

The Symphony in 1933

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ABSTRACT

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Begun in Berlin, completed in exile in Paris, and premiered on both sides of the Atlantic, Kurt Weill's Symphony No. 2 sets up the symphony circa 1933 as both resolutely international and messily interdisciplinary, and spotlights how fundamentally a transnational approach is needed in order more comprehensively to understand both the genre and the localised political and social issues shaping symphonic discourse at this time. Taking the issues raised by Weill's symphony as a starting point, and borrowing fine-grained, historically synchronic approaches from year studies, this thesis examines the symphonic genre in 1933 through four other case-study works composed or premiered in that year. I thus position the symphony as a site of cultural exchange between and within the major contexts traversed by Weill and his work: Berlin, Paris, and a messier U.S. East-Coast nexus that centres on New York and Boston, via Mexico City, looking in detail at Hans Pfitzner's Symphony in C-sharp minor, Roy Harris's *Symphony 1933*, Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony*, and Arthur Honegger's *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*.

The Germanic genre has long been associated with nationalism, monumentality, and power display, wedded to Germanic Enlightenment philosophical discourses about universalised selfhood and its relationship to society. 1933, the year in which Hitler took power and the Great Depression reached its peak, was politically and economically fraught, concentrating social questions that intersect with symphonic issues about power, selfhood, space, and mass audiences. It is also a neglected year within symphonic surveys. The thesis combines archival work and hermeneutic perspectives to foreground those social and political discourses historically associated with the genre. I argue for the significance of their differing legacies in co-existent contexts, for the complicity of the genre in establishing and perpetuating political and colonial hegemonies, and for the urgency of rethinking the symphony as an international phenomenon.

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NB All translations of primary materials are my own unless otherwise indicated.

Abbreviations

Archives

Berlin, Stiftung Berliner Philharmoniker

Berlin Philharmonic Archive

Boston, Symphony Hall, Boston Symphony Orchestra Archives

BSO Archive

New York, The New York Public Library, Music Division, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden

Foundations, Correspondence and scores belonging to Carlos Chávez, JOB 93-4

Chávez Correspondence

New York, Weill-Lenya Research Center

Weill-Lenya

Ser. 30, 15/6 denotes series 30, box 15, folder 6.

Washington D.C., Library of Congress, Music Division, Roy Harris Papers

Harris Papers

Washington D.C., Library of Congress, Music Division, Aaron Copland Collection

Copland Collection

Washington D.C., Library of Congress, Music Division, Serge Koussevitzky Archive

Koussevitzky Archive

Washington D.C., Library of Congress, Music Division, Correspondence from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection

Coolidge Collection

Washington D.C., Library of Congress, Music Division, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection

Slonimsky Collection

Dutch Newspapers

The Dutch newspaper clippings cited in the introduction are found as copies in Ser.50B at the Weill-Lenya Research Center, and some bibliographic data is only annotated on the documents by hand. I have indicated indecipherable text with '?', and/or a conjecture of a fuller title than the abbreviation provided.

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Introduction

The Symphony in 1933: Kurt Weill's Symphony No. 2

On 21 March 1933, Kurt Weill fled Berlin, having heard he was on a Nazi blacklist following a wave of arrests of prominent intellectuals that coincided with the Reichstag fire in late February. In his single suitcase was a completed draft of the opening movement of his Second Symphony (or *Symphonic Fantasy*), his first (and what would prove to be his final) effort at large-scale instrumental composition in ten years. A commission from the prolific Parisian music patron Princesse Edmond de Polignac in 1932, and originally destined to be premiered in her private salon, the interest and tentative indication of further work it represented in part was perhaps what determined his course to Paris: visiting the previous year he had been warmly received as the latest bright young thing from Germany. His colleague and lover respectively, the couple Caspar and Erika Neher, drove him across the border (it is not clear whether the former was aware of the latter's relationship with Weill). He had been hiding out at their home since the beginning of March.

This introduction establishes Weill's Symphony No. 2 and its initial reception as a case study that illuminates the international setting for the symphonic genre around 1933, the genre's instability, and the kinds of insecurities saturating symphonic discourse. It begins with a short exposition driven by primary source analysis laying out some of the recurrent themes structuring the project, before panning back to address the underlying research questions and transnational methodological principles that govern my overall enquiry.

Weill's symphony was completed in exile on the outskirts of Paris in 1934 and draws heavily on material from his stage works. Conventional musico-historical narratives dictate that Weill, the socialist and 'populist' theatre composer internationally famed for his works with Bertolt Brecht, should be an unlikely contributor to this genre: he was negotiating territory historically considered the pinnacle of 'high' art music and home to Beethoven, Brahms, and Bruckner, and working in a genre encumbered by specifically Germanic idealist nationalism since at least its

reception by nineteenth-century ideologues.¹ What is more, the work is challenging for Weill biographers: as a salon commission, he was writing for the bourgeois world that his previous work had acerbically critiqued.² Symphony No. 2 provokes several questions: why suddenly, and seemingly uncharacteristically, write a *symphonic* composition of all things?³ And why, to put a finer point on it, at this precise moment turn to the symphony just as he escaped the darkening German political regime?

The work underlines the symphony's status in the early twentieth century as something far beyond a purely 'musical' object. It is a tool of political critique, both embedded within and sceptical of social discourses about exile, high art, internationalism, and popular culture. In some ways, Weill's work foregrounds the genre's self-awareness. It had become a vehicle for distanced reflection on the suffocating geographical determinism as well as the nationalist self-aggrandising that had come to plague the symphonic genre, and for lampooning symphonic monumentalism's role in establishing political hegemonies. No longer a genre that could sustain unabashed idealism, Weill's decision to write a symphony negotiates and refracts 'modern' social discourses about mass tastes and markets. Was Weill's work simply a swiftly turned-out money-maker at a time of dire financial need, as previous scholars have suggested?⁴ Weill's assets in Germany, of

¹ For discussion of the nationalistic ideological colouring of the symphony in early nineteenth-century critical reception, see Sanna Pederson, 'A. B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life and German National Identity', *19th-Century Music*, 18 (1994-5), 87-107; Celia Applegate, 'How German is it? Nationalism and the Idea of Serious Music in the Early Nineteenth Century', *19th-Century Music*, 21 (1998), 274-296.

² See Ronald Taylor, *Kurt Weill: Composer in a Divided World* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 203.

³ As far as it is possible to infer from the available primary sources, it seems Polignac only commissioned a work for orchestra, and that it was Weill's decision to write a symphony. Sylvia Kahan supplies the most authoritative range of primary sources illuminating this issue. She cites a letter from Weill to his publisher of 7 November 1932, 'I have ... received from the Princess Polignac a commission to write her *an orchestra work* to be premiered at her house and to be dedicated to her [emphasis mine].' Kurt Weill to Alfred Kalmus, Universal Editions, 7 November 1932. See Sylvia Kahan, *Music's Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer Princesse de Polignac* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 292. In her footnotes she mentions a letter from Weill to Lotte Lenya of 29 November 1932 in which Weill writes '*The symphony* is coming along. La Polignac has already paid me 5,000 francs [emphasis, again, mine].' Kim H. Kowalke and Lys Symonnette, trans. and eds. *Speak Low (When You Speak Love): The Letters of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1996), 105, in: Kahan, *Music's Modern Muse*, 489.

⁴ See Ronald Sanders, *The Days Grow Short: the Life and Music of Kurt Weill* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1985), 203; Sylvia Kahan, *Music's Modern Muse: A Life of Winnaretta Singer Princesse de Polignac* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 309 and 311; Jürgen Schebera, 'Amsterdam, 11. Oktober 1934: Einiges zur Uraufführung von Weills *Sinfonie Nr. 2*' in *Kurt Weill-Studien*, eds. Nils Grosch, Joachim Lucchesi, and Jürgen Schebera (Stuttgart: M & P Verlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1996), 109-118, 109. Sanders suggests money was a major motivating factor for the symphony. Kahan highlights Weill's letters to Lenya in which he refers to the money he was being paid for the symphony (or waiting to be paid: Weill wrote, 'That beast [Polignac] hasn't given me my money' and 'I'm ready to string her up on one of the pipes of her organ if she doesn't give me my money'), citing Kowalke and Symonnette, *Speak Low*, 104-107 and 111-114. Kahan does not overtly suggest it was a major drive, however. Schebera positions

course, had been frozen, so the economic case must have been intense. But there is also a sense in which the work seems profoundly sincere. The symphonic genre retained much of its allure and prestige as *the* test of a composer's capabilities – to what extent, then, was the work a conscious transition of musical register and a bid for elevated respect and recognition? Having studied with Ferruccio Busoni, Weill's credentials rivalled those of any of his more 'serious' orchestral composer contemporaries, and, as he confided cryptically to Lotte Lenya the day after he finished the sketch, he was confident about the work: 'I'm very happy that I can also do something like this better than the others.'⁵ Considering the fraught political context and the work's lengthy gestation – uncharacteristically protracted for Weill – some commentators have suggested that his self-quotation from stage works with an overt socialist agenda points towards a reading of the symphony as a powerful social commentary.⁶ This, I argue, is commensurate with the genre's historically lofty ideals, and hardly incompatible with financial motivation. Yet if secondary literature on Weill's work at large has resisted such an interpretation, then this seems highly revealing about the remarkable persistence of twentieth-century perceptions of 'true' symphonic idealism as decontextualised, universal, and, above all, divorced from quotidian economic imperatives.

In the work's programme note, Weill took a playful and noncommittal position on the musical content of his symphony, despite its flagrant borrowing from the stage. This was perhaps a knowing gesture towards just some of these problematics of absolute music – after all, absolute music has always been a category steeped in ideology:⁷

money as important for Weill in this period, but he does not follow this by suggesting that any financial motivations implied the work's superficiality.

⁵ Letter from Weill to Lotte Lenya, 16 December 1933, in: Kowalke and Symonnette, *Speak Low*, 107.

⁶ The following sources endorse a political reading of the symphony, challenging pervasive characterisations of the work that suggest it was simply a popular crowd-pleaser, or a superficial side-line contribution to Weill's theatrically orientated oeuvre and ideology. See Christian Kuhnt, "Das Gegenteil von Pastorale": Anmerkungen zu Kurt Weills 2. Sinfonie', in *Exilmusik: Komposition während der NS-Zeit*, eds. Frederick Geiger and Thomas Schäfer (Hamburg: von Bockel, 1999), 315-32; Schebera, 'Amsterdam'; Stephen Johnson, 'After Mahler: the Central European Symphony in the Twentieth Century', in *A Guide to the Symphony*, ed. Robert Layton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 382-401.

⁷ Mark Evan Bonds, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006); Laurenz Lütteken, *Sinfonie als Bekenntnis: Zürcher Festspiel-Symposium 2010* (Kassel: Baerenreiter, 2011), 8-9.

It is not possible for me to comment on the content of the work since it was conceived as pure musical form. But perhaps a Parisian friend of mine was right when she suggested that an appropriate title would be a word that expressed the opposite of ‘pastoral’, should such a word exist. I do not know.⁸

Weill’s comments, particularly the reference to the ‘pastoral’, also reveal the work’s dialogue with the Germanic symphonic tradition. Following classical symphonic models, in three movements – Sonata (*Sostenuto – Allegro molto*), Largo (titled ‘Cortège’, referencing the funereal slow movement of Beethoven’s *Eroica*), and Rondo (*Allegro vivace*) – the symphony is unified by carefully worked motivic interactions (described by one commentator as ‘Lisztian thematic transformations’).⁹ These, however, are disguised on the surface level by a sense of disjunction (bear in mind the *Verfremdungseffekt* developed with Brecht) resulting from the abrupt succession of orchestral gestures and almost cinematic cuts between diverse musical materials that reference multiple historical and contemporary forms. Indeed, considering Weill’s integration of dance structures, march, sonata form, Cortège, and lyrical song invites comparison with Mahler’s famed all-embracing attitude to ‘the symphony’,¹⁰ and also invokes Adorno’s commentary: ‘All categories are eroded [...]: none are established within unproblematic limits. Their dissolution does not arise from a lack of articulation but revises it: neither the distinct nor the blurred is defined conclusively; both are in suspension.’¹¹ Also noteworthy – and again referencing the Mahlerian model – is the bittersweet humour Weill invests in the work (Adorno calls it ‘gallows humour’):¹² the grotesquerie of the trombone and woodwind glissandos; the faux-militant trumpet fanfares;

⁸ ‘Ueber den “Inhalt” des Werkes etwas zu sagen, ist mir nicht möglich, da es als reine musikalische Form konzipiert wurde. Vielleicht ist das Wort einer Pariser Freundin richtig die meinte, wenn es ein Wort gäbe, das das Gegenteil von “Pastorale” ausdrückt, so wäre das der Titel dieser Musik. Ich weiss es nicht’. Programme of the Subscription Concert (Bruno Walter/Concertgebouw Orchestra), 11 October 1934; with programme note by Kurt Weill. (Hereafter: Concertgebouw programme note.)

⁹ Douglas Jarman, *Kurt Weill: An Illustrated Biography* (London: Orbis, 1982), 94. Also see Robert Bailey, ‘Musical Language and Formal Design in Weill’s Symphonies’, in *A Stranger Here Myself: Kurt Weill-Studien*, eds. Kim H. Kowalke and Horst Edler (Hindelsheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1993), 207-215. Bailey provides an analysis of the symphony’s first movement, examining its motivic unity.

¹⁰ Plenty of commentators have done the same, or drawn up other seemingly Mahlerian influences on the work: see, for example, Antony Beaumont, booklet accompanying CD: Kurt Weill, *Symphony No. 1, Quodlibet, Symphony No. 2*, Die Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, cond. Antony Beaumont (Chandos Records Ltd., CHSA 5046, 2006), 12; Misako Ohta, ‘Kurt Weill und Gustav Mahler: Der Komponist Weill als Nachfolger Mahlers’, *Gakushuin Daigaku kenkyū ronshū* 2, March (1998), 39-58; Jarman, *Kurt Weill*, 95; Jürgen Schebera, *Kurt Weill: An Illustrated Life*, trans. Caroline Murphy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 223.

¹¹ Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 23.

¹² Ibid.

the impossibly quick triplet motif of the closing bars.¹³ The bald repetition of the march for winds in the final movement creates a particular moment of generic fluidity, manipulating the forces present in the orchestra to create a ‘popular’ marching band. Could Weill be emphasising the archaic principle of literal sonata form repetition – that supposedly gestures towards a more abstract notion of the genre – by inserting a repetition at the least expected moment, and in the wrong movement? Or, given that commentators have hypothesised that the march alludes to the paradox of the menacing, yet ludicrous, appearance of ‘goosestepping Nazis’, does the repetition critique the lack of imagination that leads to political complicity?¹⁴ A question mark similarly hangs over the C major ending. If intended as a nod towards notions of purity and simplicity, then such a tacked-on gesture is, quite frankly, farcical, and perhaps anticipates Igor Stravinsky’s critique in *Symphony in C* (1938-40). That no symphony could really end in C major with a straight face by 1934 confirms the self-consciousness that haunted the genre.

Initially a premiere for the symphony was not forthcoming. It wasn’t until August 1934 that Bruno Walter, exiled from Berlin in the same week as Weill, agreed to take up the symphony for performance (under pressure from Weill’s advocate, and pupil from Berlin, Maurice Abravanel).¹⁵ The events surrounding Walter’s exile from Berlin are given further attention in chapter 1. Walter was quick to get the ball rolling, however; the inaugural performance took place in Amsterdam on 11 October 1934, with immediate subsequent performances at The Hague and Rotterdam. (Atypically for a Polignac commission, the promised private salon performance did not take place until after the premiere.)¹⁶ A few weeks later Walter took the work to the United States, presenting the work in New York on 13 and 14 December. Weill could not have hoped for a

¹³ As Stephen Johnson writes in reference to Weill’s Second Symphony, ‘We should not forget we are dealing with an accomplished ironist here: one who, no less than Mahler, could use popular styles to poignant, disturbing or even downright brutal effect.’ See Johnson, ‘After Mahler: the Central European Symphony in the Twentieth Century’, 391.

¹⁴ For example: Anthony Beaumont, booklet accompanying CD: Kurt Weill, *Symphony No. 1, Quodlibet, Symphony No. 2*, 12.

¹⁵ See Schebera, ‘Amsterdam’, 110-11. On 7 June 1934, Walter wrote to Abravanel, ‘Selbstverständlich will ich Kurt Weill’s [sic] Symphonie mit dem grössten Interesse anhören.’ See letter from Bruno Walter to Maurice Abravanel, 7 June 1934, Ser. 47, Weill-Lenya.

¹⁶ Weill’s Second Symphony was finally performed at the large music room at Avenue Henri-Martin on 24 June 1935. See Kahan, *Music’s Modern Muse*, 328.

more prestigious opening for his first piece of absolute music in ten years; as he wrote to Lenya, 'I'm afraid the gods will be envious'.¹⁷ And after attending the Concertgebouw rehearsal he seemed to have every reason to remain buoyant, reporting to Lenya, 'Just a quick note. The rehearsal [of the Second Symphony] was wonderful. Walter does it marvellously and everyone is really enthusiastic, especially the entire orchestra! It's a good piece and sounds fantastic.'¹⁸ It seems any early insecurities about his ability to develop the 'right style' [*richtigen Stil*] for an orchestral work had long been assuaged.¹⁹

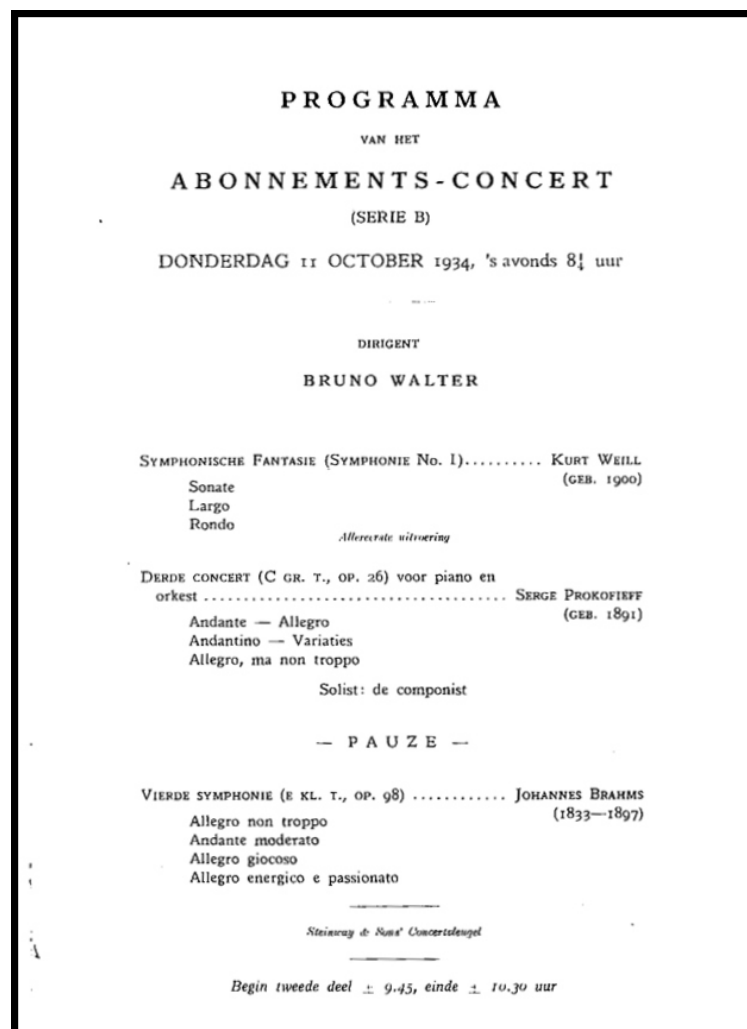


Figure 1: front cover of the original programme for the world premiere of Weill's Second Symphony by the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam. Note that the work is introduced as 'Symphony No. 1'; the symphony has been retrospectively renumbered no. 2 to acknowledge Weill's one-movement student symphony (1921). Courtesy of

¹⁷ 'Ich habe Angst vor der Götter Neide'. Schebera, 'Amsterdam', 111.

¹⁸ Letter from Weill to Lenya, 10 October 1934, in: Kowalke, *Speak Low*, 145. This letter is frequently cited to confirm his positive attitude to the symphony. See, for example, Kowalke, *Kurt Weill in Europe* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1979), 86; Schebera, *Kurt Weill*, 223; Schebera, 'Amsterdam', 114; Bailey, 'Musical Language and Formal Design in Weill's Symphonies', 207-215, 207; Taylor, *Kurt Weill: Composer in a Divided World*, 203.

¹⁹ Kuhnt, "Das Gegenteil von Pastorale", 318. Kuhnt quotes a letter from Weill to Universal Edition, found as a copy in the Weill-Lenya Research Center.

And yet this was to misjudge the complex and restrictive discourses used to police the symphonic genre. The work animated and agitated reviewers, provoking divisive and inconsistent responses, and if anything, it seemed his *Dreigroschenoper* success stacked the odds against his symphony's chances of a welcoming critical reception.²⁰ Juxtaposed in the programme with Brahms's Fourth Symphony, a mainstay of the repertoire, the yardstick against which Weill's symphony was to be measured was particularly illustrious [figure 1]. Some were pleasantly surprised. As the reviewer for *Eemlanden* reported: 'That was not so bad! I had prepared myself for much worse things! [...] Modern, very modern, but funny and fluent, and without sentimentality (*hartverscheurende klanken*).'²¹ But for the most part, critics were more damning, and a Maastricht newspaper spelled out some major and recurrent qualms:

Kurt Weill is the composer of the *Dreigroschenoper*, and I fear that he is doomed to remain as such. This is no disgrace, though it would be better if he just accepts it, and does not attempt to force his talent into a rather hopeless direction. Because, to be honest, Weill's *Symphonische Symphonie* is not much more than a number of expanded songs, causing the result to be rather ridiculous. In spite of the fact that the song-style does not lend itself to symphonies, the nature of Weill's music is just not suitable for absolute music. Weill is a man of the theatre [...] ²²

What was it, for this reviewer, about symphonies that opposed the 'song style'? And precisely what was it about the 'nature' of Weill's music that meant it could not be assimilated within the

²⁰ My Masters thesis, deposited at the Weill-Lenya Research Center, deals in more detail with the Dutch reception of Weill's symphony, building on the only existing research that has been done on this body of reviews, a German-language article by Schebera. Schebera was among the first to suggest overtly that the symphony's poor reception in the Netherlands was determined not by the intrinsic qualities of the work, but by the bittersweet impact of Weill's *Dreigroschenoper* fame. He suggests that it had distorted perceptions of Weill and his music, making critics orientate their understanding of Weill's work from the bearings of that very distinctive style. As Schebera points out, for the most part it seemed the critics had heard neither the violin concerto, the early chamber works, the one-act opera with George Kaiser, *Das Berliner Requiem*, *Mahagonny*, nor *Die Bürgschaft*. Unfamiliar with any of Weill's oeuvre beyond that international blockbuster, critics were unprepared to take the work 'seriously' and preconditioned to hear only echoes of one work. See Schebera, 'Amsterdam', especially 116.

²¹ 'Die viel mee! Ik had mij op veel erger dingen voorbereid! [...] Modern, zeer modern, maar geestig en vlot, en zonder hartverscheurende klanken.' H. F. K., 'Belangrijke nieuwe muziek in het Concertgebouw: Serge Prokofieff en Kurt Weill', *Eemlanden*, 12 October 1934 (trans. Liselotte Snijders).

²² 'Kurt Weill is de componist van de Drei Groschen Oper en ik vrees, dat hij nog vele jaren gedoemd is dit te blijven. Dit is geen schande, doch het is beter zou hij hiermede genoegen neemt en niet tracht zijn talent te forceeren in een richting, waarin het voorloopig nog niet veel kansen lijkt te hebben. Want om het oprecht te zeggen is Weill's Symphonische Fantasie niet veel anders dan een aantal zoodanig vergroote songs, dat het resultaat eenigszins ridicuul is geworden. Behalve, dat de song-stijl zich niet zeer goed leent voor symphonische vormen, is het karakter van Weill's muziek ook al heel weinig geschikt voor absolute muziek. Weill is een theaterman...' Anonymous, 'Weill en Prokofieff – Symphonie in Songs – Prokofieff's derde pianoconcert', *Maast.* (Maastricht newspaper?), 12 October 1934 (trans. Josephine Kahn).

boundaries of the symphonic form? As many questions as the reception raises about the ‘nature’ of Weill’s music, however, it raises still more about the nature of ‘absolute’ music. In particular, the reception draws attention to the nineteenth-century ideological legacies of the symphonic genre and ‘absolute’ music and the ongoing place and relevance of those discourses in the twentieth century. For instance, as one reviewer observed, ‘[Weill] doesn’t give the impression that he *had* to write a symphony because it was burning inside of him... [original emphasis]’²³ The idea of the symphony was still integrally shaped by conceptions of Romantic creativity and about unique artistic visions, but it is uncertain whether those powerful inherited narratives about the symphonic generative process still fully convinced.

Yet unpacking what critics had to say about the ‘nature’ of Weill’s ostensibly ‘theatrical’ music in parallel with the way the reviews foregrounded the aesthetic legacies of ideals associated with nineteenth-century absolute music is revealing. It uncovers that their problems with the work had less to do with ‘purely’ musical aspects, and more to do with social discourses relating to Weill’s ‘popular’ status and fame, political discourses linked to the socialist message of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, racial discourses bound up with his Jewish heritage, and finally the perceived ‘internationalism’ of Weill’s musical voice, at odds with symphonic, and specifically Germanic, nationalism.

Several writers commented on the ‘banality’ or ‘emptiness’ of Weill’s music, implicitly contrasting it against the depth of true symphonic language.²⁴ L. M. G. Arntzenius, writing for *Telegraaf*, addressed this directly: ‘one could not trace any symphonic art (*symphonische kunst*) in the normal sense of the word. Symphonic art requires an orchestra that has been more deeply touched and worked on [...]’.²⁵ Such aesthetic legacies had clear nationalist-ideological correlates.

²³ ‘Het geeft niet den indruk dat hij het werk schrijven moest omdat iets in hem brandde.’ Anon, ‘Concertgebouw: Wereldpremiere van de Eerste Symphonie van Kurt Weill’, n.d. (trans. Snijders).

²⁴ See, for instance, H. R., ‘Donderdagavondconcert Concertgebouw’, *Handelsblad*, 12 October 1934 (trans. Linda Bakkum); Theo v. d. Bijl, ‘Concertgebouw: Een nieuw werk van Kurt Weill’, *Jüd.* (a Jewish periodical?), 12 October 1934 (trans. Snijders); L., ‘Muziek: Concertgebouw’, *Dames Kroniek*, 13 October 1934 (trans. Anne Hillebrand).

²⁵ ‘Van symphonische kunst in den normalen zin heeft men bij dezen eersten keer luisteren echter weinig of niets bespeurd: bij symphonische kunst behoort een dieper doorvoeld en dieper doorwerkt orkest’, L. M. G. Arntzenius, ‘Walter’s Tweede Avond – Première van Kurt Weill’s “Symphonische Fantasie” – Prokofieff Oogst Succes’, *Telegraaf*, 12 October 1934 (trans. Kahn).

Alongside metaphors of depth came those of organicism, another key Germanic symphonic ideology that embedded music in other social, scientific, and aesthetic discourses of the nineteenth century. Together, depth and organicism helped make music about subjective interiority and freight it with the burden of national identity construction.²⁶ The reviewer in *Volk*, initialled P.F.S., wrote that ‘all the “songs” that are interweaved in the piece display the same kind of primitive melody, which does not lend itself to the distinctive character of symphonic style: the development’.²⁷ Likewise, far from a paragon of organic unity, the reviewer for the *Dames Kroniek* wrote uncharitably of Weill’s thematic development: ‘it all sticks together like dry sand’, acidly describing the themes as simply ‘appearing’ rather than the more symphonic or organic ‘developing’.²⁸ In a similar rhetorical vein, but with a more contemporary geneticist bent, another reviewer indicated that the music ‘all remained in an embryonic state’.²⁹ Arntzenius summed up the supposed problem with the musical themes: ‘Sometimes they have a song-like character, sometimes they appear to be a bit heavier, yet they never swell to become an actual piece, to become the foundation for, indeed, a symphonic sound. No, never will they reach the level of a true symphony.’³⁰

If Weill’s work was not a ‘true symphony’, how, then, should the reviewers account for the obvious delight of the listening public in the wake of Weill’s *Dreigroschenoper* fame: the fact that Weill bridged so-called ‘high’ and ‘low’ art forms and audiences? ‘On the slippery floors [of the concert hall] he made the occasional clumsy gambol and he winked amicably and jovially at the distinguished ladies Rhythm and Melody, something which does not belong in a dignified

²⁶ Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E.T.A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

²⁷ ‘Al die “songs” waarmede het werk doorspekt is, vertonen dezelfde soort primitieve melodie, die zich juist niet leent voor de karakteristieke symphonische stijl: de ontwikkeling.’ P. F. S., ‘Weill en Prokofieff – Première der symphonische fantasie bereidt een teleurstelling – Voortreffelijke uitvoering’, *Volk*(?), 12 October 1934 (trans. Kahn).

²⁸ ‘maar het hangt aan elkaar als droogt zand en de erin opduikende (van “verwerken” kan men hier nauweliks spreken) thema’s en motieven getuigen veelal van een bedenkelijke banaliteit en een tamelijk treurigen waansmaak.’ L., ‘Muziek: Concertgebouw’.

²⁹ ‘het bleef alles in embryonale toestand.’ Anon, ‘Concertgebouw’.

³⁰ ‘Soms van een song-karakter, soms iets zwaarder van allure, doch nimmer uitdijend tot een waarlijk gegeven, tot een grondslag voor inderdaad-symphonischen klank. Nimmer groeiend tot het niveau van inderdaad-symphonische kunst.’ Arntzenius, ‘Walter’s Tweede Avond’.

symphonic milieu!³¹ Note the gendering of popular music as feminine, a trope that is reiterated in the gendering of the positive audience reception: ‘There was a lot of applause for the piece by Kurt Weill, (especially the young ladies were – of course because of the *Dreigroschenoper!* – very enthusiastic).³² The criticism thus raised issues relating to the Enlightenment ideal of the symphonic genre’s community-forming impulse, but inflected by specifically twentieth-century concerns.

Some anti-Jewish rhetoric was also present, indicative of how notions of symphonic authenticity continued to be congruous with ideas of racial purity. Having already, as seen above, described Weill’s melodies as ‘primitive’, the reviewer for *Volk* went on:

Initially, coming from the schooling of Busoni, his [Weill’s] work displayed great seriousness. Abruptly this changed. Instead of increased intensification, stagnation set in. The composer had found a genre which promised him comfortable success. And he stayed faithful to that genre. Only those of a strong nature know how to avoid the dangers that the flush of victory brings along.³³

Weakness of character, popularism, and commercial success are hinted at and elided together – with clear anti-Semitic undertones.

Even this cursory overview of the reception of Weill’s symphony has uncovered a number of areas that require further contextualisation and analysis. It provokes questions about the localised discourses that the reception plays into, and how that localised discourse is constructed reflexively as peripheral against a culturally dominant narrative – the Weill criticism was shot through with a sense of deference to Germanic ‘*symphonische*’ values. Perhaps, indeed, symphonic anxieties were more pronounced in Amsterdam than they might have been in a more culturally assured city like Berlin or Vienna. Yet existing literature on symphonic discourse lacks a

³¹ ‘op de gladde vloeren maakte hij nog wel eens ’n onhandigen kultenflicker en tegen de voorname dames Rhythme en Melodie gaf hij amicale en joviale knipoogjes, welke in een deftig symphonisch milieu niet tot de bon ton behoren!’ v. d. Bijl, ‘Concertgebouw: Een nieuw werk van Kurt Weill’.

³² ‘Er was veel applaus voor het werk van Kurt Weill, (vooral de jonge dames waren – natuurlijk vanwege de *Drei Groschen-opera!* – zeer enthousiast)’, H. F. K., ‘Belangrijke nieuwe muziek in het Concertgebouw: Serge Prokofieff en Kurt Weill’.

³³ ‘Uit de school van Busoni voortgekomen, getuigde zijn werk aanvankelijk van grote ernst. Plotseling kwam de ommekeer. In plaats van verdere verdieping trad stilstand in. De componist had een genre gevonden, dat hem een gemakkelijker succes beloofde. En hij bleef dat genre trouw. Alleen sterke naturen weten de gevaren te ontlopen, die de roes van het succes met zich medebrengen.’ P. F. S., ‘Weill en Prokofieff’.

comparative perspective, leaving us ill-equipped to understand the Amsterdam reception, and still less able to compare its subtleties with the reception of Weill's work across the Atlantic. It seems that to understand Weill's work and its reception we need to begin to piece together a fuller, more globalised picture of symphonic discourse. Only then can the question of what it was about the ideological construction of symphonic music that led to Weill being so forcefully excluded more convincingly and productively be addressed.

Methodology

Weill's symphony sets up the symphony circa 1933 as both resolutely international and messily interdisciplinary, and thus as a particularly problematic and unstable moment for a genre historically both so nationally particularised and so ideologically insistent on its 'absolute', self-contained status. The narrowly prohibitive and inflexible Amsterdam reception of the work illuminates the precariousness of the symphonic genre and the anxiety surrounding it at this time, in turn indexing a sense of political volatility alongside nostalgia for an unrecoverable past. Any suggestion that Weill's symphony might represent a 'deliberate revolution' within the form, for instance, was dismissed out of hand.³⁴ Thus to understand the manifold directions in which the symphony and its criticism point – for example, where might pursuing Weill's cryptic programme-note comment 'the opposite of pastoral' take us? – the lens needs to be widened.

This project was initially motivated by a desire to gain a keener understanding of Weill's symphony, which has received only limited critical attention compared with much of his oeuvre.³⁵ It became apparent that this would mean relating it to other symphonic works from 1933, and situating it in the appropriate international context. In short, what is needed is a more precise idea of the localised political, social, and aesthetic nuances shaping symphonic discourse in the global

³⁴ 'Is this a deliberate revolution? I can hardly believe it: the unity seems a bit too weak to destroy the fundamentals of the existing literature.' 'Bewuste revolutie? Ik kan er moeilijk aan gelooven: het geheel schijnt wel wat zwak om de pijlers van de bestaande literatuur te vernietigen.' Arntzenius, 'Walter's Tweede Avond'.

³⁵ Weill's Second Symphony is the subject of only a handful of studies to date: Bailey, 'Musical Language and Formal Design in Weill's Symphonies'; Kuhnt, "'Das Gegenteil von Pastorale'"; Schebera, 'Amsterdam'; Ohta, 'Kurt Weill und Gustav Mahler'.

contexts traversed by Weill's symphony. Begun in Berlin, finished in exile in Paris, and given trans-Atlantic premieres by another exile, Walter – if any symphony deserves the label 'transnational' and calls for an aligned critical/methodological perspective, Weill's does. Its history and critical reception were profoundly shaped by twentieth-century histories of human displacement that intersect with global music networks and international concert circuits. Weill's symphony thus provides a biographical way of accessing and unpacking the value of 'transnationalism' for musicology, a critical concept that can seem unwieldy and abstract. But that clear sense of the situation globally, and of the socio-political stakes for the genre, are precisely what are largely absent in existing scholarship on the symphony. The Germanic genre has long been associated with nationalism, monumentality, and power display, wedded to Germanic Enlightenment philosophical discourses about universalised selfhood and its relationship to society. 1933, the year in which Hitler took power and the Great Depression reached its peak, was politically and economically fraught, concentrating far-reaching social questions that intersect with symphonic issues about power, selfhood, society, and spatial expansionism. Having started from Weill's symphony, then, this study grew into something more ambitious, as it became clear how fundamentally a transnational approach is required in order fully to understand the symphonic genre more broadly at this time.

Thus this thesis examines the symphonic genre in the year 1933 from a transnational perspective. I thread outwards from Weill's work, examining the wider aesthetic and social significance of the symphonic genre in the contexts with which Weill's symphony interacts to create a more finely grained picture of the symphony in the year 1933. My study has no pretensions towards being a comprehensive survey of the symphonic genre in that year – instead it is concerned with challenging the patterns of existing music scholarship, by indicating the benefits of borrowing transnational approaches from *histoire croisée* and from so-called 'year studies'. The thesis positions the idea of 'the symphony' as a site of cultural exchange and transaction between and within the major contexts traversed by Weill and his work: Berlin, Paris, and a slightly less neat U.S. East-Coast nexus that centres on New York and Boston, with a

sojourn to Mexico City. To this end, I have selected a handful of case study works composed or premiered in the year to contextualise and complement the issues raised by Weill's work – Hans Pfitzner's Symphony in C-sharp minor, Roy Harris's *Symphony 1933*, Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony*, and Arthur Honegger's *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* – with a chapter devoted to each. As these works show, the symphony was hardly a static or local phenomenon in this period: like Weill, these composers were all to a greater or lesser extent internationally mobile in the years around 1933. The thesis uses a mixture of archival work and music-hermeneutic perspectives to approach and contextualise these symphonies, negotiating a constant tension between 'the symphony' as something localised on the one hand and as something global, abstract, and 'universally' recognisable on the other. This approach brings those Germanic social and political discourses historically associated with the genre to the fore, and asks about their legacies in different socio-cultural contexts. The thesis then picks up Weill's work again in the conclusion, re-examining it, and its New York reception in particular, in light of the interim discussion.

Literature Review

Attention to 1933 is doubly urgent, as became clear during my preliminary research on the numerous studies of the symphony in the twentieth century. Having dropped through the cracks of standard symphonic periodicising, symphonies from the years surrounding 1933 have suffered systemic neglect. The tacit assumption is that not only was the genre dwindling after its nineteenth-century heyday,³⁶ it was now something of a poisoned chalice given marked anti-German political sentiment following the Great War. In that climate, how far was the monumental public muscle flexing with which the genre was virtually synonymous in good taste? Some of those composers whose work in the genre is best documented did indeed turn their attentions away from the symphony around this time – for instance, Sergei Prokofiev, Dmitri

³⁶ This narrative is outlined by A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire*, 5 vols (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), in particular, iv 'The second golden age of the Viennese symphony: Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Mahler, and selected contemporaries'; also by Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations* (on page 3 she writes that the genre 'dwindled into irrelevance' after Mahler's death, despite its continued prominence in music criticism). The decline narrative is challenged, however, by studies such as Christopher Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony* (London: Dobson, 1983).

Shostakovich, Kurt Atterberg, Howard Hanson, Roger Sessions, Stravinsky, and Ernst Krenek, further contributing to a sense of lull and stagnation, particularly since so much music scholarship has a biographical focus. Simultaneously, 1933 comes just at the tipping point before counter narratives of later symphonic regeneration, particularly in Anglophone countries and Scandinavia, really gain momentum.³⁷

Yet despite falling in the no-man's land between two monolithic symphonic narratives, one of decline, one of regrowth, this period was enormously productive. Allowing 1933 somewhat porous borders for the time being, between 1932 and 1934 works emerged across Europe and the USA from seasoned symphonic composers as well as from more unlikely quarters, focussing tensions between nineteenth-century ideological legacies and wide-ranging, yet typically 'modernist' anxieties. To illustrate the magnitude of the body of works that has been overlooked, a selective list is worth including at this point [figure 2].³⁸

Figure 2: selective list of symphonic works composed c. 1933

Germany	Paul Hindemith, <i>Mathis der Maler</i> Symphony (1933-5) Hans Pfitzner, Symphony in C-sharp minor (op. 36a) (1932) Karl Amadeus Hartmann, <i>Miseræ</i> (or Symphony No. 1) (1933-4) Paul Dessau, Symphony No. 2 (1934 – reworking and premiere 1962) ³⁹
Austria	Franz Schmidt, Symphony No. 4 in C major (1932-3) Hanns Eisler, <i>Kleine Sinfonie</i> (1932) Alexander Zemlinsky, <i>Sinfonietta</i> op. 23 (1934) Frida Kern, <i>Symphonische Musik</i> op. 20 (1934)
France	Kurt Weill, Symphony No. 2 (1933-4) (begun in Berlin)

³⁷ For literature dealing with a roughly post-1930 period of symphonic revival, see, for instance, Wolfgang Osthoff and Giselher Schubert, *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge* (Mainz; London: Schott, 2003). I have not found any symphonies by Scandinavian composers dating from 1933.

³⁸ A more extensive (but not exhaustive) list of symphonies can be found in appendix 1.

³⁹ Manuel Gervink, *Die Symphonie in Deutschland und Österreich in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen* (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1984), 244.

	Arthur Honegger, <i>Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3</i> (1933) Albert Roussel, Symphony No. 4 in A major (1934)
United Kingdom	William Walton, Symphony No. 1 (1932-5) Ralph Vaughan William, Symphony No. 4 (1934) Benjamin Britten, <i>Simple Symphony</i> for strings (1933-4) and <i>Sinfonietta</i> op. 1 (1932) Arnold Bax, Symphony No. 5 (1932) and Symphony No. 6 (1934-5) Havergal Brian, Symphony No. 4 '<i>Siegesslied</i>' (1932-3) Richard Hall, Symphony op. 34 (1933) Ernest Oates, Symphony No. 1 (1933)
Italy	Gian Francesco Malipiero, 'Prima Sinfonia (in Quattro tempi come le Quattro stagioni)' (1933)
Soviet Russia	Nikolai Myaskovsky, Symphony No. 13 (1933), Symphony No. 14 (1933), and Symphony No. 15 (1934) Aram Khachaturian, Symphony No. 1 (1934) Dmitry Kabalevsky, Symphony No. 2 (1934) and No. 3 <i>Requiem</i> (1933)
Hungary	Ernő Dohnányi, <i>Szimfónikus percek (Symphonic Minutes)</i> (1933)
Poland	Józef Koffler, Symphony No. 2 (1933) Karol Szymanowski, Symphony No. 4 (<i>Symphonie concertante</i>) op. 60 (1932)
Estonia	Eduard Tubin, Symphony No. 1 in C minor (1931-4)
Mexico	Carlos Chávez, <i>Sinfonía de Antígona</i> (1932), <i>Llamadas, Sinfonía proletaria</i> (1934)
Argentina	Juan José Castro, <i>Sinfonía bíblica</i> (1932) and <i>Sinfonía argentina</i> (1934)

USA	Roy Harris, <i>Symphony 1933</i> (1933) Aaron Copland, <i>Short Symphony</i> , No. 2 (1931-3)
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And that is not to mention unfinished or planned symphonies from major composers who died before their works could be completed: Edward Elgar's *Symphony No. 3* and Alban Berg's *Symphonic Pieces from Lulu*. These works channel a range of socio-political concerns that are differently amplified in different contexts: about human displacement and dislocation, about the bourgeois subject, about institutionalised and politicised forms of violence, about the lines of power along which art is divided and articulated as 'low' or 'high', about mass production and expanding international markets. Like Weill's symphony, many of these works evince an ambivalent stance toward the genre and to the idealist and nationalist discourses with which it was caught up: no longer playing by nineteenth-century rules, they manipulate or critique the form. And my archival research has made it clear that the symphony and its supporting institutions in the period were a thriving, if contested, international phenomenon. Considered as a body, these symphonies undoubtedly demonstrate the currency and immediacy of the form, then, in spite of the continuing dialogue they evince with its classical and romantic heritage and ideals. However, the political status of the symphony in 1933 is far from straightforward.

Until recently, scholarship on the symphonic genre has largely been survey-type work; even the latest scholarship has typically been delimited by country and heavily periodicised.⁴⁰ The following literature review uncovers some of the reasons for the absence of this body of work from literature on the symphonic genre in the twentieth century by reflecting on the methodology of general surveys of the symphony in English- and German-language scholarship in particular.⁴¹ On the whole, the tendency of this body of literature is towards the strongly

⁴⁰ See, for instance, Andrew Deruchie, *The French Symphony at the Fin De Siècle: Style, Culture, and the Symphonic Tradition* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2013); Douglas W. Shadle, *Orchestrating the Nation: The Nineteenth-Century American Symphonic Enterprise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁴¹ The principal survey literature under review is as follows: Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*; Eugène Borrel, *La Symphonie* (Paris: Larousse, 1954); Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire*, iiia 'The European symphony ca. 1800-ca. 1930: Germany and the Nordic countries', iiib 'The European symphony ca. 1800-ca. 1930: Great Britain, Russia and France', iv 'The second golden age of the Viennese symphony: Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Mahler, and selected contemporaries'; Louise Cuyler, *The Symphony* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973); Gervink, *Die Symphonie*

uncritical and canonising, made all the more troubling by its highly selective historical and geographical coverage. Having for the most part resisted (new) musicology's incorporation of post-colonial, post-structural, queer, and feminist perspectives over the last three decades, which have enriched opera studies in particular,⁴² it seems sorely in need of reframing.⁴³ First, I point to and explore pervasively decontextualised approaches to the genre and their post-war underpinnings – particularly in Anglophone scholarship. These approaches have failed to provide adequate foundations for contemporary scholarship, and this problem is only just beginning to be redressed in recent literature. Secondly, I investigate how those ways of engaging with the genre that became entrenched throughout the twentieth century have created faultlines that have allowed particular periods, repertoires, and national voices to slip from history. Then I stress the need for – and ultimately sketch out – an alternative transnational methodology that seeks not

in *Deutschland und Österreich in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*; Horst Herold, *Symphonic Jazz – Blues – Rock: zum Problem der Synthese von Kunst- und Unterhaltungsmusik in symphonischen Werken des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Lit, 1999); Ralph Hill, *The Symphony* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1949); Julian Horton, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Hartmut Krones, *Die österreichische Symphonie im 20. Jahrhundert* (Wien: Böhlau, 2005); Layton, ed., *A Guide to the Symphony*; Lütteken, *Sinfonie als Bekenntnis*; Osthoff and Schubert, *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge*; Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*; Helga-Maria Palm-Beulich, *Süddeutsche Komponisten im 20. Jahrhundert: Verzeichnis zeitgenössischer symphonischer Werke* (München: Bayerischer Musikrat, 1992); Ursula von Rauchhaupt, *The Symphony* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973); Jürgen Schaarwächter, *Die britische Sinfonie: 1914-1945* (Köln: Dohr, 1995); Robert Simpson, ed., *The Symphony: Elgar to the Present Day* (Aylesbury: Penguin Books, 1967); Stedman, Preston, *The Symphony* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979); Wolfram Steinbeck and Christoph von Blumröder, *Die Sinfonie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Laaber: Laaber, 2002); H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Twentieth Century Composers, Volume II: Germany and Central Europe* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970); Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 6 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), iii, 'The Nineteenth Century' and iv 'The Early Twentieth Century'; Nicholas E. Tawa, *The Great American Symphony: Music, the Depression, and War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Homer Ulrich, *Symphonic Music, its evolution since the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952); Arnold Whittall, *Music Since the First World War* (London: Dent, 1977); Arnold Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁴² For examples of opera approached from feminist and queer perspectives in particular, see Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices*; Corinne E. Blackmer and Patricia Juliana Smith, eds. *En Travesti: Women, Gender Subversion, Opera* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Naomi André, *Voicing Gender: Castrati, Travesti, and the Second Woman in Early-Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); Catherine Clément, *Opera, or, the Undoing of Women*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988). Post-colonial perspectives have also recently begun to influence the direction of opera studies. See, for example, Mary Ingraham, Joseph So, and Roy Moodley, eds., *Opera in a Multicultural World: Coloniality, Culture, Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Although not overtly post-colonial, Nina Sun Eidsheim's work has examined racialised vocal timbre and how that informs the construction of operatic voices. See Eidsheim, 'Marian Anderson and "Sonic Blackness" in American Opera', *American Quarterly*, 63 (2011), 641-671. I am grateful to Juliana M. Pistorius for directing me to this latter body of post-colonial literature.

⁴³ McClary's analysis of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in relation to – potentially violent – masculine sexuality has triggered particularly controversial reactions. See McClary, 'Getting Down off the Beanstalk, in *Feminine Endings*, 112-131, 129-130, and reactions such as Pieter van den Toorn, 'Politics, Feminism, and Contemporary Music Theory', *The Journal of Musicology*, 9 (1991), 275-99. See also the response to van den Toorn by Ruth A. Solie, 'What Do Feminists Want? A Reply to Pieter van den Toorn', *The Journal of Musicology*, 9 (1991), 399-410.

only to rehabilitate the years around 1933 in the literature, but also to show how doing so foregrounds some productive possibilities for studying the symphonic genre and for drawing it into closer dialogue with the political and social discourses with which the genre is entwined, rather than the ‘purely’ musical concerns of many scholars to date. Framing the neglected and politically tumultuous year 1933 might allow us to access a more sophisticated and interdisciplinary plane on which to reformulate our understanding of the genre; one that disrupts linear narratives of individual composers and national traditions, setting the symphony in negotiation with contextual networks.

Decontextualised Symphonies

The decontextualised universal values associated with the symphony that prevail in general discourse beyond musicology are often front and centre in media representations of the genre, for example: the BBC’s 2011 series *Symphony*. This was endorsed by the Open University and relayed by an all-star male establishment trio of musicologist Professor John Deathridge, conductor Sir Mark Elder, and actor Sir Simon Russell Beale.⁴⁴ A typical scene on location in Vienna found Russell Beale declaring (over an opulently sized portion of chocolate torte) that ‘Beethoven’s Ninth is not just any old piece of music; it’s a colossal achievement, a comprehensive, yet unpredictable tour thorough the human condition’.⁴⁵ Given the impact elsewhere in the humanities of postmodern suspicion of universals it seems remarkable that casual claims about the existence of a ‘universal human condition’ could go unchecked, let alone the ability of any particular musical genre to offer an analysis of it, and least of all a ‘comprehensive’ one. Yet in relation to the symphony, such claims pass without comment. In fact, what the programme makers failed to acknowledge is that this seeming universal is in fact very specific and ideological, and it is a sad irony that it is exactly the universal that privileges the well-spoken, well-fed ‘great men’ who are represented by the programme’s presenters. And these

⁴⁴ BBC Four, *Symphony*, four episodes <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b016vgw7>> (accessed 1 June 2012), first broadcast 3 November 2011.

⁴⁵ Ibid., Episode 2: ‘Beethoven and Beyond’, at 00:17:04.

values propounded by the BBC series magnify the same assumptions that have more covertly structured existing scholarship on the symphony, assumptions which have changed little over the past several decades.

For instance, towards the turn of the millennium Arnold Whittall was given the opportunity to rewrite his 1977 textbook⁴⁶ work *Music Since the First World War*, which contained two chapters on 'symphonic music'. The new book, 'in which the core chapters of *Music Since the First World War* are retained, revised, and in some cases radically rewritten',⁴⁷ was published in 1999 with the title *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*. And if his chapters on symphonies in the respective volumes might have provided an opportunity to expose and interrogate what had altered across two decades of scholarly approaches to the symphonic genre, instead what is most intriguing about the 1999 rewrite is how revealingly little symphonic areas had been revised. All Whittall seemed to acknowledge was that over the period some other scholars had been active enough to require inclusion, and thus musicological heavyweights like Richard Taruskin and David Fanning appear in the 1999 version.⁴⁸ Additionally, some facts had been updated in light of sources that were late to emerge, for example, concerning Sibelius's later years.⁴⁹ Of course, the scores of the symphonies themselves had not altered, but neither, seemingly, had any aspect of the way in which Whittall approached or understood them. Whittall took a copy-and-paste approach across the two publications to the symphonic analyses in particular, suggesting the work done to be both ahistorical and immutable.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Given the number of times the study has been reprinted, with editions in 1977, 1988, and 1995 before the rewritten 1999 edition, it seems fair to assume this has been a standard and influential musicological textbook.

⁴⁷ Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*, 6-7.

⁴⁸ Ibid., see, for example, 57; 150; 152.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 64.

⁵⁰ For discussion on music analysis post-new musicology, particularly concerning using unity as the governing principle, see the dialogue in *Music Analysis* sparked by Robert P. Morgan, 'The Concept of Unity and Musical Analysis', *Music Analysis*, 22 (2003), 7-50, with a whole section in *Music Analysis*, 23 (2004), 333-385 devoted to responses from Kevin Korsyn, Daniel K. L. Chua, Jonathan D. Kramer and Joseph Dubiel (with an introduction by Jonathan Cross). Also in the latter issue is Kofi Agawu's reflection on the contemporary state of music analysis, 'How We Got Out of Analysis, and How to Get Back in Again', *Music Analysis* 23 (2004), 267-286. See also Ian Biddle on music analysis as textual activity in, 'The gendered eye: music analysis and the scientific outlook in German early Romantic music theory', in *Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century*, eds. Suzanne Clark and Alexander Rehding (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 183-96. Critical discussion of separatist impulses in music analysis and of critiques of formalism can be found in Jim Samson, 'Analysis in Context', in *Rethinking Music*, eds. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 35-54.

Against the backdrop of a decade of disciplinary upheaval brought about by the new musicologists, this required some justification, and, indeed, in his ‘Millennial Prelude’ Whittall defended the continued relevance of his 1975 approach for the millennial reader:⁵¹

much of my own text may appear to subscribe to the outmoded heresy of autonomy [...] It is the composition as music which dominates, even so, for there is always a sense in which the work of art, with the inevitable element of consolation in face of an alarming world which it brings with it, represents a triumph over the world and not a mere reflection of it. *It is a product of the world that transcends its context.* When [Roger] Scruton writes that ‘music inspires and consoles us partly because it is unencumbered by the debris that drifts through the world of life’ [Scruton, *Aesthetics*, 122] this is not just a pious poetic fantasy.⁵² [italics mine]

Whittall’s minimal revisions exemplify a stasis in scholarship on the symphony as a whole across the latter quarter of the twentieth century, conditioned by persistent assumptions that engagement with the symphony requires no social or political context. Such decontextualisation, usually accompanied, as in Whittall’s ‘Millennial Prelude’, by a sense of the universal, appears time and time again in symphony scholarship. It characterises studies from Ballantine’s 1983 self-proclaimed ‘first intensive published investigation’ of the genre in this period⁵³ to A. Peter Brown’s colossal study of 2002, which barely concedes any lines of influence extending beyond the musical establishment. As Ballantine explains, socio-historical concerns – ‘the question [of] why the changes [to the symphony] that I describe came about at all’ – can quite unproblematically sit outside the book’s scope: ‘I need hardly reiterate that it is not part of my purpose to answer these in the present book.’⁵⁴ Karen Painter’s 2008 attempt to demonstrate the contested political ground supplied by the symphony by focussing on the genre in Germany in the early twentieth century was thus long overdue, and forms a key text in this literature review. Yet although she shows that the symphony invites ‘political inspiration and interpretation’ in its reception,⁵⁵ the question of the autonomy of symphonic poesis is left undisturbed.

⁵¹ See Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*, 1-7. For further discussion of this position, see Whittall, ‘Autonomy/Heteronomy: The Contexts of Musicology’, in *Rethinking Music*, Cook and Everist, 73-101.

⁵² Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*, 2-3.

⁵³ Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, 11.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁵ Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 6.

Whittall's work is thus symptomatic of a significant obstacle for musicology as a whole in the twentieth century: precisely this insistence across the discipline on music's special autonomous aesthetic status.⁵⁶ This allowed musicologists for the most part to bury their heads in the sand while radical currents of intellectual change were enacted in other humanities disciplines, right up until the extended (but productive) period of self-reflection that took place in the discipline in the 1990s – although the degree to which it has subsequently reinvented itself is questionable. And since the symphony was claimed to be the most abstract of orchestral genres, this has affected studies concerning symphonies in particular, making it one of the genres most impervious to the drives and agendas of contemporary scholarship.

Dilettantism in British Musicology c. 1945-80

Key problems in Anglophone scholarship on the symphonic genre can be traced further back to trends in British music scholarship more generally in the decades immediately following the Second World War, which have failed to create a rigorous bedrock for contemporary engagement with the symphony. By 1980, British musicology was still apparently unsophisticated enough that one overseas scholar was quoted as remarking: 'in Britain the true musicologist is as rare as the dodo bird.'⁵⁷ British musicologist David Fallows offered a diagnosis. 'Part of the answer lies in the nature of the work being published,'

Some of it is relatively unrigorous and might well be classified as journalism rather than scholarship. [...] But since most of these books are published by commercial houses that need to sell copies at a profit it is not surprising that the emphasis is on material that is relatively easily read and on books that will be appreciated in a culture that differs so strongly from that of most continental countries in omitting philosophy from the standard education of the well-bred citizen.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See Philip V. Bohlman, 'Musicology as a Political Act', *Journal of Musicology*, 11 (1993), 411-436.

⁵⁷ A letter from an overseas scholar to the *Times Literary Supplement*, quoted in David Fallows, Arnold Whittall and John Blacking, 'Musicology in Great Britain since 1945', *Acta Musicologica*, 52 (1980), 38-64, 55. A watered-down version of this accusation has continued to be levelled against musicology in Britain by some members of the American musicological establishment: see, for example, Richard Taruskin, 'Review: Speedbumps', *19th-Century Music*, 29 (2005), 185-295.

⁵⁸ Fallows et al., 'Musicology in Great Britain since 1945', 55.

He went on to suggest that the organisation of music faculties in universities was also to blame for the absence of serious musicological work in Britain, citing the makeup of departments with no more than a handful of staff in each, and an undergraduate curriculum that privileged the skill-set required to direct musical activity in secondary schools. Graduate studies in music, moreover, only came to Britain as late as 1965. ‘As a system it has its advantages’, wrote Fallows, ‘but prolific musicological publication is not among them.’⁵⁹

Fallows thus challenged the register of music appreciation taken by musical scholarship in the 1950s and 1960s. What this dilettantism has done is to articulate some of the fault lines along which British musicology has been (and often continues to be) organised. Up to 1980 there was still a heavy weighting towards the study of particular composers, generally as a chronological narrative-style life-and-works study⁶⁰ or volumes that encourage and aid music appreciation. A variant of the composer-biased structure is adopted by Ralph Hill’s *The Symphony* (1949), Simpson’s *The Symphony* (1966) and by H.H. Stuckenschmidt in *Twentieth Century Composers: Germany and Central Europe* (1970), in which each chapter deals with a different composer.⁶¹ The emphasis on music-appreciation has impacted particularly strongly on symphony scholarship, and the legacy of the 1950s-style music guide continues to be acutely felt as late as the 1990s in Layton’s *A Guide to the Symphony*.⁶² Although this book is clearly aimed quasi-democratically at ‘music lovers’, it nonetheless has musicological aspirations: it is published by Oxford University Press, and the backmatter declares that it ‘could become the standard reference work for music lovers and serious students alike’.⁶³ This book is organised into nineteen chapters that either deal with a particular composer, or a particular national tradition – for example, ‘The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn’, ‘The Symphony in Nineteenth-Century Germany’, ‘Beethoven’, ‘Bruckner’, and

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ For the stranglehold of composer monographs in British publishing, see *ibid.*, 51.

⁶¹ See Hill, *The Symphony*; Simpson, *The Symphony: Haydn to Dvořák* (Aylesbury: Penguin Books, 1966), and *The Symphony: Elgar to the Present Day*; Stuckenschmidt, *Twentieth Century Composers*, 11. See also Preston Stedman’s survey, which organises material on the large scale by period, then by geography, and finally by composer: Stedman, *The Symphony*.

⁶² Layton, *A Guide to the Symphony*.

⁶³ Backcover of Layton, *A Guide to the Symphony*. Quotation from the *Daily Express* (a publication that may not be particularly well informed about what a ‘serious student’ of music requires).

insofar as is possible, the chapters are arranged chronologically. In this respect, it recalls Simpson's *The Symphony*. Typically for a publication of this register, genre is not problematised. Layton monumentalises the symphonic genre in the very first sentence: 'The evolution of the symphony must remain one of the greatest achievements of the Western musical mind'.⁶⁴ This reaffirms the orthodoxy of talking about symphonies in a way that does little more than self-congratulate mankind for its (or his) achievements, the same tone adopted in BBC4's *Symphony*, a television analogue to Layton's book. But the early Anglophone musicology that Fallows criticises evidently set up the structures that legitimised this way of engaging academically with the symphony.

A lack of scholarly rigour is also manifest in the absence of footnotes in many of the studies in my bibliography. This affects those by Hill, Borrel, Simpson, Stuckenschmidt, the 1977 version of the Whittall, Cuyler, and Ballantine, suggesting reluctance to enter into dialogue with other scholarly sources. At best, this is further evidence of the endemic lack of professionalism in musical scholarship identified by Fallows, allowing musicology to play into the hands of its detractors. More troubling, by disallowing acknowledgement that the scholarship can be contested, it appears that each unit of scholarship occurs in isolation, approaching some kind of independently located truth. Set against this context, Whittall's 1970s and 1980s work takes on a radical dimension despite its problems from a contemporary perspective, as a reaction against 'unsystematic' analytical work in Britain.⁶⁵

This dilettantism also explains in part the absence of thorough historical and contextual foundations for contemporary work on the symphony. Given the elitist and essentialising impulses that have historically structured the discipline, reifying 'music' into its 'value-free object of study',⁶⁶ opera studies and film music studies, for example, had to fight for their place in the academy, developing bold critical frameworks around the 1990s.⁶⁷ However, it seems that it may

⁶⁴ Ibid., 'Introduction', 1-2.

⁶⁵ Whittall, in Fallows et al., 'Musicology in Great Britain since 1945', 57.

⁶⁶ See Bohlman, 'Musicology as a Political Act', 422-4.

⁶⁷ Film music research has taken off since the mid-1980s. However, virtually no academic literature on music for film exists dating before that period, when many of the symphonic surveys considered in this literature review emerged, save for Roy M. Prendergast, *Film Music: A Neglected Art: a Critical Study of Music in Films* (New York: W.W. Norton,

have been taken a priori that the symphony, the pinnacle of Western art music and its work concept, was thoroughly deserving of scholarly attention. But the tides have turned, and what was once self-evident now appears weak in current scholarly contexts, particularly in light of the shift of emphasis in the discipline towards popular musicology.⁶⁸ In this revised context, symphony scholarship now needs to prove just why we should devote our energy to what might be perceived as a privileged relic of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, the unqualified assumption that the symphony is worth studying means that earlier scholars have not left a legacy that stands up to the intellectual and methodological scrutiny of the modern academy. There has been little activity in uncovering and collating sources and critical writing that build a sense of the ideological implications for the symphony in the early twentieth century, to which Painter's recent book is the exception.⁶⁹ The groundwork for research involving understanding the symphony, and particularly new symphonies, as in any sense locally contextualised rather than as 'a triumph over the world [...] unencumbered by the debris that float through life' advocated by Whittall via Scruton, is not in place.

Symphonies and the New (and Post-New) Musicology

New musicology cast doubt on conventional means of acquiring or creating musical knowledge, yet paid little attention to the twentieth-century symphony. Perhaps it is missing from the new musicological project because it is seen as comparatively conservative, anachronistic, and also oppressively masculine in relation to other twentieth-century genres. Superficially, at least, it seems to be awkwardly wedded to other grand narratives, those of politics or of privileged

1977). His title is revealing. Since then, some studies definitional for the field have included: Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1987); Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992); Caryl Flinn, *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton, N.J.; Princeton University Press, 1992). Roughly concurrent disciplinary innovations in opera studies have been outlined under footnote 42: opera's emphasis on musical bodies challenged musicology's fetishist essentialism of the musical object. See also Wayne Koestenbaum, *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality, and the Mystery of Desire* (London: Penguin, 1994).

⁶⁸ For more detailed discussion of the interdisciplinary tension this has engendered, see John Covach, 'Popular Music, Unpopular Musicology', in *Rethinking Music*, Cook and Everist, 452-70.

⁶⁹ Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*. See also Tawa, *The Great American Symphony*, which gives some sense of the ideological stakes for the American symphony and its 'public role' before and after the Second World War.

geographical regions, presenting an apparently challenging and clunky object for the explicitly progressive impulses of new musicology. There has been a strong new musicological bias towards opera, suggesting the diagnosis that opera is just more obviously interdisciplinary and hard to contain than so-called ‘absolute’ music, and also suggesting that the kinds of professional networks shared by scholars working towards the new musicological project had little in common with those networks of scholars working on the symphony. That bias has persisted: the weighting of coverage towards opera studies at the latest Biennial International Conference on Nineteenth-Century Music held in Oxford in July 2016, for instance, suggests that the current musicological climate is still highly receptive to the collaborative energy and interdisciplinary messiness opera stages, but perhaps scholars are overlooking possibilities for applying similar principles and approaches to other genres and areas.⁷⁰ Some revisionary work on the symphony does exist, for example by Susan McClary,⁷¹ and, although not conventionally wholly aligned with the new musicological movement, by James Hepokoski.⁷²

Yet the sense at present is that musicology at large is thankful new musicologists have for the most part stopped rocking the boat, and that the discipline as a whole is now able to historicise that period of intense disciplinary innovation as a brief state of hedonism that has burned out and given way to the current, more reserved state that could be labelled post-new musicology. However new musicological perspectives still offer some rich scope and potentially productive starting points for scholarship on the twentieth-century symphony, particularly since this body of music missed out on treatment in the first place. There is certainly space to develop

⁷⁰ See the programme to the 19th Biennial International Nineteenth-Century Music Conference, 11-13 July 2016, University of Oxford, <http://www.music.ox.ac.uk/assets/Conference-booklet-23.6.16.pdf> (accessed 30 July 2016).

⁷¹ See Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), in particular chap. 3, ‘Sexual Politics in Classical Music’, 53-79, which examines Tchaikovsky’s Fourth Symphony, and 127-130 for attention to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. See also ‘Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert’s Music’, in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, eds. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood and Gary C. Thomas (Routledge: New York, 2006), 205-233.

⁷² For example, see James Hepokoski, ‘Masculine. Feminine. Are current readings of sonata form in terms of a “Masculine” and “Feminine” Dichotomy Exaggerated? James Hepokoski Argues for a More Subtle Approach to the Politics of Musical Form’, *The Musical Times*, 135 (1994), 494-99, and his later work, such as Hepokoski, ‘Back and Forth from Egmont: Beethoven, Mozart, and the Nonresolving Recapitulation’, *19th-Century Music*, 25 (2001/2), 127-154; Hepokoski, ‘Beyond the Sonata Principle’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 55 (2002), 91-154.

some of their methodologies, particularly regarding gender and power, which have so far been underexplored in relationship to the symphony.⁷³

Many new musicological agendas, moreover, have lost none of their urgency. It is odd, for example, that the symphonic genre continues only to attract interest from a limited scholarly demographic. When *A Guide to the Symphony* edited by Robert Layton was published in 1993 (with a later edition in 1995), of the eleven ‘music experts’ chosen as contributors, not one was female.⁷⁴ Set against the frenetic revisionist disciplinary activity of the 1990s, this seemed revealing, if not wholly unexpected. But the 2013 *Cambridge Companion to the Symphony* unfortunately only demonstrated that scholarship is not yet in a position where it can redress the balance – it had only two female contributors out of a total of sixteen (Pauline Fairclough and Mary Sue Morrow).⁷⁵ Although telling us nothing about these writers’ level of engagement with socially, contextually, or theoretically aware ‘progressive’ approaches, such disproportional gender representation appears nonetheless indicative of the kind of conservative forces shaping this area of scholarship, and it seems a shame that the Cambridge Companion editor in particular could not seek out a more balanced range of voices.

Painter’s book represents an example of a post-new musicological approach to the symphony. The book sets out to trace the trends in critical reception of symphonies in Germany in the early twentieth century. It addresses the way symphonic works were reconstructed in written prose, analysing how the rhetoric deployed interacted with political discourses and propaganda, particularly the way territory, violence, race, and gender were constructed on the national stage. Richly informed by primary sources, Painter’s work steers away from the unassailable figure of the composer and instead concentrates on what was written in the public sphere *about* the genre. Nonetheless, her otherwise much-needed focus on symphony criticism in relation to political rhetoric unfortunately chiefly limits its scope to canonical figures Mahler and

⁷³ Feminist disciplinary critique and potential models are offered by Suzanne Cusick. See Cusick, ‘Gender, Musicology, and Feminism’, in *Rethinking Music*, Cook and Everist, 471-498.

⁷⁴ In Simpson’s edited volume of 1967, the same situation is less surprising. See Simpson, *The Symphony: Elgar to the Present Day*.

⁷⁵ Horton, *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*.

Bruckner. The canonisation of Mahler, allowing his symphonies to frame everything that emerges in the new century, as Beethoven framed the century before, is a pervasive assumption in much English- and German-language scholarship on the twentieth-century symphony.⁷⁶ And by cementing the Mahlerian/Brucknerian symphony to the monolithic narrative of politics, her work also unfortunately does little to challenge the persistent idea of the genre as monument, as something static and invested with (sometimes terrible) glory. Indeed, Painter seems to suggest that early twentieth-century symphonic culture was already a museum culture, in which the critical reconstruction and interpretation of canonical works were enacted in relation to an early twentieth-century political narrative. This narrative is often retrospectively – and somewhat uncritically – styled as propelled by an unstoppable force towards the inevitable final self-destruction of German society in 1945. The fact that ‘symphonic defeat’ in Germany – to cite the title of Painter’s final chapter – apparently coincides with the arrival of the Third Reich makes it difficult to argue that Painter challenges these deterministic assumptions about the symphony’s political role in that process. It is illuminating to compare this with Alexander Rehding’s near-contemporary monograph *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, which concerns symphonies in all but the title. Much more indebted to new musicological thought, his primary focus is to engage critically with the concept of ‘monumentality’, tackling the legacies of nineteenth-century ideologies bound up with the symphony using a much more flexible historical model to Painter’s.⁷⁷

Altering priorities in musicology as a whole have had a profound effect on symphony scholarship. However, the issues raised here about how scholars have engaged with the

⁷⁶ For the pervasiveness of Mahler in symphonic histories, see the chapter ‘Gustav Mahler und das Ende der Gattung?’ in Steinbeck and Blumröder, *Die Sinfonie im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, 45-92, at 45-6. As they put it on page 45, ‘Über Gustav Mahler und seine Bedeutung für die Gattungsgeschichte der Symphonie ist viel geschrieben worden, so viel wie über keinen anderen Symphoniker nach Beethoven, und in relativ kurzer Zeit.’ Krones’s edited collection on the symphony in Austria in the twentieth century also stages Mahler at the centre of enquiry. See Krones, *Die österreichische Symphonie im 20. Jahrhundert*. David Fanning similarly frames Mahler as a definitional starting point for the genre’s twentieth-century development, although he adds Sibelius to create a dual symphonic platform. See David Fanning, ‘The Symphony Since Mahler: National and International Trends’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, Horton, 96-129, 96-99.

⁷⁷ Alexander Rehding, *Music and Monumentality: Commemoration and Wonderment in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

symphony have inflected the period around 1933 especially strongly. The fact that 1933 is largely missing from scholarship is accounted for by the many ways in which symphony scholarship has been territorialised, and then by the way these territories have been concretised through reiteration and re-rehearsal. To understand the critical absence of the body of works set out in my opening table, then, it is necessary to thematise the fault lines along which material in the literature under review, and particularly the survey works, is organised.

Definitions

Preoccupations with defining the symphony have focused the twentieth-century canon in ways that have denied the genre's interdisciplinarity. Symphonic definition is a frequent stumbling block right from the very earliest of the literature under review, although the way in which the issue is negotiated varies. A number of unsuccessful attempts to define the symphony characterise scholarship from the 1960s and 1970s, which in many ways betrays the kind of positivism shaping musicology in this period. In 1966, attempts to pin down a definition for the symphony could be shamelessly overt. Simpson put it at the centre of his inquiry, at the opening of his introduction.

The subject needs definition. We must know what we are going to include in a book of this kind, and why. [...] the fact that musicians do speak of 'genuinely' symphonic music, in terms however nebulous, and criticize some symphonies as being such in name only, is solid evidence that there is some essence recognized by those who discuss it at all.

For Simpson, we must 'find out what "symphonic" really means, so that we can see whether it is an exhausted possibility, or whether it is something that can still fire the imagination.'⁷⁸ He attempted a five-fold comprehensive definition of the symphony, an effort to fix down the symphony that only emphasises the ways in which the genre is bound to exceed his attempts to contain it in this way.⁷⁹ And as Fanning notes, Simpson's musical emphasis excludes any 'ethical dimension' to the genre, a political category vital to Soviet Russian commentators.⁸⁰ Ballantine in

⁷⁸ Simpson, *The Symphony: Haydn to Dvořák*, 9.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 13-14.

⁸⁰ Fanning, 'The Symphony Since Mahler'.

1983 took a similar approach, although he managed to reduce the criteria further to one ‘symphonic essence’ – rather unfortunately named in light of postmodernist anti-essentialism.⁸¹ He defined ‘symphonic essence’ as ‘the musical preoccupation with dualism’.⁸² He then organised his material quasi-scientifically by categorising symphonies by their degree of deviance from a symphonic ideal of formal and structural dualism, ultimately allowing musical dualism across some less conventional parameters to qualify as symphonic.

In contrast, in more recent scholarship it seems symphonic definition is an unspoken problem. Painter treads very carefully around the question of what a symphony actually is, never committing to more than a vague locus of ideas which surface implicitly throughout her text. But when they do, far from being a flexible constellation of concepts, it becomes clear that they are formalised in relation to quite a fixed set of discourses inherited from the nineteenth century, not in dialogue with the dynamic present.⁸³ It seems that actually a very conservative, ‘purist’ idea of what ‘the symphony’ is underpins the book – those symphonies that seem deliberately to exploit the genre conventions to critical effect go virtually unmentioned.⁸⁴ In many ways, this conception of the symphony is just as limiting as those explicit attempts to concretise the symphony by Simpson and Ballantine above. It simply represents yet another way of territorialising the genre that allows the messier works originating from the period around 1933 to slip through the net.⁸⁵

Thus the sense of the symphony that underpins her study is the symphony as a static thing, a relic of the nineteenth century that has no contemporary currency for twentieth-century composers. Painter gives the impression that symphonic debate in the early 1930s was simply

⁸¹ See, for example, Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, 13.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ To cite but one instance among many, Painter writes that ‘the symphony epitomized attempts to preserve art music against the popularity of jazz, film and dance music’; thus she positions the symphony as a conservative relic of the nineteenth century. Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 7. Or see Nicholas Attfield’s critique of Painter, in which he points out that Painter’s study supports the supposition ‘that the German symphony perished along with Mahler in 1911’. Nicholas Attfield, ‘Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900-1945 (review)’, *Music and Letters*, 90 (2009), 296-8, 297.

⁸⁴ For example, occasional symphonists Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler – composers somewhat at odds with the traditional identity of a symphonic composer, whose symphonies arguably subvert the genre – each merit only one brief mention apiece. See Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 158 (Weill) and 218 (Eisler).

⁸⁵ Despite its promising title, Horst Herold’s 1999 published doctoral dissertation doesn’t address this issue either: it is not concerned with symphonic works. Herold focuses on several classical/popular music hybrids, including George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* and Igor Stravinsky’s *Ebony Concerto* in order primarily to trace the origins of symphonic rock. See Herold, *Symphonic Jazz – Blues – Rock*.

about the reinterpretation of ‘great’ Romantic and late-Romantic symphonies (those by Beethoven, Mahler and Bruckner in particular) against the foil of a critical discourse altered by ‘modern’ twentieth-century events and concerns, like the First World War. As Nicholas Attfield also points out, very little attention is given to the period’s contemporary symphonists (save the final chapter that considers Hindemith’s *Mathis der Maler* symphony).⁸⁶ Concessions that new symphonies might, too, be constructed in a way that interacts with the political sphere in critical writing are noticeably absent.⁸⁷

In different ways, all these approaches express a central tension in scholarship on the symphony, that between the symphony as dynamic and as canonic or monumental: the symphony as categorisable and controllable, and the ideological associations with the symphony as ‘living’, animated, in flux, and vitalist. Perhaps it would be better, following Rehding’s *Music and Monumentality*, to create some critical distance from this binary, and focus attention on historically contextualising it in relation to the manifold discourses within which it is situated.

Geography, Periodicisation, and Symphonic Eschatology

Since the nineteenth-century the symphonic genre has been intimately packaged-up with nationalism and nationalising impulses and agendas. The creation of a unique national symphonic style carried high stakes for the identity of many nation states.⁸⁸ This is a terrain that, like the geographical landscape, has never been neutral or evenly weighted. Broadly put, the symphonic landscape and its scholarly representation crystallises around Austria and Germany: in the nineteenth century, around their political hegemony, and in the twentieth century, their decline.

⁸⁶ Attfield, ‘Symphonic Aspirations (review)’, 297-8.

⁸⁷ Indeed, although the symphony ‘invited political inspiration and interpretation’ (Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 6), the idea of the symphony that underpins the book is clearly in unresolved tension with the political sphere, and sometimes it even seems Painter’s symphony walks a line close to being something inherently apolitical, onto which political interpretations are then projected. This kind of implicit position is revealed, for example, when she writes: ‘Few orchestral works were entitled “symphony” after January 1933, and those that were often bore an explicit political message but few ties to the symphonic tradition’ (ibid., 218). If Weill and Eisler’s virtual absence from this definitional frame is unsurprising, more so is the very limited attention given to stylistically reactionary symphonic figures like Hans Pfitzner (see ibid., 255) and Franz Schmidt (see ibid., 175).

⁸⁸ See, for example, Pederson, ‘A. B. Marx, Berlin Concert Life, and German National Identity’; Jim Samson, ‘Nations and Nationalism’, in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 568-600.

The hybrid Austro-Germany is a particularly problematic ‘imagined’ space – one that only really existed, under the darkest possible conditions, for a brief while after the *Anschluss*. It is hardly surprising, then, that in twentieth-century symphony scholarship, too, these national discourses (orientated by German-speaking nations) continue keenly to influence how discussion of the symphony is territorialised.⁸⁹

Thus geography has been a crucial organisational principle for broad surveys of the symphony. This is arguably the case in virtually all the studies represented in the core material under review here⁹⁰ apart from Ballantine’s, who consciously rejects this system of categorisation.⁹¹ A typical example of how geography is deployed is provided by Layton’s collection of essays, in which chapters (with the exception of those concerning just one canonical symphonic figure) are organised by region: ‘The Symphony in France’,⁹² ‘The American Symphony’,⁹³ ‘The Symphony in the Soviet Union’,⁹⁴ to name but a few. Geography provides a convenient focal point for the need-to-know information for a non-specialist readership (and the omissions make clear which countries are considered unimportant). The boundaries such a strategy builds around national traditions often structures the way we think about the genre – as explicitly nationalised or irrevocably bound with nationalism – and renders national borders largely impermeable. In isolating each body of work along the borders of nation states, other ways of thinking about the symphonic genre are resisted. Indeed, in some ways Stuckenschmidt thus also provided a dissenting voice from the orthodoxy of geographical organisation: ‘If one considers the composers representative of the various trends in Germany and Central Europe one arrives at a sum of cross-connections and influences that transcends geographical boundaries

⁸⁹ See, for instance, Krones, *Die österreichische Symphonie im 20. Jahrhundert*.

⁹⁰ None more so than Palm-Beulich, *Süddeutsche Komponisten im 20. Jahrhundert: Verzeichnis zeitgenössischer symphonischer Werke*. This is a catalogue of the symphonic works of 337 composers from Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria.

⁹¹ He rejects what he calls ‘sequential’ organisation in his study – that is, grouping composers or symphonies along ‘obvious’ (and superficial) lines of similarity. ‘For example,’ he writes, ‘one might order the discussion chronologically, or perhaps group works under headings reflecting their country of origin.’ Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, 14. This geographical principal can also perhaps be said to inflect Whittall’s work less heavily than the other studies under discussion in this literature review. See Whittall, *Music Since the First World War* and *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*.

⁹² David Cox, ‘The Symphony in France’, in *A Guide to the Symphony*, Layton, 193-220.

⁹³ John Canarina, ‘The American Symphony’, *ibid.*, 402-24.

⁹⁴ Fanning, ‘The Symphony in the Soviet Union’, *ibid.*, 292-326.

and nationalities,⁹⁵ and this in spite of the fact that he draws a geographical perimeter around the scope of his book. His approach would show clearer signs of paving the way for the kind of study I undertake in this thesis, were it not for his claim that these networks evoke the transcendental: 'a universal identity, a sense of [art, writing and music] belonging to all men'.⁹⁶ But his work nonetheless presents stimulating ideas for thinking about the symphony in terms of cross-national human motion, exile, and displacement.

A. Peter Brown's gargantuan study stakes out particularly rigid boundaries in symphony scholarship because it seeks to be comprehensive. This may sound counter intuitive, but the greater the volume of information encompassed and assimilated, the more heavily harnessed and specifically located that information becomes. Comprehensive studies must be organised somehow, and it is in the fixed markers around which the material is ordered that the ideological factors are often revealed (the same has been said of Taruskin's *Oxford History of Western Music*, in which the history espoused is bound to a far less objective narrative than Taruskin claims).⁹⁷ Brown selects location, period, and the musical establishment as his main organisational categories, but setting up such a frame implicitly specifies the kinds of connections that can be made, disallowing and even delegitimising others.

Related to the problem of geographical organisation, 1933-4 suffers from being framed as a bookend period in standard symphonic narratives. It marks the death of a great number of composers who worked in the symphonic genre: Gustav Holst, Franz Schreker, Alban Berg, and Edward Elgar. The deaths of these composers who had bridged the late-Romanticism of the twentieth century with inter-war Europe – Frederick Delius was another figure to pass away in 1934 – perhaps contributed to the feeling of the curtain falling on the symphonic tradition, particularly in Austria and Germany. On top of the symphonic silence from Sibelius and Nielsen

⁹⁵ Stuckenschmidt, *Twentieth Century Composers*, 11.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁹⁷ See in particular Gary Tomlinson, 'Review Article: Monumental Musicology', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 132 (2007), 349-74, quoting Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (OHW from here onwards), 5 vols, i, xxii. Tomlinson critiques in particular Taruskin's claim to ideological neutrality, the sense conveyed by the OHW that 'History happened thus' (350). See also Susan McClary, 'Review-Article: The World According to Taruskin', *Music and Letters*, 83 (2006), 408-15, particularly at 410.

from the mid-1920s, the sense was perhaps that the ideological torch many still wanted to hold for a certain pre-modernist utopian conservatism was being gradually starved of fuel. In Germany the anxieties that caused such cultural nostalgia were particularly acute, of course. Pamela Potter positions the 1930s musicological project to identify and re-establish ‘Germanness’ in music as a reaction to precisely this ‘fear that Germany’s musical strength was about to fade into oblivion.’⁹⁸ Additionally, Nazi cultural policy has been directly or indirectly responsible for the critical silence surrounding some works composed around 1933: either they were too closely affiliated with the regime for comfort, or they have never been rehabilitated after a poor initial reception in Nazi Germany or fully recovered from the pervasive legacies of the label ‘*entartete Kunst*’.

Peripheral to standard symphonic periodisations, then, 1933 is positioned either as an end or, conversely, as a new beginning. As the final sentence of A. Peter Brown’s study has it (the fourth volume of a projected five),⁹⁹ the 1928 ‘pointillistic canons’ of Webern’s two-movement op. 21 mark the nihilist self-erasure of the nineteenth-century Austro-Germanic symphonic tradition and ‘obliterate the nineteenth-century concept of the word “symphony”’. 1933, then, falls beyond that narrative’s final curtain, downgraded to mere epilogue, even though, as Brown admits, ‘Schmidt was to write two more symphonies and Zemlinsky his *sinfonietta*.’¹⁰⁰ Brown’s recourse to nineteenth-century definitions presents a conveniently neat trajectory for the symphony from glorification to self-erasure. Brown’s teleology also depends on a normative idea of which composers represented the major forces within the twentieth-century canon. He pivots between the nineteenth-century and modernity on the axis of the Second Viennese School. Glossing the twentieth century in this way accounts significantly for the fact that Brown overlooks works by Weill, Pfitzner, Eisler, and Hartmann, and that he paints Schmidt’s contribution as an anachronistic anomaly.

⁹⁸ Pamela Potter, *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler’s Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). See in particular ‘Attempts to Define “Germanness” in Music’, 200–234.

⁹⁹ Brown’s death in 2003 prevented the completion of his five-volume project, leaving volumes 1 and 5 unwritten, and the twentieth-century symphony in particular uncatalogued by the series. Volume 1 was completed in 2012, edited by Mary Sue Morrow and Bathia Churgin, but ‘The symphony in Europe and the Americas in the twentieth century’ remains outstanding.

¹⁰⁰ Brown, ‘The second golden age of the Viennese symphony: Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Mahler, and selected contemporaries’, 892.

Characteristic of many of the studies under discussion here is the way this narrative of symphonic decline is particularised to Austria and Germany,¹⁰¹ and is typically matched by an emphasis on symphonic rejuvenation ‘as the Roaring Twenties gave way to the more sober-minded thirties’¹⁰² in Anglophone countries especially.¹⁰³ This opposition mirrors perhaps too neatly the lines along which early twentieth-century global conflict was drawn, suggesting the need for interrogation. Wolfgang Osthoff and Gisela Schubert have begun this process, by giving a more balanced account of the post-1930s symphonic revival beyond the UK and America.¹⁰⁴ And – were further evidence needed that the symphony is a construct that exceeds musical definition – this suggests that the symphony is embroiled with shaping the identity of politically and ideologically dominant nations, in part a genre retrospectively harnessed by commentators to support a burgeoning and victorious post-war cultural narrative.

By his selective presentation of a ‘complete’ music history, Taruskin’s *OHW* implicitly privileges U.S. cultural-political agendas. The symphony is a key tool within this project to reconfigures the twentieth-century musicological landscape in relation to America as the dominant ideological force. Taruskin’s only chapter exclusively devoted to the symphony in the twentieth-century volumes evinces an unambiguously U.S.-centric bias, titled ‘In Search of the “Real” America’.¹⁰⁵ The heavy emphasis he puts on Russian composers potentially does more than reinstate an overlooked body of works within music scholarship, or capitalise on Taruskin’s special expertise. It additionally sets up a Cold War binary that reaffirms American global political primacy. Perhaps, then, attention to the variety of symphonies produced in the ‘missing’ years around 1933 within the frame of one study may complicate narratives of twentieth-century

¹⁰¹ See Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, in which she traces a trajectory from ‘Symphonic Idealism in Crisis’ to ‘Symphonic Defeat’ in Germany. See also Cuyler, *The Symphony*: Cuyler heavily weights discussion towards symphonic development in the U.S. in the chapter ‘The Symphony in the Twentieth Century’, detailing only two symphonists from Germany and Austria (Hindemith and Schoenberg), compared to five American symphonic composers.

¹⁰² Fanning, ‘Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge (review)’, *Music and Letters*, 85 (2004), 498-499, 498.

¹⁰³ See Taruskin, ‘The Symphony Goes (Inter)National’, *OHW*, iii, 745-802, and ‘In Search of the “Real” America’, *OHW*, iv, 559-674. See also Cuyler, *The Symphony*; Stedman, *The Symphony*.

¹⁰⁴ Osthoff and Schubert, *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge*, 310.

¹⁰⁵ See Taruskin, *OHW*, iv, 559-674.

history as driven by global territorial and political dichotomies, which seem implicitly to underscore much symphony scholarship.

Existing Surveys of the Symphony in the 1930s

German-language scholarship has fared somewhat better than that of the Anglo-sphere in taking some first steps towards dealing with the symphonic tradition in the 1930s. In 1984 Manuel Gervink published a doctoral dissertation on the inter-war symphony in Germany and Austria;¹⁰⁶ a decade later, Jürgen Schaarwächter similarly produced a doctoral examination analysis of the British symphony from 1914 to 1945.¹⁰⁷ Both Gervink and Schaarwächter's studies are governed by the same geographical particularity that hampers many of those already considered. Osthoff and Schubert's book, based on their 1999 Frankfurt am Main symposium *Die Sinfonie in den 30er und 40er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts*, however, is different.¹⁰⁸ Although the temporal remit is too wide to cultivate the attention on the early 1930s those years urgently require, and although the geographical scope is somewhat random and diffuse, as a whole the works considered in the book traverse the usual rigid and closed national boundaries that restrict discussion in most of other studies of the symphony. Nonetheless, as Fanning observes in his review, it could have gone further in making those national borders porous: he criticises the 'lack of dialogue between the contributions'.¹⁰⁹ Thus, although Osthoff and Schubert's study appears transnational at first glance, it lacks any sustained comparative dimension.

Reframing Symphony Scholarship – Going Lateral

Several mutually influential factors have combined to organise the present-day scholarly landscape on the twentieth-century symphony in a very particular and limiting way. These include: the dilettantism of mid twentieth-century Anglophone musicology, unchallenged

¹⁰⁶ Gervink, *Die Symphonie in Deutschland und Österreich in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*.

¹⁰⁷ Schaarwächter, *Die britische Sinfonie 1914-1945*.

¹⁰⁸ Osthoff and Schubert, *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge*, 310.

¹⁰⁹ Fanning, 'Symphonik 1930-1950', 498-499.

assumptions about symphonic autonomy and about symphonic study as a valid academic endeavour, the canonisation of figures like Mahler, conventional territorialisation of geography and period, and contemporary perceptions of the symphony in the twentieth-century as anachronistic and resistant to progressive methodologies. Writing on the symphony is geographically deterministic, and this cannot be denied or erased. But it can be critically restructured to emphasise the contingency, orientation, and performativity of location, rather than location as something embedded and inherent. This thesis proposes one methodological possibility for reconfiguring the narrativising tendencies and geographical territorialisation of existing studies.

Using a tightly focused time period with a wide geographical scope to delimit the project, I emulate aspects of a historical approach becoming increasingly prevalent. The advantage of drawing on such ‘year studies’ to study the symphonic genre is that it fosters biographical, musical, and other kinds of connections between composers, the works, and the surrounding commentary that are contingent and unexpected, and that traverse national boundaries. Examining one particular year with a fine grain – if a year with slightly flexibly defined margins – opens up avenues of enquiry and allows parallels to emerge often closed down by the traditional lines along which symphonic histories have been drawn. And not only does a project examining 1933 address a gap in the literature, it also seems particularly well placed to address the methodological issues I have identified in surveys of the symphonic genre, and particularly first, the political and social dimensions that have been absent from existing studies of the genre, and second, the important legacies of the ‘idea’ of Germany and Austria for the genre. Thus the spectres of Germany and Austria loom large in my study. To investigate the politically tumultuous year 1933 is to foreground more explicitly the genre’s liberal-idealist Germanic heritage and the associated political and social issues – after all, as Painter puts it, ‘the symphony was the most German of musical genres’¹¹⁰ – which become especially acute as fascism begins to take hold.

¹¹⁰ Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 3.

It is clear, moreover, that previous fault lines in symphony scholarship have prevented a number of potentially productive interdisciplinary dialogues. Foregrounding an interconnected time period makes it hard to ignore the ways in which the symphony is linked with so much else beyond the isolated realm of the concert hall, and not just with politics: with dance and other stage performance (embodiment and visualisation), with contemporary and historical theatre and opera (voice), with discourses about mass culture and media, with cinematic thinking (potentially productive because of the issues of agency, control, subjugation, boundary and narrative it raises).¹¹¹ Voice seems a particularly useful analytical springboard for thinking about the symphony in new ways.¹¹² Exploring which musical voices are speaking in these symphonies, what the indicators for this are, and thus what kinds of subject positions are privileged seems potentially a fruitful line of enquiry. And what price is paid in allowing (or disallowing) the authority of those speaking narrative subjects in the context of the reformulation of power dynamics across public platforms in the different contexts with which this thesis deals?

Thus it is worth briefly taking a look at the scholarly landscape of ‘year studies’. Although as far back as 1955 Raymond Postgate presented a single year as the focus for a historical study, chronicling month-by-month the politically momentous year 1848, it is only in the last decade that the approach has gained momentum, almost ten years after Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht’s 1997 study *1926: Ein Jahr am Rand der Zeit* (titled in English *In 1926: Living at the Edge of Time*).¹¹³ Like my study of 1933, many of these publications set up their focal year as one that demarcates some kind of shift. Felipe Fernández-Armesto’s 2010 study of 1492 is a case in point. Fernández-Armesto positions 1492 as ‘The Year Our World Began’, arguing that Columbus’s voyage to

¹¹¹ See, for example, Peter Franklin, *Seeing through Music: Gender and Modernism in Classic Hollywood Film Scores* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge*, ‘Musical Narratology: A Theoretical Outline’ (Berkeley, University of California Press: 1995), 98-121; Anthony Newcomb, ‘Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies’, *19th-Century Music*, 11 (1987), 164-174; Abbate, *Unsung Voices*; Vera Micznik, ‘Music and Narrative Revisited: Degrees of Narrativity in Beethoven and Mahler’, *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 126 (2001), 193-249; Jonathan Crary, *Suspension of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1999).

¹¹² For a potential model based on work on voice in Mahler’s symphonies, see: Julian Johnson, *Mahler’s Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹¹³ Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *In 1926: Living at the Edge of Time* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1997); Raymond Postgate, *Story of a Year: 1848* (London: J. Cape, 1955).

America dictates the moment that 150 million years of ever increasing human and ecological divergence reversed its direction, and began the process of convergence that characterises today's globalised world.¹¹⁴ More recently, within musicology Benjamin Piekut has examined the New York experimental scene in 1964, and Beate Kutschke and Barley Norton have edited a collection of essays on music and protest in 1968.¹¹⁵ Yet these studies are at their most successful where they resist writing as if change already hung in the air, emphasising instead the contingency of historical events, the provisional status of human experience in those moments, and the sense of future possibility or uncertainty. Put differently, they succeed when they challenge teleologies that suggest change was inevitable.

The year as methodological frame is also having its moment in contemporary popular culture. Art historian Florian Illies's 2012 popular non-fiction *1913: Der Sommer des Jahrhunderts* was an international bestseller, released for English-speaking readers in the summer of 2013 under the title *1913: the Year before the Storm*,¹¹⁶ and in 2014 James Fox brought the approach to the mainstream media in the three-part BBC Four documentary *Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities*.¹¹⁷ It focused on three cities in three 'exceptional' years: Vienna in 1908, Paris in 1928, and New York in 1951. The documentary suggests current preoccupation with finding alternatives to the monumentalising historicism exemplified by 2011's *Symphony*. Tim Dowling in *The Guardian* called it 'an intriguing premise': 'Fox contends that "in a handful of moments in history, one particular city has exploded into life", creating a cultural shift that reverberates the world over.' The appeal of the approach seems to be not only the way it focuses historical contingencies, but also how it reframes well-trodden narratives, uncovers forgotten stories, and

¹¹⁴ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *1492: The Year our World Began* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 5.

¹¹⁵ Benjamin Piekut, *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and its Limits* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); *Music and Protest in 1968*, eds. Beate Kutschke and Barley Norton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹¹⁶ Florian Illies, *1913: Der Sommer Des Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 2012); Florian Illies, *1913: The Year before the Storm*, trans. Shaun Whiteside and Jamie Lee Searle (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2013).

¹¹⁷ BBC Four, *Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities*, three episodes, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04fh387>> (accessed 1 August 2016), first broadcast 20 August 2014.

allows unexpected cultural and historical events to be contextualised in relation to one another.

'To be honest', wrote Dowling, 'he had me at Hitler, Freud, and Trotsky in the same cafe.'¹¹⁸

Detailed historical work on one particular place and period has been pervasive in much recent music scholarship;¹¹⁹ this project adopts an alternative, but complementary transnational methodology to tell a different historical narrative, and a narrative that is clearly necessary if we are to understand a complex international phenomenon like 'the symphony'. In common with those recent place-centred approaches, the scope of my thesis is concerned with challenging historical orthodoxies and geographical delineations entrenched within musicology by the inherited value systems and political asymmetries that have shaped the discipline's twentieth-century development. Likewise, my thesis responds to some contemporary anxieties in music scholarship that have prompted renewed interest in Actor-Network-Theory;¹²⁰ methodologically, however, it aligns itself more closely with approaches in transnational history: Weill's symphony presents a clear opportunity to 'follow topics beyond national boundaries'.¹²¹ If transnational methodologies are most successful when applied to the history of concepts, then perhaps dealing with the genre's definitional problem by reconceiving symphonies as "'entangled" products of national crossings' – as systems of aesthetic or cultural-political relations – could offer a productive route for circumventing the definitional impasse.¹²² Unlike many of those place-centred or ANT-influenced studies, this thesis does not reject the work concept as a methodological starting point, but does nonetheless view it critically. The work concept is an essential springboard for understanding the power structures in which that concept, and the symphony as archetype of that concept, is complicit.

¹¹⁸ Tim Dowling, 'Secrets From the Asylum review: the celebrities have taken over in this po-faced view of history', *The Guardian*, 21 August 2014, <<http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2014/aug/21/secrets-of-the-asylum-tv-review-ray-winstone-claire-sweeney>> (accessed 28 February 2015).

¹¹⁹ For instance, a five-year European Research Council-funded project titled 'Music in London 1800-1851' is currently running at the music department of King's College, London. See <<https://musicinlondon.org>> (accessed 16 July 2016).

¹²⁰ See Piekut, 'Actor-Networks in Music History: Clarifications and Critiques', *Twentieth-Century Music*, 11 (2014), 191-215. See also Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: an Introduction to Actor Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹²¹ Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (New York; London: Routledge, 2004), xii.

¹²² *Ibid.*, xiii.

I suggest, then, that study of the symphony would benefit from participating in a move in the last fifteen years or so in historical disciplines towards the study of *histoire croisée*, or entangled history. Musicology has recently been diagnosed as particularly urgently requiring this methodological perspective; according to Anne C. Shreffler, Felix Meyer, Carol J. Oja, and Wolfgang Rathert, it is a discipline which ‘has traditionally been approached from within the category of the nation, often centering on composers and their works as representative of national achievements.’¹²³ *Histoire croisée*, by contrast, ‘emphasizes the cultural and social connections between nation-states’, enabling musicologists to resist the pull of the composer/work configuration. For historians Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor, ‘methodological approaches, historical evidence, and categories of analysis inherited from the past need to be historicized. Rather than proceeding on the basis of established categories of “nation”, “state”, or “society”, *histoire croisée* orientates itself around problems’.¹²⁴ The status of the symphony in 1933, focused by Weill’s Symphony No. 2, offers just one such problem, and a strong opportunity to dismantle the category of ‘nation’ and geographical determinism so heavily embroiled in symphonic histories.

Foregrounding Socio-Political Aspects

A key motivation for refocusing the lens on the genre is to generate a higher resolution image of the genre’s social and political role in different, but co-existent, socio-cultural arenas. Here I aim to examine the symphony as a mechanism by which the status of particular kinds of subjectivities was asserted and the power of elite groups maintained and perpetuated, building on established scholarship that considers how social practices at the symphony concert establish and perpetuate hegemonic groups, identities, and value systems.¹²⁵ This is partly about how social rhetorics associated with the genre historically align with or are channelled by particular political

¹²³ Felix Meyer et al., eds., *Crosscurrents: American and European Music in Interaction, 1900-2000* (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2014), 12.

¹²⁴ Cohen and O’Connor, *Comparison and History*, xiii.

¹²⁵ See, for example, Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998); Sven Oliver Müller, ‘Political Pleasures with Old Emotions? Performances of the Berlin Philharmonic in the Second World War’, *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 43 (2012), 35-52.

movements or ideologies, for example, fascism in Germany, American liberalism in the U.S., and Pan Americanism across North and South America. In addition, however, this thesis examines how the symphonic case studies musically can play an active part in sustaining or undermining political impulses and norms.

Aside from Painter's study, some of the most recent literature on the genre has indicated the need for a more advanced understanding of the genre's socio-political stakes, as well as its deep entanglement with nineteenth-century idealist philosophies of selfhood.¹²⁶ As Margaret Notley and others have shown, symphonic discourse grappled with questions about the relationship between individual sovereignty and mass publics, and about community-formation and the national imaginary.¹²⁷ On the one hand the symphony is an idealist, expansionist project; on the other, it directs its lens inwards onto subjective interiority, familiarising the listener with a universalised notion of selfhood.¹²⁸ Some contributions to the *Cambridge Companion* point in this direction, too. For instance, as Daniel M. Grimley emphasises, 'simply "sounding together" has not always been an easy or politically straightforward task, and the idea of community that the symphony has often seemed to elevate can swiftly become more exclusive than inclusive.'¹²⁹ Likewise, Fanning begins his chapter on the symphony after Mahler by stressing manifestations in Germany and (Soviet) Russia of the early twentieth-century ethical aspect to the symphony as a utopian community-forming ideal.¹³⁰

A Sociological Perspective: Paul Bekker's *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler*

As Fanning acknowledges, theorising the symphony from a sociological perspective in the twentieth century was Berlin music critic Paul Bekker. Writing in 1918 as the German imperial government began to crumble after the First World War, his treatise *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis*

¹²⁶ For the latter of these, see, for instance, Lütteken, *Sinfonie als Bekenntnis*, 138.

¹²⁷ See, for instance, Bonds, *Music as Thought*; Margaret Notley, *Lateness and Brahms: Music and Culture in the Twilight of Viennese Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹²⁸ Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*.

¹²⁹ Daniel M. Grimley, 'Symphony/Antiphony: Formal Strategies in the Twentieth-Century Symphony', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, Horton, 285-310, 285.

¹³⁰ Fanning, 'The Symphony since Mahler', 96-7.

Mahler, based on a series of public lectures, represents a useful starting point for unravelling the most relevant issues and areas for the case studies considered in this thesis.¹³¹ Situating the genre within libertarian discourses, Bekker's optimistic vision of the symphony's intended audience – the *Hörerschaft*, or utopian assembly of listeners who come together for the duration of the work, and that, in so doing, reflect a perfect democratic social body – can be traced back to the genre's Enlightenment origins. The idealised public of listeners is quite literally composed by the music, and Bekker thus made the case for an intimate and reflexive connection between music, space, and listening community.¹³² This seemed a radical departure from the kind of heroic symphonic narratives and Beethoven idolatry evinced in, for example, Felix Weingartner's roughly contemporary and enduringly successful *Die Sinfonie nach Beethoven*, first published in 1898, but revised for a fourth edition in 1926.¹³³

Indeed, the fraught relationship between the individual and the collective in democratic thought has always been a key issue explored through symphonic discourse. Other writers in the early nineteenth century drew parallels between the composite, yet multi-voiced functioning of the orchestra and the idealised mechanisms of democratic social orders governed by ethical values of individual freedom and autonomy. They pointed to how the orchestra was a – literally harmonious – analogue for the needs of the autonomous individual and the collective requirements of the social order.¹³⁴ Bekker's text shows that the positive moral value invested in the symphonic genre in the nineteenth century seemed to have lost none of its potency by 1918, or if it had, post-war republican optimism was the climate in which it could be resurrected. But the symphony has not always channelled egalitarian impulses. Frequently, the symphony and the orchestra have been put to politically dystopic use: in fascist Germany, for instance, the ordered

¹³¹ Paul Bekker, *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1918).

¹³² *Ibid.*, 15-16.

¹³³ Felix Weingartner, *Die Sinfonie nach Beethoven*, 4th ed., (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1926).

¹³⁴ See Bonds, *Music as Thought*, in particular chap. 4, 'Listening to the Aesthetic State: Cosmopolitanism', 63-78; see also Emily I. Dolan, *The Orchestral Revolution: Haydn and the Technologies of Timbre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), in particular chap. 4, 'The Republic of Sound', 136-79. Dolan has argued for how the different instruments and instrumental characters in the orchestra represent autonomous individuals within a synthesised semi-utopian collective, reflecting late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century contemporary philosophical discussions of the self and society. She concretises one key respect in which the symphony orchestra can negotiate and narrate the relationship between the individual and the collective.

and hierarchical organisation of the symphony orchestra modelled the paternal authority of the *Führerprinzip*: gathered around the central figure of the conductor, the large ensemble needed to perform a symphony working as one musical body mirrored Nazi ideology.¹³⁵ Either way, the symphony simulates – or even stimulates – the political imagination.

Alongside politics, the symphonic genre came with an expansionist spatial impulse. For Bekker, the articulation of musical ideas that embraced all layers of society required a vast unfolding of energy, which in turn demanded a correspondingly vast physical space.¹³⁶ Put less prosaically, what he meant is that symphonies can be loud, and volume travels. Bekker wedded the symphonic genre to an idealisation of public space as a site for rational consensus, similar to the liberal coffee-house culture Jürgen Habermas later theorised in *The Structural Transformation of the Bourgeois Public Sphere*.¹³⁷ Notley and Benjamin Korstvedt have worked on the liberalist underpinnings of symphonic space, and signalled the value of more thorough critical attention to Habermas's social theory in relation to the symphony.¹³⁸ Yet Bekker's ideal symphony, epitomised – in one of the more pedestrian aspects of the treatise – by Beethoven's works, represents a direct, one-way conduit from the composer to the mass listening public, and such rhetoric perhaps reveals an anti-democratic and coercive aspect to the symphony's power over the community it creates, which Bekker does not adequately reconcile. Indeed, symphonic space has been inflected differently in different ideological contexts. For instance, Rehding has excavated the strong fascist ideological charge to the vast imagined spaces conjured by the symphonic genre for 1930s German musicologists.¹³⁹ In line with totalitarian ideologies that renounced selfhood, these were expansive virtual arenas in relation to which the individual disintegrated.

¹³⁵ For discussion of the orchestra's symbolic role in Nazi Germany, see Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, in particular 214-15.

¹³⁶ Bekker, *Die Sinfonie*, 11.

¹³⁷ See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989).

¹³⁸ Notley, *Lateness and Brahms*, 156-60; Benjamin M. Korstvedt, 'Reading Music Criticism beyond the Fin-de-siècle Vienna Paradigm', *The Musical Quarterly*, 94 (2011), 156-210, 172.

¹³⁹ See Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, especially 172-80.

Summary of Chapters

The thesis begins by spotlighting Berlin. Precisely these tensions surrounding the symphony's political and social status at a moment of enormous political change between two value systems form the subject of chapter 1, "On a Threshold": Issues of Genre, Space, and Subjectivity in Hans Pfitzner's *Symphony in C-sharp Minor*. The incongruousness of liberal sociological theorisations of the symphony such as Bekker's within the emerging political context of fascist Germany in early 1933 is explored through the reception of Hans Pfitzner's *Symphony in C-sharp minor*, a reworking of his 1925 String Quartet, op. 25. Due to Nazi threats of violence, just days before the Berlin performance of Pfitzner's new symphony the *Philharmonie* had seen the very public cancellation of Walter's regular concert, precipitating his political exile. I read the reviews in parallel with both Bekker's Enlightenment-inflected symphonic utopianism and with emerging Nazi symphonic aesthetics, exploring Pfitzner's symphony as caught between these two symphonic poles. I pay particular attention to how the public and private space discourses associated with the symphony and the string quartet, as articulated by Bekker,¹⁴⁰ allow an unusually clear view of fascist reformulations of subjectivity and space in this context marked by Walter's persecution. Attention to Pfitzner's symphony gives a fine-grained view of how National Socialist values, particularly to do with monumentality, gained traction within symphonic aesthetics.

Next, chapter 2, "Unmistakably American"? Abstracting Sound and Space in Roy Harris's *Symphony 1933* shifts the focus to America's East Coast, where Weill's symphony was to be premiered by Walter in late 1934. Harris's *Symphony 1933*, commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky, is a work that teases out how several different spatial dimensions intersect in and around symphonic discourse and problematise the genre. Examining the work illuminates the relationships between those expansionist discourses associated with the symphony indicated by Bekker, liberal ideology, and the imagined spaces of the American West. In particular, I investigate the ways in which *Symphony 1933*'s premieres in Boston and New York in early 1934

¹⁴⁰ See Bekker, *Die Sinfonie*, 8-11.

focus several distinct areas that demonstrate an imperative to order, homogenise, and anonymise space through processes of abstraction, bringing together acoustic science, recording technology, and the ideologies of landscape underpinning the West's colonisation. The chapter suggests that the different conceptions of abstracted space at play in these concerts reinscribe but also problematise the broader spatial narrative of abstraction and reproducibility integral to liberal ideology. Literary scholars Martin Brückner and Hsuan L. Hsu have followed Philip Fisher in characterising this spatial narrative as an 'abstract, infinitely expandable and easily damaged "democratic social space"'.¹⁴¹ Underlying these ideologies is a question about how the discourse around Harris's symphony and liberalism's spatial narratives colluded in establishing the political hegemony of white Americans and the 'naturalness' of their right to occupy the West, an acute anxiety given the disenfranchisement of white working-class Americans during the economic collapse of the early 1930s.

With its spare chamber-like textures, classical formal balance, and lightly balletic sense of movement, Copland's *Short Symphony* (1931-3) seems to present an anti-monumental foil for Harris's symphony, both aesthetically and ideologically. Chapter 3, 'The Bounding Line: Pan American Aesthetics in Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony*' argues that *Short Symphony* harnesses utopian discourses associated with the genre towards an alternative sense of what the symphony could be in an American context. *Short Symphony* was partly composed in Mexico, where Copland was the guest of his close friend and confidant Carlos Chávez, and the pair's aesthetic thought shows much reciprocal influence in this period. Rather than glorifying the Western frontier narrative and its protagonists, as Harris's symphony does, like Chávez Copland seems to put the genre's community-forming impulse in service of a Pan American social ideal that spoke to the climate of political solidarity across the American continent of the 1930s and 1940s. Yet Copland's subversively utopian aims for the work come into tension with the burdensome ideological legacies of the symphonic genre and its problematic status as a European colonial

¹⁴¹ Martin Brückner and Hsuan L. Hsu, *American Literary Geographies: Spatial Practice and Cultural Production, 1500-1900* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 20.

import to the Americas, as well as with the politically questionable and hegemonising aims of the Pan American project as a whole.

Back in Paris, Honegger's *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* was a commission for the Berlin Philharmonic, thus tracing in reverse the Berlin-Paris course of Weill's symphony. Chapter 4, "‘Und zwar einer modernisierten *Eroica*’: Arthur Honegger's *Mouvement Symphonique Nr. 3*" deals with its reception, premiered by the Berlin Philharmonic a few days before Pfitzner's Symphony in C-sharp minor. The work therefore focuses attitudes to the symphonic genre from both inside and outside of Germany – from the German critics and from Honegger – making it a vital complement to Weill's and Pfitzner's works. For reviewers, Swiss-German Honegger's work was unambiguously neither French nor German, and it shows the mechanisms by which commentators sought either to assimilate or to expel the work from Germanic idealist aesthetic traditions. And although much critical reception was positive, the fact that all Honegger's music was banned shortly afterwards seems to have been canonised in Honegger scholarship as evidence of critics' cold resistance to *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*. Despite the work's 'sober and unprepossessing' title,¹⁴² the chapter suggests that it had a critical political programme downplayed in the surrounding commentary. Manipulating the symphonic form, and referencing Beethovenian subjective narratives in particular, it considers the changing relationship between the individual and the collective within a tumultuous era of political and industrial/technological upheaval, ultimately lamenting over the ruins of both the symphony and the utopian political project it represented. The work is thus exemplary of how Nazi history inflects contemporary scholarship in ongoing and often under-acknowledged ways, having caused persistent critical silences, thus underlining the importance of renewed attention to the symphony in the year 1933.

This is a theme pursued in the conclusion, realighting on Weill's symphony. I examine how the issues raised in the thesis can enrich how we are able to understand Weill's work and its international reception, and I foreground some potential implications for future studies of the genre. Ultimately, approaching the symphony in 1933 seems a question of refining a critical

¹⁴² Willy Tappolet, *Arthur Honegger* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1954), 85.

framework capable of mediating the multiple and freighted historical layers that the discourse collapses together, and for dealing in a sophisticated way with the localised conditions for and implications of so-called 'universal' values. Evidently a site at which cultural exchange takes place, the symphony in this period is a filter for anxieties about inter-cultural relations, for engaging imaginatively with other nations and identities, and for formulating a sense of selfhood and community. Offering a window into people's sense of their place in the world, symphonic discourse was a means to define who they were, but equally, and more revealingly, who they were not.

Chapter 1

‘On a Threshold’: Issues of Genre, Space, and Subjectivity in Hans Pfitzner’s Symphony in C-sharp Minor

In the same week Weill fled Berlin for Paris, Hans Pfitzner’s Symphony in C-sharp minor op. 36a, an orchestral transcription of his String Quartet op. 36 (1925), was premiered in Munich. The date, 23 March 1933, coincided with the passing of the Enabling Act, allowing Adolf Hitler full political control. A week later, on 30 March, it was played again by the Philharmonic Orchestra in Berlin.

This chapter focuses on that second performance at the *Philharmonie*. The scene of Bruno Walter’s high-profile exile from Germany mere days before, here the effects of new Nazi policy and persecution could be felt in an immediate way. According to a witness account of events, ten days prior to the Pfitzner concert the Nazi authorities had threatened violence at the concert hall if Walter’s regular concert with the Berlin Philharmonic – part of the ‘Bruno Walter Series’ – were to proceed as usual, triggering Walter’s immediate political exile.¹ His replacement by Richard Strauss, who donated his fee to the hard-up orchestra, has been well rehearsed in the secondary literature,² but was certainly not the only concert affected by Walter’s exit. Due to conductor ‘reshuffles’ (as they were described in one review) between many of the major north-German concert venues in the wake of Walter’s departure,³ at the Pfitzner concert on 30 March Pfitzner himself unexpectedly took to the podium at short notice to conduct his new symphony; although the composer was not directly stepping in to cover Walter (Eugen Jochum had been on

¹ This account of the events surrounding Walter’s exile comes from the memoirs of Edith Stargardt-Wolff, who at the time had been due to inherit the concert agency responsible for the Berlin Philharmonic’s engagements. Edith Stargardt-Wolff, *Wegbereiter grosser Musiker* (Berlin: Bote & G. Bock, 1954), 276-77; cited in: Erik S. Ryding and Rebecca Pechefsky, *Bruno Walter: A World Elsewhere* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 220.

² Coverage of Strauss’s 20 March concert at the Berlin Philharmonic is extensive. See, for example: Michael Walter, *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber, 2000), 360-62; Raymond Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2011), 152; Michael Kennedy, ‘Taking Walter’s Place’, chap. 20 in *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 269-79; Pamela M. Potter, ‘Richard Strauss and the National Socialists: The Debate and its Relevance’, in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and his Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 93-113, 94-5; Michael Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 23-4; Erik Levi, *Music in the Third Reich* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), 42-3.

³ ‘Umbesetzungen’, Otto Steinhausen, ‘Das Musikleben der Gegenwart: Berlin’, *Die Musik*, 25 (1933), 619.

the original billing, but was needed at Leipzig's *Gewandhaus* to cover what had been Walter's permanent position – now unfilled), this last-minute conductor switch nonetheless made Walter's absence from the concert circuit plainly apparent.

Before moving to some of the other contexts traversed by Weill's Symphony No. 2, we need to establish and illuminate some of the stakes for the symphony and symphonic discourse in Berlin, and the Pfitzner concert provides a vital platform from which to do it. The Berlin coverage of Pfitzner's C-sharp minor symphony provides a window into how the symphonic genre was written about at a moment of swift, yet in many ways chaotic and uncoordinated, ideological change in the early weeks following the *Machtergreifung*. Germany was the genre's ideological home territory, and despite having been historically overshadowed by the Strauss concert, Pfitzner's Berlin premiere was quite clearly a major German cultural event led by a major cultural icon. A few qualms relating to the genre transition aside, it received significant, overwhelmingly positive exposure from all the major Berlin newspapers and national music journals, a sign of his political standing in this period, and numerous additional performances of the symphony in several German and Austrian cities followed throughout 1933.⁴ Heavily championed by the right-wing media, Pfitzner's construction as a public figure couldn't have been further from Weill's.⁵ Neither could the kinds of racially charged discourses used to endorse his symphony, which were suffused with German nationalist rhetorics.

⁴ Typically effusive was the *Berlin Lokal Anzeiger*, which thanked Pfitzner for 'a new masterpiece, which is a significant contribution to the contemporary situation of German culture.' The original reads: 'wir danken dem Meister für ein neues Gipfelwerk seines im deutschen Kunstleben der Gegenwart so schwerwiegenden Schaffens.' Walter Abendroth, 'Pfitzner-Abend der Philharmoniker', *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger*, 31 March 1933. Other performances during 1933 took place in Dortmund (at the 1933 Tonkünstlerfest), Darmstadt, Düsseldorf, Wiesbaden, Bonn, Dessau, and Vienna. Pfitzner cancelled the performance that had been planned for the summer Salzburger Festspiele, in line with National Socialist policy in relation to Austria. How far Pfitzner was politically pressurised into doing so, however, is unclear. See further discussion in Birgit Jürgens, 'Pfitznerns Wirken und seine Position im Nationalsozialismus – Ambivalenzen, Worte, Taten', chap. 4 in *'Deutsche Musik' – das Verhältnis von Ästhetik und Politik bei Hans Pfitzner* (Hildesheim: George Olms Verlag, 2009), 163-273, in particular 229-51.

⁵ The ultra-conservative *Zeitschrift für Musik*, for instance, seemed particularly invested in endorsing Pfitzner and forwarding his career. For example, an article entitled 'Hans Pfitzner Boykott in Berlin' appeared in the April issue, accusing the *Staatsoper* and *Städtische Oper* of actively avoiding programming Pfitzner's works. Fritz Stege's article openly pressurised the institutions into reinstating Pfitzner: 'One thing is clear: spring festivals in Berlin without a Pfitzner opera are a sin against the spirit of the German nation!' 'Das Eine steht fest: Frühjahrsfestspiele in Berlin ohne eine Pfitzner-Oper sind eine Sünde wider den Geist der deutschen Nation!' F[ritz] St[ege], 'Hans Pfitzner-Boykott in Berlin?', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 4 (1933), 375-6, 376. A follow-up article in the May issue – titled 'Fulfilled Suggestions and Wishes of the ZFM' – detailed how the journal's demands had been met and that Pfitzner's *Palestrina* was back on the *Berliner Staatsoper*'s spring *Spielplan*. See anon, 'Erfüllte Anregungen und Wünsche der ZFM', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 5 (1933), 486-7.

But perhaps most critical within the broad concerns of this thesis is how the Berlin reception foregrounds the spatial dimension within symphonic discourse and shifting relationships between critical commentaries and the genre's liberal-idealist heritage. Music criticism feeds into and responds to wider networks of social and political values, actively shaping and regulating modes of representation and thought in particular communities.⁶ As a reworking of a string quartet, Pfitzner's work affords a unique opportunity to investigate language relating to public and private spheres and spaces within a society in transition to fascism: particular kinds of language and discussion are initiated by its position as a 'boundary-work'⁷ (as one reviewer termed it) between chamber music and symphony; between private and public space. This suggests reading the concert and its reception as a tipping point, at which nineteenth-century symphonic idealism and twentieth-century totalitarianism become visible as intimately entwined. As Karen Painter notes, nothing altered identifiably about symphonic musical language or style when Hitler seized power; instead it was the 'ideological valence' that changed.⁸ March 1933 precedes any sedimentation of Nazi symphonic values – Painter has described the first two years of the Nazi government as an uncertain period of 'inconsistent scrambling' in cultural life⁹ – but the symphony's reception anticipates their discourses, pointing to a slippery slope between the aesthetics of absolute music and its artistic imperatives, and the collusive anonymisation and determinism of totalitarian regimes.

'The era of individualism died once and for all on 30 January,' propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels stated in an address the weekend before Pfitzner's Berlin concert. 'The individual is being supplanted by the collective of the *Volke*.'¹⁰ Yet contemporary appraisals of Pfitzner's

⁶ After all, as Benjamin Korstvedt contends, pointing to a sea-change in disciplinary methodology in recent decades, 'there is now little danger of supposing, let alone seriously arguing, that music criticism expressed little more than matters of musical taste and objective artistic judgment.' See Korstvedt, 'Reading Music Criticism beyond the Fin-de-siècle Vienna Paradigm', 166.

⁷ 'Grenzwerke', see anon., *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* 1933, 24/25, 16 June, 1933, 335.

⁸ Karen Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900-1945* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 217.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 219.

¹⁰ 'Am 30. Januar ist endgültig die Zeit des Individualismus gestorben. [...] Das Einzelindividuum wird ersetzt durch die Gemeinschaft des Volkes.' Address given at the Berlin *Haus des Rundfunks* ('Die zukünftige Arbeit und Gestaltung des deutschen Rundfunks'), in Helmut Heiber, ed., *Goebbels Reden 1932-45* (Düsseldorf: Gondrom, 1991), 82-107, 82.

symphony suggest strongly that listeners ‘heard’ the intimate, subjective space of the string quartet as if preserved within the orchestral rendering, seeming in part to undermine Goebbels’s ideological directive. I ask, then, about the role played by Pfitzner’s symphonic reorchestration in reshaping aesthetic and political notions of space in the context of the political transition. A critical tenet of fascist ideology¹¹ closely associated with what Michael Meyer has called ‘the collectivisation of the individual’¹² is the reformulation of the relationship between subjectivity¹³ and public space, and music can participate forcefully in this process. As Margaret Notley has observed, opposing the symphony and public space against chamber music and the subjective associations of the private sphere was a well-established critical tendency; likewise, in the Berlin reception the respective spatial analogues for the two genres are heavily implied with metaphors of force, space, and containment.¹⁴ Against this specific political background the work provokes a set of questions about the monumentalisation of the string quartet’s forces, and about transgressing or reformulating the corresponding real and imagined public and private spaces associated with each genre. This chapter explores how Pfitzner’s symphony simultaneously

¹¹ While the definition and methodological viability of a congruous ‘fascist ideology’ is the subject of ongoing debate, fascism scholarship from the 1990s onward has seen the emergence of a so-called ‘new consensus.’ This intersection of perspectives, first identified by Roger Griffin, crystallises around the idea of ‘interpreting fascism as a unique ideological articulation of radical revolutionary nationalism, ‘third way’ politics and holistic social organisation.’ See Aristotle A. Kallis, ‘Fascist ideology – the quest for the “fascist minimum”’, in *The Fascism Reader*, ed. Kallis (London: Routledge, 2003), 145-47.

¹² Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 8.

¹³ The problem of ‘subjectivity’ was a prevalent theme in the work of many Weimar writers, philosophers, and social critics. In particular, they reflected on the unity and coherence of the modern subject, its moral structures, and its autonomy and its relationship to the mass or collective, or to the state. See, for example, Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. and ed. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995). Martin Heidegger’s holistic ontology of *Dasein* proposed an alternative to Cartesian conception of the self. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967). For a meditation on state violence, law, freedom, and agency, see Walter Benjamin, ‘Critique of Violence’, in *Selected Writings*, eds. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, vol. 1, 1913-1928 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1996), 236-52, especially 241-42. Benjamin’s critical reflections here seem particularly salient in the context of an increasingly violent state and police force. Other Weimar essays addressing these themes include Hans Zehrer, ‘The Revolution of the Intelligentsia’, in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, eds. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 295-97, originally published as ‘Die Revolution der Intelligenz’, *Die Tat*, 21 (1929), 486-507; as well as Karl Mannheim, ‘Ideology and Utopia’, in *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, Kaes et al., 297-300, originally published in *Ideologie und Utopie* (Bonn: Cohen, 1929), 121-130.

¹⁴ Notley, *Lateness and Brahms*, 156-160. At 159, she notes that ‘the metaphor of symphony as public oration (versus string quartet as conversation) was already current during Beethoven’s lifetime’, citing Ludwig Finscher, ‘Symphonie’, in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd edn., ed. Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1998), vol. 9, cols 56-8. Also incisive for this discussion is Theodor W. Adorno’s sociological analysis of the public and private distinctions between chamber and symphonic music. See Adorno, ‘Chamber Music’, and ‘Conductor and Orchestra’, chaps. 6 and 7 in *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, trans. E.B. Ashton [Ernst Basch] (New York: Continuum, 1989), 85-103 and 104-117.

contributes to and contests fascism's ideological remodelling of space, both performing and defying an assimilation of the private into the public. The sense of autonomous subjectivity that fascist ideology seeks to erase is immanently connected with the essential core of the private sphere; if the symphony, as the reviews begin to indicate, succeeds in preserving a sense of a private sphere beyond the reaches of political intrusion, then what are the implications for subjective autonomy and agency?¹⁵

The project here, however, is not to re-canonise Pfitzner's symphony, a work that has sunk from our historical consciousness, despite contemporary assessments of the work as 'without doubt, one of Pfitzner's strongest compositions.'¹⁶ Instead, it is to add to a broader theoretical investigation into how the symphonic genre becomes collusive in fascism's reformulation of the relationship between space and subjectivity, building on work by those such as Reinhold Brinkmann and Alexander Rehding. These scholars have compellingly examined National Socialist constructions of two interlinked aesthetic categories: respectively, the 'sublime' and the 'monumental.'¹⁷ My methodology allies in part with Rehding's directive for understanding the 'machinations of monumentality'; he proposes that examining arrangements – that is, musical material that has undergone some transformative process, in this instance, a symphonic rescoring of a string quartet – might yield 'instructive insights on the workings of monumentality'.¹⁸ And he underlines the stakes for the monumental in National Socialist Germany by paraphrasing Thomas Mann's shrewd observation on the dangers of monumental music: that 'monumental music seems to exude moral authority without specifying the carrier of the authority, or indeed the nature of such morality.'¹⁹ This chapter also situates itself within a body of socio-cultural literature on musical and cultural life in Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Meyer,

¹⁵ Thomas Burger's definition of an *Intimsphäre* as 'the core of a person's private sphere which by law, tact, and convention is shielded from intrusion' illuminates the way in which these ideas are enmeshed. See Burger, translator's note to Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, xvi.

¹⁶ 'Das Streichquartett, bzw. die Sinfonie ist ohne Zweifel eine der stärksten Kompositionen Pfitzners.' Karl Wörner, 'Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie in cis', *Melos*, 12 (1933), 133.

¹⁷ See Reinhold Brinkmann, 'The Distorted Sublime: Music and National Socialist Ideology – A Sketch', in *Music and Nazism: Art Under Tyranny, 1933-1945*, eds. Michael Kater and Albrecht Riethmüller (Laaber: Laaber, 2003), 43-63; Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 8.

¹⁸ Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 15-16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

Stephen Hinton, Erik Levi, Michael Kater and others have supplied comprehensive historical and critical foundations for work on the late Weimar Republic and on early fascist Germany, and scholars such as Painter and Bryan Gilliam have explored how far symphonic and Nazi ideals converged.²⁰ Sven Oliver Müller has used the Berlin Philharmonic as a case study to establish how the National Socialists used musical culture as ‘a powerful instrument in consensus politics’.²¹ This chapter’s scope is more tightly defined in relation to the research questions posed by this thesis, seeking closely to examine one concert to clarify how it can illuminate a particular historical moment of political upheaval. Holding a magnifying glass to a phase of ideological transition allows investigation of how established critical rhetorics begin to take on new dimensions and associations, shedding light on some of the inconsistencies of fascism, and its roots in existing intellectual trends.

To consider, then, how Pfitzner’s symphony both becomes complicit within, but also resists totalitarian renegotiations of subjectivity and space, initially the focus is shifted to the political-historical context for the Berlin concert and to its reception, where the work’s uncertain genre status, suspended between chamber music and symphony, was a central source of critical tension. Contemporary listeners couched their descriptions of the work in competing terms that both evoked monumentality and the sublime, and also drew on the language of austerity, celebrating the symphony’s rejection of decadent orchestral colour. While most reviewers applauded the symphony’s success, there was nonetheless some discomfort in the reception about how the work articulated and negotiated public and private space. Those musical moments at which contemporary reviewers argued that the work failed to convince as a symphony are outlined and analytically examined in relation to conventional symphonic models, with particular consideration for the public and private sphere discourses closely associated with chamber and symphonic

²⁰ See, for example: Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*; Levi, *Music in the Third Reich*; Levi, *Mozart and the Nazis: How the Third Reich Abused a Cultural Icon* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010); Michael H. Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Potter, *Most German of the Arts*; Stephen Hinton, *The Idea of Gebrauchsmusik: a study of musical aesthetics in the Weimar Republic with particular reference to the works of Paul Hindemith* (New York: Garland, 1989); Hinton, *Weill’s Musical Theater: Stages of Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*; Bryan Gilliam, ‘The Annexation of Anton Bruckner: Nazi Revisionism and the Politics of Appropriation’, *The Musical Quarterly*, 78 (1994), 584–604.

²¹ See Müller, ‘Political Pleasures with Old Emotions?’, 38.

music. Two problematic symphonic-generic junctures in particular caught music critics' attention: the structure and thematic work of the first movement, and the close of the final movement. Then, in light of this discussion, this chapter looks at language employed in the reviews more broadly. I frame my analysis in relation to two key theoretical areas: Bekker's idealist Weimar symphonic aesthetics on the one hand, and Brinkmann's and Rehding's work on the Nazi 'sublime' and 'monumental' on the other, building on and exploring in more detail the introductory chapter's brief exposition of these texts and the issues they raise. The criticism, I argue, isolates this concert as a historical moment during which the sands begin to shift more decisively between two value systems. The setting put a very specific kind of pressure on the symphonic genre, showing that principles which had once seemed libertarian and utopian all too readily prepared the ground for totalitarian thought.

The Berlin Premiere of Pfitzner's Symphony at the *Philharmonie*

The March concert that opened this chapter had added significance for Pfitzner, as the Berlin premiere of his first ever symphony. His reputation in contemporary circles as 'the last of the romantics' was chiefly built on his works for stage, cantatas, and songs.²² Composed during the latter part of 1932 at the age of sixty-three, such a late first foray into the genre may point to self-fashioning after Brahms. In any case, this concert would have presented a crucial opportunity for Pfitzner to display his work in the sightlines of the new government, channelling the genre's status as a serious test of a composer's capabilities. He had envisaged Berlin as the ideal location for the premiere from very early on in the symphony's conception, indicating the kind of cultural capital the *Hauptstadt* could invest in the work,²³ and his concession that it first be premiered in Munich a week earlier came only after a generous offer from the mayor to put on an extra,

²² 'le "dernier des Romantiques"', E. d. W., 'Lettre de Berlin', *Revue Musicale*, 14 (1933), 378.

²³ Hans Erich Pfitzner and Bernhard Adamy, *Briefe* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1991), 599; letter to Otto Fürstner, 7 July 1932.

‘appropriately “sensational”’ concert for the new symphony, which overrode his reservations about the city.²⁴

Pfitzner’s letters to friends and colleagues from 1933 reveal his concern about his perceived peripheral standing in the Third Reich’s artistic hierarchy, particularly in relation to those he saw as in the inner circle such as composer Strauss and conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, and that he had hoped that the new nationalist government would elevate his reputation.²⁵ Indeed, Pfitzner sent Hitler numerous invitations to performances of his works in Berlin during this year, but the requests were to no avail, leaving Pfitzner disappointed and disillusioned.²⁶ Just two weeks before the Berlin concert, on 15 March, Pfitzner had written to Hitler reminding him of their single meeting in 1923 and asking for Hitler’s support in his artistic endeavours.²⁷ (Unknown to the composer, Hitler’s 1923 visit to Pfitzner in hospital had ignited in Hitler a loathing for Pfitzner that proved long lasting: Goebbels remarked in a 1943 diary entry that ‘the Führer really is very much against Pfitzner since, contrary to all evidence, he thinks him to be a half-Jew.’²⁸ Thus Hitler would have nothing to do with Pfitzner, despite the composer’s best efforts.) Pfitzner’s ambivalent relationship to the incumbent regime has been extensively documented elsewhere, but

²⁴ ‘Natürlich würde dieses Konzert von Seiten der Stadt entsprechend “aufgemacht” werden.’ Ibid., 608-9; letter to Fürstner, 8 September 1932.

²⁵ Evidence of Pfitzner’s hopes for the improvement of his situation under the National Socialists, and the subsequent injustice he perceived at his marginalisation can be found in several of his letters. Pfitzner’s letter to Hitler immediately after he came into power is telling: see *ibid.*, 621-2, letter to Adolf Hitler, 15 March 1933: ‘Bei Ihnen brauche ich wohl nicht erst zu fragen, ob Sie wissen, wer ich bin, vielmehr nehme ich an, daß Sie sich der – mir unvergeßlichen – Stunde erinnern, wo Sie mich im Schwabinger Krankenhause besuchten. Wer wie Sie ein “Kunstgewogener” ist, wird mich verstehen und gleich mir gegen Ungerechtigkeit kämpfen, meine Handlungsweise billigen und mich mit der Macht, die in Ihren Händen liegt, in meinen Bestrebungen unterstützen.’ A letter to Viktor Junk of 5 December 1933 reveals Strauss and Furtwängler as the obvious figures of comparison: ‘von allen großen Namen der Musik [bin] ich der einzige [...], der noch nicht einmal in eine würdige Stellung gesetzt wird, geschweige denn zu hohen Ehren aufsteigt, wie die Herren Richard Strauss und Wilhelm Furtwängler.’ Ibid., 643. See also 640, letter to Margaritta Jüttner-Fischer, 5 October 1933, in which he writes about his disappointment and frustration with his position in the new Reich: ‘In der Zeitung stand dann die Lüge, ich wäre “verhindert” gewesen. Ein Dementi von mir ist nicht erschienen. Das ist meine Stellung im Dritten Reich, wo ich eigentlich, wenn es nach Verdienst ginge, eine Art musikalischer Kaiser sein sollte.’

²⁶ See, for example, *ibid.*, 645; letter to Felix Wolfes, 5 December 1933. ‘Hitler hat trotz mehrmaliger Einladung nicht eine einzige meiner Veranstaltungen besucht, sitzt aber jeden Abend in einem anderen Konzert oder Oper, so während eben dieser Zeit in Rheingold, Walküre, Arabella, Butterfly, Backhaus-Klavierabend, Liederabend Maria Müller, Arienabend des Welttenors Gigli u.s.w.’

²⁷ Ibid., 621 (See footnote 25).

²⁸ Much more can be found on the relationship of Pfitzner to Hitler in Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era*, 218-19.

like the timing of this letter, much of Pfitzner's behaviour in the early months of 1933 seems self-interestedly opportunist.²⁹

Pfitzner's symphony is in four movements, and reorchestrates the string quartet in a literal sense.³⁰ As Johann Peter Vogel notes in his early 1990s analysis of the string quartet, C-sharp minor appears too rarely in Pfitzner's compositional output for its use to be merely coincidental, and while Vogel observes musical references to Beethoven's late String Quartet op. 131, he sees no indication that Mahler's Symphony No. 5, the other obviously canonical work in C-sharp, influenced Pfitzner's compositional thinking.³¹ The first and second movements are paired, as are the third and fourth movements, and should be performed *attacca* 'to underline motivic relationships.'³² Marked 'moderato (ziemlich ruhig)', the first movement opens in C-sharp minor with – to adopt Vogel's thematic labelling – a sinuously chromatic four-bar polyphonic 'motto' theme for solo woodwinds. In this way, the symphony acknowledges from the outset its debt to chamber music. But at the same time, by employing two bassoons and two clarinets, it sets up an aural world with a distinctly orchestral acoustic signature, hinting at the size and scope of the symphonic forces as yet unheard. As will be examined in more detail further on, the gestural melodic content of the 'motto' theme articulates some harmonic elements structurally important for the work overall; nonetheless, it presents a problem area within the symphonic form since, a curiously circular and static gesture, it resists goal-directed development. Three additional themes are set out in the first movement's exposition (bars 5–84), only one of which, the 'song theme' ('*Gesangsthema*') from bars 31 to 75, is in the relative major, E, playing the role of the second subject. While a loose sonata structure can be traced, with the 'song theme' (bars 140–175)

²⁹ Pfitzner's complex relationship with the National Socialist authorities is thoroughly discussed elsewhere. See, for example, *ibid.*; John Williamson, *The Music of Hans Pfitzner* (Oxford: Clarendon University Press, 1992), especially chap. 8, 'An Inner Emigration?' 301–48; Sabine Busch, *Hans Pfitzner und der Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2001); Jürgens, '*Deutsche Musik*'; Jens Malte Fischer, 'The Very German Fate of a Composer: Hans Pfitzner', in *Music and Nazism*, Kater and Riethmüller, 75–98.

³⁰ Readers unfamiliar with Pfitzner's C-sharp minor string quartet op. 36 and symphony op. 36a might find Johann Peter Vogel's detailed formal and harmonic analysis of the string quartet useful, given the formal identity between the two pieces. His work has provided an important point of reference for my formal sketch of the symphony. See Vogel, *Hans Pfitzner: Streichquartett Cis-Moll Op. 36* (Munich: Fink Verlag, 1991).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 10–12.

³² 'um den motivischen Zusammenhang sinnfällig zu machen.' See Pfitzner's remark at the end of the first movement in the string quartet score: Hans Pfitzner, *Quartett in Cis-moll für 2 Violinen, Viola und Violoncello opus 36* (Berlin: Adolph Fürstner, 1925), 18; see also *ibid.*, 13.

reprised in the tonic major, C-sharp, in the recapitulation (bars 126–183), Vogel demonstrates how it is overlaid with a symmetrical Bartókian bridge structure bookended by the ‘motto’ theme – ABCDCBA: two forms are at work simultaneously and in tension with one another.³³

A scherzo second movement follows, beginning in the subdominant, F-sharp minor. Marked ‘sehr schnell,’ the scherzo is energized by solo lines in the clarinet parts described by a contemporary critic as ‘ironic and grotesque’.³⁴ Other critics noted that this movement gained particularly convincingly from the orchestra’s rich colour palate.³⁵ At the end of the movement the music reaches a momentous climax scored for full orchestra with crashing cymbals (bar 389) before ebbing away to almost nothing, at which point the solo clarinet takes the stage again for a whimsical afterword over a perfect cadence (bars 148–152). The third movement is in $\frac{6}{8}$ with the performance marking ‘langsam, ausdrucksvoll’, and initially begins on a G-sharp, the same first note as in the two outer parts of the first movement’s ‘motto’ theme. This preliminary hint at the dominant aside, however, the initially chromatic melodic material – an arching, ‘strikingly abstract’ arpeggiated semiquaver gesture heard unaccompanied in the first violins that opens by articulating a tritone and is then quasi-canonically passed between the other string voices (bars 1–10) – leaves the tonal centre inconclusive.³⁶ Yet the chromaticism abruptly gives way to diatonic passages, for instance centring on D major from bars 11 to 14, before falling back into meandering atonality. In spite of the compound time signature, at bar 46 the melodic entry of unison trumpets in C major gestures uneasily towards the idea of a march with heavy use of dotted rhythms; harp and pizzicato strings mark each of the quaver beats. The finale has the performance direction ‘ziemlich schnell’. Beginning in C-sharp minor, and concluding in D-flat

³³ Ibid., 15–16.

³⁴ ‘ironish, groteske Hauptthema.’ Wörner, ‘Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie in cis’, 133.

³⁵ ‘der scherzoartige zweite Satz [...] gewinn[t] überzeugend durch die reiche Farbenpalette des Orchesters.’ Paul Schwes, ‘Aus dem Berliner Musikleben’, *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* 1933, 7 April 1933, 207; see also comments by a critic who published only under the name ‘Runge’ in *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*: ‘dem Scherzo ist die Umarbeitung gut bekommen [...] es hat sich an äußere Wirkung sehr gewonnen.’ It is likely that this was Otto Runge, the former editor of *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* under its previous name, *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, from 1902 to 1917. Runge, ‘Pfitzner dirigiert seine neue Symphonie’, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 31 March 1933. However it is perhaps conceivable that this was the violinist Nerina Runge (b. 1891), the daughter of physicist Carl Runge, who was also known as Nina Courant after her marriage to the mathematician Richard Courant in 1919. She is the only living music professional in 1933 with the surname ‘Runge’ in the online portal Deutsche Biographie. See ‘Nerina Runge’, accessed 5 January 2016, <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz109061.html#indexcontent>.

³⁶ ‘auffallend abstrakt.’ Wörner, ‘Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie in cis’, 134.

major, the enharmonic major equivalent, structurally it can be broken down into five sections. Material from the ‘motto’ theme of the opening four bars of the first movement is echoed in the closing passage (bars 316–331). By contrast, the string quartet does not make the enharmonic switch, ending instead in the tonic major, C-sharp: this single discrepancy in the orchestral transcription is a significant point to which this chapter will return.

Expectations for the symphony on the night of the Berlin concert would have been high, following the success of the official premiere in Munich the week before. Concluding the concert, Pfitzner’s symphony was heard after Schubert’s Symphony in B Minor and two of Pfitzner’s orchestral songs, ‘Zorn’ (1904) and ‘Klage’ (1915), sung by Hans Reinmar.³⁷ ‘Klage’ was so warmly received it had to be repeated – perhaps, as one reviewer suggested, it amplified particularly timely nationalist sentiments.³⁸ However in view of the last-minute switch in conductor from Jochum to Pfitzner, the atmosphere in the hall seems to have been something other than simply anticipatory: that all the reviews by the major music journals headed their discussion with the unexpected conductor swap suggests Walter’s continued absence upstaged the new symphony to some degree. After all, several journal critics wrote about this concert in the same column as they reported on the *Philharmonie* concert on the original evening of Walter’s exile when, as already noted, Strauss had stepped in for Walter at the eleventh hour, replacing the expected programme with Strauss’s own works. Only the phrase ‘*anstelle von Bruno Walter*’ on the concert programme indicated Walter’s publicly unexplained absence from his series.³⁹ What is more, Walter’s removal from the billing had met with resistance, requiring Goebbels’s personal intervention for its implementation, and after the concert Hans Hinkel, the leader of the Fighting

³⁷ ‘Konzerte der Berliner Philharmoniker 1932-1934 (In- und Ausland)’ Quelle: Peter Muck 100 Jahre Berliner Philharmonisches Orchester, Schneider Tutzing 1982, digitised and revised for the Berlin Philharmonic Archive, effective March 2013. Unfortunately there are no programmes for this concert surviving in the Berlin Philharmonic archive: much pre-1944 material was lost after the Philharmonie – at its former site on Bernburgerstraße – was destroyed by Allied bombing.

³⁸ ‘Dann folgen zwei Lieder mit Orchester, die Pfitzner 1904 (‘Zorn’) und 1915 (‘Klage’) komponiert hat. Man muß das erwähnen, denn Unwissende könnte meinen, es handle sich um Konjunkturprodukte: so sehr sprechen die beiden herrlichen Eichendorff-Dichtungen das nationale Empfangen unsere Tage aus.’ See Abendroth, ‘Pfitzner-Abend der Philharmoniker.’

³⁹ P 1933 20.3, concert programme, Berlin Philharmonic Archive.

League for German Culture (*Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur*, or KfdK)⁴⁰ and commissioner in the education ministry, had to justify the events leading to Walter's exile to the conductor's discontented yet influential supporters, claiming that 'we never prevented this concert, nor did we forbid Bruno Walter, whose real name is Schlesinger to conduct. However, it was impossible to offer the necessary protection.'⁴¹

It is not difficult to imagine, then, that at the Pfitzner concert the affair was still prominent in audience discussions. So too, perhaps, were political developments vis-à-vis racial policy more generally, if the political topics that sat side-by-side with musical commentary in newspaper coverage of the concert accurately reflect the thoughts of the concert-going public. In the 31 March issue of the *Berliner Börsen Courier*, for example, the review of the Pfitzner concert was located on the second page of an issue headlined by the organised national boycott of Jewish businesses that was to begin the following day.⁴² The musical commentary and rhetoric has to be read, then, in the context of the political changes and conductor dismissals that flanked it in material documentation of the concert. A similar fate befell several prominent conductors by April 1933: Hermann Scherchen, Heinz Unger, and Joseph Rosenstock all lost their positions around the same time.⁴³

Still, the differing ways in which the respective reviewers framed the situation suggests that the attitudes to Walter's exile circulating among the audience were far from monochrome. While not one of the critics for the major Berlin newspapers and national music journals clarified the reasons for Walter's departure, and none openly condemned the situation, it seems that the tone was not one of general assent but rather one of studied neutrality. Representative was editor Paul

⁴⁰ An organisation aiming to protect German cultural values and challenge modernist art, founded by Alfred Rosenberg in 1929.

⁴¹ 'Wir haben niemals dieses Konzert verboten oder Bruno Walter, der eigentlich Schlesinger heißt, untersagt, zu dirigieren. Allerdings ist es uns unmöglich gewesen, für das Konzert etwa noch Saalschutz zu stellen...' *Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger*, 5 April, 1933; quoted in Joseph Wulf, *Musik im Dritten Reich: eine Dokumentation* (Gütersloh: Rowohlt, 1966), 23. This translation is Meyer's; he discusses the cancellation of Walter's March *Philharmonie* appearance with reference to Wulf's work in *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 43.

⁴² Heinrich Strobel, 'Pfitzner dirigiert', *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 31 March 1933, 2.

⁴³ All these dismissals were reported in the April issue of *Die Musik*. See Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 32.

Schwers's (1874-1939) report in the conservative journal *Die Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, which explained simply that:

One of the Philharmonic concerts owed Eugen Jochum was conducted as a special concert by Hans Pfitzner, since Jochum had to conduct the *Gewandhaus* orchestra in Leipzig in place of Bruno Walter, following his departure for Amsterdam. By this means, Pfitzner got the opportunity to showcase in person his new C-sharp minor symphony.⁴⁴

The neutral stances may reflect increasing political pressure and scrutiny of the written word.

Gleichschaltung (coordination) began to be applied to the press almost immediately after the Nazis seized power, with the intention of centralising, standardising, and unifying printed publications.

In February, the day following the Reichstag fire, a presidential decree had mandated the closure of newspapers deemed 'politically dangerous'.⁴⁵ It was not until 1936, however, that art criticism – legally termed *Kunstbetrachtung* – officially became little more than token praise for works that had already been passed by the censors.⁴⁶ Thus although in March 1933 no laws had yet been passed controlling aesthetic criticism, and the *Schriftleitergesetz*, preventing all writers of non-Aryan descent from writing professionally, would not be passed until October of the same year, Nazi policy and the public hounding of prominent intellectuals and musicians like Walter must have impacted upon what it seemed wise for music critics to put in print.

⁴⁴ 'Eins der Eugen Jochum zustehenden Konzerte der Philharmoniker wurde als Sonderkonzert von Hans Pfitzner geleitet, weil Jochum im Leipziger Gewandhaus zu dirigieren hatte an Stelle des nach Amsterdam abgeflogenen Bruno Walter. Pfitzner fand auf diese Weise Gelegenheit, seine neue cis-moll persönlich vorzuführen.' Schwers, 'Aus dem Berliner Musikleben', 207. Some commentators, reviewing several concerts in one report, remarked on both high-profile changes of conductor in the past few weeks together. *Die Musik* cited a broader reshuffle of conductors as having affected this concert, pairing – as if the circumstances of both changes were routine and comparable – Walter's and Jochum's respective absences from Berlin: 'Umbesetzungen fügten es, daß kurz nacheinander zwei der führenden deutschen Komponisten am Dirigentenpult der Philharmoniker standen: Richard Strauß dirigierte seine Domestica, Hans Pfitzner seine neue cis-moll-Sinfonie, eine Umarbeitung seines bekannten, vor acht Jahren erschienenen Streichquartetts. Strauß sprang für Bruno Walter ein, die Pfitzner-Sinfonie sollte ursprünglich Eugen Jochum machen.' Steinhagen, 'Das Musikleben der Gegenwart: Berlin', 619. Note that the review stresses not Walter's absence, but Strauss and Pfitzner's appearance. Here then the neutrality of tone is insidious, recasting events positively. Less neutral was the report in the *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger* by Nazi composer, music critic, musicologist, and author Walter Abendroth (1896-1973): 'Merkwürdiger Parallelfall: Vorige Woche erschien Richard Strauß in der Philharmonie als Ersatzmann für Bruno Walter, gestern Hans Pfitzner für Eugen Jochum, der im Leipziger Gewandhaus Walter vertreten mußte. So hatten wir Gelegenheit, innerhalb weniger Tage die beiden größten lebenden Repräsentanten der deutschen Musik – zugleich Verkörperungen der beiden entgegengesetzten Pole musikalischen Schöpfungstums – als Konzertdirigenten und Interpreten eigener Werke an der Spitze unserer Philharmoniker zu sehen.' Abendroth, 'Pfitzner-Abend der Philharmoniker.'

⁴⁵ See Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 209.

⁴⁶ Even then, scholars have debated the degree to which music criticism was affected in practical terms by the new law. Fabian R. Lovisa, for example, has suggested that the impact of the *Kritikverbote* on music criticism has largely been overestimated. See Lovisa, *Musikkritik im Nationalsozialismus: Die Rolle deutschsprachiger Musikzeitschriften 1920-1945* (Laaber: Laaber, 1993), 18 and 197-208.

There were, however, exceptions to the neutral language used by most reviewers.

Conservative nationalist critic and composer Fritz Stege (1896-1967) provides a case in point, writing for the Nazi-allied *Zeitschrift für Musik* and commending Strauss and Pfitzner for their short-notice appearances. Strauss in particular was hailed as a hero:

Instead of Bruno Walter, it was Richard Strauss who appeared, met with great enthusiasm and undeterred by threatening letters from Jewish-incited America. The conductors switched: Hans Pfitzner appeared to help provide the Berlin premiere of his C-sharp minor symphony.⁴⁷

Perhaps this portrayal was unsurprising, given that Stege was also music critic for the main Nazi mouthpiece the *Völkische Beobachter*, had belonged to the KdF since 1929, and was reporting in a journal that explicitly opposed ‘modern’ music. But it disturbs nonetheless: up to this point Stege had always written approvingly of Walter’s Berlin concerts, and *Zeitschrift für Musik* had previously regarded Walter as a great ‘German’ conductor.⁴⁸

Although the journals seem unable publicly to acknowledge the circumstances surrounding Walter’s exit, privately many prominent members of the musical community sympathised with Walter, as expressed in letters after his exile.⁴⁹ Pfitzner too certainly would have supported his friend and colleague,⁵⁰ an example of a Jewish artist who, in his opinion, was thoroughly ‘German,’ as ‘the nature of his disposition and thought throughout his entire life’ apparently proved.⁵¹ Had simultaneous double-city premieres of the symphony in Munich and another city taken place, as was an initial suggestion from Pfitzner to his publisher, Walter would have been

⁴⁷ ‘Anstelle von Bruno Walter fand sich, mit Jubel begrüßt, Meister Richard Strauß ein, der sich nicht durch Drohbrieve aus dem jüdisch verhetzten Amerika hat abschrecken lassen, vor das Berliner Publikum zu treten. Die Dirigenten wechselten: Hans Pfitzner erschien, um seiner cis-moll-Sinfonie zu ihrer Berliner Erstaufführung zu verhelfen.’ Fritz Stege, ‘Berliner Musik’, *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 5 (1933), 458. Abendroth, unsurprisingly, depicted the switch in conductors in a similarly jubilant tone: ‘Langanhaltender Beifall entläßt den Meister, den wir auch als ideal fachlichen, geistvollen Dirigenten gerne öfter hier begrüßen würden.’ Abendroth, ‘Pfitzner-Abend der Philharmoniker.’

⁴⁸ Ryding and Pechesky, *Bruno Walter*, 223.

⁴⁹ See further discussion in *ibid.*, 224.

⁵⁰ For detailed exploration of the relationship between Pfitzner and Walter, particularly after 1933, see Hans Rudolf Vaget, “Der gute, alte Antisemitismus”. Hans Pfitzner, Bruno Walter und der Holocaust’, in *Bruckner-Probleme: Internationales Kolloquium 7.-9. Oktober 1996 in Berlin*, ed. Albrecht Riethmüller (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999), 215-32.

⁵¹ ‘[Bruno Walter] hat [...] durch sein ganzes Leben bewiesen, daß er auch in seiner Gesinnung und seiner ganzen geistigen Struktur ein Deutscher ist.’ Pfitzner and Adamy, *Briefe*, 611; letter to Carl-Friedrich Goerdeler, 10 September 1932.

the only conductor Pfitzner would have considered to lead the other performance.⁵² The terms and contradictions of Pfitzner's own anti-Semitism have been well documented elsewhere,⁵³ but he appears to have believed that racial heritage could be neutralised or realigned by cultural assimilation. Artistic triumph moreover proved this assimilation, and for Pfitzner Walter was a case in point.⁵⁴ Yet even if Pfitzner thought that his idea of race was less absolute than it was for Nazi policy, and even though choosing a path of low resistance and acting to protect his own interests does not indicate whole-hearted advocacy of the regime, it ultimately made little difference: his anti-Semitism, as Joseph Wulf notes, allied '*weltanschaulich*' with that of the National Socialists.⁵⁵

Symphonic Problems: Exploring the 'Mechanisms' of Monumentality

The report in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* by a critic who published only under the name 'Runge',⁵⁶ was representative of the terms in which many journalists and music critics framed the work, conceptualising the genre transition spatially, evoking both force and excess, and affording the music a sense of agency: 'If one asks oneself why Pfitzner might have undertaken [the reorchestration], the intensifying development of the first movement springs to mind. Here the invention does indeed burst the frame of the string quartet, and demands the sound-world of the orchestra to build up.' But in contrast, Runge conceded that 'on the other hand, other parts resist such a superficial, externalised effect (*solche äußere Wirkung*); their historically informed use of

⁵² 'Sollte eine andere Stadt für eine gleichzeitige Uraufführung ausersehen werden, so könnte als Dirigent nur Bruno Walter in Betracht kommen.' Ibid., 609; letter to Fürstner, 8 September 1932.

⁵³ See, for example, Vaget, "Der gute, alte Antisemitismus"; Jürgens, '*Deutsche Musik*'; Williamson, 'An Inner Emigration?'; Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era*; Busch, *Hans Pfitzner und der Nationalsozialismus*; Fischer, 'The Very German Fate of a Composer: Hans Pfitzner.'

⁵⁴ Indeed, Pfitzner's assessment of Walter as 'ein Deutscher' originates from a letter Pfitzner wrote to the mayor of Leipzig, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler, on 10 September 1932 strongly recommending that the Jewish heritage of the opera director Otto Erhardt should not stand in the way of his appointment at the Leipzig Stadttheater, which he describes as a 'socio-ethical' issue. 'Nun ist die Sache aber wichtig genug: in allgemeiner, spezieller, künstlerischer und menschlicher, ich möchte sagen sozialetischer Hinsicht.' Note in particular Pfitzner's use of the italicised word 'Künstler': 'Ich will Ihnen gegenüber meine Empfehlung des *Künstlers* Dr Erhardt etwas näher ausführen.' Pfitzner and Adamy, *Briefe*, 609-11. In addition Pfitzner petitioned in this year for the release of his Jewish friend and mentor Paul Nikolaus Cossman from Stadelheim prison, at not inconsiderable risk to himself, as Williamson notes. See Williamson, 'An Inner Emigration?', 322-23. Busch, *Hans Pfitzner und der Nationalsozialismus*, 123-30 furnishes more detailed commentary on Pfitzner's and Cossman's relationship and on Pfitzner's petitioning on Cossman's behalf from his initial arrest in 1933 to his death in hospital in Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1942.

⁵⁵ Wulf, *Musik im Dritten Reich*, 334.

⁵⁶ See footnote 35.

techniques, pervaded by notions of the sublime (*In-sich-Gelehrtheit und Unsinnlichkeit*), resist the shimmering colours (*Farbenglanz*) of the orchestra.⁵⁷ Reviewing the concert for the *Berliner Börsen Courier*, Heinrich Strobel (1898-1970) observed that ‘despite the great apparatus being used, the symphony has a sound that is austere, cold, in part even unsentimental (*eine herbe, unsinnliche, nicht selten sogar harte Klanglichkeit*).’ Other passages, in short, resist the shallow monumentalising effects of the orchestra, instead receding inwards: implicit is the moral elevation of immanence over external appearance. He went on to note that ‘the four voices that constitute the specific sonority of the quartet are preserved.’⁵⁸

Runge points us towards the key tension in the reviews: the question about how (and how successfully) the work articulates and negotiates the relationship between the two genres, between the external and the immanent, and thus between public and intimate space. Which musical junctures, then, presented a problem to reviewers: at what points did they hear echoes of the string quartet, the pull of the subjective domain, and query the work’s success? Schwerts, writing, as we saw, for *Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, highlights two musical areas perhaps most saturated with symphonic expectation as problematic: ‘much of the musical material, particularly in the first movement and the finale, strives against the orchestral guise [...] requiring brute force to be squeezed into a new sonic form.’⁵⁹ Analysing those points – the first movement and the end of the last movement – then, might help to disclose how, to use a formulation of Rehding’s, the

⁵⁷ ‘Fragt man sich, warum Pfitzner sie vorgenommen haben mag, so drängt sich zuerst der Gedanke an die großartig aufwachsende Durchführung des ersten Satzes auf. Hier sprengt die Erfindung tatsächlich den Rahmen des Streichquartetts und verlangt nach der Wuchs des Orchesters. [...] Andere Partien wieder sträuben sich gerade gegen solche äußere Wirkung. Ihre In-sich-Gelehrtheit und Unsinnlichkeit scheut vor dem Farbenglanz des Orchesters zurück.’ Runge, ‘Pfitzner dirigiert seine neue Symphonie.’ Translating the multifaceted word ‘unsinnlich’ and its nominal form ‘Unsinnlichkeit’ has presented an interesting problem, which I have dealt with differently depending on the context. ‘Unsinnlich’ variously suggests something being ‘un-sensuous’, but also ‘ungraspable’ or ‘intangible’; in addition (although less commonly) it can imply ‘Unsinn’ (‘nonsense’). There is also a sense in which it relates to the sublime; that which is beyond logic, the tangible, or the knowable.

⁵⁸ ‘Trotz des großen Apparats, der aufgewendet wird, hat die Sinfonie eine herbe, unsinnliche, nicht selten sogar harte Klanglichkeit. [...] Das vierstimmige Klangbild des Quartetts bleibt durchweg gewahrt.’ Strobel, ‘Pfitzner dirigiert.’

⁵⁹ The original reads: ‘Breite Teile, vor allem im Anfangssatz und auch im Finale, widerstreben durchaus der orchestralen Einkleidung; sie sind rein quartettmäßig erfunden und durchgeführt und lassen sich nur mit Zwang in eine andere Klangform pressen.’ Schwerts, ‘Aus dem Berliner Musikleben’, 207.

‘mechanisms’ of monumentality operate in the transition from string quartet to symphony, before the theoretical implications of monumental symphonic aesthetics are explored further on.⁶⁰

The most useful analytical source for considering the shift from the aural space of the string quartet to that of a symphony is an essay following the Berlin premiere in the April issue of the progressive journal *Melos* by the young Heidelberg music researcher Karl Wörner (1910-69). Founded in 1920 to champion new music, under the National Socialist government *Melos* would be renamed *Neues Musikblatt* in 1934 to distance the publication from its avant-gardist past. This issue appeared just before major upheavals at the journal began: in May the progressive (and thus ‘politically unreliable’) chief editor Hans Mersmann was replaced by Strobel – from whom we just heard as a regular music critic for the *Berliner Börsen Courier* – with a reformed political focus.⁶¹ Prior to the change in editors, however, Wörner had written critically about reactionary and nationalist political action.⁶²

Opinions varied as to the success of the first movement, which presented a particular point of friction in the reviews. Unlike Runge, for Wörner weaknesses in its symphonic façade were immediately apparent:

The least satisfying in its orchestral rendering is the fervent gloom of the first movement. For starters, it does not meet one’s traditional expectations for the first movement of a symphony. It is built from four themes, and the sonata form is merely implied. The themes in themselves contrast too little from one another to have an oppositional effect in the orchestral reworking; their inner complexity (*Differenziertheit*) is much more clearly perceivable when played together by a chamber ensemble.

First movements are the symphonic region in which a number of key generic expectations are set up – note Wörner’s reflections on the importance of contrasting themes and sonata form. Indeed, he calls it the ‘*Hauptsatz*’, emphasising its significance for the symphonic identity of the work overall. However, the movement ‘does not meet one’s traditional expectations’: he implies

⁶⁰ Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 9.

⁶¹ Strobel’s Jewish wife Hilde Betty Levy perhaps made him a surprising choice as replacement editor.

⁶² For instance, in the December 1932 issues of *Melos* he had spoken out against the increasingly pervasive reactionary ‘modern political and cultural campaigns and slogans’ that had led to the closure of the world-renowned Dessau Bauhaus. See Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 29. Later, after serving in the *Wehrdienst* and imprisonment by US forces during the war, Wörner became head editor at Schott’s journal department, a post he held from 1955 to 1959.

that in its symphonic version this movement is compromised by the lingering trace of the string quartet's presence within. The oppositions musically immanent within and internal to the string quartet's arching, striving themes do not translate well into the symphonic form, which seems to need more obvious, perhaps even brash or bombastic kinds of musical oppositions between, not within, themes. Even more interesting are Wörner's explicit conclusions about what is lost in the transition between the two mediums, namely the subtlety of what he calls the 'delicate chamber quality' in the 'rhapsodic' motivic shapes of the second and fourth themes (presumably he here means the main theme – Vogel's 'Kopfthema' – from bars 5 to 12, and the 'song theme', bars 31–75). 'Likewise', he writes, 'the themes are stripped of their passionate, urging drive. In the symphony the whole movement appears somewhat uniform and cumbersome, exacerbated by the use of brass to fill out the sound.'⁶³

For Wörner, the intrinsic delicacy of the themes and the subtlety of their differentiation are swamped by the heavy orchestral setting. Other listeners heard their internal complexity as strain: as composer Hans Sachße (1891-1960) put it in issue of *Zeitschrift für Musik* preparing readers for the symphony's performance at the upcoming June 1933 Dortmund Tonkünstlerfest (Sachße had first heard the work at the Munich premiere), 'an extreme inner tension emanates right from the first melodic line, which in wide leaps and with poignant exuberance (*mit schmerzlichem Überschwang*) strives for the summit, only to sink back in resignation: [example 1]'.⁶⁴

⁶³ 'Orchestral am wenigsten befriedigend ist der leidenschaftlich düstere erste Satz. Er entspricht zunächst nicht dem, was man traditionell von dem ersten Satz als dem Hauptsatz einer Sinfonie erwartet. Er baut sich auf vier Themen auf, die Sonatenform ist nur angedeutet. Die Themen sind in sich zu wenig kontrastierend, um in der Orchesterbearbeitung gegensätzlich zu wirken, während ihre innere Differenziertheit beim kammermusikalischen Zusammenspiel viel stärker empfunden wird. Das zweite und vierte Thema hat einen geradezu rhapsodischen Charakter. [...] Das Figurenwerk hat beständig etwas kammermusikalisch Filigranartiges. Diese Feinheiten gehen im Orchester verloren. Gleichzeitig wird den Themen ihr leidenschaftlicher drängender Impetus genommen. In der Sinfonie wirkt der ganze Satz, wuchs durch die Behandlung des Blechs als Füllstimmen, etwas uniform und schwerfällig.' Wörner, 'Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie in cis', 132-34.

⁶⁴ 'Eine ungeheure innere Spannung geht gleich von der ersten Melodielinien aus, die in weiten Sprüngen mit schmerzlichem Überschwang dem Höhepunkt zustrebt, um resigniert zurückzusinken.' Hans Sachße, 'Hans Pfitzner: Symphonie in cis-moll', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 6 (1933), 559-61, 560. It is also worth mentioning that the ebb and flow of energy implied here strikingly recalls Ernst Kurth's symphonic wave discourse from his two-volume *Bruckner* of 1925, heavily influenced by scientific/technological thought. See Ernst Kurth, *Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. Lee A. Rothfarb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Example 1: The opening bars of the first movement of Pfitzner's Symphony in C-sharp minor, as quoted in: Sachße, 'Symphonie in cis-moll,' 560.

Ziemlich ruhig

Sachße suggests that the opening melody thematises the futile, powerless struggle of subjective being, centring the movement within the private sphere. This is a reference to what Vogel denotes as the 'motto' theme, and it is worth briefly taking a closer look at this passage, since its four solo contrapuntal lines make it such an obvious allusion to chamber musical space. The gestural arcs traced within the theme compress a sequence of key structural tones for the string quartet/symphony overall; this then suggests reading the work as a whole as collapsing chamber space out into public, symphonic space [example 2].

Example 2: The 'motto' theme: the opening four bars of the first movement of Pfitzner's string quartet in C-sharp minor, op. 36. I have presented the string quartet scoring here to make reading the harmonic relationships more straightforward: in the symphonic rendering, the violin lines are taken by two clarinets in A, and the viola and violoncello lines are given to two bassoons. Hans Pfitzner, *Quartett in Cis-moll für 2 Violinen, Viola und Violoncello*, opus 36 (Berlin: Adolph Fürstner Verlag, 1925), 1.

Ziemlich ruhig ("moderato")

Falling chromatically by a semitone from G-sharp to G-natural, the bass line in the first bar articulates a harmonic motion from *i* in second inversion to $\sharp V^{*7}$ and foreshadows the importance of the tritone, G-natural, to the work's harmonic and motivic development. Further semitone descending movement from E-natural to D-sharp in the second half of the same bar anticipates the importance for the work of the second scale degree, D-sharp: D-sharp is also the lowest note of the 'motto' theme's arching gesture. At the beginning of the main theme at bar 5 the second scale degree is stressed once more, this time in the upper line, by falling on the downbeat as a suspension over a melodically elaborated *i* before resolving down to C-sharp. The upper range of the first violin line stresses an F-sharp (although it is decorated by creeping momentarily up to G-sharp) prefiguring the subdominant tonal area of the second movement, and indeed the ambiguous status of G-sharp as a tonal pivot for the third movement.

Again underlining the tendency of the criticism to codify the chamber genre in language signalling the private sphere, Oskar von Pander's (1883-1968) description in *Die Musik* of the reorchestration at the Munich premiere portrays the solo string lines in the string quartet not as individual voices, but as musical 'thoughts' ('*Gedanken*'), then realised by full instrumental groups in the symphony.⁶⁵ It suggests an identity between sound and thought that recalls Schoenberg's use of the word in his 1931 manuscript *Zu: Darstellung des musikalischen Gedankens* [*On: presentation of the musical idea*] meaning something between a thought and an idea: Schoenberg's opening gambit refers to composing as '*thinking in tones and rhythms*. Every piece of music is the *presentation of a musical idea* [original emphasis].'⁶⁶ Pander's language, too, implies a private sphere or interiority that is sounded. Such metaphors suggest that the transition from string quartet to symphony can be expressed in terms that parallel the public rendering or 'collectivisation' of the individual that is critical to fascist ideology. Yet reading between the lines of Wörner's analysis reveals that the

⁶⁵ 'Im allgemeinen übernehmen geschlossene Instrumentalgruppen die ursprünglich von Solostreichern vorgetragenen Gedanken.' Oskar von Pander, 'München', *Die Musik*, 25 (1933), 628.

⁶⁶ See Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff's 'Commentary' in: Arnold Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation*, trans. and eds. Carpenter and Neff (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 15. A list of Schoenberg's various *Gedanke* manuscripts, written between 1923 and 1936, is given in the editors' preface, at xv-xvi.

symphony cannot successfully sublimate the subject within the mass: 'the details are lost'; the musical effect is 'cumbersome'.

Perhaps equally as freighted with genre convention are symphonic finales. A major generic issue is how final movements discharge the energy accumulated throughout the symphony's duration back into the silence that borders the work.⁶⁷ Pfitzner's symphony presented no exception, and perhaps unsurprisingly, then, listeners struggled to make sense of the very final bars of this movement, in a way that again seems to resist the collectivisation of subjective autonomy. On the one hand, for Wörner, the movement 'gave the impression in part of a great symphonic finale', most likely alluding to the conventionally symphonic main theme (bars 1–22), comprised of antecedent and consequent phrases (bars 1–7). Yet on the other, reviewers seemed unable to square the concluding bars' quasi-cyclical return to the 'motto' theme and associated chamber space from the opening of the first movement with what had come before. Wörner, for example, suggests that in this movement the symphonic effect is at its most immediate and thrilling (*'unmittelbarsten und packendsten'*), but seemed to stumble at the final bars, and he was not alone in doing so: for Sachße in *Zeitschrift für Musik* as well, a degree of discomfort focuses around the final passage of the work.⁶⁸ Rather than evincing a seamless assimilation of the musical lines into an 'outsized' form,⁶⁹ instead the final passage, particularly from figure 65, seemed to render partially visible the otherwise obscured, naturalised monumental scaffolding encasing the string quartet.

Sachße noted the contrast between symphonic and chamber spheres in the finale movement as a whole: 'The finale is a great symphonic closing movement, whose primary theme [example 3] appears as if intensified into a demonic possession, only in order finally then to seek out [a resting place in] spheres of chamber music intimacy [as at the very beginning of the symphony].'⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Michael Talbot, *The Finale in Western Instrumental Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 6.

⁶⁸ 'Der zweite und der letzte Satz des Streichquartetts kommt von sich aus einer Instrumentierung am meisten entgegen. Und hier ist auch der Eindruck der Sinfonie am unmittelbarsten und packendsten.' Wörner, 'Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie in cis', 132.

⁶⁹ See Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 5.

⁷⁰ 'Das Finale ist ein großer symphonischer Schlußsatz, dessen Hauptthema: [example 3] in eine Stimmung dämonischer Wildheit gesteigert wird, um dann wieder am Schluß Sphären von kammermusikalischer Intimität aufzusuchen.' Sachße, 'Symphonie in cis-moll', 561.

Example 3: Main theme of the fourth movement, as printed in Sachße, 'Symphonie in cis-moll,' 561.



The movement's opening theme begins with a major second suspension of a D-sharp over the C-sharp in the bass, once again emphasising the structural importance of the D-sharp first stressed in the 'motto' theme at the very beginning of the first movement. In the final bars of the symphony, 316–331, that 'motto' theme returns once again. Sachße suggests that genre-space is being manipulated to unify cyclically the end of the finale with the beginning of the first movement. However for Wörner, Pfitzner's negotiation of the distinction between intimate and public space at the close of the finale was unconvincing: 'The close of the finale has, in contrast [to the development of the *Hauptthema* in the rest of the movement], the intimate quality of chamber music,' writes Wörner. '[Yet] in the instrumentation it loses its contemplative, introspectively lyrical character.'⁷¹ In light of both reviews, it seems that the reviewers cannot listen to the symphony without also hearing the original string quartet behind the symphonic bluster. And Pfitzner's reorchestration fails, as Wörner implies, in that he inadvertently renders the familiarity of the symphonic form strange. By reminding listeners of the chamber music space, he exposes the symphonic monumentality as an unwieldy construction imposed upon the musical material.

But what is it that fails fully to convince here? How is this passage corrupted by the added weight and the public exposure effected by the new genre? Given Wörner's critique of the ending, it seems likely that the problem lies in the juxtaposition between monumental musical forces and the intimacy of the original string quartet passage, as well, perhaps, as the inability of that passage persuasively to release the force and energy the movement has gained. In the string quartet, the final C-sharp major passage at figure 65 with the key signature of C-sharp minor

⁷¹ 'Der Schluß des Finales ist dagegen kammermusikalisch intim. Er verliert durch die Instrumentierung seinen nachdenklichen, beschaulich lyrischen Charakter.' Wörner, 'Hans Pfitznerns Sinfonie in cis', 133.

[example 4] is presented in the symphony, as already noted, in the enharmonically equivalent key of D-flat major, but without the performance directions ‘*wieder zurück*’ or ‘*sehr ruhig*’ [example 5].

Example 4: Fourth movement of Pfitzner’s string quartet in C-sharp minor, op. 36, figure 65 to the end. Pfitzner, *Quartett in Cis-moll*, 63.

The musical score is for Pfitzner's String Quartet in C-sharp minor, op. 36, figure 65 to the end. It is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The key signature is C-sharp minor (three sharps: F#, C#, G#). The time signature is common time (C). The score begins with a box labeled '65' and a forte (ff) dynamic. The music features complex triplet patterns in all parts. A section marked 'wieder zurück' (wieder zurück) begins with a dashed line and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. This is followed by a section marked 'sehr ruhig' (sehr ruhig) with a piano (p) dynamic. The score concludes with a very soft (pp) dynamic.

First system of a musical score in A major (three sharps) and 3/4 time. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are treble clef, and the last two are bass clef. The first staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and two eighth-note runs of G4-A4-B4. The second staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The third staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The fourth staff has a triplet of eighth notes G4-A4-B4, a triplet of eighth notes A4-B4-C5, a triplet of eighth notes B4-A4-G4, and a triplet of eighth notes A4-G4-F#4. It also includes a pizzicato section with a whole note G4 and a half note A4, both marked *pp*.

Second system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are treble clef, and the last two are bass clef. The first staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The second staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The third staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The fourth staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. It also includes an arco section with a whole note G4 and a half note A4, both marked *pp*.

Third system of the musical score. It consists of four staves. The first two staves are treble clef, and the last two are bass clef. The first staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The second staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The third staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. The fourth staff has a whole note G4, a half note A4, and a whole note G4. It also includes a section with a whole note G4 and a half note A4, both marked *ppp*.

Example 5: Fourth movement of Pfitzner's Symphony in C-sharp minor, figure 65 to the end. Pfitzner, *Symphony cis-Moll Op. 36a* (London: Eulenburg, 1987), 90-1.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 312 to 315, and the second system covers measures 316 to 319. The key signature is C-sharp minor (three flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes parts for Horn in E, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Euphonium, Horn, Harp, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The score features various musical notations including triplets, dynamics (ff, p, pp), and articulation marks.

Measure 312: Horn in E (p), Violin I (ff 3), Violin II (ff 3), Viola (ff 3), Violoncello (ff 3).

Measure 313: Horn in E (p), Violin I (ff 3), Violin II (ff 3), Viola (ff 3), Violoncello (ff 3).

Measure 314: Horn in E (p), Violin I (ff 3), Violin II (ff 3), Viola (ff 3), Violoncello (ff 3).

Measure 315: Horn in E (p), Violin I (ff 3), Violin II (ff 3), Viola (ff 3), Violoncello (ff 3).

Measure 316: Fl. (p), Ob. (p), Cl. (p), Bsn. (p), E. Hn. (p), Hn. (p), Hp. (p), Vln. I (p), Vln. II (p), Vla. (p), Vc. (p).

Measure 317: Fl. (p), Ob. (p), Cl. (p), Bsn. (p), E. Hn. (p), Hn. (p), Hp. (p), Vln. I (p), Vln. II (p), Vla. (p), Vc. (p).

Measure 318: Fl. (p), Ob. (p), Cl. (p), Bsn. (p), E. Hn. (p), Hn. (p), Hp. (p), Vln. I (p), Vln. II (p), Vla. (p), Vc. (p).

Measure 319: Fl. (p), Ob. (p), Cl. (p), Bsn. (p), E. Hn. (p), Hn. (p), Hp. (p), Vln. I (p), Vln. II (p), Vla. (p), Vc. (p).

In this version Pfitzner calls on far expanded forces using complete orchestral strings, soft woodwind and horn interjections, full-sounding trombone chords held pianissimo, strummed harp gestures, and pianissimo timpani reiterating the plucked off-beat quavers in the harps and double basses. Some altered articulations and dynamic markings presumably respond to the increase in players. At a superficial level, D-flat major is simply a more straightforward key for woodwind and brass and therefore more suited to symphonic forces. But D-flat major and C-sharp major are not the same thing, and any alteration even seemingly for convenience is accompanied by an affective transformation. Historically, C-sharp major had been considered a brighter, harder, more brilliant and remote tonality; in contrast, D-flat's affective associations were less tense – thought wistful, nostalgic, and introspective.⁷² In Pfitzner's songs, C-sharp minor is the key associated with death, or with an unfulfilled wish for death.⁷³ The change in key untethers the end of Pfitzner's symphony from his string quartet's Beethovenian reference point – after all, the work is no longer a string quartet – as well as from Pfitzner's expressive connection of the tonal centre to death, at least in the minor. Nevertheless, the historical associations of the new tonality perhaps tie it to another equally ambivalent kind of annihilation. Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* ends in D-flat major; it is the tonal area associated with the new world order as flames engulf the gods and the curtain falls.

In the symphony, the sense of proximity fostered in the string quartet, perhaps in part resulting from the dense and familiar timbral range, is reversed. The weight and timbral richness of the orchestral rendering is a distancing device, engendering a sense of detachment between listener and sound. The symphony does not succeed in realising publicly the sense of restful intimacy in the string quartet. At the very end of the movement, the fragmented echoes of the tritonal harmonic tension in the first movement's 'motto' theme are heard in the woodwind from bars 316 to 317 (I in second inversion with the A-flat in the bass descending to G-natural for

⁷² Rita Steblin elucidates the mid nineteenth-century 'psychological association of ever-increasing strength and brightness (or, conversely, weakness and sombreness) with the number of sharps and flats.' See Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1996), in particular 103-33.

⁷³ See Richard Mercier, *The Songs of Hans Pfitzner: A Guide and Study* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 1; see also Vogel, *Streichquartett Cis-Moll*, 12.

♯IV⁷, followed by V⁷) then again from bars 318 to 319 in the horns (iv in second inversion followed by VII⁷, then I). In the trombone and string parts, the symphony's structural emphasis on the second scale degree – now E-flat rather than D-sharp – persists from bar 311, when the last fragmentary rendition of the movement's main theme is heard, right up until the final two bars, where the suspension finally resolves. These musical gestures, embodying different levels of harmonic dissent, and recalling the compressed harmonic potentiality of the first movement – are in turn, instrumental group by instrumental group, assimilated into what is only ostensibly the tonic major, the tonal world of D-flat. The enharmonicism disrupts the conventional circular 'unity' of the symphony's tonal space. To repurpose a point Thomas Bauman made about the so-called 'recapitulation' in the finale of Mahler's 'Resurrection' symphony, the 'new order' represented by this unexpected tonal domain does not allow tonality to play its restorative 'symphonic' role.⁷⁴ Perhaps, instead, the restorative function is fulfilled by the symphony's genre-spatial circularity, as noted by Sachße, implying that Pfitzner's symphony takes the interplay between genre, subjectivity, and space as its subject matter. But even so the end of the work does not return to quite the same 'spheres of chamber music intimacy' with which the first movement opened. This, the criticism makes clear, is an uneasy symphonic conclusion.

Transforming German Symphonic Aesthetics

For most reviewers, however, any questions the symphony raised about genre and genre-space did not detract from the success of Pfitzner's work overall. Like the bulk of the critical responses, Stege and the *Zeitschrift für Musik* – the same writer who had shown such obvious delight when Richard Strauss had appeared in Walter's place, 'undeterred by threatening letters from Jewish-incited America' – waxed rhapsodically about the symphony and the accomplishment of the transition between genres:

⁷⁴ Thomas Bauman, 'Mahler in a New Key: Genre and the "Resurrection" Finale', *The Journal of Musicology*, 23 (2006), 468-85, 479-80.

The development of the orchestral sound-world out of the string quartet is very interesting; the intended deepening and intensification of expression is fully achieved by the composer. The deeply profound work [...] left a long-lasting impression.⁷⁵

But it is difficult to read ‘the intended deepening and intensification of expression’ (*die beabsichtigte Vertiefung des Ausdrucks*) and the kind of penetration it implies as innocuous, taking into account its overlap with Nazi revolutionary rhetoric, not to mention the pleasure Stege took in Walter’s ousting a few lines earlier. Goebbels used a similar kind of spatial depth metaphor a few months later in a speech in the *Philharmonie* marking the 15 November opening of the *Reichskulturkammer*. He applauded the National Socialist revolution that was all-encompassing (*‘eine totale’*); that ‘[took hold of] all areas of public life and transformed them fundamentally (*von Grund auf*)’.⁷⁶ Stege wasn’t alone in deploying this sort of metaphor to express the transformative effect of the shift in genre: the reviewer for the *Berliner Tageblatt* declared that the symphony ‘reveals the work’s ethos in its full scope and profundity’.⁷⁷ Although metaphors of depth have a rich history in German philosophical and aesthetic thought, as Holly Watkins has shown,⁷⁸ in the context of the evident Nazi sympathies of Stege’s review, the phrase points to an unease pervasive in the criticism about the wider and potentially transformative social implications of the act of reinscribing the string quartet as a symphony. As Goebbels’s *Philharmonie* speech went on: ‘[the revolution] has completely changed and formed anew the relationship of the people to one another, the relationship of the people to the state, and their relationship to the whole question of being (*Dasein*)’.⁷⁹ The genre discourses between the two musical forms were distinct,

⁷⁵ ‘Die Entwicklung des orchestralen Klangbildes aus dem Streichquartettsatz ist hochinteressant, die beabsichtigte Vertiefung des Ausdrucks ist dem Komponist voll und ganz gelungen, das tief schürfende Werk [...] hinterließ einen nachhaltigen Eindruck.’ Stege, ‘Berliner Musik’, 458.

⁷⁶ ‘Die Revolution, die wir gemacht haben, ist eine totale. Sie hat alle Gebiete des öffentlichen Lebens erfaßt und von Grund auf umgestaltet.’ Heiber, *Goebbels Reden 1932-45*, 131.

⁷⁷ ‘Ein sehr seltener Fall, dass die Thematik stark und tragend genug ist, die Erweiterung der Form, die Bereicherung des klanglichen Ausdrucks nicht nur zuzulassen, sondern damit das Ethos erst in seinem ganzen Ernst und seiner Tiefe offenbar zu machen.’ L.Bd, ‘Im Rundfunk: Hans Pfitzners Sinfonie Cis-moll’, *Berliner Tageblatt*, 1 April 1933.

⁷⁸ Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*.

⁷⁹ ‘Sie hat die Beziehungen der Menschen untereinander, die Beziehungen der Menschen zum Staat und zu den Fragen des Daseins vollkommen geändert und neu geformt.’ Heiber, *Goebbels Reden*, 131. Here Goebbels rhetorically connects with Heidegger’s ontology of *Dasein*. The mode of being represented by *Dasein* is by definition interconnected with other selves, and indeed modes of relating to the self are profoundly determined by going through ‘Others’. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, especially chap. 4 of part 1, ‘Being-In-The-World as Being-With and Being-One’s-Self. The “They”’, 149-68.

particularly in terms of the kind of implied voice, listeners, and space associated with each. What, then, exactly *is* the ‘deepening’ process taking place in the transition from string quartet to symphony?

In the remainder of this chapter the descriptions of the genre transition in the reviews of Pfitzner’s symphony at the Berlin concert in the major newspapers and contemporary music journals are read closely for their capacity to help pinpoint exactly where and how the process of collusion between symphonic and fascist values begins to take place. As was the case to a greater or lesser extent for all symphonies from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Pfitzner’s symphony was caught between two competing ideological poles. On one side, reflecting themes woven into critical writing on the genre throughout the nineteenth century, is the symphony as a product of the Enlightenment: an idealist vehicle for a multi-part, yet cohesive utopian social order which enshrined personal autonomy.⁸⁰ On the other is the symphony’s monumental ability to overwhelm and absorb the listening subject within the collective, linked to the Kantian aesthetic of the sublime, but repurposed by National Socialist aesthetics.⁸¹ The reviews raise several themes marked by both of these symphonic ideologies: in March 1933, so soon after the Nazi takeover, this reception makes clear that the way in which subjectivity, space, and force are articulated is still contested and plural. Because of its specific historical positioning and because of how it negotiates the divide between public and private spheres, Pfitzner’s symphony and the commentary surrounding it can illuminate especially clearly the tensions between the transcendental symphonic idealism that continues to inflect the genre on the one hand, and the ideology and rhetoric of the totalitarian National Socialist aesthetic imperatives that would crystallise in the coming months.

Enlightenment idealist values remained decisive for German symphonic aesthetics even towards the end of the First World War, channelling widespread optimism on the political left as

⁸⁰ See, for example, Bonds, *Music as Thought*. In particular, chapter four deals with the symphony’s role in philosophical representation of the relationship between the individual and society: ‘Listening to the Aesthetic State: Cosmopolitanism’, 63-78.

⁸¹ See ‘Listening to Truth: Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony’, chap. 3 in *ibid.*, 44-62.

the new Weimar Republic was established, and Bekker's 1918 treatise *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler* was exemplary.⁸² (Pfitzner and Bekker's intellectual positions were in many ways opposed: the composer had lambasted Bekker's writings in a well-known public spat that reinforced Pfitzner's status as an archetypal anti-modernist.)⁸³ This concise book offers an important perspective that helps reconstruct a wider historical and ideological framework for reading the concert reviews. As noted earlier, Bekker's ideas about the symphonic genre as composing an idealised democratic space align with Habermas's later theorisation of the liberal public sphere.⁸⁴ The performance of a symphony, Bekker wrote, is equivalent to 'a musical assembly of the people (*musikalische Volksversammlung*), an assembly in which a shared sentiment, whose expression is reached through the music, is activated and comes alive.'⁸⁵ The symphony and its associated symphonic-generic space are thus unique in their potential to form universal communities, composed of all social levels: in contrast, for Bekker the string quartet or piano sonata are suited to very different kinds of musical and tonal ideas, which require far less force of sound and are correspondingly suited to much smaller, more intimate – and therefore exclusive – spaces.⁸⁶ Pfitzner clearly capitalised on the association of these ideas with the genre, having had the significance of reaching a mass listening public in mind from the outset of his plans to reorchestrate the string quartet, but his intentions for the new work lack Bekker's community-building ideological tenor. Making the case to his publisher for the new symphony in June 1932, its first mention in Pfitzner's published correspondence, he reasoned that 'the sounding in a bigger circle as a symphony will perhaps contribute to a so-called popularisation of the work as a

⁸² However, Bekker was not necessarily arguing for these as eternal values invoked by the symphony. Rather, his historically situated analysis also argued that the close association of the symphony with these values was contingent upon the genre's maturity coinciding with the intellectual climate and democratic ideals of the period spanning from the French revolution through to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. See Bekker, *Die Sinfonie*, 16.

⁸³ Pfitzner publicly attacked Bekker's 1911 book on Beethoven in his acerbic 1920 essay, *Die neue Aesthetik der musikalischen Impotenz* (Munich: Verlag der Süddeutschen Monatshefte, 1920). See also Paul Bekker, *Beethoven*, 2nd ed., (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1912). For further discussion, see, for example, Jürgens, 'Die Politisierung der 'Einfallssästhetik': Erster Weltkrieg und Weimarer Republik', chap. 3 in *'Deutsche Musik'*, 72-162.

⁸⁴ See Bekker, *Die Sinfonie*, 16.

⁸⁵ 'die Aufführung einer Sinfonie [ist] gleichbedeutend mit einer musikalischen Volksversammlung, einer Volksversammlung, in der ein durch die Musik zum Ausbruch gelangendes Gemeingefühl lebendig und tätig wird.' *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸⁶ See *ibid.*, 8-11.

string quartet, because a symphony always has a bigger public.’⁸⁷ While Bekker claimed that ‘the motivation for composing a symphony is grounded [...] in the artist’s wish to speak to a mass public’,⁸⁸ Pfitzner’s remark suggests a rather more calculated attitude to the musical marketplace.

In 1933, then, only fifteen years after Bekker wrote *Die Sinfonie*, the symphonic ideals expressed there could barely have seemed more out of place. In principle Bekker’s formulation of symphonic space is in the spirit of creating an egalitarian symphonic listening community comprised of all layers of society, unified by faith in principles of ethical freedom. But it is not at all difficult to anticipate how the National Socialist political backdrop together with its totalitarian nation-forming imperatives – the ‘*Daseinskampf eines Volkes*’, as Goebbels put it, in loaded Heideggerian language⁸⁹ – begin to corrupt and coopt this community forming impulse and rhetoric, anticipating the National Socialist vision of individual subjectivity dissolving within the collective consciousness of the mass, and the vast imagined public spaces of the monumental.⁹⁰ For the degree to which it is informed by Enlightenment values, Bekker’s symphonic theory does surprisingly little to preserve the sense of the individual listening subject and her autonomy, influenced, perhaps, by ideas prevalent in nineteenth-century philosophies of listening. Friedrich Nietzsche famously diagnosed the decadence of Wagnerian music culture, claiming that the listening practices it commanded were fundamentally bound up with listeners’ desire to submit to ‘the sublime, the profound, the overwhelming.’⁹¹ And at this Pfitzner concert in particular, political circumstances put an insidious gloss on Bekker’s conjectures about the appropriate amount of force required by symphonic ideas. Furthermore, Walter’s underscored absence darkly recalls Bekker’s proposition that such musical ideas command a particular imagined space and

⁸⁷ ‘das Erklären als Sinfonie in einem größeren Kreis wird vielleicht beitragen zur sozusagen Popularisierung des Werkes als Streichquartett; denn eine Sinfonie hat immer ein größeres Publikum’, Pfitzner and Adamy, *Briefe*, 595; letter to Fürstner, 17 June 1932.

⁸⁸ ‘Die Ursache des sinfonischen Schaffens liegt [...] in dem Bedürfnis des Künstlers, zu einem Massenpublikum zu sprechen.’ Bekker, *Die Sinfonie*, 12-13.

⁸⁹ Heiber, *Goebbels Reden*, 131.

⁹⁰ See Rehding’s discussion of Albert Speer’s monumental ‘light cathedrals’ in Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 173.

⁹¹ See Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner: Nietzsche Contra Wagner and Selected Aphorisms*, 3rd edn, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici (Gloucestershire: Dodo Press, 2008), 10.

that they are generated from the conception of a particular kind of community, now a community predicated on exclusion on the basis of constructions of racial purity.

The symphonic genre occupied a privileged place in Nazi myth-making, and in the construction of a unified national imaginary, vital to a totalitarian ideology that elevated the state above all else. Throughout the Third Reich, the Nazis exploited the symphony for ceremonial purposes both at large concerts and, using the latest technology, over the radio. As Meyer observes, the ‘collectivisation of the individual’ essential to National Socialist ideology was symbolised ‘by the decline of the *lied* and the rise of the large orchestra.’⁹² The dominant aesthetic for National Socialist Germany was the lofty transcendentalism of the monumental, ‘with its grandiosity, lavishness, and spirituality.’⁹³ One aspect of the symphony’s importance to the National Socialists, then, relates to the disciplined social and spatial hierarchy of the symphony orchestra: the large collective of players subordinate to the conductor perfectly models the paternalism of the *Führerprinzip*.⁹⁴ The other was its monumental aesthetic, and had to do with the supposed overwhelming effect of the music on the listener.

The symphonic genre’s status historically as an archetype ‘for the experience of the sublime’ points to a further theoretical perspective to inform our reading of the reviews, because shifting discourses relating to the sublime shed light on the changing status of the listening subject in totalitarian ideology.⁹⁵ The sublime, Brinkmann argues, ‘categorises the experience of vast, monumental, overpowering objects.’⁹⁶ Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* proposed that the ability to experience the sublime was a property of the subject, asserting the individual’s ability to ‘exert self-determination and a state of autonomy, that is, to control the sublime.’⁹⁷ Yet, as Brinkmann explains, the sublime was ideologically recast under the National Socialists, relocating it within the monumental object itself. In this way, National Socialist aesthetic thought removed the aspect

⁹² Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 9.

⁹³ Gilliam, ‘The Annexation of Anton Bruckner’, 591.

⁹⁴ For discussion of the orchestra’s symbolic role in Nazi Germany, see Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, in particular 214–15.

⁹⁵ Brinkmann, ‘The Distorted Sublime’, 49.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

of the sublime that affirms the sovereignty of human subjectivity: the individual is radically reformulated in relation to the sublime, and in relationship to the collective: ‘the *Gemeinschaft*, the *Volk*.’⁹⁸ Brinkmann puts it elegantly: ‘what remains is the overwhelming power of the great or monumental, of the collective will, to which the Subject must submit.’⁹⁹ Rehding expounds the spatial dimension to the sublime or monumental, drawing on Heinrich Bessler’s and Arnold Schering’s aesthetic theories of the mid- to late-thirties: the monumental in Nazi Germany is embroiled with the creation of expansive virtual spaces in relation to which the individual ‘crumbles’.¹⁰⁰ But, as he explains, ‘the central concern of [monumental] musical space is not with meaning but with presence [...] [which] remains a void to be filled with political content.’¹⁰¹ Thus Rehding identifies the theatrical appearance of agency as one of monumentality’s central trappings.¹⁰² In effect, then, and as Painter similarly notes, National Socialist ideologues imbued the sublime musical object with ‘a kind of subjectivity’; critically, this included the agency to wield force over the listening subject.¹⁰³ Pfitzner himself invoked an aligned narrative that positioned the musical work as an agent driving the reorchestration independent of Pfitzner as composer-creator. Writing to his publisher in 1932 about his intentions to rework the string quartet for symphony orchestra, Pfitzner claimed that it was the structure and sound world of the string quartet that artistically demanded its reworking as a symphony.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Ibid., 48.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹⁰⁰ See Rehding, ‘Faustian Descents’, chap. 6 in *Music and Monumentality*, 169–96, in particular 173–80. He cites Arnold Schering, ‘Über den Begriff des Monumentalen in der Musik’, *Von großen Meistern in der Musik* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1935), and Heinrich Bessler, ‘Musik und Raum’, in *Musik und Bild: Festschrift Max Seiffert*, ed. Bessler (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1938).

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 180.

¹⁰² Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 9.

¹⁰³ Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 240.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Künstlerisch betrachtet fordert die Struktur und die Klangwelt dieses Stückes zur Behandlung als Sinfonie gerade zu heraus.’ Pfitzner and Adamy, *Briefe*, 595; Letter to Fürstner, 17 June 1932. In a later letter he reiterated this argument: the reorchestration was necessary because both harmony and form – indeed, the whole structure of the quartet – invited the shaping (*Gestaltung*) as symphony: ‘Denn [...] fordert die Harmonik sowohl als wie die Form, kurz, die ganze Struktur des Quartetts direkt zur Gestaltung als Sinfonie auf.’ Ibid., 597; letter to Fürstner, 29 June 1932. Pfitzner was perhaps at his most candid – and theatrically fatalist – about his limited aesthetic claims for the work in a letter to his long-term friend Margaritta Jüttner-Fischer. Note specifically, the symphony is presented as tragic manifestation of his creative impotence, as Pfitzner denies his own instrumentality: ‘Leider bist Du in einem großen optimistischen Irrtum befangen, wenn Du annimmst, daß die Sinfonie ein Originalwerk ist und in der letzten Zeit konzipiert und ausgearbeitet worden ist, daß also der Quell noch springt. Er springt nicht mehr. *Die Sinfonie ist eine Bearbeitung meines Streichquartetts in cis moll für Orchester* [Pfitzner’s emphasis].’ Ibid., 619; letter to Jüttner-Fischer, 25 February 1933.

How, then, do these theoretical discussions of genre, space, and subjectivity relate to the Pfitzner concert in the Berlin concert hall; how can the ‘deepening’ process of genre transition Stege articulated be understood alongside the racially motivated ousting of Walter? The National Socialist sublime and its erasure of the subjective factor align ideologically with the transition between private and public space in the reorchestration from string quartet to symphony. This is Meyer’s ‘collectivisation of the individual’: the eradication of the private subject and alongside it, subjective agency, autonomy, and freedom of thought. Walter’s absence signals the wrenching of the private sphere out into the public context of the concert hall, and suggests the public rendering and violent disciplining of the deviant private subject, represented by Walter, and of the private sphere of belief: recall Goebbels’s revolution that ‘[took hold of] all areas of public life and transformed them fundamentally.’ Set against the violence beginning to be embedded as a mechanism structuring the public sphere, and the brutality with which the private sphere, and allied issues like family and religion, were beginning to be pulled forcibly out into the public, the material resistance against this genre shift implied by Stege’s phrase ‘the intended deepening and intensification of expression’ that we saw earlier – a resistance that it nevertheless overcomes – sounds especially loaded. It physically overpowers any sense of boundary between symphony and string quartet, coopting the private sphere to make it assume a public character. As the studied neutrality of most of the responses to Walter’s exile in the symphony’s reception seems to show, language that publicly affirms the private, and the autonomy of the individual subject, was losing traction.

Negotiating Genre, Space, and Force

Like several others, Schwers’s report in the *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* used force metaphorically to describe the transition between genres, in a way that implied the music’s agency. As we saw, his assertions that large portions of the music struggle against the symphonic reworking, ‘requiring brute force to be squeezed into a new sonic form’, exemplifies the sense of tension between the

two genres that was a theme throughout the reception.¹⁰⁵ Unlike the general critical consensus, however, Schwers was unconvinced by Pfitzner's handling of the transition from string quartet to symphony. Spatial metaphors provided Schwers with a crutch for explaining genre as an abstract concept: as he asks, if Pfitzner had believed that the work was so symphonically loaded from the start – so loaded that eventually the reworking for orchestra became an inner necessity – then why not create an appropriately large frame (*'angemessenen großen Rahmen'*) from the outset? Politely questioning the wisdom of shifting the string quartet into 'a fully changed sphere', and hence drawing up a clear boundary between the two discrete genres of string quartet and symphony, his conclusion is as pointed as it is deferent: 'even Pfitzner's great experience didn't succeed in bridging the schism.'¹⁰⁶ Here Schwers presumably meant Pfitzner's musical experience more generally, since this was the composer's first symphonic venture.

The related idea that in the string quartet some kind of surplus in the musical material was poised to 'burst' the frame, structure, or fabric of the chamber form recurred throughout the reception – most frequently, the phrase used was *'den Rahmen sprengen'*.¹⁰⁷ For many listeners, the musical content embodied a sense of pent-up, even violent excess barely contained by the conceptual space of the string quartet medium. In this light, the shift across the genre divide seems brutal – the wrenching apart of a terse and self-contained chamber form into another,

¹⁰⁵ One key exception was Wilhelm Zentner's report on the Munich premiere of the work in the *Zeitschrift für Musik*, in which he drew attention to what he perceived as the complete smoothness and reversibility of the genre transition; ideologically this suggests a sense of ease about the transition between the kinds of public and intimate spaces associated historically with each genre in performance: 'Jedenfalls vermöchte der Betrachter, dem die chronologische Reihenfolge unbekannt geblieben, nur schwer zu entscheiden, ob die Symphonie eine Weiterbildung des Quartetts oder dieses eine Rückbildung und Bearbeitung der Symphonie sei.' Wilhelm Zentner, 'Konzert und Oper: München', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 5 (1933), 503.

¹⁰⁶ 'Wenn Pfitzner der Meinung wurde [sic] – und diese Meinung wird man respektieren müssen – sein Quartett sei von vornherein so stark sinfonisch belastet gewesen, daß die orchestrale Ausgestaltung schließlich für ihn zur inneren Notwendigkeit wurde – ja, warum hat er der Schöpfung dann nicht gleich den ihr angemessenen großen Rahmen gegeben? [...] Aber selbst der großen Erfahrung Pfitzners gelingt es nicht, diesen Zwiespalt zu überbrücken. [...] Es taucht bei aller Hochachtung vor der durchgeführten Absicht Pfitzners schließlich doch die Frage auf, ob es wirklich notwendig und zweckentsprechend war, das ursprüngliche Quartett in eine völlig veränderte Sphäre zu versetzen.' Schwers, 'Aus dem Berliner Musikleben', 207. See also footnote 59.

¹⁰⁷ The same metaphor can additionally be found in the following reviews in *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (see footnote 57), *Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger*, and *Die Musik* respectively: 'Sie birgt in der kammermusikalischen Gestalt Ausdruckswerte, die das gegebene Klanggefüge sprengen möchten', anon, 'Festprogramm der 63. Tonkünstler-Versammlung: Lebensdaten der Tonsetzer – Kurze Einführung in ihre Werke', *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* 1933, 24/25, 16 June 1933, 335; 'Jeder Musikalische aber wird jetzt hören, wie vieles, was in der Urfassung den Rahmen des Kammermusikalischen zu sprengen drohte, im Orchestersatz erst seine Erfüllung findet', Abendroth, 'Pfitzner-Abend der Philharmoniker'; 'es [droht] in der Intensität und Wucht seines Ausdrucks inhaltlich den Rahmen eines Streichquartetts zu sprengen', Pander, 'München', 628.

unfamiliar sound world. After all, the creation of a symphony from a string quartet grasps bodily into the private sphere and pulls it out into the public, on the one hand muscling up the work with the additional weight and physical power of sound bolstering each line; on the other anatomising it by dissecting those lines, breaking them down and splitting them between different groups of instruments to be expressed symphonically.

Implied in the bursting of the string quartet's frame is Bekker's idea of the symphonic compulsion to speak to the masses, because ideas generated by an idealised image of a symphonic space and symphonic community would exceed a chamber form. The modes of thinking governing symphonic space expressed here are aligned to some extent with Bekker's theorisation of the symphony as an agent capable of determining freely a specific space, and with this, an idealised image of a particular listening public. Indeed, Bekker's '*Kraftentfaltung*' suggests an uncomfortable parallel with what Goebbels called '*die Volkwerdung*' in his November 1933 *Philharmonie* address – that is, the Hegelian coming-into-being of the German people – and its *Lebensraum* corollary adopted by the Nazis as a fundamental justification for their geographical expansionism.¹⁰⁸ Symphonies, as these writers seem to assert, have their own proper domain; according to the expansionist ideology of *Lebensraum*, so too do the German people. One reviewer used the word '*Einfall*'¹⁰⁹ – a term Schoenberg used to imply the kind of arresting compositional idea 'that strikes like lightning'¹¹⁰ – for these frame-bursting, highly concentrated musical ideas. '*Einfall*' has a pertinent second spatial meaning: 'invasion'.

If Schwers's review was largely allied with Bekker's modes of thinking about symphonic space, Otto Steinhagen's review of the Berlin concert in *Die Musik* more clearly foreshadows the National Socialist symphonic aesthetics of the sublime complicit in the collectivisation and public rendering of the individual. *Die Musik*, one of the most influential journals on the German

¹⁰⁸ 'Der Sin der Revolution, die *wir* gemacht haben, ist die Volkwerdung der deutschen Nation. Diese Volkwerdung zwar zweitausend Jahre lang die Sehnsucht aller guten Deutschen.' [original emphasis] Heiber, *Goebbels Reden*, 133. See also Rehding's discussion of the political resonances of *Lebensraum*, a term used by musicologist Heinrich Bessler to evoke a musical monumentality that was determined by the expansive physical spaces it filled: Rehding, *Music and Monumentality*, 174-5.

¹⁰⁹ 'Stellenweise verlangen die Art der Einfälle und ihre Verarbeitung geradezu eine Instrumentierung.' Pander, 'München', 628.

¹¹⁰ See Carpenter and Neff, 'Commentary', 17.

market, was well respected for its balanced political spectrum of opinion pieces from distinguished members of the musical establishment, but degenerated into a vehicle for official propaganda from the June 1933 issue, which led with an address from Goebbels.¹¹¹ Steinhagen's portrayal of the symphony invests the work with agency: the 'commanding presence and living energy'¹¹² afforded to sublime objects in the National Socialist ideological tradition. Initially, he introduced the symphony as a reasoning voice, cast in the Cartesian tradition of rational subjectivity and evoking the clear division of the interiority of the mind against the sentimental excesses of the body:

[...] the skilfully added brass in particular rarely seem to serve the sentimental climaxes but rather the line of reasoning in an intellectually led debate (*Zwiesprache*). This music doesn't fall, in the way in which we are used, into states of excess; its intensifications are entirely bound to the pure inner consistency of the work.¹¹³

The word '*Zwiesprache*' suggests a reasoned dialogue enacted internally within the work. This symphony, then, aims to convince the listener by reason alone. Thus musical force emphasises something 'pure': the logical inner consistency of the work, and as Gilliam reminds us, 'purity' was 'encoded with distinct political meanings in Nazi-era symphonic discourse.'¹¹⁴ It was bound up with the 'openly racial' tone of the search for 'pure' ethnic 'Germanness' in music.¹¹⁵ Adopting rhetoric about noble spirituality in conjunction with ideas of ethnic purity, Nazi symphonic ideology drew on, but transmuted, core tenets of German idealism, and particularly discourses about the inwardness of the subject, closely linked in this review to the clarity of rational thought. In the next line of the review the symphony assumes an active role, meeting and challenging the gaze of the subject: 'Those who do not back away from immersing themselves in the exhausting tension of such a demanding musical experience will not be blinded by it, but in fact enlightened

¹¹¹ See Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 34. For a more detailed analysis of *Die Musik* as a publication complicit in the *Gleichschaltung* in National Socialist Germany, see Lovisa, *Musikerkritik im Nationalsozialismus*, 21-39.

¹¹² Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, 240.

¹¹³ The original reads: 'die thematischen Beziehungen sind deutlicher geworden, wozu besonders die sehr geschickt eingesetzten Blechbläser beitragen, die seltener der gefühlsmäßigen Gipfelung als vielmehr der Beweisführung in einer geistvoll geführten Zwiesprache zu dienen scheinen. Diese Musik fällt nicht gewohnheitsmäßig in Ektase, ihre Steigerungen sind rein geistiger Natur.' Steinhagen, 'Berlin', 619.

¹¹⁴ Gilliam, 'The Annexation of Anton Bruckner', 600.

¹¹⁵ Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 590.

([*Die Anspannung*] *macht ihn aber sehend für die Welt eines Eigenen*).¹¹⁶ ‘Enlightened,’ however, doesn’t quite capture the precise imagery of the German: those who immerse themselves in the musical experience are, literally, ‘made seeing for the world of the Self.’ Steinhagen spells out the mechanisms of the sublime as reconceptualised by National Socialist ideologues by endowing the music with subjective element able to wrestle with and even overpower the listening subject. Yet this overcoming of the subject is presented not as compromising the listener’s autonomy, but rather as emancipatory: the music does not ‘blind’ the subject; instead, it facilitates knowledge of a universalised interiority – implying the uniqueness and superiority of the German *Geist*.¹¹⁷ Language suggesting the subject’s strength and integrity mask how the passage restricts the subject’s autonomy.

The kind of universalised selfhood the passage implies for those ‘strong’ enough to access it plays into some emerging National Socialist discourses that appealed to notions of strength, duty, and freedom to appropriate politically the private sphere: Fritz Rotosky articulated something similar in an article titled ‘*Was ist Kultur*’ in the July 1933 issue of *Neue Literatur*: ‘The individual must be absorbed by the community with his soul in order to fulfil his innermost calling [...] to do what is in his power [...] makes a man free, in spite of having taken orders. He is free because he wants to obey.’¹¹⁸ Both Steinhagen and Rotosky’s passages propose a shared sense of interiority that serves not to preserve but instead to erode the idea of an autonomous private sphere. Steinhagen’s ‘world of the Self’, an interiority strongly linked to German nationalist ideologies, is a private sphere that has been collectivised. What was described earlier in the context of Walter’s exile as the private sphere being wrenched outwards, then, can equally be formulated the other way around, as the public sphere permeating inwards into ‘all spheres of life.’ Furthermore, in the context of Walter’s forced exile Steinhagen’s ‘world of the Self’ problematically asserts only one dominant subject position as universal, made up of those

¹¹⁶ ‘Wer die bis zur Erschöpfung reichende Anspannung des Mitgehens nicht scheut, den blendet sie nicht, macht ihn aber sehend für die Welt eines Eigenen.’ Steinhagen, ‘Berlin’, 619.

¹¹⁷ Notions of interiority and inwardness were integral components of discourses about German superiority, as Watkins shows. See, for example, Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*, 2.

¹¹⁸ Fritz Rotosky, ‘Was ist Kultur’, *Neue Literatur* (July 1933), 380, found in Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 25-6.

listeners strong enough to withstand the musical journey. This begs the question, obviously urgent in this context, of the value of those subjects that it excludes.¹¹⁹ The review foregrounds the paradox that the seemingly universal subject is in fact constructed in relation to a suppressed Other.

Symphonic Aesthetics on the Threshold

Although the first few months after the fascist takeover were chaotic for music and musical institutions, and although the emergence of a National Socialist discourse on music was ‘piecemeal’ at best,¹²⁰ charting the reception of Pfitzner’s symphony over the numerous additional performances throughout 1933 nonetheless offers a view of how National Socialist values gained traction within symphonic aesthetics. In March *Zeitschrift für Musik*’s review of the premiere in Munich by Wilhelm Zentner (1893-1982) suggested the unity and presence of the authorial subject by deploying rhetoric connotative of Germanic ethnic superiority: ‘The work [is] pervaded right into its very last fibres by Pfitzner’s blood and spirit’.¹²¹ At the Berlin premiere the following week the *Berliner Börsen Courier* echoed such sentiment, hailing the work as ‘filled with a deep and authentic romantic sensibility; it is the expression of a personality in which contemplative, brooding and sensitive qualities synthesise uniquely.’¹²² As the year progressed the alignment with nationalist ideologies that linked idealist traditions of interiority and spirituality to ethnic purity became increasingly explicit. In the August edition of *Zeitschrift für Musik*, its former editor-in-chief and influential anti-modernist Alfred Heuß (1877-1934) described the

¹¹⁹ Such exclusion was stated in much more explicit terms later in the year. Pfitzner’s friend (and Austrian Nazi) Junk wrote to Pfitzner after the symphony’s Vienna premiere on 30 November 1933, congratulating the composer on the success of the work, and then making some invidious observations about the Viennese concert-going public: ‘Das Publikum [...] ist das denkbar beste und ernsteste. Kannst Du Dir vorstellen, dass es jetzt bei uns Konzerte gibt, in denen Du keinen einzigen Juden siehst? Ich kenne ja das Wiener Konzertpublikum ziemlich genau und kann sagen, dass in diesen Konzerten wirklich die Besten von den Besten zu finden sind.’ Elisabeth Wamlek-Junk, *Hans Pfitzner und Wien: Sein Briefwechsel mit Victor Junk und andere Dokumente* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1986), 105. This letter avows unambiguously the symphony as a cultural institution incriminated in the process of changing social and ideological norms. The bourgeois social practice of symphony concert attendance here masks violently oppressive social boundaries.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 209.

¹²¹ ‘Das Werk, bis in die letzte Faser vom Blut und Geiste Pfitznern durchwallt’, Zentner, ‘Konzert und Oper: München’, 503-4.

¹²² ‘[Das Werk] ist erfüllt von einer tiefen und echten romantischen Gesinnung, es ist Ausdruck einer Persönlichkeit, in der sich Besinnliches, Grüblerisches und Empfindung eigenartig mischen.’ Strobel, ‘Pfitzner dirigiert.’

performance at the Dortmund Tonkünstlerfest as the festival's highpoint, 'about which nothing further need be said, other than that it allowed us fleetingly to feel the breath of the beyond and recognise music once more as an art of metaphysics.'¹²³ And by October, at a concert in Dessau, *Zeitschrift für Musik's* reviewer claimed the C-sharp minor symphony, a challenging work to get to grips with, 'reflected all depths of the German soul'.¹²⁴ All these excerpts demonstrate the heritage of Nazi symphonic aesthetics in Romantic *völkisch* discourses, and evince a sense of a collectivised interiority that is closely linked to (or perhaps subordinated under) Pfitzner's paternal authorial subjectivity.

But the question of genre persisted for some. By June of 1933 the *Allgemeine Musikzeitung* had reformulated its response to the work in the programme notes for the performance at the Dortmund Tonkünstlerfest. The symphony now represented an intersection between two genres, exemplifying a new kind of 'boundary-work' (*Grenzwerk*): 'its substance is situated on a threshold, accommodating creativity in both chamber and symphonic music'. Deploying a metaphor with clear militaristic overtones, and foreshadowing rhetoric used to justify later Nazi military mobilisation, the idea of occupying the boundary allows seepage between and the blurring of the two spaces. Rather, then, than reinforcing the spatial distinction between symphonic and chamber music spheres, instead the 'boundary-work' is a gateway that enables the erosion of that distinction and the collectivisation of the private sphere. Whereas for Schwerts the tension between string quartet and symphony and their different associated spaces had compromised the success of Pfitzner's symphony, in this later review (whose author is unnamed) that same tension was positively recast as a source of dynamic energy for the work, suggesting that rhetoric that blurred public and private space was becoming increasingly normalised and familiar. In both incarnations the work is volatile, again using language connoting strength and vigour that chimes with emerging Nazi discourses. As string quartet the expressive material is

¹²³ The original reads: 'über die weiter nichts gesagt sein soll, als daß sie wieder einmal den Atem einer Kunst des Metaphysischen verspüren ließ.' Alfred Heuß, 'Vom Tonkünstlerfest in Dortmund und noch wichtigeren Dingen', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 8 (1933), 808.

¹²⁴ 'Ein ganzer Abend war Hans Pfitzner gewidmet, dessen erhabene Chorfantasie 'Das dunkle Reich' und die zergübelte, schwer verständliche cis-moll Sinfonie op. 36 a alle Tiefen der deutschen Seele widerspiegeln', Hans-Georg Bonte, 'Dessau', *Zeitschrift für Musik*, 10 (1933), 1054.

poised ready to burst; as symphony, the harmonic colouring fails to corrupt the pure, clear strength of the '*Vierstimmigkeit*':

In the chamber music form it [the work] contains latent values of expression that burst the limitations of the pre-given sound-world. In the symphonic [form] it actually preserves with clarity the strict character of the four instruments (*Vierstimmigkeit*) that – in terms of sound – only appears to be enhanced in the shading of intensity. Almost nowhere is the pure, clear energy diminished by mere harmonic padding. Music history certainly offers enough examples of such boundary-works (*Grenzwerke*), whose essence perhaps comes closest to the ideal of 'absolute' music.¹²⁵

The idea of '*Vierstimmigkeit*' is nationalistically loaded, recalling the Bachian academic counterpoint taught at the Leipzig Conservatory. But more intimately entangled with German identity politics, of course, is 'the ideal of "absolute" music', a nexus at which this writer implies public and private space now elide without any conceptual friction.

In Berlin in March 1933, however, things looked less deterministic. The misgivings about genre in the initial reception have shown that constructions of Germanic ethnic purity were hardly guarantors for the success of Pfitzner's symphony. It suggested how mutable and unpredictable symphonic discourse could be, no matter how dominantly or decisively a particular element, like notions of racial authenticity, correlated with the value system of the emerging political regime. This reflects back on how we might read constructions of race in conjunction with a symphony like Weill's, too: race in relation to the symphony in 1933 emerges as something that far exceeds any in-out binary framing, requiring more sophisticated tools of contextual analysis.

While a sense of what it meant to participate in the concert and listen to Pfitzner's new symphony cannot be fully reconstructed here, the reviews do convey a keen sense of how contemporary listeners experienced the simultaneous presence of both genres and the musical

¹²⁵ 'Ihre Substanz [liegt] auf der Grenzlinie zwischen kammermusikalischer und sinfonischer Erfindung [...]. Sie birgt in der kammermusikalischen Gestalt Ausdruckswerte, die das gegebene Klanggefüge sprengen möchten und wahrt in der sinfonischen den strengen Grundcharakter der realen Vierstimmigkeit, der nur in der Schattierung der Intensitätsgrade klanglich gesteigert erscheint, aber fast nirgends durch bloßes harmonisches Füllsel in seiner reinen, klaren Kraft gebrochen. Beispiele solcher Grenzwerke, deren Wesen vielleicht dem Ideal 'absoluter' Musik am allernächsten kommt, bietet die Musikgeschichte ja genug.' Anon., 'Festprogramm der 63. Tonkünstler-Versammlung', 335.

frictions this caused. Music, and the symphonic genre in particular, as these reviews show, is powerfully collusive in the fascist reformulation of the relationship between subjectivity and space. Yet by resisting the reorchestration and conventional symphonic-generic markers, Pfitzner's work also foregrounds an *Intimsphäre*, to borrow a term from Thomas Burger, that counters the totalitarian drive to render the subject fully public.¹²⁶ The prevalent tension between a sense of an internalised musical idea and the physical symphonic manifestation means that, ultimately, this symphonic work was unable to subsume the subjects and delicate voices of the string quartet into the monumental mass, demonstrating discomfort about the coexistence and manipulation of public and private space. In a sense, then, the work retains what Adorno calls chamber music's 'critical' function, driven by the 'premises of autonomy and independence extending all the way into the compositional ramifications of chamber music.'¹²⁷ By resisting 'expansiveness' and 'decor', Adorno might have argued, this symphony seems to oppose fascist erasure of the subjective element.¹²⁸ And in revealing to some listeners, if only briefly, the monumental scaffolding that jars with the musical material, drawing attention to the public rendering of private space, the work stakes out a point of ideological conflict within the first few haphazard weeks of fascist Germany. Even symphonic discourse associated with a strongly nationalist figure like Pfitzner turns out to have the potential to be unexpectedly polyvalent and politically elusive.

¹²⁶ See footnote 15.

¹²⁷ Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music*, 100.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 96.

Chapter 2

‘Unmistakably American’? Abstracting Sound and Space in Roy Harris’s *Symphony 1933*.

The moods which seem particularly American to me are the noisy ribaldry, the sadness, a groping earnestness which amounts to suppliance towards those deepest spiritual yearnings within ourselves; there is little grace or mellowness in our midst; that will probably come after we have passed the high noon of our growth as a people.

Roy Harris, 1935¹

Inside the cover of the manuscript score to *Symphony 1933*, a dedication from Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, reads: ‘To Roy Harris, in remembrance of the first performance of a great American Symphony’.² Not long afterwards, in 1935, Harris reflected on what it meant to be American. His words expressed American subjectivity as suspended between simultaneously outwards and inwards striving impulses – ‘noisy ribaldry’ contrasts with the introspection of ‘deep spiritual yearnings within ourselves’. The tension Harris perceives in modern American self-consciousness taps into a nostalgic mythology prevalent in depression-era culture that reified the sovereignty of the individualist frontiersman alongside the American West. Indeed, interpreting Harris’s 1935 pronouncements even more ambitiously, a later 1947 article by Nicolas Slonimsky isolated this tension’s territorial traction, explicitly harnessing Harris’s music to the landscape of the American West in which Harris grew up. Casting Harris as a spokesperson for American identity, and in so doing eliding the idea of authoring and occupying the West, Slonimsky read this passage ideologically as a ‘programme of musical Americanism’. Not content with Harris’s music simply evoking the ‘great open spaces of Harris’s original habitat’, he argued that Harris’s philosophical Americanism ‘goes far beyond the frontiers of the West.’³ The colonised West has always been a contradictory and highly ideological

¹ Nicolas Slonimsky, ‘Roy Harris’, *Musical Quarterly*, 33 (1947), 17-37, 23-4. Slonimsky does not reference any source for this passage, and I have been unable to locate its origins. Despite the difficulty of determining this passage’s authenticity, it is nonetheless revealing about the kind of subjectivity Harris was used to represent in the critical discourse.

² Manuscript full score inscribed from Serge Koussevitzky to Harris, Harris Papers, box 6.

³ Slonimsky, ‘Roy Harris’, 24-5.

imagined space, on the one hand promising an endless, frictionless realm of which the pioneering individual is master, affording free motion and infinite geographical expansion beyond the limits of vision, but on the other, mapped, measured, and dissected into discrete units of property. As this chapter will show, the tensions at the core of Harris's American self-consciousness animate the whole historical process of westward expansion, in which an idealist impulse towards the West's infinite and diffusive horizon is matched historically by a rationalist counter impulse to control, contain, and disavow. Additionally, this tension captures something particular to the symphonic genre: how the symphony in the early twentieth century was awkwardly located between rationalising modernist musical imperatives, and the genre's historically transcendentalist aspirations.

If Harris perceived modern American self-consciousness as rooted in the past, however, it also looked forwards. With Harris's words to support him, Slonimsky articulated a nascent, directed national psyche determined by a constant impulse to exceed the horizon. Cotten Seiler has argued that mobility characterises twentieth-century notions of American selfhood – particularly masculine selfhood – as part of a historically broad national account of (westward) progress and modernity; to quote Leon Mandel, America is a nation that 'narrates itself as novel, singular, and in forward motion.'⁴ Yet such almost frictionless motion towards and beyond the horizon depends on two things: an ideology of anonymous space that offers little if any resistance and a forward-moving subjectivity able to overcome any obstacle.

Harris's *Symphony 1933* focuses both these things. Early performances of the work in Boston and in New York spotlight several distinct areas that demonstrate the same imperative to dominate, order, homogenise, and anonymise space through processes of abstraction, bringing together acoustic science, recording technology, the ideologies of landscape underpinning the colonisation of the American West, and contemporary discourses and anxieties emerging around

⁴ Cotten Seiler, *Republic of Drivers: A Cultural History of Automobility in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 8-9; he cites: Leon Mandel, *Driven: The American Four-Wheeled Love Affair* (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), 76. The volume of cultural-historical literature on the automobile in America is extensive; Seiler provides a bibliography at 155-6.

twentieth-century American selfhood and mobility, related to the technologies of the railroad and automobile in this period. Ultimately, however, these different conceptions of abstracted space at play in these concerts reinscribe – but also problematise – the broader spatial narrative of abstraction and reproducibility integral to American liberal ideology. Literary scholars Martin Brückner and Hsuan L. Hsu have followed Philip Fisher in characterising this spatial narrative as one that provides ideal conditions for the uninhibited mobility of American subjects: an ‘abstract, infinitely expandable and easily damaged “democratic social space”’.⁵ My intention is not to suggest that these complex historical and social phenomena resolve within this narrative, but instead that this spatial narrative provides a starting point for aligning some of the ideologies of space at play at the concerts, and that where these alignments fail may prove most revealing. What is more, the symphonic genre is heavily implicated in liberalism’s spatial impulse: its totalising social impulse towards what Bekker called the *Hörerschaft* and its expansive musical frame makes it congruous with Fisher’s ‘infinitely expandable’ spatial ideology. This chapter asks, then, about the sense of American selfhood the diverse elements coalescing at these concerts refract, and that Harris’s symphony, in conjunction with liberal spatial narratives, participates in shaping. If the primary authorial voice in *Symphony 1933* is the impulse to order and control, then Harris is an agent of that rationalising and colonial ‘modernising’ process linked to ideas of Enlightenment subjectivity. This chapter unpicks the landscape politics associated with American liberalism alongside some of the utopian aspirations of symphonic ideology, asking about the collusive role of genre discourses associated with the symphony in monumentalising white presence in these colonial landscapes.

Commissioned in the spring of the title year, *Symphony 1933* gave Harris his first taste of serious public recognition. Although Harris’s own accounts of his biography can be unreliable, he claimed that Koussevitzky had specifically asked for ‘a big symphony from the West’, setting up from the very outset the metaphorical terrain of Harris reception.⁶ *Symphony 1933* was initially

⁵ Brückner and Hsu, *American Literary Geographies*, 20.

⁶ Beth E. Levy cites what she believes to be the most detailed record of the circumstances of the commission, an excerpt from a 1966 oral history review:

premiered at Boston Symphony Hall in January 1934, where it was also broadcast over the radio, and was repeated and recorded live at Carnegie Hall in New York a week later, becoming the first American symphony reproduced for the phonograph. These performances play into a modernist account of the progressive scientific mastery of sound and space, representing different aspects of what cultural historian Emily Thompson has described in her 2002 monograph *The Soundscapes of Modernity* as the ‘modern’ erosion of the unique and reciprocal relationship between sound and space – that is, how sounds are shaped by the specific spaces in which they reverberate.⁷ Not only was the work both broadcast over the radio and recorded, but the site of the premiere itself, Boston Symphony Hall, has this characteristically ‘modern’ disassociation of space from sound built into its architecture. In 1900 Boston Symphony Hall opened as the first concert hall to be designed according to the principles of acoustic science, and it paved the way for a modern, reproducible orchestral sound independent of the acoustic idiosyncrasies of its performance space, later developed by radio and phonograph technologies into the wholesale reproducibility of sound that fully severed its relationship to space.

The symphony’s early reception consolidated Harris’s emergent reputation as an authentic American composer from the West, drawing on the mythological figure of the nineteenth-century pioneer. Examining the documentation surrounding the work’s first performances, the first part of this chapter cuts a different path over historical ground covered extensively by Beth

‘Koussevitzky said, “Copland has told me about you (I know about you already from Nadia Boulanger), but Copland says you are the American Mussorgsky.”
 You see? And we had a laugh about it.
 He said, “You must write me a symphony.”
 So I said, “What kind of symphony?”
 And he said, “Oh, I want a big symphony from the West.”
 See Beth E. Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western’, *American Music*, 19 (2001), 131-167, 145. There is some reason to doubt this version of events: Levy’s observation that the ‘big symphony from the West’ anecdote only appears in sources from 1951 onwards seems telling, although she also points to evidence that supports its credibility, such as Copland’s anecdote about Koussevitzky telling his orchestra, ‘The next Beethoven vill from Colorado come!’ See *ibid.*, 163; Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900-1942* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1984), 109.

⁷ Emily Ann Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002).

E. Levy, drawing on both her work and my own examination of primary sources – some of which are not present in her analysis – from the Roy Harris Papers at the Library of Congress. Levy’s work uses the reviews of *Symphony 1933* to illuminate how both Harris and the contemporary commentators were invested in blending fact and fiction to collectivise Harris’s biography as symbolic of a universalised heroic American identity and unique American experience, distinct from Europe. The reviewers embedded the symphony and its white composer in a collectively imagined, idealised Western landscape, biographically linking Harris’s romanticised Scottish-Irish American subjectivity and the landscape to imply – falsely – that their relationship was immanent and organic.⁸ In so doing, commentary on Harris’s symphony contributed to the wider construction of a nostalgic and mythologised idea of the American West and rural life in public discourse and culture at this time.⁹ This was a mythology shaped by contemporary ideals and anxieties, a particularly urgent narrative in depression-struck America, where economic collapse meant the mass dispossession and westward exodus of agricultural workers, set against the backdrop of the transition into a wage economy, the division of labour, and the alienation of workers from the land. As Levy puts it, Harris reception is, then, a springboard for examining ‘the role of the West in the American imagination’.¹⁰

But what happens when the Western spaces and subjects evoked by the symphony in the reviews meet the ‘modern’ ideology of space and sound at Boston Symphony Hall, or represented by the Columbia recording? Departing from Levy’s work on how what she calls ‘Harris’s western mythology’ came into being, the rest of this chapter considers more theoretically the specifically modern aspects to the sense of American selfhood that Harris’s symphony participates in shaping, and argues that Harris’s symphony frames a subjectivity that remodels the figure of the pioneer for an era shaped by industrial capitalism. Given some of the rhetoric in the reviews about motion and thrust, as well as the ‘modern’ streamlining,

⁸ See Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, how Roy Harris Became Western, 131-167; Levy, *Frontier Figures: American Music and the Mythology of the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). Levy’s work largely draws on archival material from the Roy Harris Archive at California State University, Los Angeles.

⁹ See, for example, discussion in Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western’, in particular 155.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 132.

disassociating, and alienating impulses in ideologies of sound and space that converge on the concerts, Harris's symphony seems to outline a 'modern' subjectivity characterised by propulsion within frictionless space – a selfhood both socially and spatially mobile. This figure aligns with the narratives of spatial abstraction, reproducibility, and homogeneity that converge on the performance sites of *Symphony 1933*.

Attending to these unaddressed questions about what American selfhood looked like in the context of the Depression's mass disenfranchisement of working Americans seems more pressing than some of the specifically analytical questions raised by Harris's *Symphony 1933* – questions which, furthermore, have already been explored by existing analytical studies of Harris's symphonies, such as Dan Stehman's 1973 doctoral dissertation, and Levy's aforementioned work situating elements of these analyses in their cultural-historical context.¹¹ Given the interwoven metaphors of masculinity, propulsion, organicism, sexual reproduction, and male virility in contemporary reception, this chapter suggests a reading of the symphony that considers explicitly modern anxieties about shifting paragons of white masculine identity. It proposes that hearing Boston Symphony Hall and Carnegie Hall at the Harris premieres through the filter of place articulated by legal scholar Rosemary J. Coombe – 'not [as] sources of stability – the sources of essential or integrated identities – around which boundaries can be drawn, but [as] particular constellations of historical relations articulated at a particular locus'¹² – might make some sense of the different historical dimensions layered here, and the kinds of American histories and futures, and American subjectivities these assemble.

¹¹ See Dan Stehman, 'The Symphonies of Roy Harris: An Analytical Study of the Linear Materials and of Related Works' (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1973); see also the coverage of the work in Levy's doctoral thesis, article, and monograph respectively: Levy, 'Frontier Figures: American Music and the Mythology of the American West, 1895-1945' (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2002); Levy, "'The White Hope of American Music'; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western'; Levy, *Frontier Figures: American Music and the Mythology of the American West*.

¹² Rosemary J. Coombe, *The Cultural Life of Intellectual Properties: Authorship, Appropriation and the Law* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 828-9; see also Keith Aoki's discussion in: Aoki, '(Intellectual) Property and Sovereignty: Notes toward a Cultural Geography of Authorship', *Stanford Law Review*, 48 (1996), 1293-1355, 1301-2.

Western Spaces and the Harris ‘Myth’

It was Aaron Copland who introduced Harris to Koussevitzky and thus secured Harris’s first major commission, when the composers attended one of music patron Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge’s Festival chamber concerts at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. in April 1933. Harris began work on the symphony immediately, completing the first two movements in Coolidge’s Washington apartment, which she had generously allowed Harris and his wife, Hilde, to occupy free of charge in her absence.¹³ At the end of May, Harris quipped in a letter to Copland: ‘Koussevitzky piece is fulminating. It will have lots of surge in it. Quel Pun.’¹⁴ Ready for Koussevitzky in late December,¹⁵ *Symphony 1933* was initially premiered at Boston Symphony Hall on 26 and 27 January 1934, between Stravinsky’s *Appollon Musagète* and Sibelius’s Fifth Symphony, in a concert broadcast over the radio.¹⁶ Judging from a letter from Harris to Coolidge after the Boston performance, the concert was a resounding triumph, although the professional and diplomatic nature of Harris’s relationship with Coolidge makes description in any other terms unlikely: ‘the Symphony sounded and was received with a success beyond my wildest hopes. Dr. Koussevitzky gave me a wonderful performance – with insight and technical precision – and deep conviction.’¹⁷ The symphony was then repeated and recorded live for Columbia Records’ Masterworks series at Carnegie Hall in New York a week later, on 2 and 3 February.

¹⁴ Letter from Harris to Copland, 31 May 1933, Copland Collection, box 256.

¹⁵ There is some uncertainty in the literature about precisely when Harris completed the symphony. Levy notes that ‘Harris began work sometime between March and June 1933 and finished the scoring sometime between September and December of that year.’ See Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western’, 163. Harris was at Yaddo in Saratoga Springs in October, ‘to finish my symphony’, as he telegraphed Coolidge. See telegram from Harris to Coolidge, 3 October 1933, Coolidge Collection, box 38.

In December Harris wrote to Slonimsky: ‘Koussevitzky told me he will not program the work until the parts are in his hands. And as the programs are made up in advance + publicity etc — I am determined to have it ready for him by New Years. So I can send him a telegram with a flourish. I want him to feel confident in my integrity.’ Letter from Harris to Slonimsky, December 1933, Slonimsky Collection, box 143.

¹⁶ The radio performance is attested to by correspondence with Harris’s composition teacher Arthur Farwell, who listened to the broadcast. Letter from Arthur Farwell to Harris, 6 February 1934, Harris Papers, box 25.

¹⁷ Letter from Harris to Coolidge, n.d., box 38, Coolidge Collection.

Sibelius's Fifth Symphony was replaced in the New York programme with Brahms's Fourth. In spite of frostier reception in New York, Harris's enthusiasm for the recording project was clear. As he reported to Slonimsky in February 1934: 'The Symphony was recorded and we believe [it] will be a knockout. The head engineer said he had never officiated over a clearer score – and that the balance was very even. We shall see.'¹⁸

Resisting conventional nineteenth-century European symphonic models, *Symphony 1933* has three movements, marked *Allegro*, *Andante*, and *Maestoso*. The first movement, although tripartite, adopts structural principles that depart from traditional sonata form, developed instead more freely from the motivic materials. Characterised by driving, irregular rhythmic patterns and phrase lengths, the movement lurches into action in C minor with a pounding timpani triplet '3+2' rhythmic motive, shrill woodwinds, and muscular brass writing.¹⁹ The motive's asymmetrical rhythmic tension has structural ramifications for the movement, which alternates between compound and duple meters.²⁰ The first theme, in E-flat minor, appears from bars 11 to 28 in the horns and trumpets. After its bravado, Harris finds a more reflective mode for the middle section (bars 174–282), which introduces a soaring, lyrical melody in the strings (bars 174–194), twice varied and restated. The final recapitulatory section is signalled by the return of the timpani motive (bar 300). A three-part canon for brass dominates the extended coda (bars 344–395), culminating in a powerful fortissimo bitonal dissonance scored for full orchestra: an E-flat minor triad jars against an arpeggiated D-major triad picked out in the upper register woodwind and brass. This is an allusion to the two predominant tonal areas in the movement as a whole, D minor and E-flat minor.

In the sinuous second movement, *Andante*, Harris employs a free rondo form. The movement opens and closes in E minor, with A minor as a secondary tonal centre; the principal theme initially appears in the viola part, from bars 22 to 32. Legato passages for solo woodwind,

¹⁸ Letter from Harris to Slonimsky, Feb 1934?, box 143, Slonimsky Collection.

¹⁹ Boston Symphony Orchestra concert program, Trip Series, Season 53 (1933-1934), Carnegie Hall, Saturday Concert 3, page 8, Boston Symphony Orchestra Program Books, BSO Archive. (Hereafter: BSO concert programme).

²⁰ See Stehman, 'The Symphonies of Roy Harris,' 92.

which Harris denotes as ‘pastoral’, intertwine with solo string writing, occasionally punctured by pizzicato strings.²¹ The chief tonal area of the final movement, *Maestoso*, is G minor, although Harris also makes use of other closely related keys. It evokes the same unrelenting motion as the previous movements but is primarily energised by gestural juxtapositions. The structure is derived from a single theme (bars 1–8) that is developed, varied, and transformed through several techniques including contrapuntal work, canon, and imitation. In the programme note Harris refers to his development of the finale’s main theme as ‘autogenetic’ – self-generative – melodic design, invoking quasi-biological terminology.²² Few scholars aside from Levy and Harris biographer Dan Stehman have paid *Symphony 1933* much analytical or critical attention; Malcolm D. Robertson’s overview of all Harris’s symphonies in the journal *Tempo* largely confirms the same weaknesses in *Symphony 1933* identified by Stehman: the overenthusiastic use of ostinati, excessive repetitions, dependence on motivic devices, and a slackness in the structure.²³

First and foremost among the abstract spatial ideals considered in this chapter, then, is the one most clearly conjured by the symphony’s reviews at these concerts: the imagined space of the American West. This nostalgic space soothed modernist anxieties about urban life and was vital, as Levy has likewise observed in her analysis of these materials, for the Harris myth, which entwined a kind of universalised, pragmatic American subjectivity and an idealised notion of Western landscapes.²⁴ In their 2010 essay collection *Philosophy and the Western* Jennifer L. McMahon and B. Steve Csaki summarise the West’s mythological, utopian status as ‘a wild, untouched land of terrain laden with golden opportunities.’²⁵ Reviews of the Harris premiere drew on all the key tropes corresponding to the mythic West, heavily strewn with metaphors associating landscape, masculinity, and organicism.²⁶ Henry Taylor Parker from the *Boston Evening*

²¹ BSO concert programme.

²² Ibid.

²³ Stehman, ‘The Symphonies of Roy Harris,’ 93; Robertson, ‘Roy Harris’s Symphonies,’ 10.

²⁴ The following primary source analysis is my own – any references to Levy’s work are drawn explicitly.

²⁵ Jennifer L. McMahon and B. Steve Csaki, *The Philosophy of the Western* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010).

²⁶ Extracts of selected reviews of these concerts and of the recording are published in: Dan Stehman, *Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991). Other reviews were found in scrapbooks in the Harris Papers, and via ProQuest Historical Newspapers. I have noted the location of the source when clarity is required.

Transcript characterised what he heard as ‘unmistakably American – American of the Far West that nourishes itself. [...] The new symphony is American, first, in a pervading directness, in a recurring and unaffected roughness of musical speech – an outspoken symphony.’²⁷ Musically, too, the symphony was complicit in American myth-building, even if reviewers’ explanations of precisely how the symphony musically represented the West were unspecific. To cite Parker again, the ‘propulsive force’ of the uneven rhythms and melodic scope ‘seem to derive [...] from the West that bred Mr Harris and in which he works most eagerly – from its air, its life, its impulses, even its gaits.’ Harris’s symphony thrust forward, in language suggesting both masculine sexuality and ‘modern’ mechanised transportation that facilitated free passage through the West. Parker went on, ‘next to never does [his melody] proceed in measured sequences. From a germ his themes broaden and lengthen in a fashion strange to the short-breathed musical hour.’ In sum: ‘In this melody we hear an instinctive American quality to which we respond as instinctively.’²⁸ Needless to say, the commentary presupposed the naturalness of Harris’s ‘right’ to inhabit the West: as Slonimsky put it, for example, ‘his music is born, not invented’.²⁹

Even negative reviews stayed on this territory: although in the *New York Times* Olin Downes called the symphony an ‘ineptitude’, he nonetheless used the qualifying adjective ‘American’. The overlap in other reviewers’ vocabularies with the language of virility, heroism, and masculinity in Downes’s Sibelius reception makes his refusal to champion Harris’s symphony worth noting.³⁰ For Downes, who had seen the score before the New York performance and attended some rehearsals, Harris’s symphony did not live up to media expectations: ‘The structure of the piece, its map on paper, and some of its motives, have the creative seed and offer good opportunities for symphonic development. For this writer, the promise of the symphony stops there. [...] There is little genuine organic development in this symphony.’³¹ As the value system against

²⁷ Henry Taylor Parker, ‘Manifold, Abundant, Individual,’ *Boston Evening Transcript*, 27 January 1934.

²⁸ Parker, ‘Manifold, Abundant, Individual.’

²⁹ Nicolas Slonimsky, ‘From the West: Composer New to Bostonians – Background for Roy Harris About to be Heard at Symphony Hall,’ *Boston Evening Transcript*, 24 January, 1934; found in: Harris Papers, box 42.

³⁰ See Glenda Dawn Goss, *Jean Sibelius and Olin Downes: Music, Friendship, Criticism* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995).

³¹ ‘an American ineptitude’, Olin Downes, ‘Harris Symphony Has Premiere Here’ *The New York Times*, 1 February 1934, 9.

which Downes assessed Harris's symphony indicates, metaphors of organicism and of masculinity entrenched in both symphonic discourse and discussion of the American landscape made it easy to elide the genre with the West.

Downes's analysis notwithstanding, for most of the reviewers the work represented, or so it seemed, a certain kind of subjectivity writ large. And that subjectivity, as Levy explains, was firmly located by the reviewers in an imagined Western landscape, the world of Harris's boyhood. Born in a log cabin on, of all days, Abraham Lincoln's birthday, Harris had spent his early years in Oklahoma before moving to California as a child. These two far-flung states together formed a locus for a catch-all notion of the American 'West' crucial to the Harris 'mythology'. The westward route from Oklahoma to California, in addition, had contemporary symbolic value: John Steinbeck appropriated it for his protagonists in *The Grapes of Wrath*, which he began writing in 1938, responding to the Oklahoma Dust Bowl of the mid-1930s.³² Further biographical detailing of Harris's farm-working, truck-driving youth did nothing to dispel the all-American mythology that emerged around Harris in the written media, enhancing his ability to speak for the American people. Western 'authenticity' was here contrasted against East Coast – and therefore European-influenced – sophistry,³³ which deliberately played down Harris's cosmopolitan Parisian education under Nadia Boulanger in the 1920s. According to Slonimsky in an article introducing the composer to Bostonians before the premiere, Harris's was a life that 'presents a picture of individualistic endeavour, culminating with success in high places'.³⁴ Such implicit – and not so implicit – parallels that were frequently drawn up between Harris's apparent rough-and-ready origins and the mythological figure of the pioneer settler hardly happened by accident, and recall the myth-building around Harris's older contemporary Carl Ruggles. Indeed, landscape, transcendentalism, and authentic American identity are thematised in the commentary

³² John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath* (London: Penguin, 2000).

³³ For example, as Slonimsky declared: 'his music is born, not invented. It reflects not the European ready-made manufacture, but a free and somewhat mysterious firmament of America.' Slonimsky, 'From the West: Composer New to Bostonians'.

³⁴ Ibid.

on Ruggles's roughly contemporary works like *Men and Mountains* (of 1924, but revised in 1936) or *Sun-treader* (of 1932).³⁵

Levy has shown the extent to which Harris had a hand in consciously fashioning and controlling his self-image, invoking frontiersman spirit to his advantage.³⁶ His programme note to *Symphony 1933* is a good example, where, in what one reviewer called a 'formidable postulate',³⁷ Harris gave a sense of the ambitious proportions and philosophical scope for the American identity the work sought to project:

In the first movement I have tried to capture the mood of adventure and physical exuberance; in the second, of the pathos which seems to underlie all human existence; in the third, the mood of a positive will to power and action.³⁸

'Formidable postulate' indeed. Glossing over the influence of Nietzschean rhetoric, Harris's words affirm the currency for 1930s America of romantic ideologies that held the symphonic genre as the prime musical vehicle for projecting a universalised notion of human subjectivity. It also seems to reiterate the themes in Harris's reflections on American identity that opened this chapter: romantic introspection contrasts with an externalised impulse to progress – 'the mood of adventure and physical exuberance'. Harris's symphonic subject, like the pioneer, is active and free moving: the symphony is about the individual, his autonomy, and his capabilities to effect change around himself. The masculine pronoun is used intentionally.

Yet the vision of selfhood Harris's symphony affirmed was anything but universal. Slonimsky's article alluded to the symbolic and deeply racialised kind of dominant American subjectivity composers like Harris and Ruggles represented, with a seemingly irreverent reference to the language of livestock sales: 'Roy Harris of Oklahoma, thirty-five, white, and healthy, is well-equipped to be a musical emissary.'³⁹ It is worth noting that the dominant narrative of

³⁵ See, for example, discussion in: Deniz Ertan, 'When Men and Mountains Meet: Ruggles, Whitman, and Their Landscapes', *American Music*, 27 (2009), 227-253.

³⁶ Levy, 'The White Hope of American Music'; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western', especially 141-42 and 150.

³⁷ Cyrus W. Durgin, 'Music: Symphony Hall Boston Symphony Orchestra', *Daily Boston Globe*, January 27, 1934.

³⁸ BSO concert programme, 7.

³⁹ Slonimsky, 'From the West: Composer New to Bostonians'. Levy also discusses this quotation in: Levy, "'The White Hope of American Music'; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western', 151.

westward progress that privileges white subjects runs at ninety degrees to the south to north axis of early twentieth-century African-American migration, and counter to the nineteenth-century west to east migration of Chinese railroad labourers and miners, or indeed the ethnic cleansing and enforced resettlement of Native Americans, which followed no general trend.⁴⁰ Levy illuminates further the racial aspects of the Harris mythology, a composer cast as the ‘white hope’ for American music, and the importance put on his “‘Scotch-Irish” lineage’.⁴¹

Close reading of the Harris reception gives some insight into the rationalising liberal discourses of land ownership – what Seiler has called ‘possessive’ individualism⁴² – that historically legitimised white presence in and occupation of Western landscapes. Recall how one reviewer described ‘the West that bred Mr Harris and in which he works most eagerly’. Far from organic, Harris’s biographical connections with Western landscapes tie into pervasive and deeply embedded liberal discourse of ownership that bind labour, property, and sovereignty, predating individual freedom and autonomy on property and the ownership of the products of one’s labour. But this paradigm of autonomy seemed increasingly unsustainable in the 1930s where, as *The Grapes of Wrath* critiques, the artisanal models of ownership, labour, and production in which it is rooted were imperilled by new processes of industrial farming. Nonetheless, the following quotation from Steinbeck’s novel elucidates clearly the sense of ownership and autonomy that the Harris myth conduits, even as it was undermined by wider contemporary economic imperatives:

Sure, cried the tenant man, but it’s our land. We measured it and broke it up. We were born on it, and we got killed on, died on it. [...] That’s what makes it ours – being born on it, working it, dying on it. That makes ownership [...].⁴³

The voice of the tenant man weds rationalist measurement and labour to ideas of property ownership, expressed in the emotive rhetoric of belonging and identity. Steinbeck articulates a romanticised relationship between land and life-cycle which aims to enunciate just how tightly

⁴⁰ Brückner and Hsu, *American Literary Geographies*, 16.

⁴¹ Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western’, in particular 151-55.

⁴² For further background on ‘possessive’ individualism, see Seiler, *Republic of Drivers*, 18-19.

⁴³ Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 35.

land and identity – particularly, and perversely, white male identity – were enmeshed in the cultural consciousness.

Abstracting Space and Sound

Harris's Western mythology, then, relied heavily on the idealised and universalised conception of a mythical, untouched, and fertile American soil. Idealised and transcendent, this West contrasts sharply – or so it appears thus far – with the other 'modern' extra-musical rationalising projects focused around the early performances of this symphony, asserting the scientific domination of space and sound. But, as will be discussed below, and as the words of Steinbeck's tenant man begin to indicate, the mythologised landscape obfuscates economic and legal principles that rationalised space and subject into property and sovereign owner, the same principles which historically justified colonial claims to the West, and continued to underpin depression-era anxieties such as the alienation of workers from the land. In this way, the idealised Western landscape summoned in the Harris reception aligns more closely than first appears with the processes shaping modern subject and space at the two 1934 performance sites – Boston Symphony Hall and Carnegie Hall in New York – sites which both exhibit the rationalist and, according to Thompson, 'modern' cultural imperative to untether sound from space. What follows elucidates how these spaces were rationalised and asks about their rationalising impact on audiences, exploring how the frictionless aural space of the concert hall orders the listening subject by generating an optimised and homogenous space through which the music has uninhibited passage.

It is no exaggeration to claim that the construction of Boston Symphony Hall from 1899-1900 heralded a new era for the relationship between space and sound. Indeed, the development of acoustic science by Wallace Sabine, a young Harvard physicist, took place in tandem with the design and building of the hall, and two monographs have been published in the last twenty years discussing this chapter of Boston Symphony Hall's history: Thompson's aforementioned *The*

Soundscape of Modernity, and Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall Boston: A History with Documents* (2000), the appendix of which contains copies of much of the original correspondence concerning the Hall's construction.⁴⁴ Financier and philanthropist Henry Lee Higginson, sole owner of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, commissioned the new building as a replacement for the city's old Music Hall, which had housed the orchestra, among other performers, for the previous forty years. The issue of acoustics had been on the table, as Thompson demonstrates, from the very first mention of the plan to construct a new permanent home for the orchestra in 1892.⁴⁵ Sabine became involved quite late in the process. He was drafted in to help Charles McKim of renowned New York architectural firm McKim, Mead & White design the hall in line with the latest scientific developments in the field of acoustics, a field Sabine himself was at that moment pioneering.⁴⁶

Until the late nineteenth century, music was coloured by the acoustic signature of the space in which it was performed or heard, and the position of the listener in that space. Successful acoustics needed an experienced architect and a degree of luck. Sabine's work aimed to change this. He sought universal rules that could be manipulated to control acoustic space and give architects a reliable foundation for their work. Sabine had been working on the problems of acoustics since 1895, when he took part in a project to address the acoustic limitations of the auditorium in Harvard's Fogg Art Museum.⁴⁷ He had been interested in the way different materials absorbed sound, seeking to map a relationship between the volume of a room, the absorptive properties of its walls, and the duration of the residual sound.

It was because of this work that Higginson was put in touch with Sabine: Higginson, anxious that no architect could fully assure him of the hall's acoustic merit, voiced concerns about the acoustic quality of the proposed new concert hall to Harvard's president Charles W. Eliot, who

⁴⁴ Richard Poate Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall, Boston: A History with Documents Including Correspondence of Henry Lee Higginson, Charles Follen McKim, and Wallace Clement Sabine* (Boston: Boston Symphony Orchestra, 2000); Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁶ Stebbins notes that Sabine chose to receive no financial remuneration for his work on the concert hall. See Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall, Boston*, 102.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 48.

contacted Sabine. After receiving Eliot's letter, Sabine returned to his notes from the extensive experimentation he had undertaken on the Fogg Lecture Room, and two weeks later made a significant breakthrough. He realised that a relationship could be drawn between the quantity of cushions in a room (x) and the reverberation time of that space (t). These, he discovered, could be plotted on a graph as a hyperbola ($xt = k$, where k is a constant) displaced by the value of a , where a represents the absorbing potential of the walls of the room: $(a + x)t = k$ [see figure 3].⁴⁸

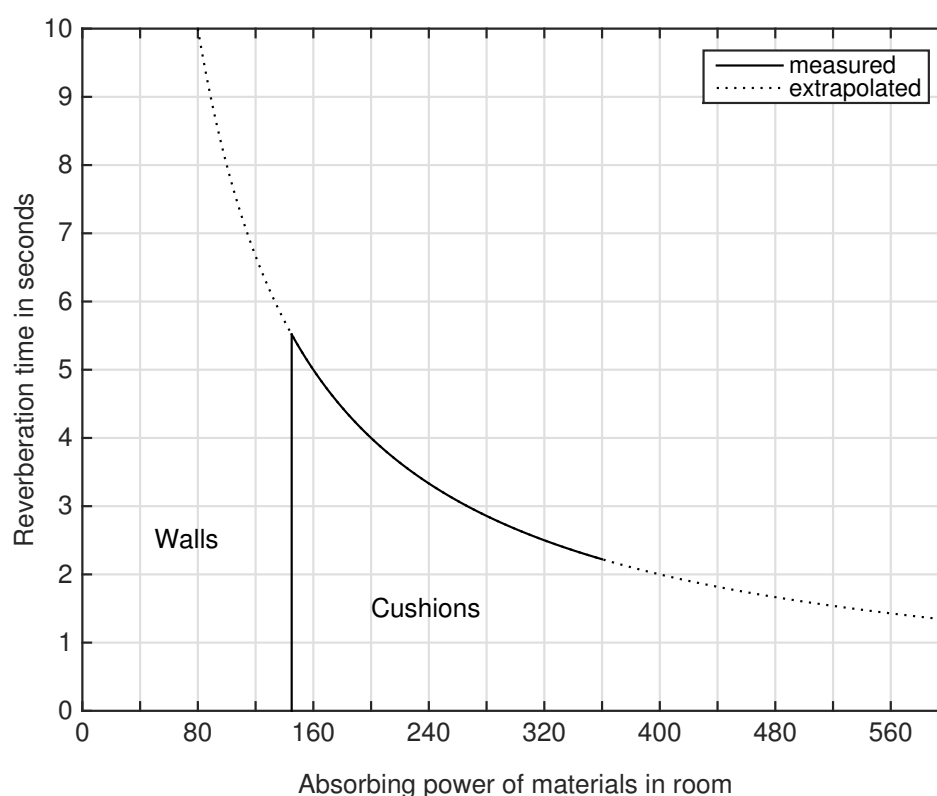


Figure 3: 'Curve 5 plotted as part of its corresponding rectangular hyperbola. The solid part was determined experimentally; the displacement of this to the right measures the absorbing powers of the walls of the room.' Graph reproduced with modifications from figure in: Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*, 38.

Sabine summarised his latest discovery in a letter immediately afterwards to Eliot:

You may be interested to know that the curve, in which the duration of the residual sound is plotted against the absorbing material, is a rectangular hyperbola with displaced origin; that the displacement of the origin is the absorbing power of the walls of the room; and that the parameter of the hyperbola is very nearly a linear function of the volume of the room. This opens up a wide field.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Thompson provides a more detailed discussion of the mathematics. See Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*, 38-9.

⁴⁹ See *ibid.*; see also Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall, Boston*, 49.

During the process of designing and constructing the concert hall Sabine further developed his mathematical description of acoustic space. He was able to redescribe the relationships much more elegantly and accurately, creating absorption coefficients for other materials beyond walls and cushions, and linking the hyperbolic constant, k , to the volume of the space (V) by a factor of 0.164. Thus Sabine's calculations could be written:

$$t = \frac{0.164V}{\sum(a_n s_n)}$$

where t = reverberation time (in seconds),

V = volume of the room (in cubic meters),

a_n = absorption coefficient of the material, n , and

s_n = surface area of material n (in square meters).⁵⁰

Boston Symphony Hall was in this way measured and rationalised during its construction in service of an ideal – that is, in service of creating a ‘perfect’ aural space, allowing full control of that space’s aural conditions.⁵¹ With the help of Sabine’s work, it became – at least in theory – possible to replicate spatially and materially identical acoustic conditions right across the world, so famous orchestras could sound the same whether in Boston or London, Paris or Berlin. In this way, sound was abstracted from the space in which it was played. Put differently, Sabine untethered sound from the specific aural trace of the space in which it resounded. If listeners imagined the sound waves moving from the orchestra to their ears, Sabine’s developments

⁵⁰ Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*, 39-42.

⁵¹ However, the designs for the hall did not result exclusively from scientific enquiry. Pragmatic guess-work based on existing concert structures continued to play an important role. The decision to keep the square shape of the former Music Hall exemplifies this, modelling the new hall not on abstract principles but on the favourable acoustics in Leipzig’s *Gewandhaus*. Likewise, an early idea to shape the building like a semi-circular classical Greek theatre was eschewed on the basis that no such concert hall had ever been built before: financiers were only willing to wager so far on theoretical acoustics. For further details about the original classical Greek design see *ibid.*, 15-17; H. Earle Johnson, *Symphony Hall, Boston* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 16.

limited the effect of resonant properties of the concert hall on the music's free movement through that space, enabling the music to move without resistance. Sabine's rationalisation of the concert hall aimed therefore towards an ideal of 'frictionless' aural space, even if this depended on cultural agreement about what such optimal acoustic conditions were. Such rationalisation of space attempted to erase the unique aural signature of the concert hall: what remained must therefore be 'pure' sound. It also reveals both a standardising and an expansionist impulse, because architects could potentially infinitely replicate this aural space.

It is in this sense that the mathematical ordering of space at Symphony Hall arguably betrays a romantic, idealist impulse, which has ethical undertones about art's ennobling potential. This tension is articulated on a plaque in the building's lobby that acknowledges Sabine's contributions:

Symphony Hall, the first auditorium in the world to be built in known conformity with acoustical laws, was designed in accordance with his specifications and mathematical formulae, the fruit of long and arduous research. Through self-effacing devotion to science, he nobly served the art of music.⁵²

But 'pure' abstracted sound was idealised in European music discourse long before Sabine made architectural and spatial acoustics an academic field of enquiry in the U.S.⁵³ As Karen Painter has observed, arguments about purity and timbre were closely entwined in nineteenth-century Germanic musical discourse, where influential critics, including Eduard Hanslick, valued the abstract musical idea above its material rendering. Invoking ideas of sensuality and the body, there was a pervasive understanding that the physicality of timbre corrupted music's purity, indicating that sound's pure essence was ideological.⁵⁴ The plaque dedicating the space to Beethoven at the top of the proscenium arch over the stage in Symphony Hall, a figurehead for the Germanic pure musical 'idea', is an explicit gesture towards the impact of European – or

⁵² Stebbins, *The Making of Symphony Hall, Boston*, 47.

⁵³ Although acoustics were already an established academic area in Europe, this field did not seem to extend to architectural acoustics. Veit Erlmann has investigated Hermann von Helmholtz's work on acoustics, resonance, and the ear in the late nineteenth century. See Erlmann, *Reason and Resonance: A History of Modern Aurality* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), in particular chap. 6, 'The Labyrinth of Reason: Hermann von Helmholtz's Physiological Acoustics and the Loss of Certainty', 217-70.

⁵⁴ Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations*, in particular chap. 3, 'Sensuality and Redemption', 81-122.

perhaps even more specifically, Germanic – ideologies of musical value and purity on this concert hall and on the scientific impulse to abstract sound from space.

The architecture of Boston Symphony Hall and its ‘technological manipulations of sound-absorbing building materials’ are used by Thompson in *The Soundscape of Modernity* as the starting point for a particular narrative of technical mastery of space and sound. She contends that the period 1900 to 1933, bookended by two key events – the opening of Boston Symphony Hall and the opening night at New York’s Radio City Music Hall in December 1932 – signalled a major transformation in the nature of the American soundscape and the culture of listening, characterised by the ‘disassociation’ of sound and space. Radio City Music Hall represents the electrical transcendence of the architecture and space of performance: ‘the severance [of the relationship between sound and space] was made complete when electroacoustic devices claimed sound for their own.’⁵⁵ But another first – the status of Harris’s symphony as the first American symphony to be recorded in February 1934 – advances a very similar point. Taken together, then, the week-apart Boston performances and New York live recording of *Symphony 1933* compress Thompson’s narrative of the period’s reformulation of soundscape and listening practice, focussing the spatial ideologies Thompson details.

The Columbia recording of Harris’s symphony at Carnegie Hall, then, uncouples sound from space differently. However, given the large existing literature on twentieth century recording, only a few aspects need to be raised here that relate to the broader argument of this chapter.⁵⁶ This was the first American symphony to which it was possible to listen ‘on demand’ at home; a real trail-blazing work not only in the context of Harris’s biography, but for the construction of the American symphony as a genre and, as such, symptomatic of early canonising drives. The work was recorded on seven sides of a seventy-eight record. (The remaining four minutes and twenty

⁵⁵ Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity*, 2.

⁵⁶ See, for example, Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology has Changed Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Timothy Day, *A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Michael Chanan, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and its Effects on Music* (London: Verso, 1995); Robert Philip, *Early Recordings and Musical Style: Changing Tastes in Instrumental Performance, 1900-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

seconds on the eighth side are devoted to another work by Harris commissioned to fill the empty side, written for flute and string quartet, and prosaically titled *Four Minutes Twenty Seconds*.) In many ways the recording represents a kind of abstraction or even *extraction* of the specific aural space of a performance, in this case, Carnegie Hall on Friday evening, February 2, 1934. It captured a specific aural space, frozen in time, which then could in principle be reproduced anywhere with a phonograph player. Again, the abstraction of the aural space in the Carnegie Hall serves its infinite reproducibility, in the same way as abstract acoustic principles behind the Boston Symphony Hall allowed in theory for the infinite replication of that exact concert space with no regard for geography or locality. However these abstract spaces also differ. The way the Columbia recording domesticated Harris's West by harnessing it within the private sphere, making it both reproducible and mobile, intersects with some contemporary discourses around technologies that enabled American mobility and domesticated the West in other ways, as elaborated below.

American 'Individualism' and Rationalised Landscapes

The acoustics of Boston Symphony Hall and the New York recording, then, point to a tension between rationalist imperatives and the idealist, infinite universalism that their respective technologies sought to serve. The mythology of the West, likewise, was caught between two poles: between the transcendental, utopian ideal of the West that drew settlers out there, and the rationalising projects that established and perpetuated colonial claims to the land. Indeed, historically the ideological and legal foundations for American westward expansion owed much to obviously rationalist conceptualisations of space. European ideologies of spatial abstraction, homogeneity, and reproducibility arguably underscored the whole project of federalism after America obtained political sovereignty in the late eighteenth century, and underscored westward expansion under the banner of 'manifest destiny'.⁵⁷ This is the narrative of which the nostalgic,

⁵⁷ Yvonne Elizabeth Pelletier notes that: 'Anglo-American's sense of potential has been facilitated by an ongoing vision of itself as the promised land. [...] Its vast, seemingly empty geography provided a conveniently blank surface

nineteenth-century Western pioneer-figure was the protagonist, and after whom Harris, aided by the press, fashioned his public image.

As literary scholar Michele Navakas argues, invoking Martin Brückner's work on cartography, a 'modern homogenous spatiality' facilitated a unified sense of nationhood despite the geographical diversity of the North American continent, underwriting the logic of America's political sovereignty.⁵⁸ Quite literally from the ground up, landscape and subject were rationalised as a basis for replicating and extending a hegemonic model of law and governance under a centralised power. Early federal land ordinances exemplify such a conception of space. The North West Ordinance of 1787, for example, was an agreement about how additional states could be incorporated under the centralised federal authority governing the existing East Coast states, pertaining to the region covering present-day Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota.⁵⁹ It specified that this land be divided into mile-squared quadrants, which were then combined into townships consisting of thirty-six mile-squared quadrants, onto which the existing power structures of government and law could be mapped. In addition, the Ordinance enshrined a notion of land-ownership as fundamental to liberal models of civil society, a prerequisite for systems of justice. The Homestead Act of 1862 provides a later historical example of rationalist legal approaches to landscape that persisted well into the twentieth century. Under this act, land was handed out to American citizens in identical 160-acre units with the stipulation that the land be cultivated – that is, possessed and disciplined.⁶⁰ As

upon which numerous theological, political, and economic fantasies could be imposed. [...] 'By the nineteenth century, opportunities in America were reconceptualised explicitly in terms of physical and financial investment in the land, complementing humanistic visions of the nation as an Enlightenment model of democracy.' [...] 'The collective will to see the nation as potentially perfectible, and all geographies as equally available for transformation into productive cities and farms, made land a concrete means by which all citizens could express an optimistic faith in an otherwise uncertain endeavour.' Yvonne Elizabeth Pelletier, 'False Promises and Real Estate: Land Speculation and Millennial Maps in Herman Melville's *Confidence-Man*', in *American Literary Geographies*, Brückner and Hsu, 191-205, 191-2.

⁵⁸ See Michele Currie Navakas, 'Island Nation: Mapping Florida, Revising America', *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 11 (2013), 243-271, 246; she cites: Brückner, *Early American Cartographies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

⁵⁹ For further details, see, for example, Peter S. Onuf, *Statehood and Union: A History of the Northwest Ordinance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). See also the original document: 'An ordinance for the government of the territory of the United States, North-west of the river Ohio' (New York, 1787); Digital ID: bdsdcc 22501, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/bdsdcc.22501>> (accessed 9 June 2015).

⁶⁰ See Karen R. Merrill, *Public Lands and Political Meaning: Ranchers, the Government, and the Property Between Them* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), especially chap. 2: 'The Properties of the Homebuilder', 37-66; Michael L. Lanza, *Agrarianism and Reconstruction Politics: The Southern Homestead Act* (London: Louisiana State University

such, westward expansionism is fundamentally implicated historically in liberal discourses which required a notion of land as property as interchangeable – as fungible and anonymous – and which blurred the boundaries between property and the sovereignty of the individual. As Steinbeck put it in *The Grapes of Wrath*, critiquing American ‘individualism’, ‘the quality of owning freezes you forever into “I”, and cuts you off forever from the “we”’.⁶¹

Contemporary reviews of *Symphony 1933* argued that it projected the spaces of the West within the space of the concert hall. And despite the century-wide historical distance between them, some of the legal foundations for American expansionism and the acoustic principles behind Boston Symphony Hall seem to be connected by the ideals of spatial homogeneity and reproducibility that they uncover. The historical disciplining of the American landscape into equal, measured – and critically – abstract, anonymous units anticipates the way the Boston Symphony Hall was measured and rationalised to create a ‘perfect’ space, in which no trace of that space’s acoustic idiosyncrasies could be perceived, and in which the musical subject could move without friction. As in Boston, the space of Carnegie Hall at the recorded performance underwent rationalisation in its capture for the phonograph. Indeed, this recording abstracted the Carnegie Hall performance, making it – theoretically – reproducible in any space with a phonograph, the caveat being the limitations of the technology at the time. But both rationalised concert hall spaces – in New York and in Boston – were culturally enormously loaded, as an elite space for the white bourgeois class – the same subjectivities privileged in the narrative of westward expansion – to perform and affirm their hegemony, naturalising the West in the cultural imagination in a way that justified the power of precisely those bourgeois subjectivities. These rationalising processes defused the West’s raw power and domesticated the formerly untameable, legitimising an attitude of white ‘entitlement’ to mobility within that landscape.⁶²

Press, 1990); see also: Paul W. Gates, *Free Homesteads for all Americans: The Homestead Act of 1862* (Washington: Civil War Centennial Commission, 1963); Daniel Witter, *The Settler's Guide to the Entry of Public Lands in Colorado* (Denver: News Printing Company, 1882).

⁶¹ Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*, 158.

⁶² See Seiler, *Republic of Drivers*, 5, for further discussion of ‘attitudes to mobility characterised by entitlement’.

However, the historical distance between these impulses cannot be seamlessly collapsed at these performances, in part because of how ideological foundations for individualism shifted around the turn of the century with the advent of Taylorism, as Seiler has argued. Frederick Winslow Taylor's hugely influential *The Principles of Scientific Management*, published in 1911, elucidated his systematic aim 'to increase productivity by precise delineation, measurement, surveillance, and enforcement of workers' activities', fully alienating workers from their labour.⁶³ If the ideology behind the North West Ordinance homogenised and anonymised land, then, it still proposed land ownership as a determining factor for individual autonomy. Steinbeck's semi-fictional account of conditions in the 1930s under industrial agriculture in *The Grapes of Wrath*, however, depicts a landscape even further homogenised into anonymous spaces of mass production, where land was owned by ever fewer, ever richer firms and individuals. This critique of capitalist modernity and of the virtually impossible conditions faced by migrant farmworkers is germane here for understanding the desperate situation in the early 1930s, as a realist foil to the utopianism of Harris's mythologised West.⁶⁴ The Great Depression hit the white working class hard, threatening to destabilise the position of the white male workers – modern pioneers – who formed the bedrock of white American identity, that is the kind of hard-working, straight-talking, no-frills masculine identity performed at the concert hall by Harris's symphony.⁶⁵ It saw the mass dispossession of farmworkers and westward migration, and focused anxieties about mechanisation and the labouring jobs it made redundant, and about rationalisation of labour more generally. Workers lost their connection to the land on which they and their families had been born, had lived, and had died. The liberal discourses about the sovereign yeoman subjectivity on which the nineteenth-century American political economy depended rang hollow.

American 'individualism', then, as Seiler has observed, had to be a construct that could shift to accommodate changing cultural and political imperatives and norms moving into the twentieth

⁶³ See *ibid.*, 26. More general discussion of Taylorism is found in chap. 1, 'Individualism, Taylorization, and the Crisis of Republican Selfhood', 17-35.

⁶⁴ See Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*.

⁶⁵ For discussion of how the importance of pioneer masculinity to bourgeois American identity was established, as well as its complicated relationship with Europe, see Monica Rico, *Nature's Noblemen: Transatlantic Masculinities and the Nineteenth-Century American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

century, and the Harris reception reflects some of the contradictory elements that characterised shifting ideas of ‘individualism’. The late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ideology of ‘sovereign selfhood anchored by artisanal production’⁶⁶ was re-forged under a new roughly twentieth-century regime of industrial capitalism which posited a new kind of individualism subordinated to consumer culture, where the individual was no longer the locus of land ownership and of self-reliant material production. To preserve the status quo under a developing industrial capitalist regime, self-determinism needed to be decoupled from property ownership and ownership of one’s own labour, and reharnessed onto something else that could be assimilated within the modern discourses and imperatives of corporate capitalism and consumerism. Seiler proposes that an idea of American mobility, an obvious requirement of capitalist workforce, fulfilled this function, and was repackaged and sold as a fundamental condition of freedom. The archetypal technology of this kind of self-determinism was the automobile; the archetypal figure, the lone driver. One American myth – that of the yeoman pioneer – was elided with another in a way that masked the rift between shifting political economies.⁶⁷

The scientifically ordered, clean space of the Boston concert hall arguably participated in forming just such a characteristically ‘modern’ kind of autonomous selfhood, which was not wholly continuous with the autonomous yeoman selfhood typified by sovereignty and ownership. This depended on a sense of identity between listening subject and the kind of exuberant, active, adventurous American subjectivity Harris sought to evoke in the symphony – recall here Harris’s comments in the programme note. Note that, as already seen, on the plaque in the lobby in Boston Symphony Hall ‘the art of music’, or the musical subject, is served by the scientific rationalisation of the concert hall, facilitating the free and unimpeded motion of the music ‘itself’. This idea of the musical subject as unimpeded reflects contemporary constructions of the American subject in relationship to a ‘modern’ vision of clean and reproducible anonymous

⁶⁶ Seiler, *Republic of Drivers*, 24.

⁶⁷ Ibid., in particular introduction: ‘Automobility and American Subjectivity’, 1-16, and chap. 1, ‘Individualism, Taylorization, and the Crisis of Republican Selfhood’.

space. The space of Boston Symphony Hall thus participates in configuring a sovereign subject that dominates space – but aligns perhaps less with liberal discourses about sovereignty and land ownership than it does with a scientifically rationalised subject whose ‘individualism’ related to freedom of mobility. Furthermore, the frictionless, pure space of the concert hall which leaves no acoustic trace on the music performed there mirrors the frictionless, clean, and abstract space of American liberalism, as articulated by Brückner and Hsu: ‘an abstract, infinitely expandable [...] democratic social space’. Indeed, the ideology of space and sound at Boston Symphony Hall seems to trace the same counter-running impulses to control and contain on the one hand, and towards a boundless, idealised horizon on the other that situates it in liberal ideology’s broader narrative of spatial abstraction.

Most of the reviews of Harris’s symphony, as we saw, seemed to hanker after a nostalgic fiction of the pioneer and West that obscured the modern alienation of agricultural workers from the American landscapes they had once cultivated. But slightly closer attention to the reviews suggests that this mythologised figure also channelled ideas of modern propulsion and progress, and that the homogenous Western space that the reviews evoked characterised perhaps not just ownership of, but instead mobility within these landscapes as the archetype of freedom and self-determinism. Characterisations of space as increasingly frictionless, homogenous, and anonymous, then, enabled American mobility. Organicist language helped mediate this transition. Not only did the use of such vocabularies represent a muscular attempt to appropriate the ‘natural’ for the kind of subjectivities with whom white society sought to identify. Organicist rhetorics are polysemous, binding together sexual metaphors and metaphors of masculinity, but also metaphors of motion, propulsion and growth, and contemporary scientific ideas in ways that resist untangling. Precisely this mutability, then, obscures some of the conflicts in American ideas of autonomy and self-determinism foregrounded by the Depression: between an agrarian sense of American freedom characterised by property ownership, and a modern, capitalist sense of American freedom characterised by mobility.

Organicism and Propulsion

Metaphors of organicism and masculinity entrenched in both symphonic discourse and discussion of the American landscape made it particularly easy to elide the West and the musical terrain of the symphony. Slippage between organicist metaphors used to frame both the Western landscape and symphonic space – recall Downes’s comments about ‘organic development’ and the ‘creative seed’, or Parker’s sexually charged observations about the rhythms’ ‘propulsive force’ – suggests that musically, too, Harris’s symphony represents a rationalising space, layered upon the spaces already discussed as coinciding at the concerts. A hagiographic 1932 article on Harris by his former composition tutor Arthur Farwell for *The Musical Quarterly* offers a yet further and particularly clear example of poetic enfolding of musical and Western spaces, where he describes the composer’s ‘teachers of melody’ as ‘the broad horizon, the long undulations or the craggy lines of mountain contours, winding streams, and the gracious curvature of tree branches’.⁶⁸ As such, modernist imperatives musically to systematise and dissect then become linked to ideas of ordering and systematising the landscape, in ways which facilitate ‘modern’ mobile subjectivities.

But in a recent essay on Harris’s tonal practices Levy identifies a vital point about some of the conflicting tendencies within Harris’s organicism, centring on the ideological role of the tonic. Organicism has a dual function in relation to Harris’s tonal realm, negotiating the oppositions between idealist romanticism and ‘scientific systematising’, two aspects of modernity that she argues his music assimilates. Rejecting key signature and scale, she notes that Harris’s harmonic idiom ‘was built, from the ground up, on the principle that both tonality and consonance could and should be defined in relation to a single, anchoring entity: the sounding fundamental tone’.⁶⁹ Critically, then, Harris’s conflicting understandings of organicism converge with the oppositional structuring impulses that arguably frame the American West: ‘investing this tonic note with all the weight of science and nature, Harris theorised a sense of tonality [...] quite concretely tied to his

⁶⁸ Arthur Farwell, ‘Roy Harris’, *The Musical Quarterly*, 18 (1932), 18–32, 25.

⁶⁹ Levy, ‘Roy Harris and the Crisis of Consonance’, in *Tonality 1900–1950: Concept and Practice*, eds. Felix Wörner, Ullrich Scheideler and Philip Ernst Rupprecht (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), 247–260, 248.

position at a cusp between two distinct understandings of organicism: a romantic emphasis on spontaneous growth and a modern preoccupation with systematic control.⁷⁰ This has implications for Harris's melodic design: Harris's tonic functions melodically as a germ out of which many different scales may sprout. Perhaps, too, the fundamentally ordered and interchangeable idea of a tonic suggests – as indicated by Levy's consciously deployed metaphor 'from the ground up' – a rationalised, systematised kind of ground, recalling the West's historical division and disciplining.

Levy suggests, then, that the organicism surrounding Harris and his symphony in the contemporary commentary does complex ideological work, precariously balanced between broadly idealist and broadly rationalist ideologies, but does not link it to the specific crisis for masculine subjectivities engendered by the Depression. Although vocabularies of organicism have long been bound up with the symphonic genre, Farwell played a significant role in cementing their unusual centrality in public discussion of Harris's music. In the aforementioned *Musical Quarterly* article he extolled the 'principle of germination and organic growth which [...] determine[s] the formal character of every composition of Harris from its first note to its last.'⁷¹ Farwell also noted Harris's particular talent as 'this astonishing capacity for *re-constituting* the germ-theme in infinite variety in respect of melodic line, rhythm and harmonic reference'.⁷² Such vocabularies often veiled sexual metaphors. Byron Adams has incisively contextualised the 'germ' metaphor in early twentieth-century British Sibelius reception. Alluding to 'germ plasm', which at the time was thought to be an element of sexual reproduction (what we now know as the genes inside egg and sperm cells), the germ was a potent metaphor of specifically masculine virility.⁷³ But, as a term nodding to contemporary scientific discourse, the germ metaphor also indicates an organicism viewed through the microscope of modernity's scientific, dissecting, rationalising agendas. Modernist imperatives to systematise, fragment, and exert control on an ever-decreasing

⁷⁰ Levy, 'Roy Harris and the Crisis of Consonance', 248.

⁷¹ Ibid., 20.

⁷² Ibid., 22.

⁷³ Byron Adams, "'Thor's Hammer': Sibelius and British Music Critics, 1905-1957", in *Jean Sibelius and His World*, ed. Daniel M. Grimley (Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011), 125-157, 142-3.

scale can also be assimilated into organicist language, and Farwell's above elucidation of Harris's form, generated from small cells, bears this out. Harris's seeming organicism disguises extensive intervention as natural reproduction.

This supposed 'principle of germination and organic growth' prompted new terminology in the reception that stressed the self-generative aspect of Harris's form. In Slonimsky's *Boston Evening Transcript* pre-concert article Harris's melodic line was presented as 'heliotropic', connoting growth towards the sun.⁷⁴ In this sense, melody in particular is represented as a mode of diffusion in Harris's work, 'organically' – in the sense of spontaneous growth – cheating the regularity of containing parameters like metre, rhythm and so forth. Growing away from the ground in the direction of the infinite, the 'heliotropic' musical subject is both free and self-determining. Levy locates a particularly clear example of Harris's 'heliotropic' melody – melody-as-seed – in the first movement of *Symphony 1933* [see example 6]:⁷⁵

Example 6: Roy Harris, *Symphony 1933*, first movement, violin 1 and 2, bars 174–94, modified with reference to manuscript score (Harris Papers, box 6) from example in: Levy, 'Roy Harris and the Crisis of Consonance', 150.

cantabile

♩ = 92 to 100

⁷⁴ Slonimsky, 'From the West: Composer New to Bostonians'.

⁷⁵ Levy, 'Roy Harris and the Crisis of Consonance', 249-50; Levy also uses this example to illustrate 'heliotropic' melody in: Levy, "'The White Hope of American Music': Or, How Roy Harris Became Western", 148.

Nonetheless, ‘heliotropic’, diffusive motion towards the heavens is balanced by a counter, literally ‘grounding’ impulse towards the tonic (or ‘home’), gesturing once again towards the counter impulses that structure ideas of the American West. Thus although such organic imagery signified something idealist in the sense of growth towards the boundless skies, it equally channelled early twentieth-century biological discourse: divisions into irreducible, interchangeable units of ‘seed’ and ‘germ’ and their internal, self-propelling growth logics. As already noted, Harris himself described his melodic development in *Symphony 1933* as ‘autogenetic’, appropriating geneticist vocabularies.⁷⁶

The self-generative aspect of the seed or germ metaphor echoes rhetoric associated with the self-sufficient, individualist frontiersman, or the self-made man. Although a seed plants roots where no roots previously existed, the metaphor nonetheless locates Harris within the ‘natural’ order of things, and his thriving position there is cemented by appealing to the universals that nurture like light and water, covertly legitimising white presence in Western landscapes. Parker’s review of the Boston premiere that claimed Harris’s symphony was ‘American of the Far West that nourishes itself’ is again salient here. Adams’s work suggests that the germ metaphor can displace the conscious agency of the composer, subordinating it to natural, unconscious, and uncontrollable sexual drives. Veiling Harris’s agency with metaphors suggesting the uncompromising powers of nature elides Harris himself with the landscape, ‘naturalising’ in a literal sense of the word the symbolic white American masculine subjectivity for whom he stands. Additionally, ‘heliotropic’ growth towards the sun frames the flourishing of white subjectivities in this landscape as inevitable – a natural imperative that recalls the inevitability connoted by manifest destiny, underscored by faith in ‘progress’.

But flora metaphors do more than bed white subjectivities in Western landscapes. Encapsulating a sense of something simultaneously both permanent and provisional, these metaphors align with the uprooted, suspended state of the modern subject: that which is rooted can also be uprooted and relocated. This kind of organicism, then, is shaded by ‘American’

⁷⁶ BSO concert programme.

pragmatism, able to grow roots wherever the pioneer might find himself. The ground evoked by these metaphors is interchangeable, implying an element of homogeneity and standardisation – impulses ostensibly foreign to the natural world. Regardless of discrepancy in land fertility across the great expanses of the West, the American ground from which the seed germinates and gains its strength is universalised, non-specific. It is difficult to determine whether the hostility of much Western terrain to agricultural processes, an acute problem in Oklahoma in 1930s, for example, is occluded by this language, or respun into a narrative of heroic battling between man and environment.

Could the sense of motion implied by the term ‘heliotropic’ and present in this passage not also have suggested the weightless cruising of the automobile on the open road, the locomotive heading ‘out west’, or the steam ship crossing the Atlantic? Several commentators responded to the symphony with vocabularies that bound up masculine sexuality with motion or propulsion, all this part of a package of elements thought typically ‘American’. Moses Smith was the most explicit. ‘To any American with ears’, he wrote, ‘the symphony speaks the American language. This music is virile. It has a destination.’⁷⁷ Recall also Parker’s sexually charged comment about the ‘propulsive force’ of the asymmetrical rhythms, which seem to derive from the ‘impulses’ and ‘gaits’ of the West. In the *Boston Herald* George S. McManus described the work’s ‘rugged, driving sincerity’.⁷⁸ For W.J. Henderson, ‘resolution and energy are found everywhere, manifestations of a young and independent talent’.⁷⁹ Other commentators’ references to motion and propulsion were more oblique. ‘Vigor’ was a word curiously overused by critics, perhaps since it alluded both to movement and to potent sexual energy. Francis D Perkins described ‘the vigor of the work’;⁸⁰ Moses Smith complimented the ‘breadth and vigor of many of its melodies’;⁸¹ Henderson

⁷⁷ Moses Smith, ‘Stravinsky’s Ballet Feature of Program at Symphony’, *Boston Evening American*, 27 January 1934; found in: Harris Papers, box 42.

⁷⁸ George S. McManus, ‘Music’, *Boston Herald*, 27 January 1934, 4. This review is cited in: Stehman, *Roy Harris: A Bio-Bibliography*, 377.

⁷⁹ W. J. Henderson, ‘Roy Harris Work Played By Boston Symphony’, *New York Sun*, n.d.; found in Harris’s scrapbook of *Symphony 1933* reviews, Harris Papers, box 42.

⁸⁰ Francis D. Perkins, ‘Koussevitzky Presents “1933” By Roy Harris’, *New York Herald Tribune*, 3 February 1934. This review is cited in: *ibid.*, 379.

⁸¹ Smith, ‘Stravinsky’s Ballet Feature of Program at Symphony’.

observed ‘vigor in all the score’.⁸² The symphony’s bombastic opening, with its pulsating timpani figure articulating an open fifth – the motif that jolts the symphony into motion – can only have aided this impression. Indeed, the ‘vigor’ memo seemed to have reached Theodore Chanler at *Modern Music*, too, when he described the passage, although his implied transport of choice was nautical: ‘The opening period of the first movement [...] has a freshness of temper, a nervous vigor of pace, that is as exhilarating as a dash of salt spray on the face’.⁸³ Perhaps Chanler was thinking of perilous ocean crossings to the New World.

Whether Harris’s ‘destination’ was reached by land or by water, the language of the reviewers suggested a masculinity shaped by propulsion and mobility. It does not seem too far-fetched, therefore, to suggest that the symphony’s reception was entwined with discourses relating to Seiler’s self-determining American driver, an emerging masculine archetype that reframed the mythologies of the lone pioneer for the post-Taylorist era. Yet despite the utopianism of this subject’s free-flowing motion towards an unreachable horizon, the driver is ordered and separated into discrete islands of portable private space that alienate that subject from the landscape rushing past. The automobile played a role in domesticating the West, as a commodified bubble of private space that mediated the wilderness, and in this way it intersects with the West Harris’s symphony projected at the concert hall, or at home via the phonograph or radio transmission, similarly commodified, sanitised, and domesticated.

It seems that Farwell heard the desolation of the period as a programme to the second movement. Farwell wrote to Harris after hearing the radio broadcast of the premiere: ‘the second movement [...] gave a very pathetic impression, even one of despair – I presume reflecting the despair of the year 1933.’⁸⁴ This kind of modern, alienated American subjectivity might then present an illuminating foil for reading this movement’s universalised introspection – described

⁸² Henderson, ‘Roy Harris Work Played By Boston Symphony’.

⁸³ Theodore Chanler, ‘Forecast and Review – New York – 1934’, *Modern Music*, 11 (1934), 142-7. Typescript found in Harris Papers, box 42. Similar vocabulary seemed to stick to Harris himself, as an archetype for American masculinity. Mendel, for example, was impressed by the ‘pace’ at which Harris was producing new works. See Arthur Mendel, ‘An American Work’, *New York Times*, 11 February 1934, 8.

⁸⁴ Letter from Farwell to Harris, 6 February 1934, Harris Papers, box 25. Reproduced with the permission of the Arthur Farwell family.

by one reviewer as a ‘supra-personal sadness’.⁸⁵ For example, the lyrical woodwind figure four bars before figure 7 creates a sense of smooth, steady motion [see example 7].

Example 7: Roy Harris, *Symphony 1933*, second movement: ‘Andante’, bars 66–72. Reproduced from manuscript score (Harris Papers, box 6).

Poco Rubato

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet in Bb, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The Flute part is marked *mf cantabile* and features a melodic line with a first ending bracket. The Clarinet in Bb part is also marked *mf cantabile* and features a similar melodic line with a first ending bracket. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) are marked *mp* and play a steady, rhythmic pattern. The second system includes parts for Flute, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet in Bb, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The Flute part continues the melodic line. The Oboe part has a first ending bracket. The English Horn part has a first ending bracket. The Clarinet in Bb part continues the melodic line. The Violin I part has a first ending bracket. The Violin II part has a first ending bracket. The Viola part has a first ending bracket. The Violoncello part has a first ending bracket. The Contrabass part has a first ending bracket. The string parts (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass) are marked *mf* and play a steady, rhythmic pattern. The Violin I part has a first ending bracket. The Violin II part has a first ending bracket. The Viola part has a first ending bracket. The Violoncello part has a first ending bracket. The Contrabass part has a first ending bracket. The Violin I part has a first ending bracket. The Violin II part has a first ending bracket. The Viola part has a first ending bracket. The Violoncello part has a first ending bracket. The Contrabass part has a first ending bracket.

⁸⁵ Chanler, ‘Forecast and Review – New York – 1934’.

The legato, even quaver melody in high register flutes and clarinets glides above the regular, stepwise motion of the crotchet accompanying figures in middle to low register strings. The passage conjures a feeling of constant, flowing pace, but also an alienation that commentators suggested was part of the modern condition: the woodwind voices seem distant both in register and timbre from the grounded aural world of the strings over which they move. Perhaps, too, the regularity and tonal order of the string accompaniment supplies a sense of modernity's 'homogenous spatiality' – a rationalised notion of ground as interchangeable, anticipating a nationalised highway infrastructure that by the 1950s would go on to create anonymous, standardised non-places across the continent.⁸⁶ The 'despair' Farwell noted, then, might respond to a contemporary crisis of virile masculinity, and that masculinity's disconnection from the landscape, bemoaning the emasculating effect of mass unemployment on the white cultural consciousness.

Conclusion

Despite the democratising social impulse historically associated with the symphonic genre by those like Bekker, it is perhaps its spatial implications, consonant with the all-encompassing social impulse towards the *Hörschaft*, that had the greatest power to absorb and perpetuate the idealised West's inherent contradictions in the myth-making surrounding *Symphony 1933*. Symphonic discourses inherited from the nineteenth century offered existing conceptual furrows that translate onto the contradictory outwards and inwards striving impulses structuring both the West and American subjectivities, strengthening the hold of the imagined West in the cultural imagination. The symphony's immense, even – to invoke Gustav Mahler – world-encompassing musical frame is congruent with the horizonless reach of the West. Yet it contrasts with the genre's rationalising modernist musical imperatives to control at the most detailed motivic level, congruent in turn with the rationalising projects of dissection into small units that underpinned

⁸⁶ See Seiler, *Republic of Drivers*, 15.

Westward expansionism, or the homogenous, reproducible spaces of industrial capitalism. The critical elision of Harris's symphony and the landscapes of the West suggests that insofar as it is a modernist project of musical dissection it is also ideologically allied with colonialist projects to dominate the landscape of the West.

Yet in spite of its contradictions, Harris's symphony opened up a platform for making symphonic discourses a problem of American identity and a space for forging American subjectivities. Farwell illustrated this in the *Musical Quarterly* article – and it can reasonably be assumed that here he was acting as Harris's mouthpiece⁸⁷ – injecting vocabularies of self-sufficiency and self-determination right into the essence of absolute music, after first setting up the European symphony as a conceptual space either too strictly controlled by superficial rules or too 'loose and flabby' after 'a century of Romantic laxity'.⁸⁸ The article stressed the authenticity of absolute musical forms in particular as the only viable alternative to these 'debased' – and thus also decadent and emasculating – European drives. Masculine language connoting generative virility held Harris apart from supposedly effete, overrefined tendencies in European music: in opposition to 'Europe-born and Europe matured' 'shallow vagaries', Harris 'brings up a profoundly earnest and authentic art of music, wherein music shall speak of and for itself, and weave its own dreams and messages out of its own material and in its own terms.' Harris 'must perforce rear its [music's] form from out its own inmost self.'⁸⁹ Musical and authorial 'American' subject are here elided. Sexual imagery of regeneration and new life 'reared' from within again abounds: the appeal to 'authenticity' is tied to ideas of natural, healthy masculine sexuality. Farwell thus reframed symphonic ideology within terms bound up with liberalism, American 'individualism', and masculine identity, and made the symphony a space for those ideals to have free rein.

⁸⁷ Given Harris's involvement in writing the article, it can more or less be read as a statement of Harris's aesthetic agenda. See Levy, "'The White Hope of American Music': Or, How Roy Harris Became Western", 142 for discussion of Farwell's 1932 *Musical Quarterly* article, and the extent of Harris's influence on the text.

⁸⁸ See Farwell, 'Roy Harris', 20-24.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

What kind of American selfhood, then, do Harris's symphony and its abstract spaces together refract? Harris's reflections on American identity that opened this chapter gestured towards a national identity full of contradictions: one that appears timeless, although explicitly has yet to reach maturity; one that scans the world beyond the frontier, but also looks inwards in its search for authenticity, caught between the transcendentalist impulse towards the infinite skyline and the rationalist impulse to control, dissect, and bound. However the modern, autonomising impulses related to 'modern' reformulations of space and sound focused by early performances of the symphony makes it a site at which the romantic mythology of the pioneer is fused with the new and emerging sense of selfhood characterised by self-determinism and frictionless mobility – that is, American subjectivity ready for capitalist modernity, and a figure that countered and obscured the emasculating effect of the Depression. This subjectivity, then, is rooted in a collectively imagined past era of nation forming and struggle, but has its eyes fixed on the horizon, with a keen sense of advancing through both space and time. Yet the kind of American subjectivity and narrative performed by Harris's symphony and the kind of space it propounds comes at the cost of the other subjectivities and narratives, both American and otherwise, that it silences.

Chapter 3

The Bounding Line: Pan American Aesthetics in Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony*

Mexico was a rich time. Outwardly nothing happened and inwardly all was calm, yet I'm left with the impression of having had an enriching experience. It comes, no doubt, from the nature of the country and the people. Europe now seems conventional to me by comparison. Mexico offers something fresh and pure and wholesome – a quality which is deeply unconventionalized. The source of it I believe is the Indian blood which is so prevalent. I sensed the influence of the Indian background everywhere – even in the landscape. And I must be something of an Indian myself, or how else explain the sympathetic chord it awakens in me. Of course I'm going back some day.¹

Letter from Copland to Mary Lescaze, 13 January 1933.

Aaron Copland kept a photo album documenting the months from late August 1932 to early 1933 he spent in Mexico visiting Carlos Chávez.² The pictures suggest that he spent much time in the company of his new partner, Victor Kraft. There are plenty of typical holiday shots clearly taken by both men: photos of Mexico City, of their accommodation, of day trips, of desert and rural landscapes, and photos of the men at play. Also interleaved between the Mexican land- and cityscapes are often suggestive pictures of Kraft in various states of undress: shirtless on the tennis court, draped over garden furniture, reclining, topless and provocatively spread-legged across a rowing boat, posing naked and athletic in the sunshine like a Hellenic statue, sunbathing nude. Although there are some off-guard photos of Copland that suggest Kraft might at times have held the camera, for instance of the composer sleeping naked on a deckchair, Copland's viewfinder repeatedly returned to the seventeen-year-old's muscular physical form.

Through the lens of this album, it would be easy to read Mexico and Kraft as symbolically entwined within the camera's gaze. The Mexican landscapes of the album, as much as does the flawless body of the young Kraft, seem to promise Copland a kind of tabula rasa, an image vital to the freshness and universalism of the Pan American ideal with which this chapter is concerned. The album encompasses a sense of energy: a budding new relationship, empty landscapes, potent gleaming automobiles, blazing sun, youthful bodies, open deserts, a new world

¹ Letter from Aaron Copland to Mary Lescaze, 13 January 1933, Copland Collection, box 258. All archival materials in this chapter created by Copland are reproduced by permission of The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright owner.

² 'Mexico' (photo album, Copland Collection, box 514, 1932).

to be explored by the young men. It channels a sense of an empty universal, emblazoned with bodily presence and the pregnant with possibility, further horizons, and novel experiences. The images are also often highly eroticised, and at least one Copland scholar has read his relationship with Mexico as being about exploring his homosexuality through the subaltern's permissive 'potential for transgression'.³ But is Copland simply objectifying and orientalising Mexico in the Saidian sense? Engendering a sense of erotic fulfilment and spiritual wholeness, Copland's idealising relationship with Mexico perhaps becomes less about binary transgression than about its redemptive potential: about making peace with selfhood. As such the album represents the body not only as a site of power, but also, more playfully, as a site of pleasure. Copland's naive idealisation of Mexico's simplicity, in offering something 'fresh and pure and wholesome' supports this reading of the album. Indeed, Copland's friend Gerald Sykes isolated a spiritual aspect to Copland's emotional maturation during the trip: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Likewise, in her analysis of musical Pan Americanism, Carol Hess has observed of the same letter from Copland to Lescaze that opens this chapter that it articulates a profound desire to identify with an American 'hemispheric' universal.⁵ That universal represented something that is immediate, something that, rather than othering the Orient, sublated the self within a holistic, sensual wholeness or self-fulfilment characterised by presence, immediacy, and completion, even if in many ways it simply feminised the subaltern differently, by rendering it a more maternal, supplicatory, and nurturing presence. What Hess does, then, is to point us towards the idea of

³ Carol A. Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor: Music, Difference, and the Pan American Dream* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4; she cites: Elizabeth Bergman Crist, *Music for the Common Man: Aaron Copland during the Depression and War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 69.

⁵ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 35.

reading all these elements of Copland's engagement with Mexico within a Pan Americanist universalising impulse. Nonetheless the character of those engagements is not consistent, and in many ways it remains profoundly ambivalent: even the letter to Lescaze points to Copland's tendency to essentialise and primitivise. Insofar as the Pan American impulse can be said to organise Copland's Mexican activities, then it was, as Hess acknowledges, by no means 'uniformly benign'.⁶

This chapter is about the symphony that Copland worked on during the trip to Mexico, his *Short Symphony* or Symphony No. 2. Copland dedicated the work to Chávez. The two men probably met in New York during autumn 1926, and *Short Symphony*'s genesis and first performance are closely tied to their strengthening relationship: fittingly, on 23 November 1934 Chávez premiered the work in Mexico City at the *Teatro del Palacio de Bellas Artes* with the Orquesta Sinfónica de México after Koussevitzky deemed it rhythmically too challenging to incorporate into the Boston Symphony Orchestra's season. Reviews of the concert, however, seem to have disappeared without trace and all that remains – at least in the Copland archive at the Library of Congress (i.e. in the U.S., not Mexico) – is the concert's programme and a letter from Chávez to Copland documenting the performance.⁷ Central to this thesis is a concern better to understand the social impulses associated with the symphonic genre, and this chapter asks about the genre's role in preserving local hegemonies and the cultural privilege of particular social groups. Discourse and commentary surrounding *Short Symphony* situates such questions squarely within a Pan American context, signposted by letters, photographs, both Copland's music criticism and that of his contemporaries, and the themes in lectures Copland gave at the time. But although at face value we might expect the *Short Symphony* to be complicit in U.S. cultural imperialism, especially as an elite 'high' art form transplanted into a country with little

⁶ Ibid., 7.

⁷ I have located advertisements for the concerts in Mexico City daily newspapers of the time *El Universal* and *Excelsior* but no reviews. Jennifer DeLapp has similarly been unable to find any evidence of the Mexican reception for her chapter in *Copland Connotations*, which in part surveys the reception of *Short Symphony*. Jennifer DeLapp, 'Speaking to Whom? Modernism, Middlebrow and Copland's *Short Symphony*', in *Copland Connotations: Studies and Interviews*, ed. Peter Dickenson (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 85-102. I am grateful to DeLapp for our conversation at the March 2016 meeting of the Society for American Music in Boston, and to Leo Zucker, for aiding me in finding the concert advertisements in the Mexican newspapers.

infrastructure for classical music, instead, the dialectical relationship between the U.S. and Mexico in which *Short Symphony* participates is far more complex and mutable. Copland initially adopted Chávez's suggestion 'the bounding line' as a working title, pointing towards a common aesthetic project. Examining its wider aesthetic and ideological implications situates the work more fully within a Pan American aesthetic agenda that sought to privilege the body, unity, organicism, essence, and line. Beyond aesthetics, the North-South power differential *Short Symphony* negotiates is also politically inflected by an egalitarian Pan American utopianism prevalent in the contemporary political mood, and acknowledging this allows for a much more nuanced reading of the work and the complex political terrain it navigates, even if Pan Americanism's 'hegemonic intent'⁸ is ultimately no less insidious than colonial or imperialist subjugation, weighted in favour of the dominant political power, the U.S. As Stephanie Stallings puts it, 'The very term "Pan-Americanism," originating in a U.S.-based frame of reference, held the assumption that there existed Americas distinct from each other, an idea Chávez resisted if not outright rejected in favour of the more inclusive concept of "Americanism," referring to the entire continent'.⁹ Developing another sense of the provisional title, I consider how the symphony negotiates the dialectical 'bounding line' that both confounds and defines the Pan American project.

To finesse the dynamic between the U.S. and Mexico in which *Short Symphony* participates, this chapter suggests that we need to read the *Short Symphony* and the utopian, idealised community-forming drive of the symphonic genre within a Pan American contextual and aesthetic framework. Pan Americanism was by definition a multi-dimensional transnational phenomenon, inflected by American political preoccupations with global superpowers Europe and Russia in particular, and as such this frame provides a starting point for addressing how the symphony in the Americas was a surrogate for anxieties about cultural and political relationships with Europe. After all, as Hess notes, Europe was always 'lurking in the background' of Pan

⁸ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 7.

⁹ Stephanie N. Stallings, 'The Pan/American Modernisms of Carlos Chávez and Henry Cowell', in *Carlos Chávez and His World*, Saavedra, 28-45, 30.

Americanism.¹⁰ Hess's research offers a robust model for such work. In this chapter I respond to her challenge that we consider musical works that evoke Latin American 'through a Pan Americanist lens'.¹¹ Recent work done by Hess to uncover musical discourse surrounding Pan American 'ur-classicism' as part of wider cultural interest in the U.S. in forging spiritual, diplomatic and economic ties with South America in the late 1920s and 1930s suggests that Copland's symphony was symptomatic of his engagement in a complex practice of mutual musical, intellectual, and political exchange with Chávez and Mexico that was fostered by a particular and short-lived political and intellectual climate of the 1930s and 1940s. This chapter aims to show how the aesthetics of *Short Symphony* respond to particular values celebrated by American critics as 'ur-classical', values which peaked aesthetically, perhaps, in the early 1930s. In this way, it attempts to demonstrate how the *Short Symphony* contributes to a Pan American hybrid mythology, which aimed, but ultimately failed, at setting the U.S. and Mexico on equal footings: in *Short Symphony*, Copland attempted to find a sense of balance, but this was nonetheless a mythology that ultimately privileged the U.S. Alongside the closely associated visual image of the universalised tabula rasa, that 'ur-classical' aesthetic was invoked in support of a – supposedly positive, socially progressive – Pan American universal. Vital for a more comprehensive and historically situated aesthetic understanding of the work, applying this perspective also points towards striking parallels between *Short Symphony* and Chávez's *Sinfonia India*, premiered in 1936, or his *Sinfonía de Antígona* of 1932.

Existing literature has barely acknowledged the influence of the Pan American intellectual context on Copland's *Short Symphony*, despite much of it having emphasised the importance of democratic world views for reading the work. Widening the lens around this symphony to include the Pan American context develops the ideological focus of research by those like Howard Pollack and Jennifer DeLapp, who have discussed the work as in different ways symptomatic of Copland's 'democratising' and 'middlebrow' impulses respectively. For Pollack,

¹⁰ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 10.

those rhythmic and metric difficulties in the work that dissuaded Koussevitzky from holding the work's premiere decentre the authority of the conductor in rehearsal and performance, a function of Copland's egalitarianism.¹² For DeLapp, *Short Symphony* is symptomatic of Copland's anxieties about the need to bridge contemporary disconnections between composers and the public, channelling the anti-elitism of the Depression, although, like Pollack, her essay downplays Copland's interests in communism at the time.¹³ Situating these socio-political impulses within Pan American agendas attends to a significant critical blind spot in their work. Furthermore, examining Copland's attitudes to Mexico sharpens up narratives about Copland's virtually unquestioned status as a 'democratising' historical figure, as part of broader critical tendencies throughout the twentieth century to gloss Copland's biography within hegemonic U.S. nationalist narratives. Aesthetically, scholars have either examined the work's engagement with neoclassicism – by contrast, Hess describes 'ur-classicism', in making a marked break from European aesthetics, as the 'antithesis of neoclassicism'¹⁴ – or have largely attempted to situate the work within loose definitional categories delineating Copland's own oeuvre. DeLapp, for instance, has positioned it at a watershed moment between Copland's 'difficult' European modernist phase and his outward-looking populist phase.¹⁵ Analytically, Daniel E. Mathers has tackled the *Short Symphony* and its rescoring as the *Sextet* in depth in his 1989 masters' dissertation.¹⁶

Intimately entwined with discourses of universalism, of course, is the symphonic genre, making Copland's *Short Symphony* a particularly appropriate case study for examining Pan Americanism's universalist aspirations. The central focus of analysis of this chapter is how the

¹² As Pollack puts it, the conductor's role becomes 'one more of supervision than of control, of establishing the framework for competing elements to work out their conflicts, a situation very different from that of the virtuoso conductor of the nineteenth century, and one with profound socio-aesthetic implications.' By 'socio-aesthetic implications', Pollack writes that he 'meant to suggest the democratic and anti-authoritarian ethos underpinning it.' See Howard Pollack, 'Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony* and the Challenge to Human Supervision and Control in Music', *Journal of New Music Research*, 31 (2002), 201-210, 206-209.

¹³ See DeLapp, 'Speaking to Whom?', 85-102. DeLapp charts the work's reception after its U.S. radio premiere in 1944, and its first U.S. concert performance in 1957. The number of years between its composition and first U.S. performance means the symphony seems almost a kind of musical time capsule, and the reception allows DeLapp to track changing twentieth-century attitudes to an obviously modernist musical language heard out of its time.

¹⁴ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*.

¹⁵ DeLapp, 'Speaking to Whom?', 85-102.

¹⁶ Daniel E. Mathers, 'Closure in the *Sextet* and *Short Symphony* by Aaron Copland: A Study using Facsimiles and Printed Editions' (M.M., The Florida State University, 1989).

symphonic genre could contribute to this Pan American project. This chapter examines how the symphonic genre, as an instrument of power, contributes to and mediates the dynamic between the U.S. and Mexico, and between Copland and Chávez. Beginning with a detailed biographical discussion of the work to explain more comprehensively the biographical significance of Copland's relationship with Mexico to the work, the chapter's arguments then proceed along two fronts. I propose first that the aesthetic values propagated by Copland's *Short Symphony* and suggested by its working title 'the bounding line' are most comprehensively read as in conscious dialogue with broader Pan Americanist aesthetics. But there's another paradigm here too, just as vital for reading the work. Part of a mutual aesthetic dialogue with Chávez, these need to be contextualised as much by Chávez's aesthetic philosophies as they do by directions pointed to by wider use of the phrase 'the bounding line' by Copland's other contemporaries, tying into networks of cultural ideas about line, dance, balance, and classicism that suggest theoretical alignments from Jacques Dalcroze on music and movement to the aesthetic philosophies of William Blake and James Joyce. Thus the chapter's second claim is that the ideas of presence, spontaneity, and physicality – and, importantly, dance – implied by the notion of line and boundary in the work's temporary title together present just as important an aesthetic polarity for discussion of the work as the cerebral qualities of classical abstraction highlighted by previous commentators, with profound implications for the symphony's role in the discourses of power contained within the Pan American project and the hegemonies it establishes. In seeking an aesthetic of balance, line, lightness, and freshness that drew on a musical language closely associated with dance, Copland idealistically sought to promote Pan Americanist values – that is, to mediate more sensitively in music tensions between hegemonies and multiplicities, and to render the body not as an exoticised other but as a site of pleasure and sensual wholeness.

Yet the symphonic genre was a medium that resisted any intentions to distribute power fairly. The cultural weight of the symphonic mechanism in many ways meant it proved an inept and unwieldy tool for this idealist project, amplifying rather than smoothing out unevennesses of power within Pan Americanism. More acutely than Harris's *Symphony 1933*, then, Copland's work

highlights some pervasive anxieties about the symphonic genre in the U.S. pertaining to its arrival from continental Europe. Much as American commentators and composers like Copland might have wanted to strip the genre of its historical and ideological baggage, the genre was simply already too tightly and heavily saddled, meaning that the *Short Symphony* assumes an agency of its own. A genre that has always been about public muscle flexing, I argue that it complicates the kind of Pan American project elucidated by Hess, and in so doing, it foregrounds the complex discourses of hegemony and some of the Foucauldian lines of power, both lateral and hierarchical, shot through the whole Pan American project.¹⁷ Thus *Short Symphony* is complicit in a Pan American dialectic that seeks to overcome – but, contrary to Copland’s hopes for the work, ultimately serves perhaps only to reinscribe – the essentialist tropes of difference commonly ascribed to North and South.

Short Symphony: Copland in Mexico

The first mention of the *Short Symphony* in Copland’s correspondence occurs in a letter to Brant written from Tangier, Morocco, dated 10 September 1931. ‘I’m working on a new orchestral piece’, wrote Copland, ‘and am very pleased with my thematic material. It’s probably a symphony’.¹⁸ The next update, also to Brant, followed in 1932, undated but presumably sometime before Copland travelled to Mexico at the end of August. Again: ‘I’m working pretty well. I have 3 separate orchestral movements completed, but unfortunately they don’t belong in the same piece!’¹⁹ Between his time in Tangier and his sojourn in Mexico from August 1932, Copland spent time in Berlin, London, and New York. He spent the early part of 1932 at Saratoga Springs, N.Y., where he held the first of his Yaddo Composers’ Conferences at the beginning of May. Work on other compositions disrupted progress on the *Short Symphony*. In June 1932, he wrote to Kirkpatrick from Yaddo, ‘My new work [*Short Symphony*] is being upset by the

¹⁷ Hess also draws attention to how Foucauldian discourses can inform readings of Pan Americanism. See: Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 7.

¹⁸ Letter from Copland to Henry Brandt, 10 September 1931, Copland Collection, box 258.

¹⁹ Letter from Copland to Brandt, probably August 1932, Copland Collection, box 258.

fact that I've started still a newer [*Statements*] and am working on the two simultaneously. The newest piece will have 4 or 5 short movements. I have one of these already... Of the other, I have two of the three movements practically done.²⁰

The Yaddo festival is of additional interest because the composers' round-table discussion held there – and initiated by Copland – has been documented in detail.²¹ Often frustratingly circular and unclear, and riddled with minor personal misunderstandings and politics, the conversation provides a tantalising window into off-record conference discussions. The transcript makes for lively reading, and gives a sense of some prevalent and specifically American anxieties about form that provide an insight into some of Copland's aesthetic preoccupations as he was working on the *Short Symphony*. These anxieties centred on the need for U.S. composers to divest historical forms of their cultural weight: debate honed in on the tensions between musical inheritance and reinvigoration of form – and, implicitly, between Europe and America. According to the transcript, held in the Aaron Copland Collection at the Library of Congress, present were Copland, Marc Blitzstein, Israel Citkowitz, Richard Donovan, Wallingford Riegger, and Robert Russel Bennet. The composers reflected on their creative practice, aiming to find a way of composing that reflected their 'mutual psychology' as Americans. Conversation circled around the problem of using pre-existing forms to carry the 'individuality' of American compositional voices (questions about American individualism versus national schools of composition seemed constantly to be brewing below the conversation's surface – Russel Bennet: 'We'll become a clique if we agree on form'. Riegger: 'We must be individual.')

The critical idea that emerges in the composers' discussion about form for thinking about the *Short Symphony* is the tension in the idea that a form that has historically been handed down can, perhaps, be neutralised of its ideological associations. Citkowitz notes that 'We've arrived through history at various ways of stating things musically. Do you want to invent a new way? Why not utilize the old ways as freely as possible?' There's a strong underlying sense of teleology

²⁰ Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 208.

²¹ 'First Yaddo Composers' Conference' (transcript of proceedings, Copland Collection, box 357, 2 May 1932).

associated here with the available musical forms – ‘we’ve arrived’ – but equally Citkowitz speaks with deliberate neutrality about ‘history’, presenting it as something objective sounding, thus sidestepping the question of *whose* history is attached to those forms. Emphasising the present, Citkowitz creates the sense that the musical forms available to the composers are freely ready for the picking. Copland seems to agree: on the topic of sonata form he states ‘I think of [form] like the four-measure phrase that just comes – god-given’.

Simultaneously, however, there was much discomfort expressed around pre-established forms. The discussion evinced preoccupations among some of the composers present about their stranglehold over the American imagination, severing the blood supply to real, organic creative impulses. When Riegger contended that ‘American psychology might be expressed in the stereotyped forms’, meaning those inherited from the European musical past, Blitzstein immediately countered: ‘it is hard for us to think in those forms.’ Citkowitz made a point about the tensions between where form comes from and the role it can continue to play in contemporary composition. If, as he proposes, form organically responds to social and historical conditions, then once form has lost its historical and social immediacy and urgency, it becomes, to deploy the term Citkowitz brings into the discussion, ‘mold’. Thus he argues that ‘form becomes mold to later generations’. Genres and forms such as the symphony – and the composers mention sonata form explicitly – were positioned uniquely between inheritance and innovation; the symphony, then, both stifles and enables creativity. Everyone acknowledged it was a problem, but no one knew quite what to do about it: Copland’s approach to form, however, seemed pragmatic.

Copland planned to arrive in Mexico City in time for a concert exclusively of his works on 2 September 1932 as part of his longer visit to Mexico (his arrival was documented in the Mexican press, and Copland annotated the clipping [see figure 4]).²²

²² Annotated newspaper clipping, *El Gráfico*, 3 September 1932, Copland Collection, box 387. My thanks to Fabiola Salguero Carcamo at the *El Universal* publishing group for locating the clipping’s date.

ESCANDALOSO ASALTO A DOS INDEFENSOS CHINOS

Información en la Página 10

Gráfico.

Edición
de la
MAÑANA

5 CTS.
DOBLE CIRCULACIÓN EN
EL DISTRITO FEDERAL QUE
LA DE CUALQUIER OTRO
PERIÓDICO 5 CTS.

LA HUELGA CONTINUA EN PIE

Información en la Página 2



GRAFICAS DE ACTUALIDAD.—Un lucido festival infantil se desarrolló ayer en la mañana en la Escuela "República Argentina" y participaron en el mismo numerosos pequeños que acuden a dicho centro de enseñanza. La fiesta se vio sumamente concurrida por parte de un selecto público integrado por representantes de la Secretaría de Educación Pública y Bellas Artes y por particulares. Damos a conocer dos fotografías relacionadas con el festival, y que fueron tomadas de los números que mayormente se publican, pues en ellos alcanzaron lucimiento los pequeños que intervinieron en su ejecución. En la gráfica de abajo aparece en medio del profesor Carlos Chavez, Director del Conservatorio y del maestro Reynolds, el eminente compositor norteamericano Aaron Copland, quien desde ayer se encuentra en la capital en gira artística.

ESCANDALOS CON MOTIVO DE LA HUELGA

Figure 4: Copland's annotated newspaper clipping in *El Gráfico*, 3 September 1932. © Agencia de Noticias EL UNIVERSAL. Permission to use Copland's image granted by the Aaron Copland Fund for Music.

On 18 August the same year, Copland wrote to Chávez asking if the planned concert in Mexico City could be moved to 9 September to ensure that Copland could arrive in time: he explained that he aimed to leave New York on 24 August (the date was not changed, and so the trip to Mexico had to be swift). The arduous journey to Mexico by car and train,²³ lasting several days in high summer, was no mean feat. It took eight days to drive to Laredo, from which point the composer took the train to Mexico City. He added: 'I am bringing with me a young violinist who is a pupil, companion, secretary, and friend!' That young man was to become Copland's long-term partner, Victor Kraft, or, as he was introduced in that letter, Kraftsov. 'I'm sure you will like him', Copland ended the letter.²⁴

Little material documents the months Copland and Kraft spent in Mexico together, save for Copland's correspondence, and that intriguing photo album. There are photographs of Copland, Kraft, and Chávez larking about in a dusty landscape, reclining on top of a rock, and an action shot of Chávez jumping in the air. It shows street scenes in Mexico City, panoramas, Copland at work, the garden (presumably of the house at which Copland and Kraft were staying in their final two months in the country), and a group of composers including Silvestre Revueltas posed behind the same garden seat over which Kraft had draped himself in the more intimate photograph elsewhere in the album. The beach photographs were perhaps taken in Acapulco: on their way back to the U.S./Mexican border the pair had taken a detour since 'Victor wanted to experience swimming in the Pacific.'²⁵

'My Mexico trip has been all I could have hoped for and more,' Copland enthused to Brandt in November 1932. In the letter, he reported on the progress of the new symphony, although in the same breath he casually denigrated both Mexico and Mexicans, a far cry from his retrospective romanticisation to Lescaze in the letter that opened this chapter:

I can't rave too much about the country itself – nor the populace, for that matter. The first two months I spent in Mexico City – now I have a lovely house in the country where conditions for work are ideal. But don't think I've finished a whole batch of new works, as you would have done. No, I'm still turning out my 1932 opus and I'll consider myself lucky if I come home with it

²³ Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 213.

²⁴ Letter from Copland to Carlos Chávez, 18 September 1932, Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 11.

²⁵ Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 216.

completely finished. At any rate I have two movements of it done and orchestrated and it's the third I'm working on now. I'm using an orchestra with no trombones or tuba and only two trumpets. It should be interesting to see what that gives. I still haven't a name for it, and I begin to despair of getting a really satisfactory one.²⁶

While in Mexico Copland also composed two *Elegies for Violin and Viola*, although ultimately he used the musical material in his *Statements*, withdrawing *Elegies*. Finding a name for the new symphonic work was to prove a long-standing difficulty. Confirming that only two movements were finished, Copland wrote to Mary Lescaze on 13 January 1933: 'Whoever told you I had finished a piece was a bit ahead of the facts. It's only almost done. Two movements are orchestrated and in ink. But there's that damn last movement. I have the theme and the form but the notes have to be filled in. I wish I had it finished in time to bring it back with me [to New York] and play it to everyone.'²⁷ Copland was referring to his informal Young Composers' Group that had met every few weeks throughout 1932, which Lescaze had often attended.²⁸ Copland did indeed complete the work not long after arriving back in New York, and an undated telegram from Copland reveals that just such a casual get-together of composers – most likely comprised of the usual suspects from the Young Composers' Group – took place on his return, although its date is unclear. It reads: 'Last get-together of season – Saturday at 8.30 – 60 Washington Mews... No polemics if possible... First public performance of Copland's "Short Symphony". Bring your own latest opuses if you like. No destructive criticism invited, only the other kind. A.C.'²⁹ [see figure 5] This 'public performance' was probably a piano reduction of the work.

²⁶ Letter from Copland to Brandt, 16 November 1932, Copland Collection, box 249.

²⁷ Letter from Copland to Lescaze, 13 January 1933.

²⁸ For more detail on the Young Composers' Group, see: Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 192. 'Regulars' included Arthur Berger, Henry Brant, Israel Citkowitz, Lehman Engel, Vivian Fine, Irwin Heilner, Bernard Herrmann, Jerome Moross, and Elie Stiegmeister.

²⁹ Telegram from Copland to Brant (1933), Copland Collection, box 249.

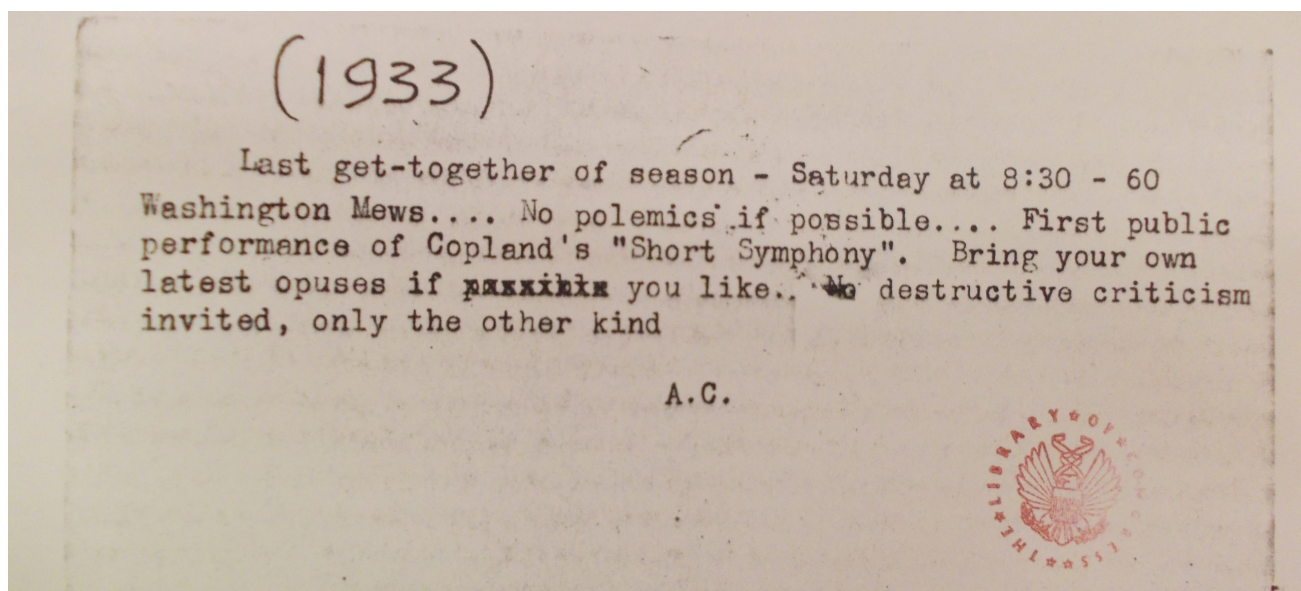


Figure 5: telegram notification of first informal performance of *Short Symphony*. Reproduced by permission of The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., copyright owner.

By November 1933, references to the symphony in Copland's correspondence centre on the matter of getting the work performed. Calling the symphony by its temporary title 'the bounding line', Chávez proposed a performance in Mexico: 'Now: The Bounding Line? I am eager to have the score and play it for the concerts of May [1]934. You know, I can have copies made for me of the score and parts, or that if you sent me a copy of the score, I [could] have the copying made [sic], and [have] sent your score back pretty soon. Is it going to be played this season by Kouss? Let me know all about.'³⁰ Koussevitzky's decision not to premiere the work on account of the enormous rhythmic challenges it posed the orchestra has been well rehearsed in the literature on the *Short Symphony*.³¹ But in October 1934, writing to Chávez, Copland seemed still to expect that Koussevitzky would ultimately premiere the work: 'The performance of the work which Koussevitzky was to have done last season was postponed because of what he told me was the extreme difficulty of the work. He expects to do it here this season, but as yet it has never been played. (Kouss- has his own copy of the score.)'³² Copland expressed some veiled concerns

³⁰ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 25 November 1933, Copland Collection, box 250.

³¹ See, for example, Pollack, 'Aaron Copland's Short Symphony and the Challenge to Human Supervision and Control in Music'; DeLapp, 'Speaking to Whom?'.

³² Letter from Copland to Chávez, 15 October 1934, Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 11.

about the ability of the Mexican orchestra to do justice to the symphony, evidence, perhaps, of a tendency to condescend to the country Copland elsewhere had styled as ‘virtually without composers, without organized orchestras, without even a musical season. No tradition of art music exists there...’.³³ ‘Are you sure you can prepare the performance in so short a time? Otherwise perhaps it would be better to wait – as I am afraid that with this work a shaky performance would give an incoherent impression to the public. Of course, I leave it absolutely in your hands to do as you like.’ Copland may have been rattled by such a proficient and celebrated talent as Koussevitzky refusing to take on the work, however, and so his caution may be unrelated to his assessment of the Mexican orchestra’s relative degree of talent. Copland then reported on the music on which he was currently working, including: ‘... a ten-minute “light piece” called “Salon Mexico” which only needs to be orchestrated. I am terribly afraid of what you will say of the Salon Mexico – perhaps it is not Mexican at all and I would look so foolish. But in America del Norte it may sound Mexican!’³⁴

‘The Bounding Line’

The way Copland styled the lack of significance of the provisional title ‘the bounding line’ years later in his autobiography has largely directed attention away from its potential critical relevance for interpreting the work: as Copland recalled it, he eventually rejected the title after some friend – their identity forgotten by the time Copland recounted the episode – had pointed out ‘that “bounding” seemed more like “boundary” than the “bounce” I had in mind.’³⁵ Yet I argue that ‘the bounding line’ is a vital aesthetic paradigm for hearing the symphony. First, suggested by Chávez, and therefore representing a key manifestation of Chávez’s agency in relation to the symphony, it is an important clue as to both the degree to which, and then to the way in which Copland himself musically engages with Pan American ‘ur-classicism’. Secondly, it reveals how

³³ Copland, ‘Carlos Chávez: Mexican Composer’, in *American Composers on American Music: A Symposium*, ed. Henry Cowell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1933), 102-106, 103.

³⁴ Letter from Copland to Chávez, 15 October 1934.

³⁵ Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 209.

Copland channelled wider networks of aesthetic values connected to motion, line, presence, dance, and the body, seeking to revitalise the symphony. The working adoption of Chávez's title indicates Copland's engagement with Chávez's aesthetic thought and the lines of mutual influence within the aesthetic project that the *Short Symphony* sought to promote. In addition, and as will be shown, the phrase also surfaces elsewhere within the writing of Copland's close contemporaries, to be discussed in more depth further on.³⁶ This is strongly suggestive of the fact that the aesthetic project bound up with Copland's symphony may have been enmeshed within more established cultural and aesthetic discourses than Copland remembered over the distance of several decades.

The sense of 'line' expounded in Chávez's 1928 *Modern Music* article 'Technique and Inner Form' is indicative of the kind of aesthetic philosophy conjured by the title he proposed:

External and internal form cannot be separated; they are one. External form unfolds from the center of a work of art; the whole inner substance, when objectified, is nothing more than the external form.

An old misconception of this simple truth has given us the phrase 'to read between the lines.' When we attempt to do this we believe that we are penetrating deeper into an art than the myopic person who stops short at the surface. Those who rely on such an approach resort to an easy substitute for reading what lies in the lines themselves, being unable to get much from what is actually written down. If we permit ourselves the liberty to read between the lines we may easily find just the opposite of what is in them. The unity of a work of art needs to be supplemented by no profound interpretations; it is all there in the lines, not between them – in the external form, which is the only natural embodiment of the form of the work at the center.³⁷

'... it is all there in the lines...'. Sounding surprisingly like a Boulanger pupil, Chávez outlines what is quite clearly a classicising aesthetic that seeks 'objectivity'; that claims that there is no need to look beyond what is plainly apparent in an artistic work's explicit lines; that artistic message and formal clarity are one and the same. Yet the 'line' that Chávez expounds is in dialogue with explicitly 'authentic', vitalist aesthetic agendas, by which Chávez means those that are driven by so-called 'organic' local impulses: as he puts it later in the same piece,

The Greeks were benefited by their Parthenon and the Aztecs by their pyramids because these were products created out of their own vitality – a vitality restored to them by their artists in a new and

³⁶ See Israel Citkowitz, 'Spring Concerts in New York', *Modern Music*, 9 (1932), 168-172

³⁷ Chávez, 'Technique and Inner Form', *Modern Music*, 5 (1928), 28-31, 28.

stable form. It is impossible to conceive of the Greeks expressing their internal sense by carefully borrowing the external forms of the Aztecs or the Egyptians.³⁸

Chávez's aesthetic philosophy of line is integrally linked to the organicist anxiety about uncovering living, vital 'form' that responded to contemporary aesthetic problems: could long-established forms maintain contemporary currency and vitality for modern composers? This anxiety was echoed in the composers' discussions at Yaddo, and rested on a quasi-biological belief in the consummative unity of moment and generative impulse. Driven by their 'internal sense', creative impulses needed to shape their very frame, perhaps paralleling the internal logic of the development of the 'germ' in geneticist discourses, as touched on in the previous chapter. Thus the forms of the past could not simply be transplanted wholesale into the conditions of the present and expected to thrive.

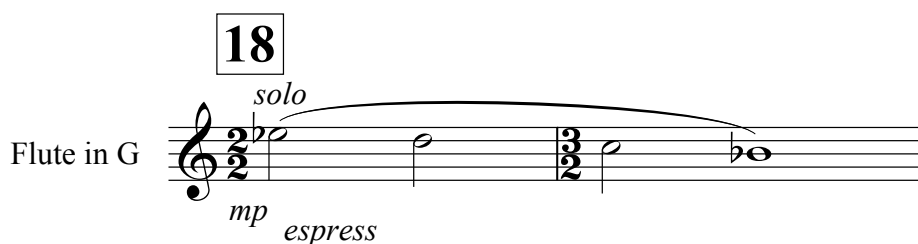
Appearing to pursue Chávez's aesthetic directive almost to the letter, *Short Symphony* seems to be governed by a spare aesthetics of immediacy, presence, line, and physicality, using organic, bodily vitality as a means of invigorating classical unity. Pollack, for instance, notes the work's sense of 'spontaneity'.³⁹ It reads as part of the impulse, building on the anxieties about musical form and heritage focused in those discussions at Yaddo, to neutralise the symphonic form and to revitalise it for the precise needs and concerns of North American composers, although this of course is no less idealistic and ideological than the model Copland was seeking to supplant. Like both Weill's and Harris's symphonies, the compact work is in three movements, with a fast-slow-fast formal design. All three movements are performed *attacca*, and the work as a whole lasts approximately fifteen minutes.

The first movement, which, as the programme note to the *Bellas Artes* premiere intimated, conveys the 'character and vivacity of an *Allegro*,' is marked *preciso e ritmico* and is almost entirely

³⁸ Ibid., 30.

³⁹ Pollack, 'Aaron Copland's Short Symphony and the Challenge to Human Supervision and Control in Music', 202.

Example 9: movement II bars 1–2



To cite the programme note's curious description of this passage: 'there is luminosity'; sound now expands to fill, *sonstenuto*, the full parameters of the space.⁴² This sustained sense of line contrasts with how, in the first movement, the musical gestures cast pointillist shapes in the air that faded and were replaced just as instantaneously, like fireworks against the night sky or light reflected on water. Yet 'luminosity' suggests that such musical presence is not heavy or cumbersome but spacious, light, and airy. The characteristically conjunct vocal motion and vocal timbre of the flute at the movement's outset – the programme uses the verb '*decir*', 'to say' – and the contrapuntal development of this theme and its counter theme (one bar before figure 19, in the violins) contrasts with the jerkier gestural motion of the outer movements, and this quite literal centring – as a middle movement – of voice within the body evinces another sense in which Copland's symphony isolates and evokes bodily presence. Delapp notes, however, that despite the largely stepwise motion, 'occasional leaps of an octave or more provide aural links with the first and last movements', perhaps going some way towards mediating the different bodily orders of voice and gesture.⁴³ At times, the movement foreshadows the reflective, twilight mood found in the lyric dance of *Corral Nocturne* in *Rodeo*: after all, they are both imaginative evocations of the south-west. The Pan-like dotted-rhythm flute theme – summoning, perhaps,

⁴² 'Hay luminosidad. La flauta dice, sola, una sentida frase; el violoncello la recoge.' Orquesta Sinfónica De México programme note.

⁴³ DeLapp, 'Speaking to Whom?', 87.

the lone shepherd at dusk – accentuates this atmosphere, extending an invitation to a (Hellenic?) dance [see example 10]. It recalls the pastoral mode of the second movement of Mozart’s piano concerto No. 27 K. 595, where the principal theme is reprised doubled by the flute and violin.

Opening with discrete gestures pirouetting in all directions and clearing the stage, it is easy to imagine dancers concentrically whirling into the wings for a new scene at the beginning of the third movement [see example 11].

Example 10: movement II solo flute in G with accompaniment bars 34–38. Reproduced from Aaron Copland, *Short Symphony (no. 2)* (New York: Boosey and Hawkes; 1955), 30.

30

Fl. in G

Cl. I, II in Sib

Fag. I

Vln. II (Half)

Vln. (Half)

Vcl. (Half)

Cb. (Half)

Solo

p semplice

pp

ppp

Solo

p cant.

pizz p

pp

Example 11: Movement III figure 27 and figure 28. Reproduced from Copland, *Short Symphony (no. 2)*, 37-8.

37

III

27 Tempo $\text{♩} = 144$ (preciso e ritmico)

Cl. b. in Sib

Fag. I, II

Vln. I (Half)

Vln. II (Half)

Vla. (Half)

Vcl. (Half)

Cb.

Solo

p

Solo

p

mp

Tempo $\text{♩} = 144$ (preciso e ritmico)

Half

p

div.

pizz.

p

I

Ob.

II

Heck.

I

Cl. in Sib

II

Cl. b. in Sib

Fag. I, II

I

Tr. in Do

II

Pno.

Vla.

con sord.

sf

con sord.

sf

pizz. Tutto

p

div.

sf

B. & H. 17629

28

I Fl. II

Ob. I. II

Cl. I. II in Sib

Cl. b. in Sib

Fag. I. II

Pno.

28 8 Soli (div.) con sord.
1. 2.
3. 4.
5. 6.
7. 8.
con sord. *pp*

Vin. I (8 Soli)

Vin. II div. *sf p* con sord.

I Fl. II

Ob. I

I Cl. in Sib II

Fag. I

Vin. I (8 Soli)

Vin. II div.

Solo *p*

Solo *p*

Solo *p*

Solo *p*

p espress.

p espress.

The original programme note describes ‘a sort of brief indecision [before] the last movement appears unexpectedly in a well-paced allegro.’⁴⁴ An ostinato is established in the violins in bar 9 (figure 28). Two main themes are stated, which are then varied and developed, one built on the interval of a fifth, the other on a fourth. The movement climaxes at figure 48 with quotation from a contemporary film, Eric Charell’s 1931 German musical blockbuster *Der Kongress Tanzt* [see example 14]. Set during the Congress of Vienna, the plot centres on an unlikely romance between Czar Alexander I and a local glovemaker played by international film idol Lillian Harvey. The fragment references the *Schlager* hit by Werner Heymann ‘Das Gibt’s Nur Einmal’, originally sung by Harvey [example 12]. When the theme first appears, at figure 31, Copland quotes the first two lines of the song’s chorus: *Das gibt’s nur einmal/ Das kommt nicht wieder*, although, disguising the origins of the quotation, it is rhythmically modified [example 13].⁴⁵

Example 12: melody from the chorus of ‘Das Gibt’s Nur Einmal’, bars 1–8.



⁴⁴ ‘Hay como una breve indecisión y aparece imprevisto el *último movimiento* en bien ritmado Allegro.’ Orquesta Sinfónica De México programme note.

⁴⁵ DeLapp, ‘Speaking to Whom?’, 87; numerous commentators have speculated about the potential hidden meaning alluded to by the quotation. Pollack hypothesises that the reference reflects ‘the work’s vitality and humour’. Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 290; Müller-Berg argues that Copland considered unrepeatable the synthesis of tradition and modernity he achieved with the use of the interval of an octave as his symphonic thematic material: this is the ‘Einmal’ to which she suggests the quotation is referring. See Müller-Berg, ‘*Ultramodern versus Neoklassizistisch*’, 81.

Example 13: Movement III, figure 31 'Das Gibt's Nur Einmal' theme. Reproduced from Copland, *Short Symphony* (no. 2), 43-4.

43

31

Picc.

Fl. I. II

Ob. I. II

Heck.

Cl. I. II
in B $\flat$

Fag. I. II

C. Fag.

I. II

Cor. in Fa

III. IV

Tr. I. II
in Do

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vle.

Vo.

Cb.

31

B. & H. 17629

Example 14: Movement III, figure 48 'Das Gibt's Nur Einmal' theme reprised. Reproduced from Copland, *Short Symphony* (no. 2), 62-3.

44

Picc.

Ob. I

Cl. I, II
in Bb

Fag. I

C. Fag.

I
Cor. in Fa

III

Tr. I
in D

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vle.

Vo.

Cb.

con sord.

pizz.

B. & H. 17629

Picc.

Fl. II

Ob. I. II

Heck.

Cl. I. II
in Sib

Cl. B.
in Sib

Fag. I. II

C. Fag.

I. II

Cor. in Fa

III. IV

I

Tr. in Do

II

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vle.

Vo.

Cb.

48

48

marc.

marc.

div.

arco

B. & H. 17629

63

Picc.

Fl. I, II

Fl. in G

Ob. I, II

Heck.

Cl. I, II in B $\flat$

Cl. b. in B $\flat$

Fag. I, II

C. Fag.

I. II

Cor. in Fa

III. IV

I

Tr. in Do

II

Pno.

Vin. I

Vin. II

Vle.

Vc.

Cb.

marc.

non legato

B. & H. 17629

non legato

The movement ends abruptly on an open fifth (although in its published form this chord is repeated twice more; it is likely that Leonard Bernstein persuaded Copland to make this alteration).⁴⁶

The abstraction and balance of neoclassicism has been a major critical area for existing discourse on the *Short Symphony*, and the secondary literature abounds with Stravinskian comparisons, citing the ‘crisp, spare textures’, syncopations, ‘disjunct leaps’, and, even more explicitly, ‘Stravinskian ostinatos’, and referencing in particular *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) and *Symphony in Three Movements* (despite post-dating *Short Symphony* by almost a decade).⁴⁷ Frequent changes of time signature with an emphasis on $\frac{5}{8}$ in the opening bars makes *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* another obvious reference point, as does the unusual instrumentation, particularly foregrounding alto flute. However, Copland uses an aesthetics of line as a way of balancing the tension between polyphony and homophony differently to Stravinsky. Whereas Stravinsky fragments his material into mosaic-like blocks, Copland uses gestures that oscillate between moving in and out of time with one another to explore ideas of continuity, responding to broader questions about musical hegemonies and diversity. Delapp argues that the unusual instrumentation, calling for large woodwinds including piccolo, alto flute, heckelphone doubling cor anglais and bass clarinet, yet scoring without tuba, trombones, or percussion, ‘gave Copland an ample palette for recreating Stravinskian neoclassical textures’, in which case, however, Copland’s avoidance of Stravinsky’s much-loved trombones perhaps seems odd.⁴⁸

Chávez wrote Copland an – unsurprisingly – glowing report on the concert held in Mexico City as part of the final concert of the 1934 season, and on the success of the rehearsal period:

Here is the program of our last concert. I hope you will agree with the way your work was placed between Stravinsky Suite and H.P. The performance was accurate and “souple”; we had 10 rehearsals and it was worked out with the utmost of interest and energy; the orchestra men were at first sceptical but by the third rehearsal or so they had a real genuine and growing interest: I was

⁴⁶ Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*, 290.

⁴⁷ DeLapp, ‘Speaking to Whom?’, 87; David Matthews, ‘Copland and Stravinsky’, *Tempo*, 95 (1971), 10-14, 12-13.

⁴⁸ DeLapp, ‘Speaking to Whom?’, 87; Pollack notes, more non-committal, that the scoring ‘arguably represents a personal take on the time’s neoclassical trends’. Pollack, ‘Aaron Copland’s *Short Symphony* and the Challenge to Human Supervision and Control in Music’, 202.

amazed to see this that seldom happens with your works and mine; this last concert was the best of the entire season: it was warm and enthusiastic.⁴⁹

Corroborating Chávez's account, an article in the Mexico City daily newspaper *Excelsior* advertising the concert assured readers likewise that 'those who have heard [*Short Symphony*] in rehearsal guarantee the public's enthusiasm – from both those who are keen on modern music and those who are not', describing it as 'without a doubt one of the most perfect compositions of the contemporary recent output'.⁵⁰ Chávez's programming of Copland's symphony is worth observing, sandwiched between deliberately 'light' Stravinskian neoclassicism (Stravinsky's Suite no. 2 for small orchestra, divided into March, Waltz, Polka, and Galop), and some of Chávez's own latest aesthetic attempts to reconcile North-South difference in his *H.P.* suite from his ballet of the same name (premiered – its one and only performance – in Philadelphia in 1932 under Leopold Stokowski). *H.P.* (Horsepower) thematised the culture clash between the industrial North and rural South, complete with giant dancing fruit, and a solo from a half-man, half-machine hybrid representing northern mechanisation that opened the production.⁵¹ In juxtaposing *Short Symphony* against Stravinsky's neo-classicism in particular, Chávez perhaps attempted to emphasise in a favourable light the comparative 'seriousness' of Copland's American classical aesthetic. Copland responded positively in turn: 'What you said about the Short Symphony naturally made me very happy. Only a week before your performance, I had a conversation with Koussevitzky in which he told me that he regretted it very much that he could not play the 'Short Symphony' as he had promised. "What's the matter, I said, is it too difficult." "No, he said, not too difficult, but just impossible." This week I will be seeing him again and I will be able to tell him that in Mexico they do the 'impossible'! How I wish I could have heard it. And what a strange feeling it gives me when I think that you have heard a piece of mine which I

⁴⁹ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 1 December 1934, Copland Collection, box 250.

⁵⁰ 'Es, sin duda, una de las composiciones más perfectas de la producción contemporánea, y quienes la han escuchado en los ensayos aseguran que entusiasmará al público aficionado o no a las manifestaciones del arte moderno.' *Excelsior*, 21 November 1934.

⁵¹ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, in particular 50-80.

have not yet heard. I will probably try to get Stokowski to play it, but it is too late for this season, of course'.⁵²

Posing a terse aesthetic challenge to the Romantic symphony on multiple levels, *Short Symphony* punctures what Copland was to describe in a 1938 lecture series as 'an overripe art',⁵³ draining the swollen symphonic form of its excess fluid, and attempting to negate the weighty critical heritage of the symphonic genre. It is classical in its balanced formal structure – Paul Rosenfeld described form as the most important 'attribute of intrinsic classicism'.⁵⁴ In addition, it rejects symphonic romanticism by renouncing all kinds of monumental excess – length, sentiment – in short, in its austere, objective aesthetic. Even its more ambitious extended woodwinds seem to be in service of precision: textural effect and timbral colour. The work evokes a sense of limitation, order, and containment. In particular, Copland's emphasis on gesture and immediacy – the presence of the body – cuts against the grain of idealist symphonic models and their associated Austro-Germanic ideologies, bound up with the mind, interiority, and emotion that forms a counterpoint to sensual/affective dimensions.

But perhaps *Short Symphony*'s more profound contribution is to develop a symphonic aesthetic of lightness and balance that treats the body as a site not of sensual objectification but of play and pleasure. This kind of physicality foreshadows Copland's later ballet scores, and insofar as it turns its back on Austro-German symphonic idealism, it suggests Haydn rather than Beethoven as the more apposite symphonic model, returning the genre to its earlier and more flexible classical origins. In the mid-eighteenth century, symphonic space was more strongly inflected by dance, as well as other genres, such as opera or chamber music, and by social spaces supposedly foreign to reified nineteenth-century symphonic listening practices, such as the court or church. Indeed, Müller-Berg suggests even earlier links with Neapolitan symphonists Scarlatti, Pergolesi, and Sammartini.⁵⁵ This tallies with the concentrated design and three-movement form

⁵² Letter from Copland to Chávez, 31 December 1934, Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 11.

⁵³ Copland, 'Symphonic Masterpieces Lecture 7: Mahler, Symphony no. II' (lecture series, Copland Collection, box 214, 1938-9).

⁵⁴ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 40; she cites Paul Rosenfeld, *By Way of Art* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1967), 276.

⁵⁵ Müller-Berg, 'Ultramodern versus Neoklassizistisch', 80.

of *Short Symphony*. Dance, as Haydn's minuet/trio middle movements remind us, is hardly incommensurate with social symphonic ideals of community formation, and indeed its musical legacies continued to influence the nineteenth-century form more pervasively than aestheticians advocating the purity of 'absolute' music were willing to acknowledge.

Yet in spite of the work's physicality, most scholars have noted only the work's supposedly cerebral classicism as the parameter on which Copland challenged the Romantic symphony: none have dealt convincingly with the rhythmic and gestural foregrounding of the body, or the balletic musical language.⁵⁶ In her essay '*Ultramodern versus Neoklassizistisch*' Müller-Berg compares how the differing aesthetic impulses in Ruth Crawford's *Three Songs* and Aaron Copland's *Short Symphony* contributed to the symphonic genre's rehabilitation in the U.S. Explicitly defining *Short Symphony*'s aesthetic as neoclassical, and Copland, by extension, as a neoclassicist, she argues that it rejects the subjective orientation of nineteenth-century European symphonic romanticism in favour of something more 'objective', that finds its closest aesthetic analogue in eighteenth-century classicism. 'Using original technical compositional methods of his own time [together with recourse to pre-Romantic symphonic models] he proved that at the beginning of the 1930s it was unnecessary to reach back for the stylistic resources of the Romantics.'⁵⁷ She cites Copland in *Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America* in defence of this move towards an 'objective' neoclassical aesthetic; however, not published until around 1941, *Our New Music* is not an especially robust source for *Short Symphony*.⁵⁸ For Müller-Berg, the *Short Symphony* is perhaps an anti-symphony insofar as it renounces nineteenth-century European ideals and seeks to root the form instead in an eighteenth-century musical language and sense of proportion and balance that refers back to ancient Greek aesthetic thought. In particular, she stresses the importance of the kind of ancient or original symphonic ideal suggested by the word's Greek etymology of 'sounding together' for the aesthetic conception behind *Short Symphony*, and she suggests that

⁵⁶ Matthews, 'Copland and Stravinsky', 12-13.

⁵⁷ 'Zusammen mit neuen kompositionstechnischen, originellen Methoden seiner Zeit bewies er, dass es für die Komposition einer Symphonie Anfang der 1930er Jahre nicht notwendig war, auf die Stilmittel der Romantik zurückzugreifen.' Müller-Berg, '*Ultramodern versus Neoklassizistisch*', 80-81.

⁵⁸ Copland, *Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1941), 12.

Copland accesses this particular facet to symphonic ideology by using the intervals of octave, fourth, and fifth constitutive of ancient Greek music theory as the principal symphonic theme – that is, ‘perfect’ divisions of the octave. She argues, then, that in treating an interval thematically he achieved in this work his first synthesis of tradition and modernity, and in so doing revitalised the symphonic genre for the U.S. context. Yet with her rationalist focus Müller-Berg overlooks the potential of the music’s Hellenism for exploring the body: for talking about dance and even alluding to the music’s queerness. Furthermore, I suggest that such attention to an antiquity located in Europe in the hunt for Copland’s symphonic models has also overlooked the importance of situating the symphony in a Pan American contextual framework – could the ‘bounding line’ working title not explicitly suggest border crossings, even? – and thus the significance of Pan American ‘ur-classical’ universalising discourses for our understanding of the *Short Symphony*.

Symphonic Utopias: Pan American Idealist Drives

Thus if *Short Symphony* attempts to channel the utopian community-forming aspirations of the symphonic genre, then this chapter argues that it does so for a Pan American musical and political project that aimed to unite the American continents. Pan Americanism was a powerful cultural force gathering momentum during precisely the period that coincided with Copland’s work on his *Short Symphony*. A key U.S. political focus of the 1930s and 1940s was the project to underline commonalities between the nations making up the Americas, which underwent a marked shift under President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s new administration. Pan American ideals guided foreign policy of the era. March 1933 saw Roosevelt give his inaugural address, a moment Hess observes to be definitional for Pan Americanism. In it he announced the Good Neighbor Policy, a bid to cultivate cooperative diplomatic interactions between North and South America, stressing trade as the principal mode of North-South engagement rather than the military interventionism for which the U.S. had become known in the region: ‘In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbour – the neighbor who resolutely

respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others.⁵⁹ Roosevelt packaged international relations within a rhetoric that invoked citizenly responsibility to the local community, seeming thereby to express a certain new kind of individualism that looked outwards. And as political, diplomatic, and economic projects were initiated, so too were cultural ones: for instance, Edgar Varèse founded the *Pan-American Association of Composers* in 1927.⁶⁰ Although, as Hess elucidates, the 1930s and 1940s were the ‘golden age’ of Pan American solidarity, many of its tenets began to sediment in the late 1920s. Pan Americanist ideologues argued for the existence of a unique yet universalised American identity rooted in the continent’s ancient past. North Americans idealised the South: Mexico offered North Americans the myth of a life more ‘authentic and coherent than that of the United States.’⁶¹ The era saw the Mexican ‘vogue’ and other celebrations of South American culture in U.S cultural life, for instance in art and architecture.⁶² Hess puts it eloquently: Pan Americanism ‘reflected north-south psychological and spiritual bonds, celebrating the identities of the individual American republics while subsuming them within a hemispheric framework.’⁶³

Copland’s correspondence with Chávez during the *Short Symphony*’s composition and the process of bringing the work to its Mexican premiere clarifies both composers’ concerns with Pan American ideals. In part, the political project manifests as a musical one: both composers seem preoccupied with condensing down a distinct ‘American’ sound explicitly differentiated from Europe. As Copland wrote to Chávez in December 1931,

I am through with Europe, Carlos, and I believe as you do, that our salvation must come from ourselves and that we must fight the foreign element in America which ignores American music. I am very anxious to see the music of Mexican and South American composers and I hope you will bring back some scores with you. And I have plans to go there myself in the fall to see how things are.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Addresses and Messages of Franklin D. Roosevelt: Compiled from Official Sources, Intended to Present the Chronological Development of the Foreign Policy of the United States from the Announcement of the Good Neighbor Policy in 1933, Including the War Declarations* (London: His Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1943), 5.

⁶⁰ See, for instance, discussion of the Pan-American Association of Composers in Stallings, ‘The Pan/American Modernisms of Carlos Chávez and Henry Cowell’, 28-45.

⁶¹ Helen Delpar, ‘Carlos Chávez and the Mexican “Vogue”, 1925-40’, in *Carlos Chávez and His World*, Saavedra, 204-219.

⁶² See, for instance, Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992).

⁶³ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 3.

⁶⁴ Letter from Copland to Chávez, 26 December 1931, Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 12.

Instead of looking to Europe, Copland was keen to turn his attention south for musical models. Reporting in a letter to Chávez on a recent concert conducted by Alexander Smallens – presumably in New York – in which he had heard a piece of Chávez’s performed, Copland was eager to identify musical differences between ‘our’ works and those of the Europeans, and thus to stress the similarities between his own works and those of Chávez (April 7 of 1932 or 33):

“The difference between our works and those of the Europeans was striking. Theirs were so smooth and refined – so very much within a particular tradition, and ours quite jagged and angular.”⁶⁵ The trope of describing European music as refined – and the Europeans more generally as over-refined – is typical and well-rehearsed, connecting with Arthur Farwell’s diatribe against the decadence of European music in the previous chapter. Here, however, it perhaps ties in to arguments about the superficiality of neoclassicism, rooted, according to Hess, in neoclassicism’s ‘presumably French characteristics of wit, brevity, and refinement’,⁶⁶ as opposed to the ‘jagged’ ‘angularity’ of primitivist American ur-classicism. In addition to the musical plane, on a spiritual or emotional level too the connectedness of the Americas supposedly operated much more immediately and deeply than the connection bridging ‘old’ and ‘new’ worlds, as Copland explained in a letter to Chávez after his visit: ‘As soon as we crossed the border, I regretted leaving Mexico with a sharp pang. It took me three years in France to get as close a feeling to the country as I was able to get in three months in Mexico. I can thank you for this, for without your many kindnesses, the opportunity for knowing it and loving it so well would never have come.’⁶⁷

Chávez, too, was concerned with emphasising the commonalities between his and Copland’s musics, and therefore with the ‘sameness-embracing’ of the Pan American project.⁶⁸ In a letter

⁶⁵ Letter from Copland to Chávez, 7 April 1932/3, Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 11.

⁶⁶ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 26.

⁶⁷ Letter from Copland to Chávez, 2 January 1934 (1933?), Chávez Correspondence, JOB 93-4, folder 11.

⁶⁸ ‘sameness-embracing’: Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 7.

dated 1 December 1934, written after he received the score of the *Short Symphony*, he complained to Copland:

what I understand by ‘modern music’ or ‘contemporary music’ is first our music: all the rest belongs to historical periods, no matter how close or dear these historical periods may be to us. Well I think that I don’t get any kick out of so called European modern composers because they actually belong to already past musical periods, they belong to history: we had this season a lot of Honegger, Hindemith etc etc stuff here, and let me tell you that they are simply unbearable for me, they are artificial, full of literature [sic] bad literature and worst possible taste, I cannot stand them any more they should be shut up forever, so much the better. And to think that it is that stuff what [sic] is taken for contemporary music? No, it is not.⁶⁹

Like Copland, Chávez pitted ‘our’ modern American music against European music. His letter evinces the same notions of American vitality in contemporary musical developments as those found in the Harris reception, contrasted against European music that he perceives as representing out-of-place relics of a bygone age. This situates Chávez’s observations about European music within Hess’s discussions about how Americans differentiated their supposedly organic ‘classicism’ against the purportedly superficial neoclassical trends emerging out of Europe. Chávez links the music of composers such as Honegger and Hindemith with pretence and empty posturing. Critical here is the idea of ‘presentism’ as vital to a shared aesthetic between Copland and Chávez (and Americans more broadly), as implied by ‘our music’, aligning with those same preoccupations about form and cultural inheritance debated by the U.S. composers at the Yaddo festival. In a later letter Chávez complained that ‘our present is formed up [sic] of 95% past and only a 5% of present – we must not agree with that.’⁷⁰ Elsewhere, Chávez describes European musical taste as ‘sweetish, rotten, old’.⁷¹ These comments contrast explicitly with Copland’s observations about Mexico as being ‘fresh and pure and wholesome’ – as Hess has noted, ‘freshness’ was a key term in the Pan Americanist rhetorical arsenal.⁷² Perhaps it is in this light that the third movement’s musical quotation might be understood. Harvey’s lyrics quite literally draw attention to the fleetingness of the present moment: ‘*Das gibt’s nur einmal/ Das*

⁶⁹ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 1 December 1934.

⁷⁰ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 18 January 1935, Copland Collection, box 250.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 30.

kommt nicht wieder: Copland weaves a reference to presence, vitality, and transience into the work's structure.

'Let me tell you what I thought: [on receiving the *Short Symphony*] wrote Chávez in the same letter, 'well, here is the real thing: here is our music, my music, the music of my time, of my taste, of my culture, here it is as a simple and natural fact to my own self, as everything belonging to one's self is simple and natural.'⁷³ Pollack has painted this exchange of letters as evidence that 'Copland and Chávez strongly identified with each other – perhaps more deeply than with any other musical contemporary, a remarkable phenomenon considering their differences in background and temperament.'⁷⁴ Chávez's willingness here to assume Copland's musical voice as his own mouthpiece, however – particularly when aligned with organicist rhetorics suggesting it to be a 'natural' matter of course – is potentially insidious. A Pan American mythology that stressed sameness and presentism – 'of my time, of my taste, of my culture' – depended on an ideal of America that was wiped clean of its past, ready for a common vision of the present and future. The tabula rasa was an important image put to ideological work in service of this ideal. As Hess has it, the tabula rasa 'signified all that was pristine, unprecedented, and hopeful in the Americas.'⁷⁵ In terms of landscape politics, the tabula rasa ideology mirrored white engagement with the American West, as discussed in the previous chapter, particularly its anonymising and homogenising drives. Yet, even as it feigned the even facilitation of a fair, equalised, and harmonious Pan American political landscape, invoking corresponding imagery of barren plains, Mexican deserts, and icy tundra that formed the landscape of the Americas in the popular imagination, this narrative did not neutralise the Americas of their history evenly. Copland's and Chávez's aesthetic values of presentism align with the impulses towards seeming 'neutrality' that preserve political and colonial hegemonies. The emphasis of the tabula rasa on 'freshness', presence, and possibility privileged those groups with investment in only an American past of their own design, delegitimising older claims to American landscapes and, consequently, denying

⁷³ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 1 December 1934.

⁷⁴ Pollack, 'Aaron Copland, Carlos Chávez, and Silvestre Revueltas', in *Carlos Chávez and His World*, Saavedra, 99-110.

⁷⁵ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 26.

certain groups an evenly weighted political voice. Chávez is understandably loath in his letter to acknowledge the imbalance in political power in his relationship with Copland, but it is unavoidable.

As Hess incisively observes of the background power differential operating here, citing Homi Bhabha's work on 'mimicry', 'hegemonic powers often take advantage of the subaltern's impulse to mimic, of its vulnerability in negotiating the elusive play of sameness and difference. These habits have long affected U.S.–Latin American relations.'⁷⁶ However, the finely grained foreground dynamics often functioned quite differently – and the Copland/Chávez aesthetic project is precisely an example of a more complicated two-way transaction. On the one hand, in the passage above Chávez does indeed seem actively and problematically to sublate his own musical voice within Copland's purportedly universal one. Yet, on the other, and before we read this as straightforward participation in 'mimicry' – whether passive or more Bhabharian and subversive – it seems important to note that in the late 1920s, as we are about to see, Copland was just as keen, vice versa, to ascribe Chávez the universal ability to speak for all of America.

Copland, Chávez, and Pan American 'Ur-Classicism'

That binary set out in Chávez's letter to Copland – (European) history and artifice as defined against (American) newness and vitality – points towards an aesthetic tension underpinning the classicism of Copland's *Short Symphony*, and to the precise distinction critics drew between neoclassicism and what Hess calls 'ur-classicism'. 'Ur-classicism' is a critical phenomenon Hess has linked to discourse surrounding Chávez's music specifically, but that also intersected with commentary on many other American composers – the Harris reception seen in the previous chapter offers a keen example of how the vitalist organicism of 'ur-classicism' played out elsewhere. It represents a way of writing about classical aesthetics and their universalising potential while explicitly divorcing them from a heritage in eighteenth-century Italy and central

⁷⁶ Ibid., 6; she cites Homi Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse', *October*, 28 (1984), 125-133.

Europe or in classical Greece, instead harnessing ideals of balance, unity, and harmony onto the aesthetics, spirituality, or landscapes of ancient America. Hess uses the reception of three works by Chávez at the first of the 1928 Sessions-Copland concerts to trace the way this rhetoric crystallised around Chávez's music in particular, with critic Paul Rosenfeld as a key agent in this discourse. Whereas most commentators have assumed that the reception primitivised Chávez's music, Hess instead argues that the reviews gave rise not to a rhetoric that stressed the difference and exoticism of Chávez's music, but to one that explored commonality, drawing upon classicising discourses to find (literal) shared ground and universal impulses that could be put to work as a communal musical language across the Americas. Hess explains that reviewers 'classicised Chávez's Mexican Indian musical persona' affording it 'universalism, timelessness, transcendence, authenticity, clarity, organicism (sometimes referred to as "wholeness"), objectivity, and the formal and affective restraint associated with absolute music, that is, values commonly understood as classic.'⁷⁷ The Copland-Sessions concert was not an isolated instance of this impulse: a 1928 four-page article on Chávez's music by Henry Cowell described it as: 'particularly clean-cut, crystalline, straightforward, and with an impelling rhythm'.⁷⁸ Yet rather than locating neoclassical influences in Chávez's music, Hess suggests instead that the critics celebrated 'ur-classicism', an aesthetic trend whose existing influence in other cultural areas such as architecture, journalism, and anthropology was already widely felt.⁷⁹ As Hess eloquently summarises it, 'ur-classicism [...] created conditions for absolute music that united the usable past of ancient American with the universal whole, all within the "freshness" the tabula rasa promised.'⁸⁰ The Germanic prefix, however, seems incongruous, but perhaps fittingly underscores problematic tensions within 'ur-classicism': as it specifically attempted to detach itself from European cultural imperialism, Europe remained, nonetheless, definitional. It is

⁷⁷ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 26.

⁷⁸ Stallings, 'The Pan/American Modernisms of Carlos Chávez and Henry Cowell', 31.

⁷⁹ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 6.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 48-9.

curious, though, that Hess does not problematise the central-European ideological legacies of the prefix.

Proponents of ‘ur-classicism’ responded to modernist anxieties about ‘living’, timeless form in opposition to the preestablished, supposedly stagnant and impotent, exhausted patterns of what Citkowitz called ‘mold’ – the inherited musical forms and structures of past eras that did not respond to contemporary compositional problems. Whereas, according to Rosenfeld, neoclassicism relied on resurrecting preestablished moulds and patterns – as Hess paraphrases Rosenfeld, neoclassicists were ‘obsessed with the ossified dictates of the eighteenth century’ – classicism was fresh, vital, and ‘authentic’, responding organically to contemporary formal problems.⁸¹ Stravinsky was Rosenfeld’s archetypical neoclassicist. As Chávez himself put it in an article for *Modern Music* of 1928, the same year as Cowell’s article:

It is only authentic work that has validity or any inherent reason for being. Validity in art might be defined as the result of a vital interest of the author which is transmitted to the person to whom he addresses himself. It is obviously impossible to extract something vital from an already exhausted process. After a unique creation there remains no margin of vitality; Palestrina exhausted Palestrina, Wagner exhausted Wagner and Debussy exhausted Debussy.⁸²

In identifying and applauding Chávez’s ‘ur-classicism’, commentators suggested that specifically in the Americas classical ideals could organically channel vital ‘modern’ impulses attuned to their context, and thereby transcend the artifice and posturing of neoclassicism. Yet in Chávez’s language we can clearly hear the echo of Bekker’s rhetoric about the impulses motivating the true symphonic artist. As such these kinds of statement are deeply contradictory, both seeking to separate from their European roots, while simultaneously drawing on parallel discourses and agendas.

Copland was particularly keen to herald the significance of the uniquely, but universally American aesthetic Chávez was forging. In an article that appeared first in *New Republic* in – again – 1928 and that, somewhat expanded, was republished in Henry Cowell’s 1933 volume *American*

⁸¹ Ibid., 43-4.

⁸² Chávez, ‘Technique and Inner Form’, 29.

Composers on American Music, he described Chávez as ‘one of the few American musicians about whom we can say that he is more than a reflection of Europe’; but he rejected any suggestions of Chávez’s parochialism: ‘that his music should be recognizably that of a Mexican is hardly credible.’⁸³ His comments on Chávez’s music celebrated Chávez’s rejection of German romanticism, and were preoccupied with precisely these same concerns about fusing modernity and universality.

Without consciously attempting to be ‘modern,’ his music indubitably succeeds in belonging to our own age. [...] Chávez is essentially of our own day because he uses his composer’s gift for the expression of objective beauty of universal significance rather than as mere means of self-expression. [...] [His music] exemplifies the complete overthrow of nineteenth-century Germanic ideals which tyrannized over music for more than a hundred years. It propounds no problems, no metaphysics. Chávez’ music is extraordinarily healthy; it is clear and clean-sounding, without shadows or softness.⁸⁴

Copland concludes: ‘here is absolute music if ever there was any’, after thus deploying a rhetoric remarkably redolent of Nietzsche on Georges Bizet in *The Case of Wagner*: ‘Bizet’s music seems to me perfect. It comes forward lightly, gracefully, stylishly.’⁸⁵ The parallels with the North-South sickness-health dialectic found in Nietzsche’s portrait of nineteenth-century European aesthetics are arresting, especially given Nietzsche’s attraction to the figure of the dancer as a way out of idealism’s moribund intellectual inwardness.⁸⁶ As Nietzsche continues, extolling the lithe physicality of Bizet’s music: “‘All that is good is easy, everything divine runs with light feet’”: this is the first principle of my aesthetics.’⁸⁷ Note also how Nietzsche’s assertions about *Carmen* anticipate the same notion of the South as a catalyst for holistic spiritual fulfilment that shaped the Mexican ‘vogue’: ‘how such a work completes one [...] I became so forbearing, so happy, so Indian, so *settled*...’⁸⁸ In spite of ‘ur-classicist’ aspirations to cut loose from Europe, European

⁸³ Copland, ‘Carlos Chávez: Mexican Composer’, 102-106; see also Copland, ‘Carlos Chávez – Mexican Composer’, *New Republic*, 54 (1928), 322-323; both are discussed briefly in Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 40.

⁸⁴ Copland, ‘Carlos Chávez: Mexican Composer’, 102-103.

⁸⁵ Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner*, 1.

⁸⁶ See *ibid.*, in particular 8-9.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

aesthetics appears nonetheless to lurk just outside of the frame, casting long shadows over the discourse.

Line, Body, Motion

Yet Chávez was not alone among Copland's contemporaries in interesting himself in an aesthetic philosophy that channelled classicist aesthetics and privileged line, and it was certainly not a purely 'Pan American' pursuit: for instance, Copland's close friend and former Boulanger student Israel Citkowitz⁸⁹ – who had been present at the Yaddo composers forum discussed earlier – seems to have been particularly interested in both Blake's and Joyce's conceptions of a 'bounding line'. Chávez was moving in social and intellectual circles that overlapped with those of Copland and Citkowitz, having travelled in the U.S. and Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. Thus Chávez's awareness of these ideas, likewise, seems almost certain, if hard to verify, since, as Leonora Saavedra observes, so much about Chávez remains uncharted.⁹⁰ But to trace lines of influence from Blake and Joyce via Chávez is to miss the point: instead it is to give a sense of how these ideas about 'line' were circulating in the contemporary artistic and intellectual ferment, and how they can inform our understanding of musical Pan Americanism. Citkowitz put a spotlight on 'the bounding line' in a 1932 article in *Modern Music*, hinting at the scope of the questions it poses of aesthetics and perception:

If the essence of music is motion, a motion controlled and brought to definite issue, it is interesting to note each new work's version of this essential motion as its characteristic feature, its very physiognomy. This motion, this fundamental shape and direction corresponds in music to [William] Blake's 'bounding line.' 'How do we distinguish the oak from the beech but by the bounding outline?'⁹¹

The 'bounding line' is, then, where classicism and organicism (the oak tree) meet. The notion of the 'bounding line' was not solely a philosophical and aesthetic concern for William Blake,

⁸⁹ Citkowitz studied with Boulanger from 1927 to 1931.

⁹⁰ Saavedra, 'Preface', in *Carlos Chávez and His World*, Saavedra, ix-xv, xiv.

⁹¹ Citkowitz, 'Spring Concerts in New York', 168.

however. The phrase's heritage can be traced from Blake through to James Joyce, another writer with whom Citkowitz, perhaps not coincidentally, was preoccupied around this time: he had written four songs to texts by Joyce in 1930, and had promised Copland a number of Blake songs for the concert of American chamber music Copland organised with Roger Sessions in London in December 1931 – a concert at which Chávez's *Sonatina for Piano* was also performed. Ultimately only completing the Blake song cycle in 1934, Citkowitz instead sent a further song adding to the collection of Joyce songs he had composed the previous year.⁹² Indeed, Greg A. Hecimovich has argued that the phrase the 'bounding line' represents a significant point of connection between the two writers' thought.⁹³

Blake's 'bounding line' is loaded with a quasi-Platonic idealism that harnesses essence and authenticity: 'the great and golden rule of art, as well as of life, is this: – that the more distinct, sharp, and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp, the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling.' In Blake's thought, the line is somewhat less about motion than about ontology and the act of creating something out of nothing. 'Leave out this line and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again.'⁹⁴ Yet Citkowitz's reference to physiognomy – judging character from the form of the body or face – is important and revealing, explicitly invoking discourses associated with physicality and the body. Indeed, as Blake goes on to note in the same passage from *Modern Music* quoted above by Citkowitz, 'How do we distinguish one face or countenance from another, but by the bounding line and its infinite inflexions and movements?'

For Joyce, who adopted and developed the idea of a 'bounding line' in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), it serves to articulate a distinction between chaos and perception; 'the triumph of imaginative energy over the fallen world'.⁹⁵ The classical focus is clear: the bounding line has to do with the immediacy of sensory perception and with unity, as a function of

⁹² See Copland and Perlis, *Copland, 1900–1942*, 191.

⁹³ Gregg A. Hecimovich, "With Pale Blake I Write 'Tintingface': The Bounding Line of James Joyce's Aesthetic", *James Joyce Quarterly*, 36 (1999), 889–904, 889.

⁹⁴ William Blake, *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. David V. Erdman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 550.

⁹⁵ Hecimovich, "With Pale Blake I Write 'Tintingface'", 894.

separation within a field of sensory chaos. In the final chapter of *Portrait of the Artist* Stephen Dedalus, the novel's central character, explains Aquinas's tripartite theory of beauty: 'wholeness, harmony, and radiance' ('*integras, consonantia, claritas*'). *Integras*, Stephen explains, is 'the first phase of apprehension', in which 'a bounding line [is] drawn about the object to be apprehended', presenting it as 'selfbounded and selfcontained upon the immeasurable background of space or time which is not it'. The mind separates the object out as one discrete thing from 'the rest of the visible universe'. But more pertinent is how Joyce goes on to elucidate *consonantia*:

Then, said Stephen, you pass from point to point, led by its formal lines; you apprehend it as balanced part against part within its limits; you feel the rhythm of its structure. In other words, the synthesis of immediate perception is followed by the analysis of apprehension. Having first felt that it is *one* thing you now feel that it is a *thing*. You apprehend it as complex, multiple, divisible, separable, made up of its parts, the result of its parts and their sum, harmonious. That is *consonantia*.⁹⁶ [original italics]

Following the premiere of Copland's symphony, Chávez assumed rhetorics of objectivity, logic, and organicism to express the work's universal musical achievement, showing the value of a 'ur-classicist' reading, but also closely aligning with Joyce's description of *consonantia*:

The dialectic of this music, it is to say, its movement, the way each and every note comes out from the other as the only natural and logic [sic] possible one, is simply unprecedented in the whole history of music. The work as a whole, I mean to say, in its entirety, is an organism, a body in which every piece works by itself 100% but whose musical mutual relation is such, that noone could possible [sic] work and exist without the other. It [sic] has been very much talk about music in which every thing is essential, nothing superfluous, but, as far as I know, exist, yes, the talk about such music, but not the music itself. The Little Symphony is the first realization I know of that, and yet, the human content, the inner expression is freely emotional. It is precisely that tremendous human impulse what [sic] made possible such realization.⁹⁷

Those typically 'ur-classicist' anxieties about the tension between modernity and history, and about the need for a vital musical form that is responsive to contemporary compositional problems are evidently percolating just underneath Chávez's commentary, and Copland seems to provide something like the sublime example, having transcended the impotence of handed-down musical 'mold' to reinvigorate the symphonic form – perhaps the strongest evidence of this

⁹⁶ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. Seamus Deane (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2000), 230.

⁹⁷ Letter from Chávez to Copland, 1 December 1934.

comes where Chávez commends the *Short Symphony*'s distance from 'the whole history of music'. But the striking similarities between Joyce's description of *consonantia* above and Chávez's aesthetic reflections on the work are also worth noting, giving a sense of how 'ur-classicist' rhetorics are nonetheless imbricated in wider networks of discourse, very far from being hermeneutically sealed within the Americas.

Chávez invokes a sense of vital physicality in his reaction to *Short Symphony*: 'is an organism, a body'; potentially also 'tremendous human impulse'. Bodies are critical to how Joyce's and Blake's figure of the bounding line coincide: as Hecimovich puts it, 'significantly, the bounding line originates in the immediate "here and now" of perception and the body.'⁹⁸ Musically, Chávez is perhaps referring to a sense of bodies in motion – 'the dialectic of this music [...] its movement, the way each and every note comes out from the other as the only natural and logic [sic] possible one' – that has to do with the music's metaphorical space and the organic and logical, yet often opposed and contrasting harmonic and melodic relationships within that arena. It seems that it is the motion that brings the bodies into being that creates the sense of presence. Citkowitz characterised the implications of the 'bounding line' for musical motion as the 'free and varied [...] flow from idea to idea'.⁹⁹ Indeed, Dalcroze seems pertinent here, particularly pertinent in light of how prescient *Short Symphony* is of the musical language in Copland's later ballet scores. Marion Bauer's 1929 essay on the 'Dynamic Line' in *Modern Music* of 1929 might inform an analytical framework for future work on the *Short Symphony* and the interplay between line, flow, body, and dance aesthetics.¹⁰⁰

A closer reading of the second movement – in many ways, a study of orchestral weight and timbre – gives a preliminary sense of what such a reading might entail, uncovering a close overlap between Copland's provisional title and Bauer's idea of the 'Dynamic Line' that can also tell us much about Copland's preoccupations with dismantling symphonic monumentalism. A Dalcroze-informed analytic framework thus offers a productive way of approaching things here. As Bauer

⁹⁸ Hecimovich, "With Pale Blake I Write Tintingface", 894.

⁹⁹ Citkowitz, 'Spring Concerts in New York', 168.

¹⁰⁰ Marion Bauer, 'Rediscovering the Dynamic Line', *Modern Music*, 6 (1929), 28-31

wrote: ‘Imagine a piece of music tracing in its course every change of dynamic color, not only the more obvious *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*, but every slight graduation of nuance and accent, *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, attack and release, and you will have a Dynamic Line.’ As she continues, offering a brief outline of some principles of Dalcroze’s eurythmics: ‘the natural tendency is to increase the volume of tone as the pitch goes higher, and to decrease it with a descending passage: every phrase has a climactic point, usually its highest tone; the volume increases to the point and diminishes as it leaves it.’¹⁰¹ This musical line then gives impulse to physical movement – Dalcroze’s pedagogical system aimed to synchronise music with motion to create embodied musical and rhythmic learning experiences.

The movement can be read as a prolongation of Dalcroze’s principle, which becomes a way of exploring symphonic and timbral weight – monumentality – through the prism of motion. An analogy would be the application of pressure and consequent increasing weight and thickness of the unbroken artist’s brush or pen stroke. That initial opening four-note motive in the alto flute is answered by further gestures sounding one by one from cello, viola, bassoon, violin, oboe and clarinet – individual musical bodies in motion entering the stage; falling in and out of synchronisation with one another. The bass line never quite allows the passage to settle harmonically [see example 15]. Likewise, Copland’s reluctance to stress the downbeat generates a sense of balance and weightless suspension that evokes the feeling of balletic motion. Two bars before figure 19, the gestures coalesce homophonically for the first time in legato contrary motion. Perhaps this exploration of the interplay between dependence and independence was part of what Chávez was referring to when he called the work ‘an organism, a body in which every piece works by itself 100% but whose musical mutual relation is such, that noone could possible [sic] work and exist without the other.’ The sound world gradually thickens until at the climax of this movement, the *fortissimo* at figure 26, the aural line has accrued a weight that takes on characteristics of the monumental. The line physically overwhelms the listener with the force of its auditory presence and weight [see example 16]. If the monument seeks to overpower,

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 28-9.

however, Copland's work aims for balance. In line with Dalcroze's philosophies, its peak in volume comes as the orchestra articulates the extremes of register; yet as soon as the tide of sound passes over the listener, it suddenly recedes, both in timbral force, and in register. Manipulating suggestions of permanence, Copland seems to use the ebb and flow of Dalcrozian line to dispel the energy of the monumental; to sweep it away. The slate, once again, is wiped clean, ready to begin anew. In this way, Copland balances and attenuates symphonic monumentality, rendering it transient. After energy slowly accrues over the course of the movement, to borrow Daniel M. Grimley's term, its dissipation is 'telescoped' at the very end, in a fluid gesture that undermines symphonic monumentality in its ease.¹⁰² Even the idea of voice, foregrounded by the opening alto flute gesture, forms a counterpoint to monument's eternal marble: voice evokes living – and ultimately dying – breath and flesh.

¹⁰² See Grimley, '*Symphony/Antiphony*', 288.

27

II

18 Tempo $\text{♩} = \text{circa } 44$

Solo
Fl. in G mp *espress.*

Ob. I

Fag. I p *espress.*

Vin. II pp *espress.* *Half*

2 Solo
Vle. p *intensivo*

Half p *espress.*

Vo. p

19 Più mosso ($\text{♩} = 52$)
più accel. *tr. tr. tr.*

Fl. II p

Fl. in G mp

Ob. I, II mp

Cl. I in Sib mp

Cl. b. in Sib mp

Fag. I mp *Solo*

Vin. I (Half) p *espress.* mp mf *intensivo*

Vin. II (Half) mp mf *intensivo*

Vle. (Half) mp mf *intensivo*

Vo. (Half) mp mf

Cb. mf *Half*

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Example 16: Movement II, figure 25 to end of movement (climax comes at figure 26). Reproduced from Copland, *Short Symphony (no. 2)*, 34-6.

34

25 (♩=♩) Meno mosso poco rit. - - -

Cl. b. in Sib.

C. Fag.

I. II

Cor. in Fa

IV

Tr. I in Do

con sord.

p

25 (♩=♩) Meno mosso poco rit. - - -

senza sord.

mf espress.

senza sord.

mf espress.

Vln. I div.

Vln. II div.

mp espress.

mp

Vle. div.

mp

mp espress.

Vo.

mp

Cb.

mp

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Tempo I

26

Picc. *ten. ten. ten.*
 Fl. II *f*
 Fl. in G
 Ob. I. II *a2 ten. ten. ten.*
 C. A. *f ten. ten. ten.*
 Cl. I. II in Sib *f ten. ten. ten.*
 Cl. b. in Sib *f*
 Fag. I. II *f*
 C. Fag. *f*
 I. II *f poco marc.*
 Cor. in Fa *f poco marc.*
 III. IV *f poco marc.*
 Tr. I. II in Do *Solo senza sord. f poco marc.*
 Pno. *fff marc*

Tempo I

26

Vin. I div. *fff marc.*
 Vin. II *unis. f*
 Vle. *unis. f*
 Vo. *fff marc.*
 Cb. *fff marc.*

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An Essentialised Symphony?

Yet there is a far less utopian way of reading the symphony, which hinges around the essentialised aesthetic pointed to by the phrase ‘the bounding line’ and its gestures toward Aquinas’s *consonantia*, as well as its physionogmy: representing only the necessary features of the symphonic form, Copland’s symphony is terse, and collapses inwards. It seems clear that the ideas of an essential form evoked by the ‘bounding line’ fit securely with Copland’s aims to create, in his own words, ‘as perfect a piece as I could.’¹⁰³ ‘The bounding line’ hints at the platonic ideal, and indicates a search for the concentrated essence of the symphony. Recall Chávez’s assessment of the work after the premiere above, from which the following phrase bears repetition: ‘Music in which every thing is essential’. Chávez portrays the work as lean, highly concentrated, and stripped back to its bare essentials. Chávez’s comments correspond with binaries about European excess and decadence as compared with American frugality and necessity that played out in the discourse surrounding Harris’s symphony. And if Copland’s symphony constitutes, as Chávez seems to suggest, the essential scaffolding for the symphonic form, then it aligns with the aesthetic-philosophical problems about essence and ontology bound up with Blake’s and Joyce’s ‘bounding line’. Chávez points to the balance, poise, and unity of the work. His assessment of the composition’s unity channels nineteenth-century symphonic aesthetics, but in a way that reduces and compresses the symphonic genre to its most essential elements. For instance, Chávez’s words invoke (Germanic) dialectics to invest the work with a teleological certainty: ‘the way each note comes out of the other as the only natural and logic [sic] possible one...’

In contrast to the contentions of Chávez, Copland, Rosenfeld and others about the potential of an American classical aesthetic to cast off key aspects of the genre’s potent ideological charge, then, instead *Short Symphony*’s classicism seems in many ways to intensify them. Despite Copland’s

¹⁰³ Müller-Berg, ‘*Ultramodern versus Neoklassizistisch*’, 69; she cites Michael Steinberg, *The Symphony: A Listener’s Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 132.

intentions to work within a utopian, cooperative, and above all politically equalising aesthetic project, pent up in this symphony's well-defined musculature is the raw enlightenment impulse to order, contain, and control, a nexus of aesthetic values associated with rationality that maintains the hegemony of North over South. The 'symphony' is a category that is hard to neutralise and tends to maintain its own critical gravity, and throughout this chapter it has become clear via the exposition of all these discourses that far from Copland (and Chávez) being able to forge the genre anew as a powerful tool within a new egalitarian political and aesthetic project, the muscle-flexing ideological resonances of symphonic presence as monument and symphonic power display cut through, becoming once again a vehicle for the display of enlightenment impulses to structure and rationalise.

The problem that imperils Copland's *Short Symphony* as a Pan American utopian project fundamentally comes down to the kind of highly circumscribed and stratified space conceptually invoked by the genre. Unlike the tabula rasa it cannot mentally be un-structured, or be cleared of all prior associations and expectations of internal hierarchy. Copland's symphony cannot succeed in assimilating the genre into the Pan American idealist agenda or in converting the genre into a neutral mechanism; instead, the symphonic genre, as if it contained an internal self-righting mechanism, reassumes its cultural weight, and in so doing, any fragile, nascent aesthetic space for mutual cultural exchange, transformation, and development closes down almost as soon as Copland had attempted to open it up. The symphony then reverts to type to form a tightly contained, preordained and policed space within which the binary dialectic of body/mind that map onto South-North are simply reinscribed and re-differentiated as part of tightly defined symphonic conceptual possibilities that preclude revolutionary development. It fails to allow a space of possibility for mutual gain, transformation, or overcoming of difference, or, put differently, an aesthetic realm of play in which those dialectics could be put on trial, rejected, and overcome. Within this symphonic calculus there is a serious danger that Mexico is simply reduced down to become part of the 'dialectic' Chávez identifies within the work, and is elided with notions of the body.

Despite its community-forming impulse, the highly controlled way in which historical discourses continue to order symphonic space mean that it is not an appropriate musical medium through which to attempt to create the kind of holistic union of mind and body represented by the Pan American dream – that is, an utopian sensual unity marked by presence, immediacy, and wholeness. Inside a space that does not allow for mutual transformation, tropes associated with the dialectical subaltern serve simply to establish the dominance of the North, exacerbating difference rather than underlining commonality. Recall Copland's reflections on Mexico that opened this chapter as offering 'something fresh and pure and wholesome – a quality which is deeply unconventionalized', and his associated claim that its source is 'the Indian blood which is so prevalent.'¹⁰⁴ Nothing signals immediacy and presence, as well as a contentious universalism, quite like the profoundly bodily image of blood; the phrase also uncomfortably indicates the ease with which Copland slips into essentialising the country, collapsing it down to the plane of 'body'.

In other words, far from representing a kind of neutral, 'god-given'¹⁰⁵ formal tool to establish a new universal language for a utopian Pan American project, in some key ways the symphonic genre was such a well-established and weighty critical category that it starts to structure the discourses around it. Rather than becoming an equal partner in the project of Pan Americanism, it seems that Copland's idea of Mexico is instead subsumed under the critical weight that the symphonic genre takes on. Then the 'freshness' of Mexico – Copland called it something 'fresh and pure and wholesome' – and the body, becomes a mere tonic to invigorate and make 'vital' symphonic form. Of course, the notion of using the idea of Mexico to inject 'freshness' into the genre – simply to respond to laments about the turgid decadence and excess of the romantic symphony, as evinced, for example, by Arthur Farwell in the previous chapter – is deeply problematic. Even if Copland's reduced symphonic scale and aesthetics of line seek to decentre symphonic monumentality, in this way Copland's symphony seems nonetheless to point

¹⁰⁴ Letter from Copland to Lescaze, 13 January 1933.

¹⁰⁵ First Yaddo Composers' Conference transcript.

us back to a politics of subjugation and appropriation for the aims of the dominant cultural power. If the idea of 'Mexico' is an impulse invoked simply to invigorate the symphonic genre, then, again, Copland's symphony risks becoming little more than a colonial project or agent, taking what it wants or needs from the environments in which it finds itself, only to stimulate growth or development of the colonial power's cultural products. And it does little more than reveal the issues about currency and relevance that surrounded the symphony in the U.S. Indeed, the symphonic genre becomes a proxy for cultural anxieties about Pan Americanism's relationship with Europe, anxieties which defer engagement with hazards endangering Pan American idealism from within. It is complicit in mechanisms that obscure Pan Americanism's internal structural political and economic inequalities.

Conclusion

How, then, does all this affect how we read or hear Copland's terse symphonic aesthetic? Copland's symphony explores not simply straight-up neoclassicism but an aesthetic that attempts to contribute more broadly to a utopianist Pan American project. As such, it attempts to open up a dialogue and to situate itself within decentred Foucauldian networks of power. It uncovers not simply a model of cultural imperialism and appropriation, but a model of exchange, in which Chávez's agency in writing and thus constructing an image of Copland's symphony is instrumental. Arguably, in *Short Symphony* Copland aims to emulate an aesthetic of 'ur-classicism' with which he has seen Chávez have success, and which has been positively received and theorised by himself and others. In this vein, further comparative work might be done contrasting *Short Symphony* with Chávez's *Sinfonia India*, or his *Sinfonía de Antígona*. Indeed, as Hess notes, contemporary commentator and ethnomusicologist/composer Colin McPhee 'noted select classical attributes' in *Sinfonia India*, 'such as "sharp and clear" outlines.'¹⁰⁶ I argue that without viewing the *Short Symphony* through the lens of Pan Americanism, a lens heavily suggested by its

¹⁰⁶ Hess, *Representing the Good Neighbor*, 79; she cites Colin McPhee, 'Forecast and Review', *Modern Music*, 13 (1936), 41-46, 42.

biographical context, our view of its aesthetics lacks an important dimension. As I have shown here, only then can we begin to access the rich web of connotations and connectivity of the aesthetics it proposes. The moniker ‘the bounding line’ and the aesthetic ideals about unity, form, and motion it supplies as critical possibilities allow the idea of absolute music and the symphonic genre to be held up and considered from a new angle. It provides an alternative kind of theoretical prism – Anglo-informed, through Blake and Joyce – that supposedly allows us to view this heavily discussed and critically laden genre, tussled up in layers of Germanic discourse, in a new and clear light. These critical possibilities act as a significant and illuminating foil that expand and complement an ‘ur-classicist’ reading within, but also perhaps beyond, the broader project of Pan Americanism, providing an apparatus to help foreground more prominently aspects of immediacy and physical presence within the work.

Nevertheless, Copland’s Pan Americanism is criminally utopian. *Short Symphony* played a complicit role in a relationship of power that, despite its utopian rhetoric, remained profoundly unequal (and remains so, considering the continued absence of documentation of the Mexican premiere, or scholarship on this work that deals with the Pan American dimension). *Short Symphony*’s sense of immediacy and presence within an overall aesthetic of classical clarity, aesthetic ideals that ostensibly playfully subvert the weight and excess of the European symphonic tradition, are nonetheless deeply problematic in terms of how they align with ideas about Mexico as a ‘tabula rasa’, in terms of what they suggest about Copland’s tendencies to essentialise in his engagements with the country and its people, and thus in terms of the subaltern dynamic of power they articulate. Such an emphasis on the present at the expense of the past implies almost a wiping clear of history, and obscures existing power relations as it maintains them. Copland’s Pan American utopianism turns out to have quite a different inflection to that of Harris’s symphony, but – perhaps just as uncomfortably – it is informed by some of the same essentialising and homogenising impulses that, as discussed in the previous chapter, underpin colonial projects in a U.S. context. Complicit in perpetuating the mythology of the tabula rasa, counterintuitively, Copland’s ‘little symphony’, as Chávez affectionately called it,

ultimately envisions an expansionism in many ways aligned with that of Harris's 'big symphony from the West'. As in the hegemonising Pan American project more broadly, a project that largely served U.S. interests over those of Latin America, those power relations denied on the surface nonetheless persist just below.

Perhaps, however, the significant difference of scale does exonerate Copland somewhat. His more modest work allows him to mediate more fluidly unresolvable contradictions of hegemony and diversity. Indeed, it may be that Copland's most radical contribution is to aim not to resolve those contradictions in the work, but to attempt to engender a greater sense of balance and possibility. The 'bounding line' gestures to a tension central for the symphonic genre: between motion and fixed presence. It captures a conflict between fluidity of movement from point to point and the solidity and unity of physical (or monumental) substance; the boundedness that philosophically defines discrete unities. 'Boundedness' in the sense of 'containment' collides with the leaping motion of the musical line; 'line' refers to both outline and to the contours of musical motion, as well as to counterpoint, and *Short Symphony* seems to show Copland as cognisant of all these contradictions.

For all Copland's good intentions, then, the symphonic genre could not function straightforwardly as a neutral mechanism in the Pan American project – it itself could not function as a tabula rasa, revealing of course about the ideological disingenuousness of the blank slate construct. Thus the chapter has sought to demonstrate how an attempt to neutralise the symphonic genre of the historical discourses with which it is embroiled must ultimately fail. Copland's *Short Symphony*, acting as a case study for the genre's attempted appropriation within a Pan American project reveals something profound about the genre and the depth and irrevocability of its entanglement within those hegemonising universalising discourses, and gives further insight into the ways in which the genre deploys force – or 'presence' – to assert their universal validity, building on the discussion of monument in chapter 1. What it also does is show how uncomfortably close engagement with Europe always is behind the veil of Pan Americanism; how difficult it is for 'a musical nation reared on the German symphony

orchestra',¹⁰⁷ in the words of George Antheil, to unbind the symphony from that critical heritage. Through examining the moniker 'the bounding line' it becomes clear that an aesthetic that seems on the surface to invite reflection on Copland's engagement with Mexico is instead much more about processing a relationship with European symphonic ideals and discourse. This illuminates another way in which Europe profoundly determined the shape and direction of Pan Americanism. 'It is all there', I argue, appropriating Chávez, 'in the lines'.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ George Antheil, 'Opera – A Way Out', *Modern Music*, 11 (1934), 89-94, 89.

¹⁰⁸ Chávez, 'Technique and Inner Form', 28.

Chapter 4

‘Und zwar einer modernisierten *Eroica*’:¹ Arthur Honegger’s *Mouvement Symphonique* Nr. 3

In Paris in March 1933, as Weill arrived in exile from Berlin, Arthur Honegger waited for news about the Berlin Philharmonic’s upcoming world premiere of his *Mouvement Symphonique* nr. 3. Conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler could no longer guarantee the performance in the turbulent political climate, and when the critical telegram arrived, it read: ‘Playing as planned, but suggest you don’t come’.² Heard in the *Philharmonie* on 27 March, three days before Pfitzner’s symphony, Honegger’s work received mixed press. Coming down in the work’s favour in the *Berliner Tageblatt* and foregrounding the conductor’s prevarication about performing the work, Jewish critic and editor of the *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* Alfred Einstein headed his review acerbically: ‘Wilhelm Furtwängler has finally dared to put Arthur Honegger’s “Symphonischen Satz Nr. 3” on the programme’.³ Indeed, Einstein himself was shortly made redundant from the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Cognisant of the dangers of remaining in Germany, he left for London later in 1933, ultimately emigrating to the U.S.A. in 1939 following his physicist cousin Albert. Einstein was correct that performing Honegger’s new work was risky in the charged setting, perhaps alluding to the fact that as a commission for the Berlin Philharmonic’s fiftieth anniversary – a moment of celebration, but also of stock-taking and reflection – the orchestra had invited Honegger to engage with and comment on the symphonic tradition and its associated values at a time of acute political upheaval. What is more, Honegger’s was a potentially incendiary perspective, as a foreign composer best known for his old-testament themed oratorio *Le Roi David* (1921) and, more recently, *Cris du Monde* (1931), a critique of capitalist modernity.

Thus Furtwängler, to whom the symphonic movement was dedicated, was right to be worried about the composer’s presence: the concert circuit was still reeling from Bruno Walter’s

¹ Alfred Einstein, ‘Vorletztes Philharmonisches Konzert’, *Berliner Tageblatt*, 28 March 1933, 4.

² Harry Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly, trans. Roger Nichols (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1999), 131.

³ ‘Wilhelm Furtwängler hat es endlich gewagt, den “Sinfonischen Satz Nr. 3” von Arthur Honegger aufs Programme zu setzen’. Einstein, ‘Vorletztes Philharmonisches Konzert’.

sudden escape from the *Philharmonie* days earlier and, according to some accounts, misinformation was circulating about Honegger's racial background – was he Jewish?⁴ Reviews of the concert appeared flanked inside the front covers of the Berlin daily papers by reports on the so-called Nazi 'defence-action' (*Abwehraktion*) beginning to take place elsewhere in Germany against alleged foreign Jewish 'Hetzpropaganda': the newspapers reported SA guards stationed in front of Jewish businesses in other cities to prevent trade [see figures 6 and 7]. Rumour was as powerful as fact in the National Socialist political machine, and, a calculation Furtwängler must have made, even suspicion seemed enough to cause chaos. In short, therefore, quite what was going to cause trouble – and how far such trouble would run – was hard to predict.

⁴ Geoffrey K. Spratt, *The Music of Arthur Honegger* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), 244.

Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung | **Die Neuorganisation der preussischen Justiz** | zweifellos eine Entlastung, wie sie sich seit Verlegen
berlin hiesiger Zentrums noch niemals in ähnlicher
ergeben hat.

Die Neuorganisation der preussischen Justiz

Personelle Veränderungen auf Veranlassung des neuen Reichskommissars
Der Kommissar für das preussische Justizministerium, Kommissar die Einsparung einer Ministerialdirektionen

[illegible]

Reichskommissar Kerl
vor den Justizbeamten
überfüllte Kundgebung
im Kriegervereinshaus

Der zum Reichsminister für das preussische Zivilministerium ernannte Präsident des Preussischen Justiziums Herr, hat am Montagmittag die Beschäftigten im Zivilministerium übernommen und sprach während im Kriegsgerichtsausschuss in einer Zusammenkunft vor den Beamten und Angestellten der Justizverwaltung und vor den Herren der Reichsministerien. Er sprach über die Aufgaben des Justiziums, die es zu erfüllen habe, worüber, was der Hauptpunkt des Kriegsgerichtsausschusses schon lange vor Beginn der Veranstellung überliefen. Er sprach in den verschiedenen Punkten die für die Veranstellung des Justiziums wichtige Punkte, die er aus der Erfahrung lebhaft erhalten konnten, konnten. Die Stimmung bei wurde durch den Wunsch überlegen.

Lundschitz sprach der neue Ministerpräsident des preussischen Zivilministeriums Dr. Freisler, der ebenfalls zum Reichsminister für das preussische Zivilministerium ernannt wurde, übernahm die Leitung des Reichsministeriums für das preussische Zivilministerium.

Was die Gleichschaltung für Bayern bedeutet

Die Vormachtstellung der Bayerischen Volkspartei gebrochen.

Wesels Berechnungsbefugnisse auch zur Anrechnung kommt, in beiden Fällen liegt somit kein Zweifel der Tatsache fest, daß nach der selbstverständlichen Ausgestaltung der kommunikativen Abgeordneten die Nationalparlamentarien mit den fünf Vertretern der kantonirten Sommerschweiz, Not nurmehr sollte die Baslerische Volkspartei ihre Abspreizung im Bundestage haben. Nicht in

Verlobungs-Einverleibungserz G-dur, die Cosenummer Programms, wurde diesmal von Edy Red vorgesungen. Dem frischen Grundcharakter des Wertes entgegen, fast gar nicht virtuos, bei aller Vollständigkeit hat Formwahrnehmung vernunft. Als Uebung behutsam, daß der Regenturm ein Heilmittel sei. Zumorwell ist die Darstellung eines Zimmerers von der menschlichen und von der tierischen Perspektive aus. Für den

[illegible]

„Wie sehen die Tiere die Welt?“

Vertrag von 1933. Zu begreifen ist, welche Bedeutung der Vertrag für die Entwicklung der deutschen Filmwirtschaft hatte. Der Vertrag von 1933 ist ein Meilenstein in der Geschichte der deutschen Filmwirtschaft. Er ist ein Dokument, das die Beziehungen zwischen der deutschen Filmwirtschaft und der amerikanischen Filmwirtschaft regelt. Der Vertrag ist ein Dokument, das die Beziehungen zwischen der deutschen Filmwirtschaft und der amerikanischen Filmwirtschaft regelt. Der Vertrag ist ein Dokument, das die Beziehungen zwischen der deutschen Filmwirtschaft und der amerikanischen Filmwirtschaft regelt.

zweifellos eine Entwicklung, wie sie sich seit Bestehen des bayerischen Centrums noch niemals in ähnlicher Weise ergeben hat.

[illegible]

Eine Erklärung
 des Bayerischen Heimat- und Königsbundes
 München, 28. 3.

In den letzten Wochen ist im Zusammenhang mit der Vergrößerung über einen monarchistischen Ausschuss in Bayern die Meinung vertreten worden, daß die kaiserliche Regierung bereit gewesen sei, sich gegen die Entwicklung im Reich auszusprechen zu lassen. Die Blinden- und Gehörlosen-Zeitung des „Frankfurter Kurier“ hat den Landesleiter des Bayerischen Heimat- und Königslandes am Ausfalle über die Frage ersucht. Freiherr v. Gurlenberg hat sich dazu folgendermaßen geäußert:

So einen Rathsch kann schon daraus nicht die Rede
in, weil Kronprinz Rupprecht es von jeder abgelehnt
ist, kein Rathsch auf dem Wege der Gewalt zu erzwängen.
Nur die Frage, ob es zutrifft, daß Kronprinz
Rupprecht die Differenzen der Regierung mit der
Regierung selbst mit der Beilegung zum Einfließen
Regierungsausschüsse zu nehmen, daß Freiger v. Sutter-
gung folgende Antwort:
Ich kann bestimmt bezeugen, daß der Kronprinz nicht
am Ende, ja, es ausdrücklich abgelehnt hat,
s. Staatsrat mit der Beilegung zum Einfließen der Auf-
sicht der Königl. in Bayern zu nehmen. Die Königl.
Regierung hat der Kronprinz auch die hohe Ein-
führung seiner Aufträge, und seine Wünsche
er nicht bereit will, ungeschickt nach in schwebender
schwebender Zeit am anzufragen.

[illegible]

Die Reform der Krankenkassen

[illegible]

In der Deutschen Gesellschaft 1914 E. R. spricht heute
Abend 8 Uhr. Gastredner: Dr. jur. Franz Osk-
en über das Thema: Beitrag zur Kolonialfrage
Deutsch-Spanische Expedition 1914
Entschreibung Gomeran, Spanisch-Guineen mit Rück-
sicht, Damen und Gäste willkommen. Duntler Anzug,
bei dem Vortrag gesellschaftliches Beisammensein bei
dem Buffet.

Die Tradition Roms im neuen Italien

Präsident Giuseppe Benetti spricht

[illegible]

Figure 7: Heinrich Strobel, '9. Furtwängler-Konzert', *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 28 March 1933, 2. The same paragraph as in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* leads the article 'Folgen der Greuelhetze', about the SA guards posted in front of Jewish businesses to discourage shoppers' entry. Source: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz.

Berliner Börsen-Courier Nr. 148

28. März 1933

Deutsche Buchdrucker für die Reichsregierung

Der geschäftsführende Ausschuss des Deutschen Buchdrucker-Vereins gab in seiner Sitzung vom 27. März 1933 einstimmig seine Meinung dahin Ausdruck, daß es Aufgabe der deutschen Buchdrucker-Bezirke ist, die Ziele der nationalen Reichsregierung mit allem Nachdruck zu unterstützen.

Der Deutsche Buchdrucker-Verein ist der Überzeugung, daß die starken lebendigen Kräfte, die in der Nationalregierung strömen, sich zum Segen des deutschen Volkes und zum Wohle der schwer geprüften deutschen Wirtschaft auswirken werden. Im besonderen begrüßt er die Erklärung, daß die der Privatinitiative die stärkste Förderung zuteil werden lassen wird. Der Persönlichkeitsgedanke hat in dieser Erklärung seine kraftvolle Ausprägung gefunden. Gemäß dem Programm der Reichsregierung erwartet der Deutsche Buchdrucker-Verein auch, daß die Reichsregierung die Druckereibetriebe der öffentlichen Hand endlich in weitestgehendem Umfang ihrer Auflösung entgegenführt, um dadurch dem berufständischen Gewerbe neue Arbeit zuführen und ihm neue Möglichkeiten zum Aufbau zu geben.

Stahlhelms, um damit ihre bisherigen Ziele weiterverfolgen, da es so nicht weitergehe. Es müsse vielmehr jetzt etwas unternommen werden, auch müsse es jetzt wieder anders her um gehen. Um den Hausaufgaben zu entgegen, wollten sie im Stahlhelm mitmachen."

Eine Erklärung der Deutschnationalen

Zu den Vorfällen am Montagabend erklären der Landesvorsitzende des Deutschnationalen Volkspartei zu Braunschweig, Studententrat Baumann und Dr. Lange-Bartels, der Landesvorsitzende des Deutschnationalen Volkspartei zu Hannover, Dr. Lange-Bartels, die Deutschnationale Volkspartei sei aus dem Grunde an den überraschenden Vorgängen interessiert, weil sie bei den letzten Wahlen in der Kampffront schwarz-weiß rot zusammen mit dem Stahlhelm gestanden habe.

Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei habe die größten Bedenken dagegen und lehne es für ihre Organisation in der entscheidenden Weise ab, Marxisten einzeln oder in Gruppen bereits jetzt aufzunehmen, da die Gefahr der Überführung sonst gesehen sein könnte. Nur die erprobten nationalen Kräfte seien in den gegenwärtigen Tagen geeignet, die nationale Entwicklung zielbewußt, aber auch stetig und ruhig zu betreiben. Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei führe den Kampf gegen den Bolschewismus Schulters an Schulter mit der NSDAP in unverminderter Stärke weiter,

Spielplan eines Nationaltheaters

Hanns Johst sprach gestern mit Rainer Schöller in der Berliner Funkstunde über den Spielplan eines Deutschen Nationaltheaters.

Die Unterhaltung zerfiel in einen ablenkenden und in einen bejahenden Teil. Sie war zuerst Abgabe an überlebte Berliner Spielpläne. Sie ist durchaus zu unterschätzen. Die Flachheit und Aengstlichkeit dieser Spielpläne ist hier seit vielen Jahren mit allen Mitteln der Kritik bekämpft worden. Die Bevorzugung überflüssiger Autoren ging oft so weit, daß sogar ein albern amerikanischer Jargonchrank wie „Pottsch und Perlmutter“ kritisch gegen die deutsche Produktion ausgespielt wurde. Wenn man sich an diese, heute vorsintflutlich anmutende Polemik erinnert, so begreift man vieles.

Die flachen, faden Spielpläne wurden, das versteht sich von selbst, in der Rundfunkunterhaltung abgelehnt. Johst bekannte sich zum dichterischen Theater, zur dichterischen Sendung der Bühne, zum Theater als Kultstätte. Er will den Geist, im Wort verkörpert, die Ideengestaltung, die Botschaft des Uebernatürlichen. Aus diesen Thesen nehmen wir die Sätze heraus, die heute schon greifbar sind, heute schon Inhalt bekommen können. Das ist das Bekanntnis zur Sprache, zum deutschen Wort und — nicht ohne Zusammenhang damit — die Abgabe an das Parteitheater auf der einen, und an das Bildungstheater auf der anderen Seite. Bildungstheater, das würde heißen: ein Theater, das nur auf Plakat aufgebaut ist, das aus der vergangenen Literatur auch die Werke im Spielplan hält, die nur literaturhistorisches Interesse oder Seltenheitswert (also Luxuswert)

Folgen der Greuelhetze

Am Dienstag vormittag begann in Obersachsen die nationalsozialistische Abwehraktion gegen die jüdische Hetzpropaganda im Auslande. Vor zahlreichen jüdischen Geschäften stehen SA-Posten, die die Kaufwilligen von Betreten der Läden durch Aufstellung abhalten suchen. Eine Anzahl Unterführer der SS und SA sorgt vor den großen jüdischen Geschäften in den Hauptstraßen der Stadt für Ruhe und Ordnung. Die Polizei nimmt von der Aktion, die ohne Zwischenfälle verlief, keine Notiz.

In Schwerin (Warthe), 28. März. In Schwerin (Warthe) sind heute, wie das „Schweriner Kreisblatt“ mitteilt, sämtliche jüdischen Geschäfte und die Geschäftsstelle des „Schweriner Kreisblattes“ geschlossen worden. Das Gehalt für die betroffenen Angestellten muß auf zwei Monate im voraus bezahlt werden.

Die in New York ansässigen Juden versammelten gestern Abend im Madison Square Garden eine Protestversammlung gegen angebliche Judenverfolgungen in Deutschland. Der Zuspruch zu den Versammlungen war so groß, daß noch zwei Parallelversammlungen unter freiem Himmel einberufen werden mußten. Als Redner waren Al Smith, Bürgermeister

Zwischenfall in Kaiserslautern

Vor dem hiesigen Arbeitsamt kam es am Montagvormittag zwischen einem SA-Mann, der den Eingang zu dem Gebäude besetzt hielt, und dem Kommissar des Reichsarbeitsministers für die Pfalz, dem Stahlhelmführer Dr. Pick, zu einem Zwischenfall, der zu dem Gerücht Anlaß gab, Dr. Pick sei verhaftet worden.

Wie wir auf Anfrage bei der Polizeidirektion in Kaiserslautern erfahren, trifft die Verhaftung nicht zu. Der SA-Mann hat Dr. Pick auf Grund bestehender Anweisungen den Einlaß in das Arbeitsamt verweigert und ihn aufgefordert, mit ihm zum Beauftragten der NSDAP zu gehen, was auch geschah. Dem Vorfall lagen Meinungsverschiedenheiten über die Dr. Pick gegebenen Kompetenzen zugrunde.

Das Stahlhelmbundesamt erklärt:

Zu der Meldung über Auflösung des Stahlhelms in Braunschweig wird von dem Stahlhelmbundesamt mitgeteilt, daß eine geschlossene Aufnahme von roten Verbänden zum Stahlhelm in Braunschweig nicht vorgenommen worden sei. Allerdings seien solche Verbände

O'Brien, Senator Wagner, Bischof Manning und der Präsident der Federation of Labor getauft. Die Polizei hatte einen ausgedehnten Sicherheitsdienst eingerichtet.

Bei der Beratung eines gegen Deutschland gerichteten Antrages im Repräsentantenhaus kam es zu einer lebhaften Debatte, in der der Demokrat Blanton bemerkte, daß die Juden in einigen Stadtteilen Washington keine Häuser oder Wohnungen erwerben dürften. Im übrigen sollte man erst im eigenen Lande Ordnung schaffen, ehe man sich mit Angelegenheiten anderer Länder beschäftige.

Abflauen der Greuelpropaganda

Die Blätter berichten eingehend über den Beschluß der deutschen Regierung, für den Fall der Fortdauer der unter jüdischer Führung in Gang befindlichen Propaganda im Ausland scharfe legale Gegenmaßnahmen zu treffen. Ebenso veröffentlichten sie die nachdrückliche Zurückweisung des Versuchs einer Wiederbelebung der Greuelpropaganda, die der Reichsminister erteilt hat. Es zeigt sich das offensichtliche Bestreben, kein Oel ins Feuer zu gießen.

Eine Ausnahme macht lediglich der sozialistische „Daily Herald“, der sich aus politischer Quelle mit neuem Material versorgen

in geschlossenem Zuge zwecks Aufnahme zum Werbebüro des Stahlhelms gezogen. Etwaige gegen die Reichsregierung gerichtete Rufe aus diesem Zuge fielen also nicht dem Stahlhelm zur Last.

Der Geschäftsführer des braunschweigischen Stahlhelms sei beim Stahlhelm in Berlin und werde vernommen. Im übrigen schwebten die Verhandlungen noch, doch lasse sich schon übersehen, daß eine Versauerung des Braunschweiger Stahlhelms gegen die Regierung, insbesondere gegen den Reichskammer unter keinen Umständen in Frage komme. Der Bund habe Annahmen geschlossener Verbände schon vor Wochen verboten und für Einzelaufnahmen äußerste Vorsicht und längere Probezeit angedroht.

von Morozowicz Kommissar z. b. V.

Der Reichsminister und Kommissar für das preussische Ministerium des Innern Göring teilt mit, daß er am Montag Rittermeister von Morozowicz zum Kommissar z. b. V. im preussischen Ministerium des Innern ernannt hat.

Die Vorgänge in Braunschweig werden von nationalsozialistischer Seite damit erklärt, als hätten die Linksoffiziersverbände Bestrebungen vorhanden seien, die nationalen Verbände zu zersetzen und dann von innen her auszuhebeln.

haben. Die Ablehnung dieser Stücke bedeutet eine Konzentrierung und Einschränkung des klassischen Repertoires, von dem in der Hauptsache die Werke, die große Gegenstände berühren, die weltgeschichtlichen Stoffe gespielt werden müßten. Also, um schnell einige unvollständige Beispiele zu nennen: „Coriolan“, „Julius Caesar“, „Macbeth“, „Antonius und Cleopatra“ im Gegensatz etwa zu „Romeo und Julia“. Von Schiller: „Räuber“, „Fiesco“, „Kabale und Liebe“, „Don Carlos“, „Wallenstein“, „Tell“ im Gegensatz zur „Brau von Messina“ (die allerdings sprachlich formal immer wichtig bleiben wird). Von Goethe ist „Faust II“ heute wichtiger als „Faust I“. Von Kleist: „Homburg“, „Hermannschlacht“. Dazu selbstverständlich die klassischen Lustspiele. Es wird also nicht darauf ankommen, etwa Werke wie Otto Ludwigs „Erbförster“ oder von späteren Werken die Stücke von Wildenbruch zu spielen. Es wird nicht auf ein patriotisches, sondern auf ein nationales Theater ankommen.

9. Furtwängler-Konzert

Es ist zu begrüßen, daß Furtwängler sein neuestes Abonnementskonzert mit einer zeitgenössischen Aufführung einleitete, mit dem „Mouvement symphonique“ Nr. 3 von Arthur Honegger. Das Werk zeigt den hochbegabten Schweizer, in dem deutsche und französische Elemente in der merkwürdigsten Weise gegeneinander streben, von seiner besten Seite: als einen Rhythmus von starker Ursprünglichkeit, als einen Koloriten von ungewöhnlicher Originalität. Der wendige und keineswegs besonders selbstkritische Honegger sucht in diesem „Sinfonischen Satz“ von den programmatischen Vorstellungen loszukommen, die hinter seinem „Pacific“ und seinem „Rugby“ standen und die zweifellos den Welterfolg dieser Orchesterphantasien entscheidend bedingten. Honegger schließt sich den Tendenzen an, die seit Jahren immer größeren Einfluß auf die Entwicklung gewannen, den Tendenzen der formalen Befestigung und der stilistischen Klärung. Beides, Befestigung und Klärung, ist in dem neuen Stück so wenig gelungen wie in der mehrfach in Berlin aufgeführten Sinfonie. Das „Mouvement symphonique“ ist eigentlich nur eine Variante des letzten Satzes der „Sinfonie“. Auch hier folgt einer heftigen, tumultösen Partie ein lyrischer Abgang. Es ist vielleicht einer der wesentlichsten Charakterzüge von Honeggers Musik, daß sie einem klassizistischen Schema nicht anzupassen vermag. Sie ist zu eigenwillig, zu hart, zu widerbar.

läßt. Auch „Daily Mirror“ bezieht deutsches feindliches Propagandamaterial aus einem Warschauer Blatt.

„Die Wahrheit über Deutschland“

„Herald Tribune“ führt in einem Leitartikel mit der Überschrift „Die Wahrheit über Deutschland“ aus: Nach überstimmten Berichten zeige sich nunmehr, daß alle wilden Behauptungen der ersten Tage unbegründet gewesen seien.

Korrespondenten, die sich ihrer Verantwortung bewußt gewesen seien, hätten den Überhebungen in der ersten Woche keine Beachtung geschenkt. Schwere Verantwortlichkeit ruhe aber auf denen, die diese Beschuldigungen auf unverantwortlichen Gerüchten aufgebaut hätten und zur Kriegshysterie zurückgeführt seien, um sie lebendig zu erhalten.

Boycott deutscher Waren in Palästina

Jerusalem, 28. März. Renter meldet: Die hiesigen Juden haben beschlossen, in ganz Palästina eine Boykottbewegung gegen deutsche Waren und deutsche Filme einzuleiten, um gegen den Antisemitismus in Deutschland zu protestieren.

Wie von nationalsozialistischer Seite zu den gestern angekündigten Maßnahmen bekannt wird, liegt zwar der Boykottaufruf fertig vor, jedoch will man vor seiner Veröffentlichung erst die Wirkung der gestrigen Ankündigung abwarten und danach Maßregeln treffen.

Gegen den Mißbrauch des Horst-Wessel-Liedes

Das württembergische Innenministerium hat den Mißbrauch des Horst-Wessel-Liedes, wenn dasselbe bei unangelegenen Anlässen und unpassenden Orten, wie z. B. in Gastwirtschaften oder ohne besonderen Grund auf öffentlichen Straßen und Plätzen gesungen wird, bei Strafandrohung untersagt.

Es wird die Erwartung ausgesprochen, daß die Mitglieder und Anhänger der NSDAP darauf hinwirken, daß das Lied in Zukunft nur bei Gelegenheiten, die einen würdigen Rahmen für das Horst-Wessel-Lied bilden und nur von Anhängern der nationalen Regierung gesungen wird.

Angeichts der Beunruhigung, die gegenwärtig wegen der bei der Vereinigte Oberschlesische Hüttenwerke A.-G. Oberbiller eingeleiteten und vorgesehenen Maßnahmen die Belegschaft und weite Bevölkerungsschichten Oberschlesiens ergriffen hat, hat der Reichswirtschaftsminister den Reichstagsabgeordneten Dr. Kleiner als seinen Kommissar mit der Nachprüfung der Verhältnisse an Ort und Stelle beauftragt.

In ihrer Eigenwilligkeit liegt aber gerade ihr Reiz. Die klanglichen Schärpen des bewegten Teils mögen manches Ohr befremden, sie mögen von anderen als „überlebe“ bezeichnet werden — jeder unbedingende Hörer wird zugeben müssen, daß hier ein rhythmischer Kraft und eine musikalische Energie wirkt, die man in der zeitgenössischen Musik nicht allzu häufig antrifft. Der lyrische Schluß fügt sich nicht überzeugend an. Die künstlerische Absicht ist klar: den wilden, flackernden, durcheinander tanzenden Rhythmen des ersten Teils sollen ruhige, trauernde, artige Gegenübergestellt werden. Aber diese Absicht ist nicht überzeugend verwirklicht. Das Stück wurde von Furtwängler und den Philharmonikern glänzend gespielt. Glänzend und rhythmisch bewegt war auch die Aufführung der d-moll-Symphonie von Schumann, die dann folgte und die für die Hörer eine notwendige Entspannung bedeutete.

Elly Ney trug dann das Dur-Konzert von Beethoven vor. Sie bezaubte ihr heftiges Temperament, sie bemühte sich um eine fast filigranhafte Deutlichkeit und Zartheit des Figurenwerks, an dem dieses Beethovenkonzert so reich ist. Aber sie vergaß, daß hier das Figurenwerk (anders als bei Mozart) nicht spielerischer Selbstzweck ist, daß es hier eine symphonische und „klangpoetische“ Funktion hat. Die pianistische Zucht, der sich Elly Ney unterworfen hatte, verdient ungeschickte Anerkennung. Aber nun vertiefte sie in das gegenteilige Extrem: sie spielte dünn und farblos.

Den Beschluß machte der Eulenspiegel von Strauss — ein viel bewundertes und immer wieder faszinierendes Bravourstück Furtwänglers.

Heinrich Strobel.

Walter von Molos neuer Roman

Die Ableitung für Dichtkunst der Preussischen Akademie der Künste veranstaltete gestern einen Vorlesungsabend, auf dem der frühere Prä-

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Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3 was the final part of a trio of symphonic movements written over ten years, following machine-music archetype *Pacific 231* (1923) and the bodily vigour of *Rugby* (1928). In relation to the other two works, its enigmatic ‘absolute’ title made the lack of explicit programme conspicuous, ambiguously straddling abstraction and programmaticism. Yet lacking a juicy title this work has received little interest in comparison to the much more ready images conjured by *Pacific 231* or *Rugby*, despite, for Geoffrey K. Spratt, standing ‘as his finest achievement in the field of purely orchestral symphonic music to date.’⁵ Honegger regretted how the supposed programme for *Pacific 231* in particular had obliterated all other modes of critical engagement with the work, even though he had insisted that the work aimed in no way to emulate the noise of the locomotive.⁶ Frustrated by these readings, Honegger had attempted to shift its reception discourse to more abstract spheres, for instance in 1925 describing the work as ‘a varied chorale, of a wholly classical architecture’, as Egon Voss has shown.⁷ With *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, however, Honegger encountered the opposite problem. Whether he wanted to or not, Honegger found himself making a point about both so-called absolute music and about music critics. As he retrospectively summed up the work’s longer-term anonymity in 1954: ‘my poor “Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3” paid dearly for its sober and unprepossessing title. [...] And the moral... no, no, I myself was once a music critic and I shan’t say anything unkind about a profession that once put bread on the table!’⁸

But Berlin 1933 afforded more reasons than simply lack of imagination for critics to eschew creative critical engagement with the work – frequently, the same critics who wrote about the Pfitzner concert. Taking place just as control was tightening over music journalism in Germany,

⁵ Spratt, *The Music of Arthur Honegger*, 243. In a similar vein, according to Spratt, Honegger’s ‘curt reaction’ to the work’s criticism in 1933 ‘had been to say that it was due to their failure to recognize it as an infinitely better work than the other two’, referring to *Pacific 231* and *Rugby*, although Spratt provides no source for this comment (see 244).

⁶ Egon Voss, ‘*Pacific 231* – Reine Programmemusik oder doch ein Stück absoluter Musik?’, in *Arthur Honegger: Werk und Rezeption*, ed. Peter Jost (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 199–212, 210.

⁷ ‘un choral varié, d’une architecture toute classique’, see *ibid.*, 203; he cites: Alexis Roland-Manuel, ‘Opinions d’Arthur Honegger’, *Dissonances: Revue Musicale Indépendante* (1925), 87.

⁸ ‘mein armes “Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3” hat für seinen unansehnlichen und nüchternen Titel schwer gebüßt. [...] Und die Moral... doch nein, ich bin selbst Musikkritiker gewesen und will nichts Böses über einen Beruf sagen, der mich ernährt hat!’ See Tappolet, *Arthur Honegger*, 85.

as explored in chapter 1, the premiere was a misfortune of place and time, restricting any imaginative programmatic associations. This issue of what they did not or could not say about Honegger's work, and why, then, becomes perhaps precisely the most interesting thing about the reviews. A foil for Pfitzner's symphony and the status of symphonic discourse in Germany, Honegger's work gives a sense of the kinds of themes with which symphonic discourse could not deal, provoking questions about the limitations and constraints on how listeners heard and wrote about Honegger's symphony. Partly this was to do with how questions of national identity had enough force in symphonic criticism to overpower other issues. A contemporary article in the American journal *Pro-Musica Quarterly* summed up popular perceptions of Honegger's ambivalent national status: 'As a man and as an artist, the personality of Arthur Honegger was born at the intersection of two cultures, at the meeting-point of two influences. [...] [H]e blends harmoniously French restraint and clarity with the symphonic torrent and vigor found beyond the Rhine'.⁹ Assimilating a Swiss symphony that, for contemporary critics, fell unambiguously into neither the French nor the German compositional traditions underlined a central problem for symphonic discourse in Germany about notions of nationalist purity, and seemed to consume reviewers' attentions.

First and foremost, this chapter explores a key theme absent from the Berlin reception: the possibility of a critical socio-political reading of Honegger's third symphonic movement. Honegger's suggestion that the 'absolute' title was 'sober and unprepossessing' hints at more revealing alternatives he might have considered and discarded, and the volatile political climate indicates that the decision may not simply have been aesthetic, but that he intended to deflect attention from the work's programmatic aspects, which, accordingly went, if not unnoticed, then certainly unremarked upon. As he had in *Cris du Monde*, I suggest that in *Mouvement Symphonique* nr. 3 Honegger critically engages with some of the ways in which selfhood and self-realisation are threatened by the imperatives and anxieties of modernity. At a time of economic depression and political uncertainty, his work ultimately voices an elegy over the wreckage of symphonic

⁹ André George, 'Arthur Honegger', *Pro-Musica Quarterly*, 7 (1928), 4-12, 4-5.

utopianism, a genre heavily bound up with liberalist narratives. Yet heard in an unexpectedly charged context after Hitler's rise to power, these themes became heightened.

To date the work has received only cursory scholarly attention.¹⁰ As Honegger diagnosed, in part the title has seemed to discourage scholars' or performers' interest in the work. In addition, however, the fact that no existing research summarises or analyses the reception of the work's premiere has allowed a misrepresentative narrative about the supposedly 'hostile' reviews to sediment in the secondary literature based on only its most negative elements.¹¹ In the emerging Nazi climate some critics did indeed write off *Mouvement Symphonique* as a superficial French novelty. This is a strong example of the French symphony being relativised by its German neighbours. The more conservative reception strains set up Honegger as a figurehead for all things French, international, and new, reacting particularly strongly to the supposedly 'mystical and pretentious' title¹² (and recall here the similarly negative reactions in Amsterdam to the title of Weill's symphony). Perhaps in an effort to distance Honegger from the incumbent regime's politics, then, the symphony's cold reception in Berlin has been canonised unquestioningly in Honegger literature. Furthermore, the oblique status of this work as a 'true symphony' coupled with its perplexing relationship with the two other symphonic movements means that it has been omitted from studies that have dealt with and traced aesthetic lines of development through some or all of Honegger's named and numbered symphonies.¹³ The historical silence of this

¹⁰ Matthieu Carlier, 'La Forme Dans Les Trois *Mouvements Symphoniques* d'Arthur Honegger' (non-doctoral dissertation, Université Paris Sorbonne), 1992; there are some references to *Mouvement Symphonique* nr. 3 as part of a detailed discussion of *Rugby* in Keith Walter's doctoral dissertation, but it is paid no sustained analytical attention. See Keith John Walter, 'Rhythmic and Contrapuntal Structures in the Music of Arthur Honegger' (Ph.D., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 1997). Both Halbreich and Marcel Delannoy give short analytical treatments of the third symphonic movement in their larger life-and-works studies: see Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 356-8; Marcel Delannoy, *Honegger*, ed. Geoffrey K. Spratt (Genève: Slatkine, 1986), 147-9.

¹¹ See Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 131, where the reception is described as 'icy' and 'hostile'; see also: Delannoy, *Honegger*, 149-50. Delannoy gives a similarly false impression of the coldness of the Berlin reception.

¹² 'mystisch-hochtrabend'. See Ernst Heinrich Schliepe, 'Neuntes Philharmonisches Konzert: Honegger, Schumann, Strauß, und Elly Ney', *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 March 1933.

¹³ Foremost here is Jean Maillard's study of all five of Honegger's numbered symphonies, in which *Pacific 231* and *Rugby* are mentioned in passing but *Mouvement Symphonique* nr. 3 is not. See Jean Maillard, *Les symphonies d'Arthur Honegger*, ed. Jacques Nahoum (Paris: A. Leduc, 1974). Tappolet devotes separate chapters to the five numbered symphonies and to the three symphonic movements in: Tappolet, *Arthur Honegger*; in relatively recent literature see, for instance: Ulrich Konrad, 'Die *Sinfonie liturgique* von Arthur Honegger und die Tradition der Sinfonie um 1945', *Musik-Konzepte*, 135 (2007), 25-44; Ulrich Tadday, "'Ziemlich unabhängig von herkömmlicher Ästhetik": Arthur Honeggers *Symphonie liturgique* und *Sinfonie Deliciae Basilienses* zwischen Innovation und Affirmation', *Musik-Konzepte*, 135 (2007), 45-56. The only exception is Sergej Ėrazmovič Pavčinskij, *Simfoničeskoe Tvorčestvo A. Oneggera* (Moskva:

work despite its musical and political interest is also more broadly symptomatic of decreasing critical attention to Honegger's music as a whole since the mid-1980s, occasioned, as Ulrich Mosch suggests, by shifting methodological and historical agendas within musicology and the disciplinary dominance of the Anglo-American sphere.¹⁴

However, a great deal has been overlooked here. Not only does examining the reviews more comprehensively historically rehabilitate Honegger's work, it also gives a more accurate picture of the ambivalence of the context and the ambiguities in Honegger's relationship to it. Moreover, it sheds light on the transnational aims of my project. In contrast to the negative reception that lambasted the symphony's supposed 'Frenchness', many other strands of criticism welcomed Honegger's latest concert offering,¹⁵ some even demonstrating a clear impulse to assimilate the abstractions of the work within the weighty critical rhetoric of German aesthetic traditions. After the symphony's socio-political reading, then, my secondary aim in this chapter is to address the overdue need to collate and evaluate the reception of this Berlin concert, and uncover and account for the work's missing positive reception in particular. Such revisionary activity is necessary to finesse pervasive narratives of National Socialist persecution as uniform and monolithic.

This chapter begins by examining more closely that dismissive strand to the reception, foundational work required to establish both a historically accurate picture of the negativity some critical camps directed at the work, and an understanding of how a misrepresentative narrative about the work's reception has developed. These sources are revealing about the status of the symphony as a specifically Germanic cultural object. Close engagement with those 'hostile' reviews provides insight into how some of the more conservative German reception dealt with the world outside the national imaginary, and insight into the terms on which a work that many considered 'French' resisted integration within the German symphonic arena. Then the focus

Sovetskij Kompozitor, 1972). Ėrazmovič Pavčinskij is unique in discussing *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* and the numbered symphonies within the same frame, but there is no English translation.

¹⁴ See Ulrich Mosch, '(Kein) Platz in der Geschichte? Das Honegger-Bild in der Musikgeschichtsschreibung', in *Arthur Honegger: Werk und Rezeption*, ed. Peter Jost (Bern: Peter Lang, 2009), 15-35.

¹⁵ 'Es ist zu begrüßen, daß Furtwängler sein neuntes Abonnementkonzert mit einer zeitgenössischen Uraufführung einleitete, mit dem "Mouvement symphonique" Nr. 3 von Arthur Honegger.' Strobel, '9. Furtwängler-Konzert'.

shifts to introduce the more favourable reception, which reveals grounds for interpreting the work as exploring specifically ‘modern’ narratives of subjectivity. Given *Mouvement Symphonique*’s ambiguous thematic relationship to the machines of *Pacific 231* and the bodies of *Rugby*, I suggest hearing *Mouvement Symphonique* with reference to some of the themes evinced in Siegfried Kracauer’s 1927 essay ‘The Mass Ornament’.¹⁶ Concerned with changing ‘modern’ relationships between the body, the mass, and the machine through an analysis of the mathematical reification of the human body in the mass dance spectacle, Kracauer’s text illuminates a key cultural anxiety I argue Honegger explores through his symphony about the mass and its assimilationist drive to absorb the individual. Additionally, the themes in ‘The Mass Ornament’ offer a way of mediating the conflict between ‘absolute’ music’s seeming abstraction and reification on the one hand and the programmatic concerns of the political/social environment on the other – the modalities Honegger balanced the work between. Further on, it will be argued that Honegger’s work uncovers his grim fascination with modernity’s dissolution of subjective interiority, as part of wider debasement of Enlightenment values, focused through the dialectical prism of the symphonic form.

‘Icy’ Reception? Delegitimising French Symphonies

First, let us turn to the context for reading the reception. To all appearances, the conditions of the premiere were so far from optimal that one need hardly wonder that previous scholars seem to have taken a subsection of the negative criticism as representative without probing further. On 13 March 1933 Furtwängler had written to Honegger asking him whether he might consider postponing the first performance of *Mouvement Symphonique*, convinced that political strains would have abated by the start of the following season. And simply by being Swiss, Honegger’s work was already problematically conspicuous. Falling in the middle of the Berlin Philharmonic’s spring Beethoven cycle, it was isolated within a season that was overwhelmingly Teutonic – the figures forming the programme’s bulk were Brahms, Strauss, Beethoven, Wagner, Liszt (an

¹⁶ Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament*, 75-86.

honorary German, of course), Bruckner, and Pfitzner.¹⁷ National Socialist cultural policy was already beginning to have its effect. Given the tumultuous and precarious politics following Walter's ousting that week, Furtwängler's decision to ask Honegger not to attend the premiere is perhaps understandable. But besides the question marks hanging over Honegger's racial background,¹⁸ just as importantly Honegger's presence would also have drawn press and political attention to this foreign commission within the programme, spotlighting its already potentially inflammatory treatment of the orchestra and of symphonic form. Conversely, without him there, the work could be styled differently, downplayed as a light opener to Furtwängler's ninth and penultimate *Philharmonisches Konzert* of the season, a programme that otherwise showcased towering figures within the Austro-German canon: Schumann's Fourth Symphony, Beethoven's Piano Concerto no. 4 (with Elly Ney as the soloist) and Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*.

Nonetheless, and in spite of Furtwängler's efforts, for some listeners that juxtaposition immediately foregrounded what they perceived as the incongruity of Honegger's 'French' sound.¹⁹ One of these listeners was Ernst Heinrich Schliepe of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* [see figure 6]. Calling the title 'grandiose and pretentious', Schliepe was explicit in his rejection of the work along national Franco/German lines: 'We know Honegger sufficiently; he is always introduced as Swiss, although his entire musical and intellectual disposition marks him out as a typical proponent of the new French music'.²⁰ Schliepe implied that Honegger's alleged Swissness was a coincidence of birth only, and a category being deployed in the programme to dupe the German public into listening in frustration for absent Germanic depths in his music. Schliepe's diffuse complaints centred on the work's superficiality:

behind this orchestral movement with its grandiose, pretentious title nothing further is hidden than yet another piece of '*Allerweltsmusik*', just like all those mixed together *en masse* by the 'international' composers dedicated to contemporary music, who will continue to mix together

¹⁷ 'Konzerte der Berliner Philharmoniker 1932-1934 (In- und Ausland)'.

¹⁸ Delannoy, *Honegger*, 149.

¹⁹ See Schliepe, 'Neuntes Philharmonisches Konzert: Honegger, Schumann, Strauß, und Elly Ney'; Strobel, '9. Furtwängler-Konzert'.

²⁰ 'Wir kennen Honegger hinlänglich; er wird immer als Schweizer vorgestellt, obwohl er seiner ganzen musikalischen und geistigen Haltung nach ein typischer Vertreter der neuen Französischen Musik ist', Schliepe, 'Neuntes Philharmonisches Konzert: Honegger, Schumann, Strauß, und Elly Ney'.

the well-known ingredients until their public has finally had enough. Our German public has already reached that point.²¹

The supposed lack of substance was linked not only to the work's 'Frenchness', however, but to its 'internationalism': the categories were clearly blurred in line with indiscriminate senses of foreignness increasingly pervasive in German nationalist ideologies. The review evokes a sense of weariness, of nerves worn out by too much interchangeable 'mass' material. By emphasising the fatiguing modern condition it engenders (*'endgültig überdrüssig ist'*), Schliepe resisted any suggestion that this work could be vital or regenerative of the spirit, qualities bound up with 'true' Germanic aesthetics. This review represents the reflexive conditioning of French symphonic discourse at its most insidiously desultory, characterised by non-engagement. Honegger's symphony was denigrated simply to a 'novelty', a word which places it in the highly subordinated category of *Trivalliteratur*. 'The rejection of the French novelty was polite, but emphatic.'²² More damningly still, that 'novelty' was 'French'. Schliepe elevated the discerning German public above it all.

Slightly more nuanced in his appraisal than Schliepe, Heinrich Strobel, writing in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, nonetheless had a strong tendency to essentialise on national terms [see figure 7]. We saw this earlier, too, in his writing on Pfitzner – commenting on the Symphony in C-sharp minor, he wrote: '[the work] is filled with a deep and authentic romantic sensibility; it is the expression of a personality in which contemplative, brooding and sensitive qualities synthesise uniquely'.²³ Strobel had some faint praise for the Honegger premiere, but throughout his review he constructed an antagonism between French surface and German depth which implicitly dismissed any engagement with the work on 'symphonic' terms, i.e. via harmonic, thematic, and formal development. Although his opening remarks on Honegger's national influences sounded only cursory, they reveal deeply entrenched oppositional geo-political sentiment: 'The work, in which German and French elements strive against each other in the most peculiar ways, shows

²¹ 'hinter diesem Orchestersatz mit dem mystisch-hochtrabenden Titel verbirgt sich nichts weiter als ein Stück jener Allerweltsmusik, wie sie alle dem Zeitprogramm mit Haut und Haar verschriebenen "internationalen" Komponisten massenhaft gemixt haben und nach den bekannten Ingredienzien weiter mixen werden, bis das Publikum dessen endgültig überdrüssig ist. Unser deutsches Publikum ist so weit.' Ibid.

²² 'Die Ablehnung der französischen Novität war höflich, aber deutlich.' Ibid.

²³ Strobel, 'Pfitzner dirigiert'.

off the best side of the highly able Swissman: a rhythmist of vigorous origins, and a colourist of unusual inventiveness.²⁴ His world-view did not appear to permit the synthesis of nationalist essentialisms, which instead strive against one another. Strobel thus distanced Honegger from Germanic and specifically symphonic aesthetic traditions by emphasising his proficiency in the fields of rhythmic invention and orchestral colour. Such surface-level musical parameters did not stir the mechanisms of deep organic musical logic. And Strobel extended these discourses to shape the character of the composer himself: although Honegger was admittedly ‘highly able’, Strobel followed with a backhanded compliment by describing him as ‘versatile and not particularly self-critical’ (*wendige und keineswegs besonders selbstkritische*); again these are tropes bound up with superficiality in contrast to brooding Germanic spiritual depth.²⁵ His skilful use of colour became a problem for Honegger elsewhere in the reception, too. The *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger* emphasised it even more negatively as the irritant presence of ‘brash colours’, alongside ‘florid sounds’ and ‘harmonic inconsistency’ that ‘ruined the taste for listeners’, and the subtext, at least in part, was the French influence.²⁶

Rehearing *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* in Berlin

Evidently some reviews were highly dismissive and consequently afforded historians easy opportunities to report the work’s cold reception in Berlin. Yet, although these are informative sources for some of the core concerns of my thesis, gesturing to broader questions and anxieties about internationalism, modernity, and the symphonic genre perhaps particularly acute in Germany, the responses they evince are one-sided and incomplete. By contrast, other critics sought overtly to draw continuities through Furtwängler’s programme, stressing Honegger’s embeddedness in Germanic aesthetic traditions.²⁷ Despite the way the work obviously sought to

²⁴ ‘Das Werk zeigt den hochbegabten Schweizer, in dem deutsche und französische Elemente in der merkwürdigsten Weise gegeneinander streben, von seiner besten Seite: als einen Rhythmiker von starker Ursprünglichkeit, als einen Koloristen von ungewöhnlicher Originalität.’ Strobel, ‘9. Furtwängler-Konzert’.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ ‘klangliche Ueberladenheit, grelle Farben, und harmonische Ungereimtheit verderben dem Zuhörer [...] den Geschmack.’ G[?], ‘Klassik, Romantik, Moderne: 9. Furtwängler-Konzert’, *Berliner Lokal Anzeiger*, 28 March 1933, 3.

²⁷ Otto Steinhausen, ‘Das Musikleben der Gegenwart’, 620; note also continuities drawn in the title of the following review: G[?], ‘Klassik, Romantik, Moderne: 9. Furtwängler-Konzert’.

relate itself to ‘modernity’, making it an easy target for the prejudices of the reviews already seen, the historical allusions in the work, completely missed by commentators like Schliepe, were rich, multi-layered, and frequently distinctly Germanic. The following brief cross-section of how some other reviews introduced Honegger’s work to their readers – Hans Pringsheim writing in a journal at the more conservative end of the spectrum, *Die Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, and a figure more progressive in outlook, Einstein in the *Berliner Tageblatt* – uncovers a set of responses that were far from ‘icy’. As Einstein ended his review, ‘it is a peculiar and exciting – yet certainly not aggressive – work, that one would gladly hear again.’²⁸ These are just two of the several commentators who engaged thoughtfully and seriously with the work on symphonic terms.

Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3, as the title indicates, is technically a single movement, but, as both Pringsheim and Einstein argued, it can be heard as two symphonic movements coupled together.²⁹ The first, *Allegro marcato*, is in sonata form and built from four themes. Roughly equal in length to the first half, the *Adagio* second movement is dominated by the quasi-vocal timbre of the lyrical solo saxophone, accompanied by ‘*Trauermarsch*’ gestures in the strings. Pringsheim argued that despite the reference to and development of motivic materials from the sonata form ‘*Hauptsatz*’, the *Adagio*’s completely different, funereal character, its introduction of a new meandering saxophone melody, and its self-generative thematic expansions (‘*eigenwüchsigen Ausdehnung*’) qualified it as far more than simply an extended accompanying coda.³⁰

The final gestures dissipate into nothing, and both Pringsheim and Einstein made weighty comparisons with Beethoven’s *Eroica*, a cornerstone of the Germanic symphonic tradition – Pringsheim evocatively described its ‘disintegration into nothing’ (‘*Zerflattern ins Nichts*’) as palpably evocative of Beethoven’s work.³¹ Einstein’s emphasis seemed to be even less explicitly

²⁸ ‘Es ist ein merkwürdiges, erregendes und doch nicht aggressives Werk, das man gern nochmals zu hören bekäme.’ Einstein, ‘Vorletztes Philharmonisches Konzert’.

²⁹ Ibid.; Hans Pringsheim, ‘Aus dem Berliner Musikleben’, *Die Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, 7 April 1933, 208.

³⁰ ‘Formal betrachtet sind es eigentlich eher zwei zusammengekoppelte Sinfoniesätze: ein lebhaft bewegter, rhythmisch sehr energischer “Sonatensatz” mit drei Themengruppen und ein Adagio von mehr rhapsodischer Haltung, das man, ungeachtet des Aufklings motivischen Materials aus dem Hauptsatz, schon wegen der ganz neuen, weit geschwungenen Saxophonmelodie, mit der es anhebt, des völlig anderen, trauermarchartigen Grundcharakters – das Zerflattern ins Nichts ist fühlbar der *Eroica* nachempfunden – und nicht zuletzt der eigenwüchsigen Ausdehnung beim besten Willen nicht mehr als zugehörige “Coda” empfinden kann.’ Ibid.

³¹ See *ibid.*

on the musical parallels, and more on the socio-political ones. Enigmatically calling *Mouvement Symphonique* ‘a modernised *Eroica*’, he appeared to point to how Honegger manipulated Beethoven’s heroic narrative of individual subjectivity to reflect contemporary socio-political anxieties.³² Was Einstein suggesting that Honegger’s ambiguous two-movement work was perhaps modelled on the failure of symphonic realisation found in works like Schubert’s *Unfinished Symphony*; was its inability to stretch to three or four movements and failure to achieve a sense of symphonic apotheosis, then, indicative of the contemporary crisis surrounding Enlightenment notions of subjectivity?

Pursuing Einstein’s insinuation, the rest of this chapter suggests that the ‘absolute’ title concealed a socio-political exploration of a nexus of cultural anxieties about post-Enlightenment rationalism³³ – including technology and mechanisation – and its destructive effects on selfhood. It then returns to look at the positive strands to the reception in slightly more detail, asking why, in the main, they failed to engage with the socio-political reading. Symphonies are fundamentally bound up with liberal Enlightenment values – in particular, it is worth noting that Beethoven explicitly dedicated his third symphony to democratic ideals – and reinscribing the *Eroica* narrative in light of the crises of the early 1930s, as Einstein indicated, Honegger’s ‘*Zerflattern ins Nichts*’ cuts off midway that archetypal symphonic narrative of subjective ‘becoming’ typical, as Scott Burnham has shown, of Beethoven’s heroic style.³⁴ After all, the individual’s demise forms the subject matter of the *Eroica*’s second movement. My argument here builds on an interpretative direction taken by Geoffrey Spratt. Speculating about *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*’s politics, Spratt foregrounds Honegger’s comments about what he aimed to thematise in his oratorio *Cris du Monde*, as reflected upon in *I am a Composer*: ‘Some saw a communist work in it,

³² ‘und zwar einer modernisierten Eroica...’, Einstein, *Vorletztes Philharmonisches Konzert*.

³³ Observed by contemporary cultural theorists like Kracauer, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer, anxieties about rationalism – a cultural impulse inherently bound up with the intellectual revolutions of the Enlightenment – were acute in Weimar Germany. Rationalism was considered a destructive cultural force whose increasing and pervasive effects commentators highlighted as impacting upon many spheres: the military, the capitalist economy, the body, the industrialisation of the work place and the dissection of labour, the culture industry. See, for instance, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Levin, introduction to *The Mass Ornament*, 1-30.

³⁴ See Scott G. Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

others a reactionary hymn. Actually, in it I gave expression to the revolt of the individual against the crowd that crushes him – a timely subject.³⁵ The symphonic movement seems to be about modern selfhood and exploring the distractions and restrictions against which it struggles, and in relation to which it ultimately fails to achieve authentic self-realisation. It reifies spaces of subjective interiority as a balm for the incessant pressures of modern, mechanised life. Yet ultimately, Honegger's stance on these issues remained ambiguous – throughout the work, he seemed simultaneously enthralled and appalled by the impulses he articulated. Of course, these issues were incisive as Honegger composed the work in the mood of political turmoil that pervaded 1932, but they had only become more provocative since the National Socialists came into power in January 1933.

Body, Mass, Machine: *Allegro marcato*

Cris du Monde evinced how Honegger had been preoccupied in the very late 1920s and early 1930s with the manifold modern pressures that denied the individual the mental and emotional space to achieve true knowledge of the self. The project was inspired by John Keats's *Hymn to Solitude*, and Honegger asked his close friend René Bizet to write the text. *Cris du Monde* is in three parts. The first portrays the 'Voices of Morning' and the commotion of the city awaking – the sounds of factories, cries of harried workers, calls to arms, calls of suffering; in the second, we hear the voices of the mountains, the sea, open spaces, and distant lands offering mankind a space of respite and solace; finally the third – 'Voices of Night' – returns us to the frenzy of modernity. Workers leave the factories; cinemas, trains, trams, and wirelasses clamour for attention, and the remorseless cycle begins once more as night transitions to day.³⁶ Harry Halbreich summarised the oratorio's message as follows:

³⁵ Spratt, *The Music of Arthur Honegger*, 244; he cites: Willy Tappolet, *Arthur Honegger*, trans. Claude Tappolet (Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1957), 108.

³⁶ For a more detailed introduction to *Cris du Monde*, see Spratt, *The Music of Arthur Honegger*, 201-222.

A prophetic warning about matters that then had no name [...] quality of life, the environment, pollution, enlistment, mass culture [...] in short, everything that contributes to the destruction of the soul and the death of the individual.³⁷

Bizet's libretto was animated by contrasts. Spratt summarises it thus: 'a perfect opposition of the need for solitude with the whole ethos of the modern world; a philosophical argument which is full of vivid contrasts, driven by a thrusting force of immense power and consistent energy but totally unified through its large-scale block structure.'³⁸

In 1932, however, as an explicit commission for Berlin, *Mouvement Symphonique* presented Honegger the opportunity to particularise those anxieties to the German political context, and to focus them through the lens of symphonic discourses, particularly the genre's dialectical form. As he had in *Cris du Monde*, in *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* Honegger sought to explore the contradictions shaping notions of subjectivity in modernity, and sonata principles offered an opportunity to compress and refine the musical architecture he had developed to mirror the block structure of Bizet's text. The symphony also offered him a more 'abstract' form for investigating the crisis of modernity, a crisis, indeed, that some contemporary cultural theorists rooted in a surplus of rationality and in impulses towards false abstraction that were destructive tendencies for 'authentic' selfhood.³⁹ The work, then, seems to allow an analysis to play out of several impulses that act to cripple self-determinism: the militarisation, the politicisation, and the industrial and mechanical rationalisation of the individual. As Honegger himself suggested, it investigates the individual's absorption into the collective. As it will be argued later, however, the *Adagio* second part then gestured towards a spiritual antidote to 'the death of the individual' evinced in the first.

Channelling the mood of 'Voices of Morning', the *Allegro* is chaotic, and brings to mind Weill's comment about the musical content of his Symphony No. 2: 'the opposite of pastoral'. Yet a more abstract form to *Cris du Monde* requires a different critical framework for reading how

³⁷ Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 417. Cited in: Deborah Mawer, "Dancing on the Edge of the Volcano": French Music in the 1930s', in *French Music since Berlioz*, eds. Richard Langham Smith and Caroline Potter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 249-280, 249.

³⁸ See Spratt, *The Music of Arthur Honegger*, 202.

³⁹ See Levin, introduction to *The Mass Ornament*, particularly 16-19.

it explores these issues of modernity. Without a concrete programme, then, I suggest that holding up the *Allegro* alongside some of the themes in Kracauer's 'The Mass Ornament' illuminates some cultural anxieties about the shifting relationships between body, machine, and mass that seem to inform Honegger's work, because it deals with a cultural phenomenon about mass shapes and abstract patterns relevant to the genre. Kracauer pointed to the dissolution and dissection of individual dancers within the kinds of mass spectacles performed in stadiums across the world, to become mere anonymous components of 'girl clusters, whose movements are demonstrations of mathematics', no longer of human erotic or spiritual impulses.⁴⁰ The *Allegro* also invites this comparison hermeneutically. For example, organised mass bodily motion is referenced from the outset by the march tempo marked simultaneously $\frac{12}{8}$ and $\frac{4}{4}$; in addition, the movement is interwoven with 'modern dance' rhythms, as Hugo Leichtentritt's programme note put it.⁴¹ Evoking a military band, the instrumentation too references the ordered mass, with heavy brass and woodwind including saxophone; indeed, this suggests a parallel with the march section in the third movement of Weill's symphony. But Leichtentritt's relatively dry commentary on the *Allegro* in the programme note did not acknowledge any extra-musical preoccupations beyond the dance rhythms. Instead, he focused on the manipulations of sonata form, the thematic developments, and descriptions of the instrumentation.⁴² Kracauer's text, then, provides a theoretical point-of-entry that mediates the 'abstraction' of absolute music and the physical concerns of the local environment, offering a perspective on how 'abstract mass effects' obscured more immediate, tangible concerns about the body, and about selfhood and its absorption within the collective.

⁴⁰ Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament*, 76.

⁴¹ Berlin, Berlin Philharmonic Archive, P 1933 27.3, concert programme, 3-5. (Hereafter: Leichtentritt concert programme). Leichtentritt was also forced to leave Germany in 1933, and was invited by Harvard University to emigrate to the U.S.A.

⁴² Ibid.

Example 17: *Allegro marcato*, bars 1–10, Arthur Honegger, *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3 pour Orchestre* (Éditions Maurice Senart: Paris, 1933), 1-3.

Allegro marcato

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes the Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in Bb, Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, and Contrabassoon. The second system includes the Horn in F, Horn in F, Trumpet in C, Trumpet in C, Trombone, Trombone, Tuba, Percussion, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The Percussion part includes a cymbal (cymb.), triangle (tr.), and a bag of Timb. (p bag. de Timb.). The score is in 12/8 time and features a complex, rhythmic melody with many accidentals and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'p'.

Picc.
 Fl.
 Ob.
 C. A.
 Cl.
 Alto Sax.
 Hn.
 Hn.
 C Tpt.
 C Tpt.
 Perc.
 Vln. I
 Vln. II *div.*
 Vla.
 Vc.



Ob.
 C. A.
 C Tpt.
 Vln. I
 Vln. II
 Vla.

The sublation of the individual within mass motion and mass formations, a sense of modern mechanised industry and its effect on the individual, and the powerlessness of the individual in the face of mass hysteria therefore all seem critical preoccupations of the *Allegro*. The first two bars articulate a C-sharp minor ascending scale of accented triplet quavers [see example 17].⁴³ As the layers and registers increase, tension mounts, and there is almost a feeling of something with regularly spaced gears and cogs winding up into action. The passage establishes the tonal domain, but also the march idiom and its associations of human regimentation. Alluding perhaps to the metronomic beating of a snare drum, with sharp, biting ricochets, the march idiom also reminds us of the state's violent militarisation of the body. The dual time signature articulates a highly rationalised temporal space.

The fact that the work is linked to both *Rugby* and to *Pacific 231* strengthens the reading that it mediates body and machine – the mechanical train and the muscular, sweating bodies of the sportsmen – and the tonal area of C sharp worked as a hinge throughout the trio of symphonic movements. *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*'s C-sharp minor tonality builds coherence with the C-sharp tonal centre of *Pacific 231*, which ends in C-sharp minor, and whose development section is a 42-note cantus firmus grounded on C sharp. Sometimes, however, it is foregrounded in a way that was more oblique. Although unison C sharps are the first notes sounded in *Rugby*'s introduction, the main key of *Rugby* is D major: here Honegger emphasises the leading note to describe 'the tension of anticipation' before the sports match begins.⁴⁴ Halbreich observes that C-sharp was one of Honegger's favourite keys.⁴⁵ As noted in discussion of Pfitzner's symphony, the other major canonical referents for C-sharp minor are Beethoven's String Quartet op. 131 and Mahler's Symphony No. 5, and the same affective connotations of fraught brightness as observed in relation to Pfitzner's work can be detected in *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*'s atmosphere. (By coincidence, then, two C-sharp minor symphonic works were premiered in Berlin in the same week.) It generates an unease in relationship to the subject matter.

⁴³ Similarly, Halbreich describes it as 'two measures of violent scales'. Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 357.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 355.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 351.

Characterised by dotted rhythms and wide leaps, the main theme is then heard at bar 3 in the first violins [example 17] – for Marcel Delannoy, pent-up and potentially ‘agressive, tense like a muscle’⁴⁶ – against a counter-theme in the trumpets. This instrumentation exacerbates the sense of militarism; indeed the supposed main theme has to fight to be heard against it. Consistent with Spratt’s reading of the work as a whole, a sense of struggle thus characterises even the initial statement of the first theme. The grotesque militarism becomes even more apparent at figure 1, with the introduction of whirling horns, fanfare-esque semiquaver triplet trumpet interjections and parodic overuse of violently shrill, trilling woodwinds (and piccolo in particular) at extremes of register, effects that stress the mechanistic aspects of the instruments themselves and generate a sense of the inhuman.

Figure 2 introduces the driving second theme, heard in the basses, which intensifies over seven bars [example 18]. The layered escalation through the registers creates a relatively crude sense of something advancing. This is interrupted by jarring motion in the strings, accompanied by an elongated, soaring *sostenuto* melody in the woodwinds at figure 3, perhaps a moment of subjective freedom from the cacophony. Figure 6 brings in a new theme in $\frac{3}{4}$, identified as the exposition’s fourth motive in the Berlin programme note, initially heard in the horns and supported by the strings digging into each of the beats of the new tempo with repeated down-bow gestures. The development section that follows principally works with this theme. A sense of growing hysteria builds to a climactic restatement of the opening theme at figure 10, the theme now appropriated by unison trumpets, the same instrument that had almost drowned out its initial rendition at bar 3.

⁴⁶ ‘agressive, tendue comme un muscle’, Delannoy, *Honegger*, 148.

Example 18: *Allegro marcato*, figure 2, first eight bars, second theme. Honegger, *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, 6-8.

Piccolo
 Flute
 Oboe
 Cor Anglais
 Clarinet in B $\flat$
 Alto Saxophone
 Bassoon
 Contrabassoon
 Horn in F
 Horn in F
 Trumpet in C
 Trumpet in C
 Tuba
 Tam-tam
 Violin I
 Violin II
 Viola
 Violoncello
 Contrabass

II.
sempre f
sempre f
 II.
 IV.
 staccato
sempre f
sempre f

Picc. Fl. Ob. C. A. Cl. Alto Sax. Bsn. Cbsn. Hn. Hn. C Tpt. C Tpt. Tba. T.-t. Vln. I Vln. II Vla. Vc. Cb.

Musical score for page 205, featuring woodwinds, brass, strings, and percussion. The score is written for a full orchestra. The woodwind section includes Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, and Contrabassoon. The brass section includes Horns (I, II, III, IV), Trumpets (C, C), Trombone, and Tuba. The string section includes Violins (I, II), Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The percussion section includes Timpani. The score is in 4/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including rests, notes, and dynamic markings.

Key markings and dynamics include:

- Ob.:** *a 2* (first and second endings)
- Cl.:** *a 2* (first and second endings)
- Bsn.:** *a 2* (first and second endings)
- Hn.:** *I. II.* and *III. IV.* (first and second endings)
- Vln. I:** *IV* (fourth ending)
- Vln. II:** *IV* (fourth ending)
- Vla.:** *p* (piano)
- Vc.:** *p* (piano)
- Cb.:** *p* (piano)

After a pounding two-bar bass drum lead-in accentuated by down-beat cymbal crashes, the *Allegro*'s recapitulation culminates at figure 16 in a *sempre forte* tutti which then crescendos to *fortissimo*. A fragment of the main theme is insistently, even obsessively repeated in the upper strings until it loses any sense of meaning [see example 19]. Instead, it becomes automated, like a political slogan at fever pitch. The increasingly frenzied repetition and the chromatically ascending register of its apex is almost unbearable. Four final stabbing upwards trombone flutter-tongued glissandi on irregular beats ratchet up the accumulated tension. There are some clear comparisons to be drawn between the very end of Weill's symphony and the end of the *Allegro*, not least the grotesque use of trombones. Again, as in the march in Weill's third movement, Honegger perhaps creates a musical analogue for the synchronism of militarised bodies, or bodies participating in any kind of coordinated mass spectacle, at once alluring, terrifying, and ridiculous. That first theme is wrenched apart – obliterated, even – within the furore of the unthinking mass, assimilating the individual within the collective.

Example 19: *Allegro marcato*, figure 16 to the end of the movement, reduced score showing string parts and trombones, omitting woodwinds, percussion and other brass. Honegger, *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, 46-9.

16

Violin I
f sempre

Violin II
f sempre

Viola
f sempre

Violoncello
f sempre

Contrabass
f sempre

crescendo

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Tbn. 1, 2
ff *gliss.*

Tbn. 3
ff *flutterzunge*

Vln. I
ff

Vln. II
ff

Vla.
ff

Vc.
ff

Cb.
ff

Yet a reader would guess none of this from glancing over the programme note. Describing it – in a bid to focus attention on the quality of the sound rather than its programmatic associations – as a ‘shimmering climax’ (*‘glanzvollen Höhepunkt’*), Leichtentritt steers well clear of any extra-musical signifying territory, concentrating instead on the passage’s impressive technical work: ‘This third main section climaxes in a tutti-episode in which the main theme no. 1 unfolds through the whole orchestra, artfully led in octave canon in the violins and basses.’⁴⁷ Arguably more significant, however, seems to be how it crystallises an accretion of energy through the *Allegro* that ultimately moves beyond musical argument to become meaningless noise. Indeed, this recapitulation seems utterly unhinged, the final effect being of perilously balancing over a cliff edge, with potential energy in such surfeit that the whole enterprise might come crashing down at any moment.

The *Allegro* creates a musical sense of ‘objectivity’, a brash sound-world which provides a dialectical antithesis for the *Adagio*’s more subjective mode. Despite the largely condescending tone of the rest of his *Berliner Börsen-Courier* review, Stobel conceded that ‘a rhythmic strength and a musical energy is operating here that one doesn’t encounter in contemporary music all too frequently.’ He also observed that ‘the sharp edges to the sound-world in the first part may alienate some listeners’, unintentionally striking upon a critical point about register: the *Allegro* seeks to distance its audience, who witness, but are not necessarily subject to, its musical onslaught.⁴⁸ The *Allegro* establishes a space of alienation, aligning Honegger’s symphony with the alienating registers explored in Weill’s Second Symphony, and differentiating it from Pfitzner’s more romantically immersive exploration of the interplay between subjective and collective space.

The *Adagio* and Subjective Interiority

⁴⁷ ‘Dieser dritte Hauptteil gipfelt in einer Tutti-Episode das Hauptthema Nr. 1 in größter Klangentfaltung des ganzen Orchesters kunstvoll geführt im Kanon der Oktave, in Geigen und Bässen’, Leichtentritt concert programme, 5.

⁴⁸ ‘hier eine rhythmische Kraft und eine musikalische Energie wirkt, die man in der zeitgenössischen Musik nicht allzu häufig antrifft.’ [...] ‘[d]ie klanglichen Schärfen des bewegten Teils mögen manches Ohr befremden’, Stobel, ‘9. Furtwängler-Konzert’, 2.

If those upward glissandi left the symphony at a point of maximal fervour and tension, then the beginning of the perplexing *Adagio* hermeneutically signals something quite different. The music dissolves into ‘a kind of symphonic fantasy’ dominated by the entrance of the solo saxophone, whose character in the original programme Leichtentritt described as ‘noble’ and ‘broadly sweeping’ (*‘breit ausladenden’*), commenting, like some critics, that the accompanying figures take on the character of a *‘Trauermarsch’*.⁴⁹ Adopting a more poetic register that contrasts with his stricter formal description of the *Allegro* – a mode of writing congruous with the *Adagio*’s fantasy atmosphere – Leichtentritt continued:

At the end only a shadow of this rhythm remains. All stressed parts of the bar become pauses; only the unstressed parts of the bar reverberate, as if fading away into the dusk.⁵⁰

Indeed, interpretations of the *Adagio* vary wildly in the secondary literature. Delannoy has argued that it provides an aesthetic counterweight for the tension of the first movement.⁵¹ This reading seems unconvincing, however: the dissipation of energy at the saxophone entry is too abrupt for it persuasively to perform this function. Insofar as the two parts have radically different characters, I argue that their relationship is dialectically antagonistic, not harmoniously balanced. The ending has proved especially vexing. For Delannoy, ultimately throughout the narrative of the work, ‘it is the saxophone’s song that sweetly triumphs’;⁵² for Halbreich, by contrast, the ending to this ‘vast epilogue’ – meaning the coda, from bar 327 – represents ‘a veritable death agony of sound, prefiguring the “conclusion muffled as though in terror” of the *Fifth Symphony*’.⁵³ Delannoy hints at the idea that the *Adagio* represents an arena exploring subjective interiority, but asserts that this area of the work ultimately wins out over the *Allegro*; Halbreich’s nihilist reading seems closer to the mark.

⁴⁹ ‘eine Art symphonischer Fantasie über die verschiedenen Motive des ganzen Stückes, voll gewählter Reize der Klangfarbenmischung, reich an Feinheiten der Kontrapunktik. Den Anfang des Adagio beherrscht das Saxophon in einem noblen, breit ausladenden Solo, weiterhin abgelöst von den Violinen. Die Begleitrhythmen nehmen hier den Charakter eines Trauermarsches an.’ Leichtentritt concert programme, 5.

⁵⁰ ‘Am Schluss bleibt nur noch ein Schatten dieser Rhythmen übrig, Pausen auf allen betonten Taktteilen, so daß nur die unbetonten Taktteile nachschlagen, wie wesenlos im Dämmerlicht verschwindend.’ Ibid.

⁵¹ ‘A la tension de l’Allegro s’oppose la riche matière de l’Adagio.’ Delannoy, *Honegger*, 148.

⁵² ‘c’est le chant du saxophone qui triomphe doucement’, *ibid.*, 149.

⁵³ Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 357-8.

The sensory assault of the *Allegro* evoked a brash outwardness, ‘objective’, massive, mechanical, and, ultimately, dehumanising. In contrast, the *Adagio* turns inwards to invoke internal space, retreating to a restorative world to counteract those rationalist tendencies – referencing the oppositional symphonic tendency towards a universalised sense of interiority. Narratives about the subject, of course, are a mainstay of Germanic symphonic criticism, within which Beethoven’s music generated a particularly seminal ‘mythology of selfhood’;⁵⁴ the Berlin critics alluded to this with their *Eroica* references.

Although previous Honegger scholars have, as above, gestured towards the notion that the *Adagio* represents a subjectively dominated realm, what has gone unremarked in the secondary literature is how the musical and hermeneutic space of the *Adagio* presents a core problem because it is not formally acknowledged in the title of the work. I argue this is a vital and productive tension for analysing the symphonic movement. As already seen, the contemporary reviewers who analysed the formal structure – Pringsheim and Einstein – were unsatisfied with the status of the *Adagio* as an ancillary coda, suggesting instead that it represented something closer to a symphonic second movement in its own right. Falling somewhere between the two, then, the *Adagio* is an ambiguous paragenetic space of the kind identified by Hepokoski and Darcy, and fulfils a corresponding function.⁵⁵

This begs the question, then, of why the *Adagio* isn’t formally acknowledged in the title of the work, and what the failure to articulate the nature of its identity and function as musical space does to alter that nature? For one, it echoes modernity’s increasing renunciation of the subjective realm, marginalising the space and everything that is articulated within it. But perhaps more significant is its critical function. In not formally acknowledging the space, it is given a certain freedom. That freedom allows it to act as a space of commentary and critique in a way that permits it to reflect upon, transcend, and transform the space of the *Allegro*. Important here is how the passage musically invokes historical generic spaces that had just this interiorised

⁵⁴ Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought*, 3; she cites: Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 118.

⁵⁵ James A. Hepokoski, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata*, ed. Warren Darcy (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 282.

reflective function, standing outside of narrative time. And ultimately the failure to acknowledge the second movement in the title raises the potentially destabilising question of which movement is the real symphony.

The hermeneutic role played by the saxophone is vital to a reading of the *Adagio* as an exploration of subjective interiority, and to understanding its role as a critical space that reflects on the *Allegro*. The timbral world at the opening of the *Adagio* is one closely evocative of the human voice, using only middle registers: violas, bassoons, saxophone, cellos. These warm and welcoming timbres invite the listener in. Halbreich observes that Honegger seldom uses saxophone in his purely orchestral works, although it frequently appears in his stage works and oratorio, perhaps heightening the allusion to voice.⁵⁶ In comparison with the *Allegro*'s impersonal timbral attack and sheen, the *Adagio*'s scale is more human, potentially even suggesting a chamber space, to draw another parallel with the manipulation of space in Pfitzner's C-sharp minor symphony. There is something fantastical about the relaxed tone of the saxophone in particular, perhaps because of its otherworldly generic foreignness within the symphony.

At figure 17, the downward-plunging arc of the first bar-and-a-half of the saxophone solo thus literally begins by receding inwards [example 20]. Lowering the listener down into a new kind of musical or generic space, contrasting with the ascending motion of the introduction to the *Allegro*, it articulates a microcosm of the fourteen-bar melodic line's broader two-octave melodic descent. Given the quality of the *Adagio* as a symphonic 'fantasy', perhaps that space represents the intimate sphere of individual consciousness. The conjunct, yearning motions within that overall melodic arc, typical of the interweaving melodic lines that characterise the whole *Adagio*, likewise signify such subjective space, recalling the subjective striving located by contemporary reviewers in similar melodic lines in the first movement of Pfitzner's work [see p64].⁵⁷ Honegger's harmonic language is dependent on suspensions and sparse but closely harmonised chords that again connote voice, and the generally static harmonic motion generates

⁵⁶ Halbreich, *Arthur Honegger*, 357.

⁵⁷ Sachße, 'Hans Pfitzner: Symphonie in cis-moll', 560.

Example 20: *Adagio*, figures 17 to 18. Honegger, *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, 50.

The way Honegger tended to connect the saxophone with church music is significant. The scoring of solo woodwind over strings heard at the beginning of the *Adagio* is evocative of Bach's cantatas, and the reflective mode of the arias in particular, which had the function of presenting a moment of pause for internal reflection. Indeed, the use of *obbligato* woodwinds signalled the arrival and function of this generic mode: the saxophone then becomes a modern analogue for the plaintive cries of the oboe d'amore. Honegger was tapping into a deep-rooted historicism, invoking an interiority linked to spirituality: a balm for the harsh drives of modernity expounded in the *Allegro*. The *Adagio* in the *Easter Oratorio* seems a particular point of reference, strengthened by the counterpoint with the bassoon, the other solo woodwind it uses. Yet the saxophone also codifies subjectivity and self-expression by referencing jazz, a shorthand for the idealised American democratic values of *Individualismus*. Canonic referents are blended with the contemporary in a multi-layered tapestry of historical allusion, with the aim of foregrounding, through voice, an alternative image of the human body to that painted in the *Allegro*, as something singular and sacred, and in need of protection against the mass and against industrial and military forces.

The ending of the *Adagio* likewise supports this reading. If, as quasi-coda, the *Adagio* presents a paragenetic space offering commentary on what has come before, then perhaps, to quote Pringsheim, the 'Zerflattern ins Nichts' of the closing bars aims to focus the frantic, overpowering dynamism of the *Allegro* through a new lens, spotlighting its effect on the subject. Whereas the *Allegro* first subject found itself competing for an unimpeded voice from its very first statement at bar 3, before ultimately being drowned out and losing its identity within the militaristic cacophony at figure 16, the *Adagio* shifts the focus emphatically to give that which is lost in the narrative of the *Allegro* – individual subjective space – prolonged attention. Once the *Allegro*'s public, monumental symphonic space is inverted to spotlight the subjective perspective within, Honegger is able to re-narrate the *Allegro* in a fantasy mode. He then foregrounds the concurrent erosion of subjective space that underpins the *Allegro*'s symphonic bombast, and leaves the symphony's subjective narrative unsatisfyingly incomplete, ineffectually fading away

into nothing. Fragments of motivic themes from the *Allegro* are interspersed throughout the *Adagio*, underlining that the two musical spaces are entwined, and that they mutually illuminate one another. Indeed, this reading helps address the problem of how the two spaces are formally connected: as we saw, contemporary commentators had difficulty formally accounting for the degree and quality of thematic referentiality between the two parts, which left the *Adagio* positioned clearly as neither coda nor second movement.⁵⁸

According to this reading, the end of the *Adagio* then signals the dissipation of the subjective realm and the dissolution of the individual in response to the kind of incessant onslaught of political hyperbole, militaristic collectivity, and frenetic mechanistics manifested in the *Allegro* [see example 21]. And although these themes were pressing as Honegger composed the work in 1932, their urgency only intensified in the context of the National Socialist takeover – as did their political sensitivity. The point Honegger makes by permitting this paragenetic, fantasy space of liberal musical play and subjective exploration to evaporate into the silence of the concert hall is deeply troubling. Honegger could not have predicted just how chilling that space would turn out to be on the evening of 31 March, marked by Walter's ousting and the threats of violence there the previous week. In that context, his saxophone solo mourns the breakdown of liberal symphonic values.

⁵⁸ See, for instance, Pringsheim, 'Aus dem Berliner Musikleben', 208.

Example 21: *Adagio*, figure 20 to the end. Honegger, *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, 57-60.

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet in B $\flat$, Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, and Contrabassoon. The second system includes Horn in F 1,2, Horn in F 3,4, Trombone 1, Trombone 2,3, and Tuba. The third system includes Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass.

Key musical details include:

- Flute:** Measures 57-58, marked with a [20] dynamic marking.
- Clarinet in B $\flat$:** Measures 59-60, marked "I. solo".
- Alto Saxophone:** Measures 58-59, marked *p*.
- Horn in F 1,2:** Measures 57-60, marked "sourdines II".
- Horn in F 3,4:** Measures 57-60, marked "sourdines".
- Violoncello:** Measures 59-60, marked with a triplet of eighth notes.
- Contrabass:** Measures 57-60, marked *arco* and *pizz.* (pizzicato).

Fl.

Ob.

C. A.

Cl.

Alto Sax.

Bsn. *arco* *3*

Cbsn. *pp*

Hn. *III.*

Hn. *IV.* *pp*

Tbn. *sordines* *pp*

Tbn. *sordines*

Tba. *pp*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *(pizz.)* *pp*

Vc. *arco* *3* *pp* *pizz.*

Cb. *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score contains staves for various instruments. The woodwind section (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in A, Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Bassoon, Contrabassoon) is mostly silent, with a triplet in the Bassoon and a melodic line in the Contrabassoon. The brass section (Horn I & II, Trombone I & II, Tuba) features complex rhythmic patterns and dynamics, with 'sordines' (mutes) indicated for the trombones. The string section (Violin I & II, Viola, Violoncello, Contrabass) includes pizzicato and arco passages, with a triplet in the Cello. Dynamics like *pp* (pianissimo) are used throughout.

Embedding *Mouvement Symphonique Nr. 3* in Symphonic Discourses

Fascist Germany, then, raised the stakes for hearing the work, increasing the definition, resolution, and immediacy of the political and social themes with which *Mouvement Symphonique* was occupied. Yet at the Berlin performance Leichtentritt's programme notes and the concert reviews barely engaged with the extra-musical associations Honegger voiced, instead locating the work in relation to safer questions of symphonic formalism and thematic development. Einstein's and Pringsheim's veiled parallels with the *Eroica*'s second movement, alluding perhaps to its subject matter of death in battle – an extreme form of state annihilation of the individual – were the closest anyone came to acknowledging any suggestions that the music gestured to the preoccupations of modernity. Could the *Eroica* reference have been a coded allusion to the death-knell sounding over democracy in the concert hall? If so, it was certainly guarded, easily dismissed as a canonising assimilationist gesture from a peripheralised nation. Name-dropping from the heights of Germanic symphonic aesthetic traditions carried relatively little risk.

No comparable extra-musical parallels surfaced in the vast majority of the reviews, however. Indeed, in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, Strobel stated explicitly that this was a work in which Honegger sought to free himself of the programmatic associations that had determined the worldwide success of *Pacific 231* and *Rugby*.⁵⁹ For the most part, reviewers engaged much more explicitly with the work's formal elements, and not only because to do so deflected the question of the work's politics. Many agendas seemed more actively positive: such engagement demonstrated an impulse to situate the work within broad Germanic historical-aesthetic arcs that implicitly elevated the work, in ways that overlap with the *Eroica* comparisons. This was perhaps most pronounced in Otto Steinhagen's review. In the context of a programme which, he argued, stressed the close relationship between classical, romantic, late-romantic and contemporary music, he noted how 'the Swiss (*Der Schweizer*) Honegger, representing the most recent developments, returns to closed sonata form' indicating how deeply steeped 'der Schweizer'

⁵⁹ 'Honegger sucht in diesem "Sinfonischen Satz" von den programmatistischen Vorstellungen loszukommen, die hinter seinem "Pacific" und seinem "Rugby" standen und die zweifellos den Welterfolg dieser Orchesterphantasien entscheidend bedingten.' Strobel, '9. Furtwängler-Konzert'.

(stressing his Germanic, not French affiliations) was in the richness of this musical history and how fundamentally his work was tethered to earlier traditions.⁶⁰ Remarkably, rather than new music's stylistic rupture Steinhagen emphasises Honegger's formal continuity with those pinnacles of the German canon Schumann and Strauss.

We heard from Steinhagen in chapter 1 extolling the metaphysics of Pfitzner's symphony, focussing in particular on the clarity of its intellectual rigour as opposed to any sentimental excess, and its supposed capacity to yield the 'world of the Self' to the listener. By early 1933, *Die Musik's* academic credibility was deteriorating, and it was fast becoming a mere mouthpiece for official propaganda: the June issue opened with an article by Goebbels.⁶¹ Steinhagen was enamoured of the concert as a whole, and carving a place for Honegger's symphonic movement within the world of Germanic musical values, the vocabulary in which he couched Honegger's work was not noticeably different from that which grounded Pfitzner's symphony within Germanic idealist music aesthetics a few days later:

Honegger's work 'Mouvement Symphonique Nr. 3' premiered here brings something unfamiliar, austere, and melodically somewhat inaccessible. Developed from a clear and genuine musical vision, however, the strength of the logical tectonics and the art of the thematic structure alone should enthrall even non-partisan listeners.⁶²

Steinhagen drew attention to elements of the work with which he imagined listeners would have difficulty. Yet he framed them positively, as an austere sound world that challenged the listener to achieve new heights – although he admittedly stopped far short of the promises of Enlightenment he attached to the sense of confrontation in Pfitzner's work. As in his review of the Pfitzner concert, where he had seemed very invested in separating the interiority of the mind from the emotional excesses of the body, he commended musical aspects that are logical,

⁶⁰ 'Klassisches, Romantisches, Spätromantisches und Gegenwärtiges standen in engster und erkenntnisreicher Beziehung' [...] 'der Schweizer Honegger [kehrt] als Vertreter der jüngster Entwicklung wieder zur geschlossenen Sonatenform zurück'. Steinhagen, 'Das Musikleben der Gegenwart', 620.

⁶¹ See Meyer, *The Politics of Music in the Third Reich*, 34; see also Lovisa, *Musikkritik im Nationalsozialismus, 1920-1945*, 21-39.

⁶² 'Honeggers hier uraufgeführte Arbeit "Mouvement Symphonique Nr. 3" bringt Ungewohntes, klanglich Herbes, melodisch noch nicht leicht Eingehendes. Aber allein die Kraft der logischen Tektonik, die Kunst der Thematischen Gefüges, musikalisch echt herausgeworfen aus einer klargeschauten Vision müssen den Nichtvoreingenommenen unbedingt packen.' Steinhagen, 'Das Musikleben der Gegenwart', 620.

intellectual, or non-sensual, suggesting the moral elevation of immanence and internal mechanism over external manifestation.

A closer look at Pringsheim's review in *Die Allgemeine Musikzeitung*, a relatively conservative journal, shows that it was not only with the *Eroica* reference that he located Honegger's work in Germanic musical discourses. He gestured towards symphonic organicism and intellectualism as he outlined the work's main attributes: 'a certain strength and vitality to the thematic invention, tremendous rhythmic energy, and an elaborately worked-through structure (*kunstvoll durchgearbeitete Aufbau*)'.⁶³ These are all nationalistically loaded qualities integral to the Germanic symphony, encapsulating a prominent tension between the rigour and inner purity of academic counterpoint – '*kunstvoll durchgearbeitete Aufbau*' – and the vigour of organicist development. Pringsheim draws particularly on qualities of strength, depth, and purity prominent in the discourses surrounding Pfitzner's symphony. But, unsurprisingly given the journal's political and aesthetic sympathies, he also identifies weaknesses in Honegger's musical language, typical of aggressive tendencies in new music, criticising 'the seeming indissoluble attachment of the composer to so-called "new music's" brutal conceptualisations and violations of sound'.⁶⁴

So why did Leichtentritt and the reviewers hear – or at least write about – the symphony in the ways that they did? The limitations of the reception as a whole are indicative of a broader theoretical question about the failure to self-determine within developing fascist contexts. Perhaps some critics did not recognise the potential socio-political reading; those who did perhaps did not dare express it in print. As politics intensified, the press became more restricted. Critical, then, becomes what is left unsaid. Given the strong nationalist critical tendencies to reject Honegger's work, the willingness alone of many writers to embrace Honegger's symphony within nationalist aesthetic traditions may become politically resistant. Or it may be symptomatic of other impulses entirely. These contexts are exceptionally difficult to unpick – and the question

⁶³ 'eine gewisse Kraft und Vitalität der thematischen Erfindung, gewaltige rhythmische Energien und kunstvoll durchgearbeitete Aufbau'. Pringsheim, 'Aus dem Berliner Musikleben', 208.

⁶⁴ 'die anscheinend unlösliche Verbundenheit des Tondichters mit den brutalen Klangvorstellungen und Klangvergewaltigungen der sogenannten "Neuen Musik"', *ibid.*

of motivation is especially contentious – but in laying out the criticism more carefully, some groundwork has been done here to help begin to complicate and create a more finely-grained understanding of this concert.

Yet whatever the reason for avoiding *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*'s explicit militarism, its machine allusions, the *Adagio*'s potential status as a modern lament, or indeed, the programmatic questions raised by the movement's predecessors *Pacific 231* and *Rugby*, reviewers fell back on nationalistically loaded discussion of the 'pure' music, to which the work lent itself easily. The Berlin reception of *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* shows how flexibly German commentators were willing to apply German idealist aesthetic categories as an assimilatory gesture, but equally, the ease with which they could close ranks around anything they wanted to label alien. Thus in contrast to discussion about the symphony as a Germanic cultural export in the intervening chapters, this chapter has considered what happens when that cultural export is reimported. As a work that shows an outsider looking in at the German symphonic tradition, as well as focusing how German critics attempted to assimilate the world outside the Reich, Honegger's symphony facilitates a shuttling between national perspectives. In the context of this thesis, examining it has investigated a trajectory in which the symphonic genre folds back on itself to become a mutable site of cultural transaction within Germany.

Conclusion

Like the stance Pfitzner articulated in his symphony heard a few days later, Honegger's position in relation to the themes his symphony explored seems to have been genuinely ambivalent. *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* offers a commentary on absolute music, and, through that prism, it investigates the ability of the individual to self-determine in spite of the constant onslaught of pressures and distractions presented by industrial modernity. Yet Honegger's attitude appears at once repelled and enraptured by the destructive 'modern' tendencies he expounds: the military, the industrial machine, the mass. Rather than thinking about it as deflative, then, *Mouvement Symphonique*'s unambiguously 'absolute' title may furnish the key to reading its situation in Berlin

in 1933 and its political ambivalence. Delannoy claims that Honegger defended the topic of the work, in contrast to *Pacific 231* or *Rugby*, as ‘music itself’,⁶⁵ a heavily freighted concept in the German context for which Honegger was writing. To invoke ‘absolute’ music was to recruit a whole host of discourses and ideologies pressing in the political and economic climate of the early 1930s – ideas of nationalist purity, liberalist ideals about individual autonomy – but, like a trick of the light, look away and they just as easily recede behind the abstractions of the ‘pure’ music.

Perhaps, then, for Honegger the symphonic genre was a sophisticated plane on which simultaneously to engage and to disengage with modernity, but also more specifically with Germany, with politics, and with nationalism, in the same way as the reviewers had. Given that Berlin’s symphony orchestra *par excellence*, the Berlin Philharmonic, had commissioned the work, Honegger was privileged in the knowledge that his reflections on the German symphonic tradition and the contemporary political situation would be given a potentially influential platform in the heart of the capital. But the commission turned out to be a poisoned chalice, and the capability simultaneously to engage and disengage was evidently vital in the dangerous political climate of 1933. Yet in finding himself unable to commit to the work’s status Honegger himself enacted that same anxiety about authenticity and self-determinism. Clearly these anxieties were keen in 1933, as the freedoms of citizens in Germany were becoming increasingly limited and controlled.

Indeed, Berlin 1933 has emerged from the way reviewers engaged – or were not at liberty to engage – with the work as a key context in which notions surrounding liberal subjectivity were disintegrating at an especially alarming rate. Writing the work in October 1932, Honegger may have been responding to concerns outside Germany about Hitler’s party and their effective censorship of cultural and self-expression based on reports by those travelling in and out of the country. The cultural proximity of Honegger’s Swiss-German background may have predisposed him to be particularly invested in what was going on. Those anxieties are encapsulated in an

⁶⁵ ‘Le sujet serait la musique elle-meme’. Delannoy, *Honegger*, 148.

article by Hans Heinsheimer for the American journal *Modern Music*: he referred to the ‘increasing political terrorism of the Hitlerites’ and how they were ‘transforming the picture at the expense of modern music’.⁶⁶ In January 1933 he reported that: ‘the aim of the National Socialists was to push us back to the Middle Ages. [...] What has resulted from the tremendous supremacy of a party which has so active and definite a culture program? Their politico-cultural demands are radical. They include not only strong anti-Semitism, but just as much anti-Slav and anti-French feeling; they set up the German superman against the “inferior foreigner.”’⁶⁷

Thinking more theoretically about agency, the two-movement form of *Mouvement Symphonique* seems to evince a negative dialectical form of musical argument that illuminates ‘modern subjectivity’ and its entanglement with the German symphonic tradition. Formally, then, Honegger supplies a meta-commentary on the kinds of tensions embedded within the Germanic symphonic tradition, and with it, the ultimately destructive tendencies entrenched within Enlightenment liberal values, at least according to contemporary theorists like Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer.⁶⁸ At a structural level, he does this by presenting a thesis (the *Allegro*) and then a space that seems to antagonise and reflect on that thesis (the *Adagio*). Likewise, picking up on a theme raised in the chapter on Pfitzner’s symphony, perhaps Honegger sheds light on aspects of how absolute music seemed to contain the seeds of the inherently collusive imperatives that paved the way for totalitarian values. Rheinhold Brinkmann asks whether ‘first traces of [the] totalitarian imbalance at the expense of subjectivity might not already be present in the forced revolutionary form and message’ of Beethoven’s most canonical symphonic works.⁶⁹ In the *Allegro*, Honegger exposes pent-up aggression, crass hyperbole, and even potential undertones of militarism as embedded within the symphonic tradition and its rigid sonata form in particular.

⁶⁶ Hans Heinsheimer, ‘Nightmare in Germany’, *Modern Music*, 10 (1933), 115-117, 115.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 115-16.

⁶⁸ Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

⁶⁹ See Brinkmann, ‘The Distorted Sublime’, 48.

Honegger's *Adagio* then follows as a lament over the ruins of symphonic utopianism, displaying liberalism, and the symphonic project, in tatters. Walter Benjamin wrote about the 'ruins of the bourgeoisie', invoking Honoré de Balzac. 'With the destabilisation of the market economy', he argued, 'we begin to recognise the monuments of the bourgeoisie as ruins before they have crumbled.'⁷⁰ Prescient of Vaughan Williams's later epilogue to his Symphony No. 6, which contemporary commentators suggested evoked a post-nuclear wasteland,⁷¹ Honegger leaves us with a post-apocalyptic vision of spiritual corruption and debasement, where the only escape is to turn inwards. Whether, for Honegger, the situation remains salvageable is unclear. He seems to hint at the possibility of a space for spiritual redemption, but equally, in a nihilist gesture, he ultimately dissolves away that space into nothing. To return to the observations Leichtentritt made in his programme note, Honegger ultimately destabilises the rhythms and metric structures that characterised the *Adagio*, 'as if fading away into the dusk.'⁷² If the symphony is one of the Enlightenment's, and liberalism's, archetypal musical genres, then this work gestures towards the wasteland dystopia beyond the point at which faith in those ideals was tenable. *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3* offers a glimpse of the ruins of the sovereign palace built on the foundations of the Enlightenment project, a sense of waking to our own destruction, and a despairing threnody for the future. Its eschatology is simultaneously horrifying and compelling.

That 'fading away' makes it a symphony of its time and place, harnessing a cultural moment during which narratives of subjective self-realisation or symphonic apotheosis perhaps seemed impossible to sustain. In failing to achieve a symphonic finale, Honegger's subjective narrative in the symphony becomes simultaneously closer and further away from genuine self-realisation. And as such this work is highly attuned to the cultural and philosophical concerns about selfhood acute in the political and social context of 1933.

⁷⁰ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press, 1999), 13.

⁷¹ See, for example, Michael Kennedy, *The Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 301.

⁷² Leichtentritt concert programme, 5.

Conclusion

Weill's Symphony No. 2 in New York

Would Weill's Symphony No. 2 fare any better across the Atlantic than it had in Amsterdam? This question would likely have been a pressing concern for Bruno Walter as he showcased Weill's new concert work with the New York Philharmonic at the Carnegie Hall on 13 and 14 December 1934, two months after the Concertgebouw premiere. The first conspicuous implication of the negative Amsterdam reception was Walter's decision to revise the title, making it less contentiously proximate to the celebrated Austro-German symphonic canon. In New York, therefore, rather than 'Symphonische Fantasie: Symphonie no. 1' Weill's symphony was performed under the title *Three Night Scenes: A Symphonic Fantasy*, apparently proposed by Walter on account of the work's 'nocturnal, uncanny, mysterious atmosphere',¹ and presumably an attempt to respond more sensitively to a set of expectations made clear by the Amsterdam reception about Weill's theatrical background. And yet inconsistent messages were broadcast at the concert about the work's generic status: despite the title's softer sell as compared with Amsterdam, Weill's symphonic ambitions emerged explicitly in the programme note, which launched him as a 'symphonic composer of serious intentions'.² Critics were vexed: one reviewer voiced a concern that the new title was assumed 'somewhat rashly'.³ In New York, Weill's hopes of being taken seriously as a symphonist were unravelling before even the possibility, presented by Walter's 'gateway title',⁴ had the chance to pique listeners' interests. Yet precisely this uncertainty and prevarication about the work's status and Weill's aspirations emphasise how ideologically freighted the genre was, and how fraught the stakes were for a U.S. audience. It seems that here in particular the work could not bear the burden of the title 'symphony'.

¹ Programme of the Philharmonic Society of New York, Carnegie Hall, 13-14 December 1934; with programme note by Lawrence Gilman, Ser. 50B, Weill-Lenya. (Hereafter: New York Philharmonic concert programme).

² Ibid.

³ Pitts Sanborn, 'Concerts in New York', *Christian Science Monitor*, 22 December 1934, 10.

⁴ For discussion of 'gateway titles', see Hepokoski, 'Beethoven reception: the symphonic tradition', in *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 424-59, 445

A letter from Walter to Weill reveals that he had never been convinced by the work's generic claims: although he agreed the form was symphonic, the conductor believed that the 'remarkable popular tone, half ironic, half tragic, which constituted the charm of the work' was inappropriate in something described as a symphony.⁵ Indeed, Walter had first advised against calling it a symphony the very first time he had met Weill to look over the score in Italy in 1934, suggesting instead a variant on the New York title;⁶ evidently his convictions only strengthened after the hostility in Amsterdam. Despite ultimately accepting this re-invention in New York, Weill's insistence in the Concertgebouw programme that the work was conceived without a programme, as well as his commitment to the title 'symphony' in Amsterdam in spite of Walter's reservations, suggests unease around explicitly introducing a programmatic frame, no matter how vague. This echoes the stance Honegger took regarding his *Mouvement Symphonique nr. 3*, underlining the disparity in status both composers felt between 'programmatic' and 'absolute' music, and how this was reflected in the level of respect they commanded in the public eye.

Weill's symphony did not create the same stir as it had achieved in Amsterdam. *Die Dreigroschenoper* did not have the same cultural capital on the U.S. market as in the Netherlands, despite a brief Broadway run. Far removed from Weill's introduction in Amsterdam as a composer known for his 'juicy, fluent, and successful music'⁷ Pitts Sanborn summed him up much more dryly in the *Christian Science Monitor* as 'one of the German modernists whose compositions have been little heard in this country.'⁸ If American listeners were familiar with anything, then as the programme note indicated, it was most likely his radio cantata *Der Lindberghflug*, broadcast in the U.S. by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1931, followed by *Royal*

⁵ 'symphonisch ist gewiss die Form, aber keineswegs symphonisch ist ebenso gewiss die Orchesterbehandlung wie Clarinetten solo mit folgender Trompeten Melodie, "Bolero" Rhythmus der Streicher, schliesslich auch die "Begleitung" des Posaunen Solos im 2ten Satz und andere ähnliche Dinge. Schliesslich ist ja gerade der Reiz des Werkes der sonderbare ironische tragisch populär Ton, den Sie mit dem Wort Symphonie irgendwie schamhaft verleugnen.' Cited in: Kuhnt, "'Das Gegenteil von Pastorale'", 319. This English translation is taken from Taylor, *Kurt Weill*, 203, although he does not cite the original letter.

⁶ 'he suggests not to call it a "Symphony" but rather e.g. "3 Scenes for Orchestra" or something like that, since the music is so dramatic.' 'er schlägt vor, es nicht "Symphonie" zu nennen, sondern z.B. "3 Szenen für Orchester" oder dergl. weil es doch eine sehr dramatische Musik ist.' Letter from Weill to Maurice Abravanel, August 1934, Ser. 30, 15/6, Weill-Lenya (trans. Weill-Lenya Research Center).

⁷ 'hier algemeen bekend om zijn sappige, vlotte en rake muziek'. Anon, 'Concertgebouw', *N. Rott. GT* (Rotterdam Gazette?), 12 October 1934 (trans. Kahn).

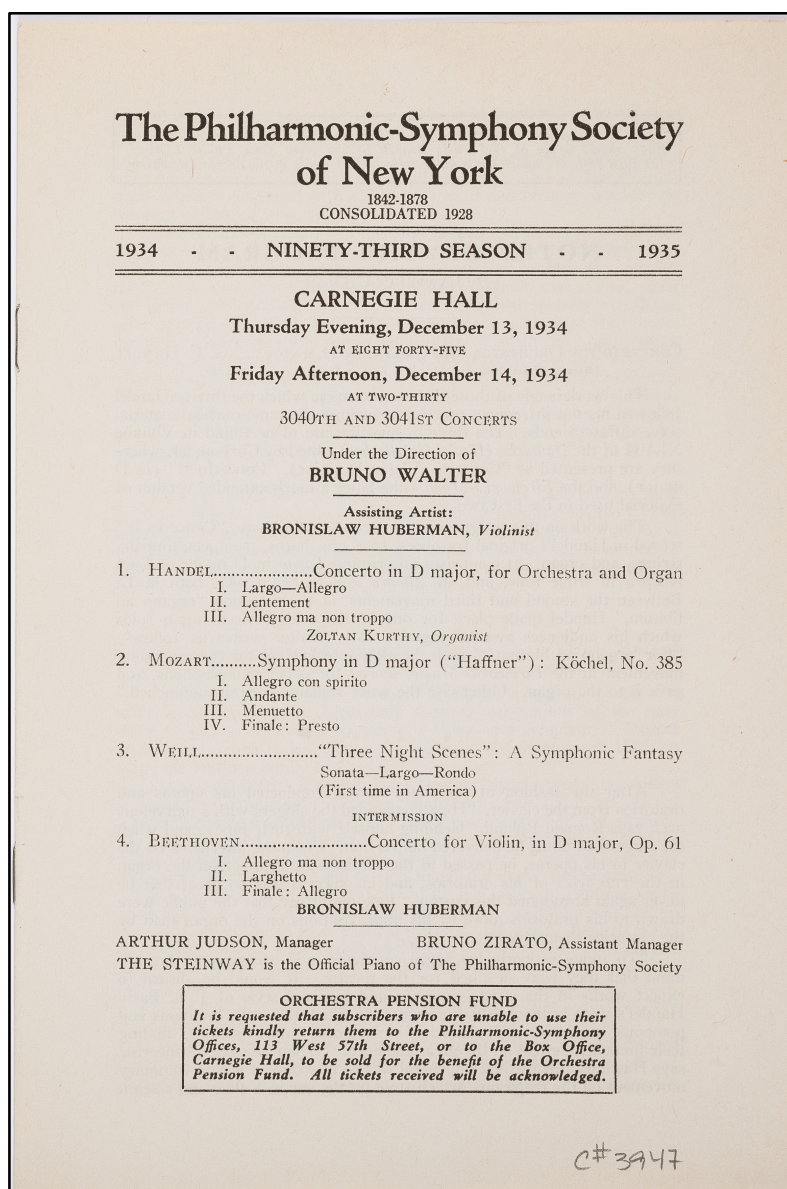
⁸ Sanborn, 'Concerts in New York'.

Palace, Die Dreigroschenoper, or Mahagonny.⁹ Consequently there are far fewer reviews of the concert on record – and they were even less sympathetic, and quicker to stereotype.¹⁰ And since the work was accompanied by such contradictory messages about the work’s status and Weill’s objectives, in the New York reception the genre discourses are especially complex and difficult to untangle: was it a symphony or a series of light orchestral vignettes? The programming didn’t give any strong clues either, positioned immediately before the concert’s interval, after Handel’s Concerto in D major for Orchestra and Organ (featuring Zoltan Kurthy) and Mozart’s ‘Haffner’ Symphony in D major. The key of Weill’s work was anomalous; D major was restored once again in the second half with soloist Bronislaw Huberman performing Beethoven’s Concerto for Violin [figure 8]. This conclusion asks how we should read the New York reception and the concerns it raises in light of where the thesis has been, and where ending the thesis here leaves us in terms of potential further work.

⁹ New York Philharmonic concert programme.

¹⁰ Kim Kowalke has also summarised these reviews from the New York performance and concludes that as in Amsterdam, with limited knowledge of Weill’s output, the American newspapers showed no awareness of Weill’s ‘aesthetic or musical goals’. A different continent, however, meant a different major Weill composition served as the reference point for critics. Rather than *Die Dreigroschenoper*, Kowalke blames the renown of his 1927 cantata *Der Lindberghflug* – Weill’s best-known work for the American audience. Still, accurate as Kowalke’s observations are, it is not within the frame of his study to broaden out and suggest that these reviews are just as indicative of underlying symphonic genre anxieties as those in Amsterdam. Kowalke, *Kurt Weill in Europe*, 87.

Figure 8: Front cover of the programme booklet for the New York concert of Weill's *Symphonic Fantasy*. Reproduced with the permission of the New York Philharmonic Archives.



Reception

In the *New York Times*, Olin Downes proposed an acerbic alternative title for Weill's work: 'Three Night Club Pieces in the outworn and thin-blooded modern German style'. Positioning Weill as archetypal of the latest – and seemingly lamentable – developments in contemporary German music, and paying no heed of Weill's exile status in France, Downes injected a level of venom into the criticism not seen in Amsterdam. 'The Weill pieces [...] are disappointing,' he wrote, '– the more disappointing because Kurt Weill has long been reckoned one of the smartest young men of modern Germany.' Aside from using the review to slight 'modern' German music, implicitly contrasted against the country's weighty historical musical legacy, Downes's charges

against the work for the most part closely echoed those in the Netherlands, especially those concerned with the expectations of a symphony. He pointed out ‘the complete banality and lack of originality of the musical material’; ‘the prolixity and dullness and absolute lack of distinction in the development.’ He described the vigorous culmination of these ‘dreary, dull and witless’ pieces as mere ‘speed and noise’ – deploying signifiers of urban modernity – which he hoped some would not mistake for ‘wit and esprit’. His review rounded off with the following damning remarks, querying the deservedness of *Mahagonny*’s 1927 success: ‘The music heard last night simply serves to show how easy it is to write satirical measures, especially if you have stage, action, and dialogue to help you, compared with the difficulty of writing real music.’¹¹ That muscular and suggestive phrase ‘real music’ is revealing of how Downes constructed musical value, and symphonic value in particular. Slickly obfuscating multiple extra-musical discourses, it parallels the assertion in the Amsterdam reception that ‘the nature of Weill’s music is just not suitable for absolute music’.¹²

One of these extra-musical discourses was Downes’s views about the relationship between ethnicity and symphonic character, evinced, for example, in his Sibelius reception, where he celebrated rugged and heroic Norse masculinity.¹³ Indeed, whereas in the Amsterdam reception racial discourses had been heavily codified, in some of the New York reception they were much more explicit. ‘Kurt Weill, like the Rock of Ages never changes’, opened Lazare Saminsky’s review in *Modern Music*, making clear that he knew little of Weill’s music outside of the typecasting of his biggest commercial successes. ‘The Rock of Ages’ refers to a Hannukah hymn – note that these racialised criticisms come in spite of – or perhaps, indeed, because of – Saminsky’s own Jewish faith, his upbringing in Russia, and his prolific academic interest in Jewish music. In 1930s America, anti-Semitism was raw, and it would consequently be easy to overstress the racial discourses in the reception. One could argue that if for some critics Weill posed a threat to the ‘idea’ of symphonic language, it was because he was essentialised as inherently ‘Jewish’ and

¹¹ Olin Downes, ‘Walter Presents Novelty by Weill’, *New York Times*, 14 December 1934, 28.

¹² See anon, ‘Weill en Prokofieff’.

¹³ See Goss, *Jean Sibelius and Olin Downes*, especially 37.

thus ‘rootless’, challenging the close links between the symphony and ideas of nationhood.¹⁴ Yet this is at risk of seeming one-dimensional. Understanding the Weill reception in the context of how Copland’s Jewish-ethnic heritage was constructed and assimilated in relation to ideas of American identity, for instance, lays out a more complex terrain. Similarly, as Saminsky’s review continues it becomes clear race is part of a tangled node of issues. Unlike Downes, Saminsky’s geographical centre of reference was Paris rather than Germany: ‘His orchestral *Night Scenes* [...] proved to be a protracted and tearful midinette [Parisian shop-girl] elegy, reeking of shrewd obviousness.’ Parisian commercialism becomes emblematic of the triviality of European mass culture as a whole: the question of Weill’s relationship to the historicised French musical tradition was beside the point. Calling the work ‘empty and plodding’, he concluded: ‘it is spiced with infantile polyharmony, well mounted and equipped with everything helpful to a commercial career.’¹⁵ The New York reception shows that we can only unpick the discourses embroiled with the supposed banality and limitations of Weill’s symphony – race, commerce, nationalism – inasmuch as we acknowledge that they belong wrapped up together again.

Ultimately the problem with Weill’s orchestral work for the New York critics was less a direct question of race, although race was heavily implicated, and more one of two closely related issues: scope and sincerity. Overwhelmingly its vision seemed myopic – for Downes, ‘dreary, dull, and witless’ – in contrast to America’s hopes for ambitiously outward-looking, organic, and expansionist ‘real’ symphonic voices. Those voices were called for particularly energetically in times of economic uncertainty. Insofar as Saminsky’s nexus of complaints centred on Weill’s commercial reputation, then, they played into the same juxtaposition explored in relation to Harris’s *Symphony 1933*. The supposedly insincere, inauthentic drives of big-city East-Coast American and European commercial and ethnically mixed cosmopolitanism were pitted against authentic, rural American vitality and virility of the West. But we needn’t review those rhetorics from the earlier chapter: Saminsky’s Weill review directly followed that of a new Harris choral

¹⁴ Constructions of Jewish composers as ‘rootless’ and thus contrary to American values are discussed in: Rachel Mundy, ‘The “League of Jewish Composers” and American Music’, *Musical Quarterly*, 96 (2013), 50-99.

¹⁵ Lazare Saminsky, ‘New Malipiero, New Harris and Weill’, *Modern Music*, 12 (1935), 89-90, 90.

poem, and he provided plenty more of his own. Saminsky began in a conventional vein: '[a] breath of significance is always present in any work of Roy Harris. His gift of great scope and vitality never fails to captivate.' This contrasts strikingly with Downes comments that Weill's *Night Scenes* 'should have been a fifth as long as they are'.¹⁶ As we have seen, Harris in part forged his success and tailored it to the national mood by aligning himself and his music with everything that was anti-metropolitan. And the discourse surrounding Harris's 'home-spun'¹⁷ music in particular was racialised, as discussed in chapter 2, as explicitly white Scotch-Irish – as we saw, 'Roy Harris from Oklahoma, thirty-five, white, and healthy, is well-equipped to be a musical emissary'.¹⁸ Those racial discourses were harnessed within musical commentary to legitimise the authenticity of his musical voice and his right to speak for the American people through his symphony. Following suit, Saminsky too stressed the racial dimension of Harris's music: 'but though there are taints of technical limitations and crudity in this work, Harris is never inarticulate spiritually. Virility of impetus and a tense racial note make his diction clear and winning.'¹⁹ These intertwined discourses in Harris reception illuminate, perhaps, some aspects of what Weill might have been hinting at about the stakes for the symphonic genre with his comment in the Concertgebouw programme note that 'an appropriate title would be a word that expressed the opposite of "pastoral"'.²⁰ Pastoralism was not simply to do with the nostalgic picturesque, but had implications for the contemporary racial imagination. Landscape and white racial identities were constructed in parallel within symphonic discourse, as chapter 2 demonstrated by analysing how narratives were built around *Symphony 1933* that embedded Harris's Scotch-Irish subjectivity in the open spaces of the American West. This was the case in Germany too, as Weill must have been aware. For instance, Bruckner reception increasingly fostered *Blut und Boden* ideologies.²¹

¹⁶ Downes, 'Walter Presents Novelty by Weill'.

¹⁷ Saminsky, 'New Malipiero, New Harris and Weill', 90.

¹⁸ Slonimsky, 'From the West: Composer New to Bostonians'.

¹⁹ Saminsky, 'New Malipiero, New Harris and Weill', 90.

²⁰ Concertgebouw programme note.

²¹ See Gilliam, 'The Annexation of Anton Bruckner: Nazi Revisionism and the Politics of Appropriation'.

Pitts Sanborn, by contrast, was much less concerned with attacking a generalised sense of European sophistry; his review seems to be differently underscored by preoccupations about America's place on the world stage and its relationship with Germany in particular. We have seen that symphonic concerns were especially keen in America, and that composers, conductors, and critics alike saw developing a unique symphonic tradition as a significant step towards redefining the U.S.'s position vis-à-vis Europe.²² Yet at this time, Germany's international political and cultural status was particularly unstable as Hitler's government entrenched their power and the outside world looked on at the collapse of established cultural and democratic structures. For Sanborn, Weill's symphonic fantasy sounded 'in large part like a latter-day Berliner's idea of Broadway, with, of course, a tentative grasping at the "jazz spirit".' Building on a new-found, if fragile, sense of American cultural confidence about its place within the international music scene that had blossomed through the 1920s,²³ including, for instance, the inclusion of the United States in the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM) in 1923, Sanborn oriented Weill's *Night Scenes* in relation to America: the symphony builds on the 'complimentary interest in the United States and its people' Weill demonstrated in *Mahagonny*. The tone is multi-layered: the assertion that Weill could not hope to get the sound of America 'right' suggests cultural arrogance; equally, Sanborn bolsters America's 'promised land' mythology by hinting at the kind of imaginative relationship Weill has with the country. Yet his largely negative reactions to the work perhaps also evince a prevalent unease about European enthusiasms for jazz among the white American cultural establishment. As Carol J. Oja has shown, visiting European modernists tended to value African-American music above anything the American concert hall had to offer, and had no qualms about lecturing white Americans on its superiority.²⁴ Beth E. Levy describes the 'sometimes violent' debates between American composers and music commentators about the 'proper relationship' between jazz and American composition in the 1920s and 1930s, and it

²² For more discussion about forging an American identity through music, see Taruskin, 'In Search of the "Real" America', *OHWM*, iv, 599-674. For instance, as Taruskin elaborates at 637, Koussevitzky championed the genre with a series of symphonic commissions.

²³ Carol J. Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 295-6.

was not uncommon for prominent voices explicitly to discourage other American composers from engaging with jazz in order to cultivate an ‘authentic’ Anglo-Saxon Americanism.²⁵ In the racially charged atmosphere of 1930s America, with so many white American composers invested in finding alternative sources of material to jazz for reinvigorating American music, yet another European modernist ‘grasping at the jazz spirit’ perhaps read as simply one more snub of American art music. Nonetheless, any assertion – if subtly anxiety-ridden – of local American cultural dominance over Germany contrasted with how the Amsterdam reception seemed almost to marginalise itself in deference to a sense of German ‘*symphonische*’ music and its values. And all the reception uncovers how revealing a foil symphonic discourse can be for nuanced anxieties concerning intercultural relations and the precise fine-tunings in the balance of relative power.

Sanborn commended the structure of the sonata movement, although admitted that ‘the second (Largo), with its long passages of cantilena, might be more pleasing to the general [listener]’:

The concluding scene (Rondo) is trivial enough. Moreover, the string of three runs to a length that is by no means heavenly. The best that can be said for the fantasy is that in it Weill gives proof of his abilities as an orchestrator; and as an instrumental fabric the Philharmonic-Symphony set it forth quite superbly.²⁶

Weill was complimented on little more than the mechanistic execution of orchestral forces, incidentally, an aspect of the work reported on negatively in Amsterdam: ‘what I don’t understand is the stiff instrumentation’;²⁷ ‘one can instantly imagine this Fantasie to be a work for a salon orchestra, considering that the ‘apparatus’ [orchestra] was so poorly used’;²⁸ ‘he has indeed limited himself to a fairly simple orchestration of his work [...] he has, I would almost say, expressed himself in his most sober form.’²⁹ (Comparison between pared-down orchestration and the *Neue Sachlichkeit* Weimar aesthetic spilling over from the previous decade seemed to have

²⁵ Levy, “‘The White Hope of American Music’; Or, How Roy Harris Became Western’, 151–53.

²⁶ Sanborn, ‘Concerts in New York’.

²⁷ ‘Maar wat ik niet begrijp is de stroeve instrumentatie.’ v. d. Bijl, ‘Concertgebouw: Een nieuw werk van Kurt Weill’.

²⁸ ‘Men kan zich deze Fantasie onmiddellijk in een uitgaaf voor salonorkest denken, zoo poover is het apparaat gebruikt...’ Arntzenius, ‘Walter’s Tweede Avond’.

²⁹ ‘Hij heeft zich inderdaad beperkt tot een vrij eenvoudige orkestratie van zijn werk [...] hij heeft zich, zou ik bijna zeggen, in zijn meest bedaarden vorm geuit.’ Anon, ‘Concertgebouw’.

been missed by Dutch critics.) The idea that Weill is above all a successful orchestrator fits a broader impulse to trivialise his work, and to trivialise the work of so-called ‘international’ trends in modernism more generally – recall similar critical tendencies in some of the negative Honegger reception in Berlin. Unlike Amsterdam, where the work was begrudgingly acknowledged to be a popular success, it appears in New York that even the audience was ‘chilly towards Weill.’³⁰

Injured by such unrelenting negativity, Weill summarised the press reactions at both the Amsterdam and New York concerts to Maurice Abravanel in January 1935:

It was a great success with the audience – catastrophic press (‘banal’, ‘disjointed’, ‘empty’, ‘Beethoven in the beer garden’, etc.) [...] Not one friendly word. Apparently this piece has unleashed against me in the most determined manner those factions that have always been latent up to now.³¹

But was Weill right to collapse the Amsterdam and New York symphonic criticism together in this way? Both sets of reception reflected the fact that symphonic discourse oscillated between two planes: between local concerns and the seemingly universalised ones for which the symphony was emblematic. When the same issues are raised against the foil of symphonic discourse in different contexts, for instance, Weill’s Jewishness, (the lack of) organicism, commercialism, and the kind of community or audience the symphonic genre might build, those issues begin to look international or even ‘universal’. What this thesis has aimed to show, however, is how vital it is to keep sight of the fact that these were locally inflected issues with localised stakes in the different contexts we have visited: in short, we need to be aware that those universals were constantly reformulated in response to quite different stimuli and preoccupations. At the same time, this is not to dissolve these ‘big ideas’ completely – they are still required as centres to orient the comparisons, and are historically justifiable, rooted in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century debates and ideologies linked to the genre.

³⁰ Sanborn, ‘Concerts in New York’.

³¹ ‘Grosser Publikumserfolg – katastrophale Presse (“banal”, “abgebraucht”, “Leer”, “Beethoven im Biergarten” usw.) [...] kein einziges auch nur freundliches Wort. Offenbar hat dieses Stück den Widerstand der Fachleute gegen mich, der latent immer vorhanden war, in der wildesten Weise entfesselt.’ Letter from Weill to Abravanel, 21 January 1935, Ser. 30, 15/6, Weill-Lenya. This translation is found in: Kowalke and Symonnette, *Speak Low*, 145.

Illustrating this point about the ambivalent status of these ‘big universal ideas’ and how they are constructed in symphonic discourse, further on in the letter Weill offered his own diagnosis for the negative criticism:

Until now, [the critics] have always been able to deal with the fact that anyone who composes for the theatre writes music that speaks to the audience directly, without the mediation of experts (*Fachleute*). That such a thing should now start taking hold in the concert hall, that here too an immediate effect on the listener can be achieved, that’s simply going too far.³²

Weill brings us back to a universal symphonic vision consonant with Bekker’s: a means for the composer to communicate directly with the audience. Yet he also taps into contemporary currents of thought that parallel, for instance, Copland’s anxieties about concert-going elites, as well as longer-standing questions about symphonic popularism, as a genre that had always demanded a rousing tune.³³ As such, this passage underlines the simultaneous historical registers that are telescoped into symphonic discourse, shaping and informing its development: contemporary anxieties rub against historically imagined grand visions.

What has become clear methodologically, then, is that in order to examine such an ideologically saturated cultural construction as the symphony, it is necessary to be equipped to switch in a sophisticated way between just such multiple registers or scales – the seeming ‘universal’ and the specific; global political concerns and their localised ramifications; the concept’s historical freighting and the contemporary issues that collide against it. By paring down the project’s temporal scope, this study has been able to amplify some of those other more finely grained differences in scale across an international setting. Within this frame, however, the study’s ambitions have been relatively modest: to underline the complexities in this discourse, pointing to the value of similar approaches for future research. Required here first and foremost is further contextualisation of the deeply interweaved contemporary socio-political issues in

³² ‘Die haben es bisher geschluckt, das seiner für das Theater eine Musik schreibt, die direkt, ohne Vermittlung der Fachleute, ans Publikum herangeht. Dass das nun auch im Konzert einreissen soll, dass auch hier eine unmittelbare Wirkung auf den Hörer erreicht werden soll, das geht ihnen über die Hutschnur.’ Ibid (trans. author).

³³ For discussion of symphonic popularism in the nineteenth century see, for instance, Notley, “Volksconcerte” in Vienna and Late Nineteenth-Century Ideology of the Symphony’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 50 (1997), 421-453.

symphonic discourse to facilitate further comparative work. In addition, this will allow more detailed and interdisciplinary connections to be made, which the complexity of the genre and its reception demands.

Some Legacies

In spite of its reception, Weill's faith in his work was unwavering, as, seemingly, was Walter's. As his letter to Abravanel of January 1935 continued: 'it takes a hell of a lot of self-confidence and a capacity for resistance to keep on living with this kind of *Dreck*.'

Thank God, my work gives me pure and undisturbed pleasure and I am convinced that I am on a very good track. The symphony sounds excellent, and Walter was beside himself because of my ability to orchestrate only what's essential while being able to retain a full and beautiful sound. By the way, he really is a marvellous guy (*ein wirklich feiner Kerl*), we understood each other very well.³⁴

Although there was a short period after the New York performance in which Weill seemed unsure what next to do with the work – his attentions were occupied with breaking into the Parisian theatre scene – some plans seem finally to have crystallised, perhaps with the intervention of the Princesse de Polignac.³⁵ Weill's symphony was performed again in Paris on 25 April 1935 with the title *Fantasie Symphonique*, broadcast over the radio by the Orchestre National under musical director Désiré-Emile Inghelbrecht. This time the press were admiring, picking up on Mendelssohnian influences, and 'the delicacy of Haydn and Mozart'.³⁶ Two months later, on 24 June, it finally received its promised performance in Polignac's salon at Avenue Henri-Martin, programmed with works by Beethoven and Chabrier.³⁷ Still championing the symphony, Walter

'es gehört schon eine gehörige Portion Selbstvertrauen und Widerstandskraft dazu, diesen ganzen Dreck noch länger mitzumachen. Gottseidank macht mir die Arbeit reines ungestörtes Vergnügen, und ich bin überzeugt, dass ich auf einem guten Wege bin. Die Symphonie klingt hervorragend, Walter war ganz ausser sich über meine Fähigkeit, nur das notwendigste zu instrumentieren und doch einen vollen, schönen Klang zu erreichen. Er ist übrigens ein wirklich feiner Kerl, wir haben uns sehr gut verstanden.' Ibid (trans. modified from Weill-Lenya Research Center).

³⁵ As he wrote to Jascha Horenstein in January 1935: 'Despite that, or perhaps for that reason [his success in cracking the Parisian theatre scene], I can't decide whether to do anything with the symphony. At any rate, it's now up to the Princesse de Polignac to make me her suggestions.' 'Trotzdem oder deswegen kann ich mich nicht entscheiden, mit der Symphonie etwas zu machen. Ausserdem ist es jetzt an der Prinzessin Polignac, mir Vorschläge zu machen.' David Drew Collection, letter from Weill to Jascha Horenstein, 5 January 1935, Weill-Lenya.

³⁶ 'la délicatesse de Haydn et de Mozart'; P.B., 'Concerts Divers', *Le Ménestrel*, 3 May 1935, 152; 'Une légèreté rapide, de tradition mendelsohnienne', Darius Milhaud, 'La Scène: une première audition à l'Orchestre national de la radiodiffusion', *Le Jour*, 28 April 1935, 6, Ser. 50B, Weill-Lenya.

³⁷ As recorded in 'Le Monde et la ville', *Le Figaro*, 19 June 1935; found in Kahan, *Music's Modern Muse*, 328.

himself gave the work another chance, performing it once more in Vienna on 18 April 1937 with Toscanini in attendance (apparently the first time he had been to a concert given by another conductor) to an unusually positive reception from the Viennese public,³⁸ but that was to be the work's final outing during Weill's lifetime. Weill died in 1950; the symphony was only resurrected in 1966 after David Drew published the score. Interest in the work has exploded since the year 2000, however, which marked the centenary of Weill's birth (1900) and fiftieth anniversary of his death, with celebrations directed in part by the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music (KWF). Indeed, the Weill-Lenya Research Center, the archive of materials bequeathed to the KWF, has documented a significantly greater number of post-millennial performances of the work than in the years leading up to the centenary combined.³⁹

The symphony's poor initial reception on such prestigious global platforms as Carnegie Hall and the Concertgebouw, however, must have contributed to the fact that Weill never wrote another symphony. Had political events unfolded differently, and the work been received by the same Berlin critics who reviewed Honegger's symphony, for instance – critics willing to find the points of connection with the Germanic symphonic tradition, to pick up on the Mozartian or Mendelssohnian influences, or to probe the meaning of 'the opposite of pastoral' – quite a different symphonic career might have ensued. That seemingly neither Weill's nor Walter's faith in the quality of the symphony were diminished by the mixed reception is telling. But other creative opportunities began to emerge instead. As a work that forged connections for Weill in Paris and travelled there with him, there is symmetry in the observation that in September 1935 – ten months after the Carnegie Hall performance – Weill once again followed a path mapped out

³⁸ 'In last Sunday's *Times* there was a report from Vienna that [Bruno] Walter performed my symphony there. [...] The article says the audience reacted more positively to the work than to any other modern one.' Letter from Weill to Lenya, 8 May 1937, in Kowalke and Symonnette, *Speak Low*, 238. Kowalke and Symonnette, however, point out that this was not exactly how the *New York Times* reported the concert, citing the original review as follows: 'The Viennese received the Weill novelty with a good deal more equanimity and good-will than they usually extend to things of the sort. But all told, it hardly seemed to me one of Walter's better days.' H.F.P., 'Toscanini Visits Vienna', *New York Times*, 2 May 1937, cited in: Kowalke and Symonnette, *Speak Low*, 239. Original review in Ser. 50B, Weill-Lenya.

³⁹ Their list is not exhaustive, but the Weill-Lenya Research Center has documented 28 performances of the work before 2000, and 36 from 2000 onwards, correct as of July 2014. (Here the definition of 'performance' includes multiple performances, if given by the same conductor at the same venue). See finding aid to Ser. 50B, Weill-Lenya.

by his symphony, emigrating permanently to New York with Lenya.

Weill's exile narrative foregrounds one set of ways in which the rise of the National Socialists explicitly impacted upon the symphonic genre in this period. Some of the other works in the thesis have shed light on others. In the introduction, this thesis posed the question of why 1933 and the surrounding years are missing from the secondary literature on the symphony. Having looked in more detail at the works by Pfitzner, Weill, and Honegger in particular, the National Socialist context can now be set out more fully as a further key factor contributing to its critical neglect. But it would be easy to characterise National Socialism as an uncontrollable, inevitable tide rolling over the era that has dragged works like Weill's, Honegger's, and Pfitzner's into its undertow. Instead, however, I argue its legacy is much more complex in terms of how and why it has caused these omissions from the repertory, and it furthermore continues to shape academic engagement with works from this period in manifold subtle and problematic ways. It is a context difficult to gain critical purchase upon apart from in the most polarising sense.

For Honegger, Berlin 1933 represented barren critical ground for the acceptance of his symphonic message. Coupled with Nazi rumour-mongering, this proved the launch pad for *Mouvement Symphonique's* virtually complete disregard throughout the twentieth-century. Indeed, such Nazi constructions of '*entartete Kunst*' – 'degenerate art' – have had more pervasive influence beyond National Socialist Germany on the twentieth century reception of both Weill's and Honegger's symphonies than contemporary scholarship might like to admit, particularly since National Socialist Germany was a formative context for the disciplinary development of *Musikwissenschaft*.⁴⁰ For many years Weill was not seen as a composer worthy of study in his own right: the earliest resurgence of post-war Weill interest was ancillary to a growing literature around Brecht in the 1950s and 1960s. Although other factors were at play, National Socialist suppression of Weill's music, alongside derisive European attitudes to his later American output, prevented Weill from regaining a foothold in twentieth-century history. Racialised discourses about superficiality and inauthenticity have been pernicious in framing Weill's whole career. For

⁴⁰ See Potter, *Most German of the Arts*.

instance, the pervasive construction of the ‘Two Weills’ has compromised academic engagement with his output.⁴¹ Canonised as a subtitle in Drew’s 1980 *New Grove* article, it portrayed his emigration to the U.S. and work on Broadway as an irreconcilable stylistic rift – and a betrayal of his early modernist promise. Yet the seeds of the idea were already present in Weill’s lifetime, surfacing in Adorno’s uncompromising obituary, which informed readers that ‘the profile of this composer [...] can hardly be encompassed by the [unified] concept of a composer at all’.⁴² A figure thus repeatedly painted in ways that resist notions of unity, one need hardly wonder that Weill’s single mature symphonic work has received so little twentieth-century attention. Kim Kowalke’s seminal 1979 analytic study *Kurt Weill in Europe* demonstrated the first signs of an impulse to change the field and overhaul attitudes to Weill,⁴³ however, and since the founding of the KWF in 1983, Weill scholarship has increased in volume and ambition, gradually breaking down some of the racist, colonialist, and elitist musicological positions that have inflected discourse on Weill – and accounted for his critical neglect. In contrast, without the carefully cultivated financial resources available to an institution like the KWF, Honegger has yet to enjoy a similar resurgence of interest.

Just as decisive for this period’s absence from symphonic surveys, however, has been a reluctance to engage with symphonies like Pfitzner’s that demonstrate some alignment with the fascist project – perhaps because adequate critical frameworks for dealing with political complicity and resistance are still lacking.⁴⁴ Like plenty of other works that were highly regarded in National Socialist Germany, his symphony in C-sharp minor has fallen into obscurity.

⁴¹ David Drew, ‘Kurt Weill’, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, 1st ed., 20 vols, xx (London: Macmillan, 1980), 300-310. Tamara Levitz has critiqued the article and its 2001 revision, accusing it of evincing a commitment to colonialist intellectual positions and charging Drew with the articulation of Weill’s life and oeuvre through a purely modernist agenda characteristic of the 1980s. See Tamara Levitz, ‘Putting Kurt Weill in his Historical Place: The *New Grove* articles’, *Kurt Weill Newsletter*, 20 (2002), 4-9.

⁴² Adorno, ‘Kurt Weill’, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 15 April 1950, reprinted in: Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984), 544-47. Found in: Kowalke, ‘Kurt Weill, Modernism, and Popular Culture: *Öffentlichkeit als Stil*, *Modernism/Modernity*, 2 (1995), 27-69, 29. As Kowalke indicates, the original reads: ‘Die Figur des Komponisten, der in Amerika starb, wird vom Begriff des Komponisten kaum recht getroffen.’

⁴³ Kowalke, *Kurt Weill in Europe* (Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1979).

⁴⁴ For a general reflection on the treatment and development of notions of consent and coercion in fascism scholarship, particularly in relation to choice and constraint, see Roberta Pergher and Giulia Albanese, ‘Historians, Fascism, and Italian Society: Mapping the Limits of Consent’, in *In the Society of Fascists: Acclamation, Acquiescence, and Agency in Mussolini’s Italy*, eds. Pergher and Albanese (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

Pfitzner's work remains a distant outlier in relation to the core symphonic repertory: performances of this work in the years since 1933 have been scarce to say the least, despite contemporary assessments of the work as 'without doubt, one of Pfitzner's strongest compositions.'⁴⁵ Best known as a composer of opera and song, Pfitzner's problematic political associations during the Third Reich have nonetheless meant he has rarely even made the programmes of high profile opera companies, let alone orchestras, particularly outside of Germany.⁴⁶ Yet figures such as Pfitzner are precisely those currently in most need of critical attention. Their ambivalence and marginality helps to sharpen our understanding of the realities and contradictions of living in the Third Reich. For instance, as much as symphonic discourse historically took its bearings from notions of racial purity, Pfitzner reception has shown how complex and counterintuitive the relationship between symphonic discourse and ethnicity could be, even within the context of a highly racialised state like National Socialist Germany. It is only by revisiting and reexamining works by ambivalent figures like Pfitzner, as well as those others considered in this thesis, and finding ways of grappling with often uncomfortable histories, that we can understand more fully what went on in this pivotal year and the kinds of persistent historical absences it has created. And given the recent rise of right-wing popularism in Europe and America alongside a generalised mistrust of out-of-touch intellectual elites, as well as increasing nationalist isolationism largely in response to a vast refugee crisis in Europe, it seems we need to understand what happened in 1933 and the social discourses and nationalist mechanisms complicit in that political transition more pressingly than ever. It is a period that underlines and reflects back at us our own political inertia and ethical inadequacies.

Conclusion

Using Weill's symphony as a starting point, this thesis has argued for the urgency of rethinking

⁴⁵ 'Das Streichquartett, bzw. die Sinfonie ist ohne Zweifel eine der stärksten Kompositionen Pfitznerns.' Wörner, 'Hans Pfitznerns Sinfonie in cis', 133.

⁴⁶ See Jens Malte Fischer, 'The Very German Fate of a Composer: Hans Pfitzner', in *Music and Nazism*, Kater and Riethmüller, 75-89, 76.

the symphony as an international phenomenon: looking at these symphonies together in this transnational constellation creates different kinds of knowledge from exploring them separately. Foregrounding the year 1933 has helped emphasise some of the specific socio-political aspects to the genre picked out in criticism of the time. This thesis has argued how largely Germanic ideological legacies were differently nuanced in some different socio-cultural contexts, and has taken us closer to getting a sense of the role the symphony might play in perpetuating or destabilising particular political hegemonies. Closing this thesis again with attention to the Carnegie Hall concert of Weill's Symphony No. 2 shows one example of how the works considered in this thesis can throw new light on each other. Much additional comparative work exists to be done here, and in using the Weill symphony as a frame I have set up only one specific and limited sense of the 'international', dominated by Western cultural centres. There is scope for much wider exploration of the symphony's internationalism, especially for studies that travel beyond such centres of power and think further about the symphony's colonial agency, moving in the direction I have begun to indicate with my approach to Copland's symphony. Some themes have recurred that could be more productively theorised and suggest directions for further work: for instance, the symphony's spatial impulse and its relation with hegemonising political impulses. And as my introduction established, there are many more symphonies from this time still awaiting examination.

This thesis provides an aesthetic snapshot of some composers' engagements with the genre in a discrete slice of time, an image vividly saturated and richly varied. Evidently, the symphonic genre still held intrinsic appeal for composers in the musical and cultural/social environments of 1933. The works considered here underline that composers still wanted to write symphonies as compositional challenges in their own right. Weill, Pfitzner, Harris, Copland, and Honegger were all intrigued by the prospect of grappling with the specific musical issues the form posed: how to reconcile diverse musical forces, how to tackle the requirements of tone and its tricky balance of popularism and academicism, and how to manipulate vast orchestral forces and sound's tangibility or 'plasticity' in the German sense of the word '*plastisch*', navigating the problems raised

by symphonic monumentalism. If these composers explored and integrated other disciplinary paradigms like ballet, the dance hall, and the musical language of the theatre within the form, or transgressed different orders of 'absolute' music by engaging discursively with chamber musics, it is significant that they chose the symphony as the platform from which to do so. Broadly speaking, the works suggest the need for further discussion about the place of this creative form in a modernist context, and about how composers sought to create meaning symphonically, or to reinvigorate the symphony as a site for meaningful communication in the twentieth century.

Symphonic discourse, then, was a conduit for other anxieties: relating to race, economics, class, masculinity, mass-culture, and a nexus of issues surrounding space, transportation, and expansionism, and 1933 represented a particularly precarious moment for the genre. The symphonies explored in this thesis spotlight a genre characterised by uncertainty, ideological saturation, and prevarication. Likewise, symphonic discourse focused local concerns that often seemed really to be about people's sense of their collective place and significance in a changing global-political setting. Channelling a 'long' intellectual history – and one that was peculiarly Germanic, invested with Romantic idealism and Hegelian dialectics – it was a lens for imagining other nations and identities, and reflexively for modelling the self through those identities. Symphonic community-building and spatial expansionism associated with Enlightenment thought took on different ideological colourings in fascist Germany and in post-colonial America, refracting markedly twentieth-century concerns and dilemmas about reformulations of the relationships between space and subjectivity. An imaginative means to reconcile past with present, to forge nostalgic fantasies, and to project outwards into a collective future, symphonic discourse was nonetheless just as profoundly shaped by the unsounded voices of those it marginalised. This thesis reveals a symphonic history marked as much by exclusion as by any inclusive notions of communality.

Appendix:

Symphonies Composed c.1933 – Indicative Survey

The following is an indicative survey of the range of symphonic works composed circa 1933 I encountered in contemporary journals and secondary literature while conducting research for this project. Since it does not represent an effort to compile a comprehensive survey the list is non-exhaustive.

Argentina	Juan José Castro, <i>Sinfonía bíblica</i> (1932) and <i>Sinfonía argentina</i> (1934)
Australia	Fritz Hart, Symphony No. 1, op. 107 (1934) George English senior, Symphony in A major and Symphony in D minor (1932-33)
Austria ¹	Franz Schmidt, Symphony No. 4 in C major (1932-3) Hanns Eisler, <i>Kleine Sinfonie</i> (1932) Alexander Zemlinsky, <i>Sinfonietta</i> op. 23 (1934) Frida Kern, <i>Symphonische Musik</i> op. 20 (1934) Julius Bittner, Symphony No. 2 (1934) Otto Färber, Symphony No. 1 (<i>Symph. Fantasia</i>) (1932) Hugo Kauder, Symphony No. 2 (1934) Friedrich Reidinger, Symphony No. 1 (1933) Leopold Matthias Walzel, Symphony No. 2 (1933/39) Raimund Weissensteiner, Symphony No. 2 (1933) Erich Zeisl, 'Kleine Symphonie' (1933)
Estonia	Eduard Tubin, Symphony No. 1 in C minor (1931-4)
France	Kurt Weill, Symphony No. 2 (1933-4) (begun in Berlin)

¹ See Krones, 'Die österreichische Symphonik in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren', in *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge*, Osthoff and Schubert, 28-40.

	Arthur Honegger, <i>Symphonic Movement nr. 3</i> (1933) Albert Roussel, Symphony No. 4 in A major (1934)
Germany	Paul Hindemith, <i>Mathis der Maler</i> Symphony (1933-5) Hans Pfitzner, Symphony in C-sharp minor (op. 36a) (1932) Karl Amadeus Hartmann, <i>Miseræ</i> (or Symphony No. 1) (1933-4) Paul Dessau, Symphony No. 2 (1934 – reworking and premiere 1962)² Paul Höffer, <i>Symphonische Musik</i>, op. 37b (1933 – although the date of the premiere could not be determined)³
Hungary	Ernő Dohnányi, <i>Symphonic Minutes</i> (1933)
Italy	Gian Francesco Malipiero ‘Prima Sinfonia (in Quattro tempi come le Quattro stagioni)’ (1933)
Japan	Saburō Moroi, Symphony No. 1 (1934)
Mexico	Carlos Chávez, <i>Sinfonía de Antígona</i> (1932), <i>Llamadas, Sinfonía proletaria</i> (1934)
Poland	Józef Koffler, Symphony No. 2, op. 17 (1933) Karol Szymanowski, Symphony No. 4 (<i>Symphonie concertante</i>) op. 60
Soviet Russia	Nikolai Myaskovsky, Symphony No. 13 (1933), Symphony No. 14 (1933), and Symphony No. 15 (1934) Aram Khachaturian, Symphony No. 1 (1934) Dmitry Kabalevsky, Symphony No. 2 (1934), and No. 3 <i>Requiem</i> (1933)
The Netherlands	Guillaume Landré, Symphony No. 1 (1932)

² Gervink, *Die Symphonie in Deutschland und Österreich in der Zeit zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, 244.

³ Ibid., 284.

United Kingdom ⁴	William Walton, Symphony No. 1 (1932-5) Ralph Vaughan William, Symphony No. 4 (1934) Benjamin Britten, <i>Simple Symphony</i> for strings (1933-4) and <i>Sinfonietta</i> op. 1 (1932) Arnold Bax, Symphony No. 5 (1932) and Symphony No. 6 (1934-5) Havergal Brian, Symphony No. 4 ‘<i>Siegesslied</i>’ (1932-3) Richard Hall, Symphony op. 34 (1933) Ernest Oates, Symphony No. 1 (1933) Richard Hall, Symphony op. 34 (1933) Michael Tippett, Symphony No. 1 in B minor (1933-4, unpublished) George Lloyd, Symphony No. 1 in A (1932) Rudolph Dolmetsch, Symphony No. 1 in D minor, op. 1 (1932) Cyril Bradley Rootham, Symphony No. 1 in C Minor (1932) George Lloyd, Symphony No. 2 in E (1933) and Symphony No. 3 in F (1933) Reginald Owen Morris, Symphony in D (1933) Gustav Holst (unfinished) (1933-4)
USA	Roy Harris, <i>Symphony 1933</i> (1933) Aaron Copland, <i>Short Symphony</i>, No. 2 (1931-3)

⁴ See Guido Held, ‘Erste Symphonien – Britten, Walton, und Tippett’, in *Symphonik 1930-1950: Gattungsgeschichtliche und analytische Beiträge*, Osthoff and Schubert, 84-108; see also Schaarwächter, *Die britische Sinfonie: 1914-1945*.

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Part 3: Scores and Audio Material

3.1 Audio Material

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