

Schmidt's assertion that 'in spite of [their] diversity of backgrounds and aspirations, all eleven [artists] shared one thing: their intrinsic Jewishness that they expressed in their art' (p. 239). Schmidt construes this 'intrinsic Jewishness', or 'being Jewish in one's soul', not just as a quality that unites the artists of the Fifth Zionist Congress but as a 'criterion for the creation of Jewish art' (pp. 239, 241, 242). In positing this 'intrinsic' quality, Schmidt not only elides the individual experiences of the artists she surveys—Bendemann converted to Christianity!—but those of Jews in general. There is no monolithic, transhistorical essence that defines '“the Jewish experience,” wherever and in whatever time period it occurs' (p. 244). And rather than express and reinforce this historiographical myth, a central task of Jewish art might be to break down just such scholarly idols. It is beyond Schmidt's purview to present a fully fledged theory of Jewish art, but by propagating misconceptions about Jewish art she belies the strengths of an otherwise solid entrée into an important new subject.

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VICTOR TUNKEL, *The Music of the Hebrew Bible: The Western Ashkenazic Tradition*. The author, London, 2004. 115 pp., illustrations, musical examples, glossary, annotated bibliography, indexes. £20.00. ISBN 0954660714.

This volume explores the Jewish tradition of biblical cantillation, fulfilling a twofold purpose. Firstly, it outlines the history and meaning of the Masoretic *t'amim*. Secondly, it explores the western Ashkenazic tradition of chanting the Torah, the melodic system used within most British synagogues.

As Tunkel observes in his foreword, this book is primarily aimed at a Jewish readership, oriented towards those who wish to expand upon a basic knowledge of cantillation. In just over a hundred pages he covers remarkable ground, leading the reader through complex theories of interpretation, giving a comprehensive set of musical examples illustrating correct interpretation and identifying problematic areas in current practice.

Despite this practical focus, however, the material covered here is of significant value to those engaged in the wider study of the Hebrew Bible. The system of *t'amim* is laid out in a lucid and logical manner, together with examples indicating how the correct interpretation of the *t'amim* can resolve grammatical ambiguities. Further, Tunkel's exploration and notation of western Ashkenazic cantillation fills a significant gap within the wider Jewish music literature. This volume provides the only reliable notation of this system as currently practised, and in doing so reasserts the continued presence of this tradition alongside the eastern Ashkenazic system, widely used in both the USA and Israel, upon which most previous studies have focused. While Tunkel is rightly cautious about encapsulating an oral tradition in written notation, of particular interest is his inclusion and analysis of variations (and common mistakes), and his comparison of modern practice with historical sources, both of which illustrate the evolution of the western Ashkenazic tradition.

If a criticism is to be levelled at this volume, it must be that the musical examples only relate to the cantillation of the Torah itself. The five other sets of melodies relating to the chanting of the Prophets and texts read on holidays are omitted; thus only a partial picture of western Ashkenazic cantillation is provided. Despite this omission, however, this volume will be of value to anyone seeking to expand upon a basic knowledge of the *t'amim* or to explore contemporary musical practice in British synagogues.

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