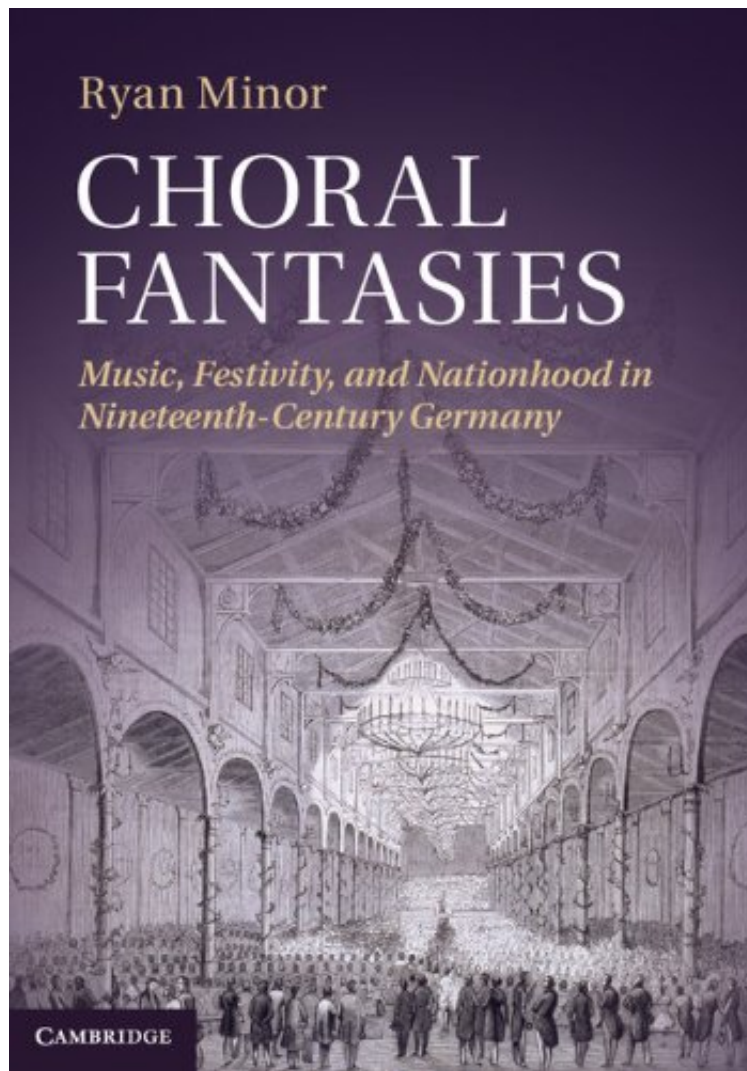


(Download free pdf) Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany

Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany

Ryan Minor

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Ryan Minor : Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Choral Fantasies: Music, Festivity, and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany:

Most histories of nineteenth-century music portray 'the people' merely as an audience, a passive spectator to the music

performed around it. Yet, in this reappraisal of choral singing and public culture, Minor shows how a burgeoning German bourgeoisie sang of its own collective aspirations, mediated through the voice of celebrity composers. As both performer and idealized community, the chorus embodied the possibilities and limitations of a participatory, national identity. Starting with the many public festivals at which the chorus was a featured participant, Minor's account of the music written for these occasions breaks new ground not only by taking seriously these often-neglected works, but also by showing how the contested ideals of German nationhood suffused the music itself. In situating both music and festive culture within the milieu of German bourgeois liberals, this study uncovers new connections between music and politics during a century that sought to redefine both spheres.

"With an elegant lightness, *Choral Fantasies* is entirely persuasive in making us think about the chorus not as a ready-made means or compliant vessel for the communication of national or political aspirations but as an aesthetic and social imaginary associated with a German festival culture. Look backing to ancient Greece and Rome, the chorus reemerged in the music practices of the nineteenth century in a highly charged political atmosphere. This new and courageous exploration offers musically astute and politically revisionary readings of the choral works of Brahms, Liszt, and Wagner, and much more besides." Lydia Goehr, Columbia University, New York

"*Choral Fantasies* is a penetrating study of the intricate workings of collective singing within the machinations of cultural nationalism in the nineteenth century. Minor draws up a carefully crafted and historically iridescent picture of changing notions of nationhood, the community and its charismatic leaders, from the cautious stirrings at the beginning of the century to the ebullient Hurratriotismus of the Bismarck years. With his sensitive musical observations and incisive reflections on historiography, Minor offers fascinating insights into the cultural work that choral music and choral singing performed in the nineteenth century." Alex Rehding, Fanny Peabody Professor of Music, Harvard University, Massachusetts

"Minor offers fresh approaches to several neglected choral works by major nineteenth-century composers (Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Wagner, and Brahms) written for German cultural festivals." Choice

"With admirable deftness, and an avoidance of the sociological or musicological jargon so often attendant upon such studies, Minor sketches a long-term shift in culture and class ..." R. J. Arnold, *European History Quarterly*

About the Author Ryan Minor is Associate Professor of Music at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. His research focuses primarily on the musical and political culture of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Germany, with special emphasis on opera, choral music and music's participation in the public sphere. He has published widely on Wagner and serves as an Associate Editor of *The Opera Quarterly*.