The 60th anniversary edition of Style and Idea, published by the University of California Press, offers interested readers an introduction to the world according to Arnold Schoenberg. In 559 pages—including sources and notes, appendixes and an index—the volume presents a broad spectrum of Schoenberg’s literary work such as lectures, essays and studies. As he envisioned the current edition as the first part of a larger series, he summarized his own selection of texts under the collective term “Minor Writings and Manuscripts”. Hence, the presented list of texts is not complete, and rather an overture, leading the audience into Schoenberg’s complex views in which he combines musical ideas with reflections on social, political, and cultural concepts and realities.

The writings in the volume clearly exemplify Schoenberg’s differentiation between the categories of “style” on the one hand, and “idea” on the other, — concepts Schoenberg used

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1 Joseph Auner writes in the foreword of the new edition that Schoenberg envisioned the original Style and Idea as the first of a five-or six-volume edition of his writings: the edition now under way at the Arnold Schoenberg Center is projected to span twenty-four volumes. Arnold Schoenberg, Style and Idea (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010): 4.

2 Auner notes in the foreword to the present edition: “The substantial volume you are holding in your hand represents just a small portion of writings that include several books on music theory and composition, literary works, and many published and unpublished essays on a vast range of topics.” (Ibid.), 4.
to explain his considerations of art as a result of logical reflection. The dichotomy between style and idea also served as a model to explain the state of the world and life.

In general, the edition allows a non-German-speaking audience to experience the close interplay between Schoenberg’s philosophical ideas and his perspective on concepts of the musical thought and performance practice. These documents are significant primary sources for researchers investigating all areas concerning Arnold Schoenberg: his life, his pedagogical approach, works, interpretation and the theoretical basis of new music.

As the edition includes over a hundred of Schoenberg’s literary writings, Stein separates the articles into various categories, which allows the reader and researcher to preselect respective topics. In total, the volume divides Schoenberg’s writings into ten parts, each one titled by headers which designate common thematic areas. Stein notes: “The editor, confronted by an incredible abundance and diversity of material, has elected to arrange Schoenberg’s articles into various categories, which, though not entirely exclusive of one another, strive to examine each of his main interests and field of activities.” Such areas of interest are manifested in rubrics which separate musical ideas from philosophical and political writings, and also distinguish between Schoenberg’s educational concepts and self-evaluation. Other parts bring together articles on musical criticism and considerations of the past. A chronological organization of the articles allows readers to explore Schoenberg’s progress as an artist and thinker and highlights the development of his ideas. For example, Part VIII, on teaching, includes articles written in the years from 1911 to 1950 and thus provides insight into Schoenberg’s experiences of music education both in Europe and in his exile years abroad.

While most categories include about one to ten articles, the parts devoted to Schoenberg’s writings on music theory and composers are the longest. Part VII (Performance and Notation) is the volume’s most extensive category. Numerous musical examples accompany the respective parts concerned with music theory. The volume closes with detailed information about each article’s sources (“Sources and Notes”). Appendix One organizes the writings chronologically, and Appendix Two details the original language of the articles (“Original German and English Articles and English Translations, listed alphabetically.”) The volume includes some of the most discussed texts by Schoenberg, such as “The Relationship to the Text” written in 1911, in which Schoenberg integrates the discussion of the music, text, form and subject into the general mindset of German Expressionism.

Like the 1985 edition, the present book does not include further excerpts from Schoenberg’s rich literary work. This sixtieth anniversary edition basically reprints the 1975

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3 Ibid., 14.

version, adding only a foreword written by Joseph Auner to the prefaces by editor Leonard Stein (written in 1971) and the translator Leo Black, both of which appeared in the same form in the 1975 version.\textsuperscript{5}

Since Schoenberg expressed his thoughts in both German and, during his exile in Los Angeles, English, the bilingual Schoenberg researcher might be interested in reading the German and the English editions in parallel to gain an authentic idea of Schoenberg’s original linguistic expression. One will realize with astonishment that \textit{Style and Idea} is not \textit{Stil und Gedanke} (German title). Not only is the sheer size of the German edition of 1985 much different from the English version—that German version is only 240 pages long—but the structure also varies in the respective editions.\textsuperscript{6} Schoenberg’s original purpose of \textit{Style and Idea} as the first volume of a series, and his summary of some essential essays under the header “Style and Idea,” resulted in different interpretations by the editors in Germany and North America. While the German version follows Schoenberg’s separation between “Stil und Gedanke” and “Gesammelte Werke” (collected works), the North American edition apparently did not perceive the volume as two independent parts and presents the articles in a new order. Hence, the newest German edition of \textit{Stil und Gedanke} of 1985 consists only of the first part of Arnold Schoenberg’s \textit{Gesammelte Werke} of 1975, while \textit{Style and Idea} represents a fusion between the two original parts.\textsuperscript{7} Such factors suggest the present anniversary edition of 2010 is not entirely a primary source but the result of interpretations of Schoenberg’s works affected by differences in cultural environment and time.

Two main factors are essentially involved in the process of a cross-cultural transformation: the structural approach and the treatment of language. Regarding the edition’s overall appearance, the German version of 1975 apparently followed Schoenberg’s aim to divide the writings into three parts entitled “Style and Idea,” “Essays on Music,” and “Appendix”. (I “Stil und Gedanke,” II “Aufsätze zur Musik,” and “Anhang”), while in 1992, the German editors limited their new edition to the articles that Schoenberg himself titled “Stil und Gedanke” —thus establishing the first part as an independent volume in 1992, with no additional forewords, while the editors of the North American edition even deleted

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6}Arnold Schönberg, \textit{Stil und Gedanke. Aufsätze zur Musik}, Ivan Vojtek ed. (Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer, 1992).
\end{itemize}
Schoenberg's own dedication from the volume.\textsuperscript{8} Such a cut is incomprehensible, as the dedication allows us to understand that Schoenberg’s ideas were imbedded in a complex European aesthetic environment, and within that community, diverse artists used similar concepts to express the same ideas, e.g. Alfred Loos in architecture and Karl Kraus in language critique.

The separation into various parts by Stein deconstructs Schoenberg's own organization and is a problematic approach. By reconstructing it this way, Stein alludes that Schoenberg's fragmental writings are in themselves distinct, and therefore, neglects the writing’s holistic nature that avoids the distinction between musical matters and the world.\textsuperscript{9} Furthermore, the recent North American edition presents a questionable mix of the essays that Schoenberg himself summarized in the category “Style and Idea,” and which he started with the important essay “The Relationship to the Text”—a piece that outlines an essential position for Schoenberg and seems to provide the reader with a foreword that introduces the composer's general considerations of the written word.\textsuperscript{10}

A significant problem of the present edition is caused by a misrepresentation of Schoenberg as a bilingual writer, who appears as “translated” into the language of the American audience. The edition only provides information about the original language of the writings in Appendix 2. Interestingly, the German version also fails to give such references directly within the respective writings. In summary, the German and North American editions are quite different from each other, a fact that complicates the researcher’s work. Since even the spelling of “Schoenberg” differs between both editions (the German uses the umlaut and refers to Schoenberg as “Schnöberg”), the reader might doubt whether the writings presented in the book were indeed created by the same person.


\textsuperscript{9}The editors of \textit{The Musical Idea} notes in the book’s preface: “Our primary concern is to project Schoenberg’s passion for the whole – a particularly kind of a whole. We believe that Schoenberg’s thought cannot be understood without understanding the his organic bent of mind.” “Arnold Schoenberg, \textit{The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation}, ed. Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (New York: Columbia University Press 1995), xviii.”

\textsuperscript{10}The editors of the German edition of 1975 drew attention to a manipulation of Schoenberg’s organization: “Es soll keineswegs verheimlicht werden, dass der Versuch, eine von Schönberg angedeutete Ordnung seiner Schriften zu rekonstruieren, immer ein Wagnis einschliesst, dass er Fragen offenlässt, Anstoss zur Diskussion gibt.” (Schnitt, \textit{Stil und Gedanke}, (1975), 479.

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Not only do the translation procedures call into question the credibility of the present edition as a primary source, the editorial comments and stylistic corrections also can not be distinguished from Schoenberg’s own words. Such situations demand a critical reflection on the authenticity of the text. The translator’s intention to make “the English version flow and to prevent it seeming fussy” is an attempt which at times sacrifices Schoenberg’s authentic voice. In general, translators and editors alike perceived a need to correct Schoenberg’s English. The English publisher of the Arnold Schoenberg Letters notes “it would have been needlessly pedantic to leave, in the interest of ‘authenticity,’ Schoenberg’s spelling and punctuation uncorrected, or not to adjust the sense of a sentence when it was clear that his intention was defeated by an imperfect command of the language.” Such interventions are questionable as they prevent a capturing of Schoenberg’s original tone and personality, which was characterized by his individual German style. Nuria Schoenberg-Nono suggests a promising solution out of the translation dilemma in Arnold Schoenberg Self-Portrait, when she notes: “Ideally, the German originals should be published next to the translations to avoid losing the puns, paradoxes, and the typically Austrian (often sardonic) humor of many of the passages.” The German edition of 1992 also addresses issues which arise out of the translator’s work.

Interestingly, Schoenberg’s request to preserve his unique “German” tone in the translation corresponds to the aims of very recent translation theorists. The very current discussion, led by Lawrence Venuti, calls for a foreignization of translation by preserving the original tone, and problematizes translations that manipulate cultural identifiers by a careless processing of meaning into the respective contexts of the target language—a process of which


Schoenberg was apparently well aware, as he expresses his concerns regarding the publication of the *Harmonielehre* in English: “Is there any means of guaranteeing the public’s (i.e. 'art-lovers', as also the author's) right to a good translation on a level with the original literary work? I have the following practical examples in mind: I myself expect to have to let my *Harmonielehre* be translated into English (…) without being in a position to check the translations as thoroughly as is necessary.(…) [H]ow wrong it is to let a translator have a monopoly, perhaps for an eternity (!!).”

Apparently, Schoenberg was aware of the tendencies of modifying translations whose first goal is to make texts flow in different cultural contexts. Surprisingly, the translation issues Schoenberg raised frequently were never reconsidered by Leonard Stein for *Style and Idea*. The sixtieth anniversary edition uses the same translation as the older versions, which were written by Leo Black in 1975 —long before translation studies emerged as an independent discipline. Today, translation researchers such as Lawrence Venuti draw attention to the need to preserve cultural identities. Venuti’s prominent publication, *The Translator’s Invisibility*, calls for translations which establish the translator as a voice in her or his own right, a second instance beside the author’s position.

Fortunately, the Philosophical Library also printed a new edition of this text which might be a promising alternative to Stein’s version of *Style and Idea*. The anniversary edition by the Philosophical Library published in 2010, has reprinted the early 1950 version in its exact entirety. Moreover, the translations by Schoenberg’s student Dika Newlin were read and corrected by the composer himself. Newlin aims to “adhere as literally to the original style as English usage allows. Thus there should be a certain consistency of expression between these and the later essays which were written in English but which still bear the earmarks of Schönberg’s individual German style.”

In conclusion, it is not quite clear whether the design of the 2010 Stein edition of *Style and Idea* is able to grasp the complexity of the composer’s thought. The decision to separate the articles into parts reminds one of sign posts positioned by Stein who decides in an authoritarian manner *a priori* what the respective writing really is about and thus influences the reader’s choice. A similar problem lies in translations that fail to preserve Schoenberg’s original tone. When reading the texts included in *Style and Idea*, one often experiences Schoenberg’s struggle with the conventions of musical composing and also his critique of an audience unwilling to engage intellectually with his art in order to grasp the very essence of music. Investigating Stein’s reprint by looking at the past versions, as well as the German editions, it is to be assumed readers still prefer to approach Schoenberg in a comprehensible way, or, that editors do not believe in their reader’s ability to deal with Schoenberg’s literary oeuvre independently. The format of Stein’s edition allows a convenient access to

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Schoenberg’s collected writings—an intent that, at first glance, might serve to boost clarity and comprehensibility, but that hinders a deep understanding of Schoenberg’s thoughts. It is rather doubtful if such an easy way will provide deep insights into Schoenberg’s ideas, or if Stein’s version only reflects on Schoenberg’s style. It may be the task of future editions to imbed Schoenberg’s thoughts in their original contexts and thus, allow for a holistic experience of his writings.

For Further Reading:

Primary Sources:


Secondary Sources:


