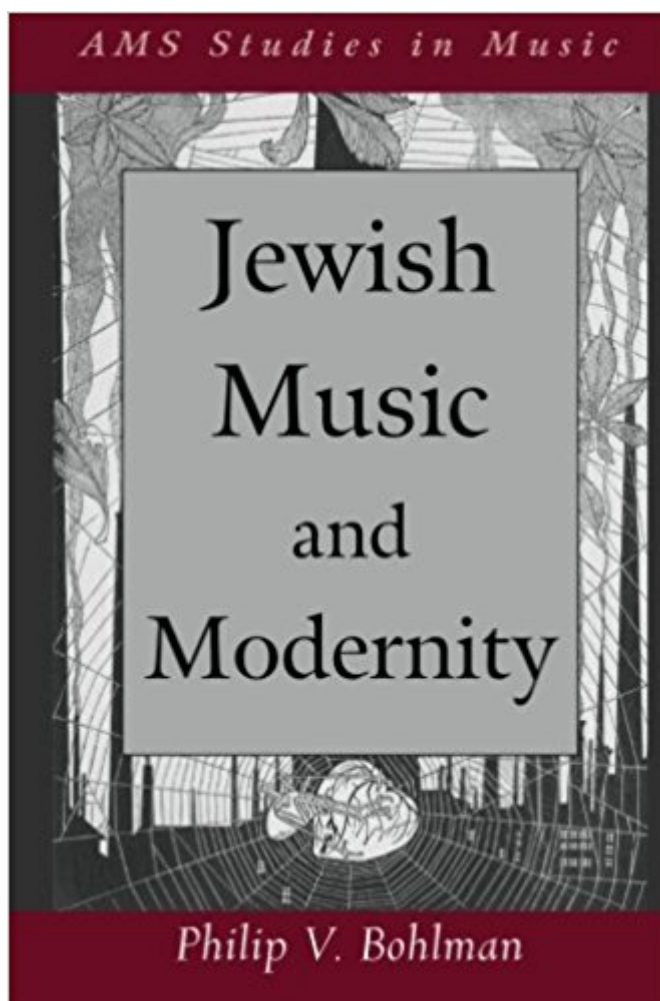


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# Jewish Music And Modernity (AMS Studies In Music)



## Synopsis

Is there really such a thing as Jewish music? And how does it survive as a practice of worship and cultural expression even in the face of the many brutal aesthetic and political challenges of modernity? In *Jewish Music and Modernity*, Philip V. Bohlman imparts these questions with a new light that transforms the very historiography of Jewish culture in modernity. Based on decades of fieldwork and archival study throughout the world, Bohlman intensively examines the many ways in which music has historically borne witness to the confrontation between modern Jews and the world around them. Weaving a historical narrative that spans from the end of the Middle Ages to the Holocaust, he moves through the vast confluence of musical styles and repertoires. From the sacred and to the secular, from folk to popular music, and in the many languages in which it was written and performed, he accounts for areas of Jewish music that have rarely been considered before. Jewish music, argues Bohlman, both survived in isolation and transformed the nations in which it lived. When Jews and Jewish musicians entered modernity, authenticity became an ideal to be supplanted by the reality of complex traditions. Klezmer music emerged in rural communities cohabited by Jews and Roma; Jewish cabaret resulted from the collaborations of migrant Jews and non-Jews to the nineteenth-century metropolises of Berlin and Budapest, Prague and Vienna; cantors and composers experimented with new sounds. The modernist impulse from Felix Mendelssohn to Gustav Pick to Arnold Schoenberg and beyond became possible because of the ways music juxtaposed aesthetic and cultural differences. *Jewish Music and Modernity* demonstrates how borders between repertoires are crossed and the sound of modernity is enriched by the movement of music and musicians from the peripheries to the center of modern culture. Bohlman ultimately challenges readers to experience the modern confrontation of self and other anew.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Culminating a trilogy by one of ethnomusicology's most innovative and distinguished voices, this book is as much about the nature of Jewish music and its historiography as it is about history, modernity, and the poetics of narrative itself."--Ruth F. Davis, University Senior Lecturer in Ethnomusicology, Fellow of Corpus Christi College Cambridge

"Uncovering the intricate layers of meaning found in the archeology of 'Jewish music,' Bohlman provides innovative perspectives towards a sophisticated reading of this concept. He modulates between disparate contexts of performance, styles, genres, academic endeavors and individuals to create a distinctive tapestry of intersecting connotations. A welcomed addition to ongoing discourses about music, politics of identity, and post-modernity."--Edwin Seroussi, Emanuel Alexandre Professor of Musicology, Hebrew University in Jerusalem

"Makes a number of important contributions to scholarship on Jewish music...Casts important light on scholarly and historical practices and definitions." --Music & Letters

"Bohlman's meticulously researched book is highly sophisticated in its argument, innovative in its approach, and original in its insights into a wealth of new materials, and as such presents a valuable contribution to scholarship on Jewish music, Jewish history and historiography." --Musica Judaica Online Reviews

Philip V. Bohlman is a Mary Werkman Distinguished Service Professor of the Humanities and of Music at The University of Chicago. His ethnographic and historical research stretch from the American Midwest across Central and Eastern Europe to the Middle East and South Asia. In addition to his work as a scholar, he is a pianist and the Artistic Director of the Jewish cabaret ensemble, the New Budapest Orpheum Society.

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