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## Literature and Music Reviews

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**Presenter Information**

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Forces of Nature: Birdsong in Time and Place in Olivier Messiaen's *Le Traquet Stapazin* from  
*Catalogue d'oiseaux*

I. Introduction

Olivier Messiaen's fascination with birdsong is well documented<sup>1</sup>. As a dedicated ornithologist, Messiaen transformed bird calls into beautiful melodies. In *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, Messiaen presents birds as actors in a picturesque scene; near the Côte Vermeille, the different times of day transform the songs of eleven birds. Messiaen documents the metamorphosed birds as the time of day and the various locations in *Le Traquet Stapazin* modify his "little servants of immaterial joy."<sup>2</sup> In *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time*, Paul Griffiths discusses time as a condition of experience and change in Messiaen's compositions<sup>3</sup>. Within the context of an analysis of *Catalogue d'oiseaux*, Griffiths contends that Messiaen breaks the previously established patterns in respect to time of day.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, this paper argues that while time of day and location undergo marginal change, they have a significant impact on the birds present in this piece. I will first give the reader an understanding of the layout of this piece. Then I will argue the immutability of locations and detail changes within the birds. Finally, I will contend that the condition of experience, including time of day and location, affect the content and structural positioning of the birds.

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent P. Benitez, *Olivier Messiaen: A Research and Information Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 136-139.

<sup>2</sup> Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, trans. John Satterfield (Paris: A. Leduc, 1956), 34.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Griffiths, *Olivier Messiaen and the Music of Time*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), 166-189.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 181-182.

## II. Preface to an analysis of *Le Traquet Stapazin*

The structuring factors of this piece are birds, locations where the birds sing, and the time of day. The time of day and location both affect the content and structure of birdsong through modifying the sonorities of the different birds and by contextualizing the birds within cycles. Seven distinct locations are introduced within the first thirteen measures of the piece (Example 1). These locations contextualize the presence of birds, as the locations themselves are presented in a consistent arrangement and provide support to variations of each birdsong. The locations are:

- 1) Bien modéré (Terraced vineyards)
- 2) Vif (By the side of the road)
- 3) Bien modéré (In the vineyard)
- 4) Bien modéré (In the garrigue)
- 5) Un peu vif (Sunlight with volubility)
- 6) Vif (Flying over the sea)
- 7) Modéré (On the rocks of the cliff)

I will discuss the disruptions and continuities of these locations in the block style notation pioneered by Edward Cone in order to show changes in the birdsong that occur over large spans of time<sup>5</sup>. Ultimately, the time of day governs the sequence of locations and the birds present in each location. There are four instances where Messiaen specifically designates a change in time of day, all of which are labeled additionally as *Lent* (Example 2). These sections introduce new birds as well as change the order of the locations. I will refer to the given times of day as one of the following:

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<sup>5</sup> Edward T. Cone, "Stravinsky: The Progress of a Method," *Perspectives of New Music* 1, no. 1 (1962): 18-26.

- 1) Sunrise
- 2) Morning
- 3) Sunset
- 4) Dusk

The organic elements of this piece are the eleven birds. Modified by the time of day and location in which they appear, the birds are listed here in order of appearance:

- 1) Traquet stapazin (Black-eared Wheatear)
- 2) Bruant Ortolan (Ortolan Bunting)
- 3) Fauvette à lunettes (Spectacled Warbler)
- 4) Goéland argenté (Herring Gull)
- 5) Grand corbeau (Large Raven)
- 6) Chardonneret (Goldfinch)
- 7) Fauvette Orphée (Orphean Warbler)
- 8) Bruant fou (Rock Bunting)
- 9) Bruant Proyer (Corn Bunting)
- 10) Hypolaïs polyglotte (Melodious Warbler)
- 11) Cochevis de Thékla (Thekla Lark)

I will also discuss the large-scale development of birdsong in the style of Edward Cone.

Example 1: Seven locations in mm. 1-13 with English translations

**Bien modéré**  
(vignobles en terrasses)  
(terraced vineyards)

**Vif**  
(au bord de la route)  
(by the side of the road)

Piano

**Bien modéré**  
(dans la vigne)  
(in the vineyard)

**Bien modéré**  
(dans la garrigue)  
(in the garrigue)

**Un peu vif**  
(ensoleillé, avec volubilité)  
(sunlight with volubility)

**Vif**  
(volant au dessus de la mer)  
(flying over the sea)

**Modéré**  
(sur les rochers de la falaise)  
(on the rocks of the cliff)

Example 2: Four *Lent* sections with English translations

A. Sunrise

Lent - Sunrise

106 107

Piano

*(le disque rouge et or du soleil sort de la mer et monte dans le ciel)*  
*(the red and golden disk of the sun comes out of the sea and ascends into the sky)*

The musical score for 'Lent - Sunrise' consists of four staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a treble clef, starting at measure 106 and ending at measure 107. It contains the lyrics in French and English. The second staff is a piano accompaniment in treble clef, starting at measure 106 and ending at measure 107. The third and fourth staves are piano accompaniment in bass clef, starting at measure 106 and ending at measure 107. There are dynamic markings like '8<sup>va</sup>' and '8<sup>vb</sup>' in the score.

B. Morning

Lent - Morning

129 130

Piano

*(le disque d'or du soleil monte plus haut dans le ciel bande lumineuse sur la mer)*  
*(the golden disk of the sun rises higher in the sky, a luminous strip on the sea)*

131 132

The musical score for 'Lent - Morning' consists of eight staves. The top staff is a vocal line with a treble clef, starting at measure 129 and ending at measure 130. It contains the lyrics in French and English. The second staff is a piano accompaniment in treble clef, starting at measure 129 and ending at measure 130. The third and fourth staves are piano accompaniment in bass clef, starting at measure 129 and ending at measure 130. The fifth and sixth staves are piano accompaniment in treble clef, starting at measure 131 and ending at measure 132. The seventh and eighth staves are piano accompaniment in bass clef, starting at measure 131 and ending at measure 132. There are dynamic markings like '8<sup>va</sup>' and '8<sup>vb</sup>' in the score.

## C. Sunset

Lent - Sunset

239 240 241

Piano

*(entouré de sang et d'or, le soleil descend derrière la montagne)*  
*(surrounded by gold and blood, the sun descends behind the mountain)*

8<sup>va</sup>-----J

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano piece titled 'Sunset'. It consists of four staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains three measures of music, with measure numbers 239, 240, and 241 indicated above. The second staff is a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The third and fourth staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a bass line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The piece is marked 'Lent' and includes French and English lyrics. A performance instruction '8<sup>va</sup>-----J' is located at the bottom right of the score.

## D. Dusk

Lent - Dusk

258

Piano

*(rouge, orange, et violet du ciel, au dessus de la montagne)*  
*(red, orange, and violet sky above the mountain)*

Detailed description: This musical score is for a piano piece titled 'Dusk'. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. It contains five measures of music, with measure number 258 indicated above. The second staff is a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, containing a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The third staff is a single bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, which is mostly empty. The piece is marked 'Lent' and includes French and English lyrics.



### III. Immutability of Location

The locations that contextualize birdsong are unchanging in terms of their mode and rhythm. In the case of the *Bien modéré* (Terraced vineyards) motif, there is no change at all from one instance of this location to another (Example 3). In the case of the *Un peu vif* (Sunlight with volubility) motif, there are only minor changes in the pitches and rhythms (Example 4). Both locations reveal that the locations are not significantly altered so that they may support the surrounding birdsong.

Presented as the first musical idea in mm. 1-2, the *Bien modéré* motif uses what Messiaen refers to as a mode of limited transposition and a rhythm that closely resembles those that he refers to as non-retrogradable. In *The Technique of My Musical Language*, Messiaen details his modes of limited transposition and retrograde rhythms.<sup>6</sup> The *Bien modéré* motif contains all twelve chromatic pitches, thus nullifying the possibility of transposing the motif beyond simply beginning on another pitch of the chromatic scale. Even so, the subsequent return of the motif in mm. 19-20, mm. 52-53, and mm. 196-197 are arranged exactly like the first instance in mm. 1-2. Additionally, the rhythm of the *Bien modéré* motif cannot feasibly be placed in retrograde. Messiaen writes that “all rhythms divisible into two groups, one of which is the retrograde of the other, with a central common value, are nonretrogradable.”<sup>7</sup> The eighth notes in the first measure of the motif make this retrograde extremely difficult. Though the motif could yield rhythmic variants through reversal, there is no way to modify this motif in such a way that it becomes uncharacteristic. The *Bien modéré* motif is constructed in such a way that prevents development

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<sup>6</sup> Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, trans. John Satterfield (Paris: A. Leduc, 1956), 20.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

and change. By limiting opportunities for development, Messiaen has created a musical motif that acts as a constant, unchanging factor that supports the surrounding birdsong.

The *Un peu vif* (Sunlight with volubility) motif is similarly placed in a mode that cannot be easily transposed, but, in contrast to the *Bien modéré* motif, showcases minor variations in rhythm that complement the surrounding birdsong. The motif's first appearance in mm. 8-9 is repeated in mm. 17-18 and mm. 26-27. The motif uses predominantly pitches of the E major pentatonic scale, and there are added pitches in later iterations of this motif. The inclusion of a B $\flat$ , C, and G in mm. 17-18 retains musical continuity with the surrounding birdsong. In m. 16, a variation of the *Bien modéré* motif supplies a B $\flat$  sonority at the beginning of the measure in the left hand. The C and G are also heard in the last chord of the left hand in m. 16, thus preparing the listener for these pitches in the second iteration of the *Un peu vif* motif (Example 5).

Messiaen also expands the rhythms and groupings in the second and third iteration to further support the expansion of birdsong. In mm. 17-18, the grouping of the motif changes from groups of 3 + 3 + 2; instead, the motif is presented as a grouping of 2 + 4 + 2. However, this shift is not structural—the groupings equal the same value as the first motif. The third iteration in mm. 26-27 presents a newer grouping, 4 + 3 + 2, that adds a note, but this is offset by a shorter note value in the second measure of the motif (a quarter note instead of a dotted half note).

Ultimately, changes in the rhythmic groupings exist to highlight the introduction of newer pitches, which in turn support the surrounding birdsong. Though the *Un peu vif* motif changes more than most of the locations, the motif is not changed so as to prevent failure in its supporting role in developing the birdsong.

### Example 3: Bien modéré (Terraced vineyards) motif

Bien modéré  
*(vignobles en terrasses)*

1 2

Bien modéré

19 20

Bien modéré

52 53

Bien modéré

196 197

Bien modéré

Example 4: Un peu vif (Sunlight with volubility) motif

Un peu vif  
*(ensoleillé, avec volubilité)*

8 9

Un peu vif  
17 18

Un peu vif  
26 27

Example 5. Context for second iteration in mm. 17-18

Bien modéré      Un peu vif

16 17 18

#### IV. Development of Organic Elements

The eleven birds each undergo individual transformations through different forms of compression. This compression is most observable in the transformations of the Traquet Stapazin (Black-eared Wheatear), the Goéland argenté (Herring Gull), and the Hypolaïs polyglotte (Melodious Warbler).

The Traquet Stapazin appears sixteen times throughout the piece; the bird appears six times during sunrise, seven times during morning, twice during sunset, and once during dusk. It is worth noting the beginning and ending locations of the Traquet Stapazin, as it is one of few birds that are given a specific location at both first and final appearances (“by the side of the road” in m. 3 and “away on the road” in m. 270) as seen in Example 6. There are two patterns related to the time of day within the birdsong of the Traquet Stapazin: a pattern of decreasing interval size throughout a certain time of day and a gradual decrease in interval size throughout the entire piece. The full block style notation of the birdsong of the Traquet Stapazin is provided in Example 7. Over a larger span of time, the sonorities of the Traquet Stapazin’s birdsong compress significantly. When first introduced, the birdsong is comprised of larger intervals, including major ninths, minor sevenths, and major sixths in mm. 3-4. The compression of these wide intervals is most visible in the Traquet Stapazin’s birdsong during the sunset and dusk sections; mm. 242-243 are centered around major seconds and augmented fourths, and the last appearance, mm. 270, is voiced in tritones written as augmented fourths. The large-scale compression is created through a second pattern that occurs during a certain time of day. As a change in time of day approaches, the intervals decrease in size. The primary sonority in m. 133, the first instance of the bird during the morning section, is a minor seventh. Contrast this with the

minor seconds and perfect fourths in m. 203, which is one of the last occurrences of the Traquet Stapazin's birdsong during the morning section. This pattern is also observed during the sunrise section. In m. 3, the most prominent sonority is the major ninth; in the last instance of birdsong before a change in time of day, m. 118, the primary sonorities are diminished fifths, augmented fourths, and minor thirds. The Traquet Stapazin undergoes large-scale sonority compression as well as compression within a specific time of day.

Similar to the Traquet Stapazin, the Goéland argenté undergoes a gradual, long-term compression. However, the sonority is compressed through lowering the range of its melody. The Goéland argenté appears seven times; five times during sunrise, once during sunset, and once during dusk. This bird is significant in that it is the last bird to sing before the end of the piece. The beginning and ending locations of the Goéland argenté are shown in Example 8. There are three distinct motifs in the song of this bird as shown in the full block style notation of Example 9. The first motif, seen in mm. 10-11, includes a bass note that creates an augmented interval that is offset by a consonant sonority above it. A second motif is observed first in mm. 31-32, in which the birdsong is characterized by dissonant interval grace notes that precede dissonant sonorities that include tritones and clusters. The A and Eb sonority seen in m. 10-11 in the left hand returns in the left hand of m. 89; this return connects the sonorities of the first motif and the rhythm and style of the second motif, which propels the development of the birdsong. The third motif ultimately governs the lowering of the tessitura. The third motif occurs in mm. 47-49, where the tessitura first reaches into the lowest octaves of the piano. This motif acts as a connection between the first and second motifs, as the Ab in the right hand of the piano in mm. 10-11 returns in m. 32 of the second motif, two octaves down and spelled as a G#. In the third

motif, the G# appears as the highest voice in mm. 47-49. A large-scale change in register occurs in tandem with change in time of day; as the sun lowers in the sky, the tessitura of the birdsong descends. Within the sunrise section, the birdsong remains mostly in the middle register of the piano, centered around pitches within the fourth and fifth octave of the piano. The sunrise section contains the widest breadth of range in the birdsong, collectively spanning four octaves. Like the Traquet Stapazin, the Goéland argenté foreshadows movement to a lower register in its last iteration during sunrise in mm. 102-103. The birdsong moves into the first octave of the piano, a depth matched only at dusk in mm. 271-272. During sunset, the birdsong returns in the fourth and fifth octaves of the piano (mm. 257), similar to the beginning of the sunrise section. There is a substantial lowering of the range, as the birdsong during the dusk section covers only two octaves. This compression of range is highlighted by the descent into the lower octaves of the piano; the birdsong is first heard in the middle octaves of the piano, but is heard at the very bottom of the first octave during its last iteration. The final iteration in mm. 271-272 recalls the music introduced in mm. 47-49; the final iteration sounds as a lower transposition of the third motif. It is this sense of change that Within the birdsong of the Goéland argenté, there are compressions that occur both within a time of day and over the long-term development of the birdsong.

While the Traquet Stapazin and the Goéland argenté exhibit clear changes, the changes in the birdsong of other birds are not as transparent. The Hypolaïs polyglotte appears only once in the entire piece, but its development throughout its singular appearance is directly influenced by the time of day surrounding its appearance. The Hypolaïs polyglotte appears during the sunrise section of the piece in m. 128, immediately before the second Lent section (mm. 129-132). The

primary sonority of the birdsong is major sixths juxtaposed with major sevenths. The birdsong undergoes compression through accelerating the occurrences of certain motifs in its song. In Example 10, the birdsong has been grouped by the number of thirty-second notes within a motif. The beaming captures that the uneven groups of thirty-second notes each begin with an A in the right hand. Throughout the development of the birdsong, the A begins each grouping; as the pattern compresses, the A occurs increasingly frequently. After the stasis created by the first three thirty-second notes of the grouping of five notes, the bird song quickly changes from alternating patterns of groupings of threes and twos to only groupings of threes. The final four groupings are composed of minor sixths, major sixths, and occasional major sevenths. The groupings of three propel the birdsong into the silence before the Lent section, accelerating its development and creating melodic continuity before its end. This acceleration is in direct opposition of the slower, more rhythmically static Lent section that follows; the acceleration seems as though it prevents the bird from completing its song. The inclusion of the minor sixth is indicative of a compression of motifs, as this is the only time in the birdsong that there are three uninterrupted groups of three. Though this is a more nuanced change than the compressions of the Traquet Stapazin and the Goéland argenté, there is still a change in the birdsong of Hypolaïs polyglotte that is governed by the time of day.



Example 6. Beginning and ending locations of Traquet Stapazin

Traquet stapazin  
*(au bord de la route)*  
*(by the side of the road)*

1 2

Traquet stapazin  
*(loin sur la route)*  
270 *(away on the road)*

The image displays two musical staves for piano accompaniment. The first staff, labeled '1' and '2', shows the beginning of the piece 'Traquet stapazin (au bord de la route)'. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4 and B4, and a quarter note C5. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second staff, labeled '270', shows the ending of the piece 'Traquet stapazin (loin sur la route)'. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4 and B4, and a quarter note C5. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Example 7. Cone style Traquet Stapazin

Traquet stapazin

The musical score for 'Traquet stapazin' is presented in a grand staff format, consisting of a treble clef and a bass clef. The piece is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into several systems, with measure numbers 3, 4, 21, 22, 54, 55, 108, 112, 113, 114, 118, 133, 135, 137, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 198, 199, 202, 203, 237, 238, 242, 249, 250, and 270 marking the beginning of various sections. The music is characterized by intricate rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a variety of rests. The bass line often provides a steady accompaniment, while the treble line features more complex melodic and rhythmic figures. The piece concludes with a final cadence at measure 270.

Example 8. Beginning and ending locations of Goéland argenté

Goéland argenté  
*(volant au dessus de la mer)*  
*(flying over the sea)*

Musical notation for the beginning of the piece, measures 10 and 11. The notation is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a brace on the left. Measure 10 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a chordal accompaniment. Measure 11 continues the same pattern. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

Goéland argenté  
*(très loin, sur la mer noire)*  
*(very far, on the black sea)*  
271 272

Musical notation for the ending of the piece, measures 271 and 272. The notation is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a brace on the left. Measure 271 shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a chordal accompaniment. Measure 272 continues the same pattern. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. A dashed line with '8vb' below it indicates an octave shift for the bass staff in measure 272.

Example 9. Cone style Goéland argenté

Goéland argenté  
Sunrise

Musical notation for the 'Sunrise' section, measures 10 to 48. The score is written for piano in two staves. Measures 10 and 11 show a rhythmic pattern in the right hand with eighth notes and rests. Measures 31 and 32 show a similar pattern in the left hand. Measures 47 and 48 are mostly rests in the right hand with accompaniment in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *8<sup>vb</sup>* is present at the end of the section.

Musical notation for the 'Sunrise' section, measures 49 to 89. The score continues in two staves. Measures 49 and 89 are marked. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and slurs, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. A dynamic marking of *8<sup>vb</sup>* is present at the beginning of the section.

Musical notation for the 'Sunrise' section, measures 102 to 103. The score is written in two staves. Measures 102 and 103 are marked. The right hand has rests, while the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. A dynamic marking of *8<sup>vb</sup>* is present at the beginning of the section.

Sunset  
257

Musical notation for the 'Sunset' section, measures 257 to 271. The score is written in two staves. Measures 257 and 271 are marked. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes and slurs, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment.

Dusk  
271

Musical notation for the 'Dusk' section, measures 271 to 272. The score is written in two staves. Measures 271 and 272 are marked. The right hand has a rhythmic accompaniment, while the left hand has a melodic line with eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *8<sup>vb</sup>* is present at the beginning of the section.

Example 10. Music of the Hypolaïs polyglotte

Hypolaïs polyglotte

128

The image shows a musical score for two staves, likely piano accompaniment. The score begins at measure 128. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The music is characterized by a complex, rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The upper staff features a melodic line with frequent slurs and ties, while the lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar rhythmic complexity. The piece concludes with a final cadence in measure 131, marked by a double bar line and a repeat sign.

## V. Superimposition of Landscape and Sunrise

Messiaen's use of a double structure affirms that the landscape and sun cycles govern the appearances of birdsong. Peter Hill uses another piece, "L'alouette calandrelle," to detail a 'double structure' in the music of Messiaen; the double structure is a work that uses two layers that interact and govern the piece from the middle to the end of the work.<sup>8</sup> In *Le Traquet Stapazin*, the two structures that govern the piece are the arrangement and interaction of birdsong with landscapes and the time of day sequence. The superimposition of structure occurs during sunrise, where the time of day governs the cycle of birdsong and the location of the birds is of lesser importance (mm. 106-196) as seen in Example 11. This superimposition, as Hill suggests, occurs at the middle of the work and continues until the end. The return of the interaction of birdsong and landscapes in m. 196 is still governed to an extent by the time of day sequence as established in m. 106 until the end of the piece. Before the sunrise in m. 106, three distinct cycles are marked by the introduction of the *Bien modéré* (Terraced vineyards) in m. 1, m. 19, and m. 53. The Traquet stapazin (Black-eared Wheatear), Bruant Ortolan (Ortolan Bunting), Fauvette à lunettes (Spectacled Warbler), Goéland argenté (Herring Gull), Grand corbeau (Large Raven), and Chardonneret (Goldfinch) alternate as they occur within different locations. The sections expand from one to another, and all locations give support to the variation of each birdsong as they remain unchanged. Disrupted by the sunrise in m. 106, the sequence established at the beginning of the piece returns only in m. 196. The sunrise motif alternates with the song of the Traquet Stapazin in mm. 106-119 until the introduction of new birds and a cycle created through the alternation of the Fauvette Orphée (Orphean Warbler), Bruant fou (Rock Bunting), Bruant

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<sup>8</sup> Peter Hill, *The Messiaen Companion*, (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1995).

Proyer (Corn Bunting), Hypolaïs polyglotte (Melodious Warbler), and the Cochevis de Thékla (Thekla Lark). However, when morning occurs in m. 129, the Traquet Stapazin returns (m. 133) and alternates with the morning motif until m. 146 with the return of the new birds and their cycle. Yet, m. 196 marks the return of locations and the birds from the beginning of the piece as the sun sets, portraying the original birdsong in the daylight before dusk, occasionally interrupted by returns to the sunset motif in m. 239, m. 251, m. 255 and then to the dusk motif in m. 258, m. 261, m. 264, and mm. 273-274. This reveals a second superimposition, this time between the first cycle and the sunset cycle toward the end of the piece. Similar to its superimposition during sunrise, this cycle is imposed over the music of dusk (mm. 196-274). This double structure reveals that both location and time of day determine the order of the appearance of each bird.

Example 11. Superimposition of two sections

<b>Cycle 1</b>	Traquet Stapazin Bruant Ortolan Fauvette à lunettes Goéland argenté Grand Corbeau Fauvette à lunettes Chardonneret Fauvette à lunettes			
<b>Cycle 2</b>	Traquet Stapazin Bruant Ortolan Fauvette à lunettes Goéland argenté Grand Corbeau Chardonneret Goéland argenté Fauvette à lunettes			
<b>Cycle 3</b>	Traquet Stapazin Bruant Ortolan Fauvette à lunettes Grand Corbeau Goéland argenté Chardonneret Fauvette à lunettes Fauvette Orphée Goéland argenté Fauvette à lunettes			
<b>Beginning of Double Structure</b>  <b>Sunrise mm. 106-107</b>		Traquet Stapazin Sunrise Traquet Stapazin Sunrise Traquet Stapazin Bruant fou Fauvette Orphée Bruant Proyer Hypolaïs polyglotte		



<p><b>Morning mm. 129-132</b></p>			<p>Traquet Stapazin Morning Traquet Stapazin Morning Traquet Stapazin Morning Bruant fou Fauvette Orphée Bruant Proyer Fauvette Orphée Bruant Proyer Fauvette Orphée Bruant Proyer Cochevis de Thékla</p>	
<p><b>Return of Cycle 1 Continuation of Double Structure</b></p>				<p>Traquet Stapazin Bruant Ortolan Traquet Stapazin Grand Corbeau <b>Sunset mm. 239-241</b> Traquet Stapazin Fauvette Orphée Bruant Ortolan Cochevis de Thékla Sunset Goéland argenté <b>Dusk m. 258</b> Fauvette à lunettes Bruant Ortolan Goéland argenté</p>

## VI. Conclusion

A study of *Le Traquet Stapazin* reveals a unique interaction between the birds of the piece and the condition of their environs. The birds are actors, as dynamic and lively as Messiaen's articulate descriptions in the foreword to the piece. The locations that the birds appear are the antithesis to the energetic birds; seldom changing except to retain musical continuity, the locations provide support to the birds. A second factor that affects the condition of the birds, the time of day, represented through the rising and setting of the sun, catalyzes changes of the different birds' orderings and appearances. Messiaen supports the reliance of birds on both location and time of day through the use of a double structure that permeates the middle of the work until the end. *Le Traquet Stapazin* presents an intricate balance between the actors and the acted upon that affirms Messiaen's belief that birdsong "surpasses the human imagination in fantasy."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Olivier Messiaen, *The Technique of My Musical Language*, trans. John Satterfield (Paris: A. Leduc, 1956), 34.

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