



Jewish Contiguities and the Soundtrack of Israeli History

Assaf Shelleg

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Jewish Contiguities and the Soundtrack of Israeli History unfolds the cultural itineraries of modern Jewish and Israeli art music. Extending from modern Jewish art music in Europe through its dislocation to British Palestine and Israel, the book captures the tensions between national rhetoric and nationalized theological tropes through the way they have been recorded in art music.

Author Assaf Shelleg begins with the prehistory of Israeli art music in central and Western Europe. He introduces the reader to the various aesthetic dilemmas in the history of modern Jewish art music, ranging from auto-exoticism to Jewish self-hatred. Moving on to consider the Hebrew culture, he discusses the institutionalization of art music in British Palestine and the dilution of romanticist nationalism during the interregnum of Israeli statehood. Delving into the proliferation of styles in the 1950s and '60s, Shelleg examines the collapse of traditional Hebrew templates and the concomitant surge of linear compositional devices inspired by Arab Jewish music. By the 1970s, he reveals, Israeli composers saw musical Judaism as a cultural discourse that transcended the nation; they deterritorialized the national discourse at the same time that religious Zionist circles had been translating theology into politics.

Shelleg unearths the various cultural constraints and dialectics that played a pivotal role in the dislocation of modern Jewish art music to Israel, and looks at the Jewish undercurrents of Hebrew culture and how Jewish secularized concepts outgrew their national functions. *Jewish Contiguities and the Soundtrack of Israeli History* will be essential reading for scholars of Jewish and Israeli music, culture, and history

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