

## CHAPTER 1

### ORCHESTRAL MUSIC: SOURCES AND ATTITUDES

#### Introduction

The five sections comprising this chapter deal with the essential practical and intellectual background to the whole study. Further historical details concerning performance practice and orchestration are introduced later in the course of the relevant discussions.

The present chapter sets out to establish the source material on both the physical level and on the level of ideas because in thinking of "orchestration" in a past era there is a particularly difficult balance to be maintained between the evidence of the notes and the evidence of what these meant in the composer's mind. Since I do not believe that such a balance is easily imposed I have treated the sections below rather more separately than is usual in a single chapter. The outlook of the sections, however, progresses from the exposition of the printed notes to exposition of how, at the time of composition, they might have been thought of as sound. With some stress in each section on the contrasts between ancien régime, Republic and Empire the scene is also set in its historical perspective.

Having attempted in sections 4 and 5 to isolate some of the former critical tools and concepts linked with orchestration, I have placed a re-interpretation of these in the light of modern analysis at the end of chapter 8 and in the final chapter.

#### (1) Printed Full Scores

Professor Brook has made us familiar with the circumstances surrounding the publication of symphonic music in eighteenth century France, one of which was the absence of printed full scores and the compromises in orchestration which distribution in printed parts demanded.

In other genres, other conditions obtained. Unless the composer was a favourite there was no profit in the printing of instrumental parts of operas or occasional music, and this was not usually done. Such works were frequently composed with the resources of a particular ensemble in mind, and the need to make a success of them was not dependent on the flexibility of their orchestration, but on different criteria such as dramatic propriety, which in many circumstances might involve the very opposite process; namely, the design of a specific and attractive orchestration. For reasons discussed below, full scores of operas were copiously produced, and these printed documents in the majority of cases are the sole remaining record of their musical nature. The phenomenon of the full score therefore invited exploration of both its internal and external significance.

The geographical and social reasons that give Parisian printed source material at this time peculiar value and authenticity are mentioned by Brook in La Symphonie Française, Vol. 1, page 40. The evidence assembled below incidentally amplifies these reasons.<sup>1)</sup>

Full scores, in the past as well as today, possessed a unique educative value that is particularly important where orchestration is concerned. The rôle that they played in this respect is discussed in sections 2 and 3 below.

#### a) Symphonies

Paris, already the most active European centre of music publication, appears also to have been the first to print full scores of symphonies. An outline of the situation just after 1800 is given by Carse.<sup>2)</sup> The particulars may be summarised as follows:

1) Brook's notion that autograph scores, as the printer's source, were possibly regarded as draft copies, is borne out by the case of Spontini's La Vestale and Fernand Cortez. The autographs of these pieces show that they were used as printer's copy, and were sometimes added to for this purpose.

2) Carse/BB pp.425-438

1801-1806: Leduc published 27 Haydn symphonies, including 5 "Paris" and 3 "London" works.

1802-1803: Pleyel published 4 new Haydn "London" symphonies.

It is perhaps possible that some of the famous London full scores by Cianchettini and Sperati crossed the Channel, in which case they too should be noted:<sup>1)</sup>

1807-1809: 18 Haydn symphonies; 6 Mozart symphonies; Beethoven's first three symphonies.

After these came two French works, the only surviving examples by Méhul, in G minor and D major. These were published in 1809 in Paris, as a fitting acknowledgement of France's only major symphonist between Gossec and Berlioz. No other symphonies appear to have been published in France in score at the time.

#### b) Opera overtures

Probably the only publisher who issued operatic overtures in score without printing the appropriate opera was the official Conservatoire publishing house, the "Magasin de Musique du Conservatoire", originally the "Magasin de musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales".<sup>2)</sup> These overtures were, in order of published appearance:

Méhul: *Le Jeune Henri*, 1797  
 Winter: *Marie de Montalban*, 1798  
 Winter: *Les deux frères rivaux*, 1798  
 Winter: *Le sacrifice interrompu* (between 1797 and 1805)  
 Mozart: 'Overture', 1802<sup>3)</sup>

For other publishers, the printing of operatic overtures from plates originally engraved as part of a full score of the whole was naturally an expedient frequently adopted. Occasionally the offprint was advertised in the full score itself; this happened with Nicolo's Les Confidences (1803)

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- 1) The Breitkopf Haydn full scores of 1806-8 number only five, of which three had already been engraved in Paris.
- 2) Pierre/MAGASIN p.153. This book consists of a full history of the enterprise and a catalogue of all its publications.
- 3) Probably Don Giovanni or Die Zauberflöte. Köchel lists only a Figaro score by Imbault, ca. 1795.

and Dalayrac's Koulouf (1806). More commonly the advertisement was contained in the publisher's current list.

c) Vocal works:

(i) Revolutionary hymns

All the pieces published by the Magasin de Musique were in parts, with the exception of two in full score:

Méhul: "Hymne à la Raison" (P.32), afterwards "Hymne patriotique",  
Auguste compagne, published 3 July 1794.

Cherubini: "Hymne du Panthéon" (P.79), published shortly after  
23 April 1795.

Other such works printed in score were rare and of less musical importance than the above. The set by Cambini and published by Imbault in 1794 is one example:

"Hymne à l'Être Suprême" (P.64)	"Hymne à la Victoire" (P.69)
"Hymne à la Vertu" (P.75)	"Hymne à la Liberté" (P.76)
"Hymne à l'Égalité" (P.77)	"Les Rois, les Grands, les
"Ode sur nos Victoires" (P.85)	Prêtres" (P.82)

The score of Cambini's "Le pas de charge républicain" (P.44), published by Boyer also in 1794, appears to be the only other full score of this type.<sup>1)</sup>

(ii) Occasional pieces

The first and most notable of these, printed at the expense of the State in 1800 by order of the Minister of the Interior, was

Méhul: "Chant national du 14 Juillet 1800" (P.161).

The other pieces in this category were printed a decade later:

Cherubini: "Chant sur la mort de Joseph Haydn" (composed 1804,  
printed during or after 1810)<sup>2)</sup>

Méhul: "Chant lyrique" performed for the unveiling of the statue of Napoleon at the Institute and published in 1811.

1) Pierre/HYMNES pp. 118-119

2) CHERUBINI p.15

## (iii) Religious music

Naturally little or no church music was written by leading composers before the Concordat in 1802. Le Sueur's religious music was entirely published under the Restoration, and the music for the Imperial Chapel was retained in manuscript in the official library. The large works by Paisiello for the Concordat and for Napoleon's coronation (chiefly the Te Deum and the Mass) were not printed; neither was Méhul's Messe Solennelle, dating from the Empire.

The following works are those which I have so far found to have been published in full score before 1810:

Mozart: Requiem

Gluck: De Profundis

Cherubini: Mass in F, written 1808, published 1810 (all by the Magasin de Musique)

G. Martini: Messe Solennelle (1808) (published by the author)

d) Opera and ballet

Paris produced by far the largest number of operatic full scores in Europe. Many composers were virtually certain of publication if they so desired, and composers now forgotten published operas in full score. Thousands of pages in score were engraved each year. Foreign composers found Parisian publishers as well as Parisian performances: Paisiello, Zingarelli, Blangini, Della Maria, Isouard. The printing of serious and comic operas continued throughout the Revolution. Later on, works of very large dimensions such as Paisiello's Proserpine (1803) and Spontini's Fernand Cortez (1809) were accommodated by publishers. The publication in full score of Catel's ballet for the Académie, Alexandre chez Apelles (1808), was an innovation in France.

Full scores of operas printed from the time of Gluck to about 1797 often contained some measure of ambiguity owing to over-concentration of the typography.<sup>1)</sup> These ambiguities generally affected wind instruments

1) The effect of this on interpretation will be discussed below.

and sometimes the percussion.

It was in opéra-comique scores that the benefit was first enjoyed of certain improvements in the design and execution of engraved pages. This development took place slightly before 1800, a period during which no works performed at the Académie were engraved. It consisted in the employment of punches instead of hand engraving for all those parts of the score using letters - the names of instruments, dynamic and speed indications and text. Also, redesigned and clearer punches were used for the musical notes themselves. The publishers Gaveaux Frères appear to have been the first to make these improvements, which were rapidly adopted by most other publishers of full scores. The first scores (pending proper investigation) appearing to have these modifications were Le petit matelot (1796) and Sophie et Moncars (1797) by Pierre Gaveaux. (See Ex.220).

Occasionally the individual composer might publish an operatic full score. Dalayrac and Grétry issued many scores themselves; the popularity of their opéras-comiques presumably encouraged them to keep as strict as possible a control on their dissemination in print.<sup>1)</sup> There was good reason, in addition, in avoiding the profit made by the distributors. This was one reason why in 1802 Cherubini, Méhul, Kreutzer, Isouard (Nicolo) and Boieldieu formed their own publishing company,<sup>2)</sup> both for their own works and the works of others mutually agreed upon. This concern lasted for nine years, issuing full scores of operas as well as other music.

e) Accuracy of full scores of Académie operas

A distinction must be drawn between full scores of works written for the Académie and those for other theatres, when considering their accuracy. The reasons are logical. A printed score of the former kind, by virtue of

1) Le Sueur published his Alexandre à Babylone in full score at his own expense, but the opera was never performed.

2) Pierre/CHERUBINI

the relative isolation of the French genre of tragédie lyrique, would not in general have been regarded as ever likely to serve as the basis for a production. Additionally, such were the practical differences between performances at the Académie and elsewhere that productions even, say, of a work by Gluck or Salieri in Paris and Vienna would have been quite distinctive; the style of singing, the insertion of ballets and the composition of the orchestra were all scarcely comparable. This meant that certain features were not unlikely to have been omitted from the printed score owing to requirements of space. These features were usually the ballets themselves, and sometimes clarinet, trombone or percussion parts.

Opéras-comiques, on the other hand, whether or not their printed versions were used in performance before 1789, did not share the difficulty of lack of space which hampered Académie scores since their orchestral resources were invariably smaller. Their accuracy was generally to be relied upon far more.

The only way to fully establish the accuracy of Académie printed scores is by referring to the copy scores or to the part-books preserved at the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra. Out of the total of eleven printed Académie operas (a further 29 works were unpublished) that were performed between 1788 and 1800, I have checked three: Vogel's Démophon, Zingarelli's Antigone and Gossec's La Triomphe de la République have not been so checked.<sup>1)</sup> After 1800, as will be seen, the question of accuracy changes considerably.

The range of discrepancy between the printed and manuscript copy full scores of the three other Académie full scores printed between 1788 and 1800 is as follows:

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<sup>1)</sup> The others are Lemoyne's comedies Les Prétendus and Les Pommiers et le Moulin; their orchestral resources are smaller than normal for the Académie; and Grétry's La rosière républicaine, Denys le tyran and Anacréon, all of which were examined from the Grétry C.E.

Cherubini: Démophon (1788) Overture originally contained trombones which are not in printed score.

Ballets, end of act 1, not in printed score

In the following places clarinets appear in the manuscript score, but not in the printed score:

Act 1: numbers 4 and 7

Act 2: number 19

Act 3: last chorus

There are also parts for clarinets for the chorus, act 3, scene VII, "Le plus beau sang", which do not appear in either the printed or the copy scores. A cardinal example of distortion in the printed score is shown by Ex.131 from the overture, taken from the Paris copy score. In print the trombones do not appear and the entry of trumpets and clarinets is obscured.

Lemoine: No trombones in the printed score at all, but there are  
Nephté (1789)

MS parts for:

Overture

Act 1: "Marche lugubre" and the hymn following

Act 2: Recitative at the opening

Percussion (Bass drum, cymbals, tambour) omitted in the printed score at

Act 2: scene III

Act 3: all through

Two complete choruses are omitted from the printed score.

Méhul: Horatius Cocclès (1794)

The results of compressing the orchestral layout may be seen in Ex.16, p.84 of the printed score. In this case the unlabelled woodwind stave (arrowed) actually signifies flutes, oboes and clarinets together - ten instruments in all. This is the only such ambiguity in this score, but it illustrates well how misleading the printed note could be at this date.



If a progression from the rather severe imperfections of the printed score of Cherubini's Démophon to the less serious ones of the two later scores may be discerned, the process may safely be said to have continued. The two scores issued after the fallow days of the later Directory, Cherubini's Anacréon (1803) and Blangini's Nephtali (1806), achieve complete accuracy in the clarinet and trombone parts,<sup>1)</sup> and are laid out with clarity.

We can attribute the reason for this change partly to an alteration in the market from collectors to performers, but also through the knowledge that a larger foreign sale was now being catered for than was possible a decade previously. Trading links had improved a great deal under Napoleon.<sup>2)</sup> Neither Anacréon nor Nephtali was by a native Frenchman, and neither were the contemporary printed scores of Tamerlan (von Winter, 1802) and Proserpine (Paisiello, 1803). Only two full scores of Académie works by Frenchmen first given between 1801 and 1805 were published: Le Sueur's Ossian (by Imbault between July 1804 and March 1805)<sup>3)</sup> and Catel's Sémiramis (by the Conservatoire press between 1802 and 1806). Ossian was popular, and a Napoleonic favourite; it was published on the commercial market while Sémiramis was put out by the institution in which Catel worked. Le Sueur, like von Winter and Blangini, produced a saleable commodity in print abroad while the younger and more academic composer did not. The growing 'internationalism' of outlook and lessening of the influence of traditional styles at the Académie was in turn necessarily reflected in the orchestration of scores.

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- 1) No percussion parts were discovered for either of these pieces; stylistically it is quite possible that Nephtali originally contained more percussion than its absence from the printed score would indicate.
- 2) Ponteil/ORGANISATION p.166 et seq. Note also: "Si le commerce des instruments nous appartient exclusivement par l'excellence de notre facture, celui de la musique gravée nous appartient également. Nous ne tirons pas de musique du dehors, et nous en exportons beaucoup." Taken from B. Sarrette's speech to the Conservatoire on 24 February 1802, quoted in Pierre/SARRETTE p.196.
- 3) Information kindly provided by M. Jean Mongrédién

Such notices as the following, produced at about the time that Ossian, ou les Bardes was published, show that even at that epoch sophistication in general communication engendered a need for greater general factual accuracy. Full scores were to be called upon to fulfil an entirely modern function.

"Toutes les cours et les capitales de l'Europe, et même les grandes villes de l'Italie, demandent à connaître la belle musique des Bardes. Madrid, Vienne, St-Petersbourg veulent voir ce bel opéra sur leurs théâtres. La Reine de Prusse vient d'en demander la partition à M. de Lucchesini; l'enthousiasme semble général d'un bout du continent à l'autre ..." etc. 1)

With the printed scores of Spontini's La Vestale (1807) and Fernand Cortez (1809), indeed, another change in the status of the printed full score is seen. Spontini, as is well known, altered many details of orchestration during the rehearsals of these works; the printed score, the preparation of which gave this composer even more time to contemplate details of all kinds, is again at one remove from the copy score and even the autograph, and is more 'finished' than either of these, even though it may no longer be a true representation of what was performed on the opening nights. To take two notable examples: in La Vestale the tam-tam in the finale of act 2 does not appear in the autograph and is only pencilled into the copy score; and in Cortez the instruction at the beginning of the act 2 "Trio, Choeur et Danse" for the oboes and clarinets to be muted by leather bags does not appear at all in the copy score. The publishing of full scores of operas may perhaps be said to have reached a certain state of maturity with these two works. In an autograph note dated 22 April 1844 Spontini marked the Académie copy score of La Vestale with his profound disapproval of the "nombreuses altérations, des transpositions, des coupures, des changemens qui en dénaturent ma composition originale.." and the request that all be adjusted to the "grande partition gravée."<sup>2)</sup>

1) Courrier des Spectacles, 25 November 1804.

2) Bibliothèque de l'Opéra A.412.c, title page of second act.

f) Full scores of opéras-comiques

The general lack of difficulty in fitting the necessary instruments to the printed page was challenged momentarily when composers began to use a single trombone in the orchestra around 1791. Some ambiguity is encountered with earlier scores where the trombone is placed on one or other neighbouring stave and inadequately labelled. Any complete omission of the trombone from a printed score is impossible to detect owing to the disappearance of practically all manuscript scores; but the pattern of its inclusion in opéras-comiques with more serious subject-matter after 1793 leaves little cause for concern in this respect.<sup>1)</sup> The only example in which a trombone part is known to have been lost is that of Dalayrac's Camille (1791). Here the inscription on page 1 states

"La partie de Trombone se trouve gravé dans les parties séparées."

These printed parts have not been found, either in Paris or in London.

Other, more subtle alterations made in the course of publishing opéras-comiques may be considered as of two kinds: intentional amendments made by the composer, and alterations made by the engraver either as an expedient or in order to conform to a tradition.

For the first, it is naturally likely that the more accomplished a composer was, the more inclined would he have been to attempt improvements before publication. It is known that Méhul, for example, worked at successive sketches of at least two operatic pieces. Weckerlin has printed an account of the evolution of "A peine au sortir de l'enfance" from Joseph,<sup>2)</sup> and I have examined the several stages by which the love duet "O du sort fortuné" from Adrien, Act 2, scene 8 was finally completed.<sup>3)</sup>

1) The question is treated in detail on page 124.

2) In LAVIGNAC Vol.4, pp.2282-2283

3) B.N. MS 2276 (lot 6).

Both these series of sketches involved alteration of the orchestration as well as the vocal line. It is therefore highly unlikely that Méhul, for one, did not make cumulative sketches for other pieces, and consider altering the autograph before publication.<sup>1)</sup> In the case of Méhul's Ariodant (1799) I have discovered a previously unknown finale to Act 3<sup>2)</sup> which differs completely from that found in the printed score. As so little else of the autograph of this piece has survived it is unfortunately impossible to say how commonplace this kind of large-scale substitution was, and at what point in time it took place. For Méhul, publication was a considered step; while Ariodant was polished, inferior works from the earlier and later periods of his career were not issued in print.

In the case of Cherubini even fewer clues are to hand since the autographs of Lodoiska, Elisa, Médée and Les deux journées have all disappeared.<sup>3)</sup>

The second class of alterations, those made by the engraver, generally comprise modifications to the intended keys of clarinets and horns, from the study of which some conclusions may be reached on the true tonality of these instruments when played at the time. The effect on clarinet writing is discussed in Chapter 6. The obvious anomalies in phrasing and dynamic markings on the printed page do not affect orchestration greatly, and there are very few obvious misprints of notes.

The improvements in the design of full scores noted in the previous section enabled greater accuracy in detailed markings to be achieved after

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1) Pougín/BOIELDIEU p.51 hints at the revision process, but without cited authority: "Méhul faisait alors répéter, au même théâtre, [Favart] un grand ouvrage, qu'il crut nécessaire de revoir et de retoucher au dernier moment." This was in the spring of 1798; the work may already have been Ariodant (Autumn 1799), since the only other première to precede it was Adrien, an Académie opera.

2) Now B.N. MS 2280 (v).

3) Lesure/CATALOGO

1800. In many scores, particularly those by orchestrally sensitive composers, a meticulous prescription of dynamics, phrasing and expression markings is the rule, so that the appearance of the page is equal or superior in quality to the best French scores of Haydn's symphonies, those published by Pleyel, of 1802-3.

g) The meaning of full scores

Printed full scores of all kinds were naturally issued at intervals after the first performance of the work itself, but as far as may be ascertained in the operatic field, a work that proved popular would have been printed as soon as possible, so as to secure the public's support before the piece was forgotten in favour of some other. Moreover, the fecundity of the majority of composers with which we are concerned implies that there was little delay in most cases between completion of the work and the first performance. The notable exceptions to this are encountered in later works for the Académie (see Introduction, p.vi).

In the exceptional instance of Dalayrac's Une matinée de Catinat, first published in full score by the author and then distributed by Imbault, we are able to date the appearance of the score with more accuracy than is normally possible. The first performance was on 29 September 1800. At the base of the title page of the full score appears the following:

"Les Parties séparées se trouveront à la même adresse le 1<sup>er</sup>  
Pluviose An 9" [i.e. 21 January 1801].

This inscription therefore informs us that the latest date for the appearance of the score was mid-January, and possibly earlier than that. The less detailed checks provided by the comparison of publishers' addresses with Hopkinson's Dictionary of Parisian Music Publishers shows that most opéras-comiques were issued within three years of the first performance.

- Printed full scores in Paris of the time may therefore be taken to be
- (1) Issued with the musical intentions of the composer fully accommodated, and not brought out by a pirate editor or arranger.
  - (2) Near-contemporary documents representing the music a relatively short period after its composition and first performance
  - (3) Frequently in a form very little altered from that presented in the autograph
  - (4) Brought out under some degree of surveillance by the composer, owing to the geographical concentration of the French capital.

A unique form of score is that of the overture to L'opéra-comique (1798) by Della-Maria. It demonstrates an attempt by the composer to make the work more acceptable to the provinces, and the following instruction is supplied:

"J'ai cru devoir arranger cet Overture à huit parties vu que tous les Orchestres ne sont pas aussi complet que dans les grands Théâtres de Paris. Il faudra la copier pour les Orchestres qui ne se trouverait pas porté à plus de huit. Les petites notes qui se trouvent dans les Instruments à cordes sont pour remplacer les Instruments à vent qui manqueraient."

That this should be the only score that I have seen to be issued in this form is an indication of the artistic singlemindedness of the great majority of composers, who brought out even their most advanced operatic works in full score without any such possibilities for licensed alteration to so important an aspect (and one so readily adaptable) as the wind parts.<sup>1)</sup> There was a strong consciousness in France of the way instrumental art had 'progressed' during the final quarter of the eighteenth century,<sup>2)</sup> and the publication of full scores that were seen abroad as well as at home was an expression of great confidence in this area of musical activity.

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- 1) Some commentators did not let this practice pass without criticism: "Aussi a-t-on tellement multiplié les instruments, que le plus petit opéra-comique peut à peine être joué dans quatre ou cinq des plus grandes villes de la République." Leclerc/ESSAI p.34.
  - 2) Numerous allusions exist. "In that branch of the art [instrumental music] they are very far advanced." GUIDE p.136.

But there were more mundane reasons also. The difference between printed full scores of operas and printed parts of symphonic compositions was considerable from a commercial point of view. With the latter, which were produced in order to be sold to private individuals with differing domestic instrumental resources,

"les exigences de l'édition, en tant de commerce, ont un effet débilisant et réactionnaire sur le développement de l'orchestration symphonique en France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle" 1),

since editors needed works that could be performed with variable numbers of instruments. The wind parts were the first to suffer concision.

The Revolution destroyed many of the outlets for symphonic performance on a domestic scale, leaving composers free to develop orchestration within the theatre pit unhindered by demands for instrumental flexibility. Engraving of parts of operatic compositions was in general unnecessary, so that the publisher's resources could support the engraving of full scores. The steadily increasing internal capital expansion of France under the Empire undoubtedly helps to explain the production of these scores, and perhaps their improved quality too.<sup>2)</sup>

#### h) The uses of full scores

An initial problem to be solved in considering the dissemination of full scores is that of their price. A random selection of examples reads as follows; the dates quoted refer to the first performance.

Propiac	<u>La fausse paysanne</u> (1789)	3 acts	30 livres
Chapelle	<u>La vieillesse d'Annette et Lubin</u> (1789)	1 act	18 livres
Cherubini	<u>Lodoiska</u> (1791)	3 acts	60 livres
Gossec	<u>La triomphe de la République</u> (1793)	1 act	25 livres

1) Brook/SYMPHONIE, Vol.I p.43

2) Ponteil/ORGANISATION pp.177-178

Méhul	<u>Ariodant</u> (1799)	3 acts	40 francs
Méhul	<u>Bion</u> (1800)	1 act	30 francs
Le Sueur	<u>Adam</u> (1809)	3 acts	60 francs
Catel	<u>Les Bayadères</u> (1810)	3 acts	60 francs

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Full score of the overture to Nicolo's Les Confidences (1803) 6 francs

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A Revolutionary hymn by Cambini (1794) 1 livre 10 sols

First issue of the collection Musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales (1794), later numbers of which contained full scores by Méhul and Cherubini (P.32, P.79 above) 8 livres<sup>1)</sup>

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In order to gain some notion of the purchasing power of French money some comparisons may be made with the cost of various other commodities in 1802. The French monetary system was then in the process of changing to the decimal denominations, but the new franc had the same value as the traditional livre.

1 louis = 24 (livres = £1 sterling (when trade was on a par between  
(francs = 10d sterling England and France)

1 (livre = 20 sols = 10d sterling  
(franc

Beef per pound : 10 sols ("cheap")

Bottle of wine : 10 sols to 8 livres

A dozen eggs : 12 sols

Daily wage of a workman at the Manufacture des Gobelins : 4 livres

A good meal for an English traveller : 4½ livres

Admission to the Académie pit, or to a ball : 3 livres and 7 sols tax

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<sup>1)</sup> Pierre/MAGASIN p.30, footnote



The best seats at the Salle Favart : 10 livres 10 sols<sup>1)</sup>

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From this list it may be estimated that 10 sols in 1802 was very roughly equivalent to 5 English shillings (1971), and that a livre or franc was roughly 10 shillings or slightly more. Therefore a full score might have cost the equivalent of £20-30.

Although it would be profitless to try and estimate the purchasing power of the livre more accurately between 1789 and 1810, it is sufficiently clear that

- (i) Although the nominal price of the larger scores remained steady, they in fact became cheaper, since those of 1810 are physically larger than those of 1791, and French finances, although tending towards greater stabilisation after 1801, would have also tended towards inflation owing to the new supremacy of metal monies with intrinsically less than face value<sup>2)</sup>
- (ii) Even allowing for fluctuations of the economy, an average full score was well beyond the pocket of any student or lower-paid individual.

Yet there obviously remained sufficiently numerous purchasers to keep music publishers in business throughout the period,<sup>3)</sup> and this fact merely demonstrates the continued width of the breach between rich and poor. The poor must have gone but rarely to see the works of Kreutzer or Cherubini; much less would they have been able to buy their music in this form. Even the Revolutionary pieces listed above were not cheaply bought in 1794.

i) Printed scores in performance

The broader dissemination of full scores among the middle classes is also suggested by the advertisements of sale in full scores stating that

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- 1) All from GUIDE, which also states (p.97), "In general the prices of admission to the theatres have been augmented since the revolution."
  - 2) Ponteil/ORGANISATION p.62
  - 3) Placed on its own, the following advertisement in a daily newspaper indicates a measure of confidence in the sale of scores: "Paul et Virginie, opéra, se vend chez Brunet, place du théâtre Italien...."; La Chronique de Paris, 11 July 1791, p.776

the music might be purchased at the theatre, just as libretti had traditionally been. Also, there are not a few opéra-comique scores surviving in Paris and London that were self-evidently used for performance. These all bear the marks of rehearsal crayon, the marking of entries and torn pages, and are not the kind of composition that was popular for very long in France: Gaveaux, Lise et Colin (1795), Dalayrac, Le château de Monténéro (1798) and Boieldieu, Beniowsky (1800 version only) are three examples. This is important evidence insofar as it has been natural to assume that performances were directed from manuscript. There are even more certain indications that printed scores were employed as reliable documents in performance. In a letter to the editors of the Journal de Paris on 1 January 1791 Grétry referred to one of his engraved scores as a standard:

"Je prie les directeurs desdits spectacles de corriger à l'aide de la partition gravée, la partition manuscrite, de Raoul Barbe-Bleu, qui leur a été donnée par des mains infidèles; c'est le seul dédommagement que je leur demande pour avoir joué mes pièces sans mon aveu." 1)

Negative evidence for the same practice is provided by the note in the printed score of Propiac's La fausse paysanne (1789):

"N.B. Cette pièce ayant éprouvé des changements depuis son impression, MM les Directeurs de Province sont priés d'en diriger la représentation d'après la partition."

Evidence for the practical use of printed scores occurs in the occasional appearance of printed instructions by composers of opéras-comiques from 1798 directed solely at the conductor. Two examples are quoted in full.

"Les Citoyens maîtres de musique et premiers violons, sont priés de faire exécuter les accompagnements le plus Piano possible ne réservant les Forté que pour la fin des Airs. Les Piano doivent faire l'effet d'un Orchestre qui jouerait dans les coulisses.

Le mouvement de l'Ouverture est extraordinairement Vif, celui du Duo, entre Blinval et Rosine, à peu près comme les menuets d'Hayden

1) Grétry/CORR p.145

dans ses Simphonies, celui du dernier Allegro du Quatuor comme l'Ouverture."

(Della Maria: Le Prisonnier, 179

"Pour que cette ouverture produise de l'effet il faut que tous les instruments l'exécutent en pianissimo jusques au crescendo." 1)

This kind of instruction is incomprehensible except when regarded as a direct communication from the composer to the executants. The only conclusion possible is that a certain number of printed scores were produced with the possibility allowed for that they would be used as the basis for a performance.

j) Conducting scores

The reduced scores for use by conductors often referred to in the nineteenth century and discussed by Carse<sup>2)</sup> have not been found among the orchestral material that I have examined at the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra. Whether the copy score was used by the director as the source from which the instrumental part-books were made is not known; nevertheless, the copy scores, although sometimes marked and altered, do not in general bear the signs of practical use shown by the part-books. The director may well sometimes have used a first violin part.

Printed scores were not used at the Académie at this time; the Bibliothèque de l'Opéra frequently lacks printed copies of operas produced on its own stage from this period.

k) Timbre fiscal

A difference of opinion must be affirmed with Mr. Hopkinson so far as the following remarks concern full scores:

"The most important impact on music publishing that the French Revolution made was the introduction of the Timbre Fiscal, which levied a tax on papiers-musique.... This law was dated 9 Vendémiaire, An VI (October 30, 1797), and existed until about 1841." 3)

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- 1) See chapter 2 page 76 for further discussion of these instructions.
  - 2) Carse/BB pp. 446-447
  - 3) Hopkinson/PUB, Introduction

It is not stated by Mr. Hopkinson how high this tax was placed. Since the tax on the most expensive seats at the Académie was only 11 sols in 1802 (see above) it would not seem likely that a comparable tax on printed music would have been prohibitively high. Timbre fiscal does not appear to have diminished the production of full scores after 1797.

### 1) Copyright

The position as stated by Carse does not represent a fully accurate assessment:

"It was not, especially in the case of opera, that there was any hope of making a profit from the sale of printed full scores ... The scores were printed rather with the idea of controlling the right of performance ... unless the right to produce [the opera] went with it, publication of the full score would always entail a loss." 1)

As we have reasoned above, there are ample grounds first of all for thinking that full scores did make the necessary profits by sale. Secondly, it is directly contrary to the facts to assume that the rights of performance went with the sale of a full score. Composers and publishers realised only too well that with the abandonment of the restrictions on theatrical performances (including opera) there was an immediate danger after 1790 of a living author's work being performed without permission or recompense. To redress this situation the Revolutionary Convention passed laws protecting the authors of printed operas in January 1791, August 1792 and July 1793. Warnings referring to these laws were sometimes included after the title-pages of operas, and three of these form the substance of Appendix 6. It will therefore be seen that the ownership of a score conferred no right whatever to perform the work, and that, on the contrary, the written permission of a living composer was required. Profits to the publishers accrued from sales, not performances. The fact that copyright laws were operating meant that scores could be distributed and studied as freely as access to them could be obtained.

1) Carse/BB pp.425-426

(2) The Aims of the Conservatoire

There was no nationally organised teaching of music after 1789, the time that the position of the Church became disrupted in France.<sup>1)</sup> The National Convention, in but one of its political acts designed to make art a greater part of everyday life than hitherto, responded in a law of 3 July 1795 by establishing the Conservatoire de Musique. It is difficult to overestimate the effect that this foundation made on musical life, even from the beginning.

The practical details that made the above law possible have been very clearly treated by historians<sup>2)</sup> and need not concern us at length. Teaching of music in France before the Revolution was the responsibility of the Church in its various maîtrises, between 400 and 800 in number.<sup>3)</sup> The theoretical tuition was in general elementary; "composition" signified ecclesiastical counterpoint and the only instrumental tuition provided was for the organ, the cello, the viola and the serpent.<sup>4)</sup> The result was that orchestras and bands relied on foreign musicians, especially Germans. As for singers, one account claimed that they were chiefly instructed in how to produce a sufficiency of volume.<sup>5)</sup> The best voices were adopted by the traditional singing school attached to the Académie (which survived until 1807<sup>6)</sup>), or, from 1784, by Gossec's singing school known as the Ecole royale de chant et de déclamation. Both singers and instrumentalists were impressed into professional life too hastily.

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- 1) In November 1789 the States-General decreed that the Church's assets (reckoned to be one fifth of the national wealth) was henceforth at the disposal of the nation. On 10 March 1791 the Pope condemned the Constitution, rendering about half the clergy "unconstitutional".
- 2) Notably Constant Pierre in SARRETTE and CONSERVATOIRE
- 3) See Schwartz/FRENCH p.11; Sarrette himself said, "plus de cinq cents".
- 4) Pierre/SARRETTE p.190
- 5) B. Sarrette: Discours prononcé..dans la séance de l'ouverture de cet établissement le 1<sup>er</sup> brumaire An V (22 October 1796) in CONSERVATOIRE/I p
- 6) Schwartz/FRENCH p.11

The impetus behind the founding of the Conservatoire was provided by Bernard Sarrette, who together with Gossec designed its forerunner, the Institut National de Musique (1793-5). Sarrette had taken it upon himself to organise the wind-players of the National Guard soon after the fall of the Bastille. He did so out of private funds, and the first participation of the guardsmen in public ceremonies to be sponsored by the government was in August 1793. Thus occurred the early concentration on wind music which was to persist in the organisation of the Conservatoire, and the genesis of modern French wind playing.

The function of instrumental teaching had always been given priority in Sarrette's plans, and he was retained as administrative head of the Conservatoire after the absorption of the Institut, a post which he held with only minor interruptions throughout the future vicissitudes of the institution until 1815.

The Conservatoire was originally founded on the double basis of the instruction of the young and the musical participation of both teachers and students in the public ceremonies ordered by the government. The second part of this responsibility naturally lessened in importance with the rapid decline in the number of ceremonies after Thermidor. Notwithstanding the fact that stringed and keyboard instruments were not employed in the open-air festivals and had not been provided for in the teaching of the Institut, they were taught at the Conservatoire from the outset. Likewise there were teachers of singing, of accompagnement and of composition.<sup>1)</sup> The initial teaching strength was 115.

During the period up to the Restoration (when it was closed and then reorganised) the Conservatoire underwent periodic attacks from outsiders who

<sup>1)</sup> Since a teacher of the contrabassoon is mentioned in a draft plan, but none for bassoon, the disappearance of the contrabassoon from the first official plans should not be taken to imply the presence of the contrabassoon in Paris.

were rightly jealous of the advantages of teaching membership - prestige, a salary and possible influence in the other musical institutions of the capital. It was attacked by supporters of the former maîtrises, who rallied round Le Sueur on his dismissal in 1801, and by several other factions. Sarrette's continuing energy and high sense of purpose kept the Conservatoire intact except during the Consulate, when the teaching staff was reduced by two stages to 38 in 1801-2.<sup>1)</sup> On the other hand, the concerts given by the Conservatoire pupils from 1800 [see Appendix 4] extended the scope of its activities.

The formation of such an institution, bringing the kind of official recognition to the art of music already enjoyed by visual and literary arts, must have been as much a stimulus to the numerous teachers as to the taught, in all branches of music. Sarrette recognised this in his speech to the Conservatoire of February 1802:

"Ses membres se réunissent pour discuter les théories qui peuvent perfectionner et agrandir les différentes parties de la musique; l'application en est immédiatement faite dans l'enseignement..."<sup>2)</sup>

These corporate benefits in the earlier Conservatoire, headed by the best talents in France, made for a situation very different to that proposed by A. W. Locke; for him, the Conservatoire could not have had

"any great influence in promulgating the ideas of romanticism in music, for it was under the control, from the beginning, of men like Cherubini, who must be classified as conservative academicians."<sup>3)</sup>

On the contrary, the presence of the composer of Elisa,<sup>4)</sup> of Méhul, Grétry and Gossec as "Inspecteurs de l'enseignement," was a most forcible stimulus to French musical development. The Conservatoire under the Empire was a stronghold against the invasion of French musical "romanticism" by Italian composers.

1) Pierre/CONSERVATOIRE pp.409-410

2) "Observations sur l'état de la Musique en France", in Pierre/SARRETTE p.192

3) Locke/ROMANTIC p.61

4) Nominated by at least two commentators as the outstanding example of French romanticism before Chateaubriand's Atala.

Such recognition is due to the Conservatoire if only because no other music teaching was offered in Paris on an organised basis between the Revolution and 1812. Before 1801-2 four hundred pupils were in attendance, "des deux sexes, pris en nombre égal dans chaque département."<sup>1)</sup> In 1812 A. E. Choron was asked to reorganise the maîtrises and the church choirs in France.<sup>2)</sup> Choron, in contrast to the staff of the Conservatoire, was not a composer at all, but a historian of music and a teacher who had specialised in publishing early music. His approach to education adopted the eclecticism of the Conservatoire, however, in about 1817, when he proposed for his own school of music both performance and "la poétique de la composition."<sup>3)</sup>

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In at least three aspects, Sarrette's vision of the Conservatoire was designed specifically to assist the progress of the art of instrumental composition. The first was the establishment of the Conservatoire publishing house which, as successor to the Magasin de Musique à l'usage des Fêtes Nationales, was responsible for printing a great number and variety of parts, scores and tutors. I have already mentioned some full scores that were published,<sup>4)</sup> and instrumental tutors will be discussed in detail in chapter 4. Over and above these were printed hundreds of choruses, songs, instrumental solos and chamber music pieces.<sup>5)</sup>

That the greatest attention was paid to the provision of music for all the woodwind instruments and for the horn was not accidental. The

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1) CONSERVATOIRE/II pp.4-5

2) Honneger/DICT, article 'Choron'

3) Choron/ECOLE

4) The remainder consist of five operas by Catel, one by Solié and Cherubini's Elisa

5) Listed in Pierre/MAGASIN pp.120-160



necessity for building both a teaching repertory and a performing one for these instruments in France was acutely felt. Before the Revolution,

"Les instrumens à vent, poussés au plus haut degré de perfection par quelques artistes distingués, sont restés en général dans une médiocrité qu'on ne peut reprocher aux instrumens à cordes. Il semble que cette médiocrité vient moins des moyens employés au développement de leur mécanisme, que de la mauvaise direction donnée à leur étude...

Si les élèves nés pour la musique cherchaient à s'élever au niveau de l'art, ils avaient à vaincre des obstacles que leur opposait l'absence entière d'ouvrages élémentaires et de bonnes pièces pour l'étude de leurs instrumens." 1)

The Conservatoire was not alone in publishing tutors or wind chamber music; it did, however, mitigate the causes for its concern above by publishing a greater variety of wind music than other houses did, and many more original compositions for these instruments than arrangements. Its own text-books of solfèges and harmony were designed for use at the Conservatoire

Sarrette's second concern was for the establishment of a library of scores accessible to music students and to the public. The tenth article of the law of establishment of the Conservatoire provided for

"... une collection complète des partitions et ouvrages traitant de cet art, des instrumens antiques ou étrangers, et de ceux à nos usages qui peuvent par leur perfection servir de modèles." 2)

Sarrette acted immediately in pursuit of this aim. He collected material from depositories, from sequestered property, from the libraries of Versailles and those of the Menus-Plaisirs and of other Parisian libraries. 3) Under the law, copying of works held in the library was specifically made provision for. Moreover, the library was seen as being a new as well as a vital part of education in composition:

"Si on examine quels étaient les moyens d'étude à la disposition des jeunes artistes qui se livraient à la composition, on

1) CONSERVATOIRE/I pp.10-11. Sarrette's Discours.

2) Dated 3 August 1795; quoted in Pierre/SARRETTE p.180

3) Pierre/SARRETTE p.144

voit qu'après avoir reçu les premiers élémens de l'harmonie, ces artistes n'avaient aucune espèce de facilité pour former leur talent d'après la comparaison des modèles créés par le génie des hommes qui ont ouvert ou prolongé la carrière de la science musicale. Les belles productions, si on excepte celles des contemporains que le goût du public fixait alors au théâtre ou dans les concerts, leur étaient presque entièrement inconnues.. et la faiblesse de leurs moyens pécuniaires a trop souvent été un obstacle à la possibilité de se procurer la portion qui en avait été gravée...il faut que les ouvrages des maîtres de tous les temps et de toutes les nations réunis dans la bibliothèque du Conservatoire, offrent aux recherches des jeunes artistes les conseils du savoir." 1)

If I have quoted at length, it is because this aspect of the teaching ambitions of this time has been conspicuously ignored, and because they are here stated without ambiguity. The price of full scores has been discussed above. The change in status of the full score is made quite clear; the luxuries of the previous generation are to be turned to the advantage of serious and meritorious students. It may be noted in passing that so far as printed scores are referred to, it was music for the theatre rather than the concert-room that formed the vast majority, and that it was in operatic music that the bulk of innovations in orchestration were to be made.

Both music of the past and unfashionable music of the present were deemed important for study, and both categories would have been fruitful for the student of orchestration. A curious score by Plantade, who joined the Conservatoire as a professor in 1799<sup>2)</sup> demonstrates a link between the increasing interest in orchestration and the increasingly widespread use of full scores: it is his opéra-comique Zoé (first performed July 1800) which incorporates a continuous guide to the layout of the score in the form of a small, pointing hand that indicates the first violin line on each page. This example is, to my knowledge, unique.

1) CONSERVATOIRE/I pp.13, 14, 18

2) Pierre/CONSERVATOIRE p.412

Sarrette's third concern was the general improvement of wind music, in whatever the context, but particularly in that of the orchestra. The provision of tutors, of solo music and the facilities for the study of all wind music were part of this aim. Sarrette was conscious of how the historical rôle of wind instruments might be altered; at the initial stage this might best be effected by the development of the ensemble of exclusively wind instruments:

Formerly "les instrumens à vent, qui, par leur nature, ne pouvait être employés que comme des accessoires brillans, entraient dans l'exécution et en sortaient sans être initiés dans la marche générale de l'harmonie, et conséquemment sans pouvoir en suivre l'application aux passions..."

Chargés du service des fêtes publiques, les instrumens à vent ont une nouvelle carrière à parcourir...leur partie devient entièrement principale."<sup>1)</sup>

In the wind band symphonies that had been already written the upper woodwind, and especially the clarinets, had indeed replaced the violins in open-air performance. The taste for exclusively wind ensemble music was firmly planted, and was to be nurtured by Reicha under the later Empire and Restoration, but designed for domestic performance:

"wind instrumentalists have made enormous strides in the past twenty years, their instruments have been perfected by the addition of keys, but there was no worth while music to show their capabilities..."<sup>2)</sup>

Before this, however, and not long after the Conservatoire officially opened, popular recognition of the new part that wind instruments might play began to vindicate the interest that Sarrette had shown in them from the outset. This part was not simply in the formation of wind ensembles, but in the display of soloists in concertos and the *sinfonia concertante*, and the emergence of more ambitiously written music for the winds in orchestral scores.

1) CONSERVATOIRE/I pp.12-13

2) Prod'homme/REICHA p.349