Hybridity in the Organ Works of Jean-Louis Florentz: Euro-Africanism as Catholic Evangelism

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Florentz. These conversations took place in Bourcier's home in Nantes, France in September 2018. Instead of the awkward discomfort that often tinge conversations of culture, my time with Bourcier was a cordial exchange of ideas that sharpened our understanding of Florentz's abstruse musical universe. His willingness to share his firsthand knowledge of the composer has been crucial for the success of this research project.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the lineages of French Catholic and Ethiopian Christian theology that inspired Jean-Louis Florentz's enigmatic compositional processes. An analysis of his two largest organ works frames my discussion of these processes, but in a manner more focused on Florentz's method of cultural and musical synthesis. A large body of *Florentzien* scholarship focuses on the technicalities of the composer's complex modal system, without addressing the layers of African religious symbolism that dictate his methods of motivic generation. Moreover, few scholars have addressed the formal organizing principles by which Florentz juxtaposes indigenous African music and religious symbols within the confines of the French symphonic organ tradition. My analysis will take into account my recent studies and conversations with Michel Bourcier, as well as manuscripts and documents given to me by the *Association Jean-Louis Florentz*. My study demonstrates that Florentz's approach to musical hybridity is a rare example of African-Orientalism that serves as a symbolic advocacy of African culture, but also as a tool for Catholic evangelistic goals. Florentz's method of conjoining disparate musical traditions is oriented towards musico-cultural hospitality, and not for the control or domination of an indigenous culture. Such a method stands in opposition to the Imperialist "knowledge producing" orientalism proposed by Edward Said. However, my thesis illuminates the manner in which these same cultural differences can be magnified, controlled, and used to ideological ends.

First, I share Bourcier's crucial insights into the composer's life and philosophy, including many details omitted from his *Essai analytique et exégétique (2018).* I also illuminate Florentz's "underlying message" of Christian evangelism as found in his distinctly Catholic-Humanist worldview. The second chapter analyzes tropes of "orientalism" and "spirituality" as they

manifest in the school of French exoticism that predated Florentz. Finally, I point to specific methods of hybridization in Florentz's magnum opus, *Debout sur le Soleil,* op. 8 and *Laudes,* op. 5 to contextualize Florentz's Christian narratives.

By clarifying the composer's manner of musical hybridity (combining disparate cultural and musical materials), I demonstrate that Florentz's method of treating African music serves simultaneously to advocate for the equally meaningful humanity of African people, but also to contrast himself from the secularity that he perceived in modern French society.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette thèse examine les lignées de théologie chrétienne catholique et éthiopienne qui ont inspiré les énigmatiques processus de composition de Jean-Louis Florentz. Une analyse de ses deux plus grandes œuvres pour orgue encadre ma discussion de ces processus, mais d'une manière plus centrée sur la méthode de synthèse culturelle et musicale de Florentz. Un corps considérable d'érudits de Florentzien se concentre sur les aspects techniques du système modal complexe du compositeur, sans aborder les couches du symbolisme religieux africain qui dictent ses méthodes de génération de la motivation. En outre, peu d'érudits ont abordé les principes d'organisation selon lesquels Florentz juxtapose musique africaine indigène et symboles religieux dans les confins de la tradition française des orgues symphoniques. Mon analyse tiendra compte de mes études et conversations récentes avec Michel Bourcier, ainsi que des manuscrits et des documents que l'Association Jean-Louis Florentz m'a remis. Mon étude montre que l'approche de Florentz en matière d'hybridité musicale est un exemple rare d'orientalisme africain qui sert de plaidoyer symbolique pour la musique africaine, mais aussi d'outil pour les objectifs de l'évangélisation catholique. La méthode de Florentz consistant à associer des traditions musicales disparates s'oriente vers l'hospitalité musico-culturelle et non vers le contrôle ou la domination d'une culture autochtone. Une telle méthode s'oppose à l'orientalisme «produisant du savoir» impérialiste proposé par Edward Said. Cependant, ma thèse met en lumière la manière dont les différences culturelles peuvent être amplifiées, contrôlées et utilisées à des fins idéologiques.

Tout d'abord, je partage les connaissances cruciales de Bourcier sur la vie et la philosophie du compositeur, y compris de nombreux détails omis de son Essai analytique et exégétique (2018). J'éclaire aussi le «message sous-jacent» de Florentz sur l'évangélisation

chrétienne, tel qu'il se trouve dans sa vision du monde distinctement catholique et humaniste. Le deuxième chapitre analyse les tropes «d'orientalisme» et de «spiritualité» tels qu'ils se manifestent à l'école de l'exotisme français qui a précédé Florentz. Enfin, j'évoque des méthodes spécifiques d'hybridation dans Debout sur le Soleil, opus magnifique de Florentz, op. 8 pour contextualiser les récits chrétiens de Florentz dans ses œuvres pour orgue.

En clarifiant la manière dont le compositeur interprète l'hybridité musicale (en combinant des matériaux culturels et musicaux disparates), je démontre que la méthode utilisée par Florentz pour traiter la musique africaine sert à la fois à plaider en faveur de l'humanité tout aussi significative du peuple africain, mais aussi à s'opposer à la laïcité qu'il a perçue dans la société française moderne.

INTRODUCTION

Since his death, Jean-Louis Florentz (1947-2004) has been subject to continuously increasing scholarly attention. Prior to the release of Michel Bourcier's landmark study on the composer (2017), Florentz scholars have rooted their findings in his theoretical writings as found in the unpublished treatise *L`hospitalité des mémoires (Genèse de ma technique harmonique)*. In spite of the revelatory research of the past decades, a dearth of scholarship exists on the spiritual and ideological underpinnings of Florentz's unique method of musical and religious *hybridity*. The theory of *Hybridity* was proposed by the Indian critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha and studies the manner in which culturally disparate materials interact within the same space. By "space" Bhabha is referring to physical places and literary or artistic mediums that juxtapose two unrelated (or distantly related) cultures. This thesis posits that Florentz's organ work *Debout sur le Soleil* can be analyzed within Bhabha's framework, since it contains interactions between European and African culture within the same musical work.

Until recently, it has been difficult to discuss Florentz's methods of musical hybridization and thematic organization with a high level of specificity. This is primarily due to the previous lack of scholarship regarding the extent of Florentz's extra-European inspirations. Before Bourcier's research, the origins of the Ethiopian chant employed by Florentz were difficult to pinpoint without access to specialized primary documents. Having gained a copy of the composer's annotated manuscript of *Debout sur le Soleil,* my research provides a detailed explanation of Florentz's methodology and influences as stated by the composer himself, and aided with studies with his dear friend, Michel Bourcier.

In my studies with Bourcier, we systematically outlined the multiple layers of musical,

religious and numerological symbols that affect the construction and development of Florentz's music. More importantly, Bourcier's new study (2017) clarified precisely which musical components are direct extractions from Africa, and how they manifest themselves in the context of a highly saturated harmonic language. In addition to providing revelatory biographical information on the composer, this paper explores the manner by which Florentz samples authentically African music and how it contributes to Florentz's own tendency towards a culturally spectral method of musical composition.[1] The works being discussed are *Debout sur le Soleil*, op. 8, and *Laudes*, op. 5. Special attention will be devoted to musical material that invokes simultaneously African and Occidental themes, and the plethora of musical symbols that form the multicultural collage of Florentz's sound world.

Florentz's own writings and manuscripts demonstrate a careful approach to cultural hybridization; Florentz was keenly aware of colonial history and of the need to avoid musical Imperialism.[2] In my view, Florentz's music is not exempt from the difficult questions that arise when indigenous musics and cultures are filtered through European mediums. However, his music serves as a fruitful example to discuss the ways in which a work of hybrid art can become what Bhabha calls a "third space of enunciation."[3] It is in this space of enunciation that Florentz can articulate the subtle similarities and glaring differences that exist between different cultures and their alternative accounts of human history.

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1 Robert Sholl, *Jean-Louis Florentz and Spectralism, (*Unpublished, 2018), 3-4.

2 Meghan Harper, *Debout sur le soleil: Diversity, Symbolism, and the Future of Music*, (Boston, MA: AGO Convention, 2014), 12.

3 Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 108.

Since my study inevitably discusses interactions between Occidental and non-European musical styles, a lengthy discussion about the transforming nature of French Orientalism frames the argument. Moreover, I analyze postcolonial concepts of hybridity and cultural appropriation to demonstrate that African Orientalism in the music of Florentz served primarily as a tool for Christian evangelism, but also for cultural advocacy. His outspoken advocacy of indigenous peoples is inseparable from the century-long lineage of French composers who freely venerated non-Western music and spirituality. By clarifying the underlying artistic and philosophical underpinnings of French exoticism, I will demonstrate that Florentz wished to promote, rather than control the music and culture of Africa. Additionally, I will expand the postcolonial notion of abrogation, to demonstrate that Western composers can compose in "comparable dialects" of a foreign musical language. By clarifying his method of hybridization, I demonstrate that Florentz's stringent approach to transmitting and employing African music sits beyond Said's notion of "knowledge producing" Orientalism. I do, however, address the issue of "spiritual authenticity," and how non-Western religion is often used as a tool for Western composers to ideologically distance themselves from Western secular ideals. Lastly, I discuss how the prejudices of a listener can produce false knowledge when confronted with foreign musical material.

Chapter I: The Florentzien Philosophy: Musical *Hybridity* as Religious Ideology

Florentz as a Spiritual and Cultural Revolutionary

The self-designated "double cultural heritage" of composer Jean-Louis Florentz (1947-2004) can be gleaned from his uniquely hybridized Euro-African musical idiom.[4] Such an aesthetic deviates from the established canon of regionally homogenized repertoire conceived for Europe's King of Instruments. His ideologically charged method of musico-cultural synthesis is a symptom of the "dizzying developments" and "revolutionary attitudes" of globalism, humanism and liberalism that profoundly influenced academic and artistic circles in France during the latter part of the twentieth-century.[5] In spite of his unwavering commitment to the Catholic faith, Florentz chose to distance himself from the inflexible dogma, Imperialist underpinnings, and lavish financial practices of the French Catholic Church.[6] According to Bourcier, Florentz believed that "Catholic religion should not be a state in the Vatican," and would regularly attend non-Catholic churches.[7] The composer's open embrace of other ancient forms of Christianity and extra-European spirituality point to the evangelistic motivations behind his ethnographic practices and extensive sampling of Ethiopian chant. His culturally heterogeneous worldview transcends the boundaries of geography, race, and economic opportunity in order to illuminate the

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[4]Jean-Louis Florentz, *L`hospitalité des mémoires (Genèse de ma technique harmonique)*, (Unpublished), 44.

[5]Christopher Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 1.

[6] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[7] Ibid.

omnipresence of God in cultures that cannot conform to a wholly European-Catholic worldview. The diversity of his religious influences fit neatly into what Christopher Anderson has described as France's "theological rainbow."[8] This refers to the disavowal of conservative orthodoxy and the hybridization of Occidental and non-European spirituality found in the writings of Catholic thinkers such as Ernest Hello, Simone Weil, Charles Tournemire and Olivier Messiaen. Two books by Stephen Schloesser explore this brand of "Jazz-Age" French Catholicism. Fulcher characterizes this progressive theology as "blurring the lines between religion and ideology,"[9] while Anderson defines this phenomenon as the reality of God as "seen from different angles."[10]

Florentz must have retained some initial loyalty to the Catholic establishment, as he spent one year in seminary (1967-1968) in hopes of becoming a priest.[11] This initial embrace of Catholic orthodoxy is undoubtedly linked to his childhood experiences in the conservative Catholic commune of Saint Chamond (in Loire, France). However, as Langlais has noted, Florentz's eventual desire for human affection, and his distaste for conservative sexual ethics caused him to take issue with the stringency of Catholic dogma.[12] The composer is, however, unwavering in his conviction as it regards the importance of Christian evangelism. Florentz's inclusivity does not extend to those who would deny the existence of God. In the same vein of his ideological predecessors, Florentz's musical ideology is centered around the abandonment of

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[8]Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 173.

[9] J. F. Fulcher, *The Politics of Transcendence: Ideology in the Music of Messiaen in the 1930s*, (The Musical Quarterly 86, 2002), 465.

[10]Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 173-174.

[11]Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[12]Conversations with Marie-Louis Langlais, September 2018.

secularism; he embraces an art that has a Catholic-Humanist philosophy at its source of inspiration.[13] Schloesser traces this resurgence of Catholic-Humanist art to the "Christian Intellectual Renaissance,"[14] while making note of the nineteenth-century philosopher Ernest Hello (1828-1885), who implored French Catholic artists to regain their previously held prominence, and to expose the "beauty of reality and nature when seen through the eyes of faith."[15] Ernest Hello was frequently referenced as a source of inspiration by both Olivier Messiaen and Charles Tournemire.

This study has led me to a glaring "alternative-fact" that has pervaded much of the academic writings on Florentz. While many scholars have deemed the composer the musical heiress of Olivier Messiaen, this is only partly true. As Sholl notes, Florentz spent a mere year as an auditor in the class of Messiaen. Florentz departed the class prematurely after tensions arose between the two composers. More specifically, Florentz perceived that Messiaen had become immersed in the "post-serial" style of Boulez's *Domaine Musicale,* which rose to prominence in France during the 1960s and 1970s. Florentz detested the music of Messiaen's famous pupils such as Boulez, Stockhausen and Xenakis.[16] Bourcier surmises that "Messiaen was somewhat forced to teach the post-serialist school, because that was the influential tradition." Florentz likely venerated a timeless caricature of a young Oliver Messiaen; while he was enamored with the early works of the master, he diverged from Messiaen regarding the future of French music. Anderson

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[13] Stephen, Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire, (*Richmond: Church Music Association of America, 2014), 322.

[14] Ibid, 317.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

also makes note of Messiaen's "rejection of mysticism" and his embrace of austerity in his later works.[17]

Florentz and Messiaen were estranged during some portions of the 1970s; the former's experiences at the conservatory only reinforced his aversion to the *Domaine Musicale* and the inaccessibility of French contemporary music.[18] We can briefly see the influence of a "post-serial" idiom in Florentz's works composed before 1969. Bourcier describes these works as "flirting with the vanguard."[19] These compositions were primarily composed in graph notation, and were quickly redacted by the composer because they were "indicative of a Western ethnocentrism that he denounced forcefully."[20] According to Bourcier, the composer's eventual studies with the film composer Antoine Duhamel were undertaken primarily to reinforce his belief that France's current musical trends were "forms of Imperialism."[21]

Seeking to foster a drastic change in his musical trajectory, Florentz began his study trips to Africa immediately after his departure from the Paris Conservatory. Robert Sholl offers a comprehensive catalogue of Florentz's studies in Africa: "14 voyages to North Africa, Niger and the Ivory Coast (1971-79); 4 voyages to Kenya (1981-86); 8 voyages including Israel, Martinique, Egypt (1982-87), and further voyages."[22] Florentz's escape to Africa was certainly motivated by

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[17] Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 173-174.

[18] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[19] Michel Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue. Essai analytique et exégétique: L'univers florentzien et Une tétralogie pour l'orgue vol. 1*, (Lyon, France: Symétrie, 2017), 39-40

[20] Ibid.

[21] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[22] Robert Sholl, *Jean-Louis Florentz and Spectralism, (*Unpublished, 2018), 1.

his discomfort with the eurocentrism of the conservatory, but also by his desire to develop a musical aesthetic that represented the complex essence of human spirituality beyond the confines of Europe. Bourcier remarked that Florentz rejected the music of the *Domaine Musicale* because their musical idiom "couldn't be spoken to everyone."[23] Indeed, Florentz's immersion into the music of Africa was aimed at lessening his own eurocentrism, in hopes of developing a musical language that could appeal to a broader conception of humanity, and not simply to the echo chamber of European hyper-intellectualism.

Florentz's musical ideology is a symptom of the French Catholic church's unabashed rejection of secular rationalism and progressivism in the early twentieth-century. The "failure of rationalism" is a trope that preoccupied other French Catholic eschatologists in the interwar period; these writers denounced human intellectual progress and technological innovation as the cause of humanity's greatest atrocities (chemical warfare, for example).[24] These attitudes were predictably undergirded with anti-German sentiments.[25] While the French Catholic church had initially welcomed the synthesis of industrial age technological advancement and Catholic faith, the dawn of high-tech weaponry and more efficient ways of committing genocide caused many French Catholic thinkers to denounce "human progress" as being incompatible with a Catholic world-view.[26] In the inter-war periods, we see many French thinkers assuaging themselves with the perceived spiritual authenticities of the past, whether through the writings of Saint Thomas

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[23] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[24]Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 332.

[25] Francois de Medicis, *Darius Milhaud and the Debate on Polytonality in the French Press of the 1920s*, (Music and Letters 86, no. 4 (2005)), 586.

[26]Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 332.

Aquinas, Gregorian chant, or in Florentz's case, ancient Ethiopian chant. Florentz's embrace of ancient African music redefines his own expectations of European classical music, while retaining an undeniably French and nonconformist dimension to his musical aesthetic. The writings of French philosopher Ernest Hello seem to predict the arrival of such a revolutionary artist: "It seems to me at this solemn time there must be a great man, or rather great men, who speak in the name of humanity, who speak in the human style, and who engrave on their individual characters their different signatures."[27]

Conversations with Michel Bourcier: The primacy of "symbolic meaning"

The organist and musicologist Michel Bourcier (b. 1964) was a close confidant of Florentz and gave the premiere performance of the composer's famous work dedicated to him, *Debout sur le Soleil*, *Op. 8* (1990). In addition to knowing intimate details of Florentz's deeply held convictions, he also authored the most comprehensive theoretical study on the composer to date. I elected to study with Bourcier privately between September 13-19, 2018. Most notable about our time was the dearth of discussion on certain technicalities of Florentz's harmonic idiom. As earlier noted, the complexity of Florentz's *pentaphonic* system has been explored *ad nauseum* by the composer himself in *L`hospitalité des mémoires*. Thus, my most salient conversations with Bourcier centered around Florentz's own religious philosophy as it is manifests itself in his music.

Florentz's symbolist and extra-musical inspirations cannot be completely decoded by an outside observer, but they can be encapsulated by two compositional goals as described by Bourcier: utilizing musical composition as a tool for Christian evangelism and the successful

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[27] Ibid.

"welcoming" of various types of African music into a European classical idiom.[28] According to Bourcier, Florentz's rejection of European secularism manifests itself in his central message to the world: "convert while there is still time."[29] The phrase "souviens-toi" (remember) is a deeply significant motif that recurs throughout a number of Florentz's works, whether in literal iterations or symbolic ones (it appears 169 times in *Debout sur le Soleil)*.[30] This recurring metatheme calls for the conversion of a secular world that had "forgotten that God exists." Indeed, Florentz's compositions are simply "vehicles which bring forth meaning" to his unabashadley Christian message.[31] Bourcier describes his works as "manifestations" of God, similar to what Messiaen describes as an "*éblouissement,"* or the "bedazzled" feeling that one gets when they have experienced the beauty of a work that attempts (always unsuccessfully) to capture the very essence of God.[32] Messiaen describes such works as an "excellent prelude to the unspeakable and invisible."[33]

The primacy of Florentz's message of evangelism presents itself in the numerous religious symbols that recur throughout his works. Bourcier's description of Florentz's methods mirror Schloesser's analysis of the Symbolist movements of late nineteenth-century France. Indeed, Symbolist art emerged as a rejection of "naturalism and realism," in order to reaffirm the

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[28] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue,* 192.

[31] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[32]Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 332.

[33] Ibid.

relationship that exists between music and the divine symbol that it refers to.[34] While naturalist art seeks to replicate that which can be seen and understood, Symbolist art stands as a representation to the unseen and irrational. Ernest Hello describes this phenomenon as *orthodox mysticism,* which is "higher than reason, [...] [it] sees, hears, touches, and feels that which reason is incapable of seeing, hearing, touching and feeling.[35] In the same vein, the constituent musical components of *Debout sur le Soleil* refer to a complex network of Ethiopian religious symbols that exists beyond the realm of European religious thought. The deep symbolic gestures of the Ethiopian church are highly defined and define the fabric of their religious experiences.[36] In the same manner that Western Classical notational conventions lack the proper taxonomy to precisely subsume the complexity of African rhythms, Florentz's complex network of musical-religious symbols ensure that the music that he borrows is never isolated from its original intent.

Religious symbols have a particularly profound effect on the outpouring of musical events in *Debout sur le Soleil.* Florentz's approach to musical form transcends traditional motivic development, and is aptly described as a cyclic recurrence of musical indicators, rather than a formal development of hierarchically organized motifs. Schloesser remarks that the practice of cyclically recurring motifs hearkens back to the music of Franck, in which musical indicators communicate a message of "spiritual ascent," by enveloping the listener in the profound message

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[34]Ibid, 266-267.

[35] Ibid.

[36]Anne Damon, "'Église chrétienne orthodoxe d'Éthiopie. 'Aqwaqwam. La musique et la danse des Cieux." (*Cahiers D'Études Africaines,* 2006, 288.

that undergirds the music.[37] Similarly, Anderson describes Florentz's process as "dynamic," with many parallels to the "story-telling" nature of oral traditions.[38]

As I will demonstrate, Florentz's "interpenetrating" layers of religious symbolism most delineate the development of musical leitmotifs and the global organization of his compositions. Bourcier illuminates Florentz's obsession with "meaningful" and symbolic music by pointing out the composer's redaction of the large orchestral work, *Le Marches du Soleil* (1983). According to Bourcier, the piece was musically gratifying, but was redacted by the composer "because it was not meaningful enough."[39]

Bhabha's hybridity in its musical and literary manifestations

Before exploring Florentz's specific method of hybridizing music from different cultures, it will be useful to contextualize the concept of hybridity as it manifests in current academic discourses in cultural studies. The term hybridity was coined by the cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha; his theory says that when an object (written history, philosophy, literature, art, political discourse) juxtaposes one or more distinct cultures in the aftermath of a colonizer-colonized relationship, that object inevitably becomes beholden to the bitter histories and political conceptions of identity and power that have plagued both societies.[40] In other words, two cultures who have previously shared an imbalance in power (England and Ghana, for example) will

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[37]Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 334.

[38] Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 167-168.

[39] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[40]Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 122.

always view their exchanges in light of this unequal relationship. Bhabha's concept of hybridity claims that outdated conceptions of identity and hierarchy must be transcended in order for hybridity to flourish and succeed. His theory is a disavowal of the cultural binary that so often guided the divisive rhetoric that undergirds colonial discourse. By cultural binary, I am referring to methods of classifying cultural interaction that appeal to the narrative of a hostile Europe exuding control over the savage "other" (African and Oriental peoples and culture). This binary also extends to narratives that would imply a linear evolution between cultures and societies, such as nineteenth-century prejudices against indigenous music and art.

However, it is important to note that Bhabha is not reversing the binary to political or redemptive ends. As Ashcroft notes, the cultural binary also implicates the perspective of the colonized other.[41] Just as Western colonial discourses reduced African people to "savages," postcolonial discourse has a tendency to characterize the West as being purely oppressive. Moreover, the complex nature of interactions between Africans and Westerners is grossly mischaracterized when the relationship can only be described with terminology that implies domination and submission.[42] By mischaracterizing the complexity of the relationship between two cultures, one becomes oblivious to the subtleties of "cross-cultural pollination."[43] Thus, Bhabha's notion of hybridity proposes a neutral space that embraces the contradictions and

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[41] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 11.

[42]Ibid, 18.

[43] Ibid, 108.

subjectivities of conflicting perspectives, which ultimately "allows cultural differences to operate in the same space." [44]

Bhabha's neutral space is most often referred to as the "third space." This refers to a new way of receiving the complexity of cultural interaction in which preconceived notions of "authority" and "identity" are rendered inadequate. Mikhail Bakhtin brilliantly describes Bhabha's concept as allowing a "polyphony" of contradictory voices to state their distinct cultural perspective. The necessity of a neutral "third space" stems from the desire to abandon the intensely hierarchical nature of colonial-era language (such as savage, primal, evolved). Musicologist Sarah Weiss points out that these linguistic "identity markers" are often used to political ends, and not to the ends of understanding the complexity of cultural interaction.[45]

Musicologist Timothy D. Taylor offers a sobering analysis on how the notion of musical hybridity can easily dissolve into the same power imbalances that dominated the colonial era. Taylor identifies a crucial flaw that exists in hybrid art forms such as the "nebulous genre" of world music. The issue lies in Western control over representation, and the ways in which nonwestern culture is channeled through exclusively Western mediums (i.e. American record companies, music producers, and arguably composers). He notes that hybridity is becoming a "criterion that shapes the way that music by Others is heard by critics, fans, and listeners."[46] This imbalance is magnified when the nonwestern musician is unable to exude any control over Western artists who might be making claims over a foreign culture's music. Taylor points to the

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Sarah Weiss, *Listening to the World but Hearing Ourselves: Hybridity and Perceptions of Authenticity in World Musi*c, (Ethnomusicology 58, no. 3 (2014)), 510

[46] Timothy D Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 141.

glaring number of Afro-European and Asian-American musical collaborations that are heard solely by Western audiences. Along these lines, he offers a challenge to Bhabha to more closely consider the "oppositional and destabilizing effects" that hybrid musics have when Westerners have unfettered control over the dissemination, rights, and marketing of these musical collaborations. He describes the phenomenon as the Western musician's curating or "packaging" of non-Western music to be more accessible and marketable.[47]

Taylor also notes that the notion of hybridity has often been used as a weapon to challenge the artistic merit or authenticity of certain non-Western musicians. He bemoans that Western listeners and critics often show prejudice against non-Western music that freely incorporates Western musical indicators. He points to examples in the world music industry where African artists have had their "signs of authenticity" challenged on the basis of their deviation from indigenous forms.[48]

The issue of genre, and what gets to be considered "appropriately hybrid," looms over Bhabha's theory. Indeed, hybridity seems most comfortable for Westerners when the process involves two "purely distinct" cultures that are juxtaposed in a manner that highlights their differences. A music perception study by Sarah Weiss strongly implies that the majority of listeners of "world music" have deeply ingrained aural indicators for what constitutes "authentic" or "inauthentic" non-Western music. Her study showed that many listeners would dismiss certain genres of African music that seemed to be too heavily influenced by Western musical forms. She

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[47] Ibid 143-146.

[48] Ibid.

points to the manner in which the degree of cultural difference can be "mediated, absorbed, diluted, made banal, depreciating, traded, fetishized, and exalted."[49]

Florentz, although deeply hospitable to the cultures that he immersed himself in, seems to relish the distinct differences that exist between Europeans and Africans who have remained immersed in their "original" or "authentic" culture. Harper posits that Florentz's extensive sampling was partially indebted to the homogenous genealogy of Ethiopian chants.[50] Since Ethiopia remained uncolonized until the Italian occupation of 1936-1947, the Ethiopian tradition reflected a pure and unsullied form of religion and practice that was relatively void of Western influence. Bourcier writes that the music of the African Horn most affected Florentz because it "is the cradle of humanity."[51] Florentz's own words about the quality of Afro-Eruopean music make a cautious but unabashed critique of how European colonial actions had caused an unnatural interruption in Africa's musical genealogy. This lengthy and cautious reflection from his treatise seems to illuminate his concern with a conception of African music that is true to its rhythmic, "deep African" identity:

"With the exception of a few [cultures], including Tanzania, the situation of African music is different; not as a result of an intrinsic evolution, but the result of a sometimes servile adoption of the Western "world's" indicators of approval (...) but in all the music, the deep African reality has become watered down vitally, precisely because it has become mixed. Mixture is not an

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[49] Sarah Weiss, *Listening to the World but Hearing Ourselves: Hybridity and Perceptions of Authenticity in World Musi*c, 509.

[50] Meghan Harper, *Debout sur le soleil: Diversity, Symbolism, and the Future of Music, (*Boston, MA: AGO Convention, 2014), 7.

[51] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue,* 90-93.

exchange. In miscegenation, there is often abdication of identity and personality, in favor of a single conjunction of the most elementary interests. Reflecting on all this points us back to the era of African deportations to America, the birth of Jazz, all the phenomena of America's wanderings in Africa, then again to America, to the Caribbean, etc... I have a deep respect, and a great admiration for many of these genres, born from these mixings and crossbreeding of civilizations: in particular the reggae, which (moreover) influences me a lot in my music, especially on the harmonic level, and with its "rhythmic swing." This musical behavior, with planetary dimensions, is not my real concern. But it's the only behavior which I accept for Africa, by fierce and determined opposition to all loans, collages, and other forms of primary predation of deep Africa, which are more or less clearly a Western compositional approach in search of inspiration. At this stage of the explanations, I refer the reader to the first lines of my article, which is the prerequisite for any "discourse:" my relationship to Africa and the Semitic Near East is a story of love; with all the risks, however, of a passionate love-affair: in particular the danger of possessing the other, a danger which I do not deny, and on which I try to be vigilant."[52]

Although Florentz does fall prey to some ingrained notions of cultural authenticity, he claims that his comments do not stem from "purism," declaring that "cultures are allowed to choose the evolution that best suits them."[53] Florentz's apologetic tone certainly indicates that he was keenly aware of the issues of representation and identity that inevitably stand as a challenge to the aims of combining disparate cultures. Florentz admittedly transcends the commercial curatorship that so affects the sampling of African music in Western performance mediums, but I

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[52] Florentz, *L`hospitalité des mémoires (Genèse de ma technique harmonique)*, 44.

[53] Ibid.

assert that Florentz still wields a powerful tool of cultural representation when he transmutes a foreign culture into the niche and hyper-intellectual world of symphonic organ music.

The Problem of the Pipe Organ

Florentz's preoccupation with the music of Africa was counterintuitive to the evolutionist beliefs of many nineteenth and twentieth-century composers-organists. Taylor points to racist attitudes that continued to guide the narrative about non-Western peoples and cultures well into the interwar period. The majority of his collection of infamous quotes are cited from organists who share the widely accepted narrative of African culture as being a "rung far down the evolutionary scale."[54]

While Florentz revered African music for its inherent quality and symbolic gravity, most European commentary on indigenous people and music were extensions of belittling discourses which promoted "the law of development" in human beings and art. In twentieth-century France, these attitudes were tinged with anti-semitic undertones (see Schloesser's commentary on Vincent D'Indy). As Schloesser notes, composers such as D'Indy and Tournemire subscribed to a "linear evolution" theory, in which works of art were believed to demonstrate the evolution of the human spirit. Such ideologies are also linked to tropes of "racial determinism."[55]

Much in line with this evolutionary mindset, many twentieth-century organists naturally assumed the primitivity of African music and people. Indeed, the organist Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) declared that "the Negro is a child, and with children nothing can be done without the use of authority. [...] With regard to Negroes, then, I have coined the formula: "I am your

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[54] Timothy D Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, 76-77.

[55] Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 334-335.

brother, but your elder brother."[56] Bleaker still, the English organist Hubert Parry claimed that "at the very bottom of the process of [musical] development are those savage howls which have hardly any distinct notes in them at all, [...] the savage stage indicates a taste for design, but an incapacity for making the designs consistent and logical." [57]

Such belittling attitudes are not surprising. Throughout the Imperial history of Europe, pipe organs have been wedded to the physical spaces and elitist aesthetics of powerful religious and governmental institution. Florentz's music finds itself unintentionally affected by this cultural history. The African music that he samples is inevitably filtered into a work of classical organ music, which receives subjective scrutiny from a select, elitist audience closely tied to the Western Academy. Just as the bird has no agency or opportunity to respond to the ornithologist's findings within the community of eager zoologists, African peoples have little chance to respond to Florentz's musical portrayal of African music and culture within the niche group of organ composers and listeners. Indeed, as the hybrid work of art becomes less accessible to the people it portrays, the object itself begins to represent its own type of eurocentrism.

In addition to its complex auditory medium and religious associations, the pipe organ is easily one of the least known instruments to African peoples.[58] Florentz's preferred medium of expression are the lush orchestral stops of the French Symphonic organs of Aristide Cavaillé-Coll (1811-1899), as well as many of the neoclassical and new-age registrations that became prominent in France in c. 1970-1990. Jean Guillou's (1930-2019) tonal design for the Van de

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[56] Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, 76-77.

[57] Ibid.

[58]Damon, "'Église chrétienne orthodoxe d'Éthiopie. 'Aqwaqwam. La musique et la danse des Cieux," 267-269.

Heuvel organ in Saint Eustache Paris contains many of Florentz's unorthodox mutations stops; his multi-movement work *Laudes, op. 5* was conceived for the instrument.[59] Unfortunately, the type of pipe organ that Florentz calls for in his works are rarely found even in developed Western countries. In Paris, France, there are only two instruments that possess the stops and technology to realize Florentz's works (Saint Eustache and Notre Dame Cathedral). Both of these organs contain what Florentz's close colleague, Jean Guillou, called the "new colors" necessary to the future of organ music.[60] These new color stops are based on the natural progression of the harmonic series, but exploit higher and more distant sonorities such as the 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th. These newly added exotic mutations for the Saint Eustache organ, however, run in opposition to the aural priority of an instrument whose historical role has been to support polyphonic liturgical singing. More importantly, these revolutionary mutation stops play little role in the primary liturgical function of the instrument, thus redefining the instrument as one that can support sonorities that transcend the Western expectations of the French organ to accompany plainchant. These new color stops were added to the Notre Dame Organ during the 1992 restoration.[61]

Florentz's advocacy and exploitation of non fundamental mutations are rooted in his obsession with the strange harmonics of African instruments and Ethiopian heterophonic chants, in which the congregation would freely imitate the same liturgical melody in various keys, modes

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[59] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[60] Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 155.

[61] Langlais, *Jean-Louis Florentz, L'oeuvre d'orgue*, 91.

and with subtle ornamental variation.[62] Here within this improvised, oral African tradition, we can see the great utility of dissonant mutations stops to replicate the cacophonous timbre of the (assumably) untrained Ethiopian choir improvising polyphony for morning worship.[63] A crass but relevant double entendre can be gleaned from Bruno Chaouat's description of the aims of France's "New Left" to harness "cultural mutations to its revolutionary ends."[64]

Florentz's Hybridity: French Music or Franco-African Music?

After spending a few days engaging in analytical discussions about Florentz, I decided to discuss the issue of hybridity with Michel Bourcier. I asked him if he thought that Florentz's works should be considered hybrids, since they seemed to be a "third species"of music that is simultaneously African and Occidental.[65] Bourcier seemed perplexed by the question, and assured me that Florentz's music "is French music."[66] He went on to explain that the music could retain its French identity, even though many of the constituent parts are purely African.[67] Although I disagreed with Bourcier's perspective, I quickly realized that there was not a clear answer to this question. I also noticed a strong parallel between Bourcier's notion of French identity in Florentz's music, and Timothy Taylor's studies on representational control.

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[62] *Patterns of Progress: Music Dance and Drama, (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Ministry of Information, Foreign Language Press Dept, 1968.)*, 24-26.

[63] Truche, *The Music of Jean−Louis Florentz,* 8-11.

[64]Chaouat, *Moroseness in Post-Cold-War-France*, 131.

[65]A shortened conception of Bhabha's "third space of annunciation." (See Ashcroft, 108).

[66] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[67] Ibid.

After being introduced to postcolonial concepts in 2015, I learned that the shadow of the colonial era casts itself on interactions between European and African music. Florentz's works were commissioned and supported by the same governmental and religious institutions that suppressed and controlled the very cultures that Florentz wished to preserve in his music (see the Algerian-French Colonial Wars). In the decades following World War I, the French nation (and all of Europe) had a tendency to assign identity to vast swaths of culture and people (as in the "Italian Empire of Ethiopia"). Prior to World War II, the population of French people living in France had decreased to 41.5 million people, while the population of non-native (African and Arabic) French colonial subjects had risen to some 69.1 million people.[68] In the same manner that France claimed ownership over the identity of many subaltern people, the music of Africa is beholden to these same incongruities in representation.[69]

It is not difficult to trace the parallels between the postcolonial concept of hybridity and the construction of Jean Louis Florentz's works. This hybridity is most obvious in *Debout sur Le Soleil,* op. 8, which uses the Ethiopian Easter service as the primary delineator for its formal structure. This work is a testament to Florentz's deep commitment to the twentieth-century French organ, as well as his immense knowledge of Ethiopian religious music and culture (both Christian and Jewish). His other work, Laudes, op. 5 exemplifies a more politically charged hybridity. While this work is modeled after the rite of Matins from the Ethiopian Christian Church, he openly describes the multi movement work as "icons of Mary weeping for the persecution of

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[68] Statistics taken from "https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_colonial_empire."

[69]Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience: Spirituality in the Western Appropriation of Asian Music,* 38.

Ethiopia [...] songs of hope in a world delivered from tribulation."[70] Later, he clarifies that he is referring to the persecuted class of Christians that suffered throughout the brutality of the Ethiopian Civil War (1974-1991). In this work, Florentz actually draws similarities between the West and an impoverished peasant class of Ethiopian priests and farmers. By illuminating the similarities in Marian theology between Roman Catholics and Ethiopian Orthodox Christians, he has amplified the influence of a subaltern political cause by bringing attention to common ground, and not to difference. This drive for commonality between disparate cultures is an extension of the "fraternal and solemn hospitality" that Florentz offers to the foreign cultures that he takes inspiration from. He writes that you must welcome a culture "without colonizing it, but on the contrary by welcoming it."[71]

Hybridity by Necessity: Gilles Deleuze's Rhizome

The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze's theory of Rhizomes provided a more cerebral and culturally reductive interpretation of the theory of Hybridity. In discussing the issue of the two needed ingredients of "self" and "other" in regards to hybridity, he makes the claim that the conception of a purified "self" is inherently hybrid and fluid because it is so shaped and informed by "others." For Deleuze, hybridity is the definition of human identity. His theory of cultural "rhizomes" posits that culture is best understood as a non-hierarchical manner of deciphering data and its interpretation. In terms of culture, it refers to the "principles of connection and

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[70] Jean Louis Florentz, *The Question of timbre and harmonic vibrato in Les Laudes (Op. 5) for organ* (Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993), 97.

[71] Langlais, *Jean-Louis Florentz, L'oeuvre d'orgue: Témoignages Croisés,* 40.

heterogeneity [...] a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relevant to the arts, sciences, and social struggles."[72]

At its core, Deleuze's theory is an extension of Materialist philosophies that reduce human experience to the inevitability of neurological reactions. Such an assertion reduces hybridity to an inevitable outcome of human existence. Imbalances in power, conflicting perspectives, and constantly evolving cultures are thought to be unavoidable, and thus a state of the physical world: "culture sure spreads like the surface of a body of water, spreading towards available spaces or trickling downwards towards new spaces through fissures and gaps, eroding what is in its way; the surface can be interrupted and moved, but these disturbances leave no trace, as the water is charged with pressure and potential to always seek its equilibrium, and thereby establish smooth space."[73]

This view of hybridity seems to eliminate the need for the creation of a "third space." For Deleuze, the notion of hybridity as the combining of two separate parts is degraded. The third space is a perpetual state of human identity that exists separately from arbitrary delineators of cultural purism such as "European," and "African."

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[72]O'Sullivan, Simon, *Cultural Studies as Rhizome- Rhizomes in Cultural Studies, Unpublished,* 81-82.

[73] Ibid.

CHAPTER II *Florentzien* Mysticism, Tournemire and Said's *Orientalism*

French Exoticism Revisited: Problem of Spirituality

A well documented subset of Western musicians remain in search of authentic spiritual experience through the appropriation of Eastern religious themes. This trend towards the "ownership of spiritual practice" has had a notable influence on those musicians who freely incorporate Eastern music as a means to add existential depth to their musical aesthetic. The commercialization and fetishization of "spiritual authenticity" has been unpacked by scholars such as Jay Keister and Sarah Weiss. In addition to being an effective marketing tool for record companies, Keister points to the manner in which the term *spiritual* has become an identity marker to describe the "exotic sounds" and unfamiliar timbres of Eastern music. She asserts that the imagined concept of spirituality has lead to a "classificatory imperialism."[74] This brand of classificatory imperialism reinforces outdated binaries that portray the West as objective and rational, and the East as mysterious and subjective. In this sense, the appropriation of spiritual themes becomes a manner of highlighting and exploiting cultural differences. Finally, the concept tends to stem from Westerner's dissatisfaction with the human "alienation brought on by secular societies,"or the banal stringency of some Western religions.[75] Florentz's disavowal of the Paris Conservatory and his embrace of African culture is a prime example of this phenomenon.

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[74] Jay Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience: Spirituality in the Western Appropriation of Asian Music,* (The World of Music 47, no. 3 2005), 38.

[75] Ibid.

David Hay describes spirituality as "the drive for relational consciousness, in which humans can feel a connectedness to God, other human beings, and nature."[76] Viewing hybridity in terms of this "relational consciousness" illuminates the manner in which Western ideological projects are fulfilled by utilizing Eastern tropes to distance oneself from Western culture. Florentz's own self description makes reference to a "double cultural heritage," assumably to assert his disavowal of eurocentrism. Unfortunately, this same "drive for relational consciousness" causes Eastern cultures to be defined by the subjective experiences of Western outsiders. The desire for religious transcendence often seems unconcerned with the actual "doctrines" and people to whom these appropriated spiritual ideals belong. Eastern religious experience thus becomes an imported commodity to further ideological and self-defining goals.

In its French manifestations, the importation of Eastern music and culture was at its height at the end of the nineteenth century. The early germination of globalism was apparent through the numerous Paris Colonial Exhibitions of 1899-1931. These affairs, which could last upwards of six-months, displayed cultural artifacts in the form of indigenous people, music, art, and agricultural commodities. While these events were primarily focused on fostering international trade, they also stood as affirmations of French superiority over "pre-evolutionized" Eastern cultures. To write off these events as purely oppressive would be to give into outdated binaries, as many fascinating hybrid processes were generated from these imbalanced cultural interactions.[77]

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[76] Ibid.

[77] Kárpáti, *Non-European influences on Occidental Music,* 28.

Precursory Debussian Exoticism and Said's Orientalism

One early example of French musical hybridity is Claude Debussy's interest in Chinese Gamelan music. A musico-cultural predecessor of the Tournemire-Messiaen school, Florentz's own method of hybridity is largely indebted to Debussy, particularly the juxtaposition of complex modal practices, Eastern-inspired pentatonicism, and oversaturated spectral textures. Both composers sought transcendent modal sonorities that served as the "third space" needed to bridge the French modal and Eastern musical traditions.[78] In the aftermath of Florentz's own conversion from the "historical necessity" of post-serial music, the palatable harmonic idiom of Debussy offered a rubric for a musical aesthetic that was distinctly French, and yet aesthetically aligned with Florentz's cultural and musical mission.[79]

Debussy's attendance at the 1889 World's Fair is widely considered the moment of inception for a more culturally aware brand of twentieth-century French exoticism. This exhibition boasted the first European debut of a Chinese Gamelan Ensemble in Paris.[80] While this haphazard cultural exchange is haunted by a distinct brand of "knowledge-producing" Orientalism (the exploitation of foreign music into a circus-like museum exhibition), it was nevertheless an important development in French exoticism leading up to Jean-Louis Florentz.

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[78] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue. Essai analytique et exégétique: L'univers florentzien et Une tétralogie pour l'orgue vol. 1*, 39-40.

[79]Ibid, 123-127.

[80] Kárpáti, *Non-European influences on Occidental Music,* 28.

Debussy's own musings on Chinese gamelan music demonstrate a new type of advocacy for the inherent qualities of Eastern music as compared to its Western counterparts. His perspective and approach are far more sophisticated and culturally aware than some of his French colleagues (see Saint Saëns's bizarre work, *Africa, Op. 89)*. Debussy's reflections are a prelude to the lasting impact that Eastern spirituality and music would have on French composers throughout the 20th-century:

"Among the Annamites one presents an embryo of an opera, with Chinese influence, where the pattern of the tetralogy could be recognized: only there are more gods and less scenery. . . A small, chattering clarinet conveys the emotion, a tam-tam furnishes the terror: that is all. . . No special theatre, no hidden orchestra. . . not a single trace of bad taste. . . The music of the Javanese reveals a counterpoint next to which Palestrina's seems like child's play. And if one listens, without European parti-pris, to the charm of their percussion, one is obliged to state that ours, in comparison, is only the barbarous noise of a traveling circus."[81]

Debussy's evaluation must contain some purposeful hyperbole. The most striking aspect of his observation is that he seems keenly aware of the colonial trappings of "European parti-pris," which presumably refers to nineteenth-century Western biases on the quality of Eastern music. For both Debussy and Florentz, the future of French music was the ability to incorporate these Eastern cultures into the fabric of French musical practice. Debussy's comments seem even more remarkable when one compares them against the racist undertones of prominent contemporaries such as Vincent D'Indy, who viewed French music as a linear progression away

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[81] Claude Debussy, *Essays on Taste* (1913).

from primitivity, and towards an "evolutionized human spirit."[82] D'Indy's philosophy (which was arguably shared by Tournemire) sought to define French music and identity through a veneration of Europe's middle ages, and largely wrote off indigenous music as "primitivity."[83] Debussy confronts this tendency through his admonition of "special theatre" and "bad taste." He demonstrates an unusual amount of concern with authentic representations of human experience, and the lack thereof in the conservatory system (both Florentz and Debussy chose to leave the Paris Conservatoire). The obscure term "human experience" has dominated discourses on spirituality, and is best described as the glorification of human mundanity. It is a term that is linked to the veneration of the transcendental, shared human experiences that increase one's relational conscious to universal human values. The philosopher John Dewey labels this practice as the "aesthetic appreciation of everyday simplicity," which is our common ground with other cultures.[84]

Viewed in another light, Debussy is reversing the cultural binary to revolutionary ends. His comparisons of Occidental and Oriental cultures place the gamelan in a culturally superior position. As Karpati notes, however, Debussy's view presents its own form of prejudice against music in the conservatory. In addition to carving out a new path for French music, Debussy's attitude towards ancient cultures was reactive to the eurocentric aesthetics that informed the colonial mission. While Debussy was far removed from the formalized concepts of cultural

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[82] Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 334-335.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience: Spirituality in the Western Appropriation of Asian Music,* 39.

studies, he must have been keenly aware that such a vocal advocacy of Oriental music would have a culturally productive effect (as in inciting hybridity) on the countless musicians he personally influenced.

Taking into account Said's definition of Orientalism as a "knowledge producing" act, Debussy is making a claim to cultural knowledge based solely in his limited exposure to such music. Even if these same conventions serve to promote the equality of subaltern music, cultural differences are still magnified to ideological ends. However, Debussy complicates Said's theory by employing a practice that I have coined "subaltern diplomacy." Since the musicians of the Far East lack a medium of articulating themselves within the lofty, intellectual circles of Western classical music, Debussy steps in as a cultural diplomat of sorts, exploiting his powerful influence to serve as an advocate of the equality of non-Western's music, and by extension, non-Western culture. Because he offers little insight into the lives or perspectives of these peoples, he exemplifies a certain amount of ambivalence (in the postcolonial sense of the term). However, Debussy's words serves to elevate the artistic standing and humanity of subjugated people.

This famous announcement of Dvorak regarding the overlooked quality of Negro music resonate with a similar, albeit subtle form of "subaltern advocacy:"

"In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music. They are pathétic, tender, passionate, melancholy, solemn, religious, bold, merry, gay or what you will. It is music that suits itself to any mood or purpose. There is nothing in the whole range of composition that cannot be supplied with themes from this source. The American

musician understands these tunes and they move sentiment in him."[85]

Debussy's framework of treating subaltern music was further developed by Messiaen and Florentz. While I will not attempt to situate Debussy into the religious and symbolist frameworks that influenced his followers, it will be useful to briefly discuss the type of Orientalism employed by Olivier Messiaen. Recent research by Griffiths points out that Messiaen didn't absorb Hindu rhythms directly from indigenous peoples, but rather from his teachers at the conservatory. The composer himself noted that very few of his works contained concrete utterances of indigenous, Hindu music.[86] Unlike Florentz, Messiaen was less concerned with the totality of the symbolic dimensions of non-European music. A similar attitude also guided Messiaen's transcription of birdsong: he was more concerned with the intrinsic quality of the sound moment than with the specific experiences that aid in understanding the animal's perspective (analogous to the lack of perspective on the Hindu other). Messiaen is inadvertently taking advantage of cultural knowledge, but it remains ambiguous whether there is any intent to advocate for Hindu people. Alas, Messiaen's aims were far more concerned with the overt irregularity, 'instability," and immobility" that were so characteristic of non-European music and the natural world. For him, indeterminacy and nature were the window for experiencing God.[87]

Bourcier's evaluation of Florentz's methods make the strong claim that the composer's

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[85]Joseph Horowitz, *Dvořák and the New World,* 74.

[86] Kárpáti, *Non-European influences on Occidental Music,* 32.

[87] Truche, *The Music of Jean−Louis Florentz,* 5.

works are "not of any Orientalism, much less an exoticism."[88] Such a belief is rooted in the assumption that Florentz had a closer relationship to the African cultures that his music freely borrows from. It is of the utmost difficulty to define how Florentz conforms to or complicates the notions of appropriation, orientalism, or exoticism, but there is one observation that is for certain: Florentz was far more cognizant of subaltern experience than his predecessors; he comprehended the symbolic importance that certain music held for African peoples. Bourcier line of thought might imply that Debussy and Messiaen are ensnared by Orientalism because of the gap that existed between their "knowledge" and actual direct experience with the culture to whom a music belongs. According to Bourcier, Florentz's sophisticated ethnographic processes and level of cultural awareness are transcendent of Orientalism.

Organ Revolutionaries: Parallels between Jean Louis Florentz, La Jeune France, and Tournemire

As French society began to ostracize German influence in French music and art c. 1920-1940, many French composers were forced to defend their compositional ideologies as being authentically French. Indeed, even popular composers such as Darius Milhaud were dogged by attacks from Vincent D'Indy, who publicly shunned him as being sympathetic to German musical aesthetics.[89] Similarly, the composers Andre Jolivet, Jean-Yves Daniel-Lesur, Yves Baudier, and Olivier Messiaen began the society *La Jeune France* in 1936 in order to distance

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[88] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue. Essai analytique et exégétique: L'univers florentzien et Une tétralogie pour l'orgue vol. 1*, 85-86.

[89] L.C Amos, *An examination of 1920s parisian polytonality: Milhaud's ballet "La création du monde,"* (PhD Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 2007), 3.

themselves from the conformist views of D'Indy and the hollowness of German serialism. The rejection of conservative musical aesthetics was a central part of the musical ideology of *La Jeune France*. Their ideals were not rooted in religious piety, but rather in a humanism and mysticism that promoted the universality and interconnectedness of all people and cultures. As with both Olivier Messiaen and Charles Tournemire, *La Jeune France* saw the universality of human values as the guiding ideology for the future of French music. Anderson cites Jolivet's *Hymne a l'Univers* as an initial example of this human inspired music.[90] The work is charged with cosmic meaning, and as Anderson notes, seeks to create experimental and revolutionary sonorities that are "directly related with the cosmic universal system."

Charles Tournmire and Jehan Alain were also revolutionary in their assimilation of expanded harmonic landscapes and unusual timbres in the vocabulary of the French organ. Although many composers similarly strove to bring the French symphonic organ into "modern tonal vocabulary,"[91] Alain and Tournmire accomplished this with a perspective that looked to transcend traditional hierarchies of constructing organ timbre. Their unconventional methods of treating organ timbre were transcendent of the highly defined manner of handling organ tone in the romantic tradition of Franck and Widor. These methods were not solely an abandonment of the standardized organ aesthetics of the Cavaille-Coll tradition, they were a redefinition of what is considered an "acceptable" accumulation of organ timbre.

Tournemire in particular demonstrates this timbral revolution by calling for impractical

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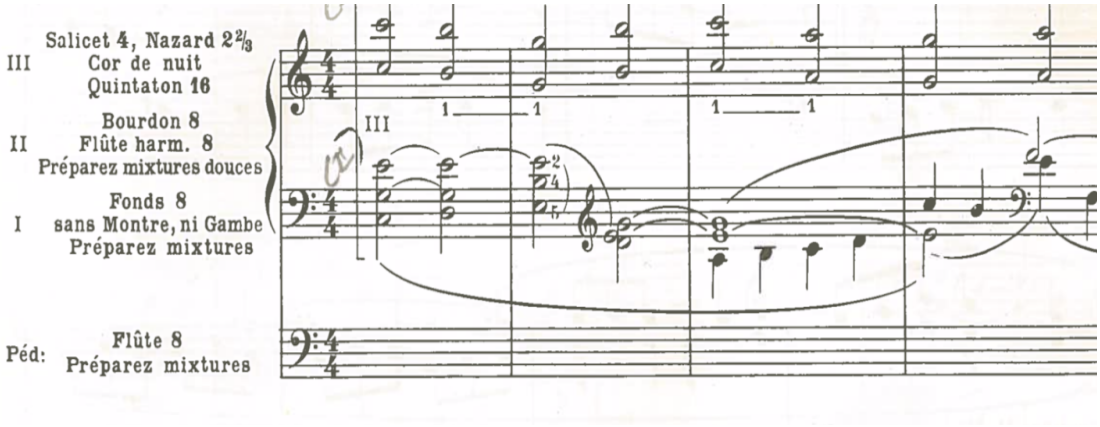
[90] Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 161.

[91] Anderson, *Twentieth-century organ music*, 153-155.

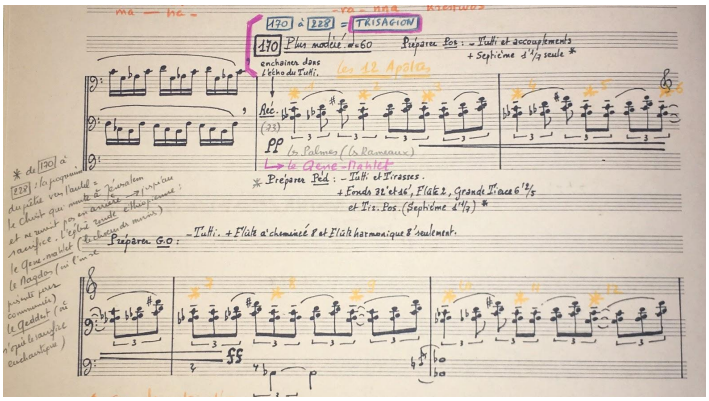
stop combinations that bear little resemblance to his predecessors. In his Diptyque from *L'Orgue Mystique*, the composer asks for the unusual combination of Quintaton 16,' Cor de nuit 8,' Nazard 2 ⅔, and Salicet 4.' Example 2-1 exemplifies his very nuanced approach to registration:

Example 2-1: Opening registrations of Tournemire's *Diptyque*



This strange, ethereal sound is used to invoke the mystery of Mary's purification; this stop combination exists in a realm beyond the romantic models of organ registration. In the music of Franck and Widor, organ tone was generally divided into three families: foundations, reeds and mixtures. Tournemire's approach, however, employs highly specific individual stops taken from different families. These types of sonorites cannot be independently classified within the existing taxonomy of timbral classification. In this manner, Tournemire is creating a "third space" in which highly defined individual stops openly conflict with one another, which is often highlighted with the use of gap registration. We see this tendency in the music of Florentz as well, particularly the juxtaposition of conical reed stops with far-flung harmonics. Example 2-2 shows the motif "of processing palms" that occurs in measure 170 before the crucifixion of Christ. Florentz calls for the nasal timbre of the vox humana reed stop to be supplemented with various other foundation

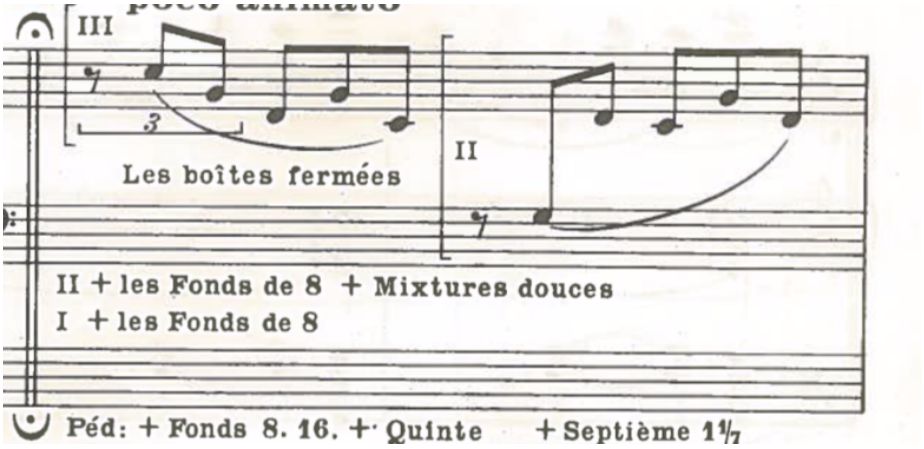
stops, and mutations 3 ⅕ and 1 ⅗.



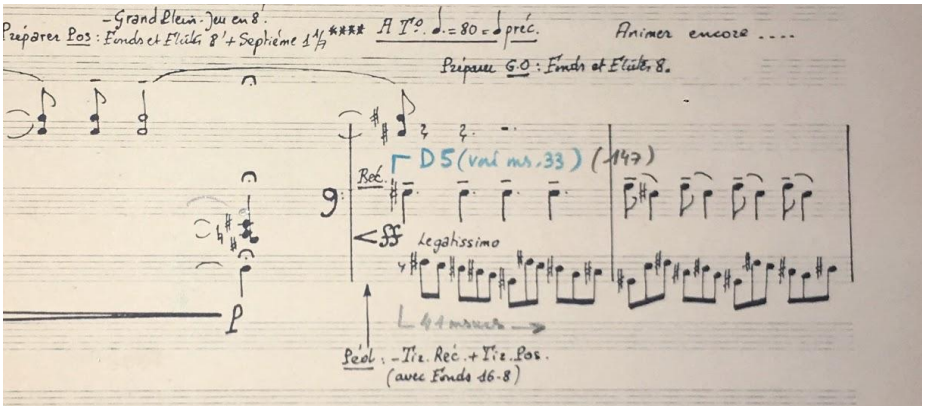
Example 2-2: Measure 170 of Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil*

The art of registration under Tournemire and Florentz becomes far more subjective; instead of giving into the hierarchies of terraced dynamics that guided the classification of nineteenth-century organ tone, they treats the building of organ sonority as a non-hierarchical process, in which stops that were once considered untenable can now openly synthesize and conflict with one another. Tournemire's eventual juxtaposition of low foundations and the Septieme 1 1/7 in measure 122 (see example 2-3) is another example of his unorthodox approach to organ tone. This combination shades low, fundamental tone with highly dissonant upper harmonics. This exact same stop combination is employed by Florentz in *Debout sur Soleil* in the fifth liturgical Dance of measure 271 (see example 2-4). These gap registrations, as earlier noted, serve primarily to serve as "spice" for their timbral vocabulary. `

Example 2-3: Measure 122 of Tournemire's *Diptyque*



Example 2-4: Measure 271 of Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil*

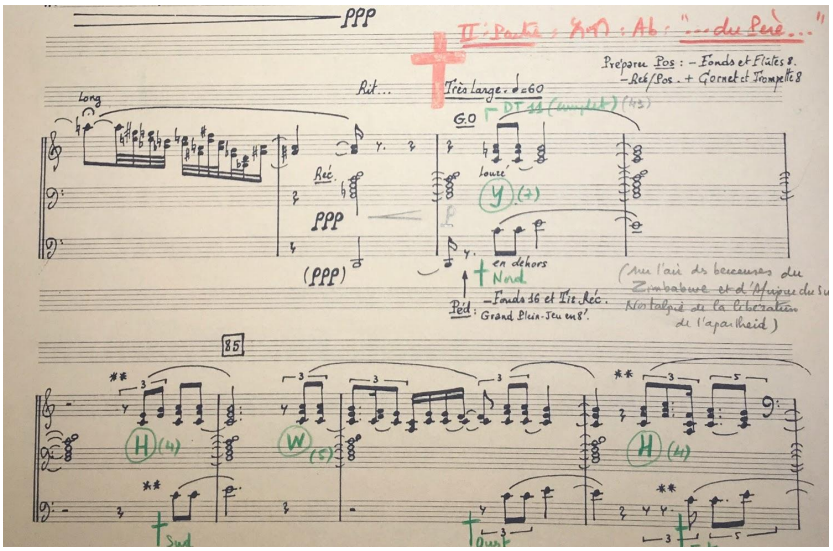


According to Bourcier, Tournemire's *Diptyque* is written in a style that mirrors Florentz's aims toward an accessible musical language. Although the angular chromaticism and modality of Tournemire is well documented in the rest of the catalog of *L'Orgue Mystique,* the *Diptyque* stands apart as an exploration of naive Ionian modality, constant drones in perfect fifths and perfect fourths, and the cycling of small motivic cells that border on being "minimalist" in their constant repetition and lack of development. While impossible to prove, it would seem that Tournemire is forging a path towards a "spiritual" music that depicts spiritual ascent through

musical simplicity. I assert that the unusual idiom of Tournemire's *Diptyque* is meant to invoke the "primitive" music of the ancient Hebrews, since the purification of Mary is an ancient Hebrew rite that takes place in the temple of Jerusalem.

The striking similarity between Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil* and Tournemire's *Diptyque* is the manner in which they alternate between an idiom that seems closer towards a modernist French style, and an idiom that seems to transcend this modernity altogether. Indeed, Tournemire and Florentz seem to share a similar"double cultural heritage." In his *Diptyque*, Tournemire cycles through bits of musical material that borders on the edge of polytonality, and then returns to a music that could only be described as naive. This same phenomenon occurs in measure 82 (see example 2-5) of Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil.* After the climax of the dense "section one" of the work, a simple Zimbabwean lullaby is presented in the most exposed and harmonically stable iteration. For both Florentz and Tournemire, the constant pull between "modern" and "human" styles (I am avoiding the word primitive) give their musical aesthetics a powerful transcendental dimension.

Example 2-5: Measure 82 of Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil*



Appropriation and Abrogation

The question of whether Florentz's extensive borrowing of African music is a case of "cultural appropriation" would be an inevitable consideration for a neutral observer of his music. Amid current postcolonial discourses the word appropriation carries highly negative connotations. The question of "who can claim ownership over a cultural form" often reinforces the overused and problematic concept of cultural "authenticity." Spurr defines appropriation as the "strategy by which a dominant imperial power incorporates [...] the territory or culture that it surveys and invades."[92] This definition, by employing colonial language that invoke domination and submission, appeals to the commonly understood definition of cultural appropriation as a negative phenomenon. Many academics default to pointing out the power imbalances that are implicated in the appropriation of land and culture. This concept is also closely related to the notion of the appropriation of cultural knowledge known as Orientalism. Both of these terms have become politically charged and potentially damning concepts to employ when discussing Western art, literature and music. In the hands of many academics, these terms have been employed simultaneously as teaching tools, and as weapons. While students benefit from the historical awareness offered by postcolonial concepts, these same notions can be used to sully individual artists or academics.

Appropriation in the music field is a particularly salient study to be had in our current climate of globalization. The ability of peoples to easily travel and pass on their native music have

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[92] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 28.

lead to an increased amount of hybrid art forms.[93] Thus, cultural intermingling has the unique ability to create new and uncharted musical designs. Interestingly enough, many of the early music forms that were created by cross cultural exchange (jazz, for instance) have transcended postcolonial accusations of appropriation. This is due in part to the slow passage of people and ideas that characterized a pre-globalized society. For example, the centuries of cultural exchange that lead to the creation of jazz were solely a consequence of the African slave trade. This was a cross cultural germination that developed over many centuries, but eventually lead to the creation of a new music genre. This slow germination process is difficult to identify in the current climate of our technologically connected world; the hyper-connectedness of our society makes the creation of cultural forms happen more quickly than ever.[94] For instance, if one desired to create a new genre of music employing Western and Nigerian music, one would simply need to do a google search to find relevant examples of their native music. This rapidness in the creation of cultural forms has also lead to the hijacking of cultural indicators for commercial reasons.[95] Indeed, as Keister, Taylor and Weiss point out, there is a long held corporate interest in the promotion and production of "world music."[96] In these cases, music production companies focus solely on the types of non-Western music that will appeal to the consumer's perspective and misconception of world music.[97]

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[93]Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, 126.

[94] Ibid, 129.

[95] Ibid, 129.

[96] Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience*, 38.

[97]Ibid.

Outside of the purview of Imperial and corporate institutions, Ashcroft describes the way in which appropriation can be used in reverse. She describes the manner in which previously colonized peoples "take over aspects of the imperial culture- such as rationalism and analysis [...] to express their own "social and cultural identities."[98] Some obvious musical examples of this are the many genres of African popular music that make use of Western chords and harmony.[99] Here, appropriation is not viewed as the pilfering of cultural form from a distant society, rather it is the redefining of a cultural tool (Western harmony) to be expressive rather than oppressive. Indeed, many of the African societies who now employ Western harmony had their own ancient musics suppressed or destroyed by these same musical conventions in the colonial era.

The benefits and detriments of cross-cultural exchange are abundantly clear. Cultural appropriation can lead to artistic evolution and the redefinition of cultural tools; however, it can also reinforce gross misrepresentations of peoples and cultures, often for the sake of profit.[100] It is between these two vastly different outcomes that one must ask where the line should be drawn between acceptable and unsatisfactory forms of appropriation.

In Ashcroft's study, I came across a concept that was closely related to appropriation, which had important implications for "musical multiculturalism." The theory of abrogation pervades the field of cultural studies and serves as a qualifier for some forms of appropriation. It is defined as the repudiation of the "normative concept" that there is one "standard form" of any

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[98] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 15-16.

[99] Sarah Weiss, *Listening to the World but Hearing Ourselves: Hybridity and Perceptions of Authenticity in World Musi*c, (Ethnomusicology 58, no. 3 (2014)), 517.

[100] Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience*, 38.

language.[101] In its colonial use, it is employed to combat the notions of inferiority that were often assigned to subaltern "dialects" and "marginal variants" of the English language.[102] Ashcroft's definition, however, falls short of discussing the ways in which abrogation can be applied in reverse. In this reversed conception, the Westerner articulates an inferior dialect of a foreign or ancient language. This concept of an "inferior dialect" can be gleaned in those Western musicians who inadvertently make claims to performing "authentically" African or Oriental music, without possessing the musical vocabulary to articulate all of its subtleties.

Moreover, the notion of abrogation opens the door to the possibility that accusations of "cultural appropriation" do not implicate even those with a limited knowledge of the extra-European musical material that they are employing. If abrogation as applied to African people's allows for a multiplicity of hybrid languages, why then are Western musicians not afforded the same opportunity? If the concept was applied equally, it would mean that even the ill informed Westerner has some license to create his own dialect of a distant or unfamiliar language. While this complicates our conception of cultural appropriation, it is particularly applicable to multicultural music exchange. If we interpret language to be synonymous with musical language and custom, abrogation seems to threaten the very conception of appropriation.

Abrogation also manifest itself through the ways in which Western musicians (particularly jazz musicians) created new dialects of religious and spiritual thought.[103] As Keister notes, many 20th-century musicians (for commercial or philosophical reasons) participated in a culture of

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[101] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 3.

[102] Ibid, 17.

[103] Keister, *Seeking Authentic Experience*, 36.

musical spiritualism; she goes on to cite examples where themes of spiritualism have been appropriated to support commercial interests in the world music market.[104] Spirituality, according to Keister, is the "creativity and engagement within and outside religious traditions." Spirituality often emerges amidst a lack of satisfaction with one's own culture (like in the case of Jean-Louis Florentz). Indeed, many Western musicians embraced Eastern religions and music because of their "disenchantment with the restriction of religious organizations, [...] or with the familiar music of one's own culture."[105] Indeed, the value of these cultural commodities often lies beyond its objective quality; rather, the value is in the listener's unfamiliarity with the "visual, sonic, and aesthetic pleasures" of far Eastern religion and culture. Keister describes it as a "sensual spirituality" that aims for "relational consciousness [...] with God and other human beings"[106]. The term is also inseparable from the notion of universality, since it is a concept that "rejects the boundaries of religion and culture."[107]

Keister's concept of musical-spiritual appropriation parallels many of the concepts found in Said's writings on the fundamental nature of Orientalism. Her thesis could be surmised with the anecdote: the issue is not that we appropriate, the issue is how we appropriate. Prior to the 1970s, it was widely acceptable for a Western musician to freely incorporate the music and cultures of the far East.[108] According to Said, however, these types of cultural practices have the end result of

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[104] Ibid, 38.

[105] Ibid, 43.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid, 49.

[108] Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, 126.

implanting misconceptions about the far East in the mind of Westerners.[109] Moreover, he argues that all forms of Orientalism stem from the "ontological and epistemological distinction between the Orient and the Occident." In other words, Said takes issue with methods of classification and means of appropriating that would reinforce a cultural binary of "us and them." He believes that these cultural binaries are rooted in a colonial obsession with controlling the image and culture of the Far East, while posturing the West as a culturally superior civilization.[110]

Appropriation as Advocacy

One might argue that some types of appropriation work to erode the cultural binary (the works of Jean-Louis Florentz in particular). To avoid "constructing" falsehoods about Eastern music, some musicians have focused on ethnographic research in hopes of extracting exact replications of the extra-European music that they borrow. Jean-Louis Florentz, a composer who is known for his extensive work with African music and religion, went to great lengths to maintain a scientific level of precision when recording and transcribing the works of African peoples. Does the precision of Florentz's ethnographic practices, and his intimate knowledge of African people exempt him from the snares of orientalism? According to Said, the answer is no. My intimate knowledge of the composer's methods, however, cause me to take issue with oversimplifying his treatment of African musical materials.

The main difference between Florentz and those composers who employ Eastern music

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[109] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 153-154.

[110] Ibid.

indiscriminately, is that Florentz often aims to create a musical product that preserves the original intention of the extra-European music. In my opinion, he begins to transcend "false representations" when the auditory accounts of the borrowed material is accurate. We can point to two such cases in Florentz's Laudes, op. 5. The composer uses direct transcriptions of Burundi music in Rempart de la Croix, m. 94-102; he uses a second transcription of a Burundi salutation song in Pleurs de la Vierge, measures 1-10. While Florentz has employed these two forms of direct transcription in the context of an Ethiopian Christian mass, I posit that these relatively uncurated replications of the borrowed material begins to circumvents Said's notion of false cultural constructions.

One must consider the argument that the act of reinforcing cultural binaries is not solely dependent on the accuracy of an artist's reconstruction of Eastern culture objects; these binaries can also be constructed when the extra-European material is beholden to a listener's prejudices or ignorances. To offer a relevant experience: in the autumn of 2011, I had the opportunity to study with the notable Florentz scholar, Marie-Louise Langlais. Together we attended a concert where Florentz's *Laudes*, op. 5 was being performed by Jennifer Bower. A month before, I had visited Jenny in her home and found her practicing a few measures of Florentz, which I immediately had a negative reaction to. The dense cluster chords and saturated chromaticism seemed randomized and cacophonous. At this point, I knew nothing of the music of Florentz, and was totally oblivious to his African influences. However, in the pre-concert talk (months later), the performer gave some background information on the extent of the composer's ethnomusicological studies, and mentioned Florentz's conception of himself as the "African music expert of France." With this

simple distinction, my perception of the piece had been profoundly transformed. To be frank, my own racial identity caused me to be immediately more receptive to Florentz's music once I learned of his influences. However, this change in perception also pointed to my own personal lack of knowledge about African music. I had no solid reference point to know what Ethiopian chant sounded like. Thus, I was trusting Florentz to guide and inform my knowledge of this distant culture. While I could not initially identify which portions of the work were authentically African, I did notice the jarring simplicity of much of the musical material, particularly as it was juxtaposed with Florentz's hyper-modality. In my first encounter with Florentz's music, I came to the misguided conclusion that Ethiopian music was simple, while Florentz's musical language was complicated.

As Said implies, I saw an immediate need to apply a hierarchical structure between the two musics, even though I felt massively enlightened by the spiritual experience of hearing African religious music in the context of an organ concert. Contrastingly, a respected colleague was also in attendance at the concert, and was equally unfamiliar with the works of Florentz. I was surprised to find that he was absolutely disgusted and repulsed by the concert, and made his opinion known to many others following the event. I remember overhearing them say "who needs music from Africa anyway? It is just a giant desert." I was shocked by his statement, and couldn't help but wonder if he would have had the same reaction if he was oblivious to Florentz's sampling of African music; perhaps it was not African music that he disliked, but Florentz's musical style. In any case, the outcome for him was a negative and derogatory one, and reinforced his misconceptions about the superiority of Western music.

The disparity between these two cultural constructions demonstrate how objective knowledge about an Eastern culture is still subject to Said's binaries that are so lodged in the conscious of most Westerner listeners who encounter extra-European material. Said's definition of Orientalism is so all encompassing that it often makes it difficult to know how one should interact with Eastern culture at all. In my view, knowledge and mutual exchange are positive outcomes. If the two consequences are over-classification or misrepresentation of Eastern culture, I would be inclined to believe that the quest for more intimate knowledge about those culture best avoids the false constructions that Said warns of. By achieving a deeper understanding about the cultures which one appropriates, the interaction is more characterized by being an exchange of ideas, rather than a method to "dominate and restructure" cultural commodities through the lens of eurocentrism.

Appropriation is, of course, an inevitable outcome of a globalized society. However, much like the concept of Orientalism, cultural appropriation is a term whose vagueness makes it difficult to know precisely what it is to misrepresent or control a cultural fact. I define the line between acceptable and unsatisfactory appropriation with three prerequisites: adequate knowledge, positive intent, and hospitable reception. These criterion ensure that extra-European material is recorded clearly and accurately, and that extra-European material is understood in its full cultural context, without false or arbitrary constructions.

CHAPTER III: African Religious Symbolism and Organization in *Debout sur le Soleil, op. 8*

Self-Inflicted Hybridity: Evolutionary Themes in the legacy of Zara Yaqob

Florentz's preface to *Debout sur Soleil* reveals the undeniably Ethiopian and extra-European inspirations of the work. Conceived as the first part of a tetralogy titled the "Book of Enchantments," it is inspired by the theological work of the same name by the Ethiopian Emperor Zara Yaqob (1434-1468). According to Florentz's preface, Yaqob authored the Book of Enchantments in response to the Vatican's desire to catalyze diplomatic relations with Eastern Christians, and is intended to "instruct theology to spiritually unify the faithful." Yaqob also unified Ethiopia's two religious entities into a unified Christian church in the 15th century. Although Ethiopian Christianity can be traced back to the Kingdom of Aksum in the early 4th century, the reign of Zara Yaqob was pivotal to creating a singular identity for the Ethiopian Church (although regional variants of executing chant coexisted).

Florentz's salutation to Yaqob reveals the theologically instructive and liturgically centered nature of *Debout sur le Soleil*. He does not construct this work as a piece of European organ music whose identity is self-referential, rather the work's identity is defined by its symbolic relation to the Euro-African theological hybridization of the 15th century. Most importantly, it channels the themes of evangelism and Christian conquest that transcended European and African borders. Florentz also expresses a concern for the golden ages of Christian conquest as they manifested in Yaqob's ruthless approach to the eradication of pre-Christian culture. Hearkening back to the "glory days" of Christian expansion (now lost), Florentz focuses squarely on Yaqob as

a symbolic third-space for the hybridization of Orthodox and Western Christianity, which stands stronger unified in its mission against heresy. Zara Yaqob stood apart for his creation of diplomatic activities with the early Roman Church; he was represented at the Council of Trent, and received missionaries from Pope Eugene IV. His later translations of Western Christian literature are a testament to his deep interest in European religious practice. (Redington) In his own country, Yaqob was able to unify the quarreling religious sects of Coptic Christians and "sabbath" observing Orthodox Christians (the Tewahedo church). This method of religious hybridization was by no means popular; Yaqob's failed attempt to unify the Christian and Jewish Sabbath into a "two-day event" was radical for his time.

Yaqob's approach to cultural and religious reform mirrored the forceful approach of the European Crusaders; he forcefully disseminated a distinctly Marian theology into the Ethiopian church. The incorporation of European Christian thought was not always well received: he decreed that all Ethiopian churches were required to have a Marian altar, and caused rioting when he featured a "Western-style Madonna painted by Branca-Leone." (Redington) According to research by Norman Hugh Redington, Yaqob seems to have initiated a mandated hybridization between Western and European Christian ideals in Ethiopia in order to offer a third path for Ethiopia's existing Christian religions. However, Yaqob's more brutal acts of white-washing were taken against practitioners of pre-Christian Ethiopians, particularly practitioners of animism. Animism is linked to Ethiopia's pre-Christian, polytheistic pagan religion. The term most often refers to the superstitious beliefs that attribute living spirits to inanimate objects.

Yaqob's disdain for his empire's pre-Christian identity offers a point of departure for descending the tired narratives of "oppressed" and "oppressor" as they are associated with racial identities in colonial discourses. The cultural conditions that preclude hybridity are not always incited by the brutal invasion and domination of territories between colonizer and colonized. In the case of Yaqob, the process of hybridization was incited by a desire for a redefinition of his own people's self-identity. In this case, the desire to magnify and unify the Christian culture of Ethiopia brought on the suppression of an integral part of their own cultural history. Whether this suppression can be considered "self-inflicted" remains unclear. What is most clear is that the human desire to control one's cultural identity can come both from outside and within. For Yaqob, the allure of Roman Catholic power and influence may have incited this self-inflicted cultural genocide against Ethiopian animists. In the same manner that some hybrid-ethnic cuisines eliminate those delicacies that might offend their Western patrons, Yaqob's erasure of Pre-Christian culture could be viewed as the desire to transcend the aspects of Ethiopian religious identity that would threaten its proper hybridization with Western Christian ideals. The forces that control cultural change are most often the politically and religiously affluent, and are beyond the agency of the people who are most affected by it.

While moralistic judgements can easily guide conversations about the birth, death, and synthesis of culture, these preconceptions of morality degrade as these events progress further into history (few people would be offended by the atrocities committed by the Roman Empire). The violent consequences of cultural exchange eventually became known as "historical necessities," even if the brutality of such processes are understood. Indeed, for both Florentz and Tournemire, the violent crusades of the middle ages were considered the climax of Christian

civilization, and “the high-point of human achievement.” Schloesser points to Tournemire’s white-washed view of Europe’s middle ages as a peaceful conversion of the world into its inevitable Christian identity.[111] Tournemire’s rose-tinted view of the genocidal practices of Christian assimilation are most clear from the narrative laid out for his Symphony No. 7. This work depicts the world’s conversion from primitivity to Christianity. This partiality towards the middle ages is rooted in the rejection of Enlightenment ideals which (in the view of Tournemire and D’Indy) began with the Renaissance. Tournemire’s perspective views ancient religions as “dim flickers of divine light,” which are ultimately eliminated in order to become evolutionized. (Scholesser)

The opening of Florentz’s preface to *Debout sur le Soleil* exemplifies a similar, but more historically aware perspective on the historical necessity of Christian unification:

“When, in the middle of the fifteenth century, Emperor Zara-Yaq'ob published "The Book of Enchantments ", (T'omara Tesbe'et), the Christian lands of Abyssinia were still largely subject to the rites of divination, magic, ritual killings and superstitious terrors. It is to react against these discordant mores that Zara-Yaq'ob, (The beloved son of the Church) contacted by the emissaries of Pope Eugene IV for the rapprochement of Latin and Eastern Christians, wrote this book of instruction theology to spiritually unify the faithful in the faith on the face of the Resurrected. This period of Ethiopian history has great similarities with ours. The end of our twentieth century sees the emergence of the myth of "sacred return, or religious", while far and wide, many religious sects and/or fundamentalists flourish. The incapacity of the human sciences, technical

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[111] Schloesser, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire,* 306.

progress, various ideologies materialists and rationalists to sustainably meet the aspirations of the people, gave way to more irrational creations of the human spirit, justifying in particular the moral and political violence. I have taken the title of the imperial writing of Zara-Yaq'ob in their etymological sense: "The treaty of the incarnation of God ", or "of human nature assumed by God ", to crown a cycle of "peri-liturgical" works."[112]

Debout sur le Soleil's inextricable link to the *Book of Enchantments* manifests itself musically in the juxtaposition of Orthodox and Coptic Christian chants, motivic development that mirrors the superstitions of animism, and in its invoking of "hospitality" between two far removed Christian cultures. In the face of Yaqob, Florentz peers at an ideological doppelganger. *Debout sur le Soleil* emerges from the third space crafted by the forcing of two disparate parts into one.

Organization and Meaning in Debout sur le Soleil

Debout sur Soleil refers to the scriptural account of the Apocalypse as found in Revelation 19:17: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun, crying with a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair" Come join the great supper of God."[113] The work's title is also based on Jacque Lecerq's book Debout sur le Soleil, which is a meditation on the passion of Christ. Lecqlerq was the head priest of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, and was engaged in extensive missionary work in Africa. He was also a friend and spiritual advisor of Tlorentz. *Debout sur le Soleil* is the synthesis of two distinct but related musical scenes: a hybridized "liturgical act" that superimposes the sonorities

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[112] From the preface of *Debout sur le Soleil.*

[113] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

of Notre Dame's Cathedral organ with the music of the Kidana-Mehret Cathedral, where Florentz did much of his field research on the Ethiopian Liturgy.

A study of Florentz's manuscript most clearly illuminates the ways in which the Ethiopian religious themes guided his approach to hybridity in *Debout sur le Soleil.* His score resembles a piece of sacred, visual art rather than a musical text. His annotations are copious, with many recurring visual characters which correspond to the musical and religious components which tie together the work's many layers of musical meaning.[114] He uses at least eight different colored pencils to categorize the components of the work. Of those categories of classification, only three are devoted to the music of Western origin. I have listed the colors and their function in Table 1. This will assist in understanding the annotations in Florentz's score, which will be cited often. Five of Florentz's methods of musical organization have direct connections with Ethiopian religious symbolism and language.[115]

COLOR	FUNCTION	COLOR	FUNCTION
Red	Corresponds to the 4 subsections, and the 4 points of the Cross which are representative of the physical design of the Ethiopian Church.	Dark Blue	7 Main Leitmotifs

[114]Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue.* 238.

[115] This is not an entirely accurate statement, since many of the musical organization principles are simultaneously Western and African, particularly the 14 leitmotifs.

Blue	Four refrains and the seven columns of the sun. Refers to the seven Angels of the Apocalypse, as found in the book of Enoch.	Green	7 Subsidiary Leitmotifs
Brown	Two main sections of the whole piece, based on Matthew 16:24.	Orange	Modal Analysis
Purple	Four Invitations (and Coda) for the Ethiopian Church. "The Lord Be With You"	Plain Pencil	169 musical events, related to the "remembrances of God" from the Pentateuch."

Table 1: Table of Florentz's Annotations according to color scheme

In the case of *Debout de Soleil*, Florentz's meticulous method of negotiating between Ethiopian and European material reduces the inherent chaos of the "contradictory and ambivalent" sound spaces in which cultures articulate themselves. As Bhabha describes, "recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity may help us to overcome the exoticism of cultural diversity in favor of the recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate."[116] Florentz's well defined tools of synthesis and thematic organization demonstrate the depth of his knowledge for the essential building blocks of the Ethiopian Christian tradition. This work encapsulates the depth of the elusive Ethiopian religious symbols that are at once highly defined and interdependent.

[116] Ashcroft and Griffins commentary on Bhabha.

Blue Ink: the Four Refrains and the Columns of the Sun

In example 3-1 one sees a blue cross shaded with yellow filling labeled as CS-1, "Columns of the Sun." This is the first of four "verse and chorus" structures that constitute one of the many "reading levels" of *Debout sur le Soleil*. This visual indicator employed by Florentz refers simultaneously to the subsidiary leitmotif of the 7 Apocalyptic Angels as found in the book of Enoch, but also for the "alternating chorus and verse structure" of Syriac hymnody.

Florentz's musical execution of the CS theme is firmly rooted in the harmonic idiom of French extended-modal practice. In this sense, the African religious symbol is the object which is signified by the music; however, the musical medium and harmonic language are far removed from the symbol by time and space. In other words, African religious indicators are being channeled through a communicative medium that is more indicative of the West than of Africa. This observation does not intend to admonish this practice, but rather, to highlight it. The abrasive, crashing polychords represent the heterophonic singing of Syriac melody, while the rapid flourishes symbolize the virtuosic chants of the Ethiopian priest.[117]

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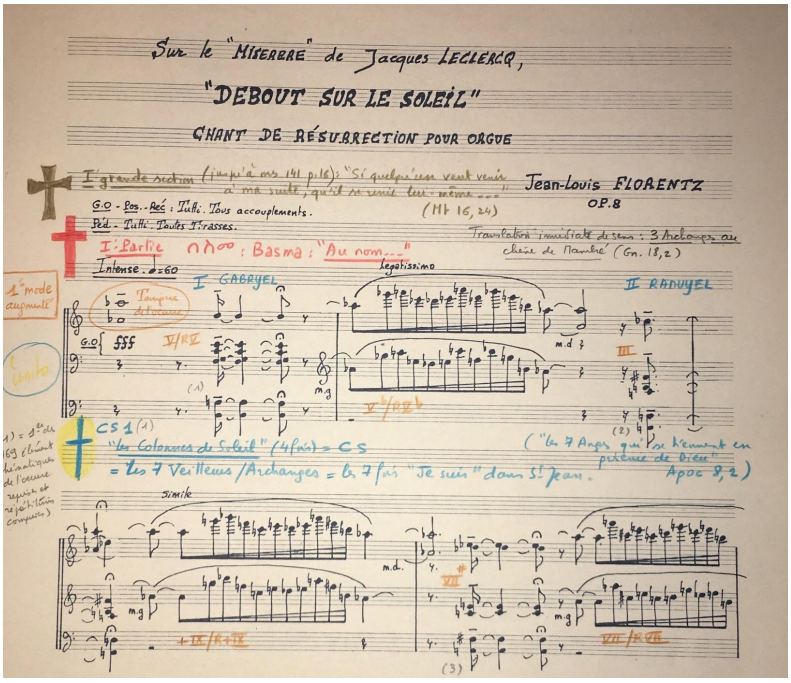
[117] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.



Example 3-1: Measure 1-4 of Florentz's *Debout sur le Soleil*

The seven columns (or seven angels) from Enoch are an explicitly Ethiopian religious symbol, as the book of Enoch remains in the canon of Ethiopian Christianity, but not the Western Christian Church.[118] Florentz employs his modal system (see the orange ink under each chord in example 3-1) to assign each angel its own specific polychord.[119] Each chord is labeled with the corresponding angel in blue ink. Contrastingly, the auditory account of these angels is actually inspired by the central scene of Jacques Leclerq's book *Debout sur le Soleil (1980)*,[120] after which Florentz's work was named. Leclerq writes of a miserable homeless woman who attended masses at Notre Dame; the recollection focuses on her spiritual catharsis, which was allegedly brought on by the roaring, apocalyptic organ improvisations of Pierre Cochereau on the organ of Notre Dame

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[118] The angels of the apocalypse (as found in the book of Enoch) are Gabryel, Ramuyel, Saraq'ayel, Uryel, Ragweyel, Mikayel, Rufayel, Uryel

[119] [119] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue. Essai analytique et exégétique: L'univers florentzien et Une tétralogie pour l'orgue vol. 1,* 181.

[120] Ibid, 237.

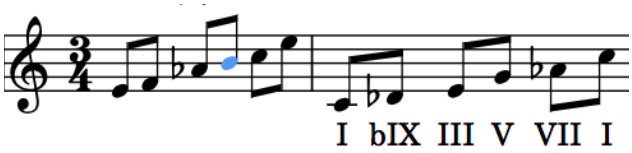
Cathedral. Bourcier claims that this “seven columns” leitmotif is actually based on Pierre Cochereau’s *Symphonie en Improvisation,* which was recorded on the Phillips label.

What is most striking about this type of multilayered approach to musical generation is that it illuminates the similarities between the French and Ethiopian religious experiences. Although Florentz does not use any explicitly African music in this important portion of the work, it is still impregnated with meaning and symbolism that is simultaneously invoking African and Western culture; this points to a shared dialogue between the cultures and not the stark inequalities that exist between the grandeur of Notre Dame's pipe organ and the drums, lyres, and sticks that comprise the musical instruments of the Ethiopian Christian church. Thus, Florentz’s seems to be in line with Bhabha's binary opposition; he transcends hierarchical structures between the two cultures, and focuses on creating a sound world that invokes both the African and Western religious perspective, transcending the aspects of geography and economic opportunity that separate them.

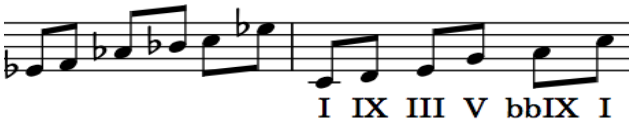
Orange Ink: Modality and Analysis

Florentz both utilizes and transcends modal harmony by creating his own method of harmonic generation that welcomes the pentaphonic structure of Ethiopian Chant. Florentz’s modal system is heavily indebted to pentatonicism, and omits the labels of scale degrees “IV” and “VI.” He treats these scale degrees as chromatic extensions of scale degrees III, V and VII to include the full chromatic scale into his generation of modes. There are two types of modes associated with Ethiopian Chant: Hemitonic and Anhemitonic. Examples 3-2 and 3-3 show the *Misere* theme in its hemitonic and anhemitonic modes. The hemitonic (example 3-2) is used during Lent and is aptly described as the pentatonic mode with a raised 5 and 9 or “2nd mode

super diminished." The anhemitonic (example 3-3) is used during celebration and is simply the pentatonic mode (or 1st mode diminished). It is from these five-note modal cells that Florentz derives his elusive manner of harmonic generation, which often sounds atonal in its manifestations.



Example 3-2: Anhemitonic *Misere*



Example 3-3: Hemitonic *Misere*

Florentz's generation of the polychords associated with the *Columns of the sun*, demonstrate the way in which he manipulates pentatonic cells to generate unlimited harmonic possibilities. First, he starts with the five notes of first mode augmented and then extracts its Q (Chromatic) companion. In other words, he is focusing on the seven notes that form the complement of the original mode. The scale degree as prescribed by the original pentatonic mode becomes the shorthand roman numerals that Florentz uses to organize the polychords of the seven angels. If the 1st mode augmented (Ab, B, C, Eb, F#, Ab) is equivalent to "I, +IX, III, V, VII, I" the Q companion (A, Bb, C#, D E, F,G) are given the labels "IXbb, +IXb, II, bV, V, VII, #VII."

Florentz then uses an eight note mode (I + IXbb, +IX, III, Vb, V, VII, VII#) that is juxtaposed over each note of the Q companion, with each of the constituent notes becoming a new "I." It is from these seven, eight-note scales which, although identical, offer the rubric for Florentz's polychord generation. Each of these eight-note collections are assigned to one of the

seven angels of the apocalypse. Florentz's use of these collections are extremely complex and, while consistent in theory, the pitch material often deviates from the composer's own method of labeling. In the end, this method of generation and labeling is simply a rubric and not an-encompassing explanation of his generative process.

Plain Pencil: 169 Musical Iteration

In postcolonial discourse, there have been a plethora of arguments against expressing hybridity solely in Western languages. As Ashcroft notes, there is an obvious incongruity between the bird's eye view of Africa in Western language, and the view of the colonized subject in the mother tongue.[121] She goes on to surmise that Western languages are an "alien environment" in which oral traditions of ancient cultures cannot thrive or be properly represented. Florentz, whether aware of these linguistic considerations or not, went to great lengths to avoid using the syntactic structures of Western Classical music to delineate his musical account of Ethiopian religion. Here we can turn to the organizational principles which tie each of the seemingly unrelated musical events together in *Debout sur le Soleil*. We will begin with the smallest units, which Bourcier describes as 169 "musical moments."[122] This unorthodox approach to from mirrors what Andreoni describes as Florentz's capacity to "detach the process of form generation from the classical syntactical domain."[123] These 169 constituent musical parts correspond to the

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[121] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 162.

[122] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l'orgue.* 192.

[123] Federico Andreoni, *Pentaphones and Structural Plasticity in the Music of Jean−Louis Florentz*, 6.

169 times that the word “remember” (or *Tazakkara* in Ge’ez) occurs in the Jewish Pentateuch.[124] This is Florentz’s manner of “expressing tribute to the Old Testament, the story of the [Ethiopian] Jewish people”[125] Moreover, it corresponds to a religious theme in which Florentz was particularly invested: the call for a secular Western society to remember the authority of God: “See that you forget the Lord who brought you out the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage” (Deuteronomy 6: 12).[126] Thus, each change of musical texture is simultaneously a tribute a to the ancient Ethiopian Jewish peoples, and a call for an abandonment of secularity in Western culture. Indeed, Florentz’s very conception of the piece's components seems to abandon the syntax usually associated with classical music, or his “mother tongue.”

Organ Music or Liturgical Act?

Florentz’s method of re-imagining African music could easily be misinterpreted as a crass form of thoughtless appropriation. What we find in Florentz’s method of borrowing is a composer who was aware of the intimate details of the culture that he wished to pay homage to. In example 3-4, we see the opening page of *Debout sur le Soleil,* where Florentz has drawn an Ethiopian cross (which resembles a square more than a triangle) and has written “In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost” in the ancient Ethiopian Ge’ez language.

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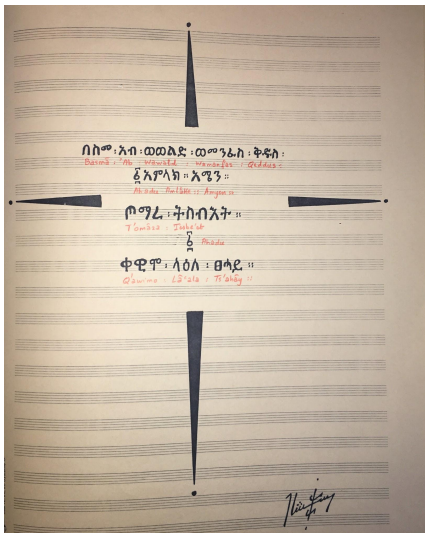
[124] Bourcier, *Jean-Louis Florentz et l’orgue, 192.*

[125] Ibid.

[126] Bourcier lists this as the relevant scripture.



Example 3-4: Opening page of *Debout sur le Soleil*

Scholars of Ethiopian music describe the Ge'ez language as being the most difficult barrier hindering Western understanding of the Ethiopian liturgy. Florentz's ethnomusicological lecture handouts from the Lyon Conservatory demonstrate his command of this ancient language. Similarly, *Debout sur le Soleil* is best understood as a "commentary on ancient texts," a modern midrash. Florentz is paying homage to the "mother church" by using the Ethiopian liturgy and ritual as the primary delineator of form. In an unpublished note, Florentz implies that the performer of the work must transcend the limits of his human perception to welcome the divine into the work. He references the Ethiopian "genet skin," which is a symbolic animal skin put over one who will recite the word of God. This skin is intended to shield off one's human nature, so that they are sanctified enough to profess the word. While the technical challenges of Florentz music could easily become the performer's primary focus, the composer himself would most likely view this as secondary. As Jean-Baptiste Robin remarked in our conversation on the composer,"Florentz said that, sometimes you must improvise."

Self-contained hybridity in the Ethiopian Christian tradition

It will be useful to view an instance of hybridity in which Florentz derives a theme's development from an Ethiopian religious symbol. As Bourcier discusses extensively in his book, Florentz was fascinated with the customs of the Ethiopian Christian tradition that diverged from French Catholicism.[127] One of the most notable traits of Ethiopian Christianity is its self-contained hybridity. Christian doctrine is freely mixed with local, indigenous (pre-Christian) superstitions.[128] One of these beliefs is that one can be healed from demons (which they believe to cause sickness) by reciting its name. According to Bourcier, an Ethiopian faith healer would call the many names that the sickness-causing demon might have, and upon discovering its name, the ailment would leave the person's body. This belief manifests itself in the Ethiopian Christian church as a practice in which the congregation recites the 12 names of God that are found in the Ge'ez language (the ancient Ethiopian language), to invite his presence into the service.

The 12 names of god are a recurring subsidiary leitmotif that occurs incessantly throughout *Debout sur le Soleil* (see the green annotation in example 3-5). This leitmotif corresponds with a unique type of Florentzian microdevelopment. If we turn to the pedal line in measure 176 (example 3-5), we see the names of god transcribed in the original Ge'ez language, with a different pedal motif corresponding to each name of god. Not only has this leitmotif dictated the pitch material, but also the development of the motif itself. Because the essence of God is the same, all 12 variants are essentially accentuations of Ab (which Florentz considers the divine note). The 12 part structure of the pedal also controls the material in the right and left hand,

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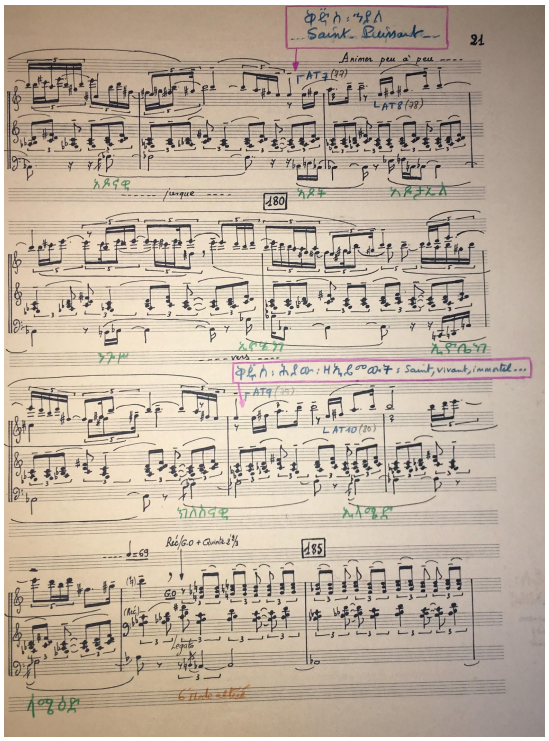
[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

since the 12 names of god must be stated in their entirety. Florentz repeats this technique elsewhere in the work, most notably in measure 65-66 where he musically spells the word "remember," or *Tazakkara*.



Example 3-5: Measures 176-185 of *Debout sur le Soleil*

Here, Florentz inadvertently confronts what has long been a criticism of hybridity in all of its from forms. Many have criticized Bhabha's notions of non-hierarchical structures and subjective perspectives as "negating the imbalance and inequality of power relations it references."[129] As Ashcroft notes, Bhabha's concept of hybridity has been "regarded as replicating assimilationist policies by masking or "whitewashing" cultural differences."[130] There is some

[129] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Post-colonial Studies*, 109.

[130] Ibid.

truth to this argument. One cannot ignore the power relationships that undergird the interactions between two disparate cultures. One can, however, equalizing this imbalance by understanding the distinct perspective and mode of expression of the non-Westerner.

CONCLUSION: The Future of *Florentzien Hybridity:* Cross-Cultural Exposure

While this study has explored the ways in which cultural difference can serve as a tool for both advocacy and ideology, little has been discussed regarding tangible solutions to the representational imbalances that arise when African musical styles are channeled through purely Western artistic mediums. To analyze the intent of Florentz without considering the impact his music may have on subaltern listeners is distinctly Eurocentric. One solution is to purposefully expand the audience for Florentz's works in African countries (or African diasporas) where his music would never be heard. This is no easy feat considering that most of his works were intended for customized pipe organs and large orchestral forces that are difficult to transplant into rural areas. Since live performances are often untenable, I envision a moveable listening-station that could easily be transplanted into rural areas. One could travel to Ethiopia and document the reactions of local church goers hearing Florentz's music for the first time. I imagine that this aurally abstruse layering of venerated Christian melodies and dense dissonant textures would incite a wider range of reactions from this highly defined subject group. The current study will be most aided with an understanding of how Ethiopians might perceive their own music within Florentz's medium of expression. My central concern is whether Florentz's curating of Ethiopian chant obscures the melodies in a manner that would render them imperceptible to Ethiopian Christians. The question of whether Ethiopians can recognize their "voice" in his music will shed

light on the salience of his hybrid processes. If Florentz's music can reach a wider audience in Africa, this will provide a more well rounded view on the ways in which certain types of cultural advocacy produce a cacophony of positive and negative reactions, which exist without hierarchy in Bhabha's third space of neutrality.

The fetishization and appropriation of culture is an inevitable consequence of a globalized human race. Although haunted by the lingering cultural hierarchies of the colonial era, these same cultural obsessions serve to foster cross-cultural interaction and can lead to reconciliation through the creation of hybrid art forms. A practical solution to liberate Florentz's music from the cerebral dimension and into the hands of "the people," is to lessen the scientific scrutiny that one applies when performing his works. Florentz's painstaking attention to detail and use of sophisticated organ technology in his scores certainly indicates that his mode of expression was highly nuanced.[131] However, if one transcends the immense technical and technological demands he puts on the sole and obscure Western organist, one could easily envision transcribing or arranging Florentz's works for a smaller and more concise combination of instruments that could more easily travel into rural areas. An electronically derived or midi-based transcription of his works is highly conceivable; these types of re-orchestration will remove a layer of aural complexity that might give non-organists and non-musicians the opportunity to react to Florentz's music in a more nuanced and articulate way.

Insofar as Florentz's works remain in relative obscurity and limited to the Western audience, the cultural synergy that Florentz seeks to foster will be defined by a select group of

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[131] See registration prefaces in *Debout sur le Soleil, op. 8* and *Laudes, op. 5*.

specialized listeners. If Florentz's works will indeed be the "in-between space that carries the burden and meaning of culture," it will take advocates of his music to make the performance spaces more accessible for audiences. For the current audience of listeners for Florentz's works, they might consider the composer's advice to "avoid imperialism in cultural matters."[132] Western musicians and academics have room to be more receptive to the differing perspectives that will inevitably contradict the representational imbalances of cultural appropriation.

For Florentz, cultural hybridization is more than merely including indigenous African music within a Western, bourgeois art form; his distinct form of musico-cultural hospitality employs the Ethiopian religious experience as its point of departure. While this type of hybrid music will always be viewed in the aftermath of the colonial era, postcolonial cultural dialogue should transcend the outdated binaries of "modern music" and "indigenous music." These musical traditions exist as equals in Florentz's transcendent and inclusive conception of human culture.

Near the end of our studies, Bourcier told me of Florentz's unrealized dream to have *Debout sur le Soleil* performed as the processional voluntary for a "combined mass" at Notre Dame Cathedral.[133] The composer imagined bishops of the Catholic church and bishops of the Ethiopian Christian church processing in the grandeur of the Cathedral and worshiping together in solidarity.[134] While this is likely an impractical feat because of the stark differences in theology between these two religions, it points to the transcultural forms proposed by Bhabha's theory of *hybridity.* Bourcier notes that Florentz was hopeful that Ethiopian Christians would eventually

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[132] Langlais, *Jean-Louis Florentz, L'oeuvre d'orgue*, 121.

[133] Conversations with Michel Bourcier, September 2018.

[134] Ibid.

hear his music and recognize their native chants; he wished that their Christian heritage would be articulated and valued, even in the foreign environment of French symphonic organ music. Florentz's visions describe the very essence of hybridity: unlikely perspectives being articulated in unlikely places.

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