Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture

This engaging book explores the dynamic relationship between evolutionary science and musical culture in Victorian Britain, drawing upon a wealth of popular scientific and musical literature to contextualize evolutionary theories of the Darwinian and non-Darwinian Revolutions. Bennett Zon uses musical culture to question the hegemonic role ascribed to Darwin by later thinkers and interrogates the conceptual premise of modern debates in evolutionary musicology. Structured around the Great Chain of Being, chapters are organized by discipline in successively ascending order according to their object of study, from zoology and the study of animal music to theology and the music of God. Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture takes a non-Darwinian approach to the interpretation of Victorian scientific and musical interrelationships, debunking the idea that the arts had little influence on contemporary scientific ideas, and by probing the origins of musical interdisciplinarity the volume shows how music helped ideas about evolution to evolve.

Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture

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To Challoner and Gabriel,
my two wonderful children on the cusp of evolution
Contents

List of Figures [page viii]
Acknowledgements [x]
Introduction [1]
1 Zoomusicology [42]
2 Ethnomusicology [78]
3 Folk Musicology [115]
4 Music Pedagogy [150]
5 Music Biography [191]
6 Music History [226]
7 Music Theology [260]
Epilogue [296]

Bibliography [311]
Index [359]
Figures

I.1 Charles de Bovelles, *Physicorum elementorum* (1512) [page 24]
I.2 Ramon Llull, *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (written in 1304 and published in Valencia in 1512) [25]
I.3 Adam Saluziansky à Zaluzian, *Methodi herbariae libri tres* (1592) [26]
I.4 Charles Bonnet, *Traité d'insectologie* (1745) [27]
I.5 Charles Bonnet, *Contemplation de la nature* (1764) [28]
I.6 Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, *Philosophie Zoologique* (1809) [29]
I.7 Carl Edward von Eichwald, *Zoologia specialis* (1829) [30]
I.8 Charles Darwin, *Notebook B: Transmutation of Species* (1837–38) [31]
I.9 Charles Darwin, on the *Origin of Species* (1859) [32]
I.10 Ernst Haeckel, *The Evolution of Man*, vol. 2 (1879) [35]
I.11 Ernst Haeckel, *The Evolution of Man*, vol. 1 (1879) [36]
I.1 W. J. Gordon, *A Popular Natural History for Boys and Girls* (1894) [50]
I.2 Plan of the Gardens of the Zoological Society in the Regent’s Park: 1851 [52]
2.1 Tagore’s Great Chain of Musical Being [104]
2.2 Tagore’s Interpretation of Music History [106]
3.1 Title page, John Broadwood, *Old English Songs* (1847) [128]
4.1 John Curwen, ‘Mental Effects and Manual Signs of Tones in Key’, *The Standard Course of Lessons and Exercises in the Tonic Sol-Fa Method of Teaching Music* (1876) [169]
4.2 John Curwen, Exercises 7 to 12, *The Standard Course of Lessons and Exercises in the Tonic Sol-Fa Method of Teaching Music* (1876) [171]
List of Figures

ix


5.1 Front cover to Francis Hueffer, *Richard Wagner and the Music of the Future: History and Aesthetics* (1874) [220]

5.2 Ernst Haeckel, *The Evolution of Man* (1879) [221]
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