

penultimate sentence on p. 6 is syntactically deficient. Despite my reservations, this is a valuable book, although it is one that will probably enlighten musicologists about Lorca rather than Hispanists about Falla.

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DAVID RODRÍGUEZ-SOLAS, *Teatros nacionales republicanos: la Segunda República y el teatro clásico español*. Madrid: Iberoamericana/Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert. 2014. 237 pp.

The years that followed the advent of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931 offer a particularly rich source of material for students of the pervasive workings of political power in cultural production. After the repressive regime of the 1920s, which tended to encourage socially insulated artistic practice, the achievement of democratic freedoms inspired in most artists and intellectuals an enthusiastic spirit of civic cooperation in the project of national modernization. The new republic identified as an essential task for its own long-term survival the implantation of understanding of and respect for modern democratic principles among a populace still more than 30% illiterate, long accustomed to electoral chicanery and susceptible to the attraction of radical movements that systematically discounted the very viability of *petit-bourgeois* democracy. One key solution was to embark on an ambitious programme of national educational reform, and it is the instrumentalization of culture in general and theatre in particular in these years that is Rodríguez's main focus of analysis, a task approached through a wide-ranging examination of relevant contemporary sources.

Rodríguez's opening chapter establishes the new regime's educational policy-makers' deep-seated belief in the civically enlightening potential of culture, and moves on to examine the activities of the Misiones Pedagógicas, set up to give the rural populace access to the cultural goods and services (libraries and museums, as well as films, readings, lectures, music and theatre) deemed crucial to the modernizing project. His account is generally sympathetic to the regime's aims and needs, but does not dodge some thorny issues of altruistic service *versus* factional advantage. A cogently-argued subsection, for instance, demonstrates that the Education Ministry promoted a favourable concept of national history via the prescription of school textbooks that characterize the Second Republic as the culminating point of the historical evolution of the Spanish people. Patronizing assumptions are duly noted, such as taking the open-mouthed absorption of rustics during performances as proof of efficacious acculturation, or claiming that the forgotten cultural patrimony of 'el pueblo' is being restored to them via recitals of traditional songs and *romances*. The performance practices of two travelling theatre groups, set up by the Misiones Pedagógicas under the direction of young writers, the traditionally shoe-string Teatro del Pueblo, run by Alejandro Casona, and Lorca's better-endowed La Barraca, are each examined in detail in the second and third chapters. Detailed attention is paid to the criteria for selection and adaptation of classical theatre works and the textual amendments and stage effects incorporated in their performance, all geared to the twin aims of promoting popular-democratic principles and providing aesthetically and morally beneficial experiences.

The final two chapters return to the mainstream urban political arena to analyse the proposals for a Spanish national theatre and the productions mounted in 1935 to mark the centenary of the death of Lope de Vega. Announced in 1932, the former project, after protracted debate, approached implementation only in the highly polarized political environment of the mid 1930s, and was blocked in 1935 by the now conservative-republican education minister and the *lerrouxista* Madrid administration. The Lope centenary became something of a competition, with a performance in the Retiro of *La dama boba* organized by the theatre progressives (Cipriano Rivas Cherif, Margarita Xirgu, Lorca) in contrast to the

more traditionally commemorative productions mounted in various city plazas by the Madrid Ayuntamiento, while, on the far Right, Acción Española proclaimed Lope's monarchist-catholic credentials.

The choice of general theoretical orientation in the case of particular topics (for example, Loren Kruger for national theatre, Pierre Nora for commemorative practices and Anthony D. Smith for concepts of national history) facilitates useful conceptualizations. On the other hand, the persistent applications of Bourdieuan theory seem rather less helpful. The complexly interrelated concepts (field, cultural capital, *doxa*/orthodoxy, [dis]interest, etc.) subsumed under the term *habitus*, primarily designed to address matters of agency and structure in social theory, do not significantly enhance the explanatory scope of an analysis that is already perfectly coherent on a more straightforward level of politically motivated educational and artistic strategies (that does not, moreover, address epochal issues of class and power in a systematic way). This is a minor reservation, however; overall, this book is likely to be welcomed by theatre specialists and non-specialists alike, both for the inherent interest of its well-researched source materials (including photographs) and the care with which they are presented and analysed.

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DANIELA OMLOR, *Jorge Semprún: Memory's Long Voyage*. Oxford: Peter Lang. 2014. 232 pp.

This book, which grew out of Daniela Omlor's PhD dissertation at the University of St Andrews, is the first monograph in English about Jorge Semprún (1923–2011), and thus fills a hitherto gaping void in the English-language reception of this significant writer, politician, militant and witness of the twentieth century. While, as the rich and up-to-date bibliography attests, there are numerous studies that analyse various aspects of Semprún's *oeuvre*, this book offers a comprehensive and thorough picture by covering almost all of Semprún's works, including two films—though one might consider that the omission of *Montand: la vie continue* may have been an oversight given that it also contains many autobiographical elements and discusses at length the making of the film *L'Aveu*, both of which are important to Omlor in this study. The exclusion of some other works seems more appropriate.

While the genre of Semprún's books is difficult to identify, as he does not fit neatly into any canon, most of his writings might in some way qualify as testimonies and autofiction, as all are closely related to the author's life. However, Omlor refrains from offering a chronological analysis, or focusing on biographical data: she examines Semprún's books as literary texts, supplying the referential material when necessary. Yet, a biographical development may still be traced as the themes addressed by Semprún focus on his childhood, his mother, the concentration camps and politics—especially the Communist party—and the life of a militant. But this book is not a biography, and apart from the necessary factual details presents, instead, a profound, literary critical and philosophical reading of the various texts.

The overarching theme of Semprún's *oeuvre* is memory, and the book organizes its structure along this unifying principle, analysing Semprún's main themes from the perspective of memory, testimony and identity. While focusing on the metamorphoses of his concentration camp experiences in the light of changes in the author's political conviction and personality, Omlor also gives equal importance to Semprún's description of his political experiences, as well as the search for the origin of his interest in memory, which the author finds in exile at an early age. Although Semprún offers an almost idyllic view of his childhood, imbued with painful nostalgia, this nostalgic idyll is overshadowed by—and therefore can only be appreciated in—the context of exile and the foreboding catastrophe. Following an analysis of the different stages of Semprún's recollections of the concentration