heard of a gamelan. Be that as it may, Howat's insights are first rate and reflect the understanding of both a scholar and a performer.

Less convincing are some of his speculations as to possible connections to other Western composers. Again, there is much that is very good in his discussion, but his claim, for example, of a relationship between bars 55–56 of 'Paysage' by Chabrier with 'the first solo entry of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*' needs further documentation. His connecting of the opening of Schumann's *Carnival* with French overture (p. 159) also is problematic; not all dotted figures do a French overture make. If there *is* a causal connection between the two, it should be documented in the text. However, there are some excellent insights all through his discussion and on the whole, he does a fine job of putting the composers into historical context.

Howat really shines in 'Part 3: Fresh perspective', and I found his analysis of the 'Menuet' from Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* to be especially compelling:

> At first glance its opening eight bars look like a harmless antecedent-consequent 4+4 sequence … In fact they reverse the classical norm by placing the full close before the modal half-close (bars 4 and 8). Ravel neatly follows through at the end of the Menuet's opening section … where the melody from bar 1 to 4, initially an antecedent, now returns as a consequent, the full close in its 'proper' place. As the Menuet's recapitulation moves into the coda, Ravel gives this an extra nudge by continuing the opening melody over the transition … so that the original antecedent–consequent melodic trope now becomes consequent–antecedent, carrying the music gracefully into the coda (p. 177).

Howat is a gifted pianist, so it stands to reason that he would have real insight into the playing of this repertoire. 'Part 4: At the keyboard' contains much in the way of sound technical advice as well as imaginative suggestions as to how the pianist should realize this great music tonally by connecting it to the composers' orchestral palates.

In spite of the above-mentioned caveats, *The Art of French Piano Music: Debussy, Ravel, Fauré, Chabrier* is a book that should be on the shelf of any scholar or musician who has an interest in this fascinating repertory. Roy Howat is to be congratulated for producing a major contribution to musical scholarship and performance practice.

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doi:10.1017/S1479409811000115

Harvey Sachs, *The Ninth: Beethoven and the World in 1824* (New York: Random House, 2010). 225pp. £12.99.

Harvey Sachs is well known for his books on Arturo Toscanini, Artur Rubinstein, and music in Fascist Italy, among other subjects.[1] In a wistful aside early in this book he writes:

> I am not an authentic musicologist. I state this fact neither ashamedly nor proudly, but simply to give you an inkling of what lies ahead … When asked what my

[1] Harvey Sachs, *Toscanini* (New York: Lippincott, 1978); Harvey Sachs, *Reflections on Toscanini* (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991); Harvey Sachs, *Rubinstein: A Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1995); Harvey Sachs, *Music in Fascist Italy* (New York: Norton, 1988).

> profession is, I usually say, for the sake of expedience, 'writer and music historian' but 'daydreamer, appreciator, and curiosity addict' would be a more accurate definition (pp. 5ff).

In a postlude he remembers being transfixed in childhood by recordings and that 'Beethoven seemed to speak to me more clearly, more directly, than anyone else' (p. 196). And in a highly personal confession he writes:

> at the outset of my adult life, when the government of my native country demanded that I participate in a war that I considered unjust, cruel, stupid, and tinged with racism, Beethoven and his resilient, universalizing music, which seemed to transcend all human tendencies towards disunity but also, simultaneously, toward mindless obedience – toward following the multitude to do evil – were among the main influences that made me decide to emigrate rather than do what was expected of me (p. 198).

This passage, though retrospective, sets the stage. His dual subjects are the Ninth Symphony as a reflection of Beethoven's political beliefs, and 1824 as the year of its first performance. With that year as a focal point he envisages a group of far-flung contemporary writers and artists whose works Sachs regards as, equally, messages of liberation and reflections of 'Romanticism's rear-guard action against repression' (p. 110). These other artists are Byron, Pushkin, Delacroix and Heine, each briefly surveyed. It turns out, not surprisingly, that Sachs' claims of connection between the Ninth Symphony and works by these contemporaries are based simply on the general proposition that all of them believed in 'freedom of the mind and spirit' (p. 95). He readily admits that 'to a hypothetical observer who, in 1824, had heard of Beethoven … and the other major figures … the points of contact among them would have seemed tenuous, perhaps even nonexistent. But from a twenty-first century perspective, the connection seems almost too obvious' (p. 95). Most of the book moves on this broad all-encompassing level, and as such it may be a useful primer for general readers steeped in neither music nor history. But with all possible sympathy for the author's enthusiasm, I have to say that as a contribution to the Beethoven literature it has little or nothing to offer beyond personal reflections.

Since the 'Ode to Joy' became an international anthem suitable for ceremonies and commemorations, its cultural status has evoked a river of commentary. At least one can say for Sachs' book, in comparison to Esteban Buch's *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History*,[2] that Sachs makes some attempt to talk about the whole symphony, all four movements, while in Buch's survey of its reception the earlier movements are simply missing. Sachs set up his book in four parts: 1) a section on Beethoven in Vienna and the premiere of the Ninth; 2) '1824, or How Artists Internalize Revolution' (this means Byron, Pushkin, etc.); 3) 'Imagining the Ninth', in which he gives a highly personal tour of all four movements; 4) a final section entitled 'To Begin Anew' which reports on the reception of the Ninth Symphony by Berlioz, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Wagner. He explains in a note (p. 169) that his list of successors would have been longer (for example, would have included Brahms and Bruckner) had he not limited it to those born before 1824.

[2] Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History*, trans. Richard Miller (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479409811000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Sachs has combed the secondary literature, and he makes mention of work by current Beethovenians, including Maynard Solomon, Charles Rosen, Elaine Sisman, David Levy, Barry Cooper and myself. Equally, he is conversant with the works of the Romantic writers cited above and the critical literature around them, as well as moderns including Saul Bellow, Elsa Morante, Joseph Brodsky and Margaret Drabble. But entirely missing in text and notes – there is no bibliography – are the basic contributions to our understanding of the Ninth Symphony by Gustav Nottebohm, Heinrich Schenker, Donald Francis Tovey, Otto Baensch, Carl Dahlhaus, Nicholas Cook, Leo Treitler, William Kinderman and James Webster.[3] That Schenker's great monograph of 1912 on the Ninth is missing is especially telling, the more so since it was translated into English some years ago by John Rothgeb (1992). And on Romanticism – that perennial flag that waves high over the earlier nineteenth century – I sorely miss any reference to the seminal work of the late John Daverio, whose nuanced views on how Romanticism influenced music could have helped to give some substance.[4]

Here and there the impulse to really come to grips with the subject does emerge, as when Sachs offers a modified translation of a Beethoven letter or his own translation of much of the Heiligenstadt Testament (pp. 43–5). But many quotations and references are from secondary sources, at times quite remote ones, not from originals or basic studies of original sources. This is not just true of the musical side but also of the historical one, where we find no reference to studies of Europe in the Restoration after Napoleon by recent historians, though there are more than a few that would have been relevant. I missed any reference to even so broad and general a volume as Paul Johnson's *The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815–1830*,[5] a closely-packed survey in which all the major characters in Sachs' book also appear.

All in all, I find myself wishing that Harvey Sachs had followed his musical interests as 'a day-dreamer, appreciator, and curiosity addict', and written a purely impressionistic essay on the Ninth, perhaps with an emphasis on comparing recorded performances, rather than this effort to combine history and analysis, which does justice to neither discipline. Perhaps the largest issue that

[3] Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1887; reprinted in 1970 by Johnson Reprint Corporation, New York), Chapter XX: 'Skizzen zur neunten Symphonie', 157–92; Heinrich Schenker, *Beethoven's Ninth Symphony*, trans. and ed. John Rothgeb (New Haven: Yale University Press, [1912] 1992); Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, II (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), Chapter XLII: 'Ninth Symphony in D Minor: Its Place in Musical Art', 1–45; Otto Baensch, *Aufbau und Sinn des Chorfinales in Beethovens neunte Symphonie* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1930); Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven; Approaches to his Music*, trans. Mary Whittall (Oxford: Oxford University Press [1987] 1991), esp. 76–80; Nicholas Cook, *Beethoven; Symphony No. 9* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Leo Treitler, 'History, Criticism, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony', and 'To Worship that Celestial Sound: Motives for Analysis', which are included as Chapters 1 and 2 in his *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989): 19–45 and 46–66; William Kinderman, *Beethoven*, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); James Webster, 'The Form of the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony', *Beethoven Forum* I (1992): 25–62.

[4] John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993).

[5] Paul Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern: World Society 1815–1830* (New York: Harper, 1999).

this book raises is the relationship of current musicology to journalism. This is not scholarship, as the author himself says, but it is intended to be high journalism, an overview aimed at the general reader and listener, the concert-goer and Beethoven enthusiast. This is a perfectly laudable aim, but it calls for at least some observations.

In the current phase of expansion of musical commentary in the digital age, increasing popularization is probably inevitable and, depending on how it is done, appropriate. For reasons too complicated to go into here but broadly visible to any experienced observer, high-level traditional historical musicology is now under siege from various forces, some within its own ranks, some outside them. One noticeable tendency has been the questioning, and in some circles the weakening or abandonment of traditional analytical, historical or philological studies of what have long been accepted as important works in Western music history, in favour of approaches that tend to collapse such works almost entirely into their cultural contexts and to stand aloof from the sources that document their origins and thus reveal important aspects of the processes by which they were created. This is a complex issue, and I can only allude to it here, but a simple example from one of my own fields of interest might suffice. In our time, access to basic sources of Western music, let's say, Beethoven's sketches and autographs, is easier than could ever have been imagined in the past, but only a fraction of their vast and mysterious contents have yet been published. As a result, only very partial insights are available into the inner world of a musical creator of the highest importance.

Now, I am far from imagining that every scholar who wants to contribute to public understanding of a work like the Ninth Symphony should first attempt to transcribe sketches or delve deeply into the many revisions in the autograph score, which, by the way, has been brought out in full facsimile for the third time by Bärenreiter-Verlag.[6] But I do believe it is the historian's and commentator's task to ask hard questions, whatever his approach, to help the intelligent lay reader understand what such questions are and what provisional answers are circulating in the field; in short, to enlarge understanding of works on this level beyond broad approximations that float like clouds over the landscape. That is why, in reading the work of a historian or other serious commentator, it is legitimate to look to see what his range of knowledge is, what his claims are, and on what foundations these claims are based.

At the same time, I am not undervaluing musicological writings designed for this same intelligent general reader that can be highly personal, largely subjective and highly imaginative commentaries on an individual musical work, since it is with the experience of individuality and the sense of the work as a singular aesthetic entity, that all perception begins. As Leo Treitler put it in a thoughtful essay:

> the historical object … might be thought to have greater possibilities of persevering in so far as it has an autonomous presence contemporaneous with the work of the scholar – for example, in so far as it has an existence in the world of performance, but also in so far as it has a presence as music in the consciousness of the scholar.[7]

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[6] Ludwig van Beethoven, *Sinfonie No. 9, op 125, Autograph* (Documenta Musicologica, II/42 [Bärenreiter Facsimile 5]), ed. Lewis Lockwood, Jonathan Del Mar and Martina Rebmann (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 2010).

[7] Leo Treitler, 'The Historiography of Music: Issues of Past and Present', in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999): 357.

Certainly Beethoven's Ninth has a strong presence in the consciousness of the writer of this book, as anyone can see. For that reason alone a more intensely personal account of the work by Sachs, who clearly knows a great deal about performance, would probably have been more convincing. Sachs' discussion of particulars in the four movements contains a number of handsome turns of phrase and moments of perception that carry personal conviction, and his emotional attachment to musical experience is manifest. Extended and developed, they might have brought a better outcome.

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doi:10.1017/S1479409811000127

William Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). *xiv* +334pp. $99.00.

For over 20 years, William Weber has used the analysis of concert programmes as a vehicle for his study of musical taste in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His pioneering approach has since inspired various ongoing research projects involving systematic collection, including those by Christina Bashford, Rachel Cowgill and Simon McVeigh (*Concert Life in 19th-Century London*), Patrick Taïeb and Hervé Lacombe (*Répertoire des programmes de concerts en France*), and Ruppert Ridgewell (*Concert Programmes in the United Kingdom and Ireland*). William Weber's recent book, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste*, can be said to offer a synthesis of his preceding work, in both the approach and the methodology used, without, however, repeating its exact content given that he now aspires to broader conclusions. Based on the study of more than 100 concert programmes (from among the thousands he has consulted), Weber seeks to understand the 'great transformation of musical taste' between 1770 and 1900: 'This book', he explains, 'attempts to show specifically when, and in what kinds of concerts, a macroscopic division between supposedly ''light'' and ''serious'' music arose, related to the notions of ''popular songs'' and ''classics'' ' (p. 4).

The concert programmes that punctuate the entire work are analyzed according to different criteria: the ratio of living to dead composers, the proportion of vocal to instrumental music, the genres performed, the number of musicians involved, the degree of 'seriousness' of the pieces – from where the concert's degree of 'miscellany' is derived. Weber thus identifies change and permanence over time, as well as practices specific to time and place, building up a global panorama of the public concert in Europe, from its historical beginnings, based on a great many samples.[1] However, the interest of his work does not lie in his sources alone. The concert programmes are just a point of departure, sometimes a point of arrival, for an in-depth study of numerous issues related to the period in question (sometimes linked to political history). Using specific methodology, Weber presents nothing less than a general history of musical taste and musical life where almost all genres rub shoulders in no apparent order, to an era when concert programmes became highly homogeneous, and, on the contrary, exclusive in terms of genre.

[1] A reading of William Weber's book may be complemented by consulting the case studies he suggests on the website http://www.cph.rcm.ac.uk/Programmes1/Pages/Index.htm.