THE PIANO STYLE OF
CLAUDE DEBUSSY

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PIANO

AS AN INFLUENCE ON STYLE

The piano has been considered a percussion instrument owing to the fact that the tone is produced by the depression of a key that sets in motion a hammer which strikes a string stretched on a soundboard. To say that the piano is strictly a percussion instrument, however, is untrue.

The modern conception of the term "percussion instrument" is associated with the symphony orchestra, where it comprises various types of drums, the xylophone (or marimba), celesta, glockenspiel, triangle, tambourine, cymbals, Chinese gong, and wood block. With exception of the tympani, xylophone, celesta, and glockenspiel, these instruments produce no variety of pitches; they are thus incapable of producing degrees of the scale, and are used only for rhythm and color.

The piano, on the other hand, is primarily a harmonic and melodic instrument with a range of seven and one-third octaves, consisting of eighty-eight keys. The range is A (sub-contra) to c₄.
Fig. 1.—Range of the piano

From this instrument a wide range of dynamics is obtainable and a great series of overtones and harmonics can be produced. An important additional feature is the possibility of a gradual crescendo and diminuendo in volume which depends on the pressure exerted upon the key and is directly controlled by the performer. So wide a range of dynamics is unobtainable on any other solo instrument with the exception of the large pipe organ, where, however, it depends entirely upon electrical and mechanical aids and is not produced directly by the performer. In addition the piano possesses three pedals, namely, the damper (sustaining) pedal, the sostenuto (which is relatively new on American pianos, designed for sustaining pedal-points), and the una corda (one-string) pedal, often called the "soft pedal" because of the softer tone produced when it is employed.

With reference to the construction of the framework of the piano E. Clossen states:

1Additional terms for the damper pedal are the tre corde and the dampfer.
Before the use of cast iron the framework of the piano was made of wood strengthened by cross-beams. It is this framework which, in the last analysis, must support the immense tension of the strings. After the invention of iron frames, the woodwork could be much lighter, in proportion to the solidity and the weight of the metal work which, in the modern piano, bears the entire tension of the strings. At the top of the frame is fixed the wrest-pin block into which are embedded the wrest-pins by which the strings are tightened and tuned.2

On the outside of the frame and below the wrest-pin block is placed the soundboard, which is intended to amplify the sound of the strings. Glued to the soundboard is a bridge over which the strings pass. This bridge forms a connection between the strings and the soundboard, and transmits the vibrations in much the same manner as that of a violin.

Today the strings are of cold drawn steel, whereas formerly they were of steel and brass. In the middle and upper registers the strings are triple and in the bass they are single and double.

The invention of the pianoforte is attributed to Bartolommeo Cristofori, a Paduan, who in 1709 conceived the idea of a hammer mechanism.3 Cristofori (1655-1731) had settled in Florence in 1710 and became known as

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3 The origin of the pianoforte or, at least, its distinguishing device, the hammer action, is usually traced back to the activity of Pantaleon Hebenstreit (1659-1750) who toured Europe as a virtuoso of the pantaleon, i.e. an enlarged dulcimer played with hammers, like to cembalon of the Hungarian gypsies. Willi Apel, *Harvard Dictionary*, p. 551.
"harpsichord-maker to the Grand Duke of Tuscany."\(^4\) Little is known of his invention, and there were other priority claims by a French manufacturer, Jean Marius (dates unobtainable) and a German organist, Christoph Gottlieb Schroeter (1699-1782).\(^5\) However, a mechanical feature of Cristofori's (1720) that has survived to present day is

the side-slip of the keyboard by means of the soft pedal, so that the hammer strikes only one string instead of two, or two strings instead of three (una corda, due corde); but as the pedal had not been thought of, the mechanism was worked out by means of two knobs fixed at the side of the instrument like the stops of the harpsichord.\(^6\)

In addition, Closson writes:

To the instrument itself, Cristofori had given the shape of the big harpsichord (grand piano shape) and he had called it gravicembalo col piano e forte (harpsichord with soft and loud), an expression already used in the sixteenth century in Venice by Giovanni Gabrieli in his 'sonata piano e forte' for strings and brass.\(^7\)

An important early pianoforte builder was Gottfried Silbermann (1683-1753), a German organ builder of note. He constructed two pianofortes (1726)\(^8\) and submitted one of them to Johann Sebastian Bach for his approval. Bach's pupil, Johann Friedrich Agricola, writing in 1768, gives the following account of Bach's criticism of the Silbermann pianos:

... Mr. Gottfried Silbermann had at first built two of these instruments [pianofortes]. One of them was seen

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\(^4\) Edward F. Rimbault, *The Pianoforte*, p. 94.


\(^6\) Closson, *History of the Piano*, pp. 78, 81.

\(^7\) Ibid., p. 81.

\(^8\) Ibid., p. 83.
and played by the late Kapellmeister, Mr. Joh. Sebastian Bach. He had praised, indeed admired its tone; but he had complained that it was too weak in the high register, and was too hard to play [i.e., the action was too heavy]. This had been taken greatly amiss by Mr. Silbermann, who could not bear to have any fault found in his handiworks. He was therefore angry at Mr. Bach for a long time. And yet his conscience told him that Mr. Bach was not wrong. He therefore decided--greatly to his credit be it said--not to deliver any more of these instruments, but instead to think all the harder about how to eliminate the faults Mr. J. S. Bach had observed. He worked for many years on this. And that this was the real cause of this postponement I have the less doubt since I myself heard it frankly acknowledged by Mr. Silbermann. Finally, when Mr. Silbermann had really achieved many improvements, notably in respect to the action, he sold one again to the Court of the Prince of Rudolstadt. Shortly thereafter His Majesty the King of Prussia had one of these instruments ordered, and, when it met with His Majesty's Most Gracious approval, he had several more ordered from Mr. Silbermann. Mr. Silbermann had also had the laudable ambition to show one of these instruments of his later workmanship to the late Kapellmeister Bach, and have it examined by him; and he had received, in turn, complete approval from him.9

Even after the early defects were overcome, François-Joseph Fétis (1784-1871) remarks:

9Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, The Bach Reader, p. 259. (Explanations in square brackets are by the editors). Apparently Bach's approval was obtained in 1747 when he visited Frederick the Great (Ibid., p. 305). It is to be noted that Bach lived only three years after the time which is perhaps the main reason he wrote nothing for the new instrument. On Bach's preferences among the earlier clavier instruments Forkel remarks: "He liked best to play the clavichord; the harpsichord, though susceptible of a great variety of expression, had not soul enough for him. . . . He therefore considered the clavichord as the best instrument for study, and, in general, for private musical entertainment. He found it the most convenient for the expression of his most refined thoughts, and did not believe it possible to produce from any harpsichord or piano-forte such a variety of gradations of tone as on this instrument, which is, indeed, poor in tone, but on a small scale extremely flexible." (Ibid., p. 311)
the resources of the new instrument were not understood, and the keys required a greater delicacy of treatment than those of the harpsichord; in a word, it became necessary for musicians and amateurs to change their style of playing, a circumstance, in itself, sufficient to retard the success of the pianoforte.\textsuperscript{10}

Alfred Einstein makes the following statement with regard to the development of the keyboard instrument after Bach's time:

From 1750 on, the role of the keyboard became very different from what it had been previously. In an early classic work, say a "solo sonata" for violin and harpsichord—everything of importance was in the violin part, which was at times even written in chordal or polyphonic form, and the harpsichord part was relatively unimportant, containing only the bass-line, the support or accompaniment for a solo instrument. But after 1750 the keyboard instrument became the dominant partner and the violin part became so insignificant, so completely \textit{ad libitum}, that in most cases it could actually be omitted without much loss.\textsuperscript{11}

During the career of Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) the pianoforte range comprised five octaves, the compass extending from great G to f\textsuperscript{3}. It therefore had as great a range as the harpsichord and a larger range than the clavichord. K. P. E. Bach states (1759): "a good clavichord must have in addition to a lasting, caressing tone, the proper number of keys, extending at the very least from the great octave G to the three-lined e \textit{[i.e., four octaves and a major third].}\textsuperscript{12}

He also says that a four octave harpsichord is sufficient to

\textsuperscript{10}Rimbault, \textit{The Pianoforte}, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{11}Alfred Einstein, \textit{Mozart}, p. 239.

\textsuperscript{12}Karl Philipp Emanuel Bach, \textit{Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments}, p. 36.
execute his Lessons in the Essay. With reference to the accompanying value of these instruments he remarks, "the pianoforte and clavichord provide the best accompaniments in performances that require the most elegant taste; however, in all recitatives and arias with simple accompaniment, a harpsichord must be used." It must be noted that although K. P. E. Bach treats mostly of the four-octave harpsichord, a five-octave instrument had already been in the possession of his father and is described as follows by Olosson:

A harpsichord which belonged to Johann Sebastian Bach, in the Berlin Museum, offers an example of sobriety and quiet good taste. It has a range of five octaves from F (the F of the sixteen-foot organ pipe), two keyboards which could be coupled together and five 'stops' of which two acted on the lower manual, two on the upper, while the fifth was a 'lute-stop.' The black and white finger-keys are reversed.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) writes in a letter to his father dated October 17-18, 1777, some interesting particulars with reference to pianofortes built by Johann Andreas Stein (1728-1792), a pupil of Silbermann's. Mozart says:

This time I shall begin at once with Stein's pianofortes. Before I had seen any of this make, Spaeth's claviers had always been my favorites. But now I much prefer Stein's, for they damp ever so much better than the Regensburg instruments. When I strike hard, I can keep my finger on the note or raise it, but the sound ceases the moment I have produced it. In whatever way

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13Ibid., p. 37. The Lessons were complete compositions written to illustrate the Essay.


15Olosson, op. cit., p. 43.
I touch the keys, the tone is always even. It is true that he does not sell a pianoforte of this kind for less than three hundred gulden, but the trouble and the labor which Stein puts into the making of it cannot be paid for. His instruments have this special advantage over others that they are made with escape action. Only one maker in a hundred bothers about this. But without an escapement it is impossible to avoid jangling and vibration after the note is struck.\textsuperscript{16}

Stein's pianofortes were equipped with the customary five octaves (great G to \( f^3 \)). These instruments were mounted with double strings, and, instead of pedals, were still furnished, like those of Cristofori a half-century earlier, with two iron springs, ornamented with copper knobs, in that part of the chest nearest the bass, to raise the dampers. In order to move these springs, the player found it necessary to use his left hand, removing it for a moment from the keyboard. Stein improved these "pedals" by making them act by means of knobs placed against the knees.

The piano at the beginning of the nineteenth century comprised a wooden frame for the strings, an adequate sound-board and two pedals, now operated by foot levers and no longer by the knees. A new feature with the beginning of this century was the practice of triple stringing in the upper register. The piano was more softly voiced than the modern piano and a fortissimo (ff) on a piano of this period would be comparable to a mezzo-forte (mf) on a modern grand. This fact explains the reason for so much thick chord writing.

in the lower registers. This is especially true in some of the sonatas of Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827). An excellent example is found in the Finale movement (presto section) of the Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). Those full chords produce more audible overtones on a modern grand than on a piano of Beethoven's time. The reason is that the early wooden frame in the piano could not withstand as much tension as the modern steel frame and the stronger strings; and it is this additional tension that increases the number of audible overtones.

The compass of the piano began to grow during this time and Beethoven's thirty-two sonatas (1795-1822), clearly show how the range was increased from five to six octaves. Examples of the growth of this range can be shown in two sonatas, Op. 10 No. 3 (1798) and the last sonata, Op. 111 (1822). The range of Beethoven's piano during the writing of Op. 10, No. 3 was five octaves (contra G to f⁴) and the Sonata Op. 111 is written within a range of six octaves (contra D to c⁵):

![Fig. 2.--Range of Beethoven Sonata Op. 10, No. 3](image1)

![Fig. 3.--Range of Beethoven Sonata Op. 111](image2)
The greatest extension of range in Beethoven's piano was made in the bass. When Beethoven's last five sonatas\textsuperscript{17} (1816-1822) were finished the piano was comparable to the instruments made by Ignaz Joseph Pleyel (1757-1831) which Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) knew.

Turning to the style of writing for the piano, in addition to the more sustained cantabile writing made possible by the resonances produced with the damper pedal, there are two fundamental points to be observed: (1) Wide spacing of the hands at the extremes of the keyboard was not written for early clavier instruments because, even though all notes could be played at once, the effect was thin. On the piano, however, with the damper pedal down, the same spacing produces sympathetic vibrations in the middle register, even though the keys are not struck, and these sympathetic vibrations enrich the harmony.

\textbf{Fig. 4.--Beethoven Op. 110, first movement, measures 25-27.}

\textsuperscript{17}The five sonatas are Op. 101, 106 (Hammer-Klavier), 109, 110, and 111.
(2) In addition, while the early clavier instruments (like the modern organ) were limited to sounding at once only those tones that could be played simultaneously, the piano, by means of the damper pedal, can sustain more tones than could be held down by the hands alone. It is especially the latter ability that marks the true piano style of writing found in the widely spaced arpeggios of Field, Chopin, and Liszt as well as in certain effects in Debussy's music to be discussed later.

Fig. 5.--Chopin Nocturne in D Flat, Op. 27, No. 2

As far as the forms of piano music are concerned, it is with John Field (1782-1837), Irish pianist, that a noticeable break comes with the earlier style of composition in the sonata, fugue, and rondo. Field was a pupil of Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) and wrote an original type of composition called
the "Nocturne." In his essay on Field, Liszt writes:

He opened the way for all the productions which have since appeared under the various titles of Songs without Words, Impromptus, Ballades, etc., and to him we may trace the origin of pieces designed to portray subjective and profound emotion. He it was who discovered this domain, alike so new and so favorable, to imaginations of a subtle rather than grandiose type, to inspiration more tender than lyrical.

Frédéric François Chopin (1810-1849) was a great admirer of Field, and with him as his guide, Chopin wrote a set of Nocturnes strikingly similar to the set by the Irish pianist. For instance, here are two examples taken from the Field Nocturne No. 5 in B Flat Major and the Chopin Nocturne, Op. 32, No. 2:

![Field Nocturne No. 5 in B Flat Major](image)

Fig. 6.--Field Nocturne No. 5 in B Flat Major

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18 The Nocturnes were named "night pieces" by Chopin whose writings in this form are inspired by Field. Chopin was familiar with other compositions of Field and taught them to his pupils; namely the concertos.

The Chopin Nocturne, Op. 32, No. 2 dates from December, 1837, the same year that Field died.\textsuperscript{20}

The use of the \textit{una corda} pedal plays an important part in the characteristic style of Chopin's compositions. With this device in mind he, like Field, wrote many pianissimo examples that G. Abraham calls "filigree passages"\textsuperscript{21} which embellish the melodies. For example, this passage from Chopin's \textit{Andante Spianato}, Op. 22 is typical:

\textsuperscript{20}Field died January 11, 1837.

the polyphonic, bringing a new style of playing into vogue. This style was referred to as "rhetorical", considerably used by Chopin and greatly used by Franz Liszt (1811-1886).\textsuperscript{22} The style is marked by a virtuosic, theatrical display of both the performer's technique and the resources of the piano. The wide spacing between accompaniment and melody\textsuperscript{23} mark Chopin's break with traditional and the over-worked Alberti-bass used in compositions of earlier composers.

Another feature of Chopin's style is the "stretto" effect. Unlike the fugal stretto, which is a contrapuntal device produced by hastening of voice entrances, the Chopin stretto is largely a matter of hastening the tempo. The Chopin stretto is frequently found at the end of a long composition, clearly defined by a sudden accelerated tempo, the building of a climax (with increasing technical difficulties) to a dramatic close with fortissimo chords and passage work.\textsuperscript{24} However, the stretto is not limited to the end of the composition but may appear at different places in a single movement.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{22}For example see the Chopin Etude in A minor, Op. 25, No. 11. Other examples are the Finale (Presto ma non tanto) from Sonata in B minor, Op. 58, Ballade in F minor, Op. 54, and Polonaise in F Sharp minor, Op. 44.

\textsuperscript{23}See Ballade in A Flat, Op. 47, mm. 116-123.

\textsuperscript{24}For example see the Chopin Sonata in B Flat minor, Op. 25, first movement (Grave--Doppio movimento), mm. 231-242.

\textsuperscript{25}E.g. in first movement, Sonata in B Flat minor, Op. 25, mm. 93-104, 163-168, and 204-208.
Chopin's works of large scale abound in "thick technique." By the term, thick technique, is meant passage writing in more than one note at a time, e.g. double thirds, sixths, and octaves; which greatly complicates the execution of the composition:

Fig. 9.--An example of "thick technique" as found in the Chopin Fantaisie in F minor, Op. 49, mm. 99-101.

With the addition of extra notes in passage work the clarity of the pure finger technique, found in the works of the Viennese classicists, disappeared. In its place arose this style of resonance, rich harmonies and the greatest quantities of tone that could be produced from a single instrument. 26

After 1850 the literature written by Franz Liszt (1811-1886) was conceived with the modern piano in mind. It must be noted that although Liszt was born one year later than 

26 Examples of "thick technique" can be found in the more ambitious works of not only Chopin but, also, Schumann (Toccata, Op. 7), Liszt (Legende No. 2: St. François de Paule marchant sur les flots), and Brahms (Variations on a Theme of Paganini).
Chopin, Liszt outlived Chopin by thirty-five years, and was therefore in a position to make use of the more resonant and brilliant modern piano. For while A. Babcock had invented the cast iron frame by 1825 and the cross-stringing\textsuperscript{27} around 1830, these features were not generally adopted until about 1855 when Steinway and Sons incorporated them in their pianos. Liszt's compositions abound in pianistic difficulties, so designed as to draw attention to his unusual technical proficiency and command of the instrument.\textsuperscript{28}

In speaking of Paganini's influence on Liszt, S. Sitwell remarks:

Paganini may be said to have been the model of his own early virtuoso pieces. He had been the inspiration of Liszt from 1830 onwards, and all his piano pieces published up till 1840 show the predominance of this influence. From the age of nineteen, during the long months of incessant practice at his instrument it was Paganini whom he had in mind.\textsuperscript{29}

Liszt exploited the dynamic possibilities of the piano and proved his point by executing his ideas in public. It is unfortunate that the musical and technical ideas of Liszt did not reach equally high standards, for though he continued writing in the style of Chopin, some of the good features

\textsuperscript{27}According to Apel "cross-stringing" is the last step in the evolution of the piano, i.e., the higher strings are arranged in the form of a fan and spread over the largest part of the soundboard; the bass strings crossing at a higher level. (\textit{Op. cit.}, p. 576).

\textsuperscript{28}See \textit{La Campanella} and Sonata in E minor.

\textsuperscript{29}Sacheverell Sitwell, \textit{Liszt}, p. 125.
were overdone and thereby cheapened. His three *Etudes de Concert* and the twelve *Etudes d'exécution transcendante* require a formidable technique and they best illustrate his style.30

30 Liszt thought of the piano in terms of a small orchestra and spent much time arranging Beethoven's nine Symphonies for piano solo. He also made other piano transcriptions of selections from operas by Charles-François Gounod (1818-1893), Richard Wagner (1813-1883) and Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901). By giving their works a hearing in public, he also rendered great service to composers whose compositions were unknown at the time.
CHAPTER II

DEBUSSY'S GENERAL MUSICAL STYLE

A few years before 1900 an attack on German Romanticism was launched by a Frenchman, Achille-Claude Debussy (1862-1918), in reaction against the prevailing style of the late nineteenth century music. Debussy used purely musical weapons (to be discussed later) that are definitely "French" in character, but are free from nationalistic motives or tendencies. Speaking of the sad, unfortunate state of existing French music (1905) Debussy gives reasons for the necessity of a rise of a new style, characteristically French:

French music is still in the position of a pretty widow who, having no one by her side strong enough to direct her, falls, to her cost, into alien arms. It is undeniable that certain unions are necessary in art, but we should at least use some discretion; to choose the loudest shouter is not necessarily to choose the finest man. These unions are too often merely self-interested and little more than a means of reviving a waning fame. Like cautious marriages, they turn out badly. Let us magnanimously accept such art as is imported into France, only let us not be blinded or fall into ecstasies over penny whistles. Let us make up our minds that this valuation will not be reciprocated; on the contrary, our good nature induces that stern and discourteous attitude in foreigners, of which we can hardly complain since we have challenged it.¹

Debussy strongly objected to the virtuoso style and

¹Claude Debussy, Monsieur Croche, the Dilettante Hater, pp. 159-160.
over-emotionalism found in a few operas of Richard Wagner (1813-1883)\(^2\) and the compositions of César Franck (1822-1890). Regardless of the fact that Franck was considered primarily a French composer his works are marked by a heavy German influence found in such works as the Prélude, Chorale and Fugue (1884) for piano, and the Sonata in A Major (1886) for violin and piano.\(^3\)

According to Adolfo Salazar it is supposed that Debussy met Wagner during 1880 through the influence of Madame Nadejda von Meck\(^4\) and later, when a scholarship pupil in Rome, he became personally acquainted with Franz Liszt;\(^5\) however, his most personal contact was with Franck at the Conservatoire. Lockspeiser states:

In his early days he [Debussy] had an aversion to

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\(^2\)Extreme chromaticism found in portions of Tannhäuser and the music-drama, Tristan and Isolde.

\(^3\)"It is impossible to be lacking in reverence for the man of genius who composed the Beatitudes. But is it French, this mysticism, this ignorance of irony, this taste for metaphysic, this readiness to take everything seriously, this need to prove something, this absence of critical sense, this imperviousness to the strong sensuousness of the Latins, and this taste in formal development in which can be found the characteristics of the Teutonic race?" (G. Jean-Aubry, French Music of To-Day, p. 28.)

\(^4\)A rich widow of a Russian industrialist and friend of Tchaikovsky, she applied at the Paris Conservatory for a young pianist whom she desired in the capacity of house musician to play four hands with her. Debussy's piano teacher, Marmontel, who was fond of Claude-Achille despite his "defects" and who valued the qualities of his budding though not well-disciplined personality, recommended his pupil. (Adolfo Salazar, Music in Our Time, p. 171.)

\(^5\)Salazar, Music in Our Time, p. 172.
modulation, which led to his rupture with César Franck at the Conservatoire. "Modulate, modulate," the old organist used to exhort his pupil, who was improvising at the piano. "But I am quite happy in this key," said Debussy resentfully. "Why do you want me to modulate?" And he left in a huff.6

Debussy was not opposed to descriptive music but he did oppose the idea of a detailed program which is typical of the symphonic poem of Liszt (Ce qu'on extend sur la montagne, 1848) and of Richard Strauss (Don Juan, 1888). Instead he decided on a short program piece as his favored vehicle of expression.

Indeed, while to the Romantic mind music was the expression of the inner self, Debussy conceived of it as a supersensitive mirror reflecting the impressions received from the outer world, an outer world, to be sure, not of hard facts and stark realities, but of subtle shades and vague contours.7

Debussy preferred to use suggestive titles for his compositions and he wanted to write atmospheric music of pictorial and visual images that hint, not state, to the listener what the composer has in mind. His approach is on a parallel with the novel technique of the French Impressionistic painters, Monet, Manet, and Renoir8 and also the refined symbolist poetry

6 Edward Lockspeiser, Debussy, p. 135.
7 Willi Apel, Masters of the Keyboard, p. 274.
8 In 1874, ... a group of French painters rejected by the Salon organized a joint-stock company and exhibited their works independently in Paris. The group included the familiar names of Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, and Degas; and its first showing was received by the public with jeers and laughter, and by the critics with exceptional insolence. Taking his cue from one of Monet's pictures called Sunrise, an Impression, a facetious writer lumped all the exhibitors together under the name impressionists.

Despite its ignominious beginnings, impressionism gained momentum, won the sympathies of men of talent, and flourished
of Verlaine, Baudelaire and Mallarmé. Debussy writes in a letter on March, 1908, to his publishers and he mentions the term, Impressionism, and he states, "I am trying to do 'something different'--in a way, realities--and what the imbeciles call 'impressionism,' a term which is as poorly used as possible, particularly by art critics." With regard to Impressionism, in general, Thompson states:

In literature, in painting, in music, the aim of these kindred artists was to suggest rather than to depict; to mirror not the object but the emotional reaction to the object; to interpret a fugitive impression rather than to seize upon and fix the permanent reality.

for more than forty years. The movement was the logical culmination of the historical tendency of painters to investigate the phenomena of light and atmosphere. The impressionists laid great stress on the "innocent eye", the eye that registers nature impartially like the lens of the camera; and aided by scientific experiments, evolved a chromatic equation for the transcription of nature. In the final stages, they indicated shadows and local colors by facets--by dots and dashes--of pure pigments which, when recomposed by the eye at a distance, produced the vibrant liveliness of nature itself. Thus, in painting grass, they used, not a prepared green, but innumerable touches of blue and yellow, leaving the blending process to the spectator." (Thomas Craven, A Treasury of Art Masterpieces from The Renaissance to Present Day, p. 53.)

9"A movement in French literature, at the height of its importance between the years 1870 and 1886. Revolting against realism and influenced by the English Pre-Raphaelites and by the music of Wagner, it sought to achieve in poetry the effects of music, making use of clustered images and metaphors suggesting or symbolizing the basic idea or emotion of each poem. Forerunners of symbolism were Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Verlaine, all of whom had an important influence on the movement; its leader and theorist was Stéphane Mallarmé." (William Rose Benét, The Reader's Encyclopedia, p. 1091.)


11Oscar Thompson, Debussy, Man and Artist, p. 21.
The entire subject of Impressionism with specific reference to music is best summarized by Nicolas Slonimsky:

IMPRESSIONISM is of a pictorial origin. The name "IMPRESSIONISTS" was used in print for the first time by Louis Leroy in the French paper, Charivari, of 25 April 1874, semi-derisively applied to Monet and his followers. In music, IMPRESSIONISM was applied by analogy with pictorial IMPRESSIONISM, and derives its literary and programmatic inspiration from SYMBOLISM in poetry. (The word "SYMBOLISM" as applied to literature was used for the first time in print in an article in the Paris daily, Le Figaro, of 18 September 1886.) Analogously to pictorial IMPRESSIONISM and literary SYMBOLISM, musical IMPRESSIONISM integrates tonalities into a musical poem with a programmatic or pictorial title. The melodic and harmonic style of IMPRESSIONISM is characterized by the following uses: In melody, (1) affectation of Greek modes, particularly ecclesiastical Dorian; (2) whole-tone scale constructions; (3) pentatonic scales. In harmony, (1) chords of piled-up thirds used en bloc as indivisible units, e.g. consecutive triads, consecutive seventh chords, chords with an added sixth; (2) root progressions by equal division scales, that is, scales produced by the division of the octave into two equal parts, resulting in tritones; three equal parts, resulting in augmented triad harmonies; four equal parts, resulting in diminished seventh harmonies; the whole-tone scale; chromatic scales; (3) intertonal harmonization with no three successive chords belonging to any given tonality, specifically harmonizations in major triads only, the melody in contrary motion to the bass, and in melodic positions following the row: 358358.

Example: the descending whole-tone scale in the bass, beginning with C, harmonized, C major, E-flat major, A-flat major, F-sharp major, E major, D major, C major, with the derivative melody being C (8), D (3), E-flat (5), F-sharp (8), G-sharp (3), A (5), C (8). An early instance of intertonal harmonization by major chords is found in Moussorgsky's Boris Godunov, in Gregory's prophetic vision in the second scene, composed on 23 October 1871, where the melodic row B, C-sharp, E, F-sharp, G, is harmonized respectively, E major, C-sharp major, A major, F-sharp major, E-flat major (enharmonic). In rhythm: (1) use of a short appoggiatura-like ictus on the strong part of the measure, analogous to the daubs of color of the stipplers' school of painting; (2) rapid uniform non-symmetric groups of notes, mostly in prime numbers, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17.

In orchestration: (1) progressive individualization of instrumental colors, and virtual abandonment of group
orchestration; (2) exploration of the extreme registers; (3) larger use of percussion instruments, including exotic instruments; (4) use of the piano as a percussion instrument, also other percussion keyboard instruments, such as the xylophone.¹²

Melody

Some of Debussy's early melodies seem inspired by the melodic writings of Chopin. A diatonic melody is used in a great number of Debussy's compositions, especially the early piano works. To take an example, the Clair de lune from the Suite bergamasque (1890)¹³ is quite similar to the Chopin Berceuse, Op. 57 which is written in the same key (D-flat Major). Both melodic lines in these two compositions follow the scale-wise movement:

Fig. 10.---Debussy Clair de lune, mm. 1-4

¹²Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, pp. xviii-xix.

¹³The Clair de lune is a composition which has the flavor of the lyric style of Debussy's contemporary, Jules Massenet (1842-1912); see, for example, the aria, Vision Fugitive from Hérodiade (1881).
The relation of Debussy's music to that of Chopin is further apparent through his extensive use of Chopin's composition titles: Ballade (1890), Mazurka (1890), Nocturne (1890), the Préludes (1910-1913), Berceuse (1914), and the Études (1915). These compositions are all forms in which Chopin had written and Debussy obtained early piano instruction from a Chopin pupil, Madame Mauté de Fleurville. In the early compositions of Debussy the melodic line flows rather continuously in the conventional Romantic fashion; but in the later compositions the melodies become fragmentary and disjointed as if they were atmospheric settings of vague tonalities and rhythmic effects preparing the listener for what is to come. When Debussy resorts to the fragmentary melody the purely diatonic often disappears in favor of a mild

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14 The complete title: Berceuse héroïque pour rendre Hommage à S. M. le Roi Albert Ier de Belgique et à ses Soldats.

15 Schmitz, op. cit., p. 40.
chromaticism. Bits of chromaticism, found in *La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune* from the second book of *Préludes* (1910-1913) are suggestive of some of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (1859):

![Musical notation]

*Fig. 12.—Debussy *La terrasse*, mm. 32-34

Other treatments, the whole-tone scale melody and the melody built on the pentatonic scale will be discussed later in this chapter.
Fig. 13.—Wagner Tristan und Isolde, Prelude to Act I, mm. 43-47.

Melody with ornamental tones is what Debussy chose to call the "arabesque" treatment. Thus, in referring to J. S. Bach's Violin Concerto in G Major he says:

it contains, almost intact, that musical arabesque, or rather that principle of ornament, which is the basis of all forms of art. The word "ornament" has here nothing whatever to do with the meaning attached to it in the musical grammars.

The primitives, Palestrina, Vittoria, Orlando di Lasso and others, made use of this divine arabesque. They discovered the principle in the Gregorian chant; and they strengthened the delicate traceries by strong counterpoint. When Bach went back to the arabesque he made it more pliant and more fluid; and, in spite of the stern discipline which the great composer imposed on beauty, there was a freshness and freedom in his imaginative development of it which astonishes us to this day.17

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17Debussy, op. cit., p. 45.
The Deux Arabesques (1888) are possibly inspired by the Arabeske, Op. 18 (1839), of Robert Schumann, a chiefly melodic, placid composition of incomparable beauty. Striking similarities are found in the Debussy Arabesque No. 2 and the Schumann Arabeske, Op. 18:

![Debussy Arabesque No. 2, mm. 5-8](image1)

![Schumann Arabeske, mm. 1-4](image2)

18 Schmitz (op. cit., p. 43) refers to those pieces as "interlacing figures of flowing fancy, according to the Arab custom, an art primarily developed in a civilization denied by religious beliefs the right to artistic representation of the human form. Yet nothing in these compositions is Arabic, the term arabesque having taken the wider connotation of patterns which repeat themselves in graceful curves, or combine with other patterns in lacey tracery."
The use of diatonic and chromatic melody clearly links Debussy with his predecessors in Western Europe. His use of the early modes, as well as of the whole-tone and pentatonic scales, on the other hand, apparently derives from the Russian composers whose influence will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. For the present it will suffice to cite a few examples from Debussy's work.

The use of the medieval Dorian mode is suggested in the opening two measures of the Arabesque No. 1 if the F-sharp tonality is taken as the temporary tonic. The ecclesiastical Dorian, usually expressed by the octave, d-d¹ in the untransposed system (i.e., without key signature) is here transposed by the signature of four sharps upward by the interval of a major third to f-sharp--f-sharp¹:

![Musical notation]

Fig. 16.--Debussy Arabesque No. 1, mm. 1-4

A second melodic device of impressionism arises in
connection with the whole-tone scale construction that consists of six whole-tones to the octave. Only two such scales exist, namely: c, d, e, f-sharp, g-sharp, b-flat, c\textsuperscript{1} and c-sharp, d-sharp, f, g, a, b, c-sharp\textsuperscript{1}.

The whole-tone scale lacks three of the most fundamental intervals of traditional music, i.e., the perfect fifth, the perfect fourth, and the leading tone. In fact, the exploitation of its resources has been, in the hands of Debussy, one of the most obvious indications of the 20th-century revolt against the harmonic system of the 19th-century. Owing to the presence of only one interval the whole-tone scale completely lacks that feeling of "centralization" and "localization" which, in the normal scales or in the church modes, is indicated by the term "tonic".\textsuperscript{19}

An early example of Debussy's use of the whole-tone scale is found in the Prélude from the suite, Pour le Piano (1896):

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{debussy_prelude.png}
\caption{Debussy Prélude from the suite, Pour le Piano, mm. 155-157.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{19}"Whole-tone scale," Harvard Dictionary of Music.
A good example of the other whole-tone construction is found in *L'Isle joyeuse* (1904): 20

![Musical notation]

**Fig. 18.**--Debussy *L'Isle joyeuse*, mm. 129-132

The third melodic device of impressionism mentioned by Slonimsky is the pentatonic scale. Apel explains this scale as

a scale which consists of five different tones, the octave already reached at the sixth degree. Theoretically there exists, of course, an infinite variety of such scales. The following types are of special importance: (a) The

20 An example of a partial whole-tone construction is found in *Cloches à travers les feuilles* from the second set of *Images* (1907), where the first two measures are identical, beginning on G and descending five whole steps to G-flat and back again.
tonal penta-scale, i.e., a five-tone scale which has no semitones. Properly speaking, there exists only one such scale (transpositions apart), namely: cd . fga . c³. However, by using different tones as tonic, five different "modes" can be derived from it, for instance: cd . fga . cl or fga . cld¹ . fl, etc. On the pianoforte, such scales can easily be reproduced by playing the black keys only. . . (b) The semitonal penta-scale. Such a scale results by omitting the second and the sixth, or the second and the fifth, degrees of the diatonic scale: c . efg . bc¹, or: c . ef . abc¹. Since these scales include two major thirds (ditonus) they are called "diatonic," . . (c) A penta-scale with equidistant steps is the Javanese salendro. This has been used, under the name "pentaphonic" scale, by Alaleone. . . .

Debussy uses only the "tonal penta-scale" as, for example, his Pagodes from the Estampes (1903). Here the five-tone melody is on the black keys with chordal accompaniment of conventional harmony (Fig. 19). This same melody is found again in a different version at measures eighty and eighty-one (Fig. 20) where it occurs below an accompaniment composed of a running five-note passage (also on the black keys), so that there are two pentatonic scales of the same construction (tonal penta) to be played at once:


22It is to be noted that on the piano the ability to form a tonal pentatonic scale on any of the black keys made Debussy's problem of pentatonic writing relatively simple. The writer has found no examples of the other two forms of the pentatonic scale (the semitonal penta-scale and the Javanese salendro) in Debussy's music. With regard to the origin of Debussy's use of the pentatonic scale Locksenser remarks, "... the five tone scale was borrowed from (or suggested by) music of the Javanese and Cambodian dances heard at the Paris World Exposition, 1889 and 1900." (Debussy, p. 138)
Fig. 19.--Debussy Pagodes from the Estampes, mm. 3-4

Fig. 20.--Debussy Pagodes, mm. 80-81
An example of an incomplete pentatonic melody is found in *La fille aux cheveux de lin* from the first set of *Préludes* (1910). The melody played on the black keys is again a tonal penta-scale (g-flat, b-flat, d-flat, e-flat) but with the third tone, a-flat, omitted. However, this missing tone occurs in another part in measures five and six where the chords are those of conventional nineteenth century harmony. In addition, the tone 'f', foreign to this pentatonic scale, occurs, but only as a passing-tone whose rhythmic location and duration are not prominent enough to affect the essentially pentatonic character of the passage:

![Musical notation](image)

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Fig. 21.--Debussy *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, mm. 1-6
Another type of melody which Debussy employs is the folk-style as found in *Jardins sous la Pluie* from the *Estampes* (1903). A treatment of folk and exotic music will be treated more fully in the following chapter.

**Harmony**

In harmony Debussy made his greatest break with the traditions of the nineteenth century technique of composition. His friend, Maurice Emmanuel, summarizes Debussy's technical principles as follows:

(a) the extension of harmonic relationships, (b) independence in the use of dissonances without preparation or resolution, (c) the free employment of notes foreign to the chord, (d) the formation of an arbitrary scale or of an oriental or modal coloring with the resulting successions of chords, and (e) the use of enharmonic change as a means of modulating to distant tonalities whose modality rests uncertainly between major and minor. We are very far, in this year of 1887, from the aesthetics of romanticism or even of Wagnerianism. Nevertheless, Wagner still had much to say and Debussy, the Damoiselle élue still unfinished, went to Bayreuth to hear *Parsifal* and *Tristan* (1888-1889).

One of the most important harmonic devices of impressionism is the use of chords constructed of piled-up thirds used in block form as indivisible units: consecutive triads, consecutive seventh and ninth chords, chords with an added sixth, dominant eleventh chords and dominant thirteenth chords. Of their use Apel points out:

23Quoted in Salazar, op. cit., p. 175. It is interesting to note that fifteen years after hearing *Tristan*, the music drama, Debussy contrasts Wagner to Bach:

"In Bach's music it is not the character of the melody that stirs us, but rather the tracing of a particular line,"
This technique, which is one of the most characteristic features of impressionistic music, is in opposition to traditional harmony not only because it violates the rule of parallel fifths or because it introduces unresolved dissonances, but chiefly because it rejects the fundamental concept of traditional harmony, namely, the functional character of the chords. Instead, it establishes the chord as a mere sensuous and sonorous factor.

Although Debussy's name is rightfully connected with the establishment of parallelism as a technique, occasional examples are to be found with numerous 19th-century composers (Rossini, Moussorgsky, Lalo, Delibes).24

The parallel triads appear frequently in Debussy's works and these two examples from La soirée dans Grenade from the Estampes (1903) and the D'un Cahier d'Esquisses, from the same year, illustrate the use of parallel major and minor chords respectively:

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George Dyson calls the progression of consecutive seventh
chords the "side-slip" (normally chords move with a skip-relationship to roots—for instance, upward or downward by a fifth or a fourth) and goes on to say: "These chords thus become 'points of rest,' not so much because their normal inferences are discounted as because they cease, in such a context, to have any."

The use of consecutive seventh chords is found in Debussy with frequent repetition. A possible model for his use of parallel seventh chords is found in the twenty-first Mazurka, Op. 30, No. 4 by Chopin (1837):

Fig. 24.--Chopin Mazurka, Op. 30, No. 4, mm. 129-132

This example, taken from La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune from the second book of Préludes (1910-1913), adequately illustrates Debussy's use of parallel sevenths:

\[\text{Fig. 24.--Chopin Mazurka, Op. 30, No. 4, mm. 129-132} \]

\[\text{This example, taken from La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune from the second book of Préludes (1910-1913), adequately illustrates Debussy's use of parallel sevenths:} \]

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\[25\text{George Dyson, The New Music, p. 64.} \]

\[26\text{Ibid., p. 65.} \]
Another use of consecutive sevenths is found in the Étude IX (pour les notes répétées) composed in 1915. Here the seventh chords appear with the fifth of the chord missing:

The use of parallel triads, seventh and ninth chords is characteristic of impressionism. The idea originates with
the suggestion that if one chord creates a desirable impression, a series of chords of the same kind will increase it.

These dominant sevenths and ninths may be alterations of the common secondary seventh and ninth chords of any given key, or they may be borrowed dominants of different keys, the key feeling being temporarily abandoned, and resumed after the final dominant. The latter are perfectly agreeable in such an environment. 27

A good example of the use of parallel ninths is found in a portion from Debussy's lyric-drama, *Pelleas et Mélisande* (1892-1902):

![Musical notation]

Fig. 27.—Debussy *Pelleas et Mélisande*, (Act I), mm. 435-438, (p. 45 in score).

With reference to parallel chords of the added sixth perhaps the clearest example in Debussy is in the *Sarabande* from the suite *Pour le Piano* (1896-1901):

Fig. 28.--Debussy Sarabande from the suite Pour le Piano, mm. 35-37.

The dominant eleventh chord is formed by adding a minor third to the dominant ninth. The eleventh tone is rather harsh when sounded against the third, an octave below. If the third is omitted, the effect is much smoother:

Fig. 29.--Debussy Pelléas et Mélisande (Act V), mm. 6-8, (p. 268 in score).

An example of parallel dominant thirteenths is also to be found in Pelléas:
With regard to another modern device, the passing chord, George Dyson says:

The melodic threads of the contrapuntist have become composite streams of harmony, and these streams may approach and recede, coalesce or clash, just as did the individual parts of polyphony. 28

This is seen in an example of early organum (ninth and tenth centuries) cited by Miller: 29

28Dyson, op. cit., p. 82. 29Miller, op. cit., p. 97.
In Debussy's music evidences of organum and chord streams are best illustrated by *La Cathédrale engloutie* from the first set of *Préludes* (1910):

![Image of musical notation]

**Fig. 32.**—Debussy *La Cathédrale engloutie*, mm. 14-15

![Image of musical notation]

**Fig. 33.**—Debussy *La Cathédrale engloutie*, mm. 28-30

Another harmonic device of impressionism is the use of intertonal harmonization. In this technique, according to Slonimsky, the chords are usually triads but "no three
successive chords belong to any tonality. As a matter of fact, in Debussy's *Étude XII* (pour les Accords), composed in 1915, there occurs the following with no two chords in the same tonality:

![Musical Staff]

**Fig. 34.**--Debussy *Étude XII* (pour les Accords), m. 54.

In the composition, *Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut* from the second set of *Images* (1907), is found another example of intertonal harmonization of major triads. Here, however, each chord is written in its second inversion, over an organ point, rather than in the root position found in the *Étude XII*:

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31 An even longer example is found in the same composition (mm. 105-106) where the melodic row D, E, F, G, B-flat, C is harmonized with D major, E major, F major, G major, B-flat major, C major triads respectively.
Non-Harmonic Tones

Debussy's piano compositions make extensive use of non-harmonic tones, i.e., tones which occur in a vertical sonority but play no part in the theory of inversion of that sonority. The non-harmonic tone does not have the spelling of any of the intervals which make
up the implied harmony. The non-harmonic tone is related melodically to one of the members of the chord.\textsuperscript{32}

McHose classifies the non-harmonic tones as follows: (1) Passing tone; (2) Suspension; (3) Neighboring tone; (4) Anticipation; (5) Escape tone; (6) Appoggiatura; (7) Pedal point; (8) Changing tone. No attempt will be made to illustrate conventional treatments of these non-harmonic tones, and the following examples are confined to irregular treatments.\textsuperscript{33}

**Passing tone.** In *La fille aux cheveux de lin* (Préludes, Book I, 1910) the tone $c$ is an example of an irregularly quitted passing tone:\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig36.png}
\caption{Debussy *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, m. 20}
\end{figure}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{32}Allen Irvine McHose, *The Contrapuntal Harmonic Technique of the 18th Century*, p. 98.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{33}The free use of the Neighboring tone, Anticipation and Changing tone is not discussed here. When these non-harmonic tones are employed with free treatment they lose their original identity.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{34}The quitting of the tone $c$ by leap results from the use of the pentatonic scale. Strictly speaking, of course, $c$ proceeds not by leap but by step since the next tone is e-flat in the pentatonic scale. However, the effect on ears accustomed to a heptatonic scale is that of quitting by leap.
\end{flushright}
Suspension. An example of an unprepared suspension when a third voice enters as a dissonance is found in Passepied from the Suite bergamasque (1890-1905):

![Fig. 37.--Debussy Passepied from the Suite bergamasque, m. 7.](image)

Another example of a suspension is found in the Prélude (Suite bergamasque) where the treatment of the suspension can be interpreted two different ways: (1) If the first a, in the example, is considered the suspension it is "unprepared." (2) If the second a is considered the suspension the note of preparation is a dissonance:

![Fig. 38.--Debussy Prélude from the Suite bergamasque, m. 5.](image)
Escape tone. An example of the free treatment of this is found in Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir (Préludes, Book I, 1910):

Fig. 39.--Debussy Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir, m. 39.

An example of an escape chord occurs in La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune (Préludes, Book II, 1910-1913):

Fig. 40.--Debussy La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune, m. 26.
Appoggiatura. The free use of the appoggiatura is clearly shown in *Les collines d'Anacapri* (*Préludes*, Book I) where two unresolved appoggiaturas sound with their notes of resolution:

![Fig. 41. -- Debussy Les collines d'Anacapri, mm. 6-8](image)

Pedal point. In *Danseuses de Delphes* (*Préludes*, Book I) a chord of the added sixth is used with the fifth as an inner pedal point:

![Fig. 42. -- Debussy Danseuses de Delphes, mm. 2-3](image)

See also *Ondine* (*Préludes*, Book II), mm. 1-2, where the effect may be interpreted as unresolved appoggiaturas or altered dominant thirteenth chords.

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35See also *Ondine* (*Préludes*, Book II), mm. 1-2, where the effect may be interpreted as unresolved appoggiaturas or altered dominant thirteenth chords.
A use of an upper pedal is also found in the Prélude (Suite bergamasque):

Fig. 43.—Debussy Prélude from the Suite bergamasque, mm. 87-88.

An excellent example of an arpeggiated incomplete C major (tonic) triad, with G as an upper neighboring tone, is used as a pedal chord in La Cathédrale engloutie (Préludes, Book I):

Fig. 44.—Debussy La Cathédrale engloutie, mm. 72-74
Rhythm

With regard to rhythm Slonimsky mentions two factors that contribute to impressionism. The first device is the use of appoggiatura grace notes that fall on the strong part of the measure. According to Slonimsky this is similar to the "stippling" technique\(^3\) of the French Impressionist painters.\(^3\) Three examples of this treatment are found in the following compositions:

(1) La puerta del Vino from the second set of Préludes (1910-1913):

![Musical notation]

Fig. 45.--Debussy La puerta del Vino, mm. 1-3

(2) Sérénade à la poupée from the suite, Children's Corner (1906-1908):

\(^3\)Slonimsky, op. cit., p. xix.

\(^3\)Illustrated in Seurat's Dimanche sur la grande jetée.
Another rhythmic device is the use of "rapid uniform non-symmetric groups of notes, mostly prime numbers 3, 5, 11, 13, 17 in strict time (opposed to Chopin's rubato passages)."  

An excellent example is the Feux d'Artifice from the second set of Préludes (1910-1913):

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38 Slonimsky, op. cit., p. xix.
A second example of non-symmetric groups of notes is the Poissons d'or from the second set of Images (1907):

Fig. 49. -- Debussy Poissons d'or, mm. 10-11
The third example (Figures 50 and 51) is taken from *Reflets dans l'eau* from the first set of *Images* (1905):

![Musical notation for Fig. 50: Debussy *Reflets dans l'eau*, m. 24]

**Fig. 50.**—Debussy *Reflets dans l'eau*, m. 24

![Musical notation for Fig. 51: Debussy *Reflets dans l'eau*, m. 28]

**Fig. 51.**—Debussy *Reflets dans l'eau*, m. 28

Debussy's use of rhythm is effective and subtle, proving at times to be difficult to execute. Debussy sometimes employed exacting rhythms that do not give the effect of a well-kept metronomic beat. Thus, in the composition *Clair de lune* (1890), the nine-eight meter is somewhat obscured by the tying
of all parts from weak to strong beats and by the varying du-
ration of the dotted quarter with three or two eighth notes, procedures which cause this composition to be played inaccurately perhaps more often than accurately:

Fig. 52.--Debussy Clair de lune, m. 3

A similar rhythmic subtlety occurs in passages where dotted rhythms alternate with triplets:

Fig. 53.--Debussy L'Isle joyeuse, m. 9

39See Clair de lune, mm. 13-18.
Debussy's use of syncopation is probably most noticeable in the Danse (1890):

Fig. 54.—Debussy Danse, mm. 1-4

Of Debussy's use of nationalistic rhythms, especially those of Spain, more will be said in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

INFLUENCES ON DEBUSSY'S PIANO WORKS

The style of any composition or group of compositions is determined by a number of factors: the epoch, nationality, personality of the composer, technical resources (i.e., tonal systems, performing medium), the general scale of writing (i.e., intimate or grand) he employs, all of which may effect to a varying extent, the constituent elements of style, i.e., the rhythm and tempo, melody, harmonic and contrapuntal aspects, the texture and even, perhaps, the form.

In the preceding chapters we have seen that Debussy's style—especially as regards harmony and texture—was influenced by the fact that he was a late nineteenth and early twentieth century composer. Likewise, as a result of his chronological and geographical location, he was influenced by the music of certain countries. The first of these national influences was, of course, that of his native France. During his training at the Paris Conservatoire (1873-1881) Debussy studied piano with Marmontel and organ with César Franck who devoted particular attention to improvisation. Although the influence of the "cyclic" form (i.e., the interconnection of different movements of the same composition through the use of similar thematic material) can be seen in Debussy's Fantaisie for piano and
orchestra (1889) and the String Quartet (1893). Debussy gave up the study of improvisation because of Franck's "harmonic vagueness due to his mania for modulating."¹ At a later date Debussy labeled Franck as a "modulating machine."²

Other influences at the Conservatoire were Jules Massenet and Charles Gounod. Debussy was never known to be a pupil of Massenet; however, he may have audited Massenet's classes or learned to consider Massenet a great musician in the harmony class at the Conservatoire. Massenet was the most popular master at the Conservatoire and the songs, Nuit d'étoiles and Beau soir show how Debussy in younger days was a Massenet disciple. Debussy in later years expressed the opinion that Massenet seems to have been a victim of the fluttering fans of his fair hearers, who flirted them so long to his glory. . . . His influence on contemporary music is obvious, but admitted grudgingly by certain persons who owe so much to him, though they have the hypocrisy and ingratitude to deny it.³

Debussy goes on to say:

His brethren could not readily forgive this power of pleasing which, strictly speaking, is a gift. It must be admitted that this gift is not indispensable, particularly in art; to take but one example, Bach never pleased" in the sense of the word as applied to Massenet.⁴

¹Leon Vallas, Claude Debussy, His Life and Works, p. 11.
²Ibid.
³Claude Debussy, Monsieur Croche, the Dilettante Hater, p. 50.
⁴Ibid., p. 63.
He praises Gounod because he "evaded the domination of the genius of Wagner" and "with all his faults, is needed."\(^5\)

From Gabriel Fauré Debussy gained "the exquisite as opposed to Franck's excessive art of modulation and poetic inspiration."\(^7\) In the Fauré Ballade, Op. 19 for piano and orchestra evidences of both qualities of composition are found within the first twenty measures. Fauré's lyricism is closely connected with Chopin and preserves the traditional nineteenth century style of writing.

Ten years after leaving the Conservatoire, Debussy profited from experimental harmony of another French composer, his younger contemporary, Erik Satie (1866-1925), whose Sarabandes for piano (1887) contain the first examples of "certain harmonic procedures (unresolved ninths in particular) which became associated with Debussy."\(^8\) The Sarabandes are similar in style to two of Debussy's own compositions of a later period: Sarabande from Pour le Piano (1896) \(\text{—see Fig. 28, p. 40}\) and Hommage à Rameau from the first set of Images (1905).

\(^5\)Debussy makes the following interesting comments with regard to Faust: "As to Faust, eminent writers on music have reproached Gounod with travestying Goethe's conception; but the same eminent writers never think of noticing that Wagner may have misrepresented the character of Tannhäuser, who, in the legend, is not all the repentant little scapegrace Wagner makes him out to be, nor did his staff, scorched by the memory of Venus, ever flower again. Gounod is a Frenchman and may therefore be forgiven; but in the case of Wagner, since he and Tannhäuser were both Germans, it is inexcusable." \(^6\) (Ibid., p. 157)

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 159.


\(^8\)Edward Lockspeiser, Debussy, p. 46.
Satie gives the following account of meeting Debussy in 1891:

When I first met Debussy he was full of Moussorgsky and was very deliberately seeking a way that wasn't easy to find. In this problem I was well in advance of him. I was not weighed down with Prix de Rome, nor any other prize, for I am a man like Adam (of Paradise) who never won any prizes—a lazy fellow, no doubt. I was writing at that time Le Fils des étoiles on a libretto by Joseph Peladan, and I explained to Debussy the need a Frenchman has to free himself from the Wagnerian venture, which didn't respond to our natural inspirations. I also pointed out that I was in no way anti-Wagnerian but that we should have a music of our own—if possible without any Sauerkraut.

Why could we not use the means of Claude Monet, Cézanne, Toulouse-Lautrec and others had made known? Why could we not transpose these means into music? . . .

Satie goes on to say: "If I didn't have Debussy . . . I don't know what I'd do to express my wretched thoughts—if I was still able to express them." Satie's admiration for Debussy culminated in a friendship which lasted for nearly thirty years.

After Debussy had won the Prix de Rome he spent two years at the Villa-Medici (1885-1887). Here he met Liszt at the home of the Italian composer, Giovanni Sgambati. Liszt and Sgambati consented, as a favor to the young holder of the Prix de Rome, to play Saint-Saëns Variations on a Theme of Beethoven (Op. 35) for two pianos. At a later date Debussy and Vidal played for Liszt Emmanuel Chabrier's Valses romantiques, a composition that Debussy greatly admired.

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9Ibid., pp. 45-46. 10Ibid., p. 47.

11According to M. de Ternant: "Debussy said this was the greatest musical treat of his life, and when he related the incident to Saint-Saëns, the French composer was much affected and warmly embraced him." (Lockspeiser, op. cit., p. 29.)
Another younger and more important contemporary, Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), had been writing music in much the same style as Debussy. These two men were friends until Paris critics attempted to prove that one composer was an imitator of the other. The incident, referred to as "l'Affaire Ravel" took place after Ricardo Viñes had given a premiere of Debussy's *Soirée dans Grenade*, in the *Estampes*, at a concert for the Société Nationale in 1904. Thompson gives the following account:

Resemblances were found between *Soirée dans Grenade* (1903) and the *Habanera* of Maurice Ravel (1895). The latter had been brought out in two-piano form, with the *Entre Cloches*, its companion piece of the *Sites auriculaires*, at the Société Nationale on March 5, 1898, when Ravel was twenty-three years old. Debussy, it developed, had borrowed the manuscript of the *Habanera* from Ravel and had mislaid it. He was not to put hands upon it again, according to his own testimony, for several years and he had never so much as examined it. And as for the resemblances—including harmonic effects that were novel in that time, a particular treatment of a pedal note and the voluptuous *Habanera* rhythm (see Fig. 22, p. 36)—they were to be found also in an earlier Debussy work (like Ravel's, for two pianos), *Lindaraja*, which Debussy composed in 1901 but which was not published until 1926. *Lindaraja* had lain forgotten between the pages of one of his old manuscripts. In incorporating the old *Habanera* in his *Rapsodie espagnole* of 1907, Ravel took care to give it the date of 1895, possibly in fear that posterity would suspect him of having borrowed from Debussy.12

With reference to the chief similarities and differences in styles of Debussy and Ravel Shera gives the following brief summary:

Their intentions are always perspicuous; but whereas Debussy's preference runs toward a mysterious cloudiness in effect, Ravel rejoices in the highlights and sharp contours. Exceptions are to be found in the works of

12 Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 145.
both: few things are more full of sunlight than Debussy's Poissons d'Or or Les Collines d'Anacapri; while the Prélude à la Nuit of Ravel's Rapsodie espagnole for orchestra is as impressionistic as any Whistler Nocturne. But in the main Debussy's temperament is negative, Ravel's positive.

Both are writers of programme-music; in other words, both delight in choosing subjects from the external world. Debussy inclines toward the medieval in Pelléas and Ravel uses a Greek tale for Daphnis and Chloé. In choice of subjects from contemporary life they seem to draw closer. Spain they both love: Debussy's La Soirée dans Grenade and Ravel's Alborada del graciioso. Paris, again shows its appeal in Debussy's Jardins sous la Pluie and in Ravel's Jeux d'Eau.

Shera goes on to say that

In outlook, however, the difference between them is marked. In a word, it is not hard to feel that Debussy is often possessed by a brooding, almost Virgilian, sadness for the lacrimae rerum. To Ravel such an attitude means little or nothing. But where Debussy turns to mysticism and views the world from some remote seclusion, Ravel seems to come close to it, open-eyed and unafraid. Mysticism does not attract him. Debussy's conceptions are dramatic, Ravel's static. This fact may find some explanation in their attitude to the forms of classical music. Ravel welcomes them, and in at least one instance (Jeux d'Eau) uses a classical form for which the subject makes little demand. Debussy, as the String Quartet shows, finds classical form a nuisance, and prefers to spin his stories each in its own pattern. Debussy's repetitions are determined on principles of his own, and wholly satisfying results he obtains show him a master of construction. Ravel seems to look to the form first; and the idea second; and the natural effect which he rarely fails to achieve shows an equal mastery from his own standpoint. Neither works on a large canvas; both are essentially miniaturists.

With regard to techniques of composition, their use of the unusual scale systems, harmonic texture and clarity of style, makes a few of their works difficult to distinguish, as for example, Debussy's Hommage à Rameau from Ravel's Le Gibet.

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13F. H. Shera, Debussy and Ravel, pp. 4-5.

14Ibid., p. 6.
With regard to scales the modes are used by both men. Debussy uses the Phrygian mode in the *String Quartet* and *Prélude* to the Suite bergamasque. Ravel uses the Aeolian mode in the first movement of the *Sonatine*. Both make use of the pentatonic scale (Debussy's *Pagodes*¹⁵ and Ravel's *Impératrice des Pagodes* from *Ma Mère l'Oye*).

The whole tone scale, although more frequent in Debussy, is used by both composers and can be seen in such works as Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye* (score p. 15, mm. 6-7) and Debussy's *Golliwogg's cake-walk*, from the *Children's Corner*, (m. 6).

Both composers indulge in the use of parallel triads. Also prominent are the uses of consecutive sevenths found in Debussy's *La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune* (see Fig. 25, p. 38) and in Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau*, (mm. 4-6), and *Menuet* from *Sonatine*, (mm. 7-11).

Uses of parallel ninths can be found in Debussy's *Pelleas et Mélisande* (see Fig. 27, p. 39) and Ravel's *Sonatine*, mm. 23-27.

Lockspeiser claims that Ravel's piano works show the influence of Liszt and that Debussy's do not.¹⁶ But although Ravel has written more compositions in the brilliant style than Debussy, Debussy's *Fantaisie* for piano and orchestra, *L'Isle joyeuse* and *Feux d'Artifice* are as brilliant in their style as Ravel's *Alborada del gracioso*, *Scarbo* and *Toccata*.

¹⁵See Fig. 19, p. 32.
¹⁶Lockspeiser, *op. cit.*., p. 143.
Turning to the influences of music from other nations, one notes that in 1880, before the Prix de Rome, Debussy was employed as a household pianist by Mme. Nadejda von Meck, the mysterious correspondent and patron of Tschaikovsky. As a result of this employment Debussy, at eighteen, went to Russia and was introduced to a limited amount of musical literature, mostly by Tschaikovsky, Napravnik and Anton Rubinstein. According to Lockspeiser "Balakirev was the only member of the 'Kutchka' whom Mme. von Meck admired. Rimsky-Korsakov she found 'lifeless,' Cui 'perverted' and Mussorgsky 'quite finished.' Borodin 'never had much brains and overstepped his mark.'

Concerning Debussy himself, Mme. von Meck writes in a letter of August 7, 1880 to Tschaikovsky:

Yesterday for the first time I played our Symphony (i.e., Tschaikovsky's No. 4) with my little Frenchman. So today I am in a terrible state of nerves... My partner did not play it well, though he read it splendidly. This is his only, though very important merit... He has another merit, which is that he is delighted with your music. Theoretically he is Massenet's pupil and naturally considers Massenet the great luminary... He does not care for the Germans and says: "Ils ne sont pas de notre tempérament, ils sont si lourds, pas clairs." On the whole he is a typical Parisian boulevard product... He composes very nicely, but here too he is the true Frenchman.

Debussy's earliest piano composition, the Danse bohémienne

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17 The relation of Debussy to Wagner, the arch representative of German music, has already been treated ante pp. 18-19.
18 Additional information with regard to Mme. von Meck is found ante p. 19.
19 Lockspeiser, op. cit., p. 16.
20 According to Lockspeiser, ibid., p. 12.
(1880), is mentioned in the correspondence between Mme. von Meck and Tschaikovsky. In a letter of September 8, 1880 she wrote: "I would like to draw your attention to a short work by Debussy the Pianist. The young man wants to devote himself entirely to composing; he writes really delightfully..." Tschaikovsky's reply of October 8, 1880 was: "It is a most charming piece, perhaps a little short..." 21

It was Debussy's second trip to Russia in the following year that gave him a wider acquaintance with the works of Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov,22 Mussorgsky and Borodin. Two of Debussy's early piano works, both from 1890, the Ballade and Danse23 show the modal and mild Eastern influences see Fig. 54, p. 557.

With regard to the attributed influence of Mussorgsky on Debussy as a composer Vallas gives the following account:

In 1874 Camille Saint-Saëns had brought back from Moscow a copy of the original edition of "Boris" [Godunov]. The composer of "Samson and Dalila," who was too conservative to appreciate such a very daring work, had given the copy--then unique in France--to Jules de Brayer, an organist and professor of music, who was manager of the Concerts Lamoureux, and a contributor to the Revue Wagnerienne... Even Debussy, who about the year 1890 had the copy of "Boris" given to him by Brayer in his possession for some time, does not seem to have taken


22 Debussy was interested in Rimsky-Korsakov as a technician, and he hailed the Antar Symphony as a "pure masterpiece" (quoted in Thompson, op. cit., p. 195). It is interesting that in the Concerto in G-sharp minor, Op. 30, for piano and orchestra (1882) complete whole tone scales (in octaves) are found in mm. 246-248; 258-260.

23 The Danse contains a portion of writing similar to Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestral techniques, mm. 13-20.
much interest in this opera; possibly because he did not understand the subject, as the text was in Russian. It was not until a few years later, in 1893, that he read it through completely at Ernest Chausson's house at Luscany. In February 1896 he came in closer touch with the genius of this composer, during the lecture-concerts which Pierre d'Alheim organized in Paris, at which the interpreters were the singer Marie Olenine, and the pianist Foerster. The songs entitled "Sunless" were for Debussy a further realization of Mussorgsky's art. In 1901, on the 30th of March at the Société Nationale, he again heard Marie Olenine sing the "Chambre d'Enfants" Nursery song cycle, and he warmly praised its picturesque beauty in his second musical article in the Revue Blanche.

Apparently Debussy's enthusiasm for Mussorgsky, through the years, was not so great that he ever desired to use him as a model. On the contrary he expresses, in a letter as late as 1911, the opinion that the "'patchwork' (placage) of Boris is no more satisfactory than the 'persistent counterpoint' in the Meistersinger finale." Mussorgsky's most beneficial influence was as an antidote to Wagnerianism. Yet it cannot be denied that Mussorgsky had a definite influence on Debussy's harmony for his (Mussorgsky's) use of the modes adopted from orthodox religious music, and his freedom, which was probably due to his conscious and instinctive neglect of traditional laws, might be regarded as a "retrospective justification of young Debussy's daring."

24 With regard to the Nursery song cycle Debussy stated: "No one has given utterance to the best within us in tones more gentle or profound. He is unique and will remain so..." (Quoted in Thompson, loc. cit.)

25 Vallas, op. cit., p. 60.

26 Lockspeiser, op. cit., p. 48.

27 Vallas, op. cit., p. 61.
Debussy's great interest in exotic music came about as a result of hearing the Gamelang orchestra (Javanese) at the Exposition Universelle of 1889-1890. Musicians from the Far East (Javanese and Annamite) brought to Paris atmospheric music introducing scale systems unknown to Western culture. Debussy was especially won over by this music from the Orient and the Gamelang, a group of instruments which accompanied the undulatory dancing of the Bedayas. This orchestra was entirely percussion with exception of one two-stringed instrument resembling in appearance the viola.

In the music of these different races Debussy found a supple diversity of forms, rhythms, chords, and scales, in marked contrast to the stereotyped forms and harmonies, the stiff, symmetrical rhythms, and the modal restrictions he had been taught in vain at the Conservatoire.

Vallas goes on to say:

Twenty-four years later, in one of his last articles, he was to praise the originality and the expressiveness of some of the Javanese and Annamite music; and he contrasted the grandiloquent art of Bayreuth with the more direct expressive action of the Oriental theatre which he had frequented at the exhibition.

It is perhaps worth calling attention to the bell-like quality of the light percussive use of seconds in mm. 9-18 in Jimbo's Lullaby from Children's Corner (1908), and even more in

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28 See pentatonic effects in Pagodes (Figures 19, 20, p. 32) and La fille aux cheveux de lin (Fig. 21, p. 33).
29 Thompson, op. cit., p. 92.
30 Vallas, op. cit., p. 58.
31 Ibid., pp. 58-59.
mm. 54-58 in the pentatonic composition, "Voiles," from the first volume of Prélu des (1910).

The only other national music—and the only folk music—that exerted an appreciable influence on Debussy was that of Spain. In 1903 Debussy had included the Soirée dans Grenade in the Estampes. Although Debussy never visited Spain (with exception of a visit to the border town, San Sebastian, to witness a bull-fight), his friend, the eminent Spanish composer, Manuel de Falla comments:

The power of evocation integrated in the few pages of the Evening in Granada borders on the miracle when one realizes that this music was composed by a foreigner guided by the foresight of genius. There is not even one bar of this music borrowed from the Spanish folklore, and yet the composition "in its most minute details, conveys, admirably, Spain."33

Debussy's free rhythms, his modes, his snatches of melody which end on the dominant, and his passages resembling cante hondo (the "deep song" of Andalusia), all suggest the atmosphere of the southern Spanish "Arabia." In the Soirée dans Grenade the vague wandering melody is not really cante hondo, but a poetical suggestion of it, an evocation. There are also

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32 The putative influence of American ragtime in Golliwogg's cake-walk from Children's Corner and Le Soldat Anglais from La Boîte à Joujoux (Ballet pour enfants par André Hélène) is hardly worth more than a passing mention.

33 Quoted in Schmitz, op. cit., pp. 85-86. It is possible that Falla's Noches en los jardines de España for piano and orchestra (1916) was influenced by Debussy's Soirée dans Grenade.

34 Gilbert Chase, The Music of Spain, p. 158.

35 J. B. Trend, Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music, p. 54.
fragments reminiscent of cante hondo in the Préludes: "La puerta del Vino" (Book II, No. 3) and "La Sérénade interrompue" (Book I, No. 9).\(^36\)

Debussy wrote La puerta del Vino after receiving a post-card from Falla, representing El Puerta del Vino, a gateway to the Alhambra Palace in Granada.\(^37\) La Sérénade interrompue is full of interesting guitar effects; one of the guitars, tuned in flats and playing in B-flat minor, is being interrupted by another strumming in D Major, in mm. 85-89. The feeling in Soirée dans Grenade and La puerta del Vino is intensified by the habanera rhythm and it is this rhythm that holds these compositions together.

Besides Falla two other composers suggest themselves as possible sources of Spanish influence in Debussy—Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909) and Enrique Granados (1867-1916). Albéniz was a pupil of Liszt (1878) and in 1893 settled in Paris where he remained until 1900. Chase remarks: "He was a frequent guest at the home of Ernest Chausson, where he met such composers as Fauré, Dukas, d'Indy and Charles Bordes,"\(^39\) but there is no evidence that Albéniz and Debussy ever met. However, when Albéniz returned permanently to Spain he wrote for piano "twelve new impressions"\(^40\) in a suite, entitled Iberia.

\(^{36}\)Ibid. \(^{37}\)Schmitz, op. cit., p. 166. \\
\(^{38}\)Chase, op. cit., p. 153. \(^{39}\)Ibid. \(^{40}\)Ibid, p. 155.
published in four books (1906-1909). And it was during the same period when Albéniz was writing his *Iberia* for piano that Debussy was at work on a suite for orchestra, bearing the same name (1908).

It is very doubtful whether Granados and Debussy knew each other except through their compositions. Granados had an aversion to travel and remained in Spain almost exclusively. Moreover, he wrote a different type of Spanish music from the "naturalism" of Albéniz and Falla for he had discovered the Spanish eighteenth century, the period of Goya. His important work for piano, *Goyescas* (1911) consists of compositions that are the result of his efforts to give musical expression to scenes and characters inspired by the paintings and

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41 Chase comments: "Works of formidable technical difficulty, taxing the resources of the best-equipped virtuosi, these twelve "impressions" -- so they are called in the subtitle -- constitute an imaginative synthesis of Spain (though in truth most of the pieces have Andalusia for their locale) as seen through the nostalgic evocations of the composer in his Parisian exile." (Ibid., pp. 155-156) Best known compositions from the suite are *Fete-Dieu à Seville, Triana* and *El Albaicin*.

42 Debussy was familiar with the Albéniz *Iberia* by December 1913 for he writes in the *Bulletin français de la S. I. M.* (Paris) a commentary on *El Albaicín*: "In *El Albaicín*, from the third book of *Iberia* one finds the atmosphere of those Spanish nights that emanate the fragrance of carnation and aguardiente ... It is like the muffled sounds of a guitar complaining in the night." (Quoted in Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, p. 89)

43 His sea voyage to America was menaced by submarine warfare during World War I. On March 24, 1916, Granados and his wife, returning from America to Spain, perished in the sinking steamship *Sussex*, torpedoed by a German submarine in the English Channel. (Chase, op. cit., p. 160)

44 Incorporated into an opera bearing same name. World Premiere was in New York on January 28, 1916 with Granados present. (Ibid., p. 163)
sketches of Francisco Goya. The dominant aesthetic trait of Granados is his madrilenismo, his feeling for the spirit of Madrid at the most colorful and romantic moment of its history.  

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Despite what has just been said about Russian, Oriental and Spanish influences, the art of Debussy remains extremely French. Claude Debussy—"musicien français," as he liked to call himself—exemplified in music those qualities attributed by Jean Aubry to French art in general:

French art always remains, in nearly all of the best exemplifications, an aristocratic art, an art of cultured and well-educated people; an art created for subtle minds and discreet hearts. It is not in accord with French tradition to cry out, or make a show of one's sentiments. And that which we may lose as regards to power, we gain, perhaps, in penetration and delicacy.  

45Ibid., p. 161. Of the Goyescas Suite the best known numbers are the introduction (El Pelele), Quejas ó la Maja y el Ruisenor and El Fandango de Candil.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF DEBUSSY'S COMPLETE WORKS

FOR PIANO, (1880-1915)\(^1\)

(Unless otherwise indicated the publishers mentioned are Parisian firms. Where only one firm appears it is both the original and the present publisher. Where more than one firm appears the first is the original publisher, and the last the present publisher.)

KEY TO PUBLISHERS

\begin{tabular}{ll}
C & Choudens \\
*** & F. E. Fromont Co. \\
*** & A. Durand and Cie. \\
** & H. J. Hamelle, Éditeur \\
* & Éditions Max Eschig \\
*** & Jean Jobert, Éditeur \\
M & Edward B. Marks Music Corp., New York \\
R & Revue Société Internationale de Musique Bulletin \\
* & E. Schott and Co., Ltd., Mainz and Leipzig \\
SEM & "Société d'Éditions Musicales" \\
SM & "La Sirène Musicale" \\
* & Represented in the U. S. A. by Associated Music Publishers, New York \\
** & Represented in the U. S. A. by M. Baron, New York \\
\end{tabular}

1880 \textit{Danse bohémienne}: (original publisher unavailable) S (1932).

\(^1\)A thematic list of Debussy's works for all media is to be found in Leon Vallas \textit{Claude Debussy et son temps}, III-LXXXIII.
1888 Deux Arabesques: D (1891).

1890 Réverie: C (1890); F (1905); J.
Ballade: as Ballade Slave C (1890); F (1903); J.
Danse: as Tarentelle Styrienne C (1890); F (1903); J (1923).
Valse romantique: C (1890); F (1903); J.
Nocturne: SM (1903); SEM (1907); E.

1890-1905 Suite bergamasque: F (1905); J (1932).
Prélude
Menuet
Clair de lune (1890)²
Passepied

1891 Mazurka: H (1904); F (1905); J.

1896-1901 Pour le Piano: F (1901); J.
Prélude
Sarabande
Toccata

1903 Estampes: D (1903).
Pagodes
La soirée dans Grenade
Jardins sous la Pluie

1903 D’un Cahier d’Esquisses: S (1904); M (1935).

1904 Masques: D (1904).
L’Isle joyeuse: D (1904).

1905 Images, lst series: D (1905).
Reflets dans l’eau
Hommage à Rameau
Mouvement

1906-1908 Children’s Corner: D (1908).
Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum
Berceuse des éléphants
Sérénade à la poupée
La neige danse
Le petit berger
Golliwogg’s cake-walk

²This exact date is given in the edition by the publisher, E. Fromont.
1907 **Images, 2nd series: D (1908).**  
Cloches à travers les feuilles  
Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut  
Poissons d'or

1909 **Hommage à Haydn: R (1910); D (1911).**

1910 "**La plus que lente**" Valse: D (1910).

**Douze Préludes, 1st book: D (1910).**

- Danseuses de Delphes
- Voiles
- Le Vent dans la plaine
- Le sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir
- Les collines d'Anacapri
- Dès pas sur la neige
- Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest
- La fille aux cheveux de lin
- La sérénade interrompue
- La Cathédrale engloutie
- La danse de Puck
- Minstrels

1910-1913 **Douze Préludes, 2nd book: D (1913).**

- Brouillards
- Feuilles mortes
- La puerta del Vino
- "Les Fées sont d'exquises danseuses"
- Bruyères
- General Lavine—eccentric
- La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune
- Ondine
- Hommage à S. Pickwick, Esq. P. P. M. P. C.
- Canope
- Les tierces alternées
- Feux d'Artifice

1913 **La Boîte à Joujoux, children's ballet: D (1913).**

1914 **Berceuse héroïque pour rendre Hommage à S. M. le Roi Albert 1er de Belgique et à ses Soldats: D (1915).**

1915 **Douze Études: D (1916).**

- pour les "cinq doigts" d'après Monsieur Czerny
- pour les Tierces
- pour les Quartes
- pour les Sixtes
- pour les Octaves
- pour les huit doigts
- pour les Degrés chromatiques
- pour les Agréments
- pour les Notes répétées
Douze Études, continued.
-pour les Sonorités opposées
-pour les Arpèges composés
-pour les Accords

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WORKS FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

1888-1889 Fantaisie for piano and orchestra: C (1890); $F$ (1919); J.

PIANO DUETS

1880 Symphonie en si (one movement): Discovered and published in Russia (1935).

1882 (?) Triomphe de Bacchus: C (1928).

1889 Petite Suite: D (1889).
   En Bateau
   Cortège
   Menuet
   Ballet

1891 Marche Ecossaise (sur un theme populaire): as March des Anciens de Ross C (1891); $F$ (1903); J.

1914 Six Epigraphes Antiques: D (1915).
   Pour invoquer Pan
   Pour un tombeau sans nom
   Pour que la nuit soit propice
   Pour la danseuse aux crotales
   Pour l'Egyptienne
   Pour remercier la pluie au matin

3"Though he did not publish it, Choudens engraved the Fantaisie / which bears a similarity to d'Indy's Symphonie sur un theme montaguard français, composed in 1886 / in 1890, at a time when Debussy was selling any and all of his manuscripts, wherever he could find a publisher." (Oscar Thompson, Debussy, Man and Artist, p. 108)
WORKS FOR TWO PIANOS

1901  Lindaraja: J (1926).

1915  En blanc et noir: D (1915).
   I. Avec emportement
   II. Lent. Sombre
   III. Scherzando
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