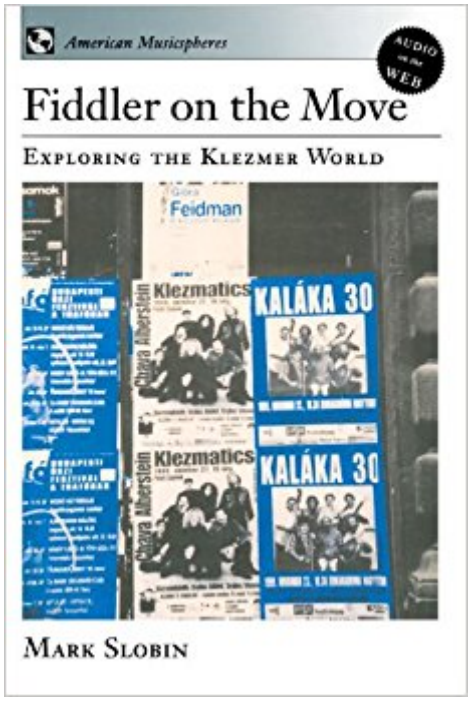
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# Fiddler On The Move: Exploring The Klezmer World (American Musicspheres)




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## Synopsis

"Klezmer" is a Yiddish word for professional folk instrumentalist-the flutist, fiddler, and bass player that made brides weep and guests dance at weddings throughout Jewish eastern Europe before the culture was destroyed in the Holocaust, silenced under Stalin, and lost out to assimilation in America. Klezmer music is now experiencing a tremendous new spurt of interest worldwide with both Jews and non-Jews recreating this restless volatile, and vibrant musical culture. Firmly centered in the United States, klezmer has paradoxically moved back across the Atlantic as a distinctly "American" music, played throughout central and eastern Europe, as well as in many other parts of the world.  Fiddler on the Move places klezmer music squarely within American music studies, cultural studies, and ethnomusicology. Neither a chronology nor a comprehensive survey, the book describes a variety of approaches and perspectives for coming to terms with the highly diverse array of activities found under the klezmer umbrella. Bringing to his subject the insights of an accomplished ethnomusicologist, Slobin addresses such questions as: How does klezmer overlap with, and differ from, the many other contemporary "heritage" musics based on an assumed connection with a group identity and links to a tradition? How do economics, artistic expression, and the evocation of the past interact in motivating klezmer performers and audiences? In what kinds of environment does klezmer flourish? How do stylistic features such as genre, form, and ornamentation help to define the technique, affect, and aesthetic of klezmer? Featuring a music CD with many of the archival and contemporary recordings discussed in the text, this fascinating study will interest scholars, students, musicians, and music lovers

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In an introductory disclaimer, author Slobin, a faculty member at Wesleyan University, explains that his book does not aim to be a chronology or a comprehensive survey of Klezmer. (Readers searching for those would do well to read Seth Rogovoy’s recent tome, The Essential Klezmer: A Music Lover’s Guide to Jewish Roots and Soul Music from the Old World to the Jazz Age to the Downtown Avant-Garde, LJ 6/15/00.) Compared to Rogovoy’s book, Slobin’s is more academic in tone, somewhat drier, and not quite as current. Nonetheless, Klezmer fans will find a great deal of valuable material. Slobin focuses on several different perspectives, which make up the central four chapters: "Klezmer as a Heritage Music," "Klezmer as an Urge," "Klezmer as Community," and "Klezmer Style as a Statement." The latter section includes some systematic musicological analysesDincluding sonograms of melodic ornamentsDthat may perplex the lay reader. In general, though, the book is well researched and rich in anecdotes and makes a compelling case for the importance of Klezmer in American musical and cultural studies.DLarry Lipkis, Moravian Coll., Bethlehem, PA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Written by one of the most distinguished ethnomusicologists working today and accompanied by an illustrative CD, Fiddler on the Move is a thoughtful, essay-like contemplation of klezmer music in contemporary US society and of its culture-historical background....Addressing music scholars and informed music lovers, Slobin synthesizes theoretical perspectives from which klezmer music may be studied and thus contributes to ethnomusicological method and theory as well as to American and Jewish studies."--Choice"A beautifully written book on a timely topic....important for anyone interested in contemporary Jewish and American studies and current trends in ethnomusicology." --Notes"Well researched and rich in anecdotes...makes a compelling case for the importance of Klezmer in American musical and cultural studies." --Library Journal"Mark Slobin is probably the person best -placed to write about the klezmer revival. He has not only written extensively about Eastern European folk musics..., but may have been the first Jewish ethnomusicologist to see that the klezmer revival was relevant to Jewish music and Jewish community.....Here, Slobin puts the revival into a cultural and musical context that will be sheer delight to people engaged in playing the music, or wanting to understand that context better....Slobin’s insights and breadth of understanding contribute to an enormously wonderful volume. ...this is the first book about klezmer music and

about the klezmer revival that offers perspective and grounded historical fact....Once again, Mark Slobin writes the (so-far) definitive work. This is a book that was needed. Now I look forward to the next volume."--Ari Davidow, klezmershack.com"Klezmer enthusiasts, musical history buffs, musicians, and music lovers will find this book a fascinating study of why klezmer music continues to pull in so many listeners."--International Musician"Fiddler on the Move is written in a style that is very accessible....Slobin is at once more understanding and more critical of the music's past and its future. He cares about why people are called to klezmer, and how it functions in an age of world music....[The book] provides a rich sense of klezmer's historical and cultural roots, of the meaning of the music in both the old and new worlds....[He] gives the reader a sense of the music as it is played, with a detailed look at how several players interpret a common tune....Slobin does a great job of describing...the impact of so much loss of material on our understanding of klezmer today. This book will appeal to readers looking for insight into why klezmer pulls in so many listeners, [and] why it is we--and so many others--have developed a love for this music at this time."--Kim Bates, The Green Man Review"Slobin's metaphorical style and ease in writing soften the complex dialogue he creates between theoretical concerns and a diverse examination of klezmer. He has a knack for flowing in and out of specific lives and events as they relate to larger issues. This gives this book a textured yet comparative feel, a good example for how to go about doing ethnography."--Journal of American Folklore

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