Les jours de gloire:

The French Violin School and the Paris Conservatoire, 1795-1842

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I attest that this thesis is my original work. Where I have made use of the work of others, I have acknowledged their contribution by means of appropriate footnotes.

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Abstract

The French Violin School is a body of compositional, performing, and teaching practice which emerged within the context of the Paris Conservatoire, founded in 1795. Its first exponents were all founding professors of that institution: Pierre Baillot, Pierre Rode, and Rodolphe Kreutzer. Their model was the Italian, Giovanni Battista Viotti, who had moved to Paris from Turin in 1782. This violinistic style was promulgated through the pedagogical activity of the Conservatoire in several forms: direct teaching; the official violin method published by the Conservatoire printery and its subsequent translations; and a large corpus of composition for violin, including the famous books of etudes by Rode and Kreutzer, as well as by successors such as Jacques Féréol Mazas and Charles Dancla.

Although there has been much written on the French Violin School's compositional and violinistic style, few scholars have considered the degree to which its pedagogical practice was bound up with the culture of the institution surrounding it. In turn, scholars of the Conservatoire have not considered the key contribution of the violin school in a detailed and critical way. The existing scholarship on the Conservatoire as an institution has largely glossed over the history of its foundation, in part because much of the relevant French scholarship was written under the sway of the revisionist school of Revolutionary historiography and thus contains an anti-Revolutionary bias. The result is a portrayal of the Conservatoire as a glorious national institution with somewhat regrettable Revolutionary origins, one which only slowly finds its feet. A close examination of its history, however, reveals that the Conservatoire owes its existence both to Revolutionary events and Revolutionary values, and that those values shaped the internal culture of the institution for some years after its inception.

The thesis explores the development of both the French violin school and its institutional home and relocates them within the wider cultural framework of the Revolution. By combining a close examination of pedagogical detail with wide-lens cultural analysis, it offers a comprehensive picture of the internal culture of the institution, exposes its strengths and weaknesses, and suggests that they go a long way toward explaining both early success and early relative decline. Setting these two stories alongside one another reveals the complex and hitherto unrecognised interrelationships that shaped them during the turmoil of the Revolutionary period. What emerges is that it was the early years in which the Conservatoire in general, and the violin school in particular, showed leadership within the music world and French society. These were 'les jours de gloire'.

Foreword

To study classical music is to be inducted into a tradition which extends across time and space. For me, this started when my father took me to his violin teacher for my first lessons, aged eight. Although her many pupils addressed her as 'Mrs Morgan' we were all aware that her maiden name was Esquedin, and there was more about her than her French accent to remind us that she came from a different culture. I became aware that she had studied at the Conservatoire in Brussels with the great André Gertler and I remember her once spontaneously singing the theme of one of my violin pieces in French solfa. My interest in French music undoubtedly dates back to the transcriptions of Debussy piano pieces which she gave me at an early age, alongside such French School staples as the Kreutzer studies and the Viotti Concerto in A minor. My second teacher, Vincent Edwards, who had studied at the Julliard School with Oscar Shumsky, had an entirely different way of teaching. He started me on the Dont Caprices almost immediately, which I now suspect had something to do with standing in that lineage (Dont – Auer – Zimbalist – Schumsky).

My interest in history started with my awareness of music history, of playing pieces written across a span of three centuries, and of the way period and national styles were so often evident to the ear even when one did not immediately recognize the composer. That interest was sharpened by the experience of studying at the Music University in Cologne [die Musikhochschule Köln]. In Europe, it was much more obvious that the past is still with us, whereas in my school history classes, the 'great Australian silence' on the subject of colonization and dispossession, together with a desire to avoid political controversy, meant that the important and interesting aspects of Australian history were missing.

The experience of living in other languages made me aware at a personal level of how much our values and selves are shaped by language. We experience the world as individuals, but we make sense of that experience collectively, through language. When I came to ANU, I studied modern history, languages, and German literature. This convinced me that literary fiction, while it can be intensely personal, can also provide some of the best insight into the lived experience of the past. The period straddling the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth fascinated me. It was the last age of the polymath and contrasting currents of

rationality and emotion were able to co-exist. Poets were also engineers (Goethe), or geologists (Novalis).

In the violin class of Igor Ozim in Köln, I was subjected to a rigorous technical regime based on the French School, but shorn of its aesthetic content. There was one precise way to play détaché, one precise way to play martelé, one way to play collé, despite the fact that, as I later discovered, variety in bowing and nuance were hallmarks of the classical French School. When I returned to the Kreutzer and Rode studies later, I was struck by how much of a stylistic education they convey, once you try to play them as pieces. This was reinforced by my experience of teaching these and more elementary studies from the same era. It made me curious about the conceptual separation of technique and expression, a separation commonly taken for granted. When I found myself giving the same study material to students which had been given to me, I started to think about cultural transmission and persistence.

This thesis brings together all these strands of my life. It has been suggested to me that it represents an intellectual revenge on my former violin masters. It did seem at one stage as though the price demanded of my training was my individuality, but I also had many, many positive experiences and I remain grateful to all my teachers. I studied at conservatoriums in Germany, Norway, and Australia, each of which had its own ethos and each of which dealt with the tensions inherent in education in a different way.

A few technical details. All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. I have retained original spelling of all quoted text, which means the retention of spellings which are now archaic, such as ‘avoit’ [avait], ‘connoitre’ [connaître], ‘ornemens’ [ornements], and ‘talens’ [talents]. I have also retained French formatting for all titles of books and articles published in French, such as use of a blank space before periods and exclamation marks. Despite the general trend away from capitalization of nouns in English, I capitalize both ‘Revolution’ and ‘Revolutionary’ when referring to the French Revolution of 1789-1799 and otherwise do not. In footnotes, I use the abbreviations ‘BnF’ for the Bibliothèque nationale de France, and ‘AN’ for the Archives nationales de France.

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Chronology

Year	Event	Regime	The Conservatoire and forerunners
1782	Viotti comes to Paris	Monarchy: reign of Louis XVI (1774-92)	*École royale de chant et de déclamation* (formally exists up until 1795, and then absorbed into the Conservatoire)
1784	*Establishment of École royale de chant et de déclamation*		
1788	Louis XVI convokes the Estates General		
1789	The Third Estate declares itself the National Assembly, fall of the Bastille	Constituent Assembly	
1791		Legislative Assembly	*Musique de la Garde nationale parisienne*, subsequently *Institut national de musique*
1792	Abolition of monarchy, proclamation of the Republic, declaration of war on Austria	National Convention	
1793	Declaration of war on UK and Dutch Republic		
1794	*Sarrette arrested, then released* '9 thermidor': fall of Robespierre		
1795	*Foundation of Conservatoire decreed*	Directory	Conservatoire under Sarrette (1795-1815)
1797	Coup of 18 fructidor: purge of royalists		
1799	Coup of 17-18 Brumaire: Napoleon becomes First Consul. End of the Revolution.	Consulate	
1801	Concordat signed with the Pope		
1802	*Severe cut to Conservatoire budget*		
1806	*Cut reversed*	First Empire	
1808	*Declamation added to music*		
1814-1815	Defeat of Napoleon and Restoration of Louis XVIII; *Conservatoire downgraded and renamed 'École royale de musique et de déclamation'*	Bourbon Restoration (Louis XVIII and then Charles X)	Inspector general: Perne (1816-1821)
1822	*Conservatoire (École royale) starts to rebuild, Cherubini assumes directorship*		Directorship of Cherubini (1822-1842)
1824	Accession of Charles X		
1828	*First performance of Société des concerts*		
1830	July Revolution: Philippe of Orléans becomes king. Breakthrough of Romanticism. *École royale is renamed Conservatoire*	July Monarchy	
1842	*Deaths of Baillot and Cherubini*		Directorship of Auber (1842-1871)

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

'Allons enfants de la Patrie
Le jour de gloire est arrivé !'[1]

On 25 March 1794 a young captain of the Parisian National Guard was arrested by order of the Committee of Public Safety. His name was Bernard Sarrette and he had command of a corps of musicians.[2] For reasons which remain unknown, Sarrette, though no musician himself, had made it his mission to found a music school on the broadest possible basis. This group of about eighty musicians, mostly wind players, had already distinguished itself through performance at Revolutionary festivals and it also taught music to a small cohort of pupils drawn from the sections of Paris. Sarrette's efforts toward enlisting the support of the national parliaments had so far succeeded in attracting to the group the grand name of *Institut national de musique* and some haphazardly renewed funding, but little more.[3] His arrest came at a time when the power struggle within the National Convention was at its most intense, between the arrest, trial, and execution of the 'Hébertists' (13-25 March) and that of the 'Dantonists' (30 March to 5 April). The arrest and execution of Robespierre, Saint-Just, and their supporters would happen in late July. It was not a good time to find yourself in the hands of Revolutionary justice.

At about the same time, a gifted young violinist named Pierre Baillot was serving in the Army of the North, near Cherbourg, part of the *levée en masse* decreed in August 1793.[4] The army was there to guard against invasion by the British and attempts by the rebel armies of the

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1 'Arise, children of the Fatherland / The day of glory has arrived!' The first two lines of the 'Chant de guerre pour l'Armée du Rhin' by Rouget de Lisle. It acquired the name 'La Marseillaise' in 1793-4 and was adopted as the anthem of the Republic in 1795.

2 Bernard Sarrette (1765-1858). For biographical details, see Chapter 4 below.

3 We owe the details of Sarrette's story to Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation* (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895).

4 Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) was professor at the Conservatoire from 1795-1842.

Vendée to link up with the old enemy. A great admirer of Viotti,[5] Baillot had been given a place in his orchestra at the Théâtre Feydeau in 1791, but had to resign it after only a few months as the salary there was insufficient to support the household of mother, sister and aunt which depended on him.[6] Even after he was released from the army, Baillot had to work in the Ministry of Finance to support his family.

During his short stay in the orchestra of the Théâtre Feydeau, Baillot had made friends with a younger and even more gifted violinist named Pierre Rode.[7] Rode was a pupil of Viotti and had joined the orchestra in 1789 when the theatre was still called Théâtre de Monsieur, a name which had since acquired too aristocratic a ring. Rode had made his solo debut at the theatre with Viotti's Concerto No. 13 to great success, but the increasing difficulties faced by musicians in the Revolutionary decade would soon lead to his leaving Paris to go on foreign tour, first to Hamburg and the Netherlands, later to Spain, and eventually to Russia.

Rodolphe Kreutzer was the son of a court violinist at Versailles and had also come under the spell of Viotti.[8] He became first violinist in the royal orchestra (*la chapelle du roi*) in 1785, solo violinist at the Théâtre Italien in 1790, and had had a major success in 1791 as composer of the opera *Lodoïska*. Unlike Baillot, he was not only well-established, but rich, having made an advantageous society marriage.[9] Despite this, and perhaps because of the precarious state of the Paris theatre scene, he had joined Sarrette's troop at the end of 1793 when it expanded to include more composers and some string players.

Giovanni Battista Viotti himself, having arrived in Paris from Piedmont in 1782 and rapidly acquired the reputation of being the foremost violinist of the time, had found it impossible to continue running the Théâtre Feydeau and had left Paris for London in 1792. As a foreigner and former member of the Queen's household, he may have felt his life was in danger. In

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5 Giovanni Battista Viotti (1755-1824).

6 Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même: Étude de musicologie musicale', in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 18 (1978), 134.

7 Pierre Rode (1774-1830) was professor at the Conservatoire from 1795-1810.

8 Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831) was professor at the Conservatoire from 1795-1825. His brother Auguste (1778-1832) took over his class from 1825 until his death in 1832.

9 David Charlton, 'Kreutzer family', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

1798, however, intrigue would see him exiled from Britain on grounds of Jacobinism. For the rest of his life, he would return to Paris only rarely.

In March 1794, then, although music was flourishing in the many theatres, its economic basis had been undermined by the collapse of traditional patronage. Most of what had been the ruling class had emigrated and the theatres were under pressure to appeal to a broad popular taste. They had to be prepared at any time to interrupt a performance to play the *ça ira* if the audience so demanded. Sarrette's band had carved out a role for itself in producing music for the national festivals and any ad-hoc Revolutionary celebration, but in line with the new, popular spirit, these were mostly open-air affairs and hence written for wind instruments only. The fledgling republic was fighting the armies of Austria, Prussia, Britain, and the brothers of the executed French king on its borders, rebel armies in the Vendée and elsewhere inside France, and, it often seemed, itself. It had just fears for its survival, and was in a permanent state of political and financial crisis.

Despite all this Revolutionary turmoil, Sarrette's colleagues secured his release from prison, and on 3 August 1795, the National Convention decreed the establishment of a state-funded conservatorium of music, the first in all of Europe, with provision for an astonishing 115 teachers and 600 pupils and a budget to match. While this budget was almost immediately subject to attack, the Conservatoire de musique opened in October 1796 with Sarrette as Director.[10] The first concert for the distribution of prizes was held in August of the following year. Baillot, Rode and Kreutzer would form the nucleus of a school of violin-playing based on the Viotti style and exploiting the possibilities of the new Tourte bow. Initially known as the 'School of Viotti', and later as the 'French Violin School', it would rapidly acquire international fame and its influence endures today. All the great players of the modern era can trace their lineage back, either to Baillot and his colleagues or directly to Viotti, and aspiring violinists everywhere still practise the etudes of Kreutzer and Rode. Between 1800 and 1814, the Conservatoire would publish an influential series of official teaching methods covering all the key subjects; the violin method was written by Baillot in consultation with

[10] I am simplifying here a little. In fact, Sarrette's was at first appointed *Commissaire chargé de l'organisation*, before subsequently being called *Directeur*. See Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 130-2.

Kreutzer and Rode.[11] A series of student concerts, the *exercices publics*, would start in 1800 and likewise rapidly become famous, in particular for the passion and precision of the string playing. These concerts would pioneer the performance of symphonic music by Mozart and Beethoven, as well as French composers such as Méhul.[12] And in a direct line, François Habeneck, a former student of Baillot, would in 1827 found the first professional concert society in France, the Société des concerts, dedicated above all to giving the symphonies of Beethoven the quality of performance he felt they deserved.[13] In 1839, a young Wagner would write, after hearing a rehearsal of the 9th Symphony by this orchestra, that only now did he understand what Beethoven was doing with this work.[14]

In its first years, the Conservatoire was powered by a Revolutionary spirit, a spirit which found in the Société its last musical and organizational expression. Revolutions happen when enough of a population discards its habitual passivity in the face of repression and takes its fate into its own hands. It immediately enters uncharted waters and at first, everything it does is new. The musicians who formed the Conservatoire did so as part of a revolution which aimed to found a new society. They adopted new, democratic forms of organization and they set about educating public taste as well as training new musicians.

As a state-funded institution, the Conservatoire was particularly exposed to political weather. In the early years, it constantly had to fight for its existence. The staff complement was reduced to 74 in 1797, and between 1795 and 1842, the number of pupils never approached

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[11] Pierre Baillot, *Méthode de violon par Mm. Baillot, Rode et Kreutzer* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire, 1803). I shall generally refer to this as the *Méthode*. Baillot published a more substantial method in 1834: *L'Art du violon, nouvelle méthode, dédiée à ses élèves* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire, 1834).

[12] Nicolas Étienne Méhul (1763-1817) was one of the foremost composers of Revolutionary music, such as the famous 'Chant du départ', words by Marie-Joseph Chénier. He was a founding member of the Institut de France and one of the first five inspectors-general of the Conservatoire. His popularity was such that his standing with the authorities even survived the Restoration.

[13] François-Antoine Habeneck (1781-1849), was admitted to the Conservatoire in 1801, obtained a first prize in 1804 and became professor of violin in 1824.

[14] D Kern Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, 1828–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 168. The quote is reproduced in French translation in Elisabeth Delafon-Bernard, 'Habeneck et la Société des concerts du Conservatoire : un destin exemplaire', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 116.

the originally projected 600, oscillating between 350 and 400 for most of that time.[15] Napoleon's administration cut the budget even more severely in 1802, reducing the staff to 39, although Sarrette managed to get the cut reversed in 1806. In 1808, thanks to Sarrette's efforts, the education of musicians was expanded to include that of actors, and the institution became the *Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation*. Then came the Bourbon Restoration of 1814/1815. Because of its Revolutionary past, the institution suffered badly: its budget was cut again and its director sacked.[16] The Conservatoire would start to grow again from 1822 and weather the storms of 1830 and 1848, but Sarrette would stay in retirement until his death in 1858.

Sarrette was not forgotten by his colleagues. Among the eulogies delivered at his funeral in 1858 was one by the actor Joseph Samson.[17] In it, Samson describes the Conservatoire as a Parthenon constructed by Sarrette, dedicated to the arts of music and declamation: 'ces arts enchanteurs, dieux des intelligences délicates et des natures d'élite [these enchanting arts, gods of delicate minds and select natures]'. It is a sign of the success of the Conservatoire in becoming an accepted feature of the official life of France that the actor could also refer to politics as something 'qui ne devrait jamais s'approcher de nos arts [which should never intrude on our arts]'.[18] This seems an extraordinary assertion for someone speaking of the Conservatoire of all institutions, a breathtaking denial of all its early history. It points not only to the human capacity to forget, but also to how much had changed over the years since 1795.

By the 1840s, the Conservatoire had moved from being an active element in society to a conservative one. A look at the programming of the student concerts or those of the Société des concerts will show how the Conservatoire moved from promoting new music to resisting

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[15] For the student enrolment figures, see Appendix D.

[16] Formally speaking, the Conservatoire was closed down in 1816 and the defunct École royale de chant (now 'et de déclamation') resuscitated. The substantial continuity in personnel and operations means, however, that we can consider the École royale as a continuation of the Conservatoire under different name. To save confusion, I refer to it as 'the Conservatoire' throughout.

[17] Joseph-Isidore Samson (1793-1871) was a student of the Conservatoire who won a first prize for acting in 1812. He was a leading principal at the Comédie-française from 1832-1863 and became professor at the Conservatoire in 1864.

[18] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 170.

it .[19] Brought into existence through human action within a complex array of societal forces, it had come to embody the idea of culture as a separate sphere of artistic and imaginative life. This idea emerged across Europe in the course of the nineteenth century, and still dominates today.[20] It is also implicit in much of the historiography of the Conservatoire.

Within France, the status of the Conservatoire violin school has never been challenged, but look at its status within a wider frame and the story is different. Before the late eighteenth century, and despite isolated German masters such as Biber, the leaders in violin-playing and composition were unquestionably the Italians: Tartini, Geminiani, Lolli, Locatelli, Pugnani, and so on. With the School of Viotti, the geographical centre of innovation in violin-playing moved to Paris, but its supremacy was soon challenged, first by Paganini from the 1820s, and then by the rival school established in Brussels by Charles de Bériot and Henri Vieuxtemps. Another prominent centre sprang up in Vienna (Böhm, Dont, Ernst, Hellmesberger, Joachim), and the centre of innovation kept moving east, to St Petersburg and Moscow, and finally west across the Atlantic to New York. The hegemony of the French School was fairly short-lasting. This is in large part because it resisted the new artistic trends of the 1820s and 1830s. Like the Conservatoire as a whole, it resisted the cult of virtuosity and technical display, and it resisted the new romantic aesthetic.[21] The seeds of this partial obsolescence can be observed even in the Conservatoire's pioneering years: there is an incipient conservatism even in its Revolutionary values.

The story of the rapid rise and early eclipse of the French Violin School is not to be separated from the story of the Conservatoire as a whole. The success of the violin school can be ascribed to several factors. Firstly, there is the appeal of the Viotti style itself, a combination

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[19] The programmes for the *exercices publics* from 1800-1900 can be found in Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 476-510. The programmes for the prizewinners concerts can be found in the same collection, 967-983. For the programmes of the Société des concerts, see Holoman, *The Société des Concerts*. Holomann also makes the point about the conservative turn in programming. See for example 197, where the author quotes conductor Girard in conversation with the Empress Eugénie in 1856: 'Madame, the repertoire of our society is the Louvre of musical art'.

[20] Raymond Williams has traced the evolution of this concept in the British context: *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (Columbia University Press, 1983; first published, 1958).

[21] I first made this argument in my article on the treatises of Baillot: Douglas Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing between Revolution and Reaction: A Comparison of the Treatises of 1803 and 1834 by Pierre Baillot', *Nineteenth Century Music Review* 18/3 (Dec. 2021), esp. 29-30.

of incisiveness, expressiveness, and nuance heightened by the possibilities afforded by the new French bow. This style was not just a personal style, but owed much to the musical dynamism of the Paris to which Viotti came. The second reason for the success of the violin school is the support of the new institution around it and its pedagogical model.

But just as the internal culture of the Conservatoire had a major influence on the pedagogy of the violin, the violin teachers as a group had a major influence on the development of the Conservatoire as an institution. Within the conceptual hierarchy of the institution, the violin had to cede pride of place to singing and composition,[22] but it contributed much more to the early success of the school than either. Voice teaching was always problematic: subject to competition from the Opera, which had its own school, and frequently criticized as inadequate.[23] The violin's status as the most important orchestral instrument was unchallenged and it was also a solo instrument. The pianoforte was still being developed and indeed was taught side-by-side with the traditional clavecin in the first years. Many of the wind instruments, like the clarinet, were new or still developing. By contrast, the build of the violin had been substantially settled from the time of Stradivarius and Amati (ca. 1720), and the new bow perfected by Tourte in the 1780s would remain the standard. A large repertoire had already built up for the violin, even if much of it was only just being rediscovered by Baillot and colleagues at the end of the century. Many violin treatises had already been written before 1800, including famous ones by Geminiani (1751), Leopold Mozart (1756), and 'l'Abbé le fils' (1761).[24] The stringed instruments constituted the basis of the late eighteenth-century orchestra, the violin was the lead instrument of the strings, and the first violinist was in most cases also the conductor. This prominence also meant that violin professors and pupils were more numerous within the Conservatoire, numbers accentuated by the fact that the viola was not yet taught as a separate instrument. Violinists like Baillot and

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[22] See for example the budgets for 1816 or 1823, AN AJ/37/12/2. Staff are listed under the following headings: 'Administration, Composition, Voice, Solfège, Piano, Violin…'

[23] See for example Katharine Ellis, 'Vocal training at the Paris Conservatoire and the choir schools of Alexandre-Étienne Choron: debates, rivalries, and consequences', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), vol. I, 125-144.

[24] Francesco Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751); Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer Gründlichen Violinschule* (Augsburg, 1756); Joseph Barnabé Saint-Sévin (l'Abbé le Fils) *Principes du violon*, ed. Aristide Wirsta (Facsimile edition of 1761, Université de Paris, 1961).

Habeneck were the standard bearers of the institution, and when its orchestras were praised, it was always the violinists who were first mentioned.

The Conservatoire was not without antecedents. As well as the church schools it replaced, the *maîtrises*, there was the École royale de chant (1784-1795), a short-lived attempt at improving the quality of French singing. But the key models were the *conservatorii* of Naples and Venice, which had acquired European renown in the first half of the eighteenth century. From them came the centrality of singing and the new solfa methods. But just as the Revolution represented something fundamentally new in political discourse, the Conservatoire represented something new in music education. The Italian conservatories were charitable institutions, and when the republics which supported them fell on hard times in the 1760s, a remarkable music tradition fell away very quickly.[25] The Conservatoire was from the outset a state-funded teaching institution for the training of professional musicians, and it pioneered a new pedagogical model based on the principles of progressive instruction, systematic technical development, and healthy competition. It became a central point of reference for all the music schools which followed.

Broadly speaking, the focus of the thesis moves from the outside in, as well as forward in time. Chapter 2 includes a broad-brush overview of French society across the period 1760-1840, with an emphasis on values. Chapters 3 and 4 consider the genesis of the violin school and the Conservatoire as a whole, after which the focus moves to the pedagogical philosophy of the institution. Chapter 5 interrogates the instrumental methods published in the foundational decade of 1800-1810, and Chapter 6 explores the Conservatoire's response to social and artistic change between 1800 and the mid 1830s. With Chapters 7 and 8, the focus narrows to the culture of the institution itself, first through an examination of its outward-facing activities and then through teasing out more hidden elements. The final chapter opens the focus out beyond the borders of France to rival schools of music established in the wake of the Conservatoire, questioning the institution's status as a model and sketching out the expansion of the violin world beyond the French School.

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[25] Rosa Cafiero, 'Conservatories and the Neapolitan School: A European Model at the End of the Eighteenth Century?', in *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 15–29.

Positioning of the thesis

The thesis explores the development of both the French violin school and its institutional home, the Conservatoire, and relocates them within the wider cultural framework of the Revolution. By combining a close examination of pedagogical detail with wide-lens cultural analysis, it offers a comprehensive picture of the internal culture of the institution, exposes its strengths and weaknesses, and suggests that they go a long way toward explaining both early success and early relative decline. Setting these two stories alongside one another reveals the complex and hitherto unrecognised interrelationships that shaped them during the turmoil of the Revolutionary period.

Most studies of the early Conservatoire by French scholars depict the genesis of a glorious national institution. The value of such an institution is tacitly understood to be self-evident. As soon as we step back from accepting its existence as a historical given, however, and ask 'Just how likely was it that the new French republic, fighting for its survival and teetering on the verge of bankruptcy, would find the time and money to found a large new music school?', we are forced to look at the culture of that society in a critical way. And as soon as we look at the history of the Conservatoire as an institution through a lens other than that of national culture, we may look at its internal culture in a more critical way.

What is presented here is fundamentally a cultural history. Occasionally, its arguments rest on musical judgements, but rarely on detailed analysis of musical works, and the musical examples are given largely in the spirit of illustration. My background as a violinist and violin teacher naturally equips me to make judgments of a violinistic nature, but I have endeavoured to keep these to a minimum. I could say with James Johnson that 'I am not a musicologist',[26] except that the territory and methods of cultural history may now have expanded into musicology to the point where no clear line can be drawn dividing the two. Firstly, the thesis proceeds from a broad conception of culture which owes much to anthropology. Secondly, it relies on detailed reading of texts, with an eye to values, assumptions, and conflicts which are implicit and may need teasing out. Thirdly, it incorporates linguistic analysis, recognizing the way language provides repertoires of thought and exploring the significance of specific word-concepts, such as *talent* and *émulation*. Finally, it recognizes that the cultural is inextricably political, but rejects economic and

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[26] James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 5.

cultural determinism alike, believing that the social world is created by material circumstances, by human action, and by ideas.

I have been influenced by a range of theoretical approaches, especially those which place language at the centre of our construction of meaning (Raymond Williams, Michel Foucault) and I have accepted as fixed points of reference certain key works, such as Habermas's account of the emergence of the public sphere and Lydia Goehr's account of the emergence of classical music built around the 'work-concept'.[27] Much of my method, however, is that of old-fashioned cultural history. I have endeavoured to immerse myself in a wide variety of sources, both primary and secondary, and allowed the material to act on me, rather than immediately putting it to the question with the aid of a pre-defined theoretical framework. Where my reading of situations has been at odds with the reading of others, I have sought further evidence, as well as considered how different standpoints and assumptions may have impacted on the respective interpretations. My investigation was guided by three main questions, of roughly equal importance: what sort of an institution was the Conservatoire, what were the conditions which gave rise to it, and what did these things mean for violin teaching? Once I set seriously about answering the second question, it became more and more clear to me that the answer to the 'why' of the Conservatoire was not only a question of conditions, but also of events and timing. Chapters 3 and 4 thus present as much a political history as a cultural one. As Peter Burke writes: 'Different problems require different methods of response.'[28] The complexity of events also invited the construction of a narrative which brings together movements at the personal and local levels with what was happening at the national level. If this has succeeded, it confirms the value of the recent trend towards the re-adoption of narrative in cultural history, especially, as here, when a major feature of the story concerns cultural change.[29]

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[27] Some key works: Williams, *Culture and Society*; Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (Routledge, 2002; first published as *Les mots et les choses*, 1966); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989; originally published as *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, 1962); Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: an Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[28] Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Malden, Mass.: Polity, 2008), 116.

[29] Burke, *What is Cultural History?*, 123.

Given what I have outlined of my approach above, it would seem to fit well within what Jane Fulcher and Oxford University Press have dubbed 'the New Cultural History of Music'.[30] It certainly shares a number of characteristics with the New Cultural History as described by Burke, and it extends the field of inquiry of the New Cultural History further into the musical realm, bringing its critical perspectives into an area of music education which has received little recent attention.

Previous scholarship

Writing on the French Violin School

The scholarship which has focused expressly on the French School of violin-playing to date adopts standard musicological approaches. English-language writing has been principally concerned with developments in instrument construction, playing technique, and both violinistic and compositional style. These aspects have been explored in great detail by writers such as David Boyden, Clive Brown, Robin Stowell, Boris Schwarz, and Chappell White.[31] Schwarz's *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* is an essential reference. Like White, he writes about music in a way which can readily be linked with wider cultural discussion. When it comes to teaching, however, this kind of approach is very strong on *what* Baillot and his colleagues taught, but does not directly address the *how* or the *why*.

The main contribution of French writers has been extensive biographical detail, and elucidation of the interpersonal connections which make up the tradition. Thus Arthur Pougin's *Notice sur Rode, violoniste français* remains the chief source on the life of Rode,

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[30] See Jane Fulcher, 'Introduction: Defining the New Cultural History of Music, its Origins, Methodologies, and Lines of Inquiry', in *The Oxford Handbook of the New Cultural History of Music* (online publication, 2012), 3-12.

[31] For example, David Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); Robin Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987) and 'Beethoven and the French Violin School', *The Music Quarterly* 44/4 (Oct. 1958), 431-44; Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Boyden and Stowell are particularly strong on instrument developments and playing techniques, Schwarz on compositional styles, and Brown covers both technique and style thoroughly. Chappell White, *From Vivaldi to Viotti; A History of the Early Classical Violin Concerto* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992).

and Brigitte François-Sappey's invaluable article on the writings of Baillot constitutes, in effect, a potted biography.[32] Anne Penesco's chapter on Baillot and the Franco-Belgian school of violin-playing represents a typical approach which aims to honour the tradition.[33] Geoffrey Gelrud's 1941 PhD thesis on the French School, though written in English, belongs in this category, providing equal parts biographical narrative and compositional analysis.[34] In attributing the success of the French School purely to the popularity of Viotti's compositions and to the activity of Kreutzer, Baillot, and Rode, however, it completely ignores the institutional setting which promoted and directed their pedagogical activity.

Work on the history of the Conservatoire

Almost all of the French-language writing on the history of the Conservatoire is commemorative. Constant Pierre, the first serious archivist of the Conservatoire, published several works to coincide with the centenary of the Conservatoire's foundation in 1895. Among them, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire*, and *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation* remain essential points of reference.[35] Together with the collection of primary documents assembled by Pierre,[36] they are full of invaluable information. They are unashamedly pro-republican, in keeping with the mood of the early Third Republic.

The bicentenary in 1995 provoked a flurry of new work, often by writers intimately connected with the current Conservatoire. Apart from one institutional history,[37] these are primarily collections of small, detailed studies,[38] and while many of them are informative, they tend to

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[32] François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même'.

[33] Anne Penesco, 'Pierre Baillot et l'école franco-belge de violon', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795–1995*, ed. Bongrain and Poirier, (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 91-100.

[34] Paul Geoffrey Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School, 1782-1882* (Doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1941).

[35] Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire* (Reprint edition: Wentworth Press, 2019; originally Paris: Fischbacher, 1895); *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*.

[36] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs.*

[37] Laetitia Chassain-Dolliou, *Le Conservatoire de Paris, ou les voies de la création* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995).

[38] *Le Conservatoire de musique de Paris: Regards sur une institution et son histoire*, ed. Emmanuel Hondré (Paris: Association du Bureau des Étudiants du CNSMDP, 1995); *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris, Buchet/Chastel, 1996); *Le Conservatoire de Paris : deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*.

lack a critical perspective and do not engage seriously with wider cultural or political issues. The work on the early years of the Conservatoire shows strong influence from the revisionist school of Revolutionary historiography, and anti-Revolutionary bias may be another reason why political factors are so often passed over in silence.[39]

The French Revolution (1789-1799), taken as a whole, is the defining event in French modern history. Despite its evident importance for the birth of the Conservatoire and its influence on the histories of the Conservatoire written so far, none of the writers who have written on the French Violin School or the Conservatoire have grappled seriously with recent work on the Revolution. Neither have they placed the Conservatoire in the context of Revolutionary debates about education. This thesis aims to do both.

Historiography of the Revolution

Broadly speaking, the historiography of the French Revolution since 1900 can be divided into three phases: Marxist, revisionist, and what follows. For about seven decades, the Marxist interpretation held sway, which placed the French Revolution in the context of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1918 and of future world revolutions. Based on Marx's theory of historical materialism, it emphasized economic and social factors and had little interest in music, which was considered a mere accoutrement of the victorious middle class. In the mid 1960s, Alfred Cobban disposed decisively of the notion that the Revolution was carried out by an industrial or commercial middle class over a feudal aristocracy,[40] and François Furet mounted a dramatic attack on the validity of any materialist interpretation, asserting the driving influence of a peculiar Revolutionary discourse which dominated politics right up to the fall of Robespierre in July 1794.[41] He also attacked the Marxist belief in the Revolution as a decisive point of rupture, by adopting Tocqueville's thesis of a continuing process of state

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[39] Jean Mongrédien's *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism: 1789–1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland OR: Amadeus Press, 1996) falls outside this frame. Originally published as *La musique en France, des lumieres au romantisme : 1789-1830* (Paris: Flammarion, 1986), nearly ten years before the bicentennial, it is even-handed in its treatment of the Conservatoire pioneers, including Sarrette. It still treats the Revolution as background, rather than foreground.

[40] Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999; first published, 1964).

[41] François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

modernization for his interpretation of the second half (1795-99).[42] Furet was in the vanguard of a cultural turn in the writing on the Revolution, which produced such works as Mona Ozouf's *La Fête révolutionnaire*.[43] While it hardly even mentions the music which accompanied the festivals, this remains the seminal account of their complex and contested symbolisms. Lynn Hunt's *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* follows usefully on from Ozouf and Furet, taking their work on discourse, and showing more closely how it related to people and their actions.

Characteristic of the revisionist school is an emphasis on the experience of Revolutionary actors, as well as of symbols and ambiguities. Together with the rejection of Marxist analysis came a more negative view of the Revolution and a tendency to place it in the context of twentieth-century totalitarianism. A fine example is Simon Schama's *Citizens!*[44] Much of the French writing on the early history of the Conservatoire is tacitly aligned with this tendency. Bronislav Baczko's *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, aside from remaining the definitive account of the transition between the first and second halves of the Revolution, is an interesting case. Although it comes out of the Furet-Ozouf tradition and has as its starting point the hyperbolic and paranoid discourse of the Jacobin years, it closely links that mutating discourse with Revolutionary actors and events. I have used it to demonstrate just how important was the timing of the decree which established the Conservatoire's foundation.

From among more recent accounts of the Revolution, I have chosen Jean-Clément Martin's *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* as a central point of reference. It is a detailed general history from a highly credentialed Revolutionary historian which places explanatory emphasis on the circumstances within which Revolutionary actors made the choices they did.[45] Ideologically and methodologically, it provides a useful counterweight to Furet. Given the importance of the National Guard to the foundation of the Conservatoire, and the question

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[42] Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; first published, 1856).

[43] Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, transl. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988; first published as *La Fête révolutionnaire*, 1976).

[44] Simon Schama, *Citizens! A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1989).

[45] Jean-Clément Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2012).

of the militarism of French culture under Napoleon, I have drawn on a number of specific studies, such as dedicated works by Georges Carrot and Alan Forrest.[46]

Until recently, the five years of the Directory (1795-1799) have received much less attention than the first five years of the Revolution and the widespread disillusion of the period has coloured its later assessment. But it makes little sense to extol the value of the Conservatoire without placing it in the context of the educational program of the Directory and acknowledging the positive Revolutionary values which underpinned it. James Livesey's *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* is one of the works which argues for a re-evaluation of the achievements of the Revolution in general and of the Directory in particular.[47] This study may be considered a contribution to this growing body of work.

History of Education

The assumption of music's unique and separate nature means that none of the historians of the Conservatoire has considered how general ideas about education may have acted on how it developed. The fact that it was created as part of a suite of educational institutions, however, would indicate that wider debates and developments in education are worth examining. The title of Marguerite Figeac-Monthus' recent *Les enfants d'Émile? L'effervescence éducative de la France au tournant des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* speaks for itself, but R. R. Palmer's *The School of the French Revolution*, published forty years earlier, remains a very informative guide to what was happening in French education leading up to the Revolution and his *The Improvement of Humanity: Education and the French Revolution* gives the best overview of what happened across the span of the Revolution.[48] It is complemented by Bronislaw Baczko's *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, which, as well as an analytical introduction, provides full text of the key educational plans of the Revolutionary period.[49] François

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[46] Georges Carrot, *La Garde nationale (1789-1871) : une force publique ambiguë* (Paris: Harmattan, 2001); Alan Forrest, *Napoleon's Men: The Soldiers of the Revolution and Empire* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006; first published, 2002).

[47] James Livesey, *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). Another is Annie Jourdan's *Nouvelle Histoire de la Révolution* (Paris: Flammarion, 2018).

[48] Marguerite Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile? L'effervescence éducative de la France au tournant des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2015). Robert Roswell Palmer, *The School of the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1975); *The Improvement of Humanity: Education and the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1985).

[49] Bronislaw Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie* (Geneva: Droz, 2000; first published, Paris, 1982).

Azouvi's *L'Institution de la raison : la révolution culturelle des idéologues* deals with the specific political stream of the Revolution which sought to found the new Republic on reason.[50] It complements the work of James Livesey listed above.

Other histories

My desire to situate the history of the French Violin School within much larger narratives, as well as the need to answer specific questions, has meant engaging with some widely disparate literatures. The implication of the School in the establishment of a musical canon in France, and the ambiguities surrounding its relationship with the Romantic movement meant that it was important to have an authoritative point of reference on Classicism and Romanticism. This is provided by Walter Jackson Bate, and I have also consulted M. H. Abrams's similarly seminal work on Romantic literature.[51] I have complemented these with more recent work on Romanticism including *Romanticism in National Context*, and *Romanticism Then and Now*.[52]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is a central cultural reference point. The *Cambridge Companion* provides a useful complement to reading some of his key works.[53] One of the interesting aspects of Livesey's *Making Democracy* is his suggestion that the value accorded sentiment in the Revolutionary years was part of a conception of society which was much more inclusive of women than the nineteenth-century code of honour which came to replace it. Marc André Bernier and Deidre Dawson's edited volume on *Les Lettres sur la sympathie (1798)* of Sophie de Grouchy provides confirmation of this idea.[54] Desmond Manderson's paper in *Critical Studies in Improvisation* is a highly relevant example of discursive history which shows how apparently separate fields of human endeavour – in this case, law and

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[50] François Azouvi, *L'Institution de la raison : la révolution culturelle des idéologues* (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1992).

[51] Walter Jackson Bate, *From Classic to Romantic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961); Meyer Howard Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

[52] Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, *Romanticism in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); *Romanticism Then and Now*, Special edition of *New Literary History* 49/4 (Autumn 2018) (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press).

[53] *The Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*, ed. Patrick Riley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[54] *Les Lettres sur la sympathie (1798) de Sophie de Grouchy : philosophie morale et réforme sociale*, ed. Marc André Bernier and Deidre Dawson (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010).

music – bend to the same vast intellectual breeze.[55] There are clear parallels between the legalistic nature of the Revolution, the strong tendencies towards codification within the Conservatoire, and the development of classical music in France, in the modern sense of the word 'classical'.

Cultural histories of music

This is the first history of the French Violin school and of the early Conservatoire to try to catch its subject in such a wide cultural-historical net. But it has benefited from many studies which have done similar or greater things with topics which are tangential to its subject. William Weber was a pioneer of sociological approaches to questions concerning musical publics, production, and reception, and several of his works are relevant to the present history.[56] To this tradition belong chapters by Élizabeth Bernard and Joel-Marie Fauquet, on concert publics in nineteenth-century Paris.[57] Tia DeNora's seminal *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius* uses sociological analysis to demolish one of the most enduring myths of classical music: the myth of the solitary genius who sets new rules by force of personality and creative conviction alone.[58] Both Weber and DeNora are helpful on canon formation, as is Katharine Ellis.[59]

Since 1990, there has been work which seeks to integrate the study of music history more closely with cultural history, and even with political history and the history of ideas. This includes a two-volume publication coming out of an international collaboration funded by the European Commission called *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional,*

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55 Desmond Manderson, 'Fission & Fusion: From improvisation to formalism in law and music', *Critical Studies in Improvisation (Etudes critiques en improvisation)* 6/1 (2010), 1-10.

56 William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna 1830-1848* (London: Croom Helm, 1975); 'La musique ancienne in the waning of the Ancien Régime', *Journal of Modern History* 56 (1984), 58-88; *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

57 Élizabeth Bernard, 'Les Abonnés à la Societé des concerts du Conservatoire en 1837', and Joel-Marie Fauquet, 'La musique de chambre à Paris dans les années 1830', both in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-thirties*, ed. Peter Bloom (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1987), 41-52, 299-325.

58 Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792-1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

59 Katharine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Institutional, and Political Challenges. It contains several relevant chapters.[60] Malcolm Boyd's volume *Music and the French Revolution* sets out explicitly 'to explore the musical experience of men and women over a wider-than-usual spectrum',[61] and several of the chapters succeed, including Cynthia Gessele's discussion of the origins of the Conservatoire, and Jean-Louis Jam's discussion of the Revolutionary collaboration between Marie-Joseph Chénier and François-Joseph Gossec.[62] In *Listening in Paris*, James Johnson has provided an illuminating examination of the interplay between political culture, performance space, and music composition in producing an entirely changed culture of music appreciation.[63]

Laura Mason's exploration of popular song culture in the Revolution seems to be a rare example of a historian of the Revolution straying into musical territory,[64] as opposed to a musicologist tooling up into cultural history and other sub-disciplines of history. John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw's *The Birth of the Orchestra* is a fascinating history which places the history of the orchestra within the grander narrative of the creation of modern institutions such as armies, navies, banks, and bureaucracies.[65] Its timeframe makes it highly relevant.

Perhaps the closest existing study to this thesis in approach is Mark Darlow's *Staging the French Revolution*, which forms part of Oxford's New Cultural History of Music series.[66] It aims to present an institutional history which is thoroughly embedded in its political and cultural context, and to explore the complex reciprocal relationships between these aspects of society. At heart, Darlow is questioning the totalitarian interpretation of the Revolution, according to which the Opera was successfully pressured by the national authorities during the Terror to become an instrument of propaganda. What I have presented of the relationship

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60 See footnote 23 above for full reference.

61 *Music and the French Revolution* ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2.

62 Cynthia Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and national music education in France, 1795-1801', and Jean-Louis Jam, 'Marie-Joseph Chénier and François-Joseph Gossec: two artists in the service of Revolutionary propaganda', *Ibid*., 191-210, 221-235.

63 Johnson, *Listening in Paris.* Full reference given in footnote 26.

64 Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution: Popular Culture and Politics, 1787-1799* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

65 John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

66 Mark Darlow, *Staging the French Revolution. Cultural Politics and the Paris Opera, 1789-1794* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

of the National Guard musicians and the Revolutionary authorities is consistent with Darlow's conclusions concerning the relationship between cultural organizations and the Revolutionary authorities.[67]

Primary sources

Constant Pierre collection 1900

Historians of the Conservatoire owe a great debt to Constant Pierre, music historian and archivist. He was the first to assemble and catalogue the documents relating to the first hundred years of the Conservatoire which now form the core of the holdings AJ/37 at the French National Archives. His thousand-page published collection, only some of which can be found in AJ/37, remains an essential reference.[68] For the most part, it is ordered chronologically and there are sections devoted to the École royale de chant, the Musique et l'école de la Garde nationale, the Institut national de musique, as well as the Conservatoire proper.

Among the kinds of documents transcribed and reproduced are: diverse correspondence; journal articles; the various laws and regulations governing the Conservatoire, programs for the *exercices publics*; lists of personnel, lists of violin professors and concertos prescribed for competitions; and texts of prize-giving speeches. Pierre also includes statistical information, such as the number of students enrolled, broken down, for the main, by year and gender. Although one has to bear in mind that this is a selection which will inevitably reflect some personal bias, it remains invaluable.

Holdings at the Archives nationales, AJ/37

The holdings at the Archives nationales at St Denis are extensive overall, but meagre for the first years of the Conservatoire. In recognition of the importance of the École royale de chant to the history of the Conservatoire, they include documents pertaining to that institution, such as letters and exam registers.

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[67] For example: 'What the Revolution creates is a system where individual authors or institutions need to position their works in order to attract approval and subsidy.' *Ibid.*, 392.

[68] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*.

The records from the years of Sarrette's leadership (1795-1814) have almost all been lost, although Constant Pierre was able to reconstruct the enrolment registers right back to the opening in Year V.[69] The entries not only record initial information, such as name, age, place of origin, courses enrolled, but also subsequent courses, any disciplinary action, prolonged absences, prizes won, and so on.

Records from the Perne and Cherubini years (1816-22; 1822-42) are often dotted through the various codes. They include registers of copied official correspondence and diverse original letters, the annual budgets going back to 1816, class lists, committee minutes, and the notes kept by examiners. One forgotten gem is to be found under 'music studies / teaching of specific instruments / violin'.[70] It is a letter addressed to Cherubini penned almost certainly by Baillot, signed by Baillot, Habeneck and Kreutzer (probably Auguste) and dated 7 January 1831 or 1834. It is titled 'Observations sur les classes préparatoires de violon des professeurs adjoints au Conservatoire de Musique'. I discuss this letter in Chapter 8, and a transcription with translation is included in the appendices.[71]

Baillot writings

Pierre Baillot is such a significant figure in the early life of the Conservatoire that it is worth listing his principal writings together, rather than by genre. There are the two violin methods, 1803 and 1834: the first is the official violin method written in consultation with Rode and Kreutzer and the second ostensibly an updated version, under Baillot's name only.[72] They carry much more than instructions on how to play the violin and their comparative analysis forms the framework for my article 'The French School of Violin Playing between Revolution and Reaction'.[73] Also full of diverse insights are his *Observations* concerning the violin competitions at the Conservatoire of music, and his obituary of Viotti.[74] Finally, the

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69 AN MIC/AJ/37/351.

70 AN AJ/37/84/7/s (Études musicales / Enseignements particuliers / Violon, 7 janvier 1831 - 12 janvier 1917).

71 See Appendix I.

72 Baillot, *Méthode de violon* and *L'Art du violon*.

73 Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing between Revolution and Reaction'.

74 Pierre Baillot, *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique (1835)* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1872). Baillot, *Notice sur Viotti, né à Fontanetto, en Piémont, mort à Londres, le 3 mars 1824* (Paris: Impr. De Hoquet).

Bibliothèque nationale holds two volumes of his private writings, under the rubric 'Souvenirs depuis ma naissance [memories since my birth], 1771-1823'. These include diaries from his time in the Army of the North, 1793-5, diaries from concert tours within France and abroad, extracts copied from works of Rousseau and Edward Young, diverse reflections. There are also lists of his private students and Conservatoire students between 1793 and 1821. These manuscripts, in private hands at the time Brigitte François-Sappey wrote her 1978 article based on them, have since come to the Biblothèque nationale and the first volume has been digitised.[75]

Instrumental methods or treatises

While there is in theory a difference between a method and a treatise, in practice, it is often impossible to draw a distinction. Baillot's *L'Art du violon*, for example, contains large numbers of simple scale exercises such as one would associate with a method, but also many pages of philosophical reflection on the nature of music and music performance, such as one might expect to find in a treatise. Hélène de Montgeroult's *Cours complet* is no different.[76] There are very few methods which are progressive enough to lead a student through from first to last page. They are more a resource for the teacher than for a student unaided. Perhaps the only publications which deserve the name 'treatise' are those which consist primarily of prose discourse, and which are just as readily classified as 'essays', such as Jean-Benjamin Laborde's *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* of 1780.[77]

The various methods often contain clear statements of aesthetic direction, as well as attitudes to teaching and learning. They also reveal much about the values and assumptions of their authors, both in how they lay out teaching or learning materials and through their exposition of what they regard as artistic or philosophical truths. The key methods for the French Violin School are the two by Baillot already cited, although Habeneck's method of 1842 deserves note both as a gauge of continuity and because it includes a facsimile of some rare notes by Viotti on violin playing.[78] The most influential methods of the mid-eighteenth century

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[75] Pierre Baillot, *Souvenirs // 1*, BN IFN-52513563; *Souvenirs // 2*, RES VMB MS-84 (2). François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même'.

[76] Hélène de Montgeroult, *Cours complet pour l'enseignement du fortepiano* (Paris: Janet et Cotelle, n.d. [1820]).

[77] Jean-Benjamin Laborde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Pierres/Onfroy, 1780).

[78] François-Antoine Habeneck, *Méthode théorique et pratique de violon* (Paris: Canaux, 1842).

provide important context for the Baillot methods: those by Francesco Geminiani (1751), Leopold Mozart (1756), and L'Abbé le fils (1767). Contemporary comparators for the 1803 Baillot treatise are those by Cartier (1798) and Michel Woldemar (1800), as well as the official Conservatoire methods for other instruments.

Violin etudes and other musical works

The most enduring expressions of the French Violin School are the etudes of Kreutzer and Rode.[79] The fact of their continued technical relevance to the violinist and the wealth of stylistic information they convey were two of the starting points which prompted this project. Although the 24 etudes of Baillot are no longer played, several of his students contributed etudes written squarely within the same tradition which remain standard teaching fare, such as those of Dancla and Mazas.[80] Further points of comparison include the *24 Matinées* of Gaviniès (French, but pre-Viotti school) and the *24 Caprices* of Paganini.[81]

Education treatises and plans

Education is central to a society's conception of itself and the myriad plans spawned by the outbreak of the Revolution constitute a rich source of data on the French mental universe of the time. I have relied largely on the collection published by Bronislaw Baczko as *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*.[82]

Letters, Memoirs, Obituaries

Letters have provided many miscellaneous insights into the history of the time, such as those written to Conservatoire directors requesting audition of their children for entry and for financial assistance in sending them to Paris for audition. Some are to be found at the

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[79] Rodolphe Kreutzer, *40 Études ou Caprices* (first published, Paris, 1796; earliest surviving edition, Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1803); Pierre Rode, *24 caprices en formes d'études*: uncertain when these were written, but Clive Brown and Jonathan Schwartz in *Grove* date them to circa 1815: 'Rode, (Jacques) Pierre (Joseph)', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[80] Jacques-Féréol Mazas, *75 Études mélodiques et progressives*, Op. 36 (Bonn: Simrock, 1843). Charles Dancla produced many volumes of etudes, mostly aimed at an elementary level, such as Op. 14 and Op. 68.

[81] Pierre Gaviniès, *Vingt-quatre matinées* (Paris, 1794 or 1800). Niccolo Paganini, *24 Capricci per Violino Solo* (Milan: Ricordi, 1818).

[82] Reference given above.

Archives nationales, some at the Bibliothèque nationale, and there is also a fine collection published by Julien Tiersot between 1924 and 1936, which has now been partially digitised.[83]

Memoirs similarly provide invaluable insight into French society of the time, even if, like all sources, they have to be sifted for bias and omission. I would single out those of Madame de Genlis for aristocratic life in the eighteenth century, and those of Adolphe Adam for the lives led by musicians in the early nineteenth.[84] In addition to A. Adam, there are three memoirs which afford insight into the inside of the Conservatoire: those of Hector Berlioz, Eugène Sauzay, and Charles Dancla.[85] Although the Sauzay memoirs are only available in the form published by Brigitte François Sappey, they contain a rare description of Baillot's violin classes. Louis Spohr's memoirs have been largely ignored by French commentators, but they offer the valuable perspective of a sympathetic outsider on Baillot and company. They are interesting from other points of view as well, such as Spohr's relationship with his teacher, Franz Eck, and his own pupils.[86]

The *notice*, which can be loosely translated as 'obituary', is a characteristic French genre across the period. Like a memoir, it can illuminate its author as much as its subject and the two often find themselves mixed together in the same publication, as in Adolphe Adam's *Souvenirs d'un musician*, which contains personal reminiscences as well as fascinating *notices* on Dalayrac, Boieldieu, and Hérold. Just as interesting are Pierre du Rozoir's *Notice sur Baillot*, and Baillot's *Notice sur Viotti*.[87]

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[83] Julien Tiersot, *Lettres de musiciens écrites en français du XVe au XXe siècle* (Turin: Bocca Frères, 1924-1936).

[84] Félicité de Genlis, *Mémoires*, ed. Didier Masseau (Paris: Mercure de France, 2004); Adolphe Adam, *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857).

[85] Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1969; originally published Paris, 1869); Eugène Sauzay & Brigitte François-Sappey, 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay (1809-1901)', *Revue de Musicologie* 60 (1974), 159-210; Charles Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs* (Paris: Delamotte, 1893).

[86] Louis Spohr, *Selbstbiographie* (Kassel and Göttingen, 1860-61); published in English as *Louis Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865).

[87] Pierre du Rozoir, *Notice sur Baillot, célèbre violoniste* (Paris, 1845), BnF RECUEILS-239 (12), 56-73. Baillot, *Notice sur Viotti*.

Literary works

Literary works can reveal matters which preoccupied people at the time they were written and miscellaneous details about the texture of their lives which are often most useful when they are incidental to the main action. Many novels of the time testify both to a faith in education as the motor of social mobility and to the social anxiety accompanying it, such as Stendhal's *Le rouge et le noir* (1830), and Dumas' *Le Comte de Monte Cristo* (1844). The fact that Jean Valjean joins the National Guard when he and Cosette come to Paris in around 1830 is testimony to the respectable, bourgeois nature of that organization.[88] George Sand's *Pauline*, published in 1839, but written in the early 1830s, is one of the first novels to portray the artistic world as inherently superior to that of wider society and this, taken together with such documents as Theophile Gautier's preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, written at about the same time, signals an important shift in the values of a segment of society.

In tandem with other sources, fictional works help with the imaginative reconstruction which is an essential part of the historian's task. Thus Victor Hugo's *Quatrevingt-Treize* [1793], though written well after the events it describes, gives a vivid sense of the vicious internecine wars of the Vendée which seems consistent with more sober historical accounts.[89]

Journalism, essays, and other writings

The essay was a popular form of writing, often designed to contribute to a particular debate and to influence public opinion and government policy. Thus Jean-Baptiste Leclerc's *Essai sur la propagation de la musique en France* of 1796 refers back to Laborde's essay of 1780.[90] Leclerc looks to have been a classic example of a parliamentary deputy from the 'Plain', and this kind of writing can give many clues as to the attitudes of non-musicians concerning music. Often the same people would be writing essays, or journal (newspaper) articles and they might well be members of parliament. Germaine de Staël's *De L'Allemagne* is more

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88 Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, vol. II (Paris: Gallimard 1973; first published: Paris, 1862).

89 Victor Hugo, *Quatrevingt-Treize* (Classiques de poche, 2001; first published, 1874).

90 Jean-Baptiste Leclerc, *Essai sur la propagation de la musique en France, sa conservation, et ses rapports avec le gouvernement* (Paris, prairial, an IV / May-June 1796); Jean-Benjamin Laborde, *Essai sur la musique ancienne et moderne* (Paris: Pierres/Onfroy, 1780).

than an essay and provides a useful context for considering the significance of the Conservatoire's promotion of German music.

The journal/newspaper articles which I have quoted come for the most part via the Constant Pierre document collection. In order to build up a picture of contemporary attitudes to music and music teaching, I have augmented them with miscellaneous writings, such as the memoires of Grétry and Marmontel.[91] In any case, the view of the Conservatoire from the outside is better documented than the view from within. For example, there are fine detailed studies by Jean Mongrédien and Matthias Brzocka on the views of the French musical press and the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, respectively.[92] The journalist's view tends to be an outside one, and once my focus turns to the internal culture, it is of less value than the personal testimony provided by memoirs, letters, or institutional documents such as committee minutes.

François-Joseph Fétis, Biographie universelle des musiciens

Fétis is an inescapable point of reference.[93] Although he can be tendentious and his vast output inevitably contains more than a few errors, his position as a sometimes dissenting voice initially from within the Conservatoire makes his opinions doubly interesting. I tend to refer to the first edition of 1837-44, although many writers seem to prefer the more extensive second edition of 1880.

The next chapter positions the thesis more precisely in relation to historical theory, through an exploration of key concepts such as culture and class. At the same time, it paints in much of the historical background which is essential to the main story which follows.

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[91] André Grétry, *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique*, 3 vols (Brussels: A. Wahlen, 1829; first published 1797); Jean-François Marmontel, *Mémoires* (Paris: Firmin Didot frères, 1846, originally published, 1804).

[92] Jean Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves d'après la presse contemporaine (1800-1815)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 15-37; Matthias Brzocka, 'L'Image du Conservatoire dans l'*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* de Leipzig à ses debuts', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 379-386.

[93] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, 1st edition (Brussels: Melin, Can & Co., 1837-1844). Fétis studied violin at the Paris Conservatoire, before becoming composer, librarian, and a pioneering musicologist. He became the director of the Brussels Conservatory in 1833.

CHAPTER 2
CULTURE, CLASS, AND CONTEXT

Culture and cultural transmission

'Culture', as I shall use the term, is a complex accumulation of social practices, of ways of doing things and that includes thinking. These social practices both evolve over time and become habitual, displaying the powerful inertia of human habit. Culture is always a social phenomenon. When a particular way of doing something appertains only to an individual or to two individuals, it is not culture, but beyond that, culture can inhere in social formations of all scales: familial, tribal, local, regional, national, institutional, and so on. The teaching of musical instruments, which had hitherto largely been a local and familial business became, with the development of the eighteenth-century conservatories of Naples and Venice, an institutional undertaking.[1] With the foundation of the Paris Conservatoire it also became a national undertaking, bound up with other national enterprises.

The breadth of this definition of culture owes much to anthropology and there is a wealth of cultural history built on a similar broad understanding. Noah Juval Harari has put it neatly: 'The immense diversity of imagined realities that Sapiens invented, and the resulting diversity of behaviour patterns, are the main components of what we call "cultures".' Within this umbrella, Harari includes shared imagined realities, shared behaviour patterns, and in third place, the artifacts produced with the aid of these realities and patterns, or material culture.[2] Robert Darnton and Lynn Hunt have provided fine and relevant examples of work which focuses on mentalities and social behaviour. Darnton's *The Great Cat Massacre* aims to give an insight into how life was lived in an eighteenth-century France which has become alien to us due the passage of time. He calls this 'the anthropological mode of history' and notes that it uses approaches similar to those of the literary scholar, in order to conjure from diverse

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[1] The French cathedral schools, the *maîtrises*, hardly taught instruments. See below under 'schools'. I am not considering the German-speaking territories, whose impact on eighteenth-century France came only through export of musicians.

[2] Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (London: Vintage, 2015; first published in Hebrew, 2011), 41.

texts insights into foreign mental worlds.[3] In *Politics, Culture and Class*, Hunt focuses on the 'common values and shared expectations of behaviour' which underlie Revolutionary action.[4] In examining the internal culture of the Conservatoire, it is precisely these common values and shared expectations of behaviour which I am seeking to reveal.

This broad conception of culture has been slow to penetrate musicology. Much of the existing scholarship on the Conservatoire rests implicitly on a conception of culture as a body of creative and intellectual activities which is separate from the rest of society, consisting principally of literature, music, theatre, and the visual arts. The evolution of this notion of culture in the British context has been convincingly laid out by Raymond Williams.[5] It continues to be the dominant conception today, and there are writers who refer to it as Culture, with a capital 'C', to distinguish it from the broader and less exalted 'culture'.[6] In their turn, cultural historians have been slow to examine music, music-making and music teaching. Mona Ozouf's seminal work on the Revolutionary festivals, for example, does not mention music, which only appears in the index under 'National Guard'.[7] Nicholas Brown has written of a silence within cultural history on the subject of music, 'almost as if it concedes to music its own historical mythology as autonomous and non-representational'.[8] This thesis is a cultural history, not because my subject concerns what may be regarded as 'high culture', but because I am centrally interested in people's social habits of mind and action in the context of a specific social enterprise. That social enterprise is the teaching of music as it evolved within the new institution of the Paris Conservatoire between 1795 and 1842. The avowed aim of this enterprise was the preservation and transmission of culture in the narrow sense, but education itself is social action and the explicit content of what was

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3 Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre, and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

4 Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 10.

5 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (Columbia University Press, 1983; first published, 1958).

6 See for example Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, 3.

7 Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, transl. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988; first published, 1976).

8 Nicholas Brown, 'Introduction', to *One Hand on the Manuscript, Music in Australian Cultural History 1930-1960*, ed. Nicholas Brown, Peter Campbell, Robyn Holmes, Peter Read and Larry Sitsky (Canberra: The Australian National University, 1995), 5-16.

taught there is of less interest to me than how it was taught and what may have been taught unintentionally.

Culture changes in response to changing circumstances: physical, economic, social, political, and so on. It also changes as human beings find new and possibly better ways of doing things. This is most obvious with technical skills, the development of which is a major aspect of the history of violin playing. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Paris school was famed for its style, but also for the high level of technical skill demonstrated by its exponents, and it is clear that Paris was at this moment the leading centre of violinistic innovation. It is no accident that Beethoven dedicated the last two of his sonatas for violin and piano to Kreutzer and Rode respectively.[9] Louis Spohr modelled his playing on Rode's.[10] While Baillot frowned on virtuosity for its own sake, the level of technical skill evidenced by his *L'Art du violon* (1834) is very high, and indeed the Viotti style, with its blend of a powerful singing tone and variety of coloration, required sophisticated bowing technique in addition to the usual left-hand difficulties.

Culture is always learned, but not always taught. It seems likely that most culture is assimilated unconsciously, but as society has become more complex it has invested more and more resources in deliberate cultural transmission – which is to say, in education. As Condorcet noted in his *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain*, drafted while in hiding from arrest in 1793-94, the invention of writing has been of profound importance for the preservation and propagation of human knowledge.[11] The publication of the official methods of the Conservatoire represented something very new in this regard. The

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[9] Opus 47 in A minor, commonly known as the 'Kreutzer Sonata', and Opus 96 in G major. It is a popular irony that Kreutzer couldn't make head or tail of the sonata which is now known by his name and never performed it. Rode's performance of Opus 96 in 1813 was a disappointment to Beethoven, who sent him the score so that he could practice it further. This was one of a series of setbacks which curtailed Rode's performance career and led to his early retirement. Before 1813, however, his fame was great and he was regarded as the purest exponent of the Viotti style.

[10] Louis Spohr (1784-1859) was a very famous violinist and composer in his time, particularly in Germany and England. He heard Rode performing while on tour in 1803. He visited Paris and heard all of the major exponents of the French School. With regard to this school, his memoirs provide the very useful perspective of the sympathetic outsider: Louis Spohr, *Selbstbiographie*, (Kassel and Göttingen, 1860-61); *Spohr's Autobiography*, translated by Henry Holmes in 1865 (New York, 1975). He also published a violin method: Louis Spohr, *Violinschule*, (Vienna: Haslinger, 1833; reprint, Munich/Salzburg: Katzbichler, 2000).

[11] Nicolas de Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1966; first published posthumously in 1795), esp. 117.

most useful advice on how to play an instrument had previously been largely secret, passed from teacher to student. Along with the reputation of the teacher, it constituted a kind of cultural capital which the teacher was loth to part with unless paid.[12] Many great exponents did not even publish the etudes they had written until the end of their lives. Pierre Gaviniès and his *24 Matinées* are an example.[13] With the establishment of the Conservatoire, this kind of cultural capital became associated with the institution as much as with the teacher: being able to announce oneself *élève* or *lauréat* or *professeur du Conservatoire* rapidly acquired great value.

It may be argued that education is not only about cultural transmission, that it can be about the release of individual potential, but this is a Romantic conception which did not appear until well into the nineteenth century. In eighteenth-century France, education was universally understood to be the deliberate formation of the individual for society, usually for a specific place within society: 'éducation où les hommes peuvent apprendre leurs devoirs et acquérir les talens propre à l'état que chacun doit remplir pour le maintien et la prospérité de la grande famille [an education where men may learn their duties and acquire the abilities proper to the station which each must occupy for the maintenance and prosperity of the great family].'[14] The popularity of Rousseau's *Émile* did not change this. Although its whole emphasis is on the development of the individual and the education given to Émile is largely directed at protecting him from the harmful influences of society, the endpoint of the book is still his entry into society.

Formal education is only one mode of cultural transmission, of the perpetuation of practice and the diffusion of innovation. In the case of how to play a musical instrument, there are a number of modes in evidence in the eighteenth century, often common to the transmission of other kinds of skill. Some of these were given institutional form, but different educational

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[12] See for example Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792-1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 91-4. See also David Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2016; first published, Ashgate, 2004), 89.

[13] Pierre Gaviniès (1728-1800), one of the greatest of the eighteenth-century French violinists, was a founding professor of the Conservatoire at the end of his life. His *24 Matinées*, which are still studied, were only published in 1794. They require sophisticated left-hand technique.

[14] André Grétry, *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique*, 3 vols (Brussels: A. Wahlen, 1829; first published 1797), vol. III, 6. See R.R. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity: Education and the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1985), 37-38. It is no accident that one of the principle synonyms in French for *éducation* is *formation*.

settings could take advantage of more than one mode. The modes include: (1) unconscious assimilation by example; (2) conscious imitation or emulation; (3) one-to-one teaching; (4) class teaching; and (5) learning with the aid of written instructions. Key institutional settings include the family, private tutors, formal apprenticeship, and schools.

Across the period, music teaching was often a fairly haphazard affair, even for the talented and determined. Many musicians had their first tuition within the family and most orchestral musicians learned on the job. Rodolphe Kreutzer learned first from his father, before having private lessons for two years or so from Anton Stamitz and then modelling his playing on Viotti's. Rode had an orderly succession of teachers, but Baillot seems to have been largely self-taught, although he had some lessons from Pollani during a brief childhood stay in Rome. He taught his own children, René and Augustine. Viotti's time with his teacher Pugnani included a kind of informal apprenticeship when they travelled and performed together in 1780. This is also how Louis Spohr, through the support of his patron Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, was able to study with Franz Eck. By playing second fiddle to him on a tour of the Courland in 1802-3, he was able to get some lessons as well as learn a host of things less formally. Later, he consciously modelled his playing on Rode's; he and his musician wife taught their children. Nicolas Dalayrac (1753-1809) was a self-taught violinist who wished to compose. Finding himself hampered by a lack of knowledge of harmony or any other music theory, he managed to persuade Honoré Langlé to give him some lessons in composition. The only time Langlé was able to offer him was the hour between his rising from bed at six in the morning and leaving for his first lesson at seven. He thus contrived to give Dalayrac some advice while dressing, being shaved and being powdered.[15] It is important to remember that these kinds of ad hoc, private teaching arrangements were the rule across the period and that the ordered, progressive music education provided by the Conservatoire and similar institutions was, and remained, the exception.

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[15] Adolphe-Charles Adam, 'Dalayrac', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), esp. 245-7. Honoré-François-Marie Langlé (1741-1807) is a significant figure who makes the connection between the famous conservatorium La Pietà in Naples and the Conservatoire: he studied at La Pietà, was professor at the École royale de chant from its inception in 1784 and subsequently at the Conservatoire, when this absorbed the old institution. According to Adolphe, he was, despite his name, Italian (*Souvenirs d'un musicien*, 244).

Schools

The words 'school' and '*école*' have a range of meanings, which are similar enough across the two languages for the two words to be treated as one. On the one hand, I shall use 'school' in its common sense to denote any educational institution, including the Conservatoire, which is not better described as something else, such as a university. When the word is used to denote a school of violin or of composition, other meanings come into play. Lionel de La Laurencie uses the phrase *L'École française de violon* to refer to the whole tradition of violin-playing in France from Lully to Viotti.[16] For me, this is far too broad a usage, encompassing quite different aesthetic directions and people in some cases little connected with one another. When I use the term 'French Violin School', I am referring to Rode, Baillot, and Kreutzer, and their pupils, the Viotti style, and the musical and pedagogical activity which unites them. In other words, an artistic tendency, an interrelated group of people, and a body of practice. From the point of view of this usage of the word 'school', the existence of a common institutional framework is not essential, although in the case of the French Violin School, it is of great importance to the School's history and character. The term 'body of practice' is useful, because it draws attention to the collective activity which really constitutes the school, made up of music-making, teaching, composition (especially of études), and the drafting of treatises/methods.

I have already mentioned the Italian conservatories, some of which combined a focus on sacred choral music with high standards of instrumental playing. Aside from the École royale de chant, the main institutional predecessors of the Conservatoire in France were the cathedral schools (*maîtrises*). These combined a degree of vocal training with very limited instrumental tuition. Their focus was the preparation of choral music for church services, and much of the mode of educational transmission was probably akin to an apprenticeship: the boys would have learnt by doing.[17] Another drawback of the system was that a boy's musical education usually ceased when his voice broke, since the bass and tenor parts could be filled by men in orders. According to Spitzer and Zaslaw, the *maîtrises* had been steadily losing their influence since the Middle Ages. In the eighteenth century, only 10 percent of known

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[16] Lionel de la Laurencie, *L'École française de violon, de Lully à Viotti*, in 3 vols (Geneva: Minkoff, 1991; originally Paris, 1922-24).

[17] Unlike certain of the Italian conservatories, the *maîtrises* did not teach girls.

composers were graduates of these schools, compared with 25 percent in the seventeenth, itself a low proportion. Interest in sacred music fell steadily throughout the eighteenth century.[18]

If we look at schools more generally – outside of the teaching of music, that is – much of French education was similarly private and ad hoc. Even the revolutionaries never attempted to nationalize schooling altogether. They supported the idea of *instruction libre*, which meant that, in practice, anyone (such as Baillot's father) could set up a school. The paradigmatic example of formal, public education was the eighteenth-century French *collège*. These institutions were partly charitable, often chartered, and were usually run by teaching orders, even after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1764. Although they taught only about one in ten thousand French boys, their influence was considerable and texts such as the *Traité des études* by Charles Rollin, principal of the Collège de Beauvais, were widely read.[19] The curriculum was very narrow, based on the medieval 'trivium', i.e. grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The same curriculum was offered at many of the private schools, such as the *Pension Hix*, where Louis Adam sent his son Adolphe. Adolphe relates the experience of attending his first class at Hix, when hearing another pupil decline the Latin pronoun *Quivis, quaevis, quodvis* 'filled him with an unspeakable terror'. Due to somewhat straitened circumstances, his father had to withdraw him from Hix and send him instead to a less expensive school as an external student, aged sixteen. Being, as he put it, 'very precocious for his age', Adolphe formed a liaison with a seamstress who lived opposite their house. Instead of going to the school, he did his study at her place every day, focusing on the harmony lessons his father had arranged, rather than on his rhetoric and philosophy. Fortunately, his father never found out.[20] As the eighteenth century progressed, 'philosophy' increasingly included mathematics and physics,

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[18] John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 205.

[19] Charles Rollin (1661-1741), the son of a cutler, was a scholarship boy at the Collège du Plessis and subsequently the Sorbonne. Like many college teachers, he was ordained, but pursued an academic and teaching career rather than an ecclesiastical one. He was a Latinist, Hellenist, historian and translator. After teaching at the Sorbonne, he became professor of rhetoric at Plessis and professor of eloquence at the Collège royale, before being elected rector of the University of Paris in 1694. He took over the direction of Beauvais in 1696, but his tenure was interrupted by conflict with the Church because of his Jansenist sympathies. His *Traité des études* of 1726 was hugely influential throughout the eighteenth century and was rarely out of print: Charles Rollin, *Traité des études (De la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les Belles-Lettres par rapport à l'esprit et au cœur…)* (Paris, 1845; first published, Paris, 1726-1728).

[20] Adam, 'Notes biographiques', in *Souvenirs d'un musician*, ix-xiii.

but despite attempts to modernize the curriculum, the study of Latin and Greek texts continued to dominate, source of the interminable classical references which pepper the official speeches of the time, but also source of political ideals which fuelled aspirations for change.

Because of an extensive system of scholarships, the *collèges* taught boys from a wide range of backgrounds and, whatever the social distinctions, a strict meritocracy reigned within the classroom. In many cases, the teachers themselves had been scholarship boys. Jean-François Champagne (1751-1813) was principal of Collège Louis-le-Grand from 1791-1810. Before that, he had been pupil and teacher, meaning that he was a part of the school for nearly fifty years. Conservatoire professors would likewise include many former students, as the examples of Baillot's students Habeneck, Sauzay, and Dancla illustrate. The combination of internal equality and classical republican example through the curriculum has led R.R. Palmer to characterize Louis-le-Grand as a nursery for revolutionary ideas. Its alumni, after all, included Camille Desmoulins, Maximilien Robespierre, Quincy de Quatremeres, and many other Revolutionary figures.[21]

While few or none of the founding members of the Conservatoire seem to have attended a *collège*, there are aspects of Conservatoire culture which are strongly similar, either through the disproportionate influence of the *collèges* on public life, or through the power of shared classical example. Accompanying the principle of meritocracy was a strong belief in the positive value of healthy competition, of *émulation*. Rollin lists it as one of the five advantages of institutional education over private tutoring.[22] This concept is central to the internal culture of the Conservatoire. A key aspect is the belief that the student can learn as much from their fellows as from a teacher. The institution in 1747 of annual, national competitions among college students also prefigures the Conservatoire tradition. As at the Conservatoire, the *collège* competitions were held in autumn: the last one in the hall of the Jacobin Club in August 1793.

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[21] R.R. Palmer, *The School of the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1975), esp. 9-40.

[22] Rollin, *Traité des études*, Book VII, 10-11. See Appendix B for the list.

Codification, power and authority

In discussing the diffusion of new cultural practices, I have given a picture of informal, even anarchic processes: someone invents a new way of doing something; someone else observes the new method, tries it out, and perhaps adopts it. Improvements in instrument design probably followed this sort of pattern. However, into informal processes intrudes the human impulse to codify, to lay down the law, and with codification come questions of power and authority. The impulse to codify was particularly strong in eighteenth-century France. The drive towards codification and uniformity was evident across all areas of public life, and it was accompanied by a profound belief in the possibility of improvement. The formation of the Constituent Assembly in 1789 and the Legislative Assembly in 1791 turbocharged the process. In *The Logic of Culture*, William Ray refers to the 'cult of laws' advocated by the deputy Kersaint in 1791, and identifies an impulse which 'welds rational autonomy and the expression of individual will to the disclosure and production of a framework of rules, values, beliefs, and practices'.[23] Ozouf reminds us of the enormous faith the early deputies to the Constituent Assembly had in their power to found a new society through law, quoting deputy Camus on January 1, 1790: 'Assuredly, we have the power to change religion'.[24] In many ways, the Revolution was a battle between a will to rational order and the stubborn resistance of customary practice.

Unless we want to identify competing factions within the revolutionary class, the question of power is less interesting than that of authority: on what authority is the just measure to be established? Some contemporary possibilities were: monarchical initiative; religious pronouncement; collective reason; ancient custom; experience; and classical example. The revolutionaries of 1789 did not reject the political authority of the crown per se, but they did reject royal fiat as a basis for ideas, just as they rejected the authority of the Church. The national deputies would themselves work out rationally how the realm was to be constituted, and would then invite the monarch to lend his authority to the constitution through formal approval. For all this, in the lead-up to the Estates General, much appeal was made to ancient custom as the justification for certain ideas: *régéneration* was a word used at least as much as *révolution*. Tackett's work on the writings of the first deputies also challenges their

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[23] William Ray, *The Logic of Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 2.

[24] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 276.

characterization by writers such as Tocqueville and Furet as impractical men, motivated by abstract ideas. In fact, many of them had personal experience of the exercise of municipal government.[25] As the Revolution entered uncharted waters, this experience became of less use and with the consequent radicalization, custom ceased to be regarded as a valid point of reference. Classical authority was often sought rhetorically, but although it was frequently invoked to support certain ideals of republican virtue, it was not able to provide any blueprint for political organization, since it was generally acknowledged that the Athenian model of direct democracy was unworkable for a large country such as France. Where received classical models did have influence was in the broader cultural and educational realm. The staging of the national festivals is one example of forms which hearkened back to an idealized antiquity. Mona Ozouf, who has written the seminal study of the festivals, ascribes the appeal of antiquity to a search for origins, uncontaminated by decadence.[26]

In the arts, the dominant neo-classical approach meant determining the standard by which beauty and taste were to be judged and the means by which this standard was to be apprehended.[27] In music, a key aspect of this standard was the concept of good taste. One of the motive springs of the Conservatoire was the desire to set the bounds of good taste: *fixer le bon goût*, in the phrase of one commentator.[28] Neo-classicism remained the dominant intellectual force in France until about 1830, although subject to increasing challenge from the 1820s. According to this world view, the goal of a human life is to grasp the nature of the ideal, and this is done through the moral exercise of reason, aided by classical authority and religious purpose. This insight enables one to esteem the real, the beautiful and the good, which are one.[29] Ultimately, the authority invoked is divine. There is much of this in Baillot's writings, but in them, we also observe his struggle with the inherent problems of its

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[25] Timothy Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary: The Deputies of the French National Assembly and the Emergence of a Revolutionary Culture (1789-1790)* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 304-305.

[26] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 275.

[27] Walter Jackson Bate, *From Classic to Romantic*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), esp. Ch. 1: 'The Classic and Neo-classic Premises', 1-26.

[28] The commentator was a composer named Bemetzrieder. See Cynthia Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and national music education in France, 1795-1801', in *Music and the French Revolution*, ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 196.

[29] Bate, *From Classic to Romantic*, 22.

application to music and with the competing values of romanticism, since the romantic virtuoso takes himself as the creative origin.[30] Already Rousseau's highly popular notion that one should trust the judgement of one's own heart is potentially at odds with this belief in divine order.

Between the two halves of the eighteenth century, one can observe a shift in the way the just standard is defined: from the use of rules to the use of models. As Saint-Preux writes to Julie, in discussing their joint education: 'proposons-nous de grands exemples à imiter, plutôt que de vains systèmes à suivre [let us put forward great examples to imitate, rather than vain systems to follow]'.[31] In the visual arts, classical Greek and Roman models existed, and from their example, underlying principles could be inferred. In music, however, as Charles Burney observed, this was not the case.[32] This led to a search for models worthy of emulation and lent an additional charge to the use of the word *classique*. Ultimately, it led to the increasing emphasis on tradition which is observable in the violin methods written by Baillot: if there were to be models for violin composition, they would have to found in the past of a tradition only a hundred or so years old. The shift from the authority of reason to that of tradition was evident at the level of the French state, as it moved from republic, through empire, to restored monarchy.

When it comes to instrumental pedagogy, published teaching methods constitute some of the most tangible instruments of codification.[33] Prior to the Revolution, the authority invoked by the author tended to be his/her experience as player and teacher. With the official methods published by the Conservatoire, we can observe a shift from experience as authority to an institutional authority. This happened in parallel with the pre-existing trend towards reason as organizing principle and pre-dated the turn to tradition.

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[30] In outlining values contemporary to the period, it is difficult to avoid sexist language without anachronism. Despite acknowledged female virtuosos such as Hélène de Montgeroult, the contemporary assumption would have been that virtuosos were men.

[31] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloïse* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1967; first published, 1762), 30.

[32] Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (London, 1773), 34-5.

[33] I use the word 'method' almost exclusively to refer to printed teaching methods.

Regardless of what authority it rests on, codification often creates problems for the future. It may help to impose or to stabilize change, but it then resists further change. Several of the key intellectual trends across the period involve codification, such as: the drive to gather, organize and disseminate knowledge (the *Encyclopédie*, the *Institut national*) and the quest to establish the just measure and unify (the metric system). These powerful ideas were initially dynamic in their effect, but in the context of the Conservatoire became obstacles to further evolution. Where Kant saw the Enlightenment as the liberation of man to think for himself (his famous *sapere aude*),[34] more recent critics of the Enlightenment have suggested that it was more about substituting one source of guidance for another: 'The role of the philosophe was precisely to instruct and civilize the nation' (quoting Voltaire).[35] Post-Thermidor, this is exactly how the political class saw its role. In a similar way, one may see institutions like the Conservatoire, once securely established, behaving much like monarchs by virtue of their positions in society.

Through its status as a national institution, through the fame of its concerts and of its violinists in particular, the Conservatoire rapidly gained an institutional authority which encouraged it to feel it was able to set the bounds of good taste and musical practice with little reference to the world beyond Paris. It came to believe that it was by its very nature exemplary and to forget that what had made it successful in the first instance had been the ability of French music-making to absorb influences from outside France. It became a largely self-perpetuating school, in which new professors were almost uniformly recruited from the ranks of former students. In addition, the neo-classical aesthetic principles which guided its early years were inherently resistant to change.

Class and agency

Writing a cultural history of music teaching means exploring the ways in it is enmeshed in the structures and striving of the wider society. Over the past thirty years, an increasing volume of musicology has moved past the point where historical context can be treated merely as a backdrop to the main drama, the creative process. One fruitful group of approaches to the

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[34] 'Dare to know': Immanuel Kant, 'Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?', in *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 4 (1784), 481–494.

[35] Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), e.g. 117.

history of music has been sociological, exploring the effects of conditions surrounding music production and reception. Pioneers include William Weber and Joël-Marie Fauquet.[36] They have tended to do this from an implicitly Marxist perspective, however, which means that the influence is all one way, with economic and social conditions having a determining role.[37] Once we see music as implicated, not only in long-term social processes, but also in political and symbolic conflicts, this kind of view is insufficient. Weber has contributed some interesting and relevant work on the politically integrative function of musical canons,[38] but to explain change across the period 1760-1840 by vague reference to a 'rising middle class', as many musicologists do, is not to explain anything at all. The historiography of the Revolution has long since disposed of the view that the course or outcomes of the Revolution can be adequately explained by class struggle, even less by economic interest.[39] But there is a further benefit to be gained from catching up with the cultural turn in Revolutionary historiography and considering its implications for music and music teaching. If we accept that the drivers of change in the Revolutionary years were political and ideological, rather than social and economic, then the way is open to seeing musicians as participating in the making of history and not just as experiencing its effects.[40]

Constant Pierre has told the story of the engagement of Bernard Sarrette's music corps in the Revolution and how Sarrette doggedly lobbied the Paris Commune, the Legislative Assembly, and the Convention for the support necessary for the creation of the Conservatoire. Whenever music was required for the festivals, Sarrette's corps supplied it, often only being paid after the event. In the course of one deputation to the Convention, one of the musicians accompanying Sarrette relates how Lafayette, walking with the king in 1791, had asked the musicians to play something less warlike than the Revolutionary songs which were current,

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[36] See for example William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna 1830-1848* (London: Croom Helm, 1975); Joël-Marie Fauquet, *Les sociétés de musique de chambre à Paris de la Révolution à 1870* (Paris: Aux amateurs de livres, 1988).

[37] Mark Darlow makes a similar point in *Staging the French Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 8.

[38] See for example William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[39] Alfred Cobban was one of the first to expose the flaws in the Marxist edifice: Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, first published, 1964). In this volume, Cobban also discusses some of the problems with the notion of 'rising' classes.

[40] Here I follow Lynn Hunt in particular: Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class*.

and instead to play the sentimental tune '*Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille* [Where could one better be than in the bosom of one's family]*'*. The musicians refused, and played the *ça ira*, a story attested by more than one source.[41] Pierre has also shown how the conservatoire printing press was the result of a private initiative by the same group of musicians in 1794: they were not able to get existing publishers to print the new Revolutionary music, so 51 of them pooled their capital and set up their own printery. It was subsequently brought under the roof of the Conservatoire and used to publish the official methods.[42] If we take a step back and consider the historical significance of these two clusters of events, the conclusion is evident: the Conservatoire and the printing press were not simply borne aloft on the corpulent belly of a rising middle class, nor were they merely created by state fiat: they were the fruits of collective action. This collective action was made possible by pre-existing cultural traditions and also by specific political circumstances. It left its mark on the internal culture of the Conservatoire once it was established: a collective approach to decision-making became a feature which survived the passing of the Revolution.

According to Peter Burke, the principle question of social history is 'who?'[43] Although, as a cultural historian, I am more interested in the question 'how?', I will acknowledge at this point that the story I am telling concerns only a certain portion of French society: the small fraction of the overall population which had education and some means. It encompassed the nobility and a very broad and diffuse middle class which included government officials, lawyers, doctors, merchants, and people of various other occupations. The cut-off point on the social scale seems to have been the point at which people worked with their hands: the middle class excluded artisans and labourers. It is better defined by its access to education and by its substantial adoption of enlightenment ideas than by its relationship to the means of production. They were the people who bought copies of the *Encyclopédie*.[44] If there was

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41 Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation (1895)* (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally, Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895), esp. 42.

42 Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire* (Reprint edition: Wentworth Press, 2019; originally, Paris: Fischbacher, 1895), esp. 13-25.

43 Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Malden, Mass.: Polity, 2008), 116.

44 Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment. A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie 1775-1800* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1979). Darnton's main focus is an exploration of the commercial chicanery involved in the production and marketing of the *Encyclopédie* from the time of its substantial completion. But he also gives a nod to the historians who would like to establish whether the Encyclopaedists as a group could be characterised as belonging to a bourgeoisie in the Marxist sense. Neither the backgrounds of the

such a thing as a 'revolutionary class' across the full span of the Revolutionary period, it was a coalition of the politically active within this educated layer of society, minus the conservative, catholic nobility and clergy.[45] This coalition announced itself in symbolic form in late June, 1789, when the Third Estate deputies to the Estates General constituted themselves the National Assembly and were promptly joined by a liberal fraction of the Second and First Estate deputies.

The absence of a Marxist bourgeois revolution does not mean the absence of class tensions. For example, there was significant antagonism between the conservative deputies of the Second Estate and those of the Third Estate, as Timothy Tackett has shown. The commoners were better educated and within their ranks was a preponderance of lawyers and jurists, which goes some way to explaining the legalistic approach of the early Revolution, and indeed of the Revolution as a whole. The nobles were disdainful of their social inferiors and were generally more wealthy. They represent the Counter-revolution, ready-made.[46] The battle lines were of course much more fluid than this brief sketch might seem to suggest and there were many different interests and ideas in competition. Despite the absence of a triumphant capitalist bourgeoisie, commercial culture was a significant element in the Revolutionary mix.[47] The point is that the nature of the institutions created during the Revolution, and especially under the Directory, owes much to the accession to greater political power of a broad, educated, and often self-conscious middling class which had a different scale of values from those of much of the previous ruling class. The Conservatoire was formed from within this middling class. In a much-quoted article published in the *Journal de Paris* in 1800, the author gives some of the credit for the quality of music-making in Italy to the conservatoriums of Naples and

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contributors to the endeavour, nor the figures he comes up with for the people who subscribed to the early editions support this. Only four percent were merchants or manufacturers, only four percent were titled nobility. Doctors, surgeons and administrative officials, on the other hand, were well-represented. Darnton concludes that 'What identified the Encyclopedists as a group was not their social position, but their commitment to a cause' (14-15).

45 Alfred Cobban sees the Revolutionary middle class as being primarily made up *officiers* (a declining class), lawyers, and other professional men: Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation*, 67.

46 Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary*, esp. 306. Tackett's detailed analysis of the writings of 219 deputies to the first national assembly is fairly consistent with Cobban's characterization of the Revolutionary class.

47 See Lauren Clay, 'The Bourgeoisie, Capitalism, and the Origins of the French Revolution', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 21-35.

Venice, but notes that their status as charitable institutions might pose a problem for their adoption in France as models:

> Les conservatoires de l'Italie sont de simples hôpitaux, où l'indigence trouve, à la vérité, une ressource précieuse et la perspective d'un état honnête; mais la classe moyenne y éprouve une répugnance à y puiser son instruction.[48]
>
> [The conservatories of Italy are only charitable establishments, where, in truth, destitution can find a precious resource and the prospect of an honest station, but where the middle class may feel a certain repugnance at seeking instruction.]

A look at the paternal occupations of a small sample of Conservatoire staff – the key players of the violin school – may serve as illustration, if not proof. Rode was the son of a merchant in Bordeaux. Baillot's father was an advocate at the *parlement* of Paris and subsequently ran a (private) school for law students in Passy, near Paris. After his death, Pierre was brought up by a senior regional administrator. Baillot's pupil and later son-in-law, Eugène Sauzay,[49] was the son of an *intendant* (another senior administrator), and Charles Dancla,[50] a pupil who would likewise become a professor at the Conservatoire in his turn, was the son of a doctor, just like Hector Berlioz.[51] Kreutzer and Habeneck were both sons of musicians. It may be worth mentioning, in addition, two members of the Conservatoire whose social background puts them outside this frame, admittedly neither of them part of the violin school. The first is Hélène de Montgeroult, the pianist whose brief tenure as professor of piano stands out not

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[48] *Journal de Paris*, 19 fructidor, Year VIII, p. 1748, reproduced in Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 120-122.

[49] Eugène Sauzay (1809-1901) was admitted to the Conservatoire in 1823, obtained a first prize in 1827, and became professor of violin in 1861. He also married Baillot's daughter Augustine. His memoirs were assembled and edited by Brigitte François-Sappey and are an important source: Eugène Sauzay & Brigitte François-Sappey, 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay (1809-1901)', *Revue de Musicologie* 60 (1974), 159-210.

[50] Charles Dancla (1817-1907) was admitted to the Conservatoire in 1828, obtained a first prize in 1833, and became professor of violin in 1855. Various of his violin etudes are still in use.

[51] Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) is now regarded as the most significant French composer of the period. His *Symphonie Fantastique*, first performed in 1830, is a seminal work of musical Romanticism. At the time, however, he found it difficult to get his works performed, got on the wrong side of the Conservatoire hierarchy and had to work as a journalist to make ends meet. His memoires are both revealing and entertaining: Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires* (Paris: Flammarion 1991; originally published in Paris, 1869). His father was strongly opposed to his undertaking a musical career.

only because of her aristocratic birth, but because, for a long time, she was the only woman to be appointed professor.[52] Between her resignation in 1798 and 1833 there were unmarried women employed as *professeurs adjoints*, also known as *répétiteurs*, but no full professors.[53] The second possible exception is the director, Sarrette. Sarrette's birth certificate gives the occupation of his father as *maître cordonnier*,[54] which does not tell us much about his station: he could have been anything from a poor cobbler to a wealthy shoemaker. There is, however, a hint of snobbery in some of the attacks directed at him, including the accusation that he was barely literate, which invites us to speculate that his origins may have been humble.[55] What is more interesting is to consider Sarrette in the light of Lynn Hunt's work on the Revolutionary class. She sees this class not as a pre-existing social stratum, but as something brought into being by the new political discourse.[56] As I shall argue, Sarrette is a type-specimen of the Revolutionary class so understood. When we come to the Restoration, one suspects that it was this, as much as his prominent position as Conservatoire Director, which marked him out for summary dismissal.

Overall, the Revolution was more a clash of values than a clash of classes, but there was a brief period between 1789 and 1794, when the 'ordinary people' – artisans and labouring people – become players on the political stage, especially in Paris. Laura Mason has written a fascinating account of the explosion of popular song culture which accompanied their emergence. She characterizes the subsequent foundation of the Conservatoire as part of a retreat to high culture, of a piece with the narrowing of the electoral franchise, the abolition of the grain maximum price, and all the other aspects of the swing back to the right which followed the fall of Robespierre.[57] This is the trouble with the Revolution, which raised such

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[52] Hélène Antoinette Marie Gautier de Montgeroult, née de Nervo (1764-1836).

[53] Laure Cinti Damoreau (soprano) was appointed professor of voice in 1833, but even then, she was paid Fr 200 less than any of the male vocal teachers (see budget for 1833: AJ/37/12/2, 2). Louise Farrenc (1804-1875) was appointed professor of piano in 1842, but similarly, she was not paid the same as her male colleagues. See Bea Friedland, *Louise Farrenc, 1804-1875: Composer, Performer, Scholar* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1980), 29-31.

[54] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 71.

[55] Pierre, *B. Sarrette*, 12-13.

[56] Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class*, esp. 13.

[57] Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution: Popular Culture and Politics, 1787-1799* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), esp. 158-9.

high hopes and aspirations: its achievements will never satisfy those for whom nothing short of genuine democracy will do, nor those for whom its spasms of violence are fundamentally irredeemable. The Directory (1795-99) has suffered from a particularly low opinion among scholars, with its withdrawal from popular democracy, the re-emergence of narrow interests and corruption, and the apparently damning fact that it ended with the Napoleonic dictatorship. Its achievements are routinely overlooked.[58] Next to the nationwide flowering of popular song described by Mason, the Conservatoire may look like a regression or a retreat. Looked at in the context of the status of music and musicians under the monarchy, however, it represents a giant step forward.

The changing status of music and musicians is captured in a story involving Viotti and the Comte d'Artois which appeared in the *Décade philosophique*, 1798.[59] The action would have taken place in 1783, shortly before Viotti ceased playing in public.

> Un jour de fête à la cour, Viotti doit s'exécuter à Versailles pour un nouveau concerto de sa composition. […] Le silence se fait à l'orchestre. Dans le salon il semble que chacun soit averti par ce silence même de respirer plus doucement encore pour mieux entendre le solo qui va commencer. La corde frémissante sous l'archet fier et brillant de Viotti a déjà fait entendre quelques accents lorsque tout à coup il se fait un grand bruit dans la pièce voisine. *Place à Monseigneur le comte d'Artois*. C'est ce Prince en effet qui arrive, précédé par valets de pied portant des flambeaux et accompagné d'une suite nombreuse. Les deux battants de la porte s'ouvrent, et le concerto est interrompu. La symphonie recommence un moment après : silence. Cependant, le comte d'Artois ne peut rester en place, il se lève, il marche dans le salon, adressant assez haut la parole à quelques femmes. Alors Viotti met son violon sous son bras, plie son cahier et sort, laissant là le concert, Sa Majesté et Altesse Royale, au grand scandale de tous les spectateurs. On n'a jamais bien su quelles furent les raisons qui, peu de temps après cette aventure, déterminèrent Viotti à ne plus se faire entendre en public.[60]

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[58] James Livesey's *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) is one of the works to advocate for a revision of this kind of assessment.

[59] The comte d'Artois was a brother of Louis XVI. He became king in 1822 as Charles X.

[60] Ange Marie d'Eymar, untitled article in the *Décade philosophique*, no. 36 (30 fructidor, 16 September 1798), 521-2, reproduced in Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult : La Marquise et la Marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006), 40-41.

> [On one festival day at the court, Viotti was expected to perform a new concerto of his composition at Versailles. […] The orchestra falls silent. In the room, it is as though this silence warns everyone to breath more softly in order better to hear the solo which is about to begin. Under the proud and brilliant bow of Viotti, the trembling string has already produced a few notes, when there is a sudden loud noise from the next room. *Make way for his Grace the Comte d'Artois*! It is indeed the arrival of the Prince, preceded by footmen and accompanied by a numerous following. The two wings of the door open and the concerto is interrupted. A moment later, the tutti starts up again and silence falls. The Comte d'Artois is, however, unable to sit still. He gets up, walks about the room and addresses some ladies in a fairly loud voice. Viotti tucks his violin under his arm, folds his music and exits, leaving behind the concert, His Majesty and Royal Highness, and a room full of scandalized spectators. No one knows for certain what were the reasons why, not long after this incident, he ceased playing in public.]

What we witness here is a collision between a distinguished individual and an established mode of behaviour. The individual is not the nobleman, but the musician: Artois is behaving as might be expected at the Paris Opéra, where commentating on other spectators and ignoring the music was *de rigueur* until at least the 1780s. The collision points to a change which was starting to occur in listening habits.[61] It also suggests a number of things about the status of the musician. While neither the status of music itself nor Viotti's acknowledged greatness were enough to constrain the behaviour of a prince *du sang*, Viotti did have sufficient freedom of action to withdraw himself from the concert, though one doubts this was also true of the orchestra. He was not a slave. His situation represents a halfway point between the musician as servant who must perform at command and the nineteenth-century virtuoso who, within the confines of the concert hall, is king.

Given the Revolutionary context in which the story was published, it should be treated with some caution. The revolutionaries were prone to making sweeping statements about the poor condition of the arts under 'tyranny'; Sarrette's speeches are full of such references. But there are enough similar stories from the period for us to feel that it might well have happened as reported.[62] It is well-established that Viotti ceased to perform in public from this time, and

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[61] See James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), esp. Ch. 1, 'Opera as Social Duty', 9-34.

[62] See, for example, Spohr's account of his performance at the court of the King of Württemberg: *Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), 106-7. To the horror of the chamberlain,

clearly he was able to survive economically without doing so. He continued to perform in private and the incident did not prevent his admission into the Queen's household in 1784. He was in a position to take on the management of the Théâtre de monsieur in 1788, [63] which suggests he had both means and considerable freedom of action. He even made a bid to take over the running of the Opéra itself in 1789, in exchange for a loan to the Crown of three million livres.[64] To characterize him as a royal servant would be misleading. As an acknowledged virtuoso, Viotti was of course in a privileged position, but then, so were other major players of this story, such as Baillot, Kreutzer, Rode, and Habeneck.

There is, nonetheless, evidence to suggest that there was such a thing as a monarchical mindset when it came to the status of music. Napoleon's government offered posts to the best musicians in groups along the usual monarchical lines: *la musique de la chapelle du premier consul*, and so on, and Baillot and Kreutzer were among those who accepted positions. Baillot, however, felt that they were treated as little better than lackeys.[65] And there is the demotion of the Conservatoire under the Bourbon Restoration in 1815; not only was its director sacked and its budget cut, but it was brought under the *Menus plaisirs de la Maison du roi*. This was the symbolic place of music under the returning monarchy, alongside such royal pleasures as dining, theatre, and general ceremonial. Fortunately, the lack of interest in music of either Louis XVIII or Charles X (the former comte d'Artois) did not prevent the resuscitation of the school from 1822, thanks to a combination of sympathetic ministers and the slow process of change in social values.

So much for the status of *musicians* under the French monarchy. As for the status of *music teachers*, we gain some indication from the 1769 regulations of the Collège Louis-le-Grand, the most famous of all the eighteenth-century secondary colleges. These very detailed

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Spohr refused to perform for the royal family unless they stopped playing cards and listened. They complied.

63 Chappell White, 'Viotti, Giovanni Battista', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

64 Viotti was the spokesman for a consortium in this venture. See Darlow, *Staging the French Revolution*, 64-75.

65 See the letter to 'M.P.', dated 13 December, 1802 : Pierre Baillot 'Lettres adressées à différents destinataires du 17 décembre 1795 au 25 mars 1815', BnF *Souvenirs // 2*, sous-notice 7. This letter is also reproduced in Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même: Étude de musicologie musicale', in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 18 (1978), 178.

regulations were drawn up by four senior professors of the University of Paris. Title VIII, Point 7 reads:

> 'Teachers of dancing, music and drawing may give their lessons only during hours of recreation. It is at this time also, normally, that tailors, shoemakers, launderers, etc. will be received.'[66]

We need to remember that in the eighteenth century, for most educated people, the ability to play a musical instrument was merely an *agrément*, an accomplishment. This was as true for men as for women. For some, like the father of Dalayrac, this was all it was worthy of being. He insisted that his son study to enter the bar and forbade him any serious engagement with music. Dalayrac loved music above all else and taught himself the violin, climbing out of his window at night in order to practise on the roof and eventually attracting a nocturnal following amongst the *pensionnaires* at a nearby convent. The tale of the mysterious nocturnal fiddler reached Dalayrac *père*, who came to his son's room accompanied by a locksmith to place a grill outside his window. He did, however acknowledge the obedient diligence with which Nicolas had been studying his law and allowed him to practise his violin in his leisure time, provided it did not interfere with his studies. Nicolas qualified for the bar, but he pleaded his first case with such a lack of distinction that his father purchased a commission for him in the guards of the Comte d'Artois. Only after leaving the family household to take up this post did Nicolas find a way to study music informally. He became a successful opera composer.[67]

The correspondence of the Conservatoire directors is full of examples of people who had thought of their music as no more than an *agrément*, but had been forced by circumstances to make a living by teaching, or who had arranged for a child to receive tuition with only the acquisition of an accomplishment in mind and, upon perceiving real talent, wished to put

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[66] Palmer, *The School of the French Revolution*, 60. This is Palmer's translation; I have not been able to source the original French.

[67] Adolphe Adam, 'Dalayrac', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), esp. 218-240. Adolphe-Charles Adam (1803-1856) was the son of Louis Adam, (1758-1848), founding piano professor of the Conservatoire. Adolphe became a successful opera composer, by way of composing ditties for the vaudeville theatres. These *souvenirs* are hugely entertaining, although like all memoirs, they should be taken with a grain of salt.

them forward as candidates for entry to the Conservatoire.[68] The boundary between the amateur and the professional was porous. Baillot started out as an amateur and by some accounts, his attitude to music retained much of the amateur right through his life. As a whole, however, the Conservatoire contributed to a significant professionalization of musical life.

France 1760-1840: trends and tensions

The principal span of time covered by this study runs from the foundation of the Conservatoire in 1795 to the end of the directorship of Cherubini, the same year that he and Baillot died: 1842. This short period witnessed both great political turbulence and considerable cultural change. To understand the circumstances which gave rise to the Conservatoire and to understand its internal culture, we need to look back at least to 1760, when France was starting to emerge from a certain cultural sclerosis. The creation of the Conservatoire was caught up in other historical events, but it was also caught up in more general historical trends, some of a more social and others of a more ideational nature. In many cases, the School was not only acted upon but was an agent contributing to change.

It is important to emphasize that many of these trends were in evidence well before 1789. Because of the profound significance of the Revolution for French national identity, one of the most enduring tendencies of French writing is to accept the Revolution's self-narrative as the starting point of everything.[69] For its defenders: before the Revolution, barbarism and autocracy; with the Revolution, liberalization and progress. For its detractors: before the Revolution, a settled order; after the Revolution: bloodshed, war, and central state control. This, despite Tocqueville's demonstration, as long ago as 1856, that the progressive centralization of power in France was a tendency which can be traced back to Louis XIV.[70]

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[68] Two examples of correspondence as described are: Letter from M. Giraud to Perne, 5 August 1817, and a letter from a M. [Têtespont?] to Cherubini, dated 18 June 1824, both to be found at AN AJ/37/322/2. Under the Restoration, the Conservatoire was renamed 'École royale de musique et de déclamation' and instead of a director, it had an 'Inspecteur-général' by the name of François-Louis Perne (1772-1832), who had to fulfil the functions of a director between 1816 and 1822, when Cherubini was made Director. To save confusion, I use the name 'Conservatoire' across the whole period.

[69] I owe this insight to François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), but it is readily observable.

[70] Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Regime et la Révolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; first published, 1856).

Culture evolves constantly, but it does not change suddenly from one day to the next, and when human beings make something new, they always use materials they have to hand. What follows is a summary of some key trends and concepts which had significant bearing on the story I shall tell.

The overall period 1760-1840 is fluid and dynamic, which is also to say, creative and uncertain. France was the most populous country in Europe, and between 1715 and 1789, its population grew from 22 million to 28 million. Recent scholarship has insisted on the co-existence of an increasingly debt-ridden state and a thriving economy, but an economy in which the benefits of growth were very unequally shared. Generally good conditions for agriculture meant steady growth and few crises between 1720 and 1760, but from then on, a combination of population growth, occasional bad harvests, and liberal reforms combined to cause growing pauperization of the rural population and rural resentment against all elites. In a country which remained dependent on agriculture and which had increasing numbers of urban poor, any trouble with the harvest sent shock waves around the country, as happened repeatedly between 1760 and 1789. French industry and trade were dynamic, creating a wealthy elite which comprised both commoners and nobles. The number of significant musical figures who came from the Bordeaux region probably testifies to the growing affluence of such major trading ports.[71] This diverse and divided class had an interest in the maintenance of the monarchy, but it wanted greater influence on government and was engaged through various forms of sociability and writing in a nation-wide debate on potential reforms.[72]

In this kind of environment, ideas have more power than usual. As Lynn Hunt has observed, we have a strong tendency to think in terms of a material and social substructure and a cultural superstructure. This is part of the Marxist legacy. Hunt has proposed instead the metaphor of a moebius strip, in which sometimes the one is on the top, and sometimes the other.[73]

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[71] Rode and Sarrette came from Bordeaux, and Dancla from nearby. Baillot spent much of his childhood and youth in the region. One would be more inclined to think this a coincidence, but for the prominence of the Girondin faction in the Revolution: the Gironde is the area around Bordeaux.

[72] Silvia Marzagalli, 'Economic and Demographic Developments', in *The Oxford Handbook*, 3-17.

[73] Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class*, 13.

Reason, emotion, and the drive toward comprehensiveness

'The passage of time revealed that it [the Revolution] was both the daughter of reason and the daughter of enthusiasm.' Soboul, 1973.[74]

> Gavroche chanta :
> *Je ne suis pas notaire,*
> *C'est la faute à Voltaire,*
> *Je suis petit oiseau,*
> *C'est la faute à Rousseau.*[75]

One of the strongest paradoxes characterizing the second half of eighteenth-century France is the coexistence of a continuing faith in reason with the high value more recently accorded human feeling. The role in the Revolution of the political ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau has been a matter of much dispute, but there is little doubt about the affective revolution in which the 1761 publication of *Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloïse* played a significant part. This novel was taken up by literate people of all stations and it is probable that when it came to 1789, at least as many of the deputies to the Constituent Assembly had read *Julie* as had read *Du Contrat social*, published only a year later in 1762.[76] The upward revaluation of human feeling brought with it an upward revaluation of music, regarded as the language of the passions, an essential precondition for the establishment of the Conservatoire.

The symbolic opposition of Voltaire and Rousseau constituted a highly productive tension, which has its musical analogue in the combination of incisiveness and passion characteristic of the Viotti style.[77] But the powerful belief in reason in France of the period is not only represented by the essentially combative critical mind of Voltaire, dedicated to demolishing ignorance and superstition. It is also represented by Diderot and his confederates who laboured to create the *Encyclopédie*. This project is emblematic of a constructive drive, a

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[74] Albert Soboul, *The French Revolution 1787-1799*, transl. Alan Forrest & Colin Jones (London, 1989; first published as *Précis d'histoire de la Révolution française*, 1962), 13. This quote is taken from the foreword to the English edition of 1974.

[75] 'Gavroche sang: 'I am not a notary / That is Voltaire's fault / I am a little bird / That is Rousseau's fault'. Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973; first published, Paris, 1862), vol. II, 597.

[76] Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary*, 304.

[77] See Appendix A (1) for a musical example.

comprehensive knowledge project involving gathering, systematization, and dissemination.[78] The *Institut national des sciences et des arts*, decreed in 1795 like the Conservatoire, is the encyclopaedia's direct descendant.[79] Systematization meant the imposition of rational order; the standardization of weights and measures through the creation of the metric system (1791-99) is utterly characteristic.[80] Under the Directory, this tendency became associated most closely with the group of men led by Destutt de Tracy known as the *idéologues*.[81] Dissemination meant education. The publication by the Conservatoire of uniform teaching methods (1802-14) should be seen in the context of these powerful tendencies and not as the result of a totalitarian desire for control.[82]

The *Encyclopédie* is a touchstone for the period in other ways, such as its preference for practical knowledge over theoretical knowledge. Where the development of instrumental music in England was hamstrung by the exaltation of theory and the disdain of the upper classes for practical ability,[83] late eighteenth-century France valued utility. The full title of the work is *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*. Much of its content concerns technological improvements across a wide range of occupations [*métiers*]. The Conservatoire published methods, not treatises: it was concerned with instruction, not speculation.

Romanticism was a phenomenon which emerged very late in the period. English literature scholars have been known to characterize the whole period as 'romantic'. The journal *European Romantic Review*, for example, covers exactly this period, 1760-1840. But classicism had a strong hold in France and romanticism only broke through in 1830, the same

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[78] I prefer the term 'comprehensiveness' to the more commonly appearing 'universality', as the latter has many other meanings. See Chapter 4 below.

[79] There is the potential for confusion in the fact that the direct precursor of the Conservatoire was called the *Institut national de musique*, decreed in principle in 1793 and then again in 1795, at which point Daunou proposed to change the name to *Conservatoire*, because he wanted the name *Institut national* for this new institution. See Document CCXX, Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 123.

[80] First proposed in 1791, decreed in principle in 1795, and the first actual measurement standards adopted in 1799.

[81] See François Azouvi, *L'Institution de la raison : la révolution culturelle des idéologues* (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1992).

[82] *Contra* Emmanuel Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', eg. 79.

[83] See David Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2016; first published, Ashgate, 2004).

year as the July Revolution, with the publication of Stendhal's *Le rouge et le noir*, the tumultuous first performance of Hugo's *Hernani*, Delacroix's painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, and the first performance of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. The Conservatoire in general, and the violin school in particular, opposed many aspects of this artistic movement, including its tendencies to extravagance and technical display and the public fascination with child prodigies which was a feature of the 1820s and 30s, and which went hand in hand with the emerging worship of individual genius.

Democratic ferment

The Revolution formally abolished aristocratic privilege in 1789 and the monarchy in 1792. But the ideas of nobility and monarchy had been under attack for many years prior, and by 1787 the authority of the king had been severely undermined to the point where, according to many historians, it had already collapsed, the decision to convoke the Estates General effectively representing an admission of defeat.[84] The chief standpoint from which these institutions were attacked was the enlightenment conviction that all human arrangements should be open to rational scrutiny. From this standpoint, religious or royal authority was no longer a sufficient basis for conducting the affairs of the country. This was a democratic standpoint in so far as anyone with the language and education to participate in what was regarded as reasoned debate could do so. It excluded the rural and urban poor and it excluded all but a few, aristocratic women, but it still constituted a powerful challenge to the established governing order. Royal policy-making was by custom conducted behind closed doors. The ideas that national budgets should be published and that office bearers should be elected, rather than decided by patronage or money, were radical.

'Careers open to talent' is often portrayed as a Revolutionary catch-cry. Tocqueville was the first to see the chief achievement of the Revolution as the installation of a bureaucratic state presiding over a society with a firm belief in equality of opportunity (rather than actual equality). But he also showed how the monarchy had been trying to promote a more meritocratic system for many decades before.[85] Measures in the musical realm are consistent

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[84] See e.g. Jean-Clément Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2013), Ch. 5 'La chute de la maison Bourbon', 155-181.

[85] Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Regime et la Révolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; first published, 1856).

with Tocqueville's assertion that the monarchy was a modernising force in this regard. The administration of Louis XV (r. 1723-1774) undertook reforms aimed at phasing out the sale of positions in the royal orchestra as early as 1761. By 1780, positions were filled by competition, decided by jury vote.[86] In the early history of the Conservatoire, we can see competition between the principles of merit, allegiance, and patronage, but there was clearly a general expectation that merit would prevail. Entry to the Conservatoire was by examination and vacant posts were generally filled by competition. Even in the first years of the Restoration, Inspector-General Perne resisted attempts by his government masters to impose students on the Conservatoire on the basis of their social connections.[87] The annual student competitions which were a key feature of the pedagogical framework were public and Baillot, at least, put a great deal of thought into how they could be conducted as fairly as possible.[88]

Many of the Revolutionary debates had been prepared in the context of a free exchange of ideas facilitated by the aristocratic salons, an intellectual sociability often known as the Republic of Letters. As Madame de Staël observed, this sociability was a feature of French society which distinguished it from that of Germany, where philosophy was the work of solitary thinkers. One of the chief characteristics of the *Encyclopédie* was the collective nature of its authorship; from today's standpoint, it could be characterized as 'citizen science' on a reduced franchise. De Staël regarded the intellectual sociability of the salons as both positive and negative. It was negative in that the desire to shine through delivery of *le bon mot* could lead to superficiality of thought, but positive in that a much larger fraction of educated society was participating in intellectual debate.[89] Much of this debate in the years leading up to the Revolution concerned the forms a more democratic society might take. The early optimism of the Revolution as it got under way in 1789 was founded in significant measure on a shared belief in the power of collective reason to change society for the better. This belief itself constituted a dynamic force. It may have been shaken by the popular

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86 Spitzer and Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra*, 183.

87 See for example the letter from Perne to Delaferté, dated 12 April 1817: 'L'Ecole royale … n'est pas une pépinière de petits talents de société [The Ecole royale … is not a nursery for minor society talents]': AN AJ/37/3/2, 31.

88 See Pierre Baillot, *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique (1835)* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1872).

89 Germaine de Staël, *De l'Allemagne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1968; first published, 1813), 101-110.

violence of 1789-1794, but it persisted and the Conservatoire is one of its products. The emphasis on collective approaches characteristic of the Revolutionary decade was also a conscious reaction against the monarchical principle. There is a direct line to the collective authorship of the official violin treatise. Rousseau, whose concept of the general will has been blamed by some for the extreme intolerance of dissent under the Jacobin ascendancy, was still a democrat. In his *Dictionnaire de Musique*, he asserts that men of good education will generally agree on what constitutes good taste, but acknowledges that there is a problem when they cannot. The solution he proposes is to take a vote.[90]

Out of the wreckage of the Marxist interpretation of the Revolution has come some interesting work on how a rapidly growing consumer culture was undermining the traditional vertical social relationships in favour of (horizontal) commercial relationships. Historians such as Colin Jones have established a link between a growing consumerism and civic values. In reviewing this research, Lauren Clay has concluded that the growing commercial culture had a greater influence on the Revolution than what one might call 'the commercial class'.[91] This is consistent with James Livesey's description of a constellation of values, in competition with the Republic of Reason, which included human feeling, connection, and creative labour, which he encompasses within the term 'the commercial republic'.[92]

Even the monarchy was infected by ideas of economic liberalism. Various reforms were attempted with the aim of introducing greater freedom and competition into markets hitherto reliant on royal 'privilege', or monopoly, and which often strenuously resisted the changes. Monarchical attempts to open up the French economy were sufficiently radical that many historians refer to a failed 'revolution from above' (1780-1789) as the first phase of the Revolution itself.[93] The foundation of the École royale de chant in 1784 was one such attempt. Its aim was to improve the quality of singing at the Opéra through providing some competition with the Opéra's own school. Naturally, the partisans of the Opéra screamed

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[90] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, entry for 'goût', *Dictionnaire de Musique* (Paris, 1768), 235-6.

[91] Clay, 'The Bourgeoisie, Capitalism, and the Origins of the French Revolution', 36-39.

[92] Livesey, *Making Democracy in the French Revolution*.

[93] See for example Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 'Première partie, La Révolution par le haut : Les raisons d'un échec', 23-414.

blue murder at this attack on their privilege,[94] but the times had changed since Lully's unchallenged monopoly of this royal institution in the time of Louis XIV.[95] Even within the Opéra, someone had the bright idea of inviting Gluck and Piccinni to compete directly by inviting them to compose operas to the same subject, Iphigenia, in 1783. The resulting competition gave rise to one of those vigorous, public stoushes between opposing musical camps in which the French of the time seemed to delight.

The Opéra had always been a state institution. In the musical realm, it showed a tendency to behave like a monarch itself, and its relationship with the Conservatoire was often uneasy, both institutions teaching voice and often employing the same people. In the mid-eighteenth century, the Opéra had fallen into a parlous state, suffering from excessively bureaucratic direction and the 'musical Gallicanism' of the reigns of Louis XIV and XV. In 1774, with the death of Louis XV, it underwent major reforms, generally felt to be long-overdue, which commentators did not hesitate to characterize as a 'revolution'.[96] This is one illustration of the change in meaning of the word 'revolution' itself. After 1770, it acquired positive connotations for the first time. Partly through the example of the American and Batavian revolutions, a revolution came to be seen as a valid path out of an impasse. This linguistic development was one of the small factors which helped to make the Revolution possible, indeed desirable, as 1789 approached.[97] No-one, of course, predicted the course the Revolution would subsequently take.

The course it took may have put the Germans off the idea of revolution, and to a lesser extent the British, but it did not end democratic agitation anywhere, and certainly not in France. The partial nature of democratic gains, the repressive reign of Bonaparte, and the Restoration attempts to turn the clock back ensured that the cauldron kept simmering. The July

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[94] See Michel Noiray, 'L'Ecole royale de chant (1784-1795) : crise musicale, crise institutionelle', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005) vol. I, 49-76.

[95] Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687) was a violinist and composer who dominated French musical life between 1665 and 1685. He owned letters patent which prohibited anyone else from singing any entire work in any part of the kingdom in any language without his permission. His music remained very popular at court right up to around 1750.

[96] William Weber, 'La musique ancienne in the waning of the Ancien Régime', *Journal of Modern History* 56 (1984), 58-88.

[97] Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 26.

Revolution of 1830 was another case of partial gains, and 1848-1851 another case of a revolution confiscated by plebiscitary dictatorship. These revolutions always disrupted musical life, often sending theatres into bankruptcy. The early years of the Conservatoire provide an example of collective leadership and I would argue that, even under the more forceful leadership of Cherubini, much of this collegial approach remained. With Habeneck's tenure as *chef d'orchestre* at the Société des concerts between 1828 and 1848, however, the peculiarly Bonapartist combination of autocratic leadership, meritocracy, and nationalist enthusiasm found its musical echo. Sauzay referred to the early years of the Society as 'the militant years'.[98] In the revolutionary ferment of Victor Hugo's Paris of 1832, Marius is befriended by Courfeyrac, one of the leaders of the club *les Amis de l'A, B, C*. When he is asked to declare his political stance, he answers '*démocrat bonapartiste*'.[99] There existed many seemingly contradictory political possibilities.

As the nineteenth century was to demonstrate, the principles of nobility and monarchy were not so easily swept away as events seemed to suggest. Napoleon brought back the principle of rank in order to bolster his hold on power and monarchy kept reappearing, in one guise or other, until the final victory of the Third Republic. In a way, as François Furet suggests, the Revolution did not end until 1880, with the endorsement of the Republic by the majority of the country at the ballot box.[100] It took that long also for the dream of universal, free, secular education, equal for boys and girls, to be realised.

National education and the strengthening of the state

Education was one of the great preoccupations of the age. This is partly due to the influence of empiricist philosophers such as Locke and Condillac: if everything that is in the mind has arrived through the senses, then control of the environment will lead to control of intellectual and moral development. To those who wanted to see society improve, education was the starting point, and to those concerned to maintain the order of society as it was, it was likewise central, hence the determination of the Church to maintain its influence over schools and curricula. A major aim of education was to instil virtue, but it was also key to improving

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98 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 190.

99 Hugo, *Les Misérables*, vol. I, 835.

100 Furet, *Penser la Révolution française*, 17. Furet developed this idea in full book form: *La Révolution : de Turgot à Jules Ferry : 1770-1880* (Paris: Hachette, 1988).

agriculture and manufacturing, and to harmonizing the relationship between the individual and the state. From the 1760s on, the buzzword was *national* education. Education had become caught up in the military competition between the states of Europe; it is no accident that the first state to set in place a system of universal primary education was Prussia, by the royal decree of 1763. The aim of education was not the unfolding of the individual, but productive citizenship: when people quoted Rousseau on the subject, it was not from *Émile* (1762), but from *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (1772).[101] This was for boys: few went beyond advocating more than primary education for girls. Condorcet was one of those few and even he did not dare to put the idea of equal education for girls and boys forward to the Constituent Assembly.[102] Of course, even universal primary education was a revolutionary idea in France and would take a century to achieve. Education has always been a political issue, but this was particularly so in the Revolutionary period, since there was widespread acceptance of both the desirability and the possibility of change.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars led to a general militarization of society, to the point that for a time, military production and the military ethos dominated society. Once again, however, this tendency pre-dated the Revolution. It was evident as far back as the time of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), driven by the rivalry with Britain, and it found its musical analogue in the French predilection for vigorous march rhythms. As Boris Schwarz has shown, this was a characteristic of the French style which dated back to around 1780.[103] There was a fashion in the second half of the century for a quasi-militarization of schools as well: at certain of them, boys wore military-style uniforms and went through the 'Prussian exercise'.[104] This trend reached its apogee with the Napoleonic lycée, in which pupils were marched from class to class to the beat of a drum. How much it contributed to the internal culture of the Conservatoire is an important question, which I will consider in Chapter 8.

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[101] I owe much of this to Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*. Palmer identifies four main educational trends across the period: nationalization (which stared early and continued strongly through the C19); politicization (especially 1789 on); democratization (especially from 1793); and modernization (especially from 1795). See esp. 'Preliminary Observations', 3-7.

[102] *Ibid*, Chapter Four: 'Democratization: The Quest for Equality'.

[103] Boris Schwarz, 'Beethoven and the French Violin School', *The Music Quarterly* 44/ 4 (Oct. 1958), 435. See Appendix A (2) for an example.

[104] Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*, Ch. 1: 'Realities Before the Revolution', 8-36.

It is not uncommon for anti-Revolutionary commentators to date the tendency towards centralization of state power to the Revolution. However, the strengthening of the state is clearly a longer-term process which goes at least back to Louis XIV. The monarchy under Louis XV was a modernizing force, much as it was in Austria-Hungary under Joseph II. Under the Revolutionary governments, one could argue that the process of state-building was constructive as much as repressive. For all its failures, the administrative achievements of the Revolution were considerable. To take one example, the creation of the departmental structure of France was just the top-level aspect of a municipal revolution which transformed the country. One of the reasons it lasted is that it did not simply involve the imposition of a geometrical grid. Rather, it involved flexible adaptation of such a pattern to the geographical contours of the country and to the history of its regions.[105] The strengthening of the nation-state is a crucial long-term process, which in the C18 was dynamic in its effects, but in the C19 became an inertial force. We see this reflected in the formation of a musical canon from about 1830 on, as I shall discuss in Chapter 7.

The Conservatoire was one of a suite of educational institutions established under the Directory which included the *École normale*, the *écoles centrales*, and the *Institut national*. They can be seen as a result of the attempt to put the ideas of the *lumières* into practice and to reorganise society along rational principles. They can also be seen as part of a long-term political project which sought to lay the foundations of a genuinely democratic republic through creating an educated citizenry.[106] Like the new administrative structures, these institutions showed great lasting power. Many may have been elite and central institutions, but the substantial failure of the Directory to transform education across the regions of France was not the result of a lack of effort. Rather it resulted from the ongoing civil war, the resistance provoked by the Revolution's attacks on the Church, and the indifference towards education of many rural people.[107] In their aspiration to transform the culture of the nation, the revolutionaries of 1789 vastly underestimated the force of cultural inertia.

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[105] Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 266-8.

[106] See for example Livesey, *Making Democracy*, esp. Ch. 5, 167-197.

[107] Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity*, Ch. 5: 'Democratization: Building the Better World'.

The emergence of 'classical' music

The rise in the status of music was a long-term European trend whose cause is difficult to establish. The Conservatoire was both a beneficiary of and a contributor to this trend. Its foundation represented a significant investment at a time when the new republic was at war and constantly on the verge of bankruptcy. The fact of this investment and its timing have attracted surprisingly little attempt at explanation, but the generally high value accorded both music and education by the Revolutionary class must form a part of the answer. In turn, the foundation of the new institution decisively raised the status of music and music teaching in France. As David Golby has shown, this status lagged well behind in Britain, a country with a far more advanced economy and stronger mercantile/industrial middle class.[108]

The rise in the general status of music was joined by more specific trends which date from very late in the eighteenth century. The first was a rise in the relative status of instrumental music. While opera continued to be the main game in France right across the period, what came to be called 'absolute music' was slowly gaining in importance, driven perhaps by the rise of interest in German symphonic music. In this, the Conservatoire played a major part, through the *exercices publics* which began in 1800, the public chamber music concerts started by Baillot in 1814, and of course the Société des concerts from 1828. These performance settings had an important role in the gradual acceptance in France of the music of Mozart and Beethoven, in the face of considerable initial resistance from the public. One of the main motivators of the Conservatoire was the desire to furnish France with a school to rival those of Italy and Germany. It is an irony of the story that this same institution not only drew on Italian tradition, but also championed German music.

The tension between tradition and innovation is one of the great themes of European history, especially that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Conservatoire, and the violin school in particular, sought simultaneously to write a new chapter in musical life and to anchor themselves in tradition. Here, Baillot had a major influence. Before 1800, there was virtually no historical repertoire. Composers like Viotti performed their own works, and usually only the latest. In 1795, Baillot discovered manuscripts of Corelli, Tartini,

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[108] Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth-Century Britain*.

Geminiani, Locatelli, Bach, and Handel.[109] In the same decade, Jean Baptiste Cartier, another pupil of Viotti, republished a large number of such forgotten works within his violin method,[110] and a tradition was born. It was part of a more general revival of interest in 'ancient' music which had started earlier in Britain and Germany. By 1834, Baillot was teaching that the student should first study the old masters before tackling modern works,[111] a tendency which would ultimately lead to the avoidance by many musicians – and by audiences– of contemporary repertoire.

What we are witnessing across the period is the emergence of 'classical music', in the sense of an historical repertoire including both the old and the new, in which the performer's task is to render the ideas of the composer rather than his/her own. Up until the late eighteenth century, composers were not commissioned to provide 'works', but music, almost always for specific occasions. Frequently, they wrote, played the solo part, and led the performance themselves, as Viotti was in the process of doing when interrupted by the Comte d'Artois. With the emergence of what Lydia Goehr calls the 'work concept',[112] the roles of composer and performer were starting to separate. Baillot himself had a repertoire which stretched from Corelli to works of the present, including his own work. He was one of the first musician-interpreters, someone not only capable of playing his own works but also of adapting his playing to the varied styles of other composers. Somewhat later, conducting, too, started to become an identifiable role, distinct from those of first violin or composer. Habeneck was one of the first musicians so to specialize, with his violin-playing increasingly coming second to his conducting. Already in 1807, while still a student, he was named sole *chef d'orchestre* of the Conservatoire orchestra. In 1817, he succeeded Kreutzer as first conductor at the Opera and he was conductor of the Société des concerts as well as one of its founders. Ironically, Berlioz's dissatisfaction with Habeneck's conducting of his *Requiem* was something which confirmed Berlioz in his determination to conduct his own works, rather

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[109] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, (Paris, 1866; first published, 1861), entry for 'Baillot', 220.

[110] Jean-Baptiste Cartier, *L'Art du violon, ou Collection choisi dans les sonates des écoles italienne, française et allemande* (Paris: Decombe, 1798).

[111] 'Pour se former un bon style, il faut commencer par se nourrir des *auteurs anciens*', Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 7.

[112] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: an Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992)

than entrust them to a concertmaster. In his memoirs, Berlioz goes as far as to imply that Habeneck had deliberately sabotaged the performance.[113]

Goehr's account of the emergence of these new concepts is seminal, but it is the story of the emergence of disembodied ideas. Somehow, music itself is the hero of her story. The following account of the Conservatoire's early history shows, in the French context, that there were people participating in this change. This is particularly true of the Revolutionary years (1789-1799), when the collapse of the monarchical state and subsequent emigration of a sizeable chunk of the ruling class opened up unprecedented space for social and political action. For half a century, the Conservatoire was able to exercise a cultural leadership which was dynamic and not conservative. That it subsequently ceased to do so may have been due in part to a hardening of class structures in nineteenth-century France, but it was also due to its own ideational underpinnings and to the cultural inertia which institutions seem inevitably to acquire.

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[113] Berlioz, *Mémoires*, 273-4.

CHAPTER 3
THE SCHOOL OF VIOTTI
AND THE BIRTH OF THE CONSERVATOIRE

The French School of Violin-playing was the child of the aesthetic tendency championed by Viotti and the new form of pedagogical organization embodied in the Conservatoire. Its genesis thus can be considered as a convergence of capital 'C' and small 'c' culture. The Conservatoire owes its emergence to a combination of long-term cultural trends and short-term political events, to a specific cultural and political moment. I will first consider the Viotti style in a music-historical perspective and the relationship between it and the School of Viotti within the Conservatoire, before presenting a narrative account of the events leading to the Conservatoire's foundation. The following chapter will step back and weigh up the various causes.

Viotti and music composition in late eighteenth-century France

Viotti is largely forgotten now, but he was a significant figure in the history of music, both as violinist and as composer. His most significant compositional contribution was to the violin concerto. As Chappell White and Boris Schwarz have shown, he brought a new seriousness to this genre and a fuller treatment of the orchestra. White presents the Viotti concertos as the culmination of a long process of development going back to Vivaldi.[1] According to Schwarz, Viotti created a new style of concerto, fused from elements of different national traditions. By the dawn of the new century, this conception of the genre reigned supreme.

> So strong was his influence, so unique were his accomplishments as violinist and as composer for his instrument, that he brought about a complete regeneration of French violin art. Again, as with Lully, Gluck, and Cherubini, we see a foreign musician combine his native heritage so skillfully with French tradition and taste that the result is acclaimed by the French as their own product. Viotti's concept of the violin concerto – an imaginative fusion

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[1] Chappell White, *From Vivaldi to Viotti. A History of the Early Classical Violin Concerto* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992). Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), Ch. 4 'The French Violin Concerto', 163-222.

> of Italian, French, and German elements – was eagerly absorbed and developed by his French disciples and ultimately became known as the French Violin Concerto.[2]

The most familiar point of comparison would be the concertos of Mozart, written between 1773 and 1775. Numbers 3-5 (K216, 218, 219) are excellent works which have stood the test of time, but they are works which principally aim to charm. Viotti brought to his composition a 'heroic' conception of the solo violin and a range of darker moods, which contribute to Schwarz's characterization of his Paris concertos as 'pre-Romantic'.[3] His Concerto No. 22 in A minor (1792) is often singled out.[4] Even something as simple as the use of minor keys makes quite a difference: all of Mozart's violin concertos are in major keys, whereas more than half of Viotti's, and an even higher proportion of the later ones, are in the minor. It is one of the reasons why Mozart's D minor piano concerto K466 (1785) marks such a departure. Admittedly, the violin concerto was not an important genre for Mozart. Those he wrote were early works, and who knows what he might have contributed had he written one towards the end of his life. As it was, the next step in the development of the violin concerto was made by Beethoven in 1806. His concerto is the first to give full symphonic treatment to the orchestra. According to Schwarz, Beethoven was strongly influenced by the style of the French Violin Concerto and the style of French opera. His study of these genres was facilitated by the visits to Vienna of Kreutzer, Baillot, Rode, and Cherubini, around the year 1800.[5]

Music history was inflected by the Revolution but it did not experience an abrupt discontinuity. The political and social turmoil of the 1790s brought to prominence a generation of French composers who responded to the demands of the new times and audiences, such as Méhul, Catel, Cherubini, and Lesueur, the teacher of Berlioz. Schwarz characterizes them as the 'revolutionary romanticists' and sees musical romanticism as a

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[2] Boris Schwarz, 'Beethoven and the French Violin School', *The Music Quarterly* 44/4 (Oct. 1958), 432.

[3] Schwarz gives detailed analysis of such features in *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, esp. 172-5. The phrase 'a heroic conception' I owe to Bruce Schueneman, *The French Violin School: Viotti, Rode, Kreutzer, Baillot, and their Contemporaries*, ed. William E. Studwell (Kingsville, TX: Lyre of Orpheus Press, 2002), 6.

[4] This concerto was much admired by Brahms and Joachim, who revived it. See Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, 181-4.

[5] Schwarz, 'Beethoven and the French Violin School'.

fusion of the French dynamism and élan exemplified by these composers with German sentimental nostalgia. To which one might add, the sophistication of German instrumental writing. This fusion was first effected by Beethoven.[6]

In considering the broader picture of musical life in France, it is important to remember that opera was the dominant musical form across the entire period. Adolphe Adam wrote, with irony, of 'a kind of revolution' occurring in Paris in 1793. He was not referring to the period of the Jacobin ascendancy commonly called the Terror, but rather to the displacement of the simpler melodic music of Grétry and Dalayrac by the more harmonic music of Méhul and Cherubini.[7] Even calling this 'a musical revolution' would be an exaggeration, since the slow adoption by French composers of fuller harmonies and more thoroughgoing orchestration was a feature of the whole period. As with the violin concerto genre, a strength of the musical scene in Paris was its capacity to graft Italian and German influences onto French traditions. By 1780, the contest in the musical press between French and Italian opera, set off in 1752 by the *querelle des bouffons*, had been settled in favour of the Italian style, but French scores still tended to be thin in comparison with those of German composers such as Gluck, Mozart, and Haydn. Indeed, the 1780s version of the *querelle des bouffons* was the war between the *Gluckistes* and the *Piccinnistes*, so complete was the eclipse of the old French style. Nonetheless, opera was a popular form and, whatever the scoring, catchy tunes and a good sense of drama were essential to success. In his *Souvenirs d'un musicien*, Adam places himself firmly on the side of those who disliked music of any great complexity, preferring that of composers such as Grétry and Dalayrac over *musique savante* [learned music].[8] Much of the Paris public's reticence with regard to Mozart related to its complexity,[9] and it took a slow revolution in listening habits for the musical public to welcome Beethoven.[10]

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6 Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, 276.

7 Adolphe Adam, 'Boieldieu', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), 1-26.

8 *Ibid*. See also Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult : La Marquise et la Marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006), 7, on the way the term *musique savante* was used as a slur.

9 Jean Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves d'après la presse contemporaine (1800-1815)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 34-5. In addition, James Johnson suggests that the reason why Mozart symphonies were so ill-received in a Paris where Haydn's were so well accepted, was that they were more abstract in conception: James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), esp. 212.

10 Johnson, *Listening in Paris.*

The classical symphony was largely an import into France, but the Conservatoire played a major role in its development, firstly through the development of wind instruments. Because they were held in the open air, the music for the national festivals was almost entirely written for wind instruments; strings do not project well out of doors. This gave a spur to the sophistication of writing for wind instruments, which had to provide the whole texture of the composition. The other major contribution of the Conservatoire to the genre consisted in pioneering the symphonies of Mozart and Beethoven. The student performances of the decade 1800-1810, the *exercices publics*, led the way.

Historical materialism and the Tourte bow

Viotti was very much a violinist-composer and his style of playing is difficult to separate from his style of composition. Before turning to the role of the Conservatoire violinists in propagating that style, we must acknowledge the role played by the new French bow, developed by François Tourte in the 1770s and 1780s. The greater length of the Tourte model, the axe shape of the point, and the even spreading of the hair through the ferrule, made it possible to sustain a stronger and more even pressure across the whole length of the bow. No longer did the point of the bow have to be the weaker end. This in turn created the possibility both of a better legato and of a range of strong articulations, which function like consonants to the long vowels of sustained bowing. A new family of bowing strokes emerged which, because associated with the French School, retain across the world today their French names: *martelé* [hammered stroke], *détaché* [detached stroke], *sautillé* [springing bowing], *collé* [glued stroke], and even *fouetté* [whipped stroke].

The story of how Viotti's style exploited these possibilities has been told by musicologists from Paul Gelrud through Robin Stowell to Clive Brown and others.[11] It is a style at once incisive, expressive, and full of nuance. It combined the broad grandeur of Italians such as Tartini and Pugnani with the sharp liveliness of the French tradition, and while the durability

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[11] Paul Goeffrey Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School, 1782-1882* (Doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1941), esp. 47-57; Robin Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 11-23; Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice 1750-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 259-281; Werner Bachmann, Robert E. Seletsky, David D. Boyden, Jaak Liivoja-Lorius, Peter Walls and Peter Cooke, 'Bow', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001; Airdrie Kalyn Robinson, *'Plein de feu, plein d'audace, plein de change': Examining the role of the Méthode de violon in the establishment of the French Violin School* (M.M. thesis, University of Lethbridge, Alta, 2014), 19-30.

of the French Violin School owes much to the institutional framework which surrounded it, we should acknowledge the appeal of the style itself. There is however a historical question which has rarely been directly addressed and that is which came first, the bow or the style, material or artistic culture? If it was the new bow which came first, followed by the new bowing strokes and ultimately the new aesthetic tendency, we would have a fine example of historical materialism in action, much like the invention of the steam engine leading to large-scale industrial production, an industrial bourgeoisie, and ultimately, liberal democracy.

Unfortunately, there are several problems with such a chain of causation. Firstly, the Tourte design did not represent a bold innovation per se, but rather the integration of several innovations into one model, whose excellence is demonstrated by the fact that it remains the template today, in much the same way as the Stradivarius model of the violin itself. The Tourte bow was finalized in around 1785,[12] and already by 1800 was in wide, if not exclusive use. Before that, many different bow designs were in circulation. Violinists made their choice of model according to many factors, including cost, personal preference, and the style to which they aspired. For purposes of discussion, it is convenient to reduce the range of designs to Michel Woldemar's selection, which consists of the bows associated with Corelli, Tartini, Cramer, and Viotti (the Tourte).[13] It is important not to assume that this sequence of designs simply represents a series of improvements, a linear progression reminiscent of the stages of human development in Condorcet's *Esquisse*.[14] There were usually trade-offs. The longer Tartini bow facilitated a stronger, more sustained sound, but it sacrificed some immediacy of response. For this reason, Locatelli preferred a lighter, shorter bow.[15]

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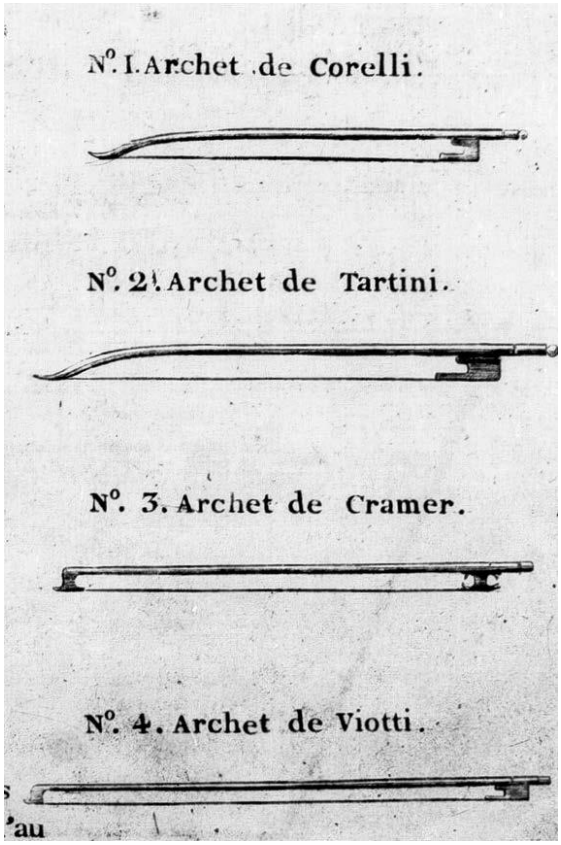
[12] David Boyden, 'The Tourte Bow', in 'Bow', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[13] According to Baillot, the bow Viotti used was a bit shorter and lighter than the standard Tourte, but when commentators such as Michel Woldemar refer to 'the Viotti bow', the overwhelming likelihood is that they mean the Tourte.

[14] Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1966; first published, 1795).

[15] Seletsky, 'c1625-c1800', in 'Bow', *Grove Music Online*.



A range of bow designs, presented by Michel Woldemar.[16]

The second thing to note is the contribution of leading violinists to bow design. Tartini (1692-1771) is credited with giving the impetus for making longer bows from 1720.[17] Viotti is credited with asking Tourte to find a way to spread the bow hair evenly across its breadth, which led to Tourte's invention of the ferrule, the one original aspect of his design.[18] While these contributions are not proven, collaboration between bow makers and leading players seems very likely to have occurred.[19] Performers had an interest in having the best tools to work with and their endorsement of a given model was likely to lead to more business for the maker.

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[16] Illustration taken from Michel Woldemar, *Grande Méthode ou étude élémentaire pour le violon* (Paris: Le Duc, ca. 1800), reproduction by IMSLP.

[17] Seletsky, 'c1625-c1800', in 'Bow', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[18] Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 18. Stowell's authority is Fétis.

[19] Gelrud goes as far as to find it 'inconceivable' that Tourte would not have discussed limitations of the existing bows with travelling virtuosi such as Pugnani, Puppo, Fiorillo, Mestrino, Campagnoli and Viotti. See Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School*, 58.

The third objection to the materialist hypothesis is that while different designs may have favoured different playing styles, they were not determinant of them. As part of his study of the French School, Paul Gelrud spent a few months comparing the playability of a Tartini bow and a Tourte model. He concludes that, although the tone produced with the Tartini bow is smaller in volume than that of the Tourte and it is difficult to play as fast with the Tartini bow, it is possible to reproduce any modern bowing technique in some degree. He even concludes that the Tartini bow can produce a very effective *martelé*, a stroke strongly associated with the French School rather than with Tartini.[20] Innovations were not necessarily taken up more widely. The Cramer bow was the first to include the axe-shape of the tip and marks an important transitional step between the various Italian designs and the Tourte. With this bow, Cramer was able to produce a lively, short bowing stroke at the middle which, from the descriptions given, sounds much like the modern *sautillé*. The wide admiration of Cramer's playing, together with his prominence as leader of the Mannheim orchestra, encouraged wide diffusion of the Cramer bow. It also prompted many less-than-successful attempts to copy his use of the bouncing stroke.[21] However, this style did not generally catch on in Germany, in part because of the influence of Spohr, who disliked thrown bowings.[22]

While there is thus a good match between the Tourte bow and the style of the French School, there is little evidence of a causal relationship in favour of the technology. There remains the possibility that the characteristics of the bow had an influence on the style as it developed across time and it could be that Airdrie Kalyn Robinson's characterization of the relationship between style and bow as 'symbiotic' is as apt as any.[23] The demands of the style stimulated the development of the bow, the bow facilitated the playing style, and the popularity of the style promoted the diffusion of the bow design. However, if the above account of the history is accurate, priority must be accorded the aesthetic direction over the technology.

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[20] *Ibid.*, 51.

[21] Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performing Practice*, 271-3; Stowell *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 18.

[22] Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice*, 9.

[23] Robinson, *'Plein de feu, plein d'audace, plein de change'*, eg 63.

The Viotti style and the Conservatoire

By many accounts, Viotti's debut performance at the *concert spirituel* on 17 March 1782 caused a sensation, and his style soon attracted admirers. As the son of a Versailles musician, Rodolphe Kreutzer heard Viotti at Versailles and immediately decided to model his playing on that of the Italian master. Kreutzer was 16 at the time, but had already made a successful debut with a concerto by Anton Stamitz two years earlier at the *concert spirituel*. Pierre Rode came to Paris in 1787, aged only 13, and began lessons with Viotti. He soon joined Viotti's orchestra at the Théâtre de Monsieur and his solo début there in 1790, with Viotti's Concerto No. 13, was a great success. Pierre Baillot moved to Paris in 1791, aged 20, and played for Viotti, who was impressed with the breadth of his style, a breadth he no doubt owed to the lessons he received from Polidori in Rome. Baillot accepted the offer of a position in the orchestra and shared a desk with Rode. The two became firm friends. We do not know whether Baillot actually had any lessons with Viotti, but he was firmly within his orbit and is generally considered a disciple.

With the foundation of the Conservatoire in 1795, a body of teaching practice emerged, focused around Baillot, Kreutzer and Rode, and the playing tendency benefited from a framework which articulated and promulgated its principles. The three disciples also composed violin music and enriched the style with their ideas.[24] An example on a technical level concerns (left-hand) fingering. Viotti's fingerings tend to stay in one position, which means accepting the frequent changes of sound colour which accompany frequent string crossing. Rode's fingerings are designed to keep melodies on one string where possible. Paganini's fingerings do the same. This necessitates much more shifting but brings the phrasing much closer to that of the human voice, in accordance with Viotti's often quoted admonition, *per ben suonare, bisogno ben cantare* [in order to play well, you must sing well].[25]

Bowing technique was the great contribution of the French School. Viotti's disciples systematized his bowing style through the composition of etudes which remain essential to

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[24] To consider just one genre, Kreutzer composed 19 violin concertos, Rode, 13, and Baillot, 9: Schwarz, 'Beethoven and the French Violin School', 432.

[25] Baillot attributes this saying to Tartini; Pierre Baillot, *Notice sur Viotti*, (Paris: Impr. De Hoquet, 1825), 5.

the development of bowing technique today. One reason that the etudes of Rode, in particular, have weathered so well is the challenge inherent in doing justice to the unique combination of passion, precision, and subtlety of the style they embody. Bruce Schueneman states that the Rode etudes were displaced in pedagogical esteem by the more virtuosic etudes of Paganini.[26] This is an error. The Rode etudes are usually given to the student at an earlier stage, but they are not merely less virtuosic: they contain technical challenges of a different nature which relate to their very different style.[27]

It is important to emphasize that the Viotti style was as much the product of a society as of an individual. Firstly, it was in part the fruit of the tradition inherited from his teacher Pugnani, and extending back through Somis to Corelli. But it did not simply arrive in Paris in Viotti's luggage. As Boris Schwarz has shown, Viotti's success as a composer was rapid but not instant; he had to adapt his style to the expectations of the Paris musical public.[28] His Paris concertos are more dynamic and passionate than the London concertos which follow and which show the influence of Haydn.[29] One of Chappell White's most important insights regarding compositional style is the importance of vibrant urban centres which spur musical creativity through collaboration and competition.[30] At a time of very limited formal musical education, most composers learnt by example, and this was true in large measure of performers also. Across the period, the dynamism of Paris made it the cultural city par excellence. Here is Mendelssohn in 1832:

> Hier aber ist Frankreich, und darum kann man auch keine deutsche Stadt mit Paris vergleichen, weil hier Alles zusammen strömt, was in Frankreich sich auszeichnet, während

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[26] Schueneman, *The French Violin* School, 66.

[27] For just one example relating to the treatment of tenths, see Appendix A (5).

[28] Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, 168. Most commentators, such as La Laurencie, Gelrud, and White, follow Fétis in imputing instant success to Viotti's appearance in Paris. Schwarz follows Baillot in his *Notice sur Viotti*, 4-5. Here I would trust Baillot over Fétis. Baillot, with his veneration of the master and especially in the context of an obituary, could have no reason to invent any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the first audiences, whereas Fétis, that indefatigable musicologist, was too prolific not to make the occasional error. Apart from this, Baillot (b. 1771) was closer to Viotti in age and acquaintance than Fétis (b. 1784).

[29] Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, 177. Chappell White makes a similar point in *From Vivaldi to Viotti; A History of the Early Classical Violin Concerto* (Philadelphia: Gordon and Breach, 1992), 342.

[30] White, *Ibid.*

> es sich in Deutschland verbreitet. Deutschland besteht aus so und so viel Städten; aber was Kunst, ich glaube überhaupt, was Kunst betrifft, ist Paris Frankreich. Daher haben sie denn auch hier das Konservatorium, wo erzogen wird, wo sich eine Schule bildet, wohin alle Talente aus den Provinzen geschickt werden müssen, wenn sie sich irgend vervollkommnen wollen; den außer Paris giebt es in ganz Frankreich kaum ein erträgliches Orchester, keinen ausgezeichneten Musiker; und während hier 1800 Clavierlehrer sind, und es doch noch an Lehrern fehlt, macht es in den anderen Städten so gut wie gar keine Kunst. Wie tausendfach sich Das nun hier im Mittelpunkt gestaltet, welch ein gewaltiges Treiben das ist, wenn man ein ganzes Land in Einer Stadt vor sich sieht und von allen Leuten die Elite um sich hat, das kann ich gar nicht beschreiben.[31]
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> [This, however, is France and that is why no German city can be compared to Paris. For all the outstanding elements to be found in France flow together in this spot while in Germany they are scattered. Germany is made up of so and so many cities, but as far as music is concerned – and I believe that it is true of all the arts – Paris is France. Here is their conservatoire where people are educated and where a school is growing up, where all the talents from the provinces must be sent if they wish, in any degree, to complete their educations. For outside of Paris, in the whole of France there is hardly an orchestra worthy of the name and no outstanding musicians whatever. While here we have 1800 piano teachers – and still not enough – there is practically no music at all in the other cities. When an entire country is concentrated in a single city before one's eyes, when one is surrounded by the élite of a whole population, the surge of activity and the way everything is multiplied a thousandfold, is all more than I can describe.][32]

Viotti arrived to a Paris which had a thriving musical life centred on the theatres, the Opera, the *concerts spirituels*, and the salons. As Lionel de La Laurencie has shown, there already existed a French violin tradition which had produced fine players right up to Gaviniès and Guénin, both of whom would teach at the Conservatoire in the first years.[33] While French violin composition lacked the expressiveness and virtuosity of Italians such as Tartini and

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[31] Letter to Carl Friedrich Zelter, Paris, 15 February 1832, in *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830-1847 von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy & Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1870), 247-8.

[32] Translation from G. Selden-Goth, ed., *Felix Mendelssohn: Letters* (New York: Vienna House, 1973; first published, 1945), 190.

[33] Lionel de la Laurencie, *L'École française de violon, de Lully à Viotti* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1991; originally published in Paris, 1922-24), vol. II, 227-332.

Pugnani, the 1767 treatise of Saint-Sévin and the etudes published by Gaviniès at the end of his life suggest a high level of technical attainment.[34] This environment supported Viotti's art and ensured its diffusion. To speak of a School of Viotti springing into instant existence in 1782, as does Paul Gelrud, makes no sense, even if we accept the usage of 'school' to designate merely a playing and compositional style.[35] It took time for Viotti's style to develop and to acquire fame and adherents. It makes more sense to see the French School as a school in the broader sense: a body of teaching as well as playing and compositional practice, centred within the Conservatoire of Paris and starting with the establishment of that institution in 1795.

Musicians in dangerous times

The story of the French School of Violin-playing is bound up with the story of the Paris Conservatoire and the birth of the Conservatoire is bound up with the Revolution of 1789-99. By the time of Bernard Sarrette's death in 1858, the Conservatoire had assured its existence, and placed itself, in its own imagination, above and apart from the wider society. But it owed its existence to the Revolution and its early years partake of the political tumult and personal danger of revolution and empire.

Pierre Baillot served in the Army of the North between October 1793 and March 1795. As part of this army, he was caught up in the vicious civil war of the Vendée. The Army of the North not only had to contain the insurrections inland but, above all, it had to prevent them from linking up with British attempts to land émigré forces along the coast. As Baillot's diary records, in February 1794, volunteers from Baillot's battalion were sent in four vessels to raid the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey. The vessels were either captured or sunk by the British and almost all Baillot's comrades perished. In freezing Cherbourg, December 1794, Baillot witnessed disastrous shipwrecks as the tempest dashed anchored vessels against the coast and against one another. The storms lasted for days. On one occasion, a Dutch vessel had almost made it into harbour but was caught by the falling tide. As bad luck would have it, this ship prevented sixteen others from entering harbour and five broke against its side.

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[34] Joseph Barnabé Saint-Sévin (l'Abbé le Fils), *Principes du Violon*, ed. Aristide Wirsta (Facsimile edition of 1761, Université de Paris, 1961); Pierre Gaviniès, *24 Matinées* (Paris: Imbault, ca 1800; first published, 1794). Gaviniès died in 1800.

[35] Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School*, 1.

Worst of all, the disaster prevented the docking of ships carrying much-needed grain.[36] Baillot was an adjudant rather than a foot soldier but, moving with his batallion all around the coast to face an unpredictable menace from the sea and subject to equally unpredictable attack from the rebel army of Jean Chouan on land, there were many ways he could have died. In April 1794, travelling down the Loire from Nantes to Saimboeuf by boat, he passed many towns and villages in ashes. Nantes was the site of legendary atrocities on the part of the Revolutionary activists under the aegis of the *représentant en mission,* Jean Carrier. Stories which came out at his trial in 1795 of mass drownings, the *noyades*, included the practice of 'republican marriage', in which a man and a woman were stripped naked, tied together back to back, and heaved into the river.[37] No doubt there was savagery on both sides, but one can imagine the thirst for revenge provoked by such tales of republican violence. Baillot's entry for 17 April 1795 (28 germinal an III) reads: 'En me promenant aux environs de la ville, je faillis tomber entre les mains des Chouans [While walking near the town, I almost fell into the hands of the Chouans]'.[38]

Avril 1795. — 28. Germinal an 3.
En me promenant aux Environs de la Ville, Je faillis
Tomber entre les mains des Chouans.

Entry from Baillot's diary, 17 April 1795, BnF IFN-52513563.

In Paris, 1794, Bernard Sarrette was denounced and arrested but also managed to survive. Sarrette was a political player. He and his music corps were engaged on the militant side of the Revolution and his musical colleagues were to reap the benefit of his leadership. Many

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[36] Pierre Baillot, 'Souvenirs depuis ma naissance, 1771-1823', *Souvenirs // 1*, sous-notice 1, 24-6.

[37] Bronislav Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ? Thermidor et la Révolution* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 191-254.

[38] Baillot, 'Souvenirs depuis ma naissance, 1771-1823', 32.

other musicians, of course, kept their heads down and survived as best they could. Fétis tells the story of the interrogation of a certain Puppo by the Committee for Public Safety in 1793:

> - Votre nom ?
> - Puppo.
> - Votre profession ?
> - Je joue du violon.
> - Que faisiez-vous sous le règne du tyran ?
> - Je jouais du violon.
> - Que faites-vous maintenant ?
> - Je joue du violon.
> - Mais si la République a besoin de vos services, que pouvez-vous faire pour elle ?
> - Je jouerai du violon.[39]
>
> [- Your name?
> - Puppo.
> - Your profession?
> - I play the violin
> - What did you do under the reign of the tyrant?
> - I played the violin.
> - What do you do now?
> - I play the violin.
> - But if the Republic has need of your services, what will you do for it?
> - I will play the violin.]

Puppo was acquitted. As Jérome Dorival notes, we should be aware that Fétis may be taking some poetic licence here, but the attitude imputed to Puppo is consistent with that of many musicians.[40] Grétry, for example, who did very well under the monarchy, having been appointed director of music for Marie-Antoinette, inspector of the Comédie Italienne, and Royal Censor in 1787, later made himself out to be a republican. He was appointed to the Conservatoire at its foundation in 1795 as one of the first five inspectors general, although he

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[39] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, 2nd edition (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1873-1880), entry for 'Puppo'.

[40] Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 59-60.

never contributed much to the work of the institution.[41] Dalayrac (originally 'D'Alayrac'), despite his aristocratic connections, spent the Revolutionary years in Paris, protected perhaps by the popularity of his music. From Adam's account, not only was he unthreatened, he even managed to shelter an émigré under his own roof for a time.[42] This puts the Terror in some perspective.

Hélène, Marquise de Montgeroult, however, had reason to fear for her life in 1793. Not only was she a *ci-devante*, but the authorities had good reason to suspect that her husband, the Marquis, had attempted to emigrate under cover of a diplomatic mission to Naples, accompanied by Hélène and the children. In the event, they were intercepted by the Austrians en route and the Marquis ended up dying in an Austrian prison. The politics of the situation are complex and much is uncertain, but by his death Montgeroult was able to help his wife who, on her return to Paris, could portray herself as the victim of a perfidious enemy (Austria). By association, this was halfway towards making her a patriot.[43] She found herself in prison nonetheless and had to front the Committee of Public Safety in 1794. Her son, Eugène Gautier, tells the story in his memoirs, with great theatrical flair.

Bernard Sarrette, whom Gautier terms 'a friend', had interceded for Madame de Montgeroult, and requested a hearing. The order was given to bring her before the Committee and a piano was carried in, a box which, at first sight, Sarrette mistook for a coffin.

> « Citoyenne, dit le président, on nous assure que l'Institute national de musique ne peut se passer de toi et de ton talent, dont nous avons voulu juger par nous-mêmes. Assieds-toi là et joue-nous La Marseillaise ! »
>
> Ce n'était pas le moment de se faire prier. Interdite et tremblante, madame de Montgeroult se laissa tomber sur une chaise devant le piano (peut-être, disait-elle plus tard, n'était-il pas parfaitement d'accord), et elle commença cette tâche facile pour elle de jouer l'hymne de Rouget de l'Isle.

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41 M. Elizabeth, C. Bartlet and David Charlton, 'Grétry, André-Ernest-Modeste', *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Grétry's dates are 1741-1813.

42 Adolphe Adam, 'Dalayrac', in *Souvenirs d'un musician*, esp. 257-8. These *Souvenirs* date from 1834, but were not published until 1857.

43 Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 79-99.

Ô jeunes filles du Conservatoire, quand à l'époque des concours, vous tremblez en exécutant un concerto devant un paisible et inoffensif jury, c'est là qu'il eût été permis d'avoir peur, puisque le prix qu'il s'agissait de gagner, c'était simplement la vie !

Après avoir joué une fois l'air demandé, l'artiste le reprit en y introduisant quelques timides variations destinées à faire briller son exécution incomparable ; puis, mettant à profit son grand talent d'improvisatrice, elle promena le thème dans les divers tons voisins de celui où elle avait commencé. Jetant alors, à la dérobé, un regard sur le terrible aréopage, elle vit que le président souriait. Les plumes avaient cessé de grincer sur le papier ; tout le monde était éveillé ; deux membres du Comité dodelinaient doucement dans leurs immenses cravates ; un petit murmure, qui allait devenir un fredonnement, planait sur le tribunal. Madame de Montgeroult redoubla d'efforts. Ramené au ton principal par un formidable crescendo qui faillit faire éclater la poitrine du frêle instrument, le thème sacré reparut tout à coup à la main droite, accompagné de larges arpèges.

Le président n'y tint plus ; il se leva, et imité par ses collègues, il attaqua d'une voix de tonnerre le chant national. À ce bruit inaccoutumé, la porte s'entrouvrit ; les huissiers, le sourire d'obséquiosité sur les lèvres, joignirent leurs voix à celles des commissaires ; plus loin, les deux soldats qui gardaient la porte de l'escalier, laissant tomber leurs fusils sur les dalles de pierre, se mirent à entonner leur chant favori, les yeux fermés et le coude appuyé sur le triangle de leur baïonnette. Pendant ce temps, la mélodie guerrière égrenant ses notes sonores d'étage en étage, on entendit jusque dans la cour des voix lointaines répéter comme un écho : *Aux armes, citoyens!* [44]

['Citizenesse', said the president, 'We are assured that the Institute national de musique cannot do without you and your talents but we wish to judge for ourselves. Sit down and play us the Marseillaise!'

This was not the moment to wait until entreated. Shocked and trembling, Madame de Montgeroult sank onto a chair in front of the piano (later, she said that it may have been out of tune) and addressed what was for her the easy task of playing the tune of Rouget de Lisle.

O young girls of the Conservatoire, you who tremble at competition time when performing a concerto before a peaceful and inoffensive jury, this was the moment to be afraid, since the prize at stake was quite simply life itself!

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[44] Eugène Gautier, *Un musicien en vacances* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, ca. 1873), 51-53. See Appendix C for the full anecdote, which is also quoted in Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 101-2.

> After having played the requested tune once, the artist repeated it, with the introduction of a few timid variations aimed at showing off her incomparable facility. Then, drawing on her great talent as an improviser, she paraded the theme through various neighbouring keys. From a furtive glance at the terrible assembly, she saw that the president was smiling. Quills had ceased scratching paper. Everyone had woken up, two members of the Committee were bobbing their heads gently in their cravats, a soft murmuring, which had become a buzzing, hovered over the tribunal. Madame de Montgeroult redoubled her efforts. Brought back to the tonic key with a formidable crescendo which nearly burst the chest of the frail instrument, the sacred theme suddenly returned in the right hand, accompanied by broad arpeggios.
>
> The president could no longer contain himself. He stood and, followed by his colleagues, launched into the national song in a thunderous voice. At this unaccustomed noise, the door half-opened and the doormen, obsequious smiles on their lips, added their voices to those of the commissars; further off, the two soldiers guarding the door to the staircase noisily let fall their rifles onto the flagstones and set to singing their favourite song, eyes closed and elbows resting on the triangles of their bayonettes. Meanwhile, the notes of the warlike melody climbed from floor to floor, and even in the courtyard one could hear distant voices repeating like an echo: *Aux armes, citoyens*!]

Montgeroult's performance was accepted as proof of her patriotism and she was acquitted. Formally speaking, she was 'requisitioned' by the Republic and placed under the orders of Sarrette, but it appears that this was only Sarrette's way of saving her from prison and possible trial and death. She did not actually join the Conservatoire musicians until 1795/6, as one of the 30 teachers chosen by jury to make up the initial staff complement of 115. Dorival, in reproducing the above account, explores many of the complexities and ambiguities of the situation and of the account as historical evidence. Gautier was a member of the Conservatoire family, a composer and former violin student of Habeneck. He was appointed professor of music history in 1872, a discipline not yet very scientific in its approach and the theatrical style of Gautier's story incites us to approach it with all the more caution. An anti-Revolutionary bias is evident in an account published eighty years after the events it describes.[45] It certainly forms a marked contrast to the books written from a republican

[45] Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 103-9.

standpoint with scrupulous acknowledgement of sources by Constant Pierre only twenty years later, which are so important to our understanding of this history.

Although there is no direct documentary confirmation of Gautier's story, it does receive some indirect support from the memoirs of the violinist Alexandre Boucher, another musician with ties to the court, and who participated in the Revolution. These memoirs were assembled by Gustave Vallat from Boucher's journals and published in 1890.[46] Boucher (1778-1861) is a fascinating figure, too showy and unruly a talent to be a part of the Conservatoire. Like Sarrette, he had the courage to intercede with the Revolutionary authorities on behalf of friends. At the age of 11, he had taken part in the storming of the Bastille and turned himself into a kind of Revolutionary minstrel; he was famous for improvising variations on the *Marseillaise* and the *Ça ira*. If we can credit his memoirs, he obtained in 1793 the release of his erstwhile schoolmistress, Madame de Mortaigne, by leading a delegation of musicians before the Committee of Public Safety in much the same way as Sarrette did for Montgeroult and, indeed, as Sarrette's colleagues did for him. It appears from letters quoted by Vallat that Madame de Mortaigne never forgot this service.[47]

The essence of the story of Montgeroult and the Marseillaise is believable in the context of a Revolution in which music clearly did play a significant part, despite the silence on the subject from most Revolutionary historians. The Marseillaise was a banner, a rallying point, much like the tricolour cockade or the red bonnet. As Dorival points out, it was not the property of the Montagnard faction, but a general mark of patriotism in a context where allegiance could not simply be inferred from social status.[48] Being a *ci-devant* might have placed a question-mark over a citizen's allegiance, but that question could be answered by professions of faith and revolutionary action. Thus the Duke of Orleans changed his name to Philippe Égalité and joined the Montagnards. He was not guillotined merely for being a former duke, but because his faction lost out in the increasingly vicious partisan politics of the moment.

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[46] Gustave Vallat, *Études d'histoire, de moeurs et d'art musicale sur la fin du XVIIIe siècle et la première moitié du XIXe siècle, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Maison Quantin, 1890).

[47] *Ibid*., 80-85.

[48] Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 131.

We shall return to questions such as the role of music in a Revolutionary culture which favoured public displays of emotion. For now, it is enough to note that in the midst of these tumultuous times, many kinds music-making went on, some overtly political and some less so. Musicians had to adapt to the Revolution; some benefitted and some simply survived. In 1792, Viotti felt it wise to leave for London, perhaps more because of the difficulties of running the Theâtre Feydeaux in the turmoil of Revolutionary Paris than because he was in any great personal danger. He continued to compose, adapting his style to the taste of the London audience. Ironically, he was exiled from England in 1798, allegedly on suspicion of 'Jacobin activity'.

Towards the Conservatoire: the École royale de chant et de déclamation

While it is well-known that the Conservatoire grew out of a National Guard music corps in the 1790s, it is often forgotten that it did not represent the first attempt in France to create a secular equivalent of the *conservatorii* of Italy. In 2005, a two-volume history of music teaching in Europe was published, coming out of a major project funded by the European Science Foundation.[49] Emmanuel Hondré, who has made several contributions to the history of music teaching in France, begins his chapter on the Conservatoire by stating baldly that the history of the Conservatoire begins in 1792, with the foundation of the Institut national by Sarrette.[50] This, when the chapter immediately preceding is devoted to the École royale de chant (est. 1784), and demonstrates its importance as an institutional predecessor of the Conservatoire![51] The simple fact is that the National Convention decree of 16 thermidor, an III (3 August 1795) which established the Conservatoire, suppressed at the same time both the *Institut national de musique*, and the *École de chant et de déclamation* (formerly *École royale de chant et de déclamation*). All current teachers at both institutions automatically became

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[49] *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, in 2 vols, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005).

[50] Emmanuel Hondré, 'Le Conservatoire de Paris en quête de sa mission nationale (1795-1848)', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 81.

[51] Michel Noiray, 'L'École royale de chant (1784-1795) : crise musicale, crise institutionnelle', *Ibid.*, vol. I, 49-77. The full name of the institution is *École royale de chant et de déclamation*, but for simplicity, I generally refer to it by the shorter 'École royale de chant', or, just in this section, as 'École royale', or 'the School'. Under the Restoration, the Conservatoire was renamed *École royale du musique et de déclamation*, but to save confusion, I shall refer to it as *Conservatoire* throughout.

part of the new establishment,[52] and thus the Conservatoire can be said to have grown out of both. It also included 30 new staff selected by a competitive process.

Origin of Conservatoire staff	**Number in 1796**
Musique de la Garde nationale	57
Added 1793	13
Added later	2
École de chant et de déclamation	13
Filled by competition, 1795	30
TOTAL	115

Origin of Conservatoire staff at the opening of the institution in October 1796.[53]

Hondré's tacit dismissal of this earlier history can only really be explained by the French tendency to believe that everything, for good or ill, starts with the Revolution. But there are other reasons why the École royale de chant is readily overlooked. It was small, focused on the education of vocal students, and it only ran for a few years: from 1784 to about 1791, even though it was not actually dissolved until 1795. It was also generally regarded as unsuccessful and costly: with a budget of 30,000 livres, it employed 13 professors to teach a mere 15 pupils.[54] It did, however, prefigure the Conservatoire in a number of important ways. It charged no fees and was explicitly based on Italian examples, using the solfège methods developed in Italy. Specific sources of Italian influence at the school include Piccinni and Langlé (ex-Naples), both professors of voice, and Rodolphe, the professor of composition,

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[52] Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 125.

[53] These figures have been pieced together from Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation (1895)* (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895).

[54] 'Projet de dépense annuel pour l'école de musique', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 2-5 (this proposal includes regulations for the School).

who had studied with Jomelli in Stuttgart. The repertoire was also Italian, going back to Pergolesi.[55]

As Michel Noiray notes, the professors contributed to the Conservatoire by the École royale were more important than their small number would suggest: Gossec,[56] the director, would turn out to be one of the foremost composers of new genres such as the Revolutionary hymns; Catel likewise.[57] Guénin was an eminent violinist.[58] In 1792, Gossec became *maître de musique* in Sarrette's first school, the École de musique de la Garde nationale, when the École royale de chant, like many royal institutions, had all but ceased functioning. He seems to have acted in close partnership with Sarrette. The ex-École de chant people formed a majority of the jury set up in 1795 to select the remaining teaching staff of the new institution. Finally, a disproportionate fraction of them (Catel, Gossec, Rigel and Langlé) were among the authors of the first official methods.[59]

The principal aim of the École royale was a limited one: to do something about the infamous shouting or screeching [*criard*] style of contemporary French singing, known in Italian as the *urlo francese*. The Opera had its own school, the *magazin de l'opéra*, but it only perpetuated the same style. Although the aim of the École royale was limited, the means it employed were impressively broad; it aspired to teach everything needed to produce a well-rounded stage performer. Hence, in addition to solfege, voice, instruments and composition, it taught

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55 Noiray, 'L'École royale de chant (1784-1795)', 67.

56 François-Joseph Gossec (1734-1829) started out as a violinist and bass player. In 1755, he succeeded Johann Stamitz as director of the private orchestra of La Pouplinière. Through Stamitz, he came under the influence of the Mannheim School. In 1769, he founded the Concert des Amateurs, one of the best of the orchestra societies. He was a lieutenant in the Garde Nationale and a prolific composer of Revolutionary music, including the *Te Deum* performed in Notre Dame as part of the Fête de la Fédération, July 14, 1790.

57 Charles Simon Catel (1773-1830) was a success story of the École royale, starting out as pupil and becoming an accompanist there. Along with Gossec and Méhul, he was one of the foremost composers of Revolutionary music. He composed such songs as 'Hymne à l'égalité' (1791), 'Hymne sur la reprise de Toulon' (1793), and 'Hymne à l'Etre Suprême' (n.d.). He was chosen to draft the official harmony method of the Conservatoire.

58 Marie-Alexandre Guénin (1744-1835) was a prominent violinist who studied with Capron and Gaviniès, and was appointed solo violinist at the Opéra having first joined the orchestra there in 1771. He was founding member of Conservatoire staff but lost his position in the contraction of 1802. He is another Frenchman, according to *Grove*, whose compositions betray the influence of the Mannheim school: Michael Keller, rev. Michelle Garnier-Panafieu, 'Guénin, Marie-Alexandre', *Grove Music Online*, 2001/2014.

59 Noiray, 'L'École royale de chant', 67.

French language, history, geography, declamation, and dance. There was even a *maître d'armes*,[60] perhaps because so many theatrical productions feature duelling scenes. The later Conservatoire appointed an exercise master [*professeur/maître du maintien du corps*], too, once it had added acting to its remit in 1808.[61]

The École royale was set up in direct competition to the *magazin de l'opéra* and from the beginning, the School and the royal *intendant* responsible, La Ferté, came in for sustained attack in the press. The Opéra, of course, was the desired destination of graduates from the École royale, and had the power to dispense precious opportunities for developing singers to debut. It could therefore obstruct the careers of graduates by refusing them major roles in its productions, and this gave it the upper hand in the day-to-day tussle between the two institutions. The École royale, through the contracts signed by the parents of its pupils, had the power to agree to or prevent its students from performing in public, and in the case of an urgent need on the part of the Opéra, this gave the École royale a certain leverage. Otherwise, it had to seek the support of La Ferté. The involvement of the *intendant* in the detailed running of the School was a feature of the École royale which flowed on to the Conservatoire, especially under the Restoration. The Director had to seek approval not only for his budgetary expenditure, but also for all appointments. Pressure from the Court or from an increasingly influential public opinion was mediated through La Ferté. Thus Gossec had constantly to justify the existence of his school against accusations that the results produced did not warrant the expenditure made, that the students did not work hard enough, and so on.[62]

Noiray exposes the self-interest at stake in the sharp public relations battle between the Opéra and the Maison du roi and drawing on François Furet, portrays it as an example of the stand-off between the rebellious local level and a monarchy at once dominating and powerless, in a society lacking mediating institutions.[63] Another way of characterizing this broader context is as a series of attempts by a modernizing monarchy to introduce an element of competition,

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[60] Noiray, 'L'École royale de chant', 65;

[61] This is revealed by the budgets. See AN AJ/37/12/2.

[62] See, e.g., the letter signed by Gossec and several of his colleagues arguing that to work young voices any harder would be counter-productive: letter to La Ferté dated 1 July 1787, AN AJ/37/1/1c.

[63] Noiray, 'L'École royale de chant', 71. The reference is to 'Tocqueville et le problème de la Révolution française', in François Furet, *Penser la Révolution français* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

into a space hitherto characterised by monopoly, or *privilège*. These include the laws breaking up the metropolitan merchants' monopoly of colonial trade in 1784, and the Anglo-French Trade Treaty of 1786, which opened the grain trade to foreign competition after the Seven Years' War.[64] The language of La Ferté's defence of the School confirms this interpretation.[65] Unsurprisingly, such attempts met with stiff resistance from those elements of the society which felt their interests threatened. The resulting stand-offs were an increasing feature of the reign of Louis XVI (1774-92), and were a significant factor in the collapse of state legitimacy which precipitated the Revolution.[66]

As the Estates General approached, the Opéra was invited to draft a *cahier* in concert with the Comédie Francaise and took full advantage of the opportunity to take aim at La Ferté and the School. Noiray quotes from the extract reproduced in Pierre 1900:

> Quel peut donc être le but d'une pareille institution ? sinon de nous forcer à être toujours en garde contre les tyrans qui peuvent nous détrôner, de redoubler de zèle, de nous livrer à des études approfondies, afin qu'un jeune écolier ne vienne dans un moment s'emparer de la place que nous occupons, ou du moins ne la partage avec nous ?
>
> [What could be the aim of such an institution, if not to put us on constant guard against the tyrants who wish to dethrone us, to redouble our efforts, to oblige us to study more deeply, only in order that, at any moment, some young student may come along and take away the place we occupy, or at the least, force us to share it?][67]

Noiray sees this use of the politically charged word *tyran* as sinister, in view of the coming revolution and the guillotining of La Ferté in 1794, but does not comment on the irony of the authors objecting to being *dethroned* by a tyrant. Only monarchs have thrones. Words like

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[64] Lauren Clay, 'The Bourgeoisie, Capitalism, and the Origins of the French Revolution', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 31-33.

[65] 'Sa Majesté, persuadée que ses finances seraient plus que dédommagées, par le concours des étrangers dans la capitale … elle a établi en conséquence … une École de chant, de déclamation [His Majesty, persuaded that his finances will be more than compensated by the competition of foreigners in the capital … has therefore established … a School of Music and Declamation]', Document XLVII: 'Extrait du précis sur l'opéra et son administration, par l'intendant La Ferté (1789)', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs,* 41.

[66] See Part I, 'La Révolution par le haut : Les raisons d'un échec', in Jean-Clément Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2013), esp. 59-86.

[67] Document XLVII: 'Vœu pour la suppression des écoles, extrait du *cahier des doléances*', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs,* 40.

'tyrant' were being tossed about routinely and often with a hypocrisy that did not escape contemporary commentators. As André Chénier wrote of the Jacobins: 'je sais que ces gens, ne haïssant la tyrannie que lorsqu'elle n'est pas dans leurs mains, voyaient avec un œil d'envie des rivaux [I know that these people, who only hate tyranny when it is not in their own hands, looked on their rivals with envious eyes]'.[68] It is significant that the authors of the *cahier* express fear at the prospect, not only of losing the places they occupy, but even of having to share them. The words could have come from Louis XVI in reference to the Constituent Assembly. The aim of the revolutionaries of 1789 was not to dethrone the king, but to share his power. Had Louis been able to do this in good faith, much of the Revolutionary bloodshed need never have happened. As Annie Jourdan writes, we tend to underestimate the opposition of reactionary and conservative elements in society to any form of social, cultural or political progress.[69]

The above expression of self-interest also anticipates Kreutzer's reply to Lesueur in 1823, on the subject of Kreutzer's having refused use of the Opéra hall for a premier performance of one of Berlioz's new works. Kreutzer was, at the time, the director-general of music at the Opéra and his permission was needed. Lesueur was Berlioz's teacher. His student having been rebuffed summarily, he came to see Kreutzer himself. Pushed by Lesueur, Kreutzer expostulated: 'Eh ! pardieu ! que deviendrons-nous si nous aidions ainsi les jeunes gens ? [By God, what will become of us if we go helping the young in such a way?]' As Berlioz dryly comments: 'Il avait au moins le mérite de la franchise [He had at least the merit of being honest].'[70]

Whatever the grander historical themes in evidence, self-interest will always play a role. To the revolutionaries, however, self-interest (or the 'particular interest') seemed to constitute the

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[68] 'Réponse à une lettre de Marie-Joseph Chénier, insérée dans le « Moniteur » du vendredi 11 mai', *Journal de Paris*, 12 May 1792, André Chénier, *Œuvres Complète* (Paris : Bibliothèque de la Pleïade, 1950), 317. André Chénier (1762-1794) and Marie-Joseph Chénier (1764-1811) were both poets and partisans of the Revolution. André is generally regarded as the greater poet, but he strongly allied himself with the Brissotins, or Girondins, which led to his death by guillotine on the orders of Robespierre and associates in July 1794. Marie-Joseph was elected to the Convention and served on the committees of general security and public safety. Although suspected of 'moderantism', he survived the Jacobin dictatorship. A successful collaborator with Gossec in the composition of Revolutionary songs, he was a key ally of the musicians who formed the Conservatoire.

[69] Annie Jourdan, *Nouvelle Histoire de la Révolution* (Paris: Flammarion, 2018), 16.

[70] Hector Berlioz *Mémoires* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1969; originally published 1869), 81-2.

guiding principle of the *ancien regime*. When leading ministers such as Turgot and Neckar could be made and broken by court intrigue, with no consensus able to be reached as to the general interest, and with politics essentially carried on behind closed doors, this point of view is understandable. It explains the Revolutionary obsession with openness and transparency, the enthusiasm for outdoor festivals and the paradoxical and damaging denial of any politics of compromise. For a time, the enthusiasm of revolution seemed to sweep away much of the obstruction of self-interest, witness the patriotic delirium of 4 August 1789, when the deputies of the National Assembly voted away their own privileges. Naked self-interest returned with a vengeance after Thermidor, with large-scale corruption.[71] This resurgence did not, however, prevent the Republic from creating a raft of public institutions for the general weal, such as the Institut national de France, the central schools, and the Conservatoire.

Noiray provides an excellent account of the pre-Revolutionary politics in play around the École royale, from a certain point of view. Like the revisionist historians of the 1980s and 90s, his perspective is dominated by the approach of the guillotine, but I would suggest that there is a broader picture: one of contending interests in a fluid field created by the collapse of the monarchical order. Space was opened up for construction as well as destruction, and into this space marched the musicians of the Parisian National Guard.

Before we turn to that narrative, there are two final points to be made about the École royale de chant which look forward to the time of the Conservatoire. The first is that the Conservatoire inherited the rivalry with the Opéra when it came to voice training. There remained a sense that something must be done about the poor state of singing at the Opéra, but that the Conservatoire's best efforts were never adequate. According to Adolphe Adam, the old habit of the *urlo francese* still dominated opera singing at the time of the Restoration.[72] The correspondence of Inspector-general Perne (de-facto Director, 1816-1822) is full of attempts to recruit good voice students from across France, in particular from the South of the country.[73] Across the period, unlike its instrumental teaching, the vocal teaching of the Conservatoire was never regarded as a success.

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[71] See, e.g., Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 684-6.

[72] Adam, 'Hérold', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien*, 32.

[73] See the register of Perne's correspondence, AN AJ/37/3/3.

The second point is that it appears from the few documents surviving that the École royale experienced more trouble with indiscipline from its students than did the Conservatoire. The exam register from 1784 records that two out of thirteen pupils were dismissed for poor conduct [*réformé pour inconduite*] and one further for lack of punctuality [*inexactitude*] in one semester alone.[74] In a letter to La Ferté dated 15 September 1786, Gossec complains to La Ferté of the conduct of a certain Mlle Chevalier:

> Le 6 septembre. Mlle Chevalier, que l'on nomme à l'École Mlle Darmand, est arrivée à 11 heures et demie ; s'étant présentée à cette heure à la classe de M^r^ Rigel, l'une de ses maîtres de musique, elle n'a pu avoir de leçon, attendu que la classe de ce maître était finie, cette demoiselle s'est retirée avec infiniment d'humeur et en menaçant de s'en plaindre aux supérieurs, et depuis elle n'a pas reparue. Je ne me permets d'autre reflexion sur cette demoiselle, sinon que de dire, monsieur, que deux personnes comme elle, avec deux comme M^r^ Dessaules, feraient fermer pour toujours l'École Royale.
>
> [September 6th. Mademoiselle Chevalier, known at the School as Mademoiselle Darmand, arrived at half-past eleven. She presented herself at this hour at the class of Monsieur Rigel, one of her music teachers, but was unable to have a lesson, given that the class of this teacher was by this time over. She withdrew in a very bad temper, threatening to complain to M^r^ Rigel's superiors, and has not been seen since. The only further reflexion I shall allow myself, Monsieur, is that it would only take two such persons, together with two like M^r^ Dessaules, to close the École Royale forever.][75]

Although this excerpt relates to a single episode, it is suggestive of how the School was situated within social power relations. Gossec would hardly have to narrate such a story to La Ferté if he had the authority simply to strike Mlle Chevalier from the list of pupils. That he did not reflects in part the close involvement of the Minister in the running of the School, but it also points to the fact that many of the pupils had powerful parents or other protectors. The short paragraph devoted to Mlle Douvisqui, in the exam register referred to above, takes the trouble to record: 'protegée par M^me^ St Huberty'. The authority of La Ferté might be required to censure the behaviour of such a pupil, and even he might choose to exercise diplomacy in some cases. The clear implication is that the power of Gossec as director was not great. We see this again with Perne under the restored monarchy, but much less so under Cherubini

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[74] AN AJ/37/1/1d.

[75] AN AJ/37/1/1b.

from 1822. The behaviour described is that of an adolescent who expects to have her way. There could be many reasons for this, but among them is the likelihood that she is well-born, and expects music masters to defer to her by virtue of their lower social status. As we shall see later, it is only during the early years of the Restoration that one can imagine such behaviour being tolerated at the Conservatoire.

Bernard Sarrette and the Musique de la Garde nationale de Paris: Republican Overture (for wind instruments)

The story of how, between 1789 and 1796, a band of 45 musicians belonging to the National Guard of Paris grew to become the Conservatoire, is a remarkable tale of revolutionary voluntarism. It features both collective and individual initiative; Bernard Sarrette played such a key role that it is difficult to imagine the successful outcome without his involvement. Despite this, very few music historians have shown much interest in Sarrette. What we know of the history, we owe almost entirely to Constant Pierre (1855-1918), who published several key works, such as *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation* and *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales et du Conservatoire*.[76] Both of these works were published in 1895, on the one-hundredth anniversary of the Conservatoire's foundation. They are implicitly pro-republican and pro-Sarrette, in marked contrast to the writing which commemorated the next centenary in 1995. This said, they are written in a style which eschews overt comment or interpretation, and Pierre clearly aspires simply to present the facts, in accord with the prevailing positivist philosophy of history. Pierre seems to have been an archivist at heart, and the document collection he published in 1900 remains an essential reference.[77] His determination to avoid anything which might be construed as interpretation means that *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire* begs a number of interesting questions. His account also pushes far into the background the Revolutionary events which alone give the story full meaning. Before considering some of the questions of interpretation, I will therefore present a narrative which sets the story of Sarrette and his troop within the context of the wider Revolutionary drama, keeping an eye on what events at the level of national and city politics (often one and the same) meant for the Paris National Guard as a whole. This will be important when we come to assess the

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[76] Full references already given above.

[77] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*.

influence of the musicians' National Guard experience on the internal culture of the Conservatoire. In weaving these strands together, I am proceeding from the conviction of historians such as Jean-Clément Martin that the Revolution can only be properly understood through study of its events, rather than just of forces and ideas,[78] which will be examined in the next chapter. Between the two chapters, I hope to show how much the foundation of the Conservatoire owed to the Revolution at a time when culture and politics were inextricably linked.

La Musique de la Garde nationale (July 1789 – June 1792)

Apart from the information contained in his birth certificate, to which we shall return later, we know next to nothing of Sarrette before July 1789 when Paris was in a state of revolutionary turmoil. Spontaneous acts of rebellion against royal authority were occurring all over France, often with the involvement of local Revolutionary councils. The story Pierre assembles from the fragmentary evidence he was able to find is that Sarrette was living in the District of Les Filles de St Thomas and was a member of the District Committee. On July 13, most likely as informally decided by that committee, he took command of a troop of 150 soldiers of different regiments and brought them to the District. The following day he took them to the Invalides in order to arm them. Only then was he formally given command of this troop by the District, together with that of the musicians and pupils of the nearby Gardes françaises depot.[79] July 14, as we recall, was the day of the siege of the Bastille, in which the eleven-year-old violinist Alexandre Boucher reputedly took part. (One suspects that many people took part in these Revolutionary *journées* as spectators rather than as active participants, with a very blurred line between.) Already the next day, July 15, the fall of the Bastille was celebrated at Notre Dame with a *Te Deum* composed and produced by Gossec. On July 25, the assembly of the Paris Commune formed itself and on July 31 it formally subordinated the various bourgeois militias of Paris to its authority, naming them the Garde nationale de Paris. In recognition of his services, the district committee 'voted Bernard Sarrette a sword' [*a voté*

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[78] Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, esp. 12-13.

[79] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 14; Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 71. Although these two sources quote the same passage from Sarrette's service record, obtained from the Ministry of War, the former refers to 13 and 14 July, whereas the latter refers to 13 and 14 January. I have to assume that it is the former which is correct and the latter a transcription error or misprint, since this kind of Revolutionary action seems more likely in July than January 1789, and since in *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, Pierre is engaged in a painstaking reconstruction of events.

à Bernard Sarrette une épée].[80] This wonderful expression, which signifies promotion to officer rank, encapsulates the meeting of tradition and innovation so characteristic of the Revolution. In accordance with the new democratic spirit, Sarrette is *elected* officer, but the symbol of his rank is the sword, ancient symbol also of the aristocratic, warrior caste.

The Gardes françaises to which the musicians had belonged constituted one of several professional military units devoted to maintaining the peace of France under the monarchy. It had a proud history of military music.[81] In placing themselves under the orders of the District, the musicians technically were deserting their posts, as did many of the Gardes françaises at the time. The new and evolving Revolutionary government was trying to catch up with events and regularize a complex insurrectionary situation. In this context, such desertions were glossed over and the Gardes françaises were absorbed into the paid National Guard when this was formally created on 31 July 1789.[82] Sarrette also formally joined the paid National Guard in September 1789, with the rank of captain. His command of the musicians meant that he was responsible for their lodgement, food, clothing, and pay.[83] This arrangement continued when they were formally subordinated to the Commune, rather than the District, in October 1790, which meant that Sarrette was constantly having to lay out money of his own, or to borrow it and seek reimbursement from various authorities.[84]

Meanwhile, the musical troop distinguished itself by participating in the frequent ceremonies and commemorations by which the Revolutionaries sought to sacralise its new symbols. The documentary evidence is incomplete, but it is very possible that they were part of the *Te Deum* produced by Gossec which celebrated the fall of the Bastille and on various other occasions throughout 1789. They probably accompanied the blessing of the flags of the newly named Garde nationale in September 1789 and they certainly accompanied the ceremony at which the flags of the old Gardes françaises were exchanged for those of the Commune in January 1790. Again, they very likely accompanied various oath-taking

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80 Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 14; Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 71.

81 Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School*, 16-17.

82 Georges Carrot, *La Garde nationale (1789-1871) : une force publique ambiguë* (Paris: Harmattan, 2001), 31-45, esp. 44.

83 Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 15.

84 Pierre rejects the notion that Sarrette had sufficient means to advance the necessary sums on his own account without resort to credit (*B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 19).

ceremonies which abounded in the early Revolution as the people of France tried to affirm their unity as a nation and which even found their echo in French opera from this time.[85] At this point, the Musique de la Garde nationale consisted only of wind instruments and one musical innovation it introduced consisted in the use of wind band to accompany choirs.[86] Another was to expand the range of instruments included in the band, adding oboes, flutes, trumpets, trombones and tubas to the traditional clarinet, horn and bassoon.[87]

Although the Gardes françaises unit from which they came had included a school as well as a military band, the musicians functioned principally as a band until 1792, although one suspects that, music-making being so often a family business, the sons of existing guardsmen may have received informal teaching in the band. From 1791, the troop began to make representations to the Commune for its constitution as a school, supported by sympathetic voices in the press. In order to lead this charge, Sarrette resigned from the paid National Guard when it was absorbed into the regular army by the National Assembly decree of August 1791. The troop continued to associate itself with the most militant side of the Revolution, appearing notably at the festival commemorating the rebellion of the Swiss guards of Châteauvieux, held on 15 April 1792. It was at this time that constitutional moderates like La Fayette were starting to lose the arm-wrestle for power with the Jacobins. Not wishing to encourage further acts of insubordination in the army, La Fayette forbade the Garde nationale from joining in the celebrations. Against orders, many members of the music corps assembled in front of the Opéra and performed two choral pieces written by M-J Chénier and Gossec: the *Choeur à la Liberté*, and the *Ronde nationale*.[88] Sarrette made much of this act of patriotic insubordination when he lobbied the Convention in 1794 and 1795.[89]

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[85] For the wave of oath-taking, see, e.g., Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 253-284. For opera, see M. Elizabeth C. Bartlett, 'The new repertory at the Opéra during the Reign of Terror: Revolutionary rhetoric and operatic consequences', in *Music and the French Revolution*, 130-2, 154.

[86] One indeed of the three new Revolutionary genres identified by David Charlton, the other two being the funeral march and the one-movement overture for wind ensemble. See David Charlton, 'Introduction: Exploring the Revolution', in *Music and the French Revolution*, 8.

[87] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 22.

[88] *Ibid.*, 27.

[89] *Ibid.*, 42.

L'École de musique de la Garde nationale (June 1792 – November 1793)

These efforts to give the music corps a more enduring form encompassing both performance and education received their first success on 9 June 1792, when the Commune agreed to support a school for 120 sons of national guardsmen, two for each of the 60 districts (hence Garde nationale battalions) of Paris. Physically, it was housed at the depot of the Musique de la Garde nationale, rue Saint-Joseph, already the third address of this depot since Sarrette first took charge. War having been declared on Austria in April 1792, the School's immediate task was to train musicians for the armies. It was at this stage that the Garde nationale was functioning as the conduit for funnelling volunteers into the Revolutionary armies, numbering in the hundreds of thousands.

The École de chant, meanwhile, as a national institution, was struggling to continue operating, having ceased in 1791 to be funded by the king. It successively changed its name to 'École publique …' and 'École nationale …', and, like other public education institutions, was being maintained on a provisional basis by decision of the Constituent Assembly. The deputies to this body had seen their task as that of reconstituting the country rather than governing it and, with the collapse of royal authority, were forced to hand numerous unsolved problems of governance on to the Legislative Assembly which would succeeded them.[90] As it considered different proposals for a new education system, the Legislative Assembly also deferred a decision on the fate of the School. Between 1791 and 1795, the School was funded on a half-yearly basis, then quarterly, then monthly. In spite of the staff having volunteered to accept a reduction in pay in 1791, Director Gossec had to make continual representations to the national authorities for them to be paid at all.[91] Gossec was, of course, also part of the Musique de la Garde nationale.

The Musique de la Garde nationale did not stay under the umbrella of the Commune for long. In September 1792, the National Convention replaced the Legislative Assembly, abolished the monarchy and proclaimed a republic. With the execution of the king in January 1793, the declaration of war on Britain and the Dutch Republic in February, and the beginning of the uprising in the Vendée in March, the new republic was engaged in a massive struggle for

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[90] Bronislaw Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie* (Geneva: Droz, 2000; first published: Paris, 1982), 108.

[91] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 49-54.

survival. The *levee en masse* was decreed in August 1793; henceforth, all citizens of the country were considered subject to requisition by the State. Baillot was caught up in the mass drafting of young men to the armies which followed, leaving Paris in November. Increasingly, government was by exception and power was centralized more and more within the committees of Public Safety and General Security. Sarrette began to receive commissions directly from the Committee Public Safety, both for performance at festivals and for provision of military musicians.[92] After the failed insurrection of the Paris sections in support of the Girondins in June 1793, Sarrette also very likely perceived that the Commune would lose out in any conflict with the national authorities and he decided it was time to seek the foundation of a school at the national level. He enlisted the support of the Commune and led a joint delegation to the Convention. Baudrais spoke for the General Council of the Commune, Sarrette for the musicians, and the band performed a number of patriotic songs, including the '*hymne de la liberté'*, (words by M-J Chénier and music by Gossec), and the *ça ira*. It was no doubt useful that as well as being a prominent Revolutionary poet, Chénier had a seat in the Convention; it was he who presented the proposal for the establishment of a national school of music. This proposal was accepted in principle, with the details referred to the Committee for Public Instruction. The musicians celebrated and acted to cement their position by proceeding directly to the Council of the Commune to claim their red bonnets, once a symbol of punishment and now of insurrectionary patriotism.[93]

Institut national de musique (November 1793 – July 1795)

While the *Institut national de musique* was thus decreed in November 1793, it would take a further 20 months for this decree to be put into effect. The institute found itself in a kind of no-man's land, funded on an ad-hoc basis partly by the Commune and partly by the Convention. Battles raged at the borders as well as inside France and even inside the Convention, as internecine struggles between former allies reached sanguinary intensity. Yet even as, in Jean-Clément Martin's phrase, the state exploded,[94] the Revolutionaries were

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[92] On 10 August, 1793, Sarrette was commissioned to provide music for the anniversary of the overthrow of the monarchy and on 21 October 1793, to provide military musicians for the Army of the West, raised to deal with the Vendée uprising. Again, he had to provide for their equipment, clothing, and other logistics.

[93] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 38-45.

[94] 'L'état éclaté', in Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 383-418.

trying to build a better world through a wholesale reform of education.[95] The Committee for Public Instruction was simply too busy to respond to calls for a broadly based music school. Sarrette therefore continued to lobby. After the troop performed at the Festival of Reason on 10 November 1793, it presented a special concert for members of the Committee and the Commune. Sarrette exploited the great impression made by this performance by obtaining support for the addition of 13 more musicians to the Institute. In a step towards a school which would go beyond wind instruments and encompass all of music education, these included the violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer, the cellist Henri Levasseur,[96] and three significant composers: Lesueur, Méhul, and Grétry.[97] Here is a review of a concert presented in 1794, the kind of press item which supported the Institut's cause. It indicates, incidentally, that Pierre Rode was still part of things in Paris when he was not on tour:

> Voyons maintenant les avantages de l'Institut : ils sont innombrables. Il est impossible d'offrir une plus belle réunion de talens précieux : l'Institut bien organisé peut exciter l'émulation, former les maîtres, des artistes célèbres, devenir en un mot la première école de goût de l'Europe ; cette école étoit nécessaire, indispensable même. Bien dirigée, nous le répétons, elle mérite toute l'attention, tous les soins du Gouvernement, et nous ne doutons pas que son exercice du 17 ne lui ait mérité toute sa sollicitude paternelle. L'ouverture du citoyen Méhul, la *Symphonie concertante* du citoyen Devienne, l'*Ouverture* du citoyen Catel, tout en un mot a excité le juste enthousiasme des auditeurs. La *Symphonie concertante* du citoyen Kreutzer a été exécutée avec la plus grande perfection, par cet artiste et par les citoyens Rode et Levasseur.[98]
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> [Let us consider the advantages of the Institute, which are innumerable. It would be impossible to offer a more splendid array of precious talents. Well-organized, the Institute could serve as an inspiration, train teachers and celebrated artists, in a word, it could become the leading school of taste in Europe. Such a school is necessary, even indispensable. We

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[95] See, e.g., R. R. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity: Education and the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1985): Ch. 5, 'Democratization: Building the Better World'.

[96] Jean-Henri Levasseur (1764-1823) was one of the founding professors of violoncello at the Conservatoire, and one of the authors of the official cello method, published in 1805.

[97] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 46-52. Jean-François Lesueur (or Le Sueur) (1760-1837), opera composer, was one of the first inspectors general of the Conservatoire. Now known chiefly as the teacher of Hector Berlioz, he was one of Boris Schwarz's 'revolutionary romanticists' and experimented with massed musical forces in a way which anticipated Berlioz.

[98] From *Affiches, announces, etc.*, no. 69 du 19 brumaire an III (9 November, 1794), quoted in Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 103.

> repeat, well-organized, it is deserving of all the attention and care of the Government, and we have no doubt that the performance on the 17th has merited all the Government's fatherly solicitude. The overture of Citizen Méhul, the *Symphonie concertante* of Citizen Devienne, the *Overture* of Citizen Catel, everything sparked the enthusiasm of the listeners. The *Symphonie concertante* of Citizen Kreutzer was performed to the greatest perfection by that artist, as well as by Citizens Rode and Levasseur.]

The Institut made successful representations to the Committee of Public Safety to gain control over stores of musical instruments and sheet music confiscated from émigrés and now regarded as national property. This was the foundation of what would later become the Conservatoire's museum and library.[99] It also meant that students who could not afford instruments or music could often borrow them.

Perhaps the most difficult moment came when Sarrette was denounced to the Committee of Public Safety and arrested in March 1794. Historians still argue about whether it is accurate to write of Revolutionary 'paranoia', in view of the fact that there *were* royalist plots being hatched all over the country and that the brothers of the dead Louis XVI had broadcast their intention of invading their own country in alliance with foreign armies, in order to wipe out Revolution and Revolutionaries.[100] Baillot, indeed, was invited to join one of the émigré armies as early as November 1791. Demonstrating both his patriotism and his Revolutionary sympathies, he refused.[101] Nevertheless, the fact remains that in the pressure cooker of 1793-4 Paris, a single denunciation was enough to result in arrest. In the case of Sarrette in March 1794, there were effectively two denunciations which were contradictory. One accused him of involvement in a royalist plot sponsored by the British and at the same time accused him of being too zealous in attacking the church and aristocracy, the other accused him of being too moderate (itself a dangerous accusation at the time). Revolutionary justice, like so much else, was in a state of improvisation. A prisoner could languish in confinement for some time unless brought to the attention of the Committee of Public Safety. Condorcet died in such a prison in the month of Sarrette's arrest, writing his famous *Esquisse*, which thus came out

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[99] *Ibid*., 53, 56-7, 144.

[100] See, e.g., Jourdan, *Nouvelle Histoire de la Révolution*, 123.

[101] Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même : Étude de musicologie musicale', in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 18 (1978), 135.

posthumously.[102] Sarrette's colleagues, however, ensured that he was not forgotten and lobbied determinedly for his release, emphasizing his central role in administration of the Institut, and the importance of the Institut for the armies. This release was obtained provisionally in April, then definitively in May.[103]

The Institut continued to fulfil orders from the authorities for the formation of music troops for the armies and to perform in the national festivals. In line with the more democratic spirit of 1793/94, preparations for the Festival of the Supreme Being saw members of the Institut disperse to various schools in order to teach the school children key songs for the occasion. Some accounts even have Gossec, Lesueur and Méhul perched on chairs in the streets, teaching the hymns to the multitudes, like St Francis preaching to the birds![104] Constant Pierre regards these reports with justifiable suspicion, but they find a historical echo in the July Revolution of 1830 when Berlioz, roaming the streets with a gun in hand and waiting for 'something' to happen, ends up conducting an impromptu choir of workers in the Marseillaise.[105]

In addition to training regimental musicians and performing at the festivals, the Institute was expanding its usefulness to the Revolution in other ways. Frustrated at the unwillingness of the established houses to publish the new compositions associated with the Revolution, a collective of 51 National Guard musicians pooled enough capital to set up a printing press, the *Magazin de musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales*. The press was commissioned by the Committee of Public Safety to print collections of patriotic airs for distribution to the departments and the armies. This formed part of a concerted program of political education aimed at ensuring the loyalty of the armies after debacles such as the defection of General Dumouriez in April 1793. The 12 collections of music published in these first two years were largely composed by Catel, Cherubini, Gossec, Méhul, and Lesueur, the five composers who became the first *inspecteurs de l'enseignement* of the Conservatoire. The press was brought under the wing of the Conservatoire in 1796 and renamed the *Magazin du Conservatoire*. It

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[102] Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1966; first published, 1795).

[103] Details of Sarrette's arrest and release taken from Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 59-71.

[104] *Ibid*., 75-81.

[105] Berlioz, *Mémoires*, 157-8.

remained in operation from 1794 to 1826 and was used to print the official methods which came out in the new century.[106]

9 Thermidor and the foundation of the Conservatoire

The fall of Robespierre and his confederates on 9 thermidor an II (27 July 1794) triggered a 'sweeping realignment of forces' in the Convention, and the Plain started to reassert itself against the Mountain.[107] It took some time for the deputies to work out what this meant for the government of the country and for the Revolution. They were clear that they did not want a return to 'Robespierrism', but Revolutionary government and the suspension of the constitution continued. The consensus which emerged was the need to terminate the radical phase of the Revolution and consolidate the Republic. The Constitution of Year III established the Directory and entered into force on 26 October 1795 (4 brumaire, an IV). Ominously, a rebellion in Paris was put down on 5 October by troops under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte.

On the first anniversary of the 'revolution' of 9 thermidor – that is, on 27 July 1795 – the musicians gave a concert to the Convention. Taking advantage of its success, the very next day, M-J Chénier presented his report on the definitive organisation of the Institut, to be called the *Institut central de la musique*. A few days later, the Convention formally decreed the establishment of the *Conservatoire de musique*, renamed to avoid confusion with the *Institut national des sciences et des arts*. The Conservatoire was to be a much more complete and extensive music school than the old Institut national de musique, teaching all instruments, voice, and composition, and consisting of 115 teachers and 600 pupils of both sexes.[108] Sarrette's high Revolutionary profile which had saved him from harm in 1794 now earned him two new periods of arrest in 1795, as he found himself on the list of 'terrorists' of his section. On both occasions, he was released by order of the Committee for General Security. It undoubtedly helped that M-J Chénier was a member of this committee.[109]

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[106] Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire* (Reprint edition: Wentworth Press, 2019; originally Paris: Fischbacher, 1895).

[107] Laura Mason, 'Thermidor and the Myth of Rupture', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, 532.

[108] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 179-182; Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 125.

[109] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 71-2.

'Politics should never come near our arts' was the word from the great actor Samson at Sarrette's funeral in 1858.[110] The vote in favour of establishing the Conservatoire was directly associated with the anniversary of the arrest of Robespierre and his associates on 9 thermidor and their execution at the Place de la Revolution on 10 thermidor. Politics and the arts could scarcely find themselves closer together than that. The full significance of this proximity will be discussed in the next chapter, which will consider not only why the Convention deputies voted in favour of the Conservatoire's foundation, but why the Directory followed through with funding the institution, reservations notwithstanding. Before turning to an analysis of the reasons, however, a summary of the first few years of the Conservatoire's existence will give an idea of just how precarious that existence was.

The Conservatoire was established by the law of 3 August 1795 (16 thermidor an III). The same law disestablished the École de chant and the Institut nationale de musique and took their personnel into the new school. As mentioned above, selection of the remaining 30 professors was conducted by a jury featuring several of the professors formerly belonging to the École de chant. Physically, the establishment was to be housed in the building formerly known as the *Hôtel des Menus-plaisirs*, although it took some time and trouble to dislodge the former occupants. By the time the Conservatoire was formally opened and started taking pupils in October 1796, the form of government had changed again, with the Directory replacing the Convention. Revolutionary idealism was on the way out and self-interest on the rise; money spoke ever-louder. Voices were almost immediately raised in the Council of Five Hundred against the cost of the new school and its very existence was called into question.[111] Budgetary pressures had never gone away, but under the Directory, money suddenly mattered as much as principle, some would say more than principle. The emphasis had shifted from the participation of 'the people' in the festivals to their education, and while this remained important it was not to cost too much.

It has already been mentioned that the much-quoted numbers of 115 teachers and 600 pupils associated with the new school are misleading, since staff numbers were immediately cut and the number of pupils rarely rose above 400 across the period (1795-1842). While

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[110] Samson's funeral oration for Sarrette, in Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 170.

[111] *Ibid*., 140. For the formal response for the Conservatoire in justification of its budget, see Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 131-3.

performance at the festivals continued to be part of the School's raison d'être, the marked drop in the number of festivals meant that the School could not justify employing so many wind players just to perform. Many of these players were therefore cut from the teaching staff and overall numbers brought down to 74.[112] In 1802, as Napoleon consolidated his power and as expenditure came to match his personal priorities, there was an even more savage cut, which took staff numbers down to 35. The decisions on who would have to go were made by jury, but Sarrette took on the painful duty of writing to each personally. This cut was reversed in 1806 and in 1808 Sarrette succeeded in adding acting to the institution's remit, making it the *Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation*. Then came the Restoration of 1814/15. According to Elizabeth Bartlet, influential members of the new government advocated for the outright abolition of the Conservatoire.[113] While this was averted, the downgrading of its status and its subsequent neglect left it in a poor state. Sarrette, of course, was the first to be dismissed and the new government even tried to do him out of his pension.

The success of the School, like the success of Sarrette, meant that it attracted enemies. These ranged from those who had missed out on posts, through those who resented the suppression of the maîtrises, to representatives of the Opéra, who resented the competition with the Opéra's own school.[114] And there were always voices which did not agree with concentrating such an investment in a Paris institution. Despite the received wisdom that the Revolution was solely a force for the centralization of power, there always were centrifugal as well as centripetal tendencies and in 1798 alone, there were two proposals presented to the Council of Five Hundred to reduce the Conservatoire's budget in favour of creating special music schools in the departments. In the event, the reduction was effected but not the new schools.[115] In 1802, recognizing the loss for regional communities represented by the suppression of the maîtrises, Sarrette indeed put forward an ambitious proposal for

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[112] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 145-6. For enrolment figures, see Appendix D.

[113] M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet, 'Méhul, Etienne-Nicolas', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[114] See 'Lettre à M. Paisiello', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 148-9.

[115] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 145.

hierarchical network of music schools across the country.[116] The cost was prohibitive and it would take many years for the network of *succursales* [feeder schools] to develop.[117]

Sarrette, as spokesman, had always been most exposed to personal attack from people envious of his position, as the denunciations of 1794 reveal.[118] In 1802, he even faced a concerted attack from within the institution and simultaneously in the press by Lesueur and his supporters. Sarrette was accused of acting from personal ambition and the familiar word *tyran* was bandied about; it may not have packed quite the charge it had ten years earlier. Although a major source of Lesueur's grievance seems to have been his inability to get certain of his operas performed, something on which Sarrette could have little influence, he also wished for the Conservatoire to focus more on opera and voice in general.[119] The breadth of the attack prompted questions from the Minister. There was an impressive circling of the wagons, as the predominantly loyal staff of the Conservatoire drafted a very detailed refutation.[120] It was signed collectively, though the writing may well have been done by Baillot.[121] Sarrette also offered his resignation to the Minister but this was refused.

It was not until the years of Cherubini's directorship (1822-1842) that the Conservatoire was able to cement its position in French society. It was under Cherubini that the School gradually took on its modern form, which is part of the reason why Conservatoire scholars have tended to diminish the importance of the early years.[122] Cherubini's predecessor, Perne,

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[116] Bernard Sarrette, 'Observations sur l'état du la musique en France', in *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 189-196, esp. 193.

[117] See Émmanuel Hondré, 'Les succursales du Conservatoire ou les jalons d'une relation Paris-Province,' in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 409-20, esp. 413-16. The first municipal schools to be named *succursales* were those of Lille and Toulouse in 1826. Metz and Marseilles followed in 1841.

[118] See e.g. Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 13.

[119] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and national music education in France, 1795-1801', 209; Laetitia Chassain-Dolliou, *Le Conservatoire de Paris, ou les voies de la création* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1995), 27.

[120] 'Recueil de pieces à opposer à diverses libelles dirigés contre le Conservatoire de musique', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 147-155.

[121] This is disputed. See Cécile Reynaud: 'Les fonds consacrés à Baillot au département de la Musique de la Bibliothèque nationale de France', in *Musique, esthétique et société au XIXe siècle: Liber amicorum Joël-Marie Fauquet*, ed. Damien Colas, Florence Gétreau, Malou Haine (Wavre: Mardaga, 2007), 43.

[122] For an excellent overview of Cherubini's directorship, see: Anik Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 39-98.

had managed to keep the School limping along between 1816 and 1822, hampered by budget cuts and the aristocratic disdain of the returned Bourbon monarchy. Morale was low and discipline poor at the once-again renamed 'École royale de musique et de déclamation'. It took a sympathetic and active minister in the form of Lauriston to persuade Cherubini to take over the leadership of the School and to give him extensive authority to pull it into shape. Cherubini started by reauditioning all pupils and dismissing a third. The tenacious Director was able to secure gradual increases in the budget and his efforts to revive the *exercices publics* from 1824 helped to lay the foundation for the Société des concerts in 1827. The meek departure of the Bourbons in the face of the July Revolution of 1830 gave Cherubini the chance he needed to recover the coveted appellation of 'Conservatoire'.

In 1842, illness finally forced Cherubini to step down as director. Both he and Baillot died that same year. They had given the best part of their lives to the institution and in many ways, each had been resisting the tides of nineteenth-century change. Baillot was by then the last surviving member of the central violin trio, Rode having died in 1830 and Kreutzer in 1831. Like the Paris Conservatoire, the French School, which had enjoyed undisputed leadership of the violin world in the early years of the nineteenth century, was facing competition from Brussels, Vienna, and Prague. Before outlining the case that the glory years were the turbulent early ones, and not the long secure decades which followed, it is time to examine the factors which supported the unlikely event of the Conservatoire's foundation.

CHAPTER 4
WHY THE CONSERVATOIRE?

'Il y a des causes générales, soit morales, soit physiques, qui agissent dans chaque monarchie, l'élèvent, la maintiennent, la précipitent ; tous les accidents sont soumis à ces causes ; et, si le hasard d'une bataille, c'est-à-dire, une cause particulière, a ruiné un état, il y avoit une cause générale qui faisoit que l'état devoit périr d'une seule bataille.' Montesquieu, 1734.[1]

'Il est pour les institutions un moment favorable, passé lequel on parviendroit difficilement à les faire prospérer.' Jean-Baptiste Leclerc, 1796.[2]

Existing scholarship, the hegemonic impulse

It should be clear from the preceding narrative that neither the emergence of the Conservatoire in 1795 nor its survival in the first years of the new century, was inevitable. However, few scholars have asked why the institution was created at this time, why a state in constant crisis chose to make such a substantial investment in music education. The fact that the Conservatoire was ultimately allocated a place within the suite of educational institutions established by the Daunou Law of 3 Brumaire an IV (25 October 1795) is insufficient explanation on its own.[3] Comprehensiveness had its limits: the 'Écoles speciales' with which it was grouped did not include schools for dance, say, or declamation. The fact that Chénier's proposal was accepted with enthusiasm in July 1795, well in advance of the presentation of the Daunou Law, suggests two things. Firstly, music was valued highly enough for the deputies to be confident that a school for teaching should form part of the nation-building

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1 'There are general causes, moral and physical, which act in every monarchy, raising it up, maintaining it, or hurling it to the ground. All accidents are controlled by these causes. And if the chance of one battle – that is, a particular cause – has brought a state to ruin, some general cause made it possible for that state to perish from a single battle.' Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence* (London, 1797; first published, 1734), 207.

2 'For institutions, there is a favourable moment, passed which it is difficult to make them prosper.' Jean-Baptiste Leclerc, *Essai sur la propagation de la musique en France, sa conservation, et ses rapports avec le gouvernement* (Paris, prairial, an IV / May-June 1796).

3 For an overview of the Daunou Law, see Appendix F.

exercise which was the Law. Secondly, it suggests that the timing of the proposal itself was significant.

As I observed earlier, Constant Pierre, to whose efforts in unearthing scarce documentary evidence we owe so much, eschews speculation about causes. He diligently reconstructs events and largely avoids commenting on their significance, although his book *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire* naturally highlights the contribution of Sarrette. General music histories tend to content themselves with the old canard about the rising middle class. This might, at a pinch, say something about why the Conservatoire was founded sometime in the century between 1750 and 1850, but nothing useful about why it was founded in 1795. Robin Stowell goes a bit further in his summary explanation of the event, when he ascribes it to 'the new social independence of the middle classes as a direct result of the events of the French Revolution' which, in acknowledging the importance of political events, is closer to the mark.[4]

French musicologists writing around the two-hundredth anniversary of the Conservatoire's foundation in 1995 have illuminated many important aspects of the historical detail, but tend to downplay the debt their institution owes to the Revolution. Thus Laetitia Chassain-Dolliou's history reduces the years prior to Cherubini's directorship (1822-42) to a 'republican prelude'.[5] The tendency to skip over the Sarrette years partly results from the fact that most of the relevant records were lost very early in the piece, whereas from Cherubini's time there is a much fuller record. But politics undoubtedly plays a large part as well. The title of Emmanuel Hondré's 'Le Conservatoire de musique de Paris : une institution en quête de sa mission nationale [an institution in search of its national mission] (1795-1848)' likewise implies that the Conservatoire took a while to find its way. This ignores the fact that the School was expressly funded to provide France with a school to rival those of Germany and Italy, to provide musicians for the armies, and to provide music and musicians for the national festivals. These are all national purposes and in them the institution clearly succeeded. For Hondré, however, the only national mission which counts is leadership of music education

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[4] Robin Stowell, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3.

[5] Laetitia Chassain-Dolliou, *Le Conservatoire de Paris, ou les voies de la création* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1995). The first three chapter headings are: (1) Prélude républicain; (2) L'Avènement du Conservatoire moderne; (3) Le temps des virtuoses.

within France from which all the regions could benefit.[6] Hondré is representative of a tendency to make Revolutionary centralism, and resistance to it, the defining theme of the period. Mongrédien provides another example in the course of his otherwise even-handed account of music teaching between 1789 and 1830, when he states that the publication of the Conservatoire teaching manuals was part of a 'great centralizing effort to affirm the superiority of Paris and her Conservatoire over all of France.'[7] This scholarly tendency overlooks the influence of neo-classical principles predating the Revolution. It also ignores the deep roots of Paris's struggle with regions such as the southwest, west and east in particular, roots which Emmanuel Todd traces back to the Waldensian and Catharian heresies of the twelfth century and beyond, and which he ultimately explains by demographic patterns. The greater population and nuclear family structure of the Paris basin has meant that it has traditionally been first to adopt political and religious change and has then worked to impose that innovation on the rest of the country. However, just as long-standing is the pattern of innovation coming across France from east to west.[8] In the case of music, late eighteenth-century Paris was the gateway for new developments taking place in Germany to the east as well as in Italy to the south. Revolutionary centralism existed, but it was the intensification of a pre-existing phenomenon, fuelled by the war emergency of 1792-4. Although most strongly associated with the Jacobins and later Napoleon, centralism also resulted from the general conviction of the parliamentary deputies in Paris that they had the ability and the duty to remake France as a modern nation. What I dispute is its significance for the creation or character of the Conservatoire. The founders of the Conservatoire were far more concerned to achieve France's musical equality with its neighbours than to affirm a superiority over the regions which was a long-established fact.

Another major problem with the focus on Revolutionary centralism is the frequent equation of centralism with totalitarianism, a stance which derives from the historical alliance of the

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6 Emmanuel Hondré, 'Le Conservatoire de Paris en quête de sa mission nationale (1795-1848)', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), vol. I, 81-102.

7 Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism: 1789–1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland OR: Amadeus Press, 1996; originally published as *La musique en France, des lumières au romantisme : 1789-1830*, Flammarion, 1986), 21.

8 Emmanuel Todd, *The Making of Modern France* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991; first published as *La nouvelle France*, Paris, 1988).

Counter-revolution with the long-standing regional resistance to Paris.[9] When Hondré writes of the recovery of student numbers from 1816, his desire to boost the contribution of the monarchy at the expense of that of the Revolution borders on bad faith. The timespan of 1816-1848 allows him to report what looks like a dramatic increase in student numbers at the Conservatoire: from 140 to 580, as well as a doubling of the budget from Fr 80,000 to Fr 155,000. This is disingenuous, given that, as one can readily see from the table reproduced in Appendix D, the low figure of 140 is an anomaly in the history of the school and was caused by vindictive neglect on the part of the Restoration administration.[10] In Vincent Peillon's words: 'La Révolution française n'est pas terminée [the French Revolution is not over]'.[11]

One account of the genesis of the Conservatoire which deserves to be examined more closely is that of Cynthia Gessele.[12] Gessele shows that cultural nationalism was at the heart of the Conservatoire enterprise and thoroughly explores its Revolutionary origins. Her account pays a lot of attention to competing theories of harmony; important figures include Rameau,[13] Bemetzrieder,[14] and Catel.[15] Theories of harmony are important because of their strong bearing on composition and Gessele links them with the aspiration for a national style of composition. Fundamentally, Gessele ascribes the foundation of the Conservatoire to a nationalistic, hegemonic impulse, a convergence of *ancien-régime* traditions of laying down

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[9] See for example 'Institutional voice and authority' in Chapter 5 below. Katharine Ellis' *French Musical Life* although focused on the complex relationships between Paris and the regions between 1830 and 1937, avoids this trap. Ellis notes that 'we should not consider state centralization, or deconcentration, to be either unidirectional or forever imposed upon the unwilling' and outlines the nature of the soft power exerted by the Conservatoire. See Katharine Ellis, *French Musical Life: Local dynamics in the century to World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 30.

[10] Hondré, 'Le Conservatoire de Paris en quête de sa mission nationale (1795-1848)', esp. 94, 100-101.

[11] Vincent Peillon, *La révolution française n'est pas terminée* (Paris: Seuil, 2008). This is a direct response to François Furet's famous essay 'La Révolution française est terminée'. See Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 13-130.

[12] Cynthia Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and national music education in France', in *Music and the French Revolution*, ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 191-210.

[13] Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) was arguably the most significant French composer of the eighteenth century. His theory of 'ground bass', which is founded on the harmonic series, was enormously influential. When we describe a chord as 'first inversion' or 'second inversion', this goes back to Rameau.

[14] Anton Bemetzrieder (1739 - ca.1808) was a theorist and teacher. He taught Diderot's daughter, and his first work, *Leçons de clavecin et principes d'harmonie,* was a very successful treatise in dialogue form, a form which recalls Diderot's famous *Le Neveu de Rameau*. See Cynthia Gessele and Jean Gribenski, 'Bemetzrieder, Anton', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[15] For a thumbnail biography of Catel, see Chapter 3 above, footnote 57.

the law on taste and the Conservatoire's monopoly on the composition and performance of music for the national festivals. There is more than a whiff of the totalitarian interpretation of the Revolution in this account. Crucially, Gessele presents the pedagogical program as a fallback when the Conservatoire's monopoly over the production of music for the national festivals had lost its value. In other words, Gessele ascribes the drafting and publication of the Conservatoire methods not to a pedagogical mission forming part of a broader educational program, but purely to an attempt to control French musical life, to resurrect Lully in republican form. Rational order and unity, in this interpretation, are synonymous with control, rather than the desire to communicate knowledge in a comprehensible fashion.

Gessele's explanation combines longer-term cultural trends with political opportunism in a cogent and convincing way, but the dominance of the revisionist interpretation of the Revolution as a whole may have led the author to overlook some contrary indications. One is that the Institut national de musique established a commission to organize the drafting of instrumental methods already in August 1794, at a time when the national festivals were still in full swing. This is not consistent with the Conservatoire's pedagogical program being a fallback. There is no mention of 'unity' in the record of this decision, just of the need for simplicity and precision, and the intent is confirmed by a letter written by Gossec in 1794.[16] As I shall discuss below, even to set festival music production against music teaching is in some measure to create a false opposition, since they form part of the same Revolutionary program.

A second difficulty I have with Gessele's thesis is that it makes Revolutionary calls for a 'national music' the whole raison d'être of the School. It implies that the aim was to replace music from other countries: 'Now, within the Revolutionary context, the music academy was to be the supreme enforcer of musical style.'[17] The trouble is, what evidence is there that the Conservatoire composers were trying to create, let alone 'enforce' a national style, outside of the context of the national festivals? As we shall see in Chapter 7, a major feature of the *exercices publics* from 1800 was their promotion of the music of German composers: Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Italian composers such as Piccinni, Sacchini, Cherubini, and Spontini never went out of vogue, nor is there any sign that the Conservatoire tried to promote French

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[16] Document CXCII, in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 96; letter from Gossec to Coupigny, in *Lettres de musiciens écrites en français du XVe au XXe siècle* (Turin: Bocca Frères, 1924-1936), 217.

[17] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and National Music Education in France', 200.

composers at their expense. Bernard Sarrette, in his capacity of 'commissar charged with administration', gave a speech at the opening of the Conservatoire in 1796. If anyone spoke for the Government's intentions at this stage, it was Sarrette. He states:

> Cette nouvelle institution, en arrachant à l'oubli les chefs-d'œuvre de toutes les écoles offrira l'exposition unique des richesses sublimes de cet art … tout ce que le génie de la musique a produit de grand sera exécuté par le Conservatoire dans les exercices, soit que ces œuvres aient été consacrées au culte, soit qu'elles aient été écrites sous différentes langues, ou que le goût du nouveau les ait entièrement éloignées du théâtre.[18]
>
> [This new institution, in rescuing from oblivion the masterworks of all schools, will provide a unique display of the sublime riches of the art … all the great products of musical genius will be performed in the student concerts of the Conservatoire, whether those works were dedicated to religion, or written in different languages, or have entirely disappeared from the stage due to the taste for the new.]

The cultural nationalism of the Conservatoire was of a peculiar sort which shall be discussed in detail in Chapter 8, but I would suggest that pre-Revolutionary calls for a French national music were mostly inspired by a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis Italy and Germany. Rousseau's harsh conclusion in 1753 that the French had no music of their own worthy of the name cast a long shadow.[19] When it came to the Revolutionary festivals, composers like Méhul, Catel and Gossec were as much trying to produce a music appropriate to the occasion, in the best pre-nineteenth-century tradition,[20] as working from political conviction. Jean-Louis Jam has made a study of Chénier and Gossec, the poet-composer duo of the Revolution par excellence. He concludes that Gossec was not really a Revolutionary by conviction, but rather a professional composer who would serve the master of the moment to the best of his abilities.[21] Furthermore, the Revolutionary genres identified by David Charlton (the

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[18] Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation (1895)* (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895), 187.

[19] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Lettre sur la musique française* (1753), in *Collection complète des oeuvres* (Geneva, 1780-1789), vol. 8, in-4°.

[20] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

[21] Jean-Louis Jam, 'Marie-Joseph Chénier and François-Joseph Gossec: two artists in the service of Revolutionary propaganda', *Music and the French Revolution*, 221-235.

celebratory choral hymn, the funeral march, and the wind overture) emerged from practice, not theory.[22]

The narrowness of Gessele's interpretation can be demonstrated by how she reads the following passage from Chénier's proposal to the Convention of 28 July 1795:

> Si donc cet art est utile, s'il est moral, si même il est nécessaire pour les armées, pour les fêtes nationales, et, ce qui comprend tout, pour la splendeur de la République, hâtez-vous, Représentants, de lui assurer un asile … L'Allemagne et l'orgueilleuse Italie, vaincues en tout le reste par la France, mais longtemps victorieuse en ce genre seul, ont enfin trouvé une rivale.
>
> [If, therefore, this art is useful, if it is moral and moreover if it is necessary to the armies, to the national festivals and in the broadest sense, to the splendour of the Republic, make haste, Representatives, to assure it a safe haven … Germany and Italy, vanquished in all other arts by France, but long victors in this genre alone, have at last met a rival.][23]

This passage is quoted in support of the following conclusion: 'France and its music – *that is, the music of the armies and of the national festivals* – were at last to reign victorious.'[24] This is a misreading: Chénier is asserting that music is (1) useful, (2) moral, *and* (3) necessary for the armies and festivals. It is also (4) necessary for the prestige of the country. Chénier is referring to music in general, not merely to the Revolutionary genres. The tail end of the passage exposes the customary French sense of musical inferiority.

Because the passage above forms part of Chénier's peroration, it summarizes almost all of the reasons habitually put forward in favour of the creation of a broadly based music school. The next paragraph of the same text contains some more of them:

> Cependant nos fêtes seraient inexécutables dans cette vaste commune, les corps de musique de nos armées ne se renouvelleraient plus, nos théâtres et leurs orchestras dépériraient; les musiciens découragés, quitteraient nos contrées ingrates pour chercher une rive hospitalière;

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[22] See David Charlton, 'Introduction: Exploring the Revolution', in *Music and the French Revolution*, 8.

[23] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and National Music Education in France', 200-201, reproduced from Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 122. The translation is Gessele's.

[24] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and National Music Education in France', 209. My italics.

> l'art lui-même succomberait sous les attaques du vandalisme, si la sage prévoyance des législateurs ne prévenait tous ces inconvénients.[25]
>
> [Meanwhile, our festivals will not be able to take place in this vast commune, the music corps of our armies will not be renewed, our theatres and their orchestras will perish; musicians, discouraged, will leave our ungrateful country in search of more hospitable shores; art itself will fall prey to the attacks of vandals, if the wise foresight of our lawgivers does not prevent all these calamities.]

In other words, France needs music for its theatres as well as for its armies and festivals. Musicians are valuable in themselves because music is valuable in itself, and we must look after them if they are not to leave France. Chénier might have been thinking of Viotti and Rode: Viotti had left Paris for London in 1792 and Rode spent most of the 1790s on tour abroad. The Conservatoire, from the outset, was as much about conserving musicians as conserving music. The appearance of the key word *vandalisme* in the passage reminds us that one of the concerns of the parliamentary deputies from early in the Revolution was to prevent artistic material culture from destruction by insurrectionary crowds. It was partly because of this concern that what had previously belonged to the king was now held to belong to the nation. The concept of the *patrimoine* was a protective one and Chénier is invoking it here in support of music and musicians.[26] He is also dovetailing his argument for the School with the Daunou plan then in preparation, which became the Daunou Law of 3 brumaire, an IV (25 October 1795). This plan laid much importance on cultural prestige, through the Institut national des sciences et des arts.[27]

The Conservatoire did display hegemonic tendencies once established. It fought against any perceived competition, such as repeated attempts to found schools focused on ancient and sacred music, first the Institution royale de Musique classique et religieuse and later, the

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[25] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 122. My translation.

[26] Bronislaw Baczko has explored the contradictions in the attitudes of the Revolutionary authorities towards objects of material culture. See Bronislav Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ? Thermidor et la Révolution* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 255-264. In essence, he affirms that their desire to prevent the wanton destruction of France's cultural inheritance is amply demonstrated through a series of decrees across the whole course of the Revolution. Equally, he affirms that other decrees, especially those to do with the confiscation of aristocratic and church property, led inevitably to such destruction. He identifies a strengthening of the discourse denouncing vandalism in the wake of Thermidor: *Ibid*., 259.

[27] Bronislaw Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie* (Geneva: Droz, 2000; first published: Paris, 1982), 501.

École Niedermeyer.[28] But the aspiration to lead in music education and musical taste is a different thing from a desire to control the whole of national music production. As Gessele herself notes, Sarrette was offered charge of the Opera as well as of the Conservatoire in 1797, which would have brought all of the major musical institutions under one roof. He refused.[29]

Like the discussion above, Gessele's thesis concerning the 'why' of the Conservatoire rests largely on reasons advanced publicly at the time. While this is both valid and inevitable, it may lead us to overemphasize factors such as Revolutionary zeal, nationalism, and supporting the war effort, since these were values over which there was express agreement. However, we can broaden our view to encompass the behaviour of the School once founded, such as the music performed by students and staff. We should also look for motivations which were not directly stated, either because they were too obvious to be mentioned, or because they could not be openly acknowledged. Into the first category falls the overwhelming value assigned education in general and into the second, fear of a potentially violent populace.

A final note: in attempting to weigh up the factors which led to the decision to establish the Conservatoire, we must keep in mind those who made that decision and followed through on it, namely the parliamentary deputies, first to the Convention and subsequently to the Council of Five Hundred. Even more so than the ordinary people, this Revolutionary class was in the grip of its own Revolutionary imaginary. There is little sign that this group wished to remake all music composition in a new image, but there are plenty of signs that they thought music, and music education, *chose tout à fait utile et morale* [a jolly good thing]. They had a very broad view of education and within it music had a special role.

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[28] Alexandre-Étienne Choron (1771-1834) set up this school for sacred music in 1817 but its activity was interrupted in 1830. Louis Niedermeyer (1802-61) founded a 'school for classic and sacred music' in 1853, over the objections of both the Conservatoire and the clergy. See: Laurence Ardouin, 'La musique ancienne au Conservatoire – évocations de la pratique d'un repertoire', in *Le Conservatoire de musique de Paris : Regards sur une institution et son histoire*, ed. Emmanuel Hondré (Paris: Association du bureau des étudiants du CNSMDP, 1995), 175-6.

[29] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and National Music Education in France', 209.

The educational effervescence of France at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries

'Il est inutile de vouloir faire sentir l'importance de l'éducation en général'. Mirabeau, 1791.[30]

The title of Marguerite Figeac-Monthus' study evokes the extraordinary degree of interest brought by educated people in eighteenth-century France to the question of education.[31] This was true before the Revolution; one need only think of the popularity of *Émile*, and the constant reprinting of Charles Rollin's 1726 treatise, despite much of it being a deadly–dry exercise in classical history.[32] The memoirs of Madame de Genlis are one of the most-cited sources on eighteenth-century aristocratic life. While she launched her career as mistress to the Duc d'Orleans, it appears that her great vocation was the education of children.[33] She wrote many pedagogical works and took her role as *gouverneur* to the ducal, and hence royal, children very seriously. Her appointment to the role, which by tradition only went to a man, caused a scandal and she may have felt an added need to prove her detractors wrong.[34] Characteristically for the time, the education she devised for her young pupils included a great deal of practical experience and artistic play. She had them learn living languages – English, German, and Italian – rather than Latin and Greek.[35] For all the modern methods, however, she ran her schoolroom with a rod of iron.[36] Despite receiving little encouragement from her mother regarding her own education, she had always devoted to it as much time as possible,

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30 'It is scarcely worth emphasizing the general importance of education', Mirabeau, 'de l'Éducation publique, premier discours', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 73.

31 Marguerite Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile ? L'effervescence éducative de la France au tournant des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2015).

32 Charles Rollin, *Traité des études* (*De la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les Belles-Lettres par rapport à l'esprit et au cœur)* (Paris, 1845; first published, Paris, 1726-1728).

33 Felicité de Genlis, *Mémoires*, ed. Didier Masseau (Paris: Mercure de France, 2004). Félicité de Genlis (1749-1830) entered into the ducal household in 1770 and became the mistress of the then Duc de Chartres (future Duc D'Orleans and also future Philippe d'Égalité) shortly after. She was given charge of the upbringing of the future King Louis-Philippe (born in 1773) and of the twin princesses born in 1777, and was named official *gouverneur* in 1782. She spent much of the Revolution in emigration. Her first collection of educational plays, *Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes*, was a publishing success in 1779. Although she positioned herself as an anti-philosophe due to the atheism of figures such as d'Alembert, she greeted the early stages of the Revolution with enthusiasm. *Ibid*., 'Introduction' by Masseau, 9-35.

34 *Ibid*., 16.

35 *Ibid*., esp. Ch. 9, 292-9.

36 *Ibid*., 'Introduction', 32.

reading whatever she could get her hands on and making extracts. In part, this was the response of the autodidact. Like many eighteenth-century women of letters, she had little or no formal education. But it is interesting that Baillot did the same thing – extracts from Edward Young and Rousseau survive among the papers held at the Bibliothèque Nationale[37] – and the depth of learning of women such as Germaine de Staël and Sophie de Grouchy invites the conclusion that time, access to a good library, and a surrounding intellectual milieu might constitute the best learning environment, at least for the naturally gifted.

This would not have been a popular idea at the time, partly because it hardly offers a democratic solution and partly because central to the prevailing notion of education was the formation of the child as a social being. Public discussion concerned public education: 'plus propre à former le caractère des enfants, à façonner aux habitudes sociales [more suited to forming the character of children, to fashioning social habits]'.[38] This recalls Charles Rollin's list of advantages of public over private education, and was therefore of long standing, but the Revolution gave it a powerful boost. To the Enlightenment faith in progress through knowledge and reason was added a political imperative: once sovereignty is held to reside in the people, their education becomes both duty and necessity. Bronislav Baczko shows how, in the Revolutionary imaginary, politics and education were nearly inseparable: 'To teach the people liberty, equality and fraternity, means *to imagine* a liberational education which will teach the people their own future. But to invent such an education is, at the same time, *to legitimate* [Revolutionary] *power*'.[39]

Consistent with this social view of education, there was much discussion of the superiority of the 'simultaneous' method over the 'individual' method. This discussion is still with us today, but in an opposing trend. In the years since the Second World War, much educational innovation has centred on finding ways to incorporate greater individuality in school learning. The eighteenth-century French were looking at the poor results of the village school model for

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[37] Pierre Baillot, 'copies d'extraits en vers et en prose de divers auteurs', *Souvenirs // 2*, sous-notice 4, BnF VMB 84 MS (2).

[38] J. Villier, *Nouveau plan d'éducation et d'instruction publique dédié à l'Assemblée Nationale* (Angers, 1789), quoted in Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile ?*, 1.

[39] 'Apprendre au people la liberté, l'égalité et la fraternité, c'est *imaginer* une instruction libératrice qui lui enseignerait son propre avenir. Mais inventer une telle instruction c'est, du même coup, *légitimer le pouvoir*', Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 17.

primary education, in which each pupil effectively studied on his/her own and the teacher cycled through the classroom, giving ten or fifteen minutes of time to each one. It was argued that children would learn much more effectively if they learned together, grouped by age, much as they did at the (secondary) collèges.[40] The principle of grouping pupils by learning level would become a strong feature of the Conservatoire model.

The outbreak of the Revolution in 1789 therefore saw an explosion of plans for national (public) education. Four of them are of particular relevance here: those of Mirabeau (1791), Talleyrand (1791), Condorcet (1792) and Daunou (1795). The Daunou plan underlay the Law, and hence underlay the system of education which was finally agreed by the Convention in 1795. For a time, it brought to an end the ceaseless indeterminacy of the educational debates and decrees.[41] It was a comprehensive system, encompassing primary schools, central (secondary) schools, special schools (including the Conservatoire), the Institut national des sciences et des arts, a system of honours and rewards, and the national festivals.[42] Daunou drew extensively on the influential Talleyrand and Condorcet plans, the latter being the most thorough of all, but doomed to rejection by its insistence that education should not be subject to political interference. The Mirabeau plan was the first to respond to the new Revolutionary situation.[43]

Because of the central place of education in the Revolutionary program, educational plans became battlegrounds for competing ideas about the shape of the new society, as did schools themselves. For the purposes of this story, however, it is their many common elements which are more important. For all their political differences, there was general agreement on the need for secular education and a complete reform of the existing system, a shared belief that there were many prejudices to destroy, and a high value placed on utility and patriotism. It is also noteworthy that many of the plans were written by teachers and therefore were written from experience, not just from theory. Prominent among the authors were several Oratorians

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[40] Isser Woloch, *The New Regime: Transformations of the French Civic Order, 1789-1820s* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994), esp. 224-9.

[41] Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 11.

[42] See Appendix F for an overview of the Daunou Law.

[43] Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 13.

or former Oratorians, including Villiers and Daunou.[44] Several of Rollin's concerns remained current, such as that books should be written in French, with exercises appropriate to a given learning level; the secondary curriculum should be broadened out to include poetry, history and philosophy, rather than just Greek and Latin; examples should be used rather than precepts; and the education of girls should not be neglected.[45] Although little was achieved with regard to this last, the fact that girls' education was explicitly addressed in various of the plans shows that feminist claims were making themselves heard.[46] Rousseau was a constant point of reference, but most agreed that the model of education presented in *Émile* involving the devotion of a preceptor to a single boy was impractical. Women of letters, of course, disputed his ideas on education for girls.[47]

There was a general expectation that education should be 'universal', but it is worth noting that this very characteristic Enlightenment term could mean many things. Condorcet is the most explicit on the subject and offers the broadest definition:

> Ainsi, l'instruction doit être universelle, c'est à dire, s'étendre à tous les citoyens. Elle doit être répartie avec toute l'égalité que permettent les limites nécessaires de la dépense, la distribution des hommes sur le territoire, et le temps, plus ou moins long, que les enfants peuvent y consacrer. Elle doit, dans les divers degrés, embrasser le système entier des connaissances humaines, et assurer aux hommes, dans tous les âges de la vie, la facilité de conserver leurs connaissances, ou d'en acquérir de nouvelles.[48]

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[44] Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile ?*, 1-10. The Oratorians were a teaching order. While most teachers in the eighteenth century were clergy, they were minor clergy rather than priests. Jean-François Champagne (1751-1813) is an example. Principal of the prestigious Collège Louis-le-Grand, he only took minor orders as sub-deacon. During the Revolution, he took the civil oath of the clergy and in 1793, left it altogether and married the widow of a former classmate Lebrun-Tondu, who had been executed as a Girondin, possibly to protect her and her children. See R. R. Palmer, *The School of the French Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1975), esp. 34.

[45] Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile ?*, 17-20. Properly speaking, my use of the word 'secondary' is anachronistic, since the division of education into primary, secondary, and tertiary stages was not introduced until the nineteenth century. I use it for reasons of clarity.

[46] See, eg., Talleyrand's lengthy if unconvincing apologia for the exclusion of women from political life and hence different educational opportunity: Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, 'Rapport sur l'instruction publique, fait au nom du Comité de constitution, à L'Assemblée Nationale les 10, 11 et 19 septembre 1791', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 168-171.

[47] Félicité de Genlis' *Adèle et Theodore ou lettres sur l'éducation* (1782) was one highly successful example.

[48] Condorcet, 'Rapport et projet de décret sur l'organisation générale de l'instruction publique (avril 1792 – décembre 1792)', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 183.

> [Education should thus be universal, which is to say, it should extend to all citizens. It should be distributed as evenly as possible given the necessary limits of expense, the spread of people across the territory, and the longer or shorter time which children are able to devote to it. It should, across the different stages, embrace the whole system of human knowledge, and assure men of all ages the opportunity to conserve their knowledge, or to acquire new knowledge.]

Universality, then, could mean covering all of France; covering all branches of knowledge; available to all, men and women, young and old. All that is missing in Condorcet's definition is 'equal for men and women', although Condorcet did advocate this elsewhere and was one of the few to do so. Most authors advocated separate education for the sexes.

To refer to the idea that education should embrace all areas of knowledge, we can use the word 'comprehensive'. To sum up the whole extent of human knowledge was the universality to which the *Encyclopédie* aspired, an aspiration doomed to failure since new knowledge is always being created. Goethe pokes gentle fun at this dream through the figure of Faust, who, even when he abandons the search for knowledge in favour of direct experience, must experience *everything*: 'Und was der ganzen Menschheit zugeteilt ist / Will ich in meinem innern Selbst genießen / Mit meinem Geist das Höchst' und Tiefste greifen [And what is the lot of all humanity / I wish to enjoy within me / To grasp the highest and the lowest with my mind]' In vain, Mephistopheles warns him that this is beyond human measure: 'Glaub' unsereinem, dieses Ganze / Ist nur für ein Gott gemacht! [Believe someone like me, all this / Is only made for a god!]'[49] In keeping with Madame de Staël's observation concerning the contrasting intellectual cultures of France and Germany, the quest of the national deputies was a collective one whereas Faust's is individual.[50] There was nonetheless something Faustian in the scale of their ambition. In any case, the aspiration to this kind of universality will have worked in the Conservatoire's favour: if education is to be comprehensive, how could you leave music out?

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[49] Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust, Erster Teil* (Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1949; first published, 1808), lines 1770-2, 1780-1.

[50] Germaine de Staël, *De l'Allemagne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1968; first published, 1813), 55-6. De Staël contrasts the social nature of French intellectual society with the prevalence of solitary thinkers in Germany.

Comprehensiveness was, then, a feature of all the educational plans. Another aspect on which there was general agreement was that education must speak to the whole person: intellectual, physical, and moral – and not necessarily in that order. Rousseau was no outlier in this regard.[51] Moral education indeed was a greater concern for the Revolutionaries than the teaching of reasoning, which explains the enormous importance they attached to the national festivals. The authors of educational plans distinguished clearly between *éduquer* and *instruire* (to educate and to instruct). Implicit in this distinction was that not everyone could become *instruit* [educated in an intellectual sense], but all citizens, young and old, must be educated to the republican way of thinking. Rabaut Saint-Étienne distinguishes between *instruction publique*, which enlightens, and *education nationale*, which inculcates virtue. They are sisters, but national education has the seniority.[52]

The national festivals were to be the main vehicles for inculcating republican values in the general populace. We see this already in the 1791 text of Mirabeau, who devotes a whole discourse to them. Music was an essential ingredient of these occasions, all the more so because the Revolutionary authorities aimed to act on the imaginations and sentiments of the people and not on their reason:

> L'homme … obéit plutôt à ses impressions qu'au raisonnement. Ce n'est pas assez de lui montrer la vérité ; le point capital est de le passionner pour elle : c'est peu de le servir dans les objets de nécessité première si l'on ne s'empare encore de son imagination. Il s'agit donc moins de le convaincre que de l'émouvoir ; moins de lui prouver l'excellence des lois qui le gouvernent, que de les lui faire aimer par des sensations affectueuses et vives.[53]
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> [Man … obeys his impressions rather than his reason. It is not enough to show him the truth; the key point is to impassion him for it: it means little to aid him in his primary needs, if one does not seize hold of his imagination. It is therefore less a question of convincing than of moving him, less of proving to him the excellence of the laws which govern him, than of leading him to hold them in lively affection.]

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[51] Figeac-Monthus, *Les enfants d'Émile ?*, esp. 15.

[52] Rabaut Saint-Étienne, 'Projet d'éducation nationale, presenté à la Convention nationale, le 21 décembre 1792', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 297-8. See also Baczko's introduction to the volume, 30-42.

[53] Mirabeau, 'De l'Éducation publique, deuxième discours, 1791', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 96-7.

The urban poor lived under the constant threat of famine in the Revolutionary years. It is unlikely any of them would have agreed with Mirabeau that it was of little use to help them with their primary needs. They were seldom, if ever, asked, even if much was done in their name. As Mona Ozouf has shown, the history of the festivals was characterized by consistent attempts on the part of the various Revolutionary authorities to tame and channel what were, in the beginning, spontaneous popular events. In a sense, the national festivals were an attempt to engineer spontaneity. Unsurprisingly, they were a failure, in that they largely failed to capture the imagination and enthusiasm of the ordinary people at whom they were aimed. Such was the Revolutionary faith in the pedagogical project and such was the yearning for unity, however, that the authorities continued to invest in them much hope and money.[54] Their failure was only tacitly acknowledged towards the end of the Revolutionary decade and they were quietly dropped in the Fourcroy reforms of 1802. Napoleon liked military parades but had no need of sentimental displays of national unity. He was able to impose unity through force of personality, force of arms, and the promise of military glory.

Most commentators agree that the early days of the Revolution were marked by a considerable sense of unity and consensus, a faith in the regeneration of France.[55] It is one of the greatest tragedies of the Revolution that this widespread enthusiasm for creating a better world should ultimately have been channelled into Napoleon's quest for military domination and into all the death and misery which followed. In 1795, however, the enthusiasm of the national authorities for the festivals was undimmed and there is no doubt that the patriotic contribution of the National Guard musicians to these festivals was a powerful argument in favour of their push for institutional recognition.

Sentiment and social cohesion

More than anything else, the first half of the French Revolution (1789-1794) was powered by emotion, and by public displays of emotion. This started to change with Thermidor, but it was not really until the Directory (October 1795) that a colder reality became the order of the day. There are those like Simon Schama who assert that the Revolution ran specifically on

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[54] Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, transl. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988; first published, 1976).

[55] See, e.g., William Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 135.

violent emotions, that there is a direct link between violent language and violent actions, and that bellicosity was the very essence of the Revolution.[56] However, this is to ignore the violence inherent in the structures of the ancien régime as a cause of the popular violence which broke out once those structures were overthrown. It is to downplay the contribution of the Counter-revolution to the prolongation of civil strife.[57] The revisionist emphasis on violent emotion alone also ignores the outpourings of positive emotions, the displays of fraternity and the high value placed on peaceful emotions, indeed, the desire for peace and concord which were frequently evident, especially on the part of the educated Revolutionary class. The trials of those held responsible for the horrible violence in Nantes, trials held post-Thermidor, were accompanied by outpourings of sympathy for the many innocent victims, as well as the desire for justice.[58] Music, universally acknowledged to be the language of the passions, was uniquely placed to accompany and encourage all the shifting tides of emotion, providing both the drum beat of war and the soothing strains of peace.

The seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had valued reason over emotion and Enlightenment thinkers such as Voltaire regarded enthusiasm as suspect because of its association with religion. By the late eighteenth century, a revolution in values had taken place. Sentiment had become a good thing and there was a widespread belief that there exists in human beings an innate faculty of moral sentiment. This belief ran in no way contrary to the growing strain of liberal thinking on both sides of the Channel which valued free commerce in goods and ideas. 'Commerce' brought people together. It is no accident that the author of the *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Adam Smith published *A Theory of Moral Sentiments* in 1784; thinkers such as Sophie de Grouchy took up his ideas in France.[59] Smith placed sympathy, or fellow feeling, at the centre of his

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[56] Simon Schama, *Citizens! A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (London, Penguin, 1989); François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

[57] Annie Jourdan, *Nouvelle Histoire de la Révolution* (Paris: Flammarion 2018).

[58] Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 329-330.

[59] See, e.g., Sophie de Grouchy *Lettres sur la sympathie* (1798) or Germaine de Staël, *De l'influence des passions sur le bonheur des individus et des nations* (1796). Sophie de Grouchy (1764-1830) grew up in an intellectual, aristocratic milieu. She became an atheist and republican very early, the first to the horror of her mother. She seems largely to have educated herself, and taught her nephews when their tutor was away. She spoke many languages including excellent English, which led to her translating Adam Smith and other English writers into French. Grouchy married Condorcet in 1786. They were associated with the Brissotins and their salon attracted many of the best and brightest, including foreigners. In 1787, Condorcet and La Harpe founded the *Lycée*, a French precursor of the London Institute, attended by the cream of society. De

moral philosophy, in rebuttal of egoist philosophers such as Hobbes and Mandeville. Sympathy leads to social connection, which holds society together: hence fraternity was one of the three headline Revolutionary principles. Literature had an important role in imagining these connections: the plethora of sentimental novels from *Julie* (1762) to *Delphine* (1802) was not without political meaning. Rousseau was far from the only one to shift the attention away from calculation in social affairs and to dream of a 'society of hearts' – Louis-Sebastien Mercier published *La Sympathie* already in 1767 and Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandschaften* [*Elective Affinities*] (1809) is part of this same trend.[60] Deidre Dawson goes as far as to state that De Grouchy, De Staël, and Wollstonecraft between them constructed a philosophy 'which fully rehabilitates affectivity within Enlightenment thought'.[61] Enthusiasm was also a rehabilitated concept. The associations of words such as *zèle* [zeal] and *émulation* [zeal/rivalry/competition] were uniformly positive in the Revolutionary years and *enthousiasme* only regained its suspect quality with the installation of the Directory.

Displays of emotion were not yet confined to the private sphere, indeed the public and private spheres had not yet been defined in the modern sense. Public displays of emotion were a central feature of the Revolution, partly because of the constant quest for unity, and partly because of the belief in emotional openness and honesty we associate with Rousseau, which was also a reaction to the closed nature of monarchical government. The whole point of an occasion like the Festival of Federation was to generate a collective feeling of unity, and for a short time, it may have succeeded. Unfortunately, the schisms in French society were too wide to be breached. Constant Pierre reproduces the following review of an outdoor concert by a Conservatoire choir from *La Décade philosophique* in July, 1797:

> La strophe des femmes dans le *Chant du Départ* n'avait jamais paru si touchante. J'étais auprès de Méhul quand ils ont chanté cette heureuse production de son génie. J'ai passé

Grouchy was an integral part of this society and studied mathematics, history, and botany. After Condorcet died in prison in 1793, de Grouchy edited his complete works with Cabanis. Women like de Grouchy and de Staël had political influence despite being excluded from the franchise.

[60] Marc-André Bernier, 'Introduction' to *Les Lettres sur la sympathie (1798) de Sophie de Grouchy : philosophie morale et réforme sociale*, ed. Marc André Bernier and Deidre Dawson (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010), 1-17.

[61] Deidre Dawson, 'Droits de femme at droit au bonheur, résumé', *Ibid.*, 196.

> mon bras autour de lui et je l'ai pressé doucement. Nous nous sommes regardés, les yeux humides ; car le génie de Méhul est dans son âme ; et quand une âme lui parle, il l'entend.[62]
>
> [The verse of the women in the *Song of Departure* had never seemed more affecting. I was standing next to Méhul when they sang this happy product of his genius. I put my arm around him and squeezed gently. We looked at one another, damp-eyed, for Méhul's genius lies in his soul and when a soul speaks to his, he understands.]

While this is an article in a journal, it is nonetheless a journal which associates itself by its title with the *philosophes.* This association does not seem to constrain the writer to assume an unemotional attitude, any more than it constrained Ange-Marie Eymar when he wrote about Hélène de Montgeroult in the same publication.[63] We also note that the words by Marie-Joseph Chénier in the famous *Chant du Départ* are very warlike, dating from the mass-mobilization of 1794. 'La République nous appelle / Sachons vaincre ou sachons périr! / Un Français doit vivre pour elle, / Pour elle un Français doit mourir [The Republic calls us / To prevail or to perish ! / A Frenchman must live for the her / For her, he must die]' is the refrain. It is interesting that they could provoke such tender emotion on this occasion. Perhaps the song had changed its meaning somewhat between 1794 and 1797, signifying less a defiant bellicosity than patriotic attachment.

The tenor of the above article in the *Décade philosophique* demonstrates that contemporaries perceived no inherent contradiction between passion and reason. They were passionate about reason and they reasoned about the importance of passion. As Mirabeau wrote of the educational subject: 'Ce n'est pas assez de lui montrer la vérité ; le point capital est de le passionner pour elle [It is not enough to show him the truth; the key point is to impassion him for it]'.[64] Chénier, in his report to the Convention of 10 Thermidor, could say that 'eloquence is the most powerful arm of reason', holding up Rousseau as his model.[65] Reason was rarely

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[62] *La Décade philosophique*, 30 messidor an V (27 July, 1797), quoted in Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 142.

[63] Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult : La Marquise et la Marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006), esp. 45-50. A series of articles on Montgeroult by Ange-Marie Eymar in the *Décade philosophique* constitutes one of Dorival's principal sources. These articles are written in a register of great emotional sensibility.

[64] Mirabeau, 'De l'Éducation publique, deuxième discours, 1791'.

[65] 'l'éloquence est l'arme la plus puissante de la raison', from 'Rapport au nom des comités d'instruction publique et des finances sur l'organisation de l'Institut central de musique, présenté par M. – J. Chénier à la

synonymous with passionless thought. *Raison* and *raisonné* had many meanings. In the case of De Grouchy, a key meaning of 'reason' was taking a wider view of things than the narrow interest of the individual.[66] 'Taking a reasonable view of things' retains this meaning in English today. Condorcet was one of the few Revolutionaries to put his entire faith in the power of reason to advance humanity, which may be one of the reasons that he is regarded as the last great Enlightenment thinker and that his well-argued political proposals did not have more success. The group of men around Cabanis known as the *idéologues* carried on this tendency. The elaboration of a curriculum for the new national education from 1795 was one case when reason and sentiment did face off, but it was sentiment which won. There was a tussle between the *idéologues*, who wanted to impose a new technocratic curriculum based on the teaching of grammar, and the teachers themselves, who based their curriculum on literature. According to James Livesey, it was the teachers who succeeded in developing a modern canon to replace, or at least update, the traditional one based on classics. The new list included Italian, English and French writers. This canon developed organically through the independent decisions of school teachers rather than being authored by central committee and imposed from above. A major justification advanced for a literary education was that 'it trained the most universal capacity of humans, that of sentiment'.[67]

Le Chant du Départ would enjoy a long political career. It was raised to the status of official imperial anthem in 1804 and was enlisted for Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's run for presidential office as late as 1974. It is likely that the Revolutionary leadership was well aware of the power of such songs. Both tune and text were important. In Elizabeth Bartlet's assessment, this one 'epitomizes the best of the genre', with its 'memorable melody and martial rhythms'.[68] Méhul is reputed to have presented it to Robespierre in person without mentioning the name of Marie-Joseph Chénier who wrote the words. Marie-Joseph was regarded as a moderate, which was dangerous enough, but even worse, his brother André was in prison, an outspoken enemy of Robespierre and all he stood for. Robespierre was not

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Convention, Séance du 10 Thermidor III – 28 Juillet 1795', Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 122.

66 Sandrine Bergès, 'Introduction' to *Sophie de Grouchy's Letters on Sympathy: A Critical Engagement with Adam Smith's the Theory of Moral Sentiments* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3-45.

67 James Livesey, *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), Ch. 5, 167-197.

68 M. Elizabeth C. Bartlet, 'Méhul, Etienne-Nicolas', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001, 9.

fooled. He praised Marie-Joseph's 'grandiose republican poetry' (*grandiose* was a positive epithet at the time), which left that of his 'Girondin' brother in the shade. It was Robespierre who changed the title from *Hymne à la Liberté* to *Le Chant du Départ*. André Chénier, perhaps the best poet of his generation, was guillotined on 7 Thermidor (1794) only three days before Robespierre himself.

Napoleon also appreciated the power of music. Here is an extract from a letter written while on campaign in Italy and dated 26 July 1797:

> De tous les beaux-arts, la musique est celui qui a le plus d'influence sur les passions, celui qui le législateur doit le plus encourager. Un morceau de musique morale et fait de main de maître touche immanquablement le sentiment et a beaucoup plus d'influence qu'un bon ouvrage de morale, qui convainc la raison sans influer sur nos habitudes.[69]
>
> [Of all the fine arts, music is the one which has the greatest influence on the passions, the one which should most be encouraged by the lawmaker. A piece of moral music from the pen of a master unfailingly touches our feelings and has much more influence than a good moral work, which may convince our reason without affecting our habits.]

This is the young Napoleon, still sentimental and possessed of revolutionary idealism. Once he had hardened into the undisputed caesar of France, he continued to like Italian opera and marching bands, but musicians were only servants to his imperial grandeur. In a rare political comment, Baillot once wrote: 'Napoléon traitait la musique comme une puissance qu'il était bien aisé à humilier [Napoleon treated music like a power it was easy to humiliate]'.[70]

War and Peace

The need to train musicians for the armies was an explicit argument for the value of what Sarrette's musicians were doing, and it was an argument which would have carried weight. Although the Gardes françaises had their own tradition of military music, regimental musicians were often recruited from Germany; the father of François Habeneck, founder of the Société des concerts, was one such. With France at war with both Austria and Prussia, the supply of regimental musicians from German states was likely to be interrupted and in the

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[69] Paul Goeffrey Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School, 1782-1882* (Doctoral dissertation, Cornell University, 1941), 27.

[70] Pierre Baillot, 'pensées diverses, 1800-20', *Souvenirs // 1*, sous-notice 6, 20; BnF VMB 84 MS (1).

Revolutionary years, there was also the nationalist argument that the army should only be composed of Frenchmen. The professional army of Napoleon's empire contained units of many nationalities; only around a third of the *grande armée* which invaded Russia was French.[71] The early Revolutionary armies were very different: almost entirely French, young, and substantially untried.

In the eighteenth century, music was held to be an important factor in the effectiveness of troops in battle. A 1783 publication titled *Tableau de Paris* attributed part of the success of the Prussian armies to their warlike music.[72] Here again, music's value derived in large measure from its role in supporting morale. This would have been even truer of the disorganized and inexperienced soldiers of the early Revolution than of the Prussian professional army. Alan Forrest quotes one report from a captain in the first battalion of the Lot-et-Garonne, who relates how the battle against the Austrians was in the balance, with the French wavering. The drummer boys were seized with panic and the rhythm lost, when their drum major, turning his back to the enemy, rallied them and, with them, the attack.[73] To this, we can add Victor Hugo's fictional account of the attack by Gauvain's republican troops against a strong position at Dol. Gauvain creates the illusion of a sizeable force attacking from the side by attaching almost all the drummers to his small detachment. The larger rebel force, composed almost entirely of untrained peasants, takes fright and breaks.[74]

The warlike side of the Revolution is well-documented. The early rebellion against the vestiges of royal power was in many cases only effected through force of arms, with Revolutionary militias forming spontaneously all across the country and facing off against Counter-revolutionary militias and units of the regular army. Some of these conflicts became entrenched civil wars, as in the Vendée. Others flared up periodically, as political fortunes changed and parties who had previously lost out saw the opportunity for revenge. Then there were the wars at the frontiers, against the armies of Britain, Prussia, and Austria, supported by the émigré French princes.

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[71] Alan Forrest, *Napoleon's Men: The Soldiers of the Revolution and Empire* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006; first published, 2002), 18.

[72] Abbé Raynal, *Tableau de Paris* (Amsterdam, 1783), quoted in Gelrud, *A Critical Study of the French Violin School*, 17.

[73] Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, 84-5.

[74] Victor Hugo, *Quatrevingt-Treize* (Classiques de poche, 2001; first published, 1874), 311-14.

What is often overlooked is the general longing for peace, both on the part of the ordinary people whose sons made up the bulk of the Revolutionary armies and on the part of the parliamentary deputies. We should be wary of taking at face value the official rhetoric and the bloodthirsty lyrics of the Marseillaise. Historians have cast doubt on the political enthusiasm of the Revolutionary soldiers after the first calls to arms. The initial enthusiasm which produced many volunteers in 1791 was followed by a general reluctance to volunteer, perhaps as the seriousness of the commitment became apparent. From 1792, the armies were raised by conscription in all but name. The *levée des 300,000* decreed in February 1793 proved very difficult to effect, and this is what led to the *levee en masse* in August 1793.[75] François Furet, in asserting the violent nature of the ruling Revolutionary discourse, makes much of the fact that it was France which declared war on Austria in April 1792, and not the other way around.[76] The Brissotins pushed for war for internal political reasons: they wished to force the reluctant Louis XVI to show his true colours.[77] But we should not forget that the Brissotins faced much parliamentary opposition in this; even Robespierre voted against the declaration of war. Once the war was started, however, it gained its own momentum. Battle losses were huge and so was the effort to field the numbers required to defend the country against so many enemies. War started to define the state, and by the time the early defeats had been replaced by victories, it had become all but indispensable to the state's survival within France.

The Directory sought to put an end to the Revolution, to civil discord, and to external war. In 1797, the Minister of the Interior (Neufchâteau) wrote in one of his reports: 'peace alone will revive the confidence and tranquillity that are the bases for every commercial venture. Then, we will be able to inspire the resolution of particular interests with the general good.'[78] The Directory's efforts within France were hampered by the fact that the wounds were too fresh and the royalists still strong. Their efforts to make peace internationally were fatally undermined by a combination of their own political weakness, their lack of understanding of

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[75] Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, 6.

[76] Furet, *Penser la Révolution française*.

[77] See for example Jean-Clément Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2013), esp. 407-10.

[78] Quoted in Livesey, *Making Democracy*, 239-40.

strategic state politics,[79] and the fact that they could not control the generals. Napoleon, in particular, was making French foreign policy on the run. A negotiated peace, for him, was just breathing space to prepare a new campaign and neither he nor his fellow generals had an interest in a lasting peace.

Music held the immense advantage that it was equally able to inspire warlike and pacific sentiments. As M-J Chénier said, 'il anime à la fois la guerre et l'amour, la chasse et la pastorale [it enlivens both war and love, the hunt and the pastorale]'.[80] Then as now, music was an indispensable accompaniment to every significant occasion, with the crucial difference that then, they had no recorded music: the need for music went hand-in-hand with the need for musicians. Music was less controversial than books or objects of visual art. Bronislav Baczko has illuminated the difficulties faced by the Revolutionary authorities when they wished both to preserve the objects of material culture they had inherited from the past, *and* purify them of unwanted 'tyrannical' associations. For Urbain Domergue, head of the *Bureau de bibliographie* [Bibliographical Office], this meant 'wielding the revolutionary scalpel' to separate what was valuable from what was harmful. Should one burn feudal charters along with title deeds which recorded much-hated aristocratic privileges or preserve them as valuable monuments? It was difficult to draw the line between purification and vandalism.[81] Music's less referential nature was an advantage: if the words to a song went out of vogue, someone made up new ones. This was a feature of popular song culture.[82] By and large, however, music was not expected to last, so new music needed to be composed and produced all the time. The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works had not yet been built.[83] It is a happy irony that the foundation of the Conservatoire, an institution which would contribute significantly to musical canon-formation in France, should have benefitted from the fundamentally occasional nature of eighteenth-century music production.

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79 For Livesey, this is the major factor: *Making Democracy*, 'Conclusion', 234-247.

80 'Rapport au nom des comités d'instruction publique', Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 121.

81 Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 258-264.

82 Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution: Popular Culture and Politics, 1787-1799* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

83 Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

Taming the savage hordes: the shadow of the September massacres

A central fact of the Revolution from its beginning was that the leadership class was afraid of the ordinary people, especially the militant working poor of Paris. This fundamental truth could never be spoken, because the whole legitimacy of the Revolution derived from the People in the abstract. But though the deputies to the various representative bodies enlisted the support of the *sans-culottes* in order to safeguard their overthrow of the established order, they were frightened by the violence which resulted. There were many incidents of 'mob justice' in which perceived enemies of the people were hung from lamp-posts or decapitated and their heads paraded on pikestaffs. On several occasions, the Convention itself was invaded by threatening crowds, and the deputies knew that even they were not safe. Some of these riots were well-planned and had specific objectives, such as the regulation of grain prices which the predominantly liberal representatives were unwilling to institute. Women were prominent, a fact which probably was doubly shocking to the deputies. The infamous Prison Massacres of September 1792 seem to have been carried out by soldiers about to depart for the frontiers. The fear was that the inmates of the city's prisons, including former Swiss guards, would be freed and the armies would have an enemy in their rear. The soldiers were suspicious of the leniency of official justice. To the deputies, the killing of defenceless prisoners, like the killing of guards who had already surrendered, seemed unspeakable savagery. Not even a Brissot or a Robespierre was prepared to speak in exoneration of the September massacres and the term *septembriseur* became a term of political abuse.[84]

The Jacobins were the faction most disposed to excuse and exploit popular violence, but even they had no real intention of letting the People govern. They wished to keep the tiger in its cage to frighten their adversaries. When it suited them, violence was either justified by the perils faced by the Republic or it was blamed on a wicked royalist plot, which often amounted to the same thing. But at many junctures, even a firebrand such as Danton called for less bloodshed. Robespierre denounced dechristianization, argued for the abolition of the death penalty, and tried to save Marie-Antoinette from execution.[85] The Jacobins were frequently trying to put a brake on popular violence, which could leave them with an exposed left flank. It is significant that advocates of greater popular power were designated the *enragés*. This

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[84] Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 192.

[85] *Ibid*., e.g. 267.

means ‘rabid’, like dogs, and its derivation from *rage* demonstrates that violent emotion was suspect. Concessions to popular demands such as the maximum on grain prices were made under duress, and it was the Jacobins under the leadership of Robespierre who found ways to bring the sections and the Commune to heel. This is why they had few allies left outside the Convention when their colleagues turned on them on 9 Thermidor.

Aside from the years of the Jacobin ascendancy (very roughly, mid-1792 to mid-1794)[86], the tacit attitude was that, while the People were sovereign and could not be blamed as a whole, their propensity to violence was due to a lack of education. This was all the more accepted since, in the Enlightenment mind, ignorance and barbarism were synonymous. Hence the many references to the need to soften national customs, such as the words of Deputy Ducos to the Convention in 1792: ‘C’est à l’éducation publique… c’est à elle à adoucir nos mœurs, à prévenir leur férocité [The role of public education… is to soften our manners, to guard against their ferocity]’.[87] When the parliamentarians said ‘our’ manners, they meant ‘their’ manners, those of the common people. It must be remembered that the word ‘manners’, in eighteenth-century English, had the same broad meaning as the French *mœurs*: it meant customs, cultural patterns of human interaction, and of human behaviour more broadly. *Mœurs* and *morals* are cognate, hence the many references to music’s essentially *moral* nature:

> Et tel est l’empire de cet art de tous les arts le plus universellement senti, qu’il ne faut qu’une âme et des oreilles pour en jouir. Malheur à l’homme glacé qui ne connaît pas son charme irrésistible ! Malheur au politique imprudent, au législateur inhabile, qui, prenant les hommes pour les abstractions et croyant les faire mouvoir comme les pièces d’un échiquier, ne sait pas qu’ils ont des sens ; que ces sens forment des passions ; que la science de conduire les hommes n’est autre chose que la science de diriger leur sensibilité ; que la base des institutions humaines est dans les mœurs publiques et privées, et que les beaux-arts sont

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[86] One could argue that for significant parts of 1792, no-one was in charge of the country. In August 1792, the Paris Commune and the sections were the most powerful force in Paris, but it was the Jacobins who were able to take charge, and William Doyle is one who argues that between March 1793 and Thermidor (end of July 1794), they were able to extend governmental power over most of the country. See Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 236-7.

[87] Baczko, *Une Education pour la Démocratie*, 24.

> essentiellement moraux, puisqu'ils rendent l'individu qui les cultivent meilleur et plus heureux ?[88]
>
> [And such is the power of this art, the most universally appreciated of all arts, that possession of ears and a soul is all one needs to enjoy it. How unfortunate the ice-cold man who know not its irresistible charm! How misguided the imprudent politician, the clumsy lawmaker who, taking men to be abstractions which one can move about like pieces on a chessboard, knows not that men are endowed with senses, that these senses form the passions, that the science of leading men is nothing other than the science of directing their sensibility, that manners public and private constitute the basis of human institutions and that the fine arts are essentially moral, since they make the individual who cultivates them better and happier!]

One of the central projects of the educated Revolutionary class, unacknowledged and unacknowledgeable, was to make the ordinary people *like them*. The experience of the Terror underlined for them that citizenship, education, and morality were all intertwined, to such a degree that the new constitution which came into force in October 1795 created a primary franchise based on education as well as gender: it restricted citizenship to men who could read and write. Property continued to be a condition for electors, the next level up in a tiered democratic system. Universal (male) suffrage became a long-term goal, predicated on the creation of an educated citizenry. While it is easy for us today to sneer at the paternalism of this Revolutionary project, it is worth remembering that Napoleon gave up on popular education altogether. His interest in education did not go beyond elite schools for military officers and engineers. It was not until the Guizot Law of 1833 that universal primary education again became a government priority.

Accompanying the desire for a general pacification of manners came an emphasis on the pacific nature of femininity:

> …les femmes, surtout, douées d'une sensibilité exquise et supérieure à la nôtre, aiment passionnément la musique, qui, comme elles, adoucit les mœurs, tempère la force par la grâce, rapproche et lie ensemble les divers éléments de la société.[89]

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[88] Marie-Joseph Chénier, 'Rapport au nom des comités d'instruction publique', 121.

[89] *Ibid.*, 121.

> […women, above all, endowed as they are with a sensibility which is delicate and superior to ours, have a passionate love for music which, like them, tempers force with grace and brings together and binds the different elements of society.]

There are several things going on at once here. One is undoubtedly a reaction against the brief moment of liberation which the Revolution had afforded some women. Women had taken part in the early assemblies held in preparation for the Estates General and Hélène de Montgeroult had played the piano in (public) performances at Viotti's Théâtre Feydeaux in 1790, something unthinkable before the Revolution. More spectacularly, Marie Gouze had authored the *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* [*Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizen*] and carved out a political career as Olympe de Gouges. She advocated successfully for women's right to divorce, legislated in September 1792. It was the Jacobins who first sought to curtail the participation of women in political life, perhaps because of de Gouges' denunciations of Robespierre and Marat, perhaps also because the rival circle associated with Brissot included many prominent and articulate women, such as Manon Roland and Sophie de Grouchy. De Gouges was guillotined in November 1793. A general fear of female power may have played a part, but the male deputies were undoubtedly horrified by episodes such as the beatings delivered to former nuns by militant women. For these so-called *fessées* to be translated into English as 'spankings' does not do justice to the fear and humiliation which the victims must have experienced.[90] There is a class element to the horror at female violence and to the insistence on the gentler nature of women. Respectable women do not dismember wounded men with knives. But by 1795, there is little doubt that many women of all stations would have shared the desire of the deputies for a more peaceful society. The horrific testimony at the trials of the Revolutionaries from Nantes served as a reminder that violence specifically *against* women was a feature of war and civil strife, as it always is.[91]

It is not surprising that Chénier was able to persuade his colleagues in the Convention that music was part of the answer. We should not underestimate the power of the Orphic myth in

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[90] In this case, we should be thinking not of Rousseau's *Confessions*, but of Candide's punishment at the hands of the authorities of Lisbon: the *fessée* he received was evidently a whipping or a caning, not a 'spanking'. See Voltaire, *Candide*, in *Micromégas, Zadig, Candide* (Paris: Garnier Flammarion, 2006; first published, 1759), 161.

[91] Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, e.g. 226. See also Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 628-32.

the imaginary of a political class steeped in the legends of Classical antiquity: 'Orphée, sur les monts de la Thrace, soumettant les monstres des forêts au pouvoir de sa lyre [Orpheus, on the mountains of Thrace, subjugating the monsters of the forest with the power of his lyre]'.[92] The tales of Orpheus were some of the best known of all the classical tales. They were the subject of countless operas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Gluck's hastily updated French version of *Orfeo ed Euridice* was an even greater hit in his first Paris year of 1774 than *Iphigénie en Aulide*.[93] With these operas, Gluck accomplished a revolution, paring away distracting elements such as the customary ballets in order to concentrate the emotional force of the story. Rousseau is reported as leaving a performance of *Orphée et Eurydice* with tears streaming down his face and he was far from the only one to respond in this way.[94]

The Thermidorian Moment

The period between the overthrow of Robespierre on 27 July 1794 and the beginning of the Directory on 26 October 1795 is often referred to as the 'Thermidorian reaction', and its government, the 'Thermidorian Convention'.[95] Bronislav Baczko, who has written the definitive account of the prevailing political discourse, calls it the 'Thermidorian Moment'.[96] It has long been customary to consider 27 July 1794 as the decisive point of rupture, dividing the Revolution into two halves, the first optimistic and radical, and the second cynical and conservative. Baczko was the first to show how uncertain remained the direction the Republic would take after 9 Thermidor. This has been confirmed by more recent scholarship: Laura Mason considers that the continuities in political culture pre- and post-Thermidor mean that it would be better to consider the years of the whole Convention (1792-1795) as a frame. In her view, it was the established culture of denunciation which facilitated the creation of the myth of Thermidor by turncoat Jacobins such as Fréron and Tallien. Although the

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92 Chénier, 'Rapport au nom des comités d'instruction publique', 121.

93 Jeremy Hayes, Bruce Alan Brown, Max Loppert and Winton Dean, 'Gluck, Christoph Willibald Ritter von', *Grove Music Online*, 2002 (first published, 1992).

94 James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 60-61.

95 The precise date could be disputed. The new constitution (the Constitution of Year III) was promulgated on 22 September, and the councils of Ancients and the Five Hundred were not declared definitively constituted until 1 November. 26 October was the date the Convention was dissolved.

96 Ch. 5, 'Le moment thermidorien', in Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 305-350.

Convention restored the freedom of the press, it continued to strengthen its own power and to rule by exception (the constitution remaining suspended until peace should ensue).[97] Baczko, while admitting these continuities of political practice, shows how the Convention deputies were trying to find a way out of rule by the committees, away from central control, fear, and bloodletting. They were constrained not just by events, but by the political discourse they themselves had contributed to creating.

It is important to remember that at least 600 of the 700 Convention deputies who were trying to put an end to the Terror were the same ones who had approved the radical measures instituted in 1793.[98] Their desire for peace, calm, and forgetting was based partly on the need to avoid their own complicity in the Terror, but it was genuine. By 1795, France's fortunes in the frontier wars had turned and it no longer faced serious threat of invasion. Peace treaties were signed with Tuscany in February, with Prussia and Hessen in April, and with Spain in July. The liberalism natural to most of the Convention deputies started to assert itself again and emergency measures such as the special conditions for workers in war industries were watered down.[99] Large numbers of political prisoners were released. Anti-clericalism was toned down, especially in the West, and priests ceased to be functionaries of the state. The more militant representatives on mission were recalled and great efforts were made to heal the rifts in the regions. A peace treaty for the Vendée was signed on 2 February 1795, which made many concessions to rebel demands. The peace did not last, but in the short term, even the Vendée leader, Charette, called for people to become 'amis de coeur et d'affection [friends of heart and affection]'.[100]

The trouble was that no matter how much everyone tried to sheet the blame for the whole Terror onto the dead Robespierre, the mood within the country was not in favour of forgiving and forgetting, but rather of vengeance. The lenience shown to royalist insurgents in the provinces encouraged the White Terror in the Midi, where Revolutionary violence was underpinned by longstanding clan rivalries.[101] In Paris also, measures to curb the power of

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97 Laura Mason, 'Thermidor and the Myth of Rupture', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 521-537.

98 Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française*, 660.

99 *Ibid*., 624.

100 *Ibid*., 625-38.

101 *Ibid*., 649-50.

the Jacobins were accompanied by thuggery on the part of resurgent royalists, bands of young men known as the *jeunesse dorée* [golden youth]. The continuing danger of popular violence was underlined by invasions of the Convention itself in April 1795. Demands included the restoration of price controls on foodstuffs and the honouring of the Constitution of 1793. A deputy named Féraud was wounded, apparently by an accidental gunshot, and then decapitated, his head presented to the President of the Convention on a pike. The threat of royalist invasion had not gone away, either. In June-July 1795, the émigrés and the English organized a landing at the Bay of Quiberon in the West, planned to link up with a rebel (chouan) army, with the renewed aim of establishing a naval base for English operations as twice attempted in 1793. This attempt, too, was thwarted by a republican army under General Hoche, but the West remained a zone of violence and insurrection.[102] The strength of the continuing rifts within the country were such that the Convention was obliged to rule by force, striking down threats from left and right. It was starting to ask itself whether it stood for anything other than stability.

The deputies faced the same problem which had dogged the Revolution from the beginning: the problem of finding the political centre. It was clear that they did not want a return to the Terror, or to popular democracy. Neither did they want a return to the monarchy. By the summer of 1795, a consensus had developed that for the Republic to survive it needed a positive program.[103] The idea was to move away from government by exception and regroup in defence of the gains of 1789 by creating durable institutions. On 6 May 1795, a Commission of Eleven was appointed to draft a new constitution, a task which went hand in hand with the work of the Committee for Public Instruction, led by Daunou, to design a new, national system of education. The Republic needed to show itself and its many enemies that it was there to stay. Prestige had survival value: a regime endowed with prestigious institutions looked like one which would last. The dream of a popular republic had not been abandoned, but it had been deferred until the creation of an educated citizenry.

Baczko shows how the representatives were able to create a new discourse which justified the suppression of the popular democracy which had been the basis of Jacobin power in 1792-4. Key to this revised discourse was the concept of *vandalisme*, a neologism of the time, with

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[102] *Ibid*., 667-670.

[103] *Ibid*., 651-2; Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 328-350.

the Abbé Grégoire one of its first users.[104] The revised discourse did not prove any more effective at preventing actual destruction of material culture than previous measures, but it did provide a means to denounce actions of the people without putting their sovereignty in question: it helped to create a separation between the sovereign people in the abstract, and the people as they were.[105] The term 'vandal' expanded from those who destroyed statues to those who imprisoned men of letters such as Condorcet and Lavoisier: vandalism attacked all men of talent.[106] As Jean-Luc Chappey puts it, the invention of the Terror (that rule by the tyrant Robespierre of which the other deputies were victims, not perpetrators) 'allowed for the redefinition of the Republican elite, flanked by a stigmatised, violent populace and an old, sullied elite.'[107] With the aid of the concept of *vandalisme*, the People-sovereign had insensibly become the People-child.[108] It needed to be calmed, soothed, and instructed. As Daunou wrote in the peroration of his proposal of 24 June for primary schools and central schools: '[l'heure est venue] de la bienveillance, du rapprochement, de la réunion, du repos dans le sein des passions douces et de sentiments paisibles [(the hour is come) for benevolence, for reunion and reconciliation, for rest in the bosom of peaceful sentiments]'.[109]

This is the context in which Sarrette and Chénier made their move on behalf of the musicians of the Institut national de musique. The timing of the presentation of Chénier's report on 10 Thermidor an III (28 July 1795) was masterful, concerted as it was with the musical performance given at the Convention the previous day, in commemoration of the 'joyous revolution' of 9 Thermidor an II (27 July 1794). The anniversary was a reminder of all the strife, division, and fear which the deputies were seeking to escape. The concert was a reminder of the power of music to ennoble in commemoration what had been, at the time, a desperate and bloody event, much as the Te Deum which celebrated the siege of the Bastille in 1789. To a parliament preparing its own dissolution – to deputies concerned, as were all the Revolutionaries, with their place in history – Sarrette and Chénier offered the blueprint for

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[104] Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 266.

[105] *Ibid*., Ch. 4 'Le people vandale', 255-304.

[106] *Ibid*., 280-1.

[107] Jean-Luc Chappey, 'The new elites. Questions about political, social, and cultural reconstruction after the Terror', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, 556-572.

[108] Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, esp. 295-304.

[109] Pierre Daunou, 'Rapport sur l'instruction publique (23 vendémiaire an IV)', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 512. Also quoted in Baczko, *Comment sortir de la Terreur ?*, 348.

a cultural institution which would demonstrate the greatness of republican France. Chénier's address itself is a masterful piece which strikes all the right notes: it is lyrical on the power of music in general, emphasizing its utility, its universality, its moral nature, and the prestige which will accrue to the Republic through the excellence of the new school. Its evocation of *l'homme glacé* who is immune to the charms of music is a coded reference to Robespierre. Tellingly, its last word is 'peace':

> Il sera glorieux pour vous, Représentants, de prouver à l'Europe étonnée, qu'au milieu d'une guerre immense, qui n'a été pour la République qu'une suite non interrompue de triomphes, contenant à la fois, dans l'intérieur, le terrorisme anarchique et le terrorisme royal, décrétant, pour les siècles, une constitution sage, républicaine, vous savez encore donner quelques instants à l'encouragement d'un art qui a gagné des victoires et qui fera les délices de la paix.[110]
>
> [It will be glorious for you, Representatives, to prove to an astonished Europe that, in the middle of an immense war which has been an uninterrupted series of triumphs for the Republic, while containing both anarchist and royalist terrorism in the interior and ordaining a wise constitution for the centuries to follow, you are able to devote a few moments to encouraging an art which has won victories and which will create the delights of peace.]

The presentation of Chénier's address on 10 Thermidor was received with enthusiastic applause and was followed by a reading of the draft decree. Because of its relevance to public instruction, the decree was briefly referred to the Commission of Eleven, but it was adopted on 16 Thermidor with a few modifications, including the change of name from *Institut central* to *Conservatoire*.[111]

As has already been pointed out, the fact of the decree was not enough to guarantee the continued existence of the Conservatoire. Although there was substantial continuity between the Convention and the Directory parliaments in terms of personnel, the political climate continued to change. Reason was emphasized more and more, both as the basis of government and also its means. Enthusiasm and passion came to be considered dangers to the

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[110] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 122. For the full text of Marie-Joseph Chénier's report, see Appendix E.

[111] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 126.

political and social order.[112] The Conservatoire was only just opening its doors in October 1796, when the Council of Five Hundred required the Conservatoire leadership to submit a formal response to questions including: 'Is the Conservatoire necessary? Does the Conservatoire really need so many professors? Isn't the Conservatoire costing too much?', and 'What problems would the closure of part or the whole of the Conservatoire present?'[113] Between this and the many proposals to cut the Conservatoire budget, one is left with the impression that its foundation had been decreed in a fit of enthusiasm which the deputies came to regret. In other words, it seems doubtful that the proposal would have succeeded if it had it been put forward a year or two later. It is true that, in the first five years of the Revolution, many decrees were made and annulled, but as shown above the deputies had lost their taste for provisional measures. The mood was for foundation, not destruction. The law of 16 Thermidor gave the Conservatoire an existence to cling to. As it started taking pupils, showing off their abilities through public concerts and distributing prizes, its hold on life strengthened, despite the cuts to its staff. The Fourcroy reforms of 1802 cut it to the bone, but it had a growing reputation in its favour and it became an ornament to the Empire just as it had become to the Republic: a glory of France at a time when national glory was one of the only ideas holding the country together.[114] Its prestige saved it, even as the political climate became more and more hostile to the values which had inspired its creation.

The role of Sarrette

' À l'administrateur intègre et éclairé; à l'homme habile qui sut comprendre et féconder la pensée d'un gouvernement ami des grandes choses.'[115]

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[112] Chappey, 'The new elites'.

[113] Document CCXXXIX: 'Éclaircissements sur le Conservatoire de musique, adressés à la Commission des dépenses des Cinq-cents…, brumaire an V', in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 131-3.

[114] François Furet, *La Révolution : de Turgot à Jules Ferry : 1770-1880* (Paris: Hachette, 1988), Ch. 5 'Napoléon Bonaparte', esp. 217-9. This status was demonstrated in 1808, when Napoleon presented the newly established conservatory in Milan with a set of the Conservatoire's textbooks, bound in leather and finished in gold. See Davide Daolni, 'Uncovering the origins of the Milan Conservatory: the French model as a pretext and the fortunes of Italian opera', in *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 121.

[115] 'To the honest and enlightened administrator, to the capable man who was able to understand and enrich the thinking of a government which was the friend of great things.' Toast by Dourlen, a former pupil of the Conservatoire, at the reunion of Conservatoire staff and Sarrette in 1840, as reported by the journal *France musicale*, reproduced in Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 166.

An examination of the factors which contributed to the foundation of the Conservatoire would not be complete without considering the personal initiative and activity of Bernard Sarrette. Under his leadership, the musicians established their usefulness to the Revolution from its beginning and Sarrette made sure their patriotic contributions stayed in view. This political engagement came at considerable personal risk, as demonstrated by Sarrette's several arrests. Oddly, however, little interest has been showed in this key figure since Constant Pierre published his *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire* in 1895. Sarrette scarcely rates a mention in the literature commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the Conservatoire in 1995, perhaps because this literature was written by musicologists and Sarrette was no musician.[116] This did not stop Sarrette's musicological contemporary, François-Joseph Fétis, from devoting an entry to Sarrette in his *Biographie universelle des musiciens*.[117] From this entry and other testimony it is evident that Sarrette's colleagues were well aware of the debt they owed him. The establishment of the Conservatoire was the great work of his life, since the Bourbon Restoration forced him into early retirement.

Why Sarrette made the musicians' cause his own remains a mystery, as does most of his life before the outbreak of the Revolution in Paris in July 1789. Piece together what we do know, however, and for all the gaps, an intriguing picture emerges. Sarrette was born in Bordeaux in 1765. His birth certificate lists his father's estate as *maître cordonnier* [master shoemaker].[118] Constant Pierre is content to present this fact with no further comment, but it is interesting that shoemakers were known for their political radicalism across the period. They were well-represented among the crowds which attacked the Bastille and at the *journées* at the Champs de Mars and of August 1792. While printers, joiners, locksmiths and building workers also played prominent roles in Revolutionary action, 'there is little doubt that that as worker-intellectuals and ideologists shoemakers were exceptional'. They were often highly

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[116] The fact that Jean Mongrédien's earlier work, by contrast, does acknowledge the importance of Sarrette's contribution supports my contention that ideological discomfiture is the cause of the bicentennial neglect. Mongrédien does not, however, explore the political significance of Sarrette's success in much depth. See Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism: 1789–1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux (Portland OR: Amadeus Press, 1996; first published as *La musique en France, des lumieres au romantisme : 1789-1830*, Flammarion, 1986), esp. 21.

[117] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, 1st Edition (Brussels: Melin, Can & Co., 1837-1844), vol. 8, 41.

[118] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 71; Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 12.

literate, perhaps because of the relatively low physical demands and solitary nature of their work.[119] They were also generally poor, but this does not seem to have been the case with Sarrette *père*, since Bernard's marriage contract shows that he brought 30,000 livres to contribute to this marriage in 1791.[120] This was a considerable sum, equivalent to the entire annual budget of the École royale de chant. As Bernard was only 26 at the time, it seems most unlikely he had accumulated this sum himself. The bride, Marie Orcival, brought only 2,000 livres to the marriage, plus an annuity of 500.

The amount of money Sarrette brought to his marriage, and the fact that he did not marry 'up', financially, paints a different picture of him than that suggested by some of his enemies. He was an active bourgeois rather than a sans-culotte. Indeed, with his activity always in advance of the authorities' support between 1789 and 1796 he must have been adept at raising short-term money and had good accounting skills, possibly acquired in the course of his previous employ in the gardes françaises. As the officer responsible for the Musique de la Garde nationale, his responsibilities extended to the musicians' food, lodgement, clothing and pay. The much-used contemporary metaphor 'a father among his children' seems particularly appropriate in Sarrette's case.[121] He was very active within his section and spent a lot of time following the debates at the Commune and the key committees of the Convention. As Pierre notes, even the wildly vitriolic documents of denunciation confirm what we can infer from his actions, namely that Sarrette was an energetic and adroit operator.[122] Unless we imagine that all his speeches were written for him by someone else, something which could hardly have been kept secret, those which have survived show him to have been a fine writer, if one without the rhetorical extravagance of a Chénier. The risks he ran also suggest he had either great courage or considerable political commitment, or both. We should not forget that he was a soldier: the outbreak of the Revolution in July 1789 found him a member of the gardes françaises, and he became an active member of the National Guard. A personal interest in music on Sarrette's part is attested by the Conservatoire's first historian, Théodore de

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[119] Eric Hobsbawm and Joan Walloch Scott, 'Political Shoemakers', *Past & Present* 89/1 (Nov. 1980), 86–114. Quotation from p. 88.

[120] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 72.

[121] For one example among many, see Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 165.

[122] *Ibid.*, esp. 64.

Lassabathie, who claims that Sarrette 'formed his taste through assiduous attendance at the Théâtre de monsieur' (Théâtre Feydeaux).[123]

None of this provides sufficient explanation of why Sarrette devoted his considerable talents to the cause of founding a music school. His detractors accused him of self-aggrandizement. If they were right, we have to explain at least three occasions on which Sarrette sought to withdraw from his position of prominence. The first was the decisive moment in July 1795 when Chénier's proposal was carried in the Convention. The plan for the organization of the Conservatoire specified leadership by a committee of nine composed of the five *inspecteurs de l'enseignement* together with four of the teaching professors in rotation. There was no position for Sarrette, who was preparing to take up a commission in the Army of the North. Since Sarrette himself, together with Gossec, was the author of the organizational plan, this was either an oversight, an act of selflessness, or a strategic move designed to give the lie to the accusations mentioned. In any case, the five teaching inspectors petitioned the Committee of Public Instruction to the effect that they could not possibly manage to complete the definitive organization of the new institution without Citizen Sarrette. Their petition was granted and Sarrette officially designated *commissaire chargé de l'organisation*, a title only later changed to *Directeur*. If this was a political tactic to disarm criticism, it cost him two months' salary.[124]

The second occasion Sarrette sought to step back was at the height of the attacks from Lesueur and his supporters, attacks primarily aimed at changing the focus of the Conservatoire towards vocal music but with Sarrette a secondary target.[125] Sarrette's offer to resign was refused by Minister Roederer with an asperity which suggests that Roederer regarded such a resignation as tantamount to dereliction of duty:[126]

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[123] Théodore de Lassabathie, *Histoire du Conservatoire impérial de musique et de déclamation* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1860), 23. Typically, Lassabatie gives no source for the statement, but given when he wrote his history, he may well have heard it directly from Sarrette, who only died in 1858.

[124] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 129-132.

[125] Gessele, 'The Conservatoire de Musique and National Music Education in France', 209; Chassain-Dolliou, *Le Conservatoire de Paris, ou les voies de la création*, 27.

[126] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 147.

> J'ai reçu, citoyen, la lettre par laquelle vous m'offrez la démission de votre place de directeur du Conservatoire de musique.
>
> Je vous préviens que je ne l'accepte pas, parce que vos services sont utiles, et qu'un chef d'établissement ne doit point le quitter sur de frivoles prétextes.[127]
>
> [Citizen, I have received the letter in which you offer your resignation from the position of director of the Conservatory of Music.
>
> I have to inform you that I do not accept this resignation, since your services are useful, and since no head of such an establishment should seek to leave it for frivolous reasons.]

Again, if this was a tactical move on Sarrette's part, it carried the evident risk of acceptance. Cherubini threatened his resignation several times through his tenure as director (1822-42),[128] but as a successful composer his position was more secure. Finally, Sarrette, having been dismissed from his post by the Restoration government in 1814-15, was offered the directorship again in 1830. The departure of the Bourbons brought many people back to public life who had been prominent during the years of revolution and empire, such as Henri Beyle, more commonly known as the author Stendhal.[129] Sarrette declined out of respect or friendship for Cherubini.[130]

In considering the nature of Sarrette's commitment to the musicians' cause, we may also recall his intercession on behalf of Hélène de Montgeroult in 1794. Montgeroult was not a member of the Institute nationale de musique, which was only composed of men. She only joined the Conservatoire through the competitive process run in 1796. While her son, Eugène Gautier, refers to Sarrette as 'a friend', there is no suggestion in his account, nor in Jérôme Dorival's biography, that they were close, and their very different social standing makes it unlikely. Much more likely is that Sarrette was acquainted with her indirectly, through

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[127] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 77.

[128] Anik Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 39-98.

[129] Henri Beyle (Stendhal) (1783-1842) worked in the Ministry of War under Napoleon (1800-14) and fell in love with Italy during a posting to Milan. He lost his post at the Restoration but was appointed French Consul at Civitavecchia after the July Revolution. His novel *Le Rouge et le noir* [*Red and Black*] was published in 1830 and *Lucien Leuwen* posthumously in 1894. He wrote a lot about music: *Lives of Haydn, Mozart and Métastase* (1815) and a *Life of Rossini* (1823).

[130] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 164.

Cherubini perhaps, who, like Montgeroult, was a friend of Viotti. Sarrette would also have known of her reputation as a piano virtuoso. It is difficult to see self-interest in Sarrette's intervention on her behalf and seems better to accept Sarrette's actions at face value, to conclude that he espoused the cause of music out of a Revolutionary determination to change the world for the better, an idealism he shared in 1789 with many of his countrymen. That this determination did not waver through the bloodier years of the Revolution may testify to the strength of his political commitment and to the fact that he was a soldier.

Children of the Revolution

'Dans cette cuve où bouillonnait la terreur, le progrès fermentait.'[131]

The accusations of self-aggrandizement directed at Sarrette reveal resentment at the rise of a nobody from the provinces to a position of prominence. One of the denunciations penned in 1802 characterizes Sarrette as a complete illiterate before the Revolution who, from a simple accounting clerk, had become 'an economist, an intendant, and, if you please, head of the Music of the National Guard.'[132] Here is the nub of the matter. The Revolution made it possible for able nobodies to achieve great things. Under the monarchy, Sarrette's lack of aristocratic birth or connections would have made the role he played quite impossible. People like Sarrette made the Revolution and were made by it. As Lynn Hunt has written, 'The political culture of revolution was made up of symbolic practices, such as language, imagery, and gestures. These symbolic practices were embraced more enthusiastically in some places and by some groups that in other places and groups. In many ways, the symbolic practices … called the new political class into existence.'[133] Sarrette was a type-specimen of this new political class. His mastery of the language and gestures of the Revolution enabled him to survive its various phases and his cause to prosper.

Sarrette's cause was the musicians' desire for an institutional home, and its success was the result of collective and collaborative action. Many of the musicians aligned themselves with

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[131] 'In this cauldron where terror seethed, progress also fermented.' Hugo, *Quatrevingt-Treize*, 249.

[132] 'de simple commis à la comptabilité, il était devenu économe, intendant et, si l'on veut, chef de la musique de la Garde nationale', Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 13.

[133] Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 13.

the Revolution at an early date and this must have involved them in some risk. Once the Conservatoire was in existence, its professors produced many innovations, as the next chapter will show. When it came to the foundation of the School, however, Sarrette's was the key political and administrative role, one which continued past 1795. The risks he ran were the greatest, as his several periods of arrest attest. His status as a non-musician was an advantage for his advocacy for a music school, since it made it more difficult to accuse him of self-interest. His status as an officer of the National Guard, charged with the care of the musicians, placed him in the interesting position of being both their champion and also a representative of the Revolutionary government. At the opening of the Conservatoire on 22 October 1796, Sarrette addressed the assembled professors as the government's representative, rather than as one of them: 'Citoyens, le Gouvernement attend tout de vos efforts… vous allez commencer l'enseignement ; son succès est guaranti par la réputation que vous vous êtes justement acquise [Citizens, the Government has expects great things of you… you are about to commence teaching; its success is guaranteed by the reputation which you have already justly acquired].'[134]

The vigorous defence of his leadership mounted by Sarrette's musical colleagues even after the foundation of the institution in 1795 shows the value they placed on his administration. As a state-funded institution, the Conservatoire was always exposed to political weather and the Director had to function as a shield for his colleagues. While Sarrette's correspondence as Director has been lost, the correspondence of Inspector-general Perne (1816-22) and Director Cherubini (1822-42) shows that managing the relationship with the Conservatoire's political masters was a major task. When to this was added the surveillance of the internal operations of the School, one can understand why Cherubini ceased to compose on taking up the role.[135] The separation of administrative from artistic leadership evident in the organization of the Société des concerts, with the President taking care of the former and the artistic director having the position only of Vice-President, may also be traced back to the division of labour between Sarrette and Gossec in the National Guard years.

The foundation of the Conservatoire was made possible by a combination of long, medium, and short-term factors. All of these were boosted by the Revolution. The value system of

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[134] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 187.

[135] Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire'.

late-Enlightement France accorded a high place to education and an increasingly high place to music. But in the realm of music education, all the ancien régime managed to create was the École royale de chant. The Revolution broke the gridlock of court politics, and the collapse of the state meant that space was opened up for political action of all kinds. The musicians of the National Guard were able to take their fate into their own hands. At the same time, the turmoil created by the irruption of the common people into political life meant that the services of those musicians were in high demand by the authorities, whether the republicanism they wished to promote was warlike or pacific. The high value placed on emotional immediacy lifted music above other art forms, where previously it had been below. Finally, in Bernard Sarrette, the Revolution produced a figure capable of navigating the Revolutionary tempest, of identifying and seizing the decisive moment. The new institution continued to show artistic leadership and to benefit from the space left by a weakened aristocracy. The story of that leadership and of how it shaded into conservatism is the subject of the next three chapters.

CHAPTER 5
THE OFFICIAL METHODS, 1800-1814

The collective dynamism of the National Guard musicians who formed the core of the Conservatoire staff carried on into the early years of the new institution's existence. Among its key achievements were the drafting and publishing of new teaching methods, the establishment of popular public concerts by the student orchestra, and, overall, the embodiment of a new model of pedagogical organization. Through these activities, the Conservatoire made major contributions to the quality of musical performance and to the status of instrumental music in France. The violinists of the Conservatoire were responsible for a large measure of these achievements. As the successes became institutionalized, however, the Revolutionary elan which had inspired them petered out. It lasted longest in the activity of the Société des concerts, which, for the bulk of Habeneck's tenure as chief conductor (1828-48), was a pioneer not only of Beethoven, but also of new composition, French and German. As it aged, the Conservatoire took on more of the character of a monarchical institution and in the violin world, leadership passed to other centres.

The official methods are the first tangible expression of the educational philosophy of the new institution and they have much to say about its pedagogical practice, which aimed to be systematic, progressive, and comprehensive. While this much is generally agreed, most commentators to date have focused on a concern for rational uniformity which they equate with a totalitarian impulse, an interpretation I reject. Although the Conservatoire system was built on the teaching of the elements of music and solfa, I will focus on the instrumental methods and the violin method in particular. The importance attached to these publications was such that Baillot and Adam published revised versions of the violin and piano methods respectively in the 1830s, revisions that will form the subject of the next chapter. Kailan Rubinoff has contributed the most detailed analysis so far of what the methods say about pedagogical culture.[1] I have reservations about this analysis and since it rests largely on the flute method, I will widen the discussion to embrace all of the instrumental methods.

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[1] Kailan Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model of Music Pedagogy: The Paris Conservatoire, Hugot and Wunderlich's Méthode de flûte, and the Disciplining of the Musician', *Journal of Musicology*, 34/4 (2017), 473-514.

Le Magasin de musique – l'Imprimerie du Conservatoire

In early 1794, in order to expand the scope of their musical operations and to take advantage of the opportunity to make themselves more useful to the Revolution, the National Guard musicians established what was to become the Conservatoire printery [*imprimerie*]. Known as the *Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales*,[2] its initial focus was on major orders issued by the Committee of Public Safety for national festival music. In the first year, these effectively underwrote the enterprise. The Committee also allocated premises to the venture out of national (confiscated) property – the decision of 15 February 1794 was signed by Barère, Collot d'Herbois, Prieur, Carnot, Billaud-Varenne, and Saint-Just. The main publications were a monthly collection of festival music comprising a symphony, a hymn, a march, a rondeau or double, and one or more patriotic songs, along with short collections made up only of songs. Given that the former had to be printed in sufficient number of copies for all 550 districts of France, plus the armies, the new society took on a heroic task to set up the press, hire engravers, write the music, print it, and make the first delivery by 1 germinal (21 March) as promised.[3] That the delivery was 19 days late does not detract much from the achievement.[4]

The initial order from the Committee of Public Safety for monthly deliveries of festival music ran out in April 1795 and political priorities were changing fast. Publications by the *Magasin* which illustrate the changing mood include the *24 Romances* by Rouget de Lisle for violin and fortepiano (1795) and a series of *Romances anacréontiques* by Berton, Cherubini, Lesueur, and others (1796).[5] The society put much effort into advertising its publications, and

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[2] This was the first of a series of names adopted by the press. From August 1797, it generally called itself the 'Imprimerie ou Magasin du Conservatoire' and this is simplified to 'Imprimerie du Conservatoire' in most referencing. After being first located in the rue Joseph, Brutus section and subsequently in the rue des Fossés-Montmartre, the press was finally co-located with the Conservatoire, rue du faubourg Poissonière, no. 152, a corner address sometimes also rendered as rue Bergère, no. 3. For the full range of appellations and addresses, see Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire* (Reprint edition: Wentworth Press, 2019; originally Paris: Fischbacher, 1895), 118.

[3] Legally, the *Magazin de musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales* was a joint stock company and it remained so through its various changes of name until, scarcely still active, it was sold to the publishers Janet and Cotelle in around 1826. See Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 101-3. I generally use the term 'society', rather than 'company', partly because it is cognate with the French *société*.

[4] Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, esp. 24-7.

[5] Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 75. 'Anacreontic' poetry is poetry written in praise of food and wine.

tried repeatedly to interest the Directory in renewing its subscription for the festival collections, through the new Committee of Public Instruction. This said, the *Magasin* started to branch out into other genres well in advance of the decline in demand for patriotic music. According to Constant Pierre, the number of pieces engraved by the press quadrupled between the first half-year (April-October 1794) and the second (November 1794 – March 1795). The increase was due to music for study and performance, further evidence that the pedagogical work of the Conservatoire was fundamental to its purpose rather than opportunistic. The publication of appropriate methods and music was a key element of this work. As Pierre points out, suitable repertoire for rapidly developing instruments such as the horn, clarinet, and bassoon was simply not available.[6] The violin was scarcely better off. Baillot was only discovering Tartini manuscripts in the early 1790s and his contribution of several to Cartier's collection published in 1798 shows how little known this major violin tradition was in France.[7] An example is Tartini's *Art of Bowing*, an invaluable work for the serious violinist and a jewel of the collection. Cartier was able to draw on an autograph of this work, hitherto only known in an adulterated Paris edition.[8] In an age when, thanks to digitization and the internet, we seem to be able to find almost anything which has ever been printed, it is hard to imagine how little music might have been available for learning an instrument. Small wonder that it was generally expected that teachers would write whatever small pieces they found necessary for their students.

The methods

1. **Elementary principles of music**, Year VIII (1800)
Agus, Catel, Cherubini, Gossec, Langlé, Lesueur, Méhul & Rigel, *Principes élémentaires de musique arrétés par les membres du Conservatoire, pour servir à l'étude dans cet établissement*, 310 pp (in five booklets, including the three solfa volumes).
2. **Solfa**, Year IX (1801)
Agus, Catel, Cherubini, Gossec, Langlé, Lesueur, Martini, Méhul & Rey, *Solfèges pour servir à l'étude dans le Conservatoire de musique*
3. **Harmony**, Year IX (1801)

6 Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 91.

7 Jean-Baptiste Cartier, *L'Art du violon, ou Collection choisi dans les sonates des écoles italienne, française et allemande* (Paris: Decombe, 1798). On the first page of his preface, Cartier thanks Baillot, Gaviniès, Alliaume, Boisgelou, Pesseri, and others for contributing rare manuscripts.

8 *Ibid.*, 4.

Catel, *Traité d'Harmonie …* , 71 pp.
4. **Horn**, Year X (1802)
Frédéric Duvernoy, *Méthode pour le cor suivie de duo et de trio pour cet instrument …* , 63 pp. plus index
5. **Clarinette**, Year X (1802)
Xavier Lefèvre, *Méthode de clarinette …* , 158 pp. plus index
6. **Violin**, Year XI (1803)
Pierre Baillot, *Méthode de violon par Mm. Baillot, Rode et Kreutzer …* , 165 pp. plus index
7. **Bassoon**, Year XI (1803)
Étienne Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson par Ozi …* , 144 pp. plus index
8. **Singing**, Year XII (1803)
Richer, Garat, Gosec, Méhul, Guingené, Langlé, Plantade, Mengozzi, & Cherubini, *Méthode de chant du Conservatoire de musique contenant des principes de chant, des Exercices pour la voix, des Solfèges tirés des meilleurs ouvrages anciens et modernes et des Airs dans tous les mouvemens et des differens charactères*, 290 pp.
9. **Flute**, Year XII (1804)
Antoine Hugot and Jean-Georges Wunderlich, *Méthode de flûte …*, 152 pp. plus index
10. **Violoncello**, Year XIII (1804)
Baillot, Catel, Levasseur & Baudiot, *Méthode de violoncelle et de basse d'accompagnement …*, 205 pp. plus index
11. **Piano**, Year XIII (1804)
Louis Adam, *Méthode de piano du Conservatoire …*, 234 pp. plus index
12. **Horn**, 1807
Henry Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor …*, 114 pp. plus index
13. **Plain chant**, 1814
Nicolas Rosé, *Méthode de plaint-chant à l'usage des églises de France*
14. ***Serpent***, 1814
Nicolas Rosé, *Méthode de serpent adoptée par le Conservatoire impérial de musique pour le service du culte et le service militaire*, 33 pp.

List of the official Conservatoire methods in order of publication[9]

[9] Sources: Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 157-160; Emmanuel Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', in *Le Conservatoire de musique de Paris: Regards sur une institution et son histoire*, ed.

As well as the rediscovery and printing of classic repertoire,[10] then, the great work of the *Imprimerie du Conservatoire* was the engraving and printing of the official methods. While the need for these was identified by the Institut national already in August 1794, their drafting had to wait until the Conservatoire's teaching operations had got underway, late in the Revolutionary decade. The table above lists the methods in order of publication. Their total number is 14, but the key work lay in the drafting of the first 11, published between 1800 and 1804. The drafting of no. 12, an additional method for horn, seems to reflect a disagreement between Duvernoy and Domnich on the degree to which horn players should specialize in the *alto* and *basse* registers. While the distinction in these roles was generally respected in the hand horn period, Duvernoy was an advocate of *cor mixte* playing and Domnich clearly not.[11] Strictly speaking, Duvernoy's method should not be included under the heading 'Official Methods', despite being published by the *Imprimerie*, since it does not seem to have received official approval. Constant Pierre includes it in his list of methods but, unlike the others, its listing lacks the summary of committee approval and merely gives the date its publication was announced in the key Paris newspapers.[12]

The last two methods, for plainchant and *serpent*, being principally concerned with religious music, fall outside the frame. The *serpent* is a lip-energized wind instrument with side holes and a cup-shaped mouthpiece, sometimes called the 'bass of the cornett family'. Its original purpose was to strengthen the sound of church choirs, especially in Gregorian plainchant, although it was brought into the military band by Sarrette and company, along with oboes, flutes, trumpets, trombones and tubas. Plainchant, as a purely ecclesiastical genre, is entirely anomalous in the context of a Revolutionary institution. That this method appeared in 1814 leads one to speculate that its publication was connected with the Restoration. Perhaps the returning Bourbon authorities made the *Imprimerie* an offer it could not refuse.

Emmanuel Hondré (Paris: Association du bureau des étudiants du CNSMDP, 1995), 81-3; digitized original editions held at the BnF and accessed via Gallica.

[10] The musicians already made the distinction between music which was fundamentally occasional and *musique classique*, which had already lasted or was expected to last.

[11] Renato Meucci and Gabriele Rocchetti, 'Horn', *Grove Music Online*, 2001. See also Henry Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, 1807), vi-viii.

[12] Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 158. Later commentators such as Hondré and Rubinoff include it in their lists of official methods without comment: Emmanuel Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 81; Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model of Music Pedagogy', 475.

The absence of an oboe method also calls for some explanation. The European treble oboe is a descendant of the hautboy, which was generally larger and louder, though it existed in various sizes and pitches. By the 1770s the new 'Classical' hautboy was displacing its predecessors, but was itself losing ground to the clarinet.[13] Its smaller sound meant that it was very little present in the Revolutionary era, being unsuited to outdoors playing. Florence Badol-Bertrand's study of the question suggests, however, that this is insufficient explanation by itself. While the oboe was the poor cousin of the flute, clarinet, and bassoon in the first years of the Conservatoire, it was still taught. The solution may come down to historical accident and personalities. Joseph-François Garnier (1755-1825) and Joseph-Alexandre Sallantin (1755-1830) were the two leading French oboe players in Paris by the time of the Revolution. Both of them appear to have been part of the part of the National Guard school. Garnier seems to have been the better player and he certainly was the better writer and composer. Between December 1795 and March 1796, however, Garnier left his posts as first oboe at the Opéra and professor at the Conservatoire, for reasons unknown. Sallantin took his position at the Opéra. Although Garnier returned to Paris at some stage before 1800, when he rejoined the Conservatoire he had to be content with a reserve position at the Opéra. Garnier published a *Méthode raisonnée pour le hautbois* with Pleyel in 1798, which Badol-Bertrand regards as the missing official method. It looks as though either the oboe was not considered important enough around the year 1800 to justify the drafting of an official method or, more likely, that Sallantin, through seniority at the Conservatoire, was the professor expected to write one and he was not up to the task. It took until 1826 for a Sallantin's successor, Gustave Vogt (1781-1870), to write an oboe method which received the official stamp.[14] Evidently, Garnier's career suffered an unexplained interruption in 1795-1796 and it is perfectly possible that the lack of a Conservatoire oboe method came down in part to such a mishap as the carriage accident which ended Rodolphe Kreutzer's solo career in 1810.

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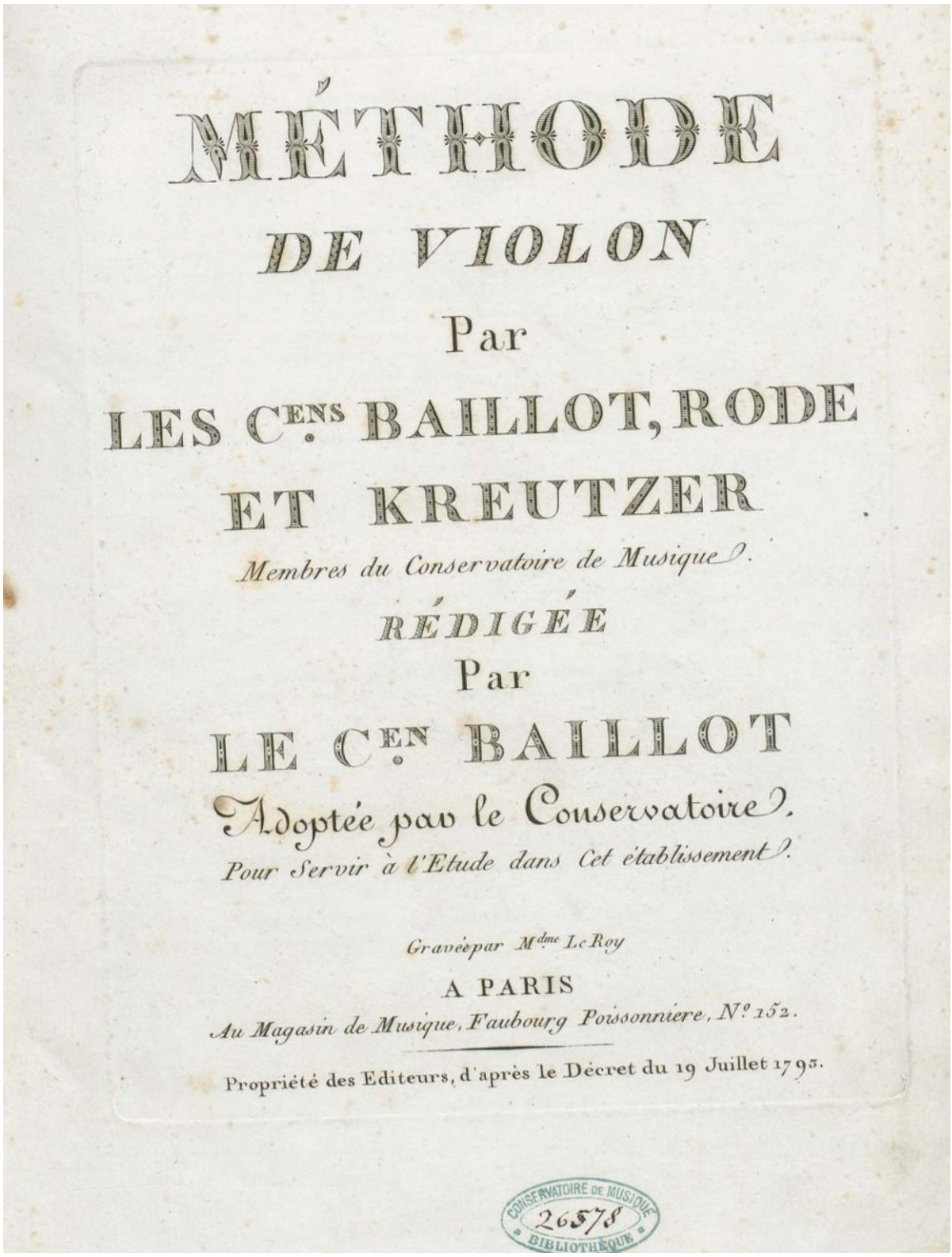
[13] Geoffrey Burgess, 'The European Treble Oboe', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[14] Florence Badol-Bertrand, 'L'enseignement du hautbois aux origines du Conservatoire (1792-1816) : un quart de siècle pour une renaissance', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 129-154. Gustave Vogt taught at the Conservatoire from 1816 to 1851, and thanks to his activity, the oboe class became one of the prides of the institution. See Anik Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 49.



MÉTHODE
DE VIOLON
Par
LES Cens BAILLOT, RODE ET KREUTZER
Membres du Conservatoire de Musique.
RÉDIGÉE
Par
LE Cen BAILLOT
Adoptée par le Conservatoire.
Pour Servir à l'Etude dans Cet établissement.

Gravée par Mdme Le Roy

A PARIS

Au Magasin de Musique, Faubourg Poissonnière, Nº 152.

Propriété des Editeurs, d'après le Décret du 19 Juillet 1793.

CONSERVATOIRE DE MUSIQUE 26578 BIBLIOTHÈQUE

Title page of the official violin method. Extract from BnF NUMM-1166780.

Considering the methods as a group, there are several aspects which stand out immediately. The most obvious is their official character. The covers make it clear not only that they carry the authority of the institution behind them, but also that they have been created expressly to be used in the Conservatoire's teaching: '*Adoptée par le Conservatoire pour servir à l'Étude dans cet Établissement*'. They are designed for practical use. This is one of the great differences between the Conservatoire violin method of 1803 and key comparators, such as the famous mid-eighteenth century methods by Geminiani, Leopold Mozart, and Saint-Sévin.[15] These methods outline principles and give examples, but they are not well-designed for use as actual teaching material. Geminiani's *Art of Playing on the Violin* is more of a treatise than a method, as is suggested by its subtitle: 'Containing all the Rules necessary to attain a Perfection on that Instrument, with great variety of Compositions, which will also be very useful to those who study the Violoncello, Harpsichord, etc'.[16] Leopold Mozart's *Versuch einer Gründlichen Violinschule* is addressed principally to the teacher: the aim announced in the preface is to convert the bad teacher to better habits.[17] The title of Chapter Three is also revealing: 'What the pupil must observe before he begins to play; in other words, what should be placed in front of him from the beginning'.[18] The *Principes du violon* of Saint-Sévin is a fairly cursory method, which serves principally to outline a set of high expectations of what the violin should be able to do, rather than presenting a series of exercises which could actually be followed by a student. The Conservatoire methods, while prescribed for internal use, were also produced for general sale. The way they advertise their authority will be discussed further on.

The second aspect to strike the eye is the frequency of collective authorship. This was undoubtedly related to Revolutionary principles, which preferred collective decision-making to monarchical fiat. It continued the practice of collective authorship begun by the *Encyclopédie*, minus the tendency to anonymity by which Diderot and company sought to

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[15] Francesco Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751); Leopold Mozart, *Versuch einer Gründlichen Violinschule* (Augsburg, 1756); Joseph Barnabé Saint-Sévin (l'Abbé le Fils), *Principes du violon*, ed. Aristide Wirsta (Facsimile edition of 1761, Université de Paris, 1961).

[16] Title page.

[17] Mozart, *Versuch einer Gründlichen Violinschule*, 'Vorbericht [Preface]', no page numbers.

[18] Leopold Mozart, transl. Edith Knocker, *A treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* (Oxford University Press, 1951), 64.

evade the threat of prosecution, and is of a piece with the parliamentary legislative process in which France was making its first experiments, thanks to the Revolution. Laetitia Chassain asserts that collective authorship also constituted a direct response to what the French perceived to be the excessive individualism of the Italian school. However, I would question whether Chassain is accurate in characterizing it as 'an inheritance of revolutionary utopianism'.[19] The collective approach seems to have served the institution well in the early years and was a practical way to ensure that institutional pedagogical approaches had the agreement of those who had to employ them. It would have been foolish to have one teacher of solfa draft a method which others did not want to use (most likely this is what happened with the horn method of Duvernoy). The involvement of several authors did not lead to a lack of clarity; a review of the singing method in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* which did not hesitate to deplore French singing nevertheless praised the singing method, the work of nine authors, for its exemplary clarity.[20] It is very possible that the collective approach is best thought of as a result, not of Revolutionary *ideology*, but rather of the Revolutionary *experience* of the Conservatoire musicians, most of whom had come through the National Guard years together. Working toward a common goal had already become part of the internal culture. Music-making is by its nature collaborative, even if collaboration exists in tension with competition for money and recognition, and the historical circumstances surrounding the Conservatoire's early years encouraged the musicians to make common cause.

A third feature of these methods to stand out is their impressive length. The piano method of Louis Adam runs to 234 pages! Even the 165 pages of the violin method give it a greater length than earlier comparators. This may owe something to improvements in paper and printing technologies,[21] but it also derives from two important features of the content. The first is that they show evidence of a real effort at comprehensiveness: they are not mere

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[19] Laetitia Chassain, 'Le Conservatoire et la notion d' < école française > ' , in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 16. Chassain is also one of the few French commentators to make the connection with the spirit of the *Encyclopédie*.

[20] Matthias Brzocka, 'L'Image du Conservatoire dans l'*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* de Leipzig à ses debuts', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 383.

[21] Philip Mansel attributes the explosion in print publications from 1800 partly to improvements in paper manufacture: Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires 1814 -1852: Monarchy and Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 307.

manifestos of a style. The second is the concern for ordered progression which has led to the inclusion of many pages of progressive learning material, from simple scales through to short exercises and pieces. This strong emphasis on progression is new. How much it relates to the late emergence in France of a genuine historical consciousness and the appearance of such a work as Condorcet's *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain* is hard to say.[22] It may simply have been the natural result of the enthusiasm for education in general and practical education in particular. But an interest in education and an interest in development and progress go hand-in-hand. The idea of ordered progress was central to the Conservatoire system of pedagogy. For this reason, the first two methods published were those covering the foundational principles of music and solfa. According to the Order of Instruction prescribed by the regulations, students could not begin instrumental tuition until they graduated from elementary solfa (the First Degree of instruction). Advanced solfa and instrument tuition could be taken concurrently and belonged to the Second Degree. The Third Degree included stage vocal performance, composition and composition theory.[23]

Individuality and conformity

Discussion of the methods as a group tends to emphasize their uniformity and much has been made of the following quote from an article published in the *Journal de Paris* in 1800:

> Un des articles de ce règlement veut que tous les professeurs, que les inspecteurs de l'enseignement se réunissent pour composer des méthodes d'après lesquelles seront données des leçons sur chaque partie de l'éducation musicale, d'où résultera pour l'enseignement la plus précieuse uniformité.[24]
>
> [One of the articles of these regulations stipulates that the professors and teaching inspectors will unite to draft methods which will form the basis for the teaching of all aspects of musical education, from which will result a most precious uniformity of instruction.]

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[22] Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès dans l'esprit humain* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1966; first published, 1795).

[23] See Title X of the 1796 regulations, in Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 226.

[24] *Journal de Paris*, 19 fructidor an VIII, p. 1748, in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 140. Laetitia Chassain quotes the phrase 'la plus précieuse uniformité' unattributed, but as though it had its origin in a founding article of the institution such as the originating decree or the first regulations. See Chassain, 'Le Conservatoire et la notion d' < école française > ', 15.

To use this quotation to support historical interpretations of Revolutionary utopianism and even totalitarianism is to confound rhetoric with what actually happened. French society valued rational order, but it also valued utility. Once we go beyond the uniform-looking covers of the methods and compare their contents, we can see that they are far from uniform. In fact, one of their many achievements lies in the individual treatment of each instrument. As Chassain has pointed out, there was little specialization in wind-playing in the eighteenth century and the expectation was common that a musician could alternate between instruments of such contrary embouchures as oboe and flute, or bassoon and flute.[25] In the strings, it was not uncommon for a violinist also to play the cello, something rare today, and the viola was not taught as a separate instrument at all. The list of his pupils Baillot put together in 1821 includes a cellist as well as violin and piano students,[26] and it is unlikely anyone thought it strange that Baillot should have taken a lead role in drafting the cello method.

It is against this background that we should measure the emphasis in each method on the character and specific difficulties pertaining to each instrument. Each method outlines the history of the instrument and specifies its range, and most devote a section to its unique character, such as Article VII of the clarinet method:

> L'étendue, la variété et la qualité des sons de la clarinette la distinguent de tous les instruments à vent. Elle peut prendre les caractères que le compositeur veut lui donner. … mais son exécution est bornée, elle ne peut pas tout faire, l'artiste est contrarié, quelquefois même arrêté lorsque le compositeur, ne suivant que ses idées, donne à la clarinette des solo mal doigtés.[27]
>
> [The range, the diversity, and the quality of the sounds produced by the clarinet set it apart from all the other wind instruments. It can take on whatever character the composer wishes to give it. ... But its performance is limited; it cannot do everything and the artist is disconcerted, even stopped in his tracks, when the composer, following nothing but his ideas, gives the clarinet solos which are awkwardly fingered.]

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[25] Chassain, 'Le Conservatoire et la notion d' < école française > ', 17.

[26] Pierre Baillot, 'Liste des Personnes auxquelles j'ai donné des leçons de Violon, 1793-1821', *Souvenirs //* 2, sous-notice 8, BnF VMB 84 MS (2).

[27] Xavier Lefèvre, *Méthode de clarinette* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XI (=1802)), 17.

One perceives that the methods are addressed not only to pupils and teachers, but also to composers, partly in an effort to encourage the expansion of existing repertoires.[28] Ozi's bassoon method is even more explicit in this, by detailing what kinds of passages or sequences of notes a composer should avoid writing for the instrument.

> Ceux qui écrivent pour cet instrument, sans le bien connoitre, doivent éviter d'employer les traits indiqués dans les exemples suivans, parce qu'ils sont ingrats ou infaisables.[29]
>
> [Those who write for this instrument without knowing it well should avoid such passages as are demonstrated in the following examples, since they are either infelicitous or unplayable.]

The introduction to the violin method does not contain so much a description of, as a hymn to its unique character and pre-eminence. This, in prose form, is the heroic conception of the violin which Viotti was first to present through his music.

> Comme il s'agit ici de l'instrument devenu le plus universel, de celui qui par son utilité se trouve entre les mains du plus grand nombre de musiciens, il est nécessaire de faire connaître aux élèves tout ce qui peut leur en donner une idée juste, et les déterminer à lui conserver le rang qui lui appartient…[30]
>
> [Since we are dealing here with the most universal of instruments, the one whose usefulness places it in the hands of the greatest number of musicians, it is important to make students aware of everything which can give them a true idea of it and which can make them determined to preserve its just station …]

The structure of the methods thus varies according to instrument partly because they have different concerns. The cello method has a section on how to play continuo; the bassoon and clarinet methods have sections on the care of reeds. But the variation in structure and content goes well beyond that determined by the individual nature of each instrument. The violin method is presented in two parts, with the second a prose section devoted entirely to musical matters such as sound, rhythm, style, and taste; Domnich's horn method is structured in three parts, but most of the other methods are only divided into articles. The violin, cello, piano

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[28] Hondré acknowledges the collaborative nature of this enterprise: Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 92.

[29] Étienne Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XI (=1803)), 32.

[30] Pierre Baillot, *Méthode de violon par Mm. Baillot, Rode et Kreutzer* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XI (=1803)), 1.

and horn methods all include introductions, with different subject matter; the flute, clarinet and bassoon methods do not. The flute, clarinet and bassoon methods each contain sections on how to play adagio and how to play allegro, to be found in different articles, depending on the method. The violin and piano methods both contain advice on adagio, allegro, *and* presto movements. The idea of three fundamental characters and tempi of movements was an *idée fixe* of Baillot, one his colleagues do not seem to have shared. Adam indeed gives an overview of a whole range of tempi in his Article IX.[31]

What the different methods demonstrate is not uniformity, but consistency. In a progressive system of teaching, it would be no use presenting instrumental methods which contradicted what had been taught at the elementary level. What is noticeable, beyond the considerable individual variation, is a consistency of philosophy, of approach. The methods were reviewed, and often even drafted, collectively. Several of the instrumental methods borrow a section from the singing method on how to render an appoggiatura. Hugot and Wunderlich borrow from Ozi's method his sections on how to play adagio and allegro movements.[32] The consistency of approach which can be observed is the result of collective and collegial effort, rather than some kind of pedagogical *Gleichschaltung*.[33]

Even where philosophy is concerned, however, it is consistency and not uniformity. Few of the methods concern themselves with the question of originality in style or performance. Baillot and Adam both do, but they express significantly different ideas on its implications for teaching. This may be because Adam sees the piano principally as the gateway to composition. Under the heading of 'Style', he writes:

> L'élève qui, après un travail assidu, aura vaincu toutes les difficultés, et acquis une exécution brillante, ne doit pas se contenter d'imiter servilement la manière des autres artistes ; il doit en avoir une à lui. Les exécutans, comme les compositeurs, doivent avoir chacun un style particulier.[34]

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[31] Louis Adam, *Méthode de piano du Conservatoire* (Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XIII (=1804)), 160-2.

[32] Hugot and Wunderlich, *Méthode de flûte du Conservatoire* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XII (=1804)), 25-6.

[33] *Gleichschaltung* is a term borrowed by the Nazis from electrical engineering and used by them from 1933 to denote the alignment of all sectors of society with national socialist values.

[34] Adam, *Méthode de piano*, 233.

> [The student who, thanks to diligent study, has conquered all difficulties and acquired brilliance in his playing, must not be content with the servile imitation of the style of others: he must have his own. Performers, like composers, must each have their own particular style.]

Baillot's conception of the artist is more modest. The 'génie d'exécution' [genius of performance] which he holds up as the ideal is transparent to the ideas of the composer:

> C'est lui qui saisit d'un coup d'œil les différens caractères de la musique, qui, par une inspiration soudaine, s'identifie avec le génie du compositeur, le suit dans toutes ses intentions et les fait avec tant de facilité que de précision. [35]
>
> [It is this (ie the genius of performance) which apprehends at a glance the different characters of the music, which, through sudden inspiration, identifies itself with the genius of the composer, follows his every intention and executes it with equal ease and precision.]

In the revised method of 1834, perhaps in response to the emergence of the romantic conception of the artist, Baillot goes even further, and asserts that emulation of one's chosen model is the best way forward, and that true originality will always emerge regardless:

> Imiter n'est pas copier, ne vous y trompez pas ! se choisir un modèle n'est pas, matériellement parlant, copier ce modèle ; c'est suivre la marche du maître qu'on préfère et s'éclairer de son expérience ; voyez tous les talens éminens, ils ont commencé par faire comme d'autres avant de se frayer une route nouvelle … Jeunes élèves, que votre imagination s'allume au flambeau du génie qui a le plus d'empire sur votre âme ! qu'elle s'en éclaire et le prenne pour guide, il sera temps après de vous frayer votre propre route, et, si nous pouvons nous exprimer ainsi, de vous revêtir de votre propre individualité. Si la nature vous a donné d'une véritable originalité, vous ne perdrez pas ce don précieux que vous portez en vous-mêmes.[36]
>
> [To imitate is not to copy: be not deceived! To choose a model for oneself is not, properly speaking, to copy that model, rather it is to follow the path of the master one prefers and to benefit from his experience. Consider the great talents: they set out by doing as others did before forging their own paths … Young students, set your imaginations aflame at the torch of whichever genius has the greatest power over your soul! Let it be guided by this light; there will always be time later for you to forge your own path and to cloak yourself, so to

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[35] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 163.

[36] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 8.

> speak, in your own originality. If nature has endowed you with true originality, you will not lose this precious gift which you carry within yourself.]

Technical development and creativity

‘So ists mit aller Bildung auch beschaffen:
Vergebens werden ungebundne Geister
Nach der Vollendung reiner Höhe streben.’[37]

The Conservatoire’s emphasis on ordered progression led to another characteristic principle which raises questions about the nature of the institution: the separation of technique and expression. Baillot’s method strongly advises the student to work at acquiring a sound technique before focussing on expression.

> Avant d’en venir à l’expression, il faut qu’ils [les élèves] se livrent entièrement à l’étude du mécanisme pour le rendre tellement familier qu’ils n’ayent plus à y revenir, plus à y penser par la suite.[38]
>
> [Before approaching expression, they (ie the pupils) must devote themselves entirely to the study of technique, in order to make it so familiar that they have no need to return to it thereafter.]

There is nothing in the key mid-eighteenth-century violin methods (Geminiani, Mozart, Saint-Sevin) which anticipates this conceptual distinction, nor in Cartier’s method of 1798. This seems to have been the historical moment at which the distinction is drawn for the first time, a distinction which, joined to the cult of virtuosity which emerged in the 1820s, would have significant consequences for the future study, performance, and reception of classical music.

Kailan Rubinoff has made one of the few critical appraisals of the pedagogical culture of the early Conservatoire to date, taking the official flute method authored by Hugot and Wunderlich as her main case study. For her, the pedagogical material of this method is entirely focused on technical development and she gives as examples some very mechanical exercises included by the authors to help the student learn the use of three small keys recently

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[37] ‘Thus it is with all education: / In vain will unrestrained spirits / strive for the pure heights of perfection.’ Goethe, ‘Natur und Kunst’, in *Gedichte* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1967; first published, 1800), 132-3.

[38] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 3.

added to transverse flute design.[39] Through an analysis of the language used in the method and the kind of pedagogical material presented, together with an examination of the disciplinary regulations of the institution, Rubinoff builds a case that the success of the Conservatoire was based on a new, military style of instruction, a style which was apt for the production of disciplined foot soldiers in the developing symphony orchestra at the expense of more creative and improvisatory aspects of music-making. She attributes this military style as a legacy of the National Guard years.

We will consider the influence of the National Guard origins of the Conservatoire on its pedagogical culture in Chapter 8, but while Rubinoff's thesis is compelling, its assessment of the (un)musical approach inherent in the official methods calls for considerable nuancing. For a start, it is hard to find much that is mechanical about the violin method. It contains many pages of scale exercises, but Baillot's concern to make playing these a musical experience took him to the length of persuading Cherubini to write a bass accompaniment.[40] (Baillot was surely capable of writing such an accompaniment himself. That he asked Cherubini to do so is not only attributable to his personal modesty, but is a clear indication of the importance he attached to the quality of the method. He wanted the best.) The exercises written by Kreutzer and Baillot which follow, for broken intervals, chromatic scales, double stops, and arpeggios are likewise presented as short pieces with bass accompaniment. A note advises that, while the scales should in general be played very slowly, there are those where the character of the bass line demands an increase in tempo: 'Il y a cependant des gammes où le caractère de la basse exige que le mouvemen soit un peu accéleré'.[41] Despite the conceptual separation of technique and expression, it is a feature of the French tradition of violin pedagogy from Baillot and company right through to Sauret that exercises designed to address specific technical difficulties are presented as short musical pieces.[42] It is the Central

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[39] Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model', 493-6. The exercises she quotes are to be found under Article 11 of the method: Hugot and Wunderlich, *Méthode de flûte*, 29-30, 34-35, and 39-40.

[40] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 10-111. Hondré, who places the methods overall within a 'totalitarian' context, concedes this point; see Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 88-90.

[41] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 10. The English translation is rendered in the preceding text.

[42] Émile Sauret (1852-1921) was one of the greatest violinists of the Franco-Belgian tradition, having studied with De Bériot, Vieuxtemps, and Wieniawski. His cadenza to the first movement of the Paganini Violin Concerto in D major still stands as the height of nineteenth-century virtuosity.

European tradition of Sitt and Ševčík which produced much more mechanical exercises.[43] These were the product of a later time – the second half of the nineteenth century - but the comparison with Sauret is a fair one. Put Sauret's *Gradus ad Parnassum* Op. 36 (1894) next to Ševčík's *School of Violin Technique* (1880), and the contrast is obvious.

The violin was scarcely taught at the National Guard school and had a special status associated with its prominence as a leading and solo instrument. To cover the possibility that it constitutes a special case, let us consider some of the other instrumental methods in the light of Rubinoff's thesis. Article IV of the piano method of Louis Adam contains many pages of mechanical exercises designed to teach proper fingering of scales.[44] Between this and Article V, however, are 50 progressive lessons especially fingered for small hands. Also labelled 'airs', some written by Adam and some taken from popular operas, they are little pieces, though they may have been designed to highlight particular technical aspects. The same pattern can be seen across the other methods. Ozi's bassoon method has several pages of dry-looking scale exercises,[45] but there follows the usual series of progressive short exercises or pieces in two parts, leading to little sonatas and major sonatas. The flute method itself is no exception. The mechanical exercises highlighted by Rubinoff are followed in each case by more musical exercises and around half of the total length of the method comprises the usual collection of progressive lessons, all written in the tuneful contemporary style familiar to violinists through the duos of Ignaz Pleyel.[46]

Rubinoff's thesis concerning repression of the more improvisatory aspects of music-making in favour of disciplined playing gains some support from the injunction in Domnich's horn method against the habit of horn players to focus on 'preluding': 'Il faut aussi, lorsqu'on étudie, se défendre contre la stérile manie des préludes [It is also important to resist, when practising, the sterile mania for preluding].' Emmanuel Hondré concludes from this that

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[43] Hans Sitt (1850-1922) and Otakar Ševčík (1852-1934) both studied in Prague and both contributed much to the pedagogical repertoire for the violin.

[44] Adam, *Méthode de piano*, 9-80.

[45] Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson*, 36-41.

[46] Ignaz Joseph Pleyel (1757-1831) was a composer, music publisher, and piano-maker. Born in Austria, he studied with Haydn thanks to his patron, Count Ladislaus Erdődy, whose family at Pressburg was related to Haydn's patrons, the Esterházys. Having worked in Italy, Strasbourg, and London, he settled in Paris in 1795 and founded a major music publishing house. This house was the first to publish miniature scores, starting in 1802 with four symphonies of Haydn. Its 1801 edition of the complete Haydn quartets was probably edited by Baillot. See: Rita Benton, 'Pleyel family', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

improvisation is only tolerated in the context of inventing further exercises, but fails to fully consider the justification given by Domnich. The whole quotation is:

> Il faut aussi, lorsqu'on étudie, se défendre contre la stérile manie des préludes, et de ce goût qui porte à jouer plus volontiers des phrases détachées qu'une musique suivie. En permettant de se reposer à chaque instant, ce genre de travail ne sert point de préparation aux morceaux de longue haleine ; il ne contribue pas à fortifier les lèvres ; il n'accoutume pas à ménager la respiration. Pour acquérir cette habitude, l'élève doit s'imposer la loi de travailler souvent ses études particulières avec la même continuité que s'il exécutait en public.[47]
>
> [It is also important to resist, when practising, the sterile mania for preluding and that taste which leads one to prefer playing detached phrases to sustained passages of music. In allowing one to rest at any time, this kind of work does not prepare one for pieces of long duration. It does not help to strengthen the lips or control the breathing. In order to learn these things, the student must impose upon himself the discipline of frequent practice which observes the same continuity as if he were performing in public.]

Domnich's discouragement of preluding had much to do with the emergence of sustained horn-playing as an important element in orchestral textures and perhaps also the transition away from the kind of bugle role associated with military bands. It is interesting to note that while the 1803 violin method does not mention preluding, Baillot's revised method of 1834 devotes several pages to the practice, distinguishing both written and improvised preludes, advising on their use and giving many pages of examples:[48]

> Le *prélude improvisé* permet au virtuose de se livrer entièrement à ses inspirations. Ce genre de prélude a été pratiqué pour le piano ou l'orgue par *Handel*, *Bach*, *Mozart*, *Clementi*, et *Béethoven* ; les organistes et les pianistes modernes ne l'ont point négligé, mais, parmi les violons, on ne peut citer, à notre connaissance, que Rodolphe Kreutzer qui s'y soit livré avec succès ; encore n'a-t-il jamais improvisé en public, quoiqu'il eut bien les moyens : l'improvisation exige une habitude acquise par une pratique constante, il n'a manqué à de grands talens qu'un travail suivi à cet égard. Les études ne sauraient donner du génie, mais

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[47] Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor*, 92.

[48] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 183-190.

> elles peuvent fournir les moyens de mettre les idées en œuvre et d'en tirer le plus grand parti.[49]
>
> [The *improvised prelude* allows the virtuoso to abandon himself entirely to inspiration. This kind of prelude was practised on the piano or the organ by Handel, Bach, Mozart, Clementi, and Beethoven. It has not been neglected by modern pianists and organists, but among violinists, to my knowledge, one can only name Rodolphe Kreutzer as someone who has done it successfully and never in public, though he certainly had the ability. Improvisation demands a habit acquired through constant practice; many great talents have lacked only consistent application in this regard. Study will never yield genius, but it can provide the means to put ideas into practice and to make the most of them.]

It is fairly evident that free improvisation was not a skill that was much *taught* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however much it was practised, which seems to have been quite a bit, at least in less formal contexts.[50] To the stories of Alexandre Boucher improvising variations on Revolutionary songs in the streets of Paris and of Hélène de Montgeroult doing so for the benefit of the Committee of Public Safety, we can add Eymar's account in the *Décade philosophique* of long sessions of duo improvisation shared by Montgeroult and Viotti.[51] Baillot's method seems to have been one of the few to give some advice on the practice.

It appears to have been customary to play a short prelude in the key of the piece to come, as a signal which asked for silence. Baillot recommends that these be prepared in advance, but under the 'general rules' for preluding, he extols the improvisatory practice:

> Le *prélude improvisé* n'étant point destiné, en général, à servir de préparation ou d'annonce, il peut être appelé *prélude de fantaisie*, ou *improvisation* ; il est libre dans son allure, dans ses formes, dans sa durée : honneur à celui qui, suivant l'impulsion de son génie, peut en même temps déployer toutes les ressources de l'art dans ce genre de rêverie qui lui permet d'atteindre jusqu'au sublime ![52]

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[49] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 183. Italics (and spelling of 'Béethoven') original.

[50] Robert Levin states that 'By the Classical era solo improvisation was carried out mostly by keyboard players': 'Improvisation / The Classical Period / Instrumental Music', *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Baillot's text above provides some confirmation.

[51] Ange-Marie Eymar, *Anecdotes sur Viotti précédés de quelques réflexions sur l'expression en musique... Extrait de la décade philosophique* (Geneva: Imprimerie de Luc Sestié, An VIII).

[52] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 184. Emphasis original.

> [Not generally being destined to serve as preparation or announcement, the *improvised prelude* could be termed *fantasy prelude*, or *improvisation*. It is free as to tempo, form, and length. All honour to him who, while following the impulse of his genius, can at the same time display all the resources of the art in this kind of reverie, allowing him to reach to the sublime!]

Conceding that the violin, through its prominence as a solo instrument, may have been subject to fewer strictures than the wind instruments, the value Baillot places on improvization still does not seem consistent with the notion of a musical culture inimical to creativity and independence.

The idea that the Conservatoire system enforced a pure focus on what was written on the page is further undermined by sections in the various methods devoted to ornamentation.[53] These are rarely prescriptive, but rather give examples of how various ornaments are often rendered, leaving the choice to the student. Certainly there is much to indicate that there was a growing preference for more restraint in the use of ornamentation, but there is not much evidence to suggest that the Conservatoire methods were a major factor in this, as opposed to changes in composition and in general performance practice. In the orchestral context, for example, the use of improvised ornamentation had been subject to increasing criticism throughout the eighteenth century, for the obvious reason that it could interfere with the harmony.[54] In the context of solo playing, the classical aesthetic dictated respect for cleaner lines, with fewer ornaments tastefully placed, rather than any Italianate exuberance of invention. Ozi expresses this well:

> Le caractère de l'Adagio, quoique large et sévère, n'exclut pourtant pas les ornemens ; au contraire, c'est peut-être le mouvement qui s'y prête davantage ; mais ces ornemens doivent être d'une noble simplicité, et toujours en rapport avec l'esprit du morceau. [55]
>
> [The character of the Adagio, though broad and stern, does not preclude ornamentation: on the contrary, it may be the movement most suited to its use, but any ornaments must be of a noble simplicity which is appropriate to the spirit of the piece.]

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[53] See for example Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 125-9; Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson*, 1-26.

[54] John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), esp. 274.

[55] Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson*, 30.

In considering the implications of the emphasis on technique we should also bear in mind how much of that technique related to expressive means. For the violin, this includes ornamentation (*agrémens de chant*), bow division, sustained bowing, crescendo and diminuendo, and other 'nuances'. The importance attached to these aspects of technique should not be measured by the few pages devoted to them in the violin method.[56] As Baillot wrote of nuance:

> Ce sont les nuances que l'on met dans le son qui produisent les plus beaux effets en musique ; elles sont pour la mélodie ce que peuvent être le clair obscure et le jeu des lumières pour la peinture. On ne saurait trop recommander aux élèves d'observer les nuances avec une exactitude scrupuleuse ; l'étude des sons filés leur donnera les moyens nécessaires pour y parvenir : cette étude seul peut les rendre maîtres de leur archet, former leur qualité de son, leur donner de la tenue, de la largeur dans le jeu, et tout ce qu'il faut enfin pour que le mécanisme du Violon puisse obéïr aux mouvemens de l'âme.[57]
>
> [It is the nuances which one adds to the sound which produce the most beautiful musical effects; they are for melody what light and shade and the play of light are for painting. Their scrupulous observance cannot be recommended too highly to students. Practice of sustained bowing[58] will provide them with all the means necessary to acquire this skill: it alone can lead them to mastery of the bow, to the shaping of their sound; it will lend poise and breadth to their playing, indeed all that is necessary for the technique of the Violin to obey the movements of the soul.]

In the twenty-first century, the term 'technique' is sometimes understood so narrowly that it only covers the difficulties associated with fast playing. Thus a 2006 thesis on the Baillot etudes could state that Rode's etudes 'often feature separated musical and technical sections'.[59] On the contrary, the first Rode caprice does not consist of a 'musical' section, followed by a 'technical' section focused on martelé. Rather, the slow opening section is an

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[56] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 135-9.

[57] *Ibid.*, 137.

[58] *Le son filé*, the ability to slow the bow right down without losing the flow of the sound, to spin it out, was highly prized in the eighteenth century. The term is, however, difficult to translate. 'Spun tone' is seldom used.

[59] R. D. Dorfer, *A Pedagogical Analysis of Pierre Baillot's 'Twenty-Four Etudes' and a Comparison to the 'Etudes' of Rudolphe Kreutzer and Pierre Rode* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 2006), abstract.

exercise in *nuance*.[60] Mendelssohn's account of attending rehearsals of his music at the Société des concerts in 1832 demonstrates that the importance attached by the French School to these subtleties of expression endured:

> Es würde Euch freuen, all' die Freundlichkeiten und kleinen Artigkeiten zu sehen, die Der für mich hat; nach jedem Symphoniestück fragt er mich, ob mir irgendetwas nicht recht sei, und so habe ich einige meiner Lieblingsnüancen hier im französischen Orkester zuerst durchstetzen können.[61]
>
> [You would be gratified to see all the little kindnesses and courtesies the latter [Habeneck] shows me. At the end of each movement of the symphony, he asks me if there is anything I do not approve of, so that I have been able, through a French orchestra, to introduce some of my favourite *nuances* for the first time.][62]

Lest the large number of pages devoted to scales deceive, it is worth observing that the importance attached to their practice was nothing new.[63] The Geminiani treatise of 1751 is full of scale examples, including many with figured bass accompaniment.[64] The Saint-Sévin treatise likewise is full of scales. Among the very little advice which has come down to us directly from Viotti is the value he attached to scale practice:

> Je n'ai pas besoin d'en dire d'avantage pour faire apercevoir de quelle <u>importance</u> je la [la gamme] crois. J'ajouterai seulement, que moi qui n'ai presque jamais étudié un passage, jamais je n'ai cessé de l'exercer toutes les fois que j'ai voulu me faire entendre le moins mal

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[60] See Appendix A(3).

[61] Letter to his father dated 13/15 February 1832, from *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830-1847 von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy & Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1870), 256.

[62] I have departed from the translation given in *Letters from Italy and Switzerland by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Translated from the German by Lady Wallace*, 3rd edition (Philadelphia: Leypoldt, 1865), 346. Lady Wallace renders the last line as 'so I have been able for the first time, to introduce into the French orchestra some favourite *nuances* of my own.' Where she sees a slightly competitive irony, I see only admiration for the skill of the French players. It says something that Mendelssohn, certainly no Francophile, uses the French word *nuances*, if with spelling germanified.

[63] Here I differ somewhat with Aristide Wirsta, who regards the emphasis on scale practice as an innovation of the French school, in contrast with earlier methods which dealt with them in a more cursory fashion. The trouble is that they dealt with everything in a more cursory fashion: the real innovation lies in showing the student how to practice. Wirsta also makes the point below that scales were to be practiced with expression. See Aristide Wirsta, *L'enseignement du violon au XIXème siècle* (Thesis, University of Paris, 1971).

[64] Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin* (London, 1751), 1-21.

> possible ; et que si je pouvois parvenir à faire une gamme parfaitte, aussi parfaitte que je l'entens, je me croirais le premier violon du monde.[65]
>
> [There is no need for me to say any more in order to show what importance I attach to it (ie scale practice). I will only add, as someone who has hardly ever had to practice particular passages, that I have never failed to practice scales on any occasion I have wished to sound to best advantage, and if I were ever to succeed in playing a scale perfectly, as perfectly as I hear it in my head, I would believe myself to be the best violinist in the world.]

Viotti goes on to outline a number of different ways of practising scales, including phrasing them using diverse patterns of crescendo and diminuendo across the scale. Even scale practice could thus contribute to the development of expressive technique. Viotti does note that this kind of sophistication in practice cannot be expected of beginners, hence we should be wary of reading anything into the more simple instructions for bowing scales in Baillot's method of 1803: 'Toutes ces gammes doivent être jouées en soutenant les sons fort d'un bout à l'autre de l'archet [All these scales should be played by sustaining a strong sound from one end of the bow to the other]'.[66] Baillot's notes on the phrasing of scale passages under the heading of 'nuances' show that he thought along the same lines as the master, and in his revised method of 1834 he goes into the expressive significance of scales in more detail.[67]

Finally, in considering the effect of the emphasis on mastering technical difficulties before focusing on musical expression, we should acknowledge what the authors of the methods themselves wrote on the subject. Baillot is very clear that study of technique is only a stepping-stone and Domnich writes in the same vein:

> Les leçons dont se composent cette méthode suffisent pour former un bon exécutant. Ici donc se termine ma tâche. Mais une carrière nouvelle et beaucoup plus vaste s'ouvre à l'émulation de l'élève, s'il est donné des qualités nécessaires pour y entrer. Il a tous les

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[65] Facsimile of notes in Viotti's hand, reproduced in François-Antoine Habeneck, *Méthode théorique et pratique de violon … notes en facsimile de l'écriture de Viotti* (Paris: Canaux, 1842), 33. I have retained Viotti's spelling and the underlining is also his.

[66] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 10.

[67] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 45 : 'La *Gamme* est l'échelle de notre systême musical; elle offre, telle qu'elle est, un chant noble et symétrique, susceptible de beaucoup d'expression et de variété ; elle se prête à tous les mouvemens de l'harmonie [Scales are the ladder of our musical system; a scale represents, just as it is, a noble and symmetrical song, which is susceptible to much variety and expression. Scales lend themselves to every harmonic progression].'

> moyens de l'art à sa disposition ; il faut encore qu'il sache les mettre en œuvre ; il faut qu'il devienne artiste.[68]
>
> [The lessons contained in this method are sufficient for the training of a good player. My present task therefore ends here. However, a new and much vaster career is open to the zeal of the student, if he possesses the necessary qualities to enter it. He has all the tools of the art at his disposal, but he must still know how to put them into practice: he must become an artist.]

The Conservatoire instrumentalists are also clear that there are limits to what can be taught. In no way do they assert that they have laid down the rules for everything. Ozi's advice on ornamentation in adagio movements continues: 'le sentiment met ici les bornes aux préceptes, c'est lui qui doit inspirer les choses de goût et de convenances [feeling must show here the limits of rules, it is feeling which must inform questions of taste and appropriateness]'.[69] Baillot and Domnich make similar points. Furthermore, the authors of the Conservatoire methods do not merely note the difference between correct and inspired playing, they make positive suggestions on how the student is to expand his/her musical horizons. The first of these is always to imitate the human voice or to consult a singing method. In the case of the violin, Baillot also advises the student to consult the works of the past masters:

> On vient de considérer le Violon sous le rapport du mécanisme, et l'on a fourni les principes matériels qui sont propres à développer dans un élève les moyens physiques que la nature peut lui avoir donnés : quand il aura vaincu ces difficultés élémentaires, on lui fera faire l'application dans un bon choix de musique, d'une difficulté progressive, capable de lui former en même tems le jeu et le goût, car il ne pourra sortir de l'ordre commun et faire de grandes choses qu'en étudiant les choses déjà faites. On lui fera donc suivre par ainsi dire l'histoire du Violon en lui mettant les ouvrages des plus anciens maîtres successivement sous les yeux jusqu'à ceux de nos jours.[70]
>
> [We have just considered the violin from the point of view of technique, and have laid out the main principles designed to develop in the student the physical abilities which nature has given him. When he has conquered the basic difficulties, he should study their application through a good choice of music, of progressive difficulty, which is capable of developing at

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[68] Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor*, 92.

[69] Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson*, 30.

[70] 'De l'expression et de ses moyens', Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 158.

> the same time his playing and his taste, since he will only stand out from the common herd and achieve great things through studying what has already been created. One will thus, so to speak, have him follow the history of the violin by successively putting in front of him the works of the oldest masters through to those of today.]

This is a passage which reveals much about Baillot's thought-world. Even without the subsequent reference to Rousseau, his influence is evident throughout. The equation of technical with physical development recalls *Émile*, in whose ideal education development of physical capacities precedes moral and intellectual development. It is typical of Baillot that he seeks to inspire the student with high aims, to 'achieve great things', another of the means by which the student in encouraged to go beyond correct playing. This effort to awaken the enthusiasm of the reader is also a characteristic of the Conservatoire methods when compared with either earlier methods or those of German authors such as Louis Spohr.[71]

A further point of interest in the above passage concerns the rediscovery of the past. There is much about the first Conservatoire methods which reflects the flattened historical perspective inherited from the French Enlightenment and typical of the Revolution, in which time is divided only between the darkness of barbarism and the light of the present.[72] The Revolution even restarts time: Year One of the Revolutionary calendar begins with the proclamation of the Republic on 22 September 1792. We adopt the same perspective whenever we refer to whatever came before the Revolution as belonging indistinguishably to the *ancien régime*. The invocation of classical precedent so beloved of the Revolutionaries does not change this perspective: the virtuous models of Greece and Rome exist outside time. This can be seen in Baillot's introduction to the 1803 method. His account of the history of the instrument is very sketchy. There is no mention of the likes of Stradivarius or Amati, but rather a vague reference to a three-stringed instrument played by Apollo which may have been a bit like a violin.[73] 'History', says EH Carr, 'begins with the handing down of tradition'.[74] In Baillot's text, that history becomes progressive through its enlistment for pedagogical ends: 'On lui fera donc suivre par ainsi dire l'histoire du Violon en lui mettant les

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[71] Louis Spohr, *Violinschule* (Vienna: Haslinger, 1833; reprint edition: Munich/Salzburg: Katzbichler, 2000).

[72] See Robin George Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973; first published, 1946), 80-81.

[73] Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 1.

[74] Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (London: Macmillan, 1961), 108.

ouvrages des plus anciens maîtres successivement sous les yeux jusqu'à ceux de nos jours [One will thus, so to speak, have him follow the history of the violin, by successively putting in front of him the works of the oldest masters through to those of today]'. The appeal to history becomes central to the revised violin method of 1834, but it is present here in embryonic form.

We shall return to the role of historical precedent in the pedagogical culture of the Conservatoire, but first we need to make a judgement about the effect of the conceptual separation of technique and expression. On the basis of the preceding discussion, we must accept that this separation does not itself necessarily entail a loss of creativity, even if the later history of music pedagogy may throw up examples where the focus on technical development has come at the expense of musical understanding and expression. We are right at the nub here of the tension between education as restriction and education as liberation. There are doubtless those who would characterize a conservatory-style pedagogy as equivalent to dressage, in line with Goethe's satire of university learning in his *Faust*:

> Mein teurer Freund, ich rat Euch drum
> Zuerst Collegium Logicum.
> Da wird der Geist Euch wohl dressiert,
> In spanische Stiefeln eingeschnürt,
> Daß er bedächtiger so fortan
> Hinschleiche die Gedankenbahn,[75]
>
> [My dear friend, I'd advise, in sum,
> First, the *Collegium Logicum.*
> There your mind will be trained,
> As if in Spanish boots, constrained,
> So that painfully, as it ought,
> It creeps along the way of thought,][76]

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[75] Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust, Eine Tragödie* (Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1949; first published, 1808), lines 1910-15 (vol. III, 62).

[76] Translation by A. S. Kline, 2003 (Poetry in Translation: https://www.poetryintranslation.com/).

Whatever conclusions one comes to concerning restrictive aspects of the Conservatoire's style of pedagogy, the tension between discipline and freedom was one of which Baillot, at least by 1834, was well aware:

> Nous avons également pensé que l'enseignement du violon, le premier de tous les instrumens, devait être établi sur les bases les plus larges : on peut voir, par le plan de cet ouvrage, que telle a toujours été notre intention, et que, depuis l'origine du Conservatoire, nous avons travaillé de bonne foi *à empêcher les élèves confiés à nos soins de devenir prisonniers d'une école*, cherchant à donner à l'école elle-même la plus grande extension possible et à laisser aux élèves la plus grande liberté d'essor.[77]
>
> [We have also considered that the teaching of the violin, first among all instruments, ought to be constructed on the broadest possible basis. The plan of this publication shows that this has always been our intention, and from the time of the Conservatoire's foundation, we have worked in good faith *to prevent the pupils entrusted to our care from becoming prisoners of any school*, endeavouring to give the school itself the greatest possible reach and leaving our pupils the greatest possible freedom of action.]

Even a comprehensive school sets bounds. It remains an open question whether there was enough room for individuality within the bounds set by the Conservatoire system. As we shall see when we look at some of the new artistic developments of the 1820s and 30s, Baillot rejected the style of Paganini and also that of De Bériot whom Paganini influenced. Baillot's piano colleagues criticized Chopin and Liszt for their technical eccentricities. And, as Brigitte François-Sappey has shown, the Conservatoire failed adequately to support many of the greatest talents in composition, from Berlioz through Alkan to Ravel.[78] What I dispute is the attribution of such failure to a 'totalitarian' mindset with its origins in the Revolution. A late-Enlightenment belief in the value of ordered progress, a neo-classical faith in eternal aesthetic principles, and a pedagogical system based on competition (see Chapter 8) are the more likely culprits.

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[77] 'Observations relatives à cette nouvelle méthode', Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 3. My emphasis.

[78] Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés' in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 29-40.

Institutional voice and authority

Another way of expressing the tension at the heart of education is the opposition of authority and independence. Use of the official methods within the institution was made compulsory through the revised regulations of 1800.[79] Emmanuel Hondré, who has written one of the only studies of the methods as a collection, characterizes their imposition as 'totalitarian and centralizing'. Quite apart from the fact that Hondré incorrectly attributes the relevant articles to the first regulations of 1796, this is a long bow to draw.[80] It anticipates the prescription of the same methods at all the *succursales* across France, feeder schools which did not exist until 1826, without even demonstrating that such prescription happened. However, let us concede that *had* such a hierarchical national network of music schools existed as proposed by Sarrette in 1802, the Conservatoire would very likely have proposed that its new methods be prescribed for use in all feeder schools. This would, in our thought experiment, be evidence of central control at a national level, but central control of a hardly different nature from that which the monarchy of Louis XV attempted to exert. To call it 'totalitarian' is just a reflex application of the revisionist interpretation of the Revolution. To put it another way, if you were confronted with a state of music teaching which was of greatly uneven quality across the country, in which only a combination of luck and money would find even a talented student a good teacher at the right time, and you wanted to do something about it, what would you do?[81] I suggest you would gather the best musicians together in one place, get them to draft methods which represented the best of their knowledge and experience, make them freely available and immediately put them into practice in a teaching institution which did not charge fees.

As we shall see, from the fame of the *exercices publics* and the Société des concerts, it seems evident that the Conservatoire did succeed in dramatically raising standards of playing. It was

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[79] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 235.

[80] Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 78. Hondré cites the original regulations at pp. 223-229 of Pierre, Documents historiques et administratifs, instead of the 1800 regulations, 231-237. Title XV concerns the drafting of the official methods (235-6).

[81] Rode and Kreutzer seem to have been two of the lucky ones. Rode had lessons from Gervais and Saint-Marie in Bordeaux, and then from Viotti from the age of 13. Kreutzer was taught by his violinist father and also Anton Stamitz. Baillot was less fortunate and despite some lessons from Polidori, Saint-Marie, and Pollani, must largely have taught himself. Dalayrac, as already narrated, was entirely self-taught, which may be one reason he did not become a violinist but a composer.

in various ways *authoritative*, but then, all pedagogy is authoritative, in that it prescribes what is to be learnt and how, and it positions the teacher as an authority. Neither this examination of the official teaching methods nor the discussion of the internal culture of the Conservatoire to come in Chapter 8 suggests that it was a particularly authoritarian institution for its time. It was not like the Napoleonic *lycée* in which students were marched from class to class. If we think of the methods as constituting a syllabus, then their imagined prescription would be no different from the procedure of any national school system. Such a system might have been a new idea in 1800, but it would be unusual to characterize all such systems as 'totalitarian'. Hondré seems to hearken back to the halcyon days of the independent maîtrises, which independent observers agree had been in decline for more than a hundred years before their abolition by the Revolution.[82]

Certainly, one of the new features of the methods is their institutional voice, which is expressed through both language and visual presentation. Linguistically, the author as personality and the teacher to whom the methods might be partly addressed disappear from view. Leopold Mozart is present in his method as a teacher with experience and with a desire for the utility of what he is presenting:

> Endlich muß ich frei gestehen, daß ich diese Violinschule nicht nur zum Nuzen der Schüler, und zum Behufe der Lehrmeister geschrieben habe: sondern daß ich sehr wünsche all diejenigen zu belehren, die durch ihre Unterweisung ihre Lehrlinge unglücklich machen; weil sie selbst solche Fehler an sich haben, die sie, wenn sie nur ihrer Eigenliebe auf eine kurze Zeit entsagen wollten, gar bald erkennen würden.[83]
>
> [Finally, I must admit that I have not only written this violin method for the benefit of the student and the teacher, but rather I wish very much to enlighten all those who have, by their

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[82] In the C18, only 10% of composers were graduates of these schools, compared with 25% in the C17. Interest in sacred music was also falling steadily through the C18. See 'Orchestras in the French province', Spitzer and Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra*, 204-212. Katharine Ellis also refers to the 'impoverished traditions' of the maîtrises and notes that even Choron, a champion of sacred music, saw the need for their reform: Katharine Ellis, 'Vocal training at the Paris Conservatoire and the choir schools of Alexandre-Étienne Choron: debates, rivalries, and consequences', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005) vol. I, 135.

[83] Mozart, *Versuch einer Gründlichen Violinschule*, 'Vorbericht [Preface]', no page numbers. I have retained the spelling of 'Nuzen' from the original.

> teaching, made their pupils miserable through having so many errors themselves, errors which they would recognize if only they would abandon their vanity for a short while.]

One perceives that Leopold is, in a sense, battling with history, with inherited circumstances. Geminiani, though he opens more magisterially with 'The Intention of Musick is not only to please the Ear, but to express Sentiments, strike the Imagination, affect the Mind, and command the Passions', is, like Leopold, present in his method. Under his advice on the 'close shake' (vibrato), Geminiani writes:

> These extraordinary emotions are indeed most easily excited when accompany'd with Words; and I would besides advise, as well the Composer as the Performer, who is ambitious to inspire his Audience, to be inspired himself.[84]

The Conservatoire methods, by contrast, speak in a voice which eschews the first person,[85] and most of them simply launch into a brief account of the history of the instrument in question. The bassoon method is even more direct: 'Article I : De la Manière de tenir l'Instrument. On prend le Basson par le milieu avec la main gauche … [Article I: How to Hold the Instrument. The bassoon is held in the middle with the left hand …]'.[86] Part of the reason for this difference relates to the flat historical perspective alluded to above. The Revolution had wiped the blackboard clean and was establishing institutions without positive reference to the past. But most of the reason lies in the presence of an institutional authority signalled immediately on the cover: *Nouvelle méthode de basson par Ozi, Membre du Conservatoire de Musique, Adoptée par le Conservatoire pour servir à l'Étude dans cet Établissement*. The horn method of Duvernoy (1802) appears to be the sole exception among the instrumental methods.[87] Although it was printed by the Conservatoire press, its relative brevity at 63 pages, compared with the 114 pages of the 1807 Domnich method, suggests that

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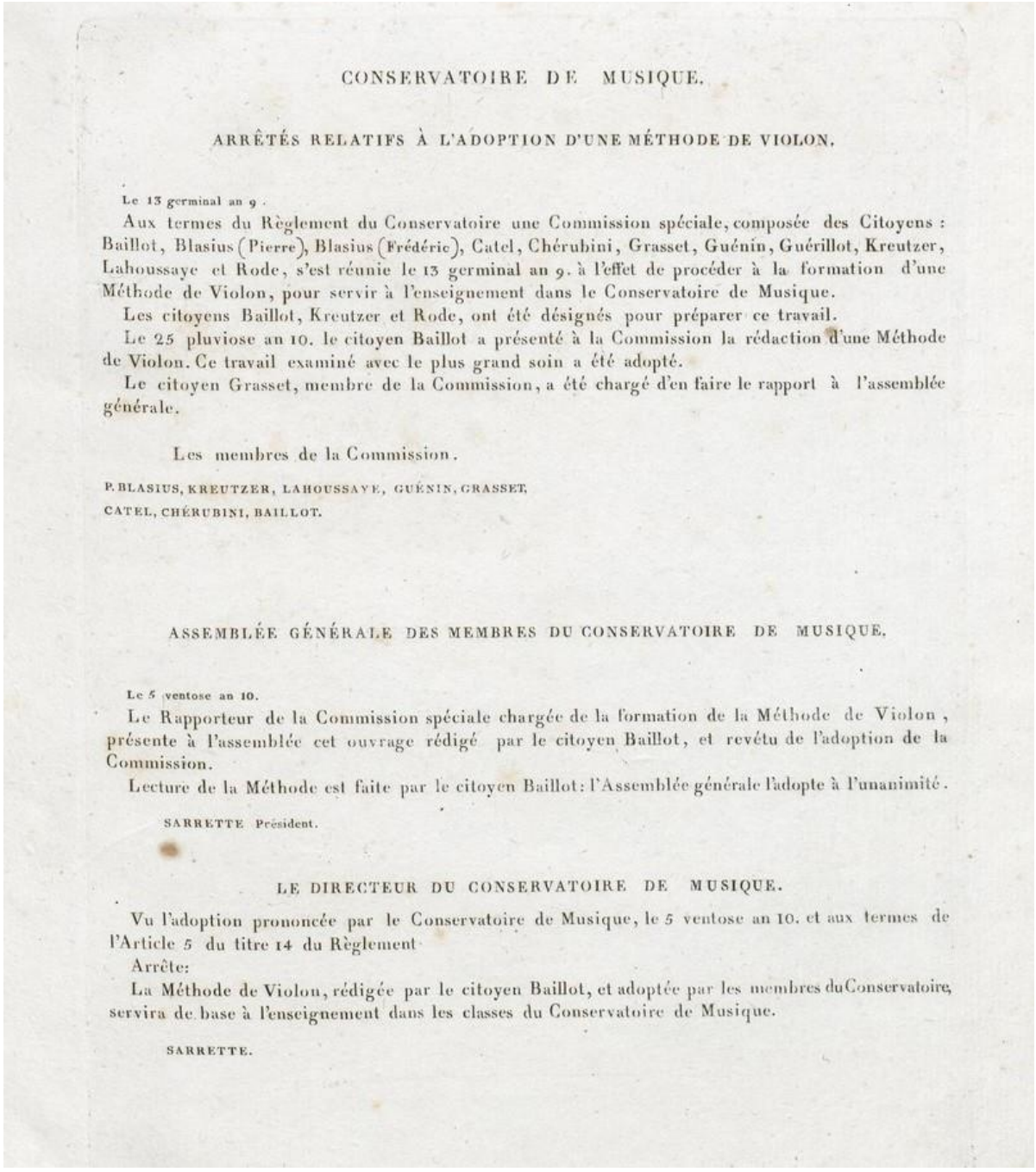
[84] Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, 8.

[85] Adam's piano method is an exception. In the introduction, he uses the pronoun 'nous' many times. However, this use of the first person plural is ambiguous: it could be a polite avoidance of the first person singular 'je' or it could also refer to the collective nature of the Conservatoire enterprise. See below. In other ways, Adam places his method firmly within the institutional context, such as through the note at the end of the introduction: 'Dans les citations d'ouvrages qui sont faites dans cette méthode, on a entendu les ouvrages établis et publiés par le Conservatoire, pour l'enseignement de la musique [Citation made in this method of other works should be understood to refer to pedagogical publications of the Conservatoire]'. Adam, *Méthode de piano*, 2.

[86] Ozi, *Nouvelle méthode de basson*, 1.

[87] I am only able to judge by the digital copy of this method available on Gallica.

the omission on its cover of official sanction may not be an accident, but rather the educational committee did not consider it sufficiently comprehensive for formal adoption. If this is so, it suggests that the committee review process was not a mere exercise in rubber-stamping but a serious exercise in quality control.



CONSERVATOIRE DE MUSIQUE.

ARRÊTÉS RELATIFS À L'ADOPTION D'UNE MÉTHODE DE VIOLON.

Le 13 germinal an 9.

Aux termes du Règlement du Conservatoire une Commission spéciale, composée des Citoyens : Baillot, Blasius (Pierre), Blasius (Frédéric), Catel, Chérubini, Grasset, Guénin, Guérillot, Kreutzer, Lahoussaye et Rode, s'est réunie le 13 germinal an 9. à l'effet de procéder à la formation d'une Méthode de Violon, pour servir à l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire de Musique.

Les citoyens Baillot, Kreutzer et Rode, ont été désignés pour préparer ce travail.

Le 25 pluviose an 10. le citoyen Baillot a présenté à la Commission la rédaction d'une Méthode de Violon. Ce travail examiné avec le plus grand soin a été adopté.

Le citoyen Grasset, membre de la Commission, a été chargé d'en faire le rapport à l'assemblée générale.

Les membres de la Commission.

P. BLASIUS, KREUTZER, LAHOUSSAYE, GUÉNIN, GRASSET,
CATEL, CHÉRUBINI, BAILLOT.

ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES MEMBRES DU CONSERVATOIRE DE MUSIQUE.

Le 5 ventose an 10.

Le Rapporteur de la Commission spéciale chargée de la formation de la Méthode de Violon, présente à l'assemblée cet ouvrage rédigé par le citoyen Baillot, et revêtu de l'adoption de la Commission.

Lecture de la Méthode est faite par le citoyen Baillot: l'Assemblée générale l'adopte à l'unanimité.

SARRETTE Président.

LE DIRECTEUR DU CONSERVATOIRE DE MUSIQUE.

Vu l'adoption prononcée par le Conservatoire de Musique, le 5 ventose an 10. et aux termes de l'Article 5 du titre 14 du Règlement

Arrête:

La Méthode de Violon, rédigée par le citoyen Baillot, et adoptée par les membres du Conservatoire, servira de base à l'enseignement dans les classes du Conservatoire de Musique.

SARRETTE.

Page of the official violin method preceding page one which registers official endorsement. Extract from BnF NUMM-1166780.

For the official bassoon method of 1803, we are fortunate to have a direct comparator: a method for the same instrument by the same musician, published in 1787.[88] It is headed: *Méthode nouvelle et raisonnée pour le bassoon, par Mr. Ozi, Premier Basson de la Musique du Roy* but there are many indications that the author feels the need to establish his authority beyond this mention of his royal position on the cover. The cover bruits its 'rational' nature, and includes a paragraph of text advertising the contents. While the body of the method opens directly with an explanation of how to hold the instrument, the second article immediately puts the author in the foreground: 'L'instrument dont je me sers ordinairement est fait par Keller à Strasbourg [The instrument which I usually use is made in Strasbourg by Keller]'.[89] There are a few things happening here. By writing 'this is how I do things', the author is both asserting his authority and limiting it. Asserting it, in that he is reminding the reader that he is a prominent performer,[90] and limiting it, in that he implicitly acknowledges other performers might do differently. The Conservatoire bassoon method contains no such passages, because it is not issued on Ozi's personal authority (aided by that of the crown), but with the full weight of the institution behind him. His status as 'member of the Conservatoire' counts for more than his appointment at the Opéra.[91] Most of the Conservatoire methods underline this authority by including as title pages extracts from the official committee deliberations by which the method was commissioned and approved (see illustration below). They thus underline the formal and collective nature of the pedagogical approach at the same time. It is significant that Ozi's 1787 method only runs to 27 pages, compared with 144 in the Conservatoire bassoon method. The difference lies not only in the vast increase in progressive teaching material, rather there are prose sections in 1803 covering

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88 Étienne Ozi, *Méthode nouvelle et raisonnée pour le basson* (Paris: Boyer, 1787).

89 *Ibid.*, 3.

90 Étienne Ozi (1754-1813) was indeed a famous performer, widely known for the expressiveness of his playing as well as for its virtuosity. Harold Griswold writes that 'In 1779 he made a brilliant debut at the Concert Spirituel, where he played a bassoon concerto by P.D. Deshayes. His performance was described as: "free and confident; the beautiful quality of his sounds on such an unresponsive instrument and the perfect accuracy of his intonation have earned for him a place in the ranks of the best artists". During the next 12 years he appeared as a soloist at the Concert Spirituel 36 times; on 19 occasions he performed his own concertos and *symphonies concertantes*'. His influence as a teacher was also considerable and the 1803 method was described as late as 1838 as 'was not only the first complete manual for learning to play the bassoon in France, but in most other countries as well'. See Harold E. Griswold, 'Ozi [Ozy], Etienne', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

91 Lefèvre, author of the official clarinet method, is the only one to have it both ways: Xavier Lefèvre, *Méthode de clarinette, par X. Lefèvre, Membre du Conservatoire de Musique et premier clarinette de l'Opéra* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an X (=1802)). Another failure of uniformity …

matters entirely overlooked in the 1787 method, such as breathing, phrasing, nuance, the contrasting characters of adagio and allegro, and the character of the bassoon overall. The official method tries to cover everything. When writing as an individual, Ozi needed only aspire to making a worthwhile contribution to study of the instrument, a contribution his acknowledged prowess as a performer qualified him to make. When drafting a method on behalf of the Conservatoire, he inherited the institution's aspiration to lay a solid foundation for future generations, the same aspiration which was behind the Institut National and the other educational institutions created by the Daunou Laws of 1795 and which had driven the Revolutionaries since 1789.

The fact of this institutional voice does not preclude variations in tone between the methods. As suggested earlier, the earnest and expressive tone of Baillot's writing sets the violin method apart, especially from the very straightforward style of the flute, clarinet, and bassoon methods. The styles of Adam and Domnich lie somewhere in between these two extremes. It is hard to be sure how far these differences in style derive purely from the respective personalities and their differing confidence in writing, or from pre-existing differences in pedagogical culture between the respective instruments. On first consideration, it seems reasonable to suppose that the teaching of instruments principally associated with military bands might bear the imprint of military culture and that the violin and piano, being associated with courtly, theatre, and private music-making, might be cases apart. The flair of Domnich's writing, however, challenges this idea, as does the breadth of his concerns, which has much in common with Baillot's:

> Le goût est ce sentiment vif des beautés et des défauts, ce discernement indépendant de la réflexion, cette espèce d'instinct qui juge presque à notre insçu, et dont les jugemens semblent d'autant plus sûrs qu'ils sont rapides … Quoiqu'à proprement parler, il ne puisse être enseigné par des préceptes positifs, cependant il a ses règles, il s'étend, se reforme et se mûrit par l'habitude de comparer.[92]
>
> [Taste is that lively feeling for beauties and defects, that faculty of discernment which is independent of reflection, that kind of instinct which judges almost unbeknown to us and whose judgements appear to be as sure as they are rapid … Although, properly speaking, it

[92] Domnich, *Méthode de premier et de second cor*, 92-3. As always, I have retained the spelling of the original French.

> cannot be taught according to positive principles, nonetheless it has its rules: it grows, reforms and matures through the habit of comparison.]

Even more than Baillot (1803), Domnich (1807) breaks with the ahistorical tendency of the other methods, characterizing the innovations of Anton Hampel, which took place at the court of Dresden sixty years prior, as 'a happy and brilliant revolution'.[93] This may be coincidence or it may be a measure of the rapidity of the change in political climate under Napoleon, as he transformed from champion of Revolutionary principles to traditional despot. Between 1803 and 1807, Napoleon had himself crowned by the Pope and painted by Ingres in a style which is positively medieval.[94] The coronation itself was held in 1804, but Napoleon sat for Ingres in full coronation regalia in 1806. In his right hand he holds the sceptre of Charlemagne and on his head is a golden laurel wreath similar to one worn by Caesar. Clearly, history was no longer a dirty word.

A further complication results from the fact that wind instruments were not only used for military music. The flute, clarinet, and bassoon were becoming prominent as solo and orchestral instruments through the latter part of the eighteenth century, and Hugot, Lefèvre and Ozi all held solo positions in the major theatre orchestras at the same time as their Conservatoire posts.[95] Any influence of military culture on the writing of different methods is therefore more likely to reflect the experience of the individual writer than the role of the instrument per se. There remains the likelihood that the personalities of leading individuals who taught at the Conservatoire over long periods of time left their imprint on the instruction of certain instruments and even on the overall pedagogical culture. Baillot, whose tenure at the School lasted from 1795 until his death in 1842, is a case in point, as are Adam, Cherubini, and many others.

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[93] *Ibid.*, iv.

[94] Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) was a prominent neoclassical painter who also played the violin and was a great friend of Baillot. In view of this friendship, it is interesting that Ingres was profoundly influenced by past artistic traditions and aspired to become the guardian of academic orthodoxy against the ascendant Romantic style. His love of the violin gave rise to the French expression 'le violon d'Ingres', which means 'hobby', or 'pastime'.

[95] Hugot at the Théâtre Feydeau, Lefèvre and Ozi at the Opéra.

The decline of the Imprimerie

Although Sarrette had taken the leading role in lobbying for initial government support, it was the bassoonist Étienne Ozi who had the direction of the *Imprimerie* once it was established. Ozi retired from the Conservatoire in 1806 but retained responsibility for the press until his death in 1813, when the direction passed to his sons Michel and Charles. The loss of Ozi *père* was doubtless a blow to the enterprise, but in any case its principal work was done: the publication of the official methods and of much new solo repertoire for wind instruments as well as for strings and piano. After 1813, the press put out few new publications; it was mostly reprints and reeditions.[96] The ongoing explosion in print culture meant that more and more music was being published elsewhere. In 1826, the company of Janet & Cotelle bought the remaining stock of the press and was the first of a succession of publishers which continued to sell music from the old stock under the *Imprimerie* banner.[97]

From this point, the role of the Conservatoire with regard to instrumental methods changed from one of active commissioning to one of evaluation and approval. The Conservatoire label carried such cachet that the authors or publishers of new methods were constantly soliciting the institution for the right to announce themselves '*méthode approvée par le Conservatoire*'.[98] A specific committee had to be formed to carry out this work. From the Cherubini years (1822-42) on, the Conservatoire thus found itself in much the same position as a monarch whose favour is sought for commercial ends, with *méthode approvée par le Conservatoire* equivalent to 'By Appointment to His Majesty'. From a more idealistic standpoint, one could say that the institution continued to set the standard with regard to methods, but by other means.

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96 Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique*, 100-101.

97 These publishers are listed by Hondré in 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 96-7.

98 Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', 98.

CHAPTER 6
CULTURAL CHANGE AND THE REVISED METHODS OF THE 1830s

'What is there in this world not subject to change? And shall we expect music to be permanent above *all* things, which so much depends on imagination and feeling.' Charles Burney, 1773.[1]

'La fortune fait paraître nos vertus et nos vices, comme la lumière fait paraître les objets.' La Rochefoucauld, 1678.[2]

The publication of the first Conservatoire methods during the Napoleonic period was a foundational project. Many new methods by Conservatoire staff continued to appear throughout the century on an ad-hoc basis, but of interest here are only two: revised versions of the violin and piano methods, authored by Baillot and Adam and published in 1834 and 1835 respectively.[3] Although produced by the Conservatoire printing press, they were not commissioned by the institution and we have to suppose that the impressive work put into them was the result of the authors' individual initiative and devotion to teaching. However, where Adam's revision is one in detail only, Baillot's is a thorough rewrite and as a result bears the marks of the enormous political, social, and cultural changes experienced by early nineteenth-century France.

The cover presentations confirm the more individual inspiration behind the revised methods. The name of each author is subtitled 'Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur', as well as 'Professeur du Conservatoire'. Baillot's *L'Art du violon* does not even carry the subtitle *Adoptée pour servir à l'enseignement*. Although, echoing the collective authorship of the first method, Baillot continues modestly to write on behalf of his deceased colleagues (Rode had

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1 Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (London, 1773), 34.

2 'Fortune reveals our virtues and vices, just as light reveals objects', *Maximes*, 1678, no. 380: François de La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1977), 78.

3 Pierre Baillot, *L'Art du violon, nouvelle méthode, dédiée à ses élèves* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, 1834); Louis Adam, *Méthode de piano du Conservatoire, Nouvelle édition revue et augmentée* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, 1835).

died in 1830 and Kreutzer in 1831), *L'Art du violon* has the character of a testament. The dedication to his students is personal:

> L'Auteur à ses élèves
>
> Mes amis
>
> C'est en cherchant avec vous à pénétrer dans les secrets du violon que je suis parvenu à fixer, dans leur plus grande généralité, les principes de cette méthode ; il m'est si doux de penser à la part que vous avez prise ainsi à mon ouvrage, que j'ai voulu vous en offrir la dédicace comme un souvenir de nos communs travaux et de nos plaisirs les plus purs.[4]
>
> [The Author to his Pupils. My Friends. It was through my efforts to explore, with you, the secrets of the violin that I succeeded in establishing, in broad outline, the principles of this new method. I take such pleasure in thinking of the part you have played in this book that I wanted to offer you its dedication in memory of our collective labours and our purest of pleasures.]

In 1756, Leopold Mozart it found necessary to address a grovelling dedication of his *Violinschule* to the Archbishop of Salzburg. In 1834, Baillot's decision to dedicate *his* method to his pupils speaks volumes about the change in status of the pedagogue brought about by time and the new national institution. Baillot's reference to 'collective labours' reflects both his characteristic modesty and the pedagogical culture of the Conservatoire.

The revised method of Louis Adam (1835)

The foreword to Adam's revised piano method states that the improvements it has brought to the original are the fruit both of time and experience.[5] The thirty intervening years had witnessed major developments in piano music relating to instrument build and the technical demands of piano composition. The scale sections are thus much updated, with more octaves of range and scales in thirds, sixths, chromatic scales, and so on. Adam's expressed aim is to gather in one publication all the difficulties which the modern pianist was likely to encounter: 'je me suis attaché à réunir toutes les difficultés d'exécution qu'on rencontre dans la musique moderne'. Consonant with this aim is the inclusion of a new collection of difficult passages

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4 Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 1.

5 Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 'Avis de l'auteur', page preceding page one.

extracted from the music of current composers: Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner, Field, Ries, Czerny, Mayseder, Herz, Pixis, Bertini, Zimmerman, and Adam himself (in order of appearance).[6] This idea had already featured in the cello method of 1804, which contains a selection of difficult passages excerpted from the repertoire of Haydn, Boccherini, and others.[7] Emmanuel Hondré characterizes this emphasis on isolating and tackling difficulties as a 'pedagogy of effort', likening it to resistance training, and asserts that it led to technical studies which became further and further removed from musical reality.[8] The collections of excerpted passages in the cello method of 1804 and the piano method of 1835, on the contrary, ground the study of technical difficulty in musical reality. Given that the Conservatoire methods contain *both* such direct quotation from repertoire *and* abstract technical exercises as well as material in between these extremes, we can conclude that the desire to create a comprehensive pedagogy led the Conservatoire authors in both directions at once.

In addition to adding new exercises, Adam has taken particular care in revising his 50 lessons fingered for small hands. The selection of famous tunes is updated in line with musical fashion: out are the tunes of Gluck and Haydn, replaced largely with excerpts from Beethoven, Rossini, and Weber. But more importantly, Adam has revised the order in order to make the increase in difficulty more gradual, no doubt with the benefit of the years spent teaching these small pieces. This demonstrates the importance he attached to the instruction of children, when, as the senior professor, he might have concerned himself only with teaching advanced students. Whether this resulted from his own experience teaching children or whether he was responding to feedback on the method from more junior teachers who were occupied with elementary instruction, either way the changes point to positive aspects of the pedagogical culture. He also made detailed changes to orthography and in one case (no. 8) changed a single note of a melody to give it greater interest.[9]

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6 Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 152-215.

7 Baillot, Levasseur, Catel, Baudiot, *Méthode de violoncelle* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XIII (=1804)), 146-206.

8 Emmanuel Hondré, 'Les méthodes officielles du Conservatoire', in *Le Conservatoire de musique de Paris: Regards sur une institution et son histoire*, ed. Emmanuel Hondré (Paris: Association du bureau des étudiants du CNSMDP, 1995), 86.

9 Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 110; *Méthode de piano* (1804), 88.

For all the care taken in Adam's revision, what have scarcely changed are the prose sections which cover style and philosophy. The sections on ornaments, style, sound production, articulation, and how to approach the study of the instrument are completely unchanged, to the extent that the original plates were clearly reused. The section on pedalling is an exception: it has been partly updated, if clumsily, to reflect the falling out of use of the third pedal named *jeu celeste*.[10] There are one or two cases where plates have been redone to accommodate a change where the original was obviously out of date. Thus the sentence of the original introduction 'Il n'y a guère que cinquante ans que le premier Piano a été construit en Saxe, par un facteur nommé Silbermann …', has been omitted in the 1835 edition. In some cases, a single comment has evidently been inserted into the original plate.[11] However, nothing of substance has been altered between 1804 and 1835 concerning the role of the piano or the style of playing. Despite the stellar careers of piano virtuosos such as Liszt and Thalberg, the instrument is still presented as the gateway to composition rather than as a solo instrument. The final section, which is devoted to style and is in many ways the philosophical capstone of the method, still highlights the contrasting styles of Clementi, Mozart, Dussek, and Haydn. No mention of Zimmermann, Czerny, Moscheles and company here, let alone of Chopin.[12]

In other words, Adam's revised method of 1835 bears no mark of the massive cultural changes of the previous thirty years beyond some of their purely technical implications for piano playing. It is not so with Baillot's *L'Art du violon*, even though this method likewise positions itself as an update of the original, expanded to account for technical progress and the lessons of experience, but conserving the fundamental principles of the original.[13] Baillot seems to have been more sensitive to the world around him and his more thorough revision and expansion of the prose sections reveal tensions between his faith in the durability of fundamental principles and his awareness of cultural change. Before discussing these tensions, let us consider briefly what had been happening outside the walls of the Conservatoire in the first decades of the 1800s.

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[10] Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 236; *Méthode de piano* (1804), 220.

[11] Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 5.

[12] Adam, *Méthode de piano, Nouvelle édition*, 249; *Méthode de piano* (1804), 233.

[13] Baillot, *L'Art du violon,* 2.

Empire, Restoration, Revolution, Romanticism

The tumult of the Revolutionary decade continued into the first years of the nineteenth century, although the conflicts internal to France became less bloody. While Napoleonic ambition and ongoing colonial exploitation projected violence beyond France's frontiers, the successive changes in regime gradually became more peaceful. To the great relief of the city, Paris was spared spoliation in 1814 despite military defeat, thanks to the disobedience of some of Napoleon's generals.[14] Many in Paris greeted the occupying Russian, British, Prussian, and Austrian troops as liberators: war fatigue meant that the tide of *revanchisme* did not rise until the 1830s. This meant that the city could 'recover through the arts the hegemony it had lost through arms', particularly as rivals such as Venice and Rome had been badly damaged by Napoleonic occupation.[15] The July Revolution of 1830 was characterized by great agitation but little bloodshed. Part of the reason for this was that the elites, while divided amongst themselves, were increasingly united against the poor: the memory of 1793 meant that the one thing they agreed upon was that they did not want a return to rule by the People. Thus, the potentially revolutionary agitation of 1832, so memorably depicted in *Les Misérables*, led only to a brief insurrection which was easily put down by the forces of order.

Whereas during the Revolution the elite had been principally polarized between Revolutionaries and royalists, under the Empire and Restoration the divisions became more complex. The ever-increasing importance of the army under Consulate and Empire brought a whole new class of senior army officers into government. Napoleon tried with limited success to fuse this cadre with returning emigrés and loyal civil servants (many of whom were ex-Revolutionaries) into an elite unified around common values of meritocracy and service.[16] Early on, he had reassured those who had benefitted from the Revolution through purchasing confiscated property (*biens nationaux*) by confirming the legitimacy of those acquisitions. Having been restored to power, the Bourbons did not overturn this measure, but laws

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[14] Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires 1814 -1852: Monarchy and Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 17. Admittedly, the second occupation which followed the Hundred Days in 1815 was more burdensome than the first. See François Furet, *La Révolution : de Turgot à Jules Ferry : 1770-1880* (Paris: Hachette, 1988), 283.

[15] Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, 38.

[16] Jean-Luc Chappey, 'The new elites. Questions about political, social, and cultural reconstruction after the Terror', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution* ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), esp. 565.

introduced by Charles X in 1825 to compensate émigrés for their losses helped the old aristocracy to regain some wealth and influence.

Emigration was an experience common to many of the elite. The Revolution had induced a sizeable chunk of the aristocracy to emigrate, at least for a time, whether to Switzerland, Germany, Britain, or America. Hélène de Montgeroult took part in the family's attempt to emigrate in 1794 and later sheltered in Germany, an episode giving rise to the story of her replacing, the organist of the local church incognito, to the lasting amazement of organist and congregation.[17] The Bonaparte dictatorship forced others into exile, such as Madame de Staël, and the Restoration induced various Bonapartists like Stendhal to leave. Some of this movement was not due to actual danger, but more to shifts in political culture in which one set replaced another in proximity to power. Wealthy people could afford to travel, or could angle for ambassadorial posts which took them out of the country, and there was a vast increase in the interest in foreign parts. While Napoleon's imperial adventure ended in disaster for France, it did open the country up to greater outside influence, in particular to the German-speaking world. The visits to Vienna of Rode, Kreutzer, and Baillot date from this time, to which we owe the dedications of Beethoven's violin and piano sonatas in A minor (Op. 47 'Kreutzer') and G major (Op. 96). As well as the new interest of the Parisian elite in the outside world, the outside world increasingly flocked to Paris, making it, by 1830, the most cosmopolitan city in Europe.

Initially, the Restoration represented a major reversal of the Conservatoire's fortunes. Formally speaking, the institution was closed down in 1816 and the defunct École royale de chant (now 'et de déclamation') resuscitated. Sarrette, of course, was dismissed, but otherwise the substantial continuity in personnel and operations means that we can consider the École royale as a continuation of the Conservatoire under a different name. Instead of a director, it had François-Louis Perne as *inspecteur général des études*. Perne had only been part of the Conservatoire since 1811 and it would undoubtedly have helped, given that the legitimacy of the Restoration government rested entirely on history, that he had a background in ancient and sacred music.[18] Although Perne tried to hold the line against attempts to

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[17] Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult : La Marquise et la Marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006), 72-76.

[18] Jean Mongrédien, rev. Katharine Ellis, 'Perne, François-Louis', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

undermine the School's merit-based admission processes, discipline was poor and morale low. Instrumental music increasingly took second place to opera.

The Conservatoire's Revolutionary origins meant that this conspicuous neglect by the returning Bourbon administration was to be expected. However, the School did not have to await the July Revolution for its luck to turn. In 1821, the ultra-royalist Villèle ministry came to power and the responsible minister, the marquis de Lauriston, was determined to improve teaching at the School. He persuaded Cherubini to take over its leadership, gave him the title of Director, and conceded him considerable power within the institution.[19] Lauriston was succeeded in 1824 by another ultra-royalist, Sosthènes de La Rochefoucauld, who interfered much more in the running of the School but did provide much of the impetus towards the revival of the student concerts which had been such a success under the Empire, and which became the Société des concerts. There is a considerable irony in the School owing its birth and revival to opposite ends of the political spectrum. The changing political complexion of France meant that the political allegiance of the School gradually became ambiguous: Revolutionary in conception and conservative in endurance.

The July Revolution led to a further fracturing of the elite: there were now not simply monarchists and Revolutionaries, but legitimists and Orleanists, republicans, Bonapartists, and liberals. The July Monarchy represented a political compromise. It is generally characterized as a 'liberal', or 'bourgeois' revolution, for it accommodated the rising wealth and influence of the financial class while not otherwise threatening that of the new and old aristocracies. In 1830, a proposal to abolish noble titles was rejected as too unpopular.[20] Precisely because it was a compromise, however, it was generally perceived as a disappointment. Louis-Philippe's reign was in many ways good for the country. He determinedly avoided entangling the country in European wars – although he acquiesced in the invasion of Algeria – and economic growth picked up. Culturally, Paris entered its heyday, enjoying a pre-eminence greater even than it had enjoyed before the Revolution. But Louis-Philippe was an unimpressive king, one who only accepted the kingship *à contre-*

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[19] Anik Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), esp. 45-6. See also Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, 118 & 181.

[20] Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, 205.

coeur. His bourgeois habits, his modesty, and his dislike of pomp did not even win him many friends among the bourgeoisie. For their part, democrats were only too conscious that the lot of the urban poor had worsened, with terrible overcrowding, hunger, and cholera. Socialism was born and Romantic writers such as George Sand and Eugène Sue made common cause with the poor of Paris against the reign of money.[21]

The relaxation of press censorship meant that political attacks were as vitriolic as ever, but there was at the same time a widespread disillusionment with politics which was very similar to that experienced with the advent of the Directory in 1795. It is captured very well in Stendhal's unfinished novel *Lucien Leuwen*, written in 1834, the same year as the publication of Baillot's *L'Art du violon*. Young, rich, and idealistic, Lucien finds no honourable calling in the France of 1834. He joins the army, but there are no wars to fight, and the army is used instead to crush protests of desperate workers. His father places him with the new Minister of the Interior, but although he is forewarned that politics is a dirty business, he finds it disgusting. The ultras are ridiculous, the republicans poor company, and the *juste milieu* is corrupt. His rich banker of a father accepts the corruption of the world and plays the game. Although he entertains mistresses, he loves his wife, and this is one of the few subjects about which he is serious. For Lucien, however, love is fatally compromised by class and the need to perform a certain personality in the salon world. The contrast with the years of Revolution and Empire is always present, explicit or implicit: there is no more glory to be won. The right is fearful of the left and to go over to the republicans would be to accept social ostracision. In 1789, the middle way might have resembled Goethe's Olympian balance, an attempt to bring all of society forward in peace, but in 1834 it is only resignation.

We gain a measure of Stendhal's disillusionment and also of the distance we have travelled since Rousseau's *Julie* by such a speech as this from Leuwen, père: 'On voit trop d'âme à travers vos paroles. Vous ne manquez pas d'esprit, mais vous parlez trop de ce que vous sentez, trop. Cela attire les fourbes de toute espèce. [Your words reveal too much soul. You do not lack wit, but you speak too much of what you feel, far too much. This attracts rogues

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[21] Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, 383-9. Relevant novels include Sand's *Le Compagnon du tour de France* (1840) and Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-3). On the disillusionment of the Left and the ongoing faultlines in French society, see also Furet, *La Révolution 1770-1880*, 336-9.

of every description.]'[22] What is missing in *Lucien Leuwen* is the depiction of art as an alternative realm in which idealistic energy might find some worthy expression, unsullied by the dirty compromises of the world. But it is there in George Sand's novel *Pauline*, written in the same year of 1834, and it is presented in manifesto style in the preface to Theophile Gautier's *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, published in 1835.[23]

There is an odd echo of this disillusionment in *L'Art du violon*, under the section 'progrès dans l'art':

> Notre âme, impatient de briser ses liens, cherche une issue pour s'élancer dans l'infini ; - l'imagination, favorisant notre penchant pour le merveilleux, nous prête ses ailes pour nous éléver dans des régions inconnues, tant il nous semble beau de quitter la terre ! mais hélas ! il faut bientôt retomber, trahis par notre faiblesse : nous sentons alors la nécessité de nous replier sur nous-mêmes et de chercher le véritable domaine de l'art, non dans le vague, ni dans les choses matérielles ou dans les effets physiques de la nature, mais dans notre propre cœur, dans l'ordre moral et dans le sentiment, cette douce vie de l'âme, cette source intarissable de félicité.[24]
>
> [Our soul, impatient to break free of its bonds, tries to find a way out, in order to launch itself towards the infinite. The imagination, favouring our desire for the miraculous, lends us its wings to lift us into realms unknown, so grand does it seem to leave the earth. But alas, we are forced to fall back, betrayed by our weakness, and we feel the need to curl back on ourselves and to seek the true realm of art, not off in the beyond, not in material things or the physical effects of nature, but in our own hearts, in the moral order and in feeling, that sweet life of the soul, that imperishable source of happiness!]

There are many ways of interpreting this passage. There is something Kantian about it: substitute 'notre raison' for 'notre âme' ['our reason' for 'our soul'], and you have the essence of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The idea that we have best access to the real world through our moral selves is a key aspect of this work.[25] Baillot may well have read Kant in translation

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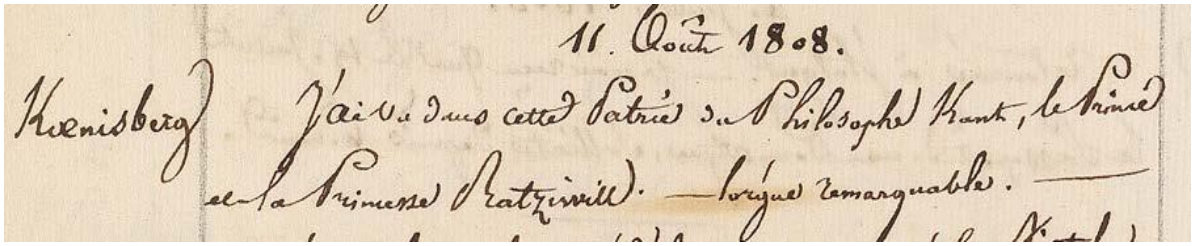
[22] Stendhal, *Lucien Leuwen* (Le club français du livre, 1950; first published, 1894), 379.

[23] Theophile Gautier, *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1966, first published, Paris, 1835), 'Preface', 25-60. George Sand's novel *Pauline* was not published until 1839.

[24] Baillot, *L'Art du violon,* 6-7.

[25] See Roger Scruton, *A Short History of Modern Philosophy*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 1995; first published, 1981), esp. 159-161.

(see below) and we know from his travel diary that he met the German philosopher in Königsberg on the way back from Russia in 1808.[26] Regardless, there is a sense here of a withdrawal from engagement with the world. This may have been a reaction to all the years of war and suffering which France had gone through and it may have been accentuated by Baillot's age and occasional ill health: there is something quietist about the language, this curling up on oneself against the world. It is a far cry from the outward engagement of the Revolutionary years.


11. Août 1808.
Koenisberg J'ai vu dans cette patrie le Philosophe Kant, le Prince et la Princesse Ratziwill. — Voyage remarquable. —

Extract from Baillot's diary, 11 August 1808, BnF IFN-52513563

Romanticism

In France, despite early precursors such as Rousseau and later ones such as Chateaubriand, Romanticism did not exist in the form of a movement until the 1820s, which puts France about thirty years behind Germany. The foundation of the literary journal *Le Globe* in 1824 was a signal event: contributors including Stendhal and Delécluse took on the stale academic classicism of the literary establishment. Rossini lit up the Théâtre Italien while the state-run Opéra languished. French Romanticism did not have as inspiration the reaction against French hegemony nor the recovery of local language and custom. Whereas German Romanticism meant a rejection of things French, French Romanticism of this time meant an increasing interest in things German. The translations of Kant by Charles de Villers had significant impact and from 1838 Berlioz took on the task of explaining Beethoven to the musical public. What French Romanticism did have as nourishment were the return of religion and the new awareness of the 'otherness' of history, which goes some way to explaining Victor Hugo's flirtation with royalism around the time of the coronation of Charles

[26] Pierre Baillot, 'Souvenirs depuis ma naissance, 1771-1823', *Souvenirs // 1*, sous-notice 1, 51. Tantalisingly, all he writes is '11 août 1808. Koenigsberg. J'ai vu dans cette patrie le Philosophe Kant, le Prince et la Princesse Ratziwill. [11 August 1808. Koenigsberg. In this country, I saw the philosopher Kant, and Prince and Princess Ratziwill.]' See illustration above.

X in 1824.[27] The rediscovery of France's past showed in the revival of interest in old monuments, the success of historical novels, and in a new preference for the furniture of past eras. In 1822, the École des Chartes was established for the training of historians and archivists and between 1823 and 1835, Guizot published a thirty-volume collection of historical memoirs.[28] In 1832, François Fétis started presenting *Concerts historiques* to the musical public.

In 1830, the new artistic spirit came out into the sun. It was one of those years when everything seemed to happen at once, with the July Revolution and the appearance of iconoclastic works in music, theatre, literature and painting. Hugo's *Hernani* took an axe to the classical unities and the first performance caused a riot comparable with the one which accompanied the premiere of the *Rite of Spring* in 1913. Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* now stands as a seminal work of European romanticism, but he had great difficulty getting it performed and understood. Indeed, the serious side of romanticism, represented by composers such as Berlioz, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, was not much in evidence in 1830s Paris: it was almost entirely eclipsed by extravagance and show. This was the heyday of grand opera, of virtuosity, spectacle, and titillation. The failing Opéra was sold to a self-proclaimed bourgeois named Louis Véron who transformed the theatre and its fortunes. Ticket prices were lowered a little and the theatre was made less opulent but more comfortable. Key composers in the 1830s were Rossini, Meyerbeer, Auber, and Halévy.[29] Typical were the operas of Meyerbeer, the music a hybrid of German and Italian elements featuring massive staging, hair-raising dénouements, and powerful, percussive music. The 1831 premiere of *Robert le Diable* was a huge success. To general scandal, it featured a chorus of ex-nuns dancing in nighties in an effort to tempt the hero from the path of virtue.[30]

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[27] Stephen Bann, 'Romanticism in France', in *Romanticism in National Context*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 240-258.

[28] Mansel, *Paris Between Empires*, 313-4. See also Furet, *La Révolution 1770-1880*, esp. 295. Furet characterizes the period of 1822-1828 as 'les retrouvailles de la royauté avec ses souvenirs [royalty's reunion with its memories]'.

[29] Rossini (1792-1868), Meyerbeer (1791-1864), Auber (1782-1871), and Halévy (1799-1862). Auber would become Director of the Conservatoire after Cherubini's death in 1842.

[30] James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 239-256.

It was also the era of the piano virtuoso. Public interest in the instrument had soared since the beginning of the new century on the back of improvements in instrument manufacture and the growth in wealth of an increasingly self-conscious middle class. As Baillot had written already in 1796: 'Il n'est pas un cercle qui ne soit devenu un concert, toutes les tables sont des pianos [There is not a social circle which has not become a concert, every table is a piano].'[31] This meant that there was a growing new audience for piano performances, both public and private. A succession of foreign virtuosos came to Paris to dazzle this public with displays of digital dexterity.[32] Liszt came in 1823 (and was famously denied entry to the Conservatoire), Chopin in 1831. Among the many other foreign pianists who came to Paris to enjoy their moment of fame and adulation were Ignaz Moscheles, Frédéric Kalkbrenner,[33] Johann Pixis, and Sigismond Thalberg.[34] Many of these artists performed their own works, composed with a view to showing off their technical skill, or modified existing compositions to the same end, a trend exactly contrary to the growing reverence for past masters. In a letter published in the *Gazette musicale* in 1837, Liszt confessed to having added many passages to Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel, in order 'to elicit the applause of a public which was always slow to appreciate beautiful things in their august simplicity'.[35] Both the practice and the confession are significant. Idiosyncracy was as desirable to the public as it was undesirable to the Conservatoire professors: Chopin's new, intensely poetic style took the salon world by storm, but Kalkbrenner criticized his unorthodox fingering and had the effrontery to propose to the young artist that Chopin study with him for three years. Liszt aroused as much fascination for his tortured manner as for his undoubted qualities as an artist. His theatrical virtuosity was

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[31] Letter to Montbeillard, quoted in Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même: Étude de musicologie musicale', in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 18 (1978), 202.

[32] Anne Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', in *La Musique en France à l'époque romantique* (1830-1870), ed. Joseph-Marc Bailbe (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 125-166.

[33] Frédéric Kalkbrenner (1784-1849) was an earlier arrival in Paris, who studied at the Conservatoire with Louis Adam, winning a first prize in 1801. He subsequently studied with Clementi in Vienna and remained of that school. He had a firm touch, a perfect legato, but a cold temperament which formed a sharp contrast with that of with the younger Chopin. See Anne Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', 139.

[34] In the late 1830s, Thalberg (1812-1871) rivalled Liszt and is still considered with him the greatest of the mid-nineteenth century piano virtuosos. Thalberg was like Paganini in that he played almost exclusively his own compositions, which successfully combine virtuosic passage work with bel canto style singing. See Robert Wangermée, 'Thalberg, Sigismond (Fortuné François)', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[35] Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', 138.

anathema to spokesmen for the old guard such as Fétis and Castil-Blaze.[36] Conservative rejection of the phenomenon was undoubtedly fuelled by the commercial links between virtuosos and piano manufacturers. Kalkbrenner was an unashamed promoter of Pleyel pianos; Liszt preferred those of Érard. The fascination with *mécanisme* had a double meaning.[37]

As Director of the Conservatoire, Cherubini tried to hold back the tide of pianists by limiting the numbers of students in the piano classes. After a first reduction in 1822 from 73 to fewer than 40, Cherubini effected a further reduction to 26 in 1827 and expressly excluded foreigners from these classes, contrary to the general rule that foreign citizens could be admitted as auditors. Clearly, there was more going on than Cherubini's avowed concern for the economic distress which might be caused by an oversupply of pianists. As well as persisting in regarding the piano as a secondary or accompanying instrument, it seems that Cherubini disapproved of the whole popular phenomenon, including the preponderance of foreign virtuosos. In the long run, Cherubini had about as much chance of reducing the numbers of pianists in Paris as the Académie française had of banishing the noun *le weekend* from the twentieth-century French vocabulary and by 1854 there were six classes at the Conservatoire (which is to say, 48 students).[38]

The Challenge of Paganini

In the violin world, one artist had the same scale of impact as the whole flood of piano virtuosos. Niccolo Paganini's arrival in Paris in 1831 was a much-anticipated event and did not disappoint. Reviewers, including Berlioz and Castil-Blaze, were in raptures and the stocks of the local violinists fell sharply.[39] Even a conservative authority like Fétis had to acknowledge that Paganini's playing combined virtuosity with great expressiveness. He

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[36] François-Henri-Joseph Blaze de Bury (1784-1857), usually referred to as 'Castil-Blaze' was a prominent music critic and author of the *Dictionnaire de musique moderne* (Paris, 1821). For Blaze's criticism of the cult of virtuosity, see Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', 138. For François-Joseph Fétis, see below.

[37] At the time, the French *mécanisme* meant both 'mechanism' and 'technique'.

[38] Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 307; Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', 132-3; Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 68-69.

[39] Anne Penesco, 'Le violon en France au temps de Baillot et de Paganini', in *La Musique en France à l'époque romantique*, 201-3. Paganini's dates are 1782-1840.

considered that Baillot alone could stand comparison with Paganini, if heard on his own ground.[40] 'If heard on his own ground': even if we accept Fétis' loyal endorsement of Baillot's quality as a violinist, the fact is that Baillot's and Paganini's grounds were almost entirely different.[41] The contrast could hardly be greater. Like Liszt, Paganini was a type-specimen of the Romantic artist. Freakishly gifted, idiosyncratic, and flamboyant, Paganini was scarcely the product of any school but his own. Baillot was modest, restrained, and faithfully modelled his playing on that of Viotti. Where Baillot was famed for his ability to adapt his style to a wide range of composers, Paganini performed almost exclusively his own works, which may have been in part because when he played a concerto of Kreutzer or Rode, as in Milan during his first Italian tour, his interpretation was criticized as too free.[42] Much of Baillot's playing occurred in private contexts – his was always a select audience – whereas Paganini's success depended on his ability to engage with a wide and not necessarily knowledgeable public. Louis Spohr met Paganini in Venice in 1816 and asked him to play at a private gathering. Paganini refused, explaining that his style of playing 'was calculated for the great public only'.[43] Baillot and Paganini thus stand for quite different modes of music consumption and support. Paganini made his living through his public concerts; self-promotion was for him an economic necessity. Baillot and his colleagues made theirs principally through appointments, royal, republican, or imperial. Finally, Paganini did not teach: he stood on his own, whereas the Paris violinists were part of a self-perpetuating tradition. Boris Schwarz goes so far as to write that they suffered from violinistic inbreeding, and that the appearance of Paganini 'tore them out of their smug complacency'.[44] Critics and rival violinists could find whatever faults they liked with a phenomenon like Paganini, but he represented a challenge they could not ignore.

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[40] Penesco, 'Pierre Baillot et l'école franco-belge de violon', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 92-3.

[41] Dancla: 'On ne pouvait du reste faire de comparaison entre ces deux grands artistes [Aside from this, one couldn't compare these two great artists]'. Dancla was thirteen in 1831, when he heard both Paganini and Baillot for the first time. See Charles Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs* (Paris: Delamotte, 1893), 8-11. Dancla may have been the first member of the French School to acknowledge the value of Paganini's example, unless one counts De Bériot.

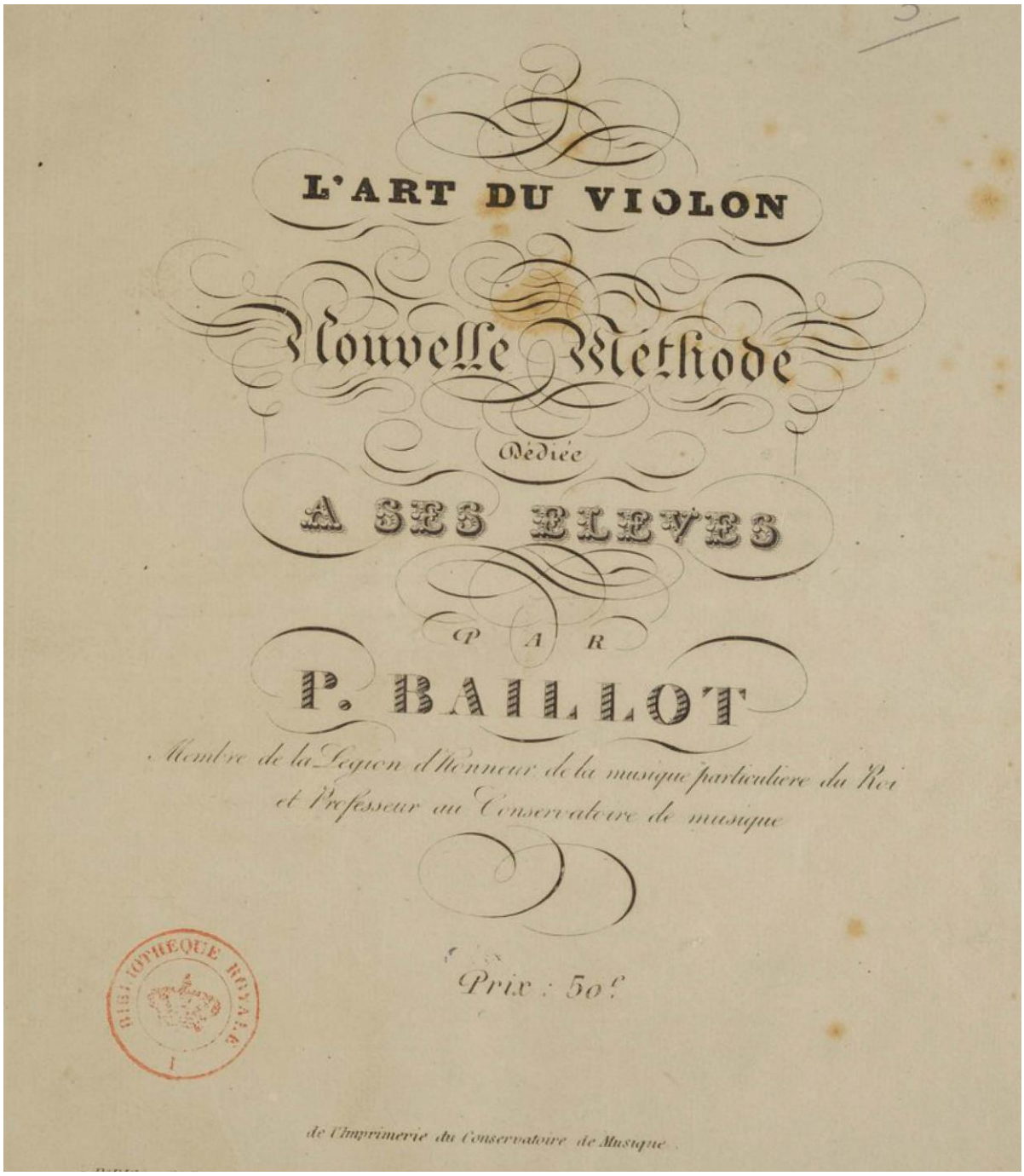
[42] Edward Neill, 'Paganini, Niccolò', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[43] *Louis Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), 282-3.

[44] Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), 216.

L'Art du violon

'On renonce plus aisément à son intérêt qu'à son goût.' La Rochefoucauld, 1678.[45]



Title page of Baillot's *L'Art du violon*. Extract from BnF NUMM-1163886.

[45] 'We would sooner renounce our interest than our taste.' *Maximes*, 1678, no. 390: François de La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1977), 78.

If Adam's 1835 method is a revision in detail only, Baillot's of 1834 is much more than that. *L'Art du violon* is a complete re-write in greater depth. Like the original method of 1803, it is organized into two parts: Part One, which contains the bulk of the method and all the musical exercises, and Part Two, which covers in prose some key musical concepts relating to expression. Every section of Part One has been revised and expanded, barring the hundred-page series of scale exercises in seven positions, which has actually been substantially shortened, making way not only for more comprehensive and advanced exercises (chromatic scales in three octaves, double-top trills, triple-stops, etc.), but for new sections on matters such as musical punctuation, cadenzas, and other improvised passages, as well as advice on how to practice [*manière de travailler*].

When compared with the 1803 method, *L'Art du violon* testifies to cultural change in a myriad small ways, but the most significant is how it anchors itself within a tradition.[46] Not only does the introduction make a serious attempt to trace the history of the instrument, but almost every aspect of violin-playing is illustrated by examples taken from the violin repertoire. It is a thoroughly scholarly procedure. The pupil is inducted into an imagined community of violinists which extends back across space and time and includes both the living and the dead. The following paragraph is one of the few which has been reproduced unchanged from 1803, but what follows is quite different:

> Cet instrument, fait pour régner dans les concerts et pour obéïr à tous les élans du génie, a pris les différens caractères que les grands maîtres ont voulu lui donner : simple et mélodieux sous les doigts de CORELLI, harmonieux, touchant et plein de graces sous l'archet de TARTINI … [47]
>
> [This instrument, made to reign supreme over ensembles and to obey every flight of genius, has taken on different characters as required by the masters: simple and tuneful under the fingers of Corelli, harmonious, touching and graceful under the bow of Tartini …]

Belonging to this tradition brings with it obligation as well as inspiration:

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[46] This comparison structures my article from 2020: Douglas Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing between Revolution and Reaction: A Comparison of the Treatises of 1803 and 1834 by Pierre Baillot', *Nineteenth Century Music Review* 18/3 (Dec. 2021), 359-388.

[47] Baillot, *Méthode*, 1 ; *L'Art du violon*, 5.

> Combien il est pénible pour nous d'ajouter aux noms des grands artistes qui ne sont plus, ceux de nos deux collègues *Rode* et *Kreutzer*, descendus presqu'en même temps dans la tombe ! … élèves chéris de ces habiles maîtres, vous chercherez à rendre avec fidélité l'expression de leur âme ; vous les retrouverez eux-mêmes et tout entiers dans leurs compositions, ils y respirent encore ! leur talens revivront en vous : conservateurs de leurs traditions, vous empêcherez que l'oubli ne pose sa main glacée sur leurs ouvrages, et vous partagerez leur gloire en vous identifiant à leurs inspirations ![48]
>
> [How painful it is to have to add to the names of great artists who have passed away, those of our two colleagues *Rode* and *Kreutzer*, who have descended to the tomb at almost the same time! … Pupils of these capable masters, endeavour faithfully to render the expression of their souls, which you can find in their compositions, intact. There they still breathe! In you, their talents will live again: as custodians of their traditions, you will prevent the chill hand of forgetfulness from falling on their works].

On one level, we might read the above passage from Baillot as no more than an injunction to students to keep playing the works of Kreutzer, Rode and company. Rendering the expression of the composer's soul as revealed through their music was, after all, the task of the performer as Baillot saw it. It is made possible with the aid of the *génie d'exécution*. But what about the expression of the pupil's individual soul? Baillot's insistence on the transparency of the violinist's own personality is entirely at odds with the Romantic desire to experience the world (and what is beyond the world) in a unique way.

Baillot was one of the first great exponents of the new art of 'interpretation': artists not only capable of playing their own works but also of adapting their playing to the varied styles of other composers. Spohr was another.[49] This is evident not only through Baillot's concept of the *génie d'exécution*, but also through the weight given to sections on 'Caractère musicale. Accent qui le détermine' [Musical character, and the means of rendering it], and 'Effets'

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[48] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 5.

[49] What Boris Schwarz calls the 're-creative artist': see Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions*, 203. Schwarz here is writing of Baillot; many have made this point about Spohr, see for example: Clive Brown, *Classical and Romantic Performance Practice 1750-1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 272. See also Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing', 11-12.

[Effects].[50] *L'Art du violon* testifies to the emergence of classical music as it has come to be: a historical repertoire including both the old and the new, in which the creativity of the performer comes second to that of the composer. The expectation is that the student will first study the historical repertoire before tackling modern works.[51] The ultimate result of this tendency has been the avoidance by many musicians – and by audiences – of contemporary repertoire.[52] Virtuosity is celebrated but there has always been a sense that it is of lesser worth than great interpretation.

With the deaths of Rode in 1830 and Kreutzer in 1831, Baillot was the last of the direct disciples of Viotti still teaching at the Conservatoire. He may have felt an added duty to defend the tradition the three had established. In *L'Art du violon*, he certainly sets himself against contemporary trends with determination. Acknowledging the rise in importance of the piano,[53] he cautions sternly against the promotion of child prodigies just as Grétry had done back in 1797.[54] There is a path to follow ('marche à suivre') and shortcuts are suspect:

> Savoir travailler est un talent ; c'est le seul moyen de tirer le meilleur parti des dons de la nature et d'obtenir des succès solides…
>
> Cette marche consiste à partir des éléments les plus simples pour arriver, par degrés, jusqu'aux choses les plus compliquées.[55]
>
> [Knowing how to work is a talent in itself. It is the only way to take full advantage of nature's gifts and to attain solid success …

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[50] *L'Art du violon*, 192. The French word *accent* is almost untranslatable, since, at this time, it refers to the technical means by which a certain musical character is conveyed. 'Effects' is another long section, running from 205-241.

[51] 'Pour se former un bon style, il faut commencer par se nourrir des *auteurs anciens*', Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 7.

[52] Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing', 28.

[53] 'Le violon et le piano partagent aujourd'hui l'empire de la musique instrumentale [Today, the violin and piano share dominion over music]', Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 8.

[54] 'Talens précoces', Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 242. See also 'Des talens précoces', in André Grétry, *Mémoires, ou Essais sur la musique* (Brussels: A. Wahlen, 1829; first published 1797), vol. II, Ch. 57. Grétry's warning against encouraging precocity is particularly striking in view of the fact that his father acquired the position of first violinist at the church of Saint-Martin in Liège at the age of 12 (vol. I, 26)!

[55] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 242.

> This path consists in proceeding by degrees from the simplest elements to the most complicated.]

Baillot is gracious on the subject of Paganini's talent, but he makes it clear that students of the Conservatoire are not to take Paganini as a model:

> Le génie peut tout employer avec succès pourvu que ce soit avec mesure, c'est à dire, pourvu qu'il ne passe point de certaines limites que le goût doit fixer…
>
> Mr. *Guhr*, de Francfort, a fait paraître un ouvrage dans lequel on trouvera la plupart des procédés employés par Mr. *Paganini* ; cet ouvrage donne l'explication la plus détaillée des principaux passages et des effets qui particularisent son jeu ; il ne doit point être considéré comme faisant suite à la méthode du Conservatoire, composée dans un tout autre système.[56]
>
> [An artist of genius can make successful use of anything, provided that he does so in moderation, that is to say, so long as he does not go beyond certain limits dictated by taste…
>
> Mr *Guhr* of Frankfurt has recently published a book in which one can find most of the technical skills displayed by Mr *Paganini*. This work gives a most detailed explanation of the principal passages and the effects which make his playing so distinctive. It should not in any way be considered as a continuation of the Conservatoire method, which is built on a totally different system.]

Baillot was clearly wrong in suggesting that Paganini's success was attributable to a few technical tricks when, even by accounts such as that of Fétis, it was a combination of expressiveness and technical artistry.[57] The word 'system' is a red herring; the reason Baillot rejects Paganini's style so categorically concerns taste. For Baillot, the character of the violin is fixed: it is beautiful, noble, and touching. Any departure from this character is therefore against nature.[58] Baillot and those who felt about music as he did could hardly approve of an artist who was happy to imitate animal noises on his violin. He covered his face when other

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[56] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 6. For a fuller quotation, see Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing', 20.

[57] 'Bien que je rende toute justice à Paganini comme chanteur, et que j'admire sincèrement la puissance extraordinaire qu'il a déployé dans la *Prière de Moïse* … [Though I do all justice to Paganini's singing abilities, and though I sincerely admire the power he has demonstrated in the *Moses Variations*…]', review of Paganini's second concert at the Opéra, *Revue Musicale*, 19 March 1831, quoted in Penesco, 'Pierre Baillot et l'école franco-belge de violon', 93.

[58] 'conserver au violin son caractère, caractère si beau, si noble, si touchant, que ce serait grand dommage de le dénaturer': Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 8.

violinists used left-hand pizzicato, harmonics, or flying staccato.[59] Baillot did not see this taste as something personal, but rather as moral and eternal: it is a given that we prefer a 'primal innocence' over brilliance.[60] Baillot and Adam shared the neo-classical belief in the existence of fixed and universal principles behind the changing multiplicity of what is apparent: 'l'art, dont les principes sont immuables, éprouve les changemens que le temps amène dans le formes [art, whose principles are immutable, goes through changes in its forms brought by time]'.[61] The appreciation of art is bound tightly together with moral knowledge and cultivation and style is a moral choice:

> Dans notre système musical, il existe un rapport entre les intervalles, un ordre matériel qui n'a point de meilleur juge que l'oreille : l'oreille est la conscience des sons, elle nous avertit de ce qui entretient ou de ce qui trouble cet ordre matériel ; c'est ainsi que la conscience, proprement dite, nous éclaire sur ce qui est bien ou mal, selon l'ordre moral ; c'est la conscience qui doit être prise pour guide dans tout ce qui est du ressort de l'intelligence et du sentiment : c'est cette voix sécrète, sage conseillère d'une âme immortelle, que l'artiste doit toujours interroger …
>
> … le Compositeur et l'exécutant ont le choix de cette expression, ce choix est le *style*, et si *le style est tout l'homme*, il faut en subir toutes les conséquences.[62]
>
> [In our musical system, there exists a relationship between intervals, a physical order which has no better judge than the ear. Hearing is the awareness of sounds; it lets us know what supports this order or disturbs it. In the same way, conscience enlightens us as to what is good or bad, according to the moral order. Conscience must always be taken as a guide in all that falls within the scope of intelligence and feelings. It is to this secret voice, wise counsellor to the immortal soul, that the artist should always attend …
>
> … the composer and the performer have choice over this expression. This choice is the *style*, and if *the style makes the man*, we must submit to all that follows.]

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[59] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 10.

[60] 'ce première innocence de l'art qui nous fait préférer aux qualités brillantes, la simple et naïve expression du Cœur [that primal innocence of art which makes us prefer the simple and naïve expression of the heart over brilliance]': Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 8

[61] Walter Jackson Bate, *From Classic to Romantic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1961), esp. 5. Quotation from Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 7.

[62] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 7. Emphasis original.

Given these fundamental beliefs about art, it is no surprise to find Adam's section on style unchanged between the 1804 and 1835 editions of his piano method; Part Two of Baillot's two methods ('Expression and its Means') is likewise identical. What differs between the two authors is that Baillot feels the need to justify the fact. In the 1834 method, a foreword has been added to Part Two, in which Baillot appeals to the eternal verities:

> Nous en appellons ici non seulement aux admirateurs d'Homère et à ceux qui sont encore sensibles au récit des malheurs de Didon, mais à ceux qui ont entendu les chefs-d'œuvres de Palestrina, de Handel, de Sebastien Bach et d'autres encore ; nous leur demandons si, pénétrés de ces sublimes inspirations, l'effet qu'elles ont produit sur eux ne suffit pas pour témoigner que le cœur répond toujours aux mêmes accens par les mêmes soupirs ![63]
>
> [We appeal here not only to admirers of Homer and to those who are still sensitive to the story of Dido's misfortunes, but to those who have heard the masterpieces of Palestrina, Handel, Sebastian Bach and others. We ask them whether the effect upon them of these masterpieces, imbued with such sublime inspirations, is not sufficient to attest that the heart always responds to the same accents with the same sighs!]

Baillot and his colleagues were concerned to cast the technical basis of the violin school as broadly as possible, but the aesthetic basis is restrictive. 'Beautiful noble, and touching' is all very well, but what about the demonic, which was all the rage in the 1830s? The Baillot aesthetic implicitly excludes not only the *Symphonie fantastique*, with its witches' sabbath, Paganini's 13th Caprice ('the Laugh of the Devil'), and Meyebeer's *Robert le diable*, but also Tartini's 'Devil's Trill' Sonata. Furthermore, to place virtuosity in opposition to musical creativity is to create a false dichotomy.[64] Paganini's music and playing inspired generations of musicians who were passionately serious about music, including Berlioz, who wrote *Harold in Italy* for him, and Brahms, who wrote his own set of variations on the theme of Paganini's 24th Caprice. In opposing the cult of virtuosity, Baillot is not only resisting the trivialization of musical taste, he is also resisting music's creative evolution.

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[63] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 262. Tellingly, Baillot appeals in a footnote to the success of Fétis' *Concerts historiques* as witness.

[64] See Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing', 22. Anne Rousselin-Lacombe makes the same point: see 'Piano et pianistes', 137.

The evolution of violin-playing beyond Baillot

The fundamental innovation of Liszt, Thalberg, and Paganini was to bring opera's extravagance of gesture to solo instrumental playing, in much the same way as Beethoven brought the drama and suspense of opera to the symphony.[65] It is no accident that Liszt was the first musician to give a solo concert at the Opéra and that he invented the solo recital.[66] The way forward for violin composition was to absorb Paganini's virtuosity and theatricality and to combine it with advances in symphonic writing. Charles De Bériot was the first to try to effect this fusion and his student Henri Vieuxtemps was the one who fully succeeded. De Bériot (1802-1870) can be considered at most a renegade member of the French Violin School, since one of his teachers, André Roberrechts, had studied with Viotti and Baillot. But De Bériot struck out on his own, strongly influenced by Paganini and encouraged by Viotti, who said to him: 'You have a fine style; endeavour to perfect it. Hear all men of talent – profit by all but imitate no one.' In 1821, he did spend a few months sitting in on Baillot's classes at the Conservatoire, but declined to enrol because, tellingly, he found Baillot's approach overly scholarly. For his part, Baillot objected to certain idiosyncrasies in De Bériot's way of playing.[67]

Baillot's musical philosophy restricted creative genius in two related ways: its insistence on respect for tradition and its insistence on the eternal validity of a specific aesthetic. For him, these may not have been restrictions: tradition was an inspiration and its discovery a delight. But there are many indications that it was otherwise for his pupils and that the phenomenon went well beyond the violin department. As Berlioz records, Cherubini's treatise on counterpoint contains the following passage: 'Cette disposition harmonique me paraît préférable à l'autre, mais les anciens maîtres ayant été de l'avis contraire, il faut s'y soumettre [This harmonic procedure seems preferable to me, but since the old masters were of the

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[65] Robert Wangermee on Thalberg: 'in Thalberg's art, regard for phrasing and expression did not conflict with sparkling passage-work, but the two techniques were superimposed on each other; he combined dash and power with unfailing care for bel canto. In this context one of his most significant works is *L'art du chant appliqué au piano*, in which arrangements of opera arias are used as teaching pieces for the piano.' Oddly enough, Fétis championed Thalberg's playing against Liszt. Berlioz took Liszt's side. See 'Thalberg, Sigismond (Fortuné François)', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[66] Rousselin-Lacombe, 'Piano et pianistes', 145.

[67] Boris Schwarz, 'Bériot, Charles-Auguste de', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Thus Anne Penesco goes too far in classing him as a pupil of Baillot: Penesco, 'Pierre Baillot et l'école franco-belge de violon', 97-98.

opposite opinion, we must submit to their example]'.[68] In the foreword to *L'Art du violon*, Baillot explains his procedure of quotation from existing repertoire and explicitly invokes 'the authority of time and usage [l'autorité du temps et de l'usage]'.[69] The question is whether this authority weighed too heavily on the young violinists of the Conservatoire and inhibited their creative development. This was certainly the opinion expressed by Fétis after he moved to Brussels in 1833. Fétis claimed that the students in Paris were required to imitate their professors: 'C'est à ces mêmes traditions, sans doute, qu'il faut attribuer le grand nombre d'artistes habiles qui sortent de cette école et la rareté de ceux qu'on pourrait appeler *de grands artistes* [It is no doubt to these traditions that we must attribute the large number of able artists which come from this school and the rarity of those which we could call *great artists*]'.[70]

François-Joseph Fétis (1784-1872) is primarily remembered today as a pioneering musicologist, the author of the mammoth *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, first published between 1837 and 1844.[71] He was also a graduate of the Paris Conservatoire who subsequently held posts as librarian and professor of counterpoint and fugue and was one of the many establishment figures with whom Berlioz quarrelled. He left his Paris post in 1833 in order to take up the directorship of the Conservatoire Royale in Brussels. Having been a mixture of internal/external critic of the Paris Conservatoire from his position as editor of the *Révue Musicale*, Fétis was now at liberty to criticise from the outside, though this did not stop him from recruiting teachers primarily from among Paris graduates.[72] While we must make some allowance for Fétis' ego, his judgement of the pedagogy of the Conservatoire is worth considering, particularly since he had direct experience of the school, was a declared admirer of Baillot as a performer, *and* was an advocate for early music.

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[68] Quoted in Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991; first published in Paris, 1869), 88.

[69] Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 3.

[70] *Gazette Musicale de la Belgique*, 17 December 1833, no. 20, p. 156, quoted in Henri Vanhulst, 'Le Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles : ses origines et le directorat de François-Joseph Fétis (1833-1871)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 208.

[71] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens*, 1st edition (Brussels: Melin, Can & Co., 1837-1844).

[72] Vanhulst, 'Le Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles', 213.

De Bériot was offered the violin professorship in Paris made vacant by Baillot's death in 1842. He turned it down in favour of a post at the new school in Brussels. While De Bériot's playing combined technical brilliance with warmth and elegance, his music has not aged well.[73] This is not so with his pupil Vieuxtemps, who studied with de Bériot from 1828 to 1831 but also spent a winter (1833-4) in Vienna studying counterpoint with Sechter, and entered a circle of musicians close to Beethoven. He revived the Beethoven Concerto in 1834 to great success. Vieuxtemps was also a fine violist and an accomplished quartet player. His music brings together the breadth and nobility of Viotti with the new virtuosity and the advances in orchestral technique made by German composers.[74] Although his music often soars with emotion, he was very strict about his music being played in form, and would not accept 'gratuitous tempi rubato'.[75] It thus retained a certain classicism. It was only with his student Eugène Ysaÿe that a more improvisatory aesthetic emerged. With time, the interchange between the Paris and Brussels schools was such that they came to be regarded as one 'Franco-Belgian' school,[76] but the longevity of this school owes much to its modernization through De Bériot and Vieuxtemps. It is Vieuxtemps who was the true heir to Viotti. The only Paris graduate of equivalent stature was Henryk Wieniawski, but his music, brilliant and well-constructed as it is, lacks the breadth and seriousness of that of his older Belgian colleague and he had the benefit of Vieuxtemps' example.[77] Although Ysaÿe, the last of the great violinist-composers, was a student of both Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps, he grew

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[73] Schwarz, 'Bériot', *Grove Music Online*.

[74] Boris Schwarz and Sarah Hibberd, 'Vieuxtemps Family', *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Vieuxtemps (1820-1881) enjoyed huge success as a travelling virtuoso, including tours to America and five years in St Petersburg as soloist to the Tsar (1846-51). Dancla regarded his as the only left-hand technique to rival Paganini's for balance and sureness of intonation: see Dancla *Notes et Souvenirs*, 10-11. Vieuxtemps was professor at the Brussels Conservatory from 1871 to 1877, interrupted by a stroke in 1873 – Wieniawski filled in for him. He died in a sanatorium in Algeria.

[75] Zeno Hubay, 'Preface' to Vieuxtemps *Six Concert Etudes* Op. 16 (Budapest: Harmonia, 1914?).

[76] Aristide Wirsta sees the fusion of the two schools as occurring around 1850: Wirsta, *L'enseignement du violon au XIXème siècle*, 'Addenda', 7.

[77] Wieniawski (1835-1880) was a student of Massart in Paris, himself a student of Auguste Kreutzer. He won a 1st prize in 1846, having entered the Conservatoire at age eight. He was thus one of the 'precocious talents' of which Baillot disapproved. He moved to St Petersburg in 1847 and earned the praise of Vieuxtemps. Wieniawski was without doubt one of the greatest violinists of the nineteenth century and during the course of his second stay in St Petersburg (1860-1872) had a decisive influence on the growth of the Russian violin school. His manner of holding the right arm rather high and pressing on the stick with his index finger above the second joint has become known through Carl Flesch as the 'Russian bow grip'. See Boris Schwarz, revised by Zofia Chechlińska, 'Henryk [Henri] Wieniawski', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

up in Belgium and studied first in Liège.[78] Thus it does seem that the Belgian side of the Franco-Belgian school was the more innovative compositionally. Fétis was right.

[78] Ysaÿe's name is often spelt incorrectly as 'Ysayë', perhaps because Anglophone readers think of the 'y' as a consonant and not as the sounding vowel of the final syllable: the final 'e' is silent. Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931) had his first violin tuition from his father. After an unsuccessful time at the Liège Conservatory aged nine, he entered the class of Rodolphe Massart aged 14, winning a silver medal two years later. He then studied with Wieniawski in Brussels and Vieuxtemps in Paris. He took over from Jenő Hubay as professor of violin at the Brussels Conservatory in 1886. Ysaÿe championed French composers including Saint-Saëns, Franck, Fauré, d'Indy and Chausson. The Franck Violin Sonata (1886) and Chausson *Poème* (1896) are among the many works dedicated to him and he gave their first performances. His style, a deeply creative virtuosity, was very influential. He is now best known for his six Sonatas for Violin Solo, Op. 27 (1923), each of which is dedicated to a different violinist. See Michel Stockhem, 'Ysaÿe, Eugène (-Auguste)', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

CHAPTER 7
SETTING THE STANDARD

A system of education almost always includes a system of evaluation of student progress. In the case of the Conservatoire, this was done by means of examination by jury of all classes, one pupil at a time, at the end of each semester. It was also done through the annual Conservatoire competitions. It was here that standards were confirmed and laurels apportioned. The Conservatoire was a public institution and it had to demonstrate, publicly, the results of its teaching. It did this through the competitions themselves, the annual concerts of prizewinners, and the concerts of the Conservatoire orchestra. Like the competitions, the *exercices publics* had a dual function: they provided the students with practice in ensemble playing and they advertised the quality of Conservatoire teaching to the wider society. They did this so successfully between 1800 and 1814 that their audience grew from one of family and friends to one which included fashionable society and foreign visitors. After a long hiatus due to the Restoration, these concerts re-emerged in 1828 in the form of the Société des concerts du Conservatoire, which set the standard for orchestral performance across Europe. They played a major role, not only in establishing the fame of the Conservatoire, but also in promoting acceptance of German music in France and in establishing a musical canon with Beethoven at its centre.

Examination

In the early years, the Conservatoire had constantly to justify the investment of public funds made in it. One of the ways it did this was to institute and maintain a strict regime of surveillance, which concerned both the behaviour of students and their progress through their studies. The punctuality of teachers was also strictly monitored. Pedagogy and policing were closely intertwined, but unlike Rémy Campos I do not regard them as inseparable and will leave a detailed discussion of discipline to the next chapter.[1] Students were certainly subject to frequent examination. They were examined before being admitted, then regularly to monitor their improvement and effect their progress through the stages of instruction. The

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[1] Rémy Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire de Paris au XIXe siècle : éléments pour une description', *Revue de musicologie* 83 (1997), 109.

high frequency of examination thus may have resulted partly from a mindset which prioritized order and control, but it also flowed from the progressive nature of instruction, such as the requirement to graduate from basic solfa before entering one of the instrumental classes.

The evolution of this pedagogical framework can be traced through the successive regulations governing the institution: those of 1796, 1800, 1808, 1822, and 1841, recognizing that practice may not always have matched the written rule and may also have anticipated it.[2] According to the first regulations, students in the instrumental and solfa classes were to be examined four times a year; in the regulations of 1800, this was reduced to three times a year and by 1808 they had settled into a twice-yearly routine. The voice classes were examined more often, no doubt due to the outside pressure which accompanied their lack of success. With minor variations, the annual rhythm seems from the outset to have conformed to the pattern detailed in the 1822 regulations, with the study year beginning in October:

October	Commencement of classes
November/December	Formal distribution of prizes from the previous year's competition: public ceremony and concert
December	Examination of classes
June	Examination of classes and designation of students allowed to compete in the competitions
August	Competitions, followed by holidays

By 1800, the procedure for examination had settled into the following pattern: before the day of examination, the teacher of each class provided the teaching committee [*comité d'enseignement*] with a register containing a report on each student which covered progress, effort [*zèle*], and punctuality. On the examination day, the professor presented each student in turn before the committee, which consisted of the five teaching inspectors [*inspecteurs d'enseignement*] and the Director, chairing. The inspectors made notes in the official registers. These were discussed in committee, with the Chair drafting a summary for each

[2] The regulations can be found in Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 223-255.

pupil which included the official decision on whether the student would continue in the current class or progress to another class. Similarly, having consulted the teachers, the committee decided which students might compete in the competitions. The main change across the years seems to have been a steady increase in the size of the examining committee. Before 1800, the five teaching inspectors divided the classes up between them, but after that they examined them together as a committee. By 1841, the committee was composed of seven members of the Conservatoire, including the Director, plus two composers from outside the institution, for a total of nine.[3] Conservatoire classes were not open to the public. This was understandable, but it allowed enemies of the School to circulate rumours concerning what went on behind its walls.[4] It seems likely that the expansion of the examining committee was aimed at assuring the public and the government that what went on in the School was subject to proper oversight.

It is important to note that evaluation of student progress also meant evaluation of teaching quality, an aspect underlined by the practice whereby the teacher presented each student to the examining committee. As Campos has pointed out, this lent some ambiguity to the power relationship between professor and class. This was particularly true of the competitions: a prize for a student was, in a sense, a prize for her/his teacher also.[5] In seeking promotion, teachers who had not shown much success in this regard might plead that they had not had many talented pupils to work with, but the very usage of the word *talent* was such as to emphasize the role of the teacher. In this period, the French noun *talent* is used in a way English speakers would not recognise, which is to denote acquired proficiency rather than raw ability. Nowadays, we think of talent as something inborn. It is a 'gift', something brought by the student to the teaching/learning space, and we have a tendency to exalt it above proven ability. *Talent* in the early nineteenth century had to be 'acquired' by the student and could be 'given' by the teacher. It can be almost untranslatable into English, although 'proficiency' and 'skill' are possibilities. Some examples:

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[3] Regulations of 1841, Title II, Article 7, in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 251.

[4] Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 113-5.

[5] Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 108-9.

> 'La médiocrité du *talent* n'est que trop souvent la suite de la violation des principes [Only too often the violation of principle results in a poor technique]'. (Jean-Baptiste Cartier on the importance of learning the violin according to the correct principles, 1798.)[6]
>
> 'Cette élève de Mr Blangini à qui elle doit le *talent* qu'elle a acquis [This pupil of Mr Blangini, to whom she owes the proficiency she has acquired]'. (Perne in response to a request transmitted via the intendant for a vocal student to change teacher, 1818. Perne suggested that this would lead to an injustice, in that another teacher would get the credit for Blangini's work.)[7]
>
> 'Il faut qu'à tout prix j'acquiert quelque *talent* [I simply must acquire some real proficiency]'. (A singer seeking entry to the Conservatoire in 1821. The prospective student was already performing in a provincial theatre.)[8]
>
> 'On n'accuse seulement l'École royale de musique [de Paris] de ne pas produire de *talent*, on affirme qu'il l'empêche de naître. [The École royale de musique stands accused not only of failing to produce any talent, but of hindering its birth].'[9] (François-Joseph Fétis evaluating criticism of the Conservatoire from his pulpit at the *Revue musicale*, 1827.)

When spokesmen for the Third Estate advocated for 'careers open to talent' before the Revolution, they did not mean open to gifted youngsters – the *collèges* did this through scholarships – but rather to men of proven ability: men like themselves, as it happened. From a positive point of view, we could say that this attitude to talent tended to reinforce the collaborative nature of the teaching enterprise, a collaboration honoured by Baillot through the dedication of his *Art du violon* to his students. On the negative side, it may be considered a cultural value which subordinated the pupil to the teacher and tended to restrict his/her creative independence.

Baillot was especially clear that he placed little value on raw ability, since the road to realised ability – the *marche à suivre* – was so long and arduous. Knowing how to work was a talent

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6 Jean-Baptiste Cartier, *L'Art du violon, ou Collection choisi dans les sonates des écoles italienne, française et allemande* (Paris: Decombe, 1798), 2.

7 Letter from Perne to the Intendant, 14 May 1818, AN AJ/37/322/2.

8 Letter from Mr Gellas, a prospective voice student, to Perne, 6 March 1821, AN AJ/37/322/2.

9 *Revue musicale*, 1827, no. 43, p. 450; quoted in Henri Vanhulst, 'Le Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles : ses origines et le directorat de François-Joseph Fétis (1833-1871)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 207.

in itself, one which needed to be acquired like all the others: 'Savoir travailler est un talent'.[10] The judging table which he included in his *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique* of 1835 lines up various natural qualities [qualités naturelles] with corresponding acquired qualities [qualités acquises]. Thus, a good ear for pitch must develop into sureness of intonation, a sense of rhythm into precision and aplomb, and facility into cleanness and purity of sound. Next to these technical qualities, sensitivity and impressionability must become sweetness of expression, and expansive warmth must become force of expression. In Baillot's vision, the contestant pupil is to be judged on the acquired qualities as listed, and even more so on their specific application to the three concerto movements: allegro, adagio, and presto.[11] Eugène Sauzay gained entry to the Conservatoire at the age of 14 and was placed in the preparatory violin class of Baillot's repetiteur, Guérin. His memoirs record that he made a visit to Baillot in the company of his mother and uncle to thank him. The professor, however, painted such a grim picture of all the difficulties and dangers ahead that they left 'completely discouraged'.[12] Even a first prize was only a start:

> Un premier prix n'est point, d'ailleurs, un brevet de talent, mais un gage de l'espérance, et il y a loin de ce premier prix de l'école à une belle et solide renommée, ce grand prix du vrai mérite.
>
> [Besides, a first prize is not a certificate of competence but an earnest of hope, and it is a long way between this first school prize and a good, solid reputation, that grand prize of real merit].'[13]

It is interesting that Baillot, who had serious reservations as to the capacity of the musical public to discern true excellence, still regarded an earned reputation as the great prize. It testifies to what Jürgen Habermas has called 'the normative power' of the classical Greek example:

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[10] Pierre Baillot, *L'Art du violon* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire, 1834), 242.

[11] Pierre Baillot, *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique (1835)* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1872).

[12] 'Il… nous fit un tableau si sombre de toutes les difficultés que doit surmonter l'artiste, de tous les dangers auxquels s'expose celui-ci, que nous sortîmes entièrement découragés, ne sachant plus que faire.' Eugène Sauzay & Brigitte François-Sappey, 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay (1809-1901)', *Revue de Musicologie*, 60 (1974), 163.

[13] Baillot, *Observations*, 28.

> In the fully developed Greek city-state, the sphere of the *polis*, which was common (*koine*) to free citizens, was strictly separated from the sphere of the *oikos*; in the sphere of the *oikos*, each individual is in his own realm (*idia*)…. The polis provided an open field for honourable distinction: citizens indeed interacted as equals with equals (*homoioi*), but each did his best to excel (*aristoiein*). The virtues, whose catalogue was codified by Aristotle, were ones whose test lies in the public sphere and there alone receive recognition.[14]

The annual competitions

Origins

Previous historians of the early Conservatoire have made little comment on the competitions, perhaps because they are such a familiar feature of the institution. But they appear to be something new to the history of music teaching and they are of central importance to the pedagogical culture of the institution. There is no mention of competitions in scholarly accounts of the Italian conservatories, just occasional mention of prizes awarded for the encouragement of pupils. It seems likely that such prizes were awarded at the discretion of the authorities, as per the practice at the Madrid Conservatory, rather than as the result of a competitive process.[15] The idea of rewarding rivalry is clearly of pagan origin, hardly in keeping with the culture of Christian establishments such as those of Naples, Venice, or Madrid.

Although I suggested in Chapter 2 that the Conservatoire may have taken inspiration from the national competitions associated with the *collèges*, the original models were almost certainly the drama competitions of ancient Athens. These were held in the context of religious festivals, the most famous of which was the spring festival of Dionysos Eleuthereus in Athens. As with the Conservatoire performances, the plays were judged on the day by a jury and there were prizes to be won as well as prestige. Among the playwrights to become famous through the competitions were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. These festivals were extremely important civic events – they incorporated ritual sacrifices to Dionysos, civic

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[14] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989; originally published as *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, 1962), 3-4.

[15] Beatriz Montes, 'La fondation du Conservatoire royale de musique Marie-Christine de Madrid (1830-1831)', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), vol. I, 161-186.

announcements and other ceremonies – and typically ran for about five days. They clearly provided inspiration for the national festivals of the Revolution. The theatre performances consisted of tragedies, satyr plays, comedies, and circular choruses (dithyrambs) which were the more democratic element: there was one chorus performed by men and one by boys for each of the ten 'tribes' of Athens. These tribes were an administrative invention, like the sixty sections of Paris. The tragedies were a competitive element of the festival, designed to bring forth excellence.[16]

A high-ranking official of the city called the *archon* decided which plays would be performed in competition. The ten judges of the tragedies were chosen by lot from the ten tribes. Reconstructions of the judging process suggest that after the tragedies were performed, each judge cast his vote for the winner into an urn. The first and second prizes were allocated on the basis of a rather complex process of drawing the ballots from the urn. There is mention of an urn used as a prop in the Conservatoire competitions and of a *dépouille* [unravelling/unfolding] of the ballots as part of the process of counting the votes, a task which fell to the Chair of the judging panel.[17] Dancla gives an account of the process in 1833, the year he won his first prize. The procedure evidently involved a theatricality strongly imitative of the Athenian example:

> Ah ! à cette époque le vote et la délibération se faisait à ciel ouvert. Devant le public, devant les élèves, le Directeur posait une première question :
>
> Y a-t-il lieu à discerner un premier prix ?
>
> On passait l'urne. Neuf boules blanches : oui, il y a lieu à discerner un premier prix à l'unanimité.
>
> Y a-t-il lieu à partager le premier prix ?
>
> Six boules blanches, trois boules noires : oui, il y a lieu à partager le premier prix : faites vos bulletins, Messieurs. Et ainsi de suite pour les autres nominations.[18]

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[16] Mark Cartwright, 'Ancient Greek Theatre", *World History Encyclopedia* (Published online at https://www.worldhistory.org/Greek_Theatre/, 2016); Ruth Scodel, *An Introduction to Greek Tragedy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 33-43.

[17] Baillot, *Observations*, 23.

[18] Charles Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs* (Paris: Delamotte, 1893), 17.

> [Ah! In those days, the vote and the deliberation were conducted openly. In front of the public, in front of the students, the Director asked the first question:
>
> Should a first prize be awarded?
>
> The urn was passed. Nine white circles: yes, by unanimous vote, a first prize should be awarded.
>
> Should the first prize be split?
>
> Six white circles, three black circles: yes, the first prize should be split. Cast your votes, sirs. And so on for the other nominations.]

Dancla records that the process of jury deliberation only started to be held in private with the directorship of Auber – which is to say, after 1842 – as a result of protests from the public on certain occasions. In Cherubini's time, the public was strictly forbidden to give any sign of approbation or disapproval![19]

The idea of collective judgement of musical performance was embedded in the language of the time through the much-used word *suffrage* [vote, or suffrage], often used in the plural *suffrages* [votes]. 'Il réunit tous les suffrages' [literally, 'He gathered every vote'] is the kind of expression one encounters frequently to denote the critical acclaim of an undefined but implicitly discerning public, rather than just of official critics. Thus, a review of the first student concert in 1800 mentions: 'l'ouverture de *L'Hôtellerie portugaise* de Cherubini qui receuillit les suffrages unanimes d'un auditoire nombreux de connaisseurs exercés [the overture to *The Portuguese Hotel* by Cherubini, which met with the universal approbation of an audience containing many experienced connoisseurs]'.[20] This expression was not confined to music performance – D'Alembert uses it in a foreword to the *Discours préliminaire* to refer to the approbation of his potential readership and Élisabeth Vigée le Brun uses it in referring to the success of her painting of Marie Antoinette *en famille*[21] – but the frequency of its use in

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[19] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 17-18.

[20] Quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 462.

[21] 'Ces réflexions très utiles … qui ne peuvent manquer par cette raison d'obtenir le suffrage des véritables gens de bien [These useful reflections … which will for this reason not fail to garner the approbation of the truly well-intentioned]: Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *Discours préliminaire de l'Encyclopédie* (Paris: Gonthier, 1965; first published, 1759), 'Avertissement', 6. 'J'obtenais le suffrage général' : Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun,

the musical context shows how much the reception of music was part of a wider critical culture, despite the value ascribed to emotional veracity. Sentiment and reason were complementary and there was a confidence in the validity of collective judgement.

Prestige

Despite Baillot's reservations about the significance of competition prizes, they certainly did function as an attestation of quality [*brevet de talent*]. If the right to advertise oneself *élève du Conservatoire* was so valuable that it had to be formally restricted in the regulations,[22] how much more coveted was the appellation *laureat* [prizewinner]. It was a sign of the extent of the Conservatoire's influence on Paris – and hence, national – musical life that already by 1836, the major orchestras were full of Conservatoire graduates, especially prizewinners.[23] Kern Holoman has observed that as the Société des concerts matured, entry into the society virtually became restricted to laureates of the Conservatoire and competitive auditions were not felt to be necessary.[24]

The competitions themselves were held in August, at the end of the teaching year, and were open to the public. The formal distribution of prizes was held in the following autumn/winter, and was the most important formal event of the Conservatoire calendar. By custom, it was attended by the relevant minister or a similarly august government representative, whose speech was then published in major newspapers such as the *Moniteur* or the *Journal des Débats*.[25] This underlined the official, national nature of the School. Thanks to Constant

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Mémoires d'une portraitiste (Paris: Scala, 1989), 45. Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842) was one of the great portraitists, if not *the* great portraitist of the age.

[22] See Title X, Article 12 of the 1796 regulations, in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 127.

[23] Laetitia Chassain, 'Le Conservatoire et la notion d' < école française > ', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 21. Chassain gives the example of the Opera orchestra in 1836: 39 of 80 musicians were former prizewinners of the Conservatoire.

[24] D. Kern Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, 1828–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 13, 24.

[25] The Conservatoire came under the Ministry of the Interior in its first years, then the Maison du roi under the Restoration. Later, it came under the Ministry of Education [*instruction publique*].

Pierre, we have the text of many of these speeches readily available.[26] Here is a characteristic passage from the Duc de Choiseul, standing in for the Minister in 1832:

> J'aime à rendre un public hommage à ces hommes célèbres qui consacrent leurs talents et leurs veilles au progrès des arts et à former des élèves qui, dignes d'eux, puissent un jour, en les remplaçant, honorer encore plus leur mémoire.[27]
>
> [I would like publicly to pay my respects to these famous men, who devote their talents and their cares to the progress of the arts and the education of pupils who might be worthy of them and who may one day, by taking their places, the more honour their memory.]

Much is revealed in this one seemingly anodyne sentence. The occasion is the distribution of prizes to students, but much of the honour goes to their teachers and to the establishment as a whole. The greatest praise for the students is that they are seen and heard to be worthy of their teachers. In Choiseul's formulation, the members of the Conservatoire serve art first and their teaching second. And, its being 1832, it is the 'progress' of art they serve, not its conservation, although as we know from the previous chapter's discussion the Conservatoire's relationship with artistic progress was ambiguous. Characteristic also is the clear expectation that future professors would be drawn from the ranks of former prizewinning students. No one seems to have considered that this sort of pedagogical inbreeding might have deleterious consequences for the institution; the assumption simply was that the ongoing process of selecting the best via entry examination, annual competition, and the competitive process for filling professorial vacancies would ensure continuing excellence. A final note: although Choiseul, according to linguistic custom, refers only to celebrated 'men', a couple of sentences further on, he makes a point of acknowledging the recent appointment of the first female professor of voice, Mme Damoreau.

The competitions within the Conservatoire teaching system

As well as providing a publicly recognized gauge of ability, the competitions were an important feature of the Conservatoire's pedagogical system from its inception. The first cohort of students started their studies in October 1796 and we can infer that the first competitions were held in August 1797 (Year VI of the Revolutionary calendar), since there

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[26] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 900-967.

[27] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 918.

was a first prize-giving ceremony on October 24 that year.[28] In the violin section, first prize went to Charles Sauvageot, aged 15, a pupil of Blasius, and second prize was awarded to *citoyenne* Félicité Lebrun, aged 18, a pupil of Baillot. At the end of the second year (prize-giving, Year VII), the first prize went to a student of Gaviniès named Verdiguer. The following year, Lebrun, still a student of Baillot, was awarded a first prize conjointly with *citoyen* Luc Guénée, a violinist formerly with Gaviniès and now with Rode, probably due to Gaviniès' failing health. At the prizewinners' concert, they performed a Duo Concertante of Viotti together.[29] The prize in the instrumental sections was a new instrument of French manufacture, second prize was a collection of new sheet music for the relevant instrument, and third prize (known as 'accessit') was a palm.[30] Palms and laurels: the classical references are plain. It is not recorded how Lebrun and Guénée shared the prize between them; perhaps one received the violin and one the certificate as per the violin competition results of 1818 recorded below. The mystery of how Lebrun was competing in the violin competitions when enrolment of women was otherwise restricted to solfa, piano, and voice is one which will be explored in the next chapter.

There are several characteristics of the competitions which demonstrate how integral they were to the system of teaching. They were not open to all students: entry was subject to the recommendation of the teacher and approval by the teaching committee. Although decisions were made by a jury of up to nine, the recommendations of the teachers could also feed into the final decisions since these concerned not only whether prizes should be awarded and to whom, but also who should be allowed to continue their studies. Pupils could only attempt the competitions three times; if unsuccessful on the third attempt or in receipt of a first prize, they were only allowed one more year of instruction. According to Baillot, a first prize might thus justifiably be denied to a precocious talent in order to give them time to mature. Similarly, if it were difficult to separate two candidates purely on the merit of their

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[28] Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation (1895)*, (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally, Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895), 143.

[29] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 511-513, 968.

[30] These details were not specified in the regulations until the 1800 edition, but clearly were anticipated by practice. See Title XI of those regulations, Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 234.

performance, preference could be given to the one who was taking part in their third, and hence last, competition.[31]

Prizes were not simply awarded to the highest-placed competitors. In a given section, a first or second prize might not be awarded at all if the jury felt one was not merited. Alternatively, as with Lebrun and Guénée in 1799, two first prizes might be awarded. In 1823, four were given, so strong was the field.[32] The competitions did not only select the best, they set the standard and proclaimed it publicly. The aim, in Baillot's words, was to support 'the general march of progress and to encourage hard work'.[33] It is interesting that around half of the criteria Baillot recommends for judging are essentially technical; three of them are even grouped under the heading 'necessary technical basis [base necessaire du mécanisme]'.[34] If Baillot's table can be taken as an indication, contestants were thus being judged more on how well they had studied than on their performance per se. It seems likely that this is the sort of problem Fétis had with the Conservatoire system since it clearly encouraged conformity to official standards rather than individuality.

Judgement was also publicly pronounced on what a given section revealed about the quality of the class overall. By way of example, the competition register from 1818 formally records:

> Le jury après avoir au préalable consulté MM. Kreutzer ainé et Baillot, sur la durée des études et sur les connaissances musicales des concurrents et après avoir exprimé à ces professeurs toute la satisfaction sur les résultats de leurs classes … a rendu le jugement suivant :
>
> 1. Qu'il y a lieu à accorder un premier et un second prix dans les classes de Violon.
>
> 2. Qu'il y a lieu à partage du premier prix entre MM. Baumann et Clavel, entre lesquels le violon et le certificat de premier prix seront répartis par la voix du sort et ainsi qu'il est ordonné par les règlements, et ce attendu que lesdits sieurs Baumann et Clavel ont déployé

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[31] Baillot, *Observations*, 27.

[32] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 885. This is also mentioned in the Sauzay memoirs: 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 165.

[33] Baillot, *Observations*, 27.

[34] From the judging table included in the *Observations*.

> dans le concours un talent assez fini sous tous les rapports pour qu'ils doivent cesser leurs études, et prendre rang parmi les artistes.[35]
>
> [Having consulted Messieurs Kreutzer (the elder) and Baillot prior to the competition on the length of study and the musical knowledge of the competitors, and having expressed to those professors the jury's full satisfaction at the results of their classes, the jury … has made the following judgement:
>
> 1. That a first prize and a second prize should be awarded in the violin classes.
>
> 2. That the first prize shall be shared between Messieurs Baumann et Clavel, with the violin and the certificate shared between them according to lots, in accordance with the regulations. Further, that since the said Messieurs Baumann et Clavel have displayed in the competition a fairly finished competence from all points of view, they shall finish their studies and take up their positions in the ranks of artists.]

Reinforcing tradition

For the competitions to be fair, it was general practice for entrants to play a set concerto. Baillot attached great importance to the choice:

> Nous devons le répéter, le succès de l'école est attaché au choix des morceaux de concours : toutes les beautés reconnues pour types sont le *palladium* de l'art.[36]
>
> [We must reiterate that the success of the school depends on the choice of the competition pieces: the collection of beauties which are recognized types constitute the *palladium* of the art.]

Baillot's language gives us a foretaste of Lydia Goehr's 'museum of musical works', albeit with a Platonic flavour, since not only was the palladium or museum itself imaginary, it was inhabited by ideal types rather than specific musical works.[37] Whether or not Baillot's colleagues shared his conviction of the existence of such ideal types, there is no doubt the choice of repertoire anchored the violin competitions firmly in the one tradition. The set violin concerto was one by Viotti right up to 1854, with the exception of 1845, when it was

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[35] AN AJ/37/149/2. For the full text of the decision record, see Appendix G.

[36] Baillot, *Observations*, 21.

[37] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

one of Kreutzer's. Between 1854 and 1876, it was always classic French School: Viotti, Kreutzer, Rode, Baillot, Habeneck.[38] It took until 1884 for a concerto of Paganini to be selected for competition.

Taking all these factors into account, there is a clear possibility that the competition process would act more to reinforce the aesthetic and technical orthodoxy of the School than to reward the highest creativity. Baillot, characteristically, did not see any problem with this. In his *Observations*, he suggests that to leave the choice of ornaments to the pupil is to allow quite sufficient scope for their individuality to express itself [39]– even though the pupil who made extravagant use of them would almost certainly be marked down. Baillot sees the bounds of the school as the surest basis for the students' future growth as artists and would undoubtably have concurred with Goethe that 'law alone can grant us freedom'.[40] He states baldly that schools do not make geniuses: either they arrive ready-made, or they may even develop later than the others: 'On ne fait point de génies dans les écoles, ils arrivent tout faits ou s'y développent même quelquefois plus tard que les autres'.[41] Thus the genius alone is the exception: all others must conform to the set standard.

Sight-reading and spontaneity

As well as the set concerto movements, the violin competitions generally included a piece to be read at sight [morceau à déchiffrer / morceau à première vue].[42] This was felt 'to test their reading and musical abilities [destiné à faire apprécier leurs talens comme lecteurs et comme musiciens]'. While sight-reading was a common enough feature of orchestral auditions in the twentieth century – in many countries, it has since been superseded by prepared orchestral excerpts – its inclusion in the early Conservatoire competitions may give us pause. Partly, it reflects the fact that so much music learning in the period was haphazard and many people learned to sing or play an instrument without learning how to read music properly. When Piccinni noted, after the audition of an aspirant to the École royale de chant in 1784, that 'elle

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[38] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 607.

[39] Baillot, *Observations*, 24-5.

[40] 'das Gesetz nur kann uns Freiheit geben': 'Natur und Kunst', in *Gedichte* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1967; this poem was first published in 1800), 132-3.

[41] Baillot, *Observations*, 28-9.

[42] The 1818 competition was an exception, a fact mentioned in the judgement: see Appendix G.

n'est pas musicienne [she is not a musician]', he probably meant that she could not read music.[43] Including a piece for sight-reading may have been a way of making sure that the pupil had not bluffed their way through their studies without really being able to read. It may also reflect the fact that orchestral musicians were expected to play their parts on very little rehearsal. They had to be good readers. This is part of what made it so difficult for the symphonic music of Beethoven and Berlioz to break through; it was too new in style and too difficult to be adequately mastered in one rehearsal. As we shall see, Beethoven had Habeneck as champion, determined to devote whatever time was necessary to yield a good performance, but Berlioz was not so lucky.

It seems that it was not only orchestral musicians who were expected to be able to play well at sight, however. Indeed, the line between the orchestral musician and the soloist was not sharply drawn. When Spohr visited Paris in 1820-21, he rated Lafont as the most polished of the local violinists, noting that Lafont learned a set repertoire ahead of each concert season, and performed only that. I suspect that this is exactly what most travelling soloists would do today, since practice while on the road tends to be limited. While Spohr appreciated the resulting quality of performance, however, he found such a practice too restrictive, whereas he admired the breadth of Baillot's repertoire.[44] This puts a different perspective on the French School's emphasis on scale practice. Viotti is quoted in the previous chapter as writing that he hardly ever had to practice particular passages, but he always practised scales. In other words, he expected to be able to play almost anything at sight, or as soon as he had conceived it in his head; he expected his acquired skill and his general practice to equip him adequately to perform on the spot. With good training, the modern-day classical violinist can play just about anything if she or he has time to practise it and there are teachers who believe that students do not really need to practise separate technical work such as scales, since these can be learnt through practising concertos, one after another. Many a classical violinist is at sea, however, if called upon to improvise. Jazz musicians, on the other hand, practise scales and arpeggios in quantity. They need to be able to play what occurs to them on the spur of the moment, so they practise the building blocks of music.

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[43] Register of exams, both semester and entry, 1784- , AN AJ/37/1/1/d. He may also have meant that she did not play an instrument.

[44] *Louis Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), vol. II, 127-8.

We tend to think of playing music from the page as fundamentally different from improvisation, but there is something in sight-reading which is akin. For the competitions, Baillot's *Observations* recommend choice of a piece which poses musical, rather than technical challenges.[45] This would test the ability of the student to improvise an interpretation, as well as testing whether they had the requisite technical means ready to hand:

> Le morceau à déchiffrer : ce n'est qu'en l'ayant sous les yeux que les jurés jugeront de l'exactitude, de l'intelligence, de l'imagination et des ressources individuelles de chaque élève, dont l'expression est alors improvisée.[46]
>
> [The piece for sightreading: it is only through having it in from of them that the members of the jury will be able to judge the accuracy, the intelligence, the imagination, and the individual capacities of each pupil, whose expression is thus improvised.]

Although improvisation in public performance seems to have been a practice largely restricted to pianists, music-making in private contexts may have involved many more improvisatory practices than we realise. We know that both Viotti and Kreutzer were fine improvisers. It seems that Baillot had the habit of improvising accompaniments to his students in class. The sources are not explicit, but Dancla relates that Baillot, rather than employ a pianist as did Massart, would often accompany his students on his violin.[47] Sauzay also praises Baillot's skill at this.[48] While the verb *accompagner* had a range of meanings, it is clear from the language they use that Baillot was not merely playing the violin line along with his pupils but improvising an accompaniment, with or without the aid of some kind of score. According to Dancla, other Conservatoire professors such as Rode and Kreutzer did this, too.

Playing at sight seems to have been an expected part of being a musician at all levels.[49] Charles Dancla grew up in the southwest of the country. In 1828, having become aware of his son's musical talent, Dancla's father took him to visit Rode in Bordeaux, with a view to continuing on to Paris if Rode confirmed his estimation of the boy's ability. The ten-year-old Charles played him the solo of Rode's Concerto No. 7 and then read through a page of

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[45] Baillot, *Observations*, 25.

[46] Baillot, *Observations*, 22.

[47] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 57-8.

[48] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 168.

[49] The exception would be folk musicians. It would be anachronistic to use the term 'classical musicians' here in contrast.

manuscript which was on the stand. He could tell that Rode was favourably impressed. Armed with letters of recommendation addressed by Rode to Baillot, Kreutzer, and Cherubini, father and son travelled on to Paris so that Charles could audition for entry to the Conservatoire. The audition took place in front of Cherubini and Baillot. Baillot had the boy sight-read the tutti of Viotti's Concerto in C and asked him some questions concerning the theory of music. On this basis, he was granted entry into the class of Baillot's *repetiteur*, Guérin, where he spent three years before graduating to the class of Baillot.[50] Sauzay, who had entered by a similar pathway in 1824, relates similar experiences, many of which took place within the context of Baillot's classes. If in a good mood, as well as having the students play for him and one another, Baillot would play whatever an ingenious student slid on the stand, whether it was a Rode etude, the solo of a Viotti concerto, or one of Baillot's own sets of variations. They would also rehearse chamber music which Baillot was going to perform at his soirées, joined by one or two of Baillot's cello colleagues and with students taking the second violin and viola parts.[51] In 1841, Dancla, now a well-established performer, found himself in Lyon at the same time as Liszt. He asked whether Liszt would join him in a concert for a couple of the pieces: a Beethoven sonata and some variations by Osborne / De Bériot. Liszt agreed, on condition that Dancla allow him to replace a variation in the second piece with one of his own improvisation. To Dancla's suggestion of a rehearsal, Liszt simply said 'Inutile [No need]'![52]

Unless we suppose that the violin classes were a special case, the continuation of spontaneous musical practices in the Conservatoire context must cast serious doubt on Rubinoff's central thesis that the pedagogical culture of the Conservatoire was fundamentally inimical to creative aspects of music-making.[53] The salon milieu was full of spontaneous music-making, often by amateurs and artists mixed (they were not yet called 'professionals', and *amateur* was a term of approbation). Much of Baillot's chamber music performance took place in this milieu, including the subscription series which he started in 1814. In his study of chamber

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[50] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 6-7.

[51] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 167-8.

[52] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 66.

[53] Kailan Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model of Music Pedagogy: The Paris Conservatoire, Hugot and Wunderlich's Méthode de flûte, and the Disciplining of the Musician' in *Journal of Musicology* 34/4 (2017), 473-514. See Chapters 5 above and 8 below.

music concerts in the 1830s, Joel-Marie Fauquet identifies a trend towards professionalization. According to Fauquet, Baillot resisted this trend, retaining in his way of making music much that was spontaneous, such as making very late changes to programs, which he simply expected his colleagues to cope with. Fauquet concludes from this that Baillot 'retained much of the amateur' in his approach.[54] There is, however, another way of looking at the phenomenon: to Baillot, an artist was capable of being spontaneous and could sight-read in performance if called upon to do so. It was not that Baillot was any less 'professional' at heart than Viotti, Kreutzer, or any other of his colleagues, but rather that the general conception of what it was to be an artist was changing around them.

Baillot's Observations as a source

What we know about how the competitions were run in the early years has to be pieced together from a variety of sources such as the regulations, the lists of prizewinners and programs of the prizewinner concerts, memoirs, notes by jury members, and formal minutes. Baillot's *Observations* are particularly useful, since they are direct reflections on the practice and the thought behind it. They are dated 25 August 1835, even if now only available in an edition from 1872. They are a mine of information, but there is a danger in the reader's assuming that they tell us how things were rather than how Baillot felt they ought to be. Although the length of Baillot's tenure at the Conservatoire may have enabled him to have a significant influence on its internal culture, his colleagues will not always have agreed with him. One example is the conscientiousness which he advocated bringing to the task of judging. 'Il n'est aucun de nous qui ne soit profondément ému lorsqu'il se trouve obligé de décider du sort d'un de ses semblables [There is not one of us who does not feel profoundly moved when he finds himself in the position of having to pronounce on the fate of one of his fellows]'.[55] It is hard to imagine Habeneck feeling very moved at the prospect. The entrance examination registers from 1843 enable us to compare the different styles of Habeneck, Dancla, and Alard. Dancla's notes are generous and descriptive; Habeneck dismisses most in summary fashion with comments such as 'mauvais [bad]', or 'peu de facilité [little facility]'.[56] One imagines that the Director might sometimes have had to field questions from parents or

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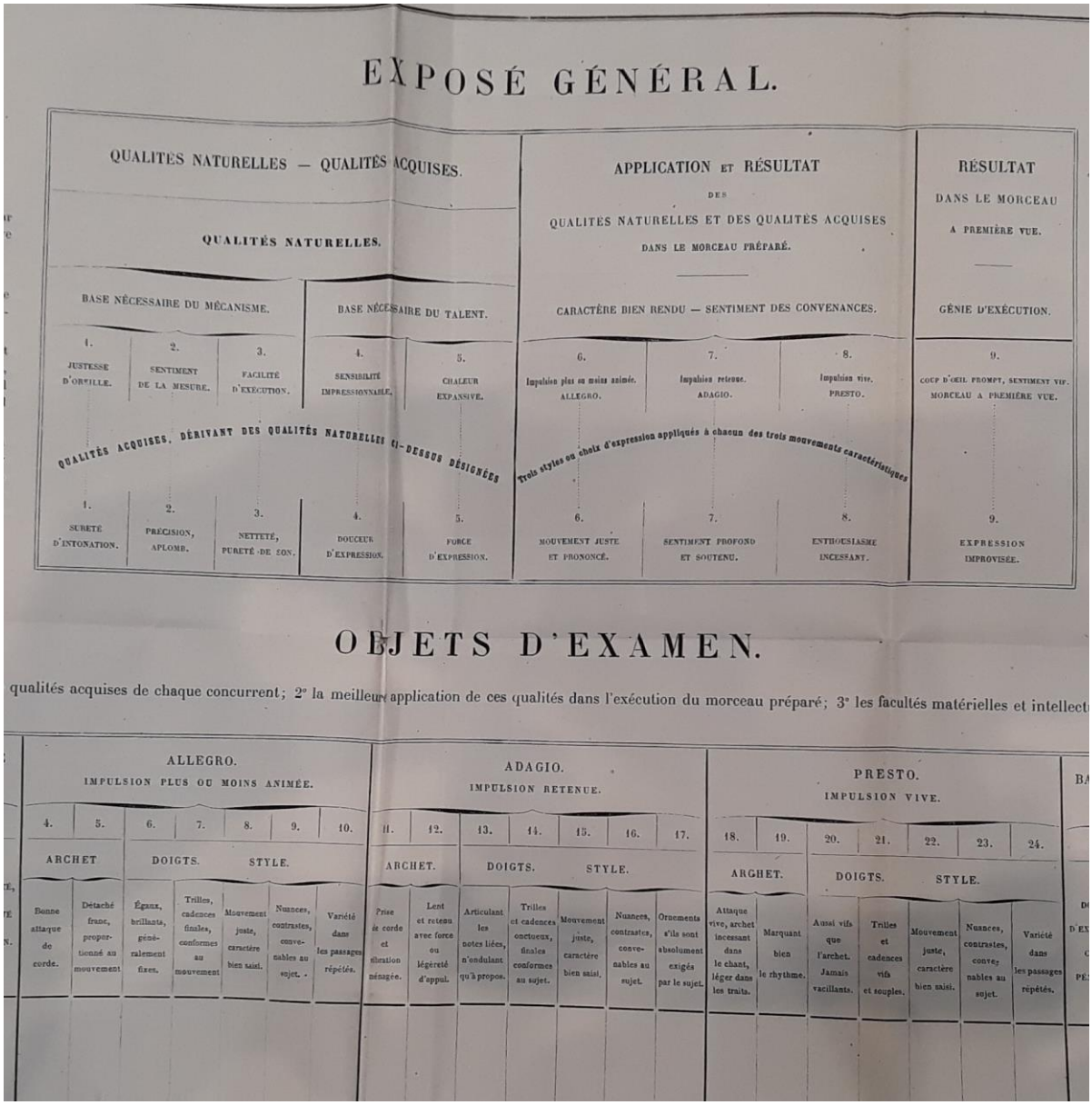
[54] Joel-Marie Fauquet, 'La musique de chambre à Paris dans les années 1830', in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-Thirties*, ed. Peter Bloom (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1987), 307-8.

[55] Baillot, *Observations*, 1.

[56] AN AJ/37/223/2.

the *intendant* as to why a certain aspirant had not gained entry. Habeneck's notes would not have been of much assistance.



EXPOSÉ GÉNÉRAL.

QUALITES NATURELLES — QUALITÉS ACQUISES.					APPLICATION ET RÉSULTAT DES QUALITES NATURELLES ET DES QUALITÉS ACQUISES DANS LE MORCEAU PRÉPARÉ.			RÉSULTAT DANS LE MORCEAU A PREMIÈRE VUE.
QUALITÉS NATURELLES.								
BASE NÉCESSAIRE DU MÉCANISME.			BASE NÉCESSAIRE DU TALENT.		CARACTÈRE BIEN RENDU — SENTIMENT DES CONVENANCES.			GÉNIE D'EXÉCUTION.
1. JUSTESSE D'OREILLE.	2. SENTIMENT DE LA MESURE.	3. FACILITÉ D'EXÉCUTION.	4. SENSIBILITÉ IMPRESSIONNABLE.	5. CHALEUR EXPANSIVE.	6. Impulsion plus ou moins animée. ALLEGRO.	7. Impulsion retenue. ADAGIO.	8. Impulsion vive. PRESTO.	9. COUP D'ŒIL PROMPT, SENTIMENT VIF. MORCEAU A PREMIÈRE VUE.
QUALITÉS ACQUISES, DÉRIVANT DES QUALITÉS NATURELLES CI-DESSUS DÉSIGNÉES					Trois styles ou choix d'expression appliqués à chacun des trois mouvements caractéristiques			
1. SURETÉ D'INTONATION.	2. PRÉCISION, APLOMB.	3. NETTETÉ, PURETÉ DE SON.	4. DOUCEUR D'EXPRESSION.	5. FORCE D'EXPRESSION.	6. MOUVEMENT JUSTE ET PRONONCÉ.	7. SENTIMENT PROFOND ET SOUTENU.	8. ENTHOUSIASME INCESSANT.	9. EXPRESSION IMPROVISÉE.

OBJETS D'EXAMEN.

qualités acquises de chaque concurrent; 2° la meilleure application de ces qualités dans l'exécution du morceau préparé; 3° les facultés matérielles et intellect

ALLEGRO. IMPULSION PLUS OU MOINS ANIMÉE.							ADAGIO. IMPULSION RETENUE.							PRESTO. IMPULSION VIVE.							BA
4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	
ARCHET.		DOIGTS.		STYLE.			ARCHET.		DOIGTS.		STYLE.			ARCHET.		DOIGTS.		STYLE.			
Bonne attaque de corde.	Détaché franc, proportionné au mouvement	Égaux, brillants, généralement fixes.	Trilles, cadences finales, conformes au mouvement	Mouvement juste, caractère bien saisi.	Nuances, contrastes, convenables au sujet.	Variété dans les passages répétés.	Prise de corde et vibration ménagée.	Lent et retenu avec force ou légèreté d'appui.	Articulant les notes liées, n'ondulant qu'à propos.	Trilles et cadences onctueux, finales conformes au sujet.	Mouvement juste, caractère bien saisi.	Nuances, contrastes, convenables au sujet.	Ornements s'ils sont absolument exigés par le sujet.	Attaque vive, archet incessant dans le chant, léger dans les traits.	Marquant bien le rhythme.	Aussi vifs que l'archet. Jamais vacillants.	Trilles et cadences vifs et souples.	Mouvement juste, caractère bien saisi.	Nuances, contrastes, convenables au sujet.	Variété dans les passages répétés.	

Detail from Baillot's judging table. Photo by author from BnF RECUEILS-35 (9).

I have already made mention of the judging table included in the *Observations*. Designed to assist the judges in making their decisions, it is very detailed and full of fascinating information on Baillot's pedagogical thinking. Other than the fact that it is beautifully engraved, however, there is no way of knowing whether it was actually used – and if so, for how long. Its use would have required each judge to rate each performance on a scale of one to three against 28 criteria, from 'sureness of intonation' through to 'sweetness of expression and penetrating charm'. As Baillot explains in the *Observations*, the detail was to aid in

judging by *conviction* as well as by *esteem*: reason was to come to the aid of instinct. Baillot did not mean to reduce the judging process to mathematics. Nonetheless, it would have required a lot of effort on the part of the judges. The fact that Baillot grouped most of the criteria within sections for three movements (allegro, adagio, and presto), while bemoaning the fact that the competitions only allowed the pupils to play the first two movements, casts further doubt on the prospect that the table was actually put into service.[57]

Baillot is an eloquent advocate for certain aesthetic convictions, which are consistent through his many writings, especially *L'Art du violon* and the *Observations*, but there is evidence they were not shared by all his colleagues. An example concerns his principled rejection of virtuosity for virtuosity's sake. Sauzay writes of his student years (1823-1827): 'Souvent la virtuososté était recompensé aux dépens du beau style, ou de *la grande école*, comme on disait dans la classe de M. Baillot. [Virtuosity was often rewarded at the expense of good style, or of the *grande école*, as we would say in Baillot's class.]'[58] Admittedly, Sauzay's memoirs were written over sixty years after the events he describes, but they constitute recollections of a time of life which we tend to remember vividly and they constitute valuable testimony to set beside the *Observations* and other sources.

The *exercices publics*, 1800-1815

It is one of the curiosities of Conservatoire history that the *exercices publics*, which did so much to establish the value of the Conservatoire in the eyes not only of the Paris public but also of attentive observers from across the Rhine, were first envisaged as concerts predominately by staff. The first regulations (1796) were designed for a staff complement of 115, whose duties encompassed performance as well as teaching. Under the direction of the *inspecteurs de l'enseignement*, the professors were to perform six concerts each year in the large hall of the Conservatoire, in the presence of the executive members of the Conservatoire, the ministers, and the Institut national des sciences et des arts. Doubtless, the intention would have been for able students also to feature, as they had during the National Guard years.[59] The demise of the national festivals and the reduction of staff numbers, however, meant that the only concerts in the first four years were the prizewinners' concerts,

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[57] Baillot, *Observations*, 19.

[58] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 165.

[59] Constant Pierre, 'Exercices des élèves : notice historique', in *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 460.

where the successful students were accompanied by an orchestra made up of teachers and students combined.

In the event, therefore, the concerts did not get underway until 1800, reconceptualised as an opportunity for the students to demonstrate their abilities. Pedagogically, this made more sense, but the successive cuts meant not only that there were too few teachers to make up an orchestra, but also that the costs of putting on concerts (venue hire, printing and copying of music, lighting, amongst other things) could not be met from the Conservatoire budget. To overcome this obstacle, the students formed a *société* which could sell subscriptions and hire a hall: initially, the Salle Olympique, rue de la Victoire. Mesdames Beauharnais and Bonaparte were among the first subscribers. Interestingly, by 1803, performers were paid.[60] Although this constitutes further evidence of James Livesey's 'commercial republic', it was not a 'hands-off' liberalism.[61] The Conservatoire hierarchy retained control over personnel and programming and in 1805 even arranged for the new staff pension fund to receive a quarter of all receipts. The government contributed the venue. Belief in the importance of the commercial aspect of the concerts, in the value of a paying audience and of paid performers, was deeply held. After the Restoration, Perne strongly protested to his masters against the loss of support for the concerts, asserting that: 'Sans exercices et concours publiques … il n'y aura pas d'émulation; sans émulation, point d'école [Without the student concerts and competitions … there will be no incentive to work, and without that incentive, there will be no school]'.[62] The practice of paying performers an equal amount per call (concert or rehearsal) was adopted later by the Société des concerts.

The Revolution had brought about the abolition of the Académie royale's monopoly over music performance. As James Johnson has shown, several new concert societies sprang up

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60 *Ibid.*, 462-3.

61 James Livesey, *Making Democracy in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). See also Mark Darlow, *Staging the French Revolution. Cultural Politics and the Paris Opera, 1789-1794* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 388. Darlow concludes that rather than ushering in 'liberalism', the state adopted crown institutions and 'operated official selected support while proclaiming liberty and deregulation, because its ideals remained at odds with the realities of cultural control'. This was particularly true of the Opéra, which had been a symbol of state prestige for a century and which almost always ran at a loss prior to 1830.

62 Quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 472. For the significance and possible translations of *émulation*, see Chapter 8 below.

between 1795 and 1805 to fill the space thus opened up, such as the Concerts rue Cléry (1798-1805) and the Concerts rue Grenelle (1803-4). The first two were very popular for a time: the Concerts rue Cléry (also known as Concert des Amateurs) had 600 subscribers in its first season. The press reviews suggest that, just as at the *exercices publics*, listening was attentive, but approval could be clamorous and popular movements redemanded.[63] The Conservatoire concerts were thus competing with other subscription series for a new concert public and were at the same time contributing to a new listening culture. Johnson suggests that they won out in the competition thanks to their attractive mix of virtuosity and enthusiasm. Reviews praised these qualities and also the unity of bowing of the violins:

> La perfection d'exécution des symphonies surpasse celle qui distinguait jadis les concerts Cléry : tout le monde est d'accord sur ce point … Les violons, altos et violoncelles, qui composaient autrefois des symphonies étaient tous, isolément, de très bons professeurs ; mais chacun d'eux avait une école d'archet différente… Aujourd'hui, ces inconvénients n'existent plus : MM. Rode, Kreutzer, Baillot, qui sont les principaux professeurs du Conservatoire, ont sans doute une école d'archet particulière à chacun ; mais, au total, ces trois manières se rapprochent beaucoup de celle de leur grand maître à tous, le célèbre Viotti. Les élèves de ces trois classes ont tous une exécution large et énergique ; il en résulte une telle unité d'exécution dans les symphonies que de loin on croirait qu'il n'y a qu'un violon à chaque partie.[64]
>
> [The perfection of symphonic performance is even greater that that which used to distinguish the rue Cléry concerts; everyone is in agreement on this point … The violins, violas, and cellos which used to make up orchestras were, taken in isolation, all the products of good teaching, but each of them had a different style of bowing … Today, this problem has disappeared. No doubt Mssrs. Rode, Kreutzer, and Baillot, who are the principal professors at the Conservatoire, each have their own style of bowing, but these styles greatly resemble that of their great master, the famous Viotti. The pupils in these three classes all have a broad and energetic way of playing, from which results such a unity of performance that, at a distance, one might suppose there to only be a single violin to a part.]

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[63] James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), Ch. 11 'The Birth of Public Concerts', 197-205. See also reviews quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 468-9.

[64] Review from the *Tablettes de Polyphonie*, 1810, quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 469.

From quite early on it appears that the orchestra for these concerts was made up not only of current but also of former students, making them anticipate even more the Société des concerts.[65] François Habeneck, the future artistic director of the Société, featured in the *exercices publics* as prizewinning soloist in 1804 and as orchestra leader from 1806 to 1815.[66] It was through these concerts that he first made his name. At first, the position of leader was shared between the likes of Habeneck (student of Baillot), Duret (Rode) and Gasse (Kreutzer), but Habeneck showed such a flair for the job that it was entrusted to him in semi-permanence. This was the beginning in France of the tendency towards specialization in the conducting role, since Habeneck's violin-playing was increasingly to come second to his role as *chef d'orchestre*.

Programming

In the glory years of the student concerts, 1800-1815, the Conservatoire presented an average of over nine concerts per year for a total of 143. We know the programs thanks to Constant Pierre, who gathered them from announcements in the *Décade philosophique*, the *Courrier des Spectacles*, or the *Journal des Arts*.[67] Although programming conformed to the established principle of miscellany and featured excerpts from vocal works as well as instrumental concertos and symphonies, there is no doubt that instrumental music had pride of place. Already, from 1801, a tradition was established whereby a complete symphony was presented – mostly by Haydn, but, increasingly, also by Mozart and Beethoven. Beethoven's 5th Symphony was performed in 1808, only one year after its composition. Four new symphonies of Méhul were programmed as if belonging to this group. Vocal repertoire gave pride of place to Italian works, but German composers (Mozart, Gluck, Handel, Vogt) and

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[65] François Bronner, *François Antoine Habeneck (1781-1849)* (Paris: Hermann Editions, 2014), 44-45.

[66] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 140-1. A review of Habeneck's debut as soloist is quoted in Matthias Brzocka, 'L'Image du Conservatoire dans l'*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* de Leipzig à ses debuts', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 382; and a glowing review of his leadership which appeared in *Tablettes de Polyphonie*, 1810, is quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 469.

[67] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 476-510. Kern Holoman claims on the authority of Jean Mongrédien that of these 143, only 100 were actually presented, but I cannot find confirmation of this in the cited chapter. See Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 10; and Jean Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves d'après la presse contemporaine (1800-1815)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 15-37.

French (Méhul, Boieldieu, Catel, Gossec) also featured. There were, of course, many violin concertos by Viotti, Rode, and Kreutzer.

Taken as a whole, this programming shows evidence of a balance between leading and following the preferences of the public, a balance skewed towards the performance of new music. Haydn's popularity was such that he was almost canonical in his own time, partly thanks to his long life and partly because his music lent itself more readily to the established manner of listening to music, which was an exercise in decipherment. If not specific scenes, listeners expected specific emotions to be depicted.[68] Mozart's late symphonies, on the other hand, baffled Paris audiences with their abstraction. In addition, the traditionalists had somehow come to identify Mozart with the Revolution and the battle in the press between *mozartophobes* and *mozartomanes* revived the old ancients vs moderns battle of the eighteenth century.[69] To its credit, the Conservatoire performed the Mozart symphonies anyway.

Beethoven met frequently with a mixture of admiration and disapproval, even horror. The French could not but admire the grandeur and verve of this music, which was akin in spirit to that of their own revolutionary romanticists, but equally they could not but be repulsed by an occasional harshness they experienced as fundamentally Teutonic.[70] By enlisting the metaphor of the eagle, the symbol of the Empire, one review implicitly likens Beethoven to Napoleon:

> Beethoven, doué d'un génie gigantesque, d'une verve brûlante, d'une imagination pittoresque, dédaigna ces vaines difficultés, auxquelles il se croyait supérieur. Il prit le vol audacieux de l'aigle et franchit avec impétuosité tout ce qui s'opposait à sa marche rapide. Il se crut assez grand pour se créer une École qui lui fut particulière et, quel que soit le danger auquel s'exposent les jeunes compositeurs qu'ont adopté cette École avec un enthousiasme qui tient à la frénésie, je suis forcé d'avouer que la plupart des ouvrages de Beethoven ont un cachet grandiose, original, qui émeut vivement l'âme des auditeurs. La symphonie en *mi bémol*, qu'on a exécutée dans ce 10^{e} concert, est la plus belle qu'il ait

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[68] Johnson, *Listening in Paris*, Ch. 12. 'In search of Harmony's Sentiments', esp. 206-212.

[69] Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves', 34-5.

[70] The term 'revolutionary romanticist' refers to composers such as Méhul, Catel and Lesueur, and comes from Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), e.g. 276.

> composée, exceptée quelques germanismes un peu durs, dans lesquels la force de l'habitude l'a entrainé, tout le reste offre un plan sage et correct, quoique rempli de véhémence …[71]
>
> [Beethoven, endowed with towering genius, burning passion, and a vivid imagination, disdained such difficulties, to which he felt himself superior. He took flight like the daring eagle and impatiently forded every obstacle which stood in the way of his rapid progress. He considered himself great enough to create his own school, and whatever the danger which exists for those young composers who have adopted this school with an enthusiasm bordering on frenzy, I find myself forced to avow that most of Beethoven's works bear the stamp of a grandiosity and originality which powerfully moves the souls of his listeners. The Symphony in E flat major [the Eroica] which was performed in the 10th concert is the most beautiful he has composed, aside from a few rather rough Germanisms to which he has been led by force of habit. All the rest presents a design which is sensible and correct, if filled with vehemence …]

What is significant about the programming of Méhul's four symphonies is that he wrote them at all. Méhul was a highly successful opera composer who had no need to try his hand at a form which had been abandoned by French composers since 1789 and was now dominated by the Vienna classicists.[72] It seems unlikely he would have written them at all had it not been for his membership of the Conservatoire and the emergence of the Conservatoire concerts. In these first years, the repertoire performed also included works composed by students.

In sum, the student concerts between 1800 and 1815 represented a significant innovation in the musical life of Paris. From his analysis of the Paris press reviews across the period, Jean Mongrédien concludes that they played a decisive role in the development of French musical taste and goes so far as to say that 'the Conservatoire had made itself the champion of modernity in art'.[73] Matthias Brzoska, from his survey of reviews published between 1798 and 1824 in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, concludes that these reviews established a lasting image of the Conservatoire in German eyes. Its key aspects were: the excellence of the orchestra; the collective mode of organization; the cosmopolitanism of its repertoire; the

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[71] Review from the *Tablettes de Polyphonie*, May 1810, quoted in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 467.

[72] Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves', 33. For a thumbnail biography of Méhul, see Chapter 1 above, footnote 11.

[73] Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices publics d'élèves', esp. 37.

exemplary character of its official methods; and the fusion of art and science in its pedagogical approach.[74]

After the Restoration, the student *exercices* became irregular: between 1815 and 1828, few were given and James Johnson concludes that the Restoration 'effectively terminated the Conservatoire as a vital element in French musical culture'.[75] This is momentarily to forget the Société des concerts, which was a direct descendant of the *exercices publics* in spirit. If, however, we put that venture aside for a moment and look only at the programming of student concerts in the strict sense, then we see that from 1820 on, opera excerpts became more and more frequent and, after a hiatus between 1824 and 1839, seem to dominate altogether, along with declamation of theatre pieces without music. The list of composers hardly changes across time. Gluck makes his reappearance in 1815 after a long, Revolutionary absence, and – along with Méhul, Rossini, and Mozart – lasts right through the century. Mendelssohn and Weber do not appear until 1874. Thus, in programming at least, the student concerts became irredeemably conservative from the Restoration onward.

The Société des concerts in the militant years

'La jeunesse change ses goûts par l'ardeur du sang et la vieillesse conserve les siens par l'accoutumance.' La Rochefoucauld[76]

The phrase 'the militant years' comes from the Sauzay memoirs, and refers to the first six seasons of the Société des concerts, 1828-1833. In this time, the new society notched up several major achievements. It systematically introduced its public to the symphonic music of Beethoven, it acquired an international reputation for the excellence of its playing, and it emerged from a series of tussles with the Government with an implicitly recognized right to control its own affairs and programming. This pioneering tendency is discernible right up until the end of Habeneck's tenure in 1848, but Habeneck had more and more difficulty in getting new work added to the repertoire and he failed to establish a mechanism for the renewal of membership through mandatory retirement. Kern Holoman has already written a

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[74] Brzocka, 'L'Image du Conservatoire dans l'*Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*', 386.

[75] Johnson, *Listening in Paris*, 203.

[76] 'Youth changes its taste through hot-bloodedness and old age conserves its through habit.' François de La Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*, 1678, no. 109, *Maximes et Réflections diverses* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), 54.

detailed institutional history of the Society and I will confine myself to bringing out a few key points, drawing some links with the wider history, and asking some political questions which he does not. I conclude that it was no accident that Sauzay chose the epithet 'militant', but rather that the spirit and organization of the Société in its first years owe much to the Revolutionary years of the Conservatoire.

The first point to emphasize is that although the Société was a separate legal entity from the Conservatoire, its evolution and ongoing links with the parent school were such that its achievements must be reckoned to the Conservatoire's account.[77] Mendelssohn refers to it simply as 'the Conservatoire orchestra' and, like most commentators, singles out the violins for particular praise:

> Es ist natürlich, daß es das Vollkommenste ist, was man in Frankreich hören kann; den es ist ja das pariser Conservatoire, das die Concerte giebt; aber es ist auch die vollkommenste Ausführung, die man irgend sonst hört. Sie haben sich vereinigt, die besten, die in Paris sind… Die Schule von Baillot, Rode und Kreutzer liefert ihnen die Geiger, und es ist eine Freude, zu sehen, wenn die jungen Leute so in Masse auf's Orchester kommen, und alle nun anfangen mit demselben Bogen, derselben Art, derselben Ruhe, und demselben Feuer… man hört, wie jeder seinen Platz vollkommen ausfüllt, sein Instrument vollkommen bemeistert, wie jeder seine Stimme und Alles, was sie erfordert, vollkommen auswending kennt, kurz, wie das ganze Orchester nicht von einzelnen Musikern, sondern von einer Gesellschaft gebildet wird.[78]
>
> [Naturally it is the best in France because it is the Paris Conservatoire which gives the concerts; but it is the best that can be heard anywhere. The best musicians in Paris joined together… The school of Baillot, Rode and Kreutzer supplies the violinists; it is a joy to see that mass of young people in the orchestra and how they start with exactly the same bowing, the same style, the same deliberation and ardour… One can hear how each player completely fills his place, masters his instrument, knows his part and everything it requires

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[77] Holoman does make the point about the continuity between the exercices publics and the Société. See Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 9.

[78] Letter to Carl Friedrich Zelter, Paris, 15 February 1832, *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830-1847 von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy & Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1870), 248-9.

> from memory; in short, that this orchestra is not made up of individual musicians but is a community.][79]

This combination of virtuosity, thorough rehearsal, and tight ensemble set a new benchmark for orchestral performance. In the same passage, Mendelssohn writes: 'Eigentlich sollte jedes Orchester so sein, Tact- und Notenfehler sollten ein für allemal nicht vorkommen [Actually, every orchestra should be like this, errors in rhythm and notes should never occur]'. Symphony orchestras around the world have since learnt to live up to this expectation and the rise in quality of performance has meant that ever more demanding music can be written. It was not only the string playing of the Société which set a new standard. Habeneck was concerned to promote and challenge the wind players and programmed arrangements of string quartet movements as well as putting on many performances of the much-loved Beethoven septet.[80] Thus continued the rapid improvement in wind performance which had started in the National Guard years when outdoor playing meant that wind and percussion instruments had to fill the whole texture.

The second point to emphasize is the dramatic shift over the course of the first twenty years in the role played by the Société within the wider society. It began by educating public taste, a role which hearkened back to the Revolution; it ended conservatively as custodian of a symphonic canon. The Sauzay memoirs convey a sense of the excitement of the first years, during which the emphasis was on discovery of the new for audiences and players alike. He makes the point that both players and audience were young.[81]

> Ces six premières années de la *Société*, les années militantes furent les plus fécondes en résultats. Nous puisions à pleines mains dans notre trésor ; presque à chaque concert, nous pouvions offrir une œuvre inconnue, excitant la curiosité et l'enthousiasme du public qui voulait l'entendre une seconde fois.[82]

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[79] Translation based on that found in *Felix Mendelssohn: letters,* ed. G. Selden-Goth (New York: Vienna House, 1973; first published, 1945), 190-191. Selden-Goth mistranslates 'Die Schule von Baillot, Rode und Kreutzer…' as 'Baillot's, Rode's and Kreutzer's schools…' Evidently, Mendelssohn was aware that, whatever the individual differences between the teaching of the three, they constituted a single school. Evidently also, conformity had its value in an orchestral context.

[80] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 188.

[81] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 184.

[82] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 190.

> [These first six years of the Society, the militant years, were the most productive. We drew liberally from the well of our treasure. At nearly every concert, we were able to offer an unknown work, exciting the curiosity and enthusiasm of an audience which wanted to hear it a second time.]

The contribution of the ageing of the players to the changing role of the orchestra is somewhat hidden in Holoman's account, although it is implicit in the tussle over compulsory retirement. The practice of life tenure was creeping in without formal decision and it had clear implications for the vibrancy of the collective. Habeneck was adamant on the need for a mandatory retirement age, but heated debate in 1842 to 1843 led to no more than general agreement on the principle and not on specifics.[83] This ageing of the membership will have accentuated the institutional tendency to conservatism over time.

But there were other factors. The Société could be regarded as a victim of its own success. It had created a new concert public and in the first years had no competitors. These, however, started to emerge from 1835,[84] giving the Société an added incentive to present the audience with what it wanted to hear. *Sociétaires* were paid a share of total revenue minus expenditure, in proportion to the number of calls they had played (or sung) as attested by tokens [*jetons*]. They came to rely on this income. Commercial imperatives were thus intruding on an enterprise which began in youthful idealism. The first musicians of what was to become the Société began rehearsing the Eroica in an unofficial way in Habeneck's home in early 1827.[85] By the time of the opening concert of the newly formed society in March 1828, they had thus been rehearsing, unpaid, for a year (a year which becomes two in the Mendelssohn letter quoted above, such is the power of myth). No wonder that the first performance was such a revelation.[86] It is hard to believe that the pioneering members of the Société did this in hope of future monetary gain. In his review of the performance, Fétis extolled the preparedness of the musicians to sacrifice their personal interests to the general good and we recall that this

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[83] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 180-181.

[84] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 152.

[85] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 184.

[86] If we are to believe the much-quoted review by Fétis: 'Régénération de École royale de musique', *Revue musicale de Paris*, 1828, vol. III, 145-149.

was one of the motivating ideals of the Revolution, since it was felt that the monarchy and the aristocracy pursued their own narrow interest, rather than that of the nation.[87]

A third and more complex point to explore concerns the democratic impulses behind the organization of the Société and the nature of its relationship with the state. It has already been narrated how it was ministers of the ultra-royalist Villèle government, de Lauriston and La Rochefoucauld, who revived the Conservatoire and installed Cherubini as Director in 1822. The first initiative which led to the creation of the Société in 1828 likewise came from La Rochefoucauld, who prevailed on Cherubini to revive the *exercices publics* which had been such a success before the Restoration. Since the Conservatoire Director's initial reluctance related to the financial risks involved, La Rochefoucauld offered assistance from the government. However, while Habeneck, Cherubini, and La Rochefoucauld were working out the financial basis of the society and discussing successive drafts of a government decree establishing the first series of six concerts, the musicians were organizing themselves. The first general assembly was held on 4 March 1828, and at this meeting the first 49 *sociétaires* ratified 50 statutes. By the end of the first season two months later membership had reached the statutory 100. The members were all former students of the Conservatoire; while the decree established mandatory and unpaid participation of any current students nominated by the Director, few were required in practice.[88]

The relationship between the government and the Société was sometimes fraught. As Mark Darlow has pointed out in the context of the running of the Opéra between 1789 and 1794, the fall of the monarchy did not usher in *laissez faire* liberalism.[89] What we can observe could rather be characterized as *aidez faire* ['help to do', rather than 'allow to do']. La Rochefoucauld may have felt that he was bringing the new concerts into existence through the decree of 15 February, in the old monarchical style. He graciously expressed his full satisfaction with the success of the first and last concerts of the season in writing. The nine

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[87] 'Le sentiment de leur mérite les rehausse à leurs propres yeux, et leur enthousiasme pour ce qui est véritablement beau les dispose toujours à faire le sacrifice de leurs intérêts particuliers, pour y coopérer de tout leur pouvoir. [A sense of their merit raises them in their own eyes and their enthusiasm for what is truly beautiful leads them always to sacrifice their personal interest in order to work towards it with all their strength.]': 'Régénération de École royale de musique', 145. It is generally asserted that this ethos continued to characterize the Société across time: Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 7.

[88] A listing of personnel for the 1828 concert season included only six unnamed Conservatoire students. See Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 144.

[89] Darlow, *Staging the French Revolution*, 388.

articles of the decree included the requirement for end of year accounts to be submitted to him (formally, to the Ministry of the Arts) and they delegated administrative authority from him to Cherubini. In practice, however, Cherubini was only the chair of a committee of office holders elected by the membership, with major decisions referred to general assembly. Unlike the Conservatoire regulations, the governing statutes of the Société were ratified by this assembly, not approved by the government.

The Société saw itself as a self-governing collective. It accepted the support of the state, which owned the Conservatoire buildings and hence the concert hall and provided a subsidy of 2000 francs, but it expected to run its own affairs. At first sight, there seems to have been a similarity with the desires of the Opéra principals in 1789 to have a share of the running of the institution. They argued that, by virtue of their 'industry', they were the true owners, although they still wanted the crown to underwrite the operation. They felt threatened by the prospect of Viotti taking over the running since Viotti wished to bring in new singers.[90] This is the difference between the two cases: the Société was a much more genuine collective in which every member had an equal vote and received equal pay per call, with the sole exception of the conductor (Habeneck) who received a double share. Membership required a lot of each *sociétaire*: attendance at rehearsals was compulsory and most or all of the administrative work of the Société was likewise done by members. In contrast, the Opéra principals were only out to protect their own interests rather than those of the other employees of the enterprise, such as members of the chorus or stage hands.

By and large, La Rochefoucauld seems to have been content with an arrangement which respected the independence of the Société. A proposal by the Paris prefect of police for an extraordinary benefit concert in December 1828 was endorsed by La Rochefoucauld, but submitted to the membership for approval. It was thus not the Restoration government which attempted to interfere with programming and other matters, but the 'bourgeois monarchy' installed in 1830. La Rochefoucauld's successor, Edmond Cavé, tried to impose such *ancien régime* practices as the permanent reservation of lodges for the king and various officials. The Société, however, made it clear that it expected any government privileges to be paid for and it expected to have full control over programming, rejecting such stipulations as that each concert should feature a Conservatoire laureate as soloist and a composition by a laureate of

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[90] Darlow, 'Viotti's bid for the Opéra', *Staging the French Revolution*, 64-75.

the Prix de Rome. It was prepared to negotiate, but would not accept the arbitrary imposition of conditions on its operations. In the event, the society accepted the allocation of four places to the Government and it accepted the principle of an annual concert for the benefit of the pension fund, even if this did not always eventuate. From 1833 on, however, it did acquire from the government the right to exclusive use of the Salle des Concerts during the season, a valuable concession.[91]

Through its behaviour, the Société thus showed a democratic understanding of its role in society: it expected to be able to negotiate with the government on equal terms. This democratic impulse was also evident in its internal organization. In Chapter 2, I suggested a parallel between Bonapartism and the driving role played by Habeneck as conductor and artistic director. The idea of giving the Beethoven symphonies the performance they deserved seems to have been a personal quest for Habeneck, but one in which he was able to enlist others. Napoleon conquered Beethoven's Vienna at the head of his armies in 1809 and Habeneck conquered Beethoven's symphonies at the head of the Société orchestra, starting in 1828 with the Third. Fétis' review of the first concert explicitly invokes the glory of imperial conquests, comparing the students to young soldiers fighting side-by-side with the veterans.[92] Although Habeneck seems to have enjoyed widespread respect among his colleagues, he did not always show them respect in return, having a habit of ridiculing musicians who made mistakes – even during performance.[93] Similarly, Napoleon enjoyed widespread loyalty among his soldiers in spite of shedding their blood like water.

But aside from the ability of a determined individual to inspire others with his personal mission which is common to the two cases, the parallel is unfair. Habeneck did not preside over any equivalent of a coercive state apparatus. Rather, his autocratic tendencies were held in check through the procedures for collective decision-making enshrined in the founding statutes of the Société. The separation of the posts of artistic director (vice-president) and president balanced off against each other two strong personalities in the form of Habeneck

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[91] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 150-152.

[92] 'Semblables à ces jeunes conscrits de l'empire qui, fiers de combattre sous les yeux des vétérans de garde, rivalisaient de valeur et d'audace [Like those young conscripts of the Empire, proud to fight under the gaze of the veterans of the guard, competing for courage and daring]', Fétis, 'Régénération de École royale de musique', 145.

[93] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 139-140.

and Cherubini. Having Cherubini handle much of the administrative work as well as the liaison with the government also freed Habeneck to focus on musical matters, a division of labour which recalls that between Sarrette and Gossec in the National Guard years. Habeneck frequently found himself in collision with the committee, but both artistic director and committee had to defer to adjudication by a general assembly. Habeneck had to persuade, rather than dictate. After the first years, his ability to introduce new repertoire was also restricted. A system of *essais* [trials] was set up, with a committee to vote on whether a given new work should be performed. From 1842, this system of trials seems to have admitted fewer and fewer new works into the repertoire.[94] Ironically, collective decision-making could thus reinforce an increasingly conservative orientation.

What the many early clashes with the government demonstrated was the ongoing conflict between hierarchical and liberal conceptions of society, a conflict in which the emergence of a self-conscious middle class played an important role. In 1838, Habeneck sought to resolve this conflict by bringing the Société into a closer relationship with the government, advocating for an agreement whereby the orchestra would provide music for official occasions in exchange for a permanent subvention. The idea recalls the relationship between the Conservatoire and the government during the Revolution when *service* at the parliament as well as at the national festivals was required under the regulations.[95] Nothing came of Habeneck's proposal and one suspects that the membership was not keen. Élizabeth Bernard's study of the social make-up of the Société audience in 1837 concluded that it was solidly bourgeois.[96] When Queen Clothilde arrived ten minutes late to the final concert of the 1830 season, she was hissed by the audience, which thus signalled (in addition to its disapproval) that it considered her to be meeting them on their ground.[97]

The incident also recalls one of Ange-Marie Eymar's anecdotes about Viotti, dating from 1790, when he shared lodgings with a deputy to the constituent assembly. One day, his friend pressed him to give a concert to an audience of high-ranking people. Viotti agreed, but on the

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[94] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 166-9, 182.

[95] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 224-5.

[96] Élizabeth Bernard, 'Les Abonnés à la Societé des concerts du Conservatoire en 1837', in *Music in Paris in the Eighteen-thirties*, 41-52.

[97] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 147.

condition that the concert take place in their modest fifth-floor apartment, saying: 'Assez longtemps, nous sommes descendus jusqu'à eux : les tems sont changés, il faut aujourd'hui qu'ils montent pour s'éléver jusqu'à nous [For long enough, we have had to go down to their level. Times have changed, and today they have to lift themselves up to ours]'.[98] These were people who might never have had to climb five flights of stairs in their lives, since the rich always lived on the ground and first floors of buildings. Times had changed further between 1790 and 1830. Viotti's apartment was a private space, whereas the Conservatoire concert hall was a public space in which a new culture was emerging, one in which deference was shown to art rather than to rank. The Société was thus an agent in the elaboration of a bourgeois public sphere in the Habermasian sense.[99]

Why Beethoven?

One of the questions Holoman does not ask is why the Société devoted such time and attention to Beethoven specifically. Without engaging with the vast literature on Beethoven's work taken on its own or set against his personal life experience, I suggest there are at least three historical factors at work. The first is that some of the affinity the French seem to have had for Beethoven, despite qualities of his music initially experienced as alien, derived from the influence of both French music and the French Revolution on the young composer. I have already mentioned the influence of the French Violin Concerto and of French opera, as well as that of the 'revolutionary romanticists' in general, according to Boris Schwarz. I have also mentioned the specific influence of the vigorous march rhythms which were an established characteristic of French music from before the Revolution. As Beate Angelika Kraus has shown, the 5th and 7th symphonies attained rapid popularity in France on the back of single, march-like movements: the fourth movement (allegro-presto) from No. 5 and the second movement (allegretto) of No. 7. The former was experienced as a colossal military march and the latter as a funeral march, a Revolutionary genre pioneered by Gossec and company. The canonical status of these two symphonies is illustrated by their customary inclusion in the Holy Week *concerts spirituels* of the Conservatoire from the late 1830s: No. 5 was played on

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98 Ange-Marie Eymar, *Anecdotes sur Viotti précédés de quelques réflexions sur l'expression en musique. Extrait de la décade philosophique* (Geneva: Imprimerie de Luc Sestié, an VIII), 24-6.

99 Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*.

Easter Sunday and No. 7 on Good Friday. The Allegretto from No. 7 was performed at a state visit of the Queen of England in 1843.[100]

Plaque on the wall of the original Conservatoire building, rue du Conservatoire, which now houses the Conservatoire National Supérieur d'Art Dramatique. Photograph by the author, 2019.

[100] Beate Angelika Kraus, 'Beethoven and the Revolution; the view of the French musical press', *Music and the French Revolution*, ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 300-314.

Beyond these specific musical influences, there is an evident affinity of spirit which links the drama of the Revolution and the dynamism of the Napoleonic campaigns with the drama and dynamism of Beethoven's music. To hear Beethoven's First Symphony even now is like hearing Haydn turbocharged: the outer movements have a driving momentum which is not to be found in Haydn or Mozart. The initial dedication of the Eroica to Napoleon suggests direct inspiration, but some of the affinity may also result from shared experience of a time. It certainly went both ways. Kraus quotes a wonderful anecdote about one of Napoleon's veterans, who sprang to his feet in the middle of a performance of the Fifth, shouting '*Mais, c'est l'empéreur ! Vive l'empéreur !* [But, that's the Emperor! Long live the Emperor!]'[101]

The second factor which led to the acceptance of Beethoven in France is the personal contribution of Habeneck, whose determination to present the symphonies predated the existence of the Société des concerts. Elizabeth Delafon-Bernard speculates that Habeneck's German parentage was a cause of his personal obsession with the music of Beethoven.[102] As Delafon-Bernard has shown, Habeneck was a very active figure in Parisian musical life who knew how to make his way. He became *répétiteur* to Baillot already in 1801, well before graduating with a first prize in 1804. After working his way up through the hierarchy of the Opera, a new class was created for him at the Conservatoire in 1824 by the intervention of La Rochefoucauld, who also made him an honorary director, allegedly 'to curb Cherubini's megalomania'.[103] He looked after the careers of his younger brothers, both also violinists, and the Habenecks became one of the families who monopolised various places at the Opera. He married well and had the duc de Berry as a protector until the duke's assassination in 1821. Very early on, he was awarded a pension by the Empress Josephine. By 1824, then, Habeneck was chef d'orchestre at the Opera, premier violon de la Chapelle et la Chambre du Roi, Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur and Professeur at the Conservatoire. Despite the strength of this position, his first attempts to tackle the Beethoven symphonies with the opera orchestra on its days off failed.[104] Successful performance of the Beethoven symphonies

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[101] *Ibid.*, 303. The quote is from Wörner, *Das Zeitalter der thematischen Prozesse in der Geschichte de Musik* (Regensburg, 1969).

[102] Delafon-Bernard, 'Habeneck et la Société des concerts du Conservatoire', 104.

[103] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 141.

[104] Delafon-Bernard, 'Habeneck et la Société des concerts du Conservatoire', esp. 99-106.

required not only a revolution in listening culture, but also in rehearsal culture, and economics were against that.

It was the Conservatoire which provided a collective musical culture able to accommodate the personal mission of a difficult personality like Habeneck and make it its own. This was the third necessary precondition for the acceptance and then canonization of Beethoven by the French musical public. It was the Conservatoire musicians who carried on the tradition of collective endeavour they inherited from the Revolution and which had been harnessed by Napoleon for his personal dreams of conquest. As François Furet puts it, the Revolutionary wars gave even to ordinary people the possibility of glory, 'that caress of life so long reserved for the nobility'.[105] With the final defeat of French arms, the national quest for glory found an outlet in the cultural realm.[106] It may be that the very difficulty of Beethoven's music was an attraction for Sauzay's generation, brought up in the shadow of the Napoleonic legend. Habeneck was widely respected for his musicianship, but he could be a touchy and abrasive personality.[107] The Conservatoire culture was able to make the most out of Habeneck's drive at the same time as restraining his dictatorial tendencies through its democratic organization.

Delafon-Bernard poses the important question of why an orchestra of the quality of the Société des concerts was able to be created in Paris and not in London or Vienna. Her principal answer is that in Austria and England, the aristocracy had too tight a hold on musical life, whereas the weakening of the French aristocracy by the Revolution meant that the musicians themselves could take the initiative. This is undoubtedly true. In an aside, she asks whether the French tradition of corporatism might also have played a role.[108] It may have, but Delafon-Bernard fails to consider the powerful influence of Revolutionary experience. Thanks to that experience, the Société des concerts was able to reconcile personal and collective dynamism in a way which had eluded the French state.

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[105] 'Cette caresse de la vie si longtemps réservée aux nobles': François Furet, *La Révolution : de Turgot à Jules Ferry : 1770-1880* (Paris: Hachette, 1988), 115.

[106] Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires 1814 -1852: Monarchy and Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001), 38.

[107] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 139-140.

[108] Delafon-Bernard, 'Habeneck et la Société des concerts du Conservatoire', 109-110.

Canon formation and the concept of the musical classics in France

Katharine Ellis has written a detailed account of musical canon-formation in nineteenth-century France. She considers that the musical canon has two dimensions: 'firstly, the practical dimension of performance and repertoire; secondly, that of a governing aesthetic by which the value of specific item of repertoire may be judged'.[109] This second sphere of action was largely the preserve of music critics, and Ellis focuses on *La Revue et Gazette musicale* between 1843 and 1880, the period following that of the present study. Ellis dismisses the early Conservatoire as lacking a historical dimension, but while this may have been true of the vocal department it was not entirely true of the violin department, which at least had a strong sense of tradition, a first step towards a historical consciousness. The early Conservatoire did prepare the ground for canon formation in a number of ways. In particular, it contributed to the emergence of the concept of the classic work, or *ouvrage classique*, as well as the related concept of the musician-interpreter.

I have already shown how the French Violin School contributed to the emergence of the violinist-interpreter, of which Baillot was a shining example.[110] The Conservatoire fleshed out the concept of the musical classic in two ways: first, through the establishment of a pedagogical repertoire for each instrument and second, through the repertoire of the *exercices publics* and of the Societé des concerts which followed them. Evidence of the first can be seen in the catalogues of music available from the Conservatoire printery which are included in some of its editions. Listed under the heading 'Ouvrages classiques' for violin are collections of works by the Italian masters: Corelli, Pugnani, Tartini, and Locatelli.[111] Conservatoire practice likewise made the concertos of Viotti and Rode and the etudes of Rode and Kreutzer canonical. With the possible exception of the Rode concertos, they remain so in violin teaching today.

When it comes to orchestral music, the Conservatoire was effectively tasked with the creation of a canonical repertoire through its first regulations (1796). Title III specifies: 'La formation

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[109] Katharine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 3.

[110] For a recent presentation of Baillot in this light, see Fabio Morabito, 'Theatrical Marginalia: Pierre Baillot and the Prototype of the Modern Performer', *Music and Letters* 101/2 (2020): 270–99.

[111] Unnumbered pages before page 1 in some print runs of the methods.

du repertoire des exercices du Conservatoire par la choix des ouvrages des grands maîtres (morts) de toutes les écoles. [The creation of a repertoire for the concerts of the Conservatoire through the choice of works from the great masters (dead) of all schools.]'[112] The assumption is evident that there is special value in the works of *dead* masters. This assumption is underlined in the second edition of the regulations (1800) through the addition of a further three annual public concerts, for 'the conservation and propagation of musical art', with the works of living composers expressly excluded.[113] This was to assert the need for a canonical repertoire before one existed.

The Conservatoire in general, and prominent Conservatoire violinists such as Baillot and Habeneck in particular, were deeply involved in the establishment of canonical musical repertoire in France, both in the symphonic and chamber music realms. The repertoire of the Société was an active one: once a work was taken in to the repertoire it was played many times. The Beethoven symphonies, in particular, were played again and again, so that the audience could grow accustomed to them, in spite of its resistance to certain symphonies such as the Ninth.[114] As Holoman puts it, the arrival of a work in the Salle des Concerts amounted to its canonization.[115] As well as those of Beethoven, symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, and Méhul rapidly became central to the canon and Mendelssohn was soon added. By the end of the Habeneck years, the repertoire was largely set.

Baillot and public chamber music series

Although they did not play as evident a role in canon formation as the concerts of the Conservatoire, it is worth making brief mention of the first public series of chamber music started by Baillot in 1814, since they form another example of the pioneering activity of the French Violin School. With Baillot always in the lead violin role, these concerts presented music dominated by string quartet and quintet repertoire. As Brigitte François-Sappey has pointed out, this required something of a revolution in listening habits since the French to that time had only regarded such music as an agreeable background to social intercourse. She

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[112] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 224.

[113] Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 234.

[114] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', esp. 187.

[115] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 136.

credits Baillot with an apostolic zeal to bring Paris to appreciate serious chamber music. Baillot's classical bent is revealed by a list of favourite works spanning the quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and early Beethoven (Op. 18) and the quintets of Boccherini. The group also presented new works by Cherubini, Onslow, and Mendelssohn. Within the Conservatoire, Baillot pioneered the teaching of chamber music, formally seeking permission from Cherubini to devote two of his class lessons a week to ensemble playing.[116] His desire for a class dedicated entirely to chamber music was only achieved posthumously: his son Réné took up the first such class in 1848.[117]

The Baillot subscription series were not the first for chamber music in Europe but they were the first in France.[118] In Fauquet's reading, Baillot's concerts occupy a transitional space between private and public, with a foot still in amateur music culture. Through the 1830s, as other groups began to appear on the concert stage, a more professional culture emerged with them.[119] When one considers that chamber music had always been written for intimate settings, it is not surprising that finding an appropriate venue was a constant problem. Baillot only solved it by accepting the offer of a wealthy friend of two fine salons in his house, but other groups preferred less private solutions.[120] The social make-up of Baillot's audience also seems to have been a more exclusive one than that of other chamber music series or of the Société des concerts. Aside from professional musicians, a third were aristocrats and two-thirds high-ranking members of finance, the law and commerce,[121] a composition typical of the new French elite which was in the process of consolidation between 1830 and 1850.

William Weber's account of canon-formation in eighteenth-century England has shown how, by the 1780s, a musical canon encompassing music from Tallis to Handel had taken clear

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[116] Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Pierre Marie François de Sales Baillot (1771-1842) par lui-même: Étude de musicologie sociale', in *Recherches sur la musique française classique* 18 (1978), 199.

[117] *Ibid.*, 172.

[118] The quartet of Ignaz Schuppanzigh (1776-1830) presented the first series in Vienna between 1804 and 1807, and Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis (1785-1842) followed suit in Prague in 1808. See K.M. Knittel, 'Schuppanzigh, Ignaz', and Gaynor G. Jones, rev. Lucian Schiwietz and Stephan D. Lindeman, 'Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis (ii)', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[119] Fauquet, 'La musique de chambre à Paris dans les années 1830', 307-8.

[120] *Ibid.*, 308-10; 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 193.

[121] Fauquet, 'La musique de chambre à Paris dans les années 1830', 304-5.

shape.[122] This canon served an important ideological function: it helped the ruling elite to heal divisions dating back to the religious wars of the seventeenth century. The above discussion demonstrates the coincidence in timing between elite consolidation and canon formation in nineteenth-century France. It thus lends support to William Weber's general thesis since there are evident parallels between the healing of rifts in the English ruling class following the Civil War and the healing of rifts opened up in French society by the Revolution.

Baillot's public liked to hear the same pieces, and was resistant to demanding new works, although some of the newer ensembles found ways to make these more palatable to their audiences.[123] Sauzay paints a picture of Baillot's style falling behind the expectations of the wider musical public, as the Romantics (whom Sauzay refers to as 'the school of Berlioz and Ortigue') gained traction. It seems that Baillot and his colleagues did not use vibrato: by implication, some of the newer artists did.[124] An attempt to present one of the last Beethoven quartets was a failure. Sauzay attributes this to the inability of the players to render, and the audience to understand, quartet writing which did not give the first violin a preponderant role. Baillot's style was not suited to the radical equality of the voices. There is a great irony in Baillot, whose modesty was legendary, being compared with Napoleon, but of course he had inherited the French tradition of strongly first violin-led quartet writing.[125]

In bringing together the examinations, competitions, and public concerts of the Conservatoire, I have been considering the public-facing side of its activity, as well as exploring the reasons for its early success – success in which the violin school was always prominent. Among the reasons conspicuously ignored by most previous scholars of the Conservatoire has been the

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[122] William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), vii.

[123] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 191-5.

[124] 'On y retrouvaient toujours à peu près les mêmes auditeurs qui, … constataient qu'ils ne vibraient pas et n'étaient émus [One found there pretty much the same listeners, who … remarked that they didn't use vibrato and weren't moved].': 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 194.

[125] 'Baillot n'était pas plus fait pour l'égalité et fraternité qu'en 1814 Napoléon pour l'acte additionnel [Baillot was no more made for equality and fraternity than Napoleon for the Additional Act].': *Ibid.*, 195. Usually known in English as 'the Charter of 1815', the Additional Act reframed the Napoleonic constitution in a more liberal direction.

positive contribution of Revolutionary events and experience. However, just as the radical expropriation of the aristocracy in the Revolution produced a society dominated by property owners, the Conservatoire's pioneering role in musical performance ultimately had conservative effects, a result of the success itself, of enduring neo-classical principles, and of the centrality of competition to the pedagogical culture. The next chapter will turn to the internal workings of the Conservatoire and seek to capture the character of the institution.

CHAPTER 8
THE INTERNAL CULTURE OF THE CONSERVATOIRE

Among the central questions which inspired this study are: what kind of an institution was the Conservatoire and what were the values which led to its creation and animated its early years? In Chapter 2, I presented an overview of the trends and tensions within France between 1760 and 1840. Some of these were social and economic, such as rapid population growth and unequal distribution of the new wealth generated by the Atlantic trade. Many were ideological, like faith in the power of collective reason and in education. Chapter 3 explored the relationship between the School of Viotti and the Conservatoire and situated both within broader contexts. Seeking to understand why the Conservatoire was founded when it was, Chapter 4 explored the role of both values and events, concluding that only their conjunction can explain the foundation of such a comprehensive music teaching institution. Chapters 5 and 6 examined the pedagogical culture of the Conservatoire through its published methods, using both internal comparison and the perspective gained through a consideration of their relationship with a rapidly changing outside culture. Even read against the grain, however, these methods tell us more about attitudes to music and music-making than about the internal culture of the institution in a more anthropological sense. In Chapter 7, the focus moved from instrumental teaching to the more public activities of the School: the competitions and the student concerts which performed essential pedagogical functions as well as establishing the fame of the Conservatoire.

As characteristic practices, the competitions and concerts embodied important values, such as a belief in the value of healthy competition. This chapter starts with an exploration of that core belief, as encapsulated in the word *émulation*, which can be regarded as a keyword, both in Raymond Williams' sense and also in the way Robert Darnton has used the individual text: as a key to unlocking our understanding of a foreign world.[1] Through demonstrating the importance of this concept and through the exploration of more tacit values, I seek to capture the ethos of the Conservatoire as an institution and to understand what kind of culture it was

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[1] Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Fontana, 1976), esp. 13; Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre, and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

transmitting in a broad sense: patterns of thought and behaviour, rather than instrumental technique and musical style.

Émulation

'Sans exercices et concours publiques, … il n'y aura pas d'émulation ; sans émulation, point d'école.'[2] Perne, 1816.

'Qui peut calculer sur les effets d'une couronne posée à faux sur une jeune tête ? … l'émulation est arrêtée dans son élan, le but de l'institution est manqué, les doctrines sont ébranlées jusque dans leur fondaments'. Baillot, 1835.[3]

'L'artiste doué d'un esprit droit', writes Baillot 'regarde comme une conquête pour l'art le succès d'un nouveau talent, et ne connaissant que la noble émulation, il fait de ses rivaux ses amis [The artist endowed with an upright character … sees the success of a new talent as a triumph for art, and knowing only the noble motive of emulation, he makes friends of his rivals]'.[4] *Émulation* is a concept central to the time and to the internal culture of the Conservatoire. There is no word in eighteenth-century English or German of equivalent force, even though the eighteenth-century meaning of the English word 'emulation' is similar to the French. Shoulder to shoulder with *mérite*, *émulation* was one of the ideological motors of the Revolution. Strictly speaking, the word has two main meanings, of roughly equal importance. One is 'rivalry' or 'competition' and the other (the original meaning) is the positive motivation ('zeal') which they stimulate. The word 'emulation' derives from the Latin *aemulatio*, meaning 'jealousy', but over time, the word seems to have shed its negative connotations. *Littré* gives the following definition: 'Sentiment généreux qui excite à égaler, à surpasser quelqu'un en talent, en mérite [the generous feeling which stimulates the desire to

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[2] 'Without public concerts and competitions, there will be no rivalry and without rivalry, there will be no school.' Inspecteur général Perne, 1816, as quoted by Constant Pierre: 'Notice historique', in *Le Conservatoire de Musique et de Déclamation, Documents historiques et administratifs* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900), 472.

[3] 'Who can calculate the effects of a crown wrongfully placed on a young head? …the rivalry of the students is blunted, the institution fails in its purpose and its doctrines are shaken to their foundations'. Pierre Baillot, *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique (1835)* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1872), 12. Baillot is arguing that it is more harmful to accord a first prize to an undeserving pupil than to withhold one from a deserving pupil.

[4] Pierre Baillot, *Méthode de violon par Mm. Baillot, Rode et Kreutzer* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, an XI (=1803)), 3.

equal or surpass another person in ability or merit].' A gentle distinction is drawn between *émulation* and *rivalité*: 'L'émulation est toujours un sentiment généreux; la rivalité est un mobile tantôt bon, tantôt mauvais [emulation is always a generous feeling, whereas rivalry is sometimes a good, sometimes a bad motivation].' The distinction between *émulation* and *jalousie*, however, is sharp: 'Quelque rapport qu'il paraisse de la jalousie à l'émulation, il y a entre elles le même éloignement que celui entre le vice et la vertu [Notwithstanding the apparent kinship between jealousy and emulation, they are as far from one another as vice and virtue]'. Unlike English, French also has the cognate noun *émule*, which can only be translated as 'rival': 'Celui qui rivalise avec un autre dans les choses louables [one who rivals another in praiseworthy undertakings]'.[5] Thus Arthur Pougin's obituary of Rode refers to Baillot as 'le digne émule de Rode [Rode's worthy rival]'.[6]

The principal definition of the English word 'emulation' given by the *Oxford English Dictionary* looks similar: 'The endeavour to equal or surpass others in any achievement or quality; also, the desire or ambition to equal or excel'.[7] In current usage, however, we do not 'emulate' our peers, only those who are above or ahead of us. There is no mention in the sources of Rode or Baillot 'emulating' Viotti, and yet this is exactly how we would now describe their musical aspiration. From this, it follows that the translation of *émulation* into current-day English is problematic, although this is not always appreciated by Anglophone writers. Frequently, 'competition' is a better translation than 'emulation'. This is partly a question of source-based as opposed to target-based translation. Mark Darlow chooses to translate *émulation* with its English cognate, but is forced on occasion to put 'emulation' in quotation marks due to the awkwardness of the correspondence and the breadth of use of the French noun. For example, he reports that Viotti, as part of his bid for control of the Opéra in 1789, undertook to 'pay extra amounts to artists for performances over and above their allotted number, in order to encourage "emulation."'[8] When Kern Holoman, in summing up

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5 Émile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Paris: Hachette, 1963; first published, 1883).

6 Arthur Pougin, *Notice sur Rode, violoniste français* (Paris: Pottier de Lalaine, 1874), 26.

7 *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. The entry for 'emulation' also lists three obsolete, negative meanings: see Appendix H.

8 Mark Darlow, *Staging the French Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 65. Darlow's quotation marks around 'emulation'.

the themes of his 2004 history of the Société de Concerts, refers to 'competition bred from admiration', it is *émulation* he has in mind.[9]

In the eighteenth century, the meanings of the English and the French were much closer than they are now. Charles Burney heard Couperin play the organ at St Gervais and was greatly impressed. He wrote: 'It is much to be wished that some opportunity, like this annual meeting, were given in England to our organists, who have talents, and good instruments to display. *It would awaken emulation, and be a stimulus to genius*'.[10] Adam Smith discusses the nature of emulation in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*: 'Emulation, the anxious desire that we ourselves should excel, is originally founded in the admiration of the excellence of others'.[11] Smith asserts that the desire to be worthy of praise is fundamental to us. He does not write here of the value of striving or competition per se, but of his conviction that our judgement of ourselves, as of others, is essentially social. There is an evident kinship between this line of thought and the Hellenic idea touched on in the previous chapter, that honour and virtue are essentially public qualities. In *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith ascribes a value to competition in a specifically commercial context. Smith's writings were very popular in late eighteenth-century France and the widespread acceptance of liberal economic ideas by the educated classes is demonstrated by various reforms attempted by the administration of Louis XV to open up the French economy.

It thus looks as though the force of the word *émulation* resulted from the confluence of two streams of thought: political economy and Hellenism. However, a belief in the value of healthy competition in the context of education predates the rise of liberal economic ideas in France. It goes back at least as far as Charles Rollin's *Traité des études* of 1728:

> Le grand avantage des écoles, c'est l'émulation. Un enfant y profite de ce qu'on lui dit à lui-même, et de ce qu'on dit aux autres. … Quels efforts ne fait point un bon écolier pour primer dans sa classe et pour emporter le grand prix ! Voilà ce qui donne de l'ardeur à de jeunes esprits ; et une noble émulation bien ménagée, dont on aura soin de bannir la

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9 D. Kern Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, 1828–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 23.

10 Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (New York: AMS Press, 1976; first published, London, 1773), 41. My italics.

11 Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (London, 1853; first published, 1769), 166.

> malignité, l'envie, la fierté, est un des meilleurs moyens pour les conduire aux plus grandes vertus et aux plus difficiles entreprises.[12]
>
> [The great advantage of schools is competition. A child profits from what is said to him as well as what is said to others. … A good student is prepared to make great efforts in order to come first in his class and to carry off the prize! This is what fires up young spirits, and a noble spirit of rivalry, which one will take care to preserve from malignity, envy and pride, is one of the best ways to lead them to the greatest virtues and the most difficult challenges.]

The value of *émulation* is regularly invoked in the various Revolutionary plans for education. Daunou uses it four times in his plan of 1795, particularly as we approach the peroration of his address. He characterizes it as 'ce sentiment généreux, le plus pur principe de l'activité humaine, et sans lequel l'égalité sociale ressembleroit au lit de ce tyran qui mutiloit ses victimes [that generous feeling, the purest principle of human activity, without which equality would be like the bed of the tyrant who mutilated his victims]'.[13] We see here how the term was implicated in the contest over the meanings of *liberté* and *égalité*. To men steeped in Greek example through their education, competition was not valuable principally because of justice or 'fairness' (a word lacking in French), but because it was healthy. Talleyrand's education plan of 1791 contains the following expression of liberal conviction: 'c'est du concours et de la rivalité des efforts individuels que naîtra toujours le plus grand bien [it is competition and the rivalry of individual efforts that always lead to the greatest good]'.[14] This is not how it looked to the urban poor. To them liberalism meant wildly fluctuating prices for basic foodstuffs, a threat to their survival which they perceived as patently unjust.

Another fine example of the use of *émulation* is to be found in the report to the Committee of Public Instruction concerning the *Magasin de musique* (the printery) from 1795:

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[12] Charles Rollin, *Traité des études (De la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les Belles-Lettres par rapport à l'esprit et au cœur…)* (Paris, 1845; first published, Paris 1726-1728), Book VII, 10-11. This is the third of five advantages listed by Rollin. See Appendix B for the full list.

[13] Pierre Daunou, 'Rapport sur l'instruction publique (23 vendémiaire an IV)', in Bronislaw Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie* (Geneva: Droz, 2000; first published: Paris, 1982), 511.

[14] Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, 'Rapport sur l'instruction publique, fait au nom du Comité de constitution, à L'Assemblée Nationale les 10, 11 et 19 septembre 1791', in Baczko, *Une Éducation pour la démocratie*, 114.

> Il est très vraisemblable que les productions des hommes de génie qui composent l'Institut jouiront chez l'étranger, comme parmi nous, d'une préférence méritée. Cependant il n'est pas impossible que des hymnes ou d'autres morceaux de musique partis d'une autre source, attirent aussi de l'attention, et si cela arrive seulement une fois, il en doit naître une émulation très favorable aux progrès de l'art et aux jouissances du peuple.[15]
>
> [It is very likely that compositions by the men of genius who make up the Institute will enjoy a marked preference abroad as they do here. Nonetheless, it is not impossible that hymns or other pieces of music from another source will attract attention and even should this happen only once, it will give rise to a sense of rivalry favourable to artistic progress and to the pleasures of the populace.]

This report was written in response to claims that the printing press enjoyed a state-sponsored monopoly over music composed for the national festivals. Such a monopoly was contrary to Revolutionary principles, which sought to abolish all vestiges of *privilège*. An investigation by the Committee of Public Instruction exculpated the society but concluded that competition was desirable.

The Conservatoire competitions are an obvious manifestation of the value invested in *émulation*. But rivalry was held to be no less virtuous for the professors than it was for the students. Thus Perne wrote to the Intendant: 'Vous connaissez l'émulation des professeurs, le désir de mettre en avant des sujets qui justifiassent la confiance que vous aviez en leurs talents [You are familiar with the rivalry of the professors, their desire to put forward students who will justify your faith in their abilities]'.[16] Although *émulation* might be interpreted here as a simple synonym for *zèle* [zeal], it is used in the context of Perne's attempts to maintain the pedagogical framework established through the regulations of the School, a framework whose integrity was threatened by the preferential treatment given to Garat as professor of voice.

There is ample evidence that the value invested in *émulation* was not merely a matter of belief and that an atmosphere of genuinely positive rivalry was part of the internal culture of the early Conservatoire. We know from Mendelssohn's letters what a strong impression the Conservatoire musicians made on him during his visit to Paris. His advocacy in 1840 for a state-funded music academy in Leipzig was evidently inspired by the Paris example. In a

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[15] Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes Nationales et du Conservatoire* (Reprint edition: Wentworth Press, 2019; originally Paris: Fischbacher, 1895), 65.

[16] Letter dated 14 May 1818, AN AJ/37/322/2.

letter to the local governor, Mendelssohn invoked not only the benefit to students of such an institution, but also to teachers:

> …für die lehrenden Musiker aber wäre ein solcher Vereinigungspunkt, ein solches Wirken aus einem Gesichtspunkte und zu einem Zwecke ebenfalls wichtig, als die beste Abhülfe gegen Gleichgültichkeit und Isolirung, deren Unfruchbarkeit heutigen Tages gar zu schnell verderblich eingreifen.[17]
>
> [But for the teachers of music it would be equally important; for to work in a group which has a common point of view and a common goal is the best means of preventing indifference and isolation, whose barrenness these days can become genuinely harmful all too quickly.][18]

The musicians' faith in productive rivalry was not confined to the Conservatoire setting. Writing of Rode's artistic decline, Fétis deplores the fact that in his last years, Rode did not hear any other violinists and played only to a few friends. 'L'habitude de n'entendre que lui et conséquemment l'absence de moyens de comparaison, avaient fini par éteindre cette vive émulation qui conserve et grandit le talent [The habit of hearing only himself and the resulting lack of means of comparison had ended by snuffing out that lively spirit of competition which conserves and nurtures one's ability]'.[19]

Like most words, *émulation* clearly has a range of meanings, some denotative and some connotative. Much about it has to do with modelling oneself on someone one admires, whether a peer or a superior. For Rollin, the fourth advantage of public education is: 'un jeune homme trouve dans ses compagnons des modèles qui sont à sa portée [in his fellows, a young man finds models which are within his reach].' Thus, emulation carries with it not only the meanings of 'competition', 'rivalry', and 'zeal', but also of 'imitation' in the neo-classical sense: you model yourself on what is closer to Baillot's *beau idéal*.

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[17] Letter to the Kreisdirektor von Falkenstein, 8 April 1840, in *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830-1847 von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy & Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1870), 413-4. The spelling 'Isolirung' is original.

[18] Translation from *Felix Mendelssohn: Letters*, ed. G. Selden-Goth (New York: Vienna House, 1973; first published, 1945), 293.

[19] François-Joseph Fétis, *Biographie universelle des musiciens,* 1st edition (Brussels: Melin, Can & Co., 1837-1844), entry for 'Rode', vol. VII, 448.

It is intriguing that Michel Foucault lists *aemulatio* as one of the four principles of resemblance fundamental to the sixteenth-century mind.[20] To emulate someone is to bring oneself in a sort of sympathetic opposition to them, which will have the effect of rendering the two of you more similar. Similar, but not the same: in Foucault's exposition, identity and difference are categories fundamental rather to the seventeenth and eighteenth-century mind. Baillot, in advising the student to choose a model for himself, asserts with confidence that 'to imitate is not to copy'.[21] This is because resemblance is not sameness and because, to Baillot, individuality is an inner essence which is fixed and unchanging, like Goethe's Daimon:

ΔAIMΩN, Dämon	[Daimon
Wie an dem Tag, der dich der Welt verliehen, Die Sonne stand zum Gruße der Planeten, Bist also bald und fort und fort gediehen Nach dem Gesetz, wonach du angetreten. So mußt du sein, dir kannst du nicht entfliehen, So sagten schon Sibyllen, so Propheten; Und keine Zeit und keine Macht zerstückelt Geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt.[22]	As on the day you were lent to the world The sun stood to greet the planets, So you grew and grew According to the law by which you entered. You must be so, cannot escape yourself, Thus have spoken Sibyls and prophets; And no time and no power can break The minted form which living grows.]

Despite Baillot's conviction, the concept of *émulation* is another element fundamental to the Conservatoire which will have acted to promote uniformity rather than individuality.

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[20] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (Routledge, 2002; first published in English, 1970; first published in French as *Les mots et les choses*, 1966), 22-23.

[21] Pierre Baillot, *L'Art du violon* (Paris: Imprimerie du Conservatoire de musique, 1834), 8.

[22] Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 'Urworte, orphisch', in *Gedichte* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1967), 189. My rather literal translation. Baillot was undoubtedly familiar with Goethe's work and quotes him in the *Observations relatives aux concours de violon du Conservatoire de musique (1835)* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1872), 11.

Nationalism and patriotism

'Le concours des ouvrages de différens genres et de différens pays éclaire peu à peu son jugement … il va chez ses voisins pour y puiser de nouvelles sources de connaissances dont il revient enrichir sa patrie : avide de choses nouvelles, curieux de tout ce qui peut aggrandir ses idées, il accueille l'étranger avec ce sentiment de fraternité que donne l'amour des arts et cet empressement qui tient au désir d'apprendre.' Baillot, 1803.[23]

Although 'the nation' was one of the key concepts behind the Revolution, the French of 1789 were patriotic rather than nationalistic. The Revolution gave powerful impetus to a conception of citizenship which was militant and patriotic, but not xenophobic. The Revolutionary wars may have contributed greatly to the rise of nationalism in the other countries of Europe, but the French soldiers who fought in them saw themselves as fighting against foreign kings rather than foreign peoples.[24] As the Revolutionary wars lost their defensive character and the gaze of the nation turned outwards, one could talk of an emerging nationalist consciousness, but this was a peculiarly universalist nationalism, as François Furet notes, 'made up of anti-aristocratic passion, rationalism, transfigured by the idea of a historico-military mission of the nation'.[25] The aristocratic emigration prompted by revolution and the movement of armies involved in imperial conquest increased an interest in foreign parts which had already been stimulated by naval exploration and the American Revolutionary War. Despite the colonial competition with the British which did so much to spur patriotic feeling in the elites before the Revolution, there was widespread admiration for British parliamentary institutions and British political philosophy. Interest in the German-speaking world was never higher than at the beginning of the nineteenth century,[26] interest in

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[23] 'Exposure to works of different genres and from different countries gradually informs his judgment … he goes to his neighbours to draw on new sources of knowledge which he brings back to enrich his own country. Eager for novelty, curious about everything which can add to his ideas, he welcomes the foreigner with that brotherly feeling which comes from a love of the arts and that eagerness which comes from the desire to learn.' Baillot, *Méthode de violon*, 3.

[24] François Furet, *La Révolution : de Turgot à Jules Ferry : 1770-1880* (Paris: Hachette, 1988), 113-6.

[25] 'Un nationalisme universaliste, où l'historien retrouve ses éléments constituants, faits de passion anti-aristocratique et de rationalisme, transfigurés par l'idée d'une élection historico-militaire de la nation.' *Ibid.*, 219.

[26] Friedrich Baldensperger, *Goethe en France* (New York, 1973; originally published in Paris, 1920).

Italy was ever-present and interest in Poland was excited by sympathy for its political struggles against imperialist Russia.

In the cultural realm, this openness to outside influence was a great strength and there is much truth in the idealistic-sounding passage from Baillot's first violin method quoted above. A pride in French achievements in no way impeded the welcome given to the many talented foreigners who were drawn to the country, especially to Paris. As Peter Burke has noted, there has been some interesting historical work done on 'cultural frontiers', which recognizes that one can consider a frontier as a contact-zone, rather than as a barrier.[27] In this sense, Paris was more a frontier town than anywhere, a contact zone between myriad cultures. What was true of Paris may also have been true, to a lesser extent, of major towns such as Bordeaux. Rode's first teacher was Fauvel, a student of Gervais, who had been born in Mannheim and was himself a student of Fraenzl.[28] When one considers that Kreutzer received early tuition from Anton Stamitz at Versailles, there are signs of significant Mannheim influence in France, which is important, given that the Mannheim orchestra was probably the best in eighteenth-century Europe.

It has already been mentioned how the 'musical Gallicanism' of the years before 1760 led to a kind of cultural sclerosis. The opening of France to Italian influence was of decisive value in the rapid improvement of musical standards from that date. As in so many things, improvements in orchestral playing – such as better placement of the orchestra, abandonment of the *batteur de mesure*, and the use of the violin leader – meant Italianization.[29] So did the long battle to abolish the *urlo francese* and improve the quality of opera singing, including the brief skirmish which was the activity of the École royale de chant. Many Italian composers made Paris their home, from Piccinni, Sacchini, and Viotti, through Cherubini to Rossini. As has already been demonstrated, German composers made an increasing impact on French musical life from Gluck onwards, either in person or just via their music.

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[27] Peter Burke, *What is Cultural History?* (Malden, Mass.: Polity, 2008), 122-3.

[28] Arthur Pougin, *Notice sur Rode, violoniste français* (Paris: Pottier de Lalaine, 1874), 5.

[29] John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 200.

Remarkably enough, this openness to foreign composers seems often to have been shared by the French composers. Gossec, exactly the sort of middle-ranking French composer who had much to fear from competition, welcomed Gluck and Mozart, and in a letter protesting against his own ill-treatment at the hands of the former over the matter of a libretto is still at pains to acknowledge Gluck's superior talent.[30] In a later letter to a young composer who had just won the Prix de Rome, Gossec counsels the study of the Italians from Pergolesi through to Paissiello, the Germans from Gluck through Mozart to Hasse, and finally a few French colleagues: Grétry, Monsigny, and Dalayrac.[31]

An eagerness to learn from France's neighbours was not confined to music. Before the Revolution, the young Élisabeth Vigée le Brun received the following advice from Joseph Vernet:

> Mon enfant, ne suivez aucun système d'école. Consultez seulement les œuvres des grands maîtres de l'Italie, ainsi que celles des maîtres flamands ; mais surtout faites le plus que vous pourrez d'après nature : la nature est le premier de tous les maîtres. Si vous étudiez avec soin, cela vous empêchera de prendre aucune manière.[32]
>
> [My child, do not follow any system or school. Just consult the works of the great masters of Italy and those of the Flemish masters. Above all, paint as much as you can from nature, which is the greatest of all masters. Study it carefully and you will avoid picking up any particular mannerisms.]

This passage shows that Italy and Germany were not the only points of reference. It also provides another example of the desire to transcend the narrowness of individual schools, which Baillot expresses so forcefully in *L'Art du violon*.[33]

French universalism was not only encyclopaedic, but synthetic. The aim was always to select the *best* of what could be found abroad. Jean-Baptiste Cartier's *L'Art du violon,* in which he attempts to distil the most useful advice on how to play the violin from the Italian, German,

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[30] Julien Tiersot, Introduction to Ch. 8 and letter to Guillard, 1778, in *Lettres de musiciens écrites en français du XVe au XXe siècle* (Turin: Bocca Frères, 1924-1936), 206-210.

[31] Letter to A.H. Chelard, 1812, *Ibid.*, 224.

[32] Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *Mémoires d'une portraitiste* (Paris: Scala, 1989), 25.

[33] See Chapter 5 above.

and French traditions, as well as the best violin pieces, provides a classic example.[34] So does the methodological approach of the Victor Cousin (1792–1867), whose philosophy aimed to extract the best from the heritage of French, Scottish, and German philosophical traditions.

> Ce que je recommande, c'est un éclectisme éclairé qui, jugeant avec équité et même avec bienveillance toutes les écoles, leur emprunte ce qu'elles ont de vrai, et néglige ce qu'elles ont de faux.[35]
>
> [What I am advocating is an enlightened eclecticism which judges all schools fairly and even benevolently, takes from them what is true and leaves what is false.]

I cannot agree with Michael Ward, who subsumes all cultural borrowing under the concept of 'eclecticism' and presents it as a weakness of French culture. He does this in the context of a reappraisal of the string quartets of the French School, which have traditionally suffered from comparison with Vienna-classical quartets regarded as normative.[36] While Ward's reappraisal is welcome, his inflation of the concept of eclecticism to embrace any fusion of elements across cultures, either geographically or temporally, causes it to lose all coherence. Eclecticism in art means not only to gather disparate elements together but to hold them in unresolved tension. Cousin may have accepted the label eclectic', due to his effort at synthesis, but his philosophy is better labelled as 'spiritualist' or 'intuitivist'.[37] Like Baillot's

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[34] Jean-Baptiste Cartier, *L'Art du violon, ou Collection choisi dans les sonates des écoles italienne, française et allemande* (Paris: Decombe, 1798).

[35] Victor Cousin, *Leçons sur le vrai, le beau et le bien (Discours prononcé à l'ouverture du cours, le 4 décembre 1817 de la philosophie au XIXe siècle)* (Éditions Ligaran, 2015; first published, Paris, 1853), 16.

[36] Michael B. Ward, *Un Mélange Étrange: The Problem of Éclectisme in the Early Nineteenth-Century French String Quartet* (PhD dissertation, University of Colorado, 2017). The quartets Ward examines are those of Kreutzer, Baillot, Rode, and Dancla. Although Baillot and Cousin shared a strong belief in intuition and moral judgement, Ward's claim that the language of *L'Art du violon* aligns Baillot with Cousin's philosophy (121-2) is unconvincing. Both Kreutzer and Rode were dead, and Baillot's career was on the decline, by the time the July Revolution brought Cousin's philosophy to official prominence.

[37] J.B. Schneewind & Allen W. Wood, Ch. 14, 'Moral Epistemology, 1788–1870', in *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century (1790–1870)*, ed. Allen W. Wood & Songsuk Susan Hahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 469-474; Jeremy Jennings, *Revolution and the Republic. A History of Political Thought in France since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 320-3. For Jennings, the significance of Cousin's philosophy lies in its rejection of empiricism. Cousin and his philosophy enjoyed great popularity for the brief period of the July Monarchy (1830-1848), when he was made a peer of France and given control of the French university system and the lycées. It was associated with the political idea of the *juste milieu* through its attempt to reconcile faith and reason and its advocacy of constitutional monarchy. Although a main effect of Cousin's spiritualism was to let God back into philosophy, Cousin's conception of the infinite was strongly at odds with the legitimist Catholicism of

attitude to artistic progress,[38] Cousin's attitude to his philosophical heritage emphasized the necessity of a critical standpoint. Baillot and his colleagues were universalist, not eclectic.

Across the period, the Conservatoire musicians seem to have retained a responsiveness to outside influence, an openness tempered by the French critical spirit. Not only did the Conservatoire staff include many foreigners such as Paer and Cherubini, but many of them toured extensively, including Kreutzer, Rode and Baillot. We have already discussed the warm welcome given to Mendelssohn by the Conservatoire musicians in 1831-2. Louis Spohr was likewise welcomed into private settings when he visited Paris in 1820-21, as well as performing in public.[39]

The weakness of the Conservatoire's vocal department meant a constant search for solutions. La Rochefoucauld's was to appoint a foreigner, Rossini, to be inspector-general of voice over Cherubini's head, in 1826.[40] A few years later, François Fétis sought to address the weakness of choral singing, contending that the problem 'lay in the mode of instruction, and unless that was changed, one would never obtain the results which are admired in Germany and England.' He proposed to travel to several German music schools in order to bring back ideas for the improvement of teaching in France. When he put his proposal to a meeting of the teaching committee in 1832, Paër, Vogt, and Habeneck protested at his characterization of Conservatoire vocal teaching as 'terrible' [*vicieux*] but did not oppose the plan. Baillot calmly stated that anything which might serve to improve the state of the art was to be welcomed.[41] As this exchange illustrates, the sense of national inferiority in musical culture

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the Restoration and his acceptance of rule by an educated elite meant that his philosophy was rejected by the Left, even by a Christian socialist like Pierre Leroux.

38 'Étudions sans cesse la marche de l'art, multiplions les essais : s'il avance, favorisons tous les mouvemens; s'il est prêt à reculer, faisons nos efforts pour le retenir [Let us study unceasingly the progress of art, let us increase our efforts: if there is progress, let us encourage its movement; if it is ready to retreat, let us strive to hold it steady]'. Baillot, *L'Art du violon*, 7.

39 *Spohr's Autobiography* (London: Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), vol. II, 127-8.

40 Anik Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire de musique et de déclamation', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 49.

41 Minutes from meeting of the *comité d'enseignement*, 13 July 1832: AN AJ/37/193/3, 34-35. Vogt is recorded as also having travelled extensively through England and Germany, and having visited 'the principal schools and philharmonic establishments'. He considered that the protestant countries had the advantage in choral singing through the tradition of singing hymns, often in four parts.

which was one of the spurs to the creation of the Conservatoire had partly given way to a pride at institutional and national achievement, the two being closely linked. This pride had not led to the conclusion that France had nothing more to learn from abroad.

The universalist spirit did not extend to the composition of the student body. Across the period, foreign nationals were only allowed to enrol as auditors and only with the Director's permission. By a royal decree of 1822, probably instigated by Cherubini, foreigners were even denied attendance as auditors, despite the regulations which provided for the possibility. The justification given was that the government did not wish 'to provide free education to non-French individuals who would take their talents elsewhere'.[42] Famously, this meant that Franz Liszt was denied entry on his arrival in Paris in 1823 and César Franck was only admitted after his father gained French citizenship in 1837. It was around the same time (1832) that Habeneck was resisting the desire of those within the Société des concerts who wished to engage foreign soloists, presumably to excite public interest. Holoman does not offer a clear opinion as to whether Habeneck's resistance was only due to his expressed determination to keep the focus on the mastering of the full Beethoven repertoire.[43] It was also at this time that Cherubini was trying to hold back the flood of foreign piano virtuosos, and when Baillot politely but firmly rejected the example of Paganini. On the other hand, Kalkbrenner, a French pianist not teaching at the Conservatoire, was one of those agitating at the Société des concerts for the benefits of engaging foreign soloists. In any case, Cherubini was finally overruled by the minister overseeing the Conservatoire in 1841 and the practice of allowing foreign auditors reintroduced; travelling virtuosos did become a regular feature of programming at the Société in the late 1830s. On balance, I would suggest that Cherubini's famous resistance to allowing foreign students access to the Conservatoire was principally motivated by a desire to strengthen musical culture within France, rather than to keep (other) foreigners out. And as already discussed, the objections of Baillot and Cherubini to the cult of virtuosity had to do with taste, rather than xenophobia.[44]

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[42] Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 70. The relevant 1822 regulations can be found in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 248.

[43] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 158.

[44] See Chapter 6 above.

Military discipline?

Among the few serious attempts which have been made to describe the internal culture of the early Conservatoire, there are two which emphasize strict discipline as a defining characteristic. The first is the 1997 article by Rémy Campos mentioned earlier which draws on records of several disciplinary incidents together with details of the regulations. The cases date from 1843 to 1873 and therefore fall outside the period covered by the present study, but the regulations referred to go back as far as 1816 and I think we can presume some continuity of disciplinary culture. Campos presents the Conservatoire classroom as a field of power negotiation, a field significantly complicated in the cases where a male teacher had to teach female students. He concludes that 'pedagogy and police are inseparable'. Campos thinks in terms of the discipline of time, speech, and the body, but does not reference Foucault directly. He looks in some detail at the provision for the control of student movement within the School and acknowledges the pressure on the School to prevent mixing of the sexes. Although Campos generally paints a picture of strict discipline, he provides some qualification: 'l'opération n'est cependant pas coercition brutale [the operation (of this discipline) is not a matter of brutal coercion]', since the School also provided pupils with an opportunity to define their identities.[45]

Kailan Rubinoff's 2017 study rests its analysis more explicitly on Foucault and goes much further, ascribing the early success of the School to a military mode of instruction.[46] Rubinoff's thesis rests principally on an analysis of the official flute method and on the continued presence in the Conservatoire regulations of a military-style regime of discipline and punishment, inherited from the National Guard years. I have already questioned the validity of the first analysis by looking at the flute method in the context of the other instrumental methods, as well as changes in compositional style. Now it is worth taking a

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[45] Rémy Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire de Paris au XIXe siècle : éléments pour une description', *Revue de musicologie* 83 (1997), 105-116.

[46] Kailan Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model of Music Pedagogy: The Paris Conservatoire, Hugot and Wunderlich's Méthode de flûte, and the Disciplining of the Musician' in *Journal of Musicology* 34/4 (2017), 473-514. Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is Rubinoff's principal theoretical reference and the key section is Chapter 1: 'Docile Bodies'. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, transl. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 2020; first published as *Surveiller et punir : Naissance de la prison*, Gallimard, 1975), 135-169.

brief look at the disciplinary provisions of the 1796 regulations in the light of the presentations of Campos and Rubinoff.

The language of these may sound harsh to an Anglophone ear: they do refer to a *bureau de surveillance* and to *police des élèves*, but *surveillance* only means 'oversight' or 'supervision' and, looked at closely, the disciplinary provisions are not so draconian as Campos and Rubinoff would have us believe. The four degrees of punishment for rule-breaking on the part of students look fairly mild: (1) a note in the 'police' register; (2) a copy of the note sent to parents/tutor; (3) publication of the note on Conservatoire noticeboard; (4) expulsion. More space is devoted to the duties of staff than to those of students.[47] The prescription of fines for failure of a staff member to carry out service may be a reflection of a musical economy in which it was normal for one person to occupy several positions and, in the case of playing positions, even to send a proxy to rehearsals and only show up for performances. The Conservatoire was making it clear that professors were to attend in person; indeed, one of the signs of the demoralization of the Conservatoire under the early Restoration was that some professors had acquired the habit of deputizing their teaching to their repetiteurs without authorization.[48] Attendance registers were kept for both teachers and pupils and more than half an hour late was considered an absence. Given the potentially disruptive effects of students arriving late and remembering Gossec's letter to La Ferté from the days of the École royale de chant,[49] this does not seem unreasonable.

The problem with reliance on formal regulations as testimony is that we need to know to what extent they were actually observed. Campos tends to take various aspects at face value. For example, the regulations prescribe silence in the classroom during lessons, but this is not proof that silence was indeed strictly observed.[50] The fact that this rule had to be reaffirmed in 1816 and 1822 suggests not, at least during this period. Similarly, in noting the discipline to which teachers were subject with regard to attendance and punctuality, Campos states that 'Aucune infraction ne devant rester impunie [no infraction (of the rule) was to go

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47 First règlement, an IV (1796), Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 223-229. Key sections are articles VIII, XI, and 'Application des peines [punishments]'.

48 Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 72.

49 See Chapter 3 above.

50 Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 112.

unpunished]', but can only quote a regulation prescribing sanctions for *habitual* lateness.[51] Charles Dancla's testimony to the strict silence observed in the context of the competition deliberations in Cherubini's time is a more solid indication of the existence of a disciplined culture, although because these were public events we cannot be sure how far it reflects the atmosphere inside the Conservatoire on an ordinary teaching day.[52] Berlioz, for example, makes no mention of being disciplined despite direct confrontations with Director Cherubini in the 1820s. From his memoirs, the punishment for his refusal to toe the line was Cherubini's later refusal to help him to mount performances of his works at the Conservatoire or to offer him a teaching position.[53] This sounds more like the carrot of patronage than the military stick. Likewise, the composition professors Lesueur and Berton fought determinedly to retain the habit acquired under Perne of holding their classes comfortably at home, rather than at the Conservatoire as required by the regulations. Berton resisted Cherubini successfully until 1832 and Lesueur went over Cherubini's head to the intendant Choiseul in order to obtain dispensation from the relevant regulation on the grounds of his age and distinction.[54]

There are more qualifications one could make concerning what conclusions we can safely draw about discipline at the Conservatoire. Among them is the likelihood that the military language of the 1800 regulations, which are the ones quoted by Rubinoff, derives from the fact that they had to be approved by Lucien Bonaparte. They are a reflection of the militarization of the state under Napoleon, rather than a major change of atmosphere within the Conservatoire.[55] Nonetheless, I think we can accept that discipline probably was fairly strict at the Conservatoire in the early years. The principal reasons for this were that the scrutiny associated with the expenditure of public money required it and the morality of the

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51 Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 111.

52 Charles Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs* (Paris: Delamotte, 1893), 17.

53 Hector Berlioz, *Mémoires* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991; first published in Paris, 1869), esp. 72-74. Berlioz did hold the position of librarian at the Conservatoire from 1839 until his death in 1869, but he was denied a teaching position.

54 Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 72-3.

55 I have made a similar point about Rubinoff's quotation of a prize-day speech by Lucien Bonaparte from 1801, rather than of the first speeches by François de Neufchâteau. See Douglas Macnicol, 'The French School of Violin Playing between Revolution and Reaction: A Comparison of the Treatises of 1803 and 1834 by Pierre Baillot', *Nineteenth Century Music Review* 18/3 (Dec. 2021), 369.

time dictated strict separation of the sexes wherever possible. It should be remembered that discipline was strict for education in general by modern standards. It remains to determine, however, whether there was a fourth reason relating to a specifically military character deriving from the genesis of the institution in the National Guard. Since I have highlighted the relevance of Revolutionary experience to other aspects of Conservatoire culture such as collective authorship, the nature of the National Guard inheritance deserves examination.

The history of the National Guard is complex, and its role and character underwent dramatic change in the course of the Revolution.[56] Fundamentally, however, it was a collection of bourgeois militias. It was not at any stage a disciplined fighting force. It was established by the revolutionary middle-class as a counterweight to the regular army which was thought of as a monarchist institution. In part, the Guard was a political force, there to safeguard the Revolution. In part, it was a response to the breakdown of public order caused by the collapse of the monarchical state and thus it took up the role of community policing.[57] Except for a brief period between 1792 and 1794, membership of the National Guard was a symbol of respectability: entry required proof of a certain tax status and guardsmen had to pay for their own uniforms. Jean Valjean's National Guard uniform was thus an essential element of his camouflage when hiding from the police in 1830s Paris.[58] As the political situation in 1790s Paris became radicalized, however, so did the National Guard and by 1793 it had become a frequently insurrectional actor, feared by the Legislative Assembly, the Convention, and even the Jacobins. Much of its revolutionary force was expended in the formation of the volunteer battalions, which marched to the frontiers to fight the invading powers at the side of a regular army weakened by desertion. The logic of the situation forced the two armies to merge and the National Guard battalions lent to the new citizens' army its revolutionary energy, as well

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[56] See for example Georges Carrot, *La Garde nationale (1789-1871) : une force publique ambiguë* (Paris: Harmattan, 2001). Although this work was published in 2001, it appears from the references to have been written quite a bit earlier. The most recent reference is from 1979, and the principal histories of the Revolution cited by the author are Godechot (1965, 1968, 1970), Lefebvre (1932) and Soboul (1959), although Carrot does cite Mona Ozouf's famous work on the Revolutionary fetes (1976).

[57] See Dale Lothrop Clifford, 'The National Guard and the Parisian Community, 1789-1790', *French Historical Studies* 16 (1990), 849-78. Clifford concludes that the most important role of the National Guard was community policing.

[58] Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (Paris: Gallimard 1973; first published, Paris, 1862).

as major problems with discipline, resulting from such democratic practices such as election of officers by the men.[59]

The National Guard was one manifestation of a militant conception of citizenship, a conception which was evident from early in the Revolution, and which was heightened by the pressure of the wars.[60] The National Guard years bequeathed to the Conservatoire public-spiritedness, commitment, and patriotism, not the geometrical discipline of the eighteenth-century army, a discipline which did not characterize the Revolutionary armies.[61] In time, Napoleon's conquests forged a professional army, but even then its successes were not due to exemplary discipline, but rather to size, speed of movement, tactical improvisation, and savage determination.[62] Any similarities which Rubinoff is able to draw between the language of ancien régime military manuals and the Conservatoire flute methods, therefore, have little or nothing to do with the National Guard experience of Conservatoire staff,[63] though they may reflect common underlying discourses to do with the body in accordance with Foucault's thesis in his *Discipline and Punish*.[64]

A final note. In February 1826, the *conseil d'administration*, which was the principal committee at that time, had to consider the potential of a new machine for regulating musical time called a 'metronome'. The Committee concluded that it might be of use for composers in indicating the desired tempo, but not as a perpetual regulator of time. Pupils and teachers

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[59] See for example Jean-Clément Martin, *Nouvelle histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Perrin, 2012), 407. See also Alan Forrest, 'Military Trauma', 382-397, and David Andress, 'Politics and Insurrection: The Sans-culottes, The Popular Movement and the People of Paris', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, ed. David Andress (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 382-397 and 401-417.

[60] See for example Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, transl. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988, first published, 1976).

[61] For an example of what I mean by 'geometrical discipline', see Henning Eichberg, 'Geometrie als barocke Verhaltensnorm – Fortifikation und Exerzitien', in *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 4 (1977), 17-50.

[62] Other ingredients of the success of Napoleon's armies include pre-Revolutionary reforms of Guibert and Gribeauval, a strongly meritocratic culture inherited from the Revolution, and structural and organizational reforms such as replacing large regiments with more flexible and manoeuverable *demi-brigades*. See Alan Forrest, *Napoleon's Men: the Soldiers of the Revolution and Empire* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006; first published, 2002), 14-16.

[63] Rubinoff, 'Toward a Revolutionary Model of Music Pedagogy', 485 and 501.

[64] See footnote 46 above. Foucault does not really consider the possibility that disciplines might be voluntarily adopted in order to gain freedom of action, although in his brief discussion of monastic disciplines, he comes close: *Discipline and Punish*, 137.

were not to be subjected to 'the cold monotony of the pendulum'.[65] No army was ever so solicitous.

Gender and class

Among the many aspects of early Conservatoire culture to have received inadequate attention thus far is the role of women within its walls. Exceptions include detailed biographies of Hélène de Montgeroult and Louise Farrenc, respectively the first and second female professors of piano in the history of the Conservatoire.[66] By and large, however, the tacit approach seems to have been to accept that the institution was male-dominated in keeping with its time and to refrain from further comment. Overall, the participation of women in professional musical life was restricted to singers in the theatres and to private piano teaching. The Opéra was the stage for many great female singing careers, if not in relation to the number of aspirants, but otherwise the general exclusion of women from public musical life means that whereas for young men the Conservatoire provided professional musical training, we cannot say the same for young women. Musical prowess did constitute a form of feminine cultural capital: it could help a young woman to make an advantageous marriage and it might enable her to earn an income as a music teacher, but the pressure on her to succeed in her musical studies was likely to be less than that on a young man.[67] This might explain the tentative observation that the bulk of the anecdotal evidence concerning student indiscipline within the Conservatoire seems to refer to female students: they had less to lose.

But the position of women at the early Conservatoire was not simply one of exclusion. In fact, the first thing to note is that teaching both young women and men in the one institution was highly unusual for the time and must be ascribed to the universalism of the Revolution, limited as it was. In his *Observations sur l'état de la musique*, Bernard Sarrette lists the exclusion of women as one reason for the inferiority of French musical life under the ancien

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[65] Minutes from meeting held on 27 February 1826, AN AJ/37/192/2e, 19. Present were Cherubini (president), D'Henneville, Lesueur, Berton, Plantade, Baptiste, Kreutzer (Rodolphe), and St Prix.

[66] Jérôme Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult : La Marquise et la Marseillaise* (Lyon: Symétrie, 2006); Bea Friedland, *Louise Farrenc, 1804-1875: composer, performer, scholar* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1980).

[67] See for example Rebecca Dowd Geoffroy-Swinden, 'Music as Feminine Capital in Napoleonic France: Nancy Macdonald's Musical Upbringing', in *Music & Letters*, 100/2 (2019), 302-334.

régime.[68] Although women could only enrol in certain subjects, they made up a sizeable proportion of student numbers: hovering around a third in the Cherubini years (1822-42) and steadily climbing thereafter.[69] Apart from the context of village schools for young children, it is unlikely the sexes were mixed in any other educational establishment of the time, unless one counts the Conservatoire's forerunner, the École royale de chant. One has only to recall how customary it was for middle- and upper-class families to send their daughters to convents for their education to realize the potential problems this may have posed for the reputation of the School.[70] As Campos has acknowledged, this was a major reason for the strict monitoring of student movement within the corridors of the School.[71] Men and women even had separate doors for entering the building.

In principle, the enrolment of girls and young women was limited to solfa, singing, and piano.[72] There were separate solfa and piano classes for female students, but ensemble and singing classes could be mixed. There was provision for mothers and guardians to attend such classes in order to keep an eye on the female students. From 1822, women could also study 'harmony and practical accompaniment', harp, and organ.[73] Although there was no bar to the appointment of female professors, they were rare across the whole nineteenth century and, not surprisingly, many of the exceptions were professors of piano or singing. From very early on, there were often female repetiteurs for the women's solfa and piano classes, but nonetheless the combination of male teacher and female class could arise frequently, which had the potential to lead to specific problems of discipline. As one professor complained to the Director, he could not take a woman by the shoulders and show her the door in a situation where she persisted in disturbing the class and refused to leave (the implication is that he

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[68] Bernard Sarrette, *Observations sur l'état de la musique en France (lues à l'Assemblée générale des membres du Conservatoire le 5 ventôse an X*) (Paris: Didot, 1801), 31-2.

[69] See Appendix D for the figures.

[70] Even well-to-do peasant families, such as that of Emma Bovary (Flaubert).

[71] Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', esp. 110, 114.

[72] According to the regulations, children as young as eight could be admitted, but in the first years, entrants generally ranged between 18 and 21 in age. We are, therefore, generally talking about young men and women, rather than boys and girls. See the entry register, AN AJ/37/351.

[73] Going by the 1822 regulations, which are not an infallible guide: Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 245-250.

could have resorted to physical force with a male student).[74] In briefly considering why Montgeroult's tenure at the Conservatoire was so short, Brigitte François-Sappey suggests that one reason was she was too beautiful to lead a class of male students.[75] This is not one of the reasons put forward by Dorival in his detailed and sensitive biography of the piano virtuoso. Dorival identifies a 'profound aesthetic disagreement' between Montgeroult and Louis Adam, a disagreement accentuated by the fact that it was Adam who received the task of authoring the official piano method and not his more forward-thinking female colleague. Dorival will not say it, but his account opens the possibility that her resignation from the Conservatoire was partly motivated by pique. While acknowledging Montgeroult's ill health, Dorival basically concludes that the combined tensions in her professional life resulting from her gender and aristocratic background could only be solved by her retreat from public life.[76] Clearly, despite considerable scholarly silence on the subject, gender was an issue at the Conservatoire.

Why was it that women were not allowed to study stringed or wind instruments in the first years of the Conservatoire? Unlike in Britain, the restriction was not on respectable women performing publicly per se: they did so at the prizewinner concerts from the outset. As already noted, Hélène de Montgeroult had performed publicly at Viotti's theatre in the early years of the 1790s, though this was certainly an anomaly given her birth and probably her gender also. She was one of a generation of fine women pianists, such as Mlle Jeunehomme, Julie Candeille, and Marie Bigot, who probably performed principally within the confines of the salon world rather than publicly. Female singers of course performed at the opera theatres. As Dorival notes, the male prejudice against female composers was greater than that against female performers[77] and the exclusion of women from composition classes can only be explained by notions of female inferiority. However, though there may have been concerns of a pseudo-medical nature relating to the physical effort required to play wind instruments and the effect of strain on the supposedly delicate female constitution, I do not think that women were considered physically or mentally incapable of playing the violin.

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[74] Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 105.

[75] Brigitte François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 32.

[76] Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, esp. 144.

[77] Dorival, *Hélène de Montgeroult*, 12.

Rather, the concern seems to have been that the raised arms and movement imparted to the body was unseemly because potentially erotic. While this may seem a quaint notion now, the descriptions of performances given at the famous all-female conservatories of Venice reveal an element of prurience on the part of the English gentleman visitors. One account described how the girls of the choir were glimpsed through a screen 'as they flutteringly abandon themselves to all the movements the performance of lively music requires'.[78]

Without engaging with the vast literature on the restrictions placed on womens' bodies and intricate forms of misogyny, the conscious motivation to bar women from playing stringed instruments is likely to have derived primarily from notions of propriety. The middle-class nature of the Conservatoire as an establishment has already been explored in some detail. In the foundational years under the Directorate, this was accentuated by the need of the political class to define itself simultaneously against a potentially savage populace and a corrupt, Counter-revolutionary aristocracy.[79] A key aspect of this class-identity seems to have been an insistence on the modest comportment of women. The description of a Conservatoire choir performance in 1797 published in the *Décade philosophique* and partially reproduced in Chapter 4 above includes the following passage. The word *honnête* [respectable] is a marker of middle-class identity:

> Les jeunes filles, parmi lesquelles un grand nombre joint à tout l'éclat de la jeunesse et de la beauté un air de décence qui annonce l'éducation la plus honnête, étaient presque toutes accompagnées de leurs mères. C'est sous leurs yeux attendris qu'elles célébraient, d'une voix pure, la Patrie et la Liberté. La strophe des femmes dans le *Chant du Départ* n'avait jamais paru si touchante.[80]
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> [The girls, among whom many united the glamour of youth and beauty with an air of decency which spoke of a most proper education, were almost all accompanied by their mothers. It was under their maternal eyes that the girls celebrated, in pure voices, Fatherland

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[78] John Spitzer and Neil Zaslaw, *The Birth of the Orchestra: History of an Institution, 1650-1815* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 176-7.

[79] Jean-Luc Chappey, 'The new elites. Questions about political, social, and cultural reconstruction after the Terror', in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution*, 556.

[80] *La Décade philosophique*, 30 messidor an V (27 July 1797), quoted in Constant Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique et de déclamation (1895)*, (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, 2010; originally Paris: Delelain Frères, 1895), 142.

> and Liberty. The verse of the women in the *Song of Departure* had never seemed more affecting.]

These restrictions on what women could study were tacit in the regulations until 1822, and the fact that this is the time they first appear may indicate that they were starting to be questioned. But even in the first years, there are intriguing exceptions to the rule, such as Félicité Lebrun, the student of Baillot who won prizes in 1797 and 1799. Typically, Constant Pierre lists this anomaly without comment.[81] In 1821, Baillot drew up lists of the pupils he had taught since 1798 under the following headings: 'Students to whom I have given violin lessons' and 'Students to whom I have given piano lessons' (both presumably, private), and 'students in my classes at the Conservatoire and those of my repetiteurs'. The piano students are all women and the private violin students are all men, with the sole exception of Lebrun, and the note in parenthesis that she was (or later became) Duchess of Laviano.[82] Lebrun is also listed among the Conservatoire pupils with a note of her first prize, but she is not the only woman: there is also a Mlle Nina Guaglia. The waters are further muddied by the entry in the competition register for the violin competition held in 1818, which lists a Mlle Blanchet among the six participants.[83]

These exceptions pose more questions than they answer. There is mention in Arthur Pougin's biography of Rode of a public debut by a female pupil of Viotti in 1790, again in Viotti's theatre. Mlle Germini both sang and played the violin. The review in the *Mercure de France* was lukewarm about her singing, but full of praise for her violin playing:

> Elle a bien mieux réussi sur le violon. On l'a fort applaudi dans un concerto de Viotti, qu'elle a joué avec une précision singulière, une habilité d'exécution fort extraordinaire dans une femme, et qui la place aux rangs des meilleurs professeurs.[84]
>
> [She succeeded much better with the violin. She was loudly applauded for a concerto of Viotti, which she played with a precision and skilfulness of execution which is quite

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[81] The lists of laureats in violin are to be found in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 608-610. Pierre has been kind enough to italicize the surnames of women on the list, a classic case of the male being the 'unmarked category', linguistically speaking. Further female prizewinners in violin followed in 1856 and 1860.

[82] Pierre Baillot, *Souvenirs // 2*, sous-notices 8-10, BnF VMB 84 MS (2). I cannot be sure of spelling.

[83] See Appendix G.

[84] Arthur Pougin, *Notice sur Rode, violoniste français* (Paris: Pottier de Lalaine, 1874), 44.

> extraordinary for a woman and which places her in the company of the best exponents of the art.]

The phrasing here is significant. The review does confirm that female violinists were something of a rarity and if it weren't for the final clause the praise could be interpreted as patronizing along familiar lines: her playing is only remarkable for being that of a woman. But placing her among the best, period, suggests otherwise.

If Montgeroult and Lebrun were the only anomalies in the Conservatoire, then one might group them with Germini and speculate that they were a symptom of the greater participation of women in public life which accompanied the first years of the Revolution. It was the Jacobins who first opposed this trend, partly to curb the prominent role of working women in protest and insurrection and perhaps also because their one-time opponents, the Girondins, included several influential and highly educated women such as Mesdames de Roland and de Grouchy. The new Civil Code associated with Napoleon was particularly restrictive of women and can be seen as part of a longer-term push to confine them to the private sphere. The general militarization of society which was dramatically increased by the wars also encouraged a masculinization of society. The list of exceptional female violinists above does not result from an exhaustive search of the archives and there may be more. Exceptions they still remain. It is very unlikely that the prohibition on girls and women studying the violin was solely an official one: if they had been learning privately in numbers, Baillot would have had private female violin pupils. After all, he had many private female piano pupils.

Another potential explanation derives from the observation that two of the above women violinists were Italian: Germini and Guaglia. There seem to have been numerous female violinists in eighteenth-century Italy. Venice was famous for its female choirs, which were maintained by four ospedali, known as La Pietà, I Mendicanti, L'Ospedaletto and Gl'Incurabili. These were charitable institutions which had developed into conservatories for girls and women. They each maintained a *coro* and taught singing and various instruments, including the violin. Their musical *maestri* were often renowned composers such as Porpora, Sacchini, Cimarosa, and they had *maestre* as well, at least one of whom became a renowned composer, singer, and violinist: Maddalena Lombardini-Sirmen (1745-1818). Another was Regina Strinasacchi (1761-1839), for whom Mozart wrote his wonderful violin and piano sonata in Bb major K.454. The quality of the music produced by these women became famous and paying boarders (necessarily female) were accepted from as far away as the

courts of Mannheim, Dresden, and Salzburg. Some came for a few months to have violin lessons from Tartini, Vivaldi, or Martinelli.[85] There is thus evidence to suggest that the moral strictures which largely prevented women from playing the violin in eighteenth-century France were not as powerful in Italy and Helen Geyer's mention of German *ospitanti* at La Pietà suggests that this may also have been true of parts of Germany. Strinasacchi could hardly have performed two concerts in Vienna in 1784 (one with Mozart) if this had been regarded as scandalous. When she married Johann Schlick, a cellist in the orchestra at Gotha, she joined that orchestra, too.[86]

With regard to the exclusion of women from study of all instruments barring the piano, I should note that it was precisely the piano, the instrument most associated with women, which was held back under Cherubini's directorship. This seems too much of a coincidence. Cherubini insisted that the value of the piano lay in its roles as an accompanying instrument or as an aid to the general understanding of music and he restricted the number of piano classes in spite of the rapidly rising popularity of the piano as a solo instrument.

The ruling ethos of nineteenth-century French culture was an aspiration for glory from which women were implicitly excluded. As the Revolution soured, national pride was principally invested in military prowess, but even as the military defeat of the Empire caused energies to be redirected towards cultural attainment, the ethos remained masculinist. The Société des concerts was one cultural arena in which the French could claim to have won renown and it excluded women even more determinedly than the Conservatoire. Apart from rare exceptions, the participation of women was restricted to the female voices of the choir, generally young women who not infrequently ended up married to men from the orchestra.[87]

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[85] Helen Geyer, 'Die venezianischen Konservatorien im 18. Jahrhundert: Beobachtungen zur Auflösung eines Systems', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), vol. I, 31-47.

[86] Chappell White, 'Strinasacchi [Strina Sacchi], Regina', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Both Mozarts, father and son, praised the expressiveness and taste of Strinasacchi's playing. It was at one of these concerts that W.A. Mozart and Strinasacchi gave the first performance of K.454. Mozart, having composed the entire sonata in his head, only had time to write out the violin part and therefore played the piano part with a blank book in front of him in an effort not to draw attention to himself. One assumes that the book had at least the lines of staves already printed and that he turned pages at intervals in order to keep up the pretence, but evidently, it was discovered.

[87] There was quite some debate as to the admission of women to full membership of the Society. Understandably, some of the more established recruits jibbed at having to remain as permanent *aspirantes*.

These observations are consistent both with the picture presented by Habermas of an emerging public sphere in which virtue is a public quality and with feminist critiques of Habermas which point to the exclusion of women as a key characteristic of that public sphere.[88] The fact that the female percentage of students rose substantially after the end of Cherubini's tenure invites the conclusion that the musical conservatism of his generation was accompanied by a conservatism regarding the place of women, which was being eroded as new generations came to prominence.[89]

It is oddly difficult to find out exactly when the Conservatoire started to admit women to the violin classes, but it can be inferred that the date was around 1850, as female prizewinners appear again from 1852.[90] Strangely again, the regulations of 1850 do not confirm this. They specify the number of classes for each gender in piano, harp, harmony, and accompaniment, and are otherwise silent on the matter. Article 53, however, specifies that the teaching of men and women is separate, except for acting classes.[91] This should logically mean that women were not admitted to classes of stringed instruments. On the other hand, they undoubtedly continued to be admitted to separate solfa classes, even though these are also not mentioned. At the Vienna conservatory, by way of comparison, enrolment of girls was restricted to the classes of piano and voice up until 1851, when this was expanded to include harmony (nearly thirty years after Paris). Not until 1864 were the first girls admitted to the violin classes.[92]

A new statute was voted in 1843, which made provision for only eight active female members of the Society, using language Holoman classes as 'blatantly offensive to modern eyes'. They were to be paid like all members on presentation of their tokens but were explicitly excluded from the pension fund. D. Kern Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, 1828–1967* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), esp. 177.

88 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989; originally published as *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, 1962), 3-4; Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 1988).

89 See Appendix D.

90 Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 608-610.

91 Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 255-9.

92 Lynne Heller, 'Das Konservatorium für Musik in Wien zwischen bürgelich-adeligem Mäzenatentum und staatlicher Politik', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 205-228.

A family affair

The reverse side of the legal subordination of women was the value attached to the affective bonds within families which had grown in the course of the eighteenth century. In this, the influence of Rousseau was significant. Robert Darnton quotes from the correspondence of a bourgeois from La Rochelle whose reading of Rousseau made him determined to become a better husband and father.[93] Baillot is another typical case: he kept special diaries of his children's first years ('Souvenirs des premières années de ma chère fille Augustine', and so on), and his letters home to his wife are full of affection.[94] Given that, as has already been noted, musicians often participated in the teaching of their own children and that, even after the foundation of the Conservatoire, much music-making occurred in private contexts, this made music very much a family affair. The continuing dominance of vocal music and the increasing ubiquity of the piano meant that the restriction of female students to voice and piano classes had less impact on the general participation of women in musical life than might otherwise have been the case.

Professionally, music had often run in families in ancien régime France. This is what David Golby calls 'continental practice', 'in which family ties, the passing of expertise (often as well as an instrument and a position) down the line in the form of a type of practical apprenticeship, is based on a continuity of excellence'.[95] This traditional pattern is still observable in nineteenth-century France, with the difference that the Conservatoire could be the framing setting for family transmission of skill. Both from a ready accumulation of individual cases and from the frequent recurrence of the same family names in student enrolment records and the staff lists contained in budgets, we can see that admission of family members as students and their appointment as members of staff was a common phenomenon. It started in the National Guard years, when the first school was formed to teach the sons of national guardsmen. Many siblings enrolled in the Conservatoire concurrently. In the first year alone (Year V), there were two enrolments under the name of Blasius – at this time there

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93 Robert Darnton, 'Readers respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity', in *The Great Cat Massacre, and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 236.

94 Pierre Baillot, *Souvenirs // 1*, sous-notices 4-6, BnF VMB 84 MS (1).

95 David Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2016; first published, Ashgate, 2004), 91.

were three professors named Blasius in the teaching staff, two of them in violin.[96] Kreutzer's younger brothers both enrolled and one ended up teaching, Baillot's son René likewise. Baillot married his daughter to one of his pupils, Eugène Sauzay. When Boris Schwarz writes of 'violinistic inbreeding', he may mean it literally as well as metaphorically.[97] Whether the strength of family ties was a factor which ran counter to the all-important merit principle is a question which shall be considered below.

There are many more ways in which family relationships were a key characteristic of Conservatoire culture or in which other relationships carried a family colour. The relationship of professor to pupil, when, as in the violin classes, both were male, could often have something of a father-son nature. Thus it was with Guérin and Dancla, Baillot and Sauzay. It is typical that when Baillot describes the concert at Conservatoire hastily improvised in honour of Viotti's unannounced visit in 1814, 'Viotti parut dans cette assemblée de famille, comme un père au milieu de ses enfans [Viotti looked in this family gathering like a father among his children]'.[98] Sarrette was also so described.[99] Added to this, the musical world of Paris, and certainly of the Conservatoire, was still small enough for everyone to know everyone else. Marriages were important: when Adolphe Adam records that he had piano lessons from Mlle Gersin for a time, he adds details of her subsequent marriages to Benincori (composer) and the comte de Bouteiller (an excellent amateur musician).[100] The student concerts started out as occasions for family and friends before their reputation attracted the *beau monde* and the decision to support the staff pension fund through receipts further underlined the family nature of the enterprise. The Société des concerts likewise had a strong family character which underpinned the solidarity between orchestra and audience. Sauzay relates how 'À la sortie de chaque concert, nous étions entourés et felicités ; des gens nous embrassaient que nous ne connaissions pas [We were surrounded and congratulated when

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96 Registers of enrolment and of contrôle of students from Year V: AN AJ/37/351. See also the index of teaching staff in Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 438.

97 Boris Schwarz, *French Instrumental Music between the Revolutions (1789-1830)* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1987), 216.

98 Pierre Baillot, *Notice sur Viotti, né à Fontanetto, en Piémont, mort à Londres, le 3 mars 1824* (Paris: Impr. De Hoquet, 1825), 10.

99 E.g. Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 165.

100 Adolphe Adam, 'Notes biographiques', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), xi.

leaving each concert and were embraced by people we didn't even know]'.[101] This testifies not just to the enthusiasm excited by shared musical experience which Sauzay is seeking to convey, but to the way the Conservatoire milieu was intimate and official at the same time.

Hierarchy

Administration

As a Revolutionary institution, the Conservatoire bore the marks of competing ideas concerning governance and administration. The institution as a whole came under the tutelage of a state ministry, with the minister mostly represented by an *intendant*. This was consistent with pre-Revolutionary practice. Appointments of new staff, the annual budget, and any additional expenditure had to be approved by the Ministry, and maintaining the correspondence with the *intendant* formed a major part of the Director's role. While there was no limit to the power of the Ministry to interfere in the internal administration of the School, the degree to which they did so in practice depended on the personalities of the Minister, the *intendant*, and the Director, the state of public opinion, and other factors. Cherubini's position as Director (1822-1842) was strong enough for the threat of resignation to win him several tussles with the Ministry.[102] Perne's position as *inspecteur général* (1816-1822) was weaker and when the *intendant* sought to overturn the principle of admission on merit and impose students on the School he could only remonstrate:

> Vous êtes le maître d'ordonner j'obéirai, mais je ne pourrai plus répondre du service une fois que la faveur se mêlera de faire donner des places aux aspirants.[103]
>
> [You are the master who orders and I will obey, but I will no longer be able to answer for the performance of the School once court favour interferes so far as to allocate places to aspirants.]

As has been noted, Sarrette's initial role as *commissaire chargé de l'organisation* lent a different character to his relationship with the first ministers, but although most of the

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[101] Eugène Sauzay & Brigitte François-Sappey, 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay (1809-1901)', *Revue de Musicologie* 60 (1974), 185. I have translated 'embrassaient' as 'embraced', for lack of an English verb for the French practice of kissing on both cheeks, which is almost certainly what Sauzay meant.

[102] Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', e.g. 50.

[103] Letter from Perne to Delaferté, dated 12 April 1817: AN AJ/37/3/2, 31.

relevant correspondence has been lost, maintenance of those relationships is likely to have constituted a similarly important aspect of his work to that of his successors, especially when the changing priorities of the Napoleonic government meant harsh cuts to the Conservatoire budget.

In terms of internal administration, the structure foreseen by the first regulations consisted of a governing committee of five *inspecteurs d'enseignement*, in a clear imitation of the five Directors of the Constitution of Year III. This proved no more workable for the Conservatoire than it did for the Republic and the inspectors successfully petitioned for Sarrette's return. However, although Sarrette took charge of the running of the School, much of its decision-making seems to have remained collegial, with the principle of decision by committee much in evidence. Examples include the approval of the official teaching methods, the admission of students, the allocation of competition prizes, and so on. There are also references to plenary meetings of the school staff in cases of particular importance, such as the public attacks on the School and its director by Lesueur and his associates. Despite the missing records, we can assume that Sarrette continued to defer to his musical colleagues on matters of artistic judgement, just as in the National Guard years. His leadership seems to have been a matter of administrative coordination rather than direction.

After the weak direction imposed on the Conservatoire by the Restoration government, Cherubini was given extensive power to pull the institution into shape. Unlike Sarrette, Cherubini was an established composer and he brought a more directive style of leadership. The political climate had also changed dramatically by the time he took the reins and there are no more references to plenary meetings of the teaching staff. The Director appointed all the main committees, subject to certain guidelines and the approval of the *intendant*, but a nominee could decline.[104] The names of key figures such as the composition professors (Lesueur, Berton, Boïeldieu) and the violinists (Baillot, Kreutzer, Habeneck) keep recurring. The Director also set the agenda for each meeting. Anik Devriès-Lesure is right to underline that this gave Cherubini considerable power.[105] But he was not a Napoleon, even within the walls of the School. For a start, he had the Minister and the *intendant* above him and had to

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[104] Baillot did so in 1825 and the place was taken by R. Kreutzer instead: Minutes of the *conseil d'administration*, 5 January 1825, AN AJ/37/193/2e, 1.

[105] Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 61.

accept the appointments of Habeneck (1824) and Rossini (1826) over his head. As I noted earlier, Holoman attributes the appointment of Habeneck to the need 'to curb Cherubini's megalomania',[106] although one could with equal justice suggest that the reciprocal appointment of Cherubini as president of the Société des concerts served to curb Habeneck's megalomania.

A key plank of François Furet's influential interpretation of the Revolution is his contention that it inherited from the previous centuries a conception of power as essentially indivisible. This conception manifested itself, in turn, as the absolute authority of the monarch, the absolute sovereignty of the people, and the absolute power of Napoleon. For Furet, the lack of the British idea of a balance of interests is what led to political extremism on both sides.[107] But we cannot say this of the Conservatoire, which seems to have been able to accommodate divergent opinion through a variety of checks and balances. We have already seen how internal discipline was not absolute, but was able to accommodate exceptions. The committee structure also provided a way of accommodating internal disagreement. Even under Cherubini's directorship, it does not seem from the minutes that the committees were merely instruments of his will. His style of chairing seems to have been to allow each member of the committee to speak in turn and then to make a decision based on the consensus of opinion.[108] While minutes will always present a sanitized version of a meeting, Conservatoire practice was for the final version to be signed by all who attended, which lends them greater reliability as sources. The overall impression they give is of a variety of personalities, each capable of standing up for a particular point of view but prepared to work together within a common framework.

Pedagogical hierarchy

There was never full equality between the members of the teaching staff. Even in the National Guard years, there were three classes of teachers: *professeurs de 1er classe, de 2me classe, de 3me classe*, with rates of pay in 1790 ranging from 850 livres down to 600.[109]

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[106] Holoman, *The Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*, 141.

[107] See, e.g., Furet, *La Révolution 1770-1880*, 22, 90.

[108] See, e.g., the minutes of the *comité d'enseignment* from 1832, AN AJ/37/193/3.

[109] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de musique*, 36-37.

Within the Conservatoire itself, rates of pay varied considerably. The budgets from the Sarrette years have not survived, but in 1816 the professorial salaries ranged on a scale of 3000 Fr down to 1000 Fr, with composition at the top, followed by singing, declamation, instruments, and solfège. The budgets for 1824, 1833, and 1841 show a similar scale, except that many of the instrumental professors are paid the same as the singers, at 2000 Fr.[110]

Within each subject which had enough students, there seems to have been a further principle of hierarchy spanning from the full professor down through *répétiteur* (also called *professeur adjoint*) to student *répétiteur*. The professors were paid twice or three times as much as the *répétiteur*, and the student *répétiteurs* were graduates who were generally required to work unpaid in recognition of the free tuition they had received during their studies. Graduates might work as student *répétiteur* for a time on their way to greater things, as did Habeneck, who worked as *répétiteur* to Baillot, later to become professor in his own right. Some, however, were paid *répétiteurs* who remained at the subordinate level for their whole careers, such as Charles-Rodolphe Guérin, a pupil of Kreutzer who was awarded a first prize in 1807. He became a longstanding *répétiteur* to Baillot and was still only paid 700 Fr in 1841.

This was a critical aspect of the pedagogical hierarchy. The classes of the *répétiteur* were preparatory classes. Sauzay and Dancla are two famous pupils of Baillot, but when they entered the Conservatoire it was first into Guérin's class.[111] Here, they were to be drilled in the requisite technical work until they were able to obtain a place in the senior class. This lends support to Rubinoff's characterization of the mode of instruction as military, although a better analogy than the training of foot soldiers would be the training of officer cadets, who have to submit to physical drill by the sergeant before going on to study strategy and tactics from officer instructors. Sauzay's recollection of Guérin's class was of harsh treatment by a man who clearly found no pleasure in teaching.[112]

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[110] AN AJ/37/12/2.

[111] They were admitted to the Conservatoire in 1823 and 1828 respectively.

[112] 'Par la façon dont il nous traitait, il était facile de voir que le professeur Guérin, lui-même, n'y trouvait aucun charme': 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 164.

Against this, however, Dancla remembered Guérin as 'an excellent master, who right up until his death, always showed a real interest in him and true affection.'[113] Sauzay was evidently a sensitive child, who later recalled:

> Je ne savais travailler, j'étais ahuri par l'enseignement. Ceux qui jouaient plus mal que moi me troublaient, ceux qui jouaient mieux me faisaient perdre confiance et me rendaient timide.[114]
>
> [I didn't know how to practise and was dumbfounded by the teaching. Those who played worse than me bothered me and those who played better intimidated me and made me lose confidence.]

Sauzay was only fourteen years old when he entered the Conservatoire. Although he had previously attended a *pension* [private school], we must make allowance for the shock of adjustment to a new learning environment, recalling Adolphe Adam's 'unspeakable terror' upon attending his first class at the *Pension Hix*.

The strict role and subordination of the preparatory classes is laid out in a letter addressed to Director Cherubini, drafted most likely by Baillot, signed by Habeneck, Kreutzer (Auguste) and Baillot, and dated 7 January 1831.[115] The letter insists on a strict progression of study from purely technical matters such as posture, through the practice of scales and bowing strokes, to a list of selected etudes (Fiorillo, Campagnoli, R. Kreutzer, Rode), sonatas (Corelli, Locatelli), and sets of variations (Tartini, Viotti, Paganini). Only then are students to be given works by living composers, these also selected with a view to extending their technique. On the one hand, this letter confirms the pedagogical principles presented by the official violin method of 1803. On the other hand, it can only have been written and signed by all three violin professors, if those principles were being called into question by current practice in the preparatory classes. The two repetiteurs at this time were Clavel and Guérin. Was one of them using unauthorized teaching material? Had Guérin decided, after half a

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[113] 'Cet excellent maître me témoigna toujours jusqu'à sa mort un véritable intérêt et une très vive affection.' Charles Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs* (Paris: Delamotte, 1893), 7.

[114] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 164.

[115] 'Observations sur les classes préparatoires de violon des professeurs adjoints au Conservatoire de Musique', AN AJ/37/84/7/s. This letter seems to have escaped all scholarly notice. For a complete transcription and translation, see Appendix I.

lifetime of subordination, that he, too, was a musician and could offer advice on interpretation? If so, it looks as though he was to be formally disabused of the notion.

Violin lessons at the Conservatoire

As David Golby has noted, the very hardest thing to discover about instrumental teaching is what actually went on in the teaching room. He attributes this partly to a natural unwillingness to part with what amounted to 'trade secrets' in a competitive environment and partly (with regard to the British case) to music's general lack of importance.[116] Neither of these factors is very pertinent to the case of the Conservatoire: music clearly was held in high esteem and the Revolutionary belief in dissemination of knowledge meant that the written methods were openly published. On the other hand, outside of the Conservatoire itself, these had to be purchased and physical access to classes for the purposes of observation was strictly limited, as we have seen. Commercial motives may therefore have played a role. The greater reason is that for those with direct experience of the lessons – teachers and students – their content was too central and familiar a part of their lives to prompt comment. As Golby suggests, it is only through the occasional diary, memoir, or correspondence that we can have access to an eyewitness account. Even then, the problem of the invisibility of the central remains. Thus Baillot's diary recounting his concert tour of southern France hardly mentions music at all, but he does write about the devastation evident around cities such as Bordeaux, the beauty of the countryside further south, and his meetings with old acquaintances.[117] Fortunately, Sauzay's memoirs do contain some direct description of Baillot's class in the 1820s.[118] From this memoir and indirect evidence, we must try to reconstruct violin lessons at the Conservatoire.

The first thing to note is that all classes at the Conservatoire, violin classes included, were group classes. Only private lessons were individual. Each class typically lasted two hours, and there were eight pupils in each class. From Sauzay's account, the pupils played to the whole class in turn and one assumes that the professor gave each a short lesson from which all

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[116] Golby, *Instrumental Teaching in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, 89.

[117] Pierre Baillot, 'Voyage dans le midi de la France, 1812', *Souvenirs // 1*, sous-notice 3, 1; BnF VMB 84 MS (1).

[118] 'La classe du Conservatoire', in 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 165-170.

could profit, in keeping with the wisdom of Charles Rollin: 'Le grand avantage des écoles, c'est l'émulation. Un enfant y profite de ce qu'on lui dit à lui-même, et de ce qu'on dit aux autres [The great advantage of schools is competition. A child profits from what is said to him, as well as what is said to others]'.[119] In the case of the piano classes in particular, the number of listeners to each pupil was augmented by prospective pupils who had been admitted as aspirants and were waiting for a place in the class to become vacant. One can well imagine that an atmosphere of quite intense competition reigned in the classes of popular instruments such as violin or piano.

Perne's letter to La Ferté of April 1817 confirms that, in principle, the professor was able to give fifteen minutes to each pupil.[120] From the indications of Baillot's style, one doubts that this can have been the case for each lesson since, at least according to Sauzay's account of 'bad days', he waited for students to put themselves forward.[121] He would also accompany his students on his violin and teach by example, playing through diverse repertoire at sight and he would even use the time to rehearse chamber music, so his classes can hardly have been structured into neat quarter-hour segments.

We thus have some useful clues as to practice in the professorial classes: essentially, they were open lessons in which pupils took turns to play for the professor and receive instruction. There is reason to believe that the procedure was different in the classes of both paid and unpaid *répétiteurs* and that this consisted of – or, at least, included – rehearsal by the pupils in unison. For a start, the very verb *répéter* means 'to practise, or rehearse'. Secondly, Sauzay's recollection from Guérin's class of being 'troubled' by those who played worse than he did makes much more sense if he were having to play along with them, just as an orchestral musician can be put off by a poor stand-partner. Thirdly, it is hard to imagine seven pupils meekly waiting their turn, while just one of them is drilled in essentially the same technical material and even less so when the teacher was a fellow student. What seems much more likely is that the eight pupils practised together in unison, under the direction of the *répétiteur*, in keeping with the contemporary educational philosophy which favoured collective learning in schools and which regarded as woefully ineffective the village school model in which the

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[119] Rollin, *Traité des études*. See Appendix B.

[120] Letter from Perne to Delaferté, dated 12 April 1817: AN AJ/37/3/2, 31.

[121] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 166.

teacher cycled through the classroom, giving each pupil ten or fifteen minutes of time. With years of this sort of organized collective practice behind them, it is no wonder that the Conservatoire string players impressed all listeners with their tight ensemble when they played together in orchestral settings.

Thus, although Rémy Campos emphasizes the cloistered nature of the Conservatoire in terms of physical access,[122] the mode of instruction was in many ways very public, in keeping with the values of the founding Republic. Even without the benefit of the end-of-year competitions, everyone would have known which students, which professors, and which departments were doing well and by competition time, expectations would have been well-formed as to where the votes would fall. Disputes over whether justice had been done to talent could play out in the press and even in the street.[123]

Competing values

The Conservatoire was acutely conscious of its status as the pinnacle of musical art in France. It was a theatre in which distinction was to be bestowed on the evidently worthy. This ethos remains intact. A recent demonstration is furnished by Brigitte François-Sappey's chapter in one of the commemorative publications from the 1990s, titled 'Le salon des refusés [Salon of the rejects]'. The unspoken assumption is that the Conservatoire, 'this temple of music', ought to attract the best teachers: from this will follow the training of the best students, and hence the propagation of musical excellence. François-Sappey considers a long list of worthy eighteenth and nineteenth-century musicians, in particular pianists and composers, who either did not teach at the Conservatoire or were dismissed. Rather than asking what it was about Conservatoire culture which worked against its own *raison d'être*, François-Sappey considers each case individually. Some themes, however, can be discerned. The first culprit is the Revolution, the second is the inherent difficulty of accommodating exceptional personalities. In the end, François-Sappey takes the treatment of Boëly, Alkan, Saint-Saëns, and Debussy together, and asks rhetorically what the French school of piano-playing might have been.

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[122] Rémy Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', esp. 113-115.

[123] Rémy Campos, 'La classe au Conservatoire', 115.

What she does not do is name what she demonstrates over time: a persistent conservatism on the part of the piano and composition departments.[124]

The merit principle has thus always been absolutely central to the ethos of the Conservatoire. There are, however, other cultural values which may have acted counter to the merit principle. François-Sappey is justified in asking whether loyalty and political allegiance played a role in the selection of staff in the first years, although it is a question which is difficult to resolve in the absence of archive material such as the minutes of the jury deliberations.[125] As François-Sappey concedes, many former Versailles musicians such as Rodolphe Kreutzer, Étienne Ozi, and Nicolas Séjan (organist) were welcomed into the fold at first. After all, even though the existing staff of the Institut national de musique and of the École royale de chant were offered positions at the Conservatoire *de droit* [by right], there was still place for 30 more, chosen by jury. But where it would have got very tough was when successive budget cuts meant that many had to be dismissed. François-Sappey blames the Revolution for preferring (in her view) a loyal mediocrity like Catel over the more learned scion of royal servants, Alexandre Boëly. The pianist Ignaz Ladurner was one of the many who were cut from the teaching staff in 1802 when numbers were reduced from 79 to 35. François-Sappey sheets the blame for this home to the Revolution by a sly reference to the guillotine: 'Pourquoi dut-il monter dans la charrette des condamnés ? [Why did he have to climb into the cart carrying the condemned?]'[126] This is patently unjust. The Conservatoire opened its doors to musicians with both Revolutionary and royalist pasts; many, after all, had both. It was Napoleon's military administration which cut the institution to the bone. Constant Pierre notes that the first round of cuts overwhelmingly affected the former members of the National Guard, musicians of the second and third classes, and thus not the Versailles musicians. Only three of the thirteen from the École royale de chant and six of the thirty admitted since the founding of the Conservatoire were dismissed.[127] Perhaps the second round of cuts fell harder on those

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[124] François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', 29-40. The title is a reference to those exhibitions of artworks which have been rejected by the official exhibition, a phenomenon analogous to a fringe festival. François-Sappey is a piano graduate of the Conservatoire who became professor of music history in 1973. She is now an emeritus professor there.

[125] The decisions on who was to remain and who was to go were made by jury. See Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire national de* musique, 145-8.

[126] François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', 32.

[127] Pierre, *B. Sarrette et les origines du Conservatoire*, 145-6.

of royalist sympathies, such as the violinist Marie-Alexandre Guénin, who then went to Marseille to work for the exiled King of Spain, but without a detailed analysis based on appropriate sources it is impossible to know. The cuts spared Louis Adam, who, according to his son, was a diehard monarchist.[128] What seems more likely is that some preference was given to professors who had contributed to the cause for a longer period of time. Ladurner, whose departure François-Sappey is at a loss to explain, only joined the Conservatoire in 1798.

Exceptional personalities, as François-Sappey concedes, do not always please people in positions of power.[129] There are many signs that the nineteenth century saw a return of privilege as an organizing principle when it came to Conservatoire appointments. Dancla narrates how, on Baillot's death, selection of his successor as violin professor depended on who had the most influential patronage. Initially, the position was offered to De Bériot, a preference Dancla regards as justified, given his character and ability. On De Bériot's refusal, the *comité d'enseignement* proposed to divide the class in half and make two new appointments: those of Dancla and Alard (former student of Habeneck).[130] Here the Minister intervened on behalf of a fellow minister who was determined to see Massart appointed, and Dancla lost out.[131] Sauzay credits his wife Augustine with making the necessary representations in favour of his appointment at the Conservatoire with the Princess Mathilde and Director Auber, and he also enjoyed the support of Halévy, whose daughters he taught.[132] The Princess remained a patroness for many years and Sauzay's memoirs are full of gratitude to her.

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[128] Adolphe Adam, 'Notes biographiques', in *Souvenirs d'un musicien* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1857), ix.

[129] François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', 29.

[130] Jean-Delphin Alard (1815-1888) was a famous violinist of the French School. He won a first prize in 1830 and made his solo debut with the Société des concerts in 1831. Paganini heard this performance and dedicated to Alard his six sonatas Op. 2. He taught violin at the Conservatoire from 1843 to 1875. Among his many pupils was Pablo de Sarasate, who won first prize at the Conservatoire in 1857. Boris Schwarz, rev. Cormak Newark, 'Alard, (Jean-) Delphin', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[131] Dancla, *Notes et Souvenirs*, 30-31.

[132] 'La vie musicale à Paris à travers les Mémoires d'Eugène Sauzay', 182, 205. Jacques Halévy (1799-1862) was a prominent opera composer who studied and then taught at the Conservatoire. His grand opera *La Juive* (1835) was the great success of his life.

The most obvious exceptions to the merit principle, of course, were the widespread exclusion of women from contention when it came to teaching appointments and the exclusion of girls and women from all instrumental classes aside from piano, as discussed above. Within their restricted ambit, however, women seem to have been subject to the same expectations as the men. Certainly, Cherubini held the line regarding admittance on merit just as Perne had attempted to. Even a direct recommendation from the queen was bluntly rejected:

> Je viens d'entendre Mlle Hebler, que vous m'aviez fait l'honneur de me recommender de la part de la reine, et qui désirait obtenir son admission au Conservatoire. … Je lui ai donné verbalement connaissance des motifs qui s'opposaient à son admission, en engageant sa mère à lui faire suivre une toute autre carrière que celle du théâtre, pour laquelle la nature lui a refusé les qualités les plus indispensables : le physique et la voix.[133]
>
> [I have just heard Miss Hebler, whom you did me the honour of recommending on behalf of the Queen and who wished to obtain entry to the Conservatoire. … I have informed her verbally of the reasons opposing her admission and have advised her mother to have her follow a quite different career from that of the theatre, for which nature has denied her the most indispensable qualities, namely the physique and the voice.]

Family ties clearly counted for a lot in French musical life, and it seems to have been accepted that family members would use their positions to help their own. François Habeneck was good at looking out for himself and for his violin-playing brothers. Elisabeth Delafon-Bernard states: 'Plusieurs familles de violinistes, les Kreutzer, les Chol, maintenant les Habeneck s'arrachent les places et les remplacements [Several violinist families - the Kreutzers, the Chols, and now the Habenecks – grab all the permanent and temporary positions]'.[134] When Rodolphe Kreutzer resigned his Conservatoire post in 1826, it seems to have been accepted as natural that it should pass to his younger brother, Auguste. Auguste Kreutzer (1778-1832) was twelve years younger that Rodolphe, and had studied at the Conservatoire, first with Baillot and then in the class of his elder brother. He won a first prize in 1801. Like Habeneck, he was already being paid Fr 2000 as an adjunct in 1824, the same

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[133] Letter from Cherubini to M. Borel de Brétizel, Secretary to the Queen, Paris, 10 October 1835. Quoted in Devriès-Lesure, 'Cherubini directeur du Conservatoire', 71.

[134] Elisabeth Delafon-Bernard, 'Habeneck et la Société des concerts du Conservatoire : un destin exemplaire', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris : Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 101.

as the full professors.[135] It could be that Auguste was the most worthy candidate for the post but it is hard not to wonder whether his smooth accession owed something to the survival of an earlier tradition in which a post was the property of the incumbent and, as such, could be inherited.[136] While decrying the relative weakness of the piano department at the Conservatoire in the early nineteenth century, François-Sappey holds up the violin department as exemplary. In particular, she extols the virtues of Baillot, noting that he was followed by his son René and his son-in-law Sauzay, such that the 'dynasty' Baillot-Sauzay taught at the Conservatoire for nearly a century. Tracing the lineage right down to Magdeleine Baillot, wife and artistic partner of Charles Panzéra and great-granddaughter of Pierre Baillot, François-Sappey concludes that 'good blood ever runs true [bon sang ne saurait mentir]'.[137] This is blithely to assume that family connections did not weigh positively in the process of selection.

François-Sappey begins her reflections on professorial recruitment by considering the Versailles musicians who came across to the Conservatoire, casting this as the normative development. This makes Baillot one of her 'white swans' who flew in from outside.[138] From the point of view of the French Violin School, as a part of Viotti's circle, Baillot was an insider. But the more important point is that the foundation of the Conservatoire opened up musical careers to a wider sector of French society, where they had previously been limited to certain musician families or imports from Italy and Germany. Kreutzer and Habeneck both came from families of professional musicians, but Rode, Baillot, Sauzay, and Dancla did not. The governing ethos of the Conservatoire was strongly aligned with the Revolutionary imperative of opening careers to talent. The talents may only have been those of the educated class and the merit principle may have been compromised by the pull of family ties and patronage, but this still represented a significant step forward. When to this opening of access was added the patriotic enthusiasm of Revolutionary France, the openness to the musical

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[135] Budget for 1824, AN AJ/37/12/2.

[136] David Charlton in *Grove* is somewhat non-committal on Auguste's prowess as a violinist: 'His playing style was less brilliant than Rodolphe's, though expressive and stylish.' David Charlton, 'Kreutzer, Jean Nicolas Auguste', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[137] François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', 32.

[138] François-Sappey, 'Le salon des réfusés', 30-31.

culture of other countries, and the generous scale on which the new institution was endowed, its early success is no wonder.

CHAPTER 9
THE CONSERVATOIRE MODEL AND CONCLUSION

The success of the Paris Conservatoire was such that it became an inescapable point of reference for all the music schools which followed. Many French commentators go further and say that it became the model on which the later schools were based. Thus André Lodéon proclaims: 'tout conservatoire porte en lui l'image virtuelle du Conservatoire de Paris [every conservatory carries within it the virtual image of the Paris Conservatoire]'.[139] This may have been true of the *succursales* established across France in the Conservatoire's wake, but it is a problematic statement if Lodéon means it to apply across Europe. Even when they adopted the designation 'conservatoire/conservatorium', itself a term appropriated from Italy and given a new meaning,[140] schools emerged in different countries in response to different perceived needs and with different forms of pedagogical organization. They were the attempted solutions to different problems.[141]

Intriguingly, though many writers refer to 'the Conservatoire model', no-one seems to feel the need to say just what that model is. It is as though the institution is regarded as exemplary in its entirety and analysis is not needed. More than a brief examination of the similarities and differences between Paris and schools such as Brussels, Leipzig, and Milan would go beyond the scope of this study. However, any such comparison must begin with a distillation of the key elements of the Conservatoire's organization.

The Conservatoire was a school for teaching music which was:

1. state-funded, and hence had a national and public character;

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[139] André Lodéon, 'La longue marche des conservatoires', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie, 1795-1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Alain Poirier (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999), 403.

[140] Davide Daolni notes that the word *conservatorio* was understood in Italy to mean 'orphanage'. Davide Daolni, 'Uncovering the origins of the Milan Conservatory: the French model as a pretext and the fortunes of Italian opera', in *Musical Education in Europe (1770–1914): Compositional, Institutional, and Political Challenges*, ed. Michael Fend and Michel Noiray (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2005), vol. I, 111. In the following discussion, I follow *Grove* in using the English 'conservatory/conservatories' as a general word for music teaching institutions which might individually have called themselves 'conservatoire / conservatorium / academy', etc. See William Weber, Denis Arnold, Cynthia W Gessele, Peter Cahn, Robert W Oldani and Janet Ritterman, 'Conservatories', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[141] Rebecca Grotjahn makes this point in '"Die höhere Ausbildung in der Musik". Gründungsidee und Gründungsgeschichte des Leipziger Konservatoriums', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. II, 303.

2. generously enough funded to offer comprehensive music training – that is, to teach all major instruments, voice, theory and composition;
3. free (did not charge fees);
4. open to pupils of both sexes;
5. not a boarding school, or *internat*;
6. led by musicians, and
7. aimed at providing professional training for musicians.
8. presented a pedagogy which was ordered and progressive, built on solfa, with a strong emphasis on technique.
9. regularly examined student progress and held annual competitions.

These characteristics have been adequately demonstrated in the preceding chapters, as have the historical conditions which gave them rise. With regard to point six on leadership, sticklers for accuracy may object that Sarrette, the first director of the Conservatoire, was not a musician. This is true and it is a wonderful anomaly in the history of the institution. But it is clear that within a collective mode of leadership Sarrette confined himself to administrative and political matters and especially to the relationship with the national authorities. Decisions on matters internal to the School were made by committee, which is to say, by musicians.

The above list is not intended as a set of essential conditions which must all be met for another institution to be described as 'conforming to the Paris model'. No other school fulfils all of them, even within France. But I suggest that the fewer of these characteristics are shared by a rival institution, the less we can accurately state that it was established according to the Paris model.

In presenting this kind of analysis, I am consciously proceeding in the opposite direction from the dominant aesthetic trend of late eighteenth-century France, according to which one should seek models and not rules. Too much previous writing about the history of the Conservatoire has been content to extol its role as 'beacon' [*phare*], without looking critically at the nature and role of the institution.[142] The sudden appearance of the Paris Conservatoire in the middle

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[142] For example: 'Ils [les maîtres et élèves du Conservatoire] avaient su comprendre le génie de Mozart et, en ces toutes premières années romantiques, pressentaient déjà sans doute le rôle de phare que devait jouer leur établissement dans le monde moderne [They (the teachers and pupils of the Conservatoire) had understood Mozart's genius and, in these first years of Romanticism, already had an intimation of the way their establishment would act as a beacon in the modern world]'. Jean Mongrédien, 'Les prémiers exercices

of the 1790s, its size, the quality of its teaching staff and of the students which emerged from it were an inspiration to musicians and music lovers in other countries. But each city which set up a music school in the years which followed enjoyed different historical conditions and even those who wished to emulate the Paris model found it very difficult to do so. Many founders had reservations about Paris and there were other models, in particular the Italian *conservatoirii* and the Berliner Singakademie. The former were charitable institutions run by the Church, focused on sacred music, most of whose pupils were wards of the institution. The latter, established by Christian Fasch as a private undertaking in 1789, was so successful that it stimulated a revival of choral singing across Germany and inspired the establishment of many similar organizations throughout Europe.[143]

A brief look at some of the music schools set up in the first half of the nineteenth century will be enough to show that while some may have adopted features of the Paris model, the divergence is usually considerable. I will restrict my analysis to the period up to 1850, recognizing that as the idea of public investment in music education became more accepted, schools such as the Vienna Conservatorium may have come to resemble Paris more with time. Consideration of Prague, Vienna, and Leipzig will be accompanied by a look at the significance of their violin departments, which show how the centre of gravity in violin-playing was moving east in the course of the nineteenth century.

Prague

The Prague conservatory was established in 1811 on the initiative of a society of aristocrats and it owed more to the Bohemian nationalism spurred by defeats at the hands of French armies than to the example of the Paris Conservatoire. It was conceived purely as a school for the training of orchestral musicians which would address a perceived decline in the quality of Bohemian orchestras. Pupils were accepted between the ages of 10 and 13 and selected with a view to maintaining a balanced, full orchestra. They received a six-year general education as well as training in their chosen instrument. The School had a singing department from 1815 and an opera department from 1826, but neither piano nor composition became part of

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publics d'élèves d'après la presse contemporaine (1800-1815)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique, 1795–1995*, ed. Anne Bongrain and Yves Gérard (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1996), 36. The Conservatoire was never more a beacon than in its first years.

[143] Raymond A. Barr, 'Fasch, Carl [Karl] Friedrich Christian', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

the curriculum until the late 19th century. Teaching was free to Bohemian students, but they were required to perform at the society's academies or in private houses. Foreign pupils were charged 60 gulden a year.[144] The organization of the school thus bears some ressemblance to the eighteenth-century Neapolitan conservatories, at which pupils were provided with the means to make a living from music and contributed to the financial maintenance of the school by performing in its choir.

The Prague conservatory is important to the history of violin teaching through the lineage of Pixis – Mildner – Bennewitz – Ševčík/Sitt. Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis (1785-1842) was taught mainly by his father and Ignaz Fränzl,[145] but he studied for two months with Viotti in 1798 while Viotti was in Hamburg. As well as conducting the Prague theatre orchestra, Pixis was a founding professor at the Prague Conservatory and taught there until he died in 1842, the same year as Baillot. He is thus founder of the Prague violin school,[146] which, through Sitt and Ševčík in particular, contributed a great deal to the pedagogy of the violin, a pedagogy characterized by very thorough, if somewhat mechanical series of technical exercises. As well as Sitt and Ševčík, Bennewitz taught Jan Ondříček and Josef Suk.[147]

Vienna

Despite a proud history of music-making and a very active amateur musical scene, efforts to establish a conservatorium in Vienna which would bear comparison with Paris met with limited success prior to 1850. The crucial obstacle was the lack of significant state support. The Gesellschaft für Musikfreunde des Österreichischen Kaiserstaates was founded in 1813, spurred, like the Prague society, by national sentiment. It managed to get a modest singing school going in 1817 and gradually instrument teaching was added, starting with the violin

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[144] Peter Cahn, 'Germany and central Europe', in 'Conservatories'; and J. Bužga, Adrienne Simpson and Jitka Slavíková, 'Prague', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[145] Ignaz Fränzl (1736-1811) was a very longstanding member of the Mannheim Kapelle and, with Anton and Carl Philip Stamitz, was one of the sources of influence of the Mannheim School on the French School. Anton Stamitz taught Kreutzer. Ignaz's son Ferdinand (1767-1833) was the teacher of Franz Eck, who taught Spohr. Roland Würtz considers Ferdinand Fränzl 'the most important German violinist of Spohr's generation': 'Fränzl family', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[146] Gaynor G. Jones, rev. Lucian Schiwietz and Stephan D. Lindeman, 'Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[147] Some life dates: Moritz Mildner (1812-1865), Antonin Bennewitz (1833-1926), Hans Sitt (1850-1922), Otakar Ševčík (1852-1934).

(Joseph Böhm) in 1819. The first public examinations were held in 1820 and the first public concerts in 1825. The school was, however, funded on the precarious basis of donation and subscription, and it started to charge fees to some students in 1829.

The pedagogical emphasis was on practical training for choral singers and orchestral musicians, but by 1832 there was the possibility of a two years' advanced class for violinists. From 1827, teaching became progressive, with a compulsory first year in elements of music and singing. This emphasis on practical training contrasted with the Prussian state plan proclaimed in 1832, which envisaged an education along conservatorium lines but with greater depth in theory to match what was seen as the greater depth and complexity of German music.

Leadership remained with amateurs until 1844, when a composer was made director for the first time. Hampered by the constantly recurring threat of bankruptcy, the Gesellschaft lobbied repeatedly and generally unsuccessfully for reliable state support. It was only from 1851 that the newly reopened school received significant support from the Crown and the City of Vienna. It was in this year that the violinist Georg Hellmesberger began a long stint as Director (1851-1893) and oversaw steady growth in the institution. It became known as the 'Conservatorium' by custom from the mid-1820s, without official decision.[148]

Böhm and Hellmesberger were not only important to the history of the Vienna Conservatorium, the violin school they established became one of the most important in the history of the instrument. Böhm (1795-1876) is believed to have studied with Rode, although it is not clear for how long.[149] Hellmesberger (1800-1873) went from being Böhm's student, to his assistant to professor in his turn, in a progression identical to that of Habeneck in Paris. He taught as professor from 1833-1867.[150] Between them, Böhm and Hellmesberger taught a

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[148] Lynne Heller, 'Das Konservatorium für Musik in Wien zwischen bürgelich-adeligem Mäzenatentum und staatlicher Politik', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 205-228.

[149] Anne Penesco, 'Pierre Baillot et l'école franco-belge de violon', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: deux cents ans de pédagogie*, 97. Beatrix Borchard and Katharina Uhde also state that Böhm had lessons with Rode, and that both Böhm and Hellmesberger 'adhered to the classical French School'. See Beatrix Borchard, rev. Katharina Uhde, 'Joachim, Joseph', *Grove Music Online*, 2020.

[150] Richard Evidon, 'Hellmesberger family', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Evidon lists Jenő Hubay among the students of Hellmesberger, but this seems hardly possible, since Hubay studied with his father up to 1872, and then with Joachim from 1873-5. The connection with Joachim still places Hubay within the same lineage. See László Gombos, Hubay [Huber], Jenő [Eugen]', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

dazzling line-up of virtuosos and future teachers, including Joachim, Ernst,[151] Dont,[152] and Auer.

Joseph Joachim's significance to the history of music is well-known. He was in many ways a classicist and revived Viotti's Concerto no. 22 in A minor. In his rejection of Liszt and Wagner, in his determination to put the ideas of the composer to the forefront rather than his own technique, in his sparing use of vibrato and his devotion to chamber music, his musical beliefs bear strong resemblance to those of Baillot.[153] Less well-known now is Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, a violinist of astonishing talent who lived much of his career in competition with Paganini. In order to avoid such competition, Paganini often did not publish his works, so that only he could play them, but Ernst showed that he was capable of learning them by hearing alone. There are few who can master his *Polyphonic Études*, the most famous of which is a euphonious but fiendishly difficult set of variations on the traditional Irish tune 'The Last Rose of Summer'. Jacob Dont's shyness in performing led him to focus on teaching and composing. Among his many pedagogical works are the *24 Caprices* Op. 35 which have become part of the violin canon, often given to the advanced student in between the Rode and Paganini caprices. Leopold Auer can be considered the father of both the Russian and American schools of the twentieth century.[154] Among his many famous students were Mischa Elman, Efram Zimbalist, Jascha Heifitz, and Yevgeny Polyakin. If it is true that Böhm studied with Rode, one of the many significant lineages thus runs: Rode – Böhm – Hellmesberger – (Dont) - Auer – (Zimbalist) – Shumsky. In 1987, Oscar Shumsky made the first complete recording of Rode's *24 Caprices*, on the 1715 Stradivarius which had belonged to Rode.[155]

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[151] Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst (1812-1865).

[152] Jacob Dont (1815-1888) taught at the Vienna Conservatorium and also at the Pedagogisches Institut.

[153] Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) studied with Hellmesberger and Böhm in Vienna. He was a friend of Brahms, who sought his advice on matters concerning string writing and dedicated to him his Violin Concerto (1878). See Borchard, rev. Uhde, 'Joachim, Joseph'. Among his many students was Jenő Hubay (1858-1937).

[154] Leopold Auer (1845-1930) studied with Dont and Hellmesberger in Vienna, then Joachim in Hamburg. He took over from Wieniawski at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1868, and stayed there until 1917. He left Russia for the USA in 1918 and taught in New York and at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. His influence as a teacher was personal and stylistic rather than technical, since most of his students came to him as finished technicians. See Boris Schwarz, 'Auer, Leopold', in *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[155] Oscar Shumsky (1979-2000) studied with Auer and Zimbalist at the Curtis Institute, Philadelphia (1928–36). At the age of eight he made his début with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski. He taught at the

Thanks to historical circumstances peculiar to Revolutionary France, the Paris Conservatoire was established on a broad footing from the outset and even the drastic cuts briefly suffered under Napoleon never rendered its musical training less than comprehensive. It taught all instruments, voice, and composition, it never charged fees, and it always had musical leadership. The Vienna Conservatorium was a private venture which only became comprehensive over a long period of time. It was led by amateurs for over twenty years, charged fees at times, and did not become a state institution until 1911. At the very least, however, its key role in the development of violin-playing shows that the Paris model was not the only way to foster talent.

Leipzig

Despite its relative proximity to Paris, the Leipziger Konservatorium was established in 1843 along markedly different lines. It was funded by philanthropic endowment but also charged fees. Most of the non-fee-paying students were on local scholarships. François-Joseph Fétis visited the new school in 1847 and was very disapproving of the lack of support for the institution from the government of Saxony, convinced as he was that a music school could only then thrive when the government fully funded the enterprise and tuition was free. Leipzig provides a further example, however, that what was established practice in France and Belgium was not at all established practice in German-speaking countries.[156] This was not for lack of voices advocating state support, as demonstrated by the letter from Mendelssohn to Kreisdirektor von Falkenstein of 8 April 1840:

> Der bloße Privatunterricht, der früher so manche schöne Früchte, auch für's Allgemeine getragen hat, ist aus manchen Gründen dafür jetzt nicht mehr zureichend…
>
> Die Schüler, welche anderweitigen Unterricht verlangen, sind fast durchgängig nur solche, die sich dem Fache selbst widmen wollen, denen aber meist an Mitteln fehlt, gute Privatunterricht zu bezahlen… Eine öffentliche Unterrichtsanstalt wäre daher für Lehrer wie

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Peabody Conservatory, the Curtis Institute, and the Juilliard School. Among his famous recordings are also the Solo Sonatas of Ysaÿe. See Boris Schwarz, rev. Margaret Campbell, 'Shumsky, Oscar', *Grove Music Online,* 2001. Among Shumsky's students at the Julliard School was Vincent Edwards, one of the founding staff of the Canberra School of Music in Australia (est. 1965). He was the author's second teacher.

[156] Grotjahn '"Die höhere Ausbildung in der Musik"', 301.

> für Lernende in diesem Augenbliche wichtig; den letzteren gäbe sie die Mittel an die Hand, Fähigkeiten auszubilden, die ohnedies oft unbenutzt zu Grunde gehen müssen.[157]
>
> [Mere private instruction, which once bore good fruit, also for life in general, now, for many reasons, no longer suffices…
>
> Students who desire further instruction are almost invariably those who intend to devote themselves to this profession but who lack the means to pay for private lessons…. At this juncture, therefore, a public institution would be important to teachers as well as to pupils. The latter would be given the means of cultivating abilities which would otherwise be wasted.][158]

The impression made on Mendelssohn by his time in Paris in 1831/32 is evident not only in his advocacy of state support but also in his evocation of the benefits of collective effort.

Despite – or perhaps because – of its close association with the Gewandhaus orchestra, the Leipzig Conservatorium aimed at providing a music education which went beyond the development of playing skills. This was a feature common to many schools in Germany. It is fair to say that the Paris Conservatoire provided musical training rather than education and this was certainly the view of German commentators. The weight of the German concept of *Bildung* came together with a growing belief in the higher purpose of music itself. Since the Leipzig Gewandhaus was founded not with a view to musical amusement but for public education and enrichment, it should not surprise us that an associated school would also aspire to a higher kind of music education. Reflective of German social conditions was the strong engagement of the Leipzig bourgeoisie. The school was run by a committee of five local notables until 1921![159] The combination of this steering committee with a single *Studiendirektor* who could only vote on 'scientific and artistic' matters yields a structure inverse to that of Paris in the Sarrette years.

The founding head of the violin department at Leipzig was Ferdinand David (1810-1873). David was a student of Spohr who led the Gewandhaus orchestra for many years and had

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[157] *Briefe aus den Jahren 1830-1847 von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy*, ed. Paul Mendelssohn-Bartholdy & Carl Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (Leipzig: Hermann Mendelssohn, 1870), 413-4.

[158] Translation from *Felix Mendelssohn: Letters*, ed. G. Selden-Goth (New York: Vienna House, 1973; first published, 1945), 292-3.

[159] Grotjahn '"Die höhere Ausbildung in der Musik"', 324.

lasting importance as a teacher and editor. He helped to perpetuate the influence of the French School through famous editions of studies and concertos by Kreutzer and Rode and brought out the first practical edition of Bach's unaccompanied violin works, which he often played in public.[160] Among the David editions still in print are the Rode Concerto no.7 in A minor, Viotti Concerto no. 23 in A major and Tartini *Art of Bowing*.[161] Albert Mell lists Joachim among David's pupils, but *Grove*'s more recently updated entry on Joachim does not mention this. According to Beatrix Borchard and Katharina Uhde, Joachim's technique was fully developed by the time he came to Leipzig to study with Mendelssohn, aged twelve. Joachim undoubtedly knew David, as he gave his debut in 1843 with the Gewandhaus orchestra led by David.[162] David did teach Franz Wohlfahrt (1833-1884), the author of many fine elementary studies for violin, and he enjoyed a collaborative relationship with Mendelssohn, much as Joachim did with Brahms. He gave the first performance of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in 1845 and was devastated when Mendelssohn died, in 1847, at the age of only 38.[163]

Milan, Amsterdam, den Hague, Geneva, Madrid, and Brussels

The German-speaking world was proudly conscious of its music traditions, and once this pride became caught up with national aspirations, it is not surprising that there should have been conscious resistance to the Paris example. There were, however, many conservatories established in the early nineteenth century which were situated well within the sphere of French influence, and one might expect that these would follow the Paris model more closely. It was scarcely so.

Milan

In 1807, Milan, having briefly been capital of the Cisalpine Republic, found itself part of the French-ruled Kingdom of Italy. While this political situation favoured governmental initiatives in education, the establishment of a conservatory in Milan was principally motivated by concern at the apparent decline of standards at the opera. It was therefore entirely focused on training singers and was small, designed to include 14 teachers, 12 boys

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[160] We recall that Louis Spohr, David's teacher, modelled his playing on that of Pierre Rode.

[161] Albert Mell, 'David, Ferdinand', *Grove Music Online*, 2001.

[162] Borchard, rev. Uhde, 'Joachim, Joseph'.

[163] Mell, 'David, Ferdinand'.

and 12 girls, all living in and kept for a period of 10 years. As Davide Daolni demonstrates, its structural organization was based almost entirely on the religious orphanage model. The bound set of Paris teaching methods presented to the School by Napoleon remained unused. Only as the Milan Conservatory evolved did it start to adopt more pedagogical inspiration from Paris, such as translating Fétis' 1824 treatise on harmony and Berlioz's 1843 treatise on orchestration.[164]

Amsterdam and den Hague

The 1826 decision by the government of Wilem I to establish four music schools across the territory of the then Kingdom of the Netherlands owed much to French example and the brief rule of Louis Napoleon (1806-10). But while the Paris Conservatoire was a constant point of reference, it was its role as a central, national music authority which most inspired emulation, rather than its mode of pedagogical organization. As in the case of Milan, its published methods remained in libraries, largely ignored. With the revolt and independence of the Belgians in 1830/31, the two key cases are the schools of den Hague and Amsterdam. The Amsterdam school was another to resemble the École royale de chant and became little more than a department of the Amsterdam Theatre. The school in den Hague failed to achieve much. Key problems in establishing a strong institution included the lack of a strong central state and the conviction that it was singing that needed improvement, rather than instrumental music.[165]

Madrid

The Conservatoire royale de musique Marie-Christine de Madrid was founded in 1830-31 as a result of monarchical initiative and enthusiasm for Italian opera. The minister most responsible for its creation wanted to look at as many models as possible and, while the influence of Paris is discernible, there are many differences between the two institutions.

In its first years (1831-8), Madrid catered for internal (boarding) and external pupils of both sexes. The school taught a full range of instruments, with just one professor for each. At the top of the hierarchy was Director Piermarino (an Italian tenor) and the professors of composition, piano, and violin (Pedro Escudero). Piermarino also taught singing. Together

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[164] Daolni, 'Uncovering the origins of the Milan Conservatory'.

[165] Jerome van Gessel, 'The Paris Conservatoire and the origin of Dutch Royal Music Schools', in *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 145-160.

with the main administrator, they made up a kind of executive committee [*junta facultative*]. The age-range of admission was 12-15. There was no entry exam, but rather parents had to provide evidence of moral, political and religious suitability. Teaching does not seem to have been progressive on the Paris model, except that the first trimester of instruction was common to all classes and was run by the top three professors.

The progress of students was monitored even more strictly than in Paris: students needed permission to practise for fear of their learning faults! Teachers were also subject to strict discipline and the Director could conduct an examination of any class once a month. In 1833, Escudero was sacked as professor of violin after complaints from parents that he only attended to the learning of a few favourites. Unlike in Paris, prizes were not distributed by open competition but by decision of the ruling committee.[166] Subject to approval of the Director, each teacher could choose his own method. The violin, flute, clarinet, and bassoon classes used the official Paris methods and Albeniz's piano class used the 1820 method of Montgeroult. Pedro Albéniz (1795-1855) had studied in Paris with Herz and Kalkbrenner. Pedro Escudero had also studied in Paris. The influence of Paris thus came through personnel and through some of the methods, rather than through the model of pedagogical organization itself.

Geneva

The Conservatoire de musique de Genève was founded in 1835. As Rémy Campos demonstrates, its early development demonstrates the critical role of the surrounding society in the formation of an institution. The history and geographical position of Geneva placed it within the orbit of France and the School's founder, François Bartholony, was a financier who divided his time between Paris and his native Geneva. He remained Director until his death in 1881. Despite these connections, there was no official intercourse between the two institutions and the contrasting Calvinist religious identity and social structure of Geneva meant that the Paris Conservatoire was as much a negative as a positive point of reference.

Public matters in Geneva were in the hands of philanthropists, men like Bartholony. They were determined that the Geneva Conservatoire would not be a school for the training of professional musicians, especially not for the immoral theatres of Paris. Rather, it would be

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[166] Beatriz Montes, 'La fondation du Conservatoire royale de musique Marie-Christine de Madrid (1830-1831)', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 161-186.

focused on vocal music, at once religious and patriotic, with the aim of educating, over time, a whole population of amateurs. The school was built on solfa, not as the gateway to the study of instruments but as the means to fluent reading and singing. Choron's singing school was more of a model than the Conservatoire, as was the *Orphéon* of Wilhem, built on the principles of mutual education. The fact that Choron's school was Catholic did not pose problems for sharing repertoire and despite any moral reservations about Paris, Bartholony was enthusiastic about the Paris Société des concerts and its performance of Handel, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven.[167]

Brussels

Had the Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles been created out of nothing in 1832, with François Fétis as its first director, it might have resembled Paris more from the outset. It was established by the new Kingdom of Belgium as part of a nation-building effort analogous to that of the Paris First Republic. As it was, Fétis inherited staff from a previous school which, like Vienna, started as a singing school in 1813, adding a violin teacher in 1820 and other instruments in 1826, when support from the Kingdom of the Netherlands augmented funding from the city authorities. Nonetheless, the influence of Paris was always considerable: the first violin teacher was a pupil of Baillot, and when the Belgian authorities looked to recruit the first director, Baillot and Habeneck were among the many names canvassed. Fétis' feud with Cherubini meant that the Paris Director initially gave him a poor report when consulted by the Belgians.[168]

As Director from 1833-1871, Fétis had enormous power over the institution and over musical life in Brussels as a whole. Nonetheless, he had inherited staff from the old École royale and could only improve their quality as posts became vacant. Despite his public criticisms of the Paris Conservatoire, he still recruited primarily from graduates of that institution and adopted most aspects of its organization. He did not seek to reproduce its pedagogy uncritically, rejecting collective teaching of solfège and piano and seeking to improve on vocal teaching.

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[167] Rémy Campos, 'Les rapports du Conservatoire de Genève avec celui de Paris : un exemple d'échanges transnationaux dans l'Europe du milieu du XIXe siècle', *Musical Education in Europe*, vol. I, 187-202.

[168] Henri Vanhulst, 'Le Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles : ses origines et le directorat de François-Joseph Fétis (1833-1871)', in *Le Conservatoire de Paris: Des Menus-Plaisirs à la Cité de la Musique*, 201-217.

There was nothing collective about his style of leadership, but under his direction the Brussels Conservatory grew into a school of solid reputation and the centre of musical life of its city.[169] It may have been the only music school to bear a strong resemblance to Paris in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The importance of the violin department at Brussels has already been asserted in the context of Fétis' criticisms of the Paris pedagogical culture.[170] As well as De Bériot, Fétis appointed Lambert-Joseph Meertz and Hubert Léonard to that department, both Belgians who had completed their studies in Paris.[171] The crucial link in the lineages between De Bériot and Vieuxtemps, however, predates Fétis directorship, since Vieuxtemps studied with De Bériot from 1828-1831. It therefore seems likely that the Brussels school of violin-playing would have been significant regardless of the establishment of a solidly structured institution, much as was the case for Vienna. As well as the lineage De Bériot – Vieuxtemps – Ysaÿe, it is important to note an important and ongoing link between Brussels, Vienna, and Budapest through Jenő Hubay (1858-1937).

Born in Budapest in the same year as Ysaÿe, Hubay had his first teaching from his father Károly Huber, who was violin professor at the Budapest Conservatory: the son changed his name to 'Hubay' to make it more Hungarian. He made his debut with the Viotti Concerto no. 22 in A minor in 1872 and went to Berlin to study with Joachim for three years. He is thus associated with the Vienna school. Returning to Budapest, he gave many recitals with Liszt, and on Liszt's advice travelled to Paris in 1878, where he developed a friendship with Vieuxtemps, whose health was failing. Vieuxtemps designated him his artistic heir and made him executor of his will before dying in 1881. On Vieuxtemps' recommendation, Hubay took over as head of the violin department in Brussels the following year. In 1886, he returned to Budapest to take up a similar post and established a violin school which became one of the

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169 Vanhulst, 'Le Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles', 209.

170 See Chapter 6 above.

171 Meertz (1802-1863) seems to have studied privately with Lafont and Habeneck; his greatest impact was as a pedagogue and he taught at the Brussels Conservatory for 35 years. Léonard (1819-1890) was a pupil of Habeneck at the Conservatoire. He was a renowned soloist and chamber musician, and he succeeded De Bériot as professor in 1852.

foremost in Europe. His pupils included Joseph Szigeti, Zoltan Székely, and André Gertler.[172]

The preface to Hubay's edition of Vieuxtemps' *Six Concert Etudes* Op. 16 is expressive of the way respect for tradition had become a major issue in classical music ever since Baillot:

> Since the copyright on the works of Henri Vieuxtemps, the great Belgian violinist, ran out, these have been republished in new arrangement by almost all the better-known publishing houses. Amongst all the latter, I found none which had retained the original markings and directions. It is incomprehensible to me how anybody, in editing the works of a master, who himself represents a school and a definite tendency, could completely obliterate that master's every mark and direction. One would think that the markings of a Spohr, a Vieuxtemps or a Wieniawski, would be respected.
>
> As Vieuxtemps was the creator of an entirely new tendency in violin-playing – a large broad plastic style, it is most important in editing his works, that the character of his great interpretive art should not be lost, and also that his principles should be made entirely clear. This large broad and free style which was the special characteristic of Vieuxtemps' music, has alas! generally been quite misunderstood.[173]

By calling these works 'études de concert', Vieuxtemps was emphasizing that they were not written for purely technical purposes.[174] As Hubay asserts, they convey a specific artistic conception of violin-playing, but if this were universally understood Hubay would not have felt the need to make the assertion. One could say the same of the Kreutzer and Rode etudes, which are sometimes taught without reference to the stylistic ideals of which they are an expression.

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[172] See Gombos, 'Hubay'. André Gertler (1907-1998) was born in Budapest and studied violin with Hubay there, but he settled in Brussels in 1928 and taught at the Conservatory from 1940-54. He made famous recordings of all the Bartok violin works. See Rudolf Lück, rev. Tully Potter, 'Gertler, André [Endre]', *Grove Music Online*, 2001. Among his students was the author's first teacher, Josette Esquedin (1929? -).

[173] Preface to Hubay edition of Vieuxtemps *Six Concert Etudes* Op. 16 (Budapest: Harmonia, 1914?). The preface is rendered in Hungarian, German, English and French. I have amended punctuation only. For the full English text, see Appendix J.

[174] They were first published under this title in Leipzig, 1845, and were dedicated to the Paris Conservatoire.

Conclusion

'Nous sommes ce que nous font les circonstances.' Chateaubriand[175]

The Conservatoire was a Revolutionary institution in conception and in its early activity. Its foundation, its animating values, and its early success can only be understood through examination of the cultural and political history of Revolutionary France. This history, in turn, can only be understood in terms of broadly held values as well as forces and events, and values in particular must be understood in terms of continuity more than of rupture. Economic and social forces may have provided the heat under the cauldron of pre-Revolutionary France and the Revolutionary wars provided further fuel, but ideas played a major role in undermining the monarchical order. Once that order collapsed, the political battle was in large measure one over values, involving disagreement over how to respond to external events and a naked struggle for power. Individual groups and personalities could play significant roles.

The late twentieth-century revisionist interpretation of the Revolution brought a welcome shift in emphasis away from social and economic analysis to discussion of cultural politics, but its strong tendency to reduce the Revolution to the Terror meant that it was only on the search for negative values. This produced the totalitarian interpretation which saw all Revolutionary action in terms of violence, centralism, and cultural control, and which has cast a dense shadow over the recent work on the early years of the Conservatoire. That orientation ignores the influence of positive values such as education, music, the collective exercise of reason, fellow-feeling, practical knowledge, equality of opportunity, and universality. All of these values pre-dated the Revolution but the educated classes which held them, including those working for the Court, were largely frustrated in their attempts at putting them into practice. Without the field of opportunity opened up by the collapse of royal authority and the weakening of the aristocracy, it is unlikely the Conservatoire would have become more than its predecessor, the École royale de chant, for some time. The ambitious form it took owes everything to the grand republican aspiration of the Revolutionaries. The discussion above of the Conservatoire 'model' demonstrates that even with the example of the

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[175] 'We are what circumstances make us': René de Chateaubriand, *Vie de Napoléon* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 1999; first published, 1847-48), 64.

Conservatoire before them, the other European conservatories founded in its wake failed to match up to its example. They responded to different historical conditions and did not have the benefit of the same political aspiration.

Revolutionary values and experience left their mark on the internal culture of the Conservatoire as well as on its shape and scale. Its insistence on admission according to merit, its tendency to collective evaluation, collective authorship, and collective decision-making, its openness to outside influence, all sprang from Enlightenment values heightened by Revolutionary experience and all contributed to the early achievements of the institution. The French Violin School, a jewel of the overall school, provides an excellent example: built on Italian tradition enlivened by the musical dynamism of late-eighteenth-century Paris, promoted by the performance and teaching of three colleagues, and devoted to leaving a strong legacy for the future in the form of fine violinists and leaders. This collective created a seminal body of its own work in the form of concertos and etudes, promoted the work of leading French and foreign composers, and grounded the study of the violin in the vocal ideal and the works of the old Italian masters.

The violinists contributed disproportionately to the fame of the Conservatoire and of the Société des concerts which grew from it, but their relatively short leadership in violinistic innovation points to forces holding back further evolution. These conservative forces were common to other departments of the Conservatoire such as piano and composition. For while the Conservatoire system of teaching decisively raised standards of instrumental performance, it contained powerful tendencies towards conformity. The first of these were ideological: a persistent neo-classical belief in eternal standards of taste, a Revolutionary mania for codification, and an exaggerated respect for tradition. To these must be added features of the pedagogical system itself: the centrality of competition, the use of group instruction, and a pedagogical hierarchy which strictly subordinated the répétiteurs to the professors. Finally, the tendency to internal recruitment of teaching staff, accentuated by the importance of family ties, limited the possibilities for internal renewal.

The early history of the Conservatoire bears witness to the contradictions inherent in the Revolutionary belief that one can legislate for freedom. This belief brought together a late-Enlightenment belief in progress with a neo-classical belief in the beauty of laws. The tensions which are always inherent in education between authority and freedom, individuality and conformity, were refracted through a neo-classical lens which struggled to accommodate

change. One could thus write a history of the Conservatoire's first century structured as tragedy: a noble undertaking overtaken by cultural change around it and undermined by its internal flaws. However, this would be to forget that, with the possible exception of the vocal department, the founders of the Conservatoire achieved exactly what they set out to do and more. They created a school which decisively raised standards of instrumental playing, one which not only could rival those of Italy and Germany but which surpassed them and long remained the standard by which they would be judged.

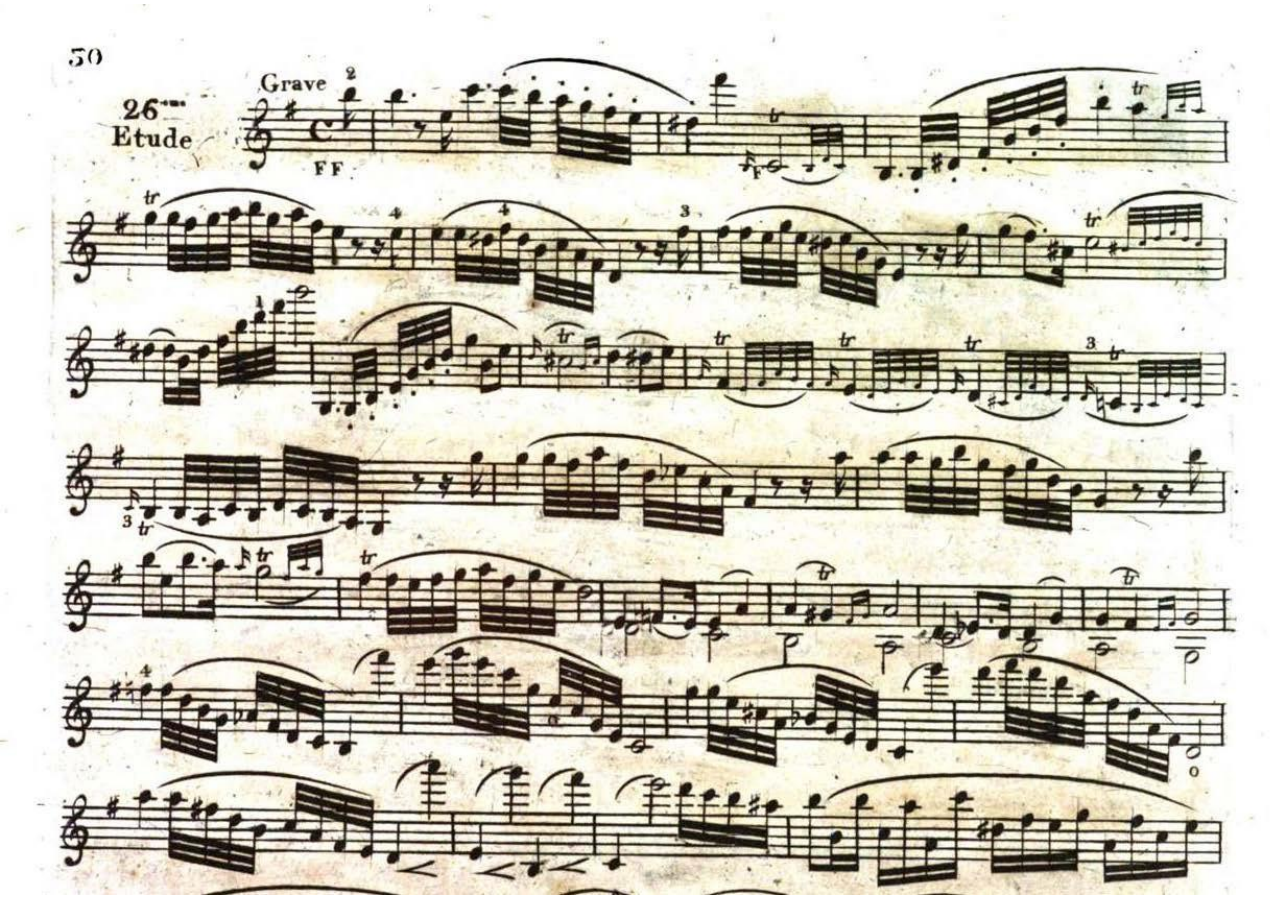
Much of their achievement derives from the historical opportunity presented to them to lead public taste, rather than have to cater to a pre-existing taste. For a few decades, the Conservatoire musicians enjoyed strong state support, but still had a large share in running their own affairs. Chateaubriand was only half right: we are made by our circumstances, but we also contribute to their making. The achievements of the early Conservatoire suggest that musicians never serve their society better than when they are engaged with it, but not bound by it.

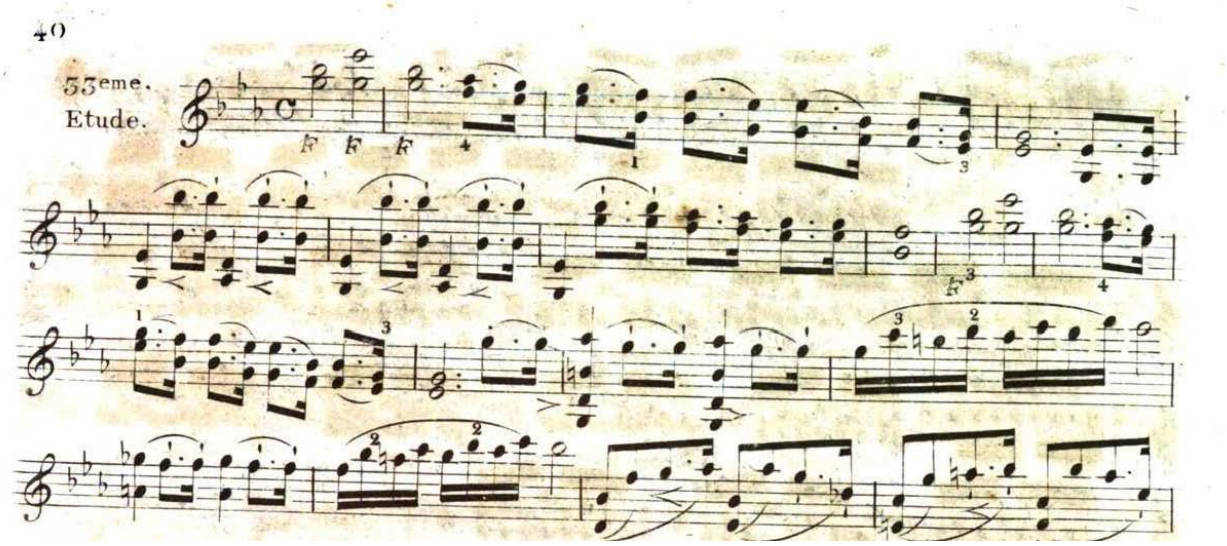
APPENDICES

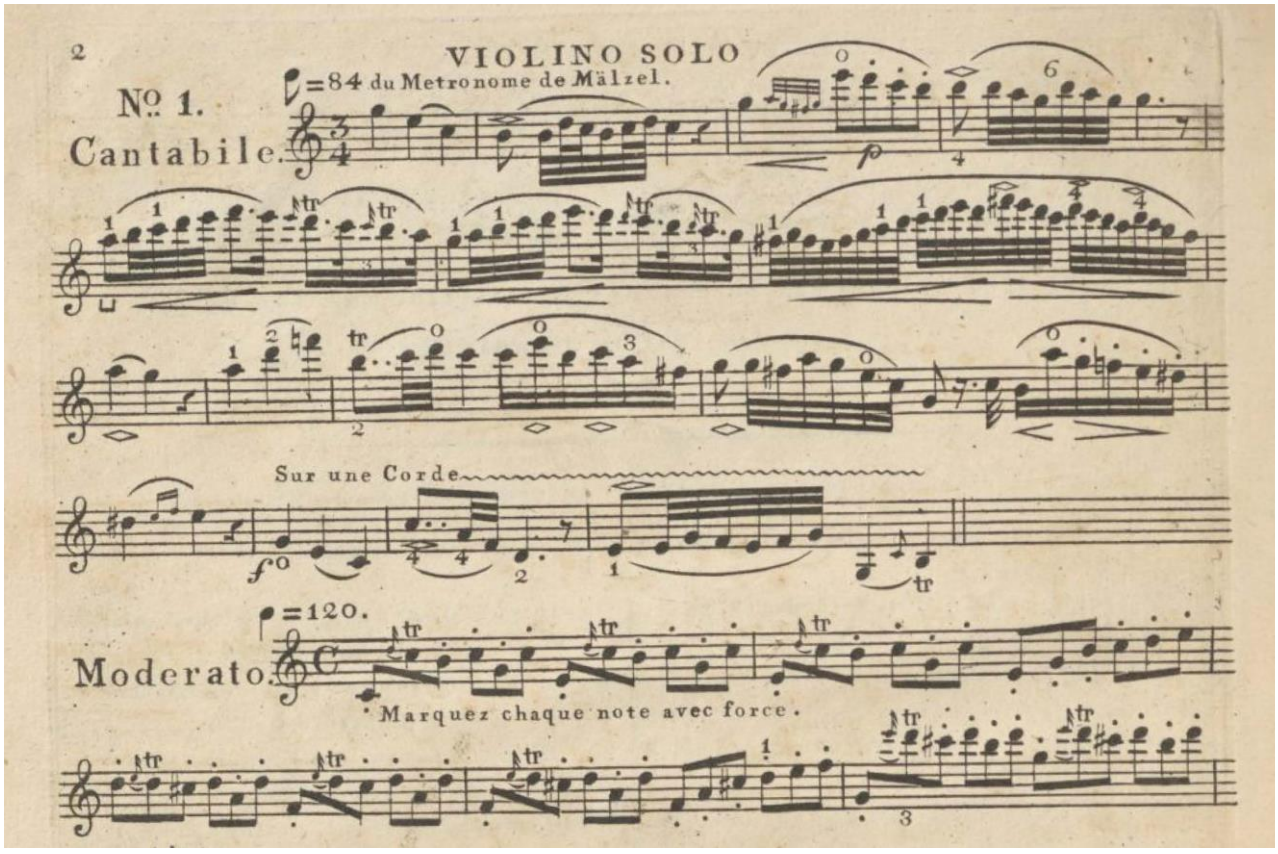
Appendix A: Musical examples

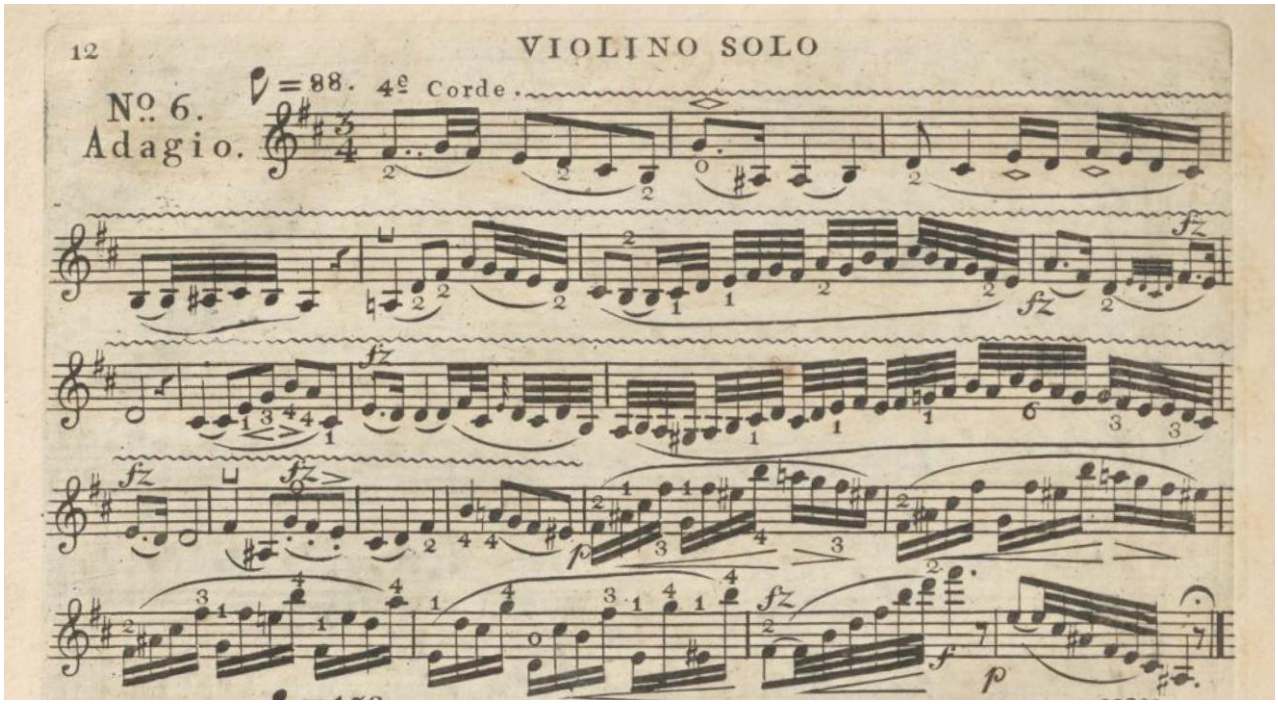
All of the following extracts have been made from scans of early editions sourced from the International Sheet Music Library Project. The respective editions are:

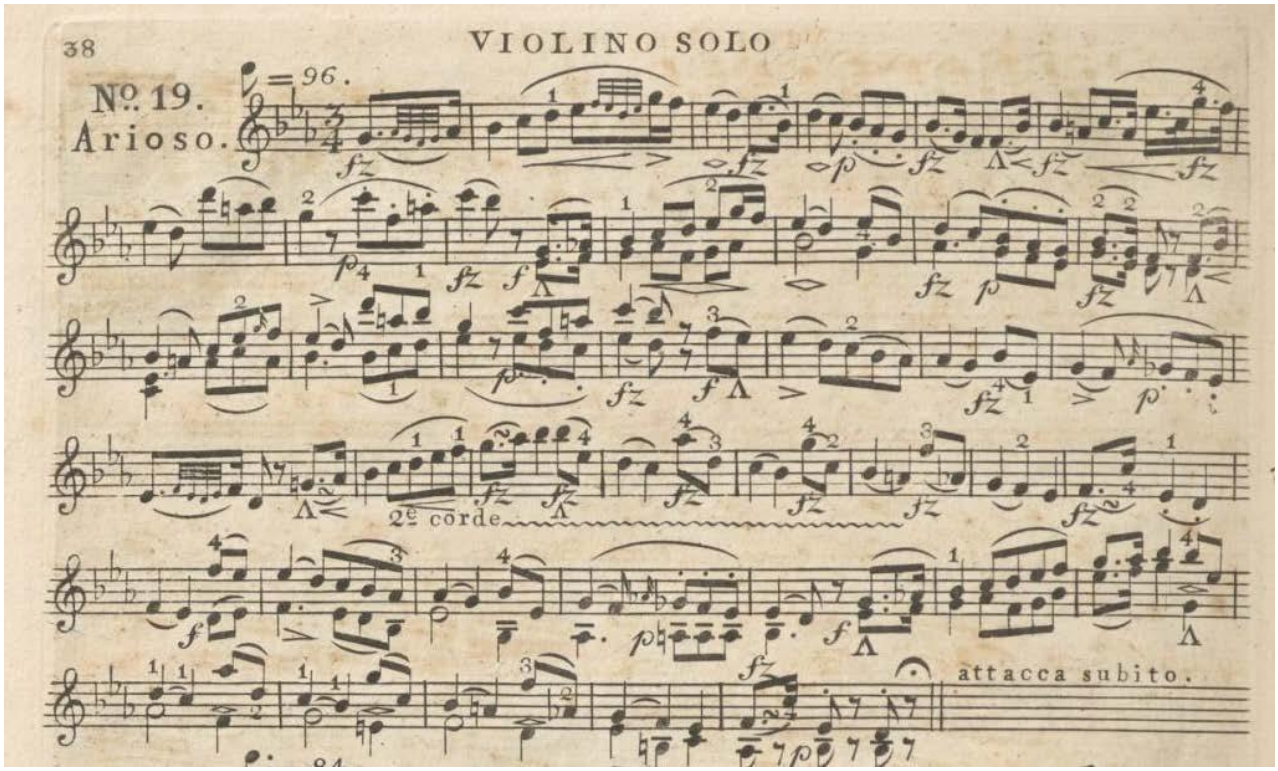
Rodolphe Kreutzer, *40 Études ou caprices* (Paris, 1810); Pierre Rode, *24 Caprices* (Leipzig: Peters, 1819); Niccolo Paganini, *24 Capricci*, 2nd edition (Milan: Ricordi, n.d. [1836]).

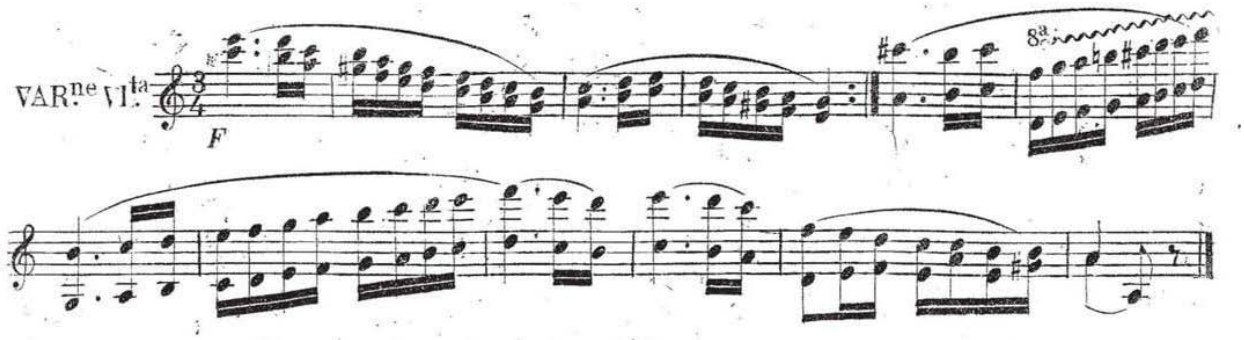
(1) Kreutzer Etude no 26 in E minor

This etude provides a fine example of what Bruce Schueneman calls the 'heroic conception of the violin'. It also illustrates the combination of incisiveness and lyricism which are characteristic of the Viotti style.

(2) Kreutzer Etude no 33 in Eb major

The opening bars of this study illustrate the characteristic French dotted march rhythm. They are also another example of the 'heroic conception of the violin'.

(3) Rode Caprice no. 1 in C

The opening cantabile section is a study in nuance.

(4) Rode Caprice no. 6 in B minor

This adagio is a fine example of the singing style characteristic of the French School. Rode indicates that most of the melody is to be played on a single string (*4e corde*) in order to emphasize this singing quality, a procedure more commonly associated with Paganini who used it to virtuoso effect.

(5) Excerpts from Rode Caprice No. 19 and Paganini Caprice No. 24

The tenths which occur in this Arioso result from genuine two-part writing and the challenge is to play them in such a way that the singing quality of the sound is in no way impaired.



Parallel tenths like these are much more typical of Paganini's style. While this variation is to be played cantabile, the double stops are used more for virtuoso effect.

Appendix B: The advantages of public education according to Charles Rollin's *Traité des Études (1728)*

1. L'éducation publique enhardit le jeune homme, lui donne du courage…

2. Au collège on fait des liaisons qui durent souvent autant que la vie, et l'on y prend un certain usage du monde…

3. Le grand avantage des écoles, c'est l'émulation. Un enfant y profite de ce qu'on lui dit à lui-même, et de ce qu'on dit aux autres. (…) Quels efforts ne fait point un bon écolier pour primer dans sa classe at pour emporter le grand prix ! Voilà ce qui donne de l'ardeur à de jeunes esprits ; et une noble émulation bien ménagée, dont on aura soin de bannir la malignité, l'envie, la fierté, est un des meilleurs moyens pour les conduire aux plus grandes vertus et aux plus difficiles entreprises.

4. …un jeune homme trouve dans ses compagnons des modèles qui sont à sa portée …

5. Enfin, c'est qu'un maître qui a un nombreux auditoire s'anime tout autrement que celui qui, étant tête à tête avec un unique disciple, …

Translation

1. Public education toughens up the young man; it teaches him courage…

2. At college, one makes connections which last one's whole life and one acquires a certain habit of society…

3. The great advantage of schools is competition. A child profits from what is said to him as well as what is said to others. A good schoolboy is prepared to make great efforts in order to come first in his class and to carry off the prize! This is what fires up young spirits, and a noble spirit of rivalry, which one will take care to preserve from malignity, envy and pride, is one of the best ways to lead them to the greatest of virtues and the most difficult of enterprises.

4. … in his fellows, a young man finds models which are within his reach…

5. Finally, a master who is faced with a numerous audience becomes much more animated than one who is closeted with a sole disciple…

Appendix C: Full account of Hélène de Montgeroult's hearing by the Committee of Public Safety, from Eugène Gautier, *Un musicien en vacances* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, ca. 1873), 51-53

Le président donna tout haut l'ordre de faire amener à la barre madame de Montgeroult et compléta l'ordre par quelques paroles dites à voix basse. Sarrette trembla ; en attirant l'attention du comité de salut public sur sa pauvre amie, peut-être venait-il de l'envoyer à sa mort.

Au bout d'un instant, un assez grand remue-ménage se fit dans l'antichambre de la salle des séances ; des chaises tombèrent ; on entendit des voix animées, la porte s'ouvrit, et l'on vit entrer, portée par deux patriotes, une caisse longue, que les yeux troublés de l'ami de madame de Montgeroult prirent d'abord pour un cercueil ; mais la vie de quatre pieds cannelés et l'aspect de deux pédales désaccrochées se balançant éperdues sous le ventre de la caisse, firent comprendre au désolé Sarrette que le prétendu cercueil n'était autre chose qu'un piano.

Derrière l'instrument, entre deux gendarmes, parut madame de Montgeroult, pâlie par plusieurs jours de captivité et d'angoisse.

« Citoyenne, dit le président, on nous assure que l'*Institute national de musique* ne peut se passer de toi et de ton talent, dont nous avons voulu juger par nous-mêmes. Assieds-toi là et joue-nous *La Marseillaise* ! »

Ce n'était pas le moment de se faire prier. Interdite et tremblante, madame de Montgeroult se laissa tomber sur une chaise devant le piano (peut-être, disait-elle plus tard, n'était-il pas parfaitement d'accord), et elle commença cette tâche facile pour elle de jouer l'hymne de Rouget de l'Isle.

Ô jeunes filles du Conservatoire, quand à l'époque des concours, vous tremblez en exécutant un concerto devant un paisible et inoffensif jury, c'est là qu'il eût été permis d'avoir peur, puisque le prix qu'il s'agissait de gagner, c'était simplement la vie !

Après avoir joué une fois l'air demandé, l'artiste le reprit en y introduisant quelques timides variations destinées à faire briller son exécution incomparable ; puis, mettant à profit son grand talent d'improvisatrice, elle promena le thème dans les divers tons voisins de celui où elle avait commencé. Jetant alors, à la dérobé, un regard sur le terrible aréopage, elle vit que le président souriait. Les plumes avaient cessé de grincer sur le papier ; tout le monde était éveillé ; deux membres du Comité dodelinaient doucement dans leurs immenses cravates ; un petit murmure, qui allait devenir un fredonnement, planait sur le tribunal. Madame de Montgeroult redoubla d'efforts.

Ramené au ton principal par un formidable *crescendo* qui faillit faire éclater la poitrine du frêle instrument, le thème sacré reparut tout à coup à la main droite, accompagné de larges arpèges.

Le président n'y tint plus ; il se leva, et imité par ses collègues, il attaqua d'une voix de tonnerre le chant national. À ce bruit inaccoutumé, la porte s'entrouvrit ; les huissiers, le sourire d'obséquiosité sur les lèvres, joignirent leurs voix à celles des commissaires ; plus loin, les deux soldats qui gardaient la porte de l'escalier, laissant tomber leurs fusils sur les dalles de pierre, se mirent à entonner leur chant favori, les yeux fermés et le coude appuyé sur le triangle de leur baïonnette. Pendant ce temps, la mélodie guerrière égrenant ses notes sonores d'étage en étage, on entendit jusque dans la cour des voix lointaines répéter comme un écho : *Aux armes, citoyens* !

Lorsque le délire général fut un peu calmé, le président prit la parole et prononça cette courte allocution :

« Citoyenne, nous voyons que tu es une bonne patriote, et nous t'acquittons des accusations portées contre toi. Viens recevoir l'accolade fraternelle ! »

Madame de Montgeroult se résigna, et dûment embrasée, devenue *sacro-sainte,* comme disait Dumouriez, elle suivait Sarrette et franchit, pour rentrer dans la vie, cette porte que tant d'autres, hélas ! n'avaient repassée que pour entrer dans la mort !

Translation

The president gave out loud the order to bring Madame de Montgeroult to the bar and added a few words in a lower voice. Sarrette trembled: in attracting the attention of the Committee for Public Safety to his poor friend, he might have condemned her to death.

After a moment, a great fracas of movement sounded from the anteroom; chairs were overturned, and animated voices were raised. The two sides of the door opened and a long box was carried in by two patriots, a box taken at first by Madame de Montgeroult's friend to be a coffin. The sight of four fluted legs, however, and two pedals dangling forlornly under the belly of the box in question, revealed to the unfortunate Sarrette that the supposed coffin was nothing other than a piano.

Behind the instrument, between two gendarmes, appeared Madame de Montgeroult, her face showing the pallor of several days of anguish and captivity.

‘Citizenesse’, said the president, ‘We are assured that the Institute national de musique cannot do without you and your talents, but we wish to judge for ourselves. Sit down and play us the Marseillaise!’

This was not the moment to wait until entreated. Shocked and trembling, Madame de Montgeroult sank onto a chair in front of the piano (later, she said that it may have been out of tune) and addressed what for her was the easy task of playing the tune of Rouget de Lisle.

O young girls of the Conservatoire, you who tremble at competition time when performing a concerto before a peaceful and inoffensive jury, *this* was the moment to be afraid, since the prize at stake was quite simply life itself!

After having played the requested tune once, the artist repeated it with the introduction of a few timid variations aimed at showing off her incomparable facility. Then, drawing on her great talent as an improviser, she paraded the theme through various neighbouring keys. From a furtive glance at the terrible assembly, she saw that the president was smiling. Quills had ceased scratching paper. Everyone had woken up, two members of the Committee were bobbing their heads gently in their cravats, a soft murmuring, which had become a buzzing, hovered over the tribunal. Madame de Montgeroult redoubled her efforts. Brought back to the tonic key with a formidable crescendo which nearly burst the chest of the frail instrument, the sacred theme suddenly returned in the right hand, accompanied by broad arpeggios.

The president could no longer contain himself. He stood, and, followed by his colleagues, launched into the national song in a thunderous voice. At this unaccustomed noise, the door half-opened, and the doormen, obsequious smiles on their lips, added their voices to those of the commissars; further off, the two soldiers guarding the door to the staircase noisily let fall their rifles onto the flagstones and set to singing their favourite song, eyes closed and elbows resting on the triangles of their bayonettes. Meanwhile, the notes of the warlike melody climbed from floor to floor, and even in the courtyard one could hear distant voices repeating like an echo: *Aux armes, citoyens*!

When the general excitement had calmed down somewhat, the president took the floor and made this little speech:

‘Citizeness, we can see that you are a good patriot and we acquit you of the accusations made against you. Come forward to receive our fraternal embrace!

Madame de Montgeroult resigned herself, and duly embraced, having become *sacrosanct*, in the words of Dumouriez, she followed Sarrette and, returning to life, passed through that door, through which, alas, so many had passed only on the way to their deaths!

Appendix D: Student enrolment figures for the Conservatoire, 1797-1850

Source: Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 873 (percentage column added).

School year	Men	Women	Total	% women
Year VI	-	-	**818**	
Year IX	-	-	**400**	
1805-6	-	-	**326**	
1806-7	217	113	**330**	35%
1812-13	245	208	**453**	46%
1816-17	-	-	**140**	
1821-22	-	-	**473**	
1822-23	193	124	**317**	39%
1825-26	224	71	**298**	24%
1828-29	193	92	**285**	32%
1828-29	209	93	**302**	31%
1830-31	193	96	**289**	33%
1831-32	184	89	**273**	33%
1832-33	186	97	**283**	34%
1833-34	200	108	**308**	35%
1834-35	223	106	**329**	32%
1835-36	244	129	**373**	35%
1836-37	268	147	**415**	35%
1837-38	270	138	**408**	34%
1838-39	256	147	**403**	36%
1839-40	267	149	**416**	36%
1840-41	246	137	**383**	36%
1841-42	254	148	**402**	37%
1842-43	307	193	**500**	39%
1843-44	307	224	**531**	42%
1844-45	331	210	**541**	39%
1845-46	343	197	**540**	36%
1846-47	378	206	**584**	35%
1847-48	356	224	**580**	39%
1848-49	335	250	**585**	43%
1849-50	312	256	**590**	43%
1850-51	312	246	**558**	44%

Appendix E: Complete text of Marie-Joseph Chénier's report to the Convention, 28 July 1795 (from Pierre, *Documents historiques et administratifs*, 120-122)

Rapport au nom des comités d'instruction publique et des finances sur l'organisation de l'Institut central de musique, présenté par M. – J. Chénier à la Convention, Séance du 10 Thermidor III – 28 Juillet 1795

Citoyens Représentants, peut-être il était courageux de venir plaider à cette tribune la cause des arts consolateurs de la vie, quand l'ignorance orgueilleuse et cruelle, ne pouvant dominer que par des moyens tyranniques, étouffait les lumières, proscrivait les talents et traitait d'objet frivole tout ce qui pouvait adoucir les mœurs d'un peuple qu'on voulait rendre esclave soumis en commençant par le rendre féroce. Aujourd'hui que la mémoire de ces dominateurs impies est livrée à l'opprobre ; quand nous venons de célébrer ce 9 thermidor, qui a brisé les échafauds dressés par le despotisme anarchique ; quand des fêtes glorieuses, civiques, rappellent aux souvenirs de tous les républicains deux mémorables époques, celle de la chute du Thrône et celle du Décemvirat, c'est un devoir doux à remplir que de proposer à la Convention nationale, amie de la République et des arts, l'organisation définitive d'un Établissement que les arts chérissent et qui a bien mérité de la République.

Déjà, Représentants, un décret rendu par vous, et rendu même dans un temps propice, ordonnait au Comité d'instruction de vous présenter, dans un court délai des vues d'organisation pour l'Institut national de musique dans la commune de Paris ; mais ce décret bienfaisant était resté jusqu'à présent illusoire, soit par de longues entraves que les dominateurs d'alors ne cessaient d'opposer à son exécution, soit par les orageuses circonstances que vous ont pressés de toutes parts depuis l'heureuse époque du 9 thermidor.

Il et temps, sans doute, de venir au-devant d'une foule d'artistes distingués, qui sont restés en France pour l'illustrer et la servir, préférant leur patrie agitée, mais libre, au calme et à l'opulence des cours qu'ils pouvaient embellir de leurs talents. En effet, les despotes, fatigués d'une fausse grandeur, sentent le besoin de se réfugier dans le sein des arts pour échapper à l'ennui pompeux qui les environne et qui les accable.

Vos comités, fidèles au vœu formé par vous, viennent donc aujourd'hui vous proposer définitivement l'Institut central de musique, car il a fallu lui donner ce nom ; d'abord, en ce qu'il désigne mieux que tout autre l'établissement, et, en second lieu, parce qu'il empêche la confusion qui pourrait résulter de la conformité de l'ancien nom avec celle d'un établissement beaucoup plus vaste, qui vous est proposé dans le nouveau plan de constitution. Cet Institut central de musique est

déjà provisoirement organisé en un corps de musiciens exécutants, attachés à la garde nationale de Paris.

C'est ainsi que, depuis le fameux décret du 14 juillet, ces artistes patriotes, sous la direction de Gossec pour la partie qui tient à l'art, n'ont cessé de concourir à l'exécution des fêtes nationales, indépendamment du service qu'ils remplissaient habituellement auprès du Corps législatif. Sous cette bannière civique, se sont rassemblés, à différentes époques, les premiers talents que la France possède dans l'art musical.

Je résiste au désir qui m'invite à les désigner publiquement, et je n'en cite aucun, car, pour être juste, il faudrait les citer tous. Qu'il me suffise de dire, et je ne crains point d'être démenti par la France ni même par les étrangers, que, dans l'état actuel des choses, il n'existe point en Europe, soit pour la composition, soit pour l'enseignement, une aussi brillante réunion de talents précieux et d'artistes célèbres.

C'est de là que sont partis ces nombreux élèves qui, répandus dans les camps français, animaient, par des accords belliqueux, l'intrépide courage de nos armées ; c'est de là que nos chants civiques, disséminés d'un bout de France à l'autre, allaient jusque chez l'étranger, jusque sous les tentes de l'ennemi, troubler le repos des despotes ligués contre la République ; c'est là qu'ont été inspirés ces hymnes brillants et solennels que nos guerriers chantaient sur les monts d'Argonne, dans les plains de Jemmapes et de Fleurus, en forçant les passages des Alpes et des Pyrénées, en délivrant la Belgique des fureurs de l'Autriche et la Hollande des longues usurpations du Stathoudérat : ces hymnes, qui font l'ornement de nos fêtes civiques, qui excitaient encore hier le juste enthousiasme de la Convention nationale, et que les républicains français n'oublieront pas plus que les fiers descendants de Guillaume Tell n'ont oublié le chant rustique et populaire, qui, sur un sol étranger et jusque dans leur vieillesse, rappelle à leur imagination frappée les doux souvenirs de l'enfance et les souvenirs plus doux encore de la terre natale.

Et tel est l'empire de cet art, de tous les arts le plus universellement senti, qu'il ne faut qu'une âme et des oreilles pour en jouir. Malheur à l'homme glacé qui ne connait pas son charme irrésistible ! Malheur au politique imprudent, au législateur inhabile, qui, prenant les hommes pour des abstractions et croyant les faire mouvoir comme les pièces d'un échiquier, ne sait pas qu'ils ont des sens ; que ces sens forment des passions ; que la science de conduire les hommes n'est autre chose que la science de diriger leur sensibilité ; que la base des institutions humaines est dans les mœurs publiques et privées, et que les beaux-arts sont essentiellement moraux, puisqu'ils rendent l'individu qui les cultive meilleur et plus heureux ?

Si c'est une vérité pour tous les arts, combien est-il évident pour l'art musicale ! Orphée, sur les monts de la Thrace, soumettant les monstres des forêts au pouvoir de sa lyre ; Arion, échappant au naufrage ; Amphion, bâtissant des villes ; toutes des fables de l'antiquité, embellies par l'imagination de poètes, ne sont aux yeux du philosophe, que de brillantes allégories que retracent énergiquement l'empire très réel de la musique. Mais si j'ouvre les annales de l'histoire, je vois Timothée subjuguant Alexandre, les rustiques Spartiates proscrivant le commerce et les arts, à l'exception de la musique ; ces mêmes Spartiates vaincus plusieurs fois et ressaisissant la victoire aux chants de l'Athénien Tyrtée.

Il n'a existé aucune nation sur la terre qui n'ait aimé cet art enchanteur ; il est partout un instinct de la nature, un besoin de l'âme ; on le trouve dans les camps et dans les forêts, dans les palais d'or des despotes de l'Orient et dans les pâturages de la Suisse et de la Sicile il égaie la solitude, il charme la société, il anime à la fois la guerre et l'amour, la chasse et la vie pastorale. Le noir Africain, transporté sur la rive américaine, soulage ses travaux et son esclavage en chantant l'air que lui apprit sa mère libre ; le robuste habitant de l'Écosse septentrionale répète les hymnes de ses anciens bardes, et se promenant dans la nuit, il croit entendre, le long des montagnes, la harpe et la voix de l'Ossian.

L'enfant chante sur le sein de sa mère, qu'il peut à peine encore nommer ; l'impétueux jeune homme chante au milieux des batailles ; le vieillard, réchauffant ses dernières jours aux doux rayons du soleil, répète, en pleurant, la chanson qui fit les délices de son enfance ; les femmes, surtout, douées d'une sensibilité exquise et supérieure à la nôtre, aiment passionnément la musique, qui, comme elles, adoucit les mœurs, tempère la force par la grâce, rapproche et lie ensemble les divers éléments de la société.

Ce bel art charme aussi l'étude, et la philosophie aime à lui sourire. Socrate, au moment de boire la ciguë, le cultivait dans sa prison ; Platon, qui connaissait son pouvoir et sa moralité, le mêlait à toutes les institutions de sa République, comme les ministres des différents cultes l'ont introduit, avant et depuis Platon, dans toutes les cérémonies religieuses. Parmi nous, ce sage et sublime écrivain, qui a prouvé, par tant d'ouvrages que l'éloquence est l'âme la plus puissant de la raison, et que la sensibilité n'exclut point la profondeur philosophique, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, dans sa vieillesse, soupirait encore ses simples romances, qu'on ne peut chanter sans être attendri, et qui portent dans l'âme, doucement émue, la mélancolie qui tourmenterait ses derniers jours.

Si donc cet art est utile, s'il est moral, si même il est nécessaire pour les armées, pour les fêtes nationales, et, ce qui comprend tout, pour la splendeur de la République, hâtez-vous, Représentants,

de lui assurer un asile. Déjà, depuis vingt ans, les progrès rapides qu'il a faits parmi nous ont augmenté la gloire que la France s'est acquise dans les beaux-arts. L'Allemagne et l'orgueilleuse Italie, vaincues en tout le reste par la France, mais longtemps victorieuse en ce genre seul, ont enfin trouvé une rivale.

Cependant nos fêtes seraient inexécutables dans cette vaste commune, les corps de musique de nos armées ne se renouvelleraient plus, nos théâtres et leurs orchestras dépériraient; les musiciens découragés, quitteraient nos contrées ingrates pour chercher une rive hospitalière; l'art lui-même succomberaient sous les attaques du vandalisme, si la sage prévoyance des législateurs ne prévenait tous ces inconvénients.

La suppression des Écoles de musique et des musiciens attachés aux anciennes cathédrales et aux chapitres a fait rentrer plus de quinze millions dans le trésor public ; il est instant de suppléer à leur existence par un établissement plus étendu, plus fertile en moyens d'enseignement et en moyens d'exécution, et dont les dépenses ne monteront pas à 230,000 francs.

Il sera glorieux pour vous, Représentants, de prouver à l'Europe étonnée, qu'au milieu d'une guerre immense, qui n'a été pour la République qu'une suite non interrompue de triomphes, contenant à la fois, dans l'intérieur, le terrorisme anarchique et le terrorisme royal, décrétant, pour les siècles, une constitution sage, républicaine, vous savez encore donner quelques instants à l'encouragement d'un art qui a gagné des victoires et qui fera les délices de la paix.

(Translation:) Report on behalf of the committees of Public Instruction and Finance on the organization of the Central Institute of Music, presented by M.- J. Chénier to the Convention, at the Session of 10 Thermidor, Year III – 28 July 1795.

Citizen Representatives, to come and plead the cause of the consoling arts may have required courage, at a time when a proud and cruel ignorance, only able to dominate by tyrannical means, suffocated enlightenment, outlawed talent, and treated as an object of frivolity anything which could soften the manners of a people, whom one sought to enslave through first awakening their ferocity. Today, with the memory of these ungodly tyrants consigned to opprobrium, when we have just celebrated 9 Thermidor, the day which broke the scaffolds erected by anarchic despotism, when glorious civic festivals recall to republican minds two memorable events, the fall of the Throne and that of the Decemvirate, it is my pleasant duty to propose to the National Convention,

that friend of the Republic and the arts, the definitive organization of an establishment which is cherished by the arts and which has shown itself deserving of the Republic.

Representatives, one of your past decrees, made at a favourable time, already ordered the Committee of [Public] Instruction to present to you plans for the organization of the National Institute of Music within the commune of Paris. This salutary decree has however remained unfulfilled, whether due to the many obstacles placed in its path by the dominators, or by the tempestuous circumstances which have crowded in on you ever since the happy events of 9 Thermidor.

There is no doubt that it is time to anticipate the needs of a group of distinguished artists, who have remained in France in order to serve and bring fame to her, preferring their disturbed but free homeland to the calm and opulence of foreign courts which they could have distinguished with their talents. Despots, tired of their false grandeur, feel impelled to escape the pomp and boredom which surround them by seeking refuge in the bosom of the arts.

Faithful to your wishes, your committees therefore appear today to propose a definite form for the Central Institute of Music, given this name firstly because it most aptly describes the establishment, and secondly, to avoid confusion with the name of a much greater establishment which is being proposed to you in the new draft constitution. This Central Institute of Music already exists in provisional form, as a corps of music performers attached to the National Guard of Paris.

This is how these patriotic artists, under the artistic direction of Gossec, have not ceased to perform as part of the national festivals since the famous decree of 14 July, independently of the duties they have customarily fulfilled with regard to the Legislative Body. Over time, the premier musical talents which France possesses have gathered under this civic banner.

I will resist the temptation to name them publicly and will single none out, since justice would require that I name all. Suffice it to say, and I have no fear of being contradicted in France nor abroad, that as things stand, there exists nowhere in Europe a comparable collection of brilliant talents and celebrated artists, whether for composition or teaching.

This is where those many pupils have come, who, spread through French camps, have inspired the fearless courage of our armies with warlike chords. This is the point from which our national songs, diffusing through France from one end to the other, have spread right across the borders into the tents of the enemy, to unsettle the sleep of despots allied against the Republic. This is the source of the brilliant, solemn hymns sung by our warriors on the mountains of Argonne, on the

plains of Jemmapes and Fleurus, when forcing the passes of the Alps and the Pyrenees, when delivering Belgium from the furies of Austria and Holland from the rapacity of the Stathouder; these hymns, which are the ornament of our national festivals, which aroused only yesterday the justified enthusiasm of the National Convention and which French republicans will no more forget than the proud descendants of William Tell will forget the rustic folksongs which recall to them, right into their old age and on foreign soil, the sweet memories of childhood and the even sweeter memories of their birthplace.

Such is the power of this art, the most universally appreciated of all arts, that possession of ears and a soul is all one needs to enjoy it. How unfortunate the ice-cold man who know not its irresistible charm! How misguided the imprudent politician, the clumsy lawmaker who, taking men to be abstractions which one can move about like pieces on a chessboard, knows not that men are endowed with senses, that these senses form the passions, that the science of leading men is nothing other than the science of directing their sensibility, that manners public and private constitute the basis of human institutions, and that the fine arts are essentially moral, since they make the individual who cultivates them better and happier!

If this is true for all the arts, how much more is it true for music! Orpheus, on the mountains of Thrace, enthralling the monsters of the forest with the power of his lyre, Arion escaping shipwreck, Amphion building towns: in the eyes of the philosopher, all these fables of Antiquity are but brilliant allegories which testify to the very real power of music. If I open the pages of history, I see Timothy vanquishing Alexander, the Spartans banning all commerce and arts with the exception of music; I see these same Spartans many times defeated and regaining victory to the songs of the Athenian Tyrtaeus.

There is no nation on Earth which has not loved this magical art. Everywhere, it constitutes a natural instinct, a spiritual need. It is to be found in the camps and the forests; in the golden palaces of oriental despots and in the meadows of Switzerland and Sicily it provides solitude with cheer, and society with charm; it enlivens war and love, the hunt and pastoral life alike. The African Negro, transported to American shores, finds relief from his labour and his enslavement by singing an air he learnt from his free mother; the hardy denizen of northern Scotland repeats the hymns of his ancient bards and, walking the mountains at night, he thinks to hear the harp and the voice of Ossian.

The child sings at the breast of the mother he can hardly yet name; the impetuous young man sings in the midst of battles; the old man, warming his last days with the gentle rays of the sun, repeats,

with a tear, the ditty which was the delight of his youth. Women, above all, endowed as they are with a sensibility which is delicate and superior to ours, have a passionate love for music which, like them, tempers force with grace and brings together and unites the different elements of society.

This beautiful art also brings charm to study and the philosopher smiles on it. Socrates, about to drink hemlock, made music in prison; Plato, knowing its power and moral nature, integrated it into all the institutions of the Republic, all the religious ceremonies. In his old age, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the sublime and wise writer in our midst, who proved in so many works that eloquence is the most powerful weapon of reason, still hummed those simple romances of his, which it is not possible to sing without being affected and which bring to the gently moved soul that melancholy which was the torment of his last days.

If, therefore, this art is useful, if it is moral, and moreover if it is necessary to the armies, to the national festivals and, in the broadest sense, to the splendour of the Republic, make haste, Representatives, to assure it a safe haven. The rapid progress which it has made here in the last twenty years has already contributed to the glory France has earned in the fine arts. Germany and proud Italy, vanquished in all other arts by France but long victors in this genre alone, have at last met their match.

Meanwhile, our festivals will not be able to take place in this vast commune, the music corps of our armies will not be renewed, our theatres and their orchestras will perish; musicians, discouraged, will leave our ungrateful country in search of more hospitable shores; art itself will fall prey to the attacks of vandals, if the wise foresight of our lawgivers does not prevent all these calamities.

The suppression of the music schools and musicians attached to the old cathedrals and chapters has returned more than fifteen million [francs] to the public coffers. It is now urgent to replace them with a more extensive establishment, one better endowed for teaching and performance, and which will cost less than 230,000 francs.

It will be glorious for you, Representatives, to prove to an astonished Europe that, in the middle of an immense war which has been an uninterrupted series of triumphs for the Republic, while containing both anarchist and royalist terrorism in the interior and ordaining a wise constitution for the centuries to follow, you are able to devote a few moments to encouraging an art which has won victories and which will furnish us with the delights of peace.

Appendix F: Principal aspects of the Daunou Law of 3 brumaire an IV

Title and Type of establishment	Field	Programme
Title I Écoles primaires	Primary education	Reading, writing, arithmetic, elements of republican morality
Title II Écoles centrales	Secondary education	Girls' education separate from boys. For the boys, three sections : (from 12 years old) drawing, natural history, ancient and modern languages (from 14 years old) mathematics, experimental physics and chemistry (from 16 years old) general grammar, literature, history, legislation
Title III Écoles spéciales	Specialised education	Schools of : • Astronomy • Geometry and mechanics • Natural history and medicine • Veterinary science • Rural economy • Antiquities • Political science • Painting, sculpture, and architecture • Music (the Conservatoire) • Schools for the deaf and blind
Title IV Institut national des sciences et des arts	Literary, scientific and artistic dissemination	Three classes: • Physical sciences and mathematics • Moral and political sciences • Literature and fine arts
Title V Institut national des sciences et des arts	Prizes, awards, and public honours	Including the Prix de Rome for painting, sculpture, and architecture (and later, music), and decisions on 'pantheonization'
Title VI Civic and patriotic festivals	Education of the People	Festivals for : • The foundation of the Republic • Youth • Marriage • Gratitude • Agriculture • Liberty • Age

Appendix G: Entry from competition register for 1818, violin section [AN AJ/37/149/2]

Concours de Violon

Le Jury a ensuite procédé au concours de violon. Les concurrents ont été :

MM. Cilmain, Girard, Bauman, Clavel, Colbech, et Mlle Blanchet.

Les concurrents ont été tous entendus dans le Concerto de Viotti en Re mineur, à l'exception de Mlle Blanchet qui a exécuté le Chant « Nel cor non piu mi sento » varié par Mr Kreutzer ainé.

Le jury après avoir au préalable consulté MM. Kreutzer ainé et Baillot, sur la durée des études et sur les connaissances musicales des concurrents et après avoir exprimé à ces professeurs toute la satisfaction sur les résultats de leurs classes.

Considérant qu'il n'a pas été possible cette année de soumettre les concurrents à la double épreuve d'un solo destiné à faire connaitre leur talent d'exécution et d'un morceau à première vue destiné à faire apprécier leurs talens comme lecteurs et comme musiciens.

Considérant qu'il est à la fois dans l'intérêt des élèves, et conforme à la justice de prendre en considération la maturité du talent des concurrents comme musiciens.

A rendu le jugement suivant :

1. Qu'il y a lieu à accorder un Premier et un Second Prix dans les classes de Violon.

2. Qu'il y a lieu à partage du Premier Prix entre MM. Baumann et Clavel, entre lesquels le violon et le certificat de premier prix seront répartis par la voix du sort et ainsi qu'il est ordonné par les règlements, et ce attendu que les dits srs Baumann et Clavel ont déployé dans le concours un talent assez fini sous tous les rapports pour qu'ils doivent cesser leurs études, et prendre rang parmi les artistes.

3. Que le second Prix, a été adjugé à Mr Colbech, qui a exécuté le morceau du concours avec aplomb, justesse, sentiment et rigueur de manière à réunir tous les suffrages et à faire concevoir de grandes expériences, lorsque ses études ultérieures auront achevé de développer les moyens plus qu'ordinaires que le jury a reconnu en lui.

Ce jugement ayant été publiquement prononcé en la grande salle d'audition, en présence des concurrents couronnés préalablement appelés, la séance a été levée et tous les membres signés après lecture faite.

[Signed :]

Cherubini, Le Sueur, Guichard, Berton, Delaferté, (…), (…)

Translation

Violin Competition

The jury proceeded to the violin competition. The contestants were:

Messrs. Cilmain, Girard, Bauman, Clavel, Colbech, and Miss Blanchet.

The contestants all played the Viotti Concerto in D minor, with the exception of Miss Blanchet, who performed the theme and variations on 'Nel cor non piu mi sento', by Kreutzer the elder.

The jury, having consulted Messieurs Kreutzer and Baillot prior to the competition, on the length of study and the musical knowledge of the competitors, and having expressed to those professors the jury's full satisfaction at the results of their classes,

Considering that is was not possible this year to submit the contestants to the double test of a solo designed to reveal their performing ability and a sightreading passage designed to demonstrate their talents as readers and musicians,

Considering furthermore that it is in the interest both of the students and of justice to take into consideration the maturity of the contestants as musicians,

Has made the following judgement:

1. That a first prize and a second prize should be awarded in the violin classes.

2. That the first prize shall be shared between Messrs Baumann et Clavel, with the violin and the certificate shared between them according to lots, in accordance with the regulations. Further, that since the said Messrs Baumann et Clavel have displayed in the competition a

fairly finished competence from all points of view, they shall finish their studies and take up their positions in the ranks of artists.

3. That the second prize should be awarded to Mr Colbech, who has performed the competition piece with accuracy, aplomb, feeling, and firmness, in such a manner as to gather all the votes and to raise the expectation of great things, once his further studies will have finished developing the exceptional capacities which the jury recognize in him.

This judgment having been pronounced publicly in the great hall in the presence of the successful contestants, the session was closed and all the members of the jury signed after reading.

[Signed :]

Cherubini, Le Sueur, Guichard, Berton, Delaferté, (…), (…)

Appendix H: Dictionary definitions of *émulation* and emulation (extracts)

Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Gallimard Hachette, 1963):

Émulation : Sentiment généreux qui excite à égaler, à surpasser quelqu'un en talent, en mérite. 'L'émulation est sans cesse échauffée par le nom d'un héros et l'aspect d'un trophée' (Mme de Genlis).

Distinctions often drawn between *émulation* and *rivalité*: 'L'émulation est toujours un sentiment généreux ; la rivalité est un mobile tantôt bon, tantôt mauvais.'

On the other hand, the distinction between *émulation* and *jalousie* is sharp: 'Quelque rapport qu'il paraisse de la jalousie à l'émulation, il y a entre elles le même éloignement que celui entre le vice et la vertu.'

Émule : Celui qui rivalise avec un autre dans les choses louables : 'Autrefois notre émule, à présent notre appui' (Voltaire). 'Que Londres est de tout temps l'émule de Paris' (Voltaire).

The Oxford English Dictionary Online:

Emulation:

1. The endeavour to equal or surpass others in any achievement or quality; also, the desire or ambition to equal or excel. Notes: In early use the word is perhaps more frequently applied to the mental emotion; in modern use the notion of active effort is always in some degree present.
2. Ambitious rivalry for power or honours; contention or ill-will between rivals. *Obsolete*
3. Grudge against the superiority of others; dislike, or tendency to disparagement, of those who are superior. *Obsolete*
4. As rendering of æmulatio (Vulgate), 'jealousy' (ascribed to God). rare.

Appendix I: Transcription of letter to Director Cherubini, signed Habeneck, Kreutzer and Baillot (January 7, 1831) [AN AJ/37/84/7/s] : 'Observations sur les classes préparatoires de violon des professeurs adjoints au Conservatoire de Musique'

La Méthode de Violon, adoptée depuis longtemps pour les classes du Conservatoire de Musique, divise l'étude de cet instrument en deux parties : l'une a pour objet le mécanisme et les principes élémentaires, en l'autre, le style ou tout ce qui tient à l'exécution des solos ainsi que celles des morceaux d'ensemble, et généralement tout ce qui a rapport à l'expression et à la philosophie de l'art.

L'expérience a fait sentir la nécessité de maintenir cette division des études dans les classes préparatoires des professeurs adjoints.

Il est d'autant plus important de conserver cette marche méthodique, que, s'il tombait en désuétude, la confusion qui en serait la suite nuirait essentiellement aux progrès des élèves en les faisant plâner légèrement par-dessus des difficultés qu'ils n'auraient point approfondies.

L'enseignement, dans lesdites classes préparatoires, a pour objet spécial :

1. L'attitude en général.
2. La manière de tenir le violon et l'archet.
3. La régularité et la souplesse des mouvemens du bras droit et des doigts de la main gauche.
4. L'étude des gammes détachés dans tous les
   [page 2]
   tons, dans tous les mouvemens, à commencer par le mouv. le plus lent, et en comptant tous les tems.
   Celles des gammes coulées, dans un mouvement un peu animé, pour obtenir la souplesse, l'égalité, et l'indépendance des doigts.
5. Ces mêmes gammes dans tous les tons aux sept positions, et tous les exercices ascendant et descendant.
6. Les différens coups d'archet, bien caractérisés, selon la division de l'archet, depuis les plus simples et les plus lents jusqu'aux plus variés et aux plus vifs, tels que les arpeggio, les staccatto, etc.

7. Les autres difficultés élémentaires telles que les trilles, les double cordes, dixièmes, etc, tous mésurées en comptant chaque tems.
8. Les études tout rigoureusement dirigées pour la justesse, la mesure, et la netteté, ces trois choses étant la bâse indispensables pour toute bonne exécution.
9. Les dites classes sont destinées aux commençants, mais ceux qui y sont admis avec quelque moyens d'exécution, sont tenus à travailler les mêmes […] de manière à ce que les plus instruits deviennent répétiteurs des autres, par un enseignement mutuel.
10. à cette effet, les gammes et autres études [auxquels] a été fait mention sont exécutés de mémoire par les élèves.
11. Lorsque le mécanisme parait irréprochable, les ouvrages suivants sont donnés à l'étude selon l'âge, le degré d'intelligence et d'instruction de chacun :

[page 3]

Les 6 dernières Sonates de Corelli. (œuvre 5)

Les 6 premières ……..

Les Sonates de Locatelli, et principalement tous les thèmes variés (œ 6)

L'Art de l'archet de Tartini (œ 1)

Les fugues du même

Les fugues de Leclair, -------- (3me et 4me livre), et principalement les morceaux de cet auteur dont la difficulté est uniforme, soit en triolets, soit en double cordes.

Des études choisis dans L'Art du Violon de J. B. Cartier

Une partie des études de Fiorillo

- de Campagnoli, aux 7 positions
- de Kreutzer
- de Rode

Les Thèmes Variés des Sonates de Paganini, (œ 6)

Les Thèmes Variés des Sonates de Viotti.

Ce n'est qu'après ces études que les élèves travaillent celles des auteurs vivans lorsqu'elles présentent une suite de difficultés élémentaires faites pour étendre les ressources du mécanisme et pour le préparer le mieux possible à la plus grande puissance de l'expression.

Les exercices faites de mémoire ont pour but de fixer l'attention des élèves sur la mesure et la netteté, sans que rien puisse les en distraire, et de les mettre plus tôt en état de passer l'examen du Comité d'administration.

Cet examen n'est relatif qu'aux objets suivants :

[page 4]

1. L'attitude.
2. la manière de tenir le violon et l'archet.
3. la régularité et la souplesse des mouvemens de l'archet et des doigts.
4. la justesse, la mesure, et la netteté.

La musique des auteurs anciens désignés ci-dessus est présentée aux élèves après les exercices faites de mémoire, comme le but et la récompense de leurs efforts ; ils y voyent l'art, non pas dans son enfance, mais dans sa simplicité et sa grâce primitive ; ils y trouvent le naturel appuyé sur la science, et en avançant dans leurs études jusqu'aux modernes, lorsqu'ils sont admis dans la classe qui leur est ouverte ensuite, ils peuvent comparer les différens genres de chaque école et de chaque époque, suivre ainsi la marche de l'histoire et de l'art, et, [voué ?] à un sentiment profond ils joignent un goût éclairé, ils se livrent tout en toute sécurité à l'entrainement de leur imagination ; leur talent, pressant son essor dans une bonne direction ne se perd point alors dans le vague, et, quel que soit le rang qui leur appartienne par la suite, les qualités solides qu'ils ont acquises en font partout des hommes utiles et des artistes honorables.

La marche régulière des études est rappellée ici aux élèves comme leur offrant le meilleur moyen de répondre avec plus de promptitude et d'efficacité aux soins de leurs professeurs dont le zèle ne s'est jamais rallenti.

Paris, le 7 janvier 1831 [?]

[signed:] Habeneck, Kreutzer, Baillot

(Translation:) 'Observations concerning the preparatory classes of the adjunct professors at the Conservatorium of Music'

The Violin Method, long since adopted for the classes of the Music Conservatory, separates the study of this instrument in two parts. The first deals with technique and elementary principles, and the second with style, and everything connected with the performance of solo passages, as well as that of ensemble pieces and, overall, everything which has to do with expression and the philosophy of the art.

Experience has taught the necessity of observing this separation in the preparatory classes of the adjunct professors.

It is all the more important to maintain this methodical progression, since were it to fall into disuse, the resulting confusion would cause fundamental damage to the progress of the pupils, through allowing them to pass lightly over difficulties which they had not thoroughly explored.

The instruction in the said preparatory classes is focussed on the following:

1. Posture in general.
2. How to hold the violin and bow.
3. The evenness and suppleness of the movements of the right arm and the left hand.
4. The practice of scales in détaché in all keys and at all speeds, starting from the slowest and counting the time.

   The practice of scales in legato, in a somewhat faster tempo, in order to acquire suppleness, evenness, and independence of the fingers.
5. The same scales in all keys, in seven positions, and all the exercises ascending and descending.
6. The different bowing strokes, well delineated, according to the division of the bow, from the slowest through to the most varied and lively, such as arpeggio, staccato, etc.
7. Other elementary difficulties such as trills, double-stops, tenths, etc, all played rhythmically while counting time.
8. Etudes, all subject to rigorous guidance concerning intonation, rhythm, and cleanness, these three constituting the indispensable basis of good execution.

9. The said classes are designed for beginners, but those who are admitted already possessing some playing ability should work at the same [curriculum] in such a way as for the more experienced to act as the instructors of the others, in a sort of mutual education.
10. To this effect, the scales and other exercises which have been mentioned should be played by the pupils by memory.
11. When the technique seems beyond reproach, the following works should be given for study according to the age, intelligence, and ability of each:

The last six sonatas of Corelli (Opus 5)

The first six sonatas of Corelli

The sonatas of Locatelli, and especially all the themes and variations

Tartini's Art of Bowing

The fugues of the same

The fugues of Leclair, -------- (books 3 and 4), and especially the pieces of this author which present uniform difficulties, be it in triplets or double-stops.

Studies chosen from J.B. Cartier's Art of Violin

Some of the etudes of Fiorillo

- of Campagnoli, in 7 positions
- of Kreutzer
- of Rode

Themes and variations from the sonatas of Paganini

Themes and variations from the sonatas of Viotti

It is only after these studies that pupils should work on those of living composers, which present a range of basic difficulties designed to extend the range of their technique and which prepare them as thoroughly as possible for the great power of expression.

The reason for doing exercises by memory is to focus the pupils' attention on rhythm and cleanness, free of any distraction, and to bring them more quickly to the stage where they can pass their examination in front of the Administrative Committee.

This examination only relates to the following:

1. Posture in general.
2. How to hold the violin and bow.
3. The evenness and suppleness of the movements of the right arm and the left hand.
4. Intonation, rhythm, and cleanness.

The music of early composers listed above is presented to pupils after the exercises to be done by memory, as the goal of and reward for their efforts. In it, they can see the art, not in its infancy, but in its simplicity and primitive grace. There they find the natural supported by knowledge, and when they progress their studies right up to the moderns, when they are admitted to the class which follows, they can compare the different genres of each school and each era, following thus the progression of history and of music. There, having added an educated taste to deep feeling, they can safely abandon themselves to the impulse of their imaginations. Taking flight in a healthy direction, their talent does not lose itself in the horizon and, whatever the station they occupy as a result, the solid qualities they have acquired will make of them useful men and honourable artists.

The regular progression of study is commended here to students, as that which offers them the best means of promptly and usefully rewarding the efforts of their teachers, whose zeal has never slackened.

Paris, 7 January 1831 [?]

Appendix J: Preface to Hubay edition of Vieuxtemps Six Concert Etudes op. 16 (Budapest: Harmonia, 1914?)

Since the copyright on the works of Henri Vieuxtemps, the great Belgian violinist, ran out, these have been republished in new arrangement by almost all the better-known publishing houses. Amongst all the latter, I found none which had retained the original markings and directions. It is incomprehensible to me how anybody, in editing the works of a master, who himself represents a school and a definite tendency, could completely obliterate that master's every mark and direction. One would think that the markings of a Spohr, a Vieuxtemps or a Wieniawski, would be respected.

As Vieuxtemps was the creator of an entirely new tendency in violin-playing – a large broad plastic style, it is most important in editing his works, that the character of his great interpretive art should not be lost, and also that his principles should be made entirely clear. This large broad and free style which was the special characteristic of Vieuxtemps' music, has alas! generally been quite misunderstood. He hated everything ugly and exaggerated, and woe to the performer who in the master's presence, misunderstood his ideas, wished to make the work 'more beautiful' through gratuitous 'tempi rubato' or pulling phrases out of shape. He insisted strongly that his composition should be played in perfect form and also that his expression marks, bowing and fingering should be observed. In 1878 when I lived in Paris and later in the year 1881 in Algiers, when I passed several months in Vieuxtemps' house, I often had the opportunity to go through his works with him most thoroughly and I am in possession of many of his marking in his own hand. As Vieuxtemps died while I was in Algiers, these markings are his last and the expression of the whole experience of his long career as a virtuoso. They are probably the most complete of any, showing his intentions in the best way. It was in Algiers that he honoured me with the dedication of his 7th violin concerto and it was he who recommended me as his successor to the Brussels Conservatorium, where I held this position for five years. After the master's death, his family entrusted me with the preparation of his posthumous works for publication. Amongst those were his 36 studies dedicated to the Paris Conservatoire. The intimate artistic and friendly relations in which I have stood to Vieuxtemps have influenced me to publish an edition of his entire works, which will appear in due course. In this edition I have given the expression marks, bowing and fingering very exactly according to the original markings. When they

were incomplete I have added to them as necessary. I hope to point the way for all who wish to interpret Vieuxtemps' music in the style which he himself desired that it should be played.

(Zeno Hubay)

Budapest, 1914.

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- Manuscript sources (Archives nationales, then Bibliothèque nationale)
- Primary printed sources (instrumental methods, then memoirs, and all remaining)
- Secondary printed sources

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Relevant material is dotted through the holdings AJ/37. Some examples:

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