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Author: Tiberiu Soare

E-mail: tiberiutpf@gmail.com

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Tiberiu SOARE
Bucharest National Opera

George Enescu, *Œdipe*: A Conductor's View

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This paper aims at looking, from a performer-conductor's point of view, at the structure of George Enescu's *Œdipe*. Respecting the division in acts, tableaux, and scenes as found in the manuscript facsimile score held by Editura Muzicală,¹ this analysis is also an attempt to read the work's internal logic based on Edmond Fleg's libretto. Identifying and following the major dramaturgical and musical threads was the main criteria in selecting and grouping into semantic units the elements considered relevant. For the sake of conciseness, the analysis of each act proposes a table of the respective act's schematic presentation, while its subsequent discussion hopes to offer the necessary hermeneutical explanations.

ACT 1, A CONDUCTOR'S VIEW

The work begins in 12/8, with M.M. dotted quarter note = 50. I use a four-beat conducting pattern, with particular attention to the solo cello doubled in unison by the contrabassoon. The special colour comes from the G on flute 3 doubled by the flageolets of alternating first and second violins. In addition, horns 1, 3, and 4 play the same sound. Gradually the sound mass grows to a first peak (two bars before [1]). It is interesting to notice that the bar before

¹ Romanian music publishing house based in Bucharest.

[1] shows the motif which would be associated, throughout the work, with the Sphinx (an ascending perfect fifth followed by a descending minor second and the return to the initial sound via a descending augmented fourth) (see Ex. 1).

Section	Subsection	Rehearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
Orchestral prelude			I Stollen: (2+1) + (2+1) + 1	
		[1]	II Stollen: (2+1) + (2+1) + 2	
		[2]	Abgesang: (2)	
			[2+(3+2)] + 1	
			2+2	
		[4]	2+2	
		[5]	[(2+1) + (1+2)] + 1 (quasi-reprise)	
		[7]	Quasi-Coda: (3)	
	Interlude		(3) = 1+2	
SCENE 1		[8]	Introduction, harps: (2)	
			Solo oboe: [(3+3) + (3+3)] + 1	
	1 ST. Section I (Homages)		[(3+3) + 2] + 4	1. Theban women
			Intervention High Priest: (2)	
			Orchestral interlude (solo oboe repeat): (1)	2. Theban warriors
			[(3+3) + (3+2)] + [(3+3) + 1] + 3	
		[13]	Introduction: (3)	
			(3+2) + 3	
		[15]	Codetta: (2)	
			High Priest: (2)	
		[16]	Conclusion: 2 + (2+2)	
		[17]	Orchestral interlude: (1+2) + (2+2)	

		[18]	(3+3) + 2 Intervention High Priest: (2) Conclusion: (4)	3. The shepherds
		[20]	Invocation High Priest: (1) [(2+2) + (2+2)] + (4+4)	Conclusion
	2 ST. Section II (Offerings)	[23]	(2+2) + (2+2) A shepherd (solo tenor): (2+2) + 1 Interlude (Dance anticipation): (2+2) + (2+2)	1. The Shepherds
		[25]	Introduction: 4+4 A Theban woman (solo soprano): 4+4	2. Theban women
		[27]	Introduction: 4+4 Entrance Creon: 4+4	3. Theban warriors
			Canon: [3 + (2+2)] + (2+2)	Conclusion (Homages)
	ABG. Section III (Dance): free sonata form		Introduction (aulody): 2+1	
		[31]	A (Shepherds): Theme 1: [(3+3) + 3] + [(3+3) + 1]	Exposition

		[33]	Bridge: [(3+3) + 2]	
		[34]	Theme 2: 3+3	
		[35]	B (Theban women): insertion of lyrical episode: [(2+2) + 1] + (3+2) B conclusion: (4)	
		[37]	Introduction: (2+2) + 2	Development (Theban warriors)
		[38]	2+3	
		[39]	(3+3) + 1	General dance
		[40]	(3+3) + 2	
		[41]	[(2+2) + 2] + 2 Dynamic ascension: (4)	
		[43]	(3+3) + 3 (2+2) + 1 Reprise conclusion: (3)	Reprise (inverted and concentrated)
		[46]	(1+2) + (2+2)	Coda
SCENE 2		[47]	Orchestral introduction: (3) 3+2 Intervention High Priest: (3) + Chorus repeat: (3) Insert: (3)	<i>La flamme d'Apollon</i>
		[50]	Introduction: (2) 1 St: (4+2) + Chorus repeat: (2)	Invocation of the ancestors
		[51]	2 St: (4+2)	
		[52]	[(2+1) + 2] + 3	
		[53]	Culmination (orchestral): 3+3	

		[54]	(2+2) + 1	The High Priest's address to Laius and Jocasta
		[55]	2+2	
			Cello introduction: (1) Jocasta: (2+2) Repetition Laius: (2+2)	Berceuse
SCENE 3			Intervention: (1)	Episode Tiresias
		[57]	(2+1) [3 + (2+2)] + (2+3)	
		[59]	(2+2) + [(2+2)]	The prophecy
		[60]	Intervention chorus: (2) [(2+2) + (2+2)] + (1+2) Episode Tiresias conclusion: 4 + (4+3) Insert: (2)	
		[63]	<i>Hélas !</i> : 4+4 Lamento orchestral repeat: (2+1) + 2	Chorus comment
		[65]	[1 + (2+2)] + (2+2)	Laius intervention
		[66]	1 St : (2+2) + 2 2 St : (2+2) + 1 Abg : 2+2	Coda (orch.)

Table 1. Act 1, formal scheme.

Ex. 1. Enescu, *Œdipe, Prelude*, bars 1-10, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

This motif first appears on solo cello, making the connection with the next phrase, played in unison on bassoon 2 and horn 2, respectively. This phrase, occurring at [1], modifies the initial interval (a descending major second instead of a minor second), generating a series of ascending sequences based on the motif played by bassoons and which culminates at [2].

We can consider this point as being the end of a first section of the Prelude, marked by a culmination (obviously, more important than that of [2]). I prepare the *fortissimo* from [2] by keeping the beat and ignoring the *allargando* convention (which, for that matter, Enescu doesn't specify) and by respecting the caesura. The conclusion of the first section, from [2], changes the beat into 3/2 (for two bars), with a subdivided three-beat pattern (quarter note beat), taking into account also a slight broadening of the tempo (*sostenuto*). At bar 3 after [2] the four-beat pattern resumes, the bassoons playing a six-bar solo line.

The pickup to [3] comes with a solo passage on first trombone featuring a secondary melody on tremolo flutes (*frullato*), the phrase being then amplified by the oboe's and clarinet's intervention followed by horns 3 and 4, until

the entry of the first and second violins with a descending motif. Starting with bar 3 after [3] (*pochissimo animando*) there comes a eight-bar, two-phase dynamic ascension: the first phase, from bar 3 after [3] to [4], is concluded by the solo viola, and the second, containing what we might call the work's first *tutti* (notice the entry of sleigh bells in bar 2 after [4]) (see Ex. 2).

Ex. 2. Enescu, *Œdipe*, *Prelude*, the first three bars after [4]: the first *tutti*. (see Enescu 2017)

The *Prelude*'s culminating plateau, at [5], is preceded by a bar in 9/8 (subdivided beat pattern, in *allargando*!) and one in 4/4 (subdivided beat pattern). Beyond the imitative dialogue of the instruments carrying the main motif (violins, violas, cellos, clarinets, cor anglais and flutes 3 and 4), it is worth underlining the independent melody of the sequential figurations on bassoons supported by the harmonies of the horns in tandem with the double basses. Here we have a culminating plateau, and not just a single peak: it is a surface integrating several peaks, dynamics- and harmony-wise.

The first such peak appears in bar 3 after [5], with the arrival of the trombone and the tympani which precede the extraordinarily dramatic phrase on trumpets (the marking *bells up* appears!) in unison with the trombones in the bar right before [6] (see Ex. 3).

Ex. 3. Enescu, *Œdipe*, *Prelude*, bars 2 and 3 after [5]: *Prelude's* culminating plateau, first peak. (see Enescu 2017)

A second peak is reached at [6,] with *rubato* unison on strings (which I believe should play *au talon*, down bow, *marcatissimo*) doubled by horns, clarinets, and bassoons. The last two bars before [7] constitute a dissipation of the energy previously accumulated, the lower strings of the orchestra and the bassoons sharing, by turns, the leading role.

Beginning with [7] we can speak about a multiple-role section: it is simultaneously a reprise, as regards the form of the prelude, a coda based on

the contrabassoon's recall of the main motif (assigned one bar later to the solo double bass), and a transition to the beginning of the opera proper, as if the curtain raised in preparation for the scene hosted by the royal palace in Thebes.

The harps' entry on [8] (*Allegretto piacevole*) thus marks the beginning of the dramaturgic action proper. The time signature is 3/4 (M.M. 100), suggesting a three-beat pattern in a moderately flowing, quarter note beat tempo (see Ex. 4).

Ex. 4. Enescu, *Œdipe*, beginning of Act 1 [8]. (see Enescu 2017)

The oboe's entry (three bars after [8], *pf* – *poco forte*) is in fact a cantilena in C# minor meant to ensure the entry of the Theban women's chorus (sopranos and altos) in bar 2 after [9] ("Roi Laïos"). Their melody is accompanied by the pizzicato of two solo cello. The B major chord on the fourth beat in bar 2 after [10] (this time played by a group of four solo cello) introduces the High Priest's first intervention (*Moderato*, quarter note = 72). At bar 5 after [10] begins a first interlude, an orchestral variation of the solo oboe's initial cantilena to which are added at first violas, the second horn, and a group of two solo second violins.

From [12] a new phrase begins, leading up to the passage of the two bassoons in unison from [13], the instruments then joined by the cello and the double basses in an imitative motion marked by the intervention of the snare drum and of the suspended cymbal. This short fragment has the role to prepare the entrance of the Theban warriors' choral group (tenors and basses) in bar 4 after [13] ("Thèbes, chante des sept portes"). As far as timbre is concerned, we must stress here the importance of the right volume balance: the

male voices are isorhythmically doubled by the horns, while at [14] a motivic comment on woodwinds and trumpets appear. The clarity of such musical discourse can be achieved by the strictest respect for the dynamic markings, for instance the horns' *fortissimo* three bars before [14] followed by a diminuendo to *forte*. The voices being doubled by instruments in the orchestra, a permanent acoustic adaptation of the orchestral accompaniment is required, as is the case of [14] for example, where the woodwinds' comments superposed on the trumpets' intervention should not cover the end of the phrase sung by the chorus even if it is marked *diminuendo*. This fragment is also characterized by a slight and brief (four-bar long) deceleration of the tempo, two bars before [14]. The purpose of this *rubato* is to underline the meaning of the text. The change to a new time signature (4/4) in bar 3 after [14] comes with the return, in a more accentuated form (*pesante*), of the initial tempo by means of a harmonic progression. The marking *Moderato* two bars before [16] points to the High Priest's intervention ("Plongez dans l'eau de Dircé").

From [16] a second interlude starts, bringing at [17] a somewhat varied reprise of the oboe's initial cantilena in C# minor (see Ex. 5). The interlude first uses triplets on violins, violas, flutes, oboes, and clarinets, all, superposed on a Bb in the lower register of the bassoons and of the two harps in unison. With the apparition of the cantilena at [17] I usually adopt a rather more flowing tempo, in order to avoid monotony setting in and to indicate the music entering a new phase of development.

Ex. 5. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 1, scene 1, section 1 (*Homages*) [17]: second orchestral interlude, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

At [18], the motif of the shepherds appears, as a sort of a rapid improvisation in the higher register, on flutes and piccolos, introducing the entrance of the tenors on beat 4 ("Echo, nymphe montagneuse") (see Ex. 6).

Ex. 6. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 1, scene 1, section 1 (Homages) [18]:*
Echo, nymphe montagnaise. (see *Enescu 2017*)

The first horns imitating in unison the tenors one beat later creates a special effect, like a real-life echo, and is complemented by the even triplet quarter notes motion on bass clarinet. The signal given by the clarinet 1, three bars before [19], is, too, suggestive of an archaic pastoral society, as it obtains an effect based on the sounds' harmonics and generates a modal harmony centred on Lydian C#, with its specific augmented fourth above the tonic. The conclusion of the shepherds' phrase restates, at [19], the improvisatory motif which would remain, throughout the work, a distinctive sign of the character of the Shepherd.

The High Priest's third intervention, followed by an invocation beginning at bar 2 after [20], marks the end of the expositional section, that of "Homages". The conclusion is represented by the entire chorus repeating, in bar 2 after [22], the end of phrase sung by the High Priest.

A group of two piccolos and two bassoons repeating the pastoral motif of [23] conducts us in the new section, that of "Offerings" (see Ex. 7).

Ex. 7. Enescu, CEdipe, Act 1, scene 1, beginning of section 2 (Offerings) [23], piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

We must specify that if in the previous section we witnessed an "exposition" of the three choral groups, this time we can talk about an *exposition of the solo characters*. The first to enter is the Shepherd, as a sort of a mirror image of the

previous section. After his short intervention, [25] comes with a prefiguration of the motif of the later general dance. The suspension of the respective theme by a fermata leads to the *andante lusinghero* of [25], preparing the entry of the Theban women, from whom Enescu isolates a solo soprano at [25]. The orchestration is transparent and light as the score insists on woodwinds and harps. The four bars before [27] represent a dynamic ascension which leads to a powerful affirmation of the Theban warriors' motif in *alla breve*. After a short, energetic introduction of the male chorus, Creon's first intervention takes place, three bars before [28]. Six bars later, in bar 3 after [28], the marking *ben tranquillo* is accompanied by the composer's particular recommendation to utilise a four-beat conducting pattern (from *alla breve*).

With [29], the conclusion of this section begins, based on an imitative writing technique (canon), both for the chorus and for the orchestra, in a new dynamic ascension which leads to the homophone culmination from [30] (see Ex. 8).

Ex. 8. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 1, scene 1, conclusion of section 2 (Offerings) [29], piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The improvisation of the first solo flute (in the manner of a true aulody) appearing three bars before [31] indicates the introduction of the instrumental section (the Dance) (see Ex. 9).

The musical score is for the beginning of section 3 (Dance) from Enescu's *Œdipe*, Act 1, scene 1. It is a piano score. The score begins with a tempo marking of *Moderato* (♩ = 48) and a *quasi cadenza*. The tempo then changes to *poco rit.* and then to *Poco animato* (♩ = 56). The tempo changes again to *Allegretto giocoso* (♩ = 108). The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *pp*, *mf*, *f*, and *cresc.*. The title of the section is *Danse des Bergers, des Femmes Thébaines et des Guerriers Thébains.* and the section number [31] is indicated. The text *BERGERS SEULS* is also present.

Ex. 9. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 1, scene 1, beginning of section 3 (Dance), piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

This new section is built as a free sonata form in order to stress the purely instrumental character intended by Enescu. The exposition starts at [31] with the main theme followed by a fragment with a markedly transitional role (starting at [33]), based on the Theban women's theme, as an anticipation of the secondary thematic group, which occurs at [35]. Beginning with [37], a development of the previously presented thematic material takes place. [40] is the beginning of a dynamic ascension, obtained by superposing the initial dance motif with that of the High Priest's invocation from [21].

The reprise begins at [43] as a new dynamic ascension leading to the signals of the horns and flutes three bars before [46], as if in preparation to the Coda from [46] (see Ex. 10).

Ex. 10. Enescu, *Cēdipe*, Act 1, scene 1, section 3 (Dance) [43]: reprise in a free sonata form. (see Enescu 2017)

The specification “free” sonata form refers precisely to this apparent dissolution of the reprise in a concluding segment. As regards the orchestration, the percussion’s score is remarkable, featuring an unusual combination of tam-

bourine, snare drum, and castanets. There is also a slight preponderance of woodwinds in relation to strings, with maybe the notable exception of the dynamic ascension from [43]. The brass section is only employed here to tone the overall aural impact, as the composer avoids using this compartment at full volume.

With [47] another scene of Act 1 starts, introducing the choral group of those returning from Delos and Delphi, bearing the flame of the god Apollo. The opening time signature is 8 (meaning that the 4/4 persists, but in the form of a subdivided four-beat pattern), in *Andante moderato* (see Ex. 11).

Ex. 11. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 1, beginning of scene 2 [47], piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The offbeat rhythm of the first and second violins is complemented by the flutes' and the clarinets' melody, in a non-imitative polyphony which precedes the entrance of the choral group (sopranos and altos) on beat 3 of the third bar before [48] ("J'apporte de Délos la flamme"). The respective phrase is repeated in responsorial manner two bars later by the whole chorus, the dialogue continuing in the two bars subsequent to [48], until the entry of the High Priest ("Rallumez au saint tison"). Here the metronome marking indicates a slight acceleration while maintaining the quarter note beat. It is therefore just an increment of the flow of the musical discourse, and, as such, is a means to help the soloist, easing his access to the higher register, and to express the particular emotion caused by the appearance of the divine symbol in the hall of the royal palace in Thebes. In its turn, the phrase, intoned by the High Priest, is repeated as a choral *tutti*, marking the section's conclusion.

The ensuing short interlude, based on the pastoral dance motif (three bars before [50]), shows how the previous section is integrated in the larger context of the *Presentation of the Offerings* and can also be viewed as a conclusion.

At [50] begins the section I called *The invocation of the ancestors*, as the High Priest begs the spirits of the kings from the past to accept the new-born among those who would one day accede to the throne of Thebes. After a brief introduction in the form of a cantilena on solo flutes in unison, the tempo accelerates almost indiscernibly with a new entry of the High Priest. Between [50] and [53] three consecutive invocations take place, in the form of as many verses, whose end is again reiterated in responsorial manner by the whole chorus, in a crescendo leading to the orchestral culmination from [53] (*Moderato, un poco largamente*), in 3/2 (for which I adopt the subdivided three-beat pattern in a quarter note beat).

[54] brings a conclusion of the entire action so far: the High Priest addresses King Laius, telling him the ceremonial has been respected and asking him to state the name of the royal heir (see Ex. 12).

LE GRAND PRÊTRE, à Laios et Jocaste.
douce cant.

(♩ = 48)

Les Dieux ont bé-ni l'enfant; les aïeux l'ont ac-cep-té; les fem-mes aux bras blancs, les ber-
gers, les guerriers ont dan-sé pour sa joy-e leurs beaux chœurs al-ter-nés.

(♩ = 40)

A présent ré-pon-dez, ô Laios, et toi, Jo-caste au chaste pé-plos: pour qu'il vive

Ex. 12. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 1, scene 2 [54]: the High Priest's address to Laius and Jocasta, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The following passage, beginning at [56], is in fact a chamber music-like interlude, in contrast with the timbral richness so far: after a short ascending, interrogative phrase on cellos, Jocasta intones an extremely simple phrase, with a beginning on an alternation between two notes (G# and F#) suggestive of a berceuse. Five bars later, the monody is restated by Laius, right after the menacing appearance of the motif of the parricide played by the bassoon, the clarinet, and the oboe.

The bar before [57] introduces, with Tiresias' intervention, the resolution of Act 1. His entry is preceded by a motif in *lamento*: a series of descending minor seconds on trombones in *legatissimo*, which creates, due to the specific technique of operating the slides, a *quasi-glissando* effect (see Ex. 13).

The writing now turns fragmented, matching the febrile dialogue between Tiresias' phrases and the broken interventions of the High Priest, Laius, and the chorus. At [59] we learn for the first time about the curse hanging over Laius' house, the triggering factor of the ulterior action in Enescu's opera. Laius' phrases are marked, rhythmically and timbrally, by short, sharp, menacing orchestral interventions which leave no place for reply: *what we in fact have here is a sentence, rather than a prediction*. The winds, the woodwinds in particular, combined with the horns, generate cold tones of an intrusive, syncopated rhythmic structure, meant to contradict everything that the music had so far conveyed. The omnipresence of the descending minor second, including in the Chorus' intervention at [61], is also designed to underline this rupture in a discourse until not so long ago centred on homophony and modal diatonicism.

The Coda starts after Tiresias' exit at [63], with the Chorus' exclamation accompanied by orchestral chords complemented by interventions of the bouché horns. A short interlude between [64] and [65], in the manner of a sudden dynamic ascension, shows King Laius making his decision, and is immediately followed by the King's exclamation, addressed to the Shepherd. The moment when the child is given to the Shepherd for him to abandon to the wild beasts on Mount Cithaeron is marked by the appearance of the dancing motif on solo cello, this time in the lower register, on the C string, the theme acquiring a dark, sinister tone. The exclamations of the winds in bar 3 after [65] are, too, destined to round out the dark, oppressive atmosphere. The last three pages of Act 1 are a dive in the lower register of the orchestra, with interventions of the bass clarinet, a solo double bass, harps, and with a strange timbral combination of tympani and suspended cymbal (see Ex. 14). It is not so much an end as an apostrophe: the premises of the whole plot have been presented, and the real story is about to begin.

Handwritten musical score for George Enescu's *Cede*, Act 1, scene 3 [57]. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments and voices. The top section is marked "57" and "perhiss animando - - - a tº (1=60)". The bottom section is marked "(1=50)", "(1=1)", and "(1=60)". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are also handwritten annotations in French, including "Tiresias, d'une voix profonde", "Les Hommes, comme égarés p.s.v.", and "Le grand Bére".

Ex. 13. Enescu, *Cede*, Act 1, scene 3 [57]: first intervention of Tiresias. (see Enescu 2017)

regarde Jocaste et Laïos avec épouvante, puis sort lentement, emportant l'enfant. Laïos revient auprès

in Tempo ($\text{♩} = 94$)

sempre *p s.v.*

de Jocaste; ils se regardent en silence et

Cl. B. *Cl. Quat.* *Alto* *più p* *pp*

veilles *C. B. Solo* *(pizz.)* *veille solo*

p s.v. *mp* *p* *p*

($\text{♩} = 76$)

veille solo *67* *(sost.)* *a T^o ♩ = 66* *éclatent* *piangendo*

più pp *trang.* *pp* *sf* *p* *pp* *Cor et Alto ff* *molto* *dim.*

Cl. B. *veilles*

RIDEAU.

en sanglots ($\text{♩} = 72$) ($\text{♩} = 66$) ($\text{♩} = 63$) *veilles (pizz.)* *lunga*

ppp *pp* *pp* *mp* *p* *ppp*

Cl. B. *C. B. s.* *sost.* *p s.v.*

ff Harpe

Fin du 1^{er} Acte.

Ex. 14. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 1, orchestral coda [66], piano score.
(see Enescu 1934)

Act 1 of *Cédipe* displays a generally unitary structure, with a predilection for a cyclical, ternary form type of construction, and a somewhat rarefied orchestral composition meant to render the music transparent and light, in total opposition to what Enescu would choose later (in the Crowning Scene at the end of Act 2, for instance).

ACT 2, A CONDUCTOR'S VIEW

Section	Subsection	Rehearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
SCENE 1	Orchestral prelude		$[2+(2+1)] + (2+2)$	
		[68]	$4 + (4+2)$ $[(4+2) + (3+3)] + (3+3)$	
	Backstage chorus	[71] + 4	I Stollen: $(4+4) + (4+2)$	<i>Oui, partir !</i>
			Intervention Oedipus: 2+4 (solo viola)	
		[74]	II Stollen: $(4+4) + (4+4)$	
			Intervention Oedipus: 3+4 (solo viola)	<i>Fuir</i>
		[77]	Abgesang: $(4+3) + [4 + (2+3)]$	
			Intervention Oedipus: 3+4 (Entry Phorbas)	<i>Mais l'exil éternel !</i>
SCENE 2	Phorbas	[80]	$[4+(3+2)] + (4+2)$ $[(4+4) + 3] + (2+2)$ $(4); [(4+4) + (3+3)] + 2$	
			$(2+2) + [2 + (2+1)]$	Oedipus' answer
		[85]	$[(2+2) + 2] + (2+1)$	Short monologue Oedipus
		[87]	Short interlude: I Stollen: $[(2+3) + (2+2)] + (4+2)$	(repeat Introduction – backstage chorus)
		[89]	II Stollen: $(4+2) + (4+3)$	
			Abgesang: $(3+2) + 3$	
	Merope	[91]	$(3+2) + 2$	Orchestral introduction
		[92] + 1	$(4+3) + 2$ $(3+2) + (3+2)$	
		[96]	$(3+3)$	
			4+2	Anticipation opening motif of Act 4

			Short interlude: (2)	
			2/8: (4+4); (6+6) + 2 (6+6) + 6 4/4: 2+2	
		[103]	[(2+2) + 2] + (2+2)	
		[105]	2 + (4+4)	
		[106]	[(2+4) + (2+4)] + 2 Short interlude: (4)	
		[109]	2+2	Conclusion
		[110]	(4+3) + 2 (2+3) + 2	Orchestral interlude
		[112]	4+4	Interlude culmination
		[113]	3 + (2+2)	Anticipa- tion Sphinx motif
		[114]	3 + (2+2); (3)	Interlude Codetta

Table 2.1. *Act 2, tableau 1, formal scheme.*

Section	Subsec- tion	Rehearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
Orches- tral introduc- tion		[115]	3	double basses
			2 + (2+2)	solo bassoon
		[116]	(2+1) + 2 (2+2) + 2	solo flute (backstage)
SCENE 1 (Shep- herd)	Introduc- tion (recitative)	[117] +1	(2+3) + (2+1)	
	Arioso Shepherd	[119]	(1); [(2+2) + (2+2) + 1]	
	Interlude	[120]	(repeat aulody) [(2+1) + 2] + [(2+2) + 2]	

SCENE 2	Entry Oedipus	[121] +1:	(2+2);	Recitative
	Aria Oedipus	[122]	I Stollen: (3+3) + 3	Section 1
		[123]	Short interlude: (3) II Stollen: 3+2 Abgesang: (4+2) + (3+2)	
			(2+2) + 6	Section 2
		[127]	Short interlude: (2) 3+3	Section 3
		[128]	I Stollen: 3+2 II Stollen: 3 Abgesang: 2+2	
SCENE 3 (Parri-cide)	Entry Laius	[130]	Aufgesang: 3+1 I Nachstolle: 3+2 II Nachstolle: 3 + (3+1)	<i>Arrière, esclave !</i>
	Orchestral interlude	[132]	I Stollen: 3 + (2+2)	
		[133]	II Stollen: 2+2 Abgesang: (1)	
	Intervention Shepherd		4+2	
		[135]	Binder-phrase: 2 + (2+2)	

Table 2.2. Act 2, tableau 2, formal scheme.

Section	Subsection	Rehearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
PART I	Orchestral introduction	[136]	(3) 7/8: I Stollen: (2+2) II Stollen: (2+2) + 3	The Sphinx's slumber
		[138]	Abgesang: (2+2) + 3	
	SCENE 1 Monologue Watchman (ABA)	[139]	A: 3 + (3+3)	Introduction
		[140]	B: (3+2) + 2	
		[141]	(2+3) + 2 Reprise A: 3 + (3+2) Binder-phrase: 2+3	

	SCENE 2	[144]	I Stollen: (4+4) + 4 II Stollen: (4+4) (4+2) Abgesang: (1)	Entry Oedipus
		[148]	Intervention Shepherd: (4+4) + 3	Dialogue Oedipus – the Shepherd
		[150]	(3+3) + 2	Repeat initial motif: the Sphinx's slumber
		[151]	(4+2) + 3 (2+2) + 2	
		[154]	[(2+4)] + 2	
			(2+2) + 1	Oedipus' address to the Sphinx
	SCENE 3	[156]	I Stollen: 2+2 (Watchman)	Orchestral introduction: the Sphinx's awakening
		[157]	II Stollen: 2 Abgesang: 2+1	
		[158]	Introduction (<i>Je t'attendais</i>) I Stollen: (4+4) + 2 II Stollen: (2+1)	Dialogue Oedipus – the Sphinx
		[160]	Abgesang: 2+1	
			I Stollen: 3 + (2+2) II Stollen: 4 + (3+2)	Arioso Sphinx
		[163]	Abgesang: 2+2	
		[164]	2 + (2+2)	The Sphinx's riddle
		[165]	3 (Orch) (2+2) + 2	Oedipus' answer

		[166]	2 (Orch); I Stollen: (2+2) + 2	The Sphinx's death
		[167]	II Stollen: 2+2	
		[168]	Abgesang: (4+2) + [3 + (2+3)]	
PART II The Great Conclu- sion: The Crown- ing	Introduction	[170]	I Stollen: 3 + (4+4)	
		[171]	4+2	
		[172]	II Stollen: (2+4) + 4	
		[174]	[(2+2) + (1+2)] + (4+2) Abgesang: 2+3	
	Section 1	[176]	I Stollen: 3+3) + 2	
		[177]	2+2	
		[178]	2+(2+2)	
		[179]	II Stollen: 2+4	
		[180]	(2+2) + (2+2)	
		[181]	(2+2) + 2 Abgesang: (3+2) + 3	
		[184]	(3+2) + (3+2)	
	Section 2	[186]	I Stollen: (4+4) + 2 II Stollen: (4+4) + 2 Abgesang: I Stollen (4) II Stollen (4) Abgesang (3)	
			(3+2) + 3	Culminat- ing plateau
	Section 3	[191]	I Stollen: (2+2) + 2 II Stollen: 2+2	Coda
		[194]	Abgesang: (2+1) + 2	
		[195]	Short interlude: 2+1	
		[196]	(2+2) + 3	
		[197]	(2+2) + 4	

Table 2.3. Act 2, tableau 3, formal scheme.

Compared to the *Prologue*, the second act of the Enescian *tragédie lyrique* calls for augmented orchestral requirements. We can notice the addition of a second pair of trumpets (arriving at a total of four in the respective section), of a third (bass) trombone, and of a group of keyboard instruments: piano (whose lid must be first lifted), a small portable organ (pump organ), and celesta (see Ex. 15).

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the second act of Enescu's *Œdipe*. The title "Œdipe." is written at the top, followed by "acte 2." and "1^{re} Scène." and "Allegretto animato (11/16)". The score is written for a large orchestra, with staves for various instruments including: Grandes flûtes, Hautbois, Cor anglais, Clarinettes, Petite Clarinette en sol, Clarinette basse, Bassons, Contre-Basson, Cors chromatiques, Trompettes chromatiques, Trombones, Tuba ténor, Tuba basse, Tuba Contre-Basse, Timbales chromatiques, Grosse caisse, Caisse claire, Triangles, Castagnettes, Vents et Percussions, Harpes, Orgue, Celeste, Violons, Altos, da Sphinge, Métrope, de Berger, Œdipe, de vieillard, Soprano, Contre-ténor, Ténors, Basses, Violoncelles, and Contre-Basses. The score includes various musical notations such as clefs, time signatures, and dynamic markings. At the bottom, there are three footnotes: 1) Les grandes flûtes 1 et 2 jouent au commencement de l'acte 2, sur la scène, pour rentrer dans le concert de l'acte 2 l'orchestre, à 2^h 45; 2) La Harpe 1 joue au commencement de l'acte 2, sur la scène, et rentre à l'orchestre pour l'acte 3; 3) Le concert de la Piano devra être préalablement enlevé.

Ex. 15. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, first page. (see Enescu 2017)

Other percussion instruments are introduced, too, such as the wind machine or the musical saw. Going over the list of instruments and over the footnotes on the first page of this act also reveal, upon careful examination, a slight incongruence: harp 1 should play, in the beginning of the act, backstage, together with two solo flutes and a choral group composed of sopranos, altos, and tenors. According to the composer, it should return into the pit only at the beginning of Act 2. But we encounter it two bars after [181], in the *Great Coronation Scene* from the end of Act 2, first playing in unison with harp 2 (which doesn't leave the pit), while from [186] the two instruments have distinct musical trajectories, albeit in obvious complementarity.

As the curtain rises, we are in King Polybus' palace in Corinth. The solo oboe's chant (*dolce, pensieroso, ad libitum*) initially takes the shape of a strict monody, while the beginning with bar 6 it is associated with a light, ethereal accompaniment on flutes, clarinets and strings commencing in the mid-low register. The first entry of the backstage group ("Adonis, couché sur la pourpre et l'or") comes after [71]: these are groups of young people from the City, a festive procession bearing the effigies of Aphrodite and Adonis and marching towards the acropolis of Corinth's (see Ex. 16).

Ex. 16. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 1: Adonis, couché sur la pourpre et l'or, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The syntax of this opening fragment is predominantly polyphonic and non-imitative, with some transitory heterophonic surfaces. Vocal and instrumental melodies blend to create a *trompe l'oreille* effect: the dynamic markings suggest a gradual advance, reaching a peak in the area after [81], and a gradual move back, with [87].

Oedipus' first interventions (at [73]: "Oui, partir !") illustrate, by fragmented melodic intervals going in opposite directions, his melancholy (see Ex. 17).

Ex. 17. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 1: Oedipus' first intervention, Oui, partir !, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The theme, intoned by the violins beginning with bar 3 after [79], sees Phorbas walking onto the stage. Here is a fine example of Enescian writing style: on the one hand, the instrumental melody (violins) exactly anticipates Phorbas' first notes (see Ex. 18);

Ex. 18. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 1: entry of Phorbas, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

but the wider context points to what we might consider as one of the first enunciations of a melodic motif which would, throughout the work, be associated with the Sphinx, seen as a personification of Fate (ex. [158]) (see Ex. 19).

Ex. 19. Enescu, *Cœdipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, scene 3: the first intervention of the Sphinx, Je t'attendais, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Phorbas' melody is related to that of the backstage choral group, as before going to see Oedipus he had been part of ceremonial procession, being thus in a way "contaminated" by the atmosphere of sacred joyfulness of Aphrodite's adorers. The accompaniment of the *arioso* here starts amplifying the initial melodies from the opening of Act 2, and the polyphonic treatment applies to both vocal density and to registers. The culmination of Phorbas' intervention comes at [84], followed by Oedipus' short reply. After Phorbas exits stage, at [85], Oedipus intones a short monologue accompanied by the first bassoon's and the cello's melodies. It is now that another important motif in the design of the work appears, the motif of "parricide" (see Ex. 20).

A clarification is now perhaps necessary: it is obvious that Enescu's technique throughout the work is to combine recurrent motifs by means of subtle and continuous variations, according to the particular atmosphere, image, situation, or the characters' psychological moods. The efficiency of this method is remarkable: in addition to providing the basic melodic material needed for constructing phrases to fit the libretto, it also allows a coherent and substantial approach to large surfaces, in a way determining the very morphology of the entire work. The whole reflects the part and the part, in its turn, is the condensation of the meaning of the whole. It is difficult to avoid the analogy with the mathematical principles of fractals as theorized by Benoît Mandelbrot at the end of the 1970s (Mandelbrot 1975, 1977). These veritable *Ur*-motifs can easily be tied to certain characters or dramaturgical themes, such as the Sphinx,

the Parricide, Athena's sacred grove (symbolising the eponymous character's apotheosis), or Antigone. But it would be an exaggeration to proceed to a strict cataloguing, in biunique terms, of the melodic or chordal structures. Enescu's work escapes such an attempt; useful perhaps in the case of Wagnerian leitmotifs, it will not fit the rather germinal-like construction with consequences on the macro-structures of the music.

The image shows a page from a musical score for Enescu's *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [85]. The score is in piano (piano score) and features a short monologue of Oedipus. The tempo is marked 'rall. molto' and 'Andante moderato (♩ = 50)'. The score includes vocal lines for Oedipus and instrumental accompaniment for strings and woodwinds. The lyrics are in French: 'Ah! goûtez sans moi aux plaisirs per. mis! A vos li.bres appels, Œdi.pe reste'.

Ex. 20. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [85]:
short monologue of Oedipus, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

We can advance here the idea of the constitution of several “gravitational motivic centres” which, once presented in different versions corresponding to a certain dramaturgical element, turn into “attractors” within the musical discourse, quite often serving to build cadential or transitive structures as appropriate. Enescu’s guiding principle in writing on large surfaces can be summarized as “motivic-thematic heterophony”, in the sense that these “gravitational motivic centres” are constituted in a network of organically interconnected nodes and antinodes. Here is an essential difference from the Wagnerian model: the typically organic Enescian style adopts and at the same time transfigures the Wagnerian structural model.

At [91] a short transitive fragment appears as the violas play a melody repeating the backstage chorus theme and accompanied by a double descending melody of parallel perfect fourths (isomorphism) on cello and double basses (see Ex. 21).



Ex. 21. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [91]. (see Enescu 2017)*

Even Merope's entrance, in bar 2 after [92], first borrows the melody sung by the backstage chorus, developing afterwards, for the dialogue with Oedipus, into a *quasi recto tono* recitative. The association between the characters' words and the orchestral comments is a very suggestive one, as we can notice by the intermediate cadence in the bar before [94], where rhythm (anapest) and timbre (celli quartet and harp 2) suggest the oars' play (see Ex. 22).

Handwritten musical score for "L'Espresso" by Georges Bizet. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (B.), Horn (Hr.), Trumpet (Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn.), Violin (Viol.), Viola (Vcl.), and Cello/Double Bass (Vcloncelle). The score is written in 4/4 time and features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The title "L'Espresso" is written in the top left corner. The composer's name "Georges Bizet" is written in the top right corner. The score is divided into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The score is written in French and includes the title "L'Espresso" and the composer's name "Georges Bizet".

Ex. 22. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [93]. (see Enescu 2017)*

The *arpeggiato* effect on the second beat of the bar creates a very plastic image of the oars slowly dipped into the still sea. The orchestra sustains Merope's question with a succession of descending sequences, after which the music turns more dynamic as durations decrease. Oedipus' answer brings with it

an even quarter notes motion going again in parallel perfect fourths, as those preceding Merope's entrance. Her statement (as from two bars before [97]) raises a performance issue which necessitates a short look at Phorbas' line in Act 3, from [271] onwards. We learn there that Apollo appeared to the couple Polybus-Merope in a dream and ordered them to raise their new-born in the mountains. They entrusted the boy to Phorbas, who was then a shepherd. The boy died shortly after, but Phorbas providentially met the Shepherd from Thebes, who had received orders from Laius to kill Oedipus, just born himself. The two, the Shepherd and Phorbas, strike a bargain: the latter will take the son of the royal couple into his care, in strict secrecy. We can thus say that Merope is convinced she tells the truth when she swears that Oedipus is her son. This is crucial for the development of the plot, as it will generate Oedipus' decision to leave what he believes to be his native city, precisely to prevent the fulfilment of the terrible prophecy hanging over his destiny. It is a classic example of irony of fate: *any action meant to avoid Fate will only contribute to its fulfilment*.

Oedipus' account of the Delphi incident (when Apollo cast him out of his temple) continue the parallelism between word and aural image. Enescu illustrates the uneasy rustling of laurel leaves with the solo violin's *glissando*, and the sudden check of the flow of Castalia's spring with a low E on second harp played in an unusual manner – *en chiquenaude* (literally, a strong blow with the nail of the index finger), producing a violent sound, metallic and vibrating (see Ex. 23).

Oedipus' quotation of the god's words is preceded by a syncopated solo double bass followed by a dynamic ascension leading to a culmination when the beat changes to 4/4. Merope's reactions are highlighted by rhythmic gasps, evoking her surprise and fear, in the mid-high register (violins, horns, flutes, clarinets).

In the bar before [103] there is a slight prosodic inadvertence, consisting of a stress shift, as regards the spoken language, on the offbeat – namely, on the second beat: “seras le mari de ta mère”. These small deviations from the French pronunciation norms are not very frequent (we will meet an alternation in the different stress placement in two identical successive phrases in bar 2 after [349]: “Tu connais les oracles du Dieu”), but they throw an interesting light on how these various stress placements from a text which Fleg wrote with a deliberately archaic flavour, fitting the subject, can be interpreted.

With [104] (*un poco piu animato*), the *staccato* eighth notes pattern is structured on an avatar of the motif of the parricide, to which the tambourine is added, whose appearance throughout the work is associated, on an almost subliminal level, we might say, with a timbral reminiscence of the incest (see Ex. 24).

rythme ternaire

101

laissez vibrer

col tutti

avec le basson de l'angle (en chiquenauille).

Ex. 23. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [101]. (see Enescu 2017)

Un poco più animato (♩ = 118)

avec horreur, comme dans une hallucination grandissante

En rêve, Poly - bos de vient mon adversai - re, et mon poignard ja - loux fouille son cœur ou - vert...

Un poco più animato (♩ = 118)

104

col tutti

avec le basson de l'angle (en chiquenauille).

Ex. 24. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [104]. (see Enescu 2017)

This association is present even in the Instrumental Prelude of Act 1, and represents a total sublimation of the principle of motivic construction: for an element of the tragedy so horrible that it couldn't be represented as such (the incest), Enescu resorts to a correspondence eluding the explicit formulation (the motif, the intervals chosen) and uses pure timbrality (*tambourine in tremolo*). The quasi-permanent juxtaposition of the parricide motif with the sound of the tambourine turns them into two aspects of the same entity (the double course that hangs over Oedipus' fate, even before he was born).

The conclusion of the dialogue between Oedipus and Merope ([105]: "Je partirai !") unfolds in a determined half note beat (*alla breve*) meant to show the hero's decision to overcome Fate. It is also worth noticing how Oedipus will not hesitate, how he will not accept the idea of predestination, and how he will choose to fight for his freedom. Here is a key moment in the plot: we could argue that Act 1 and the beginning of Act 2 were just the exposition of the dramatic material, and that it is only now, with Oedipus' departure, that the central part of the plot begins. We may in a way extend this morphological narrative to the musical discourse and say that we enter a phase of development of a sonata-like construction principle, very subtle, very condensed, which pervades the entire work. We enter an area where actions and conflicts are reflected by the continuous evolution of the essential motifs hitherto heard. From now on, we can really see operating that principle of construction wherein the composer insists on heterophonic motivic-thematic centres.

At [110], an orchestral interlude separates the first two tableaux of Act 2 (see Ex. 25).

Ex. 25. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 1, scene 2 [110]:
Orchestral interlude, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The opening phrase is followed by a heroic theme on horns and trumpets in unison, at [111]. The repetition, two bars later, of the initial phrase leads to the culmination of [112], which is followed by a katabatic fragment. The glockenspiel's intervention from 113 (third beat of the bar) suggests an unequivocal change of both set and tone ambiance: as the curtain rises for the second tableau of Act 1, we are no longer in a hall in the Corinth palace, but at the junction of three roads on a dreary day, with a storm-portending light. The crossroads is guarded by a very rudimentary statue of goddess Hecate, doubtless erected by the goat shepherds passing by in order to ensure the protection of the three-headed divinity, both feared and adored in a mixture of superstition and cunning (the prayers to Hecate often had, in Boeotia, as in all continental Greece in Classical antiquity for that matter, the aspect of an invocation of protection; this is definitely ancient an deity, originating in the Late Bronze Age).

The second tableau is open by an *orageux* passage on double basses immediately followed by a long bassoon solo built on an insistent affirmation of the motif of the parricide (see Ex. 26).

115 Andante moderato (♩ = 56)

2° TABLEAU

S.° bassa m.d.

Flûte A

(Déjà, avant le lever du rideau, on entend la plainte désespérée que le BERGER tire de ses pipes.)

Sur la scène

(poco sost.) 116 a T.° ♩ = 46

calando

pp sempre

2 C.B. Timb.

matèrico

pochiss.

Ex. 26. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 2, tableau 2 [115]: orchestral introduction, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

We must now call attention to another remarkable aspect of Enescian motivic construction: as regards intervals, the motif of the parricide is formed by an ascending minor sixth followed by an ascending augmented second and the return to the previous note (for example: D – B \flat – C \sharp – B \flat). This structure can obviously appear in various transpositions, such as E – C – E \flat – C. The interesting fact is that this structure represents a particular arrangement of the sounds contained in the Enescian melogram: E – E \flat – C (En – Es – Cu), and it can be interpreted as a signature, inserted in the key moments of the musical discourse. Moreover, the two motivic entities (the Enescian melogram and the motif of the parricide) can be placed in a clear correspondence with the Bartókian “alpha chord”: E – G – C – E \flat . The degree of intentionality in the similarity of the principles of tone organisation used by the two brilliant contemporary composers remains to be settled by a possible ulterior research.

To resume, the bassoon solo is followed, starting with [116], by a quasi-improvisatory passage on backstage solo flute, representing the Shepherd’s lamentation. The repetition of dotted motif on the bassoon concludes this brief setting up of the new sound ambient. The Shepherd’s recitative, beginning one bar before [117], carries on the ideas of the introductive orchestral passage based on the same obsessive motif of the parricide. The short prayer that the Shepherd addresses to Hecate suggests, by the *staccato* and syncopated orchestral figures, the movements of a wild goat (let’s not forget that this is a goat shepherd) and ends on a funny note, with the suggestion of an onomatopoeic cadence imitating animals bleating. With [120], the backstage solo flute resumes its melody, accompanied by the wind machine and by the *tremolo* passage of the solo violas and celli pairs *sul ponticello*. The above-mentioned motif is obstinately present in the melodies played by the bassoon and the cor anglais and which conclude with the violas’ *pizzicato* (see Ex. 27).

At [122], after a short, four-bar recitative, comes Oedipus’ aria, a bistrophic structure (the second strophe beginning in bar 4 after [123]) which ends with the passage of the remembering of Corinth from [124] (see Ex. 28).

The last section of the aria features a particularly powerful music, as it consists in Oedipus cursing the elements and the gods and blaming Fate which keeps him in her chains. It is a prefiguration of a somewhat stronger moment from the beginning of Act 3 ([218]), about which we will talk when the time comes. This passage brings a dynamic ascent, sufficiently marked so as to justify the character’s altered state of mind upon Laius’ entry. The parricide scene proper has a relatively small, but extremely dense, dimension: the king of Thebes addresses arrogantly the stranger in the middle of the road, towards whom his driver makes an aggressive gesture. This will be enough to

provoke Oedipus' extremely violent reaction, resulting in the killing, after a short fight, of all three occupants of the royal carriage (King Laius, a watchman and the driver) (see Ex. 29).

Ex. 27. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 2, scene 1 [120]: Interlude. (see Enescu 2017)

Ex. 28. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 2, scene 2 [124]: ending of the second strophe of Oedipus' aria, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

A ce moment, le char de Laïos apparaît, monté par le Roi, un cocher et un guerrier.
Le cocher lance à Edipe un coup de foudre.)

(Il veut de son sceptre frapper la tête d'Edipe.)

Allegro vivace (♩=132) LAIOS

sost..ten.

Arrière, es - cla - ve! Ar.rè - rel (De sa main levée)

sempre ff

Par l'en.

VENT
dans les
coulisses pp

sost. sf

p

sf

pp

[130] Allegro vivace (♩=132)

sont..ten.

Quat. mp

mf

Rf

Bols Cora p

ben

contre le Destin, Edipe assène à Laïos un coup formidable. —
a T° (♩=112) coup Eclair... Laïos, frappé à mort, reste un moment debout,

- fer!...

a T° (♩=112)

Timb.

Mots

Trib. Cora

Trib.

Bols

Ci. Héb.

Héb.

Alles pliz.

Tuba C.B.

C.B.

Ex. 29. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 2, tableau 2, scene 3 [130]:
Parricide, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)*

Everything happens very quickly, as if to underline the sudden and senseless character of ill-fated events in anyone's life. After this short but extremely violent episode, Oedipus is shown furiously resuming his journey through the woods of Phocis while the storm breaks with a fury which mirrors, in a purely Romantic style, his state of mind. Behind him, a desperate Shepherd realises the dimensions of the disaster which had taken place before his eyes ("Le Roi, mort !").

The third tableau begins at [136] with a dominant seventh chord (on C) superposed with a sinuous melodic motion on double basses wherein the motif of the Sphinx is clearly heard. The preponderance of the lower register combined with fluid chords is suggestive of the Sphinx's slumber, sleeping crouched, half hidden behind a rock, and guarded by a Watchman. The nocturnal atmosphere is complemented by the dark, massive profiles of Thebe's walls which dominate the set (see Ex. 30).

3^e TABLEAU

Moderato un poco lento (♩ = 60)

136

Trp. pp
Trb. (sourd.)

Cors BOPB
Tromb.

pp s.v.

un poco cant.

senza rigore -

a. Tr. (♩ = ♩) p
Fl. et Cl.

eguale, senza espressione

m. d.

pp
Tubas (sourd.)

1^{re} viol. solo

poco

pp sub.

M. G.
Cora

dolce

pp
s.v.

senza rigore -

Ex. 30. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 2, tableau 3 [136]: orchestral introduction, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The violin's chromatic, sinuous melodic motion forms a particularly strange comment on the Watchman's first intervention ([139]). It is clear, even when the curtain rises, that we are approaching a supernatural being. A suspended, motionless atmosphere, the result of an extremely refined orchestration with obvious origins in the French school of composition, distinguishes this first part of the third tableau, dominated by the Sphinx.

The Watchman's monologue, beginning at [139] ("De l'aurore à l'aurore"), presents a predominantly linear melody, designed to indicate the desolation and forbearance of an entire city faced with the punishment decided on by the gods. The fragment is governed by the melodic figures evoking the sleeping Sphinx's quiet breathing, inducing a state of an almost hypnotic contemplation. The image of the tranquil Watchman guarding the monster which, upon its awakening, will devour the lives of the City's inhabitants, evokes the

position of the artist in society, as if epitomizing a creed: “Remain awake when everyone else falls in the sleep of reason.”

The conclusion of the Watchman’s monologue (“Dormez, Thébains, dormez”) comes at [143], only to be followed right away ([144]) by Oedipus’ voice coming from afar (“Il est un breuvage”). Walking through the night, Oedipus sings to himself a tune half military song, half Middle-Eastern lament, in 5/4, as mark of his defiance of Fate, his lucidity and determination, pushing his self-indifference to the point of suggesting a suicidal act (see Ex. 31).

VOIX D'ŒDİPE, *ap. loia* *p* **Più animato, ma non troppo** (♩=88) (1)
 (1) Il est un breuvage aux doubles sa-veurs, sau-mâtre à la gorge et su-ave au
 [144] **Più animato, ma non troppo** (♩=88) *Cor* *Fl. alto* *Trp.* *Alto*
 COEUR... Heu-reux ce-lui qui meurt au jour qu'il est né; trois
 fois heu-reux ce-lui qui meurt avant qu'il soit né... LE VEILLEUR
 Quel est cet homme
 [145] (♩=80) *2 Cors* *Fl. alto* *Trp.* *Cl. Cor* *ppp* *pp* *veilles*

Ex. 31. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 2 [144]:
 Il est un breuvage, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

We find here a correspondent of the “Song of the Swiss Guards” which serves as motto for French writer Louis Ferdinand Céline’s novel *Journey to the End of the Night*, published in Paris in 1932, four years before the creation of Enescu’s opera. The melody, in quarter tones, evokes a soldier’s song, an expression of existential nihilism, the resulting sound sending us to a possible tie with the

aural world of Byzantium. It is a *sui generis* restitution of an aesthetic reality originating in the antiquity of the Mediterranean area.

Oedipus' song consists of a monotonous chant centred on the note E and sustained by the disparate interventions of several instruments (violins, horn, alto flute) which feed, by their successive entries, the reaffirmation of the same keynote and form a figured pedal by the reiteration of the same descending minor third (G – E). The structure is bistrophic, each section (strophe) ending with the same cadential structure and being followed by the Watchman's short comments ("Quel est cet homme à la mort envoyé ?"). The ostinato character of the melody leaves the impression of a circular structure, with a virtually unlimited repetitive potential.

The dialogue between the Watchman and Oedipus, which begins with the sudden interruption of what could have become a third strophe ("Arrête, passant !", [148]), features a motivic structure borrowed from the two anterior fragments – the Sphinx's Slumber and Oedipus' Song – with the anticipation, in the second bar, of an intervallic profile specific to the following section: a descending perfect fifth followed by a major seventh in the opposite direction (Eb – Ab – G). The moment when, after having been warned by the Watchman, Oedipus sees the sleeping Sphinx for the first time, is underlined by a descending *glissando sul ponticello* of the solo viola, which stops in a *pianissimo* tom-tom strike followed by the solo baritone's semi-*parlato* interjection in the lower register. These notes, using a special note representation (diamonds placed higher or lower on the staff to which precise rhythmic durations are attached), play a special role in the way this vocal fragment, sung by the Sphinx, is written (it will happen again later, in the Great Monologue at the end of Act 3). The exact way they must be performed is not specified in the legend Enescu wrote at the beginning of the score to explain the less common notations, but we can deduce, from the context, that these are sounds at the border between speech and song, marking the musical discourse with a declamatory character and leaving the performers the freedom to use a very large palette of vocal colours to express dramaturgical ideas.

The dialogue between the Watchman and Oedipus is permeated by descending chromatic melodies played by the orchestra, complementing the reiteration of the above-mentioned motifs. [154] brings a recitative in which Oedipus, the frightened Watchman standing by, decides confront the Sphinx and wakes her up. The orchestra's higher registers and the introduction of the piano in tremolated rhythms (bar 3 after [155]) increase the sentiment of strangeness and fear which dominate the entire fragment. Oedipus' cry, by which he wakes the Sphinx up, uses the same melodic figure, the descend-

ing fifth (diminished, this time) followed by a minor seventh in the opposite direction (see Ex. 32).

Ex. 32. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 2, three bars after [155]: Oedipus' address to the Sphinx, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

We witness another subtle metamorphosis of a motif anticipated several score pages earlier and adapted to the new scenic situation: changing the interval's quality brings a different meaning, tailored to the dramaturgic situation.

The orchestral passage which begins to unfold at [156], fleetingly accompanied by the Watchman's terrified intervention in the third bar, is one of the most formidable orchestral pages of the entire work: Enescu shows the Sphinx awakening and the two (Oedipus and the Sphinx) facing each other in an anabatic episode, a huge *crescendo* of the entire orchestral apparatus, where the chromatic melodic figures of the piano, the first violins, and the first bassoon – leaps on various intervals in opposite directions, where fifths and sevenths abound – give an extremely suggestive image of the supernatural creature. As well, the ascending seventh at the end of the motif clearly suggests an interrogative character, becoming what we might term “the motif of the Sphinx's enigma” (see Ex. 33).

Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest

This is a handwritten musical score for a large ensemble, likely a symphony or concert band. The score is written on multiple staves, each labeled with an instrument or section. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The score is organized into measures, with some measures containing multiple staves for different instruments. The handwriting is in black ink on white paper. The score includes the following instruments and sections:

- Fl. fl.** (Flute) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- Fl. fl.** (Flute) - 3rd staff.
- Hr. fl.** (Horn) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- C. fl.** (Clarinet) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- Cl. fl.** (Clarinet) - 3rd staff.
- B. fl.** (Bassoon) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- C. B. fl.** (Cello/Bass) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- Tr. fl.** (Trumpet) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 1st and 2nd staves.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 3rd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 4th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 5th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 6th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 7th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 8th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 9th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 10th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 11th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 12th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 13th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 14th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 15th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 16th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 17th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 18th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 19th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 20th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 21st staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 22nd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 23rd staff.
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- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 30th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 31st staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 32nd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 33rd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 34th staff.
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- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 84th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 85th staff.
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- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 88th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 89th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 90th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 91st staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 92nd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 93rd staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 94th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 95th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 96th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 97th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 98th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 99th staff.
- Tuba fl.** (Tuba) - 100th staff.

(♩ = 108)

p cresc. molto *poco accelerando* *lunga* *lunga*

Gr. Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Hr. 1
Hr. 2
Cl. A
Cl. B
Bsn. 1
Bsn. 2
Cb.
C.
Cb.
P.
Tr. 1
Tr. 2
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Tuba
Timb.
Snare
Cym.
Gong
Gr. C.
Hrp.
Piano
Vcl. 1
Vcl. 2
Alto
La Sphinx
Cb.
C.
Cb.

Ex. 33. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 3 [156]: the Sphinx's awakening (first two bars and the last two bars). (see Enescu 2017)

[157] marks a last dramatic orchestral ascent, increasing the volume to the point that it touches the psychophysical pain threshold (we remember here the Watchman's line "Déchire les cerveaux impuissants"), for the whole tumult to stabilise on an Eb on woodwinds in unison. This sound turns into a pedal, beginning with [158], using the same type of repetition (successive entries) from Oedipus' Song. The relationship between the keynotes of the two fragments, one of a descending half step (the former E[♯] becoming an Eb), is quite meaningful: this interval (chromatic or diatonic) is present both in the Enescian melogram and in the motif of the Sphinx.

The preponderance of several instruments less used so far, such as the celesta, the alto flute or the harmonium, contribute to a rarefied aural web, interrupted by massive entries of the orchestra in unison. As regards the melody, we can notice a modal structure with moveable steps on a vault-like profile: an ascent, reaching the maximum of the respective modal scale, and the return to the initial note by pitch change (for instance, the alto flute in bar 3 after [158]). The irregular rhythmic structure, yet retaining a *chronos protos* in eighth notes, defines the Sphinx: we can really “see”, by these sounds, the undulating movements and its slightly disdainful irony. Let’s not forget that, in this libretto, the Sphinx is female: *La Sphinge*. The character radiates a supernatural magnetism, not lacking a vague erotic tension.

This confrontation between Oedipus and the Sphinx at dawn as the day breaks over Thebe's walls ("une aube livide commence à naître", as the stage direction indicates) plays a pivotal role in the development of the plot: the sinister prophecy which had accompanied our hero throughout his life now comes true. This "Je t'attendais" with which the Sphinx greets Oedipus becomes, as of now, a sort of an essentialized expression of the idea of the entire opera: the relationship between Man and Fate (see Ex. 34).

158 the Sphinx *hp* ($\text{♩} = 42$) 220

Ex. 34. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 3 [158]:*
Je t'attendais, voice score. (see Enescu 1934)

The Sphinx, after informing Oedipus, with undisguised glee, that, from all its victims, he, Oedipus, will be the most beautiful (a terrifying compliment!), starts by introducing itself: Echidna, the daughter of Fate all-powerful over the lives of men, gods, and celestial bodies. The accompanying orchestral

given the later development of the story, sends us to a perpetual mirror play or exchange between the two concepts.

The image shows a page from a musical score for Enescu's *Œdipe*. The page is numbered 103 in the top right corner. The score is for Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 3 [165]. It features a vocal line for Œdipe and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Con moto" with a metronome marking of 69. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (pp, ff, sf, sfz), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions (e.g., "CEDIBE, à pleine voix", "L'homme est plus fort"). The score is numbered 165 and 166.

Ex. 36. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 3 [165]: Oedipus' answer, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The Sphinx's reaction to Oedipus' answer ([167]) is one of an unsettling ambiguity: her peals of laughter ending in convulsive, broken mechanism-like breaths, illustrate desperation rather than satisfaction, while metallic sounds and vocal effects bordering on speech are woven into the vocal fabric. For a couple of seconds, we too are ridden by uncertainty. Without stating it explicitly, the Sphinx somehow realises, with a bitter irony, that Fate will sacrifice her own child to fulfil her plans. [169] comes with a sudden change: we hear both a warning and a question and we are not sure if the dying Sphinx bemoans her defeat or celebrates her victory. The fragment is marked "soudain, la voix forte, blanche et métallique" (see Ex. 37).

Ex. 37. Enescu, *Ceïpe*, Act 2, *tableau* 3, first part, scene 3 [169]: the Sphinx's death, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Journal of the National University of Music Bucharest

[illegible]

Ex. 38. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 2, tableau 3, first part, scene 3: the Sphinx's death.*
(see Enescu 2017)

This succession of effects concludes with a short tympani strike performed with a wooden stick which results in an extremely suggestive dry sound in *pianissimo*. The rest at the end of the fragment, marked by a *fermata*, is of particular importance, loaded with a tremendous tension. This suspension is interrupted by the precipitate beginning of the Crowning Scene ([170]).

The debut of the motif on violins is also built on the motif of the Sphinx's *enigma*, having this time an expansive character, brimming with joy and exaltation: the *enigma* has been *answered*, or so we are led to believe. The Watchman's ecstatic cries, waking up the inhabitants of the City, are twice interrupted by Oedipus' confused question as he remembers the Sphinx's last words: "Rit de sa victoire?". The ambivalent nature of this melodic motif is once more made evident, turning here into an interrogative doubt: by repeating the Sphinx's last line, Oedipus in a way realises that the *enigma* still remains in fact unanswered, despite the cries of joy of those around him: the Thebans rapturously invade stage, after a sequential episode in *crescendo* ("Ouvrez les portes"), and gather before the City's walls.

After the Watchman introduces Oedipus as their saviour ([182]), the events take an inexorable turn: owing to his victory over the Sphinx, Oedipus is to be crowned King of Thebes and marry Jocasta, Laius' widow. In the general tumult, Oedipus becomes a simple actor (he will not speak again until the end of the act), things developing completely out of his control. The Crowning Scene represents one of the maximum dynamics points in the entire opera, with a large manpower deployment, as the Theban virgins ("Evohé!", [186]) and the Children's Chorus ("Hyménée!", [191]) join a Chorus divided into two main groups.

The first important section of the Crowning Scene in fact ends right before [186], making room for the following two sections, which illustrate the fulfilment of the double sinister prophecy: with the entry of the Theban virgins' ceremonial procession, we are the spectators of a public crowning ceremony. The entry of the group of basses from the Chorus ("La couronne!", bar 4 after [187]) starts a short canon suggested by the tenors' repetition occurring two bars later and followed by a polyphonic and imitative reiteration of a new melody sung by the basses (two bars before [189], "Gloire au tueur de Sphinge!"). After a short caesura, the conclusion of the coronation scene proper appears at [190], leading directly into the next section ([191]), where we attend the wedding of Oedipus and Jocasta. As if in a nightmare, the two are dumb, reduced, marionette-like, to gesture: reading the score only reinforces the feeling that the two are nothing but toys in the hands of Fate. After another culmination, which ends this section, a new *fer-*

mata appears (marked *pocchissimo*), followed by a short and extremely tensioned interlude ([195]) which seems to contradict the general impression of happiness.

As in a truly contrasting episode, the orchestra, dominated by a disturbing solo on contrabassoon and a combination of piccolo flute and piccolo clarinet (in D) in the extreme high register, is drastically reduced. The overall sensation is one of numbness and powerless fighting back on a subconscious level, similar to what one experiences as one is unable to wake up from a nightmare (see Ex. 39).

Ex. 39. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 2, tableau 3, second part, section 3 [195]: short interlude, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Written in the unusual 11/8 time signature, the culmination of the entire scene takes place on a general D major chord (disturbingly diatonic, considering the sound flux so far, filled as it was with dissonances and complex chordal structures). The Coda ([196]), wherein the Chorus replicates the shouts of “Gloire !”, ends abruptly, with the orchestra creating the image of sound curtain falling suddenly over the last, frozen, frame of the ceremony (see Ex. 40).

Handwritten musical score for George Enescu's *Cēdipe*, Act 2, last page. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments and voices. The instruments listed include Flute (Fl.), Piccolo (Pic.), Horns (Hr.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Contrabass (Cb.), Trumpet (Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba (Tuba), Timpani (Timp.), Piano (Piano), Violins (Vn.), Viola (Vla.), Alto (Alto), and Cello (Cb.). The score is written in a handwritten style with various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score ends with a double bar line and a fermata. Below the score, there is a handwritten signature "George Enescu" and the date "27 July 1928".

Ex. 40. Enescu, *Cēdipe*, Act 2, last page. (see Enescu 2017)

ACT 3, A CONDUCTOR'S VIEW

Act 3 is built by linking the three main sections which describe, on a dramaturgical level, an ascending slope, a culminating plateau, and a descending slope. These three big sections are prefaced by an introduction and an exposition of the plot, and conclude with a Coda sung by the Chorus.

Section	Sub-section	Re-hearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
Introduction			4 + (4+4)	
		[199] +2	(4+4) + (3+4)	Cortege 1 (tenors)
		[202]	[(3+3) + (2+2)] + (2+2)	Cortege 2 (altos)
		[205]	[(4+3) + 3] + 4	Cortege 3 (sopranos)
The plot is presented			(2+2)	Intervention Oedipus
		[208]	(4+3); (3+2) + 2	Dialogue High Priest – Oedipus
			(1) + [(2+3) + 1]	Intervention Chorus
		[211] +1	(4+2)	Short orchestral interlude
		[212]	4+4	Entry Creon
		[213]	(2+2) + (2+2) [(2+2) + 1] + 2	
		[215]	(4+4) + 4	
		[217]	(3+3) [(2+2) + (2+1)] + 4	Oedipus pronounces his edict (Conclusion)
		[221]	4+1	
		[222]	(3+2) + 2	
Section 1 (Investigation): it represents the plot proper of Act 3; consists of a string of episodes bearing the distinctive mark of a certain character. Ascending direction (Anabasis).	Episode Tiresias	[223] +3	(3+2) Oedipus calls out: (2+4) + 2	Entry

		[226]	I Stollen: (4+4) + 1	Dialogue
		[227]	4+4	Oedipus – Tiresias
		[228]	3+3	Intervention Chorus
		[229]	II Stollen: (4+3) + (4+2)	
		[231]	[(2+2) + 1] + (2+2) + 4	
		[232]	(2); (4+4)	
		[233]	(3+2) + (4+4)	
		[236]	2+2	
		[237]	[(2+4) + 4] + (2+2)	
		[240]	Abgesang: [(4+4) + 1] + (4+3)	
		[244]	Orchestra (3)	Conclusion episode Tiresias
		[245]	3+2	Orchestral comment
	Inter-lude	[246]	3 + (4+4)	Confrontation Oedipus – Creon
Episode Jocasta	[248]	(4) [(3+2) + 3] + 4	Introduction	
	[251]	2 + (2+3)		
	[252]	I Stollen: [(2+3) + 2] + (3+3);	Dialogue Oedipus – Jocasta	
	[254]	II Stollen: (2+2) + 4;		
	[256]	Abgesang: [(3+3) + (2+3)] + (4+2)		
Episode Phorbas	[261]	4 + (4+1)	Introduction	
	[262]	[2 + (2+2)] + [(2+2) + 4 (3+4) + (4+1)]		
	[266]	(4+2) + (4+2);		
	[267]	[(4+2) + 4] + [(2+1) + 2]		
	[270]	(2+2) + 1 (4+4) + (4+1) 3+2		

	Inter-lude	[276]	(4); (2+1) + 3	Jocasta's exit, followed by the Chorus' comment
	Epi-sode Shep-herd	[278]-1	I Stollen: (4+2) + 2 3+3) + 3	<i>Reconnais-tu cet homme ?</i> the final stage of the investi-gation
		[281]	I Stollen: 4 3 + (2+2)	
		[283]	(2+2)	
		[284]	Abgesang: (2+3) + 2	
		[285]	(2+3) + 2	
Section 2: constitutes the culminating plateau of Act 3 (Catharsis)		[286]	(2+2)	
		+2		
		[287]	3+2	
		[288]	2 + (2+2)	
		[289]	4+3	
		[290]	4+2	
Section 3: The resolution, consisting of a double segmen-tation of a long Oedipean mono-logue. Descending char-acter (Catabasis).	Seg-ment 1: <i>Par-lando</i> style	[292]	I Stollen: (4+4) + (2+2)	
		[294]	II Stollen: (2+3) + (2+2)	
		[296]	Abgesang: (2+3) + 2 (3+1) + 4	
		[299]	(2+2) + 3	
		[300]	(2+3) + 2	Antigone's first intervention
	Seg-ment 2: <i>can-tabile</i> style	[301]	I Stollen: 3+1 II Stollen: 3+1 Abgesang: 2 + (3+2)	Aria Oedipus
	Epi-sode Creon	[304]	I Stollen: (2+3) + 3 II Stollen: 4+3 Abgesang: 4+2	Oedipus is cast out of Thebes
		[309]	3+2	Conclusion
		[310]	[(2+1) + (2+1)] + 3	Interlude (Antigone's second intervention)

	Segment 3: monologue Oedipus (the prophecy)	[312]	(3) I Stollen: (4+3) II Stollen: (4+4) + 4 Abgesang: (2+3) + 1	Introduction
CODA		[318]	Orchestral introduction (4)	
			I Stollen: 2+2; II Stollen: 2+4; Abgesang: (2+2) + 2	Chorus: <i>O palais de Laïos !</i>

Table 3. Act 3, formal scheme.

If Act 2 symbolised the development of the plot, presenting the fulfilment of the sinister prophecy which had followed the eponymous hero, Act 3, intensely tragic, will bring the inexorable resolution. The somewhat heteroclite composition of the previous act (the only one to be divided into tableaux) changes into a configuration wherein unity of place and action reminds us of an antique frieze sculpted in marble. In his libretto, previously a compilation of disparate elements of the Greek legend, Fleg now follows rather closely the plot's development as given by Sophocles in his *Oedipus Rex*. The direct recourse to this latter's text leads to a greater narrative cohesion, reflected in the score as well: the general impression is one of economy of means and clarity of discourse.

Morphologically, Act 2 presents a free approach of the sonata form moulded, because of the dramaturgic requirements, on a *sui generis* structure: the introductive section, dominated by the Chorus and the dialogue between Oedipus and the High Priest, continues with a long accumulation and the music becoming more dynamic, as a sort of ascending slope (*anabasis*) composed of five episodes, each of them under the sign of a character which contributes to the development of what we might call a real investigation to find King Laius' killer. Enter, one after another, Creon ([212]), Tiresias (bar 3 after [223]), Jocasta ([248]), Phorbas ([261]) and the Shepherd ([277]), as Oedipus' interrogations gradually, inexorably leads to the learning of the terrible truth.

The second big section of Act 3, activated by Oedipus' line "Ah, je vois clair !" (bar 3 after [286]) reaches a culminating plateau (*catharsis*), followed by the descending slope (*catabasis*) consisting of Oedipus' long monologue structured into two segments (*quasi parlato*, [292] and *cantabile*, [301]), separated by Antigone's entrance ([299]). After this segmented monologue comes the episode of Oedipus' being cast out of the City by Creon and the crowd ([304]) and a reiteration of Antigone's decision to accompany her parent into exile ([310]). The second and last monologue of the main character ([312]) ends this second big section of Act 3, being followed by a Coda ([318]) wherein the Chorus brings a last comment ("Oh, Palais de Laïos !") and by a conclusive orchestral fragment in whose settling on the *vox finalis* Enescu uses the motif of the Sphinx.

As the curtain rises, the stage shows the square in front of Oedipus' Palace in Thebes. The crowd paints a collective picture of pain: the plague, seen as a divine punishment, decimates the lives of the City's inhabitants. As a short personal remark, I notice here a similarity to the general atmosphere from the opening scene of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* (see Ex. 41).

After a short orchestral introduction repeating almost *ad litteram* the opening bars of the *Prologue* (this time in triple meter), the Chorus intones a *lamento* motif consisting of a diatonic descending half step, integral part, as a matter of fact, of the Enescian melogram which had engendered the motif of the parricide. The motivic-thematic cohesion thus asserts itself from the very first page of the score, an early affirmation of the intensive construction principle which would dominate the entire act. With [199] we witness the passing of three successive funeral corteges, as embodied by the tenors, altos ([202]), and sopranos ([205]). Each of the three interventions ends with the Chorus' collective exclamation ("Œdipe ! Entends nos pleurs"). Oedipus shows himself in front of the steps of the Palace, ("De l'antique Cadmos", four bars before [208]), the High Priest intervening immediately afterwards ([208]) (see Ex. 42).

The entire fragment is governed by the melodic figure of the descending half step, illustrating the grief and the desolation which have taken over the City. Oedipus' answer is not long in coming: he, the King, awaits Creon. He had been sent to the Oracle of Delphi to find out why the City had been punished by the gods. The cello's passage, beginning in bar 2 after [211], is a brief transition to Creon's precipitate entry: Oedipus prompts him to tell everyone that the murder of King Laius must be redeemed by blood, for his murderer is in the city. The musical motif from [213], as a trumpet signal announcing Apollo's Word, can be identified as a typically Enescian stylistic device (see Ex. 43).

ACTE III

Polka

Larghetto mesto (♩ = 44)

PIANO

Altoes ou
voixes

Cor

espresso-mesto

C. Bassou

RIDEAU. Thèbes; la place publique. A gauche, un temple; à droite, le palais d'Œdipe. — Une foule, hommes, femmes et enfants, prosternés sur les marches du palais. — Des cortèges funéraires passent au fond de la scène. — Lumière triste.

Lamentoso (♩ = 104)

198

Fl. Alto et BOP

Cors

Trb.

Viol.

calando

1^{er} CORTÈGE, PETIT CHŒUR DE TENORS

Ce.

Sop.

Cont.

Tén.

Bas.

LA FOULE

Oh!

Oh!

Hé.las! Hé.las!

Hé.las! Hé.las!

Oh!

Oh!

199

Fl. Alto

pizz

mf cant.

BOP et Alto

Ex. 41. Enescu, *Cédipe*, beginning of Act 3, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Modto senza lentezza (♩ = 76) **ŒDIPÈ** (♩ = 69) **Meno mosso** (♩ = 58)

De l'antique Cadmos jeu ne posté-ri-té, pourquoi ces mains tendu-es, ces rameaux suppliants?

Moderato senza lentezza (♩ = 76) **ŒDIPÈ** (♩ = 69) **Meno mosso** (♩ = 58)

a Tempo moderato (♩ = 72) **LE GRAND PRÊTRE** *sf*

a T^o modto (♩ = 72) La Peste aux dents de feu dé-vo-re ta Ci-té. Le bois manque aux bu-

chers, la terre aux os-se-ments, et les morts sans tombeau vont mourir

Ex. 42. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 3, four bars before [208]: De l'antique Cadmos, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

sost. (♩ = 50) **poco allarg.** (♩ = 63) **a T^o un poco animato** (♩ = 63)

ŒDIPÈ *la voix forte* A nos maux-j'ap-por-te gué-ri-son.

Quelques Ténors TOUS E.cou-tez! E.cou-tez Cré-on!

Quelques Basses TOUS E.cou-tez Cré-on!

ŒDIPÈ *la voix forte* A nos maux-j'ap-por-te gué-ri-son.

Quelques Ténors TOUS E.cou-tez! E.cou-tez Cré-on!

Quelques Basses TOUS E.cou-tez Cré-on!

Ex. 43. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 3 [213]: allusion to the first theme of Enescu's *Symphony No. 1* in E♭ major, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

This rhythmic-melodic pattern can be found in the very opening of Enescu's Symphony No. 1 in Eb major.

The beginning of the Oedipus' investigation to find the perpetrator (from [215] onwards) occasions the appearance of a suggestive combination between the motif of the parricide on horns and the chromatic, sinuous figures associated with the Sphinx's scene played by flutes and violins (see Ex. 44).

The image shows a handwritten musical score for George Enescu's *Cedipe*, Act 3, one bar after [215]. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments and voices. The instruments include Flute (Fl.), Flute Alto (Fl. Alto), Horns (C.), Trumpets (T.), Trombones (Tb.), Cymbals (Cym.), Violins (Violons), Viola (Vcl.), Alto (Alt.), Oboe (Ocb.), Clarinet (Cr.), Chorus (Chœur), and Violoncello (Vcl.). The score features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and melodic lines with chromaticism. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The tempo/mood is marked 'Andante'. The score is written in a clear, legible hand with many annotations and markings.

Ex. 44. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 3, one bar after [215]. (see Enescu 2017)

Immediately afterwards, at [216], the motif of the Shepherd appears, in the very moment the character is mentioned. Creon had summoned him before Oedipus as the one who had discovered the King's body on the day of the murder. Moreover, Creon had also called Tiresias, the blind wise prophet, on his own. One can notice a nuance in the libretto here: Creon took the initiative to send for the two without waiting an order from Oedipus himself, in a way undermining his authority and leaving him no other option but to start the investigation in this particular way. It is in such a tense atmosphere, foreshadowing misery and conflict, that Oedipus pronounces his edict: if the killer pleads guilty, he will only be condemned to exile; if, by keeping silent, he refuses to save the City, he shall be cursed.

As Oedipus gives voice to the horrific punishment, accompanied by the Chorus' interventions ("Qu'il soit maudit !"), we are led to a climax around [223], the rehearsal letter also turning into what we might see as the conclusion of an exposition in a free sonata form into which the entire act is moulded (see Ex. 45).

Ex. 45. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 3 [223]: culmination of Oedipus' edict, Qu'il soit maudit !, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Tiresias' entrance, accompanied by the murmured comments of the men in the crowd, marks the debut of an ample section, in fact an independent episode wherein, by its integration in the long anabatic trajectory which would reach its *telos* at [286], plays a decisive role not so much in the development of the plot, but in highlighting the tragic quality of Oedipus' endeavour, determined not to stop until he finds out the truth, no matter how dreadful this truth might turn out to be.

242 *Pochiss. più animato*

(1. = 58)

The musical score is handwritten and includes the following parts and markings:

- Bnd:** Bassoon part, marked *soot. ff* and *pp sub.*
- Vnd:** Violoncello part, marked *ff ruidoso*, *sempre ff*, and *pp sub.*
- Alto:** Alto part, marked *sempre ff*.
- Tir.:** Tiresias part, with lyrics: *châ-te-ment. Et toi-mé-me, Oe-bi-ge, élé-mé-me,*
- V:** Voice part, marked *pp sub.*
- CB:** Cello/Bass part, marked *pp sub.*

Ex. 46. Enescu, *Cœdipe*, Act 3 [242], conclusion of the Tiresias episode.
(see Enescu 2017)

The recitative by means of which Tiresias is welcomed by Oedipus shows the latter's deference for the City's Prophet, not lacking in a subtle sub-jacent irony ("Divin Tirésias, très cher, très grand, très bon"). We witness here, besides the effort to learn the truth, the eternal conflict between the representatives of temporal power and those of spiritual power. Oedipus and Tiresias (whom the Queen's brother, Creon, holds in high respect) are without doubt part of the different "parties" contesting power in Thebes: on the one hand, the ultra-conservative side, depository of the City's traditions and intercessor between men and gods; on the other hand, the newly-arrived Hero, who has become King on his merit (he is the one who killed the Sphinx!), with a dynamic temper, determined, and innovative. Oedipus answers Tiresias' refusal with a growing rage, feeling the prophet defies him. The old man will not give up: facts will speak for themselves, words are not needed. His attempt to leave, accompanied by the Chorus' insistence ("Ne t'en va pas ! Sauve nous !", [228]), causes Oedipus make a very serious accusation: Laius' killer is Tiresias himself, whence his refusal to utter the culprit's name. With [231] the rhythm turns more dynamic, the tempo, more animated and, by changing to a compound triple meter, there is a feeling of urgency and tension. The confrontation between Oedipus and Tiresias proper begins at [232]. It is now that Tiresias finally gives the answer Oedipus had so insist-

ently asked for. We see here, in fact, a very short, very accurate abstract of the rest of the act. [235] indicates a return to the aural sphere associated with the Sphinx, as does [240] too, where it coincides with Tiresias' prophecy. The dotted motif on violins, at [242], placed over the melodic motion on the lower strings of the orchestra, is a direct reference to the similar passage from the Prologue (Act 1, one bar before [6]), having here the role of a conclusion of the entire Tiresias episode (see Ex. 46).

The formidable orchestral interlude from [244] illustrates Oedipus' powerless fury as the character remains isolated in the middle of the stage after Tiresias' exit and listens to the Chorus' comments on an ancient prophecy. He finally finds Creon to direct his anger at, and their confrontation takes the form of a rather short, but very intense fragment, to which Jocasta's entrance puts an end ([248]).

Jocasta is the protagonist of a chamber-like, lyrical segment, dominated, as regards the featured motifs, by the *Lullaby* from Act 2 ([56]). This motif had in fact been anticipated in the previous scene, when Tiresias hinted as to Oedipus' being born in Thebes (three bars before [242]). This thematic reminder is backed by a quasi-permanent allusion to the Sphinx's chromatic figure, as piano and violas testify at [249].

In the third bar after [251] a brief interlude develops, leading us into the new episode ([252]) and bringing back, superposed with the above-mentioned motifs, the obsessive repetition of the motif of the parricide on horn 1, in bar 4 after [252] (see Ex. 47).

Trumpet 1, muted, doubled by the oboe, and accompanied by the first violins' flageolets, plays at [253] a full quotation of the Act 1 *Lullaby*, sending us back to the moment of Oedipus' birth in the city of Thebes. The entire fragment is an explicit recapitulation of the plot so far: when Jocasta relates Laius' death, we even hear the *bouché* horns playing their descending chromatic half step, used in the second tableau of Act 2 to suggest the ravens' call in the woods of Phocis (one bar before [254], compared to four bars before [122]). The abundance of motivic reiterations confers the whole fragment an explicit aspect: Oedipus is confronted with more and more clues, all leading to the same tragic conclusion, soon to be revealed. In bar 2 after [259], with the Shepherd, barely arrived on stage, making his edifying intervention ("Trois, sur un char"), the beat of the melodies played by flutes, oboes, and clarinets is a clear reminder of the parricide scene (Act 2, bar 3 after [132]) and is followed by another motivic quotation, where trumpet 1 duplicates the descending motif present as early as bars 3 and 4 of the orchestral Prelude in Act 1.

Handwritten musical score for George Enescu's *Cédipe*, Act 3, one bar after [252]. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments and voices. The top staves include Flute 1 & 2, Horns 1 & 2, Clarinet in A, Clarinet in Bb (3 parts), Bassoon 1 & 2, Contrabassoon, Violins 1 & 2, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, and a vocal line for Cédipe. The bottom staves include a vocal line for Jocasta, a vocal line for Oedipus, and a vocal line for the Chorus. The score is marked with various dynamics and performance instructions. The page number 318 is visible in the bottom right corner.

Ex. 47. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 3, one bar after [252]. (see Enescu 2017)

Phorbas' entrance ([261]) marks another stage in the ascending course of the dramaturgical action, his first lines being predictably accompanied by a repetition of the initial motif which supplemented his intervention in Act 2 (bar 3 before [262], compared to bar 5 after [81]), the Corinth scene. After Phorbas speaks to Oedipus, the orchestral texture gradually turns thinner, until, in bar 5 after [265], the first violins' chromatic descending melody, doubled by the oboe and the clarinet, describe a true "pulverisation" of the motivic conglomerate which had built up so far, vividly suggesting the moment of the total loss of reason, the hero's absent-mindedness, lost as he is in solitary meditation, ignoring Jocasta's frightened questions. Several bars after Phorbas resumes his speech ([266]), Oedipus has a somewhat reserved reaction, like a return to the surface after having dived in the sombre profundities of a truth which begins to inexorably dawn on him. At [267] the intensity of the musical discourse falls to a minimum, a deliberate stagnation which makes possible the next accumulation of tension, necessary for catharsis (see Ex. 48).

Ex. 48. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 3 [267], piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The two bars preceding [271] contain the keywords which sentence Oedipus indirectly but implacably: Merope and Polybus are not his parents. Reacting to the hero's violent response, Phorbas gives a detailed account of the conditions under which the newly born Oedipus came to take the place of royal couple's lost son. Any possibility of eluding Fate now disappears forever. The return of the harmonium in the orchestral texture (one bar before [272]), placed over the melodic motion in ternary eighth notes on flute 2, clarinets, and violas, takes us back to the atmosphere of the Sphinx's scene and to the warning in her last line ("Ou rit de sa victoire"). The motif of the Shepherd on flutes ([273]), accompanied by the Chorus' exclamation ("Un berger !") is followed by a series of sequences which stop on a diminished seventh chord

in the second inversion, played by the horns (*bouché*, [275]), an effect which serves as an aural background of Jocasta's last line ("Hélas ! Infortuné !"), followed by her precipitate exit (see Ex. 49).

The image shows a page from a musical score for George Enescu's *Cedipe*, Act 3, starting at measure 276. The tempo is marked 'Allegro (♩ = 120)'. The score includes staves for Jocasta (Joc.), Violins (Viol. I, Viol. II), Soprano (Sop.), Contralto (Cont.), Tenor (Tén.), Bass (Bas.), and Piano (P.). The lyrics are in French. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, f, dim.), articulations (accents, slurs), and fingerings. The bottom of the page is marked 'CEDIBE AN ENESCU'.

Ex. 49. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 3 [276]: Jocasta's exit, followed by the Chorus' comment, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

The brief interlude at [276], accompanied by another of the Chorus' comments, leads into the ascending slope's last episode, the final stage of Oedipus' investigation, starring the Shepherd ([277]). His awkward attempts to avoid Oedipus' insistent questions determines the latter to resort to force ("Des fouets ! Des fers !"). The line is associated to the intervention of the whip itself (*frusta*) in the percussion section, thus proving the listener with the direct, unmediated image of the object mentioned. The episode's concluding part is marked by a compound duple meter (*alla breve*) combined with the quintuplet eighth notes on cellos and double basses, designed to illustrate the rising tension of this scene's ending. [286] registers the Shepherd's last testimony ("On le disait . . . fils . . . de Laïos") and the culmination which the entire act has prepared.

Two aspects come to the fore here:

a) The first, and the most obvious, is the shocking occurrence of a gunshot (*coup de fusil*) at the same time with the orchestral explosion which anticipates, by two beats, Oedipus' cry. The practical solution is, most of the times, to use a target practice gun (unloaded, of course), or a starting pistol of the kind used in athletic competitions.

b) The second concerns the notes of the violent, cluster-like chord which accompanies the tragic hero's revelation (see Ex. 50).

The image shows a musical score for Enescu's *Œdipe*, Act 3. It features two staves: a vocal line (Soprano and Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics: "di - più - a T? animato", "fils... de La - ios...", "Ah!", and "Je vois". The piano accompaniment includes markings such as "senza rigore", "Ah!", "Je vois", "Tutti", "molto", and "pp". The score is marked with a tempo of 126 and a key signature of one flat.

Ex. 50. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 3, four bars before [287]: Oedipus' cry, Ah, je vois clair !, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Below is the succession of the chord's elements presented as a scale, that is, ordered by pitch (see Fig. 1).

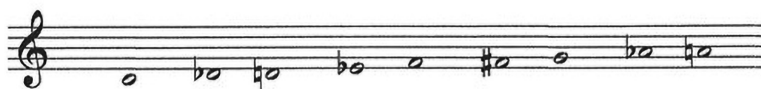


Fig. 1. The nine notes of the cluster-like chord which accompanies Oedipus' cry.

The result is a total of nine from the twelve sounds which form the chromatic whole. The fact that this is an indeterminate chord raises a legitimate question: why didn't Enescu use the chromatic whole now, when the work's dramatic tension reaches its maximum? The answer lies, I believe, in the particular meaning given not so much to the existing, but to the missing notes,

that is, in the identifying of the mode's residual-complementary structure. The resulting complementary mode consists of the notes E – B – B \flat – (E). It is easy to see that the respective sounds form the melodic nucleus associated with the Sphinx. We can thus say that, in her enigmatic manner, she is a subtle yet ubiquitous presence throughout Act 3, in an eloquent example of the Enescian genius as a composer, an instance of apophatic affirmation of a determining structure in the design of the entire work. We may add to this the inversion of the chord's contents several pages later, at [291], after Oedipus' line backstage ("Ouvrez les portes !"): the chord consists of only three notes, D – G \flat – A, a transposition of the complementary mode of earlier (E – B \flat /A \sharp – B). In conclusion, the two chord structures present at [286] and [291] respectively, are complementary, as the second one is the transposition downwards by a step of the first one.

Ex. 51. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 3 [292]: beginning of Oedipus' great monologue, Voyez, Thébains, voyez!, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Oedipus' great monologue starts at [292] with a first section, in declamatory style (*parlando*), sustained by a chord composed of the same notes as the motif of the parricide (A – F – G \flat), allocated to a solo double bass, a clarinet and a flute, the synchronic, essentialized expression of a motivic structure erstwhile given in multiple diachronic versions. The passage of the solo bas-

soon in bar 3 after [292] combines the Sphinx's (descending) melodic outline with the one which had introduced the *Lullaby* from Act 1, followed in the same bar by the solo saxophone's intervention, a prefiguration of the motif which will accompany Antigone's entry at [299] (see Ex. 51). This first section of the monologue is composed of two segments, the second one beginning at [296] (see Ex. 52).

a Tempo ($\text{♩} = 46$)
dolente

LA FOULE
pp - **Horreur! Horreur!**

O Kithéron, pourquoi m'avez-vous reçu? J'étais déjà coupable avant d'avoir vécu!

296 a Tempo ($\text{♩} = 46$) **Bon Altes**
C B solo pp S.O.
gens velles
can. mesto (Timb.)
2 C.R.

Et vous, triste chemin, bois ambigu, valon cruel, tout le sang de mon

sempre ppp *sost.*

cœur, que ne l'avez-vous bu, plutôt qu'être abreuvé par le sang paternel!

ppp *poco* Viol. *ritm.* *Mib. et Cl.* *pp* *bz* *pp sost.*

Ex. 52. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 3 [296]: second segment of Oedipus' great monologue, O Kithéron, pourquoi m'avoir reçu ?, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)*

Great actor Mounet-Sully's Classical tragedies roles made a lasting impression on Enescu, and it is here that we feel it most. The first section of the Oedipus' monologue reaches its peak at [298], by the orchestral reiteration of the fragment at [2] from the beginning of the work, which gives the impression of a great reprise at a macro-formal level.

[299] brings Antigone's first episode, with its specific motif intoned by the flutes, oboes, and clarinets. Her brief intervention creates the conditions for entering the second section of the monologue, at [301]. This is a true aria, with a bistrophic bar form, the second strophe beginning at [302] and followed by an *Abgesang* two bars before [303].

The episode which depicts Creon casting Oedipus out of the City occurs at [304]. After the tense dialogue between Oedipus and the crowd (represented by the Chorus), Antigone speaks again, stating her decision to follow her father in his long way through the night.

The second section of the Oedipus' monologue begins at [312] and is supported by the first motif of the orchestral *Prelude* (solo horn). The return to the thematic elements from the work's opening is now clearly the general construction principle of the entire descending (katabatic) slope of Act 3. [314] displays an anticipation of the motifs which would constitute the beginning of Act 4. At the end of the monologue, Oedipus makes a prophecy on the ungrateful Thebans' fate, a summarizing, trailer-like, development of the *Epilogue*, much in the same manner that Tiresias had presented the events in Act 3.

The Coda appears at [318], starting off with a dramatic orchestral segment followed by the Chorus singing in unison (a writing technique meant to strengthen the voices' contribution), a passage which continues the previous instrumental melody. The moment of the curtain slowly falling goes with an orchestral conclusion wherein the settling on the *vox finalis* (Ab in unison) is prepared by a last statement on horns, trumpet 4 and tenor tuba as they intone the descending motif of the Sphinx ("Je t'attendais !") (see Ex. 53).

[illegible]

446

(1 = 92)

*opi-
Tambu*

lunga

Gr fl 1/2

Pte fl 2

Hr 1/2

C. A.

Cl 1/2

Pte Cl (mib)

Cl B (la)

Brs 1/2

CB 1/2

C. 1/2

Trp 1/2

Trb 1/2

Tuba 1/2

Tuba B

Tuba CB

Timb 1/2

Gr C

Tamb

Tam-tam

Hrp. 1. et 2.

Piano

Vns 1/2

Altos

VC

CB

Fin de l'acte 3

George Enescu

Belleme-Leslytises

22 juin 1930

Ex. 53. Enescu, *Cedipe*, ending of Act 3 [320]. (see Enescu 2017)

ACT 4, A CONDUCTOR'S VIEW

Section	Subsection	Re-hearsal Letter	Bar Grouping	Remarks
I n t r o - duction	Orchestral prelude		I Stollen: (3+3) + 3	
		[321]	II Stollen: 4 + (3+2) Abgesang: (2+1) + 3	
	Main section (A): the Athenian Elders' first intervention	[324]	(4+2) + [(2+2) + 1]	Men's chorus: <i>Bienveillantes ! Bienfaisantes !</i>
	Middle section (B)	[325]	Introduction (2) (4+4) + (4+1)	Arioso Theseus
		[328]	Short orchestral interlude (3+2) + 2	
	Main section reprise (return of A)	[329]	(4+2) + [(2+2) + 1]	The Athenian Elders' Chorus (conclusion of the Introduction of Act 4)
Oedipus' entry, accompanied by Antigone		[330]	Introduction: (3+2) + 2	
		[331]-23	Introduction (3)	Arioso Antigone: <i>Je vois au loin des tours et des colonnes</i>
		[331]	(2+2) + 2 (2+2) + 2	
		[333] +1	I Stollen: [(2+2) + (4+2)] + (1+2) II Stollen: 2 + (3+2) (3+2) + 3 (2) Abgesang: (3+3) + 3 (3+3) + 2	Scene Oedipus - Antigone
		[336]		
		[337]		
		[338]		

Episode Creon		[341]	4+3	Introduction
			(4)	Intervention Creon
		[343]	(4+2) + (2+2)	
		[345]	2+3	
		[346]	(3+2) + 2 (4+4) + 1	Response Oedipus
		[349]	(1) (2+2) + (2+2)	
			I Stollen: 3+2 II Stollen: 3+2 Abgesang: 2	Intervention Chorus
		[355]	(2+2) + 3	Confrontation
		[356]	(3+3) + 3	Oedipus – Creon
The salutary intervention of the Athenian Elders led by Theseus		[358]	[(2+2) + 3] + 3	
		[360]	[(2+3) + 2] + (4+2)	Antigone speaking to Theseus: <i>Pitié, divin Thesée !</i>
		[362]	(4)	Concentrated reprise of the thematic material from the arioso (Theseus)
		[363] and [364]	(3+3) + 4	Creon's intervention and Oedipus' quick-tempered reply
Oedipus' great monologue	First section	[365]	I Stollen: (4+4) + 4	
		[367]	II Stollen: (4+3) + 2	
		[368]	Abgesang: (4+4) + 3	
		[370]	2+2	
		[371]	2+3	The conclusion of the monologue's first section

	Interlude	[372]	(2+2) + (2+3)	The Eu-menides' first call (Women's chorus back-stage)
	Second section	[374]	I Stollen: 4+4	
		[375]	II Stollen: 3+2	
		[376]	Abgesang: 2+2	
		[377]	2+3	(Orchestral) conclusion of the monologue's second section
	Interlude	[378]	(3)	The Eu-menides' second call
The Apotheosis: A sort of a continuation of Oedipus' great monologue, it is structured as a series of harmonic sequences like descending steps of light.		[379]	Introduction (3) I Stollen: 3+2 II Stollen: (2+2) + 2 Abgesang: 3	The farewell to Antigone, followed by her entrusting to Theseus and the Athenians he leads
		[382]	I Stollen: (2)	
		[384]	II Stollen: (4+4) + [(3+3) + 1]	
		[386]	Abgesang: I Stollen: (4+4) + [(3+3) + 2]	Reprise of the Athenian Elders' theme (Men's chorus)
		[388]	II Stollen: [4+(2+1)] + [(2+1) + 2] Abgesang (2)	

		[390]	$[(3+2) + (3+1)] + (2+2)$	Orchestral interlude (extension of the Athenian Elders' incantation)
		[392]	(3)	Preparing the culmination (Anlauf)
		[393]	$(2+2) + (2+2)$	Culmination
		[394] + 2	$(2+2) + 1$	Epilogue The Eumenides (Women's chorus backstage)
		[395]	I Stollen (2) II Stollen (2)	Orchestral Coda
		[396]	Abgesang (2)	
			3 bars (G major) $(4+4) + [(3+3) + 1]$	Final cadence

Table 4. Act 4, formal scheme.

The final act of Enescu's *Cedipe* begins with an extended orchestral introduction. The first phrase is a heterophonic structure played by the horns (a resounding motif, like a signal borrowed by the echoing woods), supported by interventions on alto flute, clarinet 3 and bassoon 1 in unison aiming at accentuating the spatiality of the resulting sound (see Ex. 54).

Like in the beginning of Act 3, there is a processual correspondence with a fragment from another famous opera. But the resemblance to the beginning of Act 3 of Giacomo Puccini's *Tosca* can only be invoked in relation to a certain atmosphere created with similar means, as there is no other direct influence of the Italian masterpiece on Enescu's work.

This initial phrase is repeated three bars later by the first violins, transformed by the addition of a statement doubling as a logical prefiguration to Theseus' aria. [321] brings back the opening motif, which would this time evolve towards an expressive culmination in bar 2 after [322]. The bar

preceding [323] introduces a choral-like writing on brass, followed two bars later by the strings' reply. This passage, dominated by metric ambivalence (simple meter alternating with compound meter) becomes a conclusion of the orchestral introduction, preparing the entrance of the Athenian Elders' Chorus (tenors and basses) at [324]. The orchestral accompaniment, echo-like, continues the idea of heterophonic interventions on horns and violas. The Chorus' eleven bars are, as regards form, the main section of a ternary structure, whose middle section is represented by Theseus' aria [325]. The even beat of the eighth notes conjunct motion in a compound triple meter (9/8) on violins and violas seconded by flutes, bassoons, and horns help a calm, serene atmosphere settle in, Theseus' invocation to the Eumenides acquiring a solemn, ceremonial character. The vocal fabric develops preponderantly in the middle register of the tenor voice, making it possible for this particular voice type to be replaced by a high baritone, for extra sound penetration in the context of an orchestral imitative polyphony requiring special attention as to proportioning. The short orchestral conclusion at [328], after the soloist's *sfumato*-like last phrase, ensures a natural return of the main section, represented by the Athenian Elders' Chorus [329]. The accompaniment is slightly different as compared with the first exposition, due to the addition of a comment on solo oboe supplemented by the flutes' interventions. Likewise, the last three bars now lack orchestral accompaniment (*a cappella*), illustrating the backstage choral group gradually moving away.

The entry of the couple Oedipus-Antigone takes places at [330], the melodic pattern associated to the latter being present on violins and alto flute. Another naturalistic element occurs on percussions: we can hear a nightingale's song backstage, supplementing the peaceful atmosphere of the beginning of act. Oedipus' initial interrogation elicits Antigone's arioso-like answer ("c'est la pieuse Athènes", [331]). The vocal melody starts, as did Theseus' earlier intervention, in a mid-lower register, which also implies a particular attention given to the balance between soloist and an orchestra featuring at times a quite dense writing (see Ex. 55).

[333] marks the beginning of a dialogue between Oedipus and Antigone, during which a premiere occurs – an ascending motif on a major scale (E major), played by the oboe which comes in at bar 2 after [334] (see Ex. 56).

This musical motif will become one of the important melodic elements to accompany the Oedipus' Apotheosis Scene in the work's finale. The conclusion of the first section consists of an expansive, orchestral *tutti* repetition of the initial motif.

ACTE IV (ÉPILOGUE)

[illegible]

Ex. 54. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 4, orchestral prelude, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)*

pochiss. meno mosso (♩ = 92) ANTIGONE

Je vois au loin des tours calando et des colon nes:

pochiss. meno mosso (♩ = 92)

ci.

Tempo I? (Mod^o tranqu. (♩ = 132 à 138))

c'est la pieuse Athè nes, séjour du roi Thésée. Et je vois pres de nous

Flûte

Tempo I? (Mod^o tranqu. (♩ = 132 à 138))

dolcis cant.

Vcllo

pp dolciss.

bp poco

mf espress.

pp

7 7 7 7

Ex. 55. *Enescu, Œdipe, Act 4, Antigone's arioso: Je vois au loin des tours et des colonnes, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)*

The image shows a page from a musical score for Enescu's *Œdipe*, Act 4, starting at measure 334. The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal line is in soprano clef, and the piano accompaniment is in G major and 2/4 time. The lyrics are: "Et vois - tu des rameaux ceignant d'uneguirlande la base d'un autel". The score includes various musical markings such as *p dolce sost.*, *RF*, *pp*, *mf*, and *trinq. grazioso*. There are also measure numbers 334 and 168 indicated.

Ex. 56. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 4 [334], piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Starting with [336] we see an interlude whose conclusion appears at [338] (“Salut, vous qui vieillz !”), containing an alternation of ternary and binary rhythms in a manner similar to the end of the orchestral introduction at the opening of the act ([323]). This rhythmical ambivalence is integrated in a general descending line which, by means of a cadence in bar 5 after [340], facilitates the transit to the fourth act’s central episode, marked by Creon’s entry in the company of a group of Thebans (tenors and basses).

The abrupt motif of the cellos and the contrabassoon (a reminiscence of the Sphinx’s question, like a final threat), superposed with the diminished seventh chord on *bouché* horns, appears after the harmonium’s entry two bars earlier to illustrate Antigone’s fright upon seeing Creon. After a passing moment where the ternary eighths beat in the lower orchestral register (cellos, double basses, violas, bassoons and contrabassoon) suddenly render the pace more dynamic, the arrival of new characters takes place on the background of remembering the motif from Act 2, associated with the Patricide scene (bar 5 after [130]). Creon’s calling out to Antigone (“Pourquoi trembler, chère Antigone ?”) slowly turns into his speaking to Oedipus, who remains impassive throughout the beginning of the scene: he, Creon, is there as the Thebans’ emissary to propose him to return to the throne. Oedipus’ answer ([346]) is a clear manifestation of his firm refusal in words full of scorn and anger addressed to the hypocritical messenger: they both know that Thebes is soon to be destroyed by the armies of the City of Argos, and the only protection against it would be bringing Oedipus within the walls of Thebes. Apollo has decided that Oedipus’ body, sanctified by the undeserved pains of atoning for a curse which had hung over him even before he was born, will guarantee the invincibility of the place where the Hero would be buried after his death. Creon’s attempt to deny the real aim of his expedition is succeeded by the des-

perate Thebans' imploration: they admit to the error of having cast Oedipus out of the City, and ask for his mercy ([351]). Following the obstinate refusal, Creon turns to a cowardly stratagem, born out of despair: seeing that Oedipus will follow Antigone anywhere she goes, he orders the men to take her. As they hesitate, Creon attempts to fulfil the base plan himself. In the moment of maximum tension between him and an Antigone who fights back, we can hear the backstage voices of the Athenian Elders approaching (bar 3 after [359]). This thematic return (one more will follow, of a markedly culminating and conclusive character, at [386]) suggests a free treatment of the ternary form, wherein the Chorus plays the role of a refrain.

After Antigone asks for Theseus' help [360], a repetition of the latter's *arioso* theme follows, similar to the passage after [325], and meant to close this central episode of Act 4. Creon's final intervention [363] is interrupted by Oedipus' exclamation "Je n'ai rien fait !", continued by a long explaining monologue which begins at [365].

Its conclusion, permeated with a number of motivic reminders rooted in the work's important moments, comes at [371] and ends with the key phrase "J'ai vaincu le Destin !" (see Ex. 57).

Ex. 57. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 4 [371]: J'ai vaincu le Destin !, piano score.
(see Enescu 1934)

This is the last proclamation of the central idea in Enescu's work, stated as early as the answer by means of which Oedipus defeated the Sphinx in Act 2: Man is above Fate. This idea is infused with an inevitable humanism, a true Enescian statement of position.

The last section of Act 4 is opened by the Eumenides' first call (backstage women's chorus, [372]). After a brief voicing of the motif associated with the Athenian Elders', the final episode of the Apotheosis is launched at [374], as alternating first and second violins, with a passing doubling ensured by flute

1, intone the descending motif which had already been anticipated throughout the act, starting in the second bar after [334] (see Ex. 58).

[illegible]

Ex. 58. *Enescu*, *Œdipe*, Act 4 [374]. (see *Enescu* 2017)

The motif of the Sphinx in the lower register of the orchestra (bass clarinet doubled by the solo cello) now acquires a cadential signification, destined

to consolidate in the shape of a Lydian mode the temporary centre of the F major key. A first culmination of the final monologue is reached at [377], while at [378] comes the Eumenides' second call. The inversion of the Apotheosis motif at [379] (violas and cellos) in its turn furthers the feeling of inner peace and nobility to permeate the whole finale.

Oedipus' farewell speech to Antigone (starting with bar 4 after [379]) brings back, as it was only natural, a last repetition of her motif, first stated in Act 3.

Beginning from [382] we witness the final section of the speech, structured on a succession of harmonic descending sequences like steps of light leading us, with [386], to the culminating plateau of Act 4 (see Ex. 59).

Ex. 59. Enescu, *Cédipe*, Act 4 [386]: *Bienveillantes ! Bienfaisantes !*, piano score. (see Enescu 1934)

Now the male voices restate in force, for the last time, the refrain-theme, turning it into a true Apollonian hymn of solar grandeur. The generous unfolding of the phrases gives the impression that Athenian Elders' theme only now

reaches completion, after all its fragmented appearances which had harmoniously served to organise the plot in Act 4.

[390] introduces a last orchestral interlude culminating with the Hero's Apotheosis, the moment when he disappears, according to the indications in the score, in a blinding explosion of pure light [393]. After the Eumenides' final intervention (female voices backstage, [394]), the orchestral Coda proposes a last remembering of the act's opening theme, this time on a G keynote, going thus back to the work's, and the Prologue's, opening sound, as in an ample Picardian cadence (see Ex. 60). The concluding bars bring back, like in the end of Act 3, an ostinato cadencing of the motif of the Sphinx, bearing the message of the whole work: we can, and we must, be the masters of our own fate (see Ex. 61).

394

calando ----- *molto tranqu.*
(d = 44)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Act 4, starting at measure 394. The score is written on multiple staves for various instruments and voices. The tempo markings "calando" and "molto tranqu." are present at the top. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The instruments listed on the left include Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Snare Drum, Cymbal, Harp, and Violoncello. The vocal parts are labeled "Eumenides" and "Hero".

Ex. 60. Enescu, *Œdipe*, Act 4, first three bars after [394]. (see Enescu 2017)

560

sost. (1256)

molto lungo

Gr. fl. 1, 2, 3, 4

Hr. 1, 2

C. a.

Cl. 1, 2, 3, 4

B. 1, 2

CB. 1, 2

Trp. 1, 2, 3, 4

Trb. 1, 2, 3

Tuba Ki. (2)

Tuba B.

Tuba CB.

Drum 1

Gr. C.

Tam-tam

Cymb. 1

Hrp. 1 & 2

Piano

Celesta

Harmonium

Vn. 1, 2

Altos. (Violins)

1st V. solo.

2nd V.

C.B. (Cello)

Fin de l'acte 4 et de l'œuvre

George Enescu

Enescu

~ le 27 avril 1931 ~

Ex. 61. Enescu, *Cedipe*, Act 4, final page. (see Enescu 2017)

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