

## *The Puritans and Music*

### Of Musicke in England, and how it allureth to vanitie (1583)

Philip Stubbes, *Anatomie of Abuses, Containing a discouerie or briefe summarie of such notable vices and imperfections, as now raigne in many countreyes of the world* (London: Richard Iones, 1583).

*Your Assignment:*

What are the most positive things Philosophus has to say about music? How can humans reap the possible benefits of music? What are most negative things he says about music? How does he explain that music can bring succor and refreshment to a person who engages with it, but might equally well spell his or her perdition? If the latter happens, who or what is responsible—the music or the player/listener?

*Spudeus.* What say you to Musick, is it not a laudable science?

*Philoponus.* I say of Musicke as Plato, Aristotle, Galen and many others haue said of it, that it is very ill for young heades, for a certaine kinde of smooth sweetnesse in it, alluring the hearers to a certaine kind of effeminacie, and pusillanimitie, much like vnto honey. For as honey and such other sweete thinges receiued into the stomacke, doeth delight at the first, but afterwarde maketh the stomacke queasie, and vnable to receiue meate of hard digesture.

So sweet Musicke at the first delighteth the eares, but afterward corrupteth and depraueth the mind, making it queasie, and inclined to all licentiousnesse of life whatsoever. And right as good edges are not sharpened (but dulled) by whetting vpon soft stones, so good wittes by hearing of softe Musicke, are rather dulled then sharpened, and made apt to all wantonnesse and sinne. And hereof is it that writers affirme Sappho to haue bene expert in musicke, and therefore whorish.

Tirus Maximus saith, The bringing in of Musicke was a cup of poison to all the world. Clytomachus, if he euer heard any talking of Loue, or playing of musicall instrumentes, would run his way and bidde them farewell. Plutarchus complayneth of Musicke, and sayth, that it doeth rather feminine the minde,

as prickes vnto vice, then conduce to godlines as spurres vnto vertue. Pithagoras condemnneth them for fooles, and bequeathes them a cloake-bagge, that measure Musicke by sound and eare. Thus you heare the iudgement of the wise concerning Musicke, nowe iudge thereof as you list your selfe.

*Spud.* I haue heard it said (and I thought it very true) that Musicke doeth delight both man and beast, reuiue the spirits, comforteth the heart and maketh it apter and readier to the seruice of God.

*Philo.* I graunt Musicke is a good gift of God, and that it delighteth both man and beast, reuiue the spirits, comforteth the hart and maketh it apter to serue God, and therefore did Dauid both vse Musicke himselfe, and also commend the vse of it to his posterity (and being vsed to that end, for mans priuate recreation, Musicke is very laudable.)

But being vsed in publike assemblies, and priuat conuenticles, as a directorie to filthy dauncing, through the sweet harmony and smooth melody thereof, it estrangeth the minde, stirreth vp filthy lust, womannisheth the mind, rauisheth the heart, inflameth concupiscece, and bringeth in vnclennesse.

But if Musick were vsed openly (as I haue said) to the praise and glory of God, as our fathers vsed it, and as was intended by it at the first, or priuately in a mans secret

chamber or house, for his own solace and comfort, to driue away the fantasies of idle thoughts, to mitigate care, sorrow, and such other perturbations and passions of the minde (the only endes whereto true Musicke tends) it were very commendable and lawful.

If Musicke were thus vsed, it would comfort man woonderfully, and mooue his heart to serue God the better: but being vsed as it is, it corrupteth good minds, maketh them womannish, and inclined to all kind of whordome and vncleannes.

*Spud.* What say you then of musitions and minstrels, who liue only vpon the same art?

*Philo.* I think that al good minstrels, sober, and chast musitions (speaking of such drunken sockets, and baudy Parasites as raunge the Countries, riming and singing of vnclean, corrupt and filthy songs in tauernes, ale-houses, innes, and other publike assemblies) may dance the wilde Moris through a needles eye. For how should they beare chaste minds, seeing that their exercise is the pathway to all baudry and filthines? There is no ship so laden with merchandize, as their heads are pestred with al kind of baudy songs, filthy ballades and scuruy rymes, seruing for euery purpose and for euery company. For prooffe whereof, who bee baudier knaues then they? Who vncleaner then they? Who more licentious, and looser minded then they? Who more incontinent then they? And brieflie, who more inclined to all kinde of insolency and leudnes then they?

Wherfore, if you would haue your sonne soft, womannish, vncleane, smooth mouthed, affected to baudry, scurrility, filthy rimes, and vnseemly talking: briefly, if you wold haue him, as it were transnated into a woman, or worse, and inclined to all kind of whordome and abhomination, set him to dancing schoole, and to leame Musicke, and then shall you not faile of your purpose.

And if you would haue your daughter whorish, baudy and vncleane, and a filthy

speaker, and such like, bring her vp in musicke and dauncing, and my life for yours, you haue wonne the goale.

And yet notwithstanding, it were better (in respect of the accompt of the world) to be a piper or a baudy minstrel, then a diuine, for the one is loued for his ribauldry, the other hated for his grauity, wisdome, and sobriety. Euery towne, citie, and country, is full of these Minstrels to pipe vp a daunce to the Deuill, but of good diuines, so few there be, that small skil in arithmeticke will suffice to number them.

But some of them will reply and say, what sir? we haue licences from iustices of the peace to pipe, and vse our minstrelsie to our best commoditie? Cursed be those licences, which license any man to get his liuing with the destruction of many thousands. But haue you a license from the arch-iustice Christ Iesus? If you haue so, you may be glad, if you haue not (for the word of God is against your vngodly exercises, and condemneth them to hell) then may you as rogues, extrauagantes, and straglers, be arrested of the high iustice Christ Iesus, notwithstanding your pretended licenses of earthly men.

Then who shall stand betwixt you and the iustice of God at the day of iudgment? Who shall excuse you, for drawing so many thousands to hell? Shal the iustices of peace? Shal their licenses? Oh no. It wil not goe for payment at that day: For, neither ought they to graunt any licenses to any to do hurt withall, neither (if they would) ought any to take them.

Giue ouer therefore your occupations, yu pipers, you fiders, you minstrels, and you musitions, you drummers, you tabretters you fluters, and al other of that wicked brood, for the bloud of al those whom you draw destruction through your wicked example and intising allurements, shall be poured vpon your heades, at the Day of Judgment: but hereof ynough, and perchance more then wil please their daintie humours.

# 1633

William Prynne, *Histrio-mastix: The players scourge, or, actors tragaedie* (London: Michael Sparke, 1633).

*Your assignment:*

Prynne comments several times on the extreme dangers to which woman are exposed just on account of picking up a lute and playing it. Find these passages, and write an account of one or two paragraphs that describes the position he takes, explains how it is motivated, what he sees as the worst-case scenario, and what, ultimately, is his view of women.



William Prynne (1600–1669)  
National Portrait Gallery, London

## Scena Decima.

The third unlawfull Concomitant of Stage-playes, is effeminate, delicate, lust-provoking musicke, which Christians ought to flie as a most filthy thing; both because it workes upon their mindes, to corrupt them, upon their lusts, to provoke them to all voluptuousnesse and uncleanesse whatsoever.

ARGUMENT 25. That which is alwaies accompanied with effeminate lust-provoking musicke, is doubtlesse inexpedient and unlawfull unto Christians. But Stage-playes are alwayes accompanied with such musicke. Therefore they are doubtlesse inexpedient and unlawfull unto Christians.

The Major [premise] is easily confirmed, by proving effeminate lust-enflaming musicke, unlawfull. That musicke of it selfe is lawfull, usefull, and commendable; no man, no Christian dares denie, since the Scriptures, Fathers, and generally with sundry others, all Christian, with others, all Pagan, authors extant, doe with one consent averre it. But that lascivious, amorous, effeminate, voluptuous musicke (which I onely here incounter) should be either expedient, or lawfull unto Christians, there is none so audacious as to iustifie it, since both Scripture, Fathers, moderne Christian Writers; yea and heathen nations, states and authors, have past a doome upon it.

It behoveth us to cut off every filthy spectacle, every dishonest sound, and to use but a word, every dishonest sence of intemperance (which is verily a true privation of sence) that doth tickle or effeminate our eyes or eares, bewaring pleasure. For the various sorceries of effeminate songs, and of the mournfull measures of the Caricke Muse, corrupt the manners, with intemperate and wicked musicke, drawing men to the affection of riotous feasting. The pipe therefore, the flute and such like instruments are to be abandoned from a sober feast, which are more fit for beasts then men, and for those

people who are most estranged from reason. But modest and chaste harmonies are to be admitted, by removing as farre as may be all soft effeminate musicke from our strong and valiant cogitation, which using a dishonest art of warbling the voyce, doe leade to a delicate and slothfull kinde of life. Therefore chromaticall harmonies are to be left to impudent malapartnesse in wine, to whorish musicke crowned with flowers.

**Iustin Martyr** (if the booke be his) writes thus to the selfesame purpose. It is not unlawfull, nor yet altogether unseemely for boyes to sing; but to sing with inanimate instruments; to sing with dancing and cymbals; the use of which kinde of instruments, with others fit onely for Children, are exploded out of our churches, where therefore they had no other church-musicke but singing in his time nothing is retained but singing onely.

**S. Hieronymus** writes thus: Let the singer be thrust out of thine house as noxious: expell out of thy doores all fiddlers, singing-women, with all this quire of the Devill, as the deadly songs of Syrens. And in his Commentary upon the Ephesians: Let youtnes heare these things; let those whose office it is to sing in the church heare these things; that we must sing to God with the heart, not with the voyce; neither after the manner of tragedians are the throate and chops to be anoynted with some pleasant oyntment, that theatrical songs and measures may be heard in the church; but we must sing in feare, in worke, in the knowledge of the Scriptures. So let the Servant of Christ sing, that not the voyce of the singer, but the words that are read may please: that the evill spirit which was in Saul may be cast out of those, who are possessed by him in the same manner, and that he may not be brought into those, who have made a play-house of the House of God. And in his commentary upon Amos he writes thus: The lust of the pallate, and all variety of dainty meates is not sufficient, for you soothe your eares with the songs of the pipe, the psaltery, and the harpe: and that which David hath made

for the worship of God, finding out variety of Organs, and musicall instruments, you transfer to pleasure and luxury.

**S. Valerian** writes thus: We therefore oft-times finde a way to be fenced to incontineny, and fomentations to adulteries to be from hence administred, whiles this man playes on the sounding citheren with a nimble quill, and another with a skilfull finger composeth the melodious inticements of the roaring organs. These are the snares, by whose assistance, among other wounds the Devill workes the deathes of men, etc.

**S. Basil** in his commentary upon Esaye hath these ensuing passages against musicians, songs, and dances: fiddlers and musicians, who passe the time of their flourishing age in villanies, together with dances and songs drawne forth in publike by wicked persons, enervate the virility of mens bodies with their lewde inticements, and soothing their soules with that publike consort, doe breake thorow them, and stirre up drunkards to the embracing of all filthy and unlawfull pleasure. Their eares are taken with the sweet harmony, but such as may pricke them on to a flagitious lubricity, etc.

What a miserable spectacle is it to chaste and wel-mannered eyes, to see woman, not to follow her needle or disaffe, but to sing to a lute? not to be knowne by her owne husband, but to be often viewed by others as a publike whore: not to modulate or sing a psalme of confession, but to sing songs inticing unto lust: not to supplicate to God, but willingly to hasten unto Hell: not to goe diligently to the Church of God, but to with-draw others with her selfe from thence, etc. With thee there lyeth a lute interlaced and adorned with gold or elephants tooth, a demoniacall statue and idoll, fastned at it were to some high; Altar and a certaine miserable woman, who by reason of the necessity of her servile condition, should apply her selfe to her distaffe, is taught of thee, per-chance an hire-ling, perchance of one who shall delive her over to some bawde or prostituted whore; afterwards when she hath satisfied all the lust in her owne

body, she is set over other yong girles, as a mistris of the like actions. Wherefore in the day of iudgement; a double punishment shall seise upon thee; both for those wickednesses thou committest when thou art drunke, and likewise for thy wicked doctrine whereby thou hast quite alienated an unhappy soule from God, etc.

Of those arts which depend vpon the studi of vanity, whether it be the art of musicke, of dancing, of sounding ipes, or such like, as soone as the action it selfe hath ceased, the worke it selfe declareth it selfe, and that altogether according to the Apostles sentence; whose end is destruction and perdition: Let these things suffice to be spoken against those who thorow overmuch effeminacy give themselves wholly over to delights, and that continually; or else against those who in the dayes of mirth or gladnesse suppose of marriages or feasts, doe more diligently procure waites, musicke, rounds and dancing, when as none of these is required of us: who have learned by the teaching of the Scripture, that the wrath of God is bent against all such studies and conversation of life. Therefore for feare of imminent evill from hence-forth amend this wicked custome of your life. Thus farre this Father, who hath other passages to this purpose.

To passe by **Chrysostome**, who writes that cymbals, pipes, and filthy songs are the very pomps and hodgpotch of the Devill, together with our ancient learned country-man **Achuvinus**; who reckons up shrill, wanton amorous musicke, which doth oft-times mollifie and effeminate the vigor of Christians, among those pomps of the Devill, which Christians in their baptisme doe renounce.

**S. Cyrill** of Alexandria afirmes that where there is the sound of the harpe, the beating of cymbals, the consort of fiddlers, with the concinnity of numbers and applauses, there also is all kinde of filthinesse; and those things are done of these in private, which is even unseemely for to utter.

**Gregory Nazienzen** records, that the Christians in his time had no dancing, no idle

songs, or wanton musicke in their publike feasts and solemnities; but onely psalmes and spirituall songs with which they praysed God.

And **Epiphanius** ascertaines us; that the whole Catholicke and Apostolicke Church, condemned theaters, playes and musicians.

**Eusebius** and **Damascen**, as they declaime against wanton musicke, songs, and dancing; so they pronounce an Eusebius quoted, woe against all such who play upon the harpe or citharen on the lords-day; comparing a fidler that playes to dancers, to a Devill. A harsh comparison, enough to scare such from their ungodly trade.

**Saint Augustine** in his first Booke, *De Musica*, declaimes against all wanton, effeminate, amorous, stage-musicke: which was much in use with players, who were commonly bad, not good, Musicians in his age: and that musicke he most discommends which was accompanied with playes or lascivious dancing.

The **3. Synode of Turvy** condemnes effeminate musicke in these termes: The Ministers of God ought to abstaine from all things which pertaine to the enticements of the eares or eyes, from whence the vigor of the minde may be thought to be effeminated: which may be imagined of certaine kindes of musicke, etc. Which severall authorities are a sufficient testimony of the unlawfulnessse of effeminate, amorous, wanton musicke. Which as it is discommendable in feasts and merry meetings, so much more in churches.

Hence is that notable passage of **Aelredus**: Let me speake now (saith he) of those, who under the shew of religion doe obpalliate the businesse of pleasure: which usurpe those things for the service of their vanity, which the ancient Fathers did profitably exercise, in their types of future things. Whence then I pray, all types and figures now ceasing, whence hath the Church so many organs and musicall instruments?

To what purpose, I demand, is that terrible blowing of belloes, expressing rather the crackes of thunder, then the sweetnessse of a voyce? To

what purpose serves that contraction and inflection of the voyce? This man sings a base, this a small meane, another a treble, a fourth divides and cuts assunder, as it were, certaine middle notes. One while the voyce is strained, anon it is remitted, now againe it is dashed, and then againe it is enlarged with a lowder sound.

Sometimes, which is a shame to speake, it is enforced into an horses neighings; sometimes, the masculine vigor being laid aside, it is sharpned into the shrilnesse of a womans voyce: now and then it is wrethed, and retorted with a certaine artificiall circumvolution. Sometimes thou mayest see a man with an open mouth, not to sing; but as it were to breath out his last gaspe, by shutting in his breath, and by a certaine ridiculous interception of his voyce, as it were to threaten silence, and now againe to imitate the agonies of a dying man, or the extasies of such as suffer. In the meane time the whole body is stirred up and downe with certaine histrionical gestures: the lips are wrethed; the eyes turne round, the shoulders play; and the bending of the fingers doth answer every note. And this ridiculous dissolution is called religion; and where these things are most frequently done, it is proclaimed abroad that God is there more honourably served.

In the meane time the common people standing by, trembling and astonished, admire the sound of the organs, the noyse of the cymbals and muscally instruments, the harmony of the pipes and cornets: but yet looke upon the lascivious gesticulations of the singers, the meretricious alternations, interchanges, and infractions of the voyces, not without dirision and laughter: so that a man may think that they came, not to an oratory, or house of prayer, but to a theater; not to pray, but to gaze about them: neither is that dreadfull maiesty feared before whom they stand, etc. Thus this church-singing, which the holy Fathers have ordained that the weake might be stirred up to piety, is perverted to the use of unlawfull pleasure, etc. Thus this ancient English abbot, whom Iohn

Saresbury another ancient English Writer, about the yeere of our Lord 1140, doth second.

Our learned Country-man **Thomas Beacon**, in his authorized *Reliques of Rome*, cap. 37–38, “Of Plain-song, Prick-song, Descant, and Singing in the Church,” writes thus:

[the following is a lengthy quotation from the *Reliques* Thomas Beacon, and ends only on p. 10, left hand column, about one-third from the top]

Singing in Churches, what it ought to be, and how it came in. Pope Vitalian being a lusty singer, and fresh couragious musician himselfe, was the first that brought prick-song, descant, and all kinde of pleasant melody into the Church; in the yeere 653. And because nothing should want to delight the vaine foolish and idle eares of fond fantasticall men, he ioyned the organs to the curious musicke. Thus was Pauls preaching and Peters praying turned into vaine singing, and childish playing, unto the great losse of time, and unto the utter undooing of Christian mens soules, which live not by singing and piping, but by every Word that procedeth out of the mouth of God.

Franciscus **Petrarcha**, in his booke, *De Remedijs utriusque Fortunae* (saith he) declareth: that S. Athanasius did utterly forbid singing to be used in the church at service time, because he would put away all lightnesse and vanity, which by the reason of singing doth oftentimes arise in the mindes, both of the singers and of the hearers.

**S. Hieronymus** reproveth not onely the lewde fashion of the singing men in his time, but also their manner of singing: when notwithstanding if the singing used in his time were compared with that minsed musicke which now beareth chiefe rule in Churches, it might seeme very grave, modest, and tolerable; and ours so light, vaine, madde, fond, foolish and fantasticall, that Hickscorner himselfe could not devise a more wanton pastime. Then he recites some passages against such curious prick-song,

and melodious singing in churches, in which plaine singing only, which every man may understand, and which is in a manner nothing else but plaine reading, ought to be used. And then hee concludes the chapter with these authorities.

**Gulielmus Durandus** saith, that the use of singing was ordained for carnall and fleshly men, and not for spirituall and godly minded men.

**Polidorus Vergilius** writeth on this manner. How greatly that ordinance of singing brought into the church by Pope Damasus and S. Ambrose began even in those dayes to be profitable, S. Austen declareth evidently in the booke of his *Confessions*: where he asketh forgiveness of God because he had given more heed, and better eare to the singing, then to the weighty matter of the holy words.

But now adayes, saith **Polydor**, it appeareth evidently, that it is much lesse profitable for our common-wealth, seeing our singers make such a chattering charme in the temples, that nothing can be heard but the voyce: and they that are present (they are present so many as are in the city) being content with such a noyse as delights their eares, care nothing at all for the vertue, pith, or strength of the words: so that now it is come to this point, that with the common sort of people all the worshipping of God seemeth to be set in these singsters, although there is generally no kinde of people more light nor more lewde. And yet the greater part of the people for to heare them, boing, bleating and yelling, flocke into the churches as into a common game-place. They hire them with money, they cherish and feed them; yea, to be short, thy thinke them alone to be the precious iewels and ornamnts of Gods house, etc. Wherefore without doubt, it were better for Religion to cast out of the churches such chattering and iangling ayes, or else so to appoint them, that when they sing, they should rather rehearse the songs

after the manner of such as reade, then follow the fashion of chattering charmers: which thing S. Austen in his foresaid booke doth witnesse, that S. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, did in his diocesse, and he commendeth him greatly for it.

**Cornelius Agrippa** writeth of singing in churches in this manner, Athanasius did forbid singing in his churches because of the vanity thereof: but Ambrose as one more desirous of ceremonies and pompe, ordained the use of singing and making melody in churches.

**Austen** as a man indifferent betwixt both, in his booke *De confessionibus*, granteth that by this meanes he was in a great perplexity and doubt concerning this matter.

But now a-dayes musicke is growne to such and so great licentiousnesse, that even at the ministration of the holy Sacrament, all kinde of wanton and lewde trifling songs, with piping of organs have their place and course. As for the Divine Service and Common prayer, it is so chaunted and minsed, and mangled, of our costly hired, curious, and nice Musitions (not to instruct the audience withall, nor to stirre up mens minds unto devotion, but with a whorish harmony to tickle their eares) that it may iustly seeme, not to be a noyse made of men, but rather a bleating of brute beasts; whiles the coristers ney descant as it were a sort of colts; others bellowe a tenour, as it were a company of oxen: others barke a counter-point, as it were a kennell of dogs: others rore out a treble like a sort of buls: there grunt out a base as it were a number of hogs; so that a foule evill favoured noyse is made, but as for the words and sentences, and the very matter it selfe is othing understood at all; but the authority and power of iudgement is taken away, both from the minde and from the ares utterly.

**Erasmus Roterodamus** expresseth his minde concerning the curious manner of singing used in churches, on this wise, and

saith, Why doth the Church doubt to follow so worthy an Author (Paul?) yea, how dare it be bold to dissent from him. What other thing is hard in monasteries, in colledges, in temples almost generally, then a confused noyse of voyces? But in the time of Paul, there was no singing but saying onely. Singing was with great difficulty received of them of the latter time; and yet such singing as was none other thing, then a distinct and plaine pronounciation, even such as we have yet among us, when we sound the Lords prayer in the holy Canon, and the tongue wherein those things were sung, the common people did then understand, and answered, Amen. But now, what other thing doth the common people heare than voyces signifying othing? And such for the most part is the pronounciation, that not so much as the words or voyces are heard: onely the sound beateth the eares.

Thus farre this worthy ancient English Professor, Thomas Beacon, and his alleaged authors.

Finally Gods vengeance hath beene and is daily provked, because much wicked people passe nothing to resort to the church; either for that they are so sore blinded, that they understand nothing of God or godlinesse, or else for that they see the church altogether scoured of all such gazing sights as their phantasie was greatly delighted with etc. which seemes an unsavoury thing to their unsavoury taste, as may appeare by this, that a woman said to her neighbour. Alas gossip, what shall we now doe at church, since all the saints are taken away; since all the goodly sights we were wont to have, are gone; since we cannot heare the like piping, singing, chaunting, and playing on the organs (Pope Agatho was the first that brought singing and organ-playing into the Church of England, in the yeere of our Lord 679) that we could before. But (dearely beloved) we ought greatly to reioyce, and give God thanks, that our churches are delivered out of all these things which displeased God so sore, and filthily

defiled his holy house and his place of prayer, for the which he hath iustly destroyed many nations, etc.

[**Conclusion:**] Effeminate wanton accurate musicke then, by the verdict of these several authors and of our owne homelies, is altogether displeasing unto God, corrupts his worship, and filthily defiles his holy house, etc. therefore it must needs bee evill.

Whereupon **Synodus Carnotensis** and the **Councell of Trent** it selfe, decreed, that all impure, lascivious, amorous, secular songs and musicke sauouring of levity and folly, should be excluded the church, because thy did effeminate the lascivious mindes of the people, and provoke them unto lust; not excite or stirre them up to devotion and compnction, as all church musicke (which should be grave, and serious) ought to doe. If therefore we give any credit to these recited authorities; who largely declaimes against amorous delicious songs and musicke as so many enchanting Syrens; which draw men on to idlenesse, effeminacy, luxury, and a kind of wanton dissolutenesse, to the corruption of their manners, of their mindes, and the perdition of their soules: Or to sundry other Christian authors which I spare to mention, in their expositions and commentaries; that they condemned musicke, not onely as unprofitable, but as noious too, because they were perswaded, it would enervate the vigor of mens mindes: which caused them to enact a kinde of law; that their children should for this cause learne no musicke.

Not to record the singular opinion of **Polybus**, who writes; that musicke was invented onely to deceive men.

It is registred of **Alcibiades**, that he reiected delicious musicke as unworthy any ingenuous person: Ateas, a Scythian King; that when he heard Ismenia an accurate musician, playing with great applause and admiration of others; he replyd, that the neighing of an horse was much more pleasing and delightfull to him:



And of **Diogenes Cinnicus**, that he neglected musicke as an unprofitable, needlesse, uselesse thing. But these perchance are over-rigorous, and lesse proper for our present purpose; I therefore passe to more punctuall witnses.

It is storied of **the Lacedemonians**, that though they approved of plaine, of grave and modest; yet they utterly exploded all effeminate, light, newfangled harmonies. Polibius, a grave historian, condemnes all amorous, lascivious harmonies, together with the use of musicke for effeminate or voluptuous ends.

**Plato**, though he approves of musicke, yet he exiles all loose unmanly, voluptuous wanton Lydian or Ionicke harmonies and musicions; together with all musicall instruments of many strings; as being a meanes to effeminate mens mindes, corrupt their manners, abate their courage, consume their time; and to draw them on to idlenesse and voluptuous living; with whom Aristotle and Socrates concurre upon the selfe-same grounds...

[**Conclusion:**] By which experimentall example, and the fore-alleadged testimonies, it is most apparent; that effeminate accurate lust-provoking musicke (especially in publike meetings, feasts and enterludes, where other concurrent circumstances confederate with it, to poast men on to sinfull actions; in which cases the sayd Scriptures most condemne it) must undoubtedly bee utterly unlawfull unto Christians, in regard of the fore-named lewde effects which issue from it: and so by consequence must playes be too, which are either compounded of it, or attended with it.

For the Minor [premise], that stage-playes (which have all other inescating lust-inflaming sollicitations accompanying them, that either human pravity, or Satans pollicy can invent) are attended with such lascivious amorous musicke, which is apt to captivate mens chastity, and foment their lusts; it is more then evident; not onely by moderne experience (our play-houses resounding alwayes with such voluptuous melody;) but likewise by the suffrage of sundry pagan and Christian authors, both ancient and moderne. All which, before infinite others, largely ratifie the truth of this assumption; that playes are alwayes accompanied with most effeminate, amorous, lust-provoking musicke, which depraves mens mindes and manners: therefore both it and the conclusion resulting from it, must be granted.

## Glossary

effeminate 21	unlawful 9	voluptuous 6	lewd 5	idleness 4
lust 13	amorous 9	wicked 6	noise 5	whore 4
wanton 10	vanity 8	corrupt 5	public 5	accurate 3
play 9	filthy 7	delight 5	enticement 4	curious 3
pleasure 9	lascivious 7	devil 5	evil 4	dishonest 3

HISTORIO-MASTIX. *6/12d*  
THE  
PLAYERS SCOURGE,  
*WmOR, Vain, & Obsc*  
FACTORS TRAGÆDIE,

*Divided into Two Parts.*

Wherein it is largely evidenced, by divers Arguments, by the concurring Authorities and Resolutions of sundry texts of Scripture; of the whole Primitive Church, both under the Law and Gospell; of 55 Synodes and Councils; of 71 Fathers and Christian Writers, before the yeare of our Lord 1200; of above 150 foraigne and domestique Protestant and Popish Authors, since; of 40 Heathen Philosophers, Historians, Poets, of many Heathen, many Christian Nations, Republicques, Emperors, Princes, Magistrates; of sundry Apostolicall, Canonica, Imperiall Constitutions; and of our owne English Statutes, Magistrates, Universtities, Writers, Preachers.

That popular Stage-plays (the very Pompes of the Divell which we renounce in Baptisme, if we beleve the Fathers) are sinfull, heathenish, lewde, ungodly Spectacles, and most pernicious Corruptions; condemned in all ages, as intolerable Mischiefes to Churches, to Republickes, to the manners, mindes, and soules of men. And that the Profession of Play-poets, of Stage players; together with the penning, acting, and frequenting of Stage-plays, are unlawfull, infamous and misbecoming Christian. All pretences to the contrary are here likewise fully answered; and the unlawfullnes of acting, of beholding Academicall Enterludes, briefly discussed; besides sundry other particulars concerning Dancing, Dicing, Health-drinking, &c. of which the Table will informe you.

By WILLIAM PRYNNE, an Vicer-Barrester of Lincolnes Inne

Cyprian. De Spectaculis lib. p. 244.

*Eugienda sunt ista Christianis fidelibus, ut tam frequenter diximus, tam vana, tam perniciosa, tam sacrilegia Spectacula: que, etsi non habere crimina, habent tamen et maximam, et parum congruentem fidelibus vanitatem.*

Laſtantius de Verò Cultu cap. 20.

*Vitanda ergo Spectacula omnia, non solum ne quis vitiorum peccatoribus insidat, &c. sed ne cuius nos loquuti consuetudo delineat, atque à Deo et à bonis operibus avertat.*

Chrysoft. Hom. 38. in Matth. Tom. 2. Col. 299 B. & Hom. 8. De Penitentia, Tom. 5. Col. 750.

*Immo vero, his Theatralibus ludis eversis, non leges, sed iniquitatem evertitis, ac omnem civitatis pestem extinguitis: Et enim Theatrum, communis luxuria officina, publicum incontinentia gymnasium, cathedra pestilentia; pessimus locus; plurimorumque morborum plena Babilonica fornax, &c.*

Augustinus De Civit. Dei, l. 4. c. 1.

*Si tantummodo boni et boni: Hi homines in civitate essent, nec in rebus humanis Ludi scenici esse debuissent.*

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