THE LATE CHORAL WORKS

OF

TON DE LEEUW

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

by

RENS TIENSTRA

A thesis submitted to the
University of Birmingham
for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Music
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
September 2016

UNIVERSITYOF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

ABSTRACT

Ton de Leeuw (1926–1996) is widely regarded as one of the most important post-war Dutch

composers. Taught among others by Olivier Messiaen and Jaap Kunst, and strongly

influenced by non-Western music, De Leeuw was a teacher at the University of Amsterdam

and professor of composition and electronic music at the Amsterdam Conservatory from 1959

to 1986, a position in which he educated many Dutch composers active today. His book *Music

of the Twentieth Century*, first published in 1964, is still regarded as an authoritative work.

Despite De Leeuw's formidable reputation as composer and teacher, and the regular

performance of his works, hardly any scholarly research into his oeuvre has yet been

undertaken. The current study is an attempt to change this, exploring five of De Leeuw's later

choral compositions as representative of the style he described in terms of 'extended

modality'.

This study is aimed at understanding the nature and specificity of De Leeuw's later

choral works, and thereby clarifying the place of the composer's later works – the choral

works in particular – within the context of their time.

CONTENTS

Preface

> This article so strongly emphasizes technical and philosophical aspects of composition that the reader may justly wonder where the music begins. The quality of music is not determined by theories. In our century, many artists have, to varying degrees, been led astray by stuffing their work full of theory, psychology, politics, and what have you. It should be clear that the creative fantasy never frees itself if we remain immersed in speculations. We must work from living experience. Only then can we reach a dimension in which music blossoms, guided by intuition, imagination, uncertainty, technical discipline, in short all the attributes that have always been a part of creative work.
>
> (Ton de Leeuw, 'Back to the Source'[1])

Studying the works of a contemporary composer often presents an opportunity to gather information from people who have worked with the artist. At the same time, as stated above by the composer whose works are the subject of this dissertation, one can easily be 'led astray' by the sheer number of theoretical, philosophical and political writings and statements of the average twentieth-century composer...

In the case of Dutch composer Ton de Leeuw (1926–1996), 'living experience' actually formed the motivation for the current dissertation. His legacy could be found and *felt* far beyond the theoretical writings one normally encounters in the study of twentieth-century composers: I was introduced to the composer and his music by professors of Composition, Solfège, the Recorder and Electronic Music, who all had their stories to tell about this apparently inspiring personality; I was astonished by some of the musical *tombeaux* written after De Leeuw's demise (including the moving setting of the *Egidiuslied* by my first composition teacher, Daan Manneke), and wondered what kind of man could have inspired such heartfelt compositions; finally, I was introduced to De Leeuw's scores and rehearsals of his music through singers and conductors who had worked with him, each one adding his or her own story to the music.

---

[1] Sligter 1995: 93.

The first score of a work by De Leeuw I was able to examine was a copy of the composer's autograph of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*, whose closing movement has pleasantly lingered in my mind ever since. The second score was, again, a copy of De Leeuw's handwriting, this time the *Élégie pour les villes détruites*. These works are the cornerstones of this dissertation, marking a period in De Leeuw's life in which he composed a number of works which have always fascinated me, but which, so far, have also been left unexplored by musicologists. With this dissertation I hope to fill that void, and hope to offer further incentive for the study and performance of De Leeuw's works; if the University of Birmingham Library's acquisition of a fair number of the composer's books and scores, brought about by the writing of this dissertation, may be considered indicative of the feasibility of this goal, I have no doubt the composer's words opening this preface were not written in vain.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express gratitude to the following persons who participated in this research:

PART I

INTRODUCTION

I.

1.1 Research subject

> And if I would have to choose... on that famous deserted island, and I was only
> allowed to do this or that... then I'd prefer choral music, yes. Yes. For I think that the
> voice, the *human* voice... is so *direct*, and so closely connected to my idea of sound,
> that it is best – even more so than our perfected Western instruments – capable of
> expressing one's ideas.[2]

Ton de Leeuw (1926–1996) is widely regarded as one of the most important post-war Dutch composers. Taught by Olivier Messiaen and Jaap Kunst among others, and strongly influenced by non-Western music, De Leeuw was a teacher at the University of Amsterdam and professor of composition and electronic music at the Amsterdam Conservatory from 1959 to 1986, a position in which he educated many Dutch composers active today. His book *Muziek van de twintigste eeuw* ('Music of the Twentieth Century'), first published in 1964 and later translated into Swedish, German and English, is still regarded as an authoritative work.

Despite De Leeuw's formidable reputation as composer and teacher, and regular performances of his works,[3] hardly any scholarly research into his oeuvre has yet been undertaken. The current study is an attempt to change this, exploring De Leeuw's later choral compositions as representative of the style he described as 'extended modality' – works that express the composer's ideas through the human voice, 'so closely connected to [De Leeuw's] idea of sound'.

---

[2] Van Hulsen 1995, first words spoken by De Leeuw (translated by the author).
[3] In all of the major Dutch concert venues (e.g. Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Muziekgebouw a/h IJ, De Doelen Rotterdam, Dr Anton Philipszaal The Hague), at least one piece by De Leeuw was performed during the 2015/2016 season. Two well-known choirs, *Cappella Amsterdam* and the *Nederlands Kamerkoor* made concert tours with programmes featuring De Leeuw's choral works.

This study is aimed at understanding the nature and specificity of De Leeuw's later choral works, and thereby clarifying the place of the composer's later works – the choral works in particular – within the context of their own time.

In this study five of De Leeuw's later choral works are discussed:

- *Car nos vignes sont en fleurs* for twelve voices (1981)

- *Transparence* for mixed choir and brass ensemble (1986)

- *Cinq hymnes* for mixed choir, two pianos and percussion (1987/88)

- *A cette heure du jour* for mixed choir (1991–1992)

- *Elégie pour les villes détruites* for mixed choir (1994)

The connections between these works were made by the composer himself: as De Leeuw wrote in his article 'Back to the Source', he considered his later works to be built from the same interconnected philosophical and technical foundation, which he labelled 'extended modality'. And, as mentioned above, he stated that he preferred writing for the voice, since it was 'best capable … of expressing one's ideas.' (He made this statement one year before his death, after having written all but one of the selected works.) With such a claim, these late choral works can be expected to provide the best examples of this self-expression and moreover, how this self-expression is given shape in 'extended modal' composition.

The selection of a set of works from the same timespan and using the same medium will also allow a comparative examination of De Leeuw's compositional approach: his preferred techniques, scoring, treatment of prosody and so on.

A composer's statements on his own music, such as the one opening this introduction, should always be read critically. But even without knowledge of De Leeuw's writings and statements, some features which recur in all five compositions may be noticed upon first

hearing. One of the goals of this study is to strike a balance between the examination of these readily apparent features, those which the composer himself pointed out, and those that are less distinct but demand a closer inspection; it is hoped that in this balance, insight will be gained into the elements, construction and specificity of De Leeuw's musical language.

1.2 Outline of the research

Chapter I consists of a general introduction: the subject, the reasons for undertaking this research, its focus and structure.

Since it is assumed that most non-Dutch readers will be unfamiliar with Ton de Leeuw, a short biography is given in Chapter II. This is followed by a history of the composer's vocal works to give an idea of the place of each of the five works within the bigger picture of De Leeuw's oeuvre.

Chapter III opens with an overview of De Leeuw's writings, followed by a discussion of the article 'Back to the Source'. The latter is important to this study as it sets out De Leeuw's own views on his later compositions, including a description of what he termed 'extended modality' and an explanation of his 'model' technique. The aim of the discussion of this article will be to discern what motivations, concerns and themes the composer considered fundamental to his later work, how his statements on these subjects may be read in the context of their time, and how they, and the questions they raise, may contribute to an analysis of De Leeuw's later works.

The next five chapters consist of explorations of the five selected works. These explorations start by pointing out the features of the work which may be considered representative of both the individual pieces and the later choral works as a whole, followed by local analyses of individual movements or smaller sections to provide insight into these themes. As each work is simultaneously different from and related to the other works, so the

selection of themes and analytical approaches will attempt a balance between unique and shared characteristics.

Chapter IX builds on the results, discussing notable topics and themes which have come to light in exploring the five works. De Leeuw's own statements as discussed in Chapter III will be taken into account in this synthesis, asking how the themes mentioned by the composer relate to his medium of choice, how these themes are given shape by varying parameters, and what structures, elements etc. may be considered characteristic of De Leeuw's composition.

2.1 Ton de Leeuw: biography

> When I was quite young I once accidentally tuned in on a radio broadcast from an Arabian station. I was thunderstruck: I became deeply aware that there were other people living on this earth, living in thoroughly different conditions, having other thoughts and feelings. Since then, the way that all of this is translated in music, and why, has held my unceasing attention. This breakthrough of consciousness had all kinds of consequences. For instance, from that moment on I could no longer project my musical development merely against the background of a few centuries of European music. I quickly broadened my horizons: the twentieth century, the Renaissance, the Middle ages, all music outside of European borders.[4]

Ton de Leeuw's life, thoughts and works constitute an intriguing reflection of post-war musical reality. Born in 1926, he studied with Louis Toebosch, Everhard van Beijnum, Henri Geraedts and Henk Badings (the pre-eminent Dutch composers of the pre-war generation), with Olivier Messiaen and the ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst, befriended many composers of his own generation, travelled around the globe to broaden the sources of his musical experience, and taught the entire generation after his own. De Leeuw died in 1996, having witnessed many musical and social revolutions at first hand.

After his state examinations in piano, music theory and music history, and lessons with the Dutch composers mentioned above, De Leeuw travelled to Paris at the age of twenty-three to study with Olivier Messiaen and Thomas de Hartmann. Pierre Schaeffer and René Leibowitz equally inspired the young composer. During his time in Paris (1949–1950), De Leeuw was a frequent guest at the composer Bep Geuer's weekly salon, visited at the time by other Dutch composers living in Paris, such Jacques Beers, Max Vredenburg and Robert de Roos.

---

[4] De Leeuw 1978: XX/2, 19–33.

On returning from Paris, De Leeuw studied with the ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst at the

Royal Institute of the Tropics in Amsterdam from 1950 until 1954, leading to compositions

such as the 'neo-medieval' *Missa Brevis* (1952), *Three African Etudes* for piano (1954) and

the first high point of his career, the orchestral *Mouvements rétrogrades* (1957). In this work

De Leeuw's life-long fascination for Eastern aesthetics becomes apparent:

> The Asians have discovered a few fundamental values in life that I find very
> appealing. For instance, a continual search for balance. People in the West are more
> expansively oriented, more enthralled by creation of tensions. That is something that
> does not concern me in the least.[5]

The *Mouvements* are cyclically constructed in the form of a double rhythmic retrograde

repeated ten times. With regard to this work, the composer used the image of 'a revolving

crystal that remains the same in itself but reflects nonetheless constantly varied rays of light'.[6]

In 1953 De Leeuw visited Darmstadt, where 'the veneration of Anton Webern, led by

the – at that time – still young Stockhausen' made him 'deeply uneasy'.[7] However, the

similarities between Stockhausen's and De Leeuw's ideas deserve mention: De Leeuw's view

on tradition as a living process rather than a static entity parallels Stockhausen's thought: 'I

have learnt – especially in Japan – that tradition does not simply exist, but must be created

anew everyday'.[8] Where De Leeuw speaks of 'trans-subjectivity',[9] Stockhausen speaks of

'transpersonal music'.[10] But the 'cult of self', so typical of Stockhausen and his followers,

was foreign to De Leeuw, who objected to the composer's 'Wagnerian tendencies'.[11]

Other significant meetings followed, particularly with John Cage and Iannis Xenakis. In 1959

De Leeuw started teaching composition and electronic music at the Amsterdam conservatory,

---

[5] Samama and Van Lingen 2006: 261.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Sligter 1995: 73.
[8] Stockhausen 1971: 76.
[9] Sligter 1995: 75.
[10] Cott 1974: 56.
[11] Sligter 1995: xxvi.

a position he would hold until1986, even becoming director of the institute where he educated a large number of the generation of composers who followed him.

In 1961, De Leeuw made the first of several trips to India, to study classical Indian music. (Unlike Riley, Glass and Reich, however, De Leeuw did not take lessons in performing this music himself.[12]) One of the compositions resulting from this trip was *Symphonies of Winds* for wind ensemble (1963), which in its structural components refers to raga traditions, but which in its title and dedication (Stravinsky) clearly shows its Western roots. It earned him the prestigious Prof. Van der Leeuw Prize. The connection with Stravinsky is significant, since the latter composer was an inspiration both for the 'Hague School' of composers (its most famous representative being Louis Andriessen) and for the composers concentrated around the Amsterdam Conservatory and University, who focussed more on the musical traditions of the East.

De Leeuw's involvement with UNESCO[13] allowed him to travel the world, and his non-western orientation remained eclectic, with inspiration drawn from yoga, tabla, the North Indian dhrupad style, Japanese haiku and Nō Theatre, traditional Eastern instruments and improvisation techniques. Later trips to India, Iran and Indonesia, Japan proved highly inspirational to De Leeuw, leading to a large number of works such as *Men go their Ways* (1964), *Haiku I* (1963) and *II* (1968) and *Lamento Pacis* (1969). At the same time various works exploring spatial set-up and guided improvisation (*Spatial Music I-IV*) show kinship to the works of Cage, Boulez and Xenakis.

---

[12] De Groot 1991: 358, note 46.
[13] This involvement consisted of organising and/or leading a number of congresses, such as the *Musicultura* meetings and the yearly *International Composers' Workshop*, which was held alternately in the Netherlands and Bulgaria. In 1961 De Leeuw was the recipient of a grant from the Ministry of Education, Art and Science, enabling him to travel for several months through India in order to study Indian music; his experiences were channelled, among other things, into his lectures for congresses organised under the auspices of UNESCO.

When discussing the works mentioned before, De Leeuw often stressed the ethical-symbolical background of the musical material and music-making in general. Interviewed by Eddie Vetter for *Het Parool*, Ton de Leeuw commented:

> What I miss in Western musical life is the very thing that still exists in the East: that the performance of music is so intertwined with your entire personality, that one is so intensively and for such a long time involved with it, that it penetrates much deeper than in the Western system of production, where you are only a good musician if you can perform something spotlessly at any given moment.[14]

It is important to mention that, in his reference to Asian cultures, De Leeuw did so 'for lack of other suitable examples'. He repeatedly stated that he was and remained a 'Western composer', for whom speaking about Asian cultures was partly to encourage the 'deconditioning of listening'.[15] Also, De Leeuw's notion of what constituted 'Eastern music' underwent various shifts of meaning and purposes throughout his life: in the 1950s examples of non-western musical traditions (for Dutch composers especially, this meant music of the former colony of Indonesia) served as means of gaining distance from nineteenth-century Western aesthetics; the Webern revival of Darmstadt in that same decade led De Leeuw (and many of his contemporaries) to an emphasis on aspects such as austerity and concentration of musical material, such as also experienced in Eastern musical art (particularly Japanese art); in the sixties attention turned to the physical, spatial and social aspects of making music; finally, in the seventies, De Leeuw's focus shifted to modality as musical material and as philosophical concept.

During the time of De Leeuw's frequent international journeys, this modality, with its implied historical, technical and aesthetic qualities, began to play a more prominent role in his compositions. This orientation reached a high point in a trilogy on biblical texts: *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* (1981), *And they shall reign forever* (1981) and *Invocations* (1983). *Car*

---

[14] As published in: Samama and Van Lingen: 260.
[15] Quotations from Flipse 1991, translated by the author.

nos vignes was awarded the highest award in composition in the Netherlands, the Matthijs Vermeulen Prize. In 1983 De Leeuw was awarded the Johan Wagenaar Prize for his entire oeuvre.

In the important article 'Back to the Source' (1986) De Leeuw described the backgrounds of the East-West relationship in his music, coining the term 'extended modality' as a general description of his music since about 1980: 'in a certain sense a re-appreciation, a generalization and an extension of earlier modal principles, put into twentieth-century perspective'.[16] (Compare a remark by Olivier Messiaen on De Leeuw's 'modal' music: 'Ton de Leeuw's music is essentially diatonic. He uses modes, melodic lines, counterpoints, chords, but it all remains diatonic. Hardly any discords. The colour is white, or just a shade bluish, sometimes a golden light is added.'[17])

By that time De Leeuw had moved to France permanently, dividing his time between his work retreat in Vétheuil and Paris, and the occasional visit to Holland. He died on Friday 31 May 1996, mourned by many composers and musicians both within and beyond the Dutch borders, as is apparent from a large number of works composed in his memory. De Leeuw's last work, *Three Shakespeare Songs* for mezzosoprano and ensemble, was awarded the Matthijs Vermeulen Prize posthumously.

---

[16] Sligter 1995: 84.
[17] Handwritten letter from Olivier Messiaen dated 22 April 1981, published in the preface of Sligter 1995.

2.2 De Leeuw's choral works: overview

De Leeuw wrote vocal and choral works throughout his life, starting with *Berceuse presque nègre* (1948) for voice and piano, and ending with his last composition, *Three Shakespeare Songs* (1994–1995).

In retrospect, a large number of the works written before the five compositions selected for this research show characteristics that would be crystallised in De Leeuw's later works; already in his first choral composition, the *Missa Brevis* of 1952 (one of the few pieces by De Leeuw that have made it into the standard Dutch choral repertoire), one finds a clear example of modality, albeit a 'neo-medieval' form of modality freely using clichés from composers such as Machaut and Ockeghem. The work does not yet display De Leeuw's concern with the more philosophical qualities of modality, or a form of integrated compositional model. The 1953 *Prière* is more closely related to his later vocal works, combining a free form of (early-European) modality, a flexible approach to rhythm and a French translation of a prayer from the Quran.

Starting with *Prière*, De Leeuw's choral oeuvre is marked by a constant use of texts of Eastern origin: the opera *The Dream* for four soloists, choir and orchestra (1962–63) consists of fourteen settings of Japanese haikus; *The Magic of Music I* (1970) sets text from an Indian music theory; *Cloudy Forms* (1970) sets Shi-t'ao. *The Birth of Music I* (1975) is an exception to this Eastern orientation, taking on a myth of the Mexican Nahua-people. From then on De Leeuw's works show a preference for French translations of Middle-Eastern texts.

Car nos vignes sont en fleur, forming a trilogy with *And they shall reign forever* (1981) and *Invocations* (1983), is a pivotal point in De Leeuw's choral oeuvre on several counts; the text is again of Eastern origin, but for the first time this is a text taken from the Bible, engaging with Christian tradition. Also, the work does not feature a single integrated compositional system, but offers an amalgam of separate compositional models, each of

which can be considered a strong precursor to the different compositional procedures of the following choral works. Again, De Leeuw's concern with the more philosophical aspects of the musical material can be found in the score's remarks: 'The bourdon tones A-D-A give musical expression to the image of the perfectly balanced inner self of a person in a state of deep rest'; 'The musical performance is not only an activity requiring technical and musical expertise, but is also an emotional/intellectual process of experiencing.'[18] (Compare Karlheinz Stockhausen's remarks on his *Stimmung* [1968] for vocal ensemble: '*Stimmung* incorporates the meanings of the tuning of a piano, the tuning of the voice, the tuning of a group of people, the tuning of the soul. This is all in the German word. Also, when you say: We're in a good *Stimmung*, you mean a good psychological tuning, being well tuned together.'[19])

The biblical trilogy was followed by two extended works for small vocal ensemble, both commissioned by Radio France and written for the *A sei voci* ensemble: *Chimères* (text by Gérard de Nerval) and *Les chants de Kabir* (text from the fifteenth-century Indian mystic Kabir). Recurring themes in the texts of these later works are (divine) love, light, transparency and unity.

The four-movement *Transparence* (1986) sets texts by Arabian mystics and formed De Leeuw's first foray into combined choral and ensemble writing since *Lamento Pacis* of 1969. This writing is continued in the *Cinq hymnes* (1987−1988) for chorus, pianos and percussion, again on texts by Kabir.

A cette heure du jour (1991−1992) for choir a cappella sets a French 'translation' of an apparently old Sumerian text (questions remain about its authenticity), which tells of a royal scribe from Sumer professing his love for a priestess in wartime. Authentic or not, the themes of the text chime perfectly with De Leeuw's later works.

---

[18] Sligter 1995: 90.
[19] Cott 1974: 162.

In 1993 De Leeuw wrote his last opera, adapting Sophocles' *Antigone*. The wartime conditions of *A cette heure du jour* were again brought to the fore, with De Leeuw focussing on individuals as pawns in a game in which they have no choice but to play their part: 'a dramatic story that can be viewed as both human drama and sacred play'; 'no expressionism, but clear, sober intensity, sober vocal lines of an almost liturgical dimension, in a compact modal-cyclical writing.'[20] Parallels to this opera may be found in the 'Greek' works of Stravinsky (e.g. *Oedipus Rex*).

Élégie pour les villes détruites (1994) closes De Leeuw's choral oeuvre with a return to biblical texts (Psalms, Isaiah and Jeremiah) in a mix of Latin and French, vividly brought into modern context by the addition of recited names of bombed cities, including Sarajevo and De Leeuw's native Rotterdam. The aforementioned themes of divine love and eternity seem far away, their place taken by bleak scenes of war, destruction and despair, continuing the line of *Lamento Pacis*, *A cette heure du jour* and *Antigone*. The *Élégie*'s final movement however is formed by a prayer of thanksgiving: 'Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations'.

It is noteworthy that in his later years De Leeuw focussed more and more on writing vocal works. From *Car nos vignes* onward (1981), the composer's list of works included a relatively high number of choral works and pieces for small chamber groups. A shared feature of the works written in this period is the use of the so-called 'model' as backbone for the composition. With the introduction of this 'model', De Leeuw's writing appears more crystallised and interconnected, for example in its increasing diatonicism ('extended modality') and the melodic, 'vocal' quality of his writing for instruments (e.g. *Apparences I* for cello solo, *Apparences II* for clarinet quartet, and the *String Quartet III*). The twelve-tone serial and spatial procedures which were important in *Spatial Music I–IV* (1966–1971) or

---

[20] De Leeuw 1993.

Lamento Pacis I–III (1969) are reduced to a minimum, with aspects of spatiality expressed through a work's text or the internal set-up of the ensemble (e.g. *Car nos vignes*).

De Leeuw did not entirely eschew writing for larger ensembles, but this writing often appears in context of vocal forces (*Transparence, Cinq Hymnes, Three Shakespeare Songs*). A noteworthy feature of De Leeuw's compositions for larger instrumental ensemble (such as the chamber concerto *Alba* of 1982, the *Concerto* for two guitars and strings of 1988, and the *Danses sacrées* for piano and chamber orchestra of 1990) is the reference to (sacred) dance. As De Leeuw said: 'Dance, movement and music reflect, on a human level, the unceasing flow of all moving matter in our universe. They are, so to speak, a stylized representation. If one experiences this unity, dance and music take on a sacred character.'[21]

---

[21] From the website of the composer's publisher, Donemus:
https://webshop.donemus.nl/action/front/composer/Leeuw,+Ton+de, accessed 06-06-2016.

3.1 De Leeuw's writings: overview[22]

Besides his activities as composer, musicologist and conservatory teacher, De Leeuw was the author of a large number of texts and lectures dealing with a wide range of subjects. Starting in the 1950s, De Leeuw's writings encompass discussions and analyses for musicological journals, a number of diaries of his UNESCO journeys,[23] lectures and papers for international congresses, workshops and masterclasses, and books motivated by his work as teacher, such as *Music of the Twentieth Century*. Most of the premieres of his works were accompanied by programme notes and interviews with the major Dutch newspapers, elaborating on the composer's musico-philosophical opinions and intentions. Next to these written sources, the composer agreed to a large number of interviews with Rokus de Groot between 1984 and 1991 when the latter was writing his dissertation on the composition and intention of De Leeuw's music.[24]

Certain aspects of these writings and interviews (especially his programme notes) should be approached cautiously in the context of academic research. First of all, it should be remembered that De Leeuw was a twentieth-century, post-war European composer, in a time when it was standard practice to supply notes and explanations – sometimes even 'defences' – for the premieres of new works. In De Leeuw's case, one notices an aversion to the 'strong opinions' and 'schools' of Darmstadt, The Hague, Stockhausen and Boulez, and to any form of artistic dogmatism.

This attitude is expressed in most of De Leeuw's cautious descriptions and explanations, using relatively general terms to describe the relation of philosophy and music

---

[22] A detailed bibliography of publications by and on Ton de Leeuw, prepared by Ariane de Leeuw, can be found at Donemus publishers (www.donemus.nl). De Leeuw's programme notes are held as documents at Donemus publishers in The Hague; in general, they are from the same year as the completion of the related work.
[23] See note 13.
[24] De Groot 1991: 445.

and carefully avoiding more definite descriptions, and this general tone tends to provide little ground for concrete discussion. An example of this is his 1979 Sydney lecture, where the composer criticised the 'lack of openness for non-Western music' in Europe[25] – a claim De Leeuw must have known to be far too general for 1979. (Perhaps in this case, the composer was referring to the 'wrong' kind of openness such as *chinoiserie* or exoticism, but his statements on this remain too vague to be discussed in more detail.)

On the other hand, De Leeuw's writing could sometimes be quite direct and specific, for example refuting the 'complete dissolution of the musical language' that he experienced in the thoughts and works of John Cage, caused by a lack of 'structural consistency and technical superiority' such as found in the Zen art on which Cage claimed to base his thinking.[26] Most of De Leeuw's texts point towards problems of contemporary musical practice, proposing alternatives to the reader or listener, often referring to non-Western music.

The relation of the concepts 'East' and 'West' is a recurrent theme throughout De Leeuw's writing; the composer considered this to be one of the major defining issues of contemporary Western art. Judging from his texts, a polarisation of these concepts seems to have taken place in the composer's thoughts at the end of the 1950s.

Both concepts are used by the composer to describe more general attitudes and structures than actual geographic or cultural conditions: 'West' is, for De Leeuw, a general description of the 'exaggerated cult of personality',[27] expressed most strongly in German music as it has developed since Beethoven and Wagner ('romantic artistry', or 'German-Romantic subjectivism');[28] 'East' is the description of a way of life which he characterised as a 'liberation from subjective individualism', and as a 'return to original being'.[29] De Leeuw's

---

[25] De Leeuw 1979.
[26] Sligter 1995: 46, 47.
[27] Sligter 1995: 75.
[28] De Leeuw 2005: 97, 117 and 132.
[29] De Leeuw 2005: 117.

writings vary in their outspokenness, but it is clear from his wording that his sympathy rests with the latter attitude.

Again, such writings should be looked at critically: the polarisation of 'East' and 'West' is not unique to the works and writings of De Leeuw, and his statements should be seen in relation to those of his contemporaries and predecessors (for example, in the Netherlands, prior examples can be found in the writings of Gerardus van der Leeuw and De Leeuw's own teacher Jaap Kunst[30]). In addition, the elements De Leeuw associated with both poles can already be pointed out in nineteenth-century art,[31] the major difference in this polarisation however being the *reversion* of dominance between the two poles from the one century to the next; elements associated with 'East' such as stasis, silence, non-development ('being instead of becoming'[32]) assumed the structural role once taken by the idea of development. The works and writings of De Leeuw provide clear examples of the widespread shift of dominance within this polarisation.

Three texts stand out as milestones in the composer's life and works. The article *Music in the East and the West – A Social Problem*[33] (1969) summarises De Leeuw's earlier travel experiences throughout the East (such as the 1963 travel diary publication 'People and Music in India' and the 1968 article 'Travel Memories from Japan'), and describes the polarisation of East-Western philosophical and artistic attitudes, and the contemporary issues resulting from a clash between both poles, as experienced by De Leeuw.

Music of the Twentieth Century – A Study of Its Elements and Structure (1961–62, published in 1964) was written – and is still used – as a textbook, and demonstrates De Leeuw's acute manner of discussing topics such as rhythm, melody, simultaneity, timbre, musical exoticism and folklore, drawing on a wide range of interests. The work may be

---

[30] See for example Van der Leeuw 1963 or Kunst 2013.
[31] See for example Dahlhaus 1980: 256–9 and Longyear 1973: 5–6.
[32] Kunst 2013: 120.
[33] First published in *The World of Music* (UNESCO 1969), XI/4, p. 6-17.

considered the distillation of his critical writing for musical journals and programme notes, but also, because of the moment of its creation, an affirmation of De Leeuw's own points of view on composition. References to 'East' abound, either as support for recent Western compositional techniques, or as counterweight to objectionable developments in the West.

The article 'Back to the Source' (1986) reveals a composer advocating a return to those cultures where music was assigned not only an aesthetic but also an *ethical* function, illustrated by examples from a number of his works. In this article, De Leeuw writes at length on 'extended modality', the term used to describe the nature and rationale of his later compositions.

Since all the works selected for this dissertation are clearly connected to the topics mentioned in 'Back to the Source', a more in-depth discussion of the article seems appropriate. The goal of this discussion will be to discern:

- which intentions, concerns or topics are considered fundamental by the composer in his later compositions;

- how the composer's statements on these intentions, concerns or topics in the article relate to De Leeuw's own time (are these statements typical or atypical in comparison with those of his contemporaries?);

- how these statements can contribute to analysis of his work.

3.2 'Back to the Source'

Written in the summer of 1986 and revised for publication in 1990, this article was first

published in 1992 and in English translation in Sligter 1995. As stated in the opening

sentence, 'this article deals with the backgrounds of the East-West relationship in [De

Leeuw's] music'. Further on, De Leeuw writes of hoping to clarify 'several matters and terms

that are often brought up in discussions of my work, but are most often left undefined'.[34] He

continues by discussing his artistic development over the years, recurrent elements in Indian

thought, the musical results of such thought, and the musical elements of 'extended modality'

in his works since about 1980, including his 'model' technique.

This 'extended modality' – a heading which De Leeuw used for a number of

compositions including the then seven-year-old *Car nos vignes sont en fleurs* and recently

completed *Transparence* – is further explained in relation to the article's title:

> (Extended) modality is a product of the interrelationship of a large number of
> elements.
>
> 'Extended modality' is in a certain sense a re-appreciation, a generalization and an
> extension of earlier modal principles [he mentions Indian *raga*, Arabic *maqaam*,
> Javanese *patet* and ancient-Greek *nomos*], put into twentieth-century perspective. It is
> also a reaction to the impasse reached in our music and is foreign to the background
> that bred both late western tonality and atonality.
>
> 'Return to the Source' refers as much to Asia as it does to the beginning of our own
> culture. The relationship to earlier modal systems lies not so much in the structure as
> in the orientation. One could say that extended modality is as much an attitude as it is
> a technical approach.[35]

It becomes clear from the article that De Leeuw was attracted to the concept of modality for a

number of reasons: its inclusion of both musical and non-musical aspects, its 'centripetal

orientation' (contrasting to the 'centrifugal tendency' of recent Western music), and De

---

[34] Sligter 1995: 73.
[35] Sligter 1995: 83–85.

Leeuw's view of modality as a consistent 'whole' of elements (the word 'unity' is often mentioned).

As with his polarisation of 'East' and 'West', De Leeuw's advocating of modality and a 'return to the source' in the period from the 1950s to the 1980s should not be seen as isolated statements. Indeed, in direct relation to De Leeuw, one need only remember Messiaen's re-interpretation of modal traditions in his 'modes of limited transposition', Stockhausen's and Cage's musico-philosophical orientation towards Asia (Japan in particular), and the Asian- and early European-inspired modality of American composers Riley, Glass and Reich. In the Netherlands, the cultural practices described by De Leeuw as the 'Western pole' were viewed just as negatively – even rejected – by contemporary composers such as Louis Andriessen, Theo Loevendie, Simeon ten Holt and Peter Schat (the latter introducing his 1982 'Tone Clock', an inventory of all possible triads in the chromatic scale, with the intention of 'solving the problem of tonality once and for all'[36]).

Although De Leeuw more than once spoke of an 'impasse' in contemporary music, his cautious choice of words (e.g. 'reaction', contrary to the word 'solution' as used by his compatriot Schat; 'a general description'; 'in a broad sense'; 'music *can* serve…') is again noticeable. The text reads as a reflection rather than a strong statement or manifesto, the latter being commonplace at the time just before this text was written (with Darmstadt or the Dutch 'war' between conventional symphony orchestras and recently formed ensembles as examples).[37]

---

[36] Schat 1982.
[37] For literature on the latter, see Adlington 2013a and 2013b.

3.2.1 Topics, concerns or intentions

Due to De Leeuw's reflective, cautious tone, the results of his intention of '[clarifying]

several matters and terms that are often brought up in discussions of my work, but are most

often left undefined' are not entirely clear. However, at one point in the article, the composer

captured in fairly direct sentences the essence of his thought, by summarising what music is to

him:

> To me, (my) music is primarily a symbol. It is a symbol of unity, the resolution of
> discrepancies; a quest for equilibrium; unity is reflected in multiplicity; the audible
> reflection of the laws of nature (for instance in cyclical structures) and the supreme
> symbol of mortality.[38]

With this statement as a lead, a topical comparison will now be made to demonstrate how De

Leeuw's views relate to those of his contemporaries.

'... a symbol of unity'

'Unity' is one of those topics that De Leeuw referred to in almost all his writings; he used the

term for its spiritual as well as musical and technical connotations. The intention of

connecting all the elements of a composition in some way is in itself not a new topic,

recognised as an artistic virtue since antiquity.[39]

    In the case of De Leeuw's teacher Messiaen, one finds examples of both the spiritual

and musico-technical connotations of the idea: the first can be seen in his inclusion of a wide

variety of musical materials (Hindu rhythms, bird song, plainchant, etc.) for the purpose of

communicating one – religious – idea (themes such as the Apocalypse, Pentecost, the Holy

Trinity). This inclusion closely resembles the 'unity … reflected in multiplicity' mentioned by

De Leeuw. Examples of unity in terms of musical techniques or processes are also found in

---

[38] Sligter 1995: 83.
[39] See for example Smith 2004, chapter II, or Stead 1994, chapter XIV.

Messiaen's music, such as fitting different musical materials within his all-embracing 'modes of limited transposition'.[40]

The difference between both composers' notions of 'unity' is clarified by De Leeuw's other remarks on music as a 'symbol of unity': 'the resolution of discrepancies; a quest for equilibrium'. For De Leeuw, this striving found expression in an attempt to interconnect a number of parameters already in the first stages of composition, such as in his models (to be explained below). In the case of Messiaen, most of his compositions lack an underlying model or technical procedure which determines or interconnects the *entire* composition's parameters. If such procedures are used in Messiaen's compositions, they are often simultaneously combined with other procedures or contrasting elements, through which the balance of the multiplicity of musical material becomes the 'equilibrium'. De Leeuw's striving for balance found expression in keeping the compositional elements small in quantity and closely related from the start; Messiaen's 'equilibrium' is an inclusion of many heterogeneous elements, which need not find resolution per se.

'... the audible reflection of the laws of nature'

Another similarity between both composers' work is found in the phrase 'the audible reflection of the laws of nature'. Messiaen often referred to natural phenomena when describing his music, such as birdsong and resonance. De Leeuw did not elaborate on this topic, but pointed to patterns and forms encountered in nature as examples for his work. Presumably, he also referred to nature to contrast the intention of 'subjecting nature' (such as often found in the art he associates with the 'Western pole') with that of 'listening to nature'. This attitude can be considered more important than actual examples of natural laws being

---

[40] See for example Messiaen 1944: 94.

applied in De Leeuw's compositions; he does not imitate or depict sounds of nature such as birdcalls, nor do his works and statements show elements of a 'Spectralist' approach.[41]

Mentioning nature within the context of twentieth-century composition demands a comparison to the work of John Cage. Just as De Leeuw did, this composer often referred to nature in relation to the goal of 'non-development' of sonic material, as illustrated by a quotation from his influential book *Silence*: '… to let sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expression of human sentiments.'[42] When comparing De Leeuw and Cage, one finds many similarities in their concern for the ethical (rather than just the aesthetic) nature of music and the attitude of the composer, musician and listener alike (De Leeuw: 'One could say that extended modality is as much an attitude as it is a technical approach'). And for both composers, Asia was a catalyst in their evolution.

De Leeuw knew Cage personally and discussed his person and attitude in a number of his writings and interviews, in a mix of admiration and critique. Cage's interpretation of Zen art led to a radical approach to composition, in which he focussed more on creating circumstances for experiencing sonic events than actually developing musical material. By comparison, De Leeuw was the more traditional composer, still using instruments and traditional parameters of composition to communicate with his audience, reserving the more philosophical side of his approach to music for his composition lessons, lectures and writings. De Leeuw's remark on 'the audible *reflection* of the laws of nature' (author's emphasis) underlines the difference between him and Cage: Cage wanted to direct the audience's full attention to a sound as it is, De Leeuw strove for this attitude of listening through the composition of sounds.

---

[41] Spectral music is a composition technique using computer analysis of the quality of timbre in acoustic music or artificial timbres derived from synthesis. The spectral approach focuses on manipulating, interconnecting and transforming spectral features of sounds. (See for example Anderson 2001.) For an exceptional example in which De Leeuw seemed to try his hand at such a form of composition, see the second movement of *Transparence*.

[42] Cage 2010: 10.

'… the supreme symbol of mortality': the question of a temporal art

The quest for a 'liberated', 'trans-subjective' music is also found in many of De Leeuw's contemporaries' focus on ideas of eternity, sacredness, transcendence and the religious (e.g. Pärt, Tavener, Górecki, Messiaen, Stockhausen). One problem resulting from this focus was that of how to express such transcendent, 'eternal' themes through the time-bound medium of music. The music of Ton de Leeuw cannot evade this problem. The composer wrote of music as a 'temporal-spatial art [and] with this last dimension, it touches on timelessness.'[43] Again, the composer's wording should be read carefully: 'it *touches* on timelessness'. From his writings, it is clear that De Leeuw did not intend to write an 'eternal music' (such as for example envisioned by Stockhausen[44]), but rather viewed the fleeting nature of the medium as a positive quality:

> Music is just as much a temporal/spatial phenomenon as is the human organism, of which it is a projection.[45]

> The human spirit finds its greatness, not in clinging to constancy, but in its capacity for continual transformation.[46]

In his view of music as a 'supreme symbol of mortality', De Leeuw shows kinship to his contemporaries' acknowledgement of music as a temporal medium, bound to a beginning and ending. But it is his handling of this medium that sets him apart from his colleagues: whereas composers such as Stockhausen and Messiaen intended to 'overcome' time through their works, and composers such as Feldman emphasized its fleeting, moribund nature ('my music is mourning'[47]), De Leeuw accepted music as a 'mortal' medium, but stated that 'precisely in this image of mortality in music … we may find the concentration of all human expression.

---

[43] Sligter 1995: 91.
[44] See for example Toop 1991.
[45] Sligter 1995: 91.
[46] Sligter 1995: 84.
[47] Citation from Metzger 1972.

We touch eternity with music and [*sic*] because of its fleeting nature.'[48] De Leeuw's use of a 'model' reflects this attitude (as we shall see): a theoretically endless process is created, which is brought to life with the composer's hand merely directing its time-bound beginning and ending.

Regarding temporality, a short comparison between the thoughts and works of De Leeuw and those of his compatriot Louis Andriessen is appropriate; the works of Andriessen often deal with the topic of temporality, as is apparent in work titles such as *Contra tempus*, *Anachronie*, *De Tijd* ('Time'), *De Snelheid* ('Speed') and *Trilogy of the Last Day*.

Andriessen's engagement with the topic has varied between compositions, from mere reference (e.g. *Facing Death*) to a strong identification between (extra-musical) subject and (musical) realisation (e.g. *De Tijd*). In contrast, De Leeuw's notion of temporality (and music's relation to temporality as a 'symbol') remained more or less unchanged; this is seen most clearly in the homogeneity of the late choral works' temporal aspects (see 6.1).

There is a similarity between both composers' works in their varied attempts to manipulate the listener's perception of time. However, there is also a difference in their means of achieving this goal: Andriessen's music often involves types of repetition associated with the American minimalists and/or extremes of tempo, note lengths and the number of repetitions (e.g. *De Tijd*); De Leeuw's works hardly ever contain such extremes and rarely feature exact repetition.

Another important difference in the composers' handling of time is found in the first stages of composition: in nearly all of his works, Andriessen started out from a specific length of time, which he then divided according to specific proportions (and often re-applied to sections of the composition). Temporality in music, for Andriessen, consisted of a set length of time with a clear beginning and ending, determined by the composer.

---

[48] Sligter 1995: 84.

In contrast, De Leeuw's philosophy, clearly taking its cue from Eastern philosophical traditions, took as its starting point a state described as the 'ultimate reality', transcending the present temporality/spatiality (more on this in 6.1). His music focusses not so much on the division of a set amount of time as on symbolising (suggesting) the existence of a transcendent state outside the music as it is. One means of achieving this was De Leeuw's 'model'.

Compositional technique: the 'model'

In 'Back to the Source', De Leeuw explains the compositional technique he has used for his works since the composition *Gending* (1975), the 'model'. In most compositions discussed here (in fact, in almost all of his later works since *Gending*) such a compositional technique could be deduced even without prior knowledge of the technique or its description by the composer. The model will be briefly explained here.

De Leeuw's use of a model as basis for a composition is important to this study for two reasons: first, its use is strongly connected to the composer's written and spoken compositional concerns; second, knowledge of the model will help in exploring the five compositions. The model itself is a *potential*, which is only brought to sound by the composer's selection. In both his composition of the model and his selections, the composer's systematic and aesthetic criteria can be discerned more clearly.

A model is best described as the blueprint for a composition, consisting of two elements: a predetermined arrangement of pitch classes, and a 'time grid' through which this arrangement is filtered. The arrangement of pitch classes is repeated continually in the course of a composition in a perpetuum of one durational value (for example, quavers) and filtered through the 'time grid', so that not all pitch classes of the model need actually be heard with each appearance. The following example demonstrates its use:

Ex. 1: *the 'model' of 'Résonances' (a) with examples of different realisations (b, c, d).*[49]

Each pitch class has its set place at which it can be caused to be played through selection by the composer (usually in the form of a superimposed rhythmic pattern): a fairly simple technique aimed at connecting pitch and time within a composition. In the model's implied repetition (in the article, the composer mentions repetition as fundamental to his model technique), an attempt can be seen to construct a composition on a cyclical rather than a developmental basis: 'The constellation of pitches passing through the filter do not constitute variations or developments, but are other versions of the same constant foundation,' wrote De Leeuw.[50] This view was connected to the ideas described elsewhere in the article: a 'centripetal orientation' and aim for a consistent 'whole' or 'unity' of different musical elements.

---

[49] Copied from the article (Sligter 1995: 87). The A$^\flat$ in the penultimate bar of the upper system of C is presumably a mistake on behalf of the composer or publisher, since it does not appear in the full score of *Résonances*.
[50] Sligter 1995: 85.

For some pieces, the underlying model is quite easy to find or hear: in certain sections of *A cette heure du jour* one notices a more or less similar arrangement of pitches returning a number of times within a short time span, hinting at the possibility of such an arrangement as backbone for the composition; by comparing these series of pitches and their durations, a larger arrangement can be found. Similarly, in the case of the fourth movement of the *Élégie*, the seemingly unnecessary notation and duration of rests points towards an underlying system of pitches and duration; however, precisely because of these long rests this system can only be partially deduced.

Following on De Leeuw's description, all five works have been analysed for their possible model. This analysis consisted of notating a work's pitch classes on a grid according to their appearance on a timeline of the smallest durational value (quavers in most cases). The only work in which no such model was found is *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*; the models of the other four works are discussed in more detail in their respective explorations.

On using a compositional system

John Cage's idea of letting 'the sounds be themselves' mentioned earlier is an example of a broader theme within post-War composition: the relation of the composer towards his musical material. 'Not developing' musical material, or the intention of minimal intervention by a composer with respect to his material, is a returning topic in post-War composers' compositions and writings. For some composers, this meant searching for compositional systems or procedures that would, in some way, minimize the composer's or performer's ego, such as expressed in Steve Reich's famous 'Music as a Gradual Process':

While performing and listening to gradual musical processes one can participate in a particular liberating and impersonal kind of ritual. Focusing in on the musical process makes possible that shift of attention away from he and she and you and me outwards towards it.[51]

De Leeuw's model technique is an example of such process music, typical of a mid-twentieth-century composer in its intentions: unifying a composition's different elements, concerned with the ethical and philosophical nature of music, and oriented towards an eschewal of the Western Classical-Romantic notion of development. In the music of all the composers mentioned before one can find examples of process music based on these intentions.

However, De Leeuw's use of the model technique differs on some points from the process music as described by Reich, for where the latter more than once stresses the audible connection between compositional process and resulting music, De Leeuw's model 'represents the ideal realization of various elements while allowing great flexibility as to their actual appearance'.[52] In short, the composer sets up a process, but does not let it 'run by itself' and is allowed to intervene in the process taking place. Where Reich states that 'the distinctive thing about musical processes is that they determine all the note-to-note … details and the overall form simultaneously', De Leeuw writes 'the entire group of these characteristics determines *to a certain degree* the individual structure of each new work'[53] (author's emphasis).

The similarities and differences between Cage, Reich and De Leeuw and their use of process music are noteworthy: all three composers aim at achieving an 'impersonal', 'liberated', less ego-focussed music through a form of process music, inspired by non-Western traditions.

The manner in which they share this process with the performer and listener, however, is completely different; Cage used processes (such as the *I Ching*) for himself as a composer,

---

[51] Reich 2002.
[52] Sligter 1995: 91.
[53] Ibid.: 86.

but, for most of his pieces, does not let the process be heard in the performance (a discrepancy for which he was criticized by both Reich and De Leeuw); Reich wanted the compositional process and the sounding music to be one and the same thing, aiming at an 'extremely gradual' musical process to facilitate it being heard; De Leeuw balanced between both composers in his use of a process, keeping a hand on its actual appearance; his process is an inaudible *potential*, brought into sound by the composer's hand. A noticeable feature of De Leeuw's later works is that a balance is sought in bringing as much of the process to the fore as to imply its presence, but never revealing the process in its full realization. In this, the music takes on the function of a signal or symbol, in relation to the underlying model.

In the construction of his model and its handling, De Leeuw showed a kinship to the 'infinity series' of his friend, the Danish composer Per Nørgård.[54] Here, the difference between the two composers is in the orientation: in their essence, Nørgård's series display an outward, centrifugal orientation, expanding to a wider range of pitches and melodic gestures throughout the piece, while De Leeuw's models tend to circle around one central pitch and aim for a balance between outward and inward motion. Also, Nørgård's music is often constructed from full, uninterrupted series, performed in long strings of a single repetitive duration (Nørgård's second and third symphonies being good examples); De Leeuw's compositions do not contain such long repetitive textures.[55]

De Leeuw's use of the model differs from most of his contemporaries' systems in not aiming at an inclusion of all possible pitches or intervals within the octave (such as Peter Schat's 'Tone Clock'), or serializing all parameters of a composition (such as in some of the works of Berio, Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez).

---

[54] See for further explanation on this technique Mortensen 2007.
[55] For literature on Nørgård, see Yoell 1974 and Ketting 1990.

Conclusions

As is clear from the above discussion, De Leeuw's topics in 'Back to the Source' should be considered typical of their time. The East/West polarisation, avoidance of (the idea of) the Classical-Romantic tradition, intentions such as that of interconnecting all the elements of a composition and minimizing the composer's influence on the composition in one way or the other (such as chance technique or process music), and questions of expressing transcendent themes through the time-bound medium of music are found in the works and writings of many of De Leeuw's contemporaries.

However, De Leeuw often differs from his colleagues in a more *specific* approach. He abhorred the general and vague ideas on 'the East' and any form of imitation, and had an extensive knowledge of non-Western art and music in particular – something which could not be said from all composers inspired by 'the East', especially those in the Netherlands. De Leeuw's East/West polarisation focusses more on the *intentional* aspects of music (such as expressed in his descriptions of 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal' orientation) rather than its outward elements.[56]

In his attempt to interconnect different elements of a composition (pitch and time in particular), De Leeuw was less radical in his use of a compositional system than his contemporaries; for him, a musical form of process always needed to be guided by the disciplined hand of the composer. His 'model' technique is noteworthy (but not unique) for its cyclical intention, striking a balance between a theoretically 'endless' music and a composition with a start and ending.

---

[56] For a comprehensive discussion of intention in De Leeuw's music, see De Groot 1991.

'Back to the Source' is equally interesting for the things that De Leeuw *did not* mention. Although well-acquainted with electronic music (he wrote electronic music and taught the subject at the Amsterdam conservatory), this topic is conspicuously absent in the article. This absence strongly contrasts with the writings of Stockhausen, who channelled many of his Asian-inspired ideas into works featuring electronic media, programme notes included. Its absence is also noteworthy because of similarities in composition technique between De Leeuw's 'model' and electronic music (these similarities will be discussed in chapter V).

Concerning modality, De Leeuw only mentioned centuries-old *non-Western* modal traditions: Indian *raga*, Arabic *maqaam*, Javanese *patet* and ancient-Greek *nomos*. His first encounters with modality from his years of study, such as Gregorian chant and the composers Messiaen and Stravinsky were left out, although he frequently mentioned both composers' works (*and* related modality) throughout his *Music of the Twentieth Century*. Presumably, both composers were omitted because De Leeuw spoke of 'as much an attitude as (...) a technical approach' and therefore focussed on traditions instead of individual artists.

However, the absence of Gregorian chant is striking; if De Leeuw spoke of a 're-appreciation, a generalization and an extension', why didn't he do so in relation to the modal traditions of his own 'Western pole'? The topic is also absent from his *Music of the Twentieth Century*, although De Leeuw had some knowledge of chant (he sang chant in a church choir in his teenage years) and, more importantly, used chant in some of his compositions, such as the 1983 *Invocations*.

A reason for this can perhaps be found in a radio interview of 1995, where De Leeuw was questioned on his use of chant; he stated that Europe's early modal traditions could be divided into 'liturgical and extra-liturgical music', differentiating it from the Asian modal

traditions, 'where all music, in and outside the liturgy, is religious'.[57] Again, the composer seemed to look for examples that encompassed 'as much an attitude as (…) a technical approach', resorting to those traditions where religious music appeared fully integrated in daily life, up to modern times. In contrast, De Leeuw described the West as 'a world that seems to have lost all touch with this value [spirituality], or is only concerned with it on Sunday mornings'.[58]

Usability in musical analysis

As mentioned before, 'Back to the Source' should be read critically with the question of its usability in musical analysis in mind.

From a historical angle, the article could be considered a determination of De Leeuw's own position as a composer/ethnomusicologist, and at the same time, a presentation of topics common to European post-War composition. It is therefore a useful source for historical comparisons, such as those made above.

From a more technical angle, the article is useful to musical analysis in terms of clarifying the 'model' as used by De Leeuw, a technique that could be presumed without prior explanation given by the composer. The article also gives some valuable insight in the relation between De Leeuw's intentions and technique, but it does not elaborate on further steps in the process of composition, such as selection and differentiation of the model or deviation from the model.

De Leeuw's view of music ('a symbol of unity…' etc.) is interesting for its semiotic angle: his music *symbolises* – thus refers to – certain topics, which consequently raises the question of whether these references are communicated to the listener and if so, how De Leeuw constructs his music in such a way that a reference *can* be communicated. What is the

---

[57] Van Hulsen 1995.
[58] Sligter 1995: 83.

relation between the intended reference and the medium by which it is communicated? What elements of this communicative language are typical or unique? And, fundamental to choral music: how does the text relate to all of this?

With such topics and questions in mind, the following explorations will delve deeper into the elements, construction and specificity of De Leeuw's musical language, as expressed in his later choral works.

PART II

EXPLORATIONS

IV.

CAR NOS VIGNES SONT EN FLEUR

text: selections from the Song of Songs;
commissioned by Radio France for *Atelier Vocal*;
first performance: Paris 1981, *Atelier Vocal* conducted by Guy Reibel;
conceived as a trilogy together with the works *And they shall reign forever* (1981) and
Invocations (1983)[59]

The closing movement of *Car nos vignes* is an unexpected unison chant, *grave et soutenu*, initiated by a solo tenor. Gradually, other voices join the propelling melody, which in terms of musical material seems to bite its own tail at every new entrance of a voice. The final result of this additive process is a tidal wave of voices, each voice tumbling over the other on the evocative words 'le feu de l'amour'. It is an ending with a feeling of resolution, which seemed far off in the violent preceding movement, where the work's text described the hopeless quest of two separated lovers.

Car nos vignes sont en fleur is a work that balances between these two extremes: it describes love, but, in the words of the composer, 'also includes the fear of losing this love, the quest towards love, and the sublimation of love in a striving towards unification with the divine'.[60] Its composition is notable for examples of those characteristics that are at the root of much of Ton de Leeuw's later work.

In this first exploration, three topics that are characteristic of *Car nos vignes* and the late choral works as a whole will be discussed through a closer examination of the work's outer movements: the expression of 'unity' and 'unification', the presentation of text, and the role of repetition and cyclicity.

---

[59] Preface to the score.
[60] Programme note by the composer, reproduced at
https://webshop.donemus.nl/action/front/sheetmusic/7473/Car+nos+vignes+sont+en+fleurs. Viewed 29-12-2015.

4.1 Unity and unification

Browsing through the score of *Car nos vignes*, one's attention is immediately drawn to its notation: the landscape-format score displays sections of guided improvisation, a relative notation of pitch, micro-tonal notation, and a complete lack of time signatures throughout. The overall impression is that of *potential*, waiting to be brought to life by an ensemble of singers. Performance remarks given in the score appear to confirm this impression, indicating a more flexible approach in sense of timing, phrasing, and the order of pitches sung.[61]

The score's layout clearly points to the composer's interest in the spatial possibilities of the ensemble. The disposition of the choir in a semi-circle is specified in the introduction as follows:

S1 S2 S3 T1 A1 T2 A2 T3 A3 B1 B2 B3

On further examination of the work, a direct relationship between the positioning of the singers and the development (or rather, 'course') of the musical material becomes apparent, with different divisions of the ensemble made for each movement.

The first movement's musical material, a hummed sequence of notes, is introduced in the two voices in the middle of the ensemble (Tenor 2 and Alto 2) and is gradually taken over by the other voices, in symmetrical direction to the outer flanks of the ensemble; this process is repeated on pages 3 and 4 when new musical material is introduced. A contrast to this outward direction is created in the third movement, where imitations of short phrases move from the left side of the ensemble (Soprano 1) to the right (Bass 3). The fourth movement features a division of the ensemble into two parts: a litany-like description of the lover's

---

[61] Examples from page 1 of the score:
'1) Settle each phase before continuing. Internally, feel the approach towards or removal from the centre [a, d', a'].
2) Repeat the same motif, freely, without haste, with intervals between each motif. Integrate in the total sonority of the group, yet without rhythmical synchronisation.
3) Free order of the prescribed notes.'

beauty in the middle two voices, alternated with acclamations sung by the outer flanks of the ensemble. In the fifth movement, the division is more blurred, with pairings of voices from all over the ensemble calling out to one another in rhapsodic phrases ('O Toi, …'). The suggestion of division and spatiality increases in the sixth movement, which features a wide diversity of musical material: impassioned melodic phrases, guided improvisation and striking percussive sounds (shouted 'takadama') for all voices, with no clear-cut musical material or spatial direction of this material in the ensemble. The conflict (or at least confusion) is apparently resolved in the seventh movement, which starts out as a unison chant, initiated by a solo voice close to the middle of the group, spreading out over the entire ensemble. During the chant, some voices occasionally follow their own path for one or two bars, after which they return to reinforce the seemingly unstoppable melody.

Clearly, different divisions and different levels of division are made in the ensemble throughout *Car nos vignes*. Following the first six movements' dramatic line as expressed in this spatial division, there is a growing sense of disunity, given shape by an increasingly divided ensemble, reaching an extreme in the shouted 'takadama' of the sixth movement. A sense of resolution is achieved by the (at that point) unexpected introduction of a unison melody. In terms of division, this seventh movement is the most 'undivided' of all: although heterophony exists in short periods of one or two bars, all voices keep returning to the same unison melody, signifying a continuous process of reunification.

This observation, combined with an idea of the work's text, could lead to the assumption that, in terms of the ensemble's division, 'unity' and 'unification' are apparently the goals of the composer's discourse (in line with his own statements on music as 'a symbol of unity'). However, if accepting this assumption, the question could be asked why the composer needed to compose any music after the first movement's opening, which starts with two voices humming on the same note A: a perfect expression of unity as it is.

A comparison between the first and the last movement of *Car nos vignes* will serve to clarify this point, and offer an illustration of De Leeuw's varied musical treatment of such themes. Both outer movements feature musical material that is in some way unified; a start from unison, a discourse featuring continual returns to that unison, and a similar build-up in the gradual addition of voices.

De Leeuw's performance remark on the first page of the score captures well the idea of the opening movement's guided improvisation: 'Settle each phase before continuing. Internally, feel the approach towards or removal from the centre [a, d', a'].' In short, a tonal centre is created, as a foundation for the music to develop. Since the music commences with a unison note, and no text or sense of pulse have yet been introduced, the listener's ear is naturally drawn towards pitch as the music's foundation.

Ex. 2: *opening of Car nos vignes sont en fleur.*

The introduction of more and more pitch classes and actual text to this guided improvisation, moving into territory far removed from the tonal centre and culminating in the singer's *ad libitum* choice of pitches, points towards an outward, centrifugal direction. Unity is the

starting ground for this movement, but in terms of pitch, the music's discourse is an

obfuscation of that unified starting ground.

Ex. 3: *stages in the process of 'obfuscation'. Note the addition of pitch classes according to fourth/fifth relationships.*
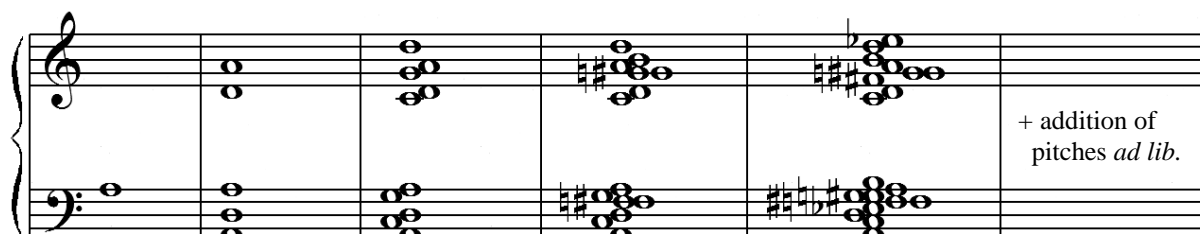

In contrast, a conspicuous feature of this movement is the reverse course of its rhythmic

parameter: the music starts in free tempo, without any clear pulse, but towards the end of the

movement, a clear pulse has been introduced through the repetitions of the word 'aime',

gradually unifying the whole ensemble in terms of rhythm. Nonetheless, at this point a sense

of disunity still hangs in the air, created by the evaporation of the movement's opening

material which initially drew the listener's ear.

The closing movement of *Car nos vignes* consists of a melody in a clear pulse

throughout – the only movement with such a pulse. At its introduction, attention is perhaps

drawn more towards the melody's *movement* than to its actual pitches, which are introduced at

a far greater pace than in the first movement. Also, a tonal centre consisting of one single

pitch such as in the first movement is absent. Instead, the melody is constructed from a

continuously repeated series of stepwise pitches, varied in each reiteration by a concurrent

process of rhythmic alteration, leading to the placement of identical pitch patterns on new

rhythmic values, and identical rhythmic patterns on new pitches (similar to the *color* and *talea*

of isorhythm).

Ex. 4a and b: pitch series (consisting of 29 pitch classes) and initial statement of the rhythmic series (<u>circa</u> 30 durations; not every statement makes use of all patterns); the rhythmic series has been notated so as to highlight the similarities of its rhythmic patterns.
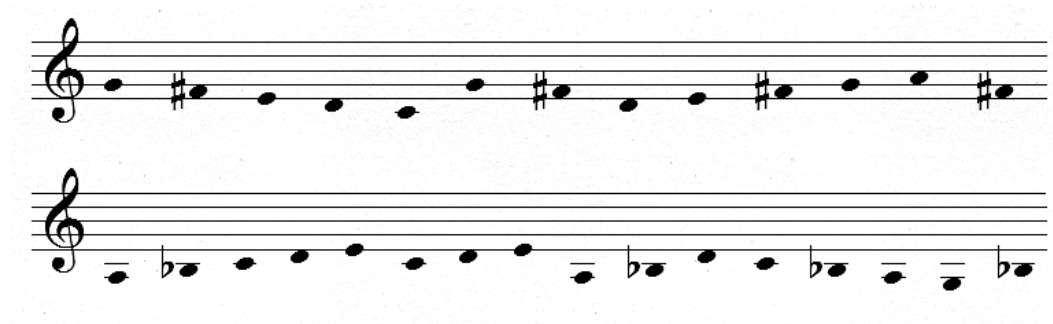
(ex. 4b)
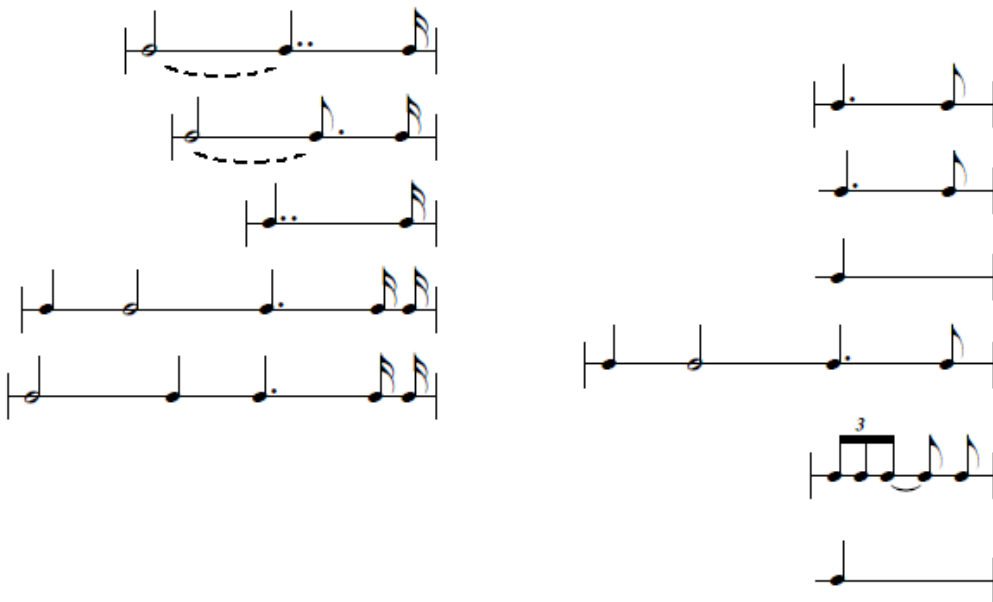
This process of constantly shedding new light on familiar patterns adds to the impression of a melody that could go on in an endless process of varied repetition. By paraphrasing rhythmic and melodic motifs throughout the melody's phrases (more on this in the section on repetition below), and inserting short periods of heterophony that always return to unison, the experience of the music as centripetally (rather than centrifugally) orientated is enhanced.

41

The difference between the outer movements of *Car nos vignes* can be described by their expression of unity and unification. The first movement clearly points out a centre for the music to develop from, expressed in the unity of the unison pitch. This is underlined by the distribution of that pitch to the singers who are in the actual middle of the ensemble. In contrast, the last movement does not clearly introduce or point out such a tonal centre, but continuously hints towards the existence of such a centre, the melody spinning around it. This goes for the spatiality of the ensemble as well: the melody is initiated by an off-centre voice, and the addition of voices to the melody takes place in near (but not exact) symmetry, moving towards the outer flanks of the ensemble.

Ex. 6a and b: entrance of voices in the first and seventh movement.

A process of unification is achieved in the first movement's rhythmic parameter, moving from a pulseless tonal field to a motif sung in rhythmic unison by the entire ensemble. However,

the first material to be introduced and put into focus (i.e., pitch), has at this point been completely blurred; therefore, a sense of complete unification (thus, resolution) is lacking at the end of this movement. This notion is confirmed by the movement's text, which speaks of a person rising from sleep, preparing to search for her lover. The scene is thus set for the composer to continue his dramatic discourse.

Although the closing movement's melody ends in a final heterophonic outburst of voices, unification is very much at its core. Concurrent voices are occasionally allowed to take their own path in a slight variation of shared musical material, but are always brought back to the unison of the chant. It is only the last outburst of voices that is not resolved to a unison, the composer simply letting each voice run its course with the same series of pitches as a shared building block, brought to a standstill in a harmony of fourth and fifth relationships. But because of frequent moments of heterophony throughout the movement, this last occurrence of heterophony is in itself not a new event. The composer's decision not to resolve to a unison could be described as necessary to make the seemingly endless music conclude.

The outer movements of *Car nos vignes* share a number of features that signify (or at least strongly imply the significance of) unity or unification, in line with the composer's remark of music as a 'symbol of unity'. Through this short comparison, it has become apparent that these ideas, for De Leeuw, need not always lead to the same musical expression; indeed, each of the seven movements of *Car nos vignes* contains a different musical expression of the significance of these themes.

4.2 Presentation of text

An obvious point of departure for an exploration of a choral work would be the composer's choice and handling of text. Which text is chosen, how are the text selections combined,

which themes or messages are implied, and how are these delivered through a work such as *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*? Looking once again at the work's opening pages one question needs to be answered first: what does the presentation of a text by itself signify in this work?

Car nos vignes is a setting of selections from the Song of Songs, a poem in the genre of the 'sacred love song', occurring in both the Jewish *Tanakh* and the Christian Old Testament. In short, *Car nos vignes* takes on much of the same discourse of that source, namely an introductory section, (a recollection of) the quest for the woman's lover, a dialogue describing both lovers' qualities of beauty, and an address to an audience (in the source the 'Daughters of Sion'). However, De Leeuw's selection of text underlines the separation of the lovers and an increasing sense of despair, expressed – among other ways – by the increasing disunity of the ensemble. The closing movement does not offer a clear resolution to this schism in terms of text, but does speak of a 'love … as strong as death', which 'rivers cannot sweep … away', implying unification.

De Leeuw's 'sacred love song' opens without text, a *tabula rasa*: the singers are given short sequences of notes in fourth and fifth relationships to repeat freely, starting out from a central tone A. Text is still absent in this indefinite soundscape.[62]

Then, at page 2, Bass 1 introduces a short fragment of text: 'sur ma couche'. This is gradually combined with other snippets of text, still sung *pp* in free time, and therefore somewhat hard to distinguish: 'dans la nuit', 'j'ai cherché', 'celui que', 'mon coeur aime', 'celui que j'aime'. Concurrent with the introduction of text, the singers' sequences of notes evolve into actual motifs, with more and more pitches added. The effect is that of slowly revealing a set of characters on a previously dark stage; with this effect, and the text gradually being more sharply outlined, the work's undefined opening is placed in reference to the night

---

[62] Similarly to *Élégie pour les villes détruites*, the score does not give any performance remark on the sound which is to be produced on the textless notes (see example 74). It is assumed by the author that hummed notes are intended since the 2000 recording of the work by the Netherlands Chamber Choir conducted by Ed Spanjaard, and the 2015 performances of the work by Cappella Amsterdam, conducted by Daniel Reuss (both choirs and conductors close associates of De Leeuw) featured humming.

of which the text speaks (in which the text's character sets out to seek for her lover). Thus, the introduction of text *itself* is made part of the work's discourse.[63]

Throughout *Car nos vignes*, text is presented in many different ways. In terms of notation, the score shows varying levels of guided improvisation and standard notation; in terms of gesture, the composer makes use of small, inconspicuous motifs or short note sequences (used mostly to provide a background for other gestures), litany-like repetitions, rhapsodic chants, and rhythmic motifs (the recurrent 'takadama' of the sixth movement); in terms of the use of voice, both ordinary and 'half-sung, half-murmured'[64] singing are asked for.

Following the line of textual presentation, a relationship can be discerned between the increasing disunity of which the text speaks and the way it is uttered. The more the text speaks of separation, the more the music becomes clouded by murmuring and the absence of clear pitch: the climax of this is the entire sixth movement. In contrast, where the text implies a unification of the two lovers, an ordinary and unified manner of singing is introduced, such as in the fourth and seventh movements.

---

[63] Such treatment of text can be considered typical of De Leeuw's works; in his later works similar examples can be found in the opera *Antigone* (again in context of night) and in the second movement of the *Cinq Hymnes*, which opens as a four-part vocalise; here, text is introduced after eight bars, mentioning the shadows of evening, before 'opening your window at sunset to lose yourself in the sky of love'.

[64] Performance remark at the opening of the sixth movement.

Ex. 7: *manners of text presentation in Car nos vignes sont en fleur*

	Text presented in 'normal' singing	**Text presented in speaking voice**
I	singing, but no text	
	tone field of motifs ———→	'aime' repetitions
II	*ad lib.* choice of pitches	
III	phrase repetitions, each repetition abstracted towards ———→	lowest pitch possible
IV	dialogue of lovers	
V	dialogue of lovers, quartertone mode	
VI		combination of guided improvisation and rhythmic speaking ('takadama')
VII	heterophonic chant	

As can be seen from this overview, the theme of 'unification' and its implied opposite 'separation' are expressed not only in the selected text or different divisions of the ensemble, but also in the manner in which text is presented. In this, text takes on a twofold referential role in its mention of the work's themes *and* an expression of those themes through its utterance.

4.3 Repetition and cyclicity

Related to the presentation of text is the repetitive way in which it is often uttered. Repetition is a recurrent feature throughout *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*, with many forms of repetition used by the composer: repetition as part of guided improvisation (such as in the opening pages), exact and contour repetitions (movs. III, IV and V), the repetition of rhythmic motifs (mov. VI) and the repetitive structure of *color* and *talea* (mov. VII). The work does not feature a 'model' such as used in the other works selected for this study, but its varieties of

repetition – especially that of the last movement – are clear precursors to this technique. Again, a closer examination of the outer two movements will serve to illustrate the work's varied use of repetition.

Car nos vignes opens with each singer performing short motifs at leisure, the effect being a rather nebulous tone field with a slowly expanding ambitus (see example 2). Although a fairly straightforward procedure, it is a form of repetition which in its intended variability would be impossible to notate in standard notation; the resulting sound will be different for each performance. (This goes for the repetitions in the other movements as well, which always feature a variable element such as pitch or timing.) Although phrases *can* be repeated exactly, it seems the composer aimed to avoid such exact repetition. The first note sequences feature the same pitches but different prescriptions concerning the order in which they are to be performed; the sounding result is a varied repetition of the same pitches. Moreover, the individual performers are asked to 'integrate with the total sonority of the group': each motif's repetition needs to be considered in relation to a constantly developing context, again suggesting a varied form of repetition.

This varied repetition appears throughout *Car nos vignes*, exact repetition occurring only rarely. The closing movement's process of combining pitch and durational series of slightly unequal length provides another example of this varied repetition, but, compared to the previous six movements, is striking for its propulsive nature: whereas the earlier guided improvisations display a more probing character (confirmed by the composer's performance remarks), the closing movement's form of repetition implies a *necessity* of repetition, the melody for some reason propelling itself forward. De Leeuw himself described this type of repetition as 'cyclicity': cyclicity is expressed through repetition, but also implies the (experience of) necessity of repetition.[65] Presumably, the use of a system to enable this

---

[65] This last description was given by Rokus de Groot (see De Groot 1991 and Sligter 1995: 142), summarising De Leeuw's own descriptions (see for example Sligter 1995: 91).

cyclicity is also the reason why this movement is the only section *not* featuring any variable element in its type of repetition, and why it is the only movement written in conventional notation. The question here is: what type of repetition does the composer employ to enhance the experience of this cyclicity? How does it differ from the other types of repetition in this work?[66]

The system of combining slightly unequal series of 29 pitches and (ca.) 30 durations, unique to the last movement, has already been mentioned. But this system alone need not result in the movement's propulsive character per se (in contrast, a similar system is used in the opening movement of Messiaen's *Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps* to convey a sense of timelessness). A closer look at the movement's construction reveals an interesting abnormality: it shows that the pitch series is never altered, but that the order of patterns in the rhythmic series *is*:

Ex. 8: patterns of the rhythmic series.

---
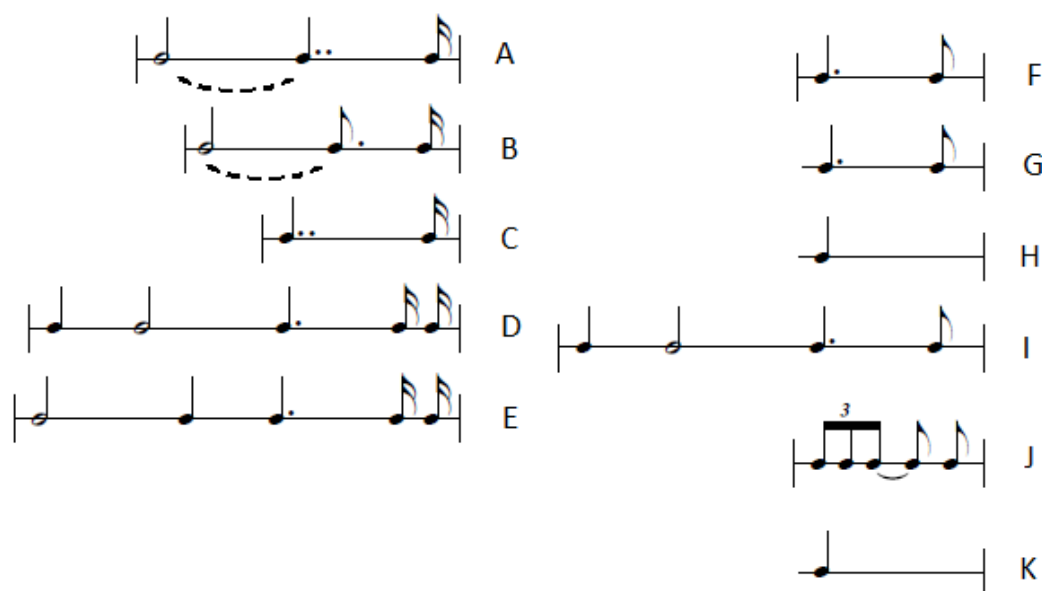
[66] This movement was analysed as an example of De Leeuw's cyclicity by Rokus de Groot (Sligter 1995: 141 et seq.); the current author's analysis differs from De Groot's analysis in the comparison with the work's other forms of repetition, and an inclusion of its presentation of text.

Ex. 9: *order of rhythmic patterns in the seventh movement*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	A′	B	A	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	C′	B		D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	C	B	A	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	A	B	C	D		F	G	H	I	J	K
s/a:	A	C	B	D′							

The composer's intervention in the repetition of the rhythmic series appears to be aimed at striking a balance between the repetitive and the unique: larger sequences of patterns are repeated exactly so as to imply the continual repetition of the entire sequence as it was initially stated, while at the same time small variations and elisions are made in the order of those patterns, resulting in new combinations of patterns heard before.

The notion of a 'necessity of repetition' is enhanced by a another intervention, expressed in the movement's four periods of heterophony: for a short period of several bars, crotchets are added to and removed from the patterns that form the end of the rhythmic series:

, thereby altering the shifting of the series of pitches and rhythm.

Ex. 10: *patterns of the rhythmic series.*

Ex. 11a: *VII, b. 14-18. The first period of heterophony (b. 15-16; rhythmic patterns F−G et seq.) is followed by the entrance of the basses.*

Ex. 11b: *second period of heterophony (bars 22-24; rhythmic patterns F−G et seq.), with entrance of the sopranos.*

After such a moment of heterophony, the voices again reach a unison passage, joined now by a new voice – an addition which in its turn will lead to an increased form of heterophony at the next such moment. The effect is that of an increasingly powerful unison.[67]

Next to this, the introduction of one clear pulse (absent in all previous movements) and the movement's construction from a *single* melodic line allow for rhythmic patterns to be clearly heard. As can be seen in the overview, many of the rhythmic patterns display a relatively long duration (a dotted crotchet at least) followed by a short duration (semiquaver or quaver), expressing a form of upbeat to the next bar, and thus adding to the melody's motion forward. This upbeat is often preceded by a limited number of longer durations (three longer durations at the most), which adds to the expectation that it will always follow closely on a longer duration; at the same time, the varying lengths of the longer duration(s) seems to be aimed at avoiding a possible predictability. The gradual abbreviation of the first three patterns by a crotchet, implying acceleration, adds to a sense of motion.

Text is treated in similar fashion. The original text is as follows:

> *Mets moi comme un sceau sur ton coeur*
> *comme un sceau sur ton bras*
> *car l'amour est fort comme la mort*
> *la passion est indomptable comme le séjour des morts*
> *ses flammes sont des flammes de feu*
> *le feu dévorant de l'éternel*
> *des torrents d'eau ne sauraient éteindre l'amour.*[68]

Already, the repetition or paraphrasing of words results in a close cyclical interconnection, a feature to which the composer was probably attracted in the first place. Here is the same text

---

[67] Here, a comparison with the melody *without* its heterophonic periods is interesting; the melody also appears as the final 'Amen' of *Invocations*, part of the trilogy to which *Car nos vignes* belongs. In the case of *Invocations*, the melody is sung by the entire choir from start to finish, without heterophonic periods, to an ostinato instrumental accompaniment. Despite making use of the same melody, the effect of an increasingly powerful unison is completely absent.

[68] Translation: 'Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.' (Bible, King James Version 1611)

as it is presented in the seventh movement, with repetitions included and similar patterns placed above one another:

Ex. 12.

> Mets moi comme un sceau sur ton coeur
>   comme un sceau sur ton bras
>   car l'amour
>   car l'amour
>   l'amour est fort comme la mort
> la passion est indomptable comme le séjour des morts
> ses flammes sont
>   sont des flammes de feu
>   le feu dévorant des flammes de feu
>   le feu dévorant de l'éternel
> des torrents
>   torrents
>   torrents d'eau ne sauraient éteindre
> éteindre
> éteindre l'amour
>   l'amour
>   l'amour
>   l'amour
> des torrents   ne sauraient éteindre le feu
>   le feu
>   le feu
>   le feu
>   le feu dévorant
>   de l'amour
>   l'amour
>   l'amour

The movement's prosody adds another form of balance between the repetitive and the unique: strands of text built from exact repetitions and paraphrases of patterns result in a new yet also familiar context for a pattern in each repetition.

This kind of technique is very similar to that of the work's opening pages, where short motifs are also repeated in an ever changing context. However, the seventh movement distinguishes itself from the first and other movements in its type of repetition: its repetition is given shape in a system which – for the first time in the entire work – does *not* feature any

element of variability; it is the only movement for which the score allows only *one* version.[69] (As demonstrated, the only element of variability in this system is the composer's own hand intervening in the system during the compositional process, rather than the singers themselves during performance.)

The construction and ordering of the system's patterns, the movement's form as a single melodic line in a clear pulse (allowing these patterns to be clearly heard) and periods of heterophony constantly returning to an increasingly powerful unison appear to be aimed at a type of repetition which enables new but similar perspectives on its building blocks with each repeat; a balance between the periodic and the unique that implies a necessity of repetition and thus, 'cyclicity'.

---

[69] In this, the relation of the seventh movement to the whole of *Car nos vignes* may stand for a change in De Leeuw's entire oeuvre, since it is from this work onwards that elements of variability rapidly disappear from the composer's works.

V.

TRANSPARENCE

two versions: for 18-part choir, trumpet, 2 French horns, 2 trombones and tuba / for 18-part choir, 3 trumpets and 3 trombones (both 1986; identical choral parts);
text: Arab mystics: Chibli (†945), Mansoer Al-Halladj (†922), Ibn Abbad (†1390), Djalal Al-Din Muhammad Rumi (†1273);
commissioned by the Fund for the Performing Arts for the benefit of *Openbaar Kunstbezit*;
first performance: 15 november 1986, Vondelkerk Amsterdam, by Nederlands Kamerkoor and Nederlands Blazers Ensemble conducted by Lucas Vis.

Transparence is a four-movement work on poems by Arab mystics, describing different states of consciousness in contact with the divine. Its themes relate closely to the 'sacred love song' of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* and the laudatory *Cinq Hymnes* composed one year later, not least in the recurrent appeal 'O Toi', which is the thread running through all three works.

5.1 Transparence: general survey

It is this 'O Toi' which also dominates the opening of *Transparence*: a short introduction by the brass (similar in gesture to the recurrent 'O Toi' in the fifth movement of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*), and the appeal is introduced, sung to a C$^{\#}$ quaver ostinato appearing in all voices. (See example 14.) Around this axis other pitches are introduced in the form of short melodic fragments, sung in canon. This slowly expanding texture is stopped in its tracks in a full bar of rest, after which, out of the depths of the brass, a new texture is developed. Alternating and eventually overlapping phrases of brass and choir gradually build up on the plea 'ne me rends pas à moi-même', reaching a climax in the first homophonic music for the choir: three wide-spaced six-part phrases, a cappella, on the text 'O Toi, ne me rends pas...'. (See example 29.) (Here also, similar chordal phrases in the fourth movement of *Car nos vignes* come to mind). After this, the music winds down on three last renditions of 'O Toi', accompanied by a fragmented version of the brass introduction. (See example 17.)

The second movement shares some of the first movement's features, also opening with a sustained C$^\#$ around which pitches are introduced, in similar order as before. However, in this section the quaver ostinato is completely absent, and the composer's scoring (including overtone singing and amplification) adds to a wholly different atmosphere. A gradually expanding harmony is twice created around the C$^\#$. After this, a relatively aggressive music on the words 'l'intensité de sa lumière' is suddenly introduced. Here, for the first time in *Transparence*, a rhythmic ostinato of ♩ ♩ ♪ makes an appearance. This dance-like section builds up in tension, more or less exploding in the *glissandi* and flutter-tonguing of the brass, after which a repetition of the movement's opening is introduced over sustained notes in the lower brass. From this point onwards, a harmony similar to that opening is created, but this time expanding to an extremely wide range, and including the brass' aggressive flutter-tonguing. The rhythmic ostinato reappears on 'et il devient invisible par l'intensité de sa lumière', in counterpoint to the six-part 'O Toi'-phrases of the first movement in other voices of the choir. After this, the music winds down by gradually expanding the rhythmic pattern into longer note values, and moving into the lower registers of the ensemble. C$^\#$ returns as axis to an otherworldly coda, ending on a vocalise on 'a-oe', perhaps representing the afterglow of the deity's 'intense light'.

The third movement takes on a lighter character, in short phrases featuring – again – the pattern ♩ ♩ ♪, moving between an octave of two C$^\#$'s. (See example 20.) Ostinatos abound in the setting of the single sentence 'Pourquoi ne veux-tu pas que la partie rejoigne le tout, le rayon la lumière?', with the choir parts displaying a preference for the middle registers, focussing on a motif of F$^\#$-A-G$^\#$-E$^\#$-A. The brass parts take on a simple accompanying role in block chords, and the movement (its role reminiscent of that of a light scherzo in a symphony) comes to a unelaborate close on 'la lumière'.

55

The fourth movement opens with a similar sequence of pitches as the three preceding, although its character is much more violent compared to the music heard earlier. Short *crescendi, sforzandi* and the highest range of the choir are used for a dramatic rendition of the 'O Toi' appeal which opened the work. The six-part chords on 'O Toi, ne me rends pas à moi-même après m'avoir ravi à moi-même' return, elaborated with violent outbursts in the brass.

After a short silence, a new section begins, built from the rhythmic pattern and $F^{\#}$-A-$G^{\#}$-$E^{\#}$-A of before. (See example 27.) This texture is slowly expanded towards the outer range of the ensemble, its ostinato repetitions culminating in the end of the phrase 'tu m'as annihilé en **Toi**'. With that 'Toi', a somewhat blurred version of the work's opening returns, the appeal sounding in short fragments in all voices, mostly on the omnipresent $C^{\#}$. Material from the more rhythmic section returns in a slowed-down reminiscence, but suddenly the brass take the choir in tow in triplet quavers, the voices rushing towards the top of their range in ecstatic eulogies (echoes of which can be heard in the concluding prayer of supplication of the *Élégie pour les villes détruites*). The unexpected build-up accelerates with the brass doubling the choir parts in semiquavers, hushed in a relatively short one-bar *diminuendo*. The coda is introduced: 'O Toi' on $C^{\#}$ reoccurs, in music resembling something of a slow *cortège*. The movement expires with short rising fragments, the choir singing 'je suis devenu libre de tout' in detached snippets of notes. The final bar's highest and lowest $C^{\#}$ in the brass mark the work's ending.

5.2 Topic and questions

As may have become apparent from the survey above, all four movements of *Transparence* – different though they may be in atmosphere – display similarities in the use of specific melodic phrases, rhythmic patterns, and sequences at which pitches are introduced. These similarities, which occur in many of De Leeuw's multi-movement works, suggest a structure of pitches or pitch classes as the basis for the composition – an idea that is confirmed by the composer's own statements on his so-called 'model', as described in chapter III.

   Transparence is the first of the works selected for this dissertation that makes use of a model; moreover, the same model is used as the basis for four different movements. This presents an opportunity to compare the composer's different ways of selecting from the model and, possibly, to assess the grounds for such selection. The aim of this chapter will be to discern how De Leeuw makes use of a model in his later choral compositions, with *Transparence* as example.

   As stated, a model is a *potential*, which only turns into music by the composer's selection; specific melodic sequences implied in the model need not find their place in the final composition, and a single section of the model can be realised in many different ways because of the composer's decisions *en route*. Compare, for example, the first few bars of each of *Transparence*'s movements, which all make use of the same section of the model: whereas movement I introduces the C$^\#$ as a quaver ostinato ('O Toi'), movement II starts out with an immobile C$^\#$ lasting eleven quavers, without a clear pulse; the short irregular phrases in crotchets and quavers of movement III move between the octave of two C$^\#$'s, while movement IV doesn't make use of the C$^\#$ at all (nine quavers rest are given), starting on the first F$^\#$ 'available' in the model. Yet despite these different manifestations, the composer does make audible – and repeats – a considerable amount of the model: enough to imply its presence.

57

The questions resulting from the different manifestations of this basic material are: How is *Transparence*'s model composed? What does this model in itself imply? How is the model realised or left unused by the composer? Can processes or criteria for its realisations be pointed out? And, a relevant question for each composition that makes use of a system, how does the purely theoretical aspect relate to the music as it is heard?

5.3 The model: overview

Transparence's model[70] is as follows:

Ex. 13. *Note that the model consists of pitch classes, presented here as pitches only for convenience.*

---

[70] The model can be deduced by notating a work's pitch classes on a grid according to their appearance on a timeline of the smallest durational value (in this case, quavers), and searching for identical sequences of pitch classes; most of the overlapping sections complement each other so as to make the entire model clear.
The model of *Transparance* was given by the composer to Rokus de Groot (De Groot 1992), but the work has been analysed again by the current author to compare results; parts of the model cannot be reconstructed with absolute certainty based on the music alone, but no deviations were found between the author's results and the complete model as given by the composer.

The model is noteworthy for its length of three hundred and twenty-four pitch classes in quavers (by comparison, the *Élégie*, composed eight years later, makes use of a model consisting of a mere thirty-six pitch classes). Because of this length, the model is not repeated as frequently as that of other works, with only one full statement in the first and third movements (the third movement also features mandatory repetitions), and two statements in the second and fourth movements.

The model contains a number of recurrent features, which allow the composer to create repetitions during the course of a single statement of the model. The first of these is the C#, which is gradually removed from the scene by the introduction of other pitch classes, and reintroduced in reverse manner towards the end of the model. The second is the sequence F#-

A-G#-E#, which is gradually introduced and returns throughout the model; it is often alternated with pitch classes A#, E and B.

The model is used six times in its entirety: a single time in the first and third movements, and twice in the second and fourth movements.

The model breaks down into the following phrases:

1. Notes 1–81: C# pedal, gradual introduction of other pitch classes in periods of nine quavers; pitch classes introduced retain their position in the period; the phase ends when the introduction of pitch classes within that time span is complete, and C# almost completely removed;

2. Notes 82–117: regular periodicity is removed, although the pitches of before return in various sequences; C# appears frequently;

3. Notes 118–217: expansion of the upper range with B, removal of C#; repetition of a strand of twenty-five pitch classes; alternation between the sequences F#–A–G#–E# and E–A#–B in a pattern of ♩♪♪♪♩ ;

4. Notes 218–270: transitional phase, alternation between sequence F#–A–G#–E# and E–A#–B is continued in patterns of ♫♪♪♪ ;

5. Notes 271–324: reintroduction of the C#; removal of patterns of alternation and gradual removal of pitch classes except those of the F#–A–G#–E# sequence; the final section displays the alternation of C# and the sequence in the seven-quaver pattern ♩♪♪♪♪♪♩ .

The following sections will discuss the various realisations of each of the model's phases, to discern how parts of the model are realised or left unused by the composer, and whether processes or criteria for its realisations become apparent.

5.4 First phase

The first phase of the model is used at the opening of each of *Transparence*'s movements. As the following examples will demonstrate, the model and its implied melodic and rhythmic features are used for realisations ranging from strict adherence to the model to embellishments and loose variations.

Transparence opens with a quick curtain raiser: two bars of music on the brass (which will be discussed below), and a continuous line of C# quavers with which the text 'O Toi' is set in motion.

Ex. 14: *opening of the first movement (composer's handwriting; score notated at sounding pitch).*

A canon between sopranos and tenors introduces, word for word, the beginning of the invocation 'O Toi, qui m'as énivré de ton amour', with each pitch sustained in other voices *bocca chiusa*. The ambitus is gradually expanded, revealing a diatonic construction around a C$^\sharp$ axis. From bar 2 onwards, the following structure emerges:

Ex. 15: introduction of pitches in quavers, with direction of melodic gestures.

The gradual addition of pitches to the C$^\sharp$ axis takes place in an imitative form, balancing between additions above and below the axis. Another form of balance may be detected in the alternating direction of the developing melodic gestures (marked here with arrows). In both directions, the size of intervals is increased: the rising gesture's order of intervals is minor third-perfect fourth-perfect fifth; the descending gesture's order is minor second-minor third. An expanding three-part canon in three registers takes in the parts of sopranos, tenors and second basses, which is broken off at the point where the C$^\sharp$ quaver ostinato is more or less forced from the scene by the growing density of the three-part counterpoint.

Concurrent with the addition of different pitch classes, intervals and an expanding ambitus (implying dynamism, growth), the ostinato on 'O Toi' is dissolved by the gradual lengthening of the word 'Toi'. Since the ostinato initially defined the music's pulse, the

62

process of lengthening enhances the experience of the music's movement as a whole slowing down, thereby implying (a return to) stasis.

Ex. 16: gradual lengthening of the 'O Toi' ostinato.

Both processes are brought to a halt at a point where they could not have developed further in the restriction of a **9/8** bar. Although not strictly reserved for such introductory sections, such a simultaneity of processes with opposite effects can be found throughout the later choral works (compare, for example, the opening of *Car nos vignes*).

From the perspective of the model, the aforementioned short introduction by the brass is still puzzling: how does this six-part phrase relate to the apparently monophonic model?

When compared to the other five manifestations of the model in *Transparence*, it becomes clear that the model itself is used from bar 3 onwards.[71] It is striking that the pitch classes used for the brass parts occur frequently throughout the model, but cannot be realised as they appear in the score, when strictly following the model. These two bars could therefore be seen as a freely improvised derivative of the model.

Another possibility is that this two-bar introduction was a later addition during the process of composition, derived from the ending of the first movement; here, a fragmented version of the opening bars – where the part of Trumpet I *does* follow the model except for one note – is played.

Ex. 17: first movement, final bars and model (note 294 et seq.); the 'passing tone' not belonging to the model has been marked.

---

[71] The first two bars also lead towards this bar by means of tempo (*con moto,* followed by *tranquillo, rallentando* towards the stable tempo of *lento* / quaver equals 66), dynamics and melodic contour.

A closer look at the opening and closing bars suggests that the brass parts are derived from the part of Trumpet I (this melody draws most attention since it is the top voice of the ensemble, and is doubled at its start in the opening bars) through parallels and countermovement: Trumpet I is doubled a fourth below by Trumpet II; the final three notes of Trumpet I are mirrored in Trumpet III (also aimed towards the C$^\sharp$) and by Trombone II (starting on C$^\sharp$); Trombone I is also paralleled a fourth below by Trombone III; Trombone I doubles Trumpet I at first, but follows the countermovement of the other two trombones at the distance of a minor seventh (i.e., two stacked fourths).

A comparison with the realisation of the model's first phase can be made by examining the opening sections of the other movements.

Both realisations of the first phase of the model in the second movement of *Transparence* feature a sequence of pitch classes identical to that of the introduction to the first movement, but lack an ostinato, pulse, or suggestion of periodicity; quavers are used almost exclusively for the closure of a phrase.

A different light is shed here on the model by its scoring: three soloists are requested to sing with amplification, which – although the overall dynamic is *pianissimo* – allots specific pitches to the foreground or background. Moreover, the composer asks for overtone singing and 'uninterrupted tremolos' in the sustained pitches of the background. The entire movement, an enlargement of the first movement's passage of sustained *bocca chiusa*, could be considered something of a 'Spectral' approach to the model in its focus on overtones and timbre.

The second movement uniquely features quarter tones (D tuned two Pythagorean commas higher), which do not appear in the composer's original model.[72] Comparison with other instances that make use of the same section of the model suggests these quarter tones to

---

[72] See De Groot 1992: example 13.

be an embellishment (inspired by the Arabic musical traditions of the texts' origin?), added in a later stage of the composition process and used only locally, similar to the glissandos that only occur in the second movement.[73]

The second movement shares the culminating texture of the first movement's introduction, with an expansion of pitch classes, density and ambitus, and also a build-up of dynamics. The first phase of the model is followed neatly throughout the first eight bars, including the sequence at which pitch classes are introduced.

Ex. 18: *sequence of pitch class introduction in II, b. 1-8.*
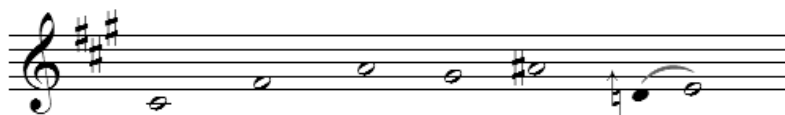
However, a similar texture (i.e., a gradual introduction of pitches which are then sustained) is also realised from the ensuing second phase of the model, demonstrating that a specific texture need not be exclusively associated with specific parts of the model.

---

[73] The quarter tones of *Transparence* are the second-last example of microtonality in De Leeuw's oeuvre, which seems to disappear with the introduction of the model, only to reappear in his last work *Three Shakespeare Songs*. The other choral work that features microtonal intervals, *Car nos vignes*, clearly states that its quarter tones are part of a specific mode, no doubt a remnant of De Leeuw's contact with the music of the East. Evidence regarding the specific 'meaning' the composer attached to these modes could however not be found. From the 'Spectralist' viewpoint, the re-tuned D seems to be connected to a fundamental E (played in the trombones) with which it always occurs, although the tuning of the D does not correspond to the deviation of -31 cents from equal temperament of the seventh overtone of the harmonic series on E.

Ex. 19: II, b. 9-10 (model: note 97 et seq.). A texture similar to the movement's opening is realised with notes from the second phase of the model (notes 82-117).

The beginning of the third movement demonstrates other possibilities of the model's opening phase. Here, the culminating texture of the previous examples is absent: $C^{\#}$ is not treated as an axis around which new pitches are introduced, but placed at the *outer* range of melodies. Instead of a regular pulse or lack of pulse, the text is set to irregular phrases of alternating crotchets and quavers.

Ex. 20: III, opening.

The entire third movement displays the recurrence of the rhythmic pattern 2-2-1-2-2-2-1 (in quavers or quaver rests) through which the model is filtered.

Ex. 21: *III, b. 1-9, rhythmic patterns.*

Ex. 22: *realisation of the model in III, b. 1-7.*

The composer's decisions to opt for a note or rest in the rhythmic pattern, although lacking a clear system, appears to be aimed at maintaining the sequence at which pitch classes are introduced as implied in the model (see examples 23 and 24).

Ex. 23: summary of pitches in III, b. 1-8.

Ex. 24: sequence of pitch class introduction in III, b. 1-8. Note that this sequence is identical to that of movements I and II.
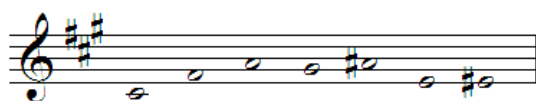
The accompanying outer brass parts of Trumpet I and Trombone III maintain the omnipresent C#, but the inner brass parts appear to be free variations on pitches of the model, again in parallel fourths and mirrored direction.[74] The grafting of parallels upon a single melodic line (almost always in parallel fourths; a relation which is also strongly present in the model) is found throughout *Transparence* and the later choral works.[75]

The fourth movement displays a more rhapsodic realisation of the model, eschewing the C# (it opens with nine quavers rest, followed by the first F# of the model) and combining elements of the preceding movements, including the melodic sequence F#-A-G#, the six-part chords of movements I and II, and the use of parallels in the parts for brass. Although the underlying model and selected text are identical as the opening movement, the atmosphere of this movement is much more dramatic: tempo is accelerated to ♩. = ca. 70, periodicity (such as the quaver ostinato of before) is absent, and violent phrases (full of accents, *sforzandi* and *crescendi*) follow each other at a quick but uneven pace. Also, the rapid and seemingly random succession of musical gestures contrasts greatly with the combination of a slow pulse

---

[74] Again, none of the brass parts can be realised by strictly following the tone-duration principle of the model.
[75] In *Transparence*, examples are found in the brass parts at the end of the first movement, II: 15-16, III: 1, and IV: 4. Similar examples in the choral parts are found in I: 30, II: 40, III: 14, IV: 9.

and stable texture (an ostinato, a culminating harmony, short melodic phrases) of the previous movements, which allowed the introduction of new pitch classes to be more clearly experienced.

The above discussion of the four movements' opening sections demonstrates the diverse results possible with the same section of the model as basis: the first movement followed the model in most respects (especially its quaver ostinato), and took advantage of the model's inner repetition of the F#–A–G# sequence to enable a short three-part canon; the second movement only maintained the introduction of pitch classes at those moments where the model allowed for them, but added a new perspective on the model in its scoring, bringing specific pitches to the fore and including overtone singing and microtonality; the third movement demonstrated another melodic construction possible by applying a rhythmic pattern, and – similar to the work's opening – the addition of variations and parallels to the model in the parts for brass; all movements realised the sequence at which pitch classes are introduced as present in the model except the fourth movement, which also eschewed the importance of the C# or use of a more stable texture.

5.5 Second phase

A new phase begins in the model with the disappearance of the regular nine-quaver periodicity from note 76 onwards: the C#, which was gradually removed from the scene, now returns for about half of the notes. Although this change is apparent in the model (the theoretical side of the composition process), it is doubtful how much of this is registered in the actual music.

Judging from the score, the change is registered primarily in the first movement, where a new section is clearly heard from bar 13 onwards (i.e., note 78 of the model); because of the relatively dense counterpoint of parts, most of the model is made audible in these bars.

The choir abandons the C#, climbing higher and higher on the text 'ne me rends pas à moi-même', while the C# is used frequently in the middle range of the brass, echoing the rhythm of the choir.

In contrast, the changes in the model do not seem to effect the music of the second and the fourth movements, no doubt because these movements also eschew the regular periodicity available through the model. As mentioned before, in the second movement, a new phrase does begin at bar 9 (i.e., note 97 of the model), but this features a texture similar to that of the previous section.

The model's new phase is also inconspicuous in the third movement, where a new section starts much later, at bar 10 (note 109 of the model). However, the composer does seem to refer to the model 'losing itself' at bar 7 (note 73 et seq.) with the melisma on 'le rayon la lumière' suddenly exceeding the upper range of the previous phrases, and making use of all pitch classes introduced until that point.

5.6 Third and fourth phases

C# is again removed from the model in the following phases, which focus on pitch classes F#–A–G#–E#, alternated with E, B and A#. As pointed out by Rokus de Groot, an alternation is made between the sequence F#–A–G#–E#–A on the one hand and pitch classes E–A#–B on the other, in an ostinato of ; this 'varied ostinato' results in a strand of twenty-five quavers, which is subsequently repeated twice.[76]

As with the second phase of the model, this new phase is most clearly audible in particular movements, in this case the third and fourth movements, which heavily feature rhythmic ostinatos; the first movement does not display any clear realisation of the ostinato

---

[76] De Groot 1991: 47.

present in the model. This supports the idea that particular phases of the model were only conceived in relation to particular sections of movements.

In the third movement, the entire model is filtered through the rhythmic pattern 2–2–1–2–2–2–1 (in quavers or quaver rests), which, for the model's third phase, results in each melodic phrase starting on a different pitch class. The pitches of the sequence F#–A–G#–E#–A are however emphasized, as only these pitches are sustained in the lower voices.

Ex. 25: III, b. 10–12.

In the third movement the same sequence is brought to the fore from bar 40 onwards by applying the rhythmic ostinato ♪ ♩ ♩ (which equals the five-quaver duration of the ostinato present in the model); later, the pattern is expanded to include notes outside this sequence.

Ex. 26: III, b. 41–42. The model is embellished with parallel fifths in the alto part.

The same procedure is applied in the fourth movement in bars 13–22. This pattern is moved

one quaver at bar 24 and later expanded, to the surrounding pitch classes E, A$^\sharp$ and B.

Ex. 27: IV, b. 13–22: model (note 152 et seq.) and realisation.

The model's fourth phase (notes 218–270) could be described as a transitional phase, since

the ostinato 🎵 of alternation between the F$^\sharp$–A–G$^\sharp$–E$^\sharp$–A sequence and E–A$^\sharp$–B ends at

this point. An alternation between both groups of pitch classes is continued in patterns of

♩♪♪♪, but without any clear sequence in both groups.

References to this new phase in the model (or closure of the previous phase) are not emphasised equally in all movements: the first and second movement feature the continuation of a build-up already initiated in the previous phase; the third movement only features a retake of the original tempo at this point in the model, also introducing the brass after a period of a cappella music; in the fourth movement, a new textual phrase commences, though continuing the earlier ♪ ♩ ♩ ostinato.

In summary, the third phase of the model features a return to periodicity, in patterns that are most clearly realised in the second half of the second movement, the third and the fourth movement, although the movements feature their own patterns through which the model is filtered. The third movement is the most consistent in its use of a pattern, but the composer varies freely between quaver notes and rests, apparently fitting his choices to the given text or preferred pitches such as those of the F$^{\#}$–A–G$^{\#}$–E$^{\#}$–A sequence; in the fourth movement, a single pattern is used at the beginning, which is later expanded. All four movements lack a clear reason for the removal of periodicity after this phase.

5.7 Fifth phase

The most important aspect of the model's fifth phase is the reintroduction of C$^{\#}$, which had been absent from the model from note 118 to 270. This reappearance is important to all movements, since it enables a return to each movement's introduction material, as can be seen at the closing bars of the first and third movement.

The reintroduction is also important to the second and fourth movements, which feature a repetition of the model and thus its first phase, crowded with C$^{\#}$s. The fourth

movement clearly builds up to this moment, repeating the phrase 'tu m'as annihilé en toi'; the C$^\sharp$ is heard again on 'Toi' (bar 25), the word it was inextricably linked to from the first movement onwards; this then connects to the repetition of the model, which is also a repetition of the entire work's opening text, 'O Toi …'.

Ex. 28: reprise of the model in IV, b. 27–28.

The second movement, however, eschews the available C$^\sharp$ completely in its first realisation of the final phase of the model (bars 26–28), with focus on alternated E, F and A. After this, the movement's opening bars are repeated, with the addition of a sustained E and A in the lower voices (thus, remnants from the first realisation of the model). However, the second time the model's final phase is reached (bar 50), the C$^\sharp$ is realised immediately from the point it appears in the model, as a pedal on which the movement slowly winds down.

5.8 Embellishments, variations and deviations

It is striking that a work which makes use of a technique that dictates a pitch class for each moment of the work, should open with two bars that do not follow the rules of that technique. This flexible use of the model is representative of De Leeuw's handling of his own composition technique; the score is riddled with notes which cannot be explained directly from the model from the first bar to the last. However, almost none of these will be experienced as foreign to the rest of the music at first listening or reading, since these embellishments, variations and deviations make use of the same material that is present in the model.

Often the notes of the model are embellished with parallels; almost always – as in the other choral works – these are fourths, an interval which is already strongly present in the model. Other embellishments include the microtonality of the second movement, glissandos (from one tone of the model to the other), flutter-tonguing and trills (e.g. IV: b. 12); the latter are introduced only when the model features the interval of a second.

A variation on the model can be found in the brass introduction opening the work, which seems to be a summary of some bars of brass music at the end of the movement, which are by themselves embellishments of the model. Another variation is the striking sequence of chords that occurs a number of times throughout the work, on the text 'O Toi, ne me rends pas à moi-même'.[77]

---

[77] I: b. 30 et seq.; II: b. 20 et seq.; IV: b. 9 et seq.

Ex. 29: I, b. 30–32, choral parts.

mode:

These chords are examples of a looser parallelism, where the top part always follows the model, and the parts below follow the top part's melodic direction downward, each running a different trail through a mode comprised of the model's notes. A noteworthy feature (which may provide a reason for the composer's choice of pitches) is that each part starts on the last pitch of the part above; from that point of view, the Alto is the odd one out, which should then be considered a doubling of the Baritone part (at the octave). Like the doubling in the brass, these chords could be explained as a temporary vertical version of the model.

Another example of variation on the model is to be found in the final bars of the second movement, where a C#–E alternation is introduced. This E is introduced far too soon according to the model (its place was reserved for a G#, which is simultaneously realised);

nonetheless, the E appears to be introduced early because the C#–E alternation is part of the final bar's harmony (the 'a-oe' of sopranos and altos, with which it shares its vocalisation); a rare example of *anticipation* in De Leeuw's music.

A last example of variation on the model is the occurrence of triplet quavers in movement IV, from bar 45 to 53, occurring solely in the trumpets. This variation is noteworthy since triplet quavers are a durational value foreign to the model.

Ex. 30: IV, b. 45, model (notes 198 et seq.) and trumpet parts.

Ex. 31: IV, b. 51–53, model (notes 228 et seq.) and trumpet parts.

Comparison with the model shows that the climaxes of these phrases always feature pitches in Trumpet I that *do* follow the model, underlined by their return to quaver or crotchets; the notes in triplet quavers seem to be derived from the mode of example 29 above; the lower parts are *modal* parallels to Trumpet I in the same relation as the aforementioned six-part a cappella chords: the highest note of a phrase is one note below the lowest note of the part above.

The phrases in triplet quavers should be seen as 'passing tones' or 'introductory phrases' leading up to tones that follow the model, both in terms of pitch and of durational value. No doubt the introduction of this noteworthy feature at this point of the work relates to the section's text, '... et que subsiste le temporel'.

Transparence also features a section that cannot be explained from the model or possible variations on the model. In the fourth movement at bar 57, the second rendition of the model ends; then, from bar 58 onwards, a 'model-free' section (which does make use of pitch classes from the model) of thirteen bars is introduced. This independence from the model is not conspicuous at first hearing or sight, since it heavily features the C$^{\#}$ which with the model begins and ends (even with knowledge of the model, it would suggest another repetition). Here, the music's origin presumably lies in its text: 'je suis devenu libre de tout'…

5.9 Conclusions

The above examples and discussions have shown the various ways De Leeuw made use of a model as the basis for a composition. From these examples, and with knowledge of other works by De Leeuw composed with a model, it is clear that a model is the foundation for a composition's pitch *classes* and melodic structure, and also serves as an indication for rhythmic structures, possible embellishments, and texture. Pitch registration, instrumentation,

microtonality, dynamics, tempo, tempo changes and the use of fermatas do not appear to be governed by the supposed model in any case.

The various realisations of *Transparence*'s model in four different movements suggest that specific phases of the model were conceived in relation to specific sections in the resultant music. For example, it is noteworthy that the first phase's introductory features are maintained in three out of four movements, while the ostinato phase of the model is only exploited in full in the last two movements. A clear reason for the model's transitional phases (i.e., those phases where previous periodicity is halted) could not be found in the music; these phases seem to be governed more by the composer's need for certain pitch classes at a particular moment than by any underlying process. This, the exceptional length of the model, and the relation of some phases of the model to only specific moments in the music, suggests that (most of) *Transparence*'s model was created – or at least amended – alongside the composition of the actual music, and used as a vehicle to interconnect all four movements.

Transparence is an early example of the composer testing out the possibilities of such a technique, for the models of later works are considerably shorter in length, and appear more interconnected.[78] Attempts at this interconnection can be seen in the model's recurrent C$^\#$ and F$^\#$–A–G$^\#$–E$^\#$–A sequence. It might be questioned whether De Leeuw's intention of constructing a composition on a cyclical rather than a developmental basis (such as mentioned in his article 'Back to the Source') is actually possibly through such a lengthy model, which in itself displays developmental features, and is repeated a mere six times.

Whether the model's implied cyclicity is successfully communicated to the listener or not, the model seems important to the composer for its *symbolical* function, especially if examined in its relation to the work's text. The model's implied repetitive and theoretically endless nature relates to the text's theme of eternity – a relationship that is especially obvious

---

[78] See the discussions of the models in chapters VII and VIII.

in the fourth movement's lengthy ostinato setting of 'mon instant s'est éternisé'. Other examples of this relationship are:

- the phrase 'ne me rends pas à moi-même', which is set to uncertain sections of the model (such as those where a preceding periodicity is removed);

- the third movement's mention of 'the whole' that includes 'the single' (the 'lumière' and 'le rayon') that is set to an extended melisma including all the pitch classes presented in the preceding phrases;

- the fourth movement's setting of 'tu m'as annihilé en toi', which reduces the model to the sequence F$^\#$–A–G$^\#$–E$^\#$–A;

- the model's C$^\#$ pedal that binds all movements of *Transparence* together on the word 'Toi', from which the music evolves and to which it returns on 'je suis annihilé en *Toi*';

- the single occurrence of triplet quavers on '... et que subsiste le temporel';

- finally, the closing bars of *Transparence*, which refer to the model by *not* making use of it, on the text 'je suis devenu libre de tout'.

Without doubt, the model technique proved highly important to De Leeuw in his goal of achieving a greater technical as well as symbolic unity within his compositions, and to give expression to his ideas of 'cyclicity'. Knowledge of this basis does not necessarily lead to a wholly other experience of a particular work by De Leeuw, but the construction of a model as a potential, brought to life by the composer's hand, presents a significant opportunity to gain insight into the composition processes and philosophy of De Leeuw's later works.

<div align="center">

VI.

CINQ HYMNES

</div>

text: Kabir (15th century);
commissioned by the Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst and the Johan Wagenaar-stichting on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Kurt Thomas Foundation;
first performance: 15 July 1989, The Hague.

6.1 Temporality

The idea of eternity appears to have been on the composer's mind while working on his later choral works, *Cinq Hymnes* in particular. The texts of the latter are lyrical meditations on the sacred meaning of music, describing atmospheres in which the soul's union with the divine results in an otherworldly, 'eternal' form of music and dance. In the opening movement, the narrator calls upon his heart to awaken 'after centuries' to witness the divine presence, while in the closing movement 'Life and Death', 'mountains and earth' dance to the rhythm of 'eternal drumbeats'; the way the final bar's tom-tom[79] gradually fades into nothing implying that the dance continues in perpetuity.

Eternity may be the theme, but how exactly does De Leeuw handle time in his compositions? How does his notion of time influence the elements, construction and specificity of his musical language?

The current section will explore the topic of temporality in De Leeuw's late choral works through the example of *Cinq Hymnes*. There are different temporal aspects to and textures in each of its five movements, and in this they are representative of De Leeuw's later works: the opening and closing movements feature pulse-driven, up-tempo music, full of repeating patterns; the contrasting second and fourth movement feature slower, melodically-orientated music, taking its lead from a pulseless form of monophony; the middle movement

---

[79] The engraved score (2011) erroneously mentions a tam-tam.

resembles a slow cortège, in a counterpoint of ostinatos and parts of a more arabesque-like nature.

Guiding questions in this exploration are: what is the notion of temporality in De Leeuw's philosophy? How does this relate to the composer's medium of choice? How does all this affect the composition's materials, construction and narrative?

6.1.1 Orientation

This exploration begins by focussing briefly on the idea of temporality in the composer's (wide-ranging) philosophy. This will be no more than an introduction, since a discussion of the composer's points of view and the means by which they are arrived at would fill a work far exceeding the scope of this dissertation. For an in-depth discussion, the reader is referred to De Groot 1991.[80]

A fundamental part of De Leeuw's life and works was a belief in an 'ultimate reality', 'in which all is one', 'opposites are reconciled', a reality of 'being, not becoming', not of 'before or after'.[81] This reality is present in the current world's own temporality/spatiality, but does not restrict itself to that temporality/spatiality. It is incomprehensible and inexpressible through the present temporality/spatiality (which in its direction contrasts to the ultimate reality's nature of simultaneousness[82]), but its qualities can, however, be referred to in, for example, art.

The composer's words from 'Back to the Source' should be remembered at this point: 'To me, (my) music is primarily a symbol'. De Leeuw's compositions should in no way be seen as an attempt to realise an 'eternal' form of music by *overcoming* the concept of duration

---

[80] De Groot 1991: 228 et seq.
[81] Ibid. The references in De Leeuw's philosophy can be traced to the *Upanishads*, Buddhism, Taoism and ancient Greek philosophy.
[82] Compare Messiaen's viewpoint, based on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologica*: 'Eternity is entirely simultaneous, whereas time knows a before and after.' (Messiaen, *Traité de rhythme, de couleur et d'ornithologie* I: 30)

(such as, for example, John Cage's *Organ²/ASLSP* or Stockhausen's compositions in 'moment form'[83]), but as *symbols* of (references to) that 'ultimate reality'.

Such symbolism occurs frequently in the late choral works and is characteristic of the composer's language; compare the remarks on the ultimate reality above with the theme of unification in *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* and *A cette heure du jour*, or with this text from *Transparence*:

> *O mystère que l'Être apparaisse dans le Néant*
> *et que subsiste le temporel*
> *avec Celui qui a l'attribut de l'éternité.*[84]

a sentence from the *Élégie*:

> *Quia melior est dies una in atriis tuis, super milia.*[85]

or these lines from *Cinq Hymnes*:

> *Toutes choses sont créées par Dieu.*
> *L'amour est Son corps.*
> *Sa forme est infinie et insondable.*
> *Il est le souffle, la parole, la pensée.*
> *Il est l'Etre pur.*
> *Il est le soleil, la lumière.*
> *Il est immergé dans toute conscience,*
> *dans toute joie, dans toute douleur.*[86]

---

[83] Stockhausen on 'moment form': 'This concentration on the present moment – on every present moment – can make a vertical cut, as it were, across horizontal time perception, extending out to a timeless I call eternity. This is not an eternity that begins at the end of time, but an eternity that is present at every moment. I am speaking about musical forms in which apparently no less is being undertaken that [*sic*] the explosion – yes – even more, the overcoming of the concept of duration.' (Heikinheimo 1972: 120–121)

[84] 'O Mystery of Being appearing in the Void / and of the temporary existing with Him that bears the hallmark of Eternity.' (Translation by the author.)

[85] 'For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.' (Bible, King James Version 1611)

[86] 'All things are created by God. / Love is his body. / His form is infinite and unfathomable. / He is the breath, the word, the thought. / He is pure Being. / He is the sun, the light. / He is immersed in all conscience, in all joy, in all pain.' (Translation by the author.)

6.1.2 'Ultimate reality' vs. a time-bound medium

De Leeuw's works offer an interesting case study, inasmuch as they ask how an 'ultimate reality' whose nature is eternal and simultaneous, without either beginning or end, is to be referred to through a medium whose nature is exactly the opposite; the composer could not ignore the fact that his discourse could only be communicated in one temporal/spatial direction. It is, I will argue, this relation (or tension?) between the referring medium and that to which is referred to that defines the temporal aspects of De Leeuw's later works.

So how does the composer construct the temporality of his pieces in such a way that it is possible for these works to take on a referential (symbolic) function?

An example of this was already given in the closing movement of *Car nos vignes*, through the concept of 'cyclicity'. Cyclicity is expressed through repetition, but also 'implies the (experience of) necessity of repetition.'[87] When discussing this topic in relation to 'ultimate reality' with Rokus de Groot, the composer elaborated on its characteristics:

- 'a structural (rather than incidental) type of repetition';

- 'the presence of a process with complementarity of counterparts (creation/destruction, plus/minus, yin/yang, evolution/involution); the counterparts together make a whole';

- 'flexibility of appearance'[88]

In cyclicity, parallels (and thus references) to the qualities of 'ultimate reality' are present: the use of a structural type of repetition, combined with the experience of the necessity of repetition, implies a self-perpetuating type of structure that – theoretically – has neither beginning nor end. The occurrence of such parallels – even if they are not obvious on the music's surface – can be seen as references to the 'ultimate reality'.

A clear reflection of the above can be seen in the composer's use of the model, in which an attempt is made to interconnect the music's vertical and horizontal aspects (i.e.,

---

[87] Sligter 1995: 142.
[88] De Groot 1991: 230, note 10.

pitch and time), in a system that is, in its implied repetition, theoretically endless. An example of its flexibility is found in the model's different realisations (which offers a possible explanation for the fact that all of De Leeuw's late works are multi-movement compositions), but also in the varied repetition of patterns in the final movement of *Car nos vignes*, a work in which the technique is first tried out.

Ex. 32: *Cinq Hymnes' model. Note that the model consists of pitch classes, presented here as pitches only for convenience.*

6.1.3 Selection

So far, the discussion of the temporal aspects in De Leeuw's music has been only *theoretical*, and the composer's own words from 'Back to the Source' should be remembered here as warning:

> This article so strongly emphasizes technical and philosophical aspects of composition that the reader may justly wonder where the music begins. The quality of music is not determined by theories. (...) We must work from living experience.

The temporal aspects of the model and its philosophical foundation have been introduced; now to examine the temporal aspects of the actual realisations of this model: How are they

constructed? What does their composition imply for the work's discourse? And are there possible reasons for their construction in relation to the composer's philosophy?

As the following examples will demonstrate, the occurrence of particular temporal aspects of De Leeuw's works can be explained in relation to the composer's selection from the model. The types of selection vary, apparently guided by the composer's preference for particular rhythmic or melodic aspects.

For example, if a particular rhythmic pattern is to have a guiding role, the model can be sieved through an ostinato figure or realised through a sequence of closely related patterns (implying a form of developing or varied repetition). On the other hand, if the realisation of a particular sequence of pitch classes is the aim, the results of this type of selection often lack an obvious durational structure. A shared trait of all types of selection is that they feature an element of repetition (essential for the music's 'cyclicity'), and that they often display elements that can be considered references to simultaneousness.
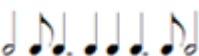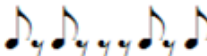
It should however be noted that a fair number of references made through the music's temporal aspects (such as palindromes, the particular relation of a realisation to the model, the relation of text to the model) become apparent only via close inspection of the score, or with knowledge of the composer's philosophy in mind.

6.1.4 Patterns

As could already be observed in *Transparence*, a fairly simple type of selection from the model is the application of a particular pattern to that model; often the model is constructed in a fashion which facilitates the use of such patterns. The third movement of *Cinq Hymnes* features the most straightforward example of such a procedure, with the upper and lower parts of Piano I following the pattern of a half note.
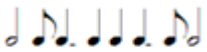
Ex. 33: *III, opening, Piano I and model. Note that in this movement, the model's durations are in crotchets instead of the usual quavers.*

A similar but more dense counterpoint of patterns can be encountered in fifth movement's second section (b. 63 et seq.; instrumental parts). Here, durations of six crotchets and patterns of and are applied to the model.

Ex. 34: *V, b. 63-65; instrumental parts.*

The shape of these patterns is often related to the shape of a particular textural phrase, and with this relation, the pattern itself may take on a function of reference to that particular text. For example, the pattern ♩ ♪♩. ♩ ♩ ♩ ♪♩ is introduced at the end of the first movement on the text 'car ton Seigneur est près de toi', and restated in the fifth movement (bar 63), directly after 'J'entends la mélodie de Sa flûte / et je ne suis plus maître de moi'.

Like the patterns encountered in *Transparence*, all of the patterns in *Cinq Hymnes* are constructed as palindromes, echoing Messiaen's use of 'non-retrogradable rhythms': in a palindromic rhythm, the forward and backward directions of time are (theoretically) identical, thus the rhythm can be considered a *representation* of simultaneousness.

A shared trait of all these instances of pattern music is their relatively long duration, with the third movement offering an extreme example lasting the entire movement. A reason for this trait could be a reference to a perpetual, endless form of music (mentioned in the work's text), of which similar examples can also be found in the works of Messiaen (e.g. *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*).

6.1.5 Pulse, periodicity and 'patterns'

Cinq Hymnes displays many textures that *suggest* exact repetition of a particular phrase or pattern such as the examples above, but on closer inspection reveal a diverse array of inexact repetition: the phrases are connected through a number of similarities, but exact repetition of a phrase is rare. The opening of *Cinq Hymnes*, bustling with rhythmic activity, provides a good example of such a texture.

Ex. 35*: I, opening bars (sopranos/altos tacet).*

At this opening, the listener is bombarded with a dense rhythmic counterpoint, but the texture is constructed in such a way as to guide the ear. The heartbeat supporting the texture is the crotchet pulse (ca. 60 b.p.m.), realised in continuous B^b crotchets. A periodicity of five crotchets is brought to this pulse, each time marked by a quaver upbeat (Piano II: bass part) followed by a note lasting five crotchets, doubled at the octave (Piano II: middle part). Finally, the upbeat, introduced as the first element of the work's discourse, adds to the music's forward motion, similar to the semiquaver upbeat in the closing movement of *Car nos vignes*.

To these relatively constant parts, melodic parts of irregular length are added in the higher registers of the pianos. These parts do not make use of particular rhythmic patterns or symmetry and, analysed individually from the point of both rhythm and pitch class, appear to be free choices made by the composer.

Ex. 36*: I, b. 1 et seq.; Piano I, melodic part.*

Ex. 37a and b*: modes of Piano I and II respectively.*

The choral parts likewise display phrases of irregular length, but add to the crotchet pulse by the placement of accented syllables *on* the beat.

Summarised, three types of 'temporal functions' can be distinguished:

- pulse;
- periodicity;
- parts of irregular length.

Examples of all three types are found in all of De Leeuw's late choral works, with the opening movement of *Cinq Hymnes* offering an example of a combination of all three types.[89]

The parts of irregular length, although apparently lacking a clear structure, are interesting for the manner in which they display a more varied form of repetition: the choral parts frequently feature the exact repetition of words, and the rhythms of their different

---

[89] Similar examples include *Car nos vignes* VII; *Transparence* I, III and the latter half of IV; *Cinq Hymnes* III and V; *A cette heure du jour*, opening; *Élégie* III.

phrases share many similarities. The overall aim seems to be the interconnection of these phrases, at the same time suggesting the presence of a pattern as the basis for all the different phrases, which is never explicitly stated.

Ex. 38: phrases in choral parts, b. 1-13.

The irregular melodic parts of the pianos offer a similar case. Because of the continuous pulse and periodicity (realised through the same instrumental colour of the pianos), these parts are easily heard in relation to that periodicity, and thus within the space of five-crotchet periods. The combination of their rhythms within the periodicity of five-crotchets results in the following phrases:

92

Ex. 39*: combined rhythm of all piano parts (excluding the crotchet ostinato), b. 1-14; a quaver note denotes a note's attack; stems downwards denote the upbeat of the five-crotchet periodicity, stems upwards that of the other parts.*

(b. 15, new section)
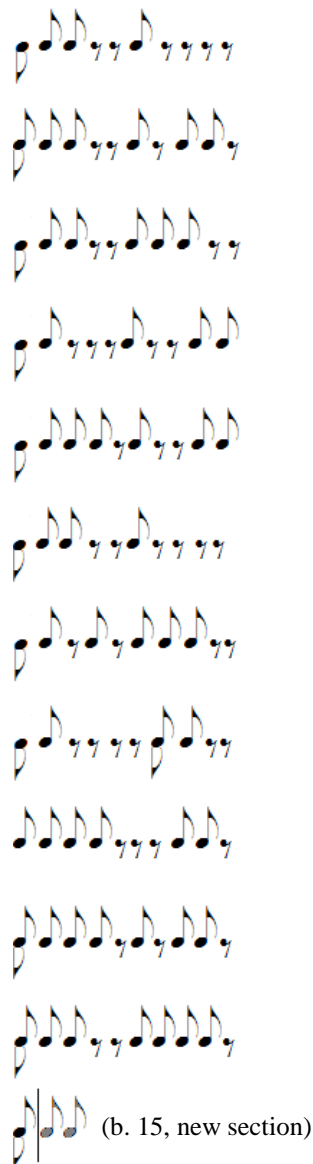
As can be seen, hardly any pattern is identical to another, but, as with the choral parts, there are many similarities: almost all patterns feature a three-quaver motif at their opening (sometimes shortened to two quavers, sometimes extended with one quaver), and the sixth quaver often features an attack, while the tenth quaver often lacks an attack. Again, these similarities hint at a shared pattern as basis for all phrases, thus implying a form of repetition.

Both cases of varied repetition above can be considered examples of the cyclicity described by the composer, and as the opening of *Cinq Hymnes* demonstrates, a combination of all three types of rhythmic functions (pulse, periodicity and patterns) enables a strong form of cyclicity:

- the crotchet pulse enables the introduction of periodicity;

- the five-crotchet periodicity enables the experience of shorter sections and thus, patterns;

- the exact repetitions of or similarities between these shorter sections imply that they are variations of a shared pattern, thus a form of repetition.

The music's forward motion is enhanced here by the quaver upbeat of each period, which is also clearly introduced to the listener, as it opens the work.

A comparison can be made with the temporal elements of the beginning of the final movement. Here there are clear similarities in the incantations of the basses (patterns) and the drum accompaniment (pulse). However, a distinct periodicity, such as that of the first movement, is absent. Yet as this example demonstrates, the durational aspect of the phrases' construction is again aimed at a form of repetition, and thus, cyclicity.

Ex. 40: V, opening.

Table 1: V, b. 3-33; composition of phrases.

Text			A	B	C	D	E
O Ami			o	𝄾	♩♩♩.	♪	♩
				𝄾	♩.	♪	𝅗𝅥.
				𝄾	♩♩. ♩♩	♪	𝅗𝅥.
le corps	*le corps*			𝄾		♪	𝅗𝅥.
est sa				𝄾	♩♩♩.		
lyre					♩♩♩		
	le corps			𝄾	♩♩♩	♪	𝅗𝅥♪♪
	est sa						
	lyre			𝄾	♩♩♩	♪	♩. ♪
	est sa			𝄾	♩♩		𝅗𝅥 ♪
	lyre						

95

(Table 1 cont.)

Il tend ses cordes	Il tend			♩	♩ ♩ (dotted quaver, minim)		
	Il tend ses cordes				♩ ♩ ♩	♪	♩. ♪
	Il tend			♩		♪	♩
				♩	♩		♩
	ses cordes			♩		♪	♩ ♪ ♪
et fait résonner				♩	♩ ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩	♪	♩
la mélodie				♩	♩ ♩ ♩	♪	♩ ♩ ♩.
				♩	♩ ♩ ♩		♩.
de l'Infini				♩	♪ ♩. ♩ ♩.	♪	
					♩ ♩	♪	♩ ..
					♩	♪	𝅝

As the entire section is underpinned by a crotchet pulse, each phrase is heard in relation to that pulse. Almost every phrase commences on an off-beat moment (column B), and displays a final cadence of a quaver (column D) followed by a relatively long duration *on* the beat (column E).[90] This last feature is an example of complementarity of counterparts as mentioned by the composer. A phrase starts off-beat ('tension'), but – as the recurrence of this feature implies – will always resolve to a note on the beat ('resolution'). Although the phrases' syncopated middle section (column C) varies in length and composition, the recurrence of this final cadence adds to the expectation that a phrase at some point *will* resolve to a final quaver and an *un*-syncopated note.

It is this shared feature which enables the different phrases to be experienced as varied repetition; not as patterns whose duration is marked via clear periodicity, but as closely

---

[90] The incidental addition of a quaver note to this final duration is most likely due to the rhythm of the word in question ('**cor**des', '**ly**re').

related patterns that feature a degree of durational flexibility (similar to the closing movement of *Car nos vignes*). The phrases' interconnection is enhanced by the repetition of short fragments of the text (see the first column) and the use of a limited number of pitches (slowly moving into a higher range, but always within the space of a fifth), each phrase sharing elements with the previous and the next.

6.1.6 Duration resulting from melodic orientation

In contrast to the opening and closing movements, the second and fourth movements feature temporal elements with a more melodic orientation.

Ex. 41: IV, opening.

Listing the durations or metres that are used in these phrases doesn't reveal any particular use of durational structures or an intention to create patterns or symmetry. But these wide, chant-like phrases – a recurrent feature in De Leeuw's oeuvre – pose the question of why particular long durations are used, such as a note lasting seven and a half crotchets.

Comparing the model with its realisations offers two possible reasons: first of all, in these phrases, the composer seems to have aimed for melodic lines in stepwise motion; he has

97

used the model as a guide to switch pitch in accordance with this stepwise motion, sometimes
resulting in strikingly long durations.

Ex. 42: IV, opening with model (Soprano, all other parts tacet). Note that F# is treated as a pedal, although the model does not always allow for this pitch class.

Another possible reason can be found somewhat further in the movement, at the third
statement of the model.

Ex. 43: IV, b. 19-21.

With each new statement of the model, the composer has added a voice to the ensemble,
while the other voices repeat their realisation of the model of before. As can be seen in the

example above, all parts feature stepwise motion, but are also complementary in terms of rhythmic activity; the use of relatively long durations creating space for other parts to be clearly heard. This feature is necessary for the four-part counterpoint to be heard, and at the same time for the *repetition* of these parts to be heard. The spare use of text enhances the clarity of this structure. A similar situation occurs at the second movement's opening bars.

After the fourth movement's counterpoint ('Kabir dit'), a striking chordal section is introduced (bar 28), characterised by its use of homophony and strong dynamics. This section contains a perfect example of De Leeuw's trade-mark realisation of harmony out of the model's single-line orientation, and the realisation of durations resulting from a melodic orientation.[91]

Ex. 44: IV, b. 28-30 with model.

---

[91] Similar examples are found in the 'chordal phrases' of *Transparence*, *A cette heure du jour* (see 7.4) and the fourth movement of the *Élégie*.

In the first bar, harmony is realised with each part changing to a particular pitch according to its place in the model. Once the full harmony is realised (an expression of the text's 'Toutes choses sont créées par Dieu'?), the durations of this homophonic section (b. 28–end) are further determined by the top part, which follows the model in those places where a stepwise motion can be realised, gradually moving down an entire octave.

In relation to the model, these chordal phrases can be considered as references to simultaneousness: the chords themselves form vertical summaries of a section of the model, while the horizontal path of these phrases is guided by a particular relation to that model.

6.1.7 Tempo and metre

Although a particular use of tempo and metre is usually considered a cornerstone of a composer's vocabulary, it is clear from the late choral works that these parameters are a secondary means of differentiation in the model's various realisations.

Table 2*: Cinq Hymnes' tempi and metres.*

	Tempo (b.p.m.)	Pulse	Metre
I	ca. 60 *l'istesso tempo ma poco meno mosso* *con moto* *(= tempo primo?)*	♩	mostly **4/4**, also **3/4**
II	ca. 40	♩	mostly **3/4** and **5/4**, sometimes **3,5/4** or **4/4**
III	60	♪	(not given, but **4/4**), a single time **6/4**
IV	ca. 72	♩	**3/2**, sometimes **3,5/2**
V	ca. 104		**3/4** and **4/4** alternatively
	ca. 120	♩	**3/2**

In relation to the composer's philosophical ideas, it is noteworthy that none of his tempo markings seem to point to 'cyclicity' (such as, for example, the use of a single tempo

throughout, or a symmetry in tempi). Most of De Leeuw's tempo markings include the trade-mark 'circa', which combined with the frequent occurrence of fermatas and local tempo changes (*accel., rit., a tempo*), implies a degree of flexibility in tempo in the service of the musical discourse.

Regarding temporality, there are parallels between De Leeuw's philosophy and those of his contemporaries, such as Stockhausen and Messiaen. However, in relation to these latter composers, his tempo markings are strikingly normal, lacking the exactitude of Stockhausen's works, or the characteristic 'sub-tempo' markings of Messiaen.

The same can be said for De Leeuw's use of metre, which conforms to the primary means of selection from the model, such as patterns. The single occurrence of a **3/4** metre in context of solely **4/4** (first movement) or the use of exotic metres such as **3.5/2** in context of solely **3/2** (fourth and fifth movement) can be explained by the model's length of hundred and ten pitch classes in quavers, often requiring one odd bar to realise the entire model. (Clear reasons for the model's length could however not be found.) It is possible that the composer envisioned the use of a particular metre when constructing the model, since most of his models point to a particular periodicity (see, for example, the periodicity of *Transparence*).

6.1.8 Conclusions

As mentioned, De Leeuw's works offer an interesting case study, inasmuch as they ask how an 'ultimate reality' whose nature is eternal and simultaneous, without either beginning or end, can be referred to through a medium whose nature is exactly the opposite. As has become apparent in this exploration, the (recurrent) temporal aspects of De Leeuw's late choral works are constructions that serve as references to the so-called 'ultimate reality', but even without knowledge of this concept, references to perpetuity and simultaneousness are clearly present in the music.

De Leeuw often included repetitive processes in his compositions, but not in the fashion of his Minimalist contemporaries; exact repetition or repetition for long timespans are rare features in his music. Rather, De Leeuw's repetitive processes are constructed in such a manner that they seem to point to one basic pattern as basis for an entire strand of patterns (a basic pattern which is, however, hardly ever stated in full, or evolves during the course of a piece). Such referential types of construction, suggesting a continuous – cyclical – reiteration of the same musical foundation, are best interpreted as an attempt to convey simultaneousness through a medium that lacks this quality. The manner in which harmony is introduced and the role it is given in the sounding music (its existence emphasised as a vertical 'summary' of a single melodic line, such as in example 44) seems to confirm this striving.

It is, in summary, the relation between the referring medium (his music) and that what is referred to (the qualities of the 'ultimate reality') that defines the character and construction of the temporality of De Leeuw's later works, the results of which are best interpreted as a *referential* type of music, in line with the composer's own words on music as 'a symbol'.

6.2 Prosody

Compared to instrumental music, choral music offers an additional opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of a composer's language through the examination of his choice and use of text in composition. As mentioned in chapter IV, De Leeuw's handling of a text extends beyond the conventional setting of a choral composition; the very business of the introduction of text can be made part of the work's discourse.

Examples of the composer's various ways of handling his texts of choice – his *prosody* – can be found throughout the five movements of *Cinq Hymnes*. The study of prosody (from the Greek προσῳδία, 'song set to music') concerns itself, among other things, with the manner in which a text is made part of a piece of music (not merely 'set to music'), and asks how in this composition a text is uttered and articulated. In more recent times, the poet Ezra Pound described the focus of prosodic study as 'the articulation of the total sound of a poem',[92] a proper description of the current section's focus.

Guiding questions in this section are: How do De Leeuw's texts of choice relate to his musical language? What types of prosodic textures are common? How do these textures function in the articulation of a particular text?

6.2.1 Texts and languages of choice

The late choral works are relatively homogeneous in their textual sources: religious texts from Eastern sources, translated mainly into French.[93] No statements could be found on the composer's preference for the French language, but the almost exclusive use of this language in his choral works coincides with the composer settling in France permanently.[94] Presumably, his daily use of French resonated with his idea that 'the human voice' was best

---

[92] Ahearn 1996: 319.

[93] A discussion of the original texts' prosody would require intimate knowledge of these languages and could easily fill an entire dissertation; it is therefore omitted here. It should also be mentioned that De Leeuw knew his sources mostly through translations.

[94] As mentioned, De Leeuw studied in France, and his wife was French by birth.

'capable of expressing one's ideas.'[95] The use of French in his compositions more or less parallels the language's particular rhythm of speech, apparent in the musical emphasis on stressed syllables, or setting unstressed final syllables (e.g. 'suprême', 'réveille', 'innombrables') to relatively short note values.

The five 'hymns' (the work's title is De Leeuw's[96]) can be considered typical examples of such texts. The composer selected poems which consider divine omnipresence, with special reference to the sacred qualities of music. They have affinities with Western (i.e., Antique and early Christian) traditions of hymn composition, and show kinship to the lyrical language of the Song of Songs and St Augustine's *Confessions*. Different mediums associated with religious service are mentioned: bells, choral music, drums, 'chants of love' (compare the texts of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* and *A cette heure du jour*) and dance.[97] These mediums are reflected in the work's instrumentation (voices, melodic percussion, drums, imitations of bells),[98] but also in the use of particular musical gestures usually encountered in sacred music, such as litany, unison chant, procession, etc.

The texts of *Cinq Hymnes* stand out for not addressing a deity directly, but calling upon different personas ('my heart', 'brother', 'ami') to give heed or observe the presence and qualities of the deity. This reference to a 'silent presence' is a returning feature in De Leeuw's choice of texts, and parallels the composer's view of his works as symbols, references.

---

[95] See note 2.

[96] His author of choice, Kabir, mostly wrote in so-called *dohas*, translated by Rabindranath Tagore simply as 'poems' (see Tagore, R. 2004. *One Hundred Poems of Kabir*. Orient Blackswan). By writing 'hymns', the composer created a strong reference to the Western tradition of hymnody, including its liturgical context and musical performance.

[97] This last art form is a recurrent theme in the late works of the composer, referred to in *Les chants de Kabir* (1985), the *Concerto for two Guitars and 12 Strings* (1987/88), *Danses sacrées* for piano, strings and percussion (1990), the opera *Antigone* (1991) and the second of the *Three Shakespeare Songs for mezzo-soprano and instrumental ensemble* (1996).

[98] The work's instrumentation was probably part of its commission, since the Kurt Thomas Foundation's famous yearly summer courses in conducting often featured this instrumental set-up to still enable the performance of larger orchestral works. A noteworthy similarity to the reduced set-up of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, a favoured work at the course, deserves mention.

6.2.2 From sound...

Following the example of chapter IV, a discussion of De Leeuw's prosody would first have to

consider the introduction of text itself. A fair number of movements from De Leeuw's choral

works feature (textless) vocalise, notated as textless notes.[99] Often, these vocalises consist of a

relatively static texture with the presence of one or two pedals. As could already be observed

in the example from *Car nos vignes,* the point at which text is introduced during or after this

vocalise is often highlighted in more than one way.

    Cinq Hymnes provides an example of such an instance in its second movement, where

after an eight-bar vocalise (pedals C and G) the text 'O frère' is introduced. This introduction

is noteworthy for its dynamics (slightly louder than the rest of the texture), the use of crotchet

triplets (contrasting with the quaver motion of both model and the movement itself) and the

use of pitch classes E-C$^\sharp$-B, dissonant to the C-G pedal.

Ex. 45: *II, opening.*

The use of vocalises shortly before the introduction of a text acts as a form of preparation

before the actual utterance of the text, creating a particular atmosphere, and focussing the

listener's ears on what is to come. In the five choral works considered in this dissertation,

---

[99] The requirements for performance of these notes is almost always left out; only the third movement of *Cinq Hymnes* includes the addition 'm'.

examples can be found where the text mentions evening and nightfall, presumably pointing back to the vocalise as an expression of this atmosphere.[100]

6.2.3 ... to a text's sonic qualities ...

And yet the introduction of text need not indicate the start of a conventional setting. De Leeuw's works feature many grey areas between mere sound and the clear utterance of a text, such as different forms of semi-vocalise, where a particular word is stretched to the point where it loses its identity as a textual utterance. The question could be asked why the composer opted for a particular grey area in the handling of a specific text. The different examples from *Cinq Hymnes* provide possible answers to this question.

A particular type of semi-vocalise can be found in *Cinq Hymnes'* fourth movement, which opens with lengthy repetitions of the name 'Kabir' (at its introduction presumably an unknown word to the listener); at two points these repetitions are rounded off with the addition of the verb 'dit', by which the previous word suddenly (re)gains meaning as a name: 'Kabir dit' ('Kabir says'). Again, this type of prosody can be considered a form of preparation, its composition a great colon for the subsequent statement: 'Kabir says: ...'. (See example 43.)

Another recurrent form of semi-vocalise is the utterance of a word in two voices, where one voice features a clear statement of the word, and the other voice features a stretching of the word similar to the example of 'Kabir dit'. *Cinq Hymnes* does not feature such an instance, but the opening of the *Élégie pour les villes détruites* does; here, the word 'Deus' is uttered in more conventional fashion (top voices) and simultaneously stretched in the lower voices, highlighting the sonic qualities of the same word, in this case its vowels.

---

[100] *Car nos vignes*, opening; *Cinq Hymnes* II; *Élégie* V (passing of the day).

Ex. 46*: opening of the Élégie.*

The recurrent stretching of words beyond the point where they can be recognised as a textual

utterance does not mean that the resulting sound and/or musical gesture has also lost its

meaning. In fact, in these instances the different sonic qualities of the words often serve to

create a kind of substratum, adding to the overall *atmosphere* of a particular section. A clear

example is found in the *Élégie*'s third movement, with the repeated stretching of the same

word 'Deus'. (See example 70.)

Likewise, De Leeuw's works sometimes feature words whose origins are unknown, or

are presumably the composer's own coinages. Of the five works discussed in this dissertation,

only *Car nos vignes* provides such an example, with the occurrence of the rhythmic

'takadama' in movement VI.[101] Here again, a word is used for its particular (here aggressive) sonic qualities, in this case to underline the atmosphere of uncertainty and persecution mentioned in the rest of the text.

Ex. 47*: Car nos vignes VI, b. 21-24.*

This last example also demonstrates a noteworthy feature of De Leeuw's different forms of abstracting text in his compositions' grey areas: the text's function as a *sign* (enabling a reference) is always maintained, whether in the word's actual meaning or in its utterance contributing to the music's overall atmosphere, expressing the reference made in the original text.

6.2.4 ... to clear utterance

Comparing the different movements of a choral work by Ton de Leeuw, one notices how much the clarity of a text's *utterance* varies. As was already clear from the exploration of *Car nos vignes*, this ranges from complete obfuscation of text (such as the sixth movement's 'takadama') to a clear, unadorned (and often unison) statement of a text. The a cappella second movement of *Cinq Hymnes* provides an interesting example of this shifting focus from mere sound to clear utterance of text.

---

[101] The word might have its origins in Eastern forms of rhythmic solfège, where similar words are used for the articulation of particular rhythmic figures. This form of solfège has for many years been taught as an elective subject at the Amsterdam Conservatory.

Ex. 48. *Brackets denote a reprise of text absent in the original text.*

Text	clarity of utterance		
	clear ———————————————————— **obfuscated**		
	vocalise, pedal C-G, *molto piano*		
O frère,	highlighted introduction through rhythm and pitch classes, *p*		
regarde,	syllabic utterance, introduced in ascending motion, *poco rit.*; diatonic		
le Seigneur est dans ce vase, qu'est mon corps.			simultaneous use of words from this phrase, no differentiation in separate parts; chromatic, *p*
Les ombres du soir tombent épaisses et profondes.		more melismatic utterance of separate words, alternated between parts; chromatic	
(regarde, o frère)	reprise of a previous sentence, similar texture as the previous phrase		
(le Seigneur est dans ce vase, qu'est mon corps.)			exact reprise; simultaneous use of words from this phrase, no differentiation in separate parts; chromatic, *p*
Ouvre ta fenêtre au couchant et perds toi		more melismatic utterance of separate words, alternated between parts; chromatic	
dans le ciel de l'amour	unison, marked *f* with accents; diatonic		
(dans le ciel de l'amour)	reprise of a previous sentence, ATB homophonic		
(le Seigneur est dans ce vase, qu'est mon corps.)			exact reprise; simultaneous use of words from this phrase, no differentiation in separate parts; chromatic, *p*
(Regarde!)	reprise of a previous sentence, in the same texture as the previous phrase, but returning to the C-G pedal		

As can be seen, a number of parameters contribute to the degree of clarity by which a text is uttered. A contrast between diatonicism and chromaticism appears to be part of this line, with chromaticism introduced at more clouded sections (although the first introduction of text is a more chromatic phrase, highlighted because of its diatonic backdrop). Sentences or words are often repeated, adding to the movement's interconnection; one clear example of this is the recurrent use of words from the first sentence uttered, 'O frère, regarde'.

Unison doubling is reserved for a single moment in bar 32, which is also a climax from the point of both dynamics and register, no doubt an expression of the text 'lose yourself ...'. In relation to prosody, De Leeuw's use of unison varies depending on its place within a movement. In the above example, its distinction with respect to the previous texture adds to the creation of a climax, enabling a strong statement of a particular text; on the other hand, unison is also used as a consistent texture, such as in the closing movements of *Car nos vignes* and the *Élégie*, where its structural use appears more symbolic in nature. The topic of unison will be discussed further in chapter VIII.

6.2.5 Pace of utterance and silence

The above example also demonstrates the reflection of cyclicity in the composer's prosody, with text usually repeated, paraphrased or paralleled. This typical trait results in a relatively slow prosodic pace, allowing the listener to reflect on the stated text. If, on rare occasion, a sentence is stated once, it is almost always interrupted and followed by pauses, enhancing a similar effect of reflection.[102]

An example of this occurs at the beginning of the third movement, where the sentence 'Là / le son des cloches / invisibles / se fait entendre' is divided into four smaller segments,

---

[102] See the fourth movement of the *Élégie* for a representative example.

and followed by an extended instrumental section with the voices stating no more text, but merely adding to the ensemble as vocalise.

Another example appears in the fourth movement, where Kabir's text is stated in strong homophonic slabs of chords, marked *forte*. (See example 44.) Again, the text is cut up into smaller segments by the use of pauses.

This use of pauses is interesting from the point of prosody. The composer gradually introduces longer pauses, combined with the music's slow descent in terms of register and dynamics; the last pause of the movement lasts two halve notes, dividing the sentence 'contemple cette splendeur / en silence'. With the gradual lengthening of pauses to the point at which their exact length can no longer be sensed (note also the absence of a pulse), the silence following this movement is cleverly made part of the discourse: 'contemplate this splendour in silence: ...'

6.2.6 Conclusions

As has become apparent from the above examples, the types of prosody occurring in De Leeuw's late choral works vary from a focus on mere sound to clear utterance of a particular text. However, the examples have also demonstrated a quality shared by all different types of prosody, similar to the works' temporal elements: that of *reference*.

For example, the introduction of text in itself can lend even a wordless texture, retroactively, a referential quality. Or text is abstracted through different means of utterance; sometimes to add to a particular atmosphere or theme mentioned in the text (thus making the means of utterance referential to the original text), sometimes to direct attention to a subsequent statement of text. Elements of 'cyclicity' are also found in the different types of prosody.

Undoubtedly related thematically to the composer's chosen texts, his works demonstrate the use of prosodic forms usually encountered in religious music, especially that of litany (a form common to both Eastern and Western religions, and in its form a prime example of repetition and cyclicity).[103] In these parallels, De Leeuw's works take on a similar character as liturgical music, sharing its *symbolic* function.

In relation to this function, one particular type of prosodic texture recurrent in De Leeuw's works deserves mention: monophony blossoming into a multiplicity of voices, found in the closing movements of *Car nos vignes* and the *Élégie*. In these instances, a prayer is uttered relatively slowly in unison, from time to time wavering out into heterophony. A comparison of this type of texture to Gaelic Psalm singing (such as in the Outer Hebrides) was made by Rokus de Groot, who introduced recordings of such singing to an amazed De Leeuw in 1971.[104] With this parallel, the consistent use of monophony (or 'monophony returning on itself') can be seen as a reference to the prosody of communal prayer, a connection confirmed by the movement's texts.

---

[103] Examples of litany in the late choral works: *Car nos vignes* IV (the qualities of the Loved One) and V; *Transparence*, opening of I and V ('O toi'); *Cinq hymnes,* opening of I and IV; *A cette heure du jour*, opening and further throughout the work (repetitions of 'Gemetar-Sirsirah'), and sections with 'psalmody' (plea to the gods); *Élégie,* throughout the work ('Deus'/'Dieu') and in III (names of bombed cities).

[104] Sligter 1995: 142 et seq. A number of recordings of this type of singing can be found on the Internet, such as 'Gaelic psalms at Back Free Church, Isle Of Lewis- 20/21/oct/2003' on YouTube.

VII.

A CETTE HEURE DU JOUR

text: French translation of a Sumerian text (?)[105];
commissioned for the celebrations surrounding the twentieth birthday of the *Studium Chorale* of Maastricht;
first performance: 2 October 1993 at the Maastricht Conservatory by *Studium Chorale*, conductor Erik Hermans

A cette heure du jour is a setting of a French 'translation' of a text supposedly from ancient Sumer, which tells of a princely scribe professing his love for the priestess Gémétar-Sirsira in wartime. Whether authentic or not, the text's themes match perfectly with De Leeuw's later works, such as the love-inspired quests of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur*, the invocations of *Transparence* and *Cinq hymnes*, the war-surrounded drama of the opera *Antigone*, and the biblical scenes of destruction in the *Élégie pour les villes détruites*.

Within the works selected for this study, and also within the later oeuvre of De Leeuw, *A cette heure du jour* stands out as a single-movement work, although it falls naturally into separate sections in both text and musical composition. In view of the work's form and length, the following exploration consists of a more general survey of the entire work (rather than single movements), after which its notable features will be discussed in three topical analyses: the use of structural pitches, the work's modality, and – as in chapters V and VI – the use of a 'model'.

---

[105] For the translation, see Selk 1989. The translation of the text was published in 1922, but the original Sumerian text apparently used by Selk has never been found. As stated in the introduction by the composer, only selections of the translation were used, those dealing with the scribe's love for Gémétar-Sirsira. The work's structure follows those selections.
The choice of text parallels that of Peter Schat's choral work *Adem* ('Breath') of 1984, a setting of a disputed translation from an Egyptian tomb of the eighteenth dynasty.

7.1. A cette heure du jour: general survey

The work's opening paints a scene of sweltering summer heat, in which the nameless royal scribe conceives his plan to go to the temple of Ninâ to call upon an impressive array of gods, so that his king might grant him the woman he loves, Gémétar-Sirsira:

> A cette heure du jour, où Sirpurla[106] repose parce que la chaleur, pareille à la bête affamée, dévore la cité et toute la campagne, Gémétar-Sirsira...
>
> [At this hour of the day, when Sirpurla rests, because heat devours the city and the whole countryside like a hungry beast, Gémétar-Sirsira…[107]]

Her name lingers in the scribe's mind, and the composer made sure it lingers in the listeners'minds as well: choral parts are at once divided into two distinct gestures[108], sopranos and tenors (later joined by third basses) describing the summer atmosphere in lyrical phrases, while altos and basses repeat the name of Gémétar-Sirsira, its syllables divided over accentuated two-part (later three-part) harmonies.

Ex. 49: *opening.*

---

[106] The original spelling in Selk's translation is 'Širpurla'.
[107] Translation into English: Hermans and Maes 2015.
[108] 'Gesture' is meant here as a movement with its own specific features such as curve, direction, character, etc.

Throughout this introductory section (bars 1–27), an almost playful contrast is made between the two gestures: while the more monumental repetitions of Gémétar-Sirsira's name are shaped as equal notes lasting five quavers and placed at the beginning of each three-crotchet bar, the melodic phrases are of varying length and rhythm, setting the text in chronological fashion.

In terms of the gestures' implied *direction*, the name-repetitions are static, marked by accents, adding to the feeling of a stable three-crotchet bar; the lyric phrases of sopranos and tenors move more freely in terms of rhythm and pitch. At the end of the first section, these phrases wind down, after which two more bars are used to end the last name-repetition. This uneven ending adds to the impression that a short section of process music between two uneven (and in terms of gesture apparently unrelated) parts has taken place.

However, a number of shared characteristics in both gestures can be pointed out, not least in terms of pitch. The name-repetitions consist of harmonies which always feature a D. With the octave d–d^1 sounding almost every bar (the name is repeated four times, each six-bar repetition followed by a whole bar rest), it takes on a function of reference, similar to the *finalis* of a mode (more on this in the section on modality). A quality of repose is emphasized by the fact that the d–d^1 always sounds at the same registers, in a relatively lower position than the melodic phrases.

Simultaneously, the lyrical phrases take on D as a structurally important pitch as well; a fair number of these phrases start on D and circle around its octave above, although none of the melodic phrases actually *ends* on a D. These phrases create a sense of movement in their apparent unpredictability, yet also a lack of closure at the end of the entire introductory section, because of the absence of a closure on a D. This lack of closure is enhanced by the name-repetitions still continuing for two bars in apparent disregard of the lyrical phrases, and

by the use of the text itself (see above): the composer has created an open ending in the first line by leaving out the rest of the original opening sentences.[109]

The relationship between both gestures is conspicuous in the moments where notes in both are performed simultaneously: these always occur on the same pitch classes (though not in the same registers). This feature will be discussed further in the section on the work's 'model'.

Ex. 50: *the 'lyrical phrases', given here without bar lines to clarify note lengths.*

A closer examination of these phrases did not result in the discovery of any rhythmic or pitch-related processes; in terms of intervals, there are no clear preferences, except for the *omission*

---

[109] In the original text (Selk 1989) the day is first followed by night, in which the scribe conceives his plan. The name of Gémétar-Sirsira originally does not appear this early in the text, but much later, in the section which De Leeuw sets in the third section of his composition.

of minor sixth, major seventh and octave (although the phrases are sung in single and later double octaves). In terms of gesture, the first five phrases display an expanding direction, while the direction of the latter two phrases is more inward. Common elements are a preference to end multi-syllable words on short note values ('repose', 'parce-que', 'bête', 'dévore', 'campagne') and a preference to end phrases on a lower note than the previous, both presumably because of similar features of pronunciation in the French language.

Although described as static in relation to the melodic phrases, the name-repetitions ('Gémétar-Sirsira') are not mere repetitions of the same pitch collections. The ever-present D binds the four repetitions together, but the composer has added little melodic offshoots to certain syllables, occurring at points where the melodic phrases contain little rhythmic activity. This adds to a sense of counterpoint between the two gestures. It is noteworthy that within this counterpoint, the direction of the two parts is always opposed:

Ex. 51: counterpoint of gesture between the 'offshoots' and the melodic phrases in bars 5, 12, 15, 20 respectively, soprano and alto parts (male voices doubled an octave below)

These offshoots are often in a intervallic relation of fourth or fifth to D. The composer does seem to avoid one offshoot, namely that of a fifth D–A.[110]

---

[110] See de Groot 1991: 57–58. De Leeuw acknowledged the avoidance of combining a pedal with its fifth above, especially at the end of phrases or sections, preferring rather a fourth below the pedal. According to the composer, this avoided the experience of a tonic/dominant relationship, keeping the music less 'grounded'.

The introductory section comes to an end in bar 27, marked by a fermata and a double bar line.

The next section (bars 28–38) describes the scribe's plans to call upon an exotic array of gods:

> Je fus agité. Un projet, je conçus. Je dis: que mon projet je l'accomplisse. Au temple de Ninâ, dans la ville de Ninâ j'irai au temple de Ninâ, ma Déesse, Ninâ, fille du Dieu Enki. Ninâ, Ninâ, j'invoquerai Nin-Girsu, Le Seigneur de la tiare, Nin-Girsu, guerrier d'Enlil, ton père sublime. Nin-Girsu, j'invoquerai. Bau, Bau, Déesse de la ville sainte qui dans Uru-Azaga brille en son temple, Bau, la dame pure, Bau j'invoquerai.

> [I became agitated. I conceived a plan. I said: may I accomplish my plan. To the temple of Ninâ, in the city of Ninâ, I will go to the temple of Ninâ, my Goddess, Ninâ, daughter of the God Enki. Ninâ, Ninâ, I will invoke Nin-Girsu, the Lord of the tiara, Nin-Girsu, warrior of Enlil, your sublime father. I will invoke Nin-Girsu. Bau, Bau, Goddess of the holy city, which in Uru-Azaga shines in her temple, Bau, the pure woman, I will invoke Bau.]

Whereas in the first section the text's character was chronological, the text of this section takes on a more 'cyclical' character.[111] The above text might also have inspired a continuation of the name-repetitions of the first section, but the composer opted for monophony in floating rhythm[112] alone; the stable meter of the first section is gone, replaced by dance-like, flexible melodies, starting in the tenors and gradually spreading out to the other voices. These melodies (the composer described them as having the character of a litany[113]) are largely built on units of quavers and crotchets, recalling the additive rhythm in Messiaen's agile melodies.

In each melodic phrase, pitches are sustained for short lengths of time, adding to the suggestion of acoustic reverberation. This process slowly introduces a more harmonic feel to the monophonic melodies.[114] As in the introductory section, these additions or offshoots are in

---

[111] See the discussion of 'cyclicity' in the exploration of *Car nos vignes sont en fleur.*
[112] This term is consciously used with De Leeuw's own description of 'floating rhythm' in mind: 'Floating rhythm (…) is really nothing more than a mitigation of the elementary metrical layer. The latter is still present, but the higher rhythmical layer traverses it freely, and is so much more important that one is inclined to forget the metre.' (De Leeuw 2005: 45)
[113] Preface to the score of *A cette heure du jour.*
[114] Again, other composers' works spring to mind, for example the similar pitch-sustaining processes in Benjamin Britten's *Curlew River* and Luciano Berio's *Chemins* series.

a relation of fourth and fifth to the main compositional material, with pitch classes A, E and B used mostly for this role.

The phrases in this section are clearly *modal* (in the sense of medieval monophonic chant), with A taking on the role of *tenor* and E the role of a note of repose, a *mediatio* or half-cadence.

Ex. 52 a, b and c: three exemplary melodic phrases from the second section. Note the gradual addition of voices, the sustained pitches, and the E at the end of every phrase.

In most cases, the pitches that make up these phrases are that of the E Aeolian with its fifth note B lowered (i.e. E–F♯–G–A–B♭–C–D–E; actually the acoustic scale of C starting on E). On rare occasions the A♭ (G♯) and F appear, both always leading to an E.

Since the gesture, length *and* pitch material of all melodies are somewhat similar, the music is in danger of stasis. The sustaining of pitches, pauses of uneven length between the phrases, and gradual addition of choral forces were presumably chosen by the composer to counter this possible blandness, although it could be argued that sustaining the already important A, E and B helps this cause.[115] If the composer however intended to create this stasis, one wonders why he choose to do so on a text with a dynamic quality (see above).

Perhaps the answer to this question lies not in this second section itself, but in the section's place in relation to what follows. Having slowed down from the initial tempo ♩ = 72 to ♪ = ca. 132 (i.e., ♩ = ca. 61), the third section reaches a *molto lento* of ♩ = ca. 50.[116] Here, luscious six-part harmonies in unison rhythm are introduced, *pianissimo*, to the text

> Afin que le mystère en mon coeur enfermé, à la face des hommes soit comme le soleil levant; afin que de mon roi je reçois celle que j'aime, qui d'un beau nom se nomme; Gémétar-Sirsira.

> [So that the mystery hidden in my heart, may be to the face of men like the rising sun; so that I may receive from my king she whom I love, who is named with a beautiful name, Gémétar-Sirsira.]

Here the 'beautiful name' rings out again: after the litany of gods, Gémétar-Sirsira returns to the stage, heralded by a solo soprano.[117] Her melody is immediately repeated by the entire choir in unison, and from that point onwards a short period of call and response exists

---

[115] The author has witnessed a fair number of rehearsals during which professional choirs dropped considerably in intonation throughout this section.

[116] A semiological relation to the composition of Gregorian chant springs to mind, in which a through-composed *ritardando* is achieved by a broadening of melodic figures, which highlights the following word or word group as the most important of the entire melody. See for example Joppich 2013.

[117] Although upon hearing it might very well not be heard or remembered, the listener is, in terms of bars, exactly midway the piece. Considering her importance to *A cette heure du jour*'s plot, the 'invisible pedestal' for Gémétar-Sirsira might be considered a conscious move by the composer.

between the soprano/bass solos (the latter singing two octaves below) and the six-part choir, with the last rendition of the 'beautiful name' in unison.

After this, the psalmodic melodies of the second section are reintroduced in the male voices, accompanied by the same tempo mark as before: *a tempo*, ♪ = ca. 132. Looking at the text, the composer's choice for a repetition of musical material is understandable:

> Sur la terre le jour s'enfuit. Sur la terre un autre jour monta. Au temple de mes Dieux j'allai. Devant le sanctuaire je proférai mes paroles:
> Mes Dieux, objets d'admiration, qui posez vos décrets sur le monde, que je vous implore! Ninâ, Nin-Girsu, Bau, Anunaki, dont la force n'a pas de borne. Tournez un regard favorable vers celui au visage courbé. Accordez-moi la science de l'entendement. Ninâ, Nin-Girsu, Bau, Anunaki.

> [On earth the day disappeared. On earth another day rose. To the temple of my Gods I went. Before the sanctuary I proffered my words: My Gods, to whom I pray, who promulgate your orders all over the world, I invoke you! Ninâ, Nin-Girsu, Bau, Anunaki, whose power knows no limits. Cast a benign look on him with the curved face. Grant me the wisdom of understanding. Ninâ, Nin-Girsu, Bau, Anunaki.]

Pitch classes A and E are again given a prominent role as structural pitches, but a new element is also introduced: imitation of melodies between the voices, supported by an uninterrupted pedal on E. The imitations stand out for maintaining the curve of each previous melody, with slightly altered pitches within each curve.

Ex. 53.

Tension is created by quickening the pace of the melodies (ultimately constructed only from quavers), the gradually shortened distance between each repetition, the unmovable pedal E, increasing dynamic intensity, and an expansion into the higher ranges of the voices. At the invocation of the last deities, the listener is not given the expected climactic fanfare; instead the earlier *pianissmo* harmonies return, on the text

> Pour que mon roi me donne pour mon épouse celle qu'aime mon coeur, celle qui d'un beau nom se nomme Gémétar-Sirsira.
>
> [So that my king shall give me as wife she whom my heart loves, who is named with a beautiful name, Gémétar-Sirsira.]

The scribe is apparently daydreaming again, on a text similar to the one before. Despite the sudden change in most parameters, a connection between harmonies and melodies is clearly present in the E, which forms the bass note of all the harmonies. Also, the pace of alternation between the different harmonies is much quicker than before, in rhythms that show closer kinship to that of the psalmodic melodies.

Ex. 54.

At bar 91, the solo soprano again rings out Gémétar-Sirsira's name in a simple alternation of pitches d^2 and e^2 in half notes and dotted half notes, far above the choir's harmonies. She is later joined by the other first sopranos and second basses (two octaves below) at bar 95. The other voices soon pick up on 'the beautiful name', and repeat it five times with increasing dynamics, ending on a unison E.

Ex. 55.

The invocation of the gods and the repetitions of Gémétar-Sirsira's name have added to a

sense of tension, which is left hanging in the air:

> Vers mes Dieux mon évocation monta. Les sacrifices s'accomplierent.
> L'invocation de ma bouche se tut.

[To my Gods my plea rose. Sacrifices were made.
My mouth's invocation fell silent.]

A new harmony is spun from this last E, all voices humming *pianissimo*. During this process of unfolding, short phrases of text are set to single snippets of melody, separated by large pauses. An overall feeling of tension and expectation is achieved by sustaining pitches from the melodic phrases in the harmonic canvas (the effect is similar to that of an echo, adding to an impression of space) and a gradual *decrescendo* of the melodic phrases into that canvas. The last melodic gesture, 'se tut' (on the intonation formula E–G–A of the psalmodic melodies before), leaves the listener with an open ending in text, harmony and melodic gesture.

Ex. 56.

Incense hangs in the air, the result of the scribe's plea to the gods only to be revealed far beyond the closing bar line…

Topical analyses

7.2 Use of structural pitches

A cette heure du jour includes a recurrent use of pitches which appear to form the foundation

of each of its separate sections, such as pedals, the *tenors* of melodies, or the bass notes of

harmonies. This occurrence of structural pitches is a shared trait of the five works studied in

this dissertation. The aim of the following discussion is to discern the possible function of

their use.

Throughout the first section of *A cette heure du jour* the D (below middle C) and d[1]

are present in nearly every bar. As mentioned, because of their relatively low position and

static character compared to the agile melodic phrases, these D's take on a role of repose, or

finalis, for a number of modes.

Another structurally important pitch class in this section is the A, which appears in

both the name-repetitions as well as the melodic phrases. This A becomes the *tenor* of all

'psalmodic' phrases in the second section, with E taking on a role of repose at the end of each

phrase.

The third section (the six-part harmonies, bar 39[4] onwards) starts out with a unison E,

which remains the bass note for every harmony thereafter.[118] F$^\sharp$ is also quite prominent

throughout this section, but it is the E that sounds in *every* harmony. However, unlike the

structural pitches of the first two sections, here the question remains how much the E is

actually experienced as a structural pitch during performance.

Following the relationship of fifths between the structural pitches of before, B is now

– at least in theory – expected to come into focus. This expectation is fulfilled at the entrance

---

[118] During the rehearsals of Cappella Amsterdam for a concert featuring De Leeuw's later choral works (April-May 2015), the conductor Daniel Reuss (conductor in several premieres of De Leeuw's works) mentioned that all harmonies should be tuned to this bass note E**.**

of the solo soprano (entering at bar 54) and the exact repetition of the choir, with a melody
that encircles and is directed towards B.

Ex. 57: entrance of the solo soprano, bars 54 and 55.

However, this confirmation is immediately annulled by the following phrases of soprano/bass
solos, combining the aforementioned structural pitches D, A and E, while the other voices
continue in their harmonies as before. A noteworthy feature of this return to previous
structural pitches is that it occurs exactly halfway through the piece.

Ex. 58: solo soprano, bars 56-59 (bass solo doubling two octaves below).

In the following section (bar 63 onwards), at the reintroduction of the second section's
material, prominence is again given to A and E, although this time the role of the E is
extended: it is sustained in every bar from bar 67 onwards. The difference between the
sustained D of the first section and this E is that in the first section the repetitions of D are
separated from each other with a quaver rest; in the case of the E, the pitch sounds without
interruption, adding to a sense of building tension. At the same time, the *ambitus* of the
psalmodic melodies is extended upwards, with the high D as clear point of focus. These
melodies then rise even further to the high G (octave of g^1/g^2).

Although it is debatable how much of the following is experienced in performance, the relation of fourths between the structural pitches of the psalmodic melodies deserves mention, which could offer reason for their choice:

Ex. 59: structural pitches in the melodies of the fourth section.
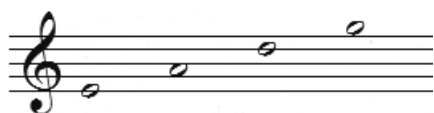
The *pianissimo* harmonies are reintroduced in bar 83, again with E as bass for the entire section. An alteration of earlier harmonies follows, with the top voices expanding their range upwards with C^2 as top of the *ambitus*. The solo soprano (later: all sopranos combined with second basses) concentrate on an alternation of D and E, the entire chorus eventually settling for E as final note of this section.

The hummed harmonies of the last section take an E as their lead, gradually adding the A, D, B^b, C and G, with B^b attracting attention in context of the previous fourth/fifth relations (its possible affiliates F or E^b are not introduced at all). The last note to be introduced, G, forms the bass note of the last harmony, and is a logical addition in relation to the D and C already heard. However, this G is striking since it had not been given any extensive role as a structural pitch.

Overall, the use of structural pitches appears to be aimed at closely connecting the different sections of the composition. Often, a primary structural pitch is accompanied by a second structural pitch, matching the *finalis* and *tenor* of medieval Western modal music respectively. By the use of one of these two pitches as a structurally important pitch in the next section, a connection to the preceding section is created. On a more abstract level, a relationship of fourths/fifths between the pitch classes of different levels becomes apparent

from an examination of the score, which offers an explanation for the introduction of so far structurally *unimportant* pitch classes (such as the final G); but these relationships will not necessarily be heard in performance.

7.3 Modality

Upon hearing *A cette heure du jour*, the listener may notice features usually encountered in early European modal music, such as floating rhythm, the use of a reciting tone (*tenor*) and a construction around structural pitches that resembles more the use of a *finalis* (such as in medieval and Renaissance modality) than the use of a tonic (such as in music of the Classical-Romantic period). Next to these references and parallels to modal traditions, the composer used the term 'extended modality' to describe his later compositions, including the five works selected for this study. But what exactly constitutes *A cette heure du jour*'s modality, and what is its purpose?

As implied by the example of the term *finalis*, an answer to these questions is to be found not only by pointing out the work's separate modal elements, but also by examining the direction, or better, the *orientation* implied by these elements. (As De Leeuw wrote in 'Back to the Source': 'The relationship to earlier modal systems lies not so much in the structure as in the orientation.'[119]) A closer look at the work's use of melody, harmony and time (rhythm, metre) will serve to clarify this point.

---

[119] Sligter 1995: 85.

Ex. 60: *the work's opening.*

The first example is the work's opening, in which the recurrence of D resembles the use of a modal *finalis*. Note that most of the harmonic moments in this section consist of two pitch classes, with three-note moments (such as in bar 4) generally being short-lived. Because of this, the two-line counterpoint is emphasized above its result harmonies, drawing attention to the melodic (horizontal) rather than the harmonic (vertical) aspects of the music. For this reason, and the relative registers at which it is placed, the repetitive D is experienced more as a point of repose than a point to which the music *needs* to resolve.

Ex. 61.

In the sections that feature a kind of psalmody (in its form a clear reference to modal chant traditions), harmony is created only via a melody from which its pitches are sustained. This construction emphasizes the single-voice melody and its motion as the basis for the music,

rather than a sense of the melody being based on an underlying harmonic framework. Again, the experience of a horizontal orientation is enhanced.

Ex. 62.

The section with six-part harmonies features the combination of three chords in similar fashion to the parallel harmonies of Debussy and Messiaen; their progressions are so-called 'chordal melodies'[120] rather than functional harmony because they are used homophonically. The chords' mildly dissonant construction (by which no chord can take on a role of resolution), unaltered bass on E, and varied ('cyclical') repetition appear to be aimed at avoiding the grounding of these harmonies. The use of the first chord (on 'fin') in its entirety as a *finalis* (while the use of the other two chords does not imply a need to resolve to this first chord) underlines this melodic aspect, thereby creating a connection to the work's preceding melodic sections.

---

[120] Term used in Reti 1978.

A cette heure du jour's parameters of time, rhythm and metre display a similar avoidance of musical 'grounding'; for a large part of the work, a regular pulse or regular accentuation of a pulse (in short, the experience of a regular bar) is avoided.

The work's most clear-cut metre, the three-crotchet bars of the opening, is at once clouded by the irregular melodic phrases with which it forms a counterpoint. After this opening section, most of the piece takes place in the floating rhythm anticipated in these melodic phrases. The second section features additive rhythm built from crotchets and quavers, with pauses varying from one to eight quavers separating the different phrases, again clouding the sense of regular metre. Metre is reintroduced in the third section, in guises which appear to underline the exotic nature of the work's text. At bars 39–62, the singers encounter an alternation of **4/4**, **4½/4**, **5/4** and **5½/4**:

4 – 4½ - 5 – 5 – 5 – 5 – 5 - 5½ - 5½ - 4½ - 5 – 5 – 5 – 5 – 5 - 5½ - 5 - 4½ - 5 – 5 – 5 – 5 - 4½ - 4

An overview of these metres shows the **5/4** metre to be a constant factor, alternated with metres that can be seen as derivatives of the **5/4**. But notice that the composer avoided a notation in quavers (for example, **9/8** instead of **4½/4**), implying a pulse based on crotchets. This additive metre (lengthening a pulse slightly, interpolating a short note into an otherwise regular rhythm, or shortening or lengthening every note of a rhythm by the same duration) again parallels modal traditions, such as Hindustan *raga*, but also the modality of Messiaen and Stravinsky.

This 'harmony section' is also the section where tempo is most varied, with three short *ritenuti* followed closely by *a tempo* marks occurring just before accentuated syllables ('le my**stè**re', 'hommes **soit**', 'de mon **roi**'). The placement of *ritenuto* and retake of the original tempo implies a 'composed *rubato*'. Because of this *rubato*, the many long notes of this

section (most of them going towards a length of a doubled half note) and the slow tempo ($\quarternote$ = ca. 50), it should be asked whether the additive metre is actually *heard* in performance, let alone felt by the performing musicians.[121] Moreover, the score does not make clear which notes are actually to be considered the 'lengthened pulse':

Ex. 63a, b and c. *Bars 40, 46 and 48, soprano part (all other parts are in unison rhythm).*

In any case, the experience of a clear and regular pulse is avoided. With the absence of such a pulse (and thus, the experience of metre), the chances of notes being accentuated or grounded through metre (such as the first beat of a bar) are minimised. Thus attention is guided towards the music's movement rather than its foundation in a possible temporal framework.

Summarising the above examples, *A cette heure du jour* not only shows outward features normally associated with modal traditions, but also displays a melodic-rhythmic (horizontal) rather than a harmonic (vertical) orientation on many levels, discernible in its use of melody, harmony, metre and rhythm; this orientation is a feature held in common with the modal traditions of Gregorian chant, Central-Javanese gamelan, Hindustan *raga* and *tâla* and Arabian *maqâm*; traditions well known to the composer.[122]

---

[121] As witnessed in the rehearsals of the choir Cappella Amsterdam for a concert featuring De Leeuw's later choral works (April-May 2015), conductor Daniel Reuss always conducted the quavers (*not* the crotchets) within the *rubato* moments.
[122] De Groot 1991: 268.

7.4 A cette heure du jour's 'model'

De Leeuw's use of a 'model' in this work has not been mentioned so far. Although the composer stated that his models were the backbone of almost all his later works, they form only one of *many* aspects of De Leeuw's composition. As with the analysis of twelve-tone music, finding the model does not equate to solving the puzzle. The question of the model's actual *use* to the performer, listener or student needs to be asked. Why did the composer feel the need to compose through this construction? Is knowledge of the model necessary for the performer or listener, and what does this knowledge add to the experience of such a composition? Is the model actually perceptible in the work as it is?

Especially because of this last question, analysis of the work started out with a general survey, touching upon striking situations and/or elements *en route*, to discover interrelationships and contrasts within the composition without prior knowledge of an underlying model or technical explanation by the composer. A number of the work's structural elements on the surface have been pointed out, some of which are clearly related, others which have a more enigmatic kinship. This last discussion will start from the premise that *A cette heure du jour* was composed using a model, to explore what knowledge of such a model may contribute to further understanding of the work.

When analysing *A cette heure du jour* with the aim of discovering a repeated sequence of pitches underlying the *entire* work, an arrangement of one hundred and sixty pitch classes in quavers can be found.

Ex. 64: *A cette heure du jour's model.*

The presumed model is presented here so that one noteworthy aspect may be clearly seen: it is a developing sequence, with a single strand of ten pitches slightly altered at each of its following fifteen iterations.[123] A parallel to this varied repetition can be found in the 'cyclical'

---

[123] As before, please note that the model consists of pitch classes and is presented here as pitches for convenience. Also, the arrangement of pitches implies a specific mode on D with inherent melodic gestures, which need not be the case in the model's realisations.

character of *A cette heure du jour*'s text (a feature shared by the other works studied in this dissertation). After sixteen strands, the entire sequence is repeated.

The structure of the model can be described as internally *dynamic* because of its similar but constantly altering strands, while the multiple repetition of the entire model can be described as a *static* feature. The fact that the model is constructed from repeating patterns, and is repeated as a whole, renders it well-suited as a foundation upon which to construct recurrent patterns, in terms of both pitch and time. The model's construction does not appear to be related to parameters such as tempo, dynamics or orchestration, elements which in general appear to lack a more systematised construction.

Examining the model, it becomes clear that pitch classes D, E and C are always left unaltered. This does not mean that these pitch classes are actually heard throughout the entire work[124] (for instance, D is relatively unimportant throughout the second section), but it does imply that these pitches and an implied motif of C–D are always within reach of the composer. The A also attracts attention, but alternates regularly with its neighbouring B♭, as is the case for F♯, alternating with F.

The inherent possibilities of the model are used throughout the composition: the D is given prominence in the opening section, while a number of characteristic melodic formulas in the model (e.g. D–A–C; E–G–A; A–G♯–E) are used quite extensively throughout the second section. The exclusive preference for pitches E, F♯ and G as building blocks for the top melody in the harmony section results in a relatively long duration of each chord, whereas the durations are shortened in the following section, when other pitches are also used.

---

[124] De Leeuw: 'The model is continually repeated in the course of the composition. But (…) these repetitions are not always thoroughly realized, or in other words, not all tones of the model need be sounded with each appearance.' (Sligter 1995: 85)

Ex. 65: *soprano, bar 39 et seq., and the underlying model (numbers denoting the model's strands).*

It is impossible to reconstruct the composer's work on the composition of the model,[125] but if one accepts the scenario of the composer starting work on the model *first* and then continuing with the actual composition of the work, it is possible composition started with the second or fourth section, since this is where the density of quavers is highest, thereby making most parts of the model audible.

The section with six-part harmonies is an odd section when taking the model into account: De Leeuw's rules of the game seem to allow for a specific harmony to occur only if the pitches included in that harmony are sustained from the point where the sequence allows them to be performed (such as made clear in the psalmodic sections; see also example 44). The first two sections of *A cette heure du jour* neatly follow this plan. To achieve a six-part harmony such as in the third section, one would need six pitches, thus six 'moments', thus a time span of at least six quavers before the full harmony can be heard. This rule of harmony occurring solely through sustaining pitches does not seem to be at work in this specific section (similar to the fourth movement of the *Élégie*). Indeed, the first six-part harmony of the

---

[125] The manuscript (presumably a fair copy) does not display notations related to a model, and no sketches of such a model have survived.

chorus already invalidates this rule by appearing in one attack, adding to its striking quality after the previous sections.

It is conceivable that De Leeuw *did* use a one-pitch-per-quaver series for the melodic parts of this movement, but that he also used an extra model for harmonies, indicating where a immediate change of six-part harmony could take place. (De Leeuw speaking about his orchestral *Résonances* [1985]: 'In *Résonances* we find a more complicated example, an enrichment of the musical texture, *where a secondary model is grafted to the original*, so that a new layer is created that co-exists for some time with the basic model.'[126] [Author's emphasis.])

The harmony section starts on the tenth strand of the model (although the first six quavers of the strand are left unused by the composer). It becomes clear that the model is followed in the top voice, where the slightly odd duration of harmonies (and bars) can be explained as a result of following the model solely on the pitches E, F♯ and G in that section.

Ex. 66: soprano, bar 39 et seq., and the underlying model.

This construction could suggest that the composer created his harmonies through *extensions* of his melodic series, in line with the horizontal orientation of the entire work discussed earlier. Exact or modal parallelism (such as in the fourth movement of the *Élégie*) is however not applied. The three chords used are built from pitches given in the model, except the D♯ in the second chord (this note thus appears dissonant to the model itself); the intervallic structure

---

[126] Sligter 1995: 91.

of these chords seem implied in certain melodic sequences within the model. When seeking a parallel between the chord's construction and the model's melodic sequences, an intervallic construction of the three chords in relations of fourths is a possibility:

Ex. 67a: *the three chords.*

Ex. 67b: *the chords' intervallic construction in fourths.*

The construction of these three chords, including the presence of the D$^\sharp$, can be explained as temporary additions of fourth to segments of the model (presented here as open notes), with the E functioning as pedal the entire harmony section. This, together with the chords' duration being guided by the place of specific pitch classes in the model, again supports the idea of harmony as an extension of a single melodic line, which in turn underlines the work's melodic-rhythmic orientation.

In this last section, it has been demonstrated that a model similar to the ones described by De Leeuw *can* be found in *A cette heure du jour*. Although certain procedures in the composition process will remain impossible to reconstruct, possible explanations for a number of features which at first appearance seemed dissonant or incongruous to the entire work (such as metre or pitch class) have been found through the inclusion of such a model, while others (such as the work's melodic-rhythmic orientation) have found supportive evidence.

VIII.

ÉLÉGIE POUR LES VILLES DÉTRUITES

text: selections from Psalms 4, 21, 31, 50, 83 and 129, selections from Jeremiah and Isaiah (in Latin and French);
commissioned by the Netherlands Chamber Choir;
first performance: 18 March 1995, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, by the Netherlands Chamber Choir, conductor Uwe Gronostay.

The final statement of De Leeuw's choral oeuvre is the five-part *Élégie pour les villes détruites*, setting texts describing the destruction of Jerusalem: an allegory for the continual destruction of cities, brought into a twentieth-century context by the recitation of the names of cities bombed in modern times, including De Leeuw's native Rotterdam. With the 'sacred love songs' of the preceding works still in mind, the *Élégie* feels like a bombardment in more than one sense, painting a bleak scene of despair and destruction through the age-old words of psalmists and prophets.

As has become clear from the previous explorations, most of De Leeuw's works can be summarised as heterophonic constructions, with a single-line melody as the music's foundation. The *Élégie* is equally heterophonous, not least in its closing movement, which starts out as a unison melody for the entire ensemble. But how do such single-line constructions relate to the *Élégie*'s division (grouping) of the ensemble, which is different in each movement? How do they relate to the heart of the *Élégie*, where an extremely dense simultaneity of musical layers is encountered?

Such questions point to a topic which has been touched upon a number of times in the previous explorations, and will be discussed further with the current work as an example: the composer's scoring for choir. How does De Leeuw orchestrate for choir, how does he distribute musical material (such as a single-voice melody) in his medium of choice?

To gain insight in the composer's scoring, the current chapter consists of a discussion of three parameters: grouping, layering (with particular focus on the third movement) and doubling.

'Grouping' is the manner in which the ensemble is used in its entirety or partitioned into subgroups through the distribution of musical material ('layers') to specific voices; 'layering' is the simultaneous combination or counterpoint of these different layers; 'doubling' is the way in which specific pitch classes are shared by two or more voices.

8.1 Grouping

The *Élégie pour les villes détruites* is written for sixteen voices, with four parts for sopranos, altos, tenors and basses respectively. Like all the other works explored in this dissertation, a different grouping of the ensemble is made in each of its movements. These groupings are easily recognised in both live performance and from an examination of the score.

The six-bar first movement uses most of the voices for the expression of the same musical material: a unison grouping. The second movement features a grouping of two distinct layers: long melodic phrases in the lower voices and fragmented wailing in the upper voices. Towards the end of this movement, the different voices are brought together in the call 'Jerusalem, lève toi, fais éclater ta splendour'. The most diverse grouping of the *Élégie* is found in the first half of the third movement, which is followed, after thirty-three bars, by a climactic reunion of the voices, at which point a combination of rising lines on 'De profundis' and the repetition of 'Deus, Deus meus' is introduced. The movement ends in similar fashion to the previous movement, with unison grouping on the call 'Jerusalem…'. The fourth movement's bipartite grouping resembles that of a congregation with cantors; alternating soprano and bass solo, with the sopranos and tenors in six-part harmonies (altos are completely excluded from this movement). The fifth movement, introduced by the altos, is a melody sung mostly in unison and octave doubling. From this melody, more and more pitches

are sustained, preparing a reintroduction of the work's opening material. After this restatement, a 'codetta' with two groups is created: lower voices sustain the harmony, above which a short canon is introduced in the four soprano voices. The work ends on a harmony of three stacked fourths in the remaining group of lower voices.

As is clear from the above summary, the *Élégie*'s musical material and related groupings are rich in variation. In terms of these groupings, there is no exclusive association of specific musical material with one specific voice; rather, a variety of musical material appears in all the voices of the ensemble. In that sense, contrasting grouping is always local and not used consistently throughout the entire work.

The more partitioned sections of the *Élégie* show a preference for distribution of musical material to combinations of at least two voices, especially those layers that are sustained for longer timespans (this will be discussed further with respect to the layering of the third movement). This type of scoring allows a single voice to alternate different musical materials, adding to a lively interaction of musical material within the entire ensemble, while at the same time preventing possible fatigue of these voices in ostinato figures.

There is a form of symmetry in the outer movements' use of the entire ensemble as a single group, contrasting with the middle movement's variety of groupings, and the second and fourth movements' bipartite grouping. The work's closing section (the 'codetta') is noteworthy for introducing a two-part grouping *after* the unison grouping of the repeated opening, which would, from the point of symmetry, have provided a logical close to the implied cycle. The text used in this section also contrasts with the rest of the *Élégie*, closing the work on a note of reassurance: 'For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.'

Similarly to *Car nos vignes sont en fleur,* the amount of division in a grouping appears to be connected to the atmosphere of a specific section's text, with unison implying a sense of

resolution and division implying a state of imbalance (compare the *Élégie*'s fifth and third movements respectively).

There is, however, a distinction between the incidental and structural use of a unison grouping. The incidental unison grouping of all voices is used often at climactic moments within a movement, frequently preceded by a short pause (e.g. II: bar 24 and III: bars 34 and 58). This grouping adds to the impact of the climax, especially when following sections that feature a high degree of division. The more structural type of unison grouping is that of the fifth movement, with a single melody in unison voices for most of the section, eventually fanning out towards sustained harmony.[127] A variation of this structural type of unison grouping occurs in the homophonic harmonies of the fourth movement.[128]

8.2 Layering

The *Élégie*'s third movement is striking for containing the highest density of groupings in the entire work. In itself, this high density need not be a striking feature of a piece of music; but in comparison to the more single-line melodic orientation of the preceding two movements – and all the composer's other works discussed so far – such a diverse grouping is remarkable.[129]

In this grouping, a structure – or better: *counterpoint* – of layers, each featuring different musical material, is experienced. This structure, which in the current discussion will be termed 'layering', is increasingly present in De Leeuw's later works, with the *Élégie*'s third movement as its most extreme example.

---

[127] Compare *Car nos vignes* VII, *Transparence* I: bar 30 and *A cette heure du jour*'s ending.
[128] Compare *Car nos vignes* IV, *Cinq Hymnes* IV and *A cette heure du jour*'s harmony section.
[129] Moments of a relatively dense layering can be found in *Car nos vignes* V and VI, *Cinq Hymnes* III and V, and short sections throughout *Transparence*, but not in such density as in this movement.

The questions raised by such layering are: how is it constructed? What effects does this construction create? And how does this layering relate to the single-line melodic orientation elsewhere in the work?

In the third movement, the following sections stand out from the experience of a performance and from an examination of the score:

1. Opening bars: introduction of the 'aï' ostinato;
2. bars 4–33: dense layering, reaching a climax in
3. bars 33–34 (all voices in unison), directly followed by
4. bars 35–49: gradual reduction of tension on the decrescendo repetition of 'Deus', overlapping with
5. bars 34–59: reintroduction of rising melodic lines on 'De profundis';
6. bars 59–63: coda, call upon Jerusalem to rise.

It is the second section that contains the densest layering of the work.

Before embarking on a further examination of this layering, it should be asked whether this layering is in fact experienced by the listener; the following section has been written from the perspective that this is indeed the case, based on the experience of live performances, recordings and an examination of the score.[130] However, it should be mentioned that a layer's noteworthiness very much depends on its contours, manner of introduction and (dis)similarity to other layers. Moreover, the use of layers for the greater part of the movement need not imply that these layers are more distinct than others.

---

[130] The author has experienced three rehearsals and three live performances of the work by Cappella Amsterdam, conductor Daniel Reuss (May 2015). Recordings of the work made by the Netherlands Chamber Choir and Cappella Amsterdam were included in the research.

In the second section, the following layers are apparent in the **score**:

1. 'ai' ostinato, alternated between A2 and T2;
2. pedal in basses; text in both French and Latin;
3. chromatically descending motif ('*quasi gliss.*'); French text (first text 'comment a-t-elle pu'); occurring in all voices; introduced in and occurring throughout the second movement;
4. three-part harmony *senza vibrato* in S3/A3/T3 alternated with S4/A4/T4; Latin text 'De profundis clamavi ad te';
5. 'pointillistic' statements of Latin text 'de pro-fun-dis cla-ma-vi', occurring in all voices;
6. spoken city names in S2 and B2;
7. signal of a quaver triplet with accent on Latin text 'Domine' in S1 and T1;
8. rising melodic phrases on Latin text 'clamavi vocem meam', introduced at bars 13 ff. (S1/S2) and 28 ff. (S2/T1).

(See also example 70.)

Ex. 68.1-8: the third movement's layers.

145

A number of layers attract attention because of their composition and/or placement in the context of other layers. One of these is the 'ai' ostinato introduced in the first three empty bars; because of the ostinato's construction as a single repeated word in a regular pulse, it is easily recognisable in a diffuse context. And because of its straightforward introduction for three bars *without* that context, this layer has been clearly pointed out to the listener. It is an important layer in the structure as a whole, for it is the one that most clearly displays a pulse.

Another layer which attracts attention in both score and live performance is the recitation of city names (layer 6). Because of their short duration and the vocal timbre (i.e., speaking voice) with which this recitation is performed, the names take on the role of flashes, contrasting sharply with the background onto which they are projected.[131] However, these same qualities, and the irregularity of their occurrence, renders them a difficult element to build upon; compared to the more stable and generally invariable other layers, this layer seems a contingent rather than essential element of this section.

Other layers are more difficult to discern individually. This is because they share a similarity in function or gesture (layers 2 and 4), occur at the same pitches of other layers (layers 4 and 7; layer 5 with 4 or 1), feature a combination of languages (layer 2), or lack a clearly recognisable contour (layers 2 and 4).

Dynamics prescribed in the score (all voices starting *piano*, with dynamic fluctuations for the sixteen voices as a whole) confirm the impression gained from an overview of the section in the score and by listening to performances: all layers are given equal importance. A striking feature of this section is the complete absence of a single emergent melody – the parameter that would normally be the backbone for the music's movement and different types of heterophony (the melodic-rhythmic orientation mentioned in chapter VII). So without this backbone, how does the composer avoid his layering becoming an impassable marshland?

---

[131] Although always notated *on* the beat, the composer requested singers to perform the recitation slightly after that beat, so that it could be noticed more clearly. (Source: conversations with the conductor and singers of Cappella Amsterdam, rehearsals May 2015).

Two features of this movement seem to be aimed at preventing such obfuscation. The first of these is the counterpoint of layers: examining the layers' density more closely, one finds that each layer occurs in a combination of a maximum of four at a time. However, the moments at which layers are introduced (or reintroduced) involve one or two layers at the most; the (re)introduction of two layers always features one distinct and one relatively indistinct layer (e.g. bar 4: layer 3 in T1 and layer 2 in B1/2/3). These moments enhance the clarity of the different voices in the ongoing counterpoint.

The music's pitch material also points to a more 'transparent' composition – especially taking its sixteen parts into account – with a preference for intervallic relations of fourths and fifths. Moreover, many of the different layers make use of the same pitch classes:

Ex. 69: *summary of pitches of II, b. 1-15 , excluding layers 3 and 6; accidental sharps have been favoured over flats for reasons of clarity.*

This summary suggests a harmonic framework as backbone for many of the different layers, including those layers that are added later, such as layer 8; parts of this summary point to a (partial) repetition every three bars. Layers 1, 2 and 4 are permanently present, and feature a number of overlapping pitches. The harmonies consist mostly of four pitch classes, with five pitch classes as maximum. Often, a highly dissonant harmony is resolved by one layer taking on the pitches of another (e.g. bars 6 and 11; here, a harmony consisting of five pitches, including D#, E and F, is followed by a harmony of four pitches G#, C#, F# and E; in terms of interval relations, the dissonant minor second relations have progressed to a far more lucid harmony in fourths).

In general, the harmonies' construction shows a preference for relationships of a fourth; the most obvious example is the chord of layer 4 (consisting of intervals of a fourth and a minor seventh [i.e., two stacked fourths]), which is always transposed exactly. A derivative of this chord can be seen in layer 8's parallel minor sevenths.

Harmonic rhythm is stable, with each chord of layer 4 lasting five minim beats, and chordal changes occurring on the beat. The ostinato of layer 1 is more volatile, displaying a preference for off-beat moments in its placement and pitch changes. The combination of these two layers is the main source for the experience of a regular pulse.

Two layers have been excluded from the summary of pitches for reason of their construction: layers 3 ('*quasi gliss.*') and 6 (speaking voice) both feature sounds outside conventional pitch notation. The recited city names are not performed at exact pitches and can therefore not be brought into relation to the pitch material of the framework, nor can their irregular occurrence be brought in relation to the harmonic rhythm. However, there is a relationship between layer 3 and the harmonic framework; its notation always gives its first and last pitches, always at a distance of a minor third. The first pitch is often similar to one of the pitches that are already sounding (e.g. bar 8^3: S3/4 and A1), or with which it is

simultaneously performed (e.g. bar 15^2: A1 and B3/4). The regular occurrence of these motifs at an alternation of four and six minim beats is another indication of a connection to the harmonic framework and its harmonic rhythm.

In summary, the harmonic framework is made audible mostly in layers 1, 2 and 4: the most stable layers in terms of occurrence. The relatively small number of pitch classes used simultaneously (in comparison to the sixteen-part ensemble), the harmonies' construction in fourths, and a stable harmonic tempo all seem to be aimed at a more transparent (if still harmonically unstable) structure. This structure moreover forms the starting point of all other layers which occur more incidentally.

The above discussion has pointed out the different building blocks of the layered structure, but has not yet suggested any *orientation* implied by such a structure. As stated, most of De Leeuw's works display a melodic-rhythmic orientation that is given shape, among other things, by a single melodic line as basis for the music's heterophony. As is clear from both the score and the experience of live performance, such a single, continuous line is absent in this movement.

Parallels can however be drawn. A structure of heterogeneous elements originating from one single source is found in the different layers' relationship to a single harmonic framework. Next to this, the whole of layers 4 (which makes audible most of this framework) and 8 hint at a melodic orientation in their exact parallelism, similar to the use of harmony in *A cette heure du jour*. Finally, a sense of pulse is created by the ostinato of layer 1, placed in an off-beat relation to the harmonic rhythm; the combination of durations (see example 70 below) echoes the composer's use of *color* and *talea* such as in the closing movement of *Car nos vignes*.

Ex. 70: *b. 4-15; combination of durations from layers 1 (continuum of minims with alternation of pitches every five notes; nine pitches in total) and 4 (alternation of three harmonies, each lasting five minims).*
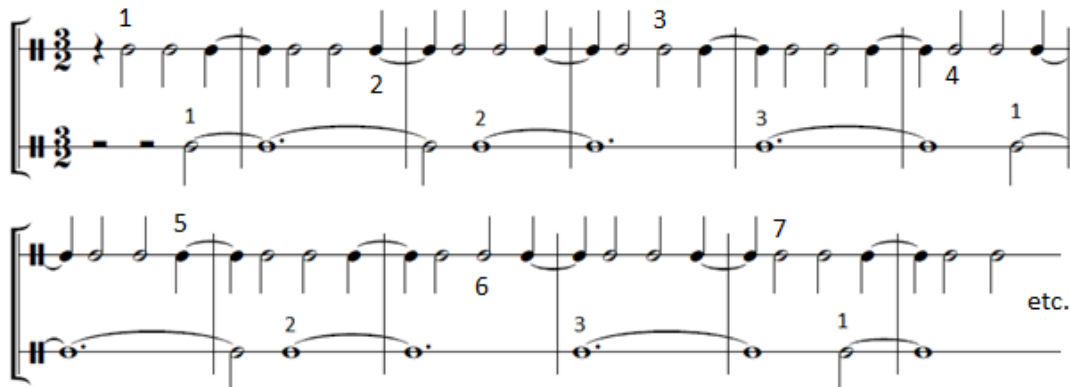
These parallels hint at the use of a 'model' as basis for the music, even if this section would probably exhibit many additions to the model, such as parallel harmonies. Analysis of the pitches and their occurrence at bars 1–33 demonstrates that this section is indeed linked to a model found in the unison melodies of the fifth movement, and which also seems to form the basis of movements II and IV. (See example 71 for this model.) Comparing the supposed model with the composition of the third movement confirms the idea of the occurring harmonies as added parallels to a single melodic line.

Ex. 71: *page 11 of the score with the underlying model (encircled notes follow the model or are prolongations of notes previously appearing in the model; notes in squares are interpreted here as derivatives, in this case parallel fourths).*

Although it is debatable whether the model's single-line construction can actually be heard through the dense and varied layering of this movement, its apparent use by the composer would confirm a similar foundation to the works that display this melodic-rhythmic orientation more clearly.

The first half of the third movement is remarkable for its layered construction. Parallels can be drawn with the melodic-rhythmic orientation of the composer's previous work and other movements in the *Élégie*, but this particular section displays a new development of the elements normally associated with that orientation: the combination of slightly uneven series of pitch and rhythm such as in *Car nos vignes* has evolved into an eclectic combination of complete *layers*, each with its own characteristics in terms of pitch, rhythm, harmony, contour and language of choice; the single-line melody encountered elsewhere has been enlarged into an amalgam of additions and a complete counterpoint of layers; the place of propulsive rhythmic patterns has been taken by a combination of an ostinato with the undercurrent of a harmonic rhythm.

Leaving out – or expanding beyond recognition – the one element that would normally be the backbone of the composer's music is perhaps another expression of the complete devastation mentioned in the movement's text. When a unison *melody* is finally introduced after thirty-three bars, the phrase 'ils sont tous exterminés' immediately explodes in pitch-less cries of 'Domine Deus, Deus meus'. The layered construction has been annihilated, but it is from this *unified* outcry onward that the supplication 'De profundis clamavi' gradually replaces Jeremiah's bleak scenes of destruction, in rising single-line melodies.
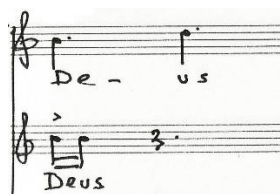
8.3 Doubling

A typical feature of De Leeuw's choral music is the use of doublings in unison and at octaves. The *Élégie*, for example, opens with a B doubled in no less than four voices, and closes with a movement that is structured around a melody for all voices in unison. Even in the dense layering of the third movement doublings are frequently found (see example 71 above). What kind of doublings are employed by the composer, and to what ends?

8.3.1 Doubling at the unison

A distinction needs to be made between incidental and more structural doubling at the unison. Incidental doublings, although occurring frequently throughout the work, are mostly restricted to accentuating the first syllable of a word and/or phrase, such as the work's opening. Other examples can be found in the third movement, bars 19 and 21, S1/T1.

Ex. 72: *bar 1, S1 and 2.*

The more structural form of doubling at the unison can be found in the work's heterophonic melodies: layers with a relatively long duration, such as the melodies of the second movement. In these cases, a single melody is given to at least two voices; often starting out in perfect unison, the melody is gradually split into overlapping phrases, creating small moments of 'period dissonance'[132] – a procedure first used in the closing movement of *Car nos vignes*. In the *Élégie*, almost all of these moments of period dissonance feature relations of a second,

---

[132] Term used by Rokus de Groot in Sligter 1995.

enhancing the experience of a single melody with embellishments. The combination of these dissonances and the melodies' upward direction adds to the build-up of tension, twice resolved by an ensuing phrase in exact unison (II: bar 27 and III: bar 58).

Ex. 73: second movement, bars 9-11. Note the 'period dissonance' in bars 10–11.
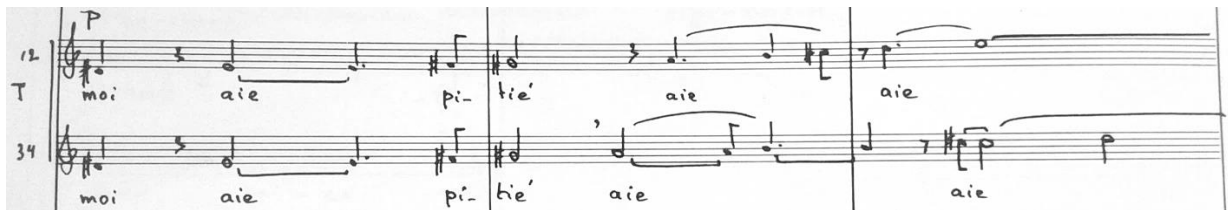
A type of doubling at the unison which balances between the two aforementioned types can be found in the work's more unquiet sections: a combination of parts that, summarised in pitches, would form only a short melodic phrase, but which is scored in such a way that it enhances a relatively clouded counterpoint of voices:

Ex. 74: opening of the second movement (sopranos and altos) and its summary of pitches.

The effect of this scoring is a haze of voices quickly passing the listener's ear; an effect that is augmented by the simultaneous use of multiple texts, and the variety of vocal timbres: tremolo notes for sopranos (no text, marked 'internal movement of the tone'[133]) and aspirated singing (marked 'tone with air') in the alto parts. This form of doubling appears to be aimed at an effect normally not associated with doubling: that of obfuscation.

8.3.2 Doubling at multiple octaves

Compared to the above examples of scoring which resemble a refined form of orchestration, the fifth movement displays a seemingly blunt form of doubling, simply introducing the double-octave doubling of a melody. However, a closer examination reveals that none of the voices is actually identical to the other, with an increasing number of octave displacements occurring throughout the movement.

Ex. 75: *V, b. 17.*

---

[133] Performed by Cappella Amsterdam (rehearsals and performances of the work May 2015) as a shivering tone, half-murmured.

Concurrent to this form of doubling are the incidental divisions of the ensemble into nearly-overlapping groups, resulting in short-lived moments of two- or three-part counterpoint.

Ex. 76: *V, b. 15.*

This combination of doubling and division, the most basic kind of heterophony, is extended in the last section of the closing movement, where pitches are sustained from the melody for much longer durations, until eventually the pitch changes of these textless sustained lines (a 'harmony in movement') have taken over the melodic function of the evaporated melody.

So in this case, a seemingly straightforward example of doubling serves a double goal; following the line of the other works explored in this dissertation, the closing movement's unison serves as an expression of resolution after four movements filled with conflict; next to this, the melody's internal doublings (exact unison, octave doubling and octave displacement) express heterophony, preparing the way for a more elaborate version of that heterophony.

156

8.3.3 Conclusions

In summary, the *Élégie* contains a varied array of doublings, each type of doubling resulting in a different effect. The more conventional use of doubling, aimed at reinforcing a specific pitch or melodic line, is found in the scoring of climactic moments, such as in the second and third movement. However, most of the composer's types of doubling function as different kinds of heterophony, as embellishments or variations on a single melodic line. These kinds vary from single incidental accentuations at the first syllable of a word, to a more structural doubling in long melodic lines that slowly expand their heterophony.

Following on from the analysis of *Car nos vignes*, the composer's choice of a specific type of doubling can be linked to the expression of a specific theme or atmosphere, as is apparent from the clouded doublings occurring in the *agitato* fragments of the second movement (its text describing a people in despair), or the unison melody of the fifth movement (its text pointing towards a prayer of thanksgiving).

IX.

SYNTHESIS

'The late choral works'?

The title of this dissertation already implies that the choral works Ton de Leeuw wrote in the last fifteen years of his life should be seen as a closely related set of compositions. The composer himself thought as much, discussing the characteristics of his later works under the single heading 'extended modality'. After exploring five of these works, many of the results do indeed point in this direction. Similarities and parallels between the compositions abound, not least in their materials and structures. As has become apparent, two concepts may be considered characteristic of De Leeuw's later works: *modality* and *cyclicity*.

In relation to these two concepts, some fairly straightforward questions may be asked: Why did the composer compose his music the way he did? Why did modality and cyclicity need to be part of that musical language? To what ends?

As 'Back to the Source' makes clear, De Leeuw was attracted to the concept of modality for its inclusion of both technical and philosophical aspects. For the composer, these philosophical aspects were, amongst others, a 'centripetal orientation' and the idea of modality as a consistent 'whole' of elements. As could be seen in the above analyses, a fair number of the compositions' more technical elements (the prime example being the 'model'[134]) do indeed point to this idea of a 'whole of elements' and suggest attempts to connect these elements – a theme which is also echoed in the composer's choice of texts.[135]

Besides suggesting a form of interconnection, De Leeuw's later works are often constructed in such a way as to take on the characteristics of self-regulating (and therefore seemingly endless) repetitive processes (in this respect, the use of the model is, again, a prime

---

[134] See 3.2.1; 4.1; 5.9; 6.2.7.
[135] See 4.1 in particular.

158

example).[136] This recurrent feature should be seen as a result of the composer attempting to parallel the characteristics of a so-called 'ultimate reality' (such as eternity and simultaneousness) through his music; the combined results of this attempt make up De Leeuw's 'cyclicity'.

A 'whole of elements' and an 'ultimate reality'... the above explanations still remain in the somewhat nebulous language of the composer. Some light may have been shed on the provenance (or points of reference) of the modality and cyclicity De Leeuw made part of his musical language, but that does not explain the *reasons* for their inclusion.

Continuing from this question, another shared trait of the late choral works deserves mention at this point. In the composer's works written before those included in this dissertation, performance remarks (or related programme notes) focussing on the performer's and listener's state of mind and the emotional/intellectual process of experience are frequently used.[137] In De Leeuw's later works (from the time of *Car nos vignes* and the fixing of the composer's modality and cyclicity onwards), this kind of remark disappears from the scores, concurrent with the disappearance of unconventional forms of notation such as spatiality and microtonal notation.[138] In that respect, *Car nos vignes sont en fleur* is highly interesting for being the last of its kind.

Was the composer no longer interested in the processes of experience during performance? How should the concurrent fixation of modality and cyclicity be seen in this respect?

---

[136] See 4.3; 6.1.

[137] E.g.: the performance remarks of *The Four Seasons* for harp solo (1964), where the performer is asked to 'envision and experience each season' before performing the written music. See also note 56. For a more in-depth discussion of such texts, see De Groot 1991, chapters XIV and XV.

[138] This fixation is also acknowledged in 'Back to the source'; see Sligter 1995: 85. However, the disappearance of unconventional forms of notation is left unmentioned.

Hermeneutics

As mentioned, the composer described his music as a 'symbol'. In the five analyses, this remark has been returned to frequently, but almost always from a musical/technical angle. More or less logically in relation to the topic of symbolism, approaching the results of the explorations from a hermeneutic angle can help in understanding the nature and specificity of De Leeuw's later works and answering the questions posed above.

In this hermeneutic approach, the compact description of the different types of 'signs' (of which the 'symbol' is but one) by the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce is useful.[139] Peirce categorised three types of signs: icons, indices and symbols.

'An *Icon* is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own, and which it possesses, just the same, whether any such Object actually exists or not.'[140] An iconic sign is one which signifies on the basis of a recognizable *commonality* or *similarity* or *likeness* between the sign and the sign's Object, even if the latter is purely imaginary.[141]

Contrariwise, an *indexical sign* depends on an actual contiguity between the sign and the sign's Object. The sign 'represents an object by virtue of its connection with it';[142] 'the sign and what it is a sign of are given together.'[143]

Concerning the 'symbol', Peirce states: 'a symbol is a *representamem* whose special significance or fitness to represent just what it does represent lies in nothing but the very fact of there being a habit, disposition, or other effective general rule that it will be so

[139] Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 8 volumes (see Bibliography for years of publication).
[140] Peirce 2.247.
[141] Hughes 2003: 140.
[142] Peirce 8.368, note.
[143] Petrilli 1997: 131.

interpreted.'[144] It is a type of sign which depends on the conventional recognition of one thing (e.g., a red traffic light) as a sign of something else (the requirement to stop).[145]

These signs and the relationships they produce are never exclusive. That is, there are no *purely* iconic, indexical or symbolic signs. Every iconic sign, for example, includes within itself some degree of indexicality and some symbolic signification; the same applies to the others. It is only ever a case, in any given triadic assemblage, of a *predominant* quality producing and *identifiable* distinction.[146]

This last remark is important when approaching De Leeuw's works from a hermeneutic angle: although the composer described (his) music only as 'a symbol', all three types of signs can clearly be pointed out in his music. The compositions' signalling function, and also the way their construction *allows* for this signification, are determinative, I will argue, of the nature and specificity of De Leeuw's late choral works, and offer an answer to the questions posed above.

Interpreting De Leeuw's modality and cyclicity

Both the modality and cyclicity of De Leeuw's later works can easily be interpreted as signs. Following on the composer's description of (his) music as a 'symbol', the musical material of both concepts can indeed be considered instrumental in bringing to mind 'a habit, disposition, or other effective general rule' for the music to be interpreted in a particular fashion – a symbolism that is manifested on many levels.

For example, the compositions' many modal elements on the surface act as both *symbols* and *indexical signs*. These elements are instrumental in establishing an association with the modal traditions of both East and West, suggesting an archaic form of music. This *symbolism* is confirmed in the composer's writing in 'Back to the Source': '"Extended

---

[144] Peirce 4.447.
[145] Hughes 2003: 141.
[146] Hughes 2003: 139.

modality" is in a certain sense a re-appreciation, a generalization and an extension of earlier modal principles, put into twentieth-century perspective.' At the same time, some of the works' texts make mention of ancient forms of communal worship with which these modal traditions are associated; thus, a combination of the 'sign' and what it refers to is given: an *indexical* signification.

The music's cyclicity, realised mostly through repetitive processes, features elements that suggest a perpetual form of repetition and simultaneousness, thus making a reference to a temporality that continuously returns on itself, or eternity – in De Leeuw's case, that of the 'ultimate reality'. In the likeness of sign and Object, cyclicity is clearly used as an *iconic* sign.

They key difference between De Leeuw's earlier works and those explored here is the structuring of its repetitive processes, the transition to which can be witnessed in *Car nos vignes*. The intended *iconic* signification would explain why the composer introduced the model technique in his later compositions. It is a technique which encompasses both a theoretical (the pitch class series) and practical form (the different 'realisations'), and both forms enable a referential function: the theoretical model signifies the 'ultimate reality' in its perpetuity, while the model's different realisations are always constructed in such a way as to signify a repeated process as basis for the composition.

An important example of signification can also be found in the referential titles De Leeuw gave his works: a line from the Song of Songs (*Car nos vignes*), 'hymns', 'élégie', etc. Although the works were all composed as pieces for the concert hall, these titles suggest a strong connection to genres of sacred music.

Moreover, the fact that the works are scored for voices easily enables an *iconic* signification to sacred music for the fact that all different types of the latter are almost always centred around vocal (thus communal) forms of music. This would explain De Leeuw's preference for the vocal medium in his later works.

The specific choice of the instrumental set-up in *Transparence* and *Cinq Hymnes* can also be interpreted from this angle, with *Transparence*'s inclusion of brass enabling an iconic signification to the Venetian-style of sacred music,[147] and *Cinq Hymnes*' percussive set-up referring to the Asian sacred music, especially Indonesian *gamelan*.

Interpreting the structural elements of De Leeuw's language

Returning to the earlier questions: why did a structured form of 'modality' and 'cyclicity' need to be part of the composer's musical language? To what ends?

Modality and cyclicity may be considered essential to the composer's later musical language *because* they enable the music to take on the function of a sign, with modality especially taking on the function of a *symbol* and cyclicity enabling an *indexical* signification. This signification is realised on levels ranging from the music's surface to the more obfuscated features (noticeable only after repeated listening or a closer inspection of the score).

In an overview of De Leeuw's oeuvre, elements of modality and cyclicity are found in works far earlier than those included in this dissertation, although their use in those earlier works appears more arbitrary.[148] In these works, particular musical structures or elements (such as spatiality, microtonality, a type of prosody, etc.) are brought into direct relation to a particular intention or idea.[149] So, already in these works, De Leeuw gives his music a signalling function.

---

[147] Gabrieli, Willaert, etc. A closer role-model can be found in the 'Venetian' works of Stravinsky, but also in Messiaen's *Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum*. It should also be mentioned that the work was written in anticipation of a premiere performance in a church.

[148] E.g. the modality of the *Missa Brevis* and *Prière*, the single-line orientation of the *Three African Etudes*, the cyclical use of a continuously rephrased 'blueprint' in *String quartet II*.

[149] An example of this is *Lamento pacis I* (1969), where the disunity of the work's texts is expressed in the disunity of the musical material, and microtonality is brought into reference to the chromaticism of Gesualdo. Another example is *Spatial music IV: homage to Igor Strawinsky* (1968), where the musical material is linked to the musician's spatial set-up, varying from individual solo playing (in 'Eastern' idiom) to unified ensemble playing (a quotation from the 'Western' Stravinsky acting as a unification of the ensemble).

A difference to the later works becomes obvious, however, in the performance remarks and programme notes of these earlier works, which heavily imply that the performers and audience are expected to acquaint themselves with the composer's philosophy and musical language to fully understand the intended message and the way it is communicated.

In contrast, the later works – the choral works in particular – feature a musical language that seems to strive for a more archaic, transcendental and universal type of communication, comprehensible without an obligatory explanation. This striving is realised, among other ways, through the (structural) use of modality and cyclicity.

The gradually *fixed* occurrence of musical genres, texts and gestures normally encountered in sacred music in De Leeuw's later works (e.g. hymns, lamentations, litany, unison chant, procession, etc.) can also be explained as part of this striving: the inclusion of these elements of *communal* worship – of an art in relation to the divine or a divine state – emphasises the music's quality as a sign in relation to an Object.

From this point, the use of the human voice ('so closely connected to [De Leeuw's] idea of sound', and 'best – even more so than our perfected Western instruments – capable of expressing one's ideas') as the preferred medium for the expression of the composer's ideas is especially important: its use allows the inclusion of language (in its turn enabling signification through text and utterance) and by itself underlines the reference to sacred music. All the elements mentioned seem directed towards the music taking on a function of a sign, with the predominant quality of that of a *symbol*.

The composer's statement '*To me*, (my) music is primarily a symbol' (author's italics) underlines that part of this symbolism perhaps need not be understood by anyone except the composer himself, but De Leeuw's later musical language contains so many references that even a performer or listener unfamiliar with the composer's philosophy is enabled to sense the

music's qualities as a signal. It is this very nature *as a signal* – and especially that of a *symbol* – that defines the specificity of De Leeuw's later choral works.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Scores

de Leeuw, Ton. 1981. *Car nos vignes sont en fleur pour douze voix mixites,* Amsterdam: Donemus.

de Leeuw, Ton. 1986. *Transparence voor 18-stemmig koor / 3 trompetten en 3 trombones*, Amsterdam: Donemus.

de Leeuw, Ton. 1988. *Cinq Hymnes for mixed choir, 2 pianos and percussion*, Amsterdam: Muziekgroep Nederland.

 de Leeuw, Ton. 1994. *Élégie pour les villes détruites for mixed choir*, Amsterdam: Donemus.

Books

Adlington, Robert. 2013a. *Composing dissent: avant-garde music in 1960s Amsterdam*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Adlington, Robert. 2013b. Expressive Revolutions: 1968 and Music in the Netherlands. *Music and Protest in 1968* (Beate Kutschke and Barley Norton, eds), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ahearn, Barry (ed.). 1996. *Pound/Cummings: The Correspondence of Ezra Pound and E.E. Cummings*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Anderson, Julian. 2001. Spectral Music. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, second edition (edited by Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell), London: Macmillan Publishers.

Cage, John. 2010. *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, Middletown (Connecticut): Wesleyan University Press.

Cott, Jonathan. 1974. *Stockhausen: Conversations with the Composer*, London: Robson Books.

Dahlhaus, Carl. 1980. *Die Musik des 19. Jahrhunderts* (= *Neues Handbuch der Musikwissenschaft*: VI), Wiesbaden: Athenaion.

Feldman, Morton. 1985. *Essays*, Kerpen: Beginner Press.

de Groot, Rokus. 1991. *Compositie en Intentie van Ton de Leeuws muziek* ('Composition and Intention of Ton de Leeuw's music'), Amsterdam: Vakgroep Muziekwetenschap, Universiteit van Amsterdam.

de Groot, Rokus. 1996. *Key Notes* 30 Nr. 3, Amsterdam: Donemus.

Heikinheimo, Seppo. 1972. *The Electronic Music of Karlheinz Stockhausen*. Helsinki: Suomen Musiikkitieteellinen Saura.

Hermans, Eric and Maes, Kim. 2015. *Francophonics. Concert programme for the concert of 15 May 2015 by Cappella Amsterdam at St Rumbold's cathedral*, Mechelen: publisher unknown.

Hughes, Graham. 2003. *Worship as Meaning: A Liturgical Theology for Late Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Joppich, Godehard. 2013. Die rhetorische Komponente in der Notation des Codex 121 von Einsiedeln. *Cantate Canticum Novum: Gesammelte Studien anlässlich des 80. Geburtstages von Godehard Joppich*, 55–110. Münsterschwarzach: Vier-Türme-Verlag.

Ketting, Knud. 1990. *Danish music after Carl Nielsen*, Copenhagen: Danish Music Information Centre.

Kunst, Jaap. 2013. *Music in Java: Its history, Its Theory and Its Technique*, Dordrecht: Springer Science + Business Media.

van der Leeuw, Gerardus. 1963. *Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

de Leeuw, Ton. 1978. *Questions, Ideas and Expectations: Premises and Aims of an East-West Encounter* (opening text of the Musicultura conference, Breukelen 1944), Breukelen: publisher unknown; also quoted in Sligter 1995, xiii.

de Leeuw, Ton. 1979. *The role of Europe in international light* (Lecture for the congress IMC of 1979, Sidney). Manuscript, unpublished.

de Leeuw, Ton. 1993. *'Antigone', programme notes to the first production of June 1993*, Amsterdam: Holland Festival 1993.

de Leeuw, Ton. 2005. *Music of the Twentieth Century: A Study of Its Elements and Structure*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Longyear, Rey M. 1973. *Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Messiaen, Olivier. 1944. *Technique de mon language musical*, Paris: Alphonse Leduc.

Metzger, Heinz-Klaus. 1972. *Music Before Revolution (Morton Feldman, Earle Brown and Heinz-Klaus Metzger in discussion)*. LP. EMI Electrola, 1C 16528954/957. A transcript is available online at http://www.cnvill.net/mfmetzgr.htm [access date: 27 January 2016]

Peirce, Charles Sanders, *Collected Papers*, 8 volumes (Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss volumes 1–6, eds.) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1931-5) (Arthur W. Burks, volumes 7, 8, ed.) (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958).

Petrilli, Susan. 1997. Towards Interpretation Semiotics. *Reading Eco: an anthology* (Rocco Capozzi, ed.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Reich, Steve. 2002. *Music as a gradual process* (1968), as published in *Writings about Music, 1965–2000*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reti, Rudolph. 1978. *Tonality, Atonality, Pantonality*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Schat, Peter. 1982. De Toonklok: De oplossing van het tonaliteitsprobleem. *NRC Handelsblad*, 24 December 1982, Amsterdam.

Selk, Philippe. 1989. *Un livre d'argile: le poème du Šu-nir*, Ceyzérieu: Editions Champ Vallon.

Sligter, Jurrien (ed.), 1995. *Ton de Leeuw* (English translation), Luxembourg: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Smith, Andrew. 2004. *Philosophy in Late Antiquity*, Abingdon: Psychology Press.

Stead, Christopher. 1994. *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stockhausen, Karlheinz, 1971. Interview über Telemusik. *Texte zur Musik 1963-1970*, II (ed. D. Schnebel), Cologne: Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg.

Toop, Richard. 1991. Last Sketches of Eternity: The First Versions of Stockhausen's Klavierstück VI. *Musicology Australia* XIV: 2–24, Melbourne: Taylor & Francis.

Yoell, John H.. 1974. *The nordic sound: explorations into the music of Denmark, Norway, Sweden*, Boston: Crescendo Publishing Co.

Film

Flipse, Eline. 1991. *Klank van de Stilt*e ('The Sound of Silence'; composer's portrait Ton de Leeuw). Video. Amsterdam: EliFli Film. First broadcasted by NPS in 1991.

Web pages

Gaelic psalms at Back Free Church, Isle Of Lewis- 20/21/oct/2003. YouTube video. Posted by GREEN M, 14 Sep 2009. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3MzZgPBL3Q [access date: 4 July, 2016]

Hulsen, Petra van, interview with Ton de Leeuw. Paris, ?, 1995: first broadcasted 29 June 1995. http://www.npo.nl/een-leven-lang/29-06-1995/IMX_NOS_722341 [access date: 27 January 2016]

Mortensen, Jørgen. 2007. 'Uendelighedsrækken' at https://web.archive.org/web/20071010091253/http://www.pernoergaard.dk/eng/strukturer/uendelig/uindhold.html, English version. [access date 28 January 2016]