THE INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL STYLES ON THE
COMPOSITIONS OF PAULINE VIARDOT

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Unlike other song composers of the 19th century, Pauline Viardot wrote in many languages and national styles. Her songs, “Haï Luli!,” “In der Frühe,” “Morirò,” “La nuit monte/ Già la notte,” “Canción de la Infanta,” “Юноша и дьява,” “Le Rêve de Jésus,” are examples of Viardot’s ability to compose in many languages and national styles.
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INTRODUCTION

Pauline Viardot was an exception to the typical Romantic song composer because she composed in many languages and styles. Nineteenth century song composers generally wrote songs in one language. Exoticism, therefore, did not permeate the song literature in the same way it did the orchestral and operatic repertoire. Exoticism is the antithesis of Nationalism and, in music, it is the practice of incorporating characteristics or elements of musics from other nations and cultures. Jeffrey Dean notes that exoticism “emphasizes the ‘otherness’ of the musical effects produced.”¹ The literature on 19th century music generally overlooks this idiosyncrasy in the song repertoire, leaving Viardot’s uniqueness as a composer generally unnoticed.

Pauline Viardot is a French composer by birth, but her compositions reflect an eclectic array of styles found throughout Western and Eastern Europe. Madame Viardot, as she was known, was born on July 18, 1821 in Paris and died on May 18, 1910 in the same city. She was a singer, a composer, a teacher, and polyglot. While several other Romantic composers were involved in advancing the genre of 19th century song literature, Viardot was one of the few writing in a variety of national styles.² Viardot, who had facility with many languages, composed songs in Russian, Spanish, French, German, and Italian. Viardot’s extensive travels exposed her to different musical styles, cultural traditions and languages. In the tradition of 19th century exoticism, Viardot incorporated national styles into these songs. Dance forms, folklore, text settings, and

² Major song composers, for example, Schumann and Fauré, chose to write in their vernacular rather than exploring other languages for song composition.

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accompaniments are examples of musical devices Viardot employed to portray national style and cultural uniqueness.

To become so acquainted with national styles, Viardot toured extensively throughout Western and Eastern Europe and was personally acquainted with many of the great 19th century composers. It is difficult to imagine a singer more active than Pauline Viardot was during her twenty-seven year singing career. As outlined by the timeline in Isabelle Emerson’s chapter on Viardot in Five Centuries of Women Singers, Viardot’s career flourished as she traveled extensively throughout Europe and became acquainted with several other musicians with whom she enjoyed collaborating. In particular, she and Clara Schumann became great friends and colleagues, and are known to have concertized piano duets. Robert Schumann’s Liederkreis, Op.24 is dedicated to her and she also toured with Liszt, performing his songs and piano duets.

It is well documented that Viardot inspired many other notable composers, including Chopin, Berlioz, Meyerbeer and Wagner, with her unusual intelligence, dramatic stage presence and musical talents. Brahms was so taken with Viardot that he composed Alto Rhapsody for her, and she came out of retirement from the stage to premiere it in 1870. Austin B. Caswell writes in the Historical Anthology of Music by Women, that Viardot was involved in launching the careers of Gounod, Saint- Saëns, Fauré and Massenet as well as the writers Flaubert, Hugo, Sand and Zola and artists

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Doré, Ingres and Millet. In fact the creation of Gounod’s first opera, *Sapho*, can be credited nearly entirely to Viardot. Having great faith in Gounod’s compositional abilities, Viardot offered to sing the title role, which allowed Gounod to secure a librettist and manager for his first operatic attempt. While *Sapho* was not a success with the general public, Thérèse Marix-Spire, in her article “Gounod and His First Interpreter, Pauline Viardot,” states that it was “the intelligent and generous singer who had drawn the humble maître de chapelle out of obscurity and started the future composer of *Faust* on his career.” The literature portrays Viardot as one who took a complete artistic approach to her social circle and interest in society; an interest which included visual, musical and literary awareness.

Like her father Manuel García, Viardot was a successful teacher. García was a professional tenor, composer, director and, most notably, a teacher of singing. Viardot was awarded the honor of a teaching appointment at the Paris Conservatoire, and was given the task of selecting and editing all the singing volumes published for use at the Conservatoire. Viardot composed both songs and vocal exercises for singers who intended to specialize in a specific repertoire, a repertoire that was primarily German and French. Many of her compositions were written for her students as she employed specific pedagogical tools within her songs.

At the Conservatoire, she was the first teacher to include works by composers

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6 In 1824, García published his *Exercises and Method for Singing* and in 1994, a collection of his songs *Canciones y caprichos líricos* was published.
who were not French or Italian in her repertoire selections. Her other publications include a manual of singing *Une heure d’étude: exercices pour voix* based on her father’s *Garcia* technique and *École classique du chant* which included comments on phrasing, accentuation and interpretation. These publications, taken with her compositions and transcriptions, are also an important source for understanding 19th century performance practice.

While Viardot followed in her father’s footsteps and composed a handful of operas, she was most prolific in her composition of transcriptions and songs. Viardot’s song publications are an example of both nationalistic influence on Viardot and, conversely, her influence on national styles. Her compositions employed several different styles and languages and were created for her own vocal abilities as well as those of her students and colleagues. She composed over 100 songs using texts by Turgenev, Pushkin, Goethe, Mörike, de Musset and Racine among others, many of which many were published during her lifetime. Also popular were her transcriptions of Haydn, Chopin, Brahms and Schubert. Viardot also made transcriptions of waltzes by Schubert, Hungarian dances by Brahms, and serenades by Haydn. These transcriptions illustrate Viardot’s interest in existing literature rather than specific national styles influencing her original compositions. Viardot also had great admiration for Schubert and published a critical edition of 50 Schubert Lieder.

Given Viardot’s significance as a composer and her presence

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among 19th century musical and literary figures, writings on her music are relatively sparse. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the influence of national styles on Pauline Viardot’s songs and to uncover the dance forms, folklore, text settings, and accompaniments that are geographically or culturally unique. Viardot was an exception to the typical Romantic song composer as she composed in many languages and styles. I establish that 19th century song literature is significantly less affected by exoticism than opera and orchestral music of the time. Through a brief discussion of Lieder, Mélodies, and Italian art song, and how composers used the art song genre to champion poetry in the vernacular, I show that the canonic art song was a nationalistically introverted genre. This is unlike other genres—orchestral music and opera for example—that often looked to other national styles for inspiration.

One representative song in each of the five languages (Spanish, French, Russian, German and Italian) will be examined. In addition, Viardot’s arrangements and the influence of French Grand Opera in one of her art songs are also studied. I acquired scores through a variety of sources, including publications dating back to the 1880s, recent publications in women composers’ anthologies, and compilations of her family’s compositional contributions. Viardot, who lived from 1821 to 1910, was fortunate enough to have over one hundred songs published during her lifetime. The University of Michigan library holds copies of over eighty of her published vocal works in their Women’s Music Collection. Scores are also available for purchase from such American publishers as Classical Vocal Reprints, the Hildegard Publishing Company and the Furore-Verlag of Germany.
Viardot’s most famous surviving composition, “Haï luli!” was published in 1880.9 “Haï luli!” is the fourth song in the collection titled *Six Mélodies et une Havanaise variées à 2 voix,* and it was also published separately due to its popularity.10 While there does not appear to be a specific reason or dedication for this composition, Viardot frequently composed works to showcase her students’ vocal and dramatic abilities. Viardot was a friend of the French romance writer, Xavier de Maistre (1764-1852) and took the text from de Maistre’s novel, *Prisonniers du Caucase.* The composer, Arthur Coquard (1846-1910) also used this text by de Maistre, however the two composers differed in which verses they decided to set; both composers chose to use the same first and last stanzas while the middle stanzas were different.11 For his middle stanza, Coquard selected the stanza that describes the fears of the young woman who awaits her lover. She questions why he has traveled such a distance from her and worries that he has found a new love. Contrastingly, Viardot omits the above mentioned verse and chooses instead to set the stanza involving the young woman spinning wool.12 The date of Coquard’s composition is unknown but one might speculate that the two composers

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9 *Haï luli!* is originally in G minor, however it was also published in A minor.
11 Ibid.
12 According to April Fitzlyon in *The Price of Genius: a Life of Pauline Viardot,* rumors about Viardot’s strangely close relationship with Russian literary great, Ivan Turgenev spread throughout Europe -- with Turgenev even living with Pauline and her husband Louis Viardot for several years. Madame Viardot remained an extremely private woman and avoided the press as much as possible. Perhaps it is for that reason that she avoided using texts that spoke of affairs. To further this need for privacy, Henry Pleasants states in *The Great Singers:* “Pauline was also just a bit straight-laced. As a small girl she witnessed her parents’ wrath when her sister bore a child to de Bériot while still being married to Malibran, and it had been a sobering experience.”
knew of each other’s songs as it seems unlikely that they would extract the exact same text from a novel and both compose a strophic, three stanza song. Regardless of the musical settings, the work by de Maistre was obviously intriguing to both French composers.

As Viardot was an accomplished pianist, her accompaniments display the wide range of the instrument’s possibilities. Most of her mélodies, mainly strophic, include several measures of introduction and interlude between the verses which enhance the character of her writing. “Haï luli!” is an example of this compositional style. The introduction offers a sweeping descending line spanning four octaves and outlining the key of G minor that foreshadows the worried singer’s anxiety as she waits for her love. The vocal line moves mostly by step with falling minor thirds bringing forth such distressing words as m’inquiète, devenir and l’attends (see Example 1).

**Example 1** “Haï Luli!,” vocal line mm. 4-6.

![Voice](image)

Preparing for a modulation to G major in the refrain, Viardot writes a V-ii-V7 progression in the new, major mode. (See Example 2).
Example 2. “Haï Luli!,” mm. 13-14.

After exclaiming “Haï luli!” several times, the last outcry occurs on a D-diminished chord before the vocal line smoothly ascends by step before falling to a cadence on the tonic in G minor. The beginning of another descending four-measure piano solo begins before the vocal line resumes. The second verse describes the lonely woman sitting alone spinning her wool. The accompaniment has now changed from a rocking motion in the piano’s right hand, with a steady supported bass line, to assume a spinning motion in ascending and descending triads outlining the chord progression, i-iv-vi-i. The singer becomes more anxious and stops spinning, which is depicted by rests interspersed throughout the line. “Allons, je filerai demain; aujourd’hui je suis trop en peine!” (see Example 3) As the wool continues to break in her hand, she exclaims that she must go and that she will spin her wool tomorrow, as today she is in too much pain.

Example 3. “Haï Luli!,” mm. 29-32.
Viardot greatly admired the works of Franz Schubert and perhaps by no coincidence decided to extract this verse and set it as she did with the imitative spinning wheel as homage to his Lied, “Gretchen am Spinnrade.” While a similarity can be drawn between the subject matter of the two songs, “Haï luli!” is representatively French in its musical style. The quadrille was a popular dance during the 19th century in France which employed varying tempi usually based on folk tunes. According to Peter Gammond in the The Oxford Companion to Music, the popularity of the quadrille encouraged arrangements of well known opera arias and songs. Like examples of movements within the quadrille, Viardot chooses to use 6/8 for this strophic mélodie and varies the tempo of the verses and refrains. The symmetrical phrasing, lyricism of the melodic line and strophic form are further indications of the later 19th Century mélodie. The flowing and varied accompaniment indicates a more refined style than the earlier 19th century romance. While the melodic line is strophic, Viardot varies the thematic material of the verses and refrains.

Another indication of Viardot’s familiarity with the French National style is her sensitivity to the language. Word stress, including syllabification of the mute e is very gracefully done. An example of this sensitivity occurs in measures 5 and 6 on the words triste and m’inquiète where Viardot is sure to place the mute e on an unaccented beat (see Example 1). Another example of her understanding of the French language is found in the third verse in measure 47. Viardot dots the fourth beat to bring stress to the words

13 Viardot had great admiration for Schubert and published a critical edition containing 50 of his Lieder.
devient and volage allowing greater emphasis on the stressed syllables to express the character’s agitated emotional state (see Example 4).


Viardot’s sensitivity to the text and subtle musical nuances in “Haï luli!” are credited to the influence and ideals of the mélodie. Having close connections with many French composers and offering suggestions with regards to their own compositions, Viardot was well acquainted with French National style. Viardot’s friendship and influence over many composers resulted in many dedications to her, including César Franck’s dedication of his mélodie, “Combien j’ai douce souvenance.” One of the composers within the circle that frequently attended Viardot’s salons and home was Fauré. Fauré was close to the entire Viardot family and had dedicated several works including “La Chanson du pêcheur” and “Barcarolle” to Pauline.¹⁴ This relationship with the ‘master of the French art song’ manifestly influenced Viardot’s own compositions, including “Haï luli!” With the vocal range spanning a ninth and the exclusion of other virtuosic elements such as fioratura, extended phrases or ornaments, “Haï Luli!” is musically accessible to singers at varying levels. Due to its accessibility, “Haï Luli!” would have been well received at the Parisian salons that Viardot attended and hosted.

¹⁴ Fauré nearly became Viardot’s son-in-law having been engaged to Marianne. Regardless, he was close to the Viardot family and dedicated his Violin Concerto to Pauline’s son, Paul.
Throughout her lifetime, Viardot controlled highly regarded salons. First, in la rue de Douai until 1883 and then later, la boulevard de St. Germain.
Viardot’s first German tour took place in 1838 and she returned to Berlin in 1843 with continued success. During these visits she cultivated and renewed friendships with Clara Wieck and Robert Schumann as well as Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel. Viardot would return to Germany frequently throughout her career and even after she retired from the stage. She participated in performances of Fidelio, Norma, Il barbiere di Siviglia and Orphée among others, as well as singing at various Liederabend during her visits. In 1869, a performance of her operetta Le dernier sorcier was performed in Weimar. Pauline and Clara frequently concertized together and Robert Schumann’s Liederkreis (Heine) Op.24 is dedicated to the singer. Clara owed a great deal of thanks to Pauline for assisting her throughout her career. Their friendship lasted nearly sixty years and Viardot went to great lengths to provide stability for her friend. Before Clara married Robert, she fled to Paris in attempts to establish a career as a concert pianist and be free from her overbearing father. During her stay in France, Viardot arranged for Clara’s lodging and introduced her to influential members of the musical community. As Viardot, herself, was originally trained to be a concert pianist, she respected Clara’s ambitions. These relationships assisted Viardot in learning more about the German national style, especially that of the Lied.

“In der Frühe” is from Viardot’s set, Drei Lieder auf Texte von Eduard Mörike. Compared to her other compositions, the accompaniment and harmonic language of “In

16 Viardot toured other German cities including Hamburg, Dresden and Munich.
17 The libretto was supplied by Ivan Turgenev.
18 It was not until the death of her sister, La Malibran that she was forced to seek a career in singing.
der Frühe” are more complex, typical of Lieder of this time. The form of the Lied is durchkomponiert with the piano acting in an important interpretive manner, not merely as a simple accompaniment. Because of Viardot’s facility at the piano, many of the accompaniments in her compositions are quite involved and challenging. “In der Frühe” is in two sections traveling from D minor to D major, with both being introduced by the piano. In the A section, the singer speaks of her anxieties and doubts which cause her to experience nightly visions. The chilling opening interlude alludes to the character’s trepidation with its slowly moving chromatic phrases. (See Example 5)

**Example 5.** “In der Frühe,” mm.1-6.

The role of the piano becomes even more significant in the B section as it passes the melodic line back and forth to the singer (see Example 6).
Example 6. “In der Frühe,” mm. 29-38.

The accompaniment propels this major section forward as the character’s emotional state blossoms into a joyful disposition rejoicing in the *Morgenglocken*. The series of arpeggios on the final page indicate the character has overcome her fears and is basking in the happiness of her awakening.

Viardot’s German text setting is idiomatic. For this composition, Viardot elected
to use a poem by a notable poet.\textsuperscript{19} This is another deviance from her Spanish and Italian compositions, where she chose to set poetry by unknown authors regularly. Before her travels to Germany, she studied thoroughly the Lieder of Schubert. It is said that during her harmony and counterpoint studies at the Paris Conservatoire under the direction of Anton Reicha, that Schubert became Viardot’s first great love in music: “She copied all his songs, and used them for her solfèggi, for the simple pleasure of being as near to them as possible.”\textsuperscript{20} This meticulous scholarship would have familiarized Viardot with the intricacies of the genre and the importance of the language.

Her performances and friendship with the Schumann couple would have also strongly influenced Viardot’s German compositions. Similarities exist between Viardot’s “In der Frühe” and Robert Schumann’s “Mit Myrthen und Rosen” from his Heine Liederkreis, which as mentioned earlier was dedicated to Viardot. Both Lieder are in durchkomponiert form, both use the role of the piano to explore the affect of the work, both have the melodic line passed between voice and piano and both use chromatic tonalities to achieve more complex harmonies. Therefore, the form, poetry, significant role of the piano and complex harmonies indicates that Viardot expressly composed “In der Frühe” as a contribution to the 19\textsuperscript{th} century Romantic Lieder literature.

\textsuperscript{19} Max Reger and Hugo Wolf also set this Mörike poem.
\textsuperscript{20} Anna Schoen-René, America’s Musical Inheritance (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1941), 215.
“MORIRÒ”

“Morirò” is the third song in the *Six Mélodies et une Havanaise variées à 2 voix* published in 1880. At the time of initial publication, a French text provided by Victor Wilder was printed above the Italian poem. The poet of “Morirò” is unknown although the poem originates from Tuscany. By the age of six years old, Viardot could speak with fluency four languages-Spanish, French, Italian and English. She later added German, Russian, Polish, Swedish, Latin and Greek, and all before she turned twenty-eight. While Viardot was a polyglot and composed in French, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian, it appears that Italian was not a priority in her compositions. Only a few of the songs in her compositional output are in Italian and many songs set the texts of unknown poets.

Viardot did not spend much time in Italy and her only visit was more personal in nature than professional. Viardot visited Italy shortly after her marriage to Louis Viardot in 1840. During the Viardot’s stay in Rome, the director of the *Villa Medici* and friend of Louis, painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres asked Pauline to sing “Wie nahte mir der Schlummer…Leise, leise, fromme Weise” from Act II of Weber’s *Der Freischütz*. For

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21 Worth noting is the availability of this publication in 2 different keys. Viardot felt her career had ended prematurely due to the fact that she sang ‘everything.’ She therefore cautioned her students to sing appropriate repertoire for the voice and current technical abilities. This pedagogical influence may have been a reason for the transpositions made available at the original printing. The keys available were D minor (original key) and E minor.


23 Ibid.


this performance, Viardot was accompanied by Charles Gounod, then a student.\textsuperscript{26} Viardot was impressed with Gounod, who accompanied her by memory. Apart from spending time with Ingres and his students discussing aspects of art and music, the Viardot couple attended performances of operas by Bellini, Donizetti and Mercadante. Although they were both well aware of the strong hold Italian singers had in London and Paris, especially at the \textit{Théâtre-Italien},\textsuperscript{27} the Viardots were disappointed with the low standards they observed in Rome. Not only did they find the singing inferior to those expatriate Italian singers in London and Paris, but they found the productions inappropriate with regards to costumes, staging and sets.\textsuperscript{28} With the exception of Viardot’s performance for Ingres, the remainder of this visit was spent exploring cultural activities, specifically in Rome.

Although Viardot did not spend much time performing in Italy, her stay was long enough to acclimate her to Italian culture. In her composition of “Morirò” the character speaks of his looming death. The text, in first person singular, adds to the declamatory style of Viardot’s writing. Although Viardot spoke Italian, the syllabification of the opening word goes against the natural word stress. Viardot chooses to punctuate the first syllable with an accent marking and dotted rhythm, avoiding accenting the final, stressed

\textsuperscript{26}Gounod had won the Prix de Rome and was required to spend a few years in Rome as part of the prize. As mentioned earlier, Viardot was of great assistance in furthering Gounod’s musical career. Unfortunately Gounod apparently felt burdened by his debt to Viardot and became overtly critical of her as time passed.
\textsuperscript{27}Louis Viardot was the director at the \textit{Théâtre-Italien} from 1838-1840. After his marriage to Viardot, however, he resigned from this position to avoid conflict of interest.
\textsuperscript{28}Barbara Kendall-Davies, \textit{The Life and Work of Pauline Viardot Garcia Vol. I The years of fame, 1836-1863} (Buckinghamshire: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2004), 98.
syllable. Viardot continues with this articulation in measures 6-8 (see Example 7), perhaps to heighten the dramatic effect.

Example 7. “Morirò,” mm. 2-8.

Viardot gives the song the marking of *agitato*, which refers to the tempo, affect and overall state of the character. With the wide vocal leaps of octaves or more, punctuated lyrical lines and restless accompaniment, including the use of tremolo, this brief song resembles a miniature *bel canto* mad scene. Other dramatic qualities found in the accompaniment include the ascending line in the right hand of the piano while the vocal line sings sustained notes. The incessant repetition of b4 in measures 17-26 represents the death bell (see Example 8).
Example 8, “Morirò,” mm. 11-26.

The shift to A major (V-I m. 27-28) which continues until the diminished seventh chord in measure 31, teases the character by suggesting the woman the character is speaking with will be happy about his death. The character’s final utterance is a stressed io which Viardot states to be sung avec toute la force. The song ends with its beginning motive, which recurs intermittently throughout the song. The slurred accompaniment effect suggests the dying one being dragged along against his will (mm. 14-15 in Example 8).
The wide vocal range and interval leaps, affect of the poem and use of articulation and phrasing suggest the influence of bel canto style. Viardot performed trouser and comprimario\textsuperscript{29} roles at the Théâtre-Italien and was familiar with this Italian national style. One reason that Viardot would not sing major roles at the Théâtre-Italien was due to the influence of the highly acclaimed Italian singers, including Giulia Grisi, who claimed the theatre as their own. It is not surprising that Grisi would only allow Viardot to sing the roles she was not interested in performing.

Viardot was familiar with the Italian national style and in performing “Morirò”, appropriate style must be considered. Ornamentation such as messa di voce, portamento and rubato would be acceptable in terms of performance practice. Bel canto includes the presence of agility, flexibility and legato throughout the range while stylistically a major proponent is beauty of tone. Within Viardot’s “Morirò” many bel canto elements exist as well as aspects of Verdi’s later, dramatically charged works.

\textsuperscript{29} These roles included Arsace in Semiramide and Pippo in The Thieving Magpie. Her trouser roles included the title roles in Rossini’s Tancredi and La cenerentola.
“LA NUIT MONTE/GIÀ LA NOTTE”

This chapter examines Viardot’s arrangement of works by other composers. An example of such a work is “La nuit monte” or “Già la notte,” an arrangement based on the second movement Serenade of Joseph Haydn’s String Quartet Op.3, No.5 in F Major. Although she also made transcriptions of works by Chopin, Brahms and Schubert, this particular work is performed more frequently than the others.\(^{30}\) Such a work illustrates the influence of individual compositions rather than general cultural styles. It is notable how closely Viardot retains the original work of Haydn and this further illustrates her desire to preserve a complete artistic approach to her career.\(^{31}\)

To Viardot, all music needed to be sung. It is perhaps for this reason that she so easily and frequently made vocal arrangements of instrumental works. With regards to this arrangement, Louis Pomey provided both the French and Italian texts. Since both texts were printed at initial publication, it is difficult to confirm the original poem from the translation. Therefore, an argument can be made with regards to performance practice that the singer has the choice to perform it in either language.\(^{32}\) Regardless of language, both have awkward moments with regards to text setting.

Viardot’s transcriptions were important to her oeuvre because she enjoyed promoting good music; that of established, even deceased composers or those just beginning their careers. According to Isabelle Emerson, Chopin approved of Viardot’s

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\(^{30}\) This fact owes a great deal to the music’s availability. La nuit monte” or “Già la notte” is published in a well known book of soprano solos for beginning students.

\(^{31}\) Viardot was interested in all these cultural. Artists, authors, dancers and musicians among others, were part of her circle of friends.

\(^{32}\) Language facility, programming and pedagogical goals would also be valid arguments for selecting either text.
transcriptions as he wrote in a letter in 1848 about a London concert: “Mme. Viardot has been so gracious as to sing my mazurkas at the concert in the theatre-without my asking to do so.” These transcriptions also form a significant percentage of her compositional output. The works are examples of national styles before her transcription and by closely adhering to the original works, Viardot is able to retain their national style. Although she transposed the movement from C to F Major for greater ease of singing, she carefully preserves the original articulation and only makes minor rhythmic alterations (see Examples 9 and 10). In addition to replacing the dotted pick-up beats with straight eighth notes, Viardot also minimally alters the ornamental figure in m. 10 of her *mélodie* from Haydn’s first violin part (see Examples 9 and 10). It is quite surprising how closely Viardot’s transcription is to that of Haydn’s original as she was notorious and sometimes criticized for her disproportionate ornamentation. Michael Steen states in *Enchantress of Nations* that Viardot was criticized for excessive use of ornamentation, especially during her early career: “Indeed, Schumann complained that, as Rosina in the *Barber*, Pauline ‘transformed the whole opera into a great variation. She scarcely left one melody untouched.’”

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34 In her Chopin transcriptions of his mazurkas, ornamentation abounds! Trills, descending chromatic scales and arpeggios are included.
Example 9, “La nuit monte,” mm. 7-13.

Example 10, “Haydn String Quartet Op.3, No. 5 Mvt. II,” mm. 6-12.
Viardot sang over one hundred and fifty performances in a revival of Gluck’s *Orphée* and also performed in a London production of *The Creation* by Haydn. She was well acquainted with the Classical Viennese style and her transcription of “La nuit monte” is an example of this familiarity. In addition to its form (the opening page contains a clear double period with an insertion between the two phrases), Viardot assists the playful quality of Haydn’s ornamentation by her text setting. Viardot also maintains the clarity of the Classical style through phrasing and avoids gratuitous vocal acrobatics.
“CANCIÓN DE LA INFANTA”

“Canción de la Infanta” is a setting of a Spanish romance (see Example 11). Language aside, the music is clearly influenced by Spanish traditions. The music uses Flamenco rhythmic patterns, Phrygian mode (common in traditional Spanish music), and Viardot writes a guitar-like accompaniment.

Example 11. “Canción de la Infanta,” mm. 4-17.

“Canción de la Infanta” is the third and only Spanish song in the set of Six Chansons du XVe siècle. Although the poet is unknown, the poem recalls a historic event from 1490. The death of Prince Alonso of Portugal occurred only eight months after his marriage to Isabél of Castile. This marriage was important to both Spain and Portugal as it was hoped that the two countries would finally be united under the reign of Alonso and Isabél.

In addition to the Spanish elements mentioned above, Viardot makes great use of the Spanish language. An example of her fluency of the language is the use of rhythm,

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36 Although born in Paris, Spanish was Viardot’s first language.
tessitura and accent markings to punctuate proper syllabification. An illustration of these three aspects can be found in measures 25-27. (See Example 12).

**Example 12.** “Canción de la Infanta,” mm.25-27 of vocal line.

Text painting is found throughout this *romance* and it enhances the effectiveness of the setting. The descending weeping passage found in the refrain and later in its repetition, is doubled in both hands of the accompaniment adding to the weight of the distress. (See Example 13).

**Example 13.** “Canción de la Infanta,” mm.12-14.

Viardot also stretches out the stressed initial syllable of the word penas (pains) over an entire measure each time it appears to emphasize the heartbreaking loss. The strophic form is another indication of the folklore influence in this song. The accompaniment foreshadows the severity of the Prince’s death. First the fragility of the princess’ emotional state is heard in measures with the accompaniment shifting to the
treble clef. (See Example 14). This figure is repeated when all the women are weeping in measures 77-81.


Example 15. “Canción de la Infanta,” mm. 22-25.

Another example of the accompaniment’s foreshadowing can be found at the beginning of the last verse, before the King, Alonso’s father, is mentioned. This time the accompaniment is heavy laden with lower octave doubling. In general, the accompaniment is instrumental in advancing this work from a folksong to an art song.

While there are Spanish elements in both the vocal and accompanying lines, one of the most prevalent Spanish idioms is the dance rhythm that occurs for the first time in measure 22 (see Example 15).  

Example 15. “Canción de la Infanta,” mm. 22-25.

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Viardot visited Spain only once, in 1842 where she toured for several months. Louis was especially happy to be returning as he had made many friends in the country while on national service, nearly twenty years before.38 The couple was well entertained by Louis’ friends and Pauline received outstanding reviews for nearly all her performances. Pauline felt like she was at home during her stay in Spain. Louis also joked that the only reason he married her was because of her Spanish heritage. Showered with gifts from royalty and politicians alike, Viardot was finally receiving appreciation for her many talents. Viardot was blossoming professionally and personally during her stay in Spain. This tour was especially fruitful for her career and she felt encouraged to work even harder. During her stay in Spain, she began learning *Norma*, she recruited an opera company in Madrid and George Sand was writing *Consuelo*, in which the heroine in the book was based on Pauline. Although it was a tremendously busy time for the couple, Louis was only too happy to introduce Pauline to Spanish culture and Pauline was only too happy to learn more about her parents’ homeland. This trip had a positive impact on the singer’s life and it is not surprising that she subsequently composed several works in Spanish.

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Viardot’s first tour to St. Petersburg occurred in 1843 by invitation from the Director of Imperial Theatres at the request of esteemed tenor, Giovanni Battista Rubini who then in his forties, was considered past his prime.\textsuperscript{39} The young singer received rave reviews throughout her visit and returned for the next two seasons. Unfortunately her third season was cut short as she contracted whooping cough and needed to return to Paris to recover. During her first visit, however, she was introduced to Ivan Turgenev and after her début in St. Petersburg at the Bolshoi Theatre, he is said to have attended her performances nightly.

Viardot’s personal relationship with Russian writer Ivan Turgenev continues to create speculation. While the nature of their personal relationship might never be revealed, they were supportive of each other’s professional lives. Turgenev thought so highly of Viardot’s compositions that he introduced her to publishers in St. Petersburg. That connection resulted in two volumes of Viardot’s songs being published in 1864 and 1869 on texts by Russian poets.\textsuperscript{40} Unfortunately, later publications used translations of the original texts, most often in German, and these editions omitted the Russian poetry entirely.

With regards to Viardot learning Russian, there is some speculation that Turgenev was her teacher. Regardless, she impressed gypsies\textsuperscript{41}, the press\textsuperscript{42} and the Emperor alike.

\textsuperscript{40} Susan Cook and Judy Tsou, \textit{Anthology of Songs}. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1988), ix.
\textsuperscript{41} The gypsies also enjoyed her Spanish songs. Pauline was not surprised by this as she heard a Spanish influence in the Russian gypsy songs.
with her Russian singing. April Fitzlyon writes that during a performance of Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Viardot sang a familiar Russian song in its vernacular: “The Emperor himself, who was present, applauded like a madman and Pauline received twelve or fourteen curtain calls.”\footnote{43} In addition to her desire to learn the Russian language, Viardot was also instrumental in promoting the works of Russian composers. Isabelle Emerson writes: “Not only did she zealously bring music of Russian composers-Glinka, Dargomyzhski, Borodin, Tchaikovski, and others-to the west, but she herself composed two sets of Lieder using the poetry of Turgev of course, but also of Pushkin, Fet and Lermontov.”\footnote{44}

“Юноша и дьва” (The young man and the maiden), is a setting of a poem by Russian poet, Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin which contains elements of folk music. According to Vadim Prokhorov, Russian folk songs have greatly influenced Russian music: “The Russian folk song has always been an essential and integral part of Russian life, Russian culture in general, and Russian music in particular.”\footnote{45} Examples of the folk song influence in “Юноша и дьва” include its limited vocal range and low tessitura. Within the range, it moves often by step or descends by a fourth, a common Russian folksong practice (see Example 16).

\footnote{42} According to Fitzlyon, the press reported that Viardot’s Russian vowels were pronounced ‘like a true Muscovite.’
\footnote{44} Isabelle Emerson, Five Centuries of Women Singers. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 175.

Examples of the Russian folksong elements that Viardot used in “Юноша и дьва” can be found in a podblyudnaya, titled, “Shyol Kuznets” which is a Russian folksong-love carol that predicts marriage (see Example 17).

Example 17. Example of a Podblyudnaya.

Since Viardot tries to follow the natural speech rhythm of the text, lyrical lines and symmetrical phrasing are not as prevalent in this song as is found in many of her other compositions. The frequent modulations between A minor and C major, and use of chromatic writing, are fitting of the maiden’s affect as she struggles to deal with her conflicted emotions about the young man.47

Ever concerned with learning about regional culture during her travels, Michael Steen writes about Glinka’s appreciation of Viardot’s talent: “She was at last receiving the ovation that she desired, not just from the crowd, but even from the high priest of

46 Podblyudnaya translates to “plate” song. During New Year’s celebrations, young women would place personal items on a plate which would later be drawn. The selected item acted as a prediction which the celebratory songs would confirm or deny.

47 It is possible that Viardot was portraying her own feelings about Turgenev in this song.
Russian music himself, Glinka.

Glinka is recognized by many to be the first Russian composer concerned with Nationalism. Elements of his writing include: recitatives and melodic writing with Russian character attributed to the use of modal scales, quotations of folksongs, chromaticism and dissonance. It is evident that Viardot embodied many of the above mentioned characteristics of Glinka’s writing in “Юноша и дьява.” (See Examples 18, 19 and 20). It seems to have been Viardot’s goal to embody the style and language of each nation she visited.

**Example 18.** “Юноша и дьява,” mm. 29-32 (Features use of recitative).

"Юноша и дьява," mm. 29-32 (Features use of recitative).

**Example 19.** “Юноша и дьява,” mm. 41-43 (Features modal qualities).

"Юноша и дьява," mm. 41-43 (Features modal qualities).

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Example 20. “Юноша и дьва,” mm. 27-28 (Features chromaticism).
“LE RÊVE DE JÉSUS”

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the operatic influence of Viardot’s writing specific to the mélodie, “Le Rêve de Jésus” (Jesus’ Dream). As the Paris Opéra was central to the French National style, it is fitting that Viardot would compose a larger scale work similar to a French Grand Opera aria.

In 1843, Viardot made an important professional contact when she met Giocomo Meyerbeer. At that time, Meyerbeer was Kapellmeister in Berlin and had known and was fond of Viardot’s late sister, Maria.\(^{50}\) Meyerbeer was duly impressed with Viardot’s talent, as April Fitzlyon writes: “he did not conceal the fact that he considered her the foremost singer of the day, and that her rightful place was at the Opéra in Paris.”\(^{51}\) A few years later in 1847, Viardot was spending a great deal of time with Meyerbeer during her visit in Berlin as he was now the Generalmusikdirector. At some point during their association, Meyerbeer vowed not to premiere an opera at the Opéra in Paris, unless Viardot had been engaged to sing in the production. True to his word, Meyerbeer insisted that Viardot be engaged to premiere his latest production at the Opéra. Due to Meyerbeer’s tenacity with the Opéra’s theatre directors, Viardot accepted an offer to sing at the Opéra from September 1848 until May 1849.\(^{52}\)

Needless to say, Viardot was pleased to be returning to Paris and making her début at the Opéra. Perhaps even more important to her career is that she would

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\(^{51}\) Ibid.

\(^{52}\) Ibid, 224.
premiere the role of Fidès in Meyerbeer’s *Le Prophète*. This performance was viewed as a long overdue victory on the Paris stage.

Viardot’s *mélodie*, “Le Rêve de Jésus” is one of her more dramatic vocal solos. The poem, by Stéphan Bordèse, contains three different narratives: Jesus (as a young child), a gathering of angels, and an angry mob. The *mélodie* begins with Jesus describing a nightmare and develops into a premonition. A gathering of angels arrives to tell Jesus that he will be King of all nations. Before the angels depart, they warn Jesus about his persecution. The frightened Jesus sees the angry mob quickly approaching, shouting: “Death to Jesus of Nazareth!” As quickly as the angry mob arrived, they disappear and leave the young Jesus to ponder his fate. The initial melodic motive of Jesus being rocked by his mother returns. Although just a child, Jesus understands the outcome of this nightmare and asks his mother to keep him close by until the night passes.

Like French Grand Opera, “Le Rêve de Jésus” is grandiose in its conception. A prevalent example of this is that both the text and music assume a theatrical part. The wide vocal range and demanding dramatic element coupled with passages of recitative quality are unusual in 19th century French song literature. This apparent dramatic force differs from the sensitivity and subtlety heard in “Haï Luli!” Abrupt changes in dynamics and tempi also assist in the suspenseful drama of the performance. The role of the piano also assists in heightening the dramatic elements of this *mélodie*. The piano takes on an

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53 This was viewed as being especially significant as Meyerbeer had not produced an opera in nearly 13 years. Viardot’s performance of Valentine in *Les Huguenots* at Convent Garden in the summer of 1848 brought her further success and even more admiration from the composer.
orchestral-like accompaniment with elements such as tremolo, varying texture insinuating changeable orchestration, and doubling octaves, which are also indications of the French Grand Opera influence (see Example 21).

The opening of the *mélodie* bears a resemblance to the beginning of “Vision Fugitive” from Massenet’s *Hérodiade* (see Examples 21 and 22). Viardot helped launch the career of Massenet by encouraging and eventually performing *Marie Magdeleine* in 1873. Their relationship continued to flourish after they both accepted positions at the Conservatoire de Paris where they continued to collaborate in faculty events.

**Example 21.** “Le Rêve de Jésus,” mm. 1-2.

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**Example 22.** “Vision Fugitive,” mm. 1-2.

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54 It is difficult to speculate which work was written first. *Hérodiade* was first performed at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels in 1881, and Viardot’s *mélodie* was initially published in 1890.

55 Massenet remained a life long friend to Viardot. He along with Saint-Saëns, were orators at her funeral.
The role of Fidès in Meyerbeer’s *Le Prophète* solidified Viardot’s operatic triumph over all the major European cities. Although Viardot was only twenty-seven years of age at the time of the premiere, this role was, in many ways, the climax of her singing career. Contrastingly, Viardot’s compositional efforts were enhanced in her maturity. Presumed as one of her later compositions, “Le Rêve de Jésus” confirm Viardot as an important 19th century song composer and is an indispensable example of her contribution to vocal repertoire.
CONCLUSION

Schubert, Schumann, Fauré, Granados, and Glinka are 19th century composers whose works form much of the canon of song literature. With the exception of a few songs, such as Schubert’s “La pastorella,” their songs were composed in their native language. Moreover, as the 19th century progressed and nationality became evermore important in Europe, these songs upheld national styles and promoted great poets who triumphed in the vernacular.

This strict adherence to a national style and language is unique to the canon of song literature. Operatic works, such as Bizet’s Carmen, and orchestral works such as Capriccio Espagnol by Rimsky-Korsakov all embraced what became known as exoticism, the attempt to adapt styles of other nations.

Pauline Viardot does not belong to the canon of song composers. Perhaps this is because she is a female, or perhaps because her oeuvre is determined to be less significant than other 19th century composers. Whatever the reason, Viardot may be excluded from the cannon because her song literature is significantly different than the other composers. Unlike the well-known German, French, Italian, Spanish and Russian composers, Viardot embraced exoticism. Many of her compositions may be stylistically as fine as those of native composers. Other compositions, such as her Italian songs, could not pass as works by well known composers such as Bellini, to be sure, but show an attempt to embrace exoticism.

Not only did broad influences of national styles, acquired through travels and performing experiences, affect Viardot’s works, so did individual works that were also
nationalistic. It is unlikely that Viardot thought much of national styles when
transcribing a work by Haydn, but Haydn’s works were very much a part of the
Viennese tradition.

While Viardot has not been placed in the canon of 19th century song composers,
she has been remembered for many of her successes. These included her successes as a
composer, teacher, and performer. It is interesting to note that as much as national
styles influenced her writing, pedagogy was also a significant influence. Viardot often
tailored works to specific students with the intent to match the student’s musical and
technical abilities while not placing undue stress on the voice. It is interesting to note
that when following this influence (which is too large for this study), one eventually
comes back to national styles as many of Viardot’s students came from other nations
and established careers singing the heavily nationalistic music of Wagner and Verdi.

A remarkable woman of many talents, Pauline Viardot was an inspiration to many
great composers of the 19th century. Her vocal talents inspired several art songs and
operatic roles and her teaching educated many singers, further establishing her family
legacy, “The Garcia Technique.” Moreover, her compositions have stimulated additional
interest and research into the works of female composers. April Fitzlyon comments that
Viardot’s greatest compositional strength was her influence over the works of other major
composers including Gounod, Meyerbeer and Berlioz.56 While Viardot is mostly noted
and remembered as an acclaimed mezzo-soprano, her teaching and influence over 19th
century compositions will continue to encourage musicians of future generations.

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