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Arnold Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw" in Postwar Europe by Joy H. Calico (review)

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clearly differentiate themselves from prostitutes, female dancers were heralding a new era by violating this sort of morality code and unveiling themselves on the stage.

In chapter 4, Elswit investigates the German reception of Albert Talhoff and Wigman's multimedia spectacle *Totenmal* (1930) with the US reception of Wigman's dance cycle *Opfer* (1931). Elswit notes how both audiences read the theme of martyrdom; however, while notions of trauma and identity were conjured in the minds of the post–World War I German audience, the American audience perceived the separation between the mystical and mundane worlds (97). She then compares choreographer Kurt Jooss's 1932 and 1951 stagings of *Der Grüne Tisch*. In a 1951 court case addressing the issue of copyright infringement of Jooss's dance, it was argued that the later performance of *Green Table* shared essential qualities with the dance's premiere some twenty years earlier. Its "sameness" accounts for its positive reception as a symbolic return home (*Heimkehr*), a sentiment that allowed West Germany to move on without reflecting on its recent past (141). West German audiences used Weimar dance to negotiate the past while finding a way to express continuity with the past, and at the same time accessing a forum to express a postwar sentiment to break with the past (137).

Drawing on various archival and historical documents—cartoons, interviews, letters, photographs, and works of fiction—Elswit grounds her interpretations of audience reception of works of expressionistic dance. She argues that early twentieth-century dance allowed its audiences to work through contemporary issues such as human and machine hybridity, female visibility, and war trauma. Elswit's *Watching Weimar Dance* makes a significant contribution to the literature on German dance in the early twentieth century and is recommended for both advanced students and scholars working on the topic.

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Arnold Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw" in Postwar Europe. By Joy H. Calico. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014. Pp. xvi + 254. Cloth $60.00. ISBN 978-0520281868.

The cantata *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Arnold Schoenberg's emblematic work commemorating the Holocaust, offers up innumerable challenges to performers and historians, not to mention audiences. Only seven minutes in duration, it poses programming problems for being too short to stand on its own either before or after an intermission, but its somber subject and dramatic effects make it difficult to pair with suitable works. Praised by some critics for its powerful message and derided by others for kitschy devices, it can have the effect of confusing audiences with its

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academic compositional conception (Schoenberg's renowned "twelve-tone" method), its jarring sonorities, and the eerie vocal delivery employing Schoenberg's signature "speech-song" (*Sprechstimme*) style. Adding to its musical complexities are the oddly juxtaposed narrated texts, which mingle the English-language Jewish testimony, the Berlin-accented German orders barked at inmates, and the concluding Hebrew prayers. Music historians have long struggled to situate the work within Schoenberg's self-imagination as a Jew, an American, a Zionist, and an heir to the imposing legacy of German music.

Joy Calico's confrontation with this perplexing work takes a completely new approach, using its postwar performance history in Europe as a cultural barometer of the Cold War. Calico situates her study within the subarea of *Exilforschung* that concerns itself with remigrants, but she treats the work, rather than the composer, as the object experiencing remigration (Schoenberg lived out his days in the United States). She positions the work as sharing features with the millions who migrated across Europe in the years following World War II, proposing that through its many performances across the continent it accumulated its own experiences and "baggage," such that its successive stagings had to reckon with its previous incarnations. Moving chronologically through its performance history, this analysis of *A Survivor's* "cultural mobility" further highlights the importance of artistic exchanges during the Cold War, showing how cultural artifacts managed to penetrate what has been described as the "Nylon Curtain."

Chapter by chapter, we are taken to six different European performance sites between 1950 and 1968: West Germany, Austria, Norway, East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Calico structures each chapter by presenting a thorough and incisive overview of the cultural-political environment in each of the locations and periods, tracking the genesis of the performance by scrutinizing the archival and oral history of the preconcert arrangements, and documenting the fate of the work in the critical responses found in newspapers and journals. In West Germany, the site of the work's European premiere in August 1950, the reactions escalated into a *cause célèbre* when Hans Schnoor, a music critic with a Nazi past, castigated the work as hate mongering and offensive to the German people, couching his attack within his longstanding record of opposing modern music broadcasts on West German radio. His tactless vilification erupted into a public scandal but also revealed the seething resentments among West Germans toward the Allied occupation and the small number of remigrants. Calico casts the subsequent performance in Vienna (in April 1951) as a more direct "remigration," since this was where the Viennese native Schoenberg had endured systemic antisemitism through the 1920s and, after the war, tried to block any performances of his works in this city where he had suffered so much discrimination and personal attack. The Vienna performance was also the only one for which, much to Schoenberg's dismay, the English text was translated

into German, and the term "gas chamber" was conspicuously excised. Yet unlike in West Germany, the critical response was surprisingly tame. Because of Austria's official status as a victim of National Socialism, *A Survivor* did not ignite the feelings of collective guilt that were so volatile in West Germany.

Thereafter any European performances of *A Survivor* fell short of inciting the types of heated debates surrounding its West German premiere, understandable in each case given the neutrality of the venues and the accumulated passage of time since the end of the war. The Norwegian performance took place in March 1954 in an overtly Jewish context, performed on a program alongside a Jewish liturgical work, and Norwegian audiences were at most slightly uncomfortable with the experience given their own treatment of their Jewish neighbors during the war. The East German premiere had to wait until 1958 and the renunciation of Stalin in order for Schoenberg's twelve-tone "formalist" composition to find a level of acceptance during the Thaw. *A Survivor* shared the program with a symphony by Shostakovich, and Calico shows how the critical response reflected antisemitic undercurrents dictated from Moscow. While they considered the performance to be an important event in East German musical life, critics focused more on the victimization of antifascists in Poland than on the overtly Jewish perspective of the work, and their cool reception of the compositional style was reminiscent of the same type of critiques of Schoenberg expressed during the Third Reich. Yet owing to the later dates of performance, the musical score's high modernism could conform to a policy that officially promoted audience accessibility but had become somewhat more tolerant toward experimentation and more engaged with gaining familiarity with Schoenberg and his school. The Polish and Czech performances revealed more of the cultural competition among the Eastern Bloc nations than any Cold War rivalries. The Warsaw performance, coming shortly after the East German premiere and presented by the East German ensemble, occurred at the peak of cultural tensions between the two countries, with East Germans assuming the role of shielding their socialist brethren from the lure of capitalist culture. The overly enthusiastic Polish reception was more a statement of their resistance to towing this socialist line than to a genuine appreciation of the work.

Calico's highly readable and engaging prose couches each episode in a very useful account of the political and cultural contexts of each performance site, setting up a framework within which to understand her interpretation of the critical responses to the work. Only in the afterword does she offer a more aesthetically oriented assessment of the work and its impact on audiences, offering a stunning comparison to Nathan Rapaport's *Monument to the Ghetto Heroes*, unveiled in Warsaw in 1948. While Calico sets out to employ a methodology that treats the work as that of a remigrant, one emerges from reading her study with a much more textured understanding of *A Survivor* as a prism of postwar political, ethical, and social tensions. Sometimes *A Survivor* serves as a catalyst for airing grievances or suppressed prejudices, and

sometimes not. One of the greatest values of this text is that it offers us a panoramic view of the cultural politics in Cold War Europe and a much-needed corrective to various assumptions about Cold War cultural competition as well as cultural solidarity on either side of the Iron Curtain.

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The Making of a Nazi Hero: The Murder and Myth of Horst Wessel. By Daniel Siemens. Translated by David Burnett. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013. Pp. xii + 316. Cloth $28.00. ISBN 978-1780760773.

The name Horst Wessel is well known to historians of the Third Reich, but as Daniel Siemens explains, it is the myth rather than the man that has been often passed down in history. To remedy this situation, Siemens provides an exhaustive analysis of the various Horst Wessels of modern German history: the Nazi convert, the Nazi agitator, the murdered "martyr," and the postwar burden. In the process, the author offers answers to many of the major questions of the Nazi period: Why did young men join the Nazi party in the period before 1933? What was the relationship between political violence and propaganda as practiced by the Nazis and Communists in the years before the Nazi seizure of power in 1933? How and why did Wessel ascend to the pantheon of Nazi heroes? And what was the fate of the myth of Wessel in postwar Germany?

Siemens begins his investigation with the murder of Wessel in Berlin on January 14, 1930, a tale shrouded in many layers of mystery and propaganda. The Nazi narrative, honed by Joseph Goebbels, is that Wessel died at the hands of Communists who were keen on revenge against the successful Nazi agitator and street fighter. Alternatively, the Communist narrative, in an attempt to distance the party from the crime, painted Wessel as a pimp who died as a result of his nefarious activities. Through painstaking research of police records, contemporary newspaper accounts, both Nazi and Communist party records, court records, and individual testimony, Siemens has discovered that the truth of Wessel's murder is much less dramatic. It seems instead that Wessel died as a result of a dispute with Elisabeth Sahm, who rented Wessel a room in her apartment on Grosse Frankfurter Strasse 62 in Berlin-Friedrichshain. Wessel lived in the room with his girlfriend, Erna Jaenichen, without paying extra rent. Apparently upset by Wessel's behavior, Sahm sought help from the local Communist cell of Berlin-Mitte, which frequented the Baer tavern. Initially uninterested in Sahm's plight, several members eventually agreed to give her tenant a "proletarian drubbing" once they discovered that the troublemaker was Horst Wessel. Thus, they proceeded to the apartment on January 14, where the group's leader, Albrecht Höhler, shot Wessel—he succumbed to his wounds on February 23.