

The Venomous Affair of the first Serpent Method

Benny Sluchin

This article deals with a particular period of important political and social activity that saw the final years of the *ancien régime*, the French Revolution (1789), and the rise of Napoleon (First Empire). Two institutions play an active role: the Paris Conservatoire and the Magasin de Musique, both founded during this period.

The Magasin de Musique, founded 18 brumaire Year II (8 November 1793), when the Institut National de Musique was still in existence, predates the Conservatoire. Bernard Sarrette (later to found the Paris Conservatoire) presented a plan for an “Association des Artistes Musiciens” that would administer all publishing activity. On 27 pluviôse Year II (15 February 1794) the project was approved and publishing activity through subscription began in earnest.¹ The foundation of the Conservatoire, by the decree of 16 thermidor Year III (3 August 1795), gave new orientation and direction to the Magasin.

The history of the Magasin de Musique² is closely related to that of the Conservatoire, as appears clearly when one considers the evolution of the Magasin’s production. Its catalogue had been established in accordance with the evolution of the Conservatoire.³ The editorial choices of this establishment follow and reflect both the activities and the concerns of the Conservatoire, especially as regards education and concerts.

The desire arose to find a new approach to teaching, one not only open to a large number of students, but one that would establish certain logical principles common to all disciplines, something hitherto neglected by the religious bodies that largely controlled musical instruction in France prior to the Revolution. This led to the development of the prestigious collection of so-called “official” methods of the Paris Conservatoire,⁴ fourteen in all (Figure 1), which influenced and conditioned music teaching in France throughout the nineteenth century and even, some would argue, right up to the present day, since most of their innovations are still in use.

The initial impetus for the creation of these methods was a decree of the Institut National de Musique dated 12 fructidor Year II (29 August 1794) and signed by its president François-Joseph Gossec:

Considering that the fundamental principles of a good school should be based on precision and simplicity, and that these principles, as well as tending to enlarge the scope of knowledge, must be freed of systematic sophistry sanctioned by custom, the Institute decides:

1° Artistes of the Institute shall concern themselves with the preparation of elementary manuals for the study of music, singing, harmony, composition, and all instrumental parts;

2° A commission shall be set up especially charged with the establishment of

CATALOGUE		
Des ouvrages nouveaux de Musique Vocale et Instrumentale composant le Magasin de Musique du Conservatoire, tenu par M. M ^{rs} CHARLES, MICHEL, OZI et Compagnie.		
A PARIS, Rue Bergère, N ^o 3.		
<p>OUVRAGES ÉLÉMENTAIRES.</p> <p>SOLFÈGES du Conservatoire de Musique, N^{os} 2^e et 3^e livre, par Agus, Catel, Cherubini, Gossec, Lauglé, Lesueur, Mchul et Rigel. Première Partie, 2^{me} Edition 56 f. c.</p> <p>Chaque livre séparé</p> <p>Le premier contenant les principes élémentaires de la musique par demandes et par réponses 15 .</p> <p>Le second contenant des gammes et solfèges faciles 15 .</p> <p>Le troisième contenant un recueil de solfèges sur toutes les clefs et dans tous les tons 15 .</p> <p>SOLFÈGES du Conservatoire de Musique, 4^e et 5^e livre par Agus, Catel, Cherubini, Gossec, Lauglé, Lesueur, Martini, Mchul et Rey. Seconde partie 50 .</p> <p>Chaque livre séparé</p> <p>Le 4^e contenant une instruction pour la conservation de la voix, et la suite des solfèges d'une difficulté progressive. 15 .</p> <p>Le cinquième contenant un recueil de leçons à deux, trois, quatre, cinq, et six voix 15 .</p> <p>TRAITÉ D'HARMONIE, par Catel, adopté pour l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire 21 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de CHANT du Conservatoire, adoptée pour l'enseignement 36 .</p> <p>NOUVELLE MÉTHODE de FORTE PIANO, par Adam, adopté pour l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire 36 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de VIOLON, adoptée par le Conservatoire de Musique, rédigée par M^r Baillot 24 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de CLARINETTE, par X. Lefèvre, adoptée pour l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire. 24 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de FLÛTE, par A. Hugot et Wanderlich, adoptée pour l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire 24 .</p> <p>NOUVELLE MÉTHODE de BASSON, par Ozi, adoptée pour l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire 24 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE pour le COR, servant à l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire de Musique, par Frédéric Duvernoy 15 .</p>	<p>MÉTHODE de VIOLONCELLE du Conservatoire, par Baillot, Levasseur, Catel et Baudiot 30 f. c.</p> <p>MÉTHODE pour F^{es} et 2^e COR servant à l'enseignement dans le Conservatoire, par Domsich 24 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de FLAIN CHANT à l'usage des Eglises de France, par M^r L. Boze 12 .</p> <p>MÉTHODE de SERPENT adoptée par le Conservatoire Royal de Musique 15 .</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OUVRAGES CLASSIQUES POUR LE VIOLON, Suivis dans le Conservatoire.</p> <p>Corelli. 12 Sonates 12 .</p> <p>Pugnani. ou: 1^{re} 10 .</p> <p> ou: 2^{me} 10 .</p> <p>Tartini. ou: 1^{re} partie 7. 50</p> <p> ou: 2^{me} partie 7. 50</p> <p> ou: 3^{me} 7. 50</p> <p>Locatelli. ou 6^{me} 9 .</p> <p> ou: 1^{re} livre 9 .</p> <p> ou: 2^{me} livre 9 .</p> <p> ou: 3^{me} 9 .</p> <p>Boccherini 7. 50</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PARTITIONS.</p> <p>ELIZA ou le Voyage au Mont-Bernard, opéra en 2 actes, par Cherubini 40 .</p> <p>SÉRÉNANIS, opéra en 3 actes, par Catel 40 .</p> <p>LES ARTISTES PAR OCCASION, opéra bouffon en 1 acte, par Catel 36 .</p> <p>Parties séparées 30 .</p> <p>L'AURORE DE SACHÉRES, en 5 actes, par Catel 40 .</p> <p>Parties séparées 36 .</p>	<p>ALEXANDRE CEZÉ APÉLLES, ballet, Musique de Catel, arrangé pour le F. Piano. Acte 1^{er} 7 f. 50</p> <p>Acte 2^e 7. 50</p> <p>LES BATAILLERS, opéra en 3 actes, par Catel 60 .</p> <p>CHANT SUR LA ROSE D'ÉRYDAN, par Cherubini 18 .</p> <p>LES AUBREGISTES DE QUALITÉ, en 3 actes, par Catel 60 .</p> <p>Parties séparées 50 .</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OUVERTURES ET SYMPHONIES A GRAND ORCHESTRE.</p> <p>Mchul. Chasse du Jeune Henry 9 .</p> <p>Catel. Ouv: de Scmiramis 7. 50</p> <p>Winter. Ouv: de M. de Montalban 7. 50</p> <p> — des deux frères rivaux 7. 50</p> <p> — du Sacrifice interrompu 7. 50</p> <p>Mozart. Ouv: 9 .</p>

Figure 1

List of methods of the Paris Conservatoire
from the catalogue of the Magasin de Musique (1814).

the elementary principles of music. This Commission shall consist of composers.⁵

For the Institut, the decree answered a real need, as can be seen from the bills sent in by Étienne Ozi during Years II and III to the Association des Artistes Musiciens, which mentions, among others, the “Solfège d’Adolphe,” the “Solfège d’Italie,” as well as instrumental methods of Devienne and Ozi. The first of the methods to be printed appeared in 1800 and the last in 1814.

A decree of 1795 established additional guidelines for the preparation of methods, this time more as an obligation than as a mere proposition:

The preparation of elementary manuals.

Article 1: In order to establish uniformity of teaching in all areas of the musical art, it is incumbent upon Members of the Conservatoire to concern themselves with the preparation of elementary manuals necessary for teaching.

Article 2: These manuals will be prepared and decided upon by special Commissions comprising teachers, related parties and composers to be presided over to the Director of the Conservatoire. Members of the Conservatoire who teach elsewhere and persons from without the establishment may, if appropriate, be assigned to these Commissions.

Article 3: The manuals decided upon by the Commissions will be submitted for adoption by a General Assembly of the Members of the Conservatoire.

Article 4: The adoption of the elementary manuals must be the result solely of an absolute majority of the votes of the totality of the Members of the Conservatory.

Article 5: Teaching from the elementary manuals adopted by the Conservatory is obligatory for all teachers in this establishment. The Director will monitor the execution of the present measure.⁶

Students were thus obliged to study from the books published or recommended by the Conservatoire:

No student will be admitted to follow any course of study without having the elementary manual prescribed for teaching.⁷

In order to satisfy all students, the Conservatoire regularly bought stocks of the manuals, which were to remain in the classrooms.

As no official text exists dealing with the relationship between the Magasin and the Conservatoire, it is difficult to determine its nature. The following case provides us with some explanation.⁸ The General Assembly of 25 August 1812 approved a method for the serpent. Released in 1814, this work was to be the last of the official Conservatoire manuals.⁹

Curiously, no author is mentioned, but the catalogue attributes it to Abbot Nicolas Roze, the Conservatoire librarian¹⁰ (Figures 2, 3). The serpent method is the result of an earlier project of Jean-Baptiste Métoyen (1733-1822). A bassoonist in the Chapelle Royale in Versailles, he was a colleague of Étienne Ozi (1754-1813), who later became a bassoon teacher in the Conservatoire itself. Métoyen is well known for his watercolor plans¹¹ of the “Musique du Roi,” but he also composed several volumes of religious music.¹² His *Ouvrage complet pour l'éducation du serpent* (Comprehensive work for the teaching of the serpent) is an extensive manuscript (containing more than 150 pages) on teaching the serpent both for general use and for particular use within churches.

MÉTHODE
 DE SERPENT
 adoptée par le Conservatoire Impérial
 De Musique
 Pour le Service du Culte
 et le Service Militaire
 Prix 15 fr.
 A P A R I S

*Au Magasin de Musique du Conservatoire Impérial rue du Filat. Poissonnière, l'°n,
 au coin de celle Bergère.*

Figure 2
 “Official” *Méthode de Serpent*, title page.

MÉTHODE
DE SERPENT
par M^r Roze.
 adoptée par le Conservatoire Impérial
 de Musique
 Pour le Service du Collège
 et le Service Militaire
 Prix 15 fr. *CS*
 A P A R I S
 Au Magasin de Musique du Conservatoire Impérial rue du Haut-Poissonnière, N^o 11,
 au coin de celle Bergère.

Cn. 5

Figure 3

“Official” *Méthode de Serpent*, title page of copy in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

The story of this work and Métoyen’s adventure are told in two manuscript pages inserted between pages 140 and 141 of this volume (Figure 4). In about 1807 Métoyen showed his work to his friend Ozi, “teacher at the Conservatoire in charge of the storeroom (*magasin*) where works are deposited.”¹³ Ozi was “so pleased that he bought it for instruction in that school.” The manuscript was then handed over to Gossec and later given to the library, run by the Abbot Roze, who removed long passages “on the pretext of making economies in the engraving.” In 1810 “it was, however, resolved to come to a decision with regard to this method.” The general assembly of the “Conservatoire divinities” decided that only Roze’s “advice in respect of this instrument would be taken into account.” Métoyen wrote to Sarrette on 6 May 1810, reminding him that his name should not appear on the method. The complete French text and a translation of Métoyen’s “Historiette” are included in the Appendix to this article.

L'Historiette de cet ouvrage est assez
curieuse à connaître.

Je fis cet ouvrage en manuscrit pour l'édi-
cation d'un Infirme de l'hôpital de Notre-Dame
à qui j'enseignois cet Instrument en qui en profité
bien, et fut depuis placé à S. Roches.

Je fis voir ledit ouvrage quelques tems après à
mon ami et ancien confère de la Chapelle du Roi,
M. Olli, Professeur au Conservatoire, et chargé du
Magasin des Ouvrages qui y sont déposés, il en
fut si content qu'il me l'acheta pour être gravé et
destiné à l'éducation dans cette Ecole.

— Vers ce tems, il arriva que M. l'abbé Rose fut fait
Bibliotaire du Conservatoire, à la mort de M. Longlé,
Mon Neveu étoit depuis longtems chez M. Goussier,
puis passa, comme cela devoit être entre les mains
de son neveu Bibliotaire.

Ce Bibliotaire jaloux d'observer sa nouvelle
dignité, fit réviser ledit ouvrage, ni changer, ni
corriger rien, sinon, que sous prétexte d'économie
de gravure, il en élaya quelques parties longuement.

Ces retranchemens faits, ma complaisance fut
de rétablir au net mon ouvrage pour le graveur
qui auroit eu peine à se reconnaître dans le
barbouillage qu'en avoit fait M. l'abbé Rose.
Environ deux ans après, il en fut faite question

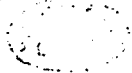


Figure 4

Métoyen's "Historiette," first page (recto).

The copy annotated by Roze is still preserved in the Bibliothèque National.¹⁴ On one cover is to be read (Figure 5):

This method was not approved by the Conservatoire, which ordered another to be prepared by Messrs. Gossec and Roze.¹⁵

1551
B^o = 7981

Méthode
Pour l'Éducation
DU SERPENT
Premier Ouvrage fait pour ces Instrumens,
Par J. B. Métoyen,
Ex-Ordinaire de la Musique Chambre et Chapelle
des Rois Louis XV. et Louis XVI., depuis l'an 1760.
jusqu'en 1792.

Cette Méthode n'a point été approuvée par
le Conservatoire, qui en a ordonné une autre.
Dont la rédaction a été confiée,
à M^{rs} Gossec et Roze

Ms. A 228

Figure 5

Title page of the Métoyen's first manuscript (A).

In fact, the official printed method mentioned earlier by no means corresponds to Métoyen's manuscript. Had Métoyen's method been printed by the Magasin, it would have been the only publication whose author was not a member of the Conservatoire. Contemporary composers whose works were published by the Magasin were all attached to this institution. Works of deceased composers (Mozart, Gluck, et al.) are the sole exceptions. As indicated in the regulations, outsiders could be assigned to the committees charged with the preparation of the methods, and such was the case for the *Traité d'harmonie* (1801) and the *Méthode de chant* (1803).

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*Seconde
Premiere Partie,*
concernant la Musique,

*Différents Préludes qu'il faut s'attacher à dire
d'un justes, pour se former l'embouchure.*

Re, mineur *Re, majeur*

Ut, majeur *Ut, mineur*

Sol, mineur *Sol, mineur*

La, mineur *La, mineur*

Mi, mineur *Mi, mineur*

Fa, mineur *Fa, mineur*

Si b, mineur *Si b, mineur*

Figure 6
Métoyen's first manuscript (A), p. 19.

Figure 7
Métoyen's first manuscript (A), pp. 60-61.

There are two manuscripts (identified here as A and B) of Métoyen's serpent method.¹⁶ One (A) was used by Roze as a model for his own work. Both its text and music probably were intended to be included in the published edition. Quite likely this is the original manuscript that was bought by Ozi "to be engraved and used for instruction in the Conservatoire." The title was changed later. Numbering was added and large cuts are to be found throughout the 100 pages (Figures 6, 7). The page size of this bound volume is 287 x 223 cm. Its contents can be summarized as follows:

pages	contents
1	title (corrected and expanded)
2	blank
3-4	preface [préface]
5-12	First Part
	First part, first article of the method
	[Premier Partie, Article 1 de la Méthode]
	the manner of beginning the study of the serpent
	[manière de commencer l'étude du Serpent]

	the form of the mouthpiece [forme de l'embouchure]
	the articulation [du coup de langue]
	the octaves [des octaves]
	the manner to hold the instrument [de la manière à tenir l'Instrument]
	Remarks concerning the gravity [observation relatives à la gravité]
13	Second part, concerning its use in the church [Seconde Partie. concernant son usage à l'Eglise]
14-16	Table of transposition of plainchant [Tableau des Transposition du Plain Chant]
17	Second part, concerning studying the instrument for the music [Seonde Partie concernant l'étude de l'Instrument pour la Musique]
18	blank
19-20	Second part concerning the music [Second Partie concernant la Musique]
	Different preludes [Différents Préludes]
21-54	Lessons [Leçons] total of 46
55-89	Duets [Suite de Leçons en Duo] 1 to 12 (with extensive editing)
90-99	Hymns and chants of the church [Hymnes et Chants d'Eglise]

The second manuscript, B, a bound volume of 159 pages of smaller size (201 x 134 cm), was probably recopied by Métoyen. It has no title page; a title that was added later (Figure 8) is attributed to Weckerlin, a librarian at the Conservatoire who drew up its catalogue in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is this volume that contains Métoyen's "story," inserted between pages 140 and 141. The volume otherwise contains music, partly for general use, and partly for use in churches (Figures 9, 10). The few pages of text at the end mention other works by Métoyen and describe (Figures 11, 12) a new type of serpent (called "Piffault"),¹⁷ also described in the official method.¹⁸ Piffault¹⁹ was an instrument maker, active in Paris around 1806, who made improvements to the *serpent militaire*. A *Motet au S. Sacrement* completes this volume (Figure 13). Its contents of this volume may be summarized as follows:

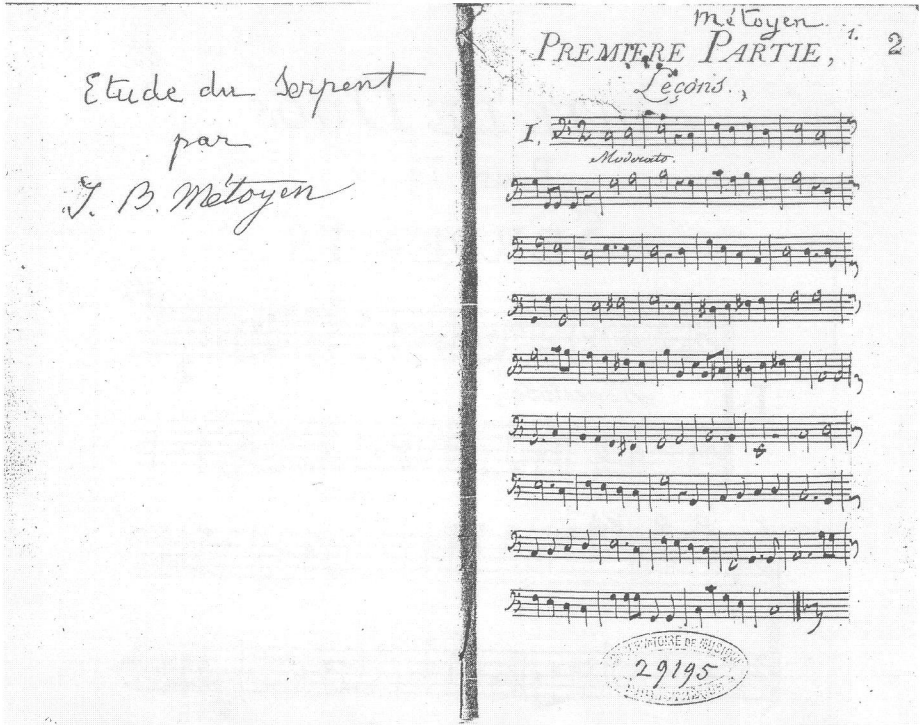


Figure 8

Métuyen's second manuscript (B), title page and p. 1.

page	contents
0	title (added later): Etudes for serpent by J.B. Métoyen [Etude du Serpent par J.B. Métoyen]
1-50	First part, lessons [Premier Partie, Leçons] total of 40 etudes
51-54	blank
55-100	Suite of duets for two serpents [Suite de Duos pour deux Serpents] numbered I - XII
101-102	blank
103-105	Table of transposition of plainchant for the serpent [Tableau des Transposition du Plain Chant pour le Serpent]

55.

SUITE DE DUOS
Pour Deux
SERPENTS.

I. *Mlaestoso.*

Figure 9

Métoyen's second manuscript (B), p. 55.

TABLEAU

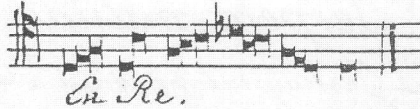
103

des Transpositions du Plain-Chant,
pour le Serpent,

Très important à bien connaître pour
jouer juste, chaque morceau étant
susceptible de variété de ton, par l'intonation
des Choristes, suivant l'étendue de
chacun desdits morceaux.

Clef, Dièze et Bémol nécessaires
dans chaque Transposition...

Le 1.^{er} Ton
est en Re,
tierce mineure.

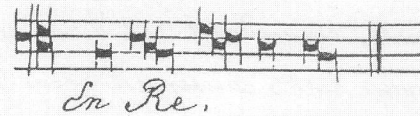


En Re.

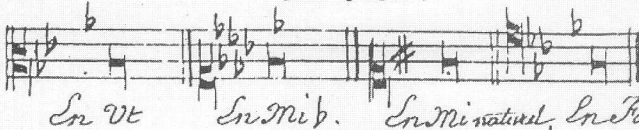


En La. En Si b. En Si naturel. En Ut.

Le 2.^o Ton
est en Re,
tierce mineure



En Re.



En Ut En Mi b. En Mi naturel. En Fa.

Figure 10

Métoyen's second manuscript (B), p. 103.

153

Serpent d'une nouvelle forme,

Inventé au commencement de l'an 1806
 Par Sébastien, luthier rue Bonaparte à Paris.

Cette nouvelle forme donne le moyen de
 joindre cet Instrument bien plus facilement dans
 les marches militaires que la forme de l'ancien
 parce que la partie inférieure se trouve sur le
 côté droit ainsi que le Basson, en conséquence
 de ce qu'il est d'une plus grande facilité à joindre
 dans les troupes, on peut lui donner le nom de

Serpent militaire.

Cet Instrument nouveau a toutes les qualités
 de l'ancien, le même son, le son est même
 plus brillant en ce qu'il n'est pas couvert de
 peau comme les Serpents de l'ancienne
 forme, cependant ces derniers devront
 toujours rester conservés pour les Eglises.

Figure 11

Métoyen's second manuscript (B), p. 153.

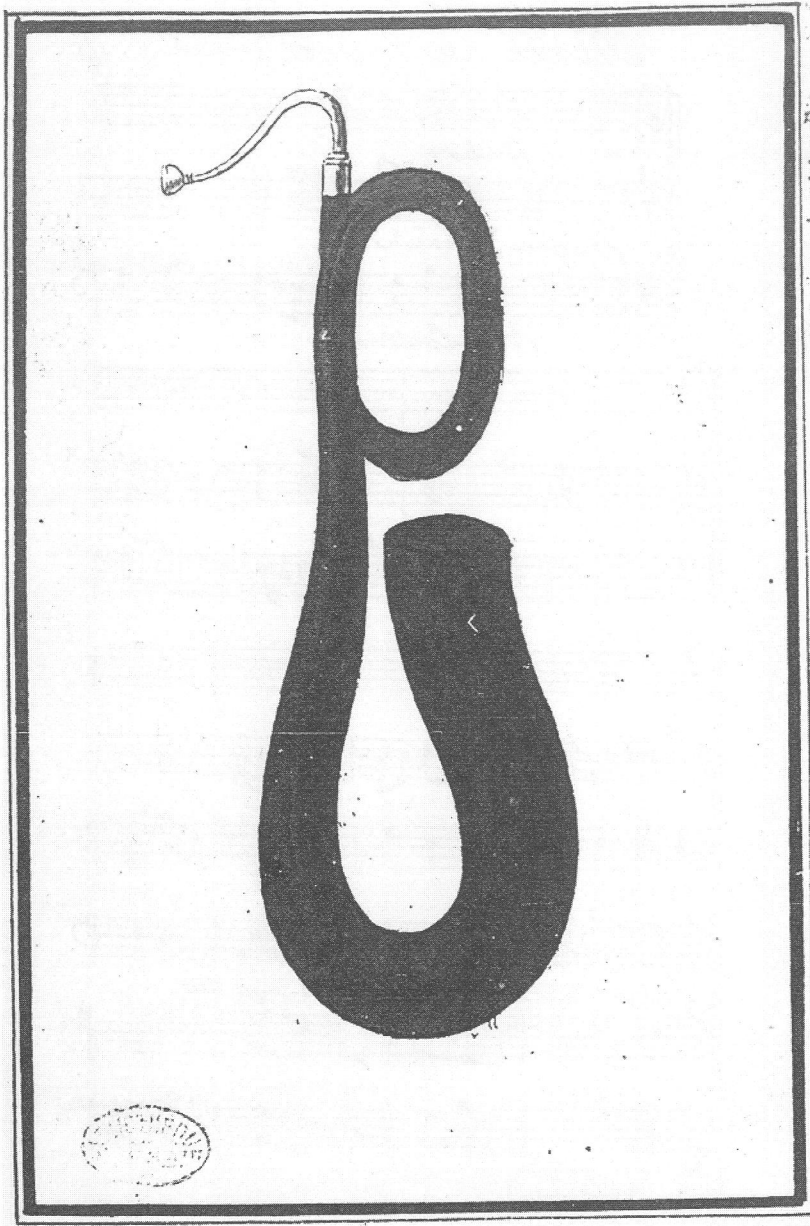


Figure 12
Métoyen's second manuscript (B), p. 154.

Motet au S. Sacrement 141

Grave

Baton. Prelude.

Bass Continue

Dies enim solemnis agitur,

Figure 13

Métyen's second manuscript (B), p. 141.

106-112	Variations on plainchant [Variations sur le Plain Chant]
113-135	Various chants of the church [Divers Chant d'Eglise]
136-139	Two duets [Deux Duos]
140	blank
=====	Little story [historiette]
141-144	Motet au S. Sacrement
145-147	Choir [Chœur]
148	blank
149-152	Table of Contents
153-156	serpent in a new form [Serpent d'une nouvelle forme]
157	continuation of table of contents

Little has been published on the life of J.B. Métoyen, and even nineteenth-century authorities such as Fétis or Choron fail to mention him. Curiously, the article “Serpent” in *New Grove* mentions this method and even quotes a remark on its use in churches.²⁰ An entry was added in *New Grove*, second edition, which throws some light on this figure.²¹

It is thus only natural to attempt a reconstruction of J.B. Métoyen’s original serpent method.²² Comprising some 180 pages, it was—as stated on the cover—the “first work for the instruction of this instrument,” even though it had “not been approved for teaching in the Conservatoire.”

Table I summarizes manuscripts A and B. The remarks in the right-hand column refer to A. This comparison led to the development of a new, enlarged serpent method comprising the text of A (as there is no general text in B), exercises, etudes, and duets of B, completed with several that are only in A, and some drafts. The part concerning the use of the serpent in churches contains the same text (which is in A and B), followed by hymns, variations, and divers “Chants d’Eglise.”

Table I (following pages)

Comparison of Sources A and B (C denotes the above-mentioned new edition)

A	B	comments
Ms. 10228	Ms. 10227	
Text	Text	
pp. 3-13		
pp. 14-16	pp. 103-105	
Etudes	Etudes	
Preliminaries, p. 19-20		
1, p. 21	1, p. 1	
2, p. 21	2, p. 2	
3, p. 22	4, p. 4	
4, p. 22	3, p. 3	
5, p. 23	5, p. 5	
6, p. 23		41 in C
7, p. 24		42 in C
8, p. 24	12, p. 13	
9, [originally 1], p. 25	6, p. 6	
10, [originally 2], p. 25	7, p. 7	
11, [originally 3], p. 26	8, p. 8	
12, [originally 4], p. 26	9, p. 9	
13, [originally 5], p. 27	10, pp. 10-11	
14, [originally 6], p. 28	11, pp. 11-12	
15, [originally 7], p. 28	13, p. 14	
16, [originally 8], p. 29	14, p. 15	
17, [originally 9], p. 30	15, p. 16	
18, [originally 10], p. 30	16, p. 17	
19, [originally 11], p. 31	17, p. 18	
20, [originally 12], p. 32	18, p. 19	
21, [originally 13], p. 32	19, p. 20	
22, [originally 14], p. 33	22, p. 23	
23, [originally 15], p. 34	23, p. 24	
24, p. 35		43 in C
25, p. 35		44 in C
26, p. 36		45 in C
27, p. 36		46 in C
28, [originally 16], p. 37	21, p. 22	
29, [originally 17], p. 37	20, p. 21	
30, [originally 18], p. 38	24, pp. 25-26	
31, [originally 19], p. 39	25, pp. 26-27	
32, [originally 20], p. 40	26, p. 28	
33, [originally 21], p. 41	27, p. 29	
34, [originally 22], p. 42	29, pp. 32-33	
35, [originally 23], pp. 42-43	28, pp. 30-31	

- 36, [originally 24], p. 44
 37, [originally 25], p. 45
 38, [originally 26], p. 46
 39, [originally 27], p. 47
 40, [originally 28], p. 48
 41, p. 49
 42, p. 50
 43, p. 51
 44, p. 52
 45, [originally 29], p. 53
 46, [originally 30], p. 51

duets

- 1, [originally 31], p. 55
 2, [originally 32], pp. 56-57
 2, [originally 3, 33], pp. 58-59I,
 3, [originally 4, 34], pp. 60-61II,
 4, [originally 5, 35], p. 62 (VIIIa)
 6, [originally 36], p. 64
 5, p. 66 (VIIa)
 7, [originally 37], pp. 68-69
 6, [originally 8, 38], p. 70
 -, chant d'église, pp. 72-73
 -, mineur, p. 75
 9, pp. 76
 7, pp. 78-79
 8, [originally 10], pp. 80-81
 9, [originally 11], pp. 82-83
 10, [originally 12], pp. 84-85
 11, [originally 13], pp. 86-87
 12, [originally 14], pp. 88-89

Eglise

- text, p. 90
 hymne, p. 90-93
 hymne, pp. 93-95
 hymne , p. 95

- p. 96 (Audi)
 p. 96 (O Splendor)

- p. 97 (Hymn du S. Sacrement)

- p. 97 (Hymn de S. Jean)
 p. 98 (Hymn de la Nativité)
 p. 98 (Hymn de la Toussaint)

- 32, pp. 36-37
 31, pp. 34-35
 30, pp. 33-34
 33, pp. 38-39
 34, pp. 39-41
 37, pp. 44-45
 38, pp. 46-47
 39, pp. 47-48
 40, pp. 49-50
 35, pp. 41-42
 36, pp. 43

duets

- IX, pp. 86-87
 III, Fugue, pp. 62-66
 pp. 55-58
 pp. 59-62
 VIII, pp. 82-85
 VII, pp. 78-81
 V, pp. 70-73
 Air, p. 88
 VI, pp. 74-77
 -, pp. 136-137
 -, pp. 138-139
 IV, pp. 67-70
 X, pp. 89-92
 XI, pp. 93-96
 XII, pp. 97-100

Eglise

- Variations, pp. 106-109
 Variations, pp. 110-112

- pp. 113-121
 p. 122
 p. 123
 p. 124 (Passion)
 p. 125 (Pentecote)
 p. 126 (S. Sacrement)
 p. 127 (Assomption)
 p. 128 (S. Jean)
 p. 129 (Nativité de la Vierge)
 p. 130 (Brumain)

There is a "cut" in A

There is a large cut in A

There is a cut in A, p. 63 is not used

A short draft, p. 65 is not used

There is a cut in A

p. 67 is not used, a cut in A

p. 71 is not used

XVI in C

short draft

same beginning, cut in A, XIII in C

XIV in C

p. 99 (Hymn de l'aveu)

p. 99 (Stabat mater)

p. 131 (Aveux)

p. 132 (Stabat Mater)

pp. 141-4 (Motet S. Sacrement)

pp. 145-7 (Chœur d'anges en trio)

Conclusion

Comparing the texts for both the official method attributed to Roze and Métoyen's text contained in source A, the superior quality of the first can be explained by the education of its author. Abbé Nicolas Roze (1745-1819) is known both as a composer and a pedagogue (*théoricien*). After serving as a *maître de chapelle* for many years, he held the position as librarian at the Paris Conservatoire from 1807 until his death, and was responsible for the reorganization of the cataloguing system. Métoyen's method, however, is very comprehensive in a musical sense: the many etudes and duets provide a real corpus for the study of the instrument. A church serpentist at this time in France would of course had to have some knowledge of plainchant, and so the manuscript also includes a practical section for the use of the serpent in liturgical music; some of the pieces included are suitable for performance with voices (see Figures 13, 14). The official serpent method, attributed to Abbot Roze, may assume familiarity with Roze's *Méthode de Plain-Chant*,²³ thus it includes only a few pieces, mostly by François-Joseph Gossec (1734-1829). The technical skill required in Métoyen's studies and duets explains clearly the need for a class in the Conservatoire. In fact, there were two classes between 1795-1802,²⁴ discontinued probably because of the political changes in those years.

The story of the first serpent method thus brings to light the contentious history surrounding its inception and illuminates a little-known but important figure in the history of this instrument, Jean-Baptiste Métoyen. It also sheds new light on the role played by the Paris Conservatoire and the Magasin de Musique in establishing a series of method books for musical instruction. The fact that a serpent method was included in the prestigious series of Conservatoire methods demonstrates the importance of the instrument in early-nineteenth-century France.

Chorus D'Angel entrio. 148

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a chorus of angels. It consists of three systems of music, each with four staves. The first system is for the vocal parts, and the second and third systems are for the basso continuo. The lyrics are written in Italian and are repeated on each staff of the vocal parts.

Tubae mensa novi
Tubae mensa novi
Tubae mensa novi

Regis, Tubae mensa novi
Regis, Tubae mensa novi
Regis, Tubae mensa novi

Regis, Novum Pascha no-
Regis, Novum Pascha no-
Regis, Novum Pascha no-

Figure 14

Métoyen's second manuscript (B), p. 145.

APPENDIX

Original French text of the “Historiette,” inserted between pp. 140 and 141 of Source B of Métoyen’s method.

L'historiette de cet ouvrage est assez curieuse à connoître.

Je fis cet ouvrage en m[']amusant pour l'éducation d'un Enfant de Chœur de Notre-Dame à qui j'enseignois cet Instrument et qui en profita bien, et fut depuis placé à S. Roch.

Je fis voir ledit ouvrage quelques tems après à mon amis et ancien confrère de la Chapelle du Roi, M. Ozi, Professeur au Conservatoire, et chargé du Magasin des Ouvrages qui y sont déposés, il en fut si contents qu'il me l'acheta pour être gravé et destiné à l'éducation dans cette École.

Vers ce tems, il arriva que M. l'abbé Rose fut fait Bibliothécaire du Conservatoire, à la mort de M. Langlé. Mon Recueil étoit depuis longtemps chez M. Gossec, puis passa, comme cela devoit être entre les mains du nouveau Bibliothécaire.

Ce Bibliothécaire jaloux d'observer sa nouvelle dignité, fit révision de divers Duo, ni changea, ni corrigea rien, sinon, que sous prétexte d'économie de gravure, il en élaça quel aues prétendues longueurs.

Ces retranchements faits, ma complaisance fut de rétablir au net mon ouvrage pour le graveur qui aurait eu peine à se reconnoître dans le barbouillage qu'en avoit fait M. l'abbé Rose.

Environs deux ans après, il est pourtant question d'une décision relative à cette Methode, et il est décidé une assemblée des Divinités Conservatoriales, et j'en reçois une invitation.

Je me rends à l'invitation qu'il m'en est fait. Quel en fut le Résultat ?

Après délibération, il est conclu, qu'il n'entre pour mon compte, dans ce procès verbal de toute décision, que des conseils de ma part sur l'Instrument, et point de ma Musique.

M. Rose, avoit un autre projet qui étoit de faire passer sous son nom cette méthode d'éducation, de laquelle il n'a nulle connaissance de cet Instrument, et pour cela, il avoit emprunté quelques Duos de M. Gossec qui ne sont nullement propre à cet Instrument, et pour son compte, et pour son compte, il y avoit ajouté quelques duos Bachiques, tel particulièrement que Lucas pour se gausser de nous, et quelques basses, sous chants d'Église.

Voilà quel fut le résultats de la délibération.

Je vis donc que j[']étois mis au néant pour la musique que j'avois faite, après faite, après avoir désiré faire connoître ce qui pouvoit se pratiquer sur cet

Instrument, l'ayant pratiqué d'une manière distinguée.

M. Gossec, me parut si peigné d'une telle décision qu'il sortit de cette assemblée, comme honteux d'y avoir été pour quelques choses.

Me voyant n'être annoncé dans ce nouveau projet de méthode que pour quelques conseils relatifs à l'Instrument, je priai fort ces MM. De l'assemblée de ne faire aucunes mentions de moi dans leur rapport, ni dans la prétendue nouvelle méthode, qui me paroit n'avoir eu aucune exécution depuis ce tems là.

Ainsi M. l'abbé Rose m'a renversé et n'en a pas eu plus de gloire.

Mais je n'avois pas l'honneur d'être un membre du Conservatoire.

Quelques jours après j'écrivis la lettre suivante à M. Le Directeur du Conservatoire et l'affaire fut terminée de cette manière. Mais mon Manuscrit est resté à la Bibliothèque.

Le 6. mai 1810

A M. Sarret Directeur du Conservatoire Impérial.

Monsieur

Je ne puis trop vous remercier de l'honnête invitation que vous m'avez faite de me trouver à votre assemblée de Jeudi dernier ;

J'ai du moins eu l'avantage d'y connoître les projets d'une nouvelle éducation pour laquelle il n'avoit encore rien paru et dont j'ai donné l'idée par l'ouvrage que j'avois fait ad hoc.

Les lumières et Composition[s] des personnes qui ont professés avec distinction l'Instrument dont il est question ne suffisant pas pour cette Instruction, il a été de ressource d'y insérer de Vielle musique Bachique, ce qui pourra donner quelques réminiscences plaisantes à qui les entendra. Je conçois que les talents d'un Musiciens des Anciens Rois ne doit plus être de mode, et c'est en conséquence que j'[']ai l'honneur de vous renouveler bien sincèrement l'absence de mon nom dans un ouvrage où je ne suis absolument pour rien, quoique ayant été le premier moteur.

Au reste, je ne doutois pas que cela ne se termina de cette maniere, tout me le fesoit prévoir, mais il faut étouffer son opinion, et sur cela le plus respectueux
Tacet.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec la plus haute considération Monsieur,

V[otre]. T[rès].h[umble].S[erviteur]

M[étro]y[n] n

Doyen de l'ancienne Musique Royale

English translation

The little story attached to this work should be of interest to the curious.

I wrote this work in a spirit of amusement for the instruction of a chorister of Notre Dame to whom I was teaching this instrument and who took good advantage thereof, and has ever since been settled at Saint Roch.

Some time later I showed this work to my friend and former colleague of the King's Chapel, Monsieur Ozi, teacher at the Conservatoire and in charge of the storeroom where works are deposited. He was so pleased that he bought it to be engraved and to be used for instruction in that school.

At about this time, it happened that Monsieur l'Abbé Roze was appointed Librarian of the Conservatory after the death of Monsieur Langlé. My album had long been with Monsieur Gossec, and then it passed, as is right and proper, into the hands of the new librarian.

This librarian, jealous to display his new dignity, revised several of the duos, yet neither changed nor corrected anything, except that, upon the pretext of making economies in the engraving, he pruned a few supposedly overlong passages.

These abridgements having been made, my desire was to restore the integrity of the work for the engraver, who would have had difficulty recognizing in these scribbles the work of Monsieur l'Abbé Roze.

Some two years later it was, however, resolved to make a decision with regard to this Method, and an Assembly of Conservatorial Divinities was decided upon, and I received an invitation.

I accepted the invitation that was extended to me. What was the result?

After deliberation it was concluded in the minutes of this decision, as far as I was concerned, that my advice in respect of the instrument would be taken into account, but not my music.

Monsieur Rose had another scheme, which was to pass this educational method off under his own name, even though he has no knowledge whatsoever with respect to this Instrument, and for that, he had borrowed a few of Monsieur Gossec's duos that were in no way intended for this instrument; and on his own account he had added a few Bacchic duos, such as, in particular, "Lucas pour se gausser de nous," and a few basses, for accompanying ecclesiastical chants.

Such was the result of the deliberation.

I saw therefore that I had been reduced to nothing with regard to the music I had written, after having desired to make known what could be performed on this instrument, having played it myself with distinction.

Monsieur Gossec seemed to me to be so upset by this decision that he left the meeting, as though ashamed to have been part of it.

Seeing myself referred to in this new project solely in terms of a few words of advice concerning the instrument, I strongly begged the gentlemen of the Assembly to make no mention of me whatsoever in their report, or in the supposedly new method, which it seems has not appeared since then.

Thus Monsieur l'Abbé Rose overthrew me but has not enjoyed any fame because of it.

Yet I did not have the honor of being a member of the Conservatoire.

A few days later I wrote the following letter to the Director of the Conservatoire and the affair was concluded in this manner.

My manuscript, however, remained in the library.

6 May 1810

To Monsieur Sarret, Director of the Imperial Conservatory

Sir,

I cannot thank you too much for the honorable invitation you extended to me to attend your meeting of Thursday last.

I had at least the advantage of becoming acquainted with the projects for a new form of instruction for which nothing had so far been published and of which I had given the idea by a work I had prepared *ad hoc*.

As the wisdom and the compositions of persons who have played the instrument in question with distinction did not suffice for this instruction, measures were taken to incorporate into it some old Bacchic music, which could be pleasant to listeners. I imagine that the talents of a musician of the former kings are no longer in vogue, and it is because of this that I have the honor of reiterating most sincerely [my request concerning] the omission of my name from a work of which I form absolutely no part, though I was its prime mover.

For the rest, I did not doubt but that it would finish in this manner; everything pointed in that direction, but one must suppress one's opinion, and maintain a respectable silence.

I have the honor most respectfully to be, Sir,

Your most humble servant

Métoyen

Dean of the former Royal Music

Benny Sluchin studied music at the conservatory of his native city, Tel Aviv, and in the Academy of Music in Jerusalem. Simultaneously, he studied mathematics and philosophy at the university of Tel Aviv and received the Master of Science degree.

Sluchin played in the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and in the Symphony Orchestra of Jerusalem. Since 1976, he has been a member of the Ensemble InterContemporain (dir. Pierre Boulez), playing the most representative music of the present century and participating as soloist in premieres of solo works by Iannis Xenakis, Vinko Globokar, Gérard Grisey, Pascal Dusapin, Elliott Carter, Luca Francesconi, Marco Stroppa and others. Sluchin has taken part in many recordings including, Le Trombone Contemporain, French Bel canto Trombone, (Musidisc), Xenakis' Keren (Erato) and Berio's Sequenzas (DGG).

He participates in various research projects in brass acoustics and musicology at IRCAM. He holds an Artist Diploma (Köln Musikhochschule) and a PhD in Mathematics (Paris, Sorbonne). He is the author of many articles and pedagogical books, including Introduction to Contemporary Trombone Techniques and Singing and Playing Simultaneously on Brass Instruments (Éditions Musicales Européennes, 1995); and with Raymond Lapie, Le trombone à travers les âges (Buchet/Chastel, 2001).

NOTES

¹ Anik Devriès and François Lesure, *Dictionnaire des éditeurs de musique français, I: Des origines à environs 1820* (Geneva: Minkoff, 1979), pp.113-16.

² Constant Pierre, *Le Magasin de Musique à l'usage des fêtes nationales et du Conservatoire* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1895; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1974), pp. 1-104.

³ Ibid. pp. 120-60.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 157-60.

⁵ Constant Pierre, *Le Conservatoire Nationale de musique et de déclamation, Documents historique et administratifs recueillis ou reconstitués* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, p. 96).

“L’Institut, considérant que la précision et la simplicité des principes élémentaires sont la base constitutive d’une bonne école; que ces principes, en même temps qu’ils doivent tendre à agrandir le cercle des connaissances, doivent être dégagés des sophismes systématiques consacrés par l’usage, arête: 1° Les Artistes de l’Institut s’occuperont de la formation des ouvrages élémentaires pour l’étude de la musique, du chant, de l’harmonie, de la composition et de toutes les parties instrumentales; 2° Il est établi une Commission spécialement chargée de la rédaction des principes élémentaires de musique. Cette Commission est formée de compositeurs.”

⁶ Ibid, p. 224.

“Formation des ouvrages élémentaires.

Article 1er. Pour établir l’unité d’enseignement dans toutes les parties de l’art musical, il est imposé aux Membres du Conservatoire l’obligation de s’occuper de la formation des ouvrages élémentaires nécessaires à l’enseignement.

Article 2. Ces ouvrages seront préparés et arrêtés par des Commissions spéciales formées des Professeurs et des parties relatives, de Compositeurs, et présidées par le Directeur du Conservatoire. Des Membres du Conservatoire, professant d’autres parties, et les personnes étrangères à l’établissement,

pourront, s'il y a lieu, être adjoints à ces Commissions.

Article 3. Les ouvrages arrêtés par les Commissions seront sou mis à l'adoption des Membres du Conservatoire réunis en Assemblée générale.

Article 4. L'adoption des ouvrages élémentaires ne peut être que le résultat de la majorité absolue des suffrages de la totalité des Membres du Conservatoire.

Article 5. L'enseignement selon les ouvrages élémentaires adoptés par le Conservatoire, est obligatoire pour tous les Professeurs de cet établissement : le Directeur surveille l'exécution de la présente disposition."

⁷ Ibid, p. 237. (The teaching committee of 1808, signed by Gossec, Méhul, Cherubini and Catel.) "Aucun élève ne peut être admis à suivre un genre d'étude sans être pourvu de l'ouvrage élémentaire prescrit pour son enseignement."

⁸ Hervé Odéon, "Le Conservatoire et l'édition musicale: L'activité du magasin de musique (1794-1814)," in *Le Conservatoire de Paris, Deux Cents ans de pédagogie 1795-1995* (Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1999).

⁹ *Méthode de serpent adoptée par le Conservatoire Impériale de musique pour le service du culte et le service militaire* (Paris: Magasin de Musique, 1814; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff, 1974).

¹⁰ There are some copies preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale under the name of Roze.

¹¹ Two watercolors dated 1773 representing orchestral dispositions on stage are conserved in Versailles.

¹² Métoyen's manuscripts are conserved in bound volumes at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

¹³ All the short quotations in this paragraph are from the "Historiette" inserted by Métoyen in one version of his manuscript. See Appendix for original French text.

¹⁴ Ms 10228. It is referred to as A in the text.

¹⁵ "Cette méthode n'a point été approuvée par Le Conservatoire, qui en a ordonné une autre dont la rédaction a été confiée, à Mrs Gossec et Roze."

¹⁶ Ms 10227 is the manuscript provided later by Métoyen. It is referred to as B in the text. The other (A) displays a lot of editing marks and was probably used by Roze for his project.

¹⁷ Clifford Bevan, *The Tuba Family*, 2nd edn. (Winchester: Piccolo Press 2000), p. 79.

¹⁸ *Méthode de serpent adoptée par le Conservatoire Impériale de musique pour le service du culte et le service militaire*, introductory pages.

¹⁹ William Waterhouse, *The New Langwill Index* (Tony Bingham, 1993), p. 303.

²⁰ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London / New York: Macmillan, 1980), s.v. "serpent," by Reginald Morley-Pegge and Philip Bate. "J.B. Métoyen, musician-in-ordinary to Louis XV and Louis XVI from 1760 to 1792, who was referring to the use of the serpent in church."

²¹ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edn. ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London / New York: Macmillan, 2001), s.v. "Métoyen," by Hervé Audéon.

²² In preparation by Éditions Musicales Européennes, in the series Brass URText.

²³ Abbé Nicolas Roze, *Méthode de plain-chant à l'usage des églises de France* (Paris: Magasin de musique, 1814).

²⁴ The teachers Jacques-Marie Cornu (1795-1800) and Jean-Baptiste Mathieu (1800-1802) for one class, and Gaspard Veillard (1795-1802) for the other.