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French Composers as Intellectuals: Music and Politics in Early 20th Century France

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French Composers as Intellectuals: Music and Politics in Early 20th Century France

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
of Bard College

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Introduction

By the time of the First World War, excluding Wagner's music from programs was a very common thing to do. In November 1915, the journal *La Musique pendant la guerre* published an interview with the Russian singer Félicia Litvinne in which she claimed that she was offered to sing Wagner in Buenos Aires but refused because she wanted to be loyal to the French-Russian alliance:

“They even gave me a great opportunity to sing Wagner in Buenos Aires. I refused, not only to avoid singing these works but because I consider it to be my duty here as long as France is at War, and as long as this horrible tragedy lasts. I will not sing Wagner, not even at home”¹

This contrasted the acts of another musician, the French conductor André Messager who at the same moment was on tour in Buenos Aires as a guest conductor where he performed Wagner pieces on three occasions. Not surprisingly, he was very criticized at the time for being a French man performing works of the enemy. He replied to his critics by saying:

“In order to introduce French music into the orchestra's programs, I had to agree to play Beethoven, Mozart, Schumann, Brahms and Wagner”²

Having this case as an example makes one wonder if there is any relationship between music and politics. Is a musician considered an intellectual with social responsibility? In this project, I will try to answer this question through the analysis of the socio-political situation of France at the turn of the 20th century and the role music played in this context. In the first chapter, we will briefly review certain factors that influenced the development of the socio-political context in France during the third republic, discuss how this gave rise to the figure of the modern intellectual, and examine what was the role of the artist in this phenomenon. In the second chapter, we will analyze the relationship of music institutions and politics using as

¹ Buch 10. “*The Germans and the Bosh*”: *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

² Buch 10. “*The Germans and the Bosh*”: *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

examples the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, concert societies and programming during the First World War. Next, in the third chapter, following the same idea of the previous chapter, we will discuss the relationship between music education and politics by comparing and analyzing the *Conservatoire de Paris* and the *Schola Cantorum de Paris*. Finally, in the last chapter, through the analysis of three composers: Vincent d'Indy, Alfred Bruneau and Gustave Charpentier, we will discuss how they assumed a role as intellectuals and conveyed political messages, both in their musical composition and in the positions they took publicly. In the same way, throughout this project we will also discuss the different concepts of the “French tradition” and musical style, concepts that played an important part in this history.

Chapter 1: Context and Origins

Social and Political Context

To analyze the social and political context in France at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century is very complex due to the multiple variables that characterized this period of time. However, there are three important factors that can be taken into account in order to understand the big picture of the social and political scene: 1) the political and social instability of the third republic, 2) the cultural militarism and nationalism in society, 3) the increasing antisemitism.

- 1) most governments of the French third republic (1870-1940) were linked to bourgeois traditional conservative values³; it was a long political period characterized by multiple wars and political scandals that relate to corruption. For example, the loss of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 (causing the loss of French territory in the Alsace region), the Panama affair in 1892 (involving the corruption of high position politicians in the construction of the Panama canal), the Dreyfus Affair in 1898 (a case of corruption in the military and the political system), the First World War in 1914-1918, and so on. Additionally, the socio-political instability was caused by the rivalry among the different political currents of the time, specially the monarchist and the republicans⁴; instability that led to the uprising of radical movements like “Boulangism”⁵ and Anarchism in 1880-90. As a way of example, Stephen Tongue makes a clearer distinction of the different political currents during this time with the following diagram:

³ Mettra 7, *Grands Événements 31: L’Affaire Dreyfus et La Conspiration de L’État*

⁴ Here republicans means those who believe in French revolution values.

⁵ “Boulangism” comes from Georges Ernest Boulanger who was a General and politician of the Third Republic. Also well known as “General Revanche”, he had his base support mainly from the working class and advocated for an aggressive nationalism in favor of the war against Germany .

Socialists	Moderate Republicans (Opportunists)	Radicals	Monarchists
Political force after 1890. Many were revolutionaries who followed the theories of Karl Marx.	Formed most of the governments during this period. Middle class and social conservatives.	It was said that their hearts were on the left but their wallets were on the right. Very anti-clerical. Powerful influence after the Dreyfus Affair.	Very Catholic. Saw the Republic as weak and corrupt. Divided between Bonapartists and more traditional monarchists

(Credit: *The Third Republic 1870-1914*, Stephen Tonge)

From 1893, the moderate republicans were in power; thus, La République (the government) was represented by them at the turn of the century.

- 2) The military played an important role in society during the third republic and was fundamental in the national ideology. In fact, it worked as an independent organization in which the high positions of the military remained in power while the governments were required to change. Among the military activities, espionage was actively practiced during the third republic among European countries. There was a constant fear of the enemy having spies in the country. Furthermore, the French military had a department of espionage and counter-espionage, especially focused on the movements of Italy and Germany⁶. Additionally, nationalism was culturally cultivated due to the influence of two political movements called *Ligue de la Patrie Française* and *Action Française*. The latest would become one of the most influential nationalist movements in 1914. Created as a reaction to the Dreyfus affair, these political movements spread conservative beliefs

⁶ Mettra 8, *Grands Événements 31: L’Affaire Dreyfus et La Conspiration de L’État*

claiming to be the real French tradition; a tradition that was based on antisemitism and the importance of clericalism⁷.

- 3) Antisemitism was not something new in the 19th century. However, by the end of the century, there was a considerable increase of antisemitism in France. This was the case, especially by the influence of a key figure of late 19th century antisemitism, Édouard Drumont who was the editor of the journal *La Libre Parole*. In 1886, Drumont wrote a book in two volumes called *La France juive*, a book regarding a conspiracy theory in which he claimed, in a hatred message, how the Jews were trying to control humanity through the imposition of three standards: the racial superiority, the world financial control through capitalism and the imposition of their religion. This book had sold more than 60,000 copies the year of publication and got reedited 200 times in the following twenty years⁸.

The socio-political situation, along with these factors, set the scenario for the intellectual manifestation to happen at the end of the 19th century as a consequence of the events from the Dreyfus Affair in 1898.

Origin of The Intellectuals

Trying to prove the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, who was wrongly accused of treason for espionage with no real proof, important figures like Louis Leblois, Macel Prévost, Anatole France, Charles Péguy, Henri Poincaré, and Georges Clemenceau started to engage in the political field in order to support Dreyfus' innocence. They were engaged through the writing of

⁷ Fulcher 10. *The Composer as Intellectual*

⁸ Mettra 9, *Grands Événements 31: L’Affaire Dreyfus et La Conspiration de L’État*

articles and political activism. However, it was the novelist Émile Zola who had a bigger influence on the movement by writing a public letter to the president Félix Faure called *J'Accuse*. Published in *L'Aurore* on January 13 in 1898, this letter exposed all the corruption of the entities and the people that declared Alfred Dreyfus guilty for the crimes he did not commit, and who did so unequivocally because Dreyfus was Jewish. Being quickly convinced about the conspiracy of the Affair, Zola felt the necessity to use his voice for the sake of the truth and justice⁹, as he expressed in the introduction of *J'Accuse*.

“They have dared to do this. Very well, then, I shall dare too. I shall tell the truth, for I pledged that I would tell it, if our judicial system, once the matter was brought before it through the normal channels, did not tell the truth, the whole truth. It is my duty to speak up; I will not be an accessory to the fact. If I were, my nights would be haunted by the spectre of that innocent man so far away, suffering the worst kind of torture as he pays for a crime he did not commit.

And it is to you, M. le Président, that I will shout out the truth with all the revulsion of a decent man. To your credit, I am convinced that you are unaware of the truth. And to whom should I denounce the evil machinations of those who are truly guilty if not you, the First Magistrate in the land?”¹⁰

J'Accuse had an incredible impact that shocked Paris, nearly turning the city upside down. Everybody was overwhelmed with the article and the Dreyfus Affair. The day it was published, *L'Aurore* sold between 200,000 and 300,000 copies which was nearly ten times the normal number. Being challenged by the strong accusations, the government sued both Zola and Alexandre Perrenx (the manager of *L'Aurore*) and condemned them to prison, forcing Zola to be in exile in England until 1899¹¹. The importance of this article comes from the way Zola was

⁹ Pagès and Levieux 16, *The Dreyfus Affair “J'accuse” and Other Writings*

¹⁰ Pagès and Levieux 43, *The Dreyfus Affair “J'accuse” and Other Writings*

¹¹ Pagès and Levieux 18, *The Dreyfus Affair “J'accuse” and Other Writings*

able to successfully summarize a complicated situation, put it into words and raise questions that eventually lead to the truth of the Affair. As Pagès and Levieux point out:

“The great merit of *J’Accuse* lies, obviously, in the fact that it drew clear conclusions from a particularly unclear and entangled set of facts, that it raised decisive questions and made it possible for the answers to them to emerge publicly”¹².

However, *J’Accuse* symbolized more than that. It was the inflection point in which people from the domain of arts and writing started to get involved in politics. From this point on, novelists, poets, historians, journalists, and so on, started to take a position of social responsibility and, later on, received the name of “Intellectuals”. Those who were in favor of Dreyfus received the name of “Dreyfusards intellectuals”; giving origin to their counterpart, the “anti-Dreyfusards intellectuals”. These were conservative right intellectuals that were against Dreyfus and those who supported him. For example, the founder of *Action Française* Charles Maurras, the founder of *Ligue de la Patrie Française* Maurice Barrès, the painter Auguste Renoir, the writer Jules Verne, and as we will later on see, the composer Vincent d’Indy.

The Artist as Intellectual

Before the modern concept of “intellectual” of the end of the 19th century, the most direct ancestor of the intellectual was the philosopher or “*l’homme de lettres*” of the 18th century. For example, people who encompass general knowledge of literature, philosophy, mathematics, physics like Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the case of the artists, the perception of their role in society was different. From the early 19th century, the meaning of their art was entirely aesthetical rather than social; in other words, the art was completely divorced from social, moral or political activism. This way of thinking was called art for art’s sake (*L’art pour l’art*)¹³. However, as the socio-political situation in France was changing towards the end of the century,

¹² Pagès and Levieux 24, *The Dreyfus Affair “J’accuse” and Other Writings*

¹³ Charle 20-27. *Naissance des intellectuels: 1880-1900*.

the *hommes de lettres* and the artist started to take a more active role in society giving birth to the modern figure of the intellectual, as it was explained before. Having said that, not every artist wanted to take part in this phenomenon. As Christophe Charles points out, this manifestation caused a division between those who did not want to get involved in the political field and thought that art should remain purely aesthetic (*avant-garde littéraire*), and those who wanted to get involved and have a socio-political impact (*avant-garde politique*)¹⁴. As a way of example of *avant-garde littéraire*, the journalist Anatole Baju wrote an article in his newspaper *Le Décadent* on April 10 in 1886 regarding the opposition of politics in arts:

“Political decadence leaves us frigid. train, led by this symptomatic sect of politicians whose apparition was inevitable at these failing hours. We abstain from politics as something ideally vile and abjectly despicable. Art has no party; it is the only point of rallying all opinions”¹⁵.

As a way of example of *avant-garde politique*, the symbolist writer Francis Vielé-Griffin wrote an article in the magazin *Les Entretiens politiques et littéraires* on May 25 in 1893 expressing his position on the art for art’s sake:

"The artist, by the mere fact that he professes the cult of Beauty, proclaims Justice and Truth (...). Certainly, artists, your duty is to persist in your being, to withdraw it from diminishing contingencies, to raise it to the Absolute, and in so doing you duly glorify humanity of which you are an elite and serve it as much. But, strive (sic), be aware of all the nobility of your effort, draw from the vast solidarity of pain that envelops you, the power to suffer better and more deeply to reach this extreme anguish, the high joy - and bequeath to remote futures an affirmation still, of the latent God, a reflection of his Beauty, a work of art”¹⁶.

Thus, there was a debate among intellectuals in which a great part believed that art for art’s sake ended and, as artists, they had a duty to proclaim justice and truthfulness. Interestingly, these

¹⁴ Charle 99. *Naissance des intellectuels: 1880-1900*.

¹⁵ Charle 100. *Naissance des intellectuels: 1880-1900*.

¹⁶ Charle 107. *Naissance des intellectuels: 1880-1900*.

intellectuals were part of the symbolist and naturalist movement in the decade of 1890; and as previously discussed, Émile Zola was one of the major characters that participated in this political activism. Now, after this brief summary of the context of the socio-political situation and the origin of the intellectual as a public figure, let's proceed to analyze how this relates to music at all.

Chapter 2: Music Institutions and Politics

As mentioned before, conservative right nationalism was culturally dominant in the turn of the 20th century, especially led by the *Ligue de la Patrie Française* and *Action Française*. This socio-political tendency remained until the time of the First World War (1914-1917). In fact, during the war, French nationalism became stronger than ever. Due to the massive influence of German nationalism in Europe and the conflicts with the Prussians, France needed to find a way to affirm its values and culture with a special focus on tradition in music¹⁷. For this reason, important characters from these political groups started to share their opinion and claim what the musical style should be.

In the case of *Action Française*, they considered that the true origin of French culture was the classical style, as seen in the monarchy era. It was Charles Maurras, who thought that French history and classicism were bounded. For him, restoring the monarchy and following seventeenth-century France as a model would generate the order necessary in society to make great art like in the past. He believed that beauty depended on order, and order of a hierarchy of values; to make beautiful art there had to be an authority who defined it. In the same way, as Fulcher points out, Maurices Barrès thought that arts and politics should be filled with the same nationalist spirit in order to make a national union:

“Hence literature and art, for French nationalist, would be the principal model and support of politics, expressive of the ideal form and fundamental nature of the national community”¹⁸

Thus, the classicism practice in the monarchy became a national language used for the defense of French culture during the First World War. Saying the authentic French culture is classic had its resistance from the left particularly. As it was mentioned before, there was a

¹⁷ Here tradition is referred to as musical style.

¹⁸ Fulcher 21. *The Composer as Intellectual*

division among intellectuals in France, the Dreyfusard and the anti-Dreyfusard. Some Dreyfusard intellectuals and institutions, (especially in the case of music), did not agree with those right nationalist thinkers. In fact, they considered that French culture needed to be based on the French Revolution and its characteristics of universalism, not on the Ancien Regime¹⁹; as we will discuss in further chapters. This dispute is something that cultural leaders had to deal with at the time. In fact, musicians and the public were part of this conflict of ideologies, in which the decisions were either to remain faithful to a popular ideology (nationalism) or take the risk of doing the opposite in favor of art.

Following this idea, nationalist doctrine was imposed on musical institutions in order to promote nationalist propaganda during the Great War; due to its categorization as a war of cultures. In 1915 the *Opéra de Paris* was reopened even though the government had doubts about the relevance of the Opéra during wartime; however, Jacques Rouché (director of the Opéra in 1914) understood the potential cultural power the Opéra could have. The state organized a network of wartime propaganda which involved mass events in which they shared nationalist ideas through cultural events such as cafe-concerts. Nevertheless, as there were multiple events like this, it was difficult to monitor the production of each concert, which is why the state decided to add the Opéra to the network due to its facility to gather crowds in a single venue; in that way, the surveillance of the production would be more effective. Because of the exclamation of classicism on French tradition by the right-wing nationalists, productions and programming had to be adapted to those political expectations²⁰. This caused a dilemma in the cultural world due to the ideological division that existed. The imposition of the classical style was found discomfoting for several musicians and music institutions. However, escaping from

¹⁹ Fulcher 23. *The Composer as Intellectual*

²⁰ Fulcher 19-23. *The Composer as Intellectual*

the right-wing nationalism network was difficult for musicians and composers to accomplish, as we will see in the case of the Opéra.

The Opéra and The Opéra-Comique

Jacques Rouché was very well prepared to meet the standards of the government and knew how to balance the political expectations with the taste and interest of the French public. He also managed to have the support of important figures such as Paul Painlevé whom he met through his journal, *La Grande revue*. He was quite successful in convincing them of the importance of the opera and the function it could have for the use of nationalist propaganda as he explains in his letter of August 25, 1915 to the ministry. He outlines his ideas to make opera more accessible to the public through a series of "*matinées*" concerts at a lower price and with an informal dress code every Thursday and Sunday afternoon. In this way, through a variety of repertoire, he demonstrated the importance of the French tradition:

“The audience will witness the history of music at the Opéra; it will be convinced that the French tradition is refined today, stronger and richer than ever”²¹

Rouché's plan was genius because, in addition to meeting the artistic requirements of the government, it served as illustrative concerts of the artistic evolution of French music. Each concert was dedicated to seeking connections between the France of the past and that of the present through the juxtaposition of past and contemporary compositions as it is shown in table 1. Rouché initially got this idea from Albert Carré (the director of the Opéra-Comique 1898-1914) who in 1910 proposed the "*matinée de jeudi*" under the direction of Serge Diaghilev and performed five historical Russian concerts and sixteen historical music concerts²². In fact, Rouché had tried this method of historical concerts before in 1913 in his own theater “Théâtre des Arts” where he used the same methodology of juxtaposing works from the past and the

²¹ Fulcher 24. *The Composer as Intellectual*

²² Chaouche. *Le répertoire de l'Opéra et de l'Opéra-Comique entre 1915 et 1945*

present like Jean-Baptiste Lully and Gabriel Fauré²³. He gained much popularity by what he called “*des concerts illustrés*” which helped him to get his position as Director of the *Opéra de Paris*. These were concerts in which the history of music was illustrated with the repertoire, the use of traditional costumes and lectures about the music in order to reinforce the cultural learning and French tradition²⁴.

Concerts Historiques de l’Opéra de Paris sous l’ère Rouché

Date	Œuvre	Compositeur
9 déc. 1915	<i>Mademoiselle de Nantes</i>	sur les musiques de Jean-Baptiste Lully, Marc-Antoine Charpentier et Marco-Antonio Cesti
6 jan. 1916	<i>Les Virtuozzi de Mazarin</i>	sur les musiques de Luigi Rossi, Claudio Monteverdi et Francesco Cavalli
16 avr. 1916	<i>Le Roman d’Estelle</i>	sur les musiques de Vincenzo Bellini, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, Ferdinand Hérold, Hector Berlioz et Luigi Cherubini
16 avr. 1916	<i>Carême prenant</i>	sur les musiques d’Antoine de Boësset, Antoine Francisque, Pierre Guédron, Jean Boyer et Jacques Gallot
25 mai 1916	<i>Une Fête chez La Pouplinière</i>	sur les musiques de Jean-Philippe Rameau, Christoph-Willibald Gluck, Egidio Romoaldo Duni, Giovanni Battista Pergolese et François-André Philidor
21 mars 1918	<i>Castor et Pollux</i>	Jean-Philippe Rameau

Table 1 (Credit: Le répertoire de l’Opéra et de l’Opéra-Comique entre 1915 et 1945/Sabine Chaouche)

Regarding the Opéra’s regular repertoire, it is possible to see Albert Carré’s influence on Rouché’s art policy. The *matinées* were not the only similarity between the Opéra and the Opéra-comique. The use of music as a channel of nationalist propaganda is something that could be seen in both institutions. Both not only had to balance the performance between the official classical demands and audiences preferences but also new modern French works. According to the *cahier des charges*²⁵, it was demanded that the Opéra and concert societies had to program

²³ Fulcher 129. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*.

²⁴ Fulcher 24. *The Composer as Intellectual*

²⁵ The contract they had to follow as music institutions.

seventeen new French compositions²⁶. Rouché tried to use this as a way to unify the French population using music as an analogy. He combined works from composers belonging to opposite ideological groups in the pre-war era, such as those with nationalist affinities like d'Indy and those with the Republican Dreyfusard ideas like Bruneau as can be seen in table 2.

Compositeurs Français de l'époque

Palais Garnier			Opéra Comique		
Date	Œuvre	Compositeur	Date	Œuvre	Compositeur
11 mars 1915	<i>Ma mère l'Oye (ballet)</i>	Maurice Ravel	15 mai 1914	<i>Mârrouf, savetier du Caire</i>	Henri Rabaud
13 jan. 1916	<i>Le Chant de la cloche</i>	Vincent d'Indy	29 mai 1914	<i>La Peri (ballet)</i>	Paul Dukas
16 fév. 1916	<i>L'Ourangan</i>	Alfred Bruneau	25 fév. 1915	<i>Les Soldats de France</i>	Paul Vidal
2 mars 1916	<i>Les Amants Rémini</i>	Max d'Ollone	25 déc. 1915	<i>Les Cadeaux de Noël</i>	Xavier Leroux
13 avr. 1916	<i>L'Étranger</i>	Vincent d'Indy	20 jan. 1916	<i>Le Tambour</i>	Alfred Bruneau
18 mai 1916	<i>Miguela</i>	Théodore Dubois	24 fév. 1916	<i>La Charmante Rosalie ou Le Mariage par procuration</i>	Henri Hirschmann
18 mai 1916	<i>Chant de guerre</i>	Florent Schmitt	5 août 1916	<i>Lakmé (ballet)</i>	Léo Delibes
25 mai 1916	<i>Un fête chez la Pouplinière</i>	Jean-Philippe Rameau	25 déc. 1916	<i>Les Quatre Journées</i>	Alfred Bruneau
14 juil. 1919	<i>Fête triomphale</i>	Reynaldo Hahn	20 jan. 1919	<i>Pénélope</i>	Gabriel Fauré

Table 2 (Credit: Le répertoire de l'Opéra et de l'Opéra-Comique entre 1915 et 1945/Sabine Chaouche)

Although the programming was very similar in various aspects (like programming mainly French composers as it is shown in table 2), the difference between both institutions was really seen in the management. While the Opéra under Rouché met the musical expectations of the public and officials, the Opéra-Comique had certain censorship problems during the war. For example, they tried to program Bruneau's *L'Attaque du moulin*, which was an opera that, in addition to having the collaboration of Emile Zola for the libretto, was based on a story about the

²⁶ “Cahier des charges, 1915,” Titre II, Art. 12. “The Conductor will be required to play during the duration of his privilege seventeen new works, including at least fourteen by French composers.”

Franco-Prussian war written by Zola. Although the opera takes place during the time of the revolution, it was considered a dangerous work due to the context of war and the Dreyfusard influence it had²⁷. However, both institutions had the priority of programming French repertoire although, at the same time, they programmed foreign composers as can be seen in table 3.

Compositeurs Étrangers

Palais Garnier			Opéra Comique		
Date	Œuvre	Compositeur	Date	Œuvre	Compositeur
9 déc. 1915	<i>Eugène Onéguin</i>	Piotr- Ilitch Tchaikovsky	6 jan. 1914	<i>La Vie brève</i>	Manuel de Fallas
29 déc. 1915	<i>La princesse enchantée</i>	Piotr- Ilitch Tchaikovsky	25 déc. 1914 jusqu'en 1917	<i>La fille du régiment</i>	Gaetano Donizetti
29 déc. 1915	<i>Soleil du nuit</i>	Rimski-Korsakov	16 avr. 1920	<i>L'invitation à la valse</i>	Carl-Maria Von Weber
5 fév. 1916	<i>Don Pasquale</i>	Gaetano Donizetti			
12 Mars 1916	<i>Manon Lescault</i>	Giacomo Puccini			
22 Mars 1917	<i>Maria di Rohan</i>	Gaetano Donizetti			

Table 3 (Credit: Le répertoire de l'Opéra et de l'Opéra-Comique entre 1915 et 1945/Sabine Chaouche)

Among the interesting things to note when comparing these tables, it is possible to see that in addition to the notable priority given to French music, the most outstanding composers were the winners of the *Prix de Rome*. This is due to the fact that in its *cahier de charges* it was stipulated that once every one or two years, music by one of the winners of the *Prix de Rome* had to be programmed²⁸. Something quite interesting about the *cahier des charges* is that in the

²⁷ Fulcher 26. *The Composer as Intellectual*

²⁸ Cahier des charges de 1915, Art. 15, AN, F²¹ 4656. Once every two years, the director of the Opera is required to present a work in one, two or three acts by a winner of the Prix de Rome. See the 1915 specifications, article 15, AN, F21 4656. During the duration of his privilege, the director of the Opera is then required to choose three of the seven works in one or two acts by French composers from among the prizes of Rome. See the 1919 specifications, article 14, AN, F21 4656. In the 1933 specifications, no allusion is made to the compulsory creation of the Prix de Rome. At the Opéra-Comique, on the other hand, the director is required to play "four Prix de Rome works that have not yet been performed at the Opéra-Comique" for the duration of his concession. See the 1918 specifications, article 39, AN, F21 4674. This clause continues in the 1932 specifications, article 28, AN, F21 4674. (This

following years after the war, this requirement was no longer part of the contract, which suggests that the probable reason for programming French composers winners of a major prize of the time was to further highlight French nationalism. On the other hand, regarding foreign composers, they were always from countries considered as allies or cultural allies like Italy and Russia. This is not surprising due to the war context. In addition to the Latin connection, Italian music was considered the seed of opera which influenced the development of French opera. In the same way, Russian ballet was very important and influential to French ballet, specifically the case of Tchaikovsky at the time. Both were considered as cultural allies beneficial to the nationalist propaganda.

Although considering German music as important as Italian opera for the history of music, there was not a performance of a German composer in any of the big music institutions during the wartime; in fact, it was banned for most concert societies. It wasn't until April 16th, 1920 that a German composer would perform again in one of these big stages, the Opéra-Comique, as shown in table 3. Then, a question emerged at the moment of the war. Are all German composers the enemy? Should German music never be played again? At the same time, this made people question whether music should be universal or linked to a national culture. For French officials the answer was clear; they wanted to defend the purity of French music from foreign culture "contamination". Very prominent in this debate were the composers Camille Saint-Saëns and Vincent D'Indy; although both were very patriotic, they disagreed on the programming of German music.

Despite being very nationalist, D'Indy had a great admiration for those composers who he considered "German masters" like Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner. On one hand, he

explanation was taken from: Le Répertoire de l'Opéra et de l'Opéra-Comique entre 1915 et 1945 by Sabine Chauche)

believed these composers had an universal influence on music, and that it was very important to consider them as pillars of music history. Additionally, he believed that the great tradition of German music that had passed from generations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had been betrayed by the contemporary Austrian-German composers like Mahler, Strauss and Schoenberg²⁹, as we will see in Chapter 3 and 4. On the other hand, Camille Saint-Saëns, after passing a wagnerian influence on music, turned against the composer and even denounced that none German music should be played during wartime:

“As early as December 1914, in the widely read *L'Écho de Paris*, Saint- Saëns went so far as to suggest that no German music be played during war... *Nothing if the barbarians, nothing of their music, of their art, of their science, nothing of their “culture” should henceforth defile our intelligence and our heart*”³⁰.

He wrote several articles like this during wartime denouncing the influence of Germanic artists on French music. In fact, in these articles he proposes that the *French school*³¹ should find its roots in the Italian Opéra. As Jane Fulcher points out:

“Saint-Saëns in an article titled *L'Avenir de la Musique française*, published in *La Grande Revue* in March 1916, confrontationally and ironically proposes that what is really required for the fuller development of French school in music is the restoration of the Théâtre Italien”.³²

This would keep the French pureness away from the excessive growth of the orchestra, and back to the singing, clarity and lyrical qualities that are proper to French and Italian music according to Saint-Saëns.

²⁹ Fulcher 29. *The Composer as Intellectual*

³⁰ Fulcher 29. *The Composer as Intellectual*

³¹ Meaning the French school of music.

³² Fulcher 30. *The Composer as Intellectual*

Concert Societies

Thus, the debate whether German music should be on stage or not was very prominent during wartime. Music institutions encountered problems because the French audience still wanted to hear 19th century romantic music. Having said that, even if important people in the field (like Jacques Rouché) wanted to keep variety on the program, they had to follow the cultural expectations of the government because of being the main music institution of the country. However, this was not the case for every institution. There were other private theaters and orchestras that contributed to the flourishing concert life in Paris playing German music during the war. The *Concert-Rouges*, being pioneer in this regard, was a concert society under the direction of Joseph Jemain since 1915 that offered multiple concerts playing German composers. They performed in their hall at the *Salle Le Peletier*, but also in others like at the *Salle des Agriculteurs* and at *6 Rue de Tournon*. As an example of programming, in their 1916-17 season they programmed multiple weekly *séances* in which they performed symphonies, sonatas, string trios by Beethoven as well as works by J.S Bach³³. However, they were well known for performing other German composers like Haydn, Mozart and even Wagner; because of this tenacity of playing “enemy composers”, this concert society was seen politically oriented to the left as Fulcher describes³⁴. Another example, the *Association Colonne-Lamoureux* was another concert society who was well known for performing German composers and premiering French modern contemporary works. It was led by Camille Chevillard and Gabriel Pierné and they had the *Salle Gaveau* as their house where they performed all the concerts. In 1916 they played Beethoven and Shumann symphonies as well as works by Claude Debussy,

³³Concert-Rouge season 1916-17, *Musical courier* November 23, 1916

³⁴Fulcher 29. *The Composer as Intellectual*

Maurice Ravel, Jules Massenet, César Franck and Gabriel Pierné's piece "*Les Cathédrales*" in remembrance of the bombing of the cathedral in Reims³⁵.

This situation created an issue for those who wanted to defend the purity of French music. For this reason, the music critic Charles Tenroc, hand in hand with Albert Dalimier and the undersecretary of Beaux-Arts, created the *Ligue Nationale pour la Défense de la Musique Française*. The League had the participation of several important figures of music in France such as Camille Saint-Saëns, Théodore Dubois, Gustave Charpentier, Vincent d'Indy, Xavier Lereoux, and Charles Lecoq, in addition to politicians like Paul Meunier and Lucien Millerenge. The main objective of the league was primarily to protect the "patrimoine artistique national" from foreign influence and to determine how French music should be represented at home and abroad. However, their goals went beyond the artistic field as Jane Fulcher points out:

"This group, according to the statement of the league, intended to act simultaneously in both the musical and political world through the following practices and means of action: propaganda, intervention with those in power, demands for reform in specific *cahier des charges* and rule of the schools, as well as by imposing interdictions on and influencing French editors"³⁶.

Thus, a network was established to control musical life in France not only through programming, propaganda and publications, but also via musical education and stylistic creativity, as we will see in the next chapters.

The creation of the *Ligue Nationale pour la Défense de la Musique Française* led to the creation of two performance societies, the *Société Nationale de Musique Française* (SNMF) and the *Société Musicale Indépendante* (SMI). The SNMF was also affiliated to the French classical ideology which defended the purity of French music from non-French elements. In other words,

³⁵ Buch 8. "*The Germans and the Bosh*": *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

³⁶ Fulcher 31. *The Composer as Intellectual*

they sought to protect French music from German influence and only played French classical repertoire. On the other hand, the ambition of SMI was to have more freedom to perform contemporary foreign composers such as Béla Bartok, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg and more modern non-classical French works such as those of Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy. That being said, Alfred Cortot, as head of musical propaganda for the ministère des Beaux-Arts, intended to unify both societies into one called *Société Nationale* in order to represent one national ideology. Nonetheless, it failed since not all members agreed on the union, especially on the side of the SMI because it represented a loss of artistic autonomy, as Duchesneau explains:

“Prominent members of the SMI, such as Maurice Ravel, Charles Koechlin, and Emile Vuillermoz, quickly protested the fusion and warned their fellow members that their aesthetic freedom was in danger”³⁷.

Thus, both societies remained separated and continued programming music following their own interests.

Programming During The War

Regarding programming, as it has been shown earlier in this chapter, it was an important issue at the time. While main institutions had to contend with the nationalist agenda, other concert societies were more open to please the audience preferences. However, there was an interesting phenomenon happening in concert societies that performed German music. There was a clear dividing line between German composers who were deemed to be acceptable: Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann - and those who were forbidden Brahms, Wagner, Strauss, Mahler, Schoenberg. How was this distinction determined? There is not a clear answer to this question. A clue can be the situation of Beethoven. He was the most often played German composer in France during the conflict and it was because of the publication of a

³⁷ Duchesneau 137. *L'Avant-garde musicale à Paris de 1871 à 1939*.

Beethoven biographical book by the French author Romain Rolland in 1902, claiming Beethoven had Belgian roots³⁸. Nonetheless, this was with the intention to “de-Germanize” the composer and get him closer to French culture as Esteban Buch claims³⁹. Thus, the same happened with the other acceptable German composers; people wanted to find a way to justify the performance of their music. For example, the French composer Alfred Bertelin said in *Le Courrier Musical* on December 1, 1916:

The influence of the age of Louis XIV threw its light on the whole of Europe, and on Germany in particular. [...] In his youth, Bach spent many nights reading the works of our harpsichordists and later he himself wrote the Suites françaises.

It was at this time that most classic German musicians were born or grew up – Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Weber, while others born later were contemporaries of the Napoleonic era. [...] It appears to me that the German musical works of the eighteenth and the first two thirds of the nineteenth century were subject to varying degrees of influence by our classical culture and this is why they were so accessible to French listeners despite the clearly Germanic essence of the themes on which they were based.

But, gradually, during the nineteenth century, Germany, obeying the voice of the patriots who wanted to shake off the foreign yoke, managed to free itself from the stronghold that our arts and literature had exercised upon it. [...] If Schumann, already to a lesser degree than his predecessors, was still under French influence, Brahms completely escaped it, and is the first in a series of musicians whose works become ever more foreign to us. The gap separating the two races is widening every day. The need to dominate, to oppress, and a megalomania attached to a foolish pride have given Germany a bombastic and empty art of music[...]. This art, which is so representative of their current state of mind, is the inescapable consequence of their “Kultur.”⁴⁰

Some people also said the French revolution was very influential to Germany at the time it happened. In fact, it indeed was influential to Beethoven's third symphony which he initially wrote dedicated to Napoleon and titled it *Bonaparte*. He ended up changing the title due to Napoleon's auto proclamation of Emperor. Being disappointed of his act, he change the title to

³⁸ In fact, both of his parents were born in Germany. However, his grand-father from his father's side was from Mechelen, Belgium, which explains the prefix of his name Ludwig “van” Beethoven.

³⁹ Buch 16. “*The Germans and the Bosh*”: *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

⁴⁰ Buch 17. “*The Germans and the Bosh*”: *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

Sinfonia Eroica: composta per festeggiare il sovvenire di un grand' Uomo (Heroic Symphony, Composed to celebrate the memory of a great man)⁴¹. Yet being influenced by the revolution I do not think it was enough to make Beethoven closer to French culture. Nonetheless, as shown before, the necessity to find reasons to justify German composers was very common probably for propagandistic reasons. This similar agenda of imparting propaganda through music not only happened in concert societies but also extended to other domains like education.

⁴¹ Dahlhaus 23–25. *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to His Music*.

Chapter 3: Music Education and Politics

Music education in France was a field that could not escape political influence. In the early 20th century in France, a war was waged between Republican and private independent institutions for influencing society through cultural education⁴². The *Conservatoire de Paris* and the *Schola Cantorum de Paris*, both being antagonistic on ideologies, were in charge of creating this musical education contest that, at the same time, carried political ideals aside from their point of view on musical style.

The Conservatoire

Having its foundation in the revolutionary period, the Conservatoire was an institution whose principles, functions and “memory”⁴³ were linked to the Republican values. As Jane Fulcher points out the Conservatoire was considered as one of the most centralized and controlling institutions among French institutions; it had certain fundamental values affiliated with Republican thought that shaped its memory and logical function:

“The first was an inherent suspicion of all previous authorities and traditions - the only tradition it recognized being that which could be altered to meet new social needs; second, it rigorously institutionalized the Republican principle of meritocracy, founding advancement within its system upon the basis of regular and successive competitions”⁴⁴

In other words, the Conservatoire only recognized the tradition that was beneficial for social needs, and meritocracy was the only recognition of success. That being said, it is important to understand the relationship between these values and the French Revolution in order to understand the institutional war. At the time of the French revolution, the monarchy was associated with religion; most of the religious symbols were destroyed in France in 1793. Even

⁴² Republican institutions refers to institutions linked to the state (La République).

⁴³ In this context “memory” means what the Conservatoire recognizes as tradition.

⁴⁴ Fulcher 26. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*.

after successive government changes during the revolution and bringing back religion to France, certain resentment stayed on people towards it. This sentiment stayed associated with the first republic even though the change of governments throughout time. Therefore, it is not surprising that the music of the past was somehow not taken into account in France after the revolution since early music, like J.S Bach, was religious music; this is something we will see on the Conservatoire's curriculum.

As Fulcher explains, the curriculum was based on a practical approach to what was considered the fundamentals for the professional field. The education was primarily centered on solfège and harmony of the 19th century. Although fugue and counterpoint were taught, the classes and analysis were mainly focused on the progression of chords from 19th century harmony⁴⁵. Because of this practical education, the Conservatoire was leaning towards the needs of the lyric theaters, which were 19th century music mainly from Italian composers. Interestingly, music history was not a requirement on the curriculum until the arrival of Gabriel Fauré as director of the conservatoire in 1905. For this reason, the repertoire for students was centered on standard virtuoso compositions and recent well-known operatic works⁴⁶. This would eventually change with the challenge of the Schola.

The Schola Cantorum

The Schola Cantorum, founded in 1894 by Charles Bordes, Alexandre Guilmant and Vincent d'Indy, had the objective of countering and challenging the influence of the Conservatoire on society. It was characterized by a fusion of ideological and musical goals which were reached not only through teaching classes but also publishing articles, lectures and pedagogical concerts. D'Indy knew that the battle against the state would be impossible alone, he

⁴⁵ It is important to remember that counterpoint and the fugue were composition techniques of the Baroque period when music was used mainly for religious purposes.

⁴⁶ Fulcher 27. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*.

needed legitimization and support from outside republican institutions. Thus, the *Ligue de la Patrie Française* and *Action Française*, after seeing the similarities between their own political positions and the ideals of the Schola (like their thoughts of French tradition, nationalism and antisemitism), offered various kinds of support that d'Indy needed, like economical, political, and propagandistic. Among these similar perspectives, the antisemitism beyond the Dreyfus affair was key; for the leagues and the Schola there was a decline in the “tradition” of French culture or a negligence of foundations of French culture. Therefore, seeing that the Schola could diffuse nationalist ideas through education and cultural projects, they had every reason to support it. Tradition was a very important point for d'Indy and the tradition that they promoted at the Schola was based on the key figures they considered as the “masters”⁴⁷ such as Lully, Gluck, Rameau. Even though the masters were primarily French, d'Indy also believed in a more universal tradition that he considered to have origins in religious music, therefore present in works that involve spirituality and an implicit or explicit moral message. As Fulcher points out:

“D'Indy's conception of such “grande musique” was thus not a socially sequestered high art, above social purpose, isolated from life, or elevating humanity in an abstract manner”⁴⁸.

The Schola's curriculum included one year of preparation with fundamentals and five-year courses in music history, analysis, aesthetics, choral practice, practice of an instrument and chamber music. In the preparatory course of one year students started learning solfège, harmony, counterpoint and Gregorian chant. At the same time, students were required to participate in choral ensembles and organum. After, students would pass to the next level of study, which d'Indy referred to as “art level”, the five-year course. In this program students would begin studying music history, harmony, and aesthetics (the latter only starting in the second year) from early renaissance to baroque, to classical, to romantic and to modern period;

⁴⁷ Here he refers to pre-revolutionary composers.

⁴⁸ Fulcher 30. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

with the idea to illustrate the historical logic of the music and its values. Then, they would study a solo instrument in order to put in practice the different forms of music like canon, fugue, suite, sonata, variations, etc, and participate in ensemble instrumental forms (chamber music and orchestra) to study forms like the concerto, the symphony and the symphonic poem. It is important to underline the presence of the symphony on the curriculum; this was a genre that the Conservatory considered insignificant and therefore one that was not taught.⁴⁹ However, for d'Indy it was the most expressive form of all since it was able to communicate emotions and ideas. For him, the Germans were the experts on this genre and he used Beethoven as the most valuable example among other composers since, as he said, it was an example of “musique pure”⁵⁰.

It was only at the end of a five-year program that students studied forms such as the opera, the oratorio and the cantata (genres considered as a priority for the Conservatoire). For d'Indy, it was important to understand the development of music from its beginnings in order to understand modern lyrical works. In fact, even the 19th century works studied at the Schola were different from those studied at the Conservatoire. Wagner was very influential to d'Indy as his model for operatic composition; he perceived the same ideals or moral message in his operas as d'Indy sought to include in the symphony genre. D'Indy considered the operatic work in France of the 19th century as “decadent” since it was an imitation of successful Italian composers (Opera buffa like Rossini), and this being a result of nefarious Jewish influence; For example, Jules Massenet's *Manon* or Georges Bizet's *Carmen*. As Fulcher mentions, d'Indy thought the imitation of Italian opera was made only because it guaranteed financial retribution, and that fact makes music to lose its purpose, which is to transmit a moral message:

⁴⁹ This is because of the huge influence of opera in France and the influence of lyrical theaters on the Conservatoire.

⁵⁰ Fulcher 31. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*. By “musique pure” d'Indy referred to instrumental music that evokes emotions.

“For d’Indy, all Jewish composers were inherently not only superficial but derivative, as well as mercenary in their art - in search only of financial gain”⁵¹.

Schola’s Support

Even though Vincent d’Indy did not join *Action Française*, he was closely associated through his editors Durand Salabert and Auguste Sérieyx who were part of it. Besides, he was also a prominent member of the *Ligue de la Patrie Française*. Having these two organizations on his side, he had access to an important quantity of Parisian press such as *Le Gaulois*, *La Libre parole*, *L’Intransigeant*, *L’Éclair*, *La Presse*, *L’Écho de Paris*, etc. Through this, the Schola could reach more than two million readers each day and push the nationalist ideology. That, and the notable gap in musical education in France that the Schola was filling, by the turn of the century, gave the Schola a wide network of supporters that went beyond the musical world. These also included politicians, journalists, literary writers, etc. This also brought with it an interesting phenomenon. The Schola attracted supporters from both the extreme left (as we will soon see) and the nationalist right; in fact, more interesting was how two antagonistic ideologies felt identified with the institution's ideals. At that point, both the extreme left and right believed in the idea of morality through art which was the same thought of the Schola; thus, they had the reasons to support it in contrast to the Conservatoire.

As previously stated, in the nationalist right there was the *Ligue de la Patrie Française* and *Action Française* with characters like Maurice Barrès, who had similar opinions as d’Indy, or Lionel de la Laurencie, who would later become the first president of the *Société Française de Musicologie*. On the left side were critics of the Republic like Charles Péguy and Georges Sorel who actually were former Dreyfusard writers. Nonetheless, more active in the support of the Schola was Camille Mauclair who besides being a Dreyfusard writer, was a socialist at the time

⁵¹ Fulcher 32. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

of the Dreyfus Affair as well. In 1901 he published an article on the Schola in *La Revue* where he provided his reasons to supporting it, as Fulcher reminds us:

“the Schola Cantorum, for him, was first of all a “phénomène moral”, for subtending it is no less than a new way of thinking about human emotions [...] the Schola is thus an expression of the desire for moral renovation in the musical world: it heralds the advent of “l’ère nouvelle du spiritualisme musical”⁵².

In fact, Mauclair also expressed his opinion on the influence of Italian opera in France. Like d’Indy, he believed that it was through the Wagnerian revolution that the French could eliminate the “italianism” from the musical scene. For him, the Conservatoire was part of the problem as well since they prioritized the Italian style of opera and focus on virtuoso singing from works by composers such as Meyerbeer, Gounod, and Donizetti. For him, as Fulcher puts it, the Conservatoire did not forget its ideological roots from the first Republic; it was an institution with a memory, but in a negative sense: it has neither learned nor forgotten anything since its genesis in the First Republic⁵³.

The Response of the Conservatoire with Fauré

La République was aware of the campaigns against the Conservatoire and the rising prestige that the Schola was getting; thus, the government finally came up with a response in 1905. That year the director of the Conservatoire Théodore Dubois resigned from his position and was replaced by Gabriel Fauré, who would eventually reform the Conservatoire. Initially, Fauré was not seen as a good choice: he did not graduate from the Conservatoire, he was not a Prix de Rome winner, and not part of the institutional environment. However, there were other factors that explain why he was considered as ideal for the position. Regarded as a moderator,

⁵² Fulcher 53. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁵³ Fulcher 54. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Fauré was able to dialogue with both sides of the musical world; those who believed in the importance of early music for the development of music (therefore, important for the development of French tradition), and those who were more interested in the concentration on 19th century music focused on the lyrical scene. He understood his role as new director within the political context and music education as he claimed in a letter to Martin Loeffler in July 1905:

“I want to be the auxiliary to an art that is at once classical and modern, which sacrifices neither current taste to established tradition or tradition to the vagaries of current style. But that which I advocate above all else is liberalism: I don’t want to exclude any serious ideas. I am not biased toward any one school and censure no genre that is the product of a well-conceived doctrine”⁵⁴.

In fact, his background training helped with this task. Fauré attended the *École Niedermeyer de Musique Classique et Religieuse*, a school intended to train church musicians. Its curriculum was focused on music from the past just like the Schola, specifically from the period between the 15th and 18th centuries such as Palestrina, Lasus, Bach, Handel and the school of “clavicinistes” in France. On the other hand, Fauré had important social contacts that probably helped him get recognition among important political circles. He mainly made these contacts in the salons held by important figures like Mme. de Saint-Morceaux, the Princesse Edmond de Polignac, and Camille Saint-Saëns (who was his close friend).⁵⁵

But what traditions could be preserved while reforming the institution, especially in the context of republican values? In his reform, Fauré made multiple changes on the curriculum of the Conservatoire, now giving importance to music history and expanding the musical spectrum imitating the Schola’s curriculum. After the reform, both were similar in terms of educational

⁵⁴ Fulcher 143-145. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁵⁵ Fulcher 144. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

content. Just like d'Indy, Fauré proposed the study of music from an historical approach as in theory (counterpoint, harmony and analysis of form) as in practice (solo instrument and vocal training). To address the criticism of the importance given to Italian opera, he proposed to no longer consider the lyrical theater as the only purpose of study; instead, he added the study of music of German composers (like Schubert, Beethoven, Schumann, Bach, Weber, etc) and French classics like Lully and Rameau. In addition, The Conservatoire included the study of the symphony; but, while including it to the curriculum as the Schola did, it was presented in a different way. Contrary to the Schola, the symphony for the Conservatoire was considered only as a “genre” that could represent things (like nature or feelings) with a musical purpose, but that was not a medium to convey moral messages. In other words, the symphony was seen and studied for its musical qualities and characteristics, without any further interpretation. For example, a symphony was considered “French” according to its clarity, logic (in structure and harmony), and balance⁵⁶.

Despite the reform of the Conservatoire, there still was a lack of clarity on how they preserved the ideals of La République while competing against the Schola over music education. From my point of view, I think Fauré tried to imitate the Schola in order to shorten the gap of educational content that the Schola was filling. However, in order to maintain traditions of La République, he preferred to change the approach on the new curriculum as it was shown in the case of the symphony with the reason to be different to the Schola. In fact, after the reform, some musicologists like Jules Combarieu still criticized the Conservatoire because of this. In 1910 he claimed that even though counterpoint was taught, it was not real counterpoint but simply the progression of chords. In addition to that, he believed that the approach of harmony taught at the

⁵⁶ Fulcher 146. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Conservatoire was closer to geometry than music; as it was necessary to follow certain formulas in order to make good music⁵⁷.

Thus, music educational institutions were very influenced by politics in the turn of the 20th century. Both the Schola and the Conservatoire had an important role in the musical scene in France which was later reflected during the time of the great war as seen in the previous chapter. But beyond institutions, we can ask ourselves: what was the role of specific individuals? What about composers? In the next chapter these questions will be addressed.

⁵⁷ Fulcher 147. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Chapter 4: Music Intellectuals

As we examined previously, music was implicated in a symbolic battle between right-wing nationalists and republican nationalist over the discussion of French cultural identity and values. But even prior to these institutional battles, the Dreyfus Affair was very influential to the engagement of French musicians as intellectuals. By the decade of 1890s, French musicians started to manifest awareness of their role beyond the arts and began to occupy other fields like politics, philosophy, literature, and so on. For this reason, not surprisingly, important musical figures of that time were very implicated in the affairs of the world either politically, by writing articles and signing important documents (like the “Manifeste des Intellectuels”), or artistically through the application of ideology in their works or the attribution of ideology to their works by others, as we will see later on.

As mentioned before, during the Affair important French musicians felt they had to be inclined politically and felt a responsibility to participate in political campaigns, for instance by signing documents in favor or against Dreyfus Affair. For example, the “Manifeste des Intellectuels” that was initiated by Émile Zola, Anatole France and Marcel Proust in 1898, included the participation of the composer Charles Koechlin, the music historian Henri Prunières, the composer Alfred Bruneau, and the musical scholar Lionel Dauriac. On the other hand, signing the contrary petition opposing the manifest and initiated this time by the *Ligue de la Patrie Française* were Vincent d’Indy, the composer Augusta Holmès, the director of the Opéra-Comique Albert Carré, the critic Henri Gauthier-Villars, the composer Pierre de Bréville and the professor at the Conservatoire de Paris, Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray. Other figures like Claude Debussy, Gustave Charpentier, the conductor Edouard Colonne and the music historian

Julien Tiersot decided not to choose a side but still signed a petition circulated by the Comité de l'Appel à l'Union, in favor of reconciliation and published in *Le Temps* in 1899. Out of this group of musical figures, there were others who did not participate in politics directly like Maurice Ravel and Camille Saint-Saëns and who, even though they believed in the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, did not express their support in petitions. However, Saint-Saëns became involved in politics later during the Great War as it was seen previously in Chapter 2⁵⁸. Thus, there is an obvious division of those considered as Dreyfusard (intellectual from the left) and those anti-Dreyfusard (Intellectual of the right) that not only disagreed on ideology but also in style; as we will shortly discuss specifically in the case of Vincent d'Indy, Alfred Bruneau and Gustave Charpentier.

D'Indy, Intellectual of the Right

Born into an aristocratic family, d'Indy grew up with the traditions and values of the old French society. Besides that, he joined the military in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War in the 105th Battalion of the National Guard when he was 20 years old. Even though he did not stay longer than six months, his ideals and values were very influenced by his experience of military discipline and camaraderie; something he later applied to his pedagogical ideal at the Schola. After coming back from the war, he decided to pursue music. Time where he met César Franck, who would become his composition professor and a paternal figure in his life. At the same time, he began to associate closely with other students around Franck, forming a community of conservative thinkers that would eventually become anti-Dreyfusard musicians promoting aristocratic traditions. In fact, they already shared the antisemitic thinking and considered the Italian school of music exemplified by Rossini as very opportunist with the only goal to achieve instant financial success, just as their mentor Franck thought. On the contrary, they believed in

⁵⁸ Fulcher 19-20. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

the idea of some sort of intelligence or ideal that must inform a piece of music, as in Beethoven or Wagner's works⁵⁹. Therefore, these successive events shaped the way d'Indy viewed music and the world in general. By the time of the Affair, d'Indy had a great reputation in the musical world, and was considered as one of the greatest composers of late romanticism in France. From this point on, he approached his political and professional goals as a musician as one, emphasizing his beliefs in the army, the church and the greatness of tradition.

As d'Indy taught and developed at the Schola, he strongly believed in the possibility to communicate ideology through music in different ways: style of writing, compositional techniques to create a narrative, context of the composition, language (in the case of having a piece with singers), and the interpretation. This is something that it is possible to see in his music; for example, his *Symphony No.2*. It was written after the Affair, between 1902 -1903 and it expresses what a symphony should be for him, both in style and moral meaning. In terms of style, the influence of Wagner comes across throughout the piece. D'Indy uses techniques like chromatic lines in the melody, chromatic harmony and progressive tonality, giving the music a very dramatic and Wagnerian feeling. Through this he thinks he is able to express profound feelings, something he visualized in Beethoven and Franck⁶⁰.

In the case of this symphony, he proposed a conflict between dark and light, in which dark represents evil, doubts, sadness, and light represents faith, goodness, joy. These two ideas are portrayed in two themes throughout the piece, the theme "X" and "Y". Interestingly, he proposes, as we will see below, that the theme "X" is the idea of modernism or antitraditionalism (dark), while the theme "Y" is the idea of tradition (light) fighting against "X". The idea of these motives come back and forth in all movements with "Y" always winning over "X".

⁵⁹ Fulcher 22. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁶⁰ Fulcher 65. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Metaphorically, the piece represents the triumph of tradition not only in music but in sociopolitical values⁶¹.

Example 1.1: Movement I - Symphony No. 2 in B flat, Vincent d'Indy. Beginning of the symphony. (Red markings represent dissonant harmony and blue markings represent consonant harmony)

Extrêmement lent (♩=36)

Instrumentation:

- PETITE FLÛTE
- 1^{re} et 2^e GRANDES FLÛTES
- 1^{er} et 2^e HAUTOIS
- COR ANGLAIS
- 1^{re} et 2^e CLARINETTES en SI \flat
- CLARINETTE BASSE en SI \flat
- 1^{er} et 2^e BASSONS
- Toutes
- 1^{res} et 2^{des} HARPES
- 1^{rs} VIOLONS
- 2^{ds} VIOLONS
- ALTON
- VIOLONCELLES
- CONTREBASSES

Tous droits d'exécution réservés.

In example 1.1 we have the beginning of the symphony in which d'Indy starts with the theme “X”. He begins with cellos, basses and harps playing a diminished ascending line giving a mysterious and dark character. Then, he continues the theme with the woodwinds playing a very dissonant harmony that never resolves; notably, he starts that phrase with the clarinet and flutes

⁶¹ Fulcher 65. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

playing a tritone. It is good to remember that the tritone was a chord considered diabolic in classical harmony due to its uncomfortable dissonants. D'Indy continues this pattern for 13 bars, always adding more instruments and increasing the dynamic to Fortissimo to increase the tension as we can see in example 1.2.

Example 1.2: Movement I - *Symphony No. 2*, Vincent d'Indy, from measure 12.

The image shows a musical score for five staves. A red box highlights measure 12. The score includes markings such as 'arco', 'piu f', 'Uais', and 'ff'. The tempo marking 'en animant un peu' is written above the Violin I staff.

Here in measure 12, he makes a two bar transition adding a new rhythmic pattern on the violins with the ascending whole tone scales and the change of tempo in bar 13, as he indicates *en animant un peu* for the start of theme “Y”.

Example 1.2: Movement I - *Symphony No. 2*, Vincent d'Indy, from measure 14.

The image shows a musical score for five staves. A blue box highlights measure 14. The score includes markings such as 'Solo', 'f', 'pizz.', 'Div.', and 'sp'. The tempo marking 'Très vif' is written above the Violin I staff.

Here in measure 14 he begins the theme “Y” with a French horn solo accompanied by the strings. In this section the music goes to the main tonality B flat major making a statement of triumphalism by theme “Y”. Interestingly, d’Indy makes this transition and resolution very clear by resolving the harmonic tensions of the beginning with a B flat major chord in measure 14, kind of indicating that theme “Y” is resolving all the tensions that the counterpart was making. This battle comes back and forth in every movement, and also within each movement, repeating the same ideas in different ways but always making the same statement, the victory of theme “Y” (tradition) over theme “X” (antitraditionalism). As Fulcher points out, after composing this symphony, d’Indy did not make a public opinion about the meaning of the motives of the piece. He rather left that task to his anti-Dreyfusard colleagues to clarify this statement. It was d’Indy’s friend and associate René de Castéra who comment about the meaning of the two themes of the symphony in the journal *L’Occident* using the following terms:

“The first..., outlining the interval of the tritone (the devil in music) by a series of thirds alternatively minor and major, has a somber and menacing character that in the thought of the author vaguely symbolizes the bad influence of the modern element. The second ..., is the traditional element, the good influence”⁶².

The symphony being the most important musical form for d’Indy, he decided to use it to convey this political message. However, he did not limit himself to a musical statement that required comments and clarifications to make its meaning explicit. For that reason, he did not only write instrumental pieces but also operas that could convey these ideas easily due to the use of language. He wrote operas that had good success like *Attendez-moi sous l’orme* (1882), *Le chant de la cloche* (1884), *Fervaal* (1897), *L’étranger* (1903), *Le rêve de Cinyras* (1922) and *La légende de Saint Christophe* (1915). Taking the latest as a way of example, *La légende de Saint*

⁶² Fulcher 66. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Christophe is an opera that he started writing in 1903 but finished in 1915 during the war and, following Wagner's example, he was the composer and librettist of his own work. The opera is about the legend of Saint Christopher, a christian tale about a giant that is looking to serve the most powerful person in the world. At first he serves the king until he meets the devil and becomes his servant. Then, after discovering the existence of Jesus Christ, he decides to seek out and serve Jesus. In his long search, he finds a way to serve christianity by helping people cross the river on his shoulders. One day, he hears a child calling for help. Christopher carries him on his shoulder and while crossing the river, the child becomes heavier. When they finally cross, the child announces he is Jesus Christ and Christopher becomes a christian.⁶³

D'Indy did not only use this story due to his religious background but because it was the closest thing to the mythological topics Wagner used in his operas. Moreover, he thought of Saint-Christopher's tale as a great subject to convey his political cause. In fact, d'Indy made the opera as a mystery play in which, by changing some elements of the legend, he portrayed aspects of the jewish-dreyfusard influence (like pride, pleasure and interest for financial success) on certain characters of the piece. For example, the character of the king, *Roi de l'Or*, is a character described as someone rich, pretentious, bourgeois and Dreyfusard. As Fulcher indicates, d'Indy portrayed the king this way in the narrative; for example, in different scenes where *Roi de l'Or* is in rooms full of gold and expensive objects counting his money or talking about the importance of freedom as he does in one of his dialogues saying "I have had traitors declared innocent"⁶⁴ (Making reference to the Affair). In my opinion, following the same logic d'Indy used in his symphony, he makes this statement more clear musically by associating the *Roi de l'Or* with uneven and monotonous rhythms and tonal ambiguity because of the use of tritones and other

⁶³ Fulcher 66-67. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁶⁴ Fulcher 68. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

kinds of dissonance as we can see in example 2.1. Again, this is the association of dissonance and untraditional with the idea of the dark.

Exemple 2.1: Act I scene 2 - *La légende de Saint Christophe*, Vincent d'Indy. (Red markings represent dissonant harmony and blue markings represent consonant harmony)

The musical score for Act I scene 2 of *La légende de Saint Christophe* by Vincent d'Indy is presented. It features three vocal parts: AUFÉRUS, LE ROI DE L'OR, and LE PRINCE DU MAL, along with a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Un peu animé" with a quarter note equal to 88 beats per minute. The score is annotated with red boxes indicating dissonant harmony and blue boxes indicating consonant harmony. The piano part has a prominent repetitive rhythmic pattern of fourths and tritones. The vocal part for LE ROI DE L'OR includes the lyrics: "Por - tez ce mes - sage à mon frère, dans la ci - té han - sé - a - ti - que;". The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, and *cresc.*, and performance instructions like "Le rideau s'ouvre" and "Ped.".

As we can see in the example, d'Indy makes a pattern of uneven repetitive rhythm that harmonically is divided in two micro ideas. The first half of the bar is a series of fourths followed by tritones in the next figure of the second half of the bar. These two ideas of repetitiveness and dissonance together constitute the leitmotif of the *Roi de l'Or*. This pattern

repeats until the *Roi de l'Or* sings, and even in his line he continues to have uneven rhythms. There is another example in this piece in which d'Indy portrays other characters as Dreyfusard, the “*faux artistes*”. We should think of the *faux artistes* as those musicians who embraced the Dreyfusard ideal. In this case, d'Indy parodies them as characters who think they're smart and innovative but really don't know what they're doing; to make it more explicit he uses a parody version of impressionism in the music as it is shown in example 2.2.

Exemple 2.2: Act I scene 3 - *La légende de Saint Christophe*, Vincent d'Indy.

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system features a Tenor (Tén.) and Bass (Bas.) vocal line with the lyrics "LES FAUX ARTISTES" and "Fau - teurs d'un art té - nu et". The piano accompaniment includes a "gliss." marking. The second system shows a Soprano (S.) and Bass (B.) vocal line with the lyrics "ra - ro, Nous fai - sons la mode et nous la sui - vons. Que" and "ra - ro, Nous fai - sous la mode et nous la sui - vons." The piano accompaniment includes a "gliss. sur les touches noires" marking. The third system shows a Tenor (T.) and Bass (B.) vocal line with the lyrics "tout soit a bais sé à no - tre tail - le." and a piano accompaniment marked "f".

Here in this section of the opera d'Indy makes another statement very similar to what has been shown previously. However, in this later case he now includes the innovation of impressionism to the same idea. Even in the lyrics of the *faux artistes* this criticism is present as they sing in this section:

“Fomenters of an art that is thin and rare, we make fashion and we follow it. All should be lowered to our size. Hatred to enthusiasm! Hatred to ideal art! No more rite, no more studies, let's make things small and original”⁶⁵.

D'Indy, being a great believer of traditional art, makes clear here that impressionism for him is not ideal art. Nonetheless, it is just a pretentious “small and original” style of music that only wants to be considered because of its transgressions of the traditions. Following this idea, d'Indy makes another symbolic statement on the structure of the opera since he divides the work into three acts each once divided into three scenes. For him, the triptych form was the traditional form of the opera followed by the initial great masters like Gluck. Thus, his operas were an attempted combination of tradition and Wagnerian influence. On the other hand, Bruneau and Charpentier manifested the opposite message in their music.

Bruneau and Charpentier, Intellectuals of the Left

Due to his father being a music publisher, Alfred Bruneau was surrounded by music from an early age. He studied in the Paris Conservatoire, but never was dependent on the official educational system to receive his musical education. Prominently, he studied harmony with the composer Augustin Savard and composition with the composer Jules Massenet. This independence allowed him to achieve stylistic freedom and develop an interest in innovative music. As d'Indy, Bruneau was musically inspired by Wagner and also considered to be a strong Italianism on French music; he thought of this influence, however, as musical rather than

⁶⁵ Fulcher 69. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

political. He did not have an antisemitic connotation on his opinion about the Italian influence like d'Indy did. At the same time, Bruneau had a different approach to this problem as we will later discuss. He mainly focused on lyrical compositions in the form of opera, cantata or songs. For him, there had to be a combination of poetry and realism in the music by using daily contemporary situations as inspiration to express the nature of the feelings. Thus, by the combination of Wagnerian compositional techniques and getting inspiration from contemporary life experience, Bruneau was the initiator of the naturalist opera in France⁶⁶.

In terms of politics, Bruneau was mainly considered Dreyfusard due to his collaboration with Émile Zola. In a moment where Zola wanted to start writing for theater, he became increasingly interested in opera as well. For this reason, after their first encounter in 1888, Bruneau and Zola became close friends and started a series of operatic collaborations in which Zola was the librettist: *Le Rêve* (1891), *L'Attaque du moulin* (1892-93), *Messidor* (1894-96), and *L'Ouragan* (1897-1900). Even though Bruneau had become a popular and prestigious French composer at the time, Zola's involvement with the Dreyfus Affair made a lot of critics target their operas due to being adaptations of Zola's novels. As Fulcher indicates, the anti-Dreyfusard critics perceived the intention of the composer and the novelist to convey a political message by making the librettos as truthful as possible to Zola's texts and by making the music accentuate the inflexions of the lyrics. This "style" was considered by those hostile to Zola as "Dreyfusard". As a way of example, Fulcher points out the case of the music critic Jean Drault from *La Libre parole* expressing his opinion on Zola's libretto:

"O'Divy' (or Jean Drault), the music critic for *La Libre parole*, castigated Zola's use of prose and his mixture of "correct" and colloquial usage and of realistic and fantastic elements. Zola,

⁶⁶ Fulcher 19. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

who had assaulted the forces of "tradition" on a political level, was now doing so in opera by ignoring the rules of both propriety and convention"⁶⁷.

Even though Bruneau and Zola tried to unify music and text as perfectly as possible, it was a task they could not achieve properly because of multiple reasons: the linguistic problem in the libretto, the combination of naturalistic and conventional elements in the music, the adaptation of a long novel to a shorter version for the opera and the lack of logic in the relationship between the music and text. Most of these problems Bruneau tried to compensate for by including Wagnerian elements like the leitmotif. However, they were used in a more superficial way for the music rather than using patterns from a web of motives in order to support the narrative, like Wagner does in his operas. This was an aesthetic problem Zola and Bruneau had to face during their partnership that did not change until one of their latest opera *Messidor* (1894-96). Nonetheless, despite being their most successful opera, it still was not possible to stop the politicized attacks on their works; especially after Zola's article "J'Accuse". Because of the hostility against Zola, the anti-Dreyfusards press declared them to be criminals; making acts of violence by anti-Dreyfusard riots for the performance of *Messidor* in Nantes in 1898 and other cities that led to the cancellation of the opera by the fear of theater directors⁶⁸.

In terms of tradition, Bruneau's opinion was based on two main points that in some cases were aligned with the ideal tradition of the Conservatoire. First, anticlericalism in French music history. For him, in contrast to d'Indy and the Schola, French tradition was independent from Catholicism; but rather it begins with the composer Adam de la Halle (1240-1288) and his early dramatic works like *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion* that, for him, formed the basis of Opéra Comique. Characterized by its independence from religion, de la Halle was considered by Bruneau as the first French composer to seek for the union of melody and text, drawing

⁶⁷ Fulcher 20. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁶⁸ Fulcher 20. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

inspiration from the people. In the same way, he considered Lully, Rameau and Gluck as part of the tradition like d'Indy; however, he then centered the tradition on composers of the revolutionary period (like Grétry, Méhul, Gossec, Cherubini) and from the 19th century (like Boieldieu, Bizet, Saint-Saëns and Berlioz). In fact, placing Berlioz as one of the most important figures of the French tradition since Bruneau considered Berlioz saved French music from the Italian influence. Regarding the other point, as mentioned before, it is the use of the “popular reality” and the nature of life as a source of inspiration for music; this gave birth to the naturalist opera which was later considered as the Dreyfusard genre⁶⁹.

As mentioned before, Bruneau and Zola encountered a lot of stylistic difficulties during their collaboration. They had two dilemmas: First, the difficulty to be dramatically realistic in a genre that is based on fantasy. Second, the difficulty to combine music and text in a natural way for opera that does not feel either strange to the music or linguistically uninteresting. Solving these problems would make possible the achievement of what he considered as the highest point of French tradition, the naturalist opera. Although Bruneau had certain success with this, it was Charpentier with his opera *Louise* who was able to solve the problems Zola and Bruneau struggled with. As Fulcher indicates, even Bruneau considered Charpentier's opera to be the greatest example of naturalist opera not only because of the use of subject from daily life but also because Charpentier was able to elevate the message of his opera by creating a balance between the music and text. Before Analyzing Charpentier's *Louise* is important to see his background and how he relates to the Dreyfusard ideology.

Charpentier was born in a working class family from Tourcoing (near Lille). He started working in a factory with his father when he was ten years old. His father, being an amateur musician, taught him the basics on music until he started his studies on violin at the Lille

⁶⁹ Fulcher 43. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Conservatoire. His employer was so impressed by his musical skills that he decided to fund Charpentier's musical studies on harmony at the Conservatoire de Lille until he was able to pass the admission exam to the Conservatoire de Paris in 1879. Being nineteen years old, Charpentier moved to Paris to begin studying composition with Jules Massenet. Due to his financial limitations, he had to find cheap lodging in Montmartre, a place famous for the mixture of social groups like bohemians, workers, students, artists, etc. Living in this new environment influenced him in multiple ways that even made him question his own identity. Becoming more open minded, Charpentier started to find ways to express his personal independence; for example, dressing like a bohemian or engaging with social political movements like "Boulangism". This inclination towards social interest went to the point of getting attracted by anarchists circles as well. It is known that during the decade of 1890 Charpentier used to frequent the Café du Delta, a gathering place for anarchists at the time⁷⁰. As Fulcher points out, his contact with them was direct, and this was supported by the fact that one of the people he met gave him an adaptation of two revolutionary songs *Ça ira* and *La Carmagnole* with a text referring to the anarchist bombings of that decade. Several scholars then pointed out that Charpentier used fragments of this song in his operas *Louise* and *Julien*⁷¹.

Musically, during his time in the Conservatoire, Charpentier learned and mastered the traditional composition, and won the Prix de Rome in 1887. However, he was very interested in innovating music as well. For this reason, he also instructed himself in poetic techniques and in Wagner's music during his time at the library of the Conservatoire. His goal, as for Bruneau, was to achieve the fusion of music and text in his operas; and as his teacher Massenet suggested, he worked on the librettos himself. As previously mentioned, Charpentier solved the stylistic

⁷⁰ Sonn 4, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin-de-siècle*.

⁷¹ Fulcher 80. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

problems Bruneau and Zola had. In part he was able to do so through the subject he used for the opera because people could relate with the narrative. In the case of *Louise*, Charpentier decided to use a personal anecdote of a story of an affair he had with a young working class girl called Louise. For the opera, he wrote the libretto about the affair of Louise with a poet (Julien) and how she rebelled against her family to be with her lover. Interestingly, Charpentier also used this subject to talk about social classes and the social distances between them through language and expression; as Fulcher demonstrates:

“Several scholars have noted the different levels of language employed in the text of *Louise*: poetic language (rhymed verses, alliterations, and assonances), literary language (lyric prose), and "familiar" (colloquial) locutions. According to Manfred Kelkel, they are used to demonstrate the different social levels of the characters: the poet Julien, for example, expresses himself most often in literary situations, in verse. Even when he employs more informal diction, it is always "correct" in usage, corresponding with the cultural level that Julien represents”.⁷²

A good example of this is in act III when the people in Montmartre are celebrating the love of Julien and Louise. Here all the characters from Montmartre sing in groups and use colloquial language [Example 3.1].

Exemple 3.1: Act III scene II- *Louise*, Gustave Charpentier. Beginning of the Opera

The musical score consists of four vocal parts: Soprano (S.), Contralto (C.), Tenor (T.), and Bass (B.). The lyrics are in French and English. The French lyrics are: "Voyez donc ces têtes qui sont! cons-puez! cons-puez! / Viv' la ri-go-la-de! Dans un roy-al bac.cha.nal! loin du flic et / Viv' la ri-go-la-de! Dans un roy-al bac.cha.nal! loin du flic et / Dans un roy-al bac.cha.nal! loin du flic et". The English translations are: "Would you see the looks of them! put 'em out / Hip hurrah for lark-ing! In a roy-al bac.cha.nal! far from povers mu. / Hip hurrah for lark-ing! In a roy-al bac.cha.nal! far from povers mu. / In a roy-al bac.cha.nal! far from povers mu.". The second system of the score has French lyrics: "Quel-le sé-ré-na-de! Quel é-tran-ge car.na-val, quel in- / tou-tes ces lu-miè-res! Quel é-tran-ge car.na-val, quel in- / Quel-le sé-ré-na-de! Quel é-tran-ge car.na-val, quel in- / tou-tes ces lu-miè-res! Quel é-tran-ge car.na-val, quel in-". The English translations are: "Such a se-re-nad-ing! Oh! how strange a car.ni-val, this in- / look at all the lan-terns! Oh! how strange a car.ni-val, this in- / Such a se-re-nad-ing! Oh! how strange a car.ni-val, this in- / look at all the lan-terns! Oh! how strange a car.ni-val, this in-". The Bass part has French lyrics: "Gloire aux a-nar-chis-tes! En l'honneur des é-tu-diants, com.pa.gnons.bat- / An-ar.chy for e-ve! In the students' hon-our now come my friends let's". The English translation is: "An-ar.chy for e-ve! In the students' hon-our now come my friends let's".

⁷² Fulcher 83. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

This element of the opera was not only employed to make reference to social classes. In the case of Julien, language is also used to represent the influence he is having on Louise. In fact, this element is expressed both in text and music as one can see in example 3.2:

Exemple 3.2: Act I scene I- *Louise*, Gustave Charpentier. Beginning of the Opera.

Moderato $\text{♩} = 76 \text{ à } 80$
 JULIAN, standing on the terrace.

O cœur a-mi! O cœur pro-mis! hé-las! si loin, si près!
 O lov-ing heart! O promised heart! A-las! so far, so near!

segue
 ppp

2. Ad.

dim. **Meno**
 Toi, mon i-do-le, ma joi-e, mon regret!
 Thou art mine i-dol, my joy, my despair!

segue **Tempo**
 *

Le jour s'envo-le... Ah! ta pa-ro-le
 The day is fly-ing! Will not thy sigh-ing

va-t-elle appren-dre à mon a-mour que ton cœur prend plaisir à guet-
 send to my heart a word to say that thy heart doth re-joice to re-

cresc. *dim.* *cresc.*

ter mon bon jour?.. Vous a-vez tar-
 -ceive my good day? You are ve-ry

mf *segue* *pp*

Animato $\text{♩} = 400 \text{ à } 404$ LOUISE

Here in this example we can see Julien's leitmotif that consists of ascending major triads that rhythmically match his speech. Something characteristic about this leitmotif is the fact that it sounds like a victory fanfare that I think represents how Julien wins Louise over her family. Later on in the first act, when Julien convinces Louise to escape with him, Julien's influence is not only represented in the language she uses but also musically because his leitmotif is played

when she is singing which is another clue that Julien has influenced her to leave her family [Example 3.3].

Example 3.3: Act I scene I- *Louise*, Gustave Charpentier.

14

rall. - - - Tempo

LOUISE *p*

La re - - clu - - se son - geait au
dim. p And the maid - - en she dreamt Prince

- lait l'A - ve - nir!
 - sleep lay my Fate!

segue pp

Meno

Prin - ce char - mant qui ré - veil - la la Belle au Cœur Dor -
 Charming would come, and wa - ken with a kiss the Sleep - ing

Animato rit. *mf* Animato rit. Animato rit. *f*

- mant! Com - ment aurait - el - le su que
 Fair. But how could she e - ver guess, her

This becomes more clear later on in the opera at the beginning of III act in the famous aria *Depuis le jour*. In this section, Louise completely assimilates the idea of leaving with Julien and it is musically expressed recalling the leitmotif of the beginning but now being more expressive about her feelings [Example 3.4].

Exemple 3.4: Act III scene I- *Louise*, Gustave Charpentier.

Même mouvement. $\text{♩} = 54$

LOUISE

De puis le jour

Même mouvement.

PIANO

mf. *p.* *pp*

où je me suis don_né - e, tou - te fleu - ri - e

Un peu animé

cresc. *mf* *dim.* *p*

sem - ble ma des_tiné - - - e. Je crois rê - ver - cédez

Ped. *

Due to his background from a working class family and his political leanings, Charpentier had a clear goal with this opera. He wanted to make opera closer to working class people by writing it on a subject that would feel familiar to them. By doing so, and using artistic and operatic conventions, Charpentier was able to write a more refined naturalist opera with a more consistent aesthetic. This allowed him to avoid the criticism Bruneau and Zola got for their operas. However, this does not mean *Louise* did not have a politicized reception. Yet, it was a different case from Bruneau. In the case of Charpentier, his work was not politicized for his

opinions outside the musical world; it was politicized by the perception Dreyfusard thinkers had about *Louise* and its subject. For example, Bruneau viewed the opera as the perfect work that evoked an “awakening of the national spirit” because of the use of a “popular subject”. The composer Maurice Emmanuel wrote an article in the *Revue de Paris* about the opera claiming that the piece was democratic and it traced back to the Dreyfusard and Republican values. Following the idea, Camille Mauclair thought of the composer as the “fils du peuple” and a great musician with socialist beliefs. Yet, for him, the most important achievement of *Louise* was that it brought social problems and desires of the working class to the prestigious opera stage. In other words, the left was becoming Charpentier’s work to a Republican myth. Charpentier’s response to this was to take advantage of the misconception of the opera and use his popularity to create social projects, *L’Œuvre de Mimi Pinson*⁷³.

First, it was a social program to give free tickets for the opera to working class families. Nonetheless, this project had an immense growth and led to a wide array of social projects creating a system of social aid for the working class. Among the services it offered, there were those dedicated to social aid (like free healthcare, job fairs and nursing homes), and those dedicated to music (like free concerts, music education, a music journal, etc). In the same way, Charpentier opened a new music school in Montmartre, the *Conservatoire Populaire de Mimi Pinson*. Having an ideology between socialist and Republican views, this Conservatoire was created to mitigate the impact that the Schola Cantorum was having on Paris with its right wing nationalism by implementing their political views on education. Interestingly, *L’Œuvre de Mimi Pinson* became more than a social aid program. It became a system of social aid for French female workers with the goal of achieving working-class independence. As Fulcher explains, Charpentier focused this project on female workers because this already existed for male in the

⁷³ Fulcher 94-97. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

“Orphéons” societies⁷⁴. The Conservatoire drew female workers from the garment industry and offered music lessons twice a week from 8pm to 10pm; they learned how to sing, to accompany voices on the harp or piano or to participate as dancers⁷⁵. The goal of this project was to support moral values and increase the intellectual level through music as Charpentier explains:

“The goal is to bring together female workers and employees of Parisian stores and workshops in the same fraternal effort for their moral and intellectual elevation. . . . At the same time "L'Oeuvre de Mimi Pinson" refines the taste of its members and shows them the beautiful by well-appropriated artistic lessons, thus turning them away from the many vulgarities and platitudes, and offers them, by the regular inter- play of its different sections, encouragements, distractions, and material aid”⁷⁶

Thus, Charpentier became an intellectual of the left by using the resources he obtained from *Louise* to promote his socialist belief. Interestingly, compared to d’Indy, Charpentier did not limit himself to only do so through his compositions and music education. He assumed his role as intellectual being even more influential by helping female workers to have the opportunity to learn music and arts.

⁷⁴ The “Orphéons” societies were an initiative from the Second Empire to improve the social conditions of the working class through the learning of arts and music.

⁷⁵ Fulcher 97-101. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁷⁶ Fulcher 102. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

Conclusion

As we have seen, the usual assumption that music and politics have nothing to do with one other – an assumption explained by the fact that music is never directly referential – can be said to be at best an oversimplification. Arts in general depend and have effect on the social context. The socio-political instability of the third republic in France gave origin to the Dreyfus Affair. This was the initial point for the rise of the modern intellectual in the guise of important figures of French literature, politics and arts; Émile Zola being the most influential of all the characters with *J'accuse*. However, when artists are included among the intellectuals, musicians are almost never mentioned. By using the example of music institutions, music education and individual musicians of the time (1880-1918), my goal has been to rediscover the role of musicians as intellectuals in late 19th and early 20th Century France. In the music institutions and politics chapter, we analyzed the use of the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, concert societies and programming to impart political propaganda during the First World War. In the music education and politics chapter, we compared and analyzed how differently politics influenced music education in two antagonistic institutions: the *Conservatoire de Paris* and the *Schola Cantorum de Paris*. We also discussed the different concepts of “French tradition” and musical style supported by the schools. Finally, in the last chapter we compared three composers and their acts as intellectuals: one figure of an “intellectual of the right,” Vincent d’Indy, and two figures of “intellectuals of the left,” Alfred Bruneau and Gustave Charpentier. We analyzed their background and some excerpts from their music to see how they conveyed political ideas not only through positions taken publicly but also through their musical composition.

Interestingly, I found some contradictions in the acts of some of the intellectuals I mentioned. As time moved forward to the First World War, the political position and perception

of music style changed drastically for some intellectuals. For example, Alfred Cortot. Before the war he was assistant conductor at Bayreuth⁷⁷ (1898-1901) and conducted several Wagner operas, including the first Parisian performance of *Götterdämmerung*⁷⁸ in 1902⁷⁹. Then, during wartime he formed part of the censorship initiative by the *Ligue Nationale pour la Défense de la Musique Française* to ban German music. Vincent d'Indy did the same thing; as previously shown, he considered Wagner as a key figure for music history and opera, bringing back the seriousness that the opera was lacking due to Italianism. Yet, he also joined the *Ligue Nationale pour la Défense de la Musique Française* during the war. In fact, Camille Saint-Saëns criticized d'Indy's ambiguity towards German music in an article published in June 1917 in the *Écho de Paris*, as Buch reminds us:

“Saint-Saëns published his article *Le danger musical* in the *Écho de Paris*, denouncing a “movement in favor of German music” because he says: *Musical luminaries and others besides, it seems, are working together to impose the resumption of Wagnerian repertoire upon the public. Vincent d'Indy is the only person named*”⁸⁰

D'Indy's answer to this was not to admit his appreciation to German music. In the contrary, he denied any connections with Wagner, as he said:

“I do not know if the pro-Wagnerian plot exists [...] but, in any case, what I can say is that it is absolutely nothing to do with me”⁸¹

Thus, This ambiguity also appears on the left and its sympathizers as it can be seen in the case of some members of the *Société Musicale Indépendante*, in composers such as Emile Vuillermoz, Louis Vuillemin, and Florent Schmitt. Even though they were more engaged in the

⁷⁷ Referring to the opera house in north Bayreuth, Germany, built by Richard Wagner and dedicated solely to the performance of his works. It is the venue for the annual Bayreuth Festival, for which it was specifically conceived and built. Its official name is *Richard-Wagner-Festspielhaus*.

⁷⁸ Last opera of Wagner's ring cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. One of the most famous works by Wagner.

⁷⁹ Cooper 6. “Cortot, Alfred”.

⁸⁰ Buch 16. “*The Germans and the Bosh*”: *German Music in Paris during the First World War*

⁸¹ Vincent d'Indy, “Le danger musical”. *L'Écho de Paris*, June 20, 1917

musical world than in political debates, they would sort of defend the political position of the nationalist right by claiming the infiltration of “foreign elements” in French music – and did this even though the *Société Musicale Indépendante* was adamantly open to performing foreign composers. Without ignoring their patriotism for French culture, it seems there was something beyond nationalism behind these contradictions. From my point of view, French composers were concerned with their own musical style. Even though most of them recognized the importance of German music, I believe that they wanted to have their own musical identity. This might be a reason why Camille Saint-Saëns went from appreciating Wagner at the end of the 19th century to starting a massive anti-Wagner propaganda in 1914⁸². As pointed out before, he believed that the French style needed to stay away from Wagnerism and keep it towards the “song” styles, the sonata form and Opéra-Comique. In the same way, Debussy was worried about French tradition; nonetheless, his conception of style was very different from that of Saint-Saëns. For him, lyricism being the core of French tradition, it had to be expressed in multiple ways more than just the melody, as Fulcher points out:

“Writing in the Dreyfusard *Le Figaro*, he stressed his desire to be realistic in the declamation but still implicitly distance himself from Charpentier and Brineau: *The characters in this drama endeavor to sing like real persons, and not in the arbitrary language built on antiquated traditions... the feelings of a character cannot be continually expressed in melody*”⁸³

For this reason, Debussy sought to innovate music in a new form with new harmonies and new techniques that would eventually be called *Impressionism*. This became a new perception of French tradition. From being elegant and balanced as Saint-Saëns claimed, it became the search for elegance, transparency, pleasure and “color”⁸⁴. However, it was not until

⁸² Fulcher 29. *The Composer as Intellectual*

⁸³ Fulcher 179. *French Cultural, Politics & Music*

⁸⁴ Color meaning sounds and harmonies that add special textures to the music.

the beginning of the war that this new concept of French tradition would start to be accepted. This situation has repeated itself multiple times in history; creating other socio-political scenarios in which “tradition” has been put into question due to the continuum emergence of new genres, like it was in the case with jazz later on. However, these cultural conflicts in music are what has made possible its development to what it is today.

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