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Rachel Moore, *Performing Propaganda: Musical Life and Culture in Paris During the First World War*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. x + 256 pp. Illustrations, tables, bibliography, and index. £60.00. (hb). ISBN 978-1-78327-188-7; £19.99. (eb). ISBN 978-1-78744-223-8.

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With notable exceptions, accounts of French musical history either stop in 1914 or begin in 1918. Rachel Moore's book, *Performing Propaganda: Musical Life and Culture in Paris During the First World War*, addresses this lacuna; first by showing the many ways in which wartime cultural life continued pre-war traditions, and second by bringing to light a number of war-specific musical endeavors. In order to reconstruct the practicalities of the daily lives of interpreters, concert programmers, composers, dancers, stage designers, and music publishers during the war, the scope of the book frames the activities of these cultural actors under the broader question of how music was used as propaganda. Surveying the two poles of propaganda—negative on the enemy and positive on the cause of the allies—the book explores how the war shaped musical life while fostering a latin cultural identity to oppose the barbaric culture of the Germans, often referred to as the *boches*, one of the many words coined during the First World War.

The outbreak of the war forced the French government to set up institutions exclusively dedicated to musical propaganda. Moore contextualizes such efforts as an offensive to match the efforts Germany had made in this respect. In the context of the war, the Wagnerian craze which had dominated city stages across Europe in the late nineteenth century was perceived by many as propaganda *avant l'heure*. The Comité Catholique de propagande française, the Comité protestant de propagande française à l'étranger, and the Maison de la presse, which had one of its four subdivisions entirely dedicated to propaganda, were all founded in 1915. In the arts, it was not until 1916 that Dalimier entrusted pianist and conductor Alfred Cortot with the establishment of the Service de propagande artistique, which Moore hails as a “landmark in French music history” (p. 51).

At home, such propagandistic ventures sought to boost civilians' morale. Abroad, there were more tangible goals. French musical propaganda sought to raise funds for the Allies and to seduce the public in neutral countries. During their international tours, French ensembles established new collaborations with local musicians and played the national anthems of their hosts. For instance, the “Marseillaise” and the “Starred Spangled Banner” were performed at the concerts of the French-American Association for Musical Art, founded during the war, which also saw the birth of the Comité de rapprochement franco-espagnol. Through these activities, the French sought to compensate for the fact that their concert life had long been dominated by the same

Austro-German repertoire (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, and Schumann, among others). This kind of cultural diplomacy—efforts to educate on the vast French musical heritage—also became a propaganda experience for Parisians through the Matinées nationales, concerts held at the Sorbonne on Sunday mornings and during which the Société des concerts and the Colonne and Lamoureux orchestras combined their remaining human resources.

Others took a more radical approach against German infiltration, or seduction, of French musical taste. Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) proposed a complete ban on all German compositions from French concert programs in favor of the home classics from the Opéra-Comique, such as Auber and Gounod. Moore qualifies Saint-Saëns' remarks in his press series, *Germanophilie*, as “emotional propaganda,” that is to say, not based on evidence and relying on a heavy interpretation of the enemy as the sole party guilty of the situation. As her research reveals, this is one of the many ways in which the post-1914 cultural strategies echoed those of 1870. Saint-Saëns, who, during the Franco-Prussian War, had founded the Société nationale to promote French music, came up with a more antagonizing proposal. Times were different, however, and numerous voices of authority, such as Émile Vuillermoz and Jean Aubry, responded to *Germanophilie* by accusing Saint-Saëns of being old-fashioned. Aubry also feared the harm that the old composer's harsh words might cause to the image of France abroad.

Being a musician during the war meant having to face the dilemma of understanding music either as self- (or collective) care or, at the other end of the spectrum, as a frivolity. Saint-Saëns is a paradigmatic example and is discussed at length. Writing on October 10, 1915 he stated that he would give up his pen anytime if, in exchange, France emerged victorious from the war: “France first, music next” (p. 19). The composition of new pieces, it could be argued, was not a priority at a time when composers were being killed—as was the case of Albéric Magnard (1865–1914)—or mobilized, such as Paul Pierné and Florent Schmitt. The book explores how music was used in the cause of returning to a relative normality. In addition to its morale-boosting potential, it was a necessity for professional musicians and dancers who, seeing their income decrease and even vanish, required concert life not to fade out completely. Thus, in late 1914, after assuming that the war was probably not going to be a short-lived experience, the resumption of certain concert series or the establishment of new musical *matinées* was presented as “comfort for the soul” (p. 21). On November 28, the Concerts Mayol was the first institution to resume its activity since the outbreak of the war, followed by the Nouveau Théâtre and the Salle Villiers. Later on, a number of charity concerts were also organized, for instance the Festivals de musique française, which were dedicated from 1916 on to support mobilized composers. Another way in which concert life contributed to the greater cause was through the *taxe de bienfaisance* introduced on November 1914, and by which 15% of all receipts was to be donated to charity. The war also caused the gender ratios to shift significantly. With many of their male members sent to the battlefield, women joined orchestras in higher numbers than in the pre-war era. There were weekly concerts by all-female orchestras, for instance, at the Grand Palais des Glaces on the Boulevard du Temple.

Navigating musical life in Paris right after the outbreak of the war demanded, first of all, the identification of the “musical” enemy. What to do with Wagner’s operas during the hostilities, knowing that his works were the crowd-pleasers that brought ticket revenue to theatres? In wartime France, “enemy composers” were separated from their acceptable German counterparts according to how they transcended national borders and integrated a universal heritage. Thus the first time since the outbreak of the war that a Beethoven work was included in a concert

program--his *Eroica* symphony dedicated to Napoleon--was at the opening of the second season of the Concerts Colonne-Lamoureux, on October 25, 1915. But even making peace with such composers, natives of enemy territories, did not solve the shortage of potential materials for concerts.

Rachel Moore's *Performing Propaganda* puts great emphasis on the material aspect of music performance and distribution, particularly in her analysis of musical institutions and music publishing. The material calamities of the war logically disrupted concert programs and, like in previous eras of conflict such as the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, "miscellaneous" programs made a return. Without the means to stage a full operatic performance, some concerts became a mixed spectacle, alternating stand-alone opera acts with shorter vocal or instrumental pieces. The war also promoted the rediscovery of the old repertoire. Jacques Rouché, the director of the Opéra, was one of those challenged to stage opera with minimal infrastructure. In order to do so, he alternated fragments of contemporary operas with baroque and classical ones, thus paving the way for the postwar consecration of figures such as Rameau and his *Castor et Pollux*, performed in full in 1918. In state-subsidized institutions like the Opéra—which had remained closed from July 28, 1914 to December 9, 1915—a fixed percentage of new works had to be included in the programs. After its reopening, works such as D'Indy's *Le chant de la cloche*, Theodore Dubois' *Miguela*, and Alfred Bruneau's *L'ouragan* were premiered at the Palais Garnier.

Of particular interest within the general frame of music and propaganda is the discussion about score edition. According to Moore, the war did not give way to radical alterations in the general mode of work, but it did offer opportunities to reflect on the standard procedures that would renovate the sector in time. Moore shows the different techniques displayed by editors and bookstore owners to comply with the 1914 ban on commercial relationships with enemy countries. Some chose to put their existing pre-war German editions, most of which came from Leipzig, into storage, while others tagged them with signs that read "not to be opened during the war" (p. 173). The Germans had found ways of selling their editions at lower prices and to publish matching sets of a given composer's full works, which added to their appeal to collectors. The price of a German edition of eighteen Mozart sonatas was 3.15 francs, compared to the 2.30 francs needed to purchase a French edition of only three. Authoritative voices in the book sector in France considered it was time to offer French editions of the Austro-German classics, so that their works could be performed through locally produced scores and therefore "guilt-free" (p. 188). While many composers admitted to finding it difficult to create new works in the climate of hostility, editing gave them the opportunity to continue work in a different creative mental frame. Thus, a new collection of "classics" was edited by leading French composers under the initiative of Jacques Durand for his *Édition classique*: Saint-Saëns edited the works of Mozart; Dukas, those of Beethoven; Debussy, of Chopin; Ravel, of Mendelssohn; and Fauré, those of Schumann, for example (p. 187). Another similar initiative, although without the expected results, was that of Aléxis Rouart and his *Édition française de musique classique*, aimed at uniting a number of editors into a bigger consortium to avoid a multiplicity of editions. As Rouart hoped that this unified edition would also appeal to students, he asked the director of the Paris *conservatoire*, Gabriel Fauré, whether he would make a list of the most relevant pieces used at this institution. The *conservatoire* was deeply invested in educating singers for the Paris Opéra, which, as the book explains, shifted the canon of French music by incorporating the most widely used pieces from the operatic repertoire into it.

The particular case of those editors who did not join Rouart's call for a music publishing *union sacrée* offers a case in point to illustrate one of the book's conclusions: that unpatriotic behavior was more common than has generally been accepted, and that despite the remarkable efforts described throughout the monograph to "catch up" with the Austro-German musical tradition, its repertoire continued to dominate Parisian musical life during the war. On this basis, Moore argues that the war did not bring about "the great transformations with which it is often credited" (p. 218). Rather, the war was a period of continuities with the past, not least if we lend an ear to the repertoire of patriotic crowd-pleasers from the Franco-Prussian War that once again took center stage in 1914–1918. Despite this, important innovations took place, including the birth of landmark musical institutions, such as the Société française de musicologie (founded in 1917), and the establishment of musical alliances between France and other countries (such as the Casa Velazquez to promote Franco-Spanish cultural relations), all of which had far-reaching diplomatic impacts well beyond the November 1918 armistice.

As discussed throughout this review, the book focuses on what we might generally regard as "highbrow" music. The author states that in order to analyze how music functions as propaganda, the corpus of works selected had to be "well-known and popular with audiences," which is why the avant-garde is left aside (p. 11). Yet the very term of avant-garde had strong military connotations, and the Surrealists and Dadaists, for instance, were often explicit about the political context, particularly in Paris during the war. This leads the reader to reconsider the implications of the book's subtitle, "Musical Life and Culture in Paris." How did the popular and the everyday intersect during the war and how did the historical avant-gardes articulate that crossover? Answering this question would have enriched the discussion on some of the main issues addressed in the book, namely how musical life in Paris deviated from its pre-war customs. Related to this is the question of how to define the popular in the war context. While it sounds reasonable to think that Beethoven was more popular than, say, Satie, what is to be made, for example, of the repertoire of *chansons* sung by the soldiers? Moore's work offers a fertile ground for further studies on daily life during the war, of the avant-garde and the popular analyzed through the prism of propaganda.

In *Performing Propaganda*, Rachel Moore shows the delicate balance between discourse and practice that shaped Parisian musical life during the war. At the same time, it frames the pillars of the musical milieu—organization of musical ensembles and orchestras, concert programming, the written discourse on music, the French recuperation of its past for patriotic purposes, and music publishing—within the broader tactics of patriotism, nationalism and pragmatism. The book is based on extensive research with archival materials, including individual collections of composers, the general and specialized press, police records, and institutional sources, which taken together show the technicalities of making music survive during wartime. Against the idea that the war halted the frivolous commodity of music, the book argues for an understanding of how the war made the established *savoir-faire* deviate from the pre-war routine. Scholars and students interested in French cultural history will find in this book a compelling companion to rethink the extent to which the usual flow of musical notes was altered in the Parisian warscape. I would invite readers to listen to some war-themed music premiered during the war and discussed in the book, such as Lily Boulanger, *Pour les funérailles d'un soldat* (premiered on 7 November 1915; [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl7UT8F\\_Y4I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kl7UT8F_Y4I)) and Henri Büsser, *Hymne à la France* (premiered on 24 January 1915; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbVbx3Dw8BA>).

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