

regional setting, while downplaying more structural modes of comment, Wiebe's writing is in step with the cultural emphases and reception-rich tone of much recent Britten scholarship.⁶ Few Britten critics, though, have quite Wiebe's breadth of cultural reference: her engagement with a roster of historians of British art, literature, and society—from Richard Hoggart in the 1950s to Alexandra Harris⁷—strikes a refreshingly eclectic context in a book still grounded in sustained readings of the scores.

Articulating an artistic contribution to postwar British cultural renewal, Wiebe homes in on Britten as the creator of a local participatory culture, a remarkable communicator who remained a reluctant orator. In concentrating on national tropes of recovered indigeneity in the postwar years, Wiebe revealingly encourages a hearing of Britten's music less centered on the richly peopled dramas of the operatic stage, and more attuned to sounds that—as bearers of histories and memories—can never fully be tamed. There are other Brittens not mentioned here: the 1930s cosmopolitan modernist; the skittish observer of the postwar avant-garde, dismayed by a widening audience gap while engaging with a twelve-tone pitch language; and the Cold War ambassador, friend of Shostakovich and Rostropovich. Discussing *Noye*, Wiebe herself mentions Britten's interest in Asian-influenced textural heterophony, audible as early as *Paul Bunyan* (1941) and as late as *Death in Venice* (1973). But it is to a composer steeped in the heritage of carols, hymns, and English ritual that she has, with great verve, directed our ears. *Britten's Unquiet Pasts* will certainly prove indispensable to critics and scholars of Britten's music. Beyond that, for its sophisticated understandings of British cultural history, it deserves a far broader readership.

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Composing Japanese Musical Modernity, by Bonnie Wade. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014. viii, 271 pp.

Everything changed in 1868. That year Japanese rebels demolished the two-hundred-year reign of the isolationist samurai government and installed the youthful Meiji emperor as ruler of the island nation. Over the course of his

6. See, for example, Christopher Chowrimootoo, "Bourgeois Opera: *Death in Venice* and the Aesthetics of Sublimation," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 22 (2011): 176–216; J. P. E. Harper-Scott, "Post-War Women in Britten," in *Rethinking Britten*, 86–101; Kevin Salfen, "Britten the Anthologist," *19th-Century Music* 38 (2014): 79–112; and Danielle Ward-Griffin, "Theme Park Britten: Staging the English Village at the Aldeburgh Festival," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 27 (2015): 63–95.

7. Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957); Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010).

reign (1868–1912) and well beyond, a project of rapid modernization defined Japan’s political, industrial, and artistic pursuits.¹ In *Composing Japanese Musical Modernity* Bonnie Wade explores the ways in which music, particularly Western-style art music (*yōgaku*) and Japanese classical music (*bōgaku*), participated in the project of modernization. Implicit in her argument is an understanding of music’s continued role in the formation of a Japanese modernity in the years following the empire’s defeat in World War II.

Wade weaves together a history of music making in modern Japan, fourteen years of extensive field research, and individual accounts from composers and composer-performers. This synthesis of history and anthropology endows her monograph with a vigor not often found in previous scholarship on art music in modern Japan.² Wade’s concern with individuals’ engagement with music as a modern practice allows her to home in on a distinctive quality shared by many Japanese composers. “Most Japanese composers,” she suggests, “have continued in some ways to maintain a relational sort of role in their society” (p. 2). Unlike many of their Western colleagues, Japanese composers of the twentieth century practiced an “artistic flexibility” that allowed them to work in a variety of spheres and genres, ranging from school songs to avant-garde orchestral pieces. This flexibility, a quality made necessary by the hurried social and political changes of the twentieth century, was crucial to all aspects of modern life, including music culture and composition.

Wade supports her contention by means of a theoretical framework called “affordance theory.” First put forth by James J. Gibson, affordance theory is rooted in the idea of a condition or conditions that make an action possible.³ Wade handles this theory adeptly, stating, “the action that has interested me is the creation of new music, with possibilities that have been offered to Japanese individuals since the systematic introduction of Western music as a tool for modernization” (p. 12). Throughout her study Wade considers how modernization created environments that enabled composers to practice their craft. Divided into three sections, each with two chapters, the book scrutinizes these environments, establishing the ways in which situations allowed composers to “remain connected to the people” (p. 13).

1. For more on modernity in concept and practice in the Meiji era, see Carol Gluck, *Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

2. Scholarship on Western music in Japan is primarily historical and Wade cites several of the key texts, including Ury Eppstein, *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994); Luciana Galliano, *Yōgaku: Japanese Music in the Twentieth Century*, trans. Martin Mayes (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002); David Hebert, *Wind Bands and Cultural Identity in Japanese Schools* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2012); Judith Ann Herd, “Western-Influenced ‘Classical Music’ in Japan,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Japanese Music*, ed. Alison McQueen Tokita and David W. Hughes (Aldershot, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 363–82; and David Pacun, “Nationalism and Musical Style in Interwar Yōgaku: A Reappraisal,” *Asian Music* 43, no. 2 (2012): 3–46.

3. James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979).

The first section, “Composers in the Infrastructures of Japanese Modernity,” centers on the way governmental and industrial infrastructures created environments that made it possible for modern music to thrive. In Chapter 1 Wade provides the greatest amount of historical background, exploring the importation to Japan of the idea of “the composer” together with Western technologies and political philosophies in the late nineteenth century. These newly minted Japanese composers often received educational and financial support from the Meiji government in exchange for services. Wade summarizes the significance of Western music as part of the modernization of the educational curriculum, citing the government’s interest in music as an ideological apparatus.

Wade also explains the intricacies of governmental sponsorship of the arts, a sponsorship that led to the establishment of multiple public and private conservatories and a behemoth music education industry. These educational systems, grounded in the ideology of *fin-de-siècle* Japan, remain very much alive today. Wade’s field notes, based on her visits to extracurricular music schools for children, substantiate this vitality. In these notes she observes music theory and composition classes for elementary and middle school children, costly activities that reveal parental devotion to encouraging and cultivating musical knowledge in their children—one of many parts of her study in which Bourdieu’s concept of “cultural capital” shines through.⁴ As well as cultivating competent young composers, the educational infrastructure provides opportunities for older composers to earn an income while pursuing their art.

While Chapter 1 focuses on education, Chapter 2 centers on the symbiotic relationship between political institutions, industry, and modern music. Companies such as Yamaha and Sawai, we learn, promote music education and domestic music making as a means of selling their instruments and method books. Wade then examines JASRAC (Japan Society for Rights of Authors and Composers), which is part of the government’s Ministry of Cultural Affairs. A non-profit entity, JASRAC strictly enforces copyright, thus creating an environment in which composers and their works are protected from exploitation. Wade’s description of the monumental Tokyo Opera City construction project is among the most fascinating parts of the chapter (pp. 43–47). A massive arts complex at the edge of Tokyo’s trendy Shinjuku district, the edifice includes business offices, restaurants, shops, art museums, and performance halls for both traditional and Western music and theater. Wade uses Tokyo Opera City to illustrate the clear connections between cultural capital and literal capital in modern Japan, and in doing so clarifies the various affordances composers acquire through the interconnectivity of industry, education, and government.

4. Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241–58.

The second section of *Composing Japanese Musical Modernity*, entitled “Japanese Composers in Shared Cultural Spaces of Western Music,” is concerned with the efficacy of art music as a tool of modernization. Here Wade explores music’s ability to create shared cultural spaces, which in turn allow composers to work internationally while exploring aesthetics that blend cosmopolitan and traditional elements. In Chapter 3 Wade delves into the world of *yōgaku*. This imported genre, having accrued prestige and widespread popularity, opened up a shared musico-expressive space in contemporary Japan. Moreover, Japanese adeptness in this genre allowed composers and performers to expand into global activities.

Wade offers a synopsis of prewar international musical exchanges as background to her research into and interviews with postwar composers. She presents us with entries summarizing the biographies and endeavors of nearly a dozen modern composers and composer-performers, many of whom are, thanks to her work, receiving attention in Western scholarship for the first time. Since many of the women composers she spoke with made it clear that they did not want to be considered “female composers,” Wade generally eschews discussion of gender ideology. Yet her descriptions of and interviews with these women are among the most insightful of the chapter, offering a more profound appreciation of gender and its relevance to musical modernity. Wade’s interview with the blind female composer Sachie Murao is especially compelling, and her sections on marimbist Keiko Abe and the active composer Keiko Fujie present tantalizing prospects for future research.⁵

In the latter portion of Chapter 3 Wade considers the two most prominent Japanese figures in the international music world: Tōru Takemitsu and Seiji Ozawa. She describes their global contributions to music and examines how their actions abroad impacted the musical scene locally. Most poignant is Wade’s turn on the idea of musical borrowing in her summary of the accomplishments of Ozawa, Takemitsu, and other Japanese composers: “Borrowing—that is, receiving something from somebody temporarily, with the expectation that it will be returned—turns out to be an apt word: what Japan borrowed it is now returning in the form of contemporary musical creativity” (p. 95).

In Chapter 4 Wade continues her assessment of shared cultural space as an environment conducive to musical activities, turning her attention to *hōgaku* performers and composers. She concedes that although contemporary *hōgaku* (that is, new music written for traditional Japanese instruments) generally receives less support than *yōgaku*, the close relationship between performers and composers in this genre is emblematic of Japanese musical modernity, the syncretic engagement with both traditional and modern music offering unique opportunities for artistic collaboration. Wade stresses the necessity of

5. Here and throughout this review I follow Wade’s example of presenting Japanese names in the European order.

communication and familiarity if the collaboration is to work: “It bears repeating that for composers who want to draw on both the grounded traditions in Japanese musical modernity by writing for a traditional instrument, the availability of capable and involved performers is an absolute prerequisite” (p. 126). She relates that *hōgaku* performers will often commission new pieces for their instruments, thus affording composers the chance to write for distinctive timbres and capabilities, often placing a traditional Japanese instrument or instruments in an ensemble primarily consisting of Western instruments. Through her analysis of works by Toshio Hosokawa, Toshiro Mayuzumi, Tadao Sawai, and many others, Wade clarifies how modern composers and composer-performers have navigated ideas of “Japanese-ness” in relation to national and international concertizing pursuits.

The book’s final section, “The Presence in Japan of European Spheres of Musical Participation,” is devoted to composers and their interactions with professional and amateur ensembles. These last two chapters depict Japan’s vibrant musical culture. The nation (which is slightly smaller than California) is home to twenty-five full-time professional orchestras and over a hundred amateur orchestras (pp. 141–42). In Chapter 5 Wade considers how this ensemble-rich environment provides (or fails to provide) composers with opportunities to write for larger groups. She explains that, as a result of musical conservatism, contemporary composers are rarely given the chance to hear their works performed by professional ensembles: the financial risk of commissioning a new piece by a Japanese composer is simply too great, whereas orchestras can always bank on Beethoven, Bach, and Mozart. But the Japanese musical world has evolved in such a way as to undercut this hegemony in some interesting ways.

In Japan, Wade relates, there are numerous composition competitions, many of which lead to monetary rewards, public performances, and increased prestige. These competitions also give young composers an opportunity to win recognition, which might translate into future commissions and teaching positions. In addition, amateur orchestras and wind bands frequently support new composers, commissioning works or building a concert around a given theme. In such cases composers must again collaborate and be sensitive to the needs and abilities of the group in question. This exemplifies and strengthens Wade’s contention that composing art music in modern Japan is not so much an autonomous act as a social one.

Chapter 6 continues in a similar vein, this time delving into vocal ensembles. Vivid accounts of the early days of choral music in Japan enrich Wade’s historical overview. She then interrogates the ideological function of ensemble singing during this time. Especially striking is her portrait of Kosuke Komatsu, a composer who fostered choral activities in Japan in both the pre- and postwar eras. Wade quotes a member of the Japan Choral Association to give the clearest impression of the social importance of singing: “Many

choral groups formed after the war. There were not enough instruments, but there could be choruses. People were depressed, and they wanted to keep their spirits up” (p. 182). The numerous personal accounts of chorus members presented here tell a poignant story of the significance of music making in modern Japan’s darkest days.

In the remainder of the chapter Wade examines how the popularity of school and amateur choruses has allowed composers to participate in competitions as well as receive commissions and performances on a regular basis. She surveys individual composers’ approaches to music and text settings, artists writing everything from avant-garde art songs to pieces for elementary school children. Like composers working in other genres, those involved in composing for choirs consciously engage with performers’ needs and abilities in their works.

In *Composing Japanese Musical Modernity* Wade effectively weaves a tapestry of historical research, personal accounts, and theoretical analysis. It is a comprehensive approach that gives the book omnivorous appeal. Scholars working in the fields of music, anthropology, Asian Studies, and modern history can all glean something from it. Moreover, Wade lays the groundwork for further scholarship on Japanese composers and the environments that afford them social and artistic opportunities. Specifically, she has opened pathways for the study of *yōgaku* and *hōgaku* in audiovisual media such as Japanese theater, film, television, and video games. Her book provides an elegant model for scholars concerned with the composition, performance, and reception of art music within a transnational context. It is a brilliant study of music in modern Japan. But it is not just that. It is a culmination of a devoted scholar’s efforts of more than a decade to tell a story that thoughtfully engages with music as lived experience—experience that, thanks in part to Wade’s work, will resonate globally for years to come.

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