

**THE ANALYSIS OF REGARD DES ANGES COMPOSED BY
OLIVIER MESSIAEN**

**Olivier Messiaen Tarafından Bestelenen Meleklerle Bakış'ın
Analizi**

DOI NO: 10.36442/AMADER.2020.18

Çağdaş SOYLAR¹

Abstract

*The purpose of this study is to demonstrate Olivier Messiaen's musical language as applied to his piano music. It also provides a picture of how he combined his unique compositional technique with his strong Catholic faith and presented them in his composition. The research materials have been gathered from published secondary sources and from direct performance of the music. General biographical articles about Messiaen's life have been researched to emphasize significant events of his life that are directly reflected in his music. Also, the background of *Vingt Regards Sur l'Enfant- Jésus* (Twenty Gazes upon the Infant Jesus) has been studied to find out how the analyzed work is related to the entire cycle. A formal breakdown of the piece (modes of the limited transposition, themes of the *Vingt Regards*, rhythmic and harmonic structures etc.) has been made to understand how the musical language and rhythmic structure interact to generate tonal progression and formal structure, how the piece relate to the title, and how the piece relate to the religious and mystical views of the entire cycle and his general musical output.*

Keywords: *Vingt Regards, Modes of Limited Transposition, Rhythmic Structure, Harmonic Structure.*

Özet

*Bu çalışmanın amacı, Olivier Messiaen'in piyano eserlerinde kullandığı müzik dilini ifade etmektir. Aynı zamanda, Messiaen'in özgün beste tekniğini güçlü katolik inancı ile birleştirip eserlerine nasıl yansıttığını göstermektedir. Araştırma verileri, yayınlanmış kaynaklardan ve bestecinin çalınan eserlerinden toplanmıştır. Messiaen'in müziğini doğrudan etkileyen önemli olayları vurgulamak için, hayatı hakkında yazılmış genel biyografik makaleler araştırılmıştır. Ayrıca, analizi yapılmış olan No: XIV, *Regard des Anges* adlı bölümün, eserin bütünü ile olan ilişkisini anlamak için *Vingt**

¹ Dr., Pianist and Author, Pennsylvania State University School of Music, soylarc@yahoo.com

* This article is prepared from the doctoral dissertation, *The Musical Language of Messiaen's Vingt Regards Sur l'Enfant- Jésus, No: XIX: Je dors, mais mon cœur veille, No: XIV Regard Des Anges*, by Çağdaş Soy lar at Yaş ar University Faculty of Art and Design, Music Department. Also, this dissertation got published into book under the title of "Messiaen's Musical Language on the Holy Child" by Wipf and Stock Publishers in the United States, on October 26, 2018.

Regards Sur l'Enfant- Jésus hakkında geniş bir araştırma yapılmıştır. Bölümün müzik dilinin ve ritmik yapısının birbirleri ile bağlantı kurarak yarattığı tonal geçiş ve biçimsel yapıyı, içeriğinin ismi ile olan ilişkisini, eserin dinsel ve mistik tarafı ile olan bağı ve bestecinin genel müzik görüşü ile olan ilişkisini anlamak için bölüm parçalara ayrılıp incelenmiştir (Sınırlı transpozisyon modları, Vingt Regards`ın temaları, ritmik ve armonik yapısı vs.).

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Vingt Regards, Sınırlı Transpozisyon Modları, Ritmik Yapı, Armonik Yapı.*

INTRODUCTION

Olivier Messiaen was a prominent twentieth-century French composer whose works are widely researched and frequently performed. His unique musical language includes highly complicated concepts that are derived from a variety of sources. Greek rhythms, Hindu rhythms, and bird calls influenced him deeply; his Catholic faith, however, had the greatest impact on his compositions. This study demonstrates how Messiaen combined his unique compositional technique with his strong faith and presented them in his compositions. It gives a detailed analysis of *Regards Des Anges* (Gaze of the Angels), a religiously motivated piece from *Vingt Regards Sur l'Enfant- Jésus*, to explore how Messiaen integrates the Christian theology into his musical language.

Regard Des Anges, a celebration representing the angels beholding the birth of Jesus Christ, presents diverse pitch collections, musical textures, and rhythmic structures. Different pitch collections have a symbolic meaning for Messiaen. It is fascinating to find out how the subject of the piece is articulated in the change of pitch collections and rhythmic structures, as well as how the changes of musical language through the use of the different pitch collections generate the formal structure that is related to the biblical source.

As one of the most influential teachers of the twentieth-century, Messiaen provided many materials-such as books, programme notes, and interviews-to help future generations understand his compositional technique. These sources are of tremendous help in understanding his religious ideology, his musical language, and the performance of his music.

Messiaen's Life

Olivier Messiaen, French composer, organist, ornithologist and teacher, was born on December 10th, 1908 in Avignon, and died on April 27th, 1992, in Paris. A child prodigy, Messiaen began composing at the age of eight. He studied the piano during his childhood with Gontran Arcouët and Robert Lortart, and studied harmony with Jehan de Gibon. In 1919, he enrolled in the Paris Conservatory where he studied the organ with Marcel Dupré, one of the greatest organists of all time. He left the conservatory in 1931, however, and started working as an organist in the Church of *La Sainte Trinité*, where he held that position until his death. Messiaen also taught at the *École Normale de Musique* and at the *Schola Cantorum*.

At the outbreak of World War II, Messiaen was enlisted in the army. Shortly after that, he was taken prisoner by Germans at Görlitz in Silesia and spent the following years (1940 – 1941) in a prisoner of war camp. Here, he composed his major work, *Quartet for the End of Time*. The work was composed for himself to perform at the piano and for a violinist, a cellist, and a clarinetist who were also prisoners. They performed their first concert at the camp in the winter of 1941. In the same year, Messiaen was released from the camp. After the war, he started teaching harmony at the Paris Conservatory. Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and George Benjamin were his most notable students. In 1966, he became professor of harmony at the Paris Conservatory and retained the position until his retirement in 1978. He died in his sleep on April 27, 1992 in Paris at the age of 83 (Dingle, 2007).

Messiaen's Catholic faith had the greatest influence on his musical achievements. He always stated that he was born a believer and devoted himself almost exclusively to his religion using the Bible symbols frequently in his compositions to express his love to Jesus Christ (Dingle, 2007).

Messiaen was also an ornithologist spending a lot of time in France and abroad transcribing different bird calls. This was an instinctive passion of his which he did for his personal joy. He put both rhythm and melody of the bird calls in writing. In France, he could recognize fifty species by their songs; throughout Europe, he could recognize five hundred others. He composed three masterpieces: *Oiseaux Exotiques* (1955-56) for winds and percussion, *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* (1956-57) for solo piano, and *Chronochromie* (1959-60) for large orchestra.

Background of the *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*

The *Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus* (Twenty Gazes upon the Infant Jesus), composed in 1944 is a masterpiece. The cycle is a good example of Messiaen's devotion to the Catholic faith as it contains many theological elements and is also considered one of the most remarkable solo piano works of the twentieth-century.

Messiaen subdivides *Twenty Gazes upon the Infant Jesus* into four groups of five pieces according to their title descriptions. The first group addresses God, the Father, while the second group addresses God, the Son, and the third group addresses God, the Holy Spirit. The fourth group again addresses God, the Son.

Messiaen uses three cyclical themes throughout the work. They are the *Thème de Dieu* (Theme of God), the *Thème de l'étoile et de la Croix* (Theme of the Star and the Cross), and the *Thème d'accords* (Theme of Chords). The most important theme of the cycle is the "God Theme," which is first heard in the initial movement, "*Regard du Père*" (Gaze of the Father). This theme also appears in incomplete forms, in the sixth, tenth, eleventh and the fifteenth movements.

The second theme, "Theme of the Star and the Cross," is presented in the second movement, *Regard de l'étoile* (Gaze of the Star), and the seventh movement, *Regard de la Croix* (Gaze of the Cross). This is a slow theme and consists of small range of intervals representing two significant events in the life of Christ. The first is the lighting of the way for the Magi to find the infant Jesus while the second represents the crucifixion.

The third theme, the *Thème d'accords* "Theme of Chords," a four-chord progression, first appears in the sixth movement, *Par Lui tout a été fait* (Through Him everything was made). This theme does not contain any religious references.

Many Biblical references are made in the music, in the movement titles, and in the pre-movement descriptions (Burger, 2009: 47). The description of the first movement, *Regard du Père* (The gaze of the Father), comes from the New Testament "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt 3: 17). This pronouncement comes directly after the events described in the previous verse which states, "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him" (Matt 3:16).

Movement six, *Par Lui tout a été fait* (Through Him everything was made), refers to John 1:1–3, with the third verse being the primary source “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.”

Movement eight, *Regard des hauteurs* (Gaze of the heights), comes from the Christmas story and Luke : “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” (Luke 2:14).

Biblical numerology seems to play a symbolic role in the *Vingt Regards*. There are several examples of this relationship in the work. For example, movement one, *Regard du Père*, is related to number 1 which is “the number of unity” and evidently represents God-the Father (Bullinger, 1998: 51).

Also, the multiple two is a significant factor in the numbering of the sixth movement and the twelfth movement as creation was completed in six days. In the *Vingt Regards*, this multiple creates a relationship between those movements as both movements deal with the concept of creation.

The seventh movement is dedicated to the Cross because number seven represents the spiritual perfection. As Jesus Christ sacrificed himself to take away the sins of the world in order to redeem humanity, movement seven is connected to the spiritual perfection which was provided by Jesus Christ through Cross (Bullinger, 1998: 23).

Messiaen provides title descriptions for each of the *Vingt Regards*. The comments shown below are taken from the score and translated by Dennis Vannier (Voglar, <http://www.fearnomusic.org>). They appear in the following order:

I. *Regard du Père* (Gaze of the Father)

Complete phrase on the Theme of God.

And God said: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ...”

II. *Regard de l'étoile* (Gaze of the star)

Theme of the star and the Cross.

Jolt of grace ... The star shines naïvely, surmounted by a cross

...

III. *L'échange* (The exchange)

Descent in a trail of light, ascent in a spiral; awesome human-divine communion; God becomes man so that we may become gods ...

God is the motif of alternating thirds: that which does not change, that which is small. Man is the remaining fragments, which grow and grow and become huge, following a process of development I call “asymmetrical swelling.”

IV. *Regard de la Vierge* (Gaze of the Blessed Virgin)

Innocence and tenderness ... The woman of Purity, the woman of the Magnificat, the Blessed Virgin contemplates her Child ...

I have tried to express purity in music: this requires a certain degree of strength—coupled with much naïveté and childlike gentleness ...

V. *Regard du Fils sur le Fils* (Gaze of the Son upon the Son)

Mystery, rays of light through the night—refraction of joy, the birds of silence—the person of the Word in a human nature—marriage of the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ ...

This represents, of course, the Son-Word contemplating the Son-Child-Jesus. Three sonorities, three modes, three rhythms, three superimposed tunes. “Theme of God” and rhythmic canon through the addition of a dotted note. Joy is represented by birdsongs.

VI. *Par Lui tout a été fait* (Through Him everything was made)

Multiplicity of spaces and times; galaxies, photons, reverse spirals, inverted thunderbolts; through “Him” (the Word) everything was made ... in an instant, creation reveals the luminous shadow of its Word ...

This is a figure in which the subject is never repeated: as early as the second entrance, it changes rhythm and register. Notice the divertimento during which the upper voice expresses the subject as a non-retrograde rhythm, and where the fortissimo bass repeats a fragment of that subject in asymmetrical swellings. The middle incorporates very short and very long values (representing the infinitely small and infinitely large). Then, retrograde reprise of the fugue, like a crayfish. Mysterious stretta. Fortissimo theme of God: victorious

presence, the face of God behind the flames and turmoil. Creation reprises and sings the theme of God as a chordal canon.

VII. *Regard de la Croix* (Gaze of the Cross)

Theme of the star and the Cross.

The Cross said to him: you shall be priest in my arms ...

VIII. *Regard des hauteurs* (Gaze of the heights)

Glory in the heights ... the heights descend upon the manger like the song of a lark ... Birdsongs: nightingales, thrushes, warblers, chaffinches, goldfinches, warblers, serins, and mostly larks.

IX. *Regard du Temps* (Gaze of time)

Mystery of the plenitude of time; Time sees within itself the birth of He who is eternal ...

This theme is short, cold, strange, like de Chirico's egglike heads; rhythmic canon.

X. *Regard de l'Esprit de joie* (Gaze of the Spirit of joy)

Vehement dance, drunken horn-like tonalities, transport of the Holy Spirit ... the joy of God's love in the soul of Jesus Christ ...

—I have always been struck by the fact that God is happy—and that His continual and ineffable joy inhabited the soul of Christ. Joy is, for me, a transport, an intoxication in the maddest sense.

—Form:

Oriental dance in the extreme-low range, in unequal neumes, like plainchant. First development on the "theme of joy." Asymmetrical swelling. Three hunting-tune-like variations. Second development on the "theme of joy" and "theme of God." Then, reprise of the Oriental dance, with the extreme-low and extreme-high ranges together. Coda on the "theme of joy."

XI. *Première communion de la Vierge* (First communion of the Blessed Virgin)

A tableau in which the Blessed Virgin is shown kneeling, bent forward in the night—a luminous halo surrounds her form. Her eyes shut, she worships the fruit hidden within herself. This scene takes place between the Annunciation and the Nativity: it is the first and greatest of communions.

Theme of God, soft volutes, stalactites, and interior embrace. Recall of the theme of the “Virgin and Child” in my “Nativity.” Ever more enthusiastic Magnificat. Special chords with pulsations in the low register, representing the heart of the beating Child within his mothers’ breast. The theme of God vanishes.

-After the Annunciation, the Virgin Mary worships Jesus within herself ... my God, my Son, my Magnificat!-my love without voice ...

XII. *La parole toute puissante* (The all-powerful Word)

Monody with pulsations in the low register.

This child is the Word, which sustains all things though the power of its voice ...

XIII. *Noël* (Christmas)

Carillon—the bells of Christmas sing with us the sweet names of Jesus, Mary, Joseph ...

XIV. *Regard des Anges* (Gaze of the Angels)

Shimmering, percussion; powerful breaths sounding immense trombones; thy servants are flames of fire ...—and then, the songs of birds drinking azure—and the angels are amazed: for God has joined, not with them, but with the human race ...

In the first three stanzas: flames, rhythmic canon, and breaking up of the chordal theme.

Fourth stanza: birdsongs. Fifth stanza: the angels are amazed.

XV. *Le baiser de l’Enfant Jésus* (The kiss of the Child Jesus)

At every communion, the Child Jesus sleeps beside us near the door; He then opens it upon a garden and throws Himself in the light to embrace us ...

Theme of God in the style of a lullaby. Sleep-the garden-arms extended toward love -the kiss-the shadow of the kiss. An etching furnished my inspiration for this movement: it showed the Child Jesus leaving the arms of His mother to kiss little sister Thérèse. All this is symbolic of communion, of divine love. One must love in order to love that picture and this music, which aims to be as soft as the heart of heaven; there is nothing else.

XVI. *Regard des prophètes, des bergers et des Mages* (Gaze of the prophets, the shepherds, and the magi)

Exotic music—tom-toms and hautboys, huge and reedy consort

...

XVII. *Regard du silence* (Gaze of silence)

Silence in the palm of the hand, inverted rainbow ... Every silence in the manger reveals music and color that are the mysteries of Jesus Christ ...

Polymodality, rhythmic canon through the addition of a dotted note, special chords, “theme of chords.” The entire piece is intricately chiseled, for a piano work. Ending: alternating chords, multicolored and impalpable music, like confetti, light gemstones, and colliding reflections.

XVIII. *Regard de l’Onction terrible* (Gaze of the awesome anointing)

The Word assumes its human nature; awesome Majesty adopts Jesus’s flesh ...

—An ancient tapestry depicts the Word of God as combat, with Christ astride a charger: one sees only His two hands clasping the hilt of a sword, which He brandishes through a cloud of lightning bolts. That image influenced me. In the introduction and the coda, gradually slowing notes are superimposed on gradually accelerating notes, and vice versa.

XIX. *Je dors, mais mon coeur veille* (I sleep, but my heart waketh)

A love poem, dialog of mystical love. Rests play and important part.

It is not the angel’s bow that smiles down on us, —it is sleeping Jesus, who loves us on His Sunday and grants us oblivion ...

XX. *Regard de l’Eglise d’amour* (Gaze of the Church of love)

Grace makes us love God as He loves Himself; after the rays of night and the spirals of distress, here are the bells, the glory, and the loving kiss ... The full passion of our arms embracing the Invisible ...

—Form (the development precedes the exposition):

Development:

First theme in a nonretrograde rhythm, amplified to the right and left; that theme is interrupted by inverted fireworks. Then, three recalls of the “theme of God” separated by asymmetrical swellings. The third theme is melodic. It is followed by the first theme with fireworks and more asymmetrical swelling. Finally, ringing of bells, forming a dominant pedal and recalling the chords of the preceding movements.

Exposition:

Complete phrase on the “theme of God”, as a glorious fanfare. Long coda on the “theme of God”— triumph of love and joy, tears of joy.

The Analysis of *Regard Des Anges*

Below is the title description of the movement:

Shimmering, percussion; powerful breaths sounding immense trombones; thy servants are flames of fire ... —and then, the songs of birds drinking azure—and the angels are amazed: for God has joined, not with them, but with the human race ...

In the first three stanzas: flames, rhythmic canon, and breaking up of the chordal theme.

Fourth stanza: birdsongs. Fifth stanza: the angels are amazed.

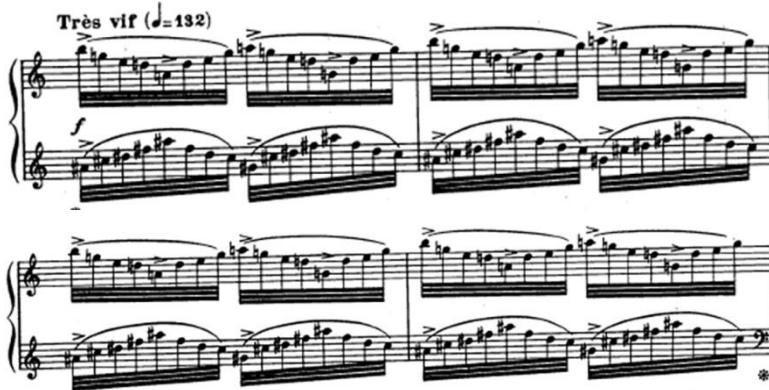
Regard des Anges is about the decision of God becoming human. It is about the angels beholding the birth of Jesus Christ. The form of the piece can be represented in the following manner: Section A (mm. 1–18), Section A' (mm. 19–43), Section A'' (mm. 44–77), Section B (mm. 78–133) and Coda (mm. 134–156).

Section A is joyful in character and is represented by flames of fire. The sound of the trombone represents the celebration of Jesus Christ's arrival in human form and includes rhythmic canon and a fragmented chordal theme.

The most important feature of Messiaen's compositional technique is a group of modes known as the modes of limited transposition. These constitute a system of seven symmetrical modes having limited number of transpositions before they replicate themselves. In other words, a mode can only be transposed a limited number of times before replicating itself in its original state. The

opening of *Regard des Anges* (mm. 1–4) are derived directly from the second transposition of mode 7 [C#-D-D#-E-F#-G-G#-A-A#-B].

Figure 1. (mm. 1–4)



1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

The alternate notes of the complete texture (left-hand and right-hand) outline a ten-note segment of the perfect fifth cycle [G-D-A-E-B-F#-C#-G#-D#-A#] breaking up mode 7 into its perfect fifth components. This cyclic aspect is confirmed by its transformation into vertical representations in the first and second chords of measure (m. 5) [Bb-Eb/G#-C#/G-C/F#-B] and in the subsequent measure (m. 6) [E-B/D-A/A-E/D-A/C-G/G-D]. In these same measures, the perfect fifth aspect continues to exist in the left hand, however, octatonic pitch collections are introduced for the first time [B-D-F#-E#/G#-B#-F#/F#-A#-E] in the right hand. Here, the *Thème d'accords* (mm. 5–6) with its customary added values, unfolds. The three standard models of the octatonic scale are based on the tone-semitone pattern and are therefore the following: Octatonic-O (C-D-Eb-F-F#-G#-A-B-C), Octatonic-1 (C#-D#-E-F#-G-A-Bb-C-C#), and Octatonic-2 (D-E-F-G-Ab-Bb-B-C#-D).

Figure 2. (mm. 5–6)

Modéré (♩=138)

(Thème d'accords) *Ped.* *Ped.* *

1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

The trombones are introduced (m. 9) and follow one another in a strict rhythmic canon.

Figure 3. (mm. 8–17)

16^a (Canon rythmique) *marcato* *f*

16^b *f* *f*

8 *fff* (Trombones)

8 (simile) (Fractionnement du thème d'accords) *etc.*

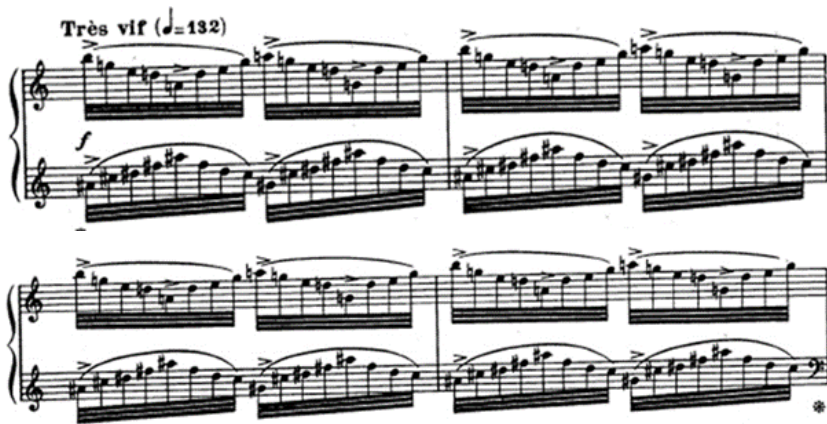
1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

In this rhythmic canon, one can derive augmented and diminished rhythms, rhythmic pedals, added values and non-retrogradable rhythms. Different sonorities and rhythmic structures are used to introduce new themes or ideas throughout the piece. The added value in the *Thème d'accords* together with the rhythmic canon of the trombones are the only two rhythmic devices used to identify the themes themselves.

The octatonic aspect of the passage emerges and is confirmed by the tritones [Bb-E/C#-G] derived from the octatonic scale (mm. 7–13).

The texture that follows is clearly divided into octatonic and perfect fifth cyclic segments. The left hand consists of two different octatonic collections, (mm. 14–15) is an octatonic 2 collection [B-D-F-E] and (mm. 16–17–18) is octatonic 0 [A-C-G#-Eb-B-D]. Above these, the right hand continues to unfold perfect fifths horizontally. This is followed by the repetition of the first four measures which forms section A' (mm. 19–22).

Figure 4. (mm.19–22)



1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

Unlike section A, A' is followed by a new motive that explores octatonic, cyclic and whole-tone formations (mm. 23–24), where [Ab-C-D-Gb] is octatonic 0, [A-E-B] are perfect fifths, [Eb-F-Db-G] is whole-tone 1 and [G-F#-C-A#-E] is octatonic 1.

Figure 5. (mm. 23–24)

1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

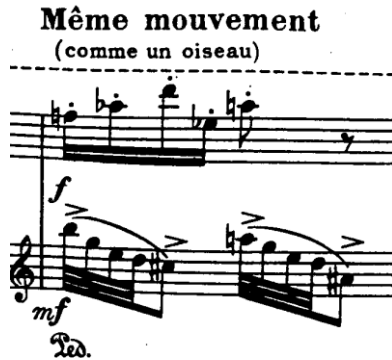
Immediately following this motive, the *Modere* part of Section A is repeated with a small extension (m. 44). A similar thing happens with the repetition of A as A" with increasingly larger extension. These extensions, however, are not significant in presenting new pitch collections (mm. 48–77).

Figure 6. (mm. 44–47)

1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

Section B (mm. 78–133) is called “*comme un oiseau*” which means “like a bird.” This section is a close imitation of the birds one finds in his bird song collections and contains all the pitch collections used in the first three sections of the piece.

Figure 7. (m. 78)



1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

In the Coda, (mm. 134–156) the emphasis is purely on the octatonic collections where all three octatonic scales are represented in alternating measures, for example, (mm. 138–139–140).

Figure 8. (mm. 135–136–137–138– 139–140)



Modes seem to represent the human aspect of existence because they are made up of unequal parts. The cycles, being made up of equal and repeating intervals, seem to represent something quite different. Quite possibly, the universal. In the cases of both pieces, the type of pitch construction the composer uses in different sections symbolizes the ideas put forward in the descriptions at the beginning of the pieces. They are also in part responsible for the formal definition of the pieces.

Regard des Anges shows various features of his composition style, such as rhythmic augmentations and diminutions and non-retrogradable rhythms as well as rhythmic pedals.

An example of exact rhythmic augmentation is present in the *Thème d'accords* (m. 6) with third and fourth chords are augmentations of those that came before.

Figure 9. (m. 6)



1947 by Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, Paris

A non-retrogradable rhythmic structure occurs in Section A (m. 32) where the rhythmic sequence is palindromic. Olivier Messiaen gives a clear explanation of what non-retrogradable rhythms are: “Whether one reads them from right to left or from left to right, the order of their values remains the same” (Messiaen & Satterfield, 2007: 20). He was deeply interested in non-retrogradable rhythms because the music rhythmically returns to its starting point. The use of non-retrogradable rhythms suggests Messiaen’s desire to return to God. This motion is directly suggested in the Bible: “And the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it” (Eccl 12:7).

Section A (mm. 1–18) consists of perfect fifth cycles and octatonic collections. Section A' (mm. 19–43) consists of cyclic, octatonic and whole-tone collections. Section A" (mm. 44–77) consists of the same collections found in A'. Section B (mm. 78–133) returns to the cyclic and octatonic collections the latter become the exclusive collections of the Coda (mm. 134–156).

CONCLUSION

Regard des Anges deals with an interesting subject that is articulated in the change of pitch collections and rhythmic structures. For example, as already explained, the word “shimmering” at the beginning of the first stanza is given by the first four measures with the presentation of mode 7. Being presented by alternating perfect fifths, another universal concept is articulated by equal intervals. Because alternating fifths cannot be derived from the octatonic sequence, Messiaen uses mode 7 which is not only presented as a mode, but it is also presented as a perfect fifth cycle that articulates the universality of the concept of shimmering. Because of its unique structure, mode 7 can

also be used to represent Godly and heavenly ideas. Another reason why he presents shimmering by mode 7 is that both universal and the person who is observing the universal are present. In so doing, Messiaen ascribes two different meanings to mode 7, one universal and one human.

Thème d'accords includes both the octatonic scale and perfect fifths. The stanza “the powerful breaths sounding immense trombones” are presented by the rhythmic canons. The breaths are all made up by tritones. The breaths, the canons, start right after each other and continue in the same way until the trombones are brought in. The trombones are presented in the bass by octatonic scales which are against the perfect fifths of the breaths. Fire, a universal concept, is articulated by perfect fifths whereas the servants are articulated by the octatonic collections.

Section B is related to the stanza “then the song of birds, drinking azure.” In this section, mode 7 which is asymmetrical in structure, represents earthly things. However, there are no longer perfect fifth cycles appearing in the music. At this point, Messiaen no longer uses perfect fifths because these are representative of the universal.

The coda stanza “Angels are amazed. God joins them with the human race” is primarily made up of the octatonic collections and represents the amazement of the angels as well as the fact that God joins humanity.

While using an extra-musical source as a program for musical composition is nothing new, the manner in which Messiaen uses different pitch collections and special rhythms to represent unique concepts is highly sophisticated. The complex pitch relations generated by the simultaneous use of different pitch collections and their derivatives articulate several things. They not only reflect the literal meaning of the title (word painting) but articulate a progression and amalgamation of literal and abstract concepts that follow one another in simultaneously generating both a literal history and the musical progression and the formal structure of the piece (Soylar, 2018: 44).

REFERENCES

- Bullinger, E. W. (1988). *Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Kregel.
- Burger, C. P. (2009). *Olivier Messiaen's Vingt Regards sur l'enfant-Jesus: Analytical, Religious and Literary Considerations*. (DMA Dissertation). University of Texas at Austin.
- Dingle, C. P. (2007). *The Life of Messiaen*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fear No Music, & Voglar, I. (2008). *Olivier Messiaen Comments on the Vingt Regards*. (Accessed, April 14, 2016).
- Messiaen, O., & Satterfield, J. (2007). *The Technique of My Musical Language: Text with Musical Examples*. Paris: Alphonse Leduc.
- Soylar, C. (2018). *Messiaen's Musical Musical Language on the Holy Child*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

İnternet Kaynakçası

http://www.fearnomusic.org/assets/programs/FNM2008-09_program2.pdf