INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or “target” for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is “Missing Page(s)”. If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in “sectioning” the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from “photographs” if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of “photographs” may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

University Microfilms International
300 North Zeib Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106 USA
St. John’s Road. Tyler’s Green
High Wycombe, Bucks, England HP10 8HR
BAUGHMAN, Gordon Shepherd, 1946-
THE TEN PRELUDES FOR UNACCOMPANIED
VIOLIN, OP. 35 BY EUGÈNE YSAŸE

The Ohio State University, D.M.A., 1976
Music

Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106

© 1976

GORDON SHEPHERD BAUGHMAN

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
THE TEN PRELUDES FOR UNACCOMPANIED VIOLIN, OP. 35 BY EUGÈNE YSAËE

DOCUMENT

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Gordon Shepherd Baughman, B.A., M.M.

* * * * * *

The Ohio State University

1976

Reading Committee:

Dr. Robert Hare
Dr. Burdette Green
Dr. Norman Phelps

Approved By

Advisor
Department of Music
To Christopher Kimber and Joseph Gingold, my Teachers.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of my committees throughout the program for their help and encouragement. I wish to extend special thanks to Dr. Burdette Green and Dr. Norman Phelps for the generous amounts of time that they have given to make this paper possible. In addition, I express my thanks to Jody Williams and Steve Hannan for their kind help in preparing this paper.
VITA

September 19, 1946 .............................. Born--Columbus, Ohio
1969 ........................................................ B.A. Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana
1970-1976 ............................................. Teaching Associate, School of
Music, The Ohio State University,
Columbus, Ohio
1973 ........................................................ M.M., The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Performance

Studies in Violin.  Professor Christopher Kimber
Studies in History.  Dr. Keith Mixter
Studies in Theory.  Dr. Harold Luce
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ............................................... iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA ................................................................ iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES ................................................. vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE. ............................................................... 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. BIOGRAPHY .......................................................... 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE PERFORMER-COMPOSER .............................. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE PRELUDES .................................................. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their Origin and Purpose ....................................... 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Discovery and Editing ..................................... 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. THE &quot;SQUELETTES GRAMMATIQUES&quot; .......................... 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION ....................................................... 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Importance of Ysaïe in the Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Modern Left-Hand Violin Technique ...................... 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Place of the Preludes in the Etude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature of the Instrument ................................. 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. ........................................................................ 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. ........................................................................ 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY ....................................................... 71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure I. Letter of 1-26-1976 from Antoine Ysaye to the Writer. 58

Figure II. Autograph from a copy of Antoine Ysaye's *Etudes Biographique* presented to the Writer. 60

Figure III. Note of 3-9-1976 from Antoine Ysaye to the Writer. 62

Figure IV. Letter of 3-18-1976 from Schott Frères to the Writer. 64

Figure V. Note of 3-23-1976 from Antoine Ysaye to the Writer. 66
PREFACE

Though few violinists are aware of the existence of Dix Préludes pour Violon seul by Eugène Ysaÿe, those who know the work regard it as something of an enigma: a musically eccentric, extremely difficult set of etudes on the intervals from unison through the tenth. The preludes are assembled from a series of thirty-three brief exercises which are among the few legible remains of a projected pedagogical work left incomplete at the time of Ysaÿe's death in 1931. The work was discovered and recently reconstructed from notebooks.

There has been a growing renewal of interest in the many and varied compositions by Ysaÿe and his evident contributions to the development of modern violin technique. His Six Sonates pour Violon seul, op. 27 are now available to American audiences through recordings and recital performances, and they have long been regarded as pedagogical staples in the studios of master teachers such as Ivan Galamian and Ysaÿe’s student Joseph Gingold in the United States, and A. I. Yampolsky and David Oistrakh in the Soviet Union. In spite of the renewed interest in the sonatas, the preludes continue to be neglected by students and teachers. In a recent letter to me (see Appendix A, Figure I), Antoine Ysaÿe, son of the violinist and president of Fondation Ysaÿe in Brussels, stated that he knows of no commentary published on the Dix Préludes, other than that contained in the Schott edition of the work. He also stressed the importance of making known the relationship between
the sonatas and the preludes. The primary purpose of this paper is to clarify this relationship and to consider the contributions of the Dix Préludes to the etude literature of the instrument.

In addition, this study takes advantage of the detailed record of Ysaïe's approach to the problem of left-hand technique which the preludes contain. This will help to sharpen the focus of our historical perspective in regard to the true place of Eugène Ysaïe in the development of modern violin technique.
In recalling the impressions of his youthful years at the turn of the century, famed pianist Artur Rubinstein wrote:

The Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaïe was my idol. Accustomed as I was to the ascetic restrain and nobility of Joachim, who seldom used a vibrato, the exuberance and sensuousness of this Belgian lion simply overwhelmed me.¹

That a violinist and not a pianist should have been Rubinstein's idol may seem odd, but not so to anyone familiar with the enormous prestige and influence enjoyed by Ysaïe at the height of his powers.

Born in Liège, the center of the great Belgian school of violin playing, on July 16, 1858, Ysaïe began study of the instrument at age four with his father Nicholas, conductor of a local theatre orchestra. At seven, he entered the Liège Conservatory where he studied with Désiré Heynberg, a teacher with whom he had little rapport. Consequently, he left the conservatory and resumed study with his father. The lack of extensive conservatory training during his early years may to some extent account for the great originality of his playing. Of his work under his father, Ysaïe later said:

¹Artur Rubinstein, My Young Years (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), P. 32.
It was my father who really taught me to play the violin. Though his manner was rough and his hand heavy, without him I should never be where I am today. Rodolph Massart, Wieniawsky, and Vieuxtemps of course opened new horizons for me in the realm of technique and interpretation, but it was my father who taught me how to make my instrument sing.2

The young Ysaÿe's career was launched under circumstances resembling the scenario of a movie script. The renowned virtuoso Henri Vieuxtemps was strolling past the home of the Ysaÿe family when he heard his own Fifth Concerto impressively rendered by the fourteen-year-old Eugène. Subsequently, Ysaÿe was readmitted to the conservatory through Vieuxtemps' influence. He began to study under Theodore Radoux and then under the famous Rodolph Massart, former teacher of the renowned Wieniawsky, and later teacher of Fritz Kreisler.

Wieniawsky (1835-1880) later tutored Ysaÿe in Brussels, and in 1876 he began work with Vieuxtemps in Paris. It is "À mes Maîtres Vieuxtemps et Wieniawski in memorium" that the Dix Préludes are dedicated, but undoubtedly Vieuxtemps played the more important role in establishing the young violinist's career. Through Vieuxtemps' efforts, Ysaÿe was introduced to many of the greatest musical personalities of the day such as Anton Rubinstein, Camille Saint-Saëns, and César Franck. He later became closely associated with Franck as disciple and interpreter.

In 1879, due to the financial difficulties of his family, Ysaÿe temporarily abandoned plans for a concert career and accepted the

---

position of concertmaster of a Berlin beer-hall orchestra under the
direction of its impresario, Benjamin Bilse. The orchestra engaged
some of the greatest artists of the day, somewhat like the Pops Concert
series of the Boston Symphony today. Consequently, Ysaïe had further
opportunities to meet and hear other great artists. He was also given
opportunities to perform as soloist and conductor.

In 1882, Anton Rubinstein persuaded the young artist to leave
Berlin and accompany him on a concert tour of Norway and later Russia.
Rubinstein was to become another major force in shaping the young vio-
linist's personality. Just as Artur Rubinstein was one day to regard
Ysaïe as his idol, in later years Ysaïe was to say of Anton Rubinstein
"He was truly my master of interpretation."3

In 1883, Ysaye set off for the French capital where he became one
of the entourage of devoted admirers of César Franck: Chausson, d'Indy,
and Fauré among them. Although at that time there was little interest
in Franck's music, Ysaye began a life-long effort to make known the
work of that composer.

Another composer with whom he was to become closely associated was
Camille Saint-Saëns. Ysaye and a cellist, Joseph Hollman, often visited
the composer, "...who would play his trio with them or advise Eugène
as to the interpretation of his Third Violin Concerto..."4 one of
Ysaye's favorite works, which he performed frequently.

3Antoine Ysaye and Bertram Ratcliffe, Ysaye..., p. 24.
4Ibid., p. 40.
The 1884 premier performance in Paris of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* marked the beginning of yet another strong influence on the young violinist's musical personality. In a letter to a friend he wrote:

> Never has any music, even that of Bach or Beethoven, had such an effect on me. I was completely submerged by it. I went back to my hotel as though drunk and began to undress automatically. My heart, my mind, all that is conscious or unconscious in me, was under the spell of that ecstatic music, so tragic and yet so tender, inspired by the death of the two lovers....It was whilst taking off my boots that I suddenly returned to earth. I had been soaring in ethereal regions and now there before my eyes was a pair of boots. It was too much. I picked them up and flung them in the fire.5

Such prose (and such behavior) is excessive or theatrical to us. But it should be remembered that this was the age of Sarah Bernhardt and Anton Rubinstein: the age of the Artist, when grand and romantic passions and gestures were part of the public life-style of performers both on and off stage.

Ysaïe's career as a major artist began in 1885 when Saint-Saëns arranged for him to appear as soloist at one of the important *Concerts de Colonne*. He performed works by Lalo and Saint-Saëns to great acclaim by the audience and critics. Numerous engagements ensued, and a concert career began that was to last almost thirty years. By the turn of the century, he had earned the reputation of being the world's greatest violinist.

The following year, 1886, was also to mark several important events in Ysaïe's life. On September 28, he married Louise Bourdeau de Courtrai, the daughter of an officer in a Luxemburg garrison. The

5Antoine Ysaïe and Bertram Ratcliffe, *Ysaïe...*, pp. 40-41.
marriage celebration included the first performance of the now-famous violin sonata of César Franck, a wedding present from the composer. This was to be the first of a long list of major works premiered by and/or dedicated to the violinist. Shortly before his marriage, Ysaïe had been appointed professor at the Brussels Conservatory, where he began his long career as a distinguished teacher of many celebrated artists. 1886 was also the year that he organized his highly successful quartet with Mathieu Crickboom, second violin; Leon Van Hout, viola; and Joseph Jacob, cello.

In 1889, he expanded the range of his tours to include Germany, Austria, Italy, and England to ever-increasing acclaim. The year 1890 included a second highly successful tour of Russia.

Ysaïe had made attempts at composition as early as 1862, but he later destroyed most of these early works, considering them too derivative of the works of Vieuxtemps and Wieniawsky. In 1892, Ysaïe began to compose once again, this time in a new form: the poème. It should be noted that this was prior to the creation of the famous Poème of Chausson, composed for and, to some extent, by Ysaïe. Joseph Szigeti relates in his autobiography, With Strings Attached, the following anecdote:

There can be no doubt in the mind of any violinist who had the good fortune to hear Ysaïe in his great days that the solo exposition in Chausson's Poème with those typically Ysaïean sinuous double stop passages across the strings could never have been written but for the inspiration - and probably the collaboration - of Ysaïe. I was confirmed in this feeling when by chance I met David Holguin, a pupil of Ysaïe. He told me how, one morning in class in Cincinnati, André de Ribeauville asked Ysaïe about the genesis of this particular passage, saying "It sounds as if you had written it yourself."
To which Ysaye replied with a smile: "Mais oui, that is precisely what I did - on Chausson's framework." 6

Three pieces composed in 1892 were the Poème élegiaque, op. 12; Scène au rouet, op. 13; and the Chant d'hiver, op. 15. These works already show the modal and whole-tone harmonies of the later works of the master. It is interesting to note that this was also the year during which Debussy was creating the string quartet that received its first performance the following year by the Ysaye Quartet. The close relationship between Ysaye and Debussy is discussed in the next chapter.

After a highly successful tour of the United States in 1894, the violinist returned to Brussels to found, the following year, the now-legendary "Concerts Ysaye," a symphonic society featuring the greatest conductors and soloists of the day. Among the conductors were Nikisch and Weingartner; the pianists included Paderewski, Busoni, Saint-Saëns, and Cortot; and among the string soloists were Casals, Dreisler, Thibaud, and Capet. The society also introduced numerous works by little-known Belgian and French composers of the day. And the following year marked the premier performance by Ysaye of the above-mentioned Chausson Poème in Nancy.

In 1898, Ysaye made his second triumphal tour of the United States, where he gave over one hundred concerts. He was offered the post of permanent conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, to succeed Seidl, but refused the position to return to Europe. From this point until the year 1914, Ysaye was the most sought-after violinist in Europe and America.

In 1914, the outbreak of the war forced Ysaïe to leave his villa La Chanterelle in Le Zoute and flee to London, where he gave numerous performances to benefit Belgian charities. Two years later, at the request of his friend Queen Elizabeth of Belgium, the violinist returned to the Belgian front to play for the troops stationed there.

At the end of 1916, Ysaïe returned to the United States for the seventh time. The following year, he became the conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, where he enhanced the high standards of performance that still characterize that organization. During this period, he introduced to the American public the then-little-known scores of such composers as Debussy, Schoenberg, Scriabin, and Ravel.

It was also at this point that he returned to teaching. A list of some of his students gives indication of his influence on the development of violin playing in this country. Among those that studied with him in Cincinnati, or subsequently in Europe, are David Mannes, concertmaster of the New York Symphony and founder of the Mannes School; Nicolai Sokoloff, founder of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra; Joseph Gingold, the distinguished teacher and former concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell; André de Ribaupierre, well-known teacher at the Eastman School in Rochester; and violist, William Primrose, who Ysaïe persuaded to concentrate on the viola, rather than on the violin.7

---

In 1922, at the request of Queen Elizabeth, Ysaÿe returned to Belgium to resume his positions as Maître de Chapelle at the Belgian Court and the director of "Les Concerts Ysaÿe." It is also at this time that he devoted himself more and more to composition by accomplishing the works which had been germinating in his mind in London and in Cincinnati.®

Ysaÿe's monumental Six Sonatas pour Violon Seul, op. 27 were composed in 1924. Each sonata was dedicated to a contemporary violinist; Szigete, Thibaud, Enesco, Kreisler, Crickboom, and Quiroga respectively. This great work is his violinistic testament. Antoine Ysaÿe cites 1922 as also the year of the genesis of the sketches of the Quarante Préludes sur les Intervalles from which the Dix Préludes were later realized.®

After many years of living the life of the bon vivant, having "burned the candle at both ends," as he later wrote to Fritz Kreisler, his age began to catch up with him. As early as 1900, he had been diagnosed as being diabetic, but he continued to live the good life of the gourmet and the connoisseur. In 1929, his health finally gave way, and a gangrenous boil on his leg made amputation necessary.

During his convalescence, his attention turned to an opera scenario which he had outlined in his youth. The subject was the sad exploitation of coal miners, whose children had been his childhood companions. The result was the opera Pier i Houyeu, with a text written in his own Walloon dialect. It was performed for the first time on March 4th, 1931 in Liège, with Queen Elizabeth in attendance. Unable to attend the


®Ibid., p. 25.
performance himself, Ysaïe listened to the performance by radio in Brussels. According to his son Antoine:

At the end, through the applause, the audience could be heard calling for the composer, and a voice was heard announcing: "You will now hear the voice of Ysaïe," and (through specially-installed loudspeakers) Ysaïe's voice, a little weak, a little trembling, was indeed heard tendering his thanks from his sick-room, whilst a portrait of him was projected onto a screen in the theatre.  

The opera was performed a few weeks later in Brussels on April 25th, with the composer in attendance. This was Ysaye's last public appearance.

On May 12th, 1931, Antoine Ysaye greeted a young violinist at the door of the master's house. His name was Phillip Newman, and he had come to play for the composer his Fourth Sonata, dedicated to Kreisler. He was quietly led to the landing outside the room where the great violinist lay dying. As Antoine signalled, the young violinist began to play:

...the dying man tried to raise himself, straining to catch every shade of expression. Then came the last chord, and in the silence which followed he said: "Splendid...the finale just a little too fast." He never spoke again.

Thus, Ysaye ended his life as romantically as he had lived it.

---

10 Antoine Ysaye and Bertram Ratcliffe, Ysaye..., p. 151.
11 Antoine Ysaye and Bertram Ratcliffe, Ysaye..., p. 153.
CHAPTER II
THE PERFORMER-COMPOSER

Ysaye may be the last major violinist to devote himself to serious composition of large-scaled works. After him, Kreisler continued to compose his charming little concert pieces; and serious composers who were also violinists, such as Ysaye's student Ernest Bloch, continued their work. However, we must return to the major nineteenth-century virtuosi, such as Ysaye's teachers Vieuxtemps and Wieniawski, to find great violinists who also composed large-scaled works. Nevertheless, there exists a significant difference between Ysaye and most of the great violinist-composers of the nineteenth-century. Virtuosi such as Paganini and Wieniawski created compositions which were primarily intended for their own use on the concert stage. With the exception of the poèmes of the 1890's, most of Ysaye's important compositions were created after his retirement from the concert stage. In order to find a major violinist who also composed an opera we would have to return to the time of Louis Spohr (1784-1859), another figure who successfully combined the roles of conductor, composer, and violin virtuoso and teacher.

For some extraordinary reason that no-one has adequately explained, reference works rarely credit Ysaye with having composed anything but six violin concertos; and yet there are over sixty works in existence, most of which have been published. The six concertos were deemed too unoriginal by the composer to even be given an opus number and were
never published! Ysaye actually composed seven concertos, but later he abandoned them. An eighth concerto has been performed and recently published in an edition by Ysaye's grandson (see Appendix A, Figure IV). The numerous works composed by Ysaye in free form for violin and orchestra were regarded by the composer as potential material for several concertos. Following this conception of them, Jacques Ysaye has combined Divertissement, op. 24 and Extase, op. 21, giving rise to a work in the traditional three-movement form of the concerto. The resulting concerto is extremely successful, containing many passages calling to mind the best work of such composers as Ravel and Scriabin.

Ysaye's earliest surviving pieces are typical nineteenth-century salon pieces: mazurkas and fantasies in the styles of Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps. The harmonic and formal characteristics of César Franck and his followers, especially Chausson, exerted a strong influence on his compositions from the 1890's to the end of his life. Specifically, these influences can be seen in Ysaye's frequent use of ninth chords and his fondness for cyclic form.

Another composer whom the violinist met during his second stay in Paris (1883-1886) was Claude Debussy. This meeting was the beginning of a long and mutually rewarding relationship. At the time of their initial meeting, they were both as yet little known names to the general public; but as Ysaye's reputation began to grow, Debussy gladly accepted his friend's growing influence to create a greater audience for his works. On December 19th, 1893, Ysaye's quartet gave the premier performance of Debussy's string quartet in Paris. In an undated letter of the same year to Chausson, Debussy wrote:
The person I was most interested to see there (Brussels) was Ysaïe, whom I called on first. You won't be very surprised to hear that he actually shrieked with joy on seeing me, hugging me against his big chest and treating me as if I were his little brother. After which reception, I had to give him news of everyone and particularly of you, of whom, unfortunately, my only knowledge was from letters. And then music, and music till we went mad with it. That memorable evening, I played in succession the Cinq Poèmes (of Baudelaire), La Damoselle élue and Pelléas et Mélisande... as for Ysaïe, he became delirious. I really can't repeat what he told me! He liked your quartet too and is getting some people to work at it!

Such sessions as the one described above by Debussy gave Ysaïe the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the goals of the avant-garde composers of his day. His relationship with Debussy at this point in their lives was especially close. For example, the Nocturnes, were originally intended to be a work in three movements for violin and orchestra to be performed by Ysaïe. In a letter to the violinist dated September 22nd, 1894, Debussy wrote:

I am working at three Nocturnes for violin and orchestra.... It is, in short, an experiment with the different combinations that can be obtained from one colour--like a study in grey in painting. I hope that this will appeal to you, for the pleasure it might give you is what I am most concerned with. I am not forsaking Pelléas for this--and I must say that, the further I go, the more depressed and anxious I become....2

Debussy's ideas, especially concerning the use of modal and whole-tone

---

2Ibid., p. 61.
scales, later had a strong influence on Ysaïe's own composing. A strong parallel may be drawn between the Dix Préludes and Debussy's Douze Études for piano, and the possible connection between the two projects will be discussed in the next chapter.

Antoine Ysaïe's 1972 catalogue of his father's work includes, along with twelve arrangements and harmonizations of Baroque composers, over sixty compositions. They are divided into the following categories: works for solo violin, two violins, violin and piano, violin and orchestra, two violins and orchestra, viola solo, cello solo, violin and viola duets, cello and piano or orchestra, piano trio, string quintet, quartet and orchestra, string trio, orchestra, and the above-mentioned opera.

Ysaïe's strong interest in composing may explain his life-long crusade to make known the creations of obscure or neglected composers in his work as solo violinist, conductor, and quartet leader. Antoine Ysaïe has compiled a list of over fifty works dedicated to or premiered by his father. In addition to the previously cited works by Franck, Chausson, and Debussy, the list contains works by Saint-Saëns, Fauré d'Indy, Lekeu, Dukas, Busoni, Vieuxtemps, and Kreisler, as well as numerous lesser-known composers. It should be added that many of those now-famous names were practically unknown when Ysaïe first began to perform their music.

Ysaïe's role as performer-composer also served another important historical function. Aside from their intrinsic musical value, his violin

---

compositions, especially the solo sonatas, provide a priceless record of a style of playing which no longer exists. Concerning Ysaïe's historical importance as a performer, Joseph Szigeti has written: "Here was perhaps the last representative of the truly grand manner of violin playing, the living link with Vieuxtemps...." In regard to the sonatas, Szigeti continues:

He was well aware of the importance of his intensely individual double-stop, chord, and "across-the-string sweep" techniques in the history of violin playing.... A glance at some of the pages showed me that here indeed was a work... that would permit later generations to reconstruct a style of playing of which the inadequate Ysaïe recordings give us barely a hint.6

The famous violinist and pedagogue Carl Flesch wrote the following detailed impression of Ysaïe's playing:

...Above all I must try to describe Eugène Ysaïe... the most outstanding and individual violinist I have ever heard.... The taste of the time, which yearned for the synthesis between technical perfection and the greatest intensity of expression... found its complete fulfillment in Ysaïe. His tone was big and noble, capable of modulation to the highest degree.... His vibrato was the spontaneous expression of his feeling, a whole world away from what had been customary until then: the incidental, thin-flowing quiver "only on expressivo notes"; his portamentos were novel and entrancing, his left-hand agility and intonation of Sarasate-like perfection.... There was no kind of bowing technique that did not show tonal perfection as well as musical feeling. His style of interpretation betrayed the impulsive romantic, who was concerned not so much with the printed note-values, the dead letter, as with the spirit that cannot be reproduced graphically.... At the apex of this pyramid of fascinating attributes, however, was an indefinable aura emanating from this dominating personality and drawing everybody irresistibly within its charm....7

---

6Ibid., p. 118.
To anyone familiar with the usually dry and scientific style encountered in most of Carl Flesch's writings concerning violin playing and violinists, the almost rapturous prose of the above passage is something of a surprise. The passage is particularly interesting for our purposes because it isolates one technical specific in which Ysaïe is revealed in his role as innovator: the vibrato.

In Szigeti on the violin, the great violinist recalls "... listening to the beautiful, chaste, close vibrato on his (Ysaïe's) 1912 Columbia U.S.A. recording... Ysaïe's unthrobbing lovely cantilena as I still remember it."8 Thus in the use of the continuous, focused vibrato used as an integral aspect of tone production, rather than as an occasional expressive ornament, Ysaïe was regarded as a pioneer.

Concerning other aspects of Ysaïe's approach to the problems of left-hand technique, more is said in the fourth chapter which examines his fingerings preserved in the Dix Préludes.

---

CHAPTER III
THE PRELUDES

Their Origin and Purpose

In a letter marked: Zoute, April 18th, 1928, Ysaÿe described the genesis of the preludes as follows:

....Depuis quelques mois déjà, je pioche une machine qui me passionne et m'absorbe. J'avais à quelque temps d'ici conçu le projet d'un travail de haute technique moderne se basant sur le jeu des intervalles partant de l'unisson jusqu'à la dixième. Si l'unisson n'est pas un intervalle harmonique, il l'est, au violon, par le commadifférentiel et par le doigté.

Je fais d'abord un squelette grammaticque, un schema, par pair et impair, en employant le meme intervalle des quatre ordres majeur, mineur, diminué, augmenté, et ainsi proposé (c'est un dogme, une loi) je vais, je réalise, je conjoint le tout en un court morceau de musique que j'appelle"prélude" lui-même formé d'exercises différemment rythmés. Comprends-bien: si, par exemple, je m'escrime sur la quinte, ce sera le prélude uniquement, exclusivement fait avec des quintes...

Et je t'assure que ce n'est pas faux, c'est même fort harmonieux et c'est nouveau au moins du côté sonorités.

Ce travail est, je le crois robustement, celui qu'on attend et qui doit venir parce qu'il est émanation directe des fleurs harmoniques du dernier quart de siècle; il vient a son heure parce qu'il est nécessaire au progrès de la virtuosité et de la composition orchestrale.

Je suis en bon voie, la première esquisse s'achève au moment ou je dois repartir. Certes cet ouvrage n'est pas au point, mais j'en suis férû, je tiens le filon et le retravailler, retoucher, polir, sera un plaisir nouveau....


For the last few months, I have been working on a project that obsesses me. Some time ago, I planned a work of advanced modern technique based on the playing of intervals from the unison to the tenth. On the violin, the unison can be considered
an harmonic interval because of fingering and the differential comma.

At first, I make a grammatical skeleton, a schema, according to odd and even numbering, using the same interval in its four different forms: major, minor, augmented, and diminished. With this basic organizing principal in mind, I proceed to unite the whole in a short piece of music which I call “prelude”, itself created from exercises in different rhythms. Understand me well: if, for example, I am working with the fifth, it will be a prelude made exclusively from fifths... And I assure you that the end result is not bad. It is even quite harmonious, and as far as the sonorities go, it is new.

I strongly believe that this is the expected work that is bound to come as a direct emanation of harmonic developments of the past twenty-five years. It appears at the right time, because of a necessity for the advancement of virtuosity and orchestral composition.

I am on the right path; the first sketch is just finished at the moment that I have to leave. Of course, this work is not yet complete, but I am deeply committed to it. To rework it, to retouch and polish it will be a new pleasure.

In addition to this letter, there exists a fragment of an unfinished preface by Ysaïe to the work. It is also published in the Schott edition of the preludes. That portion revised in the author's own hand is as follows:

Il est indubitable que, de tout temps, les conquêtes harmoniques furent à la base des progrès de la technique instrumentale et, particulièrement, de celle des instruments à cordes. En effet, chaque accord nouveau--ou ceux dont l'usage fut long à entrer dans la pratique-- apporte au mécanisme une richesse, un essor un élément d'invention, un intérêt nouveaux; l'apport se partage et tous les domaines de la musique s'enrichissent.

PAGANINI, chercheur, inventeur d'une technique spéciale, suit l'évolution de la musique lyrique italienne de son temps et, sur une harmonie généralement consonante, bâtit tout un système nouveau en utilisant avec une habilité qui tient du prodige les successions rapides de tierces, octaves (doigtées) et dixièmes en doubles cordes...2

---

2Eugène Ysaïe, op. cit., p. 5.
Without question, harmonic discoveries have always provided the basis for the development of instrumental technique, and particularly that of stringed instruments. In effect, every new chord (or those which only gradually came into general usage) brought to instrumental technique a richness, an element of invention, a new interest; every realm of music benefits from this contribution.

PAGANINI, the seeker, the inventor of a special technique, follows the evolution of lyrical Italian music of his time, and builds in a basically harmonically consonant style a new technique with a prodigious capacity for rapid successions of thirds, fingered octaves, and tenths in double-stops...

The specific harmonic developments which are explored from the violinistic standpoint are the modal, whole-tone, and hybrid scales of the impressionist composers. A strong parallel can be drawn between the Ysaïe preludes and the Debussy etudes for piano. It is even possible that the long discussions of Ysaïe and Debussy concerning the latter's works may have provided Ysaïe with the impetus for the creation of the preludes.

The two books of piano etudes were written by Debussy during 1915. According to Edward Lockspeiser: "The Studies do, in fact, present a synthesis of the manifold aspects of Debussy's original and independent conceptions of the piano." They explore the new difficulties which result from the impressionist harmonic innovations as well as new color possibilities of the instrument.

The most striking similarity between the etudes and the preludes is, perhaps, Debussy's titles for the second through fifth etudes: "pour les Tières, pour les Quartes, pour les Sixtes, pour les Octaves." Of special interest in any comparison are the etude and prelude on fourths. Although

etudes on specific intervals were not uncommon, prior to the Debussy and Ysaye works, few make an extensive exploration of the interval of the fourth.

Aside from the similar harmonic idioms of the Debussy etudes and the Ysaye preludes, there exist also thematic parallels. For example, the following passages from the second and fourth exercises from the preludes resemble passages from the ninth Debussy etude, "pour les notes répétées:"

Example I. Eugène Ysaïe, Dix Préludes, 2nd exercise (Tempo) measure 1.

Example II. Ibid., 4th exercise (Allegro assez viv), measure 1.

Example III. Claude Debussy, 9th Etude (Scherzando), measure 10.
Example IV. Ibid., measure 1.

Like the Debussy etudes, the Ysaÿe preludes also explore the possibilities of new sonorities. At the beginning of the first prelude a note by the author states:

A part de quelques très rares exemples-de ci de là le double son d'une corde voisine- je ne vois pas que l'unisson soit entré dans la pratique courante.
Pourant, avec son étrange effet sonore, un peu supernaturel, l'unisson est intéressant et curieux...4

Throughout the preludes, coloristic possibilities are pursued in both traditional and novel ways. There are the usual variety of color effects through the use of harmonics, and pizzicati. In the second prelude, something of a klangfarben effect is created by executing passages that would usually be played on one string in broken double stops in seconds, as in Exercise 6. Nevertheless, the strange sonorities of the successive unisons of the first prelude are the most strikingly original color effects of the set.

4 Eugène Ysaÿe, op. cit. p. 11.

Apart from a very few instances, that of the double stop of an open string with its fingered equivalent on the next string, I do not think that the unison has come into general use. However, with its strange sonority, rather unearthly, the unison in itself is interesting...
Unlike the Debussy etudes, the Ysaÿe preludes should not be regarded as formal compositions, with the exception of the sixth prelude (see Appendix B for formal analysis). They are, as Ysaÿe's letter indicates, a series of exercises realized from scale outlines for pedagogical purposes.

Instead of the traditional analytical approach to the set, I have reduced scale outlines of the passages containing original fingerings using the format of the existing squelettes grammatiques which is also described in the composer's letter, quoted on pages 18-19. I must emphasize that these are presentations of the original fingerings according to a format used in the existing squelette grammaticque fragments. They are not necessarily the complete outlines actually used by Ysaÿe.

The Discovery and Editing

Ysaÿe's studio in Brussels on Avenue Brugmann was reconstructed at the Royal Conservatory of Liège. A gift from the violinist's heirs to his native town, the studio contained a priceless library which the city asked M. Charles Radoux Rogier to catalogue. The exact date of the discovery of the Dix Préludes is not known according to a note from Antoine Ysaÿe to this writer (see Appendix A, Figure IV), but it occurred during 1938-39 when the work of M. Radoux Rogier was carried out. Two notebooks were discovered among the manuscripts. One contained the first
sketch of "40 Exercises" in pencil from which the second notebook containing a manuscript (also in pencil) entitled Treize Préludes was realized. In another letter to this writer, Antoine Ysaïe described the manuscript of the 40 Exercises as "illegible" (see Figure I). Of the thirteen preludes planned by the author, only the first ten were found to have been actually composed. A sketch for the eleventh, bearing the heading "Intervalles mélanges" (mixed intervals), was discovered in such a premature state that it could not be reconstructed. A note in Ysaïe's hand gives the following plan for the final three preludes: "Prélude 11 - libre; Prélude 12 - caprice; Prélude 13 - variations."5

According to the above-mentioned note from Antoine Ysaïe, it was in 1940 that M. Henri Koch, professor of violin at the Royal Conservatory of Liège, was engaged to edit the work for publication in a practical, working format. It was his task to realize the bowings, slurs, fingerings, etc. left in incomplete or abbreviated form by the master. In the resulting edition (Schott, 1949), the printed fingerings are those of Ysaïe; the italicized fingerings are those of Koch. The added performance markings by Radoux Rogier are marked by vertical brackets. Those segments of the original manuscript which were so unclear as to be open to interpretation have been marked by Radoux Rogier with a horizontal bracket. These precautions taken by the editors have made the task of analysing Ysaïe's original intentions considerably less complicated.

---

5 Eugène Ysaïe, op. cit., p. 9.
The complete "squelettes grammatiques" which Ysaïe mentioned were not in the sketchbook or in the notebook containing the manuscript of the preludes. However, fragments of these outlines for intervals of the third, the seventh, and the ninth were discovered in the sketchbook. These have been published in the Schott edition following the corresponding preludes.

Example V. Eugène Ysaïe, 10 Préludes, p. 17.
Example VI. Ibid., pp. 27-8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GAMMES</th>
<th>SCALES</th>
<th>TONLEITERK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ut maj.</td>
<td>G maj.</td>
<td>D Dur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C maj.</td>
<td>C Dur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This fingerings are topical and very practicable.

E. Y.
Example VII. Ibid., p. 33.

GAMMES  SCALES  TONLEITERN

Ut maj.  C maj.  C Dur

Ré maj.  D maj.  D Dur

Fa maj.  F maj.  F Dur

Par tons  Whole tones  Tonweise
To what extent Ysaÿe followed his original intentions regarding the squelettes grammaques as stated in the letter previously quoted on pages 18-19 cannot be determined. The fragments which are available do contain the schema divided according to odd and even fingering, except in the case of the interval of the tenth where alternate fingering would be impossible for most hands because of the great stretching of the fingers involved. However, the fragments do not show the same interval in all four basic forms as described in the same letter.

Ysaÿe's plan of creating the preludes from a series of separate exercises in different rhythms was followed through. The exercises are numbered consecutively from one through thirty-three throughout the set. A plausible explanation for retaining this subdivision of the preludes is that each exercise isolates a particular problem and could be practiced separately, perhaps with more efficient results.

In the same letter, Ysaÿe states emphatically that each prelude will be composed exclusively from one interval. This intention he did not carry through to the end. As early as the third prelude (measure 41) he deviated from his original design and began to incorporate mixed intervals and chords (measure 55). Even the second prelude contains one pizzicato double stop on the minor ninth (measure 17). Nevertheless, he does remain remarkably faithful to his original intentions by making only occasional use of mixed intervals and chords in all but the sixth prelude, which he regarded as the most musically interesting. Perhaps because of his fondness for the interval of the sixth as demonstrated by his extensive use of the interval in most of his violin works, Ysaye was unable to resist the free play of musical ideas which the sixth
prelude suggests. It is the only prelude of the set which is suitable for concert performance.

Aside from the composer's statements regarding his method of realizing the preludes from scale outlines, or "schemas", a comparison of the squelette grammaticque fragments and their corresponding preludes helps to clarify the compositional process used by the master. For example, if we examine the upper line of the schema for the whole tone thirds (Example VIII-a), we can see the outline of the first measures of the third prelude (Example VIII-b).

Example VIII-a. Ibid., p. 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Par tons</th>
<th>Whole tones</th>
<th>In Ganztönen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pair</td>
<td>pair</td>
<td>pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>even</td>
<td>even</td>
<td>even</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schema
Since the fingerings of Ysaye and those of the editor M. Koch are clearly distinguished in the edition, we are able to reduce scale outlines and their corresponding schemas from those passages in the preludes using only the original fingerings.

Fortunately, the preludes contain enough material with the original fingerings to have made possible the deduction of Ysaye's fingerings for scales on all of the intervals from the unison through the tenth, with the exception of the seventh and the ninth. Regarding these latter intervals we have the fingerings contained in the fragments of the original outlines. In many instances, the information has been sufficient to make possible an extensive reconstruction of the original squelette grammatique. Even in those instances where the fingerings for the
intervals were not numerous. I believe that I have been able to construct a cogent picture of the master's approach to the problems of executing those intervals. This data has permitted a consistent reconstruction of Ysaïe's approach to left-hand technique discussed in the next chapter.

The description of the schema in the April 18th, 1928 letter and the fragment outlines suggest that the schema served a dual function. On the one hand, the odd and even fingering represented the traditional approach to the problem of successive double stops, which is different from the fingering which Ysaïe had indicated for the same scale (cf. Example VI). This allowed an immediate comparison of the traditional fingering and Ysaïe's fingering. On the other hand, the schema also provided the opportunity of examining his fingerings for each of the ten intervals in scale outlines at the third (cf. Examples V and VII). The importance of this function is underscored by the instruction accompanying the schema of the third fragment: "à jouer séparément."

In the following examples, I have placed some fingerings in brackets in the scale reductions. Those fingerings in parentheses represent alternate fingerings in Ysaïe's hand in similar passages. Those fingerings in brackets are my estimated fingerings for passages in which one or two fingerings are missing and not readily deducible from the context of neighboring fingerings. I should emphasize that only passages which were extensively fingered were used as sources for the scale reductions. Consequently, only occasional additions were necessary.
The sixth prelude is constructed from whole-tone scales on g-natural and a-flat. Most of the original fingerings are given for the extensive single-stop passage work. Because they are relevant to our general interest, these are reproduced along with the scales in sixths. In order to determine Ysaïe's original fingerings for the whole-tone scale on a-flat, I have used his fingerings for this scale as it appears in measure 15 of his first unaccompanied sonata.1 An interesting artificial scale on a-natural is completely fingered in the sixth measure of Exercise 18. As previously mentioned, a formal analysis of this prelude appears in Appendix B.

Example IX, Eugène Ysaye, Prélude I, unisons

a. Scale in D Minor

b. Schema for Scale in D Minor
c. Whole Tone Scale on E

\[ \text{\textit{diagram of whole tone scale on E}} \]

d. Schema for Whole Tone Scale

\[ \text{\textit{diagram of whole tone scale structure}} \]
Example X. Eugène Ysaye, prélude II, seconds.

a. Scale in C Major*  (To be played very slowly at first and gradually faster.)

* This scale from the sketchbook is reproduced on page 15 of the Schott edition.

b. Schema for Scale in C Major.
c. Whole tone Scale on C*

* This scale from the sketchbook is reproduced on page 16 of Schott edition.

d. Schema for Scale in C Major
Example XI, Eugène Ysaïe, Prélude III, thirds.

a. Scale in C Major

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\[3 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 0 \quad 1 \quad 3 \quad 4\]} \\
\text{\[1 \quad 3 \quad 2\]} \\
\end{align*}
\]

b. Schema for Scale in C Major

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\[3 \quad 1 \quad 2 \quad 0 \quad 1 \quad 3 \quad 4\]} \\
\text{\[1 \quad 3 \quad 2\]} \\
\end{align*}
\]
c. Whole Tone Scale on C*

(From the sketchbook.)

First simple scale, then (whole tone scale):

```
4  J  4  3  4  4  3  4  3  4  4  3  4  3  4  3  4  3
```

* This scale from the sketchbook is reproduced on page 19 of the Schott edition. For the corresponding schema, see example X.
Example XII. Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude IV, fourths

a. Scale in E Major

b. Schema for Scale in E Major
Example XIII. Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude V, fifths

a. Scale in C Major - G. Mixolydian

b. Schema for C Major - G. Mixolydian Scale
c. Scale in E Minor

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Scale in E Minor} & \\
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
1 & 2 & 3 & 0 & 1 & 2 & 2 & 0 \\
\end{array} & \hspace{1cm} \begin{array}{cccccccc}
[3] & 0 & 1 & 2 & 2 & 0 & 1 & 2 \\
\end{array} & \hspace{1cm} \begin{array}{cccccccc}
[1] & 1 & 2 & 2 & 0 & 1 & 2 & 2 \\
\end{array} & \hspace{1cm} \begin{array}{cccccccc}
[2] & 0 & 1 & 3 & 2 & 1 & 0 & 3 \\
\end{array} & \hspace{1cm} \begin{array}{cccccccc}
[3] & 0 & 1 & 3 & 2 & 1 & 0 & 3 \\
\end{array}
\end{align*}
\]

d. Schema for Scale in E Minor
Example XIV. Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude VI, sixths

a. Whole Tone Scale on A-flat

b. Schema for Whole Tone Scale
c. Constructed Scale - Alternating Whole and Half Steps on A-natural

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 \\
1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 \\
\end{array} \]

\[ \begin{array}{cccccccccccc}
3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 & 3 & 4 \\
2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 & 1 \\
\end{array} \]

d. Schema for Constructed Scale
e. Whole Tone Scale on G-natural (single stops)

f. Whole Tone Scale on A-flat (single stops)
Example XV. Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude VII, sevenths*

(From the sketchbook.)

GAMMES  SCALES  TONLEITERN

ull maj.  C  maj.  C  Dur

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paars  amas  gerade

Schema

Impair  od  agende

Sol majeur  C  major  G  Dur

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ré majeur  D  major  D  Dur

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Par-tons  Whole tones  Ganztones

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These fingerings are logical and very practicable.

E. Y.

* This outline fragment from the sketchbook is reproduced on pages 27 through 28 of the Schott edition.
Example XVI. Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude VIII, octaves

a. Scale in D Minor

\begin{align*}
&\begin{array}{cccccccc}
& 0 & 1 & 2 & 0 & 1 & 2 & 1 & 2 \\
\end{array} \\
&\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\end{array}
\end{align*}

b. Schema for Scale in D Minor
Example XVII, Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude IX, ninths*

* This outline fragment from the sketchbook is reproduced on page 33 of the Schott edition.
Example XVIII, Eugène Ysaÿe, Prélude X, tenths

a. Scale in C Major

b. Schema for Scale in C Major
The preceding scale reductions were realized from passages in which Ysaye had marked those intervals with the fingerings indicated. They are not necessarily the only fingerings Ysaye would have used for those scales. A careful examination of these fingerings does reveal a consistent approach to the problems of fingeriing.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

The Importance of Ysaë in the Development of Modern Left-Hand Violin Technique

According to the outstanding Soviet violinist David Oistrakh, I.M. Yampolsky's *The Principles of Violin Fingering* "...embodies the artistic and methodological experience of the Soviet violin school".¹ In the final portion of the book, the author makes the following statement regarding the evolution of modern left-hand technique in violin playing:

If we consider the historical development of the technique of playing musical instruments, we can observe a clearly defined tendency for technical methods of playing to become similar. The history of music gives a number of examples of such simplification which opened up new artistic possibilities for both composers and performers.

If we consider the development of violin fingering method in this light, we can observe that such simplifications, which were connected with the elimination of unnecessary movements in the left hand, were the result of using hitherto underdeveloped technical devices—the contracted position of the fingers, which led to the maximum use of the fourth finger and half-position, the concept of the position as having an extent of a fourth to a fifth, and the use of the even numbered positions...²

²Ibid., p. 129.
The final lines of this quotation provide us with the nucleus of the Soviet authority's views on this matter. In the United States, Ivan Galamian is the most influential violin theorist and teacher. In his Principles of Violin and Teaching, Galamian makes the following statement regarding the development of modern left-hand technique:

In the field of fingerings there have been several developments that have helped to advance the left hand technique as such: (a) more playing in the even numbered positions, (b) the half-step shift, (c) position changes on the open strings, (d) better chromatic fingerings, (e) new types of extensions outside the frame, and, finally (f) a new kind of fingering that is based on extensions of contractions...3

Both of these generalizations have several basic points in common. The statements by Yampolsky and Galamian may be reduced to the following generalization: contemporary left-hand violin technique differs from the practices common through the early decades of this century in the following three aspects--(a) the frequent use of the even-numbered positions, (b) the frequent use of extensions and contractions outside a given position, and (c) the use of extensions, contractions, and half positions as shifting devices. These three elements have brought an evenness and fluidity to modern left-hand technique which was impossible with the approach to fingering generally taken by violinists in the past. A surprising number of editions by nineteenth-century editors are still in print. Their extremely awkward fingerings testify to the servile devotion to the odd-numbered positions by most nineteenth and early

twentieth-century violinists. The Schirmer edition of the Brahms third violin sonata (edited by the nineteenth-century violinist Franz Kreisel) provides a good example of this kind of anachronism. Measures 44 through 47 of the first movement demonstrate the results of this approach at its worst:

Example XIX. Johannes Brahms, Opus 108, 1st movement (Allegro), measures 44-47 of the violin part.

The above passage would be fingered in the following manner if the principles of the extension shift$^4$ were applied:

Example XX. Ibid.

$^4$The term "extension shift" is used in this paper to refer to any shift accomplished through the use of extensions, contractions, or half-step shifts.
Although Ysaïe was a contemporary of most of these editors, a close examination of the fingering reductions of the preceding chapter reveals how far ahead of them he was in his approach to the problems of fingering. **In every example** there is present "(a) the frequent use of the even-numbered positions," and "(c) the use of extensions, contractions, and half positions as shifting devices." Extensions and contractions outside the frame other than the half-step shift are not frequently encountered in scale passages. Their primary function is to facilitate the execution of large intervals in a context of smaller intervals as well as to facilitate the execution of alternating small and large double-stop intervals. Since the preludes are largely created from scale passages on the same interval, there are few passages of this nature in them from which to evaluate Ysaïe's approach to "(b) the frequent use of extensions and contractions outside a given position..."

We do find that Ysaïe applied this principle to those passages where it is relevant:

Example XXI. Eugène Ysaïe, Opus 35, 2nd prelude (Cadenza), measure 8.
These few instances of extensions and contractions outside of the position frame do not constitute sufficient proof that Ysaye had clearly formulated this concept in his mind. However, the third prelude also contains extension passages with the instruction "Laisser le pouce à la 1ère position," "Leave the thumb in the first position." This indicates the use of extension fingering:
Example XXIV. Ibid., measures 21-22.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Laisser le pouce à la 1ère position.} \\
\text{Leave the thumb in the 1st position.} \\
\text{Den Daumen in der 1. Lage lassen.}
\end{array}
\]

The Place of the Dix Préludes in the Etude Literature of the Instrument

In the previously quoted letter in which Ysaye outlined his intentions regarding the form and purpose of the etudes, he referred to the project as "... a direct emanation of the harmonic development of the past twenty-five years." This period was essentially the first quarter of the twentieth-century. Although Ysaye was familiar with the work of Schoenberg and other early twentieth-century composers and conducted their works, the harmonic developments explored in the preludes are basically those of the impressionist composers and the poly-tonal composers such as Busoni and Szymanowski.

The preludes provide the violinist and opportunity for examining the problems of executing double stops from the unison to the tenth in various modal, whole-tone, and hybrid scale patterns. In addition, they provide access to ingenious fingering solutions in accord with the basic principles of modern left-hand technique. In so doing they constitute an ideal preparation for the study of Ysaye's own masterpiece: the six sonatas for unaccompanied violin. They are also an excellent

\[\text{This writer's translation, p. 18-19.}\]
preparation for mastering the solo and orchestral parts of works of the impressionist and poly-tonal composers. The technical difficulties for the left hand peculiar to this period are usually neglected by students and teachers alike. Although there have been subsequent pedagogical works which deal with many of these problems, the Dix Préludes are probably the only work in the etude literature of the violin devoted solely to the problems found in the works of this period. They thus fill what was once an unfortunate void in that body of literature.⁶

In closing, let us consider another statement by the great David Oistrakh:

...like Paganini, Ysaÿe introduced a new era of the violinistic art, enriching the instrument's technical and polyphonic possibilities. The contribution of Ysaÿe's work to the international musical heritage has not been sufficiently emphasized.⁷

⁶For an excellent study of the technical problems in the violin literature from the atonal period to the present, see W. Walters' Technical Problems in Modern Violin Music... (State University of Iowa, 1958), Photocopy, Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1976. It also contains an interesting set of original exercises.

The six unaccompanied sonatas with all of the original fingerings and bowings have long been available to the public. There have been studies of them, such as the Greenspan and Antoine Ysaÿe works, from historical and musicological points of view, but there is yet to appear a detailed study of the fingerings and bowings from the viewpoint of the executant. The six sonatas are Ysaÿe's musical and violinistic testament. Until an exhaustive study of the fingerings and bowings of the sonatas appears, Ysaÿe's full contribution cannot be properly accessed. It is my sincere hope that this study of the preludes may provide an impetus for the realization of a definitive evaluation of the six sonatas.
APPENDIX A.

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING
THE PRESENT DOCUMENT
Figure I. Letter of 1-26-1976 from Antoine Ysaÿe to the Writer.
Dear sir:

Regarding your amiable letter of 5-1-76----There is no commentary on the ten preludes of my father (he wrote 40 of them, but they are practically illegible) other than that by Ysaye himself in the edition in three languages. It is up to you to make known the musicological importance of this work, which constitutes an excellent preparation for the final sonatas. I am sending you a copy of my work in English, and I hope that you will become a member of our association which contains the most eminent masters of the bow.

Sincerely,

Antoine Ysaye
EUGÈNE YSAŸE

À GORDON BANCROFT
avec le souhait de
l'élite pour sa thèse
de l'École des Hautes-
études de Paris.
Violoniste de tous les temps, chef d'orchestre.
Dirigé.

Long live the Fiddler,

Ysaye

23/12/1926

Figure II. Autograph from a copy of Antoine Ysaïe's Etude Biographique... presented to this Writer.
To Gordon Baughman, with the author's wish that it will be read for his doctoral paper in which he will not forget the exalted figure of "the greatest violinist of all time." Casals Dixit.

Long Live the Fiddle,

The Author,
A. Ysaye
2-23-1976
Figure III. Note of 3-9-1976 from Antoine Ysaye to the Writer.
Dear Friend,

The explanations are contained in the edition of the ten preludes, the result of forty sketches which are almost illegible. These are in the museum at Liège. They were among the last works of the master, created between 1928 and 1930. Ysaïe's last work, the opera Pierre the Miner, was written after the operation on his leg in 1929. You should obtain last March's issue of The Strad, which contains an original article by Mr. Sheppard, but which contains some rather serious errors: Ysaïe created the studies during two different periods at Liège, not at Brussels, where he was professor.

Yours Truly,

A. Ysaïe
Monsieur,

En réponse à votre lettre du 2 et., Nous sommes d'accord que vous reproduisez dans votre thèse doctorale, gratuitement, des extraits des "Dix Préludes" de Ysaye.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, nos salutations distinguées.

P. SCHOTT FRÈRES

Figure IV. Letter of 3-18-1976 from Schott Frères to the Writer.
Dear Sir:

In response to your letter of the 2nd of last month, we agree to allow you to reproduce extracts from the Ten Preludes of Ysaÿe.

Sincerely,

for Schott Brothers,
J.J. Junne
Figure V. Note of 3-23-1976 from Antoine Ysaÿe to the Writer.
Dear Sir:

I cannot give you the exact date of the discovery by Mr. Radoux Rogier of my father's manuscript of forty exercises. It all happened sometime during the seven-year period when we were cataloguing the library which was reconstructed and inaugurated in 1938 or 1939. It was at this time that Mr. Radoux Rogier catalogued all that was in the studio. The project took several months, and it must have been around 1940 that he began the work with Mr. Koch, a professor at the conservatory in Liège. The date of the copyright is in the edition.

Cordially,

A. Ysaïe

(The eighth concerto of my father has just been discovered. It has been edited by my son. Next time you will receive remarks by my father himself.)
APPENDIX B.

FORMAL ANALYSIS OF THE
SIXTH PRELUDE
PRELUDE VI

LES SINTES

SIXTHS

SEXTENS

Whole tone on 9th

Ex. 16
Section A

Pianissimo

Ex. 17
Poco più vivo

Sempre animando

Whole tone on 9th

area

W + ab

area

area
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


**D I S S E R T A T I O N S**


**A R T I C L E S**


    "Ysaÿe's Solo Violin Sonatas", Repertoire, vol 1, No. 2, pp. 102-104.


MUSIC


