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In fall 1873, Saint-Saëns escaped to sunny Algiers. Some thought it was for his health's sake. He also had to finish sketching his new opera, *Samson et Dalila*. Algeria had been occupied by the French since 1832. Two years before Saint-Saëns's visit, a major influx of new settlers had arrived, including Communards and displaced Alsatians and Lorrainers, tripling the French presence in Algerian towns.¹ Military control gave way to civil administration, and with the territory now officially assimilated to France, life began to replicate the rhythms of the homeland. Music performed by military bands and in new theaters built by the French contributed to this, such as Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*, performed at the Théâtre d'Alger in April 1876. French opera served to remind settlers of their roots, expressing French *mœurs* and encouraging French pride. As elsewhere in European empires, opera provided a context for colonists to distinguish themselves from the natives.² Music, along with trade and commerce, also brought together the various Europeans living there—Spanish, Italian, and Maltese.³ In 1878, an Italian musician organized Algiers's first classical music society (which at first put on more Italian and German than French music).⁴ Performing and listening to Western music provided settlers with a sense of the culture they

1. In 1876, of a total population of almost 3 million in Algeria, there were roughly 200,000 French and 190,000 other foreigners. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes* (1874), 3rd ed. (Paris: Guillaumin, 1886), 338.

2. In Cairo, where it would have been a "true miracle to see a turban" in local theaters, the audience for Verdi's *Aida* (1871) also consisted mostly of Europeans. See the review by F. Filippi, excerpted in Arthur Pougin, *Verdi: Histoire anecdotique de sa vie et de ses œuvres* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1886), 227.

3. These groups became naturalized French in 1889. The urban organization of Algiers reinforced the dichotomy between European and indigenous peoples. J.L. Miège, "Algiers: Colonial Metropolis (1830–1961), in *Colonial Cities*, ed. Robert Ross and Gerard Telkamp (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985), 174–76.

4. "Palestrina, Pergolese, Handel, Bach, Haydn, Beethoven, etc." were listed as its early repertoire in *Revue et gazette musicale*, 14 April 1878, 116.

shared, its assumed superiority, and an ongoing connection to the outside world. Anthropologists interested in this settler culture began to write about this region as giving birth to a “new Mediterranean race,” a vigorous and virile product of the intermingling of Europeans and locals willing to embrace France.⁵ Later some believed that because Latin civilization had flourished there in ancient times, “France was merely repossessing what was hers by hereditary right.”⁶

We do not have access to letters Saint-Saëns may have written, but we do have his musical impressions, melodies he collected during this first visit and later incorporated into his *Suite algérienne* (1880). Although the composer had already written his exotic-inspired *Mélodies persanes* (1870) and “Désir de l’Orient” (1871), the *Suite* points to actual experiences in the “French Orient,” thereby resembling Félicien David’s popular *Le Désert* (1844). The score of each movement begins with descriptive phrases that set the scene, as in opera, encouraging listeners to focus their imaginations in a particular way rather than indulge in some vague Orientalist dream. The prelude, with its undulating patterns suggesting the waves of the sea, begins with the perspective of someone arriving in the port of Algiers by boat and what one might have heard, including the ubiquitous call to prayer, “Ali Allah! Mohammed rassoul Allah!” (*sic*). The “Rhapsodie mauresque” is set in a Moorish café amid dancing, its instrumentation an attempt to capture the flutes, rebabs, and tambourines of the accompanying music (ex. 13a). The inspiration for “Rêverie du soir” comes from a desert oasis near Blidah. The languid qualities of the music, perhaps associated with nomadic Arabs, may have embodied for French listeners the charm of a race that some French people felt had “run its course” and, compared with European civilization, was “moribund.”⁷

To suggest the French military presence in Algiers, Saint-Saëns frames the four-part work with buglelike horn patterns in the opening prelude and at the end of the “Rhapsodie,” then a bombastic, exuberant French military march that closes the *Suite* (ex. 13b). Beginning in the strings before they move to the rest of the orchestra, the composer conceived its “warrior accents” (in assertive C major) as an explicit contrast to the “bizarre rhythms” and “languorous Oriental melodies” that they

5. Léon Faidherbe and Paul Topinard, “Instructions sur l’anthropologie de l’Algérie,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’anthropologie de Paris* 8 (1873): 603–59, and other texts are discussed in Patricia M. E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Race in Colonial Algeria* (London: Tauris, 1995), 157, 196–97, 209–10. Other Europeans in Algeria were “useful auxiliaries,” as well as being most easily assimilated, according to Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation*, 330–31, 336. He believed that racial mixing was inevitable and that some mixed races were great ones.

6. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 200–201.

7. *Ibid.*, 157–58.

EX. 13 Saint-Saëns, *Suite algérienne* (1880).

a. "Rhapsodie mauresque."

The image displays two systems of a musical score for the piece "Rhapsodie mauresque" from Saint-Saëns' *Suite algérienne*. The score is written for a symphony orchestra and includes parts for Flutes, Timpani, Tambourine, Violins I, Violins II, and Violas. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The first system shows the initial four measures, with the Flutes and Violins I parts featuring melodic lines, the Timpani providing a steady rhythmic pattern, and the Tambourine playing a simple dotted rhythm. The second system continues the piece, with the Flutes and Violins I parts maintaining their melodic themes, while the Timpani and Tambourine continue their respective rhythmic patterns. The Violins II and Violas parts are mostly silent in this section, indicated by rests.

Flutes

Timpani

Tambourine

Violins I

Violins II

Violas

(continued)

EX. 13 (continued)

b. "Marche militaire française."

Allegro giocoso (♩ = 132)

Violins I

Violins II

Violas

Cellos

Double Bases

follow, especially when reinforced by military drums and cymbals. One critic saw the march as embodying “the justice and benefits of our domination,” perhaps a reference to the disciplined coordination and coherent structure that the French may have perceived as their contribution to colonial life, here represented by the march’s closed form, ABA. He added, “Without any heavy boasting, its certitude of being invincible bursts forth with radiant ease, firm nonchalance, and vivaciousness.”⁸

8. Emile Baumann, *Les Grandes Formes de la musique: L’Œuvre de Saint-Saëns* (Paris: Editions littéraires et artistiques, 1905), 299. Just after the closing of the 1889 Universal Exhibition, the Concerts Lamoureux used this march possibly to reassert French national pride at the end of their first two concerts of the season, following a duo from Bizet’s *Pêcheur des perles*, the Bohemian dance from Godard’s *Tasse*, and Saint-Saëns *Réverie*.

Because the Orient here is more than a function of the composer's imagination, this music begs a number of questions. Was the composer attempting to stimulate curiosity and interest in the colony while reassuring listeners of French dominance there, or merely paying tribute to his own impressions? Was he writing to encourage escape, albeit an imaginary or vicarious one, creating a fantasy on which listeners can project their own desires?⁹ Or was he pointing to a people living in incommensurable differences, a region in transition, albeit contained by the French?

At its premiere in Paris in December 1880 (and in other performances soon thereafter), audiences ignored the prelude and "without enthusiasm" politely applauded the march whose straightforward duple patterns and clear tonal progressions may have seemed too predictable in this context. Gone were the days when the public would have unanimously celebrated the French military presence there, as they did in Thomas's *Le Caïd* (1849). Most preferred what they could relate to already more than Saint-Saëns's musical response to colonialist realities, the startling contrasts in urban life. They appreciated the variety of orchestral colors, typically enjoyed in Saint-Saëns's music, here deployed to enliven melodic repetition. The timbres inspired by Arabic music showed how engaging with the Other's difference could push on the boundaries of Western sound, a musical benefit of colonial expansion. Listeners also savored the "exquisite charm" of the "Rêverie du soir," consistently calling for an encore. With its "love song" in the solo viola, its loose sense of the bar line, and its unusual use of the orchestra, this movement suggested the elusive beauty and sense of freedom one might experience far from European civilization. Critics compared the "Rêverie" with Orientalist music by Glinka, Reyer, and David. This was appropriate, because the work was written entirely outside Algeria and through the lens of the composer's memory.¹⁰

However, opinion was mixed when it came to the "Rhapsodie mauresque." The first half of the movement is based on a theme that sounds like violinists practicing a scale, carefully moving up and down five notes. This is then treated contrapuntally, emblematic of Western classical music in Saint-Saëns's march "Orient et Occident," as woodwind melismas recalling Arab music try to interrupt. The second half, however, incorporates Arabic melodies, at first in the woodwinds and percussion, then echoed (and assimilated) by the strings. The two Arab-inspired sections play with duple versus triple meter patterns and juxtapose various modes (A-Mixolydian, E-Dorian, B-Aeolian, D-Mixolydian, and A-Dorian with

9. Ralph Locke, "Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East," *19th-Century Music* 22, 1 (Summer 1998): 21.

10. Jean Bonnerot, *C. Saint-Saëns: Sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris: Durand, 1922), 98.

D-major scales and a D-Major coda (see ex. 13a). As Ralph Locke has pointed out, this “contrasting sequence of moods and meters” refers to those of North African vocal and instrumental ensembles that played *nūba*, multimovement music originating in Andalusia;¹¹ but it also suggests how Arab and Western musical practices can coexist and collaborate. While one critic found this piece “constantly interesting,” one of the composer’s best, another judged Saint-Saëns as “often more inspired” than here. A third critic found this movement “terribly noisy” and hard to understand on first hearing.¹² The work’s mixed reception in 1880 suggests that French audiences were divided on the merits of assimilated melodies and cultural coexistence, with some no more enthusiastic than were indigenous Arabs and many settlers about assimilation itself.¹³

As with Thomas’s *Hamlet* in Vienna in 1878, the backdrop of current events in 1880 may also have lent meaning to the *Suite algérienne*. With France’s privileged position in Tunisia secured after the Treaty of Berlin, merely drawing attention to Algeria may have been useful, reminding listeners of the colony’s strategic importance, whether they supported assimilation or not. Kroumirs in Tunisia had allegedly been threatening Algeria and its Christian residents. After Jules Ferry formed his government in September 1880, pressure mounted to intervene. Although monarchists and left-wingers advised against it, moderate *républicains opportunistes* supported Ferry’s doing so. In spring 1881, and while the *Suite* was still being performed in orchestral concerts, the French in Algeria invaded Tunisia and in May 1882 it became a French protectorate. Three months later Tonkin (northern Vietnam) followed.

It is no accident that significant new efforts to extend the nation’s geographical borders took place when France was reforming education.¹⁴ Unlike the Germans, who defined their citizens based on ethnocultural identity and excluded those

11. Locke, in “Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers,” considers the “Rhapsodie mauresque” the “most artistically successful evocation” of “non-Western music-making before Colin McPhee’s gamelan-inspired *Tabuh-Tabuhan* (1936)” (40).

12. Reviews of the premiere on 19 December 1880 by the Concerts Colonne: A.M., “Concerts et soirées,” *Ménestrel*, 26 December 1880, 31; *Revue et gazette musicale*, 26 December 1880, 414; and Edouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique* (1880) (Paris: Ollendorff, 1881), 715. For a review of the Concerts Padeloup performance the following week, see H. Barbedette, “Concerts et soirées,” *Ménestrel*, 2 January 1881, 38.

13. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 172, 205.

14. In 1886, the year of the final law on secular primary education, Ferry assigned Paul Bert, who wrote some of these documents, to Indochina.

without German ancestry, French republicans had an expansive definition of citizenship with important implications. Central to this was their belief in the possibility of assimilation, the capacity of people, especially when helped by education, to adopt new *mœurs*, whether the working classes back home or the colonized abroad. Considered an advanced stage of colonialism, after occupation and exploitation of the natives, assimilation entailed imposing French laws and institutions—the Code Napoléon, French education, and (after 1889) military service—on indigenous peoples. The idea was not to ignore racial and religious differences or to address the economic needs of the colonized, but rather to try to build some kind of “moral community” based on living under the same economic and social regime.¹⁵ As these hopes materialized, they assumed the colonies would demonstrate the universalism of republican values.

With their power consolidated and redefining what was useful to the nation, in the early 1880s, *républicains opportunistes* looked to colonial expansion and exploitation of colonial resources as major means of stimulating national prosperity. France was the new Rome, the product of assimilating ancient Greek and Roman traditions through the Gauls and German traditions through the Franks. Aiming to enlarge French territory by filling countries like Algeria with Frenchmen who would “possess and cultivate” it,¹⁶ French administrators hoped to create a “new France” functioning in the image of the *patrie*. Expanding the borders of the nation would create new markets crucial for nation’s economic growth, more jobs, and an alternative power base with claims to glory strong enough to replace those of the aristocratic French dynasties. France needed the colonies to maintain its position within Europe.

The realities of colonialism, of course, conflicted with these ideals and complicated the category of citizen. Convincing the nation that imperialist expansion was worth the costs and that the assimilation of new French men and women was desirable or possible presented major challenges. Many colonizers did not want their power usurped by indigenous voters.¹⁷ And just as some listeners resisted leaving their mental armchairs to appreciate how non-Western resources could enrich French music, few Algerian Muslims were willing to repudiate their rights to Islamic law to become French citizens. Moreover, the very people the French thought most capable of assimilating, the Kabyles (a Berber people indigenous to northeastern Algeria), participated in an unexpected but massive insurrection in

15. François Bernard, “Introduction” to *Les Colonies françaises: Petite Encyclopédie coloniale*, ed. Maxime Petit (Paris: Larousse, n.d.), ix.

16. Lucien-Prévost-Paradol, *La France nouvelle* (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1869), 418–19.

17. See James Lehning, *To Be a Citizen* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2001), chap. 7.

1871, which some compared to the Commune. The Kabyles, many of whom had blond hair, were thought to be distantly related to Europeans, possibly the Celts, and, with their sedentary, farming culture preserved in the mountains, this “sister population” espoused a way of life that resembled the French more closely than that of nomadic Arabs.¹⁸ The French felt betrayed. After the suppression of hostilities and general disarmament, increasing anti-Arab sentiment led to closing bilingual Franco-Arabic elementary schools created during the Second Empire, thereby removing one of the most powerful forces for assimilation.¹⁹ Contemporaries and historians were mute on the irony of cutting back on “universal” education in Algeria just as it was being expanded at home.

Many republicans clung to the utopian ideal upon which the new identity of France rested, however, and expected music to infuse energy into the colonial process. Just as some proposed that “all cultivated men in Algeria” should know Arabic (and all Arabs, French), sympathetic musicians saw music and musical practices as languages to be shared. In June 1872, Algerian administrators invited choruses and wind bands from throughout France and Switzerland to compete with local ensembles in a huge *orphéon* festival. Algerian reviewers praised this as “a symbol of light and prosperity,” initiating a “new era on the African soil.” From the perspective of a major Parisian critic who came to serve on the jury, such a gathering signaled to the French back home that Algeria was not just a “site of battles, arid, sterile, and forever bent on war.” Music was helping to “solve the problem of assimilation,” whether this meant indigenous people identifying as French, or mostly other Europeans. As such, music was not just part of the *mission civilisatrice*, with the *orphéons* promoting “art, union, charity, order, and work”; it was a form of public instruction, the only thing, many thought, that could prepare a “fusion of races.”²⁰

From a republican perspective, music also had an important role to play at home, combating lack of interest in the colonies, inciting curiosity, and helping to

18. Francisco Salvador Daniel contended that because Kabyle songs often used the Phrygian mode, as Plutarch described it, the Kabyles were descendents of “the great aryan family of the Pelasgians, the first inhabitants of Phrygia [in west-central Anatolia].” Since the latter had spoken “Cabiric or Gallic,” the presence of this mode and these languages in French *chansons populaires* meant that the French and the Kabyles had similar ancestors. See Salvador Daniel, *La Musique arabe, ses rapports avec la musique grecque et le chant grégorien* (1863) (Algiers: Adolphe Jourdan, 1879); Paul Lacome, “Les Chants de la race cabirique ou gallique d’après Salvador Daniel,” *Revue et gazette musicale*, 14 November 1880, 361–63, and 5 December 1880, 387–88; and Jann Pasler, “Theorizing Race in 19th-century France: Music as Emblem of Identity,” *Musical Quarterly* 89, 4 (Winter 2006): 472–74.

19. Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation*, 413–14.

20. Em. Mathieu de Monter, “Alger: Fêtes musicales,” *Revue et gazette musicale*, 26 May 1872, 163–65, and 2 June 1872, 171–72.

“sell” the French public on their benefits. Other than at the Universal Exhibitions, most people had no contact with those whose lands France was invading and colonizing. But after the republicans came into power in the late 1870s and 1880s, exotic fantasies permeated stages and concert halls.²¹ Besides new operas, such as Emile Paladilhe’s *L’Amour africain* (1875), Massenet’s *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877) and Verdi’s *Aida* (premiered in Cairo in 1871 and performed in Paris in 1876, 1878, and 1880), there was the revival of Félicien David’s *Le Désert*, with its musical depictions of Middle Eastern natural beauty, its evocation of dancing women, and its exotic melodies, one of which is marked, “rêverie du soir.”²² The first official concert of the 1878 Exhibition featured it and the Concerts Colonne performed it twice each year in 1877, 1881, 1883, and 1885. French Orientalism could be useful even if it only created an illusion of difference and its relationship to the exotic Other was superficial. Feeding the desire for exotic fantasies drew attention to the colonies, particularly to the extent that these fantasies suggested analogies with French culture and the universality of human feelings. However, they also led to simplified positions on complicated issues that may have contributed to prejudice, arrogance, and support for unenlightened policies.

Those defiantly opposed to imperialist conquests, embracing protectionism, or focused on the recession beginning in January 1882, also looked to music. Most Frenchmen understood the inevitability of war in Europe and the urgency of maintaining a competent army. Music inspiring militaristic patriotism had broad appeal,

21. These went back to Napoléon’s Egyptian expedition and to the taking of Algiers in 1830. As commonly used, the French word *exotique* is a nonspecific reference to foreign others, based on the perception of difference. Emile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française*, 5th ed. (Paris: Hachette, 1881), defines it as “Qui n’est pas naturel au pays.” In his *Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), Peter Mason defines “exotic” as necessarily displaced, its perception involving translation, characterized by sameness within difference, and resulting from a process of exoticization. It is “produced *inside* discourse” while suggesting something resistant to assimilation (163 and chap. 8). Exotic is distinct from Oriental, which refers to a certain part of the world and a scholarly discourse of description and discovery about it, sometimes involving a desire for accuracy and verisimilitude. The term “Orientalist,” as Edward Said has pointed out in *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), implies a power relationship and the assertion of superiority. Lumping many cultures under the exotic allows for “dreaming,” but often excludes recognition of specific cultural differences. For recent essays that explore this, see Jonathan Bellman, ed., *The Exotic in Western Music* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998).

22. In his “La Musique française et l’Orient: A propos du *Désert* de Félicien David,” *Revue internationale de musique française* 6 (November 1981): 36, Jean-Pierre Bartoli argues that David, the “founder of a new school of exoticism,” sought to explore analogies rather than differences between the musical cultures of the Orient and the Occident, particularly the “poetry” of the former. Besides the incorporation of Arabic melodies and textures, what was new were songs and theatrical works in which the plot was vague or nonexistent.

especially for the Ligue des patriotes, a new consortium of both radical republicans and monarchists, the far Left and far Right. The Ligue wanted music to help fire up the country for *revanche* against Germany and looked to songs, both new texts to popular songs performed at *cafés-concerts* and songs written for children, to help with this. Clashes with the Ligue led to a new government in 1885, after elections almost wrested control from the *opportunistes*. This forced reconsideration of what was in the country's general interest. The flexible concept of utility allowed people to express their differences, often through music, and the French government to address them without turning to revolution.

MUSICAL FANTASIES FUELING COLONIALIST DESIRE

As with the thirst for ever-growing global commerce, imperialist expansion was driven by nationalist desire, especially that of French republicans to increase their influence on others, their economic and military power, and their own pride. Ferry and Gambetta agreed that a "politics of energy" was better than "standing still."²³ Both before and after 1870, the republicans considered colonization the best way to spread French civilization. This idea of bringing "fraternity and assistance" to oppressed peoples dated from the 1790s. Saint-Simonians rationalized it as a way to extend the human family and create a "mystical union of the west and the east."²⁴ More accurately, it seemed the only way to assure France's survival as a great nation. Under the Second Empire, the country had increased its size and power by annexing Nice and Savoy, acquiring New Caledonia, Senegal, and Cochinchina (southern Vietnam), establishing a protectorate over Cambodia, and building the Suez Canal. In the 1870s, French explorers continued to investigate new parts of the world, but besides a treaty that provided for a poorly defined protectorate in Tonkin in 1874, initial exploration of the Sahara, and the suppression of insurrections in Algeria, colonial efforts were minimal. France's foreign policy focused in large part on the "Question of the Orient"—the breakup of the Ottoman Empire in Europe—and its attempted resolution in the Treaty of Berlin (1878).²⁵

23. Juliette Adam cited in Charles-Robert Ageron, "Jules Ferry et la colonisation," in *Jules Ferry, fondateur de la République*, ed. François Furet (Paris: Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1985), 194.

24. Raoul Girardet, *L'idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962* (Paris: La Table ronde, 1972), 17–20.

25. The Treaty of Berlin gave independence (and more land) to Montenegro and Serbia, some of Romania to Russia, Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austrian occupation (over Serbia's objection), Cyprus to England, and France a privileged position in Tunisia, previously under Turkish rule.

When the republicans came to power, some of them aspired to further colonial acquisitions. The abbé Raboisson had reminded the French that historically they had been excellent colonizers—hadn't Alsace once been taken from Germany and wasn't it now far more attached to France than Ireland to England or Hungary to Austria? In 1880, the king of Tahiti abdicated and what had been a protectorate became a French colony. That same year the Chambre voted 1.3 million francs to begin a Trans-Saharan railroad from Senegal to the Niger River. And in a series of articles in the *Journal des débats*, the conservative republican journalist and traveler Gabriel Charmes argued for turning attention to the Mediterranean. He reminded everyone that France had "other frontiers than the Vosges" and that "more damage than the amputation of the eastern provinces" was at risk in the Mediterranean.²⁶

Ferry's occupation of Tunisia—"the only great undertaking the international situation would permit a defeated France"—led some to think that his colonial policies in 1880–81 were primarily a response to circumstances. Ferry resigned, but returned to power in 1883, establishing a French Department of the Colonies. By 1884, military expeditions in Tonkin and the Congo were part of his government's larger goal of "laying the foundations for a French empire" in the Far East and Africa. "If France wants to remain great," as Ferry once explained, shifting definitions of national greatness from internal to external criteria, "she must carry her language, her *mœurs*, her flag, her arms, her thought to wherever she can." A new "France in formation" was the "guarantee of her national future" (fig. 49).²⁷

As Ferry presented it, the utility of the colonies was practical, strategic, psychological, symbolic, and above all economic. Colonies would increase the number of French citizens and give France a presence and an influence abroad. After the humiliating loss to Prussia, imperialist successes would distract "eyes fixed on the blue line of the Vosges," revive French pride, and renew confidence in its military. They would show the French military to be capable and strong. Although it was eventually recognized that people loved and defended their own *mœurs*, Ferry saw it as his government's duty and responsibility to continue the attempt to civilize "inferior races" as a way to maintain his country's status as a great nation. He, like many others, agreed that "the people who colonize the most are the leading people; if they aren't today, they will be tomorrow."²⁸ A lawyer and spokesman

26. Girardet, *Idée coloniale*, 29–32. See also Abbé Pierre Raboisson, *Etude sur les colonies et la colonisation au regard de la France* (Paris: Challamel, 1877), 65–67.

27. Ageron, "Jules Ferry et la colonisation," 194–99. Ferry presented the most complete definition of his colonial policy in a speech to the Chambre on 28 July 1885 and in his book, *Le Tonkin et la mère-patrie* (1890). See his *Discours et opinions de Jules Ferry*, 5 vols. (Paris: Colin, 1895–98).

28. Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation* (1874), cited in Girardet, *Idée coloniale*, 28.

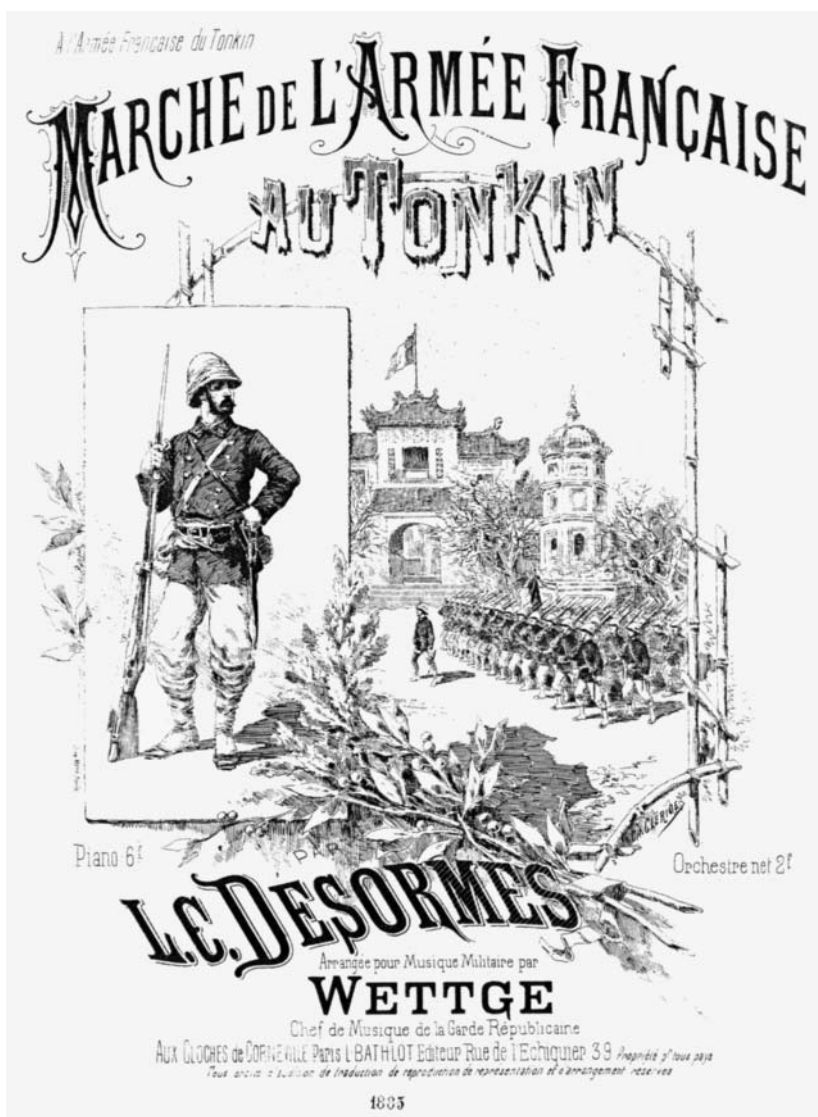


FIG. 49 L. C. Desormes, “Marche de l’armée française au Tonkin,” arranged for military band (1885).

In addition to being a composer, Desormes was the conductor at the Folies-Bergère. Wettege, the arranger, was conductor of the Garde républicaine.

for the growing bourgeoisie, Ferry also took a pragmatic perspective. Providing potentially new primary materials to enhance French productivity and expanded markets for French products, the colonies helped him address his voters' commercial needs and desires. Because he believed that "nations are only great by the activity they develop," he considered colonial policy "the daughter of industrial policy." With the country in a major recession beginning in 1882, this was particularly important. Ferry considered export "an essential part of public prosperity" and competition with rivals at the very core of imperialist motivations.²⁹

With its capacity to arouse desire, and an emerging aesthetic that elevated desires to the status of needs, music was in a good position to induce sympathy for the republicans' positions on progress, race, assimilation, and Western culture. Music and musical instruments had long documented human migrations, making French imperialism seem normal instead of aberrant. During periods of conflict and aggression abroad, music, musicians, musical instruments, performance contexts, and images of these put a human face on the imperialist process for a public with a need to know that increased as the French sought to take more and more colonies.³⁰ As such, they helped to produce knowledge and inflect attitudes about the exotic Other, sometimes in concrete and specific ways.

STAGING IMPERIALIST DESIRE

Travel literature, theater, and music had long fed French interest in distant cultures, cultural analogues for explorer accounts shaped to serve Western purposes. Jules Verne's fictional *Voyages extraordinaires*, with an average of sixty illustrations per novel, brought the pretense of realism to tales of the exotic Other. As they oscillated between truth and romantic fantasy, these encouraged the illusion that Westerners controlled as they explored exotic locales, an attitude that perhaps the settlers also

29. Jules Ferry, *Le Tonkin et la mère Patrie* (Paris: V. Howard, 1890), 40–41, and Girardet, *Idée coloniale*, 47–50. Much debate has surrounded the question of whether France's colonies ultimately benefited the country. For a similar view on the preeminence of economic arguments in Ferry's policy, see Raymond Betts, *Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory, 1890–1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 3. For more on the economic interdependence of France and the colonies and French colonial businesses, see Robert Aldrich, *Greater France* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), chap. 5. See also the statistical analyses that show the complexities of exports/imports in Jacques Marseille, "Les Relations commerciales entre la France et son empire colonial de 1880 à 1913," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* (1994), 286–307.

30. For more on the use of images to serve imperialist propaganda, see Thomas G. August, *The Selling of the Empire: British and French Imperialist Propaganda, 1890–1940* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985).

shared. Beginning in 1877, the *Journal de voyages*, oriented to a public of adolescents, further popularized this taste for adventure stories. So did theatrical productions such as Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery's *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours*, among the best-attended of the decade. Premiered in 1874 at the Théâtre Porte-Saint-Martin, it was later performed over 400 times in a row at the Théâtre du Châtelet.³¹ This story in a prologue, five acts, and fifteen tableaux follows a man's struggle with the elements and people around the world. Audiences were able to compare visually a wide range of different cultures—all reduced to short vignettes—and marvel at the Western traveler's ability to move between and negotiate such differences.

The short interjections of J.-J. Débillemont's tonal music built of simple, repeating eight-measure themes grounded this experience in a Western perspective. His "Marche des rajahs," processional music at a Hindu royal cemetery before a cremation, captured the tone of the "funeral psalmody interrupted at equal intervals by drum and cymbal strokes" mentioned in the novel and called for in the play to accompany the Hindu priests; it also presented an easily recognizable Western structure—merging the ternary form of a military march with classical variation form, its repeating theme building in volume, rhythmic complexity, and registral density to a climax (ex. 14). The syncopated tune "La Malaisienne" accompanied the songs and dances of the Malay festival just before the travelers cross the ocean to San Francisco. With its frequently changing volume from soft to loud, it captured some of the unpredictability associated with foreign Other. The lilting and gracious "Valse indienne" was an odd piece to accompany the travelers' encounter with native Americans who threatened to kill them. Perhaps Débillemont was expressing popular French sympathy with the subjects of James Fenimore Cooper's novels.³²

Although waltzes may have been unusual in such works, marches, emblems of Western domination, inevitably accompanied them. In 1879–80, for example, A. Belot's *Vénus noire*, an explorer's tour of central Africa, featured, not only a *ballet des nègres* with the queen of the amazons, but also a snappy "Marche de la caravane" composed by Alexandre Artus, the conductor at the Théâtre du Châtelet. Like other such marches, this one repeated the same tune over and over as it "explored" different registers and densities, ending with an assertive coda to be played proudly (*fiermento*) as if the voyagers were content and self-satisfied with

31. Offenbach may have been poking fun at this in *Le Voyage dans la lune* (1875), a *féerie* (extravaganza) in twenty-four tableaux.

32. See the descriptive comments at the beginning of tableau 4, scene 2; tableau 7; tableau 10, scene 4 of *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours* in A. d'Ennery and Jules Verne, *Les Voyages au théâtre* (Paris: Hetzel, 1874).

EX. 14 J.-J. Débillemont, "Marche des rajahs," for Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery, *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours* (1874).

LE TOUR DU MONDE
de Dennery et Jules Verne



MARCHE des RAJAHS J. J. DEBILLEMONT.

Maestoso.

PIANO.



L. G. 3238.

what they had traversed. Such productions did much to give the illusion that foreign cultures were accessible and comprehensible, wherever the Westerner's gaze might wander, as did the display of exotic products and portraits of brave explorers in the foyer of the Théâtre du Châtelet during the performances.

With Russia gaining new influence in the Balkans after the Treaty of Berlin and Ferry's government focused on imperialism, the hit of the 1880s at the Théâtre du Châtelet was another *pièce à grand spectacle*. Verne and d'Ennery's *Michel Strogoff* premiered there on 17 November 1880, reaching 100 performances by 1888. In five acts and sixteen tableaux, this play based on the 1876 novel features not explorers, but armies and a heroic lieutenant of the czar. Russia was becoming a powerful colonial power with unquestionable military superiority. In 1876, it had annexed the Central Asian territories and there pretended to abolish slavery, anarchy, and despotism. *Michel Strogoff* focuses on a fictional invasion of Russian Siberia by the Tartars, as well as the trials and personal courage of Strogoff who travels from Moscow to the steppes of Siberia to save his country. To explain why Verne represents the Tartars as aggressors after they, in fact, had been conquered, Chris Bongie suggests that "the barbaric Other . . . is both that which is doomed to disappear in the progressive light of a liberalizing modernity and that which must be represented as having not yet been surpassed." For Strogoff to experience a kind of voyage of initiation, he needed to encounter a radically different world. Besides the torture scene, what communicates the distinction of this world is the *fête tartare* with its "absolutely charming" songs and dances. Bongie proposes that Verne included them because "this cultural shell is all that will survive of barbarism once its political power had been definitively quelled."³³ Both Massenet and the house composer Artus wrote incidental music, but neither wrote a bacchanale or songs for the *fête tartare*, a ballet that begins the ninth tableau. The cover of Artus's "Marche triomphale" may suggest a performance by veiled, bare-legged women at the *fête*, carrying swords and shields and bowing before their leader, but the exuberant *maestoso* music, again built of eight-measure phrases, functions to display Tartar pride before the captured Strogoff (fig. 50).³⁴ Massenet contributed military music to accompany the Russian soldiers: an "Air de la retraite" for the

33. Chris Bongie, *Exotic Memories: Literature, Colonialism, and the Fin de Siècle* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1991), 51, 64–66.

34. The dancers look like men in the engraving accompanying the play, whereas on the cover of the Artus score, based on the same image, the dancers are indisputably female, with long diaphanous veils extending from their foreheads to their feet, their arms and torsos from the waist down visible from the side and back. French audiences must have preferred their exotic dancing by women rather than men.

THÉÂTRE DU CHATELET

A Monsieur RUBINSTEIN, Directeur du Conservatoire de Moscou

MARCHE TRIOMPHALE

MICHEL STROGOFF

Drame de
A. D'ENNERY & J. VERNE

Alexandre ARTUS

Chef d'Orchestre du Théâtre du Châtelet

Paris. LE BAILLY, Editeur. 6 Rue Cardinale, et 2^{me} Rue de l'Abbaye.

Des Redoublés pour Musique Militaire. 1^{re}

De même Auteur
Quadrille Piano
La même orchestre.

FIG. 50 Alexandre Artus, "March triomphale" from Jules Verne and Adolphe d'Ennery's *Michel Strogoff* (1881).

fifes and drums of the czar's grenadiers and a "Fanfare" for the *chevalier-gardes* (a cavalry of the Russian imperial guard consisting of nobles).

Most French exotic spectacles were constructed around stereotypical binary oppositions, a replication of the dichotomy of self/Other projected onto another culture. This was not just a convention of the genre, it also reflected "racial policy" in the colonies, where the French played up differences between neighboring indigenous groups, pitting one against another (such as the Kabyles and the Arabs) to accumulate power and diminish the possibility for unified resistance.³⁵ Opera, in particular, also proved an ideal realm in which to "make the native seem like us by giving her a 'voice,'" for, as Gayatri Spivak has pointed out, "if the subaltern can speak, then, thank God, the subaltern is not a subaltern any more."³⁶ Probably because of the "essential untranslatability" of whatever actual non-European music Parisians might have been able to hear, operas probably did a much better job of inculcating this illusion than did occasional visits by indigenous musicians. Whether composers or librettists wished to criticize the assimilationist theory, promote it, or play with ambiguities and complexities inherent in the ideal or the practice, they could construe Oriental characters in their operas as belittling, resisting, or embracing Western cultural influences, and the French colonial presence as representing contamination, enrichment, or some amalgam of the two.

Whereas an operetta like Charles Lecocq's *La Jolie Persane* (1879) tended to address social questions at home, in this case, divorce, and Olivier Métra's ballet-pantomime *Yedda* (1879) used the story of a Japanese peasant assimilating into the upper class through marriage as the pretext for wishful thinking about change in France,³⁷ some operas and *opéras-comiques* addressed colonial situations. When Gounod's *Le Tribut de Zamora* was not ready, Vaucorbeil chose Verdi's *Aida* as his first new production at the Opéra in 1880, with Gabrielle Krauss in the title role.³⁸ In some ways, this constituted official assimilation of an Italian composer whose opera had earlier been reviewed as specifically Italian³⁹—an interesting choice

35. Aldrich, *Greater France*, 106.

36. Cited in Rey Chow, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 35–36.

37. *Yedda* was the only new work produced at the Opéra in 1879.

38. French audiences already knew *Aida* from its premiere in Italian at the Théâtre-Ventadour in 1876 and in French at the Théâtre-Lyrique in 1878.

39. In *Revue et gazette musicale*, 30 April 1876, Paul Bernard compares *Aida* with Verdi's other operas and concludes his long review, "One felt as if transported to sunny Italy" (139). See also 1880 reviews cited in Karen Henson, "Exotisme et nationalités: *Aida* à l'Opéra de Paris," in *L'Opéra en France et en Italie, 1791–1925*, ed. Hervé Lacombe (Paris: Société française de musicologie, 2000), 290.

given the large Italian colony in Paris and the second largest number of immigrants at the time being Italian workers. However, the work had French roots. The scenario was concocted by a French Egyptologist, Auguste Mariette, and adapted by Camille Du Locle, later director of the Opéra-Comique.⁴⁰ Moreover, Pougin, and more recently Karen Henson, have argued that French music had the greatest influence on the work.⁴¹ Reinforcing this interest in French Orientalism, Colonne programmed excerpts of *Samson et Dalila* and *Le Roi de Lahore* in his Good Friday and Easter concerts the same week as the Opéra's premiere of *Aida*, and, after critics noted the similarity to Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine*, the Opéra later that fall ran it in repertoire with *Aida*. Its exotic subject inspired a "dazzling" spectacle, and Henson and Locke underline the enormous impact made by the sets and costumes, the result of "archaeological research."⁴² As in other exotic French spectacles and operas, such as Félicien David's *Lalla Roukh*, the relationship of music and visual design calls on audiences to negotiate the coexistence of realistic display and imaginative projection, to see grandeur, exotic beauty, and passionate characters and, with the help of music, to feel their meaning.⁴³ What elicited particular attention was the Triumphant March of act 2 with its brilliant display of costumes and orchestral colors à la Meyerbeer. For the 1880 production, the Opéra had Adolphe Sax make replicas of Egyptian-inspired trumpets (with two pistons instead of one) to play the pitches more accurately, although, as Locke points out, the "bizarre and blaring sound" of those used in earlier performances may have helped to code the Egyptians as "technologically primitive." Hearing these, Parisians clamored for an encore in the middle of the premiere and, in honoring this, everyone in the

40. See Ernest Reyer, "Voyage au Caire," reprinted in *Notes de musique* (Paris: Charpentier, 1875) and the correspondence in *Verdi's Aida: The History of an Opera in Letters and Documents*, ed. Hans Busch (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978).

41. Pougin, *Verdi*, 266, and Henson, "Exoticisme et nationalités," 266–67, 291–94. Henson refers to G. Bertrand as a critic who saw orientalism as "particularly cultivated by the French" (292–93). She also points out that Du Locle commissioned Saint-Saëns's *La Princesse jaune* and Bizet's *Djamileh* and *Carmen* (266–67). Earlier, in his "Voyages au Caire," Reyer had pointed to similarities between the nostalgic father-daughter duo in *Aida* and the analogous scene in *Mignon*, and between *Aida*'s introduction, the prelude to *Lohengrin*, and the second part of *Les Troyens* (193, 198).

42. *Ibid.*, 279–85 and Ralph Locke, "Beyond the Exotic: How 'Eastern' Is *Aida*?" *Cambridge Opera Journal* 17, 2 (July 2005): 116–22. See the catalogue, *Voyage en musique: Cent ans d'exotisme. Décors et costumes dans le spectacle lyrique en France* (Boulogne-Billancourt: Centre culturel de Boulogne-Billancourt, 1990).

43. In describing *Lalla Roukh*, Camille Bellaigue writes of the "transposed impressions" effected by "music's strange ability to translate sights into sounds and visual spectacles into harmonies!" "Un Siècle de musique française," *Ménestrel*, 29 May 1887, 201.

procession had to go out and come back in.⁴⁴ This unprecedented repetition, possibly planned, suggested that spectacle was arguably more important than plot, and that music was part of spectacle.

As Locke has noted, *Aida* raised the question of what it means to establish and maintain an empire—issues of class and the dynamics of power—but it does so in a setting displaced from any relationship to France. This would presumably allow for dreaming without the responsibility of taking a stand on French colonization. That *Aida* and other such works could be interpreted in so many different ways (Locke proposes nine distinct readings) may have encouraged audiences to draw parallels between various situations of imperial domination. Here ancient Egypt could represent itself or the Middle East or imperialist Europe.⁴⁵ In rendering stereotypes transparent, especially with music that could convey cultural differences with or without “conventional exotic topoi,” Locke suggests, Verdi “allows audience members to make implicit connections to social structures and traits of character of their own time and place.”⁴⁶ Indeed, I would argue, since in the colonies the French tended to look to indigenous peoples as their collaborators, victims of previous invaders who had driven them from the coast into the mountains (e.g., Kabyles in Algeria, Chams and Penong-Piaks in Vietnam, Cambodians in Indochina), the depiction of the Ethiopians as “primitive but vital” may have resonated with some. French colonialists considered these groups as survivors of “powerful nation[s] from the past” that had earlier colonized these lands: the Kabyles as descendents of the Celts; the Cham and Penong-Piak people as “the debris of a great Malay nation that, before recorded history, played an important role in Indo-China.”⁴⁷ In other words, the opera could support identification, not only with the powerful, but also with the powerless, the conquered, the weak, especially if the latter were descendents of a once powerful civilization. From this perspective, French audiences may have associated themselves with the Ethiopians and the Egyptians with the Prussians in their attack on the French in 1870–71, a connection Verdi himself once made.⁴⁸ In recognition of his success, a week after

44. H. Moreno [Henri Heugel], “Aida à l’Opéra,” *Ménestrel*, 28 March 1880, 130–32; Ralph Locke, “Aida and Nine Readings of Empire,” *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 3, 1 (2006): 63–65; and Henson, “Exoticisme et nationalités,” 285.

45. Locke, “Beyond the Exotic,” 106–7, and “Aida and Nine Readings,” 45–72, esp. 49.

46. Locke, “Beyond the Exotic,” 119, 131.

47. Petit, *Colonies françaises*, 347. As Charles Lemire puts it in “Aux monuments anciens des Kiams,” *Le Tour du monde* 68 (1894), “Oppressed excessively by the Annamese they [the Chams] saw liberators in us.” Translated in *Cities of Nineteenth-Century Colonial Vietnam*, ed. Walter Tips (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1999), 179.

48. In “Aida and Nine Readings,” Locke points out that Verdi was a “deeply committed anti-imperialist” (56, 71–72).

Aida's premiere at the Opéra, at a celebratory dinner with President Jules Grévy, Jules Ferry, and other politicians, Verdi upon Ferry's recommendation was named a *grand officier* of the Légion d'honneur.⁴⁹

Delibes's *Lakmé*, the *opéra-comique* that perhaps best represented republicans' attitudes to the colonies, was composed in 1881–82 and reached the stage in April 1883. Two months before its premiere, Jules Ferry returned as the head of the government and renewed attention to colonial conquests in the Congo, Madagascar, Tonkin, and Tunisia. Whereas Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore* (1877), set in India at the time of the Muslim invasion, could have taken place anywhere in the Orient and virtually at any time, *Lakmé*'s portrayal of English colonialists in contemporary India reflected desire for a more *realistic* idea of the foreign Other.⁵⁰ With an extraordinary budget of more than 80,000 francs, every effort was expended, as with the Opéra's *Aida*, to make the exotic Other viscerally present: appropriate costumes and hair styles borrowed from images of Indian goddesses, replicas of Indian statues, and musical instruments that exactly reproduced those an Indian rajah had sent to the Conservatory museum.⁵¹ Delibes also musically represented the Other as accurately as he could in the ballet of the *bayadères* and the famous Bell Song.⁵² Moreover, the opera's depiction of natives as uneasy and plotting a revolt may have suggested a perspective on the problems in Tunisia that contributed to Ferry's resignation two years before. Rather than taking a harshly critical perspective on the participation in this revolt, *Lakmé* suggests a sympathetic view of the rebellion, perhaps in part because the colonialists are English, France's competitors. Since Queen Victoria had been proclaimed Empress of India in 1876, rivalry with England abroad had led to Anglophobia. In 1879, during the war between the British and the Zulus in South Africa, the French press expressed admiration for the Zulus, whose king encouraged revolt among his people and

49. Pougin, *Verdi*, 274.

50. *Le Grand Mogol* (1877), Edmond Audran's first *opera-buffa*, also depicted colonists in India, including a Parisian dentist and his sister, who falls in love with an Indian prince. After the dancing of the *bayadères* when the love affair is thwarted, she agrees to marry a local Englishman. The work became widely popular after its Paris premiere in 1884. An orchestral fantasy based on it was performed in Haiphong on 8 June 1889, where French colonialists may have identified with the story. Later that year, a famous singer debuted in a production of *Le Grand Mogol* before the governor-general and mayor. Claude Bourrin, *Le Vieux Tonkin* (Saigon: Aspar, 1935), 184, 200.

51. These details appear in Un Strapontin de l'orchestra, "La Soirée théâtrale: *Lakmé*," *Figaro*, 15 April 1883.

52. According to Julien Tiersot in his *Notes d'ethnologie musicale* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1905), Delibes benefited from the help of an informant in writing the dances in act 2, one of which seems to use a mode transcribed by Fétis (73–74).

attacks on the neighboring British colony of Natal.⁵³ In July 1882, when the English took control of it, disputes began over the Suez Canal. This context may have predisposed French audiences to sympathy for Lakmé's Orient and its people's desire to rebel against foreign occupation.⁵⁴ Admitting the strengths and courage of the colonized in any case made the conqueror seem all the more powerful, as with Verne's Tartars.

The nature and character of Lakmé would have reinforced this sympathy; she resembles Thomas's Mignon. The idea for the opera came to the librettists of *Jean de Nivelle* upon hearing an American, Marie Van Zandt, sing the role of Mignon in Thomas's opera.⁵⁵ To create a work especially for this "child with a strange but captivating style," whom they found "charming and bizarre," they suggested that Delibes adapt Pierre Loti's famous novel *Le Mariage de Loti* (1880), which, although set in Polynesia, features an English sailor (Loti himself) who falls in love with a local beauty but eventually leaves her. Already at the age of six, Van Zandt had reportedly lived the idea underlying *Lakmé*, that is, "savage passion in contact with our European civilization."⁵⁶ With her "exotic" background and "childlike graces," she was the ideal singer to premiere *Lakmé*. When he meets her, Gérald refers to her "look of a child." She describes her own music as "a naïve song." When she tells of the forest where the lovers might hide at the end of act 2, she sings innocently (the score says "mysteriously"), almost entirely in eighth notes and gently arching lines to a hushed, relatively static accompaniment, as might Mignon (see ex. 4 and ex. 15). When dying, she loses her voice; it reduces to a single pitch, reminiscent of Mignon when she sings of not knowing from where she came. Lakmé is sincere and self-effacing; she takes her own life when she thinks she has been betrayed.

53. Either the French were sympathetic to the Zulus and curious to see a "race" capable of standing up to the English, or the English were anxious to exhibit how civilized the people could be under their influence, for they sent a group of five Zulus from the colony of Natal to Paris that same year. They "were exhibited" at the Folies-Bergère and depicted in the press both as performers, with their weapons and shields, bare-chested, and with feathers rising from their heads, and among the theater's well-dressed public.

54. Also possibly predisposing some French to identify with Lakmé's people was their belief, unmentioned in reviews but nevertheless an ongoing interest of many French, that their musical roots could be traced back to India and its Aryan civilization. See, e.g., Henry Woollett, *Histoire de la musique depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: Monde musical, 1909), 1: 37–39, 46, 54, 70.

55. Un Strapontin, "Lakmé." Van Zandt had performed in *Mignon* and *Faust* all over Europe in the early 1880s.

56. In an evocative but possibly highly apocryphal story, Van Zandt once charmed some Amerindians who came out to hear her vocalises in a Massachusetts forest and took her for "a supernatural being." Subsequently, she was raised in England. Ibid.

The opera thus is not about the conquests of the exotic woman, for her charms involve no overt manipulation. Rather, both the man and the woman are occasions for a *voyage imaginaire*, that is, a love that begins in their imaginations, mutually, before they meet. After listeners are drawn into the dream by the lullaby-like duet of Lakmé and Mallika, Gerald begins to be filled with “the fantasy of delusions” to which he both defiantly resists as well as tentatively indulges. Lakmé, sensing immanent change in the nature around her and accompanied by open octaves and fifths, anxiously moves between E major and E minor as she asks herself, repeatedly, why she feels strangely happy. Their mutual anxiety culminates in their first duet, in which both discover its source and echo the same ornamented descending octaves, cadencing on “love.” Under the charm of her Berceuse in the forest, which Lakmé herself refers to as “sweet” and “naïve,” Gerald falls asleep. When his English friends come to get him, they cry out, “Awake, dreamer, awake!” and Lakmé, before expiring and in a hauntingly beautiful moment, thanks Gerald for having given her “the sweetest dream that one can have under this sky.” James Parakilas interprets both *Lakmé* and *Carmen* as “dreams about the dreamers, men (almost never women) who test their dreams of escaping into a different life and who bring down the curtain by proving to themselves—and the audience—that the dream is false and escape is impossible.”⁵⁷ The ending certainly makes this interpretation plausible—Lakmé vanishes “far from this world” as the curtain drops; hopes expressed for her “eternal life” most likely applied to the fate of the opera as well. However, the *mutuality* of the characters’ dreaming—Lakmé’s as well as Gérard’s—adds a twist to the conventional story.

In addition to depicting the typical exotic woman’s enchantment of the foreigner, charming him with her voice, particularly in the Bell Song, the opera focuses on Lakmé’s fascination with Gerald. The dream of colonialists, as expressed by Lakmé, was that the exotic Other desired them as much as they were desired by Westerners, that they were similar enough to understand and be understood by non-Western peoples, and thus could engage in reciprocal relationships with them.⁵⁸ Moreover, Gérard and his companion Frédéric both note early in the opera, “Everywhere women are the same, happily, so happily.” This observation establishes a rationale for their mutual feelings, also underlying *Aida* and *Samson et Dalila*. If people are the same and love is universal, when Lakmé uses stylistically Western tunes with no Orientalist inflections to express this love, European music

57. James Parakilas, “The Soldier and the Exotic: Operatic Variations on a Theme of Racial Encounter,” *Opera Quarterly* 10, 2 (Winter 1993–94): 41.

58. Leroy-Beaulieu describes colonization as a “permanent exchange of influences, a reciprocity of services . . . in a word, a mutual dependence” (*De la colonisation*, xvi).

EX. 15 Delibes, *Lakmé* (1883), act 2, “Dans la forêt près de nous.”

Here Lakmé describes a nearby forest where she and Gerald can escape detection amid the exotic bamboo, vines, and flowers. Her melodic line is made up of almost entirely eighth notes over a repetitive figure in the orchestra, giving the music a simple, almost childlike character that supports perceptions of both Lakmé and Marie Van Zandt.

Andante quasi Allegretto (♩ = 63) Lakmé (mystérieusement)

p Dans la fo-rêt près de nous, Se cache toute pe-ti-te, —

Andante quasi Allegretto (♩ = 63)

pp

les 2 Ped.

U-ne cabane en bambous Qu'un grand ar-bre vert a-bri-te

too seems universal (ex. 15).⁵⁹ It is as if Western music—and, by inference, Western culture—are the only ones that could be imagined as shared. The story also proposes that the West was as mysterious, alluring, and dangerous to Easterners as the East was to Westerners. This suggests that something other than conquest was going on in the colonies, that the Other—or at least certain others—was attracted to the potential of assimilation. The audience at the premiere (which included Antonin Proust, various military officers, and intellectuals involved in the colonial policy discussions) may also been pleased with another of its themes. Toward the end, only a few measures of a military march are enough to induce Gérald to depart. Duty, honor, and devotion to one’s country are as strong a

59. Ibid., 48. In his “Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers,” Locke notes that certain passages sung by Aida too are “free of Otherizing accent” and might “cause us to feel as if we ourselves were Aida” (129).

force as mutual love—it is the old duty/love theme of French classical drama and Simon’s perspective on it rearticulated in an East-West plot. With all that the opera implies about personal freedom, sensuality, and sexuality, finally patriotism turns out just as motivating and important.

Such works raise an important question: were they meant to promote particular attitudes to the colonies or to reflect prevailing perceptions? I would suggest they probably did a little of both. Offering a certain utility from the perspective of imperialists, exotic spectacles, whether for elites or bourgeois audiences, used the luxury of spectacle to play into Westerners’ fascination with power,⁶⁰ while helping them consider cultural differences and the possibility of mutual desire between Self and Other. This is in part because their “charm” coaxed audiences into dreaming, escaping reality as well as, in a certain sense, themselves—arguably just as important to French audiences as metaphysical transcendence was to Germans. The attempt at portraying realism or “historical truth” in the sets and costumes articulated differences rendering possible this escape. At the same time, it was crucial that the stories involve comprehensible stereotypes on whom French listeners could project both similarity and difference. As Homi Bhabha has pointed out, stereotypes recognize differences, though in a fixed, reified form, as well as disavow these differences. Their ambiguity ensures their replicability, predictability, and thus understandability.⁶¹ Exotic spectacles and their stereotypes create a framework for understanding the Other as a function of one’s categories, allowing their use for a purpose. Temporary escape and communal experience of exotic stereotypes could have cemented a sense of Self shared by all present, regardless of their social and political differences, molding an audience into a microcosm of the nation regardless of what listeners identified with. Everyone would have enjoyed the thrill of an imagined adventure, followed by the self-satisfied pride of return to the comforts of home. This would have reinforced white European ethnocentrism.

Exotic libretti also had utility for composers. Exotic subjects inspired not only picturesque dramatic characters, but also rich orchestral colors, expanding the palette of musical sounds—an important form of musical progress for the French.⁶² Moreover, libretti that joined fiction and reality left room for composers to dream, to pick up

60. Herbert Lindenberger, *Opera: The Extravagant Art* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984), 274–75.

61. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), chap. 3.

62. For more on the utility of exotic music for composers and listeners, see chapter 10 below.

where the poet left off,⁶³ as Debussy later appreciated in Maeterlinck. Metaphorical stories encouraged this. Simple plots also helped, allowing the music “its superiority.”⁶⁴ In the end, as a *Lakmé* reviewer put it (substituting “beautiful” for “sweet” in Lakmé’s final song), it is music more than story—the varied and evocative orchestration, suave melodies, and fluidity—that gives “the most beautiful dream that one can have under our sky.”⁶⁵ Killing off the woman in these operas is a way to end the dream, not necessarily comment on the impossibility of racial intermarriage, assimilation, or universals.⁶⁶ Moreover, as noted in chapter 6, the qualities associated with exotic women like Lakmé are often those many wanted to associate with French music, especially its “exquisite, penetrating charm, which delightfully lulls its listeners, sending them on a journey to dream’s ethereal realms.”⁶⁷ Not surprisingly, in 1884, Delibes was elected to the Académie des beaux-arts and *Lakmé* was soon being performed both all over France and abroad. Reviewers of the London production not only found that the role fitted Van Zandt “like a glove,” especially the agility of her voice and the “purity” of her intonation—the ultimate accomplishment for a Western singer—they also called *Lakmé* the “personification of French *opéra-comique*,” a genre in which the French excelled without much foreign influence.⁶⁸

MUSIC AND COLONIAL ASSUMPTIONS

Under the republicans, music was used to support three assumptions that underlay French imperialism. The first of these was the idea that human beings could understand one another because they were fundamentally the same (essentially reflecting the monogenist view that all the races descended from one).⁶⁹ French

63. Paul Bernard, commenting on Louis Gallet’s libretti in “Théâtre National de l’Opéra: *Le Roi de Lahore*,” *Revue et gazette musicale*, 6 May 1877, 137. Furthermore, in comparing *Le Roi de Lahore* with *Aida*, Bernard observed that while Verdi is more “nervous,” Massenet is more “dreamy.”

64. Review of *Lakmé* in Amiens, *Ménestrel*, 1 February 1885, 71. In her *Unsung Voices* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991, Carolyn Abbate argues that voice transcends plot in the Bell Song (5–6).

65. Un Strapontin, “*Lakmé*.”

66. In such an opera, I also do not hear these endings as using death to contain the power of women, as Catherine Clément suggests in her *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

67. Review of *Lakmé* in Amiens.

68. T. Johnson, summarizing various reviewers in “Chronique de Londres,” *Ménestrel*, 14 June 1885, 221.

69. In *Greater France*, Aldrich discusses other assumptions: that conquest was legitimate and that the colonies should serve France, help solve national problems, and provide fields of opportunities (91–93).

anthropologists of the time measured and compared the physical characteristics of foreign visitors to Paris, especially those who were part of ethnographic exhibitions. While polygenists believed in a separate origin for each human race and argued that the nature of a people was fixed and homogeneous, not alterable by education or intelligence, monogenists, many of them republicans, focused on universal traits, which they sought to identify throughout the globe. They saw racial diversity as a result of migration and adaptation to shifting circumstances. This was important. It underlay their belief in the potential of the environment to influence people and in the ability of people, through education and reason, to adapt and change. Just as they hoped to use these to turn the *classes populaires* into French citizens, republicans believed that people from other cultures too should be able to assimilate. To enjoy the benefits of laws assuring liberty, equality, and fraternity, one had only to learn the language and accept a French way of life. Such an idea also formed the basis of their assimilationist colonial policy—its hopes, illusions, and ultimately its cruel naïveté.

Besides music and exotic spectacles, musical instruments and images of them reinforced republicans' assumption of universals in the world. In 1879–80, Johannes Weber studied ancient monuments, early texts, and other documents from various nations for recurring instruments. Having acknowledged that the Arabs had introduced the two-stringed rebab to Europe, he nonetheless pointed to a Latin text documenting the use of similar stringed instruments in Brittany in the sixth century. An obelisk in Constantinople showed him organs already there in the fourth century. Although Weber was careful to describe their different names, scales, and functions, he used Western categories such as drum, trumpet, flute, guitar, and harp to facilitate comparison and act as a framework for understanding.⁷⁰ This reduced the Other to varieties of the same. Although he found harps and other plucked and bowed string instruments from eastern Europe to South America and from Africa to Indonesia, no instrument was more widely used than drums.⁷¹ Images of drums, in fact, dominate the popular magazine *L'Illustration*. Defying any rigid notion of cultural distinction, these appeared in engravings and photographs from the military exercises, folk music, and orchestras of all European nations to the fields and festivities of Africa and

70. Johannes Weber, "Ethnographie des instruments de musique," *Revue et gazette musicale*, 16 November 1879, 371–72, through 29 February 1880, 65–67.

71. Perhaps recognizing this, E.-M. de Lyden was quick to point out not only the provenance of drums in France, but also their importance to Louis XIV and his musicians. He also discusses the two drums used in the French military. See his "Le Tambour," *Ménestrel*, 4 July 1880, 241–43, and 11 July 1880, 249–50.

Southeast Asia.⁷² Regardless of the drum's size, how it is held and performed, and what it is made of, these images document similarities in shape and function from one culture to the next. Everywhere, these hollow resonators, when struck, call people together or give rhythm to their movements. Shared by diverse classes, ethnicities, and cultures, such instruments allude to the existence of a musical universal—sound of a certain nature serving the same basic function virtually everywhere—and what Saussure called the first principle of assimilation, the fundamental unity of the human race.⁷³

As France was acquiring new colonies, the use of Western instruments by indigenous people in the French colonies may have given readers back home confidence in the possibility of assimilation. For example, among its images of Madagascar, a French protectorate since 1885, *L'Illustration* represents two Western-style military drums, snare and bass, played on the hips as in France, plus three Western-style violins (fig. 51). This appropriation of Western instruments for a parade on 14 July 1893, the French national holiday, documented Africans' assimilation of French customs on Nossi-Bé, an island off the northwest coast of Madagascar, which a treaty opened to French commerce in 1860. Intent on modernizing his country, the Madagascan king supported the establishment of Catholic missionaries and the French Navy there. Assimilation of Western musical instruments suggested latent respect for French culture.

Second (and related to the first assumption) was the idea that resources were neutral, interchangeable, and transportable, that they could function outside their original context, whether they were plants, animals, people, or music. All that was needed to assimilate those from outside France was "acclimatization," or their habituation to new conditions of existence. To acclimatize an individual or race of whatever species, as Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire explained it, meant to remove it from its place of origin and imprint on its organization modifications

72. In H. Robert Cohen's *Les Gravures musicales dans l'Illustration* (Québec: Presse de l'Université Laval, 1982–83), drums (*tambours*) appear 92 times from 1864 to 1899 associated with non-Western music (33 times), Western military scenes (21), Western folk music (14), and Western classical music (24). See also Jann Pasler, "The Utility of Musical Instruments in the Racial and Colonial Agendas of Late Nineteenth-Century France," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 129, 1 (Spring 2004): 24–76.

73. Even Léopold de Saussure, who criticized this idea in his *Psychologie de la colonisation française dans ses rapports avec les sociétés indigènes* (Paris: Alcan, 1899), sees assimilation as based on this belief (31).



FIG. 51 "Nossi-Bé: Queen Binao and her sister Kany visiting the residence on 14 July," *L'illustration*, 2 September 1893.

that rendered it able to exist and perpetuate its species under these new conditions.⁷⁴ The purpose of bringing exotic plants and animals to France was not just to understand the mechanism of racial diversity, but also to determine which species could acclimatize to France and what economic and social utility they could serve, particularly for agriculture and industry. The capacity of something to acclimatize was also a fundamental prerequisite for free trade, something the republicans made possible by law in 1880. It meant that the French could appropriate foreign ideas and products for their use-value. Some hoped that this might lead to innovation, possibly new commodities. Others wished to use ethnic specimens to awaken curiosity and generate support for colonialism. Faced with the distance and difference of foreign cultures, it was important, therefore, to emphasize what transcended the constraints and particularities of foreign cultures and had potentially universal utility.

Instruments provided great examples of acclimatization, whether in press images or museums, particularly the Musée d'ethnographie, created in 1880. One could compare, for example, the vertically held Tunisian "violin," played with a bow, and the plucked, vertically held instrument used in Bosnian dance orchestra, or the marimbas of West Africa and their *congénères* in Indonesia and Indochina. Cultural confusions aside, these allowed readers to see family resemblances among instruments and musicians within three regions—Asia, Africa, and eastern Europe. They also drew attention to possible transnational movement, whether of religion (Islam in Tunisia and Bosnia) or culture (Europe to Argentina), and suggested how local traditions could affect instrument design and performance.

Collectors and scholars of *chansons populaires* showed how the acclimatization of a melody might work. Occasionally, they changed an interval to make a dominant cadence and inevitably added harmony and other accoutrements of Western art song, including instrumental introductions, interludes, and codas. Julien Tiersot "dressed them with the clothes of harmony," so that in "transporting them into a context so different from their natural context" they would not be too *dépaysé* (like fish out of water) and could be admitted "into a world that would not accept them in their bare simplicity." That Tiersot listed himself on concert programs as the author of the *chansons populaires* he published recognized their status as musi-

74. Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, *Acclimatation et domestication des animaux utiles* (Paris: Maison rustique, 1861). The French systematically began to experiment with trying to acclimatize species foreign to France in 1848. Declaring that only half the globe had been developed for useful exploitation, in 1860, Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire created a zoo (distinct from the Jardin des Plantes) that specialized in acclimatization as well as the creation of racial hybrids: the Jardin zoologique d'Acclimatation.

cal hybrids.⁷⁵ In the accompaniment to his transcriptions of *chansons populaires* from Greece and Brittany, Bourgault-Ducoudray based the harmony—what he called the “conquest of the modern races”—on the melody’s mode and imitated its rhythms and changing meters. He also added performance instructions, extensive accompaniments, and sometimes interludes that made them like art songs, easily accessible to Western audiences. His goal was to show that modes were compatible with modern music and could be acclimatized, explored and incorporated for the sake of French musical progress.⁷⁶

Acclimatization had tangible benefits, but also predictable limitations. “Definitively acclimatized,” *Aida* entered the Opéra’s repertoire.⁷⁷ If borrowed melodies and their Western accompaniments seemed incompatible at first, new sounds and original effects could arise from their combination. But while most composers who incorporated French *chansons populaires* into their works used them as signs to their origins, those who borrowed from the vast repertoire of indigenous song from throughout the world were often content to acclimatize exotic modes or exotic tunes to suit Western purposes without acknowledging their presence.⁷⁸ It was enough of a tour de force to accompany these melodies with a “rational succession of chords.”⁷⁹ In seeking themes “to bend under their laws and force [them] to enter into the framework of their compositions,” they proceeded like colonialists. To the extent that those themes resisted acclimatization, they suggested the realities of colonial life.

In general, non-Western modes, melodies, and timbres in Western settings gave rise to what Homi Bhabha calls the “inbetween”—the “zone of intersection” that results in “unresolved and unresolvable hybridity.”⁸⁰ While racial theorists such as Arthur de Gobineau considered hybridization a prelude to racial degeneration, Saint-Saëns in his “Rhapsodie mauresque” showed what can be accomplished through hybridity, even if this rendered the work difficult to understand. After juxtaposing timbres, themes, and temperaments, the last third of the work insis-

75. Julien Tiersot, *Mélodies populaires des provinces de France* 1 (Paris: Heugel, 1888), 1; and 4 (1911), 3.

76. See Jann Pasler, “Race and Nation: Musical Acclimatization and the Chansons Populaires in Third Republic France,” in *Western Music and Race*, ed. Julie Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 147–67.

77. Pougin, *Verdi*, 262.

78. Whether Bizet was inspired by Arabic, Greek, or Phrygian music, or was unconscious of the connection, Lacombe found the mode *asbein*, “le mode du diable,” sung by Carmen in his opera. “Chants de la race cabirique ou gallique” (cited n. 18 above), 387.

79. Henri Quittard, “L’Orientalisme musical: Saint-Saëns orientaliste,” *Revue musicale*, 1 March 1906, 113.

80. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 4.

tently superimposes two meters and suggests two modes, the triple meter theme in D-Mixolydian over the static duple meter accompaniment in A-Dorian. As if to foreground his Western skills, he also accompanies the theme with itself in similar and contrary motion in a way that recalls counterpoint, a genre absent from Arab music (see ex. 13a). Elsewhere overt modal differences between a theme and its accompaniment “give the illusion of a melody without accompaniment.” This metric and tonal “indecision” and “uncertainty,” together with the “compromise” we accept because of the “rational succession of the chords,” is a kind a metaphor for the cultural coexistence of colonialism.⁸¹ Because acclimatization ignores the effects of displacement and disjunction on objects themselves and their meaning, borrowed exotic melodies often lose their most distinctive characteristics when combined with Western musical procedures. Making possible new uses of non-Western music inevitably entailed removing meaning—tradition and history—asccribed by previous users and replacing this with new meaning. In this sense, musical borrowings reduced varieties of difference to the category of difference, sometimes collapsing into the binarism of Self-Other. To the extent that new uses fixed the borrowed object, its commodification could derail music’s capacity to signify in meaningful ways.

To support a third assumption underlying French imperialism—the idea of France and the French as superior despite their humiliating losses in 1815 and 1870—they needed an Other who was clearly inferior.⁸² In the 1880s, the French focused on what constitutes Western civilization in a global context. They saw themselves as its greatest representative and its guardian. In 1882, Ferry said his mission was not to “realize the impossible fusion of the races, but to promote or awaken among other races the superior notions of which we are guardians.”⁸³ Influenced by social Darwinism, they embraced the concept of racial evolution and racial atavism, predicting that less advanced races could revert to the uncivilized behav-

81. Quittard, “Orientalisme musical,” 107, 111–12.

82. This idea was well-developed by the 1860s when the French came to see their colonies as a reflection of their military and economic power and the victory of civilization over *barbarie*. See Jacques Thobie and Gilbert Meynier, *Histoire de la France coloniale*, vol. 2: *L’Apogée* (Paris: Colin, 1991), 519–36.

83. This was written in his preface to *Les Affaires de Tunisie* (Paris: J. Hetzel, 1882); cited in Serge Bernstein, “Jules Ferry,” in Léo Hamon, *Les Opportunistes: Les Débuts de la République aux républicains* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l’homme, 1991), 267.

ior of their ancestors.⁸⁴ Defining and proving this was as elusive as the concept itself. Despite little knowledge and understanding of distant cultures, explorers' accounts served the French well, producing objects of knowledge for Western consumption and reinforcing stereotypes about so-called primitive cultures. In illustrations accompanying memoirs, adventure novels, and magazines, modestly dressed or half-naked non-Westerners, more often than not living in nature and fighting with spears and other simple arms, suggested civilizations limited in their development. When juxtaposed with Westerners' exquisitely tailored clothes, luxurious salons and theaters, and massive, well-armed militaries, they seemed to call out for the "civilizing" influence of their colonizers.⁸⁵ By providing extreme contrasts with their own culture, whether in the distant reaches of the West (Argentina and provincial Russia) or in Indochina and the west coast of Africa, such images reinforced the claims of social Darwinism, the purported survival of the fittest. They also encouraged the French to believe in the second principle of assimilation, the absolute value of all things Western, independent of time and place.

Almost everything about Western musical instruments seemed to suggest their superiority. In arguing for a "logical and uniform," that is, evolutionary development of music, Johannes Weber and others used them to posit a hierarchy of race and culture. Instruments and their scales alluded to a culture's "progress" and relative status as if there were various "degrees" of civilization, a tenet held by both monogenists and polygenists. Because of the value Weber assigned to melody over sonority and rhythm, stringed instruments come out on the top, percussion at the bottom. Similarly, Gustave Chouquet, curator of the Conservatoire's musical instrument collection, contended that "percussion and wind instruments were less important" because "man, proceeding from simple to complex," made these first, and people still use them widely "in savage countries all over the world."⁸⁶ Weber also signaled how the melodies of "savage people," very short and formed of a small number of repeated notes, resemble those of "European peasants." Yet,

84. Peter Baugher, "The Contradictions of Colonialism: The French Experience in Indochina, 1860–1940" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1980), 7.

85. Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 14. Conklin notes that the French of the time associated bare feet and minimal clothes with "savagery" and were proud that Africans coming to the 1889 exhibition left France "fully shod," considering this "civilization in the making."

86. Gustave Chouquet, *Le Musée du Conservatoire national de musique: Catalogue descriptif et raisonné* (Paris, 1875; suppl. 1884), 198, 243.

contradictions abound, such as Weber's praise for Arabs and Indians who used far more modes (scales) than Westerners did.⁸⁷

In images of French musical performance, the large orchestras, elegantly dressed players, and sophisticated concert halls would also have suggested Western superiority, especially to those living in the colonies. The juxtaposition in *L'Illustration* (31 May 1879) of an image of a near-naked "Annamite" playing an unusual bamboo mouth organ (the *kén pé*) with one of a charity ball with orchestra at the Hotel Continental in Paris is a case in point (fig. 52).⁸⁸ As in many salon performances in the city, crystal chandeliers, carved wood paneling, and stylish exquisitely tailored clothes of the audience members as well as the performers at the ball are evidence of great skill and beauty. Imported, portable palm trees suggest Western domination over the natural order. Those attending such performances and able to afford these luxurious forms of beauty are unambiguously white and upper-class. Throughout *L'Illustration*, the opulence of similar-looking, Greek-inspired theaters all over Europe and as far away as Constantine, Algeria (1883), and Odessa (1887) document the extent of European power and achievement. In this context, the image of the musician wearing only a loincloth, a cape, and some jewelry, which accompanied an article by a military captain who traveled to Annam in 1876, acknowledges certain realities that perhaps contributed to the arguments for French intervention.

The Indochinese musicians depicted in *L'Illustration* (25 October 1884) (fig. 53), amid the Sino-French war in Tonkin just after Annam and Tonkin had become French protectorates, are quite different and suggest a certain civilization. The performers are fully clothed and wear discreet hats; they are playing stringed instruments and woodwinds, suggesting instrumental coordination required in ensemble-playing and special skills needed for correct intonation. Their sound was most likely relatively quiet and refined, requiring close listening, possibly sophisticated audiences. Nothing suggests the primitivism, sensuality, decadence, or danger often associated with exotic Others in nineteenth-century France. The Chinese deity in the background and the close resemblance of these musicians to

87. Weber, "Ethnography," notes that Rabindranath Tagore took this as proof of Indian superiority over Europeans (66, 372, 377).

88. Described as a "Moi" or "savage," but never discussed in the article in which he appears, this image is of the most primitive musician in *L'Illustration* between 1870 and 1900. This man, from near Ba-truc (province of Hué) in the mountains between Annam and Laos, was probably one of the Malais, a race conquered by the Annamites and dispersed into the forests and the mountains west of Annam (central Vietnam). The image strongly resembles a photograph of "Khas savages" from Laos published in *L'Illustration* (1903) and a photograph of a Penong-Piak, the largest of this group, reproduced in Petit, *Colonies françaises*, 347.



FIG. 52 "Savage on the outskirts of Batruc," *L'Illustration*, 31 May 1879; from M. Dubreuil de Rhin, *Le Royaume d'Annam et les Annamites* (Paris: Plon, 1879).



FIG. 53 "Buddhist ceremony in a pagoda," *L'Illustration*, 25 October 1884; from Charles Lemire, *L'Indochine: Cochinchine française, royaume de Cambodge, royaume d'Annam et Tonkin*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Challamel aîné, 1884).

Chinese musicians published earlier in *L'Illustration* (20 September 1873) would have been important to French imperialists who argued that annexing Indochina, for the French a “little China,” would get them access to China itself. The extreme difficulties the French had in trying to assimilate the Indochinese made it important continually to remind the French public why the land was worth the expense and effort.

Although much related to music seemed to support the inevitable migration of people and their cultures, the colonized's potential desire to assimilate, the capacity and desirability of their resources to be acclimatized in French contexts, and the ultimate superiority of French culture, the collusion was not ideal, and music expressed this. The binary oppositions that make for dynamic form and good classical structures in Western music—whether in the ternary ABA of a march or the male-female duos in opera—mask the realities of identity. Stereotypes suppress not only accuracy, but also variety. While the costumes and sets of exotic spectacles occasionally captured something authentic about a foreign culture, music ensured insulation from anything substantially different. With its large orchestras and complex harmonies clothing all sound, music inevitably denied much specificity or materiality to whatever may have been signaled or acclimatized. More often than not, audiences were encouraged merely to experience an imaginary exotic Other, not given a venue in which to know it as something distinct from their imagination or from *other* Others.

SONGS INSPIRING RESISTANCE

Mapping the nation onto its empire represented not only France's biggest commitment in the early 1880s, but also its most problematic. Not all French agreed with the attempt to assimilate non-Westerners and the diversion of resources from the country's other needs. The colonies turned out to be a difficult testing ground for the republican theory of “universalism.” Treating the natives as equals was neither a simple nor a self-evident proposition. Some doubted whether other races could learn to behave like the French. In 1883, Armand de Quatrefages, a leading monogenist, recognized that in acclimatizing, a race could degenerate, that is, lose or modify the character most appreciated in it. Acclimatization represented the victory of milieu over an organism. But this never took place without a more or less violent struggle, which necessarily led to loss for both individuals and

generations.⁸⁹ In an 1884 study of Arab civilization, Gustave Le Bon argued that assimilation would never be possible, since the French and Arab races were too dissimilar.⁹⁰ Writing about Saint-Saëns's frequent adoption of Oriental melodies in his work, a critic similarly threw his hands up at the possibility of true assimilation: "European music, Oriental music, these are two distinct, often opposed organisms, in any case, as far one from the other as Aryan languages are from Semitic ones." Attempts to incorporate Oriental melodies ended up in distortion, and this problem was "insurmountable."⁹¹

Some who benefited from France's colonialism, such as Pierre Loti, the pen name of the French naval officer Julien Viaud, began to think that bringing French civilization to exotic Others was not entirely good. In his *Le Mariage de Loti* and later *Madame Chrysanthème*, based on a diary he kept in Japan in 1885, he reiterates the age-old lament that, with the increasing presence of Western civilization abroad, old customs and traditions were beginning to disappear, rendering exotic travel less interesting (meaning perhaps less useful as a resource for the Western imagination). To the extent that France's "civilizing mission" tended to ignore national and racial differences, it minimized the very things that seduced Loti and fueled his desire.

Whether and for what purpose to call the French back to arms stimulated perhaps the greatest political differences in the early 1880s. Those who preferred to concentrate on *revanche*, an unusual combination of radical republicans, conservatives, and monarchists focused on recovering Alsace and Lorraine, protested Ferry's imperialist projects bitterly and with some success. Georges Clemenceau, a leader of the radical republicans whom Ferry called *intransigeants*, had clashed earlier with Ferry while he was mayor of the eighteenth arrondissement. As deputy from Montmartre, beginning in 1880, Clemenceau used *La Justice*, a newspaper he directed, to attack Ferry. After Ferry's Tunisian politics provoked internal revolt, in 1881, he forced the prime minister's resignation.

Fear of Germany colored this rejection of imperialist ventures. Germany's potential threat was growing. In 1882, it formed the Triple Alliance with Austria and Italy, and in 1883, it embarked on its own colonial efforts in Southwest Africa. After Ferry again became prime minister, in October 1884, he began negotiations

89. Quatrefages, "Acclimatation des animaux et des plantes," *Magasin pittoresque* 2, 1 (1883): 373–75.

90. Gustave Le Bon, *La Civilisation des arabes* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1884).

91. Quittard, "Orientalisme musical," 108–9.

with Germany. However, his adversaries objected.⁹² Resistance to Ferry reached a new peak during the Sino-French war in northern Tonkin (August 1884 to April 1885) when the French suffered heavy losses. On 11 December 1884, the monarchist Duc Albert de Broglie, a former Moral Order prime minister, argued in the Senate: “Colonial policy is a luxury forbidden to a weakened France . . . a luxury and an excess of power for a nation that overflows with force and prosperity. For a nation momentarily weakened, it’s a burden that puts a strain on [the country] and could lead to ruin both for the colony and the metropole.”⁹³ It is ironic that to lambaste a government policy with which he disagreed, a conservative supporter of the Opéra would employ the word “luxury,” often used by the Left to argue against the need for the Opéra’s huge subsidy.

The following month, Paul Déroulède, a friend of Gambetta’s, published an article in *Le Drapeau* (10 January 1885) making a similar argument about the implications of France’s weakness:

To colonize usefully, one needs not just an excess of men and merchandise, but also, an excess [*trop-plein*] of glory. Undisputed supremacy cuts short any debate and resolves conflicts. . . . We have lost face in the world, as the Chinese expression puts it, and the mask of exotic conquests won’t give this face back to us. Colonies [seem like a] compensation for [our] lost provinces and an immediate remedy for our industrial and commercial crisis. [But what they cause us is] the dispersion of our military forces, our absence in Europe, the installation [*intronisation*] of Germany in France, the renunciation of our rights, and the abandonment of our French in Alsace-Lorraine.⁹⁴

In his address to the Chambre on 30 July, the radical Clemenceau went further, taking on Ferry’s notion of “inferior races” as the justification for colonization. If the colonized were inferior because we had been able to conquer them, then analogously, “are we an inferior race to the Germans because we lost to them?” Were we arguing for “the power of force over that of right [*la Puissance de la force*

92. Monarchists thought Ferry had fallen into a “Prussian trap.” Clemenceau accused him of being Bismarck’s “protégé,” though in fact he exercised great prudence and refused a proposed alliance with Germany against England. Raymond Poidevin, “La Politique extérieure de Jules Ferry, 1883–85,” in *Jules Ferry, fondateur de la République*, 212–17.

93. Reprinted in Charles-Robert Ageron, *L’Anticolonialisme en France de 1871 à 1914* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973), 64.

94. *Ibid.*, 67–68.

sur le Droit]”? “The history of France is a lively protest against this. The genius of the French race is to have generalized the theory of rights and justice, to have understood that the problem of civilization is to eliminate violence in men’s relationships with one another.”⁹⁵

Compelling objections to French colonialism thus came from the monarchist Right as well as the radical Left.

MILITARISTIC PATRIOTISM AND THE LIGUE DES PATRIOTES

Opposition to Ferry galvanized under the leadership of Déroulède (1846–1914),⁹⁶ who represented a powerful and motivated wing of the republicans, faithful to the spirit and the traditions of 1848 and devoted to the Jacobin patriotism of Gambetta. Déroulède was known as a playwright and poet obsessed with *revanche*. He once defined it as “a war of wounded pride and envious hatred that a conquered people wish to wage against their conqueror.”⁹⁷ Before the Prussians invaded France, he had predicted as much in “Le Clairon,” popularized in 1869 by the singer Mme Amiati at the café l’Eldorado.⁹⁸ Considering himself only someone “sounding the bugle” (*sonneur de clairon*), he wanted to keep “fervor” alive and “forgetfulness from entering our hearts.”⁹⁹ Admired for its *revanchist* spirit and heroic sentiment, his first volume of poems, *Chants du soldat* (1872), became one of the country’s best-selling, reaching its eighty-ninth edition by 1882 (fig. 54). Déroulède’s subsequent volumes of poetry—*Nouveaux chants du soldat* (1875), *Marches et sonneries* (1881) and later *Refrains militaires* (1888)—were also reprinted numerous times. In them, he tries to instill a cult of glory, respect for strength, military heroism, duty to one’s country, hatred for one’s enemies, and self-sacrifice. Ferry made his poetry required reading in primary schools. Gounod set two of these poems to music, “En avant!” (1875) and “Vive la France” (1878). The former, an *allegro marziale* for solo and chorus, inspires people to push forward in spite of death.¹⁰⁰ The latter describes soldiers marching, “having duty as their guide,” and predicts *revanche*—“if hatred

95. Ibid.

96. Juliette Adam and her radical republican journal *La Nouvelle Revue* also played an important role in this resistance to colonialism.

97. Paul Déroulède, “Discours de Cahors, 15 avril 1884,” in Le Bâtonnier Chenu, ed., *La Ligue des patriotes: Son programme, son passé, son avenir* (Paris: Sirey, 1916), 91.

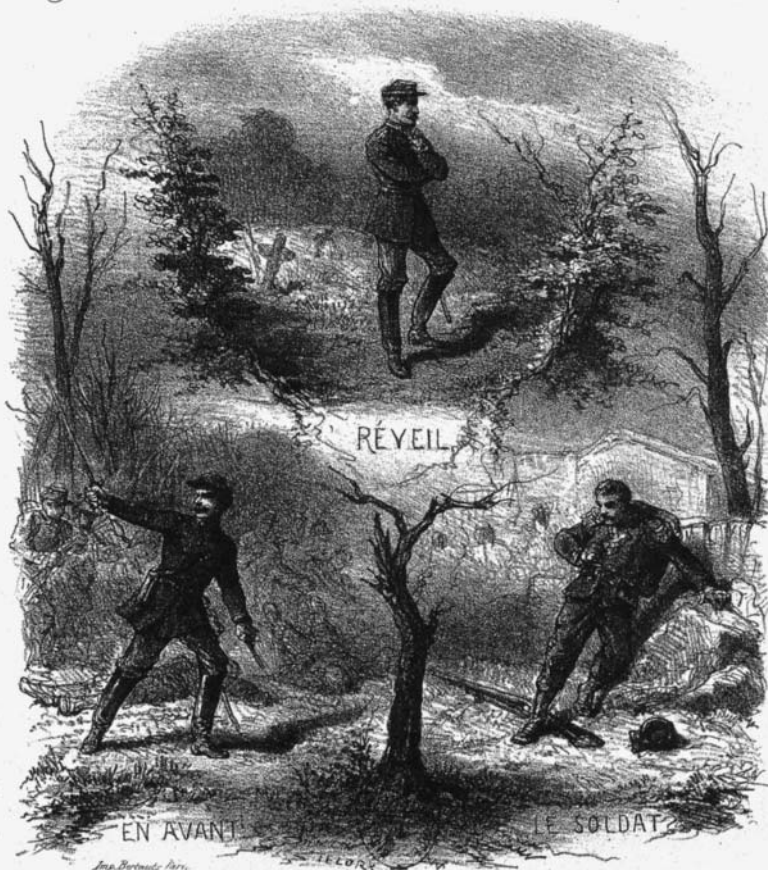
98. François Caradec and Alain Weill, *Le Café-concert* (Paris: Hachette, 1980), 72.

99. Déroulède, from “A mes amis,” in his *Marches et sonneries* (Paris: Charles Lévy, 1881); extract in *Figaro*, 29 June 1881.

100. Bourgault-Ducoudray set “En avant” for a three-voice chorus of children or women as part of a series, “Chants d’éducation et de récréation.”

CHANTS DU SOLDAT

Poésie de PAUL DÉROULEDE



MUSIQUE DE

A. MARMONTEL

EN AVANT! Prix: 2^{fr} 50 — RÉVEIL. Prix: 4^{fr} — LE SOLDAT, Prix: 4^{fr}

Paris, Editeur LÉON ESCUDIER, Rue de Choiseul, 21

FIG. 54 Paul Déroulède, *Chants du soldat* (1872), patriotic poems set to music by Marmontel.

is already born, strength will be born.” President Mac-Mahon had commissioned this patriotic song for the 1878 Paris Exhibition, because there was no national anthem at the time.¹⁰¹ The Garde républicaine band performed it as a march for the opening ceremonies, and workers later sang it as a chorus.¹⁰²

Déroulède’s play *L’Hetman*, first performed at the Théâtre de l’Odéon on 2 February 1877, was also a huge success, performed seventy-three times in its first season and earning the highest receipts ever for the theater. This story of a Cossack leader who led an uprising against Polish oppressors struck a chord in French audiences, as did his virile, if somewhat brutal, style. After its final line calling for vengeance, “No matter the dead, freedom reigns,” long and frenetic applause followed this, coming from all branches of high society and a great number of officers.¹⁰³ Massenet wrote incidental music, including Cossack patriotic songs (now lost) and a fanfare for the Cossack attack.

While Gambetta was prime minister, in January 1882, Bert created a Commission d’éducation militaire to promote military and patriotic values in the primary schools. This committee included Déroulède, the future French president Félix Faure, and the distinguished republican historian Henri Martin. When these men resigned out of frustration in mid-March, they began to conceive of a private association to promote their goals. Only weeks after Gambetta left office, on 18 May 1882, they met at a gymnastic society meeting and proposed a Ligue des patriotes. Déroulède gave what now appears like a prepared speech about French wanting to “develop the moral and physical strength of the nation.”¹⁰⁴ Although its members were sympathetic to Gambetta, a member until his death in January 1883, and were intent on recovering Alsace and Lorraine, in its early years, like all other associations, the Ligue promised to concern itself with neither politics nor religion.¹⁰⁵ It

101. See also fig. 33, the discussion on p. 278 above, and Frédéric Robert, *La Marseillaise* (Paris: Pavillon, 1989), 91–92.

102. Saint-Saëns too was attracted to Déroulède’s texts. He once improvised music for a comedy, *La Blouse et l’habit*, or *Le Fils de la Révolution*, based on words written by Paul Ferrier in conjunction with Déroulède. This was performed during musical evenings in the painting studio of Léon Glaize, a well-known portraitist. Watson Lyle, *Camille Saint-Saëns* (New York: Dutton, 1923; rpt., 1970), 68.

103. Edouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique* (1877) (Paris: Ollendorff, 1878), 183.

104. There are differing views as to the origins of the Ligue. See Bertrand Joly, *Déroulède: L’Inventeur du nationalisme français* (Paris: Perrin, 1998), 66–68, and Peter Rutkoff, *Revanche and Revision: The Ligue des patriotes and the Origins of the Radical Right in France, 1882–1900* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981), 24–25, 32.

105. Having studied the Ligue’s archives and Déroulède’s correspondence, Raoul Girardet stresses this in his “La Ligue des patriotes dans l’histoire du nationalisme français,” *Bulletin de*

attracted an unprecedented alliance of conservatives and radicals, royalists and Bonapartists, wealthy and ordinary folk for whom “patriot was the family name.” Martin served as its first president and three deputies—Faure, Alfred Mézières, and Edmond Turquet—were its vice presidents. Other politicians who joined were the radical republicans Clemenceau and Georges Leygues.¹⁰⁶ The Ligue also included women and petit bourgeois Parisians disenchanted with economic recession, fearing socialism, and jealous of gains made by Jewish and non-French industrialists.¹⁰⁷ The group worked like other associations, run by a small committee that met weekly.

What the Ligue considered of greatest utility to the country was an expanded sense of sacrifice (more than Ferry was willing to espouse) and strengthened military education. Déroulède articulated their goals in his first speech and subsequently in his treatise *De l'Education militaire* (1882). First, inspired by Paul Bert and believing that “a country can be invaded and threatened in ways other than by soldiers,” and that “the arming of hearts is more necessary than that of the arms,” he advocated moral education.¹⁰⁸ This should have three components: patriotic (“which makes one passionately love one’s country”), military (“which makes one serve patiently and willingly”), and nationalist (“which is the exact knowledge of the interests and needs of the entire nation”).¹⁰⁹ Second, admiring the “vigour and flexibility” of those in gymnastic and fencing societies, he called for physical education. He wanted gymnastic classes to become a national institution, for gymnastic champions were becoming recognized as “useful to the country” in terms of enhancing its prestige and glory. Third, he wanted education in military values and virtues to begin two years before military service. In the introduction to his *De l'Education militaire*, Déroulède explains:

la Société d'histoire moderne (1958): 3–6. However, such a phrase was a requirement of all associations requesting official recognition, including concert and choral societies. Because they also wished to stockpile arms and organize patriotic festivals, considered a state function, the government refused to grant them official recognition. Over the years, they were thus tolerated without being authorized. See Joly, *Déroulède*, 71.

106. Leygues was elected to the Chambre in 1885; he served as minister of the Navy eleven times and was minister of public instruction and fine arts in 1894–95 and 1898–1902.

107. As Brian Jenkins explains in his *Nationalism in France: Class and Nation since 1789* (New York: Routledge, 1990), an urban populist Right emerged in the 1880s because of the focus on bourgeois concerns in the *opportunistic* government, the parliamentary character of its regime (which enabled antirepublican majorities to return to power after the revolutions of 1848 and 1870), and the *républicains opportunistes*’ inability to harness *revanchiste* sentiment (89–91).

108. Jean-François Sirinelli considers Paul Bert the original inspiration for the Ligue and sees the Ligue’s original goals as very close to those of the Ligue de l’enseignement républicaine et laïque. See Sirinelli, *Histoire des droites en France*, vol. 1: *Politique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 522.

109. Le Bâtonnier Chenu, ed., *Ligue des patriotes*. 35–41; Rutkoff, *Revanche and Revision*, 32.

It's a question of transforming the youth of our schools into a legion of brave Frenchmen, of arming them from childhood on with the bundle [*faisceau*] of male feelings and virile habits that make up the true soldier. This means [inspiring] the cult of the flag, which fortifies the love of the *patrie*, the taste for arms, which never takes away from the taste for books, the respect for discipline in which unity of effort and equality before duty is born, and, finally, pride in the name of France, with all the force that is necessary to be well and the courage it takes not to let oneself perish.¹¹⁰

Underneath this preoccupation was the fear that the young who had not experienced war would lose the vigor and “virile feelings” so necessary for a good army and that “the most courageous qualities of our race would disappear.” For this reason then, he considered the “bitterness of our defeats and our weakening” as “useful” motivation in building the country's future army.

To aid in this education, Déroulède called for two new national festivals, one on 29 April honoring the anniversary of Joan of Arc's deliverance of Orléans (occupied by the Prussians in 1870), the other on 20 September reminding the French of the defeat of the Prussians at Valmy in 1792. With these, the French would be celebrating the first French patriot and the first victory of the republican army.¹¹¹ He also pointed out that the country needed new schoolbooks oriented toward exciting patriotism and bravura. And he argued for engaging the help of music and patriotic poetry. Along with its gymnasiums, he thought that the secret to Germany's strength was the songs taught in its schools. French parents should sing appropriate popular songs, beginning with the cradle, and vocal music should accompany scholarly excursions and gymnastic exercises. Noting, “patriotism will find in them a very good instrument of propaganda and training,” he asked the minister to encourage the writing of popular music and the organization of choral societies. He also proposed a competition and prize for the best collection of ten to twenty patriotic and popular songs to be used at home and in schools. As he envisaged it, this would include stories about French history and songs from other countries as a way to learn about what motivated their patriotism. Déroulède considered such songs “a kind of musical rallying [*ralliement*] that would follow our little Frenchman from the school to the barracks and from the barracks to the battlefields” (see ex. 16).¹¹²

110. Paul Déroulède, *De l'éducation militaire* (Paris: Librairie nouvelle, 1882), 3.

111. *Ibid.*, 16.

112. Déroulède, *De l'éducation militaire*, 9–18.

EX. 16 Oscar Petit and Charles Manso, “La Légende du petit tambour,” *Chants scolaires du nord de la France* (1885).

This song tells the story of a “little drummer” who grows up dreaming of fighting for his homeland. The verses, each with an accompanying picture, show the patriot at various ages: first, at only five years old; then, ten; finally going to war in the third verse at age twenty; and “bravely dying” in the last verse.

Paroles de **CH. MANSO.** **LA LÉGENDE DU PETIT TAMBOUR** Musique de **O. PETIT.**
Chant de Marche

Mouvé de pas redoublé

Il a_vait cinq ans le pe - tit tam - bour
Comme un vrai trou_pier il bat_tait la cais_se Du toit pa_ter -
nel il fai_sait le tour En marquant le pas fier de
son a_dres_se Il a_vait cinq ans le pe - tit tam -
f en augmen_tant jusqu'à la fin
- bour Il a_vait cinq ans le pe - tit tam - bour.

2
Il atteint dix ans le petit tambour,
De plus en plus fort battant la peau d'âne
Il marchait galement aspirant au jour
Où sous l'uniforme il irait l'air crâne.
Il atteint dix ans le petit tambour. (bis).

3
Quand il eut vingt ans, le petit tambour
Le sac sur le dos partit pour la guerre,
A la France ayant donné son amour
Les balles, vraiment ne l'effrayaient guère.
Quand il eut vingt ans le petit tambour (bis).

4
Un jour de combat, le petit tambour
Marchait en avant en battant la charge,
C'était dans un clos de quelque faubourg,
Quand il s'abattit sous une décharge...
En brave mourut le petit tambour. (bis).



One such volume by Félix Bayle, *Recueil de chants patriotiques-faciles* (1883), was written for girls' and boys' primary schools.¹¹³ In its preface, the author explains that poetry alone has only limited effect on children, but joined with music, their enthusiasm explodes and the effect is irresistible. He believed that when music reaches the ear, it imprints strongly on the memory.¹¹⁴ All the texts are by Déroulède, including “La Femme française,” the longest (ex. 17). This monophonic song without accompaniment elaborates on one of the poet's most important themes: the utility of women. In two stanzas in C major and with snappy

113. In her *La Musique dans l'école: De Jules Ferry à nos jours* (Issy-les-Moulineaux: EAP, 1995), Michèle Alten notes that Déroulède's songs were included in many school song collections up through 1900 (80).

114. Félix Bayle, *Recueil de chants patriotiques-faciles* (Paris: Colombier, 1883), iii, iv.

EX. 17 Félix Bayle, "La Femme française," *Recueil de chants patriotiques-faciles* (1883).

Here the composer uses the recurring note C' to suggest connections between woman, French, and love-making in stanza 1, and between mother, instinct, and procreation in stanza 2, and the recurring rhythms of "femme" with hope, France, and soul.

Andantino

Fem - me, si l'être en qui tu mets ton es - pé -

- ran - ce, Ne met son es - pé - ran - ce, et son bon-heur qu'en

toi; Si, Fran-çais, il peut vivre é - tran - ger à la

Fran - ce, Ne con - nais-sant par - tout que son a -

- mour pour toi; Si, sans se croire in - di - gne

et sans se croire in - fâ - me, Quand tout son pa - ys

s'ar - me, Il n'ac-court pas s'ar - mer, O

fem - me, la ten - dresse a dé - for - mé cette â - me, S'il

ne sait pas mou - rir, tu ne sais pas ai - mer! S'il

ne sait pas mou - rir, tu ne sais pas ai - mer!

(continued)

EX. 17 (*continued*)

2^d
Stanza

Mè - re, si ton en - fant gran - dit sans être un
homme, S'il marche ef - fé - mi - né vers son de - voir vi -
- ril; Si d'un instinct pratique et d'un sang e - co -
no - me, Sa chair é - pou - van - té - e a l'hor - reur
du pé - ril; Si, quand viendra le jour
que notre honneur ré - cla - me, Il n'est pas là, sol -
- dat, marchant, mar - chant sans maugré - er, O
mè - re, ta ten - dresse a mal for - mé cette â - me, S'il
ne sait pas mou - rir, tu n'as pas su cré - er! S'il
ne sait pas mou - rir, tu n'as pas su cré - er!

dotted rhythms, it tells women not to love their men if they aren't willing to go to war and attacks mothers whose sons "walk effeminately toward their virile duty" for not knowing how to create good progeny.¹¹⁵ Such ideas hark back to Méhul's "Chant du départ" and his own *L'Hetman*, in which the mother tells her son that "duty demands" that he leave his lover behind to take up arms and "die, for there must be blood." In his book on the Ligue, Déroulède notes that his colleagues were particularly interested in having women as members, "because it is women who make sons." More important than caring for the wounded, women should see their role as "giving heart to our future soldiers," meaning the courage to love one's country above all else.¹¹⁶

Even if she held a different attitude toward Germany through her enthusiasm for Wagner's music, Augusta Holmès, who later dedicated two songs to Déroulède, was sympathetic to this notion of how women should understand war.¹¹⁷ In her first major work, the dramatic symphony *Lutèce* (1878), for which she wrote text as well as music, the Gauloise does not try to seduce or entreat when the interests of love and duty collide. In part 1, she happily explains, "Rejoice country. Your sons give their blood. I give my husband." After comparing the blood of French heroes with French wine, in part 3 she sings exuberantly and with dotted rhythms, "The blood of heroes rejuvenates . . . saves cities . . . fertilizes devastated fields . . . For the blood of heroes and the mothers of still more audacious sons, the most beautiful country will be reborn." With this work, Holmès suggested that the country's salvation depended on women's fertility as mothers.

Support for the Ligue's ideals, particularly *la revanche*, grew steadily in the musical world. In Bourgault-Ducoudray's *Hymne à la patrie* (1881) for mixed chorus with children, six choral groups echo back and forth, "Let us have only one spirit—*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*," and finally come together to proclaim, "Sound the fanfares, warriors . . . we will be avenged, we will be conquerors!" In 1882, Charles Lenepveu, another Conservatoire professor, wrote *Velléda*, an opera about war between the Gauls and the Romans, premiered at Covent Garden. And in 1881, 1883 and 1888, the Académie chose *Geneviève*, *Le Gladiateur*, and *Velléda*, libretti about militaristic patriotism, for the Prix de Rome competitions.

115. In this context, "virile" clearly means willing to go to war, and "effeminate" its opposite.

116. Paul Déroulède, *Le Livre de la Ligue des patriotes* (Paris: Bureau de la Ligue et du drapeau, 1887), 6. Many French leaders agreed that women's primary duty to society was to have children.

117. "Le Chevalier au lion" (1898) and "Ogier le Danois" (1900). Both concern heroes who desire revenge, salvation for their country, and glory.

Theatrical entertainments too echoed this military ethic, particularly in works oriented to families. The Opéra populaire opened with the patriotic *Roland à Roncevaux* (1864) by Auguste Mermet, himself from a military family, and it was performed there throughout winter of 1883–84. The work not only introduced the “Chanson de Roland,” the oldest French epic, from the eleventh century, it also commemorated a military defeat Charlemagne’s army suffered in the Pyrenees, later used to motivate young Frenchmen to join the Crusades. That winter the Cirque d’hiver put on *Les Volontaires de 92*, another military epic with four tableaux, the third one set in Egypt. The performance, a “Lilliputian drama,” featured 200 children dressed in French military uniforms and squadrons with thirty ponies accompanied by artillery, fanfares, and military music.¹¹⁸ On 3 September 1884, Déroulède’s “Le Soldat” appeared in *Le Figaro* in a setting by André Wormser for a four-voice military chorus. It follows an exhilarating call and response form, with the refrain, “the soldier,” answering all kinds of challenges to which the soldier must rise.¹¹⁹

Backed by the radical republicans and capitalizing on a spirit of *revanche* against Germany that continued to inflame much of the country, Déroulède and the Ligue thus mounted a growing challenge to the *républicains opportunistes*. Ironically, he had much in common with them. Like Ferry, Déroulède was deeply patriotic and moved by the example of the French revolutionaries. His talents as a man of the theater more than a politician enabled him, like Gambetta, to rouse people. He believed that service to the nation should be the purpose of each individual. However, between 1882 and 1887, as secretary-general of the Ligue, he gave 300 speeches in Paris and the provinces, attempting to redirect French attention away from colonial expansion and refocus it on an alternative path to recovering French pride, taking back Alsace and Lorraine. People sometimes smiled at his militarist texts, but they also appreciated his chivalrous loyalty to the cause, his honesty, and his hopefulness.¹²⁰ The Ligue considered these of “national utility.”¹²¹ Like the *républicains opportunistes*, Déroulède also understood the power of music to

118. Charles Darcours [Charles Réty], “Courrier des théâtres,” *Figaro*, 16 January 1884.

119. Between 1876 and 1895, a good number of minor composers set this song to music, often involving a choral setting of the refrain and building to a triumphant climax. Bourgault-Ducoudray composed a version for a chorus of two female or childrens’ voices, to be sung “with enthusiasm and *largeur*.”

120. P.-B. Gheusi, *Cinquante ans de Paris: Mémoires d’un témoin, 1889–1938* (Paris: Plon, 1939), 124.

121. Many of these were published in the newspaper *Le Drapeau* to which Déroulède made regular contributions, or in his *Livre de la Ligue des patriotes*.

influence people and the importance of reaching children at an early age. Using the very same means and strategies that his adversaries were putting in place to disseminate their hopes and ideals—education, music, and the theater—he hoped to reach a larger public. By 1885, he and the Ligue had become a political force to contend with.



While Parisians in 1885 were delighting in myriad exotic spectacles in both elite and popular venues—Meyerbeer's *L'Africaine* at the Opéra, *Lakmé* at the Opéra-Comique, Edmond Audran's Indian *opéra-bouffe*, *Le Grand Mogol*, at the Gaîté, an African contortionist at the Folies-Bergère, and a comic pantomime with horses about the Congo at the Hippodrome—another crisis in Tonkin caused further division among republicans. Ferry was again removed as prime minister.¹²² Then the moderate *opportunistes* lost in the October elections, leaving no one with a majority, and almost equal voice to the radicals and the conservatives (what was left of the royalists, the Bonapartists having virtually disappeared).¹²³ The legislature deadlocked, making further reform impossible and requiring an alliance with radicals on the Left. In January 1886, Charles de Freycinet formed a government with four *opportuniste* ministers, two radicals, and two from the extreme Left, a rising force in French politics. After expelling French princes and their heirs in May, banning them from the army and government office, and after completing the project of secular primary education in October, the government's priorities within the country shifted decisively. Because most French saw economic growth as integral to the public good and agreed on the need to foster new markets, after enlarging the country in North Africa and Indochina, the new government turned to promoting economic liberalism. Whereas Ferry's *opportuniste* government had focused on individual initiatives and small firms, the new government concentrated on *large* business interests. To the extent that these encouraged the spread of prosperity, they became associated with the national good.

Fascinated with or fearful of the Other, the marketplace in some ways emerged as more productive than government in diffusing conflicting notions of what was

122. In March 1885, a French general was forced to retreat from a Chinese army at Lang-Son. French anxiety over this turned out to be exaggerated. A treaty with China was soon signed, leaving Annam and Tonkin to become French colonies.

123. Republican representation in the Chambre des députés fell from 383 to 201, and the anticolonial Right picked up over 100 seats.

in the country's best interest. Still, the conflict over the merits of assimilation and resistance continued for many years—during World War II, with Vichy collaborators and the French resistance, and today with internationalist-oriented conservatives espousing positions diametrically opposed to those of protectionist nationalists. The issue of who qualifies as a French citizen has never been more controversial.