10 • The Symbolic Utility of Music at the 1889 Universal Exhibition

More than a year before the opening of the largest exhibition yet mounted, French officials issued a special invitation to Dinah Salifou, king of the Senegalese Nalous since 1877.[1] Those in the know considered Senegal, France's oldest African colony, one of the world's great colonial establishments, the launching site for expeditions into Africa's interior, even if the French public remained largely indifferent and some hostile to further colonialism.[2] Over three decades, General Louis Faidherbe had established ports, schools, banks, a newspaper, telegraphic lines, and a museum. Among his closest allies were the Nalous.[3] Dinah Salifou believed it in their mutual interest to collaborate with the French. Indeed, from 1884 to 1887, French forces assisted the Nalous in a vicious civil war. Dinah Salifou felt both flattered at the invitation to come to Paris and anxious because of a cousin who might (and, in fact, did) usurp his power while he was away.[4] Still, intent on reinforcing close ties with the French, he agreed, and his hosts did not let him down. Upon his arrival in early July, the Gare de Lyon was decked out with flags, speeches followed, and the crowd made him feel admired. They also paid him the honor of listening to his musicians perform, astounded by what they heard.

At his posh hotel, a journalist and a photographer from *L'Illustration* documented the king's entourage—his two wives, brother, son, and two nephews, the

1. Focusing on common people from the colonies who were brought in to build and animate the artificial villages at the Exhibition, scholars have ignored elites who were also invited. A royal contingent from Hué, Annam, also came with its villagers.

2. Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Guillaumin, 1886), 485–86, 494, and Louis Faidherbe, *Le Sénégal: La France dans l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris: Hachette, 1889), addressed these very concerns.

3. The kingdom of the Nalous dated from 1754. In 1845, they agreed to stop the sale of slaves in their territory in return for money, arms, and tobacco from the French. Later Dinah Salifou allowed French and English factories to be built. According to *l'Illustration*, there were fifty to sixty thousand Nalous at the time.

4. Thierno Diallo, *Dinah Salifou, roi des Nalous* (Dakar: Nouvelles éditions africaines, 1977).

FIG. 77 Henri Thirait, "The African king Dinah-Salifou, the queen, and his entourage" (engraving based on a photograph by Paul Boyer, with the background removed), *L'Illustration*, 6 July 1889.

prime minister, and two *balafon* performers, seated in front of them (fig. 77). The only other depiction of the king on this trip, on the ship coming to France, also shows a musician directly behind him carrying a large lutelike instrument, the *kora*. Such images are quite different from what we find in the rest of the French press. While Senegalese villagers in their artificial village at the Exhibition are never shown performing music,[5] music seems to have been central to this king's identity. Indeed what Westerners called griots, hereditary praise-singers, had been members of royal retinues since the seventeenth century. Here they are not sexualized, like many other black performers in the French imagination, nor wild-looking and "close to nature," as in an image of a *balafon* player elsewhere,[6] but dignified—no surprise, perhaps, to French readers of the time since the Senegalese were considered the most evolved of the region.

Like most non-Western music performed during the 1889 Exhibition that

5. Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World's Fair* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2005), points out that the only instrument in depictions of the Senegalese villagers is a drum, "tucked away in the upper center of the silversmith's hut" and "either ignored or perceived as environmental sound by exhibition-goers" (246–48).

6. Cf. the balafon player on the cover of *La Musique des familles*, 5 January 1889.

served to entertain and distract listeners who knew little about it, the *balafon* in this engraving is an emblem of cultural identity. Its music undoubtedly served to please and comfort the king, like Western monarchs who patronized musicians, such as Louis XIV.[7] But the instrument was also symbolic, to the king a reminder of his home and to Westerners the "national instrument of Senegal." Because some French believed the arts manifested the soul of a civilization, they would have seen the "great sweetness" of its tone and its appropriateness for "the frequently melancholic melodies of men still close to Nature" as signifying the Senegalese people.[8] When the king's musicians performed several times in the Senegalese village, the French ethnographer Julien Tiersot found their music more complex than a song of a few repeated notes performed for him by one of the villagers; yet he criticized *balafon* music for being almost exclusively rhythmical and lacking any melodic themes.[9] Senegalese music thus would have reinforced the stereotype of a primitive people who might benefit from French contact. At the same time, its association with "nation" gave the illusion of a stable regional identity, ignoring vague borders and fluctuating structures of power.

With the 1889 Universal Exhibition, Jules Ferry's imperialism and the resistance to it made it important to go beyond celebrating competition and the benefits of democracy. Like the 1878 Exhibition, through music and musical instruments (along with architecture, art, furniture, food, industrial and agricultural products), that of 1889 could produce knowledge about national identities in the West. But if France were to serve as a model for others, the 1889 Exhibition also had to engage the general populace more broadly on nation-states beyond the West, distinct political entities with whom the French might share values and make alliances or that could be fought over, conquered, and administered. Through comparison of similarities and differences, visitors were thus encouraged to think in terms of racial distinctions and the relative status of various cultures, as if they represented various "degrees" of civilization. At stake, as the 1889 Colonial Congress made clear, was the expansion of the white race. Whatever nation could establish itself all over the globe would probably one day be the greatest.[10]

Far more extensively and self-consciously than before, this exhibition therefore not only reinforced the notion of a modern Western culture (as centered in Paris),

7. This king recalls Duke Ascanio Sforza who traveled with his court musician, Josquin des Prés.

8. See Gustave Le Bon, *The Psychology of Peoples* (1894; New York: Arno, 1924) and Edmond Bailly, "Ethnographie musicale: Le Balafo," *Musique des familles*, 5 January 1889, 93.

9. Julien Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1889), 102–3.

10. E. Monod, *L'Exposition universelle de 1889* (Paris: Dentu, 1890), 2: 451.

but also, and significantly, posed the question of a world culture. Deflecting attention away from internal differences within France, French organizers wished to examine the world's past as far back as humans could imagine it, trace an evolutionary path from the past to the present, and encourage people to think of the future in global terms. In this context, the search for origins needed to go beyond Western civilization; the question of race was far more complex than what was played out in Alsace and Lorraine; and the notion of nation was not just a dynamic of regional struggle with one's neighbors. The rising public interest in evolutionary theories, the massive growth in geographical and anthropological societies, and imperial expansion in the 1880s made it essential to consider history, race, and nation as beyond the time and place of individual cultures. Underlying these agendas were important questions. What did people around the world share? Were there universals commonly embraced by all humans?

The 1889 Exhibition provided the ultimate testing ground for republican monogenism, even in music. While polygenists thought it highly unlikely that direct contact with Westerners at the Exhibition or elsewhere could have much influence on people of color, monogenists disagreed.[11] To encourage wide comparisons between people, their *mœurs*, artistic practices, and relative progress, French officials extended invitations, not only to their own colonies, but also to twenty-eight countries outside Europe.[12] Participants had to finance their own contributions and determine how they would depict and position themselves. A panorama in the shape of a globe representing the earth overlooked the various national pavilions and villages on the Esplanade des Invalides, reminding everyone of their interconnectedness. Some countries brought music, especially those who had long traditions associated with the nation, still vibrant in the present. The dancers, actors, and musicians from Java and Vietnam were among the most popular attractions. Others, like Mexico, eschewed music, perhaps because that of their ancestors, the Aztecs, had disappeared and because they wished instead to "publicize a modern image of the nation in order to attract immigrants and investment."[13] When he went around taking notes on various non-Western musics, Tiersot was particularly focused on the presence of harmony. But, I argue, it was the French aesthetic of charm and grace, together with

11. Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé, *Remarques sur L'Exposition du centenaire* (Paris: Plon, Nourrit: 1889), chap. 7.

12. These included Japan, Persia, New Zealand, South Africa, the United States, Turkey, and sixteen Latin American countries, the latter perhaps to reinforce French interests being threatened there by other powers and with a view to understanding more about the site of the future Panama Canal. Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo, *Mexico at the World's Fairs: Crafting a Modern Nation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 18.

13. Ibid., 19.

French taste for ever-new sonorities, that made investing in music, especially exotic music, pay off, according to republican criteria. These performances brought people together in shared experiences of the bizarre and unknown, and some suggested new ways of hearing, a form of progress little anticipated by organizers.

In many domains, although the Exhibition was an enormous "school of ideas" and some performances had commercial value, what officials esteemed most highly was the symbolic utility of all cultural displays, from the Eiffel Tower to music. In other words, it was not just knowledge they wished to produce, including knowledge as a form of power, but also a way of thinking and perhaps an ethics to go with it. In the symbol, concept supersedes materiality and physicality, even if that concept is inevitably mediated by assumptions and stereotypes that could vary from spectator to spectator. The symbolic is contingent, contingent on the connections it is used to make, but nevertheless persistent and productive of meaning. It articulates an identity, something beyond itself, while reducing the complexities of reality. That Dinah Salifou felt betrayed by the French when they installed a rival to lead a neighboring tribe, and that he returned home to chaos and a massacre, were realities absent from the image he was there to project. Where the symbolic can have utility, possibly surpass an object's expected or functional utility, is when it implies or affects not just beliefs and values, but also actions. The symbolic can be used to strengthen desires reflective of larger situations, such as colonial expansion or its cessation. The Exhibition's large number of retrospectives expressed this preoccupation, as did music, conceived as more than entertainment. To the extent that they had symbolic utility, people, objects, products, and practices could serve as emblems of pride, prestige, and even nation, especially if nation was not yet a stable concept. For republicans, the Exhibition as a whole legitimized the Third Republic, its success momentarily overshadowing the realities of internal dissent, troubling corruption, and rising socialism. The Exhibition made republicans proud and at last confident of their future. However, for pessimistic monarchists who feared racial degeneration from crossbreeding, the Exhibition drew attention to great flux in the world, "new duties" that the French must assume, and a potential "crisis in history" that might result from the "fusion of men and ideas."[14]

REPUBLICAN VALUES ON DISPLAY

The state-sponsored 1889 Universal Exhibition, in preparation since November 1884, testified to the power of liberal republicanism, affirming the value of eclecti-

14. Vogüé, *Remarques*, 190.

cism and diversity and linking commerce with national glory. Its pretext was to commemorate 1789—an exhibition that showed the Third Republic to be the guardian and heir of the French Revolution. Much of it took place on the Champ de Mars below the Eiffel Tower, once the site of many revolutionary festivals. This was not unproblematic, for many differed over whether the Revolution had been the result of 1789 liberalism or 1793 radical actions. Monarchists abroad suspected that organizers planned to glorify the violent downfall of the French monarchy. To assuage worried officials, political meetings and revolutionary memorabilia were banned from the Exhibition and the only dates officially commemorated were from 1789–93.[15] Instead, as Janet Horne has explained, organizers concentrated their efforts on portraying the Revolution as the "beginning of the modern era," one of the "industrial 'motors' of industrialization and all of the material wealth on display at the Exhibition one of its consequences." The Exhibition would showcase a country not "torn apart by ideological divisions, but, rather, one united by the fruits of material progress."[16] Prime Minister Ferry was determined to rally support for the Republic by showing how advanced French society had become under the leadership of the *républicains opportunistes*, the result of assimilating the innovations of science, industry, and technology.[17] Yet, ironically, in some ways the 1889 Exhibition tested the limits of republican idealism, especially when it came to "official" art.

LEARNING THROUGH SYMBOLS

Three principles motivated the organization of the Exhibition, each of them involving music in significant ways. The most important was the idea of instilling a broad sense of fraternity into an unprecedented number of people.[18] Whereas fraternity had long been a republican ideal, France was still a country deeply divided along social, economic, and political lines. It needed more mutual understanding both within the country and with its neighbors and colonies. Ferry, long preoc-

15. In effect, four of the five anniversary dates that the Exhibition commemorated—5 May, 20 June, 14 July, and 4 August—were all related to 1789 and the fifth, 21 September 1792, signaled the beginning of the First Republic. For a discussion of this emphasis on 1789 as opposed to 1793, see Mona Ozouf, *L'Ecole de la France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 149.

16. Janet Horne, "Presenting Modern France: The Rhetoric of Reform at the 1889 Universal Exhibition," in *Unfinished Revolutions: Legacies of Upheaval in Modern French Culture*, ed. Robert Denommé and Roland Simon (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 146, 154.

17. True to his radical republican perspective, Antonin Proust argues in his *L'Art sous la République* (Paris: Charpentier, 1892) that this progress resulted not from government subsidies but rather private initiative (63).

18. There were 419,759 admissions, with 1, 2, or 5 tickets sold per admission.

cupied by the need for national unity, hoped to attract all kinds of people, not just foreigners, but also rural and minority people from the French provinces. Yet the reality was that, although the 1889 Universal Exhibition was conceived for the whole world, not just as a place for Western nations to play out their struggle for superiority through nonviolent competition, at first most European nations refused official participation, objecting to the celebration of 1789. Germany forbade its people to participate, other than a small group from Alsace-Lorraine. Although Britain, the Austro-Hungarian empire, Russia, Spain and others later allowed private contributions from their countries, and royalty with their families came from virtually every European country, including Russia, as well as from Senegal and Persia, official delegates were from younger nations such as Greece and Serbia, the United States, and secular republics like Switzerland.[19] The Exhibition provided a utopian place for peaceful encounters and a renewed sense of the *esprit public*, even if, for many, entertainment, amusement, or distraction formed the basis of its appeal. While Italy and Germany were plotting against France, it was an occasion to deepen relationships with France's allies, especially Russia, and display to the world the extent of French fraternity.[20]

As in revolutionary festivals, parades and performances played an important role in encouraging great masses of people to transcend their differences. Pascal Ory recounts a procession preceding a banquet of French mayors: as 15,200 mayors from all over the country marched from the Louvre to the Champ de Mars, reputedly 700,000 spectators looked on.[21] At this and other such parades, the "Marseillaise" was inevitably performed. The "musical symbol of the nation" was "the acoustic signature of the Republic;" as "ritual object" it could also be heard performed by the Javanese anklung.[22] Hoping to revive the revolutionary sense of collective empowerment, republicans also sponsored huge concerts by neighborhood and provincial groups under the banner of one nation. Whether 850 children singing a capella, 1,600 chorists under the direction of the Opéra conductor, or 700 military band players, what is remarkable is that many of these presented music by France's most illustrious living composers—Thomas, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Delibes, and Massenet (fig. 78). For the performers, these were challenging on every level. But for the public, it did not take imagination or sophistication to

19. Adolphe Démy, *Essai historique sur les expositions universelles de Paris* (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1907), 393–402.

20. Ibid., 416–19, 433–45.

21. Pascal Ory, "Le Centenaire de la Révolution française," in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, vol. 1: *La République*, ed. Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 540–41. Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, puts that number as 11,182 (108).

22. Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 109–10.

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

MINISTÈRE DU COMMERCE, DE L'INDUSTRIE ET DES COLONIES

EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE DE 1889

Direction Générale de l'Exploitation

AUDITIONS MUSICALES – SALLE DES FÊTES DU TROCADÉRO

LE DIMANCHE 25 AOUT 1889, à deux heures

DEUXIÈME

FESTIVAL

DES

SOCIÉTÉS CHORALES FRANÇAISES

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L'Harmonie du Bon-Marché, Dirigée par M. Paulus

Ancien Chef de la Musique de la Garde Républicaine

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2. **Cavaliers Fantassins**, chœur de division . . . . . WEKERLIN
3. **Le Vin des Gaulois**, chœur général . . . . . GOUNOD
4. **Les Gardes-Chasse** (*du Songe d'une Nuit d'été*) . . . . . AMBROISE THOMAS
5. **Cachons les pleurs amers**, chœur mixte . . . . . LAURENT DE RILLÉ

Ouverture de Zampa par l'Harmonie du Bon Marché . . . . . HÉROLD

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2. **Les Lansquenets**, chœur de division . . . . . LÉO DELIBES
3. **Paix charmante**, chœur général . . . . . RAMEAU
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Ce Programme ne peut être affiché.

FIG. 78 French choral societies' festival program, 25 August 1889.

This Sunday afternoon all-French concert in the Salle des Fêtes at the Trocadéro included 1,600 singers from numerous amateur choruses, accompanied by the wind band of the Bon Marché department store and led by the Opéra's conductor. Unfortunately, the famously poor acoustics of the hall did not favor such a concert.

experience the pleasures of such performances. The sheer power of their sound was palpably physical. In these contexts, then, music served, not just as a metaphor of social harmony, but also as a medium for it.

Organizers' second principle was education and their methods of encouraging learning not only comparison, but also symbols. Like its predecessors, the Exhibition laid out products of all kinds, including musical instruments and music instruction manuals, to glorify the worker and the industrial revolutions and to help everyone learn about new ideas, innovations, and new products. Edison's phonograph made quite a stir for its ability to capture fine musical details. Visitors were expected to compare what they encountered with what they knew already and other things on display. There were also speeches, lectures, and sixty-nine international conferences, including the first two socialist congresses, the first international congresses on women's rights and feminine institutions, and the first international photography congress. It was hoped that the enormous spectrum of knowledge would generate excitement, encourage improvements in people's lives, and generate a sense of what was distinctive about French products.

To raise more awareness about French heritage as part of national identity, they introduced a new concern for history. In addition to a centenary exhibition on the Revolution, a number of panoramas (circular paintings) depicted the French past, such as those on Joan of Arc, the Taking of the Bastille, and the History of the Century. The latter featured Victor Hugo placed between allegorical figures representing work and defense of the country and a chronological succession of hundreds of notable people between 1879 and 1889.[23] Of particular interest was a set of buildings along the Seine spanning from one side of the Champ de Mars to the other: a fascinating array of dwellings from ancient times to the present, in one country and another, that suggested the impact of evolution and race on culture. In this "History of Human Habitation," conceived and designed by Charles Garnier, architect of the Opéra, prehistory was defined as life before a definable culture, history as a succession of cultures in time and space, and the dividing line between the Orient and Occident set by the limits of the Roman Empire. As they wandered from one structure to the next, visitors could compare civilizations—prehistoric and primitive, western and eastern, past and present—through where people lived. They could examine the impact of migrations and the influence of climate while imagining themselves in time-travel. The grottos of the Troglodites and the earliest huts came first, followed by constructions before Christ by the Egyptians, Assyrians, and

23. On panoramas, see Vanessa Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), chap. 4.

FIG. 79 Building the 1889 Universal Exhibition, *L'Illustration*, 29 December 1888. In the foreground, one of the last primitive (early Bronze Age) dwellings in the History of Human Habitation exhibit; next to it are the Egyptian, Assyrian, Phoenician, and Hindu pavilions. In the rear, the Eiffel Tower in the process of construction.

others (fig. 79). Those of the Germans and Gauls were perhaps ironically the most primitive of this group. Next followed the history of Western construction from the Romans through the Renaissance, Byzantine construction, and Islamic architecture; and finally contemporary housing in China and Japan, the traditional structures of the Eskimos, various native Americans, and the people of equatorial Africa (lumped

into one category). Sometimes the shapes, round or square construction, elicited comparison, sometimes the materials, stone, wood, or iron, sometimes the size. A monogenist critic suggested that such models taught "the same principles were active in the creation of material culture of all ages."[24] Although the cultural juxtapositions were often odd, this exhibition forced visitors to confront the plethora of civilizations, compare the relative benefits of each, and begin to draw conclusions about French civilization, especially with the Eiffel Tower looming high over them all.

In part because of the role it played in the exhibition of cultures, music was one of the main attractions, offering innumerable opportunities to reflect on national and cultural differences. Although few commented on this, "listening was an inescapable experience" at the Exhibition; as Annegret Fauser has shown, "townscape and soundscape were inextricably intertwined."[25] Besides concerts associated with the pavilions, various cafés, and piano manufacturers, there were daytime performances of singers and pianists, many of them little-known, at the Pavillon du gaz,[26] alongside major ensembles from France and abroad at the Palais du Trocadéro.

Concerts organized by various national groups allowed audiences to ascertain the extent to which national musics had distinct characteristics. In two conducted by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov, the large Russian orchestra impressed with its original colors and the music's incorporation of Russian folk songs, although some found the works excessively long. However, possibly because they excluded vocal music—a rarity in Paris—these concerts failed to attract a substantial public. Orchestral works presented by the Spanish seemed influenced by Massenet, while those by the Americans showed a strong neoclassical German influence. National characteristics were more perceptible in the choruses. The all-male Russian national chapel choir made a hit with their epic songs as did choral societies from Finland, Norway, and Spain. Tiersot especially admired the Norwegians, attributing their success to the mixture of social classes among its chorists, something he predicted would never happen in France.[27]

24. Emile Monod, *L'Exposition universelle de 1889* (Paris: Dentu, 1890), cited in Miriam Levin, *Republican Art and Ideology in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI, 1986), 82.

25. Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 6–9. This excellent, richly illustrated book addresses some of the same themes as this chapter.

26. *La Musique des familles* sponsored a Sunday afternoon series there. Highly eclectic, one in late September juxtaposed a Beethoven march, Schubert impromptu, Kalkbrenner sonata, songs by Augusta Holmès, Weber, Rameau, and gypsies from Moscow, and an excerpt from the first act of Wagner's *Die Walküre*.

27. Julien Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques: Promenades à l'Exposition de 1889* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1889), 56. On the national concerts, cf. Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 42–58.

Exclusively French music was performed at the concerts offered by French orchestras. Five major Paris orchestras (Lamoureux, Colonne, the Société des concerts, the Opéra-Comique, and the Opéra) participated between May and September, each increasing its numbers to over 200. Lamoureux presented music by eight living French composers, Colonne twelve of them. The state-subsidized Société des concerts represented the country's musical elite, members of the Institute, with Delibes's dances *dans le style ancien* and Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony, an ideal choice in that it reconciled past and future. The Opéra-Comique balanced opera selections by dead French composers with those by living ones, including Delibes's *Jean de Nivelle* and Saint-Saëns's *Prosperine*. True to its conservative practices, old masterpieces dominated the Opéra's program, with excerpts from Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore*, Thomas's *Françoise da Rimini*, and Paladilhe's *Patrie* being the most recent. Throughout the Exhibition, there were also ensembles such as the amateur chorus Concordia (on 28 May), chamber music concerts, organ concerts at the Trocadéro, the Concerts Colonne's Saint-Saëns Festival on 31 May with Mme Krauss and Paderewski, and a benefit performance in June of Handel's *Messiah* sponsored by the Société philanthropique, the first public event organized by Comtesse Elisabeth Greffulhe. Some were expensive, with ticket prices for the Saint-Saëns Festival ranging from 2 to 60 francs. The *Messiah* netted over 25,000 francs, twice what the Opéra took in on a good night. Such concerts prove that elites attended the Exhibition as well as everyone else.

This long litany of concerts elicited the word "official." On the positive side, this signaled genuine respect. At the top of the monument before the Gallery of the Liberal Arts, Auber and Berlioz were included in the list of eight "great men." "Here's something that gives an idea of the progress of music in the contemporary period," Tiersot proudly observed.[28] But some, not happy with all the choices, made fun of the idea of "official music," the public utility they were meant to serve, and especially the gigantic Palais du Trocadéro where they were held. A critic observed, "In spite of a holy horror of all that is official—especially *Official Art*, that monstrous product of a hyperadministrative civilization—I dared last Thursday night to spend two hours in that building of public inutility where the orchestra of the Opéra-Comique made itself heard *officially*."[29] One should note that "official" here meant officially sanctioned rather than the reflection of an official doctrine, for each orchestra made its own choices and tried to address the tastes

28. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 1. A first version was published in Julien Tiersot, "Promenade musicale à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 26 May 1889, 165. Other essays in this series were published in subsequent issues.

29. Durand, "La Musique à l'Exposition," *Musique des familles*, 14 September 1889, 380.

of its constituencies.[30] The main complaint was exactly what one might expect from committees consisting of those embracing a wide range of aesthetic concerns: too much variety and too little coherence or progression in the presentation of works. This made fruitful and enlightening comparison difficult. There were other problems as well. Unlike at the 1878 Exhibition, the French orchestra concerts presented only works that had already been heard. In addition, these concerts were perceived as overly long, and stringing the excerpts together without a break, as Colonne performed them, did not help matters. Moreover, performing fragments out of their original context made for limited meaning. Still, critics had to admit that, although these concerts may not have been very exciting for Parisians, few complained. The audience of "*braves gens* who had come from the four corners of France" was "so happy to hear their favorite airs performed for once in all their grandeur."[31]

In general then, as for music festivals at the Exhibition, the purpose of these concerts was an aural kaleidoscope of the state of French music—a "retrospective" of music by forty French composers, twenty-eight living and twelve dead, with every genre represented. Works by Georges Marty, William Chaumet, Emile Bernard, Gaston Salvayre, and Charles Lenepveu alongside the Hillemacher brothers, Victorin Joncières, Charles-Marie Widor, Augusta Holmès, Charles Lefebvre, Alphonse Duvernoy, and Vincent d'Indy testify to the goal of broad representation. With the music of certain composers recurring in these concerts, however, one can begin to consider the question of an emerging republican canon despite the stylistic eclecticism. As in the Exhibition festivals, pride of place was given to Auber, Berlioz, and Bizet, then to Adam, David, Gounod, Thomas, Reyer, Saint-Saëns, Delibes, and Massenet. Most were either Academicians or Conservatoire professors. This canon was reiterated in the awards ceremony for 25,000 on 29 September, which began with 800 musicians and singers of the Société

30. Likewise, when the government decided that each of the state-subsidized theaters should present a free performance on Sunday night, 5 May, the Opéra put on Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* and the Opéra-Comique, Massé's *Les Noces de Jeannette* and Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, audience favorites, but older works having nothing to do with the Exhibition's nationalist agenda.

31. Durand, "Musique à l'Exposition." See also Ch. G., *Art musical*, 15 September 1889, 131, and 30 September 1889, 139, who notes that the opera concerts of the festival "benefited from the turmoil of the almost too unwieldy crowd that rushes for pleasure wherever it is offered," this despite only a "slight success, artistically speaking," because of "having to program works sometimes of little interest." For those who could attend, for the six months of the Exhibition, the Opéra put on mostly well-established favorites: Gounod (*Roméo et Juliette* [29 times], *Faust* [13]), Thomas (*La Tempête* [16], *Hamlet* [10]), Meyerbeer (*Les Huguenots* [10], *L'Africaine* [9], *Le Prophète* [5]), Verdi (*Aida* [9], *Rigoletto* [8]), Halévy (*La Juive* [9]), Saint-Saëns (*Henry VIII* [8]), Paladilhe (*Patrie* [5]), Delibes (*Coppélia* [5]), Rossini (*Guillaume Tell* [5]), and Massenet (*Le Cid* [3]).

des concerts performing Saint-Saëns "Marche héroique," listened to respectfully "in a religious silence." For the delegates' procession anticipating the closing ceremonies of the Olympics in recent years, the orchestra played the march from Thomas's *Hamlet,* the Apotheosis of Berlioz's Symphonie funèbre et triomphale, and the Soldiers' Chorus from Gounod's *Faust*. Delibes wrote a new fanfare for it. The event, conceived to excite enthusiasm for "the workers of the world," ended with the finale of act 2 from Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore*.[32] Representing France here were its musical masterpieces. No one thus could have gone home without hearing French contemporary music.

The historical aspects of music at the Exhibition complemented this display of official culture. In the history of work exhibition, several rooms featured old musical instruments—lutes, woodwinds, keyboards, and strings, including a replica of an Egyptian harp at the Louvre. Tiersot, who could imagine how these had been used in music from Lully to Meyerbeer, found it one of the "most instructive" of the Exhibition. In a Latin Quarter venue where two concerts of *musique ancienne et moderne* were organized by the Conservatory professors, Louis Diémer and Jules Delsart, visitors could hear such instruments played—specifically the harpsichord, viola da gamba, and viola d'amour. This allowed audiences not only to compare the music of their French contemporaries (Lenepveu, Lalo, Widor, Lefebvre, and Godard) with that of their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century predecessors (Rameau, Couperin, Leclair, Daquin, Berteau, and Marais), but also to experience the "charm and sweetness" of old instruments alongside the precision of modern ones. Critics considered these concerts among "the most artistic" of the summer.[33] Because republicans were fascinated with the potential of medieval modes to renovate French music, not surprisingly the International Congress of Popular Traditions presented a concert of *chansons populaires*—thirty-three songs, some excerpted from French volumes published by Weckerlin, Bourgault-Ducoudray, and Tiersot, others from Finland, Russia, Greece, Scandinavia, and Great Britain. Such juxtapositions encouraged listeners to compare melodies and rhythms from across Europe and the French provinces, some of them with very distant origins.[34]

32. Arthur Pougin, "La Distribution des récompenses à l'Exposition universelle," *Ménestrel*, 6 October 1889, 316–17, and A.H., "Exposition universelle. Distribution des récompenses," *Art musical*, 30 September 1889, 137–38.

33. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 6–10; Ch. G., "La Musique à l'Exposition," *Art musical*, 31 May 1889, 76, and 15 June 1889, 83.

34. Tiersot had prepared the music public with thirty-seven articles on the history of French *chansons populaires* in *Ménestrel*, 26 February 1888–3 February 1889 (later published as a book).

Ironically, it turned out to be difficult to mount a proper musical celebration of the Revolution. Three small works were resurrected at the Opéra-Comique,[35] but no large ones and, strangely, no Méhul. For the centenary concert on 14 July, military bands were in charge. In his long review, Tiersot did not mention a single piece they performed. Instead, he bemoaned that no decent music was submitted in a state-sponsored competition for a cantata to commemorate the Revolution and that contemporary musicians were "completely uninterested in the traditions of these times. . . . For the most part, they would not deign to express a collective feeling and look down on the decorative power of music, rejecting any notion of 'official art' or any attempt in this sense."[36]

When the cantata competition failed to produce a winner, in October 1888, Augusta Holmès, an Irishwoman fully assimilated into the French musical world, approached the city of Paris proposing her own *Le Triomphe de la République: Ode triomphale*, an explicit allusion to Gossec's *Le Triomphe de la République* (1793), composed to commemorate the founding of the Republic.[37] In fact, Holmès was ideal for the task at hand, having composed several large patriotic works: *Irlande* (1882), *Pologne!* (1883), and *Ludus pro patria* (1888). The latter, a symphonic ode for chorus and orchestra subtitled "Admiration for the Country," was one of the few new works the Société des concerts performed in 1888, and it was well-received. Moreover, Holmès's embrace of Wagnerism and friendship with the symbolists gave her the appearance of a progressive. Impressed with the proposal, the government dedicated a staggering 300,000 francs for the production.

No performance at the Exhibition was more symbolic of the nation than Holmès's *Ode*. Inspired by the colossal festivals of ancient Greece and the Revolution, as well as Berlioz's music for the 1844 Exhibition of Industry (involving 1,022 performers), it was envisaged to be performed outdoors, free, and for as many people as possible. She called for 1,200 players, including an orchestra of 300 (with over 40 brass and 4 harpists) and 900 singers drawn from Paris schools and

35. Paisiello's *Barbier de Séville*, Dalayrac's *Raoul de Créqui*, and his *La Soirée orageuse;* Devienne's *Visitandines* was rehearsed but never staged. Fauser explains that these and three other *opéras-comiques*, representing the years 1788–94, were originally intended to be performed at the Grand Théâtre de l'Exposition, but that the hall proved too small. Apparently, they were not a financial success and were replaced by the standard repertoire, *Carmen* or *Mignon*. The organizer of the series, Paul Lacome, had published *Les Fondateurs de l'opéra-comique: Transcriptions pour piano et chant* (Paris: Enoch, 1878). For a fuller analysis, see Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 79–92.

36. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 48–53.

37. See also Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 110–38, and Jann Pasler, "The Ironies of Gender, or Virility and Politics in the Music of Augusta Holmès," *Women and Music* 2 (Fall 1998): 21–23, and in id., *Writing through Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

amateur choruses, including three from working-class Belleville.[38] Holmès wrote the poem and the music, designed the costumes and sets, and took part in the casting. Colonne conducted. Numerous rehearsals were required, and the workers singing in the choruses had to learn their parts by heart—a daunting requirement. For the event, transferred to the Palais de l'Industrie for fear of bad weather, the exhibition hall was transformed into a theater with 22,500 seats. Reputedly, 30,000 people attended the first performance on 11 September, celebrating the victory at Valmy and the birth of the First Republic. The second on 12 September was for schoolchildren, and the third on the 14th free to the public. Two more followed for the benefit of charities. These concerts, all full, made so much noise that reputedly the hall was damaged and later had to be demolished.

Like Gossec's *Le Triomphe de la République* with its marches and choruses, the *Ode triomphale* consists of a series of allegories with utopian implications around an "altar of the fatherland," draped with the French flag, recalling the first national festival held on 14 July 1790. After a triumphal march, static choruses, each led by an allegorical figure, celebrate the grandeur of various aspects of the country, including diverse classes and ages. Dramatic juxtapositions result from the different meters and instruments associated with the characters on stage. The wine growers and harvesters, for example, alternate and finally come into unison as they sing of "the bread and wine, the flesh and blood of France." The soldiers and the sailors then do the same, followed by the workers (accompanied by percussive string playing), artists (who "tell the universe of your glory"), scientists (who "help man resemble God"), lovers, youth, and children. These choruses symbolize the union of all the forces in the nation. After them, a funeral march concludes with a figure veiled in black, carrying chains and symbolizing grief (or Alsace, as some understood her). Each group bows to her as she passes. Then, the veil tears and a woman dressed in the three French colors appears, singing, "O people . . . I come to your call. . . . Come to me you who suffer for justice." The chorus responds, "Glory to you, sacred Liberty, glory, the Republic!" The symbolism of such figures was both powerful and evocative, especially to the mostly French audiences.[39]

For the central character representing the French "motherland," Holmès called for a woman with long blond hair (fig. 80). Except for one redhead and a dark-haired Bacchus and Minerva, Holmès intended that all the principal performers have blond

38. The choruses included Le Choral de Belleville, Le Choral Chevé de Belleville, La Lyre de Belleville, Le Choral du Louvre, Les Enfants de Paris, Le Choral Chevé Polytechnique de Montmartre, Les Amis de la rive gauche, and four others.

39. See Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 121n57.

FIG. 80 "The Invocation of Liberty" on the cover of *L'Illustration*, 14 September 1889, a scene from Augusta Holmès's *Ode triomphale* at the Palais de l'Industrie, 11 September 1889.

hair. Amphitrite was to be "very white, and very blond, pale blond," Apollo a "very tall, very young, and very blond," and the lovers "blond, white, and beautiful." The land too, full of wheat, was described as a "blond plain." Reinforcing these images, the children were to be dressed in white. The racial implications of Holmès's explicit depiction of ideal people as white and blond, even if most French are not, resonates with Déroulède's *Le Livre de la Ligue des patriotes* (1887) and Georges Vacher de Lapouge's *L'Aryen et son rôle social* (1889), which argues for the superiority of whites with blond hair. The decision to sponsor such a work suggests that conservative tendencies had begun to permeate republican ideology.

Although Holmès did her best to create a unifying symbol, replacing two central figures standing for Alsace and Lorraine with one representing the "universal Republic,"[40] many critics used the *Ode* as an opportunity to express their political opinions about the Republic, rejecting or embracing the poem and music for nonmusical reasons. Republicans praised it for being "excellently decorative, a kind of musical fresco . . . in which all the details, all the effects are organized to support the final apotheosis, the triumph of the republican idea, so great, so generous, and still so incompletely practiced."[41] Meanwhile, Boulangist papers attacked the composer for glorifying the Republic and Catholic ones for parodying the words of Christ. In the musical world, Saint-Saëns called Holmès "our muse."[42] Pougin found that the symbolism impeded movement and was responsible for the antitheatrical nature of the work, but he appreciated its grandeur.[43] A critic in *La Nation*, focusing on Holmès's extensive use of unisons and phrase repetition and the newfound clarity that resulted, reported: "It's neither Gluck nor Berlioz, nor Beethoven, nor Wagner. It's Augusta Holmès and it's really something. . . . The characteristic of this art is its absolute and magistral simplicity, sought and found. The music of Augusta Holmès is simple, beautiful, and bare like one of the marble goddesses."[44] While some found this a sellout to a less severe and more pleasing aesthetic than in her earlier works, a critic for *Le Progrès artistique* concluded, "One hopes that this serenity will open a new path in our national art."[45] Such recogni-

40. Fauser notes that it is not clear whether this change was Holmès's idea or a request from Exhibition organizers (ibid., 129).

41. A. Landely, "Le Triomphe de la République: Ode triomphale," *Art musical*, 15 September 1889, 129–30.

42. *Le Rappel*, 12 September 1889.

43. *Ménestrel*, 15 September 1889, 292.

44. Minotoro, writing in *La Nation*, excerpted in *Fêtes du Centenaire: Ode triomphale exécutée au Palais des Champs-Elysées le 11, 12, 14, 18, 21 septembre 1889, poème et musique d'Augusta Holmès, Opinions de la presse* (Paris: Durilly, 1889).

45. Ibid.

tion helped Holmès win her first official honor from the French government that year, becoming a chevalier of the Légion d'honneur.

THE "GREAT THEATER" OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Progress was the third principle underlying the Exhibition and, as elsewhere, republicans used two methods to promote it, competition and assimilation. The best examples of progress were the Exhibition's two main buildings, the Gallery of Machines and the Eiffel Tower. Commissioned to embody the government's idea of a new public environment, they were to reflect the achievements of engineering and suggest new forms of beauty appropriate for the modern age. As construction in stone was thought to have reached "the limits of its usefulness," they were built of iron beams. The former, with both iron and glass panes, covered the largest space ever—337 by 1,378 feet—housing some 16,000 machines. The latter, a vertical equivalent, rose over a thousand feet. The tower had no functional utility; what was important to the Exhibition organizers was its symbolism, which its 1,792 steps and iron from occupied Lorraine embedded in its structure. Moreover, as in a panorama, "through the astonishment of space, it plunges into the mystery of time," writes Roland Barthes. "To perceive Paris from above is to imagine a history."[46] Georges Berger, the director of works for the Exhibition, thought of it as a metaphor for the ascent of man and Gustave Eiffel, its creator, as an arch of triumph of the modern age showing man's victory over new materials.[47] Others saw it as a symbol of the republican social ideal, as well as French superiority "before which colonial peoples would stand in awe" and "be convinced that their societies benefited from the guidance of their French rulers."[48] However, as Miriam Levin has pointed out, academic painters and architects, including Garnier, denounced its modern aesthetic and the socioeconomic values it symbolized. The writer

46. Roland Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill & Wang, 1979), 11.

47. Eiffel also pointed to all possible scientific uses the Eiffel Tower might serve (ibid., 6).

48. Eiffel considered the Tower both symbolic and socially transformative, a place where all could meet; see Miriam Levin, "The Eiffel Tower Revisited," *French Review* 62, 6 (May 1989): 1058–61, and Dana Hale, "Races on Display: French Representations of the Colonial Native, 1886–1931" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1998), 39. Some visitors, indeed, such as Ahmad-Zaki, took the Eiffel Tower to represent the achievement of the French people. Other Ottoman and Egyptian visitors were interested in what the fairs could teach them about improving living conditions in their own countries. See Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 47, 49.

J.-K. Huysmans too found it "the emblem of an age dominated by the passion for gain."[49] Having symbolic utility thus was not always as advantageous to the republicans as it might seem.

Through the ritual of competitions, also symbolic, organizers brought together diverse people, treated as equals engaged in comparable activities, to produce a republican message: work hard and you will be rewarded, regardless of who you are and where you came from. As evidence of the value of workers' clubs and self-help activities, visitors could see the fruits of their efforts in various musical competitions. Sundays and Mondays were reserved for competitions by *groupes populaires*. These included two for village bands and choral societies from all over the country, another for school bands (with 850 children), and others for *fanfares* and *musiques d'harmonie* (wind bands), French military bands, and foreign military bands (see fig. 78). These often challenged performers, demanding that they take on serious art music. In an international competition for the best municipal wind band, ensembles played transcribed movements of Beethoven and Mendelssohn symphonies, Massenet's program music, and Bizet's *Patrie!* in hopes of winning four prizes ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 francs.

With *musiques pittoresques*, a way of describing nonurban, orally transmitted music associated with people, some of them illiterate, from various regions of France and other countries, the Exhibition drew attention to the continuity of the past in the present and expressed the republican desire to integrate rural and urban France. Organizers saw in it the origins of national as well as regional identity. Some of the country's most illustrious contemporary composers, including Emile Paladilhe, Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray, and Gaston Salvayre, sat on the jury of a competition on 4 July for regional instruments and regional *air populaires*, the first half devoted to France, the second half to foreign countries. All other music (such as opera fantasies and *café-concert* songs) was excluded. The idea of French peasants in their local dress competing with one another on Bourdonnais cornemuses, Provençal tambourines, and Auvergnat vielles in a big Paris concert hall on the same day was a republican utopia, a symbol of the nation in all its diversity. For many, hearing this music was a novel experience. Since some performers purported to "represent a civilization," especially those from eastern Europe, visitors were drawn, as with the *chansons populaires*, to compare instruments, con-

49. Huysmans thought the Eiffel Tower "disconcertingly ugly and not even enormous." His essay, "Le Fer" (1889), is reprinted in Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, *The Expanding World of Art, 1874–1902* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), 74–78. See also Levin, *Republican Art and Ideology*, 16–18, and Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 2–4.

template influences and origins, and draw conclusions about their relative progress from one region to another. However, performers themselves were not always as focused on the same notion of authenticity as were organizers and critics. Tiersot, for example, objected to the first French prize being given to a bagpipe player influenced by modern music, and "not the best kind."[50] In the foreign categories, a first prize went to a gypsy orchestra that offered its rendition of the Hungarian "Rákóczy March," setting up an interesting comparison with Berlioz's arrangement of it, later performed in the military band festival.[51] A Hungarian women's orchestra won third. With their unusual sonorities, the five-hour event presented a kind of exoticism within European countries that was new to most visitors.[52]

The Exhibition was conceived of as a platform for such gatherings as well as a symbol to visitors from around the world—not just of France's technological strength and productivity since the Revolution, but also its openness to foreign cultures. To demonstrate the desirability of French colonial assimilation and their achievements, colonial administrations spent a fortune making sure the colonies were brilliantly represented. It undoubtedly escaped no one that the colonial pavilions were on the Esplanade des Invalides, directly across from the imposing War Ministry, linked to the Champ de Mars by a train along the Quai d'Orsay. As the president put it at the awards ceremony, the point was "the grand cause of peace and humanity."[53] In its eccentric, eclectic juxtapositions of foreign people and products, organizers wished to suggest that France was capable of assimilating the largest variety of cultures ever brought to the West. No exhibition had been as successful, though not so much in the realm of politics—not only did so many European countries refuse to participate officially, but the 34,000 French exhibitors outnumbered those from the rest of the world by 6,000.[54] With Berger as director, an open-minded man in charge of the foreign sections of the 1878

50. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 26.

51. Tiersot calls Berlioz's version of the "Rákóczy March" "heroic and long-breathed," emblematic of French struggles during the Revolution, and the Hungarian version, "though belligerent and vivacious," music "over in a minute and whose revolutionary zeal does not last," reflecting Hungary's continued domination by the Austrians. See Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 256, 274, and 252–78.

52. In his review of music at the Exhibition, *Musiques pittoresques*, Tiersot judged most of this music "not very interesting" except for the colorful costumes and instruments that went along with it (24–30). In "La Musique à l'Exposition," *Musique des familles*, 13 July 1889, Flamen compared them with one another and pointed out what would have been new to Parisians (306–7).

53. Quoted in its entirety in A.H., "Exposition universelle, distribution des récompenses," *Art musical*, 30 September 1889, 138.

54. Holt, *The Expanding World of Art*, 69.

Exhibition, the colonies became its main focus. Of the 6.8 million francs spent, 35 percent went to this aspect of the exhibition, much of it for constructing pavilions and bringing exotic people to the capital.[55]

Much has been said about race as spectacle in such exhibitions. On the Esplanade des Invalides and in the gardens of the Palais du Trocadéro, organizers juxtaposed pavilion after pavilion as emblems of national and colonial identity. Earlier exotic spectacles such as Jules Verne's *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours* and *Michel Strogoff* had taken Parisians on a whirlwind adventure abroad in their imaginations. Magazines such as *L'Illustration* and, in the months before the Exhibition, *La Musique des familles*, fed their curiosity about foreign people, their instruments, and their music.[56] Now a certain reality promised, although still limited and heavily mediated. Moreover, developments abroad and reporting on it probably helped shape French attitudes to these exhibitions. Annam had become a French protectorate in 1884, and in December 1888, *L'Illustration* devoted significant coverage to the graduation ceremony of the Annamite literati, who after completing exams would become privileged civil servants of the state. Whereas this class had long criticized the French and their influence on indigenous culture, these images suggest that hostilities had subsided and given way to "a frank and lasting friendship."[57] The next month an engraving of the ex-king of Annam—who gave up his kingdom to his brother after battling the French, fleeing, being captured, and then imprisoned in Algiers—would have clarified power relations under the protectorate, especially after its suggestive placement next to an image of Stella, dressed as a soldier, in a reprise of Offenbach's *La Fille au tambour-major.* The publication of music in advance of the Exhibition also helped establish the terms of visitors' understanding of non-Westerners. In January 1889, *L'Illustration* published a Tahitian choral hymn, transcribed for piano and two singers, which it presented as "authentic," dating from before the arrival of Europeans and still sung by the natives. The title, *Hyménée* (*Hīmeni*, in Tahitian), however, refers to a kind of multipart choral singing influenced by Protestant missionaries (fig. 81).

55. Jean Meyer, Jean Tarrade, Annie Rey-Goldzeiguer, and Jacques Thobie, *Histoire de la France coloniale: Des origines à 1914* (Paris: A. Colin, 1991), 638. Of this, 48 percent went to exhibitions of Algeria and Tunisia (with shared funding coming from Paris and the colonies). After them, Indochina took up the greatest space with its pavilions for Cochinchina, Cambodia, and Annam-Tonkin and a pagoda of the gods of Hanoi, an Annamite theater, and a Tonkinese village.

56. For example, *La Musique des familles* published lithographs of Africans performing the *balafon* and the *gorah* on the covers of its 5 January and 9 March 1889 issues and accompanied these with long explanatory essays by Edmond Bailly.

57. J.S. "Nos gravures," *L'Illustration*, 15 December 1888, 440–41, 448.

FIG. 81 Cover of "Hyménée, hymne tahitien," transcribed for piano by Jules Cressonnois, *L'Illustration*, 5 January 1889.

The readers of *L'Illustration* were concerned about the authenticity of exotic songs. To put their minds at ease, the text accompanying this image informs us that the source of this song is "two travelers back from Oceania with a collection of Tahitian songs and legends," and that the "*hyménée* [choral song] that we provide today is one of the prettiest pieces in the Tahitian repertoire; needless to say, this refreshing melody and text are scrupulously authentic."

Throughout the 1880s, those living near the major European zoos, including the Jardin zoologique d'Acclimatation in Paris, could have seen exhibitions of exotic peoples, such as the Tierra del Fuegians and Ceylonese, but only one group at a time. The 1889 Exhibition brought to Paris as much of the world as possible and in passive, peaceful cooperation. Some pavilions consisted of imitations of local structures—an Angkor Wat temple, a white Tunis palace, a Senegambian log house—in the manner of the Venetian and the Paris hotels in Las Vegas today; others merely borrowed elements. Many had tall towers flying flags to identify them. There, although the marketplace was a less exclusively decisive factor than in Las Vegas today, foreign products were marketed and sold in boutiques and ethnic restaurants. Exhibited to be experienced as stereotypes and compared as one might the various dwellings of the History of Habitation and the life groups of the History of Work exhibits—that is, according to their evolutionary state as emblems of race, ethnicity, and culture—non-Western people were displayed in constructed villages. These showed visitors how they lived, their labor potential, and their reaction to whites. It is noteworthy that the Senegalese village contained not only a mosque and structures like those in which the indigenous people have lived over time, but also, at its entrance, a replica of a military tower with a French flag flying, such as Faidherbe built all over the country—a fascinating architectural example of the cultural coexistence and power relationships on which Saint-Saëns commented musically in his "Rhapsodie mauresque." The liveliness of these installations and their performances, some of which charged admission, was assured by 203 Indochinese, 61 Senegalese, 20 Congolese, 11 Tahitians, and 10 Canaques from New Caledonia, in addition to representatives from non-French colonies. In this sense, as one observer pointed out, the Exhibition was "more universal than any of its predecessors." Visitors marveled at the differences between tiny Javanese dancers, small, beardless Annamites and Tonkinese, and tall Senegalese, "who looked like giants."[58] The placement of the Social Economy exhibit near by, with its focus on working-class culture and the working-class family, allowed for comparison between the various kinds of activities practiced by exotic peoples in the colonial villages and those of the "Cité sociale," a "grandiose workers' village."[59] Reputedly, French workers attending the Exhibition befriended those from other countries[60]—a kind of analogue of the *fraternité* and *sociabilité* with which French dignitaries received the Senegalese king, but not necessarily how the majority of

58. Olga Flinch, *Paris of Today* (New York: Cassell, 1891), 252, 260.
59. For more on the Social Economy exhibit, see Horne, "Presenting Modern France."
60. Vogüé, *Remarques*, 174–75.

FIG. 82 Caran d'Ache caricature, from Grosclaude, "Almanach prophétique pour 1889," *L'Illustration*, 1 December 1888.

Exotic visitors to the Jardin zoologique d'Acclimatation view "authentic" Parisians, "arrayed in their native costume," who exhibit "their primitive habits: smoke cigarettes, draw their swords, read stock exchange reports, and discuss politics with animation."

visitors reacted to those of other races. The experience of similarity and difference could be exhilarating or disconcerting.

While most reports of exotic peoples noted how curious but interesting the experience was, Hugues Le Roux was among those asked who the spectacle was, and who was watching whom? (fig. 82). He spent extended time in these villages, devoting "even days to black people and odd days to yellow ones," and ended up feeling very embarrassed. The visitors did not realize, for example, that the Senegalese spoke French and thus understood the comparisons people made of them to "monkeys" and "monsters." They resented being exhibited like savages in huts when back home they had houses, train stations, and railroads and their "health committee" would never allow such living quarters.[61] In other words, while the exhibitions made visitors feel as though they were learning something by encountering the real

61. Hugues Le Roux, "Psychologie exotique," *L'Exposition de Paris de 1889*, 27 July 1889, 170. Evidently, one of his main informants was the head of the Senegalese village, Samba Laobé Thiam.

thing, exotic objects were often fragments without meaning when out of context, and exotic people, there to play a part, were not always who they seemed.

THE UTILITY OF EXOTIC MUSIC

By including various forms of non-Western music at the 1889 Exhibition, organizers evidently wished to contain, if not to impose an order on, something whose very existence defied containment because largely beyond Western comprehension. For most people, however, concerts served as escape from the problems of daily life and the vicissitudes of political life. This was especially true of exotic music, alluring precisely because little understood. For those seeking to "dream," exotic music provided the seduction of difference almost for its own sake. As Peter Mason has pointed out, "it is the very act of discovery which *produces* the exotic" and "produces it in varying degrees of wildness or domestication."[62]

Between the Javanese dances accompanied by gamelan, Arab belly dances or *nūba* performances, Annamite theater, Romanian cabaret, Finnish minnesingers, Hungarian gypsies, and others, there were nine options every evening. This did not count performances in the various cafés and restaurants, such as by an orchestra of Russian women.[63] Such music was obviously not like what audiences might hear in the *pièces à grand spectacle* written in Western forms, performed on Western instruments, and therefore little touched by actual difference. It was distinct from what most listeners knew, and more mysterious than anything they could have imagined. Played on instruments by living performers, it was the real thing. At the same time as it "aroused the curiosity of the public eager for novelty,"[64] such music challenged listeners, and in some ways far more than "Great Art." While exotic music was part of what shaped visitors' understanding of different peoples, their incomprehension of it risked leading to increased disparagement and intolerance of little-known people.

62. Peter Mason, *Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1–2. See also Sindhumathi K. Revuluri, "On Anxiety and Absorption: Musical Encounters with the Exotique in Fin-de-Siècle France" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2007). For the difference between "exotic" and "oriental" at the time, see chapter 7, n. 21, above.

63. Critics occasionally discovered imposters recognized as members of the Colonne and Lamoureux orchestras or graduates of the Paris Conservatory. As far as their music was concerned, Tiersot thought there was no problem: "it is very easy to distinguish what is authentic from what is not. The art of pastiche has not yet been pushed very far" (Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 69).

64. Arthur Pougin, *Le Théâtre à l'Exposition universelle de 1889* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1890), 89.

For the musically attuned listener, the exotic performances offered much more and were in some ways more useful than any official music. Hungarian gypsy music was a hit, from Tiersot's perspective, in part because, "not playing on the beat," it seemed to express "the absolute liberty inherent in the gypsy's nature," freedom being a trope republicans never stopped promoting.[65] Likewise for Arab music—"so different from our own that it seems always new." Such music was already known, especially since the 1878 Exhibition, and it had been heard since then in brasseries, *cafés-concerts,* and chic salons. Yet while reviewers in 1878 appreciated it and were "seduced by this unknown," their attempts to explain it were limited. Gypsy music remained "an incomprehensible mystery," and Arab music something strange "made of monotonous sonorities against which bizarre melodies occasionally stand out, rising to the most inhuman peaks of the vocal scale." *Ménestrel*'s reviewer in 1878 compared Arab scales with those of the ancient Greeks, but went no further, getting lost in reverie about Greek civilization.[66] In 1889, critics gave exotic music closer attention. To help visitors understand the character of certain Arab music, Tiersot pointed to Saint-Saëns's successful assimilation of an arabesque in his *Rêverie arabe*. As Annegret Fauser points out, musical exoticism "provided the referential framework against which the actual music of the 'Other' could and would be judged."[67] But not always. Tiersot was particularly taken with the "exercises" of the Aïssaoua, Moroccan Sufis who used music to go into trance.[68] He found that the songs, rhythm, and "musical noises" driving their bodies into contortions had a powerful effect on the nerves of the spectators as well as the performers, and compared this with the power of music as understood by the ancient Greeks.[69]

Javanese dance and Annamite theater drew so much attention that it is possible to see what kinds of assumptions, preconceptions, and values listeners brought to their experiences, whether republican or monarchist, Wagnerian or anti-Wagnerian. Unlike in the case of some of the other exotic exhibits, instead of speaking to the primitivism of these art forms vis-à-vis their Western counterparts, many critics recognized their "undeniable" value. In the case of the Javanese spectacle, this

65. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 61–66.

66. Paul Lacome, "Exposition universelle de 1878: Les Musiciens arabes," *Ménestrel*, 21 July 1878, and his "Exposition universelle de 1878: Les Musiciens tsiganes," *Ménestrel*, 8 September 1878, 330.

67. Fauser, *Musical Encounters,* 144.

68. According to Louis Vignon, *La France dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1887), the Aïssaoua were not hostile to the French in Algeria, instead often "useful" in serving French interests (244–45).

69. Tiersot, "Promenades musicales à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 22 September 1889, 299, and 29 September 1889, 308.

elite genre was associated with the Javanese courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta. But, more than the spectacle, Paris fell in love with "the innocence and purity of these frail and delicate beings" (fig. 83). Visitors saw them as embodying their own "cult of youth, grace, and beauty" and the republican musicologist Arthur Pougin deemed them the "lionesses of the exotic part of the Exhibition."[70] Yet Pougin considered "Annamite" theater the "high point" of the Exhibition. The nomadic (rather than court-based) ensemble from Saigon gave eight performances per day for five months and charged as much as an orchestra concert in Paris. Although he and others could not understand the language and considered its music "frenetic," albeit occasionally expressive—its "noisy orchestra" consisting of "piercingly loud, dissonant instruments"—Pougin saw Annamite theater as "the revelation of an unknown, strange, and brilliant art that strikes one by its novelty and sincerity as well as its naïve peculiarity." Its forms, in particular, he found "very interesting, very intelligent, very complicated," the four spectacles episodes of one long epic. While Pougin, an anti-Wagnerian, carefully avoided any comparison with Wagner,[71] many others leapt at the occasion. Vicomte Eugène-Melchior de Vogüé, who preferred the Javanese court ballerinas to Annamite popular theater, reported that Wagnerians discerned leitmotifs in the Vietnamese music and considered the Vietnamese epic a kind of "Oriental Niebelungen."[72] The republican Tiersot, also a Wagnerian, avoided this comparison, while giving substantial attention to the particularities of the instruments and music. Instead, Tiersot called the arrangement, repetition, and prolongation of a certain number of melodies improvisation.[73]

Among those who analyzed what they heard at exotic performances and published their conclusions,[74] Tiersot was the ideal scholar to present these to the public. He recognized that they not only "transport us as far as possible from our civilization," they also served as "an occasion to study the musical forms specific to races for whom art is understood differently than ours."[75] Tiersot's attitudes thus went beyond the typical ethnocentrism of the time. An expert in *chansons populaires,* he was open to what could be learned from the music of peoples who, on the surface, seemed less sophisticated and he had experience transcribing nontraditional melodies and finding similarities in disparate repertoire. To get inside infor-

70. As Tiersot explains in *Musiques pittoresques*, although the theater became known as Annamite, in fact the musicians were all Cochinchinese, from the south (13).

71. Pougin, *Théâtre*, 88–99.

72. Vogüé, *Remarques*, 177.

73. Tiersost, *Musiques pittoresques*, 15.

74. For example, see Edmond Bailly, "Musique pittoresque: Au kampong javanais," *Musique des familles*, 15 June 1889, 274–75.

75. Tiersot, "Promenades musicales à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 26 May 1889, 165.

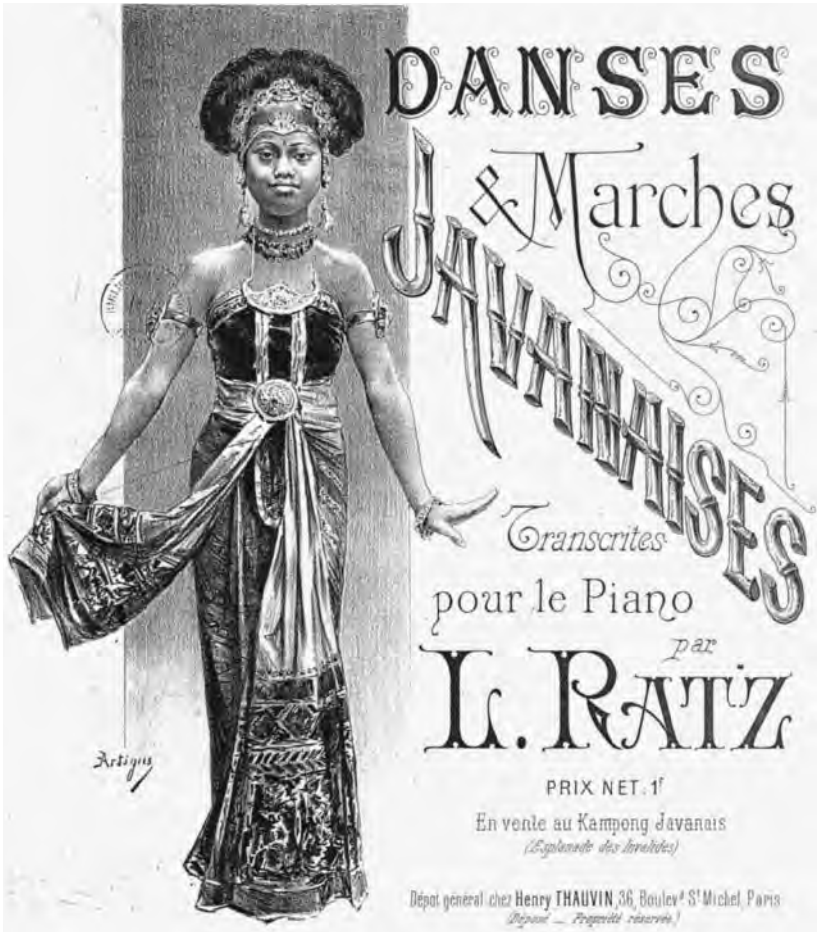


FIG. 83 L. Ratz, *Danses et marches javanaises* (1889), transcribed for piano.

The first piece uses the five-note *pelog* scale (C♯ E F♯ A B). This music was sold at the Javanese kampong on the Esplanade des Invalides and was later reproduced in *Figaro musical*, February 1893.

mation, Tiersot spent time with the musicians of various cultures and *interviewed* (he italicizes the word) them through an interpreter. This provided him with "more complete information" than would be available by merely attending a public performance. It also allowed him to take down musical examples "dictated by an indigenous musician" and to compare what he heard in the "sweetness of a beautiful June morning" to the "furor" of notes that were otherwise "indiscernible" the night before. After spending a few mornings with the Javanese musicians, they

let him sit on stage among the instruments all day during a performance. There, he was able to observe the musical behavior and "sonorous combinations," while trying his best to "act like a Javanese" himself ("me javanisant de mon mieux").[76]

Tiersot's essays, at times full of respect and admiration, are the most detailed of those published during the Exhibition. His efforts to describe these musics as rationally and objectively as possible were laudable, even if they revealed the limitations of the comparative model of reasoning. Tiersot was aware of this problem, admitting that "by comparison alone with our theatrical productions, it is hard to give an exact idea of the genre of pieces of which *Le Roi de Duong* offers us a curious example." Yet he could not help but make such comparisons with Western analogues. Annamite instruments are either "a kind of oboe," a flute that "sounds like all flutes," or a stringed object whose sound "closely resembles that of the French viol." Their orchestra plays a role "like that which our orchestra plays in pantomime or melodrama." Javanese gongs sound "like the great bell of a cathedral." Such comments helped orient readers, though they led critics to conclude that "these sonorous engines seem a little miserable next to European products by instrument makers."[77] He also resorts to comparison in attempting to explain musical style. Some Javanese music, for example, proceeded like "certain classical overtures." Many such comments, however, veil genuine differences. And if Tiersot makes fun of fellow critics who compared the characters of the Javanese tales to those in *Salammbô* or the *Magic Flute* and their contemplative and immobile qualities to those of *Parsifal*, he does some of the same. While admitting that Easterners understood harmony very differently, he doubted there were "any rules concerning the combination of simultaneous sounds." He compares one of their chords to a ninth chord as one might hear in *Tristan* and says one piece gave the impression of being in D minor throughout. And their counterpoint he compares with that of Josquin des Prés or Palestrina in taking a tune, like "L'Homme armé" used in Masses, and "proceeding from identical principles."[78]

Such observations suggest that the experience of exotic music involved more than merely voyeurism of "primitive" people" that generally had the effect of reinforcing the viewer's sense of superiority. In many ways, Tiersot's conclusions support important republican agendas—not just using music to shed light on the nature of racial difference, but also exploring the potential of monogenist claims

76. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, specifically mentions this kind of contact with musicians from Annam and Java (13, 17, 35–36, 43).

77. Croquenotes, "Exposition universelle: Théâtre Annamite," *Musique populaire*, 19 October 1889, 5.

78. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 12, 13, 31, 37, 43, 45.

about racial origins, republicans' faith in progress, and their universalist ideology. Even if these musics seemed "an inferior art," Tiersot proposes that we consider them as reflecting earlier stages of the evolution in which all cultures participated: "we should not pay less attention to them because they show us new aspects of music and, in all truth, are closer to [music's] origins than is our art of today, which is so complex and refined." In listening to music from black Africa, Oceania, and the Far East, he found particularly significant lessons. The two Senegalese *balafon* players accompanying the king on his visit to the Exhibition played harmonies, suggesting more musical progress than might otherwise characterize the music of their drums. However, Tiersot concluded that the *balafon* harmonies resulted from improvisation or chance. Yet when the Pahouin singers from the Congo, the Canaques from New Caledonia, and the Tahitians produced harmonies from their simultaneous voices, they seemed quite conscious of what they were doing. This led him to surmise that harmony, "which we like to consider as the conquest of the modern genius," has much older traditions outside the West, has existed independently of the ancient art of Greece and Rome, and "seems to have stayed stable since its origins." Although Westerners were "reduced to the practice of homophonic singing, vocal harmonies probably existed in the practices of distant races for a long time." Tiersot understood that these conclusions, which he interpreted as a "real discovery," had important implications for the history of music. Harmony is "not the exclusive product of complex mental work, but, on the contrary, something natural to mankind, even savages or primitive people; its rights in the realm of Art are equal to those of melody."[79]

Many of Tiersot's observations made music seem like a cultural universal, especially in his discussion of music by Africans. Little of the public heard this music at the Exhibition, perhaps because it was considered too primitive. Tiersot got Africans to perform for him privately and dedicated his last essays to their music. Here he points to the omnipresence of the drum "used by all people on earth" and the prevalence of isochronous rhythm in dances of the Pahouins, Arabs, Spanish, and American Indians in the Buffalo Bill show. He finds what he considered the "primordial form" of lyric poetry, the epic song glorifying a hero, even in Senegal. His analyses of the vast array of musics presented at the Exhibition suggested that the intervals of Western scales can be found almost everywhere.[80] He even

79. Tiersot, "Promenades musicales à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 6 October 1889, 316; 13 October 1889, 324–26; 20 October 1889, 332. Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, also underlines the importance of Tiersot's conclusions (251–52).

80. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 1–2, 37, and Constant Pierre, in a review of Tiersot's book in *Musique populaire*, 29 March 1890, 187–88.

acknowledges the participation of women as composers outside the West. In his analysis of Tahitian music presented at the Exhibition, he concentrates on a triumphal song for chorus composed by a woman with olive and chocolate-colored skin. As for France with Augusta Holmès's *Ode triomphale*, Tahiti chose this work to represent itself before the French president. In expressing love, it connects the Tahitian king with the French Republic. Such recurrences of musical elements and musical talents from one culture to the next implied that "in spite of apparent differences of the most striking kind, man resembles himself everywhere." Some of Tiersot's observations also support the notion that non-Westerners had assimilated European influences, such as a march form in a Javanese song that recalled for him similar songs in America and England more than the "original *mélopées*" of Far Easterners. Behind such thoughts lay the hope that Western listeners might be able to understand and assimilate the music of different cultures, just as France hoped to assimilate the people of its colonies.

Exotic music also encouraged audiences to hear music, even sound, in new ways. Ironically, it was not only the increased taste for the mysterious and the unknown that predisposed certain listeners to be open to it, but also the French aesthetic of charm and grace. As de Vogüé put it, "an instinct pushes us to look for an unknown corner of the world, and we imagine it charming because not yet associated with the preoccupations we bring with us."[81] Marmontel pointed out, furthermore, that it is often the "vague, indefinite" aspects of sound that charm us.[82] Reviewers inevitably cited this, even when they said little else about the music. Although some observers admitted to being "hypnotized" by the "monotonous and melancholic *mélopée*" of the Javanese spectacle, many experienced exotic music as "lacking in neither charm nor poetry."[83] It could seem like noise and not embody traditional beauty, yet be charming and poetic. It could please the ear. It could stimulate the imagination. Listening for charm and grace mitigated perception of the "bizarre" and allowed audiences to enjoy the aural pleasures of this music and the new horizons it opened up.

In this context, whether they considered it primitive, bizarre, or just curious, "music" became quite ambiguous, encouraging people to entertain broader definitions of it. Tiersot stresses this point throughout his essays. In some ways, he continues to espouse Rousseau's definition of music as what is pleasing to the ear.

81. Vogüé, *Remarques*, 1.

82. See chapter 6, n. 116, above.

83. Franc Jourdain, "Le Kampong javanais à l'Exposition," *L'Exposition de Paris de 1889*, 17 August 1889, 212–13. Pougin, *Théâtre*, writes similarity of Javanese music as "not always being without sweetness and without charm" (112).

He has trouble with the role of percussion in exotic music except in Javanese genres where it is "perfectly musical" because played "more softly." He finds that the violent feelings expressed by cries in Annamite singing "have nothing musical about them" and is puzzled by the unclear relationship between the parts of this music, which he thinks reveals a musical nature that is "remarkably little harmonious." And yet, other qualities in exotic music required that his notion of the pleasurable expand beyond conventional Western preoccupations. He insists on the "musical character" of what he thinks of as Annamite improvisation, clarifying that it is not invented on the spur of the moment but based on the development of preexisting melodies. Although it may remain on the same syllable and note for an extended period, he is also intent on calling Annamite singing music.[84]

In addition, exotic music drew listeners' attention to non-Western philosophies of sound and music and to possible connections between music and nature. Because many French believed in a relationship between music and place, some mused about possible connections between exotic music and where it was composed and practiced, as if "primitive" environments gave rise to "primitive" music. The mystic writer, magazine editor, and composer Edmond Bailly took a different perspective. In preparing for the Exhibition by researching various exotic peoples and their instruments and writing on them in *La Musique des familles*, he had come across references to sound in essays written by travelers in exotic places like Africa, Oceania, and the South Pole. This led him to thinking about sound per se in all its variety and effects on the human listener.

During the final months of the Exhibition, every week from 31 August to 5 October, Bailly published a series of articles called "Le Monde sonore" (The World of Sound), subtitled "Sound, harmony of the spheres, voices of nature." The first begins with an acoustician's definition of sound as "movement that becomes audible at a distance. . . . Every sound, every noise announces a movement." One of these is "psychic sensation, that is, the emotion the phenomenal movement evokes in our soul." Movement, in turn, also creates sound and "the projection of light across space." Writing eighty years before John Cage, Bailly observes, "the complete absence of any sound [*manifestation sonore*] does not exist on our planet any more than radical darkness or absolute cold." There are "microscopic ambient sounds" everywhere—ranging from the planetary ones evoked by Greek philosophers to those made by the earth, animals, and even plants. In his third article, dedicated to "vegetal harmonies," especially those recounted by explorers in foreign lands, he quotes Jean Rambosson's book *Histoire et légendes des plantes*

84. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 14–17.

utiles et curieuses (1868), which suggests that, depending on the form of their leaves, the color and texture of their flowers, fruit, and the roughness of their branches, plants produce different sounds when interacting with the wind, decrescendos or diminuendos, solos and tuttis. Such sounds have influenced the kind of instruments made by people living near them, their use of these instruments, and the tuning. Moreover, because it seems that "nature's music resonates only in the minor mode," people who live near nature tend to sing in minor modes. Bailly also describes the different songs produced by birds in various regions around the world. Citing Michelet and anticipating Olivier Messiaen's study by over sixty years, he describes bird and animal cries in the "forest of the new world" from an idealist, Orientalist perspective: "these brilliant and sustained modulations are heard less frequently in our climates; here they are replaced by more solemn and more measured songs." Lastly, Bailly discusses different sounds produced in different climates, ranging from the humid tropics to the northern glaciers, and under extreme conditions, including storms at sea, volcanoes, and earthquakes. He speaks metaphorically of the effect of these sounds on us: they recall "the first stages of creation" or "bestial splendor." He also explains their source in the steam and gaseous fluids produced.

These articles are interspersed with various reviews of performances at the Exhibition, including one on musical exoticism. They prepared readers for such works as Bourgault-Ducoudray's *Rapsodie cambodgienne*, which the Concerts Lamoureux premiered the following January. This tone poem in two parts gives musical form to the floods that inundate Cambodia each year. The composer calls this the "Genius of the Earth" confronting the "Genius of the Waters." In their reviews of the *Rapsodie*, Bailly and others questioned whether Bourgault-Ducoudray got the musical themes from indigenous musicians at the Exhibition or dreamed them up after visiting the Annamite theater or Javanese village.[85]

Exotic music, together with what was written about it, led some composers to reconsider traditional Western notions of melody, harmony, and especially rhythm. While at the 1878 Exhibition, Liszt and François Gevaert were taken with the improvisations of the gypsies, in 1889, it was Debussy who may have drawn the most benefit from listening carefully and assimilating what he heard. According to a friend, he spent "many fruitful hours" at the Javanese kampong. Like others, he brought his own preoccupations to the experiences, particularly his interest in resonant sonorities, fluid rhythms, musical ways of creating "immobil-

85. Edmond Bailly, "Concert Lamoureux," *Musique populaire*, 23 January 1890, 112; H. Barbedette, *Ménestrel*, 26 January 1890, 30.

FIG. 84 "*Angklung* musicians at the Universal Exhibition," *L'Illustration*, 6 July 1889. Visitors to the Javanese pavilion were met by the *angklung* ensemble, which accompanied them to the pavilion's main theater with marches played on the drum and the *angklung*, a lightweight instrument made from bamboo. Each *angklung* produces one pitch, produced by rapidly shaking the instrument.

ity in perpetual movement," and new forms of musical logic. Since he was already familiar with pentatonic and whole-tone scales, having incorporated them into his cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* and *Printemps* (1887), what fascinated him especially were the sonorities of the *angklung*, the "percussive rhythmic complexities of the gamelan," and the effect these produced (fig. 84).

In October, just as the 1889 Exhibition was closing its doors, Debussy began a work for piano and orchestra, inspired not only by the contemporary interest in large cyclical works, such as Saint-Saëns's Third Symphony, but also by the musical sonorities, rhythms, and formal processes of Javanese music. Pointing to similarities with the use of a folk tune as cyclical theme in d'Indy's *Symphonie sur un chant montagnard français* (1886), Richard Mueller has argued that in his *Fantaisie*, Debussy modeled a cyclical theme on a Javanese theme. Tiersot, who transcribed it, found that this tune was developed with more logic and clarity than many others and, recurring throughout a dance, gave continuity despite the tempo changes. Debussy's theme captures the accent at the end of the ostinato and the symmetry of pitch groups in the Javanese model. Mueller also believes that the tremololike ostinato sonority of the *angklung* rattles accompanying the players'

processional march, which Tiersot transcribed as chords resembling those in Wagner's music, influenced certain ninth chord formations in the *Fantaisie* and rhythmic patterns associated with oscillating octaves. In the *Fantaisie*'s finale, the cyclic theme returns as an ostinato. As Mueller explains, "The effect of repeating an ostinato in an orchestral sonority that is in a continual state of flux is the quality of Javanese music that Debussy tried to capture.[86]

It is surprising then that just before the work was to be performed, Debussy withdrew it and forbade publication. Moreover, in 1890, he made extensive changes on an engraved print, deleting the very Javanese elements he had previously assimilated. Because he went on to reuse the Javanese-inspired cyclical theme in a *Tarantelle styrienne* for piano (1890) and two Verlaine songs (1891), Mueller suggests that the problem was not with the Javanese influence on his thinking per se, but both the attempt in the *Fantaisie* to recreate the effect of Javanese music too literally and the failure to maintain the authenticity of the original by burying it in a series of variations. Assimilation, to be valuable and to take hold, needed the kind of critical distance he would soon learn from the symbolists.

THE EXHIBITION IN RETROSPECT

Republicans must have been pleased that this public display of their values—fraternity, education, and progress—went so well. If, as in revolutionary festivals, it suggested a world of coexistence, if not equality, in which everyone had a role, it was also one in which there was freedom of movement amid metaphorically charged, disparate spaces. In its organization, the Exhibition achieved a balance between structuring the perception of order and assuring the perception of progress, particularly in the displays of industrial products. With the exotic performances, organizers catered to the public's increasing taste for the mysterious, the sensational, and the unknown, while inferring a world larger and more complex than the imagination could conjure up. Exhibitors and performers were there to compete as well as show off, but the organizers gave out over 33,000 awards, so few went home empty-handed. Electricity allowed visits day and night.

86. Richard Mueller, "Javanese Influence on Debussy's *Fantaisie* and Beyond," *19th-Century Music* 10 (1986): 157–86. See also Roy Howat, "Debussy and the Orient," in *Recovering the Orient: Artists, Scholars, Appropriations*, ed. Andrew Gerstle and Anthony Milner (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic, 1994), 45–81, and Fauser, *Musical Encounters*, 195–206. Fauser argues that the spectacle as well as the music appealed to Debussy, and sees Mélisande as modeled in part on the Javanese dancers (203). She also points to his fascination with Vietnamese theater as "embryonic music drama," and Tiersot's analysis of leitmotifs therein (194–95).

Visitor receipts doubled those of the 1867 Exhibition, a third more than in 1878. Business prospered during the Exhibition, too, especially theater receipts despite the relative lack of new works.[87] Within France, the Exhibition reinforced the centrality of Paris and its capacity to produce a sense of nation. The exposure to French products also encouraged exports and sympathy with French republicanism.[88] The French went home proud of what republican ideals had brought the country. If the Exhibition did not create a thirst for more imperialist adventures, it did seem to validate and vindicate their usefulness, showing the French the fruits of their investments.[89]

Politically, the republicans reaped much from Exhibition's success. People enjoyed the respite from divisive controversies, and the Boulangist threat was averted, with the general tried and condemned that August. Eugénie Buffet, a popular singer and militant Ligue member, was condemned to fifteen days in jail for having cried, "Long live Boulanger!" in one of her performances during the Exhibition when President Sadi Carnot passed by.[90] In the October elections, Déroulède was elected to the Chambre des députés, but, with the economy gradually recovering,[91] Boulanger's supporters gained few of the Right's seats and *opportunistes* recaptured control of the Chambre.[92] Unfortunately, this success was tainted by the accusation that the Rothschilds had contributed millions to an *opportuniste* minister of the interior and had 35,000 Romanian Jews brought in and naturalized so that they could vote republican. This exacerbated the association of the republicans with the growing influence of banks and industry.[93]

87. Earnings were 10,417,344 francs in 1867, 13,074,927 in 1878, and 15,276,860 in 1889. "Paris et départements," *Ménestrel*, 10 November 1889, 359. Theater receipts rose 50 percent over those during the 1867 Exhibition and 17 percent over those of 1878.

88. Rome, for example, mounted a production of Paladilhe's *Patrie* later that fall.

89. The commissioner of the Colonial Exhibit, Louis Henrique, concluded: "After seeing the 1889 colonial display, who is not astonished that only two or three years ago there were bitter disputes about the utility of the colonies? The least suspecting visitors have been seized with enthusiasm by the spectacle before their eyes; the skeptics have been obliged to face the facts. . . . In a word, the trial of colonialism was concluded by the tribunal of public opinion in 1889." From E. Monod, *L'Exposition universelle* (1890), cited in Robert Brain, *Going to the Fair: Readings in the Culture of Nineteenth-Century Exhibitions* (Cambridge, UK: Whipple Museum of the History of Science, 1993), 179.

90. François Caradec and Alain Weill, *Le Café-concert* (Paris: Hachette, 1980), 95.

91. Industrial production rose 5 percent, and wages 3 percent.

92. Brian Jenkins, *Nationalism in France: Class and Nation since 1789* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 95; Maurice Agulhon, *The French Republic, 1879–1992* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 486; 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), 49.

93. Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994), 305.

It is ironic, then, that with all its optimism, the 1889 Exhibition challenged what could be learned through the comparative method. With thriving "primitive" cultures shown to coexist with more "civilized" ones, the History of Habitation constructions threw into question the republican belief in the evolutionary development of human culture and probably led to as many false as tenable conclusions. The Eiffel Tower and Gallery of Machines were popular more for their "thrilling vistas" than their didactic content. To the extent that the "sensual pleasures of consumption" began to take precedence over the "abstract intellectual enjoyment of contemplating the progress of knowledge,"[94] the French were forced to reconsider the *opportunistes*' notions of the moral and educational utility of music, as well as the radicals' desire to democratize aesthetic pleasures. Exotic displays may have been amusing and entertaining, too, and some of them were commercially successful, but it is questionable whether they implanted the seeds of a desire for assimilation.

When it came to music, certainly, the performances succeeded in bringing together ensembles that had never made music together, and in attracting large numbers of listeners, introducing many to music they'd never heard before. However, as Tiersot points out in his final review, devoting so much energy and money to creating big effects that would impress crowds, such as the day when twenty-four military bands played together, had its disadvantages. Organizers tended to concentrate on the superficial aspects of things, what he and others called the *pittoresque*, not just in music but in everything, and this led to neglecting serious music that might otherwise have elevated listeners.[95] Inevitably, the huge motley performances were often mediocre. And, perhaps most troubling, pleasing a crowd was not the same as addressing a public. The Exhibition offered the masses an abundance of pleasurable distractions competing for their attention. But to what end? When a public was seduced by novelty, they understood it in a context, often through comparison. It is not clear what crowds of visitors, many from out of town, got out of the festivals, competitions, and official orchestral concerts, whose value was largely symbolic more than educational, and symbolic of achievement more than of progress pointing to a new future. The merits of eclecticism had reached their limits. Virtually all concerts of Western music were mixed bags, incoherent juxtapositions leading to dizzying effects rather than enlightenment.

Ironically, given their unfathomable appearance to Westerners, the huge array

94. Rosalind Williams, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumption in Late Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 59–60.

95. Tiersot, "Promenades musicales à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 20 October 1889, 332.

of exotic musics had the capacity to be more instructive. Tiersot learned much from them. Certainly, they were suggestive of ethnic/racial predispositions and racial origins, and Tiersot found documentary evidence therein with radical implications for the history of music. However, it is not clear how the general public digested this exposure. For those not repelled by the challenge of listening in new ways, the Exhibition's performances presented a surfeit of originality and charm. But did audiences grasp the distinctions enough to compare them or just enjoy their effect? Did they relate what they heard to what they learned from seeing performers' living quarters, food, and other products? Did they make connections and contemplate mutual influences? Was authenticity critical to their enjoyment or merely supplemental?

There were limits to what could be learned from such music or experienced. Republicans who wished music to instruct or communicate a message through charm were stymied. Overwhelmed by the spectacle of such diversity, Deputy Lockroy complained that the whole thing resembled the Folies-Bergères, whose succession of spectacles was intended to evoke the imagination and stimulate pleasures for their own sake.[96] When leaving the Exhibition one night after hearing the Russian national chorus, one visitor was less interested in learning than grateful for having been lifted out the present:

> I must leave this sweet vision of the legendary and sacred Orient and reimmerse [myself] in the milieu of practical people who vote, coachmen, city police, *garçons* in cafes, the guys that take the mud off your shoes *[décrotteurs],* all of them citizens, and—instead of the brave Nikititch or the plaintive Ivoutchka [from the National Russian chapel choir]—I have to listen to M. Ferry or General Boulanger talk on and on. The ordinary things of indigestible modern life appear even more cruel, and still, how sweet these pastoral escapes, among the flowering paths of the dream![97]

Losing oneself in exotic music, even if it did not elevate one to some imaginative azure, as Wagner's music did, solved the problem of the banality of everyday life, albeit only temporarily. While the collection and organization of representatives of all times and all places assumed that visitors could understand these exhibitions, exotic music made it clear that understanding of the exotic Other was partial at best, if not a total illusion. There was also the risk that total incomprehension of

96. Levin, *Republican Art and Ideology*, 210.

97. Georges Saint-Mleux, "Exposition universelle. Exotisme," *Musique des familles*, 28 September 1889, 395.

this music would lead to increased disparagement and intolerance of little-known people.

Two composers seem to have benefited most from the Exhibition, Saint-Saëns and Debussy. Not only did his omnipresence in official concerts catapult Saint-Saëns to great fame, so did his reputation for the ease with which he assimilated a wide range of styles, ranging from the German classics to Algerian music. During the final month of the Exhibition, the classically oriented critic Camille Bellaigue gave a lecture on Saint-Saëns in which, echoing Gounod in 1887, he compared the composer to Beethoven. Saint-Saëns's frequent travels to North Africa and the Far East had also made him unusually receptive to exotic music. In Tiersot's essays on the Exhibition concerts, Saint-Saëns is the only French contemporary to whose music he refers in discussing exotic music, and the only one whose opinions about it he cites.[98] Saint-Saëns may have been wrong to think of Javanese music as Hindu (Java is majority Muslim and the performers at the Exhibition were from Surakarta and its Muslim court), but he upheld the idea of music that "deliciously charms the ear," a "music of dreaming." Orchestral audiences had long enjoyed the seductive colors and original rhythms of the "Bacchanale" and the "Dance of the Priestesses" from his *Samson et Dalila*, which both Colonne and Lamoureux put back on their programs just after the closing of the Exhibition in fall 1889.[99] Public fascination with exoticism and Saint-Saëns's elevated status in the musical world most likely led to the decision to give the French premiere, at long last, of his *Samson et Dalila*. In December 1889, Henri Verdhurt announced he would inaugurate a new theater in Rouen with the opera the following March and take it to the Eden-Théâtre in Paris that October.

Debussy was still virtually unknown to the public in 1889, having recently returned from his postgraduate years in Rome. But thanks to the Exhibition, he integrated the stimulus of exotic music with the symbolist fascination with sonority, developing important musical ideas in his first major works. In his case, it was his perspective as an outsider who had never traveled beyond Europe or apparently studied exotic music that served him well. Not privy to the principles underlying this music, he was left on his own to digest what he heard. Unlike Tiersot who marveled at instances when he heard harmony in non-Western music, Debussy

98. Tiersot, *Musiques pittoresques*, 46–47, and "Promenades musicales à l'Exposition," *Ménestrel*, 22 September 1889, 299.

99. The Concerts Lamoureux performed Saint-Saëns's "Dance of the Priestesses" on 17 November 1889, not having done it since 1884, and the Concerts Colonne played it on 15 December, for the first time since 1887.

focused on the particularity of its sonorities, its timbre. Early ethnomusicologists considered this, rather than pitch, "the most apparent quality of the sound" and that which had the most immediate effect on the listener.[100] Constantin Brailoiu claims that Debussy in fact owes less to Javanese scales than to their orchestral sound and unusual instrumental combinations.[101] Mueller's conclusions aside, this insight is born out in Debussy's response to hearing an Annamite woodwind and drum at the 1889 Exhibition (fig. 85 and ex. 24). Although much of the French public found the piercing sound of this woodwind extremely unpleasant—one called it "a kind of flute whose sound enters your ear like a rotary drill"—Debussy appreciated how these two instruments expressed as much as an entire orchestra. He became interested in decomposing sound and using timbres in their pure state.[102] The opening flute solo of his *Faune* should be understood as, in part, an idealized response to the challenge posed by this music.

So, too, should his *Nocturnes*, a work that also brings together symbolist ideas and exotic influences. Its original title came from "Scènes au crépuscule" (1892) by the symbolist poet Henri de Régnier.[103] Pushing his interest in individual timbres further, in 1894, Debussy wrote that in *Nocturnes*, he envisaged dividing the orchestra into separate groups, clearly distinguished in sound and function.[104] Contrasting timbres would delineate musical ideas. *Nocturnes* surpassed *Faune* in the use of ostinati. Whereas those in *Faune* maintain their rhythms but change their pitches to accommodate what was harmonically called for in the melody, in *Nocturnes*, they consist of the same notes as well as rhythms and Debussy treats them as motives. Moreover, in "Sirènes," he superimposes numerous, simultaneous

100. In his *Esthétique musicale* (1921), Ernest Closson writes, "Chacun perçoit de prime abord une sonorité particulière, n'identifierait-il point le corps qui l'a produite, instrument, voix, ou phénomène naturel." Cited in André Schnaeffner, "Le Timbre," in *La Résonance dans les échelles musicales*, ed. Edith Weber (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1963), 216.

101. Cited in Schnaeffner, "Timbre," 216.

102. Later, he wrote to Victor Segalen, "Musicians do not know how to decompose sound, the pure given. . . . I am trying to use each timbre in its pure state . . . We have learned too much about mixing timbres without using them for what they are *[les faire jouer avec leurs valeurs mêmes]*." Annie Joly-Segalen and André Schaeffner, eds., *Segalen et Debussy* (Monaco: Rocher, 1962), 107. On Debussy's interest in timbre as sonority, see Mark DeVoto, "The Debussy Sound: Colour, Texture, Gesture," in *The Cambridge Companion to Debussy*, ed. Simon Trezise (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 179–96, esp. 183–85.

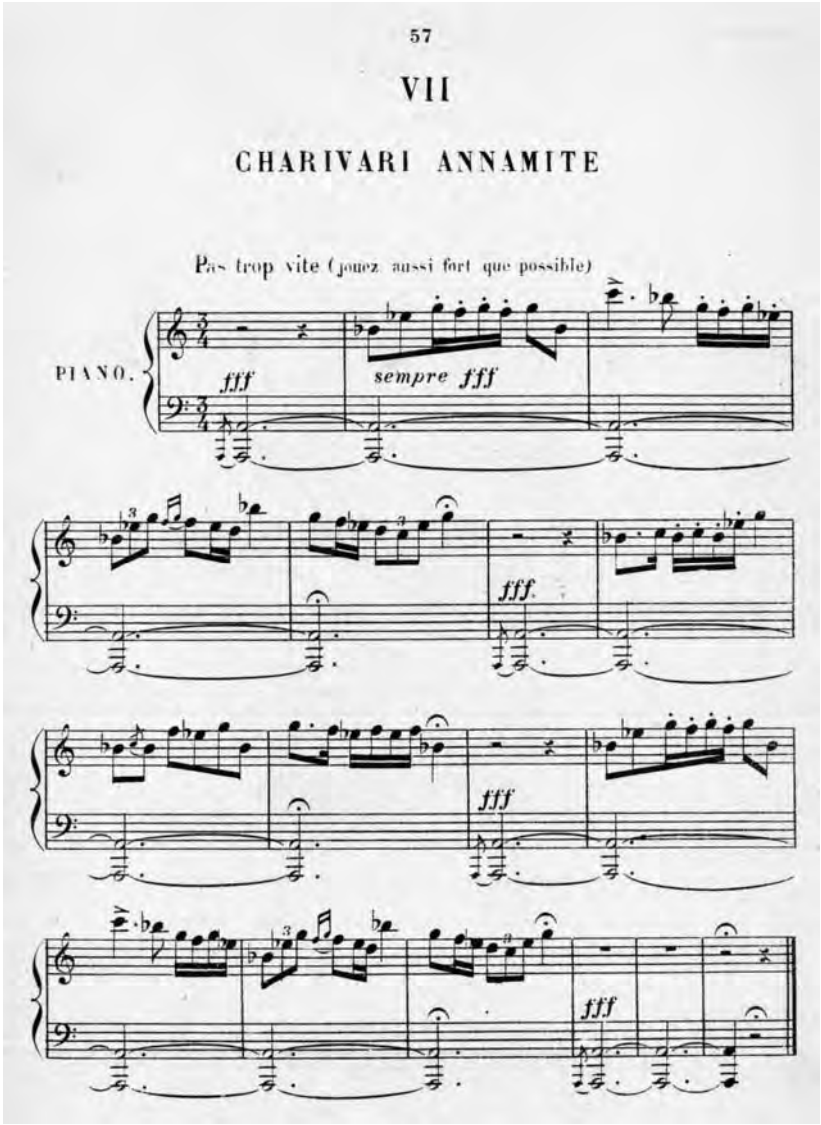
103. In "Debussy, Mallarmé, and 'Les Mardis,'" in *Debussy and His World*, ed. Jane Fulcher (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001), 258–59, Rosemary Lloyd points out that Régnier, "one of Mallarmé's most devoted disciples," was the person who got permission from Maeterlinck for Debussy to set *Pelléas et Mélisande* to music.

104. Debussy, letter to Henri Lerolle, 28 August 1894, cited in Maurice Denis, *Henri Lerolle et ses amis* (Paris: Duranton, 1932), 30.

FIG. 85 Engraving from Louis Bénédictus, "Charivari annamite," *Les Musiques bizarres à l'exposition* (Paris: Harmann, 1889).

EX. 24 Louis Bénédictus, "Charivari annamite," *Les Musiques bizarres à l'exposition* (1889).

This miniature book of transcriptions made available in Western notation various music that visitors may have heard at the 1889 Universal Exhibition. Performers of this music for the Annamite Theater are instructed to "play as loud as possible"—the only dynamic level marked in the piece is fortissimo (*fff*), and this while the melody is often extremely dissonant with the drone bass. Jules Lemaître observed: "most discordant charivari [mock serenade] of lunatic amateurs would seem like a celestial harmony after this. . . . It is music for torturers, made to accompany the agony of prisoners who have had sharp reeds forced under their fingernails" (*Figaro*, 8 July 1889).



rhythmic ostinati, forging an equivalent for the multiplicity of simultaneous lines, or what he called "twining counterpoints," in Javanese music wherein various instruments perform different elements of a *balungen*, or melodic framework, at varying rates (ex. 25). Comparing the complexities of Javanese music with those of Palestrina, he later explained, "Their school consists of the eternal rhythm of the sea, the wind in the leaves, and a thousand other tiny noises, which they listen to with great care. . . . Javanese music obeys laws of counterpoint that make Palestrina seem like child's play."[105] The polyrhythmic divisions of the measure in "Sirènes" with up to nine different rhythmic ostinati not only suggest the innumerable rhythms of the sea,[106] they fuse to create a new sonority (ex. 26). By the time Debussy completed this masterpiece (1897–99), short motives, distinct timbres, and rhythmic ostinati had become important elements of his own personal style.[107]

Debussy's ability to integrate symbolist and exotic influences during this period was probably encouraged, if not also shaped, by his association with Bailly. The very month his series on sound ended, Bailly founded another journal and a publishing house to support occultist and symbolist work, the Librairie de l'art indépendant.[108] The salon he held in his office attracted some of the leading symbolists of the time. In this context, Debussy, a regular there from 1890 to 1894, developed his new theory about music. Connecting sensations associated with exotic music, symbolism, and the occult, he proposed that music should express "the mysterious correspondences between nature and the imagination."[109] Exoticism thus contributed to a cult of sonority, a kind of analogue to the symbolist cult of self, with significant implications for early modernism.

105. *Revue musicale S.I.M.*, 15 February 1913, in *Debussy on Music: The Critical Writings of the Great French Composer Claude Debussy*, ed. François Lesure and trans. Richard Langham Smith (1977; Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), 278. For further analysis, see Jann Pasler, "Timbre, Voice-leading and the Musical Arabesque in Debussy's Piano Music," in *Debussy in Performance*, ed. James Briscoe (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999): 225–55.

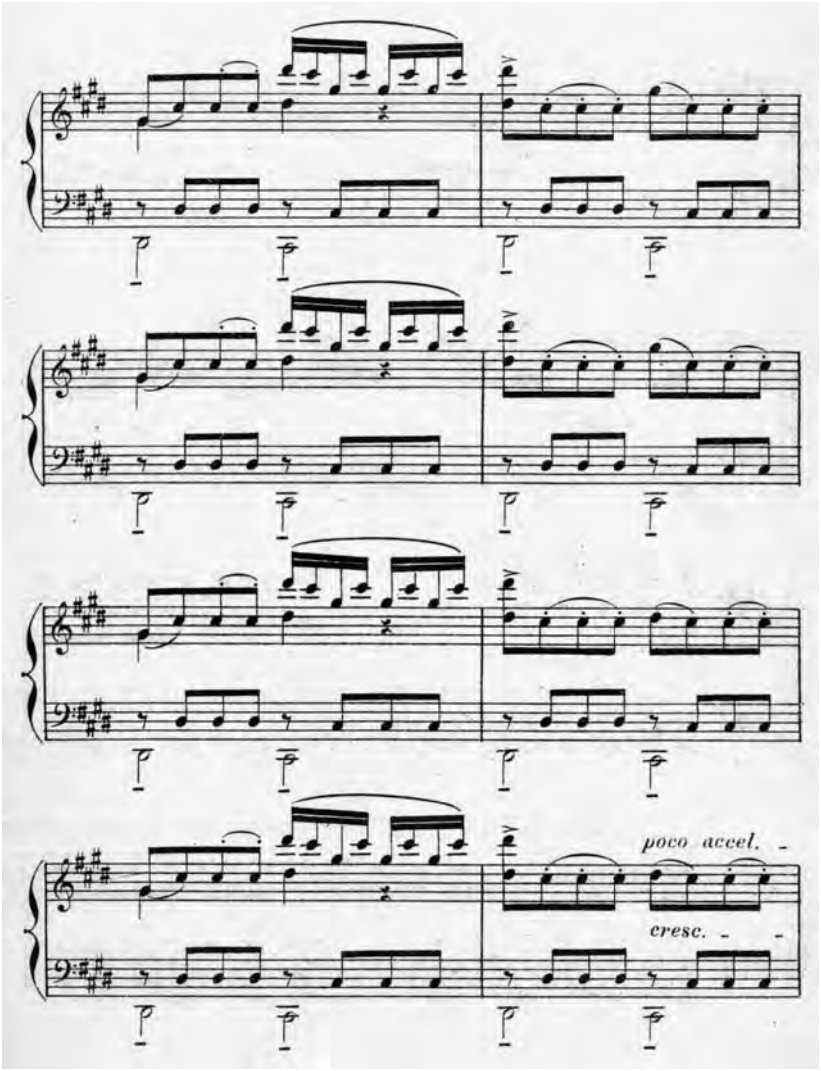
106. Jean Barraqué, *Debussy* (Paris: Seuil, 1962), 108.

107. See the analysis of these aspects of *Nocturnes* in Jann Pasler, "Debussy, Stravinsky, and the Ballets Russes: The Emergence of a New Musical Logic" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1981), 282–95.

108. During this period, Bailly distributed Debussy's *Cinq Poèmes de Baudelaire* when it was first published and published his *Damoiselle Elue* in a limited luxury edition.

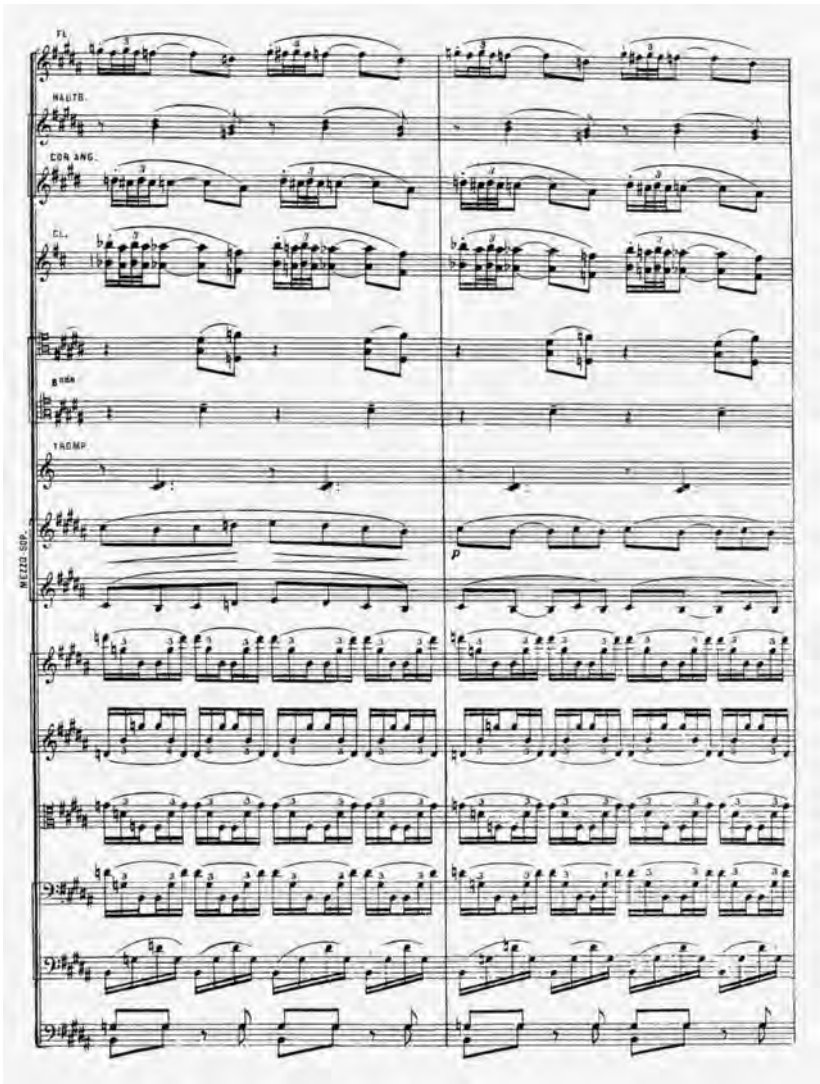
109. Debussy used this expression in his explanation of what he was seeking to accomplish in his *Pelléas*, which he began to think about in 1893. See his "Pourquoi j'ai écrit *Pelléas*," in Claude Debussy, *Monsieur Croche et autres écrits*, ed. François Lesure (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 61.

EX. 25 Louis Bénédictus, "Danse javanaise," *Les Musiques bizarres à l'exposition* (1889). In this transcription of a Javanese dance, characterized by a two-measure repeating melodic pattern, the superimposition of numerous shorter rhythmic ostinati, of half-notes in the bass and sixteenth-notes in the soprano, resembles that of Debussy's "Sirènes."



EX. 26 Debussy, *Nocturnes* (1897–99), "Sirènes."

The aural effect of these nine repeating rhythmic patterns, two per measure, results from the simultaneity of note durations ranging from dotted quarter notes to triplet thirty-second notes.



From the Eiffel Tower to the Javanese performances, the symbolic utility of Exhibition displays was of crucial importance in getting visitors to think of certain achievements, including music, as infused with republican hopes and ideals. The Exhibition's success suggested that republicanism had become an official culture. This recognition served to shift French focus from a vague but devoted sense of *la patrie* to an articulate sense of nation. Whereas the former was broad enough to appeal to distinct, warring factions, the latter called for a unity coextensive with the Third Republic. On 21 September, the government unveiled the mold of a new statue symbolizing France, called *Le Triomphe de la République* (The Triumph of the Republic). As in the case of Holmes's *Ode*, it did not win the government-sponsored competition for such a work to be placed in front of City Hall. However, the municipal council of Paris liked the statue so much that officials commissioned it for the Place de la Nation where it still stands. With monarchist aspirations dissipated after the demise of General Boulanger, agreement on the nature of the nation-state grew more plausible. As the world grew smaller and conflicts abroad proliferated, presenting a united front to the world—a coherent national identity—was becoming a necessary prerequisite for making diplomatic agreements and political alliances in international contexts. At the same time, this need for self-definition raised the stakes on whose voices would determine that identity. With neither the radical Left nor the Catholic Right content, and any true consensus on the national interest remaining elusive, this led to increased friction with those espousing conflicting ideals and fueled the emergence of distinct countercultures nurturing alternative ideologies.

Music's contribution to the Exhibition was significant in this regard. Understanding of its public utility had evolved, along with perception of the country's needs and desires, away from serving primarily a moral and educational role in forming citizens and contributing economically to the country's prosperity. What was increasingly important was the symbolic capacity of music. Musical instruments and a broad array of musical practices expressed and embodied national identity and a nation's commitment to progress. It was ironic, then, that from the perspective of musical progress Javanese and Vietnamese music proved more useful than official French concerts and, more than any French music, was compared to Wagner as the representative of musical progress in the West. Organizers' focus on standard repertoire rather than new pieces suggests that the ideology of progress at home was beginning to be compromised, particularly among the emerging republican Right.

After the Exhibition, instead of embracing eclecticism and diversity while promoting growth and change, republicanism in the 1890s became, for moderates and conservatives, an ideology to maintain and protect. As we shall see in the next chapter, in response to socialist idealism and anarchist attacks, this led to various alliances between republicans and traditional elites, including Catholics and aristocrats. Not all of the latter were interested in the utility of music for the public good, as defined by republicans. Yet they did understand the merits of music's symbolic utility and, like republicans, turned to it as a weapon for self-defense, self-promotion, and the preservation of their own values amid a new round of controversy over what it meant to be French.