French Cultural Politics & Music

From the Dreyfus Affair to the First World War

Jane F. Fulcher

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JANE F. FULCHER

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To My Mother and
the Memory of My Father

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INTRODUCTION

This book is about a phenomenon of central importance to cultural studies and, as such, to current attempts to situate musical culture within a historical landscape. Its subject is the "invasion" of one cultural area or field by another—in this case the *occupation* of French musical culture by political culture at the turn of the century.

As this volume demonstrats, the impact of the phenomenon was both broad and profound: it affected all aspects of French musical culture, which reacted back on political culture itself. Hence, as opposed to existing music histories, it argues not only that this political penetration occurred but also that perceiving it opens new perspectives on contemporary French musical semiotics and values; meanings and priorities we have previously construed as "purely aesthetic," autonomous, or related to the inner dynamics of the art and the field were, rather, freighted with ideological significance. Underlying this conviction lies the premise that in order to comprehend this fact we must reexamine the transformation of French political culture during and after the Dreyfus Affair.

Historians of France have long established the ideological roots of the Dreyfus Affair, or the enduring conflicts it articulated and that helped to imbue it with the power of myth. Extending back to the French Revolution, they lay specifically in what Timothy Tackett has referred to aptly as the "tragic flaw at the core of the first revolutionary settlement" (p. 313). Although Enlightenment ideals had tri-

umphed, they were not founded on complete consensus, especially concerning models of government or the relation between Church and State: the counterrevolution implacably kept both of these sensitive issues alive—conflicts henceforth embedded in postrevolutionary France, ready to explode in the right political compound. This occurred once again in the late nineteenth century, when the Boulanger and the Panama scandals helped incite antiparliamentary and anti-Semitic sentiments, formulating the chemistry that the affair would ignite.

Myriad histories have narrated the events that constituted the Dreyfus Affair and established their role in helping to transform contemporary political culture in France. Succinctly, in 1894 a Jewish captain in the army, Alfred Dreyfus, was summarily convicted in a court-martial of selling French military secrets to the Germans. Public opinion was at first solidly in support of the army's conclusions, but in 1896 the chief of intelligence, Colonel Picquart, discovered exculpatory evidence: it implicated not Alfred Dreyfus but rather a Major Esterhazy, who was subsequently tried but ultimately acquitted by French army authorities.

At this point, Dreyfus's brother, Mathieu, contacted Emile Zola, the prominent novelist, whose interest in Republican politics was, by now, widely known; Zola, perceiving a miscarriage of justice replete with far greater implications, determined, with the temerity of a renowned public figure, to bring the scandalous "affair" to light. In 1898, with shrewd effrontery, he published an open letter to the president of the Republic, consisting of a litany of charges, all beginning with the words "J'accuse" (I accuse). It resulted in an indictment for libel. Zola's subsequent publicized trial and conviction, while compelling him to flee for England, expanded the arena of the "Dreyfus Affair."

Now in the public sphere, it seized the attention and spurred the engagement of not only major political but intellectual and literary figures on both sides of the question. They, like Zola, recast the issues as a referendum on those that had bifurcated France since the Revolution, and particularly since the birth of the Third Republic in 1870: Did "tradition" and the rights of the State take precedence over those of the individual citizen? Did those of the army outweigh civil authority, even if the former were found in error? Two conceptions of France baldly confronted each other once more, as they had in 1789 and have periodically ever since. One maintained the incontrovertible authority of the army, the Church, and the nation, while the other implacably asserted the judicial and egalitarian ideals of the French Revolution. New tactics of political organization and direct intervention immediately spawned to mobilize individuals and groups for alignment on each side of the incendiary ideological questions: political leagues, demonstrations, and petitions now thrust their way into French public life, politicizing new social groups and rending most sectors of society in France.[1]

Strenuous ideological combat did not subside with the "closure" of the Dreyfus Affair—the presidential pardon of Dreyfus in 1899, followed by his exoneration in 1906. Defeated French nationalists refused to concede and pertinaciously continued the fight through two of the leagues that survived by refocusing their aims—the Ligue de la Patrie Française and the Action Française.[2] These leagues did share certain features with others (of the Right) that were born of the Dreyfus Affair and the preceding political scandals, such as the Ligue des Patriotes and

the Ligue anti-Sémitique: as opposed to political parties, which proposed a "global" program, or an ideological blueprint for society, leagues were distinguished by their strictly limited political aims. They wished to "destabilize" the government, believing the parliament to protect special interests, thus to be guilty of corruption as well as irresponsibly negligent of the French electorate. In search of a more unified society, they rejected political parties as too divisive and embraced anti-Semitism, perceiving Jews as yet another factor in the loss of community. And, finally, unlike parties, which they held were incapable of articulating public opinion or aspirations, the leagues advocated "direct action"—mobilization of the "masses," both metaphorically and in the streets.[3]

What distinguished the Ligue de la Patrie Française was, first, a more specific ideological goal, despite an absence of the doctrinal coherence that would appear with the Action Française.[4] The other distinguishing factors of the league (as well as of the Action Française) were its membership, the nature of its "program," and the kind of impact it would have. Both leagues were conceived by an intellectual elite and, despite their more limited membership, acted as "zones of high ideological pressure," influential in the circulation of French nationalist ideology.[5] But most significant here is that both now turned to the domain of culture in order, legally, to prolong the war over contestatory conceptions of essential French values. Cultural criticism thus became for them a form of political intervention and action, a means to articulate and indirectly diffuse their conceptions of the "authentic essence" of France. The Patrie Française, moreover, sought to prove that the Left had no monopoly on "intelligence" and hence recruited those brilliant intellectual personalities who seemed sympathetic to its point of view.[6]

Prominent in both leagues were writers, or those whose major concern was the arts, particularly Maurice Barrès (in the Patrie Française) and Charles Maurras (in the Action Française).[7] Political and literary historians have amply established the conceptual connection that these thinkers and their followers helped to forge between French nationalist ideology and artistic values.[8] Most recently, David Carroll has emphasized the central and seminal nationalist conception of the culturally unified nation as the cognate of a great work of art. For Barrès and Maurras, politics and art were to be imbued with the same "national spirit," from which each was originally born, and which inherently endowed them with an identical nature.[9] As Carroll observes, for Maurras the strength of the nation, its fundamental unifying principle, was determined by history and supported by tradition in a manner analogous to great art. Hence, literature, for the far Right, would become "the principal model and support of politics," expressive of "the ideal form and fundamental nature of the national community and the people."[10]

Maurice Barrès placed consistent emphasis on the tight imbrication of nationalist politics and art, stressing in particular the role of art in "the mythologizing" of the nation. For Barrès as well as for Maurras, revolution in culture (including the arts) was no less than essential—a prerequisite for the return to an endemic state, organically at one with the nation. Both authors were henceforth to be central in what Carroll has termed the fascist "aestheticizing of politics," which would concomitantly contribute to the further politicizing of art in France.[11]

FRENCH NATIONALIST LEAGUES AND MUSIC

The impact of such nationalist theories was by no means limited to politics and literature in France: the two leagues strove to implement them throughout French culture, with ramifications we have not yet fully appreciated. This they were able to do through various new networks of communication and "sociability," such as journals, publishing houses, and several prestigious Parisian salons. These all facilitated the circulation of nationalist doctrine throughout the arts, as well as its common vocabulary and its distinctive set of metaphors and historical references.[12] Historians of art have recently begun to address the intriguing question of how this nationalist "campaign" helped to transform the criteria of aesthetic legitimacy and thus critical standards. As they have shown, well before World War I art critics and nationalist writers were applying such politicized conceptions, and thus subtly shaping aesthetic direction in art: throughout the decade preceding the war, the conceptual and aesthetic terrain was being prepared for a return to tradition and an elevation of classicism as the French "national style."[13]

Analysis of the impact of nationalist cultural initiatives on music is only beginning, and it is the goal of this book to reveal how profoundly the field was, in fact, affected.[14] As I shall demonstrate, not only was the musical world "invaded" as a part of the cultural aggression of these two leagues after the Dreyfus Affair—the Republic "had" to respond. In this manner the field of music was penetrated by political ideology so overtly and directly that it indeed recalls the politicization of music during the French Revolution.[15]

Distinctive in music was the institutional dimension. To a greater extent than in other cultural fields, professional training and thus "consecration" in music was dominated by a state institution. The Conservatoire National de Musique controlled "legitimate" education in music, but it now found itself confronted by a nationalist challenger in the form of the Schola Cantorum. The latter's eventual director, Vincent d'Indy, was a prominent member of the Ligue de la Patrie Française, and through the school he set about establishing a musical culture in systematic opposition: he marshaled the prestige and resources of the league and took advantage of the widespread perception of the pedagogical limitations of the Conservatoire in order to legitimize his own school of music. The resulting institutional opposition was eventually to generate a structural opposition, at once both professional and ideological, that would gradually pervade the French musical world; each side would produce its own conmpositional groupings and find supporters not only in the press and salons but through the official, academic world or through the cognate nationalist "institutes."

The Schola Cantorum did not just define a specific range of musical values that it considered to be "national"; it established a "code" that associated these values with genres, styles, repertoires, and techniques. Hence, while literature diffused nationalist "ideas," as embodied creatively in fictional form, and the visual arts engaged with politically charged images, music opened up another powerful realm:[16] it "manifested" nationalist values through a potent symbolism that was inherently bivocal—that is, simultaneously resonant in invoking the fields of both French politics and art.

Music was valuable as a symbol, for these nationalist leagues were well aware of all it could evoke when framed by a discourse that imbued it with ideological meaning: it could engage the realm of what Freud refers to as "primary process thought," or what is associated with "projection, fantasy, and the incorporation of disparate ideas."[17] Hence, it was particularly useful for the French nationalist Right in this period because, as such, it was inherently immune to conventional rational Republican critique. The Republic, which to this point had largely neglected to imprint its values through music, now responded in kind, making it an agent in the battle over political-symbolic domination.[18] The "war" would bifurcate French music, which, far from being monolothic and dominated by "impressionism," was sundered by aesthetic-ideological disputes, a phenomenon that our histories have too often dismissed.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Part I of this study analyzes the process through which French music was pulled into the cultural war launched by these nationalist leagues as a response to their defeat in the Dreyfus Affair. Temporally, it concerns the period between 1899 and 1905, under the anticlerical ministry of Waldeck-Rousseau, a coalition of Radical-Socialists, Socialists, and Moderates.[19] Its central concern is the institutional opposition, how it developed and spread throughout the French musical world, and how this structure of confrontation and the stylistic codes it created affected the music taught, supported, performed, and composed.

Chapter 1 examines the Schola, and particularly the resonant new discourse it developed, one that transcended political abstractions and evocatively conflated political, religious, and aesthetic dimensions. It reveals, in particular, not only how closely d'Indy's ideas mirrored those of Barrès but also how they generated the code that associated them with genres, styles, repertoires, and techniques. The chapter then turns to how the Republic first responded through the intermediary of the Dreyfusard composer Alfred Bruneau, who forged a Republican discourse for the musical programs of the 1900 Exposition; it traces how opposing political values thus articulated with aesthetic oppositions and analyzes the symbolic structure of this ideological confrontation, or the stylistic and formal qualities that encoded it. From here it examines the networks through which supporters on both sides of the battle disseminated the doctrines and codes of the warring institutions, affecting the musical culture at large.

Concomitantly, chapter 1 reveals that arguments over canonicity were central in these disputes, involving partisan scholars and critics in addition to institutions that were henceforth locked in battle. Moreover, in contrast to the Conservatoire, the Schola created a canon that was not just used for pedagogical study but publicly performed, framed by a discourse that explained its political significance. As this chapter demonstrates, the French university system soon responded to the Schola's challenge in music history and the canon, leading to the flourishing of musicology in France.

Chapter 2 concerns those composers who responded most prominently and

directly to the battle or to the growing politicization they experienced throughout French musical culture. It reveals the impact of the Dreyfus Affair on the way in which French musicians conceived their role—as engaged intellectuals—joining political parties or participating in associated projects and journals. As it further demonstrates, some reacted by consciously employing new politicized meanings; others found that their works, conceived outside these codes, were nevertheless construed within their framework.

D'Indy, in the first case, responded not only through his pedagogy at the Schola Cantorum, but also through specific compositions that were intended to encode an anti-Dreyfusard ideological message. But such was not the case with the politically active composer Gustave Charpentier, who found that the message he had intended in his earlier naturalist opera *Louise* was misconstrued in this context. Chapter 2 analyzes the gulf between his attempt in this work at a multilayered projection of his own psychosocial condition and its interpretation as Dreyfusard, on the basis of subject and style. As it demonstrates, the work's inherent polyvalence was temporarily and unfortunately fixed and, thus, its message distorted within this framework of signification; for naturalism in opera had become associated with a Dreyfusard stance because of the operatic collaboration of Emile Zola and Alfred Bruneau.

By focusing on stylistic codes of meaning as understood within the period, this study seeks to avoid imputing political meanings on the basis of our current perceptions of political homologies or metaphors. Such an "essentialist" approach (which posits an absolute connection between style and ideology, ignoring the political valences of styles in different contexts) must be replaced by the historical and anthropological study of meaning.[20] We must attempt to excavate the systems of meaning in which specific works were both conceived by composers and then understood by audiences of the time—which were not necessarily identical. In the case of *Louise,* we shall find that the two were indeed substantially different; moreover, the context of performance played a central role in determining how the contemporary public and critics "read" the work. Presented with the support of the Republic, at one of its theaters shortly after the Affair, the highly personal message of *Louise* was submerged by the context, which skewed it ideologically. As this book demonstrates, although politics was not always present in the messages or modes of communication of the music, it affected conditions of both presentation and reception.

Chapter 2 further demonstrates (as does chapter 4) that the relation between music and ideological meaning was mutable—transformable through the political, intellectual context, as well as through the dynamics of performance. Not only could different systems of meaning be applied in interpretation, but the manner, venue, and political context of presentation could play a politically semantic role. This was true of contemporary French music, but also of the canon or the "classics," particularly those of Rameau and Beethoven, as we see in chapters 1 and 3. Traditional "reception history," centered on the "horizons of expectation" of a given audience, cannot account for such factors in a performing art such as music. A central goal of this book is to establish that, in interpreting the meaning of a work historically, we must, like anthropologists, examine how sig-

nificance was constructed, on all its levels, by contemporaries. Certainly, we cannot ignore the inherent qualities of the work or text, but we must strive to understand what could credibly be done with it by different groups under certain circumstances.[21]

Chapter 2 goes on to explore the case of other composers, like Albéric Magnard, who were equally victimized by a politicized culture that misread or refused to register their message. Magnard emphatically declined to accept the dominant codes of meaning and attempted to articulate a Dreyfusard message, using what was considered an "anti-Dreyfusard style." Finally, chapter 2 examines responses to the pervasive politicization in other aspects and venues of the musical world, including repertoire choices, official subventions, and musical journalism. As it shows, the same codes of meaning were at work throughout these domains: no aspect of French musical culture was spared from the battle waged by the two nationalist leagues.

Part II concerns the escalation and the further ramifications of this battle as new groupings publicly entered the political-cultural arena between 1905 and the advent of the war. Temporally it begins with the dissolution of Emile Combes's ministry and its anticlerical program, which was followed by a more conservative collaboration of Radicals and Moderates in the new government. Within this changed political context, chapter 3 explores how the existing aesthetic-political discourses were addressed by others that were tied to new French ideological positions; specifically, it examines the new musical programs that emerged with the unification of the "internationalist" French Socialist Party, as well as the points of emphasis that it introduced into the political-cultural dialogue. Just as important, it considers the response of those who were dissatisfied with both Right and Left and who joined together briefly as "National-Socialists," with their own distinct aesthetic ideals. Prominent here, too, was the Action Française, which implacably intensified its battle not only on official culture in general but specifically on the educational system, which included the Conservatoire.

Chapter 3 also examines how the government responded to this damaging assault on its legitimacy through a thorough reform of its own national conservatory of music. As we shall see, the Republic, in spite of the Conservatoire's institutional inertia, finally brought about badly needed changes because of the symbolic challenge of the Schola and its many advocates; however, its new director, Gabriel Fauré, had to balance these reforms (largely drawn, if modified, from the Schola) with values that resonated symbolically with the Republic's own political ideas. Again, the translation from political concepts to musical principles is not transparent, for it had to do with opposition to the Schola, as well as with the Conservatoire's social role and traditions.

Important here were journalists and writers on music, who entered the battle of the two institutions and their associated compositional factions, now called "chapelles." As this chapter demonstrates, they perceptively analyzed the interests that lay beneath each, drawing an explicit connection, as they perceived it, between musical taste and French political ideologies; moreover, they astutely pointed out the difficult position into which French composers were thrust, often for professional reasons being forced into an alliance with one of the camps. Pro-

fessional and political stakes were inseparable: aesthetic groupings were instinct with ideological dimensions, drawing their support from the government or its opponents, which even partisan critics could see.

Finally, as this chapter illuminates, the symbolic battle was being fought through various controversies or skirmishes between the warring compositional schools or "chapelles." These disputes, again, no longer transparent or consistent in their logic today, refracted ideological oppositions through the prism of French musical and aesthetic issues. Here it is also important to note that such altercations were closely related to, and in some cases generated by, those already rending other French cultural fields. Hence, it is within this context that disputes we have not perceived as ideologically charged emerge as fraught with value-tensions that were inseparably bound to the political world. As this study thus consistently argues, it is impossible fully to grasp this musical culture—its practices, codes, comportment, and discourses—apart from the political culture that impinged upon it.[22]

Chapter 4 returns to the responses of composers, here focusing on those most prominently implicated in cultural conflicts during the period of mounting nationalist hegemony before World War I. Of central concern to this chapter is how those composers most frequently used as symbols or exemplars by the warring schools responded to the battle, and then to nationalist dominance. It examines how they lived and worked in this culture, within its codes of meaning, its professional practices, its contentiousness, and its centralized, bellicose institutions. Here the goal is to reveal how this context helped to shape not only their careers and the reception of their works but also their professional and, in the end, certain creative decisions. It returns to the complex issue, raised in chapter 2, of how composers attempted to inscribe ideology or comment on the warring factions through their style. For they could evince an awareness of the dominant ideological and stylistic orthodoxies by employing current codes creatively, in order to define their own particular stance. One goal here is thus to establish that the semiotics of French music in this period is inseparable from this context and that understanding it helps to uncover new layers to certain works.

No French composer during this period could escape awareness of these structures of meaning or of the battles and tensions that continually subtended the litigious French musical factions. Most did not or could not retreat from politics, now such an integral part of their experience: many engaged it subtly, commenting on the situation in a variety of ways. Some did so more prominently than others during the period under scrutiny here; the latter, such as Ravel and Saint-Saëns, although important, are thus examined only in passing.[23] And since some did indeed participate publicly throughout the entire period under study, and in several different contexts, they are discussed as their roles become relevant, in several of the chapters. Again, because the subject of this study is the interaction of French musical and political cultures and its many effects, now lesser-known composers (such as Magnard, Roussel, and Ropartz) are discussed at some length.

However, of particular importance are the compositional "commentaries" of two major composers—Debussy and Satie—whose works reveal what artists can

do creatively with political symbols. While Debussy, here a central figure, grew overtly sympathetic to French nationalist ideology, he refused to adopt its aesthetic orthodoxies, instead forging a unique response. Significantly, his written and verbal discourses were not transcribed through current codes in his music, although the ascription of political meaning to musical styles did influence certain of his choices. Chapter 4 stresses, in particular, the original way in which Debussy, in his later works, related symbolically to the ideas of Barrès, but in a manner far different from that of d'Indy: such ideas—and especially those of the self in relation to the collective—were for him not doctrine to be translated but, rather, an impetus to his creative use of the past.

This volume thus seeks to establish that awareness of Debussy's relation to the ascribed meanings of his period can enrich our understanding of these complex, multivalent works. Clearly, not only minor works were affected by the ideological context of this musical culture fraught with bivocal political-aesthetic disputes: great works responded to these tensions, with a degree of aesthetic integrity that both relates them to and helps them transcend the politicized culture in which they were born.

Another implicit argument in this chapter is that political tensions were here not simply those of class: ideology in this period transcended class divisions, particularly with the advent of a new populist Right. This book thus participates in the more recent turn within French history from a stress on class to cultural representation and language in social formation and identity.[24] Debussy, as Chapter 4 reveals, indeed grew confused in his class identity and, like so many others, found refuge in a nationalist ideological stance.

Erik Satie took the political path opposite to that chosen by his friend Debussy, but he also responded originally with games about current meanings in order to say something "other." This is not to claim that Satie was necessarily supported by those with the same ideological sympathies that he often ironically professed to hold: like Debussy, he consciously sought to confound those politicized critics who would impute a factional position to him on the basis of his musical style. Hence, his polyvalent compositions were used not only by the Radical-Socialist Party (which he joined) but also, in the eve of the war, by the nationalist Right he opposed. Each group "constructed" the composer by emphasizing elements in his style that it perceived plausibly to accord with its own aesthetic-ideological stance. Satie's style was malleable enough to be used by even politically contestatory groups, including those whose positions he protested and that appropriated it in ideologically different ways.

Not all composers responded so creatively. D'Indy and Charpentier became obsessed with political issues and musical-political programs, if from opposite sides of the French political spectrum. Others remained caught in the middle, the victims of increasingly shrill and intolerant camps that were dismayed by the seeming disjunction between their political sympathies and musical style. Chapter 4 concludes by analyzing how the ideological battle continued to rage; the last skirmish before the traditionalist victory was fought over Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps*. It relates the final shift in hegemony to the loss of autonomy in French musical culture, or the inability of the professional world or field to enforce au-

tonomous aesthetic criteria.[25] In this way it seeks to explain the otherwise inexplicable, and often overlooked, return to tradition in music in France well before the First World War.

As this book seeks to establish, throughout these years French music was inextricably bound to the political culture within which it was a symbol and that affected it in multifarious ways. As a result of the initiatives of two French nationalist leagues, other political groupings in France, including the parties in power, came to recognize music's potential ideological agency. Hence, music played a significant role in the ideological and symbolic battle in France before the war, one integrally important to the political combat for French nationalist hegemony.

Cultural divisions between music and politics in this period in France are not easily made; the demarcations were much less clear than today, and the boundaries were continually blurred. To cite the words of Johan Huizinga, the task of a cultural history is to "penetrate" the historical landscape, identifying areas that touched, in an historically unique terrain. This book attempts such a task, but its concern is, ultimately, the results for "meaning" within the two spheres that touched in this period for discernible reasons—those of politics and music. For the goal of cultural history, most fundamentally, is to decipher meanings, to grasp the significations invested in symbolic forms, and it is this intent that has shaped this book.[26]

I

THE BATTLE IS ESTABLISHED

Musicians Enter, 1898–1905

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1

THE NEW CULTURAL "WAR" AND THE FRENCH MUSICAL WORLD

THE DREYFUS AFFAIR AND FRENCH MUSICIANS

Few historians of France would dispute that the political landscape experienced seismic shifts in the traumatic, tumultuous period during and after the Dreyfus Affair; a new range of political tactics, comportments, practices, and actors made their debut in—to switch to an equally apt metaphor—the new "theater" of French politics. Now making their dramatic appearance on the national stage in this seminal period were political leagues and parties, new social groups, and new forms of propaganda.[1] It is one particular variety of the latter that demands our special attention here because its impact on the musical world in France was to be direct and profound: born in the wake of the Affair, its nexus was the milieu of those defeated—those who refused to capitulate in the struggle for the principles they had defined in the course of the conflict. With the triumphant Third Republic stolidly in control of political discourse, the cynosure of their propagandistic effort henceforth was culture and, above all, the arts.

In the wake of the Affair, French nationalists turned to culture as an effective but indirect means through which to articulate and subtly insinuate the political values they still hoped to diffuse.[2] For the debate over Dreyfus had engaged the central question of French identity, or the fundamental political and moral values for which the nation stood: Did the authority and tradition of the state, the army,

the aristocracy, and the Church take precedence over those principles and rights that had been defined so emphatically by the French Revolution? With the closure of the Affair, the question of "What is France?," legally at least, was resolved conclusively in favor of the defenders of the Revolution and of Captain Dreyfus;[3] but the cunning rejoinder of two Rightest leagues that were born of the Affair and that were now redefining their tactics and role was the cognate question "What cultural values are French?"

Originally conceived to act outside the established political channels, the leagues had forged new modes of political activity and enlarged the area of political action;[4] once defeated, two leagues in particular defined the new realm of ideological debate in which they could propagate their conception of French cultural identity—and thus of France as the arts. Actively co-opting prominent critics or writers on the arts, they were also forming critics from within their own networks or producing and infiltrating influential publications. Here, in numerous articles, such writers ascribed political associations or values to styles and concomitantly made aesthetic or artistic legitimacy a political question.

Although the league called the Action Française was soon to be central in this domain, another, initially more influential, was already presciently preparing the way; created directly as a result of the Dreyfus Affair, the nationalist Ligue de la Patrie Française helped shift the political grounds of debate to authentic French culture and art.[5] Indeed, this was implicit in its origins, for the founders of the league had aimed at recruiting not only the political and intellectual elite but also those prominent in the artistic world; significantly, its opening declaration enjoined adherents to work within their professions "à maintenir, en les conciliant avec le progrès des idées et des moeurs, les traditions de la Patrie Française" (to maintain, while conciliating with the progress of ideas and morals, the tradition of the French homeland). Important artists responded, and the directive committee itself included the writers Lemaître, Brunetière, and Barrès, and the composer Vincent d'Indy.

The presence of the musician d'Indy, while often overlooked, should not be minimized, for nowhere was the League de la Patrie Française more successful in its cultural politics than in music. Through d'Indy, it began the process of impregnating French musical discourse with terminology, conceptions, and values that were derived from the political realm. It thus played a pivotal role in making French music a stake in the symbolic battle now being waged by the Republic's critics and in assigning political meaning to style.

Chapter 1 examines the way in which music was drawn into the cultural war that was launched by this French nationalist league in the immediate aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair. It demonstrates how musical programs became, in effect, political initiatives, means to attach ideological meanings to music that could thus symbolically manifest the league's creed. In the course of this chapter we trace the structure of the ideological and institutional opposition established between the Republic's Conservatoire and d'Indy's nationalist cognate, the Schola Cantorum. By analyzing the Schola's program and discourse, we may reveal its close ties to the basic concepts of the Ligue de la Patrie Française, which helped support the school as a vehicle to disseminate its doctrine. We also discover that

the Schola, although marginal, developed a wide base of support because of its moral emphasis (interpreted differently by Right and Left) and its badly needed pedagogical reforms.

Just as important within this temporal framework—from the closure of the Affair until 1905, or when the backlash against the leagues was strongest—is the Third Republic's response to the Schola. The latter now ostensibly perceived that French music could be used ideologically as a means to articulate a Republican conception of inherently French cultural values. It responded in stages, beginning with the musical programs of the Universal Exposition of 1900, which defined a Republican canon, framed by the discourse of the Dreyfusard Alfred Bruneau. In this chapter we thus trace the construction of rival models of French musical identity and examine how each side thus availed itself of music to propagate its cultural conception of "France."

In this context, we also see the Republic's simultaneous riposte to the nationalists' attempted appropriation of music history as it promoted it itself through the university system. It was indeed as a result of this cultural war and its battle to define the "quintessentially French" that the discipline of music history began at last to flourish in France. Ideological exchanges were to proliferate in the context of articles and lectures on music in new institutions like the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales, further attaching political meanings to style. This affected almost all aspects of musical culture in France, as it was ineluctably pulled into the combat over competing French political myths.

Our point of departure to understand this phenomenon must necessarily be the Affair itself, and the way in which the political divisions it engendered implicated music, along with other professions. It was, indeed, to the initial engagement of the Dreyfusard composer Alfred Bruneau that d'Indy would eventually respond, if on a deeper, ideological level. Hence, although the Affair itself had little immediate effect on the musical world in France, its long-term effects were to be both profound and tenacious.

The Engagement of French Musicians

The Dreyfus Affair and the divisions that it inevitably engendered spared few of the professions in France; this impact by no means excluded French musicians, particularly those in Paris. They too were approached by leagues and political groups on both sides of the issues and asked to lend their signatures and thus their prestige to the petitions and protests circulated by each side. Why they were sought out and responded publicly becomes less of an enigma if we examine the circumstances, beginning with their changing self-conceptions or professional self-images in the 1890s. This was not only the period when Wagner's works were dominating the operatic stage but also a time when his theoretical writings were widely known and actively read in France. In large part because of his impact, it was not only acceptable but indeed expected that a composer would take an interest in or espouse larger philosophical and social ideas.[6]

In addition, as Christophe Charle has shown, during the period immediately preceding the Affair, social categories and the conceptions of different professions

were shifting in France. Even before, intellectuals (although not always referred to specifically as such) were beginning to claim both a special political role and a distinctive power. This was particularly true of artists, who were beginning to conceive of themselves and to be perceived as intellectuals, or as serving as "educators of a new truth." Already by the early 1890s, journals like *Entretiens politiques et littéraires* were equating the two, or grouping French poets together with other intellectuals; devices such as the survey and "protest" were also confounding these categories by approaching writers, journalists, and men of letters alike, and without distinction.[7]

By the decade of the 1890s, French musicians were manifesting awareness of new conceptions of the artist in order to protect their professional interests and, concomitantly, those of French music: concerned that French operas were being abandoned in favor of foreign operatic works, they did not hesitate to lobby the Chamber of Deputies or the relevant ministries on their own behalf. Moreover, they were learning to use the press to identify their specific professional concerns with larger national interests, and thus to win the support of sympathetic politicians.[8] And so it is not surprising that many French musicians aligned themselves politically during the Affair, believing it their responsibility to sign the various polemical documents. Although it is difficult to generalize concerning the mechanisms through which they arrived at their decisions, we may gain some insight by examining several of the important cases.

As is well known, the Dreyfusard "Manifest des Intellectuels" was headed by prominent literary figures, most notably, Emile Zola, Anatole France, and Marcel Proust; but among its myriad other signatories were well-known and now-forgotten French composers, musicians, musical scholars and historians, and critics of music. Most prominent were the composer Charles Koechlin, the music historian Henry Prunières, the composer Alfred Bruneau, and the musical scholar Lionel Dauriac. Signing the opposing petition circulated by the nationalist Ligue de la Patrie Française was the composer Vincent d'Indy, the composer Augusta Holmès, the director of the Opéra Comique Albert Carré, the critic Henri Gauthier-Villars (or "Willy"), the composer Pierre de Bréville, and the professor of music history at the Paris Conservatoire, Louis Bourgault-Ducoudray.

Others hesitated to choose a side but signed the public petition circulated by the Comité de l'Appel à l'Union in favor of reconciliation and first published in *Le Temps* on January 17, 1899. Among those subsequently lending it their signature were the composers Claude Debussy and Gustave Charpentier, the music historian and critic Julien Tiersot, and the conductor Edouard Colonne.[9] The latter case provides special insight since Colonne, who himself was Jewish, expressed his reprehension not of anti-Semitism but of militarism to Saint-Saëns; the latter, although in fact a believer in the innocence of Dreyfus, was deeply disturbed by this remark, pointing out that there had been three generals in his family. Hence, Saint-Saëns refused a request to set a Dreyfusard chanson to music and did not sign petitions, but he did agree to join the Dreyfusard Ligue des Droits de l'Homme.[10]

Yet the leading musical figures in the Affair, those who would go on to make the connection between the political and the artistic principles, were Alfred