



more interesting and plausible figure, whose own conception of music as the very grammar and syntax of civic and religious order has (I would argue) never been adequately explored. Such an exploration can only be encouraged and enriched by the materials presented in this volume.

It may seem to many that Fux, like some Orphic figure in early opera, is destined to languish forever in the archive, released on occasion into the bright but transient dawn of an early music festival or CD (or online resource) but otherwise restricted to the scholarly shades of Avernus. The first volume of this catalogue confounds that reading and invites us to make a fresh appraisal of Fux's international significance as an immensely prolific custodian of Habsburg culture and north Italian musicianship alike. It also makes this reader impatient for its successor. Hochradner's approach to the liturgical music, given its central importance not only to Fux himself but to an understanding of his wider significance in early eighteenth-century Europe, will surely make this second volume of acute interest. To that end, one cannot close here without saluting Hochradner's greatly gifted collaborators, Géza M. Vörösmarty, Martin Czernin and Volker S. Weyse, as well as his immediate colleagues in Salzburg, Adriana De Feo, Sarah Haslinger and Kerstin Schmid-Pleschong. One must also congratulate Hollitzer Verlag for having produced such an elegantly designed, beautifully typeset and legible book. 'Johann Joseph Fux cannot be counted among the fortunate in the history of musical reception', Hochradner ruefully concedes in his Introduction (xlv). But this volume, at last, proves otherwise. It is a magnificent achievement.

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MARK HOWARD

DECODING RAMEAU: MUSIC AS THE SOVEREIGN SCIENCE. A TRANSLATION WITH COMMENTARY OF CODE DE MUSIQUE PRATIQUE AND NOUVELLES RÉFLEXIONS SUR LE PRINCIPE SONORE (1760)

Lucca: LIM, 2015

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The *Code de musique pratique* of Jean-Philippe Rameau is not one of the author's most familiar theoretical works. Published towards the end of his lengthy career (Rameau was seventy-six when it appeared in 1760), it lacks the attention-grabbing claims of his earlier theoretical writings such as the *Traité de l'harmonie* of 1722 (which introduced his revolutionary concept of the *basse fondamentale*) or the *Génération harmonique* of 1737 (where his most extensive thoughts on the acoustical generation of harmony through the sonorous body – the *corps sonore* – are developed). The *Code* seems an oddly eclectic work. Consisting of sixteen chapters embedding seven 'methods' of practical pedagogy for accompaniment, composition, singing, melodic embellishment and improvisation (and each subdivided into several dozen 'lessons', 'articles', 'observations' and 'means'), it has a helter-skelter quality that suggests it became a repository for some of Rameau's mature pedagogical reflections. The last-minute addition of a highly speculative addendum on the origins of music and the *corps sonore* entitled *Nouvelles réflexions* tends to support this hunch. Yet tucked away within these two works is a wealth of brilliant observation and thought by Rameau that well deserves the attention of scholars.

We are fortunate that we now have an excellent published English translation of these works thanks to the diligent efforts of Mark Howard. (Kudos also to the Italian publishing firm of Libreria Musicale for such a handsome production of the book.) But this edition is far more than a translation. Howard has provided an extensive introduction and commentary on both texts that is interspersed within the translation. (I will come



back in a moment to consider the wisdom of this intermingling of text and commentary.) Comprising some 650 pages in total, the result is the most exhaustive critical edition of any single one of Rameau's writings hitherto published. Even the *Traité de l'harmonie*, long available in a fine translation by Philip Gossett, has never received the singular scholarly attention that Howard lavishes upon the *Code* and *Nouvelles réflexions*.

As I indicated above, the *Code* is an extremely (and at times infuriatingly) desultory text. While Rameau has never been celebrated as a particularly elegant or disciplined writer, this work seems to suffer particularly from the author's penchant for repetition and for jumping quickly between differing thoughts or observations that seem to occur to him as he is writing. Provocative insights that are mentioned on one page are often left abandoned or undeveloped, only to pop up many pages and chapters later in completely new contexts. Many contradictions in the text or musical analyses are left unresolved. Supposedly Rameau had enlisted the aid of a literary academician named François Arnaud in the preparation of this work (6). This was hardly unprecedented; Rameau often sought the help of prominent scientists and literary figures when writing some of his earlier treatises. But it is hard to see much evidence of any copy editing in the present case.

The full title page of the *Code* as translated by Howard reveals something of the eclectic agenda Rameau had for this treatise:

Code for the Practice of Music, or methods in order to teach Music, even to the blind, in order to form the voice and the ear, for the position of the hand with a technique of the fingers [mécanique des doigts] on the Harpsichord and Organ, for Accompaniment on all Instruments that are susceptible to it, and for the Prelude: With New Reflections on the sonorous Principle (22).

With the exception of the 'New Reflections' that are appended at the end, Rameau's *Code* seems to be largely a compilation of sundry essays on musical practice. But not all of these subsections are given equal treatment. While the lengthy method on composition (comprising chapters 8 to 14), along with its ample musical examples, covers some ninety-seven pages of treatment in Howard's translation, and the method of 'accompaniment' (chapter 5) totals fifty pages of text and musical examples, the method for 'forming the voice' receives only seven pages (chapter 3), as does a method 'for improvisation' (chapter 16). For readers who know some of Rameau's earlier writings, it will become clear that he is often developing theoretical ideas and problems addressed in some of his previous treatises (particularly on the question of the fundamental bass in various musical contexts). But as we shall also see, there are many new ideas as well.

Howard points out correctly that much in the *Code* seems to have been anticipated in an unpublished manuscript Rameau produced some time in the 1740s entitled 'L'art de la basse fondamentale' (49–50) that I reported on in an article published thirty years ago (Thomas Christensen, 'Rameau's "L'Art de la Basse Fondamentale"', *Music Theory Spectrum* 9 (1987), 18–41). It is too bad Howard was not able to compare the two works for the present study. An edition of 'L'Art' has long been available in a French doctoral dissertation (Isabelle Rouard, "L'art de la basse fondamentale" de Jean-Philippe Rameau: édition scientifique et critique, commentaire musicologique et mise en perspective théorique et pratique', Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2001). But based on my own reading of the manuscript, along with a redaction of it that was published by Pietro Gianotti in 1759, I believe that the *Code* far exceeds both works in ambition and detail. We can thank Rameau's many altercations with the *encyclopédistes* for spurring him to rethink and develop some of the most fundamental problems of his music theory.

Despite this omission, the reader will be grateful for Howard's numerous elucidations of the text. He has made extraordinary efforts to track down some of Rameau's sources and antecedents in French music theory, tracing and comparing many of his arguments to earlier texts that he wrote, and even citing examples from his many keyboard or operatic works that aptly illustrate some of the arguments. It seems that there is scarcely a single paragraph from Rameau's texts that Howard does not comment upon.

But this plenitude of commentary comes at a cost. So extensive is this scholarly apparatus that it threatens, literally, to engulf the text. For, as mentioned earlier, Howard intersperses his commentary between chapters



of Rameau's original text. The result is a see-saw effect of reading Rameau, and then Howard's reflections on the same passages (often by extensively quoting or rephrasing text and musical examples that had already appeared a few pages earlier). But it is hardly a balanced dialogue. By my count, the full translated text of the *Code* in this publication comes to 176 pages. Howard's introductory material and commentary, however, tally 382 pages – far more than double the length of the original text. Ultimately, then, the publication is really two separate texts: a scrupulous translation of two of Rameau's late texts of music theory, and a wide-ranging monograph by Mark Howard on Rameau's theoretical thought. To that extent, it marks a new and important contribution to the growing literature on Rameau's music theory.

One can legitimately take differing views of Howard's planning. On the one hand, one might well wish for a simpler, cleaner translation of the text uncluttered by too much editorial intervention (comparable to Gossett's eminently practical translation of the *Traité*, with its crisp introduction and some selective footnotes). I personally would have preferred something closer to this approach, leaving readers the liberty of drawing their own conclusions, and then having Howard's own interpretation and criticism of the text placed in a separate monograph or clutch of scholarly articles. On the other hand, with a text that is as difficult and desultory as the *Code* is, one can make a strong case – as does Howard – that the text needs the intervention of a strong expositor. Still, considering the asymmetry between the text and commentary, it is often Howard's voice that emerges as dominant. And to be fair, Howard did not disguise that; the title of this publication, after all, makes it clear that he is the author 'decoding' Rameau's text.

One of Howard's major claims in his reading of Rameau's *Code* is that its title should be taken quite literally. He argues that the text is a 'body of laws' (à la the 'Code Napoléon') that codifies the proper practice of music (22). Throughout the text, Howard continually highlights in footnotes certain words and phrases employed by Rameau to reinforce their legislative or juridical underpinnings. There is some truth to this reading, though I do think Howard sometimes exaggerates matters by selectively homing in upon certain definitions culled from the Dictionary of the Academy. But many of the terms Howard singles out (rules, transgressions, laws, dominion, rights, reign, liberty, licence and the like) can be found in many of Rameau's earlier writings, not to mention in many other texts of *musica practica* that seek to regulate and codify various parameters of musical practice for pedagogical purposes. It seems the claim about the juridical nature of the text was made by several commentators who read an earlier prospectus advertising the imminent publication of the *Code*; nowhere that I have seen did Rameau specifically claim that the text should be read in this way.

Given how flexible Rameau is in his invocation of theoretical precepts, as well as his continual deferral to musical instinct and the ear, somatic motions of the keyboardist and general notions of good taste (and I'll return to these issues in a moment), I don't think he can be said to have written an exemplar of musical legislation, or at least one that would stand up in any court of law that I could imagine. A code, we should keep in mind, can be more suggestive of civility, decorum and *bienséance*, as in a code of conduct (see, for instance, the classic study by Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, volume 1: *The History of Manners* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969)). If Rameau is indeed acting as a supreme 'legislator' of musical practice, as Howard proposes, he hardly seems to be doing so in a very effective way.

Still, there is no doubt that the *Code* represents Rameau's most ambitious attempt to reconcile his many theoretical ideas with a musical practice that he had mastered in his final two decades as France's most celebrated composer. His treatise is filled with musical examples that illustrate in far more detail many of his most subtle theoretical insights – and in many cases qualify them. And for those readers who are only familiar with a few celebrated examples of analysis culled from his earlier writings (such as his analysis of Lully's *Armide* monologue, the subject of a famous debate with Rousseau), the wealth of detail in these examples will be a revelation. Of the many musical examples contained in the thirty-odd engraved plates appended to the *Code*, the vast majority contain a fundamental-bass analysis that is discussed by Rameau in his text. (A bemusing result of Howard's book is that the reader is continually reading a commentary on a commentary on a musical example.)

Rameau's fundamental-bass analyses in the *Code* testify to some remarkable developments of his theoretical and pedagogical ideas. One innovation that struck me was in the 'method' on accompaniment.



Most earlier manuals of keyboard accompaniment that were published in France (or at least within the half-century preceding the *Code*) would begin with a simple inventory of diatonic harmonies above the scale and their normal figuring that was called the ‘rule of the octave’ (*règle de l’octave*). Rameau himself had done this in the fourth book of accompaniment in his *Traité de l’harmonie*, albeit while also trying to show how the rule of the octave was generated ultimately by the fundamental bass that he tried to place underneath it. As a simple and easily memorized harmonization of a diatonic scale, the *règle* was a bedrock of the Italian partimento keyboard tradition that had already begun to infiltrate French practice in the eighteenth century.

It is thus something of a surprise that the first substantial harmonic progression that Rameau assigns to the aspiring performer in the *Code* is not the *règle*, but a sequence of seventh chords descending by the diatonic circle of fifths (104). Rameau calls this an ‘enchainment des dominants’. Ironically enough, in the very year that the *Code* appeared, another manual of keyboard accompaniment came out in England, by the Italian composer Giorgio Antoniotto, that used the same sequence of seventh chords descending by fifths as a foundation for its pedagogy. Antoniotto called the sequence a ‘skip of the cadence’. And while it participated in the same partimento genealogy as the *règle*, Antoniotto’s treatise also attempted to integrate Rameau’s fashionable fundamental bass. (A reproduction of this treatise has recently been released, and would make for an interesting comparison with Rameau’s *Code*: Giorgio Antoniotto, *L’arte armonica, or a Treatise on the Composition of Musick* (London: John Johnson, 1760; facsimile edition, ed. Deborah Burton, Turnhout: Brepols, 2017).)

This sequence of seventh chords turns out to be a brilliant means of introducing another innovative aspect of the *Code*: the ‘*mechanique des doigts*’ – technique of the fingers, as Howard translates it. While Rameau had introduced this notion in a much earlier treatise on accompaniment (*Dissertation sur les différentes Méthodes d’accompagnement pour le clavecin, ou pour l’orgue, avec le Plan d’une nouvelle Méthode, établie sur une Mécanique des doigts, que fournit la succession fondamentale de l’Harmonie* (Paris: Boivin, 1732), which Howard, I should add, effectively brings into his commentary to contrast with the *Code*), it is in the latter work that the notion takes on a real epistemological function.

Essentially, Rameau teaches the performer through this sequence how to ‘feel’ his way through each successive chord change with the preparation and resolution of the dissonances that ‘enchain’ the whole progression. The resolution of sevenths in alternating voices becomes a game of the fingers (*‘jeu de doigts’*). At the same time, Rameau urges the performer to be ever-sensitive to the role of the leading note (*‘note sensible’*), as it is the compass that orients us to the ‘reigning’ tonic scale degree. (He even uses a special figured-bass signature of a cross (+) to indicate this.) The keyboard player is instructed to learn to ‘sense’ with his fingers the volatility of these tendency tones as they seem drawn to their notes of resolution as if pulled by some invisible force. Both the placement and the motion of the fingers thus become – after much practice – something the player does mechanically, as if by instinct. This was also how Rameau could claim that his new method would allow a blind performer to learn to play the keyboard simply by developing a sensibility of touch.

All this constitutes a remarkable change for a theorist who had made his name as one of the most cerebral rationalists in an age that was filled with many like-minded Cartesians. At points in the *Code*, he seems to insist that the performer dispense with any active thought and rationalization of what he is doing. ‘We should not think about that’, Rameau advises the student who confronts with perplexity a surfeit of possible choices in learning to accompany, ‘since the fingers are going to do it all’ (105). ‘Without being occupied with the rules, all possible progressions are executed perfectly and promptly’, he elsewhere tells us, emphasizing that ‘These fingers prepare and resolve all dissonances themselves’ (37).

This is not to say that Rameau has given up the kinds of theoretical reflections that filled his many earlier publications, or that performance should be done somnambulistically. Nor does it mean that he now allows violations of all his theoretical formulations so arduously constructed over the previous forty years and some six major treatises on harmony. Instead, this shows Rameau’s growing conviction that the body – the fingers guided by the ear – can develop an innate sensibility to the laws of harmony that he had already laid out



through rational induction, but which is inculcated through our natural exposure and receptivity to the *corps sonore*. It is a natural extension of his growing acceptance of Lockean ideals that he had picked up through his interaction with the *encyclopédistes*, particularly Diderot.

Speaking of Diderot, I was sorry not to see Howard explore more deeply Diderot's influence on the *Code*, considering that Diderot was one of the few *philosophes* to retain a largely favourable opinion of Rameau and his theoretical aspirations to the end of Rameau's life. (On the importance of Diderot for Rameau's mature thought see my chapter 'Diderot, Rameau, and Resonating Strings: Evidence of an Early Collaboration', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, volume 323 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 56–94.) In particular, I suspect that Rameau's seemingly peculiar interest in the teaching of the blind that pops up in certain places in the *Code* was one inspired by Diderot's speculations on the epistemology of blindness and the remarkable case of the blind English geometrician Nicholas Saunderson (1683–1739) in his 'Lettre sur les aveugles à l'usage de ceux qui voient', published in 1749. In a later dialogue ('Le Rêve de d'Alembert' from 1769), Diderot probed the nature of somatic action (in particular by automatons) that is also suggestive of Rameau's mature thoughts on the mechanics of finger motion on the keyboard. In this case it may well have been Rameau who was the instigator of Diderot's speculations. Regardless, the result of Rameau's somatic pedagogy is that the harmonic progressions in the *Code* display remarkable flexibility.

In the 'Method on Composition', which comprises the next substantial section of the treatise, Rameau shows a far more ambitious palette of harmonies and their progressions than in earlier treatises. Among other things, Rameau introduces for the first time the Neapolitan and augmented-sixth chords, to the former of which he gives the quaint label of 'La pleureuse'. His coverage of modulation is also far more ambitious and insightful than in previous treatises. In particular, his subtle distinctions between a 'reigning' tonic and subsidiary tonics show a notable advance in his notion of key hierarchy and enchainment. (In a later century, we would call the concept simply 'tonality'.) Of course some of these advances can be attributed to changes of style that Rameau was ever alert to in the 1750s. But I suspect they are also a result of some significant meditations on the ontology of the *basse fondamentale*.

To be sure, fundamental-bass harmony as he first described it in the *Traité* some forty years earlier remains a key regulative concept. But in example after example, Rameau seems to be less dogmatic in assigning roots to chords (*sons fondamentals*), and allows more unorthodox successions in the fundamental bass that he would have proscribed in earlier treatises. The best example of this in the *Code* is his freer treatment of suspensions. Whereas in earlier treatises, Rameau would almost always have explained a given suspension as an example of 'supposition' (where a fundamental root is placed – or 'supposed' – below the basso continuo), now he allows suspensions to take place over the same fundamental (thus acting as a displacement of some consonance resolution). Likewise, he is much more liberal in allowing the fundamental bass to move by intervals that he had earlier prohibited, particularly by seconds and other dissonant intervals. Finally, he shows the keyboard player that certain chords and progressions can be analysed with reference to a number of differing fundamental basses (often with three differing roots indicated as possible underneath the same chord). The result, as I suggested above, is less a legal code of rules than a code of conduct; behaviour is based upon experience and context. Through a combination of sentiment, taste and a reliance on the ear, the fingers will know how to follow, for, as he concludes the treatise, 'thinking and acting are . . . just one thing' (535).

I should not end this review without saying something about the *Nouvelles réflexions* that are also included in the translation. While it was published along with the *Code*, and certainly merits inclusion here, the text is a very different one from the *Code*, with a differing agenda and audience in mind. It continues some polemics Rameau had in the previous decade been waging with Rousseau and particularly d'Alembert over the role of harmony in music, and the importance of his beloved *corps sonore* and the triple geometric proportion in the generation of music – and, be it said, of all the mathematical and geometric sciences. There are also some important new ideas ('new reflections', as indicated by the title) on some venerable theoretical problems with which Rameau had been wrestling for forty years, including the generation of the minor mode and dissonance.



Rameau also considers the genealogy of music and melody (something that Rousseau would pursue in the 'Essay on the Origins of Language', not to appear in print until long after his own death, though penned at the same time as the *Code*). Rameau here lays out his most ambitious and audacious claims for the priority of the *corps sonore* as nature's progenitor of proportions via the triple proportion whereby all the other sciences found their own origin. If Rameau's wild speculations about Chinese music or the role of Noah as a disseminator of this occult knowledge seem far-fetched (as they surely did to d'Alembert), we do see that the speculative theorist and 'would-be philosophe' was still very much active at the same time he was writing his most substantial practical treatise.

This brings me to my final comment about Howard's project. At the beginning of his Introduction, Howard counsels us about the perils of holding to any stark division between practical and speculative theory in the case of Rameau (3–5). Both are manifest in the *Code*, he argues, and really are interdependent. Howard's uneasiness with those who divide Rameau and his works into two distinct genres (and I suppose I am one of those guilty of that) rests on his assumption that there is something unbecomingly schizophrenic about the resulting picture. But the practical and speculative sides of Rameau never merge seamlessly into a single person – nor into a unified and coherent body of literature. (There is no way any reader could deduce from the tortured discussions of the harmonic and geometrical proportions that Rameau carries out in his *Nouvelles réflexions* the subtle and sublimely varied musical excerpts analysed in the *Code*.) The two stand in a constant dialectical tension with one another. It is no shame to Rameau as either a thinker or a musician that he was never able to resolve these two poles into a unison. On the contrary, the glory of Rameau – and, be it said, the discipline of music theory – is how it emerges within those contested spaces between practice and speculation. Ultimately this is what makes the pairing of the *Code de musique pratique* and the *Nouvelles réflexions* between the same book covers such a telling monument to Rameau's identity as both composer and theorist.

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JOYCE L. IRWIN, ED. AND TRANS.

*FORETASTES OF HEAVEN IN LUTHERAN CHURCH MUSIC TRADITION: JOHANN MATTHESON
 AND CHRISTOPH RAUPACH ON MUSIC IN TIME AND ETERNITY*

London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015

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What are the skills currently required of an eighteenth-century music scholar? Where the century of Bach and Mozart once represented the pinnacle of the German philological enterprise, with its mandatory archive stints and scribal identifications, the new Anglo-American cultural-history agenda instead demands fluency in media studies, early modern optics or affect theory. In this environment of increasingly variegated expertise, deciphering primary source materials on different, more or less music-related topics has become at once more necessary and more niche as a pursuit. Although the process is aided by the increasing availability of such texts in digital repositories, most of these original treatises can remain difficult to access, owing to language barriers, presentation in old typefaces, convoluted writing styles and abstruse references. Joyce L. Irwin's translation of two eighteenth-century German Lutheran music treatises does a great service, therefore, in facilitating students' engagement with a particular set of ideas and debates in their original formulation. The volume is published in the series Contextual Bach Studies (edited by Robin Leaver), but anyone interested