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"Te Deum Laudamus": Chant Fragments in Four Organ Works by Tournemire, Langlais, Dupré, and Demessieux

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“Te Deum Laudamus”: Chant Fragments in Four Organ Works by Tournemire, Langlais, Dupré, and Demessieux

by

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The Gregorian chant "Te Deum laudamus" has been sung by the Roman Catholic faithful for over 1000 years. Consisting of 29 verses, the "Te Deum" is variously a song of praise extolling God's goodness and might, and a song of supplication asking for God's mercy and benevolence. Several composers in twentieth-century France—composers who were also organists serving the Roman Catholic Church in Paris—wrote organ pieces based on this ancient chant.

This treatise examines four settings of the "Te Deum" for organ, each by a different French composer who made unique contributions to organ performance and composition: Charles Tournemire, Jean Langlais, Marcel Dupré, and Jeanne Demessieux. Chapter 1 begins by examining the specialized training in organ improvisation at the Paris Conservatory. The chapter continues by exploring how the composers in this study used this training to meet the demands of their church positions. Chapter 1 closes with a discussion of the roles of Gregorian chant and of the organ in the Roman Catholic mass

in mid-twentieth-century Paris. The treatise continues with a literary and musical exegesis of the "Te Deum" chant, placing it in its historical context (Chapter 2). Chapters 3-6 then present a biography of each composer and an analysis of each organ *Te Deum*. The analyses demonstrate how these four composers differently manipulate fragments of the "Te Deum" chant in their organ works.

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Chapter 1
Organ Improvisation and Gregorian Chant

Of the many musical links between the composers in this study, perhaps the most important is the education they received at the *Conservatoire nationale de musique et de déclamation* or the Paris Conservatory, the venerable institution founded during the reign of Napoleon I in 1795.[1] Charles Tournemire, Jean Langlais, Marcel Dupré and Jeanne Demessieux each received the rigorous training offered by the Conservatory, and each composer won the first prizes that opened the doors to the most prestigious Parisian church positions. While at these posts, sometimes for thirty or more years, the subjects of this study excelled at service playing, improvisation and performing recitals. While each grew as an artist after their Conservatory education, their years in the organ class provided the solid foundation of harmony, counterpoint, fugue, analysis, and composition (not to mention professional guidance and contacts) on which they built their careers.

1.1 Organ Training at the Paris Conservatory

Instrumental instruction at the Paris Conservatory took place in the form of classes and not through private lessons. Michael Murray, a former student of Marcel Dupré, writes that the class instruction approach "means each student accustomed himself to performing before a critical audience of his peers, whose performances he in turn judged, profiting at the same time from the teacher's criticisms of all."[2] Organ study at the

[1]Roger Nichols, *The Harlequin Years: Music in Paris 1917-1929*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 181.
[2]Michael Murray, *Marcel Dupré: The Work of a Master Organist*. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985), 32-33.

Conservatory was, from its inception in 1795, divided into two general areas: interpretation of composed works and improvisation. Throughout the history of the Paris Conservatory, however, the emphasis in organ study focused more on improvisation. In remarks that seem to reflect the history of organ training at the Conservatory, Camille Saint-Saëns asserted the importance and necessity of improvisation to an organist's education:

> It is improvisation alone which permits one to employ all the resources of a large instrument, and to adapt oneself to the infinite variety of organs; only improvisation can follow the service perfectly, the pieces written for this purpose being almost always too short or too slow. Finally, the practice of improvisation develops faculties of invention which, without it, would have remained latent.[3]

Honing these "faculties of invention" of France's future organists was the focus of the Conservatory organ classes. According to Rollin Smith, in the classes of François Benoist, the first organ professor at the Conservatory (1819-1872), "three quarters of the studies of the class were devoted to improvisation. Indeed, the class served not to train virtuosi but as a workshop to develop skills in improvisation for those musicians who were already exceptional players."[4] Henri Busser, a pupil of César Franck (who succeeded Benoist as organ professor at the Conservatory), confirms Smith's comments:

> It is true to say that the teaching of technique was rather neglected—notably pedal study. One prepared works of Bach and Handel for the examinations but most of the time was devoted to plainchant (which was treated very freely in florid four-part counterpoint), and to improvisation

[3]Camille Saint-Saëns, "Music in the Church," *The Musical Quarterly* II/I (Jan. 1916), 8. As quoted in Rollin Smith, *Toward an Authentic Interpretation of the Organ Works of César Franck* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1983), 5.
[4]Smith, *Toward an Authentic Interpretation*, 5.

of fugue and a free theme.[5]

Improvisation was so important to César Franck and his approach to teaching organ that, according to his student, Gabriel Pierné, Franck always would carry two note books in the inside pocket of his frock coat:

> …one bound in black—the other bound in red. The one bound in black contained fugue themes which Franck had collected at random. They were subjects by Bach, Handel, Gluck, Léo Delibes—the subjects on one side, the answers on the other. In the notebook bound in red were the themes from the classics and Franck's original themes…. At a lesson he took them out and chose a theme that we had to develop in our improvisation.[6]

Franck's students would need all their improvisational faculties to pass their organ examinations, as Vincent d'Indy, another student of Franck, described: "The tests for this examination were—and still are—four in number: the accompaniment of a plainchant chosen for the occasion, the performance of an organ piece with pedal, the improvisation of a fugue, and the improvisation of a piece in sonata form, both these improvisations being upon themes set by the examiners."[7]

This approach to organ training, which emphasized improvisation, continued through Marcel Dupré's tenure as organ professor at the Paris Conservatory (1926-1954). When Dupré taught at the Conservatory, "the class met three afternoons each week in the Salle Berlioz…. At two of the weekly sessions, the class studied improvisation—fugue on one

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[5]Henri Busser, "La Classe d'Orgue de César Franck en 1889-1890," *L'Orgue* No. 102 (April-June 1962), 33-34. As quoted in Smith, *Toward an Authentic Interpretation*, 162-164.
[6]Smith, *Towards an Authentic Interpretation*, 159.
[7]Vincent D'Indy, *César Franck*, trans. Rosa Newmarch (London: John Lane The Bodley Head, 1909), 33. As quoted in Smith, *Toward an Authentic Interpretation*, 4-5.

day, *thème libre* on the other—and at the third, execution."[8] According to Murray, in the classes on execution, which focused on technique and repertoire, "Dupré would only occasionally suggest works to be played, and then only if the student had been playing too exclusively the works of one composer or period."[9] Improvisation classes, in contrast, were more rigorous. Dupré would sometimes present a theme on the spot, ask for a volunteer and tell the student what to do with the theme: for example, a fugue or a chorale prelude.[10] According to Jean Langlais, Dupré would often assign improvisation homework—a more complex theme on which students had to prepare a *thème libre* for the next improvisation lesson.[11]

Knowing "what to do with a theme" or how to "prepare a *thème libre"* required painstaking preparatory work in counterpoint, harmony, fugue, and analysis. As taught at the Conservatory, improvisation was the musical activity which called on all of a student's musical powers. As Dupré student Murray states:

> …the word *improvisation*, with its connotations of looseness and unordered spontaneity, belies the skill, discipline, and mental effort required to practice the art at its highest: to improvise well poses no less a challenge to competence than do the game of chess and certain exercises in higher mathematics. Yet the challenge, as [Alexandre] Guilmant told Marcel [Dupré], is not merely to skill, discipline and concentration. The good improviser, having mastered the tools of harmony, counterpoint, fugue, and composition, will extract from a given theme all of the expressive potential it contains. In sum, he will make *music*.[12]

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[8]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 118.
[9]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 119.
[10]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 119.
[11]Ann Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 2000), 55. The term *thème libre* is slightly misleading. It does not mean "free improvisation." Instead, as noted by Michael Murray, it denotes "the improvisation of a movement in strict form." See Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 40.

This music making, according to Marcel Dupré, happened only as the culmination of many years of careful study. Writing in 1965, Dupré described in detail his philosophy and his approach to teaching improvisation:

> …improvisation studies parallel the study of theory, of the writing and composition of music. Every student must first know the seven clefs, without which he is incapable of reading scores or the motets of Renaissance masters. As he acquires keyboard experience at the piano and the organ and analyzes the literature of the great composers, he must be trained, at the same time as his study of harmony, to carry out and to link up at the keyboard the harmonic technique which he knows, by transposing chromatically into all keys. When he reaches the study of four-part counterpoint, he can be trained in improvisation on a chorale in the various forms from the past—contrapuntal, figurated, canonic, ornamented in the soprano, placing the *cantus firmus* in the different voices. Then while studying the writing of the fugue, he will improvise at once expositions for three or four voices, requiring himself to stick faithfully to the counter subject; next free development and finally the stretto. It is the same as for the performance: by relentless repetition of bits of phrases until one acquires the accuracy and facility that makes for progress.
>
> The student then works on the variation forms, beginning with the classic chaconne and passacaglia, then the different movements of the sonata beginning with the trio sonata. He could finally take up the improvised symphonic etude, developing the periods of the exposition and avoiding mere chatter in the periods of the development.
>
> In short, it can be said that the operation of training an improviser follows step by step the training of the virtuoso and of the composer.
>
> Hence, it is necessary to possess the "métier" ("tricks of the trade") before launching into improvisation. It will serve as the foundation for the inspiration of the moment and for the imagination. Far from restraining them, it will help them to expand to complete freedom, with neither restraint nor hesitation. The improviser will then know where he is going; and freedom from all preoccupation with mechanics will endow his music with life and establish communion with his listeners.[13]

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[12]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 38.

[13]Marcel Dupré, "On Improvisation," trans. by Jeannette Dupré, *The Diapason*, (February 1965): 25.

Perhaps most striking about Dupré's remarks is realizing just how long this education in improvisation would take. When Jeanne Demessieux, who studied with Dupré for many years, was once asked by a student how long it would take to learn to improvise, she responded, "twenty years."[14] Gaston Litaize, another Dupré pupil and a contemporary of Jean Langlais, attested to the rigors of learning how to improvise in general and to Dupré's teaching in particular:

> In the matter of the improvised fugue, since the time of Gigout, students could drop the counter-subject, but Dupré was much more strict: he required that the counter-subject be kept every time one presented the subject, which wasn't easy. He also wanted that in the relative key that we introduce the fugue subject in intermediate voices.[15]

The staggering scope of skills necessary to improvise well is laid out in Dupré's dense two-volume work, *Complete Course in Improvisation* of 1925. Along with many exercises and commentary, Dupré concludes: "To be a good improviser one must have acquired not only a sure and supple technique but a knowledge of harmony, counterpoint and fugue, and familiarity with plainsong, composition and orchestration."[16]

Training in these other disciplines meant that organ students were at the Conservatory for many years. Tournemire's tenure lasted for five years, while Dupré's and Langlais's

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[14]Anecdote told to the author by Dr. Frank Speller, Professor of Organ at The University of Texas at Austin, in April 2003. Speller studied with Demessieux at the Conservatory in Liège, Belgium from 1959-1960.

[15]"En matière de fugue improvisée, alors que du temps de Gigout, les élèves pouvaient ou non garder le contre-sujet, Dupré se montrat beaucoup plus strict: il exigeait que le contre-sujet soit gardé chaque fois que l'on présentait le sujet, ce qui n'était pas facile. Il voulait également qu'au relative, nous introduisons le sujet dans les voix intermédiares." Marie-Louise Jacquet-Langlais, *Ombre et Lumière: Jean Langlais 1907-1991* (Paris: Editions Combre,1995), 50-51. Translation by the author.

[16] Marcel Dupré, *Cours Complet d'Improvisation à l'Orgue*, trans. John Fenstermaker (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1973), v.

lasted for seven. Jeanne Demessieux spent eight years training at the Conservatory. Not surprisingly, these composers often took prizes in areas other than organ, such as harmony, piano, fugue and composition. Dupré won a *premier prix* in piano in 1905, in fugue in 1909 and won the *Prix de Rome* in 1914. Demessieux won a *premier prix* in harmony in 1937, in piano in 1938, and in counterpoint in 1939. Tournemire won only his organ prize at the Conservatory, while Langlais won a *second prix* in composition in 1934.

1.2 The *Premier Prix* in Organ

A student's fluency in improvisation was critical to success at the end of a Conservatory career and to success in securing a prestigious church position. Organ study at the Conservatory, after three to four years of class instruction, culminated in the exit prizes following a public competition.[17] These spring competitions were, according to Murray, the "musico-emotional summit of the school year, the culmination toward which the thought and activity of teacher and pupil were directed during the long trimesters of the winter season."[18] Murray continues: "The student could remain in any class for no more than five years: if by then he had failed to win a *premier prix*, he was required to leave the school with a minor award, either a *second prix* or an *accessit*. He was required to leave the school as well if he failed within two consecutive years to win any prize at all."[19] Students, therefore, were faced with the reality that a *premier prix*

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[17]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 119.
[18]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 33.
[19]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 33.

from the Conservatory was a *sine qua non* for a distinguished performing or teaching career in France.[20] As Murray states:

> The Conservatory was the only graduate-level, state-supported music school in France, all its students matriculating on government scholarships. To win a *premier prix* was, for an instrumentalist, to win as well almost certain employment in one of the important orchestras. For a singer, the *premier prix* opened the doors of the Opéra or Opéra-Comique. For a soloist, it helped establish a concert career or a teaching studio. Such entrées into the musical establishment were implicit in the Conservatory's intimacy with government.[21]

To win a *premier* prix in organ at the Conservatory, a student had to perform several tasks. According to Marcel Dupré:

> The organ class at the Paris Conservatory, founded at the conservatory's very beginning under Napoleon I, requires for obtaining the First Prize not only examination in performance but in improvisation as well.
>
> One could say that the program of organ competitions fixed by César Franck has hardly changed at all.
>
> Here is the order of the examinations:
>
> 1. On a prescribed Gregorian theme, improvisation of a contrapuntal chorale in the manner of the chorale preludes of J.S. Bach.
> 2. Improvisation of a strict four-voiced fugue on a prescribed subject. The candidate works out the counter subject in a few moments of thought and, in the course of the fugue, retains it for each entrance of the subject.
> 3. So-called "free" improvisation in the form of an Andante movement of a sonata with center development section. The term "free" indicates the harmonic idiom is less strictly contrapuntal than for the fugue.
>
> Two performance examinations from memory follow: 1. a major classic or modern work, of the student's choice. 2. a piece required of all, composed especially for the competition and given to the candidates a month before the contest.[22]

Such requirements were just what Langlais had to meet in his organ exam. Langlais's

[20]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 49.
[21]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 31.

exam obliged him to harmonize, transpose and to improvise a prelude on a Gregorian melody, to improvise a fugue based on a subject of Alexandre Cellier, to play a written work (Langlais chose Bach's Toccata in F major) and finally to improvise a *thème libre*.[23]

Each of the performers in this study excelled at the rigorous exam and won a *premier prix* in organ at the Conservatoire: Tournemire in 1891, Dupré in 1907, Langlais in 1930, and Demessieux in 1941. These prizes, as well as other *premier prix* won by these composers, certainly opened doors for prestigious Parisian church positions. In some cases, these composers acquired junior appointments at Parisian churches during their Conservatory years. For example, Dupré served regularly as Charles-Marie Widor's deputy at Ste. Sulpice while he was still a student at the Conservatory. Mostly, though, it was not until several years after their Conservatory training that these composers came to the posts with which they would be associated for many years. Parisian church positions were notoriously hard to attain. The most esteemed posts came open infrequently—sometimes only once every 20-30 years—and competition for these jobs was fierce. As Roger Nichols writes:

> While the post of *titulaire* at one of the great Paris churches was no money spinner on its own, the *gloire* attached to it was very considerable. This meant…that organists tended to hold on to their jobs for as long as they could still climb the stairs up to the organ loft, which in turn meant that, when vacancies did occur, they were canvassed and fought for with some vigour. In the major Parisian churches, only two vacancies (St-Philippe du Roule, 1922; St-Augustin, 1925) occurred between Henri Dallier's appointment to the Madeleine in 1905 and Messiaen's to La Trinité in 1931.[24]

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[22]Dupré, "On Improvisation," 25.
[23]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 61.
[24]Nichols, *The Harlequin Years*, 191.

In fact, Eugène Gigout, Professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatory from 1911-1925, remained at his church position at St. Augustin from 1863-1925, while Charles-Marie Widor played at St. Suplice from 1869-1933, and Louis Vierne at Nôtre-Dame Cathedral from 1900 until he died on the console during the middle of a recital in 1937.[25] Each performer in this study did acquire, however, one of these highly regarded church positions in Paris, and remained in the position for many years. Tournemire played at Ste. Clotilde from 1898-1939; Dupré worked as *titulaire* organist at St. Sulpice from 1934-1971; Langlais held the position at Ste. Clotilde from 1945-1987; and Demessieux was organist at the Church of St. Esprit from 1933-1962 and at Church of Ste. Marie-Madeleine from 1962-1968.

1.3 Gregorian Chant and Parisian Churches

In the first half of the twentieth century, the Roman Catholic Church continued its revival of early church music begun in the nineteenth century across Europe. During the second quarter of the nineteenth century in Germany, a "Palestrina renaissance…caused a predilection for sixteenth-century *a capella* music" in the Catholic church, while in France the situation was very different. As Benjamin Van Wye states:

> "[the] Gregorian revival, which received its greatest impetus from work done by the monks of the Benedictine Abbey at Solemnes, France, during the second half of the nineteenth century, sought to make plainsong the chief liturgical music of the Roman Church, a distinction those melodies

[25]Nichols, *The Harlequin Years*, 192.

had not enjoyed since the early centuries of Christianity."[26]

In support of these trends, Pope Pius X issued his legislation, *Motu proprio*, on November 22, 1903, which termed Gregorian chant the *ne plus ultra* of liturgical music. The legislation stated:

> Gregorian chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is fully legitimate to lay down the following rule: the more closely a composition for the church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worth it is of the temple.[27]

Since the *Motu proprio* was unambiguous about the "sanctity, goodness of form and universality" of Gregorian chant, the Roman Catholic organist had to deal with this repertoire in an increased fashion.[28] Unlike other European countries, for over 300 years in France the organ had been central to the liturgy.[29] Thus, the musical emphasis during liturgies fell to Gregorian chant, and soon came to be omnipresent in French Catholic liturgies—both sung by choirs and improvised on by organists. In a speech given by the famous French organ virtuoso Joseph Bonnet, one sees the numerous occasions an organist needed to interact with Gregorian chant:

> Take, for example, the vesper service: it includes the singing of five psalms, a hymn and the Magnificat. At the end of each psalm, after the repeating of the antiphon, the organist plays an interlude related to the melody of the psalm or of the antiphon. Between verses of the hymn and of the Magnificat the same procedure is followed. Now, you could hardly make any choirmaster give you the keys in which these chants will be

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[26]Benjamin David Van Wye, "The Influence of The Plainsong Restoration on the Growth and Development of the Modern French Liturgical Organ School" (DMA diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1970), 1-2.
[27]Van Wye, "The Influence of The Plainsong Restoration," 1.
[28]Karl Gustav Fellerer, *The History of Catholic Church Music*, trans. Francis A. Brunner (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961), 195-196.
[29]Van Wye, "The Influence of The Plainsong Restoration," 2.

> sung. They may vary in pitch from half a tone to one-and-a-half tones. Most of the time the choirmaster plays his accompaniments to the Gregorian chants *extempore*. Furthermore, during the Magnificat, the priest, deacon and sub-deacon proceed to the incensing of the altar, or the clergy in the sanctuary and, afterwards, of the congregation. The length of this ritual may vary and the organist must see that the singing of the Doxology, which comes at the end of the incensing, is in accord with the singing of the choir. In view of this, one must realize the great necessity for fluent improvisation.[30]

This "necessity for fluent improvisation" was found not just at the evening Vespers service but also at Sunday morning masses. While particular practices varied from church to church in early to mid-twentieth century France, organists generally played at five key times during the mass: as the clergy entered at the start of mass (in French, a piece called *prélude à l'introit*); the offertory (*l'offertoire)*; the elevation as the priest consecrates the body and blood (*l'élevation)*; the communion (*la communion*); and at the conclusion of the service (*pièce terminale*).[31] In the Appendix to the second volume of his *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation*, Marcel Dupré lists the many other times—during masses, services of Vespers, Compline and Benediction—when the organist is called upon to improvise.[32] So crucial was the ability to improvise nimbly during mass

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[30]Smith, *Toward an Authentic Interpretation*, 6.

[31]Van Wye, "The Influence of The Plainsong Restoration," 110. It was for these five times in the liturgy that Tournemire wrote his famous *L'Orgue Mystique*, a compilation of five organ pieces for each Sunday of the Church year.

[32]Marcel Dupré, *Cours Complet d'Improvisation*, 144-148. In addition, Dupré offers general advice to Catholic organists regarding what improvisational forms are best suited to the various parts of the liturgy. He writes: "The prelude, the fugue and the chorale, should come before the service. The toccata is best placed after the service. The variation should be divested of any picturesque character, except around the Feast of the Nativity, when it is particularly useful in treating the naïve noëls of the middle ages. Finally, among the symphonic forms, the piece with two themes may be employed, provided that the second theme has a purely spiritual character. The song without words may also be used, especially when the recapitulation combines the two themes…. The organ plays a

that Bonnet wrote:

> No one may keep a position in any Catholic church in France without being a very able improviser. The part the organ plays in the Roman French ritual is so elaborate that the organist is relieved of any accompaniment of the choir. In addition to the grand organ, generally placed in the west gallery, there is always a chancel organ, and another organist or choirmaster is in charge of the choir. On the grand organ are played not only the preludes, offertories and postlude, which may be taken from written music, but also a great number of more or less developed interludes for which only improvisation is possible.[33]

Gregorian chant and organ improvisation then were inextricably linked in Roman Catholic church services in early- and mid-twentieth-century France. Because of their training at the Paris Conservatory, Charles Tournemire, Jean Langlais, Marcel Dupré, and Jeanne Demessieux were able to meet the significant musical demands of the Catholic liturgy. These composers used their education in counterpoint, harmony, fugue, and orchestration to improvise upon Gregorian chants of the Roman Catholic services.

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decorative part, and in each piece it must be like the great stained-glass windows in a cathedral, of which one appears red, the other blue, another violet, even though they are, in reality, multicolored. It is from this wonderful simplicity in richness that the improviser must draw his inspiration." See Dupré, *Cours Complet d'Improvisation*, 144 and 148.

[33]Smith, *Towards an Authentic Interpretation*, 6.

Chapter 2
The "Te Deum" Chant: Context and History

While Charles Tournemire, Jean Langlais, Marcel Dupré, and Jeanne Demessieux were each formidable performers and improvisers on the organ, each was also a distinguished composer. With the exception of Demessieux, each composer wrote prolifically for the organ. This treatise selects four works written by these composers on a particular piece of Gregorian chant called the "Te Deum": *Improvisation sur le Te Deum* by Charles Tournemire (1930); *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum* by Jean Langlais (1933); *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum* by Marcel Dupré (1949); and *Te Deum pour Orgue* by Jeanne Demessieux (1958). Each *Te Deum* for organ is a large-scale, energetic and highly dramatic commentary on an important piece of Gregorian chant that has been used in the Catholic Church for over 1500 years as a song of praise, thanksgiving, and supplication.[34] This study compares and contrasts the use of the "Te Deum" chant in each composition.

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2.1 The "Te Deum" Chant

The "Te Deum" chant, written approximately 1500 years ago, has a rich history. Paul Westermeyer writes that "Of the western hymns not taken from the Bible, this one [the Te Deum] is the best known."[35] The chant's precise authorship is unknown: scholars

[34]Charles Tournemire's work is technically an improvisation, as it was his student, Maurice Duruflé, not Tournemire himself, who transcribed the work. More details on the genesis of Tournemire's *Te Deum* follow in Chapter 3. As explained in Chapter 5, the exact date for the composition of Dupré's *Te Deum* is unknown.

[35]Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 49. While details on the "Te Deum" hymn are limited, Westermeyer's book contains an excellent overview of the history of church music.

speculate that the chant was written sometime in the 4th century A.D. by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine or Bishop Niceta of Remesiana.[36] One legend surrounding the chant says that the "Te Deum" was spontaneously composed and sung alternately by St. Ambrose and St. Augustine on the night of the latter's baptism (A.D. 387)."[37] According to Ron Jeffers, "The hymn has also been ascribed to St. Hilary of Poitier and St. Ambrose, but the "Te Deum" is in rhythmical prose, and not in the classical meters of the hymns known to be written by them. Recent scholarship has rejected all these ascriptions as inconclusive."[38] Jeffers continues, writing that traditionally the "Te Deum" has been sung liturgically

> "at the end of Matins on Sundays and feast days except the Sundays of Advent and those Sundays from Septuagesima to Palm Sunday inclusive. It follows or replaces the last responsory and is followed immediately by Lauds, except on Christmas Day when it is followed by the prayer and the first Mass of the Nativity."[39]

Nowadays one would be most likely to hear the "Te Deum" not in the Catholic Church but in the Anglican Church in England during a Sunday morning service of Matins, where in some cathedrals it is sung every weekend. The "Te Deum" has also served functions outside of the liturgy: "as a solemn act of thanksgiving, especially at

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[36]Ruth Steiner, Keith Falconer, and John Caldwell, "Te Deum," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 190-191. For an extended discussion on the manuscripts, sources and authorship of the "Te Deum," as well as an "Attempted Reconstruction of the Original Text of the "Te Deum," see A.E. Burn, *An Introduction to The Creeds and to The Te Deum* (London: Methuen and Co., 1899), 256-279.
[37]Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire Compiled and Annotated by Ron Jeffers*. (Corvallis, Oregon: earthsongs, 1988), 218.
[38]Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire*, 218.
[39]Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire*, 220.

ordinations and consecrations (kings, abbots, virgins)."[40] The "Te Deum" has also served "as a processional chant, the conclusion for a liturgical drama…and a hymn of victory on the battlefield."[41]

The "Te Deum" chant consists of twenty-nine prose verses divided thematically into two sections, as seen in Figure 2.1.[42]

Figure 2.1: Text and translation of "Te Deum" chant[43]

SECTION 1

1. Te Deum laudamus: te Dominum confitemur.	We praise Thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.
2. Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur.	All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting.
3. Tibi omnes Angeli, tibi Caelie et universae Potestates:	To Thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens and all the powers therein:
4. Tibi Cherubim et Seraphim incessabili voce proclamant:	To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry:
5. Sanctus: Sanctus: Sanctus Dominus Deus	Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;

[40]Rev. Joseph Gelineau, *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship: Principles, Laws, Applications*, trans. Rev. Clifford Howell (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 1964), 182.
[41]Steiner, Falconer and Caldwell, "Te Deum," 191.
[42]While the exegesis of the "Te Deum" text is mine, Margrete Thomsen's exegesis, is, in some ways, similar. See Margrete Thomsen, "Langlais's *Hymne D'Actions de Grâces,*" from *Hommage à Langlais* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 95-96.
[43]This figure is based somewhat upon Thomsen's, though the translation of the "Te Deum" I have used is different. She uses a modern translation, whereas I prefer the older version common in many Anglican settings of the "Te Deum". This citation refers to the translation: Sarah Langdon, Brochure note for *The St. Paul's Service and Other Music by Herbert Howells*. Hyperion CDA66260, 1988. Compact Disc.

Sabaoth.

6. Pleni sunt caeli et terra majestatis gloriae tuae.	Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory.
7. Te gloriosus Apostolorum chorus:	The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee.
8. Te Prophetarum laudabilis numerus:	The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee.
9. Te Martyrum candidatus laudat exercitus.	The noble army of Martyrs praise Thee.
10. Te per orbem terrarum sancta confitetur Ecclasia:	The holy Church throughout the world doth acknowledge Thee;
11. Patrem immensae majestatis:	The Father: of an infinite Majesty;
12. Venerandum tuum verum, et unicum Filium:	Thine honourable, true, and only Son;
13. Sanctum quoque Paraclitum Spiritum.	Also the Holy Ghost: the Comforter.

SECTION 2

14. Tu Rex gloriae, Christe.	Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.
15. Tu Patris sempiternus es Filius.	Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
16. Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem, non horruisti Virginis uterum.	When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man: Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.
17. Tu devicto mortis aculeo, aperuisti credentibus regna caelorum.	When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.
18. Tu ad dextram Dei sedes, in gloria Patris.	Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.
19. Judex crederis esse venturus.	We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.

All kneel while this verse [20] *is sung.*

20. Te ergo quaesumus, tuis familis subveni, quos pretioso sanguine redimisti.	We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.
21. Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis in gloria numerari.	Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting.
22. Salvum fac populum tuum Domine, et benedic hereditati tuae.	O Lord, save Thy people: and bless Thine heritage.
23. Et rege eos, et extolle illos usque in aeternum.	Govern them and lift them up for ever.
24. Per singulos dies, benedicimus te.	Day by day we magnify Thee
25. Et laudamus nomen tuum in saeculum, et in saeculum saeculi.	and we worship Thy Name, ever world without end.
26. Dignare Domine die isto sine peccato nos custodire.	Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
27. Miserere nostri Domine, miserere nostri.	O Lord, have mercy upon us.
28. Fiat misericordia tua Domine super nos, quem admodum speravimus in te.	O Lord, let Thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in Thee.
29. In te Domine speravi: non confundar in aeternum.	O Lord, in Thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded.

Section 1, verses 1-13, addresses God the Father, extolling his power and might, and declaring the many creatures that lift their voices in praise to God. The writer points to God's supremacy in the list of beings who pay homage to God. The text uses present tense as mortals praise God. For example, they "acknowledge" God "to be the Lord," as "all the earth" worships God. Extraterrestrial beings, famous figures of the Church, and those long dead—what John Wordsworth terms the "invisible Church"—are also said to

join in this hymn of praise.[44] To the God of the "Te Deum" "all Angels cry aloud," "Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry," while the "glorious company of the Apostles" and the "noble army of Martyrs" praise God. At every turn, the words of this section suggest an unbridled paean to the Lord. Section 1 ends with a doxology in verses 11-13, giving praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

A rhetorical and thematic shift marks verse 14, the start of section 2 (verses 14-29). God's Son, Christ, is now the focus of the writer's words. The writer calls Christ "the King of Glory," "the everlasting Son" who is seated "at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father." The writer recalls Christ's willingness to take man's sin upon himself after he was born of the Virgin Mary: "When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man: Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb." Christ's generosity to His faithful believers despite His suffering on the cross is celebrated in verse 17 ("When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers"). In verse 19, the writer articulates Christ's role as "Judge" of his followers, pointing toward the primary theme of supplication in section 2. While the start of section 2 is in some way about asking for God's help, the writer begins in earnest at verse 20 when he writes, "We therefore pray Thee, help Thy Servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood." This solemn shift in the text is marked in the traditional practice of singing this verse on one's knees. As the chant continues, the text implores God to "save Thy people," to "Govern them and lift them up," and to "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin."

As the chant progresses, its rhetoric becomes more intense and pleading. By verse 27, the writer is asking God not just to "help" or "govern" his servants, but, in his infinite power and goodness, to "have mercy upon us." The request for God's mercy is

[44]Right Rev. John Wordsworth, *The "Te Deum," Its Structure and Meaning, and Its Musical Setting and Rendering, Together with a Revised Latin Text, Notes and Translation* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1903), 12.

immediately repeated in verse 28, "O Lord, let Thy mercy lighten upon us, as our Trust is in Thee." In verse 29, the last verse of the chant, the writer pleads with God for his intervention in this earthly life. He asserts, "O Lord, in Thee have I trusted." His final plaintive summary of all the prayers of the last fourteen and a half verses comes in a simple sentence, "let me never be confounded." Man is in utter need of God's mercy. The thematic essence of section 2 is an acknowledgement of that need and an anxious, pleading cry for God to meet that need.[45]

2.2 The "Te Deum" Chant Tune

There are several versions of the "Te Deum" chant tune, according to Thomeson, because the chant was transmitted orally throughout the centuries:

> The musical setting of the chant arises from the general principle of psalm singing, i.e., the chanting of the psalm on a recitation pitch with initial, mediant, and cadential inflections, a tradition that many assert is of Jewish origin…. The musical setting basically consists of a simple recitation formula, fairly easily memorized, and transmitted orally which would account for the frequent but minor variations in the sources available today. [46]

The composers in this study draw from the most well-known of the versions, the traditional chant or simple tone version from the *Liber Usualis*, published by the Benedictine monks of Solemnes, as seen in Figure 2.2.[47]

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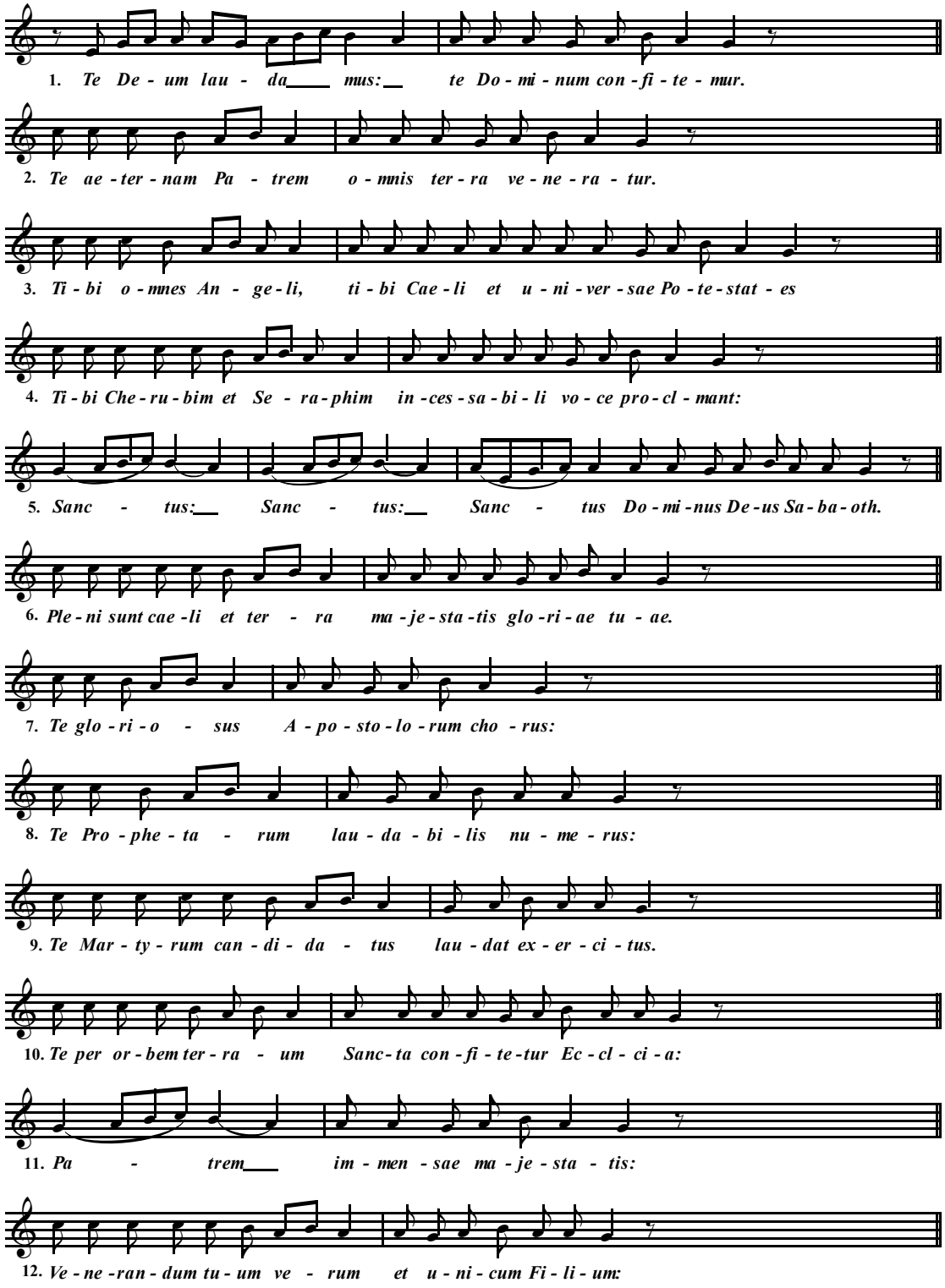
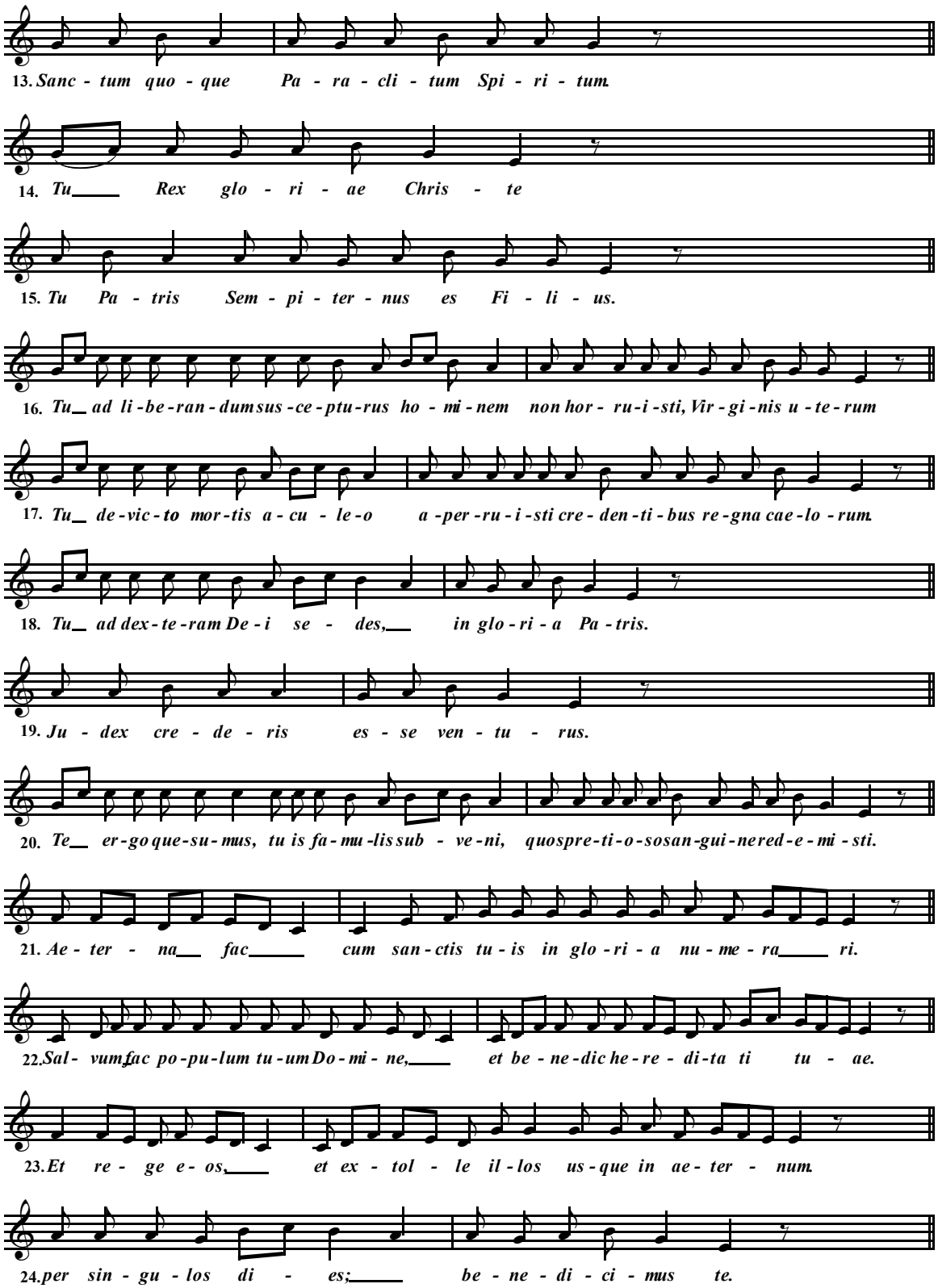
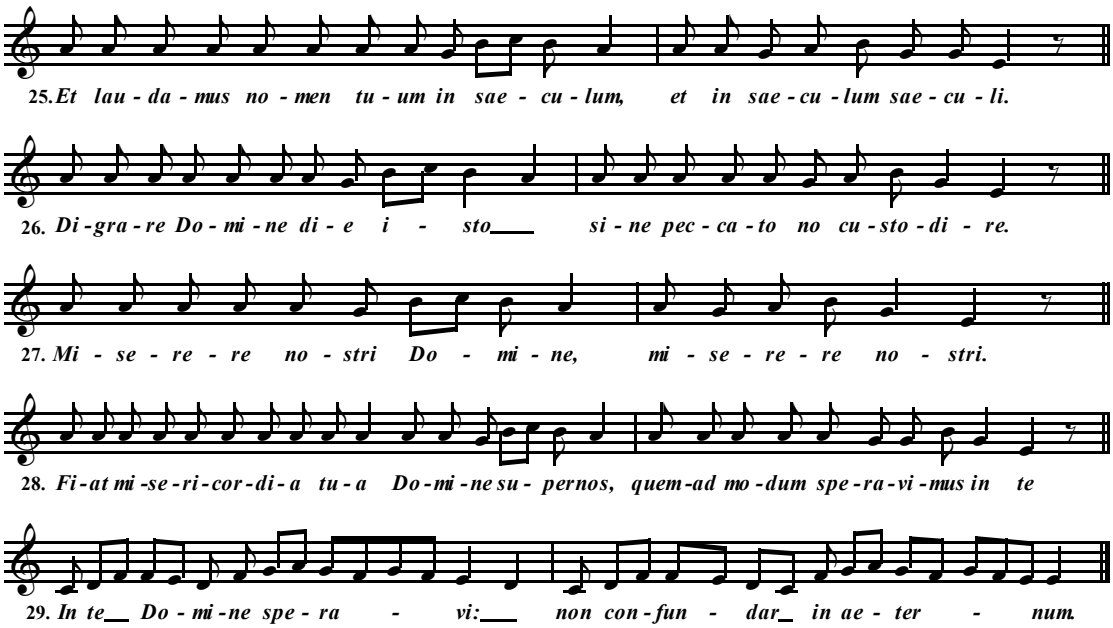
[45]For an extended discussion of the "Te Deum" text, see Dewi Morgan, *But God Comes First: A Meditation on the* Te Deum (Longmans: London, 1962). In essence an extended pamphlet written for the Anglican faithful, Morgan's tome is a meditation on how the "Te Deum" text relates to the Christian message of the Bible.
[46]Thomeson, "Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces*," 97.
[47]Steiner, Falconer and Caldwell, "Te Deum," 192.

Figure 2.2: The "Te Deum" Chant Tune[48]



[48]Benedictines of Solemnes, eds., *The Liber Usualis with Introduction and Rubrics in English* (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée and Co. 1938), 1834-1837.


13. Sanc - tum quo - que Pa - ra - cli - tum Spi - ri - tum.
14. Tu____ Rex glo - ri - ae Chris - te
15. Tu Pa - tris Sem - pi - ter - nus es Fi - li - us.
16. Tu_ ad li - be - ran - dum sus - ce - ptu - rus ho - mi - nem non hor - ru - i - sti, Vir - gi - nis u - te - rum
17. Tu_ de - vic - to mor - tis a - cu - le - o a - per - ru - i - sti cre - den - ti - bus re - gna cae - lo - rum.
18. Tu_ ad dex - te - ram De - i se - des,___ in glo - ri - a Pa - tris.
19. Ju - dex cre - de - ris es - se ven - tu - rus.
20. Te_ er - go que - su - mus, tu is fa - mu - lis sub - ve - ni, quos pre - ti - o - so san - gui - ne red - e - mi - sti.
21. Ae - ter - na___ fac_____ cum san - ctis tu - is in glo - ri - a nu - me - ra_____ ri.
22. Sal - vum fac po - pu - lum tu - um Do - mi - ne,_____ et be - ne - dic he - re - di - ta ti tu - ae.
23. Et re - ge e - os,_____ et ex - tol - le il - los us - que in ae - ter - num.
24. per sin - gu - los di - es;_____ be - ne - di - ci - mus te.



The "Te Deum" chant is "based on Mode 4, hypophrygian" and appears in the Solemnes *Liber Usualis* in Phrygian on E.[49] The "Te Deum"chant is highly repetitive, with a few musical figures providing the material of the chant. The melody of verse 2 of the chant repeats in many other verses in the "Te Deum" chant, such as verses 3-4, 6-10, 12. Frequent use is made of the melody to verse 14, with its characteristic major-third, minor-third descent at the end of the verse. This appears throughout the "Te Deum" chant until the end, in verses 15-20, 24-28. Moreover, the melodic opening in the first part of verse 24 reappears in verses 25-28. Not unexpectedly, the composers in this study employ just three to five motives from the chant in their organ compositions, all of which are easily recognizable.

The dramatic Christian themes of praise and supplication found in the "Te Deum" text are mirrored in the composers' works based on the "Te Deum" chant. In general, sections using musical material drawn from the "praise" sections of the chant are

typically loud, dramatic and joyful, while sections using "supplication" material tend be quieter and more reflective. While these religious themes of praising God and asking for his divine help are ubiquitous in the Roman Catholic mass, the four compositions in this study are intended for recitals rather than for Roman Catholic church services. These "Te Deum" works might have appeared at the end of mass as the *pièce terminale* or perhaps even as the clergy enter at the start of the mass as the *prélude à l'introit*, but would certainly not have been suitable for the other times in the Roman Catholic Mass when the organ plays alone. Most likely, these organ works were intended simply as virtuosic concert pieces—works which reflected the composers' training in improvisation at the Paris Conservatory, and their intimacy and facility with the Gregorian chant they encountered in their church positions.

[49]Thomeson, "Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces*," 97.

Chapter 3
Charles Tournemire and *Improvisation sur le Te Deum*

The first piece this study addresses is the *Improvisation sur le Te Deum* by Charles Tournemire, a work which more than any other in this study exhibits the link between organ improvisation and Gregorian chant. Charles Tournemire was widely renowned for his rhapsodic improvisations on Gregorian chant during liturgies at Ste. Clotilde Church, where he worked for over four decades. As its name suggests, this work began life as an improvisation—albeit a recorded one. The piece was later transcribed by one of Tournemire's students, Maurice Duruflé. While this composition contains moments of the "looseness and unordered spontaneity," which Michael Murray states are connotations of the word "improvisation," Charles Tournemire's work has a clear form and means of development.[50]

3.1 Biography

Charles Arnould Tournemire was born in Bordeaux on January 22, 1870 and died in Arcachon on November 4, 1939. He began studying music at the Bordeaux Conservatory where, at the age of 11, "he won a prize...and made his first appearances as an organ accompanist."[51] He enrolled in the Paris Conservatory in 1886 at the age of 16 and began organ studies with César Franck. After Franck's death in 1890, Tournemire continued his organ studies with Franck's successor, Charles-Marie Widor. Tournemire's work yielded him a *premier prix* in organ in 1891 from Widor's organ class.[52] It was his study with Franck, however, that would prove the more formative for Tournemire: from Franck

[50]Murray, *Marcel Dupré*, 38.
[51]Flor Peeters, "Charles Tournemire: An Appreciation," *The Diapason* (September 1964): 20.
[52]Nicholas Kaye, "Charles (Arnould) Tournemire," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 656.

he inherited "a spiritual, mystical motivation for composition and for organ improvisation."[53]

Another part of Tournemire's inheritance from Franck was the prestigious position of Titular Organist at the Basilica of Ste. Clotilde in Paris, a post Franck held from 1859 until he died in 1890.[54] A church in Gothic-revival design completed in 1857, Ste. Clotilde boasted a fine organ by the consummate nineteenth-century French organ builder, Aristide Cavaillé-Coll. Franck's pupil, Gabriel Pierné, immediately succeeded him in the job in 1890 but, after Pierné left in 1898, Tournemire competed with thirty other candidates and won the post at age 28.[55] He played at Ste. Clotilde for the next 41 years until his death in 1939. Tournemire's tenure at this church was the mid-point of St. Clotilde's 129-year old association with Franck, Tournemire and their students.[56]

In the organ loft at Ste. Clotilde, Tournemire had assistants and other contacts who would have a profound influence on organ composition and playing throughout the twentieth century: Maurice Duruflé, Daniel-Lesur, Olivier Messaien, Jean Langlais, Norbert Dufourcq, Gaston Litaize, and Jehan Alain.[57] In addition to his work at Ste. Clotilde, Tournemire worked as Professor of Chamber Music at the Paris Conservatory from 1919. Tournemire had always coveted, however, the Professor of Organ position at

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[53]Peeters, "Charles Tournemire: An Appreciation," 20. In 1931, Tournemire wrote a book on his master. See Charles Tournemire, *César Franck* (Paris: Delagrave, 1931) and Kaye, "Charles (Arnould) Tournemire," 656.

[54]Robert Southerland Lord, "The Sainte-Clotilde Tradition: Toward A Definition," *The American Organist* (February 1982): 38.

[55]Peeters, "Charles Tournemire: An Appreciation," 20. The trial for the organist position at Ste. Clotilde is another example of how competitive and scarce prestigious organ jobs in Paris were.

[56]The tradition continued with two of Tournemire's students who succeeded him at Ste. Clotilde: Joseph Ermend Bonnal in 1939 and Jean Langlais, a subject of this study, who held the post from 1945 until 1987. See Gwilym Beechy, "Charles Tournemire, 1870-1939," *Musical Times* 111, no. 1527, (May 1970): 543.

[57]Robert Southerland Lord, "Charles Tournemire and The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross," *The Diapason* (November 1977): 1.

the Conservatory. As with all prestigious music positions in Paris, the organ post at the Conservatory was rarely vacant and, being the top position in organ in Paris, was the most fiercely sought-after. Tournemire was nonetheless a "strong contender" for the Organ Professorship when it came open in 1925, after the death of Eugène Gigout.[58] The post was ultimately awarded, however, to Marcel Dupré (another subject in this study) who remained Professor of Organ at the Conservatory until 1955.

In addition to performing and teaching, Tournemire was a prolific composer for many media. He wrote four operas, eight symphonies, seven choral works, several collections of solo vocal songs, and various chamber works including trios, sonatas and quartets. For the organ, he composed twenty opus numbers, including five symphonies and several collections of smaller-scale works. The largest of his organ compositions is his *L'Orgue Mystique*, opp. 55-7 (1927-1932), a massive work of some 255 individual pieces grouped into 51 suites, each corresponding to a Sunday of the liturgical year.[59] Each suite is based upon the various plainsongs appointed for a particular Sunday. Such an enormous undertaking recalls the work of another liturgical organist, J.S. Bach: as Nicholas Kaye observes, Tournemire's "cycle…aims to provide for the Catholic liturgy what Bach had accomplished for the Protestant."[60] Tournemire, however, apparently did not write these suites for his own use in the services at Ste. Clotilde. Instead, the centerpiece of Tournemire's musical offering each Sunday was improvisation on Gregorian Chant.

Maurice Duruflé, who studied technique and improvisation with Tournemire from 1919-1920, and who would often assist and substitute for Tournemire, claims that:

> Tournemire never played from a prepared score at Sunday Mass; the book of Gregorian chant was always on the music rack, open at the liturgical office of the day. He improvised the entire Low Mass, pausing for the gospel and the sermon. That meant a full half-hour of music. I hasten to

[58]Lord, "Charles Tournemire and The Seven Last Words," 1.
[59]Beechy, "Charles Tournemire: 1870-1939," 543.
[60]Kaye, "Charles (Arnould) Tournemire," 656.

> add that this half-hour of music was always inspired by the Gregorian themes appropriate to the day and reflected the successive portions of the service. It was not a concert, but a genuine musical commentary on the liturgy.[61]

Tournemire once spoke of plainsong as a "truly inexhaustible source of mysterious, resplendent lines" and as a "triumph of modal art."[62] When asked about the role of the liturgical organist, Tournemire stated that improvised music of the service should be:

> …very strictly based on the liturgy, that is to say being so inspired by the splendor of the liturgical text as well as the Gregorian line which are like airy and mobile paraphrases of the motionless structure of the cathedrals.[63]

Unlike the other *Te Deum*s in this study, Tournemire's *Improvisation sur le Te Deum* is a pure reflection of this link between Gregorian chant and improvisation. This composition was wholly improvised and recorded, and then later transcribed by his student, Maurice Duruflé.

3.2 Tournemire's Improvisation and Recordings

In 1930, Tournemire was called upon by the French record company Polydor to make some recordings featuring the organ at Ste. Clotilde. The technology needed to effectively record the organ did not emerge until the mid-1920s when the "recording industry converted to microphone recording with electronic amplification."[64] That

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[61]Maurice Duruflé, "My Recollections of Tournemire and Vierne," *The American Organist*14, no.11 (November 1980): 54.
[62]Duruflé, "My Recollections," 54.
[63]Peeters, "Charles Tournemire: An Appreciation," 20.
[64]Richard Burns, "Organ Recording...The Early Years," *Music* (August 1973): 24. Burns writes that "the acoustical recording process [the process which proceeded electrical recording], which was effective at reproducing the voice, also served with some degree of adequacy to reproduce (in descending order of success) the violin, the band, the piano and the orchestra. However, it was singularly ineffective in reproducing the pipe organ. This is because the organ is such a spread-out instrument, and if you got the recording horn far enough back to pick up in some decent balance the sound of the entire instrument, the sound was not loud enough to make a satisfactory recording. Also, the process was completely incapable of reproducing the pedal notes."

Tournemire's recordings were made at all is somewhat surprising. Though other organists such as Louis Vierne, Charles-Marie Widor and Joseph Bonnet all made early phonograph recordings in their respective churches in Paris, recording the organ was laborious and far from lucrative. As Richard Burns explains:

> The recording equipment, including a very heavy and delicate disc-cutting lathe, had to be moved into the building occupied by the organ and set up. The organ to be recorded, in most cases, was unlike anything else with which the recording engineers ever had to cope. It was high up in the air and widely spread out. You could not move any of it, as you could musicians in an orchestra. If you had the microphone far enough back to pick up the entire instrument in a good balance, you probably were also picking up too much reverberation. The ideal way to cope with the situation would be to use several microphones close up, but then that involved getting microphones which were much heavier than those in use today, high up in the air. So this ideal probably was seldom realized.
>
> This all had usually to be done in a church, a very busy place, and not everyone connected with a church is necessarily sympathetic to such an endeavor. Recording of serious organ music probably was acquiesced in [sic] by the recording companies mostly out of a sense of artistic duty and after a good deal of arm-twisting on the part of organ enthusiasts. Certainly there was no money to be made by it, and such a recording was probably just one more job in a busy schedule to the recording crew. In most cases, the equipment was set up, the recording was made and the equipment moved out, never to return. Undoubtedly tests were made prior to the recording session but the recorded organist most likely did not hear the final results of the recording session until some weeks later when he received the test pressings. These he would have either to accept or reject with no opportunity for retakes.[65]

Tournemire made a total of eight recordings (each containing one work) in 1930 for Polydor. Tournemire recorded the *Choral in a minor* of Franck, two of his own compositions, and then five improvised works, one of which was the *Improvisation sur le Te Deum*.[66] As Raymond Weidner points out, Tournemire apparently used these

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[65]Burns, "Organ Recording," 24-25.

[66]Raymond Frank Weidner, "The Improvisational Techniques of Charles Tournemire as Extracted from His Five Reconstructed Organ Improvisations" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1983), 12-13. Weidner provides a helpful figure listing the Polydor recording numbers as well as further information about the distribution of the recordings.

recordings as musical examples for his lectures. One such lecture occurred at the Institut Français in London on February 25, 1936 entitled "L'Orgue et son developpement à travers les siècles, sa litterature, et l'art de l'improvisation." The notice for the talk stated that "the lecture will be illustrated by records made by Tournemire at Ste. Clotilde, and will be open to members of the Organ Music Society."[67] As Weidner writes, "how they were received is revealed, in part, by a review of two of those recordings in Britain's *The Gramophone*":

> …on two Polydor records, 566057, and 8 (12n., 6s.6d each), MAÎTRE CH. TOURNEMIRE, on St. Clotilde's organ at Paris, plays Franck's *A Minor Chorale*, adding on the 4th side a *Cantilène Improvisation* of his own…. The *Chorale* opens with capital breadth and promise, rhapsodies [sic] succinctly, muses attractively, sings confidently (on side 2), and finishes with sustained eloquence and power…. The music could not be more clearly presented than here. Perhaps one or two of the solo stops are a little pungent, but there is never any difficulty in hearing all the notes. M. Tournemire's piece is a poetic little thing with some restless harmonic twists, a little vague in its implications, but tonally, coaxing attention and giving pleasure.[68]

This is apparently the only assessment of Tournemire's eight recordings when they were released. While this review does not mention the *Improvisation sur le Te Deum*, one can perhaps surmise that initial critical appraisal of the other of Tournemire's recorded improvisations would have been favorable.

Tournemire's pupil, Maurice Duruflé, painstakingly transcribed each of the recorded 1930 improvisations, and Durand and Co. of Paris published the works as *Cinq improvisations* in 1958.[69] In a 1979 interview, when asked how he made the Tournemire transcriptions, Duruflé responded:

> I played the records over and over. I worked especially at night, because

[67]Weidner, "The Improvisational Techniques of Charles Tournemire," 13.
[68]Weidner, "The Improvisational Techniques of Charles Tournemire," 14.
[69]These recordings are the only aural record we have of the art for which Tournemire was so famous.

> during the day there was too much noise. The technical quality of the records was not good; there was a great deal of background noise. In intricate passages, I slowed the record player down to half speed to capture the finer notes. It was a lot of work! Tournemire improvised fast. His temperament pushed him to improvise at rapid tempi. You will notice the number of fast passages in the improvisations.[70]

New research reveals that "Tournemire himself did not want the improvisations reconstituted and published." Duruflé scholar James Frazier writes:

> On several occasions, when Tournemire was in England, Felix Aprahamian urged him to reconstitute and publish the improvisations himself. In every instance Tournemire objected to the whole notion, insisting that the works were intended as improvisations, not as pieces to be learned and performed by other organists. After their publication, Aprahamian wrote that the improvisations "are now available to players and have been made available contrary to the composer's expectations and probably contrary to his wishes, as well."[71]

Thus, an interesting irony in the history of organ music: a composer's best known and most performed works were never intended to be so. Tournemire meant *Improvisation sur le Te Deum* to be his fleeting meditation on an ancient hymn of praise and supplication. Instead, the work, along with the other *Cinq Improvisations*, came to be solidly grounded in the organ repertoire.

3.3 Form in Tournemire's *Improvisation sur le Te Deum*

Because it is an improvisation, Tournemire's *Te Deum* exhibits the most formal freedom of all the "Te Deum" compositions in this study. The composition contains many changes in tempo and dynamics, and its form is created out of small segments that are linked together. The work can be divided into three larger sections, with the outer sections articulated by a final cadence in e minor (see Figure 3.1). The rationale for the

[70]George Baker, "An Inverview with Maurice Duruflé," *The American Organist* 14, no.11 (November 1980): 58.
[71]James Frazier, "Maurice Duruflé: A Centenary, Part I," *The American Organist* 36, no. 11 (November 2002): 62.

division of the work into three sections will be discussed below. The overriding dynamic for the work is *ff*, though there are moments of relative quiet in the *Te Deum*. Particularly noteworthy are the frequent changes in tempo: Duruflé transcribed no less than twenty-six changes of tempo throughout the entire piece.

Figure 3.1. The Sections of Tournemire's *Te Deum*

Section 1 (mm. 1-65)
Largo, Andante, Piu vivo, Animado
Changes in tempo: 10
2/4, 3/4, 4/4
ff--p--f--p--mf--f--ff
Texture: 3-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted
v. 1—Te Deum laudamus
v. 1—Te Deum cell
v. 14—Tu Rex gloriae, Christe

Section 2 (mm. 65-158)
Andantino, Molto animado, Vivo, Poco meno vivo
Changes in tempo: 8
2/4, 3/4
mf--p--f--p--mf--p--f--p--f--p--f--p--f--ff--p--f--ff
Texture: 3-8 voices
Chant excerpts quoted
v. 1—Te Deum laudamus
v. 1—Te Deum cell
v. 14—Tu Rex gloriae, Christe

Section 3 (mm. 159-218)
Moderato, Vivo, Presto, Adagio
Changes in tempo: 8
2/4
ff--fff
Texture: 3-11 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v.1—Te Deum laudamus
v. 1—Te Deum cell
v. 14—Tu Rex gloriae, Christe

As seen in Figure 3.1, Tournemire's *Te Deum* runs the gamut from a transparent three-voice texture (usually appearing as octaves in statements of the "Te Deum" theme, as seen in the first three bars of the work), to thick eleven-voice textures (m. 193). Dynamically, the work covers the entire range from *p* to *fff*. Section 2, for example, is notable for its rapid changes in dynamics from *p* to *f*. Section 3 features a gradual

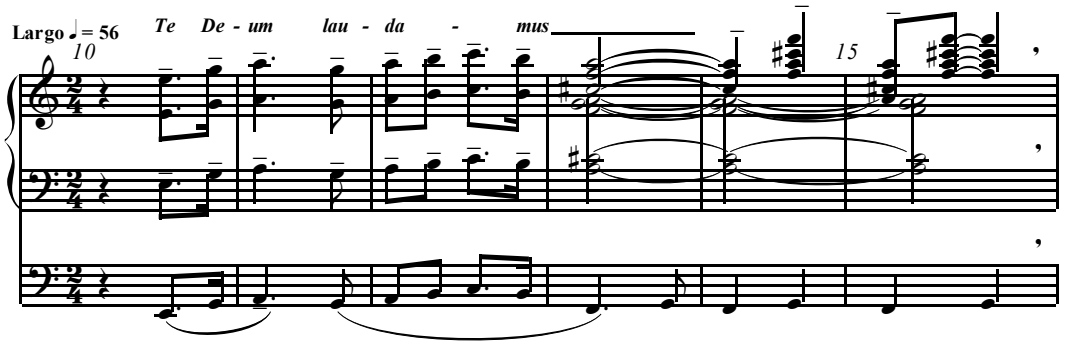
increase in dynamic from *ff* to *fff*, which begins at m. 196 of the work and concludes with the climax of the piece at mm. 209-218. Tournemire's work features frequent and dramatic changes in dynamic, tempo and texture. The liberties of this work are perhaps due to the fact that the piece began as an improvisation.

3.4 Tournemire and the "Te Deum" chant

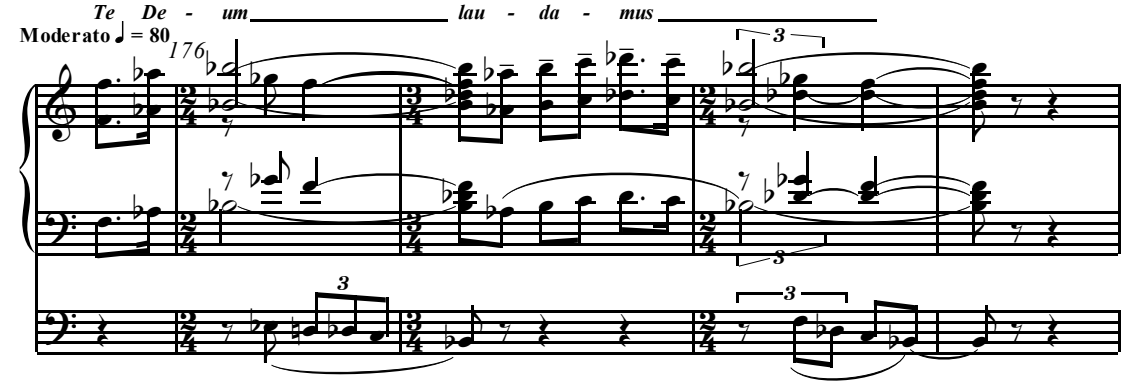
Of the composers in this study, Tournemire is the most economical in his choice of chant material to incorporate in his work. Compared to Langlais, Dupré, and Demessieux (who use from three to five verses of the chant in their works), Tournemire draws from just two verses of the hymn–verses 1 and 14—which reflect only the praise and not the supplication theme of the original "Te Deum" hymn. Verse 1 of the hymn speaks of praising God ("We praise Thee, O God") and verse 14 speaks of Christ's position as ruler of all ("Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ"). Moreover, Tournemire's *Te Deum* draws from only the first half of verse 1, and frequently presents cellular material based upon the first three notes of the chant–E, G, A. The generally *forte* dynamics of the work tend to reflect these praise-themed words.

Almost every presentation of the chant material in Tournemire's *Te Deum* is declamatory in nature: chant fragments usually appear in *fff* octaves and are often harmonized with block chords. Example 3.1 shows various ways in which the chant material is presented.

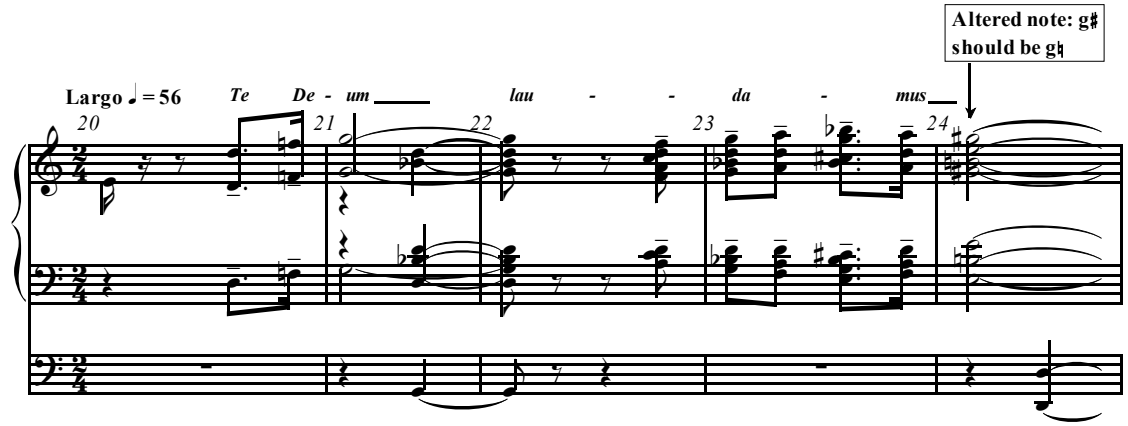
Example 3.1a: Tournemire, mm. 10-15



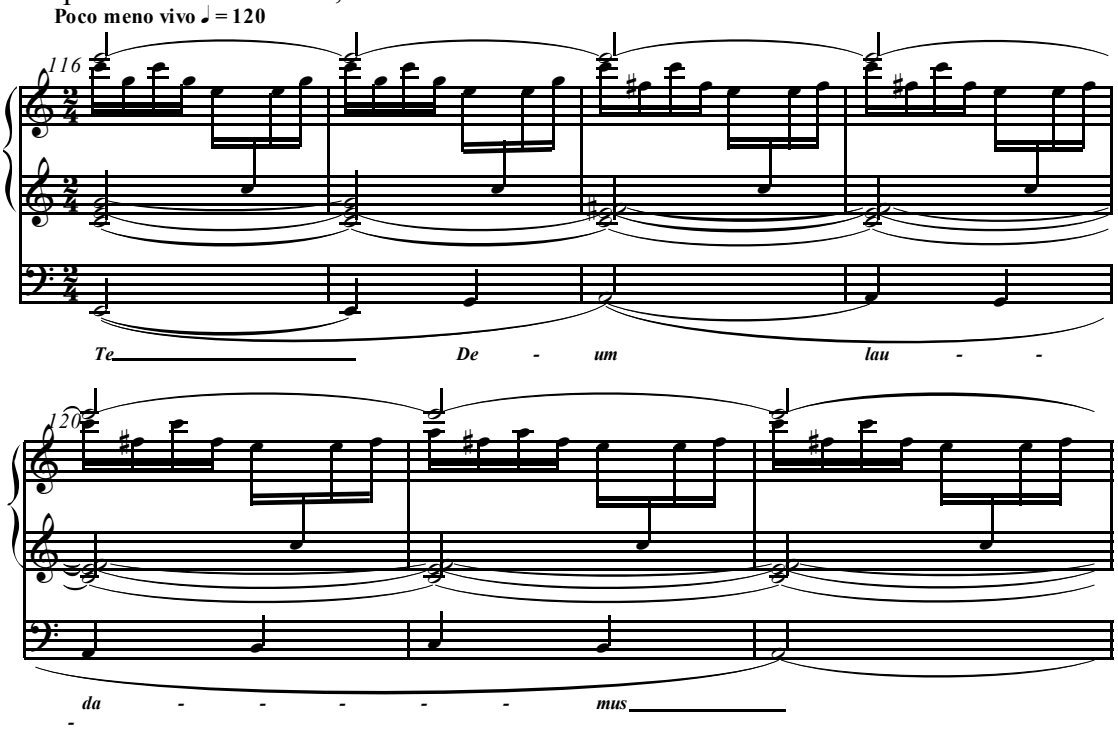
Example 3.1b: Tournemire, mm 176-179



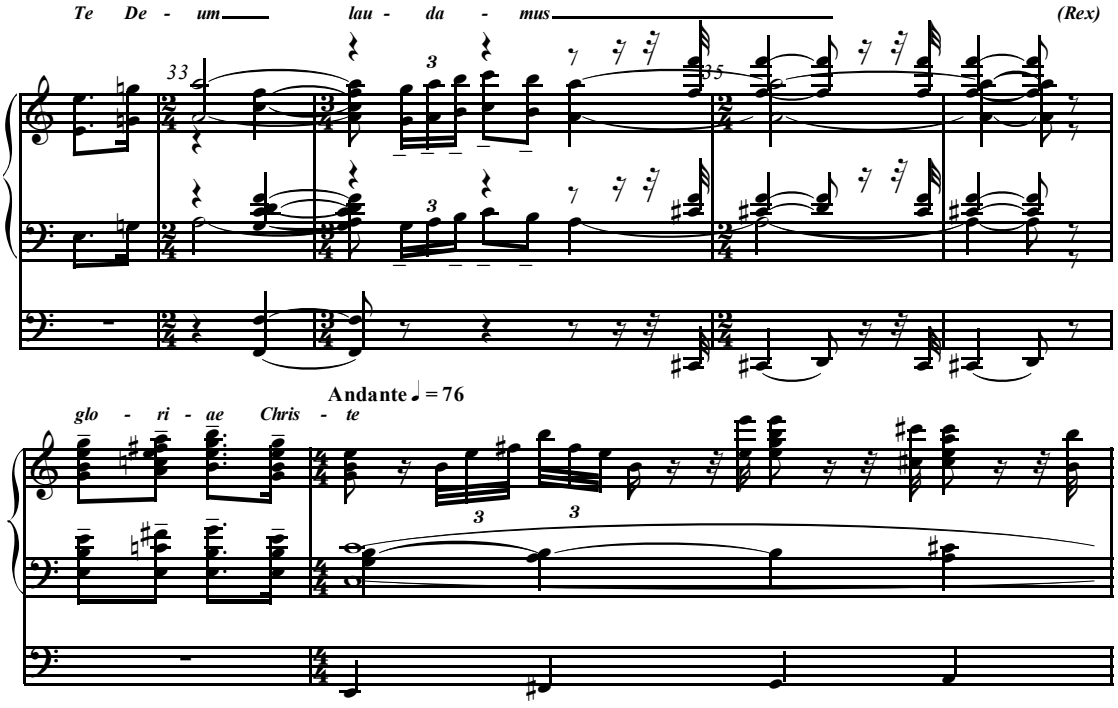
Example 3.1c: Tournemire, mm. 20-24



Example 3.1d: Tournemire, mm. 116-122



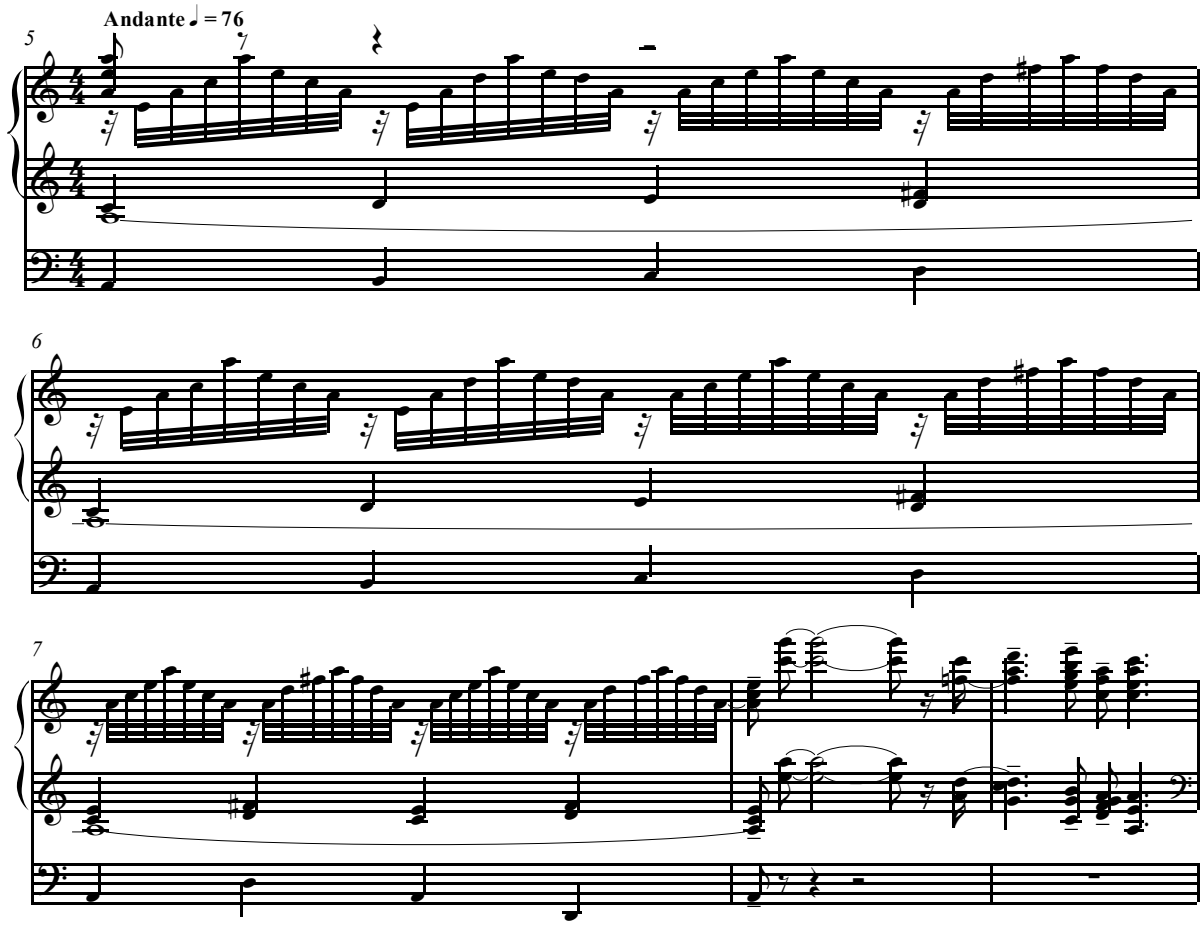
Example 3.1e: Tournemire, mm. 33-38



In Example 3.1a (mm. 10-15), the "Te Deum" theme appears in Phrygian on E in octaves alone. In Example 3.1b (mm. 176-179), the "Te Deum" theme appears again in octaves, only this time transposed to Phrygian on F. In Example 3.1c, (mm. 20-24), the theme appears (transposed to Phrygian on D) in the right hand in a combination of octaves and block chords. Sometimes the "Te Deum" theme appears as a single line below a toccata-like figuration in the hands, as seen in Example 3.1d (mm. 116-122). Example 1e (mm. 33-38) shows the "Te Deum" theme presented in octaves and the "Rex Gloriae Christe" theme presented in the top voice above block chords (mm. 37-38). In each example, the chant material is forcefully presented and aurally recognizable.

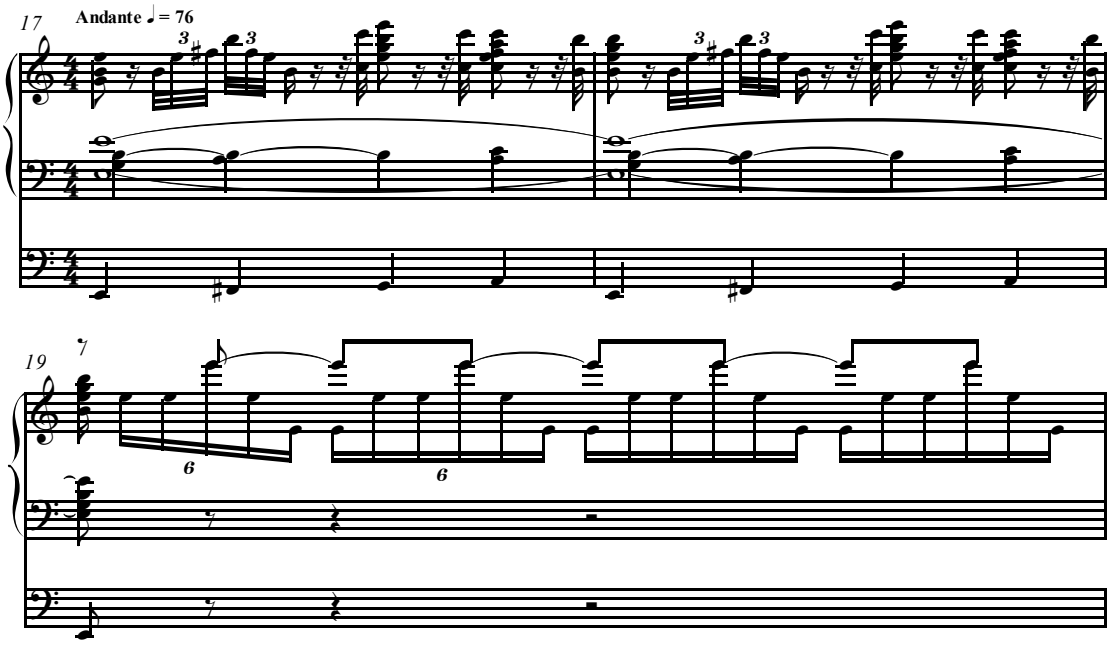
The more unusual features of this work, however, lie not in the presentation of chant material but in the rhapsodic links between the presentations of this chant material. A technically virtuosic interlude links each "Te Deum" declamation. The links or interludes vary throughout the work in their procedures and musical textures, but all share two features: they are harmonically static and virtuosic. Example 3.2a, a rhapsodic interlude from mm. 5-9, shows several devices typical of other links in the work.

Example 3.2a: Tournemire, mm. 5-9



One feature of this interlude is the A pedal point in the lowest voice of the left hand, which sounds throughout most of the passage. The foot pedals (the lowest stave) and the next-to-lowest voice in the left hand decorate the pedal point in ascending 10ths. The right hand plays rapid rising and falling 32nd-note arpeggios. The tempo has also quickened at the beginning of this interlude from quarter note = 56 at the opening of the work to quarter note = 76 at the start of the interlude. Despite the faster tempo and increased activity, this passage (mm. 5-9) is harmonically static. Example 3.2b (mm. 17-19) presents similar procedures: a pedal point (on E) in an inner voice, rising tenths, and 32nd-note arpeggiation, but this time the passage concludes with rapid repeated notes (mm. 19) which reinforce the pedal tone.

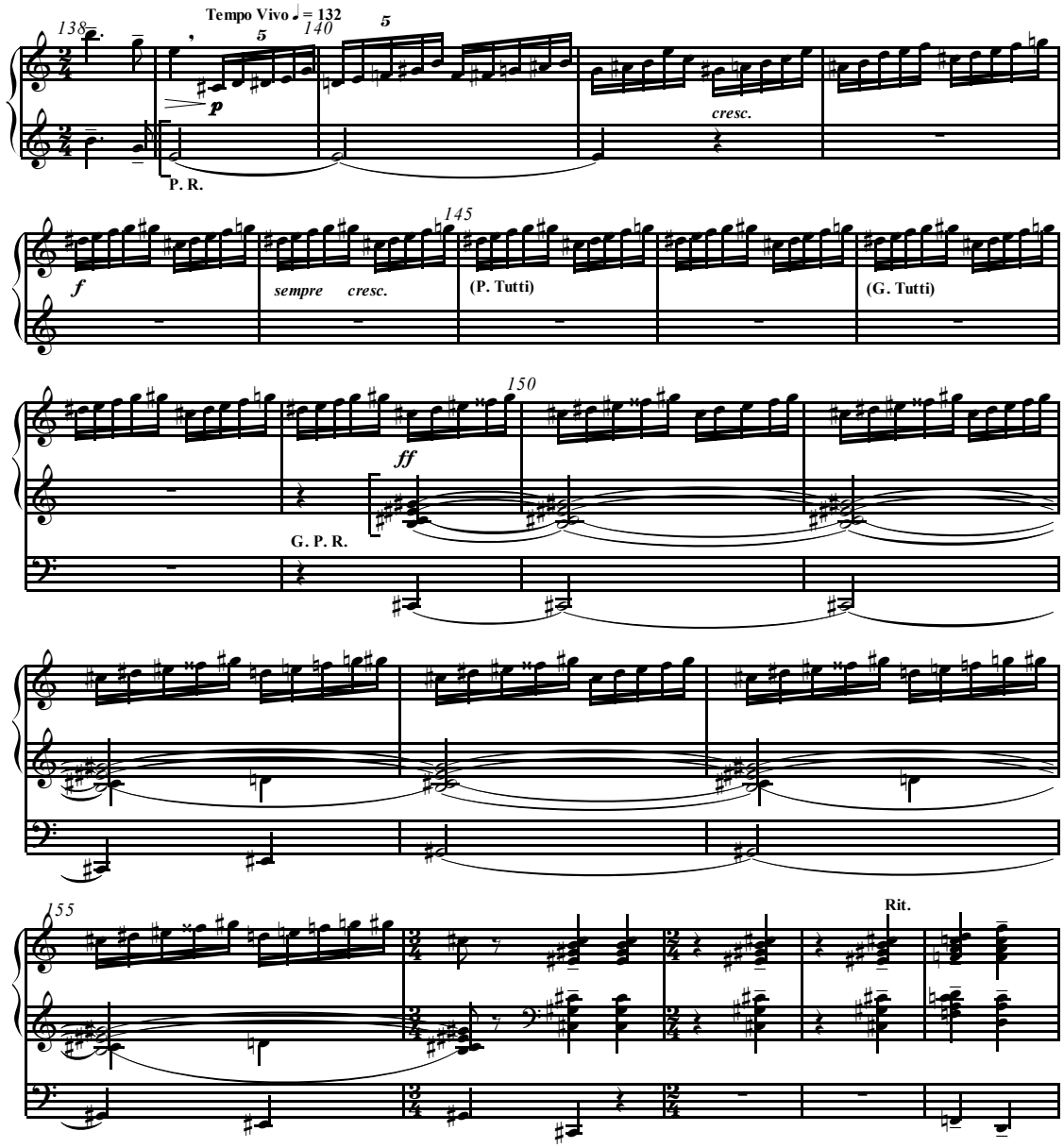
Example 3.2b: Tournemire, mm. 17-19



As before, with this interlude there is a corresponding increase in tempo. In fact, with all the interludes in section 1, there is a quickening of tempo. Each interlude has a minimum speed of quarter note = 76, whereas each presentation of chant material has a slower marking of quarter note = 56. The arpeggiation in these two examples is also found in other interludes, such as in m. 30, mm. 101-104, and in mm. 51-59.

Sequences are another device characteristic of the interludes. Example 3.2c (mm. 138-159) shows the interlude that occurs between two presentations of the "Te Deum" theme (mm. 131-35 and mm. 159-160 respectively).

Example 3.2c: Tournemire, mm. 138-159



This passage is based upon an ascending five-note figure (m. 139), which is presented 33 times in this passage. The high level of chromaticism associated with the five-note figure makes the tonal center of the passage unclear. This is notable because the "Te Deum" themes both before and after the interlude are clearly in Phrygian on E. In this instance, the opening of the interlude (139-148) seems to create a moment of harmonic instability.

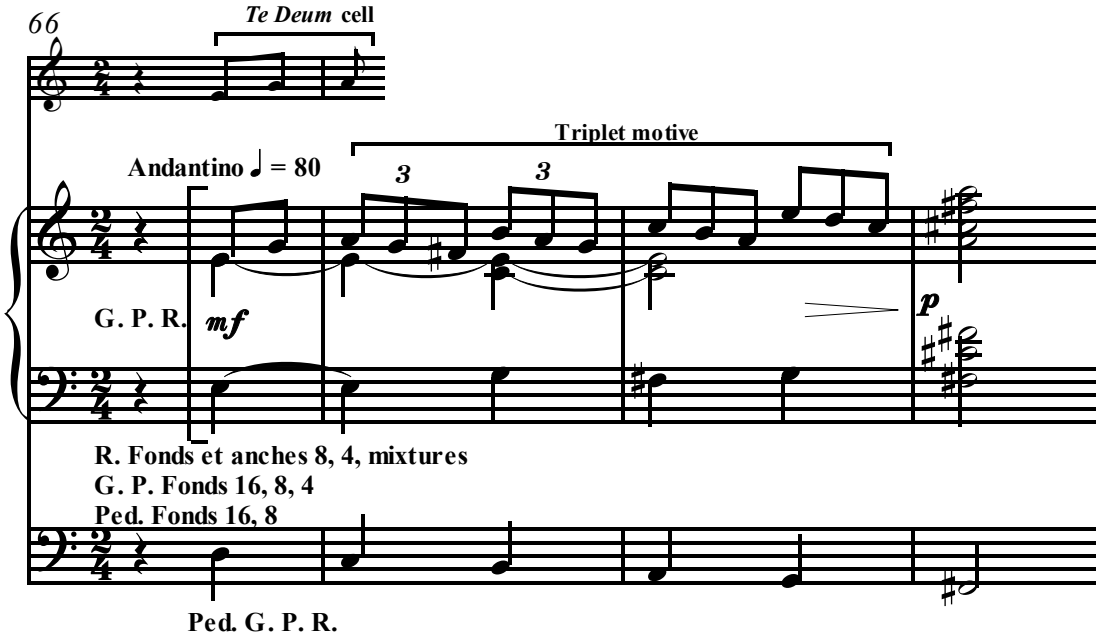
By m. 149 a left-hand dominant 7th chord and a pedal point on C# appear halfway through the interlude, and the left hand chord is sustained to the end of the passage. Despite the fast-moving chromatic filigree in the right hand, the passage does not move anywhere harmonically: the C# dominant 7^{th} chord never resolves, but is used merely for its sonorous quality.

Each of the rhapsodic interludes, then, is markedly different from the chant presentations in terms of texture, figuration, and harmonic rhythm. In this way, the interludes seem to act as a foil to the more straightforward chant presentations and, as foils, their primary purpose seems to be to serve as elements of contrast rather than as elements of transition. Because they feature figuration rather than thematic material or its development, the rhapsodic interludes do not so much connect sections of the work as articulate them. The interludes are, in essence, interpolations—rhetorical asides which present areas of virtuosic freedom rather than development of thematic materials.

3.5 Teleology in Tournemire's *Te Deum*

Despite the small interludes and sections, however, there is an overall sense of progression throughout Tournemire's *Te Deum.* Teleology in this work happens chiefly through the presentation of rhythmic variants of chant material. As mentioned earlier, the work can be divided into three larger sections, with the outer sections articulated by a final Phrygian cadence in e minor (see Figure 3.1). The sections are also articulated by distinctive rhythmic presentations of chant material. In section 1, the rhythmic presentation of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme occurs in dotted-rhythm octaves, (Examples 3.1a, 3.1b, 3.1c, and 3.1e). Section 2 of the work provides a rhythmic variant of material from the "Te Deum laudamus" theme: Example 3.3a (mm. 66-69) shows a triplet-motive in the right hand which is heard throughout Sections 2 and 3.

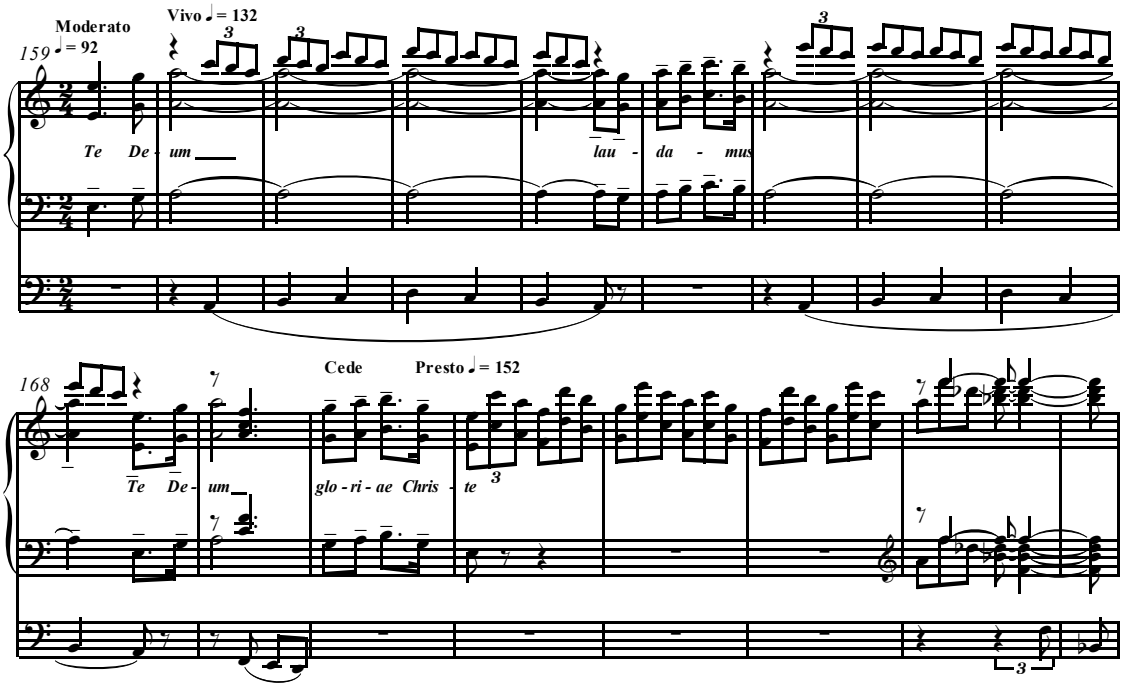
Example 3.3a: Tournemire, mm. 66-69



The figure begins with the "Te Deum" cell (E, G, A) and continues in rising groups of triplets for two bars. In Section 2 this triplet motive continues in various guises, while rhapsodic interludes separate presentations of this motive (mm. 99-104, 112-123, and 129-136).

Section 3 seems to coalesce thematic and rhythmic materials found in both sections 1 and 2. Example 3.3b, taken from the start of section 3 (mm. 159-175), shows dotted-rhythm octave presentations of chant material reminiscent of section 1 (mm. 159-160, 163-165, and 168-171) linked by the triplet motive originally presented in section 2.

Example 3.3b: Tournemire, mm. 159-175

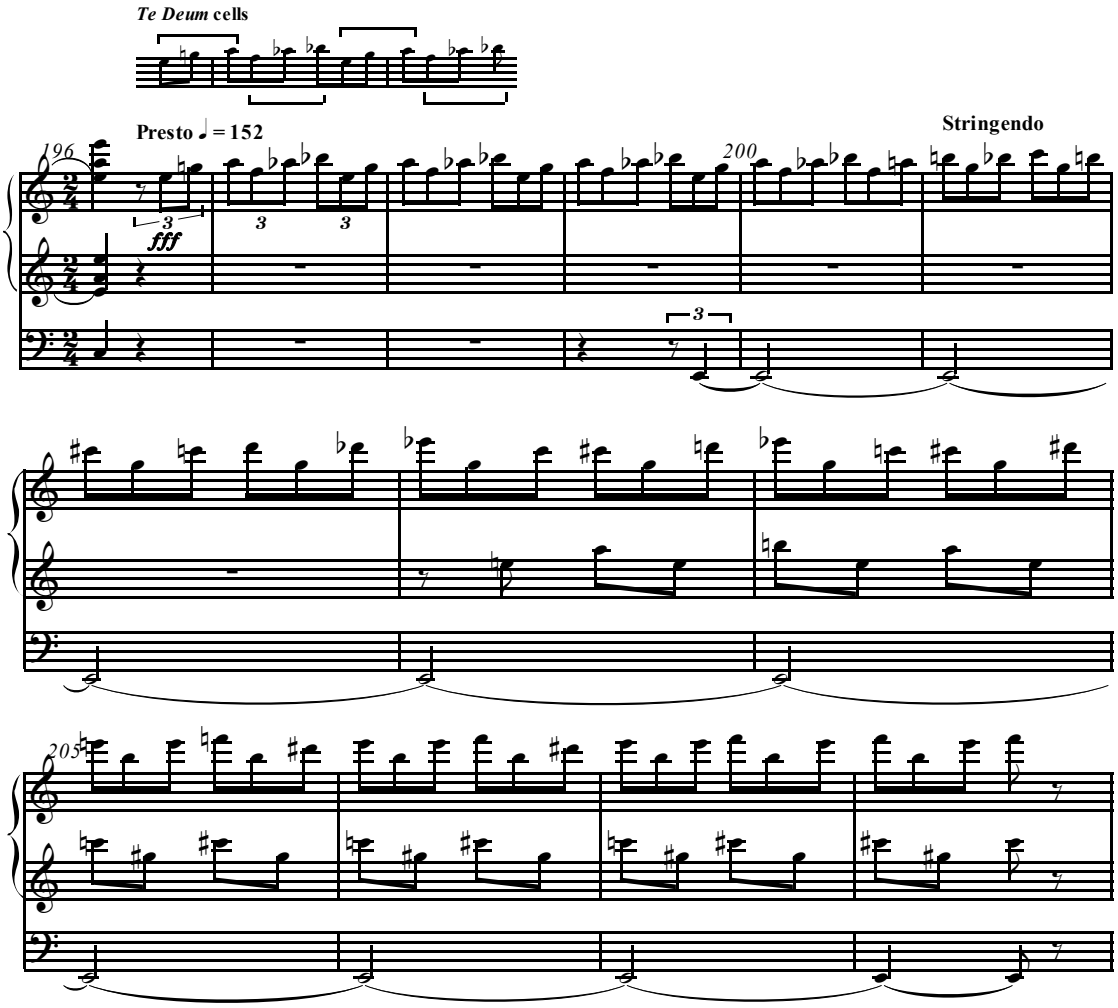


The first two times the triplet motive appears in the passage (mm. 160-163 and mm. 165-168) the motion is largely step-wise as it is with the original motive. The third appearance of the triplet motive in mm. 171-174 recalls more of the rhythm of the motive than its melodic line, as intervals between notes expand from the half- or whole-steps in previous statements to major 3rds and major 6ths. Throughout this passage, there are no rhapsodic interludes. Instead, the music jumps seamlessly and immediately from one thematic idea to another. This combination of thematic and rhythmic materials from sections 1 and 2 marks a significant moment in the work's development. Despite its status as an improvisation, there is a sense of goal orientation throughout the entire work. Each section of the work is articulated by a different presentation of chant material:

section 1 with the dotted-rhythm octaves; section 2 with the triplet motive based upon the "Te Deum" cell; and section 3 which combines the dotted-rhythm octaves with the triplet motive.

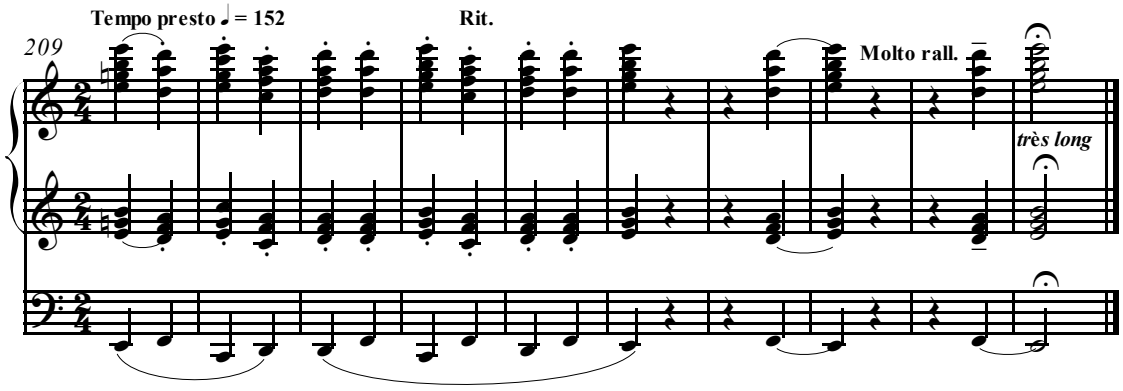
Another important moment in this development occurs in the coda of Tournemire's *Te Deum* (mm. 196-218). In this passage, several thematic and rhythmic materials from throughout the work combine in a moment of summation. The coda begins with a figure based on the triplet motive, as seen in Example 3.3c (mm. 196-208).

Example 3.3c: Tournemire, mm. 196-208



The intervals of the original triplet motive have changed, however. Whereas the original motive as it appeared in Section 2 contained just one "Te Deum" cell, this figure contains several "Te Deum" cells in Phrygian on E and in Phrygian on F. The key centers of these cells are significant, as they recall those of the presentations of the chant material at the start of section 3 (Phrygian on E, mm. 159-160; Phrygian on F, mm. 175-176). The key centers of the cells are equally important because of what they prefigure a few bars later. Phrygian on E in the final measures of this work (mm. 209-218) is established, in part, by this movement between Phrygian on E and Phrygian on F. Example 3.3d (mm. 209-218) shows the motion from F to E in the pedal line.

Example 3.3d: Tournemire, mm. 209-218



Such motion, with the lowered 2nd scale degree, is a hallmark of the Phrygian cadence in E. These cells, then, serve a dual purpose: they recall an earlier harmonic moment in the section and foreshadow one to come. Therefore, this moment at the start of the coda marks another instance in which progression in Tournemire's *Te Deum* is effected by the combination of modal elements. The motion from F to E in the final bars of the work both recalls earlier tonal centers in the section and helps to establish the key of Phrygian

on E for the ending of the work.

For a work that was, in essence, created spontaneously by the composer, Tournemire's *Improvisation sur le Te Deum* exhibits a striking amount of cohesion and sense of forward drive. By working with only two chant excerpts and presenting them frequently in aurally recognizable ways, Tournemire creates a tight focus for his improvisation. This focus is enhanced by virtuosic rhapsodic links which serve both as bookends and as foils to the more straightforward presentations of chant material. Furthermore, by using rhythmic variations derived from these two chant excerpts, Tournemire creates an overall sense of goal orientation for the work.

Chapter 4

Jean Langlais and *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum*

The second piece in this study is Jean Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum*, one of Langlais's early works and perhaps his most enduring composition for the organ. Six years after Tournemire died, Langlais inherited Tournemire's prestigious post at Ste. Clotilde. Like his predecessor, Langlais stayed at Ste. Clotilde for over forty years and continued the rich history of liturgical improvisation at the church begun in César Franck's tenure in the nineteenth century. Unlike Tournemire's improvised *Te Deum*, Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum* is a composed work in which several chant excerpts are manipulated.

4.1 Biography

Jean Langlais was born in Brittany on February 15, 1907 and died in Paris on May 8, 1991. Langlais went blind at the age of two, and, consequently, his career unfolded differently than the careers of the other composers in this study. He studied music at the *Institution des Jeunes Aveugles*—the national institute where France's blind were educated—from 1917-1927. There Langlais read music from the braille system—a "particularly complicated" way of notating music, according to his student and biographer Ann Labounsky—and studied with another blind organist, André Marchal.[72] In 1927 Langlais entered the Paris Conservatory and the organ class of Marcel Dupré.[73] In 1930 he won the *premier prix* in organ and in 1934 the *second prix* in composition. In

[72]Ann Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 2000), 34.

[73]This and several other biographical details are taken from: Xavier Darasse and Marie-Louise Jaquet-Langlais, "Jean Langlais," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 246.

addition to his work at the Conservatory, Langlais was a busy teacher and performer. From 1932 until 1945 he served as organist at the church of St. Pierre-de-Montrouge in Paris and taught organ, choir and composition at the *Institution des Jeunes Aveugles*. The position which helped to establish Langlais's career came in 1945 when he was appointed organist at the church of Ste. Clotilde in Paris, the church where César Franck and Charles Tournemire were formerly organists.

Unlike Charles Tournemire and Jeanne Demessieux, Jean Langlais was particularly well known in the United States. He was perhaps the most widely traveled of the composers in this study. Langlais made eight two-month concert tours of the United States and Canada, beginning in 1952.[74] As a result of these tours and frequent other visits to the United States to perform and teach, Jean Langlais became quite prominent in America. This prominence drew many American organ students to Paris to study with him.[75] Langlais's reputation in and frequent visits to America brought him in touch with American publishers who, as Ann Labounsky writes, were "eager to print his music."[76]

Langlais indeed had much music to be printed. His compositional output was prodigious: some 254 opus numbers from 1927-1990.[77] Langlais wrote for many media including strings, harpsichord, piano, and handbells. The majority of his music, however, is for organ and for choir, which is hardly surprising given his 42-year tenure at Ste.

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[74]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 148.

[75]Labounsky includes a select list of Langlais's students which includes some of the top organ recitalists—American and otherwise—in the world today. See Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 333-334.

[76]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 149.

[77]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 342-363. Labounsky's book contains a complete opus list. For the most extensive listing of Langlais's works, see Marie-Louise Jaquet-Langlais, *Ombre et Lumière* (Paris: Editions Combre, 1995). Jaquet-Langlais, Jean Langlais's widow, lists premières, timings, publishers, dates of publication and dedications for each work. For an equally extensive and helpful source, see Kathleen Thomerson, *Jean Langlais: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988). Thomerson's book contains information only until 1987, however, three years before Langlais stopped composing, and four years before his death in 1991.

Clotilde.

4.2 Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum*

As his Opus 9, Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâces, Te Deum*, stands near the start of his compositional career. Written in 1933-34 for a contest sponsored by the Parisian group "Amis de l'Orgue," *Te Deum* is the final movement of a three-piece suite, *Trois Paraphrases Gregoriennes*.[78] The first piece of the suite, *Ave Maria, Ave maris stella* (Hail Mary, Hail, Star of the Sea), concerns the Annunciation, the biblical story of the angel Gabriel's visit to the Virgin Mary to tell her of God's plan for her to bear Jesus. Langlais "develops the mystical intent of the Annunciation, taking the chant antiphon 'Ave Maria' from the second vespers from the feast of the Annunciation."[79] Langlais bases the second piece of the suite, *Mors et resurrectio* (Death and Resurrection), "on the [Gregorian] gradual from the Mass for the Dead." As Langlais describes, "the theme from the Mass for the Dead represents life—the Resurrection—and it is in the minor mode. And then the theme in major at the beginning represents death."[80] Langlais's *Te Deum,* based upon the ancient hymn of praise and supplication, completes the three-work collection. Taken as a whole, the suite portrays three of the great themes of the Church: Jesus's impending birth, thanksgiving for what God has given the faithful, and man's death with God's attendant promise of resurrection and eternal life.

Langlais premièred *Te Deum* on June 28, 1934 in Paris on the salon organ of Madame Suzanne Flersheim, "a wealthy Jewish patroness of the arts."[81] The première was in a house and not a church because, as Labounsky writes:

> During the early 1930s, few recitals were given in churches or concert

[78]Jacquet-Langlais, *Ombre et Lumière*, 76 and 348.
[79]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 80.
[80]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 80.
[81]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 84, and Jacquet-Langlais, *Ombre et Lumière*, 348.

> halls. House organs were not in great supply, but such affluent music lovers as Madame Flersheim...held recitals in their homes. Marchal [André Marchal, Langlais's former teacher] often arranged these concerts by promising young organists."[82]

The only review of Langlais's *Te Deum* appeared six months later in December 1934 by George Samazeuilh, a critic for *Le Courrier Musical*. While it is not entirely clear from this review which movements the critic is referring to, Langlais scholar Kathleen Thomerson surmises that the *Deux pièces* were probably two of the *Trois Paraphrases Gregoriennes*—the *Ave Maria* and *Te Deum*.[83]

> To be fully appreciated, the *Deux pièces* for organ of M. J. Langlais, student of Paul Dukas, ask to be heard in their original version and not in a transcription for two pianos which M. G. Litaize and the composer nevertheless made sound as good as possible. The start of the first work with its breadth of feeling along with the movement of the second work particularly struck me as coming not from just a maker of notes but from a true artistic temperament—one who will, in time, make his way.[84]

The *Te Deum* was published, along with the other *Paraphrases Gregoriennes,* soon after this review, in February 1935 by H. Herelle and Co. of Paris.[85]

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[82]Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 84. Precisely why churches held few recitals in the 1930s, Labounsky does not say.

[83]Thomerson, *Jean Langlais: A Bio-Bibliography*, 98.

[84]"Les *Deux pièces* pour orgue de M. J. Langlais, élève de M. Paul Dukas demanderaient pour être pleinement appréciées, d'être entendues dans leur version originale, et non dans une transcription pour deux pianos dont M. G. Litaize et l'auteur ont pourtant tiré le meilleur parti possible. Le début de la première, par la largeur de son sentiment, le movement de la seconde m'ont particulièrement frappé comme émanant non d'un faiseur de notes mais d'un véritable tempérament d'artiste qui fera son chemin." (Author's translation). George Samazeuilh, "Auditions des ouvrages des élèves des classes de Composition et des laureates du Prix du Rome," *Le Courrier Musical* 18 (December 15, 1934).

[85]In a conversation with the author in March 2002, Kathleen Thomerson, author of Langlais's thematic catalogue and a student of his at Ste. Clotilde in 1954, said that Langlais's widow, Marie-Louise Jacquet-Langlais, keeps all of Jean Langlais's extant manuscripts in her Paris apartment. In her biography of her husband, Jacquet-Langlais writes that the manuscript to *Te Deum* is lost. See Jaquet-Langlais, *Ombre et Lumière*, 348.

Langlais's *Te Deum* has a prominent place in contemporary organ literature. The work's exciting use of registration, its loud dynamics, and the easily audible way in which parts of the chant are presented perhaps account for the work's appeal among organists and the general public alike. Langlais's *Te Deum* has been frequently recorded and is performed often on the recital programs of concert organists.[86] As a work of moderate difficulty, it is technically accessible for most organ students and, as a result, is played often on recitals.

4.3 Form in Langlais's *Te Deum*

Langlais's *Hymne d'Actions de Grâce, Te Deum* can be divided into four main sections (see Figure 4.1), each with a clear beginning and ending.

Figure 4.1: The Sections in Langlais's *Te Deum*

Section 1 (mm. 1-27)
Maestoso
4/4, 3/4
p—ff
Texture: 2-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum Laudamus"
v. 1—"Te Dominum confitemur"
v. 5—"Sanctus"

Section 2 (mm. 28-64)
a Tempo
12/8, 6/8
pp—ff
Texture: 1-7 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum"
v. 14—"Rex Gloriae Christe"
v. 29—"In Te Domine Speravi"
Te Deum Cell
Supplication Motive—from v. 14

Section 3 (mm. 65-75)
Large
2/4,3/4, 4/4
ff
Texture: 1-9 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:

Section 4 (mm. 76-92)
Allegro; con fantasia
3/4, 4/4
ff
Texture: 7-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:

[86]In a random survey of the "Recitals" section of six recent issues of the monthly magazine *The American Organist*, I found Langlais's *Te Deum* programmed eight times.

v. 1—"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 2—"Te aeternum Patrem"
v. 14—"Tu Rex Gloriae Christe"

v. 1—"Te Deum" in retrograde
v. 29—"aeternum"
v. 29—last two notes of the chant—sung to "num" of aeternum"
Variations of the Te Deum Cell

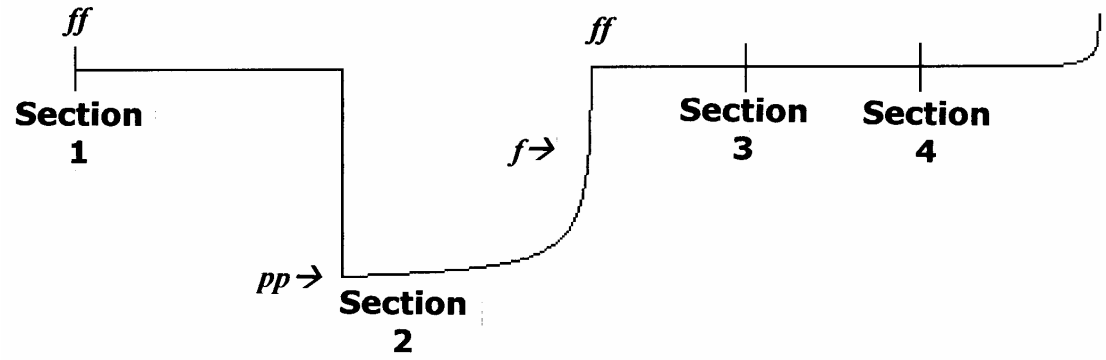
As seen in Figure 4.1, Langlais's choice of chant material reflects the two main literary themes of the "Te Deum" chant: praise and supplication. Verse 1 of the chant, which appears in every section of Langlais's work, speaks of praising God: "We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord." Excerpts of verses 2 and 5 of the chant, which proclaim God's holiness and his role as "the Father everlasting," appear in sections 2 and 3 of Langlais's *Te Deum*. The texture, registration and *tempi* markings of Langlais's *Te Deum* generally reflect the more jubilant nature of the praise theme in the "Te Deum" chant. Sections 1, 3 and 4 use several chant excerpts from verses 1, 2, and 5 of the "Te Deum" chant, and range in texture from one to ten voices, though usually the texture is a thick six to ten voices. The organ registration called for in these sections is generally very loud. At the start of the work, Langlais calls for all foundation stops and reeds at 16', 8', and 4', as well as mixtures. He assigns this registration to a dynamic level of *ff*, the predominant dynamic in sections 1, 3 and 4. Throughout the work, the *tempi* markings are generally broad with such markings as *maestoso, a tempo,* and *large*, while the final section is marked *allegro* and *con fantasia*.

Langlais also uses thematic material associated with verses 14 and 29 of the "Te Deum" chant, which ask for God's help. Addressed to Christ, verse 14 declaims, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ," and marks the start of a prayer to God and to Christ imploring their mercy. Verse 29, the last verse of the chant, reveals the plaintive essence of the "Te Deum," "O Lord, in Thee have I trusted: let me never be confounded." These chant fragments are presented in many textures and dynamics—one to ten voices ranging from *pp* to *ff.* Whereas Langlais assigns nearly the full-organ sound to the dynamic *ff,*

with the dynamic *pp* he asks for the full swell with reeds with the swell box shut. Relative to the full organ sound, this *pp* is quiet; relative to the entire dynamic range of the organ, it is not. In other words, the dynamic range of the work as a whole is rather narrow.

Nonetheless, there is a dynamic trajectory to the work, as shown in Figure 4.2. The dynamic shape of Langlais's *Te Deum* falls in the form of an inverted arc. This shape is similar to the dynamic arc of Demessieux's *Te Deum* (as will be seen in Chapter 6) but different in one respect: whereas the middle section of Demessieux's *Te Deum* is quiet for its entirety, Langlais's middle section, Section 2, starts quietly but soon builds in dynamic so that the end of Section 2 is marked *ff*. This dynamic form gives the entire work a forward momentum as the piece moves towards its conclusion.

Figure 4.2: The Dynamic Trajectory of Langlais's *Te Deum*



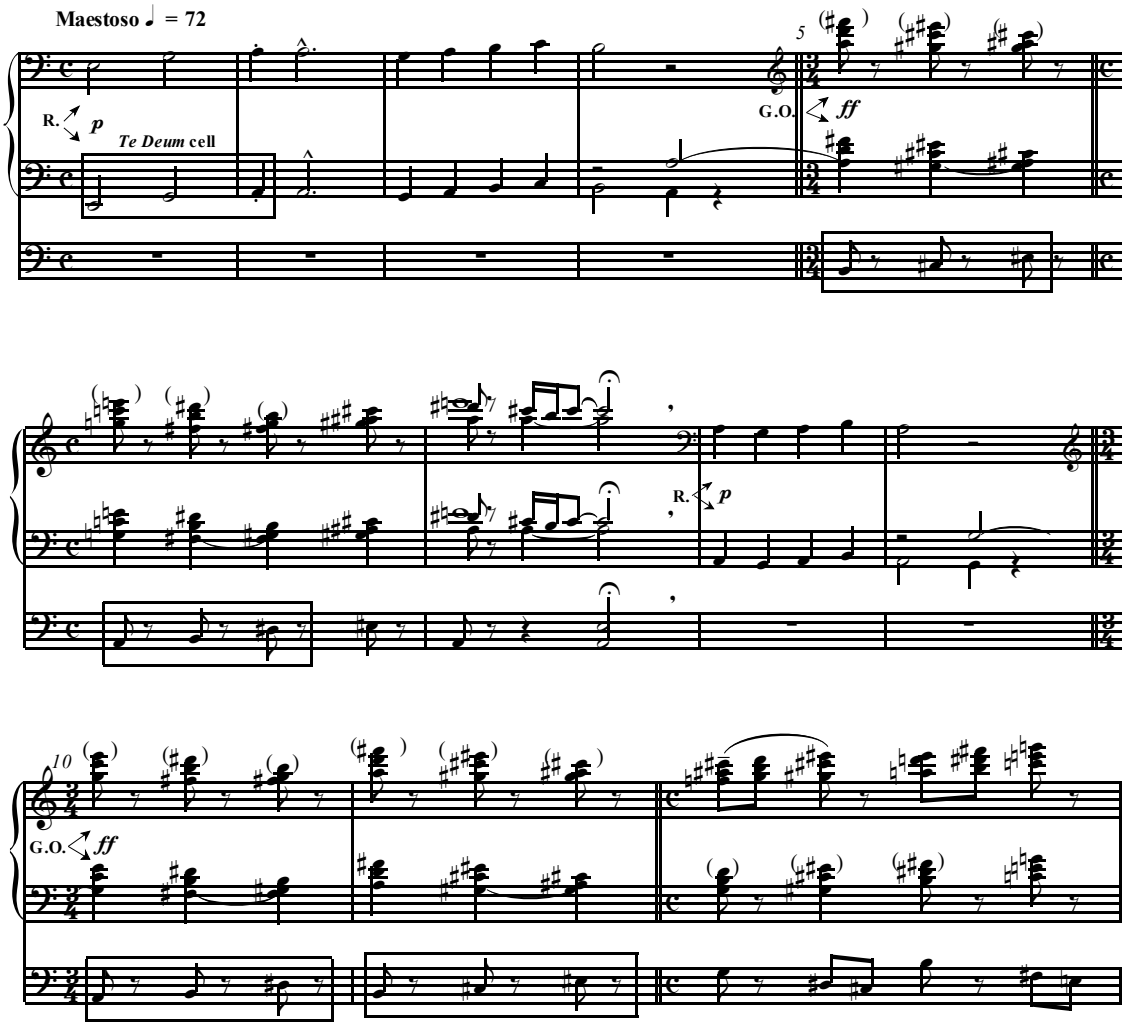
4.4 Chant Fragments in Langlais's *Te Deum*

Excerpts of the "Te Deum" chant provide several structural functions in Langlais's *Te Deum*. First, chant excerpts delineate sections of the work. The work begins with a direct quotation of verse 1, "Te Deum laudamus" in mm. 1-4. Section 2 starts with a six-

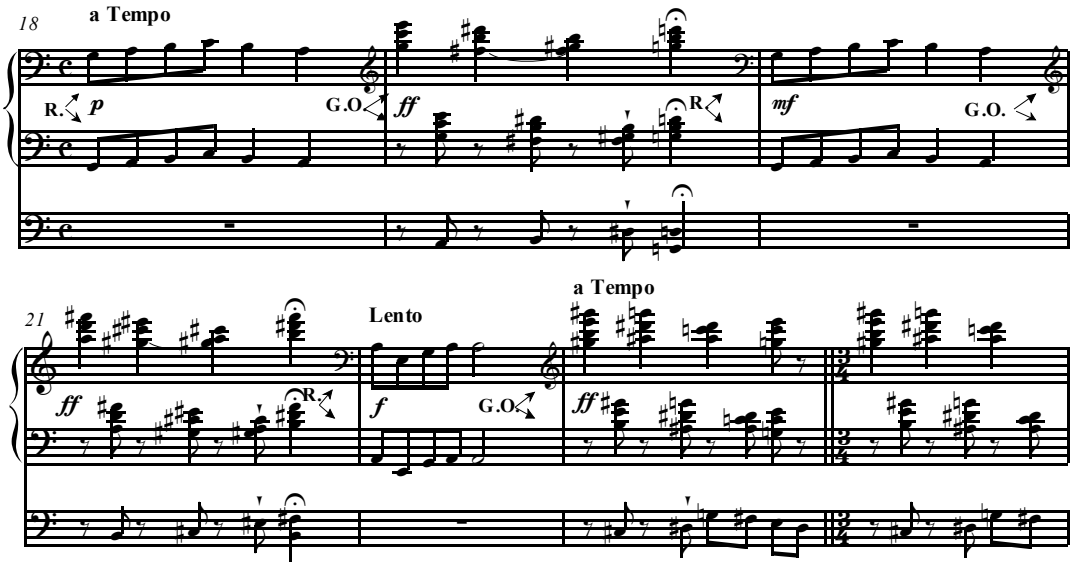
note excerpt from verse 14, “Rex gloriae, Christe” (m. 28), while section 3 begins with a direct quotation from verse 2, “Te aeternum patrem” (mm. 66). Unlike the other sections, Section 4 ends with an excerpt, found in mm. 88-89, which is a reference to the last four notes of the chant, sung to the word “aeternum.”

Second, chant fragments serve as points of contrast in the midst of dense chromaticism. In section 1, the modal chant and chromatic sections are juxtaposed. As shown in Example 4.1a (mm. 1-12), two direct quotations from the “Te Deum” hymn (mm. 1-4 and 8-9) alternate with thickly-textured chords.

Example 4.1a: Langlais, mm. 1-12



Example 4.1b: Langlais, mm. 18-24

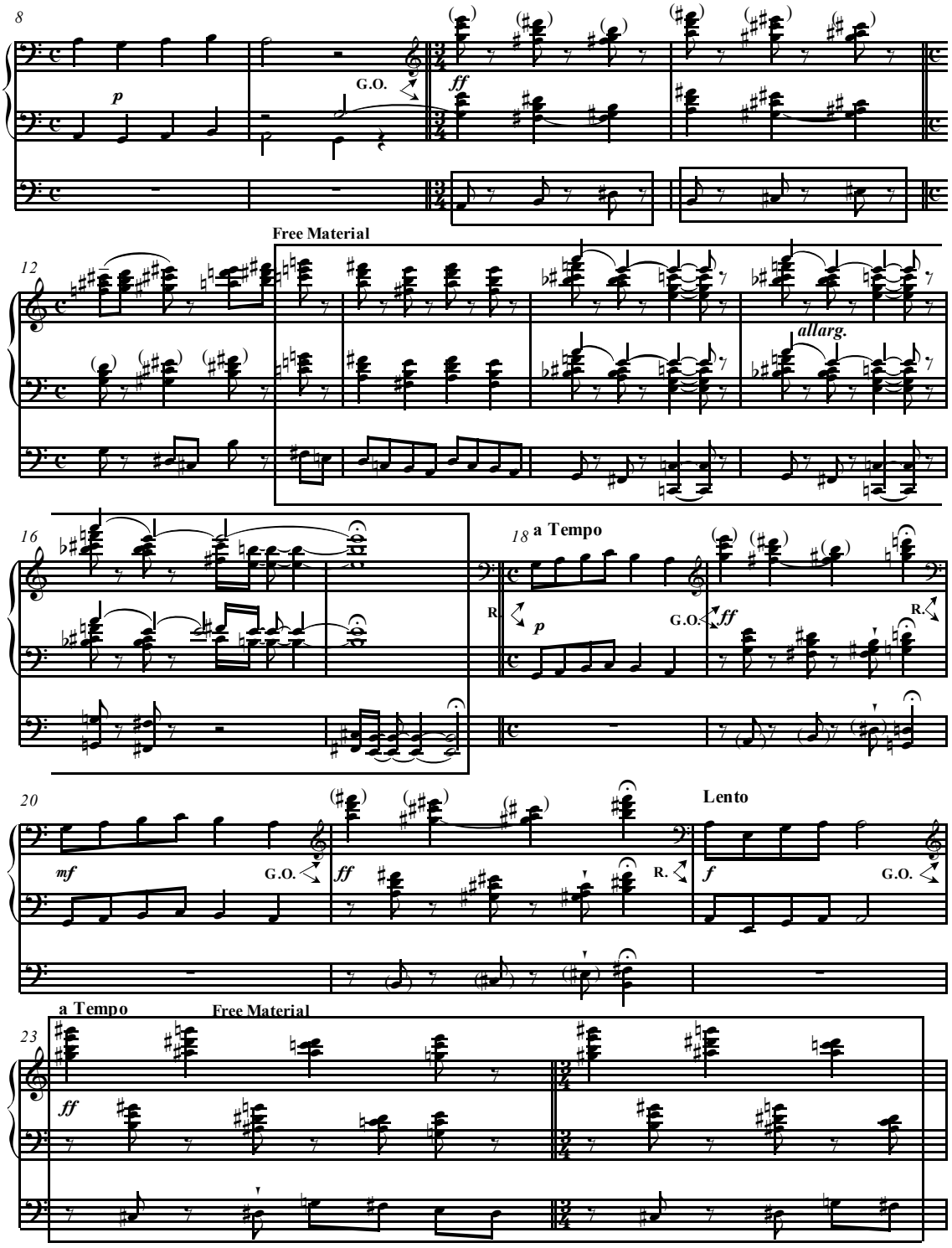


Example 4.1b (mm. 18-24) further illustrates this principle of juxtaposition: the chant excerpts appear in their original mode of Phrygian on e and alternate with the same chordal passages as before, though now this juxtaposition is more rapid than before, recurring every measure.

The chordal passages in section 1 contain, however, other elements related to the chant. The "Te Deum" cell (E, G, A), common to all of the *Te Deum* compositions in this study, is presented here as the first three notes of the piece, as seen in Example 4.1a. Altered cells, which are loosely based upon this "Te Deum" cell, appear in the chordal passages that follow. As seen in Example 4.1a (mm. 5-6), the lower voice of the three chords outline the motivic cells (B, C#, E#) and (A, B, D#), while the upper voice outlines the motive cells (F#, E#, C#) and (E, D#, B), all of which are loosely based upon the original (E, G, A) cell. The same process is seen in mm. 10-12 (Example 4.1a). Again, the chords outline cells loosely related to the "Te Deum" cell ((A, B, D#), (B, C#, E#), (D, E#, F#)) and its retrograde ((E, D#, B) and (F#, E#, C#)). Seen as a whole,

section 1 seems to present a series of contrasts between strict monophonic presentations of the original chant and heterophonic variations that follow. As seen in Example 4.2 (mm. 8-24), Langlais presents the chant in its original form (mm. 8-9, m. 18, and m. 22), followed by thick chromatic chords containing cells loosely based upon the "Te Deum" cell (mm.10-11, m. 19, and m. 21), which are then followed by free material (mm. 12-17 and mm. 23-24) that seems to depart from the chant altogether.

Example 4.2: Langlais, mm. 8-24

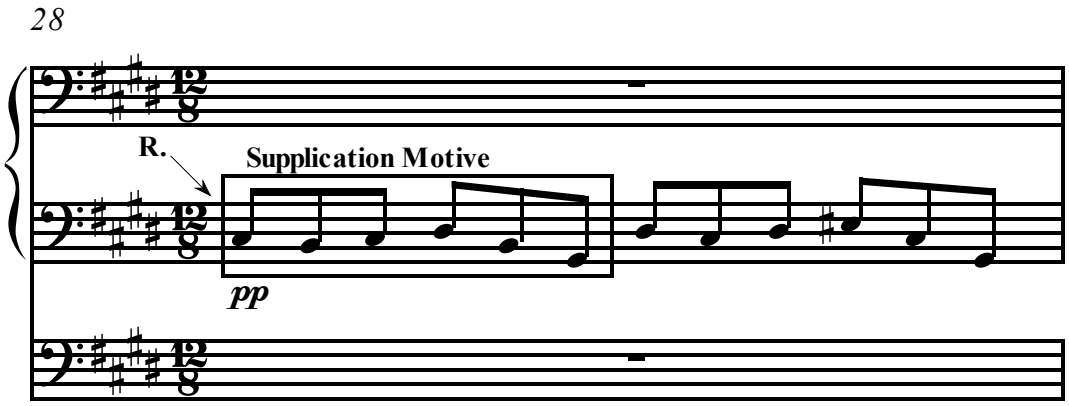


This progression from original chant excerpt, to variation, and finally to free composition

repeats throughout the section. When the material strays furthest from the original chant excerpt, Langlais then returns to the chant in its original mode.

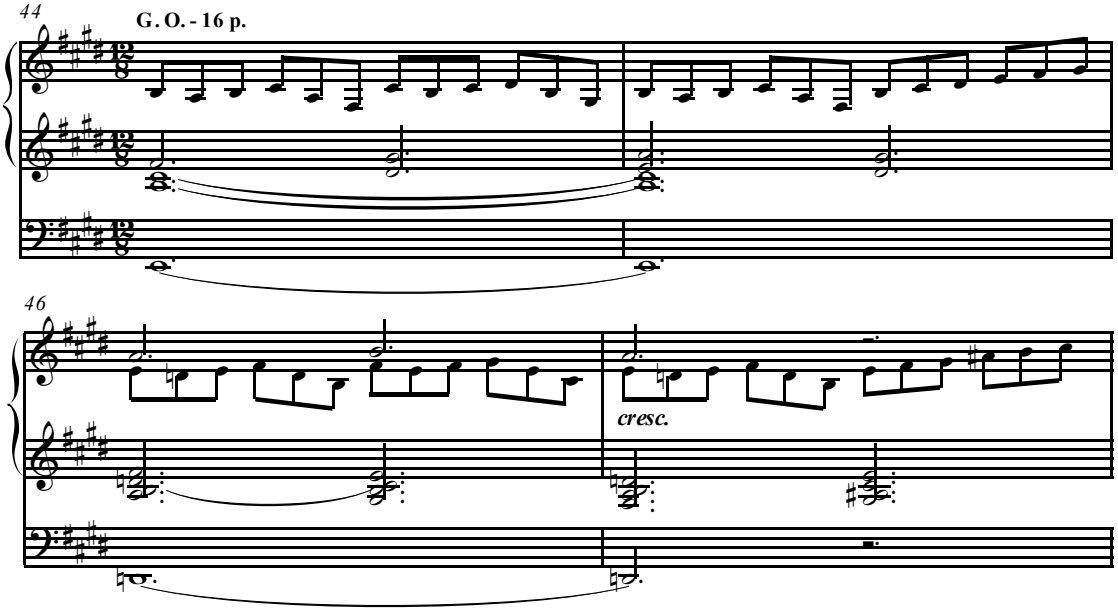
Another function of chant fragments is to serve as accompanimental motives which bind together several elements of section 2. Langlais draws from verse 14 for the chief motive of section 2 (mm. 28-64).

Example 4.3a: Langlais, m. 28

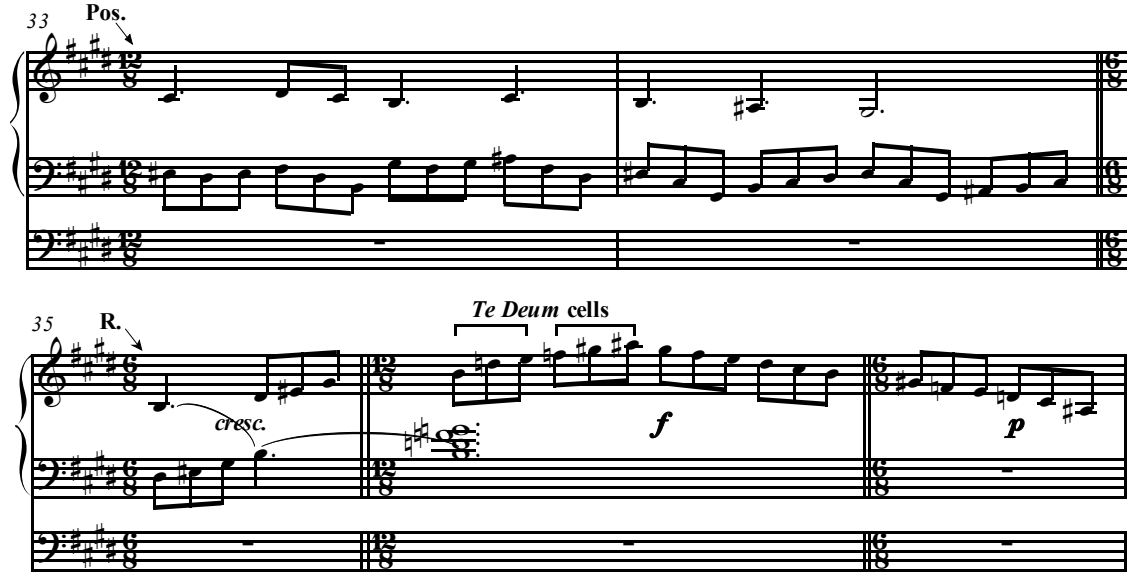


Example 4.3b: Langlais, mm. 54-55

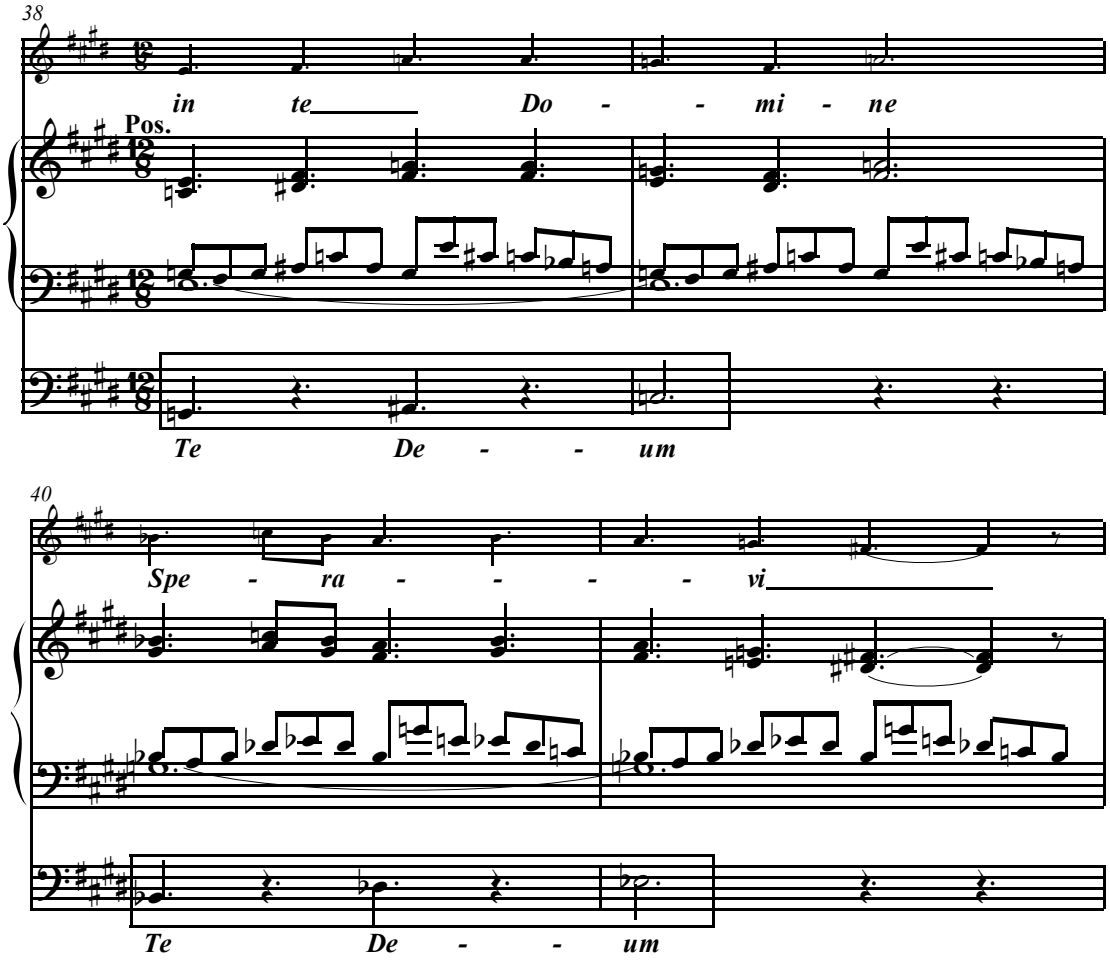
Example 4.3c: Langlais, mm. 44-47



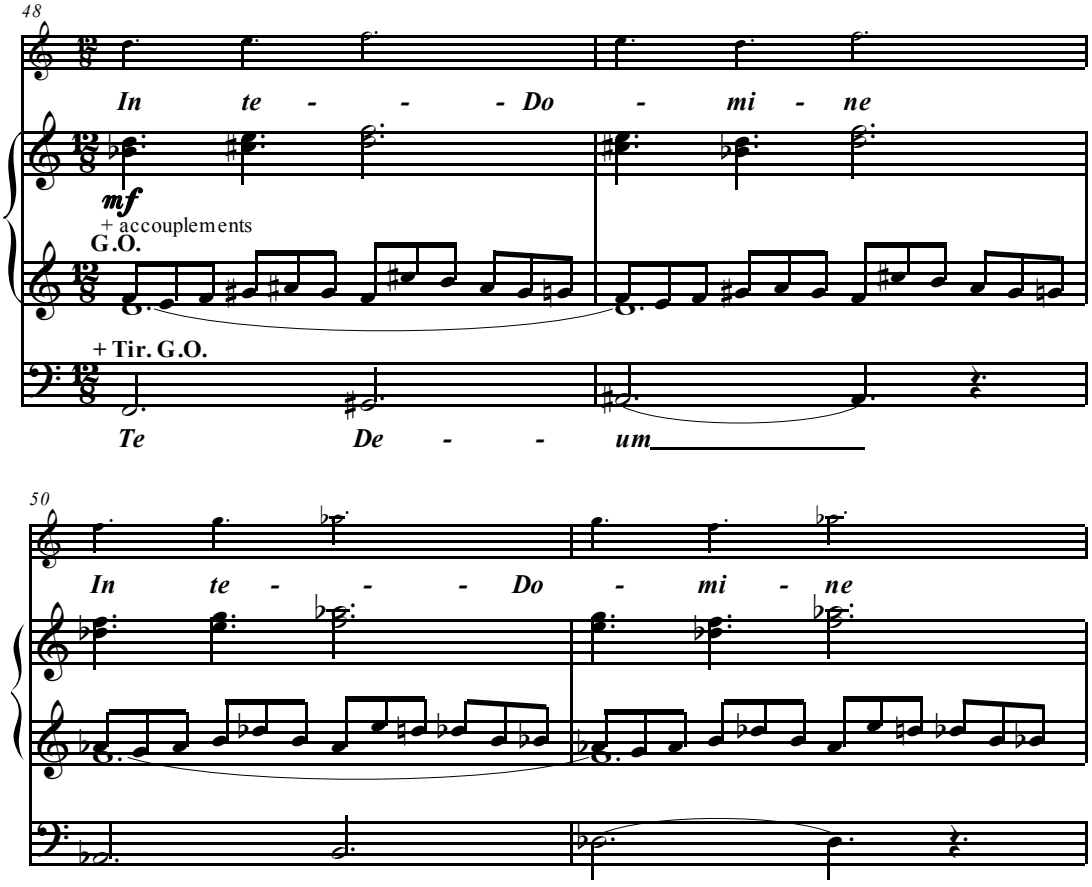
Example 4.3d: Langlais, mm. 33-37



Example 4.3e: Langlais, mm. 38-41



Example 4.3f: Langlais, mm. 48-51



As seen in Example 4.3a, this motive appears as the first six notes, here in Phrygian on g-sharp. These six notes are first associated in the "Te Deum" chant with the words, "Rex gloriae, Christe." Verse 14 marks an important thematic moment in the hymn when the words shift from praise of God to supplication in asking for His mercy and forgiveness. Because of the literary association with these notes, I describe this motive as the "supplication motive."

The supplication motive is the compositional germ which serves to interrelate the musical ideas of section 2. All the accompanimental material in section 2 is related—if not in pitch then in rhythm, to the original triplet supplication motive. Sometimes the

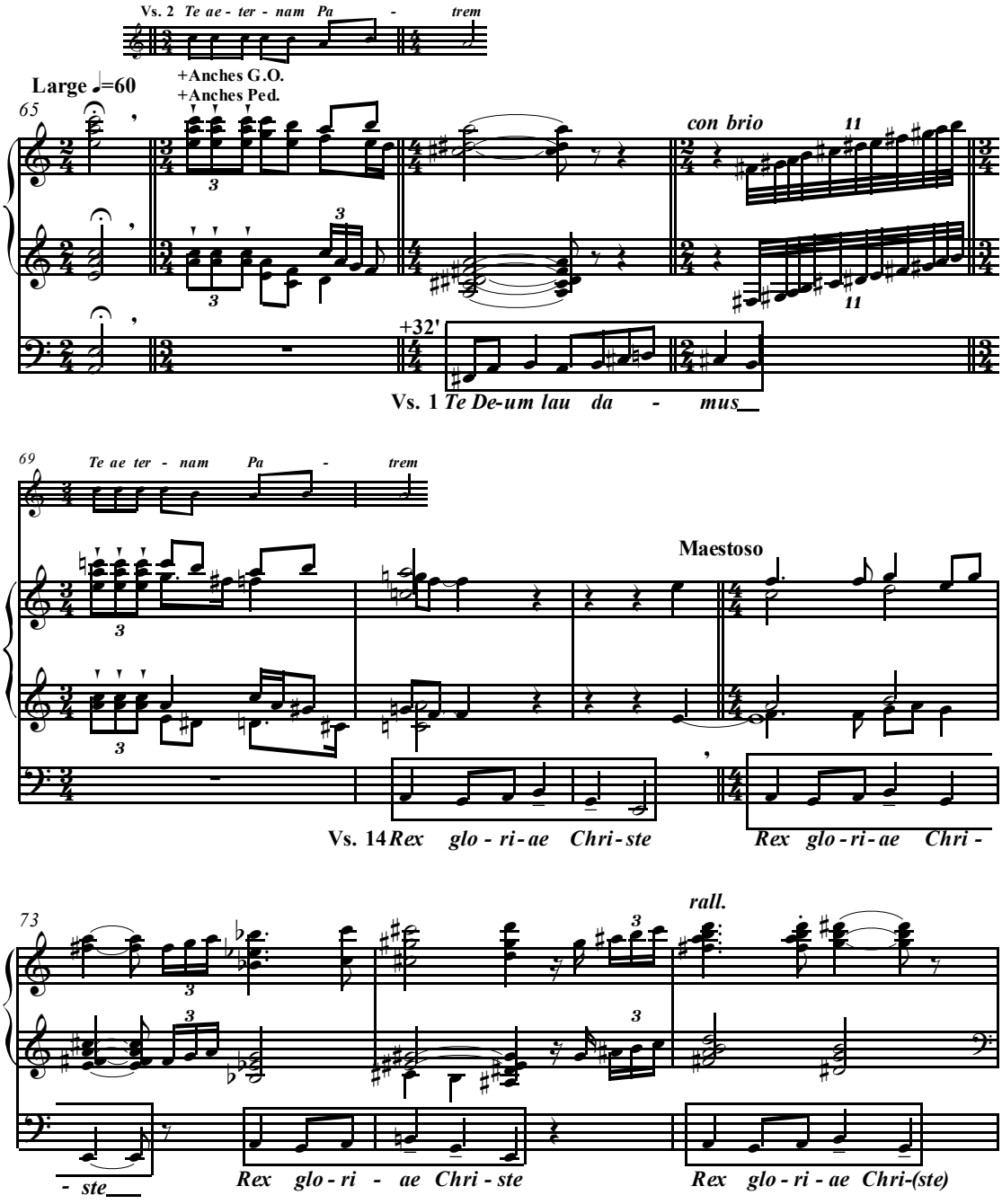
motive appears in sequence, as seen in Example 4.3b (mm. 54-55). In this example, the supplication motive appears in the left hand, first on Phrygian on g, then on f, and then on d. Sometimes sequences of the supplication motive are bound together with free material in the upper voice as seen in Example 4.3c (mm. 44-47). Here a sequence of the supplication motive (Phrygian on f-sharp, g-sharp, and f-sharp) is linked to the following sequence (Phrygian on b, c-sharp, and b) by means of two ascending triplets in m. 45. At other times, the supplication motive is followed by free material. In Example 4.3d (mm. 33-37), the left hand presents two statements of the supplication motive (m. 33) followed by free triplet material. (Note, though, the two "Te Deum" cells in the right hand in m. 36—the material is not entirely free.) Finally, some of the accompanimental figures in section 2 are loosely based upon the supplication motive. As shown in Example 4.3e (mm. 38-41), the triplets in the left hand share the triplet rhythm of the original motive, but little of the motive's general arc.

In Example 4.3e (mm. 38-41), however, the left hand triplets help to bind together other elements of the chant. The top voice in mm. 38-41 presents a quotation from verse 29, "in Te Domine speravi" ("in Thee, Lord, have I trusted"). Verse 29 is perhaps the one verse of the "Te Deum" chant in which the speaker most intensely asks for God's help: "O Lord in Thee have I trusted: Let me never be confounded." Verse 29, then, is a moment of great supplication. Under this chant excerpt and the triplet rhythm of the supplication motive come two statements of the essence of the praise theme: the "Te Deum" cell (mm. 38-41). At this moment, the accompanimental triplets, which refer to the supplication motive, serve to connect chant elements from the beginning and end of the "Te Deum" chant as well as the two literary themes—praise and supplication—of the

chant. Such a passage is again seen in Example 4.3f (mm. 48-51) where the same three elements work together. In these two passages, the supplication motive, or rather its variation, is at the heart of a rich, multi-layered reflection of the musical and literary themes of the "Te Deum" chant: three of the principal musical elements Langlais draws from the "Te Deum" chant form the entire texture of the music and present the two central literary themes of the "Te Deum" chant. This rich reflection happens throughout section 2, where the supplication motive is paired with a chant excerpt from verse 29 (mm. 52-55) or with the "Te Deum" cell (mm. 56-59).

Finally, chant elements also occur at significant moments in order to recall previous sections or moments in the work. Section 3 contains several instances of this particular use of the chant. Section 3 comes at a unique point in the work. From a performance point of view, it is a point of arrival. The a minor chord in m. 65 at the start of section 3 stops the musical narrative with a fermata and breath marks. Section 3 also presents the densest concentration of chant material in the entire work. As seen in Example 4.4 (Section 3, mm. 65-75), chant excerpts dove-tail together one after the other.

Example 4.4a: Langlais, mm. 65-75

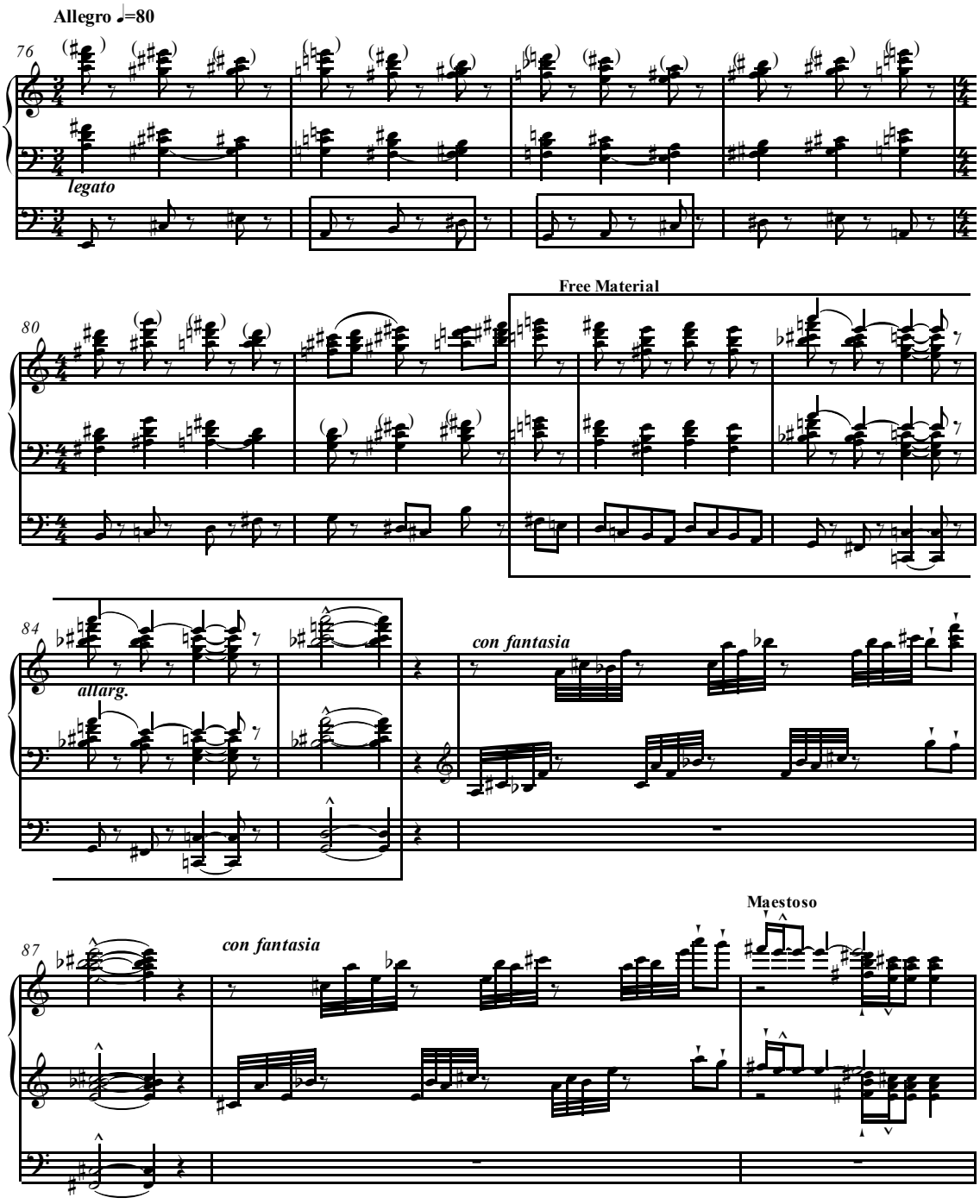


Measure 66 presents "Te Aeternum Patrem," a fragment from verse 2 of the "Te Deum" chant. This chant fragment ends on the first beat of m. 67 when "Te Deum laudamus"

(from verse 1 of the chant) begins in the pedal line. This dove-tailing happens again on the first beat of bar 70 when the last note of the "Te Aeternum Patrem" fragment functions as the first note of the "Rex Gloriae Christe" fragment (from verse 14 of the chant) appearing in the pedal. These ten bars recount most of the chant material quoted thus far in Langlais's *Te Deum.* Only one chant excerpt—that from verse 2 in mm. 69-70—is new.

The large amount of chant material in section 3 of Langlais's *Te Deum* could be interpreted as the first part of a large-scale working out of the compositional procedures of section 1. In section 1, Langlais presents unadorned chant excerpts, followed by material containing variations of that chant, and then finally free material. If combined with section 4, section 3 fits into a similar pattern. Section 3 presents seven quotations of chant material with six in their original key of Phrygian on e. Such unadorned presentations can be likened to mm. 1-4 and the presentations of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme. Section 4 (as seen in Example 4.5, mm. 76-89), presents material containing motives loosely related to the "Te Deum" cell (5, 4, 0), (0, 2, 5), (0, 2, 6) in mm. 76-81, which is then followed by free material.

Example 4.5: Langlais, mm. 76-89



Section 3's increased length and intensity of chant excerpt quotation may account for the longer length of the variation and free material in section 4. The chant excerpts in section

3 then serve a dual purpose: they recall both significant pieces of chant and refer to the compositional procedures (chant excerpt—variation—free composition) that opened the work.

Langlais's *Te Deum* is a work which exhibits the multi-faceted uses of ninth-century chant. Chant material delineates sections of the work, serves as points of contrast amidst passages of dense chromaticism, and provides motivic material for the accompaniment. Langlais also positions chant material in the work so as to recall previous sections of the piece, thus creating an overall sense of unity to the work. Furthermore, the combination of chant materials creates a vivid reflection of the literary themes of praise and supplication of the original "Te Deum" chant.

Chapter 5

Marcel Dupré and *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum*

The third work in this study is Marcel Dupré's *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum*, a composition from the mid-point of Dupré's career. Marcel Dupré was the dominant figure of Parisian organ culture for over 50 years, serving as organist at the famed St. Sulpice Church and as professor of organ at the Paris Conservatory. In addition, he maintained an international performing career and composed an exceptional amount of music. Like the other composers in this study, Dupré was also a prodigious and gifted improviser. His composition, *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum,* is aptly named as it uses several centuries-old paraphrase techniques as a means of development.

5.1 Biography

Marcel Dupré was born in Rouen in 1886 into a musical family.[87] His organist father and pianist mother gave Dupré his first music lessons. At age 15 in 1897, Dupré began formal organ study with Alexandre Guilmant, one of the great organ virtuosos of turn-of-the-century France. After five years of private study with Guilmant, Dupré enrolled in the Paris Conservatory in 1902. At the Conservatory, Dupré spent seven years studying piano with Diémer, organ with Alexandre Guilmant and Louis Vierne, and fugue with Charles-Marie Widor, eventually winning a *premier prix* in all three fields. The summit of Dupré's prize-winning career came in 1914 when he was awarded the coveted *Prix de Rome.*

During his academic studies, Dupré began his performing throughout Paris. He started deputizing for Widor at St. Sulpice Church in 1906 (a position he would later

[87]François Sabatier, "Marcel Dupré," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music Online*, ed. l. Macy (Accessed 4th November 2002), http://www.grovemusic.com.

assume in 1934 and would hold until his death in 1971) and for Vierne at Nôtre-Dame Cathedral in 1916. Dupré's early reputation as a performer was sealed by his 1920 feat of performing the entire organ works of Bach from memory at the Paris Conservatory. Soon thereafter began Dupré's recital career, which would take him all over the world performing more than 2100 recitals by the time he died in 1971.[88]

Marcel Dupré was equally regarded as a teacher. Dupré's post as professor of organ at the Paris Conservatory from 1926 until 1954—what amounted to a position at the summit of the French organ world—gave him enormous power and influence. Dupré taught students who would have an enormous impact upon organ and other music throughout the twentieth century: Olivier Messiaen, Jehan Alain, Jean Guillou, Maurice Duruflé and Marie-Claire Alain, along with two of the composers in this study, Jeanne Demessieux and Jean Langlais. Even those who did not study personally with Dupré found themselves reacting to his legacy: performers used his editions of the organ works of Franck, Liszt, Mendlessohn, Schumann, Bach, Handel or Mozart; they studied his 1926 text *Traité d'improvisation à l'orgue*, a text that is still the gold-standard for books on improvisation; they played his many works in church services or in recitals; they listened to the over one hundred recordings Dupré made; or they studied with one of Dupré's students, many of whom developed their own international reputations as composers and performers. Marcel Dupré was in many ways the nexus around which turned almost everything of consequence in twentieth-century French organ music.

Certainly no other French organist in the twentieth century enjoyed such a long and glowing reputation as an international figure as did Marcel Dupré from the start of the twentieth century until his death in 1971. Bernard Gavoty, an organist and long-time music critic for *Le Figaro*, wrote of Dupré: "...I do at least want to set down the dominant

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[88]Marcel Dupré, *Recollections (Second Edition)*, trans. and ed. Ralph Kneeream (Miami: CPP/Belwin, 1978), 139.

qualities which have guided the steady ascent of our contemporary master of the organ: talent, of great dimensions and therefore inexplicable; complete lucidity; and lastly unwearying persistence and systematic procedure. These combine to account for a success for which I hardly know any parallels."[89] Of Dupré's famously clever improvisations, Gavoty once wrote:

> One day in Saint-Sulpice, he improvised "for fun" a *ricercare* for six voices, with a canon for the middle two—and trained musicians will know what an achievement that represents. Nothing in his face betrayed the effort of an operation which is comparable only with the solution of certain problems in transcendental mathematics. At the last chord he smiled broadly and, pushing in his registers, said simply, "There!" "If that is not what one can call genius!" I gasped, astounded and overwhelmed. Dupré, his face serious again, said suddenly, "Come along!" and, taking me behind the organ to the little room which he uses as a study, he spoke to me firmly, "Do you know what genius is? I will tell you. Genius is the inimitable find, the harmonic of melodic discovery. It is, for instance, the adagietto in *L'Arlesienn*e, or the first bars of Fauré's *Secret*. What I have just given you is an example of a contrapuntal combination, quite difficult to pull off, I grant you, but requiring only a clear head and care in following your voices. I possess that instinct—it comes naturally to me, that's all. But I beg of you, stop using big words, and *leave genius to the masters!"* His voice as he uttered the words was almost severe, and I went away, determined indeed to leave genius to the masters, on condition that I included in their ranks Marcel Dupré![90]

Such panegyric was not uncommon in reviews of Dupré's concerts and improvisations.

Dupré was a prodigious composer for the organ, with 35 opus numbers for organ solo, 9 opus numbers for works for organ and orchestra, and 12 opus numbers for works written for other instruments. As François Sabatier writes: "…Dupré left a succession of works which, along with those of Messaien and Alain, represent some of the last great examples of the virtuoso symphonic tradition in French organ music."[91] Dupré's work

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[89]Bernard Gavoty, *Great Concert Artists: Marcel Dupré* (Geneva: René Kister, 1957), 10-12.
[90]Gavoty, *Great Concert Artists*, 12.
[91]François Sabatier, "Marcel Dupré," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 730.

ranges from the small-scale (*Vêpres du commun des fêtes de la Sainte-Vièrge,* op. 18), to the large-scale (*Symphonie no. 2, c#*, op.26). As Dupré was such a gifted improviser, it is perhaps not surprising that some of his compositions began life as improvisations. Most famously, in 1924 at the Wanamaker store in Philadelphia, Dupré improvised a piece that he would later write and publish as his most highly-regarded and well-known work, the *Symphonie-Passion* (1925). Many of Dupré's compositions, however, were written and not improvised. As to the compositional genesis of his *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum*, its early development seems to lie somewhere in between the realm of improvisation and composed music.

The origin of Dupré's *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum*, Op. 43 is uncertain. It was published in 1949 by H.W. Gray in New York City, a fact from which Dupré scholar, Graham Steed, concludes that "it was probably conceived at the end of the Second World War."[92] Furthermore, Steed writes:

> It is possible, but by no means certain, that it [Dupré's *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum*] may have originated at the recital played by the composer in Nôtre-Dame de Paris on August 13, 1944. Jeanne Demessieux was there, and wrote about it in her diary: "Unforgettable, audience of about 6,500." The program ended with an improvisation, and when Dupré got to the bottom of the outside stairwell leading down from the towers and the organ gallery, he was literally mobbed by the crowd. However, at this time Paris was not completely liberated from the German occupation, and it may have been too soon for an improvisation on the *Te Deum.*[93]

Beyond this anecdote by Steed, the details surrounding the composition of Dupré's *Te Deum* are uncertain.

5.2 Chant Fragments in Dupré's *Te Deum*

[92]Graham Steed, *The Organ Works of Marcel Dupré* (Hillsdale, New York: Pendragon Press, 1999), 129.
[93]Steed, *The Organ Works of Marcel Dupré*, 129.

Dupré's choice of chant material for his *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum* reflects the literary themes of the "Te Deum" hymn text: praise and supplication. As shown in Figure 5.1, chant excerpts in Dupré's composition come from five verses: 1, 2, 14, 18, and 22. The dominant literary theme of these verses is praise. The first half of verse 1, frequently repeated in Dupré's composition, speaks directly of praising God. The first half of verse 2 speaks of God as "Father everlasting." In contrast, verse 14 shifts the focus to Christ, proclaiming, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ," while verse 18 asserts Christ's position at the "right hand of God." The literary theme of supplication is represented with inclusion of verse 22. In the "Te Deum" chant, verse 22 follows the rhetorical shift in verse 20 from praise to supplication. In verse 22, the text implores God, "O Lord, save thy people."

Texturally and dynamically, Dupré's presentation of chant excerpts in *Te Deum* reflects their literary meaning. The sections that quote "praise" excerpts (verses 1, 2, 14, and 18) tend to be louder and with a thicker texture than those sections that quote the "supplication" excerpt (verse 22). This "supplication" excerpt appears twice in the work in section 2, just after the full-organ opening, and then again in section 5, and finally in section 6 just before the climactic full-organ close of the work. That this line of chant appears four times in Dupré's *Te Deum* seems significant and might point to extra-musical meaning in the work. The inclusion of this line of text may resonate with the events occurring in Paris at the time the piece was written: the end of World War II in 1945. This interpretation is also suggested by Dupré scholar Graham Steed:

> There are two final observations, one of which concerns the composer's own religious approach to the *Te Deum*. He certainly made it a great musical triumph, but he was also concerned with the fact that, besides being a paean of praise, it is also a prayer for peace, "O Lord save thy people, and bless Thine inheritance." In the glorious final section of the work, it is that sentiment which predominates. His countrymen had suffered terrible privations in the war years, and obviously he wanted to

emphasize their need for a more peaceful future.[94]

Whether Dupré intended an extra-musical meaning to this work or not, his inclusion of the chant excerpt from verse 22, "O Lord, save thy people," in his *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum* is unique among the other composers in this study.

Dupré's *Te Deum* presents unusual challenges for the analyst. If this piece was improvised, as Steed suggests, this may account for the work's highly sectionalized form. One way of interpreting the use of chant in Dupré's *Te Deum* may lie in the word "paraphrase," taken from the full title of the work *Paraphrase sur le Te Deum.* As a musical term, "paraphrase" most often occurs:

> in music of the 14-16th centuries, [as] a melody borrowed from another source (usually chant) and then ornamented. Paraphrase technique has been described as "the process by which a composer quotes a melody faithfully-enough, but elaborates freely as he goes on."[95]

Another definition of "paraphrase" adds that the chant melody "may be subjected to rhythmic and melodic ornamentation [in the polyphonic work it appears in] but it is not obscured."[96] There are specific ways in which both the faithful quotation and free elaboration take place in *Te Deum*. Dupré uses three historical paraphrase techniques that are described thus:

> In early 15th-century settings of hymns, antiphons and sequences based on chant, the borrowed melody usually appears in the upper voice and was not subject to much alteration. In cyclic masses, however, borrowed melodies (mainly restricted to the tenor) could be extensively paraphrased (e.g. Du Fay's *Missa 'Ave regina caelorum'*). In masses of the late 15th century and the 16th, paraphrased melodies appear within an imitative texture, moving from voice to voice (as in Josquin's *Missa 'Pange lingua'*

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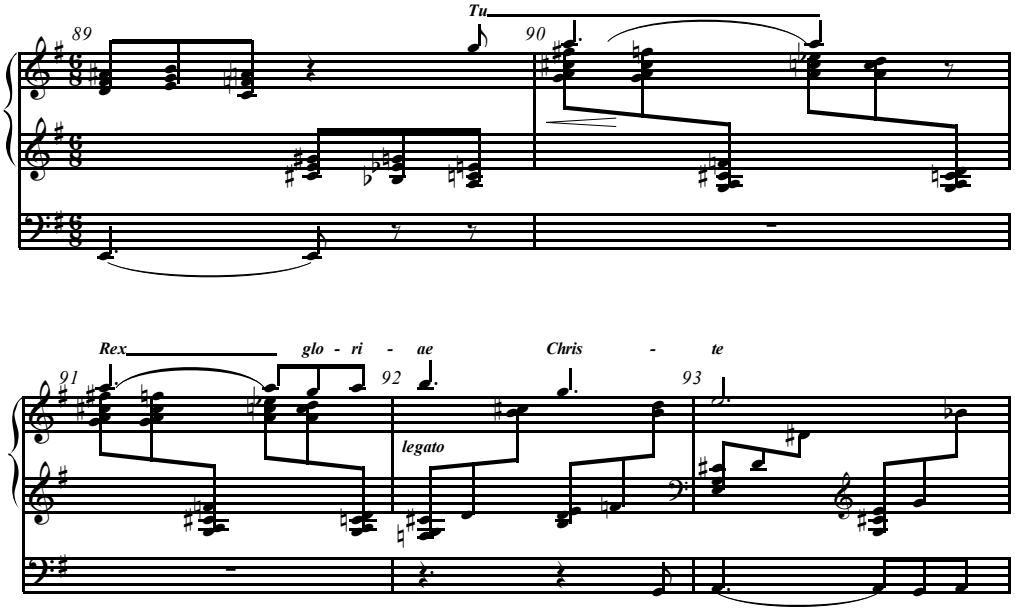
[94]Steed, *The Organ Works of Marcel Dupré*, 130.
[95] Richard Sherr, "Paraphrase," *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1999), 608.
[96]Richard Sherr, "Paraphrase," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 69.

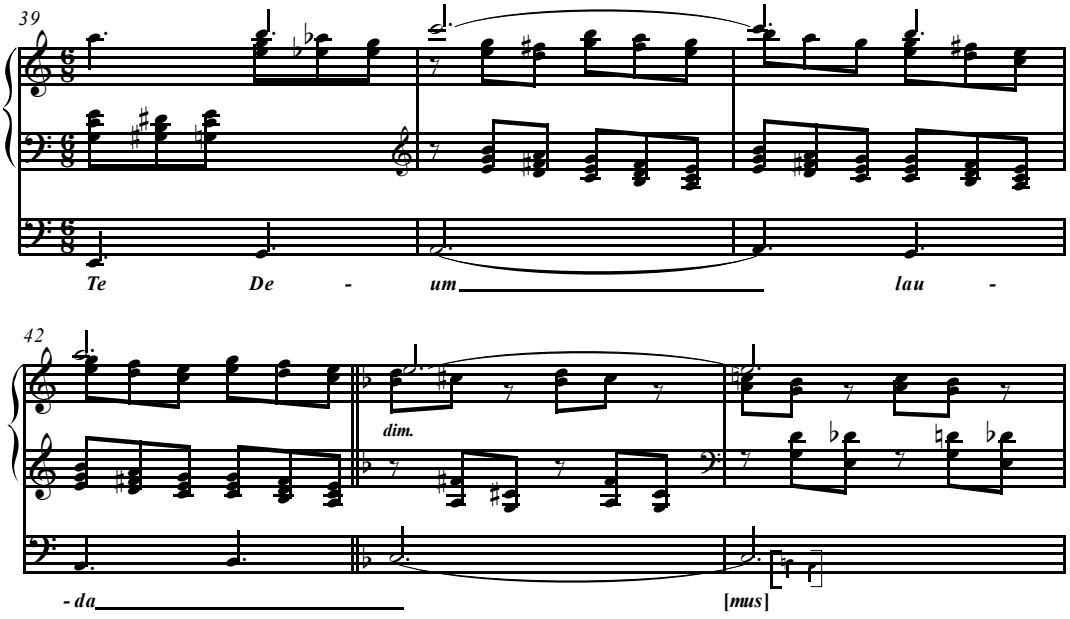
or Palestrina's masses based on hymns.[97]

Similarly, in Dupré's *Te Deum*, the chant is either strictly presented; or the chant's pitches or rhythm is altered; or the chant is presented in an imitative fashion.

Example 5.1a: Dupré, mm. 89-93

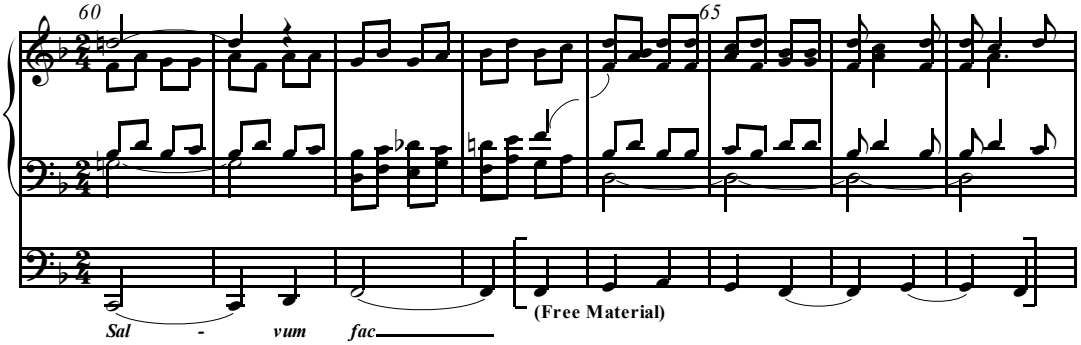


Example 5.1b: Dupré, mm. 39-44



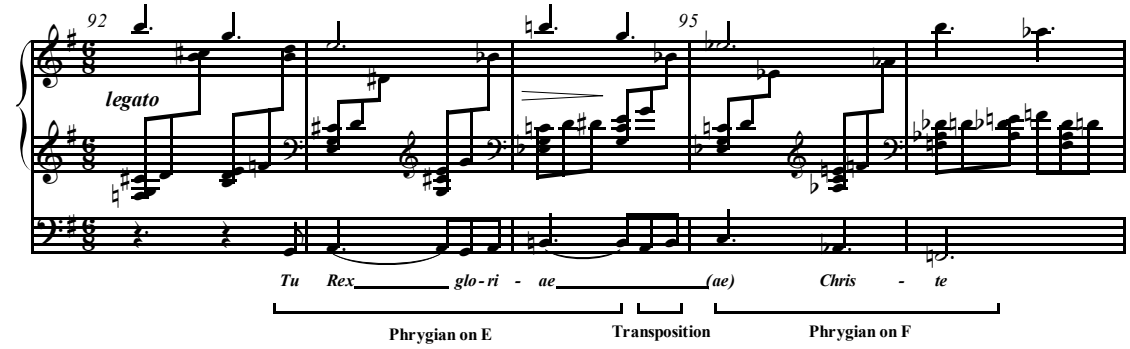
[97]Sherr, "Paraphrase," *New Grove*, 69.

Example 5.1c: Dupré, mm. 60-67

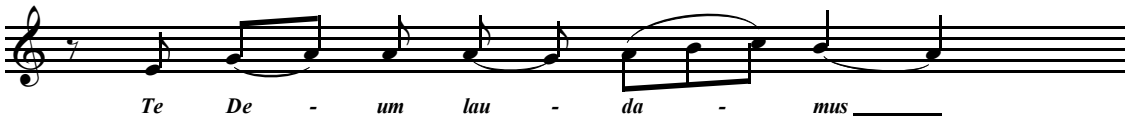


Example 5.1a, taken from mm. 89-93 in section 3, shows an unaltered excerpt of verse 14, "Tu Rex Gloriae Christe" in its home key of Phrygian on E, in the top voice of the right hand. Subtraction of pitches of "Te Deum" chant material is seen in Example 5.1b, taken from mm. 39-44 in section 1. Here, the pedal presents the first seven pitches of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme and leaves out the last two pitches. Adding free material to the chant is seen in Example 5.1c, taken from the pedal in bars 60-67. Bars 60-62 show the original three notes of the chant excerpt from verse 22, "Salvum fac." Instead of continuing with the chant excerpt, however, the pedal continues with free material in bars 63-67.

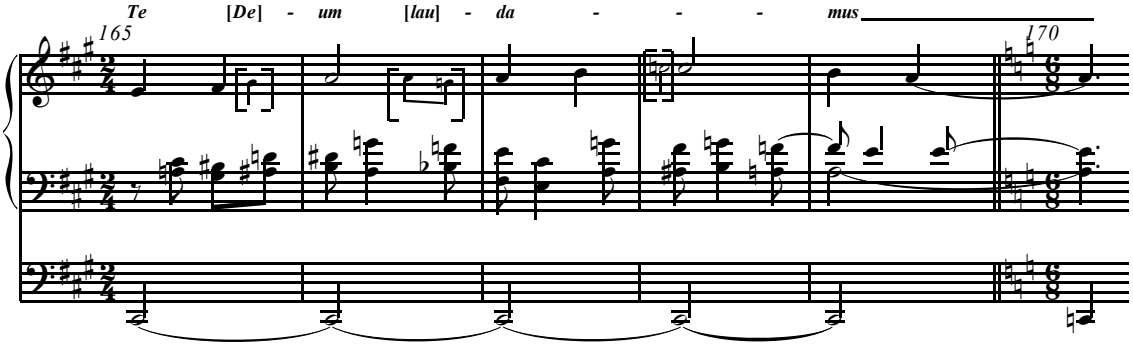
Example 5.1d: Dupré, mm. 92-96



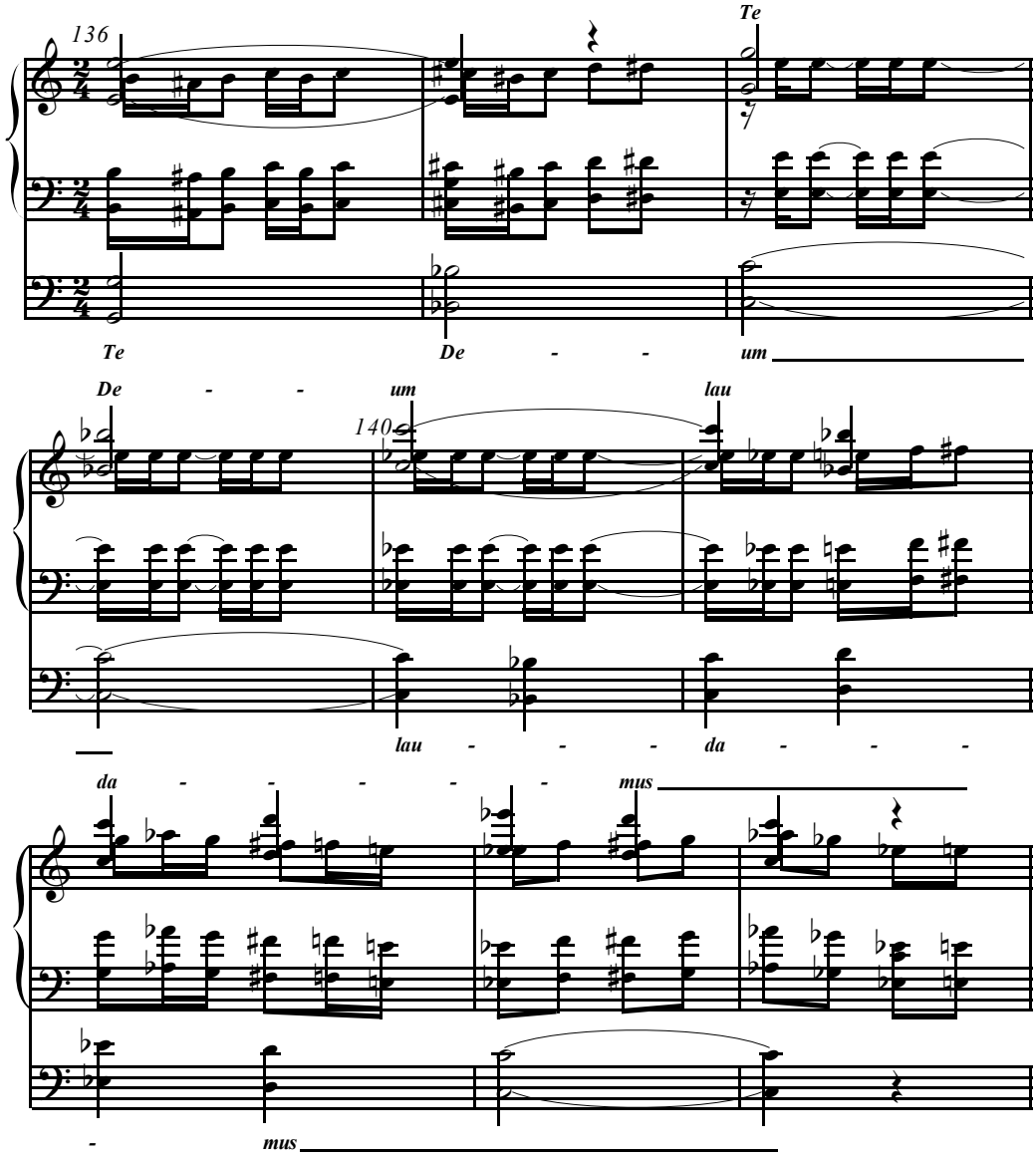
Example 5.1e: *Te Deum* Chant (Verse 1):



Example 5.1f: Dupré, mm. 165-170



Example 5.1g: Dupré, mm. 136-144



A further way in which chant material is presented through pitch alteration is by means of a transposition. In Example 5.1d, the pedal in bars 92-96 plays an excerpt of "Tu Rex Gloriae Christe" from verse 14. One half of the excerpt is in one mode and the other half is in another mode. Bars 92-94 present "Tu Rex Gloriae" in Phrygian on E. After these notes, one expects the descending E minor triad on "Christe." Bars 95-96 present this downward minor triad, only in F minor instead of E. Chant material is also presented through chromatic alteration. In example 5.1f, showing mm. 165-170 in section 5, the passage both leaves out notes (the A and G in bar 166), and contracts and expands intervals within the chant excerpts (the G of the chant becomes F# in bar 165, the C-natural of the chant becomes C# in bar 168). Chant melodies also appear "within an imitative texture" in Dupre's *Te Deum*, as seen in Example 5.1g, taken from mm. 136-144 in Section 4. Here, the pedal begins with an unaltered excerpt of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme on Phrygian on G in bar 136. Two bars later in m. 138, the right hand imitates the same theme in the same mode as the pedal continues beneath it.

5.3 Form in Dupré's *Te Deum*

Dupré's *Te Deum* is divided into six sections which call for nearly the entire dynamic range of the organ, from full-organ to simple 8' foundation stops (see Figure 5.1). The divisions in the form are very clear, with changes in tempo, time signature, and key signature delineating the start of a new section. The tempi of the sections are generally brisk with markings such as *Allegro moderato*, *Allegro deciso*, and *vivo*, though two sections are given a tempo marking of *cantabile*.

Figure 5.1: The Sections in Dupré's *Te Deum*

Section 1 (mm. 1-46)	Section 2 (mm 47-83)
Allegro moderato	Cantabile
6/8	2/4

fff---f
Texture: 3-7 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum Laudamus"

mp
Texture: 1-5 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 22—"Salvum fac populum tuum Domine"

Section 3 (mm. 84-105)
Tempo I
6/8
mf
Texture: 3-5 voices
Chant excerpt quoted:
v. 14—"Tu Rex Gloriae Christe"

Section 4 (mm.106-154)
Allegro deciso
2/4
f---fff---mf
Texture: 4-8 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 14—"Tu Rex Gloriae Christe"
v. 18—"Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes"

Section 5 (mm. 155-169)
Cantabile
2/4
mp
Texture: 4 voices
Chant excerpts quoted"
v. 1--"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 22--"Salvum fac populum tuum Domine"

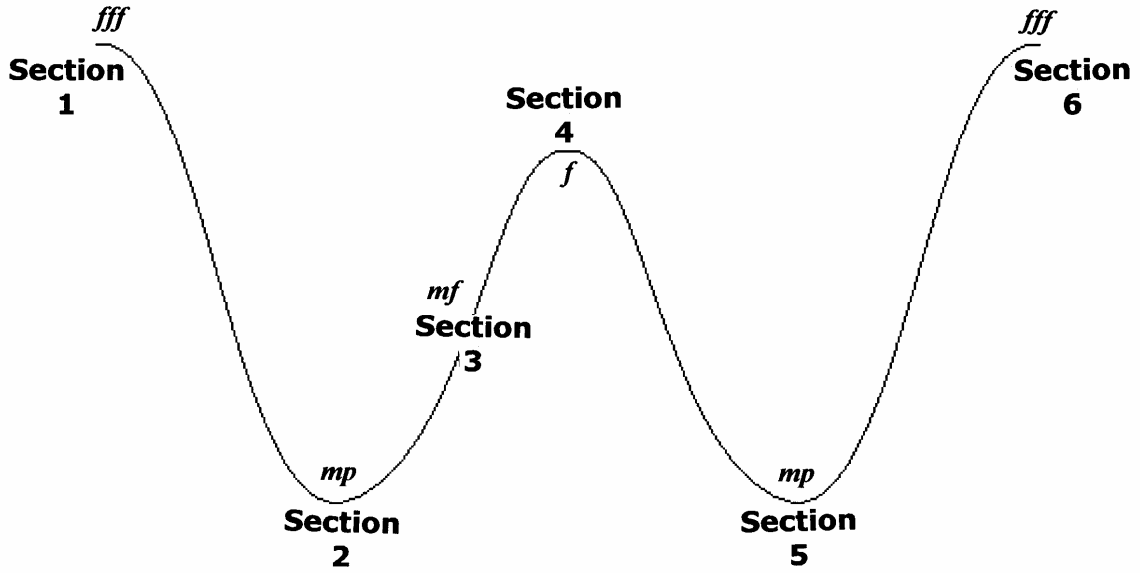
Section 6 (mm. 170-212)
Vivo
6/8
f---ff---fff
Texture: 1-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1--"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 1--"Te Deum"
v. 2--"Te aeternum Patrem, omnis terra veneratur"
v. 22--"Salvum fac"

.

Texturally the piece ranges from a transparent one- and three-voice texture in section 2 to a thick ten-voice texture in section 6. The dynamic trajectory of the work can be seen in the form of two inverted arcs (see Figure 5.2). Sections 1 and 6 are both in *fff*, calling for all the stops of the organ. Between these highpoints, there is a wide dynamic range: from the *mp* of sections 2 and 5, in which Dupré asks for simple 8' foundation stops; to the *mf* of section 3, where the enclosed manual plays at *tutti* with the expression box closed; to the *f* dynamics at the start of section 5 which requires manuals II and III to be

coupled to each other. In summary, the six sections of Dupré's *Te Deum* span four dynamic levels, ranging from *mp* to *fff*. The resulting dynamic form creates momentum toward the climax of the piece, which appears in the final section in the last two measures of the piece (mm. 211-212).

Figure 5.2: The Dynamic Trajectory of Dupré's *Te Deum*



The overall form of Dupré's *Te Deum* consists of six self-contained sections with links to connect them. The sections vary in their overall level of organization. For example, in section 1, the recurrence of particular phrases of chant and their modes gives an internal coherence to the structure of this section. Section 1 (mm. 1-46) is based upon the "Te Deum laudamus" theme, which comes from the first half of verse 1 from the original chant. The phrase first appears near the beginning of the work in the pedals in bars 4-11 in its home key of Phrygian on E. The right hand then takes the theme in rhythmic expansion in bars 13-25 in a new mode, Phrygian on B. Immediately following, the pedal takes another transposition of the theme, this time in Phrygian on G from bars 24-28 (though the first two notes of the theme, G and B-flat, are absent). The pedal follows in bars 33-34 with a statement of the "Te Deum" cell on Phrygian on F#, followed immediately by a return to a statement in the right hand of the entire "Te Deum

laudamus" theme in the home key of Phrygian on E (whereas previously in bar 23 the first two notes of the theme were implied, in bar 24 the last two notes are implied). What we see, then, is an ABA form based upon modes operating within Section 1, with A representing statements of the complete "Te Deum laudamus" theme in Phrygian on E, and the B section representing transpositions and freer treatments of portions of the theme.

Another example of internal coherence occurs with section 4. Section 4 is organized by the presentation of chant excerpts in imitation. This section (mm. 106-154) quotes three verses of chant: verse 1, "Te Deum laudamus"; verse 14, "Tu Rex gloriae, Christe"; and verse 18, "Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes." The section begins with a statement of the theme from verse 18 in bars 106-108 in its home key of Phrygian on E. Free material follows in mm. 108-112. Another statement of the verse 18 theme appears in the top voice in mm. 113-115. Free material follows until m. 122 when the imitation begins. The other two chant excerpts from verse 1 and verse 14 now form the framework around which the rest of the section is built. Bar 122 begins with a statement of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme in the soprano on Phrygian on E. The pedals follow two bars later with a statement of the same theme, only in Phrygian on A. The themes continue in imitative fashion until m. 132 when the verse 14 theme enters in the top voice. As the statement of this theme ends in bar 136, the pedals take up the "Te Deum Laudamus" theme again, this time in Phrygian on G. The top voice follows two bars later in m. 138 with an imitative statement of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme. The imitation between the top voice and the pedals continues in mm. 145-148 where both have a statement of the verse 14 theme on Phrygian on G. In summary, while free material is present in section 4, it is the imitative presentation of chant excerpts that give the section its internal coherence.

Other sections, while no less coherent, seem freer in their organization. For example, section 5 (mm. 155-169), only 14 bars long, seems more like a transition than a separate

section in itself. The section is built around quotations of chant excerpts from verse 1 ("Te Deum laudamus") and verse 22 ("Salvum fac populum tuum"). The verse 22 excerpt is presented in the top line in bars 155-157. A slightly elongated excerpt from verse 22 appears in the tenor line in mm. 160-164. Just as this excerpt ends, a chromatically altered statement of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme from verse 1 appears in the top voice. Perhaps verses 1 and 22 are presented here to prepare for their final appearance in Section 6. The nature of the link between sections 5 and 6 also suggests that this passage is transitional. The link takes place in bars 169-170. In essence, the sections are linked through common tones. Bar 169 presents a first-inversion A major chord. Three notes of the chord are tied over to bar 170, the start of section 6, creating a smooth transition between sections. In summary, the freer organization of this section comes from its short length, the quick presentation of chant excerpts, and the common-tone link between this section and the next. These elements suggest that section 5 is transitional in nature.

The organization of section 6 (mm. 170-212) seems to center on rhythmic elements rather than on certain presentation of chant excerpts. The tempo marking of this section is a vigorous *vivo* in 6/8 time. The section begins with a highly rhythmic pedal solo in mm. 170-174, which presents a chant excerpt from verse 2 ("Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur"). Two more voices enter in m. 175, with the top voice playing a rhythmic imitation of the pedal solo which began the section. The four voices that enter in m. 180 continue the pulsing, driving rhythm established by the pedal solo. A statement of the first three notes of verse 22 ("Salvum fac") is presented in the top voice in bars 185-186. Contained within this statement are the first signs of a chromatically altered statement of the "Te Deum laudamus" theme, which continues for several bars (mm. 185-192). This statement is heavily altered and not easily recognizable. The only other chant elements in this section are four brief "Te Deum" cells (mm. 196-198 and m. 203). The

presence of this chromatically altered excerpt of chant, the use of small cellular elements of the chant, and the forceful rhythmic alteration of the chant excerpt in the pedal solo suggest that the chant itself is not the primary means of organization in this section. The relentless driving of the 6/8 rhythm, on the other hand, seems to be the primary element that motivates this final section and finally provides closure.

Presentations of chant material at the start and finish of sections also give form and shape to this work. As seen in Figure 5.3, presentations of chant material articulate nearly all of the sections.

Figure 5.3: Chant Presentations Articulating Form in Dupré's *Te Deum*

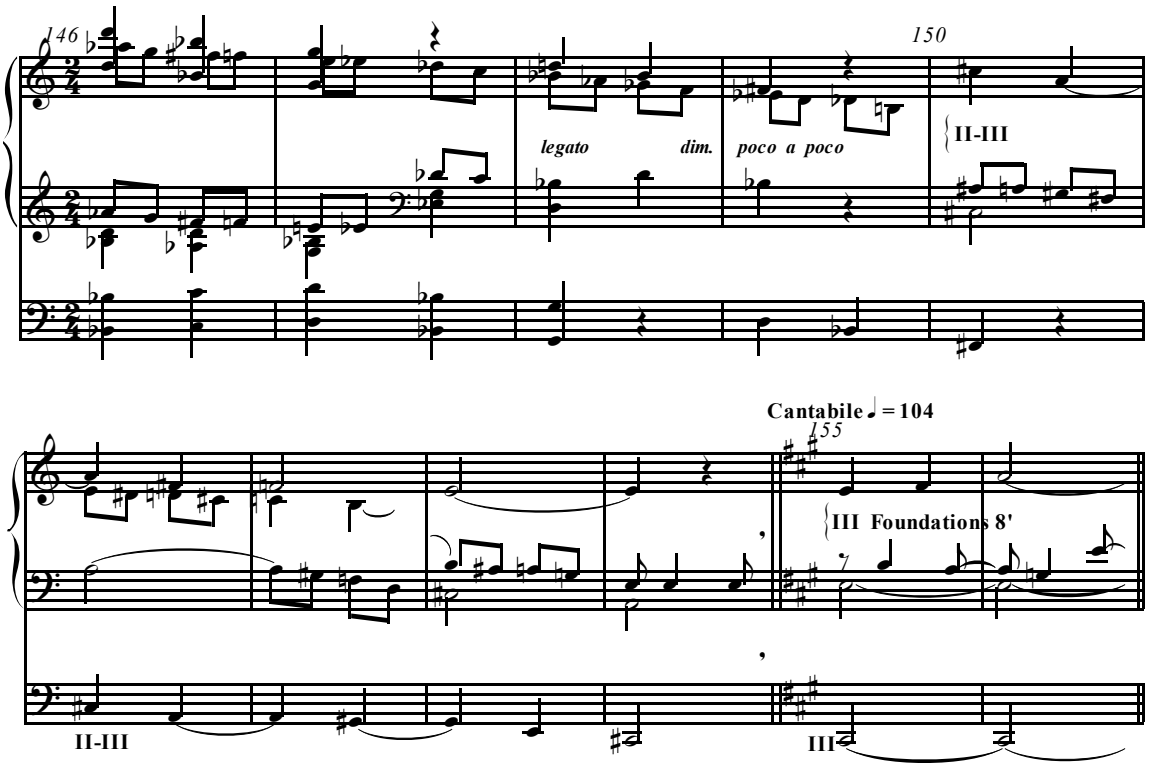
Section 1 (mm. 1-46) Start: "Te Deum laudamus" (mm. 4-11) End: "Te Deum laudamus" (mm. 39-44)	Section 2 (mm. 47-83) Start: "Salvum fac populum tuum Domine" (mm. 48-54) End: Free material
Section 3 (mm. 84-105) Start: "Tu Rex gloriae, Christe" (mm. 86-89) End: Free material	Section 4 (mm. 106-154) Start: "Tu ad dexteram sedes" (mm. 106-108) End: "Gloriae Christe" (mm. 146-148) and free material
Section 5 (mm. 155-169) Start: "Salvum fac populum tuum (mm. 155-157) End: "Te Deum laudamus," chromatically altered (mm. 165-169)	Section 6 (mm. 170-212) Start: "Te aeternum Patrem omnis terra veneratur" (mm. 170-174) End: Te Deum cell (m. 203) and Free material

Chant excerpts, then, serve as bookends to delineate the sections in Dupré's work. Such regular arrivals and departures of chant material serve to provide even greater clarity and continuity of form in this sectional work in which form is not always immediately apparent.

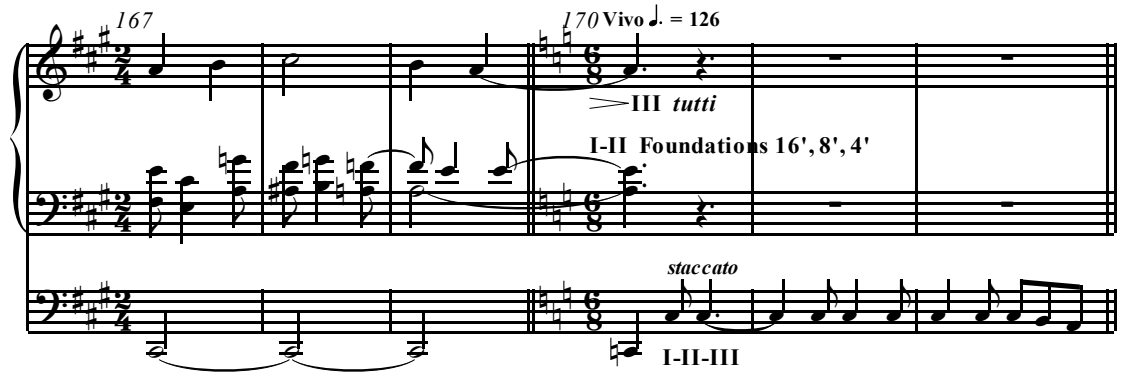
In addition to the various ways chant is manipulated in *Te Deum*, the links between

sections also help to provide an overall continuity to this highly sectionalized work. At each break in the form, the links bring to a close the previous section and provide a smooth transition to the next section—sometimes a section of greatly varying textures and dynamics. The two chief ways in which these links function are through common tones and stepwise voice-leading. Example 5.2 presents these procedures.

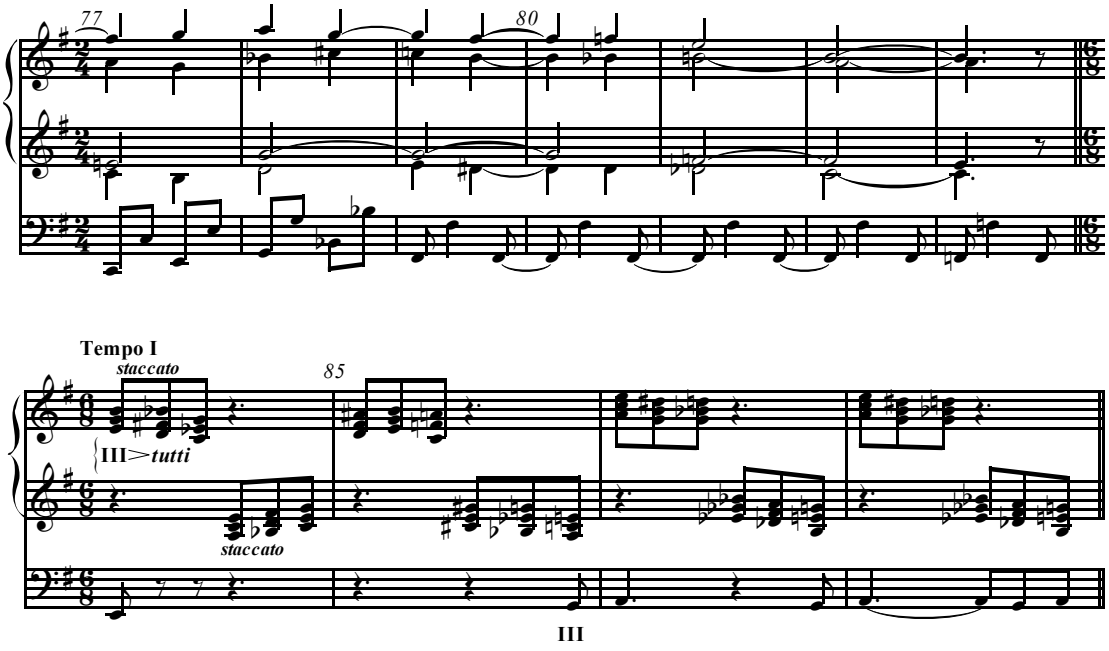
Example 5.2a: Dupré, mm. 146-156



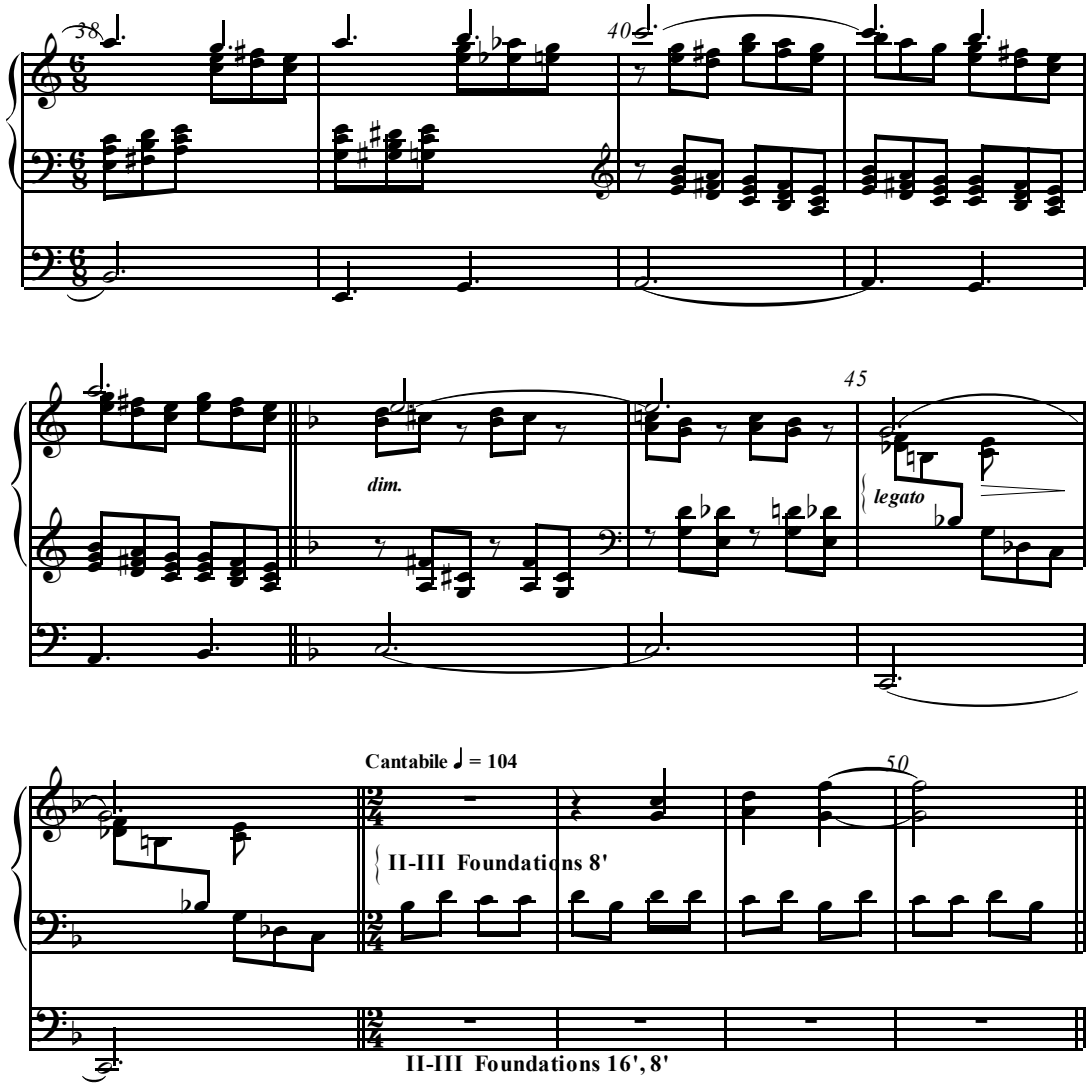
Example 5.2b: Dupré, mm. 167-172



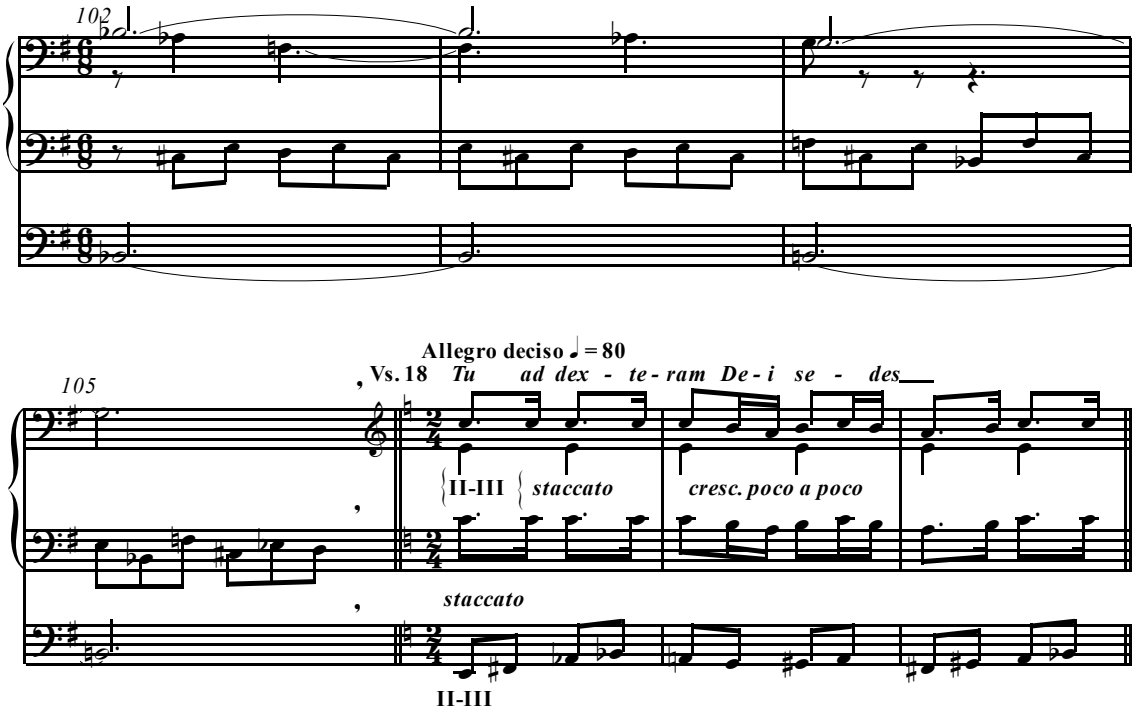
Example 5.2c: Dupré, mm. 77-87



Example 5.2d: Dupré, mm 38-50



Example 5.2e: Dupré, mm. 102-108



The use of common tones to create a link between sections is seen in Example 5.2a, showing the end of section 4 leading to the start of section 5. Section 4 presents *fff* dynamics and thick seven- and eight-note textures such as in bars 122-142. To prepare for section 5, with its sparer four-voice texture, mm. 148-154 reduce the texture and present a *diminuendo*. The end of section 4 occurs in bar 154, with a first-inversion A major chord. The start of section 5 in m. 155 contains three tones in common with the previous chord. Therefore the voicing of the A major chord in m. 154 becomes the basis for a new C# minor triad in bar 155. Thus, through the process of textural thinning, a *diminuendo*, and the use of common tones, a smooth transition is effected.

Example 5.2b, showing a passage that was previously discussed, illustrates a similar procedure at the end of section 5 (mm. 167-172). Here, section 5 ends on a first-inversion A major chord in a 4-voice texture. Section 6 starts in m. 170 on a first-

inversion A minor chord, which contains three tones in common with the previous chord. This link also operates with stepwise voice-leading, as seen in the downward chromatic step from the C# to the C-natural in m. 170. This transition, then, is an example of a link that functions both through common tones and through stepwise voice-leading. Linking through stepwise voice-leading is illustrated again in Example 5.2c, showing the transition from section 2 to section 3 (mm. 77-87). Here there are no common tones shared between these measures (mm. 83-84). Instead, the start of section 3 is reached through stepwise voice-leading in the pedal, as seen in mm. 83-84 where the F-natural moves down by half-step to the E-natural in bar 84.

Example 5.2d, showing the transition between sections 1 and 2 (mm. 38-50), illustrates a sectional link created through textural thinning and a decrease in dynamics and tempo. The seven-voice texture of bar 40 gradually reduces to a three- and four-voice texture at the end of the section (m. 46), anticipating the one- and three-voice texture of the start of section 2. Moreover, a *dimenuendo* begins in bar 43 and a change of articulation from *staccato* to *legato* is called for in bar 45. Both the *diminuendo* and articulation prepare for the quiet dynamics of the *cantabile* section 2, starting in m. 47.

In one instance, there is no transition or link between sections. Example 5.2e shows the rather abrupt moment between sections 3 and 4. Here there is no stepwise voice-leading nor are there any common tones between chords. Instead, as seen with the breath marks in all three voices in m. 105, a full break is intended between sections. This abruptness may be because the chant excerpt presented at the start of section 4 ("Tu ad dexteram Dei sedes") has not yet been heard in the piece, and its first presentation after a break sounds like new material. The abruptness may also be because no connection

between sections 3 and 4 was ever intended, for these sections are the only two in the work to be separated with breath marks.

The form and use of chant excerpts in Dupré's *Te Deum* are unusual. While the work has an overall improvisatory (and thus less developed) feel to it, nevertheless there are definite structural and organizational devices at work. Chief among these are the varied paraphrase techniques used throughout the work. Furthermore, common tone and stepwise voice-leading links create smooth transitions between sections. Finally, the regular presentation of chant material at the beginning and end of sections combines with these other features to give clarity and continuity to Dupré's composition.

Chapter 6
Jeanne Demessieux and *Te Deum pour Orgue*

The final work this study considers is the *Te Deum pour Orgue* by Jeanne Demessieux, a composer, who perhaps more than the others in this study, distinguished herself as an organ virtuoso. In the 47 years of her life, Jeanne Demessieux became internationally recognized as the finest organist of her generation, a consummate improviser, a faithful Parisian church organist, and a fine teacher at the Conservatory in Liège, Belgium. *Te Deum pour Orgue*, a virtuosic work dating from near the end of Demessieux's compositional career, is her best-known work for organ.

6.1 Biography

Jeanne Demessieux's rise to the pinnacle of international organ playing was meteoric, fueled by her unflagging drive and relentless work ethic. A native of Montpellier, Demessieux was born on February 14, 1921 to a family who was equally ambitious for her. As Jo Ewing Anderson writes:

> [Demessieux's] first teacher was her older sister Yolande, who instructed three-year-old Jeanne in the rudiments of piano and music theory. At age four Demessieux devoted two hours daily to piano practice and two more hours to solfège and musical dictation. She wrote her first compositions at age five, and, in the same year, her piano repertoire already included some of the partitas and preludes and fugues of J.S. Bach.[98]

Demessieux's precociousness continued as she enrolled in 1928 at age seven in the Conservatory of Montpellier, where she won first prizes in piano and solfège by age eleven.[99] In 1932, Demessieux's family moved to Paris, and Demessieux began studying

[98]Jo Ewing Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux" (D.M.A. diss., University of Georgia, 1996), 5-6.
[99]Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux," 6.

at the Conservatory, where she eventually won four *premier prix*: harmony (1937), piano (1938), counterpoint and fugue (1940) and organ (1941). The watershed event for Demessieux—the event that would shape her indelibly in years to come—was meeting Marcel Dupré (the third composer in this study). By the time they met in 1936, Dupré had been professor of organ at the Conservatory for ten years and for two years had served as the *titulaire* organist of St. Sulpice Church in Paris. He was, as mentioned in Chapter 5, the foremost figure on the French organ scene. Karen E. Ford describes Demessieux's meeting with Dupré:

> It was on October 8, 1936, at Meudon that Jeanne's career saw a decisive turning point, when she was introduced to Marcel Dupré, a meeting arranged by the director of the conservatory in Montpellier. Jeanne later wrote in her diary, "This was an unforgettable meeting for me." In truth, the meeting with the great master of the organ proved to be a sort of reciprocal "thunderbolt" between teacher and pupil, leading to an exceptional and unique relationship rich with exchanges and discoveries for both.
>
> An established figure on the international organ scene by this time, Dupré must have immediately seen in the tiny slip of a girl the successor for which he had been looking, one capable of spreading the influence of the French organ school. Recognizing the multiplicity of her talents, he eagerly took the child as his prize disciple and over the next ten years trained her vigorously and rigorously, leaving no stone unturned in the development of her talent, later writing, "One cannot be a great artist without having (first) been the student of a great artist.[100]

Three years of private lessons with Dupré preceded her enrollment in his organ class at the Paris Conservatory in 1939. Though she received a *premier prix* in organ in 1941, Demessieux continued studying privately with Dupré for the next five years. In these five years, Ford writes, "almost all the great works of organ literature were meticulously studied, memorized, and performed. Dupré tried to push the limits of Jeanne's virtuosity

[100]Karen E. Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," *The American Organist* 26, no. 4 (April 1992): 58.

even more by writing for her works of enormous difficulty, furthering her acquisition of a near-impeccable and flawless technique."[101]

Finally Dupré thought Demessieux ready for her debut. Over the course of a year in 1946-47, Demessieux gave twelve debut recitals at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, recitals met with glowing enthusiasm from Bernard Gavoty, who wrote:

> "An organ wonder? No—stupendous, monumental…Liszt could not have caused any more surprise by playing for the first time his *Études*…and no one but Dupré himself is capable of such marvels in improvisation. Demessieux should…be seated in the first rank of the artistic family…she follows."[102]

Marcel Dupré was equally fervent in his remarks after the first of Demessieux's twelve recitals at Salle Pleyel, saying: "The impact of yesterday's recital is equal to that of the Paris debuts of Menuhin, Geiseking, and Horowitz."[103] Such encomiums followed Demessieux throughout her career and were offered by performers and critics alike. Maurice Duruflé once said after one of Demessieux's concerts: "Next to you we play the pedals like elephants. It [Demessieux's playing] is magnificent, marvelous. I feel we are very far behind you."[104] Demessieux's improvisations were likewise highly praised. *American Organist* reviewer Charles Van Bronkhorst wrote of one of her improvisations: "I heard Marcel Dupré improvise on submitted themes several years ago and was duly

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[101]Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," 58.
[102]Bernard Gavoty, "Jeanne Demessieux," *Images Musicales*, 1946. As quoted in Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," 60.
[103]"Le rentissment du recital d'hier est l'equivalent du premier recital à Paris de Menuhin, de Gieseking, d'Horowitz" (Author's translation). Christiane Trieu-Colleney, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie de luttes et de gloire* (Avignon: Les presses Universelles, 1977), 186.
[104]"Á coté de Jeanne Demessieux, nous jouons de la pédale comme des elephants. C'est magnifique, merveilleux. Mon sentiment est que nous sommes très loin derrière vous"

impressed, but I have never been as stimulated or musically satisfied as by this beautiful example of the French tradition."[105] Such praise is hardly surprising after learning that Dupré once said of her, "Jeanne Demessieux is the finest organist of all generations."[106]

After her debut concerts, Demessieux began her international recital career which, over the next 22 years, took her to France, Western Europe and North America. In 1947 she was the first woman invited to give a recital at Westminster Abbey in London.[107] The 1950s saw an explosion of her career. She undertook three transcontinental tours of America, a feat largely unheard-of at the time.[108] As Laura Ellis writes, "A number of American women organists, including Nita Akin, Claire Coci, and Catherine Crozier, made transcontinental recital tours of the United States in the 1950s, but few European women traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to perform organ recitals in North America."[109] Demessieux took up appointments as organ professor at the Conservatories in Nancy (from 1950) and at Liège, Belgium (from 1952).[110] In the mid-1950s, she served as director of the jury at the prestigious International Organ Competition in Improvisation in Haarlem, Netherlands, and was often called upon to adjudicate organ competitions at the Paris Conservatory.[111] Demessieux recorded sixteen albums, and

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(Author's translation). Trieu-Colleney, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie*, 186

[105]Charles Van Bronkhorst, "Jeanne Demessieux, Bidwell Memorial Presbyterian Church, Chico, California, February 14," *The American Organist* (April 1958): 148.

[106]"Jeanne Demessieux est la plus grade organiste de toutes les generations" (Author's translation). Trieu-Colleny, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie*, 165.

[107]Trieu-Colleney, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie*, 233.

[108]For a detailed discussion of Demessieux's American recital tours, see Laura Ellis, "The American Recital Tours of Jeanne Demessieux: A Documention of Her Performances" (D.M.A. diss., University of Kansas, 1991).

[109]Ellis, "The American Recital Tours of Jeanne Demessieux," 85.

[110]Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," 62.

[111]Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," 62.

received the *National Grand Prix du Disque* for 1960-61 for her *intégrale* of the works of César Franck.

In addition to her performing and teaching career, Demessieux was a steadfast church organist in Paris. She was appointed *titulaire* organist of Saint-Esprit Church in 1933 at age thirteen, the youngest *titulaire* organist in Paris.[112] Demessieux remained at her post at Saint-Esprit for the next 29 years until in 1962 she was appointed *titulaire* organist of the prestigious Madeleine Church in Paris, a position she kept until she died at the age of 47 in 1968. Jeanne Demessieux took seriously her position as a church organist and saw it as fundamentally different from her role as a concert virtuoso. As recounted by Anderson, Demessieux was once asked to compare the two roles, and responded:

> Very different from that of a virtuoso. If, in concert, one is there to serve the organ, in the church, it is the service that one must serve before all. One should never look to shine, no matter how great one may be. Near to the altar, virtuosity in improvisations and executions [of written works] must remain in the intellectual domain and the congregation should never notice them.[113]

As a composer, Demessieux wrote music which resembled in spirit the works of her predecessors. Karen Ford writes:

> As a composer, Demessieux inherited the French neo-Romantic style of earlier French composers such as Alain, Langlais, Tournemire, and Vierne, and thus did not come under the spirit of her contemporary, Messiaen, whose works she nonetheless admired. In particular, her work frequently resembles that of Alain, who also wrote programmatic music of great suggestive and imaginative power.[114]

According to Jo Ewing Anderson, Demessieux wrote music that was,

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[112]Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux," 12.
[113]Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux, "12.
[114]Ford, "Jeanne Demessieux," 63.

> sensuous, evocative, and forceful, yet wedded to a strong sense of architecture and a definable tonal language. As models of technical virtuosity, these organ works are unsurpassed in the literature. They reveal their creator's command of her instrument, her thorough conservatory training in harmony and improvisation, and her profound personal aesthetic.[115]

That Demessieux would write works that make significant demands of the performer is hardly surprising given her own technical prowess. What is perhaps surprising, though, is that she wrote only eight works for organ:

Six Études, Op. 5 (1946)
Sept Méditations sur le Saint-Esprit (1947)
Triptyque, Op. 7 (1948)
Twelve Choral Preludes on Gregorian Themes, Op. 8 (1950)
Poème pour orgue et orchestre, Op. 9 (1952)
Te Deum, Op. 11 (1959)
Prélude et Fugue en ut, Op. 13 (1965)
Réponds pour le Temps de Pâques (1968)

With the exception of a few of the *Choral Preludes*, most of these eight compositions are technically challenging and suited more for the professional musician rather than for the amateur. Some of the compositions, such as the *Chorale Preludes* and the *Réponds pour le Temps de Pâques*, draw their themes from liturgical works such as Gregorian chant and have a place in the liturgy of the church. Other works, however, are secular in nature such as the *Prélude et Fugue en Ut* and the *Six Études*, and are composed for the concert hall.

Demessieux's *Te Deum pour Orgue*, Op. 11, written in 1958, falls in the middle of her compositional output. It was not a commissioned work. Rather it was inspired by the organ at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City, where she gave a concert on her second American tour in February, 1955.[116] In her travel diary written on

[115]Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux," 2.
[116]The exact date of the 1955 recital cannot be found. It was sometime in late March 1955. No documentation is given as to what about the organ at St. John the Divine

her third American tour in 1958, Demessieux wrote about the *Te Deum*'s affiliation with St. John's: "30th January: At the organ at St. John the Divine, I tried my *Te Deum* which was inspired by this organ, and to my relief, it was what I had intended."[117] Demessieux wrote *Te Deum* in late 1957 or early 1958, and premiered her piece at the start of her third two-month long American tour.[118] *Te Deum*'s premiere was on February 10, 1958 in Graham Memorial Chapel at Washington University in St. Louis.[119] The work was received with great enthusiasm, as evidenced by Ronald Arnatt's review of the concert for The American Organist magazine:

> As a composer Jeanne Demessieux is known mostly in this country for her *Twelve Preludes on Gregorian Themes*—short, finely wrought pieces showing a combination of contrapuntal mastery and lyrical warmth. The prelude on *Rorate coeli* is one of the loveliest of these, with a distinct style all her own, leaning less on her compatriots. Here was an entirely different approach to a Gregorian chant [Demessieux's *Te Deum*], martial in mood, polytonal in influence and excitingly brilliant. The work falls into three main sections: the opening, strong exposition, the quieter, more reflective middle section, and the powerful toccata-like ending, frighteningly difficult and jaggedly dissonant.... Jeanne Demessieux was

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inspired Demessieux. Having played on the organ myself, though, I imagine part of her inspiration was the organ's massive State Trumpet stop over the west doors of the Cathedral. It makes an enormous sound, and would be very well suited to the *trompettes en chamade* passages of the work.

[117]"30 janvier--À l'orgue de Saint-John the Divine, j'essaie mon Te Deum, inspiré de cet orgue, et en eprouve comme un soulagement, c'était ce que j'avais entendu" (Author's translation). Trieu-Colleney, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie*, 207. Exactly what Demessieux "intended" when she wrote her *Te Deum* is unknown. This sentence is the only reference to her *Te Deum* that Demessieux makes in her travel diaries, as quoted by Trieu-Colleney. Demessieux makes no mention of the work's premiere in her diary entry on February 10, 1958.

[118]No information is available as to the exact date of composition. Demessieux scholar Jo Ewing Anderson writes that "Demessieux's manuscripts and personal papers are owned by Jean Wolfs who lives in Maastricht in The Netherlands. Correspondence with M. Wolfs, former assistant to Demessieux at the Conservatory of Liege, revealed that access to these important papers is not allowed." See Anderson, "The Organ Music of Jeanne Demessieux," 5. Whether or not the manuscript to *Te Deum* is among these papers is, it seems, uncertain.

[119]Ellis, "The American Recital Tours of Jeanne Demessieux," 50.

> received with great enthusiasm and was brought back many times to take a bow—fortunately she did not play an encore since anything played after her own three works would have been an anti-climax....[120]

Such praise for *Te Deum pour Orgue* was heard in Europe, as well, as demonstrated when Demessieux's biographer, Christiane Trieu-Colleney, writes that "critics noted the 'shocking effect' of this great fresco."[121]

6.2 Demessieux's *Te Deum pour Orgue*

Demessieux's use of the "Te Deum" chant is at the essence of how the work is structured and developed. In *Te Deum pour Orgue*, Demessieux works with chant material in several ways. In one case, portions of the chant articulate the beginning and end of each of the five sections of the piece. In addition, one particular verse of the chant frequently returns at pitch and serves as a modal anchor in the midst of Demessieux's often dense, highly chromatic and dissonant harmonic language. Furthermore, smaller phrases from the chant form the building blocks of larger phrases in the work. Finally, motivic cells from the chant appear as rhetorical flourishes, ostinati, or refer to the verse from which they are drawn.

Development or teleology in *Te Deum* does not resemble that of more traditional forms; instead, changes in mood, dynamics, registrations, textures and the growing complexity with which Demessieux manipulates the chant material articulate the processes of the work. Moreover, Demessieux, by her selection and manipulation of the chant material, reveals the thematic essence of the ancient text—praise and supplication.

Demessieux's work is divided into five sections (see Figure 6.1) and calls for the full tonal resources of the organ.

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[120]Ronald Arnatt, "Jeanne Demessieux, Graham Memorial Chapel, Wahsington University, St. Louis, MO, February 10, 1958," *The American Organist* (April 1958): 149.

[121]"Les critiques saluent "l'effect saisissant" de cette grande fresque" (Author's translation). Trieu-Colleney, *Jeanne Demessieux, Une vie*, 94.

Figure 6.1 The Sections of Demessieux's *Te Deum*

Section 1 (mm. 1-23)
Moderato
3/4
ff
Texture: 3-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 1—"Te Dominum confitemur"
"Te Deum" cell

Section 2 (mm. 24-76)
Moderato
2/4
p—ff
Texture: 1-8 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
"Te Deum" cell
v. 1—"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 2—"Te aeternum Patrem"

Section 3 (mm. 77-118)
Andante
3/4
p
Texture: 4-6 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 21—"Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis in gloria numerari."

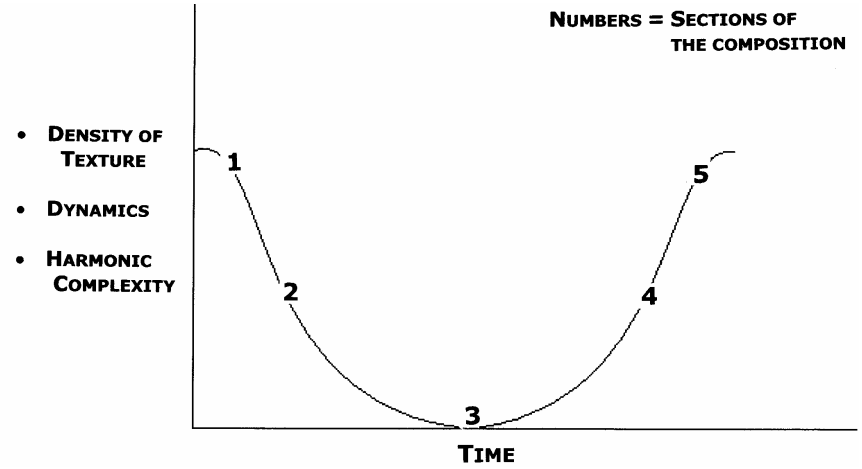
Section 4 (mm.119-155)
Allegro
3/4, 2/8, 6/8
mf—f
Texture: 2-7 voices
Chant excerpt quoted:
v. 5—"Sanctus"

Section 5 (mm. 156-188)
Allegro
4/4, 12/8, 2/4
ff—fff
Texture: 3-10 voices
Chant excerpts quoted:
v. 1—"Te Deum laudamus"
v. 2—"Te aeternum Patrem"
v. 14—"Tu Rex gloriae Christe"
"Te Deum" cell

Passages range in dynamic from *p* to *ff*, and registrations from simple foundation stops to full organ with *trompettes en chamade*. The piece varies greatly in its texture, with some passages presenting a single voice (mm. 24-25) and others with as many as ten (mm. 174-175). Texturally, dynamically and in terms of mood, the piece unfolds along the form of a palindrome: that is, it proceeds up to a central section and then continues in retrograde.

Sections 1 and 5, the outer sections of this five-section work, mirror each other in their use of full organ with dense textures and in the high incidence of chromatic harmonies. Sections 2 and 4 are alike in their rhythmic drive, sparer texture, and quieter dynamics. Section 3 is unique among the sections of the *Te Deum* for its slow tempo, quiet registration of just foundation stops in the hands, and in the transparency of its harmonies. Thus the dynamic, textural and harmonic curve of the composition can be interpreted as an inverted arc, as illustrated in Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2 The Dynamic Trajectory of Demessieux's *Te Deum*



While the outer sections mirror each other in certain ways, they are perceived differently: sections 1 and 2 gradually relax the intensity of the opening, while sections 3 and 4 gradually build in intensity to section 5 and the conclusion of the work. In other words, there is a momentum in the inverted arc form for the climax of the piece to come in the final section. Indeed the climax of *Te Deum* arrives in section 5, beginning six bars before the end (m. 183), as a motive from verse 1 returns on the *trompettes en chamade*. The climax peaks in the final bar of the piece as the entire tonal resources of the organ play an E major chord, one of only three times in the piece that a pure major triad stands by itself at a key- and section-defining moment. The final full-organ E-major chord in bar 188 appears as a striking moment of harmonic clarity.

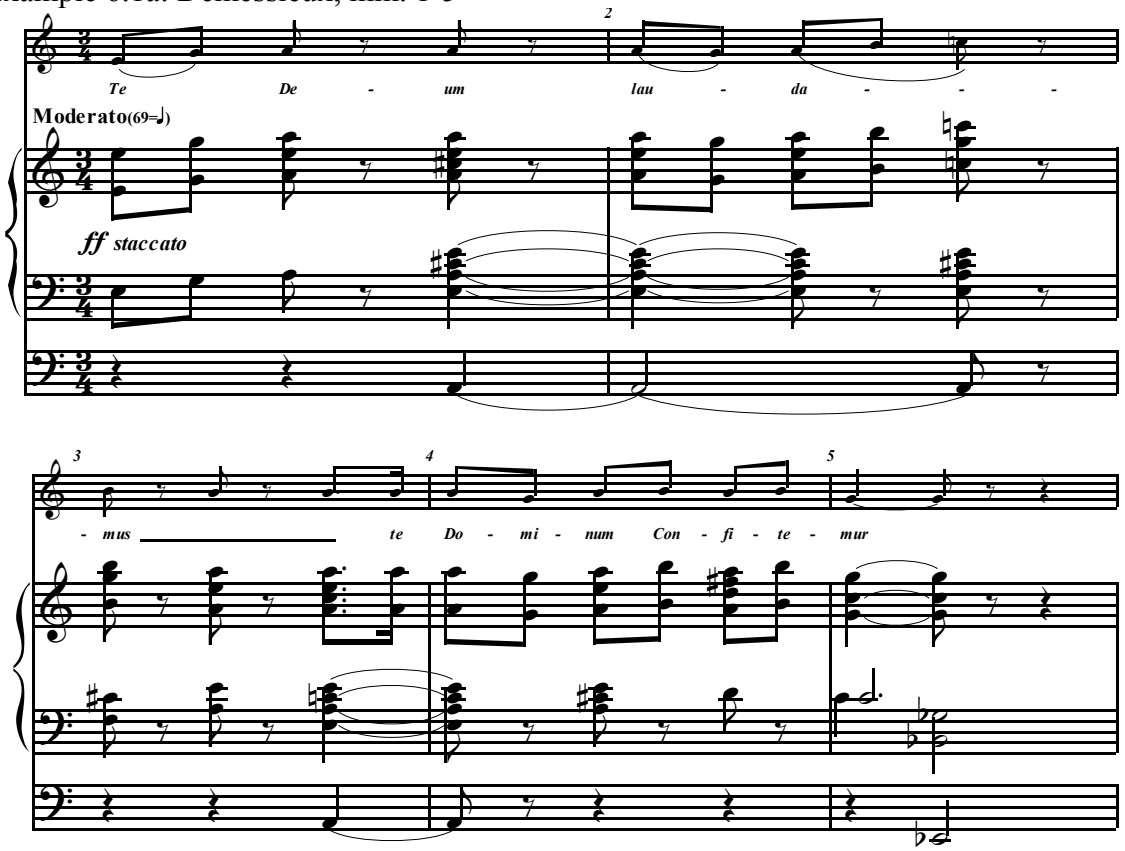
One reason why Demessieux might have chosen this inverted dynamic curve for the *Te Deum* is because the form works well rhetorically and thematically with the chant excerpts she has chosen. As noted in Figure 6.1, *Te Deum* uses excerpts from just five verses of the "Te Deum" chant: 1, 2, 5, 14, and 21. The words associated with four of these five verses are, in essence, about praising God. Verse 1 speaks of acknowledging God "to be the Lord," while verse 2 tells that "All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting." The central theme of verse 5 is God's holiness, and verse 14 is an exhortation to Jesus Christ that "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ." These "praise" excerpts are scattered in the outer sections of *Te Deum*. The first two sections of *Te Deum* use chant material from verses 1, 2 and 14 while the last two sections draw material from verses 1, 2, 5, and 14. In the central section, however, the words associated with verse 21 reflect the other main theme in the "Te Deum" text, supplication. Out of the 29 verses of the chant, a striking thematic change occurs in the central portion of the text at verse 20, where the theme shifts from praise to supplication and to matters of mortality. Verse 21 reads, "Make them to be numbered with thy Saints in glory everlasting" (with "them" referring to oneself and to all humanity). The entire verse is quietly presented in section 3 of Demessieux's *Te Deum*. Thus the rhetorical shift to a quiet and intense pleading for life everlasting marks the middle section of both the text and Demessieux's composition. This presentation of the chant fragment from verse 21 in section 3 not only directly reflects the themes of the text, but also synchronizes the work with the text: at the heart of the text is a quiet prayer for mercy and forgiveness. In the literal and rhetorical middle of *Te Deum* is the same prayer, offered softly and transparently.

The sections of Demessieux's *Te Deum*—be they praise-filled or pleading in their themes—are articulated and unified by Demessieux's use of materials from the chant. At the opening and close of each of the five sections of the work, some version of the chant

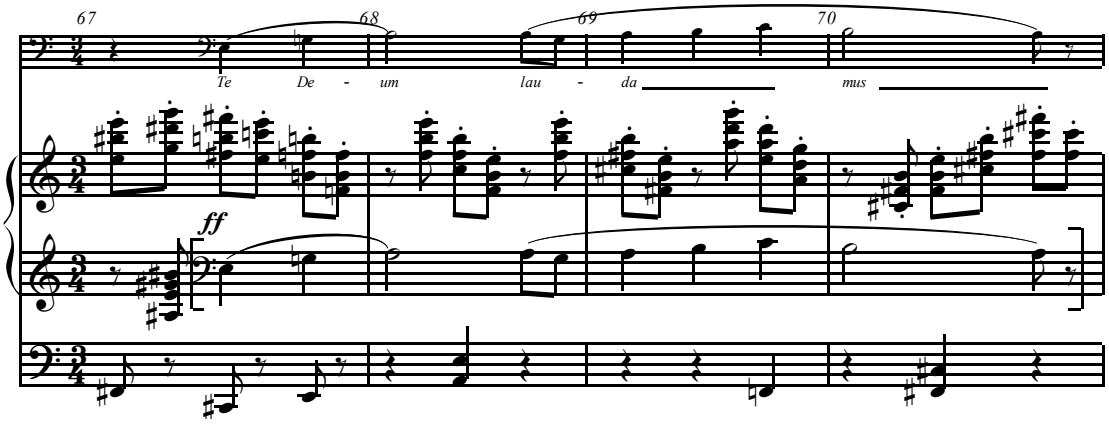
material is presented. The presentations vary greatly, however, and can be categorized in four ways. Some sections are delineated by quotations of entire verses of chant, while some by just a phrase of a verse. Some sections are articulated by smaller motivic phrases, and some by even smaller motivic cells.

Example 6.1 shows examples of these four different presentations of chant material used to articulate sections of the Demesieux's *Te Deum pour Orgue*.

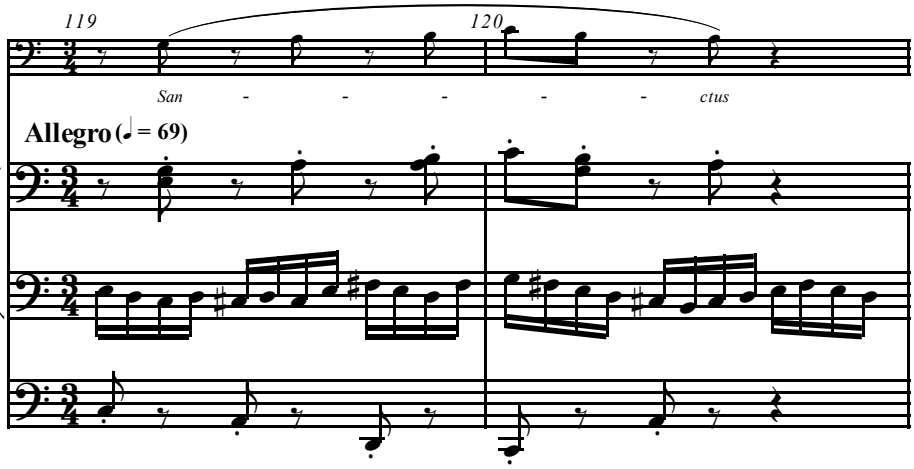
Example 6.1a: Demessieux, mm. 1-5



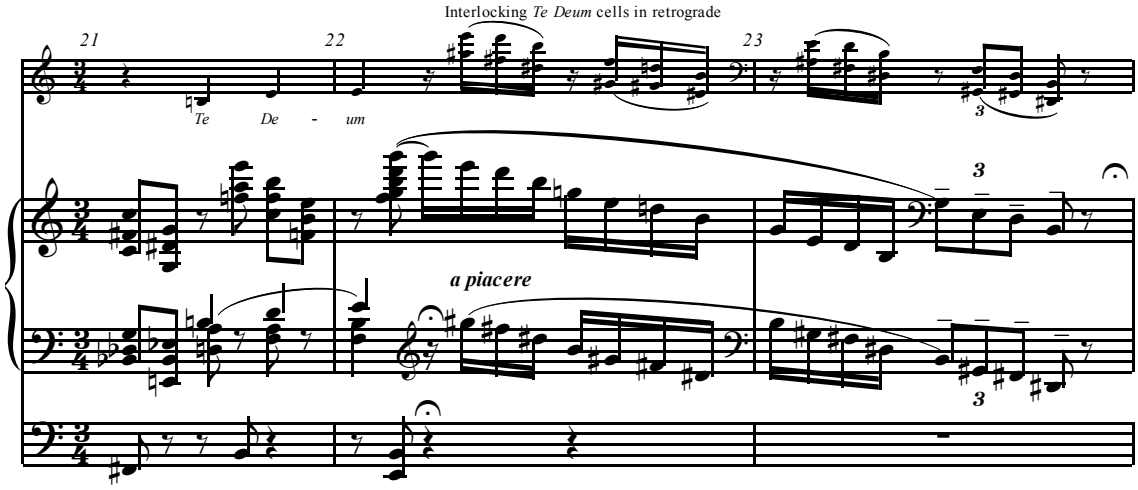
Example 6.1b: Demessieux, mm. 67-70



Example 6.1c: Demessieux, mm. 119-120



Example 6.1d: Demessieux, mm. 21-23



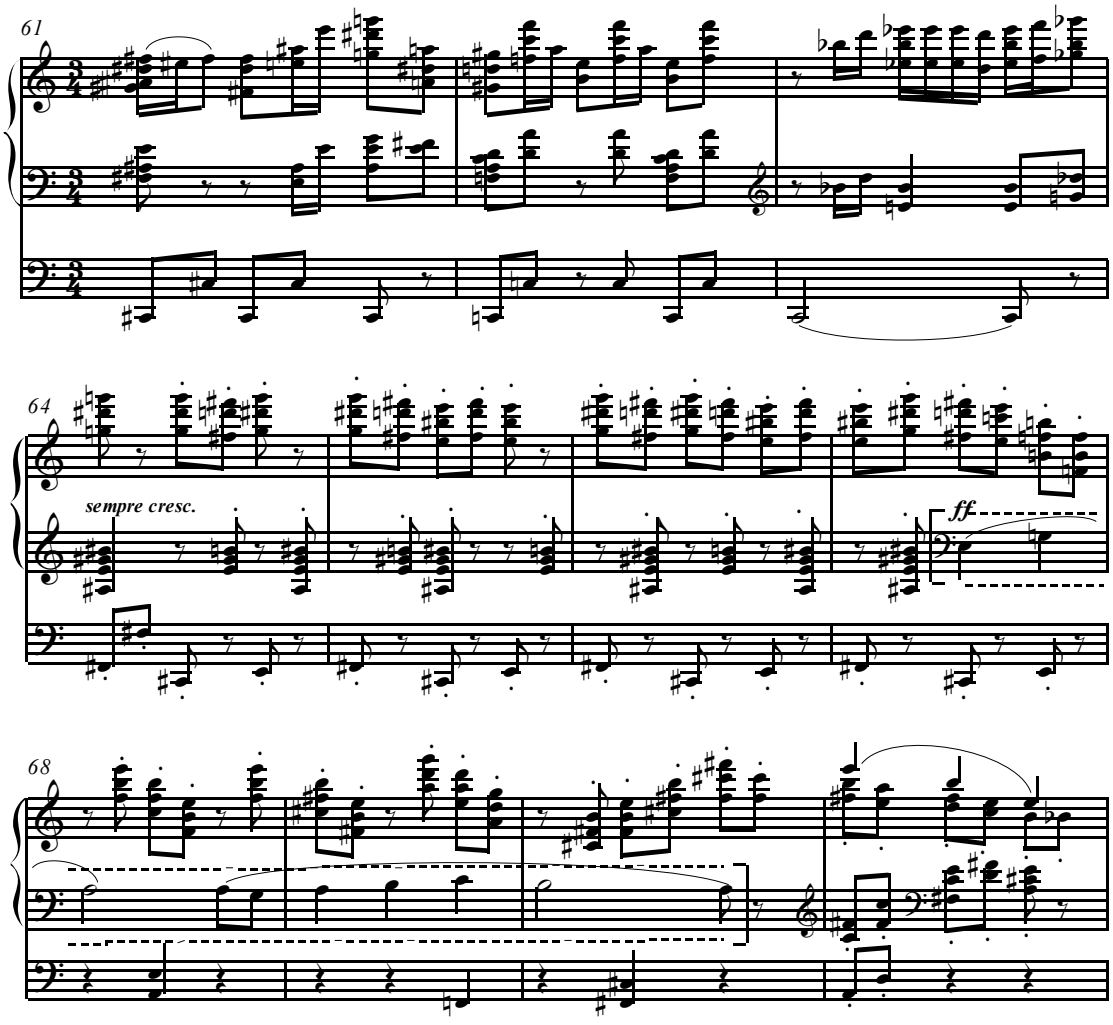
Example 6.1a, taken from the first five bars of the work, shows the quotation of a complete verse of chant. The entirety of verse 1 ("Te Deum laudamus: te Dominum confitemur") is presented at pitch in Phrygian on E in the top line. Example 6.1b shows a moment near the close of section 2 in which just a phrase of verse 1, "Te Deum laudamus" (mm. 67-70), is presented in the tenor line at pitch on Phrygian on E on *trompettes en chamade*. Example 6.1c shows a passage in which smaller motives drawn from the "Te Deum" chant articulate a section. In this example, drawn from the first two bars of the section 4 (mm. 119-120), the top line contains a motive from verse 5 ("Sanctus") which is later repeated, reordered, and transposed. Finally, Example 6.1d presents an instance in which small motivic cells mark the close of a section. In these last three bars of section 1 (mm. 21-23), the "Te Deum" cell drawn from the first three notes of the chant, is presented in its original form and in retrograde. The original cell first appears in the tenor line at m. 21 in Phrygian on B. In its retrograde, the cell appears eight different times in the next two bars (mm. 22-23) as a cadenza-like downward flourish. In these two bars, each retrograde "Te Deum" cell interlocks with another at the interval of a minor sixth. At the open and close of each section, then, some form of chant material serves as a structural divider.

6.3 Chant Fragments in Demessieux's *Te Deum*

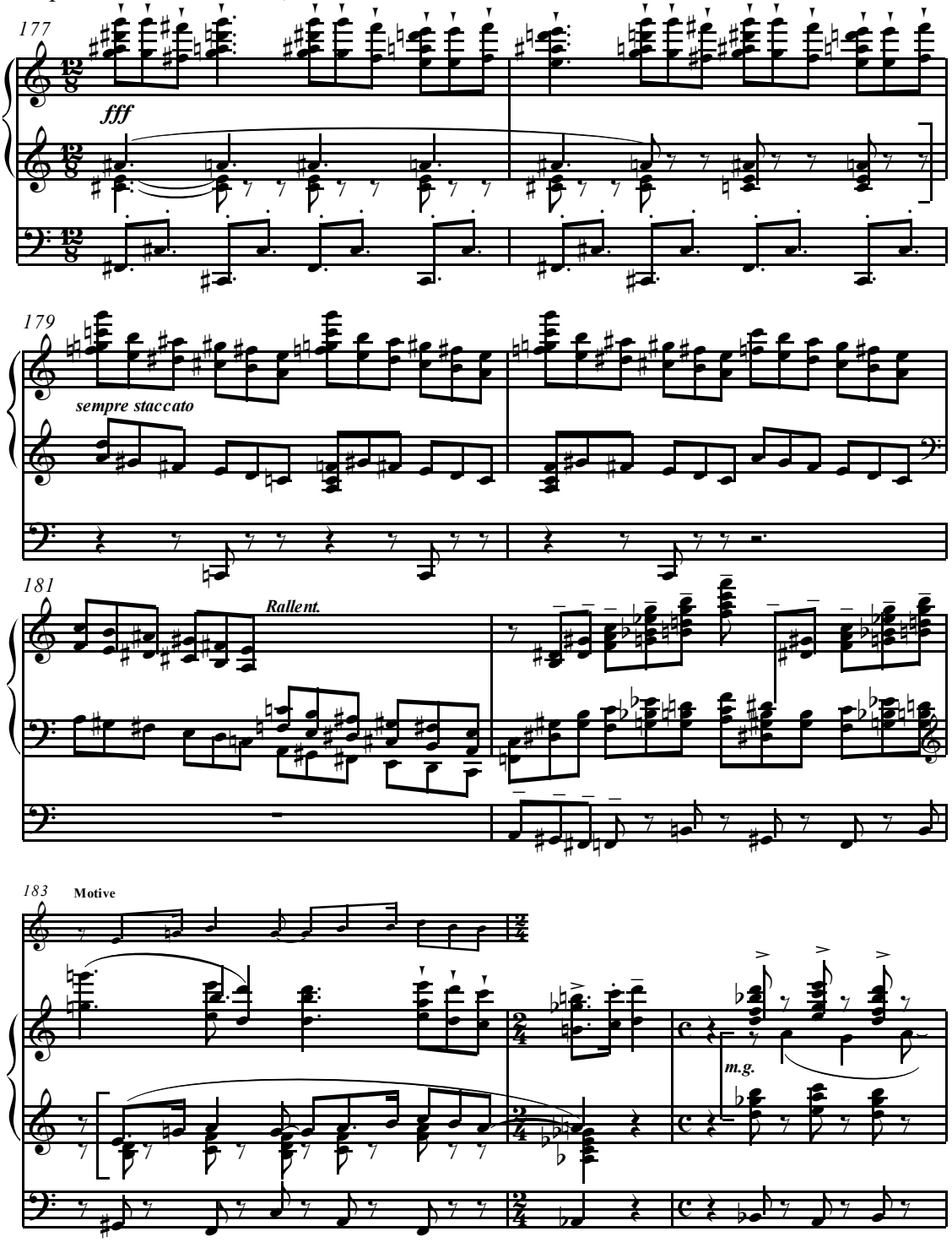
One particular motive from verse 1 serves not only to articulate some of the sections of *Te Deum pour Orgue*, but also to unify the work as a whole. This motive is associated with the words "Te Deum laudamus," (and thus will be named the "Te Deum" motive) and appears as the opening phrases of the piece in the key of Phrygian on E (mm. 1-3). Unlike other chant excerpts which appear transposed from their original key of Phrygian on E, the key center of this motive remains constant: with one exception (mm. 5-10), the "Te Deum" motive is heard only in Phrygian on E. The motive returns three times (mm.

26-31, 67-70, 183-184) in sections 2 and 5. Each time it is presented, it follows a highly chromatic and dense texture.

Example 6.2a: Demessieux, mm. 61-71



Example 6.2b: Demessieux, mm. 177-185



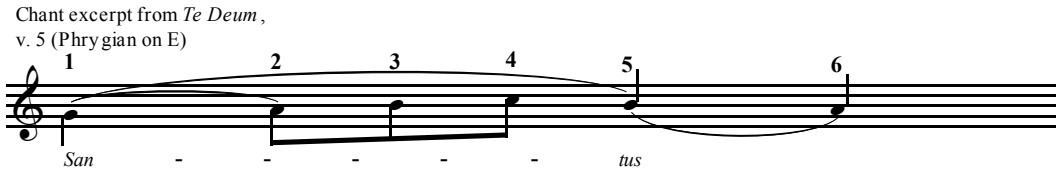
Example 6.2a, showing bars 61-71 near the end of section 2, presents an example of the changes associated with the motive's entrance. Bars 61-66 are highly rhythmic,

chromatic, texturally dense, and harmonically dissonant. As the "Te Deum" motive enters in the tenor line in bar 67 on *trompettes en chamade*, the passage's texture thins out from the eight voices (mm. 64-66) to four to six voices. In addition, the overall level of chromaticism decreases, and the key center of Phrygian on E becomes more apparent. Example 6.2b shows another such process at work (mm. 177-185). Out of the dense, dissonant, and rhythmic texture of descending parallel 6/4 chords of mm. 179-181 and rising major chords of mm. 182 comes the "Te Deum" motive on the *trompettes en chamade* in the alto line in m. 183. Textural thinning is less than before, but the presence of chromaticism drops sharply. The "Te Deum" motive thus serves as a modal anchor for the piece: the motive seems to appear when the tension of the piece is particularly high. The presence of this motive diffuses the tension, returning the composition to the original mode of the chant. The recurrence of this "Te Deum" motive creates a degree of unification in the piece. The motive returns in its home key of Phrygian on E three times, near the beginning (mm. 26-32), middle (67-70) and end (mm. 183-184) of the work. Thus the recurrence of the "Te Deum" motive in the final bars creates a quasi-recapitulation, as it recalls not just the opening four bars of the piece, but also other important structural moments of the work.

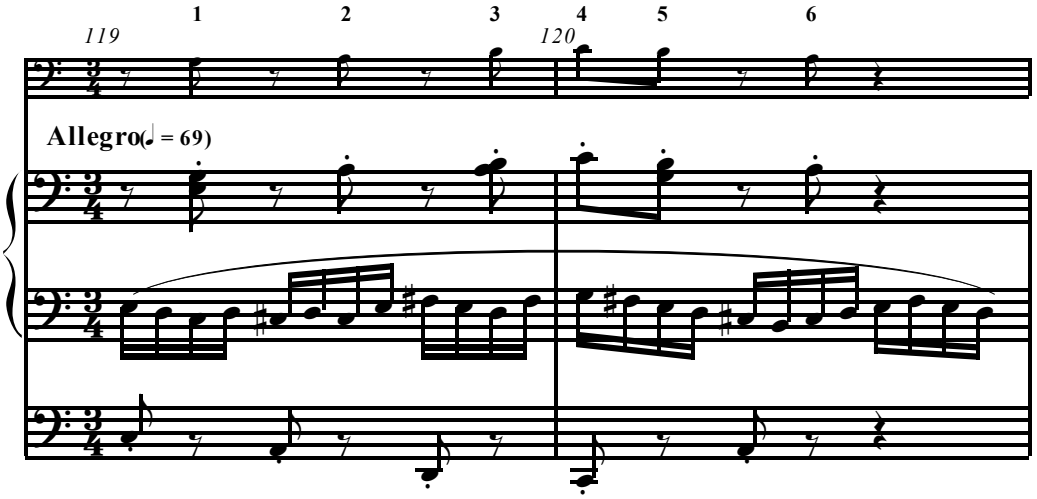
In several passages of *Te Deum*, other short motives derived from the "Te Deum" chant serve as the building blocks of longer phrases. Example 6.3, drawn from bars 119-129 in section 4, shows how, through sequence and various expanding devices, such a motive is transformed into larger phrases.[122]

[122] The numbers above the pitches in Examples 6.3b-e refer to the order of the pitches in the original excerpt (Example 6.3a).

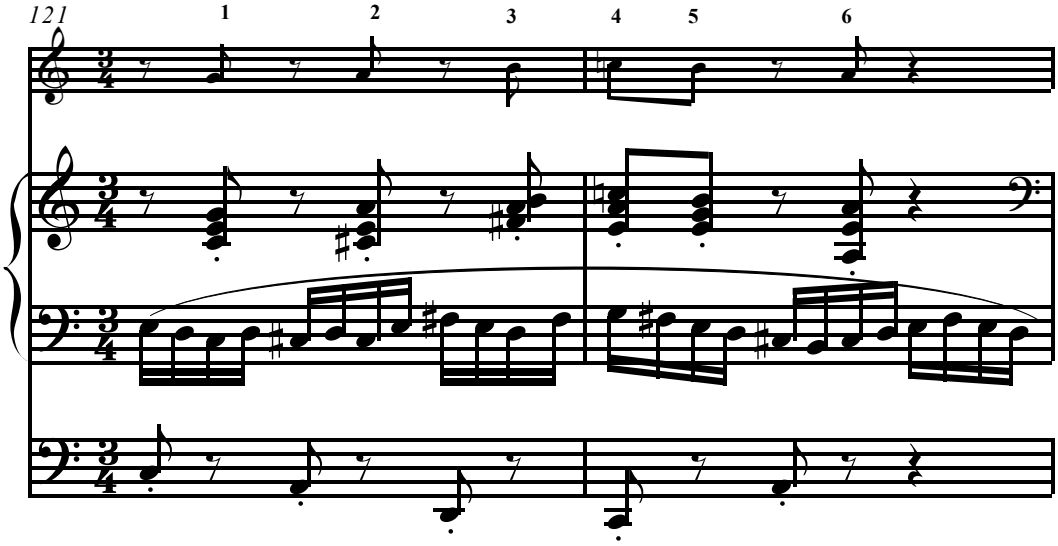
Example 6.3a: Chant Excerpt from Verse 5: “Sanctus”



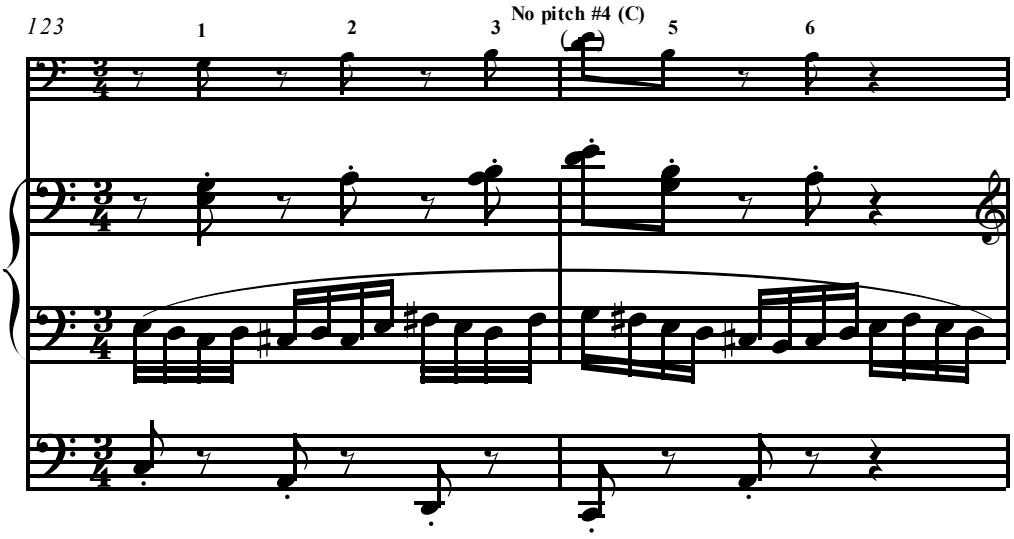
Example 6.3b: Demessieux, mm. 119-120



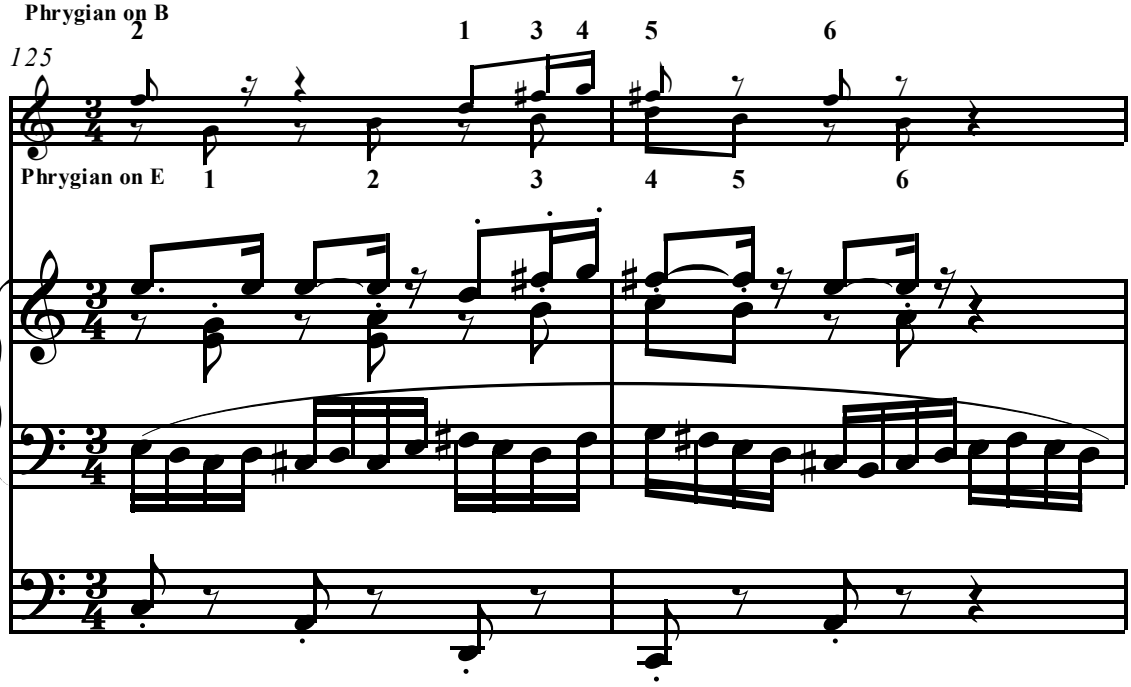
Example 6.3c: Demessieux, mm. 121-122



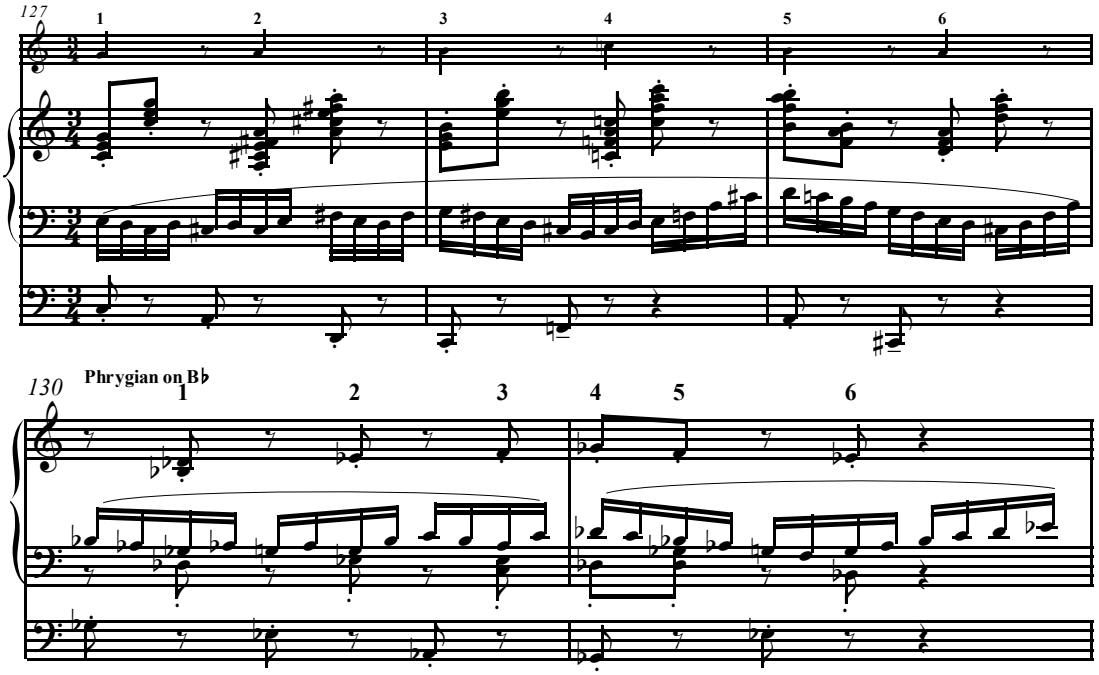
Example 6.3d: Demessieux, mm. 123-124



Example 6.3e: Demessieux, mm 125-126



Example 6.3f: Demessieux, mm. 127-131



The chant motive is drawn from verse 5, sung to the words "Sanctus," and is shown in Example 6.3a. In *Te Deum*, the motive appears in syncopation in the top voice in mm. 119-120 above a quickly moving sixteenth-note accompaniment, as seen in Example 6.3b. In the next two bars, mm. 121-122 (shown in Example 6.3c), the motive again appears in the top line on Phrygian on E above an identical accompaniment, but is transposed up an octave. Moreover, voices are added to the motive, expanding the texture. The next two bars, mm. 123-124, (Example 6.3d) are nearly identical to mm. 119-120, the only difference being that pitch 4 (C) is omitted on the first beat of mm. 124.

The following two bars, mm. 125-126 (Example 6.3e) bring an expansion of texture and a change in mode. The motive becomes part of a two- and three-note texture as it is transposed up an octave to the alto voice beneath the same sixteenth-note accompaniment from before. Above this motive comes the same motive only transposed to Phrygian on B and with the order of pitches 1 and 2 reversed. The motive continues to be expanded into a longer phrase in the next three bars, mm. 127-131 (Example 6.3f). The motive

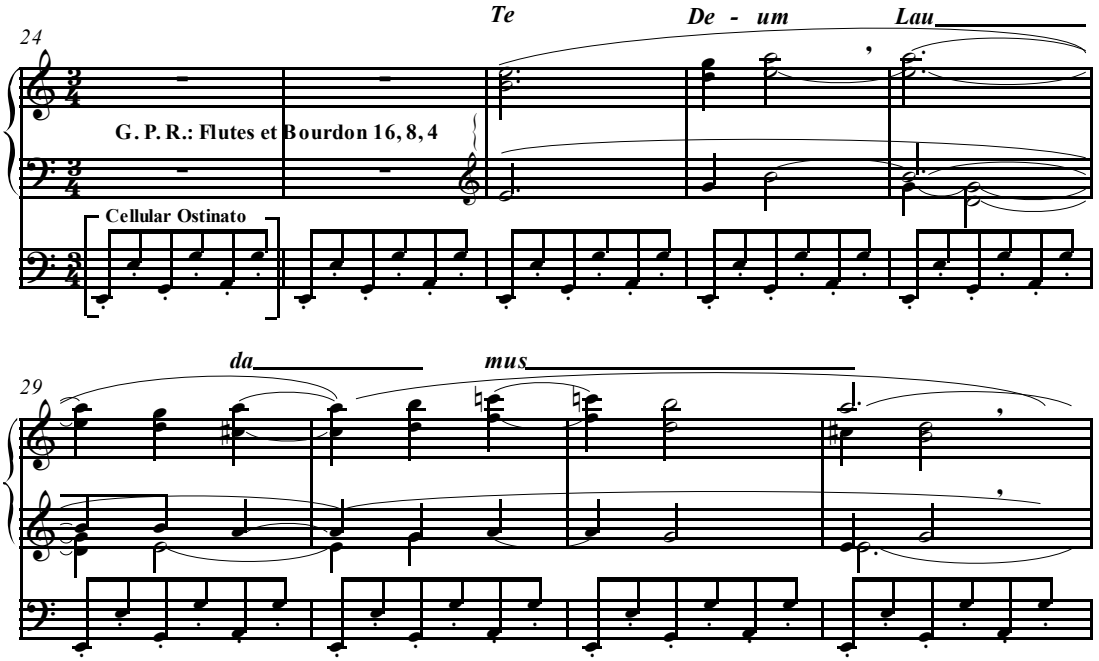
again appears in the top line in its home key of Phrygian on E, only this time atop a thicker texture of leaping three-, four-, and five-note chords (mm. 127-129). Furthermore, in these three bars, the presentation of the motive now takes longer (three bars) than it did in the previous excerpts (two bars). Finally, in this passage there is textural expansion, as well. In the four previous excerpts, the chant motive had been presented in more or less the same way: the chant was presented in dyads or triads in the upper voices with an accompaniment of running sixteenth notes and the same eighth note bass pattern. Now, in mm. 127-129, the motive serves as part of the fabric of a transposition to a presentation of the "Sanctus" theme in m. 130 a tritone away in Phrygian on B-flat. Thus, in this passage a small motive of the chant serves as the scaffolding upon which musical material is built. Longer phrases in *Te Deum* are created as a "Te Deum" motive undergoes sequence, transposition, changes in texture and changes in function. In summary, a small, six-note motive has served as a building block of phrase structure.

6.4 Teleology in Demessieux's *Te Deum*

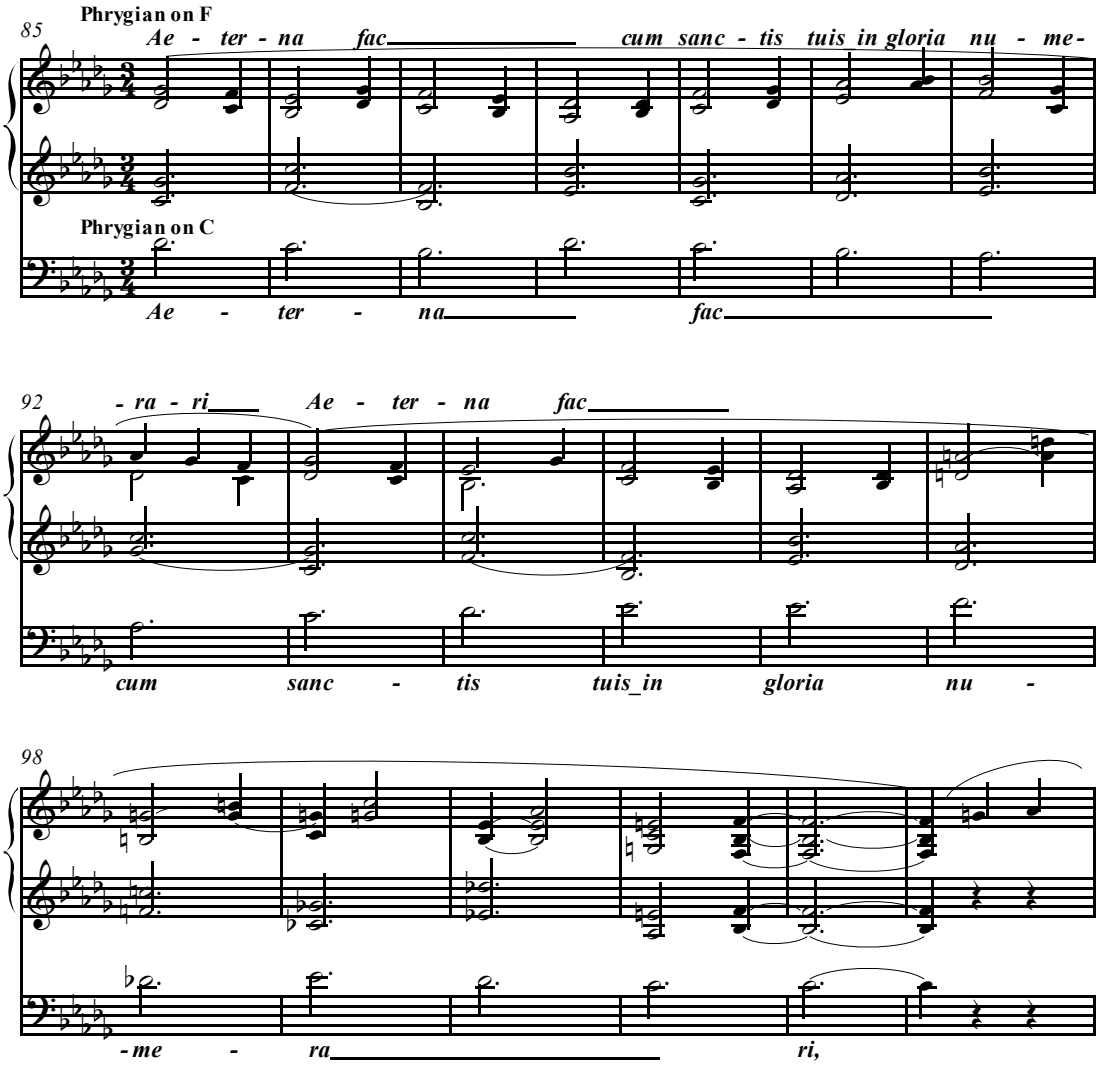
While teleology in Demessieux's *Te Deum pour Orgue* does not resemble that of traditional forms, there is a developmental process in the work. This developmental process is found in the growing complexity of how chant fragments are manipulated. The piece begins, as previously discussed (and as seen in Example 6.1a), with a direct quotation of an entire verse of chant. Example 6.1d shows the ending of Section 1 with the cadenza-like presentation of cellular material garnered from the chant. In each of these examples, the chant material is presented straightforwardly by itself. As *Te Deum* progresses, however, chant materials are combined and presented with increased intricacy. The first level of complexity involves the combination of related chant

materials. Section 2 begins with such a combination.

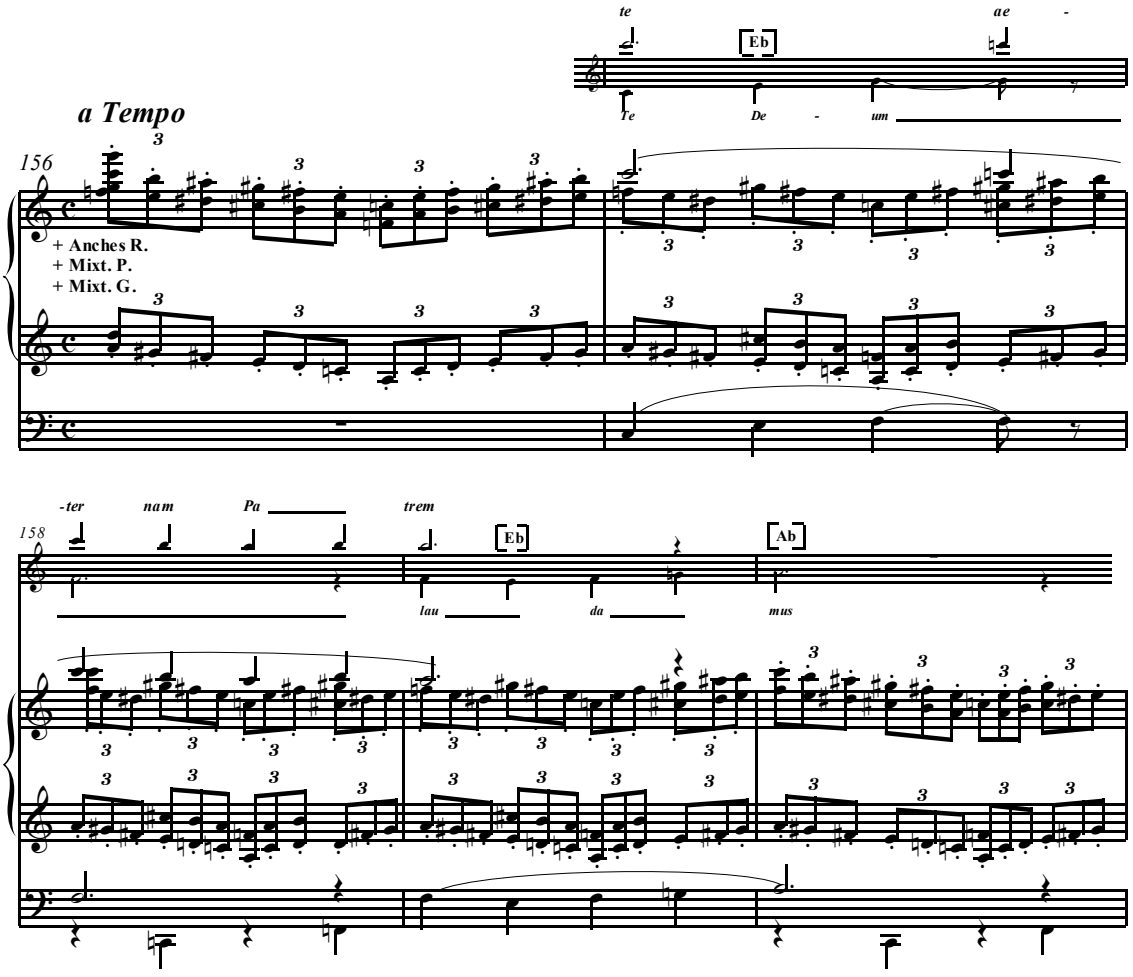
Example 6.4a: Demessieux, mm. 24-32



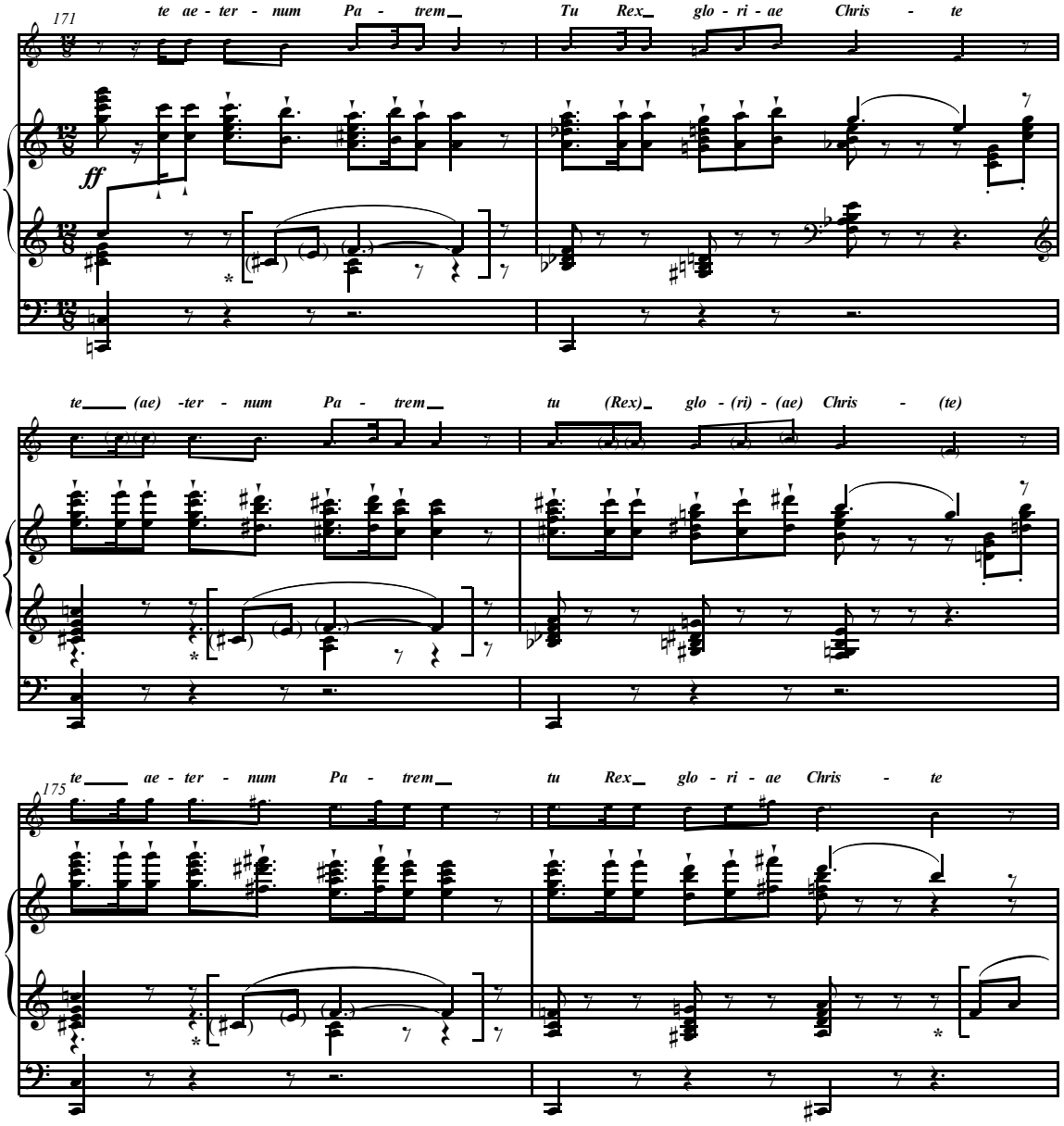
Example 6.4b: Demessieux, mm. 85-103



Example 6.4c: Demessieux, mm. 156-160



Example 6.4d: Demessieux, mm. 171-176



***Altered *Te Deum* cells**

As seen in Example 6.4a, the pedal plays an ostinato based upon the "Te Deum" cell of E, G, A, the first three notes of the piece. Above this ostinato, beginning at bar 26 and continuing until bar 32, appears a presentation of the "Te Deum motive" in the top voice. In this passage, all chant materials are highly related, as the "Te Deum cell" is derived

directly from the "Te Deum" theme.

Example 6.4b, an excerpt from the beginning of section 3 (mm. 85-103), shows Demessieux's technique of combining similar chant materials. The top line presents the entirety of verse 21 in the key of Phrygian on F, while the pedal plays the same excerpt in augmentation and in Phrygian on C. Because they are based on the same verse, the chant materials used in section 3 are identical. The start of section 5 (mm. 156-160) marks the first time in *Te Deum pour Orgue* that unrelated chant materials are combined. As seen in Example 6.4c beginning at bar 157, the top line plays a motive from verse 2 ("Te aeternum Patrem") while beneath in the pedals is an altered form of the "Te Deum" theme. The manipulation of chant material becomes most complex at bars 171-176, near the end of the work. Example 6.4d shows the rapid-fire presentation of two different chant phrases, "Te aeternum Patrem" (verse 2) and "Rex Gloriae Christe" (verse 14), above the presentation of altered "Te Deum" cells in the alto line on the *trompettes en chamade*. Thus, from the straightforward presentation of an entire verse of chant at the start of *Te Deum pour Orgue* to a dense combination of unrelated chant materials at the end of the work, we see a striking progression in the complexity with which chant material is manipulated.

Demessieux's *Te Deum pour Orgue* is a work which exemplifies the connection between Gregorian chant and the organ in Paris in the mid-twentieth century. Just as chant was integral to the Roman Catholic liturgy and its structure and development, so is the "Te Deum" at the core of the how Demessieux's work develops and is structured. Chant and its manipulations serve as endpoints in the work, articulating each of the five sections. Chant excerpts provide tonal clarity, working as modal anchors in a work that

is rhythmically complex, often chromatic, texturally dense and harmonically dissonant. Moreover, chant and short motives derived from it are the very bricks and mortar used to create longer musical phrases. Finally, the growing complexity of chant manipulation drives the development of *Te Deum pour Orgue*: as the chant manipulation grows in intricacy, so Demessieux's work develops.

Chapter 7
Conclusion

The compositional procedures in these four commentaries on the "Te Deum" chant may vary greatly, but these works are nevertheless representative of a unique and heady time in French organ music. Each composer in this study was highly trained and immensely gifted. Tournemire, Langlais, Dupré and Demessieux all had immense success at the Paris Conservatory and made careers as talented composers, performers, and improvisers. While they are certainly not alone in music history in the scope of their accomplishments, they would indeed stand out amongst today's organists. Few organists today excel in all three of these areas.

Following their Conservatory education, each composer secured a prestigious and demanding Parisian church position. These posts required constant creativity and sensitivity to the liturgy. Dupré, Langlais, Demessieux, and Tournemire were called upon to use their Conservatory training in improvisation to respond frequently and imaginatively to Gregorian Chant. These composers worked in a somewhat rarefied atmosphere: each had a world-class organ and fine acoustics at his or her disposal; all were expected to offer virtuosic music each week; each worked in the French Catholic Church in Paris, which, until the 1960s, placed a special emphasis on the role of the organ in mass; and all lived in a city surrounded by gifted colleagues who had positions of prominence in the international organ world. Unfortunately, this era was short-lived. Ann Labounsky tells of the changing nature of the French Roman Catholic liturgy in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). According to her, Langlais and many

of his colleagues in Paris struggled with these changes, which in many cases, meant that the position of the organ in the Mass was significantly diminished. [123]

The works of this study are windows into this unique world of organ culture. All four works reflect this wider cultural environment. Each *Te Deum* is a highly virtuosic commentary on a piece of chant containing literary themes which are deeply resonant and central to Christianity: praise and supplication. All four compositions were born probably of liturgical necessity. As mentioned previously in this study, the organ works on the "Te Deum" chant would not have had a set position in the liturgy, but could have been used at the beginning or ending of Mass. Furthermore, all these meditations on the "Te Deum" chant have a place—some firmer than others—in the contemporary organ repertoire. Langlais's work is by far the most frequently played. Demessieux's work is featured often on recitals as an ending work. Tournemire's work is performed from time to time, while Dupré's *Te Deum* is rarely heard in recitals or in church services.

[123]For more on this topic, see Labounsky, *Jean Langlais*, 210-232.

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