

INGRID LOE DALAKER

THOMAS TELLEFSEN  
IN THE MUSICAL CULTURE OF PARIS:  
A REPRESENTATIVE OF *JUSTE MILIEU* IDEALS?

The composer and pianist Thomas Dyke Acland Tellefsen was born in Trondheim in 1823 and died in Paris in 1874.<sup>1</sup> In 1842, he left Norway in order to study music in Paris. For the rest of his life, he paid only short visits to Norway, mainly in connection with giving concerts. In Paris, Thomas Tellefsen managed to get in touch with Fryderyk Chopin and became both his pupil and his close friend.<sup>2</sup> After Chopin's death, in 1849, Tellefsen took over the teaching of several of Chopin's pupils and managed to earn himself a great name as a pedagogue among the upper classes. He also carved out a career as a virtuoso. His concerts in Paris in the 1850s were considered among the highlights of the season.<sup>3</sup> During his childhood, in Norway, Tellefsen possessed what for his time was a unique knowledge of Baroque music

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<sup>1</sup> Tellefsen was born in Trondheim on 26 November 1823. His parents took a very active part in the musical life of the city. His father, Johann Christian Tellefsen (1774–1857), was an organist, organ builder, dealer in musical instruments and keen amateur musician in the city's music society. His mother, Anne Cathrine, née Stibolt (1785–1860), was an accomplished pianist and singer, and she taught piano, singing, harp and guitar. See Hampus Huld-Nystrøm, 'Thomas Dyke Acland Tellefsen', in *Norsk Musikkgransking, årbok 1956–1958* (Oslo, 1959).

<sup>2</sup> His first meeting with Chopin was in November 1844. Subsequently, he regularly took lessons with Chopin, until May 1847. See *Tellefsens familiebrev*, ed. Thomas Tellefsen (Oslo, 1923), Huld-Nystrøm, 'Thomas Dyke Acland Tellefsen', Ingrid Loe Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen i norsk og fransk musikkultur – en resepsjonshistorisk og verkanalytisk studie', PhD thesis, NTNU Trondheim, 2005, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen w norweskiej i francuskiej kulturze muzycznej* [Thomas Tellefsen in Norwegian and French musical culture] (Warsaw, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> Tellefsen undertook successful tours of Norway and Sweden in the 1850s and 60s. See Huld-Nystrøm, 'Thomas Dyke Acland Tellefsen'.

and the Bach tradition.<sup>4</sup> That knowledge was to be of great importance during the 1850s in Paris, where he was to join the vanguard of musicians in the early music revival.

Plate 1. *Thomas Tellefsen*, C. Vogt, Paris, 1853 (?), NTNU University Library, PO-013907



Thomas Tellefsen left behind forty-four opuses, comprising original compositions. His works include two piano concertos, five large-scale chamber music works and several nocturnes, waltzes and mazurkas for solo piano. Even though Tellefsen was a well-known musician in Paris and one of the first Norwegian composers to make use of elements from Norwegian folk music, soon after his death he was largely forgotten. Up until the last decade or so, very little of his music had been played regularly or been part of any concert repertoire. Tellefsen lived most of his life in Paris. Obviously enough, as the years passed by, Paris was where he must have felt most at home. Tellefsen can be described as a serious musician who took an active part in the French musical culture of his time. In Paris, he belonged to a milieu of well-known musicians and composers who shared a common set of musical attitudes and values. These values seem to reflect a prominent cultural movement in France around the 1850, called the *juste milieu*.

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<sup>4</sup> Harald Herresthal, 'Thomas Tellefsen and His Significance for the New Interest in Baroque Music in Paris', in Astrid Holen, Harald Jørgensen and Frederik Zimmer (eds), *Festskrift til Einar Solbu på 60-årsdagen* (Oslo, 2002); Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen'; Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*.

*JUSTE MILIEU* IN FRENCH POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

The concept *juste milieu*, which can be translated as ‘middle path’ or ‘mid-way solution’, is closely linked to the need to create a stable French culture after the Great Revolution.<sup>5</sup> In France, the Encyclopaedists were looked upon as the source of the Revolution and were blamed for the cruelties that followed. That might partly explain why at times during the nineteenth century French philosophy was closely bound to the government and its policies. The philosophical school of eclecticism, founded by Victor Cousin (1792–1867), which was the official philosophy of the Restoration, would come to be of great importance even in the field of music deep into the second half of the century.<sup>6</sup> The practical application of this philosophy had one main goal: to unite the different political factions in order to create a stable and viable policy. This philosophical school sought to combine the best aspects of French sensationalism, Kantianism and German idealism. Consequently, the past was considered as a source of renewal and also of what was true and healthy. What was still regarded as true in the earlier philosophies was to be made use of in a superior synthesis in the current philosophy. The most important aspect of this process was to avoid extreme attitudes, and instead choose a middle path or *juste milieu*.<sup>7</sup>

After the July Revolution of 1830, when King Louis Philippe was seeking to set out his political programme, the moderate royalists Victor Cousin and F. P. G. Guizot (1787–1874) were given the task of elaborating

<sup>5</sup> See Vincent C. Starzinger, *Middlingness – Juste milieu – Political Theory in France and England, 1815–1848* (Charlottesville, 1965).

<sup>6</sup> Cousin was a professor at the Sorbonne from 1830 and minister of education from 1840 to 1848. His ideas were transferred to politics and gained great influence over the development of the educational programme of the time and religious doctrines. His *Du vrai, du beau et du bien* (Paris, 1853), as a summary of his thinking, is based on his courses at the Ecole Normale in 1817–1818. See Starzinger, *Middlingness*; also Albert Boime, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision* (New Haven, 1980), pp. 5–14.

<sup>7</sup> Cousin’s eclecticism is a synthesis of ideas found in Locke, Reis, Kant and Hegel. Cousin characterised their ideas as ‘not untrue, but incomplete’ and saw his eclecticism as an independent and original philosophy. See Starzinger, *Middlingness*, Robert Sheldon Nichols, ‘F.-J. Fétis and the Theory of *tonalité*’, PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1971, p. 186 ff, Rosalie Schellhouse, ‘Fétis’s *Tonality* as a Metaphysical Principle: Hypothesis for a New Science’, *Music Theory Spectrum*, 13/2 (1991).

practical policy.<sup>8</sup> Historically, the term *juste milieu* has become closely attached to this policy, and it still carries the same meaning: an avoidance of extreme attitudes and the choice of a middle path. *Juste milieu* ideas soon gained resonance in most areas of French society and were clearly reflected in French cultural life around the middle of the century.<sup>9</sup>

Plate 2. *Victor Cousin*, Gustave Le Gray © 1856–59, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



### *JUSTE MILIEU* IN MUSIC: FÉTIS AND THE THEORY OF *TONALITÉ*

In the area of music, *juste milieu* ideas are most clearly expressed in the writings of the most influential French music critic of the period from 1830 to 1870: the music philosopher, musicologist, composer and

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<sup>8</sup> Guizot was a French historian and politician, professor of history at the Sorbonne from 1812 and minister of education (1832–1837) under Louis Philippe. In the period 1840–1848, he was foreign minister and leader of the government. Guizot was the first victim of the February Revolution, when the king dismissed him in order to save his own position. In April 1848, he moved to London, where he also met Chopin and Tellefsen. See *Tellefsens familiebrevve*, letter of 8 June 1848, p. 106, William G. Atwood, *The Parisian Worlds of Frédéric Chopin* (New Haven, 1999), p. 9, Starzinger, *Middlingness*, Boime, *Thomas Couture*, pp. 5–14, Katherine Ellis, *Music Criticism in Nineteenth Century France: La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris, 1834–1880* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 35, 41.

<sup>9</sup> See Ellis, *Music Criticism*.

journalist François-Joseph Fétis (1784–1871), who made an important contribution to the study of music as a science.<sup>10</sup>

Plate 3. *François-Joseph Fétis*, C. Baugniete, 1841, reproduction from the Fryderyk Chopin Institute's photographic collection, F. 3682



Fétis also created his own philosophy of music history. In this philosophy, first presented in ‘Cours de philosophie musicale et d’histoire de la musique’, he made use of several arguments taken from Victor Cousin’s philosophy.<sup>11</sup> Fétis regarded what was true and ideal in music as constant. Even though he saw music in a constant process of transformation, its essence would not change. In ‘Cours de philosophie musicale’, Fétis

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<sup>10</sup> From 1821 Fétis was professor of counterpoint and fugue at the Conservatoire in Paris, and from 1833 to 1871 director of the Conservatoire in Brussels, where he also taught harmony and composition. Author of the extensive music history *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (1833), founder and only contributor of the journal *Revue musicale* from 1828 to 1834, he was also a key member of the editorial board of *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* (RGM) during the years 1835–1870. For a list of his writings, see Nichols, ‘F.-J. Fétis and the Theory of tonalité’, p. 186.

<sup>11</sup> Fétis, ‘Cours de philosophie musicale et d’histoire de la musique’ (hereafter ‘Cours de philosophie musicale’) was first published in *Revue musicale*, nos. 17–25 (26 May to 21 July 1832). The main points of Fétis’s theory were later reiterated in articles over a long period of time and can also be found in the preface to the first edition of his *Biographie universelle des musiciens* (1833). Nichols, ‘F.-J. Fétis and the Theory of tonalité’, Nichols, ‘Fétis’ Theories of tonalité and the Aesthetics of Music’, *Revue belge de musicologie*, 26/27 (1972/1973), pp. 116–129, Schellhouse, ‘Fétis’s Tonalité’, pp. 219–240, Ellis, *Music Criticism*.



describes the development of harmony over four stages through *tonalité*, which deals with the progress from modality to the breakdown of traditional tonality.

The influence from German idealism is clear in several ways in Fétis's theoretical writings.<sup>12</sup> The part of Schelling's aesthetics which deals with genius is recognisable in a reworked and expanded form in eclecticism.<sup>13</sup> Regarding this theory as a point of departure, Fétis opines that the genius should not be regarded as a hope for the future, but is instrumental for destiny in the present. The avant-garde's constant desire for reform can therefore explain Fétis's scepticism concerning this group of artists. He seems to believe that true genius will be revealed primarily through existing modes of musical expression, and not because of a group of artists who are stressing the element of change.

### TONALITÉ

The idea of *tonalité* forms the logical basis for Fétis's philosophy of music history. It is understood as a psychological phenomenon expressing a universal principle of music.<sup>14</sup> According to Fétis, *tonalité* is found in

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<sup>12</sup> Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 36, Nichols, 'F.-J. Fétis and the Theory of *tonalité*', p. 369.

<sup>13</sup> Fétis's ideas reflect Cousin's reworking of Schelling's understanding of 'genius' to also include 'grand hommes'. This extension meant that eminent statesmen, artists and military leaders were seen as instruments of destiny, in which their greatness did not lie in their individuality, but rather in their knowledge and their ability to express ideas resounding within the population. A 'grand homme' was regarded 'a man of his own time' and not 'a man ahead of his time'. Success was a characteristic trait for this kind of person. Fétis used this idea to dissociate himself from attitudes connected with avant-gardism in music and claimed that great men came into being as a consequence of historical needs. If history ceased to need this kind of person, 'great men' would not appear. Schellhouse, 'Fétis's Tonality', p. 232, Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 41.

<sup>14</sup> Fétis's aesthetics and view of history are often seen as closely connected to the ideas of Schelling and Hegel, in which aesthetics, history and physiology are intertwined. In their theories, art is considered as an absolute quantity existing in perfect form outside time and space and independent of historical change. In this way, it can be only partly understood, because it is realised only in an earthly incomplete form. Over the course of history, art's potential is revealed. For Fétis, the development of *tonalité* is explained in a similar way: music is regarded as part of world art. The function of history is to reveal art through time. For Fétis, the different forms of music through history are revealed according to music's own separate and distinct metaphysical principle: *tonalité*. The role of musicology is then to discover and formulate the built-in laws of *tonalités* reflecting music's development and aesthetic judgement. Nichols, 'F.-J. Fétis and the Theory of *tonalité*', p. 186, Schellhouse, 'Fétis's Tonality', p. 230.

every culture, in the realisation of the tones in some kind of scale formation. *Tonalité* can also be described as different grammatical foundations for music expressed through history. Since *tonalité* is subject to continual transformation, it also explains why music has developed through history.<sup>15</sup>

Fétis saw *tonalité* as transformed through four different stages: *ordre unitonique*, *ordre transitonique*, *ordre pluritonique* and *ordre omnitonique*. In this transformation of music through history, each stage is founded on the previous stage. At the same time, each stage underpins the next. *Ordre unitonique* includes all kinds of modal music. *Ordre transitonique* is characterised by the introduction of the dominant seventh chord near the end of the sixteenth century and forms the main basis for the process of tonal modulation. The next stage, *ordre pluritonique* is not defined by time, but implies a greater freedom in the modulation process through the use of enharmonic procedures and substitution. *Ordre omnitonique* implies a logical extension of *ordre pluritonique*, and it was applied in Fétis's own time. Through its use of enharmonics and unlimited possibilities for modulating, Fétis predicted the dissolution of traditional major-minor tonality.

#### TONALITÉ AND THE EARLY MUSIC SCENE

Fétis's idea of *tonalité* made it possible for him to present the development of music as a logical and coherent process. Naturally, *tonalité* also underpinned the transmission of the idea that early music was of great value. When composers of previous centuries had used the actual realisation of *tonalité* in a way close to 'the ideal', the musical work would later be seen as exemplary to the current stage. Consequently, Fétis claimed that early music had to be evaluated on its own terms. His view created an important argument for regarding early music as equal in value to the music of his own time.<sup>16</sup>

There was a great surge of interest in this kind of music in France between 1840 and 1870. Of course, this development must also be seen

<sup>15</sup> See Ellis, *Music Criticism*, ch. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 73. See e.g. Fétis's critique in *RGM* (23 November 1862, p. 379) of the extensive collection of works for piano *Le trésor des pianistes*, published by Farrenc.

as part of a more general interest in history in nineteenth-century society. At the same time, however, the promoting of early music in French culture can easily be explained as part of *juste milieu* ideas and Fétis's thoughts on the realisations of *tonalité* through different stages. To create an acceptance for early music, Fétis wrote several articles, initiated publications of early music and organised a number of concerts. Already in the early 1830s, he arranged a series of *Concerts historiques*,<sup>17</sup> for which he transcribed works from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century and prepared extensive written programmes explaining each and every work.<sup>18</sup> The *Concerts historiques* were continued in the 1850s, both by Fétis himself and by the well-known Parisian musician François Delsarte.<sup>19</sup> This period also brings several articles on performance traditions in early music and several publications of scores from the sixteenth to eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

Tellefsen took an active part in promoting early music in Paris. Several reviews from the 1850s mention his performances of music by François Couperin, Jean-Philippe Rameau, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and Johann Sebastian Bach. Already in 1853, there was a piece in the *Revue et Gazette musicale* about Tellefsen joining Alkan and Hiller in a performance of J. S. Bach's concertos for three pianos.<sup>21</sup> That concert

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<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Marc van de Cruys, 'Gitarre und Laute in der "Historischen Konzerten" von F.-J. Fétis', *Gitarre und Laute*, 1993/1, pp. 63–65, Robert Wangermée, 'Les premiers concerts historiques à Paris', in Charles van der Borren and Albert van der Linden (eds), *Mélanges Ernest Closson* (Brussels, 1948), pp. 185–196, Monika Lichtenfeld, 'Zur Geschichte, Idee und Ästhetik des historische Konzerts', in Walter Wiora (ed.), *Die Ausbreitung des Historismus über die Musik* (Regensburg, 1969), pp. 41–53.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Bloom, 'F.-J. Fétis and the Revue Musicale (1827–1835)', PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1972, p. 396 ff. A critique of one of Fétis's concerts in Brussels can be found in *RGM*, 18 March 1855, and a critique of one of his concerts in Paris in *RGM*, 8 April 1855.

<sup>19</sup> François Delsarte (1811–1871), a singer with a special interest in early music, published several collections of early vocal music. In the 1820s, he was a student at the institute established by the music historian, translator and early music publisher Alexandre E. Choron (1771–1834). In the 1850s, he organised historical concerts in which Tellefsen and his wife participated. Mrs Severine Tellefsen (1839–1915) was for some time a pupil of Delsarte. Tellefsen and Delsarte also published a collection of Rameau trios together. See Ole Andreas Krogness, 'Kandidat Krogness' unpublished diary, 1866, Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo, Ms Film 53; Halfdan Kjerulf, 'Halfdan Kjerulfs dagbøker, årene 1851–1868', unpublished diary, Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo, Ms. 8° 3103, 6 August 1862; review of Delsarte's concert on 27 March 1856, in *RGM*, 30 March 1856.

<sup>20</sup> Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 191–204, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 205–217.

<sup>21</sup> *RGM*, 16 January 1853. Valentin Alkan (1813–1888) was a French virtuoso pianist and composer, whose repertoire included early music. He also published transcriptions of Bach,



was probably a repeat of a concert given twenty years before by Chopin, Hiller and Alkan. In that same year, Tellefsen was also playing Rameau and Bach on his own cembalo at a private soirée, and in March 1856 he participated for the first time in one of François Delsarte's *Concert historiques*.<sup>22</sup> This information is interesting, as it tells us that Tellefsen worked with musicians who had a close relationship with Chopin and had ties with Fétis and his milieu already in the 1830s.

For Tellefsen, like several others in his milieu, his involvement in promoting early music resulted in several publications, in the 1850s and 1860s. These collections contained scores by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Johann Philipp Kirnberger, Johann Abraham Peter Schulz and Jean-Philippe Rameau.<sup>23</sup> Tellefsen had brought most of these works from the collection of his former teacher Ole Andreas Lindeman, in his hometown of Trondheim.<sup>24</sup> Tellefsen also contributed music scores to the great anthology *Le trésor des pianistes*.<sup>25</sup> Fétis was an active contributor to this

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Handel, Grétry, Marcello and others. Ferdinand Hiller (1811–1885), was a German pianist, conductor and composer, a former pupil of Hummel. From 1828 to 1835, Hiller lived in Paris, where he established friendships with Chopin, Liszt and Berlioz and also worked as an organ teacher at the Choron Institute. See review of the Tellefsen, Alkan and Hiller concert in *RGM*, 13 March 1853.

<sup>22</sup> Henri Blanchard, 'Soirée de Tellefsen', *RGM*, 25 December 1853. See review of Delsarte's concert on 27 March 1856 in *RGM*, 30 March 1856.

<sup>23</sup> Tellefsen's publications: *Six pièces pour piano de Charles Philippe Emanuel Bach* (1855), *12 Pièces pour piano de Kirnberger, Schulz et Em. Bach* (1856), *Sept pièces pour le piano de Händel, J.S. Bach, O.A. Lindeman, Wernicke, J.C. Bach et Seydelman* (1859), works by O. A. Lindeman in *Le trésor des pianistes*, vol. ii (1861). Tellefsen arranged one of the songs in a collection from the eighteenth century: *20 Noël's français publiés par Pascal Lamazou* (1874). He also published a collection of Rameau trios with Delsarte, unfortunately no longer available. See review of Tellefsen and Delsarte's publication: '*Pièces de clavecin en concert avec un violon et un violoncelle, par Rameau*', in *RGM*, 22 November 1857. See also Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 171–183, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 185–197.

<sup>24</sup> Ole Andreas Lindeman (1769–1857) was a student at the university in Copenhagen in the 1790s. From c.1800, he was an organist in Trondheim and an active member of the city's amateur music society. Lindeman was Thomas Tellefsen's first music teacher. Regarded as one of the very best Norwegian music scholars of his time, he had extended knowledge of J. S. Bach's music and its performance tradition. Likewise, the material left behind by Lindeman shows that he had a very good knowledge of music theory from the eighteenth-century literature, and he translated several of those texts into Norwegian. Idar Karevold, *Kontinentale impulser i en norsk musikerslekt før 1850* [Continental European impulses in a Norwegian family of musicians prior to 1850] (Gothenburg, 1996), Aristide Farrenc, foreword to *Pièces pour le clavecin par Ole-Andreas Lindeman*, in series *Le trésor des pianistes* (Paris, 1862).

<sup>25</sup> *Le trésor des pianistes* is a collection of twenty-three volumes of piano music dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. It was published by Aristide Farrenc in the years 1861–1874.

project, for instance obtaining scores and writing thorough critiques of the different works.

#### THE IDEA OF *TONALITÉ* IN FRENCH CHAMBER MUSIC

The theory of the transformation of *tonalité* also informs Fétis's view on the future development of contemporary French music. With regard to chamber music, Fétis warned against taking the *ordre omnitonique* as a starting point. Instead he saw the transitional phase between *ordre transitionique* and *ordre omnitonique* as the optimal starting point for the instrumental music of his time.<sup>26</sup> In several writings, Fétis paraphrases eclecticism, including in a number of critiques from the 1840s, where he proclaims a middle way or *juste milieu*.<sup>27</sup> As a consequence, the third stage in the theory of harmony is emphasised as the most fruitful. This stage is considered to contain tonal music in which a greater freedom of modulation is possible through enharmony and substitution within chords. In the development of harmony from 1600 to 1750, Mozart's music is seen as the pinnacle, followed by a period of decline. Music that focuses on harmony with no significant melody and form is described as decadent. The works of Haydn and Mozart, as well as first- and second-period Beethoven (up to c.1810), are regarded as music of outstanding quality. Fétis sees a further development based on Beethoven's second period as the most fruitful for French instrumental music, especially chamber music.<sup>28</sup>

For several music critics in the 1850s and 60s, Beethoven's works from around 1810 were highlighted as the ideal source of new inspiration, which would allow French composers to cast new light on previous procedures and lead French instrumental music in a different direction than the contemporary progressive music of Germany.<sup>29</sup>

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See Fétis's review 'Le trésor des pianistes, publié par M.A. Farrenc', *RGM*, 23 November 1862, p. 379.

<sup>26</sup> See Ellis, *Musical Criticism*, pp. 35–45, Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', 258–260, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 255–257.

<sup>27</sup> Ellis, *Musical Culture*, pp. 39–40.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 41, 43, 101; also Schellhouse, 'Fétis's Tonality', p. 230.

<sup>29</sup> Ellis, *Musical Culture*, pp. 112–119, 199, Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', p. 258, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, p. 269.

Plate 4. Front page of Tellefsen's publication *Six pièces pour piano de Charles Philippe Emmanuel Bach* (1855)



Plate 5. Tellefsen's publication *Six pièces pour piano de Charles Philippe Emmanuel Bach*: No. 5 *Allegro di molto*

The image shows a page of musical notation for a piano piece. At the top, it says 'N. 5' and 'C. P. E. BACH' and 'ALLEGRO DI MOLTO'. The word 'PIANO' is written on the left. The score consists of six systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and rests.

For chamber music, the use of well-known formal principles, formal structures and balance in every aspect were elements which were highly regarded by Fétis and the *juste milieu* critics in *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris*, especially in the decades around 1860.<sup>30</sup> Also highly praised was the principle of the symmetrical building of phrases, called *carrure des phrases*, which was described by Fétis already in 1832 and was discussed several times in his articles.<sup>31</sup> Fétis's theory on *carrure* postulates that every phrase should correspond in length and that symmetry is a natural law.<sup>32</sup> Fétis accepted phrases of three bars, while in his writings from the 1830s he considered phrases of five bars incomprehensible, and therefore unacceptable. However, this view is adjusted in his writings from the 1850s, in which he sees asymmetry as an important prerequisite for creating good compositions.<sup>33</sup> Fétis's formalism is clearly expressed also through his critiques, where he favours well-known principles, clearly defined sections and symmetrical and well-defined melodic motifs.<sup>34</sup> He is also averse to programme music, which he regards as a regression to early music forms connected with ideas on imitation. Fétis considered programme music as a solution for composers incapable of writing an opera or autonomous music. The main points of Fétis's theory were later repeated several times and were heavily promoted in the *RGM* during the 1850s and 60s.<sup>35</sup>

Thomas Tellefsen composed five multi-movement chamber works for piano and strings.<sup>36</sup> All of his chamber music works, bar one, were

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<sup>30</sup> *La Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* (1834–1880) arose from the fusion of Fétis's *Revue musicale* and Maurice Schlesinger's *Gazette musicale*. The *RGM* was later considered as the period's most extensive and Paris's most influential music journal. See Ellis, *Musical Culture*.

<sup>31</sup> For instance, in Fétis's 'Du développement futur de la musique – dans le domaine du rythme', *RGM*, 18 October 1852, p. 363. See Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 163 n.6, Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 242–258, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 255–268.

<sup>32</sup> Fétis, 'Cours de philosophie musicale', fourth lecture, *Revue musicale*, 23 June 1832, Fétis, 'Du développement futur de la musique', *RGM*, 24 October 1852, pp. 362–363. See Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 163.

<sup>33</sup> Fétis, 'Du développement futur de la musique', *RGM*, September to December 1852.

<sup>34</sup> Ellis, *Music Criticism*, p. 163.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 161 and 238–239.

<sup>36</sup> *Sonate pour piano*, Op. 13 (1848), *Sonate pour piano et violon*, Op. 19 (1856), *Sonate pour piano et violoncelle*, op. 21 (1855), *Trio pour piano, violon et violoncelle*, Op. 31 (1861–1863), *Sonate pour piano et violon*, Op. 37 (c.1867), *Sonate pour deux pianos*, Op. 41 (1870). In addition, an incomplete manuscript for a string quartet, dated 1863. See Huldt-Nystrøm, 'Thomas Dyke Acland Tellefsen', pp. 185–197.

Plate 6. Front page of Tellefsen's *Sonate pour piano et violoncelle*, Op. 21 (1855)



written after 1850, that is, after Chopin's death and during the decades which were most clearly influenced by Fétis's ideas.<sup>37</sup> All of Tellefsen's sonatas are in three or four movements and adhere to the formal principles typical of the Classical sonata. The tonal relations between the different movements are easily explained by Classical harmonic traditions. Each movement is characterised by the extended use of symmetrical phrasing, building on an authentic cadence. The chordal material shows a moderate Romantic form, and all the modulations can be explained within a Classical system. Related to the time in which Tellefsen wrote his chamber music works, they can, in several ways, be described as conservative. However, related to Fétis's ideas of what would be the most fruitful development for French contemporary chamber music, his ideas seem to sit

<sup>37</sup> The critics Edouard Monnais (1798–1868), Henri Blanchard (1791–1858), Adolphe Botte (1823–1893) and Charles Bannelier (1840–1899) were all exponents of the *RGM*'s conservative line and the *juste milieu* in music. In the area of chamber music, the French composer Georges Onslow (1784–1853) was the foremost exponent of the *juste milieu*. For a further description of *juste milieu* ideas in French chamber music during the 1850s and 60s, see Ellis, *Music Criticism*, pp. 160, 243–261.

well with the reading of Tellefsen's chamber music output.<sup>38</sup> If seen in the light of Fétis's ideas of *tonalité*, his music may be placed in the transitional phase between *ordre transitonique* and *ordre omnitonique*. As such, there are few signs that Tellefsen goes beyond the framework given by Fétis or any other of the *juste milieu* critics of the 1850s and 60s.

In the 1850s, Thomas Tellefsen took an active part in the performance of chamber music in Paris. Here, he seems to have had a special predilection for Classical and early Romantic works. In the spring of 1854, he played for the first time in the prestigious concert series *Musique de chambre par MM. Alard et Franchomme*, and in 1856 he made his debut in the famous Beethoven Quartet Society's *La société de quatuors*.<sup>39</sup> He was also a permanent member of Princess Marcelina Czartoryska's *Club des Mozartistes*.

Tellefsen played with the composer Charles Gounod, the pianist Delphin Alard and the well-known cellist Auguste Franchomme.<sup>40</sup> Several of Tellefsen's co-performers were well acquainted with Fétis's ideas, and some of them were also previous students of his. Hence it is highly likely that this chamber music milieu could have found its inspiration in Fétis's ideas.<sup>41</sup> The members met on the first Friday of every month. The club must be regarded as one of the more private initiatives of Princess Marcelina, who also organised several other soirées and matinees. These concerts happened regularly and featured a varied repertoire. The programmes show that the Viennese Classics were of crucial importance, with an invariable predilection for works by Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven.<sup>42</sup>

#### CLOSING REMARKS

To argue further that Tellefsen's music and his non-creative work reflect *juste milieu* ideas, it is useful to see French culture in the light of more

<sup>38</sup> For further analyses of Tellefsen's chamber music in the light of *juste milieu* ideas, see Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 207–274, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 220–284.

<sup>39</sup> Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', p. 212 n.22, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, p. 226 n. 23.

<sup>40</sup> Jean-Michel Fauquet, 'Les sociétés de musique des chambre', in Joseph-Marc Bailbé (ed.), *La musique en France à l'époque romantique 1830–1870* (Paris, 1991).

<sup>41</sup> Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 216–217, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 230–231.

<sup>42</sup> Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', p. 212, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, p. 226.

general ideas of the building of the nineteenth-century nation-state. The move towards that form of government proceeded along different paths in different countries and displays several examples of the use of cultural elements in political contexts. Which elements were used depended on the political situation and the needs of the country in question.<sup>43</sup> In several countries, like Norway and Germany, which had to establish a totally new state or had to fight for political freedom, the national movements very often drew on Herder's ideas for the building of national identity and consciousness. Nineteenth-century France, by contrast, had both a strong state system and a clear awareness of a specific French culture. The French language and the French way of behaving had for several centuries been regarded as values of the highest aesthetic standard and were adopted by the nobility and the upper middle classes all over Europe. Consequently, the French had no need to forge new constructs of what was 'typically French', but could simply go on building on exciting ideals and promoting the myth of the 'typically French' as something logical, clear and understandable.<sup>44</sup> Such notions are reflected both in Fétis's ideas on music aesthetics and in French moral philosophy from the mid nineteenth century, through the avoidance of extreme attitudes and the choice of a middle path or *juste milieu*.

To conclude, it seems reasonable, through the description of the dominant ideas in French musical culture around 1850, to understand Tellefsen's activity and musical works in the light of those ideas. Tellefsen took an active part in French musical culture and, as the years passed, probably felt more French than Norwegian. In Norwegian music history literature, however, no one ever saw Tellefsen in the light of French culture or French *juste milieu* ideals. Instead, he was regarded as 'not Norwegian enough' for the key figures in the national movement and, as time passed, as 'not original enough' in a musical context. At the same time, the missing description of Tellefsen in French culture in the context of Norwegian music history reminds us of one important

<sup>43</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, 'Nationalism and Music', in *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, tr. Mary Whittall (Berkeley, 1989); Ger. orig. *Zwischen Romantik und Modern: Vier Studien zur Musikgeschichte des späteren 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1974), pp. 85–92. See also Dalaker, 'Thomas Tellefsen', pp. 23–24, Dalaker, *Thomas Tellefsen*, pp. 28–30.

<sup>44</sup> Hans Boll-Johansen (ed.), *De franske – fransk identitet, myte og virkelighet* [The French: French identity, myth or reality] (Copenhagen, 1992), pp. 101–114.



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aspect of music history literature. By adopting an overly narrow-minded approach, as has often been the case in the Norwegian music history literature, we can easily overlook important connections that may shed light on interesting nuances in history.

