MARIA SEMI, **Music as a Science of Mankind in Eighteenth-Century Britain**. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012. Pp. x + 185. ISBN 978-1-4094-2868-8. £55.00 (hardback).
doi:10.1017/S0007087412000866

As is well known, the concept of a new 'science of man' emerged in the Enlightenment, an interdisciplinary project in which the workings of the mind and the subjective realm of sensation and feelings constituted an important area of inquiry into human nature and societies. An important stimulus in the development of this science of mankind was the search for happiness (or *eudaimonia*, as Maria Semi prefers to call it), a context in which education should provide a guide to the pleasures associated with leading a good and virtuous life. Indeed, within this moral framework the ultimate goal of studying the faculties and behaviour of individuals and society is to educate and improve mankind, to offer models of correct living by means of clear examples. Two significant questions posed by Semi's new book are, to what extent does speculation on music enter into this scientific discourse, and in what way does the art of music itself participate in and contribute to the overall project? These are important but underexplored issues, one reason being that, for the most part, historians of eighteenth-century British science and philosophy have not considered music as part of their intellectual remit. In my view, this book certainly shows that they should.

Quite reasonably, Semi does not pretend to answer fully the questions that she poses in her introduction, but sees herself as filling a gap in the literature about British writing on music, specifically that dealing with its 'philosophical-aesthetic' (rather than its natural-philosophical) aspects. She argues that, taken as a whole, this body of work neglects to explore how eighteenth-century conceptions of music were linked to philosophies of mind more generally, and also to related discussions of the arts, their relationships with each other and their social functions, in both past and present contexts. The first part of her book investigates 'the reflections on music by some of the most representative philosophers and men of letters of the eighteenth century' (p. 23). By way of introduction she highlights the centrality of Locke's epistemology to all these authors, and indeed his theory of mind provides a link to the second part of the book, which focuses on a selection of music-theoretical and historical texts that utilize the philosophical concepts examined in the first section.

An important stimulus to British debates about the purpose and value of music, or more specifically of *listening* to music, proves to have been the arrival of Italian opera at the beginning of the century. This was a context in which authors such as Joseph Addison and the third Earl of Shaftesbury, for example, expressed differing views on the nature of musical taste and judgement. While both were concerned with the improvement of public taste, as a Neoplatonist Shaftesbury sought to achieve this through the encouragement of an interior sense of harmony that was essential for judging beauty. This concept of an inner sense was taken up by the Scottish philosopher Francis Hutcheson, for whom the harmony of 'good compositions' was an example of absolute beauty, even while music's capacity to express 'the human voice in any passion' constituted a form of relative beauty that was no less important to his aesthetics. As Semi demonstrates, other representatives of the Scottish school of philosophy, such as Thomas Reid, Lord Kames and Adam Smith, also had new and important things to say about music's expressive capabilities, evidence that has yet to be fully incorporated into studies of eighteenth-century theories of the passions and emerging conceptions of the emotions.

The texts considered in the second part may well be unfamiliar to readers of this journal, but they nevertheless offer insights into the way that Enlightenment thinking about music drew on such modern authorities as Bacon and Locke even while maintaining a lively interest in ancient musical theory and practice. However, just because Semi's authors were evidently influenced by the same sources did not necessarily mean that they agreed with each other on music's fundamentals. The little-known author John Frederick Lampe, for example, in *The Art of Musick*

(1740), quoted Bacon to justify the search for musical principles in sounding nature rather than Pythagorean mathematics, and used Locke to argue that compositional technique must be underpinned by an understanding of how the mind works. Sir John Hawkins, in his *General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (1776), also believed that music had its origins in nature, but for him this meant that it could therefore be understood mathematically, a tradition of harmonic science that went back to Pythagoras and more recently to Isaac Newton. Moreover, Hawkins basically dismissed the idea that the 'science of music' should be founded on modern psychologies of mind. Instead he followed Bacon's projections in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), and treated it as a pre-eminently historical discipline. Nevertheless, within this overall framework he still identified the science of music as having an interest in how music exercises the rational as well as auditory faculties, one aim being to study its influence on human minds.

While flagging up some aspects of this book that should be of interest to historians of science I have scarcely done justice to Semi's arguments, of which perhaps the most relevant here is that her protagonists did not isolate music from 'the rest of the *studia humanitatis*' (p. 156) but conceived it as part of a natural and human philosophy focused on man (the issue of gender does not come up in the book). As Semi shows, this philosophy had important things to say about the development of critical (and also pleasurable) listening to music as part of the civilizing process. To put this into broader cultural context, it is striking that discourse about this mental discipline developed in eighteenth-century Britain – a wealthy, urbanized society where significant numbers of elite concert-goers were involved in the process of aesthetic perception but were far removed from the process of creation. Semi's book provides a welcome starting-point for further investigation into the relationship between musical culture and philosophical discourse in this period.

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Michael Brown, **Performing Medicine: Medical Culture and Identity in Provincial England, *c.*1760–1850**. Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 2011. Pp. ix + 254. ISBN 978-0-7190-7797-5. £60.00 (hardback).
doi:10.1017/S0007087412000878

The practice of medicine, the patient–practitioner encounter and the institutional spaces occupied by medicine have always been arenas characterized by the notion of performance. Physicians were, and still are, expected to fulfil specific roles, in relation both to their patients and to their profession. Historical accounts of medical practitioners as an organized body of individuals have focused primarily on the construction of narratives underpinned by professionalization and the medical economy. In this atmosphere of market forces and professional self-identification, Michael Brown's complementary treatment of medical men in York between around 1760 and 1850 provides a refreshing and valuable strand of analysis. *Performing Medicine* takes us behind the facades of the increasingly imposing medical institutions so characteristic of the period and shows that cultural values underpinned the shift of practitioners from 'civic gentlemen and liberal scholars' to an organized collective of quasi-scientists (p. 226).

In Brown's terms, the book sets out to 'address the relative absence of agency, ideology and ideation within the existing historiography' (p. 6). He begins with an accessible yet thorough analysis of the context of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century York, the important provincial centre which is the focus of Brown's study. Here, we are introduced to the pervading notions of civility, politeness and the ritualized environment of the club; the concerns of practitioners about how their profession was viewed by the wider public were reflected in the organization of the medical men of the city into a 'Doctors Club', which informed and was informed by a culture of 'politeness, gentility and sociability' (p. 39).