

Debussy–Ravel Parallels in the Mirror of Modern Artistic Trends (Mode of Representation – Artistic Trend – Style)

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Abstract

The present study is an investigation about the main stylistic and esthetic characteristics of musical impressionism. The controversial presence of impressionism in music (it has only one – or a few – recognized representative, Claude Debussy; possibly Ravel and Respighi) determined us to examine the esthetic specifics of the modern tendencies in the mirror of the esthetic-stylistic sense of the concepts of way of depicting, tendency and style. The specificity of the system structure and configuration of the esthetic values reflected in modern musical creations, appears nuanced in the creation of the two main personalities of modern tendencies: Debussy and Ravel. We defined as the base of comparison the following stylistical-esthetical specifics: doubling, hexaphony, relation solo-texture, ostinato, leading-elements, contrasts etc. Beside the presence of a few stylistical-esthetical similarities between the creation of the two composers, and the other artistic branches (above all pictorial art) we also observed some major differences.

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Introduction

Right from the beginning I have to contradict the title of the paper: the outstanding representatives of art history – like Debussy and Ravel as well – cannot be simply included into the Procrustean bed of tendencies or trends, as they outgrow the limits imposed by these. Then why do we still examine these parallels in the mirror of trends? The answer to this question could be the following: because one always needs some kind of starting point for an analysis. This kind of analysis in the mirror of artistic trends is suitable – if for nothing else then – for grasping the ways both Debussy and Ravel exceeded the limits of these trends.

The first question arises thus about the trends which define, at least in their general traits, the life-work of Debussy and Ravel. The use of the plural in the question – trends – is indeed justified because one single trend is not a sufficient basis for grasping the life-work of these two great artists. The further examination of the necessary circumstances of the inclusion into trends reveals from the very beginning that the term *trend-syntagm* is more suitable than *tendency*.

According to my analytic model, I will examine the various representations of the age from the modes of representation to the styles, and hopefully my line of thought will reveal which of the levels is the most adequate for grasping the given problem.

Thus in the course of the investigation of the significance of the *mode of representation* and the connections of its elements, the difference between the meaning of the categories of “trend” of French origin and “tendency” of German origin must also be researched both on a theoretical and a practical level. The more intimate meaning of the French category of trends, lacking a strident program, and mostly built upon attitude-relations, are more suitable for grasping the Debussy–Ravel parallels. Primarily it is the trends of *Symbolism* and *Impressionism* that I have in mind. As it is well-known, the first term emerged from poetry, the second one from the art of painting. Thus none of them is originally a musical term. So we need both of them to reveal their musical connections, because there is no such *sui generis* musical trend which would be adequate for presenting the life-work of these two great masters. One might of course also think of Tristan Tzara’s *Dadaism* or the originally French *Bruitism* which spread mostly in America, etc. But neither of these are “consonant” with the message of the works of these masters. Still, in the light of the system of modern arts – as long as one presupposes the existence of such a system – it seems necessary to also include the tendencies of the “other side”, those of *Expressionism* and *Futurism–Bruitism*.

Thus, after sketching the programs and requisites of the two trends and two tendencies, I will examine the stylistic similarities and differences of the works of Debussy and Ravel in the trend of Impressionism.

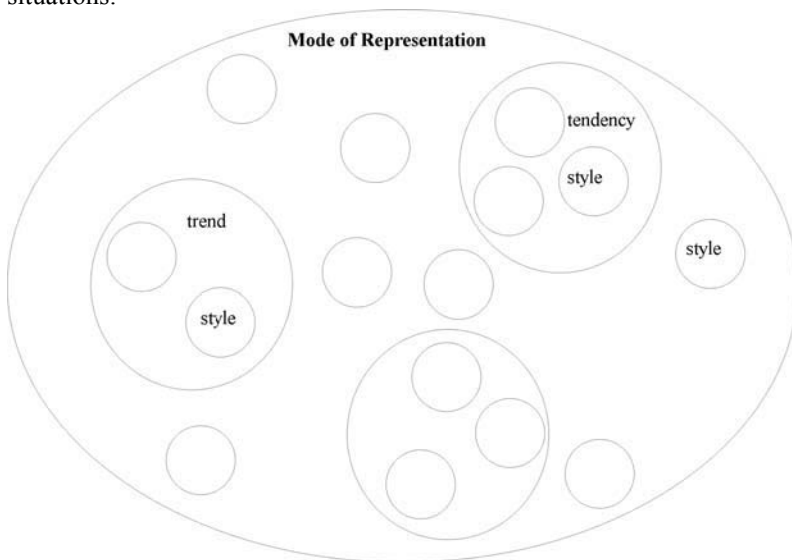
The conclusions will mainly refer to the openings deriving from the two life-works, namely the fact that both exceed the limits of these trends, and the essence of their old promise of excellence which has now long turned into certainty.

Let us start our analysis with the introduction of the categories.¹

Mode of representation

The art-historical necessity or rather constraint which tries to catalogue all events, artists, and works of art created in the same period and more or less interconnected is known to most of us. This is how the quasi-abstract patterns concluded from musical (artistic) reality come into being (such as the system of classical harmony or the model of the classical sonata-form, etc.), which can be revealing in the judgment of one certain artistic period, but their individual reapplication is usually quite problematic. It is enough to only think of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas, almost all of which – maybe excluding some of his earlier ones – is an exception to the classical sonata-form, keeping nevertheless the principle of conflicting thinking peculiar to the sonata, even developing it further to dramaticism.

In order to be able to judge a period in details in its own complexity, I will represent the artistic period by a pattern which mirrors the composition of the period in question from its general to its individual situations.



¹ All models and patterns used in the paper are borrowed from the esthetic system of Prof. István Angi.

The *mode of representation* serves for the representation of the complex image of various artistic-historical periods, its characteristic is that in the history of art its duration shows a decreasing tendency while the complexity of its content is always increasing. Modes of representation are, for instance, the Periclean Golden Age, the age of the Church Fathers and Scholasticism, dividing the Middle Ages, or the simultaneity of Classicism and Romanticism, etc. The 20th century can boast three modes of representation: the *modern*, the *avant-garde*, and the *postmodern*. *Modernism*, the period of our interest, can rightfully raise the question of the kinds of similar traits one can find in the intense artistic life of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. As we shall see, the representatives of the various trends of this period perceive the ambiguous relationship of today's man to his environment, enticing the alienated individual, deprived of its environment, with more or less redemptive promises.

Trend, tendency

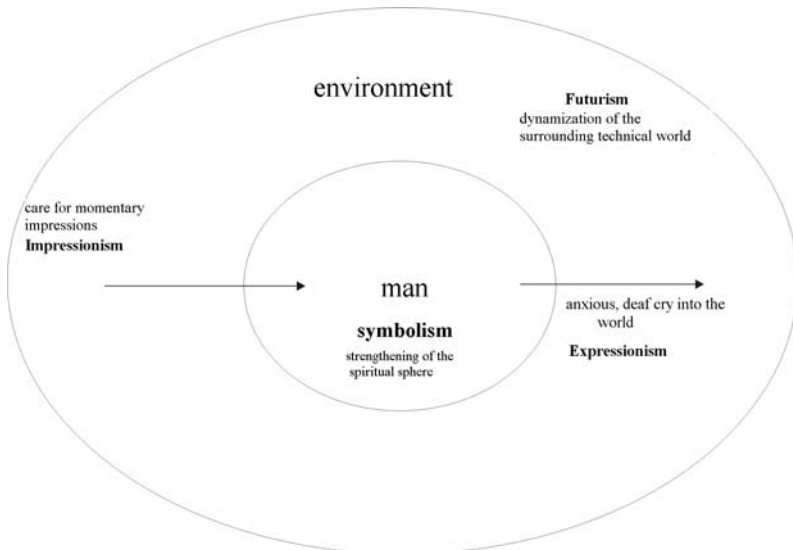
Trend and *tendency* mean those artistic groupings which, on the one hand, are built upon an identical or similar program, and on the other hand make use of a more or less similar range of artistic means. Although the terminology used in this paper does not apply the minor differences used to define the two kinds of approaches, making use of a more general term of *trend* instead, these differences must be pointed at on the basis of the etymology of these terms. Such kind of differentiation of the mode of representation into trends and tendencies is mostly a phenomenon of the 19th-20th centuries. In the case of earlier ages the artist with his personal, individual *style* productively merged into the spirituality of his age. The differences mirrored at best the divergences of various regions of Europe. These differences were usually represented by schools, and the place of their programs was taken by the keeping and/or renewal of the traditions of musical composition. Such are for instance the French-Flemish school during the Renaissance, or the Mannheim school which achieved the transition from the Baroque to Classicism, etc.

Analyzing the two terms mentioned above, one may see that these derive from the German term *Tendenz* and the French term *courant*, and refer to the most important artistic trends of the period of our interest: French Symbolism and Impressionism, German (and generally Northern) Expressionism, and the Italian–Russian Futurism. While the French word *courant* (*current*, here translated as *trend*) is associated with the meanings of flow, flowing, fluid, and instead of a program it appears

rather as a kind of attitude connected to a certain *ars poetica*, the German word *Tendenz* (tendency) refers not only to the intensity of a certain program, but also to its emphatic directedness. Such a tendency with an intense program is for example Italian Futurism.

The understanding of the formation of Modernist trends also presupposes certain reflections on the millennial relationship of *man and his environment*. Primarily, it is a magic syncretism which is regarded as the ground of artistic thinking in the illusion of a *man–environment* relationship formed in the constraint of survival (G. Thompson), which, while trying to create this relationship, intermingles the reality with its appearance, and often mixes up the cause with the effect. Henceforth one can follow up the formation of this relationship in the succession of artistic periods and their centers of gravity. Modern trends, as a final promise, summarize this relationship as follows:

1. Symbolism – the quasi-exclusiveness of the human side
2. Futurism – the quasi-exclusiveness of the environment side
3. Expressionism – man’s orientation towards the environment
4. Impressionism – the environment’s orientation towards man.



The branches of art which serve as starting point for the various trends are specially connected by their individual medium to the basic idea subjected to the process of generalization or its adequate mode of

being. The various possibilities of approaching the already mentioned relationship of man and his environment lead to the system of connections of the parameters of space and time, of seeing and hearing.

Symbolism, as we have seen, amplifying the human side and in a way extracting the man himself out of his own environment, aimed first of all to reveal the depths of the human soul. The symbol, as one of the most ancient generalizing artistic elements which here reaches its complexity, being encoded into concepts or images, comprises its artistic appearance primarily to the field of poetry. Although the art of music has repeatedly made its connections with symbolist thinking, it tends to carry it mostly in a hidden form, intermingled with impressionists features, due to its peculiar abstractness.

Futurism, on account of its complete polarization to the environment, is represented in several branches of the arts. Thus, besides poetry, painting, or architecture, it is also present in music, under the term of *Bruitism* (bruit = noise). Naturally, the artistic sublimation of the noises of the environment, as proved by the almost complete lack of significant representatives of this style, was by no means an easy task to accomplish.

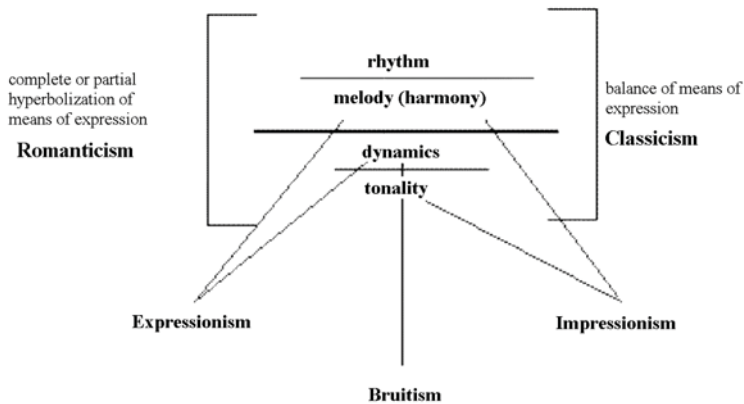
As it has been mentioned, *Expressionism* is a characteristically German and generally Northern phenomenon. While the other trends all tried to break the rule of 19th century German Romanticism, expressionist art attempted at an exaggerated, almost antagonistic representation of romantic feeling. The terrified Munchian cry of the man on the edge of insanity, the ancient invocation of the *Uhr*-cry is the example of expressionist feeling. Similarly to Impressionism, but as its counterpoint, Expressionism successively called to life all the various fields of art, and it was itself derived from the art of painting. However, its appearance in music created a most significant trend, the *Second Vienna school*, and its means of expression, beyond its programmatic nature, lent important self-expressive elements to contemporary and later musical composition.

The basic idea which called Impressionism to life, the seizure of the instant, the momentary, the fugitive, rightfully appears in the art of painting in a suitable way. Monet's art, for instance, depicts the harbor of Le Havre in a morning fog, his work, the *Impression, The Rising Sun* (1872) initiates Impressionism as a real *ars poetica*. And indeed, the seizure of the moment leads to the suspension of objective time in the contemplation of the work of art, placing the perception of the ephemeral into the subjective time-horizon of the contemplator. In this sense it is primarily a trend of the art of painting, but it also finds its place in poetry.

The idea of the suspended objective time seems to be quite difficult to be connected to music, which however is also an important representative of impressionist art. Although music cannot override its temporality, as its homogeneous medium places it into an evidently temporal framework, impressionist music seems to evade the possibilities offered by the interconnectedness of time and space by emphasizing those means of expression which ensure the spatiality of music in the matrix-pattern to be presented below.

Thus, influenced by painting, the art of music not only has its own way of emphasizing its means of expression, but it also creates a completely new phenomenon for the suspension of time. This phenomenon is *duplication*, and it is one of the basic stylistic motifs of musical Impressionism.

Let us examine now by this matrix how the single means of expression are polarized in the case of the trends mentioned so far:



Even if such a listing of modern arts would seem a useless endeavor in the case of individual artists or trends having different programs, we shall see that it is essential in the case of the art of Debussy and Ravel. It is curious that there are certain researchers¹ who discuss musical Impressionism and its representatives not as initiated artists of modern art but as a transitory phenomenon of a hazy period. However, in an all-artistic sense – as it has been shown in the case of the permutations

¹ See Kókai-Fábián, *Századunk zenéje* (The music of the 20th century), Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1961, p. 45.

of the relationship of man and his environment – the determining presence of Impressionism in the panorama of modern arts cannot be doubted, as even less the esthetic legitimacy of musical Impressionism.

Still, it is difficult to include the art of Debussy and Ravel into the Procrustean bed of trends and tendencies, because, in opposition to the representatives of impressionist painting who presented their works on several common exhibitions and legitimized thus their new art, musical Impressionism did not create a school in this sense of the word. However, there are many starting points, achievements, and stylistic similarities which connect the life-work of these two masters of music.

So, what is Impressionism?

Beyond the many influences of the end of the 19th century, Impressionism is not merely an artistic phenomenon, but also in a wider sense a worldview. Let us think of the paintings of Monet, Manet, Renoir, Pissaro, etc, but it is also present in Proust's novels and Rodin's statues. Furthermore, certain thinkers allegedly discovered certain of its elements in Bergson's philosophy, for instance intuition as the direct and momentary contemplation of things and spiritual experiences.

However, as long as Impressionism is understood as the transient representation of concrete shapes and sharp contours, then a part of Debussy's and Ravel's art can only be included into it with certain reservations. But if the various effects of an object's illumination or point-like figurative solutions are also considered important elements of Impressionism in painting (see for instance Monet's works on the Cathedral at Rouen), then the series of its similarities with music can be significantly enlarged.

Style

The last and also smallest element of our pattern is the style. Its most determining factor is the range of possibilities defined by the spirit of the age, and the personality of the artist. The importance and place of the style in the structure of a given mode of representation can be discovered by the process of its formation and further conditioning. Although the creators of any age undoubtedly reveal their specific features as opposed to the relations of modes of representation, trends, tendencies, or schools, the style receives an ever greater significance with Modernism. Thus, in a more or less isolated way, it can occupy its individual place in the system of our mode of representation.

In the case of Debussy and Ravel one can witness a double game as their common program excludes them from the flow of one certain trend, but their stylistic features connect their art over and over again.

The creative personality of Debussy and Ravel cannot be included under the collective concept of Impressionism, as:

- musical Impressionism as a school was never actually formed;
- although their existence is beyond doubt, it is difficult to clearly reveal the generally valid features of the art of painting in music;
- the choice of the subject or the mode of the artistic representation is not identical in all of Debussy's and Ravel's works;
- Symbolism had a strong effect on impressionist music both in terms of ideas and emotions, although the content of the two trends is by no means identical;
- in certain cases one can find a program and means of expression reminiscent of expressionist music in the message of works created under the influence of Impressionism.

On the basis of this model, serving as a starting point, it is a *sine qua non* condition in the approach of 20th century art to observe the individual features of artists. Thus, whether or not it is possible to speak about Impressionism in music, it seems essential to examine the individual features of artists as the starting point of our research, then to compare these with trends or tendencies which unite identical stylistic features, and finally to analyze the concrete place they occupy in the mode of representation.

The most important stylistic features of the art of Debussy and Ravel as well as musical Impressionism can be summarized as follows:

1. Duplication

The technique of *duplication* is very frequent in the works of Debussy and Ravel. What is more, its significance seems to exceed its mere frequency, becoming a main stylistic element. This phenomenon was first noticed by French musicology, when analyzing some of Debussy's works from a structuralist viewpoint.¹ According to the theory of duplication, a musical idea is repeated directly after its first appearance, then a new musical idea as well, and so on. Thus the exposed

¹ Nicolas Ruwet, *Langage, musique, poésie*, Paris: Seuil, 1972.

musical idea is systematically led through with its own repetitions, hindering the possibilities of traditional musical progression. It is an important requirement that the repeated material be short enough to make the impression of uniformity; while the repetition, in the lack of the musical material in between, does not become a mere replay. From a structural point of view the repetition ranges from complete identity to indirect variation, with the parameter of harmony remaining identical in almost all cases. Thus, in the quasi-closedness of repetition, the lack of progression which would ensure temporal continuity seems to suspend time, placing the sensation of music into a vertical, spatial dimension, where the different orchestral or instrumental games result in various light effects. The super-position of the often extremely complicated, but well elaborated rhythmic patterns create surfaces consisting of abounding points, and at the same time the dynamic games taking place in a narrow interval and the damped effects of the instruments beneficially intermingle in this vibrating musical painting.

Such kind of application and perception of the duplication rightly becomes one of the most important elements of Impressionism, defining at the same time the existence of the other musical parameters and means of expression, and probably this is the point where the relationship of music with painting becomes easiest to understand. In all likelihood the systematic application of this duplication is one of the basic conditions for a musical work to approach the ideal impressionist sound.

However, in this parallel analysis one finds a significant difference in the application of duplication by Debussy and Ravel. In Debussy's case duplication is very frequent and appears in a clear form. One of the reasons for the often very emphatic contrasts of the greater units is the systematic nature of the quasi-closedness of the repeated units. It is curious that this closedness is only apparent, because, similar to an impressionist painting, the vibrating, painting-like world of musical forms slowly acquires its shape by gradually distancing itself of point-like surfaces...

Let us see an example from the first movement of Debussy's *Three Nocturnes*, where the technique of duplication is also created between the greater units which comprise the duplicated parts (a fragment from the score):

2 Clarinettes en Sib

pp très expressif

più pp

Bassons

pp très expressif

più pp

In Ravel's case one can often meet "pure duplication" reminding of Debussy, but the musical material deriving from duplication is sometimes dissolved in a phrase, as an opening or a closure, or a transition between the two. One of its possible reasons is that stylistic practice very frequent in Ravel's work which by its nature can rarely be mixed with that peculiar kind of musical thinking which derives from duplication. This practice can be seen mainly in those pieces for piano which are qualified as Ravel's great innovations, such as the *Jeux D'eau* or the *Miroirs* piano-cycle, but also in several other works which are not stylized: the *String-Quartet*, the *Daphnis and Chloe* ballet, etc.

Let us see a "pure duplication" at the beginning of the *Jeux D'eau* piano-piece:

Très doux

♩ = 144

pp

pp

2. ed.

The opening measures of the orchestra suit *Mother Goose* show the dissolution of the duplicated structure in a musical phrase (fragment from the score):

Leuk $\text{♩} = 58$

1^{re} GRANDE FLÛTE
2^{de} GRANDE FLÛTE
1 HAUTBOIS
1 COR ANGLAIS
2 CLARINETTES en Si \flat
1 BASSON
1 COR en FA Chromatique

2. Whole tone scale

The hexatonic scale which became widespread during the Romantic period (in the works of Liszt, Grieg and others) appears in Impressionism in a different light. Its temporal lightness (in the lack of functional elements of attraction), besides its other elements used for attaining the effect of spatiality, rightly makes it one of the most important elements of Debussy's music. The use of whole tone scales so frequent in Debussy's work is almost entirely missing from the works of Ravel. Apart from some of his early works, it only appears sporadically, therefore it can be considered one of the essential features of the stylistic differences between Debussy and Ravel.

One of the paradigmatic works of whole tone scale is the second piece of the first volume of Debussy's *Preludes*, where the hexatonic scale entirely rules over the first part of the work:

Modéré (♩ : 88)
(Dans un rythme sans rigueur et caressant.)

p très doux
p
pù p

Another example is a fragment from the third part of Debussy's work for orchestra, *The Sea* (fragment from the score):

1^{er} Bon
2^e et 3^e Bous

The tonic scale which is sporadically present in Ravel's works may appear also as a material of contrast. In the fourth part of the *Mother Goose* (The Beauty and the Beast) it can be heard as the motif of the appearance of the Ugly which interrupts the aerial waltz of Beauty on the double-bassoon in a masked, chromatic form (fragment from the score):



3. Solo-texture

A characteristic feature of the orchestral works of Impressionism is the thick sounding surface or texture, which, compared to the musical texture of the music of later periods, is still of a harmonic origin.

The voice of solo instruments in the often thick sound of the orchestra is specific for both artists. While Debussy enjoys using instrumental solos in the sound surface of the texture, Ravel employs solo elements mainly outside the sound surface, in a higher or lower pitch.

Debussy, *The Sea*, first part, bassoon:



This image shows a page of a musical score for the Suite version of the ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* by Maurice Ravel. The score is arranged in a grand staff format, featuring two staves for each instrument. The instruments shown are Cello and Double Bass. The music is in a minor key and begins with a tempo marking of *pp* (pianissimo). The score includes various dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *pp*, and features complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes. The notation includes slurs, ties, and phrasing marks.

Ravel, the opening measures of the suite version of the *Daphnis and Chloe* ballet (cello, double-basses):

This image shows a page of a musical score for the Suite version of the ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* by Maurice Ravel. The score is arranged in a grand staff format, featuring two staves for each instrument. The instruments shown are Flutes (1 and 2), Clarinet in E-flat, Cor Anglais, Oboe, Bassoon, and Harp (1st and 2nd). The music is in a minor key and begins with a tempo marking of *Lento* and a metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 50$. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, and *pp*, and features complex rhythmic patterns with many sixteenth notes. The notation includes slurs, ties, and phrasing marks. The Harp parts are marked *pp glissando*.

100 Lento $\frac{4}{4} = 50$

Avec bruit que le murmure des raisolets amarrés par la rosée qui coule des cèdres

1^{re} Violine Div. Sordians

2^e Violine Div. Sordians

Viola Div. Sordians

Alto Div. Sordians

Trompettes Div. Sordians

Violoncelles Div. Sordians

Contrebasses Div. Sordians

4. Ostinato

I will present two kinds of applications of the technique of *ostinato*, both equally used in the works of Debussy and Ravel:

a. the *ostinato* carries the rhythm, and above it flows the melody:

Debussy, *Preludes*, the third piece of the second volume, *La puerta del vino*:

b. the melody covers the rhythm of the *ostinato*

Ravel, *Mother Goose*, third part, *The Queen of the Pagodas*:

c. in the second movement, *The Gallows-tree*, of Ravel's partly expressionist piano piece *Gaspard de la nuit*, one finds an *ostinato* which causes special rhythmic displacements¹:

¹ Ravel uses a similar technique in the *The Valley of Bells* piece of the *Miroirs* piano-cycle.

5. Contrasts

The contrasts known as indispensable elements of music are variously applied by Debussy and Ravel, strongly connected, so it seems, with the technique of *duplication* which significantly changes the traditional images of musical continuity. So, in Debussy's case, the more consistent application of "pure" duplication results in stronger effects of contrast, while Ravel mainly applies indirect contrasts.

Debussy, *The Sea*, first part (it can be observed how the musical process going on in seven distinct rhythmic patterns of the first example breaks 12 measures later):

The image displays a page of a musical score for Debussy's *The Sea*, first part, measures 8 through 12. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Gdes Fl. (Flutes), H^b (Horns), Cor A. (Trumpets), Cl. (Clarinets), Bons (Bassoons), Cors (Cornets), Tromp. (Trumpets), 1^{re} et 2^e Tromb. (Trombones), 3^e Tromb. et Tuba (Trombone and Tuba), and 1^{re} et 2^{de} Harpes (Harps). The music is written in a key signature of two flats and a common time signature. A box labeled '8' is positioned above the first measure of the Flute part. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, and *cresc.*, as well as performance instructions like *sourdines à 3* and *p soutenu et en dehors*. The notation is dense, with many notes and rests, indicating a complex rhythmic structure.

An example for Ravel's indirect contrast from the piano piece *Play of the Waters* (measures 1 and 18):



6. Mixtures

The mixture-structure is perhaps one of the most characteristic elements of impressionist harmony, its application is very frequent in the works of both Debussy and Ravel. There are several ways of application of this technique: figurative, broken, coupled with other techniques; or, from another point of view, natural and acoustic mixtures.

The direct form of mixture, whether coupled with other techniques or not, is more frequent in Debussy's case, while Ravel often uses the so-called masked mixtures (when parallel chords are extended by a freer melody).

The *Dead leaves* piece of the second volume of Debussy's *Preludes* offers a most complex example:



Another example from the *Canope* piece of the second volume of the *Preludes*, where Debussy uses acoustic mixtures (with modal modifications):



Let us see an example for masked mixture from Ravel. Fragment of the score of the *Mother Goose, Garden of Fairies*:



7. Special chords

Although I cannot analyze here in detail all the important components of impressionist harmony, there are still certain characteristics which should be mentioned as the essential aspects of a stylistic parallel.

The literature of the field rightly considers Debussy an outstanding fore-runner of harmony in the 20th century, as in his works he accomplished indeed all the possible versions of gravitational and geometric harmony. His use of harmony is often more daring than Ravel's, however, the comparison of their life-works may still reveal several similarities. Frequent chords are the *sixt ajoutées*, the *Tristan-*

chord, and generally the *ajoutées* chord-structures, chords made up of several layers, descending secondary plagal turns of harmony, bitonal and polytonal sound surfaces, etc. As a stylistic feature, Ravel's often used series of chords can also be mentioned, the descending secondary plagal turn of harmony for minor seventh or ninth chords.

Conclusions

Within the narrow confines of this paper, I tried to sketch certain aspects of the two outstanding life-works of the turn of the 19th and 20th century. It is my conviction that the model used proved suitable for finding an adequate place for Impressionism in the multi-faceted structure of this period's artistic endeavors. As it was revealed, the centuries-long productive relationship of man and his environment appears with new forces in the tensioned atmosphere of our period of interest, signaling, fervently or moderately, the beginning of the process of alienation of the restless man who has come to be in a confused relationship with his environment (T. W. Adorno). Although, according to the testimony of art history (as shown at the discussion of the dynamics of the mode of representation) modern trends failed to dissolve the increasing tensions, creating those outstanding works which have found their place ever since among the interests of musicologists, musicians, composers and lovers of art.

In my opinion, the trends of modern art can rightly be examined in the mirror of their own structural peculiarities, because, besides brilliant great personalities, an esthetic or social problem often becomes the basis of the appearance of new groupings with more-or-less similar means of expression and stylistic features. Starting from this basic idea, I have analyzed and compared the most important stylistic elements of two outstanding representatives of musical Impressionism. It was revealed that the encounter of these two life-works happened on the borderline of trend and style. One could see that on the second level of the pattern the works of Debussy and Ravel were first of all productively influenced by Impressionism and Symbolism, not neglecting however the sporadic effect of the program and means of Expressionism as well. Russian music (especially Mussorgski), the World Exhibition of Paris in 1889, the ethos of Spanish music, the exotic, and many other elements exerted their influence over these two artists as a mutual condition and possibility. Both composers are, of course, impressionists in the first place, predestined by several common starting points, and by all their varied

stylistic differences which, as opposing conceptions of the same system of thinking, have formed a unitary whole.

Although the range of investigations can by no means be considered complete and final, I think that the esthetic-stylistic cooperation applied in the paper had an important role in addressing several important matters, and will prove an adequate basis for further research.