

Juan José Carreras and Bernardo García García, eds. *The Royal Chapel in the Time of the Habsburgs: Music and Court Ceremony in Early Modern Europe*.

Trans. Yolanda Acker. English version ed. Tess Knighton. *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music* 3. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005. x + 402 pp. index. illus. tpls. bibl. \$180. ISBN: 1-84383-139-2.

This important book, originally published in Spanish in 2001, is the result of an international seminar held in Madrid in 2000. It is easy to be fooled by the title, which in English translation could be interpreted as a general study of European royal chapels. Make no mistake, however, that the book is devoted to Spain. This is clear enough from the first of its four sections, "European Models and Traditions," whose four brief essays on various European chapels, despite being written by leading scholars in the field, present not original research but rather broad overviews based primarily on existing publications. Even with its Spanish emphasis, however, this book is a valuable contribution to the field of court studies and can serve as inspiration for any scholar of the sixteenth- or seventeenth-century court chapel.

As stated in García García's introduction, the book aims to provide "an up-to-date examination of the patronage, organic structure and political and ceremonial structure of the royal chapel of the Spanish Habsburgs" (4). In this respect, it succeeds admirably. In the very next sentence, however, García García calls for a new scholarly conception of the chapel, one that moves beyond a mere musical institution. This goal of invigorating the study of chapels is best achieved in the book's historiographical contributions, especially Andrew Wathey's essay on the English royal chapel (the opening chapter of the first section). Far from providing an overview of the chapel, Wathey instead indicts modern musical historiography for focusing too much on lists of chapel members, composer biography, and repertoire. Building upon recent scholarship, Wathey proposes new directions for chapel studies, including a flexible conception of the chapel as institution and an increased focus on material culture and politics. Many of the book's essays succeed in answering Wathey's call, but as is perhaps inevitable in a multiauthor collection, not all of them do. Within this same section, in fact, are

two chapters that focus primarily on lists of musicians, biography, and repertoire. Thus, despite many valuable and provocative essays, the book as a whole is rather uneven.

The second section, "The Burgundian Inheritance," promises an important contribution to studies of the Spanish royal chapel, for, as explained in Emilio Ros-Fábregas's historiographical opening chapter, Spanish musicology has too long been nationalistic and isolationist. Ros-Fábregas's essay is superbly answered by Tess Knighton in her study of the "complex web of interactions and interrelationships brought together by the catalyst of political circumstance" (87), the circumstance in this instance being Philip the Fair's four-month stay in Toledo in 1502, during which the Burgundian and Spanish court chapels interacted and mutually influenced each other. The final two essays in this section, however, do not follow in the same vein: one focuses on the Netherlands and makes no mention of Spain, while the other is little more than a "life and works" of Charles V's chapelmaster, Nicolas Payen. The third section, "Music in the Spanish Royal Chapel," is even less cohesive, weighing two institutional studies (Luis Robledo Estaire's excellent contextualization of the chapel within the royal household as a whole and Dinko Fabris's overview of the Naples court chapel) against two very different musical studies, one focusing on repertoire (Michael Noone's examination of polyphony for El Escorial) and the other, by Louise Stein, discussing the role of chapel musicians in court theatrical events.

The final (and largest) section, "The Royal Chapel in Court Politics and Culture," broadens the book outside the musicological realm: in fact, three of the six essays make no mention of music whatsoever. Organized in roughly chronological order, the section as a whole provides a historical overview of the chapel's role in seventeenth-century Spanish politics. The essays also provide significant models for new approaches to chapel studies, from the role of the preacher as either defender (Francis Cerdán) or criticizer (Fernando Negredo del Cerro) of the crown to the means by which courtiers could protest royal policy by willfully flouting the meticulous and politically-loaded ceremonial etiquette among chapel attendees (Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio).

For a translated book, the text reads quite well but is not without occasional awkward grammatical constructions, misspellings, and other mechanical errors (the most egregious being the title of Fabris's essay, in which "siglo XVII" is translated as "eighteenth century" [162]). Nevertheless, with its rich selection of essays, many complemented by high-quality illustrations, tables, and appendices, together with its extensive bibliography, this book is a valuable resource for scholars of early modern Spain and for court historians of the musical and nonmusical variety.

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