

chordal motive, creating an image of a complex mass of sound in which harmonic colours are superimposed, intermixed and interchanged. Another example of the use of the extreme registers of the piano is seen in b.62:



The chord in the extreme treble register of the piano, followed by the cluster in the extreme bass register is typical of Messiaen's style and again emphasizes the importance of timbre, register and resonance in his musical language.



6. REGARD DU FILS SUR LE FILS (V): The Contemplation of the Son by the Son

Mystery, rays of light, in the night - refraction of joy; birds of silence - the body of the Word with a human character - the marriage of human and Divine natures in Jesus Christ.

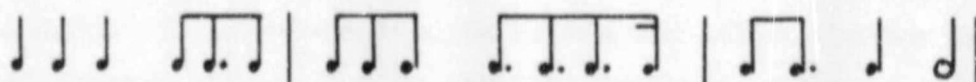
Messiaen does not name the source of the mystical poem which forms the basis of this contemplation. However, it is clear that the Incarnate Word and the dual (Divine and human) nature of Christ are central to this movement.

It is not surprising therefore, that the Theme of God should reappear in this movement, and that the symbolically important numbers 2 and 3 should feature throughout. The thematic material of the first section (A:b.1-21) is based on three musical strands, each on a separate stave, which are contrapuntal in character. The bass is a *cantus firmus*, centred on the recurring Theme of God above which Messiaen superimposes a rhythmic canon. There are three registers, three modes, three dynamic levels and three different rhythms all superimposed on one another. The number 3 therefore forms the basis of the textural structure of this movement. The duality of Christ's nature may be said to be represented in the two upper strands which take the form of a rhythmic canon. This duality is further revealed in the use of two dynamic levels as well as the interval of the 2nd. Whereas the Theme of God is centred around F# major implying a tonal centre, the two upper strands are more modal. In the same way, the formal structure revolves around the repetition of two contrasting sections, i.e. rhythmic canon superimposed on the Theme of God (Section A) and a freer section (B) based on birdsong with hints of the Theme of God in the lower part.

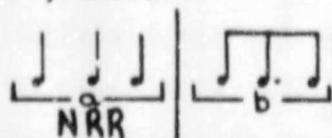
The placing of this "Regard" fifth within the twenty is interesting. Pythagorean number theory explains the derivation of the number 5 as being the sum of 3 (Trinity) and 2 (Duality). [17, p.43]

Christ reflects God's Divinity, and within the Trinity represents Unity and Diversity. Five is also the number of the flesh [Ibid, p.86] again symbolically important here since this movement deals with the Word made flesh. The number 5 is also associated with the Hindu God, Shiva, the representative of the death of death, and consequently related to Christ who overcame Death on the Cross.

The musical pulse in Section A (b.1-21) is so slow (Tres lent, $\text{♩} = 76$) that the links between each pulse have become so stretched out that they are almost impalpable. It is precisely in this atmosphere that Messiaen creates a feeling of eternity. The rhythmic canon of Section A is based on the rhythm of Tala 1, which has featured in many of Messiaen's works from "Chants de Terre" (1938) onwards. It is made up of 17 values (a prime number) comprising the Ragavardhana, Candrakala, and Lackskmīṣa rhythms (see below) which are then repeated twice again.

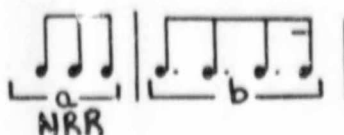


The Ragavardhana rhythm is one of the most important used by Messiaen, since this is the one found most often in his works. It consists of two rhythmic cells (symbolically significant), 'a' and 'b', 'b' being the diminution of 'a', with the addition of a dot on the second note in cell 'b', thus:

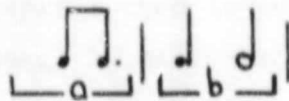


Whilst this rhythm is retrogradable, each cell is an NRR, and a palindrome. This rhythmic cell is the 93rd of the set of 120 deci-talas by Sharngadeva, and is known as the rhythm which "gives life to melody". [8, p.40f]

The other two rhythms contain examples of augmentation and diminution. The Candrakala rhythm is no. 105 of the 120 deci-talas and also consists of two rhythmic cells, 'a' and 'b'; 'b' this time is in diminution, with added values thus:

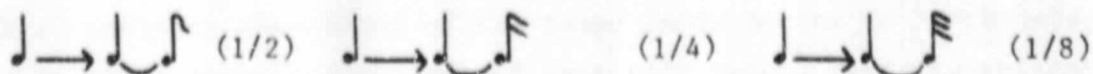


Here too, the 'a' cell is an NRR. The Lackskmica rhythm is No. 88 of the set, and also divides into two rhythmic cells. 'b' this time is an inexact augmentation of 'a':



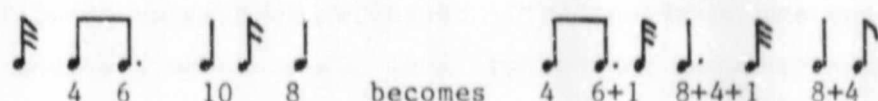
Literally translated, these two rhythms mean beauty and peace, qualities which are both applicable to Christ. Within this system of deci-talas it is possible to add to any rhythm a small, brief value which in turn transforms its metrical balance resulting in an asymmetrical structure. Any rhythm may be followed by its augmentation or diminution according to forms more complex than the simple classic doublings. This compositional device gives rise, once more, to asymmetrical rhythmical structures. Moreover, some of these rhythms are non-retrogradable, and herein lies their charm for Messiaen. It is interesting to note how Messiaen chooses deci-talas that express his particular rhythmic interest: taking a cell and then reducing all its values in proportion (his derivative from the ragavardhana), or else increasing them (candrakala and lakskmica), adding a dot (ragavardhana) and adding a value (candrakala). It is these Indian rhythms which give rise to the most significant devices of added values, inexact augmentation and diminution of non-retrogradable rhythm, although several of these devices may be applied to Greek rhythms in their turn. [8, p.37]

Messiaen regularly uses devices such as augmentation and diminution in his compositions. This process may follow three courses: (a) constant proportion in which each note is lengthened or shortened by a constant value, for example, $1/2$ or $1/4$ or $1/8$ etc:

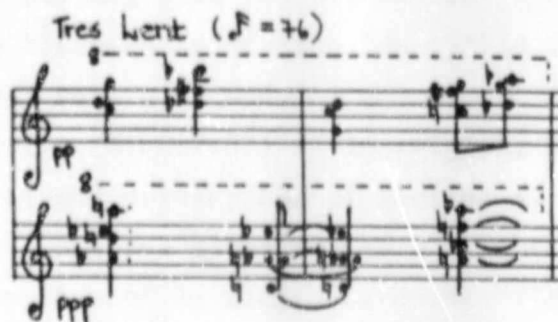


(b) constant note value in which each note is lengthened or shortened by a ♩ or ♪ or ♫ .

(c) by increasingly longer proportions according to their length thus:



Messiaen makes use of the first method in this movement. The second part of the canon is lengthened by half the original value throughout, so that ♩ becomes ♩. ; ♪ becomes ♪ and so on. This technique, whilst on the surface upsetting the feeling of conventional metre, is further evidence of Messiaen's view of time revolving around the smallest unit or pulse, rather than larger metrical entities of Western music. This concept was a result of Messiaen's in-depth study of Greek metres and Hindu rhythmic formulae. His aim was to produce an ametrical music which by its very nature demands a very precise system of rhythmic notation. This precision is evident here, and throughout "Vingt Regards...". Interestingly, the second part of the canon enters simultaneously with the first part, its values increased by a half. The effect is that of two strands of music moving at different tempi, which in turn results in an overlapping of tempo and duration by the use of added resonance:



This resultant staggering of the tempo leads to the top part being heard three times and the second part only twice, again symbolically significant.

The two strands comprising the rhythmic canon are differentiated by the use of a chord sequence in mode 6 for the upper strand and one in mode 4 for the lower strand. [8, p.38] This creates a polymodal

effect. In Messiaen's view this combination gives rise to the following colours and effects: "The chords of the upper part belong to mode 6³, whose colour is a transparent sulphurous yellow with reflections of mauve, and patches of Prussian blue and purplish brown. The middle part is based on mode 4⁴, whose colour is reminiscent of petunias - dark violet, white with violet lines and purplish violet (symbolising Love of Truth in medieval colour lore). The lower part uses three transpositions of mode 2 - mainly the first, or 2¹, whose dominant colour is a blueish violet (symbolising the Truth of Love in medieval colour lore). The combination of F# major and mode 2 in the lower strand is symbolically significant since Messiaen only uses it to express the mystical experience of superhuman love, in this case God's love for mankind. [8, p.42] The register of the piece being generally high, and the luminous sound of F# major partly overriding the colours of mode 2, all these violets and blues circulate in an overall atmosphere of gold and silver, with a touch of brassy red." [5, p.4] This explanation serves to emphasise the fact that this process of composing with colour is a very conscious and deliberate one for Messiaen. Whilst the two strands comprising the canon are different with respect to dynamic and duration, they nonetheless interact, at times merging with and overlapping each other. The canon in turn is sharply differentiated from the cyclic Theme of God, again emphasizing the dual nature of God.

The second section (B:b.22-33) is in complete contrast to the heavy polymodalities and polyrhythms of Section A. The thick chordal texture of section A has now given way to a thinner texture dominated by a single melodic line of intricate birdsong, with supporting chords in the lower part. Messiaen has referred to birds as "les petites serviteurs de l'immaterielle joie" and they express their joy or sorrow in a language as explicitly meaningful as that provided by the Indian ragas and raginas. Certain principles of structure governing the rise and fall, accent and repetition of the ragas particularly appeal to Messiaen. [41]

This section is centred around the song of "an imaginary bird", to use Messiaen's description. Its song has traces of that of the blackbird and garden warbler.* For all this, Messiaen's notations are very precise, especially in his later works. His birdsong is nearly always supported by a chord, or complex of sound, the role of which is to imitate the colouration of birdsong by giving the birdsong timbre. Thus it is not surprising to find that Messiaen uses resonant chordal structures comprised of 4ths:



The wide spacing between the two parts toward the end of b.26 should be noted. Tertian spellings of chords do appear in this section as well:

* The problems in transcribing birdsong accurately are immense as Messiaen explains: "Birds sing in exceedingly fast tempos, which are absolutely impossible for our instruments, and so I have to transcribe the song in a slower tempo. Moreover, this speed is bound up with an extreme sharpness, birds being able to sing in exceedingly high registers that are inaccessible to our instruments, and so I notate them one, two, three or four octaves lower. And that is not all: for the same reason I have to suppress very small intervals that our instruments cannot execute. I replace these intervals of the order of a comma or two by semitones, but I keep the same scale of values between different intervals, which is to say that if a few commas correspond to a semitone, a true semitone will correspond to a whole tone or a third. Everything is enlarged, but the relationships stay the same, so that my version is still exact. It is the transposition of what I have heard on to a more human scale." [41] Art, of necessity selective, can imitate nature only in part. Nature, on the other hand, has within itself all the possibilities of imitating art.



The use of the piano's top register and the bass is entirely typical of his "style oiseaux". So too is the use of grace notes, accent, staccato, repetition and rebounding within narrow repertoires of notes:



The brief "oiseaux" motive in "Regard de la Vierge" is extended into an entire section in which several melodic motives repeat themselves. The recurring melodic cell identified in "Regard de l'étoile" makes its appearance here too.



Birdsong expresses the experience of a deeper, more mystical joy.

[8, p.42]

Structurally this movement is based on the repetition of the above two sections in the following way:

A ¹	b. 1-21	Rhythmic canon based on Tala 1 superimposed above the Theme of God.
B	b.22-33	"Free" section based on birdsong, supported by chords in the LH.
A ²	b.34-53	Repeat of b.1-21.
B	b.54-67	Repeat <u>+</u> of b. 22-33 with one or two new chords in the LH, and a cadenza based on the opening "oiseaux" motive, with some elaboration.
A ³	b.68-76	Repeat of b. 7-14 with an added link leading into
CODA	b.78-80	Based on the birdsong cadenza of b.66-67 now transposed an octave higher.

The formal structure is based on simple rondo form, Messiaen again choosing a traditional structure for his sectional, symmetrical approach to composition. Section B is based on the chromatic scale, symbolically significant since birdsong represents a free, mystical kind of joy. With the exception of the resonant chords supporting the birdsong in Section B, the overall dynamic throughout this movement is very soft. This is in keeping with the mysterious nature of this contemplation.

Harmonically, Messiaen uses chordal structures which are characteristic of his style and of his MLT. In Section A the following chordal structures may be found:

Structurally this movement is based on the repetition of the above two sections in the following way:

A ¹	b. 1-21	Rhythmic canon based on Tala 1 superimposed above the Theme of God.
B	b.22-33	"Free" section based on birdsong, supported by chords in the LH.
A ²	b.34-53	Repeat of b.1-21.
B	b.54-67	Repeat <u>+</u> of b. 22-33 with one or two new chords in the LH, and a cadenza based on the opening "oiseaux" motive, with some elaboration.
A ³	b.68-76	Repeat of b. 7-14 with an added link leading into
CODA	b.78-80	Based on the birdsong cadenza of b.66-67 now transposed an octave higher.

The formal structure is based on simple ronde form, Messiaen again choosing a traditional structure for his sectional, symmetrical approach to composition. Section B is based on the chromatic scale, symbolically significant since birdsong represents a free, mystical kind of joy. With the exception of the resonant chords supporting the birdsong in Section B, the overall dynamic throughout this movement is very soft. This is in keeping with the mysterious nature of this contemplation.

Harmonically, Messiaen uses chordal structures which are characteristic of his style and of his MLT. In Section A the following chordal structures may be found:

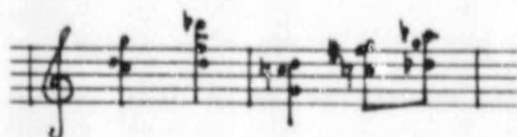
chords of 3rds and 6ths



chords of 4ths with added notes



chords of 5ths with added notes



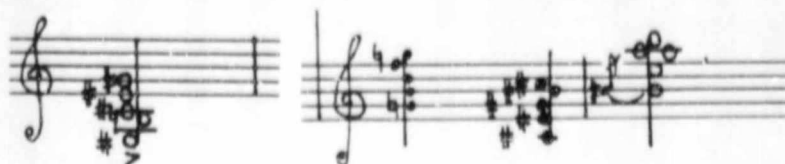
chords of 6ths and 2nds



diatonic chords within the Theme of God



chords of resonance:



chord on the dominant



Messiaen's chord building is dictated by considerations of colour rather than of structure or progression. Each chord or group of chords is a complete event in itself, distinguished from other chords by register, spacing and intervallic structure.

Several of Messiaen's "means of expression" listed in his Treatise, are used in this movement:

- (1) Modes of limited transposition (modes 2, 4, and 6).
- (2) Enlarged pedals, decorations and appoggiaturas (ostinato) in the recurring Theme of God.
- (3) Added dot, in the second part of the rhythmic canon, and in Tala 1.
- (4) The "Chord on the dominant" (b.12).

For this reason "Regard du Fils sur le Fils" serves as a good example of Messiaen's individual style of composition; and since rhythmic canons are a feature of his second period of composition the importance its use here is not to be underestimated.

7. PAR LUI TOUT A ETE FAIT (VI): By Him all hath been made
 The expansion of spaces and durations; galaxies, photons, spirals in
 contrary motion; inversed lightening; by Him (God the Word) all hath
 been made at one moment Creation reveals the bright shadow of His
 Voice.....

St John 1:3

The sixth contemplation is the longest, most complex, yet thoroughly worked-out in the first half of "Vingt Regards...". Its place within the twenty ties up with the association of the number 6 with creation, for the perfection of the universe was demonstrated by the creation of the world in six days. [17, p.103] This movement links up with I ("Regard du Pere") and III ("L'echange") in that all three share a common textural reference to God the Creator, and God the Word, musically represented by the Theme of God. This movement therefore concerns the Act of the Creation accomplished by the Son of God, or the Word, who in One with God. Messiaen elaborates: "It expresses the Creation of all things: space, time, stars, planets - and the countenance (i.e. the Thought) of God behind the flames and the seething - impossible even to speak of it. I have not attempted to describe it Instead I have sheltered behind the form of the Fugue." [5, p. 4] The reference in the accompanying text to "spirals in contrary motion" links this movement with "L'echange", in which "an ascending spiral" figure is alluded to in the opening bars. The spiral, as it appears in nature, is known to follow the Golden formula, the most famous of all axioms about proportion, established by the ancient Greeks. [19, p.47f]* As will be seen in this

* The Golden number, represented in the ratio $(\sqrt{5} + 1) : 2 = 1.618$, designated as Φ , in which the smaller part is to the larger part as the larger is to the whole, was derived from the Divine Proportion of the 15th century Italian mathematician Lucas Pacioli. This is an important concept in both ancient and modern artistic and architectural design.

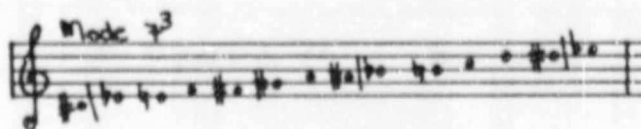
movement, Messiaen too is preoccupied with proportions and here again uses the proportions of the Indian Tala, "Ragavardhana".

Messiaen compares this fugue to that of Bach's "Art of Fugue" and Beethoven's Opus 106 (Hammerklavier) and says: "Like those great models, this one is an anti-scholastic fugue." [5, p.4] Although Messiaen has retained the important aspects of fugue form such the subject, counter-subject, episode, stretto and inversion, he has moulded these into the framework of his own musical language. This becomes apparent in the first bar.

The subject (S) is a percussive, short, rhythmical phrase. Each time it appears in the exposition it is presented in a different way. In the first entry (b.1) it is in triplets and sounds in the extreme bass register, staccato and forte:



It revolves around a D# axis, is chromatic and centred around mode 7³.



The countersubject (CS) immediately appears above, marking the first divergence from classical fugal practice. This revolves around mode 3² suggesting, in Messiaen's view, colours of orange with green and red, with spots of gold, and a milky white with iris reflections like an opal. [11, p. 18]



The intervals of the +4th and the compound 2nd (9th) dominate this CS. The "Answer" (A) does not appear as is customary in the traditional structure of the fugue. Instead, Messiaen reintroduces the subject, this time altering the rhythm and register, and superimposes this subject on itself in asymmetrical augmentation: (b. 3)

(Il y a des changements de rythme et de registres)

↑ = up a st ↓ = down a st S = same

These opening bars again reveal the importance of register, attack, timbre and dynamics in Messiaen's musical language. He has used the extreme bass register (LH) and the high treble register (RH) simultaneously, and combined staccato effects (LH) with fortissimo accents (RH). Messiaen also thickens the texture in b.4f by moving away from the octave doubling in the RH to chords of 3rds, 4ths and

7ths. Bar 4 also shows the appearance of a NRR cell, which recurs throughout this movement:  (=5 , a prime number)

In the third entry (b.7), the S becomes the A at the +5th, and both it and the CS are inverted:



This is immediately followed by the fourth entry. The A appears for the second time in succession, and is altered in rhythm and register, using octave displacement, and then superimposed upon the S, which continues the process of asymmetrical augmentation begun in b. 4:



Messiaen's fugal style differs from traditional fugue structure in that the S and A do not enter at their usual pitches of tonic (T) and dominant (D). The two opposite extremes of the piano's range are again emphasized. Messiaen gradually increases the space between the

two staves, symbolizing the "expansion of spaces and durations" mentioned in the accompanying text.

The descending  figure in b.6, now inverted in b. 12, covers the entire range of the piano. As such it symbolizes the "inverted lightening" referred to in the above text. Again the intervals of the +4th/-5th dominate.



This in turn, is followed by a stretto of the S in a triple canon of NRRs. These three voices are marked "marcato" and "f" whereas the lower one in the treble clef is marked "Legato" and "p", giving rise to contrasts in touch as well as register and dynamic. The importance of these NRR lies in their internal retrogradations; similarly, the composer's modes contain inherent internal transpositions which prevent multiple transpositions of the whole. Thus these rhythms realize horizontally what his modes realize vertically. They also symbolize the "Word" and the unchanging nature of God. [41]

(Strette du sujet, canon de rythmes non retrogradables)



Messiaen's rhythm may be said to be comprised of self-contained units, each several bars in length which are then juxtaposed. These units are in evidence throughout this movement, and are both reversed and divided, but rarely developed.

In b. 21 the CS is transformed in both rhythm and register in the following way:



The third of the cyclic themes, the Theme of Chords then appears a succession of six-, seven-, and eight-note chords in the treble register:

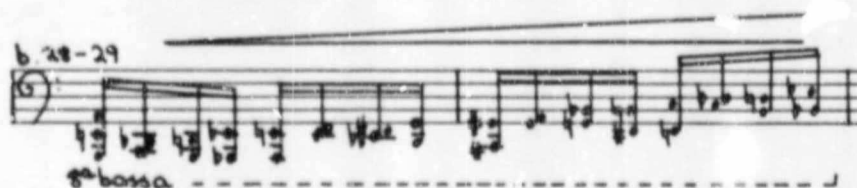


The texture is considerably thicker as a result of the chordal structures, but Messiaen allows them to sound *p*, in contrast to the *ff* and *sfz* of the previous two bars. Again, these chords are typical of Messiaen's style. Here they represent a brief break away from the thick contrapuntal texture of the previous bars. The CS then reappears briefly in b. 25 leading into a further entry of the S in a rhythmic triple canon, which is then superimposed on staccato "sound-effects" in the lowest register of the piano.

Resonant chordal structures comprised of 4ths as well as several second inversion structures dominate this new motive:

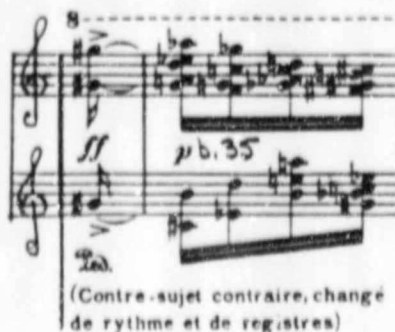


In b. 28-29 these chordal structures are modified to incorporate a chromatic progression thus:



Whereas the second voice enters the canon at the interval of a perfect 5th, the third voice enters at the +4th. These distances however, are not kept constant throughout the section. Messiaen's use of rhythmic canon as a means of arriving at polyrhythm is indicative that he felt the need for greater integration in his compositions.

In b. 34f the CS is inverted with a change in rhythm and register, above which the Theme of Chords is occasionally hinted at:



These bars then alternate with a statement of the CS in octaves finally leading to a restatement of the S in b. 42-43 as it first appeared in b. 1.

The S undergoes further transformation in b.44-48. It is treated in equal values ('normal' and dotted) and distributed over the entire range of the keyboard. Each of its individual notes is further emphasized by percussive grace-note groups, and then interwoven with fragments of the Theme of Chords, which is divided up into groups of one, two, three and four notes:

The Theme of Chords then reappears in the form of grace-notes and multiple trills (b.46-48), which Messiaen describes as "reminiscent of the attack and roll of metallic percussion. [5, p.4]

In the fugal "Divertissement" which follows (b.49-60) Messiaen superimposes two elements: (i) In the upper part the S is treated in NRR. The S is then progressively and symmetrically eliminated from either end, in this way maintaining the NRR. This technique demonstrates one of the most striking procedural uses of NRRs:



(ii) The bass simultaneously explores a fragment of the S which has been altered in rhythm and register, repeating it in asymmetrical augmentation. This 'ff' bass line in the lowest register of the piano, permeates the texture, thus strengthening the entire "Divertissement":



Messiaen maintains three dynamic levels throughout this section: 'f' for the upper part, 'p' for the middle chromatic part, arising out of the inversion of the CS, and 'ff' for the bottom part, with 'sfz' for the minor octaves in the extreme bass register. The S then appears in inversion (!), doubled at the octave, in b. 56, superimposed above the subject undergoing asymmetrical augmentation in the bass.



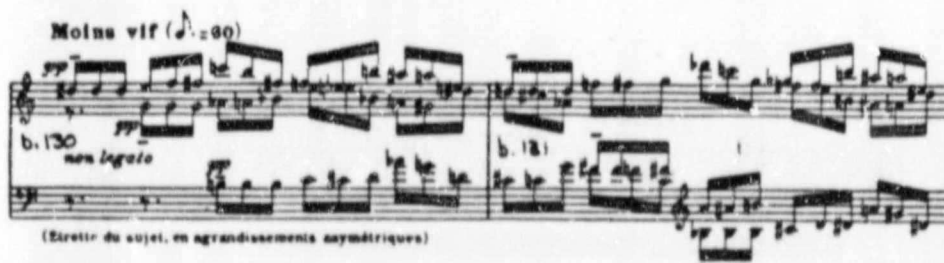
Following this the S is superimposed in inversion (RH) above the original (LH) sounding a perfect 4th higher than b. 1:



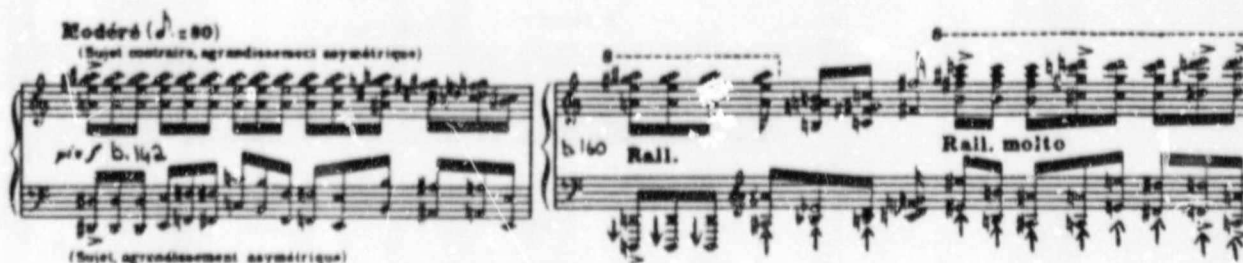
In his "Notes by the Composer" Messiaen acknowledges the influence of books he had read on astronomy, dealing with vast space and enormity on the one hand, and micro-physics, dealing with aspects of smallness on the other. This influence makes itself apparent in the Middle Section (b.61-129) which is based on the alternation of two contrasting phrase-durations: (1) a very brief motive based on the CS, heard in octaves in both extreme registers of the piano, which represents the extreme smallness of electrons and photons:



In this way these voices become more contrasted with each other in register, resulting in an alternating separation in space, and a return to overlap with one another:



This effect is further enhanced with the addition of chords, as the original S and its inversion are heard simultaneously in b.142f. The process of asymmetrical augmentation continues throughout this section and Messiaen describes the effect in the following way: "The whole passage is dominated by the infernal, machine-like inevitability of an 'accelerando', followed by a 'rallentando'. Rising from the most distant 'pianissimo' to a terrifying 'fortissimo', this enormous crescendo [over 19 bars] follows kinetic law with regard to intensity and density."* [Ibid]



* "Kinetic law" refers to the laws of physics governing momentum. The momentum of an object is defined as the product of its mass and velocity. In musical terms, mass may be interpreted either as density (texture), and velocity (tempo), or as intensity (dynamic/attack) or pace (tempo).

The next few bars are given the following description: "Another 'crescendo' leads imperceptibly from the blackness of atonality, to the victory of colour and brightness at the forceful entry of the joyful major third." [ibid]

Victorieux et agité (♩=132) Pressez

(Thème de Dieu)
(La face de Dieu derrière la flamme et le bouillonnement)

This chord heralds the sounding of the Theme of God, here representing God the Creator, victorious over His creation. The Theme of God is presented in resonant fanfare-type of chords, in slow minims.

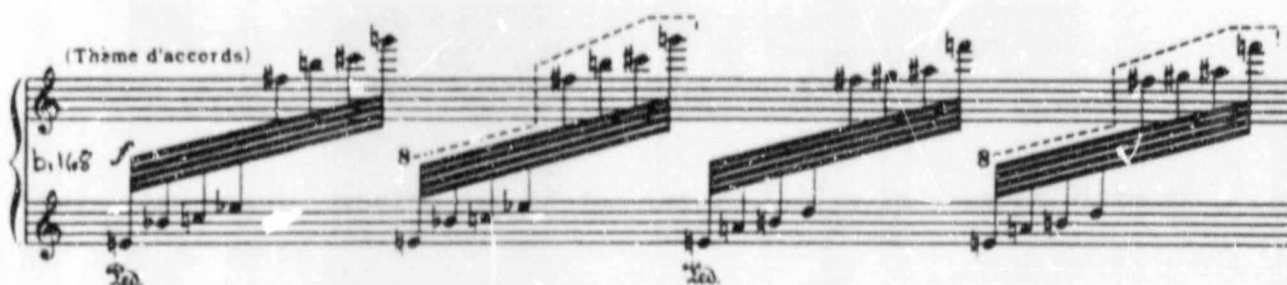
The chordal ostinato inbetween represents the face of God behind seething flames:

Au mouv^t

These chords are derived from the Theme of Chords and the CS, and are centred around mode 7. The Theme of God is heard three times in the following keys: F# major, B flat major and D major, rising a major

3rd successively. The major 3rd is the basis of the harmonic material of this movement. Inbetween these appearances Messiaen introduces:

(i) the Theme of chords in a harp-like motive in b. 168f:



This theme is incorporated into a gradual accelerando and crescendo, and is blurred by L. making it scarcely recognizable. It makes a further appearance in b. 181f, transposed a tone higher.

(ii) The Theme of Love (first appearance) in b. 170, 183, and 196-198:



This theme and the Theme of God are presented in a similar way throughout this section - in slow notes, and in the form a chorale-type fanfare.

(iii) The S in the bass with changing registers initiated each time by a grace note figure which Messiaen compares to a side drum "drag" in b. 171 and 184:

Au mouvt

ff sf b. 171

Sabason (Sujet)

(iv) A new figure arising out of the interval of a 2nd, which hints at the S in b. 176f:

A musical score for a piece titled "Au mouvt". The score is written for piano (p) and features a treble and bass staff. The tempo is marked "Allegro" (Allegro) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "ff" (fortissimo) and "f" (forte). The piece is in the key of E major, indicated by the key signature. The score is a page from a larger work, with the page number "126" visible at the bottom.

This motive is extended in b. 190.

Au mou^t 8

fff
b. 188

ff
b. 189

f
b. 190

cresc. b. 191

b. 192

(v) Bar 190f sees the introduction of a device which is very characteristic of his pianistic style:



The S is then repeated four times in the bass register. A 1-bar silence (b.204) leads into the Final Section (b.205) in which Messiaen introduces two Codas. In the first the whole of creation sings the Theme of God and the Theme of Love, which has now been transformed into the Theme of Mystical Love. Messiaen has again chosen the key of F# major for this section (b.205-220).

A very slow bar (b.221) arising out of a concentrated version of the Theme of Chords leads into the second Coda (b.222), centred on a return of the short and long phrase-durations first heard in the Middle Section. The material used here however is different. Whereas the short motive is now derived from the Theme of God,

Modéré (♩=100)
(Thème de Dieu)

(Groupes formant des valeurs très brèves et très longues)

the long phrase is derived from the Theme of chords.

This phrase diminishes in length with each appearance, from 31 ♩, to 23 ♩, whilst the short phrase is lengthened with each appearance, from 3 ♩ to 11 ♩ (3+3+3+2), all of these totals giving rise to prime numbers. Messiaen regards this process of gradual elimination as the basis of all thematic life. [1, p.35f] Amplification serves the same purpose. Another bar's silence (b.229) leads to a final proclamation of the S (b.230) in canon at the octave with changing registers:

Lent

(Sujet)

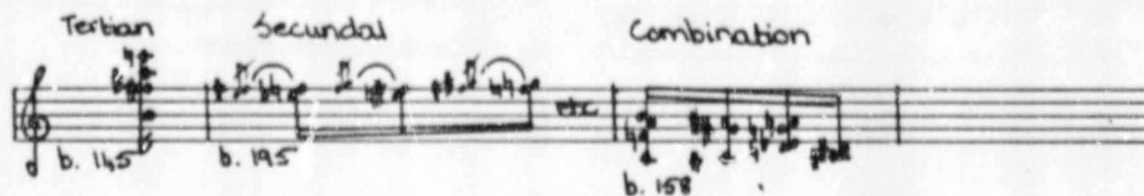
(Sujet)

Finally an arpeggio spanning the entire range of the piano ends this dramatic movement. As Messiaen points out, this figure summarizes the entire harmonic material of the piece: the major 3rd, the Theme of Chords, the whole colour spectrum. [T d]



"Par lui tout a été fait" exemplifies Messiaen's use of traditional formal structures around which he moulds his own personal language. This "Regard" reveals many characteristic features of his pianistic style in its use of:

(i) thick chordal structures which are secundal, tertial, or a combination of these:



(ii) use of resonance

musical score for piano, measures 26-27. The score is written for two staves (treble and bass). Measure 26 is marked *marcato* and *mf*, with a *stacc.* instruction. Measure 27 is marked *f marcato* and *m.dr. b. 27*. The bass line is labeled *8^a bassa* and is separated from the rest of the score by a dashed line.

These chords are characteristic of his MLT.

(iii) use of extreme registers of the piano simultaneously and apart:

musical score for piano, measures 28-30. The score is written for two staves (treble and bass). Measure 28 is marked *ff* and *no. 37*. Measure 29 is marked *f stacc.* and *(Contre-sujet) b. 43*. Measure 30 is marked *fff* and *CS*. The bass line is labeled *8^a bassa* and is separated from the rest of the score by a dashed line. The treble line is labeled *Treble*. The bass line is labeled *Bass*. The final measure is labeled *Both* and *no.*

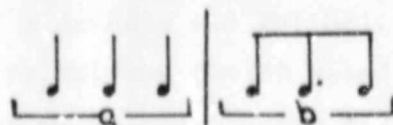
(iv) multiple trills (see b.46 above)

(v) multiple grace-note figures (see b.44 above)

(vi) contrasting textures

(vii) passages in contrary motion

Messiaen's prime concern with balance and symmetry of structure is clearly evident throughout this movement. Robert Sherlaw Johnson points out the degree of sophistication of balance between the main sections in this movement, and compares the overall structure to that of the ragavardhana, used in the stretto of b.13f. [8, p.38] Literally translated this rhythm means "increasing in colour and growing in love":



The Exposition (b. 1-48) has been described by Messiaen as a fugue, which then appears in retrograde in b. 68-129 after the Middle

Author Di Bisceglie Laureen Gail

Name of thesis Olivier Messiaen "Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jesus" : an analysis. 1987

PUBLISHER:

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg Library website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the Library website.