

nowhere near this division, and I insist that it takes more than theory to establish this conception. Such out-of-focus statements, together with several other hasty conclusions make this section not exactly the last word in scientific precision.

Nevertheless the book is invaluable, something that has long been needed. An extensive reference list at the end

helps make it the perfect introduction to the study of comparative music. Here Dr. Sachs's method, more fluid and narrative than in his *Geist und Werden der Musik-instrumente*, is well attuned to the temperament of this country, and will help greatly in promoting the book as a work of general interest.

Colin McPhee

CHARTING THE COURSE OF WESTERN MUSIC

LA *Rosa de los Vientos en la Musica Europea*,* by Adolfo Salazar, (Ediciones de la O.S.M., Mexico, 1940) is a rapid survey of Western music from prehistory to our day, with particular and insistent reference to the meshed relationships between conditions of society and artistic styles. Salazar defines his terms in two swift introductory chapters, and then deploys his chief argument under five headings: *Monody*, *Polyphony*, *The Baroque*, *Romanticism*, and *The Present Epoch*. As a composer, an internationally trained musicologist, and a sharp and witty writer, he is equipped as few men can be to produce exactly this book, which has numerous important virtues and only one major flaw.

First we are led by a true illuminator through the mazes of Oriental and early Christian monody. We are enabled to understand with pleasurable clarity the psychological implications of homophonic chant, the magical and ritualistic significance (as distinct from artistic meaning in the modern Western sense) of *raga* and *makamath*. We learn how and why so essentially Eastern a concept of music as monody came to endure in the Church, and why and how many-voiced music grew up outside it, in gathering

places of the commonality and the halls of the nobles. Here, as everywhere, Salazar is demonstrating the role of past eras in creating the musical styles that followed them down to our own day. He is never cataloguing for a musical museum, but always searching out the provenance of still-living ideas.

The gradual ground-shift from monody to polyphony (which musical style and era Mr. Salazar rather takes for granted than explains) leads gradually to the period called baroque. Here we are given an impressive survey of the origins of opera, which is called "the first, the greatest and most fecund creation of the baroque in the field of music." What makes the entire book valuable is here particularly rich – the materials by which Mr. Salazar links opera to all baroque manifestations, the baroque itself to geography, history, economics, religion, and isolated upflamings of individual genius.

More than one third of the work is devoted to romanticism, under which heading Salazar includes not only what is usually called "romantic" – Chopin, Schumann, and their contemporaries – but also most of the music commonly called "classic," nearly all music, in fact,

*A "rose of the winds" is a mariner's compass; the title symbolizes historic fluctuations of style in Western music.

between the death of Handel and that of Liszt. He derives both the form and the manner of romantic music from the pseudo-Hellenic opera and classic symphony as both were influenced by the forces generating the French Revolution. This section of his book, subdivided into *The Scene*, *The Large Forms*, and *The Small Forms*, is a brilliant essay that might well stand by itself.

It would be easy, in addition to admiring him, to agree with Salazar completely if he stopped at the end of the romantic period. He has brilliantly prepared the way for contemporary music, dug deep and with success for its sources and tools. But the final thirty-seven pages, dealing summarily with the actual accomplishments of contemporary composers (and contemporaries of any sort) are bitter and unfair, seem autobiographical – the result of some personal tragedy, perhaps – rather than critical. In isolated passages, particularly of characterization, he is still excellent. I translate two brief examples. Of Ravel: "All is refined, sharp, mordant, in that talent . . . where the desire for perfection and clear exactness produces a kind of classic frigidity, cutting and incisive as a needle of ice, and like it perfect in form, clean in profile – and given to melting when the sentimental temperature rises." And of Stravinsky: "This idea of defining strongly architectural forms in which the most audacious treatment of dissonance will not dissolve the sensation of a fundamental tonality seems to have been – in the midst of a multitude of esthetic points of view – the constant

desire of Igor Stravinsky."

But in searching for a common denominator to define our own era stylistically, Salazar, despite protests that he is classifying rather than judging, selects *bluff* (he uses this English word, which has no exact Spanish equivalent)! Defining *bluff* as the "utilization in art of effects that fall outside the esthetic area," he does himself and contemporary music the injustice of ceasing to fit reasonable explanations to facts and crushing facts to the pattern of a one-word theory. The result, though he would disown the relation, is that his most theory-ridden sentences – and the whole of his summation – might have come from the German propaganda office. His brief last chapter is not merely anticlimactic: it is a catastrophe.

This book is the first of the "Ediciones de la O.S.M., Mexico." That is, it was published by the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, and indicates another of the fruitful routes which Carlos Chavez' energy marks out for itself. (Chavez admires the book, but does not underwrite it). Has any other concert-giving body published books? Perhaps. But not, we may be certain, handsomer or better printed than this one (which, unhappily lacks an index and insists on the old, exploded idea of Haydn's Croat origin), or books likelier to enter the living stream of thought on music. Mexico is to be congratulated on this new series of books, on Chavez, and – he is living there in exile from his native Spain – on Adolfo Salazar.

Herbert Weinstock