

sierung und Hierarchisierung von Eigenem und kulturell Anderem/Fremden zu entkommen (75–87). Anders ausgedrückt: postkoloniale Intention läuft Gefahr, (neo-)koloniale Machtverhältnisse festzuschreiben. Der postkoloniale Diskurs sieht sich mit dem “Problem der Repräsentation” (126–49) konfrontiert, dem Dubiel “intra-kulturelle Hybridität” als poetologisches Verfahren (ab 150, vor allem 188–214) und als erkenntnisgewinnende Alternative entgegenstellt. Dabei setzt sich Dubiel ausführlich mit den Theorien der Hybridität und des Inter-/Intra-kulturellen auseinander, letztendlich schlußfolgernd, daß jegliche auf affirmative Identitäten gegründete Kulturtheorie und Interpretationspraxis zu einem erkenntnistheoretischen und ästhetischen Engpaß führe. “Intra-kulturelle Hybridität” dagegen könne der Logik des kolonialisierenden Blicks entkommen, da sie den Blick des Anderen quasi zum Teil des Eigenen macht; Hybridität steht somit nicht für eine Verbindung zweier Identitäten, sondern für die Aufnahme des Anderen ins Eigene, ohne es freilich wie bei Hegel dialektisch zu negieren, sondern vielmehr durch hermeneutischen Zirkelschluß als Anderes freizulegen. Obwohl der Titel des Buches eher die Nähe zu Hegel als zu Schleiermacher suggeriert, bezieht sich Dialektik aus der Sicht dieser Leserin auf die Verschränkung inter- und intra-kultureller Machtverhältnisse und ihrer Darstellung im Text.

Das Buch trägt somit zur Theoriebildung des “postkolonialen Blicks” bei, ist aber gleichzeitig als Metadiskurs zu lesen, der vertraute und neuere Theorien und Ansätze miteinander und gegeneinander ins Spiel bringt. Das Verfahren des *contrapuntal reading* (215) nimmt dabei eine Vorrangstellung ein. *Contrapuntal reading*—oder wahlweise der von Dubiel wechselweise benutzte deutsche Begriff ‘kontrapunktische Lektüre’—geht von der “transparenten Textintention” (216) aus und, so Dubiel, vermeide Spekulationen. Durch solche Lektüren gelinge es dem Leser, “die multiple Struktur des Textes [. . .] zu entschlüsseln”; der Leser dürfe bei einer angestrebten kontrapunktischen Lektüre “getrost mit dem Wissen um die Mechanismen des kolonialen und die Probleme des postkolonialen Diskurses an die Texte herantreten, muß sich aber davor hüten, es in sie hineinzulegen” (219).

Dieses Verfahren, das als Ansatz der Literaturanalyse im letzten Teil des Buchs (als bereits textimmanent in Werken wie z.B. Raabes *Stopfkuchen* angelegt) vorgestellt wird und auf einige literarische Werke angewendet wird, hat sicher auch bei Dubiels Auseinandersetzung mit dem vielschichtigen, oftmals kontrovers angelegten postkolonialen Diskurs Pate gestanden. So gesehen sind viele Aspekte postkolonialer Theoriebildung, die der Autor unter dem programmatischen Begriff “intra-kulturelle Hybridität” vorstellt, schon bei anderen Kritikern angelegt. In Literatur wie Metadiskurs fördert die Strategie des *contrapuntal reading* intra-kulturelle Hybridität zutage. Und solch ein Freilegen gehört natürlich zur wissenschaftlichen Arbeit des Literatur- und Kulturtheoretikers.

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A Companion to Wagner’s Parsifal.

Edited by William Kinderman and Katherine R. Syer. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005. ix + 364 pages + 13 illustrations. \$90.00.

Understanding Richard Wagner’s mature stage works is far from an easy task. Textually and musically, the *Ring*, *Tristan*, *Meistersinger*, and *Parsifal* are complex artistic

creations, open to multiple layers of analysis and interpretation. Each of these music dramas also brings up weighty philosophical, intellectual, and political questions, with the result that there is not only considerable debate over the meaning of any given opera, but also an enormous amount of literature on the Wagnerian *opus*—in whole and in part. Indeed, so labyrinthine are the issues surrounding text (score), context, and scholarship for Wagner's works that even specialists can find themselves overwhelmed. In an effort to offer guidance to the riddle that is Wagner's swan song, *Parsifal*, Camden House has recently issued a volume in its series of companions to major artistic works, periods, and literary figures.

At first glance, this *Companion* appears to deliver the goods. There are three essays that assess central qualities of the opera's—or *Bühnenweihfestspiel* (festival stage dedication piece) as Wagner called it—libretto. Mary Cicora examines Wagner's reworking of the medieval Parzival legend; James M. McGlathery probes the theme of erotic love in the libretto and its medieval sources; and Ulrike Kienzle investigates the drama's religious and philosophical dimensions. Next come a trio of pieces on the opera as music: Kinderman's account of Wagner's creative process for *Parsifal*, Syer's analysis of the Act I Grail scene, and Warren Darcy's fascinating study of "musical magic" in the opening sections of Act II. The volume concludes with two contributions dealing with the work's reception: Roger Allen's remarks on Houston Stewart Chamberlain as Wagnerian nationalist, and Syer's survey of *Parsifal* stage history.

Substantively, however, the book is less than satisfying, especially as a reference work that should be accessible to specialists as well as those with more general interests in *Parsifal*. Of the eight essays, only two—Cicora's piece and Syer's on staging—provide the type of "background" information that a reader expects from such a volume. Yet, neither one is particularly imaginative or insightful. Cicora's essay is little more than a synthesis of recent work on Wagner's medieval appropriations. It is solid, highlighting Wagner's mystical, Schopenhauerian take on the medieval material, but pedestrian. Syer's article is more valuable, since very little work has been done concerning *Parsifal* on stage, particularly for the post-1945 period. The comments on *Parsifal* in the GDR are especially welcome. All in all, however, it is primarily a descriptive piece with only occasional references to non-Bayreuth productions.

The remaining essays are more scholarly in their content, but ultimately of limited relevance to the task at hand. Symptomatic of this situation is Kinderman's own introduction. Instead of discussing the volume's aims and approach, as one would expect, he launches into a discussion of the challenges Wagner faced in constructing his libretto (raising themes that Cicora also develops) and his borrowing of the "Dresden amen" figure from Liszt. Similarly problematic is the piece on erotic love. While this is a theme worthy of extended treatment, McGlathery devotes most of his attention to aspects of the medieval texts (e.g. the character of Gawain/Gawan) that play little part in Wagner's account. Not only is Wagner's libretto given short shrift (a mere four pages), but McGlathery never once interrogates it from the perspective of nineteenth-century discourses on love and sexuality.

Kienzle also takes up a central issue in her remarks: the long-debated question of whether *Parsifal* is a "Christian" opera. In her sprawling and overly lengthy piece, she does well to point out the variety of influences—Christian, Buddhist, and philosophic (Schopenhauer)—bearing on the work's unique *Weltanschauung*. But, precisely for this reason, her conclusion that we might still view this work's mysticism as

consonant with Christian tradition makes little sense. Nor do her musings on *Parsifal* as Wagnerian religious synthesis for an “irreligious age” work, absent consideration of recent writing on the Second German Empire’s religious history. Jumping ahead to Allen’s contribution in the section on reception history, the shortcoming is more fundamental. This essay really is not about *Parsifal* at all, rather it concerns Houston Stewart Chamberlain and his work as passionate Wagnerian and champion of German *völkisch* nationalism.

Although music dominates in *Parsifal* as in no other Wagnerian stage work, the section on music in the *Companion* does not do it justice. The essays eschew any effort to give the reader a sense of current musicological trends with respect to *Parsifal*, preferring instead to present narrowly focused and highly technical analyses of musical moments that are not particularly accessible to non-musicologists. Only after an overly detailed account of the opera’s sketches and compositional fragments, for instance, does Kinderman explain how Wagner’s late revisions to the Act I “Transformation music” help to integrate it more fully into the work’s overall tonal structure. Katherine R. Syer dissects the Act I Grail scene with great skill, raising the fascinating question of the musical-dramatic role of “unseen voices.” Yet this essay is all explication and no argument. Warren Darcy’s discussion of the music at the beginning of Act II is the strongest of this lot. It employs an innovative analytical method to distinguish between the magical world of Klingsor and Kundry and *Parsifal*’s heroic purity. To follow Darcy’s argument, however, one needs to understand both his idea of “rotational form” (which he explains), and the concept of “hexatonic systems” (which he does not).

In sum, there is some fine and useful work in this *Companion*. But its idiosyncratic approach to the topic prevents it from really achieving its basic goal as a general, scholarly guide to *Parsifal*.

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The German Invention of Race.

Edited by Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006. vii + 221 pages. \$60.00.

This is a fascinating, truly pathbreaking collection that seeks to bring some order into the early history of German anthropology and to clarify how that discipline understood biological difference. While the collection is particularly useful in mapping out the positions of Kant and Blumenbach, it also pays attention to a number of minor, but nevertheless interesting figures. One of the volume’s main objectives is to reconstruct the ‘biological’ roots of German Idealism—‘biology’ being a discipline highly dependent on the religious, ethical, and aesthetic norms of the day. At least as interesting as the theories of race and ethnicity discussed in this collection is a secondary issue the volume raises: how Germans started to understand ‘culture,’ their own and that of others, as a historical phenomenon around 1800.

For me, the key essay in this book is Han Vermeulen’s “The German Invention of *Völkerkunde*,” which offers a very precise reconstruction of the conceptual history of a number of terms relevant for the volume: *Völker-Beschreibung*, *Völkerkunde*, *Ethnographie*, *Ethnologie*, and *Anthropologie*, to name a few. Through a detailed reading of