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MUSICAL LIFE IN EUROPE 1600–1900
CIRCULATION, INSTITUTIONS, REPRESENTATION

Les sociétés de musique en Europe 1700–1920

Structures, pratiques musicales, sociabilités



sous la direction de
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Democracy, Ethics, and Commerce: the *Concerts populaires* Movement in late 19th-century France

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In May 1884 Emile Pasdeloup was forced to fold his *Concerts populaires de musique classique* after 23 years of performances. Competition had seduced his audiences and driven him into debt. Paris was stunned. The critic Arthur Pougin gave him a eulogy fit for a hero:

“In an age when bland and shallow music had taken over, when tinsel art was shamelessly spreading everywhere, he had faith in the public spirit; he believed that a healthy, comforting work, full of greatness and nobility, had a chance to succeed. [...] Thanks to his intelligent initiative, Mr. Pasdeloup – and in this lies his most noble reward – was able to see a profound change in our artistic customs. [...] Thanks to him, musical art in France is no longer restricted to theaters alone; he has exposed audiences to the most diverse, the broadest and loftiest trends, and a whole school of young musicians which would not exist without him has proved that away from the stage our artists could create works worthy of the highest esteem. [...]

That is not all. The movement he started in Paris soon spread not only throughout France but also abroad, to not just Europe, but also the New World, and it can be said that it has now taken over the entire universe.”¹

Pougin was not exaggerating. Pasdeloup's concerts did begin a movement. They started out in 1861 as inexpensive Sunday matinées in a Parisian circus for 5000 listeners – half of them facing musicians' backs and all squeezed onto hard wooden benches, surrounded by the stench of horses – and went on to motivate imitators from Paris to the United States. In 1872, three contenders sprang up in Paris alone, each committed to performing symphonic music by French composers.² The following year, the music

¹ Arthur Pougin, “M. Pasdeloup et les Concerts populaires”, *Le Ménestrel* (11.05.1884), p. 188-189. For a study of the early years of this society, see Antoine Elwart, *Histoire des Concerts populaires de musique classique* (Paris, 1864). For comparative studies, see Elizabeth Bernard, *La vie symphonique à Paris entre 1861 et 1914*, Thèse de 3^e cycle, Histoire, Paris 1 (1976), and Jeffrey Cooper, *The Rise of Instrumental Music and Concerts Series in Paris, 1828-1871* (Ann Arbor [Mich.], 1983).

² Besselièvre's Festival populaire alternated songs with instrumental works, classical with modern ones, while devoting time to works by young French composers; Saint-Saëns agreed to conduct a new group, the Société philharmonique de Paris, probably because of its commitment to new French music; and Jules Danbé began a concert series on Sunday afternoons at the Grand-Hôtel, though with a smaller orchestra than Pasdeloup and a repertoire that included opera excerpts. Not as successful as Pasdeloup, Danbé was later forced to move his concerts to Thursdays.

publisher Georges Hartmann hired Colonne to put on a series of French orchestral concerts at the Théâtre de l'Odéon. Elizabeth Bernard has called them "a pure and simple imitation of the Concert populaire" in part because they sold seats so cheaply.³ In fact, ticket prices were *less* than at the Concerts populaires, i.e. from 50 centimes to 3 francs as opposed to from 75 centimes to 5 francs – this in a town where the bus cost 25 centimes and artisans made 2,50 francs/day. Others concert societies followed, some experience of hearing his orchestra in provincial cities, stimulated similar concert societies all over the country, beginning with Toulouse and Bordeaux (see Table 2).⁴ These provided orchestral music for a much larger public than the various Cercles artistiques, open to members only, and the Sociétés philharmoniques, sometimes consisting of amateurs and not always devoted to symphonic music. Like the Parisian Concerts populaires, most provincial Table 3 lists foreign cities with concert societies inspired by Pacheloup.

What gave rise to these concerts and explains their success? How did they get critics and the government to support them? What attracted audiences in such numbers to come? How did they contribute to making musical life more bourgeois? To answer these questions, we must understand what *populaire* meant at the time.

Populaire as "the people"

Populaire was not a single concept. When it came to music, there were three definitions, whether referring to "the people," "the public," or successful commodities. The first comes from the Latin *populus*, the inhabitants of a State as distinct from its rulers.⁵ It was sometimes associated with large numbers of people. In music this was significant for, with the population of Paris rising 50 % between 1860 and 1896, audiences for music were bound to grow. Generally speaking, *populaire* meant having broad appeal, something that could be understood or at least appreciated by many kinds of people.

³ Elizabeth Bernard, "Jules Pacheloup et les Concerts populaires", *Revue de musicologie*, 57 (1971), p. 150-178, here p. 162.

⁴ Pacheloup, for example, took his orchestra to Rouen on 10 March 1872, to Angers on 11 May 1872, and to Trouville in August 1875. However, these visits did not always have the intended effect. In *Le Ménestrel* (8.06.1884), H. Moreno points out that these concerts cost money that could have gone to local orchestras. Moreover, after hearing Pacheloup, people sometimes stopped patronizing their local orchestras, subsequently perceived as inferior.

⁵ The word *populaire* does not translate well into English in part because of differences between French and Anglo-American sociopolitical cultures. For an excellent discussion of the etymological origins and use of *populaire* and *le peuple*, see Genevieve Hoffman, *Le Peuple par écrit* (Paris, 1986), chapter 1.

Table 1: Orchestral concerts in Paris⁶

Creation	Sunday	Other days
1828*	<i>Société des Concerts du Conservatoire</i> , [Conservatoire] {2-12 fr }	
1853	<i>Société des Jeunes Artistes</i> , dir. Pacheloup (1853-1856) [Salle Herz]; <i>Société des Jeunes Artistes du Conservatoire</i> (1856-61) {3,5 fr }	
1861*	<i>Concerts populaires de musique classique</i> , dir. Pacheloup (1861-84, 1886-87) [Cirque Napoléon, renamed Cirque d'hiver] { .75-5 fr }	
1862	<i>Concerts on the Champs-Elysées</i> , dir. Arban (1861-64); Prévost (1864-?) <i>Concerts at the Pré-Catalan</i> , dir. Musard (1862-64); Forestier (1864-68) [summers]	
1864	<i>Concerts-promenades at the Hôtel Laffite</i> , dir. Varney (nightly)	
1866	<i>Concerts at the Théâtre du Prince Impérial</i> , dir. Musard (1866-?) [winters]	
1871	<i>Concerts du Grand-Hôtel</i> , dir. Danbé (1871-75); move to Sun evening; Dec 1873 to Thurs evening [Salle Herz]; Nov 1874-75 [Salle Taubout]; <i>Festival populaire de Châtelet</i> , fd. Besselièvre; May 1873 move to Jardin des Champs-Elysées, dir. Besselièvre	
1872	<i>Société philharmonique de Paris</i> , dir. Saint-Saëns (1872-73); Guion (1873-74); Colonne (1874-?), Sat, Thurs; <i>Société d'amateurs</i> (1879-?)	
1873	<i>Société des symphonistes</i> , dir. Délédicque (feb-ap 1872) [square du temple]; [1876-77] (Pleyel)	
1874*	<i>Concerts Frascati</i> (1873-74), dir. Besselièvre every day <i>Concert National</i> , dir. Colonne (Mar-April 1873) [Odéon] { .50-3 fr }	
1875	<i>Association artistique des Concerts Colonne</i> , dir. Colonne (1874-1910); Gabriel Pierné (1910-1934) [Théâtre Châtelet] { .75-5; 1-6; 1.5-8 }	
1878	<i>Concerts modernes de musique classique</i> , dir. Chollet [Cirque Fernando] (1875); Thursdays (1876-77) { .50 - 5 fr }	
1881*	<i>Concert-Cressonnois</i> , dir. Cressonnois, Lioolf [Théâtre Porte St-Martin] <i>Société des Nouveaux-Concerts</i> , dir. Lamoureux (1881-1899); Chéviillard (1899-?) [Théâtre Chateau-d'Eau, Eden-Théâtre, Cirque des Champs-Elysées] { 1.25-10; 2-10; 2-8; }	
1883	<i>Concerts Broustet</i> , dir. Broustet (May 1881-Dec 82) Sun evening [Cirque des Champs-Elysées] (1883) Thurs evening [Hotel Continental]	
1884	<i>Concerts Besselièvre</i> (summer) <i>Société des Concerts modernes</i> [anciens Concerts populaires], dir. Godard (1884-86) [Cirque d'hiver] { .75 -5 fr }	

⁶ This list does not include most short series (such as that of the Union internationale des compositeurs in 1884), neighborhood orchestras (such as the Concert Charpentier in Passy c. 1903), and private performances with orchestra, including those of the Société Nationale and other music societies. Ticket prices do not include surcharges for large works with chorus or expensive soloists. We highlight the increasing occurrences of "populaire".

Creation	Sunday	Other days
1887	<i>Concerts populaires de l'Ecole française de musique et de déclamation</i> , dir. Montardon [Théâtre Château-d'Eau] (1887-88?)	
1887	<i>Concerts populaires du Palais royal</i> , dir. Auvray (summer) {50 c.}	<i>Grand concerts</i> , Thursdays {2 fr}; <i>Concerts-promenades</i> , other evenings
1889	<i>Concerts Rouge</i> , dir. Lafitte (1889-96); Touche (1896-1906); Rabani (1906-13) nightly (brasserie) {1.25-1.75 fr}	
1892*	<i>Concerts éclectiques populaires</i> , dir. d'Harcourt (1892-96, 97-99), Sunday evng { .50- 5 fr} Grands concerts, Sun matinée [Salle d'Harc.] {50 c. -10 fr}; <i>Concerts-Conférences</i> , dir. Doret, Wednesday evening	
1893*	<i>Concerts populaires du Jardin zoologique d'acclimation</i> , dir. Pister (1893-96); Lafitte (1896-190?) [Palais d'hiver] { .20-1.5 fr}; <i>Concerts-promenades</i> , weekdays (1893-95); Thursdays (1895-190?) [Palmarium] {20 c.}; <i>Les auditions du mercredi</i> , dir. Pister (1896), [Palais d'hiver] {1-4 fr}	
1895	<i>Concerts de l'Opéra</i> (Nov 1895-97) <i>Nouvelle Société Philharmonique</i> , dir. Breitner [Agriculteurs], Thursday, Saturday, 1897, Wednesday <i>Festival populaire des Concerts Lamoureux</i> (benefit concert, 6 Jan 1895) <i>Séances historiques – Concerts d'Harcourt</i> , Thursdays (1895)	<i>Société des Grands-Concerts</i> , dir. Colonne [Eden-Théâtre] four times a week: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Sat (fall 1893)
1897	<i>Concerts at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu</i> , Thurs matinée; <i>Association artistique des Concerts Colonne</i> , Thurs matinée (1897-1901) [Nouveau Théâtre] {2-5 fr}	
1898	<i>Concerts populaires des Concerts Lamoureux</i> , Thurs evening (spring 1898) [Nouveau Théâtre]	
1899	<i>Société des matinées populaires</i> , dir. Danbé, Wednesdays [Théâtre Renaissance] { .50-2 fr}	
1900	<i>Société des concerts symphoniques populaires</i> , dir. Pister (1900-03) [Grand Palais] {50 c.}	
1901	<i>Les grands concerts symphoniques de Paris</i> , each week a different conductor, Thursdays [Théâtre Vaudeville]	
1902	<i>Société populaire de musique</i> , dir. Brussel, Garnier <i>Association Le Rey</i> , which became <i>Nouveaux concerts populaires</i> , dir. Le Rey (1902-13)	
1906	<i>Concerts Touche</i> , dir. Touche, nightly (brasserie) (1906-?) {1.25-2.25 fr}	
1914	<i>Société des concerts populaires</i> , dir. Monteux [Casino de Paris] { .50 -5 fr}	

Table 2: Orchestral concerts in the French provinces (partial list)

<i>Concerts populaires</i>	<i>Société philharm.</i>	<i>Société</i>	<i>Association</i>	<i>Cercle</i>
Toulouse 1862	Caen by 1826 La Rochelle by 1826 Strasbourg 1855			
Bordeaux 1863	Bordeaux 1868	Bordeaux		Bordeaux Nantes
Nantes 1866	Nantes			
Rennes	Limoges			
La Rochelle	Dieppe			
Marseille 1871	Marseille	Marseille		Marseille 1868
Brest 1872	Le Mans			
Versailles 1872	Clermont-Fd 1880			Aix-les-Bains
Rouen	Rouen 1834	Dijon	Angers 1876	
Lyon 1874	Lyon 1884		Roubaix	
Lille 1876	Arras			
Boulogne 1882	Besançon	Perpignan 1880		
Orleans	Poitiers			
Reims	Niort			
Verdun	Verdun			
Valenciennes	Chartres	Le Havre		
Alger	Boulogne sur mer	Tourcoing		

Table 3: Selected Concerts populaires abroad

Brussels 1865	London	Moscow
Florence	(Concerts-Promenades, Covent Garden; Saturday Popular Concerts 1893)	Madrid
Milan		New York
Turino		
Genoa	Birmingham	

More specifically in 19th-century France, *populaire* referred to a utopian sense of the lower classes developed during the Revolution and an association with what was meaningful and authentic in culture, what persevered beyond politics, not as during the Revolution when popular songs often concerned social critique or resistance. In his influential text, *Le Peuple* (1846, 1866), Michelet describes suffering in all classes of society: peasants, machine workers, manufacturers, bureaucrats, and even the rich. However, for Republicans trying to address the enormous divisions and inequalities within the nation, *populaire* came to imply a kind of righteousness associated with the lower classes and a debt which elites owe to them because of their suffering, because (according to Catholic tradition) they have a special place in God's eyes, or because (according to Socialist tradition) they have been victimized, exploited, or alienated.⁷ *Populaire* also referred to the need in a democracy to assimilate these classes through education in order to produce informed citizens who would support the political order. In the 19th-century then, *populaire* was not so much what was produced by the lower classes, as what was given them for their consumption to bring their ideals into conformity with those of their leaders.

Underlying the *populaire* was also the acknowledgement that when gathered together, people are susceptible to change. Emotion can render them excitable, explosive, dangerous. They can threaten public order and the authority of the State, as they sometimes did in the late 1880s and 1890s.⁸ This means that any attempt to influence "the people" should also be understood as a means of controlling or pacifying them. Many French did not want any more Revolutions. As Pierre Bourdieu and others have pointed out, whatever "use" is made of people as a group depends on interests and struggle among those attempting this influence as well as their position in the field of production.⁹ In sum, under the aegis of teaching civic values, populism may disguise the effects of domination as it did in primary school manuals of the time.

Education of the lower classes thus was a crucial element of the *populaire*. Michelet saw politics and education as synonymous: to make a democracy was to educate its people and that education should last a lifetime. First, looking back to Rousseau, he saw the need to educate man's social sentiments, that which would allow him to identify with the general interest of the country. For this, his passions must be domesticated, his desires elevated. Second, Michelet understood education as impossible without faith, faith in the country (which, like other Gods, has its own dogmas, principles,

and legends). Ultimately these two projects were circular: teaching certain feelings – "the life of the heart" – would teach love of country.

This "top-down" aspect of the *populaire* certainly infiltrated literature and theater at the time, but was also important when it came to music.¹⁰ Many believed in the ancient Greek practice of education through music. This art was thought to be the "direct translation of moral feelings" and to be capable of teaching feelings as well as "softening one's manners, raising man to the level of his intelligence [...] making him understand the precious resources that nature has given him." Participation in choral singing, in particular, was believed to help people "control their passions themselves" while serving as a "respite from their problems, a relaxation from their work, and a remedy to all their suffering." Municipal orphéons, made up of workers, were called "conservatories of the people" because they not only taught singing "within the limits of their hearts and purses," but also "habituated them to loving, or at least respecting, social institutions." In this context, music was considered the "most human, the most social" art because it often needs groups and depends on collaboration.¹¹ By 1876, F.-A. Gevaert claimed that "no art plays a more important role in modern life, none fascinates [*passionne*] the public and the masses more than music, this art which is democratic by its very nature." He believed music would help lead to the "moral and ideal perfection of humanity".¹²

Pasdeloup, who directed the Orphéon de Paris with François Bazin from 1859 to 1872, understood both the advantages of amateur choruses and wind bands, as well as their limitations. School children all over the country, workers in factories and department stores, men and women in each *arrondissement* of Paris studied music and sang or played in these groups. Over 130 Parisian schools competed in the last festival they directed in August 1872. Competitions and annual festivals typically brought together up to 8000.¹³ With their help, the taste for music grew significantly. Yet much

¹⁰ Besides the low-cost novels available, in the theatrical world, Ballande's *Matinées dramatiques* at the Théâtre de la Gaité performed "masterpieces of our classical theater before the popular classes," preceded by conferences that "explained the dramatic action and prepared the listeners." *Le Ménestrel* (11.08.1872) found them successful in attracting "new admirers who learn to live in a higher sphere and in whom the feeling for the beautiful is born and spreads."

¹¹ Marcel de Ris, *L'Orphéon* (1.10.1855); J.F. Vaudin, "Les Orphéons devant l'histoire", *L'Orphéon* (1.01.1859, and 1.09.1865).

¹² F.-A. Gevaert, "De l'Enseignement public de l'art musical à l'époque moderne", *Le Ménestrel* (8.10.1876), p. 356-359, and (15.10.1876), p. 364-365.

¹³ *Le Ménestrel* (8.08.1875) mentions a competition for communal schools that attracted 7880 children, and *Le Ménestrel* (29.08.1875) a Festival Orphéonique at the Tuileries involving 3000 performers from 80 choral and instrumental societies. *Le Ménestrel* (20.11.1892) reported that there had been 96 competitions that year, involving 3150 music societies (of which 888 were choral societies, 480 harmonies, 1631 fanfares, and 18 symphonies) for a total of 117 500 participants. See also Philippe Gumplowicz, *Les travaux d'Orphée: 150 ans de vie musicale amateur en France: harmonies – chorales – fanfares* (Paris, 1987).

⁷ I am grateful to my research assistant, Jean-Louis Morhange, for this insight.

⁸ See Gustave Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules* (Paris, 1895) which expresses fear of crowds and posits negative associations with the *populaire* at the end of the century.

⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, "The uses of 'the people'", in: *idem, In other words: essays towards a reflexive sociology* (Oxford, 1990), p. 150-155.

of the repertoire was transcriptions of light fare or opera, very little music by major composers written specifically for them. And performances were often mediocre. If music was to live up to its function as a moralizing force, "the people" needed music that was more serious and more elevating. Padeloup took this to mean the German classics. Few, and only those of means, could get in to hear these works performed by the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire. It was then to serve the thousands who, because of their limited means, had no access to these classics that he founded his Concerts populaires de musique classique.

In some ways, Padeloup was the ideal person to undertake such a project. He knew personally the city's most illustrious elites whose support was crucial in the creation of the Concerts populaires. The Emperor had authorized his first orchestra, the Société des Jeunes Artistes, contributing 500 francs. Padeloup was once in charge of the private musical soirées of the Princess Mathilde. He also organized the Friday concerts of the Louvre and played regularly at the home of Baron Haussmann.¹⁴ It is possible that Haussman, Prefect of Paris, agreed to finance the Concerts populaires out of guilt or concern for those forced to abandon their apartments as a result of his demolition of entire streets and neighbourhoods. The Cirque Napoléon was all that remained of the theaters along the Boulevard du Temple when the Concerts populaires began and those who lived near by were mostly artisans and *petits bourgeois*. Did Haussman consider these concerts a way of inspiring workers to respect, if not also to embrace, middle-class values? In any case, Padeloup himself was sensitive to workers. He participated in the 1848 revolution under the name of Corporal Moustique, and, after his father died and he received his prize from the Conservatory, he had to go to work to make money.¹⁵

The State too got involved, not only to make music accessible to the working classes, but also to protect as well as educate them. Until 1878, support for orchestral societies had come only from the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine-Arts as "encouragement" for those performing French composers. In 1874 Colonne received 2000 francs, while the Concerts Danbé at the Grand-Hôtel got 1000 francs (down from 2000 francs in 1873), and the Société philharmonique 400 francs. The Minister continued to fund Colonne's "Concerts populaires" with 2000 francs per year until 1878 when the deputies themselves got involved in the discussions.¹⁶ Padeloup wrote to

¹⁴ Bernard, "Jules Padeloup et les Concerts populaires", p. 154-156.

¹⁵ Bernard, *La vie symphonique à Paris*, p. 25.

¹⁶ In 1874, the Minister also accorded 500 francs to the Société classique de musique de chambre, 400 to the Société Nationale, and 400 to the Société Beaulieu, which concentrated on choral music. Support was also given in the early 1870s to Bourgault-Ducoudray's choral group and the Société des compositeurs, both of whom received 500 francs, and in 1876 to three quartets. See *Le Ménestrel* (5.01.1873), p. 47, (25.01.1874), p. 63, and (12.03.1876), p. 118. Myriam Chimènes focuses on funds coming directly from the deputies and so leaves these out of her study, "Le Budget de la musique sous la IIIe République", in: Huguen

them on 23 January 1878, arguing that concert receipts were not sufficient to allow him to put on large choral works for which he requested special funding.¹⁷ On 14 February the deputies devoted substantial time to his proposal in their discussion of the annual Fine-Arts budget. The Minister himself, Agénour Bardoux from the Republican left, argued for giving the Concerts populaires a government subsidy. He, like many others, saw them offering a healthy alternative to the immoral songs heard at the cafés-concerts and thus as "fighting against the invasion of bad taste".¹⁸

"The taste for the fine-arts has developed in France in recent years in large proportions. Music has participated in this development for the most part. Today there is not a town nor even a village that does not have its orphéon or fanfare. Everywhere well-organized societies devote themselves to musical study which has so many advantages from all points of view.

But the artistic level has not risen here [...] today, more than ever, it is light works, operettas produced in secondary theaters, little songs spouting forth in cafés-concerts that have the privilege of attracting the greatest number of spectators. [...]

It is the responsibility of the State to react against these *abérations* of national taste, to place next to light and futile works examples of lofty literature and music in its most elevated expression. This is the purpose of subsidies to serious theaters that maintain art at this level."

After voting 1 971 500 francs for the national theaters and Conservatory, the deputies then listened to the Reporter's arguments for funding Chapter 44bis, "Encouragements for the Concerts populaires." Music was in "complete decadence." The public's taste was "perverted." Padeloup's concerts were bringing together "all classes of the population" for an "excessively modest price." The competition had driven him "close to ruin." What will workers do, who for only 75 centimes, used these as "their Sunday leisure?" "We can't let perish an institution that has rendered so many services." The Minister concurred:

"It is certainly one of the best institutions produced in recent years, permitting families that are not rich to spend two or three hours listening to the noble works of Beethoven, Mozart, and Haydn. Nothing raises the heart more. It is a means of education I've always encouraged. (Expressions of approval!)"

Dufourt, Joël-Marie Fauquet (eds.), *La Musique. Du théorique au politique* (Paris, 1991), p. 261-312.

¹⁷ This letter is reproduced in *Le Ménestrel* (10.02.1878), p. 85.

¹⁸ In his "Concerts populaires de musique classique", *Art Musical* (19.12.1861), Oscar Comettant found the Concerts populaires an ideal way to "combat the culture of Pont-Neuf that seems so profoundly enrooted in our tastes" (p. 19).

Whether a continuation of or replacement for Church on Sundays, others agreed:

"It is one of the most useful institutions [...] and there is no better way to spend Sunday, torn away from the café and cabaret. (It's true! Very good!) Encourage the Concerts populaires in proportion to their sacrifices and their efforts! [...]"

They were born of an excellent idea, honest as well as artistic: to purify and form the taste of the working classes, to initiate and make them feel attached to great, strong, and serious music in a period when art has fallen very low and when too many people seek it in certain places where it could never have its temple! (Very good! Very good!).¹⁹

With Baron Haussmann there further advancing the cause, Padeloup was awarded 20 000 francs per year, an amount he maintained until the end.²⁰

Amidst this discussion, it did not escape notice that other "Concerts populaires," particularly in the provinces, were also deserving. Because these too "serve morality and public education," in their July 1879 meeting, the deputies discussed allotting 25 000 francs specifically for "Encouragements to music societies." This passed in 1880. By 1895, the subsidy had risen to 28 000 francs; however, according to one deputy, there were approximately 7000 such societies to divide it: "democratic schools of education" with 60 000 members (some of them composed of "modest employees, workers, country folk, and laborers") responsible for more than 35 million francs of commercial activity.²¹ In 1896, because they were attended by "dilettants belonging to all classes of society," the deputies voted to give the Concerts populaires of Marseilles 5500 francs, that of Bordeaux, dir. Gabriel Marie, 2400 francs, and that of Lille, dir. Emile Ratez, 2000 francs. Only 16 000 was budgeted for lesser music societies in Paris, the provinces, and Algeria.²²

In principle then, Republican leaders tried over and over to tie their subsidies of the operas houses and major orchestras to the requirement that certain concerts and low-cost tickets be made available to those who could not ordinarily afford to attend. As *Ménestral* once put it in 1892, if the State

¹⁹ Annales de la Chambre des députés, Séance of 14.02.1878, p. 247-255; also in the *Journal Officiel de la République Française* (15.02.1878), p. 1575-1582.

²⁰ By contrast, the Ministers awarded Colonne 5000 francs in 1878-79 and 10 000 francs/year thereafter. In 1892 they raised this to 15 000 francs/year.

²¹ Annales de la Chambre des députés, Séance du 15.02.1895, p. 440, and Séance du 28.11.1896, p. 645-646. It was during the latter discussion that the deputies decided to consider a Cahiers de Charges for Colonne and Lamoureux, requiring them to perform works by young French composers in return for their subsidies. By their count in 1895, Henri Maréchal and Gabriel Parès found "approximately 8500 orphéons, harmonies, and fanfares in the 87 départements and Algeria, Tunisia, Guyana, and Martinique; see Henri Maréchal, Gabriel Parès, *Monographie universelle de l'orphéon* (Paris, 1910), p. 310.

²² In 1892 there were 18 amateur symphonic societies; see *Le Ménestral* (20.11.1892), p. 375.

is a crushing force [*écrasement*], it can also be a rebuilding one [*relèvement*]. However, very little State support was ever allotted for less prominent music societies. This raises a question as to the deputies' actual intent and recalls a motive Diderot associated with the *populaire*, that which attracts the benevolence of the people so that they would pardon other actions.²³ Perhaps those trying to make a democratic society out of disenchanted monarchists, religious conservatives, provincial traditionalists, and hopeful socialists valued music not only for its moralizing power, but also for its capacity to cross class lines and bridge political differences within the various classes as it did among the elites who attended the Opéra or the Société des Concerts. Most discussions in the Chambre pointed to "all classes of society" served by the Concerts populaires. Reviewers too often pointed to "all ranks of society" there.²⁴ Yet, if there were "Latin Quarter students rubbing shoulders with workers in the top seats," the greatest number of seats – where, as Schuré put it, "all classes mixed" – probably were filled by the middle classes, the *petit bourgeois* as well as *bourgeois* some of whom worked for a living and many of whom, despite their rising incomes, were unable to gain access to the Société des Concerts. Because they were, after all, the largest percentage of the voters, "the people" who benefited from these subsidies, I suspect, were the middle classes more than the urban or rural poor.

Populaire as the public

The second definition of *populaire* relates to contemporary notions of a public. Building a public meant turning the contagious emotions of a crowd into a sense of solidarity through shared experiences. This implied getting people to behave as a public rather than a crowd, that is, developing tastes, having opinions, and participating as the early Revolutionaries dreamed they might – a collective body acting in the interests of the whole. In the first installment of his *Les Fêtes de la Révolution Française*, published in *Ménestral* from 12 November 1893 through 9 September 1894, Julien Tiersot waxed nostalgic about how during the Revolutionary festivals, "music soared over everything, translating the common thought, expressing by its lofty accents, the prayer whose pure expression was in all hearts, their souls meeting in the same thought, reaching for a new, noble, unknown, and perhaps inaccessible ideal. One of the most precious privileges of music is to express, often with the greatest power, the collective sentiment." In his next installment, Tiersot claimed that "music has almost constantly been associated with the manifestations of public life." And in the following one,

²³ Denis Diderot, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 15: *Extraits de l'Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1973), p. 365.

²⁴ Edouard Schuré, "Les concerts du dimanche et les maîtres symphonistes", *Revue des deux mondes* (15.04.1884), p. 790.

he points to Passetoul's Concerts populaires as proof that "the people" are not cursed to understand only "inferior manifestations of art," but that it is possible to recover the point of contact, lost since the Empire put an end to festivals, wherein art and "the people" unite, understand, and respect one another.²⁵

This definition points to the culture of sociability at the heart of the *populaire* in France. It suggests that people in groups affect one another reciprocally. The late 19th-century sociologist Gabriel Tarde considered the public the social group of the future and defined it not by the people or classes that made it up, but rather as "a purely spiritual collectivity, of which the cohesion is entirely mental." He felt that "social evolution begins and ends in games and *fêtes*" and that the communion of ideas shared by a public would form the basis for a new social morality, similar to what Durkheim called "*conscience collective*." Tarde explained the process of becoming a public, of forming opinions, as "assimilation by collective contagion." For him, the purpose of public opinion is "to turn the reason of today into the tradition of tomorrow."²⁶

The composer Louis Bourgaull-Ducoudray alluded to this function in his first lecture as historian at the Conservatory. After preaching how instruction turns people into "real men" by "rendering their judgement free," he concluded:

"The public, it is the majority, and the majority makes the law. If the taste of the public is raised, if it has noble aspirations, art rises. If the taste of the public lowers, the level of art goes down. One can say that public taste is a touchstone that permits evaluation of the value and strength of production of a period of time. [...] The public makes art and the artists what they are.

Nothing is more useful in the interest of art than to see the taste of the public rise and its aspirations grow."²⁷

Passetoul and his successors conceived of their public as nourished on the German classics to expect from their musical experiences noble emotions and grandeur. After 1871, they also wished to develop in this public a taste for classics produced at home. This was important because, as one listener later explained, this public included "piano teachers, and poor ones at that, who brought to these concerts zealous attention and fervent admiration" and

"adored Passetoul like a father".²⁸ Music teachers could influence what was taught to the young generations. Struggling with the traditional French orientation toward theatrical music, Passetoul hoped public taste and performance opportunities would encourage French composers to write symphonic music, especially that which might challenge German dominance of the genre. To the extent that this public embraced, appreciated, and came to respect French symphonic music, they attached prestige to it. This prestige — an important element of the *populaire* — carried its own self-generating authority, the first stage of becoming a tradition. A tradition represents the transformation of public opinion into belief. Beliefs resemble what Michellet called faith. Le Bon calls them "the indispensable pillars of civilizations; they determine the trend of ideas".²⁹ To the extent that French symphonic music became *populaire*, it had the capacity to become associated with the nation and to serve nationalist pride. The evolution of the Concerts populaires depended on the development of a public with shared ideals.

Populaire as successful commodity

The third definition of *populaire*, associated with the growing commodification of music as a consumer product, refers to both generating and responding to demand for something. The economic liberalism of the 1880s encouraged consumerism. By the end of century, orchestra assistants were taking note of how long applause lasted for each work performed, what commentary each received, which pieces audiences wished to hear again, as well as how works were received at their competitors' concerts.³⁰ Conductors popularized a work by repeating it either immediately as a *bis*, at the end of

²⁵ Maurice Griveau, "Impressions musicales de jeunesse", *SIM revue musicale mensuelle* (15.12.1910), p. 665.

²⁶ Although his study is highly critical and focused on crowds, a fear of rising socialism, and a belief that the opinion of crowds was becoming "the supreme guiding principle in politics," some of Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules*, trans. as *The Crowd, A Study of the Popular Mind* (London, 1896), is helpful in reflecting on the nature of musical publics in the late 19th-century, including Bourgaull-Ducoudray's notion of opinion as "free judgement." For example, Le Bon defines prestige as "a sort of domination exercised on our mind by an individual, work, or idea. This domination entirely paralyzes our critical faculty, and fills our soul with astonishment and respect [...]. It is easy to imbue the mind of crowds with a passing opinion, but very difficult to implant therein a lasting belief. However, a belief of this latter description once established, it is equally difficult to uproot it" (p. 130, 142).

²⁷ Julien Tiersot, "Les Fêtes de la Révolution Française, Préface", *Le Ménestrel* (12.11.1893), p. 364, (19.11.1893), p. 371, and (26.11.1896), p. 381.

²⁸ These citations from Gabriel Tarde, *La Psychologie économique*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1902), and idem, *L'Opinion et la foule* (Paris, 1901), are borrowed from Rosalind Williams, *Dream worlds, Mass Consumption in Late-Nineteenth Century France* (Berkeley, 1982), p. 374-377, 425 n. 82.

²⁹ L.A. Bourgaull-Ducoudray, "Cours d'histoire générale de la musique, séance d'ouverture", *Le Ménestrel* (1.12.1878), p. 2-3.

³⁰ For Franck's *Psyche*, performed on 27 October 1895, "the public, appreciating this work more and more, applauded still more warmly this second performance and wanted to hear the end of the first part again."

the concert, or the following week. Any *première audition* to which audiences responded favorably might reappear. To signal this, *deuxième audition* was printed on the programs. To hear a work performed twice was not only a mark of some success for composers, it was an indication to listeners that others approved of the work, or at least wanted to hear it again. To program a *troisième audition* carried the hope of general acceptance.

When audiences requested repetition of works, *à la demande générale* or *redemandé* was added to subsequent programs. On Padeloup's sixth concert program (1 December 1861), for example, after the list of works was printed "*À la demande générale* a second series of 8 concerts will take place every Sunday at 2:00 from 15 December through 2 February." Audiences also had their favorites, works such as Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, performed on their first program in 1861, and his *Septet* they "always asked to hear again and even still".³¹ As noted on the top of their 10 April 1881 concert, a "*programme historique redemandé*," Padeloup's audiences occasionally asked for the repetition of an entire concert. In this spirit, the Concerts Colonne expanded the Société des Concerts's practice of successive performances of a large work (such as *Enfance du Christ* on Good Friday and Sunday in 1872) to generate interest in works by Berlioz. For example, Colonne did *Enfance du Christ* on 10 and 17 January 1875, *Roméo et Juliette* on 28 November and a fragment *redemandé* on 5 December 1875. Colonne also performed David's *Le Désert* on 17 and 24 December 1876 – the latter selling the most tickets at the door of all concerts that season. In February 1877, after a performance of *Damnation de Faust*, they performed it again *à la demande générale*, and on five more consecutive Sundays. They also returned to it that fall for four more consecutive Sundays beginning on 9 December, interrupted by three consecutive performances in March of Berlioz' *Requiem*, and then two more *Damnation*, for a total of 13 performances of *Damnation* in 1877–78. In 1878–79, 17 of Colonne's 24 Sunday concerts featured one large work: eight of them *Damnation de Faust*, three Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliette*, two David's *Désert*, and two each of new works he hoped would be better appreciated if heard again, Godard's *Le Tasse* and Dubois' *Paradis perdu* (they tied for the City of Paris' composition prize that year). Although Colonne returned to more variety in his concert programming after that season, he reprogrammed Berlioz' *Damnation of Faust* each year on successive Sundays, threatening that each of the last several performances would be the final one until they no longer sold out the hall. This sometimes meant playing the work 7 or 8 times in a row. By the late 1890s, they'd done *Damnation* 100 times. This tactic allowed them to stay solvent while they took chances performing other new music. Colonne's repetition of this work also helped him to build a loyal following, and turn his audience into a public who appreciated Berlioz's music.

The power of repetition was well-recognized. As Le Bon points out, "The thing affirmed comes by repetition to fix itself in the mind in such a way that it is accepted in the end as a demonstrated truth".³² Extensive repetition plants the work in the unconscious, making possible subsequent reflection. Multiple performances of *Damnation de Faust*, especially in the context of competition with other orchestras doing the same work sometimes on the same day, pushed musicians to understand it with more depth and to play it better, both technically and musically. The domestication of certain works through the saturation of repeated performances allowed for their gradual assimilation into the general music culture where they became "popular" in the American sense.

This process, however, also led to the gradual objectification of these works, with no further reciprocal response possible between producer and consumer. The composer receives little to no feedback; the works become objects of consumption. By the end of the century, it is not clear that certain works continued to have same impact or influence on listeners as they did earlier. Of course, the "canon" continued to elicit respect and there were new generations to experience it. Moreover, older ones may have heard "popular" works as opportunities for nostalgia à la Proust's madeleine. In the public at large, many would come to know these works only through virtual representations – transcriptions or excerpts played by military bands, amateur harmonies, or piano. This was the era of reproduction – the early years of the phonograph, the founding of the wax museum in 1882, the craze for panoramas which represented current events, modern life, and imaginary tours of the world. Parisians were used to blurred boundaries between fantasy and reality. Illusion itself was a source of consumer pleasure. Des Esseintes in Huysmann's *A Rebours* believed that the validity of an experience depends on the quality of faith in the consumer, not on the quality of the product used to stimulate the experience. The success – or popularity – of musical works may have depended on what people associated with them as much or more than the music itself.

To the extent that orchestral music became increasingly available on metal disks for music boxes played by clanging bells or on piano rolls reduced for piano, what was left were tunes divorced from publics. By the end of the century, perhaps in part because of this development, the "classics" began to move into the category of entertainment and diversion as often as serving as occasions for close listening and shared public sentiment. To the extent that the Concerts populaires performed the same music over and over, they contributed to this gradual objectification of music. In other words, setting aside their role in performing new works and trying to establish a new French tradition of symphonic music, the Concerts populaires in Paris and the

³¹ Griveau, "Impressions musicales de jeunesse", p. 665.

³² Le Bon, *The Crowd*, p. 125.

provinces, in their continued repetition of the same works, may ironically have led to the demise of their own social utility.

Rethinking leisure: pursuit of the good life

Music may have been "the great popularizer of healthy and fruitful emotions".³³ But the question remains – why did people from many classes pursue these emotions through music? What made them attend the Concerts populaires? One answer may be, as Oscar Comettant noted after attending Padeloup's first concerts, that "the mass public wanted to prove not only that they love the beautiful things of art, but also that they know how to judge these things in their just measure".³⁴ In other words, concert attendance demonstrated people's desire to raise themselves up, to better themselves. They would merit the efforts and money Republicans would spend on their behalf. Another is that new attitudes toward leisure attracted new audiences to Sunday concerts. The pressures and pace of life under industrialization brought a need for the renewal and recreation. One Victorian writer explained that "men were encouraged to seek recreations that provided the greatest contrast to their normal occupation." As the urban historian Peter Bailey points out, however, work and play in this period were "antithetical in form only [...]. Play was change of work, as much as change *from* work".³⁵ This attitude had several implications.

First, after 1870 and the frivolous abuses of the Second Empire, many wished to redefine the ever-expanding world of middle-class leisure, conceiving pleasure as a fundamental component of the "good life." Even aristocrats such as Georges d'Avenel endorsed the idea of equalizing enjoyments, that is, rather than money.³⁶ The unprecedented abundance of leisure activities gave the lower and middle classes a "mobility and anonymity that removed them from supervision by their fellows." However, this abundance also raised some new issues – how to educate people's desire? How to seduce them away from the dangerous frontier zones of certain kinds of entertainment and provide them with "healthy" alternatives? As Bailey puts it, "leisure constituted a threat to the discipline and cohesion of the bourgeois world" even as it "tested the elasticity of class mores".³⁷

³³ *Le Figaro* (15.03.1882).

³⁴ Comettant, "Concerts populaires de musique classique", p. 19.

³⁵ Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 25.

³⁶ Williams, *Dreamworlds*, p. 105.

³⁷ Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City*, p. 21, 29. He notes that "the English Bourgeoisie, as a class, felt the difficulties of adjustments to leisure most keenly in the 1860s and 1870s. [...] [Leisure] was still too worldly and sybaritic in association to be easily accommodated within the value system of a class whose self-image and public face were defined by a salient moral rectitude" (p. 25f.).

Sunday orchestral concerts addressed this in that, as they offered diversion on a day that offered little competition, they instructed the masses in good social behavior and good morals. Beginning on Padeloup's fifth concert (24 November 1861) and thereafter on the bottom of virtually all orchestral concerts from the 1860s through the First World War is the indication, "One is earnestly requested not to [or "It is forbidden to"] enter or leave during the performance of the pieces" – just as on the programs of the prestigious Société des Concerts. Sitting in rows quietly, not moving, was not seen as repression, preventing the possibility of imagination or enchantment, but rather as behavior that enabled it. Concert attendance was a way to equip oneself with knowledge of the rules of acceptable conduct as well as a way of being and behaving visible to others.³⁸ Performance of this mode held the promise of helping workers as well as the bourgeoisie trade up socially, possibly marry better, or at the least command respect from superiors and co-workers. Knowledge of classical music demonstrated to the world liberation from the assumptions often made about the lower classes and, most of all, a kind of respectability – evidence of self-discipline as well as interest in "the finer things in life."

Second, at the turn of the century, leisure was understood as a means of creating human solidarity. Tarde proposed that people come to resemble one another internally when they imitate each other's needs and desires.³⁹ To the extent that leisure activities such as concerts reflect one's tastes, and tastes express one's inner desires, people listening to the same music share something. Shared musical experiences lessen the psychological distance between superior and inferior. Families, in particular, saw benefit in concert attendance. *Le Figaro* (15 March 1882) reported that Sunday afternoon concerts "promoted family solidarity." Sunday, after all, was a day of rest in Catholic countries and families often spent it together. The advertisements in concert programs for women's clothes and children's magazines reveal the extent to which families were the target audiences for these concerts. In the late 1880s and 1890s, orchestras turned to family magazines to publish their programs: Colonne to *La Vie de famille* and Lamoureux to *L'Illustration*.

Third, and crucial when it comes to the marketing of concerts at the time, was the association of "amusement" with "instruction," as if they should go hand in hand. The motto of *La Vie de famille* when publishing Colonne's programs was: "to amuse, to interest, and to instruct." To say that a leisure activity such as orchestral concerts could do all three, simultaneously, was the ultimate draw for consumers. The development of program notes during this period reflects this preoccupation. Notes for orchestral concerts grew in

³⁸ I am influenced here by Michel Foucault's *Ethics. Subjectivity and Truth*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York, 1997), on ethics as the care of the self (p. 286).

³⁹ Williams, *Dreamworlds*, p. 375.

size and importance in the last quarter of the century, increasing to 12 pages in the late 1890s.

It should be no surprise then that women were a significant part of the Concerts populaires audiences. Women were perceived as those most ardently seeking self-improvement through education. Since Rousseau, many believed women were also the key to affecting male opinion and character formation. Before universal education began in the 1880s, lower-class women had limited access to education. When Padeloup sold his society to the public in a last ditch effort to raise enough money to stay afloat, it was mostly "dilettant ladies" who came to his aide, becoming the majority of its stockholders.⁴⁰ Part of Colonne's rationale for marketing his concerts as an educational forum beginning in the 1880s was to attract more women to his concerts.

Les Concerts populaires

Padeloup's Concerts populaires set an important precedent. Above all, they rejected the binary opposition of high and low culture inherent in class differences of the time. Elites had access to the Opéra, the Opéra-Comique, and the Société des Concerts; "the people," for the most part, did not. Padeloup addressed this gap in two ways. First, he provided the middle and lower classes with access to orchestral music through low ticket prices and a large venue. Performing in a circus holding 5000, he sold 1200 seats for 75 centimes, 1200 for 1,25 francs, and the rest for 2,50 francs. (At the Société des Concerts, the few cheap seats were in corridors and cost 2 francs; the best ones cost 12 francs.) Second, he performed repertoire previously the virtual monopoly of the prestigious Société des Concerts. His success was such that "before the war people had to get their ticket by Wednesday; if they wanted premieres or good seats, they needed to subscribe a year in advance".⁴¹

The structure of Padeloup's Concerts populaires was inspired in part by traveling abroad to England and Germany. Padeloup decided to try something different than his first orchestra, the Société des Jeunes Artistes, and the Société des Concerts, cooperatives with performers dividing concert receipts equally (a model the Concerts Colonne also followed). For his Concerts populaires, he rented the hall and paid performers fixed fees at his own personal risk. Lamoureux, who also traveled abroad to study foreign orchestras before he founded his own in 1881, replicated this idea. In good times, Padeloup and Lamoureux did well; however, they were forced to cover losses out of their own pockets.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Le Ménestrel* (22.04.1882), p. 168.

⁴¹ Adolphe Jullien, "La retraite de M. Padeloup", *Le Français* (3.06.1884).

⁴² Although the Concerts populaires ended with Padeloup's financial ruin, earlier they enabled him to purchase a mansion. Lamoureux had money, married well, and could sustain the orchestra's losses with more ease than Padeloup.

Beyond their commitment to providing cheap seats on Sunday concerts, Padeloup's Concerts populaires de musique classique were not entirely distinct from other concert organizations, especially their rivals. Right from the beginning, in their name and their repertoire, they emulated the prestigious Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, sometimes referred to as the Société des Concerts de musique classique, founded in 1828 to introduce Beethoven symphonies to the French public. Like the Société des Concerts, the Société des Jeunes Artistes (which Padeloup founded in 1853) was originally intended to teach Conservatory students orchestral music, particularly the "old masters." Padeloup conceived of this orchestra also as a stimulus for French composers to write symphonic music.⁴³ His subsequent Concerts populaires resembled the Société des Concerts in its larger orchestra and focus on the German classics. On the top of Padeloup's first year programs were engraved the names of their most frequently performed composers: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn. Virtually every concert included some Beethoven and in their first decade, he constituted 25 % of their repertoire.⁴⁴

Reviewers were quick to note similarities with the Société des Concerts. In June 1863, Gustave Chouquet published a comparative list of works performed by both societies in 1862-63 and concluded that, although their publics were quite different – the Conservatory's more musically educated and critically astute – the programs were "almost the same".⁴⁵ He recommended that, given the limited education of many of his listeners, Padeloup perform more overtures and works that "espouse the natural, grace, simplicity, noblesse, elevation, and the sublime" and limit his public's exposure to the "complication of the modern German school." As for the Société des Concerts, the "Louvre de la musique," they should present a more varied, more historically and critically-based programs with more Bach and the French school.⁴⁶

⁴³ See *La Revue et Gazette Musicale* (1854-55), p. 314.

⁴⁴ Cooper, *The Rise of Instrumental Music and Concerts Series in Paris*, p. 49. Cooper notes furthermore that roughly half the instrumental music performed in Paris between 1828 and 1870 was by these five composers (p. 107).

⁴⁵ In 27 concerts, the Concerts populaires performed mostly German classics – Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Gluck, and Bach – as well as Méhul's *Le jeune Henri*, Bizet's *Scherzo*, Herold's *Zampa*, Meyerbeer's overture to *Struensee*, some chamber music by Viennese and Kreutzer, and two vocal works by Auber and Gounod. Similarly the Société des Concerts performed the German classics as well as Méhul and Viennese. However, as they had a chorus, they included more vocal music including opera excerpts, motets, and oratorios as well as more French music – a Reber symphony, the ballet from Rameau's *Castor et Pollux*, the trio from his *Dardanus*, the first performance of Thomas' Choeur de nymphes from his *Psyché*, and the duo from Berlioz' *Beatrice et Bénédict*.

⁴⁶ See Gustave Chouquet, "Comparative tableau des oeuvres à la Société des Concerts et les Concerts populaires", *Art musical* (4.06.1863), p. 212-213, and (25.06.1863), p. 235f. For an

After 1872, influenced by nationalism and the competition offered by the Colonne's concerts, Padeloup increased his number of premieres by French composers. To draw attention to this, in late June 1871, Padeloup divided three concerts into classical and modern music. In his 1871-72 season, he included works by Prix-de Rome winners and Conservatory professors with first, second, or third performances of new works on 11 of 26 concerts; in 1872-73 he gave these on 11 of 25 concerts; in 1873-74 he performed 16 premieres, and gave 4 works second performances. Still, he was not alone. The Société des Concerts and Danbé's concerts at the Grand-Hôtel too began to perform more French contemporaries. On 18 February 1872, for example, Padeloup and the Conservatory both performed Saint-Saëns symphonies. But in winter 1872 Padeloup introduced the public to parts of Berlioz's *Damnation de Faust* two months before the Conservatory's performance of it. The similarities between these two concert societies suggest that, even though the Conservatory orchestra was better and its public more sophisticated, Padeloup had something to offer as well. And although Padeloup aimed to reach a much wider variety of classes with his low ticket prices, he may also have been hoping to attract those unable to get tickets for the Société des Concerts.

The relation of the Concerts populaires to its contemporaries and successors is complex and dialectical. Colonne's Association artistique, founded in 1874, likewise aimed "to popularize classical and modern music, giving Sunday concerts of vocal and instrumental music." Colonne played much of the same repertoire as Padeloup and for some of the same public, though perhaps far fewer of those from the lower classes because of the nature of his concert venue. Everyone from critics in *Ménestrel* to his program annotator Malherbe thought that Colonne "continued the work of Padeloup, though he gave it more importance and more *éclat*."⁴⁷ When it came to deciding which French symphonic works to perform, Colonne, like Padeloup, devoted rehearsals to reading young composers work, some of which was chosen for concert performance. And Colonne, like Padeloup, changed his program each week, unlike the Société des Concerts, which performed the same repertoire two weeks in a row, and Lamoureux, who also often repeated entire programs on the successive Sundays.

However, this "imitation" should not be overstated. In his first season as the Association artistique, Colonne may have borrowed works such as Saint-Saëns' *Le Rouet d'Omphale* from previous successes at the Concerts populaires. He also soon presented works in direct competition to what was being

performed at both the Concerts populaires and the Conservatory.⁴⁸ On 29 November 1874, for example, both Padeloup and Colonne began with Mozart's Jupiter symphony and the Société des Concerts followed with the same Mozart symphony seven days later; on 13 December both Padeloup and Colonne opened with Haydn symphonies. The Schumann piano concerto performed to a rave review at the Concerts Colonne on 29 November was repeated at Conservatory on 6 December; in February 1875 the Conservatory did Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* a week after its success at the Concerts Colonne. When it came to performances of the Bruch concerto in fall 1875, Maubin may have done it first with Padeloup on 31 October, but Sarasate's performance on 6 November with Colonne was found to be much better. The same was true for the Mendelssohn violin concerto, performed on 19 December 1875 both by Marsick with Colonne and by Papini with Padeloup. The real battle, however, came in performances of *Damnation de Faust*. The competition that began with simultaneous performances of excerpts on 3 December 1876 and continued the following spring with performances of the entire work ended with Padeloup falling behind Colonne in critical status and possibly even public "popularity." Colonne's performances of Berlioz' *Damnation de Faust* demonstrated his orchestra's incontestable technical and musical superiority. By 1882, Colonne was making more money than Padeloup, though Padeloup did better than Lamoureux his first season and Broustet.⁴⁹ By January 1883, with David's *Le Désert*, Colonne turned away people at the door while Padeloup played for a partially empty hall, even though by the 1880s, as for his competitors, Padeloup's most frequently performed composers had also shifted to Wagner and Berlioz, along with Beethoven.

When the Concerts populaires folded in 1884, critics mourned. Despite ongoing performances by other concert societies modeled in part on Padeloup's, many felt that "Paris has no *Concerts populaires*." From some perspectives, this was true. Under pressure to raise more money to compete with the Concerts Colonne when it began in 1874, Padeloup refused to reduce the number of cheap seats. If his concerts were not available to "the greatest number of people," he claimed they would not be "*populaire*." Although on "days of battle," Colonne counted on support from students in the upper galleries, his orchestra played in a theater, an "aristocratic milieu"

⁴⁸ The Concerts Danbé also engaged in this practice. Whereas on 20 November 1872 the Concerts populaires performed fragments from Beethoven's Septet, the following week audiences could hear the same performed by Danbé.

⁴⁹ *Le Figaro* (3.05.1882) noted that of the approximately 500 000 francs spent on Sunday concerts during the 1881-82 season, the Société des Concerts earned the most, averaging 8000 francs per concert and an estimated 140-150 000 francs; in 22 concerts, the Concerts Colonne averaged 6060 per concert, earning 133 000 francs; in 24 concerts, the Concerts populaires averaged 4765 francs, earning 114 461 francs; in 23 concerts, the Concerts Lamoureux averaged only 2700 francs, earning 62 000; and in 20 concerts, the Concerts Broustet averaged 1700 francs per concert, earning 30-35 000 francs.

excellent recent study see D. Kern Holoman, *Le Société des Concerts du Conservatoire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

⁴⁷ Charles Malherbe, "Edouard Colonne", *SIM revue musicale mensuelle* (15.04.1910), p. 219. See also *Le Ménestrel* (17.04.1892) which notes that both had eclectic tastes in programming.

with far fewer low-priced seats than the Cirque d'hiver. In 1886 Lamoureux abandoned circuses for one of the most luxurious and expensive theaters in town, the Eden-Théâtre, accessible only to those "with a small fortune." Furthermore, Lamoureux, previously conductor of the Société des Concerts, eliminated the inexpensive ticket category, preferring to leave more room for elites. By the 1880s, twenty odd theaters were offering weekly matinees where audiences were more comfortable (see Table 4).⁵⁰ In fall 1883 Padeloup was forced to sell his organization to stockholders. Even with many of the city's finest musicians among his honorary members,⁵¹ his orchestra's short-lived revival in 1886 failed, forcing some to return to the Cafés-Concerts for their diversion.⁵²

The name, "Concerts populaires," indeed even the word *populaire* in conjunction with Parisian concerts, was not used to refer to an orchestral concert until Padeloup died in 1887 because the name legally belonged to him. His successor at the Cirque d'Hiver, Benjamin Godard, called his short-lived series the Société des Concerts Modernes. Concerts populaires, however, did survive as a descriptive term (see Table 1). For concerts conducted by Georges Auvray in the gardens of the Palais royal beginning in 1887, by Eugène d'Harcourt in his own newly constructed concert hall beginning in 1892, and by Louis Pister in the new Palais d'hiver of the city zoo beginning in 1893 – *Concerts populaires* were *not* the name of the society, but rather a reference to low-priced concerts on Sundays. For both Auvray and d'Harcourt, this distinguished them from more expensive *grands concerts*, involving more soloists or larger orchestras and given on other days or times. For Auvray and Pister, they were also to be distinguished from the daily *concerts-promenades*, with their much lighter repertoire consisting of overtures, opera fantasies, marches, and dances. Lamoureux twice used the word *populaire* to refer to a reduced-price concert series in 1895 and concerts on Thursday evenings in spring 1898, though the latter were possibly presented in an attempt to compete with Colonne's successful Thursday matinees that had begun the previous fall in the same theater. In 1887, the little-known concerts of the l'Ecole française de musique et de déclamation were the first of Padeloup's successors to call their organization "Concerts populaires." This meant claiming not only the Sunday matinée time, but also his repertoire and openness to young French composers.⁵³ Only two others in

Table 4: Concert venues⁵⁴

<i>Concert halls/Theaters</i>	<i>Circuses</i>	<i>Hotels/Gardens</i>	<i>Brasseries</i>
Soc des C du Conservatoire	Cp (Padeloup)	Champs-Élysées (Arban)	
Soc des Jeunes Artistes		Pré Catalan (Musard)	
Théâtre du Prince Imperial		Grand-Hôtel (Danbé)	
Association Colonne	Cmod (Chollet)		
NC Lamoureux	NC Lamoureux	C Broustet	
Cp (Montardon)	Cmod (Godard)		
Cp d'Harcourt		Cp/Palais Royal (Auvray)	
Soc Mp (Danbé)	Cp (Marseille)	Cp/Jardin (Pister)	C Rouge
Soc Cp (Pister)			C Touche
Soc Cp (Monteux)			

Paris were later so bold: Pister's concerts at the Grand Palais (1900-03) and Monteux's at the Casino de Paris (1914-?). Table 5 outlines the repertoire associated with the *Concerts populaires* and their increasing emphasis over time on contemporary French music.⁵⁵

Besides repertoire and ticket prices, personal relationships also linked these orchestras. Most conductors and performers in Parisian orchestras studied at the Conservatory. Lamoureux and Colonne both played in its Société des Jeunes Artistes under Padeloup. Like Padeloup, they too started out as violinists. Out of 110 performers in the original Concerts populaires, 44 had first prizes from the Conservatory. Moreover, many members of other Parisian orchestras played first in the Concerts populaires. Colonne played first violin in the Concerts populaires from 1863 to 1867, as did Danbé, and in Danbé's orchestra at Grand-Hôtel in 1871. In 1878, 45 members of the Société des Concerts had begun with Padeloup's Concerts populaires. Louis Pister, who tried to become the heir-apparent to the Concerts populaires at

⁵⁰ Pouglin, "M. Padeloup et les Concerts populaires", p. 189.

⁵¹ The Concerts populaire program of 26 December 1886 lists Baron Haussmann, the conductor Jules Danbé, the publishers Hartmann and Grus, the performers Faure, Roger-Miclos, Pauline Viardot, and Diemer; and the composers Thomas, Joncières, Franck, Leneveu, Bruneau, Lefebvre, Erlanger, Augusta Holmès, Chamnade, and her father.

⁵² Eva M., "Les concerts populaires à Paris", *La Musique des familles* (25.03.1886), p. 180.

⁵³ When they started in fall 1887, the conductor René Montardon wrote to French composers asking them to send him their scores and programmed on his first concert Beethoven's *Symphonic pastorale*, Weber's *Oberon* overture, an air from Mozart's *Nozze*

du Figaro, excerpts from works by Saint-Saëns, Delibes, and Rabuteau, and Berlioz's *Marche troyenne*. In spring 1888 they did the Vicomtesse de Grandval's *Atala*.

⁵⁴ We use the following abbreviations: C: Concerts; Cmod: Concerts modernes; Cp: Concerts populaires; MP: Matinees populaires; NC: Nouveaux Concerts; Soc: Société.

⁵⁵ This inclusion of contemporary music also characterized *Concerts populaires* in the French provinces, especially Angers, as well as abroad, such as Brussels and Turin. See Henri Vanhulst, "Bruxelles jusqu'en 1940", in: Robert Wangermée, Philippe Mercier (eds.), *La musique en Belgique et à Bruxelles*, vol. 2 (Brussels, 1982), and Marino Pessina's essay in this volume, p. 323-348.

Table 5: Range of Concert repertoire

Mostly German classics <	> mostly French contemporaries
Soc des C du Cons. 1860s	
Soc des C du Cons. 1870s-90s	
Cp (Pasdeloup) 1860s	
Cp (Pasdeloup) 1870s-80s	
Grand-Hotel (Danbé) 1870s	
Ass.Colonne 1870s-90s.	
NC Lamoureux	
C Broustet 1880s	
Cmod (Godard) 1880s	
Cp d'Harcourt 1890s	
	C de l'Opéra 1895-97
	Cp Jardin (Pister) 1893-96

the Jardin d'acclimatation in the 1890s and with his own series at the Grand Palais beginning in 1900, began as associate conductor under Pasdeloup.⁵⁶

In conclusion, we should not think of concert sociétés in late 19th-century France as independent, but rather as organizations with blurred boundaries that functioned as part of an interconnected network. Most French orchestras of the time, like the *Concerts populaires*, were hybrids of preexisting and concurrent societies, regardless of the publics they attracted. Those who sought by their low ticket prices to attract "all classes of society," including workers, imitated the repertoire of elite Parisian institutions and often expected their listeners to behave as if attending elite events, even if in circuses, hotel ballrooms, or the zoo. At the same time, elitist organizations often let popular orchestras bear the risk of presenting new or little-known work and so often followed them in presenting newer repertoire. It was apparently okay to fail in front of "popular" audiences, while elite audiences demanded the guarantee of quality associated with performing the "established masterworks."

Pasdeloup rejected the presumption that all new French work was "light" or least not to be taken seriously and, in doing so, set the context for the flourishing of French music after 1870. He may not have been a "great" conductor, at least in comparison with Colonne and Lamoureux. However, he proved it was possible to attract "all classes of society" to serious "classical music" and made the question of repertoire not just about the canon, but also about the performance of contemporary music. He also showed how a conductor could turn good new work into *new* classics by multiple performances. Repeat performances may have encouraged a certain commodification and consumerism, as if one can purchase new experiences and repeat them on demand. Still, this inclusion of French music in the repertoire used to negotiate class differences and to accomplish the cultural work of assimilation was arguably his greatest contribution and what his successors most wished to emulate.

⁵⁶ Lamoureux, by contrast, was a violinist at the Société des concerts and served as associate conductor there in the early 1870s, conducting in public when Delvedez was sick, before he became conductor at the Opéra-Comique in 1876 and conductor at the Société des Concerts in 1877-79.