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David Monod. *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. xiv + 325 pp. $45.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8078-2944-8.

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Music and Politics during the American Occupation

Maintaining an effective occupation regime is a costly and politically sensitive undertaking. Devastated infrastructure must be restored, institutions reformed, and conquered populations brought to accept their new leadership. Of the thousands of Americans who worked to achieve these goals in post-World War II Germany, less than two dozen had a highly specialized responsibility–they were experts in music. In *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953*, David Monod examines the role played by these select individuals in the Office of the U.S. Military Government (OMGUS) and its successor, the Office of the High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG), in their mission to denazify and democratize Germany. The result is a compelling, meticulously researched study that illuminates the tensions and competing interests that informed American music policy from the conclusion of World War II through the onset of the Cold War.

Building upon recent scholarship that has emphasized the close relationship between Nazi Germany's musical and political elites,[1] Monod turns his attention to the fate of the German musical establishment after the fall of the Third Reich. In the summer of 1945, OMGUS's Information Control Division (ICD) assumed responsibility for supervising all information and entertainment media in the American occupation zone. Music Branch officers were "to serve as a kind of sentinel watching over the birth of artistic freedom," coordinating the democratic reorientation of German musical life (p. 13). Doing so meant halting the performance of works associated with fascist or militarist ideals, and encouraging in their stead music (particularly by Jewish, international, and modernist composers) that had been suppressed or neglected by Nazi authorities. German audiences were to be taught "that the music of other nations and cultures was as valid and worthy as their own," and musicians who had supported National Socialism in the past were to be excluded from important musical posts in the present (p. 13). With American assistance, reconstructed musical institutions were to be freed from state intrusion into their creative affairs.

Settling Scores demonstrates how these goals were translated into policy between 1945 and 1953, with decidedly mixed results. OMGUS never developed an effective

program of denazification, nor did its officers successfully introduce a new musical repertoire or a lasting shift in musical tastes. According to Monod, the Americans' most tangible accomplishment was the promotion of certain structural changes that allowed musical institutions in the Federal Republic to function more democratically than their predecessors. Ironically, the independence of these institutions empowered them to make administrative decisions that sometimes ran counter to their American occupiers' wishes–most notably, by rehiring politically questionable personnel or by declining to broaden their repertoires with unfamiliar or controversial works.

As Monod persuasively argues, "the American occupiers' two goals–punishment and freedom, or put another way, control and democracy" were often at loggerheads (p. 3); Military Government's inability to settle upon a workable middle ground between the two poles thwarted the success of its initiatives. In my own work on music in post-1945 Berlin,[2] I have argued that American ambitions for musical reform were foiled by the rival presence of Soviet occupiers, the Americans' shifting attention from denazification to anti-communism, and the incompatibility of American cultural traditions with those of the Germans. Moving his focus from the exceptional city of Berlin to the internal workings of OMGUS itself, Monod arrives at a different conclusion: "it was not anti-communism that derailed the effort to transform Germany but rather the failure of Military Government itself to decide on goals and methods" (p. 9).

Monod demonstrates how American music policy was shaped by disparate interest groups within the military bureaucracy, each driven by goals and methods that were not necessarily compatible with the others'. ICD chief Robert McClure and members of the ICD Intelligence Section adopted the hardest line in matters of denazification, hoping to purge from public musical life all who "had joined, believed in, sympathized with, or profited from the Nazi party" (p. 34). Intelligence officers lobbied forcefully against the rehabilitation of celebrities like Wilhelm Furtwaengler and Hans Knappertsbusch, even when their persistence damaged American credibility and conflicted with the policies of Germany's other occupiers. Music Branch officers, meanwhile, favored a more pragmatic and reformist approach. Charged with overseeing the reorganization of German orchestras and opera houses, they hoped to reorient the music community through positive means–by encouraging the performance of American and modernist music, and by considering the appeals of blacklisted or "gray" musicians on an individualized basis. In the end, both the reformers and revolutionaries within ICD were beholden to Military Governor Lucius Clay and the economic and political demands of OMGUS at large. Convinced that the Germans had to be made responsible for their own democratic reorientation, Clay placed denazification in German hands and downsized the Military Government earlier than anyone in ICD had hoped. By mid-1948, the cultural officers "could do no more than comment on the unraveling of policies and institutions they had forcefully imposed just two years before" (p. 167).

Monod's thorough, sensitive evaluation of the American music officers is the great strength of this monograph. It is also the source of some subtle weaknesses. A more apt subtitle for the book might have been "The Americans, Denazification, and German Music," because the broader picture of German musical life takes a backseat to the actions and preoccupations of American administrators throughout his narrative. Readers will learn a great deal about Americans' quest to place politically suitable conductors and *Intendanten* at the helm of ensembles like the Munich Philharmonic and Staatsoper, but relatively little about the day-to-day operations of such ensembles, or the performance and reception of their music–considerations that seem crucial to evaluating the broader resonance of American policy. (Important exceptions are Monod's thoughtful discussion of the revived Wagner Festspiele in Bayreuth, as well as the German reception of *Porgy and Bess* and the guest appearances of conductor Leonard Bernstein.) Likewise, Monod explains the American officers' justifications for concerning themselves exclusively with "opera and 'serious' orchestral music" ("*Show business* was allowed to follow its own course, whereas *culture* came in for regulation and control"), but he too shares the officers' narrow focus. Monod leaves it to his readers to ponder the efficacy of a reorientation policy that aggressively pursued violinists and opera singers, but ignored "dance bands and musicians performing in clubs that served food or drink" (p. 23).

Another important question left open by the author is "Why music?" American officers like John Evarts had a ready answer; they believed that music was uniquely suited to the task of reorientation, since "music was an 'international language' that would inspire empathy and fraternity among peoples" (p. 39). Monod admires his subjects' good intentions while conceding their occasionally naive idealism, but his own stance on music's significance is less clear. Was music critical to the American mission, or an awkward misfit within the military bureaucracy? Scholars of the American occupation will

want to know more about how the Music Branch reflected (or contradicted) the direction of OMGUS policy as a whole, as well as how the music officers' experience compared to that of their ICD colleagues responsible for the press, radio, theater, and film.

Such considerations notwithstanding, Monod has drawn a rich portrait of a small but fascinating element of the American military government. Historians of postwar Germany–and anyone who has enjoyed the music of Furtwaengler, Karajan, Orff, Strauss, and the other renowned artists who confronted American occupiers after 1945–will profit from the valuable insights of *Settling Scores*.

Notes

[1]. See Michael H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford, 1997); Pamela M. Potter, *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the end of Hitler's Reich* (New Haven: Yale, 1998); Brunhilde Sonntag, et al., eds., *Die dunkle Last: Musik und Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne: Bela, 1999); Michael H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (New York: Oxford, 2000); and Michael H. Kater and Albrecht RiethmÃ¼ller, eds., *Music and Nazism: Art under Tyranny, 1933-1945* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2003).

[2]. Elizabeth Janik, *Recomposing German Music: Politics and Musical Tradition in Cold War Berlin* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

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