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'splendid artillery'; the latter wield 'vicious bill-hooks' with which the King of Scots is 'mutilated' and his army 'butchered'. A single quotation cannot make my point very forcefully, but several other instances of similarly emotive writing occur, and their cumulative effect is quite powerful. The reference to 'Angus Dei' on page 15, however, is presumably a misprint rather than a boast.

In most respects the book has been well produced, with clear typography and well-chosen illustrations and excellently reproduced photographs. The chief technical shortcoming lies in the music examples, most of which are too small to be readable with comfort and many of which look extremely amateurish (the example on page 45 is especially inept); whether the fault lies with the notation software or with the operator I cannot judge. There is also a very useful critical discography which includes a number of recordings issued by little-known companies.

NICK SANDON

Music in Renaissance Magic: toward a Historiography of Others. By Gary Tomlinson. pp. xvi + 291. (University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1993, $37.50/£29.95. ISBN 0-226-80791-6.)

This is an original and quite extraordinary book, which focuses on the connection between music and magic in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Tomlinson's key 'magus' is the Florentine Marsilio Ficino, and he pays special attention to Ficino's influences, his doctrine of *furor* and his astrological singing—improvised hymns and invocations to planetary gods with the purpose of beneficially affecting the psychological state of the listener. Tomlinson explores the progression from the sympathetic magic of the Renaissance to the representational art of the early Baroque period, ending with an appraisal of Monteverdi's music as embracing both the old and the new.

One cannot fail to be impressed by the rigour and precision of Gary Tomlinson's use of language, the clarity of his conceptual thought and the ruthlessness of his intent to communicate to the reader the problems involved in understanding the Renaissance world-view. Like a dog with a bone, he tussles and pulls at perspectives and methodologies, drawing on a vast number of secondary sources and often leaving the reader somewhat stranded (with his dictionary) amid a sea of erudite terminology. One is left with the impression that this is a very *clever* book, but that, in his manner of approaching the subject, Tomlinson misses the very point he strives to make. Reading Ficino's writings leads one to a realization that 'magical' understanding is a timeless, contemplative work of the soul; Tomlinson is in danger of leading both himself and the reader away on a heady, demanding journey to a distant intellectual peak, from where Renaissance musical/magical practices can only be seen as essentially alien to the 'modern' mode of rational thought. Tomlinson assumes 'the great distance of magic from our own historical and cultural perceptions and presumptions' (p. 2), and although he admits that his position as a 'latter-day rationalist' (p. 3) has been modified in the course of his studies, he can never finally free himself from the dominance of the cool, detached, evaluating mind. In reference to Joscelyn Godwin's book on a similar theme, he feels fit to relegate what some may consider to be the spiritual force of a strong religious intuition to, in his words, 'solipsistic transcendentalism'. Godwin writes from firmly within the tradition of perennial wisdom, and I would argue that there is a case for *participation*—the sharing of fundamental assumptions with one's subject—proving to be more inspiring reading, with greater potential for conveying deep insights. It may also help to bring the reader into a more profound contact with the subject matter.

I found myself alternately excited by Tomlinson's clear, thorough presentation of the musical magic of Ficino and his contemporaries and bewildered by his excursions into the deconstructuralist theories of Foucault; background reading on this subject was required before I could appreciate Tomlinson's intention in using Foucault's 'archaeological' construct to aid a more detached, objective approach to historical investigation. In the words of J. G. Merquior, 'the Foucaldian programme . . . patently tries to dispose of the cloudy notion of a unitary reason echoing the transcendental Subject in the metaphysics of classical idealism' (*Foucault*, London, 1985, p. 19). But the question arises, does it *help* the reader enter the essentially Neoplatonic world of the Renaissance magus when he is encouraged to look at it through the lens of a totally alien philosophy?

The archaeological viewpoint, which removes the 'knowing subject' from centre-stage and views history in terms of disconnected layers or *epistemes*, would seem to be incommensurable with the Renaissance 'magical' perspective itself: that of the divinity of man, the sanctity of knowledge and the fundamental continuity of perennial wisdom. Tomlinson, however, does state that his aim is to show how both the archaeological *and* the hermeneutic approaches can yield a rich and multi-layered view of 'past discourses'. I would

agree, and found myself brought far closer to an empathetic connection with Ficino *et al.* when Tomlinson demonstrated exactly this (as in Chapter 3) rather than when reading the chapters devoted to the techniques and methodologies behind it.

In his introduction, Tomlinson states his aim to redeem modern scholarship on Renaissance occult practices, which tends to either alienate or over-identify with its subject. He admirably aims to let it speak for itself, 'sitting on the fence' between the two extremes, freeing his subject from the limitations of a purely 'musicological' or 'historical' approach and achieving an 'ongoing creative dialogue with "others"'. This he does well in presenting the musical magic of Agrippa, Ramos de Pareia, Gaffurius, Ficino, Monteverdi and their influences. With thorough scholarship, he lucidly traces the development from 'magical' to 'rational' world-views, discussing the ethical powers of music and drawing interesting parallels between the *furores* of divine inspiration and shamanistic altered states of consciousness. This material does indeed speak for itself. Do we really need Tomlinson's extensive discussion of others' approaches to interpretation, his lengthy criticisms of traditional methods, to justify his own approach? I found this material laboured and largely irrelevant to the main theme of the book.

Tomlinson explains that archaeology, in Foucault's sense, 'aims to uncover, by means of meta-subjective historical emphasis, patterns invisibly dispersed throughout past discourses and practices', discovering 'the forces beyond individual agency that have conspired in shaping music histories' (p. 246). It is certainly a noble aim, to attempt to unravel our own 'complicities' in our historical views, but is it realistic and desirable to detach ourselves from common experience? Does it actually prove more rewarding for the reader if the author is so removed from personal identification with his subject? The danger is a lack of focus, of human warmth and enthusiasm, of the 'secret mutual connivance' proposed by Jung which connects author with subject and draws the reader, fascinated, into the mystery. Is it helpful to talk in terms of Foucault's *epistemes* when Renaissance magic is founded on a completely different notion of time and continuity? When Tomlinson criticizes the limitations of Foucault's theories themselves—conceding that Renaissance knowledge is too fluid and varied to be reduced to Foucault's 'conception of epistemic disjunctions'—one wonders why he bothers to introduce them at all. In the words of Plotinus, one of the great authorities behind Ficino's astrological music-making, the key to magical understanding is to 'see with different eyes', to stop logical thinking and rational analysis and step into a different order of things—the realm of the symbol, the sign, the acausal event. For Plotinus, the true magician is the man who re-enters the 'play of forces' in the world for its own sake, and in a state of conscious participation, not delusion or blind identification.

The very subtitle of the book, 'Toward a Historiography of Others', announces Tomlinson's fundamental assumption that there is 'an unresolvable alienation separating us from ... Renaissance magic' (p. 247), and he firmly declares that 'we cannot cross over to [Ficino's] side' and that 'on that other side there is a place where magic works'. He appears to have difficulty in simply allowing Ficino's practice of astrological invocation to be accepted as effective and meaningful. From his distanced perspective of 'otherness', he cannot encourage in us that flash of intuitive insight, the awed personal response to a synchronous experience that would take us to 'the other side'. Instead, he makes an effortful attempt to find a way of thinking that would allow for the credibility of occult activity: 'We must pursue a kind of historical understanding that recognises and maintains the reality of Ficino's success in astrological song' (p. 144).

Tomlinson's view is that the very idea of Ficino's songs actually working 'sits obstinately on Ficino's side of the space between us' (p. 248)—a statement with which a great many psychotherapists or alternative healers would not agree. It would seem to be a question of intellectual understanding versus experiential knowing, and with his particular approach to the subject Tomlinson cannot bridge this gap. Although he suggests that it is only in 'participation' that we may enter the world of Renaissance magic, this remains at a theoretical level, for his own participation seems thwarted at every turn by his continual reference to others' views. The problem is partly that of language, and in his concluding chapter Tomlinson does reveal an intellectual, if not experiential, insight into the crux of the matter. When he speaks of finding 'the space at the intersection of archeology and hermeneutics' (p. 247)—what might be concisely termed the 'objective' and 'subjective' approaches—he seems close to describing the very unity Ficino would refer to as 'divine', where rational understanding and 'irrational' intuition merge in a comprehension of the whole being.

It was with some surprise that I found Tomlinson suggesting that we cannot ask *how* Ficino's

songs worked on a technical level, as this very question takes Ficino into 'our' world and away from his own; he says we must not ask that question in order to understand: 'The truest understanding of his magic . . . emerges not only from the questions we ask but also from those we realize we must refrain from asking' (p. 251). Yes! At last, by acknowledging the element of mystery and the limitations of rational analysis, Tomlinson has sown a seed of wonder in the reader's overtaxed mind. But he never quite manages to allow us to stop thinking, to descend from the lofty heights of dialectical analysis and meet 'the other' on the common ground of our humanity and desire for self-knowledge. For Ficino in particular, 'magical' activity was firmly governed by his unwavering Christian belief in the limitation of human experience and his intense humility in the face of higher powers. Without a sense of awe, we cannot hope to cross over into his world.

Despite these criticisms, I did find fascinating both Tomlinson's account of Ficinian astrological music (in particular, the new light he sheds on the 'magical' role of purely instrumental music) and his sensitive, original approach to two Monteverdi madrigals. He uses 'Sfogava con le stelle' and the *Lament of the Nymph* to illustrate the shift in perspective from the Renaissance to the Baroque world-views—from the modes of resemblance and similitude (where 'ontological truth' is expressed in music) to the 'untruth' of dramatic representation, where language becomes artifice, separated from the world. Tomlinson speaks so eloquently when he stops analysing his 'methodological impulses' (p. xi) and adopts, in his words, a 'conventional historical interpretation' (p. xii). To conclude, one might describe Tomlinson's approach as 'horizontal' in its archaeological unearthing of layers, an approach which by its very nature cannot do justice to the essentially 'vertical' hierarchy of the Platonic cosmology underpinning Renaissance magic. He has certainly attempted an ambitious and novel project, but in the end the reader is left marvelling at his verbal ingenuity and intellectual prowess, not at the magical power of Ficino's songs.

ANGELA VOSS

The Bandora: its Music and Sources. By Lyle Nordstrom. pp. xiv + 147. 'Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography', lxvi. (Harmonie Park Press, Pinewood, Michigan, 1992. ISBN 0–899990–060–7.)

One of the peculiarly English features of Elizabethan instrumental music is the mixed or 'broken' consort. Most Continental consort music was written for homogeneous families of instruments, such as viols, lutes, and recorders or other woodwinds. These groups, particularly the viol consort, certainly existed in England, but the English also seem to have had a penchant for the undoubtedly more colourful texture of a mixed group, including both wire- and gut-strung plucked or bowed instruments and at least one woodwind instrument, usually a flute. It is into this environment that the bandora was born. It cannot have been said to have evolved, despite its obvious kinship with the rest of the plucked-string family, as its shape alone seems to have had no immediate forebears, and its contemporaries were particular in attributing its invention in 1562 to John Rose of Bridewell.

The plethora of newly invented (and often quickly forgotten) mechanical and other devices in Elizabeth's reign—including musical instruments—can be seen as the by-product of both the late-flowering English Renaissance and the period of middle-class prosperity that nurtured such activities. The bandora (sometimes pandora) seems to have reached its apogee in 1600, at which point its hitherto gently expanding solo repertory declined abruptly in favour of consort parts, though even these tailed off very soon after the end of Elizabeth's reign. By the last quarter of the seventeenth century it seems to have gone completely out of use, even from the consort, and mentions are largely limited to comments on the disappearance of this elegant, resonant and subtle bass instrument.

It is hardly surprising, then, that until now no writer has devoted any significant study to its repertory or history. Lyle Nordstrom's attention to such a short-lived instrument of really quite limited use, and the approach he takes in his detailed and careful study, are a reflection of a relatively new attitude among historians of every kind: a concern to understand the past on its own terms rather than exclusively with reference to its later repercussions. It cannot be said that the bandora was the forerunner of any modern instrument, nor had it any impact on the various instrumental repertories that were evolving at this time; to Elizabeth's subjects, though, the instru-