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Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945-1953

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SETTLING SCORES: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945–1953. By David Monod. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2005.

Given its title, historian David Monod's book *Settling Scores* runs the unfortunate danger of being confused with *Settling the Score* (Ned Rorem, 1988), or *Settling the Score* (Kathryn Kalinak, 1992), or *Settling New Scores* (Felix Meyer, ed., 1998) and perhaps also *Settling the Score* (Michael Oliver, ed., 1999). But Monod's subtitle, "German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945–1953," places it firmly in the company of works like Michael Kater's *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (1997) and Pamela Potter's *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler's Reich* (1998), or alongside recent work that overlaps Monod's, like Toby Thacker's *Music After Hitler, 1945–55* (2007), or my own *New Music, New Allies* (2006).

The nature of the book's rich thesis is multifold: addressing the day-to-day reality of military government's staggering bureaucracy; the seriously confused procedures of "denazification" and "reeducation"; the ineffectiveness of promoting American music; the dangerous temptation of censorship in a post-dictatorship situation; the tension between American and European values regarding culture versus entertainment; and much more. Monod's story adds to the politicized biographies of its prominent protagonists—in particular well-known figures like Wilhelm Furtwängler, Richard Strauss, Herbert von Karajan, Carl Orff, Georg Solti, Paul Hindemith, Leonard Bernstein, Walter Gieseking, Karl Böhm, and Winifred and Wieland Wagner—as well as lesser-known but equally important players like John Bitter, Edward Kilenyi, Robert McClure, John Evarts, Hans Rosbaud, Leo Borchard, Sergiu Celibidache, Harrison Kerr, Everett Helm, and Carlos Moseley.

In writing on music politics during the postwar American occupation of West Germany, the author operates convincingly from the premise that ours is a time of the politicization of the arts (2), and explains that his "interests lie in exploring the debate over what should have been done with Germany's tainted generation of musicians and its debased culture" (4). In turn, he asks his readers "to confront the question of the culpability of the artist" (4), and at the same time, to reexamine what the Americans actually achieved in the first few years after World War II in cities under their control like Munich, Stuttgart, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, and West Berlin.

Monod gives somewhat scant treatment to the contemporary music culture that experienced such a remarkable rebirth in the years following the Zero Hour, and his insistence on connecting the idea of "revolution" with reeducation leaves this reader only marginally convinced. Several misspellings and minor mechanical errors should have been caught during final proofreading, but overall the book is expertly designed and beautifully produced. Most significantly, the quality of this book's scholarship is impeccable. Monod's research is based on myriad materials in ten German and six American archives, over a dozen sets of additional private papers, eyewitness interviews, and the citation of nearly two hundred published sources. Furthermore, despite the complexity of the topic and the tangled web of tales the author is simultaneously trying to unravel and explain, this insightful book is clearly organized and elegantly written. Monod's engaging, authoritative *Settling Scores* is poised to become required reading for all historians and musicologists interested in cultural rebirth amidst the postwar ruins of occupied Germany.

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