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### Cover Page Footnote

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## Assimilating to Art-Religion

### Jewish Secularity and Edgar Zilsel's *Geniereligion* (1918)

Abigail Fine

After fleeing the Nazis, many European Jewish and Marxist scholars were fortunate to find a new sense of belonging abroad, at institutions like the New School for Social Research in New York City or among the émigré community in California. Others fell through the cracks. The philosopher-sociologist Edgar Zilsel (1891–1944), who left Vienna in 1939, could not find his footing in exile because he was never quite at home to begin with. His unusual writings were pushed to the fringe of Viennese academia before he left, and after his death, his work was largely forgotten until its rediscovery in the 1980s.<sup>1</sup> One of Zilsel's most interdisciplinary projects—his short book *Die Geniereligion* (The Cult of Genius), written in 1918—has much to offer musicology.<sup>2</sup> A close look at *Die Geniereligion* and its cultural environs exposes a fresh angle on an old problem: the formation of the Western musical canon and its secularist ethics. Zilsel's polemic reveals the canon's central irony, which also manifests in art-religion (*Kunstreligion*): proponents of the canon positioned it as a secular “neutral space” for culture, but paradoxically, this neutral space was both inflected by Catholic practice, as Zilsel showed, and also populated by Jewish artists and intellectuals such as Zilsel himself. Musical institutions like concert halls, journals, and festivals became sites of assimilation where Austrian Jews sought cosmopolitan secularity and found art-religion instead—alluring for some, alienating for others, and downright dangerous for Zilsel.

From its first pages, Zilsel's treatise set out to destroy the *Geniereligion*—that is, the parareligious cults of veneration that form around artists, scientists, pedagogues, and other secular figures. His text reads as an impassioned manifesto. As a committed Marxist, Zilsel wrote that it would be irresponsible *not* to speak out against a societal danger that allows charlatans to sway the masses.<sup>3</sup> All of Zilsel's projects were driven by this central investment in the abilities and vulnerabilities of the working class, including his last and best-known work, *On the Social Origins of Modern Science*, which traced the birth of empiricism to a network of artisans rather than a roster of lone geniuses.<sup>4</sup> Even as the politics of interwar Red Vienna formed the context of his worldview, it is tempting (if anachronistic) to read *Die Geniereligion* as a text that offered chilling premonitions of fascism. With great clarity Zilsel identified key elements of the propaganda machine whose blueprint had already been laid by Karl Lueger's Christian Social Party starting in 1897, and that later made Hitler into a paramount “genius” alongside Napoleon, Wagner, Goethe, and Beethoven.

Zilsel's project was conceived amid a political minefield at the University of Vienna, where a polarized Philosophy Department pushed his scholarship to the margins. Zilsel was an active member of Moritz Schlick's Vienna Circle, a network of liberal-socialist philosophers who developed logical and empirical methods grounded in physics. Schlick's group found itself increasingly beleaguered by a conservative,

neo-Romantic school of philosophy affiliated with Christian Socialism.<sup>5</sup> Given that the majority of intellectual leaders of Vienna's Social Democratic Party were Jewish, it became increasingly common for outwardly "scientific" objections to Marxist schools of thought to operate as an excuse for conservative faculty to oust Jewish professors from their posts decades before the systematic purges of 1938. While Schlick insisted that his circle was apolitical, and while he himself was descended from Prussian-Lutheran nobility, he was nonetheless perceived as Jewish, or Jew-adjacent. As a result, his promotion to chair of philosophy was controversial and met with a pointed inquiry into his heritage. In 1936, Schlick was murdered by a deranged former student who was paranoid about a presumed romantic entanglement with a classmate; and as Lisa Silverman has shown, Schlick's perceived status as a *Mussjude*, a Jew by association, led the Viennese press to politicize the psychiatric instability as a sensible reaction to Jewish corruption.<sup>6</sup>

It comes as no surprise that Zilsel, as Schlick's protégé, struggled to secure his footing at this university. Zilsel's book *Die Geniereligion* was the basis for his *Habilitation*, his application for promotion at the University of Vienna, which expanded this slim manifesto into a more robust, and more explicitly Marxist, history of the "genius" concept. Its fraught reception by the committee, traced in detail by Johann Dvořák, led Zilsel to withdraw his application and resign.<sup>7</sup> His colleagues implied that his approach was insufficiently philosophical because it was grounded in economics, a veiled rebuke of his Marxism. What's more, his critique of celebrity pedagogues, combined with his apparent distaste for religion, touched a sensitive

nerve after the contentious clerical reforms of Austrian public school curricula by the Christian Social Party during the Lueger era, which had been hotly contested by Austro-Marxists who advocated for secular, humanist, and more inclusive *Bildung*.<sup>8</sup> After Zilsel stepped down, he found a space that was more welcoming, if less outwardly prestigious, at the Volkshochschule, a community college that became a hotbed of socialist intellectual freedom. Here, on the fringes of academia, his work became even more interdisciplinary.<sup>9</sup>

With the Anschluss, Zilsel's career was the least of his worries. As both a socialist and a Jew, he feared the growing climate of censorship that would impede his son's education. (Whether he foresaw all the dangers ahead, we cannot know.) With his family he fled to Manhattan in 1939 and then settled among the German émigrés as a lecturer at Mills College in Oakland, California. Memoirs from his son Paul reveal a man perpetually out of place.<sup>10</sup> Like Theodor W. Adorno, he began publishing sociological essays in English and even started his new book on the sociology of science; but he never felt quite at home in that language, in American customs, or in his role as a physics instructor at a women's college.<sup>11</sup> The tipping point, or so speculated his son, was his wife's nervous breakdown and his own survivor's guilt when his sister's letters ceased. (As the family later learned, she had been sent to Auschwitz.) In 1944, before the war had even ended, Zilsel committed suicide, just as Stefan Zweig and Walter Benjamin did before him. His tragedy was not only death, but an ongoing struggle during his life to find a home for his ideas, which inhabited a space between languages, disciplines, and identities. Zilsel's story was, in this

sense, a characteristically Jewish story of assimilation.

Zitsel's treatise, in conjunction with his biography, shows us that the Western canon is a critical thread in this Jewish story and vice versa. The discipline of musicology formed around the monumental mountain peaks of German and Austrian "great men," to borrow Nietzsche's turn of phrase.<sup>12</sup> Even today, it perpetuates itself through tautologies, self-supporting statements that Robert Fink has dubbed the canon's "sleight of hand."<sup>13</sup> The central legerdemain of canonic ideologies is their claim to universal value that remains opaque—that is, they mask the historical processes that made universality desirable in the first place. Recent conversations about secularity, spearheaded by Talal Asad, may shed new light on the canon's opacity.<sup>14</sup> For Asad, secular ideologies play a similar trick: they claim universal value while concealing their contingency, their origins in Enlightenment thought, political liberalism, and the interiority of Pietism.

Nor is this resemblance superficial. The politics of canon formation mirror secularity because canons emerged at the intersection of sacred and secular, through a constellation of practices known as *Kunstreligion*, or art-religion.<sup>15</sup> In the nineteenth century, cultural heroes like Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart became surrogate saints for the liberal elite, for whom *Bildung*, or educational self-cultivation, was integral to a sense of belonging. Yet *Bildung* was grounded in an amalgam of religious practices: Catholic sainthood, Lutheran Pietism, and Jewish educational ambition, all latent behind the smokescreen of secular self-improvement.

Jewish secularization long predates the politics of canon formation, even as it later became an agent in this process.<sup>16</sup> Already in the eighteenth century, leaders

of the Jewish Enlightenment, or *Haskalah*, used the tools of liberal ideology to enact Jewish "civic self-improvement" (*bürgerliche Verbesserung*), a constellation of reforms that later came to be called assimilation.<sup>17</sup> The history of these reforms is complex because it operated at the intersection of shifting state policies of legal emancipation, a new philosophical movement, and a wide spectrum of individual personalities, each seeking an identity between the cracks. Even secularized Jews, whose cosmopolitan lives were so starkly different from those in the shtetls, found themselves fractured into an array of positions toward Judaism. Some converted to Christianity with great conviction, while others were baptized for convenience. Some defended Judaism as a religion that embodied liberal humanism, while others cast it aside in their devotion to German *Bildung*. And some appeared to disdain their roots with "Jewish self-hatred," an expression of embarrassment at the poor Jewish immigrants who poured in from Eastern Europe, and especially Galicia. The term itself exemplifies how slippery assimilation can be: Paul Reitter has argued that Jewish self-hatred, paradoxically, could function as a means of empowerment, as Jews reclaimed their own stereotypes through self-criticism.<sup>18</sup>

Assimilation was a powerful force in cosmopolitan music criticism and concert life. In the visual arts, Jews had a minimal presence; in the theater and the press, they dominated; and in music, their numbers were noticeably strong but not pervasive, which made the pressure to assimilate more urgent and transparent for those whose careers depended on it.<sup>19</sup> Even as the optimism of nineteenth-century *Bildung* waned in the twentieth, its central ideologies remained embedded in Jewish self-perception and

ambition, and these manifested in musical composition and discourse, as Steven J. Cahn has recently shown.<sup>20</sup>

As *Bildung* was subsumed by the more extreme *Geniereligion*, Jewish composers, musicians, and music writers found themselves alternately intoxicated and repulsed by art-religious devotion to canonical great men. They were faced with the reality that the secular neutral spaces they sought were neither secular nor neutral, and some experienced a profound disillusionment that fueled early Zionism. Ziesel's response to this problem was one among a spectrum of Jewish reactions to the realities of assimilation. If secularization is "a fugitive way for religion to survive," as Judith Butler suggested in her essay on Zionism, then Ziesel demonstrated how it survived through the medium of art-religion.<sup>21</sup>

### The New Real Church

Secularity studies has found a new vocabulary to articulate the complex interaction between sacred and secular, which are rarely separate. "Secular enchantment" serves as a counterpart to scientific rationalism, as articulated by Akeel Bilgrami, and recent work by Jeffers Engelhardt and Janaki Bakhle adopts this term for musical practices that engage with the sacred in a secular world;<sup>22</sup> similarly, religious studies scholars have posited "re-enchantment" as a counterpart to Weber's "disenchantment."<sup>23</sup> These terms push back against the misconception that the secular worldview of the Enlightenment was homogeneous and ubiquitous.

Unlike this nuanced vocabulary, the term *Kunstreligion* remains a compound word in every sense. The word refers to a set of concepts at the intersection of German Romantic philosophical idealism, Catholic

revival, and a growing interest in Eastern religions in the early nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> Its roots in musical thought have been traced to early Romantic writers like Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder and Friedrich Schleiermacher, who sacralized the listening experience as a form of devotion and likened religious feelings to a "holy music" (*heilige Musik*) that should accompany secular life.<sup>25</sup> For some, the very idea of *Kunstreligion* has become emblematic of the early Romantic reaction to Enlightenment secularism, a means to "overcome secularization," in the words of Nicole Heinkel.<sup>26</sup> But even nuanced histories of *Kunstreligion*, such as the writings of Helmut Loos, tend to reduce this concept to a simple admixture of sacred and secular by focusing on linguistic conflation. This approach seems to take the German musicologist Carl Dahlhaus at his word when he wrote that the early German Romantics thought art and religion "flow into one another" and that this "may be expressed through the formula that the 'sacralization' of the profane is analogous to the 'secularization' of the sacred."<sup>27</sup>

In recent years, historians have begun to understand how this concept manifested in culture long after it was first articulated. *Kunstreligion* was unusually complex in German-speaking regions, where artistic circles were divided between Protestant, Catholic, and assimilated Jewish identities. Karen Leistra-Jones has shown how art-religion was confessionalized in her recent study of Hans von Bülow's performances, rhetoric, and hermeneutical analyses, which were not only vaguely art-religious but specifically Protestant, some of numerous cultural projects that used *Kunstreligion* to unify the young German nation.<sup>28</sup> But in the same period as Bülow sermonized through analysis, the music-loving public engaged

in practices of veneration that appear markedly Catholic, not only in Austria but also in Protestant north Germany. When composers were treated as saints, *Kunstreligion* went beyond devotional listening. My own research has shown how composers' hair-locks and walking sticks circulated as relics, their houses became museums that branded themselves as sites of pilgrimage, and their fans experienced not only transcendent listening but personal fantasies of closeness with dead celebrities, who became guardian spirits of the music room. The lofty transcendence of early *Kunstreligion* continued through the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, when composers' deathbeds were called "apotheoses" and their genius was hailed as a divine gift. But this Romantic idealism was tempered by a material fascination with composers' daily lives, with their ailments, clothes, belongings, homes, and haunts.<sup>29</sup> Material practices like these reinforce the particularity, not the universality, of secular devotion.

We find this same interplay of the abstract and tangible—of gazing at a looming monument while cherishing a hair-lock in a brooch—in Asad's etymology of the "sacred." He differentiates the medieval French *sacré* from *sainteté*: the former was institutionalized and politicized, especially during the French Revolution, while the latter refers to the everyday, accessible materials of religion—the relics, shrines, and pilgrimages that interface with the beyond.<sup>30</sup> For the music-loving middle class, material *sainteté* became a way to trade in divinity: those who could not afford to build collections could purchase ersatz relics like plaster masks for the music room.<sup>31</sup>

Zilsel was among the first scholars to treat early Romantic *Kunstreligion* as a

cultural practice, not only a concept. In the Introduction to *Die Geniereligion*, Zilsel noted these trappings of religion in the arts world, calling them the "external form" of a deeper religious dogma:

Outwardly already it appears that we treasure the relics, autographs, hair-locks, quills, and tobacco boxes of our great men just as the Catholic Church treasures the bones, accessories, and clothing of saints. . . . True, we build no chapels around the graves of our geniuses, nor do we offer burnt sacrifices on the altars of antique hero-temples; but we do bury some of them together in Westminster Abbey and in the Paris Pantheon, or erect their busts in Walhalla. . . . With holy awe, as if on pilgrimage to Lourdes, we journey to these genius-graves, to Weimar, to Stratford-upon-Avon, and above all to Bayreuth.<sup>32</sup>

To this list of Catholic behaviors Zilsel added the manifestations of *Geniereligion* in popular literature and visual culture. He noted the brochures that showed geniuses gathered together in heaven; the images of a disheveled Beethoven that graced every music-room wall; the biofictional operettas, like Heinrich Berté's *Dreimäderlhaus*, that fetishized artists' biographies; and the earliest biopic films that made *Geniereligion* a product of mass culture.<sup>33</sup> Zilsel was a cultural historian long before this was an established subfield, and his interdisciplinarity gave him striking insight into *Kunstreligion*. By blending sociology and philosophy, he was able to trace the dogmas that underlay these cultural products: genius as divinity, heroic individualism, and a cult of sentimentality (*Schwärmern*) that made geniuses immune to criticism. He called these dogmas because they went unquestioned in literate society, invisible

because they substituted for (and thereby hid behind) real religious practice. Zisel, then, was in an ideal position to criticize these practices. With his own identity as an outsider—not just a Jewish outsider, but a Marxist intellectual who worked at the margins of Viennese academia—he could observe the oddity of practices that had become second nature to most.<sup>34</sup>

Several years before *Die Geniereligion*, Zisel had already expressed skepticism about the cult of genius in Vienna's music scene. His first publication in 1912 was not a sober work of sociology, but rather a surreal miniature—what he termed a “didactic fantasy”—that debunked the idea of timelessness in music culture.<sup>35</sup> In this evocative allegory, operagoing dilettantes become a carnival of zoo animals; the narrator finds himself hurled between heaven and earth, grasping at Mozart's sacred tones while dragged into the insipid pleasures of the eighteenth century; and finally, the “spider of time” sucks the narrator into its web, where all turns to slime, a writhing morass of old and new. In this piece, Zisel revealed his own flirtation and disillusionment with *Geniereligion*:

Thus I felt lonely, full of longing for a man, for Mozart, and I wanted to serve him. But as I searched for him here aloft and asked the tones about their creator, there began a roar, from all corners the rows of tones poured in and crashed against each other, separated themselves again and turned into a thousand-faceted complexity and through the universe romped the finale of the *Jupiter* Symphony.<sup>36</sup>

As he searches for Mozart, he finds instead the sublimity of the work, but it resides in a Christian heaven where he cannot remain. In a devastating final passage,

the narrator is cast down from the clouds into a swamp that devours civilization: “streams of mud [trickle] from Mozart's grave” and merge with new floodwaters, leaves of paper fight toward the surface (that is, the canon), “sticky maggots” are “fattened on the dead rococo, and on national artists [*Heimatskünstler*],” and everything succumbs to depths haunted by the Ouroboros, the mythic snake that eats its own tail (or as Zisel calls it, “progress that progresses toward progress”).<sup>37</sup> In this strange piece of juvenilia, we already see Zisel's disdain for canonic tautologies, for the empty promise of timelessness, and for sublime tones that reside perpetually out of reach.

Zisel's early disillusionment reflects a deeper contradiction of art-religion in the music world: religion shaped institutions of German *Bildung* that purported to be secular neutral spaces. This problem was ingrained in the history of *Bildung* itself, which had been torn by competing sacred and secular agendas since its emergence in the German Enlightenment. For Moses Mendelssohn, *Bildung* promised to revive Platonic ideals by offering a moral education in virtue; his position on *Bildung* dovetailed with his appeal for Jewish self-improvement, which favored a neutral Hellenism over a Christian-inflected moral code. But for others like Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Bildung* was an offshoot of Lutheran Pietism, which sought to transform society by cultivating the inner self.<sup>38</sup>

*Bildung* was decidedly more secular and political after the Congress of Vienna, when it became a tool to manufacture a Prussian bureaucracy. Outwardly, *Bildung* was upheld as a means to distinguish German naturalness and social reforms from French courtliness and aristocratic backwardness; but beneath this ideology

lurked a pragmatic agenda to create citizens who would feed the growing bureaucracies of Prussia and the Austrian Empire. What was thought natural in the mid-nineteenth century became mannered by century's end, and this shift is crucial for a reading of Zissel's *Geniereligion*. By 1900, a new wave of critics dismissed the *Bildungsbürgertum*—the educated class of civil servants—as conservative philistines, pedantic bureaucrats whose sole values were loyalty, obedience, and discipline. Zissel's disdain for the deluded masses was aimed not at the proletariat, the workers for whom he fought; his rebuke was leveled at the uncreative *Bildungsbürger* who served as arbiters of taste, enacting *Geniereligion* with bureaucratic efficiency.

Zissel's criticisms, then, can be read in part as a sign of disappointment that *Bildung* did not fulfill the liberal aspirations it promised. For Joseph S. Bloch, writing in 1885, liberalism promised a “spiritual asylum” for Jews, the “port of shelter after a thousand years of homelessness”; but by 1900, it became apparent that this was a false beacon.<sup>39</sup> Yuri Slezkine, in his book *The Jewish Century*, has defined Jewish emancipation as “a search by individual Jews for neutral . . . society where neutral actors could share a neutral secular culture.” But in order to do this, he argues, Jews had to “convert to a national faith” to access the inalienable rights promised by secular society. Here it is worth quoting Slezkine's argument at some length, as he postulates how, for Jews in nations across Europe (here citing Germany and Hungary as examples), *Bildung* could function paradoxically as both a secular space and a nationalist religion:

To enter the neutral spaces, one had to convert to a national faith. And that is precisely what many European Jews

did—in much greater numbers than those who converted to Christianity, because the acceptance of Goethe as one's savior did not seem to be an apostasy and because it was much more meaningful and important than baptism. After the triumph of cultural nationalism and the establishment of national pantheons, Christianity was reduced to a formal survival or reinterpreted as part of the national journey. One could be a good German or Hungarian without being a good Christian (and in an ideal liberal Germany or Hungary, religion in the traditional sense would become a private matter “separate from the state”), but one could not be a good German or Hungarian without worshiping the national canon. This was the new real church, the one that could not be separated from the state lest the state lose all meaning, the one that was all the more powerful for being taken for granted, the one that Jews could enter while still believing that they were in a neutral place worshiping Progress and Equality.<sup>40</sup>

Zissel might well have agreed with Slezkine's metaphor of the “new real church.” For him, *Geniereligion* was espoused by priests, founded in dogmas, and housed in institutions of culture. Even as Zissel seldom discussed his Jewish background, when he criticized the Austro-German canon for its religious undercurrent, his critique bears a tone of disappointment in a promise unfulfilled. When we read Zissel's *Geniereligion* through Slezkine's insights, we see how Jews needed to assimilate not only to secularity, which offered the protections promised by legal emancipation, but also to *Kunstreligion*, which offered a sense of national belonging, or *Deutschtum*.

This need for national identity was particularly urgent in Austria after 1918. Prior to the war, the monarchy found ways to unify its fractured empire by building a cultural center that welcomed the Jewish middle class, a paradox that historian Ernest Gellner famously termed the “Habsburg dilemma.”<sup>41</sup> David Brodbeck has discussed how key figures in Vienna’s musical life, such as Eduard Hanslick and Karl Goldmark, sought to exchange their Jewish identity for *Deutschtum* in what he calls a “quid pro quo.”<sup>42</sup> As such, Jews became the architects of the new real church, in part because, in Vienna, they were 1.5 times as likely to send their children to the *Gymnasium*, which helped them rise to the ranks of cultural arbiters (to the protestation of many colleagues).<sup>43</sup> But in 1918 this pluralistic empire, which considered itself a nationalities-state, was supplanted by the Republic of Austria that conceived of itself as a nation-state, and that was considerably less welcoming to Jews.<sup>44</sup> In Zisel’s Vienna, Jews could not agree on what the neutral space of culture should look like, and built their “new real church” in widely divergent ways.<sup>45</sup>

### Spaces of Assimilation

The debates over Jewish assimilation grew particularly heated after Karl Marx’s seminal essay of 1843, “The Jewish Question.” In it, he articulated arguments that some found to be indicative of self-hatred: that Jews should abandon Jewishness if they hope to end their oppression; that emancipation would help Jews shed their negative dispositions and mannerisms; and that assimilation would benefit society at large.<sup>46</sup> His thinking remained controversial well into the twentieth century, discussed

first by Judeo-Marxists in Russia, then by Marxists in Western Europe, and finally by the early Zionists who disagreed about whether to rebuild Jewish life at home (cultural Zionism) or to resettle in Palestine (political Zionism).

As Enzo Traverso has shown, the Judeo-Marxists in Western Europe who were active during Zisel’s lifetime focused on two facets of Marx’s essay: whether a nation can exist without a single territory, and whether Jews are partly responsible for antisemitism due to their mannered otherness. By 1900, German-speaking Judeo-Marxists were torn between the views of Karl Kautsky, who urged assimilation, and Vladimir Medem, who sought to preserve Jewishness across borders. Where Medem held that a Jewish community can be linked through *Yiddishkeit*, even without a national territory, Kautsky upheld Marx’s teleological view that Jewish assimilation is a fated step along the evolutionary process that culminates in socialism. Kautsky’s views were popular in part because he, along with Otto Bauer, absolved Jews of responsibility for their discrimination and described antisemitism as provincial backwardness that would vanish as society advanced. But for many Jewish Marxists, Zisel included, Marxism itself was an equally satisfying surrogate for national consciousness, leaving little room for a Jewish identity alongside it.<sup>47</sup> Socialism promised a more equitable society than Zion, *Yiddishkeit*, or assimilation to *Deutschtum* ever could.

These debates on paper found echoes in other corners of Jewish life where assimilation was not clear-cut. The Jewish population of Zisel’s Vienna was divided: roughly half were acculturated Jews from Moravia and Bohemia, a quarter were from Western Hungary (a demographic that

ranged from Orthodox to assimilated), and a quarter were the newest wave from Galicia, who were both Orthodox and separatist. And despite efforts during the First World War to convene Jews of all stripes in a single *Gemeindebund*, the city's population remained fractured into a wide spectrum of identities.<sup>48</sup> In pamphlet wars and coffeehouses, Jewish assimilation emerged not as a linear process, but as a series of individual paths through a patchwork of spaces with fluctuating rules of entry.

These rules varied most dramatically in Austria, where Jews were no longer protected by the pluralism of an empire under the umbrella of *Deutschtum*, of a German *Kulturnation* in which Jews might participate equally. Building upon Marsha L. Rozenblit's history of Jewish life before the First World War, Lisa Silverman has argued that Jews who had previously found patchwork identities as Austrians before the war struggled to identify with a new republic that defined itself by what it was not, leading to a heightened attention to Jewish difference that complicated "becoming Austrian."<sup>49</sup> Silverman's study, together with other recent work on Jewish assimilation, shows how remarkably convoluted Jewish self-understanding could be. Some, for instance, felt a strong nostalgia for Catholicism as the marker of an empire where they found a friendlier coexistence, but when they worked too hard to efface their own difference by participating in Catholicism, they created a new stereotype of self-conscious overcompensation. Above all, Silverman argues that spaces, more so even than people, could be coded as Jewish or non-Jewish. In cosmopolitan centers like Vienna, Budapest, and Berlin, Jewish modernity was shaped most profoundly

in zones of leisure like coffeehouses, restaurants, and salons.<sup>50</sup>

Music was another space of discourse where Jews could seek out an identity as Germans and Austrians. The more earnestly Jewish artists wanted or needed to assimilate, the more they constructed the "new real church." For Arnold Rosé, it was the Vienna Philharmonic and the Rosé Quartet, the beating heart of Vienna's musical life; for Joseph Joachim, it was the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn, which touted itself as a site of pilgrimage. Meanwhile, the Jewish poet Ludwig August Frankl was known, and by many disdained, for his active role in Vienna's artist monument projects some decades before the non-Jewish Nikolaus Dumba took the reins, to considerably more public acclaim. Frankl's contribution to the so-called "monument fever," or *Denkmalwut*, was the source of antisemitic pushback from those who worried about Jewish financiers seizing control of *Bildung*.<sup>51</sup> And one of Europe's most prominent cultural arbiters was as assimilated as they come: Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the prolific Austrian writer who disdained his Jewish grandparentage. In fin-de-siècle Vienna, being of mixed heritage (a *Mischling*) was thought to severely inhibit intellectual acumen, making pure-blooded Jewish intelligence into a form of contamination; this is why *Mischlinge* like Hofmannsthal and Eduard Hanslick so vehemently distanced themselves from their Jewish roots.<sup>52</sup> But in 1918, Hofmannsthal channeled his lack of belonging into a new utopia. He was among the most active founders of the Salzburg Festival, which he positioned as the new artistic crossroads of Europe, a neutral space that he promoted with all the utopian fervor of a Zionist.<sup>53</sup> Meanwhile, the Zionist leader

Theodor Herzl was, perhaps surprisingly, a passionate Wagnerian. He wrote in his diary that Wagner's *Ring* would form the ideal cultural center for Israel because this music had the unearthly power to unify diasporic peoples in communal feeling.<sup>54</sup>

Even in the musical spaces that Jews built, they could find themselves unwelcome. The non-Jewish Hans Pfitzner was proud to have his 1917 biofictional opera *Palestrina* premiered by the Jewish conductor Bruno Walter, but two years later, Pfitzner penned an antisemitic diatribe against the critic Paul Bekker, whose biography of Beethoven was another alleged example of the "impotence" of the "international Jewish movement in art."<sup>55</sup> And Hermann Levi conducted the premiere of *Parsifal* in spite of Wagner's abuse; he was so strongly drawn into the space of this art that it was worth being reminded of his Jewish difference. Those who saw themselves as assimilated were baffled when their Jewish difference was noted in a musical space they thought neutral: David Brodbeck has shown how Eduard Hanslick and Karl Goldmark were incredulous when critics persistently associated their works with a Jewish inflection.<sup>56</sup>

In some cases, Jews with assimilated identities found cleverly indirect ways to critique the spaces that made them unwelcome, rather than rebuke antisemitism head-on. Kevin Karnes has shown how Guido Adler, who founded the formal discipline of musicology at the University of Vienna, pushed back against what he saw as irrational approaches to Richard Wagner by the Bayreuth circle of Wagnerites. Adler called for a level-headed methodology that would discuss Wagner's music "calmly" and "circumspectly" rather than succumbing to "those passions that have been so pathologically aroused in

our time."<sup>57</sup> In conjunction with other assimilated Jewish scholars like Otto Erich Deutsch, whose work with rare historical documents brought a new rigor to the discipline, Adler's systematic approach reflected a deep concern that was shaped by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche: that history, and notably the fetishization of the past that informs heritage preservation projects, can never be a neutral science free from institutional corruption. Just as Zilsel later articulated in his *Geniereligion*, Adler worried that cultural heritage could be used or abused.<sup>58</sup>

For other Austrian Jews who found themselves unwelcome, it made more sense to accept Jewish difference and respond with self-criticism and disgust. Alexander Zemlinsky took the idea of Jewish impotence to heart with expressions of self-loathing; in his opera *The Dwarf* (1921), the title character discovers his own ugliness just as Zemlinsky did in his diaries.<sup>59</sup> One might think of Zionists as the opposite extreme, but even those with proud Jewish identities could assimilate to racist patterns of thinking. In his early writings, Max Nordau diagnosed Wagnerian art-religion as degeneration, a subtle rebellion against antisemitism; but when it came to his vision of Zion, he advocated "muscular Judaism," where participation in sports would strengthen the impotent Jewish body.<sup>60</sup> (Freud's position was similar: he held that the weak bodies of Jews led them to overcompensate with strength of intellect.)<sup>61</sup> And the composer Ernest Bloch absorbed antisemitic language to position his music as racially Jewish, as Klára Móricz has shown.<sup>62</sup>

Bloch's thinking was also indicative of a new assimilationist logic shared by writers like Berthold Auerbach, Max Brod, and

Edmond Fleg. These authors maintained that, as an ancient religion, Judaism holds the key to universal humanism. In Bloch's letters to his friend Fleg, which Mórícz has excavated from the archives, he established Jewishness as its very own neutral space independent from German art-religion: "We have to be more Jewish, not in order to separate ourselves from the 'others,' but to be more human. In searching for our roots we will also find those of the others for they plunge into the same ground."<sup>63</sup> It is telling that even those who resisted assimilation wanted the same liberal humanism that was promised (if not delivered) by the "new real church."

With this tapestry of approaches to assimilation, historians must read between the lines to detect traces of Jewish identity. This is certainly the case with Zisel, whose Jewishness was largely subsumed by his Marxism. But even as Zisel did not discuss his heritage openly, the context of his treatise, in conjunction with his rebuttal of prominent antisemites, encourages a new reading. If the canon had not served as an enticing neutral space for Jews, if Austria had not made the figureheads of its *Kulturnation* into deities, and if Jews did not have such a robust historical relationship with secularism, Zisel's *Geniereligion* would seem quite disconnected from Jewish concerns. But given the growing self-consciousness about Jews' place in cultural pantheons, especially among Judeo-Marxists, *Die Geniereligion* emerges as a subtle expression of Jewish alarm at art-religion gone awry.

### **Jewish Genius: Reacting Between the Lines**

Zisel has a special prominence in histories of the genius concept because he systematically explored the ideology and psychology of practices that his contemporaries took for

granted. Historian Darrin McMahon has noted how the *Geniereligion* Zisel theorized was fully realized later by Hitler and Stalin, who manipulated the psychology of the masses when they commissioned their networks of influential "genius priests" (in Zisel's words).<sup>64</sup> For the cultural historian Julia Barbara Köhne, who offers the most comprehensive survey of German-language discourse on genius around 1900, Zisel was disturbed by the recent masculinization of the genius cult. For Köhne, Zisel's text was a reaction to a reaction: in the wake of French and Italian arguments that linked genius with effeminate pathology and degeneration, some German and Austrian writers remasculinized genius as virile, and these same authors were (not surprisingly) hostile antisemites. Throughout his book, Zisel's main targets are the "genius enthusiasts" Thomas Carlyle, Otto Weininger, Richard Wagner, and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, who were all driving forces in popular antisemitism. Given that Zisel was among the most vociferous critics of a genius cult led largely by antisemites, his reaction might, Köhne speculates, be attributed in part to his Jewish heritage.<sup>65</sup>

To acknowledge that Zisel rebutted antisemites can oversimplify the matter because antisemitism was not a unified ideology. In their pioneering studies of Jewish Vienna, Marsha L. Rozenblit and Steven Beller articulated a useful distinction between national and racial antisemitism which can allow for a more nuanced reading of Zisel's position.<sup>66</sup> National antisemitism sees Jews as lacking deep history, as wandering nomads without place, language, or nation (the antonym, in other words, of Zionism); this ideology was a driving force for Jews who endeavored to assimilate, compensating for a perceived dearth of

cultural roots. Racial antisemitism, in contrast, was a roadblock to assimilation. When they were accused of being different in body, not only in nation—of having criminal physiognomies, muddled dialect, and shuffling gait—Jews felt helpless to assimilate without conversion (a feeling perhaps best articulated by Arnold Schoenberg in 1935, when he recounted how young Jewish artists felt paralyzed by racist accusations).<sup>67</sup> Both racial and national antisemitism drew upon the stereotype of the Jew as intellectually derivative, a trait that could be attributed to their lack of artistic heritage (national) or to their inborn degeneration (racial).

Zisel's targets were not all antisemitic in the same way. Carlyle's disdain for the Jewish wealth of London's West End formed the implicit counterweight to his adulation of great men in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841). Richard Wagner's son-in-law Chamberlain, in comparison, might be assumed to have focused on racial antisemitism given that his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1899) is now infamous as a road map for Nazi ideology; but a closer reading reveals this book to indulge in national antisemitism in equal measure, following in Wagner's footsteps. Wagner's *Jewishness in Music* (1850) articulated, in inflammatory fashion, what Carlyle left implicit, and his angry rant indulged in both racial and national antisemitism. Granted, Wagner's words were not universally accepted—they met with criticism by Jews and non-Jews alike, who derided the facile scapegoating that mistook cosmopolitan progress for Jewish corruption—but his essay did leave its mark in musicology.<sup>68</sup> Not only did German (and even German-Jewish) musicologists neglect Jewish music when the discipline

was formed in the late nineteenth century, as Pamela Potter has shown, but Wagner's essay erected a lasting opposition between progressivism and conservatism, which led classic texts in music history to disparage Mendelssohn's backward-looking Bach revival, and especially Meyerbeer's shallow cosmopolitanism, until well into the twentieth century.<sup>69</sup>

Among the texts that Zisel rebutted, the most brutally racist outlook emerged in Weininger's *Sex and Character* (1903), a slim volume that was discussed with great fervor after the author's ritualistic suicide in Beethoven's death-house that same year, which affirmed his adulation of Germanic genius that promised to purge his Jewishness. While Weininger's book was debated by his contemporaries, such as Wittgenstein, Freud, Kafka, and Joyce, it is today best known as a favorite of the Nazis, for obvious reasons: he marshaled the disgust that fueled racial antisemitism to portray Jews as weak, effeminate, and derivative.<sup>70</sup> Exactly how Zisel reacted to these authors shows us which shades of antisemitism were the latent foundations of *Geniereligion*.

Zisel concentrated his vitriol on Chamberlain, whose sensationalist text spread what could fairly be called alternative facts. Zisel was disturbed by how Chamberlain, in his Preface, acknowledged his untruths but defended these as the "living truth" (*lebendiger Wahrheit*) of his readers.<sup>71</sup> Zisel was astounded that these acknowledged falsehoods could meet with "such glee and full-blooded support" from even the most educated readers, and he felt this indicated "a malicious danger for our time."<sup>72</sup> In the appendix to *Die Geniereligion*, a short passage that debunks Chamberlain's mistreatment of Spinoza in

his book *Immanuel Kant*, Zisel was defiant at the national antisemitism that was latent in Chamberlain's cult of personality. The passage to which Zisel objected made Spinoza into the stereotypically uncreative Jew, the "glasses-wiper" (in Zisel's sardonic words) who sat from birth to death in his back office and recombined the work of others into a tapestry of syllogisms.<sup>73</sup> Zisel rebuked Chamberlain for stumbling in like a schoolmaster, ruler in hand, ready to send Spinoza to the back of the philosophical schoolroom; yet Chamberlain, as Zisel noted, did nothing to earn his position of authority because his engagement with Spinoza's writings was shallow and inaccurate. What Zisel found particularly ironic about Chamberlain's stance was how it ran counter to Kant's own philosophy of human worth, the central preoccupation of Chamberlain's book. Zisel was disturbed not only by this denigration of Jewish creativity and invention, but by the success of a book that spread the false idols of the "genius priest" to an eager reading public.

Zisel's appendix participated in an ongoing Jewish reaction against Chamberlain that has been traced by Slezkine, and that ran parallel to the response to Otto Weininger, whose treatise became an emblem of self-hatred.<sup>74</sup> A number of Jewish authors – such as Berthold Auerbach (a friend-turned-enemy of Wagner), the folklorist Joseph Jacobs, and the author Alfred Schnitzler – observed a special brand of "Jewish genius" that offered a counterpart to German great men.<sup>75</sup> But even Jewish authors absorbed the antisemitic idea that Jewish genius was reproductive rather than productive; smart Jews outnumbered smart Germans but failed to innovate. Or as Joseph Jacobs put it, German Jews are "at the present moment quantitatively (not necessarily qualitatively)

at the head of European intellect," but whether these geniuses are "inventive" he could not say.<sup>76</sup>

This was the central paradox of "Jewish genius" traced by Sander Gilman in his book *Smart Jews*, and I would suggest that this paradox informed, if subtly, Zisel's revisionist history of scientific achievement. Zisel's writings were concurrent with texts that questioned why Jewish progress was limited to less innovative spheres: the Viennese philosopher Theodor Gomperz, for instance, asked why Jews have failed to excel in science, being competent only in the "reproductive arts" like music and theater. Meanwhile, Zisel's history of science recentered intellectual achievement around a surplus of smart individuals rather than a pantheon of geniuses. By decentralizing genius, Zisel implicitly promoted the smart Jews (like himself) who worked on the sidelines, innovating out of the spotlight of celebrity.<sup>77</sup> And when these smart Jews began to disappear in 1933, ousted from university positions and censored from libraries, Zisel could not stand silent. In the workers' paper *Der Kampf*, hiding behind a pseudonym, he voiced his alarm at the new regime of censorship. Without its smart Jews, he wrote, German science would atrophy.<sup>78</sup>

Zisel's reactions to Chamberlain, Weininger, and Carlyle revolved largely around national antisemitism, which cultivated the stereotype of the wandering Jew: crafty, adaptable, but lacking spiritual or intellectual depth. Zisel's unease with racial antisemitism was more subtle, and emerges only when read in cultural context. This ideology became increasingly robust in music culture of the late nineteenth century, when composers were exhumed and reburied in Walhalla-like groves,

which allowed doctors and anthropologists to situate musical genius in the bones using the outdated cranioscopic methods of Franz Joseph Gall. The skulls of Haydn, Schubert, Beethoven, Bach, and (allegedly) Mozart were endowed with features of Teutonic superiority that were extended into dilettantish analyses of their music.<sup>79</sup> Even Jewish composers like Mendelssohn who converted to the Christian faith could never fully assimilate when they faced this biological yardstick of Germanness. Despite Mendelssohn's leading role in Protestant musical heritage in Leipzig through his Bach revival and his oratorio *Paulus*, his facial features were still critiqued as prototypically Jewish with increasing frequency in the late nineteenth century.<sup>80</sup> Detractors of Mahler in Vienna were likewise drawn to visible markers of difference, which manifested in caricatures and music criticism.<sup>81</sup> In this context, then, it comes as no surprise that Zinsel argued against the use of biology to measure worth. He argued that it is folly to trace artists' heredity and to apply biological sciences to the realm of culture. Geniuses are made, not born.<sup>82</sup>

Zinsel offers another subtle reaction to racialized antisemitism. The second part of his book revolves around *Abfärbung*, or the "rubbing-off" of geniuses on their devotees (or as Zinsel put it, the halo of a candle in the fog). Here, Zinsel connects the mechanism of the *Geniereligion* with its origins in material *sainteté*—that is, in sacred sites, relic cults, and priests as human mediators. Most striking is how Zinsel defines *Abfärbung* through psychological studies of disgust and fetishism, then offers an example paraphrased from an aphorism by Georg Christoph Lichtenberg: that one feels great unease when using a razor to

spread butter on bread.<sup>83</sup> Readers might have recognized that this psychology of revulsion lay at the core of racial antisemitism. Wagner, for instance, began his essay with a declaration of instinctive repugnance, and the remainder of his rant spins out the "living truth" of that disgust. Zinsel does not openly discuss antisemitism when he defines *Abfärbung*; but perhaps it is no coincidence that his paragraph on revulsion transitions immediately to Wagner, whose leitmotives (Zinsel explains) have taught the public what *Abfärbung* means by offering subtle suggestions beneath the surface of the plot. Zinsel offers this example without rebuking Wagner. He does, however, rebuke *Abfärbung* as a dangerous social problem. Meanwhile, Max Nordau and his interlocutors were engaged in a heated debate about Wagner's power over the masses, which Nordau framed as a societal pathology.<sup>84</sup> In the context of that concurrent discourse, Zinsel's *Abfärbung* emerges as a hidden mechanism for social control, and Wagner as its mouthpiece.

Given that Zinsel combined philosophy with cultural history, it comes as no surprise that he reacted to both shades of antisemitism. His philosophical argument, by decentralizing genius, made an intervention in the myth of the derivative Jew. And his cultural argument about *Abfärbung* revealed the seedy apparatus by which dangerous philosophies spread, in the same period when instinctive revulsion widened the reach of antisemitism.

### **Priests of the *Geniereligion***

Zinsel focused not only on how philosophies spread, but also on the individuals who spread them: the connoisseurs who disseminate *Geniereligion* to the masses by acting as

priests in a metaphysical brotherhood. My own work on pilgrimages to composers' houses supports Zilsel's idea.<sup>85</sup> Museums justified themselves with holier-than-thou piety, and self-proclaimed pilgrims were keen to differentiate themselves from tourists. Material *sainteté* like relics and pilgrimage distinguished insiders from outsiders, true from false devotees.

It was an easy jump from this culture of exclusion in German *Bildung* to related expressions of racial exclusion. A regular pilgrim to Beethoven's house named Margarete Koelman wrote a series of poems that positioned herself as a connoisseur, deriding other museum visitors as shallow dilettantes. Not long after she penned these poems, Koelman published a short story under her pseudonym, Irene Wild, called "Dschang und Dschau," which narrates the cultural clash of two Chinese men, one of whom has been assimilated into European society, the other of whom is a grotesque caricature fresh off the boat.<sup>86</sup> At first it may seem that Koelman's exclusionary thinking in one area – positioning herself as heir apparent to Beethoven's spirit – may have extended freely to her judgments about racial others. But this picture is substantially complicated by the possibility that Koelman may have herself been Jewish; her maiden name, Friedländer, was a common Jewish surname. If so, Koelman appears to have enacted her assimilation in three ways: by marrying into a family of Prussian bureaucrats, partaking in Catholic-inflected forms of composer devotion, and publishing a story that derides racial others who fail to assimilate.

Koelman's case was emblematic of an ambition among some Jews to become the priests of the *Geniereligion*. Her forgotten odes to Beethoven mirror the far more

visible writings of Heinrich Schenker, whose perturbing philosophy of German cultural superiority seems at odds with his own active participation in Vienna's Jewish community. In his article on Schenker's identity, Leon Botstein has described this apparent contradiction as the product of assimilation, "in which marginal populations that achieve some legitimacy and a foothold in a culture and world after a history of exclusion become energetic opponents of the very patterns of entrance they themselves exploited."<sup>87</sup> But for Schenker, this energetic opposition did not undermine his participation in Jewish spaces. While he championed German musical superiority as a surrogate for religion, enacting his transformation from provincial Galician Jew to Viennese urbanite (as both Nicholas Cook and Martin Eybl have shown), Schenker saw a spiritual affinity between assimilated Jewry and German genius, which he felt were equally threatened by a growing culture of dilettantism.<sup>88</sup> If we read Botstein's assessment of Schenker through Zilsel's lens, we see two types of genius priests reign over the neutral space of *Bildung*: the proponents of writers like Chamberlain who stirred up a naïve and populist fondness for genius, and whose behavior Zilsel found dangerous in 1918, alongside an elitist ideology like that of Schenker, which saw cultural insiders as protectors of the true *Geniereligion*, and whose dangers have only begun to be understood in recent discourse about music theory's white racial frame.<sup>89</sup>

For Jews immersed in the arts, like Schenker, *Bildung* was their bread and butter. But when antisemitic authors began to note Jews' biological differences, *Bildung* became the razor that Jews used as a butter knife. Their facility in the arts was seen as wrong, and that wrongness

elicited a passive form of disgust from their detractors, a mere “rubbing off” of feeling with a chilling lack of individual agency. Zisels’s response, in the final words of his treatise, is to do away with *Abfärbung* and to concentrate on the thing itself, or what he called “the ideal of the thing” (*die Ideal der Sache*), a phrase reminiscent of Kant’s “thing-in-itself” (*Ding an sich*) that bespeaks Zisels’s participation in the logical positivism of Schlick’s Vienna Circle. When Zisels entreated his readers “not to disdain, venerate, and romanticize but to learn, to search for the truth and abide by it,” it is hard not to see religious reform in this last passage, an echo of *sola scriptura*.<sup>90</sup> Zisels emerges here not only as a skeptic of secularity, and not only as a Jewish Marxist, but as the Luther of *Geniereligion* (ironically, perhaps, given Luther’s famed antisemitism). When Zisels revealed how ostensibly secular institutions failed to abide by their own tenets, he sought to rescue *Bildung* and reshape the neutral spaces of culture. His vision was one of intellectual equity and, above all, a Marxist appreciation for the collectivity of human achievement by Jews and non-Jews alike.

### Epilogue

It is a truism that historians find traces of themselves in the past—such a powerful truism, in fact, that our motivations for pursuing our research tend to remain veiled. I find it important here to lift the veil in ways that Zisels did not, and to admit that there is a strong resonance between Zisels’s project and my own story of assimilation as a Jewish Germanist (and, no less, a descendant of

a Jewish-Polish bibliophile in exile who continued to appreciate German literature after his narrow escape). I first discovered *Die Geniereligion* many years ago while researching the material practices of art-religion that led composers to be venerated like saints. A closer reading of Zisels’s text led me to the striking realization that my research interests—which so closely align with Zisels’s interests a century ago—have been motivated in part by my own Jewish response to the politics of secularity that has continued into the twenty-first century.

In light of the fraught year 2020, there are more reasons than ever to lift the veil. Zisels grabbed me not only because of my own story, but because *Geniereligion* continues to shape the story of Western art music. Granted, Catholic-inflected practices of relic-fetishism and pilgrimage have moved to the fringe, and it is increasingly rare to hear voices in the academy utter words as extreme as Schenker’s (“of all the nations living on the earth today, the German nation alone possesses true Genius”<sup>91</sup>). But Eurocentric music curricula and concert programming continue to position themselves as neutral spaces of *Bildung*, of liberal enrichment, that strive to elevate while masking their own structures of exclusion. To move forward, musicology and related institutions should recognize that canons were built in part through the politics of assimilation, and that many who seek out European musical traditions have wrestled with layered identities, with a dynamic and complex sense of belonging.

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## NOTES

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1 In the 1980s, Johann (Hans) Dvořák spearheaded a rediscovery of Zisel with his *Edgar Zisel und die Einheit der Erkenntnis* (Vienna: Löcker Verlag, 1981). Zisel's participation in the Vienna Circle (*Wiener Kreis*) led scholars to examine how his history of science advanced the circle's philosophy of empiricism. See for instance Wolfgang Krohn, "Edgar Zisel zur Methodologie einer exakten Geisteswissenschaft," in Hans-Joachim Dahms, ed., *Philosophie, Wissenschaft, Aufklärung: Beiträge der Geschichte und Wirkung des Wiener Kreises* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1985), 257–75; the section on Zisel in Rudolf Haller and Friedrich Stadler, eds., *Der Aufstieg der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie* (Vienna, Berlin, Prague: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1993); and Diederick Raven, "Edgar Zisel's Research Programme: Unity of Science as an Empirical Problem," in Friedrich Stadler, ed., *The Vienna Circle and Logical Empiricism: Re-Evaluation and Future Perspectives* (New York: Kluwer, 2003), 225–36. Recently, scholars have turned increased attention to Zisel's cultural history and genius concept, starting with Julia Barbara Köhne and Darrin McMahon, cited in notes 64 and 65 below, and continuing with a recent conference at the University of Vienna, "Edgar Zisel und die Kritik der Genieregion," Dec. 5–7, 2018.

2 Edgar Zisel, *Die Genieregion: Ein kritischer Versuch über das moderne Persönlichkeitsideal mit einer historischen Begründung*, ed. Johann Dvořák (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1990; orig. Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1918). In this article, all translated passages of Zisel's texts are my own.

3 Zisel admitted that die-hard followers of *Genieregion* would remain immune to his criticisms, but hoped to persuade those less committed to its tenets; Zisel, *Genieregion*, 55.

4 His last project was left unfinished upon his death and was finally published in 1976: Edgar Zisel, *Die sozialen Ursprünge der neuzeitlichen Wissenschaft* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976).

5 Friedrich Stadler, "Aspects of the Social Background and Position of the Vienna Circle at the University of Vienna," in Thomas E. Uebel, ed., *Rediscovering the Forgotten Vienna Circle* (London: Kluwer, 1991), 59–61.

6 Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians: Jews and Culture Between the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 60–65.

7 On the failure of Zisel's *Habilitation*, see Johann Dvořák's Introduction to *Die Genieregion*, 7–40.

8 On the debates between Christian Socials and the liberal Freie Schule association about clericalism in school curricula, and the spread of these controversies to Vienna's university system, see chapter 4 of John W. Boyer's *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 164–235.

9 For a rich account of Zisel's Marxist activism, both in his writings and in the reading group that he led at the Volkshochschule, see chapter 4 of Janek Wasserman, *Black Vienna: The Radical Right in the Red City, 1918–1938* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 106–31.

10 Paul Zisel, "Portrait of My Father," *Shmate* 1 (1982): 12–13.

11 On Zisel's career in the United States, possible reasons for his suicide, and his perpetual life on the margins, see Diederick Raven, "Edgar Zisel in America," in Gary L. Hardcastle and Alan W. Richardson, eds., *Logical Empiricism in North America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 129–48.

12 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2003; orig. 1874).

13 Robert Fink, "Resurrection Symphony: El Sistema as Ideology in Venezuela and Los Angeles," *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education* 15/1 (January 2016): 33–57.

14 Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

15 Following in the footsteps of literary scholars, musicologists have taken a substantial interest in the politics of canon formation since the 1990s. Starting with the essays in Katherine Bergeron and Philip V. Bohlman, eds., *Disciplining Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), scholars such as Marcia J. Citron and William Weber unearthed how canons formed and whom they excluded; see Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) and Weber, *The Great Transformation of Musical Taste: Concert Programming from Haydn to Brahms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). The discourse surrounding canon formation

remains robust, notably in the substantial volume of essays edited by Klaus Pietschmann and Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann, *Der Kanon der Musik: Theorie und Geschichte. Ein Handbuch* (Munich: Edition Text & Kritik, 2013) and the recent conference co-organized by Marianna Ritchey and Andrea Moore at Smith College in September 2018.

16 On Jews as agents of secularity and cosmopolitanism in Germany and Austria, see Michael P. Steinberg, *Judaism Musical and Unmusical* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

17 The concept of *bürgerliche Verbesserung* was first developed by Christian Wilhelm Dohm, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden* (Berlin: Friedrich Nicolai, 1781), as an offshoot of Enlightenment *Bildung*; on the intellectual origins of this concept, see Shmuel Feiner, *The Origins of Jewish Secularization in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, trans. Chaya Naor (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) and David Biale, *Not in the Heavens: The Tradition of Jewish Secular Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). For a history of legal emancipation in Europe, see the classic text by Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); a later collected volume nuances Katz's monolithic history by demonstrating how European states varied in their approach to emancipation; see Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katznelson, eds., *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States, and Citizenship* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995). On Jewish resistance to emancipation, see David Vital, *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

18 The concept of “Jewish self-hatred” stems from Theodor Lessing, notably *Der Jüdische Selbsthass* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1930); on the broader origins of this term in the writings of Anton Kuh and others, see Paul Reitter, *On the Origins of Jewish Self-Hatred* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

19 For a detailed chronicle of the Jewish presence in nineteenth-century European musical life, see David Conway, *Jewry in Music: Entry to the Profession from the Enlightenment to Richard Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

20 Steven J. Cahn, “A German-Jewish Tradition of *Bildung* and Its Imprint on Composition and Music Theory,” *Musical Quarterly* 101 (2019): 482–518.

21 Judith Butler, “Is Judaism Zionism?” in Eduardo Mendieta and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, eds., *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 72.

22 For Bilgrami, “secular enchantment” revolves around an alternative to scientific rationalism, whereas Engelhardt focuses on sacred musical practices in a secular world: “right singing was lived secularity—a way of encountering, invoking, and expressing the religious absolute in a ‘secular age.’” See Akeel Bilgrami, “Occidentalism, the Very Idea: An Essay on Enlightenment and Enchantment,” *Critical Inquiry* 32/3 (Spring 2006): 381–411; and Jeffers Engelhardt, *Singing the Right Way: Orthodox Christians and Secular Enchantment in Estonia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4.

23 Foundational literature for conversations about “re-enchantment” includes Gordon Graham, *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Art Versus Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); James Elkins and David Morgan, eds., *Re-Enchantment* (New York: Routledge, 2009); and Joshua Landy and Michael Saler, eds., *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

24 George S. Williamson, *The Longing for Myth in Germany: Religion and Aesthetic Culture from Romanticism to Nietzsche* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

25 The term “holy music” first appeared in Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Lectures on Religion* from 1799, whence it was picked up by Johann Ludwig Tieck and Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder in *Fantasies on Art for Friends of Art* (1799). See the comprehensive two-volume collection that traces the intellectual history of art-religion: Albert Meier et al., *Kunstreligion* (Göttingen: De Gruyter, 2011). For the theological history of the concept, see Bernd Auerochs, *Die Entstehung der Kunstreligion* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006). For its manifestations in music discourse of the early Romantics, see Elizabeth Kramer, “The Idea of *Kunstreligion* in German Musical Aesthetics of the Early Nineteenth Century” (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2005).

26 Nicole Heinkel, *Religiöse Kunst, Kunstreligion und die Überwindung der Säkularisierung: Frühromantik als Sehnsucht und Suche nach der verlorenen Religion* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2004).

27 Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 84–86. While Mark Evan Bonds offers a more recent and comprehensive history of absolute music than that of Dahlhaus, a close definition of *Kunstreligion* and devotional listening does not factor substantially into that study: Bonds, *Absolute Music: The History of an Idea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Helmut Loos has defined *Kunstreligion*

largely discursively, tracing the frequency of words like “holy” (*heilig*) in early Romantic music writings: Loos, *E-Musik: Kunstreligion der Moderne. Beethoven und andere Götter* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2017), 15–28.

28 Karen Leistra-Jones, “Hans von Bülow and the Confessionalization of *Kunstreligion*,” *Journal of Musicology* 35/1 (2018): 42–75.

29 On deathbeds as apotheoses, see Abigail Fine, “Beethoven’s Mask and the Physiognomy of Late Style,” *Nineteenth-Century Music* 43/3 (2020): 143–69. On other forms of veneration for composers as saints, see Fine, “Objects of Veneration: Music and Materiality in the Composer-Cults of Germany and Austria, 1870–1930” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2017).

30 Asad, *Formations of the Secular*, 32.

31 Fine, “Beethoven’s Mask.”

32 “Schon äußerlich zeigt es sich, daß wir die Reliquien unserer großen Männer, ihren Autogrammen und Locken, ihre Federkielen und Tabakdosen eine ähnliche Schätzung widerfahren lassen, wie die katholische Kirche den Gebeinen, Geräten und Gewändern der Heiligen, wie die Hellenen den vermeintlichen Knochen des Theseus und anderer Kultheroen. Wir erbauen um die Gräber unserer Genies zwar keine Kapellen und opfern ihnen nicht schwarze Lämmer auf den Altären antiker Heroentempel, aber wir begraben jene gemeinsam in der Westminsterabtei und im Pariser Pantheon, oder wir errichten ihnen eine gemeinsame Walhalla, die zwar keine Gräber mehr, aber doch die Büsten der Verewigten, kurz, antike Kenotaphien enthält. Mit ähnlich heiliger Scheu wie nach Lourdes wallfahren wir zu diesen Geniegräbern, ziehen wir nach Weimar, nach Stratford on Avon [sic] und vor allem nach Bayreuth.” Zisel, *Geniereligion* (1918), 3–4.

33 Zisel, *Geniereligion*, 52 and fn. 1. The early biopic to which he alludes was *Der Märtyrer seines Herzens*, also called *Beethoven und die Frauen*, a 1917 silent film directed by Emil Justiz.

34 Zisel’s approach, not coincidentally, mirrors that of Marx and Engels in the premises of their materialist method, which demystified the idealist dogmas of their rivals: “The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but *real* premises from which abstraction can only be made in the imagination. They are the *real* individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity.” Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998; orig. 1845), 36. I am indebted to Roy Chan for teasing out this connection.

35 Edgar Zisel, “Mozart und die Zeit: Eine didaktische Phantasie,” *Der Brenner* (December 1912): 268–71.

36 “Da fühlte ich mich einsam, von Sehnsucht nach einem Menschen, nach Mozart und ich wollte ihm dienen. Doch als ich ihn hier oben suchte und die Töne nach ihrem Schöpfer fragte, da begann ein Tosen, aus allen Winkeln kamen reihen von Tönen gelaufen und kletterten übereinander, trennten sich wieder und kehrten um zu tausendfacher Verwicklung und durch das All tollte die Schlussfuge aus der Jupitersymphonie.” *Ibid.*, 269.

37 “Schlammströme krochen aus Mozarts Grab und vereinigten sich zu einem Ozean von Brei, der, verdünnt durch immer neue Regenfluten, langsam answoll und alles unter sich begrabend nur faules Laub zum fahlen Firmament emportrug. Die Blätter wuchsen ins Unermeßliche und auf dem bedruckten Papiere blähten sich Kröten in schleimigem Glanz. Rabenflügelig kreiste ein Grammophon und krächzte die neueste Operette. In der Tauche aber wimmelte es; ein Klumpen von zappelnden Wagnerianern und anderen titanischen Kommis hatte sich unter dem Zeitungspapier hervorgearbeitet und das rettende Floß erklettert, da zerrten sie die anderen an den langen Haaren wieder hinab: klebrige Maden, gemästet vom gestorbenen Rokoko, und Heimatskünstler. Ganz zu unterst auf dem Grund wand sich die fabelhafte Seeschlange, die sich in den Schwanz biß: der zum Fortschritt fortschreitende Fortschritt.” *Ibid.*, 271.

38 My remarks in this passage represent but a few key developments of a much richer history of *Bildung* traced by Rebekka Horlacher in *The Educated Subject and the German Concept of Bildung: A Comparative Cultural History* (New York, London: Routledge, 2016).

39 Joseph S. Bloch, “Das Problem des Antisemitismus,” *Österreichische Wochenschrift. Centralorgan für die gesammten Interessen des Judentums* 2/1 (Jan. 2, 1885): 1; translated and discussed by Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews (1867–1938): A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

40 Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 67. The passage about a search for neutral society reads in full: “‘Jewish emancipation’ was, among other things, a search by individual Jews for a neutral (or at least ‘semineutral,’ in Jacob Katz’s terms) society where neutral actors could share a neutral secular culture.” *Ibid.*, 51.

41 Ernest Gellner, *Language and Solitude: Wittgenstein, Malinowski, and the Habsburg Dilemma*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); see also the Introduction to David Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum: Political Ideology, German Identity, and Music-Critical Discourse in Liberal Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1–23.

42 Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum*. Brodbeck builds upon the arguments of Pieter M. Judson in “Not Another Square Foot!”: German Liberalism and the Rhetoric of National Ownership in 19th-Century Austria,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 26 (1995): 83–97.

43 Enzo Traverso has argued against the widespread idea of a German-Jewish symbiosis; instead, he shows how Jewish intellectuals operated as pariahs, pushing against the continued resistance of German colleagues. Enzo Traverso, *The Jews and Germany: From the ‘Judeo-German Symbiosis’ to the Memory of Auschwitz* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995). On the Jews’ position as cultural arbiters in Vienna, see Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews*.

44 Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians*; Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity: The Jews of Habsburg Austria During World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

45 On the many shades of assimilation beyond Germany and Austria, see the collected essays in Jonathan Frankel and Steven J. Zipperstein, eds., *Assimilation and Community: The Jews in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

46 Karl Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” in David McLellan, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 46–63.

47 Enzo Traverso, *The Jewish Question: History of a Marxist Debate*, trans. Bernard Gibbons (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019).

48 On the composition of Vienna’s Jewish population in Zilsel’s time, see David Rechter, *Jews of Vienna and the First World War* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2000), 16–18; on Siegmund Kaznelson’s Congress movement, which explored political autonomy and Jewish unity during the war, see Rechter’s chapter 4, pp. 129–60. On the musical manifestations of this divide between the recent immigrant wave and the more acculturated Jew in popular broadsides, see chapter 7 of Philip V. Bohlman, *Jewish Music and Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 147–80.

49 Marsha L. Rozenblit, *Reconstructing a National Identity*; Silverman, *Becoming Austrians*.

50 On how Jewish identity was shaped in spaces of leisure, see Shachar M. Pinsker, *A Rich Brew: How Cafés Created Modern Jewish Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2018);

Sarah Wobick-Segev, *Homes Away from Home: Jewish Belonging in Twentieth-Century Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018); Mary Gluck, *The Invisible Jewish Budapest: Metropolitan Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016). On Jewish assimilation and identity in Vienna in the nineteenth century, see Klaus Hödl, *Wiener Juden, jüdische Wiener: Identität, Gedächtnis, und Performanz im 19. Jahrhundert* (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2006).

51 The debate was particularly heated in 1868 at the start of the project to erect a Friedrich Schiller monument, with Frankl serving as vice president of the committee; see Herlinde Aichner, “Ludwig August Frankl – Politiker der Erinnerung,” in *Ludwig August Frankl (1810–1894): Eine jüdische Biographie zwischen Okzident und Orient*, ed. Louise Hecht (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), 275–89.

52 Sander Gilman has discussed the special repugnance for the *Mischling* in Vienna: Gilman, *Smart Jews: The Construction of the Image of Jewish Superior Intelligence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 132–43.

53 Hofmannsthal’s utopian language appears in his essays on the Salzburg Festival in Bernd Schoeller, ed., *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 8: *Reden und Aufsätze I* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1979). Lisa Silverman has shown how Hofmannsthal’s collaborator, Max Reinhardt, negotiated his identity quite differently: he worked with Hofmannsthal on the annual production of *Jedermann* at the Salzburg cathedral, which couched the Salzburg Festival as a Catholic-Baroque endeavor, while also directing Yiddish theater in Vienna; see chapter 4 in Lisa Silverman, *Becoming Austrians*, 141–71. Meanwhile, this same performance met with antisemitic protest during its premiere in 1920; see Michael P. Steinberg, *The Meaning of the Salzburg Festival: Austria as Theater and Ideology, 1890–1938* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 169.

54 On Herzl the Wagnerite, see Leah Garrett, *A Knight at the Opera: Heine, Wagner, Herzl, Peretz, and the Legacy of Der Tannhäuser* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011); see also Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

55 Paul Bekker and Hans Pfitzner had already sparred publicly about Ferruccio Busoni, but the debate turned to the topic of antisemitism in 1919 when Pfitzner issued his polemical essay in the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* in Munich, “Neue Ästhetik der musikalischen Impotenz” (reprinted in his *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 [Augsburg: Benno Filser Verlag, 1926], 99–282). The target of

Pfitzner's multipart diatribe was Bekker's biography *Beethoven* (Berlin: Schuster and Loeffler, 1912); Bekker felt compelled to respond with his essay "Impotenz—oder Potenz?" *Frankfurter Zeitung* (Jan. 15 and 16, 1920; repr. in *Anbruch 2* [1920]: 133–41). In the 1926 second edition of his collected writings, Pfitzner penned a Foreword in response to Bekker that only deepened his antisemitic paranoia about the Jewish "war on *Deutschtum*" (Pfitzner, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 113). On this and similar debates among music critics, see Karen Painter, "Jewish Identity and Anti-Semitic Critique in the Austro-German Reception of Mahler, 1900–1945," in Jeremy Barham, ed., *Perspectives on Gustav Mahler* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 175–94.

56 Brodbeck, *Defining Deutschtum*.

57 Adler wrote that "those passions that have been so pathologically aroused in our time may play no role. Instead, they must be confronted in a candid, manly fashion and calmly discussed, and all points of disagreement must be considered circumspectly." Adler, *Richard Wagner: Vorlesungen gehalten an der Universität zu Wien* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1904), 189–90; translated by Kevin Karnes in *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth-Century Vienna* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 187.

58 See chapter 5 of Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History*, 133–59.

59 Sherry D. Lee, "The Other in the Mirror, or, Recognizing the Self: Wilde's and Zemlinsky's Dwarf," *Music & Letters* 91/2 (2010): 198–223; Pao-Hsiang Wang, "Crisis of Identity of German Jews in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna: Operas and Plays by Hofmannsthal, Schnitzler, Zemlinsky, and Schreker" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1999).

60 On Nordau's participation in an ideology of muscular Judaism, see Todd Samuel Presner, *Muscular Judaism: The Jewish Body and the Politics of Regeneration* (New York: Routledge, 2007) and Moshe Zimmermann, "Muscle Jews Versus Nervous Jews," in Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni, eds., *Emancipation through Muscles: Jews and Sports in Europe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 13–26.

61 Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).

62 Klára Móricač, *Jewish Identities: Nationalism, Racism, and Utopianism in Twentieth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

63 Bloch to Fleg, Jan. 30, 1913; translated and cited by Móricač, *Jewish Identities*, 114.

64 Darrin M. McMahon, "The Religion of Genius," in *Divine Fury: A History of Genius* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 189–228.

65 Julia Barbara Köhne, *Geniekult in Geisteswissenschaften und Literaturen um 1900 und seine filmischen Adaptionen* (Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2014), 190–228; see also Köhne's essay "The Cult of Genius in Germany and Austria at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century," in Joyce E. Chaplin and Darrin M. McMahon, eds., *Genealogies of Genius* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 115–35. Köhne was not the first to speculate about Zilsel's hidden Jewish reaction: see also Johann Dvořák, "Wissenschaft als Gesellschaftliche Auseinandersetzung und als kollektiver Arbeitsprozess—Edgar Zilsel und sein Werk," in Haller and Stadler, eds., *Der Aufstieg der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie*, 424–46.

66 Marsha L. Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1874–1914: Assimilation and Identity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Steven Beller, *Vienna and the Jews*.

67 ". . . and so we had to learn from men like Chamberlain not only that there is a racial difference between Jews and Germans; not only that the Aryan race is a very contemplative race and is thus meant to rule the world; not only that the Jewish race is an inferior one and should be despised; but also that we possess no artistic capabilities. . . . One must understand the effect of these assertions on young artists." Arnold Schoenberg, "Two Speeches on the Jewish Situation," in *Style and Idea*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 503 (my revised translation).

68 Richard Taruskin has discussed the response by the non-Jewish Eduard Bernsdorf, which reveals a latent late nineteenth-century tension between industrial progress and antimodern Romanticism, with Jews caught in the ideological crossfire; Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3: 228. While Jewish intellectuals such as Heinrich Berl, J. E. de Sinoja, and Salli Levi reviled Wagner's polemics, they shared a tendency to associate Jewish music with liturgical song, which tied its sound to the Jewish body and barred it from access to absolute music; see Bohlman, *Jewish Music and Modernity*, 189–202.

69 Pamela M. Potter, "Jewish Music and German Science," in Philip V. Bohlman, ed., *Jewish Musical Modernism, Old and New* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 89–101; on the problematic opposition that remained in music history texts, see Taruskin, *Oxford History of Western Music*, 3: 179. On

the changes in the music industry that allowed Jews to thrive, and that incited Wagner's reactionary text, see Conway, *Jewry in Music*, 257–66.

70 On Weininger's reception, see Nancy A. Harrowitz and Barbara Hyams, eds., *Jews and Gender: Responses to Otto Weininger* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

71 In Chamberlain's Preface to *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, he writes that "there is something higher and holier than knowledge: that is life itself. That which I have written here has been *experienced*. Should some factual declarations be an exaggerated error, some judgments a prejudice, some conclusions an error of judgment, nothing is entirely untrue: for isolated reason often lies, while real life never does . . . a deep feeling runs beneath, beyond the individual, and even as prejudice and ignorance may distort interpretation, a kernel of living truth *must* lie therein" (my translation). ". . . er mußte sich sagen, daß es etwas gibt, höher und heiliger als alles Wissen: das ist das Leben selbst. Was hier geschrieben steht, ist *erlebt*. Manche tatsächliche Angabe mag ein überkommener Irrtum, manches Urteil ein Vorurteil, manche Schlußfolgerung ein Denkfehler sein, ganz unwahr ist nichts; denn die verwaiste Vernunft lügt häufig, das volle Leben nie: ein bloss Gedachtes kann ein luftiges Nichts, die Irrfahrt eines losgerissenen Individuums sein, dagegen wurzelt ein tief Gefühletes in Ausser- und Überpersönlichem, und mag auch Vorurteil und Ignoranz die Deutung manchmal festgestalten, ein Kern lebendiger Wahrheit *muß* darin liegen." Chamberlain, *Grundlagen*, vol. 1, 25th ed. (Munich: F. Bruckmann, 1940), xiii.

72 Zilsel, *Geniereligion*, 192 and 234, respectively.

73 The quote by Chamberlain, to which Zilsel objects, reads: "In contrast, 'dear Baruch' sat from birth until death in his little chamber and thought about work that he had read by Descartes and Bruno and recombined it (with incomparable skill) to make a texture of syllogisms." Zilsel was further disturbed that this quotation was the only mention of Spinoza in the entire text. Zilsel, *Geniereligion*, 232; citing a passage from Chamberlain, *Immanuel Kant* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1905), 346.

74 On reactions to Chamberlain, see Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*, 52–60.

75 Paul Lawrence Rose, "One of Wagner's Jewish Friends: Berthold Auerbach and His Unpublished Reply to Richard Wagner's Antisemitism (1881)," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 36/1 (January 1991): 219–28.

76 Joseph Jacobs in a passage translated and cited by Slezkine, *The Jewish Century*, 53.

77 It should be noted that Gomperz's essay, written in 1904 and discussed at length by Sander Gilman, was both unpublished and untitled; but his sentiments, however private, were echoed by other Viennese thinkers of his time, notably those who debated Marx's "Jewish Question." See Gilman, *Smart Jews*, 107.

78 Rudolf Richter [Edgar Zilsel], "Das Dritte Reich und die Wissenschaft," *Der Kampf* 26 (1933): 486–93.

79 On Bach's skull, see David Yearsley, "Physiognomies of Bach's Counterpoint," in *Bach and the Meanings of Counterpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 209–38. On music-loving doctors who fetishized composers' remains: Abigail Fine, "Geniology as *Kunstreligion*: Measuring the Divine in the Composer's Body," paper delivered at the American Musicological Society Annual Meeting in Boston, November 2019. On the ritual exhumations, processions, and reburials of composers in Vienna's Zentralfriedhof, see Reuben Phillips, "Exhumations, Honorary Graves, and the Fashioning of Vienna's Self-Image as the 'City of Music,'" *Musical Quarterly* 102/2–3 (2019): 303–49.

80 Marian Wilson Kimber, "Never Perfectly Beautiful: Physiognomy, Jewishness, and Mendelssohn Portraiture," in Nicole Grimes and Angela R. Mace, eds., *Mendelssohn Perspectives* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012; repr. Taylor & Francis, 2016), 9–30.

81 K. M. Knittel, *Seeing Mahler: Music and the Language of Antisemitism in Fin-de-siècle Vienna* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).

82 Zilsel, *Geniereligion*, 114.

83 *Ibid.*, 105. Lichtenberg wrote: "How much depends on the way things are presented in this world can be seen from the very fact that coffee drunk out of wine glasses is really miserable stuff, as is meat cut at the table with a pair of scissors. Worst of all, as I once actually saw, is butter spread on a piece of bread with an old though very clean razor." Lichtenberg, *The Lichtenberg Reader: Selected Writings of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg*, trans. and ed. Franz H. Mautner and Henry Hatfield (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), 99–100.

84 On the debate about Wagner's degeneracy, see Thomas Grey, "Wagner the Degenerate: Fin de Siècle Cultural 'Pathology' and the Anxiety of Modernism," *Nineteenth Century Studies* 16 (2002): 73–92; Laurence Dreyfus, "Pathologies," in *Wagner and the Erotic Impulse* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 117–74; Isolde Vetter, "Wagner in the History of Psychology," trans. Stewart Spencer, in *The Wagner Handbook*, ed.

Ulrich Müller and Peter Wapnewski (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 118–55; and James Kennaway, “Modern Music and Nervous Modernity,” in *Bad Vibrations: The History of the Idea of Music as a Cause of Disease* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), 63–98.

85 Fine, “Objects of Veneration.”

86 For Margarete Koelman’s Beethoven poems in translation, see Appendix 2.2 of Fine, “Objects of Veneration,” 344–50. For her memoir, see “Dschang und Dschau: Nach dem Leben von Irene Wild,” *Deutsche Verlag-Anstalt* (1910): 316–22.

87 Leon Botstein, “Schenker the Regressive: Observations on the Historical Schenker,” *Musical Quarterly* 86/2 (2002): 242.

88 Cook argues that traces of Talmudic thinking lurk between the lines of Schenker’s ambition to assimilate; see Cook, “The Politics of Assimilation” in *The Schenker Project* (Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2007), 199–229. Martin Eybl explores the tensions in Schenker’s identity, which was divided among Polish, Galician, Jewish, Viennese, and overarching “German”: see Eybl, “Heinrich Schenker’s Identities as a German and a Jew,” *Musicologica Austriaca* (Sept. 21, 2018), <http://www.musau.org/parts/neue-article-page/view/54> (accessed Nov. 21, 2019).

89 Philip A. Ewell, “Music Theory and the White Racial Frame,” *Music Theory Online* 26/2 (2020).

90 Zilsel, *Geniereligion*, 229.

91 Heinrich Schenker, “The Mission of German Genius,” in *Der Tonwille: Pamphlets in Witness of the Immutable Laws of Music, Offered to a New Generation of Youth*, ed. William Drabkin, trans. Ian Bent, William Drabkin, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1: 3–20.