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Words without music in the German Baroque

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miscegenations of spellings are evident in English words, too, the index has 'skilfully', but p.77 has 'skillfully'. And so on. Does it matter? It is symptomatic of the lack of care bestowed on the book; and if the matching of instrument and word depends on anything other than hearsay or romantic tradition, then it does matter. Philology has a vital part to play in shedding light on the problems of recognition and terminology.

The discussion of the *kinnor* inexplicably fails to mention Lake Gennesareth (*Kinnereth* or *Kinnerôt*), whose shape is surely relevant. In connection with this and other stringed instruments, the Phoenicians get no mention, nor do Ugaritic or Egyptian sources, and the author seems not to have made himself aware of the writings of Landel or of many other informative authors who have dealt with stringed and other instruments that appear to have biblical connections. So, regrettably, Montagu's aim 'to identify those musical instruments that appear in the Bible' is not fulfilled.

Stephen Rose

Words without music in the German Baroque

Anthony J. Harper, *German secular songbooks of the mid-17th century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), £47.50

Judith P. Aikin, *A language for German opera: the development of forms and formulas for recitative and aria in 17th-century German libretti*, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung, xxxvii (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), € 79

For many of the secular songs and music-dramas from 17th-century Germany only the words survive. In the case of staged works, the music was rarely considered worth printing or preserving in a durable form. As for secular songs, often the tunes were so familiar that notation was unnecessary. Consequently many music historians have ignored these aspects of German culture, preferring to focus instead on the sacred music of church and court. The two books under review, however, are by literary historians and show how closely poetry and music were related in the period. Often, indeed, musicians were expected to write the texts as well as the tunes of their songs.

Anthony Harper, a distinguished scholar of the

Baroque lyric, offers a survey of the songbooks from German Protestant lands. These books contain strophic verse by numerous poets and musicians; only a few, such as the *Arien* of Heinrich Albert, contain notated music. Harper focuses on the secular verse, although many Lutheran collections such as Albert's were characterized by a mix of secular and spiritual songs.

Harper is at his strongest in the first chapter, where he discusses the fundamental features of German secular music in the period. He asks how German culture might be defined in an era before Germany existed politically, noting that poets writing in German might be found as far afield as Riga in the east and the Dutch Republic in the west (pp.20–22). Many songs were originally written for occasions such as weddings and funerals, and as a result the published collections often document the social circles in which musician-poets moved. Harper also explores the nature of poetic and musical invention in the period, showing the ubiquity of parody (where an existing poem is varied or wittily reversed) and of contrafacta (where an existing tune is given new words, pp.28–9).

The rest of the book is a survey of song-verse from three regions: Saxony; Hamburg and surrounding lands; and the Baltic strip running to Königsberg. Here Harper offers an insightful guide to the themes and poetic register of the songs. The love songs tend to praise virtue or morality, and can seem positively angelic when compared to the innuendo of the Italian equivalents of the period. Other lyrics deal with male friendship or fraternal love; some are peasant songs, perhaps for the amusement of town-dwellers or courtiers (pp.135, 221). Harper's knowledge of rhetorical conventions is particularly useful when he analyses the prefaces to the songbooks. Often the prefaces feign artlessness, claim that the songs were hurriedly written, or express mixed feelings about popularity (pp.87–8, 240, 253). Harper reminds us that all these motifs are familiar rhetorical strategies and cannot necessarily be taken at face value.

Harper also traces the numerous contacts between musician-poets in different regions. Often these links transcend present-day boundaries: thus Leipzigers had close links with Königsberg, while the Dutch Republic was of importance to authors as diverse as Heinrich Albert and Philipp von Zesen. Sometimes, though, Harper forgets to show the political reasons for such links. His discussion of the interchange between Danish and Saxon poets would have been enriched by mentioning the many dynastic marriages between the ruling families of Denmark and Saxony (p.246).

Whereas Harper is concerned with strophic song-verse, Judith Aikin's book traces the efforts to develop alternative verse forms for German opera. As she explains, around 1600 most German poets used sing-song metres that were 'a clumsy and ineffective vehicle for conveying emotional content'. What was needed was a flexible yet structured form of verse that established 'a specifically German rhythmic structure' for recitative (pp.20–22). This was a challenge that taxed many intellectuals, poets and musicians of the day, including Heinrich Schütz. In tracing the development of such verse-forms, Aikin takes us on a tour of numerous little-known music dramas from German courts. Many of these survive only as librettos, but often Aikin's analysis of the verse suggests what the music might have been like, as with her discussion of *Die Bußfertige Magdalena* (pp.66–77). Metrics and rhyme are not the easiest topics to explain with clarity, and Aikin does not write as deftly as Harper; yet her book helps us understand how poets and composers of the Baroque created a counterpoint between metrical accent and the sense of the words. And although her focus is firmly on the metrics, she also discusses in passing the plots and dramatic potential of the librettos, and includes many intriguing facsimiles of text-booklets and stage designs.

Both Aikin and Harper stress that they are not musicians and do not aim to offer technical insights into musical matters. Yet Aikin still manages to offer a sophisticated account of early German monody and its relationship with older styles such as ecclesiastical chant (pp.39–44). Harper's book, by contrast, would have benefited from editing by a musician: it contains several howlers, notably a reference to 'piano compositions' of the time (p.119). A more fundamental criticism is that neither book offers translations of the German quotations. Such an omission is greatly to be regretted, because the original German can be hard for even an expert to read. A non-specialist is likely to skip over the excerpts, even though they are at the heart of both authors' arguments.

Yet both books are invaluable in introducing English speakers to the richness of German secular music. I hope they might encourage performers to explore the secular repertoires where notated music survives, such as Albert's *Arien* or the 1644 opera *Seelewig*. Above all, Aikin and Harper show us how poetry and music stood in a close and mutually enriching relationship. As the Nuremberg organist Johann Löhner explained in his *Geistlichen Erquick-Stunden* of 1673: 'Without a tune a lyric is dead, and without words a melody is an empty voice; thus one gives life to the other.'

Geoffrey Baker

Small-town Spain

Miguel Ángel Marín, *Music on the margin: urban musical life in 18th-century Jaca (Spain)* (Kassel: Reichenberger, 2002)

The study of music in urban settings is as old as musicology itself; however, a more self-reflexive consideration of the relationship between such settings and musical practice is a more recent development. Building on recent approaches to urban musicology such as Fiona Kisby's edited volume *Music and musicians in Renaissance cities and towns* (2001), Miguel Ángel Marín's *Music on the margin* brings the 'background' to the fore through a detailed exploration of the distinctive urban environment of Jaca, a small town in north-eastern Spain, as a constitutive element of local musical life. He uncovers the ways in which the interactions between institutions and individuals characteristic of a small-town setting encouraged collaborative music-making and a marked localism in professional recruitment patterns; yet by showing Jaca's participation in the national and international circulation of music, he avoids characterizing the provincial setting as backward. Indeed, Marín's achievement is to reveal a richness and complexity of musical life that one would hardly suspect in a small border town.

At the centre of his picture is the music chapel of Jaca Cathedral. However, unlike previous generations of Spanish scholars, he focuses on the blurred boundaries and heterogeneous nature of this *capilla de música*, and devotes considerable attention to the social, professional and economic context of its members, and to their networks of family, colleagues and friends. By examining residence patterns, he concludes that musicians were not a distinctive group, but were part of the larger community of cathedral personnel. Data from musicians' wills shows that, while musical positions in the cathedral were avidly sought, they did not provide incumbents with improved living conditions, suggesting that the status attached to musical posts was their primary attraction. The close connections between musicians and other residents of Jaca, as well as the town's peripheral location and low salaries at the cathedral, led to a static musical environment, challenging the prevailing view of high mobility among Spanish church musicians.

Marín also insists upon the important contribution of other institutions to the urban soundscape, drawing atten-