

REVIEWS



BOOKS

Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2020
doi:10.1017/S1478570620000111

PIERRE-YVES BEAUREPAIRE, PHILIPPE BOURDIN AND CHARLOTTA WOLFF, EDS
MOVING SCENES: THE CIRCULATION OF MUSIC AND THEATRE IN EUROPE, 1700–1815
Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2018
pp. xii + 392, ISBN 978 0 729 41206 3

Between 20 and 22 November 2014 scholars met at the Université Nice Sophia-Antipolis for the colloquium ‘Musical and Theatrical Circulation in Europe, 1750–1850’. This gathering, together with three research projects directed by the editors, formed the basis for the collection of essays considered here. Edited by Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, Philippe Bourdin and Charlotta Wolff, *Moving Scenes: The Circulation of Music and Theatre in Europe, 1700–1815* posits circulation – of ideas, agents and material culture – as the foundation upon which common European musical and theatrical repertoires were constructed. Twenty-one scholars from four countries have contributed chapters to *Moving Scenes*: most (seventeen) were active at French universities at the time of publication, though the editors have achieved a fine representation of genders and career stages among their contributors. Framed within Beaurepaire and Wolff’s Introduction setting out the aims of the collection and Bourdin’s Conclusion nicely tying them together, the contributions explore how the study of mobility and cosmopolitanism in eighteenth-century Europe offers new insights that add nuance to enduring national histories and literary canons.

Moving Scenes is divided into three parts. Part 1, ‘National Taste and Cultural Domination’, comprises six case studies that investigate such topics as the national identities of musicians and composers at institutions including the Opéra, King’s Theatre and the Musique du roi; the founding of the Bibliothèque du Conservatoire; competition between French and local theatre troupes in territories occupied and annexed by France; and the limitations of French theatrical imperialism. With nine chapters, Part 2, ‘Actors and Patterns of Circulation’, is the volume’s most extensive. The case studies in this central section seek to uncover the ways in which musical and dramatic agents and materials were exchanged, as well as the meanings behind such cross-cultural mobility. They do so by exploring how theatrical information was disseminated via written sources, including newspapers and personal correspondence, the role of diplomacy in European court operatic cultures, and the diaspora and social mobility of dramatists and Freemason actors. Part 3, ‘Translations and Adaptations in Revolution’, nicely rounds off the collection with six further chapters. As the title suggests, this concluding section examines the transmission of pieces for the stage among Great Britain, France, the Italian states and the Holy Roman Empire in the years surrounding the French Revolution. Individual chapters address the cultural repercussions of theatre intended for young audiences, the role of Venetian publishers in translating French stage works, Jean-Jacques Ampère’s political adaptation of Metastasio’s *Artaxerxes*, the founding of a Jacobin theatre in occupied Mainz, French adaptations of Sheridan’s *The School for Scandal* and the performance of foreign plays at the Théâtre des Variétés-Etrangères as a means to introduce the latest theatrical developments. The three parts of this volume make an important contribution to our understanding of the negotiation of cosmopolitanism and European theatrical repertoires and experiences throughout the eighteenth century and into the next.

The editors claim in the Introduction that ‘this volume distances itself from the classic but narcissistic model of *l’Europe française* and from the supposed admiration of the Europeans for the French, whose fashions they so thankfully adopted without delay’ (4). Rather, they posit ‘French taste’ as a cultural phenomenon, and claim to examine ‘competing national tastes and canons . . . with the same attention and the same



carefulness' (4). In this regard, the volume is most successful in its central section. Of those nine chapters, the middle four contain critical or no discussion of France. Indeed, Virginie Yvernault's contribution uncovering the circulation of Beaumarchais's plays successfully challenges the notion of French cultural domination, while the following chapter by David Do Paço – among the volume's strongest – is a compelling investigation of how sometimes erratic geographic mobility helped Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749–1838) navigate and take control of his precarious life as an artist. Beaurepaire's chapter in this section explores a network of Freemason actors, focusing on hubs in Brussels and Hamburg, and Matthieu Magne's contribution sheds new light on public and private theatrical spaces in Bohemia and surrounding Austrian and Saxon lands.

These chapters notwithstanding, France and French culture play a significant and dominant role in the remaining essays of this collection. The cultures of some ten countries (or their eighteenth-century equivalents) and their relationship to France are discussed in varying depth, lending credence to the 'Europe' found in the book's title. But make no mistake: first and foremost this volume concerns France. That is not to suggest that the editors were unaware of the juxtaposition between the title's broad implications and the narrower focus on France, for they acknowledge in the Introduction the volume's 'strong core of research on French-speaking contexts' (3–4). Yet the title is misleading given the long shadow cast by the centrality of French culture in a volume purportedly challenging its very dominance in studies of the 'Age of Enlightenment and Revolution'. In the words of one contributor, Rebecca Dowd Geoffroy-Schwinden, there was 'a cultural contradiction created by the French Revolution, which simultaneously promoted a musical rhetoric of universalism and French exceptionalism' (62). The Revolution's contradiction is that of this collection. Some chapters, like Bourdin's and those mentioned above, successfully call into question the perception that French culture dominated or was forced upon the continent between 1700 and 1815. But others are not so successful. For instance, Marie-Emmanuelle Plagnol-Diéval makes the claim that 'Although French was the language of polite conversation and theatre among the educated elites across Europe, interest in these texts was so marked that they were also translated' (259). If French really were the language of elite theatre, why would those texts need translating at all – would the 'elite' not want to display their social standing by consuming theatre in the alleged 'language of polite conversation'? And if such texts were widely translated for local consumption, would that not suggest that French was not the *lingua franca* that this author purports? At times, it seems as though the sheer proportion of case studies concerning France has perpetuated this illusion more than deconstructed it, despite having shifted the framework from the national to the transnational.

Other chapters similarly betray an underlying belief in the very assumption of French cultural supremacy that the editors had hoped to confront. In a later case study examining the founding of a Jacobin theatre in Mainz, Marita Gilli posits the arrival of the French as the inevitable triumph of the new regime over the old, offering very little evidence in support of this anachronistic and simplistic interpretation. This chapter claims that 'once freed of all its feudal ties the troupe could create a theatre that would serve the interests of the bourgeoisie' instead of 'performing for the sole pleasure of the prince' (307 and 309). Yet this is despite the facts that the electoral theatre in Mainz had for years subsisted on public ticket sales – thus being dependent on serving the interests of the 'bourgeoisie' – and that the Elector of Mainz rarely went to the theatre. Gilli goes on to claim that the Jacobin theatre 'was admired by all, even by the opponents of the Revolution' (314), one of many potentially interesting, but ultimately unsupported, claims. Given that by the time this theatre opened in February 1793 Mainz's Jacobin Club had only thirty-six members from a population of thirty thousand, this assertion is problematic (see, for instance, Timothy Blanning, *Reform and Revolution in Mainz, 1743–1803* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974)). Because of this assumption that citizens enthusiastically accepted the drastic political change hastily imposed by the French occupiers, the author never entertains the possibility that Mainz's citizens might have preferred the electoral theatre that offered them the choicest spoken and music theatre from across Europe as opposed to one designed only to bolster faltering Jacobin ideals through transparent propaganda. This chapter is thus not only at odds with the aims of the volume as a whole, but also with an earlier one by Fanny Platelle investigating theatrical life during the



French occupations of Trier and Aachen, which examines an analogous situation without such underlying assumptions and with far more nuance and sources to substantiate its claims.

All in all, the individual chapters of this volume provide enlightening case studies; there is much that a reader will find valuable within *Moving Scenes*. Although it is most useful to those interested in and researching French Enlightenment and Revolutionary cultures, this collection of essays has much to offer readers wanting to discover more about the circulation and mobility of theatrical and musical agents, objects and ideas of the eighteenth century.

AUSTIN GLATTHORN

austin.j.glatthorn@durham.ac.uk



Eighteenth-Century Music © Cambridge University Press, 2020

doi:10.1017/S1478570620000159

ROGÉRIO BUDASZ

OPERA IN THE TROPICS: MUSIC AND THEATER IN EARLY MODERN BRAZIL

New York: Oxford University Press, 2019

pp. xxi + 476, ISBN 978 0 190 21582 8

For musicologists working in Latin American and Iberian studies, the past twenty years have brought a significant increase in knowledge about theatrical and musical culture in colonial Brazil. At the same time, scholars of eighteenth-century music more broadly have turned their attention to what Glenda Goodman has termed 'transatlantic music studies', increasingly choosing to focus on music relating to the diverse locations, peoples and cultures in and around the Atlantic basin. Rogério Budasz's *Opera in the Tropics: Music and Theater in Early Modern Brazil* responds to both of these trends, providing a detailed account of theatrical life in Portuguese America from the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth.

The book begins with two chapters that provide a chronological overview of written sources pertaining to the various authors, genres and functions of theatrical music in the region. The first chapter, 'Foundations', covers material from the mid-sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, while the second, 'The Craft of Portuguese Opera', covers the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The third chapter, 'Musical Sources and Archives', will be particularly useful to scholars embarking on new research about music in colonial Brazil. Some of the written sources Budasz deals with in this chapter mention musical scores that are no longer extant, such as a contents list of the music collection of the composer and music director Florêncio José Ferreira Coutinho (c1750–1819) and descriptions of manuscripts once owned by the important German-Uruguayan musicologist Francisco Curt Lange (1903–1997). Budasz also discusses many scores that are currently housed in archives in Brazil and Portugal, and demonstrates how these sources can be read for evidence about musical practices specific to Portuguese America, such as the casting of female singers and the practice of translating Italian operas into Portuguese verse. Budasz ends the chapter with an 'Addendum: A Tale of Two Operas', in which he revisits the question of which opera – *Le due gemelle*, attributed to José Maurício Nunes Garcia, or *Zaira* by Bernardo José de Sousa Queirós – could have been the first complete opera composed on Brazilian soil.

Each of the next three chapters takes on a different aspect of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century theatrical life in Portuguese America, and will interest a general eighteenth-century musicological readership. In his fourth chapter, 'Venues', Budasz provides a typology of theatrical venues built in colonial Brazil, from Type A (wooden structures used for civic festivals) to Type D (permanent theatres that acted as monuments to national culture). These types of buildings were erected all across Portuguese America, and Budasz gives a thorough account of theatrical buildings in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Grão-Pará and