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The Uses and Aesthetics of Musical Borrowing in Erik Satie’s
Humoristic Piano Suites, 1913-1917

Committee:

______________________________
Marianne Wheeldon, Supervisor

______________________________
Byron Almén

______________________________
James Buhler

______________________________
Jean-Pierre Cauvin

______________________________
David Neumeyer
The Uses and Aesthetics of Musical Borrowing in Erik Satie’s
Humoristic Piano Suites, 1913-1917

by

Belva Jean Hare, B.M., M.M.

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To Chris,
for supporting me in every way possible,
and for loving me.
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By positioning well-known existing pieces in new and sometimes contradictory musical surroundings, Erik Satie’s musical borrowings offer a fresh perspective on traditions and stereotypes in society and in music, both historic and current. While previous authors have discovered and classified the various sources of Satie's musical borrowings, the treatment and usage of these borrowings has not been thoroughly categorized before. Utilizing J. Peter Burkholder's taxonomy of Charles Ives' musical borrowings, as put forth in his book, *All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing* (Yale University Press, 1995) as a model, I explore four significant
borrowing types in Satie’s humoristic piano suites of 1913-1917 and identify previously unrecognized instances of borrowing within them. I adapt Burkholder’s definition of collage to “Españaña” (1913), identifying it as a unique compositional procedure in Satie’s output, encompassing a variety of his borrowing methods in a single work. Then I extend Burkholder’s exploration of extended paraphrase to *Embryons desséchés* (1913) and *Sonatine bureaucratique* (1917), in which Satie borrows entire pieces. I show how this wholesale borrowing not only informs the structure of the new works, but also allows Satie to manipulate the forms so as to critique the musical conventions inherent in the sources. In following chapters, I define two borrowing types unique to Satie found in *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*, *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses*, “Sur une lanterne” from *Descriptions automatiques*, and “de Podopthalma” from *Embryons desséchés*, all of 1913. *Periodic settings* and *reiterative settings* rely on repetition of borrowed phrases, their distinction lying in the function of the borrowed tune and the formal structure of the new work. Periodic settings correspond with Satie’s borrowings of stage works and have straightforward programmatic functions, while reiterative settings create very complex forms that reflect musically Satie’s interest in the aesthetic of simultaneity. By analyzing how Satie engaged with and used existing music in his own works, this study assists understanding of his musical aesthetics as well as his attitudes toward music of the past and contemporary musical styles.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

I am called Erik Satie like anyone else.¹

Erik Satie’s use of preexisting music in his compositions has long been recognized as a defining characteristic of much of his music, particularly among the pieces written in the years 1912-1917. During this period, the majority of Satie’s compositional output came in the form of short piano pieces, most produced together in sets of three, termed commonly by scholars as the “humoristic piano suites.” This group of pieces begins with Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien) and concludes with Sonatine bureaucratique written and published in 1917, following the premiere of Satie’s infamous ballet Parade.²

Though Satie utilized musical borrowing throughout his life, the humoristic piano suites feature a relatively high concentration of this practice in his oeuvre. Scholars have focused on identifying the sources from which Satie borrowed, offering some


² The inclusion of Sonatine bureaucratique in the humoristic piano suites follows Steven Moore Whiting’s description of the piece as “the culmination and also the end of Satie’s humoristic piano music.” Steven Moore Whiting, Satie the Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 488. Other authors have typically ended the humoristic piano suites in 1915, with Avant-dernières pensées. Further discussion of the selection of works for this study follows below.
enlightening discussions of the possible motivations behind his use of the sources and the effects achieved in the pieces. Robert Orledge provides the most comprehensive single list available of Satie’s original sources, giving an excellent overview of the scope of Satie’s use of extant music and the eclectic array of sources from which he drew.\(^3\) Orledge’s study, like much scholarship on Satie makes sense of Satie’s untraditional compositional style by placing it in the context of his life. The wide-ranging sources and their musical effects are shown to reflect the diversity of Satie’s experiences and attitudes. In contrast, I take as a starting point a segment of Satie’s music for detailed analysis in order to show how his compositional methods support his attitudes and aesthetic preferences. The present study intends to add to the research and ideas already put forward in Satie-related literature in order to more fully explore how, what, and why Satie borrowed, and how his chosen techniques relate to one another and to wider cultural trends.

**Issues of Borrowing**

J. Peter Burkholder, through his extensive work on the music of Charles Ives, has problematized scholarly discussion of musical borrowing, especially with regard to studies of *how* composers borrow. Most importantly, he takes issue with the overly broad assessment of the uses of existing music as part of one large category such as

\[^3\] Robert Orledge, *Satie the Composer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1990), 200-3. More recent additions to the information in Orledge’s list can be found in Mary E. Davis, ‘Esprit gaulois: Erik Satie’s *Sports et divertissements* in Context’ (Ph.D. diss, Harvard University, 1997), 89-93. Davis shows that Satie drew from George Bizet’s *Jeux d’enfants* of 1871 in two movements in *Sports et divertissements*. 
“quotation,” or even “borrowing,” claiming that to do so overlooks the variety and subtlety of this practice. His solution is the identification of over a dozen types of borrowing, each with their own purposes and methods. Acknowledgement of these different types promotes deeper appreciation of Ives’ music. In contrast, the absence of distinctions can lead to misunderstanding, as Burkholder demonstrates in a summary of some negative critiques of Ives’ music. While the terminology itself may not be the chief culprit in these misinterpretations of Ives’ music, the lack of a uniform vocabulary results from overlooking differences in borrowing practices. Similarly, there is an opportunity to develop a more thorough appreciation of Satie’s style in the humoristic piano suites through a systematic discussion of his borrowing methods and development of a more consistent language.

A brief look at how terms and techniques surface in a few existing analyses shows how different instances of borrowing can be misrepresented as occurrences of one universal technique, glossing over important distinctions. For example, Orledge, in his discussion of “Españaña” from Croquis & agaceries d’un gros bonhomme en bois (1913), remarks that Satie’s “quotations are unusually explicit and literal…,” with Satie’s piece ending in a cadence in the same key as the original and the appearance of Chabrier’s primary theme untransposed. Yet, the term “quotation” cannot be consistently applied here, as the piece presents borrowed musical ideas with varying...

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6 Orledge, Satie the Composer, 34.
degrees of exactness throughout. Steven Moore Whiting’s discussion of the same piece represents it more accurately, concentrating on how Satie manipulates small fragments from Chabrier’s España, eventually building up to full quotations of the piece’s principal melody.\(^7\) Again, the term “quotation” cannot work for Satie’s borrowing process as a whole in “Españaña,” since he frequently reworks melodic material, often reharmonizes the borrowed fragments, and mixes up the fragments so that they do not appear in the same order as in the original. Furthermore, he inserts small portions from other, some entirely unrelated, pieces into the overall parody of Españaña.\(^8\) Satie’s engagement with Chabrier’s original is multifaceted and functions on many levels, and no single term as of yet reflects the complexity of the borrowing.

Another instance of Satie’s borrowing shows a different perspective. In “de Podopthalma” in Embryons desséchés, Satie uses the melody from “The Orangutan Song” from La Mascotte, an operetta by Edmond Audran. Alan Gillmor states that Satie’s use of the operetta tune is a “reference,” Orledge says that “de Podopthalma” is “based on” the tune, but Whiting claims that Satie “quotes” it literally.\(^9\) Though each author discusses the same piece, their choice of terminology taken alone implies a different degree or method of borrowing. Making a “reference” to another piece may suggest a technique used in passing, though an original work “based on” another piece could indicate a more substantial relationship to the source, such as modeling or

\(^7\) Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 381-3.  
\(^8\) Satie inserts fragments from various pieces by Debussy into “Españaña,” see Orledge, Satie the Composer, 61-2 and Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 381-3.  
\(^9\) Alan M. Gillmor, Erik Satie (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1988), 162; Orledge, Satie the Composer, 33; Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 373.
arrangement. A “quote” can vary in length and suggests a more explicit replication of the material. A definitive model for analyzing borrowing would encourage more informed discussions of pieces such as “de Podopthalma” and promote comparison among pieces with similar techniques.

Definitions

Though the benefit of a universal vocabulary of borrowing may seem obvious, its creation poses certain difficulties. Burkholder settles on “borrowing” as the most workable name for the practice as a whole, rejecting “quotation” as too specific, “uses of existing music” as too cumbersome, and “intertextuality” as too broad. He defines “borrowing” as taking something from an existing piece of music and using it in a new piece. This ‘something’ may be anything, from a melody to a structural plan. But it must be sufficiently individual to be identifiable as coming from this particular work, rather than from a repertoire in general.

The designation “sufficiently individual” carries much weight in his definition, for it excludes “stylistic allusion,” which he defines as “the use of a musical archetype that represents a different kind of music… borrowing from outside the genre, style, or tradition, if not from a particular work.” Though he considers stylistic allusion a helpful category in his studies of Ives, he recognizes that in order to

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10 Burkholder, “The Uses of Existing Music,” 862.
11 Ibid., 863.
12 Ibid., 863.
delimit the history of musical borrowing from the history of compositional and improvisational practice as a whole, it is best to focus on borrowing from specific works and to consider allusion to general repertoires and archetypes or even to the styles of individual composers as a closely related but different phenomenon.  

Stylistic allusion, however, figures as one of the individual methods in Burkholder’s own list of borrowing types, but in the present study it is understood as an exceptional subcategory of borrowing in that it refers to an identifiable genre or stylistic practice and not specifically to a single work. Stylistic allusion figures considerably in the humoristic piano suites, but since it can be a sizeable and unwieldy category, the following analyses will only refer to its use as it relates to other borrowing procedures.

Burkholder finds the use of the term ‘quotation’ “frustrating… when the melody involved [differs] significantly from the supposed source.” To group all borrowing (exclusive of stylistic allusion) as “quotation” seemingly ignores “the extensive and thorough-going” connection a new piece may have with the original. Mere description of all borrowings as instances of “quotation” glosses over significant distinctions between them. Here again, we find problematic terminology. Perhaps an alternative definition of “quotation” would serve us better.

In his study of quotation throughout the twentieth century, David Metzer defines quotation as

13 Ibid. 863. The category of stylistic allusion does indeed figure prominently in his complete discussion of borrowing in Ives’ music, All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing. He designates an entire chapter to “Modeling and Stylistic Allusion to Evoke a Style or Genre,” particularly focusing on how stylistic allusion can create musical commentary on other styles or can achieve “expressive ends,” 267-99. It is somewhat inconsistent to consider stylistic allusion simultaneously as different from borrowing and as a type of borrowing, but his remarks on the technique do prove useful.  
14 Ibid., 852.  
15 Ibid., 853.
the placement of parts of a pre-existent piece in a new composition or performance. The use of actual material from a piece separates quotation from allusion and paraphrase, which broadly evoke works styles, or textures. Quotation is also set apart by the prominence of the borrowing, which is made to stick out from the surrounding music… Quotation is also characterized by the use of brief excerpts…

Metzer’s use of the term “paraphrase” as broadly evoking a work seems to align with Burkholder’s definition of modeling more than his definition of paraphrase. Burkholder describes paraphrase as a borrowing method that allows the composer to reorder, omit, or insert material, potentially recasting the original music to the point that it is barely recognizable. It relies on “actual music,” like quotation, yet alters it in some way that renders it noticeably different from the source, to varying degrees of extremity. Though the degree to which material is altered does not necessarily affect a borrowing’s significance, this distinction between paraphrase—an altered borrowing of the original music—and quotation—a nearly-exact relocating of musical material (be it harmonic, melodic, or rhythmic material)—can greatly affect analysis of Satie’s humoristic suites.

As we shall see, the composer utilizes both techniques to achieve different purposes.

In contrast to Burkholder’s view of quotation, Metzer’s definition allows for alteration to the source material as an inherent element of the practice. He describes a basic two-part gesture manipulated by quotation and other borrowing approaches. One part of that gesture is what can be called the original, that is, the material taken from an outside source. The original is the fragment as it exists in that

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17 Burkholder, *All made of Tunes*, 41.
source, prior to any alterations made to it. As such, it never sounds in the new
work, for there is always some degree of alteration in bringing that fragment into
its new surroundings… The other part of a borrowing is the transformation, the
name given to the fragment as it exists in the new work. As the term states, this
side of the gesture involves any alterations made to the original as well as the
changed form it assumes in its new context. The transformation is the borrowing
as we hear it; however, we hear more than just it, for the original still demands
our attention, even if never stated.\footnote{Metzer, 5-6.}

Metzer acknowledges certain adjustments as unavoidable in the act of quotation. If these
changes are not present, the result would be sampling, the use of actual sounds or
recordings from an existing performance (Metzer explores this type of quotation in depth,
but it is not applicable in a study of Satie’s music).\footnote{See Metzer’s chapter on “Sampling and Thievery” in Quotation and Cultural Meaning in Twentieth-
Century Music, 160-87. The incorporation of recordings into the act of composition is a type of quotation
that Satie did not utilize, though it does involve some of the same issues of originality and intellectual
property. Sampling differs from Satie’s use of quotation in that it quotes \textit{actual sounds} from a
performance. Here, no internal alteration takes place. Even at their most literal, Satie’s quotations
typically change the instrumentation and harmonization—or at the very least, are realized in a performance
unrelated to the source.} With music recomposed (as
opposed to sampled) into another composition, the original music cannot “as
such...[sound] in the new work,” therefore the identification of a quotation should allow
for such adjustments as are intrinsic to a relocation of borrowed music, such as a change
in timbre or instrumentation. The degree of transformation, the second part of Metzer’s
borrowing structure, distinguishes quotation from paraphrase, depending on whether the
material is altered beyond such necessary adjustments.

In summary, consideration of Satie’s borrowings in the humoristic piano suites
necessitates adaptation of existing definitions of borrowing and quotation. For current
purposes, “borrowing” broadly refers to uses of existing music or styles. It encompasses
less specific borrowing methods, such as “stylistic allusion,” as well as both “paraphrase” and “quotation,” the difference between them being that of extent of transformation. A look at the various borrowings in “Españaña” will help make these distinctions clear.

“Españaña,” Croquis et agaçeries d’un gros bonhomme en bois

Written in August of 1913, “Españaña” borrows in a variety of ways from Chabrier’s 1883 rhapsody for orchestra, España. Satie’s borrowing methods range from obscure references to prominent literal quotations, the latter varying in length from fragments to full phrases as well as in how many musical parameters are borrowed. Satie situates his only quotation of an entire phrase in “Españaña” at its midpoint, in lines 9-10, reproducing the trombone soli of mm. 218-21 of España note-for-note (Example 1.1). The only changes between the old and new versions are superficial: given that the new piece is written for piano, the texture and timbre are altered necessarily, the phrase is transposed into a new key, and the meter adjusted from 3/8 to 3/4. None of these modifications, however, disrupt the identifying characteristics of the theme. Only the changes to the expressive markings venture beyond the basic necessities of relocating the theme into a new work, giving slightly more emphasis to the downbeats than the original, yet they do not interfere with the theme’s structure.

21 The borrowings of the main theme and the trombone solo from España in “Españaña” were identified by Gillmor (see Gillmor, Erik Satie, 165-6) and expanded upon by Whiting (Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 381-2).
Together with the central location of the trombone solo quote, Satie’s omission of its original accompaniment causes this borrowing to stand apart in “Españaña.” In contrast, his use of España’s primary melodic figure, found in mm. 29-30 (shown in Example 1.2 with the bassoon, viola, and cello), illustrate methods of borrowing that involve multiple parameters. In line 11, Satie changes the harmonization from its original tonic prolongation to a prolonged IV♮ and accentuates the quotation by transposing it up two octaves. In his next quote of the same theme (line 13), he borrows from Chabrier’s harmonization (also shown in Example 1.2) through his emphasis on I♮, though he changes the function of the D in the melody from the root of a submediant chord to a passing tone. Considered alone, Satie’s use of the second-inversion tonic constitutes a paraphrase of the harmony since he draws from an original chord identity in m. 30. Because of the added harmonic paraphrase, the passage in line 13 presents a more complete borrowing than in line 11, but since the melody in both instances remains readily identifiable and unaltered, they both constitute quotations of that parameter.
Example 1.2: Chabrier, España, mm. 29-30; Satie, “Españaña,” lines 11 and 13

Throughout “Españaña,” Satie interpolates paraphrases of España’s main theme. In lines 6, 7, 11, 14, and 15 the paraphrases retain the motive’s descending contour while
varying the intervallic structure. Other presentations of the theme modify it further: for example, in lines 5 and 12 Satie borrows only the rhythm, and in lines 8-9 he reverses its contour. These heavy paraphrases’ proximity to more exact quotations supports interpreting them as derived from the primary borrowed melody. This mixing of techniques displays Satie’s compositional flexibility as he produces an array of differing borrowings from a single motive.

Satie not only borrows from the more memorable melodic themes of Chabrier’s work, as previous studies have recognized, but he also sprinkles obscure paraphrases of less-identifiable areas throughout, such as accompaniments or transitional passages. In line 3, for example, he presents a paraphrase of the second violins’ accompaniment to the final appearance of España’s primary theme in m. 471 (Example 1.3). Satie adheres to Chabrier’s rhythm closely, merely removing the rest in the middle of the figure, but he retains little of the intervallic content, choosing to follow only the basic melodic contour. Considered together, however, the paraphrases of both rhythm and contour make this minor borrowing recognizable. A similarly obscure borrowing occurs in line 16 (Example 1.4), in which Satie builds on the quartal harmony found in the first half of m.21 in España. He borrows the pitches B♭-F-C verbatim, and expands the arpeggiation of that chord over four octaves. Alone, these sorts of borrowings seem coincidental, for they are far less recognizable than quotations of primary themes. Certainly, the case for borrowing could not be made with only these two instances, but they support the overall
relationship of Satie’s piece with Chabrier’s when considered alongside more recognizable passages.

Example 1.3: Chabrier, España, m. 471; Satie, “Españaña,” line 3

Example 1.4: Chabrier, España, m. 21; Satie, “Españaña,” line 16
Not only does “Españaña” feature a variety of uses of material from Chabrier’s *España*, ranging from the easily identifiable to the obscure, it also blends these borrowings with those of other sources as well. For example, Orledge has illustrated that Satie borrows a passage from Debussy’s *La Boîte à joujoux*, which Debussy composed around the same time as Satie’s “Españaña.”^{22} Satie includes a chromatic scale of major seconds that resembles a similarly-constructed scale by Debussy, as shown in Example 1.5.

Example 1.5: Debussy, *La Boîte à joujoux*, Tableau 2, reduction 34, mm. 1-7; Satie, “Españaña,” line 7

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^{22} Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, 61-2. As Orledge points out, in this ballet Debussy borrows from Gounod’s *Faust*, which Satie in turn borrows from in “Chez le Marchand d’or” a few weeks later.
Satie also subtly paraphrases a short passage from another piano work based on *España*. Whiting has suggested the link between Emil Waldteufel’s Spanish waltz entitled *España* and Satie’s “Españaña,” the latter described as a “sort of waltz” at its outset.\(^{23}\) I have found that Satie borrows actual musical material from Waldteufel between the quotations of the main themes from *España*. Here, Satie inserts a paraphrase from the introduction to Waldteufel’s waltz, a passage which does not derive from Chabrier. Example 1.6 indicates with brackets the three-note motive that precedes the habañera fanfare in Waldteufel’s introduction which Satie mimics in the left hand in lines 12-13 of “Españaña.” Though Satie changes the fanfare rhythm to resemble the rhythm of Chabrier’s primary theme instead of a habañera, the effect of the low three-note motive as a preparation for the fanfare and *España* theme remains.

Example 1.6: Waldteufel, *España*, Introduction, mm. 11-12; Satie, “Españaña,” lines 12-13

\(^{23}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 381.
In any consideration of the humoristic piano suites, Satie’s annotations should be taken into account as well. Satie uses them to add another layer to his intricate web of borrowing in “Españaña” by referring to another famous French musical work on an Iberian theme, Bizet’s Carmen. The annotations “La belle Carmen et le peluquero” and “les cigarières” refer to the famous opera, adding to the already busy collection of multiple musical quotations and paraphrases. Thus, not only have we have seen the composer borrowing from a single source in multiple ways as well as bringing together borrowings of multiple sources into one piece, but we also see him continue these procedures into his text.

“Españaña” provides an excellent example of the flexibility inherent in musical borrowing. In it we find quotations of single and multiple musical parameters, paraphrases, and mixtures of multiple sources, though with little sense of logical order or formal construction. The borrowings are the most prominent melodic material of the piece, whether quoted or paraphrased, supporting Metzer’s observations of typical quoting practice. They contrast the newly-composed music of “Españaña,” which is typical of Satie’s style that culminates in Parade,

[accompanying the characters] with a multiplicity of short tuneful ideas... repeated so as to become memorable. Melodic types range from two-, three-, and four-note ostinati to longer melodic gestures comprising distinctive entities but usually lacking a strong sense of melodic and tonal closure.24

24Nancy Perloff, Art and the Everyday: Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 115. Satie’s style of “[juxtaposing] unrelated blocks of sound (especially non-expressive ostinatos)” is commonly discussed in the literature, Davis, 38. See also Orledge, Satie the Composer, 224-6; in relation to Sonatine bureaucratique, which will be examined later, 32.
Satie opens “Españaña” with two different figures, each three quarter notes in length and each repeated four times, placed in immediate succession. He then follows the quick paraphrase of line 3 with what Nancy Perloff terms a pendulum, a “pattern in which two pitches rotate back and forth.” The brevity and the proximity of these figures “enhances their contrast,” not only with each other, but also with the melodic borrowings, both quotations and paraphrases, throughout. Despite the fact that the more obscure paraphrases are brief and rhythmically repetitive in themselves, even they exhibit a greater melodic and harmonic variety than the newly-composed material, immediately distinguishing them as the most prominent musical events.

Table 1.1 outlines the borrowings of “Españaña,” which become distinctive musical events due to this contrast with the newly-composed music. There is little to indicate a recognizable form or logical progression, however. The music of line 1 returns twice, serving primarily as an introduction to more important musical events. Satie concentrates his primary borrowings in the middle of the piece, but otherwise, the musical events seem haphazardly thrown together and sharply juxtaposed.

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25 Perloff, 15.
26 Ibid., 115.
Table 1.1: Borrowings in “Españaña”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Number</th>
<th>Borrowed From</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sorte de valse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sous les grenadiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>España, m. 471</td>
<td>Comme à Seville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>España, m. 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>La belle Carmen et le peluquero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>rhythm of España theme (mm. 29-35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>repetition of line 1</td>
<td>montez sur vos doigts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>España, mm. 29-35 (main theme)</td>
<td>Puerta Maillot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Debussy: La Boîte à joujoux</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ce bon Rodriguez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>España, mm. 29-35</td>
<td>Au movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>España, m. 218</td>
<td>N’est-ce pas l’Alcade?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>repetition of line 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>España, mm. 29-35</td>
<td>Plaza Clichy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>rhythm of España theme (mm. 29-35)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>Waldteufel: España</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 13-15       | España, mm. 29-35 | Rue de Madrid  
Les cigarières |
| 15-16       | rhythm from line 1 |            |
| 16          | harmony of España, m. 21 | à la disposicion de Usted |
| 17-18       | repetition of line 1 |            |
| 18          | España, final cadence |            |

“Españaña” bears little similarity to any borrowing types introduced by Burkholder in his study of Ives’ music, proving that even detailed categorizations cannot...
cover all potential methods of borrowing. Burkholder’s category of collage is perhaps the closest match, “in which a swirl of quoted and paraphrased tunes is added to a musical structure based on modeling, paraphrase, cumulative setting, or a narrative program.” As with “Españaña,” Ives’ collages “typically have some obvious link to the other material” and tend to combine multiple borrowing procedures. Not only does Satie combine procedures musically, he also creates a collage of sorts in his textual associations. For example, three different iterations of the España theme appear with references to locations in Paris: “Puerta Maillot,” “Plaza Clichy,” and “Rue de Madrid,” the last two referring to two contrasting musical institutions, Montmartre and the Paris Conservatoire, respectively. He enhances this collection of locations with a mixture of languages such as “Puerta Maillot” and “à la disposicion de Usted” that humorously merge both Spanish and French, perhaps to reflect the subject of España as well as the nationality of its composer. The definition of collage must be modified to fit “Españaña,” however, as Burkholder’s application of the term describes a use of “tune fragments [that] are overlaid atop a musical structure that is already coherent without them.” “Españaña” is itself its own entity, not placed atop another musical structure or as an event within a larger form. Yet, the spirit of blending musical ideas as a “swirl” of events remains.

“Españaña” not only provides an example of a variety of borrowing techniques and how Satie can expand them through his annotations, but also the importance of

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28 Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 370.
29 Ibid., 370.
identifying the techniques and their employment. By thoroughly examining borrowing procedures, “Españaña” can be positioned with respect to the other humoristic piano pieces by how it resembles or differs from them. The application of identifying terminology assists such comparisons. The process of analyzing borrowing in “Españaña” and the assignment to a category shows that this piece stands out among Satie’s music as the only instance of the collage procedure. However, as we shall see later, the aesthetic result of the borrowings resembles that of another important category. The remainder of this study will use the distinctions demonstrated here to classify pieces with analogous procedures together, drawing comparisons between works that have previously unrecognized similarities. The application of a categorization scheme facilitates analysis both by identifying pieces that utilize unique procedures and by identifying groups of similar pieces for a comparative approach.

**Borrowing Types**

In his extensive study of Charles Ives’ use of borrowed music, Burkholder creates a typology of Ives’ techniques for using existing music that corresponds approximately to the composer’s chronological implementation of them, reproduced in Table 1.2. Though Burkholder has developed this typology for discussing Ives’ music, it applies well (with some modification) to Satie’s borrowings in his humoristic piano suites. By identifying the specific borrowing types in Satie’s humoristic piano music, an examination of both
the techniques that are unique to certain pieces and the procedures that draw them together becomes possible.\textsuperscript{30}

Table 1.2: Uses of Existing Music in the Works of Charles Ives \textsuperscript{31}

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Modeling</strong> a work or section on an existing piece, assuming its structure, incorporating part of its melodic material, imitating its form or procedures, or using it as a model in some other way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Variations</strong> on a given tune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Paraphrasing</strong> an existing tune to form a new melody, theme, or motive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Setting</strong> an existing tune with a new accompaniment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Cantus firmus</strong>, presenting a given tune in long notes against a more quickly moving texture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Medley</strong>, stating two or more existing tunes, relatively complete, one after another in a single movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Quodlibet</strong>, combining two or more existing tunes or fragments in counterpoint or quick succession, most often as a joke or technical tour de force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>Stylistic allusion</strong>, alluding not to a specific work but to a general style or type of music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>Transcribing</strong> a work for a new medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td><strong>Programmatic quotation</strong>, fulfilling an extramusical program or illustrating a part of a text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td><strong>Cumulative setting</strong>, a complex form in which the theme, either a borrowed tune or a melody paraphrased from one or more existing tunes, is presented complete only near the end of a movement, preceded by development of motives from the theme, fragmentary or altered presentation of the theme, and exposition of important countermelodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td><strong>Collage</strong>, in which a swirl of quoted and paraphrased tunes is added to a musical structure based on modeling, paraphrase, cumulative setting, or a narrative program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td><strong>Patchwork</strong>, in which fragments of two or more tunes are stitched together, sometimes elided through paraphrase and sometimes linked by … interpolations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td><strong>Extended paraphrase</strong>, in which the melody for an entire work or section is paraphrased from an existing tune</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to understand that, by Burkholder’s own admission, there is a “philosophical inconsistency” of including “categories of very different types, from methods of adaptation to formal procedures to motivations for borrowing or effects to be

\textsuperscript{30} On the appropriateness of applying a study of Ives to another composer: See Robert Morgan, “Ives and Mahler, Mutual Responses,” \textit{19\textsuperscript{th} Century Music} 2 (1978), 72-81.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., \textit{All Made of Tunes}, 3-4.
achieved.” For this reason, two of Burkholder’s borrowing types are isolated in this study as complementary methods that can assist in the creation of the other types: paraphrase and programmatic quotation. They do not feature in Table 1.3, which lists the categories I have applied to the humoristic piano suites, with definitions adjusted as needed, accompanied by the titles of the pieces associated with each borrowing type. Paraphrase, as defined above, can be understood as a transformational procedure, which varies greatly in the humoristic piano suites, from explicit quotation to paraphrase, the exact distinctions of which will be discussed below. Thus, in this study, paraphrase is a procedure that helps to create other borrowing types. Table 1.3 omits programmatic quotation for nearly all of Satie’s borrowings serve a programmatic purpose, therefore the category provides no useful limits for his music. Other omissions occur simply because they do not feature in the humoristic piano suites, for example, cantus firmus, transcribing, and variation. One chief difference in my definition as opposed to Burkholder’s of setting, is that it provides a more useful distinction between setting and extended setting and extended paraphrase. In Satie’s humoristic piano suites, I define setting as a borrowing of a single phrase used only once in the new work, extended setting as the use of an entire existing work nearly exactly, and extended paraphrase as a looser borrowing of an entire structure.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Uses of Existing Music in Satie’s Humoristic Piano Suites</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Modeling</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sévère réprimande,” <em>Véritables preludes flasques (pour un chien)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sur un casque,” <em>Descriptions automatiques</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“de Podopthalma,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Danse maigre (à la manière de ces messieurs),” <em>Croquis et agaçeries d’un gros bonhomme en bois</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Regrets des enfermés (Jonas et Latude),” <em>Chapitres tournés en tous sens</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Balançoire,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Bain de Mer,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Les Courses,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Les Quatre-coins,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Setting</strong> – a single borrowing of one phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sur un vaisseau,” <em>Descriptions automatiques</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Tyrolienne turque,” <em>Croquis et agaçeries d’un gros bonhomme en bois</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Les Courses,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Extended Setting</strong> – a relatively exact replication of an entire existing tune that structures the new work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Danse cuirassée (Période grecque),” <em>Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Extended Paraphrase</strong> – borrowing of an entire piece or section, the exactness of which may vary throughout, that affects the structure of the new work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“d’Holothurie,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“d’Edriophthalma,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“de Podopthalma,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Sonatine Bureaucratique</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Quodlibet</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“de Podopthalma,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Cumulative Setting</strong> – paraphrase or quotation of a single borrowed phrase repeated at regular intervals throughout the new work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Flirt,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Réveil de la Mariée,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Collage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Españaña,” <em>Croquis et agaçeries d’un gros bonhomme en bois</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><strong>Patchwork</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Pique-nique,” <em>Sports et divertissements</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><strong>Periodic Setting</strong> – paraphrase or quotation of a single borrowed phrase repeated at regular intervals throughout the new work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Celle qui parle trop,” <em>Chapitres tournés en tous sens</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Le Porteur de grosses pierres,” <em>Chapitres tournés en tous sens</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“de Podopthalma,” <em>Embryons desséchés</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. **Reiterative Setting** – paraphrase or quotation of a borrowed phrase (or phrases) repeated irregularly throughout a new work, possibly interspersed with other borrowings from the same or other sources.

- “Sur une lanterne,” *Descriptions automatiques*
- “Regrets des enfermés (Jonas et Latude),” *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*
- “Chez le Marchand d’or,” *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses*
- “La Défaite des Cimbres (Cauchemar),” *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses*

Though Satie makes use of many of the techniques listed by Burkholder, including modeling, setting, quodlibet, cumulative setting, patchwork, and extended paraphrase, certain procedures stand out in the humoristic piano suites. Modeling and setting comprise a significant portion of the humoristic piano suites, but they often are more superficial and do not involve a deep level of critique, manipulation, or commentary. Therefore, this study focuses on the remaining categories that feature in three or more pieces: extended paraphrase, periodic setting, and reiterative setting, the last two of which I have newly identified for application to Satie’s music. Extended paraphrase comprises four pieces: all three individual pieces from *Embryons desséchés* and *Sonatine bureaucratique*. As we shall see in Chapter 2, this wholesale borrowing informs the structure of the new works, but also allows Satie to manipulate the forms so as to critique the musical conventions inherent in the sources.

Two types of repetitive settings extract a phrase from a source and repeat it at varying pitch levels or in different keys throughout a work in a process that resembles a fugue. I define these repetitive settings as *periodic settings* and *reiterative settings*, the distinction lying in the function of the borrowed tune and the formal structure of the new
work. These encompass seven pieces which will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4: *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*, “Sur une lanterne” from *Descriptions automatiques*, “Chez le Marchand d’or” and “La Défaite des Cimbres (Cauchemar)” from *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses*. “de Podopthalma” from *Embryons desséchés*, has a unique place in this study in that it belongs to both categories of extended paraphrase and reiterative setting. These two methods comprise roughly half of Satie’s borrowings in the humoristic piano suites, their prevalence marking these procedures as noteworthy in Satie’s music.

Burkholder explains many possible benefits for the historian and analyst in differentiating among types and extents of borrowing. For example, by discriminating between different types, linear evolution in a composer’s style may become clear, or one may discover that a composer’s techniques developed out of a larger cultural or historical practice, and therefore are not as isolated as they may first have seemed. Comparison of procedures among composers can reveal fresh approaches as well as expose similarities among borrowing methods that may otherwise be missed. Additionally, he outlines some “motivating questions” for approaching a study of borrowing:

- first, analytical questions: for any individual piece, what is borrowed or used as a source? how is it used in the new work?
- second, interpretive or critical questions: why is this material borrowed and used in this way? what musical or extramusical functions does it serve?
- third, historical questions: where did the composer get the idea to do this? what is the history of the practice? can one trace a development in the works of an

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33 See Burkholder, “The Uses of Existing Music” 855-7 for a more complete discussion of the benefits of his approach.
individual composer, or in a musical tradition, in the ways existing material is borrowed and used? 34

Exploring how (analytical questions) and why (interpretive or critical questions) make up the main focus of this study. First, however, historical and cultural considerations provide a necessary background for understanding Satie’s musical borrowing.

**Satie and Popular Music**

While Satie was a young man, his family introduced him to the worlds of operetta, café-concert, and vaudeville entertainment in his hometown of Honfleur and later in Paris. After moving out on his own, he began to explore the bohemian culture of Montmartre, starting with the infamous cabaret, the *Chat Noir*. Steven Moore Whiting investigates Satie’s involvement with the popular scene at the early stages of his career and has shown how its influence permeated the composer’s output long after he ceased his direct participation. Whiting describes various entertainment venues in Paris, such as the café-concert and the music-hall, but focuses most of his attention on how the aesthetics of the *cabaret artistique* affected and inspired Satie. 36 In summary of his argument, he states:

> The *cabaret artistique* provided the pseudo-medieval stage for collaboration among painters, poets, and musicians that were to be a crucial wellspring of modernism in the early twentieth century. It institutionalized irreverence for established values of every sort and cultivated the mock-serious pose as the

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34 Ibid., 864.
35 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 62.
quintessential expression of such irreverence. It nurtured the heterodox outlook of Erik Satie and, moreover, supplied him with the idioms and techniques that inform his still outrageous and challenging art.\(^{37}\)

The cabarets encouraged a unique style of humor. Mary E. Davis describes how the attitude of *blague*, a joking and ironic wit, attached itself to “the shady world of artists” and “had become the watchword of bohemian ‘student culture.’”\(^{38}\) This irreverent manner of “unconventionality and an anti-bourgeois stance [was] considered obligatory in these bohemian haunts, though of course members of the bourgeoisie eventually came, to be berated and to socialize in the chic environment.”\(^{39}\) No one “important” escaped parody—politics served as the butt of many jokes and the waiters even dressed as prominent academicians.\(^{40}\) All the mocking and joking was delivered with a “straightforward, deadpan tone” and an “absurd humour created both by excessive logic and by stripping an object of its defining characteristics.”\(^{41}\)

This style was cultivated in the various forms of entertainment found at the cabarets. Songs, poetry readings, and short plays made up much of the fare. Individual performers each took on a unique genre and persona, such as the romantic, the socialist, or the *pince-sans-rire* satirist typified by the chansonnier Vincent Hypsa.\(^{42}\) Song performances often took the form of parody, changing the text of a familiar song to make humorous commentary on some subject. Writing also played a significant role at the

\(^{37}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 58.
\(^{38}\) Davis, 41-2.
\(^{39}\) Ibid., 223.
\(^{40}\) Perloff, 21.
\(^{41}\) Ibid., 22.
\(^{42}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 50-1. “Pince-sans-rire” denotes a deadpan, mock-serious humor.
cabarets that published their own journals. At the *Chat Noir*, Satie met Alphonse Allais, whose prose style probably influenced that of the young composer.⁴³ Writings by both men feature

absurd self-portraits which lavished excessive praise or mockery on one’s personal situation and achievements, in parodies of pedantry and academicism,… the adoption of poses as a means of caricaturing certain human types,… the satiric debunking of academicism and the delight in absurdity as a means of challenging the meaning of art.⁴⁴

Both Satie and Allais achieved parodies of academicism through a serious and deadpan tone, over-exaggeration of mundane facts, neologisms, inflated moral stance, and “pompous, flowery language.”⁴⁵

At the *Chat Noir*, another important form of entertainment developed: the shadow-play. Quotation played a part in the incidental music for these plays, as Whiting illustrates with the example of *La Tentation de Saint Antoine*, the premiere of which possibly coincided with Satie’s first visit to the cabaret.⁴⁶ In shadow-plays, quotations usually briefly alluded to well-known pieces in a manner reminiscent of song parodies by the chansonniers. Composers for shadow-plays and song performers particularly relied on quotation as a humorous device when “the original text… might then serve as an imagined counterpoint to the one actually being [performed].”⁴⁷ Quotation enabled performances to move beyond the cabaret’s walls and comment upon society using materials from society.

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⁴³ Perloff makes a detailed comparison between a number of Allais’ and Satie’s works, *Art and the Everyday*, 80-5.
⁴⁴ Perloff, 81.
⁴⁵ Ibid., 81-4.
⁴⁶ Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 69-72.
⁴⁷ Ibid., 114.
Though these techniques were common fare among the various performers at the cabarets, Satie likely learned the most from Vincent Hypsa, for whom he worked as an accompanist. For the most part, Satie arranged others’ pieces for the chansonnier to burlesque. Hypsa’s parodies spanned “a wide range of styles, from unpretentious café-concert fare and the facile romances of Delmet to an operatic scene from Bizet’s Carmen and a mélodie by Massenet.”\textsuperscript{48} Even though some of Satie’s musical work was necessarily rather mundane, he became familiar with Hypsa’s mode of humor. Hypsa typically parodied well-known music so that his audience could simultaneously relate his rewording and the original text, creating an intertextual dialogue.\textsuperscript{49} Hypsa’s approach was often mock-serious, even mock-scientific, and sprinkled with hyperbole. Sometimes he juggled several parodies at once to create a multi-layered satire that required a certain amount of insider knowledge to fully appreciate.\textsuperscript{50}

Although Satie’s collaboration with Hypsa appears to have ended in 1908, his experience with cabaret humor and popular styles stayed with him. It surfaced most perceptibly when he began “quoting from the same broad range of musical repertoire in his humoristic piano suites, which distil the parodic techniques of Hypsa into disconcerting miniatures for piano.”\textsuperscript{51} In this way, Satie was able to make a unique statement in his music, moving in a new direction by appropriating cabaret techniques in “serious” concert works.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 245.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 354.
\textsuperscript{50} Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 416
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 245.
In the humoristic piano suites, Satie, like Hypsa, parodied tunes from a wide range of styles and genres through the use of musical borrowing. Most of the borrowed material, however, shares two common characteristics. First, Satie borrowed from recognizable sources so that he could assume familiarity on the part of the audience. Easy identification helps make his borrowing work because of the “instant associations” they elicit, which a composer can manipulate to create meaning. This immediacy intensifies the two-part structure of a quotation that Metzer defines. The familiarity of a melody increases its prominence and “intensifies the engagement between old and new, as we can hear how easily or reluctantly the borrowing settles into its new locale.”

Second, Satie frequently used vocal melodies as sources so that the original pieces’ texts as well as their contexts could contribute to the multi-layered meaning. If he used an original that was not a vocal piece, he usually chose a piece associated with some kind of extramusical program or cultural-stylistic archetype, such as his borrowing of Clementi’s Sonatina in C major, op. 36, no. 1 in *Sonatine bureaucratique*, in which Satie engages Clementi’s traditional sonata form.

Another notable aspect of the humoristic piano suites is the colorful textual annotations Satie added to his music, which usually lay out the program and at times provide additional commentary. This practice, which began in 1890 with the *Gnossiennes*, included short, seemingly irrelevant phrases applied as performance instructions. This practice culminated in the humoristic suites, “carried to a new level of

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52 Ibid., 356. At least, these tunes were familiar to audiences in early twentieth-century Paris.
53 Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 421.
54 Metzer, 6.
imaginative fancy.”

Satie’s annotations in these pieces resemble Allais’ writing style in their deadpan tone and pretentious stance, abounding in attention to mundane matters, neologisms, and a ridiculously serious, objective manner. These texts add another layer of meaning to these pieces: on top of Satie’s music, which refers to other music through borrowing, he adds commentary that sometimes ties all the elements together, and sometimes follows its own unrelated tangent. The texts and titles of these pieces assume a tone of blague humor, in their frequent incongruity with the music, in their banality even when approaching extraordinary subjects, and in the jumble of images they bring together.

The humoristic piano suites bring together elements from all of Satie’s diverse experiences in Montmartre. He transferred the techniques that he observed in Hypsa’s performances to pieces for piano solo, placing familiar melodies in unexpected contexts and creating complex relationships between the piece and its sources. Satie brought some of the humoristic devices he adapted from Allais into these pieces as well, particularly in the texts he added to the pieces and the subjects he approached. In this way, Satie furthered the methods of Hypsa and Allais and extended a long-existing practice of bohemian humor.

55 Gillmor, *Erik Satie*, 149.
Satie and Concert Music

Prior to the composition of the humoristic piano suites, Satie experienced some significant life events that had a marked effect on their composition. From 1905-1912, he enrolled in Vincent d’Indy’s *Cours de composition musicale* at the Schola Cantorum. D’Indy founded the school in response to what he viewed as deficiencies in the educational programs at the Paris Conservatoire, focusing his curriculum heavily on the craft of counterpoint and studies of music history. From 1905-1908, Satie attended the counterpoint classes, taught primarily by Albert Roussel. He also informally participated in d’Indy’s classes from 1905-1912, focusing on subjects that interested him most. These included basic musical elements such as harmony, melody, tonality, rhythm, and orchestration, as well as studies of form, particularly fugue and chorale. Satie’s decision to enroll at the Schola Cantorum was controversial among those who knew him. Debussy in particular had mixed feelings regarding d’Indy’s approach, and had concerns that the school’s dogmatic teachings could jeopardize his friend’s musical individuality. His misgivings proved to be unfounded, for Satie retained his wit, inimitability, and

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57 For a detailed study on Satie’s time at the Schola Cantorum, see Robert Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, “Satie, counterpoint and the Schola Cantorum,” 81-104.
58 Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, 92-5.
irreverent attitude in his music—arguably, these aspects of his style became even more potent after the completion of his counterpoint and composition studies.

The controversies regarding d’Indy and the Schola Cantorum affected Satie in another, possibly more influential, way. Maurice Ravel, with other composers, broke from the Société Nationale, a musical society headed by d’Indy, to form the Société Musical Indépendante. This new group, though formed in opposition to d’Indy’s narrow aesthetic preferences and supposedly espousing no single artistic dogma, in actuality supported mostly works of composers considered “Debussystes.” “Debussystes” took Debussy as their idol (though not as their leader) and endorsed concepts such as independence of musical ideas, harmonic expressiveness, the existence of musical ‘genius,’ ideas that they felt were anathema to the priorities of d’Indy. The new society was hardly as “independent” as its name claimed, maintaining close ties with the Conservatoire and endeavoring “to ‘appropriate’ composers in support of their common aesthetic cause, even those whose aesthetic and political views were, in fact, substantially different.” Thus, on January 16, 1911, the SMI “appropriated” Satie, performing the prelude to act I of Les Fils des étoiles (1891), the last of the Gymnopédies (1888), with Ravel himself playing the second movement of the Sarabandes (1887), in that evening’s concert. It was no coincidence that this sponsorship of Satie’s music focused on his early, pre-Schola Cantorum works. For the SMI as a whole, the endorsement of Satie

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61 Fulcher, French Cultural Politics, 154-8.
62 Hart, 38; Fulcher, French Cultural Politics, 161.
63 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 144.
was intended to “enshrine an earlier phase of his style for their own purposes [and]…
‘reclaim’ him from the Schola.”\textsuperscript{64} Ravel, moreover, had personal motives. Though
aligned with the “Debussyste” camp, detractors accused him of imitating Debussy. In
response, Ravel appropriated Satie to his organization to counter these charges. By
claiming Satie as the common wellspring [for both himself and Debussy], Ravel
sought to deflect the charge of artistic dependence upon Debussy; they \textit{both} had
learnt from the honoured but isolated precursor, consigned to the margins of a
bygone, unappreciative epoch.\textsuperscript{65}

The SMI portrayed Satie as “a kind of noble musical savage,” claiming him as a
precursor to the aesthetic they promoted, and for Ravel, Satie represented a chance to
avert criticism of imitation of Debussy and assert his musical individuality.\textsuperscript{66} They
conveniently ignored Satie’s studies at the Schola Cantorum and his more recent
compositional enterprises, which included fugues and chorales in \textit{Aperçus désagréables}
(1908-1912) and \textit{En Habit de cheval} (1911).

The SMI sponsorship, however, made Satie known to a larger artistic public than
he had previously enjoyed. He “soon found himself something of a celebrity,” as more
concerts followed and articles about him were published by critics Michel Calvocoressi
and Jules Écorcheville.\textsuperscript{67} In 1912, Satie also began a journalistic career of sorts,
“publishing literary sketches and essays which offered a witty, ironic snapshot of his

\textsuperscript{64} Fulcher, \textit{French Cultural Politics}, 202.
\textsuperscript{65} Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 347. For a broader investigation into Ravel and Satie’s relationship, see
Orledge, \textit{Satie the Composer}, 250-1.
\textsuperscript{66} Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 352.
\textsuperscript{67} Gillmor, \textit{Erik Satie}, 144.
Satie also began to see publication of a number of his works (mostly early pieces, but also *En Habit de cheval*) by Rouart-Lerolle. The publishing firm Demets followed on Rouart-Lerolle’s success by beginning to present requests to Satie for new pieces in 1912, leading to the production of the bulk of his humoristic piano suites over the next couple of years.\(^{69}\)

Despite the somewhat ill-intentioned sponsorship of Ravel and the “Debussystes,” Satie forged ahead in his own direction. Perhaps recent events helped encourage him to do so. Nancy Perloff suggests that the “public recognition gave Satie the courage and the audacity to embark on a career as a writer and musical humorist,” a role which manifested itself in Satie’s pieces through a mixture of musical styles matched with witty texts and quotations of well-known melodies, all commenting on each other ironically.\(^{70}\)

Satie’s clever style in his writings and in the humoristic piano suites did not develop suddenly in 1912, however, but represents a maturation of influences and ideas gathered from throughout his career, particularly during his time as a participant in the cabaret culture in Montmartre. Not only did Satie’s studies at the Schola Cantorum and his involvement with the “Debussystes” affect and inform his music from 1912-1917, but his

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\(^{69}\) Gillmor, *Erik Satie*, 146; Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 349. Satie’s first offering to Demets, *Préludes flasques (pour un chien)* was rejected. His follow-up piece, *Véritables préludes flasques (pour un chien)* was subsequently turned down by Durand, but accepted by Demets. Rouart-Lerolle also began to request new pieces over the next few years. See Gillmor, *Erik Satie*, 146.

\(^{70}\) Perloff, 80; Jane Fulcher even suggests that in *Descriptions automatiques* (1913), he turned his barbed wit on the “Debussystes” themselves, as representatives of the artistic elite. Fulcher, *French Cultural Politics*, 203.
experiences with popular musical culture throughout his life also significantly shaped this period of his career.

Satie applied the Montmartre attitude to instrumental music intended for concert performance, removing cabaret style far from its original venue. His new surroundings for quoted melodies were sometimes traditional forms or musical styles completely at odds with the triviality of the popular tunes. Alternatively, Satie sometimes created trivial surroundings to house melodies taken from the classical repertoire. His time at the Schola Cantorum not only refined his compositional abilities, but it also broadened his perspective on musical culture, allowing him to comment on musical academicism as one who had certifiable experience in that arena.\(^{71}\)

In the humoristic piano suites, Satie mixed styles from cabaret and concert spheres.\(^{72}\) With his varied experiences, Satie could create music that, in the opinion of Whiting, “far surpasses [Hypsa’s art] in the complexity of his intertextual counterpoint,” by offering parodic “distortions and more: titles, prefaces, commentaries, performance instructions, and (in the case of *Sports et divertissements*) illustrations and calligraphy, with no single aspect entirely congruent (or reconcilable) with any other.”\(^{73}\) With his unique, wide-ranging perspective, Satie “did not content himself with *la blague* but

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\(^{71}\) Whiting, 416: “fusion of satire, stuntmanship, and esotericism that earlier alluded him in separate venues. But they all provided him a wide range of parodic material.” Fulcher, 200: “stylistic references from Schola that he could now deploy allow him to comment on wider cultural world.”

\(^{72}\) This duality in Satie’s music places him within another, much older tradition in French culture. As Mary Davis has explored, he continued a cultural attitude known as *esprit gaulois*, which “draws connections between intellect and humor as well as past and present.” She traces development of the *esprit gaulois* back many centuries and claims that the mingling of high and low elements in Satie’s art is appropriate to that tradition, Davis, 16.

\(^{73}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 415.
sought to stretch the limits of musico-poetic expression and the very concept of the musical ‘work.’”^74 He was able to not only comment on events and culture, as was typical in the cabaret, but also on the music itself. He could actually confront popular and traditional styles and conventions directly, sometimes with the intent to “alter the meaning and perhaps even the perceived value of the original material.”^75 In 1912, Satie was poised to bring together divergent, even conflicting influences to fashion a novel kind of program music for the piano that transcended each of the individual sources of his inspiration.

Conclusion

Now we can answer some important questions: what did Satie borrow, where did he get the idea to borrow, and what historical practice do his borrowings follow? Orledge points to practical reasons for the increase in borrowing in the humoristic piano suites, claiming that Satie used outside inspiration to help him compose more quickly in order to meet the demands of his publisher.\(^7\) This supposedly lifted the compositional burden “by taking some of the responsibility for inventing original material from his shoulders.”^77 While borrowing may have proved functional for Satie in this way, it also

\[^74\] Ibid., 416.
\[^75\] Davis, 54.
\[^76\] Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, 204.
\[^77\] Ibid., 204.
was an inspiring extramusical stimulus which “set his musical imagination in motion [and]... sparked a chain of events leading to the finished musico-poetic products.”

Yet, the reasons Satie borrowed go beyond practical considerations: they were a deliberate choice. His use of well-known pre-existing music perhaps gave his music “greater popular appeal” and turned his compositions into a ‘name-that-tune’ game. However, borrowing also expanded the scope of his pieces, bringing together disparate sources and making new musical connections. Satie amassed new and borrowed music so that he could comment on their relationship. His proclivity for musical borrowing was an aesthetic choice, one that drew from his unique compositional experiences.

The humoristic piano suites continue his early preference for writing short pieces, structured in three movements. Significantly, Satie’s “cryptic phrases” in the *Gnossiennes* grow into near-programs at this time, in which each piece corresponds to some kind of extramusical idea, from vague references to streets in Paris and Bizet’s *Carmen* in “Españaña,” to the episodic activities of a sea cucumber’s typical day in “d’Holothurie.” Musical borrowings interact with the textual ideas in various ways, sometimes encompassing the bulk of the piece. As we shall see in this investigation of the humoristic piano suites, each instance of borrowing and the method used to incorporate it advances the particular extramusical function of each work.

Having investigated the third of Burkholder’s questions, what remains is an evaluation of how Satie borrowed and interpretation of the aesthetic results. Other authors have already provided many excellent analyses of Satie’s borrowings, and this

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study hopes to further appreciation of the humoristic piano suites after thoroughly investigating Satie’s borrowing methods. Again, some work has already been put forward in this respect. In studying *Sports et divertissements*, Davis distinguishes between parody of form and those of melody, and among parodies of melody, between obvious quotation of whole phrases and more obscure quotation of fragments of melodies.\(^{79}\) Perloff investigates Satie’s use of “That Mysterious Rag” in *Parade* and finds three dominant techniques: “first, duplication of pitches in the bass line; second, duplication of contours in the bass line; third, and more frequently, variation of melody and bass-line contours.”\(^{80}\) Whiting outlines a historical development of borrowing in the humoristic piano suites that begins with stylistic allusion, then quotation, which then builds in extent and complexity to quotation from multiple sources simultaneously.\(^{81}\) Burkholder’s extensive research into musical borrowing in Ives suggests the possibility that much more may be said about Satie’s borrowing techniques. Application of Burkholder’s methods to the humoristic piano suites should further our understanding of borrowing in these pieces in a systematic way.

Unlike Burkholder’s work with Ives’ music, however, this study focuses on a limited segment of Satie’s works and not on his entire output. It is an exploration of an important moment in Satie’s career in which borrowing played a significant role, the isolation of which allows for more detailed investigation of individual works. Since

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\(^{79}\) Davis, 86-9.
\(^{80}\) Perloff, 136. Of course, *Parade* is not among the humoristic piano suites, but fits the timeframe of the current study and Perloff’s analysis is among the few existing systematic approaches to Satie’s borrowing.
\(^{81}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 355.
Satie’s career followed divergent paths and his use of borrowing varied greatly depending on the genre and venue of his pieces, this limited scope can reveal a more coherent theory of borrowing among similar pieces. Though Satie utilizes borrowing techniques in a number of compositions outside the humoristic piano suites, these borrowings do not hold the same prominent role as in the humoristic piano suites. In most of these other cases, borrowings serve in support of another pursuit, such as the scenario of a ballet or the action in a film, rather than an end in itself. In the humoristic piano suites, however, the borrowings are a main feature. In fact, during this time, Satie usually began his compositional process with a decision on the source tune, clearly giving them priority in the works. His own prioritization of musical borrowing in these years supports the focus on the technique for study. Through this analytical stance, we can investigate Satie’s attitudes toward existing music and cultural trends using patterns in his own compositions as a starting point. By organizing his humoristic piano suites into their most prominent techniques and analyzing the similarities between them, Satie’s aesthetics at this time become more clear.

Common among the three types of borrowing investigated here—extended paraphrase, periodic setting, and reiterative setting—is Satie’s irreverent attitude.

Cultivated in the cabaret culture on Montmartre and honed by his studies at the Schola Cantorum, Satie’s style embraces this compositional technique with untraditional

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82 Scholars often isolate the humoristic piano suites for separate discussion: Gillmor and Whiting each dedicate separate chapters to the humoristic piano suites: Gillmor, *Erik Satie*, chapter 6, “Chapters Turned Every Which Way,” 143-86; Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, chapter 11, “Satie’s Humoristic Works for Piano, 354-416.
83 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 356.
enthusiasm. It marks a difference between what was (the borrowed music) and what is (Satie’s newly-composed music) creating an aesthetic dissonance that characterizes much of Satie’s oeuvre. Each borrowing type underscores Satie’s approach to composition and to life, but they do so in different ways. To begin with, we shall look at extended paraphrase, a method already defined by Burkholder, to see how Satie engages with entire works and their formal structures.
Chapter 2

Extended Paraphrase

Specialist in Funeral Marches.

Requiems, Masses arranged for Balls.
The firm will deal with all harmonic repairs.
Rapid transformation of symphonies, quartets, etc., etc.
Serious music made fun.
The most difficult pieces arranged for one finger.
Vocal Melodies arranged for two pianos.
No more incomprehensible compositions.
Subtlety within reach of anyone.
Sonatas reduced, reharmonised.
Our music comes with guaranteed playability.\textsuperscript{84}

While most of Satie’s borrowings isolate single phrases from their sources, some involve entire pieces, resulting in new works whose formal structures are informed by that of their sources. Satie tends to use this more complete form of borrowing to comment on the tonal or formal functions inherent in the original. J. Peter Burkholder outlines four characteristics of extended paraphrase in Ives’ music: first, the tune in its entirety is borrowed; second, only a few elements are missing from the tune; third, the source melody is present at nearly all moments of the new piece; and last, the introduction or postlude is also based, at least in part, on the borrowed material.\textsuperscript{85}

Extended paraphrases in Satie’s humoristic piano suites fit the first two of these


\textsuperscript{85} J. Peter Burkholder, \textit{All Made of Tunes: Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 327.
characteristics consistently, but they often feature newly-composed music that serves to contrast the borrowed material as well, sometimes creating a stark contrast between borrowed and new music. Still, Satie’s use of pre-existing works in their entirety is a defining characteristic of his extended paraphrases, one that affects them in broad ways. The structure of the source has an inevitable effect on the new composition, creating a deeper relationship between the two pieces than one would find in a passing quotation of a short rhythm or melody.

“d’Edriopthalma,” *Embryons desséchés*

Each of the three pieces in the *Embryons desséchés* focuses on a different class of crustacean. A pseudo-scientific preface precedes each, introducing the creatures with their scientific name using the “same mock-formal spirit [that] Hypsa” would have employed in any of his performances.\(^ {86}\) The introduction to “d’Edriopthalma” describes these animals as crustaceans with stalkless eyes, or shrimp, which also happen to be “very melancholy by nature.”\(^ {87}\) Perhaps inspired by their supposed unhappy disposition, “d’Eriopthalma” absurdly pairs the scenario of shrimp attending a funeral with music borrowed from the third movement of Chopin’s B♭ minor Piano Sonata, op. 35.\(^ {88}\)

Though he uses the form of Chopin’s movement and musical elements from each section (Table 2.1), Satie varies the directness of his borrowing from one theme to the next in

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\(^ {86}\) Steven Moore Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 368.

\(^ {87}\) “Très tristes de leur nature!”

order to manipulate the priorities of a traditional ternary form, resulting in a critique of his borrowed object through his annotations.

Table 2.1: Form of “d’Eriophalma”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Section (&amp; Line numbers)</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Borrowing, Chopin measure numbers (Annotation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A (1-3)                       | a   | • bass chords, A section (*Ils sont tous réunis*)  
                                   |     | • funeral march theme, m. 3-4 (*Que c’est triste!*)  
                                   |     | • funeral march rhythmic motive (lines 2-3)  |
| B (4-6)                       | C   | • trio theme, m. 31-8 (*Ils se mettent tous à pleurer*)  |
| A (6-8)                       | a   | • bass chords, A section (*Comme il a bien parlé!*)  
                                   |     | • paraphrase of funeral march theme, m. 58-9  
                                   |     | • grace note figure, m. 66 (*Grand gémissement*)  
                                   |     | • funeral march rhythmic motive  |

In the A section of “d’Eriophalma,” Satie presents the famous funeral march theme in extreme paraphrase. Example 2.1 illustrates how he removes repeated notes from Chopin’s theme and realigns the dotted-eighth-sixteenth rhythmic figure with the shortened melody (which now includes a new leading-tone). Essentially, Satie compresses the theme to half its length, subtly hinting at its source through the basic melodic contour and rhythmic motive. His other borrowings from the A section of Chopin’s march are even more concealed. He opens the piece with rolled chords that “impart an appropriately submarine shimmer” to accompany the gathering of the shrimp,
mimicking Chopin’s initial harmonies in their exclusion of the third of the chord. In the next line, he follows the paraphrase of the march theme with a variation on its rhythmic motive in the left hand, which hints at the descending third found in m. 7 and 8 of the original. The father shrimp then begins to speak as Satie concludes the A section, providing a transition that imitates the $\text{I} \rightarrow \text{b7}$ melodic descent found in the source at the corresponding location (m. 30). Taken individually, these borrowings are hardly noticeable, but cumulatively, they accrue significance as subtle reminders of the source material.

Example 2.1: Chopin, B♭ minor Piano Sonata, op. 35, mm.3-4; Satie. “d’Edrophthalma,” line 1

In contrast, Satie’s use of Chopin’s B theme retains the structure and length of its antecedent phrase, shown in Example 2.2, where parentheses indicate inserted notes not

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89 Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 373.
found in the original. Notably, Satie inverts the large leaps of the right hand and inserts a
descending 6-7-5 figure into the descending fourth of m. 34 to make the melody more
conjunct. He changes the two quarter notes of m. 32 into a dotted-quarter-eighth figure,
which, with the concurrent melodic inversion, reduces the importance of 4 within the
melody. These alterations serve to relocate the melodic climaxes of the phrase,
disrupting the forward motion of the original. Furthermore, Satie modifies the figuration
of the accompaniment, reducing the arpeggiated triads to closed position rather than
Chopin’s sweeping, open double octaves. This serves to deflate the expressiveness of the
theme, underscored by the transposition from the original’s “Romantic” D♭ major to the
“pedestrian neutrality” of C major. 90 The passage remains readily recognizable,
however, since the important scale degrees and most harmonies remain close to Chopin’s
original.

Satie’s borrowing of the consequent phrase of the trio theme is even more literal
than the first phrase, a fact which has previously gone unrecognized. Example 2.2 shows
his small changes to the melody, which include repetition of the upper neighbor figure in
m. 35, inversion of the melodic leap in m. 36, and replacement of the trill figure in m. 37
with a scale passage. The inversion of the sixth leap in m. 36 to a third and the figuration
change of the closing figure create a new high point for the phrase and simultaneously
reduce the size of the intervals, again establishing a more conjunct contour and a new
climactic focal point. The only significant changes in the harmonic progression occur

90 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 374.
with the borrowing of Chopin’s m. 37, where Satie changes the diminished chords to a more typical progression through I♯. He retains, however, the harmonic motion through the supertonic key area, as indicated in Example 2.2. The passage is readily identifiable because Satie keeps its basic melodic and harmonic structure, but his changes render it deliberately mundane.

Example 2.2: Chopin, B♭ minor Piano Sonata, op. 35, mm.31-38; Satie, “d’Edriopthalma,” lines 4-5
Satie punctuates this more exact manner of borrowing in the B section with the blatant misstatement: “Quotation of the famous mazurka by SCHUBERT.” A mazurka, of course, would naturally be associated with Chopin, not Schubert. Moreover, the borrowed music in question is decidedly not a mazurka. Such unabashed misattribution is surprising in a piece of concert music, as is the resulting implication of ownership of the non-attributed music in the A section, though Stephen Moore Whiting points out that the joke would not be out of place in a cabaret setting. The annotation not only serves as a joke, but also draws attention to Satie’s more complete borrowing of the B section material. The composer acknowledges his process here, however incorrectly he identifies

91 “Citation de la célèbre mazurka de SCHUBERT”
92 Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 374.
the source, and by contrast, seems to ignore the fact of his borrowing everywhere else in
the work.

The musical character of both Chopin’s Sonata and “d’Edriopthalma” drastically
changes between formal sections from a heavy funeral march to a lighthearted trio. As
the music becomes more cheerful, however, Satie’s shrimp all begin to cry in response to
the eulogy. The mood of the music seems as inappropriate as the misattribution to
Schubert in comparison to the sadness of the scenario. All of this combines to disrupt the
traditional balance of the borrowed music. Chopin’s funeral march theme was well-
known—Satie himself even quoted it again in his music to accompany a funeral scene in
the short film *Cinema* in 1924. In that instance, it serves as a programmatic musical
background, yet here, the more famous primary receives less attention than the secondary
trio theme. He quotes the B section more directly, giving it an unconventional emphasis
and marking that incongruity through his conflicting annotations. Satie strips the funeral
march of its iconic status and the traditional form of its usual priority on the primary
theme. In this way, Chopin’s piece becomes absurd in its new scenario and devoid of the
elements that typically mark it as an accepted masterpiece.

“d’Holothurie,” *Embryons desséchés*

Satie’s prologue to “de Holothurie” introduces the first of the *Embryons
desséchés* by pseudo-seriously claiming that “ignorant people call it (the Holothurian) a
‘sea cucumber,’” going on to describe the nature of the creature, focusing on how it
climbs rocks, purrs, spins thread, and dislikes the sun. He also subtly introduces the source of his borrowing, the popular song “Mon Rocher de Saint-Malo” by Loïsa Puget, by explaining that he “observed a Holothurian in the Gulf of Saint-Malo.” The text of the borrowed song describes a young man who refuses to leave his beloved native town, rejecting a captain’s pitch about the temptations of sea-faring life.

Table 2.2: form of “d’Holothurie”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Section (&amp; Line numbers)</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Borrowing (&amp; Annotation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposition FT (1-3)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>(Sortie du matin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST (4-7)</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A section SM (Quel joli rocher!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Development” (7-10)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B section SM (Il fait bon vivre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retransition (10-12)</td>
<td>C,G</td>
<td>AR (Comme un rossignol qui aurait mal au dents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recapitulation FT (13-16)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>(Retrée du soir)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST (17-19)</td>
<td></td>
<td>A section SM (C’était un bien joli rocher! Bien gluant!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT (20-22)</td>
<td>G &amp; c</td>
<td>Octave leap SM, 2nd phrase BT (Je n’ai pas de tabac)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>(Grandiose)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: SM = “Mon rocher de Saint-Malo;” BT = “J’ai du bon tabac;” AR = “Air du rossignol”

93 “Les ignorants l’appellent le ‘concombre des mers.’”
94 “J’observai une Holothurie dans la baie de Saint-Malo.”
95 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 160. See Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 369-72 for a summary and reprinting of the song.
Much like the prologue projects a mock-scientific stance, the form of “de Holothurie” takes on a pseudo-sonata form that expands the song’s basic verse and refrain format. As shown in Table 2.2, Satie adds a first-theme area, a retransition, and a coda, using the A section of the song (refrain) for the second theme and the B section (verse) in the place of a traditional development. Satie’s new first theme consists only of short arpeggiated and oscillating fragments that suggest C major. Example 2.3 supplies Roman-numeral labels to the first theme’s melody and its accompaniment both separately and together, as the passage can be interpreted in two ways. The melody chiefly emphasizes the supertonic chord (labeled above the staff in the example) while the accompaniment alternates between tonic and dominant-functioning chords. The accompaniment figuration provides the clearest C-major progression in the exposition, yet it never offers a root position tonic chord to confirm it. Instead, the strongest harmonic motion up to this point occurs in line 3 when Satie suggests a $V^\frac{3}{2}$ in G major in the left hand by emphasizing the tritone between $\flat7$ and $\flat4$, resolving the leading tone to G in a progression toward the root-position dominant. The melody, however, avoids any emphasis of the first or fifth scale degrees in C major. An alternative interpretation is to consider the melody and accompaniment together which results in a series of weakly-functioning extended chords, indicated by circles in Example 2.3. In either interpretation, the final progression of the first theme closes the first theme inconclusively, either with first-inversion tonic or a deceptive cadence. At the very least, Satie couches the opening
of the piece in tonal ambiguity—only the lack of accidentals throughout the first line indicates a C-major tonality.

Example 2.3: “d’Holothurie,” lines 1-3

There is little in the opening passage that resembles a traditional first theme with complete phrases and functional cadences. As a result, the borrowed second theme stands out as the first melodically coherent passage in the composition (Example 2.4). Satie eliminates the repetitions of the Puget’s phrases, essentially omitting mm. 15-20, upsetting some of the refrain’s formal balance, but he keeps individual phrases intact. As with “d’Eriopthalma,” Satie makes small changes to the melody’s contour. He interrupts the stepwise motion of Puget’s m. 23 by removing the D and replacing it with an A a fifth above. He also changes the high point of m. 25 by approaching the C from above with a
neighbor note instead of from a passing tone below. These modifications impart the melody with a greater variety of contour up to the conclusion of the theme, where he replaces the dramatic rising octave at the end of the phrase with a simple repeated tonic.

Example 2.4: “Mon rocher de Saint-Malo,” A section, mm. 10-30; Satie, d’Holothurie,” lines 4-7
Satie’s second theme indicates a G major tonality by beginning and ending on tonic and outlining dominant and tonic triads. I have found that, at the end of line five through line 6, the left hand figuration borrows from the source’s accompaniment, introducing a pedal, first on A, then on E, to outline the root and fifth of the secondary dominant in G major. This alteration recalls the pedal in mm. 18-24 of “Mon rocher de Saint-Malo” which delineates the root and fifth of the tonic. Satie, however, still undermines the theme’s tonal stability by replacing the leading tone with an F♯ in both the accompaniment and melody until line 6, near the end of the second theme. Satie further obscures the dominant tonality by simultaneously presenting a cadential progression in G major in the right hand and tonicizing the dominant in the left in line 5, leading not to a root-position tonic, but to a I6 chord that lacks the third. While the second theme provides more evidence of its tonality than the first, it does not confirm it solidly with a
strong cadence. The borrowed second-theme melody, however, with its comparatively clear phrasing, remains more prominent than the first.

Whiting has found that the central section (lines 7-10) paraphrases the B section of “Mon rocher de Saint-Malo,” avoiding a development’s conventional purpose of manipulating and exploring music from the exposition, and instead borrowing new thematic material from the song’s verse.\(^\text{96}\) A retransition then begins to bring the tonal focus back to C major with one of Satie’s most famous annotations, “like a nightingale with a toothache,” a possible reference to an aria which has, until now, gone unrecognized. The retransition evokes the overblown coloratura found in the “Air du Rossignol” from the opera *Les Noces de Jeannette* by Victor Massé. Satie does not reproduce identifiable material from the aria, but instead creates an allusion to its genre that supports the quirky textual reference. His passage exudes empty virtuosity such as that found in “Air du Rossignol,” not only extending far beyond the range of a human voice, but also continuing much longer than one would expect of a retransition in such a short piece. Though the passage begins with an emphasis on C, it ends, not traditionally with the dominant, but instead with a four-octave arpeggiation of a D\(^7\) chord, the V of G major, calling into question whether Satie will recapitulate the first theme in tonic or dominant.

The recapitulation presents the themes exactly as in the exposition, without the customary transposition of the second theme to the tonic. As if to hint at the

\(^{96}\) See Example 11.2, in which Whiting shows the transformation of the original melody to Satie’s final version via the intermediate sketch, which stays much closer to the original, *Satie the Bohemian*, 369-73.
deliberateness of his departure from tradition, Satie precedes the recapitulated second theme with a “sarcastic” purr from the sea cucumber. The only change from the exposition is in the cadence to the second theme, with this version providing even less closure than the original. In line 19, the second theme ends on a repetition of an augmented chord built on the tonic, which serves to disrupt the sense of G major created in the theme. Between the second theme and the final cadence, lines 20-22, Satie inserts a closing theme which appears for the first time here. This passage introduces a new borrowing that comes from a folk tune, “J’ai du bon tabac.” Example 2.5 shows how Satie blends the octave leap found at the end of “Mon rocher de Saint-Malo” with a subtle rhythmic reduction of the contour of “J’ai du bon tabac.” This borrowing seems to come from nowhere, its only relation to the composition being that tobacco was, at the time, one of the chief exports of Saint-Malo. It seems the sea cucumber responds directly to this borrowing, as if the presence of the tune indicates someone asking him for a cigarette. In fact, without Satie’s textual commentary, the borrowing would be completely unrecognizable, as with the reference to the “Air du Rossignol” in the retransition. The tune itself, however, brings the tonality back to G major, though the sixteenth-note figuration returns shortly thereafter to again undermine the key through its suggestion of C minor.

Example 2.5: “J’ai du bon tabac;” “d’Holothurie,” lines 20-22

A traditional sonata form, of course, brings back the second theme in the tonic key and remains in that key to the composition’s conclusion. Satie, however, continues his non-traditional key scheme with an exaggerated coda that stresses a final cadence in the dominant (lines 22-23). This ending is unnecessarily “grandiose” for the scope of the piece, recalling the inappropriate virtuosity displayed in the retransition, and is made more humorous by Satie’s instruction to “do your best” with the simple, repeated triad. The coda seems to compensate for the tonal ambiguity of the first and second themes, but reiterates the ‘wrong’ final chord.

In comparison to the emphatic G-major coda and the tuneful second theme, the first theme comes across as weakly constructed and of lesser importance. Satie manipulates the priorities of the form, drawing attention away from the first theme. The second theme instead introduces the principal melodic material and the coda establishes a nontraditional central tonality for the piece. Thus, Satie gives greater emphasis to the tonal and thematic areas that traditionally have secondary importance. Moreover, by
ending the piece in the dominant, Satie’s sonata form lacks the tonal departure and return that traditionally characterizes the form. He relocates this formal convention from the music to the program, aligning the crustacean’s trip with the form: it departs in the morning with the first theme, and returns in the evening at the beginning of the recapitulation. The music, in contrast, never returns to the home key, and in the place of the expected tonic, Satie appends an exaggerated reinforcement of his lack of musical return. “d’Holothurie” evokes the classic sonata form throughout only to subvert its priorities, making the piece work without them.

“de Podopthalma,” *Embryons desséchés*: (coda)

The last piece of the *Embryons desséchés* straddles multiple borrowing categories, with each of its formal sections comprising a different type of borrowing. Though the piece as a whole does not constitute a single extended borrowing, its coda builds on the disruptive effect established in “d’Holothurie’s.” It is a paraphrase of the coda of Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony, and “out-trumps” the tongue-in-cheek cadence of “d’Holothurie” by being even more unnecessarily grand.99

“de Podopthalma” depicts a third type of crustacean: lobsters, out for a hunt as a group. The “orangutan theme” from the operetta *La Mascotte* by Edmond Audran (which will be discussed further in Chapter 3), arrives with the words of the advisor and appears multiple times throughout the A section and its return. The tune’s final occurrence is its

most comical due to the extreme disjunction between its style and the subject matter of the piece. Satie creates a tight stretto with the borrowed phrase by placing the tune unaltered in the left hand and transposing it up a fourth in the right hand. In the context of “de Podophalma,” this fugal element could quite literally represent a “flight” of the prey—the only indication as to how the hunt may have concluded. In itself, this particular instance of borrowing borders on Burkholder’s quodlibet technique in that it is a “joke or technical tour de force,” adopting a convention of the fugue typically reserved for a composition’s contrapuntal climax. Though a stretto is usually regarded as a show of technical skill by a composer, Satie mocks the technique’s conventionality by situating it in such absurd surroundings.

Satie ends the piece with a grand “Cadence obligée (de l’auteur).” The care with which he credits his ‘authorship’ in the coda contrasts with the improper designation of Schubert for Chopin in “d’Eriopthalma.” Taken with this previous misattribution, his exactitude in determining himself as the “author” of this borrowed coda is all the more ironic. Satie appropriates four prominent moments from Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony cadence for his own use, presenting them in reverse order (numbered 1-4 in Example 2.6). First, he incorporates an ascending arpeggiation in line 16, inverting the contour of the original (mm. 498-500, number 4 in Example 2.6) so that the arpeggiation lies in the treble register. Second, Satie inserts a repetition on tonic that mimics Beethoven’s mm. 500-2 (number 3). Next, Satie borrows the rapid alternation of V7/ I from mm. 486-90 of

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100 Whiting supplies Satie’s annotation for this passage from the original sketch of “de Podophalma,” *Satie the Bohemian*, 376-7. The text for the stretto supports the interpretation of an unsuccessful hunt: ‘We’ll come again some other time’ (“On reviendra une autre fois,” translation by Whiting.)
the original (number 2). Finally, he repeats excessively the tonic chord as Beethoven did in mm. 480-2 and 490-2 (number 1), providing a little more rhythmic contrast than that of the source.

Example 2.6a: Beethoven, Eighth Symphony, mm. 480-503 (flutes, violins, and contrabass only)
The cadential motion is ridiculously overlong for the scope of the piece, over-emphasizing its end similarly to “de Holothurie.” It disrupts the small scope of “de Podophthalma” with its relative magnitude, which ironically contradicts Satie’s ‘claims’ about Beethoven’s own sense of proportion:

A fake Beethoven manuscript, a sublime apocryphal symphony by the master—bought by me, religiously, ten years ago, I think.

This still unknown 10th symphony is one of the most sumptuous works of the grandiose composer. Its proportions are vast as a palace; its ideas are cool and shady; its developments precise, and right.

This symphony had to exist: the number 9 is not properly Beethovenian. He liked the decimal system: “I have ten fingers” he explained.\footnote{Erik Satie, \textit{Revue Musicale S.I.M.}, VIII, 7-8 (July-August 1912), 83. Found in Satie, \textit{A Mammal’s Notebook}, 102.}
Satie’s admiration of these “vast” proportions certainly contradicts his own predilection for composing on a small scale. That the coda here is so very long compared to the piece, supposedly out of ‘obligation,’ mocks the nature of the classical coda by presenting it inappropriately. This time however, Satie does so in the traditional tonic key, which he pounds as if to make sure we notice his adherence to tradition. Its exaggeration, however, causes this adherence to come across as simply humorous instead of sincere. Satie reduces an 84-measure orchestral passage to three lines of piano paraphrase. In itself, the method is unconventional but the contrast of hearing Beethoven, one of the most highly revered composers in music history, immediately following a trivial operetta tune makes the coda seem even more absurd. Satie’s comment that the coda is “obligatory” collides with his own disruption of traditional forms seen already in Embryons desséchés, calling attention to it as a “cliché of musical classicism.”\(^{102}\) The repeated articulations of a symphonic coda, though quite proportional in its original setting, overwhelm Satie’s short piece and contradict its mood, again showing conventional formal practices to be out of place in his music.

**Sonatine bureaucratique**

The *Sonatine bureaucratique* of 1917 is unique among Satie’s humoristic piano suites in that it borrows an entire three-movement work. More than in the other extended borrowings, Satie retains the form of the source, which is Clementi’s Sonatina in C major, op. 36, no. 1, a piece well-known to anyone who has studied piano. The scenario

\(^{102}\) Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 377.
of the Sonatine depicts an anonymous bureaucrat on a typical day: the protagonist arrives at and departs from his office, in the meantime doing little work except for admiring his official-looking surroundings and dreaming of promotion.

Because Satie borrows more extensively from the Sonatina than from any other of his sources, the interaction of his music with the original is complex. Other than the formal structure, the element most consistently borrowed is the rhythm. The harmony, figuration, and melody are either modified, retained, or replaced to varying degrees and the tonality of the whole is transposed down a third. The *Sonatine bureaucratique* continues the borrowing patterns found in the *Embryons desséchés*, where Satie emphasizes secondary formal areas by varying his borrowing. In light of that, this discussion will begin with a look at the secondary areas of the three movements.

Example 2.7 shows the second themes from both Clementi’s and Satie’s first movements. Clementi’s consists of an ascending figure repeated in a rising sequence. Satie maintains the original melody of the first statement of this passage, but changes its accompaniment. The second of Clementi’s figures grows in intensity through its ascent. Satie, however, quells such a buildup in the *Sonatine* by reversing the texture, placing the melody in the left hand and inverting the final octave. He then expands the theme by continuing the sequence through the entire octave, adding four measures. This addition upsets the balance of the movement, shown in Table 2.3, which outlines the structures of both pieces. The side-by-side comparison demonstrates that Satie’s second theme doubles Clementi’s in length in both the exposition and the recapitulation. Even more exaggerated is the cadence (mm. 19-23, 54-8), which quintuples the length of the
original. Again, Satie accomplishes this by repeating a pattern established by Clementi: Satie reiterates Clementi’s arpeggiated cadential figure, creating a progression over a pedal \footnote{That seems unnecessarily long for the passage in question, recalling the overstated cadences found in “de Holothurie” and “de Podopthalma.”}

Example 2.7: Second Themes, I: Clementi, Sonatina, I, mm. 8-11; Satie, *Sonatine Bureaucratique*, I, mm. 8-15

Satie changes tactic in the development by providing an exact quote of mm. 16-17 from the source, as shown in Example 2.8. This material derives from the first theme,
which Satie has avoided quoting directly in both the exposition and recapitulation, ironically choosing the development for his most strict duplication. Here he borrows the melody and the accompaniment of the first two measures of Clementi’s development verbatim, altering only the expressive markings. He expands the rest of the development by repeating Clementi’s figures, as he did with the second theme, as well as by inserting two measures of new music that defy traditional rules of harmony by featuring parallel motion and non-functional chords. As Table 2.3 illustrates, the portion of the development devoted to new material increases so that it doubles the length of the first theme material.

Example 2.8: Developments, I: Clementi, Sonatina, mm. 16-7; Satie, *Sonatine bureaucratique*, mm. 24-5
Table 2.3: Form of *Sonatine bureaucratique*, I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Measures (total)</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Measures (total)</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>FT 1-7 (7)</td>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>FT 1-7 (7)</td>
<td><em>Le voilà parti.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST 8-11 (4)</td>
<td>ST 8-15 (8)</td>
<td><em>Il va gaiement à son bureau</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT 12-14 (3)</td>
<td>KT 16-18 (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>15 (1)</td>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>19-23 (5)</td>
<td><em>Content, il hoche la tête</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>FT 16-19 (4)</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>FT 24-27 (4)</td>
<td><em>Il aime une jolie dame très elegante</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New 20-23 (4)</td>
<td>New 28-35 (8)</td>
<td><em>Il aime aussi son porte-plume...</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recapitulation</td>
<td>FT 24-30 (7)</td>
<td>Recapitulation</td>
<td>FT 36-42 (7)</td>
<td><em>Il fait de grandes enjambées</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST 31-34 (4)</td>
<td>ST 43-50 (8)</td>
<td><em>Se précipite dans l’escalier</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT 35-37 (3)</td>
<td>KT 51-53 (3)</td>
<td><em>Quel coup de vent!</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>38 (1)</td>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>54-58 (5)</td>
<td><em>Assis dans son fauteuil il est heureux...</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Theme = 47%  First Theme = 31%
Cadence = 5%  Cadence = 17%

Clementi’s second movement is also a small sonata form, outlined in Table 2.4, with a second theme that modulates to the dominant in the exposition and reappears in the tonic key for the recapitulation, though truncated. In his version, Satie replaces the dual-theme exposition with a binary structure, in which the second phrase begins with the opening melodic figure but contrasts with the A theme after this first beat. Whereas
Clementi modulates to the dominant, Satie modulates to the major mediant key—
Clementi’s tonic.

Table 2.4: *Sonatine bureaucratique*, II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Clementi</th>
<th>Satie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>1-4 (4)</td>
<td>1-4 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Il réfléchit à son avancement.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans.</td>
<td>5-8 (4)</td>
<td>5-8 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>9-12 (4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13-18(6)</td>
<td>9-16 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Il compte déménager au prochain terme.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recapitulation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19-22 (4)</td>
<td>17-19 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Nouveau songe sur l’avancement.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>23 (1)</td>
<td>20-21 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadence</td>
<td>24 (1)</td>
<td>Cadence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(from Clementi’s ST, m. 12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development = 25% B Section = 36%

Satie’s chief borrowing in the Andante movement is taken from Clementi’s
development, the melody of which he follows closely (Example 2.9). Satie presents
the theme in the supertonic key, as it appears in the original, remaining close to Clementi’s
harmonization, but he changes the rhythm of the accompaniment. For example, Satie
supports m. 10 with a stepwise progression which evades the tonic similarly to
Clementi’s $V^\frac{3}{4}-i^6$ in the corresponding m. 14 (though Satie’s contains blatant parallel
fifths). As with the Allegro movement, he extends this central section by repeating the cadential figure at the end, lengthening the passage by two measures.

Example 2.9: Clementi, Sonatina, II, mm. 13-19; Satie, *Sonatine bureaucratique*, II, mm. 9-16
The final movement of *Sonatine bureaucratique* is the longest, as with the source. Here, Satie juxtaposes borrowed and newly-composed music in an exaggerated fashion. The composers’ second themes begin in m. 17 in both works (Table 2.5), the first themes being the same length. As Example 2.12 illustrates, Satie quotes most of Clementi’s second theme melody precisely. He even borrows from the original harmony when he retains the harmonic progression over another tonic pedal, only altering the rhythm to a continuous octave oscillation on \(^1\). As if to draw attention to this exact quotation of the second theme, Satie’s accompanying text states that the bureaucrat hears a piano playing Clementi nearby.

Only in the second phrase does Satie begin to make more significant changes. Clementi’s second theme modulates to the dominant key in m. 22-24 and different figuration distinguishes the consequent phrase from the antecedent. Satie begins his consequent phrase in the supertonic key and returns to the harmonic progression and closing melodic figuration of the antecedent. He then interrupts the progress of the theme in mm. 25-6, where he makes the first of many insertions that drastically conflict with the style of Clementi’s piece. Here, parallel fifths built on A and G oscillate (indicated with brackets in Example 2.10). Only then does Satie quote Clementi’s cadence in the dominant key. This is his most literal quotation in the movement thus far, borrowing the entire texture and harmonic progression from Clementi, almost as if to compensate for not having concluded the second theme ‘properly’ the first time.
Example 2.10: Clementi, Sonatina, III, mm. 17-24; Satie, *Sonatine bureaucratique*, III, mm. 17-28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clementi</th>
<th>Satie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td><strong>Measures</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition</td>
<td>1-16 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Insertion</td>
<td>41-44 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td>30-34 (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5: Form of *Sonatine bureaucratique*, III
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Le piano continue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>51-54 (4)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>69-72 (4)</td>
<td>f#</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>73-76 (4)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Insertion</td>
<td>77-78 (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ST cadence</td>
<td>79-80 (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Insertion</td>
<td>81-88 (8)</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>55-58 (4)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>89-92 (4)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>59-62 (4)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Insertion</td>
<td>93-96 (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hélas! Il faut quitter son bureau,...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>63-66 (4)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td>97-100 (4)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Son bon bureau.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5: *Sonatine bureaucratique*, III (cont.)
In the Vivache movement’s development, Satie continues the techniques he employed in the second theme. He delays the appearance of the development section with another interpolation, and as Table 2.5 illustrates, he continues to break up the section with further insertions. As with the first movement, the development begins with an exact quotation of Clementi’s melody, harmony, and accompanimental texture (m. 37). Again, the traditionally unstable development section contains one of the most exact quotations of the movement.

In the recapitulation, Clementi departs from the traditions of sonata form by bringing back phrases of the development in the tonic key, thus altering the structure of the second theme, as outlined in Table 2.5. By contrast, Satie presents the recapitulated second theme exactly as in the exposition, with only a brief tonal detour to the relative minor before arriving in the tonic key. Though Clementi blends phrases from the development into the second theme, Satie presents the return of the development theme as if it were an extension of the second theme, added to its end, as shown in Table 2.5. In m. 97, Satie returns to mm. 25-6 of Clementi’s development, changing the texture of the phrase to a scale of parallel fifths. This reiteration of the material of Clementi’s development seems to comment on the original use of the phrase in the recapitulation. Furthermore, as if in response to the approach of the cadence, the businessman realizes that he draws near to the completion of his routine day, sighing that he must leave “his beautiful office.”

Clementi ends the piece with a quick, four-measure repetition of the tonic chord, but Satie again expands his concluding passage. Though the final borrowed material
taken from Clementi’s development ended in A major, Satie counteracts the tonic by following it immediately with a four-octave scale in F major.\textsuperscript{103} He subsequently returns to A major in m. 104, but uses secondary triads, vi and iii in first inversion, to support 1 and 5. When he finally dispenses with the chordal accompaniment in m. 110, the octaves on tonic and dominant take on their expected tonal roles, to reinforce an authentic cadence at the conclusion of the work. It is a “pompously banal” closing to the movement, couched in non-conclusive harmonies and repetitive figures, once again overly long for the movement.\textsuperscript{104}

The overall effect of the secondary areas in the Vivache movement is that of Satie asserting his presence in that thematic manipulation suggests the presence of an exterior agent, acting upon the music from outside. Moreover, the insertions recall the pendulum figures and ostinati of Parade, an assertion of Satie’s compositional voice.\textsuperscript{105} Each of the intrusions in the Vivache movement share a static quality: they oscillate between two chords or figures, having no harmonic direction and thus contrasting heavily with the borrowed themes. They serve as an unmistakable reminder of Satie’s aesthetic in the midst of a Classical-era borrowing. Clementi and Satie seem to come face-to-face in this movement, their styles pitted in extreme juxtaposition.

Satie treats the first themes of the Sonatine bureaucratique very differently from the secondary areas. Example 2.11 shows the first theme of the Allegro movement with

\textsuperscript{103} The appearance of F major is a holdover from early sketches for the piece in which Satie toyed with placing the movement in F or A major. Orledge, Satie the Composer, 29.
\textsuperscript{104} Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 487.
its direct dependence on the original’s rhythm. Clementi’s is a parallel period, but Satie does not retain this structure. In both the exposition and the recapitulation, Satie changes the contour of the antecedent phrase, turning the melody into an ascending figure that leads to ¹ in m.3 rather than to ⁵ in m.2. The consequent phrases are both literal quotations: in m. 4, the original scale degrees are regained, leading to an exact imitation of Clementi’s melody in a lower octave. In m. 28, Clementi follows an unconventional recapitulation of the antecedent in a different register with a literal inversion of the consequent. Satie, however, repeats the antecedent from the exposition exactly, but then quotes Clementi’s inverted version of the consequent. The initial phrases in both Satie’s exposition and recapitulation are not readily identifiable as borrowings. Instead, he delays the confirmation of his model until the consequent phrases, pulling emphasis away from the antecedents. These themes resemble the methods of the entire piece in microcosm, placing emphasis on their latter halves by using quotation rather than paraphrase, calling attention to those phrases by their familiarity.

The melodic alterations to the Sonatina’s Andante movement continue the trend Satie established in the first movement, featuring greater changes to the primary thematic areas. His borrowing of this first theme, however, stretches even the most flexible definition of paraphrase. Satie begins with the same notes as Clementi in the first measure, transposed from F major to D major, but launches into a newly-composed melody that bears little resemblance to the original. Satie completely omits Clementi’s second theme, truncating the original A section by four measures. The repeated notes in the left hand of m. 7 only hint at Clementi’s second theme, yet, the resemblance to the
similar figure in m. 9 also looks forward to the B section, which as we have seen, closely quotes from the original development. By shortening the A section and avoiding the original melody, Satie de-emphasizes that part of the movement, shifting the focus of the movement toward its central portion.

Example 2.11: Clementi, Sonatina, I, mm. 1-7 and mm. 24-30; Satie, *Sonatine bureaucratique*, I, mm. 1-7 and 36-42
As in the first movement, Satie presents the first theme of Clementi’s third movement in inversion, transposing it from C major to A major. Though the initial figure invites comparison, the remainder of the phrase retains only the rhythm of the original.
Both versions of the theme are accompanied by a tonic pedal, though Satie’s tonic occurs on the off-beats of a subtle waltz texture. Satie changes the texture for the second iteration of the phrase, placing the theme in the left hand and accompanying it with parallel first-inversion triads in the right hand. In a manner reminiscent of his misattribution of Chopin’s music to Schubert in “d’Edriopthalma,” Satie associates the first theme with the bureaucrat humming an “old Peruvian tune.” Apparently the man is unaware that he actually hums a distortion of Clementi, which is ironic considering that he hears a nearby piano playing it during the exact quote in the second theme.

In contrast to “d’Holothurie,” Satie’s other use of sonata form, *Sonatine bureaucratique* he maintains the tonal departure-and-return aspect of the original. Indeed, Satie overstates this convention. As with “d’Holothurie,” he emphasizes the departure-and-return element in the program: the bureaucrat leaves for work in the first movements and returns in the third. His alterations to the first themes of the outer movement add another layer to these actions. Example 2.12 illustrates the similarities between Satie’s first themes from his Allegro and Vivache movements. In the third movement, he changes the meter, transposes the figure up a third and lowers the highest note by a step. Otherwise, the rhythmic proportions and contour remain similar enough to identify these melodies as variants of one another. Given this thematic similarity and the return to A major for the Vivache, *Sonatine bureaucratique* as a whole hints at a broader cyclic form. If the Andante movement is to take the place of a development, or the area where themes are worked with, Satie denies it that function, pointedly describing
how the bureaucrat does not work at all, but instead spends his day dreaming of a pay raise.

Example 2.12: Comparison of first themes in *Sonatine bureaucratique*, I and III

In all three movements, Satie upsets the formal balance of Clementi’s work by adding to the lengths of the secondary areas: the second themes, the developments, and the major cadences. For example, as indicated in Table 2.3, the first theme of the Allegro is reduced from comprising approximately half of Clementi’s movement to less than a third of Satie’s. Likewise, the length of the final cadence is increased more than three times. In the Andante, he reduces the length of Clementi’s exposition of twelve measures to an A section of nine measures, and from six measures to four in the return. After his removal of the second theme, Satie’s development has the same length as the reduced A section, comprising a full third of the Andante as compared to Clementi’s, which takes up a quarter of the movement (Table 2.4). In the Vivache movement, however, Satie disrupts the original proportions primarily through insertion of new material. Subtracting the 45 measures of newly-composed material from the Vivache movement leaves 70
measures overall—the same length of Clementi’s Vivace. All of Satie’s insertions occur in the second theme, the development, and the final cadences, resulting in a second theme that is four measures longer than the first theme and a development and cadence of the same length.

Satie also tends to quote more literally as he progresses through the musical material of a movement. The first themes are typically heavily paraphrased, with sometimes only rhythm borrowed. In contrast, the development areas of the first and third movements offer the most exact quotations. The development section receives the greatest focus in Satie’s Andante, presenting the only literal quotation of the movement and being extended to match the length of the A section. Likewise, with the second theme of the Vivace, he quotes Clementi’s second theme directly and associates its two appearances with a textual description of a piano actually playing the original piece. In both these ways, variance of the directness of quotation and lengthening or shortening sections, Satie de-emphasizes the first themes and upsets the formal balance that characterizes Clementi’s Sonatina.

**Narrative in Sonatine bureaucratique**

Satie’s commentary that accompanies *Sonatine bureaucratique* immediately identifies it as a narrative piece. The insertions in the third movement further this narrative quality, disrupting the flow of the piece, a feature that, according to Carolyn
Abbate, can signify the presence of a narrating agent. Abbate rejects labeling entire pieces as narrative, claiming that this “[impoverishes] interpretive strategy,” and instead limits analysis to “moments of narration, moments that can be identified by their bizarre and disruptive events,” claiming that these moments “seem like voices from elsewhere.” Abbate’s conditions for narrativity seem to fit Satie’s interruptions of the Vivache movement well. The insertions impede the normal flow, particularly in the passage of the second theme into the development, which is delayed by eight measures and extended by the same amount. The changes in texture from the sparsely-accompanied borrowed melodies to the thick oscillating chords of the interruptions disrupt the established textures and, being so very different from the surrounding music, are detached from it. These passages resemble what Nancy Perloff terms ‘pendulum figures’ in Satie’s ballet Parade in that they “[lack] a strong sense of melodic and tonal closure,” and their “brevity... enhances their contrast.” That the insertions in the Vivache lack tonal closure and appear so briefly augments their dissimilarity with the forward-driven phrases borrowed form Clementi. Moreover, Satie accentuates the historic nature of Clementi’s Sonatina by juxtaposing it with newly-composed passages that defy its musical conventions. Parallel motion, quartal chords, and lack of harmonic progression are characteristic of Satie’s more modern style. Not only do the inserted passages disrupt the flow of the borrowed music, but they also contrast it aesthetically, highlighting how distant Clementi’s style is from Satie’s.

107 Ibid., 28, 29.
108 Ibid., 115.
Figure 2.1: Text of *Sonatine bureaucratique*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrated (Satie)</th>
<th>Actual Thought (bureaucrat)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He’s leaving home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He goes gaily off to his office, gavilling as he goes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He nods his head contentedly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He loves a very elegant young lady.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He also loves his penholder, His shiny green over-sleeves, and his Chinese skull-cap.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He takes big strides.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He rushes up the staircase and climbs it on his back.</td>
<td>What a gust of wind!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitting in his chair, he is happy and he shows it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He thinks about his prospects for promotion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe he will get a pay rise without needing promotion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is planning to move when his lease comes due.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a flat he has his eye on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He really must have a promotion or a pay rise!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further thoughts about promotion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He hums an old Peruvian air which he collected from a deaf-mute in Lower Brittany.</td>
<td>It is so sad!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A neighboring piano is playing Clementi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He dares to dance (he does, not the piano.)</td>
<td>This is really all very sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The piano starts work again.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our friend questions himself gently.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The cool Peruvian air goes to his head again.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The piano goes on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alas!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he must leave his office, his lovely office.</td>
<td>“Come on, now,” he says, “Let’s go.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The musical interruptions parallel similar fissures in the text. Figure 2.1 presents the text of *Sonatine bureaucratique*, dividing the lines into narrated text in the left-hand column, and the thoughts of the bureaucrat on the right. The narrating voice is interrupted at various points in the piece, most notably in the third movement, which contains all but one of the bureaucrat’s thoughts. Though Satie has borrowed from Clementi throughout *Sonatine bureaucratique*, he does not refer to Clementi in the text until the second theme of the last movement. As we have seen, this second theme is a direct quotation of Clementi, which contrasts with the more ambiguous paraphrase of the first theme. The bureaucrat’s thoughts in the Vivache’s exposition, “How sad it is!” and “It is all very sad,” align however, not with borrowed music from Clementi, but instead accompany Satie’s newly-composed intrusion in the second theme. Therefore, this moment pairs the direct thoughts of the protagonist with the first direct presentation of Satie’s musical voice. This alignment of the bureaucrat’s thoughts with music that represents Satie calls into question the identity of the narrator. A consideration of an article Satie wrote five years prior can perhaps clarify the narrative identity of *Sonatine bureaucratique*.

The two levels of discourse in the music and text of *Sonatine bureaucratique* resemble a similar structure in Satie’s 1912 article on Ambroise Thomas.¹⁰⁹ Throughout the article, Satie repeatedly interrupts his own description of the former Director at the

Conservatoire with asides about his umbrella (Figure 2.2), as if Satie’s discussion of Thomas is much less important than the location of his umbrella. His discussion of Thomas is mockingly elevated and the subtle tongue-in-cheek tone contrasts with the mundane concern for his umbrella. Similarly, the bureaucrat’s thoughts interrupt the narrative of Sonatine bureaucratique with rather simplistic observations on the weather and how sad Clementi’s music is. Moreover, Satie exhibits jumbled priorities in his essay on Ambroise Thomas. At the outset he dismisses Thomas’ art, which would normally be of concern in an essay about such a prominent figure in the musical world. Instead, Satie builds to an anticlimactic commentary on Thomas’ wardrobe, mulling over the size and flexibility of the man’s arms. These misplaced intentions resemble the bureaucrat’s own in Sonatine bureaucratique, who places his lover as equal to his penholder in his esteem, and who desires promotion in his job without wanting to do any real work. As with Satie’s obsession with his umbrella, the author’s identity appears throughout the article just as the disruptions in Sonatine bureaucratique assert Satie’s presence as the composer in the midst of a borrowing of Clementi.

Satie’s history with Thomas gave him plenty of reason to scorn the man and all that he represented. Thomas was Director of the Conservatoire while Satie was a student and Thomas was rather unimpressed by the young pupil’s piano-playing skills. Thomas also served on the Académie des Beaux-Arts, to which Satie unsuccessfully applied three times, the last time for Thomas’ vacated position upon his death in 1896. In his candidacy, Satie portrayed himself as one who would supply a fresh outlook for the

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110 Whiting, 66.
Academy, claiming he wanted to “render a powerful affirmation of the vitality of the musical school of which [he] was the initiator,” though without explaining what “music school” he had founded and including as examples works he had not completed.\textsuperscript{111} It is difficult to ascertain whether these candidacies were a hoax or a genuine attempt to revive a stale academic musical culture, though Satie may well have intended both. His actions, however, are representative of his attitude toward the established musical authorities, of his belief that musical culture suffered from the perpetuation of old models. Throughout his life he praised fresh ideas and attacked those whom he felt upheld the status quo—especially if those individuals had anything negative to say about his music. *Sonatine bureaucratique* fits squarely with Satie’s critical viewpoint. Given this, it is not difficult to see the bureaucrat as representative of musical authority at that time, if not of Ambroise Thomas specifically.

Given the similarity of attitude in both the article and the composition, a parallel in their subjects can perhaps be drawn. The alignment of the bureaucrat’s thoughts (“How sad it is!”) may be intended to refer to Satie’s own compositional style. That the narration of the article and the Sonatine portray their subjects in a critical fashion suggests that the narrative voice of both is Satie himself. The negative, dismissive attitude of the bureaucrat is perhaps an attack on Thomas’ attitudes toward Satie’s music. In the end, Thomas could be the bureaucrat whom Satie criticizes in *Sonatine bureaucratique*.

**Figure 2.2: ‘Ambroise Thomas’**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse</th>
<th>Asides</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>His art? I will not speak about that, if you do not mind, but restrict myself here to giving a few vague impressions.</td>
<td>But where have I gone and left my umbrella?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why should I talk about his so curious prosody? Philine sings: <em>I a-am the blonde Titania</em>; Laertes says to us: <em>Lovely woman, have pity o-on us</em>. That is quite enough.</td>
<td>Luckily that umbrella was not very expensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His great age singled him out to represent the musical grandeur of France. He was accepted without protest, as indeed he was without joy. It was a matter of indifference.</td>
<td>I must have left my umbrella in the lift.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place he filled in the musical official world appeared considerable, but did not enlarge his esteem in the eyes of artists: it was rather like the splendid function of a general in command of an army division, very visible and very honorary. That is pretty good, you will say; which is fine by me.</td>
<td>My umbrella must be very worried to have lost me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically, he was tall, lean, surly: a sort of scarecrow. He obstinately drew attention to himself by not putting his arms, which he held against his sides, through the arms of his copious, positively vast overcoat, which made him look as if he was eternally carrying one of his friends on his back. It was his way of having long hair.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe his arms were too big; or perhaps he could not move them, do you think? I do not think so: his frock-coat and waistcoat clothed him in the long-established manner, being clearly both formal and black.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He died heaped with honors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disruptions in a work create a space for the narrator to occupy. It is he or she that propels the discourse at these moments of discontinuity. In this case, by referring to his own compositional style in his insertions, Satie positions himself in a role similar to a
literary narrator, “which stands apart from the progression of the plot in order to comment upon it, and whose perspective is timeless because of the omniscience of the narrating voice.” The alignment of his music with the flippant thoughts of the bureaucrat reveal his own opinion of his subject. Satie’s compositional voice is juxtaposed against that of Clementi, and the earlier work takes on a sense of empty pedantry as it is paired with the dull actions of the bureaucrat.

Conclusion

Overall, *Sonatine bureaucratique* seems to critique the role of sonata form and those who would perpetuate that role. As we have seen, in all three movements, Satie emphasizes secondary areas. Each first theme is borrowed in a heavily paraphrased form, reducing their usual recognizability. Satie switches from paraphrase to quotation in all three movements in order to accentuate secondary formal areas. Through repetition of existing material and insertion of newly-composed material, he alters the proportions of the form, lengthening secondary areas in comparison to the primary theme. The disruptions of sonata form culminate in the Vivache movement, where even the change of language of the title itself (from Italian to French) represents a move closer to ownership by Satie. Here, he asserts himself against the traditional form through interpolation that conflicts with the style of the original composition.

In the end, traditional formal procedures are shown to be unsuitable for Satie and he portrays those who hold to them negatively. In *Sonatine bureaucratique*, he seems to

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112 Abbate, 29; Wheeldon, 202.
compare sonata form to the life of the bureaucrat depicted in the program: a man who
epitomizes the dull machinations of a “paper-shuffling” office drone and who “dreams of
promotion,” but who never actually works. In fact, Satie describes the piano of the third
movement as “working,” in contrast to the bureaucrat who does not. The bureaucrat
simply goes to and from his office mindlessly, following a daily routine. The alignment
of his thought, “How sad it is!” with music representative of Satie reveals his reluctance
to accept anything out-of-the-ordinary. At the end of the third movement, the bureaucrat
must gather courage to leave his office. It is as if he holds too dear the trappings of
bureaucratic life and the safe stability of his office environment. The character himself
has misplaced priorities that reflect the misplaced thematic hierarchy of Sonatine
bureautique.

By manipulating traditional priorities in extended paraphrases, Satie critiques the
oppression of creativity that results with the unnecessary adoption of musical
conventions. In his writings, both published and personal, he railed time and again
against those whom he saw as repressing originality, above all focusing on contemporary
music critics.\textsuperscript{113} While Satie did not hide his distaste for music critics and what he
observed as their hypocrisy, he took great care to separate them and the values they
imposed from the actual composers who are identified with such traditions. In a 1923

\textsuperscript{113} While writing Sonatine bureautique, Satie was the subject of a libel suit by the critic Jean Poueigh
over a series of insulting postcards sent to him by Satie. The more colorful bits of the postcards are
(London and New York: Marion Boyars Publishers, 1989): 132-3. It is easy to interpret this piece as a
response to the frustration of dealing with the lawsuit, which Whiting does, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 484-5.
article that Satie wrote for *Vanity Fair* on Igor Stravinsky, he mentions several composers
whose works he parodied as he asserts that “there is no Truth in Art.” He states that

the Truth of Chopin, that prodigious creator, is not the same as Mozart’s, that luxuriant musician whose *writing* is eternally dazzling; just as Gluck’s Truth is not the same as Pergolesi’s; any more than Liszt’s is the same as Haydn’s—which is really just as well.

If there is an artistic Truth, where does it begin? Which is the Master who is wholly in possession of it?...

And yet, Critics specializing in the various Arts are rather inclined to present the public with Idea-Truths which they defend with the full weight of their sumptuous knowledge & authorized competence.

They do it with no fixed purpose, I feel sure, but they do it just the same—& have done for several centuries, the fine fellows (replacing each other along the way, of course): —a habit, presumably.

Would these Gentlemen allow me amicably to differ from their opinion? Would they concede that I have the right not to share their conviction about this matter? This is why I will never cease repeating, day and night: “There is no Truth in Art.”

Satie’s assertion that critics have acted out of habit for “several centuries” reflects the similarly habitual daily activities of the sea cucumber in “d’Holothurie” and the businessman in *Sonatine bureaucratique*. He implies that critics (like the bureaucrat) cannot think for themselves and hold too tightly to ideas that hold little value in the current artistic climate. Yet his malice is not aimed at the composers mentioned here. He greatly admired many of them, particularly Chopin, whose music he borrows in “d’Edriopthalma,” as well as other giants of music’s history, such as Bach and

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Satie even goes so far as to oppose the imitation of his own music, saying that “Satisme could never exist. It would find me against it.”

Satie’s attitude is not one of irreverence toward the “Masters,” but of questioning the imitation of them. If we attempt to understand these pieces as examples of parody, then their ‘target,’ as Linda Hutcheon points out, is not necessarily limited to the borrowed work itself. Parody, as Hutcheon defines it,

is a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text...it is a repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity.

Parody is flexible enough to allow for inherited musical traditions themselves to function as its target, which is how Satie engages the technique in his extended paraphrases. He holds up the iconic status of Chopin’s funeral march, for example, only to turn it on its head, masking its most characteristic elements and joking about its identity. He creates “critical distance” by situating it in absurdity, seeming to question its status as an imitable musical icon. His approaches to sonata form have a similar motivation: the traditional procedures themselves are scrutinized and upended, and this inversion reveals the vast gulf between tradition and Satie’s aesthetic. In the end, the conventions themselves are shown to be absurd within their new context.

In her analysis of the nature of musical conventions, Susan McClary explains that

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116 Published in *Le Coq*, 2, June 1920, reproduced in *A Mammal’s Notebook*, 151.
117 See also artistic credo in Satie, *A Mammal’s Notebook*, 149, for views on Masters.
119 Ibid., 6.
since the nineteenth century... we interpret reliance on convention as betraying a lack of imagination or a blind acceptance of social formula. In either case, the individualistically inclined artist... shuns them with disdain and seeks value in those moves that escape the coercion of convention—that aspire, rather, to the condition of the “purely musical.”

While Satie is above all an “individualistically inclined artist,” he takes a different approach to pursuing originality. Conventions, according to McClary, “so permeate human transactions that we usually fail to notice their influence,” Satie’s music, however, draws attention to them. His extended paraphrases are self-aware to the extent that “it is not the deviations [from convention] alone that signify but the norms as well,” thereby raising the status of the forms of these pieces to content in themselves. Sonata form, in “de Holothurie,” for example, plays as important a role in the piece as the sea cucumber; the animal acts as the text’s subject while the form is the music’s subject.

Satie does not seek to transcend musical conventions, but through musical borrowing, he confronts them directly. His extended paraphrases take revered pieces and conventions only to distort their procedures and pair them with absurd or inconsequential scenarios. As a result, their iconic status is dissolved and they are shown to be at odds with Satie’s own aesthetic. Perhaps his colorful title, ‘dessicated embryos,’ refers to musical conventions, making clear his irreverent attitude toward them.

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121 Ibid., 5.
Chapter 3
Periodic Setting

Indeed, I rapidly developed an unpleasant habit of originality (very original), which was out of context, anti-French, against nature, etc.

Life therefore became so unbearable for me that I resolved to retire to my estate and spend my days in an ivory tower—or was it some other metal? (very metallic)

From “Hidden Corners of My Life”

A significant number of Satie’s humoristic piano suites, seven in all, are characterized by the recurrence of lightly paraphrased or quoted themes. So prevalent is this repetitive style of borrowing that Alan Gillmor outlines this process as typical of “the 1913 piano works in general”:

a borrowed tune (or a characteristic fragment of one) is stated clearly at or very near the beginning of a piece. What follows is usually a series of repetitions of the tune (or tunes) with little or no melodic variation but in various harmonic contexts and at varying tonal levels.

In these seven pieces (but not all the humoristic works, as Gillmor implies), Satie implements a flexible structural pattern that alternates iterations of a borrowed melodic phrase with newly composed material. These statements traverse several pitch levels or keys, frequently facing alteration over the course of the work. Typically, these

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modifications include superficial changes of scale-degrees, texture, or register, but the basic structure of a melodic line usually remains intact and recognizable.

These repetitive settings break down into two similar yet functionally unrelated borrowing techniques: periodic setting and reiterative setting, the latter of which will be examined in Chapter 4. In periodic setting, Satie does not impose a rigid tonal framework; rather, he organizes a composition through regularly-placed appearances of the borrowed theme. Periodic settings alternate between appearances of the borrowed melody and newly-composed material, making the designations of statement and episode applicable to them. Each of these pieces has an episodic program enhanced by the relation of Satie’s textual annotations and the text of the borrowed melody, the recognition of which he would have assumed. The implied texts can be literally applied to the action of the pieces’ programs, giving periodic settings a dramatic quality that distinguishes them as a separate borrowing procedure.

“Celle qui parle trop,” *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*

“Celle qui parle trop,” the first of the “Chapters turned in every way,” provides a straightforward example of how periodic setting functions in the humoristic piano suites. Satie’s scenario depicts a one-sided conversation between a husband and his wife, the “woman who talks too much” as referred to in the title. She demands her spouse’s attention with commands such as “let me speak” (as if she needed permission) and “listen

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to me now!” before embarking on a long stream of trivial details about the things she wants to have (such as a hat made out of mahogany!) and about the sordid details of their friends’ and neighbors’ lives. Satie musically represents her mindless chatter with a patter of continuous eighth notes that are uninterrupted until the final line. This patter repeats itself in small diatonic ascents and descents that are restricted in range, but that do not provide rhythmic emphasis on the tonic and dominant pitches.

Satie represents the husband with seemingly-random intrusions of staccato eighth-note pairs against the wife’s patter. These “signs of impatience from the poor husband” are chromatic interjections, usually incorporating an augmented third, that clash with the wife’s diatonic stream of eighth notes. Moreover, Satie provides the husband with a symbolic voice with the quotation from the aria “Ne parle pas Rose, je t’en supplie” from Act I of Aimé Maillart’s 1856 operetta, Les Dragons des Villars.126 The operetta has a weighty subject matter, in which the protagonist provides assistance to a group of religious refugees, the Camisards. This aria is a dramatic plea to the protagonist’s partner not to tell anyone of their actions, for the sake of all their lives. Satie would have expected listeners to ascribe the quoted text from this internationally popular operetta to his borrowing of its melody: “Do not speak Rose, I beg of you.” While this text makes syntactical sense in its new context, in which the husband implores his wife to stop her endless prattle, the extreme disparity between the gravity of the original and the triviality of Satie’s setting is melodramatically humorous.127

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126 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 166.
127 See also Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 384.
Maillart repeats the phrase a number of times in the aria as the basic idea of a repeated rounded binary. Satie repeats the phrase as well, as shown in Table 3.1, which outlines the form of “Celle qui parle trop” with respect to the presence or absence of the husband’s theme (indicated by the notation “DV”) and his augmented-third interjections (+3rd). Treble and bass clefs specify the register of the husband’s tune and the wife’s patter in relation to one another. Satie removes the continuations of the original melody that lead to a cadence and repeats the phrase several times as the only melodic material in the piece. The repetitions occur at regular intervals of fourteen to fifteen quarter-note beats between each statement, with the notable exception of the final statement which acts as a coda. Due to the lack of contrasting melodic material, however, the phrase stands alone, detached from its original role as an opening phrase of a contrasting period. The final repetition before the coda offers a return of the phrase in the same key and register as the first, hinting at the rounded binary form of Maillart’s aria. While its reappearance acts as a tonal return, since Satie uses no other melodic idea in “Celle qui parle trop” to contrast it, this iteration cannot function as a thematic return as well, as it does in the original.

Satie’s first use of the phrase is relatively straightforward, with no alterations to the intervallic content. Superficial changes occur, however, as a result of the borrowing process which repositions the material into a new piece with a different instrumentation and character. The modifications are subtle and do not clearly indicate whether the borrowing is a quotation or paraphrase. Example 3.1 shows how the phrase now exists as a melody in a piano piece against a single-line counterpoint instead of a texted vocal line.
accompanied by an orchestra. Its tempo is changed from *andantino* to *vif* and the rhythm adjusted to make the tune fit into compound meter instead of its original duple. Such modifications of texture and meter allow the borrowed melody to fit seamlessly into its new surroundings, yet, since the borrowing provides the only melodically coherent material in the piece, its appearances are immediately rendered as structurally important.

Example 3.1: Maillart, “Ne parle pas, Rose, je t’en supplie,” mm. 1-3; Satie, “Celle qui parle trop,” lines 3-4
Table 3.1: Form of “Celle qui parle trop”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Material, Register</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, +3rd &amp; above</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Marques d’impatience du pauvre mari. Laissez moi parler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, DV &amp; above</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Le pauvre mari (son thème) J’ai envie d’un chapeau en acajou massif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, +3rd &amp; below</td>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Madame Chose a un parapluie en os</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, DV ? below</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter ?, +3rd ? above</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>F, Gb</td>
<td>Mademoiselle Machin épouse un homme qui est sec comme un coucou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter ?, DV &amp;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>F=DV D,C=patter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, +3rd &amp; above</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Ecoute-moi donc!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patter &amp;, DV &amp; above</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>La concierge a mal dans les côtes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV ?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>Le mari se meurt d’épuisement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DV = “Ne parle pas, Rose” from Les Dragons des Villars; Wife’s annotations in bold

Since periodic setting allows for multiple reappearances of the borrowed melody, Satie can match its progress through the piece directly to the program, as Table 3.1 illustrates. The musical patter and the borrowed phrase respond to one another throughout, reflecting the interaction of the wife and husband. The piece opens with the patter figure that weakly suggests G major. The patter outlines a fifth on 1-5 in the key, yet, given the lack of rhythmic differentiation among the pitches, neither scale degree stands out. The chromatic eighth notes above this line, or “signs of impatience from the poor husband,” play no part in the tonality of the wife’s line. In line 3, we hear the first
statement of “Ne parle pas, Rose, je t’en supplie” decidedly in G major, as shown in Example 3.1. It is the first of the husband’s many pleas to his wife to stop her nonsensical chattering, as the listener associates the melody with the original text. As the quotation progresses, the patter line never breaks stride, but begins to commit to G major more assertively by expanding its range to encompass more G major pitches. At the end of line 3, it outlines a G major triad, ascending to an upper G5, which stands out against its previously limited range. The patter then outlines a two-beat V chord in line 4 to initiate a V-I cadence in G.

After this authoritative cadence, however, we find an F½ canceling the key of G as the patter figure settles into C major. The wife has musically negated the husband’s thematic protest and continued along her own tonal path, again accompanied by his chromatic eighth-note intrusions. In line 6, the quotation appears again, this time in the already-established key of C, more assertively with bass octaves at a forte dynamic level. The wife’s patter, however, remains unaffected by this forcefulness, responding at the conclusion of the tune by again changing the tonality, this time to F major with the addition of B♭, and descending into the bass register, taking over what had been the husband’s register.

The wife’s prattle remains in the bass register through line 10, where the husband responds weakly in the treble register in F major, but with altered scale degrees. The wife takes control more quickly this time, changing keys mid-phrase to C major. While the theme remains in F, the melodic V chord in the middle of line 10 now seems
ambiguous, functioning simultaneously as V in F and I in C. In a sense, the wife’s patter
denies the borrowed tune its tonal identity. Following the conclusion of the phrase, the
patter line yet again assumes the immediately previous range of the husband’s theme and
returns to the opening material. The first three lines of the piece recur exactly as before,
as the wife shouts “listen to me now!” remaining undeterred by the tonal power struggle
that has occurred between her and her spouse.

“Celle qui parle trop” closes with a last variant of “Ne parle pas, Rose, je t’en
supplie” in G as “the husband dies of exhaustion.” Example 3.2 shows how Satie alters
the tune into the Phrygian mode by flattening 2 and 3. He harmonizes the modified tune
with a series of non-functional chords built over a pedal C: a quartal chord, C-G-D,
followed by an enharmonically spelled A♭ supporting F♯, ending with an
incomprehensible chord made of a pair of tritones a whole step apart. The change of
mode and the nonfunctional harmonic support provide a surprise at the end of a
composition that has remained mostly diatonic. Perhaps the change in character
represents the depressing futility of the husband’s attempts to tolerate his chatty wife.
Example 3.2: “Celle qui parle trop, line 14 (right-hand melody relocated to separate clef for ease of reading)

Satie creates a symbolic musical power struggle that enhances the portrayal of the real tension between the subjects of the program. The music representing the wife’s chatter continually overpowers the husband’s theme by appropriating his theme’s register and tonality, and forging ahead in a new direction. The repetitive nature of this periodic setting allows for such a musical power struggle by developing the borrowed theme in a way that conveys the program of “Celle qui parle trop.”

“Le porteur de grosses pierres,” Chapitres tournés en tous sens

Satie follows “Celle qui parle trop” with another straightforward use of periodic setting in “Le porteur de grosses pierres.” Like the Embryons desséchés, he provides a short preface in which he introduces “the bearer” as a strongman performer who puts on a show of carrying a large stone which, as Satie informs us, is actually made of pumice. In this piece, he quotes another stage work, Robert Planquette’s popular operetta, Rip, of
The borrowed melody comes from the refrain of Rip van Winkle’s aria “Vive la paresse,” accompanying the text “‘Tis nothing, a puff of air, nothing at all; a lock of golden hair in a light breeze.” Given that the performer in “Le porteur” merely carries a large pumice stone, the quotation’s text provides an ironically accurate assessment.

Satie asks the performer to put on the same kind of show as the strongman with performance indications that seem more appropriate to the piece’s character than the pianist’s playing: “With a lot of pain,” “With difficulty and sudden starts,” and “Dragging his legs.” During the last iteration of the tune, the strongman “feels the rock slipping” and lets it go to a final jolting whole-tone chord that comes across as quite overdone given the true nature of the rock. Table 3.2 outlines the three appearances of the borrowed tune and the annotations that accompany them, revealing a near-rondo structure that presents the borrowed tune three times before the abrupt end. The first statement opens the piece in $B\flat$ over a series of chromatic harmonies, illustrated in Example 3.3. The nondiatonic accompaniment clashes with the melody, perhaps depicting the supposed pain of the performer. Example 3.3 shows that Satie makes little alteration to the tune itself, simplifying the short melisma at the end by turning it into a tonic arpeggiation. As in “Celle qui parle trop,” the composer presents the borrowed melody in near quotation, leaving no question as to its identity.

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129 “C’est un rien, un souffle un rien; une boucle d’or sous le vent légère.” Translation is Whiting’s, *Satie the Composer*, 385.
130 “Avec beaucoup de mal,” “Péniblement et par à coups,” “En traînant les jambes”
131 “Il sent que la pierre lui échappe”
Table 3.2: Borrowing in “Le porteur de grosses pierres”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Material</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RW</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>Avec beaucoup de mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ostinato</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Péniblement et par à coups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RW</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>En traînant les jambes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ostinato</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RW fragment, inverted</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RW</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Il sent que la Pierre lui échappe...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RW= “Vive la paresse” from Rip

Example 3.3: Planquette, “Vive la paresse,” mm. 28-32; “Le porteur de grosses pierres,” line 1

The next appearance of the tune occurs over a repetitive figuration that begins in line 2 and continues through the rest of the piece, providing a diatonic backdrop in a regular meter for the melody. Though diatonic, the figuration is not harmonically
congruent with the melody, accompanying the 3rd and 6th scale degrees with the outline of a V chord. Satie begins to repeat material in line 6, but includes a previously unidentified paraphrase which is loosely based on the second phrase of the aria’s refrain. Example 3.4 shows this insertion of a gesture below the figuration that retains the characteristic rhythm of the theme, but descends a third in an inversion of its second phrase.

Example 3.4: Planquette, ‘Vive la paresse,” mm. 32-4; “Le porteur de grosses pierres,” lines 7-8

Though “Celle qui parle trop” and “Le porteur de grosses pierres” exemplify the same borrowing type through their many commonalities, they also have some important differences. Unlike “Celle qui parle trop,” the periodic setting of Planquette’s tune adds an extra clue to an ironic scenario, insinuating to the listener the real nature of the strongman’s show. Though both pieces accompany the borrowings with continuous figuration, in “Le porteur” this figuration does not interact with them, but instead merely serves as a background. Satie makes almost no changes between the three statements of
the borrowed tune (unlike “Celle qui parle trop”), limiting the subsequent modifications to a change of accompaniment style and tonality. This lack of variation itself is consistent with the program, however, in that it reflects the monotonous nature of the strongman’s show. Between Satie’s annotations in the score, the repetitiveness of the musical form, and the text of the quotation, the piece’s introduction seems hardly necessary as all these elements provide an accurate musical reflection of the program.

“de Podopthalma” Embryons desséchés

We now return to the third piece of Embryons desséchés. As we have seen in the discussion of extended paraphrase, “de Podopthalma” straddles borrowing categories by employing different sources and methods in each section of the piece. The A section of the ternary form is of interest in the discussion of periodic setting because the borrowed tune, while confined to the A section and its recurrence, follows a predictable repeating pattern that resembles that of “Celle qui parle trop” and “Le porteur de grosses pierres” (Table 3.3).

As we have seen, the A section pairs with the character of the advisor in Satie’s scenario, surrounding the hunting-call that comprises the B section. Satie associates the advisor character with a tune from an 1880 operetta “The Orangutan Song” from La Mascotte by Edmond Audran.132 The operetta concerns a farm girl named Bettina who brings good luck to her owner so long as she stays a virgin.133 She is in love with a

132 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 162-4.
133 See Gillmor, Erik Satie, 162-4 for a more detailed summary.
shepherd, Pippo, but of course, she is the object of desire for many men who want the benefits of owning her. In the course of the operetta, Fiametta, daughter of one of Bettina’s suitors and also an admirer of Pippo, sings “The Orangutan Song” while disguised as a minstrel. The song tells the story of a deranged ape loose in the woods, where he frightens young couples. Satie borrows from the refrain, to which most listeners at that time would likely have known the lyrics: “Do not tremble so, they will catch it!”⁹³⁴

Table 3.3: Borrowings in “de Podopthalma”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>“chasse” figuration</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>F,?</td>
<td>A la chasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>B♭ &amp; ?</td>
<td>Un conseilleur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>B♭ &amp; ?</td>
<td>Il a raison!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>LR</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Pour charmer le gibier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS, “chasse”</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>C, ?</td>
<td>Le conseilleur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Le conseilleur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>OS in stretto</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>B8</td>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Cadence oblige (de l’auteur)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OS = “Orangutan Song” from La Mascotte; LR = “La Royale”; B8 = Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony

The first quotation from “The Orangutan Song” appears after four lines of introductory figuration that “rise from the depths to the heights of the keyboard,” which

⁹³⁴ Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 375.
possibly evokes the scope of the hunters’ adventure across the sea as they “mount” and begin their “pursuit.” The introductory section, with its “un peu vif” indication and unrelenting rhythm, creates a sense of speed and intensity appropriate for a hunt. “The Orangutan Song” then makes its initial appearance in the first A section. Satie borrows just the melodic line of the second phrase from the refrain’s parallel period, presenting it in closely-related keys accompanied by chromatic harmonies. The piece begins in F major, with arpeggiated tonic chords that lead to nontonal figuration by line 2. The “Orangutan” theme appears first in B♭ major in line 5. It has undergone only one change melodically: the alteration of ♭5 to ♭6 toward the end of the phrase, as seen in Example 3.5. The introductory material returns in line 10 with an oscillating gesture instead of the arpeggiation figure that opened the piece. Here, Satie inserts the next complete borrowing of the “Orangutan” phrase in C major before its expected return. In this second complete iteration of the phrase, Satie changes the final ♯1 to ♯2, and adjusts the register up an octave after the initial fragment, as seen in Example 3.5. Programmatically, this surprising placement of the theme and the adjustment of its final scale-degree could be in response to the advisor’s imprudent advice to sound the hunting-fanfare too soon. Finally, the A section returns with the borrowing in the original key of F major, this time with scale-degrees unaltered, but with another adjustment to the register, this time down an octave.

\[135\] Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 374. The original French is: “Montez” and “Poursuite.”
Satie uses the *La Mascotte* phrase twice more, once in each of the A sections, to develop fragments of the original tune. In line 6, Satie isolates and repeats the first half of the phrase, retaining the rhythm and basic contour but adjusting some of the scale degrees up or down a step. This modification of the tune corresponds with the lobsters’ response “He’s right!” to the preceding quotation which represents the advisor’s assurance that they will catch their prey. The fragment is repeated up an octave, ending “expectantly” on $V\frac{5}{2}/A_b$ as they wait to see what will come of the advisor’s  

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136 “Il a raison!”

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suggestion. As we saw in Chapter 2, the tune’s final appearance suggests the outcome of the hunt, its stretto formation possibly referring to fugue, or “flight.”

The contrast of the lightheartedness of the A theme and the heavier trappings of a stretto and long coda at the conclusion give “de Podopthalma” an overall sense of being a joke. His pattern of setting of ‘The Orangutan Song’ is simplistic and straightforward, recurring at regular intervals over varied harmonizations. The coda then comes as a surprise as it is entirely out of place in this context. For this reason, I also categorize “de Podopthalma” as a quodlibet, a combination of “two or more existing tunes or fragments in counterpoint or quick succession, most often as a joke or technical tour de force.”

The borrowings work together to create the humorous effect of Satie showing off unnecessarily, of displaying technical skill in surroundings that do not warrant it. It is perhaps a criticism of the conventionality of the classical coda. The simplicity of the song setting sets up his critical punch at the end by giving it more emphasis through its stylistic contrast with the A section.

Conclusion

Tunes borrowed from stage works have built-in dramatic connotations. By borrowing from popular operettas, Satie created associations between his new works and the original texts. This approach resembles Hypsa’s style of parody, which “invited line-

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137 Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 375.
by-line comparison of the imagined original texts with his satirical retextings.”

Satie’s borrowings in periodic settings act as an extension of the characters he creates in his annotations by providing them with both a musical identity and imagined spoken words. We can envision the husband begging his wife not to talk any more in “Celle qui parle trop” and the advisor promising that the hunters will catch their prey in “de Podopthalma.” In “Le porteur de grosses pierres,” the claim that “it’s a trifle” implied by the words of the operatic Rip van Winkle immediately exposes the trickery of the strongman’s act. Like Hypsa, Satie designs works that function on multiple planes, in this case, between multiple media as well, text and music.

Repetition and direct association with characters or ideas in the pieces give the themes a function not far removed from that of a leitmotif. Satie’s use of periodic setting “[enhances] the relevance of minute variations...and it usually [excludes] any need for conventional development or recapitulation.”

He takes advantage of this most thoroughly in “Celle qui parle trop,” where each statement of the theme reflects the changing mental state of the husband. The two musical lines interact with each other in a tonal power struggle, the comic effect of which is heightened by comparison to the tune’s original context.

The process of periodic setting fits the program of each work in a more general way as well. In “Celle qui parle trop,” the husband’s response to his wife’s chatter grows weary, as if this is a constant state of affairs at his home. The strongman in “Le porteur

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139 Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 356.
140 Orledge, Satie the Composer, 142.
de grosses pierres” presumably must perform his job day after day, putting one foot in front of the other in a perpetual pattern. In both of these pieces, the monotony and repetition of the characters’ daily lives comes across musically in the periodicity of the form. The advisor in “de Podopthalma” repeats his advice over and over, never wavering in his conviction despite the reality of the hunt. He is revealed as less effective than he should be, unable to adapt his advice to the situation at hand.

These periodic settings have a straightforward function: to directly reflect and interact with the programmatic action of the composition. All three have regularly recurring statements and a clear delineation between the statements of the theme and the episodes in between, which have little in common musically with the borrowed melodies. This isolation of the borrowed tunes from the surrounding music makes it easy to locate them and to follow their progress through the piece. Perhaps the clear-cut function of the tunes reflects the simple and carefree atmosphere of the operettas from which they are derived. In his periodic settings, Satie provides a straightforward process for these inconsequential scenarios, bringing the simplicity and mundane nature of the characters’ worlds to life musically.
Chapter 4

Reiterative Setting

Imagine the problems to be overcome by the first man to go down a staircase! His friends inevitably made fun of him... and laughed till they split their sides... he was a "shocker."

From “Good Upbringing”\textsuperscript{141}

Reiterative settings are similar to periodic settings in that their structures are based on repetitions of the borrowed melody, but their structure is much looser. The recurrences of the themes have no meaningful pattern and lack a consistent tonal framework. Due to the repetitive yet flexible nature of these pieces, the term reiterative setting works well for their form as it does not imply any sort of periodic process, yet still emphasizes the importance of the repeating themes. More so than periodic settings, reiterative settings resemble the central portion of a fugue, in which statements of the fugue subject alternate with episodes of contrasting music that are frequently derived from the subject itself, yet follow no strict rules controlling the number or frequency of those repetitions.\textsuperscript{142} Steven Moore Whiting’s investigation of Satie’s sketchbooks reinforces the composer’s purposefulness in developing such a formal structure. Whiting describes how Satie


\textsuperscript{142} Whiting describes the “manifold transpositions and fragmentations” of the repeated borrowing found in “Sur une lanterne” “almost like the subject and tonal answers of a fugue.” Steven Moore Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 365.
usually settled first upon the material he wished to quote; he jotted the tunes at the outset of sketchwork. Then he experimented with various settings of the material... In other words, the quoted tunes served as points of departure, as the creative stimulus for composition. In a third stage of work, he selected the settings he wished to incorporate and composed the intervening music.  

With respect to this third stage, Satie’s sketches for the *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses* reveal the composer’s intention for a repetitive, fugal organization more clearly. As Whiting observes, “[Satie] set out the tunes in various transpositions with gaps in between, as if laying out the structural framework.” Yet, Satie does not consistently maintain a contrapuntal texture throughout any piece, so the conversational style of a fugue moving through individual lines is nonexistent. Instead of a purely musical discourse found in a fugue, the themes frequently reappear in altered forms to reflect the piece’s program, in a procedure that resembles that of a leitmotif, however much Satie may have abhorred the association. The combination of fugal structure with leitmotivic development allows him to simultaneously communicate through music and text, as well as to use each parameter to comment on the other. However much these pieces may evoke existing forms, reiterative settings are Satie’s original construction, designed to provide maximum flexibility in creating a discourse between music and program.

As in periodic settings, Satie’s reiterative settings borrow solely from texted music. They encompass a broader range of sources, however, ranging from opera to folk

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143 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 356.
144 Ibid., 390
145 Whiting in fact refers to the borrowed theme of “Celle qui parle trop” as a leitmotif, *Satie the Bohemian*, 383.
tunes. The implied texts relate less directly to the programs than in periodic settings, serving instead to enhance the pieces’ overall subjects and to provide deeper meaning. The programs of reiterative settings are less episodic those of periodic settings in that they convey an atmosphere or idea that interacts with the subjects of the borrowing. Satie’s process calls into question Gillmor’s assertion that the humoristic piano suites offer “little or no melodic variation.”146 In contrast to periodic settings, these pieces are saturated with their borrowed melodies: the distinction between statements and episodes becomes less clearly defined as Satie extrapolates motives from the borrowed themes for development in the episodes and alters statements more heavily. His settings of melodic material support his statement that “the harmonic potential of a melody is infinite,” in that reiterative settings seem to explore the variety of ways existing musical motives can be manipulated.147 The result is that these reiterative settings are filled with imagery and ideas created by the combination of Satie’s textual annotations and musical borrowings, and their transformations throughout each work.

“Sur une lanterne,” *Descriptions automatiques*

In *Descriptions automatiques*, Satie takes us from the experience of a child’s trip on a boat in “Sur un vaisseau” to a slow, quiet reflection on the evening’s lighting of street lanterns in “Sur une lanterne.” This piece continues the seemingly childlike perspective of “Sur un vaisseau” as a young observer provides instruction to a lamp-

147 Erik Satie, from the cover of *Mort de Socrate*, reproduced in Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, 68.

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lighter going about his duties.\textsuperscript{148} The child advises him to take his time, to flash his light then hide it with his hand, to put his hand in his pocket (in order to pull back out the light, presumably), and ending the piece by saying: “Sh! Turn out the light.”

In “Sur une lanterne,” Satie’s first use of reiterative setting in the humoristic piano suites, the composer draws from two sources. The primary borrowing comes from a Revolutionary tune, “La Carmagnole,” which was quite popular during the Terror as an accompaniment to revolutionary activities such as executions.\textsuperscript{149} It tells of how Marie Antoinette wanted to slit the throats of everyone in Paris but failed thanks to the revolutionaries’ cannons. The refrain calls for a dancing of the carmagnole in praise of their sound. Satie’s other source, “Ça ira!” was often sung in conjunction with “La Carmagnole” during the Terror.\textsuperscript{150} The refrain of this tune provides the connection to Satie’s subject in “Sur une lanterne:” “Ah! ça ira, ça ira, ça ira! Les aristocrates à la lanterne!” literally calling for the hanging of aristocrats from the lamp-posts. The violence hinted at by the presence of the revolutionary tunes seems out of place in this quiet piece, but as Whiting points out, this discontinuity between the historical overtones of the tunes and their innocuous new setting follows the tradition of other Montmartre artists.\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{148} This interpretation follows Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 364-5. The interpretation that a child is the speaker is supported by the use of the formal “you,” which indicates that the speaker is younger than the lamp-lighter.

\textsuperscript{149} For a more complete discussion of the history behind “La Carmagnole,” see Gillmor, \textit{Erik Satie}, 159.

\textsuperscript{150} \textit{Nouveau Larousse illustré}, ii, 385.

\textsuperscript{151} Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 365. He particularly draws comparison to Jules Jouy.
Though Satie began his sketching process with “Ça ira!,” he primarily borrows from “La Carmagnole.” Through his examination of Satie’s sketches for “Sur une lanterne,” Whiting has discovered that the composer originally intended the rhythm of “Ça ira!” to appear in lines 4 and 7, but later flattened the passage into a repeated eighth-note figure and added an extension as yet unidentified as a borrowing. In the final version of the piece, Satie’s only borrowing from “Ça ira!” is the oscillating gesture from the tune’s refrain, shown in Example 4.1. He opens his piece with alternating chords that continue through line 3 and are picked up again in lines 6-7. What remains of “Ça ira!” no longer suggests murder, but instead lends a peaceful, delicate backdrop to the opening lines of the “Sur une lanterne.”

Example 4.1: “Ça ira!,” refrain; Satie, “Sur une lanterne,” line 1

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152 Information on Satie’s sketches for “Sur une lanterne” is from Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 364-5.
Over this *pianissimo* oscillating figure, Satie introduces the melodic segment of the “La Carmagnole” refrain that sets the text: “Let’s dance the carmagnole.” He progressively isolates fragments of the refrain phrase for sequencing, never presenting the phrase in its entirety. Example 4.2 shows how he immediately repeats the borrowed segment up a fifth, adjusted as if it were a tonal answer, then detaches the pitches for the word “carmagnole” and repeats that figure in further transposition. Satie sets the “Dansons la carmagnole” segment similarly until line 8, when he breaks the pattern coinciding with the instruction “Retirez votre main et mettez-la dans votre poche.” The delicate eighth-note rhythmic figure from the opening continues up to line 8, adjusting the meter and suspending the oscillating gesture during the quotations in favor of stepwise progressions of non-diatonic major and minor chords (Example 4.2).

Halfway through the piece, Satie discontinues the eighth-note chord accompaniment as he introduces another segment from the source (Example 4.3). Here Satie extracts the pitches, but not the rhythm, from the tune’s incipit to the text “Madame Veto,” a colorful reference to Marie Antoinette. In a rare example of clear-cut bitonality in Satie’s music, the “Madame Veto” segment is presented in F major while the “Dansons la carmagnole” segment resides in the closely-related D major.

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153 “Dansons la carmagnole”
His final statement of the tune at the end of the piece contains his only melodic alteration to “La Carmagnole.” In line 13, Satie supports this near-quotation with a G-major chord though the tune suggests a distorted C major in recollection of the initial statement in C. However, he replaces C♭ with C♯, creating a tritone between the C♯ and G. The result is startling, but minimized by the pianissimo dynamic. It is an ethereal moment in the piece, made more so as the quotation fades with a repetition of the eighth-
quarter rhythm on ̂. He closes the work with an even more unexpected sonority, the widely-spaced, inverted D⁰ chord that accompanies the instruction “separate.”

Example 4.3: “La Carmagnole,” opening phrase; Satie, “Sur une lanterne,” lines 8-9

The formal organization in “Sur une lanterne” is based solely on the repetitions of the “Dansons la carmagnole” segment alternating with episodes that contain no borrowed elements, as shown in Table 4.1. The episodic nature of the program resembles that of periodic settings, but the procedure of setting the borrowed tunes does not relate closely to the program nor do they recur at predictable intervals. In only two places does the setting reflect the program: first the oscillating gesture of “Ça ira!” serves to create a peaceful atmosphere, and second, the fading of the final statement seems to respond to the child’s command to “extinguish.” In neither case does the implied text of the

154 “Écartez”
borrowed tune directly relate to the program. The relaxed formal organization of “Sur une lanterne” is consistent with the casual tonal organization of the piece and the loose relationship the sources have with its subject. If the final chord has any tonal significance, it is in relation to the opening oscillating chords shown in Example 4.1, which could be interpreted in G major as ii and iii. In this case, Satie ends the piece as ambiguously as he began it, without any solid commitment to a tonality. As we have seen, the subjects of the source tunes only relate to the program of the piece by way of a refrain that does not appear anywhere in the piece, as we shall see. Nor do the two borrowed melodies have much in common musically—they have different time signatures and share no melodic motives, unlike the other reiterative settings that use multiple borrowings. Though “Sur une lanterne” seems to share a similar childlike perspective to “Sur un vaisseau,” its lack of simple, obvious relationships—tonally, formally, and programmatically—make it much less “automatic.”
Table 4.1: Formal Organization of “Sur une lanterne”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Material</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ostinato chords</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>N’allumez pas encore: vous avez le temps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” fragment, sequenced</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>Vous pouvez allumer, si vous voulez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ça ira” and extension</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>Eclairez un peu devant vous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ostinato chords</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” fragment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Votre main devant la lumière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ça ira” and extension</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” and “Madam Veto” fragments</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Retirez votre main et mettez-la dans votre poche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” rhythm in left hand</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triplet figuration</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” and “Madam Veto” fragments</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” fragment, sequenced</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” rhythm in left hand</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Carmagnole” fragment, extended</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>Eteignez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final d’ chord</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ecartez</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Regrets des Enfermés” *Chapitres tournés en tous sens*

While Satie only uses one primary source for his borrowing in “Regrets des Enfermés,” in this piece we shall see him develop the reiterative technique much further than with the two themes of “Sur une lanterne.” The program is less episodic and has no clearly-defined setting. It centers on the thoughts of two individuals, the “Enfermés” of the title: Jonas, the Biblical prophet imprisoned in the belly of a whale because he had
displeased God, and Jean-Henri Masers de Latude, an eighteenth-century French adventurer imprisoned in the Bastille for implementing a ridiculous scheme designed to make advances on Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV. Though later released, during the Revolution Latude became a symbol of royal abuses. In the piece, the prisoners reflect together on their respective imprisonments, though “many centuries separate them.”

Satie quotes from the children’s song “Nous n’irons plus au bois,” using chiefly the first phrase, but also extracts other phrases from the tune for single, short statements. Significantly, the tune seems to have been a favorite of Satie’s friend Claude Debussy, who borrowed it no less than four times. Example 4.4 provides the opening phrase of the tune in the form that Satie and Debussy both used.

Example 4.4: “Nous n’irons plus au bois”

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155 See Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 386, n. 81.
156 Satie’s original annotation is: “Plusieurs siècles les séparent”
157 First half of folksong identified by Gillmor, Erik Satie, 168, second half identified by Whiting, Satie the bohemian, 387.

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As Table 4.2 shows, the piece opens with the incipit of the melody in C major, repeated and accompanied by tritones oscillating a whole step apart. The first full
statement of the phrase occurs only after an intervening episode of material that does not derive from the children’s tune. Example 4.5 shows the ambiguous harmonization of this first statement. The first three chords can be interpreted as either a III-IV-v progression in A minor, the key of the theme, or a more conventional IV-V-vi deceptive progression in G major, which foreshadows the subsequent deceptive cadence that concludes the phrase in A major.  

Here, as in most of the statements of the theme, Satie makes no melodic alterations to the original form of the phrase, rendering it an exact quotation over a newly-created harmonization. Subsequent statements quote the melody literally as well, but also progress through varying harmonizations, some which reflect the program and which will be examined shortly.

Example 4.5: “Regrets des Enfermés,” lines 3-4

![Example 4.5: “Regrets des Enfermés,” lines 3-4](image)

Satie primarily uses the first phrase of “Nous n’irons plus au bois,” but also employs paraphrases of other parts of the song as well. In line 13, shown in Example 4.6, he borrows from the second period of the tune, to the words “Entrez dans la danse,” but

159 Alternatively, Whiting analyses the progression as C major to F↓ minor, *Satie the Bohemian*, 386.
flattens the rhythm into even eighth notes. He follows this with the alternating thirds in
the bass register taken from ‘‘Sautez, dansez’’ in the same key of F maj. Thus, the
majority of the borrowed tune appears in some form, albeit out-of-order, over the course
of ‘‘Regrets des Enfermés.’’

Example 4.6: ‘‘Nous n’irons plus au bois,’’ second period; Satie, ‘‘Regrets des Enfermés,’’
lines 13-14

The scenario of Satie’s piece conveys a sense of monotony and boredom that
reflects the characters’ imprisoned conditions. From the outset, repetitions of the incipit
serve to set this tone musically. The figure returns elsewhere in the piece, always in the
bass register, except in line 7 where its texture and contour is inverted. Its melodic
interval of a third is removed and it is accompanied by oscillating major thirds instead of
tritones. This passage immediately follows the second, C major statement of the “Nous n’irons plus au bois” theme (line 6). This instance of the tune has an “aimless-sounding” chromatic harmonization that contrasts the ambiguous, yet functional, accompaniment of the first statement. The harmonies are best understood bitonally, with the accompanimental chords suggesting B♭ minor against the C major melody, though it lacks a strong tonal progression. Alternatively, this passage can be interpreted as a melody accompanied by descending linear motion, a stratified texture commonly found throughout Satie’s music of this time that eschews harmonic logic, functioning instead as two distinct musical structures working against one another: in this case, that of a melody against descending, nonfunctional triads. As with the first statement of the theme, the accompaniment joins the key of the melody more securely for the cadence. Satie keeps the cadence ambiguous, however, ending the phrase with an inconclusive I♭, providing further musical corroboration of the plight of the prisoners.

While ambiguous harmonizations possibly reflect Jonas’ and Latude’s mental states through their harmonic stasis, Satie uses other statements to reinforce his textual annotations. He sets an exchange between Jonas and Latude that ascribes contrasting musical characteristics to them. When Jonas says “I am the Latude of the sea” in line 8 the theme is set clearly in F major, complete with a correctly resolved deceptive cadence, but seems “figuratively to wilt” as it follows a descending contour in a piano dynamic.

160 Alternatively, Whiting analyzes this passage as an extraction of the final pitches of the phrase, *Satie the Bohemian*, 386-7.
161 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 386.
162 Ibid., 387. Satie’s original annotation: “Jonas dit: Je suis le Latude marin”
In contrast, Latude’s subsequent statement in D minor overpowers Jonah’s with a burst of energy at a *forte* dynamic over staccato bass octaves. Like Jonah’s statement, Latude’s contains supportive harmonies in the same key as the melody, but they adjust toward C major at the end of the phrase. Latude’s iteration of the theme comes across as proud and patriotic as opposed to Jonah’s withering one. The last two presentations of the “Nous n’irons plus au bois” theme mirror the mental state of the two captives. In line 15, when they think they see “the good old sun,” the tune rises against parallel triads but breaks off and descends chromatically, as if to show their disappointment after getting their hopes up. Jonah and Latude seem to remain optimistic, however, as the last statement of the theme crescendos from G major with a minor dominant to an emphatic E major cadence.

Satie saturates the music of “Regrets des Enfermés” with borrowed elements, whether full statements of the theme or fragments set as ostinati between them. Yet, he does not content himself with simply borrowing from “Nous n’irons plus au bois,” but also comments on Debussy’s fondness of the tune by referring to some of his quotations of it. The most apparent allusion to Debussy appears in line 12, where Satie presents the theme almost as a stretto. Whiting suggests that the passage’s inspiration comes from Debussy’s own near-stretto in “La Belle au bois dormant,” mm. 52-3, shown in Example 4.7.163 Whereas Debussy gives the incipit in quarter notes against the entire phrase in equal eighth notes, Satie keeps the tune in its original rhythm over a repetition of the incipit in eighth notes. Both, however, begin the stretto four notes into the phrase.

Furthermore, Robert Orledge has suggested that the descending passage in line 10 recalls  

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163 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 388.
Debussy’s *Nuages*, mm. 1-2 and that the rolled-chord texture at the end of “Regrets des Enfermés” models Debussy’s cadence in the prelude of *Pour le piano*.\(^\text{164}\)

Example 4.7: Debussy, “La Belle au bois dormant,” mm. 52-3; Satie, “Regrets des Enfermés,” lines 12-13

Reiterative setting in “Regrets des Enfermés” reflects the circumstances of the subjects’ characters through its repetitive structure. Satie builds the piece around this progression through the various manifestations of the theme and its motives, relating many of its appearances directly to the program. Overall, the reiterative form mimics the monotony of imprisoned life, but individual statements respond to the thoughts of the

characters. Not only does Satie’s use of borrowing interact with the program, but it seems to continue the work of a fellow composer by referring to Debussy’s own uses of “Nous n’irons plus au bois” and developing that tune further.

“La Défaite des Cimbres (Cauchemar),” *Vieux Sequins et Vieilles Cuirasses*

Alan M. Gillmor suggests that the title of this piece may be borrowed from that of the 1833 painting of the historical subject by Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps, a supposition supported by the fact that Satie retains the capitalization present in the painting’s title. The program of “La Défaite des Cimbres” ventures well beyond this episode, however, comprising a jumble of historical episodes spanning hundreds of years. He prefaces this piece, like “Le porteur de grosses pierres” and the *Embryons desséchés*, with a narrative: a young boy sleeps, dreaming of stories his grandfather has told him, seeing King Dagobert (ca. 602-39), the Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722), and the Roman general Marius (157-86 BC) all fighting the Cimbrians (defeated by Marius in 101 BC) at the battle of Mons-en-Puelle in 1304. Each of these characters makes an ‘appearance’ in the piece either through Satie’s annotations or his musical quotations. To further confuse matters, he also makes mention of the Dragoons of Villars (referring to an early-eighteenth century religious uprising on which Maillart’s opera of that name was based)

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165 The relationship between the borrowed tune and Jonah and Latude is unclear, however, but possibly reflects the musico-political circumstances of Debussy and Satie, an interpretation borne out by the borrowing of Debussy’s own music. This is Whiting’s interpretation, *Satie the Bohemian*, 389.
and the coronation of Charles X in 1824. Few similarities connect these widely
separated events—but this very lack of connection seems appropriate for the stream-of-
consciousness of a dream.

Satie utilizes two sources for his quoted material and gives them equal importance
throughout the work. The first fully quoted phrase comes from the song “Malbrough s’en
va-t-en guerre,” regarding the death (or supposed death) of the famous Duke of
Marlborough who commanded victory over the armies of Louis XIV in the early
eighteenth century. It became a popular children’s tune in France later that century. Example 4.8 shows the tune’s first phrase and Satie’s full use of it in line 5 of “La
Défaite des Cimbres,” the text of which includes the title phrase followed by nonsense
words. Satie makes minimal changes to the melody, lowering A in m. 4 to a repetition of
A and evening out the rhythm of m. 3 to equal eighth notes. Lastly, he removes the final
Bb tonic, keeping the phrase open-ended in a reflection of the dreamlike flow of events.
Another near-quote of “Malbrough” occurs in line 9 in G major, also against eighth-note
figuration. The accompaniment of the first statement is diatonic in Bb, but is not
harmonically congruent with the melody. The second statement sets the melody against
the same figuration, but not diatonically, pitting the G major tune against D major
accompaniment.

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167 Recall that Satie quoted from Les Dragons des Villars in “Celle qui parle trop.”
168 For more on the history of “Malbrough s’en va-t-en guerre,” see Gillmor, “Musico-poetic Form in
Satie’s ‘Humoristic’ Piano Suites,” 13.
Example 4.8: “Malbrough s’en va-t-en guerre,” first phrase; Satie, “La Défaite des Cimbres,”
lines 5 and 9

The other borrowed material is the consequent phrase of the opening parallel period from “Le bon roi Dagobert,” a song which concerns a Merovingian king who unfortunately has his trousers on backwards. The tune was popular in the nineteenth century when it was sung in criticism of the failed Napoleonic campaign. It seems only fitting that Satie would quote a piece about a king’s backwards pants in a piece with such mixed-up historical references. The first full “Dagobert” quotation announces “Boïrix, king of the Cimbrians,” though Dagobert himself lived centuries later. Satie quotes the melody exactly, but sets it over a series of chromatic triads, as shown in

\[\text{Example 4.8: “Malbrough s’en va-t-en guerre,” first phrase; Satie, “La Défaite des Cimbres,” lines 5 and 9} \]

\[\text{The other borrowed material is the consequent phrase of the opening parallel period from “Le bon roi Dagobert,” a song which concerns a Merovingian king who unfortunately has his trousers on backwards. The tune was popular in the nineteenth century when it was sung in criticism of the failed Napoleonic campaign. It seems only fitting that Satie would quote a piece about a king’s backwards pants in a piece with such mixed-up historical references. The first full “Dagobert” quotation announces “Boïrix, king of the Cimbrians,” though Dagobert himself lived centuries later. Satie quotes the melody exactly, but sets it over a series of chromatic triads, as shown in} \]

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\[\text{169 For more on the history of “Le bon roi Dagobert,” see Gillmor, “Musico-poetic Form in Satie’s ‘Humoristic’ Piano Suites,” 12-13.} \]

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Example 4.9. The other complete statement of the phrase sets the tune in D minor, but this time against triads diatonic to the key (with a natural 7) that revolve back and forth without tonal progression (lines 13-14). The harmonies match with the pitches of the melody, but do not support the tune in a tonally functional fashion.

Example 4.9: “Le bon roi Dagobert,” first period; Satie, “La Défaite des Cimbres,”

lines 6-7

The conclusion of this statement in line 7 adds a short extension to the end of the phrase and isolates that in turn for sequencing. This extension comes not from one of the borrowed sources, but recalls an earlier ascending scale found first in lines 1-2. This figure, one of the only in “La Défaite des Cimbres” not based on the borrowed sources,
connects statements of the borrowed tunes, perhaps serving to mark a change of scene in the dream.

Throughout “La Défaite des Cimbres,” Satie extracts fragments from the two borrowed songs for development, usually accompanying them chromatically or bitonally. He also isolates a previously unrecognized secondary phrase from one of the sources to set once in the piece. In lines 12-13, shown in Example 4.10, he precedes a full statement of the “Dagobert” phrase with a segment from a later part of that tune, with the only melodic alteration being the change in mode from major to minor.

Example 4.10: “Le bon roi Dagobert,” mm. 8-10; Satie, “La Défaite des Cimbres,” lines 12-13

Satie opens the piece with a figure that intimates the rhythm of the ‘Dagobert’ tune then further develops that rhythmic fragment in lines 2-3 in such a way that the two primary borrowings blend together seamlessly. Example 4.11 shows how this passage
capitalizes on the compound duple time common to both themes. It is a descending sequence of a figure based on an inversion of a fragment from the “Marlbrough” tune following an overall descent that imitates the descending motion of the “Dagobert” phrase. Satie then cuts off the first note of the figure, and continues to sequence the remaining three notes.

Example 4.11: “Malbrough s’en va-t-en guerre,” mm. 1-2; “Le bon roi Dagobert,” mm. 1-2;
Satie, “La Défaite des Cimbres,” lines 2-3
Table 4.3: Borrowings in “La Défaite des Cimbres”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Material</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RD incipit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascending scale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD &amp; MG blended</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>C, G</td>
<td><em>Pluie de javelots</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG incipit</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><em>Portrait de Marius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descending scale</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>C &amp; G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG full</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>B♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG incipit</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD full</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>G</td>
<td><em>Boïorix, roi des Cimbres</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascending scale</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascending scale</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD incipit</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG full</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>G &amp; D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG incipit</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>Il a du chagrin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD &amp; MG blended</td>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><em>Les Dragons des Villars</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD, 3rd phrase</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD full</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD ending, sequenced</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>b,g,e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD fragment augmented</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD motive, extended</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD truncated</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>B♭, ?</td>
<td><em>Le Sacre de Charles X (267 bis)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RD = “Le bon roi Dagobert;” MG = Malbrough s’en va-t-en guerre

The form of “La Défaite des Cimbres” defies logic. The piece alternates between partial and complete quotations of the sources, and episodes of new material or development of the quotations’ motives. As is typical of Satie’s reiterative settings, the
keys of successive statements are closely related, with the exception of the concluding statement of line 17. It is preceded by a passage in D major that develops the descending gesture and rhythm of “Le bon roi Dagobert.” After a brief pause, the final statement begins surprisingly in B♭ major. The widely-spaced chords with powerful bass octaves are appropriately “grandiose” as the accompaniment to “The Coronation of Charles X.” The tonality adjusts in mid-statement to the dominant, F major. Satie breaks off the quotation early, bringing about a cadence that also surprises, progressing from an e♭7 (vii♭7 in F) to a final G-minor chord. Though inconclusive in F major, the G-minor chord brings the piece back to the tonic established at the opening of the work.

This loose tonal and formal organization fits the subject of the piece, as the free-flowing form along and the simultaneous use of themes and figures mentioned in text create a dreamlike, nonsensical atmosphere. In terms of the borrowing, the fragmentation of the melodies, the truncation of the final tonic of “Marlborough s’en va-t-en guerre,” and the unexpected tonal shifts in the last statement of “Le bon roi Dagobert” add to the surrealistic nature as well. As if to make the piece even more impossible, Satie includes a final unfathomable instruction for the last thematic statement: to play the concluding statement of “Le bon roi Dagobert” two hundred and sixty-seven times.

The absurdity of his concluding instruction is a fitting end for this dreamscape. Likewise, his choice of borrowed sources relates to the Montmartre connections found elsewhere in *Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses*. Whiting has suggested that this title “recalls the antique knick-knacks... [displayed] at the Chat Noir, where... the first thing
one saw upon crossing the threshold was a damascened halberd supposedly owned by the Duke of Marlborough and donated to the Chat Noir by the Queen of Tahiti.”\textsuperscript{170} Furthermore, the reference to the Merovingian king Dagobert harkens back to the composer’s occultic interests nurtured in Montmartre, where “it was a convenient short distance from esoteric religions to cabaret gaiety.”\textsuperscript{171} It was in this milieu that Satie began his relationships with both Joséphin Péladan and Debussy, whose respective occultic pursuits placed much significance on the Merovingian line, which includes King Dagobert, in French esoteric histories. “La Défaite des Cimbres” not only imitates the convoluted landscape of a dream, but also the variety of interests to be found in Montmartre.

\textbf{“Chez le Marchand d’or (Venise, XIII\textsuperscript{e} Siècle),” Vieux sequins et vieilles cuirasses}

In “Chez le Marchand d’or (Venise, XIII\textsuperscript{e} Siècle),” Satie introduces us to a gold merchant who finds various ways of worshipping the metal, each more ridiculous than the last. The merchant caresses, kisses, and embraces the gold, puts it in his mouth, and he talks to it, happy as a king, before plunging head first into a coffer and coming out all achy. Satie’s designation that the merchant resides in thirteenth-century Venice provides some explanation for the suite’s title, for a \textit{sequin} is a gold coin that originated in that

\textsuperscript{170} Whiting, \textit{Satie the Bohemian}, 389-90.
Both borrowings in “Chez le Marchand d’or” reinforce the subject of monetary concerns by focusing attention toward the gold merchant’s idolatry and vanity.

The piece opens with Orpheus’ violin theme in the “Duo de concerto” from Offenbach’s Orphée aux enfers of 1858. Offenbach’s opéra bouffon spoofs the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which Eurydice cannot tolerate her husband’s conceited obsession with playing his violin. In this number, Orpheus forces her to listen to his new concerto in spite of her repeated objections, in a moment Offenbach intentionally made “hideously, irritatingly sentimental.” Satie borrows from this moment as well, as Orpheus and Eurydice simultaneously exclaim “Ah! Ah! C’est adorable” and “Ah! Ah! C’est déplorable” respectively. Satie underscores the Venetian merchant’s adoration of his gold with this reference to the admiration Orpheus has for his own musical skills. Furthering the theme of idolatry through references to nineteenth-century stage works, Satie also quotes from the “Ronde du Veau d’or” sung by Mephistopheles in Gounod’s 1859 opera Faust. He extracts various melodic and rhythmic elements from the ronde, most notably the opening phrase of the verse and a segment of its continuation to the text: “The Golden Calf is always upright! His power is praised...” Given Satie’s background in the Montmartre cabaret scene, his choice of these two stage numbers seems quite natural. Well-known as parodies, Offenbach’s music provided a wealth of material for chansonniers and the fact that Orphée aux enfers is itself an irreverent

172 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 154; Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 390.
173 Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 390.
175 Gillmor, Erik Satie, 154.
176 “Le veau d’or est toujours debout! On encense Sa puissance...”
burlesque of Greek tragedy would have made it all the more appealing to Satie.\textsuperscript{177} Not only would he have found Offenbach’s music quite at home in the Chat Noir, but he would also have heard Gounod’s “Ronde du Veau d’or” parodied many times there.\textsuperscript{178} The common play at the cabaret on the Golden Calf as a widespread symbol of idolatry was due in part to the fact that a ground-floor stained-glass window depicted that very Biblical scene. Its presence there was quite malevolent—the creator of the window made it to symbolize the Chat Noir owner’s greed and exploitation of the artists whom had brought about his success.\textsuperscript{179}

The quotations give “Chez le Marchand d’or” considerable depth of meaning well beyond the outrageous exploits of the gold merchant. Furthermore, the tunes not only have contextual similarities in their subject matter, genre, and popularity in the cabaret scene, but they also share musical characteristics. Both sources are in 6/8 meter, which Satie retains in “Chez le Marchand d’or,” making a point of it by including a time signature in the published version—a rarity among the humoristic piano suites. Moreover, the two melodies begin with a similar initial motive that rises conjunctly from \( \hat{1} \) to \( \hat{3} \) with a short-short-long rhythmic figure that places \( \hat{3} \) on the downbeat.

\textsuperscript{177} Whiting, \textit{Satie the bohemian}, 391.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid., 391-2.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid., 45.
Table 4.4: Borrowings in “Chez le Marchand d’or”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical Material</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Annotation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DC, RV extension</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>G</td>
<td><em>Il caresse son or</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>e</td>
<td><em>Il le couvre de baisers</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC, mm. 112-3, sequenced</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>E, A, D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>g</td>
<td><em>Il embrasse un vieux sac</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><em>Il met dix mille francs d’or dans sa bouche</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC, mm. 112-3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC &amp; RV blended</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>G, E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC, mm. 112-3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC &amp; RV blended</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>B, G</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>Il prend une pièce d’or et lui parle...</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC &amp; RV blended, fragment</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>B½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC &amp; RV head motive; RV end fragment, sequenced</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>F &amp; E♭, B♭ &amp; A♭, a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV, mm. 40-3</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>e?, g?</td>
<td><em>Il fait le gamin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV, accompaniment mm. 43</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>Il est heureux comme un roi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC &amp; RV head motive sequence</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeated figures</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>g?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC, RV extension</td>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>G</td>
<td><em>Il en sort tout courbaturé</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DC = “Duo de Concerto” theme; RV = “Ronde du Veau d’or” theme
In “Chez le Marchand d’or,” Satie makes full use of reiterative setting’s flexibility. He organizes the piece with repetitions of the borrowed phrases alternating with episodes that develop their motives (Table 4.4). Nor does Satie limit himself to the primary quotations that organize the piece: he transfers melodic and rhythmic elements from throughout both sources, seamlessly integrating them with the primary phrases and developing their motives as well. Since nearly every moment of the piece contains borrowed elements from the sources in no apparent logical order, the piece has similarities to the collage seen in “Españaña.” Its fundamental organization, however, is created through the repetition of the two primary quotations as they progress through different keys and variations. In its complexity, “Chez le Marchand d’or” provides an excellent example of Satie’s creativity with reiterative setting.

For the most part, Satie borrows melodic phrases, but sometimes he borrows from the original accompaniments as well, typically subjecting that parameter to greater alteration or variation. Example 4.12 illustrates Satie’s small changes to both the melody and accompaniment of the violin theme from Offenbach’s “Duo de concerto” at the outset of “Chez le Marchand d’or.” First, he replaces 4 on the downbeat with 4, giving greater emphasis to the chromatic tone by placing it on the strong beat. In the second part of the phrase, he lowers the highest pitch from 2 to 4, adjusting the subsequent pitches down a step, but maintaining the rhythm of the passage. He also borrows the paired-eighth-note accompaniment figure from Offenbach’s original, but modifies the rhythmic placement from beginning on an off beat to beginning on the downbeat. Satie’s
accompaniment figure does not function harmonically, but instead undermines the G-major melody with an oscillating figure that emphasizes F\(^\flat\) on each downbeat. Discontinuities between melody and accompaniment such as this appear with every statement of the two primary themes.

Example 4.12: Offenbach, “Duo de Concerto,” mm. 90-3; Satie, “Chez le Marchand d’or,” lines 1-2

The theme from *Faust* first appears in lines 4-5 in G minor above what I have recognized as a paraphrase of the accompaniment’s rhythm (Example 4.13). Though Satie alters the scale degrees of the accompaniment figure, the pitches still function in G minor. However, they conflict with the melody: F\(^\flat\) is aligned with a C\(^m7\) in the right hand and the D\(^b\) clashes with the vii\(^c\)\(^\flat\) in the right hand. Moreover, the interior line acts autonomously much like the accompanimental figure in line 1—it rises chromatically through pitches not present in G minor, acting entirely independently of the melodic line, until the vii\(^c\)\(^\flat\) chord toward the end of the phrase.
Example 4.13: Gounod, “Ronde du veau d’or,” mm. 9-12; Satie, “Chez le Marchand d’or,” lines 4-5

Satie sets the *Faust* phrase similarly in its next full appearance (line 9, Example 4.14), with the melody and accompaniment inverted. Again, the interior line eschews the melody’s key, utilizing B♭ throughout. As in the tune’s first appearance, the accompaniment’s rhythmic figure is also borrowed from Gounod, but which here avoids the tonic. Instead, Satie opts to present the original accompaniment figure in inversion.
and transposed down so that the figure includes the original scale-degrees. He finishes by supporting the melodic cadence nondiatonically with F major and E minor chords in the right hand.

Example 4.14: Gounod, “Ronde du veau d’or,” mm. 9-11 (accompaniment); Satie, “Chez le Marchand d’or,” line 9 (right hand)

Returning to the Offenbach borrowing, we can see that Satie makes some changes to the second phrase in its second appearance, shown in Example 4.15. Beginning in E minor, the tune rises to \( \sharp 1 \), but descends conjunctly through the leading tone instead of skipping to the submediant as before. I have found that this, in fact, is not an alteration of

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180 Satie also uses the retrograde inversion of the accompanimental figure in line 6. In this case, the texture is thinner, with stepwise thirds participating in the borrowing of the accompaniment and not acting independently. He also makes a slight change to the rhythm my initiating the accompaniment with two eighth notes instead of a dotted quarter.
the violin theme from “Duo de Concerto,” but is a replacement of the second half of that phrase with another phrase found later in the number. He paraphrases Eurydice’s line from mm. 112-3, in which she exclaims “Ah! Ah! C’est déplorable” in response to Orpheus’ violin theme, using only some pitches from Eurydice’s exclamation. This results in an elimination of Offenbach’s repetition, adapting the rhythm to an eighth-quarter alternation (parentheses around pitches and rests in Example 4.15 indicate Satie’s omissions).

Example 4.15: Offenbach, “Duo de Concerto,” mm. 112-3; Satie, “Chez le Marchand d’or,” lines 2-3

In both the opening and concluding phrases (lines 2 and 17-18), Satie adds an extension to the Offenbach tune. It consists of an oscillation between the last two notes of the borrowed phrase in an eighth-quarter rhythm that is mimicked in line 3, shown above in Example 4.15. The rhythm is similar to yet another oscillation, found in lines
11-12 of “Chez le Marchand d’or” (Example 4.16). Here, Satie emphasizes the figure by placing it in a higher register than the surrounding material, a treatment usually reserved for borrowed material. The passage is, in fact, borrowed from Faust, recognized for the first time in this study. The rhythm of this figure is the same as that of the refrain theme of Gounod’s ronde to the text “And Satan leads the ball.” As if to confirm the source of this material, he immediately repeats the oscillation to the refrain rhythm in A major (with a lowered supertonic), this time concluding the melodic line with the same scale degrees as the original and including an arpeggiation of the dominant chord borrowed from the accompaniment in m. 44 of the ronde. Example 4.16 shows that while Gounod’s refrain oscillates between pitches a minor 3rd apart, Satie adjusts the pitches to lie a step apart, as in the extension of the Offenbach phrase in line 2. Furthermore, Satie imposes this eighth-quarter rhythm taken from the Gounod refrain onto the paraphrase of Eurydice’s exclamation from line 3. In this way, the extension to the Offenbach borrowing refers to the Gounod refrain as well as Eurydice’s exclamation.

Satie does not stop blending elements from the two sources here. In line 7, shown in Example 4.17, what appears to be a statement of the Offenbach violin theme begins in G major. Instead of rising conjunctly to 5, however, the dominant is preceded by an unprepared upper neighbor. The tune then unexpectedly moves into E major for the continuation. Though the E♭ in the first part of the phrase could easily be understood as an upper neighbor varying the tune, it closely resembles the second vocal phrase from

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181 “Et Satan conduit le bal.”
“Ronde du Veau d’or,” also shown in Example 4.17. The leap from B to E in Satie’s borrowing mimics the leap from 5 to 1 in m. 13 of Gounod’s melody. Related to this, the B to E suggests a dominant-tonic progression in E that anticipates the true modulation to E major in the latter half of the phrase. Satie then repeats this blended phrase immediately in B major. This time, at the fourth leap, he commits to the newly suggested key of G major for the remainder of the phrase. As Example 4.17 illustrates, Satie retains the descending line from 1 to 5 of the Gounod phrase, eliminating the diminutions and continuing the eighth-quarter rhythm established previously.
Example 4.17: “Offenbach,” Duo du Concerto,” mm. 90-4; Gounod, “Ronde du Veau d’or,” mm. 12-16; Satie, “Chez le Marchand d’or,” lines 7-9

It is difficult to find logic in the form of “Chez le Marchand d’or.” It resembles a sonata-rondo loosely in that it alternates between statements of the two primary themes, interspersed with episodes based on secondary themes and development of motives, returning at the end to an exact repetition of the opening statement in G major before closing with an imperfect authentic cadence in the tonic key. Nor does Satie’s placement
of borrowed themes seem based on the program, with the exception of the Gounod statement in line 9, in which the borrowed phrase is set in a low register reflecting how the merchant speaks to his gold in a low voice.\textsuperscript{182} The quotes primarily function descriptively, reinforcing the subject of Satie’s piece by emphasizing the themes of vanity and greed present in both sources. The near-total saturation of the piece with borrowed material mimics the self-absorption of the gold merchant and characters referred to by the borrowings.

Satie’s creativity with the reiterative form in “Chez le Marchand d’or” calls into question assertions that he lacks proficiency with development. Gillmor claims that Satie espoused an idea of “form free from motivic development,” by “juxtaposition of bits and pieces of commonplace materials.”\textsuperscript{183} While this assessment is true for many of the humoristic piano suites and Satie’s works in general, “Chez le Marchand d’or” clearly shows the composer’s ability to manipulate these same “bits and pieces” into a complex form that showcases the impressive amount of material he can create from the simplest of motives. He does all this while giving the two primary borrowed themes equal importance, so much so that they nearly become one single theme (as lines 7-9 exemplify), demonstrating his ability to treat borrowed material with flexibility. By using reiterative setting, Satie combines Offenbach with Gounod to the point that their themes become inseparable, musically giving Offenbach’s parody equal status to Gounod’s weightier rendition of the Faust tale. In this way, “Chez le Marchand d’or”

\textsuperscript{182} “Il prend une pièce d’or et lui parle à voix basse”\textsuperscript{183} Gillmor, \textit{Erik Satie}, 170.
perhaps expresses that his humoristic parodies carry as much artistic relevance as accepted masterworks.

Conclusion

In “Regrets des Enfémés,” “La Défaite des Cimbres,” and “Chez le Marchand d’or,” Satie follows his own compositional path to musical form, neglecting traditional ideals of development and formal departure and return. The repetitive nature of reiterative setting allows the borrowed tunes to progress through different forms, shapes, and environments without requiring that they lead to any particular musical goal. This process recalls Satie’s famous statement regarding the *Aperçus désagréables* of 1913: “Before I compose a piece, I walk round it several times, accompanied by myself.”\(^\text{184}\)

This comment has often inspired comparison to Cubist techniques, inasmuch as the Cubists “investigated the complexity in time and space of a simple object studied simultaneously from several points of view.”\(^\text{185}\) Satie’s presentation of tunes in varying settings, as if to view them from different perspectives within the scope of one piece, has similarities with this artistic approach. It is this element of simultaneity found in much Cubist art that perhaps resonates with Satie’s own musical aesthetic.

The idea of musical simultaneity applies particularly well to Satie’s reiterative settings as well as with contemporary aesthetic trends that attempted to represent artistically a new “ability to experience many distant events at the same time,” which


\(^{185}\) Shattuck, 141.
were inspired by the expanded functionality of technological advancements such as the telephone and motion pictures.\textsuperscript{186} Simultaneity in the arts was an expression of the modernity of life around the turn of the century, providing a “short-cut through traditional discursive processes [that] is both powerful and instantaneous.”\textsuperscript{187} The contemporary poet Henri-Martin Barzun felt that “past poets expressed the voices of a successive universe; the contemporary poet ought to express them all at once as they are perceived by the senses and magnified by technology.”\textsuperscript{188} As a temporal art, music has a unique ability to express simultaneity, which Satie exploited by superimposing contrasting musical events such as harmonic progressions or melodic statements. In “Regrets des Enfermés,” for example, he presents the first iteration of the tune bitonally; the suggestion of multiple keys within the scope of one melodic phrase presents a conflict of two perspectives overlapping one another. Furthermore, this statement isolates the G-major accompaniment from the A-minor melody, making them two distinct entities juxtaposed against one another. This effect splits attention between two simultaneous musical parameters, that of two tonalities functioning at once, moving toward separate musical goals. In another approach, Satie elaborately blends two themes together, making two individual themes work together to create a single melody, as seen in “Chez le Marchand d’or.” Here, identifiable motifs from two phrases mingle and overlap,

\textsuperscript{186} Orledge, \textit{Satie the Composer}, 226; Stephen Kern, \textit{The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918}, 2d edition (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2003): 67. See also M.E. Davis’ discussion of simultaneity, Mary E. Davis, ‘Esprit gaulois: ‘Erik Satie’s \textit{Sports et divertissements} in Context’ (Ph.D. diss, Harvard University, 1997): 61, 69-70, 87.\textsuperscript{187} Davis, 61.\textsuperscript{188} Kern, 72. Barzun created a journal dedicated to simultaneity in which proclaimed his theories; he is also known for his heated arguments with Blaise Cendrars and Guillaume Apollinaire over who had produced the first examples of simultaneity in literature: see Kern, 72, n. 16.
culminating in a statement that seamlessly merges the two themes into one. The dual nature of the theme suggests both pieces at the same time, highlighting their similar melodic structures. This approach contrasts the one seen in “Regrets des Enfermés” where divergent elements work against one another, instead working together to create a new melodic feature. Both approaches, however, make use of differing elements in such a way that the listener perceives multiple events simultaneously.

According to Shattuck, an important aspect of this aesthetic of simultaneity is the “[establishment of] other sources of meaning than causal sequence.” Satie takes steps to remove causal sequence through these reiterative settings by progressing through iterations of borrowed melodies not by traditional musical development, but instead with “an absence of any climax, or movement toward a goal, [in a] way that progressions recur imperceptibly, [giving] the impression of a timeless creation revolving in space.” In “Regrets des Enfermés,” for example, while the opening figure returns twice in the piece (in lines 4 and 11), it seems devoid of the typical significance returns usually have. It remains harmonically static, the left hand outlining first a C-major chord, then G major followed by E major, that together subtly define a C-major tonality. The repetitions of the folk tune have little relationship to the returning opening figure and serve just as often to undermine C major by straying widely from the tonic as they serve to reinforce it through closely-related key areas. The final C-major chord of the piece almost comes as a surprise, then, considering the lack of traditional harmonic progression throughout the

189 Shattuck, *The Banquet Years*, 346.
190 Orledge, *Satie the Composer*, 143.
piece. Instead, the reiterations in “Regrets des Enfermés” seem to advance the piece without harmonic purpose, enhancing its sense of timelessness.

Throughout “Regrets des Enfermés,” the successive alterations Satie creates in the borrowed melody often relate to the program, as certain iterations of “Nous n’irons plus au bois” are given accompaniments that reflect the thoughts of the prisoners and occur alongside the events of the program. The changes, however, lack musical teleology, and thus suggest both “permanent movement and permanent rest” at the same time.\(^{191}\) A single melody spread out over “a series of points... [that turns] out to be one point,” or one tune heard over and over, along with the lack of harmonic progression creates the primary effect of stasis.\(^{192}\) In this work, Satie achieves two aesthetic ends common among artists at the time. Through bitonality, he creates simultaneity, which serves to “[extend] the present spatially,” while the repetitive, directionless quality “[expands] the traditional sharp-edged present temporally,” inasmuch as the piece seems to reflect on one moment.\(^{193}\)

“Sur une lanterne” also reflects on a single event, but one that recurs daily. The piece depicts the evening lamp-lighting, a quotidian process reinforced by the monotonous repetition of the accompanimental figures. Surprisingly, he pairs the scenario with violent Revolutionary songs—as if such violent times are as doomed to repetition as daily functions. The piece ends in its original key, but lacks any sense of drive to return there. Instead, Satie “was more interested in exploring the effects of

\(^{191}\) Shattuck, *The Banquet Years*, 141.
\(^{192}\) Ibid., 140.
\(^{193}\) Kern, 81.
monotony and boredom...His concern lay in the way our perception of time could be expanded and telescoped, and how music could function as a spatial element in time.”194 In a different exploration of monotony, “Regrets des Enfermés” concerns two prisoners who have nothing better to do than reflect in the dark. As the prisoners have nowhere to go, so too the music repeats and never moves toward a goal. In one piece, time is telescoped by referring to individuals from across the centuries while, at the same time, musical moments are prolonged through repetition.

While Satie’s reiterative settings can figuratively break down spatial and temporal distances, the programmatic annotations of all the humoristic piano suites expand the boundaries of these works to include elements of music and text simultaneously. “La Défaite des Cimbres” presents this idea at its most extreme: several historical events are conflated into one composition through both textual and musical references. The Roman general Marius is mentioned during a statement of a tune from the eighteenth century, for example, bringing together moments of history from across the millennia. The events and individuals referred to do not occur in the work with any sort of chronological, geographical, or logical sense. This aesthetic also allows us to find similarities between Satie’s reiterative settings and his lone use of collage technique in “Españaña.” In that piece, he mentions various locales in Paris in the text at the same time as he quotes and paraphrases motives from his primary and secondary musical sources. The result is a jumble of geographic and musical references condensed into a single piece. Likewise, even Chabrier’s España is compressed as the original flow of musical events is

194 Orledge, Satie the Composer, 142-3.
rearranged. Satie leaves behind conventional causality and logic in “Españaña,” as he does in his reiterative settings, bringing the collage procedure closely in line with the latter technique.

Like other multi-media arts of the time, in Satie’s reiterative settings and collage “time is compressed and reversed to break down the divisiveness of distance and bring together separate places in a single vision.”[195] This junction of diverse concepts comes to a head in the concert hall, combining music from the past (near or distant) and new music written by Satie. He brought together genres that traditionally had remained separate, such as children’s tunes and opera arias, and formed a new style that capitalized on stylistic displacement and relocation. In 1920, after Satie had composed the humoristic piano suites, he claimed that he had “always striven to confuse would-be followers by both the form and the background of each new work.”[196] It would seem that “Regrets des Enfermés,” “La Défaite des Cimbres,” and “Chez le Marchand d’or” work toward that end by defying traditional formal logic: this music progresses, morphs into new shapes, but does not develop, does not set out toward a defined musical goal. Reiterative setting allows Satie to forge his own path that cannot be followed, for it has no prescribed route.

[195] Kern, 74, in reference to La Prose de Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France (1913) by Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay.
[196] Erik Satie, Écrits, 45. Translation by Orledge, Satie the Composer, 142.

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Chapter 5

Conclusion

There is no school of Satie. Satisme could not exist. It would find me against it.  

While many of Erik Satie’s humoristic piano suites borrow from preexisting music, they do not do so in the same ways or to the same compositional ends. As we have seen, Satie employs a variety of approaches within these compositions, resulting in drastically different aesthetic effects. For example, while both the periodic and reiterative settings rely on repetition of borrowed phrases, they do so to differing ends. Periodic settings have a light and simple character, serving only to reinforce the texts Satie associates with them. Reiterative settings, on the other hand, have much denser musical connections created by their complex and irregular form that reflects the contemporary aesthetic of simultaneity in many ways. Satie’s extended paraphrases have an entirely different effect, relating in intricate ways to the preexisting source material. They often critique deep-rooted musical conventions in a humorous manner, conveying an attitude of irreverence that would have that would have fit in well at the Chat Noir or any other cabaret of the time.

Categorizing Satie’s compositions by borrowing type has allowed new connections to be made, irrespective of their chronology or even to Satie’s own groupings. For example, we have seen the similarity of approach between “de Holothurie” and *Sonatine bureaucratique* as well as between “Españaña” and “La Défaite des Cimbres,” works that are found in separate sets and that, on the surface, seem to have little in common. Moreover, finding consistent trends within borrowing techniques allows for further identification of Satie’s aesthetics in these works. That reiterative settings consistently convey musical simultaneity reveals the concept’s importance to the composer. That critique of formal conventions occurs in such diverse compositions as *Embryons desséchés* and *Sonatine bureaucratique* reveals his ongoing concern with such issues. The identification of the convergence of recurring attitudes and approaches can assist in the analysis of all Satie’s music, as this analytic approach allows certain returning features to come to the fore, making them easier to recognize elsewhere.

In the end, the benefits for analyzing borrowing as discussed by J. Peter Burkholder are manifold. By isolating reiterative settings, for example, we have seen how Satie uses the technique to relate to wider aesthetic trends. On the other hand, the more straightforward approach found in periodic settings perhaps reflects a different attitude on the part of the composer, one that distinguishes these pieces through simplicity and sincerity. This study has also made new connections between works that were published separately, belonging to different compositions and has revealed in more detail the scope of Satie’s compositional imagination, uncovering additional relationships between the new and source material. Most importantly, the identification of borrowing
methods shows the diverse ways Satie was able to throw off traditional compositional methods, eschew conventional forms, and find his own musical voice in a changing cultural climate. Satie’s irreverent attitude toward the musical status quo is inherent in his music. Therefore, exploration of his compositional methods highlights those ideas and how much they influenced his works.

The variety in Satie’s borrowing methods indicates a great deal of compositional creativity. Burkholder points out that Charles Ives’s “originality is never more clear than in the many ways he found to rework borrowed material into something fresh and to adapt it to the individual requirements of each composition.” So too does Satie find unique ways of incorporating existing music into his own works. In this study, four approaches, extended paraphrases, periodic settings, repetitive settings, and collage, are found to treat borrowed music differently. Some borrow entire structures, while others borrow less extensively but create wholly new forms. Within these categories, further variety can be found in the extent to which Satie imbues his pieces with existing material and the extent to which he relates it to the program. Moreover, many other methods could be used to describe Satie’s musical borrowing throughout his career, such as patchwork and cumulative setting, that are not included here but would increase our understanding of the wide-ranging scope of his musical style.

In any discussion of musical borrowing, the issue of compositional originality inevitably arises. Most of Satie’s humoristic piano suites consist heavily of music created

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199 These techniques are defined in relation to Ives’ music in *All Made of Tunes.*
by others—in fact, his pieces rely on existing music, serving as his inspiration and compositional starting-point. Satie’s historical reputation, however, is that of a “man of ideas,” a “precursor” to many of the major trends of twentieth-century music. While it may seem contradictory to view music that depends on borrowing as original, the aesthetic is unique, even though much of the musical material is not.

Originality rose to extreme importance in the nineteenth century as conceptions of the role of music were redefined to place greater emphasis on individual experience and less on social functionality. Musical ideas were expected to be distinct from those already in existence in order to be taken as serious contributions to the art; in fact, such criteria became a measure of a composer’s creative ability. As Christopher Reynolds states, composers who aspired to greatness, to a reputation for genius, had to nurture their claims to originality. Were there not an equally strong desire to be lauded in comparison to the revered masters of preceding generations, to take a place alongside the predecessors in the tradition, originality would have been at once easier to attain and less prized.

Past composers often attributed their inspiration “as a result of a mystical process,” particularly for their melodies, and thus tended to be reticent regarding their individual creativity. Satie ridiculed this attitude in the unpublished introduction to Embryons desséchés:

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203 Ibid., 104.
This work is absolutely incomprehensible, even to me. Its singular profundity still astonishes me. I wrote it despite myself, impelled by Destiny.204

His capitalization of “Destiny” ridicules its importance. By stating that he doesn’t even understand his own music, he mocks the lack of control and the removal of the composer’s own intent implied through attribution of inspiration to some divine process.

This need for musical material to apparently “arise as heaven-sent gifts and from the composer’s unconscious mind” left little room in nineteenth-century aesthetics for inspiration to come from existing music, particularly for melodies.205 The use of existing “formal structures, harmonic vocabulary, and elements of orchestration” was not viewed negatively, but composers “were from the beginning of their careers encouraged to fashion their own motives and themes.”206 Pieces such as Satie’s “de Holothurie,” however, take the opposite approach, in an inversion that parodies the Romantic emphasis on original melodies. Here, Satie borrowed the melodies (the traditionally original element) and changed the formal structure and harmonic vocabulary, turning a ternary folksong into a sonata form with blatantly ambiguous tonalities. His inspiration was obviously not a mystically-obtained new theme, but an existing popular one, and his originality lies in his use of that melody to fashion a critique of sonata form.

Alternatively, Satie appropriated existing tunes to create entirely new formal structures, such as the reiterative setting of “Chez le Marchand d’or,” in which the composer

204 Translated in Steven Moore Whiting, Satie the Bohemian: From Cabaret to Concert Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 368.
205 Reynolds, 114.
206 Ibid., 104.
demonstrates his creativity in the diversity of ways he exploits the operetta melodies. To
further contrast with the elusiveness of nineteenth-century composers, Satie makes his
compositional inspiration evident by allowing borrowed music to figure prominently in
his pieces, often enhancing its musical function with annotations that leave no doubt as to
the origin of the source material. The result is that Satie’s ‘formal structures’ and
‘harmonic vocabulary’ are newly created while his melodies are obviously borrowed,
thus reversing the priorities of past composers.

Satie’s open attitude, laying bare his inspiration by setting apart the borrowed
elements and drawing further attention to them in the commentaries, brought his
experience in the cabarets of Paris into the more serious venue of the concert hall,
achieving a new “fusion of stuntsmanship, satire, and esotericism... [that stretched]... the
very concept of the musical ‘work.’”

His approach creates an “aesthetic dissonance”
between traditional works built on original musical material and his barefaced borrowing
methods, finding value in the aesthetic dissonance itself.

The originality of the
humoristic piano suites lies partly in Satie’s all-inclusive approach. The use of readily-
identifiable existing melodies with humorous annotations was a novelty for the concert
hall, which by this time, was a place of reverence for the existing musical canon. In
consideration of this attitude, Burkholder compares the concert hall to a museum, where
works of dead composers had lost whatever original social function they had
served and were valued exclusively as autonomous works of art... [where] pieces
which were already old and revered or pieces which served exactly the same
function, as musical works of lasting value which proclaimed a distinctive musical

207 Whiting, *Satie the Bohemian*, 416.
personality, which rewarded study, and which became loved as they became familiar.\textsuperscript{209}

When he wrote the humoristic piano suites, Satie had recently entered into the world of concert music and participated in this ‘musical museum.’ With Ravel’s sponsorship, the Société Musicale Indépendente concert of January 1911 featured the second of the Sarabandes, the prelude to the first act of Les Fils des étoiles, and the Third Gymnopédie—pieces that did not utilize musical borrowing.\textsuperscript{210} Yet, in the following years, as his popularity grew among concert music circles, Satie increasingly began to rely on borrowing, a technique that seems out of place in this environment. His musical borrowings blatantly confront the idea of autonomy, distinctiveness, and original genius that had become important in concert music culture in the preceding century. In a sense, this defiance of accepted priorities shows originality in itself.

This aesthetic dissonance devalues neither Satie’s works nor the originals from which he borrowed. His pieces add to the sources an element of his personality so that the results are a combination of old and new ideas that are greater than both in separation. It is here, in this inclusion of Satie’s new attitude in the humoristic piano suites, that the originality of his musical borrowings becomes clearest. In a letter of 1916 to Misia Edwards, Satie claims an aversion to pastiche—a seemingly contradictory statement shortly following the abundance of borrowing in the years previous.\textsuperscript{211} Instead of

\textsuperscript{209} Burkholder, “Museum pieces,” 119.
\textsuperscript{210} Whiting, Satie the Bohemian, 347.
pastiche, Satie’s use of borrowing might better be classified as parody, in which the new work dissociates itself from the cultural associations of the source material, however much it may play upon them. As Hutcheon’s definition makes clear, parody is “repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity,” differing greatly in intent from pastiche, which “operates more by similarity and correspondence.”

212 Satie did not desire to imitate or use existing music as a crutch to aid composition. His originality, or “personal style,” arose “not so much through the appropriation of ingredients from a particular cultural or historical model as through a mode of critique.”

213 The aesthetic dissonance Satie creates in the humoristic piano suites separates the new music from the old even as it combines them. These pieces do not always ridicule the borrowed elements, however, for even a “reverential variety of parody... [also] points to difference between texts.”

214 By emphasizing his sources in the music’s texture and enhancing them with his texts, Satie makes his borrowings apparent, drawing attention to their incongruity.

Satie tended to “[repay] his borrowings with interest,” adding his attitude to their cultural meanings to create an aesthetic unique among the concert music of the time. 215 Looking at the concert hall as a museum, he managed to invoke the existing exhibits, works of music held high in the esteem of the patrons and participants, and separate his

214 Hutcheon, Theory of Parody, 60.
215 Orledge, Satie the Composer, 204.
aesthetic from theirs through appropriation enhanced by critique. Moreover, he brought humor, wit, and sarcasm to the venue and asked that previously neglected art forms such as children’s songs be considered. Satie questioned whether established forms, techniques, and revered pieces had inherent value at the same time as he attempted to raise the importance of ‘lesser’ forms that represented a wider Parisian culture. He developed unique forms and reversed traditional priorities that advanced his artistic ideals. In so doing, Satie used musical borrowing to position himself as a composer who did not bow to tradition, but who instead manipulated it to provide himself with a wealth of compositional ideas.
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VITA

Belva Jean Hare was born in Houston, Texas on July 26, 1978, the daughter of Belva Clare and Samuel Robert Aydelotte. After graduating from Elkins High School, Missouri City, Texas, in 1996, she entered the University of Tulsa in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She received the degree of Bachelor of Music from the University of Tulsa in May 2000. In August 2000 she entered The Graduate School at The University of Texas at Austin and received the degree of Master of Music in December 2002.

Permanent Address: 1327 Sapphire Bay Court, Houston, TX 77094

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