëns were not wrong in expressing their views on the deplorable state of musical life in nineteenth-century France, they were simply presenting the case as they saw it from personal experience.

There were, indeed, numerous instrumental and chamber music societies that flourished after 1828, when the Société des concerts du Conservatoire was founded by François-Antoine Habeneck. Moreover, many of them set out consciously to perform new music. Habeneck was highly innovative in seeking to promote Beethoven's music in France as early as 1828²⁰, but with subsequent conductors such as Narcisse Girard (1797-1860), the Society continued to promote Beethoven even when he was the most frequently performed composer of instrumental music in France.²¹ The programmes of this Society and most of the others were almost exclusively dominated by Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Weber and Mendelssohn. In 1851 the Société des derniers quatuors de Beethoven was established to promote the little known and unappreciated late works of this illustrious composer, but in all of these Societies young French composers were virtually ignored.

One exception to this was the Société des Jeunes-Artistes (1853-61) founded by Jules Padeloup (in conjunction with Conservatoire students and graduates) for the

²⁰ Bruneau, in his report, highlights the regenerating and enriching effect which Habeneck's concerts of Beethoven's symphonic music had on French musical life in the first half of the nineteenth century (Bruneau, 1901,73-4).

²¹ For further discussion and information about the Société des concerts du Conservatoire, see J. Cooper, 21-37.

performance of recent orchestral and vocal works. Padeloup is said to have been motivated by the refusal of one Society's conductor even to play through one of his scherzos. (J. Cooper, 1983, 42) In addition to the German masters, 'Gounod's works rank second among major works and symphonies performed, and contemporary compositions by Alard, Lefébure-Wély, Gouvy and Schumann figure prominently in the repertory.' (Ibid., 44-5) Yet in 1861, the Société des Jeunes-Artistes evolved into the Concerts populaires (1861-84), which, rather than performing French and contemporary works, sought to encourage a more general, less elite audience to become familiar with the great masters.²² Although this was undoubtedly a worthwhile aim, it left French composers once more without a forum.

Saint-Saëns's and Gounod's statements touch upon some important issues. Saint-Saëns writes about the audacity of French composers wishing to venture into instrumental music: his tone is cynical and suggests that not only was instrumental music unpopular with the general theatre-going public, but that it was somehow regarded as beyond the reach of a French composer. Furthermore, Gounod reveals a hierarchy among genres; he seems to believe instinctively that instrumental and religious music are superior, and Saint-Saëns's commitment to promoting instrumental and chamber music implies a similar assumption. This debate between theatrical and what was described as 'pure' music became a crucial issue in French musical circles from 1870. Without doubt, instrumental music was associated in the minds of French musicians, and perhaps less consciously by the elite French concert-going public, with the Germanic tradition.²³ It might seem ironic, therefore, that in trying to regain

²² Saint-Saëns jibed that the Concerts populaires 'wrote at the top of their posters: Beethoven, Mozart, Weber, Mendelssohn, or something like that'. ('inscrivaient en tête de leur affiche: Beethoven, Mozart, Weber, Mendelssohn, ou quelque chose d'approchant'.) (Saint-Saëns, 1880, 318)

²³ The use of fugue and developmental techniques associated with the Germanic tradition became a test of respectability and technical expertise. For example, Saint-Saëns frequently used fugue in development sections as a sign of his technical mastery, as Mendelssohn had done before him. Such conspicuous emphasis on learned technique was associated with the academic tradition of Conservatoire teaching. Indeed, the first round of the Prix de Rome, involved the writing of a fugue. The most traditional composers, such as Saint-Saëns, accepted this emphasis on academic mastery, while the more creative composers objected (Debussy, who excelled at fugue, did not object to the

confidence as a musical nation, French composers should have looked to Germany.

There were several reasons for this, one of which was the growing disaffection with the Italian-dominated operatic scene. The cosmopolitan and open spirit, for which Paris had always been famous, was largely responsible for the success and domination of foreign composers, such as Rossini and Meyerbeer, and for favouring Italian models.²⁴ Even works by Frenchmen such as Massenet and Gounod did not eschew the appealing Italian lyricism. Wagner, as early as 1842, made some pertinent remarks about Parisian musical life in a letter to Schumann, which the latter published in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*:

It is the Italians who are chiefly to blame for debasing what was once the attractive French style of the *opéra-comique*: they are idolized and imitated unquestioningly. The couplets which were once so attractive have become a worthless and utterly tuneless clattering of three quavers to a bar, or else they imitate Italian sentimentalism. But Italian sentimentalism is a real calamity, since it misleads even honest people: all they are concerned about is the singers' execution ...
(Wagner, trans. S. Spencer, 1987, 89)

In his view, the Italian predilection for sentimentalism and virtuosity had obscured French music and tainted Parisian public taste. In a subsequent letter to Schumann in 1843 he spitefully equated 'Meyerbeerian' with 'Rossinian, Bellinian, Auberian, Spontinian' (Ibid. 105), and although he was using Meyerbeer as a scapegoat for his own lack of success in the capital, his words were not without substance.

Bertrand, writing thirty years later, lamented the complete domination of Italian opera, on the one hand, and German instrumental music on the other. The Théâtre

academic tradition early in his career and is something of an exception). The most notorious incident was the so-called 'Ravel affair' (1901-5) in which Théodore Dubois prevented Ravel from winning the Prix de Rome and in 1905, from entering the competition on account of his fugal writing, despite Ravel's undoubted compositional talent. This finally led to Dubois's resignation. Milhaud also liked to show his prowess by writing fugues, for example, in *Cinq études* (1920), *La création du monde* (1923) and *Esther de Carpentras* (1925-7).

²⁴ Between 1852 and 1870 only five new French works were included in the repertoire (M. Cooper, 1951, 10).

Lyrique, which had been founded for the development of French music, and the Concerts populaires had marginalised their own music. He continued:

These days our instrumental music is prey to German prejudice, just as our opera has been haunted for a long time with Italian prejudices. Under the pretext of instructing us, they try to wipe us out.²⁵

The sense of insecurity and inferiority is striking and understandable, because if opera is associated with Italy and instrumental music with Germany, what does that leave for France? - certainly not religious music, which had been dealt a blow with the secularising effect of the French Revolution, and although there had been some works on religious subjects by Berlioz, Massenet, Franck and others, this hardly amounted to a tradition.

There was a very important, psychological reason why the French chose to promote 'pure' music at this time. If Bertrand's perception of German superiority in all things was representative (however grudgingly it was admitted by some), and Gounod's belief lay in the natural superiority of instrumental music over that of the theatre,²⁶ then it seems understandable that in order to regain national and musical self-respect, it was necessary to equal the Germans on their own terms. This may seem inconsistent on the part of the French, but it explains the aims of the Société Nationale, which was founded in 1871 to promote both French and instrumental music.

This dual purpose of the Société Nationale became clearer with the years that followed. Bruneau linked the Renaissance in French music inextricably with the revival of instrumental and chamber music:

²⁵ Notre musique instrumentale est aujourd'hui en proie au préjugé allemand comme notre opéra fut longtemps obsédé du préjugé italien. Sous prétexte de nous instruire, on nous annule. (Bertrand, 1872, x)

²⁶ One must not forget that Bach was one of Gounod's self-proclaimed gods, the other being Palestrina (religious music had the same status, in his view) and that Mendelssohn and his sister Fanny had exerted a profound influence on the young composer.

The return to the symphony, which was caused, as I believe I have already indicated, by the social 'upheaval' of the war, very naturally brought about a French Renaissance in chamber music. No doubt, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, being Germans, retain an incontestable superiority in this domain of instrumental polyphony. But on our own soil, some men will add to the shared riches, augment the universal treasure of beauty and, I add, of brotherhood.²⁷

He then proceeds to list these French contributions by Alexis de Castillon, Bizet, Delibes, Gounod, Godard, Gouvy, Chausson, Reyer, Saint-Saëns, Dubois, Bourgault-Ducoudray and others. Bruneau acknowledges German supremacy in these genres, but recognises that French composers also have a contribution to make; he shows the same spirit of one-upmanship as Bertrand and appeals, momentarily, to a universal solidarity.

Paul-Marie Masson, writing with hindsight in 1913, describes an abrupt change in French musical preoccupations from 1870 and labels the period as 'the final arrival of pure music in France'.²⁸ He explains that French music has always been associated with words and continues:

This spiritual state, very apparent throughout all of the history of French music, seems to have been modified greatly during the last third of the nineteenth century. The French sensibility, at least that of the intellectual elite, was enriched by a more exclusively musical taste, by a more and more marked aptitude to sense the mysterious influences of pure music directly.²⁹

Although Masson feels unable to explain the reasons for this change, preferring to leave it to historians to interpret, the language he uses to describe this change, in

²⁷ Le retour à la symphonie, dont fut cause, je crois l'avoir indiqué, le bouleversement social de la guerre, détermina très naturellement une renaissance française de la musique de chambre. Sans doute, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven gardent-ils, eux Allemands, une suprématie incontestable en ce royaume de la polyphonie instrumentale. Mais, sur notre sol, des hommes ajoutèrent aux richesses communes, augmentèrent l'universel trésor de beauté et j'ajoute de fraternité. (Bruneau, 1901, 127)

²⁸ 'l'avènement définitif de la musique pure en France'. (Masson, 1913, 7)

²⁹ C'est état d'esprit, très apparent dans toute l'histoire de la musique française, semble bien s'être modifié pendant le dernier tiers du 19e siècle. La sensibilité française, du moins celle de l'élite intellectuelle, s'est enrichie d'un goût plus exclusivement musical, d'une aptitude de plus en plus marquée à sentir directement les nuances subtiles et les influences mystérieuses de la musique pure. (Ibid., 7)

particular the line 'enrichie d'un goût plus exclusivement musical', suggests that French music was then aspiring to a more elevated level.

The greatest enigma throughout this period was Berlioz. In his own time he had failed to fit into the Italian-dominated operatic scene, but by 1870 he was associated with the romanticism that had brought French music into crisis. Berlioz came to symbolise romanticism in French music and since romanticism was so much wrapped up with German musical and political might, he was regarded as a negative influence upon the French tradition and somehow not truly French. Landormy exposed this uncertainty about Berlioz in his article of 1904, focusing on the composer and whether or not he interrupted or continued the French tradition. But here, there is little agreement between d'Indy, Bruneau and Debussy. D'Indy rejects him both as a composer and as a Frenchman:

First of all, Berlioz does not seem to me to be primarily a musician; his genius is too literary. Moreover, he is scarcely French at all; see how easily the Germans adopted him! He is neither precise, nor concise. He is not concerned with form. ³⁰

D'Indy's judgement is particularly harsh with regard to Berlioz's musicianship. Debussy had insinuated something similar the previous year when he stated that Berlioz was always favoured by those who knew least about music. (Debussy, 1971, 165) His literary interests connected him in a negative way with literary romanticism. Nor was the attack on his Frenchness new: Cornelius and Hans von Bülow regarded Berlioz as more German than French (Macdonald, 1976, 293). It was true that, later in life, Berlioz looked to Germany for the performance of his works, having become increasingly disillusioned with the French musical establishment. But this charge was also motivated by a sense that Berlioz did not fit in to the norms of French musical life, or with the accepted characteristics of French musical style. For both d'Indy and Debussy he did not figure in the lineage of the French musical tradition. As Debussy

³⁰ D'abord Berlioz ne me semble pas être avant tout un musicien; c'est un génie trop littéraire. De plus, il est aussi peu Français que possible; voyez avec quelle facilité les Allemands l'ont adopté! Il n'est ni précis, ni concis. Il n'a pas le souci de la forme.' (Landormy, 1904, 395)

exclaimed: 'Berlioz est une exception, un monstre'. (Debussy, 272)

Bruneau's report seems to herald Berlioz's rehabilitation and that of romanticism in general (1901, 148).³¹ He was the first to present the view that Berlioz was the precursor of the rise of instrumental music in France (96). Such a perspective is central to Masson's report on French music of 1913, which purported to comment upon the developments of the previous forty years. Yet Masson ignores the ambivalence with which Berlioz was regarded at the end of the nineteenth century and links the renewal of both French musical life from 1871 and that of pure symphonic music with Berlioz's rehabilitation (Masson, 1913, 8-9). His approach reflects that of the myopic historian, who, eager to make connections with the past and to explain the present situation, rewrites the past, ignoring the inconsistencies. By 1913, romanticism could be viewed much more favourably and Berlioz - as the epitome of French romanticism - could be reinstated. In short, he could, with hindsight, be seen as the precursor of the French symphonic tradition.³²

Other attempts were made to explain the move towards instrumental music by historical argument. Gaston Carraud deals directly with the issue in his article 'La musique symphonique', also of 1913.

No doubt a symphonic art could have grown from that of Rameau, but Rameau's influence was forced to give way too soon to that of the Encyclopaedists, the 'Bouffons' and Gluck, and for a century, dramatic expression became exclusively ours.³³

Carraud looks to the past in order to explain the present (or recent past) and is less concerned with historical accuracy than with speculation. Rameau was a positive

³¹ Romain Rolland confirms this rehabilitation in 1908, identifying Berlioz as representing one of the two sides of the French spirit. The other side is represented by Debussy. (Rolland, 1908, 206)

³² This change in perspective will be further emphasised by Milhaud's easy acceptance of Berlioz and of romanticism in general.

³³ Un art symphonique aurait sans doute pu naître de l'art de Rameau: mais l'influence de Rameau a dû céder trop vite devant celle des Encyclopédistes, des Bouffons et de Gluck et pour un siècle, le point de vue dramatique est devenu exclusivement le nôtre. (Carraud, 1913, 77)

symbol and therefore many things could be attributed to him - even a symphonic tradition. Deviations from this line of descent are explained as interruptions, and the period from the French Revolution (with the Encyclopaedists, the Bouffons and Gluck) to the Franco-Prussian defeat was that deviation. These views expressed by Carraud were representative of many writings and attitudes throughout the period which lasted until the 1920s and Milhaud's generation.

Although the Société Nationale was at first primarily concerned with contemporary French music and promoted the works of the younger generation such as Bizet, Lalo, Duparc, Chausson and Bruneau (in addition to established composers such as Franck, Saint-Saëns and d'Indy), its motto 'Ars Gallica' signalled a wider commitment to French music. The Society's bulletin, published each year, declared its patriotic and artistic aims:

It has given to the young the title of masters, to the masters the easy consecration of fame, sometimes arduously acquired, and to all the most potent encouragement to work; finally, it has demonstrated the existence, for so long unrecognized, of a great French musical Art.³⁴

Thus one of the aims in promoting contemporary French music was to prove the existence of a French musical tradition.

An early manifestation of France's concern with the past can be seen in the creation of a chair of music history at the Paris Conservatoire in 1871. According to René Dumesnil, Barbereau was the first appointment, but he resigned the following year and was replaced by Gautier. He, in turn, was succeeded by Bourgault-Ducoudray in 1878. (Dumesnil, 1925, 184) Bourgault-Ducoudray's contributions to music history and ethnomusicology with his studies of Greek and Russian music were of extreme importance for the education of musicians in France for several generations. Maurice

³⁴ Elle a donné aux jeunes l'appui des maîtres, aux maîtres la consécration facile d'une renommée parfois durement acquise, et à tous le plus puissant encouragement au travail; elle a enfin démontré l'existence, trop longtemps méconnue, d'un grand Art musical français. (The *Société Nationale de Musique*, 1882, 1)

Emmanuel succeeded him in 1909, the year Milhaud entered the Conservatoire.

Musical scholarship in France had been sporadic and isolated during the nineteenth century. In his article 'La musicologie', Michel Brenet cites various studies and treatises in the earlier part of the century.³⁵ It would be an exaggeration to suggest that there was no musicological activity at all, just as it is incorrect to ignore the various concert societies before 1871. Yet there was a significant upsurge of interest in music history after this date, as Brenet indicates:

After the terrible year... the constituent elements of musical art and the linking of these transformations in the past and the present drew the attention of men of letters, and musicology gradually claimed a place in the history of civilisation and national traditions, in the publications of pure and applied science and in public teaching.³⁶

In 1873 a new revue, *La chronique musicale*, appeared, and over the next few years there was an increasing availability of information on the musical contents of the Archives Nationales, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra, thanks to publications such as the *Catalogue de la bibliothèque de l'Opéra* (1878) by Théodore de Lajarte. An interest in Gregorian music was noticeable from the 1880s with studies such as *Les mélodies grégoriennes* by Dom Pothier, the first edition of the *Liber gradualis* (1883) and the *Paléographie musicale*, which began in 1889 and brought about, in Brenet's words, 'the renewal of Gregorian studies and the reform of liturgical chant'.³⁷

³⁵ The most significant studies were carried out by Edmond De Coussemaker (1805-1876) on the music of the middle ages, A. J. H. Vincent (1797-1868) on the music of antiquity and various articles on Catholic religious vocal music by Th. Nisard (1812-1887), de Raillard (1804-1887) and d'Ortigue (1802-1866). (Brenet, in Masson ed., 1913, 16)

³⁶ Au sortir de l'année terrible, ... les phénomènes constitutifs de l'art musical, et l'enchaînement de ses transformations dans le passé et le présent, attirèrent l'attention des hommes d'étude, et la musicologie vint peu à peu revendiquer une place dans l'histoire de la civilisation et des traditions nationales, dans les publications de science pure et appliquée, et dans l'enseignement public. (Brenet, 17)

³⁷ 'la rénovation des études grégoriennes et la réforme du chant liturgique'. (Ibid., 17)

The 1890s saw the most significant developments, one of which was the inclusion of music scholarship as a doctoral subject by the University of Paris: a clear sign of its recognition as an academic discipline. The first thesis, by Jules Combarieu, *Les rapports de la poésie et de la musique*, appeared in 1893 (Brenet, 18), one year before the founding of the Schola Cantorum.³⁸ The other theses to appear over the following years reinforce the prevalent climate of musical interest in Greek antiquity and in music of the past.³⁹ Another manifestation of this spirit was the publication of Henry Expert's series of editions, *Les maîtres musiciens de la Renaissance française*, which began in 1895 with the facsimile of Claude Goudimel's *150 Psaumes* (1580). Expert's appeal to scholarship is evident from the inscription on the title page: 'Based on the most authentic manuscripts and the best printed material of the 16th century, with variants, historical and critical notes, and modern transcription and notation...'⁴⁰ Subsequent facsimile editions by Expert included works by Guillaume Costeley (1896) and Clement Jannequin (1898). In addition, he supervised the publication of a series entitled *Chansons mondaines des XIIIe et XVIIIe siècles français* and produced numerous other publications.⁴¹ His contribution to both French music of the past and musical scholarship is undeniable.

³⁸ Charles Paul, in *The Musical Quarterly*, 1972, 55-6, suggests that it was as a result of the teaching at the Schola, by d'Indy in particular, that the University of Paris introduced music history. These developments were clearly concurrent rather than one being a direct result of the other. D'Indy's teaching may well have increased the profile of music history at a later date, but the University introduced the doctorate in music before the formation of the Schola Cantorum.

³⁹ The theses include such celebrated names as Romain Rolland, *Histoire de l'opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti* (1895), Maurice Emmanuel, *La danse grecque antique* (1896), Louis Laloy, *Aristoxène et la musique de l'antiquité* (1904), Jules Ecorcheville, *L'esthétique musicale, de Lully à Rameau* (1906), André Pirro, *L'esthétique de Bach* (1907) and Charles Lalo, *Esquisse d'une esthétique musicale scientifique* (1908). (Brenet, 18, Rolland, 1908, 259-60 and Paul, 1972, 56. There are some minor variants in the exact wording of the titles.)

⁴⁰ 'Basé sur les manuscrits les plus authentiques et les meilleurs imprimés du XVIe siècle, avec variantes, notes historiques et critiques, transcriptions et notation moderne ...' (Expert, 1895, i)

⁴¹ These publications include: *Anthologie chorale des maîtres musiciens de la Renaissance française, Corpus de l'art musical franco-flamand des XVe et XVIe siècles* (1905); *Les classiques du protestantisme français XVIe, XVIIe, et XVIIIe siècles* (1902); and *Répertoire classique de musique religieuse et spirituelle*.

In the same year the first volume of the complete Rameau edition was published by Durand, under the direction of Saint-Saëns. This important project amounted to seventeen volumes which appeared more or less annually until 1913 and some of the most famous names in French music were involved as editors. Saint-Saëns was responsible for the first five volumes, which notably began with Rameau's instrumental works.⁴² Perhaps it is not surprising that Saint-Saëns was most interested in editing Rameau's 'pure' music first and leaving the operas until last and to others; d'Indy edited three volumes, Paul Dukas and Alexandre Guilmant two, and various musicians, notably Claude Debussy in 1908, one volume.⁴³ Although the standard of authenticity seems not to have been a pressing issue - being principally a view of Rameau from a late nineteenth-century perspective - its importance lies in being the first major revival of interest in a seventeenth-century French composer. The position of Rameau for composers of this generation onwards cannot be overestimated; he became for French composers their musical ancestor and figurehead. As Debussy put it:

Rameau, whether one likes it or not, is one of the surest musical foundations, and one can follow in the beautiful route he has traced without fear, despite the barbarous trampling downs, the errors in which one mires him.⁴⁴

Those perhaps most responsible for this elevation of Rameau were Vincent d'Indy,

⁴² These comprised the *Pièces pour clavecin* (vol.1, 1895), *Musique instrumentale, pièces pour clavecin en concerts, six concerts en sextour* (vol.2, 1896), *Cantatas* (vol.3, 1897) and *Motets* (vols. 4-5, 1898-9).

⁴³ The dramatic works appeared in the following volumes: vol. 6: *Hippolyte et Aricie* ed. Vincent d'Indy, 1900; vol. 7: *Les indes galantes*, ed. Paul Dukas, 1902; vol.8: *Castor et Pollux*, ed. Auguste Chapins, 1903; vol.9: *Les fêtes d'Hébé*, ed. Alexandre Guilmant, 1904; vol.10: *Dardanus*, tragedie lyrique, ed. Vincent d'Indy, 1905; vol.11: *La Princesse de Navarre, Les fêtes de Ramure, Nélée et Nyrrhis, Zéphyre*, ed. Paul Dukas, 1906; vol.12: *Platée*, ed. Georges Marty, 1907; vol.13: *Les fêtes de Polymnie*, ed. Claude Debussy, 1908; vol.14: *Le temple de la gloire*, ed. Alexandre Guilmant, 1909; vol.15: *Les fêtes de l'hymen et de l'amour, ou Les dieux d'Egypte*, ed. Reynaldo Hahn, 1910; vol. 16: *Zaïs*, ed. Vincent d'Indy, 1911; vol.17: *Pygmalion, Les surprises de l'amour, Anacréon, Les sybarites*, ed. Henri Büsser, 1913.

⁴⁴ Rameau, qu'on le veuille ou non, est une des bases les plus certaines de la musique, et l'on peut sans crainte marcher dans le beau chemin qu'il traça, malgré les piétinements barbares, les erreurs dont on l'embourbe. (Debussy, 1971, 207)

Charles Bordes and the Schola Cantorum.

Dumesnil maintained that:

The most important event in the history of musical teaching in France over the last fifty years is certainly the foundation of the Schola Cantorum.⁴⁵

In 1894, it represented a crystallisation of numerous musical activities. Its three founders, Vincent d'Indy, Charles Bordes and Alexandre Guilmant, were already actively involved in the renewal of French musical life. Vincent d'Indy was an important member of the Société Nationale and Charles Bordes had been making a substantial contribution to the revival of early religious music as choirmaster of Saint-Gervais from 1890. In 1892 Bordes founded the Société des Chanteurs de Saint-Gervais who, during 1892-4, performed Palestrina's *Stabat mater* and *Missa brevis*, *Misereres* by Allegri and Josquin des Prés, Orlando di Lasso's *Regina Coeli*, Vittoria's *Passion* and Lotti's *Crucifixus*. According to Dumesnil, these were 'works which, on the whole, had never been heard in Paris. It was an enormous success.'⁴⁶ Guilmant was a renowned organist and a teacher at the Conservatoire. Through his performances of Bach, he promoted a tradition of organ performance practice which he had learnt from his teacher, the Belgian organist Nicolas Lemmens (Paul, 1972, 54). The Schola began as an educational outgrowth of the Société des Chanteurs de Saint-Gervais, but despite its religious bias, secular music (Rameau and Monteverdi, in particular) was not ignored 'as long as it antedated 1789 and postdated 1870'. (Paul, 54) D'Indy shared the common view that the nineteenth century was responsible for the loss of morale in French music and that it was through knowledge and appreciation of the great works of the past that French music would thrive once more.

⁴⁵ L'événement le plus important dans l'histoire de l'enseignement musical en France au cours des cinquante dernières années est certainement la fondation de la Schola Cantorum. (Dumesnil, 1925, 212).

⁴⁶ 'oeuvres qui, pour la plupart, n'avaient encore jamais été entendues à Paris. Le succès fut énorme.' (Ibid., 212)

In 1903, Debussy praised the Schola Cantorum's performance of Rameau's *Castor et Pollux* and its efforts in general. This was the first time that his views on Rameau and his importance for French music had appeared in print, but it was a topic to which he was to return many times. It is probable that Debussy was exposed to Rameau through both the Schola and Saint-Saëns's edition: by 1903 eight volumes had appeared, the last of which was none other than the opera *Castor et Pollux*. The Schola Cantorum was a symbol of many musical developments of its time. As an educational institution, it was crucial in focusing the minds of established musicians such as Debussy, and the younger generation of composers who studied there, upon the musical past. It contributed greatly to the strong sense of a specifically French inheritance that emerged around the turn of the century.

D'Indy was an enigmatic figure. Underlying his aims of promoting music of the past and Catholic religious music were deep-rooted prejudices. His intolerant Catholicism, anti-Semitic views, interest in Wagner and selective chauvinism confused his ideals of forging a French musical tradition. The Schola provided a partial outlet for his dogmatic nature and accounts describe it as 'a monastery of which he was the Father Superior, his role that of a "musical Savonarola, castigating superficiality and complacency in the name of Franck.'" (M. Cooper, 3⁴⁷) The Preface to his *Cours de composition* (1903) reads like a profession of musical and religious faith. D'Indy was a fervent supporter of Wagner and Wagner's views on the state of French music. In 1879, in an interview with the journalist Louis Fourcaud, Wagner blamed Jews such as Meyerbeer for spoiling the Paris performance of *Tannhäuser* in 1861 and suggested that Judeo-Italian opera had diverted French music from its true course. D'Indy made his first pilgrimage to Bayreuth in 1876 and was presented to Wagner by Franz Liszt in 1882, where he heard these opinions from the composer himself. All

⁴⁷ For a contemporary viewpoint see Louis Borgex, *Vincent d'Indy: sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1913) and André Coeuroy, *La musique française moderne*. (Paris, 1924)

this had a lasting effect on him and, according to Paul, 'determined the direction d'Indy's life was hereafter to take' (51-2). There is little doubt as to the origin of d'Indy's views on the negative influence of Italian and Jewish music in the nineteenth century. In his book *Richard Wagner* (1930) he writes of three onslaughts by the Italians on French music: the first by Pergolesi and the opera buffa, the second by Piccinni, set up by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the third by Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti and their imitators 'who greatly contributed to the debasement and bastardisation of our musical drama'⁴⁸

More serious, however, was the damage inflicted on French music by the Jews. In 1930 d'Indy argued that it was unnatural for Jews to write dramatic music and that there had been only one name, Salomon Rossi, in the history of French music before the nineteenth century. The reason was straightforward: 'We are not speaking of religion, but of race. The Hebrew race, otherwise endowed with serious qualities, has never at any time been creative in art.'⁴⁹ Jews were capable only of imitations. After backing his own arguments by reference to Wagner's *Le judaïsme dans la musique* (1868), he concludes: 'We are therefore forced to consider the Jewish period in musical art as being the most completely impotent in terms of production.'⁵⁰ Although he was writing one generation later, d'Indy's views had changed very little on this subject from the 1890s when he was a supporter, although not actually a member, of the Action Française and a fervent anti-Dreyfusard. (Paul, 54; Macdonald, 288) In these respects he had more in common with literary figures like Moréas and Maurras than with other composers such as Debussy and Bruneau, who both supported Dreyfus.

⁴⁸ 'qui contribua puissamment à la décadence et à l'abâtardissement de notre drame musical' (10-11).

⁴⁹ 'Il ne s'agit pas ici de religion, mais de race. La race hébraïque, douée, d'autre part, de sérieuses qualités, n'a jamais et en aucun temps été créatrice en art'. (13)

⁵⁰ 'Nous sommes donc forcés de regarder la période du judaïsme, dans l'art musical, comme celle de la plus complète impuissance dans l'ordre de la production.'(13)

Not only did d'Indy adopt Wagner's beliefs on French music, he went further to suggest that Wagner's influence on French music had been a positive one:

This indisputable progress, has been due, I must repeat, to Wagnerian influence without any servile imitation, but on the contrary, it has revealed the force and vitality of the French spirit.⁵¹

In his view, the French imitations of Wagnerian music dramas by composers such as Reyer, Lalo, Chabrier and Chausson had been beneficial to French music, in the same way as the rise of instrumental music, which he admitted was a new departure launched by César Franck, had raised French music out of the depths of decadence.⁽⁸⁷⁾ One wonders at d'Indy's motivation: he was not consistently nationalistic, indeed, he appears more open to other musical influences than Debussy by his acceptance of early Italian church music, Bach, Gluck, Weber and Wagner. Either his prejudices were so strong that French Wagnerian imitations were preferable to the Jewish and Italian music he so ardently disliked, or he really believed German art to be superior. Thus, French art would benefit from German models in drama and from imitating an essentially German instrumental tradition. What is certain is that his inconsistent yet ardent beliefs were his ultimate driving force.

It is important not to underestimate the overpowering influence of Wagner on the French. His personality, ideas and music were regarded with anything but indifference. In the 1870s his music was virtually banned because of his untactful remarks about the German victory in 1871. Yet this ban was short-lived and by the 1880s literary and musical Wagnerism were rife. The *Revue Wagnerienne* was founded in 1885 by Edouard Dujardin and purported to explain Wagner's dramatic theories. Moreover, during the next two decades all of Wagner's major stage works (excluding *Parsifal*, which was restricted to Bayreuth) were performed in France (Messing, 1988, 3). Composers like Lalo, Chabrier and Reyer came under the spell of his magnetic influence and their operas abound with echoes of Wagnerian harmony,

⁵¹ Cet incontestable progrès, dû, il faut le répéter, à l'influence wagnérienne sans présenter aucune servile imitation, mais accusant au contraire la force et la vitalité de l'esprit français.⁽⁶⁵⁾

orchestration, leitmotifs and mythological subject-matter. In addition, Bizet's Germanic period in the 1860s deflected him from his true course. The Italian hegemony had merely given way to a more consuming German domination that was difficult to resist. For nearly two decades Wagnerism seriously undermined the attempts to establish a French musical identity.

Certain composers recognised Wagner's ambivalent effect on French music. As early as 1885 Max d'Ollone (then aged ten) is said to have told Gounod that his favourite composer was Wagner, to which Gounod responded, as Milhaud recounts:

There are such poisons which float in the air, he cried with vehemence, which belong to a destiny contrary to the French race which wants even its children to be entranced by this magician... He is a great musician, a man of genius, but he must have been sent on the earth to destroy French music and French thought.⁵²

Gounod seems to have had a strong sense of the dangers of Wagnerism for the French. His description of Wagner as a 'poison' and as a 'magician' is vivid, and he has a clear sense of the qualities compatible with the French race. Such statements recur with increasing regularity in the writings of Debussy, Satie and Milhaud. Gounod's tone suggests a sense of persecution: that Wagner has the strength to undo all sincere efforts to develop a genuinely French musical tradition.

Bruneau's opinion on the influence of Wagner was more ambivalent. He believed that foreign influence, in particular that of Wagner, could have an innovating effect on French music:

I sincerely believe that we have retained and will retain a national character. We will get out of the Wagnerian torment not only safe and sound but, even better, regenerated, liberated, armed for the future. The influence of the German master, an influence which has had a

⁵² Il y a donc des poisons qui flottent dans l'air, s'écrie-t-il avec véhémence, il y a donc un destin contraire à la race française qui veut que les enfants mêmes soient ensorcelés par ce magicien ... c'est un grand musicien, un homme de génie, mais il a dû être envoyé sur terre pour détruire la musique française, la pensée française. (Darius Milhaud, unpublished, 1934, 6)

universal effect, has not impressed itself on any people as much as on our own ... The fundamental national element in German art is not compatible with the fundamental national element in our own art.⁵³

This statement is very similar to one of Milhaud's concerning the effect of jazz on French music: its influence was like a beneficial storm which cleared the air and then subsided. (Milhaud, 1927, 22) Bruneau describes the Wagnerian influence as a turmoil from which French music emerged healthier and more true to itself. His reverence for the 'master' is undoubted, but there is a certain pride; no matter what storm ravages French music, it can remain intact. This pride is indicative of a new confidence in the French national character from the turn of the century onwards. Jean-Aubry, writing in 1916, had other reasons not to fear foreign influence: 'our spirit is rich enough not to fear these influences, but to assimilate them'.⁵⁴ He felt that the French musical identity was strong enough not to hide from foreign influence, but to benefit from it.

In contrast to Bruneau, Debussy was unequivocal about Wagner. His statements were numerous and frequently fierce. Although he admired d'Indy's efforts to revive Rameau, he blamed both Gluck and Wagner for diverting French music from its true path.⁵⁵ Rather than following Wagner's influence, French musicians should regard Rameau and his successors as models of the true French spirit. In his view, Wagner substantially contributed to the elevation of symphonic writing, which had penetrated both instrumental and operatic composition in France. (Debussy, 1971, 240-1)

Developmental techniques had become synonymous with the attempts to establish an instrumental tradition and to escape from the Italian operatic influence, because the

⁵³ Le caractère national, nous l'avons donc gardé et nous le garderons, j'en ai la conviction. De la tourmente wagnérienne nous sortirons non seulement sains et saufs, mais, mieux encore, régénérés, libérés, armés pour l'avenir. L'influence du maître allemand, influence dont l'effet a été universel, n'a pesé sur aucun peuple autant que sur le nôtre ... Ce qu'il y a d'essentiellement national dans l'art allemand ne peut s'accorder avec ce qu'il y a d'essentiellement national dans notre art. (145-6)

⁵⁴ 'notre esprit est assez riche pour ne pas craindre les influences et pour les assimiler'. (Jean-Aubry, 1916, 15)

⁵⁵ Debussy continually made references to the French tradition as a path, from which it was essential not to deviate. See 1971, 89, 100, 206 and 207. Milhaud also used this image.

models presented by composers such as Beethoven, Strauss and Wagner had proved too overwhelming. His contemporaries were mistaken in adhering to these 'symphonic practices' (*moeurs symphoniques*) which he regarded as unacceptable for his race.

(241)

Debussy's preoccupation with Wagner reveals his own ambivalence concerning this powerfully influential figure. In the *Cinq poèmes de Baudelaire* (1888) he composed much of Wagner's immediate influence out of his system.⁵⁶ Yet Wagner crept into his works when it served his purpose or when he was pressed for time, most notably in the interludes to *Pelléas* which he expanded at short notice during the rehearsals for the opera. In a letter to Chausson (2 October 1893) he wrote about eliminating Klingsor's ghost which had surreptitiously appeared in his score. (Debussy, 1987, 54) He was all too aware of Wagner's overpowering effect. Although Debussy's writings became increasingly chauvinistic from 1908 through the war years, his criticism about the direction of French instrumental music was accurate. French composers were unable to free themselves from the German ideals of symphonic development and classical form, and in his own works, such as *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* and *Trois nocturnes*, he attempted to forge an instrumental tradition that was not dependent upon Austro-German ideals. It is undoubtedly on account of this individuality, as well as his frequent statements about the French tradition and what it represented, that almost instantly he became a model of Frenchness for subsequent generations. Although he was less involved in the French musical establishment than Saint-Saëns, d'Indy and Bruneau, his impact as a composer was more profound. He responded to the desire to strengthen French musical identity, not simply by perfecting established German traditions, but by breaking with them and forging something that could be identified as distinctly French.

⁵⁶ Milhaud's composition of *La création du monde* (1923) served a similar purpose with regard to jazz.

Debussy's own view of the contribution of composers such as Bruneau is revealing.

In a letter to Pierre Louÿs (9 March 1897), he commented upon Bruneau's *Messidor*:

How can you see such ugly people as Zola and Bruneau producing anything that's more than mediocre? Have you seen also the deplorable use they make in their two articles of patriotism, a jolly good excuse for saying "It may be bad, but at least it's French!" (Debussy, 1987, 90)⁵⁷

Although Debussy was being characteristically scathing, he makes the point that it was not necessarily those who were most active in promoting a French music who were able to achieve it themselves. Debussy described the majority of such composers as 'miserable hacks'. (91)

In spite of the clarity of his musical insight into the state of French music, Debussy can be compared to d'Indy in placing race at the centre of discussions about tradition, even if his conclusions were very different. Wagner was inappropriate as a model for French composers precisely because he was German and those who elevated Franck were mistaken because he was Belgian, as he explained:

Oh, César Franck is not French, he is Belgian... César Franck's effect on French composers boils down to almost nothing; he has taught them certain writing procedures, but their inspiration has no relation to his.⁵⁸

In his view and contrary to that of Berlioz, Gluck had disrupted French music from its true path because he was a German and was therefore unable to comprehend the nuances of French prosody. (Debussy, 1971, 99) His discrimination against composers on account of their nationality was not so very different from d'Indy's prejudice against Jewish composers; both had a notion of the fundamental purity of the French tradition. It was this underlying belief in racial purity that led the Germans to regard themselves as the master race in the 1930s.

⁵⁷ The articles he refers to were published in *Le Figaro* on 20 February, 1897.

⁵⁸ Oh! César Franck n'est pas français, il est belge... L'action de César Franck sur les compositeurs français se réduit à peu de chose; il leur a enseigné certains procédés d'écriture, mais leur inspiration n'a aucun rapport avec la sienne. (Debussy, 1971, 273).

This emphasis upon purity was the result of an increasing preoccupation with national inheritance in France from the beginning of the twentieth century. The terminology used in literary circles to define the qualities supposedly inherent in the French genius had quickly become established in musical circles. Bruneau's report of 1901 reads like a profession of faith:

It is the French tradition, derived from qualities inherent in our race: a sense of proportion, clarity, inner feeling, heart, freedom and daring, a tradition which will be the resting place, over the centuries, of real innovators and which nothing will ever destroy.⁵⁹

This confidence is matched by Debussy's answer in 1904 to Landormy's searching question about the state of French music:

French music... is clarity, elegance, and simple and natural declamation; above all, French music wants to please - Couperin and Rameau are the ones who are truly French!⁶⁰

Bruneau and Debussy were at the forefront of musical opinion and thus anticipated general musical trends; Bruneau, after all, was publicly exhibiting the recent achievements of French music at the start of a new century. Landormy's article on 'L'état actuel de la musique française' (1904) is perhaps more representative in revealing the uncertainties which still existed about the precise nature of the French musical tradition and its actual line of succession from Rameau to the present. Although he asks if a tradition really exists, there is little doubt in his own mind and those he interviews that it is something real and tangible.

This new-found confidence is far removed from the mixture of vague hope and desperation apparent in Bertrand in 1871:

⁵⁹ C'est la tradition française, faite des qualités inhérentes à notre race: la mesure, la clarté, l'esprit, le coeur, la franchise et l'audace, tradition qui sera, à travers les siècles, le point d'appui des véritables novateurs et que nul n'arrivera jamais à abolir. (Bruneau, 30)

⁶⁰ La musique française... c'est la clarté, l'élégance, la déclamation simple et naturelle; la musique française veut avant tout, faire plaisir - Couperin, Rameau voilà de vrais Français! (Debussy, 1971, 272)

One is inclined to believe that this luminous, light and smiling genius, which was French civilisation, has not lost all its reasons for existence... if the seeds are sown immediately, it is only a little later that one must gather the harvest. Let us hope that it will not be too late for the consolation and comfort of France.⁶¹

His hope stems from a fundamental belief in the potential of the French nation and culture. He expresses desperation, at the realisation of the pitiful state into which the present had fallen, and uncertainty, as to whether it was too late to regain greatness. The task presented to musicians after 1870 was to make that hope a reality and it was precisely by focusing upon the past that France began to regain its confidence.

Jean-Aubry, reflecting in 1916 upon the state of French music in the midst of the next political upheaval - the First World War - recognised the effort made by the intervening two generations to secure an identity:

Since 1870, two generations, by their compositions, their critical writings, by the organisation of groups, have succeeded in bringing today's French music not only to a point which it has not known for more than a hundred years, but where it can rival the music from every era.⁶²

Not only have these composers succeeded and realised Bertrand's hopes, but, in his view, French music is better off than ever: 'At no time has France ever known a present more sumptuous or richer with new promise.'⁶³ His confidence is more explicit than that expressed by Masson and Brenet in 1913. In Jean-Aubry's view, the Golden Age idealised in the seventeenth century has become a reality in the present. He was writing in the midst of war against Germany: the historical and cultural

⁶¹ Il est à croire que ce génie lumineux, facile et riant, qui fut la civilisation française, n'a pas perdu toutes ses raisons d'être ... si les germes en sont aussitôt semés, ce n'est qu'un peu plus tard que doit lever la moisson. Espérons qu'elle ne tardera pas trop pour la consolation et la reconfort de la France. (Bertrand, 1871, xix-xx)

⁶² Depuis 1870, deux générations, par des oeuvres, par des travaux critiques, par l'organisation de groupements, ont réussi à porter la musique française d'aujourd'hui non seulement à un point qu'elle n'avait pas connu depuis plus de cent années, mais d'où elle peut se mesurer avec la musique de tous les temps. (Jean-Aubry, 1916, 7)

⁶³ 'A aucune époque la France n'a connu un présent plus somptueux ni plus riche de nouvelles promesses.'(13)

conflict between France and Germany had been magnified onto a world level. Yet his clear historical sense and musical judgement prevent him from deteriorating into propaganda. He draws analogies between political and musical events just as Bertrand had done in 1871. Although a political victory would be desirable, he is certain of France's musical victory:

The musical victory of the France of today over the Germany of today is a reality of which we have not reaped all the benefit. Our actions should take advantage of it; it cannot be implemented with all its force while preserving, with the respect of the great musical Germany of yesterday, the open-mindedness and curiosity necessary to renew the greater France of tomorrow.⁶⁴

Such a proclamation of French musical victory over German musical decadence highlights the change in attitude over forty years when placed alongside Bertrand's earlier statements (see pp. 11, 17 and 34). Jean-Aubry was concerned not merely with the French past and present, but was particularly interested in promoting the music of the younger generation of composers - Milhaud's generation - which he felt had inherited a secure tradition in its prime. It is within this context of newly regained musical strength that Milhaud compositions and writings should be placed.

Paul Masson touches upon an important explanation for this increased confidence. He describes the forty years, from 1870, as an era which had seen various new developments, most notably in the rise of instrumental music. This was in response to the desire to 'express French feelings in a French style'.⁶⁵ In his view, this was most fully achieved by recent compositions that freed French music from Wagner, most

⁶⁴ La victoire musicale de la France d'aujourd'hui sur l'Allemagne d'aujourd'hui est une réalité dont nous n'avons pas tiré tous les bénéfices; il faut que notre activité s'y emploie; elle ne peut s'y appliquer avec toute sa force qu'en conservant, avec le respect de la grande Allemagne musicale d'hier, l'ouverture d'esprit et la curiosité nécessaires à renouveler la plus grande France de demain.(16)

Jean-Aubry cites Romain Rolland, who, despite his avowed preference for German music, had declared in 1905 that 'L'art français, silencieusement, est en train de prendre la place de l'art allemand'. (Jean-Aubry, 1916, 1)

⁶⁵ 'exprimer des sentiments français dans un style français'. (Masson, 1913, 8)

notably Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*:

which represents a completely new form of art, extremely musical and as far removed as possible from Wagnerian drama. Since then, this nationalist movement has only emphasised itself, affirming by its opposition to the frantic and furious art of Wagner our French qualities of measure and clarity.⁶⁶

At last there was a perception that the desire to find a French mode of expression had been realised, despite the subsequent complications of Wagner's posthumous legacy.

A consideration of the chronology of events can be misleading: Jean-Aubry was aware of the different, but coexisting generations of composers. D'Indy, for example, lived until 1931 and yet his views, if anything, became more entrenched. Debussy's profound reaction to the First World War reflected, in great measure, his own failing strength and growing helplessness and his recognition of a younger rising star replacing his own, namely Stravinsky. D'Indy and Debussy retained the vision of the older generation, despite the changing historical and musical circumstances. One striking example is their rejection of the period from the French revolution until 1870 for having led French music astray, long after the younger generation of composers had begun to accept the immediate romantic past. Moreover, they perceived events more as musicians than historians; their prejudices distracting them from having a clear historical perspective. In contrast, Masson's report belongs to the other end of the spectrum. It claims an historical perspective, commenting upon the developments of the previous forty years, but in so doing tends to rewrite the past to fit into its system. Landormy and Jean-Aubry belong to the category of music historians who were actively involved in contemporary musical life but were able to view events with a bit of detachment. Bruneau, Koechlin and Milhaud can be considered composer-historians, who felt compelled to comment with the authority of an artist and the

⁶⁶ qui représente une forme d'art toute nouvelle, extrêmement musicale, et aussi éloignée que possible du drame wagnérien. Depuis, ce mouvement nationaliste n'a fait que s'accroître, affirmant par opposition à l'art effréné et fumeux de Wagner nos qualités françaises de mesure et de clarté.(10)

perspective of an historian, upon the musical scene: past, present and future. The role of writer-composer had romantic precursors in Schumann and Berlioz. Wagner's writings, although numerous, were more concerned with himself than with musical life at large. The desire for detached musical insight by certain twentieth-century composers was a new development and was certainly influenced by the increasing interest in music history from the late nineteenth century onwards. The extent to which the artist or the historian gains the upper hand will be examined in Milhaud's case in Chapter 2.

The changing perspective called for new approaches. For example, the Société Nationale, which had been at the forefront of contemporary musical life, became outmoded. The first indication of this was in 1886 when foreign and classical works were introduced into the repertoire, bringing about Saint-Saëns's resignation and effectively allowing d'Indy full control. (Nectoux, 1991, 21) Dissatisfaction with the Society and its growing conservatism came to a head in 1909 when Ravel set up the Société Musicale Indépendante (hereafter SMI) because of the refusal of d'Indy to recognise the younger generation of composers. Fauré, in the unenviable position as president of both societies from 1917, failed to bring about a reconciliation between the two groups, which he believed to be appropriate during a time of war. His 'Appel aux musiciens français' in *Le courrier musical* (15 March 1917) was ultimately unsuccessful: the old and the new factions were already too entrenched. (see Nectoux, 1975 and 1991).

In *Ma vie heureuse*, Milhaud complained about the conservative nature of the Société Nationale, which had refused to play Maurice Delage's *Poèmes hindous*⁶⁷. He supported the efforts of the SMI in giving first performances of European works which were representative of the new epoch. (Milhaud, 1987, 27) Milhaud clearly

⁶⁷ The Society had also rejected 'Les temples', the first of Koechlin's *Etudes antiques* (op.46), around the same time.

belonged to this new generation of composers who had their own responses to the changing French musical climate. For instance, Wagner had become a relatively distant figure⁶⁸ and it was now Debussy who was the all-powerful influence which it was necessary to resist if one wanted to be original and not merely to imitate. Yet Milhaud inherited a strong set of assumptions and beliefs about the French musical tradition which were indebted to the previous generations of French composers who had struggled so hard to establish a distinctive national musical identity from the ashes of the apparent disaster of 1871.

⁶⁸ Jean-Aubry makes this very point in his 1916 article. Wagner was no longer an issue for young French composers; Debussy had been combating German influence and the dangers of Wagner for almost fifteen years. (5-6)

Chapter 2: Milhaud and the French Musical Tradition

I feel myself, in fact, to be very closely bound to the French musical tradition - an assertion which will perhaps appear rather odd to certain people, but I have the sense of direct lineage from the line of French composers represented by Couperin, Rameau, Berlioz and Chabrier.⁶⁹

Milhaud made this statement of faith in reply to the pertinent question 'Who are you, Darius Milhaud?', and in so doing he demonstrated the extent to which his musical and personal identity was bound up with the notion of a French musical tradition.

Milhaud was in no doubt about the existence of a living tradition and of his own place within it. As he stated in 1938: 'I have always insisted on the strength, on the necessity of tradition in an art as noble as music'.⁷⁰ For the composer who introduced Schoenberg to France and who was one of the first to embrace polytonality and jazz into his music, this is clearly an issue that requires a thorough investigation.

Milhaud began writing in earnest about music in 1919,⁷¹ becoming critic of the *Courrier musical* from 1920 until 1924 and of *The Chesterian* in 1921.⁷² In addition to his role as a critic, Milhaud published several lengthy articles outlining his view of French music, two of which appeared in 1923: 'The Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and Vienna' published in *The North American Review* and 'Polytonalité et atonalité' in the *Revue musicale*. He explained his motivation for writing when he spoke of the need

to defend contemporary music which was being incessantly attacked and to give my opinion freely. It was also a way for me to explain

⁶⁹ Je me sens en effet très solidement rattaché à la tradition musicale française. Cela paraît peut-être curieux à certains, mais je me sens étroitement tributaire de la lignée Couperin, Rameau, Berlioz, Chabrier. (Milhaud, 1952, 14)

⁷⁰ 'J'ai toujours insisté sur la force, sur la nécessité de la tradition dans un art aussi noble que la musique'. (Milhaud, 1938, 89)

⁷¹ Two articles appeared in *Littérature* in 1919: 'Le boeuf sur le toit' (April) and 'Musique' (November). However, his first article, 'Les Festspiele d'Octobre à Hellerau', was published in the *Nouvelle revue française* as early as November 1913 (59: 821-2).

⁷² He only ever contributed two articles to this journal, in 1921 and 1926.

several points of view and to dispel misunderstandings.⁷³

Milhaud's aim was twofold: to establish himself within the Parisian musical scene and to act as a spokesman for his generation. Certainly Milhaud felt the need to mark out and defend his position in the 1920s. In this respect his writing career closely reflected his own personal and musical development. Being from a Jewish family, and growing up in Aix-en-Provence before moving to Paris to study at the Conservatoire in 1909, he never felt he was a true Parisian. In 1917 he took the opportunity to travel to Brazil as Paul Claudel's secretary.⁷⁴ He returned to a post-war Paris in early 1919 much changed and matured by his two year retreat.⁷⁵ As Mme Milhaud remarked: 'Milhaud went to Brazil drinking camomile and came back drinking coffee'. (in conversation with the author, May, 1992) On his return, he immersed himself in the Parisian musical scene. He had entered an important period of his musical career, as Claudel seemed to understand when he expressed his regret that Milhaud could not join him in Schleswig, adding, 'but I agree with you that the moment is too important for you to abandon your work'.⁷⁶ His apprenticeship days under the watchful eyes of Claudel were over.⁷⁷ Thus Milhaud's writings need to be understood in the context of his own personal development. Despite the strength of his compositional technique, he felt the need to carve his own place, not only in the Parisian musical scene, but within the broader French musical tradition.

⁷³ de défendre la musique contemporaine inlassablement attaquée et de donner mon opinion librement. C'était aussi un moyen pour moi d'expliquer quelques points de vue et de dissiper des malentendus. (Milhaud, 1987, 96-7)

⁷⁴ Claudel was sent to Brazil as the French Ambassador.

⁷⁵ In *Ma vie heureuse* Milhaud described his impressions of Paris on his return from Brazil: 'I found Paris rejoicing in victory. But I returned to my apartment like a stranger'. ('Je retrouvai Paris dans la joie de la victoire. Mais c'est comme un étranger que je revins dans mon appartement'.) (Milhaud, 1987, 81)

⁷⁶ 'mais je crois comme vous que le moment est trop important pour que vous abandonniez votre travail'. (Claudel, 1961, 53)

⁷⁷ Claudel's influence on Milhaud's artistic development considerably outweighed his limited knowledge of the technicalities of music.

Although French musical identity itself was strong by 1919, France having emerged victorious from the 1914-18 war, Milhaud felt that his profession and the activities of his generation should be taken seriously. In his article on tradition, Milhaud suggested that because music is a noble art, it must have a tradition, which alone made it worthy of serious attention.⁷⁸ Furthermore, as a representative of the young generation of composers he needed the security of belonging to a movement with roots and history.

Among the French composers of his generation, Milhaud took the lead in commenting on contemporary music, and in this way followed the example of Debussy and Koechlin. Articles by other members of 'Les Six' were rare in the 1920s. Roland-Manuel, who was part of the same circle, also began writing, frequently supporting his mentor Ravel. However, in articles such as 'Les Six devant Ravel' (unpublished, c.1925), he adopted a certain detachment, commenting perceptively upon contemporary musical life and composers' motivations, rather than presenting a personal aesthetic stance. In this way he differed from Milhaud, who linked his writings to his musical preoccupations to a greater extent.

The post-war generation of composers, including Milhaud and the other members of 'Les Six', had already gained a reputation for flouting musical conventions. This was on account of the experimental and seemingly frivolous nature of some of their projects, such as the spectacle *Les mariés de la Tour Eiffel*, (1921) written in conjunction with the other members of 'Les Six' (apart from Durey) to Jean Cocteau's scenario. It was also true of *Le boeuf sur le toit* (1919), which had gained Milhaud a reputation for being light-hearted and interested in novelty at all costs. Saint-Saëns's

⁷⁸ Mme Milhaud told me that other middle-class families disapproved of musical composition as a profession, although Milhaud's own family did not discourage him. After the uproar caused by Milhaud's *Deuxième suite symphonique* (October 1920), friends of the Milhaud family came round to commiserate with them on what they regarded as a public embarrassment. In contrast, Milhaud rather enjoyed the scandal, being not in the least upset by negative publicity. (in conversation with the author, Sept.1992)

letter to Gabriel Pierné published in *Le Ménestrel* after the scandal of the *Deuxième suite symphonique* had further contributed to his notoriety and had exposed the gulf between the French musical establishment and Milhaud's generation:

I notice with sadness that you are opening the door to lunatic deviations and that you impose them on the public when it is revolted. Several instruments playing in different keys has never resulted in music but in hullabaloo.⁷⁹

Although Saint-Saëns had been at the forefront of French musical renewal in 1870, he had become increasingly reactionary from the turn of the century and deplored modern musical trends. The open letter highlights the very real differences between the generations over how the tradition should be maintained, and more fundamentally, how French music should sound. This gulf between the generations is reinforced by an unpublished letter from Charles-Marie Widor to Robert Brussel (30 June 1922) in which he supports Saint-Saëns's 'joli-lettre', describing the composer of *Le boeuf sur le toit* and his contemporaries as 'blasphemers who are ignorant of Mozart' and as 'the "French" Bolsheviks'.⁸⁰ In the same vein, Emile Vuillermoz described the young French composers in *Musical America* as 'la honte de l'Europe'.⁸¹ (Milhaud, 1982, 77) In his essay 'Les Six devant Ravel', Roland-Manuel blamed the war for exacerbating the gulf between Milhaud and Vuillermoz:

it dug a profound crevasse between the two generations, which is always gaping and which nothing will fill in, and over whose depths one hesitates to stretch ladders.⁸²

⁷⁹ Je vois avec douleur que vous ouvrez la porte à des aberrations charentonnesques et que vous les imposez au public quand il se révolte. Plusieurs instruments jouant dans des tons différents n'ont jamais fait de la musique, mais du charivari. (Milhaud, 1987, 92)

⁸⁰ 'des blasphémateurs et d'ignorants de Mozart'... "'français" bolchevistes'(L.a. Widor, 48). Widor was objecting to performances of *Le boeuf sur le toit* and works by Les Six at a Salzburg festival. Milhaud's mentor, Erik Satie, a card-carrying Communist, proudly presented himself as a Bolshevik to shock Parisian high society after the war. So it is doubtful if Milhaud was much upset by this at the time, although according to Mme Milhaud, her husband had a strong and enduring admiration for Mozart.

⁸¹ 'the disgrace of Europe'. (Milhaud, 1982, 78) Milhaud was uncharacteristically open about his dislike of Vuillermoz. He was angry because Vuillermoz had distorted his opinion of Debussy, suggesting in print that he was critical of Debussy. (Milhaud, *Ibid.*, 77-8)

⁸² elle a creusé entre deux générations une profonde crevasse, toujours béante, que rien ne saurait

The association of Milhaud and his friends with Jean Cocteau had greatly contributed to their notoriety. Cocteau was an opportunist and eagerly exploited the publicity the young musicians had received from the critic Henri Collet when he coined the term 'Les Six' in a review in *Comoedia* (16 January 1920). In his pamphlet *Le Coq et l'arlequin* (1918) Cocteau had declared: 'I demand a French music for France'.⁸³ However, this new patriotic music involved a break with the past; Cocteau, at this stage, was incapable of looking back.⁸⁴ Inspiration for French music was to come from everyday Parisian popular culture (notably from the café-concert, music-hall and circus). Milhaud shared Cocteau's predilection for experimentation, his desire to find alternatives to Debussy and Impressionism and his championship of Satie as the model for the future.⁸⁵

But Milhaud combined this interest in the avant-garde scene with a strong sense of history. Hugh Macdonald ends his discussion on French music with the suggestion that there was a break with tradition during Milhaud's generation:

Where was the victory of French music in 1918? For Cocteau and his friends the great issues of 1900 were to be laughed off the stage; importance and unimportance exchanged roles, and Stravinsky swept in a new cosmopolitanism, unthinkable before the war. The most musical nation in the world (as a concept) had simply ceased to exist. (Macdonald, 1976, 294)

Macdonald is mistaken in believing that the issues which had seemed so important in 1900 were no longer significant and that the new generation of composers were incapable of taking anything seriously. This would involve attributing too much musical insight to Cocteau and the press. As Milhaud himself stated: 'Always inclined

combler, et sur les profondeurs de laquelle on hésite à tendre des échelles. (Roland-Manuel, unpublished, c.1925, 1)

⁸³ 'Je demande une musique française de France'. (Cocteau, 1979, 58)

⁸⁴ It was only later, in the 1920s, after observing Stravinsky's and Picasso's interest in older models, that he learned that originality did not preclude an interest in the past.

⁸⁵ There will be a thorough discussion of Milhaud's views on Satie later in this chapter.

to generalise, the critics quickly came to consider Cocteau as the theoretician, the prophet, the driving force behind post-war music.⁸⁶ It must not be forgotten that Cocteau's musical understanding was extremely limited and that there was frequently some hidden agenda behind his musical preferences.⁸⁷ It is understandable that, despite the ambiguities Macdonald raises,⁸⁸ Milhaud felt compelled to establish himself as a spokesman for his generation in order to redress this balance and to argue that the innovation of his time was part of a constantly evolving French musical tradition in which his own place may often have seemed insecure.⁸⁹ By so doing he was indeed erecting the connecting ladder, of which Roland-Manuel had spoken, between the past and present of French music.

There are some striking similarities between Milhaud and Schoenberg's notions of innovation and tradition. Both had been criticised for their apparent disrespect for tradition and as a result they both felt the need to stress the compatibility between innovation and tradition. Milhaud pinpointed the source of the misunderstanding in his essay on tradition:

Fundamentally, one letter of the alphabet is enough to create the most terrible of misunderstandings, it is the letter 'R'. One speaks of 'Revolution' when it is only a matter of 'evolution'.⁹⁰

The charge of Revolution was so terrible because it ignored the notion of continuity.

⁸⁶ 'Toujours enclins à généraliser, les critiques eurent vite fait de considérer Cocteau comme le théoricien, le prophète, l'animateur de la musique d'après-guerre.' (Milhaud, 1987, 83)

⁸⁷ For example, his comments concerning Satie in 1918 reflect his pique at Stravinsky's refusal in 1914 to collaborate with him on a ballet *David*. They are also made in the light of his recent successful collaboration with Satie, Picasso and Massine in *Parade* (1917). Although Milhaud's preferences reflected his own musical needs and preoccupations, he was not inclined towards petty favouritism.

⁸⁸ Stravinsky's influence upon French music was considerable and ambiguous, as will be seen, and the distinctions between cosmopolitanism and French nationalism did indeed become blurred.

⁸⁹ He was not alone in this; Koechlin (like Satie) also ardently supported young musicians, stressing the evolutionary nature of most musical developments. (see Koechlin, 1925)

⁹⁰ Au fond il suffit d'une lettre de l'alphabet pour créer le plus terrible des malentendus, c'est la lettre 'R'. On parle de 'Révolution' et il ne s'agit que d'une évolution'. (Milhaud, 'La tradition', 1938, 90)

In his *Entretiens*, Milhaud explained that

I always had the impression of having continued pursuing what was before me, logically, in a spirit of renewal and of normal evolution, but absolutely not as a revolutionary. I did not have the impression that in my case there was a rupture, as the word 'reform' would seem to indicate.⁹¹

For once Milhaud was talking directly about his own position, rather than speaking anonymously as if on behalf of his generation.⁹²

Schoenberg, on the other hand, had no difficulty in writing about himself. He made several statements about the link between modernity and the past. Concerning the apparent stylistic shift in his op.11 piano pieces and his op.14 and 15 songs, he complained that

Most critics of this new style failed to investigate how the ancient 'eternal' laws of musical aesthetics were observed, spurned, or merely adjusted to changed circumstances. Such superficiality brought about accusations of anarchy and revolution, whereas, on the contrary, this music was distinctly a product of evolution and no more revolutionary than any other development in the history of music. (Schoenberg (trans. L. Black), 1975, 86)

In his 1931 essay on 'National music (2)', after tracing his descent from Bach, he declared:

I am convinced that eventually people will recognise how immediately this 'something new' is linked to the loftiest models that have been granted us. I venture to credit myself with having written truly new music which, being based on tradition, is destined to become tradition. (Ibid. 174)

Like Milhaud, he explained that he was 'trying to act on my own behalf as an historian' (Schoenberg, 1975, 51), but it seems that this was principally in order to give

⁹¹ J'ai toujours eu l'impression d'avoir continué poursuivi ce qui était avant moi, logiquement, dans un esprit de renouvellement et d'évolution normale, mais non absolument révolutionnaire. Je n'ai pas l'impression que dans mon cas il y ait rupture, ce que semble indiquer le mot 'réforme'. (Milhaud, 1952, 28)

⁹² Mme Milhaud pointed out that Milhaud was at his most honest in the *Entretiens* because he was being asked very specific questions about himself and his compositions. She agreed that in other writings he tended to be elusive. (in conversation with the author, June 1992)

Schoenberg, the self-assured composer, a forum and legitimacy. Schoenberg describes how it was only after he had proved his skill in traditional harmony in his *Harmonielehre* (1911) that people regarded him as other than a 'destroyer' of music (50). Milhaud also liked to prove his technical skill in setting himself fugues and by stressing the importance of traditional counterpoint. (Mme Milhaud in conversation with the author, May 1992)

There was undoubtedly an element of self-justification in Milhaud's and Schoenberg's attempt to link themselves with the great composers of the past.⁹³ Indeed, one might consider them presumptuous in assuming the historian's role before their music had withstood the test of time. One striking parallel is the way they traced the sources of their musical systems to Bach: both as regards polytonality and the twelve-tone system. Milhaud saw in the contrapuntal and tonal independence of Bach's second *Duetto* the root of polytonality (Milhaud, 1982, 174-5) and Schoenberg described Bach as 'the first twelve-tone composer' (Schoenberg, 1975, 117); here, counterpoint was the crucial element for both composers. Both men suggested that their systems were inevitable, although questions inevitably arise when Milhaud also argued for the Latin nature of his musical system.⁹⁴

Milhaud seemed to regard Bach as a universal source, but in so doing he contradicted himself. Both he and Schoenberg had a strong sense of national inheritance and both traced their musical ancestry, one to Rameau and Couperin and the other to Bach.⁹⁵ Whereas Schoenberg's named ancestors were all German, Milhaud wanted the best of

⁹³ It should be remembered here how interested Milhaud was in Schoenberg's musical innovations in the early 1920s.

⁹⁴ Milhaud was clearly inconsistent in arguing that polytonality stemmed from Bach, but was also an inevitable Latin development, on a par with Schoenberg's twelve-tone system. See the later discussion on Milhaud's use of polytonality in Chapter 5.

⁹⁵ Compare Schoenberg's essay 'National Music (2)' with Milhaud's numerous statements.

both worlds by citing Bach as well.⁹⁶ Yet there were other essential differences: whereas Schoenberg wrote of accepting his mission,⁹⁷ Milhaud spoke of submitting to the greater force of tradition:

One does not invent a tradition, one receives it and works at it. It depends not only on the musician's tastes and his inward motivation, on those influences which are the result of the circumstances and events of his life, nor on his particular musical preferences but, above all, on the race to which he belongs.⁹⁸

Both statements suggest some form of self-sacrifice, but the focus is different. Whereas Schoenberg's preoccupation is himself and his calling, Milhaud shows humility in the face of the greater force of tradition. As he expressed it, 'each work is only a link in a chain';⁹⁹ the individual work and thus the individual composer is important only in his relation to the whole.

However, Milhaud's statement needs to be examined against his writings outlining that tradition. Did tradition have an independent existence, as he implies here, or did it depend, in some measure, upon his own personal preferences? T. S. Eliot had a similar notion of the depersonalisation of the individual:

What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality. (T.S. Eliot, 1975, 40)

Milhaud, Eliot and Stravinsky all emphasised the effort and responsibilities involved in

⁹⁶ This is an indication of Milhaud's acceptance of foreign influences on a practical level, despite his statements to the contrary. Koechlin and Roussel also admired Bach, regarding him as a strengthening influence which did not in any way detract from the Frenchness of the end-product, in their view.

⁹⁷ In his article 'New Music: My Music' (written c.1930) Schoenberg declared that 'Nobody wanted to be [the innovator who would take musical language beyond tonality], someone had to be, so I let it be me'. (Schoenberg, 1975, 104)

⁹⁸ *On ne s'invente pas une tradition, on la subit, et on la travaille. Elle dépend non seulement des goûts du musicien, de ses tendances intimes, des influences que peuvent avoir sur son oeuvre les conséquences de sa vie, de ses préférences musicales, mais surtout de sa race.* (Milhaud, 1982, 194)

⁹⁹ 'toute oeuvre n'est qu'un chaînon d'une chaîne' (Ibid. 194)

belonging to a tradition, and the animating effect of the past on the present. We have already seen that Eliot and Stravinsky differed from Milhaud in believing that tradition could not be inherited,¹⁰⁰ but had to be forged, but there is another subtle difference that distinguishes Milhaud. Stravinsky and Eliot believed that the past was important and alive because of its effect on the present, whereas for Milhaud, the past was his main point of focus. Stravinsky wrote: 'A real tradition...is a living force that animates and informs the present'. (Stravinsky, 1970, 70) Both he and Eliot had a very broad notion of tradition and Stravinsky's use of the past as an inspirational model was extremely diverse and frequently appeared arbitrary. Eliot supported Stravinsky's practice when he wrote that the poet's mind is 'a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together'. (Eliot, 41)

In his essay 'The Metaphysical poets' Eliot described the gifted poet thus:

When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes. (Ibid. 64)

Despite the reverence Eliot and Stravinsky claimed to have for tradition, the past was useful in that it contained the raw materials out of which they built the present.

By way of contrast, Milhaud monumentalized the past. In 1927 he stated that

every time novelty or revolution is spoken of in the case of a musician, we can be sure that any new, substantial element introduced rests upon a stable tradition, whose logical sequence it is generally very difficult, and all the more exciting, to mark out, as it is to see how often one has to reach far back into music history to light upon the first elements of a mode of expression whose full bloom one has witnessed and which surprises by its perfection and completeness; it explodes like a bomb,

¹⁰⁰ see ch.1, 9

revealing only its new appearance...¹⁰¹

For Milhaud, each new element had its origin in the past and it was necessary to look back in order to understand its true significance. He advocated this retrospective process for each work: 'It is to retrace the footsteps, the line of thought which will reveal to us the secret of a work'.¹⁰² Such a statement justifies trying to discover the various elements that link Milhaud's own works to tradition.

Order within tradition was essential to Milhaud. It was not a fluid order as Eliot imagined it, but one firmly linked to chronology:

It is the same tradition, the same ideal which sustained the French troubadours of the sixteenth century and which sustains the youngest French musicians such as Auric, Poulenc or Sauguet today. It is the same tradition that we find in Costeley or in Couperin in the seventeenth, in Rameau and Gluck in the eighteenth, and in Berlioz, Gounod, Bizet, Chabrier, Debussy, Fauré, Satie, in the nineteenth century.¹⁰³

It is notable that, apart from Gluck, all of these are French composers. Unlike Debussy, who blamed Gluck for contaminating French music,¹⁰⁴ Milhaud considered Gluck as more French than German, perhaps because of his considerable contribution to opera in Paris. More striking, however, is his inclusion of the relatively unknown composer, Costeley. Milhaud may have become familiar with Costeley's music through Expert's 1896 edition of his works, although it is surprising that he did not choose the better known Jannequin, whose works were edited and published in 1898.

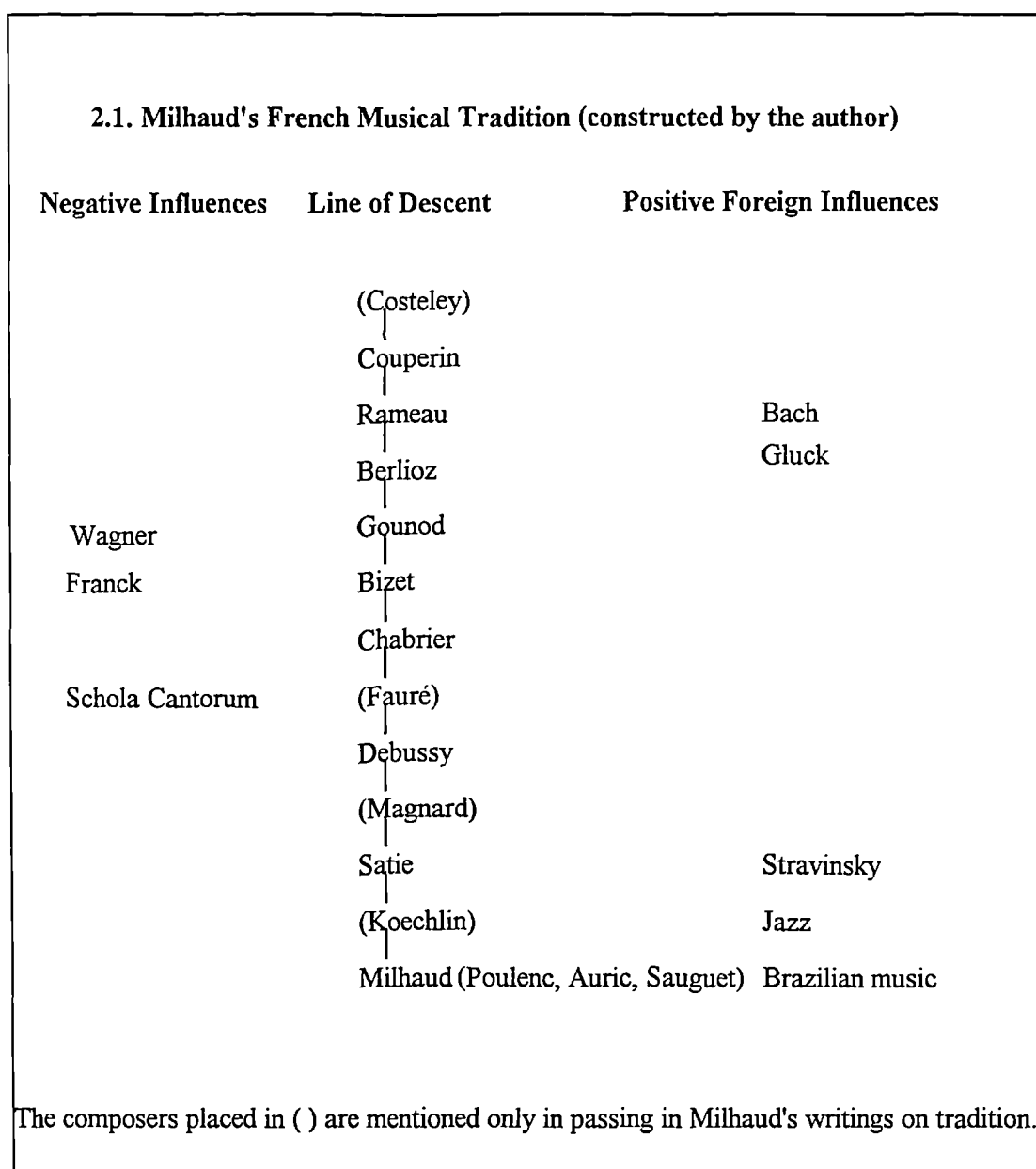
¹⁰¹ chaque fois qu'on parle pour un musicien de nouveauté, de révolution, nous pouvons être sûrs que tout élément riche et neuf introduit s'appuie sur une tradition solide, dont il est généralement très difficile et d'autant plus passionnant de retrouver la suite logique, et de voir combien souvent il faut remonter loin dans l'histoire de la musique pour rencontrer les premiers éléments d'un mode d'expression, au plein épanouissement duquel on assiste, qui surprend par sa perfection et sa mise au point, éclate comme une bombe, et n'offre plus que son aspect nouveau ... (Milhaud, 1927, 9)

¹⁰² 'C'est retrouver la trace des pas, la courbe de la pensée qui nous donnera le secret d'une oeuvre.'
(Ibid. 9)

¹⁰³ C'est la même tradition, le même idéal qui ont soutenu les troubadours de France du XIVe siècle et qui soutiennent aujourd'hui les plus jeunes musiciens français comme Auric, Poulenc ou Sauguet, la même que nous retrouvons chez Costeley ou chez Couperin au XVIIe, chez Rameau et Gluck au XVIIIe, chez Berlioz, Gounod, Bizet, Chabrier, Debussy, Fauré, Satie, au XIXe. (Milhaud, 1927, 10)

¹⁰⁴ See Debussy, 1971, 98-101 and 272-3

Milhaud emphasises the essentially unchanged nature of tradition, but in the same article he evokes the image of a river which passes through a constantly changing landscape, always flowing in the same direction from its source. (Ibid. 8) Thus, the manifestations of tradition are capable of metamorphosis in time. It is worth following the footsteps of Milhaud's line of succession to try to understand his concept of tradition more fully.¹⁰⁵ (see Figure 2.1)



Milhaud's canon of composers varied from statement to statement. Just as composers

¹⁰⁵ Figure 2.1 has been devised by the author after combing Milhaud's writings on tradition.

of the previous generation had done, Milhaud reinforced the position of Rameau and Couperin. In his *Entretiens* he goes further than merely putting them at the head of the list when he attempts to explain his indebtedness:

If I return to Couperin and Rameau, it is in relation to my chamber music, notably because of the proportions I am searching for. These proportions I endeavour to establish within calculated limits and without useless development.¹⁰⁶

Chamber music was one Milhaud's favourite media; he wrote eighteen string quartets and numerous other chamber works. His choice of Couperin and Rameau as models was significant, considering the strong associations chamber music has had with the Viennese classical masters Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. In turning from the latter with their all-prevalent developmental technique, he was seeking a French solution to chamber music composition. It remains to be seen if Milhaud actually succeeded in finding an alternative to development in Rameau and Couperin's example.

More striking, however, is Milhaud's emphasis on the nineteenth century. Unlike most of his predecessors, he embraced romanticism with open arms. Concerning Berlioz, he wrote:

Berlioz is registered in the greatest tradition of French romanticism, of true romanticism. This is not a superficial attitude of the mind, but a momentum of the soul, an interior fire.¹⁰⁷

The charge of romanticism, which had been levelled at Berlioz as an accusation, is described by Milhaud with pride. His enthusiasm reflected the changing attitude towards Berlioz apparent from the turn of the century. (see Ch.1, 19-20) In 'La musique méditerranéenne' Milhaud not only places Berlioz within the canon, but links him with Rameau:

From Rameau to Poulenc, Auric and Sauguet, the French tradition has

¹⁰⁶ Si je revendique Couperin et Rameau, c'est pour ce qui regarde ma musique de chambre, notamment en raison des proportions que je recherche, proportion que je m'efforce d'établir dans des limites mesurées, sans développements inutiles. (Milhaud, 1992, 15)

¹⁰⁷ Berlioz s'inscrit dans la plus grande tradition du romantisme français, du véritable romantisme, qui n'est pas une attitude superficielle de l'esprit, mais un élan de l'âme, un feu intérieur. (Milhaud in Roy, ed., 1954, 8-9)

always struggled to remain Latin. Nobility and grace are the principal qualities of *Castor et Pollux*. Is the exact sense of proportion not the same as we find in Berlioz?¹⁰⁸

Once more Milhaud focuses on proportion, linking Berlioz with Rameau. Thus one would expect him to argue that Berlioz was, in many respects, classical, but instead he continues: 'This great romantic is always moderate. The sobriety of his orchestration moves us by its stamp of unquestionable authenticity.'¹⁰⁹ Milhaud has arrived at a definition of romanticism which does not exclude values normally associated with classicism. This is further supported by his definition of French musical ideals, which he describes as

a certain clarity, sobriety, ease, moderation within romanticism, and care for the proportions of the design and construction of a composition, with the desire of achieving precise, straightforward and concise expression.¹¹⁰

It is noteworthy that he includes tempered romanticism among the French qualities. Bruneau had been the first to herald Berlioz's rehabilitation into the French musical tradition, but Milhaud moved one step further in placing romanticism among the ideals of Frenchness.¹¹¹ This was far from the view held by the Ecole Romane and Action Française,¹¹² who had regarded romanticism as a deviation from the Hellenic-Latin tradition and far from the position held by the Société Nationale, which had blamed romanticism for leading French music astray. However, Milhaud seems to have constructed a definition of romanticism which was more palatable to classical

¹⁰⁸ Depuis Rameau jusqu'à Poulenc, Auric et Sauguet, la tradition française a toujours lutté pour rester latine. La noblesse et la grâce sont les qualités maîtresses de l'auteur de *Castor et Pollux*. Et le sens exact des proportions n'est-il pas le même que nous retrouvons chez Berlioz? (Milhaud, 'La musique méditerranéenne', unpublished, 1934, 5)

¹⁰⁹ Ce grand romantique l'est toujours avec mesure. La sobriété de son orchestration nous émeut par son cachet d'authenticité indiscutable.' (Ibid., 5)

¹¹⁰ une certaine clarté, sobriété, aisance, une mesure dans le romantisme, et un souci des proportions du dessin et de la construction d'une oeuvre, dans un désir de s'exprimer avec netteté, simplicité et concision. (Milhaud, 1927, 11)

¹¹¹ This contradicts Gide's view that Frenchness and classicism were somehow synonymous. (See Ch.1, 7-8)

¹¹² See Ch.1, 4

sensibilities by focusing upon the qualities of proportion and moderation. Milhaud was aware of this apparent contradiction when he explained that he was particularly attracted to Berlioz's 'large works, the works on a huge scale. Here again, I will, perhaps, astonish certain colleagues - for his romanticism. Lastly for the construction of his music.'¹¹³ Just as Milhaud had self-consciously suggested that some would find his insistence on tradition odd, so his colleagues would also be astonished at his admiration for Berlioz's romanticism. Milhaud was eager to demonstrate, on the one hand, that the qualities of proportion, construction, moderation, upheld by the French as ideals, were not incompatible with romanticism, for Berlioz embraced them both. On the other hand, for Milhaud the French tradition could be proud of its legacy in Berlioz, which was worthy of the highest admiration.

Charles Gounod was another romantic composer held up by Milhaud for admiration and given a prominent position within the French tradition:

Fortunately, French music, French art and French thought could count on Gounod for maintaining their brilliance. All the qualities of clarity, moderation, tenderness and of dramatic force without excess are the very essence of Gounod's art.¹¹⁴

Whereas Berlioz was the epitome of French romanticism at its best, Gounod represented the continuity of the French spirit during an uncertain period. Milhaud distanced himself from the composers of the 1870 generation by citing the later rather than the earlier part of the nineteenth century as the more unstable period. For Milhaud, the real damage to the French tradition had been caused by Wagner,¹¹⁵ and many of the attempts to revive French music had merely accentuated his influence. In

¹¹³ grandes oeuvres, les oeuvres de vastes dimensions. Et-là aussi j'étonnerai peut-être certains confrères - pour son romantisme. Enfin, pour la facture de sa musique. (Milhaud, 1992, 21)

¹¹⁴ Heureusement la musique française, l'art français, la pensée française pouvaient compter sur Gounod pour maintenir leur éclat. Toutes les qualités de clarté, de mesure, de tendresse, de force dramatique sans outrance sont l'essence même de l'art de Gounod. (Ibid. 6)

¹¹⁵ Milhaud's statements about the negative influence of Wagner were numerous, the most famous of which - 'A bas Wagner'-was printed in *Le Courrier musicale* (28 and 29 May 1921) in response to a Wagner Festival.

particular, he blamed Franck and the Schola Cantorum:

César Franck, who is the greatest Flemish musician, established a whole movement in which pessimism, seriousness at all costs, gave rise to the group of musicians who founded the Schola Cantorum. They were in consequence completely predisposed to accommodate and to submit wholeheartedly to the influence which almost undermined our French music: that of Richard Wagner.¹¹⁶

Like Debussy, he dismissed Franck because he was a foreigner, and although he admired d'Indy,¹¹⁷ he felt the Schola, in elevating Franck, had embarked upon a false path leading to the perpetuation of Wagner as an ideal. Such strong criticism was rare for the normally tolerant and genial Milhaud. He saw Gounod as 'the logical outcome of composers of the previous century, opening the way to the French music that was representative of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.¹¹⁸ Not only was he the exemplary figure of the late nineteenth century, but the model for the younger generation to follow.¹¹⁹

Gounod was not alone in receiving Milhaud's praise; Bizet and Chabrier also 'kept intact our dear inheritance'.¹²⁰ In his *Entretiens* Milhaud praised their 'sobriété' and 'extrême simplicité de l'instrumentation'. (Milhaud, 1992, 22) It is certain that Milhaud associated these words with the qualities of Frenchness and as such they were terms of praise. It is possible that this sort of praise had become so automatic

¹¹⁶ César Franck, qui est le plus grand musicien flamand et qui détermina tout un mouvement où le pessimisme, le sérieux à tout prix, nous ont valu cette série de musiciens qui fondèrent la *Schola Cantorum*, qui furent de ce fait même absolument prédisposés à accueillir et à subir de toutes leurs forces l'influence qui faillit compromettre notre musique française: celle de Richard Wagner. (Milhaud, 1982, 196)

¹¹⁷ See Drake, 1982, 41. Milhaud's admiration for d'Indy seems surprising, particularly on account of his anti-Semitic views. He may well have appreciated d'Indy's kindness to Satie at the Schola Cantorum.

¹¹⁸ 'l'aboutissement logique des compositeurs des siècles qui l'ont précédé, et il ouvre la voie à la musique française qui illustra la fin du XIXe siècle et le début du XXe.' (Milhaud, 1982, 43)

¹¹⁹ See Milhaud, *Le Courrier musical*. (1/2, 1924, 15)

¹²⁰ 'gardaient intact ce patrimoine qui nous est cher'. (Milhaud, 1982, 196)

for Milhaud that it indicated very little apart from a stamp of approval. But Milhaud was certainly not alone in doing this; by the 1920s terms such as 'sobriété' and 'simplicité' were in common usage, having become associated with a brand of French nationalism since the 1890s, first in literature and later in music.¹²¹ Satie applied the terms with more reverence with regard to *Socrate*, when he wrote on a post-card to Jane Bathori thus: 'I dedicate the aesthetic of this work [*Socrate*] to clarity; simplicity accompanies it and directs it. That is all... I did not wish for anything else.'¹²² For Satie they had a significant artistic meaning. Scott Messing traces the extension of these terms into neo-classicism, which was in fact an outgrowth of French nationalism, having acquired its cosmopolitan associations largely through Stravinsky. Surprisingly, Milhaud did not follow this cosmopolitan trend and appeared to move against the current tide of thought by retaining the association with French identity but extending its application beyond the classical past to include the nineteenth century.

Milhaud was certainly aware of Debussy's greatness, but his attitude to the composer needs to be examined. On the face of it, Milhaud seems to devote very little attention to the composer he described as 'the surest guardian of our French traditions'.¹²³ If that were really the case, then how does this explain his absence from Milhaud's article 'La tradition' (1938) and a mere fleeting reference in Milhaud's discussion of the French and Italian traditions in 'Pourquoi j'aime Gounod et Verdi' (1942)? Nor is his place in the canon always guaranteed.¹²⁴ In addition, it is noteworthy that Milhaud presented Gounod and also Satie as the models for the younger generation to follow, despite that fact that Debussy had been indisputably the most powerful figure in

¹²¹ See discussion on French nationalism and statements by Bruneau and Debussy in Ch.1.

¹²² 'L'esthétique de cet ouvrage je voue à la clarté; la simplicité l'accompagne, la dirige... C'est tout... je n'ai pas désiré autre chose...' (Satie, unpublished postcard to Jane Bathori, 26 April 1923)

¹²³ 'le plus sûr gardien de nos traditions françaises'. (Milhaud, unpublished, 1934, 6)

¹²⁴ See Milhaud, 1982, 201, although he is mentioned earlier in the same article.

French music. But it was precisely on account of Debussy's power and his very real influence that Milhaud was so cautious. He was unequivocal about Debussy's contribution to the awareness of the French musical past:

After the early stages which were born out of Baudelairian Romanticism, after Maeterlinck's Symbolism, DEBUSSY increasingly brings together the purely French sources of his musical tradition.¹²⁵

But Debussy the composer had set an impossible standard. When he is mentioned, it is his perfection that is acknowledged. In 'La musique méditerranéenne' he wrote: 'Debussy's art is sensitive and perfect in expression',¹²⁶ and in another essay he stated that 'Debussy ... brought to his art such perfection in form'.¹²⁷ Here he is more specific in linking perfection with form. Most likely Milhaud admired Debussy's form for the same reasons as he had pinpointed Rameau and Couperin's sense of proportion: all of them presented alternatives to Germanic procedures, in particular, to development. He may well have been referring to Debussy's complex proportional structuring, especially the 1903-7 pieces. Milhaud accounts for his deification of Debussy in his *Entretiens*, when he relates an incident when he questioned Debussy's writing in *Général Lavine-Eccentric* as a student at the Conservatoire. His counterpoint teacher Gedalge responded: 'But, my dear fellow! Debussy can not make mistakes!'¹²⁸ This became for Milhaud a 'credo'; Debussy was one of the musicians for whom Milhaud had 'a particular partiality, sometimes irrational, sometimes inexplicable, indeed, paradoxical...but total'.¹²⁹ In this respect, Milhaud was like Satie,

¹²⁵ Après des débuts qui prirent naissance dans le romantisme baudelairien, après le symbolisme de Maeterlinck, DEBUSSY se rapproche de plus en plus des sources purement françaises de sa tradition musicale. (Milhaud, Claude Debussy, unpublished, n.d, 8)

¹²⁶ 'L'art de Debussy est d'une expression où tout est sensible et parfait' (Milhaud, unpublished, 1934, 6)

¹²⁷ 'Debussy...apporta à son art une telle perfection dans la forme' (Milhaud, 1982, 197). The same passage occurs in 'La Musique française depuis la guerre'. (1927, 13)

¹²⁸ 'Mais, mon cher! Debussy ne peut pas se tromper!' (Milhaud, 1992, 46)

¹²⁹ 'credo... une prédilection particulière, parfois irraisonnée, parfois inexplicable, voire paradoxale...mais totale!' (Milhaud, 1992, 46)

who never openly criticised Debussy, despite their strained personal relationship.

Debussy was arguably the most influential composer on the youthful Milhaud, and early works, like *La brébis égarée* (1910-14), betray his influence. Koechlin confirmed this in a letter to Rollo Myers in which he stated that at the time of *La brébis égarée* 'those who had a hand in showing him new musical horizons were Debussy - and also me, with my *4e recueil de mélodies* [1905-9]'.¹³⁰ Milhaud recalled his awe when he was asked to play Debussy's String Quartet at the age of thirteen and actually met the composer. It was precisely on account of his own susceptibility to Debussy's music that he was so critical of Debussy's imitators, the so-called Impressionists:

The adorable subtlety of Debussy's style (perfect in his case on account of his critical mind, which wisely serves a constantly responsive heart) led to the establishment of a movement called Impressionism, which, combined with the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov, was to lead French music into a dead-end.¹³¹

Milhaud argued that Impressionism was the inevitable outcome of Debussy's perfection. Unlike the less powerful composers Milhaud holds up as models, Debussy is inimitable in much the same way as Wagner had been a dangerous model for the previous generation. The immediacy of the threat to Milhaud's generation is evident from the force of his language: 'the youth of 1919 react with violence'¹³² to the 'sterility' of schools that follow a master. (Milhaud, unpublished, 1929, 1) His objection was stylistic: the imitation of Debussy mingled with Rimsky-Korsakov's

¹³⁰ 'ceux qui contribuèrent à lui révéler de nouveaux horizons de la musique, c'étaient Debussy - et moi aussi, par mon *4e recueil de mélodies*.' (Koechlin, unpublished letter to Rollo Myers, Paris, 27.12.48) It is noteworthy that Milhaud did not actually include Koechlin in his canon of composers, although he admired him. He seems to have regarded him as a musical friend with whom he could explore contemporary music.

¹³¹ La subtilité adorable de l'écriture de Debussy, parfaite chez lui à cause de son esprit critique si avisé au service d'un coeur toujours ému, devait déterminer un mouvement dit impressionniste, qui, combiné avec l'influence de Rimski-Korsakov, devait entraîner la musique française dans une impasse. (Milhaud, 1982, 197)

¹³² 'la jeunesse de 1919 réagit avec violence'. (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, unpublished, n.d., 14)

orchestration had led to musical 'decadence', (Ibid. 14) 'where useless complication, the search for rare sonorities to the detriment of melodic purity and the dissipation of the orchestral forces called forth a reaction'.¹³³

The search for an alternative musical style was arguably the most significant task for the developing young composer, as Milhaud explained himself:

Yet DEBUSSY always remained a veritable idol for composers of my generation. However, our quite natural reaction against music that maintained an outdated aesthetic of a fragmented soundworld and dissolving mists was never directed against DEBUSSY. We were in such need of an art that was robust, wholesome, more contrapuntal in expression, in which the sentiments of greater purity and tenderness would be conveyed with simplicity.¹³⁴

Just as Debussy had disliked his imitators, so Milhaud had a strong conviction that so-called Impressionism was no longer relevant to music. In his early years he looked for alternatives, finding literary solutions to this impasse in the writings of Francis Jammes, André Gide and Paul Claudel,¹³⁵ who were themselves moving away from Symbolism in much the same way. He was particularly drawn to the robust and 'virile'¹³⁶ style of Claudel which seemed far removed from the vagueness of Impressionism. Milhaud soon recognised these qualities in composers such as Magnard and Stravinsky.

¹³³ 'où la complication inutile, la recherche de la sonorité rare au détriment de la pureté mélodique et l'éparpillement des forces de l'orchestre appelaient une réaction'. (Milhaud, 1982, 197)

¹³⁴ Mais DEBUSSY resta toujours pour les musiciens de ma génération une véritable idole. Pourtant nos réactions si naturelles contre les musiques qui maintenaient une esthétique périmée de morcellement sonore et de brume déliquescente, n'ont jamais visé DEBUSSY. Nous avons tellement besoin d'un art robuste, sain, d'une expression plus contrapuntique, où les sentiments les plus purs, les plus tendres seraient traduits avec simplicité. (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, unpublished, n.d. 14)

¹³⁵ This was hardly surprising considering that his closest friends Léo Latil and Armand Lunel were writers. Together they read the most recent writers starting with Maurice Maeterlinck and then Gide, Jammes and Claudel.

¹³⁶ See Ch.3 for a discussion of Milhaud's literary alternatives and his search for a robust, masculine art.

Although Magnard was never actually included in Milhaud's canon of composers, he was the subject of Milhaud's first article, written in 1916, but given at a conference in January 1917. At first glance Magnard might appear an unlikely choice, particularly on account of the obvious influence of Wagner on his style, something of which Magnard was fully aware, as Milhaud quotes:

My score is written in a Wagnerian style, writes Magnard in the preface to *Bérénice*. Lacking the necessary genius to create a new lyrical form, I chose among the existing styles the one which best suited my completely classical tastes and traditional musical culture. ¹³⁷

Magnard's usage of 'classique' and 'traditionnelle' is particularly noteworthy. For Milhaud, Wagner was neither 'classical' nor 'traditional', but *German and romantic*. Milhaud seems to accept Magnard's coupling of classical with Wagnerian. (Ibid., 8) He was able to overlook his deep personal antipathy to Wagner ¹³⁸ and focus on Magnard's contribution to French music: 'He always remained completely outside the movement which emerged in France with Debussy and the Impressionists'.¹³⁹ This is a clear indication of the changing concerns of Milhaud's generation; Debussy and Impressionism had overtaken Wagnerism as a vital issue. However, later in the article (p.17) Milhaud refers to Magnard's 'technique classique', praising his technical skill in his use of fugue, canon and of course, counterpoint. These were among the very skills Milhaud felt were needed to lead French music away from Impressionism.

In Milhaud's view, Magnard stood apart from his contemporaries and was thus a fitting model for his own generation. As he explained:

¹³⁷ Ma partition est écrite dans le style wagnérien, écrit-il dans la préface de *Bérénice*. Dépouvu du génie nécessaire pour créer une nouvelle forme lyrique, j'ai choisi parmi les styles existants celui qui convenait le mieux à mes goûts tout classiques et à ma culture musicale toute traditionnelle. (Milhaud, unpublished, 1916, 9)

¹³⁸ Rarely was Milhaud so tolerant of Wagner and this article rather shows the extent of his early admiration for Magnard.

¹³⁹ 'Il est toujours resté très en dehors du mouvement qui s'est produit en France avec Debussy et les impressionnistes.' (Milhaud, unpublished, 1916, 6)

This influence is very salutary rhythmically ... it has contributed to orientating the young towards a music which is more alive, more concise, more healthy and more virile, and melodically, towards a music whose lines are traced with greater purity, and whose contours are more precise. [We should rejoice in this influence ... which guides our French music in a new way.]¹⁴⁰

Despite his Wagnerism, Magnard seemed to fit most of the criteria Milhaud had set out as necessary for the renewal of modern French music. His rhythmic, melodic and contrapuntal strength appealed to Milhaud and in his *Entretiens* Milhaud declared that Magnard had helped him to find his own musical voice.

And, however astonishing it may appear to you, I really am convinced that Magnard helped me find my way. As I was telling you a moment ago, while I adored Debussy, I sensed that it was necessary to escape his influence. Now Magnard's vigorous art...this vigorous art really gave me a shoulder-charge at a time when I was searching for my way, and took me far from Debussyist magic.¹⁴¹

Thus, Magnard provided the foil Milhaud needed to counteract Debussy's influence. This was an assertion Milhaud made several times.¹⁴² The closer one approaches Milhaud's own time, the more difficult it is to separate his view of tradition and his choice of great composers from his own personal search for a musical style which was compatible with his own inclinations and character. To some extent, he reflected his own preoccupations on his whole generation. It is significant that he focused upon Magnard's importance for his generation in his 1916 lecture, whereas his later statement was a more personal admission of influence. Perhaps with hindsight he was able to be more honest. This was typical of Milhaud: he rarely spoke directly about himself, preferring to assume the guise of a more neutral spokesman. Yet his own

¹⁴⁰ Cette influence est très salutaire rythmiquement...elle a contribué à orienter les jeunes vers une musique plus vivante, plus serrée, plus saine, plus virile et melodiquement, vers une musique dont les lignes sont plus purement tracés et les contours plus précis. [Il faut se réjouir de cette influence qui...orienté notre musique française dans une voie nouvelle.] (Ibid.,20) The line in [] was later crossed out.

¹⁴¹ Et, aussi étonnant que cela puisse vous paraître, j'ai vraiment la conviction que Magnard m'a aidé à trouver ma voie. Comme je vous le disais à l'instant, tout en adorant Debussy, je sentais qu'il fallait que j'échappe à son influence. Or l'art vigoureux de Magnard...cet art vigoureux me donna un véritable coup d'épaule à une époque où je cherchais ma voie, et m'entraîna bien loin de la magie debussyste. (Milhaud, 1992, 44)

¹⁴² C.f. Milhaud, 1916, 6-7; 1987, 46; and 1992, 43-4.

personal preferences shine through the subterfuge. In the 1916 Magnard article he went further in revealing his own preoccupations when he when discussed Magnard's use of harmony and counterpoint:

For him harmony must not be a goal to follow; it is a simple linear result obtained by the movement of several melodic parts - the result of counterpoint, and it is in this that he is close to the young French musicians.¹⁴³

At this time Milhaud was deeply preoccupied with counterpoint and this was largely due to the profound influence that his counterpoint teacher, Gedalge, had exerted on him at the Conservatoire. It brought about a change in emphasis in Milhaud's musical thinking, from the vertical to the horizontal. This rethinking was particularly striking in the case of his polytonal experiments and he described his *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, written shortly after this assessment of Magnard, in very similar terms:

'Here the polytonality no longer lay in the chords, but in the interaction of lines'.¹⁴⁴ It is clear that the concerns which Milhaud attributed to his whole generation were those which most closely affected his own personal musical development.

Milhaud did not discuss Magnard's relation to the French tradition at this early date. But he wrote of the evolutionary process of tradition in general, and 'La tradition wagnérienne' in particular, quoting Magnard's letter to Dukas:

You can not escape the laws of evolution. Works of art, like human beings, are bound to one another by an indissoluble chain.¹⁴⁵

Such a statement sounds very much like the Milhaud of the twenties. He also describes Magnard's attention to form as 'leaning on an authentic solid base - **with a**

¹⁴³ Pour lui l'harmonie ne doit pas être un but à poursuivre, c'est un simple résultat linéaire obtenu par le mouvement de plusieurs parties mélodiques - le résultat d'un contrepoint et c'est en cela qu'il se rapproche des jeunes musiciens français. (Milhaud, 1916, 7)

¹⁴⁴ 'La polytonalité ici ne résidait plus dans les accords, mais dans des rencontres de lignes.' (Milhaud, 1987, 69)

¹⁴⁵ Vous ne pourrez s'échapper aux lois de l'évolution. Les oeuvres d'art, comme les êtres, se relient les unes aux autres par une chaîne indissoluble. (Milhaud, 1916, 9)

strong tradition!¹⁴⁶ However, he had a somewhat romantic notion of Magnard's Frenchness, resorting to exclamations of a 'back to nature' variety:

It is not in any particular or unusual means of expression that one will find the sum of Magnard's originality and personality, both of which guarantee the eternity of his music. They have deeper roots, coming as they do from Albéric's heart, from the heart of this recluse who sometimes becomes at one with the soil he lives on. The music of Albéric Magnard is redolent of the

Soil
the
Soil of
France
where he works
where he sings with his lusty
and vigorous heart of
the countryside
the open air.¹⁴⁷

This romanticisation was partly due to the war. Magnard was a hero, having died for France in the war, and this contributed to his appeal. The similarities between his fate and that of Léo Latil, one of Milhaud's closest childhood friends, who was killed at the front in September 1915, are unmistakable. Although a specifically French tradition seems not to have been an issue with Milhaud in 1916, he did apply terminology associated with Frenchness, such as 'dépouillée' and 'pureté', to Magnard.

Milhaud accorded Satie a privileged position within the French tradition. The two met in 1919 after Milhaud's return from Brazil, although Satie recalled hearing

¹⁴⁶ 's'appuyant sur une base solide authentique - avec une forte tradition'. (Ibid., 9) The bold type is Milhaud's own.

¹⁴⁷ Toute l'originalité, la personnalité de Magnard, qui assurera l'éternité de sa musique ne se trouve pas dans des moyens d'expression particuliers ou curieux, elle a des sources plus profonds, elle vient du coeur d'Albéric, du coeur de ce solitaire qui se confond parfois avec la terre qu'il habite - la musique d'Albéric Magnard sent la

Terre
la
Terre de
France
où il travaille
où il chante son coeur sain
et vigoureux
la campagne
le plein air. (Ibid., 20)

Milhaud play the piano across the street from where he was visiting in the summer of 1915.¹⁴⁸ Surprisingly, Milhaud was introduced to Satie's music in Brazil by the Velloso family, whose dog bore the name of 'Satie'.¹⁴⁹ Milhaud was drawn to Satie's youthful spirit which was always a step ahead of his contemporaries: '[His] is the art of premonition and of foresight'.¹⁵⁰ It was he who had offered an alternative to Wagnerism in 1887 with his *Sarabandes*, *Gymnopédies* and *Gnossiennes*, which 'are in opposition to all the principles of Wagnerian composition and clearly foreshadow Debussy'.¹⁵¹ In Milhaud's view, Satie anticipated the harmonic progressions of Debussy's so-called 'Impressionism' by ten years.

However, Satie was also the first to turn away from 'Impressionism' towards 'fugue and counterpoint, a marvellous warming-up exercise, a discipline which gives temperance and concision'.¹⁵² Milhaud was referring to Satie's decision to return to study in 1905 at the age of 39 at the Schola Cantorum under Roussel and d'Indy. It is noteworthy, however, that Milhaud was generally critical of the Schola Cantorum, disapproving of its promotion of Franck and Wagner. (Milhaud, 1982, 196) Yet he was able to ignore this in Satie's case and focus upon Satie's wish to improve his contrapuntal skills. The study of counterpoint had been of prime importance to Milhaud since his Conservatoire days and it was a skill he looked for in the compositions of others, including Debussy (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, 2) and Magnard. (Milhaud, 1916, 7, 16-18) As usual, Satie had been the catalyst. The

¹⁴⁸ c.f. Milhaud, 1952, 82 and Ornella Volta, 1989, 94 (with an illustration of the event).

¹⁴⁹ In a review of the Concerts Koussevitzky (8 November 1923) Milhaud remarked that, apart from the French avant-garde, Satie had been promoted more by foreigners, such as the Ballets Russes, Ballets Suédois and Koussevitzky, than by the French musical establishment. (Milhaud, 1982, 80)

¹⁵⁰ 'C'est l'art de pressentiment et de divination'. (Milhaud, 1927, 14)

¹⁵¹ 'sont en opposition avec tous les principes de composition wagnériens et font nettement pressentir Debussy'. (Ibid., 15)

¹⁵² 'la fugue et le contrepoint, merveilleux exercice d'assouplissement, discipline qui donne la sobriété et la concision'. (Ibid., 15) They were real compositions requiring hard labour from Satie, who lacked Milhaud's technical facility.

characteristics of Satie's new art were notably 'discipline', 'sobriété', and 'concision', and, he continued, 'to return to simplicity, to sobriety of expression in the architecture of a work, as well as in its harmonic details'.¹⁵³ The emphasis upon Satie's simplicity recalls Cocteau's statement in *Le Coq et l'arlequin*: 'Erik Satie's opposition consists of returning to simplicity'¹⁵⁴. But although both men spoke of a return, Cocteau was more concerned with the idea of opposition in the present than with any notion of continuity with the past. In contrast, it was precisely the link between novelty and renewal that made Satie such a central figure in French music for Milhaud. 'Erik Satie's art is truly a "Renaissance"',¹⁵⁵ he wrote. Whereas Cocteau was content to call for a new and essentially Parisian art based on everyday music, Milhaud placed the apparently iconoclastic Satie firmly within the mainstream of the French musical tradition. Indeed, the ideals embodied in Satie are synonymous with Milhaud's definition of Frenchness itself.

Just as Debussy represented inimitable perfection for Milhaud, Satie stood for Frenchness at its purest.¹⁵⁶ In 1927 Milhaud described him as 'the apostle of a clear art reduced to its essentials, whose simplicity is its most beautiful ornament. A troubling contradiction!'¹⁵⁷ In this quasi-religious image of Satie, Milhaud elevated him to the position of leader of contemporary French music, and in 'L'évolution de la musique à Paris et à Vienne', he nominated Satie and Schoenberg as the respective leaders of the French and Teutonic traditions. (Milhaud, 1982, 195) In 1947 Virgil Thomson cited Milhaud's juxtaposition of the three 'B's of German music (Bach,

¹⁵³ 'de retour à la simplicité, de sobriété d'expression dans l'architecture comme dans les détails harmoniques d'une oeuvre.' (Milhaud, 1927, 17)

¹⁵⁴ 'L'opposition que fait Erik Satie consiste en un retour à la simplicité' (Cocteau, 1979, 68)

¹⁵⁵ 'L'art de Satie est un véritable "Renaissance"'. (Milhaud, 1927, 14)

¹⁵⁶ There are numerous references to the purity of Satie's art in Milhaud's writings: c.f. *La musique méditerranéenne*, unpublished, 1934, 5 and Milhaud, 1982, 80 and 81.

¹⁵⁷ 'l'apôtre d'un art dépouillé et clair dont la simplicité est la plus belle parure. Troublante contradiction!' (Milhaud, 1927, 95)

Beethoven and Brahms) with the three 'S's of modern music (Satie, Schoenberg and Stravinsky). (see Orledge, 1990, 258) Moreover, in his *Etudes* of 1927, Milhaud outlined the two paths open to the young generation of French composers - Satie and Stravinsky - and his slight preference for Satie as a model can be explained only because he was French. Not only did Satie embody the qualities of purity and simplicity, but Milhaud extended the meaning of purity when he described him as 'the musical voice proper to French music purged of every trace of foreign influence.'¹⁵⁸

Milhaud also admired Satie's moral integrity, his disdain for the critics and for materialism. In his *Entretiens* Milhaud admitted that Satie's importance was more than just musical:

I admired his intransigence with regard to the critics, his refusal of any compromise, his total integrity, his contempt for money... Satie's influence is an indirect one... there are so many ways to achieve an art reduced to its essentials that Satie's impetus is, in reality, more human than specifically musical.¹⁵⁹

Such an assessment could be made after many years of reflection when Satie's actual influence was less of an issue to Milhaud. One thing which remained constant was Milhaud's loyalty, which never wavered during Satie's final years¹⁶⁰ or after Satie's death when his general popularity was low. Indeed, for many decades Milhaud was one of the few who focused upon Satie's contribution to French music. In so doing, he anticipated and influenced current scholarly opinion by his recognition of Satie's role as a precursor of many modern musical trends, as a nurturer of young musical talent, and as a model of artistic integrity. However, Milhaud's elevation of Satie to

¹⁵⁸ 'La voix qui appartient à la musique de France dégagée de toute influence étrangère. (Milhaud, 1927, 14) He chose to ignore the fact that Satie was half Scottish.

¹⁵⁹ j'admiraits son intransigeance vis-à-vis de la critique, son refus de toute compromission, son intégrité totale, son mépris de l'argent... L'influence de Satie est une influence indirecte... il y a tant de moyens d'arriver à un art dépouillé que l'impulsion de Satie est, en effet, plus humaine que proprement musicale. (Milhaud, 1992, 53)

¹⁶⁰ Milhaud was never openly critical of Satie's final ballet *Relâche*, even although he was not particularly fond of it. (Mme Milhaud in conversation with the author, May 1991) Milhaud's generosity in musical criticism parallels that of Fauré.

the pinnacle of the French tradition must have appeared shocking to many of his contemporaries and it was hardly an honour Satie himself would have desired. For Satie had always wanted to stand apart from the mainstream of French tradition, not wishing to be associated with followers or with any sort of School. His association from 1919 with figures such as Tristan Tzara and Picabia (who were involved with the Dada movement) was a clear indication of his disdain for the artistic establishment. Milhaud, on the other hand, had nothing to do with Dada or Surrealism, which came to Paris in 1924. At most he shared a healthy disregard for official approval, but he stopped short at wanting to break with tradition. Indeed, his very insistence upon tradition can be seen as a stance against such movements.¹⁶¹ Milhaud was selective in his acceptance of Satie's aesthetics, fitting him into his self-created world order. In singling him out as the epitome of Frenchness he shows how his personal musical canon in this instance did not stand up to historical scrutiny; in many respects Satie's innovations have not proved to be so much French as more generally European.¹⁶²

National identity was of crucial importance to Milhaud. In the opening sentence of his Memoirs - 'I am a Frenchman from Provence and Israelite by religion'¹⁶³ - he clarified his own identity: his French nationality superseded his religious affiliation. Milhaud developed this idea in the process of discussing his works of Jewish inspiration: 'in works of a religious character if I use actual Jewish tunes I know a Jewish feeling is added to the music of a Franco-Latin heart, [of a] French citizen of Jewish faith'. (Milhaud, *The Problems of Jewish Music*, n.d., 12) For him a Jewish

¹⁶¹ It is noteworthy that the Belgian Surrealists such as Paul Nougé and the musician André Souris had a more positive attitude to music than the Surrealists in Paris and frequently included works by Milhaud and Stravinsky in their concerts. Satie, moreover, seems to have been their musical figurehead. (See B. Kelly and S. Levy, forthcoming, 1995)

¹⁶² Although Milhaud made passing reference to Poulenc, Auric and Sauguet as inheritors of the French tradition (Milhaud, unpublished, 1934, 5), he tended to stop at Satie. He probably felt it premature to include his own generation.

¹⁶³ 'Je suis un Français de Provence et de religion israélite'. (Milhaud, 1987, 9)

musical character was only an addition to the fundamental Franco-Latin core. Milhaud regarded French music as a part of Latin music, as his opening statement in 'Pourquoi j'aime Gounod et Verdi' (1942) indicates: 'Our French music, like Italian music, is part of the Latin tradition'.¹⁶⁴ The most natural reason for his affinity with Latin culture was his own mixed French and Italian parentage.¹⁶⁵ Milhaud extended this personal identification to music at large. He frequently interchanged the terms French, Latin and Mediterranean, which marked his own cultural identity:

But all the characteristics of my music are French and mediterranean, or even more accurately Latin. South America [,] where I lived [for] two years in Brazil[,] had a strong influence too on my work but it is a Latin influence because my Southern French soul feels at ease in any Latin atmosphere. (Milhaud, *The Problems of Jewish music*, unpublished, n.d., 11)

As a Latin, he identified with Brazilian culture which, as he argued, had strong imperial links with Portugal: 'You tell me that Brazil is far from the Mediterranean, but Portuguese culture made this country an extension of the Latin world, where I feel so much at ease and so much at home'.¹⁶⁶ Milhaud frequently described his empathy with certain cultures in terms of nationality, but he could be irritatingly vague. In his article 'La musique méditerranéenne' he equated 'French' ('Parisian') with 'Mediterranean', describing the chain of French composers from Rameau as being united in 'un esprit méditerranéen'. (Milhaud, 1934, 7) But more specifically, the term 'Mediterranean' referred to his Southern French heritage.

Milhaud retained a strong affection for his native Provence despite the many years he spent away from it. Listing his works inspired by Provence he concluded: 'This will prove to you how much I remain attached to Provençal traditions in spite of 28 years

¹⁶⁴ 'Notre musique française, comme la musique italienne, est de tradition latine'. (Milhaud, 1982, 209)

¹⁶⁵ It is a little known fact that Milhaud's mother was Italian.

¹⁶⁶ 'Vous me direz que le Brésil est loin de la Méditerranéene, mais la culture portugaise fait de ce pays un prolongement des pays latins dans lesquels je me sens si à l'aise, si 'chez moi'. (Milhaud, unpublished, 1934, 14)

spent in Paris'.¹⁶⁷ As a young composer he accepted that Paris was the musical centre and thus the place where he must study and work, but from the late 1930s, he became increasingly concerned with the decentralisation of music away from Paris.¹⁶⁸ Milhaud was knowledgeable about the history of his area, particularly the traditions of the Provençal Jews of the Comtat Venaissin.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, he also had a sense of his local musical heritage and of the characteristics associated with it. In 'La musique en Provence' (1938) he passionately declared his inability to separate the individuality of the landscape from

the bright melodies sung on the 'galoubet' by the tambourine players to a sustained and monotonous rhythm of the tambourines, a rhythm that is as regular and vital as that of our blood which beats in our arteries.¹⁷⁰

As with jazz and Brazilian music, Milhaud focused upon the rhythmic and percussive vitality of this music. Most striking, however, is the premise underlying Milhaud's use of the terms Latin, French, Mediterranean and Provençal: tradition for Milhaud was dependent upon race. He made this clear in 1923 in 'L'évolution de la musique à Paris et à Vienne':

One does not invent a tradition, one receives it and works at it. It depends not only on the musician's tastes and his inward motivation, on those influences which are the result of the circumstances and events of his life, not on his particular musical preferences but, above all, on the race to which he belongs.¹⁷¹

His belief that tradition was racially dependent throws into perspective the degree to

¹⁶⁷ 'Cela vous prouvera combien je suis resté profondément attaché aux traditions de la Provence, malgré 28 ans passés à Paris.' (Milhaud, unpublished, 1938, 10)

¹⁶⁸ See Milhaud, *Pendant les années qui ont précédé la guerre de 1939-40*, n.d., 3-4

¹⁶⁹ He was mainly indebted to his historian childhood friend Armand Lunel for this knowledge.

¹⁷⁰ des claires mélodies que chantent sur leur galoubet les tambourinaires au rythme soutenu et monotone des tambourins, rythme aussi régulier et vital que celui de notre sang qui bat dans nos artères. (Milhaud, 'La musique en Provence', unpublished, 1938, 10)

¹⁷¹ On ne s'invente pas une tradition, on la subit et on la travaille. Elle dépend non seulement des goûts du musicien, de ses tendances intimes, des influences que peuvent avoir sur son oeuvre les conséquences de sa vie, de ses préférences musicales, mais surtout de sa race. (Milhaud, 1982, 194)

which Milhaud's personal identity and his musical world view were bound together; his heritage was at the root of everything. It offered a simple solution to any insecurity: Milhaud was automatically part of these traditions, however he chose to define them, by virtue of his existence. It is noteworthy, in the light of this, that he was careful to define his Jewishness in religious, rather than racial terms, having no wish to be associated with prejudices relating to that particular line of argument. However, it cannot be denied that Milhaud was in danger of making similar assumptions about others by placing too great an emphasis upon innate, hereditary and predetermined racial characteristics.

Milhaud's attitude to Stravinsky was not wholly consistent with his notion of nationality either, for he seemed unable to place Stravinsky completely outside the French tradition. According to Milhaud, it was Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps* (1913) which had saved French music from the impasse of Impressionism and Rimsky-Korsakov, offering a new way forward and a new rhythmic vitality:

This was a shock, a flash, a sudden beneficial awakening, a finally rediscovered elemental force, a tremendous blow and a regaining of equilibrium. Everything was on another plane. The complication was not of the same order. The powerful energy shook us and made us think.¹⁷²

Stravinsky's work, in Milhaud's view, had exerted a more immediate and profound influence than any particular composition by Satie or Magnard. It is impossible to ignore a certain irony in the idea of a Russian composer saving French music from the influence of another Russian, notably his former teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, with a work which did not abound in the ideals of simplicity and precision, but was distinctly Russian and bore more than a hint of his teacher's orchestral influence. However, it

¹⁷² Ce fut un choc, un éclat, un réveil subit et bienfaisant, une force élémentaire enfin retrouvée, un coup de poing formidable et une reprise d'équilibre. Tout était sur un autre plan. La complication n'était pas du même ordre. Le dynamisme puissant nous secouait et nous donna à réfléchir. (Milhaud, 1982, 197)

was precisely 'the barbaric lyricism of the *Sacre*'¹⁷³ which inspired Milhaud. While denying that *Le sacre* had any direct influence on his own *Les choéphores*, he pinpointed the source of its power:

But at the time of the *Sacre*, it was the harmonic combinations that certainly helped me then in my research. However, this was only an encouragement, because previously I had already become aware of the possible resources of polytonality.¹⁷⁴

Milhaud, who studied the score with Koechlin in 1913,¹⁷⁵ was drawn to Stravinsky's harmonic vitality, seeing in it a viable alternative to the vaguer harmonic wanderings of Impressionism.

Milhaud admired the 'renouveau perpétuel' (Milhaud, 1992, 48) in Stravinsky, just as he had in Satie. He was particularly struck by the contrasting 'simplicité' of *Mavra*. (Milhaud, 1987, 110) In 1923 he wrote in a review of a Koussevitzky concert:

The performance of *Mavra* by the Ballets Russes disconcerted the critics... There were barely a handful of us musicians who were overwhelmed by this work in which Stravinsky showed us an unexpected side of himself. We sensed that *Mavra* had engaged him in an absolutely new path, anticipated by *Pulcinella*. The *Octet* is a continuation of it.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ 'le lyrisme barbare du *Sacre*' (Milhaud, 1992, 48)

¹⁷⁴ Mais à l'époque du *Sacre*, ce sont des agrégations harmoniques qui m'ont certainement aidé dans mes recherches d'alors. Cela n'a d'ailleurs été qu'un encouragement, car auparavant j'avais déjà pris conscience des ressources possibles de la polytonalité. (Ibid. 48-9)

Milhaud's polytonality was considerably influenced by Koechlin's *Quatrième volume de mélodies* (1905-9) and by his Viola sonata (op.53), of which Milhaud gave the first performance on 27 May 1915, just before he began to write *Les choéphores* (1915-6). This, however, does not exclude the possible additional influence of Stravinsky's *Le sacre du printemps*. Most likely it gave him the necessary impetus to write polytonally himself.

¹⁷⁵ Koechlin also experimented with polytonality from 1900 onwards. In a letter to Milhaud (June 1914) Koechlin asked him to send him examples of Stravinsky's most adventurous harmonic writing, which broke as many rules as possible, but which sounded good, for Koechlin's article on contemporary French music 'Les tendances de la musique moderne française' for Albert Lavignac's *Encyclopédie de la musique* (1925, 56-145).

¹⁷⁶ L'audition de *Mavra* aux Ballets Russes avait dérouté la critique... Nous étions à peine quelques musiciens à être bouleversés par cette oeuvre dans laquelle M. Stravinsky nous montrait un visage insoupçonné. Nous sentions que *Mavra* l'avait engagé dans une voie absolument nouvelle, annoncée

Milhaud contrasts the critic's inability to accept something new with his own fascination with novelty. The capacity to cause surprise was a sign of artistic freedom for Milhaud. He liked to think that he was also capable of considerable diversity and refused any attempt to pigeon-hole his music and ideas.¹⁷⁷

Neither did Milhaud label Stravinsky's post-*Mavra* works as neo-classical, as many critics did. In his article 'La tradition' (1940), he wrote about the tendency of certain composers such as Stravinsky and Casella to use models from the past. He regarded it as a respectful homage to the past through the eyes of the composer. (Ibid. 207-8)¹⁷⁸ Milhaud felt that Stravinsky's interest in the past testified to his awareness of tradition, especially that of Bach, Glinka and Tchaikovsky, which made him a fitting model of 'sobriété' and 'simplicité' for his generation.¹⁷⁹

Scott Messing points out the uncanny resemblance between the words generally used to define the French tradition and those used to describe Stravinsky's brand of 'neo-classicism'. This raises a serious issue: how could terminology such as simplicity, clarity, objectivity, precision and order, used to describe Frenchness, also refer to something self-consciously international? From about 1921 Stravinsky tried to eschew his own Russian nationality and forge a so-called 'international style', but with

par *Pulcinella*. *L'Octuor* en est le prolongement.' (Milhaud, 1982, 78)

Satie and Milhaud seem to have been amongst the very few to have recognised the importance of *Mavra*. Satie's appreciation appeared in *Les feuilles libres*, iv/29, Oct.-Nov. 1922, (see Volta, 1977, 39) a year before Milhaud's statement (Oct. 1923).

¹⁷⁷ For Milhaud's views on freedom from artistic movements and doctrines, see Milhaud, 1982, 113 and 159 where he declared: 'Je n'ai pas d'esthétique, de philosophie, de théorie. J'aime écrire de la musique'.

¹⁷⁸ Milhaud also treated earlier music in the manner of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* in works such as the ballet *La bien-aimée* (1928), *Suite d'après Corrette* (1937) and *Apothéose de Molière* (1948), but such a homage to the past was rare for Milhaud. See Chapter 5 for a discussion of Milhaud's musical treatment of the past.

¹⁷⁹ See Milhaud's review of Stravinsky's *Concerto for piano and orchestra* in Ibid., 83.

aesthetic ideas heavily indebted to French thought.¹⁸⁰ This throws into perspective Macdonald's statement (see Ch.2, 5) that 'Stravinsky swept in a new cosmopolitanism, unthinkable before the war.' (Macdonald, 1976, 294) Stravinsky's stripped down and 'objective' art stemmed from the same reaction to certain aspects of romanticism, Wagnerism and Impressionism, as Milhaud and Satie's art. It became associated with cosmopolitanism because its chief exponent was not French but an expatriate Russian trying to integrate himself into the mainstream European tradition. Stravinsky admitted this self-conscious aim when he described the dedication in *Mavra* to Tchaikovsky, Glinka and Pushkin as 'a piece of propaganda. I wished to show a different Russia to my non-Russian and especially to my French colleagues.' (Stravinsky, 1962, 72) Judging from Milhaud's enthusiasm for *Mavra*, it appears to have succeeded. The publicity which surrounded Stravinsky's works and ideas made it seem as if he had indeed 'swept in a new cosmopolitanism', whereas his views had actually grown out of French thought itself. Stravinsky had been true to his concept of tradition as something which is forged; he had selected aspects of contemporary French thought and dissociated them from their French nationalistic roots in a way that Milhaud never could.

Milhaud accepted Stravinsky's selectivity because of his belief in a personal tradition. Despite his attempt to present a French musical canon for general consumption, it becomes increasingly apparent that he found it difficult to distinguish between issues which were of direct personal significance and concerns affecting his whole generation. In his 1922 article on Les Six, 'Petit historique nécessaire', he argued that the group was not united in a common aesthetic on account of the 'influences et des traditions différentes'. (Milhaud, 1982, 112) This appears to contradict his numerous statements about the united goals of his generation and it calls into question the efficacy of his own role as spokesman. Yet it fitted into his notion of artistic freedom

¹⁸⁰ Stravinsky was influenced by thinkers and writers such as Jacques Maritain, Paul Valéry, Jacques Rivière and the conductor Ernest Ansermet. (See T. Gordon, 1983)

and with regard to Stravinsky, it made him tolerant of his use of nationally diverse musical models.

However, the fact that Paris was a cosmopolitan city cannot be overlooked. From the time of Louis XIV, it had been a cosmopolitan melting-pot where foreigners either visited or settled: Lully in the seventeenth century, Mozart and Gluck in the eighteenth century, and Chopin, Liszt, Cherubini, Meyerbeer and Rossini in the nineteenth. In Milhaud's generation, American rag-time and jazz had influenced the Parisian music-hall and café-concert culture. However, the First World War had virtually halted the performance of recent works by foreign composers. In his article on Arnold Schoenberg (1944), Milhaud stated that Les Six had attempted to fill this lacuna in Parisian musical life:

After the First World War the 'Group of Six' was born, of which I was a member. Our primary concern was to try to improve our knowledge of the music originating from the countries whose contact we had lacked for four years.¹⁸¹

Milhaud and Jean Wiéner made a considerable contribution to the promotion of Schoenberg's works in Paris in the 1920s. In January 1922, Milhaud conducted the first French performance of *Pierrot Lunaire* at one of Wiéner's concerts in the Salle Gaveau. It may have appeared that Paris had suddenly become cosmopolitan, and on a practical level France was more open than it had been for years. But national identity was still important, as Milhaud's preoccupation with the purity of tradition demonstrates. His attempt to pass Stravinsky off as French was exceptional. His overriding opinion was that 'often a foreign influence came and threatened to break the thread of continuity of our national tradition'.¹⁸² The language he uses is strong and somewhat chauvinistic in his desire to purge any corrupting influence from an

¹⁸¹ Après la Première Guerre mondiale naquit le "groupe des Six" dont je faisais partie. Notre souci primordial était d'essayer d'améliorer notre connaissance de la musique provenant des pays dont le contact nous avait manqué pendant quatre ans. (Milhaud, 1982, 131)

¹⁸² 'Souvent une influence étrangère est venue et a menacé de rompre la ligne de continuité de notre tradition nationale.' (Milhaud, 1982, 209)

apparently fragile tradition. Thus, while he was eager to keep abreast of musical developments in other countries, their music would always remain foreign to him and exterior to his own national heritage.

Milhaud described the effect of another foreign intruder, jazz, on French music rather poetically thus:

Already the influence of jazz has passed over like a beneficent storm, in whose wake we find purer skies and more reassuring weather. Little by little the re-emergence of classicism rids us of the broken breaths of syncopation.¹⁸³

On the one hand 'beneficent storm' suggests a good influence that enriches the tradition, but it enriches only in so far as it leaves the tradition more French than it had been before. The phrase 'rids us of the broken breaths of syncopation' is certainly negative and reveals an ethnocentric view: it is legitimate to discard something foreign when it no longer serves a purpose. In his essay, *A propos du jazz* (unpublished, 1927), Milhaud expanded on his notion of foreign influence. At first its contribution was considerable, but when it became generally accepted, it led to imitation and became an invasion against which defence was necessary 'in order to liberate our own popular music'.¹⁸⁴ This parallels Milhaud's attitude to novelty in general. He was drawn to new developments, but when he had no further use for them, which was usually when the general public and critical opinion accepted them, it was time to move on.¹⁸⁵ In this respect Milhaud was like Satie, who was always looking ahead and had an uncanny certainty about when to change direction.

Milhaud's attitude to jazz also reflects his own experience. He had been greatly

¹⁸³ Mais déjà l'influence du jazz est passée comme un orage bienfaisant après on retrouve un ciel plus pur, un temps plus sûr. Petit à petit le classicisme renaissant replace les halètements brisés de la syncope. (Milhaud, 1982, 22)

¹⁸⁴ 'pour libérer notre musique populaire'. (Milhaud, unpublished, 1927, 7)

¹⁸⁵ See 'L'évolution de la musique à Paris et à Vienne' in Milhaud, 1982, 193-5 in which he writes about the inability of the public to accept new developments. He makes a similar point in connection with Stravinsky's *Mavra*, in *Ibid.*, 78.

influenced by it when he heard the Billy Arnold band in London in 1920. This fascination grew during his visit to America in April 1922 when he came into contact with New Orleans jazz in Harlem. The impression was so powerful that in 1923 he decided to compose it out of his system:

At last, in *La création du monde*, I had the opportunity I had been waiting for to use those elements of jazz to which I had devoted so much study. I adopted the same orchestra as used in Harlem, seventeen solo instruments, and I made wholesale use of the jazz style to convey a purely classical feeling. (Milhaud, 1952, 127)

At first critical reaction was negative. It was first described as frivolous music suitable for the music-hall, but as he lamented: 'Ten years later the self-same critics were discussing the philosophy of jazz and learnedly demonstrating that *La création* was the best of my works'. (Ibid., 130) This partly accounts for his numerous statements about the beneficial effect of jazz being only a transitory one. Milhaud shunned any attempts to label, and thus to limit his musical achievements; it infringed on his sense of artistic freedom.

Milhaud's belief in a pure French tradition purged of foreign influence reveals a chauvinistic attitude which did not seem to be borne out by his wide-reaching musical practice and interests. More than most French composers he seemed to be receptive to new challenges from whatever source. His insistence upon a French tradition, and the contradictions this involved, most certainly sprang from a desire to fit in as a non-Parisian Jewish composer who was both pro-Stravinsky and pro-Schoenberg. Moreover, as a member of the avant-garde he felt the need to argue that the innovations of his time, and his own, in particular, were part of a living and evolving tradition.

Chapter 3: Milhaud's vocal works

I: Early Text Settings

We were in such need of an art that was robust, wholesome and more contrapuntal in expression, in which sentiments of greater purity and tenderness would be conveyed with simplicity.¹⁸⁵

This bold declaration by Milhaud touches the roots of his own musical development. Milhaud was seeking to redefine Frenchness in music when national confidence had been restored and Debussy recognised as having established a truly French style. This explains Milhaud's eagerness to write about the French musical tradition; in tracing his lineage he could show that French art was greater than Impressionism and the art of Debussy alone. Debussy was a very important manifestation of the French spirit, but by no means the only one. Milhaud's choice of representative composers and his own musical temperament bring into question the whole nature of the French musical character. Hugh Macdonald, in agreement with Milhaud, argues that apart from Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* and the music of Massenet and Fauré, 'French music is red-blooded and muscular everywhere we look...Magnard...was a Parisian and a patriot, and his music is as strong as a boar.' (Macdonald, 1976, 292) Milhaud's desire to portray French music as more than just 'effeminate and willowy' (Ibid. 292) not only suited his own inclination, but reflected the wishes of some other French musicians. Bruneau, reviewing a performance of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* in *Le Figaro* (14 October 1895), praised Debussy's 'rare and original temperament', but added that 'frankness obliges me to admit that I prefer something more clear cut, more robust and masculine'. (quoted in Debussy, 1987, 82) Furthermore, Romain Rolland identified two sides to the French spirit, the sensual and refined element represented by Debussy and the heroic and passionate side represented by Berlioz and Bizet. 'To tell the truth', he added 'this is the one I prefer. But God prevent me from renouncing the other. It is the balance between these two

¹⁸⁵ Nous avons tellement besoin d'un art robuste, sain, d'une expression plus contrapuntique, où les sentiments les plus purs, les plus tendres étaient traduits avec simplicité. (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, n.d. 14)

Frances that makes up the French genius.¹⁸⁶ However, ninety years later, the association of French music with Debussy and Ravel has persisted. If Martin Cooper was justified in writing that 'Debussy was inventing a new musical language and a new aesthetic', (M. Cooper, 1951, 6) then perhaps the Impressionism which Milhaud was so determined to resist was indeed the exception. Thus Milhaud's attempt to show the breadth and strength of French art, both through his music and his writings, has considerable aesthetic and historical importance. Moreover, if Debussy was able to invent a musical language and still be considered a symbol of Frenchness, then Milhaud could also be just as musically inventive without transgressing the bounds of his national tradition. He was simply bridging the dichotomy that Rolland had described.

Milhaud's search for a musical style began early. As he explained:

In 1908...Francis Jammes's verse took me out of the mists of Symbolist poetry and brought a new world to my attention, which was all the easier to attain since one only had to open one's eyes.¹⁸⁷

Milhaud was drawn to literature through his close friendship with Léo Latil and Armand Lunel, both of whom were aspiring writers. Together they read the latest literature, from Maeterlinck to the works of Jammes, Claudel and Gide. Certainly, at this stage, Milhaud derived his principal stimulus from literature. He revealed his musical sensitivity to words in a passionate letter to Latil in which he declared:

Oh, your poem! I understand it so well. You know, I want to take all the themes and developments of my *andante* and join them to your words... Now everything is condensed into your poem, and all I want is for my music to sing out its message even more strongly. But I want my music to support your words humbly, so that everyone will know I wrote it for you. (cited in Collaer, 1988, 166)

His perception that his music should be a direct response to words is the key to

¹⁸⁶ 'Pour dire la vérité, c'est celle que je préfère. Mais Dieu me garde de renier l'autre! C'est l'équilibre de ces deux Frances qui fait le génie français'. (Rolland, 1908, 206)

¹⁸⁷ En 1908...les vers de Francis Jammes me sortirent des brumes de la poésie symbolique et me firent apparaître tout un monde nouveau qui était d'autant plus facile à atteindre qu'il n'y avait qu'à ouvrir les yeux. (Milhaud, 1927, 27)

Milhaud's early musical development. This intense desire to find a musical complement for verbal expression means that the majority of Milhaud's formative compositions were vocal. Between 1910 and 1919 72% of Milhaud's output lay in vocal compositions, compared with 43% between 1920 and 1929.¹⁸⁸ Milhaud was drawn to the subject-matter and the clarity of Jammes's prose. In 1911 he received permission to set Jammes's *La brebis égarée* (1910) to music. Milhaud was attracted to the moralistic nature of the libretto, which was concerned with the adultery of the heroine, her recognition of her error and the reconciliation with her forgiving husband. According to Mme Milhaud, Milhaud, Latil and Lunel were preoccupied with such moral issues during these years and this can be seen in other works by Milhaud, such as his choice of Gide's *La porte étroite* and the *Trois poèmes en prose de Lucile de Chateaubriand*, which are both dominated by the theme of female purity and unattainability. Milhaud also appreciated the directness and simplicity of Jammes's language. *La brebis égarée* has a prose libretto and this was the first of many prose settings by Milhaud.¹⁸⁹ In choosing prose in preference to verse, Milhaud was following the recent precedents set by Gounod's *George Dandin*, Charpentier's *Louise* and Debussy's *Pelléas and Mélisande*. Before 1893 such prose settings were virtually unknown. In his preface to his little-known opera *George Dandin* (1874), Gounod wrote about the freedom of prose for the composer:

The infinite variety of stress, in prose, offers the musician quite new horizons which will save him from monotony and uniformity. Independence and freedom of pace will then come to terms with observance of the higher laws that govern periodic pulse and the thousand nuances of prosody. Every syllable will then have its own quantity, its own precise weight in truth of expression and accuracy of language. Is rhythm indispensable for musical effect? By no means...It seems obvious to me that if he is induced to care for truth by the natural shape of prose, the composer has everything to gain in expressiveness, and nothing to lose but predictability. (cited in

¹⁸⁸ However, Milhaud's focus shifted after 1916 to include ensemble pieces, often including voices, but now used instrumentally. This coincided with his parallel interest in linear writing and instrumentation.

¹⁸⁹ Others set during these years include *Sept poèmes de la connaissance de l'est*, op.7 (1912-3), *Alissa*, op.9 (1913) and *Trois poèmes en prose de Lucile de Chateaubriand*, op.10 (1913)

Macdonald, 1989, 155)

Milhaud may well have been drawn to prose because he was seeking rhythmic freedom from the regularity of metric poetry. It also permitted greater dramatic scope. Although Milhaud's musical language, at this stage, was still heavily indebted to Debussy, he showed a clear concern for the rhythmic flexibility and dramatic expressiveness of language.

The most significant and influential writer Milhaud chose was Claudel. Milhaud described the significance of their first meeting thus: 'From this day there has been a long collaboration which is the best thing in my life as a musician'.¹⁹⁰ It was in Claudel's work that Milhaud found the robust art he was seeking. In 1911 he was given a copy of Claudel's *La connaissance de l'est* by a friend, Céline Lagouarde, and its effect on the young composer was profound:

Each poem was a genuine little drama animated by a restrained lyricism which was very moving; I borrowed the book and began to set some of the poems of *La connaissance* to music. This prose of Claudel provided me with a robust and passionate element.¹⁹¹

It was the dramatic strength of Claudel's prose poems 'supported by the interior rhythm of a prose which grips one like a vice'¹⁹² which appealed to something fundamental in Milhaud. Moreover, it was precisely these qualities which Claudel recognised and encouraged in Milhaud.¹⁹³ As he recalled in *Ma vie heureuse*: 'I sang him the *Poèmes de la connaissance de l'est* which I had tried to translate with music

¹⁹⁰ 'Depuis ce jour ce fut une longue collaboration qui est la meilleure chose de ma vie de musicien.' (Milhaud, 'Ma collaboration avec Paul Claudel', 1927, 28)

¹⁹¹ 'Chaque poème était un véritable petit drame animé d'un lyrisme contenu très émouvant; j'empruntai le livre et je commençai à mettre quelques-uns des poèmes de *La connaissance* en musique; cette prose de Claudel m'apportait un élément robuste et passionné. (Milhaud, 1987, 33)

¹⁹² 'soutenue par ce rythme intérieur d'une prose qui vous serre comme dans un étau' (Milhaud, 'Ma collaboration avec Paul Claudel', 1927, 28). A considerable part of their work together focused upon finding a musical solution to the rhythmic violence of some of Claudel's dramatic prose.

¹⁹³ Mme Milhaud confirmed their recognition of each other's strength when she said that 'Claudel brought to Darius Milhaud what he needed. Claudel was a powerful man...Claudel was a man, a giant and in touch with the earth. Claudel heard the robust art in Milhaud's music - he recognised that he was different'. (in conversation with the author, 11 June 1993)

that was as robust as possible. "You are manly!" he cried'.¹⁹⁴ Similarly, in a letter to Gide in 1913 Claudel recommended Milhaud by focusing on his musical masculinity:

There is a young Jew from Aix called Darius Milhaud who would like very much to meet you. He has set poems of Jammes and myself to music and would like to do the same with something of yours. He's very gifted, strong, rhythmic and virile, which is rare among the musicians of today. (Claudel, 1949, 197)

Milhaud reveals an obvious reverence for the text and for Claudel in *La connaissance de l'est* by his simultaneous setting of two versions of Claudel's poem 'La nuit à la vérandah' (1898 and 1907). This appears to be more an act of respect than was musically necessary since the textual differences between the two versions are minimal.¹⁹⁵ Claudel's changes consist of slight rephrasings, for example, 'Il en est qui vont seules'. Even when the rephrasing is more substantial, the melodic line remains the same and the changes are purely rhythmic, as in Example 3.1. Even when one of the lines is extended, as in bar 39, it does not disturb the melodic shape or upset the resulting harmonic scheme. Indeed, the piano accompaniment is identical in both versions. Thus Milhaud's interest lay primarily in his response to the rhythmic subtleties of Claudel's texts.

Within Milhaud's varied vocal writing the flexible, narrow-intervalled recitative style associated with Debussy is frequently in evidence, as, for example, in 'Décembre' and 'Tristesse de l'eau'. The repetition on one pitch and the shapelessness of the line in Example 3.2 are far removed from the carefully arched melodies of Poulenc.

¹⁹⁴ 'Je lui chantai les *Poèmes de la connaissance de l'est* que j'avais essayé de traduire par une musique aussi robuste que possible. "Vous êtes un mâle!" s'écria-t-il'. (Milhaud, 1987, 41)

¹⁹⁵ Mme Milhaud confirmed this view when she said that 'Milhaud respectfully put both to music. At this stage, even before he had met Claudel, he was something of a hero for Milhaud - he was larger than life'. (in conversation with the author, 11 June, 1993)

Example 3.1 (*La connaissance de l'est, 'La nuit à la véranda'*, b.37-41)

39

Pied. Il y a un

Pied. L'ar -

41

ri-te arri-vant à la der-niè-re fe-nê-tre, à sur-prendre à l'au-tre fe-nê-tre au tra-

cane, ar-ri-vant à la der-niè-re de ces dix fe-nê-tres, est de surprendre à l'au-tre fe-nê-tre au tra-

Example 3.2 (*La connaissance de l'est, 'Décembre'*, b.1-8)

Assez vite.

Bu-lay-ant la con-trée et ce val -

lon feuil-lu, ta main, gagnant les ter-res couleur de pourpre et de tan

que tes yeux là-bas dé-cou-vrent, sar-rête a-vec eux sur ce

However, the fluidity of Milhaud's lines results in an irregularity of phrasing which is ideally suited to prose. Thus Milhaud approaches the 'independence and freedom of pace' which Gounod had advocated so enthusiastically.

Paul Collaer's assertion that 'Milhaud's dramatic concept does not rest on the importance of individual words' (Collaer, 1988, 49) does not hold true for Milhaud's early works. Milhaud's lines often respond, not only to the rhythm, but also to the sense of the words. This is demonstrated in 'Tristesse de l'eau' in Examples 3.3a and b, where, in the first instance, the line describing 'monotony' is set on a monotone, and in the second example, the vocal part and piano accompaniment react to the more expressive sentiments of the text. Milhaud was perfectly capable of achieving the same textual sensitivity as Debussy when he chose. The character of the vocal line in Example 3.3b is in dramatic contrast to the static and repetitive material in Example 3.3a. In Example 3.3b the melodic pace quickens to one pitch per syllable, thereby approaching the direct melodic style which was later to become characteristic of Milhaud. The song then returns to its static equilibrium. Similarly, in 'La chevelure' (Example 3.3c), Debussy adopts a characteristically static line for the more narrative passages, breaking from it momentarily to respond to the passionate outburst of the text in bar 12, before returning to the intense calm. This direct responsiveness to verbal meaning is a firm indication of the dramatic awareness of both composers. The rhythmic and melodic freedom which Milhaud was seeking in his choice of what he described as 'the extraordinary pounding of Claudel's language'¹⁹⁶ had an expressive and dramatic aim.

¹⁹⁶ 'le martèlement extraordinaire de la langue de Claudel', (Milhaud, 1992, 102)

Example 3.3a (*La connaissance de l'est*, 'Tristesse de l'eau', b.26-8)

27

be. Ni la mo-no-to-nie de ce bruit as-si-du ne suf-

This musical score shows measures 27 through 34. The vocal line begins with a fermata on the word 'be.' at measure 27. The lyrics are: 'Ni la mo-no-to-nie de ce bruit as-si-du ne suf-'. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. There are three triplet markings above the vocal line at measures 28, 30, and 32.

Example 3.3b ('Tristesse de l'eau', b.35-9)

36

vail. Les cieux pleu - rent

39 Plus vite.

sur la ter-re qu'ils fé - con - - dent. Et ce n'est point sur-

Plus vite.

This musical score shows measures 35 through 39. The vocal line starts with a fermata on 'vail.' at measure 35. The lyrics are: 'Les cieux pleu - rent' (measure 36), 'sur la ter-re qu'ils fé - con - - dent.' (measure 37), and 'Et ce n'est point sur-' (measure 38). The piano accompaniment is more complex, with a prominent bass line. The tempo marking 'Plus vite.' appears above the vocal line at measure 39 and below the piano line at measure 38. There are triplet markings above the vocal line at measures 36 and 38.

Example 3.3c (Debussy, *Chansons de Bilitis*, 'La chevelure', b.11-13)

11

et nous é - tions - li - gés pour tou - jours ain - si,

12 *mf* *Cresc.*

Eu pressant

par la mè - me che - ve - lu - re la bou - che sur la bou - che,

13 *a 1^o Tempo*
p subito

ain - si que deux lau - riers n'ont sou - vent qu'u - ne ra - ci - ne.

In contrast to the flexible recitative style, the opening of 'Le Point' shown in Example 3.4 contains a certain rhythmic regularity, even a rigidity. However, this is compensated for by the faster melodic pace brought about by the more frequent pitch changes. Indeed, the vocal line is significantly more lyrical, having an expansive range and the arch-shapes typical of more conventional melodic writing. This was the direction in which Milhaud's writing was to develop. Thus rhythmic interest was giving way to greater melodic inventiveness. Although this type of melodic writing is the exception in *La connaissance de l'est*, the contrast is dramatically effective as well as demonstrating Milhaud's sensitivity to textual setting. In both the recitative and melodic styles the outline of a third is a distinctive feature, as is shown by Examples 3.5a and b. This is not just a stylistic feature, since it results in a linear realisation of the harmonies in the piano accompaniment. Whilst the accompaniment frequently outlines the melodic line, showing how they are interlinked, the vocal part also often contains the third which the piano part avoids and the accompaniment is characterised by multiple open fifths. This was one way in which Milhaud fulfilled his intention to Latal: 'I want my music to support your words'. (Collaer, 1988, 166) In later works the vocal line and the accompaniment were to gain greater independence through the application of counterpoint.

Example 3.4 (*La connaissance de l'est, 'Le point', b. 1-20*)

Modéré et souple.



Je mar-ré-te: il y a un point à ma pro-me-na-de comme à u-ne

Modéré et souple.

phra-se que lon a fi-nie. C'est le ti-tre d'u-ne tom-be à mes pieds,

à ce dé-tour où le che-min des-cend. De là je prends ma

der-niè-re vue de la tor-re, j'en-vi-sa-go le pa-ys des morts.

Example 3.5a (*La connaissance de l'est, 'La nuit à la vérandah'*, b.18-20)

Musical score for Example 3.5a, showing vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal lines are in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "J'ai longue-ment é-tu-di-é les mœurs des é-toi-les. Les u--nes vont seu-les, J'ai longue-ment é-tu-di-é les mœurs des é-toi-les. Il en est qui vont seu-les,". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Example 3.5b ('Le point', b.80-2)

Musical score for Example 3.5b, showing vocal line and piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal line is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "un point rou-ge dans la ciel bou-ché." The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. The dynamic marking is *mf*.

Example 3.6 (*La connaissance de l'est, 'La nuit à la véranda'*, b.7-10)

Musical score for measures 7-8. It features two vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal staves have the lyrics "J'en -" written below them. The piano part is marked *pp* and consists of a continuous sixteenth-note accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 9-10. It features two vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal staves have the lyrics "tends cet-te nuit le chœur i-nin-ter-rom -" written below them. The piano part continues with the same sixteenth-note accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 10-11. It features two vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal staves have the lyrics "pu des rai-net - tes, pa -" written below them. The piano part continues with the same sixteenth-note accompaniment.

The principal dramatic interest in *La connaissance de l'est* lies in the piano accompaniment, whose sectional construction permits it to respond freely to dramatic situations in the text. Milhaud makes frequent use of accompanimental figures such as the arpeggios in 'La nuit à la vérandah', which recall Koechlin, while some of the florid writing in the same song is even reminiscent of Chopin. His use of quasi-orchestral tremolando textures and awkwardly spaced writing are indications that his musical conception was not primarily pianistic. Indeed, the most striking element in this first song is the concentrated vertical writing, such as the superimposition of chords a third apart in bars 38 and 40 of Example 3.1 - although the writing is not bitonal yet, as the chords produce lush parallel 6ths. This, and the careful spacing of open 5ths, are devices Milhaud may have adopted from Koechlin. In Example 3.5a he superimposes major 7ths, emphasising the dissonances through doubling. Milhaud's interest in such passages is clearly harmonic and it is easy to see how he began experimenting with complete chords in different keys and modes only three years later in 1915. In short, his much-discussed polytonality was not far off.

The clear, undulating textures in 'Décembre' (Example 3.2) come as a contrast to the denser harmonic writing in Example 3.5a. Although Milhaud soon abandoned such ostinati, the repetitive simplicity of the left hand chords anticipates some of the short, repetitive figures of Milhaud's later style (for example in *Le pauvre matelot* and *Christophe Colomb*). Ostinato writing, although of a less romantic nature, was also a hallmark of Satie's style. Although he did not always set out to achieve textural transparency, Milhaud certainly held clarity as an ideal and as something inherently French.

Although Example 3.2 is not melodic in the normal sense, the focus is still horizontal, and there are several other instances of linear conception in this song-cycle. In 'La nuit à la vérandah', a left-hand melody unexpectedly emerges below a persistent tremolando to form a rather dissonant contrapuntal duet with the voice, as in Example

3.6. The pentatonic piano melody is strikingly tuneful and rhythmically lively and is in sharp contrast to the recitative of the vocal line. The other instances are equally sporadic and dispersed within predominantly harmonic writing. 'Ardeur' contains a short interplay between three lines that is contrapuntally conceived. Moreover, the initial rhythmic idea in the bass permeates the song, unifying it motivically.

La connaissance de l'est (1912-3) captures Milhaud's musical preoccupations during this formative period. It demonstrates the important function the text had for Milhaud, showing him responding with a range of techniques in both the vocal line and the accompaniment, but with the emphasis on rhythmic flexibility. The growing clarity of his linear writing, his bold harmonic textures and his keen dramatic sensibility are signs of the emergence of a robust and direct art.

In *Alissa* (1913, revised 1931) Milhaud developed the dramatic potential of words and music even further and the work is closer to being a dramatic monologue than a song-cycle. Milhaud selected what he felt to be the pertinent passages from Gide's *La porte étroite* around which to build his own structure. As a result the dramatic shape of Milhaud's work differs considerably from the Gide original. A case in point is Milhaud's decision to begin the song-cycle with the biblical quotation (from Luke 13), shown in Example 3.7. The impact is considerable, but potentially misleading: only with hindsight can it be seen to be appropriate. Alissa's struggle is centred around her spiritual vocation and her decision to reject Jérôme in order to dedicate herself entirely to God. However, it functions differently in Gide's book. Although he names his work *The Narrow Door*, the biblical quotation does not begin the story. Rather, it is quoted by the Pastor during his sermon at a service attended by Jérôme, Alissa and their families. Jérôme is struck by these words, resolving to be among those who find the narrow door in order to be worthy of Alissa. Thus Milhaud highlights this passage and shifts the reference from Jérôme to Alissa: the words appear to signal her commitment to God. This dramatic emphasis on Alissa in Milhaud's version is

reinforced by the changed title and the composer's decision to set it for female voice. As a result, Jérôme speaks through Alissa herself as in no.3: 'Jérôme et Alissa'. The effect of lines such as 'Alissa says to me' and Jérôme's reflection 'As if to protest against it, my heart beating quickly, I say to her with sudden courage...' shown in Examples 3.8a and b, diminishes the immediacy of Jérôme's words. Mme Milhaud suggested that Jérôme speaks through Alissa's voice throughout the song-cycle with the exception of the final lines 'I would like to die now, quickly, before realising once more that I am alone'.¹⁹⁷ Elsewhere, Alissa's voice speaks through the letters and diary excerpts which Jérôme is reading, as he relives the events in his vivid memory. A woman's voice is thus appropriate to emphasise the extent to which Alissa overpowered his own world.

¹⁹⁷ 'Je voudrais mourir à présent, vite, avant d'avoir compris de nouveau que je suis seule'. (*Alissa*, 1931, 7, V, b.28-33)

Example 3.7 (*Alissa*, 1931, I, b.1-14)

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Alissa" (1931, I, b.1-14). The score is presented in four systems, each consisting of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Grave" with a metronome marking of 72. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are in French and describe a narrow path leading to a loss.

System 1 (Measures 1-4): The tempo is marked "Grave" with a metronome marking of 72. The lyrics are "Et - for - cez vous d'en -".

System 2 (Measures 5-8): The lyrics are "- trer par la porte é - troi - le. car la por - te".

System 3 (Measures 9-12): The lyrics are "lar - ge et le che - min spa - ci - eux mé - nent à la per - di -".

System 4 (Measures 13-14): The lyrics are "- tion. et nom - breux sont ceux qui y pas - sent:". The measure number 14 is indicated above the staff.

Example 3.8a (*Alissa*, 1931, 3, b.3-5)

- J'ai fait un tris-te rêve, me dit A-lis-sa.

The musical score for Example 3.8a consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains three measures of music. The first measure has a '3' above it, the second a '4', and the third a '5'. The lyrics are '- J'ai fait un tris-te rêve, me dit A-lis-sa.' The piano accompaniment is written in two staves (treble and bass clefs) and features a complex, arpeggiated texture with many beamed notes and some accidentals.

Example 3.8b (*Alissa*, 1931, 3, b.84-89)

- ro - - les. Comme pour y pro-tes - ter. mon cœur

battant beaucoup. dans un soudain cou - ra - ge je lui dis:

The musical score for Example 3.8b is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 84 to 88. The vocal line starts with measure 84, which has the number '84' above it. The lyrics are '- ro - - les. Comme pour y pro-tes - ter. mon cœur'. The piano accompaniment continues from the previous system. The second system covers measures 86 to 89. The vocal line starts with measure 86, which has the number '86' above it. The lyrics are 'battant beaucoup. dans un soudain cou - ra - ge je lui dis:'. The piano accompaniment continues. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) in the second system.

Although *Alissa* was performed by Jane Bathori and Milhaud at the Sorbonne in February 1920, Milhaud left the youthful work unpublished. Eighteen years later he returned to it and the revised score was published in 1931. It was rare for Milhaud to revise earlier works (and indeed, he seldom made sketches for any compositions). However, he did return to two other works from the same period: the First String Quartet, op.5 (1912) and the Suite for Piano, op. 8 (1913), simply indicating sections to be cut in the published score of the former work, and removing a movement from the latter. That Milhaud chose to intervene more extensively in *Alissa* indicates his attachment to the work and reveals, within the context of one work, the process of his compositional growth, which is more generally discernible throughout Milhaud's output between these dates.

A comparison of the structure of the original 1913 manuscript with his published 1931 revision reveals Milhaud's considerable dramatic refinement during these formative years as Figures 3.9a and 3.9b demonstrate.

Figure 3.9a

Alissa 1ère manuscript, 1913

* denotes a section cut in the later version.

The 1931 numbering follows in [].

1.	Jérôme, l'Enclos, 16 juin 1913.	[1]
2.	Jérôme et Alissa, l'Enclos 20 juin 1913	[2]
3.	Jérôme et Alissa, 20-1 juin 1913	[3]
4.	Alissa, l'Enclos, 24 juin 1913	[4]
5.	Jérôme et Alissa, l'Enclos 24 juin 1913	{5}
6.	Lettres d'Alissa, fragments	
I.	l'Enclos 28 juin 1913	[6.I]
II.	12 juillet 1913	{6.II}
III.	l'Enclos, 13 juillet 1913	*
IV.	l'Enclos, 13 juillet 1913	[6.III]
V.	l'Enclos, 13 juillet 1913	[6.IV]
VI.	l'Enclos, 13 juillet 1913	[6.V]
VII.	l'Enclos, 13 juillet 1913	[6.VI]
7.	Prelude, 15 juillet 1913	[7]
	Lettre d'Alissa, 18 juillet 1913	*
8.	Jérôme et Alissa, l'Enclos, 14 juin 1913	*
9.	Lettre d'Alissa, 21 juillet 1913 (section set in English)	*
10.	Jérôme et Alissa, l'Enclos, 22 juillet 1913	*
11. I.	Journal d'Alissa, 26-27 juillet 1913	[8.I]
II.	du journal d'Alissa, 29 juillet 1913	[8.II]
III.	du journal d'Alissa, 29 juillet 1913	[8.III]
IV.	du journal d'Alissa, l'Enclos 29 juillet 1913	[8.IV]
V.	du journal d'Alissa, l'Enclos 29 juillet and Paris 11 mai 1913.	[8.V]
	Considerably condensed: cuts text from 15 and 16 Oct of Alissa's journal. Retains the final lines.	(*)

Figure 3.9b

Alissa 1931 published score

1.	Jérôme
2.	Jérôme et Alissa
3.	Jérôme et Alissa
4.	Lettre d'Alissa
5.	Jérôme et Alissa
6.	Lettres d'Alissa (I-VI)
7.	Prélude
8.	Journal d'Alissa (I-V)

The considerably condensed format of the 1931 score shows Milhaud's increased preoccupation with form and dramatic balance. In the 1913 version Milhaud seemed to be more concerned with the story of Alissa and Jérôme, whereas in the final version Milhaud strips the structure to its essential elements, while retaining an adequate sense of the story. This is illustrated in Figures 3.10a and 3.10b, which show Milhaud reducing a four-part to a three-part structure:

Figure 3.10a

Alissa, 1913 version

Section 1	Nos. 1-5	introductory
Section 2	No. 6 (I-VI)	insight into the conflict
Section 3	Nos. 7-10	more interaction
Section 4	No. 11 (I-V)	Alissa's internal struggle and resolution

Figure 3.10b

Alissa 1931 version

Section 1	Nos. 1-5	introductory
Section 2	No. 6 (I-VI)	insight into the conflict
Prelude	No. 7	pivotal function of Prelude
Section 3	No. 8 (I-V)	Alissa's internal conflict and resolution

Milhaud dispenses with section 3 of the earlier score because it unnecessarily delays the dramatic progression. Moreover, the manuscript shows the gradual transformation of no.7 from another song, to a prelude and song and finally into a free-standing prelude for piano. Such a change highlights Milhaud's increased sense of dramatic expediency, as well as revealing his compositional process and changing musical tastes. Milhaud originally conceived the Prelude as another song and allocated three staves to each line of music. But only three bars of the vocal part were sketched in without the words, as Example 3.11a shows. These bars are merely a transposition of the opening right-hand theme and a virtual repetition of the preceding piano part. Moreover, at the point where he introduces the voice, the piano lapses from a melodic and pianistic opening (which was exceptional for Milhaud in 1913), into an ostinato bass pattern and a rather repetitive and fussy right-hand passage, typical of his early style, which he later cut. This figure is related to the right-hand descending passage in bar 7. It may seem surprising that Milhaud, who was so concerned with text, should write the piano part before the vocal line. However, it may be precisely because he conceived this particular part pianistically that he abandoned the vocal line. There are other indications that Milhaud sometimes added the voice after the piano part, as in no. 3: 'Jérôme et Alissa', where the bar lines swerve round the words and vocal line in order to encompass them within the bar. Observations such as these give a different insight into Milhaud's compositional methods.

Example 3.11a (*Alissa*, 1913, 7, b. 36-42)

36

40

Example 3.11b (*Alissa* 1913b, Prelude, b.34-48)

34

f *pp*

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Example 3.11b, consisting of three systems of staves. The first system has a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and the second system has a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo). The notation includes various notes, rests, and slurs, with some handwritten annotations and corrections. The score is oriented vertically on the page.

Example 3.11c (*Alissa*, 1931, 7, b.32)

Sans rigueur

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system is marked with the instruction *Sans rigueur*. Both systems consist of a treble clef, a treble staff, and a bass staff. The notation is dense and rhythmic, with many notes and rests. The first system shows a treble staff with a few notes and a bass staff with a dense, rhythmic accompaniment. The second system shows a treble staff with a few notes and a bass staff with a dense, rhythmic accompaniment. The notation is dense and rhythmic, with many notes and rests.

Although the text was clearly his point of departure, there are indications that his music, even at this early stage, did not always respond directly to the words, but grew out of the dramatic situation.

There has just come to light another manuscript of the Prelude from *Alissa* has just come to light, which gives further insight into the compositional process. It shows Milhaud making alterations the same day (15 July 1913). It is a tidy copy signed D.M. with the inscription 'pour C.L.': Céline Lagouarde, to whom the whole song-cycle was dedicated.¹⁹⁸ Milhaud has dispensed with the vocal line completely and the following example (Example 3.11b) shows him integrating the vocal line into the piano part and at the same time augmenting it. However, by stretching the melody thus, it is lost in the repetitive texture, which Milhaud prolongs in the bass by adding two bars of repeated G#s (b.46-7). These bars only contribute to the directionlessness of the whole section, and it is unsurprising, therefore, that they were cut from the final score and replaced with a cadenza-like flourish shown in Example 3.11c, which is more musically satisfying. This is the only known instance of Milhaud reworking his musical ideas several times before reaching a final version and shows just how different his solution was in 1931 to the one he established hours after composition in 1913. It also goes some way towards refuting Koechlin's view that 'he [Milhaud] never seems to have time or the opportunity to concentrate on any single work'. (Koechlin, unpublished letter to R. Rolland of 8 Jan. 1939, trans. R. Orledge)

The dramatic and psychological effect of the Prelude in the later version should not be underestimated. It separates the expository and active sections from the introspective final part, which explains and resolves the opening conflict. Through its verbal silence and passionate expressiveness, it leads into Alissa's reflective but vibrant spiritual world from which Jérôme is ultimately excluded. It has a similar dramatic function to

¹⁹⁸ I am grateful to Oliver Neighbour for sending me a reproduction of this manuscript, which is in his possession.

the piano interludes and postludes in many of Schumann's songs. Its pivotal role between one dramatic state and another is highly effective.

In *Alissa* Milhaud undertook the task of constructing a text from a larger work, thereby compressing events in time and intensifying the dramatic impact. In the 1931 version he took this process one stage further, reducing and refining his material. This was something he did increasingly in the 1920s in works such as his 'Minute' and chamber operas. Such a preoccupation with stripping an idea to its essential core was in keeping with the French ideal of concise, simple and clear expression. (Milhaud, 1927, 11)

The melodic line of *Alissa* underwent a striking transformation in 1931. Milhaud extensively reworked the shape of the vocal line, and a comparison of the two versions reveals the developmental process which took place in Milhaud's vocal writing during these years. His main aim was to create melody out of a static line by giving it greater shape and interest, as Examples 3.12a-3.12c show. The change from a quaver to an acciaccatura for the feminine ending 'rê-ve' is notable in Example 3.12b. Milhaud made extensive use of the grace-note for such endings, quickly abandoning the more clumsy quaver. The vocal style of the original *Alissa* differs from *La connaissance de l'est* in its greater rhythmic uniformity. However, the repetition on one note and narrow range is pervasive in the 1913 score and typical of his early text settings. Milhaud's extensive rewriting of the vocal part endowed the song-cycle with greater inflection and interest. A small example of the benefit of this rewriting can be seen in Example 3.13 which ends no. 4: 'Lettre d'Alissa'. The change from an A to a C on the second syllable not only adds colour and brings out the correct accentuation, but it is dramatically significant: the elusive Alissa has just declared in a letter that she will never cease to love Jérôme and this is her signature. Had Milhaud retained the monotone on the A, this seal on her words would have passed unnoticed. The inflection allows them to stand out in the capitals in which

Example 3.12a(i) (1913, 2, b.20-9)

20
Mon âme en-trait dans mes pa-roles Moi, je ne te qui-tter-ai ja-mais

25
Elle hau-ssa un peu les é-paul-es N'es-tu pas a-ssez

fort pour march-er seul? C'est tout seul que chac-un de nous doit ga-gner Dieu

Example 3.12a (ii) (1931, 2, b.20-9)

—Mon âme en-trait dans mes pa-roles: —Moi,

je ne te quit-te-rai ja-mais. Elle haussa un peu les é-paules:

—N'es-tu pas assez fort pour marcher seul? C'est tout seul-que cha-cun de

nous doit ga-gner Dieu.

Example 3.12b (i) (1913, 3, b.44-8)

44

Ce ma- tin, je crois que je re- stais sous l'im- press- i- on de ce rê- ve

Detailed description: This musical example shows a single staff of music in treble clef. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the staff, with a circumflex accent over the 'e' in 'rê-ve'.

Example 3.12b (ii) (1931, 3, b.44-8)

44

Ce ma- tin, je crois que je re- stais sous l'im- press- i- on de ce rê- ve.

Detailed description: This musical example shows a single staff of music in treble clef, identical in notation to Example 3.12b (i). The lyrics are the same, but the 'e' in 'rê-ve' does not have a circumflex accent.

Example 3.12c (i) (1913, 4, b. 26-9)

26

sim- ple- ment, je te de- man- de d'at- tend- re en- co- re que tu

27

sois un peu plus a- van- cé dans la vie

Detailed description: This example consists of two staves of music in treble clef. The first staff contains the lyrics 'sim- ple- ment, je te de- man- de d'at- tend- re en- co- re que tu' with a circumflex accent over the 'e' in 're'. The second staff contains the lyrics 'sois un peu plus a- van- cé dans la vie'.

Example 3.12c (ii) (1931, 4, b. 26-9)

93

26

sim- ple- ment, je te de- man- de d'at- tend- re en- co- re que tu

27

sois un peu plus a- van- cé dans la vie

Detailed description: This example consists of two staves of music in treble clef, identical in notation to Example 3.12c (i). The lyrics are the same, but the 'e' in 're' does not have a circumflex accent. A box containing the number '93' is positioned above the first staff.

Milhaud wrote them.

Although Milhaud added substantial melodic interest when he returned to *Alissa* eighteen years later, there are examples of shaped vocal writing in the 1913 version. A particular case in point is shown in Example 3.14. Although the antecedent phrase is not strictly lyrical, there is movement and direction which repeats itself in the original consequent phrase. Milhaud builds on this in 1931 by reshaping the consequent phrase to create a rather lyrical opening statement, and one which, in its stepwise movement and perfect fourth leap, is typical of his later melodic style.

The two versions of *Alissa* span a crucial stage in Milhaud's musical development. One of the ways in which this manifests itself is in the emergence of his melodic style. This stylistic consolidation can be observed in other works spanning the same period, from *Poème du Gitanjali* op.22 (1914) to *Christophe Colomb* op.102 (1928), as Examples 3.15 (a-l) show.

Example 3.15a (*Les malheurs d'Orphée*, 1924, 'Dernières recommandations d'Eurydice aux animaux', p.45, b.4-5)

Eurydice

O mes qua-tre com-pagn- ons, c'est pour un der-nier ser-vi - ce

Example 3.15b (*Le pauvre matelot*, 1926, p.23, b.1-6)

Le matelot

No-tre rue est tou-te pe-ti-te. Elle é-tait gran-de en voya-ge El-le m'en-com-brait

Example 3.15c (*Le pauvre matelot*, Act 1, p.5, b.6-11)

La Femme

Mal-gré ma trist-ess-e, j'ai ap-pris à dans-er J'ai, mal-gré ma trist-esse, ap-pris à dan-ser

Example 3.15d (*Les malheurs d'Orphée* xix 'La soeur jumelle', p.72, b.15 - p.73, b.5)

Orphée

Je tiens trop à mon mal-heur. Je ne peux pas le lais-ser. Je n'ai que lui sur la ter-re

Example 3.15e (*Les malheurs d'Orphée* ii. 'Air d'Orphée, p.9, b.2-5)

Orphée

Main- te- nant je re- viens pour tou- jours a- vec vous

Example 3.15f (*Alissa*, 1931, 6, III, p.26, b.6-7)

Alissa

Cha- que jour à pass- er a - vant de te re- voir

Example 3.15g (*Les malheurs d'Orphée*, Act III, xv. 'Chanson d'Orphée au travail', p.60 b.1-3)

Orphée

Et me voi - là de nou - veau

Example 3.15h (*Christophe Colomb*, 1928, v.s. pt. I, p.54)

Isabella

Main-te- nant, à mon Dieu,

Example 3.15i (*Alissa*, 1931, 6, V, b.21-2)

Sur- tout ne t'a- ttends pas à ce que je pui- sse te par- ler

Example 3.15j (*Poème du Gitanjali* by Rabindranath Tagore, 1914, b.69-70)

Musical score for Example 3.15j, consisting of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a melodic line with a sharp sign on the second line. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a bass line. A piano dynamic marking 'p' is placed below the first measure of the upper staff. A slur labeled 'laissez vibrer' spans across the first two measures of the upper staff. A fermata is placed over the final note of the lower staff.

Example 3.15k (*Catalogue de fleurs*, 1920, v. 'Les crocus', b.6-7)

Musical score for Example 3.15k, a single staff in treble clef. The melody is accompanied by the lyrics: Les Cro-cus se for-cen-ten po-tées. A slur is placed over the first three notes of the melody.

Example 3.15l *Catalogue de fleurs* vii. 'L'eremurus, b.22-3

Musical score for Example 3.15l, a single staff in treble clef. The melody is accompanied by the lyrics: par cor-res-pon- dan- ce. A slur is placed over the first two notes of the melody.

Particular traits include repeated 1- or 2-bar phrases contained within a narrow range, usually of a 4th or 5th, shown in Examples 3.15a-d. The phrases often involve descending stepwise movement, thereby emphasising the modal nature of many of Milhaud's melodies (for example, 3.15b and c suggest the aeolian mode). Short sequential phrases are also characteristic of Milhaud's melodic style: Example 3.15e is mainly stepwise, while 3.15f and 15g involve descending leaps. The intervals of a 3rd followed by a 4th are common to 3.15f and 3.15h and Example 3.14 (ii). A rising 6th followed by a descending third is a recurring figure in Milhaud's melodies, as Examples 3.15i-l testify. Finally, Milhaud frequently used a falling 4th or 5th at the end of phrases, as Examples 3.14(ii), 3.15a, b, d and e illustrate. It is notable that many of these features, in particular, the short repeated phrases, narrow intervals and falling 4ths and 5ths and the predilection for modes,¹⁹⁹ are also characteristic traits of (European) folksong in general. This interest in folksong is borne out by the profound effect Brazilian folk music exerted on him. In the case of *Le pauvre matelot*, Milhaud actually collected folksongs from the Vieux-port of Marseilles and the docks of Toulon to use in his opera. (Collaer, 1988, 89) Milhaud, in tapping into the resource of folk song, was enriching the French tradition with an element which had both a wider general appeal and a greater emotional range.

Milhaud gradually attached greater importance to melody during his years at the Paris Conservatoire, largely because of the influence of his counterpoint teacher André

¹⁹⁹ Milhaud's preoccupation with modes was not only folk-inspired; there was considerable interest in the ancient Greek modes in France. This was largely due to research carried out by musicologists such as François-Auguste Gevaert and Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray. Moreover, the writings of René Lenormand (Lenormand, 1913) and Charles Koechlin stressed its influence and usage in modern harmony. For example, in his *Traité de l'harmonie* Koechlin advised the prospective music student as follows:

It is absolutely necessary for the student to familiarise himself with certain scales, the usage of which is found in Gregorian Chant, in our ancient popular melodies and in Russian folklore, by masters of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance; finally, by numerous composers of the last fifty years.

(Il est absolument nécessaire que l'élève se familiarise avec certaines gammes, dont l'usage se trouve dans le Chant Gregorien, dans nos anciennes mélodies populaires, et dans le folklore russe; enfin, chez de nombreux compositeurs en ces cinquantes dernières années. (Koechlin, 1930, vol.II, 1)

Gedalge. Milhaud recalled his teacher's reaction on hearing his sonata: 'Why have you written the note D# seventeen times on the first page? You don't know how to construct a melody'.²⁰⁰ Gedalge impressed on Milhaud the idea that a melody should be good enough to stand by itself without the help of an accompaniment. It was in Rio de Janeiro that Milhaud's lessons began to bear fruit, with works such as the second sonata for violin and piano and the First Chamber Symphony, which are profoundly lyrical. However, melody was clearly something that Milhaud had to work on, and although he strove to make it important, the strength of his musical originality lay elsewhere. Nevertheless, Mme Milhaud stresses the importance of melody for Milhaud, arguing that he never made sketches for the melodic line as he occasionally did for the rhythm. (in conversation with Mme Milhaud, May, 1992) The growing simplicity of Milhaud's melodies, characterised by repetition and short phrases, is notable during these formative years.

The *Alissa* scores also give us a valuable insight into the development of Milhaud's piano writing and musical thinking in general. The most striking change is from chordal to linear writing as Examples 3.16 (a-c) show. The 1931 version of Example 3.15a can be seen in Example 3.7, bars 3-6. In the 1913 version the bars are frequently punctuated with semibreve chords which support the vocal line and the effect is somewhat static. Although the accompaniment is simple, Milhaud seems to be working with harmonic ideas rather than exploiting the potential of the piano. It is precisely this aspect which Milhaud develops when he returns to the work. He fills in the harmony with moving lines which add to the fluidity of the piece and complement the vocal line. The voice then becomes one of a number of horizontal lines. The shift in Milhaud's thinking from vertical to horizontal writing is one of the most significant processes in his musical development, since it came about as a conscious attempt to develop 'a healthy and more contrapuntal' French art, as we saw in the opening

²⁰⁰ 'Pourquoi avez-vous dix-sept fois la note ré dièse dans la première page? Vous ne savez pas construire une mélodie'. (Milhaud, 1983, 32)

quotation of this chapter. (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, n.d. 14) Moreover, the change was also indicative of a new attitude towards vocal setting which began to manifest itself when he was in Rio de Janeiro. Rather than the voice being supported by a chordal accompaniment, it is treated increasingly as another instrumental line.²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Chapter 4 will explore this shift in Milhaud's thinking more fully.

Example 3.16a (*Alissa* 1913, 1, bars 3-6)

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a measure rest marked with a '3' above it. The melody starts on the second measure with the lyrics 'ef- for- cez vous d'en- trer par la porte é- troi- le'. A triplet of eighth notes is indicated by a bracket with a '3' above it, spanning the notes 'é-', 'troi-', and 'le'. The middle and bottom staves are piano accompaniment, with the middle staff in treble clef and the bottom staff in bass clef. The piano part features a steady accompaniment of chords, primarily triads and dyads, in the right and left hands respectively.

Example 3.16b (*Alissa*, 1913, 2, bars 10-14)

10

Et le bais- sa le front C'est au- ssi ce qu'il

m'a ré- pond- u Je lui pris la main en trem- blant

Detailed description: This musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting at bar 10 with the lyrics 'Et le bais- sa le front' and 'C'est au- ssi ce qu'il'. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a similar triplet in the left hand. The second system continues the vocal line with 'm'a ré- pond- u' and 'Je lui pris la main en trem- blant'. The piano accompaniment continues with a triplet in the right hand and a triplet in the left hand, with a slur over the right-hand triplet.

Example 3.16c (*Alissa*, 1931, 2, bars 10-14)

Et le bais- sa le front. C'est aussi ce qu'il

m'a ré-pondu. Je lui pris la main en tremblant.

pp

Detailed description: This musical score consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting at bar 10 with the lyrics 'Et le bais- sa le front.' and 'C'est aussi ce qu'il'. The piano accompaniment features a slur over the right-hand part and a dynamic marking of *pp* (pianissimo). The second system continues the vocal line with 'm'a ré-pondu.' and 'Je lui pris la main en tremblant.'. The piano accompaniment continues with a slur over the right-hand part.

Example 3.17a (*Alissa*, 1913, 11.V, b.1-7)

1
 Que vo- tre règne ar- riv- et Qu'il vien- ne en

3
 moi de sor- te que vous seul régn- iez sur moi et régn- iez sur moi tou- te ent- ière

5
 Je ne veux plus vous march- and - er mon coeur

* added later

bc

Example 3.17b (*Alissa*, 1913, 11.V, b.1-7)

1

Que vo- tre règne ar- riv- ei Qu'il vien- ne en

3

moi de sor- te que vous seul régn- iez sur moi et régn- iez sur moi lou- le ent- ière

5

Je ne veux plus vous march- and- er mon coeur

Example 3.17c (*Alissa*, 1931, 8.V, b.1-7)

Lent $\text{♩} = 56$ Que vo-tre règne ar - rive! Qu'il vienne en

moi; de sor-te que vous seul régniez sur moi; et régniez sur moi toute entiè-re

Je ne veux plus vous marchan - der mon cœur.

Example 3.17 shows the opening of the final song (8.V) in three different stages. Example 3.17a exploits the arpeggio figure Milhaud originally intended as a unifying motive. It first appears in the opening song and is used extensively throughout the original version of the last song. Milhaud retained only a brief reference to it at the very end of the work. Before abandoning this version, Milhaud added the augmented 4th chord of Bb and E to bar 5 which forms the basis of his second attempt shown in Example 3.17b. However, Milhaud merely replaces one repeated motive with another and it lacks any sense of direction. In Example 3.17c Milhaud replaces the repetition with a moving line which has greater direction and interacts, to a much greater degree, with the vocal part. It is also noteworthy that he replaces the chant-like melody with a more angular line which exploits the very tritone (Bb - E) which unifies the section. However, Milhaud preserves a sombre mood in all three versions, which is in striking contrast to Alissa's supposed joy at having given herself completely to God. Milhaud shows dramatic insight in depicting this darkly, since the music reveals the inner loneliness which is involved in such a sacrifice. Indeed, the music anticipates Alissa's final words: 'I would like to die now, quickly, before having understood once more that I am alone'.

Milhaud's rejection of the principally accompanimental role of the piano had a considerable effect on the way in which he constructed and prolonged his musical ideas. His writing in *La connaissance de l'est* and *Alissa* (1913) is often sectional, making frequent use of ostinati. Example 3.18 shows how he gradually dispensed with ostinato, thickened the inner harmonies and strove towards a musical line with greater direction and purpose.

Example 3.18a (*Alissa*, V, 1913, b. 21-28)

21

second version 1913

This musical score shows measures 21 through 28 of the first version of the piece. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff with a melodic line, a bass clef staff with a harmonic accompaniment, and a grand staff (piano) at the bottom. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

25

This musical score shows measures 25 through 28 of the second version of the piece. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff with a melodic line, a bass clef staff with a harmonic accompaniment, and a grand staff (piano) at the bottom. The notation includes various rhythmic values and accidentals.

Example 3.18b (*Alissa*, V, 1931, b. 21-28)

21

25

p

This musical score shows measures 21 through 28 of the first version of the piece. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a grand staff (piano) at the bottom. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and dynamic markings such as *p* (piano). Measure numbers 21 and 25 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

The above example shows this passage in three stages. The changes in the second version are minimal and suggest Milhaud was reluctant to abandon the ostinato. Repetition occurs in the final score, but in exploiting the figure sequentially, he creates greater musical momentum and direction. We have already seen how Milhaud also cut the ostinato section from the Prelude, replacing it with the rather free flourish which functions like a cadenza. In addition, Milhaud considerably condensed the final song, removing several static repetitive sections in the accompaniment, such as in Example 3.19. Such writing anticipates the style of Part 3 of Satie's *Socrate* (1918). It is notable that Milhaud further exploits the Bb-E tritone in this section. As a result of such changes in style, Milhaud tightens the form of his song-cycle. In the final *Alissa* score there are fewer changes of texture within a section. Milhaud brings out the contrast which has been built into the carefully constructed text, showing a more sophisticated attitude to both text and drama than he had in the earlier version.

It is misleading to regard the published score of *Alissa* as a 1913 work. The extent of the revisions has never before been examined, and the insight such changes give into both the beginning and end of this formative period of Milhaud's career is an invaluable aid towards any understanding of his musical development. It remains to ask why Milhaud would choose to return to a discarded work of his past, moreover, to one based on the subject of unattainable and spiritual love, preoccupations from his earlier days which he had decisively left behind. Milhaud probably saw himself as rescuing a work he thought was good and revising it in the light of his subsequent development. The rarity of such self-criticism suggests a particular attachment to this early work. It also gave him the chance to revisit a personal world which had been particularly dear to him.

Example 3.19 (*Alissa*, 1913, 11.V)

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with lyrics: "joie", "joie", "pleurer.", "de", "joie". The middle staff is a piano accompaniment consisting of a treble clef staff with a melody of eighth notes and a bass clef staff with a bass line of eighth notes. The bottom staff shows the harmonic structure with six chords, each represented by a circle with a flat sign and a letter (B, C, D, E, F, G).

Chapter 4: Milhaud's Vocal Works

II: New Approaches to Text

i. Milhaud and Language

Milhaud's preoccupation with the intricacies and potential of language also extended to English. *Alissa* contains the earliest example of Milhaud setting a language other than his own. In no.9 of the 1913 version Milhaud set the several lines of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* which begin one of Alissa's letters to Jérôme in Gide's text. However, without the explanation supplied by Gide, the sudden switch into English in Milhaud's manuscript is unexpected and somewhat baffling. Milhaud seems to have been motivated more by the opportunity to set some English rather than by dramatic considerations. It is not surprising, therefore, that he cut this from the later score. Milhaud sketched in the rhythm above certain words, as Example 4.1 shows. Milhaud was to continue this practice in his operas *Les euménides*, *Christophe Colomb* and *La mère coupable* in order to work out the correct accentuation.²⁰² However, Milhaud chose to ignore his own rhythmic indications in bars 3, 5 and 9, opting for the equal-valued dotted quavers. Either he felt there was less risk in mistaking the accentuation or he deliberately wished to stretch the syllables. Moreover, there are irregularities in the textual underlay in bars 7 - 8. Milhaud allocates two syllables to 'o'er', 'like' and 'breathes' instead of one, rather like Debussy had done in the English language version of *La damoiselle elue*.²⁰³ In fact, by adding an acciaccatura to the end of 'like', he allocates three syllables to this word. Although the acciaccatura was to become typical of his treatment of French feminine endings, it occurs only rarely in the 1913 version of *Alissa*. It is certainly uncommon and arguably less useful in English settings. However, the unusual allocation of syllables may well be an attempt to capture the spirit of Shakespearean English, and although such an attempt was largely misplaced in this context, it indicates a certain sensitivity

²⁰² See Jeremy Drake (1989) for a discussion of Milhaud's rhythmic sketchings in these operas.

²⁰³ See David Grayson's article 'Claude Debussy Addresses the English-Speaking World' in *Cahiers Debussy*, no.16, 1992, 23-47.

towards a language other than his own. Milhaud's setting of *Caroles* (1963) by Charles d'Orléans in both French and English exploits the extra syllables of Medieval English more successfully. Nevertheless, this early experimentation with English reveals his fascination with the rhythmic potential of a stressed language and has a quaint and striking beauty to it.

In 1915, Claudel translated two poems by Coventry Patmore (1823-96) which Milhaud set simultaneously in both French and English. Patmore, like Claudel, was a convert to Catholicism, and the poems 'Departure' and 'The Azalea' were chosen from a two-volume collection entitled *The Unknown Eros* (1877), written shortly after his conversion. They are concerned with the death of his first wife Emilie in 1862. 'Departure' is a harrowing evocation of Patmore's feelings of loneliness and abandonment at the moment of her death, and 'The Azalea' is actually based on a note he wrote six weeks after his bereavement describing the sensation of dreaming about her death, only to wake up to find it had already happened.²⁰⁴ Here, Milhaud reveals his greater sensitivity to language setting, treating the two languages with considerable individuality. Examples 4.2a and 4.2b highlight the predominantly rhythmic differences between the two settings. There are many more notes in the French version to accommodate the greater number of syllables, resulting in longer and more continuous vocal lines. In bars 77 - 83, for example, there are 42 syllables in the French as opposed to 29 in the English version. Moreover, there is a lot of note repetition, causing the French version to sound more recitative-like than lyrical.

²⁰⁴ The note, dated 23 August 1862, reads: 'Last night I dreamt that she was dying. I awoke with unspeakable relief that it was a dream; but a moment after to remember that she was dead'. (Derek Patmore, 1949, 156).

Example 4.1: (*Alissa*, 1913, 9, b.1-15)

That strain a-
gain it had a dy- ing
fall O it came o' er my ear lik- e the sweet
south that brea-thes up- on a bank of vio- lets stea- ling and giv- ing
stea- ling and giv- ing...

o- dour E- nough, no more 'Tis not so sweet now
E- nough, no more

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef. The lyrics are: "o- dour E- nough, no more 'Tis not so sweet now" on the first line, and "E- nough, no more" on the second line. The piano accompaniment is written in two staves, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The vocal line features a melodic line with some editorial additions marked with an asterisk.

as it was be- fore

The second system of the musical score continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single staff with a treble clef. The lyrics are: "as it was be- fore". The piano accompaniment is written in two staves, with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The music continues in the same key and time signature as the first system.

* [] indicate editorial additions.

Example 4.2a (*Deux poèmes de Coventry Patmore, 'Departure' b.1-18*)

Modéré

ENGLISH
ANGLAIS

It was not like your great and gra-cious ways

FRANÇAIS
FRENCH

Modéré

Ce n'é-taient pas là vos grandes et gra-cieuses ma-nières

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the English vocal line, with the lyrics "It was not like your great and gra-cious ways". The middle staff is for the French vocal line, with the lyrics "Ce n'é-taient pas là vos grandes et gra-cieuses ma-nières". The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The tempo is marked *Modéré*.

Do you that have nought o-ther to la-ment,

Vous qui n'a-vez de rien d'autre à vous re--pen-tir,

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the English vocal line, with the lyrics "Do you that have nought o-ther to la-ment,". The middle staff is for the French vocal line, with the lyrics "Vous qui n'a-vez de rien d'autre à vous re--pen-tir,". The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Modéré*.

Ne-ver, my L o v e, re-pent of how, that Ju-ly af-ter-noon, you

n'a-vez vous pas mon a - m o u r re-gret de cette a-près mi - di de Juil - l e t où vous par-

The third system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for the English vocal line, with the lyrics "Ne-ver, my L o v e, re-pent of how, that Ju-ly af-ter-noon, you". The middle staff is for the French vocal line, with the lyrics "n'a-vez vous pas mon a - m o u r re-gret de cette a-près mi - di de Juil - l e t où vous par-". The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Modéré*.

Example 4.2b (*Deux poèmes de Coventry Patmore, 'Departure', b.70-87*)

Récitatif

But all at once to leave me at the last----- more at the

Mais tout d'un coup me laiss-er ain-si à la fin et--- fa--ré de sur-

won-der than the lost a-ghast with huddled un---in-ter-li-gi-ble phrase

pri-se plus que de la per-te a-----vec u-ne phra-se pres-sée in-in-ter-li-gi-ble

and fright-en'd eye And go your jour-ney

à un œil ef-fra-yé et par-tir ain-si pour

150

like your great and gra-cious ways.

gran--des et gra - ciu - - ses ma - - nie - - res

p *pp*

laisser vibrer

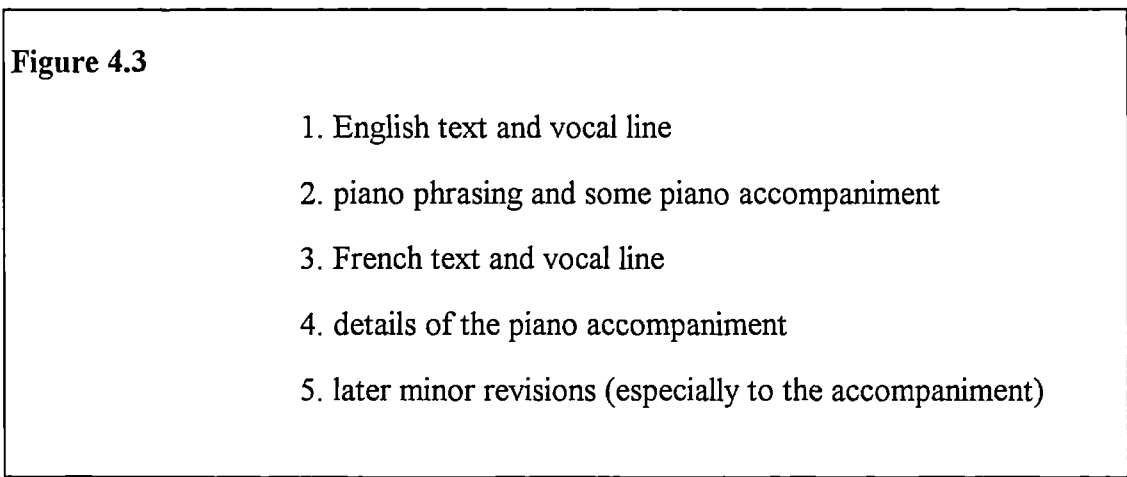
Mme Milhaud asserted that Milhaud considered the English version to be more important than the French. (in conversation with the author, May 1992) While this might not be particularly evident from the published score, an examination of the manuscript reveals Milhaud's methods and order of composition. He seems to have regarded the French as a translation, as the title page indicates: the line 'avec un traduction de Paul Claudel' is added in brackets after the title. Moreover, on the first page of each song, the English title is written first and the French squeezed in below.²⁰⁵ In the case of the title of the second song, the ink of the final 'e' in 'l'Azalée' actually crosses above the 'z' of the English, and therefore must have been written after. Furthermore, Milhaud calls the English version 'texte anglais' and the French 'traduction en français': a detail which was not carried into the published score.

An examination of the textual and musical alignment shows that although Milhaud was not very precise in either the English or French, the alignment of the latter is the less accurate. This is emphasised by the fact that Milhaud pencils in the alignment of the words to the notes in the first phrase. Moreover, the English appears to have been written before the piano part, since the bar lengths vary with the number of syllables. The quavers in bar 2 have been greatly stretched out to accommodate the words, and occupy more space than those in bar 1.

Since there is no instance of the inks used for the French and English versions overlapping, it is necessary to look for other indications to determine the order of composition. Milhaud appears to have sketched in the piano phrasing and some of the accompaniment before writing in the French version. There are numerous examples of the ink of the French text lying over that of the phrasing, for example, in bar 7. This suggests that he marked in the phrasing after writing the English vocal line. It also indicates that the text, rather than the piano accompaniment, dictated the shape of the musical phrasing. This is further supported in bars 30-31, where the phrasing


²⁰⁵ The original was not available for reproduction.



was marked in before the piano part was written. However, Milhaud wrote in some of the piano accompaniment at this stage, as the piano part is clearly written before the French in bars 24-8 of the first song, and in the opening of the second song. Yet the details of the piano accompaniment were added after the French vocal line was written as there are examples of Milhaud squeezing in the piano part, in particular, an octave sign, under the French text in the line 'C'était le parfum de l'azalée' of the second song. Moreover, the ledger lines take up more space in the piano interlude in bars 16-8 of 'Departure' than they do when they are constrained by the proximity of the French text. Milhaud also made some later revisions to the accompaniment, correcting details. Thus, after careful examination Figure 4.3 indicates the likely order of composition to be:



From the evidence of the manuscript, it appears that Milhaud did indeed regard the English version as the principal one, and that other aspects of the composition such as the phrasing and the accompaniment grew out of the English vocal line.

Milhaud may well have been drawn to the clarity of the English line, with its fewer syllables. In bars 1-3, for example, the English version is simpler and more direct than the somewhat wordy French line. Such clarity of writing was closer to the direction in which Milhaud's vocal writing was developing during the 1910s. Moreover, the

English line is rhythmically more vital, particularly in the frequent use of the syncopated figure , which is not found in the French version.

Milhaud shows his concern for the details of correct stressing in some of the changes he made to the autograph score, as illustrated in Examples 4.4a and b. His decision to remove the stress from the first syllable of 'delicious' seems to have been made after the composition of the piano part, since it changes the effect of the harmony - from more characteristic parallel ninths to parallel octaves. Milhaud must have considered that accuracy of accentation should supersede other considerations. The change of rhythm in the phrase 'so many days' from  to  further highlights the importance he attached to it. ('Departure', b.14)

Moreover, Milhaud reveals a sensitivity to the nuances of meaning in his treatment of textual repetition in bars 11-16 and 74-80 of 'Departure'. Although the passages are melodically and harmonically different, he retains the same basic stresses, with one exception, in both the English and the French settings. The rhythmic change in the English version, shown in Example 4.2a and 4.2b (bars 14-6 and 79-80) shifts the emphasis in meaning from focusing upon the lack of a 'single kiss' in the first instance, to emphasising the 'or', which balances the 'kiss' against the 'goodbye'. By way of contrast, the French version in its rhythmic uniformity is dramatically unremarkable. Thus, in this example Milhaud shows greater sensitivity to the textual subtleties of English than to the French.

Example 4.4a (*Deux poèmes de Coventry Patmore, 'The Alazea', m.s. (first version)*
b.32-3)

Musical score for Example 4.4a, first version, measures 32-3. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of three staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 32 with the lyrics "bless'd in the de- li- cious sphere". The piano accompaniment features a bass line with triplets of eighth notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Example 4.4b (*Deux poèmes de Coventry Patmore, 'The Alazea', m.s. (second version)*, b.32-3)

Musical score for Example 4.4b, second version, measures 32-3. The score is in 3/4 time and consists of three staves: a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins at measure 32 with the lyrics "bless'd in the de- li- cious sphere". The piano accompaniment features a bass line with triplets of eighth notes. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

However, Milhaud, at this stage, was unaware of some of the finer problems of English, and there are several instances of unnatural treatment of words. For example, he allocates three syllables to 'scar-ce-ly' (Example 4.2b, bar 67) instead of two, and he incorrectly stresses 'unintelligible' (Example 4.2a, bars 11-12 and Example 4.2b, bar 75). On its first appearance, he stresses the 'ible', which is correct in French, but inappropriate in English, and the second time the accent is placed on the second syllable 'in' instead of 'tel'. A more substantial error occurs in bar 42, shown in Example 4.5. On one level, Milhaud appears to allocate only one syllable to 'sombre', which would be acceptable in French, and two to 'March'. While this could be merely a printing error, it also appears in this form in the manuscript. However, the sentence itself does not make sense and the line from Patmore should read 'As a warm South wind sombres a March grove'. (C. Patmore, 1900, 19) As it stands in the manuscript and score, it is unclear whether 'sombre' should function as an adjective - 'sombre as a March grove' - or as a verb. While these can be regarded as slight oversights, such details indicate that Milhaud's incomplete knowledge of English at this stage in his career prevented him from being consistently sensitive to it.

Example 4.5 ('Departure', b.40-2)

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece. It consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, with lyrics in English and French. The middle staff is a vocal line with French lyrics. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "gloom of love, As a warm South wind sombre a March grove" and "om --- bre com-me quand le vent du Sud ap-pro-fon--- dit le noir feuil-la - ge". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a harmonic line in the left hand. The tempo is marked "p" (piano).

40 41 42

gloom of love, As a warm South wind sombre a March grove

om --- bre com-me quand le vent du Sud ap-pro-fon--- dit le noir feuil-la - ge

p

However, Milhaud's appreciation of the individuality of the English language is undeniable, as his decision to set *Christophe Colomb* (1928) simultaneously in English and French testifies. The English version appears to have been lost, although Claudel felt that it was rhythmically closer to what he wanted. Rather than treating the English as a translation, Milhaud decided once again to write two versions, as he informed Claudel in January 1928: 'Your English text of *Christophe Colomb* is wonderful! I will set both of them at once'.²⁰⁶

In 1963 Milhaud set *Caroles* by Charles d'Orléans (1394-1465) in both French and English. According to Mme Milhaud, Milhaud was drawn to the fact that d'Orléans had written both texts himself. (in conversation with the author, May 1992) Once again the differences between the simultaneous settings are considerable. However, this time it is the English text which has the most notes. After his time in America, Milhaud shows some degree of sophistication in exploiting the spoken syllables in Medieval English, as Example 4.6 shows. The variety of the rhythmic treatment is striking in the English version. This is partly due to his tendency to allot a semiquaver to the numerous feminine endings. Milhaud's extensive use of dotted rhythms and syncopation in the English brings into focus the essential difference between a stressed and an unstressed language. Once again Milhaud exploits the syncopated rhythm $\overline{\text{TTT}}$, as he had in the English line of the Coventry Patmore songs, and there are instances in the work when this rhythm takes over the thematic interest, spoiling the contours of the melodic line. The unnaturally fast pace of the English line is determined by the French, which appears to have been written first in this case. Both the pacing and the constant repetition on one note indicate that the English had to fit into the line set by the French. If Milhaud had not been under this constraint, it would have been interesting to have seen to what extent he could combine rhythmic vitality with melodic interest.

²⁰⁶ 'Votre texte anglais de *Christophe Colomb* est merveilleux! Je ferai les 2 à la fois'. (Claudel, 1961, 88)

Example 4.6, (*Caroles*, b.36-42)

French
36

Au moins je vous en prie - que me lai-ssiez seu - le -

English

A- las for- tun- e as ska- pe me sum re- dres to he- le me of this kar- lui- la

ment au- cun peu d'a- le- ge- ment

gre- vous sor- e that y may ben as y ha- ve ben to- fo- re

sans m'ost- ter la vie

or doo me so- ne to ster- ve in my dis- tres

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled 'Caroles' (b.36-42). It consists of three systems of music, each with a French line and an English line. The French lyrics are: 'Au moins je vous en prie - que me lai-ssiez seu - le -', 'ment au- cun peu d'a- le- ge- ment', and 'sans m'ost- ter la vie'. The English lyrics are: 'A- las for- tun- e as ska- pe me sum re- dres to he- le me of this kar- lui- la', 'gre- vous sor- e that y may ben as y ha- ve ben to- fo- re', and 'or doo me so- ne to ster- ve in my dis- tres'. The music is written on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) in a 3/4 time signature. There are various musical notations including notes, rests, and ornaments. The page number 139 is at the bottom.

Although the French version is bland in comparison, it has a more lyrical and dignified line.

Milhaud's treatment of the English in *Caroles* goes some way towards explaining his attraction to the language; working with a stressed language allowed him to be more rhythmic without returning to the recitative style he had left behind. There is a notable similarity between the soprano line in Example 4.6 and the rhythmic ostinati that abound in *L'homme et son désir* (1918). Although there is greater variety of note-values on account of the text, the writing in *Caroles* is more instrumental than vocal. It is understandable that Milhaud began to experiment with rhythmic patterns freed from words, thus avoiding any congestion they might cause. Nevertheless, Milhaud's increased confidence in English, after many years in America, is reflected in *Caroles* in his taking greater freedom with a language which was not his own.

Milhaud also set parallel Hebrew and French texts, for example, in the *Service sacré* (op.279, 1947). Mme Milhaud related that he sought the advice of a cantor, to ensure he had the correct stressing. Similarly, *Pacem in terris* (op.404, 1963), is written in both Latin and French. This time he was advised by a monk who was a Latin scholar. (in conversation with the author, June 1993) In 1944 Milhaud composed two songs with parallel Creole and French texts, *La libération des Antilles*, op.246, but here there is very little rhythmic difference between the two settings. Milhaud evidently felt that the two languages were sufficiently related for similar treatment. However, he employs the rhythm $\overline{\text{f}}\text{f}$ which he seems to eschew in his own language. The syncopated rhythms add a humorous rag-time quality to the Creole text.

The fact that Milhaud chose to set parallel texts rather than merely add translations reveals the deep interest he had in the nuances of language and suggests that he did not like contrived translations made to fit existing music. Moreover, he seemed to

have a clear notion of the rhythmic potential of a particular language, as the strikingly different settings examined above testify. Milhaud was willing to work out the accentuation for a particular foreign language, seeking the advice of those who were experts, because of the rich musical opportunities such challenges offered him. The care he took with language goes some way to challenging the popular perception that Milhaud wrote too quickly and uncritically.

Milhaud had a different attitude towards setting foreign languages than he had towards his own, as he explained in *Entretiens*:

It is possible that I allow myself certain liberties. First of all, I believe that one has the right with regard to one's own language. Of course, I would never entertain the idea of treating a foreign language in such a manner.²⁰⁷

Mme Milhaud reinforced this when she said that 'Milhaud was completely free with the rhythm of his own language - he felt it was his, but he was always more careful with foreign languages'. (in conversation with the author, June 1993) As a result, Milhaud has been charged with insensitivity to the French language. In his *Entretiens*, Claude Rostand maintained that:

you have often been reproached for adopting a syllabic prosody which is very four-square, a prosody which does not take into account what Ravel called 'the transient and subtle music of the French language, and for not respecting the pulsation of this language.'²⁰⁸

Paul Collaer also acknowledged Milhaud's use of unvaried rhythms and syllabic word-settings. (1988, 50) This is certainly the tendency which becomes evident in Milhaud's writing after the Coventry Patmore songs. However, Collaer justifies this tendency by saying that the voice part is no more than another instrumental line and is

²⁰⁷ il est possible que je me permette parfois certaines licences. D'abord, je crois qu'on en a le droit vis-à-vis de sa propre langue. Evidemment, il ne me viendrait jamais à l'idée d'en user ainsi avec une langue étrangère. (Milhaud, 1992, 103)

²⁰⁸ on vous a souvent reproché d'adopter une prosodie syllabique très carrée, une prosodie ne tenant pas compte de ce que Ravel appelait 'la musique fugace et subtile de la langue française', de ne pas respecter la pulsation de cette langue. (Milhaud, 1992, 102)

merely a part of an overall musical conception. While this often becomes the case after 1917, it does not apply to all his vocal works, nor does it necessarily clear Milhaud of rhythmically inflexible writing.

Milhaud himself had a different answer. In his view, there were many ways of setting the French language.²⁰⁹ While acknowledging the suppleness of the French language and the slight stress on the penultimate or last syllable, he argued that the French language is also capable of a 'vigueur singulière', as Claudel's writing has shown. This desire to find a more violent outlet for French led Milhaud and Claudel to develop spoken declamation with percussion accompaniment. However, within the context of sung language, Milhaud's move away from the sensitive recitative style of Debussy towards a more rhythmically staid style was deliberate; he wanted to show that the French language was capable of greater vitality and directness. Examples 4.7a-d (vocal lines only) show the emergence of a rhythmically unvaried style from 1917, which is far removed from the flexibility of works such as the *Sept poèmes de la connaissance de l'est*.

In Milhaud's view, the relative equality of the syllables in French presented a greater freedom for the musician compared with the restricting accentuation of Italian and German. This addresses Milhaud's second point, that sung text is not bound by the same rules as spoken text:

And then, from the moment that one sets a text to music why should it be required to have the same pulsation as spoken language?...There is already a fundamental distinction, since it is not a question of speaking, but of singing.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ 'La langue française ne se présente pas toujours ainsi' (Milhaud, 1992, 102)

²¹⁰ Et puis, dès l'instant où l'on met un texte en musique, pourquoi vouloir qu'il ait la même pulsation que le langage parlé ... il y a déjà une convention à la base, puisqu'il ne s'agira pas de parlé mais de chanté. (Milhaud, 1992, 104)

Example 4.7a ('La marchande d'habits', *Chansons bas*, 1917, b.1-7)

Doucement

Le vif oeil dont tu re-gardes Jusques à leur con-te-nu Me sé-pa-re de mes har-des

Example 4.7b (*La gomme coule*, I, m.s. 1918, b.1-2)

Tendrement

La gom-me coule en larm-es d'or des ce-ri-siers

Example 4.7c (*La gomme coule*, II, b.13-16)

13

Dis, rê-ves-tu que sur un roc vont se po-ser par-mis des
thym's chèv-re feu-illes de blan-ches chèv-res

Example 4.7d (*Catalogue de fleurs*, IV, 'Les jacinthes', b.1-6)

Al-be-ti-ne blanc pur La-pey-rous-e mauv-e clair

Thus the 'courbe mélodique' (Ibid., 103) and 'l'expression poétique' (Ibid., 105) are more important than the technical conventions governing spoken language. Moreover, Milhaud's view that spoken and sung speech were distinct and therefore required different treatment is central to his musical development and his originality. In his early works, Milhaud's rhythmic and melodic inspiration both came from the text. However, after 1917 he separated these two tendencies, allowing them to function independently. As a result, his preoccupation with melody developed at the expense of rhythmic flexibility and his rhythmic originality manifested itself in spoken declamation and in his unpitched percussion writing. Thus, Milhaud's melodic and rhythmic preoccupations can be seen as a reaction to the rhythmically sensitive treatment of language in Debussy's generation. His overtly melodic but rhythmically restricted style and his exploitation of the vigorous potential of the French language were central to his aim of developing a robust art.

Milhaud admitted that he took liberties with accentuation.²¹¹ He viewed the barline as an arbitrary convention, arguing that the melodic shape should determine the flow of a piece. There are also examples of ambiguity of meaning, as in the example from *Le pauvre matelot* noted by Honegger: 'à demain' which sounds 'à deux mains on account of the emphasis on the first syllable of 'demain'. (Ibid., 104 and see Example 4.8) This is caused by giving the syllable 'de' the highest note rather than placing it on a down beat. However, if Milhaud is free with his accentuation of language, then the sense can also be blurred rather than heightened, as in the above example. By suggesting that the responsibility for articulation in these instances rests with the singers rather than with the piece itself, he is, to some extent, abnegating his responsibilities as a composer.

The extent to which the sense of individual words is crucial in Milhaud's vocal works is questionable. In his early works the music reacts directly to the prose. In later

²¹¹ His treatment of weak syllables on strong beats in *Agamemnon* will be examined in Ch.4, 49.

works the music responds more to the general mood or the idea of the song, and in his more extended vocal works and operas, to the on-going demands of the drama. Claudel believed that the individual words were not so important and could not even be heard in the more violent scenes, and it seems that Milhaud agreed with him. Moreover, his predilection for multiple layers of sound in works such as *Les euménides*, *Christophe Colomb* and *Maximilien* means that it is almost impossible to discern individual words. Rather, one is struck by the impact of the cumulative effect.

Example 4.8 (*Le pauvre matelot*, Act 1, p.17, b.2-3)



Thus, Milhaud's treatment of the language was principally dependant upon what he described as the 'exigences du mouvement dramatique'. (Milhaud, 1992, 106)

Whether or not this affected his treatment of stresses, as he suggested in *Entretiens*, is less certain and will be discussed in relation to his use of spoken declamation.

However, Milhaud shows considerable dramatic sensitivity to characterisation in the range of treatment of the vocal parts in his operas. Here, he employs a fast-paced vocal line for the less sympathetic or less developed characters, such as the sailor in *Le pauvre matelot*. His excessive pride and confidence are matched with a rhythmically even line, the pitch and speed of which make it difficult for the listener to take him seriously, as Example 4.9a indicates.

Example 4.9a (*Le pauvre matelot*, Act I, p.35, b.9-12)

On a vraiment du mal à per-dre l'habi - tu - de des aventu - res. Celle - la se -
 - ra la der - nière et la plus bei - le. Tu me promets ?

Example 4.9b (*Christophe Colomb*, v.s. Pt.I, p.43)

Le Défenseur (se levant sur un autre point du Choeur)
 Der Verteidiger (erhebt sich aus einem andern Teil des Chores)
 Tenor Solo du Choeur

310

Il ne s'a - git pas spé - cia - lo - ment du Roi d'Es - pa - gne, mais de tous les Sou - ve - rains,
 Nicht al - lein vom Kö - ni - ge von Spa - nien ist die Re - de, von den Herrschern ins - ge - samt,
 Navyon Solo du Choeur

Il ne s'a - git pas spé - cia - lo - ment du Roi d'Es - pa - gne, mais de tous les Sou - ve - rains,
 Nicht al - lein vom Kö - ni - ge von Spa - nien ist die Re - de, von den Herrschern ins - ge - samt,
 Bass Solo du Choeur

310

Drch. d'orch. et des instruments
 mp

Orch.
 p

Example 4.9c (*Christophe Colomb*, v.s. Pt. I, p.154-5)

Isabelle
 Isabella

Main - te - nant, o mon Dieu, j'ai fait ma tâ - che et il n'est pas jus - te que je
 Mei - ne Auf - ga - be Herr mein Gott, hab' ich er - füllt, und lie - gest da mich län - ger

vi - ve plus long - temps. J'ai ma - ri - é la Cas - tille et
 le - ben, wär's nicht recht. Ver - mählt hab' ich Ka - sti - lien und A - ra -

Example 4.9d (*Christophe Colomb*, v.s. Pt. II, p.93)

Christophe Colomb

Quel-le joie de pen-ser a-près tou-tas ces af-fre-sex ru-meurs que
O; wie schön ist's, zu den-ken, daß trotz der schreckli-chenschlimmen Ge-rüch-te

Sa Ma-jes-té a é-té sou-dai-ne-ment gué-riol
doch ih-re Ma-je-stät so plötz-lich ganz ge-nast

Example 4.9e (*Les malheurs d'Orphée*, vi Duo d'amour d'Orphée et d'Eurydice, p.26, bars 1-13)

Modéré, sans lenteur $\text{♩} = 116$

EURYDICE

Mon rê-ve, mon dé-

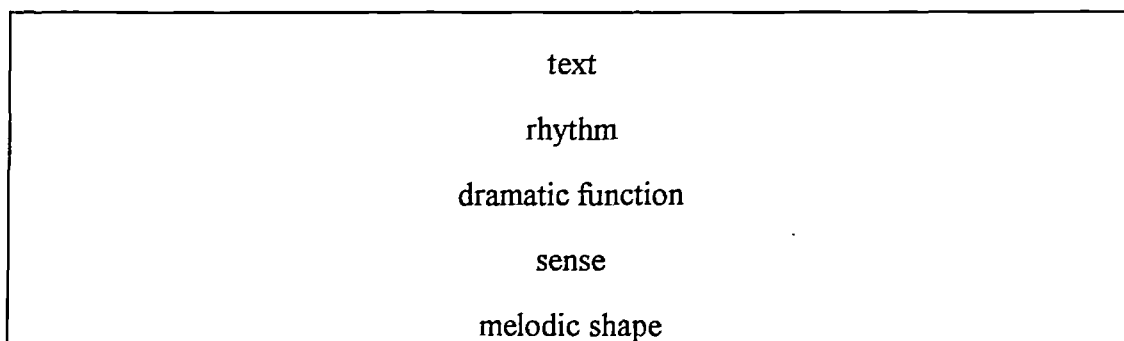
Eur. -sir, Mon es-pé-ran-

Eur. -ce Tu es-là

Equally striking are the monotonous semiquavers sung by three men depicting the counsel in Part I of *Christophe Colomb*, as in Example 4.9b. Such rhythmic rigidity detracts from the actual words, creating a caricature of the character. In contrast, Isabella and Christophe Colomb are given lines with greater melodic and rhythmic flexibility. Isabella's saintly nature is depicted by long, fluid passages with wide leaps and rhythmic variation, while Colomb's part retains the flexibility of Claudel's prose, as in Examples 4.9c and 4.9d. In addition, Milhaud characterises Euridice in *Les malheurs d'Orphée* with an exotically coloured line, which indicates not only her foreign origins, but a genuine warmth towards this character, as Example 4.9e demonstrates.

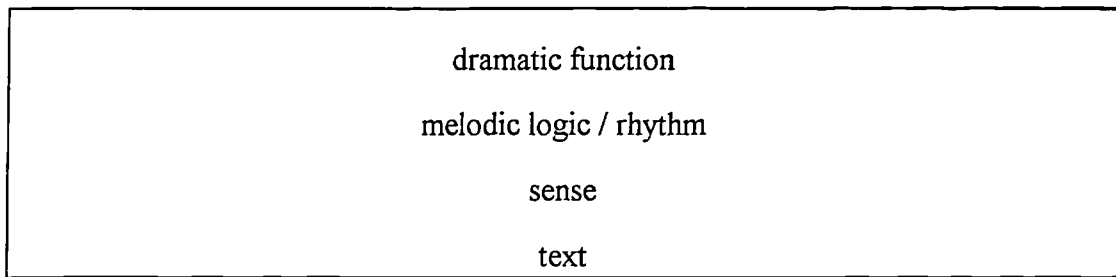
Milhaud displays a range of vocal techniques in his operas to achieve the necessary breadth of characterisation. The above examples demonstrate that, although Milhaud frequently adopted an inflexible line, he did so deliberately and could take into account 'la musique fugace et subtile de la langue française' (Milhaud, 1992, 102) when he felt the situation required it.

It is possible to trace a gradual change in Milhaud's priorities concerning the interaction between music and text. In Milhaud's early works the text which was the source of inspiration reigned supreme, as in the following hierarchical model:



The change becomes apparent in Milhaud's vocal works after 1917 as in the following

model:



Thus the sense, melodic line and dramatic function become more important than the text itself: the music adds another dimension to the text rather than humbly supporting it, as Milhaud had promised Latil in his youth. Milhaud's awareness of the dramatic potential of music increased as his collaboration with Claudel progressed. Moreover, as Milhaud differentiated between the requirements of spoken and sung text, melody and rhythm assumed an independent logic of their own.

ii. The Emancipation from the Text

In 1913, Claudel challenged Milhaud to develop the vigour of the French language through music. He wanted to depict the 'joie sauvage, presque diabolique' of Clytemnestra's frenzied exchange with the chorus after she has killed her husband Agamemnon. (Claudel, 1961, 37) Claudel wrote to Milhaud about finding a solution which was between speech and song. In a letter to Milhaud on 27 May 1913 he elaborated thus:

The words should not necessarily *sing*, rather they should *dance*. We would need to accentuate the rhythmic element, for example, in the strokes of the tambour and other percussion instruments or the short cries of trombones...I feel that at this moment the pure word is not sufficient.²¹²

Here we can see at a stroke that the salient features of Milhaud's declamatory style were, in fact, inspired by Claudel. Milhaud was to develop all of these ideas in later works, excluding the short trombone cries. Claudel's keen dramatic sense is beyond dispute and the clarity of his ideas belies his limited knowledge about the technicalities of music. Yet Milhaud did not take up Claudel's suggestion of a music reduced to a purely rhythmic state with percussive accompaniment at this stage. He attempted, within the framework of melodic writing, to heighten the dramatic impact of the language. As he explained in his *Entretiens*, it occurred

thus in *Agamemnon*, in 1913, where certain words were not accentuated like ordinary language, and where I indicated particular accents. In *Agamemnon*, music intervened in a violent scene between Clytemnestra and the choir...The dramatic situation requires condensed prosody, where the syllables follow the speed of the spoken word.

²¹² Il ne faut pas que sa parole *chante*, il faut qu'elle *danse*, il en faudrait accentuer le rythme avec une rudesse à laquelle la déclamation ordinaire ne suffirait pas. Il faut une 'musique' réduite purement à l'élément rythmique, par ex. à des coups de tambours et autres instruments de percussion ou des cris courts de trombones ... je sens qu'à ce moment la parole pure ne suffit pas... (Ibid., 37)

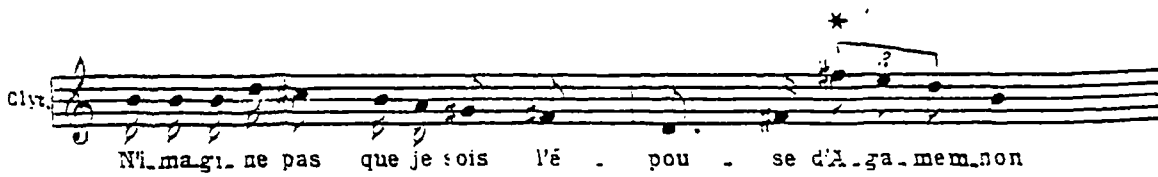
Claudel added that the source of inspiration had come from the 'performers in Arab festivals, who, with cries, tambour strokes and hand clapping, support and make the possessed person dance'. ('assistants dans les fêtes arabes qui avec des cris, des coups de tambour, des battements de main, soutiennent et font danser la Possédée'.) (Ibid., 37)

And if a word is sometimes set off the beat, it is to augment the rhythmic potential and the ferocity of the expression.²¹³

Thus, Milhaud's first solution was to strengthen the effect of the French by deliberate misaccentuation. One way in which he did this was to wrongly stress a key word, as in Examples 4.10a and b. Milhaud combines the unexpected stress with a significant change in tessitura, which exposes it further. Example 4.10c shows his tendency to place definite and indefinite articles and prepositions on strong beats. In Examples 4.10d and e Milhaud accents the first syllable in addition to the penultimate, or the last syllable. This practice, which was to become typical of Milhaud's declamatory writing, increases the rhythmic momentum and vitality of the line. Clearly, this was all in stark contradiction to Constant Lambert's assertion that the 'French as a race have a remarkably poor sense of rhythm'. (Lambert, 1966, 49)

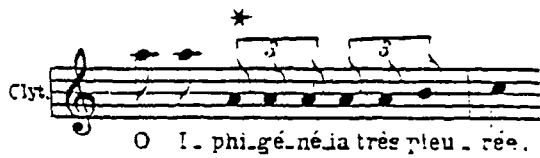
²¹³ Ainsi dans *Agamemnon*, en 1913, où certains mots ne sont pas accentués comme dans le langage ordinaire, et où j'ai indiqué des accents particuliers. Dans *Agamemnon*, la musique intervient dans une scène violente entre Clytemnestre et le chœur... La situation dramatique exige une prosodie ramassée, où les syllabes suivent la rapidité de la parole. Et si parfois un mot est prosodié contretemps, c'est pour en augmenter le potentiel rythmique, la férocité de l'expression. (Milhaud, 1992, 106))

Example 4.10a (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.15, 3rd system, b.1-2)



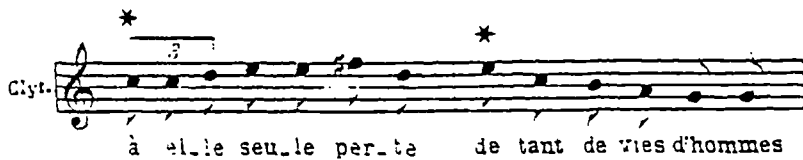
Musical notation for Example 4.10a, showing a single staff with lyrics: Ni_magi_ne pas que je sois l'é . pou . se d'A_ga_mem_non. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. There are two asterisks above the staff, one above the first measure and one above the last measure. A bracket with a '3' is placed over the last three notes of the piece.

Example 4.10b (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.23, 3rd system, b.1)



Musical notation for Example 4.10b, showing a single staff with lyrics: O I_phi_gé_né_ja très pleu_rée. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. There are two asterisks above the staff, one above the first measure and one above the second measure. Brackets with '3' are placed over the first and second measures.

Example 4.10c (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.5, 3rd system, b.1-2)



Musical notation for Example 4.10c, showing a single staff with lyrics: à el_le seu_le per_te de tant de vies d'hommes. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. There are two asterisks above the staff, one above the first measure and one above the fifth measure. A bracket with a '3' is placed over the first three notes of the piece.

Example 4.10d (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.16, 1st system, b.1-4)



Musical notation for Example 4.10d, showing a single staff with lyrics: sous la forme de la femme de ce ca_dav_re C'est l'anti_que ven_geur a_charné d'A_treus. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. There are three asterisks above the staff, one above the first measure, one above the fifth measure, and one above the eighth measure. Brackets with '3' are placed over the first three notes and the fifth, sixth, and seventh notes.

Example 4.10e (*Agamemnon*, v.s. 18, b.5-6)



Musical notation for Example 4.10e, showing a single staff with lyrics: Le sang qui cou_le des meurtres fa_mi_li_aux contrain_t le. The notation includes a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 3/4 time signature. There are two asterisks above the staff, one above the first measure and one above the fifth measure. Brackets with '3' are placed over the first three notes and the fifth, sixth, and seventh notes.

In Part II of the trilogy *L'orestie* (1915), Milhaud developed the rhythmic potential of language a stage further, as he recalled in *Ma vie heureuse*:

I wrote *Les choéphores* on the same principles as the music for *Agamemnon*; but here there are a number of sung scenes throughout the work...then two scenes whose savage and cannibal character presented us with one of the most complex problems to resolve. The lyrical component was not musical. How would one translate and deal with this storm? It is then that I thought of the text being spoken in time and in rhythm and conducted as if it were sung. I wrote for the spoken choirs, sustained by an orchestration composed entirely of percussion instruments, and for the end, after the death of Clytemnestra, a massive Hymn to Justice, where the music regains its rights and which is written for choir and orchestra.²¹⁴

Although he suggests that this was his idea, Milhaud took on board Claudel's notion of 'une "musique" réduite purement à l'élément rythmique'. (Claudel, 1961, 37) In order to accentuate the savage nature of the French language, Milhaud divorced lyrical melody from rhythm. Having dispensed with melody, there was less need to misaccentuate the language as he had in *Agamemnon*. When misaccentuation does occur, it is for special emphasis: for example, when he stresses the first syllable of 'famille' by adding an accent to the fourth semiquaver, as in Example 4.11.

²¹⁴ J'écrivis *Les choéphores* sur les mêmes principes que la musique d'*Agamemnon*; mais ici, dans toute la pièce, il y a de nombreuses scènes chantées...puis deux scènes dont le caractère sauvage, cannibale, nous posait un des plus complexes problèmes à résoudre. L'élément lyrique n'était pas musical. Comment traduire, ordonner cet ouragan? C'est alors que je pensai à faire parler le texte en mesure, rythmé et conduit comme s'il était chanté. J'écrivis des chœurs parlés, soutenus par une orchestration composée uniquement d'instruments de percussion, et, pour finir, après le meurtre de Clytemnestre, un massif Hymne à la Justice, où la musique reprend ses droits et qui est écrit pour chœur et orchestre. (Milhaud, 1927, 30-1)

Example 4.11 (*Les choéphores*, IV 'Présages', o.s. p.104, b. 1-3)

104

II

Fl. I. II. (p) (mp) (mf)

Cl. B. (p) (mp) (mf)

Viol. I. II. p

Viola

Cel. I. II.

Cont. B.

Tamb. solé

Tom. Tom.

Dr. C.

II

S.C. l'éros femelle impatient du jour et de la famille qui est plus fort que la vie et que l'en-

S. Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha

A. Heu Heu Heu Heu Heu Heu

T. Ho Ho Ho Ho Ho Ho

B. Heu Heu Heu Heu Heu Heu

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Dramatically, 'famille' is a key word, being the crux around which the tragic actions revolve: Orestes has returned to avenge his father's death by killing his mother and her lover. More typically, Milhaud employs a variety of rhythms to bring out the natural vitality of the language. In addition to the triplet figures and flowing semiquavers which abound in his early recitative style, Milhaud now uses dotted rhythms and added accents to emphasise certain words, as Example 4.12 shows. Furthermore, in Example 4.12 Milhaud also employs the choir to reinforce certain passages and rhythms. The choir periodically interjects, latching onto key words. Indeed, the choir's few words act as a subtext to the spoken line. However, many of the choir's interjections are sounds rather than words, as Example 4.13 (which leads into Example 4.12) shows. Here, the choir is treated as an extension of the percussion section of the orchestra with similar rhythmic patterns and contrapuntal textures. This appears to be the first time Milhaud used voices in this percussive manner, and it indicates that he was beginning to experiment with the potential of the voice as an instrument. It is also the first example in Milhaud's work of voices freed from the text. By dispensing with both melody and text, Milhaud could focus on the short repeated rhythmic patterns of percussion writing, while retaining a human element within the overall sound panorama. Non-verbal sounds such as breathing and hissing add a primitive dimension to the menacing chanting of the libation-bearer.

Exemple 4.12 (*Les choéphores*, IV, o.s. p.107-109)

(IV)

(IV)

soi - rai de par tie de Mi - rai, tu - a pour le plus grand pla - i - si - r mi, sou - a - mi, con -

Mi - rai tu - a A mi - rai

Mi - rai tu - a A mi - rai

Mi - rai tu - a A mi - rai

Mi - rai tu - a A mi - rai

Mi - rai tu - a A mi - rai

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Cymb.		<i>ff</i>
Tam-tam		<i>ff</i>
Triangl.		<i>ff</i>
Cast. D.		<i>ff</i>
Cast. B.		<i>ff</i>
Tomb.	<i>mp</i>	
Tiro	<i>mp</i>	
Cor. H.	<i>mp</i>	
C.C.		<i>ff</i>
Tomb. clair		<i>ff</i>
Tom Tom		<i>ff</i>
U.C.		<i>f</i>
U.C.		<i>f</i>
1 ^{re}	<p> <i>mf</i> - point de sa tête - te la tête - humer la tête, la </p>	<p> <i>f</i> chien - nel - pen - dant qu'il </p>
2 ^e		<p> <i>mf</i> Chien - ne Chien - ne </p>
3 ^e		<p> <i>mf</i> Chien - ne Chien - ne </p>
4 ^e		<p> <i>mf</i> Chien - ne Chien - </p>
5 ^e		<p> <i>mf</i> Chien - ne </p>

Milhaud retains the important role assigned to the chorus in Greek drama by allowing it to dictate the musical and dramatic form. Figure 4.14 outlines the basic structure:

Figure 4.14 *Les choéphores*, IV 'Présages'

	p.101-106 A	p.107-109 b.3 B	p.109 b.4-p.112 b.3 A	p.113-117(end) A recap.
choir	breathing	text (echoes)	breathing climax: (p.112 b.1) homophonic	breathing climax: (p.116 b.1) 10 simultaneous rhythmic patterns
solo voice	declaimed, non-repetitive	declaimed, non-repetitive	declaimed, non-repetitive	in counterpoint with the choir and percussion
percussion	repeated rhythmic patterns throughout	repeated rhythmic patterns throughout	p.112 b.1 tacet	simultaneous rhythmic patterns

As Figure 4.14 shows, Milhaud considerably varies his textures. For example, on p.112 b.2 the choir is treated homophonically in order to accentuate the words 'le crime de Lemnos', whereas he builds in the maximum complexity into the climax on p.116 b.1, creating ten simultaneous rhythmic patterns with the choir, percussion instruments and solo voice. It is a powerful moment in which percussion and voices fuse to form one rhythmic and contrapuntal force.

In 1918, Milhaud found another way of exploiting the percussive potential of vocal writing in the trio he composed for Claudel's play *L'ours et de la lune*. The trio follows Claudel's suggestion in his letter of 1913 in calling for declaimed voices and tambour. Milhaud achieves the hypnotic patterns of percussion writing through this rare use of textual repetition, as example 4.15 illustrates.

tu - ra Il me res - te mal gré l'U - ra - ge le sen - ti - ment de la Lu -

vert je

Bic Bec Brac Brac

49 49 49 49

tu - ra Il me res - te mal gré l'U - ra - ge le sen - ti - ment de la Na -

mo - le dis - tri - bu - tion de En

Floque unique Sac Soque Or - gi - bus Gor - gi -

49 49 49 49 49 49 49 49

tu ————— re

ne

————— bus

(long)

te

fff

49 49

Rio de Janeiro - 1^{er} Novembre 1948

The text is repeated six times, the final time in diminution. There is even internal rhythmic repetition in beats two and three of each phrase. The words are significant in that they generate the rhythmic pattern. Milhaud superimposes this line against three others, which have varying degrees of regularity. The chorus quickly breaks out of a triplet pattern to become the most unpredictable line with a non-repetitive text. The tambour simply marks out the pulse, while the Moon has a slow-moving rhythmic pattern with non-sensical words, followed by Latin. This is another example of Milhaud experimenting with rhythmic patterns in the voice, but this time the interest is not focused just around one line of text: the trio of *L'ours et de la lune* is a superimposition of four independent rhythmic lines.

In *Les euménides* (1917-22) Milhaud introduced both solo declamation, at the beginning of the opera, and choral declamation at the end of Act 2. This is initially in unison, but is later divided into two independent parts, as shown in Example 4.16. Here, the focus is rhythmic because of the impossibility of comprehending the simultaneous lines of words. This is reinforced by the direction 'à peine articulé': the effect is more important than the words themselves. Milhaud also makes the parts dynamically independent, and at the beginning of the example he calls for differentiation in pitch and tone in the directions 'élevez un peu la voix' and 'crié'. The choir's return to the more articulate unison, marked 'très rythmé' and 'sauvage', is characterised by the dotted rhythms and added accents which Milhaud associated with more violent, robust expression. However, Milhaud's final marking 'très doucement' and 'murmuré' shows that spoken declamation was capable, not only of robustness, but also of sensitive expression.

Example 4.16 (*Les euménides* Act 2, v.s. p.167, b.3 - 168, b.13)

élevez un peu la voix mf *crié*

Th. Il est des cas où la terre est bonne, Où l'inquisition de la pensée doit te surprendre: Il

crié *mp*

U ne vien non point sans règle Mais sans tyransurelle Je la loue Dieu à ce qui tient le milieu donne

Ch. sert d'apprendre la sagesse de for... ce Qui jamais dans la lumière n'emit son cœur à la

mp

prépondérance. ce Qui garde un terme avec l'autre en sa vue De qui est voisine celle pensée

Th. sour... ce mortelle ou vile Il respecterait la justice Voir.

pp

Qu'insoience est fille de l'impunité Mais que finit d'une âme saine est le bonheur

Ch. ...ci ce que je dis à tous Respect à la base sacrée du droit Et ne va pas d'un pied sans dieu

Celui qui d'après de belles nécessités est juste n'échappe rapas au bonheur. Pour lui pas de

crié *f* *mf* *crié* *ff* *mf*

Ch. outrageusement pour le profit que tu vois la heurter La peine est proche, la fin est

per-te-to-la-le Mais cet an-tre téméraire Je le vois qui de l'injuste cargaison o-père le jet.

Mme Milhaud has pinpointed *L'homme et son désir* (1918) as one of her husband's most important works. (in conversation with the author, June 1993) In her view, the man struggling with life, nature and desire had deep personal resonances for Milhaud and his own development. Furthermore, the work was a key one musically, being his first ballet and his most concentrated study to date in percussion writing. The rhythms were inspired by the Brazilian forests, and the forest is an important image in the ballet. In his essay, *The influence of Latin-American music on my work* (1944), he described the forest in musical terms:

...we were in constant contact with the virgin forest and its mysteries. I shall never forget how, at the sunset, the nocturnal sounds of the forest burst forth suddenly, the simple life-noises of little animals of all kinds: toads, birds, insects, vibrating together in a richness of undreamed-of tonalities, dominated by the lianes and the orchids suspended from the high branches of those gigantic trees over which the Southern Cross and the Centaur keep watch. If one could hear percussion played in a sustained pianissimo one might have somewhat the same impression. (Milhaud, 1944, 1-2)

Similarly, in his preface to the score, Claudel wrote of the motivation behind *L'homme et son désir*:

This little drama was born out of the ambience of the Brazilian forest where we were, in a sense, submerged, and which almost has the regular consistency of an object. How strange the night is when it begins to fill up with movements, cries and glimmering lights. It is precisely one of these nights which our poem intends to represent.²¹⁵

It is this which Milhaud tries to evoke through his vast array of unpitched percussion instruments.²¹⁶ He had already experimented with short rhythmic patterns in *Les*

²¹⁵ Ce petit drame plastique est issu de l'ambiance de la forêt brésilienne où nous étions en quelque sorte submergés et qui a presque la consistance uniforme d'un élément. Qu'elle est étrange, la nuit, quand elle commence à s'emplier de mouvements, de cris et de lueurs! Et c'est précisément une de ces nuits que notre Poème a l'intention de figurer. (Milhaud/Claudel, *L'homme et son désir*, Universal Edition, 1969, ii)

²¹⁶ These instruments consist of cymbales, castagnettes de fer, grosse caisse (I), tambour de basque, tambourin provençal, tambour (sans timbre), fouet, triangle, caisse roulante, grelots, cymbales (I), machine à vent, marteau sur un planche, caisse claire (avec timbre), sifflet, sifflet sirene, tamtam, cymbales (II), castagnettes de bois, grosse caisse (II).

choéphores, but apart from the greater range of instruments, Milhaud employs denser and more complex rhythms here, as a comparison between example 4.17a and 4.17b shows. Example 4.17a is taken from the incantation scene in *Les choéphores*, while example 4.17b comes from the forest scene where all the forest creatures watch the sleeping man in *L'homme et son désir*. In *Les choéphores* the rhythms are simpler and more direct. In contrast, there is a marked use of syncopation in Example 4.18b, which is typical of the work as a whole. In *Ma vie heureuse* Milhaud wrote about the rhythms in Brazilian popular music:

The rhythms of this popular music intrigued and fascinated me. There was an imperceptible pause in the syncopation, a careless catch in the breath, a slight hiatus which I found very difficult to grasp. Then I bought a quantity of maxixes and tangos; I endeavoured to play them with their syncopation which passed from one hand to the other.²¹⁷

It seems that Milhaud sought to assimilate the hypnotic syncopation of these indigenous dances into this work. He also achieved the slight pause - like a catch in the breath - in his use of rests, which break up the phrases into shorter patterns than those generally found in *Les choéphores*. Moreover, the lines are more individually distinct. Rather than simply underlining the beat, the diverse rhythmic patterns are superimposed on one another, contributing to a dense overall texture, which convincingly evokes the multitudinous sounds of the forest.

²¹⁷ Les rythmes de cette musique populaire m'intriguaient et me fascinaient. Il y avait dans la syncope une imperceptible suspension, une respiration nonchalante, un léger arrêt qu'il m'était très difficile de saisir. J'achetai alors une quantité de maxixes et de tangos; je m'efforçai de les jouer avec leurs syncopes qui passent d'une main à l'autre. (Milhaud, 1987, 67)

Example 4.17a (*Les choéphores*, IV, o.s. p.111-2)

111

The musical score is arranged in a system with multiple staves. From top to bottom, the staves are labeled as follows:

- Fl. m.b.** (Flute in middle C)
- Clarin. b.** (Clarinet in B)
- Violoncelle** (Cello)
- Contreb.** (Double Bass)
- Tam. b.** (Bass Drum)
- Tym.** (Tom)
- Corn. b.** (Bass Horn)
- Corn. a.** (Alto Horn)
- Clarin. a.** (Clarinet in A)
- Tam. a.** (Alto Drum)
- Har. p.** (Harp)
- I.C.** (Instrumental Chorus)
- S.** (Soprano)
- C.** (Contralto)
- T.** (Ténor)
- B.** (Bass)

The lyrics for the vocal parts are:

Mé-lons donc au premier rug l'histoi-re de Lem-nus, carhaquefoisqu'il parle d'une alemine.

Below the vocal staves, there are markings for **Ha** (Hautbois) and **Fr** (Fagot) with horizontal lines indicating their playing periods.

(VII)

Cymb.

Gongolo

Triangle

Cast. F.

Cast. B.

Tam-t.

Tambor.

Vln.

Vcl. B.

C.C.

Tromb.

Tom Tom

Dr. C.

Dr. M.

ff

(VII)

Ten. tout, c'est tou-jours Le cri - me de Lon-ton?

S. Le cri - me de Lon-ton, Lon-ton!

C. Le cri - me de Lon-ton, Lon-ton!

T. Le cri - me de Lon-ton, Lon-ton!

B. Le cri - me de Lon-ton, Lon-ton!

R. ZWITT

Exemple 4.17b (*L'homme et son désir*, v.s. p.29, b.1-4)

Vif
||: *Rep. ad libitum* *) ||

The musical score consists of 16 staves. From top to bottom, they are labeled: Fl. (Fl.), Tromp. (Tromp.), Tromb. (Tromb.), Cor (Cor), Viol. (Viol.), Vcl. (Vcl.), Ccl. (Ccl.), Cb. (Cb.), Perc. (Perc.), Str. (Str.), and Sf. s. (Sf. s.). The score is divided into four measures. The first measure is marked 'f' and the second 'pp'. The third measure is marked 'ff' and the fourth 'pp'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

*) Recommencer ces deux mesures jusqu'à l'entrée des danseurs munis d'instruments, en augmentant chaque fois (usqu'à fff).
Diese zwei Takte wiederholen bis zum Auftritt der Tänzer, die Instrumente bei sich haben; immer mehr steigern bis fff.

Example 4.18 (*L'homme et son désir*, v.s. p.6, b.4 - p.7, b.6)

Cédez *Plus modéré* (♩ = 66)

S.
C.
T.
B.

Cast. d. b.
Cymb. (B)
Gr. C. (B)

Cédez *Plus modéré* (♩ = 66)

The musical score consists of several staves. The top four staves are for vocal parts: Soprano (S.), Contralto (C.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The fifth staff is for Castanets (Cast. d. b.), the sixth for Cymbals (Cymb. (B)), and the seventh for Grand Cymbals (Gr. C. (B)). The bottom two staves are for the piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Plus modéré' with a quarter note equal to 66 beats per minute. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *pp* (pianissimo). There are also markings for 'Cédez' and 'Plus modéré'. The piano part features triplets and slurs.

S.
C.
T.
B.
Gn.C.(A)

pp

S.
C.
T.
B.
Thin proc.
Tamb.(s.s.)
C.roul.
Cl.(a.2.)
Tamp.
Cast.d.f.
Gn.C.(A)

ppp
ppp
ppp
ppp
p
p

The principal difference between the rhythmic treatment in *Les choéphores* and that of *L'homme et son désir* lies in their musical and dramatic function. Whereas in the former work the rhythm supports and complements the accompanying text, in the latter the rhythm provides the foreground: it becomes the principal musical focus in the ballet. Moreover, it is capable of a wide range of expression and is active throughout the drama. Milhaud had never before achieved this range within the sphere of rhythm, nor was any other composer in France so inventive within this field. He had developed it to depict violence, but in *L'homme et son désir*, it had acquired a wider application and is only absent for the first twelve bars of scene VII where the woman entices the man to follow her. The fact that the vibrant rhythms in Example 4.17b depict the colourful life within the forest testify to its increased dramatic role. In this ballet Milhaud found a role for rhythm which was not only emancipated from the text but also motivated directly by the dramatic exigencies of gesture and dance.

Milhaud also freed the voices in *L'homme et son désir* from the demands of the text, using them as melodic instrumental lines. In *Les choéphores* and *L'ours et de la lune* the chorus had been given the rhythmic patterns of percussion instruments, whereas in *L'homme et son désir* he experimented with the soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices for their purely sonorous colour. Milhaud made a range of demands on the voices, from long sustained chords to more complex part writing, as in Example 4.18. Here Milhaud applies a string quartet texture to voices. This excerpt is based on three motivic ideas which are heard simultaneously in the first bar and are thereafter treated imitatively. After its initial statement, the soprano continues with the tenor theme. Even the somewhat static one-bar phrase in the bass is taken up by the alto in bar five. The bass finally participates in the contrapuntal exchange in the last two bars of the excerpt. Milhaud treats the arch-shaped, flowing lines as instrumental melodies, giving no indication which vowel should be used. It is also notable that the voices and the percussion frequently vie for prominence, and the percussion temporarily disappears in Example 4.18 when the voices enter. This is indicative of the separation

which Milhaud had developed between purely rhythmic and lyrical expression, as the model in Figure 4.19 outlines within the context of his vocal works:

Figure 4.19

Text	
rhythmic articulation	melody
unpitched	pitched
text optional	text optional
(Ex 4.17a and 4.17b)	(Ex. 4.18)

The changing preoccupation from vocal to instrumental writing was a gradual one. From 1916 Milhaud began to write for vocal ensembles, for example the *Deux poèmes*, op.39 (1916-9) and *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, op.42 (1917), but it was not until 1918 that his treatment of these ensembles was instrumental rather than vocal in a conventional sense. One can see this transformation within *Les euménides* which was composed between 1917-1922. Act 1 opens with spoken declamation, but is otherwise traditional in its treatment of the voice. In Act 2 Milhaud introduces the goddess Athena, symbolically allotting three female voices to depict her god-like nature. In Act 3 he adds 'the assembly of the people of Athens' to the texture. It is in this act that he superimposes the various vocal techniques, as Example 4.20b shows. In Example 4.20a the voices of the 'assembly of the people of Athens' create the orchestral texture in place of instruments. This dense choral-like polytonal texture becomes more agitated with the introduction of the other voices, shown in Example 4.20b. Indeed, the flourishes in the soprano part are more typical of woodwind writing (for example, the oboe). An undulating theme in continuous quavers is supplied by a section of the choir, while the trio representing Athena, in sustained parallel octaves, contributes an ethereal quality, characteristic of organ writing. From

the midst of this texture, the more conventional vocal writing of the upper choir part and Apollo have their place, but are by no means in the foreground of this skilful piece of experimental vocal writing.

The clearest statement of this extended use of the voice is in Milhaud's Sixth Chamber Symphony (1923), which is scored for vocal quartet plus oboe and cello. It forms the last of a set of six studies in ensemble combinations, which Milhaud began in Rio de Janeiro. In Example 4.21 the oboe and cello frame the voices with short repeated ostinato patterns, which are mostly in octaves (except in bars 22-3 when they move into major 9ths). This framing device is also used by Milhaud in his Second Chamber Symphony (3rd movement) (1918), Third Chamber Symphony (1st movement) (1921) and his *Machines agricoles* (1919). However, this example differs from the others in that Milhaud is attempting to blend rather than contrast the different 'instrumental' sonorities. The voices, although limited in range and fragmented, have essentially the same character. This is a rare attempt by Milhaud to blend heterogeneous sounds, although here the voices are forced to conform to the character set by the oboe and cello.

Example 4.20a (*Les euménides*, Act 3, p.247)

Les on procede au vote

L'ASSEMBLÉE DU PEUPLE D'ATHÈNES

SOPRANI
MEZZI & CONTRALTI
TENORS
BARYT. & BASSES

pp

PIANC tacet. (à l'Orchestre: Batterie)

L'Ass.

L'Ass.

Example 4.20b (*Les euménides*, Act 3, p.251)

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system features a vocal line for Apollo (A) and a Chorus (Ch.). The Apollo part has a melodic line with a high note marked 'a'. The Chorus part has a vocal line with lyrics: "Par - le. Si la sen - tence me débouté, je se - rai à ce pa - ys u - ne visi - teu - se ma -". Below the vocal lines is the piano accompaniment (L'Acc.) with multiple staves. The second system features a vocal line for Apollo (A) and a Chorus (Ch.). The Apollo part has a melodic line with a high note marked 'a'. The Chorus part has a vocal line with lyrics: "Les dieux nouveaux comme les anciens te mé - pri - sent, c'est moi qui l'emporte -". Below the vocal lines is the piano accompaniment (L'Acc.) with multiple staves.

Example 4.21 (Sixth Chamber Symphony, 1923, I, p.5)

20

ob
S
A
T
B
VC

pp
mf
p
p
pp

25

p

Milhaud's experimentation with unusual instrumental combinations is symptomatic of a gradual shift in emphasis from vocal to ensemble writing which manifested itself during his stay in Brazil. As Milhaud admitted in his article *Musique et danse*: 'The two years which I spent in this country with Paul CLAUDEL have been a great influence on my musical development'.²¹⁸ Claudel's role in shaping and encouraging this development cannot be overestimated; it is surely no coincidence that the majority of the pivotal works discussed in this section sprang from his texts or scenarios. Neither should the importance of Brazil be overlooked. Being temporarily removed from the overwhelming pull of Parisian musical culture gave Milhaud the freedom to experiment with new influences and preoccupations, which infused his style with a freshness and originality benefiting his own musical development and enriching his contribution to the French musical tradition.

²¹⁸ 'Les deux années que j'ai passées dans ce pays avec Paul CLAUDEL ont eu une grande influence sur mon développement musical'. (c. 1943, 1)

Chapter 5: Milhaud and Polytonality

Among the techniques that dissolved tonal harmony, bi- or polytonality is notable for its tendency to promote a contrapuntal style. Although it appears to proceed from the superimposition of chords of different keys (as in Strauss's *Elektra*), it is possible to consider the contrapuntal manifestation (as in Milhaud) as the truly representative one. (Dahlhaus, 1980, 850)

Although Dahlhaus cites Milhaud as the principal exponent of contrapuntal polytonality, Milhaud's first experiments in this field were harmonic. As such, they reflect his predominantly harmonic musical thinking in early works, such as 'Nuit à la vérandah' (1912) in *La connaissance de l'est*, the 1913 version of *Alissa* and *Agamemnon*. Indeed, in *Agamemnon* one can see the first signs of emerging polytonality. The work is based on a strict harmonic scheme in which the bass descends by a semi-tone through the chromatic scale from A to A. On this a repeated melodic phrase starting on F# is superimposed which remains constant, as Examples 5.1a (bars 2ff) and 5.1b (bars 8ff) show. In Example 5.1a the bass reaches Eb and the upper parts are in the transposed dorian mode, with a feeling of aggressive modernity produced by the accented parallel 4ths. In Example 5.1b the transposed dorian melody is placed over a C major chord, but the clashing Dbs, Bbs and Abs in piano 1 create a consistently dissonant effect. Milhaud also employs the octatonic scale (starting on E) in bars 9-10 of the vocal line. In both examples, each part appears to have its own harmonic logic, although the notes C, E and G are common to three of the parts in Example 5.1b. Stravinsky had exerted an important influence on Milhaud's harmonic polytonality, as Milhaud acknowledged. He wrote in *Entretiens* that, 'at the time of the *Sacre*, it was the harmonic combinations that certainly helped me then in my research.'²¹⁹ However, Milhaud had also been exposed to the harmonic experiments of his older friend Koechlin, in particular, his *Quatrième recueil de mélodies* (1905-9) and his *Viola Sonata* (op.53). In Paul Collaer's view,

²¹⁹ Mais à l'époque du *Sacre*, ce sont des agrégations harmoniques qui m'ont certainement aidé dans mes recherches d'alors. (Milhaud, 1992, 48-9)

Example 5.1a (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.19)

Qui, fai_sant comparu_tion ausangcaillé des en -
 noir Hadés. A

Pn 1

Pn 2

Detailed description: This system contains the first vocal entry. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "Qui, fai_sant comparu_tion ausangcaillé des en - noir Hadés." The piano accompaniment (Pn 1 and Pn 2) features a complex texture with triplets and sixteenth-note patterns. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The system concludes with a fermata over the word "Hadés" and a section marker "A".

CLYTEMNESTRE *..f*

-fants dé_vo_rés, cons_titue_ra as_sis_tance. O mon roi,
 A A

Detailed description: This system contains the second vocal entry for Clytemnestra. The vocal line (treble clef) has lyrics: "-fants dé_vo_rés, cons_titue_ra as_sis_tance. O mon roi,". The piano accompaniment (Pn 1 and Pn 2) continues with similar rhythmic patterns. The system concludes with a fermata over the word "O" and a section marker "A".

Example 5.1b (*Agamemnon*, v.s. p.32)

CLYTEMNESTRE *mp*

Il ne te sied pas de rappeler ce soin, nous pourvoi-

Pn1 *mp* *p*

Pn2 *mp* *p*

Clyt. *mp*

- rons comme à sa mort à sa sépultu - re, non point parmi les pleurs de sa famille,

Clyt. *mp*

Mais la ca - res - sante Iphi - gé - né - la, la fil - le, comme il convient,

'Milhaud owes a great deal to Koechlin... [He] played a considerable role in moulding his perceptions and directing his technical development. The mark of this influence is visible up to the time of the composition of *Les choéphores*.' (Collaer, 1988, 40)

Orledge reinforced this view in his monograph on Koechlin, when he wrote that 'the vertical polytonality of the Viola Sonata had a considerable influence on Milhaud, most notably in his choral work *Les choéphores* (op.24) begun during the summer of 1915', which was immediately after he had given the first performance of Koechlin's Viola Sonata with Jeanne Herscher-Clément on 27 May. (Orledge, 1989, 117) The main difference between the two composers is that rhythmic organisation plays a far more important role with Milhaud.

In *Ma vie heureuse*, Milhaud succinctly described the nature of his initial experiments with different tonalities:

I set about studying all the possible combinations of superimposing two tonalities and examining the chords thus obtained. I also researched their inversions. I tried all the imaginable solutions while modifying the mode of the keys to which the chords belonged. I did the same thing for three keys.²²⁰

Thus Milhaud systematically explored all the harmonic possibilities of polytonality. He was to adopt a similarly exhaustive approach when he constructed a matrix for the final act of *Les euménides*.²²¹ However, his motivation was by no means purely mathematical, Milhaud was drawn to the range of expression which such combinations of chords offered:

Their sound particularly pleased me more than the others, for a polytonal chord is more subtle in its softness and more violent in its forcefulness.²²²

²²⁰ Je me mis à étudier toutes les combinaisons possibles en superposant deux tonalités et en étudiant les accords ainsi obtenus; je recherchai également ce que produisaient leurs renversements. J'essayai toutes les solutions imaginables en modifiant le mode des tonalités qui composaient ces accords. Je fis le même travail pour trois tonalités. (Milhaud, 1987, 59)

²²¹ For further discussion of Milhaud's compositional matrices for the Finale of Act III of *Les euménides* see Drake, 1989.

²²² Leur audition me satisfaisait plus particulièrement que les autres, car un accord polytonal est plus

He found in polytonality yet another means of expanding the expressive range of French music, and like Koechlin he categorised its different potentialities.

Milhaud entitled his first essay in polytonality 'harmonic variations', the process of which he described in his memoirs as follows:

In *Les choéphores* I had worked on superimposing chords moving in blocks; in *Les euménides*, the similar nature of the music needing to be expressed led me to write in a similar manner.²²³

Examples 5.2a and b show the some ways in which he superimposed different keys in *Les choéphores*. In Example 5.2a the arpeggio figures unambiguously outline the four different chords of F, Bb, A and D. However, the potentially dissonant effect is minimised by the soft dynamic and the marking 'très doux'; here polytonality is being used to heighten the dramatic expression of the Incantation. The excerpt shown in Example 5.2b is particularly striking in that Milhaud writes in parallel lines a tritone apart, starting in C minor and F# minor and moving to Eb major and A major respectively. This synchronicity is further heightened by octave reinforcement and doubling at the fifth in both keys. This predilection for open fifths is also a trait in his pre-polytonal works. Moreover, Milhaud separates the instruments into two homogenous groups, and by exploiting the range of the orchestra, achieves a dense rather than a highly dissonant sound. Although this excerpt is melodic, the emphasis is clearly in the interaction of the chords; the lines move and modulate as one voice without any individual autonomy.

There are numerous passages of harmonic polytonality in *Les euménides*. Milhaud felt that a similar musical approach was appropriate for the continuation of the story-line in the third part of the Orestia trilogy. He frequently employed rising and

subtil dans la douceur, plus violent dans la force. (Ibid., 60)

²²³ J'avais travaillé dans *Les choéphores* les superpositions d'accords en procédant par masses; dans *Les euménides*, la nature même de la musique à exprimer m'entraînait à une écriture semblable. (Ibid., 69)

Example 5.2a (*Les choéphores*, 'Incantation', v.s. 38, b.1-2)

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, marked 'Mouvement'. It contains the lyrics 'veut, à des accents plus heureux,'. A triplet of eighth notes is indicated above the first two measures. The second and third staves are for the right hand of a piano, marked 'p_{n1}' and 'p très doux'. The fourth and fifth staves are for the left hand of a piano, marked 'p_{n2}' and 'p très doux'. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and a more active melodic line in the right hand. An arrow points from the piano part to the vocal line, indicating a specific rhythmic or melodic relationship.

Example 5.2b (*Les choéphores*, vi 'La justice et la lumière', o.s. p.154-5)

The image displays a page of a musical score for the opera *Les choéphores* by Debussy. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. At the top, there are staves for Flute VI, Clarinet II, Bassoon, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in B-flat, Clarinet in E-flat, Trumpet, Trombone, Timpani, and Cymbals. Below these are the vocal parts for Soprano (S.), Contralto (C.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The bottom section of the score includes Violins I and II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The music is written in a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. A circled letter 'J' is placed above the first staff and below the vocal staves, indicating a specific section or measure. The vocal parts have lyrics in French: "Je suis de ce grand" and "Je suis de ce grand". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *ppp* and *mp*. A rehearsal mark 'II. 100 000' is visible at the bottom of the page.

Example 5.3 (*Les euménides* Act 1, v.s. p.77)

Lent $\text{♩} = 84$
3 APOLLON

J'1

(elles sortent)

je dé-chain-ne la meu-te.

ppp

Lent $\text{♩} = 84$
en dehors
ppp

A. 5

-rai au secours de mon suppliant et je le verrai saur Car

descending parallel chords, orbiting around separate tonal spheres, as in bars 3-6 of the extract from the final section of Act 1 shown in Example 5.3.

Furthermore, Milhaud took harmonic polytonality to its limit in superimposing all twelve notes of the scale, as in Example 5.4, from Act 3 of the same work. This was something he had done for the first time, but less conspicuously, in *Les choéphores*. Koechlin also superimposed all twelve notes in his works, although not until the mid-1920s and usually in superimposed perfect fourths (over five octaves) or superimposed perfect fifths (over seven octaves) to create luminous effects. Milhaud discussed this in his article 'Polytonalité et atonalité' (1923):

In superimposing the twelve notes of the scale we obtain a chord composed of the twelve notes of the chromatic scale, which can be spaced in a variety of ways, the simplest being at the interval of a fourth or fifth. This is because of the equidistance which separates each note of the chord...Here all the notes become reunited and it is as if there were none: polytonality infringes on the domain of atonality...One can see how the expressive possibilities are augmented by the different stages which span from bitonality to the simultaneous handling of the twelve tones. The expressive range can thus be considerably extended.²²⁴

Milhaud's use of all twelve notes in Example 5.4 is expressive and harmonically orientated; it punctuates and gradually dominates an already busy contrapuntal texture with its sheer weight. However, he does not adhere to his own recommendation for spacing out the chords in order to minimise the dissonance, as Koechlin did, but focuses on the thick atonal mass of sound produced. Although Milhaud rarely stretched polytonality to such atonal limits, Examples 5.4, 5.5a and b show his predilection for dense, complex and systematically organised textures.

²²⁴ En superposant les douze tons de la gamme nous obtenons un accord se composant des douze notes de la gamme chromatique que l'on peut disposer d'une infinité de manières, mais dont les plus simples sont par quarts et par quintes à cause de l'équidistance qui sépare chaque note de cet accord...Ici tous les tons se trouvent réunis et c'est comme s'il n'y en avait aucun: la polytonalité empiète sur le domaine de l'atonalité...On voit par les différentes étapes qui s'échelonnent de la bitonalité jusqu'au maniement des douze tons à la fois combien les possibilités d'expression sont augmentées. L'échelle expressive se trouve ainsi considérablement étendue. (Milhaud/Drake, 1982, 182)

Example 5.4 (*Les euménides*, Act 3, v.s. p.190-3)

Assembly of the people of Athens

The musical score is divided into three main sections. The top section, labeled 'Assembly of the people of Athens', consists of four staves of music. The middle section, labeled 'RIDEAU', is indicated by a dashed line and contains three staves of music. The bottom section consists of three staves of music, labeled Pn1, Pn2, and Pn3, representing the piano accompaniment for three pianos. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

This musical score consists of three systems. The first system contains four staves: a vocal line in treble clef with lyrics 'a be' above it, and three piano accompaniment staves (treble, middle, and bass clefs). The second system is a grand staff for piano, consisting of five staves (treble, middle, and bass clefs) with a dashed line above the top staff. The third system continues the piano accompaniment with four staves (treble, middle, and bass clefs). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

This musical score is divided into three systems. The first system consists of four staves: three vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor) and one piano accompaniment staff. The second system features a piano accompaniment with a complex, dense texture of chords and arpeggios, indicated by a dashed line and the number '8'. The third system continues the piano accompaniment with similar complex textures, marked with the number '9'. The piano part includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

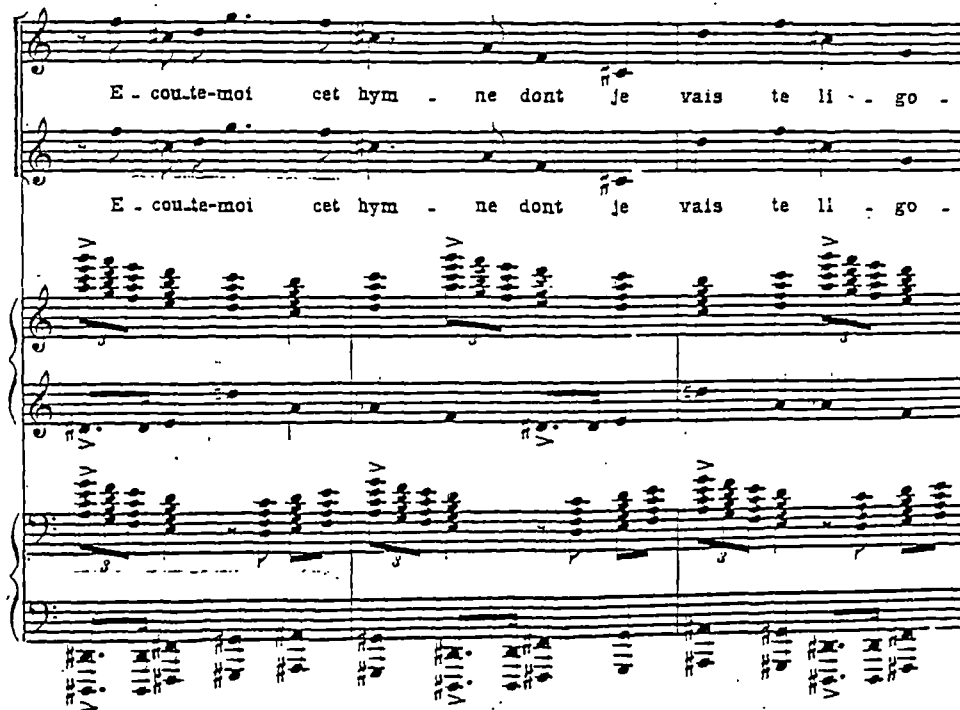
This page of a musical score contains three systems of staves. The top system consists of four staves, likely for a string quartet, with a treble clef on the first three and a bass clef on the fourth. The middle system is for piano, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a dashed line above the first staff indicating an octave. The bottom system is for a second piano part, also with a grand staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings like *f* and *p*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is common time (C). The page number 194 is centered at the bottom.

Example 5.5a (*Les euménides*, Act 2, v.s. p.104)



Ch.
Je te man-ge-rai vi-vant sans que l'ont'ait a-bat-tu à l'au-tel.
Je te man-ge-rai vi-vant sans que l'ont'ait a-bat-tu à l'au-tel.

Pn1
Pn2



E-cou-te-moi cet hym-ne dont je vais te li-go.
E-cou-te-moi cet hym-ne dont je vais te li-go.

Example 5.5b (*Les euménides*, Act 3, v.s. p.175)

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a melodic line and a dashed line above it. Below it are two staves for Piano 1 (Pn1), then two staves for Piano 2 (Pn2), and finally two staves for Piano 3 (Pn3). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The second system of the musical score continues the composition with five staves. It features the same vocal line and piano parts (Pn1, Pn2, Pn3) as the first system. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

In Example 5.5a, the vocal parts could easily be swamped by the ascending torrent of parallel 7th chords combining every white note simultaneously with rising pentatonic scales in major seconds or minor thirds. On the whole, adjacent minor 2nds are avoided between the voices and accompaniment, although this does not hold true for Example 5.5b, where clashing minor seconds abound, as shown. Furthermore, this excerpt reveals a certain autonomy between the musical lines, employing four simultaneous musical ideas. Within such a dense texture, the separate nature of these lines is impossible to discern aurally. By focusing on the dissonance and stratified polyrhythms, Milhaud was exploiting the aggressive and violent possibilities of such chords within a contrapuntal organisation that is perceptible on paper at least. It is worth noting that there were French precedents for extreme dissonance as far back as J.P.E. Martini, whose overture to *Sapho* (1794) contains a twelve note chord. (See Orledge, 1989, 44)

Milhaud has been criticised for overloading his textures, particularly in larger-scale works such as *Les euménides*, *Christophe Colomb* and *Maximilien*.²²⁵ However, it is possible to account for this tendency in Milhaud, who always felt at ease with the presence of background noise. For example, in *Ma vie heureuse* he described his arrival in Paris to study at the Conservatoire:

I have always liked movement and noise has never bothered me. On the contrary, it was therefore a real joy for me to contemplate the boulevards from my window, the nuisance of the cabs, the coach drivers with top hats gleaming with polish, the double-decker buses...²²⁶

Mme Milhaud also insisted that Milhaud was never deterred from composing by the busy street noises outside their flat in the Boulevard de Clichy; indeed, he preferred

²²⁵ See Drake, 1989.

²²⁶ J'ai toujours aimé le mouvement et le bruit ne m'a jamais gêné, au contraire: ce fut donc pour moi une véritable joie que de contempler les boulevards de ma fenêtre, les embarras de fiacres, les cochers aux chapeaux hauts de forme luisants en toile cirée, les omnibus à impériale... (Milhaud, 1987, 26)

this to complete silence. (in conversation with the author, May 1992) Moreover, Milhaud also enthusiastically described the blanket of dense sound that emanated from the Brazilian forest at night. Drake suggested that Milhaud became accustomed to noise by hearing the almond-grinding machines as a child in Provence. (in conversation with the author, June 1993) Whatever the reasons, it seems certain that Milhaud was able to tolerate considerably more simultaneous sounds in his own music than could the average ear, and this has led to some miscalculations in the balancing of musical forces within these larger works.

Although Milhaud felt it was appropriate in *Les euménides* to adopt a similar harmonic style to that of *Les choéphores*, there are many examples which confirm that *Les euménides* was composed over the five years between 1917 and 1922, when Milhaud began to change from vertical to linear polytonal writing. There are several instances of fugal and imitative writing, as in Example 5.6. Here, the basic motif (marked 'a'), undergoes a slight extension in each part. The parts begin together on beat 3 of the bar 2, but Milhaud delays the drop (of a 5th, major 6th, 5th and minor 7th respectively) by 1 beat in each line. As a result each subsequent motive is one beat longer than the previous one, thus shifting the vertical effect with each repetition and creating a lively imitative exchange. The extreme simplicity of this short repeated motive is indicative of a tendency in Milhaud, which manifested itself from 1917, to pare down his musical ideas to their essential elements. In Example 5.7 Milhaud further applied contrapuntal techniques - in this case, progressive augmentation - to the basic chromatic motive in piano 2. In this striking opening to Act II, Milhaud is playing with the conventions of species counterpoint, which was a mainstay of Paris Conservatoire academic teaching. By maintaining the rhythmic integrity of the individual lines, this excerpt looks like an exercise in 'contrepoint à quatre parties'. Indeed, it is not unlike the following excerpt (Ex. 5.8) from an article on 'Le contrepoint' by Eugène Cools (one of Milhaud's teachers), published in Lavignac's *Encyclopédie de la musique*, although Milhaud has added a line of chromatic quavers

Example 5.6 (*Les euménides*, v.s. 29)

Plus animé

A. *ces-se renais-sante et remon-tan-te Et par de-là la mer et les cités que l'eau en-*

Mouv: ♩ = 92

a1
a2
a3
a4

A. *- tou-re Et ne perds point le cœur dans le re-mâchement de ces maux jusqu'à ce qu'arri-*

3
3
3

Example 5.7 (*Les euménides*, v.s. Act II, 79)

Acte II

*À Athènes, dans un temple où se dresse
une antique statue de Pallas Athéna.*

Modérément animé $\text{♩} = 80$

I

PIANO

II

Modérément animé $\text{♩} = 80$

Example 5.8 (Lavignac, 1925, II, p.2733, no.5)

5. *Chant donné*, rondes, noires, blanches :

5. *Chant donné* - Rondes, Noires, Blanches

C.D.

The musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a sequence of rhythmic figures: a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, a half note, and a whole note. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a sequence of rhythmic figures: a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, a half note, and a whole note. The notation is simple and focuses on the rhythmic structure of the piece.

from which the whole opening is generated.

However, Milhaud breaks most of the other rules, such as not having an interval larger than an octave between two neighbouring parts (*ibid*, 2734), and his unorthodox entries begin a minor 9th apart like the surrounding dyads. More crucially, his application of independent polytonal lines to contrapuntal writing necessitated a rethinking of traditional tonal relationships, while maintaining the spirit of counterpoint.

Dahlhaus focused on a crucial issue when he wrote about contrapuntal polytonality as follows:

Polytonal (or polymodal) counterpoint is a paradox of compositional technique in that the tonal atomization of the style as a whole requires a particularly clear tonal characterisation of the individual parts; otherwise polytonality - whose aesthetic import consists in the pointedness of its effect - will turn into the grey on grey of tonal indistinguishability. (Dahlhaus, 1980, 850)

The paradox which Dahlhaus perceived was that, although the overall effect of polytonality is tonally complex, it is best achieved through linear simplicity. Milhaud's gradual preoccupation with transparent linear textures was part of the same conscious attempt to simplify and shape his melodic writing. Both were indebted to the guiding influence of his counterpoint teacher at the conservatoire, André Gedalge.

Milhaud acknowledged the benefit of Gedalge's counterpoint classes in introducing him to Bach:

I did my counterpoint and all the studies of Bach chorales - exercises where counterpoint mixes with harmony - and when one is able to tackle the elaborate chorales, rejoins the domain of composition.²²⁷

²²⁷ Je fis mon contrepoint et toutes les études sur les chorals de Bach, exercices où le contrepoint se mêle à l'harmonie et, lorsqu'on est à même de faire des chorals développés, rejoint le domaine de la composition. (Milhaud, 1987, 32)

Thus, it was through the study of Bach that he learned to appreciate the inter-relationships between counterpoint, harmony and composition. It was precisely this connection which Milhaud made when he saw in Bach's *Duetto* (no.2) the seeds of polytonality:

The day when canons other than at an octave were permitted, the principle of polytonality was laid down...One already senses with Bach a desire to allow each line its separate tonal existence: this manifests itself in a canon, for example, by the juxtaposition of notes which are not harmonically explainable and which do not entirely make sense unless we admit that we are dealing with two superimposed tonalities. This is the case in the second of the four *Duetto*s by Bach.²²⁸

Milhaud's point was based on bar 9 of this duet, reproduced in Example 5.9. As he pointedly asked:

How does one explain the *A* on the second beat of the ninth bar in the lower part in relation to the *F* in the upper part? The harmony does not allow the false relation which is produced by the *C* natural of this first inversion chord and the *C* sharp of the first beat of the following bar.²²⁹

However, Drake has pointed out that:

his purely harmonic interpretation of this extract, which is not harmonic but entirely contrapuntal, reveals an attitude which is confirmed by the article itself. For polytonality here is almost exclusively a matter of superimposing common chords which have different tonics.²³⁰

Although it is thought that Milhaud did not venture into contrapuntal polytonality

²²⁸ Le jour où les canons autres qu'à l'octave furent admis, le principe de la polytonalité était posé...Chez Bach déjà on sent parfois un désir de laisser à chaque ligne sa vie tonale séparée: cela se traduit dans un canon, par exemple, par une rencontre de notes qui s'explique mal harmoniquement et qui ne prend tout son sens que si on admet qu'il s'agit de deux tonalités superposées. Ainsi dans le deuxième des quatre *Duetto*s de Bach. (Milhaud/Drake, 1982, 174-5)

²²⁹ Comment expliquer le *la* du deuxième temps de la neuvième mesure à la partie inférieure, par rapport au *fa* qui est à la partie supérieure? L'harmonie ne permet pas la fausse relation qui se produira entre le *do* bécarre tierce de cet accord de sixte et le *do* dièse du premier temps de la mesure suivante.' (Ibid. 175)

²³⁰ son interprétation purement harmonique de ce morceau, qui ne contient pas d'harmonie mais uniquement du contrepoint, révèle une attitude qui est confirmée par l'article lui-même. Car la polytonalité y est presque exclusivement une question de superposition d'accords communs qui ont des toniques différents. (Ibid. 32)

until 1917, the first brief example actually occurs in 1915 in the third song from *D'un cahier inédit du journal d'Eugénie de Guérin*, 'A mesure qu'on avance'. In this canon, Milhaud experimented with what he regarded as the inherent polytonal potential within this form, maintaining the horizontal independence of each line, as Example 5.10 demonstrates. The opening reveals a tonally ambiguous theme and the strict canons each enter at the perfect fifth below at two-bar intervals. In his article 'Polytonalité et atonalité' Milhaud wrote about canons by composers such as Bach which have 'a contrapuntal tonal independence [and] which only give the impression of tonal unity by a game of counterpoint controlled vertically'.²³¹ In his own canon, Milhaud moves one step further in removing the vertical tonal control. The focus of the writing is completely horizontal with little concern for the vertical effect, as the semitone clashes, generally with octave displacement, testify (shown by arrows). This song shows Milhaud experimenting with the linear logic of contrapuntal writing at the same time as he was examining the potential of superimposed chords.

In addition to his teaching duties, Gedalge wrote numerous studies on counterpoint, fugue and solfège.²³² In his article 'Les rapports de l'harmonie et du contrepoint: définitions et considérations générales' (1904), Gedalge defined the art of counterpoint thus:

The art of counterpoint essentially consists of building up, with a musical effect in mind, two or more melodic parts which are independent in their rhythms and character, without, for all that, diminishing the prominence of the principal melodic line.²³³

²³¹ 'une indépendance tonale contrapuntique qui ne fait croire à une unité tonale que par un jeu de contrepoint contrôlé verticalement'. (Milhaud/Drake, 174)

²³² For example, *L'enseignement de la musique* (ms. autograph), 5 March, 1925; *L'enseignement de la musique par l'éducation méthodique de l'oreille*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1921); *Traité de contrepoint et de fugue formé de règles puisées dans les traités de Cherubini - Bazin* (ms. autograph, n.d.); *Traité de la fugue* (Paris, 1901)

²³³ L'art du contrepoint consiste essentiellement à constituer, en vue d'un effet musical, deux ou plusieurs parties mélodiques indépendantes dans leurs rythmes et dans leur caractère, sans, pour cela, atténuer le relief de la ligne mélodique principale. (Gedalge, 1904, 326)

Example 5.9 (Bach *Duetto*, no.2, b.1-11)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano duet. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The second system also consists of two staves, featuring a piano (*p*) dynamic marking in the bass staff, a forte (*f*) dynamic marking in the treble staff, and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic marking in the bass staff. A *cresc.* (crescendo) marking is present in the first system. A fingering number '5' is indicated above the treble staff in the first system. A slur with the number '10' is placed over the final notes of the second system in both staves.

Example 5.10 ('A mesure qu'on avance', b.1-10)

III

A mesure qu'on avance...

D. MILHAUD

Très lent

CHANT

PIANO

p
douloureusement

5

10

A me - su - re qu'on a -

Although counterpoint is the result of the interaction of lines, these should serve a dominant melodic line, which should be reduced to 'the simplest expression' possible (Ibid., 329). Moreover, in stressing the independent character of each line, Gedalge highlighted the importance of rhythmic autonomy, which, in his view, determined the harmonic result. As he explained:

If one considers that the simultaneous parts are different, not only melodically, but also rhythmically, one easily understands the importance of this last factor as a determinant cause of the fundamental harmony. For the rhythmic accent of one of the melodies (generally the principal melody) is, in fact, dependent on the number of harmonies created at the initial stage and the link between these harmonies; they could never, in principle, occur against the beat, that is to say, on the weak accents of the melody.²³⁴

Milhaud was taught that rhythmic accentuation was desirable not only for its vital input, but also for controlling the harmonic direction of a work. It is therefore understandable why Milhaud considered Gedalge such a crucial influence on his musical development. Through learning from him the careful manipulation of melody, rhythm and harmony through the study of counterpoint, Milhaud infused his own compositional technique with these very ideals.

Milhaud's polytonal experiments became more consciously linear while he was working on the cantata *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* in Rio de Janeiro in 1917. As he explained in *Ma vie heureuse*:

I chose an orchestra of twenty-one soloists to sustain the singers' voices... I wished to eliminate all the intermediary parts which were not essential and to give each instrument an independent line with its own melodic and tonal expression. Here polytonality no longer lay in the chords, but in the interaction of lines.²³⁵

²³⁴ si l'on considère que les parties simultanées sont différentes non seulement par la mélodie, mais encore par le rythme, on comprend facilement l'importance de ce dernier facteur comme cause déterminante des harmonies fondamentales. Des accents rythmiques de l'une des mélodies (généralement la mélodie principale) dépendront, en effet, le nombre des harmonies engendrées à l'état fondamental et le lien de ces harmonies, celles de ne pouvant jamais, en principe, se produire à contre rythme, c'est-à-dire sur les accents faibles de la mélodie. (Ibid., 327)

²³⁵ Je choisis un orchestre de vingt et un solistes pour soutenir les voix des chanteurs... Je désirais supprimer toute partie intermédiaire qui ne fût pas essentielle et laisser à chaque instrument une

The writing in *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* is indeed concentrated and predominantly linear in focus. Example 5.11 shows his contrapuntal writing at its best. The compression of musical ideas in this excerpt is considerable. Milhaud constructs a canon in six parts with entries descending in whole tones. The lines are divided into three pairs: 1-3, 2-4 and 5-6. The imitation between lines one and three and two and four is strictly maintained to the end of the phrase.

In Example 5.12 Milhaud again demonstrates his concentration of ideas. This time the focus is both chordal and linear. Conflict is created by juxtaposing a three-beat chordal figure (piano 2) against a melodic line which works in longer units in piano 1. However, there are harmonic allegiances between the lines. The lowest line revolves on an axis of the chords Db, F and G. To this Milhaud adds a quaver pattern of F, G and Db chords, arranged so that the same chords never coincide vertically. However, the pattern does not end there. With the support of an inner pedal, the simple melody (in piano 1) moves through the keys of Db, F and G within the space of a mere five bars. In *Agamemnon* (v.s. p.33) Milhaud had employed a rotating progression of chords - B diminished, D minor and F# major - for a choral passage to good effect without the superimposition of other lines. Milhaud shows in this example from *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* that he had by no means abandoned harmonic writing, but that he could integrate it with a more melodic style. Moreover, it shows him carefully balancing the vertical dimensions of the music. Yet Milhaud goes even further in linking the harmony with the text; the music in piano 1 shifts a beat late to add emphasis to 'pour-quoi', so that all the harmonic lines (except the right hand of piano 2) coincide on the same chord (G major). This adds considerable emphasis to the younger brother's plea to be left to sleep in peace, undisturbed by what he believes to be a vision of his long-lost brother.

ligne indépendante ayant sa propre expression mélodique ou tonale. La polytonalité ici ne résidait plus dans les accords, mais dans des rencontres de lignes. (Milhaud, 1987, 69)

Example 5.11 (*Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, II. 'Le père', v.s. 20, bars 3-6)

The musical score consists of five staves. The top two staves are for the vocal line, labeled 'E.' and 'P.'. The bottom three staves are for the piano accompaniment, labeled 'I' and 'II'. The lyrics are written below the vocal staves. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *P*, and various musical notations including slurs, accents, and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7).

Vocal Lines:

E.: *maît.* *La Maï-son.* *ce n'est pas Vous.* *mon Pé - re.*
schloß! *Die - ses Haus,* *das seid nicht Ihr,* *mein Va - ter!*

P.:

Piano Accompaniment:

I: *p*

II: *P*

Example 5.12 (*Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, V. 'Le frère puine', v.s. 91)

V

LE FRERE PUINE * DER JÜNGERE BRUDER

Lent ♩ - 80

L'enfant prodigue
Der verlorene Sohn

Le frère puine
Der jüngere Bruder

Piano I

Piano II

E.

F. p.

Tu ne dors
Du schläfst ja

Qu'est-ce que tu viens faire i - ci ? Pour-quoi me dé-ran-ger dans mon som-meil?
Was ist der Grund, daß du mich weckst? Schon längst lieg ich im Schlaf. Stö-re mich nicht!

I

II

There is a considerable range of writing in *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, from lightly scored linear textures to dense, highly dissonant passages, which capture the different emotions expressed by the characters. In spite of the ensemble scoring, this is a large-scale dramatic work based on a moralistic biblical subject. The writing reflects this weightiness, and although *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* is predominantly linear, it is by no means a study in textural transparency.

It is impossible to separate Milhaud's preoccupation with tonal independence from his concern with instrumentation. As he explained in *Ma vie heureuse*:

In writing this music [*Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*], I had found the sonority I had dreamt of as a child, when, before I slept I imagined, with my eyes closed, music which seemed to me impossible to express. This special sonorous quality of a group of instruments tempted me and I began a series of *Petites symphonies* for seven or ten different instruments. I was eager to hear these essays in tonal independence.²³⁶

Paul Collaer, supporting Milhaud's choice of the small ensemble, asserted that 'polytonality must be written with distinctly articulated parts for an ensemble of soloists in order to be clear. It is much less adaptable to a large orchestra'. (Collaer, 1988, 42)

In the six Chamber Symphonies, written between 1917 and 1923, Milhaud exploited the possibilities of linear writing for both heterogenous and homogenous groups. He began to channel his melodic invention principally into his instrumental works, and the melodies in the first three chamber symphonies possess a light, lyrical quality which is not apparent before 1917. Examples 5.13a and b show different manifestations of this new lyricism.

²³⁶ En écrivant cette musique [*Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*], j'avais retrouvé la sonorité dont je rêvais tout enfant, lorsque avant de m'endormir j'imaginai, les yeux fermés, une musique qui me semblait impossible à exprimer. Cette qualité sonore si spéciale d'un groupe d'instruments me tenta et je commençai une série de *Petites symphonies* pour sept ou dix instruments différents. J'avais hâte d'entendre ces essais d'indépendance tonale. (Ibid., 69)

Example 5.13a (*Première symphonie*, I, p.6 bar 2 - 7 bar 2)

The image displays a musical score for Example 5.13a, consisting of two systems of staves. The instruments listed on the left are piccolo, flute, Bb clarinet, oboe, Harp, 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, and cello. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system shows the beginning of the passage, with dynamic markings like *mf* and *mp*. The second system continues the passage, with dynamic markings like *mp* and *p*. Performance instructions such as *pizz.* and *archet.* are also present. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

20 C C'

ral. Mouvement.

Example 5.13b (*Première symphonie*, III, p.15-6)

20

piccolo
flute
Bb cl
oboe
harp
1st vln
2nd vln
viola
cello

mf (expressif)
mf
p
mf (expressif)
p

25

mp
mp
mp
p
p

30 sans ralentir

p
ppp
ppp
p
p

Example 5.13a has a long flowing melody in the flute. Yet, despite its relative length of five bars, there is considerable internal repetition of intervallic patterns, as figures a-c highlight. The initial three notes (a) are transposed up a fifth in the following bar. This is followed by local repetition (b). The climax of the phrase (c) is an inversion of the initial intervals E and A, which reinforce the tonic/dominant relationship. These two bars (20-1) constitute an antecedent and consequent phrase (c) which are sequential. The disarming simplicity of this pastorale melody is reinforced by the harp, whose arpeggio figuration, consisting of alternate minor thirds and major seconds, picks out all the notes of the melody except the passing D. The strings provide a background support with a secondary theme (d) treated imitatively in Eb major, moving through descending chords to a B major statement in bar 6 of Example 5.13a. However, this does not diminish the prominence of the wind and harp sonority, which, in its unrelenting vernal brightness, has echoes of Ravel and Rimsky-Korsakov.

The third movement of the First Chamber Symphony is structured around five statements of the naive mixolydian melody shown in the wind in Example 5.13b. It has a distinctive folksong quality on account of the narrow range of a fifth and its simple repeated patterns. This is combined with a viola and cello melody (bars 19-22), sharing the same characteristics, to create bi-level folksong. In the final statement the woodwind melody undergoes modal alteration, first of all in the minor (bar 25) and then with a raised lydian fourth (bar 29). Also in true folksong style, the melody is simply repeated with a constantly changing harmonic background. A harp ostinato continues throughout reinforcing the prevalent G major, with a brief excursion to F. The role of the strings on p.16 is simply to create a piquant polytonal background (C and Eb) for the melody. The evocative ending successfully demonstrates the gentle subtlety which Milhaud felt was possible through polytonal means. In the First Chamber Symphony Milhaud adhered to Gedalge's insistence, firstly, that a melody should be memorable, and secondly, that there should be one dominant line in the counterpoint to ensure the desired end of textural clarity.

Example 5.14 (*L'homme et son désir*, v. p.44-5)

Modéré (♩ = 84)

The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes:

- Hautb.
- Trp. (nat)
- Harpe
- Cb.
- pte Fl.
- Grde Fl.
- Clar. (si^b)
- Clar. b. (si^b)
- Cymb. (A)
- Cast. d. f.
- Gr. C. (A)
- Tamb. d. b.
- Tamb. prov.
- Tamb. (s. t.)
- F.
- Trg.
- C. roull.
- Grel., Cymb.
- Mach. à v.
- Mart. sup.
- C. d. (a. t.)
- Sf.
- Sf. s.
- Tamt.
- Cymb. (B)
- Cast. d. b.
- Gr. C. (B)

The second system includes:

- van I
- van II
- Alto
- vclle

Dynamic markings include *mp*, *p*, *ppp*, *pizz*, and *sf*. The tempo is marked *Modéré* with a quarter note equal to 84 beats per minute.

Musical score for orchestra and voices, page 218. The score includes staves for strings (Violins I & II, Violas, Cellos, and Double Basses), woodwinds (Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons), brass (Trumpets, Trombones, Horns), and voices (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The music features various dynamics such as *mp*, *pp*, and *f*, and performance instructions like *arco* and *pizz*.

Milhaud used the same folk-like melody, a year later, in *L'homme et son désir*, shown in Example 5.14. The rhythmic change from $\square\square$ to $\square\square\square$ befits the livelier atmosphere of the latter work, and is due to the change in focus from melodic to percussive writing. Moreover, Milhaud exploits the dynamic range, creating an evocative accompaniment, which supports rather than obscures the melody, with more vibrant interjections as in bars 5-6. It is a rare example of Milhaud transforming a melody from one work into another.

Milhaud created another folksong melody in the third movement of the Second Chamber Symphony, whose opening is shown in Example 5.15. However, despite its being comparable in repetitiveness and spirit to Example 5.13b, its polytonal layout functions differently. Milhaud had foregrounded the melody in the First Chamber Symphony; in this movement the flute is one of several distinctive contrapuntal lines. This is partly due to its relatively low tessitura, which is set against the high register of the violin. However, it is principally due to the greater independence of the parts. In seeking both tonal and instrumental autonomy in his musical lines, Milhaud came closer to attaining his ideal in this movement, but at the expense of Gedalge's recommendation of retaining a principal melodic line. The main rivals to the flute melody are the violin and double bass lines, which move together four octaves apart, thus forming a melodic shell around the inner lines. The tonally flexible and active nature of the double bass part are clear signs of the linear conception of the movement, since the bass usually provides harmonic support.

By way of contrast, the other lines have clear tonal areas and revolve around recurring axes. The flute is centred on A major, the cor anglais in G# major, the bassoon in F major, the viola plays in the phrygian mode starting on A and the cello alternates between F and C#. Whereas the remaining string parts move in Milhaud's favourite parallel fifths, the wind parts are melodic, and the cor anglais and bassoon share in some of the flute's material, shown by 'a' in Example 5.15, which also takes

the focus away from the flute line. Moreover, the cor anglais takes over the flute melody in bar three, and their overlapping roles also blur the four-bar phrasing, further contributing to the web of polytonal lines. This and the irregular internal repetitions give the whole an impression of being strictly organised whilst retaining an improvisatory feel.

Milhaud wrote a strikingly similar movement, one year later, in his *Machines agricoles*, a section of which is shown in Example 5.16. Here the voice becomes an additional contrapuntal line and the clarinet has the repetitive melody which is absorbed by the complexity of the other parts. The violin and double bass play at four octaves distance again from bar 3 onwards, outlining a scale of B major minus its leading note. The viola and cello retain their parallel fifths, as in Example 5.15. The fact that Milhaud carries over the oscillating semi-quaver figure marked 'a', leaves no room for doubt that he closely modelled this movement on the third movement of the Second Chamber Symphony.²³⁷

²³⁷ In the second movement of his Third Chamber Symphony Milhaud doubles the violin and bassoon parts to create a similar robust effect, while avoiding the blend of two homogenous instruments. The doubling of treble and bass was evidently a sonority he favoured at this time.

Example 5.15 (*Deuxième symphonie*, III, p.13)

III Joyeux. 13

flute *mf*

cor ang. *mf*

bssn. *mf*

vln

viola

cello *pizz.* *p* *mf*

d.b. *mf*

5

flute *mf*

cor ang. *mf*

bssn. *mf*

vln

viola

cello *p* *mf*

d.b. *mf*

Example 5.16 (*Machines agricoles*, II, p.10-11 bar 2)

5

picc.

B♭cl

Bssn

voice

chi - - nes ro - bus - tes et pra - ti - - ques. Tou - tes par.
 schi - - nen ro - bust und wirk - lich prak - - tisch. Die rei - ben.

vln

vla

cello

db.

mp

ties frot - tan - tes sont mu - nies de cous - si - nets à rou - leaux: ce qui ex -
 den Par - ti - - en ha - ben Rol - len - la - ger neu - en Sy - stems. Dar - auf be -

pli-que la lé-gè-re - té de-trac-tion de
rust die Leich-tig-keit im 'Zagund die al - ler - si.

The image shows a page of musical notation. At the top, there are three staves of music: a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. Below the first system, there are two lines of lyrics in French and German. The French lyrics are 'pli-que la lé-gè-re - té de-trac-tion de' and the German lyrics are 'rust die Leich-tig-keit im 'Zagund die al - ler - si.'. Below the lyrics, there are two more systems of music. The first system consists of a piano accompaniment in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The second system consists of a vocal line in treble clef, a piano accompaniment in treble clef, and a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The music continues with various notes, rests, and ornaments.

Milhaud's wind writing in the Chamber Symphonies differs in character from his writing for strings as the above examples show. As in Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* (1920), *Mavra* (1921-2), the *Octet* (1922) and the *Concerto for piano and wind instruments* (1923-4), Milhaud experimented with the lyrical potential of wind instruments in preference to the traditionally warmer strings.²³⁸ In stripping down his melodies to a new folk-like simplicity, he achieved a lyrical clarity in his wind writing which responded to the French ideal he valued in other composers, particularly Satie.

Similarly, Milhaud focuses on the robust, dynamic potential of the strings, as Stravinsky had sought to do in the *Three Pieces for String Quartet* (1914) and *L'histoire du soldat* (1918). Milhaud frequently treated the strings in a percussive manner, as Example 5.17a from the Third Chamber Symphony shows. Here Milhaud brings the rhythmic string writing into the foreground. The impact of these percussive-sounding patterns is further intensified by the clashing seconds and ninths in the violin and viola parts. Pitch also plays an important part in determining the rhythmic impact of Example 5.17b from the Second Chamber Symphony. Milhaud creates a syncopated effect both through slurring over the accented beats and through the sudden shifts in tessitura, although only the double bass part, in the final four bars of the movement, is actually syncopated in itself. The slur does not act as an anacrusis to emphasise the first beat of the bar, as might be expected; rather, the emphasis is focused on the two-octave jump which generally occurs on quaver beats

²³⁸ In 'Some ideas about my Octet' (1924) Stravinsky explained his choice of wind instruments for his *Octet* as follows:

My Octet is made for an ensemble of wind instruments. Wind instruments seem to me to be more apt to render a certain rigidity of the form I had in mind than other instruments - the string instruments, for example, which are less cold and more vague. The suppleness of the string instruments can lend itself to more subtle nuances and can serve better the individual sensibility of the executant in works built on an 'emotive basis'. (Stravinsky, quoted in E. W. White, 1979, 574-5)

Although Milhaud was not seeking the same 'rigidity of form' and expression as Stravinsky, his lyrical exploitation of the wind over the strings was a deliberate choice. It is worth noting that Milhaud started doing this *before* Stravinsky.

two and five. The effect is heightened by the duplets in the wind. In this use of syncopation, Milhaud appears to be trying to recreate the 'catch in the breath' and the 'slight hiatus' which so much fascinated him in the Brazilian folk music he had heard in 1917-8. (Milhaud, 1987, 67) However, Milhaud's writing for strings in the chamber symphonies more frequently serves as a backdrop to the more lyrical wind parts, for example in 5.17c, where the strings are treated homophonically. However, their impact lies in the texture they create rather than in the particular harmonic content; Milhaud superimposes six of the seven notes of the key of Ab major to create an undulating block of sound.

Example 5.17a (*Troisième symphonie*, III, p.10, b.1-6)

III.
Rondement.

flute
Bb cl
bssn
vln
viola
cello
d.b.

5

mp
p
pp
pp spiccato
pp spiccato
archet
pp
pizz.
pp

Example 5.17b (*Deuxième symphonie, I, p.6-7*)

25

flute
cor ang.
bssn.
vln
viola
cello
bass

30

flute
cor ang.
bssn.
vln
viola
cello
bass

Example 5.17c (*Première symphonie*, II, p.9, b.1-4)

II.
Chantant.

The musical score consists of the following parts and markings:

- piccolo**: Staff with notes and rests.
- flute**: Staff with notes and rests.
- B♭ cl**: Staff with notes and rests.
- oboe**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *mp (en dehors)*.
- harp**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *pp*.
- 1 vln**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *sourdine* and *pp*.
- 2 vln**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *sourdine* and *pp*.
- viola**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *sourdine* and *pp*.
- cello**: Staff with notes and rests. Includes marking *sourdine* and *pp*.

U.E.7192*

Milhaud maintained this conception of the different roles of particular instrumental groups in *L'homme et son désir*. As he explained in his memoirs:

I already imagined several independent groups: on the third level, on one side: a vocal quartet, on the other side: the oboe, trumpet, harp and double bass. On the second level on each side: percussion instruments. On one side of the first level: the piccolo, flute, clarinet and bass clarinet, and on the other side: a string quartet. I wished to preserve complete independence, melodic and tonal as well as rhythmic, for these diverse groups.²³⁹

The ballet involves four independent groups and in demanding that they should be physically separated, he was going one stage further than before. This decision also reflects the influence of Claudel, who sometimes divided his stage into different levels to enhance the symbolism.²⁴⁰ In *L'homme et son désir* the instruments thus become involved with the setting and the action, as Figure 5.18a-c illustrates.²⁴¹

Figure 5.18a

	L.H.		R.H.
L.4.		The hours of the night (represented by walking women)	
L.3.	oboe, trumpet, harp	the moon and a cloud	vocal quartet, d.bass
L.2.	percussion	the principal action - the man	percussion
L.1	string quartet	reflection of the moon and cloud	piccolo, flute, clarinet, and bass clarinet.

²³⁹ J'imaginai déjà plusieurs groupes indépendants: au troisième étage, d'un côté: un quatuor vocal, de l'autre: le hautbois, la trompette, la harpe, la contrebasse. Au deuxième étage de chaque côté: des instruments de percussion. Sur un côté du premier étage: la petite flûte, la flûte, la clarinette, la clarinette basse et de l'autre côté: un quatuor à cordes. Je désirais conserver une entière indépendance, aussi bien mélodique, tonale, que rythmique à ces divers groupes. (Milhaud, 1987, 72)

²⁴⁰ In *L'Annonce faite à Marie* (1912) the different levels reflect the different spiritual states of the protagonists.

²⁴¹ Audrey Parr does not put the instruments in the order outlined by Milhaud and Claudel (see note 21 above), but the photographs shown in Figures 5.18b and 5.18c reveal the involvement of the musicians in the dramatic action.

Figure 5.18b (Photograph of curtain by Audrey Parr for *L'homme et son désir*)

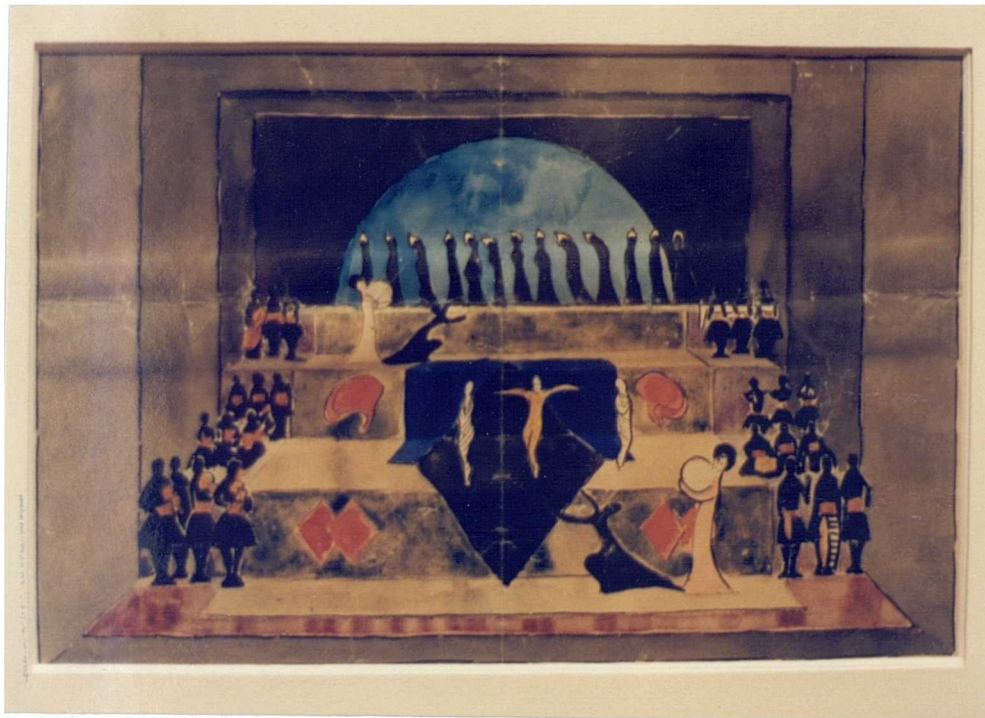
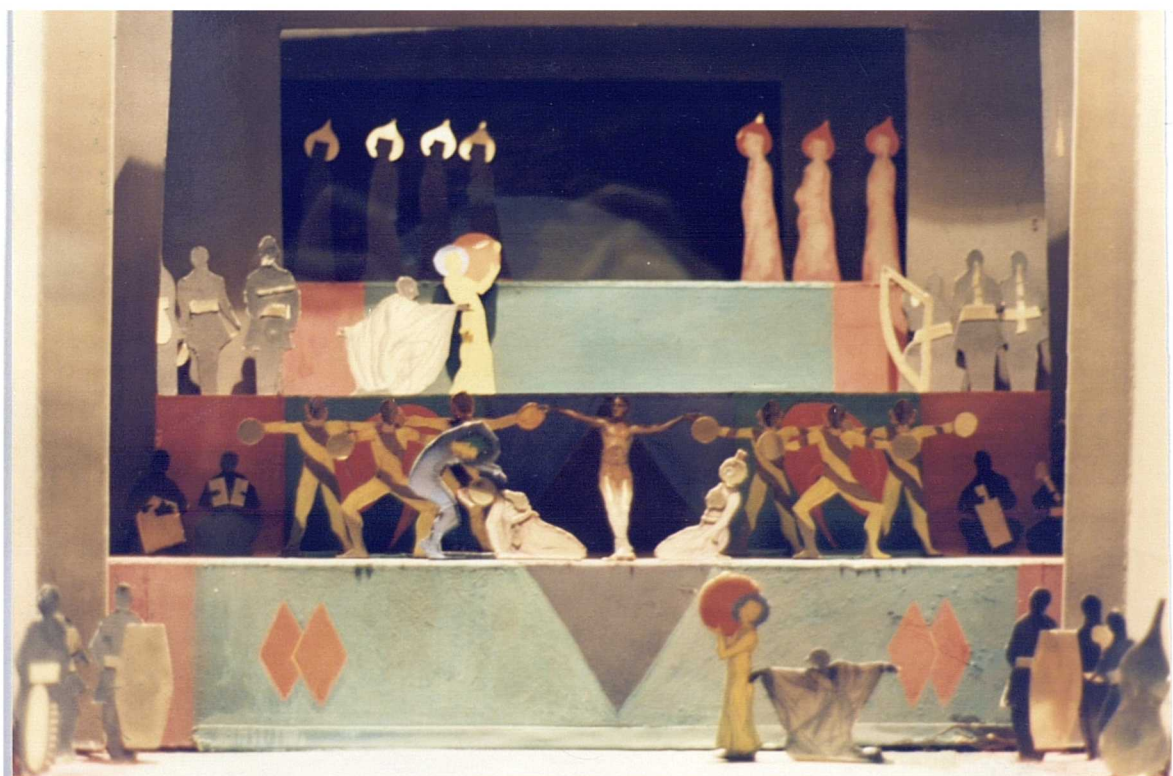


Figure 5.18c (Photograph of miniature set by Audrey Parr for *L'homme et son désir*)



The possibility of an implied hierarchy cannot be overlooked. Certainly, the decision to place the percussion on the level of the main action further suggests that it is the principal musical force in this work, while the other instruments occupy a more peripheral place. However, in many other respects there are similarities between *L'homme et son désir* and the earlier Chamber Symphonies, beyond the borrowing of a melody from the First Chamber Symphony, as Example 5.14 illustrated. Milhaud gives the melodic interest to the wind groups and makes extensive use of a melodic pattern in scene vii which has the overt simplicity and repetitiveness of folksong, as can be seen in Example 5.19a. The melody is played in both the piccolo and the bass clarinet at three octaves distance, thus confirming his partiality for combining treble and bass sonorities. The melody, which is initially prominent, although set against chromatically inflected string parts, soon becomes one strand in a complex polytonal texture. Although the strings are typically accompanimental in *L'homme et son désir* (as at the start of Example 5.19b), they are not needed for the same percussive role as in the Chamber Symphonies and their parts are frequently flowing, for example in the opening lines of the ballet. Milhaud's fondness for the double bass manifests itself in the extensive solo in scene vi (Example 5.19c). It is noteworthy that he places it with the wind group (perhaps following Mozart's example), keeping it separate from the main body of strings. Its sheer flexibility and use of syncopation make it difficult to believe that Milhaud had made no particular contact with jazz by 1918. Furthermore, a new, cruder element is introduced in the trumpet melody in scene v (Example 5.19b) and in its extrovert manner, foreshadows the brasher melodies of the twenties, for example in *Le boeuf sur le toit*.

Example 5.19a (*L'homme et son désir*, vii, p.69)

1 *Animez un peu*

Hautob.
 Trp. (ut)
 Harpe
 Cb.
 pre Fl.
 G de fl.
 Clar. (sib)
 Clar. (sib)
 Cymo. (A)
 Cymo. a. f.
 Gr. C. (A)
 Tamb. d. b.
 Tam. prov.
 Tam. (sib)
 F.
 Ing.
 C. Poul.
 Grel. Cymo.
 Moch. a. v.
 Mart. sur.
 C. cl. a. t.
 sf.
 sf. s.
 Tamr.
 Cymo. (B)
 Cast. d. b.
 Gr. C. (B)

2 *Animez un peu*

Viol. I
 Viol. II
 Alto
 Voile

Example 5.19b (*L'homme et son désir*, v, p.56, b.1-2)

56 *Vif* (J. 136)

Hautb.
Trp. (ut)
Harpe
Cb.
pte fl.
Gr. de fl.
Clar. (sib)
Clar. b. (sib)
Cymb. (A)
Cast. d. f.
Gr. C. (A)
Tamb. d. b.
Tamb. prov.
Tamb. (s. t.)
F. Trg.
C. roul.
Grel., Cymb. (2 Cymb.)
Mach. à v.
Mar. sup.
C. cl. (a. t.)
Sf.
Sf. s.
Tamt.
Cymb. (B)
Cast. d. b.
Gr. C. (B)

Vif (J. 136)
Violon I
Violon II
Alto
Celle

Example 5.19c (*L'homme et son désir*, vi, p.78-9)

Modéré (♩.68)

The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes the following parts from top to bottom: Hautob., Trp. (wt), Harpe, Cb. (with a *p* dynamic marking), Pt. fl., G. de fl., Clar. (sib), Clar. b. (sib), Cymb. (A), Cast. d. f., Gr. C. (A), Tamb. d. b., Tamb. prov., Tamb. (s.t.), F. Trg., C. roull., Grel, Cymb., Mach. à v., Marr. sup., C. cl. (a. f.), Sf., Sf. s., Tamt., Cymb. (B), Cast. d. b., and Gr. C. (B). The second system includes Violon I, Violon II, Alto, and Velle. The Cb. part in the first system contains a melodic line with a *p* dynamic marking. The percussion parts have various rhythmic markings, including *pp* and *ppp*. The tempo is marked *Modéré* with a quarter note equal to 68 beats per minute.

Hautb.
 Trp.(ur)
 Harpe
 Cb.
 pte Fl.
 qde Fl.
 Clar.(si^b)
 Clar.b.(si^b)
 Cymb.(A)
 Cast.d.f.
 Gr.C.(A)
 Tamb.d.b.
 Tomm prov.
 Tamb.(a.t.)
 F.
 Trg.
 C.roul.
 Grel.,Cymb.
 Mach.à v.
 Mart.sup.
 C.cl.(a.t.)
 Sf.
 Sf. s.
 Tamt.
 Cymb.(B)
 Cast.d.b.
 Gr.C.(B)
 Viol I
 Viol II
 Alto
 Vclle

Example 5.20a (*Quatrième symphonie*, I, p.3, b.1-3)

à Madeleine Milhaud

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4^e Symphonie.

Dixtuor

für solistische oder
chorische Besetzung

pour 10 Instruments à cordes
ou Orchestre à cordes

for 10 stringed instruments
or stringed orchestra

I. Ouverture. Animé.

Darius Milhaud.
1921.

The musical score is arranged in ten staves, each representing a different string instrument. The instruments are listed on the left side of the score:

- 1^{er} Violon.
- 2^e Violon.
- 3^e Violon.
- 4^e Violon.
- 1^{er} Alto.
- 2^e Alto.
- 1^{er} Violoncelle.
- 2^e Violoncelle.
- 1^{er} Contrebasse.
- 2^e Contrebasse.

The score begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo and mood are indicated as "Animé." The first three staves (Violins 1, 2, and 3) are marked with a forte dynamic (*f*) and the instruction "grand détaché". The fourth staff (Violin 4) is also marked with *f* and "grand détaché". The fifth staff (Alto 1) is marked with *f* and "grand détaché". The sixth staff (Alto 2) is empty. The seventh staff (Violoncelle 1) is marked with *f*. The eighth staff (Violoncelle 2) is marked with *f* and "grand détaché". The ninth staff (Contrebasse 1) is marked with *pizz.* (pizzicato). The tenth staff (Contrebasse 2) is marked with *f*. The score consists of three measures, with the first measure being the most prominent.

Example 5.20b (*Quatrième symphonie*, I, p.5, b.15-19)

15

The image shows a musical score for Example 5.20b, which is a passage from the first movement of the Fourth Symphony by Beethoven. The score is arranged in a system of ten staves, labeled on the left as vln1, vln2, vln3, vln4, vla1, vla2, v.c.1, v.c.2, db1, and db2. The first staff (vln1) begins with a boxed measure number '15'. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or F minor) and a 3/4 time signature. The first violin part (vln1) features a melodic line with several slurs and accents. The second violin (vln2) and third violin (vln3) parts are relatively simple, often playing sustained notes or simple rhythmic patterns. The fourth violin (vln4) part is also simple, often playing a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The viola parts (vla1 and vla2) have more complex, moving lines. The first and second violas (vla1 and vla2) often play similar parts, with some slurs and accents. The first and second violas (v.c.1 and v.c.2) play a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The double bass parts (db1 and db2) play a steady eighth-note accompaniment, often with slurs and accents. The dynamic marking 'p' (piano) is used throughout the passage.

In his last three Chamber Symphonies Milhaud concentrated on homogeneous groups. The Fourth Chamber Symphony (1921) was scored for strings; the Fifth Symphony (1922) for wind; and the Sixth Symphony (1923), as we have already seen in Chapter 4, for voices. The structure in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony resembles a concerto grosso in its alternation between tutti and concertino sections. Moreover, the style is pseudo-baroque in its 'grand détaché' and sequential semiquaver patterns in the upper strings, and in its basso continuo cello and double bass lines (see Example 5.20a). Milhaud overbalances the inner Eb minor lines of the fourth violin and viola with a reinforced bass of two cellos and double bass and upper strings in C major. C major gains the upper hand in the three different melodic lines of the first solo section, shown in Example 5.20b, which stylistically would not sound too out of place in Vivaldi. Nevertheless, Milhaud's own hallmark is clear in the vigour and shape of the lines and the bitonal approach. But, certain aspects would have been out of place in baroque writing, such as the modulation from C to F# major and the introduction of two simultaneous themes, not to mention that they are in different keys. Furthermore, there are some formal irregularities, as Figure 5.21 illustrates:

Figure 5.21:

<u>Sections</u>		<u>Tonal Plan</u>
'a'	tutti (without soloists)	C & Eb
'b'	solo (vln I, viola II, d.bass I)	C
'a'	tutti (without soloists)	A & Bb chord
'b'	solo (different group: vln II, viola I, cello II)	F# & C
'a'	tutti (without soloists)	C min & Eb
'b'	tutti (full ensemble)	C & F# min- Eb- C

Firstly, the concertino (consisting of violin I, viola II and double bass I) are silent during all the tutti sections save the last. Secondly, Milhaud changes the solo group at the second recurrence of 'b', and finally, material which had been reserved for the smaller section, is taken over by the whole ensemble. This movement shows Milhaud

adhering to the spirit rather than the rules of baroque writing in his desire to exploit an aspect of the string sonority.

Milhaud kept more strictly to both the spirit and to certain rules of baroque writing in the third movement, marked 'Etude'. It is a complex canon which resembles a fugue in formal aspects such as its subject, answer and counter-subject entries and in its sheer size and complexity. The entries rotate around the cycle of fifths starting with the double bass in F and moving upwards. Figure 5.22 shows the palindromic nature of the movement's entry structure.

Figure 5.22:

Violin 1				F F (subject)
Violin 2			C C	
Violin 3		G		G
Violin 4		D		D
Viola 1 / 2	A A (new c.subject)			A A (c.subject)
Cello 1	D			D
Cello 2	G			G
D.Bass 1	C			C
D.Bass 2	F (subject)			F

At the second viola's entry in A, the new counter-subject begins in the first viola in the same key, moving through the parts at the interval of a fourth until it reaches F again in the first violin. This process begins again, from the top down to complete a simple, but effective piece of tonal symmetry. This was not an isolated phenomenon in Milhaud. In the previous year, his *Troisième étude* (1920) involved a more complex structure of four simultaneous fugues. The polytonal fugue in the *Deuxième suite symphonique* (1919) had caused a riot at its first performance on 24 October 1920 at a Concert Colonne under Pierné's direction. He also constructed a strict choral fugue at the opening of Act II of *Esther de Carpentras* (1925-7) to celebrate the carnival there. It not only appealed to his sense of construction and ingenuity, but served him

as a vehicle for polytonal and instrumental exploration.

Milhaud's use of the fugue in the second section of *La création du monde* (1923) deserves particular attention. In combining fugue with jazz Milhaud was going further in his synthesis of old and new elements. Moreover, the different treatment of the same material in the two versions is noteworthy. In the ballet score, which is dominated by wind and percussion, the fugue is hidden behind piano flourishes and syncopated percussion, as the opening bass entry in Example 5.23a demonstrates. The piano quintet version, in contrast, is pared down to its essential fugal elements and the piano is notably omitted from the opening, as Example 5.23b shows. Milhaud's treatment of the past is different in these two examples. In the first, the focus is on the recreation of the jazz ensemble, and the emphasis is naturally on this new element. In the second example, by putting the jazz material into a different instrumental context, Milhaud focuses on the past model which he apparently felt was suited to the predominantly string sonority. The fact that he titles this movement in the piano quintet version 'fugue' and not in the ballet score reinforces this change in emphasis. Furthermore, one can also see Milhaud adapting his own instrumental preferences to jazz in the ballet version. The use of the double bass, so suited to the jazz idiom, fits in with his developed soloistic interest in this neglected instrument. The same can be said for the prominence of the wind and percussion instruments. The later piano quintet version, by providing an alternative perspective, reveals the importance of instrumentation for the realisation of Milhaud's musical ideas.²⁴²

Works such as *La création du monde* and the Fourth Chamber Symphony reveal Milhaud's sophisticated use of the musical past. Earlier formal and stylistic elements appear to have been more easily integrated into his natural style than they were with

²⁴² In this respect *La création du monde* can be likened to Stravinsky's *Les noces*; Stravinsky's deep concern for instrumentation is revealed in his search for a particular sonority for the ballet. Having discarded orchestrations akin to those of his early ballets, he finally opted for the bare sonority of four pianos and percussion.

Stravinsky. Milhaud's particular model is less obvious and his results are generally more 'new' than many of Stravinsky's 'neo-classical' works, such as *Pulcinella* (1919/20), *Le baiser de la fée* (1928) and *Apollon Musagète* (1928). On the whole, Milhaud's homage to the past manifests itself in formal genres rather than stylistic pastiche, and the emphasis is on the old fructifying the new, and giving it a different gloss through a polytonal approach. This is significant and perhaps a little ironic since Milhaud, in his writings, showed greater reverence for the past and tradition, whereas Stravinsky was more concerned with how the past could enrich the present. In this respect their words appear to be at odds with their musical practice.²⁴³ In adapting earlier principles to his own modern use, Milhaud comes closer to Satie who devised the 'modern fugue' to fit his predilection for writing in short segments. (see Orledge, 1990, 57-8) Milhaud did, however, write a number of works in the 1920s which are closer to Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* in approach, although his models all come from the nineteenth century. In the recitatives which he wrote for a performance of Chabrier's *Une éducation manquée* by the Ballets Russes in Monte Carlo in 1924, he attempted to adopt that composer's style, as Satie did with Gounod in his completion of *Le médecin malgré lui*. The two other works from the 1920s - the ballet *La bien-aimée*, op.101 (1928) and the *Trois Caprices de Paganini* - also have nineteenth-century origins and reinforce Milhaud's acceptance of his romantic heritage. The ballet, which was a commission from Ida Rubinstein, is scored for pianola and orchestra and is an adaptation of Schubert and Liszt. However, the works based on earlier models, such as *Suite d'après Corrette*, op.161b (1937), the *Sonate pour clavecin et violon*, op.257 (1945), *Apothéose de Molière*, op.286 (1948) and *Le jeu de Robin et Marion*, op.288 (1948) belong to the 1930s and 40s and are therefore outside the scope of this thesis.

Milhaud's predilection for creating structural patterns manifests itself in a less orthodox way in the second movement of the Fourth Chamber Symphony, where he

⁴³ It must be borne in mind that most of Stravinsky's writings had a ghost writer, but this is not the sum to doubt the sincerity of the words associated with him. See Chapter 2, 12-15 for a comparison of Stravinsky's and Milhaud's notions of the past.

superimposes a theme and its inversion one tone apart, as Example 5.24 illustrates. The ostinato in the fourth violin and first viola acts as a throbbing pulse in the midst of this dense homophonic choral texture based on second inversion minor chords. This prepares for the overlapping entry of the chorale theme in C major on double bass I as a strikingly simple contrast.

Milhaud continued in this vein in his Fifth Chamber Symphony for ten wind instruments (1922), written in the same year as Stravinsky began his *Octet*. The recurring refrain, with which the first movement opens, is based on a play of seconds, sevenths and octave leaps, as Example 5.25a shows. The bassoons move in perfectly synchronised mirror image to each other, while the oboe and cor anglais move in mirror image on the intervals of a second and in the same direction on the leaps. Milhaud sets up a similar refrain pattern in the second movement, shown in Example 5.25b. Its repeated alternation between the open fifth consonance and the more dissonant adjacent seconds with an added augmented fourth gives a harsh and rather plodding effect in his ostinato. This is reinforced by the rhythmic accentuation. Milhaud adds to this a tonally and rhythmically flexible melodic line, first of all in the bass clarinet (Example 5.25b). Its chromatic inflection, florid runs and syncopation create a feeling of improvisation, and it is clear that he was familiar with jazz at this stage. Furthermore, his concept of melody, as he had nurtured it in the first three symphonies, had changed in this work. Instead of attempting a folk-like lyricism, Milhaud seemed to be aiming for a greater vigour in his wind writing, as the markings 'rude' and 'violent' in the first and third movements suggest. This was the role he had previously granted the strings. He achieves this mainly through thickening the texture with blocks which are more homophonic in character, and by using parallel writing to emphasise dissonance. The texture is further built up with a strong independent bass-line and numerous ostinati. In this symphony melodic clarity (hitherto associated with his wind writing) has been replaced by the robust and vigorous expression in keeping with his new aesthetic of the 1920s.

Example 5.23a (*La création du monde*, ballet score, p.9)

I ($\text{♩} = 62$)
Iris sec et l'arpège iris rapide et nerveux

11

Piano
C.cl.
Tamb.
G.C.
Tmb.
C.B.

Trb.
Piano
C.cl.
TIP
G.C.
C.B.

12

Piano
C.cl.
TIP
G.C.
Sax.
C.B.

Example 5.23b (*La création du monde*, piano quintet, II 'Fugue', p.7).

II - FUGUE

$\text{♩} = 112$

Alto
Vle

f

// //

Alto
Vle

p

// //

1

Vcns
2
Alto
Vle

mp
mp
mp

// //

1
Vcns
2
Alto
Vle

mp

Example 5.24 (*Quatrième symphonie*, II, p.10-11)

II. Choral.
Assez lent.

Handwritten musical score for measures 1-3 of the second movement. The score includes parts for Violin 1, Violin 2, Violin 3, Violin 4, Viola 1, Viola 2, Cello 1, Cello 2, Double Bass 1, and Double Bass 2. The tempo is marked 'Assez lent.' The music features long, sustained notes with various articulations and dynamics.

Handwritten musical score for measures 4-6. The score includes parts for Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Bassoon 1, Bassoon 2, Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Flute 1, Flute 2, Piccolo, Cello 1, Cello 2, Double Bass 1, and Double Bass 2. A measure rest of 5 measures is indicated above the Clarinet 1 part in measure 4. The music continues with complex textures and articulations.

10

Musical score system 10, consisting of eight staves. The system includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mp*. A box containing the number 10 is located at the top center of the system.

15

Musical score system 15, consisting of eight staves. The system includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mp*. A box containing the number 15 is located at the top center of the system.

Example 5.25a (*Cinquième symphonie*, I, p.3)

à Marya Freund

Droits d'exécution réservés.

5^e Symphonie.
(Dixtuor d'instruments à vent.)

Darius Milhaud.
1922.

I. *Rude.*

Petite Flûte.

Flûte.

Hautbois.

Cor anglais.

Clarinette en Sib.

Clarinette basse en Sib.

1^{er} Basson.

2^e Basson.

1^{er} Cor.

2^e Cor.

Example 5.25b (*Cinquième symphonie*, II, p.9, bars 1-7)

II. Lent.
1er Flûte. 5

piccolo
flute
oboe
cor ang
Bbcl
Bass Bbcl
1st bssn
2nd bssn
1st horn
2nd horn

sourdine
sourdine

U. E. 7192*

As we have seen, Milhaud made extensive and varied use of polytonality during this formative period. In his view, it gave him greater expressive range and scope. Koechlin, in his *Traité de l'harmonie* (vol. 2, 1930) described different effects achievable through polytonality, such as luminous, nocturnal, mysterious, and evocative writing. Milhaud was certainly capable of achieving these effects. However, instead of having a mysterious quality, Milhaud's polytonal writing before 1920 frequently went hand-in-hand with a new lyricism which was evocative of the carnival atmosphere and colour of Brazil. This is most evident in the First Chamber Symphony (1917: Example 5.13b) and the Fourth String Quartet (1918) where polytonality provides a piquant background for lyrical expression.

In his harmony treatise Koechlin clearly differentiated between harmonic and contrapuntal polytonality. The examples he selects from Milhaud's work are, understandably, predominantly harmonic, although excerpts from *Soirées de Péetrograd* go some way, in his view, towards linear writing, although not as far as his own 'Arabesques' from *Les heures persanes* and Stravinsky's *Rossignol* (1908-14). (Koechlin, 1930, 258-9) Milhaud's early polytonal experiments were indeed harmonically conceived and the dense and often dissonant chordal blocks in *Les euménides* (Example 5.4) and in *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* captured the 'violence' and 'vigor' which he sought to inject into French music. However, from the Second Chamber Symphony onwards Milhaud's new-found lyricism, on the one hand, and predilection for dense textures on the other, gave way to a more integrated style. Melody, which had previously been foregrounded, became fragmented into smaller motivic patterns which could be manipulated for structural purposes. After several purely instrumental works, the voice was reintroduced in *Machines agricoles* and *Catalogue de fleurs* (1920) as one of a number of contrapuntal lines. Such contrapuntal polytonal writing was ideally suited to both structural and instrumental exploration.²⁴⁴ It is important to remember that the works through which this new

²⁴⁴ Milhaud's purely harmonic polytonality did not completely disappear in the 1920s. *Les*

style emerged in the late 1900s and early 1920s are generally considered to be his best. In experimenting with a variety of polytonal instrumental combinations, Milhaud fused new and old elements to create a vital and distinctive style.

euménides (1917-22), which spans five years, contains lengthy passages of harmonically conceived polytonality. Milhaud merges the two tendencies in *Christophe Colomb* (1928), and in *Maximilien* (1930) harmonic writing begins to dominate in anticipation of what might be regarded as his middle period.

Chapter 6: Conclusions. Milhaud's Contribution to the French Musical Tradition

In a letter to Alexander Zemlinsky of 26 October 1922, Schoenberg praised Milhaud's musical contribution as follows:

Milhaud strikes me as the most important representative of the contemporary movement in all Latin countries: polytonality. Whether I like him is not to the point. But I consider him very talented.
(Schoenberg, 1964, 80)

Schoenberg's statement indicates his recognition that Milhaud's polytonality was more than an expressive personal tool. It was just as much a symbol of Latinity and of Frenchness for Milhaud, who regarded it as the constructive French answer to the breakdown of conventional tonality after the turn of the century, in the same way as free atonality and the equality of the twelve notes were for Schoenberg and his school.

Milhaud frequently juxtaposed the two traditions in his writings. In 1923 he wrote of two parallel traditions, one in Paris and the other in Vienna:

Diatonicism and chromaticism are the two poles of musical expression. It can be said that the Latin people are diatonic and the Teutonic people are chromatic. It amounts to two different positions: they are totally opposed and their consequences are verified by history... The belief in the perfect chord, which is something essentially Latin, inevitably had to lead to a new technique, in which several perfect chords were used simultaneously, and of course, if you prefer, several diatonic melodies were superimposed. The belief in the chromatic scale, the tendency to consider each harmony simply as a route to another (which is fundamentally Teutonic), inevitably had to free its followers from all idea of tonality and urge them to proceed using intervals of a third and fourth, which is the inevitable consequence of such an attitude.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Le diatonisme et le chromatisme sont les deux pôles de l'expression musicale. On pourrait dire que les Latins sont diatoniques et les Teutons chromatiques. Il s'agit ici de deux positions différentes: elles sont totalement opposées, et leurs conséquences sont vérifiées par l'histoire...La croyance en l'accord parfait, ce qui est essentiellement latin, devait forcément mener à une nouvelle technique, dans laquelle plusieurs accords parfaits furent employés simultanément, ce qui veut dire évidemment plusieurs mélodies diatoniques superposées. La croyance de la gamme chromatique, la

Milhaud goes on to cite Schoenberg as the head of the other tradition: 'Forming a parallel line with this evolution, we catch sight of another, just as important, in Vienna. It is a matter of atonal music, and it is Arnold Schoenberg who is the most formidable leader.'²⁴⁶ Having identified two musical tendencies Milhaud takes the leap of linking them irretrievably with nationality. It may not necessarily be transparent that either the perfect chord or polytonality are essentially Latin, yet Schoenberg thought along similar nationalistic lines, as the above letter to Zemlinsky and his article 'National Music (2)' indicate. (Schoenberg, 1984, 172-4) Furthermore, Milhaud writes that diatonicism 'must inevitably' lead to polytonality. The strength of language in which this claim is couched suggests that he is trying to justify his musical technique. Yet such language is very similar to Schoenberg's and Webern's claims that the twelve-note system was an inevitable development.²⁴⁷ Indeed, Milhaud places polytonality on a par with Schoenberg's developments and at first glance this might appear presumptuous. Although widely used, polytonality has remained a technique rather than a system and has never been seen on quite the same level as the other, due to the sheer dominance of serialism until the 1950s. Yet in the 1920s polytonality must have been at least as shocking and innovative to contemporary audiences, as the reception of Milhaud's *Deuxième suite symphonique* (1919) indicates. Moreover, we can see with historical hindsight that serialism has now lost its hegemony on the musical world and that many composers are once more embracing diatonicism and are developing new creative approaches based on the tonal system.

It must be considered whether or not Milhaud was familiar with the twelve-note

tendance à considérer chaque harmonie comme simplement un passage vers une autre (ce qui est foncièrement teutonique) devait forcément libérer ses adeptes de toute idée de tonalité et les inciter à procéder par intervalles de tierce et de quarte, conséquence inévitable d'une telle attitude. (Milhaud, 'L'évolution de la musique à Paris et à Vienne' (1923), 1982, 201-2)

²⁴⁶ 'Formant une ligne parallèle avec cette évolution, nous en apercevons une autre, tout aussi importante, à Vienne. Il s'agit de la musique atonale, et c'est Arnold Schönberg qui en est le champion le plus redoutable'. (Ibid., 202)

²⁴⁷ c.f. Schoenberg, 'Composition with Twelve Tones (1)', (1984, 216) and Webern, 1960)

method at the time of writing in 1923. Schoenberg's system had only been consolidated that year, which was the year after Milhaud visited him.²⁴⁸ It is likely, though, that the two composers kept abreast of each other's music. None of Milhaud's statements about Schoenberg and atonality from this period actually discusses or precludes the twelve-note system. In the above quotation Milhaud moves from chromaticism to atonality and the equality of the twelve notes. Like Schoenberg and Webern, he most certainly regarded it as a logical and inevitable step. Writing about the two traditions in 1944, Milhaud extended his discussion of Schoenberg's contribution:

The German one, which since Wagner had been based on an urge for a constant change of the tonal center, the orientation of the shifting harmonic material (and consequently the identity of each new center) being made evident by the introduction of chords of the dominant seventh. The sequences and incessant modulation characteristic of the music of the Germans led them inevitably to the chromatic scale. The use of this scale in the invention of a melody places at one's disposal twelve tones instead of the seven of the diatonic scale. Thus was created the twelve-tone system, which regards the twelve degrees as of equal importance; and the atonal feeling was born. That is the great contribution of Arnold Schoenberg to music. (Milhaud, 1944, 380)

Although there is more detail here, the content is effectively the same, and the fact that Milhaud had not altered his perspective twenty years later is indicative of his confidence in his own techniques. In his view, he and Schoenberg should be regarded as the principal exponents of the two most important musical innovations in Europe in the first part of the twentieth century.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ In a letter to Josef Matthias Hauer on 1 December 1923 Schoenberg wrote of his 'attempt to replace the no longer applicable principle of tonality by a new principle relevant to the changed conditions...I am definitely concerned with no other theories but the methods of 'twelve-note composition'...I believe - for the first time again for 15 years - that I have found a key. (Schoenberg, 1987, 104)

²⁴⁹ Milhaud did consider Alois Hába's experiments with quarter tones in his essay 'Polytonalité et atonalité', but he regarded it as an extension of chromaticism and indicative of the attempt to extend the expressive range of atonality. (Milhaud, 1982, 188)

Moreover, Milhaud's forging of a contrapuntal style was a deliberate act. As we have seen, he equated counterpoint with robustness, having written in his essay on Debussy that: 'We were in such need of an art that was robust, wholesome, more contrapuntal in expression'. (Milhaud, *Claude Debussy*, n.d., 14) Although the 'violence' of harmonic polytonal aggregations goes some way towards achieving a robust style, it could be argued that the interplay of active lines goes further towards this ideal, since robustness implies activity and movement. In Milhaud's view, contrapuntal polytonality would therefore represent French music in its healthiest state. It is noteworthy that in his article 'Polytonalité et atonalité' (1923), Milhaud cites harmonic bitonal and polytonal examples from Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, Roussel's *Pour une fête de printemps*, Debussy's 'Ondine' from his second book of *Préludes*, Bartók's *Bagatelles* op.6 and Ravel's Sonata for violin and cello. But he illustrates contrapuntal polytonality with an example from his own *Troisième symphonie*. It is also appropriate that Milhaud should have dedicated his most uncompromisingly polytonal and contrapuntal work, the Fifth String Quartet, to Schoenberg. It was a deliberate aesthetic statement to the leading representative of the Teutonic school.

Examples 6.1a and b reveal the unrelenting nature of Milhaud's writing in this genre. Example 6.1a shows the quiet, gradual addition of the independent lines in various keys, whereas Example 6.1b marks the return of these ideas, in a concerted, forte and scarcely distinguishable recapitulation. Milhaud maintains the melodic and harmonic independence of the polytonal lines throughout the quartet, and in marking the movement 'chantant', he indicates the interplay of singing lines. Although the vertical effect is frequently atonal, the tonal nature of the individual parts is never really undermined because of frequent melodic and motivic repetition. Schoenberg's influence may be detected in Milhaud's Fifth Chamber Symphony, which was written while Milhaud was visiting Schoenberg in Vienna in 1922. It is dedicated to Marya Freund, who performed many of Schoenberg's works. In the second movement, shown earlier in Example 5.25b, Milhaud verges on total chromaticism, but melody

and ostinato are still present as comprehensible organising forces. It seems that Milhaud was more realistic than Schoenberg. He was prepared to shock his audience, but he still wanted them to be capable of understanding what he was doing. By retaining forms from the past, like folksong, melody and ostinati, and an underlying basis in tonality, his music appeared to be more accessible than Schoenberg's more uncompromising experiments.

Milhaud's openness towards Schoenberg and the Teutonic tradition is notable. Although Milhaud had encountered several of Schoenberg's early works before the war, it was Jean Wiéner who revived Milhaud's interest in his music in the twenties. He organised a series of concerts of contemporary European music which began on 6 December 1921 with Billy Arnold's American jazz band, excerpts from *The Rite of Spring* arranged for playola, and Milhaud's Sonata for piano and wind instruments. Wiéner nicknamed his unconventional series 'concerts salades' (Wiéner, 1978, 48). Having borrowed the score of *Pierrot lunaire* from Marya Freund, he decided to put on a performance of the work and asked Milhaud to conduct it. The first half of *Pierrot lunaire* received its first French performance on 15 Dec 1921 and the first full performance took place in Paris on 12 January 1922. Thereafter Milhaud conducted the work in Brussels and London.

Example 6.1a (*Cinquième quatuor*, p.3)

Chantant

1^{er} Violon

2^d Violon

Alto

Violoncelle

pp très expressif d'un bout à l'autre du morceau.

pp très expressif d'un bout à l'autre du morceau

dont à l'autre du morceau

Example 6.1b (*Cinquième quatuor*, p.8, bars 12-15)

1^{er} Violon

2^d Violon

vla.

v.c.

The most important performance of *Pierrot lunaire* took place during Milhaud's visit with Poulenc to Vienna in 1922. Depending on the source, either Alma Mahler or Schoenberg suggested a double performance of the work in German and French.

Milhaud's own accounts of this memorable event are telling:

Thus it was that one afternoon, in Mrs Gustav Mahler's house, we had two performances of *Pierrot lunaire*, one with Marya Freund, conducted by me, and the other with Erika Wagner, under the direction of Schoenberg. It was interesting to note the differences in atmosphere that were produced. Perhaps the French and German languages used by the singers determined the 'colours' that were imposed upon the instruments. The piano was played by Steuermann, an admirable exponent of Schoenberg's art, and the other instrumentalists were members of the Vienna Philharmonic. The French language, being the softer, made all the delicate passages appear the more subtle; but in the German interpretation the dramatic passages seemed more powerful, while the delicate ones assumed more weight. (Milhaud, 'To Arnold Schoenberg on his Seventieth Birthday', 1944, 383)

This contrast is captured in his memoirs: 'This was an enthralling experience and in Schoenberg's interpretation, the dramatic elements came out more brutally, more intensely and more frenzied; instead, mine underlined the sensitive, sweet, subtle and transparent elements'.²⁵⁰ Immediately striking is Milhaud's identification of essential national and cultural differences between the French and German performances. In describing these differences Milhaud refers to the stereotypes associated with the two traditions. While the German performance was intense and powerfully dramatic, the French version contained many of the ideals considered by Milhaud to be inherently French, such as subtle, sweet, delicate and transparent. Moreover, these qualities were created principally by language and only secondarily by their French and Austrian conductors. Milhaud's sensitivity to the role of language in lending a national character to music is surely significant. It explains why he was so drawn to language and literature in his early works and only became preoccupied with instrumental combinations after he had developed his musical technique and had

²⁵⁰ 'Ce fut un expérience passionnante et dans l'interprétation de Schoenberg, les éléments dramatiques ressortirent plus brutaux, plus intenses, plus frénétiques; la mienne soulignait plutôt les éléments sensibles, doux, subtils, transparents.' (Milhaud, 1987, 118)

begun experimenting with polytonality. Moreover, the important role of foreign music in the process of shaping Milhaud's musical style cannot be overestimated nor dismissed as a passing 'benevolent storm'. (Milhaud, 1927 22)

Milhaud's interest in Schoenberg is indicative of his catholic attitudes towards foreign music. Despite the apparently narrow views expressed in his writings concerning the purity of French music, foreign music played a crucial role in forming his new robust style. Stravinsky stimulated his rhythmic and harmonic thinking, Brazilian music shaped his melodic writing and sparked off his fascination with instrumental layering, and jazz further infused his instrumentation and sense of rhythmic vitality. This should not be seen as minimising his indebtedness to other French composers, but Milhaud needed inspiration from outside the French tradition to instil vigour into French music. He was not alone in wishing for access to other music, as he indicates in his article on Schoenberg:

After World War I, the 'Groupe de Six' was born, of which I was a member. Our first preoccupation was to try to become better acquainted with the music written in the countries with which we had been out of contact of four years. (Milhaud, 1944, 382)

Jean Wiéner described this desire for foreign music as a craving for 'salad' and describes his motivation for organising performances of foreign music as follows: 'I felt keenly that something had to be done: there was a receptive and greedy public in Paris...My taste for salad lingered more than ever in me'.²⁵¹ But for Milhaud, as a professional composer, the issue was altogether more serious.

This thirst for foreign music was nothing new in France. Paris had been a cosmopolitan cultural melting-pot since the time of Louis XIV where foreigners either visited or settled, and even the attempts after the Franco-Prussian war to consolidate a purely French musical tradition were unable to banish German and Italian influences.

²⁵¹ 'Je sentais bien qu'il fallait faire quelque chose: il y avait à Paris un public disponible et gourmand... Mon goût pour la 'salade' demeurait en moi, plus que jamais.' (Wiéner, 1978, 47)

Milhaud, himself, began as an outsider when he arrived from Provence, but as a traveller he brought other influences into the Parisian cauldron. Although he was to retain the catchwords he had inherited from the previous generation about the need for a pure French tradition, Milhaud can be regarded as truly French precisely on account of his practical openness to foreign influences. He was maintaining a tradition which had served France well since its Golden Age.

Milhaud's place within the French tradition could be assessed by the extent to which he upheld the French ideals of clarity, precision, simplicity and transparency. Although he maintained these qualities as ideals, he did not always choose to compose by them. In works such as *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue* and *Les euménides*, Milhaud chose large-scale forces and dense textures rather than French ideals. The fact that he was also writing works with transparent textures, such as the chamber symphonies, quartets and *Machines agricoles* at the same time, shows that he was capable of both a full-bodied and a clear and precise style, and that in practice he was flexibly motivated by what he felt were the requirements of a particular work - just as Stravinsky was. Once again Milhaud's theory and practice appear to differ. Yet he was arguably at his best when he adhered to the French ideals, and most objections to his music concern the overloading of his textures.

However, the association of these ideals with France became blurred in the 1920s with their application to Stravinsky and neo-classicism. Thus it was that these ideals, which certainly had French origins, acquired a more international reference. Works of Milhaud's containing these qualities, such as the Chamber Symphonies and the Minute Operas, could easily be misconstrued as following neo-classical trends. This may be another reason why he repeatedly chose to align himself within the French tradition in his writings.

Similarly, Milhaud regarded his preoccupation with melody and counterpoint as

essentially French. However, such preoccupations were by no means limited to France. Although Busoni's much earlier interest in melody could be seen as more generally Latin, Ernst Kurth's important publication on counterpoint, *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts* (1917) could not. Neither could statements by both Schoenberg and Stravinsky on the importance of counterpoint in their works convince the musical public that melody and counterpoint were primarily French concerns.²⁵² However, Milhaud succeeded in associating polytonality with himself, and therefore, by definition, with France. Although Koechlin and Stravinsky both experimented with polytonality before Milhaud, statements by Schoenberg and Dahlhaus indicate that the technique became firmly associated with Milhaud. Thus he can be seen to have found a solution for French music for his generation.

Milhaud's originality lies principally in the rhythmic vitality he injected into French music. Constant Lambert declared in *Music Ho!* that the French have no natural rhythmic gifts (Lambert, 1966, 49) and Satie is a case in point of a French composer for whom rhythm was not of primary importance. Among composers of his time, Milhaud is probably the best to refute this claim, since rhythm is an important driving force behind works such as *Les choéphores* and *L'homme et son désir*. However, Milhaud was not the first to use rhythm in a deliberate way, and he may well have seen himself following the strong French tradition of Machaut, Pérotin, Philippe de Vitry and the mathematical complexities of isorhythm. Although a review published in *The Times* (3 February 1908) had identified rhythm as the crucial component of Debussy's *La mer*, Debussy's rhythmic approach was more subtle and less robust. Nevertheless, the importance of rhythm and timbre in his music may explain Milhaud's respect for Debussy in the face of Cocteau's contemporary opposition. Milhaud's interest in rhythm also manifested itself in his preoccupation with the stressing of the French language and his subsequent development of spoken declamation with Paul

²⁵² c.f. Stravinsky's 'Some ideas about my Octuor' (E. W. White, 1979/2, 576) and Schoenberg 'Old and New Counterpoint' (1928), 'Linear Counterpoint' (1931), 'Linear Counterpoint: Linear Polyphony' (1931), 'Fugue' (1936) and 'National Music (2)' (1931), repr. 1984.

Claudel. His exposure to Brazilian rhythms and jazz resulted in polyrhythmic combinations which imbued his music with greater freedom and vigour. In focusing on rhythm, Milhaud was simply foregrounding an element in French music which had largely been overlooked.

Milhaud's most valuable contribution lies in his conscious attempt to create a robust art while remaining thoroughly attached to tradition. His innovations in the areas of rhythm, wordsetting, declamation and uncompromising polytonality were considerable. His desire to make a new and lasting contribution to musical language and technique after the breakdown of conventional tonality, while retaining a strong sense of his heritage, surely entitles him to the place he so coveted within the French musical tradition.

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Appendix

Milhaud Chronology (1912-31)

- 27 Oct 1912 Claudel and Milhaud meet in Paris.
- 1912 *Premier quatuor*, op.5
- 1912 -3 *Poèmes de Francis Jammes* (3e recueil), op.6 (unpublished)
- 1912-3 *Sept poèmes de la connaissance de l'est*, op.7 (Paul Claudel), first performed 1913, Salon d'Automne, Paris (J. Lacoste)
- 1913 *Suite*, op.8 for piano
- 3 May 1913 First performance of *Sonate*, op.3 (for violin and piano), Société musicale indépendante, Paris (performed by Georgette Guller and Yvonne Giraud)
- 1913 *Alissa*, op.9 (Gide)
- 1913 First performance of excerpts from *Sept poèmes de la connaissance de l'est* (voice, J. Lacoste), Salon d'Automne, Paris.
- 5 Oct 1913 Milhaud visits Claudel in Hellerau and sees the first performance of Claudel's *L'annonce faite à Marie*.
- 1913 *Trois poèmes en prose de Lucile de Chateaubriand*, op.10 (Hellerau, Berlin, Brague)
- 1913-4 *Trois poèmes romantiques*, op.11 (unpublished)
- 1913-4 *Première suite symphonique*, op.12
- 1913 *Poème sur un cantique de Camargue*, op.13 (unpublished)
- 1913-4 *Agamemnon*, op. 14 (Aeschylus, trans. Claudel)
- 21 Nov 1913 Performance of *Trois poèmes*, Salon d'automne, organised by Armand Parent (voice, Lacoste; piano, Milhaud)
- 10 Dec 1913 Performance of First String Quartet, *Société musicale indépendante*, Salle Pleyel (performers: Milhaud, R. Soetens, R. Siohan, F. Delgrange)
- 1913-9 *Protée*, op.17 (Claudel) incidental music, first version.
- 1914 *Sonate* for piano and 2 violins, op.15
- 1914-5 *Deuxième quatuor*, op.16

- 1914 Joines Foyer Franco-Belge during the war.
- 24 March 1914 First performance of *Suite* for piano and performance of *Sonate* for violin and piano (performed by Guller and Milhaud)
- Easter 1914 *Le printemps*, op.18 (violin and piano)
- 1914 *Trois poèmes romantiques*, op.19 (unpublished)
- 1914 *Quatre poèmes de Léo Latil*, op.20
- 1914 *Le château*, op.21 (unpublished)
- 26 May 1914 First performance of *Suite symphonique*, Concerts Schmitz, Salle Gaveau.
- 1914 *Poème du Gitanjali*, op.22 (Rabindranath Tagore, adapted by André Gide)
- 1915 *Variations sur un thème de Cliquet*, op.23 (unpublished and recently rediscovered)
- 18 March 1915 Performes at concert 'Hommage à Albéric Magnard'.
- 1915 *Les choéphores*, op.24 (Aeschylus, trans. Claudel)
- 15 May 1915 Performance of Milhaud's Second Quartet, Salle des Agriculteurs, organised by Delgrange (performed by Astruc, Milhaud, Jurgensen and Delgrange).
- 27 May 1915 First performance of Koechlin's Viola Sonata (viola, Milhaud; Jeanne Herscher-Clément, piano) and first performance of Milhaud's *Sonate* for 2 violins and piano and *Quatre poèmes de Léo Latil* (voice, J. Bathori; Piano, Milhaud), Salle des Agriculteurs, Foyer Franco-Belge.
- 1915-9 *Printemps*, vol.1, op.25, for piano
- 1915-7 *Quatre poèmes pour baryton*, op.26 (Claudel) (Paris and Rio de Janeiro)
- 1915 *D'un cahier inédit du journal d'Eugénie de Guérin*, op.27, for solo voice and piano
- 1915 *L'arbre exotique*, op.28 (unpublished)
- 1915 *Notre Dame de Sarrance*, op.29 (unpublished)

- 1915 *Deux poèmes d'amour*, op.30, for solo voice and piano
- 1915 *Two Poems by Coventry Patmore*, op.31 (trans. P. Claudel)
- 10 Feb 1916 First performance of *Trois poèmes en prose de Lucile de Chateaubriand*, Concerts Rouge, Paris (voice, Arnolde Stephenson)
- 1916 *Troisième quatuor*, op.32 with soprano (extract from 'Journal intime' by Léo Latil)
- 1916 *Sonate*, op.33, for piano
- 1916 *Poèmes juifs*, op.34, for solo voice and piano
- 1916-7 *Deux poèmes du Gardener*, op.35 (unpublished)
- 1916 *Child Poems*, op.36 for solo voice and piano
- 1916 *Trois poèmes* (Meynell and Rosetti), op.37 (unpublished)
- 1916 *No.34 de l'église habillée de feuilles*, op.38 (unpublished)
- 1916 *Deux poèmes* (St. Léger Léger, Chalupt), op.39, for unaccompanied ensemble.
- 1917 Performance of excerpts from *Sept poèmes de la connaissance de l'est*, Concerts Mathot, Paris (voice, J. Lacoste)
- 5 Jan 1917 Gives conference paper 'Albéric Magnard' at *l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales*.
- 6 Jan 1917 Milhaud leaves France with Claudel for Brazil.
- 1 Feb 1917 Milhaud arrives in Rio de Janeiro.
- 1917 *Chansons bas*, op.44 (Mallarmé)
- 21 March 1917 *Verso Carioca*, op.44b (unpublished, Claudel)
- May 1917 *Deuxième sonate*, op.40, for violin and piano
- 1917-8 Starts work on Act 1 of *Les euménides* op.41 (Aeschylus, trans. Claudel)
- 1917 *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, op.42 (cantata, André Gide)
- 1917 *Première symphonie*, op.43, for chamber ensemble.
- Autumn 1917 Ballets Russes visit Brazil. Milhaud hears about the ballet *Parade*. Claudel was so impressed with Nijinsky's dancing that he planned to

- write a ballet for him (*L'homme et son désir*). Unfortunately, Nijinsky had a breakdown shortly afterwards and was never to dance the ballet.
- 1917 *Deux poèmes de Rimbaud*, op.45
- 29 Jan 1918 Performance of *Quatre poèmes de Léo Latil*, Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, organised by Jane Bathori. (This is an indication that Milhaud's works were being performed in Paris while he was in Brazil.)
- 1918 *La gomme coule* (unpublished, Jammes)
- 1918 Milhaud came across the music of a Brazilian composer called Romeo. He combined Bach-like themes with 'sharp syncopated rhythms of popular music combined with the emphatic grinding rhythm of the guitcharo. I bought one of these in the market, and introduced it later on into one or two of my orchestrations; it is a percussion instrument made of a long gourd on which a series of very close grooves have been traced. To play it, these grooves are violently rubbed with a piece of iron mounted on a handle'. (Milhaud, 1949, 77)
- 11 Aug 1918 First performance of *Première symphonie*, 'Le printemps', Rio Symphony Concerts (conductor, Braga)
- 1918 *Quatrième quatuor*, op.46
- 1918 *Sonate*, op.47, for piano, flute, oboe and clarinet
- 1918 Milhaud, Claudel and Audrey Parr work on *L'homme et son désir*, op.48, which is inspired by the Brazilian forest.
- 1918 *Deuxième symphonie*, op.49, for chamber ensemble.
- 1918 *Poèmes de Francis Jammes* (4e recueil), op.50
- 1918 *Deux petits airs*, op.51 (Mallarmé)
- 1918 *Deux poèmes tupis*, op.52 (Indian texts) for 4 women's voices and hand clap
- 1 Nov 1918 *L'ours et de la lune* (no opus number) (incidental music, 3 spoken voices and drum)

- 1918 *Psaume 136*, op.53 (trans. Claudel) for solo voices and male chorus.
- Dec. 1918 Departs from Brazil.
- Jan. 1919 *Psaume 129*, op.53b (trans. Claudel) for solo voice and orchestra (New York, en route for France)
- Jan. 1919 (Atlantic ocean) *Poèmes de Francis Thompson*, op.54 (manuscript lost and unpublished, trans. Claudel)
- Jan. 1919 Arrives back in Paris to new artistic scene. Cites Poulenc as the new leading star-to-be: 'The fresh charm of Poulenc's music was the most endearing feature of that period'. (Milhaud, 1952, 81)
- 1919 *Les soirées de Petrograde*, op.55, for voice and piano
- 1919 *Machines agricoles*, op.56, (singer and 7 solo instruments)
- 9 March 1919 First French performance of *Première symphonie* 'Le printemps' and first performance of *Deuxième symphonie* Concerts Delgrange, Paris (conductor F. Delgrange)
- 21 March 1919 Attended first performance of Satie's *Socrate* at Adrienne Monnier's bookshop La Maison des Amis des Livres. (Suzanne Balguerie, voice and Satie, piano)
- 30 March 1919 First performance of *Chansons bas* and *Deux poèmes de Francis Jammes*, Théâtre Vieux Colombier, Paris (voice, J. Bathori; piano, Milhaud); also included performance of Satie's *Parade* for 4 hands (performed by A. Salomon and Milhaud)
- 2 April 1919 Milhaud met Satie again at a reception given by the Comte de Beaumont in honour of the Queen of Rumania. Satie played *Morceaux en forme de poire* with André Salomon.
- 5 April 1919 First performance of *Quatrième quatuor*, Concerts Huyghens 'Peinture et Musique', Paris (Quatuor Capelle) directed by Félix Delgrange.
- April 1919 Performance of *Le printemps*, Théâtre Vieux Colombier, Paris (violin, Y. Giraud; piano, Milhaud)

- 13 April 1919 First performance of *Deux poèmes tupis* for 4 women's voices and hand clap, 'Concert de musique brésilienne', Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier.
- 18 April 1919 Claudel unsuccessfully solicits Jacques Rouché, director of l'Opéra, for a performance of *L'homme et son désir*.
- 15 May 1919 Performance of *Deux poèmes tupis*, Vieux Colombier, Paris (Groupe Bathori)
- 15 June 1919 First concert performance of *Les choéphores*, Concerts Delgrange, Salle Gaveau, Paris (soloist, J. Bathori; conductor, F. Delgrange)
- 20 June 1919 First performance of *Deuxième sonate* for piano and violin, S.M.I. concert, Salle Gaveau (performed by L. Aubert and Y. Giraud)
- 24 June 1919 First performance of *Les soirées de Petrograde*, Grand gala d'avant-garde, organised by Pierre Bertin (voice, Bathori)
- 1919 *Deuxième suite symphonique*, op.57 (based on *Protée*)
- 1919 *Le boeuf sur le toit*, op.58 (Jean Cocteau)
- 1919 *Cinéma-fantaisie*, op.58b (piano and violin reduction of *Le boeuf sur le toit*)
- Aug 1919 Claudel nominated French Commissioner in Schleswig and leaves France.
- 1919 *Tango des Fratellini*, op.58c (transcription of *Le boeuf sur le toit* for piano)
- c. 1919 Milhaud set Cocteau's poem *L'hymne au soleil*. Impromptu performance at Aix was a failure and Milhaud destroyed the score. 'The result was a frightful cacophony, and the experiment did nothing to improve my reputation among those amateurs of music accustomed to hearing marches by Ganne and fantasias on airs from operettas played by the town band'. (Milhaud, 1952, 86)
- 20 Nov 1919 First performance of *Child Poems*, S.M.I. concert, Salle Gaveau (voice, Bathori; piano, Milhaud)
- 1919-20 *Printemps* (vol.II), op. 66, for solo piano

- 10 Jan 1920 First performance of *Poèmes juifs*, Société Nationale, Paris (voice, J. Bathori; piano, Milhaud)
- 16 Jan 1920 Henri Collet coins the term 'Les Six' in his article in *Comoedia*.
- 1920 *Trois poèmes de Jean Cocteau*, op.59, for solo voice and piano
- 11 Feb 1920 First performance of *Alissa*, La maison des amis des livres, Sorbonne, Paris (voice, J. Bathori; piano, Milhaud).
- 1920 *Catalogue de fleurs*, op.60, for solo voice and chamber ensemble or piano
- 21 Feb 1920 First performance of *Le boeuf sur le toit* (scenario by Cocteau, costumes and scenery Guy Pierre Fauconnet and Raoul Dufy). Performed alongside Satie's *Trois petites pièces montées*. 'Spectacle concert', organised by Cocteau (also performances on 23 and 25 February). Re. *Le boeuf sur le toit*. Milhaud assembled 'a few popular melodies, tangoes, maxixes, sambas and even a Portuguese fado, and transcribed them with a rondo-like theme recurring between each successive pair. I called this fantasia *Le boeuf sur le toit*, which was the title of a Brazilian popular song'. (Milhaud, 1952, 86) Originally intended for a Charlie Chaplin silent film.
- 1920 *Trois poèmes de Jean Cocteau*, op.59
- 11 March 1920 First performance of *Machines agricoles*, Galerie de la Boétie, (voice: Marcel Vié; chamber orchestra directed by Delgrange)
- April 1920 *Catalogue de fleurs*, op.60 (poems by Lucien Daudet inspired by flower catalogue)
- 1920-3 *Ballade*, op.61, for piano and orchestra (written for Milhaud to play)
- 1920 *Sérénade*, op.62, for large orchestra
- 1920 *Cinq études*, op.63, for piano and orchestra (based on Bach's *Art of Fugue* and *Musical Offering*)
- 1920 First performance of *Sonate*, op.33, Salon d'Automne, Paris (piano, M. Dron)

- 1920 *Cinquième quatuor*, op.64
- 1920 *Feuilles de température*, op.65 (unpublished)
- 29 May 1920 Performance of *Quatre poèmes juifs*, Société des concerts Oléline d'Alheim, Salle des Agriculteurs.
- 29 May 1920 British performance of *Child Poems* and *Printemps* (for piano), Concert of Modern English and French Music, Chelsea.
- 1920 *Saudade do Brasil*, op.67, for solo piano (op.67b arranged for large orchestra)
- 19 June 1920 First performance of *Quatre poèmes de Claudel*, 'La jeune peinture française', 2ème exposition Cezanne - Renoir (17 June - 4 July), concert given by 'le groupe des "Six"' (voice, Slivinski; piano, Milhaud); programme also included 4 fragments from Schoenberg *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* (1st French performance).
- June 1920 Milhaud travels with Claudel to Copenhagen via Belgium, Holland and Germany.
- 12 July 1920 Visit to London for production of *Le boeuf sur le toit* (The Nothing Doing Bar). Milhaud powerfully struck by a jazz performance by Billy Arnold and his band at the Hammersmith Dance Hall. Attracted to the timbre and complex rhythms of the percussion. (Milhaud, 1949, 101-2)
- 1920 *Caramel mou*, op.68 (Cocteau) for solo voice and chamber ensemble (danced by Graton).
- 1920 *Cocktail*, op.69, for solo voice and chamber ensemble
- 24 Oct. 1920 First performance of *Deuxième suite symphonique*, Concerts Colonne, Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris (conductor, G. Pierné). Disruption at the concert, but despite this Pierné played the work at the following concert (30 Oct.)
- Nov 1920 Publishes article 'Brésil', *Revue musicale*, 1, no.1.
- 29 Nov 1920 First performance of fragments of *Saudades do Brasil*, Concert 'groupe des Six', Galerie Montaigne (piano, N. Velloso Guerra)

- 14 Dec 1920 First performance of *Sérénade*, Concerts symphonique Winterthur (conductor, A. Honegger)
- 22 Dec 1920 Four hand performance of *Le boeuf sur le toit* (Milhaud and Salomon), Société française de concerts Montpellier, 'Musica', concert des 'Six'.
- 20 Jan 1921 First performance of *Cinq études*, Concerts Golschmann, Paris (conductor, Golschmann; piano, Meyer)
- 24 Jan 1921 In Brussels for concert 'Erik Satie et le groupe des Six'. Includes performance of Second String Quartet (Pro Arte Quartet) and *Poèmes Juifs* (Albert and Milhaud)
- 12 Feb 1921 First performance of *Sonate*, op.47, Exposition Wiesbaden, Société d'instruments à vent (Milhaud, piano)
- 27 March 1921 In Rome for 'Séance de musique française'; programme included *Chansons bas*, *Printemps* and *Le boeuf sur le toit*, and Satie *Parade*.
- 23 April 1921 First performance of *Two Poems of Coventry Patmore*, Concert Hubbard, Salle Gaveau (voice, Hubbard; piano, Milhaud)
- 24 May 1921 First performance of *D'un cahier inédit du journal d'Eugénie de Guérin*, Salle des Agriculteurs (voice, Vié; piano, Milhaud)
- 26 May 1921 First performance of *Cinéma-fantaisie*, Salle Gaveau, Paris (violin, R. Benedetti and piano, J. Wiéner)
- 1921 *Troisième symphonie*, op.71, for chamber ensemble.
- 1921 *Psaume 126* (121), op.72 (trans. Claudel) for unaccompanied male voices.
- 6 June 1921 First performance of *L'homme et son désir*, Ballets Suédois, Théâtre du Champs-Élysées, Paris (conductor, D. Inghelbrecht). Claudel publishes a commentary in the *La danse* for the occasion, which Milhaud subsequently reprinted in his *Notes sans musique* (1949).
- 18 June 1921 First performance of *Les mariés de la Tour Eiffel* (Jean Cocteau), 'Marche nuptiale', op.70 and 'Fugue du massacre', op.70b. Performed by the Ballets Suédois de Rolf de Maré, Théâtre du Champs Élysées.

- 1921 Milhaud sums up a Wagner Festival thus: 'A BAS WAGNER'.
- 1921 *Poème* (Latil), op.73, for solo voice and piano
- 1921 *Quatrième symphonie*, op.74, for chamber ensemble
- 9 Aug. 1921 Resumes work on *Les euménides* (Act 2)
- 2 Sept 1921 Claudel leaves France to take up an appointment as Ambassador to Tokyo.
- 7 Dec 1921 First performance of *Deux petits airs*, Concerts Heure Musicale
- 15 Dec 1921 Conducts first part of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* (voice, Marya Freund), Milhaud Sonate; programme also includes Billy Arnold Band and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* on the playola, Concerts Jean Wiéner, Paris.
- 10 Jan. 1922 Louis Moyses leaves the rue Duphot and sets up a new bar on the rue Boissy d'Anglas called *Le boeuf sur le toit*. It takes over from the bar *Gaya* as the meeting place for Milhaud and his friends.
- 12 Jan 1922 Conducts complete performance of *Pierrot lunaire*, (voice, Marya Freund) Concerts Jean Wiéner, Paris.
- 15 Jan. 1922 Publishes 'Petit historique nécessaire', *Le courrier musical*, vol.xxiv, no.2 about Les Six.
- 1922 First performance of *Catalogue de fleurs*, Conservatoire de Paris (voice, M. Martine)
- 30 March 1922 Performance of *Quatrième quatuor* (Pro Arte quartet) and *Quatre poèmes de Léo Latil* (voice, Marya Freund); programme also included Stravinsky *Piano Rag Music*, Schoenberg Second Quartet and Alois Haba Quartet, op.7, Concerts Jean Wiéner.
- April 1922 Tour of the U.S.A. Conducted Philadelphia orchestra. Gives various talks, including 'Satie et les Six' at Joan of Arc church, New York. Exposed to New Orleans jazz at Harlem.
- April-May Milhaud's trip to Central Europe with Poulenc. Meets many musicians through Alma Mahler, including Berg, Webern and Wellesz. Meets

- Schoenberg in Vienna and takes part in a double performance of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* in German (conducted by Schoenberg and Erika Wagner singing) and French (conducted by Milhaud with Marya Freund singing).
- April-May *Cinquième symphonie*, op.75 (Vienna and Warsaw)
- May 1922 Milhaud visits Poland. Series of concerts of classical and modern French music.
- Aug 1922 Publishes article 'La mélodie', *Le courrier musical*, 24, no.17.
- Sept 1922 Finishes *Les euménides*
- 1922 *Sonatine*, op.76, duet and flute and piano (Aix)
- 1922 *Trois rag caprices*, op.78 (Aix)
- 27 Sept-1 Oct Milhaud, Ravel and Roussel are invited to attend Festival of French music in Amsterdam, organised by the Concertgebouw and Mengelberg. Works include Milhaud's *Deuxième suite symphonique*, Ravel's *La valse*, Fauré's Requiem and Debussy's *Fantaisie*. 'This was the first occasion on which a work of mine had been included in a programme given under official auspices'. (Milhaud, 1952, 120-1)
Milhaud's work is not well received.
- 23 Nov. 1922 First performance of *Le retour de l'enfant prodigue*, op.42, Concerts Wiéner, Paris.
- Dec. 1922 First performance of *Trois poèmes de Jean Cocteau*, Galerie Montaigne (voice, P. Bertin)
- Jan. 1923 Performance of Milhaud's Sonatina for flute and piano. Satie did not attend.
- 1 Feb 1923 Publishes article 'Polytonalité et atonalité' in *La revue musicale*, 4, no.4.
- Early 1923 Visit to America.
- 1923 *Sixième symphonie*, op.79 for vocal quartet, oboe and cello (New York)

- 1923 First performance of *Ballade* for piano and orchestra (piano, Milhaud), New York City Symphony Orchestra (conductor, D. Foch)
- 1923 *Quatre poèmes de Catulle*, op.80 for solo voice and chamber ensemble (Aix)
- April 1923 Published article 'The Evolution of Modern Music in Paris and Vienna', *North American Review*, no.35.
- 1 May 1923 Published article 'L'Evolution du jazz-band et la musique des nègres de l'Amérique du nord', *Le courrier musical*, 25, no.9.
- May 1923 First performance of the *Cinquième symphonie*, Société instruments à vent, Paris.
- 1923 *La création du monde*, op.81
- 1923 Visit to Sardinia with Paul Collaer and his wife. Jots down serenade melodies of Spanish or Saracen origin. (Milhaud, 1949, 129)
- 21 July 1923 Letter from Satie to Milhaud about writing recitatives for Chabrier's *L'éducation manquée*, op.82, to be produced by Diaghilev in Jan. 1924.
- Oct 1923 First performance of *Quatre poèmes de Catulle*, Paris (voice, V. Janacopoulos; violin, Y. Astruc)
- 10 Dec 1923 First performance of *La brebis égarée*, op.4 (1910-4), Opéra comique, Paris (conductor, A. Wolff)
- Feb 1924 Milhaud receives libretto of *Le pauvre matelot* from Cocteau.
- 5-20 Feb *Salade* 'ballet chanté', op.83, in 2 Acts (Albert Flament)
- 12 Feb-5 March *Le train bleu*, op.84, (Cocteau) for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.
- 1924 First performance of *Sixième symphonie*, Concerts Wiéner, Paris (conductor, Milhaud)
- 17 May 1924 First performance of *Salade*, Soirées de Paris (conductor, R. Desormière; costume and set design, G. Braque; choreography, L. Massine)
- 20 June 1924 First performance of *Le train bleu*, Ballets Russes (scenario, Jean Cocteau; scenery, Henry Laurens; costumes, Chanel; curtain, Picasso;

choreography, Bronislava Nijinska), Théâtre des Champs-Élysées,
Paris.

- 22 Sept-2 Nov *Les malheurs d'Orphée*, op.85 (Armand Lunel). Commission from
Princesse de Polignac.
- 1925 *Six chants populaires hébraïques*, op.86, for solo voice and piano
- 1925 *Deux hymnes*, op.88, for solo voice and piano (op.88b, arranged for
voice and orchestra)
- 4 May 1925 Marriage with Madeleine Milhaud.
- 1 July 1925 Death of Satie. The Milhauds visited him regularly until his death and
were involved with the arrangement of his affairs.
- Aug. 1925 Begins *Esther de Carpentras* op.89 (Armand Lunel)
- 1925 Publishes 'Ainsi font, font, font...' in *Musique et théâtre*.
- 1926 *Pièce de circonstance*, op.90 (unpublished)
- 7 May 1926 First performance of *Les malheurs d'Orphée*, Théâtre de la Monnaie
(conductor, C. de Thoran)
- 26 Aug-7 Sept *Le pauvre matelot*, op.92 (Cocteau) (Aix) orch. 10-21 Sept.
- 1926 Trip to U.S.S.R. with his wife and Jean Wiéner.
- Winter 1926 Lecture/concert tour of U.S.A.
- 1927 *Premier concerto*, op.93, for violin and orchestra (Portland-
Minneapolis)
- 8 March 1927 Performance of complete concert version of *Les choéphores*, L'Opéra,
Paris (conductor, Milhaud).
- 15 March 1927 Milhaud's article 'Ma collaboration avec Paul Claudel' appears in
Europe (repr. in *Etudes*, 1927)
- c.1927 Writes *A propos du jazz* (unpublished conference paper)
- 1927 In Belgium to conduct concert for Easter week.
- 14 April 1927 First concert performance of *Agamemnon*, Concerts Straram, Paris
(soloist, M. Bunlet; conductor, W. Straram).
- April 1927 In Vienna met Franz Werfel and discussed *Maximilien* with him.

- 20-6 April In Budapest. Begins *L'enlèvement d'Europe*, op.94 (Henri Hoppenot)
- 1927 *Polka*, op.95, for piano
- 1927 *Prières journalières à l'usage des juifs du Comtat Venaissin*, op.96, for solo voice and piano
- 1927 Collection of articles *Etudes* is published.
- 1927 *Trois caprices de Paganini*, op.97, duet for violin and piano
- 1927 *L'abandon d'Ariane*, op.98 (Hoppenot) (Aix)
- July 1927 First performance of *L'enlèvement d'Europe*, Festival Baden-Baden (conductor, Moëlich)
- 2 Aug 1927 Claudel writes to Milhaud introducing his *Christophe Colomb* project. Milhaud postpones *Maximilien* on receipt of the *Christophe Colomb* libretto.
- Aug. 1927 Claudel leaves France to take up his appointment as Ambassador in Washington.
- 1927 First performance of *Deux hymnes*, Concerts Straram, Paris (conductor, W. Straram)
- 1927 *La délivrance de Thésée*, op.99 (Aix)
- 1927 *Sonatine*, op.100, duet for clarinet and piano
- 27 Nov 1927 Concert performance of *Les choéphores* and the final of *Les euménides*, Nouveaux Concerts d'Anvers with the Coecilia choir (conductor, Louis de Vocht).
- 1928 *La bien-aimée*, op.101, ballet with music adapted from Schubert and Liszt.
- 1 Feb 1928 Milhaud begins writing the music for *Christophe Colomb*, op.102.
- April 1928 First performance of *L'abandon d'Ariane* and *La délivrance de Thésée*, Theater Wiesbaden (conductor, J. Rosenstock)
- 1928 *Cantate pour louer le Seigneur*, op.103, for vocal ensemble

- 25 June 1928 First performance of *Cantate pour louer le Seigneur*, Concert symphonique donné au profit de la colonie scolaire de vacances de la maîtrise (conductor Poncet).
- 1928 *Actualités*, op.104, film music (Baden-Baden)
- 1928 First performance of *Psaume 136* (Berlin)
- 1928 *Vocalise*, op.105, for unaccompanied voice
- 1929 *Quatrain*, op.106 (Jammes) (unpublished)
- c.1929 Writes *Un aperçu sur la musique contemporaine* (unpublished conference paper).
- 1929 *La p'tite Lilie*, op.107, film music
- 1929 *Premier concerto*, op.108, for viola and orchestra
- 1929-30 *Concerto*, op.109, for percussion and orchestra
- 1930 Resumes work on *Maximilien*, op.110
- 1930 Choral, op.111 (unpublished)
- 5 May 1930 Première of *Christophe Colomb* (Claudel), Theater Unter den Linden, Berlin (scenery, Panos Aravantinos; directed, Franz Ludwig Hörth; conducted, Erich Kleiber)
- 1931 *Sonate*, op.112, for organ
- 1931 Revises the score of *Alissa*.

(Most of the concert dates listed above come from Milhaud's own concert programmes which are in Mme Milhaud's possession)