As a reviewer, my objectives were to explore and reveal to the reader new, untrodden facets of composer Olivier Messiaen that are discussed in the book. Therefore, I highlighted in detail Schloesser's extensive research on Messiaen's mother, Cécile Sauvage, who was neglected by many biographers but emerges as a major writer thanks to his penetrating analysis of her works. I outlined Schloesser's study of synesthesia that places it in its proper historical context and dispels erroneous myths about Messiaen's own synesthesia. The composer's condition resulted from a cultural phenomenon, not a physiological disorder, as is commonly believed.