

INFLUENCES OF CLASSICAL INDIAN MUSIC IN ALBERT ROUSSEL'S *EVOCATIONS*

NOÉMI KARÁCSONY¹, MĂDĂLINA DANA RUCSANDA²

SUMMARY. An important figure of early 20th century music, the French composer Albert Roussel was deeply influenced by his encounter with India, which led to the composition of several orientalist works. The present paper aims to disclose the influences of classical Indian music in the orchestral work *Evocations*. Despite the Impressionist sound of the musical discourse, a careful analysis reveals the incorporation of several scalar structures in which Hindu rāgas can be recognized. Roussel goes beyond the musical representation of India: his goal is not the creation of a musical work with powerful oriental sound, but the evocation of the impact this encounter had on his creation. Situated at the crossroad of several stylistic orientations, Roussel incorporates Impressionist, Neo-classical and Post-romantic influences in rigorously devised structures, aiming to create an unusual and novel sound.

Keywords: Albert Roussel, orientalism, Impressionism, India, rāga

Introduction

The musical works of the 20th century distinguish themselves due to the complexity of the forms of expression, in which various combinations, overlaps, fusions, and influences between the existing styles can be identified. Thus, regarding the artistic movements and orientations of the 20th century, the following can be mentioned: Verismo, Expressionism, the new national schools, as well as new techniques related to sonorous systems or sources and means of producing sound, going beyond the use of historical instruments, and disclosing the electronic universe³.

The contradiction between various movements will reach its height with the abolition of the tonal center (Schönberg) and the eradication of the concept of work of art (Cage).

¹ PhD, Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music), E-mail: noemi.karacsony@unitbv.ro

² Professor Dr., Transilvania University of Braşov (Faculty of Music), E-mail: m_rucsanda@unitbv.ro

³ Constantinescu, Grigore – Boga, Irina. 2008. *O călătorie prin istoria muzicii* [Journey through the history of music]. Bucureşti: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică R.A., p.163.

French music composition of the first decades of the 20th century is marked by the interweaving of various stylistic traits: the post-romantic music language of Vincent d'Indy, which echoes the works of Camille Saint-Saëns, the Impressionism of Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, or the Neo-classicism of the interwar period, which may be considered the prolonging of the cultural, political, and religious renaissance which had begun in France in the previous century.

Modern French composers strived to renew the musical language they employed in their works, weaving together the resources of their music as well as those of the colonized countries or regions, but mostly those considered to be *exotic*, crystallizing these influences into a specific mode of expression which also aimed to preserve French tradition.

French music of the early 20th century was influenced by the figure of Claude Debussy, whose Impressionist works would later contribute to the emergence of the Neo-classical trend. Another important figure of the first decades of the 20th century was Albert Roussel, whose compositions were influenced by Debussy and Ravel, but also by the ideas and principles of the Schola Cantorum de Paris. Ever in the search of unique and novel sounds, the works of Roussel distinguish themselves especially due to the unusual harmonic constructions and timbral combinations employed by the composer. In the following, several distinctive features of Roussel's work will be presented, as well as the composer's contribution to the evolution of French musical orientalism. The analysis also aims to reveal the stylistic influences which determined the composer's unique mode of musical expression.

Albert Roussel—Stylistic Traits

The name of Albert Roussel (1869–1937) is most often associated with his orchestral works, nonetheless, his contribution to the evolution of French opera is also important. The guidance he received at the beginning of his musical studies provided Roussel with a solid foundation. The composer was encouraged to continue his education at the Schola Cantorum de Paris, where he studied composition and orchestration under the careful guidance of Vincent d'Indy between the years 1898–1907.

During his years of apprenticeship Roussel also began teaching, passing over his ideas regarding music and the creation of musical compositions to his students, among whom the names of Erik Satie, Edgar Varèse, or Bohuslav Martinu can be mentioned (the latter dedicates to Roussel his *Serenade for chamber orchestra H. 199* written in 1930).

Roussel's first important orchestral works were the prelude *Résurrection*, Op. 4 (1903) and his first symphony in D minor, *The Poem of the Forest*, Op. 7 (1904–1906). He also composed chamber pieces, works for voice and piano, as well as works for piano solo, in which Roussel's unique mode of expression can be perceived. At the beginning of his career Roussel was influenced by musical Impressionism, but gradually his style of composition became more concrete, and the composer's maturity and understating of his artistic capabilities and possibilities were thoroughly revealed in his opera-ballet *Padmâvatî* (1923). Other representative works of Roussel are the ballets *Le festin de l'araignée* (1913), *Bacchus et Ariane* (1931) or *Aeneas* (ballet for choir and orchestra, 1935), his four symphonies, the composition for orchestra, choir, and soloists *Evocations* (1910–1911), and other works for stage (incidental music, ballets, opera), chamber works and works for solo voice or instruments. What is remarkable regarding Roussel's compositions is the diversity of genres approached by the composer, as well as the fusion between these.

The fashion in which Roussel conceives his musical discourse reflects the balanced, classical personality of the composer, who will gradually approach a Neo-classical manner of expression. From the ambiguity of Impressionist sounds Roussel will proceed to musical representations based on clarity and balance of form, approaching rather the rigor of the tonal-functional system than the constructions promoted by his Impressionist contemporaries. Moreover, what is striking about Roussel's works is the rhythmic vitality of his discourse, a distinctive feature that can be remarked in several of his works. The importance of rhythm could be linked to the composer's interest in jazz—a music genre that will represent a source of fascination and inspiration for the composers of the early 20th century. The attraction towards this music is discernible in Roussel's *Jazz dans la nuit*.

The orchestration of Roussel's works is characterized by the severity of contrapuntal textures, a distinctive trait also promoted by the Schola Cantorum. Nonetheless, it is equally possible for this compositional approach to have derived from Roussel's first teacher of harmony, counterpoint, and fugue, the organ player Giguët (student of Saint-Saëns, whose compositional conception Giguët inherited and presented to his students). Regarding timbre, the musical representations of Roussel are denser and harsher than the subtle and refined discourse of composers such as Debussy or Fauré. The rigor of form and the classical structure of the composer's ideas soothe his often-tumultuous expression, nonetheless, the manner in which Roussel handles the orchestral apparatus indicates the existence of certain elements that belong to the universe of musical Romanticism. This separates Roussel from such composers as Stravinsky of the members of the group *Les Six*. However, although the sound of his works seems denser than that of his contemporaries, Roussel's work can

be clearly distinguished from the post-romantic utterances of German composers of the same period, such as Anton Bruckner or Gustav Mahler.

Roussel's manner of musical illustration reflects the composer's contact with the Orient. As member of the French Navy, he travels to the southern region of Vietnam, and later he could visit India and discover a country that will inspire him to compose several remarkable works. His attraction to the novel and unusual can be observed in Roussel's use of foreign-sounding musical modes, echoing the scales of Hindu music or the ancient Greek modes. Despite this fact, Roussel's exoticism typifies a different perspective than the one promoted by his predecessors or contemporaries, bearing the influence of Impressionism: The Orient evoked in Roussel's works *suggests*, the composer refrains from precise descriptions, striving to reveal the world he encountered as the Occidental spectator of Oriental scenes. His efforts are directed towards the devising of novel means of expression and combinations of timbre, rather than striving to faithfully evoke the sound of the Orient using Orient-inspired elements or accurate transcriptions.

Albert Roussel's orientalism is based to a great extent on the rigorous and academic approach inherited from his instruction at the Schola Cantorum. The composer does not strive to represent certain stereotypes associated with the East, rather his musical depictions evoke Roussel's impressions following the contact with the Orient. Using specific scales, borrowed from the music of India or the Far East, Roussel enriched the harmonic language of his epoch in a particular manner, but without relinquishing the equilibrium of the tonality.

Schola Cantorum de Paris

An institution for superior music education, Schola Cantorum was founded in 1894 as a reaction against the educational vision of the Paris Conservatoire, which prioritized the genre of opera and the idea of virtuosity. The founders of the Schola were organist and composer Alexandre Guilmant, and composers Vincent D'Indy and Charles Border. Notable teachers of the Schola were Isaac Albéniz, Olivier Messiaen, Darius Milhaud, and Albert Roussel himself, to name only a few.

Initially, the main purpose of the Schola Cantorum was the reform of religious music and the encouragement of compositions inspired by Gregorian chant and Renaissance music. Affiliated with the Institute Catholique, the Schola Cantorum represented a political threat for the republican government which, until that point, had had dominion over music education.⁴

⁴ Pasler, Jann. 2000. *Race, Orientalism, and Distinction in the Wake of the "Yellow Peril" in Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation and Appropriation in Music*, edited by Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, p. 91.

The Schola Cantorum supported the analysis and creation of instrumental music, emphasizing the importance of the study of counterpoint for the development of future composers. The members of the Schola reminisced with nostalgia about the period which preceded the French Revolution and paid special attention to the music of the French provinces, the *chanson populaires* considered to be a valuable emblem of French culture and tradition. Pasler remarks the Schola's interest in these *chansons populaires*, believed to have derived from the ancient Greek modes, a preoccupation which was reflected in the publishing of volumes of songs and the organization of events dedicated to this genre.⁵

Exoticism and Orientalism

Although these terms are often confused, it is important to differentiate between them. *Exoticism* is an orientation in European arts and literature, which aims to describe settings and customs of faraway places, which are perceived to be unusual or interesting. Locke considers that *exoticism* „can be broadly encompassing and relatively abstract”, often being related to places that are distant from the West, or to societies that function based on different rules than those considered established by the norm.⁶ Thus, exoticism also encompasses those artistic products which aim to depict the Orient. Lacombe emphasizes that it is important to distinguish between exoticism in general and its *offshoot*, *orientalism*.⁷ Due to the fact that both exoticism and orientalism described what was believed to be unusual for the Western public, it was common to associate these terms with the idea of alterity and the representation of the Other.

The Orient has constituted an important stimulus and source of inspiration for French artists and musicians, while orientalism, genuine or imaginary, represents a recurring phenomenon in the history of French culture. The tradition of musical exoticism was enriched with compositions inspired by the Orient, which contributed to the development of a specific musical language: *musical orientalism*, represented by the works of composers such as Félicien David, Georges Bizet, Camille Saint-Saëns, or Jules Massenet.

⁵ Pasler, Jann. 2000. *Op. cit.*, p.92.

⁶ Locke, Ralph P. 2007. "A Broader View of Musical Exoticism". *The Journal of Musicology* 24 (4), p. 479.

⁷ Lacombe, Hervé. 2001. *The Keys to French Opera in the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley – Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 179.

In the works of 19th century composers, the Orient is often a representation of a feminine Other (as is suggested by the titles of some of these works and the assignment of the main parts to female characters: *Le roi du Lahore*, *Samson et Dalila*, *Hérodiade*, *Thaïs*, etc.), different from the powerful and masculine West which extends its domination over it. However, at the beginning of the 20th century this point of view will alter, due to political events which involve the East. Albert Roussel's *Evocations* mirrors this shift in the perception of the Orient: in the last part of this work the composer attributes the most important vocal part to the baritone, thus evoking the image of a masculine Orient. Even though the works of musical orientalism highlight the differences between West and East (the Other) using precise musical elements (intervals, timbres, instruments), Roussel does not aim to emphasize the concept of alterity and the differences between these two worlds. Through his musical depictions, the composer strives to obtain a novel manner of musical expression, based on the impressions which were awakened in him upon the meeting of the Other.

Oriental Traces in Roussel's *Evocations*

Inspired by Roussel's travel to India, the composition for orchestra, choir, and soloists (contralto, tenor, and baritone) *Evocations* was first performed on 18th May 1912 at the Salle Gaveau in Paris, within a concert of the Société National, and gained the acclaim of public and critics alike. The work has three parts, each bearing a descriptive title, faithfully depicted by the musical discourse:

- I. Les Dieux dans l'ombre des cavernes
- II. La Ville rose
- III. Aux bords du fleuve sacré

What is truly striking about this work is its sound, rather related to the specific atmosphere of Impressionist music. Although it was inspired by the composer's encounter with India, *Evocations* is not filled with oriental elements that can be easily identified from the first listening experience: the composer *suggests* the quality and atmosphere of the Indian settings, he does not strive to create an accurate evocation of the encountered culture. Nonetheless, a deeper analysis, supplemented by the knowledge of some of the principles which lie at the core of classical Indian music and its construction, may reveal interesting connections between Roussel's work and the Indian music he had heard during his sojourn in India.

The first part, *Les Dieux dans l'ombre des cavernes*, entirely instrumental, resembles an Impressionist symphonic poem which evokes the harmony and silence of the daytime, followed by the visit to the Ellora caves and the discovery of the Kailāśa temple dedicated to the Hindu deity Shiva, and dominated by three of the traditional representations of the God (as God of dance, God of destruction and God of love). The discovery of the temple is followed by the return to daylight. The transparent and gleaming texture of the musical discourse, as well as the way the composer handles the various instruments, evokes the image of the temples and monasteries in Ellora. But despite the representation of a setting that is important from a spiritual point of view, the musical discourse expresses the emotional impact which the encounter of Indian culture and philosophy had on the composer. This approach distinguishes Roussel's style of composition, situated between the elegance and transparency of Impressionism, the clarity and balance of Neo-classicism, and the overwhelming emotional discourse of post-romantic symphonies.

Pasler remarks on the influence of Ravel or Debussy in the first part of *Evocations*, stating that the descriptions in Roussel's diary—the sounds he had heard and the sights he had seen—may have inspired the opening of this part.⁸ The work begins with a melodic motif comprising an ascending perfect fourth followed by a descending minor third, played by the horn and clarinet and supported by the cello, double-bass, and bassoon, which play the role of the pedal, while the violin and the harp intervene with delicate arabesques (E.g. 1). After the third intonation of the motif, the flute and the oboe will assume the ornamental line of the violin.

⁸ Pasler, Jann. 2000. *Op. cit.*, p.96.

1 COR ANGLAIS

2 CLARINETTES en Sib

1 CLARINETTE BASSE en Sib

2 BASSONS

1 CONTREBASSON

1^{er} et 2^e CORs en FA

3^e et 4^e CORs en FA

1^{re} HARPE

2^{de} HARPE

Lent ♩ = 58

1^{ers} VIOLONS (Div.)

2^{ds} VIOLONS (Div.)

Evocations: I. Les Dieux dans l'ombre des cavernes, m. 1–2 (opening)
excerpt from the orchestral score

Although the composer does not utilize musical elements with a powerful oriental connotation for the Western listener (such as the augmented second or the incorporation of oriental scales), Roussel's *Evocations* is rich in suggestive musical images, thus following one of the ideas which govern Hindu art: to suggest experiences that cannot be described, to create an atmosphere which conveys specific emotions.

The section marked by the agogic indication *1. Très lent* reveals the incorporation of melodic structures that can be associated with scales or *rāgas* from Indian classical music. The complexity of the concept *rāga* renders the translation of the term difficult, especially in accordance with Western music theory. *Rāga* is more than a mode, as the term is generally translated, because several *rāgas* may have similar scalar structures. It rather signifies *passion*, or the definite emotional state represented by a certain group of sounds. *Rāgas* can be used with the purpose of creating a certain

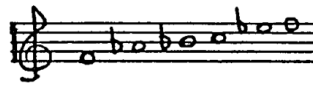
atmosphere, of suggesting a particular aesthetic flavor. Alain Daniélou compares *rāgas* to the figured bass in Western music," leaving every possibility open for variations but having the outline of the expression defined in advance".⁹ Other scholars, such as Bruno Nettl, support this idea, regarding *rāga* as a concept situated between melody and scale, embodying the union of melodic elements organized in a manner that evokes a unique emotional sentiment in the listener.¹⁰

The theme for oboe solo (E.g. 3), in the afore-mentioned section, reveals the incorporation by Roussel of the *rāga* Kafi (E.g. 2), reproduced below using Western notation.¹¹ This *rāga* is used in Hindustani classical music and corresponds to Kharaharapriya in Carnatic music. It is usually played in the evening, and its emotional expression is light, contented, gentle, and harmonious.

E.g. 2



Rāga Kafi



The *rāga* extracted from the theme of the oboe (E.g. 3)

E.g. 3



Evocations: I. Les Dieux dans l'ombre des cavernes, section 1. Très lent
excerpt of the line of the oboe from the orchestral score

⁹ Daniélou, Alain. 1943. *Introduction to the Study of Musical Scales*. London: The India Society, p.145.

¹⁰ Nettl, Bruno; Ruth M. Stone; James Porter; Timothy Rice. 1998. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: South Asia: The Indian Subcontinent*. New York and London: Routledge.

¹¹ Daniélou, Alain. 1949. *Northern Indian Music. Volume One—Theory & Technique*. London: Christopher Johnson Publishers Limited, p.130.

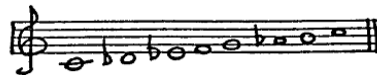
In the section that bears the agogic indication 3. *Lent et grave*, the composer discreetly introduces another structure of Indian inspiration: a careful analysis of the double-bass line in measures 43–58 (E.g. 4) reveals the incorporation of *rāga Dhenuka*, specific for the Carnatic music of Southern India (E.g. 5).

E.g. 4



Evocations: I. Les Dieux dans l'ombre des cavernes, section 3. *Lent et grave* excerpt of the line of the double-bass from the orchestral score

E.g. 5



Rāga Dhenuka reproduced using Western notation

Carnatic *rāgas* are referred to as *Mēḷakarta* (*mela* or *karta*). *Mēḷakarta* *rāgas* are fundamental scales from which other scales can derive. The equivalent of the *Mēḷakarta* in Hindustani music is *Thaat*. The 72 recognised *Mēḷakarta* *rāgas* are organized in 12 groups or *chakrās*, each containing 6 *rāgas*. *Rāga Dhenuka* belongs to the second group, *Netra chakra*, and is the 9th of the 72 *mela*.

Although the important notes of this *rāga* are E flat and B flat (according to western notation), Roussel grants greater significance to the note G, thus distancing from the atmosphere of this scalar structure. The insistent repetition of the augmented fourth, between the notes D flat and G, also suggests the influence of Indian music.¹²

The mood of the first part of *Evocations*, mysterious and calm up to this point, will gradually alter, as suggested by the motif played by the flute, oboe, bassoon, and horn at the beginning of the *Tres animé* section (the section begins in measure 77). The restlessness of the musical discourse evokes the image of the sacred monuments dedicated to the Hindu deities.

¹² Kaufmann, Walter. 1968. *The Ragas of North India*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, p.75.

Observing the orchestration, the contrast between the opening of the work and the complex chromatic discourse that suggests the image of the temple is discernible. Gradually, the serene ambience is enveloped in the dramatic contour of a melodic structure that suggests the mystical character of the composer's encounter with the monuments in Ellora.

The second part of the work, *La ville rose*, is also instrumental. Roussel's musical depiction was probably inspired by Jaipur (The Pink City): a busy capital, basking in the rays of the setting sun. The composer does not impose the listener the image of a particular setting, offering the possibility of (re)constructing a personal representation, enriched with one's desired details. Unlike the first part of *Evocations*, here Roussel invests his discourse with a marked oriental sound, due to the orchestral writing, the way he utilizes certain timbres, as well as the motifs he employs.

The main theme of this part is pentatonic (beginning with section *Un peu plus animé*, measure 39—E.g. 6) and represents the musical material the composer will elaborate on in the first section. The anhemitonic pentatonic scale, regarded as one of the oldest systems in the world, is known in Hindustani music as *rāga Bhupali* (its equivalent in Carnatic music is *Mohanam*).

E.g. 6

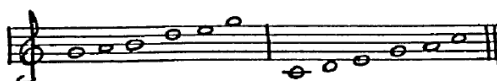
***Evocations: II. La ville rose, Un peu plus animé, m. 39–44*
The main pentatonic theme (excerpt from the orchestral score)**

This scale lacks the two extreme fifths (scale degrees IV and VII) that represent in the modern scale system the elements of tension and roughness (E.g. 7). The absence of F and B (F is the symbol of love, while

B is that of physical pleasure) suggests non-attachment,¹³ which may explain Roussel's choice of using his pentatonic motif in lively discourse.

The overlapping of the syncopated rhythm, played by the 1st violin, with the offbeat intervention of the flute, suggests the sway of dance that characterizes this part of the work. The light and lively quality of the music, as well as the construction of the discourse, suggest a scherzo form.

E.g. 7



Rāga Bhupali reproduced using Western notation

The central section is slow, suggesting the elegance of dance due to the undulating, sinuous melodic line of modal construction and static harmonies. The colorful musical images of this section create no emotional tension, which would ruin the balance of the entire part. The return of the first section, freely elaborated, is preceded by a gradual *accelerando*.

The dance-like quality of the middle section evokes the image of the sacred dances in the Indian tradition, closely related to the concept of rāga: the performance of sacred dances is accompanied by certain rāgas, depending on the character of the dance and the mood that ought to be conveyed. As in the first part of the work, the composer's efforts are directed towards the musical suggestion of a particular atmosphere, highlighted through the chosen timbres and sound structures.

The third part of the work, *Aux bords du fleuve sacré* was inspired by the city on the banks of the Ganges River, Benares (Varanasi). The part is written for orchestra, choir, and three soloists (contralto, tenor, baritone). The structure and mood of the musical discourse are subordinated to the text provided by writer and music critic Calvocoressi. The prose poem evokes the life-giving force of the sacred river, the image of temples and lotus flowers. Due to its structure and described images, Calvocoressi's text offers a suitable foundation for the unfolding of future musical evocations.

Aux bords du fleuve sacré is introduced by a choral part, which announces the sunset and the proximity of night. Roussel's music illustrates the images described in Calvocoressi's poem: lovers wandering beneath the rays of the moon, charmed by the scent of the night. In the following

¹³ Daniélou, Alain. 1954. *Northern Indian Music. Volume Two—The Main Ragas*. London: Halcyon Press, p. 156.

development, the chorus will sing a melodic line with no text, the melismatic phrases sung on vocals emphasizing the voluptuous atmosphere of the night, slowly progressing towards the climax of the discourse. The melismatic phrases sung with no text are reminiscent of Hindustani vocal music, rich in ornaments and moments of vocal virtuosity. At the same time, the vocal line of the choral part may evoke the chanting of mantras. The musical discourse is fluid and sinuous, due to the modulations which create tonal instability. The mood obtained by the composer using these sound effects (melismatic chanting of vocals and the use of frequent modulations) suggests mystical ecstasy.

The ample choral part is followed by the solo parts dedicated to the tenor and contralto voices. The two vocal timbres can be associated with the image of the lovers described in the poem, the composer's choice for these vocal types possibly being related to the quality and particular characteristics of these: the contralto timbre is often employed in orientalist musical works with the purpose of emphasizing the sensuality connected to the image of the Orient, from the point of view of the Western spectator, while the tenor timbre expresses vitality and strength (this choice of timbres can be observed in Camille Saint-Saëns' opera, *Samson et Dalila*, where the main characters represent the West and the East, the masculine and the feminine).

Roussel advances a novel approach regarding the idea of representation through color: in the vocal distribution of the final part of *Evocations* the most important part is attributed to the baritone. Thus, the composer achieves the evocation of a masculine Orient, situated on the same level of strength and evolution as the West, an idea which is opposed to the approach of his forerunners. The analysis of the baritone solo reveals interesting similarities with Indian classical music from the southern region: the vocal part is rather a continuous musical declamation, which evokes the Carnatic vocal tradition. The text of the baritone solo is emphasized through a mainly syllabic discourse, a chanted declamation that aims for expressiveness, and not the display of vocal virtuosity. This approach facilitates the apprehension of the words, placing the text in the foreground of the musical discourse, the improvisatory character of which is dictated by the structural particularity of the poem (E.g. 8).

The sunrise is announced by the intervention of a choral part, which evokes the morning prayers of Hindu priests. This moment may be compared to a hymn dedicated to the sun, as suggested by the tonality towards which the musical discourse gradually gravitates: A Major. Alain Daniélou explains that in classical Indian music each note of the scale bears a certain expression, a particular effect on the human body and mind, each corresponding to one of the subtle centers (chakra) of the body, thus being attributed a particular color, a mood, a deity.¹⁴

¹⁴ Daniélou, Alain. 1949. *Op. cit.*, p. 116.

The note A, *Dhaivata*, relates to the yellow color, a nuance that will govern the tonal structure based on this note (the tonic A). The conclusive establishment of the musical discourse on the A tonic (full of the strength and vitality connected to the yellow color), after numerous modulations that convey the discourse a sensual feature, emphasizes the resemblance of this section with a hymn to the sun.

E.g. 8

Baryton Solo

Sous le ciel noir et sil . lon . né d'éclairs il . lu . mi . nant la . nue, Plus haut que l'œil ne peut atteindre et que l'oiseau ne peut vo .

. ler, Son front ma . jes . tu . eux montant jusqu'aux palais des im . mor . tels, Se dres . se la mon .

. ta . gne sou . verai . ne Son ombre im . men . se ter . ri . fie les cœurs ti . mi . des des hu . mains,

pizz.

Evocations: III. Aux bords du fleuve sacré
Excerpt from the baritone solo

The unity of the final part of the work is ensured by the return of thematic material and a clever processing of the tonal material: the key of A Major will reveal itself as the main key of the movement, despite its late disclosure and the freedom with which the composer handles the modulations in this part.

Here also, the music discloses the influence of classical Indian music: the composer employs musical writing that resembles the melismatic and ornamental character of Indian music, while at the same time evoking the fluidity of water (linked to the image of the sacred river, the Ganges). Regarding the ornaments employed by Roussel, Pasler argues that these allude to the *gamaka*, the ornamentation used in Indian music, which involves the variation of pitch through the oscillation between adjacent and distant notes.¹⁵ These specific elements may be observed in the opening section of this part, where the smooth movement to and away from neighbour tones conjures the *gamakas* (E.g. 9).

¹⁵ Pasler, Jann. 2000. *Op. cit.*, p.96.

E.g. 9

Modéré ♩ = 80

1^{re} et 2^e GRANDES FLÛTES
3^e GRANDE FLÛTE
ou PETITE FLÛTE
2 HAUTBOIS
1 COR ANGLAIS
2 CLARINETTES en LA
1 CLARINETTE BASS

***Evocations: III. Aux bords du fleuve sacré*, m. 1–6
Excerpt from the orchestral score**

Although Roussel does not clearly state this in his journal or in his letters, the line attributed to the flute in the section which bears the agogic indication 7. *Modéré* (m.69), through its sinuous flowing and ornaments, alludes to the improvisatory quality of Indian music (E.g. 10).

E.g. 10

1^{re} et 2^e
Gdes Fl.
1^{er} Solo
p

1^{re} et 2^e
Gdes Fl.
mf
1^{er} Solo

1^{re} et 2^e
Gdes Fl.
p
8

***Evocations: III. Aux bords du fleuve sacré*, section 7. *Modéré* (m. 69–76)
Excerpt from the orchestral score**

The entire *Evocations* is rich in rhythmic and melodic ornaments, in interesting effects, such as the *glissando*, and in novel combinations of timbre, which reflects the composer's efforts to create a complex musical depiction of the India he had encountered.

Conclusions

Albert Roussel occupies a significant place in the musical scenery of the early 20th century. Roussel can be partly compared to his predecessor, French composer Camille Saint-Saëns: both composers stand out from their contemporaries due to their balanced temperament and rigorous musical conception. To be utterly understood, Roussel's music reclaims thorough immersion in the depth of the score, revealing thus the complexity and beauty of his compositions.

What is surprising about his creation is the balanced use of Impressionist, Neo-classical and Post-romantic elements. Even though the sound structures devised by Roussel are rigorously organized, the message captured by these impressive edifices of classical essence oscillates between the fragility and transparency of impressionist images and the depth of emotion which echoes the romantic longing toward an absolute ideal.

The work *Evocations* was sketched during Roussel's travel to India and reached its final form at his return to France, in 1910. The main purpose of the composer is the evocation of his inner world, of the experiences and emotions provoked by the encounter with India, its complex culture, and philosophy. This may explain the unusual quality of Roussel's musical orientalism, as well as the unique musical discourse of the composer. In his works, Roussel goes beyond the evocation of India: he expresses his own emotions, enwrapped in the exotic scent of the Orient.

The sensuality of sound, associated in the thoughts of the Western listener with the image of the Orient, is subjected to a diligent intellectual process, and despite the lush orchestration and complex harmonic writing, the most surprising features of *Evocations* is its rhythmic vitality and well-defined melodic contour.

Roussel was in constant search for new sounds and impressions, the use of strange or harsh harmonic structures (from the perspective of the early 20th century audience), or the juxtaposition of certain timbres aiming for the creation of surprising sound effects. The analysis of Indian rāgas may be further extended, but it is rather important to establish the modal nature of Roussel's music, which directly influences the undulating melody, with its leaps, displaced accents, chromaticism, constant modulations, and tonal instability, regarded by Hoérée specific to Roussel.¹⁶

¹⁶ Hoérée, Arthur. 1938. *Albert Roussel*. Paris: Rieder.

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