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S. J. Dunbavand

In Search of *Musique Chatoyante*:
Technique, Theology, and the Play of Harmonic Resonance
in Olivier Messiaen's *Vitrail Sonore*

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree
of MMus, The University of Sheffield, 2013



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Simon John Dunbavand

Submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of MMus

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of Music
Supervisor: Dr George Nicholson

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ABSTRACT

Simon John Dunbavand

In Search of *Musique Chatoyante*:
Technique, Theology, and the Play of Harmonic Resonance
in Olivier Messiaen's *Vitrail Sonore*

(Under the direction of Dr George Nicholson)

This investigation charts Messiaen's development of resonance-based harmony portraying light and colour, with theological associations equivalent to stained glass. Definitions of Messiaen's colour-chords (using examples from *Technique de mon langage musical*, *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie*, and selected works) enable the exploration of Messiaen's consolidation of style and light symbolism in earlier works, together with the beginnings of detailed colour associations in *Catalogue d'oiseaux*. Theological implications of Messiaen's juxtaposition and superposition of harmony precede analysis of the light portrayed in *La Transfiguration*: the light which, in *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, expresses Moses' vision of 'I AM' and Burning Bush, as well as harmonizing God as *inengendré*. The central movement of *Méditations* develops the 'Theme of God', recalling 'Le Verbe' and anticipating Mary Magdalene's vision in *Livre du Saint Sacrement*. In *Livre*, this harmony depicts Mary's recognition of Christ, giving coloured support to the spelling of 'Dieu' and 'Père'. The filiation of *La Transfiguration* is likewise shown to be described musically with colour-chords, which in *Chants de terre et de ciel*, *Et exspecto*, and *Livre* develop a sonic portrayal of Grünewald's *Resurrection*. Messiaen's colouring of specific visual aspects of God is analysed in relation to the theology of Columba Marmion and Hans Urs von Balthasar, whilst Messiaen's fascination with the Heavenly Jerusalem is shown to display consistent use of resonance-based harmony. In the final example of *vitrail sonore*, Messiaen's references in *Traité* to images of Christ in Glory in the Ambulatory of Bourges Cathedral are examined. These portray verses from Habakkuk and Revelation used as superscriptions for two movements in *Éclairs sur l'au-Delà...*, the music being interpreted as a representation of these windows. This interdisciplinary study therefore establishes intertextual and theological connections across boundaries of work, genre and period, linking Messiaen's music to Catholic thought.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the three people who have, at times unwittingly, instilled in me the trinity of intellectual rigour required for academic success, the hard work and discipline needed in the development of an assured playing technique, and, ultimately, the inspiration required for creative practice:

To my dad, the jazz pianist John Dunbavand (1938-2008),
to my mum, Miriam,
and to Jonathan Owen.

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For their work on ensuring the correct copyright clearance for all my musical examples, I should like to thank Victoria Cooke and Katie Wood of UMP. For supplying Illustration 5.1, p. 91, and granting permission for its use, I should like to thank Frédéric Hamet, of Musée Unterlinden, Colmar, and for help with Illustration A1, p. 123, I am grateful to Catherine Leroi at the Château d'Angers. I should also like to thank Dr Stuart Whatling at the Courtauld Institute of Art, for permission to use his two stunning photographs of the glass at Bourges Cathedral. I also wish to express my thanks to Dr Tamsyn Rose-Steel of the University of Exeter, not only for her help and guidance during the process of writing, but also for her stimulating, inspiring, and collaborative music-making. I continue to be indebted to composer, pianist, and conductor Paul Drayton, who (for the last ten years) has not only taught me by example, but also helped to focus my ideas about Messiaen by thorough questioning.

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NOTE ABOUT MUSICAL EXAMPLES

In the citation of titles of works by Messiaen, his own practice with regard to capitalization has generally been followed, frequently using lower case in French titles;¹ the policy advocated by Vincent Benitez has also been consulted.² The full title of a work is given at its first citation; subsequent citations adopt a shorter title, for example:

EXAMPLE 1.13: *Catalogue d’oiseaux*, Book 2, IV ‘Le traquet stapazin’

EXAMPLE 3.5: ‘Le traquet stapazin’

The main titles of works by Messiaen are given in italics, for example:

Livre du Saint Sacrement

The titles of individual movements within works are given in normal type, for example:

‘Apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine’

Musical examples of works by Messiaen quoted in the text refer to the scores published either by Durand or Leduc, Paris (with the exceptions of *Cinq rechants*, published by Éditions Salabert, and *Cantéyodjayá*, published by Universal Edition), and are located by title of movement, page number, system number and bar number, for example:

‘Apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine’, 77/1/1

In orchestral scores which make use of rehearsal numbers, examples are located by rehearsal number, for example:

Saint François, VIII, RN151

Rehearsal numbers may be included with page/system/bar references, for example:

La Transfiguration, VIII ‘Récit Évangélique’, RN6 (179/1/1)

Musical examples taken from works by composers other than Messiaen are located by full title and bar number, for example:

Ravel: *Miroirs*, V, ‘La vallée des cloches’, b. 6

¹ See, for example, Christopher Dingle, ‘List of Works and Discography’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by Peter Hill, (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), pp. 536-565.

² Vincent P. Benitez, *Olivier Messiaen: A Research and Information Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. xiv. Note: where a work is cited both in the preliminaries and in the body matter, the first full footnote citation is used on both occasions.

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ad.	<i>adversus</i> : used for the ‘objections’ in <i>Summa Theologia</i> .
Art.	Article: used when referring to quotations from <i>Summa Theologia</i> .
CCR	<i>Accord à résonance contractée</i> (Chord of Contracted Resonance) Distinguishing the difference between the two sets of chords in Tome V of <i>Traité</i> , ³ Messiaen refers to 1 st CCR and 2 nd CCR in Tome VII. All abbreviations of colour-chords signify both singular and plural forms.
CD	<i>Accord sur dominante</i> (Chord on the dominant)
CDA	<i>Accord sur dominante appoggiaturé</i> (Chord on the dominant with appoggiaturas) - Messiaen uses this term to describe the use of Chords of Transposed Inversions which subsequently resolve onto the Chord on the dominant, ⁴ which is abbreviated to CDA. ⁵
cont.	continued
CR	<i>Accord de la résonance</i> (Chord of Resonance)
CTI	<i>Accord à renversements transposés sur la même note de basse</i> (Chord of Transposed Inversions on the Same Bass Note)
CTC	<i>Accord du total chromatique</i> (Chord of Total Chromaticism)
<i>Catalogue</i>	<i>Catalogue d’oiseaux</i>
<i>Couleurs</i>	<i>Couleurs de la cité céleste</i>
<i>Des canyons</i>	<i>Des canyons aux étoiles...</i>
<i>Éclairs</i>	<i>Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà...</i>
ed.	edited
<i>Et exspecto</i>	<i>Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum</i>
Ex.	Example: used when referring to examples from <i>Technique de mon langage musical</i> .
Hill and Simeone	Hill, Peter, and Nigel Simeone, <i>Messiaen</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)
<i>JAMS</i>	Journal of the American Musicological Society
<i>La Nativité</i>	<i>La Nativité du Seigneur</i>
<i>La Transfiguration</i>	<i>La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ</i>
<i>La ville</i>	<i>La ville d’En-Haut</i>

³ Wai-Ling Cheong, ‘Messiaen’s Chord Tables: Ordering the disordered’, *Tempo*, 57: 226 (2003), 2-10 (p. 3).

⁴ *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d’ornithologie* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1994-2002), Tome III, p. 258.

⁵ Joseph Edward Harris, ‘Musique colorée: Synesthetic Correspondence in the Works of Olivier Messiaen’ (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Iowa, 2004).

<i>Livre</i>	<i>Livre du Saint Sacrement</i> (whereas <i>Livre d'orgue</i> is always stated in full)
<i>Méditations</i>	<i>Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité</i>
Q.	Question: used when referring to quotations from <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
RN	Rehearsal number
<i>Saint François</i>	<i>Saint François d'Assise</i>
ST	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> of Saint Thomas Aquinas - references are in the form of Part/Question/Article, for example: ST I, Q. 12, Art. 5.
Sup.	Supplement: 'Supplementum Tertiae Partis' of <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
TC	Following the conventions of Bauer ⁶ and Harris, ⁷ <i>Accords tournants</i> are referred to as Turning Chords and abbreviated to TC . However, Lee ⁸ and Cheong ⁹ follow the procedure of Glasow's translation of Samuel/Messiaen, referring to 'revolving chords'.
<i>Technique</i>	Messiaen's <i>Technique de mon langage musical</i> was originally published in two volumes by Leduc, Paris, in 1944, translated into English by John Satterfield and published in 1956 as <i>Technique of my Musical Language</i> . In 1999 a single volume French edition was published, and in 2001 this was published in English. References are given as ' <i>Technique</i> ', with volume and page numbers from the original 1956 translation, for example: <i>Technique</i> I, p. 13.
<i>Traité</i>	<i>Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie</i> was published in seven volumes by Leduc, Paris, between 1994 and 2002. This is abbreviated to ' <i>Traité</i> ', and followed by the volume in roman numerals, together with the page reference, for example: <i>Traité</i> VII, p. 138.
trans.	translated
<i>Trois petites liturgies</i>	<i>Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine</i>
<i>Un vitrail</i>	<i>Un vitrail et des oiseaux</i>
<i>Vingt regards</i>	<i>Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus</i>

⁶ Amy Bauer, 'The Impossible Charm of Messiaen's *Chronochromie*', in *Messiaen Studies*, ed. by Robert Sholl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 145-167.

⁷ Harris, 'Musique colorée'.

⁸ Chi-Kuen (Martin) Lee, 'Complexity within Simplicity: Modes and Color Chords in the First Movement of Messiaen's *Éclairs sur l'au-delà . . .*' (Paper given at the conference 'Messiaen the Theologian' at Boston University, 12th-13th October, 2007), and 'The Charm of Impossibilities: Musical Language, Theology and Narrative Discourse in Olivier Messiaen's *Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Buffalo, 2011).

⁹ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Messiaen's Chord Tables', and 'Rediscovering Messiaen's Invented Chords', *Acta Musicologica*, 75:1 (2003), 85-105.

NOTES ABOUT TRANSLATIONS

Where a standard English translation of a Messiaen source in French exists, I have chosen to use this. For example: Satterfield's translation of *Technique*, or Glasow's translations of the interviews with Claude Samuel are standard texts. Where I have cited a less familiar Messiaen source in the original French, my own translation is provided in the footnotes, or conversely, where I have quoted a short phrase from a Messiaen source or the secondary literature in my own translation, the original is provided in the footnotes. Footnote quotations may remain untranslated. Occasionally I have worked with sources written in German: either articles and chapters about Messiaen by musicologists such as Aloyse Michaely and Siglind Bruhn, by organist Almut Rößler, or the works of theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar in the original German, providing translations where appropriate. Where not otherwise credited, all translations are my own. Terms cited in Hebrew and Greek are defined in Appendix Five, p. 129.

NOTE ABOUT BIBLE REFERENCES

Biblical references in English are cited throughout from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), unless a particular point is being made with reference to an alternative translation. Biblical references in French conform to the version(s) used by Messiaen. Numbers of books are given in Roman numerals, whilst Arabic numerals are used for chapter and verse with a full point separation, for example: I John 4. 16.

NOTE ABOUT *MÉDITATIONS SUR LE MYSTÈRE DE LA SAINTE TRINITÉ*

This study makes use of titles given in 1986 by Messiaen to the originally untitled nine movements of *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*.¹⁰ Messiaen's own recording refers to each *Méditation* by Arabic numeral; in his complete recording, Olivier Latri, however, opts to remain faithful to the original roman numeral designations for each meditation, paraphrasing Messiaen's words in the preface to the score for each piece.

1. 'Le Père inengendré'
I ('Le Père des étoiles')
2. 'La Sainteté de Jésus-Christ'
II ('Dieu est Saint')
3. 'La Relation réelle en Dieu est réellement identique à l'essence'
III ('La relation réelle en Dieu est réellement identique à l'essence')
4. 'Je suis, je suis!'
IV ('Dieu est')
5. 'Dieu est immense, immuable; Le souffle de l'Esprit; Dieu est amour'
V ('Dieu est immense - Dieu est éternel - Dieu est immuable...')
6. 'Le Fils, Verbe et Lumière'
VI ('Dans le Verbe était la Vie et la Vie était la Lumière')
7. 'Le Père et le Fils aiment, par le Saint-Esprit, eux-mêmes et nous'
VII ('Le Père et le Fils aiment, par le Saint-Esprit, eux-mêmes et nous')
8. 'Dieu est simple'
VIII ('Dieu est simple – les trios sont un')
9. 'Je suis Celui qui Suis'
IX ('Je suis Celui qui Suis')

¹⁰ Theo Hirsbrunner, *Olivier Messiaen: Leben und Werk* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1988), pp. 230-231.

NOTES ABOUT ANALYTICAL METHODOLOGY

This analytical method will strive to avoid Dingle's warning against simply describing a procession of colours without attempting to explain Messiaen's reasoning for their employment.¹¹ As the primary purpose of this study is to forge connections between Messiaen's harmonic processes and his theological message, some familiarity with both medieval and twentieth century Catholic thought is required. Concepts and people mentioned in the text are explained in the appendices where background information is needed, and Appendix Four presents a chronological survey of Messiaen's works, both musical and explicatory, mentioned in this dissertation. With the primary focus of this study lying at the intersection of analysis and theology, it is not necessary to rehearse here the minutiae of Messiaen's life, save for those events pertaining to the course of an argument. Detailed accounts may be referred to by Peter Hill and Nigel Simeone,¹² and by Christopher Dingle.¹³

CHORD NOMENCLATURE

Following the practice of Forte,¹⁴ Bauer describes the twelve different pitch levels for the non-modal colour chords as 'transformations' and refers to C#/D♭, the primary transpositional level of CTI, as T₀.¹⁵ Yet Messiaen's own chord-tables reproduced in *Traité VII* clearly commence with the primary form as number 1 rather than T₀. I have chosen to follow Messiaen's own nomenclature, citing tables 1-12 rather than transformations 0-11. Describing the inversions of CTI, 1st and 2nd CCR, and the three TC, some literature numbers the chords as 1, 2, 3 or 4. Again, following the practice of Messiaen's own chord tables laid out in *Traité*, I have chosen to use the letters A, B, C and D.

HARMONIC ANALYSIS

Whilst much twenty-first century Messiaen analysis in English describes harmony by the use of pitch-class set theory,¹⁶ this tends to ignore concerns of register, voicing, orchestration, texture, and, most importantly, inversion. The tonal pull of the lower voices of CTI, above which the top voices add unique resonance, would tend to negate the use of terminology originally designed for the analysis of atonal music. In the terminology of pitch-class set theory there is but one CTI, rather than the reality of 48 individual chords and unique colours, derived from inversion and transposition throughout the chromatic scale.¹⁷ In cases where Messiaen makes subtle alterations to the pitch-class content of chords, for example when prioritizing voice-leading concerns,¹⁸ or applying changes of colour-shading by incorporating new upper resonance, or by the omission of certain pitches, the intransigence of a standard pitch-class interpretation fails

¹¹ Christopher Dingle, review of *Traité de rythme, de couleur, et d'ornithologie (1949-992): Tome V, Volumes 1&2, Tome VI & Tome VII* by Olivier Messiaen, *Tempo*, 58:227 (2004), 41-45 (p. 44).

¹² Peter Hill and Nigel Simeone, *Messiaen* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

¹³ Christopher Dingle, *The life of Messiaen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

¹⁴ Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), and 'Messiaen's Chords', in *Olivier Messiaen: Music, Art and Literature*, ed. by Christopher Dingle and Nigel Simeone (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 91-113.

¹⁵ Bauer, p. 153. For definitions of the abbreviations CTI, CCR, CD, and CR, see the List of Abbreviations, p. xv, above, and Chapter One, p. 9, below.

¹⁶ Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music*, pp. 179-181, which lists the PC-sets.

¹⁷ Christopher Dingle, review of *Olivier Messiaen: Oiseaux exotiques* by Peter Hill and Nigel Simeone, *Tempo*, 62:243 (2008), 65-70 (p. 69).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

to relate this correctly to the source harmony. Given identical, complex pitch-class sets (for example, of cardinality 7 or 8), the interpretation of harmony must also take into account the position, relative dynamics and voicing of each note within the chord, in addition to timbre or instrumentation.¹⁹ Robert Sherlaw Johnson also outlined his concerns regarding the inability of pc-set theory to recognize register, and the inflexibility of inversional equivalence whilst writing on Messiaen's birdsong.²⁰

Defenders of a pc-set theory approach will plead that this technique becomes indispensable for 'source harmony identification',²¹ and that it is convenient for comparison purposes.²² Yet this can simply be a question of terminology: it remains far less precise to say 'pc-set 7-20' than it does to specify, for example, 'CTI 7B'. A casual glance at the chord tables of *Traité VII* might lead one to suppose that there are 48 different CTI, but this is not strictly true. According to Forte, of course, there is but one CTI: SC 7-20, which takes no account of the fact that inversions of CTI consist of a tonal base beneath upper resonance, where the lower added 6th chords may be inverted, whilst the resonance remains constant.

Thus, despite expedient revisions such as the omission of inversional equivalence as proposed by Larry Solomon,²³ and both the practical demonstration of how this functions in the analysis of music by Skryabin,²⁴ together with the wider implications for tonal music in general,²⁵ and despite the generally pervasive use of mod-12 Fortean techniques throughout Messiaen scholarship originating in the USA, I have rejected the use of this theory.

COLOUR ASSOCIATION

Unable to see Messiaen's harmonic rainbows, why does it matter to us that the 'brass should [...] "play red"; the woodwinds should "play blue",²⁶ or that TC in *Chronochromie* are 'jaune pâle, rayé de blanc, de noir, et de gris, avec des taches vertes'?²⁷ It is necessary to decide whether the colour associations from Messiaen's synaesthesia are important in the analysis of harmony, or whether they are irrelevant.²⁸ An understanding of the relationship in Messiaen's mind between colour and harmony will lead us to a deeper

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Robert Sherlaw Johnson, 'Birdsong', in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by P. Hill, pp. 249-265 (p. 260).

²¹ Allen Forte, 'Messiaen's mysterious birds', in *Messiaen Studies*, ed. by R. Sholl, pp. 145-167 (pp. 103-107).

²² Bauer, p. 152, n. 24. Bauer clearly uses set theory 'for comparison only, as Messiaen's chord types are further defined by voicing and registration'.

²³ Larry Solomon, 'The list of chords, their properties and use in analysis', *Interface (Journal of New Music Research)*, 11:2 (1982), 61-107.

²⁴ Anthony Pople, 'Skryabin's Prelude, Op. 67, No. 1: Sets and Structure', *Music Analysis*, 2:2 (1983), 151-173. Pople demonstrated that it is possible to differentiate between sets related by inversion by designating them as 'A' and 'B' in Anthony Pople, 'Skryabin and Stravinsky 1908-1914: Studies in Analytical Method' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1984).

²⁵ Anthony Pople, 'Using complex set theory for tonal analysis: An introduction to the Tonalities Project', *Music analysis*, 23:2-3 (2004), 153-94.

²⁶ Messiaen's words describing *Couleurs de la cité céleste* to Claude Samuel, in Olivier Messiaen and Claude Samuel, *Olivier Messiaen: Music and Color: Conversations with Claude Samuel*, trans. by E. Thomas Glasow (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994), p. 139.

²⁷ *Traité III*, p. 85, and translated as 'pale yellow, streaked with white, black and grey, with green spots', in Bauer, p. 155, n. 31.

²⁸ Vincent Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music: An Examination of the Chords of Transposed Inversions on the Same Bass Note', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 23:2 (2004), 187-226 (p. 222).

understanding of the musical structure; an appreciation of the composer's 'poetics',²⁹ therefore, will shed light upon our interpretation. Christopher Dingle, however, remains sceptical, preferring to approach analysis of the notes of the score in a more traditional harmonic sense '...due to the highly personal nature of this phenomenon'.³⁰ Likewise, rejecting the significance of synaesthesia and colour-symbolism, Gareth Healey finds it 'impossible to draw any meaningful conclusions'.³¹ I shall argue, however, that Messiaen's *consistent* use of colour-association is not just a remarkable achievement, but becomes the governing factor in harmonic progression, ultimately bringing with it theological associations to build a spiritual sermon.

Unlike the modes, CTI offer all 12 possible transpositions, and they are not partitioned into subsets to generate different foreground harmonies: they are almost always sounded in their entirety,³² so that this greater possibility of transposition offers a far more subtle source of colours than exclusive use of the modes. Messiaen himself states the triadic nature of the lowest notes of CTI,³³ and Benitez successfully proves the triadic, tonal basis of CTI by comparing Messiaen's own colour-associations. The theory behind the derivation of CTI demonstrates the use of an altered V⁹, yet once the chord assumes its use in musical passages, this interpretation yields to the stronger tonal feeling of the 'pivotal structural element' of the added 6th tetrad which lies at the bottom of the inversions.³⁴ Confirming the reading of Benitez, Dingle hears CTI 'in terms of the triadic harmonies of the bottom staff'.³⁵ Supporting this interpretation, Benitez compares the white and gold Messiaen associates with C major with added 6th in *Conférence de Kyoto* with the white and gold assigned to CTI 4B in *Traité VII*.³⁶ Thus Messiaen indicates that C major is white and gold, *including* the inversions of C major from the CTI chord tables.

ANALYSIS IN MUSICAL EXAMPLES

The analytical methodology devised for this research is simple: above most of the musical examples are two further staves which present the harmonies at work in the composition in their simplest possible form. This corresponds to the default spacing as used in the chord tables published in *Traité VII* (or in the case of CD and CR, in chord tables presented in Appendix Three, pp. 126-127). By this method it becomes possible to apprehend clearly Messiaen's harmonic intentions for any given chord, and, more importantly, to assess the contrasts between the juxtaposition of different chords. Where the colour symbolism and colour contrasts of the harmony are of importance, these are indicated in the musical examples, either by direct quotation from the chord tables of *Traité*, or in a suitable English translation. The beaming of notes and the use of slurs does not imply a Schenkerian interpretation, but is simply designed to demonstrate examples of the prolongation/repetition of certain chords throughout a passage, or the cadential function of a bass progression, or to highlight a more long range, directional motion.

²⁹ To use the language of music semiology developed in Jean-Jacques Nattiez: *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*, trans. by Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. xi.

³⁰ Christopher Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), p. 9.

³¹ Gareth Healey, *Messiaen's Musical Techniques: The Composer's View and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), p. 2, n. 1.

³² Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music', p. 196.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 205, 206, 208.

³⁵ Christopher Dingle, 'Understated charm: style and technique in the last works of Olivier Messiaen' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 2000), p. 25.

³⁶ Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music', p. 206.

NOTE ABOUT MODES OF LIMITED TRANSPOSITION

The Modes of Limited Transpositions were described by Messiaen in detail at least five times: in *Note de l'auteur*, the preface to *La Nativité du Seigneur*, published in 1936; in *Technique*; in interview with Claude Samuel; in *Conférence de Kyoto*, and in *Traité*. These modes were to be used not just to generate melody, but also to devise harmonic material. As Allen Forte says: 'it is clear that Messiaen regarded each mode as a large *source harmony* rather than simply as a scale that consists of contiguous pitches'.³⁷ Messiaen came to describe the modes as harmonic colours: 'On a souvent cité mes "modes à transpositions limités" comme des gammes. Ce ne sont pas des gammes, mais des couleurs harmoniques'.³⁸ Thus, in *Traité* all the frequently used modes are given their complex colour associations and most typical harmonies. In the text of this study, individual transpositions of Messiaen's modes are referred to by Arabic numerals and superscript, for example: mode 3¹, whilst for legibility in the musical examples, this may be expressed as 'mode 3/3'.

Whilst this study is primarily concerned with Messiaen's non-modal harmony, any detailed engagement with this music, especially one in which colour associations and symbolism assume prime importance, must be able to demonstrate awareness of modal practices. For further information concerning Messiaen's modes, together with the colour associations of modes 2 and 3, and examples of all transpositions of the most commonly used modes (modes 2, 3, 4, 6), see Appendix Two (p. 124).

NOTE ABOUT *LANGAGE COMMUNICABLE*

Concurrent with the linguistic ideas and theories of signification which were being developed in Paris throughout the late 1960s by thinkers such as Barthes, Derrida and Kristeva, Messiaen set about solving a problem:

that music is suggestive, that it appeals to dreams or to the unconscious but doesn't possess the power of the word, of syntactic language [...] So I embarked on the fascinating pursuit of constructing a signifying musical language.³⁹

The *langage communicable* was used in three works: *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, *Des Canyons aux Étoiles...*, and *Livre du Saint Sacrement*. Messiaen developed an entire musical alphabet in order to spell out important theological ideas, where each letter is defined by a specific pitch, register and duration. This alphabet cipher is combined with cases and leitmotivic codes to represent important verbs and themes for the persons of the Trinity.⁴⁰ The letters and meanings are indicated by Messiaen in the score, in proximity to the notes to which they refer.

This communicable language intersects with the harmony of non-modal colour chords in two significant instances, discussed in Chapter Two (p. 40, Example 2.12), and Chapter Five (p. 100, Examples 5.19 and 5.20).

³⁷ Allen Forte, 'Messiaen's Chords', in *Olivier Messiaen: Music, Art and Literature*, ed. by Christopher Dingle and Nigel Simeone (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 91-113 (p. 93).

³⁸ Olivier Messiaen: *Conférence de Kyoto* [12th Nov. 1985] (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1988), p. 7: 'My modes of limited transposition are often cited as scales. They are not scales, but harmonic colours'. Whilst this is certainly true for Messiaen's belief in the 1980s, there is little evidence to suggest that he held this viewpoint closer to the time of their devising during the early 1930s.

³⁹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 123.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Andrew Shenton, *Olivier Messiaen's System of Signs: Notes Towards Understanding His Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 69, and the preface to *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*.

Simon John Dunbavand

In Search of *Musique Chatoyante*:
Technique, Theology, and the Play of Harmonic Resonance
in Olivier Messiaen's *Vitrail Sonore*

Ecce beatam lucem
*Ecce bonum sempiternum*¹

INTRODUCTION: 'WORD' AND MUSIC

This study aims at a better understanding of Messiaen's synthesis of music and theology, achieved through a survey and analysis of the use of non-modal colour-chords and their relationship to religious subtext. In his quest for sounds that sparkle and shimmer,² Messiaen established a bond between his sophisticated musical resources and Christian faith by using natural resonance,³ linking this with the colour spectrum.⁴ This creates the sonic equivalent of stained glass,⁵ itself laden with spiritual significance. As sculpture is released from marble, Messiaen saw his chords as implicit within 'natural harmony', 'having always been enclosed in it, awaiting manifestation',⁶ and this music evokes 'instantaneous light'.⁷ Indeed, Messiaen believed that 'all of Debussy's music sparkled'.⁸ But why study Messiaen's harmony in such detail? The answer lies within its extra-musical associations: as 'percée vers l'au-delà',⁹ it becomes a foundation for dazzlement,¹⁰ and a conduit to the divine.

The art of music, for Messiaen, is the embodiment of the Platonic trinity of harmony, rhythm and λόγος: textual association and allusion lie at the foundation of a piece; biblical citation fixes the intention of a piece,¹¹ and the communication of this message is essential to its meaning. Rößler elicits that biblical 'quotations are of the greatest

¹ Alessandro Striggio (c. 1536-1592), *Ecce beatam lucem*. 'Behold the blessed light, behold eternal goodness' (trans. by Jonathan Dove (b. 1959) for the motet *Ecce beatam lucem*, 1996).

² Olivier Messiaen, *Technique de mon langage musical*, trans. by John Satterfield (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1956), Volume I, p. 13: 'It is a glistening music we seek, giving to the aural sense voluptuously refined pleasures'. Satterfield's translation of *musique chatoyante* favours 'glistening' over 'shimmering' or 'sparkling', but the light imagery remains powerful. (Henceforth this work is cited as *Technique*.)

³ Seeking justification from natural resonance for the use of added notes within harmony, Messiaen writes in *Technique* I, p. 47: 'foreign notes [...] make part of the chord, changing its colour. They have, nevertheless, a certain citizenship in the chord [...] because they issue from the resonance of the fundamental'.

⁴ Olivier Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, trans. by Timothy Tikker and reproduced in Almut Rößler, *Contributions to the Spiritual world of Olivier Messiaen* (Duisburg: Gilles & Francke, 1986), pp 57-56 (p. 62): 'one does not fully understand music if one has not often experienced these two phenomena:

- complementary colours,
- natural resonance of sounding bodies'. See also the interview with Almut Rößler, April 23rd,

1979, trans. Barbara Dagg and Nancy Poland, cited in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 115: 'I believe in the resonance of sounding bodies and in the complementary colours' as the foundation for all his music.

⁵ Messiaen makes at least five references to stained glass in *Technique* I: p. 8, in which he links stained glass and rainbows in the acknowledgements; p. 21, which describes his style as a 'theological rainbow'; p. 27, which describes the CDA opening chords of 'Liturgie de cristal' as 'the effect of the stained glass window'; p. 44, which describes the CDA and CR piano chords as an 'enormous carillon, irradiated', where CR is played 'with the effect of a stained glass window'; p. 50, which describes a theoretical sequence of CDA: 'Let us make multicoloured work, bring forth an effect of a stained glass window'; and again on p. 50, using CR: 'Let us make the preceding effect of a stained glass window'.

⁶ *Technique* I, p. 52.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45, which describes the ending of 'Résurrection' from *Chants de terre et de ciel*.

⁸ Vincent Benitez, 'A Creative Legacy: Messiaen as Teacher of Analysis', *College Music Symposium*, 40 (2000), 117-139 (p. 139).

⁹ Olivier Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame: Prononcée à Notre-Dame de Paris le 4 décembre 1977* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1978), p. 2: 'opening towards the afterlife'.

¹⁰ Jan Christiaens, review of Sander van Maas, *Doorbraak en Idolatrie: Olivier Messiaen en het geloof in Muziek*, in *Tijdschrift voor Muziektheorie*, 10:1 (2005), trans. by Chris Iles, p. 3 [accessed 19 June 2012].

<<http://home.medewerker.uva.nl/s.a.f.vanmaas/bestanden/Review%20Christiaens.pdf>>

¹¹ Aloyse Michaely, *Die Musik Olivier Messiaens: Untersuchungen zum Gesamtschaffen* (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1987), p. 6. For a definition of λόγος, see Appendix Five, below, p. 131.

significance, [...] inseparable from the origins of my organ pieces',¹² and with the threefold partitioning of timbre, technique and theology of *La Nativité*, Messiaen talks of understanding the subject in distinct ways: 'théologique, instrumental et musical'.¹³ Timbre is linked to theology: 'Dies ist keine organistische Registrierung, dies ist eine theologische Registrierung'.¹⁴ Furthermore, this 'theological music' is a 'reflective music' describing tenets of faith,¹⁵ and the purpose of this study is to investigate these links between harmony and theology; more specifically, the relationships between the non-modal colour chords, the superscriptions Messiaen cites in his scores, and theologians from Aquinas to Balthasar. As 'musicien théologique',¹⁶ the synaesthesia described by Messiaen was intensely personal, with the 'special chords' devised as 'exclusively products of colour',¹⁷ embracing works from the 1930s until his final masterpieces: works often prefaced by biblical quotations, where the interaction between 'topic' and harmony might constitute a 'region of play'.¹⁸ How does this harmonic language intersect with the theological message, and when identical colour-chords are heard in different pieces, how does this intertextual play create new theological insight?¹⁹

With methodology originating in harmonic analysis, this study establishes intertextual and theological links across boundaries of work, genre and period, associating Messiaen's music with contemporary Catholic thought, to discern a consistent theological message. Following an assessment of existing literature, seven chapters investigate Messiaen's coloured harmony. Chapter One defines each type of colour-chord, using examples from *Technique de mon langage musical*, *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie*, and selected works. The second chapter explores Messiaen's consolidation of style, light symbolism, and the beginnings of colour association. Chapter Three investigates directional or textural combinations, and longer-range structural planning, whilst the fourth chapter looks at harmony colouring visual aspects of God in relation to Marmion and Balthasar. The Resurrection forms the basis of the fifth chapter, whilst Messiaen's fascination with the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the techniques he devised to describe it, is the focus of Chapter Six. Finally, there is an investigation of Messiaen's concept of *vitrail sonore*,²⁰ with specific reference to the ambulatory at Bourges Cathedral. The concluding section summarises Messiaen's theological message, together with the means he used to achieve this.

¹² Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 28.

¹³ Olivier Messiaen, *La Nativité du Seigneur* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1936), Note de l'Auteur.

¹⁴ Messiaen's words to Rößler concerning 'Le Mystère de la Sainte Trinité' from *Les corps glorieux* and cited in Ingrid Hohlfeld-Ufer and Almut Rößler, *Die musikalische Sprache Olivier Messiaens dargestellt an dem Orgelzyklus „Die Pfingstmesse“*. Zur Interpretation der Orgelwerke Messiaens (Duisburg: Gilles & Francke, 1978), p. 46 n1: 'This isn't an organist's registration, this is a theological registration'.

¹⁵ Leonardo Pinzauti, 'Gespräch mit Olivier Messiaen', *Melos*, 5 (1972), 270-273 (p. 272):

Im übrigen muß man die geistliche und liturgische Musik von jener unterscheiden, die man „theologische Musik“ nennen könnte: unter letzterer verstehe ich eine reflektierende Musik, wie mein Zyklus über die Geburt, die Auferstehung usw. (Trans. by Ingrid Hermann).

See also Michaely, *Die Musik Olivier Messiaens*, p. 5, stressing this reflective, theological approach.

¹⁶ Harry Halbreich, *L'Œuvre d'Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 2008), preface.

¹⁷ Messiaen's words in the interview with Almut Rößler, April 23rd, 1979, trans. by B. Dagg and N. Poland and cited in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 77.

¹⁸ V. Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 133-134: 'play denotes the interaction among constituent processes both within a single domain and between domains'.

¹⁹ Robert Hatten, 'The Place of Intertextuality in Music Studies', *American Journal of Semiotics*, 3:4 (1985), 69–82, (p. 69): 'Creation and interpretation are both constrained and enriched by the universe of discourse established by earlier texts. In the case of the reader (listener), we may include later texts as well'.

²⁰ Olivier Messiaen, 'Billet Parisien: L'Orgue mystique de Tournemire', *La Syrinx*, 27 (1938), 26-27, cited in Stephen Broad, *Olivier Messiaen: Journalism 1935-1939* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 8.

EXISTING LITERATURE: ANALYSIS-THEOLOGY-SYNTHESIS

Messiaen's own explanations and musical commentaries may be found in articles, treatises, prefaces to scores, lectures, interviews, and diaries. He originally ascribed to Tournemire features that would later define his own music:²¹ blending the contemporary with the medieval, *L'orgue mystique* was of 'dazzling originality', evoking the gems of the celestial city 'like a sounding stained-glass'.²² Conversely, Messiaen maintained that 'a stained glass window inspires in me a sequence of chords and timbres'.²³ Since the formulation of his philosophy in *Technique*, Messiaen aspired to 'a true music';²⁴ one which was able to testify with Aquinas that 'God is intelligible light',²⁵ achieved through 'glistening'. Mixing his sophisticated cocktail of acknowledged influences, Messiaen finishes with 'all that evokes stained-glass window and rainbow',²⁶ expanding this recipe to embrace 'the stained glass window of rhythms and modes [which] constituted precisely the qualities of *Les corps glorieux*',²⁷ and 'stained-glass music: a swirling of complementary colours' which aims at creating a 'theological rainbow'.²⁸ Not only did Messiaen reinforce his quest for shimmering music in *Technique*, but outlined much of the theoretical foundation for the development of the constituent chords of *son couleur*.²⁹ Volume III of *Traité* then made references to colour chords, whilst full definitions, examples, colour-associations and chord tables were published in Volume VII.³⁰

In *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, Messiaen explored the links between the twin dualities of resonance and colour,³¹ *éblouissement* and truth:³² 'Coloured music does that which the stained-glass windows [...] of the Middle Ages did: they give us dazzlement'.³³ *Conférence de Kyoto* explained complex rhythms, together with the coloured light of stained glass as the inspiration for coloured harmony, discussing the colour-complexes of specific chords, and likening these effects to the sparkling of gemstones. Placing his most important works in the context of the Christian mysteries and festivals which celebrate them, Messiaen provided a detailed theological explanation of *La Transfiguration* and its moments of attempted transcendence. In Messiaen's interviews with Claude Samuel,³⁴

²¹ Broad, *Olivier Messiaen: Journalism 1935-1939*, p. 9.

²² Messiaen, 'Billet Parisien: *L'Orgue mystique* de Tournemire', cited in Broad, p. 8. The successful combination of the modern and the medieval in Tournemire's *L'orgue mystique* (by the use of Gregorian chant) finds its parallel in the philosophy of Jacques Maritain, noted in Jane F. Fulcher, 'La politique de la transcendance: l'idéologie dans la musique d'Olivier Messiaen dans les années 1930', *Le Mouvement Social*, 208 (2004), 70-90 (p. 86).

²³ Bernard Gavoty, 'Who Are You, Olivier Messiaen?', *Tempo*, 58 (1961), 33-36 (p. 35).

²⁴ *Technique* I, p. 8. Further information on 'truth' will be found in Appendix Five, p. 134, below.

²⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Part I, Question 12, Article 5 (henceforth: *ST*).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁷ Olivier Messiaen, 'Querelle de la musique et de l'amour', *Volontés*, (16th May 1945), p. 1, cited in Peter Hill and Nigel Simeone, *Messiaen* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 153. (Henceforth: Hill and Simeone.)

²⁸ Olivier Messiaen, 'Réponse à une enquête', *Contrepoints*, 3 (March-April 1946), 73-75, and translated in Sander van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music: Olivier Messiaen's Breakthrough Toward the Beyond* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), p. 16.

²⁹ See Appendix Five, p. 132.

³⁰ *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1994-2002), *Tome* III, pp. 85-88, and VII, pp. 136-190. (Henceforth this work is cited as *Traité*.)

³¹ Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, trans. T. Tikker, reproduced in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 62, and cited in Sander van Maas, 'A Transfiguration of the Ear', in *Missing Links: Arts, Religion and Reality*, ed. by Jonneke Bekkenkamp et al. (Münster: LIT, 2000), pp. 157-182 (p. 157).

³² *Ibid.*, p. 64, cited in van Maas, 'A Transfiguration of the Ear', p. 158. See Appendix Five, pp. 130, 134.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 65, cited in van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 34.

³⁴ Olivier Messiaen and Claude Samuel, *Olivier Messiaen: Music and Color: Conversations with Claude Samuel*, trans. by E. Thomas Glasow (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1994) (Henceforth: *Music and Color*).

the documentation of chord colours and analysis of *La Transfiguration* further clarifies the composer's musical and theological concerns, and these in turn inform Dingle's interpretation of *Transfiguration* as Messiaen's 'most important religious work',³⁵ with the theological dimension assuming prime importance,³⁶ exhibiting a stylistic shift towards 'inclusivity'.³⁷ Messiaen also described to Samuel this kaleidoscope of colours:

With the fundamental C#, the upper range is the color of rock crystal and citrine; the lower range, of copper with gold highlights. In the first inversion on C#: wide expanse of sapphire blue, rimmed with less intense blue (fluorine blue, light Chartres blue) and with outer rims of violet. The second inversion on D♭ is orange, with stripes of pale yellow, red, and gold. The third inversion on D♭, from high to low, moves through pale green, amethyst, and black.³⁸

Yet in *Traité*, this original CTI progression was intended to be visualized as radiant fluorescence, where the play of light changes deep blue into the green and violet of the iris reflections of butterflies, whilst Messiaen captures a precious stone's movement of colour in the sparkle of emerald chatoyancy, the shifts in colour of alexandrite, the brassy lustre of chalcopyrite, and the variety of hues in tourmaline and opal.³⁹

Prior to the publication of *Traité*, few scholars mentioned *accords spéciaux*.⁴⁰ Loriod herself gave a succinct definition of 1st CCR,⁴¹ whilst Louvier explained CTI as 'découverte harmonique très importante', apprehending the sequence as a typical 'signature harmonique'.⁴² Building upon Halbreich's intuition of their significance,⁴³ Michaely, in an all-embracing undertaking establishing theological connections between disparate works, provided full definitions and examples.⁴⁴ Early Messiaen scholarship, however, has been largely unaware of the existence of specific 'colour-chords'.⁴⁵ There are references to 'unclassifiable chords',⁴⁶ either categorising all non-modal harmony as 'colour-chords',⁴⁷ or asserting that 'none of these is ever defined'.⁴⁸ Rößler cites Messiaen's words concerning colour-themes to express God above yet suffering with us, without being able to explain *hom*.⁴⁹ Yet Messiaen's diary indicated that he codified these chords, making use of chord tables to facilitate composition.⁵⁰ Research flourished following publication

³⁵ Christopher Dingle, 'Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ: a provisional study' (unpublished MPhil. dissertation, University of Sheffield, 1995), Vol. 1, p. 95.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁷ Christopher Dingle, "'La statue reste sur son piédestal': Messiaen's *La Transfiguration* and Vatican II', *Tempo*, 212 (2000), 8-11, (p. 11).

³⁸ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 65, describing the primary transposition level of 'Chords of Transposed Inversions on the Same Bass Note' (see Chapter One, p. 11, below).

³⁹ *Traité* VII, p. 138. For definitions of the abbreviations CTI, CCR, and TC, see pp. xv-xvi, above.

⁴⁰ Olivier Messiaen, *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* (Paris: Durand, 1947), Note de l'auteur iii: 'Special chords'. See Appendix Five, p. 129, below.

⁴¹ Yvonne Loriod-Messiaen, 'Étude sur l'œuvre pianistique d'Olivier Messiaen', in *Portrait(s) d'Olivier Messiaen*, ed. by Cathérine Massip (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1996), p. 105.

⁴² Alain Louvier, 'Olivier Messiaen, le rythme et la couleur', in *Portrait(s)*, ed. by Massip, p. 53: 'This very important harmonic discovery merits analysis'; p. 56: 'harmonic signature'.

⁴³ Harry Halbreich, *Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Fayard/Fondation SACEM, 1980), p. 122.

⁴⁴ Michaely, *Die Musik Olivier Messiaens: colour-chord definitions*, p. 70; examples between pp. 86 and 119.

⁴⁵ Amy Bauer, 'The Impossible Charm of Messiaen's *Chronochromie*', in *Messiaen Studies*, ed. by Robert Sholl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 145-167 (p. 151).

⁴⁶ Roberto Fabbi, 'Theological Implications of Restrictions in Messiaen's Compositional Processes', in *Messiaen's Language of Mystical Love*, ed. by Siglind Bruhn (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), pp. 55-84 (p. 64).

⁴⁷ Robert Sherlaw Johnson, *Messiaen* (London: J. M. Dent, 1976), p. 19.

⁴⁸ Jonathan W. Bernard, 'Colour', in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by Peter Hill (London: Faber & Faber, 1995), pp. 203-219 (p. 211).

⁴⁹ Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 52.

⁵⁰ Hill and Simeone, p. 342.

of *Traité*, a work comprehensively assessed by Healey.⁵¹ Opening rich possibilities for analysis and interpretation, another consequence was Dingle's assessment of Messiaen's late style,⁵² which also provides the best account in English of the colour-chords, discerning a shift in style post-*Saint François*.⁵³ Prolific post-*Traité* work was also undertaken by Cheong, firstly with a survey of Messiaen's modal practices, which, like the glass of Sainte Chapelle, creates a structured 'miracle of dazzling colours'.⁵⁴ This was followed by investigations of colour-chords: tracing the development of CCR and TC as catalogued in *Technique*,⁵⁵ establishing the historical development of the chords from Messiaen's later writing, including *Traité* III and V;⁵⁶ applying the theory of Messiaen's chord tables to the analysis of the conclusion of *Et exspecto*, noting tonal components within CCR, and showing that chord voicings do not always conform to their models.⁵⁷

Messiaen's use of CTI in the context of colour association was pursued by Benitez,⁵⁸ whilst the link between coloured harmony and natural resonance was explored by Mittelstadt,⁵⁹ and the origins of TC investigated by Anderson.⁶⁰ In an analysis of the chords of *Chronochromie*,⁶¹ Bauer categorizes errors in the literature,⁶² assessing the impact of recent harmonic research.⁶³ Forte surveys Messiaen's non-modal harmonies with respect to pitch-class set theory,⁶⁴ concluding that 'the artistic deployment of these chords is one of Messiaen's most remarkable achievements'.⁶⁵ By the late period, chords previously shackled to their harmonic context became individual sonorities, emancipated from their ordered purpose within progressions.⁶⁶ Whilst it may be true that 'in *Petites esquisses*, Messiaen releases the chords from their original function',⁶⁷ this fractured, individual use of colour-chords, becoming 'isolated entities',⁶⁸ was a process commenced at least as early as 'Neumes rythmiques'. The harmonic dimension of *Catalogue* is analyzed by Loo, assessing the importance of colour-chords in the context of *style oiseau*.⁶⁹ many of these birdsong harmonies in the later music may be traced back to the development of the colour-chords prior to the 1950s.⁷⁰

⁵¹ Gareth Healey, *Messiaen's Musical Techniques: The Composer's View and Beyond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

⁵² Christopher Dingle, 'Understated charm: style and technique in the last works of Olivier Messiaen' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 2000).

⁵³ Christopher Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

⁵⁴ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Messiaen's Triadic Colouration: Modes as Interversion', *Music Analysis*, 21:1 (2002), 53-84.

⁵⁵ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Messiaen's Chord Tables: Ordering the Disordered', *Tempo*, 57:226 (2003), 2-10.

⁵⁶ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Rediscovering Messiaen's Invented Chords', *Acta Musicologica*, 75:1 (2003), 85-105.

⁵⁷ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Composing with Pre-composed Chords in the Finale of *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*', *Revue de Musicologie*, 90:1 (2004), 115-132.

⁵⁸ Vincent Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music: An Examination of the Chords of Transposed Inversions on the Same Bass Note', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 23:2 (2004), 187-226.

⁵⁹ James Mittelstadt, 'Resonance: Unifying Factor in Messiaen's Accords Spéciaux', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 28:1 (2009), 30-60.

⁶⁰ Julian Anderson, 'Messiaen and the Notion of Influence', *Tempo*, 63:247 (2009), 2-18.

⁶¹ Bauer, pp. 151-159.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 151, n. 19.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 151, especially n. 20 and 21.

⁶⁴ Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

⁶⁵ Allen Forte, 'Messiaen's Chords', in *Olivier Messiaen: Music, Art and Literature*, ed. by Christopher Dingle and Nigel Simeone (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 91-113 (p. 113).

⁶⁶ Christopher Dingle, review of *Olivier Messiaen: Oiseaux Exotiques* by Peter Hill and Nigel Simeone, *Tempo*, 62:243 (2008), 65-70 (p. 69); Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, pp. 286, 312.

⁶⁷ Dingle, 'Understated charm', p. 88.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 330. Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 26: this is to capture the timbre of specific birdsong.

⁶⁹ Fung Chiat Loo, 'Olivier Messiaen's *Catalogue d'oiseaux*: A Performer's Perspective' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sheffield, 2005).

⁷⁰ Dingle, review of *Olivier Messiaen: Oiseaux Exotiques*, p. 69.

Permeating Messiaen's thought is Thomas Aquinas, and Bruhn's theological investigation of Messiaen's religious subjects and their musical treatment,⁷¹ via an exploration of the expression of this joy as a reflection of divine truth,⁷² culminates in a survey of the influence of Thomism on Messiaen's entire output.⁷³ This relationship between Messiaen and Aquinas is further explored by Benitez in the context of the French Catholic renewal,⁷⁴ whilst other writers assess links between Messiaen and the *ressourcement* of *la nouvelle théologie*,⁷⁵ or Columba Marmion's mystical contemplations of Christ, and by extension, those of Guéranger and Tournemire.⁷⁶ An interpretation of *Vingt regards* in the context of Marmion's theology is undertaken by Atherton,⁷⁷ and the influence of Ernest Hello upon Messiaen, especially in *Visions de l'amen*, is explored by Schrader.⁷⁸ In a comprehensive summary of available material, Voderholzer assesses Messiaen's important relationship to Hans Urs von Balthasar.⁷⁹ In summary, Jean-Rodolphe Kars hears Messiaen's music as 'cosmic liturgy':⁸⁰ a response of joy to the love of God.⁸¹

Shenton's approach to Messiaen's *langage communicable* in *Méditations*, a technique of 'striking intellectual concentration',⁸² and to the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, unites critical theory, semiology and linguistics:⁸³ this integration of musical analysis with theological interpretation is a powerful method to gain a fuller understanding of Messiaen's work. One of the first to achieve this was Alain Michel,⁸⁴ discussing the clothing of the numinous with a composer's modern techniques: 'into the forms of contemporary sensibility, he must translate a message of eternal character'.⁸⁵ Building upon this approach is the work of Sander van Maas, exploring the role of music in Augustine and Aquinas, the theology of light, and the practical application of these ideas

⁷¹ Siglind Bruhn, 'Religious Symbolism in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', *American Journal of Semiotics*, 13:1-4 (1996), 277-309.

⁷² Siglind Bruhn, 'Traces of a Thomistic *De musica* in the Compositions of Olivier Messiaen', *Logos*, 11:4 (2008), 16-56.

⁷³ Siglind Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity: Echoes of Medieval Theology in the Oratorio, Organ Meditations, and Opera* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2008), pp. 13-36.

⁷⁴ Vincent Benitez, 'Messiaen and Aquinas', in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by Andrew Shenton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 101-123. See Appendix Six, p. 135, for more information on Aquinas.

⁷⁵ Douglas Shadle, 'Messiaen's Relationship to Jacques Maritain's Musical Circle and Neo-Thomism', in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by A. Shenton, pp. 83-99. See Appendix Five, below, p. 132.

⁷⁶ Stephen Schloesser, 'The Charm of Impossibilities: Mystic Surrealism as Contemplative Voluptuousness', in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by A. Shenton, pp. 163-182.

⁷⁷ Caroline Atherton, 'Olivier Messiaen's *Vingt regards* sur l'Enfant Jésus: the Catholic perspective' (unpublished MMus thesis, University of Sheffield, 1998).

⁷⁸ Thomas Schrader, „*Was Kein Ohr gehört hat*“: Eine Untersuchung der Musik Messiaens aus musikwissenschaftlicher und theologischer Sicht, *Collectanea Musicologica* 15 (Augsburg: Wißner, 2011).

⁷⁹ Rudolph Voderholzer, '„Herrlichkeit“: Ästhetische Parallelen zwischen dem theologischen Werk Hans Urs von Balthasars und der Musik Olivier Messiaens', in *Musik des Unsichtbaren: Der Komponist Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) am Schnittpunkt von Theologie und Musik*, ed. by Michaela Christine Hastetter (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2008), pp. 187-205. See Appendix Six, p. 135, for further information on Balthasar.

⁸⁰ Jean-Rodolphe Kars, 'The works of Olivier Messiaen and the Catholic liturgy', in *Olivier Messiaen: Music, Art and Literature*, ed. by C. Dingle and N. Simeone, pp. 323-333 (p. 328).

⁸¹ Jean-Rodolphe Kars, 'Olivier Messiaen – ein Musiker der Freude', *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift Communio*, 33 (2004), 359-373, (p. 359), translated as 'Joy in the Compositions of Olivier Messiaen', *Communio: International Catholic Review*, 31:4 (Winter, 2004). Kars grounds his interpretation of Messiaen's 'Christian Joy' in 1 John 1. 1-4, which the composer cites as part of the superscription to 'Le Verbe'.

⁸² Stuart Waumsley, *The Organ Music of Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Leduc, 1975), p. 54.

⁸³ Andrew Shenton, *Olivier Messiaen's System of Signs: Notes Towards Understanding His Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

⁸⁴ Alain Michel, 'La Transfiguration et la beauté: d'Olivier Messiaen à Urs von Balthasar', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, 4:1 (1974), 493-499.

⁸⁵ Michel, cited in van Maas, 'A Transfiguration of the Ear', p. 169.

in *Méditations*,⁸⁶ later assessing Messiaen's appreciation of Balthasar's concept of beauty, whilst attempting to discern the validity of *éblouissement* as spiritual transcendence.⁸⁷ Analyzing 'Perfecte conscious illius perfectae generationis' of *La Transfiguration*, Benitez investigates how Trinitarian symbolism and exploration of the theology of the relationships within the Trinity are implied by the superposition of harmonic and durational *ostinati*, integrating the colourful with the temporal.⁸⁸ Furthermore, in 'Les élus marqués du sceau', interversion combines with coloured harmony in a Bergsonian view of time in which eternity is won with 'the sign of the cross'.⁸⁹ Messiaen's 'technique and *claritas*',⁹⁰ in his depiction of the eternal, is explored by Pickstock as a Bergsonian fusion of temporal moments.⁹¹ She perceives a Deleuzian diagonal running between Messiaen's rhythm and coloured harmony,⁹² whereby the combination of time and harmonic rainbow implants the divine in ourselves: 'Enfoncez votre image dans la durée de mes jours'.⁹³ Therefore *vitrail sonore* alone is insufficient to convey theological insight, but when expressed in conjunction with this temporal dimension,⁹⁴ becomes a vehicle for theomusicology.⁹⁵ In *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, Cheong finds a renewed importance of chorale writing and of modal and colour-chord harmonies with the goal of confronting the eschaton, laying the stylistic foundations for Messiaen's remaining mature works.⁹⁶

Messiaen's skilful deployment of resonance-based harmony, even in contexts involving dense birdsong or complex rhythmic interactions, ensures a high degree of tonal control. The composer's consistent synaesthesia refers both to the modes of limited transposition, and to the interactions between basic, triadic-based chords, greatly expanded with added notes and upper resonance. Thus tonality exercises an important role, even in large-scale structure, in a style which Dingle coins 'modified tonality'.⁹⁷ Where these tonal areas assume the role of signifiers representing scriptural quotation and theological concepts such as those set forth by Columba Marmion,⁹⁸ the interplay between them is therefore able to communicate a profound and joyful message of truth.

⁸⁶ Sander van Mass, 'The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', in *Aquinas as Authority: A Collection of Studies Presented at the Second Conference of the Thomas Instituut Te Utrecht*, ed. by Paul van Geest, Harm Goris, Carlo Leget (Utrecht: Peeters, 2002), pp. 317-331.

⁸⁷ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*.

⁸⁸ Vincent Benitez, 'Reconsidering Messiaen as Serialist', *Music Analysis*, 28:2-3 (2009), 267-299, (pp. 273-276).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 289. See also Appendices 5, p. 133, and Six, p. 135, below, for further information on Bergson.

⁹⁰ Catherine Pickstock, 'Messiaen and Deleuze: The Musico-theological Critique of Modernism and Postmodernism', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25 (2008), 173-199, (p. 194).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 181. See also Appendix Six, p. 136, below, for further information on Deleuze.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 185, citing Roberto Fabbi's analysis of Messiaen's text for 'Psalmodie de l'ubiquité par amour' in 'Theological Implications', in *Messiaen's Language of Mystical Love*, ed. by S. Bruhn, p. 81: 'Embed your image in the number of my days'.

⁹⁴ Messiaen himself acknowledges the bonds between rhythm, harmony and colour in this context in *Technique I*, p. 48:

...the relation of *notes added* to chords and *values added* to rhythms strikes us. The same charm [...] is found in these values of supplement which make the rhythms limp deliciously, in these foreign notes which insidiously transform the tint of the chord.

⁹⁵ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theological Music: Introduction to Theomusicology*, Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance, No. 23 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991). For a definition of theomusicology, see Appendix Five, p. 133, below.

⁹⁶ Wai-Ling Cheong, 'Plainchants as Coloured Time in Messiaen's *Couleurs de la cité céleste*', *Tempo*, 64:254 (2010), 20-37, (pp. 34-35).

⁹⁷ Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 313.

⁹⁸ Dom Columba Marmion, *Christ in His Mysteries*, trans. by Mother M. St. Thomas (London: Sands and Co., 1939), henceforth: Marmion. See also Appendix Six, p. 138, for more information.

*J'ai des accords, par exemple, qui contiennent les douze sons.*¹

CHAPTER ONE

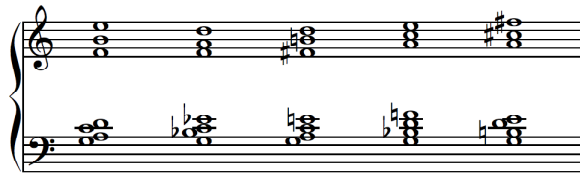
'A GLISTENING MUSIC': DEFINITIONS OF *ACCORDS SPÉCIAUX*

Messiaen's different types of *accords spéciaux* create *éblouissement* (dazzlement),² which represents 'the epitome of musico-religious experience',³ by attempting to move the listener from a purely musical realm to something higher.⁴ There are at least seven types of non-modal chords,⁵ featuring resonance from the harmonic spectrum.

CHORD ON THE DOMINANT⁶ (CD)

With colour associations of white and gold,⁷ this is a vertical sounding of all the notes of the C major scale,⁸ originally voiced above G \flat and cited in *Technique*.⁹ *La Nativité* presents a chord table (Example 1.1),¹⁰ in which each inversion is transposed back to the bass note of the original chord, forming a dynamic harmonic sequence.¹¹

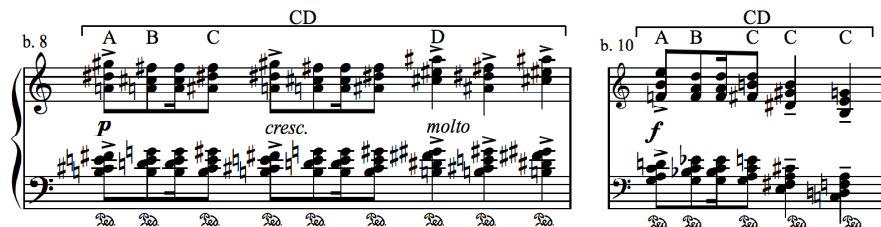
EXAMPLE 1.1: *La Nativité du Seigneur*, Volume 1, Note de l'auteur: L'accord sur dominante



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Like *La Nativité*, Messiaen's *pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas* was composed in Grenoble during the summer of 1935,¹² and alongside 'Le Verbe', this piece demonstrates Messiaen's first use of CD with inversions (Example 1.2).

EXAMPLE 1.2: *Pièce pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas*, b. 8 and 10



¹ Olivier Messiaen, *Entretien avec Claude Samuel* (Erato ECD 75505) and cited in Joseph Edward Harris, 'Musique colorée: Synesthetic Correspondence in the Works of Olivier Messiaen' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Iowa, 2004), Chapter 5, p. 84, in which Messiaen discusses the uniqueness of his harmony: 'I have chords, for example, that contain all twelve pitches' (trans. by Harris).

² See Appendix Five, p. 130, below.

³ Sander van Maas, 'Forms of love: Messiaen's aesthetics of *éblouissement*', in *Messiaen Studies* ed. by R. Sholl, pp. 78-100 (p. 79).

⁴ *Technique* I, p. 21: 'to be charmed is his only desire [...] which will lead him progressively to that sort of theological rainbow which the musical language attempts to be'.

⁵ Not including the little-used Chord in Fourths (*Technique* I, p. 50), which carries no specific colour or theological associations and as a result does not feature in this investigation.

⁶ *Accord sur dominante* (see Appendix Three, p. 126, for the chord table of all transpositions of CD).

⁷ Michaely, p. 366. *Traité* VII, p. 139: 'ce qui lui donnait une couleur blanchâtre'.

⁸ Messiaen, *La Nativité du Seigneur*, Note de l'auteur: 'L'accord sur dominante contient toutes les notes de la gamme majeure'.

⁹ *Technique* I, p. 50, and II, Ex. 201, p. 37.

¹⁰ Messiaen, *La Nativité du Seigneur*, Note de l'auteur.

¹¹ The third inversion was never used: 'il sonnait mal et s'enchaînait mal avec les autres' (*Traité* VII, p. 139).

¹² Nigel Simeone, *Olivier Messiaen: A Bibliographical Catalogue of Messiaen's Works* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1998), p. 51.

CHORD ON THE DOMINANT WITH APPOGGIATURAS¹³ (CDA)

Technique presents CD in *Exemple 201*,¹⁴ with its theoretical resolution onto a dominant-ninth in Ex. 202. Ex. 203 creates CDA with appoggiaturas on the two highest notes, whilst Ex. 204 projects a directional development of this appoggiatura/resolution idea onto each inversion, creating *effet de vitrail* (Example 1.3).¹⁵

EXAMPLE 1.3: *Technique de mon langage musical*, Volume II: *Exemples musicaux*, p. 37

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Messiaen opens *Quatuor* in Example 1.4 with a complete CDA *vitrail* evoking the heavenly silence of Revelation 8.¹⁶

EXAMPLE 1.4: *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, I 'Liturgie de cristal', 1/1/1, piano¹⁷

In *Cinq rechants*, developing CD on B \sharp from *pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas* into CDA, the sequence demonstrates goal-directed bass motion (Example 1.5).

EXAMPLE 1.5: *Cinq rechants*, III 'Introduction', 16/2/1

¹³ Accord sur dominante appoggiaturé. CDA is described in Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 16.

¹⁴ *Technique I*, p. 50 discusses CD in root position, in inversions, and with appoggiaturas.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*: 'Let us make multicolor [sic] work, bring forth an effect of a stained-glass window and arrange the different inversions of the chord with such appoggiaturas over a common bass note (C \sharp or D \flat)'. It is important to note that this explanation uses the bass note C \sharp , a feature of Messiaen's further writing on the subject in *Traité*, and also the starting point for the chord tables as the primary transposition level of CTI. For a full definition of *effet de vitrail*, see Appendix Five, p. 130.

¹⁶ Olivier Messiaen, *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* (Paris: Durand, 1942), Préface, i: 'vous aurez le silence harmonieux du ciel' (see Example 5.12, p. 97).

¹⁷ The appoggiatura chords in this analysis refer to the 5th CTI table in *Traité VII*, pp. 142-147. Subsequent examples also codify CDA by Messiaen's transposition numbers (see Table 1.1, below, pp. 15-16).

CHORD OF TRANSPOSED INVERSIONS¹⁸ (CTI)

Technique outlines ‘another disposition’ of CDA, subsequently conflating appoggiatura and resolution into one chord (Example 1.6).¹⁹ In CTI, this resolution is removed.

EXAMPLE 1.6: *Technique* II, Ex. 205-206, p. 37



Reproduced by kind permission of Editions Alphonse Leduc, Paris/United Music Publishers Ltd, England. Messiaen’s explanation of the derivation of CTI uses the bass C#/D♭.²⁰ The foundation, the lowest five notes of CD, is a modified dominant-ninth in which the major third is replaced by its chromatic upper neighbour.²¹ The appoggiaturas of CDA are added above this (Example 1.7, chord A). This chord is cycled through three of its four possible inversions (Example 1.7, chords B, C, D), where, in two of these inversions, the appoggiaturas remain in the top register (chords B, D).²²

EXAMPLE 1.7: *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d’ornithologie*, Tome III, p. 86



Reproduced by kind permission of Editions Alphonse Leduc, Paris/United Music Publishers Ltd, England. Each inversion is then transposed downwards, with all chords now formed on the same bass as the root (Example 1.8).²³

EXAMPLE 1.8: *Traité* III, p. 87



Reproduced by kind permission of Editions Alphonse Leduc, Paris/United Music Publishers Ltd, England. The appoggiaturas gain ultimate superiority as CTI is released from association with CD: Messiaen locates the moment in his published music where CDA yields to the final version of CTI (Example 1.9).²⁴

¹⁸ *Accord à renversements transposés*. CTI is described in Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 17.

¹⁹ *Technique* I, p. 50, and II, Ex. 205-206, p. 37.

²⁰ *Traité* III, p. 86. This is the same transposition level as the explanation of CDA in *Technique* II, Ex. 204.

²¹ Vincent P. Benitez, ‘Simultaneous Contrast and Additive Designs in Olivier Messiaen’s Opera *Saint François d’Assise*’, *Music Theory Online*, 8:2 (2002), 3.2

<<http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.02.8.2/mto.02.8.2.benitez.html#pt3>> [accessed 3 September 2012]. Messiaen talks instead of a dominant seventh with an added 9th, in which the leading note is replaced by the tonic (See, for example, *Traité* IV, p. 105).

²² As with CD, Messiaen omits the third inversion, renaming the fourth. Only the lower (tonal) tetrad is subjected to inversion, maintaining harmonic stability: the appoggiaturas always remain in the treble.

²³ Note in Example 1.6 that chords C and D are enharmonically transposed, just as in *Technique* II, Ex. 204 (Example 1.3), and that Messiaen designates root position and inversions as A, B, C, D.

²⁴ *Traité* VII, p. 139. We must be wary of Messiaen’s pronouncements when they concern chronology or the genesis of his works, or in this case, of the development of a harmonic device. He tends to tidy up the order of events in order to present us with a more convenient picture of a specific process. This happens most notably concerning the completion of *Les corps glorieux*, or the genesis of the *Livre du Saint Sacrement*. Concerning CTI, Messiaen places their ability to ‘stand alone’, as it were, firmly in 1944, yet independent CTI may be found in *Les corps glorieux* of 1939.

EXAMPLE 1.9: *Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine*, III ‘Psalmodie de l’ubiquité par amour’, 119/1/1 (choir and strings only)²⁵

The score for Example 1.9 consists of three systems. The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics: "Don - nant l'être à cha - que lieu, A tout ce qui oc - cupe un lieu,". Above the vocal line, harmonic designations are provided: 2nd CCR (7 A B), 1st CCR (10 A B), and CTI (4 A B C). The piano accompaniment features complex textures with triplets and sixteenth-note patterns. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Messiaen’s coloured designations for CTI are always consistent. In Example 1.10 (*Des canyons aux étoiles*), the Golden Whistler adds harmonic colour to the Mockingbird,²⁶ moving cadentially from the B \sharp of CTI 11 to the E major of TC 5 in a red context.²⁷

EXAMPLE 1.10: *Des canyons aux étoiles...*, IX ‘Le moqueur polyglotte’, 310/3/2, piano

The score for Example 1.10 is for piano. Above the staff, color-coded harmonic designations are listed: lemon, brown, red marks, chocolate, red & gold, red & gold, ruby red, orange & yellow, red & gold. The designations are grouped as CTI 11 (A B C D) and 1st CCR 4B (A), and TC 5C (A). The tempo is 'Modéré (♩=72)'. The score includes dynamic markings like *p*, *mf*, *fff*, and *f*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

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This cadential progression is repeated in ‘le Dieu caché’ (Example 1.11), where the goal of the red of E major is a symbol of the Blood of Christ in the sacrament.²⁸

EXAMPLE 1.11: *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, ‘le Dieu caché’, 18/3/1 and 18/4/3

The score for Example 1.11 shows piano accompaniment. Above the staff, the CTI 11 designations are listed: D, C, D, C. The tempo is 'Un peu lent'. The score is divided into two parts: 18/3/1 and 18/4/3. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

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²⁵ For definitions, examples and chord tables of 2nd CCR and 1st CCR see pp. 19-23, below.
²⁶ Olivier Messiaen, *Des canyons aux étoiles...* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1978), preface to score, p. 17.
²⁷ *Traité VII*, p. 138: Messiaen describes CTI 11D in detail: ‘un accord parfait pimenté, évoquant pour moi un fond brun chocolat, avec des dessins rouge carmin, sur lequel se détache une étoile d’or’. For detailed explanations of TC harmonies, see pp. 24-26, below.
²⁸ António José Marques de Sá Mota, ‘Olivier Messiaen e o Livro do Saint Sacrement – Estudo Analítico e Estilístico’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Aveiro, 2007), p. 125.

This complete CTI 11 sequence was previously used to reflect the pathway to the sun in *Haravi* (Example 1.12).²⁹

EXAMPLE 1.12: *Haravi*, IX ‘L’escalier redit, gestes du soleil’, 70/1/1

CTI 11

A B C D A

Vif, joyeux et passionné

Il ne par - le plus,

f *mf* *molto*

Péd. Péd. Péd. Péd.

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Example 1.13 demonstrates arpeggiated CDA: flourishes of CTI 11 in combination with the notes of CD resolution.³⁰

EXAMPLE 1.13: *Catalogue d’oiseaux*, Book 2, IV ‘Le traquet stapazin’, 3/4/2

11A CTI with CD combined as arpeggiated CDA

Chardonneret

Très vif (♩=184) Vif (♩=160) Très vif (♩=184)

mf *mf* *mf*

(Péd sempre)

Vif (♩=160) Très vif (♩=184) Vif (♩=160)

mf *p*

(très clair, comme un glockenspiel)

(Péd sempre)

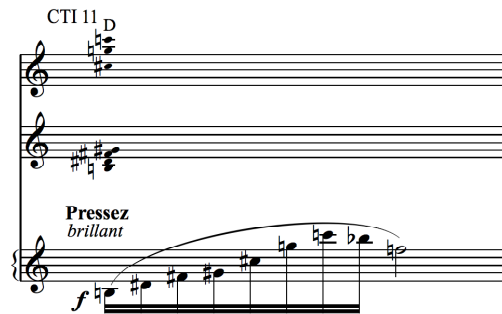
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²⁹ Text of the ninth song of *Haravi*: ‘L’escalier redit, gestes du soleil’: ‘The stairway reiterates gestures from the sun’ (my translation).

³⁰ Loo, Vol. 1, p. 174, and Vol. 2, p. 227, Example 3.5.17a, notes Messiaen’s use of *renversement transposé* here, and in Vol. 1, p. 25, analyzes Messiaen’s original sketches for this passage, noting that the first idea made use of chords, rather than the final arpeggiated flourishes, in combination with the goldfinch music.

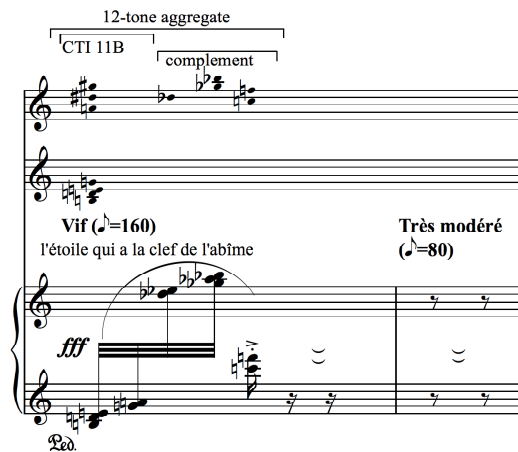
These ascending figures are in direct reference to the broken CDA of ‘Abîme des oiseaux’ (Example 1.14).³¹

EXAMPLE 1.14: *Quatuor*, III ‘Abîme des oiseaux’, 15/7/2



This arpeggiation of CTI 11 which portrays the abyss, anticipates CTI flourishes in ‘Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel’ depicting the rainbow of Revelation 10. 1,³² and recalls Messiaen’s earlier use of CD representing stars.³³ Example 1.15 develops this, adding to CTI 11B its complement, completing the total chromatic to evoke both star and abyss in Revelation 9. 1.³⁴

EXAMPLE 1.15: *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, 17/1/1, piano



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Table 1.1 shows the 12 transpositions of CTI, together with Messiaen’s detailed colour associations.³⁵

³¹ *Technique II*, Ex. 114-115, p. 17: Messiaen demonstrates the melodic arpeggiation of CDA in ‘Abîme des oiseaux’ from *Quatuor*.

³² See below, Example 2.7, p. 38.

³³ Between 1935 and 1938, in both *La Nativité* and *Chants de terre et de ciel*, CD is used to colour the musical representation of stars (see Chapter Two, pp. 44-45, below).

³⁴ See, for example, Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 119, where Messiaen reminds us that Ernest Hello stresses the need for the chasm of death beneath us in order to contrast with the infinite and everlasting life above us. Michaely (p. 662) makes clear that for Hello, this *abîme* signifies not just suffering, but the wideness of God’s mercy in response to it.

³⁵ *Traité VII*, pp. 142-147. Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, pp. 18-19, asks why the first transposition of the CTI chord table begins on C#. We must return to far earlier examples: *Technique* Ex. 204 (see Example 1.3, above), and Ex. 205 (see Example 1.6, above), and before that, the composer’s first extended use of CD (in ‘Les Mages’ of *La Nativité*, see Example 2.19, p. 44, below), also open to the suggestion of the note C# as a signifier for *le Christ crucifié*.

TABLE 1.1: CTI



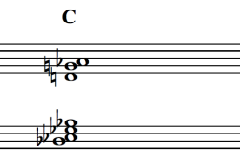



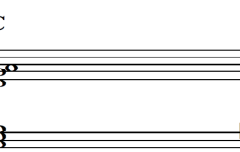
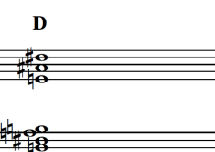


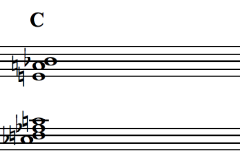


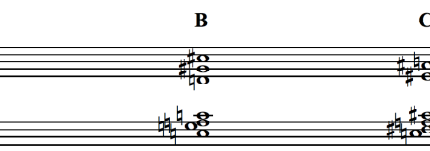



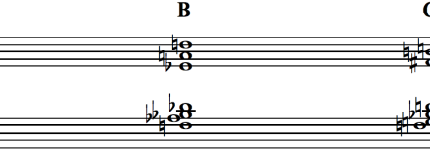
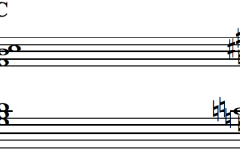
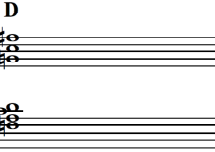


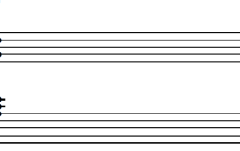


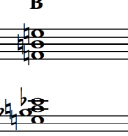
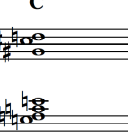
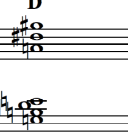


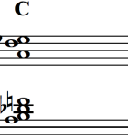



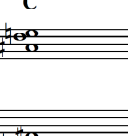
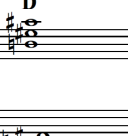

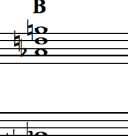
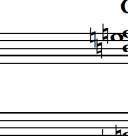

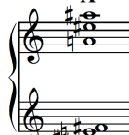
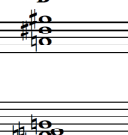
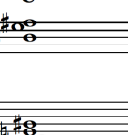
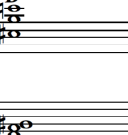


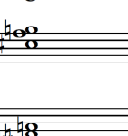

<p>1 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>zone supérieure: cristal de roche et citrine. zone inférieure: couleur cuivre à reflets d'or.</p>	<p>large nappe de bleu saphir, cerclée de bleus moins intenses (fluorine bleue, bleu clair de Chartres) et recerclée de violet.</p>	<p>orangé, avec des bandes jaune pâle, rouge, et or.</p>	<p>vert pâle, violet améthyste, et noir.</p>
<p>2 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>jaune, mauve, et gris perle.</p>	<p>bandes rouges, grises, et vert pâle.</p>	<p>orangé, avec des taches de jaune éclatant, de rouge, et de brun chaud</p>	<p>bandes verticales: vertes et violettes, alternées.</p>
<p>3 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>campanules mauves, sur des voiles blancs et gris clair.</p>	<p>cristaux: terre brûlée, violet améthyste, bleu de prusse clair, marron chaud et rougeâtre - avec des étoiles d'or.</p>	<p>fleurs d'iris (violettes à centre orange) sur fond bleu turquoise.</p>	<p>fond rose à dessins noirs (comme la rhodonite), avec des lis Martagon (fleur brun violacé).</p>
<p>4 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>bandes verticales: vert, violettes, bleu foncé.</p>	<p>blanc et or.</p>	<p>large manteau bleu saphir intense - dans les plis: des reflets violet Parme et bleu de Chartres.</p>	<p>une spirale d'or à reflets blancs et roses - sur un grand fond rouge carmin.</p>
<p>5 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>rose à dessins noirs (comme la rhodonite) - souligné d'une bande couleur de sable.</p>	<p>centré, vert pâle, et mauve.</p>	<p>arborescences rouges et roses, sur fond gris.</p>	<p>vert pâle, avec des reflets jaunes et mauves.</p>
<p>6 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>cuivré, or et brun, rouge rabattu par le noir.</p>	<p>vert émeraude, violet améthyste, et bleu pâle.</p>	<p>étoiles d'or flamboyantes - sur cristaux terre brûlée, brun rougeâtre et cuir, avec du violet améthyste et du bleu de Chartres clair.</p>	<p>soleil or et argent - entouré de rayons ondulés rouges, orangés, mauves et noirs.</p>

TABLE 1.1: cont.

<p>7 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>jaune, taché de blanc et de vert pâle.</p>	<p>bandes obliques rouges et blanches, sur fond rose à dessins noirs.</p>	<p>dessin jaune et blanc, avec des zones d'or très brillantes.</p>	<p>orangé, rouge et brun, jaune citron.</p>
<p>8 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>crystal taillé à facettes: jaune, mauve, bleu pâle, dessins en spirales blanc et or, vert pâle, rose, ombre dégradé vers le blanc - avec un peu d'or autour.</p>	<p>sur fond rouge carmin et brun cuir, des améthystes violettes, des campanules mauves, et des cailloux blancs.</p>	<p>sur fond vert pâle et gris cendré, des améthystes violettes, des campanules mauves, et des cailloux blancs.</p>	<p>lunes violettes, roses, et violet pourpre, tourmantin sur fond bleu turquoise.</p>
<p>9 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>large zone orange, cerclée de vert et de bleu pâle.</p>	<p>vert bleuté, avec un peu de jaune et de violet.</p>	<p>vert émeraude, barré horizontalement de violet</p>	<p>camaiéu de bleus: bleu saphir intense, bleu translucide genre fluorine, bleu mat genre lapis-lazuli, bleu violet, et bleu clair de Chartres.</p>
<p>10 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>bleu turquoise, souligné de rose et de mauve.</p>	<p>or brillant à reflets rouges, avec du jaune pâle, du bleu de prusse très clair, et du cristal transparent - éclat adamantin!</p>	<p>zone rouge rubis, entouré d'une autre zone rose à dessins noirs.</p>	<p>récif de corail rouge, entouré de rose, de gris, et de vert pâle.</p>
<p>11 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>brun clair, surmonté de lapis-lazuli bleu mat, et d'un peu de violet.</p>	<p>jaune citron, avec des taches rouges.</p>	<p>rouge, avec des dessins d'or.</p>	<p>fond brun chocolat, avec des dessins rouge carmin, sur lequel se détache une étoile d'or.</p>
<p>12 A</p> 	<p>B</p> 	<p>C</p> 	<p>D</p> 
<p>arborescences roses et noires, sur fond jaune et gris perle.</p>	<p>mosaïque rose, mauve, violet pourpre, et bleu turquoise.</p>	<p>lunes mauves, jaunes, et bleues, tournant sur un fond vert pâle.</p>	<p>soleil d'or éclatant, sur neige très blanche.</p>

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CHORD OF RESONANCE³⁶ (CR)

Messiaen's description of *pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas* highlights mode 3¹ with 'orange, white and gold light'.³⁷ This opening harmony provides the foundation for the formulation of CR: each chord in the descending chain omits only one note from its complete statement.

EXAMPLE 1.16: *Pièce pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas*, b. 9

The musical score for Example 1.16 consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and contains a series of chords, each with a note in the treble that descends by a whole tone. The lower staff is in bass clef and contains a series of chords, each with a note in the bass that descends by a major third. The chords are connected by a descending chain of major thirds. The score is marked with a forte dynamic (*ff*) and includes a 7th fret marking on the bass staff.

CR second inversions (minus one note in treble) (Mode 3)
beneath whole-tone descent (Mode 1)

descending chain of major thirds

CR is implicit in a single bass note,³⁸ sounding the fundamental 'and all its odd harmonics up to the fifteenth'.³⁹ Messiaen's derivation of CR from these first fifteen harmonics seems to be inspired by Jolivet's construction of a similar mode,⁴⁰ and both composers opted for an equally-tempered *flat* 13th harmonic in opposition to contemporary theorists.⁴¹ The tonal richness of CR derives from the vertical combination of two opposing seventh chords: the lower staff tetrachords are dominant sevenths, whilst the higher tetrachords are 'half-diminished sevenths'.⁴² More simply, the basis of CR is an extended dominant seventh,⁴³ sounding eight of the notes of mode 3.

EXAMPLE 1.17: *Technique II*, Ex. 208-210, p. 37

The musical score for Example 1.17 shows three examples of the Chord of Resonance (CR) in root position. Example 208 is in G major, Example 209 is in G minor, and Example 210 is in G minor with a piano dynamic (*p*). Each example consists of two staves, with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. The chords are shown as block chords.

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In Example 1.17, Ex. 208 presents Messiaen's root position CR. An extended passage of this form of CR is heard in *Réveil des oiseaux* harmonizing the song of the golden oriole played by cellos, surrounded by a dense counterpoint of birdsong (Example 1.18).

³⁶ *Accord de la résonance* (see Appendix Three, p. 127 for the chord table of all transpositions and inversions).

³⁷ Hill and Simeone, pp. 56-57.

³⁸ *Technique I*, p. 50: 'nearly all the notes perceptible, to an extremely fine ear, in the resonance of a low C figure, *tempered*, in this chord', and II, Ex. 208, p. 37 (italics in the original).

³⁹ Johnson, *Messiaen*, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Anderson, p. 12.

⁴¹ Harris, Chapter 5, p. 66.

⁴² Forte, 'Messiaen's Chords', p. 105, analyzing the two CR described in *Traité III*, p. 241.

⁴³ Mota, p. 66.

EXAMPLE 1.18: *Réveil des oiseaux*, 19/1/2

Both Ex. 209 and 210 are first used in *Chants de terre et de ciel*. Ex. 209 creates *effet de vitrail* inversions,⁴⁴ a progression first heard in ‘Résurrection’.⁴⁵ CR frequently appears alongside CTI throughout Messiaen’s ‘middle period’, bound up with the development of the concept of *effet de vitrail*.⁴⁶ Ex. 210 is heard in ‘Arc-en-ciel d’innocence’, and used by Messiaen up to *Des canyons aux étoiles*. Messiaen also presents a vertical sounding of mode 3¹ as a more astringent voicing of an expanded form of CR,⁴⁷ used in ‘Amen des étoiles’ and ‘Sortie’ (Example 1.19). CR continued to be used after *Messe de la Pentecôte*, admittedly with decreasing frequency,⁴⁸ as more complex colour-chords gained priority.

EXAMPLE 1.19: *Technique II*, Ex. 336, p. 52

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One of Messiaen’s earliest uses of CR stems from 1936, in a passage which explores the building of six and nine-part chords from mode 3¹, the third of which is a complete sounding of all the notes of the mode, familiar in this voicing from its subsequent use in *Visions de l’amen* and *Messe de la Pentecôte*. The climax of this song casts devotional arrows at the light of dawn, in a foretaste of the celestial city (Example 1.20).⁴⁹

EXAMPLE 1.20: *Poèmes pour Mi*, ‘Les deux guerriers’, 7/3/1⁵⁰

⁴⁴ *Technique I*, p. 50: ‘Let us make the preceding effect of a stained-glass window, arranging the inversions on a common bass note (C# or Db)’.

⁴⁵ *Technique II*, Ex. 171, p. 29. Compare the progression of Ex. 171 with Ex. 207 from the same piece, in which CR chords are now replaced with *accords sur dominante*, demonstrating how Messiaen deliberately makes a link between these related harmonies. See pp. 90 and 92, below, for a more detailed analysis.

⁴⁶ *Traité* is disappointing concerning information about CR: there are no chord tables; no colour associations. Perhaps Messiaen felt that there was little need to write extensively on CR in *Traité*, since it had been treated in detail in *Technique*, whilst this neglect may also be explained by the fact that its practical use became severely curtailed after its cataclysmic use at the close of *Messe de la Pentecôte* in 1950.

⁴⁷ *Technique I*, p. 61 and II, Ex. 336, p. 52, which adds the missing note to form an aggregate of mode 3¹.

⁴⁸ Mittelstadt, p. 40.

⁴⁹ *Poèmes pour Mi*, ‘Les deux guerriers’: ‘Lancer vers le ciel les fleches du dévouement d’aurore: Vous perviendrez aux portes de la Ville’.

⁵⁰ This example draws upon Mittelstadt, p. 39, Example 5.

CHORD OF CONTRACTED RESONANCE⁵¹ (CCR)

Messiaen designates two forms of CCR,⁵² different in harmonic content, yet similar in derivation. 1st CCR opens ‘Les mains de l’abîme’ of *Livre d’orgue*, whilst in Example 1.21, the characteristic ‘snap’ of 1st CCR harmonizes the song of the *Traquet Rieur*.

EXAMPLE 1.21: *Catalogue*, Book 7, XII ‘Le traquet rieur’, 12/4/1

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André Jolivet used resonance to generate complex chords.⁵³ His ‘tonal system is enlarged through the incorporation of distant harmonics and putative subharmonics’:⁵⁴ Jolivet sought to explore inferior resonance.⁵⁵ The two lowest notes of CCR are referred to by Messiaen as *résonance inférieure*, pitches designated as subharmonics.⁵⁶ Whilst Messiaen clarifies how lower resonance functions in CCR, the supporting theory of harmonic dualism is now discredited: these notes do not exist in practice.⁵⁷ The concept of *soms resultants* certainly exists as a physical phenomenon,⁵⁸ but Messiaen’s notes of inferior resonance do not conform as correct ‘difference tones’.⁵⁹

This use of both harmonics and ‘sub-harmonics’ to generate complex chords causes special focus on the middle of the texture. In Example 1.22,⁶⁰ the central tetrads are embellished by resonance from above and below, demonstrating ‘harmonic structures which radiate out from either side of a central axis’.⁶¹ The exploitation of resonance here ensures that ‘focal attention is forced [...] into the axial middle, because all relationships converge there’,⁶² and it is this middle which exhibits the most tonal properties.

⁵¹ *Accord à résonance contractée*. This bears no relation to CR (Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 26).

⁵² Cheong, ‘Rediscovering Messiaen’s Invented Chords’, p. 88, citing *Traité* V/1 in which Messiaen first distinguishes the two versions: 1st CCR and 2nd CCR.

⁵³ *Technique* I, p. 51, which cites both *Danses rituelles* and *Mana*, together with Dukas’ concept of resonance.

⁵⁴ André Hoérée, ‘André Jolivet’, *The New Grove*, Vol. 9, p. 687, citing Jolivet’s own article ‘Réponse à une enquête: André Jolivet, ou la magie expérimentale’, *Contrepoints*, 1 (Jan. 1946), pp. 33-7, and quoted in Deborah Mawer, “Dancing on the Edge of the Volcano”: French Music in the 1930s’, in *French Music since Berlioz*, ed. by Richard Langham Smith and Caroline Potter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 249-280 (p. 277).

⁵⁵ Mawer, p. 277: ‘In order to intensify his music he made use of “doubled basses”, on which complementary harmonic edifices were built’.

⁵⁶ *Traité* VII, p. 150-151.

⁵⁷ Mittelstadt, p. 34.

⁵⁸ Olivier Messiaen, *Conférence de Kyoto: November 12, 1985* (Paris: Leduc, 1988), p. 8. See Appendix Five, below, p. 132.

⁵⁹ Mittelstadt, p. 51. Messiaen (Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 61) later denied the existence of lower harmonics.

⁶⁰ *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, Préface, I: In ‘Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps’ the short, framing outer sections evoke ‘la puissance de cet ange fort, coiffé d’arc-en-ciel et revêtu de nuée’. This rainbow-effect is depicted with CTI and CD based on C#.

⁶¹ Jonathan Harvey, ‘Reflection after Composition’, *Tempo*, 140 (1982), 2-4 (p. 2).

⁶² *Ibid.*

EXAMPLE 1.22: *Quatuor*, II ‘Vocalise, pour l’ange qui annonce la fin du temps’, 8/1/1 piano

Messiaen was not the first composer to exploit shimmering textures sounding resonance elements above and below a first inversion major triad with added sixth. In Example 1.23, Ravel was inspired by the clashing of Parisian bells; opposite in mood, but identical in harmonic gesture:

EXAMPLE 1.23: Ravel: *Miroirs*, V, ‘La vallée des cloches’, b. 6

Bass resonance constitutes a waypoint in Messiaen’s development of CCR: in *Quatuor*, inferior resonance links CCR and CTI harmony (Example 1.24).

EXAMPLE 1.24: *Quatuor*, VII ‘Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel, pour l’ange qui annonce la fin du temps’, 41/1/1, piano

In *Cantéyodjayá*, lower resonance of 2nd and 1st CCR remains detached from the harmony (Example 1.25).

EXAMPLE 1.25: *Cantéyodjayá*, 13/1/1

Explaining inferior resonance in *Technique*, Messiaen alludes to the genesis of CCR (Example 1.26), and whilst not named, the theory behind CCR is fully formed, as is its function as an ‘emphatic punctuating or cadential device’.⁶³

EXAMPLE 1.26: *Technique* II, p. 45

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CCR are almost always heard in pairs.⁶⁴ Messiaen explains the derivation of 1st CCR, which, like CTI evolves from a dominant-ninth in which the major third is raised by a semitone (Example 1.27: a).⁶⁵

EXAMPLE 1.27: Derivation of CCR

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This source harmony is placed in second inversion, and preceded by a five-voice appoggiatura, in which the lowest note resolves upwards by a major third and the remaining four voices resolve by step-wise motion (Example 1.27: b and c). Beneath this are sounded two notes of inferior resonance a major ninth apart, both being chromatic neighbour notes to the original root of the source harmony (Example 1.27: d). These notes of resonance are then contracted (Example 1.28).⁶⁶

⁶³ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 26. See also Peter Hill, ‘Piano Music II’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by P. Hill, pp. 307-351 (p. 347): ‘chords of “résonance contractée” which crunch together in a curt gesture of punctuation’. See also Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 20.

⁶⁴ *L’accord appoggiaturé* and *l’accord réel*: the appoggiatura, and the actual chord. These two chords always have separate colour-associations: ‘Dans le cas des “accords à résonance contractée”, nous aurons toujours deux couleurs: la couleur de l’accord appoggiaturé, la couleur de l’accord réel’ (Messiaen, *Conférence de Kyoto*, p. 8).

⁶⁵ *Traité* III, p. 87. This musical example is also cited in Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 20 (Example 2.6).

⁶⁶ Benitez, ‘Simultaneous Contrast’, 3.3, Ex. 5 presents on one staff the example from *Traité* III, p. 88.

EXAMPLE 1.28: Typical voicing of 1st CCR⁶⁷

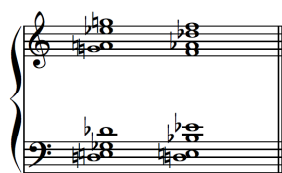


Table 1.2 shows the twelve transpositions of 1st CCR, with colour associations.⁶⁸

TABLE 1.2: 1st CCR

1 A	B	2 A	B	3 A	B
jaune, violet mauve, gris de plomb.	vert bleuté, violet, gris de plomb.	violet pourpre, jaune, rouge orangé	vert clair, gris clair, rouge.	bleu dégradé vers le blanc, orangé capucine.	rouge carmin, gris clair, brun cuir.
4 A	B	5 A	B	6 A	B
vert jade bleuté, diamant, vert clair.	rouge rubis, orangé, jaune foncé.	jaune rabattu par le noir, brun verdâtre.	vert clair, jaune, terre brûlée.	blanc laiteux, vert clair, jaune citron.	bleu de cobalt, vert foncé malachite, diamant.
7 A	B	8 A	B	9 A	B
gris mauve, orangé, violet pourpre.	jaune citron, orangé, mauve rougeâtre pétunia.	rose mauve rubellite, gris mauve peau de pêche, bleu de cobalt.	bleu fluorine, violet améthyste, gris bleuté pierreux.	violet magenta, blanc rosé, rouge orangé.	bleu violacé, café clair, dégradé vers le blanc, vert et argent, brun rougeâtre.
10 A	B	11 A	B	12 A	B
or, orangé, noir.	rouge carmin, jaune et noir.	jaune et vert clair, blanc rosé.	rouge rubis, or et acier.	violet clair hachuré de vert, bleu pâle, gris argenté et noir.	or jaune éclatant, violet pourpre taché de blancheur, or et noir,

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Messiaen constructs 2nd CCR by an identical method (Table 1.3).⁶⁹ The original uses of CCR often place both versions side by side, with transpositions of 2nd CCR on E_♯ and B_♭ preceding the primary transposition of 1st CCR. The original appearance in Messiaen's music of 1st CCR occurs in *Visions de l'amen*, where the final 'snap' of Example 1.29 'contracts the resonance of [Technique] Ex. 290',⁷⁰ whilst the arpeggiation of Example 1.30 depicts the song of the chaffinch.⁷¹

⁶⁷ See, for example, the chords in *Traité* III, pp. 188, 262, 291 (transposed down one octave).

⁶⁸ *Traité* VII, pp. 158 -160.

⁶⁹ Transpositions and colour associations may be found in *Traité* VII, pp. 162 -164.

⁷⁰ *Technique* I, p. 54.

⁷¹ Loo, p. 5, which cites *Traité* III, p. 262.

EXAMPLE 1.29: *Visions de l'amen*, 'Amen des étoiles, de la planète à l'anneau', 19/3/2, Piano I

EXAMPLE 1.30: *Visions*, 'Amen des anges, des saints, du chant des oiseaux', 62/2/2, Piano II

TABLE 1.3: 2nd CCR

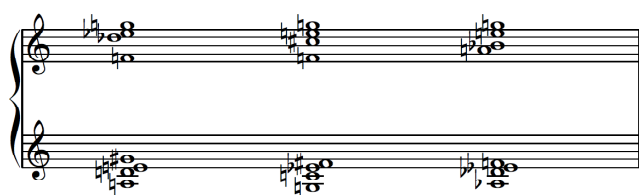
<p>1 A B</p>	<p>2 A B</p>	<p>3 A B</p>
<p>Diverses nuances de rose, allant du rouge brunâtre au rose très pâle, en passant par le rose vif et le rose orangé, formant des dessins verticaux serpentins - le tout taché, barré, veiné de noir: l'ensemble évoque deux pierres roses très connues: la 'Rhodonite' et la 'Rhodochrosite'.</p>	<p>Grande zone circulaire, gris cendré velouté. Elle sert de fond à un dessin formé de deux X légèrement croisés. Le premier X, très grand, est mauve - le second X, plus petit, placé en avant, est vert pâle.</p>	<p>Colonnes translucides, couleur 'ambre' (jaune et marron clair) - veinées de violet et de brun chocolat, avec quelques taches de bleu pâle.</p>
<p>4 A B</p>	<p>5 A B</p>	<p>6 A B</p>
<p>Fond jaune pâle translucide, avec des dessins gris et bleu pâle.</p>	<p>Arborescences rouges et vertes sur fond gris.</p>	<p>'Zoisite' verte, avec des taches de 'rubis' rouge - le tout cerclé de gris et recerclé de noir.</p>
<p>7 A B</p>	<p>8 A B</p>	<p>9 A B</p>
<p>Rouge écarlate (comme la 'Proustite') - dessiné de bleu pâle et barré de noir.</p>	<p>Grande zone mauve - se détachant sur ce fond: des ancolies (jaune et mauve), des iris (jaune et mauve), des capucines (rouge orange) - au milieu: une étoile d'or.</p>	<p>Masse compacte de 'réalgar' rouge et d'orpinment' jaune - entourée d'un premier cercle gris bleuté pierruex, d'un deuxième cercle brun roussâtre, d'un troisième cercle violet sombre.</p>
<p>10 A B</p>	<p>11 A B</p>	<p>12 A B</p>
<p>Énormes pointes rocheuses, en fer de lance, gris noir, gris mauve, gris clair - avec du jaune doré au sommet.</p>	<p>Haute muraille de pierre grise, avec quelques taches orangé pâle et mauve, une zone verte, et des traces noirâtres.</p>	<p>Bandes verticales, rouges et noires alternées, avec des taches grises.</p>

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TURNING CHORDS⁷² (TC)

The features distinguishing TC from earlier *accords spéciaux* preserve their enigmatic qualities,⁷³ and the nebulous theoretical basis for TC is explained by the fact that the chords are hardly of Messiaen's devising, but a salute to the achievements of Jolivet.⁷⁴ These early chords⁷⁵ (Example 1.31) are a vertical realization of the figuration employed in the third of Jolivet's *Cinq danses rituelles*, stylistically akin to Messiaen's *Poèmes pour Mi*.⁷⁶ Struck by the dense harmony of the opening of 'Danse nuptiale', Messiaen appropriated this colourful effect in TC.⁷⁷ Messiaen lauded the sacred evocation of the *Danses*, noting the moving quality of 'Danse nuptiale' and expressing how this captures the numinous.⁷⁸

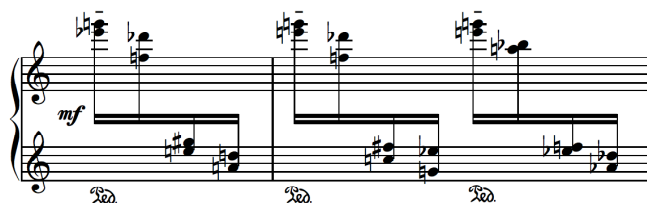
EXAMPLE 1.31: Early TC⁷⁹



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Messiaen first made use of these chords in *Visions* (Example 1.32) as the stars and planets revolve above the cosmic dance:⁸⁰

EXAMPLE 1.32: 'Amen des étoiles', 13/3/1, Piano I



⁷² *Accords tournants*.

⁷³ Mittelstadt, p. 55: eight notes rather than seven, with specific use of harmonics involving characteristic voice leading.

⁷⁴ Anderson, p. 3: Together with Daniel Lesur, Messiaen took part in a live radio broadcast about Jolivet in 1941, performing Jolivet's 'Danse nuptiale'.

⁷⁵ Messiaen does not name them as such; Cheong refers to early TC as a 'revolving chord-like progression' in 'Rediscovering Messiaen's Invented Chords', p. 92, whilst Mittelstadt, p. 52 refers to 'proto-rotating chords'.

⁷⁶ Mawer, p. 277.

⁷⁷ Anderson, p. 3.

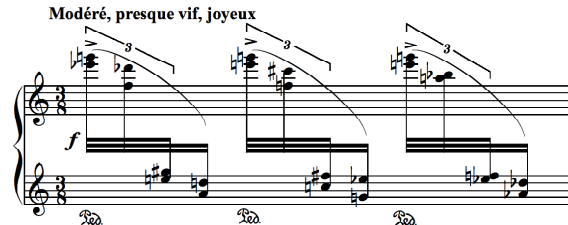
⁷⁸ Hill and Simeone, 2007, p. 303: Messiaen writes that the music 'suggests the grandeur of the Druids and the Sibylls approaching the Gift of Awe and Wonder in the face of the Divine, the source of Christianity'.

⁷⁹ *Traité III*, p. 282; also cited in Anderson, p. 2.

⁸⁰ Messiaen quotes an early example of TC in *Technique*, citing as Ex. 299 in the section *exemples plus raffinés* a passage from 'Amen des anges, des saints, du chant des oiseaux', yet this does not represent the first appearance of these chords in his music. *Traité III*, p. 238 shows an excerpt from 'Amen des étoiles, de la planète à l'anneau', which is Messiaen's first use of TC.

Citing a passage from ‘Amen des anges’, Messiaen describes these chords as ‘chiming sonorities’,⁸¹ later analyzing these harmonies as ‘colonnes d’air en resonances mobiles (comme le vent dans les arbres)’.⁸² Resonance and movement are significant concepts.

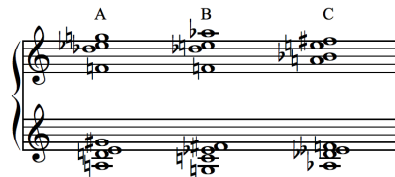
EXAMPLE 1.33: *Technique II*, Ex. 299, p. 47



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Devising transpositions for *Chronochromie*, the highest voice of the progression received a transformation.⁸³ The static melodic prolongation of G \sharp in the top voice, stemming from an ‘incantatory tone in the “Danse nuptiale”’,⁸⁴ is replaced by the desire for symmetry: ensuring that each chord contains eight notes, a melodic voice which is a retrograde inversion of the bass motion is created. These newly symmetrical chords (Example 1.34),⁸⁵ in which each voice either remains static or moves by step, form a ‘swivelling, circular motion between treble and bass’,⁸⁶ resembling iridescent glass, or a translucent, opal octahedron.⁸⁷

EXAMPLE 1.34: Definitive TC



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The ensemble of colour is important,⁸⁸ and like stained glass, the intended effect is to create a dazzling of multiple colours embedded in the memory.⁸⁹ Chord tables indicate the global colour effect of each transposition, together with the dominant colours, with treble and bass of each chord assigned different hues (Table 1.4).⁹⁰ Whilst Messiaen had used a complete sequence of TC 12 in *Verset pour la fête de la Dédicace*, the sequence only achieved its ‘final chordal form’ in *Méditations*,⁹¹ since this work marks Messiaen’s first use of the term *accords tournants*.⁹² Messiaen describes this effect as ‘la lumière scintillante’,⁹³ symbolizing God as eternal. Like the extra-musical associations of CTI and CCR, Messiaen’s use of TC extends beyond abstract colour, portraying aspects of the divine light as a means of theological statement.

⁸¹ *Technique I*, p. 54.

⁸² *Traité III*, p. 238: ‘columns of air in mobile resonance (like wind in the trees)’.

⁸³ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 29; Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 24: ‘mutation’.

⁸⁴ Mawer, p. 277.

⁸⁵ This new, definitive form is cited in *Traité III*, p. 85, becoming the 8th transposition of TC in *Traité VII*.

⁸⁶ Anderson, p. 5.

⁸⁷ *Traité VII*, p. 166.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*: ‘Il y a une seule colonne de sons qui tourne en changeant, la mémoire enregistrant une sonorité globale qui est le fruit des trois accords’ (...an overall sound, which is the product of the three chords).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Traité VII*, pp. 166-172.

⁹¹ Mittelstadt, p. 52.

⁹² Harris, Chapter 5, p. 77.

⁹³ Olivier Messiaen, *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1973), p. 37: ‘scintillating light’.

TABLE 1.4: TC

<p>Violet bleu, haché de fines bandes brunes, jaunes, roses et grises.</p> <p>1 VIOLET BLEU</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>orangé, rouge, violet, dégradé vers le blanc</p> <p>violet pourpre</p> <p>bleu violet, dégradé vers le blanc</p> <p>brun et bleu</p> <p>jaune, rose, gris</p> <p>violet bleu ou hyacinthe</p>	<p>Dessins de fleurs brunes, violettes, bleu pâle, et or, sur fond orangé.</p> <p>2 ORANGÉ</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>or et orangé</p> <p>capucine et rouge orangé</p> <p>orangé, rouge, brun et gris</p> <p>violet bleu ou hyacinthe</p> <p>bleu de prusse clair, très dégradé vers le blanc</p> <p>jaune orange</p>	<p>Vert, avec des zébrures violettes et jaunes, des feuillages adamantins, des étoiles d'or.</p> <p>3 VERT ET OR</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>violet, vert, jaune</p> <p>vert bleuté, violet pourpre</p> <p>diamant</p> <p>émeraude et gris de plomb</p>
<p>Vert prairie et bleu vert en carrés alternés, des dessins de fleurs mauve rosé et des entrelacs gris argenté.</p> <p>4 VERT ET MAUVE</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>vert jaunâtre assez clair</p> <p>campanule mauve</p> <p>bleu vert et mauve rosé</p> <p>argent, grisâtre, noir</p> <p>orangé rabattu par le noir</p> <p>vert prairie</p>	<p>Riches manteau ou tapis d'Orient, à fond brun et noir, à ramages rouges, or, oranges et roses.</p> <p>5 ROUGE ET OR</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>or et noir</p> <p>orangé clair or, brun fumé, violet sombre</p> <p>blanc laiteux, quartz rose</p> <p>rose</p> <p>rouge et or</p>	<p>Moins somptueux, moins éclatant que le précédent. Plus chaud. Rappelle un vitrail dont les personnages sont vêtus de manteaux rouges et se détachent sur fond bleu.</p> <p>6 ROUGE, ORANGE, ET VIOLET POURPRE</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>rubis</p> <p>rouge sombre rabattu par le noir, orangé, gris bleuté</p> <p>brun cuir, bleu roi</p> <p>bleu roi, cendre mauve</p> <p>rouge carmin</p>
<p>Fond de prairie verte, avec des fleurs roses, et des calcites jaune brun 'maclées' par interpénétration.</p> <p>7 VERT, ROSE, BRUN AMBRÉ</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>orangé, vert</p> <p>vert</p> <p>rose et gris</p> <p>gris pâle, rouge</p> <p>brun jaune et marron, ambré</p> <p>vert prairie</p>	<p>Jaune pâle, rayé de blanc, de noir, et de gris, avec des taches vertes.</p> <p>8 JAUNE PÂLE</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>jaune pâle, mauve</p> <p>chrysope vert bleuté mat</p> <p>crystal de roche</p> <p>rose cuivré, gris perle</p> <p>sardonyx noir, blanc et brun rougeâtre, avec du jaune pâle</p>	<p>Bandes alternées grises et jaune d'or.</p> <p>9 JAUNE D'OR</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>jaune et vert pâle</p> <p>jaune taché de rouge</p> <p>brun et blanc enfumé</p> <p>jaune et bleu turquoise</p> <p>gris d'acier</p> <p>jaune d'or</p>
<p>Cercles enlacés jaunes, noirs, et gris, entourant un escalier orangé rouge à double révolution.</p> <p>10 JAUNE, NOIR, ORANGÉ</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>gris, rose saumon, rouge</p> <p>gris d'acier pointillé de rouge</p> <p>jaune et noir</p> <p>jaune éclatant</p> <p>rose et gris</p> <p>orangé rouge très chaud</p>	<p>Gris de boue, avec des reflets multicolores.</p> <p>11 GRIS À REFLETS</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>rose et gris</p> <p>orangé rabattu par le noir</p> <p>rouge, jaune, et vert</p> <p>jaune brun enfumé</p> <p>bleu de prusse clair et foncé</p> <p>rouge et gris</p>	<p>Cercles très minces, gris, violets, roses, et or, entourant une large zone de Bleu de Chartres.</p> <p>12 BLEU</p> <p>A B C</p> <p>Bleu de Chartres clair entouré de violet</p> <p>mauve léger et bleu</p> <p>gris et or</p> <p>mauve, rose, et gris</p> <p>gris perle et violet sombre</p> <p>Fluorine bleue translucide</p>

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CHORD OF TOTAL CHROMATICISM⁹⁴ (CTC)

CTC is the vertical assembly of three different chords, yielding the total chromatic.⁹⁵ The voicing of a complex chord from ‘Minuit pile et face’,⁹⁶ above which a tetrad of resonance is added, creates the texture which evolved into CTC. The distinctive, lowest tetrachord of CTC occurs in ‘La rousserolle effarvate’ beneath added upper resonance (Example 1.35).⁹⁷

EXAMPLE 1.35: *Catalogue*, Book 4, VII ‘La rousserolle effarvate’, 19/5/1

(digitale pourprée)
Lent (♩=80)

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Example 1.36 shows the typical voicing of CTC, in which Messiaen believed the major triad to be the most important foundation,⁹⁸ citing the harmonics of an imaginary fundamental in his theoretical justification.⁹⁹

EXAMPLE 1.36: Example of CTC¹⁰⁰

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The lowest tetrachord consists of a second inversion major triad with added minor 6th, where the abrasive clash between the perfect 5th of the triad and the addition one semitone higher, may be traced back to Ravel (Example 1.37).

⁹⁴ *Accord du Total chromatique*.

⁹⁵ Mittelstadt, p. 55.

⁹⁶ *Technique II*, Ex. 221, p. 39, which quotes from *Chants de terre et de ciel*.

⁹⁷ Perhaps this shape proved ideal for future development or borrowing: the piece itself quotes from earlier material, most notably, from the *Rāgarhanakī* chords of *Cantéyodjayā* and also the concentrated ‘Theme of Chords’ and ‘Regard Chords’ in the depiction of the sunrise, as well as quoting the flute/clarinet motto theme of ‘Jardin du sommeil d’amour’ (*Turungalīla*, VI, 1 after RN 7 p. 253/1/3) to colour *iris jaunes*.

Messiaen may have been thinking of the colours of this virtuosic piece as he set about creating the colours of Heavenly Jerusalem some four years later, and certainly the unique shape of the first chord of *digitale pourprée*, together with its idea of upper resonance, may have been an inspiration for the formation of the unique partitioning of CTC. For comparison, see Example 6.7, p. 105, below.

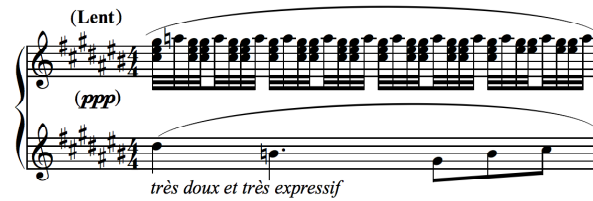
⁹⁸ *Traité VII*, p. 182: ‘L’accord ci-dessus contient tout d’abord une quarte et sixte de Mi majeure’.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*:

La puissance de la résonance naturelle du Mi grave sous-entendu, et la force joyeuse de la tierce majeure Sol dièse, tirent à elles tout l’effet de l’accord, et c’est cela qu’on entend par dessus tout. Mais ce ne serait pas suffisant pour établir la couleur définie dans le tableau. Il y a le Do bécarré (sixte mineure ajoutée), qui fait lui aussi partie de la résonance naturelle.

¹⁰⁰ *Traité VII*, p. 182.

EXAMPLE 1.37: Ravel: *Gaspard de la nuit*, ‘Ondine’, b. 3



Above this lowest tetrad Messiaen sounds a first inversion minor triad with added 2nd, which also includes the tritone above the root of E₄.¹⁰¹ Finally, the four missing pitches of the 12-tone aggregate are added,¹⁰² sounded after the main chord indicating that they are secondary resonance tones.¹⁰³ Messiaen first refers to CTC by name writing the preface to *Petites esquisses d'oiseaux*,¹⁰⁴ and whilst its name implies the use of the total chromatic, there is a core, coloured sonority of the eight lowest notes, beneath the complementary resonance of the four highest.¹⁰⁵ Table 1.5 presents the twelve transpositions of CTC.¹⁰⁶

TABLE 1.5: CTC

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¹⁰¹ *Traité VII*, p. 182:

Nous lisons dans la portée supérieure un accord de sixte de Mi bémol mineur (avec un Fa bécarré ajouté): cet accord contient un Si bémol (ou La dièse) qui est la quarte augmentée ajoutée de l'accord parfait de Mi majeur et appartient encore à la résonance naturelle du Mi grave sous-entendu.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*: ‘Ce n’est pas fini, il y a les ‘restes’: pour compléter le total chromatique, il manque encore quatre sons’. These are referred to as ‘descant notes’ in Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 23.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*: ‘comme tous les harmoniques secondaires, ils arrivent en dernier’. Occasionally Messiaen omits them, often in keyboard works where the hands are occupied with the lower 8-part chord.

¹⁰⁴ Harris, Chapter 5, p. 81.

¹⁰⁵ Messiaen, *Conférence de Kyoto*, p. 8:

Il s’agit non pas d’un ‘cluster’ mais d’un ensemble de douze sons comprenant huit sons colorés, et quatre sons supplémentaires aigus qui rentrent dans la résonance des huit premiers.

¹⁰⁶ *Traité VII*, pp. 188-190.

RESONANCE

Resonance is an important concept for Messiaen, indicating ‘avec résonances’ in *Bien modéré* of ‘Neumes rythmiques’, which makes structural use of root position CR on E \sharp .¹⁰⁷ This ‘shimmering aura’,¹⁰⁸ created by CCR fractured from their expected pairings, makes use of a directional bass motion from B \flat to D \sharp (Example 1.38).¹⁰⁹

EXAMPLE 1.38: *Quatre études de rythme*, ‘Neumes rythmiques’, 9/4/1 and 10/1/3

As Messiaen was developing a harmony of natural resonance during the summer of 1935, Alban Berg was completing his Violin Concerto, with its series in ascending thirds and concluding added-6th chord, reminiscent of Messiaen’s tonal tetrads beneath higher resonance (Example 1.39). Also contributing to the Dukas *Tombeau* was Manuel de Falla, investigating the possibilities of resonance in advance of Messiaen. Roland-Manuel’s biography of Falla erroneously attributes Falla’s ‘playing-out of natural resonance’¹¹⁰ to Louis Lucas’ *L’acoustique nouvelle*,¹¹¹ but Falla was familiar with Hugo Riemann’s *L’harmonie simplifiée*, which investigates resonance.¹¹² Messiaen would have come into contact with Riemann’s theories as a student,¹¹³ citing Riemann in *Traité* and appropriating his terms of superior and inferior resonance.¹¹⁴ It is therefore possible that Messiaen’s interest in the use of the harmonic series to generate chords was sparked by Falla’s ideas and practice.

Mittelstadt’s explanation of the basis in resonance of *accords spéciaux* takes account of Messiaen’s theoretical appropriation of imaginary sub-harmonics,¹¹⁵ yet the true acoustical foundation for colour chords may be traced from upper partials alone.

¹⁰⁷ Paul Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time* (London: Faber and Faber, 1985), p. 150: ‘E is heard[...] comfortably at the bottom of a pile of overtones’.

¹⁰⁸ Theo Hirsbrunner, *Olivier Messiaen: Leben und Werk* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1988), p. 111.

¹⁰⁹ This passage is also cited by Messiaen in *Traité* III, pp. 162-163.

¹¹⁰ Chris Collins, ‘Manuel de Falla, *L’acoustique nouvelle* and Natural Resonance: A Myth Exposed’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 128 (2003), 71-97, (p. 89), which cites Roland-Manuel, *Manuel de Falla* (published in 1930), p. 54: ‘jeux de la résonance naturelle’.

¹¹¹ Collins, p. 89.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 90, n. 61.

¹¹³ Mittelstadt, p. 35.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35, 37, 60. Messiaen eventually acknowledged that lower harmonics do not exist: ‘[harmonics] are always higher (there are no lower harmonics)’ (Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 61).

EXAMPLE 1.39: Berg, Violin Concerto, II *Adagio*, RN 225+1

Example 1.40 shows the first thirty-two harmonics of Messiaen’s theoretical fundamental C \sharp ,¹¹⁶ together with the derivation of the chromatic scale from the overtone spectrum, and the harmonics of this fundamental contained within *accords sp ciaux*. For Messiaen the organist, this method of generating harmony is grounded in the function of *mixtures* and *petites mixtures*.¹¹⁷

CR assembles odd-numbered harmonics from 7 to 15 *in order* above the major triad.¹¹⁸ CD displaces the 9th harmonic downwards, and the 5th harmonic is raised one semitone, whilst the highest two pitches are the major third and major 6th above the root.¹¹⁹ CTI A retains the lower tetrad of CD, beneath harmonics 7, 11 and 15. Thus CTI A is directly derived from CR by the octave displacement of the 9th harmonic, the raising of the 5th harmonic by a semitone, and the omission of the 13th harmonic.¹²⁰ 1st CCR B expands the palette of harmonics, sounding harmonics 17 and 19, whilst the second inversion major triad (with added 9th harmonic) is at the top of the chord. This tetrad is transferred downwards to form the basis of TC C, where the higher tetrad of TC C extends Messiaen’s palette of resonance further by adding the 19th and 21st harmonics. The lower octad of CTC, built like TC C upon a second inversion major triad, also displaces one harmonic to a lower position within the chord, this time harmonic 13.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Those harmonics departing from equal temperament tuning are rounded to the nearest sixth or quarter tone, indicated by arrows. This example draws on Fran ois Rose, ‘Introduction to the Pitch Organization of French Spectral Music’, *Perspectives of New Music*, 34:2 (1996), 6-39 (p. 7, Example 1), and Mittelstadt (p. 33, Example 1), which shows the first sixteen harmonics above the fundamental C \sharp , observing that Messiaen (*Traite VII*, p. 102) regarded only the first thirteen harmonics as being audible (Mittelstadt, p. 37). For further information on Spectralism, see Appendix Five, below, p. 132.

¹¹⁷ *Petites mixtures* refer to mutation stops, normally sounding the twelfth or seventeenth above the fundamental. Messiaen explains in Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 122:

I’ll remind you that the organ possesses an extraordinary family of sonorities, namely the mixtures, which don’t produce the real sounds played by the instrumentalist, but their harmonics, octaves, fifths, and thirds. The ancients used these artificial harmonics to illuminate timbres.

¹¹⁸ Mittelstadt, p. 38.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50, which contends that Messiaen’s ‘use of the added major sixth’ is explained as a subharmonic. Note also the problem in assigning the subdominant as harmonic 21 rather than as a subharmonic, since this tone is significantly flat.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45, 57.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56: The natural resonance of the distinctive, ‘spicy’ minor 6th, by its voicing, links CTC to Messiaen’s other colour chords in the misplacement of one harmonic an octave lower than expected.

EXAMPLE 1.40: Harmonics of the fundamental C# and the resonance of *accords spéciaux*

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is titled 'Harmonics of C#' and contains a sequence of 32 notes. Above the notes are various intervals marked with arrows: 1/6, 1/4, 1/4, 1/6, 1/6, 1/4, 1/6, 1/4, 1/6, 1/6, 1/4, 1/6, 1/6, 1/4. A dashed line above the notes is labeled 'inaudible' and 'gva'. The bottom staff is titled 'Derivation of chromatic scale from harmonic series' and 'Resonance of accords spéciaux'. It shows a chromatic scale from C# to B. Below the notes are various chord symbols: CR, CD, CTIA, 1st CCR B, TC C, CTC. The notes are numbered 1 through 17.

TONALITY AND COLOUR

The harmonic scheme at the close of ‘Le pêche aux oiseaux’ (*Saint François d’Assise*) is determined by coloured descriptions of the Isle of Pines,¹²² wedding harmony with specific coloration.¹²³ In his vision, François sings ‘Là où les feuilles sont rouges’, illustrated by complex harmony,¹²⁴ and corresponding closely with *Traité VII*:¹²⁵ red is presented as TC 5, moving through the pink of CTI 3D to the goal of CTC 9, with contrasting zones of ruby and carmine (Example 1.41).¹²⁶

EXAMPLE 1.41: *Saint François d’Assise*, VI ‘Le pêche aux oiseaux’, RN54 (136/1/1)

The image shows a musical score for 'Le pêche aux oiseaux' from Saint François d'Assise. The score is in 3/4 time and features a vocal line (Saint François) and instrumental lines (oboe 1, bassoon 1, strings, percussion). The tempo is marked 'Un peu vif (♩=66)' and 'Modéré (♩=100)'. The lyrics are: 'Là où les feuilles sont rouges, fond rose à dessins noirs (comme la rhodonite), avec des lis Martagon (fleur brun violacé). deux zones rouges côte à côte: rubis, carmin'. The score includes chord symbols: TC 5: Rouge et or (A B C), CTI 3D, TC 4C, and CTC 9. The percussion part is marked 'p'. The score is numbered 54.

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¹²² Samuel, *Music and Color*, pp. 229, 237. The Isle of Pines is part of the archipelago of New Caledonia in the southern Pacific Ocean, which Messiaen visited in 1975 (Hill and Simeone, pp. 306-307).

¹²³ This operatic link between music and text means that otherwise abstract sonic events are imbued with concrete colour associations; colours which can be confirmed both from the chord tables of *Traité VII*, and from documentation discussing these harmonies used in different contexts. Therefore when the same music appears elsewhere, it brings with it the same, fixed coloured associations.

¹²⁴ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 237: ‘Colors pass through the chords in the orchestra as Saint Francis mentions them’.

¹²⁵ Benitez, ‘Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen’s Later Music’, p. 223: Benitez states that ‘the colours mentioned in the sung text match the colours linked with [...] harmonies located at the bottom of [CTC].’

¹²⁶ This example draws upon the work of Benitez, ‘Aspects of Harmony’, Example 19, pp. 223-224.

Messiaen indicates that E major is red,¹²⁷ but what of the inversions of E major from CTI chord tables? These different chords are in reality the *same* chord, with identical pitch content;¹²⁸ colour content is likewise similar. In Example 1.42, inversions of the same added 6th chords sound beneath three notes of upper resonance, which always remain constant. The perfect 4th at the top of chord D remains at the same pitch throughout, whilst in inversion C the lowest note of superior resonance is placed one octave higher. E major is consistently red, A major blue, and C major white and gold.¹²⁹

EXAMPLE 1.42: Inversions of E, A and C major-based CTI

The example shows musical notation for CTI chords and their inversions. The top staff is labeled 'Resonance' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Added 6th triad'. The chords and their corresponding French lyrics are as follows:

- 4D:** une spirale d'or à reflets blancs et roses - sur un grand fond rouge carmin.
- 8B:** dessins en spirales blanc et or, sur fond rouge carmin et brun cuir.
- 11C:** rouge, avec des dessins d'or.
- 9D:** camaïeu de bleus: bleu saphir intense, bleu translucide genre fluorine, bleu mat genre lapis-lazuli, bleu violet, et bleu clair de Chartres.
- 1B:** large nappe de bleu saphir, cerclée de bleus moins intenses (fluorine bleue, bleu clair de Chartres) et recerclée de violet.
- 4C:** large manteau bleu saphir intense - dans les plis: des reflets violet Parme et bleu de Chartres.
- 12D:** soleil d'or éclatant, sur neige très blanche.
- 4B:** blanc et or.
- 7C:** dessin jaune et blanc, avec des zones d'or très brillantes.

Benitez and Dingle argue for a tonal interpretation of the tetrads at the bass of CTI,¹³⁰ and Cheong points out the major triad in the treble of 1st CCR B.¹³¹ Likewise, the tetrad at the bass of TC C may be interpreted as a major 6/4 with added 2nd. Thus in Example 1.43, at 'primary transposition level',¹³² a chord of D \flat major closes each theoretical progression, providing a high degree of tonal unity and cohesion.

¹²⁷ *Traité VII*, p. 310.

¹²⁸ Messiaen's colour associations confirm this: red and gold are present in all three harmonies, whilst he acknowledges these similarities in *Traité VII*, p. 138: 'certaines couleurs sont très dissemblables - d'autres, qui proviennent des mêmes sons groupés différemment, présentent des ressemblances partielles'.

¹²⁹ Thus in *Traité VII*, the inversions of E major demonstrate a series of reds in the bass beneath gold in the treble, whilst the inversions of A major yield an array of blues, and C major inversions are predominantly white and gold (sometimes with great brilliance).

¹³⁰ Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music', pp. 208, 212-13; Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 313.

¹³¹ Cheong, 'Composing with Pre-Composed Chords in the Finale of "Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum"', p. 128. This D \flat major triad is also referred to in Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 21.

¹³² The primary transposition level of TC prior to the publication of the chord tables of *Traité VII* places a D \flat major second inversion triad with added 2nd at the bass of TC C: Messiaen's explanations of TC in *Traité III*, p. 85 and 282 both use this D \flat transposition.

EXAMPLE 1.43: D \flat major chords embedded in CTI, CCR and TC

With a melodic arpeggiation of the upper resonance, Example 1.44 unites the C \sharp CTI bass with its enharmonic D \flat major treble in CCR 1B.

EXAMPLE 1.44: *Livre*, 'Prière après la communion', 135/3/1

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Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum embarks upon experimental revoicing of colour chords, harmonizing an angular bass melody 'en complexes colorés'.¹³³ Example 1.45 clarifies a tightly-knit structure: the tonal centre is the primary transposition CTI, D \flat , projected through its inversions. 1st CCR 1B amplifies this with its D \flat triad embedded at the top of the chord, whilst its lowest note, D \natural links to the bass of CTI 2, functioning in a Neapolitan relationship. The bass of the opening three CCR arpeggiates a descending D major triad, whilst the root of the progression which links CCR 7B, CTI 5D and CTI 1D expands a D \flat major triad.

This establishment of D \flat at a level beneath obvious surface features is confirmed following the statements of the punctuating low B \natural (and CTI 11C) of *Thème de la profondeur*, each followed by two chords in a 'decorated color expansion',¹³⁴ driving towards the revoiced CTI 1. This over-arching use of D \flat major, linked to similar moments in other movements (notably the D \flat major triad at the top of 1st CCR 1B in the final movement),¹³⁵ is reminiscent of the tonality of 'Joie et clarté des corps glorieux', which revels in the unfettered life of the resurrected, and 'Joie du sang des étoiles', where redemption through Christ's blood is implied on a cosmic scale.

¹³³ Olivier Messiaen, *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1966), Note de l'Auteur. Healey also notes 'an interesting relationship' between this orchestration and the theoretical models; my analysis differs in assuming the projection of the complete CTI 1 progression at the deepest structural level, whilst Healey stresses the alternative CTI transpositions above the relevant bass notes. See Healey, *Messiaen's Musical Techniques*, pp. 155-156.

¹³⁴ Chi-Kuen (Martin) Lee, 'The Charm of Impossibilities: Musical Language, Theology and Narrative Discourse in Olivier Messiaen's *Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Buffalo, 2011), p. 54.

¹³⁵ Cheong, 'Composing with Pre-composed Chords in the Finale of *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*', pp. 128, 130.

EXAMPLE 1.45: *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, I, RN3 (11/1/1), orchestral reduction

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a piano part below. The piano part is marked *[Très lent (♩=36)]* and includes dynamic markings *f* and *mf*. The first system's parts are labeled: CTI 1C, 1A, 1D, 1B, and 1C, with sub-sections 1st CCR 8B, 1st CCR 5B, 1st CCR 1B, CTI 2A, and CTI 2B. The second system also consists of two staves with a piano part below, marked *f*. Its parts are labeled: CTI 11C, 1B, 7B, CTI 5D, CTI 1D, and CTI 1A, with sub-sections 1st CCR and CTI 2C. The score includes various musical notations such as chords, melodic lines, and dynamic markings.

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*Quantum decoris illustri in sole,
quam venusta es luna,
quam multo clar' honore sidera fulgent,
quam pulcra quaeque in orbe.*¹

CHAPTER TWO

‘LUNA, SOL ET OMNIA’:²

MESSIAEN’S COLOUR-CHORD SYMBOLISM

Messiaen’s cosmic light imagery, illuminated by *accords spéciaux*, recalls the Marian symbolism of the thirteenth century *Trouvère* repertory, which uses terms such as ‘solais, lune, estoile, lumiere’,³ whilst his reference to glass and precious stone also finds its early use in medieval lyric poetry, addressing the Virgin as ‘verriere, or, esmeraude, diamanz, jaspe, saphirs, rubiz’.⁴ The theological imagery of the sun is likewise a rich vein in Messiaen: quoting Malachi 4. 2, Marmion refers to the ‘Sun of Justice, Who rises in the midst of our darkness to enlighten every man’.⁵ Reinforcing the invocation of celestial light with the imagery of sun and rainbow, TC sound in ‘Antienne de la conversation intérieure (Dieu present en nous...)’ of *Trois petites liturgies* (Example 2.1),⁶ with ‘sharply coloured chromaticism’.⁷

EXAMPLE 2.1: *Trois petites liturgies*, I ‘Antienne de la conversation intérieure’, 5/2/2

The image shows a musical score for 'Trois petites liturgies, I'. It consists of four staves: choir, ondes, piano, and strings. The choir part has lyrics 'So - leil de sang, d'oi-seaux'. Above the choir staff, there is a bracketed section labeled 'Early Version of TC' with sub-sections A, B, and C. The piano part features sixteenth-note patterns with '6' markings. Dynamics include *f*, *ff*, and *strings f*. The score is in 5/2/2 time and G major.

¹ Striggio, trans. by Dove: ‘The dazzling splendour of the sun is matched by you, the moon, and by the stars shining brightly in their great glory’. This cosmic brightness testifying to the Glory of God is also touched upon by Castiglione: ‘...just as in heaven the sun and moon and other stars show the world as in a mirror some likeness of God...’ (Baldassare Castiglione, *Il Libro del cortegiano*, 1528, trans. by Leonard Eckstein Opdycke as *The Book of the Courtier* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1929), p. 259).

² Venantius Fortunatus, verse 2 of the office hymn *Quem terra, pontus aethera*, trans. by J. M. Neale:

Cui Luna, Sol et omnia	The God whose will by moon, and sun,
deserviunt per tempora,	and all things in due course is done,
perfusa caeli gratia,	is borne upon a Maiden’s breast,
gestant Puellae viscera.	by fullest heavenly grace possessed.

³ Marcia Jenneth Epstein, *Prions en Chantant: The Devotional Songs of the Trouvères* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p. 34, and cited in Tamsyn Rose-Steel, ‘French Ars Nova Motets and their Manuscripts: Citational Play and Material Context’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Exeter, 2011), pp. 63-64.

⁴ Epstein, p. 34: ‘glass, gold, emerald, diamond, jasper, sapphire, ruby’. There is no concrete evidence to suggest that Messiaen made these allusions deliberately, yet these are powerful correspondences from a twentieth-century composer nonetheless steeped in medieval spirituality.

⁵ Marmion, p. 115.

⁶ Anderson, p. 4, which quotes this passage in reduced form.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

Conversely, the absence of colour-chords in the ‘night music’ of *Catalogue d’oiseaux* explains how ‘chords [...] are instances of resonance, and resonance is the sounding image of light’,⁸ where *Catalogue* is a ‘music of reimagined nature and of colour’.⁹ Describing ‘L’alouette calandrelle’, Messiaen links intense light with torrid heat,¹⁰ where this brightness is portrayed by CTI on C# (Example 2.2).¹¹

EXAMPLE 2.2: *Catalogue*, Book 5, VIII ‘L’alouette calandrelle’, 3/2/1

The image shows a musical score for 'L'alouette calandrelle'. At the top, a box labeled 'CTI' contains four chords: B, C, D, and A. Below this, there are two systems of staves. The first system consists of a piano staff and a vocal staff. The piano staff has a tempo marking 'Vif (♩=160)' and a dynamic marking 'p'. The vocal staff has a 'Red.' marking. The second system also consists of a piano staff and a vocal staff, with 'Red.' markings under the piano staff.

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In ‘Le merle de roche’ sun, heat and light inspire the use of CTI.¹² Complementary orange and blues indicated in the score create the effect of stained glass, corresponding to colours in *Traité* (Example 2.3).

EXAMPLE 2.3: *Catalogue*, Book 6, X ‘Le merle de roche’, 9/1/1

étoiles d’or flamboyantes - sur cristaux
 terre brûlée, brun rougeâtre et cuir, avec
 du violet améthyste et du bleu de Chartres clair.

large zone orange, cerclée de vert et de bleu pâle. orangé, avec des bandes jaune pâle, rouge, et or. large manteau bleu saphir intense - dans les plis: des reflets violet Parme et bleu de Chartres.

CTI 6C 9A 1C 4C

The image shows a musical score for 'Le merle de roche'. At the top, there is descriptive text about colors and CTI chords. Below this, there are two systems of staves. The first system consists of a piano staff and a vocal staff. The piano staff has a tempo marking 'Bien modéré (♩=84)' and a dynamic marking 'f'. The vocal staff has a '(long)' marking. The second system also consists of a piano staff and a vocal staff, with 'Red.' markings under the piano staff.

Merle de roche
 (10h. du matin - soleil, chaleur et lumière)
 Bien modéré (♩=84)
 f

• Sonorité forte, chaude et lumineuse. Les accords doivent avoir la valeur sonore d’un vitrail à dominante orange, avec des taches de bleu complémentaire.

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⁸ Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.125. In the night of the cycle, for example, when there is no light, colour chords are entirely absent from ‘La chouette hulotte’ (‘en pleine nuit... vers deux heures du matin’), and ‘L’alouette lulu’ (‘il est minuit’).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Olivier Messiaen, *Catalogue d’oiseaux* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1964), Book 5, VII ‘L’alouette calandrelle’, preface: ‘lumière intense, chaleur torride’.

¹¹ Loo, pp. 102-103, notes that this progression drives towards, and emphasizes, Chord A.

¹² ‘Le merle de roche’, preface: ‘Perché sur une pointe vive, un Merle de roche! Comme il est beau! ... Il chant aux heures de soleil, de chaleur et de lumière’.

Here CTI become fused with birdsong, many harmonies being distorted from their theoretical models by additional resonance (Example 2.4).

EXAMPLE 2.4: 'Le merle de roche', 12/3/1

Merle de roche
(5h. de l'après-midi - soleil, chaleur et lumière)
Bien modéré (♩=84)

• Sonorité forte, chaude et lumineuse. Les accords doivent avoir la valeur sonore d'un vitrail à dominante orange, avec des taches de bleu complémentaire.

CTI 1C CD 1A CTI 1A

Modéré (♩=100)

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Even where sunlight is not directly mentioned, a rich luminosity is created by tonal elements of CTI supporting sophisticated upper resonance (Example 2.5).

EXAMPLE 2.5: 'Le merle de roche', 16/1/1

Merle de roche
Très lent (♩=92)

f (lumineux)

CTI + additional resonance

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In Example 2.6, the glinting moonlight is also evoked by colour-chords: this time CCR.¹³

¹³ Loo, p. 50, interprets the use of these chords as 'depicting the night music', where 'résonance contractée' is used in a lower register to portray the darkness'. This would be convincing, were it not for the fact that Messiaen's use of non-modal colour-chords *always* refers to light (and by extension, colour, even if only white), and the score clearly stipulates *clair de lune*. The unusual bass-register harmonies help to distinguish between sunlight and moonlight.

EXAMPLE 2.6: 'Le merle de roche', 1/1/1

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Messiaen’s use of *accords spéciaux* represents not just light, but colour. In ‘Fouillis d’arcs en ciel’ Messiaen expands the rainbow symbolism of ‘Vocalise’, embracing light and sound,¹⁴ where the trance-like state of *éblouissement* is achieved by the use of *accords classés*:¹⁵ the non-modal colour chords. Example 2.7 shows CTI arpeggiation in reflection of this.

EXAMPLE 2.7: ‘Fouillis d’arcs-en-ciel’, 38/1/2

¹⁴ *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*, Préface, II: ‘L’Ange plein de force apparait, et surtout l’arc-en-ciel qui le couvre (l’arc-en-ciel, symbole de paix, de sagesse, et de toute vibration lumineuse et sonore)’.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*:

Dans mes rêves, j’entends et vois accords et mélodies classés, couleurs et formes connues; puis, après ce stade transitoire, je passé dans l’irréel et subis avec extase un tournoiement, une compénétration giratoire de sons et couleurs surhumains.

CR IN PRACTICE I: *TECHNIQUE*, EX. 210

In ‘Arc-en-ciel d’innocence’, with his line ‘Très loin, très près’ hinting at the *Loingprès* of Marguerite Porete’s *Mirouer des simples âmes anienties*,¹⁶ Messiaen demonstrates a grasp of medieval mysticism stretching far beyond paternal morning games (Example 2.8).

EXAMPLE 2.8: *Chants de terre et de ciel*, IV ‘Arc-en-ciel d’innocence’, 21/1/2

Here the play is between soul and divine lover: ‘Je vous ay par mon Loingprès les erres envoiees’.¹⁷ With ‘la présence d’absence’,¹⁸ ‘Far-Near’ can only culminate in death and beatific vision,¹⁹ mirroring the journey of the soul through seven progressive states, leading ultimately, via illumination to the manifestation of glory,²⁰ expressed by the rich symbolism of the number seven in ‘Arc-en-ciel d’innocence’.²¹ Messiaen prepares this use of CR by making use of arpeggiated third inversion CR in ascending whole tones.²²

These chords from *Technique* Ex. 210 (see Example 1.17, p. 17, above) subsequently open the tumultuous chords of ‘Combat de la mort et de la vie’ (Example 2.9).

EXAMPLE 2.9: *Les corps glorieux*, ‘Combat de la mort et de la vie’, 2/4/2 (manual parts)

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¹⁶ Romana Guarnieri, ed., ‘Il Movimento del Libero Spirito II: Il *Mirouer des simples ames* di Margherita Porete’, *Archivio italiano per la storia della pieta*, 4 (1965), 513-635. See Appendix Six, p. 139.

¹⁷ Edmund Colledge and J. C. Marler, “‘Poverty of the Will’: Ruusbroec, Eckhart and *The Mirror of Simple Souls*”, in *Jan Van Ruusbroec: the Sources, Content, and Sequels of His Mysticism*, ed. by Paul Mommaers and Norbert de Paepe (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1984), p. 39: ‘I have sent you my bridal gifts by my Far-Near’.

¹⁸ Jean-Baptiste Porion, *Hadenijch d’Anvers* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1954), pp. 136-137.

¹⁹ Colledge and Marler, p. 40.

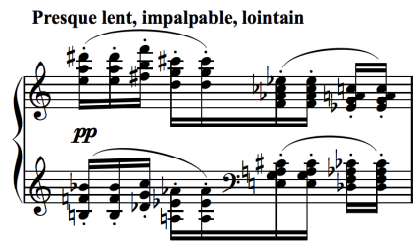
²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²¹ Sally Freeland, ‘The Divine in Messiaen’s ‘Chants de Terre et de Ciel’: Theological Symbolism and Suggestions for Practice and Performance’ (unpublished D.Mus. thesis, Indiana University, 2012), p. 44.

²² See, for example in ‘Arc-en-ciel d’innocence’: ‘Te voilà plus haut que moi’ (20/1/2), with this idea repeated at ‘Où est-il? si haut qu’on ne le voit plus?’ (21/3/1).

In Example 2.10, Messiaen uses these same two CR in *Quatuor*.²³

EXAMPLE 2.10: ‘Vocalise’, 11/1/1, piano



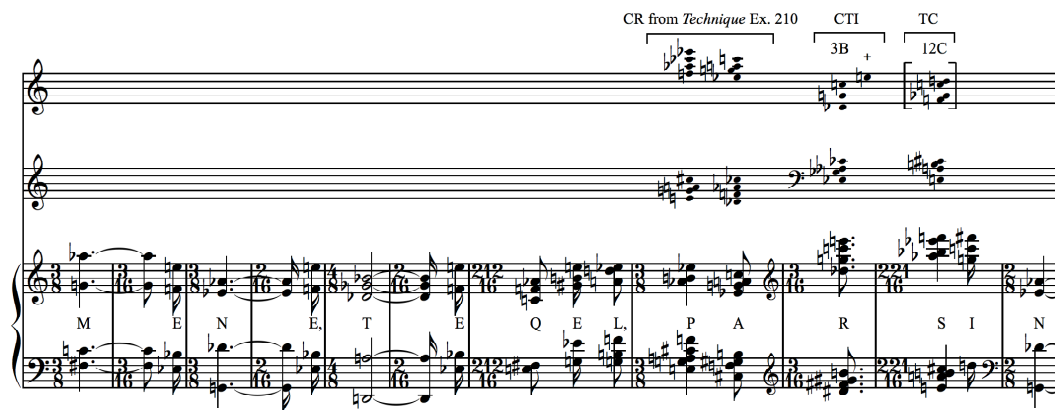
Messiaen also uses the same chords in ‘Amen des étoiles’ as the stars and planets shine (Example 2.11).²⁴

EXAMPLE 2.11: ‘Amen des étoiles’, 19/2/2, Piano I



In *Des canyons aux étoiles...*, Messiaen returns to this harmonic gesture (Example 2.12). Whilst this device had previously depicted starlight, here Messiaen makes use of the *langage communicable*, here not in French but in Hebrew, where written in the stars is the divine judgement of **מְנַא, מְנַא, תְּקֵל, וּפְרַסִּין**. Messiaen explains Ernest Hello’s universal interpretation, that our own judgement is implicit in creation.²⁵

EXAMPLE 2.12: *Des canyons*, III ‘Ce qui est écrit sur les étoiles’, RN1 (63/1/1), orchestral reduction



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²³ *Technique II*, Ex. 216, p. 38.

²⁴ *Traité III*, p.241. In the *Traité* analysis of *Visions de l’amen*, Messiaen presents CR containing all the notes of mode 3¹, followed by two CR which give all the notes of mode 3², which are the same chord in different positions: a transposed version of the second inversion, followed by the root position. Likewise, on p. 263 the three transpositions of CR in ‘Amen des anges’ are discussed within the context of the preceding CDA.

²⁵ *Des canyons aux étoiles*, preface to Première Partie, p. 14: ‘La main qui a écrit sur les murs du festin maudit les trois mots solennels, aurait pu les écrire dans le calme créateur sur les murs de l’espace, vers le septième jour’. See Appendix Five, below, p. 131.

CR IN PRACTICE II: *TECHNIQUE*, EX. 209

Effet de vitrail CR followed by CDA are heard in the second movement of *Trois petites liturgies*,²⁶ colouring the real presence with ‘a star inhaling the soul’ (Example 2.13).²⁷

EXAMPLE 2.13: *Trois petites liturgies*, II ‘Sequence du Verbe, Cantique Divin (Dieu présent en lui-même...)', 100/1/4₂

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system shows piano accompaniment with chord diagrams for CR (root, 1st inv., 2nd inv.) and CDA (4A, B, C). The second system shows the vocal line with lyrics: 'Pré - sent au sang de l'â - me, E - toile as - pi - rant l'â - me, Pré - sent par - tout mi - roir ai -'. The third system shows piano accompaniment with chord diagrams for CTI 4 (D), 1st CCR 1 (A, B), and 2nd CCR 7 (A, B), and the vocal line with lyrics: 'lé des jours, Par A - mour, Le Dieu d'A - mour!'. The tempo is marked '(Presque vif (♩=160))' and the dynamics are '(ff)'. The time signature is 100/1/4₂.

This cosmic celebration of the Real Presence through God’s love, commencing with CR inversions, also features in ‘la Présence multipliée’ (Example 2.14), colouring the universality of the Eucharist in time and place.²⁸

²⁶ For a quotation of *Technique* Ex. 209, see Example 1.17, p. 17, above.

²⁷ Translation by Kevin Halliwell and reproduced in *Visions: the music of Olivier Messiaen*, programme booklet to the BBC Messiaen festival at the Barbican Centre and Westminster Cathedral, London, between 15th – 17th January, 1999, p. 25:

Il est vivant, il est présent,
Et Lui se dit en Lui!
Il est vivant, il est présent,
Et Lui se voit en Lui!
Présent au sang de l’âme,
Étoile aspirant l’âme,
Présent partout, miroir ailé des jours,
Par Amour,
Le Dieu d’Amour!

He is living, he is present,
and He speaks in Him!
He is living, he is present,
and He is seen in Him!
Present in the blood of the soul,
a star inhaling the soul.
Present everywhere, winged mirror of the days,
through love,
the God of love!

EXAMPLE 2.14: *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, ‘la Présence multipliée’, 143/2/1

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Example 2.15, from *Quatuor*, makes use of root and first inversion CR on D \flat and B \flat as part of the shimmering cascade of modal chords in complementary blue and orange.²⁹

EXAMPLE 2.15: ‘Vocalise’, 9/2/2, piano

In *Vingt regards*, an embrace of light features in ‘Le baiser de l’Enfant-Jésus’.³⁰ In Example 2.16, the bass rises in octaves four times on C \sharp heralding firstly the ‘Theme of Chords’, followed by *carillon* chords. CR on D \flat and B \flat then lead ultimately to a CTI progression. ‘Regard de l’onction terrible’ (Example 2.17) extends this CR bass motion of D \flat - B \flat to encompass a diminished 7th in the depiction of lightening.³¹ Dingle notes Bruhn’s interpretation of ‘Regard de l’onction terrible’ based upon the ‘Apocalypse of Angers’ tapestries,³² explored originally by Atherton.³³ This CR chain descending by minor thirds is a practical application of the theoretical descending progression in which the bass spells out a diminished seventh, cited in *Technique*, where root position CR alternate with first inversion.³⁴ In Example 2.17, Messiaen again completes the progression with the use of CTI, here in a chain of major thirds.

²⁸ *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Introduction: ‘Jesus Christ is present in all the consecrated hosts of the world, at all times and in all places’. This ubiquity of God’s gift to us is portrayed musically by colour-chords.

²⁹ *Technique II*, Ex. 222, p. 39 quotes from ‘Vocalise’. In *Technique I*, p. 52, Messiaen quotes the preface to *Quatuor*:

...those swords of fire, those sudden stars, those flows of blue-orange lavas, those planets of turquoise, those violet shades, those garnets of long-haired arborescence, those wheelings of sounds and colours in a jumble of rainbows.

³⁰ *Vingt regards*, ‘Note de l’auteur’ p. iii: ‘A chaque communion, l’Enfant-Jésus dort avec nous près de la porte; puis il l’ouvre sur le jardin et se précipite à toute lumière pour nous embrasser...’

³¹ *Ibid.*: A scene from the Angers tapestry described by Messiaen:

Le Verbe assume une certaine nature humaine; choix de la chair de Jésus par la Majesté épouvantable... Une vieille tapisserie représente le Verbe de Dieu en lutte sous les traits du Christ à cheval: on ne voit que ses deux mains sur la garde de l’épée qu’il brandit au milieu des éclairs.

³² Christopher Dingle, review of *Messiaen’s Contemplations of Covenant and Incarnation: Musical Symbols of Faith in the Two Great Piano Cycles of the 1940s; Messiaen’s Explorations of Love and Death: Musical Signification in the ‘Tristan Trilogy’ and Three Related Song Cycles; Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity: Echoes of Medieval Theology in the Oratorio, Organ Meditations and Opera*, by Siglind Bruhn, *Music and Letters*, 91:3 (2010), 458.

³³ Atherton, p. 78 and Plate 3, and p. 107, which quotes Messiaen’s Second Preface, c. 1970, locating the tapestry in Angers.

³⁴ *Technique I*, p. 50, and *II*, Ex. 212, p. 37.

EXAMPLE 2.16: *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*, XV 'Le baiser de l'Enfant-Jésus', 114/4/2

Modéré (♩=112)

The score for Example 2.16 is divided into two systems. The first system shows the piano part with dynamics *f* and *più f* in the bass clef, and *p* in the treble clef. The organ part below it shows a descending chain of minor thirds with annotations '8^{ve}-----', '2^{da}', and '2^{da}'. The second system continues with similar dynamics and includes an annotation '(Thème d'accords)' for the organ part. A third system shows the organ part with a descending chain of major thirds and annotations '1A', 'B', '9A', and 'B'. The piano part in this system has dynamics *f* and *più f*. The organ part in the final system has a descending chain of major thirds with annotations '1A', 'B', '9A', and 'B'.

EXAMPLE 2.17: *Vingt regards*, XVIII 'Regard de l'onction terrible', 139/2/1

The score for Example 2.17 is divided into two systems. The first system shows the piano part with dynamics *ff* and *arrache* in the bass clef, and *(simile)* in the treble clef. The organ part below it shows a descending chain of minor thirds with annotations 'root', '1st inv.', 'root', '1st inv.', 'root', '1st inv.', 'root', '1st inv.'. The second system shows the organ part with a descending chain of major thirds and annotations '1A', 'B', '9A', 'B', '5A', and 'B'. The piano part in this system has dynamics *ff* and *arrache* in the bass clef, and *(simile)* in the treble clef.

STARLIGHT: FROM *LA NATIVITÉ* TO *VISIONS DE L'AMEN*

Starlight glistens in the use of CD throughout *La Nativité*. In Example 2.18, the daystar of Psalm 109. 3 shines brightly.³⁵

EXAMPLE 2.18: *La Nativité*, 'Le Verbe', 1/1/3

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In colourful portrayal of the Star of Bethlehem,³⁶ extended use of CD occurs in 'Les Mages' at the primary transposition level of C#, laden with the symbolism of star and cross.³⁷ Messiaen suggests: 'observe the iridescence of the "harmony on the dominant": one passes from green and gold to a velvety blue, deep violets alternate with orange'.³⁸

EXAMPLE 2.19: *La Nativité*, 'Les Mages', 7/2/1

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³⁵ Superscription to 'Le Verbe': 'De son sein, avant que l'aurore existât, il m'a engendré.' Benedict XVI explains: 'The Greek translation of The Septuagint [...] refers however to the divine sonship of the king, to his birth or begetting on the part of the Lord [...] which is why the verse reads like this: "Yours is princely power in the day of your birth, in holy splendour; before the daystar, like the dew, I have begotten you"'. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20111116_en.html> [accessed 21 September 2012].

³⁶ The superscription from Matthew 2. 9: 'Les Mages partirent et l'étoile allait devant eux'.

³⁷ See 'Regard de l'étoile', and Chapter Five, below, pp. 92, 95-96. James Lancelot also hears a version of the Gregorian melody *Veni Creator* in the opening pedal melody (programme notes to DCCA0505). <<http://www.durhamcathedralchoir.org.uk/page33.html>> [accessed 21 September 2012].

³⁸ Jon Gillock, *Performing Messiaen's Organ Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), p. 87.

Messiaen fails to mention the climactic use of *effet de vitrail* CD at the close of ‘Dieu parmi nous’ (Example 2.20). The Word of John 1 is made flesh as the light of the world. These shattering *tutti* chords present a kaleidoscope of CD, sustaining the pedal note E₃ above and below the texture. The final two chords effect a plagal cadence, where the closing added 6th is not so much the fruit of time spent prior to appointment at La Trinité as a theatre organist,³⁹ but the logical paring down of the final CD without its triad of upper resonance.

EXAMPLE 2.20: *La Nativité*, ‘Dieu parmi nous’, 12/4/1

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In 1937 Messiaen had called for religious music of integrity, citing the sparkle of stars from Baruch whilst describing

audacious harmonies, shimmering rhythms, sumptuous modes, timbres of the Rainbow! [...] to which we can ascribe what the scripture says of the stars: ‘They shine joyously for him who created them!’⁴⁰

By 1938 this had already been achieved with a glittering text and CDA in ‘Résurrection’ (Example 2.21).⁴¹

EXAMPLE 2.21: *Chants de terre et de ciel*, ‘Résurrection’, 30/1/1

³⁹ Robert Fallon, Review in *JAMS*, 63:2 (2010), 378-392 (p. 381).

⁴⁰ Olivier Messiaen, ‘Musique Religieuse’, *La Page musicale* (5th February, 1937), 1, and cited in Robert Sholl, ‘Olivier Messiaen and the Avant-Garde: Poetics of the “Messe de la Pentecôte”’ in *Messiaen the Theologian* ed. by A. Shenton, pp. 199-222 (pp. 199-200).

⁴¹ *Technique II*, p. 30, Ex. 173: ‘Résurrection (pour la jour de Pâques)’. ‘Sept étoiles d’amour au transpercé, revêtez votre habit de clarté’. The theological power of the number seven; the shining of the celestial heights; the resonance of Romans 13. 12 clad in ‘the armour of light’: these all combine to imbue these short lines with extraordinary significance. The use of CDA/CD on C# recalls ‘Les Mages’ from *La Nativité*, and looks forward to the development of CTI, creating a sonic evocation of the Resurrection, the sparkling of the stars, the shining of the sun, the light of the Divine, the colours of the sky and of the birds which adorn it. See *Technique II*, p. 29, Ex. 171, which cites the opening of the song, and p. 30, Ex. 173.

In ‘Amen des étoiles’, as the planets dance Messiaen evokes the rainbow colours of Saturn’s rings,⁴² citing the revolutions of stars, suns and the planet,⁴³ and also quoting Baruch.⁴⁴ Driving towards the climax of ‘Amen de la consommation’, Messiaen achieves the first extended use of 1st CCR,⁴⁵ in an overwhelming passage depicting paradise in a carillon of light and apocalyptic gemstones.⁴⁶ To describe this brilliance of divine light, Messiaen cites Proverbs: ‘De clarté en clarté’.⁴⁷ In ‘Amen des anges’, colouring the angels of Revelation, the whole company of heaven, and adorned by nightingale, blackbird, chaffinch, and warbler, Messiaen returns to *Technique* Ex. 204 with a glittering *effet de vitrail* CDA progression (Example 2.22).

EXAMPLE 2.22: ‘Amen des anges’, 62/1/3, Piano II

The recapitulation of the Song of the Saints is then coloured with a CDA sequence on E_b, foreshadowed in arpeggiated form in b. 9-11 of the piece,⁴⁸ and sounded here in Piano II.⁴⁹ This is immediately followed by a progression through three transpositions of CR (Example 2.23).

EXAMPLE 2.23: ‘Amen des anges’, 66/1/2, Piano I

⁴² Olivier Messiaen, *Visions de l’amen* (Paris: Durand, 1950), Note de l’auteur II: ‘Tous ces mouvements mélangés évoquent la vie des planètes et l’étonnant arc-en-ciel qui colore l’anneau tournant de Saturne’.

⁴³ Ibid.: ‘Tournent violement les étoiles, les soleils, et Saturne, la planète à l’anneau multicolore’.

⁴⁴ Baruch 3. 45: ‘Dieu les appelle et ils disent: Amen, nous voici’.

⁴⁵ Cheong, ‘Messiaen’s Chord Tables: Ordering the Disordered’, p. 7, citing the ‘generous’ use of CCR in Piano I, commencing at 88/1/2.

⁴⁶ *Visions de l’amen*, Note de l’auteur VII: ‘Vie des corps glorieux en carillon de lumière [...] Pierres précieuses de l’Apocalypse qui sonnent, choquent, dansent, colorent et parfument la lumière de Vie’. Messiaen shows the harmonic importance of this passage in *Technique* II, p. 45*n*, and *Traité* III, p. 274.

⁴⁷ *Visions de l’amen*, Note de l’auteur. Messiaen’s quotation in context reads thus: ‘But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day’ (Proverbs 4.18).

⁴⁸ Described in *Traité* III, p. 258.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 263.

ACCORDS SPÉCIAUX FROM THE TRILOGY TO CATALOGUE

Whilst much harmony in *Turangalila* is modal, Messiaen resolved to make use of ‘chords and resonances like those in my *Quatuor*’,⁵⁰ and this paean to love (and by extension, the gift of love from the loving creator) recalls a harmonic litany from *Regard du silence*.⁵¹ In Example 2.24, the fourfold repetition of the notes G-F in ‘Introduction’ is harmonized in four different ways, commencing with the ‘Theme of Chords’.⁵² Secondly, Messiaen uses two transpositions of 1st CCR: the first being at primary transposition level, which Forte links to ‘Les mains de l’abîme’, noting that this is the ‘canonical form’; the second distorting the expected shape of chord B, replacing the expected lowest note B \flat with A \flat .⁵³ Finally, Messiaen uses CTI, revoiced as in *Technique*.⁵⁴

EXAMPLE 2.24: *Turangalila-Symphonie*, I ‘Introduction’, 11/5, orchestral reduction

The image shows a musical score for Example 2.24. The top staff is labeled 'Theme of Chords' and 'Harmonic Litany'. It features a sequence of chords: 1A, B, 3B, 1B, 9A, B. Above these chords are labels: 'CCR' above 1A and B, '3B' above 3B, '1B' above 1B, and 'CCR' above 9A and B. A note above the score reads 'CTI revoiced with added notes from the CD (see Technique Ex. 205-6, 'L'Ange aux parfums', etc.)'. The bottom two staves show a piano accompaniment with a tempo marking '[Très modéré (♩=96)]' and a dynamic marking 'ff'. The piano part consists of complex chordal textures with many notes.

Commencing *Harawi*, Example 2.25 demonstrates Messiaen’s first presentation of TC as vertical rather than broken chords, followed by its downward transposition by a tone.⁵⁵ The carillon effect of TC cited in *Technique* is implied in *Vingt regards*, where the lowest tetrad of TC C sounds beneath the third chord of a bell-like progression (Example 2.26).

⁵⁰ Hill and Simeone, p. 169, citing an entry in Messiaen’s diary from 1946.

⁵¹ See Appendix Five, p. 131, and for another instance in *Vingt regards*, see Example 3.1, p. 56.

⁵² From the time of his work on *Vingt regards* until *Catalogue d’oiseaux*, the presence of the concentrated ‘Theme of Chords’ is an indicator that Messiaen’s harmonic thinking within a passage is not modal but conceived primarily in terms of colour-chords. See, for example, *Traité II*, p. 162 for Messiaen’s analysis. See also Appendix Five, pp. 132-133.

⁵³ Forte, ‘Messiaen’s Chords’, p. 110.

⁵⁴ *Technique II*, Ex. 205, 206, p. 37. Whilst Forte notes modal subsets in this *Turangalila* progression, he refuses to comment on these chords in detail, perhaps because of the misprints in *Traité II*, p. 162, Ex. 6, where the first chord of progression C contains E \sharp rather than the F \sharp of the score, and the second chord contains B \sharp , rather than B \flat (Forte, ‘Messiaen’s Chords’, p. 111 and *Traité II*, p. 162, Ex. 6). Confusing the analysis further is Messiaen’s own description, which implies that both chords are CTI on C \sharp , whereas in reality the D \flat in the bass of the first chord (which itself is a sounding, two octaves higher, of the sustained pedal D \flat) is a registral transference of the higher D \flat in CTI 3B.

⁵⁵ Messiaen’s detailed analysis of TC commences in *Traité III*, p. 282. This first set of TC in ‘La ville qui dormait, toi’ is a direct quotation of the harmony of ‘Amen des étoiles, de la planète à l’anneau’, 13/3/1 Piano I. The importance of ‘La ville qui dormait, toi’ lies in the establishment of early-TC in two transposition levels lying one tone apart, as well as linking Messiaen’s use of TC to his use of the ‘Theme of Chords’, a practice which finds its apotheosis in ‘Le traquet stapazin’. As the town sleeps, do the lovers meet by moonlight? Messiaen portrays the violet of the poem by means of colour-chords.

EXAMPLE 2.25: *Haravi*, 'La ville qui dormait, toi', 2/1/2

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EXAMPLE 2.26: *Vingt regards*, II 'Regard de l'étoile', 6/1/3

Thus the chiming of 'Amen des étoiles' is recalled harmonically in 'Regard de l'étoile', which in Example 2.27 is transposed one semitone higher in the final movement. The third chord of Example 2.27 harmonizes the D \sharp of the word 'coeur' in 'La ville qui dormait, toi', in anticipation of the use of TC.

EXAMPLE 2.27: *Vingt regards*, XX 'Regard de l'église d'amour', 170/2/1

CCR also feature extensively in *Haravi*, and again in 'Amour oiseau d'étoile', *accords spéciaux* invoke the stars (Example 2.28). Early TC are to be heard to particularly striking effect both in *Cinq rechants* and *Cantéyodjayá*,⁵⁶ binding together their harmonic language.⁵⁷ The use of TC in *Cinq rechants*, which evokes the bird-like freedom of Chagall's lovers,⁵⁸ where this love which motivates a Schopenhauerian thirst for death transcends mind and

⁵⁶ Anderson, p. 4

⁵⁷ Simeone, *Olivier Messiaen: A Bibliographical Catalogue of Messiaen's Works*, pp. 101, 103: *Cantéyodjayá* was believed to have been composed at Tanglewood in the summer of 1948, with *Cinq rechants* being completed in Paris by December of that year, making these works closely related. *Cantéyodjayá* dates, however, from 1949, as stated in Paul McNulty, 'Messiaen's journey towards asceticism', in *Messiaen Studies*, ed. by R. Sholl, pp. 63-77 (p. 64).

⁵⁸ Marc Chagall, *Over the Town*, oil on canvas (1914 – 1918), Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

EXAMPLE 2.28: *Haravi*, X ‘Amour oiseau d’étoile’, 86/2/1

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body ‘on a cosmic scale’,⁵⁹ extends, literally, to the stars.⁶⁰ As the lovers ‘swim in the blue heavens of fate’,⁶¹ the use of TC in Example 2.29, like Chagall’s image, creates an impression of ‘genuine superreality [...] independent of time and the pull of gravity’.⁶²

EXAMPLE 2.29: *Cinq rechants*, 2/3/1

⁵⁹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 30.

⁶⁰ *Cinq rechants* I (my translation):

les amoureux s’envolent vers les étoiles de la mort	the lovers fly towards the stars of death
ha ha ha ha ha soif	ha ha ha ha ha thirst

l’explorateur Orphée trouve son cœur dans la mort	the explorer Orpheus finds his heart in death
---	---

⁶¹ Susan Compton, *Chagall*, Royal Academy of Arts Exhibition Catalogue (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1985), and cited in Mikhail Guerman and Sylvie Forestier, *Marc Chagall* (London: Sirrocco, 2004), p. 110.

⁶² Guerman and Forestier, p. 115.

The dawn from which they flee, evoked by the ‘Alba’, appears again in *Cantéyodjayâ*, as does this dramatic use of TC, underpinned in Example 2.30 by savage *résonance inférieure*.⁶³

EXAMPLE 2.30: *Cantéyodjayâ*, 12/2/2

This early form of TC returns in *Catalogue d'oiseaux*. In Example 2.31, TC harmonize the song of the *traquet rieur*, whilst in ‘La rousserolle effarvatte’ both transpositions of TC from ‘La ville qui dormait, toi’ colour the water-lilies (Example 2.32).⁶⁴

EXAMPLE 2.31: ‘Le traquet rieur’, 4/4/1

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EXAMPLE 2.32: ‘La rousserolle effarvatte’, 25/4/1

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⁶³ Anderson, pp. 3-4, notes ‘its violent, pivotal intrusion [...] as a barbaric dance in additive rhythm’.

⁶⁴ Cited in Anderson, p. 5, and Loo, Vol. 1, p. 102, and Vol. 2, p. 120. The links between this passage from ‘La rousserolle effarvatte’, and the lashing, primitive use of TC in *Cantéyodjayâ* are also demonstrated by Loo in Vol. 1, p. 133, and Vol. 2, pp. 170-171.

THE RESURRECTED AND THE STARS

With ‘Les ressuscités et le chant de l’étoile Aldébaran’ Messiaen talks of singing stars and planetary harmonics,⁶⁵ citing the joyous concert of morning stars in Job.⁶⁶ Aldebaran, mentioned in ‘Katchikatchi les étoiles’, is a red star,⁶⁷ whilst in ‘Joie du sang des étoiles’, contemporaneous with Chagall’s *The Red Sun*, the symbolism of the star may represent ‘spirit’, yet its liturgical colour is that of martyrs.⁶⁸ Citing I Corinthians 15. 41-42, Messiaen likens the agility and clarity of the resurrected to the glory of the stars:⁶⁹ a Thomist concept informing the theology of *Les corps glorieux*, and later becoming the message of the final chorus of *Saint François*.

To this Romano Guardini adds love, with is the product of the beatific vision.⁷⁰ Despite the hue of Aldebaran, Messiaen’s coloration is the heavenly blue of sapphire, chalcantite, and translucent fluorite.⁷¹ Red harmony had been exhausted in ‘Bryce Canyon et les rochers rouge-orange’, whilst modal harmony eventually gives way to CTI in Example 2.33.

EXAMPLE 2.33: *Des canyons*, VIII ‘Les ressuscités et le chant de l’étoile Aldébaran’, RN2 (267/1/1)

The musical score for Example 2.33 consists of two staves: a violin solo and strings. The violin solo is marked 'Un peu lent (♩=100)' and 'p'. The strings are marked 'p'. The score is divided into three sections: A, B, and C, which are grouped under the heading 'CTI 2'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8. The dynamics range from piano (p) to pianissimo (pp).

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This use of CTI 2 is first heard in ‘Amen du jugement’ (Example 2.34), and was later developed as the divine light of ‘la source de vie’ (*Livre du Saint Sacrement*).

EXAMPLE 2.34: *Visions*, ‘Amen du jugement’, 75/1/1, Piano II

The musical score for Example 2.34 is for Piano II and is in 6/8 time. It features a CDA 2 structure with four sections: A, B, C, and D. The dynamics include 'più f'. The score is marked with accents (>) and includes a fermata over the final measure of section D. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

⁶⁵ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 168.

⁶⁶ *Des canyons aux étoiles...*, preface to score, p. 16: Job 38. 7.

⁶⁷ Audrey Ekdahl Davidson, *Olivier Messiaen and the Tristan Myth* (Westport: Praeger, 2001), p. 56.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 86.

⁶⁹ *Des canyons*, preface to score, p. 16: Une étoile diffère en éclat d’une autre étoile: ainsi en sera-t’il de la resurrection des morts. ...les ‘Corps glorieux’ seront débarassés des entraves des corps mortels. [Saint Paul] vise aussi leurs qualities (agilité, clarté) et leurs différentes ‘gloires’.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*. Messiaen quotes from Romano Guardini, *le Seigneur* (final chapter): Le cœur de Jésus sera l’espace qui renfermera toutes choses [...] Tout sera transparence, lumière [...] L’amour comme état permanent de la creation, l’identité de l’intérieur et de l’extérieur: voilà ce que sera le ciel!

⁷¹ *Des canyons*, preface to score, p. 17. Messiaen also comments:

You’ll notice that it’s not the resurrected but the star that sings. The resurrected revolve around the stars and ultimately have the right to know stars other than the sun. The piece is extremely radiant, blue like the blue of the sky, blue like that precious stone I’m so fond of, chalcantite (Samuel, trans. Glasow, p. 168).

THE FATHER OF THE STARS

In *Beati pauperes spiritu*, Eckhart writes that ‘before there were any creatures, God [...] was what he was’.⁷² Messiaen commences *Méditations* with this innascibility of the Father: being ‘without principle’,⁷³ and in an allusion to Psalm 19. 1-4, the chords at the end of this opening movement are ‘like a constellation of stars’.⁷⁴

‘Le Père inengendré’, the ‘Father of the Stars’, is unengendered, exploring Thomas’ question ‘whether it is proper to the Father to be unbegotten’.⁷⁵ ‘He is known by the fact that He is not from another; and this belongs to the property of innascibility, signified by this word “unbegotten.”’⁷⁶ The creator of the heavens is invoked by the theme of the Song of the Stars, whose second variation uses a ‘counterpoint of chords’,⁷⁷ in which the colour chords appear fragmented. Messiaen’s fascination with the *musica universalis* motivated his invention of this mystical theme to portray the harmony of the spheres,⁷⁸ and with his choice of subject matter, Messiaen lifts our theological concerns to ideas of cosmic significance.

EXAMPLE 2.35: *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, I ‘Le Père inengendré’, 14/2/1

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⁷² Meister Eckhart, *Deutsche Predigten und Traktate*, ed. and trans. by Josef Quint (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1955), 492.8, and cited in Colledge and Marler, “Poverty of the Will”, p. 18.

⁷³ Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, trans. by Francesca Aran Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 168.

⁷⁴ Jeff Leigh, ‘A Hidden Theology: Pitch Association and Symbolism in Olivier Messiaen’s *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, CUNY, 2010), pp. 65-66.

⁷⁵ *STI*, Q. 33, Art. 4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, p. 7.

⁷⁸ This symbolism of the stars is to be found in others works, such as ‘Joie du sang des étoiles’, ‘Amen des étoiles’, ‘Appel interstellaire’, ‘La Constellation du Sagittaire’ and ‘Les Étoiles et la Gloire’. For a definition of *musica universalis*, see Appendix Five, p. 131.

The stars turn as the song is harmonized with interlocking modal patterns, before a glittering array of *accords spéciaux* are used in Example 2.35.⁷⁹ One of the most profound theological moments in Messiaen's creative output is the spelling out, in *langage communicable*, of this primary attribute of God, accompanied by colour chords glinting with gold. The predominant colours move from red, through red and gold, to brilliant golden yellow; CTI cycle through mauve and blue towards lemon and red, culminating in TC 3C, which combines green with gold, whilst the numinous luminosity of the white and gold of CTI 4B is expanded with additional resonance in the final chord. The upper resonance of CTI 4B, also embedded within 1st CCR 11B, is therefore prolonged throughout this passage.

⁷⁹ *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*, p.7:

Une courte montée en crescendo amène (sous les couleurs des accords tournants, à renversements transposés, à résonance contractée) une dernière proclamation à la Pédale fortissimo du mot final: *Inengendré*.

CHAPTER THREE

JUXTAPOSITION AND SUPERPOSITION: HORIZONTAL CHAINS AND VERTICAL LAYERS

Messiaen's use of *accords spéciaux* in *Vingt regards* stemmed from his approach to the 'Theme of Chords',² 'fragmented or concentrated into a rainbow of sound',³ which 'pre-exists' just as the chord tables contain 'pre-composed' or 'pre-existing' chords,⁴ where both involve resonance, rainbows, and specific colour-associations. Extended CTI progressions in a sequential pattern produce 'harmonic tension or expectancy',⁵ with Messiaen projecting *effet de vitrail* harmony from the stasis of a single chord into a dynamic unfolding.⁶

Madeleine Hsu notes 'consistent patterns of rising or falling major or minor thirds' in her discussion of 'Regard de l'Esprit de joie',⁷ and CTI progressions within *Vingt regards* often form a chain of major thirds. The chords of Example 3.1 form a 'harmonic litany',⁸ here a technique symbolizing reflection upon the light of the divine,⁹ where this light is described in detail by both Messiaen and Marmion.¹⁰

¹ Pierre Boulez, *Relevés d'apprenti* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), trans. by Stephen Walsh as *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 49.

² From Messiaen's second preface to *Vingt Regards*, c. 1970, written as sleeve notes to the recording by Michel Béroff, EMI C 065-10.676/8; C181-11.117/8; C25 7 69161, translated by Susan Bradshaw and cited in Atherton, pp. 38-39:

The *Theme of Chords* occurs throughout: fragmented, concentrated, haloed with resonances, combined with itself, changed in rhythm and register – transformed and transmuted in all kinds of ways. It forms a complex of notes which are later subjected to endless variation – it pre-exists in the abstract, like a series, but is musically concrete and easily recognisable by its colours (a steely grey-blue crossed with red and bright orange, a mauve-ish violet spotted with leather-brown and ringed with purplish blue.

³ From Messiaen's original 1944 Preface to *Vingt regards*, and translated in Atherton, p. 38.

⁴ Terms used in Cheong, 'Messiaen's Chord Tables: Ordering the Disordered', pp. 5, 10.

⁵ Dingle, 'Understated charm', p. 24, in a discussion of the link between the lake music of *La fauvette des jardins* and 'Les stigmates' of *Saint François*. See pp. 62-63, below, for further discussion of this link.

⁶ Dingle, review of *Messiaen's Contemplations of Covenant and Incarnation; Messiaen's Explorations of Love and Death; Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, by Siglind Bruhn, p. 459, demonstrating Bruhn's awareness of this type of harmonic structure, where Messiaen is: 'tracing a path through diminished seventh chords [...] [using] octave-halving intervals (minor thirds and tritones) for the terrestrial, whereas the divine, specifically Christ, draws upon major thirds'.

⁷ Madeleine Hsu, *Olivier Messiaen, the Musical Mediator: A Study of the Influence of Liszt, Debussy, and Bartók*, (Cranbury, London and Mississauga: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), p. 71.

⁸ For a full definition of the term 'harmonic litany', see Appendix Five, p. 131. In this instance, Messiaen writes in the second preface cited in Atherton, p.105: 'the note D [...] is harmonised in a score of different ways, using "chords of transposed inversions"'.
⁹ *Vingt regards*, 'Note de l'auteur', p. iii:

Un tableau où la Vierge est représentée à genoux, repliée sur elle-même dans la nuit – une aureole lumineuse surplombe ses entrailles. Les yeux fermés, elle adore le fruit cache en elle. Ceci se passé entre l'Annonciation et la Nativité: c'est la première et la plus grande de toutes les communions.

¹⁰ Atherton, p. 67: 'both writers portray the intimacy of this moment as well as the fervour of Mary's love for her Son and depict Mary as being irradiated by the Divine light'.

This glistening brightness of CTI therefore conveys Mary's irradiation,¹¹ linking Eucharist to *Magnificat*.¹²

EXAMPLE 3.1: *Vingt regards*, XI 'Première communion de la Vierge', 81/5/1

This technique is ultimately employed as *Concert à quatre* reaches its peroration. The same CTI transpositions used in *Vingt regards* here constitute an ascending sequence, drawing upon the patterns established in the lake music of *La fauvette des jardins* (Example 3.2).

EXAMPLE 3.2: *Concert à quatre*, IV, RN40 (139/1/2), soloists

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In 'Le baiser de l'Enfant-Jésus' and 'Regard de l'église d'amour', both the 'Theme of Chords' and the *accords du carillon* prepare and lead into the appearance of linked CR and CTI in sequential chains (Example 3.3).¹³

¹¹ Marmion, p. 112:

The soul of Jesus was, by the Beatific Vision, plunged in the Divine light; this light radiated upon His Mother. In the sight of the Angels, Mary truly appeared as 'a woman clothed with the sun' [...] all irradiated with heavenly brightness, all shining with the light of her Son.

¹² *Vingt Regards*, 'Note de l'auteur', p. iii: 'Après l'Annonciation, Marie adore Jésus en elle [...] mon Dieu, mon fils, mon Magnificat! - mon amour sans bruit de paroles'. This theological linking of communion with the *Magnificat* also occurs in the superscription of 'Dieu parmi nous' (*La Nativité*).

¹³ From Messiaen's second preface, cited in Atherton, p. 107:

A dominant (C#) pedal-point is treated as a carillon of bells, during which the 'Theme of Chords' reappears, along with the "transposed inversions" of these chords [sic]: it ends with a progressive thickening of the sound complexes...

EXAMPLE 3.3: 'Regard de l'église d'amour', 170/2/1

Très modéré (♩=84)
(Comme des cloches)

(Thème d'accords)

ff

Accords de carillon

CR

CTI

Descending chain of minor thirds

Descending chain of major thirds

ff

fff

CR (Descending chain of minor thirds)

CTI (Descending chain of major thirds)

SUNRISE AND SUNSET

Binding together embellished CTI, in 'Le traquet rieur' Messiaen creates an extended ascending chain of minor thirds in the bass outlining, as the complement of mode 2³, a diminished 7th: a symmetrical figure, returning to its starting point, and limited, like Messiaen's modes, in its range of transpositions (Example 3.4). As this idea progresses, the bass motion then expands to powerful, cadential-like ascending fourths.

EXAMPLE 3.4: 'Le traquet rieur', 12/5/2

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The most impressive, extended structural use of CTI in *Catalogue* is to be found in the sunrise (Examples 3.5 and 3.6) and sunset (Example 3.8) of 'Le traquet stapazin'. Each CTI transposition is followed by inferior resonance, TC or the 'Theme of Chords'.¹⁴ As the sun's growing light transposes each CTI group upwards, so the threefold proclamation of *lumen Christi* at the Easter Vigil is sung successively higher in pitch at each appearance.

¹⁴ Loo, p. 126, describes this combination of the differing strains of chords as a 'layering of voices'.

EXAMPLE 3.5: 'Le traquet stapazin', 8/4/1

(le disque rouge et or du soleil sort de la mer et monte dans le ciel)

Lent (♩=72) *mf* ^{8va-----1} Traquet stapazin Vif (♩=160)

(dr. dessus) sec

(majestueux, sonore, coloré - laissez résonner toutes les notes) *(fier et brusque)*

mf *mf* *f*

Péd. *8va-----1* *Péd.* *8va-----1* * *(sans péd.)*

Lent (♩=72) ^{8va-----1}

f *f* *f*

Péd. *8va-----1* *Péd.* *8va-----1* *Péd.* *8va-----1* *

Traquet stapazin Vif (♩=160) *(dr. dessus)* *(dr. dessus)*

f *f* *f*

Lent (♩=72)

piuf *piuf* *piuf*

Péd. *8va-----1* *(Péd. sempre)* *Péd.* *8va-----1* *Péd.* *8va-----1* *

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EXAMPLE 3.6: 'Le traquet stapazin', 12/3/1

Lent (♩=72)
(le disque d'or du soleil monte plus haut dans le ciel - bande lumineuse sur la mer)

(majestueux, sonore, coloré - laissez résonner toutes les notes)

Vif (♩=160) **Lent** (♩=72) **Vif** (♩=160) **Lent** (♩=72)

Traquet stapazin Traquet stapazin

(sans péd.) *(Péd. sempre)* *(sans péd.)* *(Péd. 8ve)* *

Traquet stapazin **Lent** (♩=72) **Vif** (♩=160) **Lent** (♩=72)

Vif (♩=160) **Lent** (♩=72)

(sans péd.) *(sec)* *(Péd. 8ve)* * *(sans péd.)* *(Péd. 8ve)* *

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This unfolding chain is clearly perceptible, indicating Messiaen's ability to control long-range, structural planning with his 'pre-composed' material in different transpositions (Example 3.7),¹⁵ and rhythmically unified by means of a *tâla*, here *jayacr*.¹⁶

EXAMPLE 3.7: 'Le traquet stapazin', CTI Sequence

8/4/1 9/2/2 12/3/1 13/1/1

¹A B C D ⁴A B C D ⁷A B C D ¹⁰A B C D

¹⁵ Loo, pp. 48 and 50, notes that this CTI sequence 'appears prominently as the fundamental harmony to represent the sunrise-sunset music [...] in an augmented form with modulation, allowing other progressions to be superimposed on it'. Additionally, she notes the structural importance of each transposition of CTI within the diminished 7th chain (Loo, Example 3.5.3a, Vol. 2, p. 209).

¹⁶ Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 163, and Vol. 2, p. 212.

Concentrated and truncated, this sequence is used in the opposite direction to evoke the sunset (Example 3.8).

EXAMPLE 3.8: 'Le traquet stapazin', 22/5/1

CTI₁ A TC A & C Theme of Chords 10 A

Lent (♩=72)
(entouré de sang et d'or, le soleil descend derrière la montagne)

ff *f* *mf*

(majeustueux, sonore, coloré - laissez résonner toutes les notes)

ff *f* *mf*

Ped. 8va (Péd. sempre) Ped. 8va (Péd. sempre)

7 A

mf *p* *pp*

(d. dessus)

Ped. 8va *

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Sunset contracts these ideas: the descent of each CTI is coloured both by TC and the condensed 'Theme of Chords' combined, in a sequence which descends by whole tones, contrasting with the minor 3rds of CTI (Example 3.9).

EXAMPLE 3.9: 'Le traquet stapazin', sunset progression 22/5/1

CTI₁ A TC A C Theme of Chords CTI₁₀ A TC A C Theme of Chords CTI₇ A TC A C Theme of Chords

LIGHT AND TRUTH

At first perhaps as a means of sounding ‘that the Light and the Truth have at length appeared upon earth’ (proclaimed by John the Baptist),¹⁷ but finally by way of summary, Messiaen embarks upon an extended passage of CTI broken in toccata-like figuration towards the close of ‘Offrande et Alleluia final’ in *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, leading to the statement of ‘LA JOIE’. What is this joy proclaimed in *langage communicable*? Not originally intended to be the *finale*, the piece was first entitled ‘La Visitation et la joie de Jean Baptiste’.¹⁸ Weir interprets this ‘ecstatic abandon’ as Messiaen’s ‘secret’,¹⁹ whilst Marmion is more concrete: ‘The Christ, Whom he announced, has come at last; He is that Light unto which John bore testimony, and all those who believe in that Light have life everlasting’.²⁰

‘Offrande et Alleluia final’ makes use of a chain of four ordered CTI progressions ascending by minor thirds, commencing on C# (Example 3.10). This is an identical procedure to the sunrise of ‘Le traquet stapazin’, and the intention is likewise identical: now the light of Christ which is in the ascendancy as the sun of righteousness has arisen.²¹

EXAMPLE 3.10: *Livre*, ‘Offrande et Alleluia final’, 158/4/1 and 160/1/1

The image displays two musical examples of CTI (Chromatic Tetrads Interval) progressions. The first example, titled 'Saint François: Si tu portes de bon cœur la croix', is in 158/4/1 time and consists of four CTI progressions labeled 1, 4, 4, and 7. The first two are marked 'blue' and the last two 'white & gold'. The second example, titled 'La Fauvette des jardins: Lake music', is in 160/1/1 time and consists of three CTI progressions labeled 4, 7, and 10. The first two are marked 'white & gold' and the last one 'red & pink'. Both examples show an 'Interlocking chain of minor 3rds' between the two staves.

The opening of this progression in ‘Offrande’ recalls the chorale from ‘Les stigmates’ in *Saint François* (Example 3.11), in which Messiaen directly quotes Thomas à Kempis:²² ‘Si tu portes de bon cœur la croix, elle-même te portera et te conduira au terme désiré’.²³

¹⁷ Marmion, p. 102.

¹⁸ Hill and Simeone, p. 349. This was the first piece of *Livre* to be composed (p. 343).

¹⁹ Gillian Weir, ‘Organ Music II’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by P. Hill, pp. 352-391 (p. 386).

²⁰ Marmion, p. 104.

²¹ Malachi 4. 2.

²² Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, Book 2, Chapter 12: ‘The Royal Road of the Cross’. Messiaen draws attention to this quotation from Thomas à Kempis in Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 244.

²³ *Saint François d’Assise*, ‘Les stigmates’, final chorus. Trans. by Siglind Bruhn in *Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 217: ‘If you carry the cross gladly, it will in turn carry and guide you to the desired end’. In *Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 187, Bruhn also points out the links to Mark 8. 35 in this passage, using a variant translation: ‘If you willingly carry the Cross, it will in turn carry you and lead you to the desired end’.

EXAMPLE 3.11: *Saint François*, VII ‘Les stigmates’, RN64 (127/1/1), orchestra & chorus

The image shows a musical score for Example 3.11. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system is labeled 'CTI 1' and the second 'CTI 4'. Both systems have four measures labeled A, B, C, and D. The lyrics are 'Si tu por - tes de bon coeur la Croix'. The piano accompaniment features a sequence of chords in the bass line, with dynamics marked as *f* and *più f*.

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In depiction of the shimmering ‘solemnity of the lake in the moonlight’,²⁴ Messiaen used the same progression in *La fauvette des jardins* for Lac de Laffrey, here commencing on E \flat , and resolving from CTI 10 onto a first inversion F major chord (Example 3.12). The correspondences between the sequence from ‘Les stigmates’, and that of *La fauvette des jardins* are unmistakable,²⁵ whilst the harmonic similarities between both of these and ‘Offrande’ are clear.

EXAMPLE 3.12: *La fauvette des jardins*, 55/1/2

The image shows a musical score for Example 3.12. It features a single system of music with a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Très lent (♩=36)'. The score is divided into four measures labeled A, B, C, and D, with a 'CTI' label above the first measure. The dynamics are marked as *pp cresc.*, *mf cresc.*, *f cresc. molto*, and *fff*. The lyrics are 'le lac au clair de lune'. The piano accompaniment features a sequence of chords in the bass line, with a semitone step from B \flat to A \natural in the final measure.

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Originally, this transposition of the progression represented the colours of the lake (*le lac vert et violet*, 18/5/1; *le grand lac bleu*, 47/4/1), and the afternoon sun (*après-midi de lumière sur le grand lac*, 49/4/1) when ‘the lake is blue, sapphire blue, the bluest of all blues’.²⁶ This same resolution is used three times in ‘Offrande’, culminating in Example 3.10 with the same semitone step in the bass from B \flat to A \natural .

This use of CTI in minor-third chains also spells out the key scheme of the first structural and theological use of CD, in *La Nativité du Seigneur*. C \sharp of the light of the star in ‘Les Mages’, E \flat of the incarnate God amongst us, and G \flat of the eternally begotten Word. Returning to this key scheme in *Livre*, Messiaen again imbues these tonal areas with rich theological meaning.²⁷

²⁴ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 153.

²⁵ Dingle, review of *Messiaen’s Contemplations of Covenant and Incarnation; Messiaen’s Explorations of Love and Death; Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, by Siglind Bruhn, p. 461, in which he observes that this fact had escaped her. See also Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 17, where they are described as ‘prominent sequences’.

²⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 152. For comparison, note Messiaen’s first use of this ‘lake music’ CTI progression in *La fauvette des jardins* at 4/4/1 (see Example 5.11, p. 96, below), which commences one semitone higher on F \sharp (CTI 5) with a pink coloration to depict the lake at dawn.

²⁷ See Chapter Five, pp. 95-100, below, to compare this key scheme with Messiaen’s use of CTI in *Livre du Saint Sacrement* portraying the Resurrection: ‘la Résurrection du Christ’ uses structural CTI on C \sharp ; ‘l’apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine’ uses CTI on E \flat and G \flat .

STRATIFICATION FROM *CHRONOCHROMIE* TO *ÉCLAIRS*

With *Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà*, Messiaen returned to the angels of Revelation.²⁸ The theological dimension of ‘Les élus marqués du sceau’ is handled by the simultaneous presentation of three individual layers of coloured harmonies: TC, CTI and CCR in rhythmic interventions accompanied by percussion, with the minting (*monnayage*) of birdsong.²⁹ This is an identical process to that first achieved in both ‘Strophe’ sections of *Chronochromie*,³⁰ certainly a work with some theological aspect, which deals in an abstract way with the ‘time’ of the *Quatuor*. ‘Les élus marqués du sceau’ attempts to address the problem of Messiaen’s earlier flawed understanding of time and ἔσχατον,³¹ and thus in both *Chronochromie* and *Éclairs*, with the colouring of the strands of χρόνος, the καιρός of divine will is implied.³²

Messiaen discusses precisely *how* harmony may be used to colour duration.³³ Making this perceptible, ‘minting’ distinguishes tiny differences between long durations by the subdivision into the smallest note-values.³⁴ This orchestral partitioning with different groupings playing, respectively, CCR, TC, and CTI is also to be found to more specific theological purpose in *La Transfiguration*, movement IX, with the text ‘quia solus est perfecte conscius illius’.³⁵ Here the superimposition of *deçi-tâlas*, each with a separate strain of chords,³⁶ again utilizes differentiated, coloured harmony in three individual strata.³⁷

This stratification technique in ‘Les élus’ hints at anointing, with Loriod explaining that the movement deals solely with the seals.³⁸ Yet Messiaen chose to combine TC, CTI and CCR in ‘Les élus’ as he perceived their colours to give the impression of stained glass,³⁹ and as in *Chronochromie*, colour is of primary importance in chord choice. This type of

²⁸ The fourth movement suggests the four angels at the four corners of the earth holding back the winds, described in Paul Griffiths, ‘Éclairs sur l’au-delà’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by P. Hill, pp. 510-525 (p. 520), whilst both *Éclairs* and *Quatuor* refer to the seven angel-trumpeters of the Apocalypse, highlighted in Christopher Dingle, ‘Charm and Simplicity: Messiaen’s final works’, *Tempo*, 192 (1995), 2-7 (p. 7), and also treated by Messiaen in *Couleurs de la cité céleste*.

²⁹ See *Traité* III, pp. 84-85:

Les durées sont colorées de trois façons: [...] par des timbres (percussions métalliques à résonance plus ou moins prolongée) [...] par des races d’accords aux colorations diverses, appliqués systématiquement à chaque intervention [...] par des contrepoints mélodiques qui monnayent plus ou moins chaque durée.

See also Bauer, p. 148: ‘the faster-moving birdsongs emphasize the demisemiquaver units inside the longer, additive durations in the rhythmic series’. See also Appendix Five, below, pp. 131-132.

³⁰ Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 198.

³¹ Jeremy S. Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 141n: Messiaen radically misreads Revelation 10. 6, for the verse does not speak of the end of time. The vast majority of exegetes and translations understand it as saying: ‘there will be no more time left before God completes his purposes’.

³² For information on time, and definitions of *Khronos* and *Kairos*, see Appendix Five, p. 133.

³³ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 136:

The ‘strains of chords’ coloration is by far the most effective. [...] Whether juxtaposed or superimposed, all permutations will be brought to the fore by chord colorations, color serving to show the divisions of time.

³⁴ *Ibid.* See also note 29, above.

³⁵ Van Maas, ‘A Transfiguration of the Ear’, pp. 163-165.

³⁶ Messiaen, *Conférence de Kyoto*, pp. 14-16. See Appendix Five, below, p. 129.

³⁷ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 44.

³⁸ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 211.

³⁹ Yvonne Loriod, preface to score of *Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1998), Première Partie, p. 7: ‘Elles sont choisies en fonction de leurs couleurs afin de donner une impression de vitrail’.

‘polychromous web’ may ultimately be traced back to ‘Turangalîla III’,⁴⁰ whilst the rhythmic permutations recall ‘Adoptionem filiorum perfectam’.⁴¹ Messiaen acknowledges the importance of these techniques in Example 3.13, citing this passage in *Traité*.⁴²

EXAMPLE 3.13: *Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà...*, IV ‘Les élus marqués du sceau’, 105/1/1, strings

The musical score for Example 3.13 is arranged in four systems, each with two staves. The first system (Violin I) is marked 'non vibrato' and features a 'TC 1A' section. The second system (Violin II) is also marked 'non vibrato' and features 'CTI 8C' and 'CTI 1B' sections. The third system (Viola) is marked 'non vibrato' and features sections labeled '1st CCR 2A B', '7A', '11B', '4A', '8B', '12A', and '9B'. The fourth system (Violoncello) is marked 'non vibrato'. Dynamic markings such as *sfz* and *mf* are used throughout. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, and various technical annotations are placed above and below the staves.

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In Example 3.14, the earlier layered texture of *Chronochromie* anticipates precisely ‘Les élus marqués du sceau’, with its colouring of durations. This passage might suggest that there is ‘no obvious indication that any particular transposition was favoured over another’,⁴³ yet it is *colour* rather than voice-leading which controls harmonic progression. This 8-part *divisi* of first violins playing chains of TC *non vibrato* is also to be found in ‘Gagaku’ of *Sept haïkai*, where the choice of solely TC harmony is unique, designed to recreate the sound of *sho* chords:⁴⁴ these particular TC are to be found only in *Sept haïkai*, since Messiaen additionally treats them to transposed inversions above the same bass note.⁴⁵ Rather than lending support to the melody from beneath, as in Western music, these *sho* chords shimmer above the melodic line, as heaven lies above the earth.⁴⁶ Recalling the treatment of the sun in *Catalogue*, in ‘Le Parc de Nara et les lanterns de Pierre’ these heavenly chords are intended to convey ‘the marvellous effect of sunlight on the Japanese cedar tree called *cryptomerias*’.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 213. See also Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 199; on p. 275 Dingle notes ‘emotional detachment’ in ‘Les élus marqués du sceau’, doubtless due to such layering techniques.

⁴¹ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 211; Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, pp. 198-199.

⁴² *Traité* III, pp. 74-76.

⁴³ Bauer, p. 155. Note, however, in Example 3.14, Messiaen’s use of 1st CCR 12B with a second inversion C major triad in violas, which coincides with the second inversion C major triad with added 2nd/9th at the foundation of TC 9C (first violin). This is an example of Messiaen’s planned linkage of tonality and colour.

⁴⁴ Wai-Ling Cheong, ‘Buddhist Temple, Shinto Shrine and the Invisible God of *Sept Haïkai*’, in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by A. Shenton, pp. 241-260 (p. 246), and *Traité* V/2, p. 463.

⁴⁵ *Traité* V/2, p. 500, and *Traité* VII, p. 174.

⁴⁶ *Traité* V/2, p. 494.

⁴⁷ Cheong, ‘Buddhist Temple, Shinto Shrine’, p. 250 which cites *Traité* V/2, p. 463.

EXAMPLE 3.14: *Chronochromie*, ‘Strophe I’, 39/1/1, strings

The musical score for strings consists of five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is marked with various dynamics including *mf*, *pp*, and *mf pp*. Performance instructions include *non vibrato* and specific techniques like TC 8A, 9C, CTI 9C, CTI 12B, 1st CCR 12B, 5A, and 2B. The music features complex rhythmic patterns and clusters.

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ET EX PATRE NATUM ANTE OMNIA SÆCULA

Opening the theological message of *Vingt regards* with Matthew 3. 17, ‘Regard du Père’ concerns the Divine Sonship: ‘Celui-ci est mon Fils bien-aimé en qui j’ai pris toutes mes complaisances’.⁴⁸

These words which were heard on Thabor [sic], when the splendour of the Divinity filled the Sacred Humanity of Jesus with its rays, are but the echo, in the created world, of the words that the Heavenly Father utters in the heavenly sanctuary, *in splendoribus sanctorum*, ‘Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee’.⁴⁹

Marmion amplifies: ‘this *hodie* is the now of eternity’.⁵⁰ In the Gospels ‘three times only does the Eternal Father cause His voice to be heard by the world [...] *Hic est Filius meus dilectus* [...] *ipsum audite*’.⁵¹ Messiaen approaches this filiation in movement VIII of *La Transfiguration*, which is the most important moment of the entire work:⁵²

Une nuée lumineuse prend les trios apôtres sous son ombre. ‘Et voici qu’une voix sortit de la nuée, disant: Celui-ci est mon Fils bien-aimé, en qui j’ai mis toutes mes complaisances: écoutez-le.’ [...] la voix du Père poursuit le formidable témoignage qui fonde notre foi: ‘Filius meus dilectus’.⁵³

Helping to create the effect of this luminous cloud are effects such as choral declamation and *ppp* dynamic, B₁ played across four octaves, clusters for 1st violins, semitone trills, and 2nd violins playing *vibrato* (Example 3.15).⁵⁴ It is the harmonic framework, however, which contributes most to the evocation of the numinous, where two layers of TC are

⁴⁸ *Vingt regards*, Note de l’Auteur i & p. 1: ‘This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased’.

⁴⁹ Marmion, p. 65.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵² *Traité* VII, p. 277. For a definition of filiation, see Appendix Five, below, p. 130.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 277: ‘A luminous cloud takes the three apostles beneath its shadow. ‘And behold a voice came from the cloud, saying “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased: listen to Him” [...] the voice of the Father continues the tremendous testimony at the foundation of our faith: *Filius meus dilectus*’.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 279-280.

superimposed, moving at independent speeds. The foundation, in cellos and violas and firmly anchored in the red and gold of TC 5, after the initial chord C, plays a palindromic sequence pivoting on the second appearance of chord C. The bass of chord C has the defining tonal goal of the TC group, and in this case is the red of E major. Above this, Messiaen places interversions of TC ascending by semitones, increasing in brightness from the greys of TC 11, to the pale yellow of TC 8 (Example 3.16). Here is Messiaen's 'breakthrough':⁵⁵ eternity erupts into the present with light and colour.⁵⁶

EXAMPLE 3.15: *La Transfiguration*, VIII 'Récit Évangélique', RN6 (179/1/1) choir/strings

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EXAMPLE 3.16: 'Récit Évangélique', RN6, harmonic analysis

⁵⁵ Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, p. 2: 'percée vers l'au-delà'. For an alternative translation, see Introduction, p. 1, n. 9, above.

⁵⁶ *Traité VII*, p. 277:

On doit seulement sentir le frémissement de la lumière dans les accords très doux des cordes, accords dont les couleurs se meuvent à des vitesses différentes [...] Mais il fallait s'approcher – au moins un peu – de cette terreur sacrée qui est une joie, de cette irruption de l'Éternel dans le temporel: c'est ici que la lumière et la couleur interviennent.

*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.*¹

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOPHANIES OF GLORY, BEAUTY AND LOVE: SISTER WORKS *MÉDITATIONS* AND *LA TRANSFIGURATION*

Messiaen's two most substantial works of the 1960s celebrate the bond between the theophanies of Old and New Testaments. The Transfiguration is 'in its indissoluble tension between old covenant and parousia [...] testimony to the hiddenness of the glory',² and at the Transfiguration, God's hidden glory 'becomes present for a moment in all its stages and forms, and attains its immediate fulfilment in its Old Testament form in Jesus',³ where this Old Testament glory is that witnessed by Moses and evoked by Messiaen in *Méditations*. Not only would he have been led to consider a setting of the Transfiguration by his reading of Marmion, his favoured theologian concerned with the 'marvels of divine adoption',⁴ but by the sermon on light and filiation which Messiaen had heard in the Dauphiné many years previously,⁵ inspiring the division of *La Transfiguration* into a Septenary of light and a Septenary of filiation (the two most important themes running through the work).⁶ The Transfiguration provided the perfect vehicle for *éblouissement*, witnessing 'the glory of the Divinity which penetrates the Humanity of Jesus'.⁷ Indeed, both light and filiation had been strong theological concerns running throughout his music since the 1930s, with much of Messiaen's music pointing directly to this material. He would certainly have been aware of Marmion's assertion that 'the Transfiguration is one of those episodes whence the splendour of the Divinity especially shines out before our eyes'.⁸

This filiation is both eternal (the filiation of Jesus as Word incarnate), and adoptive (the filiation of mankind).⁹ Messiaen explains: 'the luminous manifestation of Christ transfigured, as well as his eternal filiation as the Word and our small adoptive filiation: these are magnificent subjects for meditation', thus causing 'an ever-renewed amazement'.¹⁰ Light dominates the opening Septenary: 'If Christ was radiant, we, too, shall be after the resurrection, when we possess the gift of light'.¹¹ Furthermore, this New Testament light symbolism ultimately represents God's love.¹²

¹ Job 42. 5 (King James Version). For more on theophany, see Appendix Five, p. 133.

² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, trans. by Brian McNeil, ed. by John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), Volume VII, 'Theology: The New Covenant', p. 341, translation from the original *Herrlichkeit: Eine theologische Ästhetik*, III:2 (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1969).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

⁴ Marmion, p. 49.

⁵ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 145, and cited in Christopher Dingle, *The life of Messiaen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 168.

⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 157.

⁷ Marmion, p. 342: 'the dazzled disciples fall upon their faces'.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

⁹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 145.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

¹¹ *Ibid.* Translation of: 'Si le Christ a été lumineux, nous le serons aussi après la resurrection, quand nous posséderons le don de clarté', Olivier Messiaen, *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1969), 'Analyse succincte', preface to the score, p. 20.

¹² Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, p. 286.

LIGHT: *CANDOR EST LUCIS ÆTERNÆ*

The favourite text of Jan van Eyck,¹³ when understood within the patristic interpretation of Wisdom, alludes to Christ himself.¹⁴

For she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars;
being compared with the light, she is found before it. For she is the brightness
of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty.¹⁵

This text forms the basis of the Alleluia of the Transfiguration, *Candor est lucis aeternae*, to which Messiaen refers in four movements of *La Transfiguration*, as well as in 'Le Verbe' of *La Nativité*. God's Glory as truth revealed through love is manifested in Christ both as its 'perfect image' and epitome of our involvement.¹⁶ *Candor*, and subsequently *et imago* are introduced by the flashes of 1st CCR 12 (Example 4.1), identical in texture to the climax of *Méditations*, depicting the Burning Bush (Example 4.2).

EXAMPLE 4.1: *La Transfiguration*, II 'Configuratum corpori claritatis suae', RN6 (39/1/1), orchestral and choral reduction

1st CCR 12
A B
or jaune éclatant
ff
mf
Can - dor est lu - cis ae - ter-nae,
Can - dor est lu - cis ae - ter-nae,

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Preceded by the 'Theme of God' to invoke the name He gives Himself,¹⁷ the coloration of 1st CCR 9 in *Traité VII* matches Messiaen's description of CCR at the opening of the ninth meditation.¹⁸ The A major triad at the top of 1st CCR 9B evokes the blue of the sky and of heaven, whilst the remaining hues evoke the flames of the bush (Example 4.2). Here Messiaen alludes to his use of 1st CCR 9 in *Le merle noir* and *Catalogue*.

EXAMPLE 4.2: *Méditations*, IX 'Je suis Celui qui suis', 77/1/1

thème de Dieu
Lent ("Je suis Celui qui suis") (Exode, III, 14)
fff
long
long
long
1st CCR 9
A B
A. violet magenta, blanc rosé, rouge orangé.
B. bleu violacé, café clair, dégradé vers le blanc, vert et argent, brun rougeâtre.

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¹³ Millard Meiss, 'Light as Form and Symbol in Some Fifteenth-Century Paintings', *The Art Bulletin*, 27:3, (September 1945), 175-181 (pp. 179-180): van Eyck cites this in connection with *Virgin in the Church*, the Dresden triptych, and the Ghent and Paele altarpieces.

¹⁴ Dingle, 'Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ', p. 37, and Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 66.

¹⁵ Wisdom 7. 29, 26: translation in Meiss, p. 180.

¹⁶ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, p. 21.

¹⁷ *Méditations*, p. 76.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*: 'accord à resonance contractée, qui mélange le bleu violacé (couleur principale) au rouge orange, au brun rougeâtre, au violet, avec un peu de vert et d'argent'.

The treble blue of 1st CCR 9 punctuates the sunrise in ‘Le rousserolle effarvatte’ (Example 4.3),¹⁹ and also features in ‘Le traquet stapazin’ (Example 4.4), ‘Le loriod’ (Example 4.5),²⁰ evoking the glistening of light of ‘La bouscarle’ (Example 4.6).²¹

EXAMPLE 4.3: ‘Le rousserolle effarvatte’, 11/3/1

The musical score for 'Le rousserolle effarvatte' is presented in three systems. The top system shows the vocal line with lyrics: 'Lever de soleil rose et mauve (sur l'étang des nénuphars) (6 h. du matin)'. The middle system is the piano accompaniment, starting with a 'Lent' tempo (♩=50) and moving to 'Très modéré' (♩=72). The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *mf*, and features a '7^{es}' fingering. The score includes a first CCR (9A and B) and a 'Red.' (Reduction) marking.

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EXAMPLE 4.4: ‘Le traquet stapazin’, 1/1/1

The musical score for 'Le traquet stapazin' is presented in two systems. The top system shows the vocal line with lyrics: 'Bien modéré (vignobles en terrasses)'. The middle system is the piano accompaniment, starting with a 'Bien modéré' tempo (♩=66). The piano part includes a dynamic marking of *p* and features an '8^{es}' fingering. The score includes a first CCR (9A and B) and a 'Red.' (Reduction) marking.

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EXAMPLE 4.5: *Catalogue*, Book 1, II ‘Le loriod’, 10/3/1

The musical score for 'Le loriod' is presented in two systems. The top system shows the vocal line with lyrics: 'Loriod'. The middle system is the piano accompaniment, starting with a 'ff' dynamic marking and moving to 'mf'. The score includes first and second CCRs (9A, B and 5A, B) and an '8^{es}' fingering.

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¹⁹ Loo, Vol. 1, p. 125, and Vol. 2, p. 157: Here CCR ‘sustain the two singing birds. In this instance, the chords function to represent the “sunshine” as a background for the birds’.

²⁰ Note that in this example, whilst the bass of 2nd CCR 5 is correct, Messiaen pairs this with the treble of 2nd CCR 7, which is one tone lower.

²¹ Messiaen writes in the preface: ‘C’est une belle matinée d’ombre et de lumière’.

EXAMPLE 4.6: *Catalogue*, Book 5, IX ‘La bouscarle’, 21/4/2

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In the context of Colossians 1. 15, Jesus as ‘image of the invisible God’ finds its roots in Wisdom.²² Messiaen explores this allusion in *La Transfiguration*, discussing the splendour of eternal light: ‘Le livre de la Sagesse prophétise à la fois le Fils-Verbe, et le Christ transfiguré’.²³ In the multi-layered sixth movement, the ternary structure is deliberately disguised to capture God’s mystery,²⁴ and whilst this may be ‘Messiaen’s greatest ornithological *tour de force*’ prior to the opera,²⁵ the most significant achievement lies within the harmony: ‘Contrepoint de chants d’oiseaux, très complexe, aux harmonies multicolores. Un *deçi-tâla* [...] s’y transforme par augmentations et diminutions successives’.²⁶

Although van Maas denies any sense of ‘breakthrough’ by the lack of framing, contrasting musical texture,²⁷ these ten colour chords ‘rotated’ to *candrakalâ* (beauty of the moon)²⁸ represent the ‘perpetuity of Christ’,²⁹ set out in Example 4.7. There exist strong associations between Balthasar and Messiaen:³⁰ for both theologian and composer, the abundant beauty throughout *La Transfiguration* is God’s Glory, with Messiaen’s symbolism of *candrakalâ* jointly signifying here both beauty, and the Son.³¹ This passage prolongs the C major gold and bright yellow light from the opening CCR through to the brilliance of CTI 7C, which closes the progression. Thus the C major of 1st CCR 12B accompanies the setting of *candor* in both second and sixth movements.

²² Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, pp. 280-281.

²³ *La Transfiguration*, preface to score, p. 20: ‘The book of Wisdom prophesizes both the Son and Word, and the transfigured Christ’.

²⁴ Dingle, ‘Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ’, p. 94.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁶ *La Transfiguration*, preface to score, p. 20: ‘Very complex counterpoint of birdsongs with multicoloured harmonies. A *deçi-tâla* is transformed successively by augmentation and diminution’.

²⁷ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 48.

²⁸ *Des canyons*, preface to score, p. 18. See also Appendix Five, p. 129, below.

²⁹ Dingle, ‘Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ’, Vol. 1, p. 39 and Vol. 2, p. 16.

³⁰ Michaely, p. 39.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 742.

EXAMPLE 4.7: *La Transfiguration*, VI ‘Candor est lucis aeternae’, RN1 (139/1/1), choir/2nd violins

Un peu vif (♩=80) (2nd sops, mezzos + 1st altos)

mf

Can - dor est lu - cis ac - ter - nac, spe - cu - lum si - ne - ma - cu - la,

1st CCR 12 A B 8A 8B 9C TC CTI 12 A B 1 A B CTI 7 C

(8 2nd violins) *p* or jaune éclatant

jaune d'or

dessin jaune et blanc, avec des zones d'or très brillantes

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Turning to *Méditations*, the dazzling gold and yellows of 1st CCR 12 and TC 9 (Example 4.8) sets the eternity of God as defined by Aquinas,³² and described as scintillating light:³³ “God is eternal” signifies not only that he will never end, but that he never had any beginning,³⁴ displayed with ‘a glittering flash of colour’.³⁵ This device directly evokes ‘the dazzling idea of God’s eternity’.³⁶ In the same way that the reality of this theological concept remains beyond our grasp, so the ‘sublime “shimmering” of the intense colours and the overwhelming richness of resonance’ which such harmonies generated for Messiaen, forever remain hidden from our view.³⁷

EXAMPLE 4.8: *Méditations*, V ‘Dieu est immense, éternel, immuable, le Souffle de l’Esprit, Dieu est amour’, 38/2/1

1st CCR 12 A B

Très modéré (Dieu est éternel)

ff

TC 9 A B C

ff

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This central piece, ‘the most important’ of all the meditations,³⁸ assembles a collection of musical signifiers for the Divine Attributes: definitions of God from Part I of *Summa Theologiae*. Firstly, God is immense. This omnipresent, infinite immeasurability of God is defined by Aquinas,³⁹ and rendered by Messiaen with the *leitmotiv* of the *theme de Dieu*, which is later developed in the heart of the piece (indeed of the entire work) as a dramatic *effêt de vitrail* toccata (Example 4.9). This pairs manual colour-chords with the theme of God in the pedal:⁴⁰ ‘I unleashed a tremendous toccata, a veritable tempest representing the Spirit’.⁴¹

³² STI, Q. 10.

³³ *Méditations*, p. 37.

³⁴ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 28.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

³⁶ Van Maas, ‘The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen’, p. 327.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 126.

³⁹ STI, Q. 7, Q. 8.

⁴⁰ Bruhn, *Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, pp. 145, 146.

⁴¹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 127.

EXAMPLE 4.9: *Méditations*, V, 42/2/2

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The texture, dynamic and identical transposition level of the *effet de vitrail* chords in the order A, B, D above the pedal signifier of God, links this moment to ‘Le Verbe’ from *La Nativité* (Example 4.10), with its complex superscription,⁴² including *Candor est lucis aeternae* which forms the core idea of *La Transfiguration*.⁴³ Thus Messiaen makes an important textual reference between works.⁴⁴ This idea was earlier explored in ‘Le Verbe’, where ‘Trinitarian love’, implicit in the manifestations of Glory in the Old Testament through the eternity of the Word, demonstrates God’s mercy.⁴⁵ a mercy revealed in the second section of the piece, through death and resurrection in the *Victimae paschali*.

EXAMPLE 4.10: ‘Le Verbe’, 1/2/2

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⁴² Messiaen combines Wisdom 7. 26 with the filiation of Psalm 2 and the brightness of the Daystar of Psalm 109 in an insightful network of theological cross-references. See Chapter Two, p. 44, n. 35, above.

⁴³ Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 76.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, p. 27.

Following this toccata, in Example 4.11 the piece develops the ‘eternal’ motive in an ambitious, swirling *vitral*, where the original colours of gold and yellow from 1stCCR 12 and TC 9 are now mixed with the heavenly blue of TC 12 and its orange complement.

EXAMPLE 4.11: *Méditations*, V, 46/3/2

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‘ON ALL MY HOLY MOUNTAIN’⁴⁶

In the seventh movement, ‘Choral de la Sainte Montagne’, Messiaen’s text of Psalm 48. 2 talks both of Jerusalem and Mount Zion in anticipation of the grandeur and beauty of Jesus on the mount of Transfiguration, where the height and holiness of the mountain are symbols of paradise, the light of the transfigured Jesus drawing us towards the heavenly city.⁴⁷ The similarities with *Conleurs de la cité céleste* in this movement exist on more than a theological level, for the style recalls the chorale treatment of the Alleluia of Corpus Christi in *Conleurs*, and the colour symbolism in ‘Choral de la Sainte Montagne’ reflects the identical colour-scheme of the heavenly city. The chorale setting of the Alleluia of Corpus Christi, *Caro mea* (Example 4.12), deals with eternal dwelling in Christ through the Eucharist, and like ‘Choral de la Sainte Montagne’, makes structural use of TC alongside other harmonic areas. Here the colour scheme uses subtle shifts, from the blues and greens of mode 3³, through the greys with multicoloured reflections of TC 11, to the emerald, amethyst and blue of CTI 6B, and the yellow, white and brilliant gold of CTI 7C. Fitting the chant contours, two chords are revoiced, whilst there are also additional/missing notes.

⁴⁶ Isaiah 11. 9.

⁴⁷ *Traité* VII, p. 309.

EXAMPLE 4.12: *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, 20/1/1

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In ‘Choral de la Sainte Montagne’ the resolution of TC onto second inversion E major triads are described as ‘appoggiatura-type chords whose chromatic density serves to dramatise the human struggle between darkness and light as the grandeur of God is celebrated’.⁴⁸ In reality, the polarity which exists is not about conflict or illumination, but rather about the splendour of complementary colours. Three *objets trouvés* contribute to the harmonic scheme: the first chord is taken from Golaud’s theme in Debussy’s *Pelléas*, whilst the second is derived from Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*. The vision of Revelation is evoked by Messiaen’s favoured apocalyptic ‘hallucination’ chords, taken from Act 1, Scene 2 of Berg’s *Wozzeck*.⁴⁹

The harmonic control is governed by phrases moving through a series of greens, cadencing on reds, and this swing between complementary colours recalls an identical colour polarity in *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, where the heavenly city juxtaposes emerald green with sardonyx, or red, orange and gold. Messiaen hears the opening Debussy and Ravel chords as green, whilst the dominant colours of TC 4 are green and mauve, with this mauve also featuring in the use of the chords culled from *Wozzeck*.⁵⁰ The points of arrival, on the other hand, are red: the red of E major and the red, gold and brown of mode 2².

TC harmonies unfold in reverse from chord C,⁵¹ where the goal of TC 4A provides a transition into the cadential red.⁵² The arrival of the word *Dei* not only uses TC to colour the concept of God, but prolongs the transitional harmony of TC 4A by means of a voice exchange as the cadential red is prepared (Example 4.13).⁵³

⁴⁸ Arnold Whittall, ‘Messiaen and twentieth-century music’, in *Messiaen Studies*, ed. by R. Sholl, pp. 232-253 (p. 239).

⁴⁹ Messiaen cites these quotations in *Traité VII*, pp. 309 & 311. Messiaen also acknowledges that this interlocking of triads a semitone apart in *Pelléas* is also to be found in Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

⁵⁰ *Traité VII*, pp. 309-311.

⁵¹ Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 25: ‘Chorale de la Sainte Montagne’ [...] has an isolated Turning Chord in the second bar, though this can be viewed as an interruption as the progression is immediately expanded’.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 311: Messiaen describes the colours of TC 4A as pale green with a little yellow, moving through silver grey towards a little red, and black.

⁵³ *Traité VII*, p. 303. Note also the fact that the majesty of this slow-moving chorale, which gradually moves through a series of colours towards red-based cadences at the close of each phrase on E major, is identical in technique to the opening movement of *Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà...*, ‘Apparition du Christ glorieux’, discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, pp. 113 and 116, below.

EXAMPLE 4.13: *La Transfiguration*, VII ‘Choral de la Sainte Montagne’, 161/1/1, orchestral and choral reduction

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TERRIBILIS EST LOCUS ISTE

Characteristic of Messiaen’s later music is the use of modal and non-modal chords within the same passage in order to offer the greatest palette of colours, and in ‘Terribilis est Locus iste’ CTI and CCR are used to contrast with mode 2. Capturing the awe of the encounter on Tabor, Messiaen selects the text *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, translating this to the magnificence of the Dauphiné.⁵⁴

Messiaen was thinking of Mark 9. 3 and Luke 9. 29, which Marmion describes thus: ‘His countenance shines like the sun, His raiment becomes white as snow’,⁵⁵ and later: ‘The countenance of Jesus shines like the sun; His garments become shining white’.⁵⁶ In Example 4.14, the sanctity of God is coloured by the chords of the piano, accompanied by the resonance of percussion.

⁵⁴ Messiaen’s programme notes for the first performance of *La Transfiguration*, and cited in *Traité VII*, p. 295:

C’est en regardant, par temps clair, le Mont blanc, la Jungfrau, et les trios glaciers de la Meije en Oisans, que j’ai compris la différence entre la petite splendeur de la neige et la grande splendeur du soleil – c’est là aussi que j’ai pu imaginer à quel point le lieu de la Transfiguration était terrible!

Both Marmion and Messiaen develop this idea from Aquinas (*ST I*, Q. 45, Art. 2), which in turn is an expansion of the Gospel narratives in Mark 9 and Luke 9. Messiaen cites Matthew 17. 2: ‘Son visage devint brillant comme le soleil, et ses vêtements blancs comme la neige’ (Preface to *La Transfiguration*).

⁵⁵ Marmion, p. 231.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

EXAMPLE 4.14: *La Transfiguration*, XII ‘Terribilis est Locus iste’, RN9 (316/1/1)⁵⁷

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The word *Deo* is bathed in light,⁵⁸ effecting an immediate change in dynamic, texture and harmony, with the tonicization of the major third of E major as a second inversion chord of A♭ major. Associated with this is a shift of colour from the red of *Gloria in excelsis* in mode 2², to the Chartres blue of *Deo*.⁵⁹ In this passage, not only are we dazzled ‘in the full radiance of eternal light’,⁶⁰ but struck by the multicoloured effect of this Uncreated Light, reminiscent of flowers, birds in stained glass, and illuminating the glacier,⁶¹ the ‘scintillating clarity of dawn’.⁶²

⁵⁷ This reduction excludes strings and percussion.

⁵⁸ *Traité* VII, p. 295:

Tout cela est lent, solennel, d’une puissance tranquille et sans effort, c’est bien ‘ce qui est en haut’. Mais il y a plus haut que ce qui est en haut, plus lumineux que ce qui est lumineux, il y a la Hauteur par excellence, la Lumière avec un grand L, il y a le mot ineffable: Deo.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 297.

⁶⁰ Marmion, p. 56.

⁶¹ *Traité* VII, p. 297. Messiaen describes the piano chords thus:

Elles sont comme des fleurs éparses dans un liquide bleu, comme des oiseaux multicolores s’envolant sur une rosace bleue, comme le scintillement de la clarté naissante lorsque le jour s’installe sur les détails de la roche et de la glace...

⁶² Translation in van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious music*, p. 51.

IPSUM ESSE SUBSISTENS: THE BURNING BUSH

EXAMPLE 4.15: 'Je suis Celui qui suis', 83/1/2, 83/3/1 & 84/1/1

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with a different time signature and key signature:

- System 1 (83/1/2):** Features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is *Très modéré* and the dynamic is *ff*. The score includes markings for *CTI* and measures 12A, 12B, 6B, and 4B.
- System 2 (83/3/1):** Features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is *Très modéré* and the dynamic is *ff*. The score includes markings for *CTI* and measures 11B, 9D, 3B, 6B, 8A, 8B, 2B, and 12B.
- System 3 (84/1/1):** Features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is *Très modéré* and the dynamic is *ff*. The score includes markings for *1st CCR 9*, *CTI 5*, *1st CCR 7*, and *CTI 9*.

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⁶³ See Appendix Five, p. 131.

The theophany on Tabor recalls that of the Burning Bush on Sinai, to which we now turn. Opening *Méditations*, Messiaen has taken us to the basis of the Abrahamic faiths, but who is God, and how does He reveal Himself? In the final meditation, both development and summary,⁶⁴ we encounter God's words to Moses on Mount Sinai, which resonates with Augustine's meditations upon the Burning Bush in his contemplation of the Trinity.⁶⁵ Aquinas observes: 'It is said in the person of God: "I am Who am"'.⁶⁶ This is the 'most proper name of God',⁶⁷ and in Example 4.15, the Theme of God in the pedal is fragmented and transposed, harmonized by CTI. In contrast to Meditation II, which, with some identical material, exhibits the immediate attractiveness of *mysterium fascinans*, Meditation IX hints in style at the fearsome *mysterium tremendum* of Rudolph Otto.⁶⁸

Moses' tangible experiences of God's presence in Exodus are described both in Meditations IV and IX, and these two pieces therefore continue the exploration of the divine light of *La Transfiguration*. Thus, Messiaen's treatment of these events of Exodus shortly after his completion of *La Transfiguration* demonstrates his understanding of the 'connection between central theophanies in the Old and New Testaments'.⁶⁹ The Eastern mystics of the Uncreated Light show that Tabor light shines from the dawn of creation, and here the use of colour-chords represents a sonic evocation of the triune God implicit in the Old Testament. Approaching God, 'Moses himself is first called to be made clean',⁷⁰ to encounter this intangible and inaccessible light.

In Moses' encounter with the Burning Bush, God speaks of Israel's deliverance to the Promised Land,⁷¹ whilst at the liturgy of the Easter Vigil, the Resurrection is foreshadowed in the Old Testament by the release of Israel from Egyptian captivity. The psalmist of *In exitu Israel* anticipates the Resurrection: 'the sanctified soul will emerge from the enslavement of earthly corruption towards the freedom of eternal glory'.⁷² 'Les élus marqués du sceau' echoes the Passover, and here, as God promises freedom to Moses, so resurrection is promised to us. In the words of Abbot Suger: 'Just as the bush is seen to burn yet is not consumed, so he who is full of the divine fire burns yet is not consumed'.⁷³ On Mount Sinai, the invisible becomes visible, and the preservation of the bush carrying the presence of the Lord becomes a metaphor for the virginity of the Theotokos: Gregory of Nyssa views the Burning Bush as the symbol of Mary, 'ignited by the divine fire'.⁷⁴

⁶⁴ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 127.

⁶⁵ Augustine, *De Trinitate* III, 11, 24.

⁶⁶ *STI*, Q. 2, Art. 3.

⁶⁷ *STI*, Q. 13, Art. 11.

⁶⁸ Van Maas, 'The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', p. 326.

⁶⁹ Solrunn Nes, *The Uncreated Light: An Iconographical Study of the Transfiguration in the Eastern Church*, trans. by Arlene Moi (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007), p. 8.

⁷⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius, *Mystica theologia* I, in *De divina hierarchia/de divinis nominibus*, ed. by Phillipe Chevallier, Vol. I (Paris, 1937), 574 (8) – 578 (8), trans. by Colledge and Marler, in "'Poverty of the Will'", p. 32. This need for purification points towards the sanctity of the Divine, both set apart, and apprehended in light:

The most godly and most exalted of things seen and understood are the exemplars of things beneath him who surpasses all. Through them, his presence above all thought is brightened, standing upon the intelligible heights of his most holy ranges.

⁷¹ Exodus 3. 8.

⁷² Umberto Eco, *Umberto Eco on Literature* (London: Secker and Warburg, 2005), p. 225.

⁷³ Abbot Suger, *De administratione XXXIV*, in *Abbot Suger on the Abbey Church of St. Denis and its Art Treasures*, ed. and trans. by Erwin Panofsky (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), p. 75.

⁷⁴ Nes, p. 60.

The culmination of the piece assembles TC and CCR with the extended Theme of God in a theological statement which amplifies the opening three bars of the piece: the name of God, the 'Je suis' of Meditation IV is coloured and punctuated by CCR (Example 4.16). The use of TC here refers to the idea from Meditation V that God is eternal, moving from blue, through red and gold to yellow. The violet blue of TC 1 refers back to the heavenly, principal colour of violet blue of 1st CCR 9 from the opening of the piece, whilst the red and gold of TC 5 and the yellow of TC 8 again reflect the colours of the Burning Bush. The repeated pattern of TC B and C established at three points within the piece is now closed with the sounding of TC A: the final appearance of these 'eternal' harmonies.

The subsequent three statements of CCR pick up these colorations of blues and yellows, reaching the climax of the entire work on the cardinal form of CCR, where the D \flat major of the treble of chord B is an enharmonic expansion of the C \sharp in the bass concluding the Theme of God. Thus the primary transposition level of CCR is finally used as the ultimate sonic representation of the Uncreated Light of God manifested in the Burning Bush, as the climax of this piece (Example 4.16).

EXAMPLE 4.16: 'Je suis Celui qui suis', 87/2/1

The musical score for 'Je suis Celui qui suis', 87/2/1, is presented in two systems. The first system features three TC (Thème de Dieu) sections: TC 1 (Violet Bleu), TC 5 (Rouge et Or), and TC 8 (Jaune Pâle). These are followed by the 'thème de Dieu' and 1st CCR 6. The second system features 1st CCR 8, the 'thème de Dieu', and 1st CCR 1. The score includes various dynamics (ff, cresc., rall., rall. molto, fff, sm, long) and tempo markings (Modéré, rall., rall. molto). The text 'Je suis Celui qui suis' (Exode, III, 14) is written above the vocal line. The score is reproduced by kind permission of Editions Alphonse Leduc, Paris/United Music Publishers Ltd, England.

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I AM PASSES BEFORE MOSES

Sacred interaction often occurs on mountains, and Moses experiences here on Sinai take us forwards to the Transfiguration. Like the Transfiguration, the Lord descends in a cloud, and after these encounters, Moses face then shines like the sun. Fresh from his work on *La Transfiguration* and in the manner of the background of a Renaissance biblical painting, Messiaen again sets his scene in landscapes he knows intimately, linking this illumination of Moses with the Transfiguration: ‘The clarity which was in His garments signified the future clarity of the saints, which will be surpassed by that of Christ, just as the brightness of the snow is surpassed by that of the sun’.⁷⁵ He uses his own experience of the mountains of the Dauphiné in both *La Transfiguration* and *Méditations* to evoke the atmosphere of these sacred biblical encounters, where the otherness of this unfamiliar dimension takes place symbolically in the forests of the Vosges, Alpes Dauphinoises, and Jura.⁷⁶ For Messiaen, we may only grasp in flashes of rare and brief illumination these two words which summarize our entire faith: ‘il est’.⁷⁷ The entire fourth *Méditation* drives towards this final vision, which literally presents ‘Je suis’ in iambic rhythm: Messiaen maintains that all other material is purely preparatory,⁷⁸ as we are ‘overwhelmed by the dazzling light of the holy’.⁷⁹

Yet buried within this mysterious avian heralding is an indication that the God who is about to appear is the Trinity, just as much as at the Baptism of Christ and the Transfiguration: the plurality of God at the opening of Genesis.⁸⁰ The short trio (31/2/1) representing Father (*rāgavardhana*, or ‘rhythm that gives life to the melody’),⁸¹ Son (*pratāpaçekhara*, or ‘the strength that emanates from the countenance’),⁸² and Holy Spirit (*simhavikrama*, or ‘the power of the lion’)⁸³ is enclosed by a disguised version of 1st CCR 1 and TC 3A with 4C (Example 4.17).

EXAMPLE 4.17: *Méditations*, IV, ‘Je suis, Je suis’, 35/3/1

The musical score for 'Je suis, Je suis' is presented in a piano-vocal format. It consists of three measures of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first measure is marked 'Un peu vif' and '8va-----'. The second measure is marked 'Un peu lent' and 'pp'. The third measure is marked 'Un peu vif' and 'f sec f sec'. The score is divided into sections labeled '1st CCR 1' (A and B) and 'TC' (3A and 4C). The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and rests.

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⁷⁵ *ST III*, Q. 45, Art. 2, ad. 3.

⁷⁶ *Méditations*, p. 29.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 126.

⁸⁰ Leigh, p. 25.

⁸¹ Shenton, p. 56.

⁸² Programme notes to Messiaen’s own recording of *Méditations*, Erato 4509-92007-2, trans. by Conrad Bernier, p. 42.

⁸³ Robert Sherlaw Johnson, ‘Rhythmic Technique and Symbolism’, in *Messiaen’s Language of Mystical Love*, ed. by S. Bruhn, pp. 121-139 (p. 131).

The greens of these chords prepare for the main vision, where the same chords are to be heard *ffff*. This 'trill motif is the authentic predecessor of the "Je suis" chords'.⁸⁴ As God passes before Moses, the strongest colours shift from green to orange and from orange to the red of glory. This visual encounter with God commences with the cardinal form 1st CCR, with its predominant colours of green, blue and violet. Green and blue remain as background colours throughout this entire passage, even at the close as the predominant colours move from orange to red, blue is to be found at the bass of TC 2B, whilst green forms part of 1st CCR 11A and CTI 10D.

Greens and blues also predominate in the vision of the Burning Bush, and whilst this opening use of CCR 1 is distorted by the reversal of the top voice and the omission of resonance notes in the bass, it is clearly linked to the final, climactic use of CCR in Meditation IX. As the vision recedes, this shift of colour towards red is marked by a gradual deceleration and *decrescendo* (Example 4.18). Balthasar's contemporaneous description of Moses' experience is identical to that of Messiaen:

There is the unapproachable furnace of light, discernable through all the refraction of colours, yet indicated by them only in an oblique and fragmentary way – no man, if he wants to remain alive, should desire to look directly at that furnace.⁸⁵

EXAMPLE 4.18: 'Je suis, Je suis', 36/1/1

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⁸⁴ Leigh, p. 74.

⁸⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Die Wahrheit ist symphonisch: Aspekte des christlichen Pluralismus* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1972), trans. by Graham Harrison as *Truth is Symphonic: Aspects of Christian Pluralism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), pp. 20-21.

FILIATION: OUR PERFECT ADOPTION

Already in *La Nativité*, Messiaen had explored the notion of three births: ‘the eternal birth of the Word, the temporal birth of Christ, the spiritual birth of Christians’,⁸⁶ and this spiritual birth is expressed in the concept of Divine Filiation. The destiny of mankind is central to the message of ‘Les enfants de Dieu’ and ‘Desseins éternel’. The former, citing John 1. 12 and Galatians 4. 6, makes clear that we are able to become God’s children, whilst in the latter, with our predestination as children of God in Ephesians 1. 5-6, ‘the decree of this predestination is eternal’.⁸⁷

Marmion’s exploration of this divine predestination in *Christ in His Mysteries* states that ‘the divine adoption by grace which makes us children of God is wrought by the Son, by the Word’.⁸⁸ Marmion’s frequent references to Christ as *λόγος*, already having informed Messiaen’s scriptural quotation for ‘Le Verbe’, make specific reference to Divine Filiation: ‘In the heavenly splendours [...] God begets this Son by an eternal generation. It is to this Divine Sonship in the bosom of the Father that our adoration turns’.⁸⁹ Some thirty years after composing *La Nativité*, Messiaen would have been aware that ‘at the Transfiguration, the Word gave full liberty to His eternal glory’.⁹⁰

Man’s relationship to the Father is again dealt with in *Vingt regards*. Explaining ‘L’échange’,⁹¹ Messiaen paraphrases Augustine via Marmion: ‘He is made man so as to make us gods’.⁹² Messiaen translates the *sacrosancta commercia* of the *oratio secreta* of midnight mass as ‘terrible échange’,⁹³ an exchange which is ‘like the grace of a new divine birth in us’.⁹⁴ This exchange signifies that ‘God, in becoming incarnate, takes our human nature and gives us, in return, a participation in His Divine nature’.⁹⁵ Marmion also refers to the *admirabile commercium* of the antiphon of the Octave of Christmas, which ‘has made us partakers of His Divinity’.⁹⁶

In exchange for the humanity which He takes, the Incarnate Word gives us a share in His Divinity; He makes us partakers of His Divine Nature. And thus is accomplished the most wonderful exchange which could be made.⁹⁷

The musical material of ‘L’échange’ illustrates this theological point:

The Incarnation of Christ, the exchange of natures, becomes musically evident as God’s reaching out to humankind [...] Jesus’ growth, God’s outstretched hand in the “awesome commerce”, is musically represented as a vertical expansion.⁹⁸

⁸⁶ Shenton, p. 35, which refers to Messiaen’s description in the preface to *La Nativité du Seigneur*.

⁸⁷ Marmion, p. 46.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* pp. 241-242.

⁹¹ *Vingt regards*, Note de l’Auteur ii and p. 8: ‘Descente en gerbe, montée en spirale; terrible commerce humano-divin. Dieu se fait homme pour nous rendre dieux...’.

⁹² Marmion, p. 122, which quotes Augustine’s ‘Factus est Deus homo, ut homo fieret Deus’.

⁹³ Edward Forman, “‘L’Harmonie de l’Univers’: Maurice Toesca and the genesis of *Vingt Regards sur l’Enfant-Jésus*”, in *Olivier Messiaen, Music, Art and Literature*, ed. by C. Dingle and N. Simeone, pp. 13-22 (p. 17).

⁹⁴ Marmion, p. 107.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁹⁸ Siglind Bruhn, ‘The Spiritual Layout in Messiaen’s Contemplations of the Manger’ in *Messiaen’s Language of Mystical Love*, ed. by S. Bruhn, pp 247-267 (p. 254).

Of this exchange, Marmion also writes that ‘it makes us children of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, worthy of one day partaking of His beatitude and glory’.⁹⁹ And it is precisely this glory which Messiaen aims primarily to capture in *La Transfiguration*, already touching upon it with the scriptural reference to his setting of ‘*Joie et clarté des corps glorieux*’:

Tunc justi fulgebunt sicut sol in regno Patris eorum. Their bodies will be glorious like unto Christ’s body upon Thabor [sic]; it is the same glory which shines upon the Humanity of the Incarnate Word that will transfigure our bodies.¹⁰⁰

As defined by Aquinas,¹⁰¹ the power of God is rendered by Messiaen in the fifth movement of *Méditations* as ‘Father Almighty’ by a total chromatic, and followed by the eternal *dbenké* of ‘Our Father’. Aquinas cites from I John 4. 16 that God is love,¹⁰² whilst Messiaen expands this idea by adding a quotation from John 15. 13, with a derivative of the theme of love from Meditation VII,¹⁰³ harmonized by CCR (Example 4.19).

EXAMPLE 4.19: *Méditations*, V, 49/1/1

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The nature of this love in Meditation VII, prefaced by seven mysterious chords, including the *Wozzeck* ‘hallucination’ harmonies, CCR and CTI, is the mutual love of the Father and Son proceeding from the Spirit, which encompasses mankind:¹⁰⁴ ‘And the Holy Spirit gives himself and visits us, and touches the burning spark of our soul. And this is the beginning and the source of eternal love between us and God’.¹⁰⁵

In the tenth movement of *La Transfiguration*, the command to hear God’s beloved son means that ‘to be the child of the Eternal Father, to attain the perfect and glorious adoption, we have but to listen to Jesus’.¹⁰⁶ Messiaen’s treatment of this concept, the joy of Marmion’s *Adoptio perfecta*,¹⁰⁷ is by the minting of the choral ‘Alleluia’ with the alleluiaic joy of birdsong from the High Atlas. With initial colours of CTI, the Moroccan *Bouvreuil à ailes roses* offers the symbolism of this high mountain encounter with God. The coloration of its plumage is a reflection of heavenly glory, with the use of TC 5 (in which the lowest tetrachord of chord A represents the pink wings), and the gold and browns of mode 6⁵, together with the richness of the subsequent CCR colours. The tonal anchor of

⁹⁹ Marmion, p. 122.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 241.

¹⁰¹ *STI*, Q. 25.

¹⁰² *STI*, Q. 20, Art 1.

¹⁰³ Bruhn, *Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 121.

¹⁰⁴ *STI*, Q. 37, Art 2.

¹⁰⁵ Jan van Ruusbroec, *A Mirror of Eternal Blessedness*, cited in Paul Mommaers, *The Riddle of Christian Mystical Experience: The Role of the Humanity of Jesus* (Louvain: Peeters, 2003), p. 242.

¹⁰⁶ Marmion, p. 243.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 239-240:

In declaring that Jesus is His Son, the Father declares that those who, by grace, are partakers of His divinity, are equally, although by another title, His children. It is through Jesus, the Incarnate Word, that this adoption is given to us... And in adopting us as His children, the Father gives us the right of one day sharing His divine and glorious life. That is the [...] *Adoptio perfecta*.

the lower tetrads is reinforced by the orchestration.¹⁰⁸ This clarification of harmony through orchestration is connected with Benitez' idea that these chords are 'derived from an approach to harmony that has close connections with timbre'.¹⁰⁹ Thus CTI contain 'two sets of opposing harmonic elements':¹¹⁰ the lower tetrachord is triadic and tonal, whilst above this Messiaen adds the colours of resonance.¹¹¹ In Example 4.20, above basic *accords spéciaux* Messiaen also creates further, additional resonance.¹¹²

EXAMPLE 4.20: *La Transfiguration*, X 'Adoptionem filiorum perfectam', *Traité VII*, p. 288, woodwind

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In recollection of 'Adoptionem filiorum perfectam', Zion Park in *Des canyons aux étoiles...* becomes an identical symbol of paradise,¹¹³ where the Western Meadowlark sings a multicoloured harmonization,¹¹⁴ again with additional superior resonance (Example 4.21).

EXAMPLE 4.21: *Des canyons*, XII 'Zion Park et la cité céleste', RN8 (455/1/1)

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¹⁰⁸ *Traité VII*, p. 282: 'J'ai renforcé tout ce qui pouvait ressembler à un accord parfait majeur [...] pour avoir dans chaque complexe [...] la clarté de la tierce majeure'.

¹⁰⁹ Benitez, 'Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen's Later Music', p. 188.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 195: 'the appoggiaturas are treated as resonance elements that modify each inversion's timbre, rather than as dissonances that require resolution'.

¹¹² *Traité VII*, p. 282: 'la plupart des notes 'en plus' sont situées dans l'extrême aigu...et jouent le rôle de résonance supérieure'.

¹¹³ *Des canyons*, preface to score, p. 18.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

CONCLUSIONS: A SPIRITUALITY OF LIGHT AND COLOUR

For Aquinas, divine manifestation within creation as fire, cloud, burning bush, saviour or sacrament does not equate to perceiving the beatific vision here on earth, yet interpreted within the Byzantine tradition, events such as the Transfiguration offered precisely this,¹¹⁵ and through his use of *accords spéciaux*, Messiaen fashions a sonic equivalent.

Méditations is a counterpart to *La Transfiguration*,¹¹⁶ not least in its treatment of light and filiation: the uncreated light shines forth both in the visions of Moses, and from Christ at Epiphany and Transfiguration. Messiaen addresses the ‘double paternity’ of God the Father,¹¹⁷ at once abstract yet personal. As in *La Transfiguration*, Messiaen likewise concerns himself in *Méditations* with communicating the deepest religious truths, and the alphabet and themes of his invented, ‘signifying musical language’ exist solely to convey theological ideas.¹¹⁸ Within and across both works, Messiaen links moments of theophany in Old and New Testaments, aware that the shining of the face of Moses mirrors that of Christ.¹¹⁹ Likewise, Messiaen’s own experience of the Meije, evoked musically in both works, draws upon the discussion of snow and sun by Aquinas:¹²⁰ the brightness of Christ’s garments represents the future brightness of the saints, surpassed by Christ as the splendour of snow is surpassed by that of the sun.¹²¹ In acknowledgement of Aquinas, and in the hope of performing *Et exspecto* in view of the majesty, purity and isolation of the Glacier de la Meije,¹²² Messiaen views light as gift:¹²³ ‘by the play of the sunlight on the whiteness of the ice, I’ll visually achieve [...] the “Gift of Light”’.¹²⁴

¹¹⁵ John D. Jones, ‘An Absolutely Simple God? Frameworks for Reading Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite’, *The Thomist*, 69 (2005), 371-406 (p. 383).

¹¹⁶ Dingle ‘Understated Charm’, p. 74.

¹¹⁷ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 127.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 123. Concerning *langage communicable*, see also p. xxi, above.

¹¹⁹ Dingle, ‘Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ’, p. 57.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79, and van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 31.

¹²¹ *ST I*, Q. 45, Art. 2, ad. 3, cited by Messiaen in *La Transfiguration* (see p. 82, n. 74, above):

‘Claritas vestimentorum ejus designat futuram claritatem sanctorum, quae superabitur a claritate Christi, sicut candor nivis superatur a candore solis. (La clarté de ses vêtements symbolise la future clarté des saints, qui sera surpassée par la clarté du Christ, comme la splendeur de la neige est surpassée par la splendeur du soleil).’

¹²² Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 34.

¹²³ Heidi Epstein, ‘The Nature of the Relationship Between Music and Theology According to Oskar Söhngen and Olivier Messiaen’ (unpublished MA dissertation, McGill University, 1990), p. 50.

¹²⁴ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 142.

...from the dawn of His resurrection,
Jesus entered into possession of this resplendent glory.¹

CHAPTER FIVE

AURORA LUCIS RUTILAT:² SOUNDING THE RESURRECTION

Seeming to conflate Resurrection, Ascension and Transfiguration,³ in the *Resurrection* panel of the Isenheim Altar, Grünewald draws our eyes to Christ's radiant halo (Illustration 5.1).⁴ Messiaen was fascinated by this image, describing it in detail in *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, focusing upon the stars and this rainbow-like halo, likening this to the light of John 1. 4-5.⁵ Messiaen related to Claude Samuel:

Christ didn't rise up; he wasn't raised up; suddenly he was alive again. And to express this total change, Grünewald used light: a sort of rainbow forms between Christ and the trailing shroud [...] the effect is stunning. I've often tried, in vain, to reproduce this in my music.⁶

One such attempt was in *Et exspecto*: 'un peu comme ce Christ ressuscité de Mathias Grünewald qui semble s'envoler dans un arc-en-ciel issu de sa propre lumière'.⁷ Messiaen was astonished by the brutality of Grünewald's contrasting colours:⁸ 'it's a springing-forth of colors emanating from Christ's face, flooding the shroud'.⁹ 'La Resurrection du Christ' is likewise inspired by the Isenheim *Resurrection*,¹⁰ and specific use of coloured harmony in this piece would imply that it attempts a musical interpretation of Grünewald's painting, capturing a vision of Christ's 'dazzling glory as the conqueror over sin and death'.¹¹

¹ Marmion, p. 306.

² Attributed to St. Ambrose, office hymn for Lauds during Eastertide, trans. by J. M. Neale:

Aurora lucis rutilat,	Light's glittering morn bedecks the sky,
caelum laudibus in tonat,	heaven thunders forth its victor cry,
mundus exultans iubilat,	the glad earth shouts its triumph high,
gemens infernus ululat.	and groaning hell makes wild reply.

³ Pantxika Béguerie, *The Isenheim Altar* (Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 1991), p. 27: 'Grünewald adds here to the meaning of the Resurrection those of the Ascension and the Transfiguration. These three [...] events in the life of Christ are combined to form a single image'. See also Appendix Six, p. 137, below.

⁴ E. H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (London: Phaidon, 1972), p. 271:

It seems as if Christ has just soared out of the grave, leaving a trail of radiant light - the shroud in which the body has been swathed reflecting the coloured rays of the halo [...] of the transfigured body of Christ.

⁵ Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre Dame* (trans. by T. Tikker), cited in Rößler, *Contributions*, pp. 63-64:

'My father, I am resurrected, I am again with Thee!' This cry of joy and of triumph is in the luminous majesty of the face, in the stasis of the arms contrasted to the flying movement of the feet and legs, in the extraordinary folds of the shroud, in the blowing wind and the starry night, but it is especially in the rainbow, in the blue-green, red and gold circle, which seems to flash around Christ, the reflections shining into all the drapery. This is surely the Light of which Saint John spoke.

⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 44.

⁷ *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, Note de l'Auteur: 'A little like the resurrected Christ by Mathias Grünewald, who seems to fly in a rainbow from his own light'.

⁸ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 44.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Comment by Naji Hakim in interview with Hye-Young Lee and reproduced in Hye-Young Lee, 'Tracing Messiaen in Naji Hakim's Le Tombeau d'Olivier Messiaen' (unpublished DMA dissertation, University of North Texas, 2006), p. 32.

¹¹ Marmion, p. 127.

The text of ‘Résurrection’ (*Chants de terre et de ciel*) provides a dogmatic summary of both Resurrection and Ascension.¹² The joining of these events also takes place in *Livre*: ‘révélation de la Résurrection et de l’Ascension’,¹³ where with ‘la Résurrection du Christ’, the final *fortissimo* chord of F# major in a rainbow of colours,¹⁴ recalling that of ‘Transports de Joie’ from *L’Ascension*, also links Resurrection and Ascension. This is a musical equivalent of the words of Marmion, ‘Jesus is all resplendent with glory’.¹⁵ ‘Le Christ se dresse subitement, dans toute la force de sa gloire, avec le fortissimo de l’orgue, et des accords lumineux où brillent toutes les couleurs de l’arc-en-ciel’.¹⁶ Around the time he was working on *Messe de la Pentecôte* there had been an idea to create music based on the altar of Isenheim,¹⁷ just as Matisse was influenced by Grünewald in the chapel at Vence.¹⁸ Again in 1973 Messiaen noted the idea of composing postludes based on Grünewald,¹⁹ and the leper of *Saint François* Act 1, Scene 3 ultimately derived from the Isenheim altar.²⁰ Comparing ‘Jésus accepte la souffrance’ of *La Nativité* with ‘Les Ténèbres’ from *Livre*, the agony in this latter piece is the blackest depiction of the Crucifixion in Messiaen’s output.²¹ Likewise, Grünewald’s Isenheim Crucifixion is perhaps the most lurid, and Sholl’s discussion of Huysmans’ account of the Isenheim Crucifixion in *Là-Bas* concludes that ‘the most realistic and natural depiction of the crucifixion is simultaneously the most idealistic’.²² Similarly, Grünewald’s *Resurrection* may be interpreted as an inspiring example in its *genre*. Messiaen commenced *Livre du Saint Sacrement* questioning the validity of his techniques to ‘express extra-musical material’,²³ yet reaching ‘La Résurrection du Christ’, the final movement of the original June 1984 version of the work,²⁴ with its clear parallels to the *Resurrection* of Grünewald, there is no doubt as to the composer’s creative powers in reflecting the bitter struggle of the dead body returning to life at this precise moment of awakening.²⁵

‘JE SUIS RESSUSCITÉ...’

Closing *Chants de terre et de ciel*, ‘Résurrection’ commences emphatically with expanded CDA on C#,²⁶ its complement sounded as inferior resonance to complete a 12-tone aggregate.²⁷ Messiaen then cascades upwards CR inversions, again on C#, describing these chords as an ‘enormous carillon, irradiated’ (Example 5.1).²⁸

¹² *Traité* III, p. 192.

¹³ Olivier Messiaen, *Livre du Saint Sacrement* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1989), p. 79: ‘Revelation of the Resurrection and of the Ascension’.

¹⁴ Röbbler, *Contributions*, p. 118: ‘F# major is a sparkling of all possible colours’.

¹⁵ Marmion, p. 343.

¹⁶ *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Introduction: ‘Christ rises suddenly, with all the force of his glory on full organ, and luminous chords shining with all the colours of the rainbow’.

¹⁷ Hill and Simone, p. 192.

¹⁸ Exhibition catalogue: *Corps crucifiés*, Musée Picasso, Paris, 17 Novembre 1992 – 1 Mars 1993; Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 26 Mars-16 Mai 1993, p. 92.

¹⁹ Hill and Simone, p. 298.

²⁰ Charles A. Riley II, *The Saints of Modern Art: The Ascetic Ideal in Contemporary Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Music, Dance, Literature, and Philosophy* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1998), p. 197.

²¹ Luke Berryman, ‘Messiaen as Explorer in *Livre du Saint Sacrement*’, in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by A. Shenton, pp. 223-239 (p. 236).

²² Robert Sholl, review of Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris 1919–1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), *Music and Letters*, 93:1 (2012), 106-110 (p. 108).

²³ Berryman, p. 223.

²⁴ Hill and Simone, pp. 348-9.

²⁵ Berryman, p. 236.

²⁶ See *Technique* II, Ex. 205, p. 37. This voicing of expanded CD on C# serves as an emblematic harmony throughout other songs in *Chants de terre et de ciel*, reaching its apotheosis in ‘Résurrection’.

²⁷ Mittelstadt, p. 36, n. 27.

²⁸ *Technique*, I, p. 44, and II, Ex. 171, p. 29.



ILLUSTRATION 5.1: Master Mathis, known as Grünewald (c. 1475/1480-1528)

The Resurrection

Panel from the Isenheim Altar (1512-1516)

Mixed media (oil and tempera) on panels of lime, 269 x 307 cm

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EXAMPLE 5.1: 'Résurrection', 29/1/2

Repeating this gesture, CR are transformed into inversions of CD, expanded with further resonance (Example 5.2).²⁹

EXAMPLE 5.2: 'Résurrection', 32/2/1

This dramatic ascent features in *Quatuor*, now transformed into CTI (Example 5.3).

EXAMPLE 5.3: 'Vocalise', 14/3/1, piano

This triumphant scattering across the keyboard of chords in *effet de vitrail* is to be heard on C# earlier in 'Vocalise' (Example 5.4).

²⁹ *Technique II*, Ex. 207, p. 37.

EXAMPLE 5.4: ‘Vocalise’, 8/3/3, piano

In *Cantéyodjayá*, the palindromic *collinálaya* uses the concentrated ‘Theme of Chords’, yet as the pattern turns on itself (Example 5.5), this is transformed into a cycle of CTI.³⁰

EXAMPLE 5.5: *Cantéyodjayá*, 17/4/3

In the second stanza of ‘Résurrection’, focus shifts to that of recognition, dawning in the breaking of bread at Emmaus. Messiaen invokes Jesus’ words to Mary Magdalene (John 20. 17) later used in *Livre*, where the motion from earth to heaven is that of the Ascension, rising towards ‘my Father, my God’. CD on C# illuminates the line ‘Seven stars of love to the pierced, put on your armour of light’ (30/1/1), and Messiaen returns to this enhanced CD to punctuate dramatically the lines “‘Je suis ressuscité, Je monte: vers toi, mon Père, vers toi, mon Dieu, alleluia. De terre à ciel je passe’”(Example 5.6).³¹

EXAMPLE 5.6: ‘Résurrection’, 33/2/2

³⁰ Gareth Healey, ‘Messiaen’s *Cantéyodjayá*: A ‘Missing’ Link’, *The Musical Times*, 148:1898 (2007), 59-72 (p. 65). Note also that Messiaen’s use of CTI in *Cantéyodjayá* recalls the practice of *Chants de terre et de ciel* (‘Résurrection’) and *Quatuor* (‘Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps’) in which the inversions of CTI cascade through different octaves. This musical palindrome is cited in full in Loo, Vol. 2, p. 208.

³¹ ‘I am resurrected, I rise towards you, my Father, towards you, my God, alleluia. I pass from earth to heaven’. This use of CD in the centre of the texture is also forms the final bar of Ex. 220 in *Technique* quoting ‘Vocalise, pour l’Ange qui annonce la fin du Temps’ (*Technique II*, p. 38).

COMPLEXES COLORÉS

The lightening flourish opening ‘Le Christ, ressuscité des morts, ne meurt plus; la mort n’a plus sur lui d’empire’ of *Et exspecto* is a melodic presentation of the hexachord (sounded as a simultaneity) supporting the same idea performed as *mélodie par manques*.³² Example 5.7 exploits an ambiguity in this *mélodie*: the common features lying at the foundation of both CTC and TC chord C. This hexachord has two derivations, both designated as yellow: it is part of TC 9C (missing A \sharp and F \sharp), and the foundation of CTC 5, the pitches D \sharp and E \flat derived from the higher resonance and transposed downwards.

EXAMPLE 5.7: *Et exspecto*, II, 17/1/1, orchestral reduction

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For this musical portrayal of the Resurrection, Messiaen turns again to the rainbow-like halo around Christ in the Isenheim Altar. Thus the yellow heard at the outset of the movement focuses our attention directly at the centre of the Isenheim *Resurrection*. The trumpet melody which follows is accompanied by a complex of rainbow coloration in the woodwind.³³ In further sonic evocation of the Grünewald image, this time the red of Christ’s shroud, the climax of this melody is harmonized by CTC 8 (Example 5.8), commencing with the complement of the main 8-part chord supported by additional notes, whilst the main chord acts as a point of arrival through phrasing and melodic leaps, with the missing A \flat from the aggregate sounded enharmonically immediately following the CTC harmony. Messiaen’s percussive use of *simhavikrama* symbolises the rhythmic representation of the victory over death, both of Shiva, and the Lion of Judah.³⁴

EXAMPLE 5.8: *Et exspecto*, II, 22/1/2, minus percussion

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³² ‘Les cessations de sons donnant le contour’ (*Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, Note de l’Auteur). See Appendix Five, p. 131.

³³ *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*, Note de l’Auteur. See note 7: ‘une mélodie de la trompette jaillit des complexes colorés des bois’.

³⁴ Ibid.

‘LE CHRIST SE DRESSE SUBITEMENT...’

Concerning Messiaen’s organ music, *Livre du Saint Sacrement* represents a *summa*:³⁵ more than music, ‘a great act of faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Sacrament’.³⁶ Messiaen’s exploration of God hidden in the Eucharist in *Livre* follows on from the visual encounters of Exodus and the Transfiguration, but here, ‘if Our Lord appeared to us in the splendour of His glory, our gaze would not be able to bear this splendour’.³⁷ Thus, as God cries ‘Je suis’, his face is hidden from Moses (Exodus 33. 22); here, God is hidden in the sacrament.

Yet Christ’s ‘humanity renders God visible’, so that the exchange of the Incarnation becomes an act in which ‘eternal wisdom infinitely shines out’.³⁸ Balthasar’s threefold *Christusgestalt* consists of Christ incarnate, Christ in the Church, and Christ in the Eucharist;³⁹ ideas Messiaen was reading whilst devising *Livre*.⁴⁰ Messiaen deals primarily with two contrasting aspects of God, corresponding to two of the three comings of Christ described by Guéranger:⁴¹ the historical events of Jesus’ life, and the personal encounter we experience with God anew, through the mystery of the mass. The remaining eschatological coming, the *αποκαλυψις* which Messiaen approaches in works from *Quatuor* to *Éclairs*, is also spelt out at the heart of the work: ‘Votre Dieu: Apocalypse’.⁴² In *Méditations*, Messiaen deals with Moses’ vision of God; in the *Livre* it is Mary Magdalene who sees her God, depicted in ‘l’apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine’. This music is overpoweringly visual, and just as Mary sees the risen Christ, Grünewald sees the precise moment of the Resurrection in the Isenheim Altar. In the mass, Christ is hidden, yet present in the here-and-now; present in his mystical entering of the soul just as much as in historical events: ‘Christ appeared in order to lead us from the visible to love of the invisible’.⁴³ Herein lies the miracle of the mass explored in the opening four movements: the ‘adoration of the invisible Christ present in the Holy Eucharist’.⁴⁴ In ‘Adoro te’ and ‘Acte de Foi’ we attempt to view God, hidden in the host and depicted in ‘le Dieu caché’. Thus the God of the Old Testament and the visions of Moses becomes real for us at this precise moment of transubstantiation, and Messiaen’s musical evocation of these events takes place in *Livre* with the dazzlement of colour chords.

At the close of ‘la Résurrection du Christ’ (Example 5.9), the extended use of CTI 1 as a metaphor for Christ crucified (above and below the pedal C#) leads eventually, via the use of CR, to the cataclysmic final chord of F# major, in ‘an awe-inspiring message of

³⁵ Dingle, ‘Understated Charm’, p. 69.

³⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 258.

³⁷ Marmion, p. 356.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

³⁹ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 121, citing Balthasar, *Herrlichkeit*, 1:528, and Galatians 4. 19. See Appendix Five, below, p. 129.

⁴⁰ Hill and Simeone, p. 344, which quotes Messiaen’s notes: “‘Absence and Presence of Jesus (as in *Points de repère* by Urs von Balthasar).” Here Balthasar notes that although God is hidden and unknown, ‘the free self-disclosure of the divine heart sheds over all our existence, thought, loving, and action an incomparable light’, in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Klarstellungen: zur Prüfung der Geister* (Freiburg-im-Breisgau: Verlag Herder KG, 1971), trans. as *Elucidations* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), p. 45.

⁴¹ Dom Prosper Guéranger, OSB, *The Liturgical Year*, trans. Dom Laurence Shepherd, OSB, 15 vols. (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1952), Vol. 1, pp. 29-30, and cited in Stephen Schloesser, ‘The Charm of Impossibilities: Mystic Surrealism as Contemplative Voluptuousness’, in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by A. Shenton, p. 169. See also Appendix Six, below, p. 137.

⁴² *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, p. 79. See Appendix Five, below, p. 129.

⁴³ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 28.

⁴⁴ Vincent Benitez, *Olivier Messiaen, A Research and Information Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 47.

jubilant'.⁴⁵ This decisive drive towards F# major is achieved by a lengthy dominant preparation, with CTI *effet de vitrail* recalling the extensive use of C#-based CD in 'Résurrection' from *Chants de terre et de ciel*, and the star of 'Les Mages'.

EXAMPLE 5.9: *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, 'la Résurrection du Christ', 62/3/1

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The first use of CTI in this piece (Example 5.10) initiates an *effet de vitrail* chain commencing on the bass F \sharp . Messiaen mentions the starry sky in his description of the Isenheim image: dawn is not very far away, and this use of CTI 5 brings with it associations from three earlier depictions of dawn.

EXAMPLE 5.10: 'la Résurrection du Christ', 63/2/2

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In *La fauvette des jardins* our first encounter with the lake is an evocation of dawn: 'a marvellous moment [...] of great poetry when everything becomes pink: the sky, but also the lake'.⁴⁶ CTI 5 captures the pink and mauve of first light (Example 5.11).

EXAMPLE 5.11: *La fauvette des jardins*, 4/4/1

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Next, in Example 5.12 this memorable use of CTI 5 takes place just before dawn.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Dingle, 'Understated Charm', p. 68.

⁴⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 152. See also Healey, *Messiaen's Musical Techniques*, pp. 33-34.

⁴⁷ *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps*, Préface, i: 'Entre 3 et 4 heures du matin [...] vous aurez le silence harmonieux du ciel'.

EXAMPLE 5.12: 'Liturgie de cristal', 1/1/1, piano⁴⁸

In the refrain at Lauds, the dawn office greeting the rising sun in *Saint François*, the word 'Seigneur' is majestically harmonized by means of CTI 5 (Example 5.13).

EXAMPLE 5.13: *Saint François*, II 'Les laudes', RN14, woodwind, horns & strings

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Working on the premier of *Méditations* at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington D. C. in 1972, Messiaen would have been struck by Jan Henryk de Rosen's 1959 mosaic *Christ in Majesty*. Rosen's depiction of Christ the King, whilst grounded in the traditions of *Majestas Domini* and Christ Pantocrator, makes reference to the stigmata, red shroud and golden halo of Grünewald's *Resurrection*, linking this moment of the Resurrection to Christ in Glory. The opening of *Éclairs*, 'Apparition du Christ glorieux', continues Messiaen's exploration of this vision, again using CTI 5 (Example 5.14).

EXAMPLE 5.14: *Éclairs*, I 'Apparition du Christ glorieux', RN3 (3/1/1), reduction

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Messiaen commences 'la Résurrection du Christ' in one 'massive and muscular',⁴⁹ final use of the apocalyptic 'hallucination' chords from *Wozzeck*,⁵⁰ continuing with an extended progression of TC/CCR in predominantly yellows and reds for his last treatment of Grünewald's halo (Example 5.15).

⁴⁸ See also Example 1.4, above, p. 10.

⁴⁹ James D. Herbert, 'The Eucharist in and beyond Messiaen's *Book of the Holy Sacrament*', *Journal of Religion*, 88/3 (2008), 331-364 (p. 346).

⁵⁰ Here Messiaen recalls the use of these harmonies in 'Les choses visibles et invisibles' and *La Transfiguration*, now transposed one semitone higher, and symbolizing apocalyptic visualization.

EXAMPLE 5.15: 'la Résurrection du Christ', 61/3/3

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‘ELLE LE RECONNAÎT!’

Livre was to develop Messiaen’s enthusiasm for contrasts between darkness and light.⁵¹ Messiaen’s original ideas to set John 20. 16 (‘et Marie dit: Rabboni’) date from around 1950, with ideas for two organ masses: one for Passiontide (‘la puissance des ténèbres’), and one for Easter.⁵² Linking these ideas, the dissonance and resolution of the suffering of the crucifixion in ‘les ténèbres’ is recalled in ‘l’apparition du Christ’.⁵³

Light in ‘la Résurrection du Christ’ makes use of CTI primarily on C#. In ‘l’apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine’, the precise moment of Mary’s recognition of Jesus is harmonized by CTI on E#,⁵⁴ a moment seized upon by Balthasar, observing that Mary turns twice as the result of Jesus’ calling.⁵⁵ The direct mention of ‘PERE’ and ‘DIEU’ transposes the CTI sequence a further minor third to G#. Example 5.16 forms the climax of a crescendo as Magdalene recognizes Jesus, and here the inverted pedal E# above CTI A and B leads to a semitone rise to E# at the top of chord D, in quotation of the same idea in the preceding piece, whilst the emphatic threefold repetition of the progression is imbued with dramatic fervour by rhythmic expansion. Messiaen’s use of E major here is more likely the representation of Christ’s glory, rather than praise in response to God’s love,⁵⁶ and Dingle maintains that E major is symbolic of ‘divine light’,⁵⁷ being, therefore, Messiaen’s key of light.⁵⁸ This applies not just to overtly tonal passages, but to this extended CTI 4 progression in which the goal is the E major triad with added 6th at the bottom of CTI 4D. This use of CTI 4 to represent Christ radiant in glory may be traced from the E major CD progression at the climax of ‘Dieu parmi nous’ to its eventual use in *Éclairs* (Examples 5.17 & 5.18).

⁵¹ See, for example, Messiaen’s diary entries cited in Hill and Simeone, pp. 343, 345.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁵³ *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, p. 58, *ffff*. *Très lent* and p. 75/3/1-2: ‘Aux accords mystérieux s’ajoute la plainte entendue dans la crucifixion: le corps glorieux de Jésus Christ a gardé les marques des cinq plaies’ (*Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Introduction).

⁵⁴ *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Introduction: Noting his use of CCR and CTI at this moment, Messiaen comments: ‘Marie regarde, elle ne comprend pas. Elle hésite, les yeux écarquillés, et tout d’un coup, saisie d’une joie folle, elle le reconnaît!’.

⁵⁵ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, p. 294, n.16.

⁵⁶ Dingle, review of *Messiaen’s Contemplations of Covenant and Incarnation; Messiaen’s Explorations of Love and Death; Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, by Siglind Bruhn, p. 460.

⁵⁷ Dingle, ‘Olivier Messiaen: La Transfiguration de Notre-Seigneur, Jésus-Christ’, p. 35.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

EXAMPLE 5.16: *Livre*, 'l'apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine', 72/5/1

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EXAMPLE 5.17: 'Apparition du Christ glorieux', RN5 (4/1/6)

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EXAMPLE 5.18: *Éclairs*, XI 'Le Christ, lumière du Paradis', RN1 (163/1/1)

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In Examples 5.19 and 5.20 we encounter two of the most important moments in Messiaen's output: the spelling out of 'PERE' and 'DIEU' in *langage communicable*, harmonized by CTI in *effet de vitrail*. This association of text with specific chords imbue them with concrete meaning, and the choice of CTI 7 in Example 5.19 returns us to the associations of G₇-based CD in 'Le Verbe': the eternity of God as Word. As this idea returns in Example 5.20, the harmonization of 'DIEU' involves a shift of colour and harmonic focus, opening with the yellow, white and gold of CTI 7C, culminating a minor third lower with the white and gold of CTI 4B.⁵⁹ Both chords contain the same notes in differing inversions, in Messiaen's colours of the numinous.

⁵⁹ The light of paradise in Example 5.18 makes use of a progression from E₄ (CTI 4B) to C₄ (CTI 1B), also a minor third progression of colour-chords, which may be traced back to its structural use in both 'Le merle de roche', with its warmth and light, and in the brilliance of the song of 'Le traquet rieur'.

EXAMPLE 5.19: 'l'apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine', 77/1/1

The score for Example 5.19 consists of three staves. The top staff shows four chords labeled A, B, C, and D, all under the heading 'CTI 7'. The middle staff is the vocal line, starting with the tempo marking 'Un peu lent' and the lyrics 'V O T R E R E'. The piano accompaniment includes markings for 'GPR { ff}', '3 tirasses', and 'R { piif}'. The piano part features a prominent bass line with '3 tirasses' and a 'P' marking.

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These chords prepare the way for the apocalypse: Jesus expected the rapid establishment of his kingdom after the Resurrection.⁶⁰ The use of CTI 7 to harmonize 'PERE' and 'DIEU' a tritone away from CTI at the close of 'La Résurrection du Christ' provides 'a musical linkage of the theologically closely related notions of Resurrection and Ascension',⁶¹ for this tritone axis forms not just the overriding tonal contrast of 'la Présence multipliée', but of the entire *Livre*.

EXAMPLE 5.20: 'l'apparition du Christ ressuscité à Marie-Madeleine', 79/1/1

The score for Example 5.20 consists of three staves. The top staff shows four chords labeled C, A, B, and B, with 'CTI 7' above C and 'CTI 4' above the second B. The middle staff is the vocal line, starting with 'Un peu lent' and the lyrics 'V O T R E A P O C A L Y P S E'. The piano accompaniment includes markings for 'GPR { ff}', '3 tirasses', and 'GPR: tutti (révélation de la Résurrection et de l'Ascension)'. The tempo changes to 'Très lent' for the final section. The piano part features a prominent bass line with '3 tirasses' and 'fff' markings.

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⁶⁰ Herbert, p. 353:

[Magdalene] would have greeted the raising of Christ as the announcement that the end of time had indeed arrived [...]. The delay between Christ's Resurrection and the raising [...] of humans living and dead could be expected to be so short that the two should properly be considered one single redemptive event.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 350.

*Haec voluptas, haec quies, haec meta, hic scopus
Nos hinc attrahunt recta in paradisum.*¹

CHAPTER SIX

TOTALITY AND *GESAMTIDEE*: HARMONIZING THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

Concordant with Balthasar's notion of God as 'eternally elementary, single and manifold' is the totality of God as *Gesamtidee*.² Concerning its musical equivalent, the total chromatic completion of colour-chords, Messiaen reveals: 'If I have a chord made up of seven notes, one also hears the other five which are missing',³ first orchestrating these added complements in *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, and ultimately using such aggregates in portrayal of *l'au-delà*. Significant later works meditate not just on 'the above', but specifically on the Heavenly Jerusalem.⁴

The theological seeds of these final works had been sown over many years: with 'Et Dieu essuiera toute larme de leurs yeux...', whilst the superscription refers to Revelation 21. 3-4, the title of this movement is also found in Revelation 7. 17,⁵ which had earlier informed 'Les eaux de la grâce'. Harmonically and symbolically, we are on familiar ground: Messiaen's use of CII combined with mode 3 creates a rainbow of tenderness.⁶ The opening of 'le Christ, lumière du Paradis' combines the composer's most usual sophisticated gestures,⁷ in the unbroken flow of 'the harmonious continuum of eternity',⁸ uniting all divergent strands of time.⁹ On the largest structural scale, *Éclairs* moves cadentially from the E major of Christ's glory to the concluding A major, the 'Alpha and Omega' of his favoured keys and colours:¹⁰ the predominant colours of medieval stained glass, and the colours of Christ's blood and the heavens. Yet this final creative period also features the symbolic use of CTC: Messiaen's last harmonic innovation, developed in the 1960s to become a chromatic totality expressing the all-encompassing nature of a God 'who is ever-present and who can be found in everything'.¹¹

¹ Striggio: This delight, this peace, this goal, this mark, draw us from here straight to Paradise.

² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Die Entwicklung der musikalischen Idee (Versuch einer Synthese der Musik)/ Bekenntnis zu Mozart* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1998), and cited in van Maas: *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, pp. 64-65: Balthasar explores the notion of God as totality, or as van Maas describes, as a 'spiritual Idea' or as 'the total Idea'. See Appendix Five, below, p. 130.

³ Interview with Almut Rößler, April 23rd, 1979, trans. by B. Dagg and N. Poland, cited in Rößler, *Contributions*, p.79.

⁴ Loriod, preface to *Éclairs sur l'au-Delà*, Première Partie, p. 1.

⁵ Ibid., p. 10, and Dingle, 'Understated charm', pp. 238, 239.

⁶ Loriod, preface to score of *Éclairs*, p. 10.

⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

⁸ Dingle, 'Understated charm', pp. 290-291; Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 268.

⁹ Catherine Pickstock, p. 180:

the cosmic time of rocks, the biological time of birds, the human time of memory,
contemplation and eschatological expectation, the pure remaining of the angels.

¹⁰ Dingle, 'Understated charm', pp. 301-302; Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 277.

¹¹ Olivier Messiaen, 'Autour d'une parution', *Le Monde musical*, (30th April 1939), p. 126 and cited in Hill and Simeone, p. 80.

EUCCHARISTIC TOTALITY

Balthasar reminds us that at mass ‘the Person of Jesus is really present; but along with the Person comes his entire temporal history and, in particular, its climax in Cross and Resurrection’.¹² The mass embraces all: ‘Jesus Christ is present in all the consecrated hosts of the world, at all times and in all places’,¹³ and the universality of Jesus’ words concerning the Bread of Life unites us not just with Christ, but with the whole of humanity.¹⁴ ‘Les ressuscités et la lumière de Vie’ quotes John 6. 54, that ‘this bread is given not only to one particular people – but to all mankind’,¹⁵ and with ‘la manne et le Pain de Vie’, Messiaen quotes Marmion’s belief that the *totality*, including every hidden facet, of Jesus is contained within the consecrated host:¹⁶

All these states of the life of Jesus are, in substance, given to us in Communion, with their properties, their spirit, their merits and their virtue: under the diversity of states, and the variety of mysteries, is perpetuated the identity of the Person Who lived them and now lives eternally in Heaven.¹⁷

Throughout *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Messiaen represents this *Gesamtidee* with the use of CTC 2. The fraction of the Eucharistic host is anticipated in ‘les deux murailles d’eau’, where as the Israelites pass through the parting of the Red Sea, by his use of the blues of CTC 2, Messiaen leaves no doubt as to the colour of the water (Example 6.1).

EXAMPLE 6.1: *Livre*, ‘les deux murailles d’eau’, 93/1/1

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¹² Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, Volume 4: *The Action*, trans by Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), p. 392. Balthasar cites Michael Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik* IV/1, 3-4 (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1952), p. 56: ‘The transfigured Christ is characterized by his death and his Resurrection. These are not mere past events of his life: they are ever alive and present’, and Eugène Masure, *Le Sacrifice du corps mystique* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1950), p. 56:

Cette réalité que furent la passion, la mort, la resurrection et l’ascension du Christ, incarnées dans cette chair et ce sang ici présents, qui sont dans l’état où ils sont aujourd’hui au ciel, c’est à dire glorieux, mais qui ne sont glorieux que parce qu’ils *ont été* et *continuent* d’avoir été souffrants, morts et ressuscités.

¹³ *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, Introduction: description of ‘la Présence multipliée’.

¹⁴ Fr. William Johnston, *Christian Mysticism Today* (London: Harper and Row, 1984), p. 111:

The Eucharist is a cosmic symbol. Through reception of this sacrament we are united not only with the individual Jesus but with the whole Christ [...] We are united with the whole human family each of whom is related to the risen Lord in a way that surpasses human understanding.

¹⁵ Marmion, p. 348.

¹⁶ Herbert, p. 362: ‘all aspects of Christ are present in the Eucharist (which is to say, all of Christ, aspectless in his wholeness), even if we cannot see them all’.

¹⁷ Marmion, pp. 352-353. Messiaen cites this as a superscription for ‘la manne et le Pain de Vie’, *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, p. 34.

Underscoring this universality of the host, CTC 2 sounds in ‘la manne et le Pain de Vie’ (Example 6.2). The idea is later transposed one tone higher: ‘For the manna the taste changed, so change the colours’,¹⁸ which develops Messiaen’s quotation from Wisdom 16. 21, in which manna becomes pleasing to every taste.

EXAMPLE 6.2: *Livre*, ‘la manne et le Pain de Vie’, 38/4/1

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CTC 2 is a recurrent sonority in differing textures and contexts, notably as the first CTC harmony in the *Bien modéré* preparation for the proclamation of ‘LA JOIE’ in the final piece. The first use of CTC in *Livre* is in an arpeggiated form in ‘Acte de Foi’ (Example 6.3), a compendium of colour-chords symbolizing the basis of belief.

EXAMPLE 6.3: *Livre*, ‘Acte de Foi’, 21/4/1

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The rising 5th of the plainchant *Quotiescumque manducabitis panem hunc* recalls the opening of *Puer natus*, making explicit the link between Nativity and consecrated host: Christ’s descent to earth in human form is mirrored in the Real Presence. Thus two pieces in *Livre du Saint Sacrement* deal with the coming of Christ: ‘Puer natus’ portrays the ‘humble and hidden’ historical coming of Christ, whilst ‘la Transsubstantiation’ represents His ‘coming into the soul [...] mysterious and full of love’.¹⁹ In ‘Puer natus est nobis’, CTC 2 is altered to conform to the opening perfect 5th of the plainchant, CTI 3 later supporting the D₄ of the chant (Example 6.4).

EXAMPLE 6.4: *Livre*, ‘Puer natus est nobis’, 28/1/1 & 29/1/1

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¹⁸ Hill and Simeone, p. 345.

¹⁹ Guéranger, Vol. 1, pp. 29-30, cited in Schloesser, ‘The Charm of Impossibilities’, p. 169.

SIMULTANEOUS CONTRASTS

Messiaen described the precious stones decorating the foundations of the wall of the heavenly city,²⁰ indicating colours in the score of *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, and using colour-chords to portray them.²¹ These harmonies are expanded to include the complements of individual chords, thus completing each 12-tone aggregate. In Example 6.5, each wind 1st CCR contains one additional note: C \flat in chord A, F \sharp in chord B, whilst piano and percussion complete the chromatic totality, where the addition of these five missing notes to sound the total chromatic transformed Messiaen's colour associations.²² The subsequent TC progression is treated in an identical way, where the additional complements possibly modify their colouration.²³

EXAMPLE 6.5: *Couleurs*, 8/2/4

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The final chord in Example 6.6 represents the original appearance in Messiaen's music of CTC.²⁴ Here it emerges as a logical progression through voice-leading from the expansion of 1st CCR; its core sonority of eight notes with a perfect 4th in the bass recalling TC A in Example 6.5, in this transposition exhibiting the red of sardonyx.²⁵

²⁰ *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, 'deuxième note de l'auteur'.

²¹ Cheong, 'Plainchants as coloured time in Messiaen's "Couleurs de la cité céleste"', p. 28.

²² Messiaen designates this expanded CCR progression as emerald green and amethyst violet, yet the basic versions in *Traité* are yellow, violet-mauve above lead-grey, followed by bluish green and violet above lead-grey. In *Traité VII*, p. 151 Messiaen makes clear that the colours are to be read from top to bottom through each chord, and that the lower octave transposition in the chord table on p. 158 is slightly darker.

²³ Cheong, 'Plainchants as coloured time in Messiaen's "Couleurs de la cité céleste"', p. 32, concerning the use of TC at RN74.

²⁴ Despite the composer's assertion (*Traité VII*, p. 182) that it is first used at the close of the fifth movement of *La Transfiguration*. To be fair to Messiaen, he later acknowledges on p. 221 of the same volume the use of CTC in *Couleurs* in the second bar of RN73 (Example 6.7), highlighting the nature of *Traité* as a loose collection of materials assembled over many years, often without rigorous cross-referencing. This is also discussed in Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, pp. 23-24.

²⁵ This chord is described in *Traité VII*, p. 189 thus: 'rouge-violet pourpre, comme certains pétunias, avec des lunes rouges carmin et rouge noirâtre, et des étoiles bleu pâle – les 4 notes supplémentaires ajoutent une flèche transversale verte (vert zoïsité), allant de gauche à droite et de bas en haut.'

The visual content of works such as *Couleurs* thus inspired this exploration of the total chromatic by means of opposing complex chords with their complements in the manner of the ‘simultaneous contrast’ technique found in the paintings of Delaunay.²⁶ Whilst later examples delay the appearance of the four highest, supplementary notes, in this first use of the chord, all 12 tones are sounded simultaneously.

EXAMPLE 6.6: *Couleurs*, 15/1/2

The musical score for Example 6.6, 'Couleurs', 15/1/2, is presented in a multi-staff format. At the top, it is labeled '1st CCR 1 + complement' and 'CTC 8'. The score includes parts for Piano, Percussion, Clarinets, and Brass. The tempo is marked 'Très lent (♩=80)'. The Piano part features dynamics like *f* and *pp*. The Clarinets part has markings for 'émeraude verte, améthyste violette' and 'sardoine rouge'. The Brass part is marked *pp*. The score shows complex chordal textures with various accidentals and articulations.

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CTC assumes its definitive format at RN73 where the main eight-part ‘coloured’ chord is sounded first, with the higher sparkle of the supplementary notes of resonance delayed by a rest (Example 6.7).

EXAMPLE 6.7: *Couleurs*, RN73 (55/1/1)

The musical score for Example 6.7, 'Couleurs', RN73 (55/1/1), is presented in a multi-staff format. It is labeled 'CTC 8'. The score includes parts for Piano and Percussion, and Wind. The tempo is marked 'Infiniment lent (env. 4 ♩ à ♩ = 40 par ♩)' and 'Un peu lent (♩=60)'. The Piano and Percussion part features dynamics like *p* and *pp*. The Wind part is marked *pp* and has markings for '(très long) (très long)'. The score shows complex chordal textures with various accidentals and articulations.

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Messiaen makes structural use of expanded and modified CTC in *Et exspecto* at the close of the first movement, ‘Des profondeurs de l’abîme, je crie vers toi, Seigneur: Seigneur, écoute ma voix!’ (Example 6.8).

²⁶ See, for example, Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 79; Benitez: ‘Simultaneous Contrast and Additive Designs’, 2.3-2.6; Benitez: ‘Aspects of Harmony in Messiaen’s Later Music’, p.189. See also Appendices Five, p. 132, and Six, p. 136, below.

As an impassioned representation of the cry of the abyss, the chords of the final eight bars make formidable use of ‘simultaneous contrasts’ to assemble the full chromatic spectrum.²⁷ As the brass raises the dynamic to *fff* in the closing bars, the harmony switches to four presentations of CTC. The missing chord, CTC 6, is present by implication in the distorted versions of the second and third chords, containing significant ‘wrong notes’. These pitches are drawn from the centre of CTC 6.

EXAMPLE 6.8: *Et exspecto*, I, 14/1/2, orchestral reduction

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QUAM DILECTA TABERNACULA TUA: OUR ETERNAL DWELLING

The fifth movement of *La Transfiguration*, ‘Quam dilecta tabernacula tua’ (Example 6.9),²⁸ closes with the sustained red of CTC 9 beneath the brilliance of the Nightingale,²⁹ creating an astonishing atmosphere for the soul’s union with the divine.³⁰

EXAMPLE 6.9: *La Transfiguration*, V, ‘Quam dilecta tabernacula tua’, 134/1/1

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²⁷ Malcolm Troup, ‘Orchestral Music of the 1950s and 1960s’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, ed. by P. Hill, pp. 392-447 (p. 438). See also Healey, *Messiaen’s Musical Techniques*, p. 156, which notes that Messiaen ‘dilutes the purity’ of CTC in this context, but for good artistic reason.

²⁸ *Traité* VII, pp. 185-186.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 184 and 189: The eight-part main chord is described as being ‘la belle couleur “rouge”’, whilst the four additional notes of resonance, here performed as the song of the Nightingale by the piano, add a circle ‘bleu gris, clair et brillant’.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 184. In evocation of Psalm 84: ‘le tout évoquant une belle nuit de printemps, et l’union mystique de l’âme avec son Dieu’.

In 'Le chemin de l'Invisible' from *Éclairs sur l'au-Delà...* (Example 6.10), Christ illumines the path to the brightness of the mountain.³¹ CTC is a feature of this movement, ultimately being used in four layers.

EXAMPLE 6.10: *Éclairs*, X, 'Le chemin de l'Invisible', RN2 (130/1/1)

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La ville d'En-Haut (Example 6.11) merely reworks the material of *Un vitrail et des oiseaux*,³² both works making use of a coloured chorale and *Fauvette des jardins* cadenzas for piano.³³ This brass chorale, harmonized by CTI and mode 3 symbolizes the glory of the celestial city, whilst the birds of the piano and percussion represent resurrected life with Christ.³⁴ The mention of 'l'aspect invisible' in the preface to *Un vitrail* demonstrates Messiaen's fascination with the unknown elements of faith,³⁵ expressed in a kaleidoscopic array of colours: 'Les couleurs d'accords changent presque constamment et symbolisent à leur tour les couleurs de la lumière d'En-Haut'.³⁶ This is the light of paradise itself, 'represented in the Apocalypse as a shimmering of colors'.³⁷

EXAMPLE 6.11: *La ville d'En-Haut*, RN25, orchestral reduction

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³¹ Lloriod, preface to score of *Éclairs*, p. 15: 'Seul le Christ peut éclairer cette voie aride et caillouteuse qui mène à la Paix sur le sommet de la montagne lumineuse'. This luminous mountain signifies both our symbolic encounter with the Transfigured Christ and the Zion of the New Jerusalem.

³² Dingle, 'Understated charm', p. 97.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

³⁴ Olivier Messiaen, *La ville d'En-Haut* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1994), preface to the score.

³⁵ Dingle, 'Understated charm', p. 103.

³⁶ Messiaen, *La ville d'En-Haut*, preface: 'The colours of the chords change almost constantly, and symbolize, in their turn, the colours of the light from above'.

³⁷ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 139.

In recollection of the final moments of ‘Quam dilecta tabernacula tua’ from *La Transfiguration*, Messiaen closes *Un vitrail et des oiseaux* with the sustained lower octochord of CTC beneath the percussive sounding of the highest tetrad (Example 6.12). In acknowledgment of the overall effect of stained-glass (in which no one colour is dominant), and in recognition that the key of F# major is a glistening ‘of all possible colours’,³⁸ just as the opal is able to diffract light, Messiaen places the chord of F# major at the base of CTC 11 with its subtle, opaline evocation of multiple colours.

EXAMPLE 6.12: *Un vitrail et des oiseaux*, 79/1/2

The musical score for Example 6.12 is presented in two systems. The first system includes a piano part (treble and bass clefs) and a wind part (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features a series of chords with a 'piano' dynamic marking and a 'ff' (fortissimo) marking. The wind part features a series of chords with a 'ff' marking. A bracket labeled 'CTC 11' spans the first two measures of the piano part. A dashed line labeled '8va' indicates an octave transposition for the piano part in the second system. The wind part continues with a series of chords and a 'ff' marking.

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With Example 6.13, *La ville* opens where *Un vitrail* closes, and the use of CTC (including florid higher resonance) recalls the Nightingale in the CTC of ‘Quam dilecta tabernacula tua’,³⁹ again with the use of ‘simultaneous contrast’.⁴⁰ Here it is the celestial city which is to be our dwelling place.

EXAMPLE 6.13: *La ville*, RN1, orchestral reduction

The musical score for Example 6.13 is presented in two systems. The first system includes a Piano & Percussion part (treble and bass clefs) and a Winds part (treble and bass clefs). The Piano & Percussion part features a series of chords with a 'ff' marking. The Winds part features a series of chords with a 'ff' marking. A bracket labeled 'CTC 4' spans the first two measures of the Piano & Percussion part. A dashed line labeled '8va' indicates an octave transposition for the Piano & Percussion part in the second system. The Winds part continues with a series of chords and a 'ff' marking. The score includes markings for 'CTI 5B', 'Mode 3/2', 'CTI 10B', and 'Mode 3/3'.

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³⁸ Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 118.

³⁹ Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, p. 113.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

*Mens hebes ad verum per materialia surgit
Et demersa prius hac visa luce resurgit.*¹

*Seigneur, illumine-moi de ta présence! Délivre-moi, enivre-moi,
éblouis-moi pour toujours de ton excès de vérité...*²

CHAPTER SEVEN

VITRAIL SONORE: THE BOURGES APOCALYPSE AND ÉCLAIRS AS THEOLOGY OF LIGHT

Effet de vitrail became an effective technique for Messiaen's communication of religious truth, mirroring medieval stained glass as a particularly successful medium for the rendition of the colour and light which emanates from the glory of God. Light and colour are treated by Messiaen on equal terms,³ with colours of *accords spéciaux* capturing 'life's beauty and bounty, which is alluded to in the rainbow',⁴ creating a sense of wonder.⁵ Van Maas reminds us of Messiaen's scholarly temperament,⁶ and the depth of his theological awareness informed his compositional practice. *Éblouissement* confronts us with Truth,⁷ and in parallel with a Gothic theology of light, the 'dazzlement by excess of truth',⁸ achieved through complexity and monumentality, exploits numerous musical parameters.⁹ Messiaen's greatest works make use of techniques and ideas from the visual arts, most notably stained glass (including contemporary practitioners such as Couturier),¹⁰ to expound mysteries of faith through Augustine's 'powerful, enflaming experience of musical beauty'.¹¹

¹ Abbot Suger, *De administratione XXVII*, translated as 'The dull mind rises to truth through material things and, after seeing that light, is resurrected from its former state of submersion' in Z. G. Tchamitch, *Imagining a Universe of Majesty: The Formation of the European Character 750 – 1150 AD* (Skara: Peter G. Tchamitch, 1992), p. 311. See Appendix Five, below, p. 133, for information on light theology.

² *Saint François d'Assise*, VIII 'La mort et la nouvelle vie'.

³ Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 130.

⁴ Siglind Bruhn, *Messiaen's Explorations of Love and Death: Musico-Poetic Signification in the 'Tristan Trilogy' and Three Related Song Cycles* (Hillsdale, New York: Pendragon Press, 2008), p. 48. Bruhn continues on p. 95: 'In Messiaen's religious works, the rainbow is one of the manifestations of God's presence in human life'.

⁵ Discours d'Olivier Messiaen, Praemium Erasmianum MCMLXXI, (Amsterdam: Stichting Praemium Erasmianum, 1971), in which Messiaen links this feeling of wonder with his experiences at Bourges:

Et que dire de mon émerveillement [...] quand j'ai vu pour la première fois les vitraux de Sainte Chapelle? Émerveillement qui devait se continuer à Chartres, à Bourges, chaque fois que je rencontrais de nouvelles rosaces, de nouvelles verrières, de nouveaux vitraux – émerveillement qui s'est fortifié à la lecture de l'Apocalypse, de ses éblouissements de couleurs féériques qui sont autant de symboles de la Lumière Divine.

<<http://www.erasmusprijs.org/index.cfm?lang=en&page=1971:+OLIVIER+MESSIAEN>> [accessed 22 September, 2012] and translated in Rößler, *Contributions*, pp. 43-44.

⁶ Van Maas, 'The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', p. 321: 'Messiaen's mind was the mind of a scholastic'.

⁷ Sander van Maas, 'A Transfiguration of the Ear', in *Missing links: arts, religion and reality*, ed. Jonneke Bekkenkamp et al. (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2000), p. 158: 'it is through *éblouissement* that we may come into contact with "another reality", with what [Messiaen] calls "Truth"'. See Appendix 5, pp. 130, 134.

⁸ *STI-II*, Q. 101, Art. 2, ad. 2.

⁹ Van Maas, 'The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', pp. 322-323. Van Maas continues, stating that Messiaen's goal is 'the deliberate blinding of the inner eye by means of intense sound-colours, leading to an experience of *éblouissement*' (*ibid.*, p. 327).

¹⁰ Shenton, p. 32. See Appendix Six, p. 136.

¹¹ Van Maas, 'The Reception of Aquinas in the Music of Olivier Messiaen', p. 319.

Conférence de Notre Dame sets out the complementary colours of red and green, blue and orange, yellow and violet, and in *Traité*, Messiaen examines colour symbolism: red represents both divine love and the Holy Spirit,¹² whilst (with implications of heaven) blue is the colour of air and sky,¹³ associated with the desire for transcendence.¹⁴ In *Sept haïkaï*, blue represents the infinite and invisible,¹⁵ whilst the depths of blue contain the divine wisdom of spirit and truth,¹⁶ and allude to Mary as Queen of Heaven. Violet, Messiaen's favourite colour,¹⁷ in the interpretation of medieval stained glass associates love with truth,¹⁸ its colour of liturgical penitence invoking the Cross,¹⁹ blending and uniting the connotations of blue and red.²⁰ In the unification of these two colours lies Messiaen's devotion to violet,²¹ where violet with a preponderance of red represents the 'Truth of Love', whilst with the dominance of blue becomes 'Love of Truth'.²² Gold is the representation of the Word and of light,²³ with gold and yellow standing as emblems of faith within Christian symbolism.²⁴ In *Méditations*, these factors work in control of harmonic progression, *son-couleur* establishing a network of theological relationships.

The narrative and didactic representations of stained glass, with New Testament characters and their counterparts in Old Testament symbolism, provides both 'a holy history and a catechism'.²⁵ Yet Messiaen's adoration for medieval glass stems not from the detail, but the overall effect:²⁶

When a stained-glass window is viewed at a distance, the figures are too small to be distinguishable, but one is still dazzled by the colors: a window dominated by blues and reds [...] produces an enormous violet to the eye.²⁷

Messiaen describes how the detail of distant medieval glass is blended and subsumed into a whole, citing the mystic Jan van Ruusbroec:²⁸ 'Contemplation sees something, but what does it see? An experience above all, which is not one thing, nor another'.²⁹ This effect is encountered musically when 1st CCR and TC portray 'Dieu est éternel'.³⁰ This 'light and scintillating effect in which all the [colours] have combined into a new unity',³¹ is

¹² *Traité* VII, p. 16.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁴ Dorothee Brunner, 'Farbklang und Geblendetsein in der Begegnung mit dem eucharistischen Herrn: Die Gebetssätze des Livre du Saint Sacrement von Olivier Messiaen als Beitrag zu einer Erneuerung und Vertiefung der eucharistischen Gebetspraxis' (unpublished Diplomarbeit, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, 2009), p. 80.

¹⁵ *Traité* VII, p. 22.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁷ Brunner, p. 81. See also Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 63: 'Debussy was asked what his favorite color was. He replied, "Violet." Now, violet is my favorite color, too'.

¹⁸ Brunner, pp. 80, 81.

¹⁹ Michaely, p. 368: 'In seiner liturgischen Verwendung als Passionsfarbe begegnet uns das Violett im VII. Satz der *Vingt regards*: "Blick des Kreuzes"'.
²⁰ Brunner, p. 81.

²¹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 43.

²² Davidson, p. 25, citing Claude Samuel, *Entretiens avec Olivier Messiaen* (Paris: Pierre Belfond, 1967), p. 43.

²³ *Traité* VII, p. 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁵ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 139.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

²⁸ Jan van Ruusbroec, *Opera Omnia* 10 (Corpus Christianorum *Continuatio Mediaevalis* CX), ed. by Guido de Baere (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991).

²⁹ *Conférence de Notre Dame*, trans. by T. Tikker and reprinted in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 64.

³⁰ *Méditations*, p. 38.

³¹ James R. Johnson, 'The Stained Glass Theories of Viollet-le-Duc', *The Art Bulletin*, 45:2 (1963), 121-134 (p. 122).

observed, for example, where the powerful irradiation (*rayonnant*) of blue tends to encroach particularly upon red.³² The attempt of the Gothic cathedral to emulate the New Jerusalem built of precious stones such as sapphire and jasper is recreated by Messiaen in *Couleurs de la cité céleste*, paving the way for *La Transfiguration* and its sister-work *Méditations*: linked both by Thomist theology, and the ambitious evocation of encounters with the divine by the highly integrated use of *son-couleur*.

Faith forms the nexus between music and the man,³³ bringing theology into the concert hall, uniquely bridging the gulf between organ loft and Parisian musical life.³⁴ Messiaen refreshes medieval aesthetics of light as understood by contemporary writers and introduces them to a modern audience in sonic flashes. This visual element of Messiaen's music is alluded to in terms such as *visions*, *regards*, *éclairs*, and even *déchirures*.³⁵ Thus his output embraces a theology of light: a coloured light, whose musical counterpart employs upper resonance as a common principle to devise myriad, complex harmonies reflecting exquisite spectral shifts. Inspired by the subtlety and violence of Delaunay,³⁶ Messiaen described the natural evocation of complementary colours,³⁷ applying this to the perception of 'successive' natural resonance in music. His later style uses modal and non-modal passages to identical purpose, creating a unified harmonic environment with the aim of transporting the listener through a multicoloured sensory experience akin to that which we feel upon entering a Gothic cathedral: 'stained glass is one of the most wonderful creations of man'.³⁸ Messiaen draws attention to Blanc-Gatti's citation from Jean d'Udine's *Traité de Géométrie rythmique*.³⁹ Blanc-Gatti notes of medieval transepts that north represents the cold shades of night and shadow (green, blue and violet), whilst the south is dominated by the warmth of light, sun, joy and life (red, orange and yellow).⁴⁰

Deriving from an Augustinian interpretation of the science of music, St Bernard of Clairvaux expects of church music the radiation of truth: 'kindling the light of truth' by the sounding of virtue must 'affect man's entire nature'.⁴¹ Writing *Saint François*, Messiaen celebrates the ability of truth to illuminate, deliver, enrapture and dazzle. As *Chants de terre et de ciel* closes with a theological celebration of the Resurrection, Messiaen alludes, with medieval Marian imagery, to the function of the Gothic cathedral as heaven in the here-and-now, where by means of incense, architecture and decoration, we are immersed in religious experience: 'Parfum, porte, perle, lavez-vous dans la Vérité'.⁴²

³² Johnson, 'The Stained Glass Theories of Viollet-le-Duc', p. 122. See also Appendix Five, below, p. 132 for further definitions of the term *rayonnant*.

³³ Hill and Simeone, epilogue to *Olivier Messiaen*, trans. by Lucie Kayas, (Paris: Fayard, 2008), p. 481.

³⁴ Dingle, 'Understated charm', p. 69. This echoes Hill's point that 'in *Visions* religious-inspired music comes out of church and into the concert hall', in Peter Hill, 'Piano Music I' in *The Messiaen Companion*, pp. 72-104 (p. 79). See also Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 54.

³⁵ The original title for *Éclairs* was *Déchirures sur l'Au-Delà* (Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 54).

³⁶ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 43.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³⁸ Peter Hill, 'Introduction', in *The Messiaen Companion*, pp. 1-11 (p. 4), in which Hill cites Messiaen's words on *Everyman*, BBC television, 1988.

³⁹ *Traité VII*, p. 8, in which Messiaen quotes Charles Blanc-Gatti, *Des sons et des couleurs* (Paris: Editions d'Art Chromophonique, 1934), p. 26, which in turn cites Albert Cozanet writing under the pseudonym Jean d'Udine in *Traité complet de géométrie rythmique* (Paris, 1926). Blanc-Gatti cites from the chapter 'Roses des Cathédrales'. See Appendix Six, pp. 135, 140.

⁴⁰ *Traité VII*, p. 8: 'Il a observé que les prodigieux verriers du Moyen âge ont toujours fait dominer les tons froids dans les Roses du Nord et les tons chauds dans les Roses du Sud'.

⁴¹ Otto G. von Simson, 'The Gothic Cathedral: Design and Meaning', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 11:3 (1952), 6-16, (p. 14).

⁴² Bruhn, *Messiaen's Explorations of Love and Death*, p. 99: '...the heavenly fragrance, the gate of the Eternal City, and the precious materials of which it is built'.

Messiaen's harmony strives to capture the sonic equivalent of stained glass with concomitant theological purpose: 'Mobile and intangible, light has always seemed the natural counterpart of the mind'.⁴³ Traditionally, 'Christian mysteries were [...] explained by metaphors of light',⁴⁴ and medieval thought likens the miracle of the incarnation of the Word, 'Dei verbum, splendor Patris',⁴⁵ to the transformative effect of glass upon light,⁴⁶ 'as the sun passes through a precious stone'.⁴⁷ Thus, light is transfigured: 'A pure ray enters a glass window and emerges unspoiled, but has acquired the colour of the glass'.⁴⁸ Suger's term for the coloured light of stained glass was *lux nova*,⁴⁹ and the aesthetics of light and its theology was once seen as the foundation of Gothic ecclesiastical architecture,⁵⁰ expressing God as unfathomable divine light, subsequently linking light with beauty.⁵¹ Most powerfully, stained glass shows us 'the light of the true Sun, that is, God'.⁵² Stained glass windows equate with scripture, for 'their brilliance lets the splendour of the True Light pass into the church, they enlighten those inside'.⁵³ Neo-Platonic light mysticism finds a scriptural basis for this architectural use of light: 'For I will be to her a wall of fire round about [...] and I will be the glory within her' (Zechariah 2. 5).⁵⁴ The building is 'wrapped in light as with a garment' in Psalm 104. 2, and Messiaen selects this verse in *La Transfiguration*: 'Amictus lumine sicut vestimento'.⁵⁵

This medieval, allegorical view of a church is a mystical representation of the celestial city;⁵⁶ Suger even attempted to incorporate into the altar of St. Denis the jewels of Revelation 21,⁵⁷ so beloved of Messiaen. In its proportions, the gothic building as 'spiritual structure', weightless and luminous,⁵⁸ was held to symbolize not just the Temple of Solomon, but the universe.⁵⁹ In this mystical essay of cosmic representation,⁶⁰ the awesome *Majestas Domini* mosaics of the Romanesque apse are transformed into the same vision in coloured light, for example in the ambulatory at Bourges Cathedral. Messiaen was most impressed by the jewel-like glittering of the beautiful windows of Bourges,⁶¹ being 'forever dazzled by the marvellous colours' of gothic windows,⁶² explaining that 'it's *light* captured by man in order to glorify the most noble of functional spaces,

⁴³ Meiss, p. 175.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 175.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 176n, citing the quotation of St. Bernard in Anselm Salzer, *Die Sinnbilder und Beiworte Mariens in der deutschen Literatur und lateinischen Hymnenpoesie des Mittelalters* (Linz: J. Feichtingers Erben, 1893), p. 74.

⁴⁶ Meiss, p. 176.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 177, citing *Revelationes Sanctae Birgittae*, Rome, 1628, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid., quoting St. Bernard and cited in Salzer, *op. cit.*

⁴⁹ Fred S. Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages: The Western Perspective* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2010), p. 350.

⁵⁰ Roland Recht, *Believing and Seeing: The Art of Gothic Cathedrals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 27.

⁵¹ Meredith P. Lillich, *The Armor of Light: Stained Glass in Western France, 1250-1325* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 6.

⁵² Guillaume Durand, *Rationale divinatorum officiorum*, 1.1.24, trans. by J. M. Neale and Benjamin Webb, *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: A Translation of the First Book of the 'Rationale Divinorum Officiorum' written by William Durandus* (Leeds: T. W. Green, 1843), p. 28.

⁵³ Hugh of Saint-Victor, *Speculum de mysteriis ecclesiae*, Sermon 2, cited in Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages: The Western Perspective*, p. 350.

⁵⁴ Peter Fingesten, 'Topographical and Anatomical Aspects of the Gothic Cathedral', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 20:1 (1961), 3-23, (p. 14).

⁵⁵ Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 86.

⁵⁶ Von Simson, p. 6.

⁵⁷ Fingesten, p. 11.

⁵⁸ Recht, p. 30.

⁵⁹ Von Simson, p.16.

⁶⁰ Fingesten, p. 3.

⁶¹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 44.

⁶² Ibid., p. 37, citing: 'Notre Dame, the Sainte-Chapelle, and [...] the cathedrals of Chartres and Bourges'.

buildings intended for worship'.⁶³ Thus, the shimmering of these great medieval windows created Messiaen's calling as musical colourist.⁶⁴ At Bourges there is little possibility of bewilderment from the enormous variety of subjects,⁶⁵ countered by the proximity to the viewer of the ambulatory glass.⁶⁶ In evocation of the kingdom of heaven, diamantine and iridescent, rays of sunlight cause the windows at Bourges to shine as the precious stones of Matthew 13. 45.⁶⁷ Inspiring his orchestration of *Saint François*, Messiaen made numerous visits to Bourges to view the stained glass of the apse, the subject matters of which influence later works, where midday sunlight illuminates the Apocalypse window:⁶⁸

On voit le Christ, avec le glaive à deux tranchants dans sa bouche. Dans sa main droite, le Livre aux 7 sceaux, en dessous, les 7 chandeliers. Dans sa main gauche, 7 étoiles rouges. En dessus, à droite et à gauche, les 7 anges tombant du ciel, en raccourci.⁶⁹

In addition to 'John's First Vision' (Illustration 7.1), central to the ensemble is a majestic vision of 'Christ as Judge' (Illustration 7.2), where the stasis of these representations of Christ in glory contrasts with the surrounding tumult:⁷⁰ 'Au milieu du vitrail, le Christ, avec de grands faisceaux de lumière rouge, d'éclairs rouges, de flammes rouges, qui partent de ses deux mains'.⁷¹ In the medallions, the darkening of the background blues, subdued by the suppression of radiance and lack of transparency, enhances the impact.⁷² Rendering Messiaen's descriptions of these two windows in sound, the harmonic trajectory of 'Apparition du Christ glorieux' (*Éclairs sur l'au-Delà...*) traces this colour scheme, placing the red of E major as the goal of the movement, as well as the point of cadential repose in all but one of its fourteen sections, and acting as transitional harmony linking modal to non-modal chords (Example 7.1). With cathedral as allegory for the body of Christ, the medieval symbolism of apse windows, which draws on Revelation 1. 14-16 ('his eyes were as a flame of fire [...] and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength'),⁷³ is reinforced by Messiaen in his choice of this superscription for 'Apparition du Christ glorieux'.⁷⁴ This conveys Christ's golden girdle, snow-white hair, fiery eyes, the furnace-like glow of his bronze feet, the seven stars (evoked by the use of CTI 3B, 1 after RN2, 2/1/3),⁷⁵ and face shining like the sun.

⁶³ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 37 (italics in the original).

⁶⁴ *Traité* VII, p. 138.

⁶⁵ Stuart Whatling, 'Narrative art in northern Europe, c.1140-1300: A narratological re-appraisal' (unpublished doctoral thesis, The Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, 2010), p. 238.

⁶⁶ Whatling, p. 230.

⁶⁷ *Traité* VII, p. 22.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: One sees Christ, with the two-edged sword in his mouth. In his right hand, the Book with seven seals, and below, the seven candlesticks. In his left hand, seven red stars. Above, left and right, the seven angels fall directly from heaven. (Reproduced by kind permission of Alphonse Leduc/UMP Ltd.)

⁷⁰ Louis Grodecki, trans. by Mary A. Weedon, 'A Stained Glass Atelier of the Thirteenth Century: A Study of Windows in the Cathedrals of Bourges, Chartres and Poitiers', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 11 (1948), 87-111, (p. 96).

⁷¹ *Traité* VII, p. 22: 'Central to the window, Christ with large beams of red light, red lightning, red flames, which come from his two hands'. (Reproduced by kind permission of Alphonse Leduc/UMP Ltd.)

⁷² Grodecki, pp. 89, 98.

⁷³ Fingesten, p. 14.

⁷⁴ Loriod, preface to score of *Éclairs*, Première Partie, p. 4: 'Apparition du Christ glorieux' alludes to melodic contours of the Alleluia of Christ the King. Messiaen paraphrases the Gregorian melody *Potestas eius* in recognition of the eternity of the Kingdom. See Harris, Chapter 6, pp. 87-88, and Julian Christoph Tölle, *Olivier Messiaen: Éclairs sur l'au-delà...: Die christlich-eschatologische Dimension des Opus ultimum* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), p. 54.

⁷⁵ Chi-Kuen (Martin) Lee, 'Complexity within Simplicity: Modes and Color Chords in the First Movement of Messiaen's *Éclairs sur l'au-delà...*' (Paper given at the conference 'Messiaen the Theologian' at Boston University, 12th-13th October, 2007), p. 8 [accessed 13 October 2012]



ILLUSTRATION 7.1: Bourges Cathedral, Ambulatory Bay 14,
Apocalypse window, panel 3: 'John's First Vision'⁷⁶
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<<http://oliviermessiaen.net/sitedocs/papers/Lee.pdf>>, which suggests that the use of CTI 3B is determined by its colour association including gold stars (see Table 1.1, p. 15, above).

⁷⁶ For a further investigation of a similar image which portrays this scene in Revelation 1. 12-20, see Appendix One, p. 123, below, which presents 'Le Christ au glaive' from the *Angers Apocalypse*. We know that Messiaen must have had detailed knowledge of this tapestry, from his reference to 'Le Verbe de Dieu charge les Bêtes' from the *Angers Apocalypse* in *Vingt regards* (see Chapter Two, p. 42, above).



ILLUSTRATION 7.2: Bourges Cathedral, Ambulatory Bay 14,
Apocalypse window, panel 8: 'Christ as the Judge'
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EXAMPLE 7.1: ‘Apparition du Christ glorieux’, RN13, orchestral reduction

The image shows an orchestral reduction of 'Apparition du Christ glorieux' with various annotations. At the top, 'bandes verticales' are listed: 'vert, violettes, bleu foncé', 'jaune citron, avec des taches rouges', 'bleu dégradé vers le blanc, orangé capucine', and 'gris d'acier pointillé de rouge, rose et gris, gris clair, brun cuir'. Below these, specific color terms are mapped to musical elements: 'jaune, mauve, et gris perle' to CTI 2A; 'rouge' to the first staff; 'vert émeraude, violet améthyste, et bleu pâle' to CTI 6B; 'blanc et or' to CTI 4B; and 'jaune et noir de rouge, orangé rouge très chaud' to TC 10. Modes are also indicated: 'Mode 2/1-bleu violet', 'Mode 2/1-vert', 'Modes 6&4' (6/3, 4/5, 6/5), 'Mode 3' (3/3), and 'Mode 3' (3/3, 3/4, 3/2). Musical notations include '1st CCR 3 A B C', '5 B', '4 A', 'CTI', '11 B', and '5 B'. The score consists of two systems of staves, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment.

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Harris’ summary of Messiaen’s phrase structure notes that ‘phrases begin with a broad expanse of violet blue, proceed through a succession of changing colorations [...] and end on a sustained red’.⁷⁷ This follows the movement of the eye from the background blues of the medallions to the reds of the apparition in the Bourges windows,⁷⁸ reflecting the original superscription: ‘Celui qui parle du ciel et celui qui est descendu du ciel’.⁷⁹

With ‘Les Étoiles et la Gloire’, Messiaen’s superscription from Habakuk 3. 4 confronts us with the awesome glory of the God of Judgment and the brightness of rays which issue from his hand: ‘Des rayons jaillissent de ses mains!’.⁸⁰ Adding to his references from Baruch and Job, Messiaen quotes Psalm 19, in which the heavens tell of God’s splendour. Loriod highlights 1st CCR 11, portraying ‘une nébuleuse: nuage de gaz et de poussière’,⁸¹ whilst Dingle analyses the importance of 1st CCR 3B,⁸² yet despite the power of the stellar descriptions here, it is the majesty of the Bourges Christ enthroned (Illustration 7.2), with flames springing from his wounded hands and to whom the stars sing praises, to which Messiaen refers. Changing the title from ‘Voyage dans les étoiles’ focused both birdsong,⁸³ and the unison *tutti* evoking the Glory of the Bourges Christ.

⁷⁷ Harris, Chapter 6, p. 118.

⁷⁸ For further analysis of ‘Apparition du Christ glorieux’, see Simon Dunbavand, “‘Orpheus the Explorer’: ‘Harmony of Parts’ and ‘Charm of Colour’ in the Performance of Olivier Messiaen’s Organ Music” (unpublished MMus folio, University of Sheffield, 2013), Programme Notes, pp. 19-20; Appendix, pp. 140-143; accompanying CD, Track 1.

⁷⁹ Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 141: ‘The one who speaks of heaven, and the one who descended from heaven’ (my translation), where blue symbolizes heaven, and red represents the glory of ‘the descended’.

⁸⁰ Loriod, preface to score, p. 11: ‘rays spring forth from his hands’.

⁸¹ Described in Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, Vol. 1, p. 247, and Vol. II, p. 165; also Loriod, preface to score, p. 11: ‘a nebula: cloud of gas and dust’.

⁸² Dingle, ‘Understated charm’, Vol. 1, p. 248, and Vol. II, p. 168.

⁸³ Hill and Simeone, p. 369 (which stresses the birdsong element); Dingle, *Messiaen’s Final Works*, p. 246.

Απο δόξης εις δόξαν πορευόμενοι¹

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine veritatis.*²

*Holy is the True Light, and passing wonderful,
lending radiance to them that endured in the heat of the conflict:
from Christ they inherit a home of unfading splendour,
wherein they rejoice with gladness evermore.*³

IN CONCLUSION: FROM GLORY TO GLORY ADVANCING⁴

Immersed in a Gothic spirituality, Messiaen was ‘a composer of the Middle Ages’,⁵ yet his pursuit of the coloured sparkle of glass also yields something sensuous: ‘It is a glistening music we seek, giving to the aural sense voluptuously refined pleasures’.⁷ Messiaen consciously attempted to compose beautiful music. For Aquinas, God’s supreme goodness, embracing clarity and consonance, is made tangible through beauty:⁸ a beauty which proceeds from God’s wisdom.⁹ Hans Urs von Balthasar’s concept of beauty also provides useful interpretational insights on Messiaen,¹⁰ via sophisticated theology offering the rehabilitation of beauty as transcendental: *Gestalt* is transformed by *Glanz*, where to behold the beauty of the beatific vision is to perceive truth and to be transported.¹¹ Beauty is therefore defined by ‘the discovery of form and luminous splendour’,¹² and Messiaen’s reading of Balthasar reveals beauty to be one of the most important religious concepts.¹³

For van Maas, the importance of Balthasar to Messiaen studies mainly lies not in the compositional working out of received theological ideas, as with Marmion (believing that Messiaen probably first discovered Balthasar during work on *Saint François*),¹⁴ but in the general correspondences between both thinkers’ understanding and interpretation of important theological perspectives.¹⁵ More specifically, however, *Herrlichkeit* articulates identical ideas to those Messiaen explores musically in *Méditations* and *La Transfiguration*. Here there is a case for believing that the musician *did* make an attempt to compose out specific ideas of the theologian.

¹ Prayer of dismissal from the Liturgy of St. James: ‘Going onwards from glory to glory’.

² Gabriel García Márquez, *Del amor y otros demonios*, trans. by Edith Grossman as *Of Love and Other Demons* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1995), p. 18.

³ Salisbury Diurnal, trans. by George Herbert Palmer, *Antiphons from the Salisbury Antiphoner*, p. 74, and cited in Robert Bridges, *The Spirit of Man* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1916), no. 449.

⁴ Prayer of dismissal from the Liturgy of St. James, trans. by Charles W. Humphreys (1840-1921).

⁵ Peter Hill, quoting Messiaen in ‘Interview with Yvonne Loriod’, in *The Messiaen Companion*, pp. 283-303 (p. 303).

⁶ Olivier Messiaen, ‘Le Rythme chez Igor Strawinsky’, *La Revue musicale*, 191 (1939), 91-92 (p. 91) and trans. by Stephen Broad, ‘Messiaen: Poetics, Polemics and Politics’, *Scottish Music Review*, 1/1 (2007), 83-98 (p. 85) <<http://www.scottishmusicreview.org/index.php/SMR/article/viewFile/7/6>> [accessed 9 September 2012]: ‘As for the young composers, they have followed a very different path from their elders – they have returned to the sensual and the spiritual’.

⁷ *Technique I*, p. 13.

⁸ Umberto Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, trans. by Hugh Bredin (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 32-33.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁰ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 61.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 62-64.

¹² Mario Saint-Pierre, *Beauté, bonté, vérité chez Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Paris: Presses de l’Université Laval, 1998), and cited in van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 67.

¹³ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 211.

¹⁴ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 61.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

So delighted was Messiaen with Alain Michel's interpretation of *La Transfiguration*,¹⁶ that it was reprinted with his imprimatur.¹⁷ Messiaen's fundamental message on filiation here encapsulates Balthasar's assertion that *beauty* establishes the reconciliation of mortal and divine.¹⁸ Michel draws the parallel between *Herrlichkeit* and *La Transfiguration*,¹⁹ and Bruhn asserts that not only did the mature Messiaen make frequent verbal references to Balthasar, but that he had already read much of *Herrlichkeit* in translation by the late 1960s.²⁰ Conversely, Balthasar had annotated his recording of *La Transfiguration*,²¹ which Kars understands as a 'cosmic celebration of the glory of Christ's Transfiguration'.²²

Significantly, Messiaen's passages of *éblouissement* attempt to emulate one purpose of the Gothic cathedral: the pilgrim is deliberately overwhelmed by beauty and is moved in awe, 'transported from this inferior to that higher world'.²³ Suger's motivation puts into practice the ideal of St. Bernard that 'guides contemplation toward the transcendental source of all beauty'.²⁴ Balthasar traces this line of *δόξα*, from *כבוד* to the manifestation of God's love:²⁵ 'At the end of this unfolding of the concept of glory, starting from word and image and arriving at righteousness, the concepts of the *beauty* of revelation inherent in this concept have come clearly into view'.²⁶

Emblematic of *ressourcement* thought, Balthasar's task was to 're-concentrate our loving gaze on the primordial beauty of Christ',²⁷ where, to behold this beauty is to witness the love of God. This is a 'perception in faith of the self-authenticating glory of God's utterly free gift of love',²⁸ which perfectly summarizes Messiaen's viewpoint: God's Glory is of supreme beauty, the pure radiance of love.²⁹ Discussing the importance of the Transfiguration Gospel,³⁰ Balthasar observed that salvation comes only from God's luminous, revitalizing Glory.³¹ Thus the salvific gift of Christ represents God's love as the crystallization of this Glory,³² to which Messiaen's response is profound joy.

¹⁶ Van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 61.

¹⁷ Alain Michel, 'La Transfiguration et la Beauté: d'Olivier Messiaen à Urs von Balthasar', *La recherche artistique*, (November-December 1978), 86-89.

¹⁸ Alain Michel, 'La Transfiguration et la beauté', *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé*, pp. 494-495, and also cited in Siglind Bruhn, *Messiaens 'Summa theologica': Musikalische Spurensuche mit Thomas von Aquin in La Transfiguration, Méditations und Saint François d'Assise* (Waldkirch: Ed. Gorz, 2008), p. 110, n. 40: 'En choisissant ainsi des textes qui insistent sur la médiation que la beauté établit entre le charnel et le divin, Messiaen retrouve l'un des aspects fondamentaux de la théologie [...] telle qu'Urs von Balthasar venait de l'éclairer.'

¹⁹ Michel, 'La Transfiguration et la beauté', p. 493.

²⁰ Bruhn, *Messiaen's Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity*, p. 58, n. 3.

²¹ Voderholzer, p. 205.

²² Kars, 'Olivier Messiaen – ein Musiker der Freude', p. 368.

²³ Abbot Suger, cited in Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, p. 15.

²⁴ Von Simson, p. 15.

²⁵ See Appendix Five, pp. 129, 131.

²⁶ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, VII, p. 315 (italics in the original).

²⁷ Aidan Nichols OP, *Divine Fruitfulness: A Guide through Balthasar's Theology beyond the Trilogy* (London: Continuum, 2007), p. 338.

²⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Glaubhaft ist nur Liebe* (Einsiedeln: Johannes, 1963), trans. *Love Alone: the Way of Revelation* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1968), p. 9.

²⁹ Père Pascal Ide, 'Olivier Messiaen théologien?', in *Portrait(s)*, ed. by Massip, pp. 39-46 (p. 40): 'la beauté suprême est celle de la Gloire, qui est pur rayonnement, resplendissement d'amour'.

³⁰ See Voderholzer, pp. 204-205.

³¹ Hans Urs von Balthasar, „Ich rufe dich bei deinem Namen“: *Der Lebensweg Jesu, sieben mal sieben Stationen der Kirche* (Freiburg: Informationszentrum Berufe der Kirche, 1983), p. 23: „Gott allein wird sie bergen in der alle umströmenden Sphäre seiner strahlenden und erquickenden Herrlichkeit“.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

Motivated by ‘Light, Joy, and Glory’,³³ and in Example 8.1 bathing the joy of this glory in the purity of yellow, gold and white light, Messiaen closes *Saint François* by building the total chromatic above a perfect cadence, using CTI 7 in a dominant function. This spacing and transposition recalls Berg’s ‘Ich werde unsterblich’ in *Wozzeck*,³⁴ whilst this transposition links both to ‘Le Verbe’, and *Livre du Saint Sacrement*. ‘Il ressuscite’ is harmonized by descending first inversion CTI and emphatic *effet de vitrail* CR, demonstrating a glittering summation of Messiaen’s harmony of light and colour.

EXAMPLE 8.1: *Saint François*, VIII ‘La mort et la nouvelle vie’, RN151, (choral and orchestral reduction)

The image displays a musical score for 'La mort et la nouvelle vie' from *Saint François*. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the vocal line with lyrics 'il res - sus - ci(te) il res - sus - ci - te de la' and piano accompaniment. Above the vocal line, CTI annotations include '9B 5B 3B' and '1st. inv. 3rd. inv. root posn.'. The piano part features dynamic markings like *più f*, *ff*, and *cresc.*. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics 'For - ce, de la Gloi - re, de la Joiel!!' and piano accompaniment. Above the vocal line, CTI annotations include 'CTI 7C + complement' and 'CTI 7A + complement'. The piano part includes dynamic markings like *fff*, *ff*, and *f*, along with a 3/4 time signature and *g^{tr}* markings. The score is a choral and orchestral reduction.

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³³ Interview with Almut Rößler, April 23rd, 1979, trans. by B. Dagg and N. Poland and cited in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 92.

³⁴ Stephan Heuberger, ‘Das Kreuz und die vollkommene Freude: Verborgene musikalische Querverbindungen zwischen den Opern *Saint François d’Assise* von Olivier Messiaen und *Wozzeck* von Alban Berg’, in *Musik des Unsichtbaren*, ed. by M. C. Hastetter, pp. 85-103 (p. 100). The text comes from *Wozzeck*, Act I, scene 4, ‘Passacaglia’ (variation 20), Doktor: ‘I will be immortal’.

Messiaen was ‘a believer dazzled by the infinity of God’,³⁵ and the coloration of Messiaen’s techniques lead the auditor to a ‘dazzling religious experience’ in an identical way to the coloured glass of a cathedral.³⁶ This dazzlement is Messiaen’s mystical ‘escape from subjectivity’, achieved by ‘the loss of self awareness through an ecstatic union with the divine’,³⁷ through the symbolism of the rainbow, which in Revelation associates divine majesty with radiant colours.³⁸ This *éblouissement* brings to the musical texture a blurring of parameters: Messiaen’s appropriation of resonance demonstrates the early ‘fusion between harmony and timbre’.³⁹ Jonathan Harvey’s assessment of Messiaen as ‘protospectralist’ shows awareness,⁴⁰ not just of Messiaen’s use of resonance as a generative technique within harmony, but also that by manipulation of its constituent harmonics, for example, ‘the timbre of wind instruments can be completely transformed by a [...] complex chord’.⁴¹ Yet his overriding concern is not technical, but metaphysical: ‘spectralism in its simplest form as color-thinking, is a spiritual breakthrough’.⁴²

Defusing Chadwick’s danger, Messiaen lifts music to the ‘indispensable’,⁴³ through his association of theology with music via textual citation, where manipulation creates theological insight. Viewed in Wagnerian terms, ‘the intercommunication of the internal discourses of the leitmotifs constitutes a non-dramatic subplot which is the esoteric aspect’,⁴⁴ and just as this weaving of multiple symphonic motives comments on the action and forges new interpretations of the text, Messiaen’s textural combination of ideas vertically and horizontally yields new theological perspectives: Messiaen’s chords are *light*-motifs. Whilst the ‘meaning’ of individual chords is not necessarily fixed at a surface level (for example in the colour-chords of *Catalogue*), the correspondence of colour and theological intention between works is both consistent and impressive. The theological significance of complex harmony, allied to the colours of the diatonic triadic content, is used across works as a means of establishing stylistic consistency and Christian preaching. The shimmer of resonance-based harmony within Messiaen’s sonic stained glass, by the superposition or juxtaposition of signifiers, forms a rich ‘theological rainbow’ of ideas,⁴⁵ where the rainbow is nature’s stained glass.

Messiaen frequently explained his music as a proclamation of faith,⁴⁶ where the interplay of rhythm, melody and harmony creates a sophisticated commentary on expressions of belief. Acknowledging his reading of Thomas Merton during the 1970s,⁴⁷ Lioriod places Messiaen’s citation of the close of *The New Man* near the end of *Traité*. Merton’s interpretation of a theology of light chimes with Messiaen’s stance from the 1960s

³⁵ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 28.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

³⁷ Christian Asplund, ‘A Body without Organs: Three Approaches - Cage, Bach, and Messiaen’, *Perspectives of New Music*, 35:2 (1997), 171-187, (p. 184).

³⁸ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 139.

³⁹ Viviana Moscovich, ‘French Spectral Music: An Introduction’, *Tempo*, 200 (1997), 21-27, (p. 22).

⁴⁰ Jonathan Harvey, *In Quest of Spirit: Thoughts on Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 42.

⁴¹ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 53.

⁴² Jonathan Harvey, ‘Spectralism’, *Contemporary Music Review*, 19:3 (2000), 11-14 (p. 11).

⁴³ Music as ‘indispensable but dangerous’ in Henry Chadwick, ‘Why Music in Church?’ in *Tradition and Exploration: Collected Papers on Theology and the Church* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1994), p. 208, and cited in Jeremy Begbie, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), p. 86, and van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music*, p. 79.

⁴⁴ Pickstock, pp. 174-175.

⁴⁵ *Technique I*, p. 21.

⁴⁶ Voderholzer, p. 196.

⁴⁷ Hill and Simeone, pp. 297, 307.

onwards, implying sympathy with Aquinas' hierarchies of goodness and beauty in *The Divine Names*,⁴⁸ and *Summa Theologiae*,⁴⁹ with Dante's *Divina Commedia*,⁵⁰ and the celestial hierarchy of I Corinthians 15. 41,⁵¹ which informs the conclusion of *Saint François*:⁵²

The brightness of the eternal light is so great that we cannot see it, and all other lights become darkness by comparison with it. Yet to the spiritual man, all other lights contain the infinite light. He passes through them to reach it.⁵³

Listening to Messiaen, Kars becomes aware of Augustine's skill of 'being our inner selves', and thus the music is imbued with a 'quasi sacramental dimension'.⁵⁴ Ultimately, we, too, must aim to achieve a transcendental experience in these 'breakthroughs' with Messiaen, for 'transfigurative listening engenders faith'.⁵⁵ As Jonathan Harvey observes: 'the more we *become* the music in *participation mystique* [...] the more we sense its true nature',⁵⁶ and far from the perceptual 'idolatry' described by van Maas,⁵⁷ this music enhances spirituality through technique. Yet technique remains secondary to the effects of *éblouissement*: 'You must *feel* it'.⁵⁸ Messiaen attempts to capture for us, in the immediate present, the 'resonances of the above and beyond',⁵⁹ 'where there is only an eternal contemplating of and gazing at the light with the light and in the light'.⁶⁰ This view of *l'au-delà* encompasses radiance as 'the light which radiates from the transfigured bodies; they no longer need either sun or stars, they're their own light'.⁶¹ *Traité* closes with lines deleted from *Éclairs*,⁶² citing St. Paul: 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard [...] the things which God hath prepared for them that love him',⁶³ acknowledging that for all his sonic explorations of the divine light, this *visio beatifica* still awaits us.

Mevagissey, St George's Day, 2013

⁴⁸ Eco, *The Aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ *ST Sup.*, Q. 85. This is discussed in Bruhn, 'Traces of a Thomistic *De musica*', p. 37:

Thomas focuses here on the different degree of radiance pertaining to the two divinely chosen entities. If the future saints in their glorious bodies will shine like pure snow, the brilliance emanating from the transfigured Christ as revealed on Mount Tabor must be likened to the sun.

⁵⁰ *Paradiso*, Canto 1:

La gloria di colui che tutto move
per l'universo penetra, e risplende
in una parte più e meno altrove.

⁵¹ 'There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory'.

⁵² *Saint François*, VIII 'La mort et la nouvelle vie':

Autre est l'éclat de la lune, autre est l'éclat du soleil, Alleluia! Autres sont les corps terrestres,
autres sont les corps célestes, Alleluia!
Même, une étoile diffère en éclat d'une autre étoile! Ainsi en va-t-il de la résurrection des
morts, Alleluia! Alleluia!
De la douleur, de la faiblesse, et de l'ignominie: il ressuscite de la force, de la gloire, de la joie!!!

⁵³ Thomas Merton, *The New Man* (London: Burns & Oates, 1962), pp. 174-175, and cited in French by Messiaen/Loriod in *Traité* VII, p. 317.

⁵⁴ Kars, 'Olivier Messiaen – ein Musiker der Freude', p. 360.

⁵⁵ Bennett Zon, 'Bedazzled by Breakthrough: Music Theology and the Problem of Composing Music in Words', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 136:2 (2011), 429-435 (p. 435).

⁵⁶ Jonathan Harvey, 'Introduction', *Contemporary Music Review*, 14:3/4 (1996), 5-7 (p. 6).

⁵⁷ Van Maas, 'Forms of Love: Messiaen's aesthetics of *éblouissement*', p. 90.

⁵⁸ Hill, 'Introduction', in *The Messiaen Companion*, p. 4, citing Messiaen's words on the BBC, 1988.

⁵⁹ Gavoty, p. 36.

⁶⁰ John Ruusbroec [Jan van Ruusbroec], *The Spiritual Espousals and Other Works*, ed. by James A. Wiseman, O.S.B. (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1985), III/3, p. 148.

⁶¹ Röbler, *Contributions*, p. 29.

⁶² Dingle, *Messiaen's Final Works*, p. 141: 'Poeil n'a pas vu – Poreille n'a pas entendu'.

⁶³ *Traité* VII, p. 317, citing I Corinthians 2. 9.

APPENDIX ONE: *LE CHRIST AU GLAIVE*

Reminiscent of ‘John’s First Vision’ in the *Apocalypse* window of the Ambulatory at Bourges Cathedral, the panel ‘Le Christ au glaive’ from the *Angers Apocalypse* features a horizontal, two-edged sword in Christ’s mouth: *le glaive de la Parole*, which is a symbol of the power of the Divine Word, representing the vision encountered in Revelation 1. 12-20. This sword is later brandished by Christ the Word in the battle between good and evil in the sixth panel of the tapestry, with the image ‘Le Verbe de Dieu charge les Bêtes’, alluded to by Messiaen in his description of ‘Regard de l’onction terrible’.

Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive for ever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. (Revelation 1. 12-20.)



ILLUSTRATION A1: *La tenture de l'Apocalypse*, Première pièce:
‘Le Christ au glaive’ (tapestry, c. 1382),
Jean Bondol and Nicholas Bataille, Château d’Angers, France

APPENDIX TWO: MODES OF LIMITED TRANSPOSITION

The Table of Modes of Limited Transposition (Table A2.1) presents Messiaen's most frequently used modes,¹ together with the complement of each mode as a chord following the scale (which facilitates mode identification by highlighting those notes which are absent). *Traité VII* outlines Messiaen's favoured modes, together with detailed colour associations and typical harmonies for each note.

COLOURS ASSOCIATED WITH MODE 2

Mode 2¹ is principally blue-violet: 'blue-violet rocks speckled with little grey cubes, cobalt blue, deep Prussian blue, highlighted by a bit of violet-purple, gold, red, ruby, and stars of mauve, black and white'.²

Mode 2² is principally gold and brown: 'gold and silver spirals against a background of brown and ruby-red vertical stripes'.³

Mode 2³ is principally green: 'light green and prairie-green foliage, with specks of blue, silver, and reddish orange'.⁴

COLOURS ASSOCIATED WITH MODE 3

Mode 3¹ 'corresponds to an orange with red and green pigments, to specks of gold, and also to a milky white with iridescent, opaline reflections'.⁵

Messiaen regards mode 3² as his best of all, principally grey and mauve, but containing 'horizontally layered stripes [...] light grey, and white with mauve and pale yellow highlights – with flaming gold letters of an unknown script, and a quantity of little red or blue arcs'.⁶

Mode 3³ consists of: 'large vertical bands, alternating with cobalt blue and very dark bluish green. On the background, rare and spaced, some reddish orange saffron lily, and some silvery liana. Dominant color: blue and green'.⁷

Mode 3⁴: 'Background: large orange [patch], deeply striped of red, finely striped of blue. [...] branches of blue, crimson mauve and silver – [...] white lily, [...] tiger lily with red cinnabar flowers punctuated of black – [...] orange and blue fruits, [...] orange and green fruits. Dominant color: orange, red, with a little blue'.⁸

¹ *Conférence de Kyoto*, p. 7: modes 2, 3, 4, and 6 are those used in practice by Messiaen, whilst modes 1, 5, and 7 are used rarely.

² Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 64.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁷ Lee, 'The Charm of Impossibilities', p. 29 and *Traité VII*, p. 123 (Lee's translation).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30, and *Traité VII*, p. 123: Lee's translation, reading *nappe* as 'tablecloth'. In Lee, 'Complexity within Simplicity', p. 11, n. 3, *nappe* also means 'sea'.

TABLE A2.1: TABLE OF MODES OF LIMITED TRANSPOSITION

The image displays 24 musical staves, each representing a different mode of limited transposition. Each staff is labeled with its mode name (e.g., Mode 2/1, Mode 2/2, etc.) and contains a sequence of notes on a five-line staff. The notes are represented by half notes with stems pointing downwards. The modes are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with 6 modes per row and 4 rows. The modes shown are:

- Mode 2/1
- Mode 2/2
- Mode 2/3
- Mode 3/1
- Mode 3/2
- Mode 3/3
- Mode 3/4
- Mode 4/1
- Mode 4/2
- Mode 4/3
- Mode 4/4
- Mode 4/5
- Mode 4/6
- Mode 6/1
- Mode 6/2
- Mode 6/3
- Mode 6/4
- Mode 6/5
- Mode 6/6

APPENDIX THREE: *ACCORDS SPÉCIAUX WITHOUT COLOUR ASSOCIATIONS*

TABLE A3.1: TABLE OF CD

The image displays a musical score for piano accompaniment, organized into seven systems. Each system contains two staves (treble and bass clef) and is divided into two measures by a double bar line. Above each measure, the chord letter (A, B, C, or D) is indicated. The chords are: A (major), B (major), C (major), and D (major). The notation includes various voicings and fingerings for both hands, with some notes marked with slurs or accents. The key signature varies between systems, including one sharp (F#) and one flat (Bb).

TABLE A3.2: TABLE OF CR

root position	1st inversion	2nd inversion	3rd inversion	root position	1st inversion	2nd inversion	3rd inversion

APPENDIX FOUR:

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF MUSICAL WORKS, LECTURES AND WRITINGS BY MESSIAEN CITED IN THE TEXT

- 1934 *L'Ascension* (organ version)
- 1935 *Pièce pour le tombeau de Paul Dukas*
La Nativité du Seigneur
- 1936 *Poèmes pour mi* (Soprano and piano version)
- 1937 'Musique Religieuse' (published in *La Page musicale*)
- 1938 *Chants de terre et de ciel*
Billet Parisien: *L'Orgue mystique de Tournemire* (published in *La Syrinx*)
- 1939 'Autour d'une parution' (published in *Le Monde musical*)
Les corps glorieux
'Le Rythme chez Igor Strawinsky' (published in *La Revue musicale*)
- 1941 *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps*
- 1942-1944 *Technique de mon langage musical*
- 1943 *Visions de l'amen*
- 1944 *Trois petites liturgies de la Présence Divine*
Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus
- 1945 *Harawi*
'Querelle de la musique et de l'amour' (published in *Volontés*)
- 1946 Réponse à une enquête' (published in *Contrepoints*)
- 1946-1948 *Turangalîla-Symphonie*
- 1948 *Cinq rechants*
- 1949 *Cantéyodjayâ*
'Neumes rythmiques' (*Quatre études de rythme*)
- 1950 *Messe de la Pentecôte*
- 1951-1952 *Livre d'orgue*
- 1952 *Le merle noir*
- 1953 *Réveil des oiseaux*
- 1956-1958 *Catalogue d'oiseaux*
- 1959 *Chronochromie*
- 1960 *Verset pour la fête de la Dédicace*
- 1962 *Sept haïkai*
- 1963 *Couleurs de la cité céleste*
- 1964 *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum*
- 1963-1969 *La Transfiguration de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ*
- 1969 *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*
- 1970 *La fauvette des jardins*
- 1971 Discours d'Olivier Messiaen, Praemium Erasmianum
- 1971-1974 *Des canyons aux étoiles...*
- 1975-1983 *Saint François d'Assise*
- 1977 *Conférence de Notre-Dame*
- 1984 *Livre du Saint Sacrement*
- 1985 *Petites esquisses d'oiseaux*
Conférence de Kyoto
- 1986 *Un vitrail et des oiseaux*
- 1987 *La ville d'En-haut*
- 1988-1992 *Éclairs sur l'au-Delà...*
- 1992 *Concert à quatre*
- 1994-2002 *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie*

APPENDIX FIVE: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accords spéciaux: Writing the preface of *Vingt regards*, Messiaen coins the term ‘special chords’, which applies to all complex harmonies which are not derived from his Modes of Limited Transposition, whilst earlier he had used the term *accords classés* in the preface to *Quatuor*. In practice, this term refers to what we now call the ‘non-modal colour-chords’, commencing in 1935-6 with the development of CD and CR, moving through to the use of CDA, CTI and CCR.

αποκαλυψις: Apocalypse, the making visible of that which is hidden. Christ is revealed as universal at the ἐπιφάνεια (Epiphany). The risen Christ is revealed to Mary Magdalene, whilst in Revelation, the Heavenly Jerusalem is revealed in the triumph of good at the ἔσχατον (eschaton), the end of times which signals the eternity of the Kingdom. This is marked by the second coming of Christ at the παρουσία (Parousia): Christ comes as judge, enthroned in Glory in heaven as seen in *Majestas Domini* images, also depicted in art as almighty Παντοκράτωρ (Pantocrator).

Christusgestalt: For Balthasar, *Christusgestalt* denotes the form of Christ: the Son of God in the image of the Father,⁹ both in his earthly life, and in the body of Church and Sacrament. Within eternity, Christ exists before the Incarnation (Psalm 109. 3).

Deçî-tâla: 120 theoretical rhythmic formulae from the fifth chapter, ‘Tala-adhyāya’, of the thirteenth century south Indian *Sangîta-Ratnakara* compiled by Śārṅgadēva. Messiaen discovered these *deçî-tâla* in Lavignac’s *Encyclopédie* whilst still a student, using numerous examples throughout his compositional life. The most important of Messiaen’s appropriated rhythms bring with them specific theological associations to the musical argument, derived either from the name of the *deçî-tâla*, or assigned by Messiaen.

For example:

śimbavikrama (8): ‘the power of the lion’ (Messiaen’s designation is based on the numerology of Shiva symbolism).

dhenkî (58): non-retrogradable rhythm which is the symbol of eternity, and never repeated successively but only through augmentation or diminution.¹⁰

pratâpaçekhara (75): ‘the power that radiates from the forehead’.¹¹

râgavardhana (93): ‘the rhythm that gives life to the melody’,¹² symbol of God the Father.

candrakalâ (105): beauty, especially of the moon.¹³

δόξα: Doxa, the New Testament Glory of God, as used, for example, in Luke 2. 9: ‘Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified’.

⁹ Sander van Maas, *The Reinvention of Religious Music: Olivier Messiaen’s Breakthrough Toward the Beyond* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), p. 63.

¹⁰ *Traité* II, p. 8.

¹¹ Ton de Leeuw, *Music of the Twentieth Century: A Study of its Elements and Structure*, trans. by Stephen Taylor (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), p. 55.

¹² Siglind Bruhn, *Messiaen’s Interpretations of Holiness and Trinity: Echoes of Medieval Theology in the Oratorio, Organ Meditations, and Opera* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2008), p. 128.

¹³ Siglind Bruhn, *Messiaen’s Contemplations of Covenant and Incarnation: Musical Symbols of Faith in the Two Great Piano Cycles of the 1940s* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2007), p. 60 which cites Michael, *Die Musik Olivier Messiaens*, pp. 44-46.

Éblouissement: Dazzlement, whereby Messiaen, through the combination of resonant harmony and sophisticated rhythm, creates the transcendental effect, which immediately lifts us in a breakthrough towards ‘the above’.

Effet de vitrail: By the transposition of a series of different inversions of the same, complex harmony to begin on the same bass note, and thus prolonging the root of the original chord whilst the music progresses through a kaleidoscopic and colourful sequence of up to four chords, Messiaen creates harmony which has the same dappled effect as the multicoloured shards of light emanating from stained glass windows. Whilst the stained glass windows themselves may represent biblical scenes, the light itself is endowed with theological symbolism, and this duality of purpose also exists in Messiaen’s harmonic progression, which may be applied to CD, CDA, CTI, or CR. He also coined the slightly looser term *vitrail sonore*, which is not to be underestimated, as the narrative and spiritual functions of much of Messiaen’s music falls into this category of ‘sounding stained glass windows’.

Filiation: The notion that just as Jesus is the Son of God, so too, we will become the Children of God by divine adoption, the *Adoptio perfecta*, runs through Messiaen’s works from *La Nativité du Seigneur* and *Vingt regards* to *La Transfiguration*. The basis for this doctrine may be traced from the Gospels, via Augustine and Aquinas to Marmion, and may also be found in II Peter:

His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may [...] become participants in the divine nature’ (II Peter 1. 3-4).

The second Septenary of *La Transfiguration* explores filiation in detail, with reference to Aquinas. Grace is received at baptism, together with the promise of future glory, revealed at the Transfiguration, during which the entire Trinity was present: in God’s voice, in the person of Christ, and in the cloud of the Spirit.¹⁴

Gesamtidee: The God who embraces everything is the single, primary idea *in its totality*. Discussing Balthasar’s *Theodramatik*, Jörg Disse comments: ‘Jede einzelne endliche Freiheit ist [...] nur eine „Facette der einem Gesamtidee“, die Christus ist’.¹⁵ Whilst Balthasar appropriates his term primarily from the arts rather than from religion, it presents us with a clear grasp of the enormity of God: ‘Balthasar begins with a totality *in the beginning* – that is, simultaneously an objective totality and a subjective totality...’.¹⁶

Gestalt: Balthasar’s understanding of *Gestalt* is best summarized by David Schindler:

Gestalt is the *appearing* of the depths of a thing’s being and as such has a twofold nature. This polarity, moreover, finds expression in the classical articulation of the beautiful as the inseparable instance of *species* (or *forma*) and *lumen* (or *splendor*) [...] *Gestalt* itself is the intersection of the horizontal and the vertical dimensions, an essential tension between the finite and the infinite.¹⁷

¹⁴ STI, Q. 45, Art. 4.

¹⁵ Jörg Disse, ‘Teilhabe an Gottes Freiheit: Zum Freiheitsverständnis in Hans Urs von Balthasars *Theodramatik*’, in *Geist und Heiliger Geist: Philosophische und theologische Modelle von Paulus und Johannes bis Barth und Balthasar*, ed. by Edith Düsing, Werner Neuer, Hans-Dieter Klein (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2009), pp. 351-370 (p. 369).

¹⁶ David C. Schindler, *Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Dramatic Structure of Truth: A Philosophical Investigation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), p. 159.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Glanz: Balthasar builds upon Aquinas' contrast between *species* and *lumen*, where the splendour of the latter is referred to as *Glanz*. This duality of form and its deeper, hidden reality are bound together in our perception of that which is beautiful.¹⁸

Harmonic Litany: An *ostinato* of two notes lying a tone apart is treated to a constantly varying harmonization. Harmonic litany is discussed in *Technique*,¹⁹ becoming important in relation to chords in 'Regard du silence' from *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*.²⁰

יהוה: The mysterious, divine name of the hidden God: YHWH.

כבוד: Kabod, the Glory of God as seen in the Old Testament, revealed to Moses in the Burning Bush and perceived by the Israelites as fire, light, lightening or cloud.

λόγος: Logos, the eternal Word of God is personified in Christ as light and life.

Mélodie par manques: This experiment by Messiaen turns the usual method of melody performance on its head. Instead of the contour being formed by our perception of the attack of each note, Messiaen creates a melody from the cessation of the sound:

One must clearly listen to the suspension of each sound (with +). The instrument which will cease must make a light crescendo, almost at the time of stopping, and without exaggeration.²¹

מנא, מנא, תקל, ופרסין: 'Mene, Mene, Tekel, Pharsin', the writing on the wall at the feast of the king Belshazzar desecrating the holy vessels of the Temple of Solomon, is explained in Daniel 5. 26-28:

This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; TEKEL, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting; PERES, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

Ernest Hello inspires Messiaen to interpret this as our universal judgement of 'numbered, weighed, divided' which is written in the stars.

Musica universalis: The theory of the harmony of the spheres, based on the proportions of distances between the sun, earth and moon, and the planets was an attractive idea from classical philosophy to the Renaissance. Messiaen's interest in the cosmos and the devising of musical techniques to express its spiritual significance, led him to formulate a theme based on this concept of *musica universalis* and interplanetary proportions in 'Le Père inengendré' from *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*.

Minting: *Monnayage*, Messiaen's use of long durations consisting of an uneven number of beats and the need to differentiate between lengthy durations of similar but not identical value led to the development of minting. Sustained long durations are contrasted by a counterpoint of more complex passage-work in the shortest possible constituent

¹⁸ Stephen Wigley, *Balthasar's Trilogy* (London: T&T Clark, 2010), p. 32.

¹⁹ *Technique* I, p. 53.

²⁰ The term 'harmonic litany' is discussed by Matthew Hill in 'Faith, Silence and Darkness Entwined in Messiaen's *Regard du silence*', in *Silence, Music, Silent Music*, ed. by Nicky Losseff and Jenny Doctor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 37-52 (p. 46), which quotes from Messiaen's programme notes.

²¹ Translation of Messiaen's note in the score of *Et exspecto* by Chi-Kuen (Martin) Lee, in 'The Charm of Impossibilities: Musical Language, Theology and Narrative Discourse in Olivier Messiaen's *Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Buffalo, 2011), p. 65.

duration, thus making audible the smallest possible subdivision of beats, often making use of busy birdsong phrases:

Minting occurs in any long unfolding of durations; in order to appreciate the tiny differences between the long durations, one must preserve the feeling of the unit of value [...] which will be constantly brought to mind.²²

Rayonnant: In terms of French Gothic architecture, *Rayonnant* is the movement based on intricate decoration, deriving its name from the radiation outwards of the tracery within rose windows. *Rayonnant* also refers to the radiation of light: the colouring of transformed rays of sunlight which streams from the stained glass windows and intermingles, creating a kaleidoscopic effect of new colours and instilling a sense of spiritual awe in the observer.

Ressourcement: This movement of twentieth century French Catholic thought, the foundation of *nouvelle théologie*, demonstrates a return to the basics of faith: the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, rather than relying on the accretion of two millennia of interpretation and conflict.

Simultaneous contrast: Explained in *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, this is the theory which demonstrates how our perception of two differing colours is affected by their proximity, most obviously between two complementary colours. Messiaen expands this to embrace chords made up of all twelve tones, which consist of a main chord of seven or eight notes, together with the remaining complement to form a twelve-note aggregate.

Son-couleur: In *Conférence de Notre-Dame* Messiaen outlines three discrete categories of spiritual music: liturgical music (Gregorian chant), religious music (the passions of Bach, for example), and *son-couleur*. The association of complex harmony with sophisticated colours in the 'preaching' of religious truths is Messiaen's solution to the problem of exactly *how* a composer evokes the divine in music. For example, discussing his response to Grönnewald's *Resurrection* in the second movement of *Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum* Messiaen explains that the wind creates *complexes colorés* in the harmonization of the trumpet melody. He transports us to the vividly colourful world of Gothic ecclesiastical architecture by creating the musical equivalent of the great cathedrals of France in order to convey specific ideas about Christian doctrine.

Sons resultants: when two notes are played together difference tones may exist, and it may be possible for the listener to hear a third, additional note which is the frequency corresponding to the difference or sum of the two original notes.

Spectralism: Spectral music specializes in the analysis and manipulation of the constituent sonic spectrum of notes, with an electronic transformational affect upon timbre, devised and perfected at IRCAM by composers such as Tristan Murail and Gérard Grisey.

Theme of Chords: This harmonic device was first devised for use in *Vingt regards*, where it is defined in the preface, but still remained a feature of Messiaen's harmony until *Catalogue d'oiseaux*. Whilst it may seem to be an abstract collection of notes, its practical

²² Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 136.

application, concentrated into a progression of two complex chords, often comes with its own colour-associations and symbolism, and is an indicator of Messiaen's non-modal thinking. The 'Theme of Chords' may be viewed as a precursor to TC, with both types being used in close proximity, for example in *Harawi* and *Catalogue*.

Theology of Light: Light represents the presence of God: 'In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it' (John 1. 4-5). Light illuminates the glory of God, showing us truth: 'And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth' (John 1. 14). At events such as the Transfiguration, for an instant the Uncreated Light as defined by Gregory Palamas becomes visible, linking Moses' encounter with the Burning Bush, for example, with the light at the conversion of St. Paul. Abbot Suger was so impressed by the coloured light which streamed into the Quire at Saint Denis that he coined the term *lux nova*. The immediate function of this stained glass had a representational dimension, but on a symbolic level, it was the coloured sunlight itself which touched and illuminated the worshippers within. Messiaen's focus throughout his career on the divine light exhibits certain parallels with the Eastern Mystics of the Light, drawing from his musical response to biblical accounts of the Uncreated Light a contemplative interpretation, in tune with that of Symeon the New Theologian and the hesychastic schools.

Theomusicology: A term first used by Jon Michael Spencer to define his methodology for investigating the interactions between music and the religious and spiritual beliefs of societies. Spencer explains his discipline thus:

Theomusicology - musicology as a theologically informed discipline - is a musicological method for theologizing about the sacred, the secular, and the profane, principally incorporating thought and method borrowed from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy.²³

Spencer begins with Augustine, contrasting the sacred with the profane to arrive at a discussion of how theomusicology could (and should) interact with global ethics and morality. Whilst Spencer's focus is primarily concerned with both ethnomusicology and anthropology, there is no reason to restrict the idea to these disciplines, as the term encapsulates and unifies issues of concern to both the historical musicologist and music analyst.

Theophany: The unequivocal, physical appearance of God to humankind: moments in the Biblical canon in which the invisible becomes visible and the true nature of God is unveiled. In the Old Testament this may be in fire or cloud, for example, or in the Gospels when Christ's Glory transcends the concealment of his humanity at the Baptism and the Transfiguration.

Time: Messiaen's theology of time embraces both χρόνος, the chronological aspect of time and the measured durations of music, and καιρός, the time of the fulfilment God's eternal purposes. Rigorous rhythmic play, in which the opposition and interaction of rhythmic processes imply parallels with Bergson's *durée réel* and *durée vécue*, symbolizes, for Messiaen, the temporal rift between heaven and earth.

²³ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theological Music: Introduction to Theomusicology*, Contributions to the Study of Music and Dance, No. 23 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), p. 3.

Trouvère: Spanning the thirteenth century, the art of the musician-poets of northern France is characterized by the subject matter of courtly love and spiritual devotion, rich in the play of allusion and citation.

Truth: Aquinas brings together two schools of thought: an ontological, neoplatonic concept of truth, as amplified by Augustine, and an Aristotelian, intellectual truth.²⁴ Balthasar points out that with Jesus' words in John 14. 6 ('I am the way, and the truth, and the life'), it becomes clear that he comes 'from above': 'Jesus is the truth, and he testifies to the truth'.²⁵ Balthasar continues: 'the one truth - the exposition of the Father by the Son (which in turn is expository by the Spirit) - is ultimately a Trinitarian truth [...] As *a-letheia* (unveiling), this truth is one that is unveiled in and for the world'.²⁶ Thus Jesus both testifies to the truth, and *is* the truth, which is 'glory'. Citing John 1. 14, Balthasar realizes that 'the exhibition of God in the world' makes clear to us that 'ultimately, the two words, glory and truth, express the same thing'.²⁷ Jesus' words in John 8. 31-32 show us that from this truth will come the ultimate freedom: 'Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free"'.²⁷

²⁴ John F. Wippel, 'Truth in Thomas Aquinas', *The Review of Metaphysics*, 43:2 (1989), 295-326 (p. 295).

²⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theologik: Zweiter Band: Wahrheit Gottes* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1985), trans. by Adrian J. Walker as *Theo-Logic: Theological Logical Theory, Volume II: Truth of God* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), p. 13.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

APPENDIX SIX: GLOSSARY OF PEOPLE

Aquinas, Saint Thomas (1225-1274). Doctor of the Church; the theology of Messiaen's music is shot through with references to the work of Aquinas, specifically the *Summa Theologiae*. *Les corps glorieux* explores the bodily endowments of the resurrected (impassability, subtlety, agility and clarity) of Questions 82-85 in the 'Supplement' to *Summa Theologiae*, whilst *La Transfiguration* and *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité* are largely direct responses to core doctrines expressed in Part I.

Augustine of Hippo, Saint (345-430) Much of Aquinas is firmly rooted in Augustine. Messiaen also expresses Augustine's ideals on the life of the resurrected: 'The body's beauty is harmony of parts with a certain charm of colour'.²⁸ Augustine continues:

We feel an indescribable love for the blessed martyrs so as to desire to see in that kingdom the scars of the wounds in their bodies, which they bore for Christ's name. Perchance indeed we shall see them for this will not make them less comely but more glorious. A certain beauty will shine in them, a beauty though in the body, yet not of the body but of virtue.²⁹

Balthasar, Hans Urs von (1905-1988). The Swiss theologian's seven-volume *Herrlichkeit* develops many of the ideas which fired Messiaen from the 1960s onwards: ideas such as the Glory of God which is perceived in beauty and in truth. Whilst some writers draw only general parallels between Balthasar's theology and Messiaen's later works, there is evidence to believe that more specific links exist.

Berg, Alban (1885-1935). Messiaen was familiar with Berg's *Lyric Suite* at the time he was writing *Quatuor*, and harmonically, specific progressions from *Wozzeck* are directly quoted by Messiaen with symbolic associations. Throughout Berg's mature music, tonal elements intersect with serialism, and the way in which these tonal areas are able to crystallize and recede in their interaction with prevailing atonality may be compared with Messiaen's pitting of tonal harmonies against birdsong or superior resonance.

Bergson, Henri-Louis (1859-1941). His ideas on the flux of duration shatter the immutability of conventional notions of time, and closely parallel Messiaen's approach to rhythm, the colouring of duration and the interaction between opposing layers.

Blanc-Gatti, Charles (1895-1965). Messiaen himself explains in *Conférence de Notre-Dame*:

I had the chance to meet, in my youth, the painter of sounds: Charles Blanc-Gatti. Blanc-Gatti was struck with 'synopsia', that is to say that he suffered from a disorder of the optic and auditory nerves that permitted him to see colors as he heard sounds. The colors were superimposed on the subject.³⁰

Boulez, Pierre (b. 1925). His intellectual approach to music aesthetics and writings on contemporary compositional techniques and theory express powerful, valuable ideas. As a fiery pupil of Messiaen, his Second Piano Sonata and masterpiece *Le marteau sans maître* span Messiaen's experimental period of crisis, challenging the older generation. Where Messiaen's response was to develop a systematic *style oiseau* in the 1950s, Boulez branched out in another direction with *Pli selon pli*. As founder of IRCAM, Boulez was able to inspire fresh directions in electroacoustic composition and performance, and as

²⁸ St. Augustine, Letter 3 (to Nebridius), and *De Civitate Dei*, xxii, 19: 'Omnis enim corporis pulchritudo est partium congruentia cum quadam coloris suavitate'. Cited by Aquinas: *ST Sup.*, Q. 85, Art. 1, ad. 3. [Accessed 19 March, 2013] <<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5085.htm>>.

²⁹ St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, xxii, 19. Cited in *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1922), Vol. 19, p. 161.

³⁰ Messiaen, *Conférence de Notre-Dame*, trans. by T. Tikker and reproduced in Rößler, *Contributions*, p. 60.

an interpreter of the Second Viennese School and composers such as Bartók, Debussy and Varèse he directs the great orchestras of the world, as well as his own *Ensemble InterContemporain* in new repertoire. By 1984, pupil had commissioned master with *Un vitrail et des oiseaux*.

Chagall, Marc (1887-1985). Russian-born French visual artist noted especially for his paintings and stained glass. Messiaen was especially influenced by his symbolist canvas *Over the Town*, whilst the vivid windows from later in his career renew the medieval aesthetic with a dazzling originality of colour and form.

Couturier, Père Marie-Alain (1897-1954). Dominican priest and editor of *L'Art sacré*, Couturier was an important designer of contemporary stained glass, influenced by Matisse (particularly the Chapelle du Rosaire at Vence) and Le Corbusier. Couturier's most important writings were collected and published as *La vérité blessée*.³¹ His work at Notre-Dame de toute Grâce, Assy forms an ensemble with the art of, amongst others, Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Lurçat, Matisse and Rouault. Messiaen possessed by his piano a picture of a Couturier window of Christ crucified, in which the eyes of Father and Son meet.³²

Daniel-Lesur, Jean-Yves (1908-2002). As an organist, Daniel-Lesur contributed to the first performance of Messiaen's *La Nativité du Seigneur*, and as a composer became a founding member of *La Jeune France* along with his friends Jolivet and Messiaen.

Delaunay, Robert (1885-1941). Following his marriage to Sonia (1885-1979) and his associations with *Der Blaue Reiter*, his ideas and theories concerning colour led to the development of the theory of 'simultaneous contrasts' and its practical application, both in the canvases of the Delaunays, and with the complementary colour aggregates in Messiaen's music.

Deleuze, Gilles (1925-1995). For Deleuze, a transverse, or diagonal interpretation between parameters in order to 'to show the imperceptible',³³ and thus shedding light on the invisible, achieves deterritorialization by a blurring of boundaries.³⁴ The purpose is the forging of new links between previously opposing elements, for example in music, the temporal versus harmonic realms: discrete entities of vertical and horizontal functions. Deleuze examines the theory of contemporary music proposed by Boulez, which 'invents a kind of diagonal running between the harmonic vertical and the melodic horizon [...] a deterritorialized rhythmic block that has abandoned points, coordinates, and measure, like a drunken boat that melds with the line or draws a plane of consistency'.³⁵

Dukas, Paul (1865-1935). Messiaen was deeply influenced by the colours he perceived in the music of his composition teacher, Dukas, not least in the harmonic planning for the close of 'Le Prêche aux oiseaux' in *Saint François d'Assise*. Viewing the stained glass at

³¹ Marie-Alain Couturier, *La vérité blessée* (Paris: Plon/Menil Foundation, 1984).

³² Andrew Shenton, *Olivier Messiaen's System of Signs: Notes Towards Understanding His Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), p. 32, which cites Marie-Louise Jaquet, 'Une somme théologique et musicale', *L'Orgue*, 154 (1975), 43-61 (p. 54).

³³ Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations 1972-1990*, trans. by Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 45.

³⁴ Brian Hulse and Nick Nesbitt, *Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Theory and Philosophy of Music* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 112.

³⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, trans. by Brian Massumi, *A Thousand Plateaus* (London: Continuum, 2004), p. 296.

Bourges, the colours were to remind him of Dukas: 'On pense aux cascades de pierreries des 7 portes dans *Ariane et Barbe Bleue*, opéra de Paul Dukas'.³⁶ Messiaen was first struck by Dukas' colouration of these gemstones at the age of eighteen,³⁷ recalling this technique in *Couleurs de la Cité céleste*.

Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1327). German mystic Eckhart (Eckehart) constantly examines the nature of God: 'God transcends being',³⁸ and many of his themes intersect with Messiaen's interests. Thus *The Birth of the Eternal Word in the Soul* examines divine filiation and our adoption, and Eckhart also explores the life of those called to behold the light of the Beatific Vision: 'Like the morning star in the midst of a cloud and as the moon at the full and as the sun in his glory, so did he shine in the temple of God'.³⁹ Eckhart also discusses notions of time and eternity: 'The now wherein God made the world is as near this time as the now I am speaking in this moment, and the last day is as near this now as was yesterday'.⁴⁰

Eyck, Jan van (c. 1395-c. 1441). Van Eyck was able to engage with the theological aspect of his religious paintings, developing the technique of layering oils to reflect his realistic depiction of light, whilst also being influenced by the spiritual dimension of Byzantine icon painting.⁴¹

Falla, Manuel de (1876-1946). Falla was interested in the use of resonance, and the incorporation of *cante jondo* into his compositional style. Whilst working in Paris, he came under the influence not only of Debussy and Ravel, but also of Paul Dukas.

Grünewald (Master Mathis) (c. 1475/1480-1528). The most noteworthy feature of Grünewald's style, contrasting with that of Dürer, is the dramatic use of colour. This may be seen most vividly in the Isenheim altar, painted between 1512 and 1516, which includes, amongst others, scenes of *Annunciation*, *Crucifixion*, and *Resurrection*. Grünewald's image of the Resurrection is unique in its startling use of colour and movement, standing outside of tradition and making powerful theological statements about Christ's Glory.

Guardini, Romano (1885-1968). Following his early work on St. Bonaventure, Guardini exercised enormous influence upon twentieth century Catholic thought, from Christology to liturgical action. Summarizing these ideas, Balthasar published *Romano Guardini: Reform aus dem Ursprung* in 1970.

Guéranger, Dom Prosper (1805-1875). First abbot of the re-founded Solesmes, and author of the substantial *L'année liturgique*. Guéranger was therefore influential on the reawakening of palaeographic research and the authentic performance of Gregorian chant, and influential upon the musical undertakings of Tournemire and the theological writings of Marmion. In his approach to the celebrations of the Christian year he was able to unite historical awareness of Christ, with its inherent mysticism, thereby forging a practical way of response.⁴²

³⁶ *Traité* VII, p. 22.

³⁷ Samuel, *Music and Color*, p. 167.

³⁸ Franz Pfeiffer, *Works of Meister Eckhart*, trans. by C. De B. Evans (London: John M. Watkins, 1924), p. 210.

³⁹ *Ibid.* Here Eckhart cites Ecclesiasticus 50. 6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁴¹ Craig Harbison, *Jan van Eyck: The Play of Realism* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991), p. 189.

⁴² Stephen Schloesser, 'The Charm of Impossibilities: Mystic Surrealism as Contemplative Voluptuousness', in *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by Andrew Shenton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 168-169.

Harvey, Jonathan (1939-2012). Harvey was a pupil of Messiaen, and influenced in his electroacoustic work at IRCAM by Boulez. Harvey consistently perceived a spiritual dimension to music, and his ambitious approach to substantial and innovative musical structures with a significant message of ‘religion’ in the broadest sense, together with his exquisite attention to the smallest details, have clear antecedents in the scores of Messiaen.

Hello, Ernest (1825-85). Philosopher and theologian who, along with Huysmans was fascinated with the writings of Ruusbroec. *Paroles de Dieu, réflexions sur quelques textes sacrés* (Paris: V. Palmé, 1877) profoundly influences the theology of Messiaen’s *Visions de l’amen* and *Des Canyons*, where, in ‘Cedar Breaks et le don de crainte’ the window of adoration opens by replacing fear with awe.⁴³

Ide, Père Pascal (b. 1957). Monsignor Ide is the author of three doctoral theses, in medicine, philosophy and theology, and of the book *Être et mystère: la philosophie de Hans Urs von Balthasar* (Brussels: Culture et Vérité, 1995). He worked closely with Messiaen as a priest at La Trinité.

Jolivet, André (1905-1974). Jolivet was a pupil of Varèse, developing interests in acoustic theory, resonance, modality and atonality, and his progressive harmony was influential on Messiaen. Founder of *La Jeune France*, his music captures the primitive aspects of ritual, tapping into the magic and incantation associated with ancient cultures.

Kars, Père Jean-Rodolphe (b. 1947). As a pianist, Kars has been an interpreter of the works of Debussy and Ravel in particular, whilst Kars’ performances of the piano works of Messiaen led to his conversion to Catholicism and ordination as priest. As a writer, Kars brings not only interpretational insight to the music of Messiaen, but is supremely well grounded to offer perspectives on the religious and spiritual aspects of his works.

Kempis, Thomas à (c. 1380-1471). Author of the influential *De Imitatione Christi*, which advocates the following of Christ in the inner life, and the taking up of the Cross, culminating in the importance of Eucharistic devotion.

Loriod-Messiaen, Yvonne (1924-2010). As Messiaen’s second wife, not only was she the dedicatee and interpreter of much of his mature piano music, but also completed significant projects after the composer’s death. Thus she prepared the publication of works such as *Éclairs sur l’Au-Delà*, providing the analytical notes in the preface to the score; organizing the musical material of *Concert à quatre* for performance; supervising the publication of the seven volumes of *Traité de rythme, de couleur et d’ornithologie*.

Marmion, Dom Columba (1858-1923). Not only was Marmion perhaps one of the most popular Catholic writers of the twentieth century, with *Le Christ dans ses mystères* he was also one of the most influential on the personal theology of Olivier Messiaen. Here Marmion starts with Thomas à Kempis and Guéranger’s *L’année liturgique* to write with memorable insight on the significant mysteries of Christ’s life, death and resurrection, all contained ultimately in the Eucharist.

⁴³ Messiaen cites Ernest Hello’s *Paroles de Dieu* in the preface to *Des canyons*, p. 14.

Merton, Thomas (1915-1968). Trappist mystic; monk and priest; contemplative writer. In *The New Man*, Merton explores how mankind is a reflection of the image of God, called to new life in Christ which is illuminated by the sacraments, not least in the promise of glory contained within the Easter Vigil.

Otto, Rudolph (1869-1937). Lutheran theologian who sets forth in *Das Heilige: Über das Irrationale in der Idee des Göttlichen und sein Verhältnis zum Rationalen* the mystical concept of the numinous, at once both fascinating and terrifying.

Porete, Marguerite (d. 1310). The mystic *béguine* was executed for the heresy of her treaty on divine love, *Le Mirouer des simples âmes anienties et qui seulement demeurent en vouloir et désir d'amour*, which was rediscovered in France in the nineteenth century, and republished in the twentieth.

Riemann, (Karl Wilhelm Julius) Hugo (1849-1919). Theorist and writer, publishing a *Musik-Lexikon* and *Handbuch der Harmonielehre*, citing the first sixteen overtones of the fundamental and the derivation of the major triad from the overtone series. Riemann attempts to demonstrate the derivation of the minor triad from a series of undertones, justified through the existence of combination tones and sympathetic vibration.⁴⁴

Rosen, Jan Henryk de (1891-1982). Polish mural and mosaic artist working in post-war USA. *Christ in Majesty* in the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington D. C makes reference to the stigmata, red shroud and golden halo of Grünewald's *Resurrection*.

Rößler, Almut (b. 1932) As organist and *Kantorin* at the Johanneskirche in Düsseldorf, she has been one of the leading interpreters of Messiaen's organ music, working collaboratively with the composer and giving both the world premier of *Livre du Saint Sacrement* in Detroit, and the European premier in Bonn.

Ruusbroec, Jan van (c.1293-1381). The contemplative mystic writer establishes the directional commerce between heaven and earth, God and mankind, in works such as *The Seven Steps of the Ladder of Spiritual Love*, and *The Spiritual Espousals*, laying the foundations for the writings of Thomas à Kempis.

Suger, Abbot (c. 1081-1151). Suger's drive and vision inspired the rebuilding of the symbolic basilica of Saint-Denis, ushering in a new architectural aesthetic of height and light as a model for the development of *Rayonnant*, viewing the edifice as both the body of Christ and a vision of the New Jerusalem.

Tournemire, Charles (1870-1939). Tournemire was *titulaire* at Sainte-Clotilde: a successor to Franck. Inspired both by Guéranger's *L'année liturgique* and by the plainchant revival originating at Solesmes, Tournemire's *L'orgue mystique* covers the entire liturgical year in pieces which paraphrase and comment on the Gregorian propers.⁴⁵ This modern use of ancient music created for Messiaen 'une merveille d'art mi-gothique, mi-ultra moderne, de la plus éblouissante originalité'.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Alexander Rehding, *Hugo Riemann and the Birth of Modern Musical Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 191.

⁴⁵ Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris 1919-1933* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), p. 304.

⁴⁶ Olivier Messiaen, 'Billet Parisien: L'Orgue mystique de Tournemire', *La Syrinx*, 27 II/12 (May 1938), trans. by Stephen Broad, *Olivier Messiaen: Journalism 1935-1939* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 8: 'a marvel of dazzling originality: half gothic, half ultra-modern'.

D'Udine, Jean (Albert Cozanet), (1870-1938). This prolific writer and theorist, in *De la corrélation des sons et des couleurs en art* proposes a protoplasmic foundation for synaesthesia, also explored in *L'orchestration des couleurs: analyse, classification et synthèse mathématiques des sensations colorées*. Anticipating Messiaen's belief in the primacy of the resonance of the sounding body, *L'art et le geste*, with its assertion 'Vivre, c'est vibrer',⁴⁷ develops the theory of a kinaesthetic basis to the visual arts through the embedding in the memory of rhythmic pulse which embraces gesture, sound and colour. For D'Udine, synaesthetic translation accompanies all artistic creation,⁴⁸ detecting a sensory synaesthesia in the literature of Huysmans.

Weir, Dame Gillian (b. 1941). The New Zealand-born organist was a leading interpreter of Messiaen's organ music, both in concert and in recordings, and was chosen by the composer to give the UK premiere of *Méditations sur le mystère de la Sainte Trinité*. Like Almut Röbler, her interpretations have involved getting behind the notes to penetrate the underlying theology and compositional processes in Messiaen's music. Thus her writing is equally as illuminating as her playing.

⁴⁷ Cited by Robert Michael Brain, 'Protoplasmania: Huxley, Haeckel, and the Vibratory Organism in Late Nineteenth-Century Science and Art', in *The Art of Evolution: Darwin, Darwinisms, and Visual Culture*, ed. by Barbara Larson and Fae Brauer (Lebanon, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2009), p. 112.

⁴⁸ Jean d'Udine, *L'art et le geste* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1910), p. 63.

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