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Curtis Price, ed. *The Early Baroque Era: From the Late 16th Century to the 1660s*. Music and Society. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1993. xiv, 400 pp. ISBN 0-13-223835-7 (hardcover), ISBN 0-13-223793-8 (paperback)

George J. Buelow, editor. *The Late Baroque Era: From the 1660s to 1740*. Music and Society. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1993. xii, 522 pp. ISBN 0-13-104340-4 (hardcover), ISBN 0-13-529983-7 (paperback)

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familiar with ancient music than they might wish to be. Perhaps he has the advantage that, in contrast to the Middle Ages, so much material survives on the context for music, with so little actual music to get in the way. Barker's verdict on Plato's "pious twaddle" and reactionary griping about declining music values (63) in *The Republic* and *Laws* is refreshing. Under the rubric of *Plus ça change ...*, his conclusion that Plato's ostensibly aesthetic dismay was really due to a new separation of musical and social values shows us how the events of a few years ago relating to pop music, Tipper Gore, and the American Senate hearings grew out of a very ancient conflict.

Finally, Christopher Page's magnificent essay on the Troubadours and Trouveres is exactly what one hoped to find. He largely ignores the genres, sources, even the names – matters he trusts us to learn about elsewhere – and instead takes us into their world through equal measures of solid research and letting their poetry speak. Fascinating pictures of persons and lives emerge. In this context, the episode comparing the otherwise pious girls who "run free and dance *caroles*" to aristocrats' dogs fighting with their fellows in town when they get the chance is worth any number of manuscript studies (207).

The limited success of this volume reflects, not sloppy work on the part of its contributors, but rather what is now seen as scholarship's failure to really address the question of "music and society." Most of the work on which it depends is now close to ten years old, and in many cases older, and this impediment shows. In the past decade, a good deal of study has been undertaken using approaches which will eventually make its still-needed successor, or second edition, a much greater achievement.

Terry Brown

Curtis Price, ed. *The Early Baroque Era: From the Late 16th Century to the 1660s. Music and Society*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1993. xiv, 400 pp. ISBN 0-13-223835-7 (hardcover), ISBN 0-13-223793-8 (paperback), referred to below as I:

1. Curtis Price, "Music, Style and Society";
2. Tim Carter, "The North Italian Courts";
3. Silke Leopold, "Rome: Sacred and Secular";
4. Ellen Rosand, "Venice, 1580–1680";
5. Anne Schnoebelen, "Bologna, 1580–1700";
6. John Walter Hill, "Florence: Musical Spectacle and Drama, 1570–1650";
7. Theophil Antonicek, "Vienna, 1580–1705";
8. Gina Spagnoli, "Dresden at the Time of Schutz";
9. George J. Buelow, "Protestant North Germany";
10. Martin Medforth, "The Low Countries";
11. Catherine Massip, "Paris, 1600–61";
12. Marcelle Benoit,

"Paris, 1661–87: the Age of Lully"; 13. Peter Walls, "London, 1603–49"; 14. Peter Holman, "London: Commonwealth and Restoration"; 15. Louise K. Stein, "Spain"; 16. Steven Barwick, "Mexico".

George J. Buelow, editor. *The Late Baroque Era: From the 1660s to 1740. Music and Society*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1993. xii, 522 pp. ISBN 0-13-104340-4 (hardcover), ISBN 0-13-529983-7 (paperback), referred to below as II:

1. George J. Buelow, "Music and Society in the Late Baroque Era"; 2. Malcolm Boyd, "Rome: the Power of Patronage"; 3. Eleanor Selfridge-Field, "Venice in an Era of Political Decline"; 4. Carolyn Gianturco, "Naples: a City of Entertainment"; 5. Julie Anne Sadie, "Paris and Versailles"; 6. George J. Buelow, "Hamburg and Lubeck"; 7. George J. Buelow, "Dresden in the Age of Absolutism"; 8. Bernd Baselt, "Brandenburg-Prussia and the Central German Courts"; 9. George B. Stauffer, "Leipzig: a Cosmopolitan Trade Centre"; 10. Robert Münster, "Courts and Monasteries in Bavaria"; 11. Susan Wollenberg, "Vienna under Joseph I and Charles VI"; 12. Donald Burrows, "London: Commercial Wealth and Cultural Expansion"; 13. Rudolf Rasch, "The Dutch Republic"; 14. Louise K. Stein, "The Iberian Peninsula"; 15. Miloš Velimirović, "Warsaw, Moscow and St Petersburg."

These two books take a fresh look at the Baroque period by abandoning the usual emphasis on musical analysis, and concentrating instead on the context in which the music was composed. Both books begin with excellent introductions by the editors, Curtis Price and George Buelow. Both give an overview of different aspects of the baroque period, putting musical developments in perspective and dispelling myths concerning, for example, the dissemination of musical styles. Price discusses the move from the so-called "*ars perfecta*" of the late Renaissance to the "expressive vocal and instrumental music of the 'second practice'" (I: 1). He then concentrates on two areas of baroque music: "The diffusion of Italian musical culture," including a look at the development of the continuo; and "Opera: an international perspective". Buelow, on the other hand, begins with a general introduction to the late baroque period, noting the origins and meaning of the term "baroque". He outlines the problems with "the very notion of a single 'Baroque' style" because of the diversity of styles found within the period covered by the "Baroque" (II: 2). Buelow's discussion looks at a number of different areas: "Music and patronage"; "Style as a focus of creativity"; "Instrumental music in the late Baroque"; "The legacy of the

Baroque in music"; and "Bach and Handel". These introductory chapters are representative of the volumes as a whole in that they assume a certain amount of musical knowledge, but explain important concepts, such as the continuo, for non-specialist readers. A careful balance between writing for the general reader and writing for the early music specialist is, on the whole, maintained.

Although interrelated (with cross-references to earlier chapters), each chapter has its own particular structure. This type of approach creates problems for the editor attempting to ensure a degree of continuity and consistency with such diverse styles of writing and choices of topic. It means, however, that authors are not forced into discussing issues that are not relevant. Since each chapter (almost without exception) reads well and abounds with interesting material, the problem of overall consistency becomes almost irrelevant. The reader can enjoy one chapter at a time, without needing to read the whole book at one sitting. Each chapter is subdivided into sections, and it would have been useful to have had these listed in the table of contents for ease of reference.

The emphasis upon geographical centres does not allow for a traditional chronological approach and results in certain anomalies. Each chapter concentrates on a particular city or region and each covers a slightly different chronological period. For example, there is a chapter on "Florence: Musical Spectacle and Drama, 1570–1650" (I: 121–45), followed by a chapter on "Vienna, 1580–1705" (I: 146–63). While at first glance this type of discrepancy in time span may seem illogical, it appears to be the best method here since it allows the writers to concentrate on the significant historical, political, social and musical events, rather than being forced to discuss events of little or no significance. Obviously, certain cities were highly productive during certain periods, but rarely did such productivity last for the entire period covered by the book. It would be futile to try to discuss in detail periods in which there was little important activity.

There is also flexibility in the choice of topic. Some chapters, such as "Dresden at the Time of Heinrich Schütz" (I: 164–84) or "Paris, 1661–87: the Age of Lully" (I: 238–69) focus largely on one composer (Schütz and Lully respectively) and his influence on the musical developments of the period. There are other chapters which give an overview of the activities of many composers working at a particular time and place and the interactions of these composers, such as "Rome: Sacred and Secular" (I: 49–74). The type and size of geographic region chosen for each chapter differs greatly. Some chapters concentrate exclusively on one city, while other authors choose to look at a couple of cities together. Still others look at a wider geographic region. While the arrangement of the chapters topographically may not be ideal (since it does not always emphasize certain important links between geographically-

removed, though musically-related, establishments), it does enable authors to concentrate on the overall life of a place and thus enable the reader to imagine the role and place of music in that particular society. It is largely the responsibility of the reader to make comparisons with other regions.

The length of the chapters varies, as does the type of material discussed. For example, in the chapter on Leipzig (II: 254–95), there is an entire section (of over six pages) devoted to the Fairs and Book Trade. This might seem rather excessive in a volume on the history of music, but the reason for the author's choice of material is clear: the fairs were important in the dissemination of printed material (including music) and served as an incentive to local composers, such as J. S. Bach, to print their own music ready for the fairs. This is clearly significant in the development of music. As the author, George B. Stauffer notes "Bach did not have to leave town to keep abreast of musical tastes; the fairs kept him *au courant*" (II: 261). The commercial importance of the fairs also influenced the style of architecture that dominated Leipzig. As Stauffer writes, "private houses were built in a way that maximized the amount of first-floor area that could be used as commercial arcades" (II: 257).

Both books give the reader copious quotations from contemporary material. This is an excellent means of painting a picture of the period as well as being useful in confirming the arguments used by the authors. Obviously, these are still subjective accounts of the experiences of a particular writer, but at least they are contemporary subjective accounts! For example, Malcolm Boyd cites a contemporary description of a concert held at Ruspoli's Palace in Rome on 31 March 1715. The diary account was written by a German traveller, J. F. A. von Uffenbach, and describes a performance of Caldara's oratorio *Abisai*. The account is a perfect way of creating for the reader a visual and audible impression of the occasion. The writer describes the surroundings in which the concert was held "[we] were led through many splendidly furnished rooms to an exceedingly grand and long gallery in which as in the whole house, were incomparable paintings and silver artefacts." At the end of the quotation we learn that "there was a very large audience, which included many ladies and several cardinals, among them Cardinal Ottoboni, who never misses such things." From these two comments the reader can imagine the sumptuous venue and the elegant and élite audience. Uffenbach also describes where the audience and singers sat. As well as being of interest to the general reader, this type of information is useful to performers interested in attempting to recreate the original setting for a particular performance. The writer also includes a comment on the singing, noting that he had "found also that none of the voices usually heard in the opera could equal these" and commenting that the singers were accompanied by instrumentalists, including "a violin which was uncom-

monly well played and many other instruments played to perfection” (II: 59–60). From these comments, the reader learns of the quality of the musical performance. The author, Malcolm Boyd, gives both the original source and its location and a secondary source in the end-of-chapter notes. He also gives a correction of a statement made by Uffenbach in his account. This type of quotation, used to justify a particular writer’s theories and to paint a realistic picture of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century society, is typical of those that appear throughout the two volumes. Not all authors are as meticulous in documenting source material, and the editors should perhaps have noticed certain discrepancies. For example, the chapter by Julie Anne Sadie on “Paris and Versailles” includes interesting quotations from Dr. Martin Lister’s *A Journey to Paris in the Year 1698*. The source is named with the first reference, but subsequent quotations (including one over twenty pages later) give no reference to their source, nor any end-of-chapter notes to explain the source or to refer back to the earlier quotation. This omission is frustrating to the reader. Space may be at a premium in these volumes, but this type of information should not be sacrificed.

For the most part quotations appear only in English. It would have been interesting to have had the quotations given in their original language, accompanied by translations. Presumably, space again dictated this editorial decision. Songs and poems, however, appear either with translations appearing in the end-of-chapter notes or together with the original text. There is one exception (II: 158) where two short quotations are given only in French. While many readers will have no problems reading and understanding this, the objective of embracing a general readership surely means that this text should have included a translation. In addition to quotations from contemporary sources, there are numerous excellent illustrations (I: 7 and II: 65). These are accompanied by brief descriptions which on the whole are informative (at least within the confines of a single sentence). The amount and type of information given by the individual writers varies considerably. For example, there are a number of reproductions of contemporary paintings depicting musical scenes. For some of these (such as I: 331) the reader is told the names of the instruments represented in the painting; whereas elsewhere (such as I: 69 and II: 112) no such mention is made. Considering the intended broad readership, it would have been helpful to have a comment on the instruments being used (still within the confines of a sentence). Although acknowledgments are given for the illustrations at the beginning of both books, it would have been useful for the reader to be given information concerning the source of the illustration within the main text or in the end-of-chapter notes. The layout of the acknowledgments is not particularly easy to use. Here, it appears that legal considerations

(concerning copyright) take precedence over clear documentation of relevant information. Surely the editors could have followed a procedure that was acceptable in both respects.

The maps at the beginning of Volume I are useful in locating the different regions and cities in Northern Europe and Italy. It would have been interesting and useful to have had these in Volume II as well. Not everyone who purchases a copy of Volume II will necessarily own the earlier volume and the information is relevant to both.

At the end of the books there are excellent chronological tables. These serve as quick-and-easy reference tools where, at a glance, the reader can see what was happening in a particular year in the musical world (“music and musicians”) as well as in the wider world (“politics, war, rulers,” “literature, philosophy, religion,” “science, technology, discovery” and “fine and decorative arts, architecture”). It is a simple and highly effective means of conveying information necessary to place music in context which, after all, is the objective of the books.

The criticisms that I have made of these two books are slight – often merely cosmetic. All the chapters (in differing ways) fulfill the objective of the series. This approach, in my view, is one of the most (if not the most) appropriate and effective ways of discussing music. Peter le Huray commented that Ralph Vaughan Williams once compared a page of music to a railway timetable, where the page tells us no more about the living experience of the music than the timetable tells us about the sights to be enjoyed during the journey.<sup>1</sup> Surely part of the information that we need to appreciate music more fully is a greater understanding of the society from which this music emerged. To what extent social, political, religious and cultural aspects influenced the composition of music can never be determined precisely. The fact that they did have an effect on the lives of composers, and the type, style and volume of compositions produced must be accepted.

I can wholeheartedly recommend these books to anyone interested in music from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Readers new to the area of baroque music and specialists in the field will gain insight into life in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The authors have been successful with their appointed task of explaining why music history has unfolded the way that it did, albeit in different ways. They awaken interest in the subject and encourage readers to look into matters in greater depth and with new insights. These accomplishments should be lauded.

C. Jane Gosine

<sup>1</sup> Peter le Huray, *Authenticity in Performance: 18th-Century Case Studies* (Cambridge, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1960), 1.