

Joseph Arthur Mann, *Printed Musical Propaganda in Early Modern England* (Clemson University Press, 2020)

Joseph Mann's *Printed Musical Propaganda in Early Modern England* sets out to emphasise 'the role of ideology in the changes and events' to create 'a more inclusive explanation of seventeenth-century cause and effect' (p. 4). Examining broadside ballads, pamphlets about music, sermons, treatises, masque and opera libretti, and published music, he argues that they 'served extensively and consistently as political propaganda throughout the seventeenth century', and that contemporaries appreciated music's significant propaganda function.

Chapter 1 argues that 'church music became an independent topic of publication during the 1640s because propagandists on both sides of the Civil War realized its value as a political symbol and as a topical vehicle for war propaganda' (p. 29). Prior to this, church music appeared only as a subsection of larger, more general discussions about music or liturgical practice. Mann uses the debate over the role of the church organ to demonstrate how attitudes to church music were used to represent political allegiance, making the organ 'a symbol of political identity' by drawing on existing stereotypes (p. 35). He compares pamphlets about church music to purely political pamphlets of the same period, demonstrating significant overlap in their arguments. Mann also provides a fascinating account of an apparently counterfeit Royalist masque libretto, although one is left wondering how effective as propaganda was something so clever that many people could mistake it for the real thing (pp. 70-3). Perhaps more could be said about the format of Cavalier propaganda, which seemed to eschew mass market publications in favour of those for a more specialist audience.

Closely associated with Puritan culture, psalm singing came under attack from religious sects during the Interregnum. Chapter 2 looks at the ways in which the practice was defended by the Interregnum government as part of their attempt to establish a new religious identity which would help them assert control. This chapter also examines how Royalist musicians, including John Playford, shaped their identity through publishing popular music collections, suggesting that these might have 'encouraged group solidarity' and generated 'resolve for political action in a community' (p. 80). Mann contrasts a simpler explanation of the connection of Royalism with music collections – that no true Puritan would consider music as a career, so professional musicians from before the war were more likely to be Royalist during it. This is undoubtedly true, and I felt it deserved to be more than an aside. Furthermore, Mann did not explicitly point out that the two explanations were not mutually exclusive. Professional musicianship may have naturally favoured Royalism and precluded Puritanism, but it did not inevitably make printed music collections Royalist propaganda, so stating this clearly would in fact have strengthened his argument. Likewise, although he raised the point that Royalists sometimes claimed that their song collections were completely innocent when in fact they were clearly propaganda, he did not explain why they might do so – this would have been worth unpicking. This might have helped secure his analysis of the songs in this section, where readers might find some of his interpretations speculative. Likewise, saving his strongest argument for a Royalist reading of these works (Philips and Knight's confirmation that Henry Lawes's music had propaganda function) to the end of the chapter was an unusual structural decision. On the other hand, Mann does little to investigate how openly Royalist propaganda evaded censorship.

In chapter 3, Mann challenges a traditional (if recently undermined) assumption that there was an outpouring of support for Charles II's restoration. He instead suggests that the sheer scale of pro-monarchy propaganda from this period shows that there was in fact significant anxiety over public opinion. I found his reading of William D'Avenant's opera libretto for *The Siege of Rhodes* persuasive, and particularly enjoyed his analysis of folk celebrations for the Restoration and Thomas Jordan's pageant script *London's Resurrection to Joy and Triumph*, with its emphasis on unity

throughout the kingdom at a time when divisions were growing. Yet by arguing that multiple readings of texts are possible, Mann argues that this 'brings us closer to the propaganda effect of these works' (p. 158).

Chapter 4 investigates how music was used to bolster the Church of England when William and Mary's Toleration Act of 1689 had given dissenting Protestant congregations freedom of worship. Mann claims this led to renewed interest in writing pamphlets about church music, arguing that it was the timing of their publication rather than their content that made them political (p. 188). He demonstrates that Anglican pamphlets were deliberately shorter, simpler and more accessible than their dissenting counterparts, which often contained extensive marginalia and lengthy digressions. Anglican works were thus cheaper and had a wider audience, giving them a greater chance of success (p. 190).

Mann's work is thought-provoking, but I was surprised by the exclusion of the music itself, given recent work which has shown that music could be meaningful in its own right (c.f. Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England*, C.U.P., 2010). His use of the word 'campaign' throughout the second half of the book implies a level of organisation and co-ordination some may find unconvincing. Structurally, there are places where hypotheses are invoked as true before a case has been made for them, or where references to niche publications (e.g. 'Atterbury's sermon' or 'Dodwell's treatise' (p.190)) assume a high level of knowledge on the part of the reader. More frustrating was the lack of a bibliography.

Mann is to be praised, however, for analysing a wide range of material from across the political spectrum, rather than focussing on one side or another, or indeed, on one type of musical publication in isolation. Overall, it is difficult to disagree with his assessment that 'the power of music represented a living, practical force in early modern England' (p. 73).

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