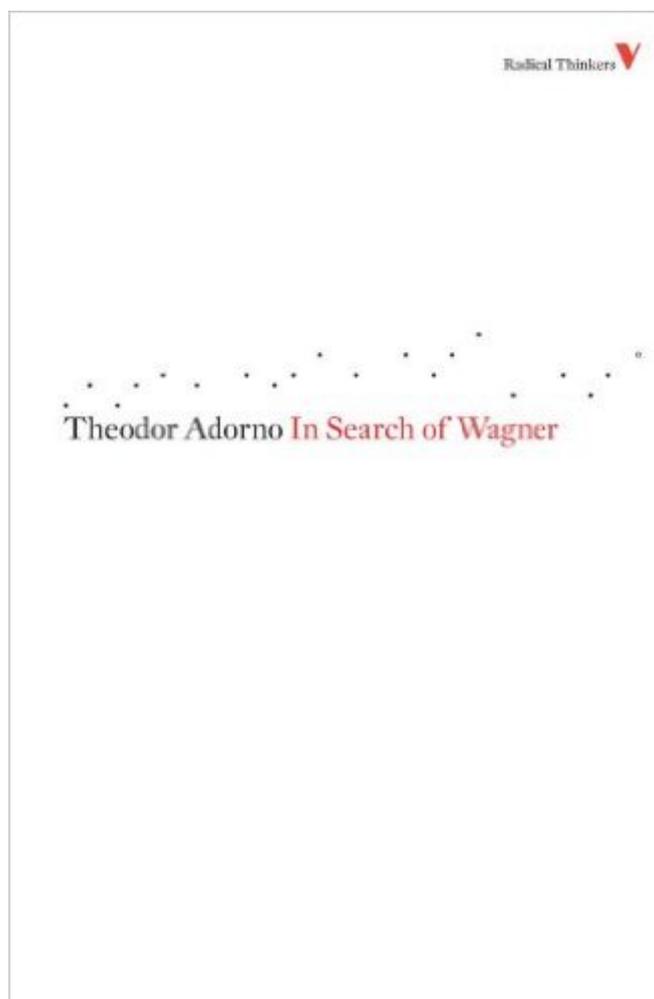


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In Search Of Wagner (Radical Thinkers)



Synopsis

Written in exile from Germany, this potent study of Europe's most controversial composer explodes the frontiers of musical and cultural analysis. Measuring key elements of Wagner's oeuvre with patent musical dexterity, Adorno sheds light on a nineteenth-century bourgeois figure whose operas betray the social gestures and high-culture fantasies that helped plant the seeds of the modern Culture Industry. A foreword by Slavoj Žižek situates Adorno's reflections within present debates over Wagner's anti-Semitism and the moral status of his work, proving why this book remains one of the most important character studies of the twentieth century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Adorno wrote this as a response to the growing inflated enthusiasm of Wagner's Operas during the War Years, with the darkest pages of Europa. It was inevitable the Third Reich was to seize upon these works primarily the more facile operas as 'Die Meistersinger', 'Lohengrin', and leave the more controversial RING to languish for history to ponder. Adorno always had a nerve-ending unbalanced by Wagner's penchant for the arbitrary largesse, the amplitude, the inflated-ness of his creative procedures, the "Gesamtkunstwerk", that while addressing the problems of all artistic genres resolved none of them in the end. Wagner's pathological ways of endowing characters and dramatic situations as sometimes reflections of things he himself had experienced was not the way to proceed in art, but skewed imagery that worked nonetheless in certain respects like his trip to the

hellish London Docks as a metaphor for the oppressive beneath the earth Nibelungen-land. His inconsistency of character building as the power of the gods being determined by Wotan's Security Agreements with himself. Well this conceit is what had preserved the aristocracy in Europa, again as a metaphor in the "Ring". Poor Brunnhilde, once a god for example becomes a mortal, but it was necessary for her to have to bring the destruction of the gods. (None of her Sister Walkure helped) Adorno utilized the "fetish" concept from Marx his entire life it was a triggering point for determining what had remained "Art" for him and what had transgressed into the vagaries of whatever the market had necessitated as popular culture, detective film noirs jazz and the post-war avant-garde.

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