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Recomposing H–A–Y–D–N: The French Revival of Haydn in 1909

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**Bryan Proksch**

**Recomposing H–A–Y–D–N: The French Revival of Haydn in 1909<sup>1</sup>**

In 1909, the centenary year of Joseph Haydn's death, Jules Écorcheville commissioned a number of French composers to write short "hommages" for solo piano dedicated to Haydn for publication in his journal, "La Revue musicale de la S.I.M." Each of the contributors wrote a short work based on a "soggetto cavato" whereby H–A–Y–D–N was rendered as B–A–D–D–G<sup>1</sup>. While some of these pieces achieved a degree of popularity, the very fact that they were composed at all hints at a reversal in the reception of Haydn's music away from the Romantic dismissal of his works towards a more favorable opinion. This shift coincided with the dawn of a new century and the rise of Modernist aesthetics<sup>2</sup>. As will be argued below, Écorcheville's interests in music history generally and in promoting French music and musicological research in particular combined to lead him to invite France's leading composers to write works in Haydn's memory. His experiences in Vienna at the 1909 Haydn Zentenarfeier, a gathering of the International Musical Society ostensibly celebrating the centennial of Haydn's death, influenced him to take advantage of a

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is an expanded version of papers delivered to the annual meetings of the Haydn Society of North America (Cambridge, Mass., May 2009) and at the International Symposium "Haydn: Celebrating His Times and His Legacy" (York University, August 2009). I am grateful to the McNeese State University Foundation, whose endowed professorship program provided financial support for these presentations.

<sup>1</sup> While H was rendered as its traditional B natural, notes for the other letters were calculated by recycling the letters beyond G beginning with the note A. For more detail on the resultant compositions see Peter Revers, *Die Hommage-Kompositionen der Société Internationale de Musique (S.I.M.) zur Haydn-Zentenarfeier 1909* (Hahn, Widor, d'Indy, Dukas, Ravel, Debussy), in: *Aspekte der Haydn-Rezeption. Beiträge der gleichnamigen Tagung vom 20. bis 22. November 2009 in Salzburg*, ed. Joachim Brüggel and Ulrich Leisinger (klang-reden 6), Freiburg 2011, pp. 157–174.

<sup>2</sup> On Haydn's importance to Modernist aesthetics compared to Romantic thought see James Webster, *Rosen's Modernist Haydn*, in: *Variations on the Canon. Essays on Music from Bach to Boulez in Honor of Charles Rosen on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Robert Curry, David Gable and Robert L. Marshall (Eastman Studies in Music 58), Rochester, N.Y., 2008, pp. 283–290.

celebratory year to further his larger goal of promoting French scholarship and composition.

Conveniently enough, a number of those composers Écorcheville commissioned also had favorable views towards Haydn's music, using it towards ends of their own. Of these, Paul Dukas, Gabriel Fauré, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Vincent d'Indy were the most outspoken supporters of Haydn's music<sup>3</sup>. They each took a close interest in it for differing reasons, an indication of Haydn's broad range of uses and appeal within France among the rising Neoclassical movement, the educational establishment via public performances, and (ironically) among composers with outspoken nationalist views who wished to differentiate their music from that of their German counterparts. In total, these suggest that the initial impetus behind the "Haydn Revival" that gathered momentum as the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed was rooted in practical matters more so than a detached "canonic" appreciation of the composer<sup>4</sup>. In the short-term, Écorcheville's 1909 commission made a public statement on the course of 20<sup>th</sup>-century French intellectual and musical life. That it also publically acknowledged the importance of Haydn in France was a byproduct rooted more in the coincidences of the calendar year than anything in Haydn's actual music. Over the long term the commissions assisted Écorcheville and the participating composers by legitimizing their musical aesthetics, with the revival of Haydn's music standing as a subsidiary consequence.

Each of these composer-intellectuals, acting for reasons of their own self-interest, played a crucial role in the revival of Haydn's reputation in France at the turn of the century, more so than the numerous "critics" of the Parisian press. They were shaping a musical atmosphere rooted in contemporary compositional practice that related closely to late 18<sup>th</sup>-century music. This does not deny that other influential writers in France (not to mention German

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<sup>3</sup> As d'Indy's views on Haydn have already been detailed (Bryan Proksch, Vincent d'Indy as Harbinger of the Haydn Revival, in: *Journal of Musicological Research* 28 (2009), pp. 162–188) he will not be addressed in detail here.

<sup>4</sup> Webster (Rosen's *Modernist Haydn*, p. 284) dates the scholarly revival of Haydn to the 1950s and the work of H.C. Robbins Landon. As far as I can determine, the first claim of a general resurgence of interest in Haydn's music was made by Rosemary Hughes (*The Rediscovery of Haydn*, in: *The Musical Times* 100 (1959), pp. 258f.), who latched on to Donald Francis Tovey's (*Haydn the Inaccessible*, in: *Id., Essays in Music Analysis*, vol. 1: *Symphonies*, Oxford etc. 1935, pp. 138–176) writings on Haydn, stating that earlier efforts were stillborn because of World War I.

criticisms that made their way to France) took a less enthusiastic stance towards Haydn's music both before and after 1909, but the growing usefulness for invoking Haydn's name in a positive way shows a distinct turning point in his reception. A general curiosity for music history, a staunch rooting in nationalism, and a turn away from Romanticism among these French composers set a precedent for further and more detailed explorations of Haydn's music at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that would later become the full-fledged "Haydn Revival" observed throughout Europe in the 1920s and 1930s.

#### THE SEEDS OF HAYDN'S REVIVAL IN FRANCE

The rapid decline in Haydn's reputation in the years following his death in 1809, particularly among composers and critics in Germany, is well-known<sup>5</sup>. Although popular with the public, and despite a healthy representation on concert programs, Haydn's music received a consistently cool reception in the writings of Adolf Bernhard Marx, Robert Schumann, Eduard Hanslick, and Richard Wagner, among others. Marx famously characterized the feel of Haydn's music as "childlike," and even went so far as to label Haydn's "ambiguous" approach to tone painting as a "naïve and awkward foreshadowing of what was to become known and actualized [by Ludwig van Beethoven] as the true meaning of instrumental music."<sup>6</sup> Schumann's frank assessment of Haydn – that

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<sup>5</sup> For a general overview of Haydn's reception in Germany and Austria see James Garratt, *Haydn and Posterity. The Long Nineteenth Century*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Haydn*, ed. Caryl Clark, Cambridge 2005, pp. 226–238. Garratt addresses Adolf Bernhard Marx, Eduard Hanslick, and Robert Schumann specifically on pages 230ff. On Haydn's popularity early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century see Thomas Tolley, *Painting the Cannon's Roar. Music, the Visual Arts and the Rise of an Attentive Public in the Age of Haydn, c. 1750 to c. 1810*, Aldershot 2001. See also David Wyn Jones etc., *Reception*, in: *Haydn. Oxford Composer Companions*, ed. David Wyn Jones, Oxford 2002, pp. 323–339; Leon Botstein, *The Demise of Philosophical Listening. Haydn in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, in: *Haydn and His World*, ed. Elaine R. Sisman, Princeton 1997, pp. 255–285; Id., *The Consequences of Presumed Innocence. The Nineteenth-Century Reception of Joseph Haydn*, in: *Haydn Studies*, ed. W. Dean Sutcliffe, Cambridge 1998, pp. 1–34; Matthew Head, *Music With "No Past?" Archaeologies of Joseph Haydn and "The Creation"*, in: *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music* 23 (2000), pp. 191–217; Jens Peter Larsen, *Joseph Haydn – eine Herausforderung an uns*, in: *Joseph Haydn. Bericht über den Internationalen Joseph Haydn Kongress / Proceedings of the International Joseph Haydn Congress Wien, Hofburg, 5.–12. September 1982*, ed. Eva Badura-Skoda, Munich 1986, pp. 9–20.

<sup>6</sup> Adolf Bernhard Marx, *Etwas über die Symphonie und Beethovens Leistungen in diesem Fache*, in: *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (1824), pp. 165–168,

“it is impossible to learn anything new from him. He is like a familiar friend [...] whom all greet with pleasure [...] but who has ceased to arouse any particular interest” – similarly paints a picture of the reception of Haydn’s music at this time that continues to color our view of Haydn<sup>7</sup>. As late as January 1923 Heinrich Schenker could state without hesitation that “there is almost no literature on Haydn [...] It is as if this mountain of truth towering upwards to the stars has disappeared [...] For the most part, Haydn’s name and circumstances only come up when someone chatters on at length about M o z a r t and B e e t h o v e n.”<sup>8</sup>

The one agenda held in common by the most outspoken 19<sup>th</sup>-century critics of Haydn (Marx, Schumann, Hanslick, and Wagner) was a desire to promote new music, or at least music newer than Haydn’s. Marx argued for the primacy of Beethoven, Schumann for a young generation of post-Beethoven composers, Hanslick for Brahms, and Wagner, of course, for himself. Haydn’s popularity among audiences, a perception of consistent favoritism towards the programming of his music in concert, and the stated beliefs of these writers that his music was simplistic or naïve, made him an easy target.

Less clearly understood is Haydn’s position among non-Germans. Camille Saint-Saëns, writing in the 1890s, noted that “the only examples of Joseph Haydn’s immense work that the present generation knows are two or three symphonies, rarely and perfunctorily performed. This is the same as saying that we do not know him at all.”<sup>9</sup> We might generalize from this that French performances included only a small number of different compositions by Haydn, which were played in a manner that was more mechanical than

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173–176, 181–184, here p. 168, translation by Wayne M. Senner, in: *The Critical Reception of Beethoven’s Compositions by His German Contemporaries*, vol. 1, ed. Robin Wallace, Lincoln 1999, pp. 63, 92.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, vol. 3, ed. Heinrich Simon, Leipzig 1888, p. 78, translation by Paul Rosenfeld, in: *Schumann, On Music and Musicians*, Berkley 1946, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> Heinrich Schenker, *Haydn: Sonate Es-Dur [Hob. XVI:52]*, in: *Der Tonwille 3* (1922), pp. 3–21, here p. 20; translation by Robert Snarrenberg, in: *Der Tonwille. Pamphlets in Witness of the Immutable Laws of Music*, vol. 1, ed. William Drabkin, Oxford 2004, p. 115 (emphasis original). Further see Bryan Proksch, “Forward to Haydn!” Schenker’s Politics and the German Revival of Haydn, in: *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64 (2011), pp. 319–348.

<sup>9</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, *Joseph Haydn et les “Sept Paroles”*, in: *École Buissonnière. Notes et Souvenirs*, Paris 1913, pp. 189–197, here p. 190; translation by Edwin Gile Rich, in: *Saint-Saëns, Musical Memories*, Boston 1919, pp. 109–120, here p. 110.

musical. That is, late 19<sup>th</sup>-century French critics and composers likely cared for Haydn as little as the Germans, though they had fewer reasons overtly to attack Haydn's music.

Belle Époque France, perhaps more than any other place in Europe, was fertile territory for a resuscitation of Haydn's reputation. Aesthetically, many French composers were drawn towards "perfection" and formalism in music, with all the connections to Viennese Classicism implied by these ideas<sup>10</sup>. While Germans and Austrians clung to Beethoven, French formalism and the nascent Neoclassical movement predisposed them favorably towards the presumed aesthetics of the Classical era as represented by Haydn and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart<sup>11</sup>. Maurice Ravel perhaps put it best while visiting Vienna in 1920:

Unfortunately I was unable to hear an opera by Mozart [while I was in Vienna]. Mozart! To us, adherents of the younger modern school, he is the greatest musician, the musician par excellence, our god! The elder generation swears by Beethoven and Wagner. Our artistic creed is Mozart.<sup>12</sup>

Ravel was not alone in this view: a number of French composers at the time were either avowed Neoclassicists (such as Saint-Saëns), had strong reactionary tendencies (d'Indy for instance), or argued that their music was rooted in the practices of past centuries (Fauré for example).

While French Neoclassicism did not in itself lead to a direct revival of earlier repertoires, a number of scholars and scholar-composers were simultaneously testing the waters of music history in an attempt to define France's musical heritage as distinct from that of the rest of Europe generally, and Germany in particular. D'Indy's

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<sup>10</sup> Carlo Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, Cambridge etc. 2001, pp. 71 and 296, n. 79.

<sup>11</sup> On Neoclassicism and its meanings in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century see Jane Fulcher, *The Composer as Intellectual. Music and Ideology in France, 1914–1940*, Oxford etc. 2005; Scott Messing, *Polemic as History. The Case of Neoclassicism*, in: *The Journal of Musicology* 9 (1991), pp. 481–497.

<sup>12</sup> "Leider war es mir nicht vergönnt, eine Oper von Mozart zu hören. Mozart! Das ist für uns, die Anhänger der jüngeren modernen Schule, der größte Musiker, der Musiker überhaupt, unser Gott! Die älteren schwören auf Beethoven und Wagner. Unser Kunstbekenntnis ist Mozart." Maurice Ravel, *Wiener Eindrücke eines französischen Künstlers*, in: *Neue freie Presse*, 29 October 1920, p. 6; translation in: Arbie Orenstein (ed.), *A Ravel Reader*, New York 1989, pp. 419f. Ravel continues by saying that he intends to "trace Mozart's footsteps" on the trip home by visiting Salzburg.

association with the modern-day premier of Claudio Monteverdi's "Orfeo" and the music of the Renaissance, Ravel and Debussy's later composition of hommages to Jean-Philippe Rameau, and widespread interest in the music of Baroque France all contributed to increased awareness and acceptance of pre-19<sup>th</sup>-century music<sup>13</sup>. As argued by Jane Fulcher, even the ideological strife between the followers of César Franck and Camille Saint-Saëns was overshadowed by the characterization of the two as "modern classics" at the heart of a collective French culture<sup>14</sup>. The notion of a modern classic required by its very nature the presence of an earlier group of classics, which increasingly included Haydn as a cited model.

With the coming of the First World War and in its wake, the French musical world strove to exclude the music of German and Austrian composers<sup>15</sup>. Wagner they dispatched with ease, but exceptions were made for earlier, less outspoken composers. An argument for Beethoven's Flemish ancestry allowed his music to remain in the concert hall, for instance. Haydn, at first included in the general ban, was a "safe" enough composer for d'Indy to defend his Third Symphony (1918) by calling it a "symphony by Haydn"<sup>16</sup>. In an ironic twist, Haydn's links with the Ancien Régime, the fodder of Germanic critics, opened the door to his acceptance in a France fearful of the rising power of the Prussian state<sup>17</sup>. Haydn stood as the icon of an era in which France dominated Europe culturally, socially, and militarily.

The specific circumstances of Haydn's biography marked him as a composer whose canonic status rested primarily on his reputation among non-Germans. He composed a set of symphonies for consumption in Paris on commission from the Concert de la Loge Olympique, while many of his most respected and most frequently performed works were composed for his two extended trips to

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<sup>13</sup> There is some parallel evidence that concert organizers in France also took an interest in programming historic works beginning in the 1890s as well (see Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen. Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France*, Berkeley 2009, p. 352).

<sup>14</sup> Fulcher, *The Composer as Intellectual*, p. 29.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50. The Concerts-Rouge continued to play Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven throughout (see Christophe Prochasson and Anne Rasmussen, *Au nom de la patrie. Les intellectuels et la première guerre mondiale (1910–1919)*, Paris 1996, p. 178). On d'Indy's Third Symphony see Proksch, Vincent d'Indy as Harbinger, p. 183.

<sup>17</sup> Jess Tyre, *Music in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune*, in: *The Journal of Musicology* 22 (2005), pp. 173–202, here p. 183, n. 27.

London. In addition, the false rumor of Haydn's death in 1804 inspired Luigi Cherubini to write his "Chant sur la mort d'Haydn" – an overt appreciation of Haydn by France's premier living composer<sup>18</sup>. Even more importantly, Haydn admitted publically that he achieved more fame in England than he ever did in Vienna. It is notable that all of the early biographies, some of which were well-read in French translation, referred to Haydn's fame in Paris and the honors bestowed upon him by Parisians. These included the honor guard posted at Haydn's door by Napoleon upon his occupation of Vienna in 1809 and a medal struck by Nicolas-Marie Gatteaux commemorating the success of the first Parisian performance of "The Creation".

Each of the biographical and anecdotal connections between Haydn and France resonated with latter-day French composers as they sought ways in which to differentiate themselves from the Germanic musical tradition while still borrowing from that heritage<sup>19</sup>. This, in tandem with the negative attitudes towards his music held by influential German writers, laid the foundation upon which the renewal of interest in Haydn's music in France would rest.

#### HAYDN AS A MEANS TO A SCHOLARLY END

Jules Écorcheville, an influential young French musicologist and editor of the "Bulletin français de la S.I.M.", saw in Haydn's 1909 anniversary a chance to bring both of his research interests – Baroque and pre-Classical music – as well as French musicology as a field to a wider European audience<sup>20</sup>. His own interest in Haydn seems to have been cursory, as he never wrote specifically on the composer; rather Haydn's anniversary offered him an opportunity to revive a genre from Baroque France (the "tombeau") and to bring together the major composers of his day in a unified com-

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<sup>18</sup> A summary of Haydn's reception in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Paris can be found in Marc Vignal, Paris, in: Haydn. Oxford Composer Companions, pp. 266f.

<sup>19</sup> The awareness of the French (in particular Saint-Saëns and d'Indy) for Haydn's early biographies (Griesinger, Dies, Carpani, and Stendhal) is attested to by the frequent references made to anecdotes found in their writings. One brief notice on the Stendhal / Carpani plagiarism scandal even made it into the French press: Paul Edmond, Stendhal plagiaire – Carpani, in: *L'intermédiaire* 59/1219 (January 1909), p. 671.

<sup>20</sup> On Écorcheville's academic training as a musicologist see Charles B. Paul, Rameau, d'Indy, and French Nationalism, in: *The Musical Quarterly* 58 (1972), pp. 46–56, here pp. 55f.

positional effort. It was Écorcheville more than anyone else who influenced events in 1909, through his decision to commission the H–A–Y–D–N works, his participation at the Haydn Zentenarfeier conference in Vienna, and his use of the “Bulletin français” to promote French research on Haydn in the years following the anniversary. His association with the Viennese celebration and the excursion that the French delegation took to Eisenstadt would, in the ensuing decades, influence a number of French musicologists to research Haydn’s life and works in greater detail.

In using the Vienna celebrations to increase the visibility of French scholarship and music in the larger world of musicology, Écorcheville was quite successful in both the short- and long-term. The congress brought him into close personal contact with prominent personalities such as Gustav Mahler, Felix Weingartner, and Johann Strauss. The conference’s ostensible focus on Haydn is more apparent in retrospect. A number of German musicologists present for the meeting, including Hermann Abert, Guido Adler, Hugo Botstiber, Otto Erich Deutsch, and Eusebius Mandyczewski, would go on to become influential Haydn scholars in their own right in the ensuing decades, yet none of these scholars wrote their most influential essays on Haydn until the 1920s. The conference’s opening remarks by Guido Adler, while lengthy and wholly devoted to Haydn, offer little in the way of new insights into his music; in fact they read like a biographical sketch designed to reacquaint listeners with a forgotten composer<sup>21</sup>.

Although modern commentators have argued that the conference in Vienna had little to do with Haydn beyond the 1909 date<sup>22</sup>, Écorcheville saw things differently. Impressed by the overall scope and quality of the Viennese conference, he commented favorably on the Haydn-related activities in two separate reports (published in the “Bulletin français de la S.I.M.” and “Le Figaro”). There was little in the way of scholarly research on Haydn at the conference, but the numerous performances of Haydn’s music in many different genres were all “presented in a generally good way.”<sup>23</sup> He

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<sup>21</sup> The complete opening remarks are recorded in the conference’s proceedings: Guido Adler (ed.), *Kongreß der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft, Wien, 25–29 Mai 1909, Vienna 1909*, pp. 39–45.

<sup>22</sup> Garratt, *Haydn and Posterity*, pp. 237f.

<sup>23</sup> Jules Écorcheville, *Le congrès de Vienne*, in: *Bulletin français de la S.I.M.* 5 (1909), pp. 755–762, here p. 758: “Tout d’abord des auditions musicales, dont Haydn fit naturellement presque tous les frais. Tous les genres nous furent présentés, et de

lamented that the French did not celebrate their own great historical composers with similar gusto, a remark that hints at a larger goal for his own H–A–Y–D–N commissions. He complained that the continual focus on Haydn at the Viennese concerts detracted from what could have been an opportunity for a broader examination of influential composers from earlier in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He felt the lack of performances of compositions by Giovanni Battista Sammartini, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Johann Stamitz, not coincidentally his specific research interests, was unwarranted given the attention paid to these composers at the scholarly proceedings<sup>24</sup>.

The French attendees made an excursion to Eisenstadt to see Haydn's long-time residence first-hand, and the trip made a lasting impression on many of them. Vincent d'Indy, Charles-Théodore Malherbe (editor of Hector Berlioz's works and the librarian for the Opéra), and scholars Pierre Aubry and Lionel de La Laurencie, as well as Écorcheville, his wife, and others visited the Esterházy estate and Haydn's former residence<sup>25</sup>. Wanda Landowska, who also attended the Vienna festivities and had just published a book making frequent reference to Haydn, likely also participated in the trip<sup>26</sup>. Figure 1 reproduces the photographs published by Écorcheville from Eisenstadt, including one of d'Indy in a conversation and another of the delegates near the Leopoldinentempel in the Esterházy Schlosspark.

While in Eisenstadt, the pilgrims were treated to a concert in the Haydnssaal and viewed a number of Haydn manuscripts and portraits. They also examined musical instruments in the Esterházy collection, including the prince's famed baryton. Écorcheville commented on the gracious reception given to the French scholars by the town and especially the prince's archivist, Lajos Merény,

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fort bonne façon." Id., *Fêtes de Haydn à Vienne*, in: *Le Figaro*, 31 May 1909: "Tandis que les centenaires de Lulli et de Rameau ont, en France, passé inaperçus, le moindre anniversaire devient au delà du Rhin prétexte à festivités musicales."

<sup>24</sup> Id., *Le congrès de Vienne*, p. 758.

<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately no record of the specific visitors to Eisenstadt survives, those listed here are mentioned specifically as making the trip (*ibid.*). A complete list of conference attendees appears in Adler, *Kongreß*, pp. 24–33. Adler lists 15 French attendees, but only twelve individuals are pictured in Eisenstadt.

<sup>26</sup> Wanda Landowska, *Musique Ancienne*, Paris 1909. On Landowska's connections with Écorcheville's circle, see Harry Haskell, *The Early Music Revival. A History*, Mineola, N.Y., 1996, pp. 49ff. Adler (*Kongreß*, pp. 24–33) lists four women from France in attendance at the conference in Vienna (Landowska, H. Baron, Écorcheville's wife Mathilde-Madeleine née Ogier, and Cecile Croekaert), making her presence in Eisenstadt plausible given the three women appearing in Figure 1.

who gave them a tour of the estate. In his report, Écorcheville noted that the Esterházy performance spaces remained largely unchanged from Haydn's time. Impressed, he noted that they were decorated in both a French taste and an Italian style, creating an "atmosphere that is part German and part Oriental"<sup>27</sup>.

The visit, combined with the festivities in Vienna, made a strong impression on many of the French delegates. Organologist Lucien Greilsamer would, shortly following the trip, write an article on the prince's baryton for Écorcheville's journal. Greilsamer's essay, one of the earliest scholarly examinations of this peculiar instrument, was of fundamental importance to later Haydn research<sup>28</sup>. By 1932, the next Haydn commemoration year, Lionel de La Laurencie would similarly enter the field of Haydn scholarship with an article on the dissemination of Haydn's works in late 18<sup>th</sup>-century Paris<sup>29</sup>. Finally the orchestrator of all of these events, Écorcheville himself, brought the H-A-Y-D-N commissions to press, printed an extended essay on Haydn's life and the genius of his works in the "Bulletin français", and promoted the conference itself in his two reports<sup>30</sup>. French scholars who were not participants at the conference followed suit. Théodore de Wyzewa, for instance, published a lengthy article on the development of Haydn's style in 1909. In it he addressed Haydn's "Sturm und Drang" symphonies, connecting them to parallel events in literature such as Johann Wolfgang Goethe's "Die Leiden des jungen Werther"<sup>31</sup>.

In giving Haydn's music a fresh look, the French contingent to the Viennese conference was setting a precedent for the future of Haydn reception and scholarship rather than relying on a German viewpoint. That they were examining Haydn specifically was a

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<sup>27</sup> Écorcheville, *Le congrès de Vienne*, p. 760: "Qu'il [Merény] y aurait à dire sur la plastique intérieure de Kismarton! sur cet ameublement où le gout français et le style italien se rencontrent dans une atmosphère mi-allemande, mi-orientale!"

<sup>28</sup> Lucien Greilsamer, *Le baryton du prince Esterhazy*, in: *Bulletin français de la S.I.M.* 6 (1910), pp. 45–56.

<sup>29</sup> Lionel de La Laurencie, *L'apparition des œuvres d'Haydn à Paris*, in: *Revue de musicologie* 13 (1932), pp. 191–205, here pp. 191ff. La Laurencie was personally close to Écorcheville, and later wrote an obituary-biography of him: *Le tombeau de Jules Écorcheville*, Paris 1916.

<sup>30</sup> Alexandre de Bertha, *Joseph Haydn*, in: *Bulletin français de la S.I.M.* 5 (1909), pp. 439–442; Écorcheville, *Le congrès de Vienne*; Id., *Fêtes de Haydn à Vienne*.

<sup>31</sup> Théodore de Wyzewa, *A propos du centenaire de la mort de Joseph Haydn*, in: *Revue des deux mondes* 79/5 (1909), pp. 935–946. See also the paper of Wolfgang Fuhrmann in the present volume, especially pp. 349–353.

result of circumstances created artificially by Écorcheville, who used his position as a scholar-editor-ambassador effectively to promote French accomplishment in historical studies and composition. The role he played in influencing the course of scholarship and Haydn's reception in France cannot be underestimated: up until his tragic death in the trenches during World War I, he was in a real sense the driving force behind research into 18<sup>th</sup>-century music that single-handedly brought together a number of major figures in French musicology and composition to celebrate Haydn both in 1909 and in the years following. Finally, a number of benefits tangential to Haydn's music ensued, including the renewal of interest in the Baroque tradition of "tombeau" writing in France that would flower in the ensuing decades and the increased visibility given to Haydn's precursors.

Figure 1: Photographs from the French delegation's trip to Eisenstadt in 1909<sup>32</sup>

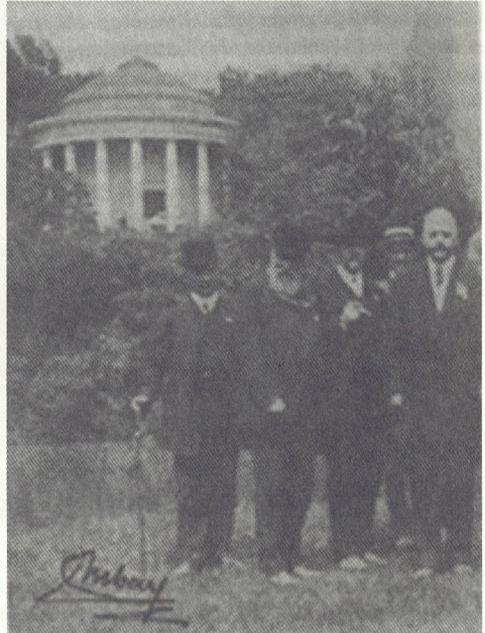


*a) D'Indy is fourth from the right,  
Écorcheville is in the middle (obscured face) with his  
wife probably beside him, and Malherbe is probably on the far left.*

<sup>32</sup> Reproduced from Écorcheville, *Le congrès de Vienne*, pp. 755–762.



*b) D'Indy in conversation with Écorcheville.*



*c) Visitors near the Leopoldinentempel.*

## SAINT-SAËNS: NEOCLASSICIST INFUSED WITH HAYDN

It may seem almost inevitable that the composers of the growing Neoclassical movement would turn to the music of Haydn to defend their aesthetics. This is especially true of France, which had a dearth of Classical-era historical figures on which to draw. While they emphasized their Baroque heritage (Jean-Philippe Rameau, François Couperin, Jean-Baptiste Lully, etc.), they did not do so in a way which excluded Viennese Classicism. Camille Saint-Saëns's approach to Haydn's music presents an interesting case study in that he promoted Haydn in such a way as to situate himself as the parallel figure for French Neoclassicism, that of progenitor. In addition, he used Haydn as an exemplar for an appropriate balance between absolute music and text painting as well as between dark and tragic works and serious-yet-uplifting compositions. His arguments on musical taste referenced Haydn as well, stating that conductors should more strictly adhere to the written score and that performers should play weightier, more significant music than was then in vogue<sup>33</sup>.

Saint-Saëns's writings on Haydn's music demonstrate his interest in defending the merits of absolute music, a direct tie to his Neoclassicist aesthetics. Nowhere is this more evident than in his 1913 essay on Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ". The well-known anecdote of Haydn's compositional dilemma in writing seven successive slow movements, quoted verbatim by Saint-Saëns from the early biographies, provided a starting point for a larger argument on musical taste in the post-Romantic era. A key thread throughout is his notion that composers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century did not consciously force revolutions on their listeners but instead innovated within the confines of contemporary musical style. Here his conservatism comes to the fore: Haydn for all of his innovations was less interested in "sensuous pleasure and keen emotion" than in writing good music using a "simple series of well-constructed chords."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> A brief synopsis of his views on Haydn, as well as a general overview of his opinions on other composers, can be found in Scott Fruehwald, *Saint-Saëns's Views on Music and Musicians*, in: *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 15 (1984), pp. 159–174, here pp. 165f.

<sup>34</sup> Unless otherwise cited, quotes of Saint-Saëns in this and the following three paragraphs are taken from Saint-Saëns, *Joseph Haydn*, in: *École Buissonnière*, pp. 189–197; translation in: *Musical Memories*, pp. 109–120.

It was no coincidence that Saint-Saëns chose the “Seven Last Words of Christ” as his focus for connecting his own music with Haydn’s. Commissioned by a canon in Cadiz, Spain, the work had the appeal of separation from Germany geographically. More importantly, Haydn famously struggled with the commission because of its programmatic requirement for seven successive slow movements. For Saint-Saëns, Haydn successfully balanced programmatic needs with writing compelling music: “Haydn feared to weary his hearers. Our modern bards have no such vain scruple.” The imposed simplicity of the “Seven Words” also provided Saint-Saëns with an opportunity to defend absolute music in spite of the work’s obvious programmatic underpinnings. He criticized the supplemental vocal parts to the piece, attributed by him to Michael Haydn<sup>35</sup>, by noting that they added “nothing to the value of the work [...] They are eloquent enough without the aid of voices, for their charm penetrates.”

Unlike many commentators, Saint-Saëns emphatically praised Haydn’s approach to text painting in “The Seasons”, citing it as required listening for all aspiring composers:

When we plunge into the score of his great oratorio, “The Seasons”, we imagine we have discovered a new planet. This many-sided work, ranging from comic opera to sacred music, representing as it does the thousand varied aspects of nature, the purity of the entire plan combining with the warmest and richest coloring – this work, so varied in form, ought frequently to be offered to the public, and every composer should study it thoroughly.<sup>36</sup>

Saint-Saëns reinterprets Haydn’s text painting as absolute music that speaks without the need for its text, much like the “Seven Words”. Instead of simply depicting things musically, Haydn was using “artistic imitation of the different sounds in nature” to trans-

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<sup>35</sup> Here Saint-Saëns erred, as there are in fact two vocal versions. The earliest is by Joseph Friberth, while a later version is by Joseph Haydn himself.

<sup>36</sup> “Quand on se plonge dans la partition de son grand Oratorio, les Saisons, il semble que l’on découvre une nouvelle planète. Cette œuvre de large envergure, qui va de l’Opéra-Comique à la Musique sacrée, où sont rendus les mille aspects de la Nature, où la pureté du dessin s’allie aux plus riches, aux plus chatoyantes couleurs, cette œuvre aux formes si variées devrait être souvent présentée au public, et tout compositeur devrait l’étudier à fond.” Camille Saint-Saëns, *Les idées de M. Vincent d’Indy*, Paris 1919, p. 36; translation in Fred Rothwell, *The Ideas of M. Vincent D’Indy (Concluded)*, in: *The Musical Times* 61 (1920), pp. 523–526, here p. 524. For a more typical viewpoint on Haydn’s text painting, see Hector Berlioz’s private comments on “The Creation” in: Nicholas Temperley, *Haydn. “The Creation”*, Cambridge etc. 1991, p. 43.

late “the profound emotions to which the different aspects of nature give birth” into music. His two favorite portions of the work were the introduction of “Winter,” which he vaguely likened to Robert Schumann, and the final moments of the work in which “with one grand upward burst of flight, Haydn reaches the realms where Handel and Beethoven preceded [sic] him. He equals them and ends his picture in a dazzling blaze of light.” While it remains unclear how exactly Beethoven preceded a Haydn composition from 1801, the lessons to be learned from Haydn’s approach to programmaticism are apparent: he took the oratorio to new heights through a “fertility of imagination and a magnificence of orchestral richness.”

The amount of criticism for contemporary French composers included in Saint-Saëns’s Haydn-related writings indicates the extent to which Saint-Saëns read his own beliefs into Haydn’s music. For instance, there is no sense of false pretentiousness, as Haydn places priority on his audience’s interest yet without falling to the opposite extreme of pandering. Haydn “knew how to flatter his patrons” in a way that was now out of fashion. Saint-Saëns directly attacks composers who “despise the mob and swim upstream”, in essence arguing that one did not have to be revolutionary to be a great composer and that a successful composer was one who could write good music that people enjoyed. In using music solely as a “source of sensuous pleasure and keen emotion” and by ignoring the audience, composers had limited their expressive potential.

An integral part of Saint-Saëns’s reception of Haydn and his criticism of contemporary composers was a notion that weight and tragedy were not requirements for art music. Saint-Saëns relished in Haydn’s “gaiety” where many of his German contemporaries used it as a point of derision. Writing on Jules Massenet, whose music he found to be uplifting, he said that this quality was becoming increasingly rare in contemporary music as the critics scoffed at the likes of Haydn and Mozart and even “turned away their faces in shame before the exuberant joyousness with which [Beethoven’s] Ninth Symphony comes to its triumphal close. Long live misery! Long live boredom!”<sup>37</sup> Rather than seeking profundity

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<sup>37</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, Jules Massenet, in: *Musical Memories*, p. 216 and *École Buissonnière*, pp. 271ff.; also Roger Nichols (ed.), *Camille Saint-Saëns on Music and Musicians*, Oxford 2008, p. 165. “Cette musique a pour moi un grand attrait, bien rare de nos jours: elle est gaie. La gaieté est mal vue dans la musique à notre

through tragedy, Saint-Saëns argued that composers would profit from writing “a simple series of well-constructed chords” not “embellished” with an “impassioned melody”<sup>38</sup>.

Comparisons between the music of Saint-Saëns and of Haydn were relatively common in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. Romain Rolland noted that “Saint-Saëns’s musical ideas were infused with the spirit of the great classics [of the late-]eighteenth century – far more, whatever people may say, with the spirit of Beethoven, Haydn, and Mozart than with the spirit of Bach.”<sup>39</sup> Pierre Lalo similarly wrote that the purity of Saint-Saëns’s music was on a par with that of Haydn and Mozart<sup>40</sup>. Laurent Ceillier commented that Haydn was an integral influence on Saint-Saëns’s musical personality<sup>41</sup>. In a memorial essay published shortly after Saint-Saëns’s death, Gabriel Fauré eulogized him as devoted to the works of neglected masters and to absolute instrumental music at a time when opera reigned supreme, opening the door to further parallels with Haydn later in the essay<sup>42</sup>.

That Saint-Saëns embraced and even encouraged the comparison between himself and Haydn is evident in his writings. A child prodigy on the piano, Saint-Saëns began playing Haydn’s music at the age of five and described himself as a “classicist nourished on Mozart and Haydn from my tenderest infancy.”<sup>43</sup> He was encouraged to explore Haydn further in part through the zeal of his organ teacher, François Benoist. Benoist’s “‘almost exclusive’ admiration

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époque. On la reproche à Haydn et à Mozart; on détourne pudiquement la face devant l’explosion de joie exubérante qui termine triomphalement la Neuvième Symphonie. Vive la tristesse! Vive l’ennui! Et ce sont des jeunes gens qui parlent ainsi. Puissent-ils ne pas regretter, trop tard, le temps perdu de la gaieté passée!”

<sup>38</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, Joseph Haydn, p. 189; translation p. 109.

<sup>39</sup> Romain Rolland, Camille Saint-Saëns, in: Id., *Musicians of Today*, New York 1915, p. 121.

<sup>40</sup> Pierre Lalo, A propos d’un anniversaire de M. Saint-Saëns, in: *Le temps*, 29 May 1906. Lalo, for his part, was acquainted with Haydn’s chamber music; see Ralph P. Locke, *The French Symphony. David, Gounod, and Bizet to Saint-Saëns, Franck, and Their Followers*, in: *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman, New York 1997, p. 180.

<sup>41</sup> Laurent Ceillier, *Personnalité et évolution de Saint-Saëns*, in: *Le guide du concert* 3 (1922), pp. 29f.

<sup>42</sup> Gabriel Fauré, Camille Saint-Saëns, in: *La revue musicale* 3 (1922), pp. 97–100.

<sup>43</sup> Nichols, Camille Saint-Saëns on Music, p. 158; Herman Klein, Saint-Saëns as I Knew Him, in: *The Musical Times* 63 (1922), pp. 90–93, here pp. 90f.; Jacques-Gabriel Prodhomme, Camille Saint-Saëns (Oct. 9, 1835–Dec. 16, 1921), in: *The Musical Quarterly* 8 (1922), pp. 469–486, here pp. 476f.

for Haydn” was so well-known that his students played Haydn-affiliated jokes on him in class<sup>44</sup>.

Often Haydn’s music serves as a thinly-veiled substitute for Saint-Saëns’s self-assessment. The opening sentence states Haydn’s primacy as the “father of all modern music” who now is “neglected”, not unlike Saint-Saëns’s own situation. Similarly he calls for music directors to “grant recognition to masters like Joseph Haydn who were in advance of their own times and who seem now and then to belong to our own.”<sup>45</sup> Writing at age 78, Saint-Saëns pointed out that Haydn reached the pinnacle of his development as a composer only late in life<sup>46</sup>.

Saint-Saëns consistently demonstrated his willingness to use Haydn’s neglect as a way to encourage performers to play weightier works in more traditional genres. For instance, he found a rare chance to agree with Vincent d’Indy on the need for an increased awareness of Haydn’s music in his 1919 review of d’Indy’s “Cours de Composition Musicale”:

I am very pleased to find that M. d’Indy attaches great importance to Haydn’s sonatas. These are not known to the youth of the present day, who are ignorant of their beauty, their extraordinary richness, and that wealth of imagination possessed by the musician to whom we are indebted for Mozart and Beethoven.<sup>47</sup>

In this assessment Saint-Saëns echoes d’Indy’s call for French pianists to perform the masterworks as often as the potpourris. The distinction may have been an underlying reason for decline of Écorcheville’s homage commission: a fear that the short-form works commissioned could not withstand the weight that he wished to place on his own compositions by invoking the Viennese Classicists.

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<sup>44</sup> Henri Maréchal, a later attendee of Benoist’s organ classes played a prank one day by reharmonizing a theme by Haydn in a more modern style, at which time Benoist played the original Haydn setting from memory saying “that is what Haydn wrote.” The expected criticism inevitably left the students laughing (Orpha Ochse, *Organists and Organ Playing in Nineteenth-Century France and Belgium*, Bloomington 2000, p. 154).

<sup>45</sup> Saint-Saëns, *Joseph Haydn*, p. 189f.; translation in: *Musical Memories*, pp. 109f.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192; translation p. 113.

<sup>47</sup> “C’est avec un grand plaisir que j’ai vu M. d’Indy donner une grande importance aux Sonates de Haydn. La jeunesse actuelle ne les connaît pas; elle ignore leur beauté, la prodigieuse fécondité, la richesse d’imagination de cet ancêtre à qui nous devons Mozart et Beethoven” (Id., *Les idées de M. Vincent d’Indy*, Paris 1919, p. 36; translation in Fred Rothwell, *The Ideas*, p. 524).

In fact this ax had been ground for nearly a century, as Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy had complained as early as 1830 that “in Munich [...] they produce the stupidest, silliest stuff imaginable and when people do not like it they pretend that is because it is still too high-brow. Even the best pianists have no idea that Mozart and Haydn also composed for the piano”<sup>48</sup>. It does not seem that Saint-Saëns or d’Indy had a noticeable effect on most concert pianists’ choices of repertoire, but in bringing this issue to light they were laying a foundation for a generation of performers that would take an interest in Haydn’s piano sonatas.

Haydn also served as a case study for Saint-Saëns the music scholar and performer-conductor. As an early advocate for scholarly editions, he worried that composers without complete urtexts such as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Frédéric Chopin were becoming increasingly “unrecognizable” in performance as the original first-edition prints disappeared<sup>49</sup>. By the same token, as a Neoclassicist Saint-Saëns was interested in the strict interpretation of a score, taking as few liberties with the music as possible. Equally concerning to him were the liberties that conductors felt they could take with works in the absence of scholarly editions. In the case of Haydn this further manifested itself in heartless “perfunctory” performances. He admitted that conductors should interpret the score, but found it “intolerable that scores should be printed with [added] nuances and bowings which are in no way due to the author and which are imposed by the editor.”<sup>50</sup>

The breadth of Saint-Saëns’s knowledge of Haydn’s music is surprising for the era. Besides the “Seven Words”, and at least a cursory knowledge of many of the symphonies and piano sonatas, he also commented on Haydn’s operatic writing. He had examined a partial manuscript of the opera “L’anima del filosofo” at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, where it is still housed<sup>51</sup>. Haydn’s use of “mysterious English horns” in that opera caught his eye

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<sup>48</sup> Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, letter to Carl Friedrich Zelter, 22 June 1830, translation in: Josiah Fisk (ed.), *Composers on Music*, Boston 1997, pp. 81f.

<sup>49</sup> Saint-Saëns, *Orphée*, in: *École Buissonnière*, pp. 225–241, here p. 226; translation in: *Musical Memoires*, pp. 155f.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 236f.; translation p. 171.

<sup>51</sup> *Id.*, Joseph Haydn, in: *École Buissonnière*, p. 191; translation in: *Musical Memoires*, p. 112. The undated manuscript in unknown (French) hands is presumed to have been copied in the 1820s or 30s (Joseph Haydn, *L’anima del filosofo ossia Orfeo ed Euridice*. *Dramma per musica* 1791. Libretto von Carlo Francesco Badini, ed. Helmut Wirth (JHW XXV/13), *Kritischer Bericht*, Munich 1974, p.14).

because they were unplayable on the modern instrument but well-suited to the clarinet. He derided a coloratura aria for Euridice as “rather ridiculous”, but thought better of her dying aria. Creonte’s aria, which had been given new Latin words for performance in church services, was “beautiful”. This reference to specific sections from an opera by Haydn, let alone a positive viewpoint on his work in this genre, is unique for the era. More typically, if Haydn’s operas were mentioned at all, it was a passing note that he worked in the genre but was inferior to Mozart. Saint-Saëns, like his contemporaries, also held this viewpoint in general, as he closes the discussion by noting that he does not regret that Haydn never finished the work (even though Haydn obviously did finish it). Nevertheless, he liked scattered sections of it and took the time to examine the manuscript and write about it. If his discussion of “L’anima del filosofo” is any indication, Saint-Saëns may well have known Haydn’s vocal music in more detail than many of his contemporaries. He was the only French composer of the era to have attempted to consult early sources as a means to better understanding Haydn’s music.

Saint-Saëns did not write a homage despite Écorcheville’s invitation mostly, it would seem, due to his dislike of the scheme used to translate H–A–Y–D–N into the pitches B–A–D–D–G for the works’ common theme, which he felt was unprecedented. A June 1909 letter in which he declines Écorcheville’s second attempt to secure a composition from him survives. In it Saint-Saëns defends his decision as regrettable but prudent for the defense of his reputation in the long-term:

You are dissatisfied [with my negative answer]; I understand and regret it *v e r y s i n c e r e l y*. But I am indeed forced to combat a host of people who, under the pretext of serving the highest interests of art, work – unconsciously – to destroy it [...] I cannot refrain from having some hope in my destiny. You are young; in about 40 years, you will see how much importance will be attached to “Pelléas” and the “Histoires naturelles”.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, letter to Jules Écorcheville, 16 June 1909, in: Arbie Orenstein, Ravel. Lettres, Écrits, Entretiens, Paris 1989, p. 104; translation in: Id., A Ravel Reader, pp. 106f. (emphasis original). “Vous n’êtes pas content; je le comprends et je le déplore, *t r è s s i n c è r e m e n t*. Mais je suis bien forcé de combattre l’armée qui sous prétexte de servir les plus hauts intérêts de l’art, travaille – inconsciemment –, à le détruire. [...] je n’ai pas pu m’empêcher d’avoir quelque espoir en ma destinée. Vous êtes jeune; vous pourrez voir, dans une quarantaine d’années ce que pèseront ‘Pelléas’ et les ‘Histoires naturelles’.”

Exactly one month later Saint-Saëns wrote Gabriel Fauré urging him to decline the commission on similar grounds. This letter reveals that he was not concerned so much with his name being connected with Ravel, Debussy or d'Indy, composers of whom he was frequently critical, but was more worried by the possibility of a negative reaction to the works in Germany<sup>53</sup>:

I've had a letter from Écorcheville wanting to celebrate Haydn, and he has a hundred reasons for it! [...] but, never, absolutely never have I seen Y and N in musical notation [...] I am writing to him to convince myself that the two letters Y and N can become D and G. I encourage you to do the same yourself. It would be annoying to get dragged into a ridiculous undertaking that could make us the mockery of musical Germany.

Saint-Saëns's argument persuaded Fauré to decline the invitation, while Écorcheville was unable, even after several attempts and an obvious zeal for the project, to persuade Saint-Saëns of the merits of the chosen "soggetto cavato". The fact that Robert Schumann had already developed musical ciphers capable of supporting non-musical letters in the 1830s seems to have escaped their notice in 1909. The oversight is inexplicable: Fauré had edited Schumann's piano works firsthand but neglected to mention the precedent to Saint-Saëns. In a further twist of irony, Fauré himself would later be honored with hommages using the very same "ridiculous" translation scheme that had led him to reject Écorcheville's commission.

An underlying reason for Saint-Saëns's rejection may have been the validity of the homage as a genre. While it quickly evolved into the tombeau, the 1909 commission was setting a precedent: the most well-known post-Baroque tombeaus, including Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin" (1917) and the collective "Tombeau de Debussy" (1920) had yet to be written. Later instances included a set dedicated to Dukas (1935) and literary "tombeau" for Écorcheville himself. One precedent to the H-A-Y-D-N hommages may have been Dukas's "Variations, interlude et finale sur un thème de Rameau" (1902), but it would be decades before such compositions would become commonplace. On the other hand, like most of his colleagues Saint-Saëns actively engaged in writing

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<sup>53</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, letter to Gabriel Fauré, 16 July 1909, in: Jean-Michel Nectoux (ed.), *The Correspondence of Camille Saint-Saëns and Gabriel Fauré. Sixty Years of Friendship*, Aldershot 2004, p. 88.

small-form solo piano music at the time (e.g. the 1909 "Feuillet d'album" in B flat major).

It remains unclear what Saint-Saëns thought that the Germans would say about the "soggetto cavato", especially considering that they, unlike Saint-Saëns and his French colleagues, would have been aware of Schumann's well-known application of them to his piano music or the more commonly-used B-A-C-H theme. Saint-Saëns's opinions on Richard Wagner's music had already alienated him from the German press long before 1909<sup>54</sup>. His writings on Wagner during the 1870s, strained his relationship with musical Germany even though he prefaced his writings on Wagner with apologetic statements. His 1876 essay on Wagner's "Ring" cycle begins defensively ("It is not without a certain apprehension that I undertake this article on Richard Wagner and his works") as does his 1899 article on Wagnerianism ("Before we begin, the reader should be warned that what follows is not a critique of Wagner's works or theories. It is something else"<sup>55</sup>). He was still aware of the strain c. 1909: his 1912 report on the Liszt centenary celebrations in Heidelberg noted that "disagreements" separated him from his German colleagues and that he could not refuse their invitation to attend because it would be "misunderstood"<sup>56</sup>. Only after accepting the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musik-Verein's invitation to Heidelberg did he begin to feel more comfortable with the German attitude towards him. In the end this was merely a short-term reunion as the onset of World War I and his publication of "Germanophilie" again brought fissure<sup>57</sup>.

In the end, Saint-Saëns showed a life-long commitment to promoting the music of Haydn, primarily because he perceived that Haydn's aesthetics and approach to composition mirrored his

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<sup>54</sup> Sabina Ratner, Richard Wagner and Camille Saint-Saëns, in: *The Opera Quarterly* 1 (1983), pp. 101–113; Pasler, *Composing the Citizen*, pp. 513f.

<sup>55</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, "L'anneau du Nibelung" et les représentations de Bayreuth Août 1876, in: Id., *Harmonie et mélodie*, Paris 1885, pp. 37–98, here p. 37; translation in: Nichols, *Saint-Saëns on Music*, pp. 101–107, here p. 101; and Camille Saint-Saëns, *L'illusion wagnérienne*, in: *Portraits et souvenirs*, Paris 1899, pp. 206–220, here p. 206; translation in: Nichols, *Saint-Saëns on Music*, pp. 108–115, here p. 108.

<sup>56</sup> Camille Saint-Saëns, *The Liszt Centenary at Heidelberg* (1912), in: *Musical Memories*, p. 121.

<sup>57</sup> See Michael Stegemann, Camille Saint-Saëns, "Germanophilie". Hintergründe einer musikpolitischen Affäre, in: *Échos de France et d'Italie. Liber amicorum Yves Gérard*, ed. Marie-Claire Le Moigne-Mussat, Jean Mongrédien and Jean-Michel Nectoux, Paris 1997, pp. 257–268.

own. Just as the five-year-old pianist would only to play the sonatas of Haydn and Mozart for people “capable of appreciating them”, the adult Saint-Saëns made a firm commitment to furthering the public’s understanding of Haydn’s music through his published writings, reviews, and research<sup>58</sup>. More than anything, Haydn provided him with an opportunity to advance his own beliefs in the importance of absolute music and the continuing validity of instrumental music in a world increasingly struggling to come to terms with programmaticism and the music of Wagner.

#### HAYDN AS COMPOSITIONAL MODEL

Paul Dukas’s interest in music history was extensive and he had already combined that interest with composition in his “Variations, interlude et finale sur un thème de Rameau” (?1899–1902). In these respects Écorcheville’s invitation to write a homage was logical. He also crafted editions of a large number of 18<sup>th</sup>-century works, including keyboard sonatas by Scarlatti, operas by Couperin and Rameau, and various instrumental sonatas by Beethoven, and so Haydn was not far from his central interests. As a composition teacher at the Conservatoire in the 1920s, he followed in d’Indy’s philosophical footsteps by teaching through the example of 18<sup>th</sup>-century masterworks. His approach to teaching emphasized Johann Sebastian Bach over Beethoven, but nevertheless encouraged a detailed knowledge of many historical styles, Haydn’s included.

Of direct personal import to Dukas were the ways in which the first Viennese school integrated popular music, folksong, and dance forms with art music and counterpoint, an idea he posited as early as 1897. As a composer Dukas strove to integrate these same features into his music. In addition, he participated in the resurgence of “musique ancienne” and especially of Baroque dance forms that occurred generally in France at the time and so the integration of styles was for him more than a historical exercise<sup>59</sup>. Out of the three Viennese classics, Haydn’s use of folksong and dance forms placed him in a position for Dukas to use him as the one example to be closely examined for applicability to modern composition. Dukas’s own works would be judged based on their

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<sup>58</sup> Nichols, *Saint-Saëns on Music*, p. 158.

<sup>59</sup> See Pasler, *Composing the Citizen*, pp. 638–641.

interaction with these forms as early as 1902, while as a critic of other composers he demonstrated the same bias.

The interplay between song, dance, and learned music lay at the heart of Haydn's style for Dukas and was the crucial element for bridging the Baroque and Romantic styles. In his estimate, Haydn set a precedent by using German and Italian song as the basis of his symphonies<sup>60</sup>. Haydn's foundational role stemmed from his establishment of symphonic music through "very daring forays" which "through the alliance of counterpoint and dance separated bit by bit from the old forms of the suite and the concerto."<sup>61</sup> Haydn's thematic development, his "crowning glory", set him apart from the composers of the Baroque, placing him in a position to influence the course of the Romantic era without actually participating in it<sup>62</sup>. Dukas's took a more ambivalent stance towards Haydn's orchestration as a feature setting him apart from Mozart and Beethoven<sup>63</sup>. While Haydn occasionally had a "stroke of inspiration", Mozart's approach was more refined and his instrumental palate somewhat more expanded<sup>64</sup>.

Haydn's Symphony Hob. I:102 in B flat major, a performance of which Dukas reviewed, features all of the elements Dukas enjoyed in Haydn's music. The first movement includes a dance-like primary theme with a transparent counterpoint between melody and accompaniment which Dukas favored. Learned music appears in

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<sup>60</sup> Dukas, *La question d'école* (1897), in: *Chroniques musicales sur deux siècles 1892–1932*, ed. Jean-Vincent Richard, Paris 1948, pp. 205f.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.*, *Le nouveau lyrisme* (1903), *ibid.*, p. 210. "La musique symphonique, née de l'alliance du contrepoint et de la musique de danse, s'émancipe peu à peu des formes anciennes de la suite et du concert". Vincent d'Indy characterized Haydn's music in a similar manner, noting the ways in which Haydn's minuets paved the way for the scherzo and sonata through odd-measured phrases and thematic development (Proksch, *Vincent d'Indy as Harbinger*, p. 181). Dukas additionally followed d'Indy's lead in the Rust scandal, arguing in an 1894 essay that Rust was, as d'Indy posited, the crucial link between the styles of Haydn and Mozart with that of Beethoven (see Dukas, *F.-G. Rust, un précurseur de Beethoven* (1894), in: *Les écrits de Paul Dukas sur la musique*, ed. Gustave Samazeuilh, Paris 1948, pp. 185–190).

<sup>62</sup> Paul Dukas, *Les concerts* (1899), *ibid.*, pp. 438–459, here p. 439.

<sup>63</sup> In this respect Dukas was somewhat at odds with typical French criticism, which applauded Haydn's clear and effective orchestration, see Jess Tyre, *The Reception of German Instrumental Music in France Between 1870 and 1914*, Ph.D. diss., Yale University 2000, p. 170.

<sup>64</sup> Paul Dukas, *La deuxième Symphonie de Vincent d'Indy* (1904), in: *Les écrits de Paul Dukas*, pp. 608ff., here p. 610.

the guise of close imitation (measure 160ff.) in the development section. The second movement is among Haydn's most lyric, an excellent example of song. The third movement juxtaposes a minuet section that is a romping folk dance replete with phrase-rhythm alterations with a highly expressive trio section. The finale of this work opens with a musette gesture and also plays with phrase-rhythm. While he did not write about the work in this sort of detail, Dukas noted that the work was "full of spiritual moments of inspiration" as well as interesting instrumental combinations. Mirroring Saint-Saëns's complaints on "perfunctory performances", Dukas's only criticism was the actual performance of the work, which was lively but lacked an attention to detail<sup>65</sup>.

The single largest concentration of Dukas's thoughts on Haydn is a concert review entitled "Haydn and Berlioz", published in January 1904, in which Dukas's enjoyment of Haydn's music and Dukas's own aesthetic parallels with late 18<sup>th</sup>-century music come to the fore<sup>66</sup>. The juxtaposition of these two composers stemmed from a joint concert of Haydn's "Seasons" and Berlioz's Requiem. Dukas saw the two as related in a merely superficial way, in that both composers used tone painting and believed in the "descriptive power of music". Beyond this he argued that their aesthetics were fundamentally opposed. For Haydn, the application of tone painting was merely a secondary concern, subservient to formal considerations and a more powerful belief in the "absolute expressive value" of music. That is, Haydn's descriptive passages were merely superficial "diversions" on the way to a deeper form of musical expression not reliant upon programmaticism. Berlioz, on the other hand, gave precedence to dramatic and poetic expression at the expense of formal and purely musical considerations. Both approaches were valid for Dukas, they simply had different expressive goals. Berlioz would have agreed that his aesthetic was completely different from Haydn's, but disagreed on the end result. Despite praising the work in his published reviews, Berlioz privately despised Haydn's text painting, arguing that they made him "shrivel up" when he listened to the "detested" work<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> Id., *Les concerts* (1899), p. 458.

<sup>66</sup> Id., *Haydn et Berlioz* (1904), in: *Chroniques*, pp. 58ff. The opening paragraph of this review has been translated in: Temperley, Haydn. "The Creation", p. 100. All other translations from the essay are mine.

<sup>67</sup> Temperley, Haydn. "The Creation", p. 43.

In "Haydn and Berlioz" Dukas balances the potentially outdated aspects of Haydn's music with praise for its originality and its wealth of effective sections. He agreed with Berlioz that there was a good deal of naïveté in the oratorios, but he did not think it excessive, nor did it interfere with his enjoyment of the work. Similarly, he admitted that parts of "The Seasons" seemed "insipid" next to Berlioz's "apocalyptic" Requiem, but overall he thought the work's candor and grace made up for this shortcoming and preserved its freshness<sup>68</sup>. Dukas felt that much of the work still retained its freshness. He found the hunters' chorus "Hört, hört, das laute Getön" and the wine chorus "Juhhe, juhhe, der Wein ist da" in the "Autumn" section to be "surprisingly effective", and his favorite movement overall was the chorus "Knurre, schnurre, knurre!" of the "Winter" section, where the break of day could "pass for one of the most spiritual sections of German music."<sup>69</sup> Dukas also mentioned the opening chaos section of "The Creation", a consistent favorite among French commentators, noting that it too had a "boldness whose edge has not been blunted by the passing of a long century."

In paying close attention to Haydn's late oratorios and in defending those works, Dukas, together with Saint-Saëns, followed Haydn's lead as portrayed in the early biographies and likely saw an opportunity to re-claim these works as "French". It is clear that Dukas, like Saint-Saëns, had read at least one of these biographies. Griesinger mentioned that "The Creation" and "The Seasons"

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<sup>68</sup> Dukas, Haydn et Berlioz, pp. 59f. "Haydn est assurément moins troublant, et l'honnête bonhomme des Saisons peut sembler à certains bien fade à côté des éclats apocalyptiques du Requiem. La tranquillité d'âme qu'elle exprime est loin pourtant d'être sans prix et j'en aime, pour ma part, la candeur et la grâce ingénieuse. D'autant que, pour avoir porté dans sa poitrine sa cœur pur, le bon Haydn n'en a pas moins été un homme d'un génie véritable, un musicien comme l'histoire de notre art en compte à peine une douzaine pour la fertilité de l'invention, la maîtrise de la mise en œuvre et le naturel de l'expression". "Il faut bien avouer pourtant que ce long oratorio contient des parties qui datent un peu. On y trouve des airs et des ensembles assez longs et fastidieux et des effets descriptifs passablement enfantins. Mais à côté, et par compensation, l'œuvre compte des pages charmantes, pleines d'une fraîcheur et d'un coloris délicieux et d'une ingéniosité d'écriture qui semble encore originale après toutes les audaces raffinées des modernes, des chœurs enfin, d'une solidité et d'un éclat qui ne redoutent aucune comparaison."

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 60. "L'Automne' et l'Hiver' demeurent les parties les plus agréables. Le chœur des chasseurs et celui des vendangeurs produisent encore un effet surprenant. Et la jolie chanson de la veillée peut passer pour une des choses les plus spirituelles de la musique allemande."

“crowned his reputation” and included a poem eulogizing the former work<sup>70</sup>. His arguments on the use of text painting in “The Creation” mirror Dukas’s argument. Interestingly enough, Griesinger also includes an extended blurb on the unparalleled enthusiasm shown for that work in Paris after its first performance there in 1800, which inspired a medal inscribed “Hommage à Haydn”. Dies likewise praised the two oratorios, with specific reference to Haydn’s stature in France:

The French Ambassador, Count Andreossy, appeared to notice with pleasure that Haydn was wearing on a ribbon in his button-hole the gold medal presented to him, in consideration of “The Creation” by the Concert des Amateurs in Paris, and said to him, “You should receive not this medal alone but all medals awarded in the whole of France.”<sup>71</sup>

Dies further notes that Paris “sought to outdo other cities and the first [foreign] performance in fact took place there”<sup>72</sup> and then goes on to mention the casting of the aforementioned medal for a second time. In essence, Dies and Griesinger both framed the oratorios as closely linked with France from the outset, and Dukas, like his colleagues, took advantage of the opportunity to revive the notion that the French had a special relationship with it.

Dukas’s earnest desire to hear more works by Haydn performed is evident in the closing section of his essay, where he praises the Société des Concerts for restoring “The Seasons” to the public and encourages them to devote future concerts to his music<sup>73</sup>. For its

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<sup>70</sup> Griesinger, pp. 63–69; translation in: Vernon Gotwals, Haydn. Two Contemporary Portraits, Madison, WI, 1968, pp. 37–42. Further see Temperley, Haydn. “The Creation”, pp. 40f.

<sup>71</sup> “Der französische Bothschafter Graf A n d r e o s s y schien mit Vergnügen zu bemerken, daß H a y d n die ihm von dem Concert des Amateurs zu Paris verehrte goldene Medaille, die er sich durch die Schöpfung erwarb, an einer Schleife im Knopfloche trug, und sagte zu ihm. [!]Nicht allein diese Medaille, Sie müssen alle Medaillen, die in ganz Frankreich ausgetheilt werden, empfangen.” Dies, p. 163; translation in Gotwals, Haydn, p. 177.

<sup>72</sup> Dies, p. 174; translation in Gotwals, Haydn. p. 183.

<sup>73</sup> Dukas, Haydn et Berlioz, p. 60: “La Société des Concerts doit être grandement remerciée, d’avoir songé à restituer intégralement à son public une œuvre qui cadre si bien avec ses traditions. Depuis quelque temps déjà, on pouvait regretter le morcellement des programmes. Donner tout un concert à Haydn, peut sembler une hardiesse au moment où quelques critiques font à Beethoven même un procès de tendance.” The Société’s repertoire list is available in: D. Kern Holoman, The Société des concerts du conservatoire, 1828–1967, Berkeley 2004 and the website accompanying this book: <http://hector.ucdavis.edu/sdc/> (4 December 2011).

part, the Société took Dukas's praise to heart and played "The Creation" in 1907. Paris had re-claimed the oratorios as its own. At the same time, Dukas had re-affirmed his own aesthetics of music by invoking Haydn's combination of folksong and dance ideas into the Classical-era style.

#### FROM CONCERT HALL TO ACADEMY AND BACK

A persistent issue in the study of Haydn's reception throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries is the apparently inverse correlation between the composer's popularity among the concert going public and his reputation among key musical figures. As has been seen, Saint-Saëns and Dukas interacted proactively with Haydn in concert, both in attempting to persuade performers to play his music and to evaluate the quality of his output. Gabriel Fauré related to Haydn's music from the opposite perspective: as a conservatory administrator he responded to the demands of the public by taking steps to ensure that his students would be prepared to perform Haydn's music as professionals.

Guided in part by Saint-Saëns's warning against German criticism, Fauré declined Écorcheville's invitation to write an homage to Haydn. That Écorcheville thought of him as potentially interested in the project is unsurprising given Fauré's attraction to the music of earlier eras and his reputation for writing excellent solo piano music. In 1909 alone Fauré wrote four solo piano works (two nocturnes, a Barcarolle, and an impromptu). Fauré's knowledge of old and remote repertoires was not only wide-ranging but also integrally linked with his compositional style<sup>74</sup>. He advocated stricter and more far-reaching reforms to Gregorian chant and also edited "pure" urtext editions of Bach's organ works and the "Well Tempered Clavier"<sup>75</sup>. In addition, he worked extensively on Robert Schumann's keyboard works and had written cadenzas for piano concertos by both Beethoven and Mozart.

Looking back on his life in later years, Fauré credited his teacher Louis Niedermeyer with first introducing him to the music of Haydn during his studies at the École Niedermeyer. It is unclear

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When André Messager became musical director in 1908 the Société played Haydn's music much less frequently.

<sup>74</sup> See Caballero, Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics, p. 71.

<sup>75</sup> On his interest in editorial and performance practice see the preface to Johann Sebastian Bach, *Le clavecin bien tempéré*, ed. Gabriel Fauré, Paris 1915.

exactly when he was first exposed to Haydn, since he began studies there at age 9 and continued there for eleven years. The earliest we can date Fauré's knowledge of Haydn is to 1860, when as a 15 year-old student he was awarded an "equal second prize in harmony" for work involving the "Seven Last Words", perhaps a reharmonization of the work<sup>76</sup>. The school emphasized the music of Bach and taught a range of composers from Georg Friedrich Handel back to Renaissance masters such as Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, and Tomás Luis de Vittoria<sup>77</sup>. During his final years at the school he studied under Saint-Saëns, who further encouraged the study of Haydn's music.

Fauré's background in music history influenced his own efforts to reform the curriculum at the Conservatoire, which in turn reflected the changing status of Haydn's music in France. He advocated a switch towards practicality in performance for Conservatoire students, in essence encouraging instruction that revolved around works performed by professionals on a regular basis. Fauré's alterations to the voice curriculum were also part of a broader effort to increase the students' awareness of non-French repertoires. His tenure as director saw a substantial increase in the number of jury excerpts by Handel (reaching eight by 1907) and for the first time included works by Franz Schubert and Schumann<sup>78</sup>. Haydn's music benefitted from both of these efforts via the oratorios, which continued to be performed with relative frequency and which were not French in origin (despite their adoption as French by Haydn's early biographers). In 1897, Fauré's first year as a composition teacher at the Conservatoire, excerpts from "The Creation" made their first appearance on the annual voice juries. When he became the institution's director in 1905, it took him only one year to make "The Creation" a standard, recurring excerpt on the juries, where it would stay for the remainder of his tenure<sup>79</sup>. The Conservatoire performed "The Seasons" in 1904 and "The Creation" in 1906; the addition of excerpts from that work reflected

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<sup>76</sup> J. Barrie Jones (ed.), *Gabriel Fauré. A Life in Letters*, London 1989, p. 16.

<sup>77</sup> Gabriel Fauré, *Souvenirs*, in: *La revue musicale* 4/11 (October 1922), pp. 3–9. Further see Caballero, *Fauré and French Musical Aesthetics*, pp. 71ff.

<sup>78</sup> A complete list of excerpts from 1897–1910 is included in Gail Hilson Woldu, *Gabriel Fauré, directeur du Conservatoire. Les réformes de 1905*, in: *Revue de musicologie* 70 (1984), pp. 199–228, here pp. 219–228.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

current events at the institution as well as the larger Parisian music scene<sup>80</sup>.

While Fauré's specific knowledge of Haydn, at least beyond "The Creation" and unidentified piano sonatas, went unrecorded, what we do know of it speaks to the growing importance of pre-19<sup>th</sup>-century music within the French educational system. It also speaks to Haydn's popularity in concert performance, and to the Conservatoire's efforts to educate its students in a more practical way. It may well be that his views on Haydn were heavily influenced by his studies under Saint-Saëns, which would of course bring Haydn's reputation, presence in the concert hall, and importance to institutional education full circle.

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As is by now evident, Écorcheville, Saint-Saëns, Fauré, and Dukas each showed a great deal of interest in Haydn at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and each for their own specific purposes beyond the simple revival of a composer for abstract historical reasons. Music history played a supporting role in arguments to be made about the present state of music in France and its direction for the future. Écorcheville, working to forward the field of musicology in France, turned to Haydn as a resource by capitalizing on an opportunity to bring recognition to his scholarly work and that of his colleagues at the 1909 Haydn-themed conference in Vienna. His commissioning of the H-A-Y-D-N works connected his effort with France's elite composers. Saint-Saëns and Dukas used the underlying aesthetics of Haydn's style as a justification for their own approaches to composition and the value of their own compositions. They also attempted to establish French "ownership" of Haydn's music, the rekindling of an idea taken directly from the early Haydn biographies and a jab at their German counterparts. Fauré, in his role as a conservatory administrator, saw the popularity of Haydn among the concert-going public, and especially the oratorios, as something his institution had to address in their curriculum.

These individuals were at the forefront of what was to become a broader restoration of Haydn's reputation throughout Europe. Elsewhere, Eusebius Mandyczewski initiated the first effort to create a

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<sup>80</sup> See Tyre, *Reception*, p. 178.

unified urtext of Haydn's works in 1907, completing ten volumes by centenary of his birth in 1932 before abandoning the project. A number of the prominent German and Austrian scholars would follow suit, publishing research throughout the 1920s and 1930s. Écorcheville, Saint-Saëns, Dukas, and Fauré dealt with Haydn's music in a detailed and knowledgeable way at an earlier date, taking a generally positive view of his music in a way that German and Austrian writers had eschewed for nearly a century. By the time of Haydn's second major anniversary, that of his birth in 1932, his reputation had been almost completely revived both in Germany and Austria as well as the broader European scholarly community, thanks in part to the foundation laid by the French during the 1909 centennial.

As a by now evident book review, the Saint-Saëns, Fauré, and Dukas each showed a great deal of interest in Haydn at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and each for their own specific purposes beyond the simple revival of a composer for abstract historical reasons. Music history played a supporting role in arguments to be made about the present state of music in France and its direction for the future. Écorcheville, working in toward the field of musicology in France, turned to Haydn as a resource by capitalizing on an opportunity to bring recognition to his scholarly work and that of his colleagues at the 1909 Haydn-themed conference in Vienna. His commissioning of the H-A-Y-D-N works connected his effort with France's elite composers Saint-Saëns and Dukas and the budding aesthetic of Haydn's style as a justification for their own approaches to composition and the value of their own contributions. They also attempted to establish French ownership of Haydn's music, the rebranding of an idea taken directly from the early Haydn biographies and a job at their German counterparts. Fauré, in his role as a conservatory administrator, saw the popularity of Haydn among the concertgoing public, and especially the aristocracy, as something his institution had to address in their curriculum.

These individuals were at the forefront of what was to become a broader restoration of Haydn's reputation throughout Europe. Elsewhere, Baschka Manthey-Crawford initiated the first effort to create a

<sup>10</sup> See the footnote on 178.