

How did the Romantic era *hear* the music of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, or Berlioz? What did it make of such pieces as the *Eroica*, the *Fantastic Symphony*, or the eerie song *Der Doppelgänger*? From many different vantage points – some philosophical, some critical, some speculative, some analytic – this volume addresses these fascinating questions.

Twelve authors probe the mind of the Romantic era in its thinking about music. They provide a searching examination of writings by music theorists, critics, aestheticians, philosophers, and commentators from the period 1800–1875. In doing so, they wield new critical tools as well as old, casting fresh light, for example, on familiar problems of musical form by inspecting eighteenth-century rhetoric and nineteenth-century gendered discourse, exploring Schubertian modulation and Wagnerian motive with the insights of cognitive science, reinterpreting the pianistic finger exercise by way of Michel Foucault and *Frankenstein*, and so on. The impact of Hegel and Schelling on music theory occupies an important place, as does that of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics on analysis and criticism. Theorists examined include Antoine Reicha, Gottfried Weber, F.-J. Fétis, and A. B. Marx; critics and commentators include E. T. A. Hoffmann, Robert Schumann, Franz Brendel, and Hans von Wolzogen.

The brilliant group of young historians of theory represented in this volume provides an array of approaches, from detailed music analysis, through close reading of texts, through critical discourse, to philosophical inquiry.

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Preface

IAN BENT

At first sight, the title of this volume contains a paradox. Theory (shorn of its qualifier) seems an unlikely bedfellow to Romanticism: we associate it with well-regulated cultural phenomena – theory and an ordered society exist in a symbiotic relationship. Hence we link theoretic activity with periods such as classical antiquity, the Enlightenment, and the modern era. The Romantic era, on the other hand, strikes us as an age of letting-go, of casting off shackles, of non-regulation.

How much more so, then, the theory of *music* – that least rational of all the arts? We tend to associate music-theoretic activity with the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, the late Baroque and Classical era, and the modern period. Again, the nineteenth century strikes as counter-theoretical. Our late twentieth-century sense of the history of theory has tended to trace a lineage of theorists from Mattheson, Heinichen, and Rameau in the late Baroque, through Marpurg and Koch, to Kirnberger and Albrechtsberger at the end of the Classical period, and another from Riemann, Schoenberg, and Schenker in the early twentieth century, through Hindemith and Messiaen, to Boulez, Babbitt, Boretz, Forte, and Lewin post World War II.

Between these two lineages there appears a cleft. It is as if a major fault-line existed between Albrechtsberger and Riemann, a mighty rift separating Classical theory from modern theory, a rift the contents of which have been displaced sideways or lost in oblivion. That which has been displaced no longer belongs to its own century; it has been annexed (and I have been as guilty as any of doing so!) either to the preceding or to the ensuing period. The formal theories of Reicha, Czerny, and Marx have been attached to the eighteenth century, as a kind of delayed-action audit of Classical form, especially sonata form, while the Sechter writings have been appended to the fundamental-bass theories of Rameau and Kirnberger, as have the Bellermand writings to the contrapuntal theory of Fux. On the other hand, the rhythmic theories of Momigny, Reicha, Marx, and Lussy

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have been construed as adumbrating Riemann's phrase-structure theory, the harmonic theories of Hauptmann and Von Oettingen as forerunners of Riemann's dualism, the melodic theories of Reicha and Marx as foreshadowing Schoenberg's motivic organicism, the modulation theories of Vogler and Weber as anticipating those of Schoenberg, and the reductionism of Vogler and Sechter as harbingers of Schenker's prolongation. Meanwhile, other theoretical ideas – perhaps in some cases because they resisted annexation – were lost sight of: until very recently we thought of Fétis only as a bibliographer and historian, Catel's and Lobe's extraordinarily interesting ideas remain neglected, while the work of others such as Cherubini, Dehn, Jadassohn, Prout, and E. F. Richter (not to mention Marx) is still spurned as *passé*.

What is needed is to look at these writers in their own terms, to see them within the culture of their age, and thus to reappropriate them to the time of which they have been robbed by twentieth-century perspective. The process has in fact been underway for some years. A picture of an autonomous nineteenth-century theory is slowly emerging, like a photographic print in the developing bath. The lead given by Robert Wason and Renate Groth in their studies of Viennese harmonic theory and French theory, and by Carl Dahlhaus, Martin Vogel, Peter Rummenhöller and others, has impelled a new appreciation of several things: that in such men as Georg Vogler, Gottfried Weber, Anton Reicha, François-Joseph Fétis, Adolph Bernhard Marx, Simon Sechter, and Moritz Hauptmann we have major theorists grappling with substantive issues, and in arguably lesser figures such as Carl Czerny, Johann Christian Lobe, Carl Friedrich Weitzmann, and Arthur von Oettingen we have no mere hack writers but men of serious theoretical intent; that nineteenth-century theory as a whole was working through the crucial issues of its day, the issues that occupied also philosophers and aestheticians, acousticians and psychologists, as well as musical practitioners and educationalists; that nineteenth-century theory had a profile all its own, which is not to be forced in procrustean fashion into the configurations of other centuries, but must be appreciated in its own right; hence that to exclude such writers as E. T. A. Hoffmann, Alexander Ulibishev, Wilhelm von Lenz, and Hermann Kretzschmar would be to distort that profile.

Perhaps, then, the paradox of our title is more apparent than real. The present volume certainly contends that coherent music-theoretic activity was engaged in during the Romantic era, and that this activity was serious and substantial enough to deserve our attention now. It therefore represents the new appreciation of nineteenth-century music theory just outlined. Its authors – the editor excepted – are members of a new, young, and extraordinarily intelligent generation of American and British historians of music theory. There is no conformity to their training, as the brief biographies above attest. As a generalization, one could say that all are conversant with the positivistic (as Joseph Kerman has taught us to say) methods of music theory and history. Yet they are familiar, too, with many recent intellectual currents. In particular, readers will detect the stamp of Michel

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Foucault's earlier thinking overtly in several of the chapters; they will find the influence of Saussurian semiology, of Derrida and de Man, of the hermeneutics of Gadamer and Ricoeur, of narratology, of rhetorical theory, and of recent philosophical thinking; they will find some of the chapters informed by new developments in music cognition, and others by the insights of gender criticism. I might add that at least three authors bring extra perspective to their topics by virtue of themselves being composers. This is a diverse group of authors, widely read, comfortable with new thinking and old, and judicious in their use of both.

The volume is structured in three broad sections. Part I, "Cultural and philosophical frameworks," examines ways in which contemporary philosophical and intellectual ideas informed and conditioned the work of music theorists. Leslie David Blasius takes as his field of exploration an object that most writers today shun – the piano exercise, neither accepted into the canon of music theory nor regarded as having intrinsic artistic worth. His article takes a broad temporal view of Romanticism, reaching from Louis Adam in 1805 through Hummel in 1828 to Karl Tausig around 1870, "grounding" the volume as a whole by tracing the roots of nineteenth-century thought deep into the eighteenth century. The chapters by Ian Biddle, Thomas Christensen, and Sanna Pederson form a coherent unit that investigates how German idealist and metaphysical philosophy underwrote thinking about music. Biddle looks at Schelling's ontology and its relation to theories of musical rhythm, phrase, and form; Christensen at Hegel's concept of history and its impact on Fétis's portrayal of the evolution of tonality; Pederson at Hegel's ambivalent aesthetic of music and the rise of an anti-Romantic polemical backlash. As a group, these three chapters chart musical Romanticism in its most prescribed chronology as spanning a half-century from 1800 to around the revolutionary year of 1848.

Pederson's concern with criticism provides a natural link to Part II, "Hermeneutics, analysis, criticism," the three chapters of which have in common a desire to get early nineteenth-century music criticism "out from behind" twentieth-century criticism, which it superficially resembles, and see it in the light of its own contexts, to rediscover its individuality. Brian Hyer takes an anonymous review of the *Eroica* Symphony dating from 1807 and examines it for its awareness (exemplified by Herder) of the cognitive processes of the listener's mind and its concern (exemplified by Schleiermacher) with the composer's intentions, and develops a theory of musical significance (drawing on Lewin and instancing Gottfried Weber) that resides in the listener's subjective experience over time; Ian Bent exemplifies Friedrich Schleiermacher's hermeneutic method through the latter's introductions to the dialogues of Plato, and searches for their influence upon E. T. A. Hoffmann's review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony; and Fred Everett Maus conducts a close reading of Schumann's review of the Berlioz *Fantastic Symphony*, separating out its different "voices," highlighting the oppositions of intersubjectivity and analysis, life and death, and suggesting several contexts within which this extraordinarily complex critique needs to be read.

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Part III, “Rhetoric, metaphor, musical perception,” contains three essays that look back to prototypes that illuminate the ideas of three theorists, and one final essay that rounds the volume out by suggesting an isomorphism between an early nineteenth-century and a mid-twentieth-century concept. Peter A. Hoyt’s chapter shares with the essays of Part II the common endeavor of “getting behind” an accretion of later ideas and revealing something in its own context – in this case Reicha’s presentation of large binary form and neoclassical dramatic theory. Here is one of those instances alluded to earlier in this Preface, in which nineteenth-century theory has been plundered for antecedents to later formulations – in this case Reicha’s diagrams and terminology, forced into the mold of sonata form. The clarified result offers the pristine pleasure of a painting cleaned of varnish and later brushwork. In the next chapter we encounter an authentic description of sonata form, that of A. B. Marx, whose gendered discourse of first and second subject receives a close reading from Scott Burnham, is shown to be a metaphor – a highly charged one, true – for a uniquely complex thematic relationship, and is placed in the context of dualistic notions in contemporary German thought. Thomas Grey’s initial search for the source of *Leitmotif* turns into an intricate disentangling of terminological strands involving metaphors of the maze, the labyrinth, the thread, guiding, and leading – all with evident roots in the Ariadne–Theseus myth – and others of weaving and spinning, fabric design and color, textile, and texture. The chapter culminates with the construction of a cognitive model of motivic listening, which links it to the final chapter, by Janna K. Saslaw and James P. Walsh. Here again metaphors play a large role, this time metaphors such as container, force, and source–path–goal. Contending that “Multiple Meaning” in the theories of Georg Vogler and Gottfried Weber constituted a paradigm shift in the abstracting of pitch relations around 1800, the authors use logic and cognitive science to propose an identity between that concept and aspects of invariance in post-World-War-II music theory.

If there is any one issue with which this entire volume is occupied, it is surely the question as to how the Romantic listener in the early nineteenth century *heard* music – what *went on in his head* as the music flowed by, what she *made of* such pieces as the *Eroica*, the Fifth Symphony, the *Fantastic Symphony*, and Schubert’s haunting song *Der Doppelgänger*, how the nineteenth-century ear perceived relationships of pitch, rhythm, harmony, and melody. Our brilliant young group of writers has tackled this ramified question, directly or obliquely, bringing to bear the methods of history, philosophy, and theory, illuminating it with insights from politics, gender, metaphor, rhetoric, critical theory, narratology, intersubjectivity, cognition, and other methodologies.

Acknowledgments

Six of the chapters in this volume have roots in the International Conference on Nineteenth-century Music held at Surrey University, Guildford (England), on July 14-17, 1994. Those by Ian Bent, Ian Biddle, Scott Burnham, and Fred Everett Maus are revisions of papers delivered on that occasion, whereas that by Peter A. Hoyt is an expansion of the first part of a paper entitled “Anton Reicha’s Accounts of the *grande coupe binaire* in Light of Neo-Classical Dramatic Theory,” the second part of which will be published in revised form elsewhere. These five papers made up a session entitled “Analytical Thought in the Nineteenth Century,” which was chaired by Robert Pascall and took place on the morning of Sunday July 17. Meanwhile, in another hall, a session entitled “Opera Post-1850” was going on simultaneously. Thomas Grey’s chapter is an offshoot of a paper delivered to that session under the title “Leading Motives and Narrative Threads: the Leitfaden Metaphor and the Critical Pre-History of the Wagnerian *Leitmotiv*,” which will appear in the proceedings of the International Congress of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung, “Musik als Text.”

The Surrey Conference was an occasion of a very high order, and its participants will remember with pleasure its sessions, recitals and many other events. Thanks go to the Department of Music of Surrey University and the many conference workers; tribute must be paid particularly to John Rink, who exhibited not only supreme organizational skills but also fine scholarship, and masterly performance at the forte piano. Thanks go also to the journal *Music Analysis* and to the Society for Music Analysis for generously sponsoring the analytical session.

Ian Bent’s paper was committed to the *Indiana Theory Review* before the present volume was conceived. It was therefore first published in a double issue of that journal, volume 16 (Spring/Fall 1995), and is reproduced here with kind permission of the Editor.

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