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The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture (review)

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and practices. They conducted their service in Ge'ez (classical Ethiopic). Since Ethiopia had an indigenous Orthodox Christian Church, mid-nineteenth-century Christian missionaries targeted the Beta Israel community. As a counter-missionary movement, the Alliance Israélite Universelle sent its own missionaries to Ethiopia. They established schools for Beta Israel, supported the study of young men from the Beta Israel in Europe and later in Israel, and introduced Western Jewish Hebrew texts and music into Beta Israel liturgical practice. The last chapter of Beta Israel history came at the end of the twentieth century, as famine forced the population of Ethiopia to cross to the Sudan, and Israel airlifted the Beta Israel community to settle it in Israel. The last evacuation was called Operation Solomon, which, as Shelemey observes, ironically commemorated the community's Solomonic origins as it marked the end of the Beta Israel community in Ethiopia (p. 119). Because in their new environment the Solomonic myth that tied the community to an Ethiopian elite threatened "to separate them from their fellow Jews in Israel," "by the early 1990s Ethiopian Jews in Israel 'almost unanimously' rejected any connection to the tradition of Solomon and Sheba" (p. 119). Identification with Jews saved the lives of the Beta Israel community, even if the price they had to pay was the disappearance of their original tradition. This was another type of modern assimilation, a less tragic one than Charlotte Salomon's, whose final work *Leben? oder Theater?*, a series of paintings, texts and melodies recalled from the canon of Western classical music, presents, as Steinberg argues, "the most fundamental historical question about the life and claims of German (including German Jewish) culture" (p. 150).

Jewish Musical Modernism, Old and New ends with notes accompanying a compact disc of Jewish cabaret songs by the New Budapest Orpheum Society, a group that takes its name (Orpheum Society) from the most famous Jewish cabaret troupe of fin-de-siècle Vienna. The recording includes settings of songs by composers such as Aaron Copland, Darius Milhaud, and Kurt Weill, Jewish sheet music (including the famous "Wiener Fiakerlied" by Gustav Pick), a selection of German cabaret songs (including two of Arnold Schoenberg's *Brett-*

Lieder), Hanns Eisler's settings of texts by Kurt Tucholsky and Bertold Brecht, and excerpts from Eisler and Brecht's *Hollywooder Liederbuch*. It is a fitting conclusion, since, as Bolhman points out, the tradition of parody in the Jewish cabaret intensified expression of self-identity. Modernism thus also brought with it an increased search for self-definition in various fields of Jewish culture. The present collection of essays is yet another attempt to understand this paradoxical cultural phenomenon, which, by nature, resists conceptualization. For despite the Nazis' efforts to unify Jewry in its destruction, Jewish culture, as the variety of essays in *Jewish Musical Modernism, Old and New* demonstrate, exhibited a remarkable diversity.

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The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture. By Tina Frühauf. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. [x, 284 p. ISBN 9780195337068. \$74.] Music examples, illustrations, tables, work lists, bibliography, index.

The organ is an instrument that many listeners automatically associate with the Christian liturgy, by virtue of the religious nature of much of its repertoire and its integration into the architecture of European and American churches and cathedrals. From the early nineteenth century, however, the organ was incorporated into German Jewish religious practices as well. Jewish composers and keyboardists became involved in composing for and performing the organ in the context of Jewish religious and cultural activities, and organs were built in some of Europe's major synagogues, including the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Straße in Berlin and the Great Synagogue in Budapest. An important and controversial tool of the religious Reform movement after the start of the Jewish Enlightenment, the organ became the focus of considerable religious policy debate and Jewish liturgical composition. Tina Frühauf's new book, *The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture*, a translated and revised version of her *Orgel und Orgelmusik in deutsch-jüdischer Kultur* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2005), offers an original and

authoritative account of the history of the organ and its repertoire in German Jewish culture.

The Organ and Its Music focuses primarily on the period from 1810, the year of the first known performance of an organ in a German synagogue, the Jacobstempel in Seesen, Westphalia, to November 1938, when rioters destroyed nearly all Central European synagogue organs in the *Kristallnacht* attacks. In chapter 1, Frühauf addresses the nineteenth- and twentieth-century preoccupation with defining the term "Jewish music," and the considerable debate and disagreement surrounding this issue. Frühauf presents the conflicting approaches of the composer Arno Nadel, the ethnographer Abraham Idelsohn, and other prominent Jewish cultural figures of the early twentieth century who hoped that defining "Jewish music" would shed greater light on the contemporary state of Jewish identity, and help to guide future musical activities. The National Socialists, meanwhile, also attempted to classify "Jewish music," in order to eradicate art in this style. As Frühauf concludes, the term "Jewish music" during this time "was both ideologized and individualized within the search for a new and clearly defined Jewish identity in music . . . as that identity continually changed" (p. 7). Frühauf thus uses the term in her book "merely as a linguistic and conceptual formula," understanding that it cannot be defined—that, in fact, "an explicitly Jewish music cannot exist" (p. 8).

Much of the initial debate about the proper role of the organ in German Jewish culture resulted from its centrality in the practice of Christianity. The organ was first officially permitted in Christian church worship in the middle of the fifteenth century, and by the late Middle Ages its use in this context was sufficiently widespread that the instrument was considered by many to be intrinsically linked to Christianity. Chapter 2 offers a survey of the uses of the organ in Jewish communities prior to the main period of the book's focus. Frühauf draws on extensive archival research in a variety of languages and countries, finding evidence of the early Jewish uses of the organ in literary and iconographic sources. She identifies a forerunner to the organ in Jewish prayer in the practice of the *meshorerim*, singers who accompanied the *hazzan* (cantor) during religious services.

Because the use of musical instruments was often forbidden in the synagogue, larger groups of *meshorerim* were sometimes hired to imitate the sounds of wind and string instruments behind the intoning of the *hazzan*. After the use of instruments in the synagogue subsequently became permitted, the organ would in many places take over the accompaniment role of the *meshorerim*.

The *Haskalah*, the eighteenth-century Jewish Enlightenment, initiated the religious developments that led to the incorporation of the organ into synagogue worship. In chapter 3 Frühauf discusses the important place of the organ in the Jewish Reform movement, which aimed at modernizing and revivifying religious practice through such changes as abbreviating the liturgy, introducing sermon-like lectures and, in many cases, incorporating choral and congregational singing and the organ into the service. As the Orthodox movement rose in reaction to the changes devised by Reform, the organ, according to Frühauf, became a symbol of their separation. Israel Jacobson was the first proponent of Reform to bring the organ into the Jewish service, commissioning an instrument in the Jacobstempel, the synagogue associated with the educational institution he founded under the inspiration of the ideals of the *Haskalah*. Frühauf tracks the introduction of organs into Reform Jewish services in German-speaking areas of Europe and elsewhere, and the often fierce published discourse that ensued. The debate over the use of the organ was characterized by contrasting views on a number of questions, including whether instrumental music should have a place in the synagogue; whether the organ was a Christian instrument; whether there was evidence that the organ had an ancient historical role in Jewish tradition; and whether organ playing qualified as work, which Jews are forbidden by religious law from performing on the Sabbath. Frühauf's account of the synagogue organ's development and controversy reveals a compelling new dimension to the history of changing Jewish identities and practices during the development of Reform Judaism from the *Haskalah* to *Kristallnacht*.

Chapter 3 continues with a detailed exploration of the technical and architectural aspects of synagogue organs, and explores these in the context of contemporary organ

building in Europe outside of Jewish tradition. Synagogue organs were used to accompany choral, congregational, and cantorial singing, but over time they increasingly took on the function of solo instruments as well; and in order to permit this, from the 1870s many synagogues commissioned larger organs capable of greater sonic variety. Frühauf enriches her study with a set of three detailed appendices included on a website administered by Oxford University Press that accompanies the book. These appendices provide comprehensive lists of organs and reed organs in European synagogues, including the dates and locations of their construction, dispositions when known, and bibliographic information of sources that mention these instruments, as well as reproductions of a number of images of organ architecture.

Following chapter 3 is an "Intermezzo" about the musicians hired to perform on synagogue organs. Central to this history was the lasting debate regarding whether organ playing qualified as work, the conflicting interpretations of which had an impact on views regarding the use of the organ on Sabbath, and the question of hiring Jewish or non-Jewish organists. Chapter 4 examines the development of organ repertoire in Jewish culture, looking both at functional pieces composed for specific parts of the religious service, and at solo works based on themes appropriated from Jewish tradition. Frühauf provides representative case study analyses of works throughout the history of the repertoire, beginning with the early *Introduction zur Thodenfeier*. This work appeared in an 1820 chorale book and was intended for the Jewish funeral service, but does not draw on Jewish traditional music; it thus represents the basis of early works for synagogue organ on the models provided in the Christian tradition.

Analyses of works in later styles focus on repertoire incorporating themes from Jewish liturgical and folk music, by composers including Moritz Deutsch, Louis Lewandowski, and Heinrich Schalit. The chapter continues with a study of organ music and Jewish identity under the National Socialists in the 1930s, with particular attention to the activities of the Jüdischer Kulturbund, and the contrasting organ works of Nadel, Siegfried Würzburger, and

Hans Samuel. Frühauf's strong analyses reveal the techniques these composers devised in their attempts to create a Jewish idiom for organ music, such as the appropriation of prayer melodies and biblical cantillation tropes as the foundation blocks for new compositions that also exhibited approaches to form and sonority adopted from contemporary practices in Western art music. The compelling insights in these analyses might make interested readers wish for more frequent and detailed music examples: with many of these works unknown to readers and scores difficult to find, accounts of musical structures call for visual aids. Frühauf's case studies will play a significant role in bringing these important composers and their stylistic innovations to readers' attention, and provide a vital point of reference for further scholarship about and performance of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Jewish liturgical music and art music based on Jewish themes.

Chapter 5 briefly examines the later history of the synagogue organ, accounting for the instrument's use in the aftermath of World War II and the emigration of many German Jews to the United States and Palestine. Although émigré composers and organists continued to develop the repertoire and perform the instrument in Palestine, the synagogue organ tradition was initially perpetuated more successfully in the United States, where there was already a history of organ performance, as well as of Reform Judaism. In the final chapter, Frühauf concludes her persuasive explication of the role played by the organ and its music in the development of Reform Judaism, and in representing the complex processes of German Jewish assimilation and dissimulation. *The Organ and Its Music in German-Jewish Culture* adopts a richly multi-faceted approach to its subject, combining thorough archival research with musical analysis, reception history, and sociological and ethnographic explorations into Jewish organ culture, and thus significantly contributes to our understanding of the ways German Jewish identities developed and transformed throughout the Diaspora before and after the mass emigration and exile of the early twentieth century.

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