4 The Timeliness of Duruflé's *Requiem*

> Plain-chant and polyphony, dominant ninths and the orchestra of Debussy—without the evidence of an actual performance, Duruflé's *Requiem* might appear to be a hotch-potch. But it is the absolute unification in a very personal manner of these seemingly disparate elements that constitutes Duruflé's chief claim to be taken seriously as a composer.
>
> FELIX APRAHAMIAN, "Maurice Duruflé and His Requiem"

VICHY'S SYMPHONIC COMMISSIONS AND THE MUSIC OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In May 1941 Maurice Duruflé received a commission from Vichy's Administration of Fine Arts to write a symphonic poem, for which he was offered ten thousand francs, payable upon completion of the work.[1] Reversing the program's steady decline each year since its inception in 1938, the administration provided ample funds—270,000 francs—to grant a total of seventeen commissions between May and August 1941, the first year of commissions granted under the new regime. The large number of commissions for symphonic poems and symphonies, thirteen in the first year alone, were intended to provide new repertoire for Paris's four symphony orchestra associations—the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, Concerts Lamoureux, Concerts Pasdeloup, and Concerts Gabriel Pierné—and the Orchestre national, for all of which the administration dramatically increased its subsidies in late 1941.[2] In exchange, the orchestras were required to increase the percentage of French music they played, to increase their performance of new music by living (or recently deceased) French composers, and to perform the new works on separate programs instead of relegating them to a single concert.[3] In his postwar memoirs Louis Hautecœur, director of Vichy's Administration of Fine Arts, praised the work of French orchestras as "a form of propaganda [that was] able to show the occupiers how false the reputation was that French music had in Germany." He also credited two high-ranking ministers—Yves Bouthillier, Vichy's secretary of state for national economy and finance, and Jean Berthelot, secretary of state for communications—with having advocated the changes.[4] Performances by the four orchestras were popular; the Sunday matinees often sold out. They

were also plentiful. During the occupation they played more than 650 concerts.[5] German officials at the Propaganda Division for France (Propaganda Abteilung Frankreich, or PAF) paid attention to their activities, taking notes on the changes in the orchestras' statutes and funding in their weekly reports on French cultural activities.[6]

The 1941 commissions, the first awarded by the Vichy regime, were distinguished not only by the increase in their number and their budget, but also by the values and the aspirations of the new state. In the glossy pages of the bimonthly *Revue des Beaux-Arts de France*—the official journal of the Administration of Fine Arts—Jeanne Laurent, the assistant chief of the administration's Music Bureau, insisted that the commissions program did not constitute an officially sanctioned aesthetic. "To give composers complete freedom, no aesthetic guidelines have been imposed," Laurent wrote of the program. "The only obligation on beneficiaries of the program is that they produce an entirely new work. The musicians retain the rights to their music, notably in terms of public performances; the state reserves only the right to have the piece performed on official occasions."[7] Hautecœur, speaking of all the administration's programs in the journal's first issue, wrote, "The state has the duty to be eclectic." Above all, he continued, the state must not act like an amateur collector "who makes known his preference for a certain musician or sculptor."[8]

This image of the state as a neutral presence directly contradicted the views of Hautecœur's predecessor Georges Huisman, who had argued in 1937 that nothing was more dangerous than for the state to attempt to be neutral in artistic matters. Huisman believed that the state should have the "audacity" to choose, without which its artistic judgments were no more worthwhile than those of a botanist indiscriminately collecting specimens.[9] Yet, for Vichy's arts administrators, a pretense to artistic neutrality was crucial in establishing their credibility as a voice independent from the German occupying forces, particularly in publications such as *Revue des Beaux-Arts de France,* which was cosponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and primarily geared toward a foreign readership. The irony is that it was Vichy officials, and not the Popular Front bureaucrats now maligned in France, who were selective in their funding choices.[10] While maintaining the pretense of granting support across the spectrum of French musical life, the Vichy administration concentrated its funding efforts on the composers whose music would best reflect the cultural values of France's National Revolution.

Traditional academic credentials such as the Prix de Rome or a professorship at the Conservatoire were decisive qualifications.[11] So was the experience

of having been captured and held in a German prisoner-of-war camp: nearly all composers released from the camps during the war would receive a commission.[12] But academic laurels and military sacrifice were not the only aspects of certain composers' attractiveness to the commissions committee, which also gave funding priority to composers known primarily for their skills as organists along with their knowledge as specialists of Catholic sacred music of the past and present. Nearly one-third of the seventeen composers chosen in 1941 had solid ties to the Catholic Church: Duruflé, Jean-Jacques Grunenwald, and Gaston Litaize, recent Conservatoire graduates who held posts as organists in Paris churches; Ermend Bonnal, an established organist and composer of religious choral and organ music appointed in March 1942 to succeed Charles Tournemire at the Basilique de Sainte-Clotilde; and Amédée Gastoué, a musicologist at the Schola Cantorum since its inception who specialized in plainchant and was a prolific composer of sacred choral music.[13] While all of these composers participated in some way in French musical life outside the boundaries of the sacred, it was their involvement with the music and institutions of the Church that brought them to the attention of the Vichy regime. The decision of the Administration of Fine Arts to fund new music composed by active church musicians—alongside the privileging of religious themes in the commissioning and acquisition of painting and sculpture[14]—was part of a broader gesture by the Vichy regime to embrace the Catholic Church.

For the new state and the ancient Church shared both enemies and goals. Vichy included in its list of grievances against the Third Republic the serious restrictions that had been placed on the Church as part of the Republic's program to secularize France. The Church applauded new government initiatives that demonstrated the regime's willingness to remedy the situation: the decree of 3 September 1940, allowing members of religious orders to teach; that of 21 February 1941, legally restoring the rights of assembly for religious orders that had been rescinded in 1901; and that of 8 April 1942, restoring to the Church that portion of its property, confiscated even before the separation of church and state in 1905, that still remained in the hands of the state.[15] The regime's goals of national renewal, its love of ceremony, and its nostalgia for the past found eager support in prominent clergymen who condemned the moral decline of France before the defeat. "Victorious, we would probably have remained the prisoners of our mistakes," proclaimed Pierre-Marie Gerlier, the cardinal archbishop of Lyons. "By dint of being secularized, France was in danger of dying."[16] The revival of old customs like the Corpus Christi procession from Notre Dame into the streets of Paris in June 1941 symbolized the return of spiritual acts to everyday French life. The reappearance of the crucifix on the walls of French schools alongside

new portraits of Marshal Pétain underscores the way in which the regime hoped to co-opt religious values in its efforts to reform the nation.

Proponents of Catholic sacred music in France spoke out in favor of restoring state subsidies to this neglected aspect of the nation's heritage. Jules Meunier, *maître de chapelle* at Sainte-Clotilde and organist at Les Invalides, appealed directly to Pétain for the restoration of the state funding provided to choir schools before the laws of separation. He argued that the state, while providing funds for religious architecture, sculpture, and painting, had left the task of sustaining religious music, the most essential element of the Catholic liturgy, to the clergy alone. France's choir schools, at one time the custodians of religious music, had suffered; many had been forced to close. In their embodiment of the moral and spiritual goals now shared by the Church and the state, Meunier wrote, the choir schools were central to the "renewal of the spiritual artistic values of the new France."[17]

Urged by Marshal Pétain to take action to revive the schools, Hautecœur approved the reinstatement of subsidies in the 1942 budget. To justify this apparent violation of the still-extant laws of separation, the administration stressed the "national interest" in ensuring the schools' survival because of their vital role in music education in France. Jeanne Laurent pointed out in a report on the Music Bureau's activities in 1941 and 1942 that musicians with a strong training in liturgical music were well placed to contribute to all aspects of musical life. Among the extant choir schools she praised were those of Lyons, Dijon, and Rouen, noting that this last counted Duruflé and the conductor Paul Paray among its former students.[18]

Reform of choral singing, in the opinion of musicologist Norbert Dufourcq, was of great importance for the development of French contemporary music. Dufourcq saw the nineteenth-century revival of plainchant initiated by Doms Prosper Guéranger and Joseph Pothier at the Benedictine Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes as the beginning of a renaissance for France's choir schools, whose repertoire had been progressively degraded in the previous hundred years by "vulgar and bland motets" composed by their *maîtres de chapelle.* Coinciding with the plainchant revival was the creation of a choral repertoire for both church and concert hall, wrote Dufourcq in a text published after the war. Here he linked the reform of France's choir schools and the renewed interest in music of the past that required competent choral singing, such as Lully, Bach, and Handel, to the appearance of new compositions that employed choral writing, by Honegger, Jacques de la Presle, and Jean Françaix. He also traced the development of the mass and oratorio from Gounod, Saint-Saëns, and Franck to

Inghelbrecht, Bonnal, and Duruflé, all of whom incorporated plainchant into their compositions.[19]

Indeed, plainchant played a major role in a spectacle that the Vichy administration sponsored in May 1941 to celebrate the first feast day of Joan of Arc since the armistice. Several performances took place throughout France's unoccupied zone of *Portique pour une fille de France,* a spectacle of drama, music, and dance narrating Saint Joan's rise to glory and demise at the stake. In the 1941 performances of *Portique,* the Vichy regime's interest in plainchant as a source for modern concert music for chorus and orchestra was interwoven with its obsession with the Catholic saint, just as the spectacle itself interlaced church and state as military, state, and Church officials appeared side by side among the audiences of thousands that thronged the stadiums in which the performances took place.[20]

We know from a newspaper review of the Lyons performance that plainchant was prominently featured in the music accompanying the central scene in which Charles VII, with Joan's help, is crowned king of France. According to the reviewer, Henry Fellot, first Léo Preger provided "a powerful *Chant du Bâtisseurs* for a cappella chorus in the style of Gregorian chant" for the scene preceding the coronation at Rheims; then, by Yves Baudrier, a "magnificent *Marche du cortège du Sacre*"; and finally, a "sumptuous and very sonorous *Te Deum,*" by Olivier Messiaen.[21] Although the contributions by Preger and Baudrier remain lost, the recently rediscovered score of Messiaen's two contributions for a cappella choir—the *Te Deum* mentioned by Fellot and an *Improprères,* sung just before Joan is tied to the stake—confirms Fellot's indication of plainchant's importance to the event. In Messiaen's setting of the first fifteen phrases of the Te Deum plainchant from the *Liber usualis,* he alternated between unison singing of phrases that cite the music as well as the words of the plainchant and freely composed phrases set in three-part harmony.[22]

Lastly, the one wartime symphonic commission that directly addressed the plight of France from an officially sanctioned perspective focused almost obsessively on the central role of religious faith in French national identity. André Gailhard, winner of the Prix de Rome in 1908 and an old friend of Hautecœur (having been in residence at the Villa Médicis when Hautecœur, one year his senior, was attending the École française in Rome), had already written a patriotic hymn to Pétain: a live performance of his *La Française: Hymne au Maréchal* was broadcast nationwide on 25 June 1941, the first anniversary of the armistice with Germany.[23] Two months later, the Administration of Fine Arts issued a special commission to Gailhard for a symphonic poem to a text by Marc-André Fabre, the coauthor of the lyrics

for *La Française*.[24] Gailhard fulfilled the commission with his *Ode à la France blessée* for soloists, chorus, and orchestra.[25] The title is undoubtedly a tribute to *Ode à la France*, the unfinished cantata that Debussy composed during the First World War and that was completed and published posthumously in 1928.[26] Whereas in his *Ode* Debussy dramatized the story of French rebellion against the English occupation in the fifteenth century, Gailhard used musical resources to narrate France's most recent struggles on a grand scale.

In the first of three movements of Gailhard's *Ode*, entitled "The Tempest," one can hear the arrival of the German troops on French soil in the stormy orchestral introduction and a choral lament. A parade of soloists then gives an account of the devastation, from a young woman describing the exodus of refugees from the north, an old man contemplating his house in smoking ruins, a woman burying her two children killed by an air raid, and an orphaned child mourning his mother and father, the latter killed in combat. In the second movement, "The Prayer," an organ accompanies a tenor soloist while the orchestra sits in silence. The soloist implores God with a simple diatonic tune, its harmonies inflected by major sixths and sevenths. In asking for God to come to France's aid, the soloist reminds him of his previous emissaries, from Saint Geneviève, whose prayers saved Paris from Attila the Hun in the fifth century, to Saint Joan of Arc ("the virgin of Domrémy"), who chased the English occupying forces out of France in the fifteenth. The not so subtle implication here is that God's latest emissary is Marshal Pétain. Vichy propaganda, with the support of the Catholic Church, made Pétain an object of veneration: one publication even rewrote the Lord's Prayer as an invocation of the Marshal.[27]

God is also an integral part of "The Reawakening," the third and final movement of the *Ode*. A C-major trumpet fanfare introduces an inspirational pentatonic hymn to the glorious future of the nation, with the arrival of a new era for France made possible by the strength of its citizens' religious faith. Gailhard's use of citations of popular tunes such as "Sur le pont d'Avignon" and the Provençal melody "La Marcho dei Rei" betrays his debt to the *Symphonie française* of Théodore Dubois, who, in the years immediately preceding World War I, employed French folk tunes as part of a dramatic progression from darkness to victory that culminated in a fanfare of "La Marseillaise."[28] The presence of the familiar tunes in the finale of Gailhard's work together with the narrative that passes from the tragedy of the opening to the celebratory closing chorus (in which "La Marseillaise" is replaced with a new hymn more appropriate to the France of 1940) creates an updated version of Dubois's symphony, a powerful aural collage of the

collective celebration that was to accompany the rebirth of the nation as promised by the Marshal.

In August 1942, during the time in which Gailhard was composing his commissioned work, the current minister of national education, Abel Bonnard, made him an official bureaucrat, appointing him as head of music and theater in the Office for the Fight against Unemployment (Commissariat à la lutte contre le chômage). In addition, Gailhard was paid twice as much as initially promised for his symphonic poem by the time of its completion in March 1943, the payments making reference to his composition of a "lyric work."[29]

Gailhard's status as a Vichy public servant, together with the explicitly political message of *Ode à la France blessée*, confirms that political biases lay beneath the surface of the commissions program during the war, even if time ran out before the *Ode* could be performed by war's end.[30] For their part, several composers in wartime France joined Gailhard in embracing the value of direct communication with their traumatized national audience. Threatened by German competition even at home, they renewed their faith in their national heritage. For a few, like Jolivet, the changing circumstances resulted in a change of style.[31] But for most—and this would include Poulenc and Honegger as well as Duruflé—no change was necessary. This was how they had conceived and written their music all along.

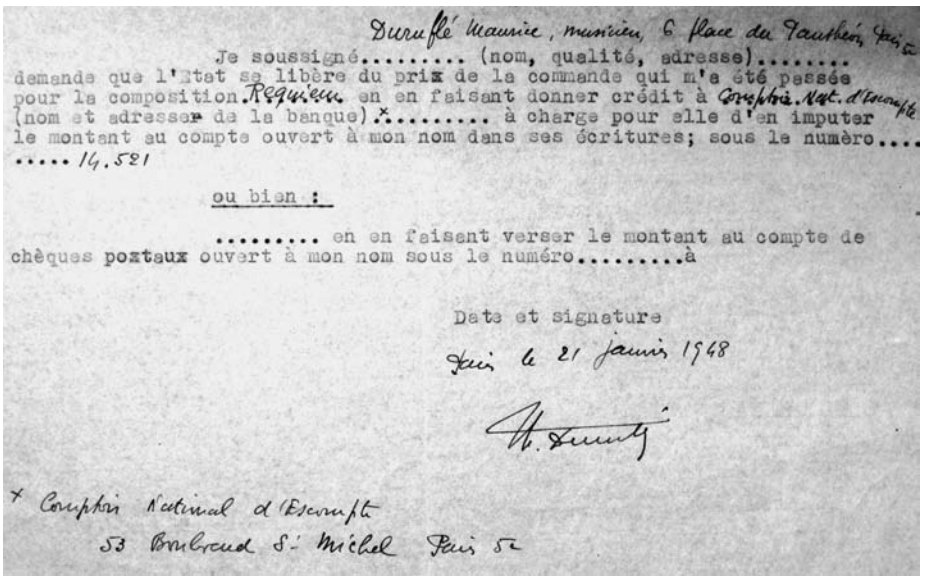
THE POSTWAR RECEPTION OF A VICHY COMMISSION

In choosing to fulfill his 1941 symphonic commission with his *Requiem*, op. 9, for chorus, organ, and orchestra, Duruflé was participating in the recent vogue not only for the renewal of French choral singing, but also for using plainchant as a source for that renewal. It had been common practice since the seventeenth century for composers who wrote sacred Catholic choral music to retain the Latin texts, but not the medieval plainchant melodies, of the Catholic liturgy they chose as the basis of their new compositions. In his *Requiem*, Duruflé made the unusual decision to retain the melodies as well as the words of the medieval Mass for the Dead. Yet Duruflé's use of the existing plainchant melodies was no mere transcription. In some movements of the *Requiem*, such as the opening of the Introit, he faithfully preserved the plainchant melody, but in other movements, such as the Sanctus and the Libera me, his paraphrases of the plainchant are less exact and more fleeting in the overall musical texture. In addition, the seventh and ninth chords that Duruflé used to harmonize the chants were indebted to the modern modal inflections and unresolved

dissonances of Fauré and Debussy, and the scoring for vocal soloists, mixed chorus, full orchestra, and organ is that of a modern concert work. The *Requiem* is Duruflé's creative engagement with medieval sacred plainchant in modern concert form.

Had Duruflé completed his *Requiem* during the occupation, the piece would undoubtedly have received a premiere by either one of Paris's four orchestras or the Orchestre national. It would have joined not only the choral adaptations of plainchant in the 1941 performances of *Portique pour une fille de France,* but also the wartime premieres of completed 1941 commissions by Litaize (*Symphonie pour orgue et orchestre,* second movement, performed by Concerts Pasdeloup in 1943) and Grunenwald (*Bethsabée,* biblical poem for orchestra, performed by Concerts Pasdeloup in 1944) in promoting new French symphonic music with sacred themes or connotations.[32] But Duruflé, who was notoriously slow at composition, did not finish his *Requiem* until September 1947, three years after the liberation of occupied Paris. By this time, the Orchestre national had, under the leadership of Manuel Rosenthal, become the preeminent orchestra for premieres of new music in postwar France; the orchestra programmed the work's nationally broadcast premiere for a concert commemorating All Souls' Day, 2 November 1947, alongside *In Memoriams* composed by Alexandre Tansman and László Lajtha, with Roger Désormière at the podium.[33] The Administration of Fine Arts paid Duruflé thirty thousand francs for the completion of his commissioned work on 14 January 1948; this time the higher amount took into account the rapid inflation that besieged the postwar French economy as well as the new going rate for commissioned symphonic works in 1946 and 1947 of between twenty thousand and fifty thousand francs. We know that the payment to Duruflé was for his *Requiem* because the composer submitted a certificate on 21 January 1948 to the Administration of Fine Arts naming the piece as his completed commissioned work (fig. 4).[34]

The existence of this certificate is important, for the story Duruflé told of the genesis of the *Requiem* in a 1950 interview is different from the one I have told here. In Duruflé's account, the impetus to write the *Requiem* came not from a state commission for a symphonic work but from a long-standing fascination with the plainchant in the medieval Mass of the Dead. Asked by the interviewer, Maurice Blanc, whether his intention was to write music for the concert hall or the church, Duruflé stated unequivocally, "My intention was to write a religious work for the church. Besides, the origin of the themes would itself justify, and even impose, this destination."[35]


Duruflé Maurice, musicien, 6 place du Panthéon, Paris 5e

Je soussigné..... (nom, qualité, adresse).....
demande que l'Etat se libère du prix de la commande qui m'a été passée
pour la composition Requiem en en faisant donner crédit à Comptoir Nat. d'Escompte
(nom et adresse de la banque) x..... à charge pour elle d'en imputer
le montant au compte ouvert à mon nom dans ses écritures; sous le numéro....
..... 14.521

ou bien :

..... en en faisant verser le montant au compte de
chèques postaux ouvert à mon nom sous le numéro.....à

Date et signature

Paris le 21 janvier 1948

M. Duruflé

x Comptoir National d'Escompte
53 Boulevard St-Michel Paris 5e

FIGURE 4. Certificate signed by Duruflé upon completion of his *Requiem*, 21 January 1948. (Document conserved at the Archives nationales, Paris.)

Duruflé's initial attempts to compose a piece based on the plainchant, according to the interview, took the form of an organ suite, not unlike the two organ works he had already composed based on plainchant.[36] Yet, after having completed the Sanctus and the Communion, Duruflé found it "difficult to separate the Latin words from the Gregorian chant with which they are so intricately linked." In order to include the words, one needed to include voices: "So it was that the organ suite was transformed into something more substantial that naturally called for chorus and orchestra. This is how I came to write this work." Once the composition was scored for orchestra, Duruflé continued, "the important role of the orchestra obliged me to think also about the concert hall where a symphonic ensemble is much more at home than under the vaults of our churches. Nevertheless, I returned to my initial idea by transcribing the work for voice and organ, which would replace the orchestra as best it could."[37] In other words, according to this interview, pious respect for the liturgical origins of the plainchant was at the forefront of Duruflé's intentions; the composition of a symphonic work for orchestra and chorus was a regrettable but necessary compromise so that both the words and music of the original plainchant could be retained. Duruflé's account, however,

leaves unanswered one crucial question: if the inclusion of words with the plainchant was necessary, why not merely compose a work for chorus and organ accompaniment, retaining the possibility of liturgical use?

Duruflé's explanation of why he wrote a symphonic work and not a liturgical one in the 1950 interview with Maurice Blanc stresses the composer's utmost respect for the original liturgy and glosses over the more secular and fully orchestrated moments of the *Requiem*. Consciously or not, he was echoing the opinions expressed by critics after the first performances of the piece in their printed reviews, in which they stressed the composer's piety, discretion, and self-effacement in his approach to setting plainchant. Several reviewers compared Duruflé's *Requiem* favorably to Darius Milhaud's recently premiered Symphony no. 3 "Te Deum," op. 271, which had been commissioned by Radiodiffusion française to celebrate the liberation of France from German occupation in 1944. In the symphony's finale, a Te Deum for chorus and orchestra, Milhaud had discarded the music of the Te Deum plainchant, choosing instead to set the Latin words in a modern choral idiom. In her joint review of the two premieres for *Les Lettres françaises*, Henriette Roget contrasted Milhaud's symphony, which she called "an intense expression of his era," with the timelessness of Duruflé's *Requiem*. For Roget, Duruflé's score owed its timeless status to the composer's piousness and his use of plainchant as source material: "[The *Requiem*] is the expression of a faith rather than the voice of a man." She added, "We should be grateful to Duruflé for having effaced himself in front of his work; for him, self-effacement is a daily habit," and announced that here was "finally a work essentially for the church that is neither watered down or bleating and that carries the mystical spark that César Franck had reignited" after the "carnal torment of Romanticism."[38]

Like Roget, René Dumesnil, writing in *Le Monde* shortly after the premiere, preferred Duruflé's *Requiem* to Milhaud's symphony, in which the Te Deum chorus "bathed [the piece], so to speak, in a liturgical atmosphere . . . but was not exempt from a monotony that stemmed from the compositional process, the absence of modulations, and the roughness of the form."[39] In Duruflé's work, by contrast, Dumesnil opined that the composer's "respect of the liturgical music is far from detrimental to the work, but instead confers on it a beautiful unity and a veritable grandeur. The principal (but not the sole) merit of the composer is to have known how to make his own inventions worthy of a singularly dangerous juxtaposition by giving [his own music] the necessary noble and serious eloquence." The sole reviewer in 1947 to evoke the other two premieres broadcast alongside the *Requiem*, Bernard Gavoty proclaimed in *Le Figaro* that, even if

Duruflé's *Requiem* is "sumptuous, maybe even too sumptuous in parts," it was better than the two *In Memoriams*, which he found "as hollow as tombs and as formal as pall-bearers." Duruflé's piece instead "brings a whiff of the heavenly peace promised to the faithful, and resolutely opposes Christian providentialism to pagan fidelity."[40]

The critics' unanimous preference in 1947 for the "heavenly peace" of Duruflé's *Requiem* over both the "monotony" of Milhaud's Te Deum symphonic finale and the gloomy "formality" of Tansman's and Lajtha's *In Memoriams* underscores a paradox central to the postwar reception of the *Requiem* in France. The very elements of the *Requiem* that conveyed a sense of timelessness—its roots in the medieval liturgical music and Latin words of the Requiem Mass, enhanced for concert performance by the judicious use of a symphony orchestra; its atmosphere of piety and contrition made universal in its depiction of generalized, rather than event-specific, mourning—were precisely suited to a listening public for whom the central issues of the war and occupation were still unresolved. If the French could not (and, in Henry Rousso's opinion, still do not) agree on how to resolve the lingering shame of the swift military defeat in 1940 and the ensuing wartime collaboration at the highest levels of the French state, they could nevertheless unite in embracing the nonspecific expression of mourning and regret in a Requiem Mass.[41] The prominence in Duruflé's *Requiem* of the sounds of medieval plainchant that were both familiar to a predominantly Catholic population and expressed in a form that had recently been evoked as a symbol of national pride must have made the piece all the more appealing at the time of its premiere. The decision by Radiodiffusion française to program the piece for a nationally broadcast secular commemoration of All Souls' Day, an important day in the liturgical calendar, suited its secularized expression of religious faith. From 1947 to 1949, November performances of the *Requiem* were an annual event in Paris.[42]

Yet the specifically French and Catholic origins of the *Requiem*'s secularized expression of general mourning have not prevented the piece from gaining immense popularity internationally, especially in North America, where Duruflé conducted the work several times while on five concert tours with his wife, the organist Marie-Madeleine Duruflé, between 1966 and 1971.[43] The first recording, made in November 1958 with Duruflé conducting, won the Grand Prix du Disque in France in 1959; as of January 2011, there were at least thirty-five different professional recordings available for sale, featuring leading vocal soloists, choral conductors, and orchestras, from Dame Janet Baker to Robert Shaw, from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus to King's College, Cambridge. These do not include

the presence of individual movements of the *Requiem* in compilations with titles like *Best Choral Album in the World . . . Ever!* (Agnus Dei), *Horizons: A Musical Journey* (Sanctus), and *Hymn for the World 2* (Sanctus).[44] Nor do they include Michael Jackson's use of a two-minute sample of the Pie Jesu at the beginning of his 1995 song "Little Susie," which prefaces Jackson's own anguished singing of lyrics protesting child abuse.[45] Duruflé's *Requiem* has also enjoyed a career as music for memorial services, mostly nondenominational occasions in the United States sung by student or amateur choirs. Struggling choral singers can learn their parts from MIDI files posted on the Internet.[46]

Such widespread postwar success for Duruflé's *Requiem* might suggest that the immediate postwar critical emphasis on the piece's timelessness was prescient. Why, then, need we discuss the historical details that link the *Requiem* to the Vichy regime and to France under German occupation? Duruflé's *Requiem*, after all, is worlds apart from Gailhard's *Ode*, in which explicit propaganda in favor of Vichy seems to have rendered the work unperformable even before the regime's demise. To put it another way, what is the nature of the relationship, if any, between the historical details about France at the time of the piece's genesis and the music that is internationally popular today?

To answer these questions, I will examine closely the choral scores that Duruflé composed based on plainchant. For the impact of the Vichy commission on Duruflé's *Requiem* can be heard not just in his decision to compose a piece based on plainchant, but also in the particular choices he made in creatively transforming the plainchant into a new composition. Plainchant was central to Duruflé's identity as an organist and musician. If one includes two early organ pieces, works based on plainchant spanned his entire creative life, from his student years at the Conservatoire to the last period of creativity that Duruflé enjoyed before a near-fatal car accident in 1975 severely restricted his musical activities. According to Duruflé, the *Requiem* originated in an organ suite not unlike his early organ works. The fact that he took a path to its completion that differed both from the early organ works and from the later choral works that he based on plainchant was, I would argue, due to his receiving a state commission for a symphonic work in 1941, and to his decision to fulfill that commission with his *Requiem*.

A LIFELONG ENGAGEMENT WITH PLAINCHANT

Any modern engagement with music and words of the medieval era is by necessity a highly mediated one. The absence of rhythmic indications in the

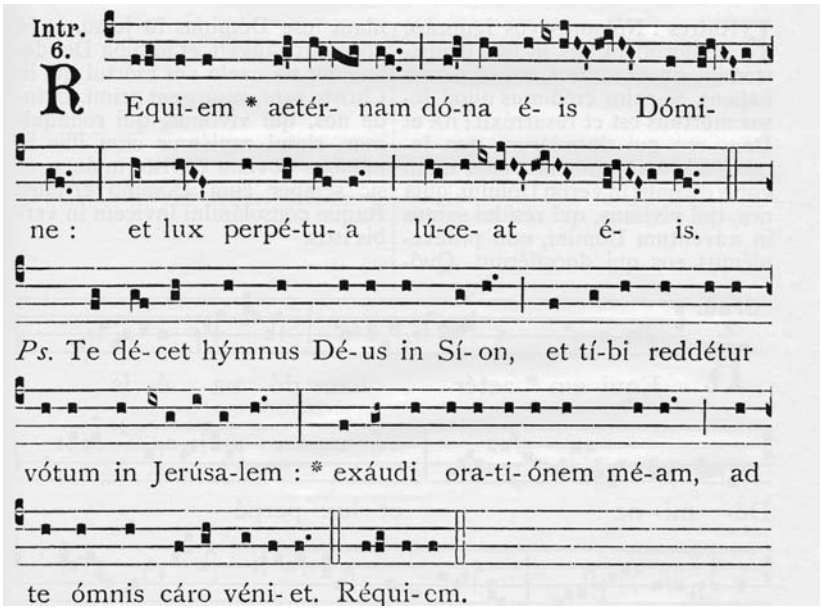
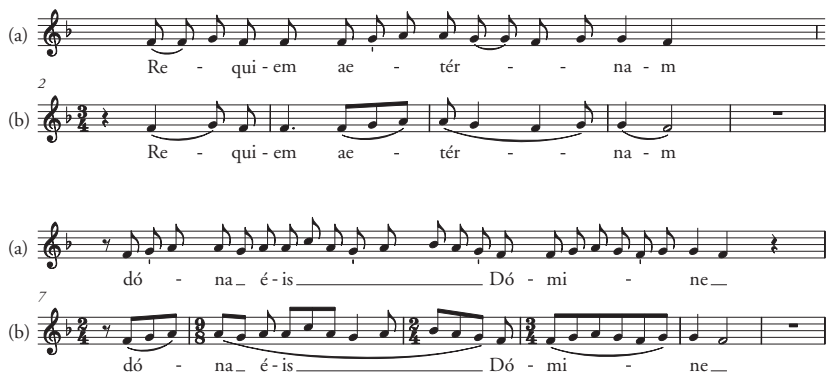


FIGURE 5. Plainchant for the Introit to the Mass for the Dead (*Liber usualis*, 1930).

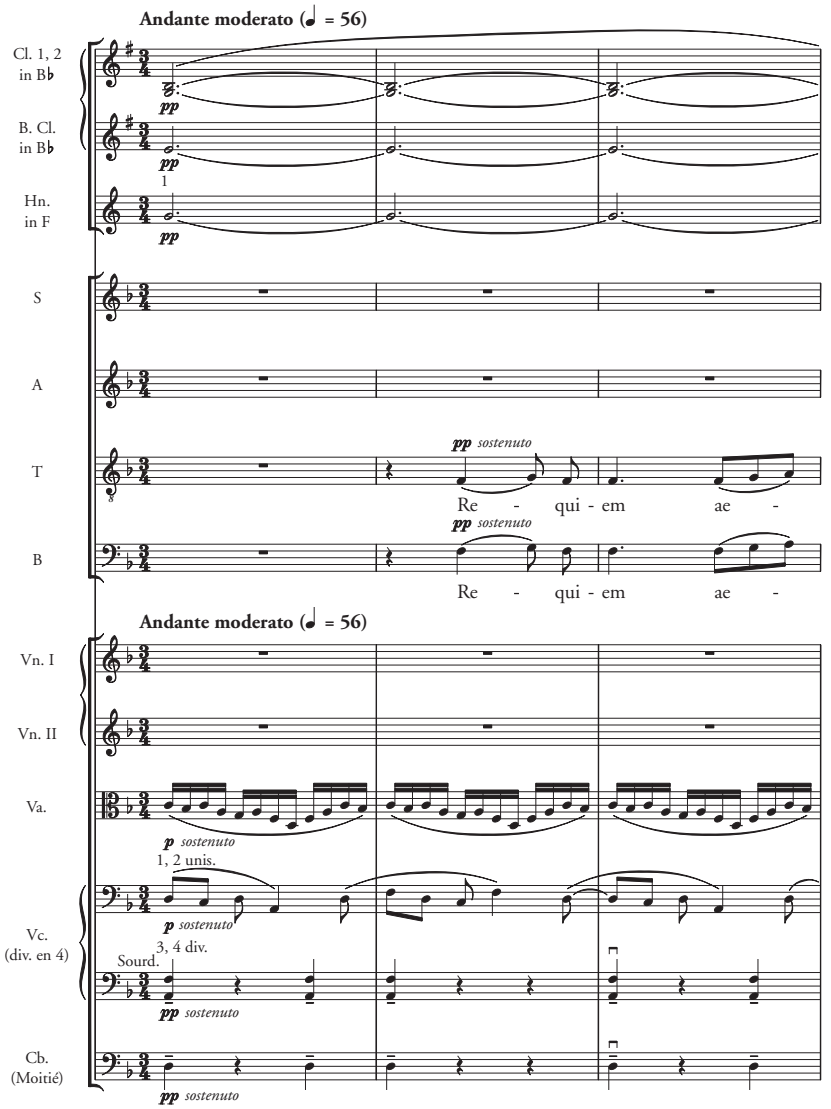
medieval notational systems for plainchant presents the biggest challenge for a modern composer who seeks to incorporate medieval plainchant into a polyphonic composition for multiple singers and instrumentalists. The Solesmes method of rhythmic interpretation of plainchant in performance was the system to which Duruflé turned in the composition of his *Requiem*. Basing their ideas on thorough study of plainchant notation in medieval manuscripts, the monks at the Abbaye Saint-Pierre de Solesmes proposed that the plainchant be sung not with added pulse and meter, which had been common practice in nineteenth-century France, but with a rhythmic system that respected the alternating strong and weak syllables of the plainchant's Latin words. Although in 1880 Dom Pothier had advocated a free approach to rhythm—"who dreams of scanning his words while speaking?"—in 1908, his successor, Dom André Mocquereau, proposed that rhythmic signs be added to Solesmes's editions of plainchant to indicate with more precision the relative durations of the syllables.[47] Several of these rhythmic signs (such as half bar lines, dotted notes, and vertical lines below notes) can be seen in the Introit to the Mass for the Dead, as notated in the *Liber usualis*, the twentieth-century chant book used until Vatican II in 1963 (fig. 5).

EXAMPLE 14. Comparison of Introit, Mass for the Dead: (a) Transcription of Solesmes notation (*Liber usualis*, 1930); (b) Tenor/bass melody, Maurice Duruflé, *Requiem*, op. 9, Introit, mm. 2–12. (Ex. 14b: © 1948 Éditions Durand, Paris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by kind permission of MGB Hal Leonard s.r.l.)

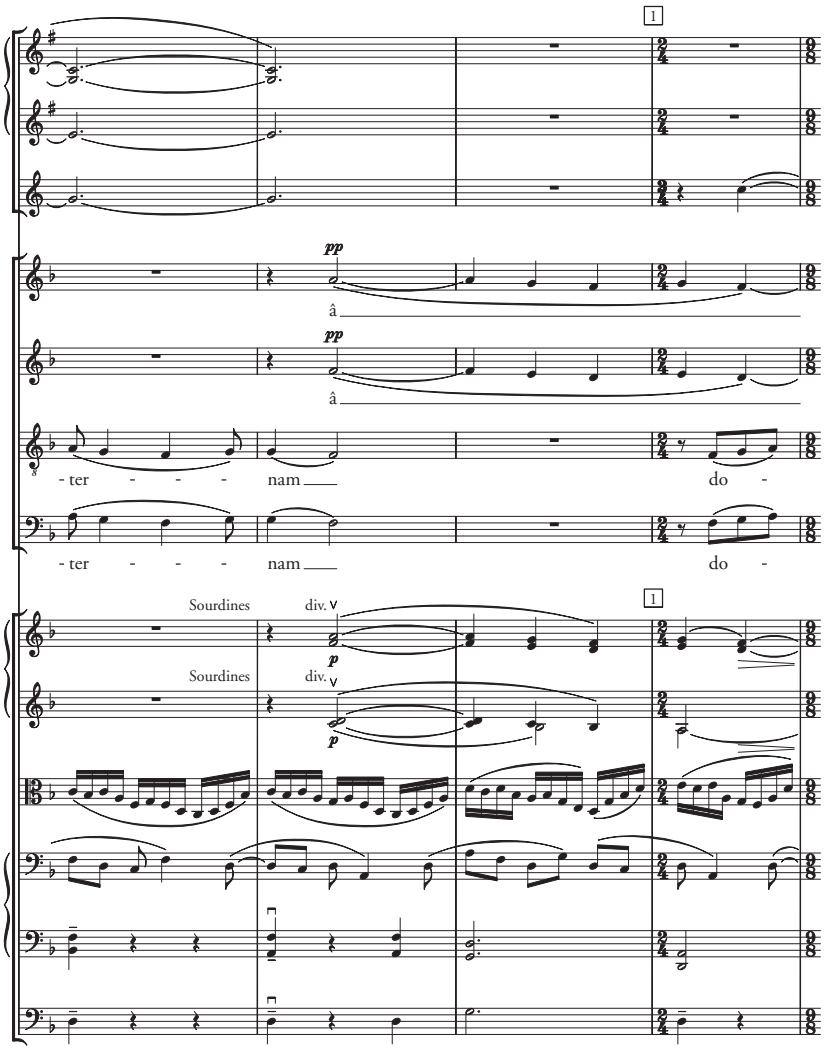


By using the Solesmes version of the monophonic plainchant as the basis of a composition for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, Duruflé had to adapt the more flexible rhythmic notation of plainchant used by the Solesmes monks to the modern metrical notation legible to modern performers so as to keep a large ensemble of musicians from falling apart. Duruflé, who sought guidance on the interpretation of Solesmes notation from Auguste Le Guennant (the director of the Institut grégorien in Paris), was especially interested in how the Solesmes method placed the rhythmic ictus, or accent, not on the tonic Latin accent but instead on the last syllable of each word.[48] By placing the last syllable of the Latin word on the initial beat of a measure in modern metrical notation, Duruflé surmised that (in his own words) the "weight" or "monotony" of the modern strong beat would disappear, leaving only weak beats: "The marvelous Gregorian melody and the Latin words take on flexibility, lightness of expression, restraint, and a mild immateriality that liberate it from the compartmentalizing of our bar lines."[49] Example 14 compares the opening of the Introit, first in my own transcription of the Solesmes notation, and, below that, in the vocal line sung in unison by tenors and basses in Duruflé's *Requiem* (for which the full score appears in example 15). Duruflé's shifting time signatures are meticulously contrived to place the last syllables of most Latin words on the strong beat of a new measure—for Duruflé, the most important aspect of the Solesmes approach to rhythm in plainchant.

EXAMPLE 15. Maurice Duruflé, *Requiem*, op. 9, Introit, mm. 1–7. (© 1948 Éditions Durand, Paris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by kind permission of MGB Hal Leonard s.r.l.)



EXAMPLE 15 *(continued)*



Duruflé was also meticulous in his respect for the Solesmes rhythmic notation, with one unavoidable exception. Whereas the use of the dot to double the duration of the preceding note and the use of a half bar line to indicate a rest between phrases were easy to transcribe into modern notation, the Solesmes invention of a vertical episema—a line below a note to signal the ictus, or emphasis, on that note—had no direct modern

notational equivalent. According to Le Guennant in his treatise *Précis de rythmique grégorienne*, a singer following the Solesmes notation can choose whether or not to use a longer duration to emphasize the ictus; moreover, the longer duration need not be exactly twice the original duration.[50] Duruflé capitulated to the necessities of modern metrical notation by maintaining equal durations for all notes with vertical lines. Instead of lengthening duration to mark the ictus, he consistently placed the ictus-bearing notes on strong beats of the measures in which they occur, thereby using intensity rather than duration for emphasis. In the passage in example 14, he altered the duration of only one note from what was indicated in the Solesmes notation: the G in measure 8, to avoid having to use either a bar of $\frac{1}{4}$ after one of $\frac{6}{8}$, or an irregular grouping (3+3+2 in the meter of $\frac{8}{8}$).

Duruflé's interpretation differs only slightly from that of the Solesmes monks in their 1930 recording of the Introit, in which the monks retain the flexibility recommended by Le Guennant in the non-metrical notation: some notes with the vertical episema are slightly lengthened, while others are not lengthened at all. Le Guennant wrote that the rhythmic ictus could take on different characters in what is called the "rhythmic synthesis": the level of interpretation that brings together all melodic, rhythmic, and textual considerations. After citing a passage from Dom Mocquereau's *Le Nombre musical grégorien* on the variety of ways singers can create emphasis in plainchant, Le Guennant recommended to his readers to "listen very attentively to the recordings of Solesmes [directed by Dom Joseph Gajard], playing again and again several times in a row the same piece"—advice that Duruflé seems to have taken to heart.[51]

Duruflé's careful adaptation of the Solesmes method of medieval plainchant performance anchors his *Requiem* in a specific time and place: namely, France in the first half of the twentieth century. Nineteenth-century reformers such as the monks of Solesmes, who had been fighting against the secularization of music for the French Catholic liturgy that followed in the wake of the French Revolution, saw their efforts vindicated in 1903. That year, Pope Pius X issued in a *motu proprio* a sweeping definition of the kinds of music to be performed in worship. The Pope called for a restoration of Latin-texted medieval plainchant as the most sacred form of music in the Catholic Church and endorsed (not without controversy) the Solesmes method of transcription of the medieval plainchant to be reproduced in modern missals. Massive efforts followed to train seminarians, establish choir schools at cathedrals, and instruct

congregants in reading and singing medieval plainchant in liturgical services.

French Catholic composers of Duruflé's generation learned plainchant in this way as children enrolled in choir schools: in Duruflé's case, as a choirboy in the cathedral school of Rouen from 1912 to 1918, where he was trained in the Solesmes method in order to provide music for the cathedral's worship services.[52] Several French composers, including Duruflé, also wrote new music based on medieval plainchant, either to be used in worship (a development welcomed by Pius X as long as the new works were in accord with liturgical law) or for concert performance. Although Duruflé's *Requiem* has been performed at public funeral services (such as the composer's own in 1986), the work falls into the latter category: Duruflé's use of the orchestra and his occasional liberties with the words disqualify the work as liturgical under the terms of Pius X's 1903 *motu proprio.*

Three years after completing his *Requiem,* Duruflé drew on medieval plainchant to compose his *Quatre motets sur des thèmes grégoriens,* op. 10, a set of a cappella choral works that this time followed the Vatican's guidelines for music suitable for liturgical use. They were written at the request of Le Guennant, to whom they are dedicated. Le Guennant, who had been instrumental in Duruflé's understanding of the Solesmes method of plainchant performance in his composition of the *Requiem,* was not only the head of the Institut grégorien but also *maître de chapelle* at three congregations in Paris (Saint-Pierre-du-Gros-Caillou, Notre-Dame du Rosaire, and Notre-Dame de Clignancourt).[53] Durand published the four motets separately in 1960, signaling the possibility of performing them both as a set and individually. Duruflé, in his memoirs, dated their composition to 1950 and indicated their suitability to be sung during the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a devotional liturgy that includes songs and prayers as well as lengthy periods of silence.[54] The service features two hymns sung by the congregation, O Salutaris Hostia and Tantum Ergo, both attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas. Both consist of the last two stanzas from Eucharistic hymns for the Feast of Corpus Christi. Whereas the plainchant for the first three of Duruflé's motets came from several different services (Ubi Caritas from vespers on Maundy Thursday, Tota Pulchra Es from the second vespers for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and Tu es Petrus from the first vespers for the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul), rendering these pieces suitable as optional music during the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, the fourth, Tantum Ergo, had a specific role to play in that service.

The centrality of the plainchants Duruflé selected for his motets to their conception, and the importance of the Solesmes method to their

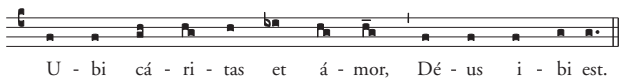
performance, is immediately evident upon glancing at the published scores. On the first page of each motet, just below the title and above the score, is reprinted the first phrase of the plainchant in Solesmes notation. Duruflé's treatment of the music and words of the medieval plainchant in the *Quatre motets* both builds on and expands the techniques he used in his *Requiem*. Once again, Duruflé used shifting time signatures, the weak metric placement of accented Latin syllables, and meticulous correspondence between the rhythmic symbols of Solesmes notation and the conventions of modern metrical notation to maintain the rhythmic flexibility the Solesmes method was designed to promote in plainchant performance. But in these motets these techniques are refined much further than they had been in the *Requiem*, and they create a different effect.

Duruflé's treatment of the opening phrase of the first motet, Ubi Caritas, is a case in point. As in the Introit to the *Requiem*, Duruflé selected certain passages of the plainchant from which he appropriated both music and words; in other passages, he retained only the text. From the original hymn—a strophic melody with three verses and an antiphon, or refrain, to be repeated before each verse—Duruflé retained the music and words of the refrain and the words of the first verse. The refrain is sung twice at the beginning and once at the end of Duruflé's motet, followed by a wordless vocalise; in between, the musical setting of the verse is freely composed. A novel element here, perhaps inspired by the lack of instrumental accompaniment, is Duruflé's antiphonal setting of the opening refrain and the first phrase of the verse, for which he divided the altos and basses into two choirs.

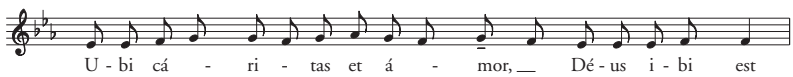
There are also subtle differences in Duruflé's treatment of rhythm in Ubi Caritas. Compared with the *Requiem*, it is much more precise. In the Introit of the *Requiem*, Duruflé had limited his shifting time signatures to those in common use: $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, and $\frac{9}{8}$. In his setting of the refrain in Ubi Caritas, he added a bar of $\frac{1}{4}$ at the end of the phrase of the plainchant (ex. 16). The reason for the bar of $\frac{1}{4}$ was to render the dotted square note of the plainchant phrase as a quarter note, and thus twice as long in duration as the square note without the dot. At the same time, a bar of $\frac{1}{4}$ instead of $\frac{2}{4}$ allowed the repeat of the phrase to enter without an intervening rest. In addition, beginning the repeated phrase with a new bar of $\frac{2}{4}$ allowed Duruflé to avoid placing the accented first syllable of "caritas" on the downbeat of the next measure. This is a noticeable increase in precision from the Introit of the *Requiem*, in which Duruflé emphasized rather than minimized the ends of phrases by lengthening the final dotted notes to half notes and adding an entire measure of silence before the next phrase.

EXAMPLE 16. Comparison of Ubi Caritas, hymn for Vespers on Maundy Thursday. (Ex. 16c: © 1960 Éditions Durand, Paris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by kind permission of MGB Hal Leonard s.r.l.)

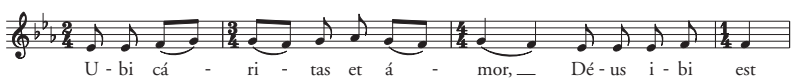
a. Solesmes, in Solesmes notation (*Liber usualis,* 1930).



b. Transcription of A in modern notation.



c. Alto melody, Maurice Duruflé, *Quatre motets,* op. 10, Ubi Caritas, mm. 1–8.



In the same phrase of the Introit, as we may recall, Duruflé even altered the duration of a note to avoid having to use the meter of $\frac{1}{4}$, a meter he does not shy away from using in Ubi Caritas.

In Ubi Caritas, moreover, Duruflé applied a more systematic approach to his treatment of the Solesmes notational conventions than in the *Requiem*, including those that are the most difficult to render in modern metrical notation: the vertical episema, which denotes the rhythmic ictus, and the horizontal episema, which is not associated with the ictus but indicates, in Le Guennant's words, an "expressive nuance." As we have seen in the *Requiem*, both of these signs may, at the discretion of the performers, be rendered through a slight lengthening of the note's duration.[55] In the Introit to the *Requiem*, Duruflé opted to use the metrical accent rather than duration to translate the notes marked by the vertical episema, placing these notes on strong beats of the measure and lengthening them only when needed to preserve the prevailing meter he had chosen. In the refrain to Ubi Caritas, however, Duruflé doubled the duration of not only the note marked with the horizontal episema, but also of the note that follows. The effect is to emphasize the pause or break within the first phrase of the plainchant that, in addition to the horizontal episema on the second to last note, is also marked by a quarter bar line after "amor," the word in question.

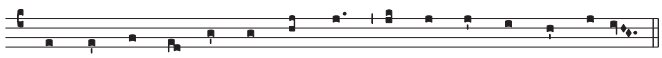
A reason why Duruflé may have been more systematic in his observance of the horizontal episema in Ubi Caritas than in the Introit to the *Requiem* is suggested by his even more systematic approach to rhythm and duration in the fourth motet, Tantum Ergo (ex. 17). Duruflé's setting distributes the words and melody of the plainchant Tantum Ergo as a duet for the sopranos and tenors, with supporting counterpoint in the altos and basses. The soprano line consists of the plainchant, set note for note, until the final "Amen," with the Solesmes rhythmic notation systematically rendered as even quarter notes for every square note-head, half notes for every dotted square note-head, a quarter-note rest for every full bar line, and a changing pattern of time signatures that ensures that every note marked with a vertical episema lands on a strong beat. The tenors imitate the soprano line canonically at a remove of two beats; the addition of passing tones, neighbor tones, and suspensions with eighth-note values works together with a louder dynamic marking and the performance indication *"un peu en dehors"* to provide an embellished counterpoint to the soprano melody. As a hymn sung by the congregation in multiple services—the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and Holy Thursday—Tantum Ergo (consisting of the last two stanzas of the well-known thirteenth-century strophic hymn Pange lingua gloriosi corporis mysterium) was, of all the plainchant melodies Duruflé selected for his motets, the one most likely to be recognized by listeners in a liturgical setting.

Thus Duruflé's motets amounted to a reenactment of plainchant that French Catholic congregants knew how to sing themselves, in a performance style they would have recognized, it being the one used to teach the congregational singing of plainchant in France and around the world in the wake of Pius X's 1905 *motu proprio*. Just as the composer's decision to set the plainchant as a cappella vocal polyphony rendered Duruflé's *Quatre motets* suitable for liturgical use (in contrast to his earlier *Requiem*), his more systematic interpretation of Solesmes rhythmic notation in the *Quatre motets* provided knowledgeable congregants with a more familiar rendering of plainchant than the comparatively artful adaptation of plainchant rhythm in the *Requiem*.

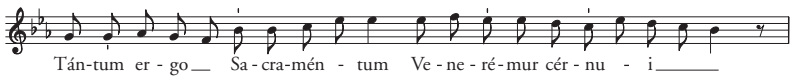
Even in the Introit to the *Requiem*, where Duruflé hewed the closest to the Solesmes interpretation of rhythm, he created no mere utilitarian transcription but an original work composed according to his own creative ideas on harmony and form. The plainchant consists of an antiphon and psalm recitation, followed by the repeat of the antiphon; it is in mode 6, (Hypolydian), with a range from F to C and a reciting tone of A.

EXAMPLE 17. Comparison of Tantum Ergo, hymn for Feast of Corpus Christi. (Ex. 17c: © 1960 Éditions Durand, Paris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by kind permission of MGB Hal Leonard s.r.l.)

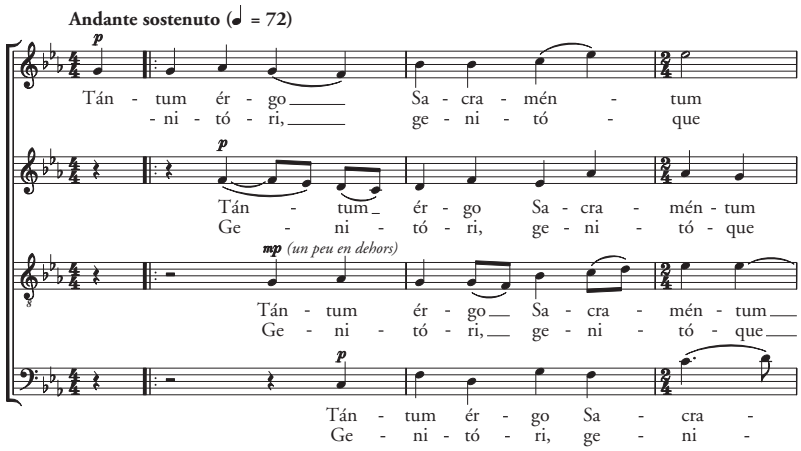
a. Solesmes, in Solesmes notation (*Liber usualis,* 1930).



b. Transcription of (a) in modern notation.



c. Maurice Duruflé, *Quatre motets,* op. 10, Tantum Ergo, mm. 1–3.



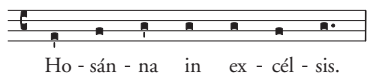
Duruflé begins with the opening antiphon, harmonized in D minor. The opening chord, a tonic minor seventh, thus contains the final, the reciting tone, and the highest note of the plainchant over a D pedal (see example 15). For the antiphon's concluding words, *"luceat eis"* (shine upon them), Duruflé uses some word-painting, changing from D minor to a D-major triad that initiates a modulation to F major: the D-major triad is a secondary dominant of ii in the new key, which leads to a plagal cadence of a first-inversion D minor seventh to the new tonic of F major. Duruflé respects the order of the plainchant's sections while changing

the pitch of the psalm recitation for variety: the first two phrases are recited on C, after which the next two phrases are recited on G. After a short orchestral interlude, the antiphon returns, once again modulating from D minor to F major. Yet this is no mere repeat: the opening plainchant melody is now in the first violins, imitated in canon at the fifth below by the second violins, with the vocal parts providing freely composed unison and four-part choral harmonizations. Thus, despite Duruflé's attentiveness to the Solesmes version of the plainchant in the opening vocal parts, the overall impression is that of an original composition for concert use.

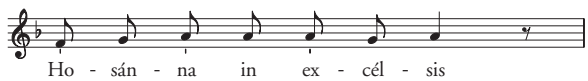
Nor is Duruflé's relatively meticulous attention to rhythm and duration in the Introit sustained throughout all the movements of the piece. The popular Sanctus and the Libera me are particularly free in these regards. In the composer's own words, "At times I completely respected the musical text [of the plainchant]; . . . at other times, I was merely inspired by the Latin text."[56] As example 18 shows, Duruflé began the Sanctus with a much rougher paraphrase of the third phrase of the plainchant, "Hosanna in excelsis," than he had composed for the plainchant in the opening of the Introit. In the phrase's first appearance in Duruflé's setting, notes with vertical episema in the Solesmes version are generally placed on strong beats and dotted notes are lengthened, even if the application of those concepts is inconsistent and passing tones abound. But these mild departures from the Solesmes version are a mere prelude to the climactic passage that follows, in which Duruflé abandons Solesmes for the more typically modern text setting practices that he himself would later compare unfavorably with that of Solesmes plainchant.[57] In repeated settings of the text "Hosanna in excelsis," Duruflé placed the tonic Latin accents of the words on downbeats of the modern meter, first in a four-bar phrase sung by the altos at rehearsal number 46, and next in a faster, two-bar phrase for the tenors at rehearsal number 48 and imitated in all four vocal parts. This highly repetitive, accented text setting for the chorus, with its shortened upbeats and strong arrivals on the downbeats, evidently responds to the military fanfares in the instrumental parts: the approaching footsteps in the lower strings and timpani, the horns and trumpets exchanging calls that grow louder and louder. In his 1949 review Gavoty singled out this moment almost apologetically in his description of a piece he otherwise praised as "a miracle of discretion," declaring that although "Duruflé was not afraid, when necessary, to make the trumpets sound, their calls were never theatrical, as they are in Verdi."[58] Nevertheless, the contrast within a single movement between the Solesmes version of Latin text setting in

EXAMPLE 18. Comparison of Sanctus, Mass for the Dead. (Ex. 18c: © 1948 Éditions Durand, Paris. All rights reserved. Reproduced by kind permission of MGB Hal Leonard s.r.l.)

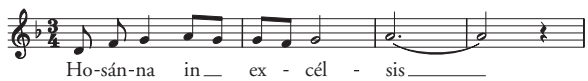
a. Solesmes, in Solesmes notation (*Liber usualis,* 1930).



b. Transcription of (a) in modern notation.



c. Soprano melody, Maurice Duruflé, *Requiem,* op. 9, Sanctus, mm. 18–21.



plainchant and a modern style of Latin text setting within a freely composed fanfare is one of the most dramatic—not to say theatrical—effects in the entire *Requiem.*

Why did Duruflé not approach the plainchant of the Requiem Mass in the same reverent way as he did in the *Quatre motets?* In his 1950 interview with Maurice Blanc, Duruflé stated about his *Requiem* that his "intention was to write a religious work for the church," and that the "intricate" link between words and music in the plainchant caused him to rethink his original idea of composing an organ suite. But this leaves unexplained both the scoring of the piece for soloists, chorus, organ, and orchestra rather than a cappella voices (as would have suited "a religious work for the church"), and the much greater departure from the plainchant in the melodic writing that rendered it nonliturgical.[59] It seems likely that contrasting commissions conditioned contrasting results. The fact that Duruflé received a relatively generous commission for a symphonic work in 1941 supplies what was missing from the composer's 1950 account of the genesis of the *Requiem.* The original suite was, in Duruflé's own words, likely "transformed into something more substantial that naturally called for chorus and orchestra" in order to fulfill the terms of the 1941 commission. In 1950 Duruflé made very different decisions on

matters of scoring and of how flexible to be in his approach to plainchant when asked by Le Guennant to write the *Quatre motets*, which were intended from the start for liturgical use by the church choirs under Le Guennant's direction.

Precisely the differences in the compositional choices Duruflé made for the *Requiem* and the *Quatre motets* show the two pieces to be alike in their suitability to their respective time and place. Just as the *Requiem* was uniquely suited for public concert performance in a recently liberated France that had yet to resolve how to face the damage done during the war but still needed to mourn, the respect and devotion Duruflé paid to Solesmes plainchant in the *Quatre motets* placed them in the mainstream of new music composed for liturgical use in the Catholic Church in the late 1950s and 1960s. In 1961, one year after the publication of *Quatre motets*, Duruflé received one of the highest honors bestowed by the Catholic Church, the Order of Saint Gregory the Great, in which he was designated a commander.[60] Ranked fourth among the five papal orders of knighthood conferred by the Pope, the Order of Saint Gregory is a secular order of merit that is awarded upon recommendation of the bishop of one's diocese in recognition of a person's demonstration of loyalty to the Vatican through personal virtue, piety, or achievement.[61] Although the recipients of the Order of Saint Gregory are not restricted by religion or nationality, there is evidence to suggest that Duruflé's meticulous attention to the Vatican-approved Solesmes editions of plainchant in his recent compositions was a decisive factor in his having received papal recognition. Three years previously, the same papal award had been given to the Belgian composer Flor Peeters, who was almost Duruflé's exact contemporary and whose compositional output and career as organist were strikingly similar to Duruflé's.[62] Moreover, the award presented to Peeters in 1958 and Duruflé in 1961 had been given in 1908 to Amédée Gastoué after he had been appointed by Pope Pius X in 1905 to work with Dom Pothier on the Vatican-authorized Solesmes plainchant editions.[63]

In 1949 Peeters published in French and English the *Méthode pratique pour l'accompagnement du chant grégorien / A Practical Method of Plain-Chant Accompaniment*, which laid out principles of how to respect the rhythmic and modal patterns of the plainchant when adding organ chords.[64] Duruflé's 1950 *Quatre motets* are much closer in spirit to the 1950 *Missa in honorem Reginae Pacis*, which Peeters composed for two voices and organ, than they are to his own *Requiem:* both works from 1950 were composed for liturgical use and for musicians (voices, organ) likely to be found in every religious setting in which the music might be performed.[65] Yet

Duruflé's *Quatre motets* stop short of following the harmonic recommendations in Peeter's practical manual, which advised musicians accompanying plainchant to favor minor triads and seventh chords over major triads, to use inversions for major triads when they are used, and above all to avoid the use of dominant sevenths, which, according to Peeters, "constitutes a demarcation line separating us from the essential characteristics of the old Modes."[66] Duruflé used major triads in root position as well as in inversions quite freely in *Quatre motets,* particularly in Ubi Caritas, which also contains frequent authentic cadences (albeit without the seventh); he has a distinct fondness for added ninths; and he even uses an applied dominant seventh in Tu es Petrus. In a later plainchant-inspired work, the 1966 *Messe "Cum jubilo,"* op. 11, he expanded his harmonic experimentation to include bitonality and octatonicism. Overall, Duruflé approached the use of plainchant in modern polyphonic composition by being faithful to melody and rhythm—albeit more so in the *Quatre motets* than in the *Requiem*—but modern in harmony.

The balance of old and new did not come easily to him, particularly in works for chorus and orchestra. Although Duruflé, a former student of Paul Dukas, had composed his *Trois Danses,* op. 6, for orchestra in 1932 (which itself originated in a failed 1927 commission for incidental music), he had never written anything for chorus and orchestra before the *Requiem*.[67] It is possible that receiving a state commission emboldened him to combine his orchestral and liturgical training in one piece. Duruflé not only sought help with the composition of the *Requiem* from Nadia Boulanger; he also repeatedly expressed both his anxiety about the project—"I am terrified by the adventure I have embarked upon," he wrote to her in summer 1946—and his gratitude for her advice in several letters. In 1957, a decade after the completion of the *Requiem,* he was still referring to the "marvelous advice" she gave him when he was "working so painfully" on this piece. In December 1961 he even credited Boulanger for the honor bestowed upon him by the Vatican, which he believed was for the *Requiem:* "A large part [of this honor] comes back to you . . . because without your enlightened advice I would never have been able to finish this work that I had dared to begin." When he wrote his second piece for chorus and orchestra in 1966—the *Messe "Cum jubilo"*—Duruflé turned once again to Boulanger.[68] The texture of this late piece is greatly simplified by Duruflé's eschewal of vocal polyphony, for the exclusively male chorus always sings monophonically to orchestral accompaniment.

Duruflé wrote several pieces over his lifetime that drew on the Solesmes editions of plainchant that had inspired his *Requiem.* Among them, the

Requiem, decidedly the most secular among his adaptations of medieval plainchant, is the one that has gained the most international popularity since its premiere. The paradox of the *Requiem*'s postwar reception is that the most secularized of Duruflé's works based on plainchant has been, among his plainchant-based works, the one most celebrated for its respect for and devotion to the timeless sounds of medieval liturgical plainchant.

VICHY AND THE *REQUIEM* IN FRANCE TODAY

The extent to which the *Requiem*'s postwar date of completion and the widespread admiration of its timelessness have obscured its historical ties to wartime France was demonstrated with startling clarity on 11 January 1996 when the chorus of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris sung the Introit, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, and Lux aeterna for the public funeral mass for the former French president François Mitterrand. Duruflé's *Requiem* appears to have been chosen because of its quintessentially French sound: news reports published the next day described the emotional response in the crowd when the choir sang Duruflé's Introit at the opening of the Mass, and when, later in the service, the American soprano Barbara Hendricks sang the Pie Jesu from Fauré's equally French (and equally popular) *Requiem*.[69] Yet, given the public debates about Mitterrand's wartime activities and postwar association with former Vichy officials near the end of his second presidential term, it is unlikely that Mitterrand or his family would have selected for his funeral a piece of music they knew to have had its own connections to the Vichy regime.

Mitterrand had long maintained that, after escaping from a German prisoner-of-war camp in late 1941, he had, despite a brief stint in the Vichy government, swiftly joined the Resistance. The journalist Pierre Péan, however, in his 1994 book *Une jeunesse française*, revealed that Mitterrand's shift from Vichy official to Resistance fighter had been far more gradual and complex.[70] At the same time, there was continuing public outrage in France about Mitterrand's ongoing expressions of sympathy for former leaders of the Vichy regime. These had taken the form not only of his decision to have a presidential wreath placed on Pétain's grave every year on Armistice Day since 1987 (a practice that ended in 1994 after public outcry). There was also the matter of Mitterrand's postwar friendship with René Bousquet, Vichy's former secretary-general of police. Bousquet was cleared of collaboration by the French high court in 1949 and had a successful postwar career in banking and newspapers; he also financed Mitterrand's unsuccessful 1974 presidential campaign. In 1986, after Bousquet's role in

wartime genocide became public—he had arranged for French police to arrest foreign Jews for deportation by the German occupying forces, most notoriously in the 16 July 1942 roundup of an estimated thirteen thousand men, women, and children at Vélodrome d'hiver, or Vel d'Hiv, in Paris—Mitterrand ended their friendship, yet there is evidence that Mitterrand shielded his former friend from prosecution for crimes against humanity, a process that ended when Bousquet was murdered in 1993.[71]

Mitterrand attempted to answer his critics in a nationally broadcast ninety-minute television interview in September 1994, an unusual move for a sitting president, but he only drew further criticism for minimizing his ties to Vichy during the war and to Bousquet afterward.[72] Éric Conan called the 1994 interview a "missed opportunity" for Mitterrand to acknowledge that his story—that of someone who believed in Marshal Pétain and the National Revolution, and even passed through a period of being both loyal to Pétain and resistant to German occupying forces before wholeheartedly embracing the Resistance in 1943—was far more typical of French citizens than the Gaullist myth of "la France résistante."[73] Mitterrand's biography also demonstrated the continuity that existed between the Vichy regime, the Resistance, and the postwar French political establishment, the denial of which had been an integral part of Gaullist mythology.

Reiterating discontinuity between Vichy France and the French Republics before and after the war, Mitterrand had long contested the suggestion that it was the obligation of the French Republic to apologize for Vichy's crimes, even as he declared 16 July, the anniversary of the roundup at Vel d'Hiv, to be a national day of mourning in France in 1993. In the 1994 television interview he reiterated emphatically, "The Republic has nothing to do with [the crimes of Vichy]. And, in my opinion, . . . France is not responsible either. It was an activist minority that took advantage of the defeat to seize power, and which is guilty of those crimes. Not the Republic, not France. Therefore I will not make any apologies in the name of France."[74] After his successor, Jacques Chirac, was elected president in May 1995, Chirac used the ceremony of remembrance at the site of Vel d'Hiv on 16 July of that year as the occasion for the first formal apology by a French leader for France's role in the Holocaust. The wording of the apology shocked the country by declaring that "France," and not the French state of Vichy, "had committed an irreparable act" on 16 July 1942, and that "the criminal madness of the occupier was supported by the French people."[75] The atmosphere of soul-searching and recrimination about Vichy's crimes reflected in Mitterrand's and Chirac's contrasting approaches to the

question of historical responsibility reached fever pitch in France with the 1998 trial and conviction of Maurice Papon, the eighty-eight-year-old former secretary-general of the Gironde prefecture of police from May 1942 to August 1944, of complicity in crimes against humanity. The conviction of a relatively junior official who may have used his post to help the Resistance, and whom de Gaulle had restored to his post after the liberation, was a poor substitute for the trial that had never taken place—that of Bousquet, Papon's superior.[76]

Meanwhile, the French Catholic Church issued a formal apology of its own. The date, 30 September 1997, was chosen to mark the anniversary of Vichy's first Statut des Juifs on 3 October 1940, for the apology was specifically on behalf of the French Catholic officials who remained silent about Vichy's anti-Semitic laws and the regime's complicity with German persecution of Jews in France. The apology, read aloud at the transit camp of Drancy and signed by the French archbishops whose dioceses had contained internment camps during the war, criticized the French Catholic hierarchy for ignoring, out of what it labeled a misplaced sense of national duty and narrow concern for France's Catholic population, the human suffering in its midst: "Faced with the persecution of Jews, and in particular the multifarious anti-Semitic laws passed by the Vichy authority, silence was the rule, and words in favor of the victims were the exception."[77] The apology also conjectured that, had the Church played a more active role in resisting the German and French authorities, more French Catholics would have followed suit. Indeed, the historian W.D. Halls has compared the wartime attitudes of French Catholics unfavorably to those of Dutch, Danish, and Polish Catholics, despite the "better organized and potentially more formidable" French Church: "French Catholics and Protestants alike were not fully aware of the influence they could have wielded during the Occupation."[78]

It was amid this atmosphere of remembrance, controversy, and apology that, in a 1999 article about Vichy's commissions to composers, I first discussed in print (and in French) the connection between the Vichy regime and Duruflé's *Requiem*.[79] My claim that Duruflé had received a Vichy commission, and that the commission had resulted in his *Requiem*, garnered an angry denial from Frédéric Blanc, the president of the Association Maurice et Marie-Madeleine Duruflé. A bitter exchange between Blanc and James Frazier, an American biographer of Duruflé, appeared in *The American Organist* in March 2003 after Frazier supported my work in print.[80] Blanc wrote that the *Requiem* "most certainly was not a commission from the Vichy Regime. I can prove this, having recently found an unedited [i.e.,

unpublished] manuscript of an orchestral work bearing the notation 'Commission by the State' in the personal archives of Maurice Duruflé."[81] Frazier, in his response to Blanc, pointed out the obvious non sequitur: the existence of one manuscript labeled "State Commission" does not rule out the possibility of other state commissions. Duruflé had, in fact, received a second state commission in 1950 from the Administration of Fine Arts for a symphonic work, for which he was paid 100,000 francs in January 1951.[82] Although I have not seen the manuscript to which Blanc refers (it is in his private collection), it is highly likely that the work in question was composed in fulfillment of Duruflé's second state commission.

It is not uncommon for close associates or family members of a deceased cultural figure to seek to distance the person and his or her work from the Vichy regime and the wartime French Catholic Church, all the more when recent apologies for the complicity of both institutions with the persecution of Jews in France have shed unfavorable light on their wartime programs. What is noteworthy about Blanc's response to my research is that he chose to address not whether Duruflé had accepted a commission from Vichy's Administration of Fine Arts, but whether the *Requiem* was in fact Duruflé's fulfillment of that commission. In so doing, he sought to protect the piece, and not the man, from the historical associations that in France in the late 1990s were the cause of national anxiety and shame. We have seen that, at the time of its premiere, early postwar critics responded strongly to the elements of the *Requiem* that set it apart from its historical time and place, and that, three years afterward, Duruflé went to implausible lengths to describe the work's genesis in terms that emphasized its use of medieval liturgical music and words at the expense of the freely composed symphonic passages that excluded it from liturgical use. The international popularity of the *Requiem* rests precisely on those elements that are least firmly associated with any particular time or place; it was this piece, one out of only fourteen works published by Duruflé, that established the composer's reputation outside organ circles and on an international stage.

Yet, like Mitterrand's story, that of Duruflé's *Requiem* is one of nuances and shades of gray rather than black and white. Whereas there is irrefutable evidence in the Archives nationales in Paris that Duruflé was one of sixty-one composers who received a commission for a musical composition from Vichy, he did not complete (and, for all we know, he may not have even started) the *Requiem* until three years after Vichy's demise. Among the composers who accepted Vichy's commissions, moreover, were at least two members of the Resistance group Front national des musiciens (Elsa Barraine and Henri Dutilleux), which calls into question whether such an act was

perceived as shameful at the time. What is more, the fact that the postwar Administration of Fine Arts paid Duruflé for completing a work commissioned by Vichy (and even adjusted the payment for inflation) demonstrates in microcosm the continuity that existed on several levels between the governments of wartime and postwar France. Although the composer's meticulous attention to the Solesmes editions of plainchant was a creative expression of French national pride that was financially supported by the Vichy regime, the sounds of the medieval plainchant of the Requiem Mass have a history in France that extends nearly a millennium into the past—a *longue durée* that, understandably, inspires those who have listened to Duruflé's *Requiem* since its 1947 premiere with a sense of timelessness. Finally, had the piece been completed during the occupation, it is unlikely it would have been deemed as appropriate to public performance during the war as it was to the public ceremonies of mourning and remembrance after the war's end. To label the *Requiem* a Vichy commission and leave it at that is akin to calling Mitterrand a Vichy bureaucrat. Although it is true, it relates only one small part of a rich and complex story.

In that case, why should these historical details about Vichy matter when we listen to the *Requiem* for musical enjoyment rather than as historical artifact? For me, they matter because Duruflé's treatment of plainchant in the *Requiem* is so different from that found in the rest of his output based on the music of the medieval liturgy. This contrast, I would argue, was the product of the circumstances in which Duruflé wrote the *Requiem*. It was commissioned as a piece of symphonic orchestral music as part of a government effort to promote new French music during the war. At a time when the French felt besieged by German propaganda, they were redefining their own heritage even as they were defending it. The stigma attached to a Vichy connection is understandable. Yet one could also read the origins of the *Requiem* in a Vichy commission as having led Duruflé, who was otherwise oblivious to his surroundings and his place in history, to speak in music, not just in defense of his besieged religious tradition, but also in defense of his besieged nation. Far from diminishing it, such a resonance might even enhance the stature of this beloved work.