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Peter Williams. *The Organ in Western Culture, 750-1250.* Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1993. xx, 397 pp. ISBN 0-521- 41843-7

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1540. Further, taking into account textual structure and musical setting, the author focusses on two works, which provide explicit information as to their context, function and manner of performance.

The value of the studies in this edition cannot be overestimated. The book provides the reader with a wealth of technical and historical information. Several essays are presented as works in progress, with both explicit and implicit suggestions as to the directions that need to be taken, and the amount of work that is yet to be accomplished in order to bring early music specialists to a fuller and more accurate comprehension of the styles and functions of as well as the connections between sacred and liturgical, Latin and vernacular medieval and early Renaissance repertories. In this respect, the essays also serve a rather practical and convenient function for the young scholar in search of a dissertation topic, in that they stress those areas that require further exploration and excavation.

Only a few minor criticisms need to be made with respect to the edition itself. An editorial slip occurs in the explicit in table 6 on p. 329 –"chart" should read "chant". Also, short, single notes, occupying one line at the foot of a page (for example, pp. 99, 103, 113, 139, 181, 250, 255) should not be centred, but, for the sake of consistency, be indented in the same manner as in cases where several footnotes of one line or more in length appear on a page. Labels for "figures" would be better grasped visually, if they appeared above rather than below (for example, p. 68) the material to which they refer. References to melodic pitches above middle *c* would be more easily detectable if italicized rather than presented in conventional typescript, in which case the higher-case letters used to refer to pitches below middle *c* might also warrant italicization. Finally, in some instances, the presentation of musical examples, with the intention to illustrate melodic variants between concordant versions, requires more accurate alignment, as, for example, on pp. 254 and 259.

In sum, this rigorous text offers challenging insights and provides stimulating reading. Despite the somewhat regrettable price, no medieval library should be without it. *Capite*!

Olga E. Malyshko

Peter Williams. *The Organ in Western Culture, 750–1250*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1993. xx, 397 pp. ISBN 0-521-41843-7.

The history of organ building often begins with a brief reference to the hydraulis known in Greek and Roman times and flits lightly through time to the Gothic

period. What happened to this instrument in the intervening years? Could it have been revived, metamorphosed from the simple instrument with a few keys and pipes to the complex instrument with multiple keyboards, and a loud, if not magnificent sound described at the beginning of Gothic times? Peter Williams, is obviously intrigued with this question and attempts to fill in this large blank.

Williams, true to his usual craft, has given us a text in which original sources are combed to tease out the minutest fragment of information. On glancing at the title, I hoped that, by some miracle, a new source had been discovered which would add to the information given by writers in the first millennium, such as Vitruvius or Theophilus. This is not the case, and as a result, Williams is dealing with material which has already been studied by many authors in this century. Books such as those by H. G. Farmer (*The Organ of the Ancients from Eastern Sources*, [1931]) or by J. Perrot (*The Organ from its Invention in the Hellenistic Period to the end of the Thirteenth Century*, [1971]) are familiar texts to English readers, and many articles exist which deal with specific instruments or aspect of instruments from this period. Thus Williams tackles no unfamiliar territory and he considers carefully the views held by his predecessors adding not so much new information as new questions.

Williams explains in his introduction that this began, not as a book about organs and organ construction, but with the idea of discovering how the organ came to be in the church. Thus the first and last chapters have almost identical titles: "How did the organ come to be accepted by the Church? Some earlier answers" and "How did the organ come to be accepted by the Church? Some new hypotheses."

The eighteen intervening chapters are divided into three sections dealing with "Organs, music and architecture," "Organs and documentation," "Organs and written technology." He admits in his introduction that he often is compelled to use the same sources in examining different topics, and so it happens occasionally that one feels one might have probed a particular question at an earlier point. But this is not truly the case, for he is most logical in working through the different problems posed by an instrument which moved from secular use to sacred with no explanation by the church, and an instrument which requires so many different skills in its construction.

When quoting Latin texts, he is particular in providing them with a parallel translation so that it is easy for the reader to compare both. This is helpful in dealing with the problem of the precise meaning of many Latin words which can have a variety of meanings, the most obvious being *organum* which, for the mediaeval mind, may refer to such diverse things as ensemble music, various instruments, polyphony and, of course, organ. For example:

> *post Sanctus, poterunt* after the *Sanctus*, they [the choir?] will be
> *organizare cum* able to perform ensemble music [?] with
> *vocibus vel organis* voices or organa
>
> One can only guess whether *organa* is used in an old or new sense, thus meaning either 'vocal organum' or 'organs' (83).

In the first section he investigates the obvious links between organs and polyphony including the possibility that a keyboard might be used in counterpoint. The impact of the organ on tuning is addressed as is the compass of the keyboard. This is continued with the question "When might organs have been heard?" thus meeting squarely the problem of what music might have been played. Dealing with this question opens up a large number of secondary reflections such as the importance of processions and accompanying music, whether it be bells or strings. His suggestions are always plausible and open up areas for speculation in the mind of the reader without belabouring the point. Thus when describing the *Te Deum* he may say,

> Quite what the organ played and when it played it is never described in sufficient details, but it is tempting to see it sounding forth the hymn's 'melodic cell' E G A C H A as the *plebes* and/or full choir were singing ... (89).

and assist in reflection on a number of possibilities, even though no evidence may be available. He continues on to make a logical suggestion as to how *alternatim* use of the organ might well have begun and gradually assumed a more important role.

The use of bells is also considered not only from the musical point of view, but also the practical since the purchase of bells by a church or monastery involved the casting of metal by itinerant workers, in the same way that specialised metal work is involved in the making of pipes. Organ placement has its own chapter and here the question of church-design is examined in a way ignored by most writers. The placement of the organ in atrium, clerestory and transept are all examined with an eye to the layout of the buildings, plans of which are included. Some of his suggestions are striking, such as,

> Getting the people to admire a technological masterpiece must have been one of the reasons for organs entering the church, and they often remained near one or other entrance... . (131).

"Organs and documentation" reveals Williams at his best in examining original sources and posing questions to advance an argument which the reader must consider but not necessarily accept. In some ways, this is the heart of the power of Williams' writings; one reads on with interest, because there are no paths which are blocked with bald assumptions.

The illustrations from sources such as the Utrecht and Stuttgart Psalters are reproduced excellently (as compared to some line drawings in previous texts) making it possible to follow exactly Williams' explanations and theories. These and other parallel manuscript illustrations are examined minutely for whatever information regarding organ construction they might reveal. Because such illustrations are so rare, Williams is careful to acknowledge that the artists may well be following convention rather than experience, but on the other hand this begs the question as to the source of significant details. In a similar way, the description by Wulfstan of Winchester of an organ is also carefully regarded.

As he moves through various references to organs in manuscripts before 1300, Williams becomes less tentative and more explicit in building up a picture of the more complicated instrument found in the fourteenth century. This is assisted by greater attention being drawn to organ in the later manuscripts and also by a more precise reference to these instruments.

At this point, Williams returns to the manuscripts to draw a pattern in the development of technology. Here are specific references to windtrunks made of oak, chests made of copper, pipe-measurements and other details. These texts often have to do with other matters, such as wood-working and bell casting, or wire-drawing. Especially interesting is the introduction of clock-making as relevant to the timberwork involved in organ construction. Keys, pallets and cases are then discussed. Here Williams has to extend his limitation of the year 1250 and move into the following century and even touch on such a late writer as Arnaut de Zwolle. One is glad that he was able to include some ideas on the early Blockwerk, and its composition.

The final chapter examines anew the presence of organs in churches, and makes a distinction between the south of Europe, where organs were heard from the atrium and the north where organs were brought within the sanctuary proper. The evidence is slender since organs were often mentioned in relation to a more important piece of furnishing or even chapel. He concludes that lay-workers built organs, but because they were not of clerical rank, they did not record their work, nor was it of enough interest for the clerics to record. He also concludes that the organ, with its loud sustained sound, was meant to amaze the *plebes* and therefore would be proudly used in public events. It was useful for its range of musical effects, and in its primitive form was relatively easy to play;

authorized by Augustine and Jerome, what greater advantage could an instrument have in providing a festive sound on occasion.

This book is the first in a series, Cambridge Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music, and with its mastery of detail and its thorough treatment of various aspects of instrument building and music theory, will interest a wider range of readers than students of organs and organ music.

William Wright

Gary Tomlinson. *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993. xvi, 291 pp. ISBN 0-226-80791-6 (hardcover).

In a recent article by Bruno Nettl entitled "The Dual Nature of Ethnomusicology in North America: The Contributions of Charles Seeger and George Herzog," the author comments that American ethnomusicologists tend to think of their work in dualisms – sound and context, anthropology and musicology, theory and application.[1] In the last several decades, which have seen the institutionalization of ethnomusicology in the North American academy, ethnomusicology has exerted varying kinds of influence on historical musicology; a heightened awareness and need on the part of scholars to consider seriously social and cultural factors is an example. Notwithstanding some historic tensions between the two disciplines, there is an emerging corpus of research in which attitudes and critical methods from both historical musicology and ethnomusicology are combined in innovative ways. Some of these resonate with and extend Nettl's dualisms: one of the most striking is relationships between the interpreter and the interpreted, and questions of "otherness" and "difference." Gary Tomlinson's recent book is a case in point. In Tomlinson's text, the discussion is constructed elegantly and with scholarly thoroughness around the dualism of hermeneutic and archaeological levels of interpretation.

A historical musicologist at the University of Pennsylvania, Tomlinson is known for his doctoral dissertation (UCLA 1979) on the humanist heritage of early opera, several related articles, *Monteverdi and the End of the Renaissance* (1987), and, of course, *Music in Renaissance Magic*. These writings have earned for Tomlinson a deserved reputation as a distinguished Renaissance specialist. A close reading of *Music in Renaissance Magic* shows Tomlinson

1 Bruno Nettl, "The Dual Nature of Ethnomusicology in North America: The Contributions of Charles Seeger and George Herzog," *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music*, ed. Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 273.