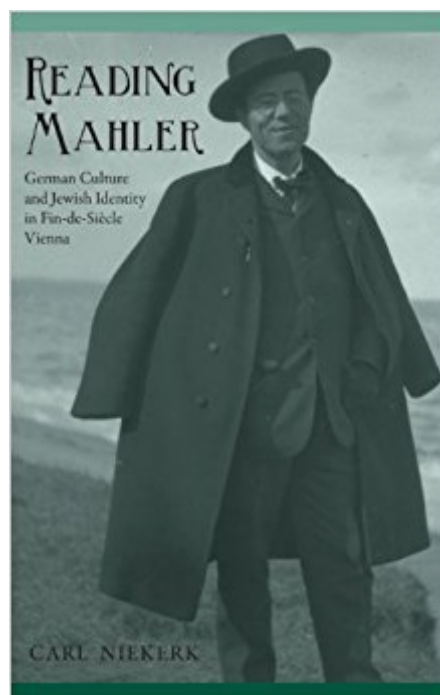




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Reading Mahler: German Culture And Jewish Identity In Fin-de-Si cle Vienna (Studies In German Literature Linguistics And Culture)



Synopsis

Gustav Mahler's music is more popular than ever, yet few are aware of its roots in German literary and cultural history in general, and in fin-de-si cle Viennese culture in particular. Taking as its point of departure the many references to literature, philosophy, and the visual arts that Mahler uses to illustrate the meaning of his music, *Reading Mahler* helps audiences, critics, and those interested in musical and cultural history understand influences on Mahler's music and thinking that may have been self-evident to middle-class Viennese a hundred years ago but are much more obscure today. It shows that Mahler's oeuvre, despite its reliance on texts and images from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is far more indebted to fin-de-si cle modernism and to an eclectic, proto-avantgardist agenda than has been previously realized. Furthermore, *Reading Mahler* is the first book to make Mahler's position within German-Jewish culture its analytical center. It also probes Mahler's problematic but often overlooked relationship with the musical and textual legacy of Richard Wagner. By integrating newer approaches in humanistic research - cultural studies, gender studies, and Jewish studies - *Reading Mahler* exposes the composer's critical view of German cultural history and offers a new understanding of his music. Carl Niekerk is Professor in the Department of German, the Program in Comparative and World Literature, and the Program in Jewish Culture and Society at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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