

The analysis of maps, from Sarmatia Europea to the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, shows that, while Europe's east was recognized as the Other, its location was not clearly specified, the range was variable, and boundaries indeterminate. On the contrary, travel writing developed static and permanent visions of eastern Europe's cultural identity, embodied and aestheticized by folk costumes, quaint villages, and impassable mountains. These representations continued to be reproduced even as modernization in the region was recognized, while they sometimes functioned as the epitome of the national Self.

This long-term cliché of eastern Europe formulated political portraits of the region after Versailles. Punch's cartoonists conceptualized the region as a bunch of unruly children in ethnic costumes in a classroom or a playground, suggesting due to the immaturity and submissiveness, the region needs a teacher or a protector, sometimes in the shape of Dame Europe, sometimes Adolf Hitler. During the Cold War, this leader was replaced by Stalin, and the east European group type composed of "satellites" was confined and veiled by the "Iron Curtain."

These stereotypical images of eastern Europe, the author indicates, are currently disappearing, and their representations are becoming more diverse, as seen on the dust jackets of academic books after the end of the Cold War. The new images displayed in the final chapter are intriguing, yet scattered and do not necessarily lead to a clear new vision of eastern Europe, leaving the conclusion open for future research.

The more critical aspect that the book discovers is the form of resistance hidden in eastern European self-representation. Along with images of explicit political demonstrations, such as protesting crowds and toppled statues, the author detects subtle nuances of opposition to established tropes. The self-representation of Europe's east, while internalizing the external depictions, slightly converts their meanings. For example, it occurs by the improper black shoes seemingly acquired in a town in a photo from National Geographic of two young Polish women in traditional ethnic dress, or the irony and deception as well as blurring of the boundary between the Self/Other in the Polish political satire during the Cold War. These expressions destabilize the entrenched values and displace the narrative in the image. The two young women in ethnic dress on the cover of this book, putting the balaclava masks on their faces, which "queers" traditional images, is the clearest example of this kind of resistance, showing a disguised artistic struggle against the image from the Other and the Self.

## **Cindy Bylander. *Engaging Cultural Ideologies: Classical Composers and Musical Life in Poland 1918–1956*.**

**Polish Studies Series. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2022. 343 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. \$149.00, hard bound.**

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Issues of musical autonomy, nationalism and international influences, elitism and accessibility, and concerns about the social function of music are the central themes of Cindy Bylander's new compelling monograph, *Engaging Cultural Ideologies: Classical Composers and Musical Life in Poland 1918–1956*. In this book, the author foregrounds different facets of musical life that supported the composition and presentation of new music, framing them against a political and ideological background that shaped cultural discourse around the musical

arts and affected the livelihoods of Polish composers. Specifically, Bylander examines how composers, both as individuals and as a consortium, interacted with policymakers, performers, and professional organizations, while negotiating the societal and political pressures placed upon them and their creative work during this highly volatile time in Poland's history. Regardless of these prevailing constraints, Bylander argues, generations of composers retained autonomy over their compositional paths.

The volume is divided chronologically into six sections: the interwar years 1918–39; the wartime period 1940–44; the early postwar era 1945–48; the Stalinist time 1949–53; the transition between 1953–56; and the thaw following 1956. The first chapter sketches the contentious reception of modernist compositions amid the burgeoning musical scene in a newly unified country after the partitions, largely to provide a backdrop for later chapters to elucidate similar polemics under differing historical circumstances. In the interwar period, music critics hotly debated the pitfalls of patriotic folk songs, modernist harmonies, and foreign trends. Such opinions followed a concert of the Warsaw Philharmonic in 1932 at which maestro Grzegorz Fitelberg—a champion of Karol Szymanowski and Polish modernists—presented stylistically different compositions by Michał Kondracki, Piotr Perkowski, and Józef Koffler. Then, soon after World War II ended, the Krakow Philharmonic's première of Jan Adam Maklakiewicz's overtly patriotic symphonic poem *Grunwald*, which commemorated a 1410 victory against the Teutonic Knights, elicited similar rhetoric regarding the inventiveness of musical means in the creation of a modern national style. The same preoccupations were again at play in 1955, when Witold Lutoslawski's *Concerto for Orchestra* drew praise for its compositional individuality and engagement with pre-existing folk music and musical traditions. By detailing the performance contexts and critical reception of many works, Bylander highlights the historical continuity of issues that critics returned to periodically. This long view invites us to understand the developments of the late 1950s (covered in the last chapter)—such as the inaugural Warsaw Autumn International Festival of Contemporary Music in 1956—as harkening back to an international vision for Polish music that Fitelberg and Szymanowski upheld decades earlier.

Bylander hones her argument about compositional autonomy (and its limits) in the middle chapters that encompass over a decade of Poland's experiment with Stalinist-style socialist realism. She pushes back against the formerly held notions that composers willingly complied with socialist realist mandates or that ideology was not a determining factor on their compositional style. Instead, Bylander focuses on actions taken by individual composers and by the Polish Composers' Union to protect artistic intent, and in so doing she reveals the far more nuanced complexities of this period. She discusses how the guidelines for new music were difficult to assess precisely, resulting in composers adjusting flexibly to government-financed commissions, festivals, and contests. There was also a wide latitude when it came to delays, withdrawals, or transfers of funds from one project to another. A system of auditions that was put in place to vet finished works also allowed for a suitably nationalist folk-based repertoire to be widely performed. Zygmunt Mycielski (*Polish Symphony*), Andrzej Panufnik (*Symphony of Peace*), Stanisław Wiechowicz (*On a Clay Vase*), and others created original works under these ideological conditions. In contrast to these instances of composers working towards their creative goals, Bylander also explores instances of government officials exerting pressure on composers, even those apparently compliant with socialist goals, to produce more panegyric music. Tadeusz Baird's cantata *Ballad of the Soldier's Mug* represents a case of one such unwelcomed commission, which, it is known, the composer completed in exchange for his father's release from prison. Probing the archival record, Bylander is able to reconstruct a more complicated, if still incomplete, timeline during which the government's interventions (including Baird's audience with President Boleslaw Bierut) encroached on Baird's multiyear efforts with the support of the Composers' Union to forego the commission he felt lacked artistic integrity.

In her close studies, Bylander draws on extensive research in the Polish archives, synthesis of musicological scholarship, and her own vivid translations of Polish-language sources. The monograph is timely in light of the recent work by Lisa Cooper Vest, John Mackenzie Pierce, Beata Bolesławska-Lewandowska, and others. Hers paints a fuller picture of Polish composers' unwavering dedication to their craft amid turbulent times.