

***Bruce Haynes. The End of Early Music. Oxford University Press, 2007.***

**284 pages: 17 musical exx. ISBN 978-0-19-518987-2. \$35 (hardbound).**

In *The End of Early Music*, Bruce Haynes calls to action all performers and artisans who make their living in early music. Unlike his *Elegant Oboe* (2001) and *History of Performing Pitch* (2002), this book is not a synthesis of musicological and historical research; rather it comprises “reflections on the present state of the historically inspired performance movement... from the point of view of someone who has been involved with it since the early 1960s” (vii).

Haynes gives a fascinating insight into the modern HIP movement and its countercultural roots. He identifies three relevant performing styles: Romantic, Modern, and Period. Romantic style, current until the early twentieth century, was characterized by sentimentalism, “portamentos, fluctuating tempos, and unrelenting earnestness” (33). This mutated after World War I into Modernism, which Haynes considers a reaction to Romanticism. (A password within the book provides access to clarifying musical examples at the publisher’s website.)

Haynes’ Modernism has seamless legato, continuous vibrato, long-line phrasing, unyielding tempos, and rigid fidelity to the printed score. While appropriate for the works of Stravinsky, Boulez, and other mid- to late twentieth-century composers, Modernism is inimical to Period performance. Applying Modernist style to Rhetorical music results in what Haynes punningly calls “strait style,” in which the performer eschews the freedoms and improvisations of Rhetorical style, thus placing himself in a musical straitjacket and missing the point of Period performance.

Chapter 8, “Ways of Copying the Past,” contrasts three approaches to copying artworks, including period instruments: Emulation, Replication and Imitation. Emulation is “copying with improvement or enhancement,” the process undertaken by Mendelssohn for Bach, by Wagner for Beethoven, and by Mozart for Handel. This was the guiding principle of period instrument making

until the 1970s; consider Dolmetsch's large-holed recorders, Pleyel's steel-framed harpsichords and Moeck's two-keyed oboes built with a modern bore, pitched at A-440 and played with modern reeds. As an outgrowth of “Darwinian” attitudes towards early music, Emulation led to “copies” of early instruments which fit the experience of Modern players.

A “humbler mind set” (140) promotes the exact Replication of period instruments, played with historically appropriate reeds, at original pitches, from original notation. This laudable goal has yet to be reached—our reeds don’t fully meet the demands of a hautboy. But Haynes views Replication as having fostered popular acceptance of “authenticity” in early music, thus allowing the truest understanding of original practice and intent.

Imitation embraces “style-copying,” which seeks to create the result of a particular style or instrument but not every fine detail. To Haynes, “style-copying is what most Period musicians do in performing.” He argues compellingly that “correcting” historical instruments defeats the purpose of making period instruments. A woodwind’s tuning and voicing can never be perfect, hence makers must adopt compromises to create functional instruments. The compromises extant in a historical instrument can tell us what was important or trivial to its maker and thus to the players and audiences of that era. Haynes perfectly sums up the challenges facing modern makers: “To comprehend the purposes of such apparent mistakes often takes years of playing, combined with reflection. If we ‘correct’ them, we may inadvertently eliminate differences between the present and the past the way nineteenth-century editors used to bowdlerize out the cross-relations in Purcell” (159).

Haynes calls for scrupulously exact copying of historical woodwinds, “warts and all.” The performer, with practice and study, must accept “flaws” as essential attributes of the instruments. This laudable attitude is a little unwieldy. Today’s audiences grew up in Modernist times and demand that performers play relatively close to equal temperament. The Period performer must be able to make a living; historical accuracy in tuning will be one of the places where woodwind makers must

compromise.

I take exception to a few of Haynes' claims. He quibbles over musicians' modes of dress and concert deportment. He contends that "the oboe used in symphony orchestras today ... has changed less since [1881] than the hautboy changed in any twenty-year period during the eighteenth century" (29 and 231, endnote 46). Such a claim addresses body morphology and key work without considering the bore and tone holes. In fact, the sound of the symphony orchestra has changed appreciably in my own concert-going lifetime of only thirty-five years, largely because modern instruments really are modern; they are louder, less nuanced in timbre and often played at sharper pitch than those of just a generation ago. And I object to his chapter title (unknowingly?) conflating Early Music with Mao Tse-tung's politics.

These quibbles aside, Haynes powerfully demonstrates the cultural validity of early music and the need for scholars and instrument makers to continuously refer back to original sources. *The End of Early Music* repeatedly confronts the unspoken assumptions and biases behind "early music" making; anyone reading this book with an open mind will come away hearing different things in early music, and will be richer for the insight.

Who should read this book? Any student, maker or performer who wishes to transcend mere technique and to understand the function and philosophy of period instruments.

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