Metaphors of the Orchestra--The Orchestra as a Metaphor

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John Spitzer

What does the orchestra mean? Apparently it means different things to different people. To an instrumentalist the orchestra means a job, a social network, an opportunity for personal expression, and probably many other things as well. To a season ticket holder at the symphony the orchestra means entertainment, high culture, and social status. To a teenager in a sports utility vehicle with the CD player turned up full blast the orchestra means irrelevance and social snobbery. The meaning of the orchestra, like the meanings of other social institutions, are not fixed but change with age, race, education, nationality, and social class. The meanings of the orchestra as a word, as a concept, and as an institution in European culture have also changed over time, beginning in the seventeenth century, when large ensembles of massed strings first began to appear in France and Italy.

Meanings and how meanings change over time can be traced in language—that is, how people have talked and written about the orchestra. What the orchestra *is*—how many players, what instruments, how arranged, and so on—can be understood from literal language: contracts, rosters, descriptions, and accounts. What the orchestra *means* is understood through figurative language: the kinds of words people use to describe an orchestra, the things that people compare orchestras to, the similes and metaphors that people call upon to convey what the orchestra means to them.

The sources of the metaphors cited in this article are texts in English, French, German, and Italian in which the writer uses the word *orchestra* or one of its cognates, or in which the writer describes an instrumental ensemble that today would be called an orchestra. These texts have been extracted from novels, letters, plays, and poetry as well as from writing about music. The earliest date from the sixteenth century, the latest from the 1990s. Many of the examples were located with the aid of the computer, in full-text databases or in dictionaries on CD-ROM.[1] Others were found in printed dictionaries,

especially musical dictionaries, and through general reading in the history and literature of music. The texts are given in translation; they will be found in their original language in an appendix at the end of the article.

"Orchestra" and Its Usage

The literal meanings of *orchestra* and the changing usage of the word from the sixteenth century to the present are well documented.[2] The Greek word *orchestra* was revived by Renaissance humanists to designate the area in the theater between the stage and the audience. In the sixteenth century, the instrumental ensemble in the theater did not occupy this space but was usually placed on the stage or behind the scenery.[3] When in the seventeenth century the instrumental ensemble was moved out in front of the stage, then "orchestra" began to refer specifically to the place where the instrumentalists played. A description by Buttigli of a festival in Parma in 1629 contains an early example of this new usage:

> At the foot [of the stage] a platform extended out from the front of the foundation. It was about a yard above the ground and about ten yards wide and formed a half-ellipse, raised up on little pedestals and surrounded by a balustrade. It provided a place for the musicians, where they could sing and play at the appropriate times and where they could see everything that was happening on the stage without being seen themselves. And this place is what Vitruvius calls the Orchestra.[4]

It is striking that Buttigli does not use the word *orchestra* until the very end of the description, as a kind of afterthought. He explains himself with a reference to Vitruvius's treatise on architecture, as though he does not expect his readers to understand the modern use of the term.

By the late seventeenth century the meaning of *orchestra* began to extend itself to the instrumentalists who occupied the place called the orchestra. When Cardinal Retz writes in 1679, "It seems to me that up to that point I had only been in the parterre or at the very most in the orchestra, playing and chatting with the violins,"[5] *orchestra* refers to the place, "violins" to the persons. However, when Enea de' Vecchi in the same year remarks on the favor that Queen Christina of Sweden showed to the young Alessandro Scarlati, his meaning is more is ambiguous: "The Queen sent one of her carriages to fetch him so that he could play in the orchestra."[6] Here, *orchestra* could be

the place, but it could also mean the group of people that Corelli joined in that place. In many examples from the first half of the eighteenth century, *orchestra* refers unequivocally to the instrumentalists and specifically to their collective identity as an ensemble. Pierre-Jacques Fougeroux, a French visitor to London in 1728, used the word in more or less its modern sense in a vivid description of Handel's ensemble at the King's Theater in the Haymarket:

> The orchestra is composed of 24 violins, led by the two Castrucci brothers, two harpsichords, one of them played by Indel [*sic*] (a German and a great player and composer), an archlute, three cellos, two basses, three bassoons, and sometimes flutes and trumpets. This orchestra makes a tremendous racket.[7]

In an account of a festival mass at Brescia in 1739 the usage is extended yet further:

> The mass was sung by the illustrious Signor Canon Soncini of Bornato, with all the proper assistance and ceremony, accompanied by exquisite music with a well-staffed orchestra.[8]

Here *orchestra* has not only been extended from the place to the players, it has also been extended from the theater to the church, where there is no stage and no "orchestra" for the instrumentalists.

The earliest of the examples cited so far dates from 1629, the latest from 1733. This period, during which the word *orchestra* established itself in European languages, was precisely the same period in which the orchestra took shape and established itself as an institution in European culture. Only in the second half of the seventeenth century did instrumental ensembles begin to appear with the features that came to define an orchestra—violin-family instruments, several string players on a part, stable instrumentation, and so on.[9] And only toward the end of the seventeenth century did people begin to use the word *orchestra* to refer to an ensemble with these features. Thus *orchestra* was a neologism: a new word for a new thing.

The shift in meaning from ancient to modern and from a place in the theater to the ensemble that occupied that place took place simultaneously in the major European languages. It happened a little earlier in Italian and French, slightly later in German and English. François Raguenet's *Comparison of French and Italian Music* provides an example of the lag time between languages. Raguenet, writing in 1702, was struck by how much more vigorous orchestral activity was in Rome than in Paris. In the original French text he uses the word *orchestre* freely and more or less in its modern sense:

> Il faut tout Paris pour former un bel Orchestre, on n'y en trouveroit pas deux comme celui de l'Opéra; à Rome où il n'y a pas la dixième partie du monde qui est à Paris, on trouveroit de quoi fournir sept & huit Orchestres composez de Clavessins, de Violons, & de Thüorbes, tous également bien remplis.[10]

Raguenet's essay was translated into English just a few years after its publication, but when the translator got to the word *orchestra* he did not yet have a cognate available in English. He translates *orchestre* as "band":

> You must rummage all Paris to fit out a good Band, 'tis impossible to find two such as that in the Opera: At Rome, which is not a tenth Part so populous as Paris, there are Hands enow to compose seven or eight Bands, consisting of Harpsichords, Violins and Theorbo's, equally good and perfect.[11]

Raguenet's translator had a choice of several words that could be used to denote an instrumental ensemble: *consort, concerto, symphony, the Music, the violins, band,* and perhaps more. He chose the last to render the French *orchestre.* An Italian translator would have had *concerto, coro, i suonatori,* and *i strumenti;* a German translator, *Chor, Kapelle, Konzert, Symphonie,* and others.[12] In each European language "orchestra" had to make a place for itself in an already well-populated semantic field. For some time its meanings overlapped with the meanings of these other words; but gradually, over the course of the eighteenth century, "orchestra" carved out a niche of its own.

A passage from Johann Mattheson's *Neu-eröffnette Orchester* furnishes a good example of the structure of the semantic field in the German of 1713:

> I have chosen to use the word *Orchestre* or *Orquestre* as a not yet very common and thus *galant* expression, instead of *Concert, Capelle, Chor,* or similar terms, which are no more universally employed than *Orchestre.* . . . From all this it is evident that the word *Orquestre* may be applied not only to the instrumental ensemble at the opera but equally and without exclusion to whatever place the headquarters and leadership [*Haupt und Directorium*] are found, whether it be of sacred or of secular music . . . And if people also want to call the chorus an orchestra, I don't see anything very shocking about that.[13]

Mattheson makes it clear that he considers the word orchestra to be a neologism: it is "not very common" and hence fashionable and "*galant.*" Mattheson's list of synonyms—*Concert, Capelle, Chor, Opernsymphonie*—shows that he is aware of how many neighbors

orchestra has in the German vocabulary. He implies, though, that *orchestra* is a *better* word for what he is talking about, because it is potentially more widely applicable. It can be used to denote an instrumental ensemble in and of itself, whatever its location or purpose.[14]

In the first half of the passage Mattheson explains to his readers what *orchestre* means by listing synonyms. With *Haupt und Directorium* he adopts a different strategy. In this phrase Mattheson compares the orchestra to a human body, with a leader who is the "head" and any number of instrumentalists who constitute the torso of the ensemble. He explains what he means by using the human body as a metaphor of the orchestra.

The basic idea of a metaphor is that one word or phrase is equated with or used in place of another. A topic at hand (in Mattheson's explanation, the orchestra) is explained or enhanced by words or groups of words drawn from other semantic fields (the human body). I. A. Richards, in his classic essay on metaphor, called the topic at hand the "tenor," the words drawn from other fields the "vehicle." Lakoff and Turner use the same idea with somewhat more intuitive terminology, calling the topic at hand the "target" and the words drawn from elsewhere the "source" or "source field" of the metaphor. In Mattheson's "Haupt und Directorium" metaphor, then, the target is the orchestra, while the source field is the human body.

When the orchestra is the target of a metaphor—when people are speaking of the orchestra in metaphorical language—what source fields do they draw from?

The Orchestra as Target: Early Metaphors

The earliest metaphors of the orchestra date from the seventeenth century. In them the orchestra is the target, not the source, of the metaphor—a predictable finding, since orchestras or orchestralike instrumental ensembles were a brand new, as yet unnamed phenomenon and would not have been much use in describing anything else. The most common metaphor for the orchestra in the seventeenth century is a hodgepodge of instruments and sounds. A typical example appears in Giovanni Battista Doni's *Tratatto della musica scenica,* written around 1630:

> But when instruments are used alone as a plain symphony to spell the actors and tickle the ears of the spectators, I do to know whether it might not be more suitable, instead of a hodgepodge [*una mescolanza*]

> like a Spanish olla podrida to put together diverse ensembles [*sinfonie*]: sometimes of viols and violins, sometimes of lutes, theorbos and lyras, sometimes of harps and harpsichords, sometimes of flutes or other wind instruments.[15]

Having no word for the orchestra, Doni calls it a "plain symphony," that is, instruments playing together without voices. For him this mixed ensemble is a potpourri, an undesirable and unpleasant musical stew. Doni condemns this new hodgepodge of diverse instruments and argues instead for traditional consorts of similar instruments playing one on a part.

Michel de Pure, in his *Idée des spectacles* of 1668, chooses a similar metaphor in French:

> I don't even need to mention other instruments, for they should be rejected and excluded from royal and public entertainments. What I saw along these lines was a Shivaree [*un charivary*], for I don't know what else to call that huge company that was assembled a few years ago. Not only did the large number of performers create impossible problems, but the lack of intonation and the wrong notes were almost inevitable. And in the end, this grand accumulation [*amas*], which seemed curious and novel at the time, turned out to be nothing but foolishness, and gave rise only to jokes and mockery.[16]

Doni and de Pure both choose metaphors with negative connotations because both authors disapprove of orchestras, or at least of multiplication of instruments and part doubling. But beyond the negative connotations, their metaphors emphasize the confusion and chaos—aural, visual and social—that results from combining so many instrumentalists into a single ensemble.

Chaos and confusion were not the only metaphors for the orchestra in the seventeenth century. A countervailing metaphor was one that had been in use for vocal ensembles since at least the sixteenth century—the metaphor of the heavenly choir. The following example combines the two metaphors in an interesting way. It is a description of Corelli's orchestra in an anonymous report of 1687:

> At a signal the royal festival began with a grand symphony comprising 150 instruments of all sorts, played by masterful musicians and led by the famous Arcangelo Corelli of Bologna. With their almost celestial harmony they brought joy to the spectators, who could not manage to comprehend how the clamor of so many instruments could strike the ear with such sweet unanimity.[17]

Here, to the astonishment of the spectators, the disorder of the massed instrumentalists is turned into celestial harmony by Corelli's skillful leadership.

The Orchestra as a Civil Polity

Writers of the late seventeenth century began to draw on metaphors from another source field to characterize the orchestra: the orchestra as a civil polity. As the interests and actions of individuals are combined and regulated in society, so the orchestra combines instrumentalists to produce music. In the orchestra, as in society, harmony is achieved by the imposition of external authority. The French author Charles Dufresny in 1699 described the orchestra in terms of royal absolutism:

> Everything hinges on the sovereign of the orchestra, a prince whose power is so absolute that by raising and lowering his scepter in the form of a roll of paper he holds in his hand, he regulates every movement of this fickle populace.[18]

Dufresny is talking about the Opéra and its *batteur de mesure,* who beat time with a rolled-up score. The batteur is compared to a ruler, the instrumentalists to the "populace," capricious and difficult to govern. The sovereign of France in 1699 was, of course, Louis XIV, who sponsored the Opéra; the absolute power of the batteur de mesure was in a direct sense a reflection of the absolute power of the monarch.

A letter from John Vanbrugh to the Earl of Manchester concerning arrangements for Italian opera in London in 1708 calls up the same metaphor of the orchestra as a civil polity:

> But if yr Ldship brought a perfect good Violin to Lead & Govern the Orcastre, 'twou'd be of great Service. Nicolini that belong'd to the Duke of Bedford & is now at Rome, is thought by the Skilfull here, to be as good as any in Europe for that particular Service.[19]

Vanbrugh's "Orcastre" may still refer primarily to the place in the theater rather than the instrumental ensemble in that place. But the language of government applies in either case. Nicolini was to govern both the orchestra pit and the musicians in it. When the first violin was not so "perfect," then civil authority broke down in the orchestra. The result was anarchy, as in Munich in the 1770s, where, according to Schubart, the concertmaster was less than adequate:

> Kröner was an uncommonly good orchestral violinist, but he did not understand the art of directing an orchestra to best advantage. Consequently things often became very anarchic here.[20]

Some eighteenth-century commentators were more willing to entertain the possibility of anarchy; at least they were less enthusiastic about centralized control. The author of a bit of anonymous verse, published around 1753 as a salvo in the Guerre des Bouffons, criticizes the noisy timebeater at the Opéra:

> He confines himself solely to flogging the time—
> As though all our actors and orchestra too,
> Unsure of themselves and governed by threats,
> Can't get anywhere unless beaten to death.[21]

Direct, centralized rule was not only sort of authority that operated in eighteenth-century society. There were remnants of feudal authority, the authority of estates and guilds, the authority of the church, and so on. When writers like Dufresny and Vanbrugh compare the orchestra to an absolute monarchy, they do more than just describe the orchestra. By choosing an absolutist model of civil society as the source for their metaphor, they assert the validity of that particular style of authority and of that particular kind of government. On the other hand, the anonymous author of the Bouffons pamphlet seems to feel that the orchestra at the Opéra does not really need an absolute monarch to make it play. And neither, by implication, should the French nation. Perhaps Italian orchestras, which did not use a timebeater and in which the instrumentalists took more responsibility for themselves, might be a better model, both for music and for society.

Friedrich Rochlitz, in his "Letters to a Young Musician" (1799), is explicit in his rejection of an authoritarian model of social organization:

> Never treat the members of your orchestra as subjects but rather as helpmates in pursuit of a noble goal. Try to raise them up, as a rational teacher does his pupils, rather than humiliating them and beating them down.[22]

Here the metaphor of top-down government has been replaced by metaphors of cooperation and education. H. C. Koch, in an article dating from about the same time, chooses yet another metaphor to express a similar ideal of social organization:

> An orchestral part [*Ripienstimme*] represents a member of a social whole [*Gesellschaft*], which is stirred by a common sentiment and which

> expresses this sentiment. When the part is played by many persons, each individual performer should not be considered as a social unit in and of himself, expressing the sentiment in his own individual way; rather the various performers playing the same part can represent a member of a social whole only when they are united together.[23]

This passage retains an echo of Mattheson's body metaphor: the orchestra is a human body; the sections of the orchestra are its limbs or members. There is also the metaphor of orchestra as civil society—*Gesellschaft.* However, Koch does not see society as a top-down, absolutist organization, but rather as a community, a social whole. Koch and Rochitz both seem to be influenced by the vocabulary and the values of the French Revolution. For them the unity of a good orchestra does not result from submission to absolutist authority; it is a voluntary cooperation for the common good.

In this sequence of "orchestra as society" metaphors from the end of the seventeenth to the late eighteenth century, the relationship between source and target remains the same. The orchestra is described using words from the source field of civil society and government. What is interesting, however, is that over the 100-year period from 1699 to 1799 the structure of the source field changed. People's ideas about the nature and the legitimacy of civil authority were transformed from a model of subordination to top-down, divine-right authority toward a model of voluntary allegiance to men and institutions. As the source field changed, the meaning of the orchestra changed in a similar way. Whereas Dufresny and Vanbrugh saw the orchestra as yet another example of the legitimacy of royal absolutism, Rochlitz and Koch see the orchestra as an example of the possibility of a new social order.

The Orchestra as a Army

By far the favorite metaphor for the orchestra in the eighteenth century was that of the orchestra as an army. Johan Abraham Birnbaum's defense of J. S. Bach in 1738 is typical:

> The criticism that the necessary precision and evenness of tempo throughout is impossible to maintain when there are many performers is not convincing. . . . If an entire army can be trained so that at a given sign one sees many thousand men carry out a manoeuver as though they were a single man, then the same precision ought to be even more possible in a musical ensemble, which consists of so many fewer persons

> . . . Whoever has had the fortune to see the famous orchestra of the great Saxon Court play a concert, will no longer be able to the doubt the truth of this statement.[24]

Birnbaum constructs the metaphor systematically and explicitly. He emphasizes traits that orchestras and armies have in common: they consist of many individuals; they are commanded by signs from a leader; they carry out actions planned in advance. If an army can achieve unity in its manoeuvres, then an orchestra, the metaphorical equivalent of an army, ought to be able to play together with steady tempo and good ensemble.

The sight of an orchestra as well as its sound suggested the army metaphor to Francesco Galeazzi in 1791:

> Nothing is more beautiful than to experience the perfect unity that is to be found here [in Lombardy] and to see with what uniformity all the bows move. It is exactly like watching military manoeuvers by well-trained and disciplined troops. Such orchestras fully reward both the eye and the ear.[25]

F. M. Veracini compares orchestral performance not to military maneouvres but to the battle itself. The *premier coup d'archet* represents the opening salvo:

> The composer is advised never to begin a musical engagement, whether in the church, in the theater or elsewhere, without first having given a general sign to all his harmonic soldiers, so that they will all be ready to open fire together at exactly the same moment.[26]

Pierre-Jean Grosley, describing the performance practice of Venetian orchestras in 1774, draws on another aspect of the orchestra-as-army metaphor:

> The entire performance, despite the variety and complexity of its parts, is executed without anyone beating time. The composer [at the keyboard] can devote himself entirely to arousing [the players] with his gestures and his voice, like the general of an army who leads his troops in a charge.[27]

Implicitly, at least, Grosley rejects the civil polity metaphor, where the orchestra is governed by the baton, in favor of the military metaphor, in which leadership is exerted by exhortation and example.

Because the orchestra-as-army metaphor was so widespread in the eighteenth century, authors could invoke it casually and in

abbreviated ways. Mozart, in a letter to his father in 1778, speaks, of the discipline of the Mannheim orchestra, comparing it favorably to the laissez-faire Salzburg Kapelle:

> If only music [in Salzburg] were as well organized as it is in Mannheim! —The discipline that rules this orchestra!—the authority that Cannabich wields. Here everything is taken seriously. Cannabich, who is the best conductor I have ever seen, commands the love and the fear of his subordinates. Moreover he is respected by the whole town, and so are his soldiers. But they behave quite differently [from Salzburg musicians]. They have good manners, they are well dressed, they don't go to the taverns and get drunk.[28]

Mozart assumes, and he imagines his father will too, that orchestras are like armies, that instrumentalists are like soldiers, that orchestras and armies should follow their leaders, and so on. But he extends the metaphor one additional step. Like soldiers, orchestra musicians should behave themselves off duty as well as on, something both soldiers and musicians seem to have trouble doing—particularly when they walk into a bar.

Charles Burney, too, used the orchestra-as-army metaphor to describe the Mannheim orchestra:

> I cannot quit this article, without doing justice to the orchestra of his electoral highness, so deservedly celebrated throughout Europe. I found it to be indeed all that its fame had made me expect . . . indeed there are more solo players, and good composers in this, than perhaps in any other orchestra in Europe; it is an army of generals, equally fit to plan a battle, as to fight it.[29]

Like Mozart, Burney takes the familiar metaphor and puts a new spin on it. He calls attention not to the subordination of the soldier-instrumentalists but to their high standing and expertise. The orchestra-as-army metaphor has become so familiar by the late eighteenth century that Burney and Mozart can push it in unexpected directions for rhetorical effect.

Around the beginning of the nineteenth century, the orchestra-as-army metaphor began to disappear. The occasional army metaphors that do turn up in the first half of the nineteenth century seem to emphasize military setbacks rather than successes. Debating the transfer of authority at the Paris Opéra for the batteur de mesure to the first violinist, an English critic had recourse to the old metaphor:

> It seems however to us, that the leader of a numerous musical army, will encounter great difficulties, if at the same time he must attend to the singers; to his own particular troops; to the score, and at the same time, draw those pure sounds from an instrument which ought alone to claim all his attention. . . . a general should direct his army, and rarely fight himself.[30]

Here the military metaphor is used to criticize, not to compliment the orchestra. In a similar vein the chronicler of the theater in Reggio Emilia invoked the same metaphor to complain about orchestral absenteeism:

> One might want to invest an orchestra with the dignity of military nomenclature: the concertmaster could be called the colonel, the leader of the seconds a major; the first cello and bass would be lieutenant colonels, and all the various wind first chairs would be captains. But what would happen to this regiment if, after who knows what battle, the colonel were to fall, the major were wounded, and the two lieutenant colonels and five of the captains were to go AWOL? I know that under military discipline the authority of the leader passes to the subordinate who takes his place; but the outcome of the battle would not be the same.[31]

Comparing the orchestra to the army is all very well, the commentator says, but all the metaphor shows is that musicians need to be more steadfast in their duties.

Why did the most common metaphor of the eighteenth century fade away in the nineteenth? Because of changes in both the source and the target fields—that is, both in orchestras and in armies. The army was the most common metaphor for the orchestra in the eighteenth century not simply because the two institutions shared features but also because both army and orchestra were models for the predominant eighteenth-century ideal of social organization: a large aggregation of individuals united in common action by princely authority. During the Napoleonic wars, armies became national armies rather than extensions of the king; they symbolized patriotism and national identity, not just the glory of the ruler. Orchestras too were, in many cases, no longer expressions of princely authority. Theater orchestras, civic orchestras, philharmonic societies, and conservatory orchestras, although they often received royal subventions, were sponsored and patronized by a broad spectrum of the monied classes.[32] Neither the army nor the orchestra *meant* the same thing in the nineteenth century as they had in earlier days; the metaphor of the orchestra as an army was replaced by new metaphors.

The Orchestra as Nature, the Orchestra as a Machine

For C. D. F. Schubart, writing in the late eighteenth century, the renowned Mannheim orchestra did not suggest an army, as it had to Mozart and Burney, but rather the outdoors and the world of nature:

> No other orchestra in the world can match the execution of the Mannheim orchestra. Its forte is like thunder, its crescendo a cataract, its diminuendo a clear brook babbling in the distance, its piano a spring breeze.[33]

The opera orchestra in Naples at the San Carlo theater elicited the same metaphor from F. J. L. Meyer:

> One cannot say enough about the fire and the vigor of execution of the Neapolitan orchestra. It is a mighty river, that sweeps everything before it and flows along in enchanting unanimity.[34]

In both Schubart's and Meyer's descriptions there is no sense of the orchestra as a collection of individuals or as a social group. The orchestra is a single, indivisible entity: "*its* forte," "*its* crescendo," "*it* is a mighty river." The orchestra is not a social but a natural phenomenon, a force of nature.

This sense of the orchestra as a force of nature comes across even more vividly in the last chapter of Berlioz's *Traité d'instrumentation*, published in 1843. In a purple passage Berlioz rhapsodizes on the potential of an imaginary orchestra he has proposed:

> In the thousand combinations possible with the giant orchestra described above, there would reside a wealth of harmonies, a variety of timbres, an abundance of contrasts surpassing anything heretofore achieved in art. . . . Its calm would be as majestic as an ocean in repose, its outbursts would recall tropical typhoons, its explosive power the eruptions of volcanos. In it could be heard the sighs, the murmurs and the mysterious sounds of the virgin forest . . . Its silence would inspire awe by its solemnity. And even the most recalcitrant of constitutions would shudder to see its crescendo grow, with a roar like a forest fire, immense and sublime.[35]

Compared to Schubart's babbling brooks and spring breezes, Berlioz's tropical typhoons and erupting volcanos reflect the increased size, power, and ambition of the orchestra in the nineteenth century. They

also suggest, in their allusion to faraway places and exotic climes, the global reach of nineteenth-century European imperialism. Finally, they suggest a new attitude toward the natural world, in which one's surroundings are contemplated and enjoyed as art, as one would listen to an orchestra.

The second common metaphor for the orchestra in the nineteenth century seems like the opposite of the orchestra-as-nature metaphor; it is the orchestra as a machine. J. N. Forkel, Bach's first biographer, described the orchestra as a clock, wound up and set into motion by the keyboardist-leader:

> The performance of an orchestra can be considered, insofar as tempos are concerned, to be similar to clockwork. The music stops at the end of each individual movement, just as a clock stops when the spring or the weight has run down. In order to keep going for any length of time, both need to be repeatedly set in motion anew. Giving the tempo to the orchestra is like winding up the musical clockwork.[36]

By the nineteenth century clockwork was no longer the paradigm of mechanical ingenuity. In nineteenth-century metaphors the machine is typically a musical instrument often a keyboard. In his *Treatise* Berlioz offers the following alternative to his orchestra-as-nature metaphor:

> The orchestra may be considered as a giant instrument capable of playing a great number of different notes simultaneously or in succession; . . . The performers of all sorts, who combine to constitute an orchestra, are, so to speak its strings, pipes, sound boxes and sounding boards of wood or metal—machines endowed with intelligence but subject to the control of an immense keyboard played by the conductor, under the direction of the composer.[37]

Here the instrumentalists are "intelligent machines," or rather intelligent cogs in one huge machine. Unity is achieved by engineering rather than by cooperation or by the exercise of social authority. Wagner seized upon the metaphor and turned it against Berlioz:

> He [Berlioz] required a huge apparatus of the most complicated machinery in order to express, with the aid of a finely tuned and carefully engineered mechanical apparatus, ideas that a simple human organ could not express, precisely because they were inhuman ideas. . . . Today the *super*natural, precisely because it is actually *un*natural, can only be presented to the astonished public through the wonders of mechanical ingenuity; and such a wonder is Berlioz's orchestra.[38]

Wagner's criticism reflects not only his feelings about a rival composer but also a romantic-reactionary critique of industrial society that emerged in Europe during the nineteenth century. The same distaste for the orchestra as a manifestation of modern technology can be heard in a passage from *A Rebours* by J. K. Huysmans:

> he recalled that wonderful plainchant Te Deum, that hymn so simple yet so grand, composed by some Saint or other—Saint Ambrose or Saint Hilary—which, lacking the complex resources of the orchestra, lacking the musical mechanisms of modern science, expressed an ardent faith and delirious jubilation that sprang from the soul of all humanity.[39]

For Huysmans the metaphor of orchestra as machine has acquired a negative connotation; true music comes not from the mechanisms of modern technology but from the simplicity of the human voice.

The metaphor of the orchestra as a machine seems to be the opposite of the metaphor of the orchestra as a force of nature. However, the two share an essential feature: nature and machines are similarly impersonal. The orchestra in the nineteenth century is no longer perceived and described as composed of human beings. Earlier metaphors—for example the shivaree or the army—treated the orchestra as an aggregation of individuals, initially and potentially chaotic, but turned into a cohesive group by the exercise of authority. The standardization of the orchestra over the course of the eighteenth century and the development of orchestral discipline and a uniform playing style meant that the orchestra was perceived less and less as an aggregation of individuals, more and more as superindividual entity. By the nineteenth century, the orchestra had become a thing.

The Orchestra as a Source Field for Metaphor

In almost all the examples so far the orchestra has been the target of the metaphor. The orchestra is the topic at hand; words or groups of words are drawn from various source fields to explain and expand the meaning of the orchestra. As the word and the concept "orchestra" established themselves during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as people got to know what an orchestra was and how it worked, the orchestra itself became increasingly available as a source field for metaphor. By the mid-nineteenth century the orchestra had become the source of metaphor more often than the target.

Not unexpectedly, the process of metaphor turns out to be a two-way street (so to speak). Semantic fields that serve as sources for

metaphors of the orchestra become themselves the targets, while the orchestra becomes the source. In the seventeenth century Corelli's orchestra had been described by the metaphor of the heavenly choir; by the nineteenth century heaven itself can be characterized with the metaphor of the orchestra. A poem entitled "The Finale," from a collection of children's verses by the Reverend Richard Cobbold, A.M., begins:

> How grand the orchestra, where all in tune,
> Play to the end harmonious strain of love,
> Where Perfect Leader, with a grace triune
> Stands to direct on eminence above![40]

Cobbold goes on to explain that we on earth "contented must remain, / To play at present an imperfect strain," and he illustrates this sentiment with a drawing of an orchestra and chorus in a nineteenth-century assembly room, directed by a handsome young man at the piano.

Just as nature furnished a source field in the nineteenth century for metaphors of the orchestra, so the orchestra served as a source field for metaphors of nature. Whereas Schubart, Meyer, and Berlioz described the orchestra in terms of spring breezes and tropical typhoons, Bernard Barton, an English Quaker poet, invokes the orchestra in 1825 to describe the sounds of nature on a moonlit night:

> For the softest of sounds shed their harmony round,
> More musical far in a calm so profound;
> The murmur of brooks, and the nightingale's song,
> And the sigh of the breeze, sweeping gently along:
> These alone form thy orchestra.[41]

Such a metaphor, it is safe to guess, would not have been possible fifty years earlier because people did not yet have clear enough notions of what an orchestra was for the orchestra to serve as a useful source field for metaphor.

Birds in particular sound orchestral to nineteenth-century writers, like Victor Hugo in 1842:

> from each leaf is heard a note, from each tree a melody; the warbler chirps, the wood pigeon coos, the goldfinch twitters, and the sparrow, joyous piper, whistles gaily above the tutti. The whole wood is an orchestra.[42]

Heine exploits exactly the same metaphor in "New Springtime" from the *Neue Gedichte* (1844):

> The trees all ring
> The nests all sing—
> Say, who is the *Kapellmeister*
> In this green forest orchestra?[43]

Heine concludes at the end of the stanza that none of the birds is the conductor; rather it is his own enamoured heart that beats the time. Insects too can sound orchestral, as they do to Romain Rolland:

> Hands behind his head, eyes closed, he listened to the invisible orchestra, swarms of insects whirling in the sunbeams around fragrant pines, the fanfares of mosquitos, the pedal points of wasps.[44]

Ultimately all the sights and sounds of nature are interpreted as orchestral, since they harmonize in an aesthetic whole:

> The chestnuts in the yard have clothed themselves in leaves; proudly some of them have already crowned themselves in their white plumes. Yesterday the nightingale was heard at Montalègre. The orchestra of spring plays an overture to the great symphony of May, a winged, flowering, leafy symphony in praise of the master of life, the creator of the universe.[45]

Making nature the target of a metaphor of the orchestra has more or less the inverse effect of describing the orchestra in terms of nature. Comparing nature to the orchestra humanizes and aestheticizes the natural world, makes it seem more familiar but less sublime.

Similarly, just as the orchestra was characterized in the eighteenth century in terms of civil polity or social organization, so society could now be described with the metaphor of the orchestra. A poem translated from German in *Dwight's Journal* in 1852 represents society as a a single giant orchestra:

> The world is but a huge Orchestra,
> And we therein musicians be,
> And she who stirs our human feelings,
> Is our sweet sister, Harmony.
> The great men, standing high above us,
> Shall the Conductor's part fulfill,
> While we, poor devils, scrape and fiddle
> As best we can, some well, some ill.[46]

Here the poet uses the orchestra not only as a metaphor for social harmony, but also as a metaphor for social hierarchy—again a

straightforward inversion of the ways in which civil society was used as a metaphor for the orchestra.

The orchestra can also serve as metaphor for a particular social milieu. Balzac, in *La peau de chagrin,* invokes the metaphor of the orchestra to describe a gambling casino and in so doing harks back to the seventeenth-century connotations of disorder and chaos:

> Although passions run high, the great number of players prevents you from confronting the demon of the addiction face to face. The evening is like a grand finale, where the whole troupe gets into the act, where every instrument of the orchestra adds its phrase to the ensemble.[47]

Taine, describing Voltaire, calls upon the orchestra to describe a very different milieu:

> that marvelous conductor of the orchestra [*chef d'orchestre*], who for the last fifty years had directed the giddy ball of ideas, serious and frivolous, and who—always on stage, always in charge, acknowledged director of the universal conversation—provided the motifs, gave the keynote, beat the measure, furnished the spark and gave the *premier coup d'archet.*[48]

Beginning with the notion of Voltaire as conductor, Taine extends the metaphor with gleeful abandon: society is an orchestra; Voltaire is the "*chef d'orchestre*"; ideas are like tunes; conversation and intellectual life need a keynote, a tempo, a "*premier coup d'archet.*" The only problem is that the metaphor is an anachronism: orchestras in Voltaire's time were not led by a conductor but by the *batteur de mesure* or the first violin.

Not all the source fields from which metaphors for the orchestra were drawn in the eighteenth century turn up as targets of orchestral metaphors in the nineteenth. Examples in which the orchestra serves as a metaphor for machines or mechanical processes are rare. Perhaps machinery and industrial processes had not yet been aestheticized in the nineteenth century to the extent they eventually came to be in the twentieth. And nineteenth-century armies never seem to be described with the metaphor of the orchestra, another sign that the resemblances between orchestras and armies had faded by the mid-nineteenth century. On the other hand, the orchestra became a source of metaphor in the nineteenth century for new targets that had not previously served as metaphors of the orchestra. Of these the most striking is the orchestra as a metaphor for language and for literature. Sainte-Beuve, reading the odes of Victor Hugo in 1828, hears the rhythms and the timbres of the instruments of the romantic orchestra:

> He has been and he is a harmonist and an architect of poetry. Thanks to him, it seems in some way as through the orchestra of Mozart and of Rossini has replaced that of Grétry in the ode.[49]

The orchestra of Grétry, for Saint-Beuve, represents simplicity and straightforwardness; Mozart and Rossini represent a brilliance and depth that Saint-Beuve found more attractive. Flaubert, in a letter of 1850, uses the same metaphor to criticize modern writers, himself included:

> What we all lack is not style nor do we lack the suppleness of bow and fingers that passes for talent. We have a well-staffed orchestra, a rich palette, varied resources . . . No, what we lack is the guiding principle, the soul of things, the very idea of the subject.[50]

Flaubert's easy move from the literature-as-orchestra metaphor to a literature-as-painting metaphor ("rich palette") suggests that he sees all the arts overlapping in a metaphorical equivalence of sensibility and technique.

Orchestration

Toward the end of the nineteenth century a distinctive use of the orchestra as a source field begins to appear: the metaphor of orchestration. The word *orchestration* came into use during the second half of the nineteenth century, replacing the older *instrumentation,* whose meaning was narrower. As a metaphor, orchestration is characteristically used to describe purposeful and artful manipulation of some sort. As the composer combines the instruments of the orchestra to achieve his musical goals, so the show-window designer in Zola's *Au bonheur des dames* deploys his fabrics and colors:

> They never tired of this white song, sung by the fabrics throughout the store. Mouret had never created anything bigger; this was the master stroke of his display artistry. Beneath the unfolding of all these shades and textures of white, in the seeming disorder of cloth, spread out as if at random in glass cases, there was a harmonious phrase of white, pursued and developed in all its tones. It was born, it grew and it expired, with the complex orchestration of a master's fugue, whose continuous development bore up the spirits of the onlookers higher and higher in flight.[51]

Zola's metaphor is not a simple comparison but a combination of words and ideas drawn from the source field of music: "song," "orchestration," "harmonies," "tones," "fugue," and "development." Together they convey a sense of richness and visual artistry, which is matched by Zola's self-conscious artistry with words.

Although there is a faint cast of irony, the implications of Zola's orchestration metaphor are mainly positive. By the twentieth century, however, *orchestration* had taken on a negative note, implying artful but surreptitious manipulation toward questionable ends, as in the following passage from Proust:

> Beyond all of Françoise's sly remarks, which weren't really any more than a whispered and treacherous orchestration, it is likely that I would also have heard, louder, more distinct and more pressing, the voice of the Verdurins, accusatory and injurious, irritated that Albertine held me involuntarily and that I held her voluntarily far from their little clan.[52]

Orchestration, in modern parlance, is often used to describe the manipulation of public opinion, usually toward less than laudable ends. The *Guardian* in 1974 described the Nixon administration in the throes of the Watergate crisis:

> The White House deployed its heavy artillery today. . . . The counter-attack was well-orchestrated.[53]

A mixed metaphor, but not injudiciously so: it recalls the old orchestra-as-army metaphor from the eighteenth century. The *Baltimore Sun,* describes a later resident of the White House in similar language:

> As she tours the country trying to boost the health care reform plan she helped craft, Mrs. Clinton's appearances are carefully orchestrated to reap picture-perfect, feel-good photos and TV coverage.[54]

A final example makes it yet more clear that in modern usage "orchestration" is an underhanded business, aimed at reprehensible ends. However, since the speaker is George Steinbrenner, we may be inclined to ask who are the good orchestrators and who are the bad ones:

> "If I would ever orchestrate some of the things [the Yankee brass] were orchestrating," Steinbrenner says, "you should take a pistol and shoot me."[55]

It is striking how far these modern metaphors of the orchestra have come from the metaphors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Doni and de Pure characterized the proto-orchestras of their day with metaphors of diversity, confusion and chaos; now the orchestra itself has become a metaphor for organization, discipline, and control. In the eighteenth century the orchestra was a symbol of the legitimate, princely authority; now it often symbolizes authority or influence that is surreptitious, underhanded, and illegitimate. Partly this is because the role of the orchestra has changed. Orchestras, although they are still important civic and national symbols, are no longer central to the display of social power and authority. Compared to football teams, presidential inaugurations and space stations, orchestras seem old-fashioned—representatives of outmoded tastes, values, and authority. Even more, perhaps, ideas about authority and social control have changed, at least in the United States and probably in Europe as well. Whereas once the coordination and regimentation of individuals into a cohesive group—an army or an orchestra—seemed laudable and desirable, now it seems dangerously totalitarian.

Over the last few decades critics have claimed that the orchestra has outlived its usefulness as a musical and social institution. Perhaps the orchestra's career as a metaphor is nearing its end too.

Appendix: Original Texts

Passages given above in translation are given here in their original languages. In some cases additional text is provided for context. Full bibliographic particulars are given in the notes to the translated passages above.

M. Buttigli, *Descrizione dell'apparato . . . in Parma . . .* (1629)

> A' piedi esce dal diritto del basamento il zoccolo di quello, con altri suoi ornamenti in altezza d'un braccio, e per lo spatio di dieci braccia, forma un mez'ovato, il quale alzato' poi da varij piedistalletti, e recinto da una ballaustrata, dà luogo alli Musici, e di cantare, e di suonare à' suoi tempi, e di vedere ciò, che si fà nella Scena, senza esser veduti, e questo luogo da Vitruvio dicesi Orchestra.

Cardinal de Retz, *Mémoires,* vol. 1 (c. 1670)

> [I]l me semble qu je n'ai été jusques ici que dans le parterre, ou tout au plus dans l'orchestre, à jouer et à badiner avec les violons.

E. de' Vecchi, letter to G. F. Marucelli (1679)

> Ma la Regina [Christina] mandò una sua carrozza a pigliarlo [A. Scarlatti] acciò sonasse all'orchestra.

P.-J. Fougeroux, manuscript travel diary (1728)

> L'orchestre étoit composé de vingt-quatre violons conduits par les deux Castrucci frères, deux clavessins, dont Indel allemand grand joueur et grand compositeur en touchoit un, un archilut, trois violoncelles, deux contrebasses, trois bassons et quelquefois des flûtes et des clairons. Cet orchestre fait un grand fracas.

G. Bonetti, "Memorie istoriche" (1739/1744)

> La messa fù cantata dall'Ill.mo Sig. Can.co Soncini da Bornato con tutta l'assistenza, e ceremonie dovute, accompagnata d'una squisitissima musica, con un orchestra assai numerosa.

J. Mattheson, *Das Neu-eröffnete Orchester* (1713)

> Allein so habe ich in Abgang dessen / das *Orchestre* oder *Orquestre* als eine noch nicht sehr gemeine und dabey *galante* Expression lieber setzen wollen / den etwann *Concert, Capelle, Chor,* oder dergleichen / die doch eben so wenig *Universel* sind als *Orchestre*. . . . Aus diesem wird gnugsam erblicken / dass man mit dem Wort *Orquestre* nicht blosserdings die *opern Symphonie* / sondern mit *licente* / ohne Unterschied und *Exclusion* denjenigen Ort andeuten wollen / allwo das Haupt und *Directorium* befindlich / es sey nun einer geistlichen oder weltlichen *Music* . . . und wolte man auch gleich das Chor ein *Orquestre* heissen / so sehe ich nicht / was darin *choquiren* könte.

G. B. Doni, *Trattato della musica scenica* (c. 1630)

> Ma quanto al servir solo di mera sinfonìa per tramezzare gli Attori, e recercare le orecchie delli spettatori, no so se fosse più espediente, in vece di una mescolanza simile quasi ad un oglia podrida alla spagnuola, far diverse sinfonìe; ora di Viole, e Violini; ora di Liuti, Tiorbe, e Lire; ora di Arpe, e Clavicembali; e ora di Flauti, o di altri Insturumenti di fiato.

M. de Pure, *L'idée des spectacles* (1668)

> Je ne parle pas non-plus des autres Instrumens, pour les rejeter & pour les exclure des divertissements Royaux & publics. J'ay veu un Charivary

(car je ne puis autrement nommer ce grand & enorme assemblage qui se fit il y a quelques années.) Non-seulement le nombre fait entre-eux des disconvenances insuportables, mais encore les detonnemens & les faux accords, y sont presque inévitables. Et enfin, cet amas qui parut curieux & nouveau, ne fut que la suite d'une vieille fadaize, & ne produisit que des railleries & des mépris.

Ms. description of Corelli performance (1687)

Dato il cenno hebbe principio la Festa Regia dal una gran sinfonia concertata di cento cinquanta stromenti di varie sorti che tratteggiati da mano maestra, e condotti dal famoso Arcangelo Corelli Bolognese con una quasi celeste armonia rendeva estatici gli spettatori, non giungendo a comprendere, come tanto bene potesse accomodarsi all'orecchio lo strepito di tanti stromenti col dolce metro concertato.

C. Dufresny, *Amusemens serieux et comiques* (1699)

Ils relevent tous du souverain de l'orchestre, prince si absolu, qu'en haussant et baissant un sceptre en forme de roulau qu'il tient à sa main, il regle tous les mouvemens de ce peuple capricieux.

C. F. D. Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst* (c.1780)

Kröner war ein ungemein guter Ripienist, nur verstand er die Kunst nicht, ein Orchester mit Vorteil zu lenken; daher ging es hier oft sehr anarchisch zu.

Réforme de l'Opéra (c.1753)

Il se borne à l'emploi d'assomer la mesure,
Comme si nos Acteurs, ou l'Orchestre peu sure,
Gouvernés par un chef qui semble menacer'
Sans les coups de bâton ne pouvoient avancer.

F. Rochlitz, "Briefen an einem jungen Tonkünstler" (1799)

Behandeln Sie die Mitglieder Ihres Orchesters nie als Untergebene, sondern als Gehülfen zur Erreichung eines löblichen Zwecks. Suchen Sie sie, wie ein vernünftiger Erzieher seine Zöglinge, mehr zu erheben als zu demüthigen und herabzusetzen.

H. C. Koch, "Über den Charakter der Solo- und Ripienstimmen" (1795)

Die Ripienstimme stellt ein Glied einer Gesellschaft vor, die, von einer bestimmten Empfindung belebt, diese Empfindung äussert; mithin kann

bey mehrfacher Besetzung einer Ripienstimme nicht jeder Ausführer derselben insbesondere als ein solches Glied der Gesellschaft betrachtet werden, welches die vorhandene Empfindung nach seiner individuellen Empfindungsart äussert, sondern die verschiedenen Ausführer einer und eben derselben Ripienstimme können nur zusammen vereinigt ein solches einzelnes Glied der Gesselschaft vorstellen.

J. A. Birnbaum, "Verteidigung J.S. Bachs" (1738)

Der einwurf, dass die heirzu nöthige accuratesse, und ein durchgängig beobachtetes gleiches tempo bey vielen unmöglich zu erhalten sey, ist von keiner erheblichkeit. . . . Kann eine gantzes kriegs-heer dahin gebracht werden, dass auf ein gegebenes zeichen, man vieler tausend menschen bewegungen erblickt, als wenn es nur eine wäre: so muss dergleichen accuratesse bey einem musicalischen Chor, dasaus ungleich wenigern persohnen besteht desto sicherer möglich seyn . . . Wer das glück gehabt hat die so berühmte Capelle des grösten hofs in Sachsen, einmahl concert halten zu sehen; wird an der wahrheit dieser sache nicht mehr zweifeln können.

F. Galeazzi, *Elementi teorico-pratici di musica* (1791)

Nulla è più bello, che il sentire la perfetta unione che ivi s'osserva, ed il vedere con qual regolarità tutti gli archi si muovono, che pare appunto di vedere gli esercizj militari di ben regolate, e disciplinate truppe; così appagano tali orchestre pienamente l'occhio, e l'orecchio.

F. M. Veracini, "Il trionfo della practica musicale" (c. 1760)

Stia avverito il Compositore di non cominciare giamai la zuffa Musicale tanto in Chiesa, che in Teatro, o altrove, se no dopo aver fatto un cenno universale a tutti i suoi soldati Armonici, acciochè stieno pronti a dar fuoco tutti a un tratto.

P.-J. Grosley, *Observations sur l'Italie* (1774)

Toute cette Musique, malgré la variété et la complication de ses parties, s'exécute sans battement de mesure. Le compositeur de cette Musique n'est occupé qu'à exiciter du geste ou de la voix, comme un Général d'armée l'est de ceux qui vont à la charge.

W. A. Mozart, letter of 9 July 1778

Ja wenn die Musique so bestellt wäre wie zu Mannheim!—die subordination die in diesem orchestre herscht!—die auctorität die der Cannabich hat—da wird alles Ernsthaft verichtet; Cannabich, welcher der beste Director ist den ich je gesehen, hat die liebe und forcht von seinen

untergebenen.—er ist auch in der ganzen stadt angesehen, und seine Soldaten auch—sie führen sich aber auch anderst auf—haben lebensart, sind gut gekleidet, gehen nicht in die wirths-häuser und sauffen.

[C. Ritorni], *Annali del teatro della città di Reggio. Anno 1831*

D'un'orchestra chi volesse chiamar con nomi militari le dignità, potrebbe dir colonnello il primo violino, maggiore il secondo, tenenti colonnelli il violoncello ed il contrabasso al cembalo, e capitano ogni primo de' diversi istrumenti da fiato. Ma che accaderà d'un simil reggimento cui dopo non so qual battaglia, venga meno ad un tratto il colonnello, sia ferito il maggiore, manchin i due tenenti colonnelli, e circa cinque capitani? So che militar disciplina in mancanza d'ogni primo concede egual autorità al subalterno che ne tenga le veci; ma la sorte dell'armi non fia però la stessa.

C. D. F. Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst* (c.1780)

Kein Orchester der Welt hat es je in der Ausführung dem Mannheimer zuvorgethan. Sein Forte ist ein Donner, sein Crescendo ein Catarakt, sein Diminuendo ein in die Ferne hin plätschernder Krystallfluss, sein Piano ein Frühlingshauch.

F. J. L. Meyer, *Darstellungen aus Italien* (1792)

Man sagt nicht zu viel von dem Feuer und der Stärke des Vortrages des Neapolitanischen Orchesters. Es ist ein gewaltiger Strom, der alles vor sich niederwirft, und in bezauberndem Einklang dahin rauscht!

H. Berlioz, *Traité d'instrumentation* (1843)

Mais dans les mille combinaisons praticables avec l'orchestre monumental que nous venons de décrire résideraient une richesse harmonique, une variété de timbres, une succession de contrastes qu'on ne peut comparer à rien de ce qui a été fait dans l'art jusqu'à ce jour . . . Son repos serait majestueux comme le sommeil de l'océan; ses agitations rapelleraient l'ouragan des tropiques, ses explosions les cris des volcans . . . Son silence imposerait le crainte par sa solennité et les organisations les plus rebelles frémiraient à voir son crescendo grandir en rugissant comme un immense et sublime incendie!

J. N. Forkel, "Genauere Bestimmung" (1783)

Die Music eines jeden Orchesters ist in Absicht auf ihre Bewegung gleichsam wie ein Uhrwerk zu betrachten. Jene hört mit jedem einzelnen Stücke auf wie diese, wenn die Feder oder das Gewicht abgelaufen

ist. Beyde erfordern zur langen Fortsetzung ihres Ganzes, dass sie oft wieder aufs neue in Bewegung gesetzt werden. Die Angabe des Takts fürs Orchester, ist gleichsam das Aufziehen des musicalischen Uhrwerks.

H. Berlioz, *Traité d'instrumentation* (1843)

L'orchestre peut être considéré comme un grand instrument capable de faire entendre à la fois ou successivement une multitude de sons de diverses natures . . . Les exécutants de toute espèce dont la réunion le constitue, sembleraient alors en être les cordes, les tubes, les caisses, les plateaux de bois ou de métal, machines devenues intelligentes, mais soumises à l'action d'un immense clavier touché par le chef d'orchestre, sous la direction du compositeur.

R. Wagner, *Opera und Drama* (1851)

[E]r bedurfte dazu eines ungeheuren Apparates der kompliziertesten Maschinen, um mit Hülfe einer unendlich fein gegliederten und auf das Mannigfaltigste zugerichteten Mechanik das kundzutun, was ein einfach menschliches Organ unmöglich aussprechen konnte: eben weil es etwas ganz Unmenschliches war. Wir kennen jetzt die übernatürlichen Wunder, mit denen einst die Priesterschaft kindliche Menschen der Art täuschte, dass sie glauben mussten, irgendein lieber Gott gebe sie ihnen kund: Nichts als die Mechanik hat von je diese täuschenden Wunder gewirkt. So wird auch heutzutage das *Über*natürliche, eben weil es das *Un*natürliche ist, dem verblüfften Publikum nur durch die Wunder der Mechanik vorgeführt, und ein solches Wunder ist in Wahrheit das *Berliozsche Orchester.*

J. K. Huysmans, *A rebours* (1884)

. . . car il se rappelait cet admirable te deum du plain-chant, cette hymne si simple, si grandiose, composée par un saint quelconque, un saint Ambroise or un saint Hilaire, qui, à défaut des ressources compliquées d'un orchestre, à défaut de la mécanique musicale de la science moderne, révélait une ardente foi, une délirante jubilation, échappées, de l'âme de l'humanité tout entière, en des accents pénétrés, convaincus, presque célestes!

V. Hugo, *Le Rhin* (1842)

Vous savez cet adorable tumulte qui éclate dans un futaie, en avril, au soleil levant; de chaque feuille jaillit une note, de chaque arbre une mélodie; la fauvette gazouille, le ramier roucoule, le chardonneret

fredonne, le moineau, ce joyeux fifre, siffle gaîment à travers le tutti. Le bois est un orchestre.

H. Heine, "Neuer Frühling" (1844)

Es erklingen alle Bäume
Und es singen alle Nester—
Wer ist der Kappellenmeister
In dem grünen Waldorchester?

Ist es dort der graue Kibitz,
Der beständig nickt, so wichtig?
Oder der Pedant, der dorten
Immer kukkukt, zeitmassrichtig?

. . .

Nein, in meinem eignen Herzen
Sizt des Walds Kappellenmeister
Und ich fühl' wie er den Takt schlägt,
Und ich glaube Amor heisst er.

R. Rolland, *Jean-Christoph, vol. 3, L'adolescent* 1905

Ou, les mains sous la tête, les yeux fermés, il écoutait l'orchestre invisible, les rondes d'insectes tournant avec frénésie, dans un rayon de soleil, autour des sapins odorants, les fanfares des moustiques . . .

H.-F. Amiel, *Journal de l'année 1866*

Les marroniers de la treille ont achevé de se vêtir; ils sont superbes et quelques-uns se couronnent déjà de leurs aigrettes blanches. Hier, entendu le rossignol, à Montalègre. L'orchestre du printemps prélude à la grande symphonie de mai, symphonie ailée, fleurie, verdoyante, hommage au maître de la vie, "au créateur de l'univers."

H. Balzac, *La peau de chagrin* (1831)

Si la passion y abdonde, le trop grand nombre d'acteurs vous empêche de contempler face à face le démon du jeu. La soirée est un véritable morceau d'ensemble où la troupe entière crie, où chaque instrument de l'orchestre module sa phrase.

H. Taine, *L'ancien régime* (1876)

En effet, il avait vu le merveilleux chef d'orchestre [i.e. Voltaire] qui, depuis cinquante ans, menait le bal tourbillonnant des idées graves ou court-vêtues, et qui, toujours en scène, toujours en tête, conducteur reconnu de la conversation universelle, fournissait les motifs, donnait le ton, marquait la mesure, imprimait l'élan et lançait le premier coup d'archet.

C. A. Sainte-Beuve, *Tableau historique et critique . . .* (1828)

> Ce qu'André Chénier avait rénové et innové dans le vers, notre jeune contemporain [Hugo] l'a rénové et innové dans la strophe; il a été et il est harmoniste et architecte en poésie. Grâce à lui, il semble, en quelque sorte, que l'orchestre de Mozart et de Rossini remplace celui de Grétry dans l'ode. . . .

G. Flaubert, letter of 2 June, 1850

> Ce qui nous manque à tous, ce n'est pas le style, ni cette flexibilité de l'archet et des doigts désignée sous le nom de talent. Nous avons un orchestre nombreux, une palette riche, des ressources variées. . . . Non, ce qui nous manque c'est le principe intrinsèque, c'est l'âme de la chose, l'idée même du sujet.

Emile Zola, *Au bonheur des dames* (1883)

> Elles ne se lassaient pas de cette chanson du blanc, que chantaiet les étoffes de la maison entière. Mouret n'avait encore rien fait de plus vaste, c'était le coup de génie de son art de l'étalage. Sous l'écroulement de ces blancheurs, dans l'apparent désordre des tissus, tombés comme au hasard des cases éventrées, il y avait une phrase harmonique, le blanc suivi et développé dans tous ses tons, que naissait, grandissait, s'épanouissait, avec l'orchestration compliquée d'une fugue de maître, dont le développement continu emporte les âmes d'un vol sans cesse élargi.

M. Proust, *La prisonnière* (1922)

> D'ailleurs, au-dessus de tous les sous-entendus de Françoise, qui n'en avait été en bas que l'orchestration chuchotante et perfide, il est vraisemblable qu'avait dû s'élever, plus haute, plus nette, plus pressante, la voix accusatrice et calomnieuse des Verdurin, irrités de voir qu'Albertine me retenait involontairement, et moi elle volontairement, loin du petit clan.

Notes

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1. The largest full-text database is ARTFL, a cooperative project of the Institut National de la Langue Française and the University of Chicago, It contains over 2,000 texts from French letters and literature and can be accessed through the World Wide Web at http://humanities.uchicago.edu/ARTFL/ARTFLhtml. For English literature there is *The English Poetry Full-Text Database,* a CD-ROM published by Chadwyck-Healey (1995); In Italian there is *LIZ* (Letteratura Italiana Zanichelli) (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1993), another CD-ROM.

2. See in particular Martin Staehelin, "Orchester," in *Handwörterbuch der musicalischen Terminologie,* ed. H. H. Eggebrecht (Wiesbaden, 1971–).

3. In the score to *Orfeo,* for example, Monteverdi calls for instrumentalists both onstage and behind the scenes. See Thomas Forrest Kelly, " 'Orfeo de Camera': Estimating Performing Forces in Early Opera," *Historical Performance* 3 (1988): 7.

4. M. Buttigli, *Descrizione dell'apparato fatto per honorare la prima e solenne entrata in Parma della Serenissima Principessa Margherita di Toscana . . . 1629,* quoted in Irving Lavin, "On the Unity of the Arts and the Early Baroque Opera House," in *"All the World's a Stage . . .": Art and Pageantry in the Renaissance and Baroque,* ed. Barbara Wisch and Susan Munshower (State College, Pa., 1990), 554. See also Irving Lavin, "Lettres de Parmes (1618, 1627–28) et débuts du théatre baroque," in *Le lieu théatral à la Renaissance,* ed. Jean Jacquot (CNRS, 1964), 105–58.

5. Cardinal de Retz, *Mémoires du Cardinal de Retz,* vol. 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1870), 212. Retz is speaking figuratively about the course of his career: up to this point (1643) he has been a spectator to the great events on the European stage. In the next phase of his career he will become a major player himself.

6. E. de' Vecchi, letter to G. F. Marucelli (1679), quoted in Frank D'Accone, *The History of a Baroque Opera: Alessandro Scarlatti's* Gli Equivoci nel Sembiante (New York: Pendragon, 1985), 158.

7. Quoted in Winton Dean, "A French Traveller's View of Handel's Operas," *Music and Letters* 55 (1974): 177. In his next paragraph Fougeroux uses "orchestra" in the sense of place rather than persons: "There is no amphitheater, only a parterre, with long benches squeezed in right up to the orchestra [*de grands bans ceintrez jusquà l'orchestre*], where men and women are mixed together pellmell." The usage of *orchestra* as referring to a place in the theater persists into the twentieth century in English, French, Italian, and German. It can designate either an enclosure for instrumentalists, or the front part of the parterre occupied by spectators.

8. Giuseppe Bonetti, "Memorie istoriche della chiesa parrocchiale de Cazzago sotto il titolo della B.V.M. . . ." (1744, ms. in Querini Library, Fè, 3), quoted in Rossana Prestini, "Devozioni e manifestazioni religiose nel Settecento a Brescia," in *Le alternative del Barocco: Architettura e condizione urbana a Brescia nella prima metà del Settecento,* vol. 4 of *Società e cultura nella Brescia del Settecento* (Brescia: Grafo edizioni, 1981), 326–27.

9. For a discussion of the defining features of the orchestra, see Neal Zaslaw, "When Is an Orchestra not an Orchestra?" *Early Music* 16 (1988): 483–95.

10. [François Raguenet], *Paralele des Italiens et des François en ce qui regarde la Musique et les Opéra,* (Paris, Moreau, 1702; Reprint, Geneva: Minkoff), 109–10.

11. François Raguenet, *A Comparison Between the French and Italian Musick and Opera's* (London, 1709; Reprint, Gregg, 1968). In England the usage of *band* to refer to an instrumental ensemble that is otherwise called an orchestra survives to the present.

12. A similar selection of terms was available in French. Instead of *orchestre,* Raguenet could have chosen *concert, les violons, symphonie,* etc.

13. Johann Mattheson, *Das Neu-eröffnete Orchester* (Hamburg, 1713), 34.

14. Johann Sebastian Bach, writing somewhat later than Mattheson, uses the word *Orchestre* in a letter accompanying the presentation of the Kyrie and Gloria of the B-minor Mass to the Elector of Saxony in 1733 (*Bach-Dokumente,* vol. 1 [Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1963], 74). Robert Marshall argues that Bach intended the word to refer to ensembles that played in the theater as opposed to the church. "Bach's Orchestre," *Early Music* 13 (1985): 176–79.

15. Giovanni Battista Doni, *Trattato della musica scenica* [c. 1630] (Florence, 1763), 110.

16. Michel de Pure, *L'idée des spectacles* (Paris: Brunet, 1668; Reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), 272.

17. Vat. Lat 10227, quoted in Andreas Liess, "Neue Zeugnisse von Corellis Wirken in Rom," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 14 (1957): 133–34.

18. Charles Dufresny, *Amusemens serieux et comiques* (Amsterdam: Desbordes, 1699), 64.

19. Letter from John Vanbrugh to the Earl of Manchester, 27 July 1708. *Vice Chamberlain Coke's Theatrical Papers,* 1706–1715, ed. Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 113.

20. Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart, *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst,* ed. Ludwig Schubart (Leipzig: Reclam, 1977), 118–19.

21. "Réforme de l'Opéra," in *La querelle des bouffons: texte des pamphlets,* ed. Denise Launay, vol. 1 (Geneva: Minkoff, 1993), 395.

22. Friedrich Rochlitz, "Bruchstücke aus Briefen an einen jungen Tonkünstler, 4. Brief: Der Musikdirektor," *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* (23 Oct. 1799): 63.

23. Heinrich Christoph Koch, "Über den Charakter der Solo- und Ripienstimmen," *Journal der Tonkunst* (1795): 154.

24. *Bach-Dokumente,* vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1969), 304.

25. Francesco Galeazzi, *Elementi teorico-pratici di musica,* vol. 1 (Rome, 1791), 208.

26. Francesco Maria Veracini, "Il trionfo della practica musicale," cap. 80 (Florence: Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini). I am grateful to John Walter Hill for providing me with a transcription from this manuscript.

27. Pierre-Jean Grosley, *Observations sur l'Italie et sur les Italiens,* vol. 2 (London, 1774), 56–57.

28. W. A. Mozart, letter of 9 July 1778, *Mozart: Briefe und Aufzeichnungen,* vol. 2 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962), 395.

29. Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany, The Netherlands, and United Provinces,* vol. 1 (London, 1775; reprint, New York, 1969), 94–95.

30. *The Harmonicon,* June 1825, 103.

31. [C. Ritorni], *Annali del teatro della città di Reggio. Anno 1831* (Bologna, 1831), 17. Quoted in Paolo Fabbri, "L'orchestra . . . sarà bene che sia . . . stabile," in *Orchestre in Emilia-Romagna nell'Ottocento e Novecento,* ed. Marcello Conati e Marcello Pavarani (Parma, 1982), 204.

32. On the social bases of the orchestra in the nineteenth century, see William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class* (London, 1975).

33. Schubart, *Ideen,* 122.

34. Friedrich Johann Lorenz Meyer, *Darstellungen aus Italien* (Berlin: Vossischen Buchhandlung, 1792), 363.

35. Hector Berlioz, *Traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration* [1843] (Paris: H. Lemoine, 1925?; Reprint, Westmead; Gregg, 1970), 297.

36. Johann Nicolaus Forkel, "Genauere Bestimmung einiger musicalischen Begriffe," *Magazin der Musik,* ed. Cramer (1 Nov. 1783): 1063–64.

37. Berlioz, *Traité,* 293.

38. Richard Wagner, *Oper und Drama* [1851], in *Richard Wagner: Dichtungen und Schriften,* vol. 7 (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1983), 78.

39. J.-K. Huysmans, *A rebours* [1884] (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1981), 281.

40. Richard Cobbold, *Valentine Verses; or, Lines of Truth, Love, and Virtue* (Ipswich: E. Shalders, 1827), 258–59.

41. Bernard Barton, "To the Moon," in *Poems by Bernard Barton,* 4th ed. (London, 1825).

42. Victor Hugo, *Le Rhin* [1842] (Paris: Ollendorff, 1906), 323.

43. Heinrich Heine, "Neuer Frühling," in *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke,* vol. 2, ed. Elisabeth Genton (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1983), 15.

44. Romain Rolland, *Jean-Christophe,* vol. 3, *L'adolescent* (Paris: Ollendorff, 1905), 88.

45. Henri Frédéric Amiel, *Journal de l'année 1866* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), 271.

46. *Dwight's Journal,* 29 May 1852, 60.

47. Honoré de Balzac, *La peau de chagrin* [1831] (Paris: Garnier, 1960), 5.

48. Hippolyte Taine, *L'ancien régime* [1876] (Paris: Hachette, 1910), 128.

49. Charles Sainte-Beuve, *Tableau historique et critique de la poesie française et du théâtre français au XVIe siècle* [1828] (Paris: Charpentier, 1843), 287.

50. Gustave Flaubert, letter to Louis Bouilhet (2 June, 1850), *Correspondence,* vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 627.

51. Émile Zola, *Au bonheur des dames* [1883] (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), 487.

52. Marcel Proust, *La prisonnière* [1922] (Paris: Pléiade, 1954), 366.

53. *The Guardian,* 23 Jan. 1974, 2/8.

54. *Baltimore Sun,* 11 Apr. 1994, 1.

55. *Sports Illustrated,* 1 Mar. 1993, 21.