

Seminar series of the Center for Research and Practice in Cultural Continuity

“Decolonizing approaches to studying history and linguistic-cultural heritage. Methods, tools, results and challenges”



Jannick Piskorski

Universität Hamburg
DECOLONIZE EASTERN EUROPE!

Rubinstein in Israel – Said in Exile

In this presentation I will discuss the instrumentalisation of western music in documentary films related to the Israel-Palestine conflict. In that process, I will discuss Arthur Rubinstein’s interpretation of Chopin’s famous Polonaise op. 53 (1842). Rubinstein’s thesis is that Israel’s victory in the Israel-Arab War of 1967 resonates in Chopin’s Polonaise, which he interprets in terms of Russian imperial rule over Poland. Through the analysis of the film “Arthur Rubinstein – The Love of Life” (1969), I will demonstrate, in how far Rubinstein’s uses a potentially anti-imperial piece for a legitimation of Israel’s politics in Palestine, that was frequently described as colonial (Edward Said, 1979; Judith Butler, 2012).

The BBC production “Exiles: Edward Said” (1988) is the second film analysed in my presentation. The film articulates Edward Said’s reflection on exile. I interpret Said’s pianistic performance of Robert Schumann’s Romanze op. 28 No. 2 (1839) as an expression of domestic music, that was played at private homes or at social gatherings without public access in 19th and 20th century Europe (and US). I will argue, that the analysed films demonstrate the use of theoretically unpolitical music as a highly political object, that can’t be analysed sufficiently without the reflection of its historical and ideological context.

DATE: JUNE 12, 16:45 (CET), Room 9, Dobra 72, Warsaw

To join the seminar online, please register before 3 PM on the seminar day at crp@al.uw.edu.pl



Center for Research and Practice
in Cultural Continuity



UNIWERSYTET
WARSZAWSKI