6 • An Ideology of Diversity, Eclecticism, and Pleasure

Along with a renewed sense of history that made the Republic seem natural and inevitable, the republicans needed policies that would promote consensus and progress as they construed it. Laws and institutions could only go so far. As they put their ideals into practice without need for compromise with the monarchists, a new republican ideology began to coalesce. Based on fundamental republican values, it was secular, its method was based on rational judgment, and at its core were liberty, equality, and fraternity. Republicans agreed on the need to extend these rights to increasing numbers of people. Furthermore, their acceptance of their own internal differences reinforced the value they ascribed to diversity and eclecticism in the arts. Yet, while many conservative and moderate republicans maintained a belief in the ideal of heroism and the importance of grandeur, the experiences of which help people feel something greater than themselves, progressive republicans, perceiving French needs differently, increasingly rejected metaphors of struggle and strength, preferring instead the celebration of peace and well-being.

In this context, as artists, scholars, and politicians were rethinking the merits of French society under both the Revolution and the Ancien Régime, a new aesthetic emerged, which was far less conservative than we have been led to believe. In contrast to the intelligentsia in Germany who, as Norbert Elias explains, conceived the ideals of serious music in opposition to "worldly aristocratic values,"[1] progressive populists in France began to look with new appreciation to the power of grace and charm. What might seem like a concern for music's surface was not seen as antithetical to a concern with organic structure. No longer opposing duty with pleasure and willing to appropriate qualities associated with the Ancien Régime, they wished to democratize pleasures previously associated with the court and the salons, bring aristocratic ideals to the masses, and make aesthetic pleasure a goal

1. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, cited in David Gramit, *Cultivating Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 122.

of public policy. It was not that the moral and didactic potential of music became unimportant, but that the aesthetic pleasure associated with serious art music should be made available to more people. With this focus on pleasure and charm came a revival of interest in feminine values and new debates over what was distinctive in French music. These drew attention to a relationship between music and its listeners rooted in aural pleasure as much as emotional and imaginative stimulation, and an enhanced understanding of music's contribution to the public interest.

CULTIVATING AESTHETIC TOLERANCE

After Jules Ferry became minister of public instruction and fine arts in 1879, and Antonin Proust the head of an interim Ministry of Fine Arts in 1881–82, there were important differences from what Jules Simon and the Académie had supported in the early 1870s. While they, too, understood the political and economic contributions music could make to the Republic at home and abroad, Ferry and Proust wished to diffuse the power of traditional elites, show more receptivity to new trends, and encourage individualism and originality. These agendas had an important impact on musical life.

Ferry was adamantly opposed to the Moral Order. Although he appreciated grandeur and idealism, he was an anticlerical positivist and pragmatist, resistant to dogma of all sorts. He also believed in the entrepreneurial spirit. As a counterforce to the weight of academic traditions, an extension of the representation institutionalized in the Conseil supérieur des beaux-arts, and a way to serve the varied interests of the expanding middle class, he was determined that there be aesthetic diversity and that individual initiative should prevail. In his speeches, he stressed "independence," "individuality," and artists' "revolt" against conventions. "Liberty in art" and "individualism" became the new republican ideology.[2] This may not have resulted in a particular republican aesthetic; however, as Michael Orwicz has pointed out, it enabled the state "to represent itself as the liberator of artists' professional concerns, safeguarding art and culture in the interests of the nation at large by constructing its aesthetic values against the Académie des Beaux-Arts, rhetorically produced as the symbol of a pre-Republican order."[3]

2. Patricia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 61–62.

3. Michael Orwicz, "Anti-Academicism and State Power in the Early Third Republic," *Art History* 14, no. 4 (December 1991): 573–74. The fact that the minister of public instruction and fine arts changed twelve times between 1879 and 1889, representing a wide range of republican political factions, contributed to Ferry's plan (586n3).

This had many implications. Following up on a proposal from Proust in 1879, Ferry created funding for *missions* to support artists and composers visiting countries other than Italy. To expose them to a wider range of influences, he proposed that winners of the Prix de Rome spend time in Spain and Flanders in addition to Rome.[4] He also encouraged the formation of artists' organizations and their professionalization. Most significant, in 1880, the state abandoned the official Salon system and put the government-sponsored annual exhibitions under the control of all artists who had previously exhibited at the Salon. With this, the Salon was turned into a democratically controlled "Republic of the arts."[5] Artists in sympathy with the secularism of the new government began to receive recognition for painting the "spectacle of everyday life," whether in a realist or impressionist style. Some, including Mallarmé, saw this as an aesthetic counterpart to republican politics in that it challenged the status quo of history and genre paintings and represented a wider range of subjects.[6]

Such actions should disabuse us, then, of the notion of the Third Republic state as homogeneous, repressive, and, in the words of Tamar Garb, "holding onto centralized control of exhibition forums in the name of a conservative academicism."[7] When the official Salon system collapsed, having become a kind of "Tower of Babel" that exhibited an extreme variety of styles, the Salon was replaced by small gallery shows and exhibitions put on by new artist societies, such as the Société des artistes français and the Union des femmes peintres et sculpteurs, founded in 1881 and 1882, the former declared of public utility on 11 May 1883.[8] These gave artists a wide range of exhibition opportunities and made them more sensitive to the demands of the market. As Garb points out, "Independent exhibitions, far from being viewed as rebellious gestures on the part of artists, were actively encouraged, and the more diverse they were, the better."[9] Dealer-critics became increasingly powerful and artists were transformed into small businessmen and entrepreneurs.[10]

4. "Concours et expositions," *Chronique des arts et de la curiosité*, 14 June 1879, 184, cited in Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 62.

5. See Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, Jane Mayo Roos, *Early Impressionism and the French State (1866–1874)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 223, and Philip Nord, *The Republican Moment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 188.

6. Roos, *Early Impressionism and the French State*, 217. See also Philip Nord, *Impressionists and Politics: Art and Democracy in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

7. Tamar Garb, *Sisters of the Brush: Women's Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994), 24.

8. Garb focuses on this organization (ibid.). See also Marie-Claude Genet-Delacroix, *Art et Etat sous la IIIe République: Le Système des beaux-arts 1870–1940* (Paris: Sorbonne, 1992), 128.

9. Ibid., 25.

10. Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 135–36.

In the musical world, Ferry's tolerance for diversity and unwillingness to promote an official doctrine also had important consequences. After 1879, while they were expected to "represent all schools,"[11] the two state-subsidized opera houses were allowed to continue to pursue different policies. Whereas the Opéra-Comique was becoming increasingly open to new approaches to musical form and beauty (discussed in the next section), the Opéra maintained its conservatism as well as its ties to traditional elites, including members of the Académie. Gounod's *Faust* and Thomas's *Hamlet* continued to attract audiences—*Hamlet* reaching its 200th performance there in February 1883—just as they did abroad, although with only a slight decrease in the number of cities performing them (see app. B). From 1881 to 1884, the Opéra put on only one new opera annually, which was invariably by an Academician (Gounod, Thomas, Saint-Saëns). From a republican perspective, composers should be free to write as they chose.[12] One critic reviewing Thomas's *Françoise da Rimini* (1882) compared him to Grétry, in that he likewise possessed an "eclectic talent searching to maintain a balance between Italy and Germany, the past and the future." Subscribers resistant to Wagner's innovations appreciated Thomas's fidelity to older forms, his sincerity, and the strength of his convictions. They thought these his "right," after all. "Defend our ideas and our principles, nothing better, but leave to each the freedom of his own tendencies."[13] Reviewers of the Antwerp performances in 1884 appreciated Thomas's "conscientious skillfulness" in working with the Dante legend, which he helped make accessible to more people. Yet the work had only limited success there and abroad. Its last performance at the Opéra was in December 1884.[14]

When it came to ballet at the Opéra, its director, Auguste Vaucorbeil, wanted more of the genre that traditional audiences loved. After seeing new ballets at the

11. See the first article of the Opéra's 1879 *Cahier des charges*.

12. For republicans such as Félix Pécaut, the republic, the "triumph of the modern principle," did not exclude "any traditional influences compatible with freedom," which applied to all kinds of human activity. Pécaut, *Le Temps*, 8 January 1873, reproduced in id., *Etudes au jour le jour sur l'éducation nationale, 1871–79* (Paris: Hachette, 1879), 3. This should be understood, however, in the context of the Opéra in which pragmatic concerns, as Steven Huebner points out in *French Opera at the Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), often took precedence over "composer authority and coherence of artistic vision" (222).

13. Cited in H. Moreno [Henri Heugel], "Semaine théâtrale: *Françoise da Rimini* devant les critiques musiciens," *Ménestrel*, 30 April 1882, 173.

14. In June 1876, Vienna, Milan, Saint Petersburg, and London were already negotiating for the rights to perform *Françoise da Rimini*. Vienna hoped to give its premiere around the same time as Paris. Unfortunately for Thomas, these performances never seemed to materialize. After the Paris premiere, the work did well in Antwerp (1883–84), Ghent (1884–85), and later Rome (1888); only airs were performed New York (1886) and Berlin (1887). See *Ménestrel*, 18 June 1876, 229, and 9 March 1884, 117.

Opéra shrink gradually from seventeen in the 1840s to five in the 1870s, he commissioned and produced three new ballet-pantomimes between 1880 and 1883, turning to established, respected composers, as had been the case long ago.[15] In choosing Charles-Marie Widor, Edouard Lalo, and Théodore Dubois, Vaucorbeil also showed openness to new voices at his theater, at least in the ballets they produced. All three were known, but for other genres—Widor for his organ music, Lalo for his quartets and orchestral music, Dubois for his religious music. Still, they well understood what Opéra audiences wanted: charming, gracious music. Widor and Dubois turned to the French provinces for their material. Widor's *La Korrigane* (1880) brings to life religious festivities in Brittany, while Dubois's *La Farandole* (1883), set in Arles, uses popular melodies recalling southern France. Not surprisingly, these works were deemed "very French." Dubois, known for being a "severe musician," was praised for putting "some sun into his motives" as well as for the elegance of his score, the originality of his orchestral effects, and the grace and delicacy of certain passages.[16] Both ballets stayed in the Opéra's repertoire for several years, *La Korrigane* reaching fifty performances by 1885. Lalo's *Namouna* (1882), by contrast, created a scandal. Years ahead of his time, the composer called for saxophones placed around the theater, including in the boxes, and the press, convinced that the work was overly influenced by Wagner, panned it in advance. After three performances, Vaucorbeil had the instruments return to the stage, and the twelve performances that followed took place calmly.[17]

Spies has pointed out distinct social and political messages in the libretti used in the two state theaters between 1879 and 1883. At the Opéra-Comique, the common people had long been treated in more sympathetic, nuanced ways. Heroes in new works were typically "leaders of peasant revolts who fell in love with *seigneurs*' daughters, or aristocrats' sons who joined the republican army when their fathers refused to let them marry peasant girls." These libretti concern not only the subordination of "personal honor to the national interest," but also the replacement of "allegiance to local or royal dynasties" with "devotion to the state, usually a republic."[18]

15. Ballets by major composers that premiered at the Opéra include Méhul's *Daphnis et Pandrose* (1803) and *Persée et Andromède* (1810), Hérold's *La Somnambule* (1827), Halévy's *Manon Lescaut* (1830), and Adam's *Giselle* (1841) and *Le Corsaire* (1856).

16. Cited in H. Moreno, "Semaine théâtrale: Nouvelles, opinion de la presse sur *La Farandole*," *Ménestrel*, 30 December 1883, 36.

17. J.-M. Fauquet, "Namouna," in *Dictionnaire de la musique en France au XIX siècle*, ed. id. (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 850–51. After this, the work became known in a version for two orchestral suites.

18. André Michael Spies, *Opera, State, and Society in the Third Republic, 1875–1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 8.

By contrast, at the Opéra, this shift toward libretti sympathetic to democracy and social progress did not take place until 1883. Its libretti continued to reflect the concerns of its elite subscribers, many of them aristocrats and political conservatives. In Thomas's *Françoise da Rimini*, for example, the bourgeoisie is still "cowardly." However, in Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII* (1883), which alludes to a five-act tragedy by the revolutionary poet M.-J. Chénier, "the common people play a responsible parliamentary role" (albeit to support their king after his excommunication, which one critic found reprehensible). In Gounod's *Sapho* (1851), revised for 1884, they are "heroic revolutionaries." With Ferry reluctant to use the Opéra as an instrument of propaganda, new works at the Opéra between 1879 and 1883, therefore, did not function in "the nation's image" as they may have previously, or might have if the Republican Union had prevailed.[19] With significant differences between the political and social content of works at the Opéra and Opéra-Comique, it is thus difficult to speak of state influence, intervention, or control in any simple way.

Ferry's attitudes also encouraged broadening the base of musicians receiving prestigious prizes, more equitably distributing the symbolic capital of reputation and public performances. Three examples illustrate this. In 1880, the competition for the City of Paris prize in music composition came down to the choice between conservative music by an established man, Alphonse Duvernoy's *La Tempête*, and progressive music by a struggling woman, Augusta Holmès's *Les Argonautes*. Both choices were unorthodox. Neither composer had competed for the Prix de Rome, unlike Dubois and Godard, winners of the 1878 prize. Duvernoy, although he had studied harmony at the Conservatoire with Bazin, had won first prize in piano and made his career as a pianist, while Holmès had never entered the Conservatoire. She had studied composition privately with Franck. Many appreciated *Les Argonautes*. Darcours called it "one of the most original and most interesting pieces produced in recent years."[20] Some jurists were drawn to its Wagnerian harmonies, while others applauded Holmès's inversion of the myth. Her Jason calls on heroic courage to overcome love itself: "I don't love you. I love only glory." They appreciated its message, that to achieve a very high ideal, one must renounce everything that makes ordinary people happy.[21] When, to the surprise of many, *Argonautes* took only second prize, this "scandal" resulted in

19. On this point I agree with Spies, ibid., that Jane Fulcher's model for the July Monarchy in *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) does not apply to the early Third Republic.

20. Charles Darcours [Charles Réty], "Notes de musique," *Figaro,* 27 April 1881.

21. Saint-Saëns, "Les Argonautes," *Le Voltaire*, 26 March 1881.

extensive and generous critical attention followed by important performances by Pasdeloup in 1881 and the Société des concerts in 1884.[22] This established Holmès as a major composer.

Conscious openness to the need for innovation and individuality in the arts eventually permeated the Académie des beaux-arts as well as the jury of the City of Paris prize. In 1884, Academicians gave the Prix de Rome in composition to Debussy, a student of a respected but only modestly successful composer, Ernest Guiraud, best known for ballet and light opera. Debussy was his first student to win the prize, and his musical style was hardly academic. If, in 1883, he was criticized for having an "overly accentuated inclination toward seeking originality," in 1884, his "personal nature" and "exuberant individuality" were appreciated and his rivals were dismissed for having "no personal character" or using old-fashioned forms.[23] The next year, the arch-conservative Gounod wrote a piece about death and transfiguration, *Mors et vita*, setting a text from the Apocalypse of St. John, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1).

In 1885, the jury of the City of Paris prize was as divided over the winner as in 1878 and 1880, only this time, the successful competitors—Vincent d'Indy and Georges Huë—both represented "modern tendencies" and both successfully negotiated an alliance between Wagner and Berlioz, composers gaining widespread acceptance with Paris concert audiences. Both were also students in Franck's organ class at the Conservatoire, suggesting increasing openness to Franck's influence on French composers. Yet whereas Huë was also in Reber's composition class there and had won the Prix de Rome in 1879, d'Indy, an aristocrat of means, studied composition only privately and with Franck. The jury again represented diverse aesthetic preferences: previous winners Godard, Dubois, Holmès, and Hillemacher; Conservatoire professors Delibes, Guiraud, Dubois, and Franck; member of the Institut Saint-Saëns; Lefebvre; the conductors Colonne and Lamoureux; plus the rest appointed by the prefect. Augusta Holmès was responsible for presenting, analyzing, and organizing the performance of d'Indy's *Le Chant de la cloche*. When after eight votes, d'Indy prevailed, it was

22. See the discussion in Jann Pasler, "The Ironies of Gender, or Virility and Politics in the Music of Augusta Holmès," *Women and Music* 2 (Fall 1998): 17–19, and in id., *Writing through Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

23. Charles Darcours, "Notes de musique," *Figaro*, 27 June 1883, and 2 July 1884. See also Jann Pasler, "State Politics and the 'French' Aesthetics of the Prix-de-Rome cantatas, 1870–1900," in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional and Political Challenges*, ed. Michel Noiray and Michael Fend (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), 2: 585–622.

because the jury found *La Cloche* "original" with a skillful symphonic part that "reveals real personality."[24] Based on Schiller's dramatic poem *Das Lied von der Glocke* (1799), which relates the casting of a bell by a master craftsman to the possibilities of human life, *La Cloche* reflects d'Indy's enthusiasm for Germany (which he had visited three times), Wagner's music, medieval times, and German *Volkslieder*.[25] The story of an artist misunderstood and not recognized until his death may have recalled his feelings for César Franck, to whom he dedicated the work. Over the years d'Indy fashioned himself as *the* disciple of Franck and Franckisme as an oppositional current in French music.[26] Choosing d'Indy was significant, not only because he was the first winner not to have studied composition at the Conservatoire, but also because he was an aristocrat, and most aristocrats restricted their musical activities to private settings.

If the republicans saw their legitimacy in public opinion—an informed opinion of citizens aware of larger issues, not just their personal preferences—and if the government was trying to turn aesthetic diversity into a policy, then it should be no surprise that after 1879, they did not stand in the way of the musical world becoming increasingly open to new voices, the most significant of these being Wagner. After audience resistance and demonstrations had led to his music being banned in 1877 and 1878, it reemerged in performances in Paris in 1879. The lack of resistance to the *Tannhäuser* march and chorus at the Hippodrome's otherwise all-French concert on 11 February 1879 (see fig. 37) led Pasdeloup to add Wagner to the program of virtually every concert that spring.[27] When in April 1880, Pasdeloup promised to do the complete *Lohengrin*, the hall was packed to capacity. Although the publishers could not provide the score, and performance of the fragments had problems—forgetting the trombones in the overture, needing to start over Wolfram's romance, and less than ideal singing—audiences, with only

24. F. Hattat, "Rapport au nom du jury classant des partitions," in Ville de Paris, *Concours pour la composition d'une symphonie avec soli et chœur* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1885), 1–5, and "Nouvelles diverses," *Ménestrel*, 8 February 1885, 79.

25. D'Indy had seen German *Volkslieder* at the Bibliothèque nationale.

26. For an analysis of this prize and d'Indy's oppositional self-identity, see Jann Pasler, "Deconstructing d'Indy, or the Problem of a Composer's Reputation," *19th-Century Music* 30, 3 (2006): 230–56, and in id., *Writing through Music*.

27. The first review of this concert in *Ménestrel*, 16 February 1879, made fun of the *Tannhäuser* march as a pastiche of Weber, and pointed to the originality of Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre* as the concert's highlight. Only later, when Pasdeloup performed the first act of *Lohengrin* again in April 1879, did reviewers note, "The hour of calm has finally come. The storms have passed and this music will be listened to and judged without taking sides, impartially." "Lohengrin à Paris," *Journal de musique*, 26 April 1879, 1. Victor Wilder's review in *Ménestrel*, 18 May 1879, was also sympathetic.

some protests, demanded encores.[28] In November, after repeating these fragments, however, Pasdeloup had to gesture desperately and for five minutes as he cried out for people to stop the tumult. Some insisted, "Bravo! encore! . . . Art has no country . . . no frontiers," while others insisted, "Get the Prussians out! No! Not a second time!" Two to three hundred people noisily stomped out when Pasdeloup recommenced.[29] Although proposed Wagnerian productions remained controversial, objections to Wagner as a German critical of the French were increasingly challenged by those who saw Wagner's harmonies and new approach to musical form as fruitful models of a music of the future. By 1882, Parisians had heard performances of music from all periods of his life.

A stunning example of the emerging fascination for Wagner came in fall 1882. Only months after Bayreuth produced the premiere of *Parsifal*, Paris orchestras rushed to begin their fall season with its Prelude, chosen perhaps because it was the most appreciated segment of the opera in Bayreuth.[30] On the afternoon of 22 October, Lamoureux, Colonne, and Pasdeloup performed it simultaneously (fig. 48). The first two placed it in the company of Berlioz and Beethoven, thereby raising the stakes on the perception of its greatness; the third surrounded it with Rameau and Bizet, eliciting judgment based on national differences. Most of its listeners were not familiar with the opera's motives and their iconic meaning. Nonetheless, many received the prelude with enthusiasm, including elites. Critics underlined how the work embodied contemporary French values, some closely linked with republicanism. Charles Darcours called the Prelude a good harmony lesson, "calm and clear," while Victorin Joncières praised the combination of intense expression and profound thought with simplicity. At the Concerts Lamoureux, Victor Wilder, who translated the Ring, also praised its clarity and grandeur, "achieved by the most natural and simple means." According to a less sympathetic reviewer, the audience at the Concerts Colonne found the work more of a curiosity. Its public appreciated the Prelude's clarity and rich orchestration—again what it shared with French music—but overall, people were "disappointed." This critic was quick to point out that in his *Roméo et Juliette*, their hero Berlioz had "invented Wagner without knowing it." The reviewer of the Concerts Pasdeloup was just glad there had been no demonstrations. As was often the case

28. "Concerts et auditions musicales," *Revue et gazette musicale*, 11 April 1880, 117.

29. Edouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique* (1880) (Paris: Ollendorff, 1881), 704.

30. *Parsifal* was protected by copyright, and until 1913, it could only be performed in Bayreuth. The prelude was among the few extracts that Wagner allowed to be played elsewhere, according to Annegret Fauser (personal communication).

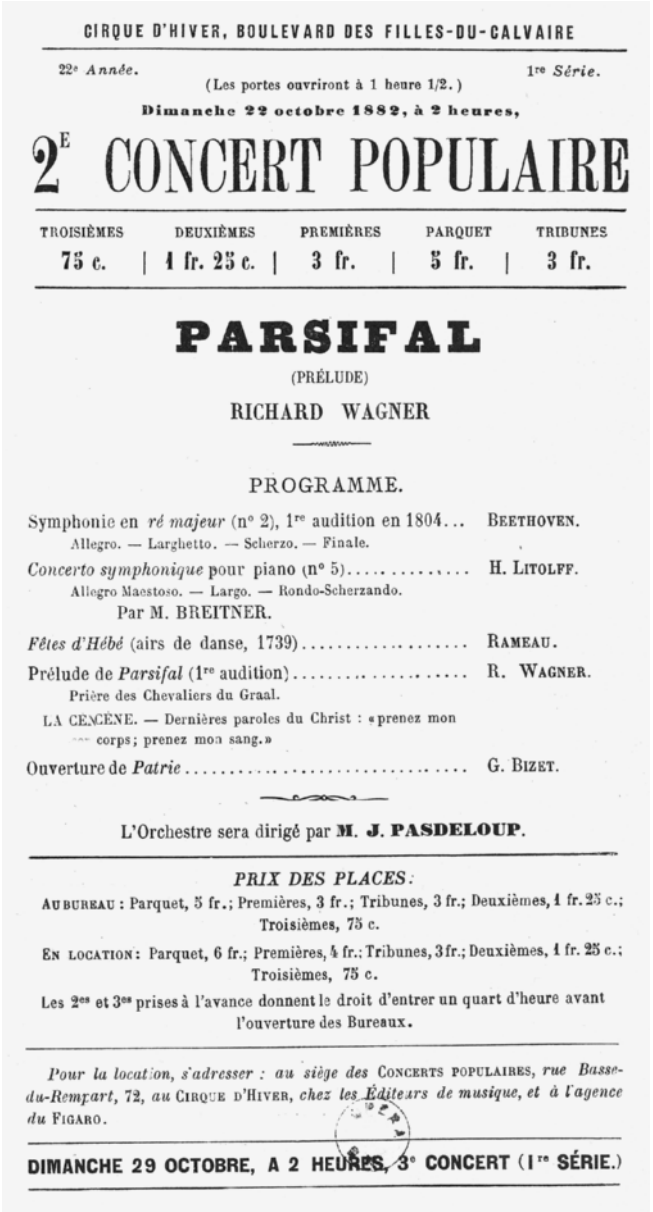

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FIG. 48 Concerts Pasdeloup program, 22 October 1882.

Pasdeloup performed his premiere of the prelude from Wagner's *Parsifal* preceded by eighteenth-century French dances by Rameau, representing French secular traditions, and followed by Bizet's patriotic overture *Patrie*, written during the Franco-Prussian War. This suggests he wished listeners to hear the Wagner framed with reminders of French identity.

with performances of Wagner there, his "resolved adversaries" had clashed with his "fanatical partisans," but this time only at the end of the performance.[31]

It is important to reiterate that when the republicans began to enact their own agendas in the early 1880s, they did not start out ideologically with the kind of conservatism for which they were later criticized. Proust wished to replace the Académie's standards with those of contemporary artists. He supported new trends in painting, including depictions of everyday life. Ferry's aesthetic tolerance and desire to support individual initiative put into practice a kind of ministerial laissez-faire. Consequently, the relative stasis of the Opéra's repertoire and its administrators' reluctance to support new aesthetic developments should not be blamed on the republican government but on Vaucorbeil, his investors (who often got involved with artistic decisions),[32] and the Opéra subscribers themselves, many of them traditional elite foes of the republicans. When Vaucorbeil died in 1885, the government appointed two co-directors with different backgrounds, and change ensued. Pierre Gailhard, a 36-year-old opera singer who had trained at the Paris Conservatoire, was from the working class; Eugène Ritt had amassed a fortune as a successful theater director.[33] Gailhard and Ritt immediately embraced a more republican-inspired strategy, commissioning a new work from a Wagnerian, Gaston Salvayre, and putting on four new operas: one by a little-known winner of the 1866 Prix de Rome, Emile Pessard, major new works by Ernest Reyer and Massenet, and Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Reyer's *Sigurd* (1884) was the most adventurous, although planned and partially written years earlier.[34] Such variety served republicans' desire not only to give public support to French prizewinners along with major composers, but also to cater to public enthusiasm for Verdi. At the Société des concerts in 1885, the appointment of Jules Garcin as conductor brought similar change. A supporter of Bizet and Massenet as well as one of the founders of the composers' association, the Société nationale, Garcin imposed more new works by living French composers, including Charles Lenepveu, Fauré, and Augusta Holmès, and performed some Wagner alongside the classics.[35]

31. Darcours's and Joncières's reviews are cited in Georges Servières, *Richard Wagner jugé en France* (Paris: Librairie illustrée, 1886), 249; the others are in *Ménestrel*, 29 October 1882, 383. See also *Ménestrel*, 22 October 1882, 375.

32. Patureau cites from the correspondence from Vaucorbeil's investors to show the extent to which they influenced artistic as well as financial decisions at the Opéra. See her *Palais Garnier*, 93.

33. Ibid., 46–53.

34. Huebner, *French Opera*, 186, considers this "the first French opera with an extended system of leitmotifs."

35. D. Kern Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, 1828–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 278.

The French described this taste for variety as eclectic. Cousin had earlier used it to argue for not discarding the past but using it as a "source of truth and renewal," and for embracing the *juste milieu* as a way to avoid extremes. Jules Simon, a student of Cousin, reinterpreted his ideas from a republican perspective.[36] For the *opportunistes*, *éclectique* likewise connoted an openness to influences from the past as well as present; yet it also meant opposed to the systematic, to dominance by one element, to the principle of exclusion. It signaled an appeal to all, not something with a strong doctrinaire coherence. Pécaut saw it as characteristic of republicans' notion of secular education, not promoting one church or one philosophy.[37] In French music, *éclectique* came to signify inclusive, especially of the new.

Eclecticism was explicitly valued by republicans during these years, admired in composers and enjoyed by audiences attending concerts.[38] In part, the term reflects the importance the republicans attached to public opinion as an aspect of democracy. As Pougin explained, the public was by nature eclectic by virtue of its varied tastes.[39] In his *Eléments d'esthétique musicale* (1884), the pedagogue and pianist Antoine Marmontel describes "the spirit of eclecticism, selection, and the ease of assimilation"

36. Eclecticism (from Greek *eklektikos*, selective, picked out) was first practiced by certain Greek philosophers and by Romans such as Cicero who chose from among various philosophical beliefs those that seemed most reasonable to them. Victor Cousin promoted this approach in his *Lectures on the True, the Beautiful and the Good*, trans. O. W. Wight (New York: Appleton, 1854), adding that philosophical systems are usually true in what they affirm but false in what they deny. Although he noted a resemblance between Cousin's eclecticism and republican opportunism, Simon criticized Cousin's eclecticism as full of holes and contradictions. See his *Victor Cousin* (Paris: Hachette, 1887), 65–68. For how this philosophy manifested itself in the taste for variety and ornament in architecture, see François Loyer, *Paris Nineteenth Century: Architecture and Urbanism*, trans. Charles Lynn Clark (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988), 387–401. In her *Musical Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Katharine Ellis suggests that eclecticism provided "philosophical justification" for the mid-century revival of early music (35–36).

37. Pécaut, *Le Temps*, 20 November 1871, in id., *Etudes au jour le jour, 1871–79*, 45.

38. A spirit of eclecticism underlies openness to the very broad aesthetic range of composers who won prizes in the Prix de Rome competition in the 1880s (e.g., Bruneau, Charpentier, Debussy, Dukas, Leroux, Pierné, Vidal), unusual in its history. The adjunct jury members during this decade may also have contributed to this, with Guiraud and Delibes serving in 1884, Franck in 1885, and Lalo in 1886. When the jury recognized both Debussy and Charles René in 1884, Charles Darcours noted that it could not have been more "eclectic" ("Notes de musique. Le Prix de Rome," *Figaro*, 2 July 1884). However, in his *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), Carl Dahlhaus missed the positive value associated with musical eclecticism in France, referring to it as something composers "degenerate into" (37) or would be accused of, such as a "technical perfection applied to a stylistic patchwork" (289).

39. Arthur Pougin, *Verdi: Histoire anecdotique de sa vie et de ses œuvres* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1886), 263.

as characteristic of French artistic tastes and suggests that these are interrelated. He traces them back to the influence of the Romans on the Gauls. He also notes that the predispositions of a people have an "undeniable" influence on its artistic progress, along with education. The French "passion for eclecticism" made them receptive to German and Italian masterpieces while remaining French, "able to fuse schools and styles without renouncing their own originality." In reviewing French music history, he points to Auber as eclectic in that he was influenced by both Mozart and Rossini, and to Bizet, who studied and appreciated foreign music but whose "spirit, heart, and dramatic feeling" remained French.[40] Saint-Saëns, in his first piece of theatrical criticism, likewise wrote of the French "love for eclecticism in music" as an explanation for why the public supported both the Théâtre-Italien and German repertoire at the Salle Ventadour. "Paris will not be the capital of the arts unless all schools, all countries are represented with dignity," Saint-Saëns concluded.[41]

Among French composers alive at the time, Saint-Saëns perhaps best exemplified the eclectic spirit. Not only was he a consummate pianist and organist, but he was often praised for being independent of all musical schools and able to write in all forms, from chamber music and piano concertos to symphonies, tone poems, and opera. In *Henry VIII*, for example, he synthesized the influence of Gounod and Wagner, traditional phrases and form with leitmotifs, and showed how leitmotifs could serve the "quotidian verisimilitude" of a historical libretto.[42] Some melodies were frank, others grandiose. In 1886 he wrote works as different as his monumental Third Symphony for organ and his playful fantasy, the *Carnaval des animaux*. Although his "gods" were Beethoven and Mozart, Saint-Saëns was known for being self-consciously eclectic, as well as "democratic, wanting to be popular and, if need be, knowing how to make concessions to public taste."[43] In 1883, Gounod pointed out that Saint-Saëns also had a "prodigious capacity for assimilation: he could write at will à la Rossini, à la Verdi, à la Schumann, à la Wagner; he knew them all deeply, which is the surest way not to imitate any of them." Having no system, following no clique, and refusing to pose as a reformer,

40. Antoine Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale et considérations sur le beau dans les arts* (Paris: Heugel, 1884), 39, 417–23, 437. Marmontel taught piano at the Conservatoire from 1848 until he retired in 1887.

41. Saint-Saëns writing in the newspaper *Le Bon Sens*, cited in Henri Moreno, "Semaine théâtrale," *Ménestrel*, 2 July 1876, 244.

42. One critic saw this synthesis as "merely another manifestation of eclecticism." See Huebner's analysis in his *French Opera*, 222–30.

43. Louis Besson, "Henry VIII," *L'Evénement*, 4 March 1883 and Camille Saint-Saëns, Introduction to *Harmonie et Mélodie* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1885), xxi. The composer had eclectic tastes in not only music, but also friends, who ranged from republicans to aristocrats.

Saint-Saëns was simply a "musician of the highest order [*de la grande race*]; he draws and paints with the freedom of a master's hand."[44]

Whereas the Opéra recycled the same handful of works in a season "like the wooden horses of a merry-go-round," and the Opéra-Comique did the same with a few more, orchestras offered enormous variety in their concerts.[45] Programs with mixed genres had long been characteristic of Pasdeloup's Concerts populaires. In its weekly Sunday afternoon concerts, the Concerts Colonne, like its predecessor, juxtaposed symphonies and choruses, marches and operatic airs, balancing orchestral works and soloists, the German classics and French contemporary music. The identical typefaces on the early programs implied no hierarchy among the works performed, although later the huge font size used for the names of famous opera stars betrayed the orchestra's use of such singers to help them stay profitable. A reviewer for Ménestrel praised Colonne's programming as *éclectique* in that it offered listeners "all the masters."[46]

Unlike Lamoureux, who devoted entire concerts to Wagner's music, Colonne, a Jewish republican, was particularly careful to balance his audience's exposure to Wagner with new French works and Berlioz. Especially for their first and immediately subsequent performances of Wagner's music, Colonne shaped its reception by performing French music before and after it. For example, before five excerpts from *Tannhäuser,* including the Venusberg scene, on three successive concerts in fall 1881, he performed either David's *Le Désert*, Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*, or Benjamin Godard's *Le Tasse,* the latter two also in five parts, these concerts followed by a two-concert Berlioz festival featuring *Les Troyens,* part 2.[47] In other words, Colonne's eclecticism made him open to performing a wide range of music, but not without thinking seriously about how to present this variety in a way that gave audiences contexts for understanding it.

44. Charles Gounod, "Camille Saint-Saëns, à propos d'*Henry VIII*," *Ménestrel*, 8 April 1883, 149.

45. Charles Darcours, "Notes de musique," *Figaro*, 13 April 1881.

46. H. Barbedette, *Ménestrel*, 19 December 1886, 22. A concert organization founded in 1892 by the aristocratic Eugène d'Harcourt took on the name Concerts éclectiques populaires for its inexpensive Sunday evening concerts.

47. Furthermore, at Colonne's first performance of Wagner's "Ride of the Walkyries," on 23 January 1881, he encircled it with premieres of French concerti featuring well-known soloists (Louis Diémer's Piano Concerto no. 2 and Camille Sivori's Concert-Stuck for Violin), followed by the "Dance of the Priestesses" and the "Bacchanale" from Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila*. As it went on to four more performances that spring, Colonne preceded it with French premieres of works by Théodore Dubois and Charles-Marie Widor, as well as music by Saint-Saëns and Bizet. In October 1882, he premiered the prelude from *Parsifal* with Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*. In contrast, in December 1881 Pasdeloup performed act 3 from *Tannhäuser* between a Beethoven piano concerto and a Meyerbeer overture.

If eclecticism had the advantage of preventing audience "fatigue," it was also a programming tactic to stay receptive to audience and performer taste, as well as to shape it. The Concerts Colonne, a private organization whose continued existence depended on strong box-office receipts, understood that relying on last-minute ticket sales more than traditional subscriptions allowed the orchestra to adapt efficiently to the ever-changing needs and desires of its public. As such, it continually reevaluated the balance between old and new work, vocal and instrumental music, foreign and French composers, entertainment and education. As a democratic self-organization in which profits (dependent on its receipts) were shared by its member-performers, new works were chosen by an administrative committee of orchestra members, and occasionally the whole orchestra voted on repertoire decisions.[48]

The state recognized the public utility of these concerts by awarding them regular subsidies beginning in 1875. That both Ferry in government and Colonne in the marketplace espoused diversity and eclecticism suggests that the emerging republican ideology was complex and not opposed to market forces, but indeed supportive of them. The occasional pejorative use of the word at the time can be attributed in good part to its association with republican values.

REDEFINING MUSIC'S *UTILITÉ PUBLIQUE*

Given this elevation of diversity and eclecticism in the early 1880s, there emerged a new understanding of what was significant about music's French qualities and its potential utility. Its capacity to instill love of country and articulate certain ideals remained important for republicans seeking to form a nation. Music also remained for them a potential source and symbol of national pride, an art commanding respect and glory at home and abroad. However, after heady days filled with idealism when they came into power, in the early 1880s, the country fell into a major economic recession. After challenging foreign dominance over banking for four years, the very profitable Union générale bank crashed in January 1882, wiping out its investors and leading to a decline in industrial production and prices. The price of wheat was also falling, and France's grapevines and vineyards had been devastated by the *Phylloxera* aphid. Proust's ministry and the international market for luxury goods had drawn increasing attention to the role the arts could play in

48. For fuller discussion of these issues, see Jann Pasler "Building a Public for Orchestral Music: Les Concerts Colonne," in *Le Concert et son public: Mutations de la vie musicale en Europe de 1780 à 1914*, eds. Hans-Erich Bödëker, Patrice Veit, and Michael Werner (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2002): 209–40.

national prosperity. The recession further encouraged people to think of the arts as something that could help boost the market economy at home as well as abroad.

With the public never "so serious and so eager" to attend concerts, as Darcours remarked in 1881, music was in a good position to contribute to the recovery. The number of concerts was growing so rapidly—Darcours mentioned several hundred in a few weeks—that critics could not keep up; in 1882, *Ménestrel* referred similarly to an overwhelming "invasion" of concerts.[49] Orchestral concerts in Paris alone brought in over 500,000 francs in winter 1881–82.[50] In this context, despite their varying political positions, many republicans came to agree on something important with aesthetic as well as economic implications. Instead of looking to music for what it promised beyond itself—its capacity to serve as a model of social *mœurs*, an embodiment of harmonious order, and a medium in which audiences could encounter their differences and come to learn what they shared—they began to address music's capacity to be satisfying in and of itself.

What did this mean to them, and how was it political? Some art historians have denied that the republicans encouraged any specific aesthetic, arguing that they concentrated on institutional reform, using art to promote national education and industrial prosperity.[51] While this is true, in the early 1880s, I do find certain values promoted by republicans, not the slightly modernized classicism tied to academicism in the 1870s, but rather a new focus on grace and aesthetic pleasure. The psycho-aesthetician Charles Henry, a left-leaning socialist, took this so seriously that in 1885, he proposed that the science of art could "and must spread pleasure in and around us." To the extent it did so, he believed, it served "an immense social function in these times of oppression and hollow conflict."[52]

A cult of pleasure began to challenge the taste for glory as well as listeners' expectations of art music, how they listened, and to what they ascribed meaning. Music had long been associated with pleasure since Rousseau defined it as "the art of combining sounds in a way that is pleasing to the ear," and for years Larousse reinforced this in his *Grand Dictionnaire*.[53] But in the 1880s, pleasure became linked with certain aesthetic, ideological, and ethical considerations. In his 1884 treatise

49. Charles Darcours, "Notes de musique," *Figaro*, 23 February 1881; *Ménestrel*, 19 March 1882, 123.

50. Charles Darcours, "Notes de musique," *Figaro*, 3 May 1882.

51. Mainardi, *End of a Salon*, 84, 134.

52. Charles Henry, "Introduction à une esthétique scientifique," *Revue contemporaine* 2 (August 1885): 442, cited in Robyn Roslak, "Symphonic Seas, Oceans of Liberty: Paul Signac's *La Mer: Les Barques (Concarneau)*," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 4, 1 (Spring 2005): n. 45.

53. Pierre Larousse prioritizes Rousseau's definition of music in his *Grand Dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Grand dictionnaire universel, 1972), 11: 720.

Eléments d'esthétique musicale, Marmontel focused on aesthetic pleasure, defining its "essential condition" as the ability to "listen to a work of art for its own sake." For him, the goal of music was not to "transmit precise and distinct ideas to the mind, but rather to give sensations"; "there is no pleasure more lively than admiring the creative inventions of an inspired musician who opens new horizons before us," he declared. Of course, such aesthetic *jouissance* required a special education of the ear, the ability to analyze one's sensations, and an intellectual effort that few besides musicians and connoisseurs could easily make. Marmontel, a republican who believed in the influence of education on *mœurs* and the "brotherhood of races," was writing to promote the appreciation of universal qualities in musical beauty.[54] Others took pleasure seriously as an explicit emanation of their progressive republican politics. When Edouard Lockroy proposed to the Chambre in April 1881 that it was time for the state to get beyond creating "an aristocracy of artists" for "an aristocracy of amateurs," he argued that art should not serve "the pleasure of only a chosen few."[55] In reviewing the Salon of 1882, Proust linked aesthetic satisfaction to the pleasure a work elicited. Describing the "school of the pleasing [*l'école de l'agréable*]" as a manifestation of his politics, the "center-left of art," he, like Lockroy, was implying that this pleasure should be made broadly available.[56] Such statements suggest that republicans sought to break down class differences not only by making elite musical forms available to all classes, such as through an Opéra populaire, but also by encouraging the experience of aesthetic pleasure associated with these elite forms in a wide range of listeners. Whether this was realistic or not, given what skills it took to experience such pleasure, was not their concern. What was so innovative about this attitude at the time is that it threw into question the assumption that pleasure was a questionable pursuit in such serious domains as high art and, because it depended on an individual's personal experience, the antithesis of anything purporting to have public utility.

The logic by which aesthetic pleasure could become a goal of public policy, something to encourage and assimilate into republican *mœurs*, is not obvious. First, it meant disentangling the concept from its association with popular song and the popular culture of the cabaret and café, scorned by most politicians for their decadence. For Proust, the focus on pleasure was part of his effort to build bridges between the arts and crafts (more than between what we now call high and low culture). Second, and ironically, it meant reviving interest in an

54. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 147, 149, 259, 417, 441.
55. Mainardi, *End of a Salon*, 83–84.
56. Antonin Proust, "Le Salon de 1882," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 25 (1882): 545.

aesthetic that harked back to the aristocratic salon culture of the Ancien Régime and resonated with those wishing to revive it—most of them adversaries of the republicans. To understand this we must remember that while in the 1870s, the republicans promoted anything that would energize citizens, impress them with French strength and grandeur, and inspire patriotism—preoccupations of their revolutionary predecessors—when their power was secured in the 1880s, they no longer feared much of what the revolutionaries had fought against. With the end of the Moral Order and laws in place to constrain the influence of the monarchists and the Catholic Church, they could begin to assimilate the aristocratic French past as part of their project of constructing a new history. Ferry's policies supporting eclecticism and diversity of expression also set a framework for integrating what the revolutionaries had previously disdained, and for investigating a national identity based on feminine as well as masculine qualities.

Third, to explain the nature of aesthetic pleasure, its advocates looked to the eighteenth century, especially its decorative arts. Unlike the fine arts, these genres were not expected to teach and elevate. Both Proust and elite figures such as Edmond de Goncourt and the marquis de Chennevières found pleasure particularly in the decorative arts, whose purpose they understood as "seduction."[57] This interest was not inconsequential. Intellectuals and cultural leaders of the Union centrale des arts décoratifs, under Proust as president, beginning in 1882, believed that "a feeling for the decorative" was characteristic of French art and should be encouraged "for the greatest glory of the country."[58] In their journal *La Revue des arts décoratifs* in the early 1880s, they explained the utility of this revival. Numerous articles explored the transformation in French taste as reflected in the decorative arts from "grandeur" and "solemnity" during the time of Louis XIV to the "grace of private pleasure" under Louis XV. In this, the rococo period, when France was "the most delicate and playful nation in Europe," artists emphasized seductive grace and coquettishness with as much skill as that used previously in grandiose historical works. Art became more "organic, exotic, and erotic," or, as one critic put it, "feminized." This historical transformation served as a model for the shift in values they envisioned in contemporary French society, likewise from grandeur to grace.[59]

To understand why republicans might want to elevate and revive interest in

57. Antonin Proust, *L'Art sous la République* (Paris: Charpentier, 1892), 161, and Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-siècle France* (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), 119, 341n67.

58. Proust, "Salon de 1882," 539.

59. For more discussion of these ideas, see Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 119–25.

grace, we must understand what it meant at the time. Writing of late nineteenth-century Austria, Carl Schorske links what he calls the "culture of Grace" with the aristocratic "wish to cultivate and manifest in style the individual's personality and grace in the world"—a transparency resembling that which Rousseau envisaged between music and character. For him, the "Baroque culture of Grace, exalting the life of feeling and beauty" contrasted with the "Enlightenment culture of the Word," which "nurtured the rigorous pursuit of ethics and truth."[60] This binary opposition, however, is not altogether applicable in France. In French, the word has multiple uses and subtle variations in meaning. When applied to how one accomplishes a task, it is synonymous with ease or facility (as it is in music with ease or facility of expression and suppleness)—Littré's *Dictionnaire* (1881) calls it, inter alia, the "quality of a style in which elegance is tied to facility." When associated with people, grace is associated with desire and desirability, "what pleases in attitudes, manners, and speech" (Littré). In *Mignon* after Philine has seduced Wilhelm with her vocal virtuosity, he implores her, "say one word in response to this heart in love, *réponds de grâce* [answer, please]." According to Littré, grace is also "what one grants others in order to be pleasing or useful, without being obliged to do so."[61] In other words, it is an advantage or favor given another sometimes deriving from the giver's generosity, kindness, or beauty. This reference to utility underlines the aspect of service associated with grace, which is also implied in another of his definitions, "the benevolence a person accords to another." Grace can also mean a disposition that tends to grant favors including pardon. In mythology, the three Graces were the gods who personified the gift of pleasing. For many Catholics, it was also the effect of the seven sacraments—God's favor—which brought one closer to Him and, it might be hoped, to godliness, certainly a form of the truth. By identifying grace as a quintessential French value, French critics and politicians were not only pointing out a profound desire in the French to please and be pleasing, but also recognizing an innate power in this desire. This could come from the relationship between the good and the beautiful as well as its potential to attract a public, making money and reputations.

Proust's focus on blurred distinctions between the fine and applied arts contributed to a reconsideration and revaluation of the aesthetic power of grace, otherwise associated with the French rococo. It also parallels a renewed interest in contemplating the seductive qualities of music, what draws listeners to music

60. Carl Schorske, *Thinking with History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 11–12.

61. *Le Petit Robert* gives this as the first definition of the word *grâce*, but drops the connection to usefulness.

rather than what impresses them or has the potential to teach them. With this came new categories of value, as well as a more intimate relationship between music and its listeners quite distinct from that encouraged by the expression of grandeur and heroism, and beyond what can be expressed in words.

In this context, musicians and critics began to think of charm as a category of judgment with serious connotations. Charm had long been associated with women, whether the naïve charms of a Mignon or the manipulative charms of a Judith. This fascinated composers in the late 1870s. But in the 1880s, the term became more generally associated with the power of music. As Saint-Saëns once put it, charm helps music penetrate the listener, insinuating itself into the veins. Charm was also a way of talking about how music addressed the ear, not just the mind or the emotions. In 1880, the critic Oscar Comettant explained what it meant to be under a work's charm as "belonging entirely to the music . . . my appetite excited and burning to know the entire score."[62] Charming listeners was thus very different from offering models of moral behavior. To the extent that music charmed a listener, it drew the listener to it, eliciting desire for it. Charm then might render the listener submissive in a certain way, perhaps submissive to whatever meanings might be embodied in it or attached to it.[63] But feeling desire rendered the listener an active participant in the aesthetic process and the production of pleasure.

DELIBES'S GRACEFUL CHARM

For those, such as Proust and the Union centrale, who believed the aristocratic French past to be the best model for studying French grace and charm, there was the music of the French baroque. As Katharine Ellis points out, concerts of this music, performed increasingly in the late 1870s and early 1880s, tended to ignore the grand moments of the operas, preferring to feature the lighter keyboard and dance music.[64] Critics helped focus audience attention on this music's grace and charm. In 1878, Lavoix *fils* remarked that the dances in Lully's *Armide* were "imprinted with charming elegance"; in 1880, Gouzien, reviewing the Opéra's *concert historique*, pointed to the "many feminine graces" in the music; in 1881, *Ménestrel*'s reviewer

62. Oscar Comettant, reviewing *Jean de Nivelle* in *Le Siècle*, 15 March 1880, cited in H.M., "Léo Delibes: La Partition de *Jean de Nivelle* jugée par les musiciens," *Ménestrel*, 21 March 1880, 123.

63. This language was also used to talk about how Indian songs recounting the Ramayana have "grace and sweetness" and people in the Orient "submit to the charm of song." See, e.g., Jacques Grosset, *Contribution à l'étude de la musique hindoue* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1888), 7–12.

64. Katharine Ellis, *Interpreting the Musical Past: Early Music in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 144.

found Rameau's music, as performed by the amateur chorus Concordia, "full of an exquisite charm and grace" and presented these traits as "altogether French."[65] Tastes were changing. With the Republic solidly established, these feminized traits no longer disturbed those who might earlier have championed strength and virility in such music as Handel's oratorios. Performances of this music offered musical models of charm and grace for a wide variety of audiences, nourished a taste for these qualities, and encouraged the notion that they were quintessentially French. Whereas baroque dances may have served to transport listeners to "an era in which the rigaudon, the gavotte and the passecaille flourished,"[66] for some composers, I would argue, it served as a historical precedent for values they wished to encourage in the present and a standard to which new music could be compared. Saint-Saëns, for example, may have incorporated a pavane in *Etienne Marcel* and old Scottish airs in *Henry VIII* as signs of earlier eras, but when he incorporates a minuet and gavotte into his Septet (1880), their integration into a large chamber work suggests a deeper engagement with the French past, which goes beyond their capacity as signifiers to the past.[67]

In many ways, Léo Delibes and his music were just what Proust was advocating in the contemporary world. His spirit was free and independent, with no prejudices and, with his ties to the world of popular culture, he was the quintessential eclectic, looking to both the present and the past for inspiration. His searching nature and originality surpassed those of other composers in "the avant-garde of the modern French school." At the same time, his style was broadly accessible, interesting to connoisseurs as well as *ignorants*.[68]

Delibes's music offered an example of how "light grace" and an "inexhaustible facility" could be learned from popular culture and Offenbach (with whom he was close) as well as from Auber and Adolphe Adam.[69] Unlike his peers in the world of art music, Delibes had his start on the boulevards. There, he developed a reputation for writing operettas and musical comedy that combined "natural grace" and a "very French clarity" with great skill and interesting, original ideas.[70] His

65. *Ménestrel*, 3 April 1881, 144.

66. *Guide musical*, 29 May and 5 June 1879, cited in Ellis, *Interpreting the Musical Past*, chap. 4.

67. This work was commissioned by Emile Lemoine, director of an amateur music society, La Trompette.

68. Critics cited in H.M., "Delibes," 122–24.

69. Marmontel calls Auber "of all our French composers, the most eminently French from the perspective of spirit, natural grace, elegance, charming ideas, and scenic skill" (*Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 423).

70. H.M., "Delibes," 122–24.

work as choral conductor at the Opéra led to writing two ballets, *La Source* (1866) and *Coppélia* (1870), which remained very popular for years, *La Source* enjoying its fifty-sixth performance on opening night of the Palais Garnier in 1875. After these, he composed *Le Roi l'a dit* (1873), his first *opéra-comique*, setting a libretto by Edmond Gondinet and Philippe Gille that had also been offered to Offenbach. In 1876, the Opéra produced Delibes's third ballet, *Sylvia*.[71] Hearing it, one critic wrote, "Everything he does has something new and personal in it, distinction and charm, every page, even a polka, is exquisite. . . . The artist ennobles everything he touches."[72] The next year, with his "graceful and popular muse" recognized as "essentially French," Delibes won the Légion d'honneur. It is possible that the success of Delibes's ballets helped persuade Vaucorbeil to increase the presence of this genre at the Opéra in the early 1880s and to commission other composers with musical backgrounds in nonoperatic music.

In 1880, Delibes had a hit that changed the course of his career and helped turn grace and charm into highly valued musical attributes. On March 8, the Opéra-Comique presented his *Jean de Nivelle*, putting forth its best efforts since *Mignon* in 1866. The libretto, again by Gondinet and Gille, recalls a very popular fifteenth-century tale. Jean II, the eldest son of the duc de Montmorency was known for having refused to take up arms against the duc de Bourgogne, disobeying his father's orders. For centuries, Jean had been satirized in popular songs, as either "the dog" who flees when you call him or the son treated by his father like a dog, although he was later transformed into a hero in war songs popularized by Napoléon's army. In 1874, two prominent authors drew fresh attention to this character. Paul Verlaine titled the sixth of his *Ariettes oubliées* "C'est le chien de Jean de Nivelle." And in his *Opuscules sur la chanson populaire*, J.-B. Weckerlin devoted a chapter to variants of the seventeenth-century song about Jean. With these songs, Weckerlin could show how the oral tradition once functioned and how the same song could be found throughout the country.[73] As noted earlier,

71. Berton composed a pastoral on this subject for Fontainbleau in 1765.

72. Julien Torchet, review of *Sylvia* in *Orphéon*, 15 March 1880. *Le Roi l'a dit* and *Sylvia* were performed in Vienna soon after their Paris premieres and, together with Delibes's other ballets, throughout the 1870s and early 1880s. *Le Roi* was also performed in Antwerp, Berlin, Copenhagen, and Prague (see Table B-6). For a short study of these works, see Jean-Claude Yon, "Delibes avant *Lakmé*," in *Lakmé*, *L'Avant Scène Opéra*, no.183 (1998): 62–67.

73. Most looked back to the version in Jacques Mangeant, *Recueil des plus belles chansons des comédiens français* (Caen, 1615). See Paul Verlaine, *Romances sans paroles* (1874), J.-B. Weckerlin, *Opuscules sur la chanson populaire* (Paris: Bauer, 1874), 2: 2–8, and "Jean de Nivelle," in the repertoire of the Grenadiers du 8e de ligne of the French army under Napoléon. The song is still alive in a version recorded by the Baltimore Consort on their CD *La Rocque 'n' Roll* (DOR-90177).

such a project supported the republicans' idea of the nation as coherent, despite internal differences of language—a pressing concern to many with the republicans assuming power in 1880.

Gondinet and Gille's version of the story offered Delibes all the pastoral scenes Opéra-Comique audiences might expect, along with scenes more typical of grand opera. Jean, not getting along with his father, flees his duties for the countryside, where he dresses up as a shepherd and flirts with the peasant girls. One of them, Arlette, although engaged to a local boy, falls in love with him, not knowing he is the son of a duke. After her song leads to the reconciliation of Jean and his father, and Jean suffers some misadventures, he reluctantly joins the duc de Bourgogne and takes on the king of France in battle. Afterwards, however, he renounces glory and grandeur and, returning to Arlette's humble village, resolves to live out his days with her. The story stimulated Delibes to explore a new style, combining graceful charm with compelling drama.

After the premiere, Adolphe Jullien, no republican, was sympathetic to the difficulties of turning a heroic poem into an *opéra-comique*, but found the constant effort of a composer "struggling against his own nature" to be tiresome.[74] However, *Ménestrel* gave *Jean de Nivelle* unprecedented attention, publishing two long compilations of reviews in various journals and newspapers and reproducing piano and vocal excerpts for their readers.[75] From conservatives such as Comettant to Wagnerians like Victor Wilder, critics embraced the work, particularly the way it merged the "healthy traditions of the French lyrical art" with the "ingenuities" and harmonic refinements of modern music.[76] Arthur Pougin praised Delibes's "great concern for form, absolute respect for his art, and rare distinction in the work's construction"—values upheld during the Moral Order—and Charles-Marie Widor appreciated how, with certain aspects indebted to grand opera, it was "more profound" than ordinary *opéras-comiques*. Most critics, however, stressed the work's "clarity" and "grace" and took pains to explain the source of the music's

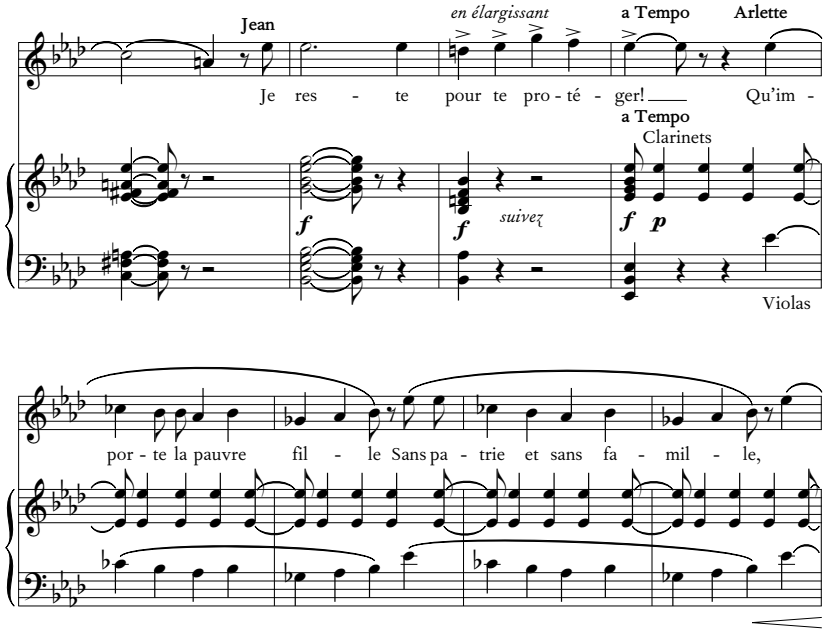
74. Adolphe Jullien, "Théâtre national de l'Opéra-Comique," *Revue et gazette musicale*, 11 March 1880, 81–82.

75. Heugel, *Ménestrel*'s publisher, made twenty-two separate excerpts of the opera available for sale that month. Although Heugel used the magazine to promote the music he published, the extent of these reproduced reviews was relatively rare. Typically, of course, such compilations would play down negative comments. In their collection of reviews, *Léo Delibes, Jean de Nivelle: Dossier de presse parisienne* (Weinsberg, Germany: Lucie Galland, 2006), Bérengère de l'Epine and Pauline Girard point out that Delibes began to be considered more seriously in the period leading up to this premiere (iv–v).

76. "Semaine théâtrale: *Jean de Nivelle*," *Ménestrel*, 14 March 1880, 114–17; H.M., "Delibes," 122.

EX. 8 Delibes, *Jean de Nivelle* (1880), act 3.

In this duo, Jean comes upon Arlette among the soldiers and wants to stay and protect her, musically reinforced by his assertive crescendo and choral accompaniment. After asking him to leave [*partez de grace*], she implores him not to worry about her even if she is a "poor girl without country or family." With music that captures Arlette's unstable resoluteness as well as her sadness, Delibes accompanies her pleading with softly repeating E♭s in the clarinets, off the beat, and doubles her undulating song with the violas.



"charm." For the composer Victorin Joncières, its "secret" lay, not only in the music's clarity and originality, but also in its "delicate details, original harmonies, and shimmering sonorities" (ex. 8). Other composer-critics also pointed to the work's sound. Some called it elegant, an aesthetic quality Littré mentions in his definition of *grâce* and that *Le Petit Robert* defines as recognizable in "forms whose perfection is made of grace and simplicity," as well as a certain "purity of style," which are characterized by "harmony" and an "ease" of expression.

More than melody or harmony, it was the effects created by new and unusual uses of the orchestra that critics saw as primarily responsible for the work's charm. Ernst Reyer pointed to how the "muffled sounds of the horn lent a mysterious charm to Jean's recitative," Widor to how Arlette's cavatina in act 2 "borrowed a singular charm from the penetrating sonority of the English horn." Saint-Saëns found Delibes's orchestration "exquisite, disdaining the banality of easy effects

and instead ceaselessly seeking and finding new things that charm the ear as much as they interest it." For him, the orchestration was "perfection." Another critic claimed, "what seduces in this score is that it seems to have been written for musicians more than the public, even if it gives the latter an extreme pleasure."[77]

"Charming details" and "seductive sonorities"—in other words, the music's surface sensations—thus had certain advantages. The very French combination of clarity and charm discouraged no one, offering "a smile for naïve listeners and a wink for smart ones." It allowed listeners to judge for themselves the extent of a work's charm. That charm was elusive and difficult to explain also had benefits. Critics' admissions that the "secret charms" of this music did not reveal themselves on one hearing made a strong argument for getting audiences to multiple performances. Critics' powerlessness to communicate in words the impression the music made on them drew attention to its distinction. Vague references to Delibes's use of "all kinds of *recherches séduisantes*" stimulated listeners' curiosity. According to *Ménestrel*, some amateurs brought their scores to the performances to follow it "in the English manner," with music in hand, perhaps so they might understand better how the composer had produced the work's charm. Those who thought Delibes was writing more for musicians than the general public pointed out that art music was supposed to raise the level of the ordinary listener's experience.[78] In this sense, the opera contributed to republicans' educational aspirations for the populace.

Although some republicans allegedly feared some kind of jinx connecting the music of Delibes to political disaster, as on 24 May 1873, when the premiere of *Le Roi l'a dit* coincided with elections that gave the monarchists a majority,[79] *Jean de Nivelle* had immediate and broad appeal. It recalled a popular old French folktale and embodied an eclecticism encompassing elements from both grand opera and *opéra-comique*, lyricism and modern harmonies, masculine bravoura and feminine charm. While *Aida* was playing at the Opéra, it earned unprecedented receipts at the Opéra-Comique and within ten months had reached its hundredth performance. The work's economic success brought attention to grace and charm as compelling aspects of serious French art music. In the context of rising Wagnerism,

77. These reviews are reproduced in H.M., "Delibes," 121–25.

78. "Semaine théâtrale," *Ménestrel*, 21 March 1880, 124; Edouard Garnier, "Léo Delibes et la musique dramatique moderne à propos de Jean de Nivelle," *Ménestrel*, 19 December 1880, 21.

79. In their *Jean de Nivelle*, L'Epine and Girard reproduce a fictional essay from the royalist *Le Gaulois*, 9 March 1880, that portrays the new president, Jules Grévy, as purportedly anxious over whether the composer's opera might bring "bad luck" (10–12). Yet elsewhere they clarify that the audience was indeed "no less agitated by passionate debates" about a new anticlerical policy just proposed by the new minister of public instruction, Jules Ferry. This was being discussed by the Senate, which that month called for the dissolution of the Jesuits (xviii).

Delibes was praised for his "native qualities" as a composer of the *race gauloise*, for innovating while respecting tradition, for preparing the future while connecting to the glorious past. With his "phrases full of stylishness [*coquetterie*]" that never lapsed into bad taste, some described his talents as "Parisian."[80] Within a week of its premiere, Vienna, Budapest, and Dresden had already signed contracts to produce it, and numerous German journals had published flattering reviews of the "charming score," especially its orchestration. By May, it was being translated into Russian, and soon it was being done in German, Hungarian, Danish, Swedish, and Italian, in some cases as grand opera with recitatives; in Moscow, in a *café-concert*.[81] *Ménestrel* mentioned foreign productions of the work more often than *Hamlet*—twenty-one times in 1880 (eleven cities), and thirty-one more in 1881 (eight cities) (see table B-9). Abroad Delibes was called a "composer-charmer" and judged a new model of the "purely French composer." In 1881, he was rewarded by appointment as composition professor at the Conservatoire, succeeding Henri Reber.

DEMOCRATIZING PLEASURE

Pleasure, of course, had not been absent from the French bourgeois world. The freedom many contemporaries felt to indulge in sensual pleasure is documented in late nineteenth-century French painting and fiction. In his 1884 novel *A rebours* (*Against the Grain*, or *Against Nature*), Joris-Karl Huysmans explores his protagonist's experimentation with hyperaesthesia and fascination with beautiful objects. From the pleasure of decorating his house with a boudoir full of mirrors and installing a cricket in a cage to stimulate his memory of the past, to the pleasure of exotic flowers, intense smells, and the equally intoxicating power of poetry, Des Esseintes takes the reader on a voyage of sensual discovery. In the 1880s, pleasure was also part of with the cultural work republicans began to expect of music. If the intellectual pleasures described by Huysmans and Marmontel were out of reach for many listeners, especially the lower classes, the sensual pleasures of sound were more accessible and equally important experiences republicans wished to cultivate

80. Wilder and Joncières cited in H.M., "Delibes," 122; "Saison russe," *Ménestrel*, 8 January 1882, 44.

81. In Belgium that fall, the public could attend the Opéra-Comique version with spoken dialogue in Brussels and the version with recitatives in Antwerp, allowing Belgians to "compare the two versions and follow their preferences" (*Ménestrel*, 15 August 1880, 293). The French premiere of the grand opera version, however, did not take place until that November in Nantes. On the Russian *café-concert* version, done without permission, see *Ménestrel*, 5 September 1880, 317. See also "Nouvelles diverses," *Ménestrel*, 21 March 1880, 125; 23 May 1880, 198; 19 December 1880, 21.

broadly in the population. The value ascribed to these acknowledges a new social position for the bourgeoisie, who had a pronounced taste for boulevard theater and operetta, cabarets and cafés. Focusing on the sensual pleasures that could be expressed in serious art music was another way to break down the association of high art with noble sentiment and grandeur and served as an aesthetic counterpart to the democratization of elite institutions.

The importance of pleasure entailed redefining the utility of art music. Certainly, as Richard Leppert points out, pleasure is an "awareness of the difference it allows, momentarily, from ordinary experience."[82] But no longer was beauty understood primarily as a way to help people transcend everyday life and imagine a harmonious social order, as under the Moral Order. If the pleasure of sensation, and particularly sounds, takes place in time and is perceived by the body as well as the heart and mind, then a music that tantalizes with aural pleasure encourages the listener to embrace the present, to enjoy it. Such music celebrates a sense of being that is no longer at risk or in dire conflict, as the republicans felt with the Third Republic solidly in their hands. Unlike the music of grandeur and heroism, music of sensual pleasure engages listeners in a kind of playfulness that acknowledges nuances in the familiar and tolerates the unexplainable. If they can, at times, anesthetize people to critical modes of perception, the pleasures of charm and grace can also help them explore a kind of freedom and inventiveness not possible within the mental constraints imposed by most kinds of work. In this sense, they could be liberating. As in the decorative arts movement, this suggests that there were social values inherent in what induced aesthetic pleasure, and that these could be democratic rather than aristocratic. As Gabriel Tarde put it, social evolution begins and ends in play.[83] Moreover, unproductive luxuries (such as music) make up the whole charm of life, he argues, and are responsible for "all the grandiose or minuscule innovations which have enriched and civilized the world."[84] From this perspective, pleasure could be part of a rigorously secular republican morality that found meaning in leisure activities, a way to connect private experiences with the social good.

82. In his "The Social Discipline of Listening," in *Le Concert et son public*, ed. Hans Erich Bödeker, Patrice Veit, and Michel Werner (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2002), Richard Leppert notes that pleasure is experiential, involving "consciousness and intentionality." The very identity of the bourgeois subject, he argues, hinges on the fact that pleasure produces desire, particularly the desire for "a totality of body and mind that hardly exists except in the imagination" (463–64).

83. Cited in Rosalind H. Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 374.

84. Ibid., 365.

It also meant considering pleasure differently than in Gounod's *Faust*, looking beyond his and Saint-Saëns's music for their models, and espousing composers with different ideals without returning to the silliness associated with operetta, especially during the Second Empire. Remember, in his *La Jeunesse d'Hercule* (1877), Saint-Saëns's hero turns away from pleasure. And as a critic, Saint-Saëns had written a column for *Le Voltaire* on 31 July 1879 in which he explained: "Music is not an instrument of physical pleasure. Music is one of the most delicate products of the human spirit." The younger generation felt differently, perhaps in part because their careers blossomed, not during the decadence of the Second Empire, but during the Moral Order of the Third Republic.

Delibes was not the only composer whose music was increasingly appreciated for the pleasure of its inherent charms and who was in a position to promote this aesthetic in his composition classes at the Conservatoire. Massenet, professor there since 1878, was also linked to the emerging cult of pleasure. He had long been appreciated for understanding feminine charm and being able to capture it in his music. In his feminine trilogy—*Marie-Magdeleine* (1873), *Eve* (1875), and *La Vierge* (1880)—he explored feminine seduction as well as the sensuality and quasi-eroticism of religious devotion (even if this may have inflamed Catholics).[85] *Hérodiade* (1881) also took on the power of charm as its subject. Unsympathetic critics—some of them Franckistes, d'Indystes, or Wagnerians with different agendas—have done a disservice to our understanding of Massenet's career in faulting him for writing music that would "produce pleasure in his listeners" and win over an audience. In the early 1880s, I would argue, this was viewed as an achievement, although not one that always resulted in "career advancement."[86] After all, when Vaucorbeil took over the Opéra's direction in 1880, Massenet suffered. Vaucorbeil removed *Le Roi de Lahore* from their repertoire and rejected *Hérodiade* because he

85. In *La Vierge*, praised for its "touching grace," Mary is "intoxicated by an unknown charm" as she ascends to heaven. Eric Goldstrom has pointed out that the enrapturing experience makes her divine. As a result of *La Vierge*'s impieties, Massenet had a sort of minor excommunication imposed on him. For a detailed study of the connections between the sacred and the sensual in these oratorios, see Erik Goldstrom, "A Whore in Paradise: The Oratorios of Jules Massenet" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 1998). See also Torchet's review of the premiere in *Orphéon*, 11 June 1880.

86. In his *French Opera*, Huebner begins his chapter on Massenet with an anecdote Vincent d'Indy recounted in his diary, in which he claimed that Massenet told the young man he composed only "trifles for the public." Later, Huebner cites a little-known critic in 1887 who believed that *Marie-Magdeleine*, which indeed led to a lot of exposure in Paris, "was not about faith, but about winning an audience" and claimed that the composer "prostituted himself with a pretence of holiness while writing saccharin, theatrical music merely to produce pleasure in

found its plot incoherent.[87] Music expressing erotic obsessions was not a ticket to sure success.

The Opéra-Comique was more receptive to Massenet as well as to the new aesthetic elevating grace, charm, and pleasure. Beginning in January 1884, his *Manon* had almost as many performances in its first twelve months as *Jean de Nivelle*. In many ways, like Delibes's *Le Roi s'amuse!* (1882)—six dances *dans le style ancien* composed for Hugo's play—the work is a nod to Proust and the Union centrale, which had advocated studying models of grace and charm from the Ancien Régime. It is set in eighteenth-century France following the death of Louis XIV, that is, precisely during the transition in public taste from grandeur to the "grace of private pleasure." Throughout the score, Massenet incorporates references to musical ornaments and dance rhythms used during the Ancien Régime. In act 3, especially, he uses an opening minuet and the occasion of a performance by the Opéra's dancers within the performance to try his hand at capturing what was so pleasurable to the king about such dances. In four short interludes (called entrances), he plays with symmetrical patterns, dramatic oppositions, and grace-note ornaments inspired by this music—easily accessible forms of musical pleasure (ex. 9). With the dancers performing in period attire and the set design a reconstruction "à la Viollet-le-Duc," reviewers appreciated this "restitution of the *fêtes galantes* of our great-grandfathers."[88] This taste for the rhythms and forms of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dances grew increasingly in the 1880s and 1890s.

The composer did not, however, stop with this *plaisir de souveraine*.[89] *Manon*, whose libretto by Gille and Henri Meilhac was based on the abbé Prévost's novel *Manon Lescaut* (1731), takes as its central focus, not just musical pleasure, but also pleasure as enjoyed by all classes and in its many forms. The work begins with

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his listeners" (25, 34). Many of the critics Huebner cites represent aesthetic perspectives linked with d'Indy whose music never had much audience appeal. Huebner himself refers to Massenet's achievements of the late 1870s—the period of *Le Roi de Lahore* at the Opéra and its very good run abroad—as "career advancements" (45).

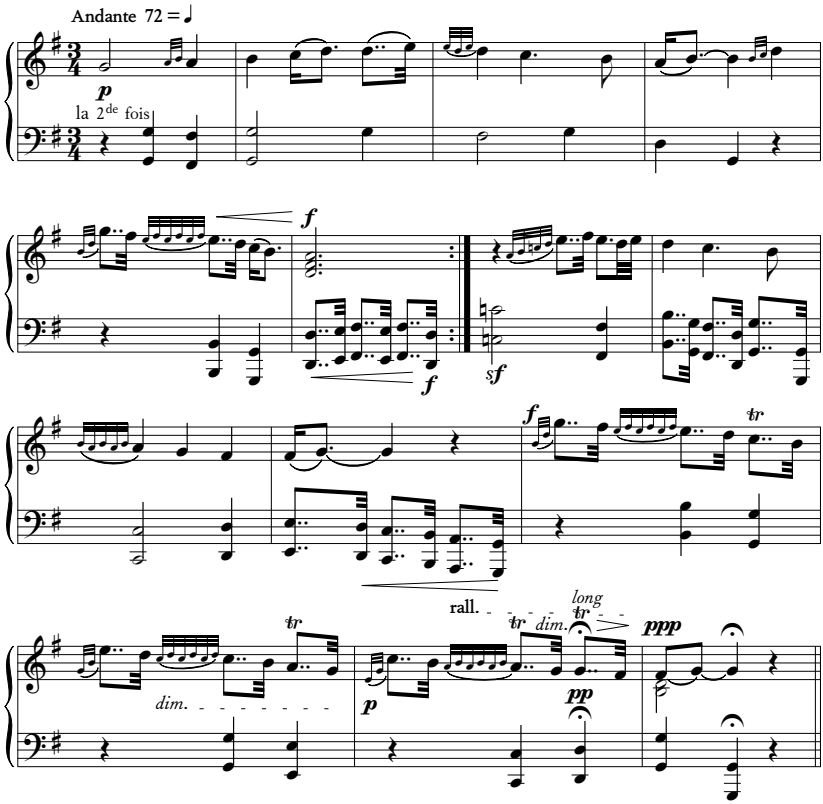
87. Meanwhile, a year before Massenet's *Hérodiade* was completed, three Italian towns vied for its premiere. It was performed in Brussels, Geneva, Milan, London, Budapest, Hamburg, Vienna, and Berlin before coming to the Théâtre-Italien in Paris on 1 February 1884. *Ménestrel*, 18 July 1880, 262. The public in Hamburg was so enthusiastic that the work was done twenty-five times there, Torchet reported in *Orphéon*, 23 January 1883.

88. "Semaine théâtrale," *Ménestrel*, 27 January 1884, 68, and review in *La France*, 21 January 1884, cited in Huebner, *French Opera*, 72. As examples of pastiche, Huebner points to the double-dotted rhythms in the act 1 sextet, the figuration in Lescaut's act 1 aria, "Regardez-moi bien," the minuet that accompanies much of the dialogue in act 3, and the Gavotte *mélodie*, drawn from one of his own earlier songs, "Sérénade de Molière" (*French Opera*, 60).

89. This is how the characters in *Manon* describe the *opéra-ballet* they are about to see (pp. 244–46 in the piano-vocal score).

EX. 9 Massenet, *Manon* (1884), act 3, minuet, second entrance.

This minuet demonstrates Massenet's integration of eighteenth-century dance styles into *Manon*, visible in both the frequent use of elaborate ornaments in the melodic line, as well as double-dotted rhythms in the bass.



the pleasure of food and drink. As patrons approach dinner at a hotel restaurant, they fawn "with joy" over the vintage wines and the dishes, one of them a "work of art." Next comes the pleasure of travel. Manon, just a "poor girl" from the provinces, sings with excitement about her first trip, even though she is en route to a convent, placed there for having too great a taste for pleasure. We first hear her singing hesitantly with off-beat accents, but vivaciously, alternating between tears and laughter and finding "everything seductive." When Des Grieux lays eyes on her, the focus shifts to the pleasure of sexual attraction. While it is Manon's physical beauty that draws him, for her, it is his voice and his words of ardent tenderness that she finds "pleasure in hearing." As if speaking for the composer and his hopes, she explains, "In charming my ears, these charm my heart." The pleasure of love is suggested by their short duet when their lines rub against one another,

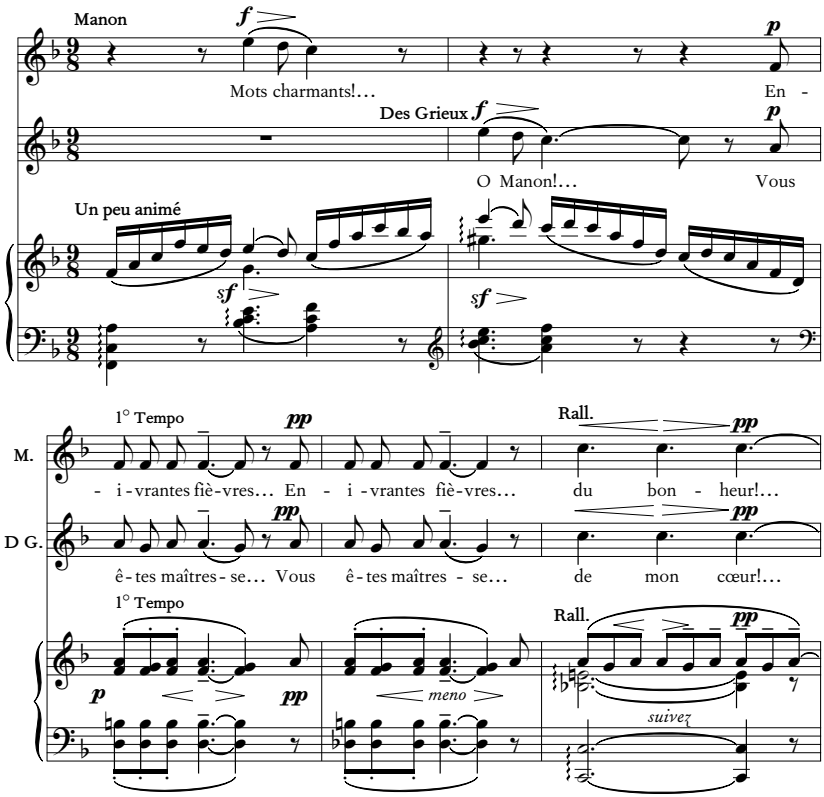
her F's against his G's, and then come together into brief unison on C (ex. 10). The words here are important. Manon's experience is of "intoxicating fevers" that lead to "happiness," while Des Grieux's ecstasy comes from contemplating her as his "mistress," the "mistress of his heart." The pleasures of love for her, at this point, are sensual, whereas for him they are emotional. After this comes the pleasure of escape to Paris, which leads to two long lines of unison singing and to Manon's "sensuous outburst," a reiteration of her vision of a life devoted to pleasure.

In the middle of the opera, after she admits to being "weak and fragile" when Des Grieux's rivals promise her a life of luxury, Manon turns to other pleasures associated with a young woman, especially vanity. The first time we hear her sing with delicate ornaments and long fioraturas is in her self-congratulatory air in which she celebrates her own beauty. This is followed by a gavotte Massenet added after the premiere, delicate music that advises women to profit while they are young. In act 5, rhyming *désirs* with *plaisirs,* Manon hopes that "all her desires" are for "pleasures." Preferring the pleasures of gold above all, she pushes Des Grieux to gamble with what is left of their money in the hope of returning to a life of luxury. In the end, the pleasure of an apology and the pleasure of forgiveness revive the couple's love, but Manon dies of shame.

If one were to concentrate only on the end, this could seem a morality tale, a warning to women not to abandon virtue for pleasure. However, unlike in *Carmen* or Prévost's novel, Manon is not depicted as dangerous or particularly sexual. She describes herself as "beautiful, young, and graceful." With claims like "There's no voice with an accent so sweet, no one with more charm and tenderness," Massenet takes pains to make her music appealing to audiences as well as Des Grieux. When she introduces herself, it is with a gentle melodic curve and repeated eighth notes that charm with their simplicity. In these ways, she resembles Mignon. Her appeal comes from her youth (she is only sixteen) and vitality. Since Des Grieux experiences a *coup de foudre* (love at first sight), she needs no manipulation to win his heart. The only seduction scene comes later, when she tries to persuade Des Grieux to leave the seminary, and it is not typical. Manon begins in a "sorrowful and supplicating" tone and a spirit of humility, appealing for pardon from God and then Des Grieux (ex. 11). Her lines begin *forte* and descend repeatedly from F flat, one after another, almost hypnotically, but without the chromaticism of Dalila's "Respond to my tenderness." Then, entreating Des Grieux to come back to her, she asks him to listen to her voice. Her melody, sung "with a great and very caressing charm," calms to *pianissimo* and reverses to repeated ascending lines. Des Grieux reiterates these same passages at the end of the opera when he implores

EX. 10 Massenet, *Manon*, act 1, duet of Manon and Des Grieux.

These few quiet measures, following Des Grieux's *forte* declamations that Manon is the "mistress of his heart," create a brief moment of repose for the two lovers, in which they reflect on the nature of their love.



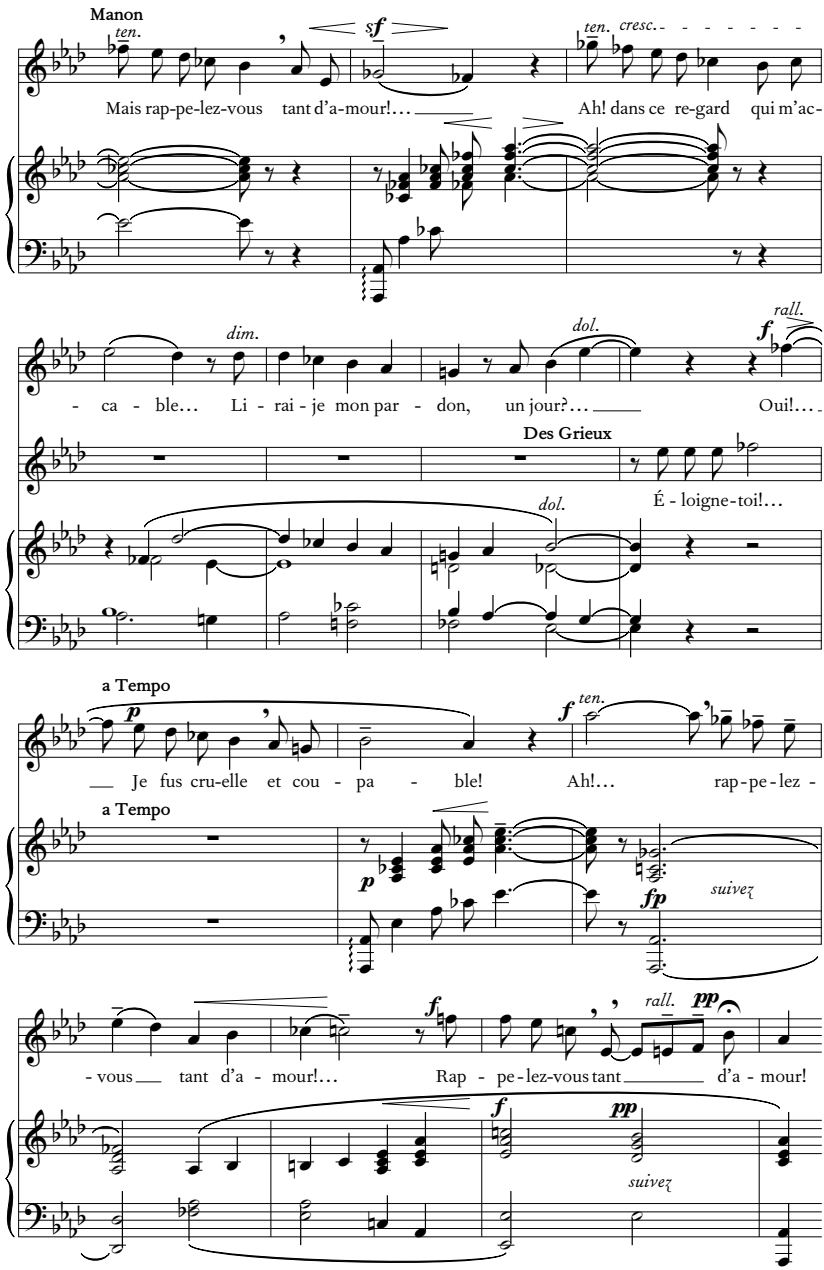
her to recall the caress of his voice, and as they engage in their final duet just before she expires. In this way, the music echoes "memories full of charm" in the lovers and becomes engraved in the listener's imagination.

Audiences expecting transparency between music and character must have been confused by Manon. Her music shares grace and tenderness with that of Mignon—attributes that, along with charm and delicacy, even politicians from Gambetta's progressive Republican Union insisted that women cultivate in the 1880s.[90] At

90. In his speech at a women's *lycée*, "Inauguration du lycée Racine à Paris," in *Au ministre de l'instruction publique 1887: Discours, allocutions, circulaires* (Paris, 1888), Eugène Spuller declared, "La femme doit garder de grâce, de charme, et de délicatesse" (249).

EX. 11 Massenet, *Manon*, act 3, duet of Manon and Des Grieux.

In the beginning of the act 3 duet, Manon begs God's forgiveness for her love of Des Grieux, culminating on a fortissimo high B as she attempts to raise her voice "to the heavens." Then she admits her own cruelty and culpability, seducing her lover from the role of a supplicant.



the same time, the music expresses self-conscious sensualism tinged with vanity. Manon falls in love and promises herself to a man, but never marries. For both men and women, the options seem to be pleasure or religious abstinence—marriage is mentioned explicitly only once and as the "duty" expected of a man. In drawing audiences into the work, Manon may not have offered audiences a clear model of what to be or not to be, but she did lead them to contemplating and perhaps vicariously enjoying a huge array of pleasures, especially musical pleasure. In doing so, Massenet democratized pleasure, validating it in the bourgeois world and spreading this taste throughout the population.[91]

This aesthetic emphasizing grace and charm was also evoked to judge composers, even in works of grandeur and nobility. In an 1885 review of *Cléopâtre*, a "lyric scene" by Duvernoy, the winner of the 1880 City of Paris Prize, for example, Charles Darcours praised the music's "grace and charm" but said that Duvernoy could have foregrounded these better if he had chosen a less overpowering subject.[92] These values permeated other musical contexts as well and affected the tastes of all classes, as documented by the choral society journal, *Nouvelle France chorale*. In 1883, this paper reported that elite audiences at the Opéra were less receptive to the "grandeur of the proportions and the nobility of the architecture" in Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII* than to its "melodic abundance" and the "aptness of the instrumental color." They particularly stressed such values in choral music. Reviewing Massenet's *Narcisse* (1878), a female chorus written for the Société chorale Guillot de Sainbris that in some ways foreshadows the concerns of *Manon*, they praised its "charming grace" and "original harmonies"—"everything is imprinted with simplicity and proceeds sweetly; it's like a hesitant soul, submitting to the irresistible attraction of a seduction." To explain the popularity of the music of the vicomtesse de Grandval, which the Sainbris chorus also performed, they pointed to her "gift with melody, that is, charm and invention," noting, "with these one is sure to please." Reviewers for *Nouvelle France chorale* encouraged the working-class and petit-bourgeois men of the Société chorale Le Louvre to widen their repertoire to include small choruses "that require qualities of charm and grace to which audiences appear always very sensitive."[93] These values were

91. Carmen and Don José "produced their theatrical pleasures . . . as players outside the bourgeois order," but Manon performed "within an *opéra-comique* social frame that assimilated 'la note voluptueuse' with the social propriety of powder and minuets," Huebner concludes (*French Opera*, 72).

92. Charles Darcours, "Notes de musique," *Figaro*, 8 April 1885.

93. *Nouvelle France chorale*, 27 April and 9 December 1883, and Hippolyte de Vos, ibid., 16 February 1884.

also found in *chansons populaires*, whose simplicity had earlier denied the genre any aesthetic merit. By 1886, they, too, were being praised for the "charm of their free inspiration" and their "naïve grace." To elevate the "primitive form" of these songs, which Tiersot found the "most lively and characteristic," he praised it as "also the most charming."[94]

Pleasure even began to permeate the language of elementary school manuals. Whereas in the 1870s popular solfège manuals defined music as "the art of expressing feelings of the soul by the combination of sounds," or as "a language that serves to express feelings, the art that moves by communicating with the soul," in his *La Première Année de musique, solfège, et chants* (1885), Marmontel called music "the art of producing and combining sounds for the pleasure of the ear."[95] Many music pedagogues long believed that it was important for children to experience the pleasure of singing before they had to learn theory. But Marmontel here introduced the notion of aural pleasure into his definition of music. Part of the emphasis on aural pleasure by republicans was to secularize music and to recognize it as the result of work and the stimulus of a physical experience. Pleasure in music, as Marmontel uses it, is the product of abstract sounds with acoustic properties. This was not just a premodernist attempt to deromanticize the genre and to elicit admiration for the composer. Teaching children the value of aural pleasure was also part of helping them to learn to listen in a very French manner, with particular attention to "beautiful and pure sonorities."[96]

With grace, charm, and the aesthetic pleasure they produced, republicans saw ways that music could get inside listeners, not just "charming our intelligence, touching our heart, and infiltrating our soul,"[97] but also appealing through its sensuality to the body. To the extent that aural pleasure is something distinct from the communication of feelings, it could create desire for itself. Viewed cynically, the taste for charm and pleasure could create a potential imbalance between people's needs and desires, or could function as a sort of carrot to get listeners, especially

94. Gabriel Vicaire, "Nos idées sur le traditionnalisme," *Revue des traditions populaires* 7 (25 July 1886): 189. Julien Tiersot, too, points out the "charm" of this repertoire in his annotations in id. and Vincent d'Indy, *Chansons populaires du Vivarais et du Vercors* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1892), 4, 8.

95. D. Bargallo, *Petite solfège* (Paris: 1876), 1; Camile de Vos, *Enseignement du chant et solfège à l'usage des écoles et sociétés chorales et instrumentales* (Paris: Nouvelle France chorale, 1878), 1; Antoine Marmontel, *La Première Année de musique, solfège, et chants* (Paris: Colin, 1885), 1.

96. In his *La Deuxième Année de musique, solfège, et chants* (Paris: Colin, 1891), Antoine Marmontel expands on his 1884 comment, clarifying that the goal of music is to "charm the ear by the production of beautiful and pure sonorities" (21).

97. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 261.

children, to ingest material—namely, the lyrics—that they might otherwise reject. Yet to the extent that one's heart, mind, and body vibrated in sympathy, this kind of music could have a particularly powerful effect.

The combination of desire and belief in this music's value led to what Gabriel Tarde called consumption. This was not the shallow and immediate gratification of preexisting tastes we normally associate with consumption, but it nevertheless fanned the market for this music by a circular process of mutual reinforcement.[98] Unlike the Opéra, which lost over 500,00 francs between 1881 and 1884, the Opéra-Comique made a profit. After trailing in receipts behind three popular theaters in the 1870s—the Gaîté, Porte-Saint-Martin, and Variétés—in 1881, it rose to third, after the Opéra and Théâtre-Français (the Comédie-Française). Investors received a 32 percent return, and even more in 1882. In 1883–84, with *Lakmé*, *Manon*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and a reprise of *Carmen*, which reached its hundredth performance there that June, the Opéra-Comique made 270,000 francs.[99] In 1884–85, it surpassed the Théâtre-Français to become the second highest grossing theater in the country. With these successes and the focus on pleasures shared with a wide public came gradual acceptance of this art music as a commodity with economic utility for the country.

Consequently, in the 1880s, the "daily seduction of success" was no longer perceived as the problem Gounod had earlier feared.[100] When government administrators addressed Conservatoire students in the 1880s, they emphasized music's capacity to be satisfying in and of itself. In 1886, Minister Albert Kaempfen told students to "love the art for its own sake, for the power and charm inherent in it."[101] They also recognized the commercial success of music by Delibes and Massenet, the two major composers teaching at the Conservatoire. In his 1883 speech, Director of Fine Arts Kaempfen praised Delibes's *Lakmé* for "seducing everyone" and becoming "beloved" from its first performance. The following year, he lauded Massenet's *Hérodiade* and *Manon* as "victories" in terms of attracting audiences for "never has the taste for music been as lively as during our time.

98. As Williams points out in *Dream Worlds*, 360–61, Tarde defines consumption as desire in combination with belief (or judgment). See also Gabriel Tarde, "La Croyance et le désir: Possibilité de leur mesure," *Revue philosophique* 10 (August 1880): 150–80.

99. "Courrier des théâtres," *Figaro*, 19 November 1884.

100. Institut de France, "Rapport de Gounod," in "Procès verbaux des séances de l'Académie des beaux-arts," 13 May 1876, Académie archives, *registre* 2E, 14.

101. Albert Kaempfen, *Discours prononcé par le Ministre de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts: Séance publique annuelle* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1886), 8. Kaempfen, a Swiss lawyer-journalist, edited *L'Illustration* before becoming director of fine arts from 1882 to 1887 and director of national museums in 1887.

It is spreading with a marvelous speed." Minister of Public Instruction, Religion, and Fine Arts Eugène Spuller likewise recognized in 1887 how popular classical music had become and, in mourning the fire at the Opéra-Comique, promised not to deprive the French too long of its "loftiness, grace, and sweetness." By 1888, Director of Fine Arts Gustave Larroumet had turned the achievements of Delibes and Massenet into an aesthetic dictum, telling students to aspire to "charm" and "elegance" and to "conquer" audiences for the sake of the music as well as the prestige and prosperity of the country. The next year, recognizing the power inherent in the cultivation of these feminine values, he called them "permanent qualities of our race."[102]

EXPLORING UNCHARTED TERRITORY

In the 1880s, along with new traditions and new histories, diversity and eclecticism, charm and pleasure, republicans continued to embrace progress as integral to their new ideology. What interested them was not so much the progress that resulted from facing difficulties—the kind that expressed republicans' hopes and desires when in the minority under the Moral Order. Rather, it was progress that was possible when one was in power: experimentation and new ideas that broke the barriers of conventional expectations to explore uncharted territory. These were the keys to greater influence in the world, a potentially long-lasting legacy. As such, they made culture an important component of public policy.

Enough of the French public had a taste for novelty and innovation that composers felt empowered to take some risks. To those for whom Germany represented progress, it was a question of assimilating German strengths. In the 1870s, this had meant trying to equal the grandeur of Handel, as Saint-Saëns attempted in parts of *Samson et Dalila* and elsewhere. In the 1880s, especially after he died in 1883, it was Wagner whose innovations presented new models of musical progress. Scholars such as Steven Huebner have shown how French composers of opera, including Massenet in his *Manon*, responded to the challenge of Wagner's growing popularity by incorporating Wagnerian motivic, harmonic, and formal procedures. What has not been entirely understood, however, is that the republican ideology of diversity, eclecticism, and pleasure created a receptive context for French Wagnerism. It encouraged experimentation, and Massenet thought audiences would appreciate artistic experimentation. At the same time, other than

102. Gustave Larroumet, *Discours prononcé par M. le Ministre des beaux-arts: Séance publique annuelle du samedi 4 août 1888* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1888).

diehard Wagnerians, most composers continued to aim for clarity and charm in their melodies and a certain French distinction in their orchestration. As Massenet once told his students, "Go far, very far, as far as you can, but follow the great road." Experimentation should go hand in hand with tradition.[103]

From Marmontel's perspective, with French composers in the 1880s "lively and original enough to exist on their own" and with France now among the "first rank" of musical nations, the time had come for the French to look to their own roots for inspiration.[104] Perhaps not surprisingly, one of the most important French traditions that laid a foundation for the generic experimentation of Delibes and Massenet was the Revolution. Much as Grétry, Méhul, and Cherubini did in their music, Delibes constructed a hybrid work with *Jean de Nivelle* by including sections of dramatic music. "Charming" sections with "delicate details" and pastoral tunes are interspersed with "grand pages," inspired drama depicting battle scenes and heroic grandeur.[105] With its elements of grand opera, Delibes pushed on the boundaries of contemporary *opéra-comique*. Like Delibes, Massenet also looked to his revolutionary predecessors for ways to renovate the genre. He was particularly interested in melodrama—spoken text with orchestral accompaniment invented by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his *Pygmalion* (1770) and used in revolutionary-era works such as Méhul's *Ariodant* (Opéra-Comique, 1799). With far more extensive and diversified melodrama than in works by his eighteenth- or nineteenth-century predecessors, Massenet uses it eighteen times in *Manon*, whenever the characters speak as opposed to sing. Sometimes it is there for local color, such as the dance music from the hotel ballroom or the choral singing of the *Magnificat* in the seminary. Such sections enabled the composer to create continuity in a genre otherwise made of distinct numbers. With recurring motives and certain developmental strategies in these sections, Massenet also forged a new way to unify opera, a French counterpart to what Wagner accomplished with his leitmotifs.[106] As Huebner has pointed out, this was unprecedented in *opéras-comiques*. Louis de Fourcaud, writing for the royalist readers of *Le Gaulois*, criticized *Manon's* eclecticism as "neither *opéra-comique* nor *drame lyrique*." However, Massenet himself called it a "harmonious fusion" of two systems, Latin-inspired melody and Teutonic drama, within a genre long consid-

103. Cited in Huebner, *French Opera*, 71.

104. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 425.

105. Reyer and Joncières cited in H.M., "Delibes," 122–23.

106. For two complementary analyses of this work from this perspective, see Jean-Christophe Branger, 'Le Mélodrame dans Manon de Jules Massenet," in Paul Prévost, ed. *Le Théâtre lyrique en France au XIXe siècle* (Metz: Editions Serpenoise, 1995), 239–77, and Huebner, *French Opera*, 63–71.

ered "eminently national."[107] In 1888, the minister of public instruction and fine arts made him an officer of the Légion d'honneur for his combination of "boldness and measure, originality and tradition, that are the essence of the French spirit."[108]

A deepening understanding of *chansons populaires* encouraged composers in another important way, especially if they believed that what characterizes great art is less how a work is put together *(mise en œuvre)* than the intrinsic value of the musical idea.[109] Bourgault-Ducoudray's fruitful studies of the genre in Greece (1876) and Brittany (1885) clarified how *chansons populaires* could help revive Western art music by offering, not only models of simplicity and clarity from the origins of French music, but also a wider range of musical scales and rhythms, long forgotten in Western art music.[110] Convinced that the major and minor modes could lead to no further musical progress, Bourgault-Ducoudray believed that "all modes, ancient or modern, European or foreign, insofar as they are capable of creating an impression, must be admitted by us and can be used by composers." Not only would this "increase the domain of musical expression and furnish new colors to the musical palette," it would also resolve the age-old problem of how "to be new while remaining simple."[111] Whereas it had been fashionable to dismiss the aesthetic value of such music, folklorists agreed that these songs were "useful," capable of opening a world of "unprecedented sensations" and inspiring a "second youth" in contemporary poetry and music.[112]

Bourgault-Ducoudray experimented with the Greek modes in his own instrumental and vocal works. Sometimes adding chordal harmonies to his transcriptions, based on the melody's mode, he aimed to show that the Greek modes were compatible with modern music and could be explored and incorporated for the sake of French musical progress. Convinced by his arguments, Théodore Dubois incorporated Greek modes in his "Chanson lesbienne" (1880), and Delibes did so too in *Jean de Nivelle*. Saint-Saëns found the modal qualities of the opening of act 2 of *Jean de Nivelle* daring—Delibes was "scorning tonality"—and Reyer was impressed by the march in act 3, which was entirely in the Hypodorian mode.[113]

107. Massenet (1884) cited in Huebner, *French Opera*, 69–71, and Hervé Lacombe, *Les Voies de l'opéra français au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 284.

108. Larroumet, *Discours*, 4 August 1888.

109. L.A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Trente mélodies populaires de Basse-Bretagne* (Paris: Lemoine, 1885), 16.

110. L.A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Trente mélodies populaires de Grèce et d'Orient* (Paris: Lemoine, 1876), and *Trente mélodies populaires de Basse-Bretagne*, 16. *Figaro* (9 December 1885) marked the latter's publication by reproducing one of the Breton songs.

111. L.A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Conférence sur la modalité dans la musique grecque*, Palais du Trocadéro, 8 September 1878 (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1879), 47, 48.

112. Vicaire, "Nos idées sur le traditionnalisme," 189–90.

113. Cited in H.M., "Delibes," 122.

This choice was significant. In his numerous lectures, Bourgault-Ducoudray pointed out that he found the Hypodorian frequently in the *chansons populaires* of Brittany as well as Greece. He also heard it in the music of Berlioz, Gounod, Thomas, and Saint-Saëns.[114] The Hypodorian mode was virile, male, full of vigor and health, "very esteemed by the ancient philosophers who believed that it inspired the cult of force and the feeling of duty." In using the Hypodorian in a march specifically indicated as "French" (ex. 12), Delibes clearly wanted to call on the power associated with the mode; he may also have agreed with Bourgault-Ducoudray that these modes should be associated with the Aryan race. This would give the French a kind of birthright to return to them as a source of renewal.[115]

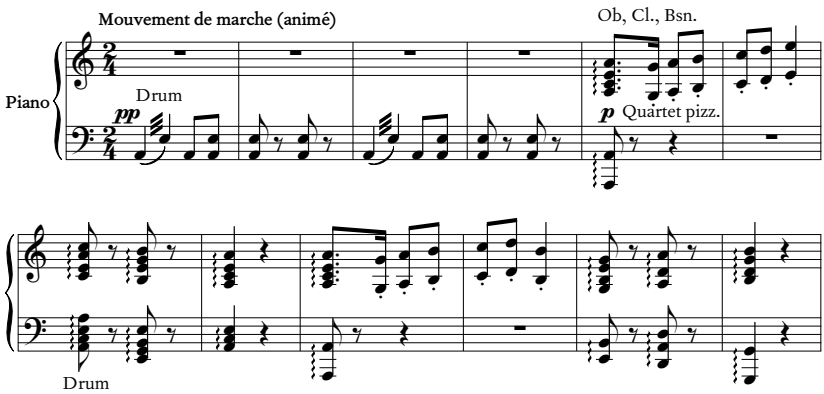
From the late 1870s to the early 1880s, music exemplified a shift in republicans' concept of French society's needs and in the sources to which they looked for inspiration. In 1877, works such as Saint-Saëns's *La Jeunesse d'Hercule*, an apt metaphor for the Republic, articulated the country's need for masculine strength, willingness to struggle, and devotion to duty in its citizens. A significant figure for revolutionaries as well as republicans, Hercules was a fitting character around whom to weave a narrative of opposition between pleasure and duty, which contemporaries audiences may have heard as an opposition between the decadence associated with the Second Empire and the need for civic virtue under the Third Republic. *Jean de Nivelle* presented a different image of national values in 1880. After its battle scenes, Jean turns his back on glory to return to a simple but charming villager. Likewise whereas Saint-Saëns's symphonic poem impresses audiences with its triumphal grandeur, Delibes's music charms with delicacy, grace, and "shimmering sonorities." With its libretto based on an old popular legend enjoyed all over the country, *Jean de Nivelle* helped focus public attention on the merits of a shared tradition in the distant French past and paralleled republican attempts to

114. The Hypodorian mode, used in many folksongs, is a musical scale from ancient Greece that uses the intervals of the Dorian tetrachord (semitone-tone-tone), but begins a fourth below, that is, with a single tone, followed by two Dorian tetrachords (on the piano, from A to A on the white notes). Bourgault-Ducoudray compared it to the Western minor scale, which he called an "effeminate Hypodorian" because of the raised seventh. See his discussion and examples from ancient Greece, Brittany, and French contemporary music, including the fugal section that opens part 2 of Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ;* the cadence at the end of the "Invocation à la nature" in *La Damnation de Faust;* the beginning of the "Roi de Thulé" romance in Gounod's *Faust;* a cadence in the "Chanson des fossoyeurs" in act 5 of Thomas's *Hamlet;* and Saint-Saëns's *Noces de Prométhée* in Bourgault-Ducoudray, *Conférence sur la modalité*, 10–21.

115. Ibid., 13, 21. See also the preface to his *Trente mélodies populaires de Basse-Bretagne*, in which, because of the presence of "identical characteristics in the primitive music of all indo-European peoples," Bourgault-Ducourday associates the modes with the Aryan race and dates their origin back to the time when it was in its infancy, before "all the branches of this race" dispersed (15).

EX. 12 Delibes, *Jean de Nivelle*, act 3, "Marche française."

During this march, French soldiers pass by, and Jean shrinks back, terrified, when he notices the French banner and is reminded of his duty. This leads to nostalgia about his country. This passage is notable musically for its use of modality, visible here from the lack of sharps in the melody and the cadence on G major.



begin to construct a new history. In incorporating elements of grand opera and *opéra-comique*, it signaled republicans' interest in integrating aspects of the French temperament rather than opposing them, as had been the case during the Moral Order. Likewise, politicians and historians interested in seeing evolutionary progress in the country's past began to forge a concept of national identity that incorporated aspects of the Ancien Régime. As for Jean, it was not the grandeur of the French kings that interested them, for courageous revolutionary heroes provided ample examples; rather, it was the charm and grace previously associated with aristocratic salons that was seen as important in French music. In 1884, Massenet's *Manon* left aside all narratives of opposition in favor of exploring a cult of pleasure. This was not a falling back to Second Empire excess but rather, as I read it, part of republicans' desire to democratize the experience of charm and grace.

Republicans theorized this as bringing the pleasures of elite art forms to the masses, but in effect this revival of interest in feminine values led to a more balanced and accurate concept of French identity based on feminine as well as masculine aspects, grace and charm as well as strength and grandeur. Moreover, grace and charm provided a way to penetrate the private as well as public consciousness of the people, contributing to the inner cultivation of citizens at home and in society. In this context, whether opera or ballet, for instruments or the voice, music was understood as a way to learn the power of charm, to practice it, and to promote it as culturally valuable.

This focus on charm and pleasure had a significant impact on how the French

thought about music. Many French were fascinated with the nature of sound, its timbre (considered its "individuality" or "personality"), and its "vague, indefinite" aspects, which Marmontel saw as responsible for music's charm. In the 1880s, there was renewed interest in acoustics and orchestral sound colors and in exploring the physical effects of sound on listeners. In his 1884 aesthetic treatise, returning to concepts embraced in the late 1860s, including Hermann von Helmholtz's acoustics, Marmontel defined music as "the art of creating impressions through combinations of sounds." He hypothesized that it is "through the mysterious assimilation of the nerves with certain effects of resonance that music affects our bodies." In other words, it is through stimulation of the nerves that music "penetrates us . . . gives us emotions . . . and transports us to an ideal world."[116] Critics too felt that an invisible current linked the conductor's baton with his listeners and that at concerts the conductor "plays directly on the nerves of the two thousand."[117] Such notions also influenced understanding of how colors affected the viewer. In 1888, Charles Henry, inspired by Helmholtz, devised a chromatic circle of colors as a way of promoting a new way of painting based on the juxtaposition of complementary colors. He believed that colors, like sounds, could elicit feelings and sought to show that some colors, such as red, were more pleasurable than others. Going further than Marmontel, he argued that "the phenomena known under the name of optical illusions, consonance, dissonance, modes, and harmony are particular cases of subjective functions common to all nervous reactions—contrast, rhythm, and measure."[118]

Composers too began to explore the musical implications of acoustic principles, especially resonance. In *Le Roi malgré lui,* which premiered at the Opéra-Comique on 18 May 1887, Emmanuel Chabrier parodies the "Blessing of the Swords" from act 4 of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* with sequences of unprepared and unresolved seventh and ninth chords—Ravel later said that this work "changed the direction of

116. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 9, 94, 105, 144–146, 275. Marmontel was not the first Frenchman to make these points after Helmholtz published his book *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik* (On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music) in 1863. In *Les Phénomènes de la musique* (1868), Adolphe le Doulcet, marquis de Pontécoulant, also focuses on sounds as the frequency of vibrations, the "impressions" they make them on the ear, and the importance of nerves in musical perception. "Since nerves are the source of movement and feeling, when they are set in motion or moved they must transfer their state to the parts [of the body] that they enervate," he explains (47). He calls music "the most active, fruitful, powerful, and general agent of pleasure" (39).

117. Camille Mauclair, *La Religion de la musique* (Paris, Fischbacher, 1928), 14–15.

118. Charles Henry, *Le Cercle chromatique* (Paris: Verdin, 1888), 5, cited in Roslak, "Symphonic Seas, Oceans of Liberty." See also Charles Henry, "Loi d'évolution de la sensation musicale," *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger* 11 (July–December 1886): 81–87, id., *La Théorie de Rameau sur la musique* (Paris: A. Hermann, 1887), and id., *Wronski et l'esthétique*

harmony in France."[119] In his *Printemps*, written that same year, Debussy explored his love of distant overtones and nonresolving chords. Although Academicians attacked his music's "impressionism," Debussy defended it, remarking, "pleasure is the law."[120] This did not mean that he embraced surface details for their own sake, but rather that he needed new compositional freedoms in order to translate into music his own *sensibilité*, what Marmontel defines as "that special predisposition of our nervous system."[121] Just as art critics saw impressionist painting as a "physiological revolution of the human eye" and sensations as the means to new experiences of reality, the young music critic Emile Vuillermoz understood the potentially transformative effect of such music on the listener's nervous system. "[T]he progressive refinement of our nerves [by this music] leads us to think that *this* is the path of musical progress," he enthusiastically predicted in one of his earliest essays praising Debussy (1899).[122]

Of course, progress in music could be conceived of in many ways—through modes abandoned since the Middle Ages, new rhythms, unusual instrumental sonorities, and even new kinds of physiological effects on listeners. To the extent that some of these were like any other primary materials waiting to be harvested, their use implied a kind of colonization. Often, in the 1880s and 1890s, this resulted in musical hybrids, animated by the French taste for eclecticism and capacity to assimilate, which Marmontel explains as a product of their history as a people who had endured successive invasions.[123] However, attitudes to progress were also affected by France's imperialist expansion, the role that external politics played in the republicans' desire for national integration and enhanced legitimacy, and the progress envisaged through the assimilation of foreign resources, including music.

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musicale (Paris: A. Hermann, 1887), and José Arguelles, *Charles Henry and the Formation of a Psychophysical Aesthetic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972). Paul Signac later applied Henry's ideas to painting.

119. Alan Gillmor analyses this work, particularly its influence on the *Sarabandes* of Erik Satie, in his *Erik Satie* (New York: Norton, 1988), 20–21.

120. From conversations between Debussy and Guiraud ca. 1889 annotated by Maurice Emmanuel and reproduced in Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy: His Life and Mind*, vol. 1 (London: Cassel, 1962), app. B, and "Entretiens inédits d'Ernest Guiraud et de Claude Debussy (1889–90)," in *Inédits sur Claude Debussy* (Paris: Comoedia-Charpentier, 1942), 25–26. I'm grateful to Brian Hart for helping locate the source of this citation.

121. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 81.

122. See Jann Pasler, "Impressionism," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 2000), 12: 90–94.

123. Marmontel, *Eléments d'esthétique musicale*, 39.