11 Opera and ballet after the Revolution

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The road to the Opéra Bastille

The Bastille: not the bricks and mortar of a prison long destroyed, but an urban space with symbolic resonance. Today, when left-wing political groups want to demonstrate in France, the Place de la Bastille remains a preferred destination. The idealistic juxtaposition of a bastion of elite art with a site of popular protest came from François Mitterrand after the historic Socialist victory of 1981, part of his ideologically marked *grands projets* to etch architectural modernity on the face of the capital.[1] An early presidential communiqué about the new house promised that the Opéra would appear 'moderne et populaire', allow a doubling of performances while reducing costs and maintain the global leadership of Paris in the vocal arts.[2] The Opéra Bastille's inauguration on 13 July 1989 magnificently conflated international cachet with populist national overtones: it took place before seven heads of state during an economic summit folded into the bicentennial celebrations. But construction delays had hampered the project. Symbolic convergence mattered so much to the regime that the first performance actually occurred in an unfinished structure and was limited to unstaged operatic excerpts sung by some of the leading artists of the day. (The first production took place only the following spring when the building was finally finished: it was Berlioz's *Les Troyens*, 1858, a work with its own set of associations with French grandeur.[3]) Then, on the evening of 14 July itself (Bastille Day), the same world leaders watched an open-air parade and spectacle, a 'grand *opéra-ballet*', entitled *La Marseillaise*, which featured over 6,000 participants representing various cultures. Thus was sustained the equilibrium between high art, popular culture and internationalism. The chosen genre evoked the *ancien régime*. The mass outdoor setting looked back to festivals of the Revolution, but now the whole was managed by that vital component of any capitalist enterprise, an advertising guru (in the person of Jean-Paul Goude).[4]

The story of the Opéra Bastille, one arm of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra (which also includes productions at the older Palais Garnier on the Place de l'Opéra), suggests several important themes in French opera since the Revolution: state control, modernity, access and audience, and international perspectives balanced against domestic ones. To consider the

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gigantic repertoire of French ballet and opera after Gluck entirely through the lens of the Opéra (under its various nomenclatures, e.g. Académie Royale or Académie Impériale) would of course be too narrow. Nonetheless, that venerable institution is a good point of reference simply because of the centripetal character of French culture: Paris at the hub, and the Opéra as its most prestigious venue. This is not to say that the house always lived up to this billing. A historian preoccupied with tracing musical progress might well say that it often fell short of leadership and novelty, and there were times when it even lost some of the lustre of social prestige. But when the Opéra flagged, there were plenty of people to draw attention to its shortcomings.

The decades of the 1950s and 1960s are representative. In a post-war period that saw a pronounced internationalisation of the opera business, the Opéra, operating largely with an in-house (and mostly) French company, began to seem like something of a backwater. As one group of French critics and historians noted: 'in the 1950s and 1960s it would not have occurred to any snob to go to the Opéra and pretend to be interested in it, and the true music lover knew very well that he would find only meagre offerings there'.[5] From the perspective of the historian of style this was not only a matter of productions and performance standards, but also related to another important shift after the war. For contrary to its long-standing practice of producing new works – thirty in the period 1919–39 under the much-respected director Jacques Rouché – Opéra world premieres slowed considerably; in the 1950s, for example, there were only three new operas: *Bolivar* by Darius Milhaud (1892–1974) in 1950, *Kerkeb* by Marcel Samuel-Rousseau (1882–1955) in 1951 and *Numance* by Henry Barraud (1900–97) in 1955. There were only six ballets, most of which were relatively short: André Jolivet's *L'inconnue* (1950), Henry Barraud's *L'astrologue dans le puits* (1951), Louis Aubert's *Cinéma* (1953), Raymond Loucher's *Hop-frog* (1953), Marcel Delannoy's *Les noces fantasques* (1955) and Georges Auric's *Chemin de lumière* (1957).[6] To be fair, one should also note that the three-act blockbuster *Dialogues des Carmélites* by Francis Poulenc (1899–1963) was produced in June 1957 after its world premiere at La Scala earlier that year. It became one of the few French post-war operas to enter the international repertoire. Inefficiencies in the administrative structure called the Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux – a creation of the Popular Front government in 1936 that brought the Opéra and Opéra-Comique under a single umbrella – bore some of the blame for stagnation and questionable quality.[7] A complex decision-making structure involving officials from both houses, a general director and government paymasters made repertoire planning cumbersome and negotiations with fractious unions difficult.

Moreover, after the war the paradigm of production had also suddenly changed so that it was now regional opera houses and French summer music festivals that premiered new operas, which then circulated nationally and internationally (if they circulated at all). The lion's share of works by well-known opera composers such as Georges Aperghis (b. 1945), Maurice Ohana (1913–92), Antoine Duhamel (b. 1925), Claude Prey (1925–98) and Marcel Landowski (1915–99) certainly fall into this category. After 1964, a new and efficient association of regional theatres (the Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Municipaux de France) fostered the sharing of resources, attracted funding from the centre and explicitly prioritised the production of new operas. The group initially comprised twelve members, including major houses in Lyons, Marseilles, Toulouse, Strasbourg and Nancy. In characteristic French *dirigiste* fashion, the number of personnel that was required in each department of an organisation in order to qualify for membership in the group was carefully codified (a minimum orchestra of fifty-five musicians, one lighting specialist and assistant, six electricians, one typist for the artistic director and so forth). Also to emerge and compete for state funding independently of opera houses were performing groups that explored the generic edges of opera in more loosely conceived frameworks of music theatre and theatrical music, where speakers, singers, dancers and instrumentalists often interacted.[8] Aperghis's Atelier Théâtre et Musique, founded in a Paris suburb in 1976, became a particularly successful example. Certainly there were prominent foreign models for this in works by Mauricio Kagel and Luciano Berio, but the provocative salvo 'Opera houses? – Blow them up!' that Pierre Boulez (b. 1925) delivered to *Der Spiegel* magazine in 1967 undoubtedly had its role, at least insofar as the aesthetic position represented by this sensationalistic stance had a considerable following.[9] (Sensationalism went awry many years later: the remark caused Boulez to be detained for a few hours by Swiss police a few months after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.[10]) In yet another replaying of the perennial young Turk against old guard – one run-in between Boulez and André Jolivet (1905–74) at a Domaine Musical concert in 1958 became legendary[11] – Boulez made the case for an experimental, research-orientated approach to composition. All operas written after Alban Berg's *Lulu* (1935) were derivative, the 'difference between stage music and concert music [had] disappeared', and a new kind of music theatre would be 'a structural mixture of technique, aesthetics and theatrical art', by which Boulez meant that it would stage a self-consciousness of its own structural properties and present itself *in situ* as a dynamic process of creation instead of a subliminal replication of past formulas.[12] Poulenc's expression of indebtedness to Mussorgsky, Monteverdi, Claude Debussy (1862–1918) and Verdi in the

dedication of *Dialogues des Carmélites* ten years before stands as an elegant counterpoise.

Meanwhile, there was still the matter of prestige at the centre. Unlike regional opera houses that were allotted substantial funds from municipalities, the Opéra and Opéra-Comique received and still receive subventions from national government, not the city of Paris. Faced with fading public interest in both houses in the late 1960s and early 1970s – indeed, the Opéra-Comique itself was formally closed in 1972[13] – the ministry of culture snared the well-known Swiss composer and opera manager Rolf Liebermann (1910–99) to reinvigorate the Opéra from 1972 to 1980. Ironically, Liebermann had been one of Boulez's targets in *Der Spiegel* (he, in turn, formally castigated the French composer not only for his 'Beckmesser-like judgements', but also for his lack of compositional productivity),[14] and, not surprisingly, the new director made no secret of his respect for Clio's muse:

> The Paris Opéra is a theatre with a royal lineage meant to enhance the prestige of a city that has a global role. Housed in a famous building, the company is visited by thousands of tourists every year. Even though it seeks to be democratic in its organisation and the price of tickets, it must remain 'royal' in its artistic approach.[15]

The government subsidy spiked in Liebermann's initial year. The Opéra swallowed a huge proportion of ministry grants to opera and even to music in general: by 1984 (after Liebermann's tenure) this house garnered 76 per cent of all government support to opera in France and 22.5 per cent of the entire music budget.[16] Liebermann instituted auditions for every position, modernised the *mise-en-scène* (renowned directors such as Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, Patrice Chereau, Jorge Lavelli and Giorgio Strehler would eventually come to work at the Opéra) and avidly courted international conductors and singers. What was gained in quality was perhaps lost in the sense of a local tradition; although répetiteurs and coaches continued to transmit locally embedded practices for the French repertoire, recordings produced by the company from earlier periods became ever more important witnesses of performing practices on the wane, as was the French repertoire itself at the Opéra. Administrative changes allowed Liebermann a freer hand than previous directors, and in 1978 the Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux was disbanded. A clause in the 1978 statute even articulated a policy of encouraging new works. It is hard to argue that this was aggressively pursued in subsequent years, but one monument of late twentieth-century opera did result: Liebermann's commission of the massive *Saint François d'Assise* by Olivier Messiaen (1908–92, first performed 1983). The work commanded international interest as the summation of

technique and spiritual values (the two were entwined for Messiaen) espoused by a towering figure in twentieth-century music: 'It contains virtually all the bird calls that I've noted down in the course of my life, all the colours of my chords, all my harmonic procedures, and even some surprising innovations.'[17] More important, in a century of mass destruction and rampant inauthenticity, *Saint François d'Assise* glows as an icon of transcendent mystic joy, a sense of the divine even as human suffering is represented on the stage.[18]

During Liebermann's tenure, a ticket for the Palais Garnier became a hot commodity. Aside from its ideological significance, then, the new opera theatre financed by the Mitterrand regime responded to real market interest. Some railed against the putative sterility of the new building, and the Palais Garnier (intended to become an unshared venue for the Opéra's ballet company) began to see opera on its boards once again after 1993. Demand overflowed to the Opéra-Comique, which once again opened its doors as a separate company in 1990 with a mandate to perform French classics from the Baroque (Rameau's *Les Indes galantes*, 1993), the nineteenth century (Gounod's *Mireille*, 1993) and *opérette*.[19] Enthusiasm has continued unabated since: after an uneven period in the early 1990s, the directorship of Hugues Gall (1995–2004) established the Opéra as a very well-managed and well-attended theatre of the highest international standard.[20]

Institutions and genres

Not the least among the reasons adduced for Gall's success was that the ministry of culture allowed him to run the Opéra with a minimum of bureaucratic oversight. State regulation of the Parisian opera industry has waxed and waned over the years, but, given its historic role as a flag-bearer of French culture, rarely with a self-effacing presence. Writing in 1862, the music critic Pier Angelo Fiorentino voiced a familiar argument for close state control of the institution, in a spirit not dissimilar from Liebermann's assessment over a hundred years later: 'The Opéra is a theatre like no other; in the eyes of people from the provinces and foreigners [it is] the grandest of all Parisian marvels . . . charged with bearing witness to the degree of civilisation, of well-being and of taste that our society prides itself in having achieved.'[21] Few since the Revolution have disputed this goal: the question often became one of whether it was best achieved through the work of free-market forces ('managed' to various degrees) or of rigid rules, an issue often tied to the ideological proclivities of successive regimes. Regulation was a matter not only of monitoring financial ledgers, but also of

controlling repertoires and the slippery business of defining genres – what kind of works were allowed in this theatre, disallowed in that.[22] Throughout much of the nineteenth century, governments also exercised control of content through censorship.

During the Revolution, however, the impulse was to throw off the fetters of regulation altogether. A law of 13–19 January 1791 allowed any citizen to set up a theatre for the performance of any kind of work:[23] 'The improvement of art is necessarily linked to competition' said the *député* Le Chapelier who introduced the legislation.[24] As it turned out, in the hothouse of rapidly changing political alignments that ensued, authorities frequently moved to close down productions. The continuing value of censorship as a preventive tool thus became clear enough, and by 1797 politicians were also calling for tighter control of a frenzied market that had driven many theatrical entrepreneurs to their ruin. Napoleon, who took a great interest in theatrical life, moved to regulate the entertainment industry even before he became emperor by addressing the dire straits of *opéra comique*. The company which gave the genre its name faced redoubtable competition in 1791 from a group at the Théâtre Feydeau that also performed French opera with spoken dialogue (which continued to be the primary distinguishing characteristic of the genre, regardless of whether plots were comical or serious). The two houses were able to coexist for a while because the Feydeau performed new serious works during the period when the Opéra experienced a deceleration of production. One of the best-remembered jewels of its repertoire was *Médée* (1797) by Luigi Cherubini (1760–1842), with its terrifying, knife-in-hand appearance of the heroine in the final act and its virtuosic orchestral writing that so impressed Beethoven. Another Beethoven connection was *Léonore, ou L'amour conjugal* (1798) by Pierre Gaveaux (1760–1825), a forerunner to *Fidelio*. The Opéra-Comique at the Salle Favart continued with somewhat lighter repertoire,[25] but notwithstanding this division of repertoire, the rival houses both went bankrupt in 1801. Under Napoleon's auspices the two companies were conflated almost immediately and took up residence under the name Opéra-Comique at the Théâtre Feydeau.

Napoleon's most important administrative change related to the theatre: after he became emperor, a law of 29 July 1807 set up a regulated system that in many of its essentials remained in effect until 1864. Paris theatres were classified into two large categories: *grands théâtres* and *théâtres sécondaires*. The first – the Académie Impériale de Musique (that is, the Opéra), the Théâtre-Français (also known as the Comédie-Française), the Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique and the Théâtre de l'Impératrice (a house for Italian opera buffa[26]) – were placed under the direct patronage of the emperor himself and received a state subsidy. The second group, without subsidy, comprised

the Théâtre de Vaudeville, Théâtre des Variétés, Théâtre de la Gaîté and Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique. Other companies were required to relinquish the word *théâtre* or face closure. The law spelled out genre and repertoire, stipulating the exclusive jurisdiction of each house over its historical repertoire and protecting the Opéra's monopoly over French works that were sung throughout. Like the Opéra-Comique, the Théâtre de Vaudeville was authorised to present plays that combined spoken dialogue and music, but only with music based on tunes, called *timbres*, already known to the public. Ticket prices were higher at the *grands théâtres*, and the clientele of more elevated social standing than at the *théâtres sécondaires*.[27] Within the group of *grands théâtres*, the level of government subvention underlined the prestige accorded to the Opéra: whereas just after the 1807 legislation it received 600,000 francs annually, the Comédie-Française netted 200,000, the Opéra-Comique 96,000 and the Théâtre de l'Impératrice (Odéon) 50,000.[28] Amounts fluctuated with time, though always preserving the Opéra's substantial lead (the Opéra-Comique was to see periods of more generous support).

Yet differences in legislated status and a policy of protectionism did not mean that the theatres were aesthetically isolated from each other. For example, although the presence of newly composed musical numbers (including many elaborate ensembles that had already been *de rigueur* in the genre for many years) elevated *opéra comique* in stature over vaudeville, in other respects at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the two genres could be quite similar in tone, setting and dramatic organisation.[29] Indeed, Eugène Scribe (1791–1861), who would become the period's most widely performed librettist for *opéra comique* (and grand opera), actually cut his professional teeth in vaudeville, and brought many of the techniques of the so-called 'well-made play' from *théâtre sécondaire* to *grand théâtre*.[30] Much the same might be said of the spoken genre *mélodrame*, the main exponent of which at the beginning of the nineteenth century was Guilbert Pixérécourt (1773–1844). The title alone of Emilio Sala's important monograph on melodrama, *L'opera senza canto* ('Opera without song'),[31] speaks volumes about fertile ground for composers and librettists, who savoured its sharply defined distinctions between good and evil, trials faced by innocent and virtuous heroines, noble fathers, mysterious protectors, skilful manipulation of plot crises and contrasting scenes, wildly gesticulating actors and general cultivation of astonishment and extravagance. The impact of *mélodrame* on the explosion of Romantic spoken theatre and music in the late 1820s was substantial, but cross-fertilisation among low and high genres occurred before this.

The shadow of *mélodrame* falls across many of the period's *opéras comiques*: *Le solitaire* (1822) by Michele Carafa (1787–1882), with the

hero as an unknown outcast falsely accused of a crime; *Léocadie* (1824) by Daniel-François-Esprit Auber (1782–1871), with the seduction of an innocent heroine by a dastardly nobleman; the very popular *La dame blanche* by Adrien Boieldieu (1775–1834), with a stranger, ghostly apparition and rapacious steward. Melodramatic themes in the latter harmonised with Walter Scott novels well known to the Opéra-Comique public. Portraying virtue oppressed and then triumphant, the melodramatic impulse seems at least subliminally to have echoed Revolutionary sentiment. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, the Opéra was slower to respond to the boulevard theatres. The operas *La vestale* (1807) and *Fernand Cortez* (1809) by Gaspare Spontini (1774–1851) did well, as did *Le triomphe de Trajan* by Louis-Luc Loiseau de Persuis (1769–1819), commissioned by Napoleon to celebrate the battle of Jena in 1807. The emperor used the institution as an extension of his own grandeur and, it has been argued, as a way to reconcile returned émigrés and ex-revolutionaries by force of opulence, a kind of brilliant aestheticisation of the new police state.[32] But as the stock of *mélodrame* continued to rise in value during the Restoration, the Opéra offered Gluck revivals as well as solemn and stately – and commercially unsuccessful – new works on classical subjects by figures such as Antoine Reicha (1770–1836) and Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766–1831).[33]

Pressures soon began to be applied to Napoleon's 1807 systemisation of theatrical life. In the Restoration new ventures petitioned the government for authorisation to call themselves theatres. One of them was the Théâtre du Panorama-Dramatique, which flourished in the early 1820s with a repertoire officially authorised as 'scenes with [spoken] dialogue for two people in order to provide a narrative context for silent characters that form groups [i.e. *tableaux vivants*] and for pantomime'.[34] In practice 'pantomime' was *ballet-pantomime*, the usual term for free-standing ballet in this period: the Panorama-Dramatique reminds us that, far from having an exclusive association with the Opéra, with which it is most famously linked, French ballet was performed at many smaller theatres throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – a practice little researched by specialists today. By the early 1820s the Théâtre de l'Impératrice had become the Odéon and its jurisdiction changed from Italian opera buffa to spoken theatre linked to the Comédie-Française. In 1823 the director of the Odéon, Claude Bernard, requested permission to add operas to this repertoire. Approval came in a typically protectionist vein: he could stage *opéras comiques* in the public domain (which meant those by composers and librettists who had been dead for more than ten years) and foreign works in translation. Despite the cost of maintaining troupes for both spoken theatre and opera, Bernard's initiative flourished for a few years.[35]

Through it French musicians and audiences became acquainted with some of the latest German operas, including in 1824 Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, translated, slightly modified and geographically transplanted to Yorkshire, England, at the end of the reign of Charles I as *Robin des bois*.[36] Also popular on the Odéon stage were pasticcios (operas stitched together with excerpts from several pre-existent works by, say, Rossini and Mozart), a little-studied phenomenon given short shrift by historians undoubtedly because criteria such as originality and close association between word, character and music in the creative act have dominated narratives of operatic history.

Grand opera

With refreshing artistic stimuli emerging from the Odéon to meld with the continued popularity of boulevard theatres, the Opéra eventually embraced change as well. The Parisian ambitions of the two leading composers for the Italian stage – Rossini and Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864) – were instrumental in encouraging new styles. Auber's *La muette de Portici* (1827, libretto by Scribe and Germain Delavigne), Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* (1829, libretto by Étienne de Jouy and Hippolyte-Louis-Florent Bis) and Meyerbeer's *Robert le diable* (1831, libretto by Scribe and Delavigne) brought new models of dramaturgy and musical style to France's first stage – early examples of grand opera. Such works, always in four or five acts, showcased carefully drawn historical contexts, individuals confronted by political, epic and supernatural forces, sharp contrasts, choral writing, long ensembles, orchestral colour, evocative musical atmospheres and virtuoso singing – all with the continued cultivation of ballet and scenic splendour fostered by Napoleon and previous rulers. Administrative reform soon accompanied the aesthetic shift. Whereas during the Empire and Restoration the Opéra had been managed as an arm of the civil service, indeed directly from the emperor's or king's own court budget, the July Monarchy turned the Opéra into a business, first run by the entrepreneur Louis Véron, albeit with an outsize subsidy and loose supervision in the form of a *cahier des charges* (contract) that laid ground rules for repertoire and tone. An enlargement of the subscriber base became one of the first priorities. Whereas no fewer than 502 people had free passes to attend the Opéra before the regime change – a telling sign of its status as an appendage of the court – Véron whittled that number down to just over a hundred.[37] Some interpretations of these developments have given preponderant weight to political factors; in the words of one scholar: 'The desire to popularize the Opéra grew from a concern with public perceptions of political

legitimacy . . . It was hence incumbent on the state to prove that its symbol, the Opéra, was . . . not a fossilized institution alienated from modern France.'[38] With only slight modification the statement might just as well apply to the creation of the Opéra Bastille mentioned at the outset. Given its history, politics were and continue to be woven into the very fabric of the institution, but explanations that excessively reduce aesthetic phenomena to political origins risk missing factors such as taste, fashion and sensibility that are important markers of identity and of various social and class groupings. As Frédéric Soulié noted at the time: 'M. Véron's great talent is to have persuaded fashionable society that it was important to have an opinion about the Opéra, its singers, its ballerinas, its orchestra.'[39] 'To have an opinion' was a mode of social discourse, a mark of 'distinction' as the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu would have said. From this perspective, politics is only one factor among many in the formation and projection of identity – an observation that might be transposed to the actual composition of new works as well, where 'identity' in the previous formulation might be substituted by 'aesthetic qualities'. Music in general, and grand opera in particular, did of course interact with the real-life experiences of consumers. In his ground-breaking study of French grand opera, Anselm Gerhard suggested how the urban environment fostered changing aesthetic predispositions.[40] Some of this is related to politics; grand opera, for example, contains many compelling scenes of mass revolt obliquely redolent of the Revolution on Parisian streets, but urban sensibilities go much further. Nor can the impact of style history and the creative response of composers to one another as music professionals – currently unfashionable methodologies in opera studies – be discounted in accounts of how grand opera was forged.

Grand operas were popular at the Opéra, indeed throughout Europe, during the July Monarchy and beyond. Meyerbeer delivered *Les Huguenots* (1837), *Le prophète* (1849) and *L'africaine* (1865); Fromental Halévy (1799–1862) scored a huge success with *La juive*; and Verdi followed suit with *Les vêpres siciliennes* (1855) and *Don Carlos* (1867). The number of foreign composers eager to work in Paris reflects the international status of houses such as the Opéra; it was the kind of appeal that harmonised with the wide European following of French theatrical life generally. Ballets continued to form an important part of the repertoire. As incorporated into grand operas they were called *divertissements*, a term loaded with both aesthetic and social implications. The generic designation clearly signalled a different set of pleasures from the main body of the opera, suggesting relief from plot and ideas that effectively mirrored the escapist role that ballroom dancing assumed in real life. Many of the ensemble numbers in operatic ballet at mid-century were

similar to the dance types composed for balls, and not much more difficult choreographically than them.[41] For important male subscribers, the hiatus from quotidian pressures took the form of voyeurism, hobnobbing with dancers backstage and taking them as mistresses. The type lives on in Irène Némirovsky's novel *Suite française*, which is set in Paris on the verge of invasion in June 1940. She writes of the banker Monsieur Corbin: 'All his mistresses were dancers. He seemed not to be interested in women of any other profession. Not one secretary, no matter how pretty or young, had ever managed to lure him away from this particular penchant.'[42] Independent *ballets-pantomimes* – of which the most successful at mid century was Adolphe Adam's *Giselle* (1841) – adopted many of the conventions of opera, including instrumental recitative to accompany gestured dialogue that echoed (in different ways) the music associated with mute characters such as Fenella in *La muette de Portici*, the gestural language of melodrama, the *ballet d'action* of the eighteenth century and instrumental compositions such as the *scène d'amour* in Berlioz's hybrid dramatic symphony *Roméo et Juliette*.[43] Cross-fertilisation between opera and dance occurred in another way as well, as a fair number of lighter works in the repertoire of the Opéra-Comique – for example, Auber's *Léocadie* mentioned before – were converted into ballets.

Other theatres at mid-century

The Paris population expanded rapidly in the nineteenth century, doubling in size from 1807 (580,609) to 1856 (1,174,346).[44] Both the Théâtre-Italien and Opéra-Comique accommodated the burgeoning demand. The former cultivated a reputation of an expensive, high-status theatre especially appropriate to true music lovers – Soulié observed that whereas the Opéra was about 'fashion and taste', the Théâtre-Italien was a 'need' and a 'passion'[45] – and the latter attracted large audiences, in part by virtue of the fact that it put on performances almost every night of the year. Steering a course between, on the one hand, low, bawdy and satirical humour and, on the other, the self-conscious importance of grand opera, *opéra comique* composers such as Auber, Ferdinand Hérold (1791–1833), Ambroise Thomas (1811–96) and Adolphe Adam (1803–56) produced a durable and variegated repertoire with an accent on sentimental comedy. The Opéra-Comique was often the first stop on the career path of young composers, a practice codified in a ministerial injunction of 1832 that required its director to give special consideration to recent Prix de Rome laureates.[46] But growing demand caused a continuous stream of requests for authorisation of new theatrical ventures. One such was the Théâtre de la

Renaissance in 1838–41, which, like the Odéon, provided a venue for German and Italian opera in translation and, like the Opéra-Comique, promised to look after young composers,[47] as did the Opéra-National in 1847–8. The immediate successor of the latter, and with the same mandate, was from 1851 to 1870 the much more important Théâtre Lyrique, whose directors were also allowed to commission new works in French.[48]

Both the Opéra-National and the Théâtre-Lyrique responded to another leitmotif of French operatic life after the Revolution that extended to the Opéra Bastille: repeated calls to make opera accessible to a broader public. This was accomplished through the creation of two large amphitheatres with cheaper seats behind the second and third tiers of boxes.[49] One should not imagine, however, that many from the working class were disposed to attend: opera is a matter of social practice as much as affordability. High culture and mass culture have mixed in various ways over time. In the late twentieth century the Opéra company performed *Carmen* in sports stadiums, and its world premiere production of Berg's completed *Lulu* (one of Liebermann's real coups) drew around 340,000 television viewers in the summer (!) of 1979.[50] In the nineteenth century it was arrangements of operatic hits in park bandstands and the inclusion of collectors' cards with pictures of operatic tableaux or portraits of composers in boxes of biscuits – difficult though it is to imagine the same practice today.

The Théâtre-Lyrique evolved in the Second Empire to compete with the Opéra and Opéra-Comique in prestige. A good deal of this was due to the effective management of Léon Carvalho (né Carvaille), an important figure about whom we still know little. (As with Véron before and later with the Opéra-Comique director Albert Carré, the Opéra director Jacques Rouché and Gabriel Astruc, key Parisian impresarios deserve more attention from historians than they have so far received.) Carvalho astutely picked up works that the Opéra administration had dithered over. To this we owe the premiere of *Faust* (1859) by Charles-François Gounod (1818–93) – the most frequently performed French opera at the end of the century – and Berlioz's *Les Troyens* (1863), or at least the second part of this mammoth work, which had to wait until the twentieth century to be done justice. In the mean time, *Faust*, which began life with spoken dialogue at the Théâtre-Lyrique, got transferred in 1869 to the Opéra, where the recitative passages composed initially for foreign performances were naturally included. *Carmen* (1875) by Georges Bizet (1838–75) would later undergo the same transformation, but would continue life on the stage of the Opéra-Comique, which began increasingly to admit works with continuous music towards the end of the century. Carvalho also promoted the young Bizet by producing *Les pêcheurs de perles* (1863). With the lifting of Napoleon's protectionist approach to theatre

life in 1864 in favour of a more flexible (though not completely unregulated) system – in line with the general liberalism of Louis-Napoleon's regime at this time – Carvalho also aggressively expanded his repertoire to include more foreign works in French translation. The effects of deregulation were soon felt: in 1866 Parisians could attend no fewer than three different productions of *Don Giovanni* – at the Opéra, Théâtre-Italien and Théâtre-Lyrique – and the press seemed to agree that the last was the strongest.[51]

The period of the Second Empire also witnessed the efflorescence of *opérette*. Jacques Offenbach (1819–80) gave it a home at the Théâtre des Bouffes Parisiens, created with very strict conditions at the end of 1855: maximum of four characters, limit of five dancers, no chorus, restriction (at first) to one-act works.[52] *Opérette*, *opéra bouffe*, lighter examples of *opéras comiques* and vaudeville all rub shoulders in the French repertoire. Honour for creating the first exemplar of the genre should go to the composer Hervé (real name Florimond Ronger, 1825–92). Approached by a short and stout friend in 1847 to put on a show at a small theatre in Montmartre, Hervé, very tall and thin himself, proposed they could play up their physical differences for a laugh with a parody of Cervantes: thus was born the *Don Quichotte et Sancho Panza*, a *tableau grotesque* for which Hervé illegally wrote new music instead of arranging pre-existing tunes as usual for vaudeville.[53] The Opéra-National legitimised his effort by taking up the piece the next year. Dozens of other comic works would flow from Hervé's pen, including a famous parody of Gounod's opera called *Le petit Faust*. But it was Offenbach's *opéras bouffes* – such as *Orphée aux enfers* (1858), *La vie parisienne* (1866) and *La grande duchesse de Gérolstein* (1867) – that garnered greater international attention, in part for their trenchant unmasking of the putative phoniness of Napoleon III's Second Empire regime.[54]

New directions and Wagner

Following the lead of musicians involved in the creation of the Société Nationale in 1871, who sought to distance themselves from the discredited Second Empire, French musical historiography has tended to see 1870 as a sharp line of division, but for all Offenbach's relevance to the Second Empire, no fewer than twenty-two of his works were performed during the 1870s, some with great success.[55] At the Opéra, grand opera proved obstinately tenacious – another element of continuity – and the Théâtre-Lyrique went bankrupt. Even so, a break with the past did occur to the extent that success in the opera house increasingly became less crucial to the establishment of a

career as a composer: operas do not form a significant part of the oeuvre of César Franck (1822–90), Gabriel Fauré (1845–1924) wrote only two (*Prométhée*, 1900; *Pénélope*, 1913), and the two short pieces by Maurice Ravel (1875–1937), *L'heure espagnole* and *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, were not decisive to the advance of his career. It fell to the Opéra-Comique to produce the most challenging new French operas. Spanish local colour, fatalistic gypsies, soldiers and exotics, the death of a main character – all had been seen on the stage of the Opéra-Comique before,[56] but Bizet's *Carmen* nonetheless struck a new tone in the stark confrontation of a strong woman with male hysteria. The dramatic parameters at the house had become very wide indeed, as light chestnuts like Auber's *Fra Diavolo* (1830) also continued to find favour. Bizet's early death that year left the arena free for the ascendance of Jules Massenet (1842–1912) as the major composer for the Opéra-Comique stage at the *fin de siècle*, much of the time under the directorship of Carvalho, with works such as *Manon* (1884) and *Werther* (1892). A virtuosic command of pastiche, unique melodic style and elegant balance of progressive and conservative syntax assured Massenet's success, much envied by that other major composer of the *fin de siècle*, Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921), whose operatic star did not rise nearly so high. One can well imagine the frustrations of one whose first opera *Samson et Dalila* (1877) did well, after a rocky start, but who suffered through the lukewarm reception accorded twelve others. While composers of *opérette* such as André Messager (1853–1929), Charles Lecocq (1832–1918) and Claude Terrasse (1832–1923) continued to ply their trade in a repertoire little known today, especially outside France, others such as Emmanuel Chabrier (1841–94), Vincent d'Indy (1851–1931) and Ernest Chausson (1855–99) debated and tested the relevance of Wagnerian opera to the French stage. Because of the requirements and conventions of choreography, ballet remained more isolated from Wagnerian influence. The great master at the beginning of the Third Republic was Léo Delibes (1836–91), whose ballets *Coppélia* (1870) and *Sylvia* (1876) were admired by Tchaikovsky and have indeed joined the international repertoire to assume a place equal to that of *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*. But ballet was also inevitably to face the challenges of new and extended tonal languages, as in *Namouna* (1882) by Édouard Lalo (1823–92), but also those emerging from Russia as an alternative to Wagner. With the stimulus of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, ballet music by French composers (for example Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* and Debussy's *Jeux*) joined the ranks of truly progressive art after the turn of the century, a new focal point for high society and snob appeal. The ballet *Le sacre du printemps* by the ex-patriot Russian Stravinsky, premiered as a stage work in Paris in 1913 to an uproar in the hall and then very successfully resurrected

as a concert piece in 1914, marks the apex of French engagement with musical modernism.

Because of the German nationalist bravado surrounding Wagner's career, performances of his operas in Paris became the hottest issue, tinged as they were with politics in French operatic life at the *fin de siècle*. Strong political overtones had resonated as early as the *Tannhäuser* debacle of 1861 when Wagner's opera, adapted by the composer for the Opéra stage, was cancelled after merely three performances. The imperial household had supported the production and agitation against it was one way to express disapproval of the regime.[57] A production of *Lohengrin* at a secondary theatre in 1887 had to be cancelled because of riots, this time spurred by a diplomatic incident between France and Germany, and it was only in the 1890s that Wagner's operas settled in to the repertoire of the Opéra, now finally displacing the older roster of grand operas. The young Debussy was inevitably caught up in such debates as well, wavering between admiration of Wagner and a desire to take French opera in new directions. The result was *Pelléas et Mélisande*, premiered at Albert Carré's Opéra-Comique in 1902, a work that does not eschew leitmotivic recurrence altogether but distributes such motifs sparsely in the context of declamation that aims for understated nuance. Debussy's masterpiece is another sign of the house's breadth of repertoire because of its lyric exploration of a bleak existential dilemma with new musical syntax.

National thumbprints

The character of French opera and ballet has been shaped not only by institutional imperatives but also by the interaction of local practice with foreign repertoires, largely Italian and German. Spontini retained Gluck's solemn dignity, especially felt in ritualistic choruses and the style of accompanied recitative, and combined this with arias displaying a more Italianate sensibility that fluently incorporated conjunct melismas into melodic lines that he shaped with carefully calibrated peaks. In this he satisfied Napoleon's own taste for Italianate singing, an aesthetic taken even further during the Restoration when Rossini was hired to manage the Théâtre-Italien during its period of joint administration with the Opéra. The acquisition of florid technique by French singers such as Laure Cinti-Damoreau in the 1820s changed the physiognomy of works not only at the Opéra but also at the Opéra-Comique, where the *première chanteuse à roulades* became a popular voice-type.[58] Musical-dramatic organisation also became transformed. Spontini's choral scenes were long and impressive, but his arias and ensembles tended to be smaller. Under the influence of Rossini and

Meyerbeer, large Italianate multipartite forms would become the norm in grand opera. These facilitated the inclusion of secondary characters and choruses to urge the drama forward, the exploration of changing affects and textures within a single large set piece and long tonic-prolongational coda passages that allowed florid singing.[59]

In the 1820s composers paid increasing attention to 'characteristic' music particular to geographical, historical and social settings as they moved away from the standard classical fare of the past. Orchestral colour became an important resource. Weber's example in *Der Freischütz*, and the influence of German music in general on expanded orchestral writing, has sometimes been cited as decisive. But it is also important to remember that Paris had built an effective training system for orchestral musicians at the Conservatoire which supplied orchestras in the capital, and the city was also an important centre for the manufacture of musical instruments. Auber worked a tarantella into the marketplace of Naples for *La muette de Portici*, but the instrumental hues in this opera seem modest when compared with Meyerbeer's infernal colours on the brass instruments in *Robert le diable*. The evocation of a voice from the past through the use of two trumpets 'coming from a distance' as Robert reads a letter from his mother – a technique right out of melodrama – earned praise from Berlioz, who more generally held up Meyerbeer's orchestration as a stick with which to beat decadent Italian art.[60] Rossini also adapted his style in his splendid evocations of the alpine setting in *Guillaume Tell*. Passages of slow harmonic rhythm and a concluding paean to liberty give some of the music an elevated symphonic character. An analogy to Beethoven is not inappropriate, for just at this moment his symphonies – and the quasi-spiritual claims they made – gained a large following in Paris.

Meyerbeer's operas were understood as eclectic works at a time when eclecticism was not a pejorative aesthetic quality – a leitmotif in French music history since the Revolution that perhaps deserves more attention from historians. The concept goes beyond German and Italian influence to link up with the pastiche of a Massenet or a Saint-Saëns, the wide-ranging musical references in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, the stylistic variety in Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites* and the postmodern tendencies of recent operas by Antoine Duhamel – whose *Gambara* (1978) after Honoré de Balzac centres on a composer of Meyerbeer's period. Darius Mil haud's *Christophe Colomb* (1930, revised 1968, Paul Claudel) dwarfs even the operas of Meyerbeer in epic scope with twenty-seven scenes and a demanding choral part, range of styles and technological requirements (including films projected on backstage screens). But what is perhaps more difficult to discern in Meyerbeer than in these later composers (except perhaps for Saint-Saëns) is a strongly marked personal sound.

For many contemporaries he wrote 'learned' music – a Germanic trait – a tradition of criticism echoed in the late twentieth century by Sieghardt Döhring and Sabine Henze-Döhring, who see Meyerbeer's operas as 'operas of ideas', though these authors wisely avoid the older Teutonic stereotypes.[61] Indeed, it was only after the nineteenth century that French critics themselves finally discarded the reductionist association of 'idea opera' with German music. Marcel Landowski's important *Le fou* (1957), for example, deals with the paradox of spiritual yearning and innocence juxtaposed with sophisticated science that allows apocalyptic destruction. No critic of his day would have thought to attribute this philosophical bent to Germanic taste. *Le fou* can also claim to share in a tradition of French taste for experimentation with colour: it is the first opera ever written to incorporate taped sounds.

Charles Rosen has suggested a different perspective on grand opera by accentuating its populist and frankly sensationalist aspects, broadly defined as 'cheap melodrama dressed up as aristocratic tragedy'.[62] Rosen perhaps draws high/low aesthetic criteria and social markers too sharply without recognising enough intermediate shades that are more flattering to the Gallic muse. Olivier Bara, for example, has written an entire monograph on Restoration *opéra comique* as a *genre moyen* without a pejorative hint. For his part, Hervé Lacombe has understood Auber's *opéras comiques* as exhibiting a particularly French 'esthétique de la conversation': 'nothing out of measure, no overblown emphasis nor pedantry, but finesse, nuance, restraint'.[63] The aesthetic world of brilliant and witty conversation may not explore the sublime, but affords its own pleasures that one would be hard pressed to squeeze into a high/low binary. Heinrich Heine wrote of the distrust of heroism exhibited by the nineteenth-century French bourgeois,[64] an observation that might be extended to a privileging of the real over the ideal. A strong national school of realism and then naturalism in literature had reverberations on the operatic stage in a *genre moyen* with its ingénues, thundering fathers and servants. In *Carmen* an older *opéra comique* character type not only lives on in Micaëla but coexists with a much fuller extension of the realist line away from the sublime in Carmen and Don José. Small wonder that French opera composers became especially adept at local colour (an extension of the 'characteristic' mode) and the exotic – as in *Carmen* and Léo Delibes's *Lakmé* (1883), where the dream-world bubble of the Indian setting is punctured by the chattering European characters. As in other national operatic traditions, the exotic – but often merely ornamental – *couleur locale* of the nineteenth century became the more thoroughgoing syntactical challenge of world music in the twentieth century. The *opéra-ballet Padmâvâti* (1923) incorporates the substantial ethnographic knowledge of both its composer Albert Roussel (1869–1937) and its

librettist Louis Laloy (1874–1944) on the level of plot, rhythm, harmony, melody and orchestration. Later, as an alternative to structuralism, Ohana's range was particularly cosmopolitan and – the word, once again, does not seem inappropriate – eclectic.[65] Japanese Noh play meets Euripides in *Syllabaire pour Phèdre* (1968); Chinese opera informs the music theatre piece *Trois contes de l'honorable fleur* (1978); multiple languages combine with microtones and influences of medieval music in his largest work for the stage, *La Célestine*.[66]

Critics consistently identified *opéra comique* with a 'national spirit' throughout the nation-conscious nineteenth century. Albert Soubies and Charles Malherbe concluded their mammoth study of the institution that was home to the genre by writing of 'a group of qualities that belong to the real essence of our race – charm and finesse, wit and clarity'; all very different, they go on to note, from Italian opera buffa and Viennese operetta.[67] *Opéra comique* as a genre remained much more resistant to Italian formal types than grand opera. Overt Italianisms were frequently scorned. At the turn of the century, the naturalist composer Alfred Bruneau (1857–1934) was vociferous in distinguishing his brand of realism from the *veristi*. Offenbach also thought that *opéra comique* at its best was 'éminemment française' – more refined than Italian counterparts. His complaint in 1856 was that its pretensions had become too lofty; in setting out the parameters for *opérette* he appealed to tried and true eighteenth-century models.[68] Yet perhaps a latent and perennial cause for anxiety was that the French public had always flocked to the Italian repertoire. French management would, after all, aggressively court Verdi and Puccini. A recent opera by Philippe Hersant (b. 1948), *Le château des Carpathes* (1993; after Jules Verne), seems a poignant testimony to this historical attraction: an Italian lament sung by a famous opera star gets transformed into a voice-object produced by an elaborate music box that lures the protagonist to his destruction (somewhat redolent of the maternal voice at the end of *Robert le diable* via *Les contes d'Hoffmann*).

Around Offenbach's time Gounod sought to achieve a greater sense of interiority in works such as *Faust* and *Roméo et Juliette* (1867). Again this should not be confused with a quest for the sublime: a relatively quotidian devil and philosopher inhabit Goethe's premise. The new-found interiority produced a responsive chromatic harmonic language, delicate part-writing in the orchestra and, even more, attention to nuance of prosody and melodic expression. The nationalist claim could, then, be applied here as well, especially at a time of increasing internationalisation of opera. Gounod pointed the way ahead to later French composers with regard to the melodic suppleness that could be carved out of the French language itself. The preoccupation remains germane today, though in the past,

suppleness sometimes became equated with effeminacy, particularly with a later figure such as Massenet, where a languid style and supposedly low intellectual level cast French music as a kind of 'Other' to Teutonic repertoires. The influence of Wagner would exacerbate such tendencies. After an initial generation of critics hostile to Wagner's brand of the sublime, myriad debates at the *fin de siècle* centred on how best to conflate his achievement with the French spirit.[69] For a figure like d'Indy it was through the cultivation of Catholic transcendence, still manifest, though in a much less self-conscious and confrontational way, in Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*. For Debussy it was through a Symbolist alchemy of rationalism and suggestion. Boulez views the vocabulary of *Pelléas* as deeply indebted to *Parsifal*,[70] but the restraint and understatement of the score lend themselves to French nationalist rhetoric. Wherever one wishes to put the emphasis, it is difficult to deny that admiration for Debussy's work has been nearly unanimous from later French composers, its influence so rich and wide-ranging that one might speak of this single work as a unifying feature for the later French opera repertoire.

Notes

1 See Wayne Northcutt, 'François Mitterrand and the political use of symbols: the construction of a centrist republic', *French Historical Studies*, 17 (1991), 141–58.
2 Frédérique Patureau, *Le Palais Garnier dans la société parisienne, 1875–1914* (Liège: Mardaga, 1991), 455.
3 Hugh Macdonald, 'La genèse des "Troyens"', *L'avant-scène opéra*, 128–9 (1990), 24.
4 Northcutt, 'François Mitterrand', 156.
5 Francis Claudon, Jean Mongrédien, Carl de Nys and Karlheinz Roschitz, *Histoire de l'opéra en France* (Paris: Nathan, 1984), 164.
6 For a survey of repertoire at the Opéra, see Stéphane Wolff, *L'Opéra au Palais Garnier, 1875–1962* (Paris: Journal Entracte, 1962); Albert Soubies, *Soixante-sept ans à l'Opéra en une page: du 'Siège de Corinthe' à 'La Walkyrie', 1826–93* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1893); and a website with extensive documentation: http://chronopera.free.fr/ (accessed 14 May 2014).
7 The composer Henri Sauguet reviewed the main grievances in *La situation du théâtre-lyrique en France* (Paris: Institut de France, 1971). See also Bruno Brevan, 'Politique musicale et théâtre lyrique en France (1945–1985)', in Danièle Pistone (ed.), *Le théâtre lyrique français, 1945–1985* (Paris: Champion, 1987), 43–50. A somewhat more positive view of the period of the Réunion des Théâtres Lyriques Nationaux is Jean Gourret, *Ces hommes qui ont fait l'opéra, 1669–1984* (Paris: Éditions Albatros, 1984), 171–84.
8 Michel Rostain, 'Àbas le théâtre musical!', in Pistone (ed.), *Le théâtre lyrique français*, 171–8.
9 The interview is translated as '"Opera houses? – Blow them up!"', *Opera*, 19 (1968), 440–8.
10 James Coomarasamy, 'Conductor held over "terrorism" comment', *BBC News*, 4 December 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1692628.stm (accessed 14 May 2014).
11 François Porcile, *Les conflits de la musique française, 1940–1965* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 194–5.
12 Boulez, '"Opera houses? – Blow them up!"', 444–5.
13 For a tabular review of the administrative history of the Opéra-Comique, see Raphaëlle Legrand and Nicole Wild, *Regards sur l'opéra-comique: trois siècles de vie théâtrale* (Paris: CNRS, 2002), 257–9.
14 'Rolf Liebermann replies', *Opera*, 19 (1968), 448–50.
15 Liebermann's personal communication to Francis Claudon, in Claudon et al., *Histoire de l'opéra*, 171.
16 Brevan, 'Politique musicale', 44.
17 Olivier Messiaen, *Saint François d'Assise*, '"It's a secret of love": an interview with Olivier Messiaen', in booklet for CD recording, Kent Nagano and Hallé Orchestra, Deutsche Grammophon 445176 (1999).

18 Further to this point of view, see Richard Taruskin, 'Sacred entertainments', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 15 (2003), 109–26.
19 Legrand and Wild, *Regards sur l'opéra-comique*, 252.
20 Philippe Agid and Jean-Claude Tarondeau, *L'Opéra de Paris: gouverner une grande institution culturelle* (Paris: Éditions Vuibert, 2006).
21 His feuilleton is anthologised in Pier Angelo Fiorentino, *Comédies et comédiens* (Paris: M. Lévy, 1866), 295.
22 For a methodological reflection about genre as it relates to the French lyric theatre, see Hervé Lacombe, 'De la différenciation des genres: réflexion sur la notion de genre lyrique français au début du XIXe siècle', *Revue de musicologie*, 84 (1998), 247–62. See also his 'Définitions des genres lyriques dans les dictionnaires français du XIXe siècle', in Paul Prévost (ed.), *Le théâtre lyrique en France au XIXe siècle* (Metz: Éditions Serpenoise, 1995), 297–334.
23 For an overview of legislation that regulated Parisian theatres, see Nicole Wild, *Dictionnaire des théâtres parisiens au XIXe siècle: les théâtres et la musique* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989), 9–19. Wild's dictionary has entries that provide basic empirical information (including legislative status, and primary- and secondary-source references) for the hundreds of theatres established in the capital over the course of the century.
24 Raphaëlle Legrand and Patrick Taïeb, 'L'Opéra Comique sous le consulat et l'empire', in Prévost (ed.), *Le théâtre lyrique en France*, 2.
25 As we have observed, in French theatre history the convention frequently, though not invariably, distinguishes the company from the building where it performed, e.g. the Opéra company at the Bastille and Palais Garnier.
26 From 1801 to 1815 the Théâtre de l'Impératrice was housed at the Théâtre de l'Odéon on the Left Bank and featured the alternation of a troupe of actors with performers of Italian opera buffa. See Wild, *Dictionnaire*, 196.
27 For a comparative analysis of ticket prices, see Dominique Leroy, *Histoire des arts du spectacle en France: aspects économiques, politiques et esthétiques de la Renaissance à la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Harmattan, 1990), 136–57. For an analysis of the opera-going public of a slightly later period as well as methodological problems associated with this kind of study, see Steven Huebner, 'Opera audiences in Paris 1830–1870', *Music and Letters*, 70 (1989), 206–25.
28 Figures from Leroy, *Histoire des arts du spectacle*, 109.
29 Olivier Bara, *Le théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique sous la restauration: enquête autour d'un genre moyen* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2001), 374–81.
30 For an application of principles of the well-made play to Scribe's librettos, see Karin Pendle, *Eugène Scribe and French Opera of the Nineteenth Century* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1979). See also Herbert Schneider (ed.), *Das Vaudeville: Funktionen eines multimedialen Phänomens* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1996).
31 Emilio Sala, *L'opera senza canto: il mélo romantico e l'invenzione della colonna sonora* (Venice: Marsilio, 1995).
32 James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 165–81.
33 For an overview of the Opéra repertoire in this period, see Jean Mongrédien, *La musique en France des lumières au romantisme, 1789–1830* (Paris: Flammarion, 1986), 63–87.
34 Wild, *Dictionnaire*, 355–6.
35 The definitive study is Mark Everist, *Music Drama at the Paris Odéon, 1824–1828* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
36 Ibid., 258–62.
37 Figures from the Commission Supérieure de l'Opéra to the minister of *beaux-arts*, 20 May 1831, Paris, Archives Nationales, AJ13 180. See also Johnson, *Listening in Paris*, 239–56. On business practices at the Opéra in this period, see John D. Drysdale, *Louis Véron and the Finances of the Académie Royale de Musique* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003).
38 Jane Fulcher, *The Nation's Image: French Grand Opera as Politics and Politicized Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 18.
39 Frédéric Soulié, *Deux séjours: province et Paris* (Paris: Hippolyte Souverain, 1836), 211.
40 Anselm Gerhard, *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Mary Whittall (University of Chicago Press, 1998).
41 Marian Smith, 'Dance and dancers', in David Charlton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 103–4.
42 Irène Némirovsky, *Suite française*, trans. Sandra Smith (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 25.
43 The major study is Marian Smith, *Ballet and Opera in the Age of* Giselle (Princeton University Press, 2000).
44 Figures from Demographia, 'Paris arrondissements: population & density:

pre-1860 definitions', www.demographia.com/db-paris-arrondpre1860.htm (accessed 14 May 2014).
45 Soulié, *Deux séjours*, 226. Social practices in this period are well described in Patrick Barbier, *Opera in Paris, 1800–1850: A Lively History*, trans. Robert Luoma (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1995).
46 Wild, *Dictionnaire*, 330.
47 For an excellent case study around this house, see Mark Everist, 'Donizetti and Wagner: *opéra de genre* at the Théâtre de la Renaissance', in *Giacomo Meyerbeer and Music Drama in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 309–41.
48 The definitive study is T. J. Walsh, *Second Empire Opera: The Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, 1851–1870* (London: John Calder, 1981).
49 Ibid., 5–7.
50 Brevan, 'Politique musicale', 47–8.
51 Walsh, *Second Empire Opera*, 206–9.
52 The complete *cahier des charges* is summarised in the most reliable and complete biography of Offenbach, Jean-Claude Yon, *Jacques Offenbach* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 155.
53 See Renée Cariven-Galharret and Dominque Ghesquière, *Hervé: un musicien paradoxal, 1825–1892* (Paris: Éditions des Cendres, 1992), 36–8.
54 The study most famously associated with this point of view, owing to the intellectual pedigree of its author, is Siegfried Kracauer, *Jacques Offenbach and the Paris of his Time*, trans. Gwenda David and Eric Mosbacher (New York: Zone Books, 2002). The most detailed study of *opérette* remains Florian Bruyas, *Histoire de l'opérette en France, 1855–1965* (Lyons: Emmanuel Vitte, 1974).
55 For a critique of the traditional view of 1870 as a change of orientation, see Delphine Mordey, 'Auber's horses: *l'année terrible* and apocalyptic narratives', *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 30 (2007), 213–29.
56 James Parakilas, 'The soldier and the exotic: operatic variations on a theme of racial encounter', *Opera Quarterly*, 10/2 (1993), 33–56; 10/3 (1994), 43–69.
57 For an account, see Fulcher, *The Nation's Image*, 189–98.
58 Austin Caswell, 'Mme Cinti-Damoreau and the embellishment of Italian opera in Paris: 1820–1845', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 28 (1975), 459–92.
59 For a case study, see Steven Huebner, 'Italianate duets in Meyerbeer's grand operas', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 8 (1989), 203–56.
60 For Berlioz's review of *Robert le diable* and commentary, see Joel-Marie Fauquet, 'Les délices de l'homme-orchestre', *L'avant-scène opéra*, 76 (1985), 70–5.
61 Sieghart Döhring and Sabine Henze-Döhring, *Oper und Musikdrama im 19. Jahrhundert*, Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen, 13 (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1997), 144–64. See also Jane Fulcher, 'Meyerbeer and the music of society', *Musical Quarterly*, 67 (1981), 213–29.
62 Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 607.
63 Lacombe, 'Définitions des genres lyriques', 289.
64 Ibid., 295.
65 See Caroline Rae, 'Maurice Ohana: iconoclast or individualist', *Musical Times*, 132 (1991), 69–74.
66 See Michel Pazdro (ed.), 'Maurice Ohana: *Trois contes de l'Honorable Fleur, Syllabaire pour Phèdre, La Célestine*', *L'avant-scène opéra; opéra aujourd'hui*, hors série 3 (1991; special issue devoted to Ohana).
67 Albert Soubies and Charles Malherbe, *Histoire de l'Opéra Comique: la seconde Salle Favart, 1840–1887*, 2 vols (Paris: Flammarion, 1893), vol. II, 446.
68 Yon, *Jacques Offenbach*, 179–80.
69 For an exploration of this, see Steven Huebner, *French Opera at the* Fin de Siècle*: Wagnerism, Nationalism, and Style* (Oxford University Press, 1999).
70 See the discussion in Roger Nichols and Richard Langham Smith, *Claude Debussy:* Pelléas et Mélisande (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 163–5. See examples in Robin Holloway, *Debussy and Wagner* (London: Eulenburg, 1979), 76–135.