

**Tanya Kevorkian. 2007. *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650–1750*. Aldershot: Ashgate. xiii, 251 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-5490-2 (paper)**

Barbara Reul

Volume 28, numéro 2, 2008

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/029960ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/029960ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Canadian University Music Society / Société de musique des universités canadiennes

ISSN

1911-0146 (imprimé)

1918-512X (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Reul, B. (2008). Compte rendu de [Tanya Kevorkian. 2007. *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650–1750*. Aldershot: Ashgate. xiii, 251 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-5490-2 (paper)]. *Intersections*, 28(2), 113–116. <https://doi.org/10.7202/029960ar>

- Rae, Charles Bodman. *The Music of Lutosławski*. 3rd ed. London: Omnibus, 1999.
- Robinson, Ray, ed. *Studies in Penderecki*. Vol. 1. Princeton: Prestige, 1998.
- Stucky, Steven. *Lutosławski and His Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Szymanowski, Karol. *Szymanowski on Music: Selected Writings of Karol Szymanowski*. Edited and translated by Alistair Wightman. London: Toccata, 1999.
- Taruskin, Richard. "Introduction." Special issue, *Repercussions* 5, nos. 1–2 (1996): 5–20.
- Thomas, Adrian. *Bacewicz: Chamber and Orchestral Music*. Los Angeles: Polish Music Reference Center, 1985.
- . "File 750: Composers, Politics, and the Festival of Polish Music (1951)." *Polish Music Journal* 5, no. 1 (Summer 2002), [http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish\\_music/PMJ/issues.html](http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issues.html).
- . *Górecki*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Wightman, Alistair. *Karol Szymanowski: His Life and Work*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999.

BRIAN LOCKE

Tanya Kevorkian. 2007. *Baroque Piety: Religion, Society, and Music in Leipzig, 1650–1750*. Aldershot: Ashgate. xiii, 251 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-5490-2 (paper).

This publication paints a tremendously valuable "big picture" of religion, religious culture, and the conflict between Pietists and non-Pietists in Leipzig during the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. Judging from the title, music seems to have played a minor role before and during J. S. Bach's tenure as *Kantor*. Yet Kevorkian opens with a resounding "In August 1730, in a lengthy and impassioned memo to the Leipzig town council, Johann Sebastian Bach complained bitterly about his working conditions," noting that "Bach is better understood . . . in the context of the sprawling social, cultural, and political system that was the urban public religious arena of the Baroque era" (1). Moreover, musicology is listed as the second of three disciplinary areas upon which the book builds, the others being the social history of religion and Pietist history (3). This presents the question of how much the following eight chapters will indeed touch on the role of music (and by extension musicians) in the religious life of a major city in central Germany over the course of a century.

Music features prominently in the first main section entitled "Congregant's Everyday Practices," a fascinating topic that is familiar to many of us.<sup>1</sup> Kevorkian

<sup>1</sup> See Kevorkian's groundbreaking article, "The Reception of the Cantata during Church Services in Leipzig, 1700–1750," *Early Music* 30 (2002): 26–45, reprinted in Bach's *Changing World*, ed. Carol Baron, 174–189 (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006).

outlines in detail how Leipzigers experienced and selectively participated in services at the two main churches, St. Thomas's and St. Nicholas's. Many arrived late, for reasons that sound all too familiar, including excess time spent in front of the mirror and squeezing in some quality time working on other projects before heading out the door. This also meant that far fewer individuals enjoyed music (chants, hymns, cantatas) and Bible readings that were presented during the first hour of the service than the one-hour long sermon, the central part of the service. At least the local elite, members of intermediary-status occupations (notaries, scribes) and artisans and their families did not have to worry about finding an empty seat upon arrival. Regular seats (*Stände*) or benches (*Bänklein*) were the property of or rented by individuals; surprisingly, female burghers owned 70 per cent of regular pews. Very wealthy persons had access to *Capellen* or "chapels" (similar to opera house boxes), a wonderful, cozy alternative during the winter and early spring when church buildings in Leipzig were unheated. All members of the congregation, regardless of gender or social rank, were encouraged to participate in the service, however selectively. They could, for example, sing chorales and listen attentively to the music performed during the service, Kevorkian notes. To that end cantata texts were published separately and available for purchase.

A thorough examination of the "producers" (clergy, city council, consistories, and cantors) follows, and here Kevorkian provides us with much insight into their specific places in urban society. I found it difficult, though, to leave behind my rather focused (and admittedly familiar) "Leipzig comfort zone" in chapter 4 and (re-)immerse myself in historically important religious and legal—rather than musical—matters in the Saxon metropolis Dresden. Granted, learning that consistories administered secular, sacred, and "hybrid" matters surrounding clerics, school employees, sacraments, liturgy, and dogma, as well as the "vast area of marriage and sexuality" (110) was valuable. But I felt much more at home in the "Leipzig's Cantors: Status, Politics and the Adiaphora" chapter, which includes much of the type of musical "background information" that Kevorkian asks her readers upfront "to excuse" as it "will be obvious to them" (3). She reminds us that Pietists and Orthodox writers squabbled in the 1690s over specific types of music, dance, and entertainment and the social context they were taking place in. Trying to come to terms with the emergence of opera and coffee houses and the impact of the Italian secular style on the church cantata, Pietists argued that it shut out the congregation. In contrast, Johann Mattheson, editor of the *Musical Patriot* journal, stressed that music, according to Luther, was value-neutral and that "operas were the best schools for church musicians" (138). What was Bach's position? He had articulated a pro-Baroque and anti-Pietist position, defending instrumental music at church in his Calov-edition Bible.

Kevorkian's expertise as a scholar of Pietist history is evident as she addresses the Pietist alternative in the third main section of her book. Drawing attention to the *collegia pietatis* of 1689–1690 first, she then shines much light on Leipzig's Pietist shadow network active at the time. Pietist musicians are, however, not mentioned. Let me draw your attention to at least one who should have been

included: Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758), a graduate of the Leipzig Thomas-Schule, founder of the second Collegium musicum in Leipzig and Kapellmeister at the Orthodox court of Anhalt-Zerbst from 1722 to 1758. He was a practising Pietist for thirty years and in 1736 corresponded with none other than Pietist leader August Hermann of Halle about important theological matters.<sup>2</sup>

The fourth main section, “The Construction Boom and Beyond,” has Kevorkian eloquently and masterfully explaining how religious life and social change helped stimulate musical culture. A rapid social and economic change was propelled by Leipzig city councillors who oversaw building projects at the New Church, St. Peter’s, and St. George’s in order to make a positive impact on the public religious arena. Musicians and music patronage are discussed last in this chapter and thus remain foremost in our minds in order for a “big picture” to emerge, regardless of our area of expertise or interest.

“Having traced the evolution of public religious culture in Leipzig in the last chapter,” Kevorkian notes in her conclusion, “it is time to locate that change in a broader cultural context” (219). She does so in record time in order to ponder the (welcome) question of how musicians interacted with supporters of the Enlightenment movement in the eighteenth century—even though the “Enlightenment is a topic beyond the scope of this book” (219). Noting that Baroque style, structures, and practices were subject to increased criticism from the 1730s onward, Kevorkian emphasizes that, despite Bach’s occasional dissatisfaction with his position, the *Kantorat* continued to be a sought-after type of employment in all of Germany.

Scholars in many disciplines, not just those mentioned in the title, will welcome this book; in 2008 the American Bach Society honoured it with the prestigious William H. Scheide Award, and for good reason. Despite the many barriers that archival researchers face continually (ranging from access and language issues to struggling with weird scripts and sloppy handwriting), historian Tanya Kevorkian has shown that, because of her painstaking examination of thousands of highly relevant historical documents, it is possible to provide satisfactory answers to the kind of “big picture” questions that have intrigued many of us in a variety of disciplines. Her straightforward, “let’s not waste time” approach to presenting her findings is particularly refreshing, yet the occasional general explanation of unusual terminology (such as *Adiaphora*) and additional music-specific secondary sources in the bibliography would have been welcome.<sup>3</sup> As a detail-oriented historical musicologist I also bemoan the dearth of footnotes in the text, which would have been the perfect forum to clarify just how much new information beyond that presented in earlier publications was in fact included in this book.<sup>4</sup> The pedagogue inside me, though,

---

<sup>2</sup> Elena Sawtschenko, “Briefe von Johann Friedrich Fasch im Archiv der Frankeschen Stiftungen Halle,” in *Das Wirken des Anhalt-Zerbster Hofkapellmeisters Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688–1758) für auswärtige Hofkapellen*, ed. Internationale Fasch-Gesellschaft e.V. [Konstanze Musketa], 85–110 (Dessau: Anhalt Edition, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> For example, Andrew Parrott’s book *The Essential Bach Choir* (2000) is conspicuously absent.

<sup>4</sup> The author draws attention to some of her publications in the “Acknowledgment” section of the book but neglects to provide specific references in footnotes.

looks forward to using this fabulous monograph in her teaching for many years to come and will remind her students to emulate Tanya Kevorkian's clear and cogent writing style whenever possible.

BARBARA M. REUL

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. 2008. *Dictionnaire de musique : fac-similé de l'édition de 1768 augmenté des planches sur la lutherie tirées de l'encyclopédie de Diderot*, édition préparée et présentée par Claude Dauphin. Arles (Bouches-du-Rhône) : Actes Sud. LCVIII + (xiv + 683 p.), ISBN : 978-2-7427-6956-8 (couverture souple).

Publiée chez Actes Sud au début de 2008, la nouvelle édition du *Dictionnaire de musique* de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, proposée par Claude Dauphin, se compose d'une longue introduction de 118 pages à laquelle fait suite le fac-similé de l'édition de 1768<sup>1</sup>. Il s'agissait pour Dauphin de replacer l'ouvrage dans les contextes philosophique, esthétique et artistique du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Rappelons que l'auteur, en tant qu'ethnomusicologue et musicologue, a réalisé un parcours universitaire quelque peu atypique en partant de l'étude de la musique traditionnelle des Antilles (plus spécialement l'île d'Haïti), pour aboutir à la pédagogie musicale et à l'étude du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Professeur à l'Université du Québec à Montréal, Dauphin a manifesté des intérêts multiples qui l'ont conduit à aborder l'œuvre de Jean-Jacques Rousseau sous les angles de la musicologie, de l'anthropologie et de la pédagogie, ce dont témoignent deux précédentes publications, *Rousseau musicien des lumières* de 1992 et *La musique au temps des encyclopédistes* de 2001 (voir en bibliographie).

En 2004, Dauphin annonçait dans un article de la revue *La Pensée* la parution prochaine d'une édition critique comprenant une comparaison entre le *Dictionnaire de musique* et les articles de musique de l'*Encyclopédie* (Dauphin 2004, 35). Cet ouvrage vient de sortir au moment d'envoyer cette recension sous presse, mais la publication qui nous occupe livre plutôt à ses lecteurs les 683 pages du « fac-similé de l'édition de 1768 augmenté des planches sur la lutherie tirées de l'*Encyclopédie* de Diderot » (page titre). Le fac-similé de l'édition reproduite par Dauphin (deuxième livraison in-8<sup>o</sup>) a fait l'objet d'une grande attention comme le souligne l'« Avertissement » de la présente édition (p. VI). La présentation, de même que les reproductions du texte et des différentes planches, sont en effet très soignées.

Un rapide survol des catalogues de bibliothèques et une recherche sur internet suffisent cependant pour que le lecteur ait à sa disposition de nombreuses reproductions du *Dictionnaire de musique* publié en 1768, parmi lesquelles plusieurs en format papier (en fac-similé (Rousseau, 1969; Rousseau, 1998) ou modernes (Rousseau, 1995)) ainsi qu'une version électronique (disponible depuis avril 2007). Plusieurs éditions de 1768 en fac-similé sont donc maintenant

---

<sup>1</sup> L'auteur de cette recension tient à remercier chaleureusement le comité de lecture de la revue pour ses conseils avisés.