Introduction

The widespread political unrest of 1968 challenged the model of prosperity that had prevailed in West Germany since the reconstruction after 1945. In the field of new music the social upheaval of this time helped to bring about a move away from the aesthetic values of serialism that had dominated in the post-war years. The immediate response to the events of 1968 was music with a stronger political dimension; the less immediate one was music that was more inclusive and more historically reflective. The social transformations of 1968 led to a new phase of music in Germany, and one that affected composers such as György Ligeti, Mauricio Kagel and Karlheinz Stockhausen, who had established reputations in the post-war years. Many of these altered attitudes were driven by Helmut Lachenmann and Wolfgang Rihm, who emerged as increasingly prominent figures in German art music at the end of the twentieth century, despite aesthetic differences and an age gap of seventeen years. In recognition of this changed environment, the present account modifies the dominant historiography of music in post-war Germany by shifting its axis from the twenty years of reconstruction after 1945 to the era from 1968 to 2000. Hence the time frame includes the end of the Cold War and extends into the years following German reunification in 1989. No attempt has been made to exclude music composed since 2000, although coverage is more selective after this date.

The book devotes central chapters (3 and 4) to Lachenmann and Rihm, as focal points for topics – such as postmodernism, musical semiotics and action-based gestures – that affected a range of composers from older and younger generations. The chapters surrounding this core expand its context by considering the precursors (2) and contemporaries (5) of Rihm and Lachenmann, especially in the context of extended techniques and inclusive methods of composition. In sequence, Chapter 1 focuses on which institutions and which funding channels supported art music in Germany after 1968, and also considers how the patterns and prospects for funding changed after German reunification. Chapter 2 investigates how composers who established reputations in the early post-war years responded to the changed environment after 1968. Chapter 3 moves on to Lachenmann, scrutinizing how he endeavours to refuse the conventions of the bourgeois tradition, even when drawing on music from this repertoire. Chapter 4 runs in parallel to Chapter 3, enquiring how Rihm is able to

engage, semiotically, with the genres of bourgeois music. Chapter 5 turns its attention to how the contemporaries of Lachenmann and Rihm, and younger figures, respond to the issues embodied in music since 1968. Finally, the Epilogue appraises the book's main themes, with a particular focus on the renewed momentum modernism gained in the 1980s.

The title *Music in Germany* is not intended to suggest that the book covers the full range of art, popular and traditional musics that existed in Germany at the end of the twentieth century. It refers more narrowly to the category of 'new music', although that term has not been used in the title because of its contested status. The stark statement made by Nicolaus A. Huber that 'new music says something *about* music' is one that could be applied to the majority of composers covered in this volume;[1] but it is not a premiss that could be used easily in connection with discussion of Hans Werner Henze or Matthias Pintscher, even though the music of both composers is partly defined in relation to it. Since the aim of the book is not to impose a label on all the repertoire studied, the term 'new music' does not appear in the title.

In his introduction to the Deutscher Musikrat's vinyl LP series *Zeitgenössische Musik in der Bundesrebublik Deutschland*, Carl Dahlhaus specified that the collection was concerned with new music and stated that it 'must be new in a qualitative, and not just in a chronological sense in order to be aesthetically and historically authentic'. This criterion is more in keeping with the concept of musical material associated with serialism than with the historically reflective turn of the 1970s, even though the series extends to 1980. However, Dahlhaus then listed three further categories for inclusion: works that have established themselves in the repertoire, those which illuminate stylistic tendencies with particular clarity, and those which add to musical resources, and stimulate the development of methods of composition and aesthetic thought.[2] These conditions articulate a process of canon formation as well. All the same, it is noticeable that they are somewhat softer and less exclusive than Dahlhaus's more austere concept of historically authentic new music. Certainly, Dahlhaus's criteria are closer to the approach of this book in their more malleable form. The position of Lachenmann and Rihm as central figures in this volume inevitably influenced the selection of music and composers considered. Lachenmann functions as a focus for the idea of music as critical thought; Rihm's presence is a shaping force in the choice of composers and scores in which the idea of historical reflection is important.

Dahlhaus's other criterion for inclusion in his record series was citizenship of the Federal Republic of Germany. This rule had the effect of including Kagel and Henze (who was resident in Italy) but of excluding

Ligeti (who took Austrian citizenship) as well as Brian Ferneyhough and Luigi Nono. The remit is wider in this volume, extending to non-German composers who were resident in Germany (such as Ligeti, Ferneyhough and Rebecca Saunders), non-German composers who were a major presence in German music (such as Nono) and German composers who were not resident in Germany (such as Henze). Accordingly, the book is entitled *Music in Germany* rather than *German Music*, an approach that enables a focus on Germany not just as a nation, but also as a cultural centre. This stance has some affinity with the one adopted in the Deutscher Musikrat's more recent CD series, covering 1950–2000, which includes music that was either conceived in Germany or was significant for music in Germany. The idea of music in Germany also allows a distinction to be drawn between composers such as Rihm and Lachenmann, who are very much part of the German tradition, and those such as Ligeti, who engaged with it more obliquely. Although the range of this volume is wider than Dahlhaus's model envisaged, selectivity remains inevitable. Perhaps the most prominent omission from this account is Heiner Goebbels, on the grounds that he is as much a dramatist as a musician.

The emphasis of this book is mainly, but not exclusively, on music in West Germany and in the subsequently reunified Germany. The idea of new music is not one that flourished in East Germany, because during the Cold War new music was promoted as a progressive category in the West, partly in order to distinguish it from the 'other' Germany. Despite different institutional approaches to contemporary music in the two Germanies, musical communication did nonetheless take place across the border. The sections on Reiner Bredemeyer and Friedrich Goldmann in this study indicate that interest in historical reflection and postmodernism extended to both sides of the Berlin Wall.

The study adopts a number of approaches, including explanation of scores and aesthetic suppositions, scrutiny of historiographical dynamics and examination of institutional support. It places more emphasis on case-studies than on repertoire survey, and its focus is more hermeneutic than analytical. This blend of perspectives is in keeping with a central theme in the study: to understand how composers since 1968 have contributed to the larger cultural project of bringing the more abstract procedures of modernity into contact with heightened, self-reflexive modes of perception.

1 Contexts and institutions

Politics and ideas

Throughout the Cold War, Germany existed as two nations, albeit with shared pasts and with continuing shared interests.[1] The success of the post-war avant-garde coincided by and large with what became known as the 'economic miracle' in West Germany, which began in the late 1940s and extended through the 1950s boosted by the American-funded Marshall Plan. So the era of high modernism was one that benefited from an economic recovery that was keen, in a Cold-War environment, to promote culture as a marker of artistic freedom in a way that could be readily distinguished from a doctrine of socialist realism. Furthermore, a climate of dynamic reconstruction supported the way that the aesthetic innovations of the 1950s moved decisively away from the musical traditions that had been favoured by the National Socialists. West Germany experienced a small recession in 1966–7, a moment which roughly coincided with the end of the first phase of post-war modernism. Moreover, it was at this time that student protest movements started to challenge the prevailing values that had accompanied the post-war economic boom, leading to the unrest of 1968. In addition, the Soviet suppression of what became known as the Prague Spring ensured that 1968 was a significant year for East Germany as well.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the West German economy fell more in line with the other economies of western Europe, experiencing the oil crises of the 1970s, until it faced an economic challenge of a different sort in 1989. When it became evident late in this year that the Berlin Wall no longer fulfilled a purpose, with border crossings opening elsewhere in eastern Europe, the two Germanies quickly embarked upon a process of reunification. Power moved away from Bonn, which had been the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany, to Berlin, which itself underwent extensive renovation, not least so that the one-time centre of the city (which had been in the German Democratic Republic) could resume its previous function. Even though upgrading infrastructure in the former East Germany proved to be an expensive process, this cost did not prevent a unified Germany from retaining the position of the former Federal Republic as the most powerful economy in Europe at the turn of the millennium. Nevertheless, extensive reconstruction had the practical effect of sucking money away from the arts,

as subsidy became less of a priority at a time when culture ceased to be an emblem of western freedom.

In West Germany, as elsewhere in Europe and the USA, the protest movements of the 1960s conflated a number of issues: American military action in Vietnam, the emergence of a youth culture linked to rock music and associated with more permissive attitudes towards sexuality, frustration with discipline and authority, whether experienced in the work place or in the family, and dissatisfaction with the model of economic prosperity that had prevailed in the post-war years. What set apart the protests in West Germany from those in other places was the shadow of the National Socialist past and the presence of the other Germany. The upshot of the first of these circumstances was that a younger generation felt that its predecessors had failed to reflect sufficiently on the Nazi era amid the bustle of the post-war boom. The effect of the second was that left-wing activity was regarded with alarm in a country that was only separated from an actual communist model by the Berlin Wall.

It is generally considered that the shooting of the student Benno Ohnesorg in June 1967 by a plain-clothes police officer (who was later acquitted) at a demonstration against the state visit of the Shah of Iran (in which it appears Ohnesorg was only indirectly involved) was a turning point in the student movement. As Nick Thomas observes: 'Ohnesorg's shooting by a plain-clothes police officer prompted tens of thousands of students to become politically active for the first time.'[2] The second inflammatory act of violence took place in April 1968 against the charismatic student leader Rudi Dutschke, who was shot in the head outside the Berlin headquarters of the West German student protest movement (Sozialistischer Deutscher Studentbund). He survived the actual incident (initially he recuperated in the Italian home of Hans Werner Henze) but eventually died in 1979, having never fully recovered. He was assaulted not by the state but by an individual who had been strongly influenced by the demonic characterization of Dutschke in the right-wing *Bild-Zeitung* that was part of the Axel Springer press empire.[3] The attempted assassination led to widespread riots, with the offices of the Springer media a particular target, because it was felt that the right-wing press was culpable for the opinions espoused by Dutschke's assailant. It was against this background of distrust between activists and authorities that the terrorist movements of the 1970s arose, notably the Red Army Faction, with its stated aim of bringing down the state by means of violence. The death of Ohnesorg had enabled those sympathetic to this aspiration to claim that 'the state shot first'.[4]

'May 1968' is the shorthand for the well-known events that took place in Paris at that time, where student demonstrations, with the support of

workers, came close to toppling the government. Roughly speaking, that date also marked the end of an adherence to structuralism as a critical methodology in France and it triggered the subsequent turn to post-structuralism. Jacques Derrida's *Writing and Difference* appeared in 1967 and Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* was published in 1968. The radical journal *Tel Quel* offered a forum for emerging post-structuralists and associated itself directly with the social unrest of the late 1960s. However, though post-structuralists identified with the energy and the anti-authoritarian stance of the protest movements, they mistrusted the Marxist leanings of these groups, because they regarded such sympathies as emblematic of dubious power structures.

The age of structuralism and the era of post-war serialism, sometimes known as 'structuralism' in Germany, more or less coincided historically and shared comparable principles to the extent that both valued structure more highly than expressive subjectivity.[5] Serial composers placed great store on explaining how their techniques worked and overestimated the capacity of their systems to control detail, especially from a perceptual perspective. Equally, structuralist readings tended to stop at the point where the underlying structure had been revealed and thereby underestimated the potential for individual elements to unravel or obscure the controlling codes. That post-structuralism, which turned its attention to the information suppressed by structuralism, exerted only an indirect influence on German composers is in part explained by the fact that it did not receive a warm welcome in Germany from the broader field of humanities and social sciences. The presence of post-structuralism was, however, at least acknowledged by the leading social theorist Jürgen Habermas in his *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (published in 1985), which attempts to reveal the neo-conservative underpinnings of various post-structuralist theories, as part of his more general critique of postmodernism.[6] Despite underestimating the creative dynamics of post-structuralism, this book makes the valuable point that it is possible to conceive of rationality without recourse to the metaphysical systems that are attacked by post-structuralism.

A few of the composers discussed in the present study explicitly acknowledge post-structuralism: Wolfgang Rihm refers to Roland Barthes, Brian Ferneyhough refers to Gilles Deleuze, Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf and Rebecca Saunders refer to Jacques Derrida, and Nicolaus A. Huber refers to Jean Baudrillard. Beyond these cases, though, the parallels between post-structuralism and music in Germany at the time need to be teased out. One shared tendency is a concern with unpicking the conventions that sustain integrated value systems; and this quality was especially

characteristic of Mauricio Kagel, for whom the passively accepted customs of the bourgeois repertoire were of paramount interest. Dismantling bourgeois practices is also important to Helmut Lachenmann, who additionally demonstrates an interest in the sort of suppressed detail that is valued by post-structuralism, by drawing into the musical fabric the mechanisms of instrumental sound production that are marginalized by standard notions of beauty. Furthermore, Nicolaus A. Huber has consistently exposed the devices of musical expression to a comparable level of scrutiny.

In addition to unravelling accepted practices, post-structuralism also showed an interest in older manifestations of schizophrenia as a way of subverting the symbolic order, with the work of surrealist author and actor Antonin Artaud receiving much attention. Derrida's *Writing and Difference* devotes two essays to him, and Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972) features him prominently as a force that cannot be pinned down by a signifying regime, as does the sequel volume *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980).[7] This sense of the pre-symbolic is also central to Rihm's numerous engagements with Artaud. Beyond Artaud, though, it is Rihm's capacity to convey music as a sign system, and then to detach meanings and affects from established mechanisms, that reveals a thoroughly post-structuralist awareness of the mobility of signification.

The social transition of 1968 marked the start of a cultural shift that led to music in Germany becoming more historically reflective in the mid 1970s, as composers sought to reconnect with the past.[8] This transformation, which affected many already established composers, stemmed not only from a renewed interest in tradition, but also from a wider frustration with a blinkered belief in the progress of technology and knowledge. Kagel's film *Ludwig van* (1970) stands as an early example of this re-evaluation of the past, because although it is not especially sympathetic to cherished values, it does indicate that the institutionalization of Beethoven is a topic that can be encountered creatively.

The turning point of 1968 was productive not just for music, but for other arts too in investigating the Romantic legacy that the National Socialist era had made so problematic. The film-maker Werner Herzog (b. 1942), the artist Gerhard Richter (b. 1932) and the artist Anselm Kiefer (b. 1945) all explored images in the 1970s that could be related to the Romantic natural environment conveyed in the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich. Writing of West German culture in the 1970s, Andreas Huyssen comments: 'This search for history is of course also a search for cultural identities today, and as such it clearly points to the exhaustion of the tradition of the avant-garde, including postmodernism.'[9] Latter in the same article he qualifies the remark: 'At the same time, the tradition of avant-gardism, if stripped of

its universalizing and normative claims, leaves us with a precious heritage of artistic and literary materials, practices, and strategies which still inform many of today's most interesting writers and artists.'[10] This view is of relevance to the musical situation, for it embraces the turn to historical reflection and encourages the idea that the resurgence of modernism in the 1980s may well also be a form of rumination on the avant-garde as itself a tradition.

Darmstadt

The Darmstadt summer courses represented a microcosm of the events covered in this book – one that sometimes influenced what happened elsewhere, especially the international dimension of music in Germany, and one that sometimes reflected it. Since Darmstadt was situated in what became the American zone, the town authorities were able to obtain funding for music courses because the occupying power saw cultural regeneration as an important means of stabilizing Germany after the war. More specifically, Everett Helm, an officer of the Theatre and Music Branch of the American military, was instrumental in supporting the summer courses from his base in Wiesbaden.[11] From 1946 to 1948, the courses were held not in Darmstadt, but in a hunting lodge in nearby Kranichstein. They were directed by Wolfgang Steinecke, a cultural adviser to the city of Darmstadt, until his death in 1961 as a result of being hit by a vehicle in the street. Steinecke's successor in 1963 was Ernst Thomas, a music journalist from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, who was chosen by the town authorities and who ran the courses along the same lines as his predecessor until the crisis at the end of the 1960s forced him to reconsider tried and tested practices. In their early years, the courses did not endeavour to promote serial technique, although Steinecke aimed to support the music of Schoenberg, which had been banned by the Nazis. It was not until the 1950s that composers such as Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Luigi Nono and Bruno Maderna attempted to build on the serial legacy of Webern, with the support of Steinecke, as reflected in a symposium held during the 1953 course.[12]

Gianmario Borio and Hermann Danuser's large-scale study of the first phase of the Darmstadt courses places the end of this stage in 1966,[13] a date that coincides with Jürgen Habermas's argument (using Adorno's term) that it was in the mid 1960s that the spirit of aesthetic modernity began to age.[14] In the previous year, a symposium was held on form in the new music, a choice of topic which indicated that change was afoot because it implied some sort of rapprochement with the past. The symposium included lectures by

Theodor W. Adorno, Pierre Boulez, Earle Brown, Carl Dahlhaus, Roman Haubenstock-Ramati, Mauricio Kagel, György Ligeti and Rudolf Stephan. Except for the talks given by Boulez and Stephan, these contributions constituted the whole issue of *Darmstädter Beiträge zur Neuen Musik* 10 (1966).[15]

'Form in the New Music' was one of a number of lectures and presentations Adorno gave at the Darmstadt summer courses during his eight visits between 1950 and 1966.[16] The recently established summer courses had given him a chance to engage with new developments in post-war music on his return from the USA to Germany in 1949 (the year in which *Philosophy of New Music* appeared).[17] As a result, Adorno was able to exert some influence on current approaches to composition, and was also positioned to reconsider his aesthetic thinking in the light of recent developments in music. This two-way process is evident in 'Form in the New Music', which explores one of the main threads in Adorno's writings on music: musical form as an embodiment, and potential reconfiguration, of social antagonisms.

Adorno's presence at Darmstadt was defined mainly by two essays. The first of these, 'The Ageing of the New Music' (1955), did not stem from a Darmstadt lecture, but was principally concerned with the figures associated with the summer courses; they found a spokesman in the person of the musicologist Heinz-Klaus Metzger, who responded to the accusation of ageing by drawing attention to the essay's lack of specific examples and to its apparent lack of familiarity with recent developments.[18] And yet, Adorno's central claim proved to be rather tenacious: technical advances should derive from subjective need, as they did in the case of Schoenberg's innovations, not from abstract planning. This central point is repeated in 'Form in the New Music', where Adorno comments that 'the reduction of music to any supposedly bare material in fact stands in need of subjective legitimation'.[19]

The second of the essays that shaped Adorno's presence at Darmstadt was his 'Vers une musique informelle' (1961), which helped to repair some of the damage done to his standing in new music circles by 'The Ageing'.[20] So that compositional processes would avoid atrophied objectivity, 'Vers une musique informelle' famously envisages a practice in which form would arise, not from pre-established categories, but from the needs of the material. 'Form in the New Music' upholds this claim when it states: 'Integral form would emerge from the specific tendencies of all musical materials. With the liquidation of musical types, integral form can arise henceforth only from bottom to top, not the other way round.'[21] Hence music that generates form from the inner life of its material would avoid the restrictions not only of traditional schema, but also of rigid compositional systems.

Brown, Ligeti, Dahlhaus and Kagel talked more extensively about open form than Adorno at the 1965 symposium, and they agreed on one thing, at least: however open the form may be on paper, it is closed in performance, because the listener only hears one version at a time. As well as giving a paper, Dahlhaus responded to the other presentations in a closing statement. To Brown's suggestion that form can be created in performance, Dahlhaus offered the somewhat exasperated reply that the approach would erode the work-concept. He also resisted Kagel's attempt to shift the emphasis away from composed form to articulation on the part of the listener, by arguing that large-scale form cannot be heard unless it is composed. Although Adorno's notion of 'musique informelle' did not specifically envisage open form, Dahlhaus directed criticism at this idea too, on the basis that the approach overemphasized isolated details; a criticism which neglected to mention that Adorno envisaged small-scale events leading to larger forms.[22]

The symposium reflected back on the achievements and limitations of serialism; it engaged with what was then the contemporary preoccupation with open form; and it hinted at the future. Ligeti's article referred to Adorno's material theory of form, which argued that because formal processes such as 'themes, bridge passages and development' have qualities that are not entirely dependent on their position in the music, they can be used to signify traditional functions in unexpected contexts.[23] Coming from Ligeti in 1965, this was not an abstract point, given his subsequent propensity for referring to established music by means of untraditional techniques. Arguably, though, the material theory of form was of even more significance to compositions from the 1970s by Wolfgang Rihm, which achieved a kind of 'musique informelle' by retaining the memory of traditional elements, while detaching them from their associated organizing syntax.

By 1967, the open form idea discussed in the seminar of 1965 had reached new proportions with Stockhausen's composition seminar devoted to the collective composition *Ensemble*, an idea that was continued in his classes of 1968 with *Musik für ein Haus*. In 1969 Stockhausen's sessions were devoted to realizations of intuitive texts from his *Aus den sieben Tagen*, but this time they faced stiff competition because the same year also saw a performance of Lachenmann's *Air*, in which the composer's ideas about structure through timbre and instrumental energy were realized on an orchestral scale. The obvious polarization between the stances of the two composers no doubt aided the rise of Lachenmann at Darmstadt and increased a sense of frustration with the authority invested in Stockhausen at the institution, a sentiment which continued until he departed from the courses after making his contribution in 1974.