

bilities” (32) of itinerant life in foreign capitals when there is ample evidence to suggest that rather than feeling at home everywhere, he felt at home nowhere. But, even more important, when Junyk concludes that “Rilke’s work strongly suggests Clifford’s ‘traveling culture’” (32), it seems that what is most at stake is the theory rather than the art.

Still, *Foreign Modernism* contains many novel insights and important revisions to Silver’s thesis. As such, it represents a valuable contribution to the literature on early twentieth-century modernism.

THOMAS ORT

*Queens College, City University of New York*

**The Musical Legacy of Wartime France.** By *Leslie A. Sprout*. California Studies in Twentieth-Century Music. Edited by *Richard Taruskin*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. Pp. xxiv+280. \$65.00 (cloth); \$65.00 (e-book).

Composers, too, took sides in wartime France, but when it comes to music, the most abstract of the arts, that’s a claim sometimes hard to pin down. Leslie Sprout is able to do it, though, thanks to painstaking research and a musician’s practiced sense of how to tease meaning out of notes and their arrangement.

Sprout has two major arguments to make. The first has to do with the ambiguities of the Vichy era’s musical legacy, and to make her point, Sprout tracks the changing fortunes of four canonical composers as they negotiated the transition from the war to the postwar. François Poulenc is remembered as an artist who created works expressive of an ever-so-French sensibility, charming and effervescent. It turns out, however, that he was also a composer *engagé*. In 1942, he aligned himself with the Front National des Musiciens (FNM), an organ of the Resistance, and the following year composed a cantata for a cappella double choir, *Figure humaine*, which concluded with a recitation, set to music, of a poem by Paul Éluard, the Resistance poet.

Arthur Honegger came out of the war in good odor. He, too, had been a member of the FNM, and in October 1944, in a Paris just liberated, he premiered a piece, *Chant de Libération*, he claimed to have been at work on since the spring of 1942. Yet, on closer inspection, Honegger was less the committed *Résistant* than he made himself out to be. In November 1941, he had traveled to Vienna at the Occupier’s expense to attend a Mozart festival. Yes, he had belonged to the FNM, but he had been thrown out in 1943. As for *Chant de libération*, it was indeed begun in 1942 as claimed, but not under that title, and when first conceived, it had been intended as musical accompaniment to a film on Jeanne d’Arc.

In the case of Sprout’s third composer, Olivier Messiaen, it is not so much the composer himself who is at issue as the reception of Messiaen’s masterpiece, the eerie, otherworldly *Quator pour la fin du temps*. The quartet (for piano, clarinet, violin, and cello) was composed in 1941 while Messiaen was a POW in a German stalag; fellow inmates constituted its first audience. Given the circumstances of the piece’s creation, it acquired an emblematic status over the course of time as a reflection not just on the POW experience but on the camp experience, concentration camps included, writ large. Sprout demonstrates, however, that the quartet’s deepest inspiration was not topical but religious: it was inspired by the book of Revelation. At its first postwar performance, Messiaen himself, to the consternation of listeners and critics, read biblical commentary. This was a piece about faith and transcendence, not about *l’univers concentrationnaire*.

Last of all, there is the case of Maurice Duruflé or, rather, of Duruflé's *Requiem*. This is a symphonic poem, completed in 1947, remarkable for its use of plainchant and integration of liturgical forms into a grand, orchestral setting. The Vatican was appreciative of what Duruflé's oeuvre, the *Requiem* and other pieces, had done for the renewal of church music, naming the composer to the Order of Saint Gregory the Great in 1961. It came as an embarrassment, however, when it was later revealed that the *Requiem*, although finished in 1947, had gotten its start in 1941 as a commissioned work and that it was the Vichy regime that had done the commissioning.

Sprout is meticulous and well-informed in the way she handles her four case studies, and they all add up to make a point: that postwar stories about the war don't tell all, far from it. But Sprout wants to say something not just about the Vichy era's postwar legacy but also about the musical mood of wartime France itself. In an Occupation setting, with the Occupier promoting German compositions, "Frenchness" in music became a much-valued good. It was important for music, such as Poulenc's, to have a French sound; it mattered that composers drew inspiration not from the likes of Wagner but from native-born sons like Debussy. Poulenc wrote a ballet, *Les animaux modèles*, which premiered in 1942. It was a dramatization in dance and music of several La Fontaine fables, all set in a country barnyard, and the score included a melodic quote from Debussy's *La mer*. What could be more French?

The fetishization of "the French tradition," moreover, was an across-the-board phenomenon, common to Vichyites and *Résistants* alike. Vichy commissioned works like Duruflé's *Requiem* to defend and illustrate what genuine French music was all about. Honegger's *Chant de libération* included an unmistakable musical quotation from France's national anthem, *La Marseillaise*.

The ambient musical patriotism of the era helps to make sense of some of the political choices that Sprout's four composers made. All had a brush, if not more, with the Vichy regime—sitting on Vichy-sponsored music commissions (as did Poulenc), writing for Vichy-sponsored youth groups (as did Messiaen), and the like. In time, Poulenc and Honegger switched over to the Resistance side. They may have done so out of conviction or out of opportunism, but the point is this: they wore the mantle of patriotism throughout. It may have seemed at the Occupation's outset that Vichy was the patriot's best choice; it seemed otherwise by the war's end.

An undivided devotion to the French tradition did not last forever, however. Sprout's account ends in 1945, the war now over. That year, the Orchestre National ran a concert series given over to the work of Igor Stravinsky. Now, Stravinsky had long since abandoned the jagged, percussive modernism of *Le sacre du printemps* for a more neoclassical style. A couple of Messiaen's students—Serge Nigg and Pierre Boulez—mounted a protest. They rejected Stravinsky's neoclassical turn. This was the sound of a bygone generation, and the young felt they had a right to make a music of their own. Nigg and Boulez were more inclined to take inspiration from the twelve-tone manner of Arnold Schoenberg, but Sprout doesn't want the confrontation understood in too-simple terms, neoclassicists versus partisans of serial music. Also at stake was the desire of a rising generation to shake off the musical nationalism of their elders in pursuit of a more international style. And so the strange musical unity of the wartime era came to an end.

A caveat and a critique must be tendered before winding up. The caveat first: this is a book about composers and how their work was received. It does not deal with musical institutions, folk music, or popular music, all subjects of debate in their own right in the Occupation era. As for the critique, it is to be noted that three of Sprout's composers—Duruflé, Messiaen, and Poulenc—took Catholicism, both as a faith and as a source of musical forms, very much to heart. And Honegger turned to Jeanne d'Arc more than once

for thematic inspiration. France had been a secular republic until 1940. How was it that Catholicism became such a central feature of the musical scene during the war, a key component of what Frenchness was all about?

What this book does, though, it does very well. Setting music in historic context, and doing so without reducing art to a mere epiphenomenon, requires skill and finesse. Sprout rises to the challenge. She brings to life the musical works she analyzes, all the while opening a window of illumination onto the complexities of wartime France's cultural scene.

PHILIP NORD

*Princeton University*

**The Americanization of France: Searching for Happiness after the Algerian War.**

By *Barnett Singer*.

Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013. Pp. viii+281. \$65.00 (cloth); \$64.99 (e-book).

The endorsement on the jacket of *The Americanization of France* promises “provocative” reading, and that is what Barnett Singer, emeritus professor at Brock University, delivers. The idea for the book grew out of a lifetime’s engagement with French history and the desire for a “conversation” about the complicated impact of American culture on postwar France, from the Algerian tragedy to the “happiness revolution” of the sixties and up to the troubled present.

This story of decline from a “serious” to a “happy” France begins with Algeria. The picture Singer draws of the “anti-colonial struggle” will not suit everyone’s taste. Working principally out of the departmental archives of the Haute-Savoie, the author looks at the evolution of the “crisis” through the eyes of Émile Vié, “a kind of French director of Homeland Security” (2), tasked with tracking Algerian violence in the Hexagon between 1955 and the early 1960s. The portrait of the Algerian FLN (National Liberation Front) that emerges from Vié’s reports owes more to *Boardwalk Empire* than to *Battleship Potemkin*. The rich and detailed material in these reports presents FLN operatives as little more than a collection of thugs “drawn from a pool of North Africans already involved in criminality from the mid-1950s” (209), extorting money from honest Algerian workers in France and murdering their opponents within the ranks of Algerian patriots—their terrorist campaign abetted by “deluded” intellectuals, a naive judiciary, and a group of cynical communist lawyers. The author has equally little patience for contemporary opinion that equated policemen like Vié to Gestapo agents and imagined “FLN leadership desiring, à la Jefferson, true democratic independence” (38).

The flip side of Singer’s contempt for the FLN and its French acolytes is his sympathy for France’s colonial project. Drawing on his own previous work, he emphasizes the good works of the *mission civilisatrice*: the schools, the roads, the sewers, the modern medicine, “the concerted campaign to eradicate Muslim slums and shantytowns,” which continued even as independence approached (51). As for the *colons*, without their contribution, “Algeria would never have constituted the appetizing prize it had now become for the FLN” (85).

If Singer treats the FLN as the main villain of this piece, he hardly makes de Gaulle the hero. The president emerges from this reading not as a man who suffered an agonizing change of heart but as a “clinical narcissist” and dishonest politician, consistently “drunk