

**Beyond the Rhine: Harmonic Dualism in
Vincent d'Indy's *Cours de composition musicale* (1902)**
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One of the most prominent Parisian musicians of his era, Vincent d'Indy (1851–1931) made important contributions to composition, pedagogy, and performance practice. His four-volume *Cours de composition musicale* also represents the only French version of German harmonic dualism. Identifying similarities between d'Indy's dualism and Hugo Riemann's theories, contemporaneous critics condemned d'Indy as the “importer, the champion, and the vulgarizer” of Riemannian theory, lambasting his search for “truth on the other side of the Rhine” (Marnold 1917, 516; Saint-Saëns 1919, 11). Robert Gjerdingen (1995), Alexandra Kieffer (2016), and Andrew Pau (2016; 2018) have perpetuated d'Indy's reputation as a Riemannian epigone, arguing that he merely repackaged German ideas for French consumption. Yet the *Cours* offers a version of harmonic dualism profoundly different from Riemann's account.

This paper outlines the treatise's reception in early twentieth-century Paris and in present-day North American music-theoretical literature; analyzes d'Indy's theories of harmony and tonality; and compares and contrasts his ideas with precedents from Riemann (*Vereinfachte Harmonielehre* and *Handbuch der Harmonielehre*) and Arthur von Oettingen (*Harmoniesystem in dualer Entwicklung*). D'Indy synthesizes Riemann's speculative, synchronic impulses and François-Joseph Fétis's aesthetically sensitive, historiographical tendencies, proposing his own dualist system rooted in the circle of fifths. More than what Gjerdingen describes as “a culturally neutral ‘technology transfer’ directed toward bringing the French science of harmony up to date,” the *Cours* represents d'Indy as a pedagogical and theoretical innovator, whose ideas spread harmonic dualism throughout France and abroad (1995, 92).