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"CONTENTS" PAGE (PAGE i).

Journal of Synagogue Music

The Journal of Synagogue Music (ISSN 1449-5128) is published annually by the Cantors Assembly. It offers articles and music of broad interest to the hazzan and other Jewish music professionals. Articles of any length will be considered, from 1,000 to 10,000 words.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING MATERIAL

All contributions and communications should be sent to the Editor: Dr. Joseph A. Levine, 1900 Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Textual and musical material, whether solicited or submitted, should be double-spaced in an 8 1/2 x 11-inch format, with a two-sentence biographical note appended.

Original copies may be submitted on paper or as attachment to an e-mail. Please include street address, e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers, as welll as a brief author biography..

Reference notes are to be placed at the bottom of each page, and should conform to the following style:

A. Abraham Idelsohn. *Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Holt), 1932: 244.

B. Samuel Rosenbaum, "Congregational Singing," *Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Convention* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary), February 22, 1949: 9-11.

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Journal of Synagogue Music

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FROM THE EDITOR:

MUSIC IN THERAPY AND PEDAGOGY

AROUND THE GLOBE

NUTS AND BOLTS

LOOKING BACK

LITERARY GLIMPSES

DIVREI TORAH/NEGINAH

MAIL BOX

REVIEWS

MUSIC

Shabbat Morning Solos for Bar or Bat Mitzvah, Congregation and Optional Cantor Obbliggato

Music as Pedagogic and Therapeutic Tool—for Whom?

This issue's **Feature section** takes its cue from a passionately argued 2004 proposal by our colleague Lilly Kaufman, an Editorial Board member at the time, and from a string of Internet postings in May of 2005. For two weeks, Hazzanet subscribers responded pro and con to a United Synagogue Review article that same Spring. It had proposed that Bar/Bat Mitzvah training change its priorities and teach students primarily to lead the service and only then, if there was time, to chant the Haftarah. The ensuing discussion involved some fifty messages, ranging from doomsday predictions that B'nei or B'not Mitzvah leading services spelled extinction for the cantorate, to apocalyptic warnings of Judaism's demise unless we educated children to act as prayer leaders in place of hazzanim. The only common thread that ran through this unprecedented gamut of opinions was the notion that teaching our youngsters to be better, more knowledgeable Jews—on or off the bimah—is perhaps a cantor's greatest responsibility.

If a Bar or Bat Mitzvah were truly musical and vocally gifted, however, most respondents agreed that it would be to everyone's benefit—including the congregation's —if that child were taught to chant selected portions of the liturgy, perhaps in tandem with the cantor.

The other side of that coin presents the challenge of enlisting Bar and Bat Mitzvah training as a means of empowering children with special needs. This issue's Cover story, "An Overview of Music Therapy, Its Relationship to Music Pedagogy, and Its Application in Empowering Jewish Adolescents with Special Needs to Succeed at Their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebrations" written by Music Therapist/Singer/Educator **Ava Lee Millman Fisher** of the West Side Medical Health Team in Vancouver, BC tackles this problem head on. It treats music as both an art and a science, shows how its dual powers have been harnessed in the past to enhance humankind's state of being and gives reasoned, proven techniques for allowing it to remedy Mother Nature's all-too-frequent oversights.

Two revealing essays on the biblical and rabbinic views of physical shortcomings accompany that lead article. The first, by **Lawrence A. Hoffman,** professor of liturgy, worship and ritual at Hebrew Union College in New

York, traces the revolutionary way our talmudic sages read the prohibition in Leviticus chapters 23 and 24 against anyone with a "defect" presiding over sacrificial offerings Already in the 9th century, Nastronai Gaon permitted a blind man to lead synagogue prayers. The second essay, by my predecessor as Journal editor and current director of the Cantor-Educator program at Hebrew College in Boston, **Scott Sokol,** documents how Mosaic law views the overcoming of disability as praiseworthy, to the point of advocating special education for that purpose.

Three relevant cases follow. The first was brought to our attention by colleague **Ruth L. Ross,** who devised an ingenious way to prepare a Bar Mitzvah whose genetic defect left him with almost no voluntary movement or speech beyond the ability to vocalize and match given pitches with great difficulty. The second, an exchange between Ava Lee Millman Fisher and our colleague **Pamela Sawyer,** concerned the challenge of integrating a legally blind woman with pitch problems into her Volunteer choir. By implementing suggestions from our featured therapist, Pamela found just the right niche for this gifted lady, who is a storyteller/maggid and teaches at a school for the sight-and-hearing impaired. The third case was a Hazzanet reply by **Sam Weiss** to the question of how to deal with Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates who are tone deaf. Our Feature section concludes with "Planning to Succeed in Teaching Prayer and Song in Afternoon Hebrew Schools," authored by a past Cantors Assembly president, **Sheldon Levin,** who also serves as principal of his congregation's Religious school.

The derived wisdom from all this? Strategic deployment of therapeutic regimens and pedagogic tools achieves optimal results through the use of *music that is sung by children.* Whether we call it the "Mozart effect" of psychological testing or the "An'im Zemirot moment" of Shabbat morning, nothing is more profoundly moving than the sound of a child's voice chanting Hebrew Scripture or prayer. For whom does that bell toll? ultimately for all of us.

* * * * * *

AROUND THE GLOBE opens with British-born musicologist **Charles Heller,** a high school teacher who also directs the male choir of Toronto's Congregation Beth Emeth Bais Yehudah, fulfilling a long-held personal goal by analyzing "The London Blue Book," a manual of congregational hymns, refrains and responses first published by England's United Synagogue (Orthodox) in London, 1899. In a survey of the process for engaging cantors in nineteenth-century Alsace, musicologist **John H. Planer** documents how a

Jewish communal self-governance system instituted by the French government affected cantors at the local level. That historical study is followed by journalist **Philipp Grammes'** report from present-day Munich on a revival of the Old South German synagogue choral tradition in Bavaria's capitol, using a male choir consisting of Russian and Israeli newcomers. Our Reform colleague, **Erik Contzius,** contributes an Opinion Piece in response to that development, on viability of the German tradition for today's synagogue. To round out the discussion a British Liberal rabbi, **James Baaden,** teams up with his congregant **Paul Mindus** in describing the recent London revival of a Friday Night service composed 71 years earlier in Berlin by Mr. Mindus' grandfather, Cantor Jakob Dymont.

NUTS AND BOLTS, which deals with technical aspects of hazzanut and allied disciplines, begins with a reconstruction by liturgist **Ruth Langer,** of how a liturgical section we now take for granted—the Torah service—took many centuries to evolve. **Steven C. Lorch,** founding head of Manhattan's Solomon Schechter School, takes the Aesthetics of Imperfection as a point of departure in discussing "Psychological Time and Improvisational Technique in Jewish Music." Rabbi/Cantor **Avraham Feder,** who lives in Jerusalem and is rabbi emeritus of the World Center for Conservative Judaism's Agron Street Synagogue, discusses four factors that may inhibit modern Jews from deriving the appropriate cathartic value from participation in public worship. **Mark Kligman,** a professor of Musicology at Hebrew Union College in New York, looks for common technical links in the techniques and materials used by klezmer musicians and hazzanim. Composer **Michael Isaacson** argues convincing against the insidious "crossing over" of American synagogue music into just plain American music.

LOOKING BACK contains a chapter from Jewish music publisher and researcher **Velvel Pasternak's** Jewish Music Companion, "The Golden Age of Cantors." In it he reveals the wide economic gap that separated *star* hazzanim from most American cantors during the early decades of last century. At that time **B. Shelvin,** Music Editor at New York's Yiddish daily *The Morning Journal,* published an essay on "The Future of Hazzanut in America," which took a dim view of its prospects for survival. Shelvin's reasons ring remarkably true eighty years later, which prompted us to translate it for this issue. Two memoirs follow, of beloved Cantors Institute instructors whose tenth Yahrzeit falls in 2006. Hazzan Max Wohlberg (b. 1907) helped found both the Cantors Assembly and Cantors Institute (now the H.L. Miller School of Cantorial Music), and chaired the latter's Nusah department. His remarkable ability to improvise on a given prayer text is analyzed by ethnomusicologist

Mark Slobin, chair of the Department of Music at Wesleyan University. Seminary Professor of Music Theory and Composition, Miriam Gideon (b. 1906) is remembered by her faculty colleague **Neil W. Levin,** who directs the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music.

A chronicle by the last of the Golden Age Cantors — **Samuel Vigoda** — of Gershon Sirota in his heyday as hazzan of the Tlomatzka Synagogue in Warsaw is the first of our LITERARY GLIMPSES of the cantorate. The second is a secret longing by contemporary poet **Jacqueline Osherow** to try her hand at medieval acrostics and penitential sonnets.

Richard Wolberg, an erudite student of Jewish mysticism, posits an eschatological aspect to the weekly Day of rest in DIVREI TORAH/NEGINAH, connecting the concept of Shabbat with that of Eternity. Your editor transposes that argument into music heard in the reflectively hopeful nusah of Minhah LeShabbat—whose liturgy mentions the World to Come—and traces the music's origins back to Kol Nidre.

Our MAIL BOX contains a congratulatory e-message from frequent Journal contributor **Joshua Jacobson** on our 2005 issue, and an informative comparison between singing and string playing, by retired CA member and orchestral concertmaster, **Sam Fordis.**

The REVIEWS section begins with **Laurence Loeb** placing Volume II of Sholom Kalib's *The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue* (2005), in its proper historical perspective. After Abraham Idelsohn's 10-volume *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies* (1923-1932), Kalib's monumental series promises to be the most comprehensive study on the subject ever published. **William Lieberman** relates how supplementary classroom material arranged and distributed by your editor during his teaching years at the Cantors Institute (1974-1982) were later gathered into the 1,112-page Hazzanic Compendium, *Ketonet Yosef* (2000), at the request of Dean Henry Rosenblum. **Alan Smolen** offers a constructive appraisal of *Evening Service for Yom Kippur* (2005), a preliminary excerpt from the new Rabbinical Assembly mahzor that's due out in 2008. Music critic **Bernard Jacobson** evaluates a representative selection of recordings from the Milken Archive Series, placing them within the framework of contemporary American music. "Meditation on the Modes," a close reading of Jeffrey Melnick's *A Right to Sing the Blues* — by **Gershon Friedlin** — traces the central role of Jewish and African American music in popular culture. **Joshua Jacobson,** whose comprehensive *Chanting the Hebrew Bible* has set a new standard for cantillation studies, discusses a new book by Victor Tunkel on the *Western Ashkenazic Bible Reading Tradition* that prevails in Great Britain. Finally, Cantors Assembly Executive Vice

President **Stephen J. Stein** pays homage to a revered teacher in analyzing a new CD of hazzanic recitatives by Moshe Taubé: *The Works of a Master Cantor.*

Our MUSIC section picks up on the Hazzanet discussion mentioned earlier, presenting prayers from Musaf LeShabbat, from *Ashrei* through *Adon Olam.* They are newly arranged **settings for solo Bar/Bat Mitzvah** (treble voice) and congregation, with optional Cantor obbligatos that offer alternative lines for high or low voice.

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We apologize to Mr. **Leon Kellerman** of the *Jewish Exponent* (Philadelphia) for a photo of his that we ran on page 165 of the Fall 2005 Journal. By way of making amends we offer it again— this time with full credit.

The Spanish/Portuguese Synagogue
Bevis Marks in London, UK.
Photo by Leon Kellerman

Lastly, we take editorial pride in informing you that the Journal's 2005 issue is now being used as a teaching text by cantorial schools at the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York, at Gratz College in Philadelphia and at the Academy for Jewish Religion in California. We'd love to hear from students of those programs regarding their use of the material.

Joseph A. Levine

Music in Therapy & Pedagogy

An Overview of Music Therapy, Its Relationship to Music Pedagogy, and Its Application in Empowering Jewish Adolescents with Special Needs to Succeed at Their Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebrations

by Ava Lee Millman Fisher

Prelude

After creating humankind, goes an old legend, God turned to the angels and asked them for their opinion of the world which He had made. They responded that the only element that was lacking was the sound of praise to the Creator. So, God created music—the voice of birds, the whispering wind, the murmuring ocean, and planted melody in people's hearts.

This is a gift that God has presented to each of us—no exclusions or exceptions; and I strongly believe that as musicians and educators, it is our responsibility and our duty to enable all to partake in this aesthetic wonder and awe that we term "music".

I write this article wearing many hats (some fitting better than others). I am a qualified music therapist, currently working with adults who suffer from chronic and persistent psychiatric problems, as well as with children with special needs. I am also a watercolor painter, and have found that often the employment of one expressive art medium leads to advantageous gains in another. I, therefore, frequently use music along with other integrated creative arts therapies in my practice.

Prior to returning to university to complete the music therapy program, I was a performer and music teacher (to this day, I love to do substitute teaching in music and art when my schedule permits). My post-secondary education commenced at McGill University where I studied voice performance and graduated in opera and lieder. Subsequently, my passion turned to Hebrew and Yiddish song, and as a lirico-spinto soprano, I have given numerous performances in this area of music.

Among my other creative accomplishments I am the mother of four sons, the oldest of whom lives with a moderate disability. He has Tourette's syn-

drome (but it does not have him!), which includes some learning disabilities, some attention deficit disorder, some hyperactivity, etc. I have been a strong and constant advocate for him, and although miracles are not within my realm, nevertheless, I believe the results sing out *fortissimo* for themselves

Although my son graduated from a private Hebrew school, the teachers were convinced that a Bar Mitzvah would not and could not be within his scope. Wearing my "mother hat" I disagreed, and spoke to the Bar Mitzvah Teacher/Torah Reader of our Synagogue. He felt that this was certainly a possibility, and together we set about to ensure that it would occur. With no exaggeration, he was outstanding! Many of his schoolteachers who attended approached me with tears in their eyes**.** As an outcome of this, the Bar Mitzvah teacher as well as others who were familiar with the background of the situation started referring other B'nei and B'not Mitzvah to me if it was felt that some type of motivational, psychological, or therapeutic assistance would prove beneficial. Voice production work and stage deportment exercises also proved helpful. I have found that, as ancillary gains, these often aid in increasing confidence and in reducing performance anxiety.

I cannot overemphasize the profound effect that becoming a Bar Mitzvah had on my son. Ten years later we had a Reaffirmation Celebration of sorts for him, and he repeated his Torah portion with as much fervency, knowledge and joy as he had the first time. I firmly believe that the entire Bar Mitzvah process had a life-altering effect on him — both as a man and as a Jew. I have subsequently seen similar results (although always unique and individualized) when working with other young people who have a variety of special needs.

Music as medicine: a time-honored modality

"What is music?" asked Heinrich Heine (1797-1856). He concluded that "its domain is between thought and phenomena. Like a twilight mediator it hovers between spirit and matter, related to both, yet differing from each. It is spirit, but it is spirit subject to the measurement of time. It is matter, but it is matter that can dispense with space."[1]

In an attempt to better comprehend Heine's comment, our investigation must begin by considering the origin and development of music as well as the means by which it evolved. So long as humankind accepted the various

[1] *Letters on the French Stage* (1837), cited in Nat Shapiro, *An Encyclopedia of Quotations about Music* (New York: Da Capo), 1977:13.

phenomena of musical sounds as isolated facts there could be no involvement of either art or science. That partnership lay dormant until humans began to use musical sounds to minister to their pleasure, and to study those sounds and their effects. The story of music is the record of a series of attempts to make artistic and scientific use of material which the ear accepts as capable of affording pleasure, and as useful in expressing one's innermost feelings.

Harnessing the power of music in an attempt to enhance or improve mankind's state of being is not a new or revolutionary concept. From its practice in ancient Egypt, India and Greece, through medieval times, music was—more often than not—both composed and performed with the concept of healing in mind. The very origin of the word "music"–*musiki*–the arts of the Muses, harks back to the ancient Greeks. This word referred to the nine Muses, goddesses of inspiration. Music was considered to be such an important aspect of Greek culture that it was used in all facets of life, including medical treatment. Pythagoras (582-507 B.C.E.) felt that all knowledge was based on harmonic numbers, and that by extrapolation, this could be used in medical treatment and in the healing process. Boethius (520–484 B.C.E.), in his treatise on music, *De Musica Institutione,* retold many instances of Pythagoras having used the melodic aspect of music as a means of healing and soothing those who were ill and distressed.[2] Boethius also posed a question that was to exert a long-term influence on the efficacy of music. He asked, "How does it happen that when someone voluntarily listens to a song with ears and mind, he is also involuntarily turned toward it in such a way that his body responds with motions somehow similar to the song heard?"[3] The early Christian apologist Aristides (ca.140) referred to music as being essentially a form of psychotherapy that unites not only the individual in friendship with himself, but also promotes a mutual friendship amongst others.[4]

The ancient Persians, believing that music was an expression of a higher principle, are said to have employed the sound of the lute to cure a variety of illness and "dis-ease." It was primarily in the mystical schools of the Sufis, who emphasized the immediate personal union of the soul with God, that

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[2] Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius. *Fundamentals of Music*, Calvin M. Bower, tr., Claude V.Palisca, ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 1989.

[3] M. M. Wanderly & M. Battier. *Trends In Gestural Control of Music* (Paris: Ircam—Centre Pompidou), 2000:259.

[4] Florence Tyson. *Psychiatric Music Therapy* (New York: Fred Weidener & Son Printers), 1981:4.

music was regarded as a path to enlightenment.[5] The belief that illness was caused by the possession of an evil spirit, especially with regard to mental disorder, permeated the ancient world. Babylonia and ancient Egypt witnessed the birth of a rational attitude to illness. The Egyptians felt that music was "psychic for the soul," and placed great faith in its comforting and curative powers. Among Egyptian deities, Isis—the nature goddess, and Serapis—the maker god, were considered the great healers.[6]

In the history of Biblical Israel, there are several instances attesting to the effect of music on the psyche. Much of the music, in distinction from that of surrounding nations, was not meant to be sensuous, but rather a *musica sacra*; in this respect more a matter of religion than of art. The ancient Israelites consciously recognized, however, that the sound of instruments had the power to stir or soothe the human spirit. Young David's playing of a hand-held lyre brought King Saul relief from deep depression. "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took the harp and played with his hand; so Saul found relief, and it was well with him, and the evil spirit departed from him" (First Samuel 16:14-23). During David's reign as king, the Levites were organized as official singers for the Temple services. A number of them were specifically designated as "prophesiers to the accompaniment of lyres, harps and cymbals" (First Chronicles 25:1).

Music played to inspire prophets to prophesy was not accompanied by lyrics; perhaps it was felt that the words would detract from the power and purity of the music. Only when a minstrel played was Elisha able to prophesy: "But now bring me a minstrel," said Elisha. "And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him, and he prophesied" (Second Kings 3:15).

The Israelites grew in numbers under the most adverse circumstances, and of necessity they developed a temperament that was indifferent to environmental conditions but sensitive to high spiritual aspirations. The effect of the injunction against the making of "graven images" was to cut them off from exercising the aesthetic faculty in sculpture or painting, and their unsettled mode of life prevented an outlet through architecture. As a result, they poured out the strength of their passionate, powerful natures in poetry and song. Their efforts continued to be earnest and dignified; it must have been of a very high caliber as witnessed by the Babylonian exhortation, "Sing us of the Songs of Zion" (Psalms 137:3).

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[5] Peter M. Hamel. *Through Music to the Self*, Peter Lemesurier, tr. (London: Element Books, Ltd.), 1981:81-82.

[6] Juliette Alvin. *Music Therapy* (London: John Clare Books), 1975:28-29; 37.

As history progressed, music and medicine continued to be conjoined in an important and unique partnership, and a wide variety of musical sounds were employed in a conscious attempt to heal disorder and dis-ease of mind and body. Jewish mystical writings as early as the eighth century contain the vision of a universe in a harmony in which "not only the angels sing: the stars, the spheres, the *merkavah* (chariot-throne) and the beasts, the trees in the Garden of Eden and their perfumes, indeed the whole universe sings before God."[7]

Saadiah ben Joseph (882-942), Gaon of the Babylonian academy in Surah, was of the opinion that specific rhythms could impact strongly on particular moods and dis-eases. He described eight rhythmic modes (as opposed to melodic modes) which, he felt, "enhance gladness, delight, generosity, nobility, and sympathy…enhancing graciousness and love."[8]

Perhaps there is no real division between God's music and His words. Abraham Abulafia (thirteenth century) compared the intellectual exercise of the Kabbalist, working on his letter combinations, to that of musical composition, believing that both endeavors exerted a similar influence on the soul. Abulafia combined Hebrew letters as if they were musical notes forming a melody. In an attempt to achieve oneness with God he would concentrate on the "music" formed by countless variations of the letters, which were always derived from the many names of God. Amnon Shiloah explains that "the combination of letters creates enjoyment in the soul just as musical harmony does, because of the unveiling of secrets confined in such combinations."[9] For Abulafia, writes Cantor Adelle Nicholson in her Masters thesis on the subject, divinely inspired ecstasy could be attained only in isolation.[10] It is interesting to note that this was contrary to the opinion of Hasidim who came to believe that one must be involved in community and under the guidance of a *rebbe* (spiritual master) in order to achieve *d'veikut* ("cleaving" to God.) Still, continues Nicholson,

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[7] Amnon Shiloah. "The Symbolism of Music in the Kabbalistic Tradition," in *World of Music*, Vol. 22, Max Peter Baumann, ed. (Mainz: Schott Musik International), 1978:64.

[8] Kay Gardner. *Sounding the Inner Landscape* (Stonington, Maine: Caduceus Publications), 1990:96-98.

[9] Amnon Shiloah. *loc. cit.,* 1978:58.

[10] Adelle Nicholson. *Healing, Judaism and Music—A New Fusion* (New York: Hebrew Union College), 1996:7; after Ben Zion Bokser, *The Jewish Mystical Tradition* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson), 1993: 97.

as with Abulafia—music became the religious offering of Hasidism. This is well demonstrated by the *rebbe*, Nahman of Bratslav (Ukraine, 1772-1810), who said: "Get into the habit of singing a tune; it will give you new life and fill you with joy." [11]

Whereas the eighth-century *Merkavah* Mystics had believed that only Moses and Joshua could hear the angelic music of the spheres, Hasidim extended this privilege to the group's *rebbe*. It was then his responsibility to impart the music's "benefits to [his] disciples for their healing and purification, either directly by singing some semblance of it, or indirectly through the wisdom with which it had imbued them."[12]

Early Hasidim considered the nigun, a genre of song without words, to be the highest form of spiritual expression. Their reasoning went as follows: melodies that required words were limited by the finite length of the texts, but nigunim were free-form; they could go on and on, with every repetition rising in both pitch and volume to an extraordinary and ecstatic climax. At this point the pitch was dropped an octave and the entire cycle recommenced. There is an old hasidic saying, "You will sing as loudly in the world to come as you sing on this earth, so decide right here and now how loudly you want to sing in heaven."

Music in the Western world: a shift in dynamics

Almost imperceptibly, throughout the so-called "civilized" world, the importance of music as a healing art form and a science form underwent a significant shift. Music gradually rose to a status wherein it was no longer within accessible and comfortable reach of its listeners. As such, it became transformed and redefined primarily as an aesthetic experience, and although this is not to be deprecated, its functional aspects as a healing method were by and large both consciously and subconsciously ignored, forgotten or overlooked.

From the Renaissance onwards, however, a growing number of those in the medical realm began to show an increasing interest in the vast array of possibilities which music could offer to their patients. The new discovery of anatomy, spearheaded by Vesalius (1514-1564), dominated subsequent centuries. It gave humankind a rational conception of the mechanism of the

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[11] Nicholson, *Healing*, page 18; citing Moshe Mykoff, *The Empty Chair: Finding Hope and Joy* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights), 1994:104.

[12] Joscelyn Godwin. *Harmonies of Heaven and Earth* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions International, Ltd.), 1987:65.

human mind and body, and opened the door to modern, scientific medicine based on the observation of phenomena which could be assessed in terms of cause and effect. This advance influenced all remedial areas, including the use of music in medicine. The English physician Robert Burton was one of the first to write about the healing powers of music, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1632). He himself had suffered from melancholy, and perhaps his ideas emerged from his own experiences. Philip Barrough (1560-1590), another English physician who treated patients suffering from mental illness, was determined that they "be merry as much as may be and have musical instruments and singing."[13]

In the eighteenth century a French physician named Louis Roger[14] examined the effects of music on the mind and body, and concluded that the mind preferred regularly recurring arrangements of pitch and rhythm, whereas the body responded to vibrations sent through the air. Roger theorized that these vibrations affected both the solids and fluids that make up the human body. Moreover, he felt that the nervous fluids and blood also contained air that vibrated sympathetically with sounds emanating from outside the human body. In short, it was discovered and acknowledged that there was a correlation between bodily and musical rhythm, and pulse and musical beat. It was also observed that music had an effect on breathing, blood pressure and digestion.

The nineteenth century saw a growing concern over the medical treatment of those with both mental and physical illness. This led physicians to seek out ancillary therapeutic means, including the use of music. The English physician/clergyman William Pargeter (1760-1810) was one of the first physicians to acknowledge that in order for music to be successfully used as a treatment, it was necessary for the practitioner to possess a definite knowledge of it.[15] Hector chomet wrote a treatise, *The influence of Music on Health and Life,* in 1846. Benoit Mojan suggested in *Sur L'Utilité de la Musique* (1803) that certain principles should be adhered to in the application of music at therapy. These included an assessment of: the nature of the illness or condition; the

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13 "Philip Barrough," in *Three Hundred Years of Psychiatry*, R. Hunter and I. Macalpine, eds.(Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1963:24-28.

14 *Traité des Effets de la Musique sur le Corps Humain* (1748), cited in Armen Carapetyan, "Music and Medicine in the Renaissance and in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Music and Medicine*, Dorothy M. Schullian and Max Schoen, eds. (New York: Schuman), 1948:147-149.

15 Juliette Alvin, *Music Therapy* (London: John Clare Books), 1975:48-49.

patient's musical sensitivities; and the volume level of the music. Prior to this, musicians involved in the therapeutic process often participated purely on an empirical basis. They did not concern themselves with the therapeutic effects of the music; these remained within he domain of physicians.

Current practices: a march into the twentieth century

The last century bore witness to a heightened interest in the use of music as a healing modality. Randall McClellan postulated that melody and rhythm could be combined to produce songs that would induce well-being. He also held that vibrations alone could have healing effects if administered to various parts of the body.[16] Adelle Nicholson states, "Roger's (and McClellan's) theories reflect the physics of sound-healing, which act upon the body through resonantal vibrations, thereafter altering the person's physiological condition." Another approach, "music-healing," writes Nicholson, "stimulates the emotional and mental states, and the body responds accordingly."[17] In *The Healing Forces of Music* McClellan also opines that music affects humankind in the spiritual realm at a level that transcends personal emotions. He feels that the music we hear within our minds may be just as powerful as the music we experience through our physical ears. Furthermore, although the actual music may have ceased, its influence may persist long after. The music may continue to permeate the mind, direct the emotional life, regulate the body energies and ultimately influence our spiritual aspirations and secular health.

Today, as a body of knowledge, music therapy is trans-disciplinary, gathering its momentum from both music and therapy. As a discipline, it is a harmonious triad of art, science and interpersonal process. As a treatment, it is highly diverse and can adapt itself to an enormous variety of clinical populations and circumstances.

Music therapy can prove invaluable to the congregational hazzan and/or afternoon religious school teacher in enabling Jewish youth to prepare for—and to succeed at—their Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrations. This is primarily due to the fact that music therapy is goal-oriented, organized and regular. Research has shown that music therapy has the potential to: encourage positive, healthy attitudes; reduce depression and anxiety; facilitate decision-making regarding options and possibilities; work through negative emotions regarding capabilities; reduce stress, fear and trauma for the B'nei/B'not Mitzvah

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[16] Randall McClellan. *The Healing Forces of Music; History; Theory and Practice* (Rockport, MA: Element), 1991:6.

[17] Nicholson, *Healing*, 1996:7.

and the parents; and to facilitate support systems and socialization networks between and amongst the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, peers, parents and families.

Demosthenes (384-322 B.C.E.), generally considered to be the greatest of the Greek orators (even though he stuttered!), saw in every small circumstance the potential beginning of a great enterprise. As educators, we should seize upon each and every opportunity as a real chance for some form of growth and development. When teaching those with disabilities (I prefer the words "underdeveloped abilities") we must remember that we do not get to choose the sorrows and tragedies that might befall us … but we do get to choose our responses. Philosopher Abraham Joshua Heschel took a similar approach: "There are three ways in which a person expresses his deepest sorrow: the person on the lowest level cries; the person on the second level is silent; the person on the highest level knows how to turn his sorrow into song."[18] Music is clearly an affirmation of life.

Music with all our children: finding each one's song

To be successful in our attempts to facilitate learning for a young person with any or many of a variety of underdeveloped abilities, we must first take a serious look at the construct of the person within his/her family. When one family member hurts, each one feels the pain and reacts. Parents and siblings often need help with comprehending the child's problem, as well as their own often-diverse reactions.[19]

At some point the parents are usually told of their child's diagnosis and prognosis, and must come to terms with it. Initially they experience denial. That is followed by alternating phases of anger and self-blaming. One form of denial may include the "cover-up" reaction, particularly if the problem is not readily visible, such as a learning disability. One parent (usually the mother) may try to protect the other by not sharing the results of studies and tests, or by minimizing the issues. Some parents may successfully cover up the extent of the problems into the adolescent years; the unknowing parent all the while building up unrealistic expectations for the child. The child is often capable of seeing through this cover-up, and may perceive that the parents are unable or unwilling to accept the child as he/she is. This awareness is accompanied

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[18] A. J. Heschel. *Man's Quest for God* (Santa Fe, NM: Aurora Press), 1955; citing *Si'ah Sarfei Kodesh*, Vol. 2, p. 92, No. 318.

[19] R. A. Gardner, "The Guilt Reaction of Parents of Children with Severe Physical Disease," *American Journal of Psychiatry,* 1969, Vol.126:636-644.

by emotions of anger or sadness, for if the parents cannot accept the child, how can the child?

At this stage, the parent(s) may also be keeping the extent of the child's problems from the professionals. The denial stage is often followed by a period of anger. At this time, parents may react in a way that sometimes alienates professionals. The initial anger may be turned inward, creating a sense of depression; associated with this reaction is often the feeling of guilt–"God is doing this to me because…" Should the depression continue, a parent might withdraw from the child, or from the other parent … often just when that parent is needed the most, and frequently in the adolescent years of the child. The initial anger may also be displaced outward, by blaming teachers and other professionals. The teacher may never hear these remarks, but the child may never be able to forget them. Such comments might also undermine the child's faith in or respect for the teachers he/she is relying on for help and hope.

For siblings, the issues are often compounded; rarely are the professional opinions shared with them—yet the entire family needs to know and comprehend.[20] A brother or sister might feel guilt for harboring what he/she may not realize is a perfectly normal thought, "I am glad it is him and not me." Some siblings become worried and feel anxious; others become angry at the double standards set up in the household. Still others become embarrassed and resent the teasing they endure at school and elsewhere, "Is your sister a mental case…or what?"[21]

Preventive family counseling focuses on educating all members of the family, and aids each member to both comprehend the situation and to be able to add assistance in a positive and inter-active manner. The knowledge of the specific underdeveloped abilities can then be used advantageously to plan positive, rather than frustrating experiences. For example, if a child has *fine* motor difficulties, primarily *gross* motor activities should be emphasized. The educator/hazzan should understand a child's weaknesses and strengths, for only then can participation be designed to maximize strengths rather than to expose weaknesses. This will ultimately help the child deal with issues of ego and self-esteem, for in working with someone with a disability, teachers must always keep in mind the concern about self-fulfilling prophesies (predic-

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[20] E. Poznanski, "Psychiatric Difficulties in Siblings of Handicapped Children," *Clinical Pediatrics*, 1969, Vol. 8:232-234.

[21] F. W. Owen, P. A. Adams, T. Forrest, L. Stolz & S. Fisher, "Learning Disorders in Children: Sibling Studies," *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, November 1971, Serial No. 144, Vol. 36:4.

tions of failure or even of *possible* failure may actually limit a person's chance of success.) As positive experiences improve confidence, the possibility of peer acceptance rather than teasing is increased, and social skills improve.[22] Novelist Margaret Atwood writes, "Children believe that everything bad that happens is somehow their fault…but they also believe in happy endings, despite all evidence to the contrary."[23] We, as facilitators, have a vested interest in turning the second part of this statement—as much as we are able—from a belief into a reality.

As a professional, I was and am very much aware of the possible ramifications to the entire family, a concern discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Consequently, I tried conscientiously to prepare my other three sons for the dynamics of loving and living with a sibling who has a disability. We spent many hours discussing humanitarianism, humanism, empathy, and tolerance. I would like to share with you one particular event.

My three younger sons, at that time all in university, invited their older brother to attend a large social event with them at the Hillel Center. My oldest son was delighted to accept the invitation, and I relished the fact that I had done a "good job." Imagine my despondency when they returned from the event—all looking glum. I immediately asked if the oldest had embarrassed the others in some way. They assured me that this was not the case. They said that when the four of them sat down at one of many tables, none of their friends made any attempt to sit with them. My sons were most disappointed by this reaction, and decided that either their friends needed sensitizing in these matters, or they were no longer their friends. Wearing my "mother hat", I was tremendously proud of them; wearing my "teacher hat" and "music therapist hat", I intuited that there needed to be a re-evaluation of some of our ideas and ideals within the Jewish community.

In early June 2005, I heard Larry King being interviewed by Barbra Walters. She asked for his opinion as to the most terrible occurrence that could happen to a person. He answered, "to lose a child." Although the interviewer was not always of the same opinion as the interviewee, she was quick to agree with this response. Bearing and raising a child with a disability often bears similar ramifications to experiencing the death of a child … especially when others so often choose to be uninvolved.

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[22] C. D. Mercer. *Children and Adolescents with Learning Disabilities* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill), 1979:104-111.

[23] Margaret Atwood. *The Blind Assassin* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc.), 2000:138.

I judiciously share the following anonymously written poem with families, in an attempt to allow for expression of emotions and to facilitate discussion. Sometimes a form of catharsis ensues. Occasionally the family expresses hope and joy in the realization that their situation is not so tenuous as that expressed by the poet. In addition, I believe that these are powerful words for cohorts to hear, to discuss—and to eventually come up with a response that demonstrates moral accountability.

Don't Turn Your Back

Don't turn your back on my son
just because he does not fit into your world.
His torment is real
and he would change it if he could.

His illness is not something you can see
but is real, all too real, nonetheless,
and the boy we know is lost to us.
Like a missing child the pain never dies
but haunts us with hopes that someday
we will find him again.

He struggles daily with an illness,
it is not a terminal illness,
but a life sentence.
He has no place of refuge
to escape his own mind.

I can't desert him. He is my son,
and he is the same son that held
my hand when we laughed and ran
through the flowers
in the meadow at his grandmother's farm.

My son's suffering and his mother's tears
have given me the courage

to ask you to listen and learn.
If you take the time to understand,
you can make his world
a less painful place.

When you are going to have a baby, it is similar to planning a fabulous vacation to Italy. You buy a bunch of guidebooks, and make wonderful plans. Day by day, your excitement grows. You imagine the Coliseum, Michelangelo's David, Milan's La Scala, the gondolas in Venice. Perhaps you make an attempt to learn some handy Italian phrases. After many months of eager anticipation, the big day finally arrives. You pack your bags and venture into this new journey. Several hours later, the airplane lands. The flight attendant announces, "Welcome to Holland." "Holland?" you say, "What do you mean, 'Holland'? I am not supposed to be in Holland; I signed up for Italy! All my life I have dreamed of going to Italy."

You are told that a change in the flight plans has occurred. You have landed in Holland, and there you must stay. So you eventually go out and purchase new guidebooks. You must learn a different language. And, you will gradually meet a whole new group of people whom you might otherwise never have met. You are in a different place and space! It is slower-paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy—this takes some adjusting. After you have been there for a while and you are able to catch your breath, you begin to raise your eyes and look around—and you begin to notice that Holland has tulips, Holland has windmills. Holland even has Rembrandts. But—everyone you know is busy coming from and going to Italy—and they are all sharing stories about the wonderful time they had there.

For the rest of your life you will say, "Yes, that is where I was supposed to go; that is what I had planned." And the pain of that loss will never go away—because the loss of that dream is a very significant one. However, if you spend your life mourning the fact that you did not get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very gorgeous things—about Holland. And maybe, if you keep your eyes open—just maybe—you will find those who wish to help you with your special journey. What a wonderful opportunity you can provide for your relatives and friends to accomplish *Tikkun Olam*—leaving this world a better place than when we entered it—and to "live generously."

Marlee Matlin, the hearing-impaired actress, author and inspiration, was recently interviewed by British Columbia's *Jewish Independent.*[24] Matlin credits her Jewish heritage and upbringing with helping her to overcome

many obstacles. "The principles of Judaism, of *Tikkun Olam*, allowed me to be where I am today. My story is meant to be an inspiration for others to live as generously as my parents allowed me to live, and to help others in less fortunate situations." Marlee feels that her becoming a Bat Mitzvah was not only of great importance to her, but to her parents and community as well. "Not only did my parents make sure I was a Bat Mitzvah, but they then used my example to encourage others to see their children as fully functioning members of the community, children who might otherwise be left out of the mainstream because of a disability."

Rebbetzin Feige Twerski of Congregation Beth Jehudah in Milwaukee feels that sensitivity to others is the basis of human relationships.[25] The times of sunlight and joy—and alternatively, those of clouds and sorrow—spare no individual the desperate need for caring and compassion from their fellow human beings. The first task in sensitivity training is to climb out of our own selves and look around. In describing the Egyptian bondage, our sages remind us that it began when the "eyes and hearts of Israel were plugged up" (Genesis 47:28). Conversely, the redemption was launched when "Moses grew up and saw their suffering" (Exodus 2:11). Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, the nineteenth–century spiritual leader of German Jewry, noted that the Hebrew word for compassion–*raḥamim*–shares the same root as the Hebrew word for *reḥem* or womb. Empathy and sensitivity to others flow from the awareness that we all share the same spiritual womb, the same history and fate; indeed, our destinies are intertwined. Therefore, whatever happens to one of us must affect the other. Understanding this reality mandates a response, which music therapy can be extremely effective in generating.

It behooves educators to be especially attuned to their own prejudices and behaviors if they wish to elicit empathic and sensitive responses from students. Even a simple word can tell a whole story! Try to count the number of times you have heard the word "but" used, when "and" would have been so much more inclusive and encompassing. I am convinced that music therapy can play a most dynamic role at the time of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, by working not only in the best interests of the adolescent with special needs, but also in the best interests of the community. What an awesome opportunity — what an awesome responsibility!

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[24] Cynthia Ramsay. "Actress Shares how Judaism Helps her Deal with Adversity," *Vancouver Jewish Independent*, August 1, 2005.

[25] Feige Twerski. *Sensitivity Training* (Jerusalem: Aish HaTorah resources), 2003.

Music therapy in action: a sound modality

Within this highly diversified field there are marked differences in the needs, abilities, conditions, and situations of clients and patients. Music therapists also differ in their perspectives, objectives, and goals, their values and priorities, and musical and material resources. The concept that all music therapists agree upon, however, is the limitless potential of music—firstly to activate, and subsequently to support and enrich**.** I often show and discuss the 1974 short film—*The Violin*, starring Canadian violinist Maurice Solway—with my patients, clients, and students. It usually generates excited conversation about the value of music—sometimes even from those who *seemingly* have had no previous passion for this (or any other) art form. I have also found that sharing selected pieces of literature about music, such as the poem I have excerpted below,[26] with teachers of other curriculum subjects usually puts them on my band-wagon; they often offer to coordinate their lessons, in any way they are able, to complement my work. I, in turn, try to tailor my sessions to enhance theirs (e.g. exploring the music of a particular country that is being studied in geography class.) This *layering on* of material is of particularly great benefit to students with underdeveloped abilities, or different learning styles.

> ***I Am Music***…If my song be in your heart you will hear my voice in the babble of the brook, the chant of the birds, the rustle of the leaves, and the billows of the sea. The wind and the rain and the flowers and the dew all speak to you of me. The rumble of traffic, the clatter of hoofs, the hum of the motor, the song of the mill; Ah! I charge the very air.
>
> Down through the ages I have walked with men, yet none have ever fathomed me. With the prince and the beggar I roam the earth and all men love me. For I am the spirit of the very best that is in t hem, and they praise and strive for the very best that is within me. I am the soul of the arts. *I am music.*

The following cases are taken from my involvement and experience in working with individuals of all ages who have a variety of underdeveloped abilities. These clients include any individual whose development is affected to some extent by a mental, emotional, or physical dysfunction, or by multiple handicaps. In commencing work with a client, I reflect on two contradictory yet complimentary quotes: "I think [i.e. I doubt], therefore I am" (Descartes), and "First we sing, then we believe" (Heschel). This dual reflection has be-

[26] *I Am Music*. Unpublished poem by Robert L. Shepherd (ca. 1974), transmitted to the writer by Maurice Solway.

come my mantra, grounding and centering me in preparing to undertake that which I believe to be a most rewarding and remarkable journey for both client and therapist.

CASE A:

Aaron's multi-media journey

Aaron was referred to me when he was ten years of age. There appeared to be no clinically significant delay in cognitive development, or in the development of age-appropriate self-help skills. There was also no significant general delay in language (I was told that he had used single words by two years of age, and communicative phrases by three years of age.) He seemed appropriately curious about his surroundings and general environs. He did demonstrate, however, qualitative impairment in social interactions; these included difficulties in the use of non-verbal behaviors such as eye-to-eye contact, facial expressions, and appropriate gestures to regulate social interaction. There also seemed to be a pervasive disinterest in spontaneously sharing enjoyment, hobbies, and/or achievements with other people in general, and with his cohorts in school in particular. There was little social or emotional reciprocity, and as a result, failure to develop peer relationships appropriate to developmental level.

Aaron displayed some repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, which included a preoccupation with parts of objects (e.g. examining the mechanism of how a CD case opens and closes), and a somewhat inflexible adherence to specific, non-functional routines and rituals (e.g. taking his shoes off and putting them on before commencing certain functional activities.) Aaron understood on an intellectual level that he was a "loner", but could not comprehend the reasons for this. He was subsequently diagnosed with Asperger's Disorder, a milder variant of Autism, characterized by social isolation and eccentric behavior in childhood, such as speech which is peculiar due to abnormal inflection and repetitiveness, clumsiness, and a circumscribed area of interest: e.g. cars; trains; door knobs; hinges; astronomy; history; or French literature.[27] However, at the time that I commenced music therapy with Aaron, we could not put a label to his problems (nor was I particularly concerned about doing so.) Eventually, he confided to me that in some ways

[27] *Autism and Asperger Syndrome*, Uta Frith, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1992**;** there is some confusion as to whether Asperger's Disorder is on the high end of the spectrum of Autism, or whether it is a separate condition.

it was a comfort to know that he had a disorder that had a "real name", and that some other people in the world had "it" as well.

Although Aaron appeared willing to work with me, eye contact rarely occurred during our initial meetings. In an attempt to encourage this, I decided to engage Aaron in the *Child's Interval* (descending minor third.) This is the interval that children resonate with and to—the first interval that most are able to sing in tune. (Many of the highly popular children's songs deliberately contain a disproportionate number of minor thirds.) I commenced by singing to Aaron:

Eb	C	C	Eb	Eb	C	Eb	C	Eb	C

Aaron quickly looked up from playing with a CD case, but did not answer. I sang the above line to him again and again—still no answer, but eye contact was evident. In subsequent weeks, he anticipated the musical question, and would make eye contact with me, waiting for the inevitable minor thirds to escape my lips. One day, he answered (in a monotone) "Aaron." From there, he progressed to singing (mimicking my intervals):

My	*name*	*is*	*Aa—*	*ron;*	*what*	*is*	*your*	*name?*

Singing can be an experience of arousal for the child with disabilities, and of freedom from many of the restrictions and confusions of pathology. Such a child is thus enabled to "use personal capacities with greater consciousness and can experience, as a result, direct, substantial fulfillment."[28] It appeared that Aaron enjoyed the non-threatening nature of these encounters. As endorphins (the brain's own "opiates") were released during our joint musical endeavors, they induced in Aaron a natural high, what is known as a "musical thrill." Recent research has shown that exhilaration produced by listening to certain music is the result of endorphin release by the pituitary gland, the surge of electrical activity spreading in a region of the brain which is connected to both the emotional and reflexive control centers. I became aware of a gradual shift in Aaron's body language; he began to smile and enter into question and answer ditties that encouraged him to relay impressions about his environment:

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[28] Paul Nordoff & Clive Robbins. *Music Therapy in Special Education*, (St. Louis, MO: Magnamusic-Baton, Inc.), 1983:22.

What	*is*	*your*	*favorite*	*color?*
What	*is*	*your*	*favorite*	*flower?*
What	*is*	*your*	*favorite*	*color?*

Eye contact was further encouraged through a variety of activities such as imitative clapping games (we commenced with the basic heart rate, which all of us have experienced *in utero*, and proceeded to longer and more complex patterns), and copying various rhythms on sticks and cymbals. To further prepare Aaron for social interaction with others, we made up games that involved passing a ball to one another in a variety of rhythms. Clearly, for this youngster, music was becoming a powerful tool in helping him to develop social/emotional, cognitive/learning, and perceptual/motor skills.

Once Aaron had mastered eye contact, smiling, and minor thirds, we made the next big jump into ascending major seconds. This is often the next interval that children are capable of singing in tune. It was clear that Aaron's range was limited (children with dysfunctions often have small ranges and low registries); nevertheless he was enjoying our time together and was making significant gains. We progressed to:

Eb	*C*	*C*	*Eb*	*Eb*	*C*	*Eb*	*F*	*Eb*	*C*
My	*name*	*is*	*A—*	*va*	*Lee;*	*what*	*is*	*your*	*name?*

Aaron was able to respond, usually in tune (although I never chastised if his effort was out of tune.) Obviously, along with his musical gains, he was slowly but surely making significant social gains. He still expressed disappointment at not being the "same" as his peers, and wondered if they would ever "like" him. At this point, I introduced the following song to Aaron:

C	G	A	G	F	E	C	C	D	G	G	E	C
The	*more*	*we*	*get*	*to-*	*ge-*	*ther,*	*to-*	*ge-*	*ther,*	*to-*	*ge-*	*ther,*

C	G	A	G	F	E	C	C	D	G	G	C
The	*more*	*we*	*get*	*to-*	*ge-*	*ther,*	*the*	*hap-*	*pier*	*we'll*	*be.*

C	D	G	G	E	C
For	*your*	*dreams*	*are*	*my*	*dreams,*

C	D	G	G	E	C
and	*my*	*dreams*	*are*	*your*	*dreams.*

C	G	A	G	F	E	C	C	D	G	G	C
The	*more*	*we*	*get*	*to-*	*ge-*	*ther,*	*the*	*hap-*	*pier*	*we'll*	*be.*

I encouraged Aaron to make up his own lyrics, and sometimes they provided me with great insight as to his thought processes, which he was unable to verbalize in a non-musical conversation. I also introduced a variety of percussion instruments; whereas at first Aaron would play with no change in rhythm or dynamics, he gradually came to be able to alter some of the elements of the tone. This was a huge advancement for Aaron, and I believe on some level he comprehended this, for he sang:

The more we get together, together, together,
The more we get together, the louder and softer I am.
For I can play loudly, and I can play softly,
The more we get together the louder and softer I am.

I used this as a bouncing-off point to do further work on dynamics, and asked Aaron if he could *sing* the word "loudly," loudly, and the word "softly," softly. This proved to be very stimulating for him. We progressed from here to discussing emotions and their effects, e.g. sadly, happily, pleasantly, triumphantly, etc. This presented considerable difficulty for Aaron, but eventually he was able to express to me on the drums how some of these emotions sounded.

We also worked with watercolors, and Aaron seemed to have a fascination with the shades and intensities of the color blue. He said it made him feel "cool"; it felt right when he was feeling in a "blue mood"; and it could sometimes be a "happy blue." Aaron was very reluctant, at first, to allow the many colors to "touch" one another (except for shades and intensities of *blue*), and was very careful as he applied paint to paper to ensure that there was no intermingling (literally) in any way, shape, or form. I used this chance to demonstrate to Aaron that *mixing it up a little* could sometimes produce fascinating results, and was not something of which to be rigidly afraid, or to reject without any attempt. He agreed to our adding various colors to blue—and became excited about the many new results we created.

I subsequently asked Aaron to fill his page with as many combinations of colors as he could. When this was complete, and beginning to dry, I gave him a salt shaker, and suggested he sprinkle salt at random over his painting. He looked at me as if I should be the one in therapy, but was thoroughly amazed as the salt reacted chemically with the paint to create a variety of interesting patterns and mottled effects. The salt works on non-staining colors (e.g. brown) much better than on staining colors (e.g. blue). Aaron was so intrigued with this that we subsequently experimented with different types of salt (there are many kinds on the market, and each will affect the damp watercolor in a

different way.) This led to more and more experimentation; it was obvious that these creative endeavors were helping Aaron to overcome some of his rigid patterns of behavior. At about this time, Aaron's mother reported to me that Aaron was *messing it up* a little on his plate, and was pushing various foods around so that they touched—an absolute "no-no" up to now. He decided that similar to colors touching one another, food touching one another was a "good thing." He also came to the conclusion that a lot of salt was better on the paintings than on the food!

I decided to introduce the *mandala* to Aaron. Mandalas are often used in art therapy for the heightening of insight, healing, and self-expression. Carl G. Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, adopted this Sanskrit word—which means center, circumference, or magic circle—to describe the circle drawings that he and his patients created. Jung felt that the mandala represented the *Self,* the center of the total personality. He wrote that the mandala could showcase "the premonition of a centre of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy. The energy of the central point is manifested in the almost irresistible compulsion and urge to become what one is, just as every organism is driven to assume the form that is characteristic of its nature, no matter what the circumstances. This center is not felt or thought of as the ego but, if one may so express it, as the *Self."*[29]

Much as I thought the fluidity of watercolors was wonderful for Aaron, I was convinced that he needed more control of the medium, in order to express himself appropriately through the mandala. With some trepidation, I introduced colored pencils, and Aaron and I drew a large circle in the centre of a piece of paper. I requested, with as few instructions as possible, that Aaron "do something with the circle." Although he seemed intrigued by the request, I could see that the colored pencils were daunting to him; his body stiffened and he pursed his lips. I decided to include some auditory stimulation, and played a relaxation C.D. Eventually Aaron chose a dark blue pencil, and with very precise semicircular shapes, turned the circumference of the circle into a bottle cap. Inside was an aerial view of Aaron's head. He looked at his creation for a while, and then offered the explanation that it was himself, trapped in the bottle. He could look through it, and others could look in, but they could not touch one another.

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[29] Carl G. Jung. *Mandala Symbolism*. (Princeton , NJ: Princeton University Press), 1973:73.

We continued working with the mandala about once per month; Aaron even wanted to experiment with circles that were not centered on the paper. I was relieved and delighted to see that he now displayed less anxiety when working with the colored pencils. After about nine months, Aaron drew a colorful bird flying upwards, and this bird escaped the confines of the mandala (i.e. the wings were outside the circumference.) Aaron examined this drawing for a long time, and eventually said that the bird was happy because other birds could touch it. At this point, I sang to him the song, "Ah, Poor Bird" (in triple meter, changing "poor" to *brave*, and "Far above the sorrows of this dark night" to *Far above the dark blue of this long night* [second line of lyrics].)[30]

C	*D*	*Eb*	*Eb*	*F*	*G*
Ah,	*brave*	*bird,*	*soar*	*in*	*flight,*

G	*C*	*C*	*B*	*C*	*G*	*F*	*Eb*	*D*	*C*
Far	*a—*	*bove*	*the*	*dark*	*blue*	*of*	*this*	*long*	*night.*

C	*D*	*Eb*	*Eb*	*F*	*G*
Ah,	*brave*	*bird,*	*as*	*you*	*fly,*

G	*C*	*C*	*B*	*C*	*G*	*F*	*Eb*	*D*	*C*
Can	*you*	*see*	*the*	*dawn*	*of*	*to—*	*mor—*	*row's*	*sky?*

Aaron's eyes were riveted on me (eye contact had come a long way.) I sang the song a number of times to him and we discussed the lyrics; sometimes he joined in, sometimes we took turns (also a skill that was developing nicely). One day, in a firm voice, he simply answered, "Yes."

Cantors, choir directors and music teachers faced with a congregant, singer or student slow to respond, I ask you to please take note: the psychological principle that I used with Aaron was to cue his response *indirectly*. Psychiatrist Milton Erikson posited that "a person cannot respond spontaneously if he is following a directive."[31] Along with ethical teachings to live by, the

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[30] Peter Blood & Annie Patterson, eds. *Rise Up Singing,* (New York: Sing Out Corporation), 1992:188.

[31] Jon Haley. *Uncommon Therapy—The Psychiatric Techniques of Milton H. Erickson, MD* (New York: Norton), 1993:21.

mishnaic tractate Pirkei Avot ("Sayings of the Fathers") lays down maxims of sound pedagogy:

> *The wise teacher questions broadly, according to subject; so that the pupil can reply accurately and to the point (5:9).*

The subtle power of continued suggestion, combined with a ritually repeated act, is far greater than that of a direct command.

It is interesting to note that birds are ancient symbols of the human soul, and of the process of transformation; they have come to stand for the spiritual realm, as opposed to the material one. We know that in Jewish tradition the dove is the symbol of purity and peace. The dove, sent out by Noah (Genesis 8:12), returned with an olive branch; this was a sign that the floodwaters had receded, and that God had made peace with humankind. Doves were also used as offerings in the rite of purification following the birth of a baby (Leviticus 12:6-8).

I found it significant that Aaron drew only one bird; I had anticipated that there were more to come.

> While single birds might represent divine messengers, a flock of birds might be interpreted to take on negative implications. This corresponds to the esoteric law that multiplicity is a step away from unity, which is considered divine. A bird in a mandala suggests the activation of one's intellectual capacities. Birds flying upwards may connote ideas being released or brought to light. Birds may also suggest the refinement of insights, knowledge, or bringing self-awareness to a higher level.[32]

Our artistic endeavors proved to be a great opportunity for Aaron to discover his creative energy. He was very proud of some of his pieces, and decided to keep a number of them.

After working with Aaron for approximately two years, I broached the idea of his becoming a Bar Mitzvah, full ceremony and all. Whereas it was previously assumed that this would not be a possibility, his teachers confirmed that there had been considerable progress in the classroom and on the playground, and felt that Aaron could succeed at this in his own way. Aaron was hesitant at first, but with the encouragement of his parents, teachers, and myself, he decided to undertake this milestone. This was an enormous step for Aaron, for in a very real sense he was agreeing to be a *performer*, and

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[32] Susanne F. Fincher. *Creating Mandalas*. (Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc.), 1991:117.

> the nature of the risk-taking of the performer is a magnified image of the personal plunge we make into the deepest places within ourselves. As we reveal our inner world to others, our reality is enhanced, emboldened, made larger than life, so to speak.[33]

Aaron entered Bar Mitzvah classes with his peers. It was hard going at first, but we rejoiced in every little step. I spoke to the class about compassion and kindness, and ultimately this led to a Pirkei Avot program; parents were asked to attend certain sessions in an effort to enable them to better convey to their children the significance of those values being transmitted. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah class responded empathically...and we *ALL* rejoiced!

As the big day approached, Aaron began to show interest in the décor for this important occasion, and chose a "happy blue." He also requested an input as to the choices of flowers and of food. Examples of his art, that we had so diligently created together, were on display for all to see. Aaron had made great strides in a number of developmental areas, and music had been his muse! He did indeed succeed at his Bar Mitzvah! He delivered both his Maftir (helped by his Bar Mitzvah teacher's occasional intervention of a *sotto voce* boost) and his Haftarah in a low tessitura (quite the norm nowadays) — with some errors — and he reached the *perfection of his capabilities!*

CASE B:

Benji and Beth's journey towards harmony – many voices, one song

Several years ago I was asked to take over the music classes in an elementary school during the months when the music teacher would be on sabbatical. As in any school, there were a number of children who were challenged in a variety of areas; it was therefore decided that I would use the scheduled music time in a music therapy mode, rather than in a teaching one. I was delighted to be given free reign to be as experiential as I thought necessary, and to abandon the planned curriculum if I wished to do so. This challenge was most appealing to me! However, it was immediately apparent that I could not fit all the grades into my schedule, and therefore decided to focus on grades 6 and 7—where I knew I would be dealing with students of Bar/Bat Mitzvah age, and where I felt I might impact on their preparation in a positive and practical manner. I was aware that many of the students were in the same Bar/Bat Mitzvah class.

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[33] Joanne Crandall. *Self-Transformation Through Music* (Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Society), 1988:54.

The first few sessions were spent getting to know the students and allowing them to get to know me. I decided to commence with the lesson plans that had been provided for me, and quickly realized that the students varied so much in their backgrounds and capabilities that I was impacting on only a few! Those who partook in private music lessons and played an instrument were, for the most part, either bored or strutting an air of superiority. Those with learning difficulties were uncomfortable, and so concerned about the amount of jeering that was going on, that they could hardly focus on the subject matter. I quickly abandoned the curriculum—at least for the time being.

I recognized that my first and foremost challenge was to allow for the development of a cohesive classroom, where members could and would share responsibility for one another's successes and failures. I asked the students to get up from behind their desks, to form a circle with their chairs and to sit on them. I noticed that a few looked surprised at this request, and rather startled. Benji immediately placed his chair so that it was facing *outside* the circle. When I asked why he had done this, he responded that he *was a part of the circle*, and that was all I had requested. When I gently pressed for more details, he said that everyone always laughed at him, and he would feel more comfortable this way. More laughter—of course! I decided to allow him to sit in this manner (backwards), telling him that I thought it was a rather creative solution to a not-so-funny problem, and giving him permission to turn his chair around when he felt that he could. The laughter abated! I noticed that Beth was left holding her chair outside the circle, feeling awkward and displaced. I asked that the class take responsibility in making certain that there was room for *everyone* to place his/her chair within the circle. Beth made sure she was at a distance from Benji before accepting a place in the circle.

Benji was an intellectually bright child who had been diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder after many problematic years at home and at school. He often neglected to pay close attention to details, and to make careless mistakes in schoolwork and other activities. He did not appear to listen when spoken to directly, and experienced problems in the organization of tasks. Benji found it difficult to follow through on instructions, and was easily distracted by extraneous stimuli. His impulsivity was apparent in that he often blurted out answers before questions had been completed, had great difficulty awaiting his turn, and often interrupted or intruded on others. The result of these behaviors was clinically significant impairment in social and academic functioning. His frustration had precipitated his becoming a bully in the school environs, and he had chosen to make a classmate, Beth, the *special* victim of his verbally aggressive behaviors.

Beth, also, was burdened with problems—albeit of a different type. She was an unusually quiet child, apparently making no effort to succeed at anything. I immediately suspected that she was suffering from some type of depression; upon delving further, I became aware that the depression was probably a situational one, the result of a significant mathematics disorder, which impacted greatly on her everyday life. Beth's mathematical ability, as measured by individually administered standardized tests, was substantially below that expected when considering the individual's chronological age, measured intelligence, and age-appropriate education. This disorder was significantly interfering with academic achievement as well as activities of daily living that required mathematical ability. Beth appeared to be a sad and lonely adolescent—a perfect target for Benji!

I decided to focus on the technique of Instrumental Improvisation, for I felt that this would allow for individual contributions that would be acceptable to all. I suggested to the class that we consider the word *improvisation*, and its varied meanings. Most became intrigued with this concept, and wanted to try it out with a variety of rhythmic instruments that I had on hand. Through the work of renowned music therapist Juliette Alvin, it has become clear that one of the most important sources of assessment data is the manner in which the individual relates to a variety of instruments, both physically and psychologically. In observing these responses, the music therapist gains valuable information which includes the stage of therapy of the individual, the types and levels of relationships that should be encouraged and developed, and the general direction and priorities of future therapeutic activities.

The instruments were placed in the center of the circle (many more instruments than number of students), and the group was encouraged to survey the instruments, and to choose one each and return to their chairs. Some seemed excited, others appeared curious; and as I had more-or-less anticipated, Benji tore a large tambourine out of someone else's hands, and Beth was the very last to choose an extremely tiny bell. At this stage the music therapist must be aware of a host of patterns of behavior that might develop over time—for one session does not allow for a diagnosis. Kenneth Bruscia[34] Chair of Temple University's Music Therapy department, has synthesized Alvin's work, listing thirty-one *Instrumental Responses* of which the music therapist should be

[34] Kenneth E. Bruscia. *Improvisational Models of Music Therapy*, (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas), 1987:105-106.

aware. I have taken the liberty of reducing Bruscia's list to thirteen possible responses for the cantor, choir director or music teacher to observe.

1. the associations stimulated by the instrument and its sounds
2. the obsessions and compulsions expressed through the instruments
3. the phobias expressed through or for the instruments
4. the posture while holding the instrument
5. the direction, shape, and force of body movements made to sound the instrument
6. the agility and control over the instrument
7. the ability to repeat and imitate instrumental sounds and musical patterns
8. the manner in which the instrument is played—purposeful or random— free or rigid
9. the preferences for particular instruments and manipulation techniques
10. the expression of emotions and feelings through the instrument and its sound
11. the extent to which the instrument is used to establish identity within the group
12. the extent to which the instrument is used to integrate with the group or another
13. the willingness to share and swap instruments

I observed many of these responses in Benji and Beth—as well as in their classmates. These responses, in fact, determined how, what, why and wherefore I would—as a Jewish music therapist—proceed with this diverse and troubled group. Above all, I sought to infuse the third of Rabbi Yishmael's three pillars upon which the world stands—acts of loving kindness (*gemilut hasadim*; Pirkei Avot, 1:2) into my classroom teaching methodology. And true to my silent prediction**,** the students began to show consideration, compassion, and benevolence towards one another.

As the weeks ensued, we made up various improvisational games employing the instruments. At times we all played together; at other times we went around the circle taking turns. Sometimes we added one instrument at a time (a cumulative build up of sound), and/or decreased the sound by subtracting

one instrument at a time. We also *played* environmental situations (e.g. an encroaching storm) or emotions (e.g. a relinquishing sorrow.) Many behavior patterns did indeed become apparent—for many students.

Benji was highly impulsive, and would play his instruments (usually the largest he could find) at random. Gradually, he began to take note of the circle, and his place in it. It served as a visual reminder to him of when his turn was coming. He was very proud of the fact that he was learning to wait for his turn; one day he requested that we move in a counter-clockwise direction, so that he could prove that he could still take his turn at the appropriate time. And he did! Subsequently, we varied the taking of turns by construing a variety of patterns (e.g. every second person; every person wearing glasses, etc.) Many teachers were now reporting that Benji's impulsivity was greatly decreased, and as a result, there was more success both academically and socially. In the Bar Mitzvah class, the teacher was now having the students sit in a circle rather than at their desks, and Benji's performance was greatly enhanced.

For a long time, Beth was the last to choose an instrument—although she did move from the tiny-tiny bell to slightly larger instruments. She seemed, however, to be benefiting in a mathematical sense from the games where we increased and decreased instruments—she could *hear* the results of addition and subtraction. Subsequently, we made up mathematical games with instruments, beats, and tempi. Mathematics began to make more sense to Beth; eventually we experimented with triplets—and Beth could *hear* three against two, etc. There was nothing wrong with her hearing or listening skills! Her mathematics teacher reported that when it came time to learn why and how it was necessary to get a common denominator, Beth was able to do this! She explained that in her head, she was thinking about the sounds and rhythms of the instruments, and then it made sense.

I was still concerned, however, about Beth's seeming despondency and depression. She appeared particularly upset when Benji played the big bass drum, and never, herself, chose an instrument such as this. One day she started crying; I took Beth aside and asked if she could tell me the reason for her tears. She responded that the big drum with its loud sounds reminded her of her father—always complaining, chastising, and teasing her about her disability. She also said that *Benji* reminded her of her father, so I assume that when Benji played the drum, it was double trouble for Beth! I suggested that perhaps her father had no idea of the effect that his behavior was having on her. I wanted to elicit Beth's permission in an attempt to grant her some power, and she eventually agreed, with great trepidation, that her father could be spoken to about the situation.

During the following session, I read the poem, *Trees,* by Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918)[35] to the class. The lyrics are:

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet-flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

A discussion about the lyrics ensued (Does the rain represent tears? etc.) I asked the class to focus on the last couplet, and requested comments. Eventually, someone ventured the response that none of us is perfect, and we must keep this in mind when dealing with others. It was more-or-less the answer for which I was hoping! At this point, I saw Beth sit up in her seat and take notice to an extent that I had not witnessed before. I asked the class to think about their answers and to decide if their behavior really coincided with their empathic responses. Keeping in mind the pioneering physician/psychologist/ educator Alfred Tomatis'[36] dictum, "I do not treat the children who are brought to me; I *awaken* them**,**" I decided to sing the composer Oscar

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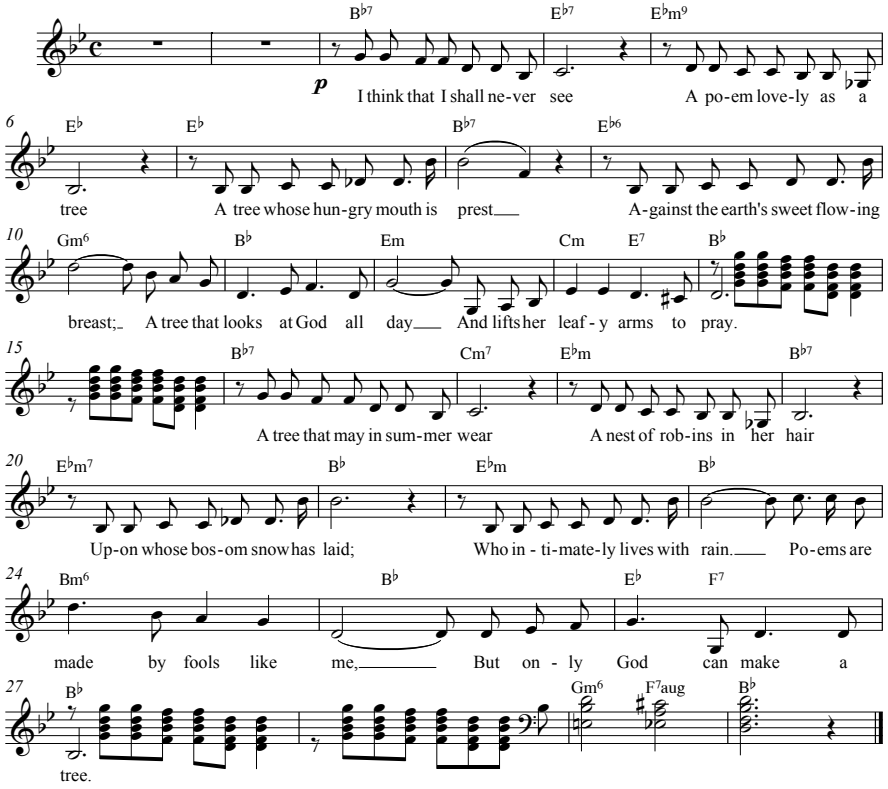
[35] First anthologized in *Modern American Poetry*, Louis Untermeyer, ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe), 1919.

[36] Alfred A. Tomatis. *The Conscious Ear—My Life of Transformation Through Listening* (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press), 1991:148.



Example 1. *Melody of Oscar Rasbach's Setting for Joyce Kilmer's* ***Trees***

Rasbach's version of *Trees*[37] to the class. Many positive comments ensued, including the idea that comprehending the poetry aided in understanding the music, and visa-versa.

Bruscia[38] also lists nine significant *Listening Responses* on which the music therapist's observations should be focused, and this is exactly where my eyes and ears were now engaged!

1. reflexive responses and automatic reactions to various *musical* elements
2. attentional skills

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[37] (New York: G. Schirmer, 1922), *Over 1,000 Songs*, Vol. II:372.

[38] Bruscia. *Improvisational Models of Music Therapy*, 1987:104-105.

3. perceptual discrimination skills
4. preferences and affective behavior reactions to musical components, moods, and feelings
5. associations or memories aroused by particular compositions, performers, instruments or styles
6. imagery stimulated by music
7. identifications (or non-identifications) with musical feelings, composer, performer, therapist, or other player in the room
8. defenses against hearing or listening to the music
9. willingness to use music as a bond with others

In the next session Beth approached me somewhat excitedly, and announced that she had a different version of *Trees* for me. She showed me Ogden Nash's *Song of the Open Road.*[39]

I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree.

Perhaps, unless the billboards fall,
I'll never see a tree at all.

I hinted to Beth that it might be a great idea if she read this to the class, and she reluctantly agreed to do so. The class loved it; the students decided to do an instrumental improvisation about the *Open Road—including billboards falling*! I suggested that perhaps this might be a metaphor for them seeing with greater clarity that which was important to them and to their friends. More discussion — Beth was beaming! Realizing that this was Beth's first real initiation of a "conversation" with me, a response was mandatory. The following week, I began by reading my own spin on Kilmer's poem to the students—for which Beth had been the inspiration—and each, in his/her own way, comprehended this.

I think that I shall never see
A classroom that is conflict-free;

[39] *Readers Digest*, June 1967.

For as this person (me!) bravely strives
To bring new light into the lives

Of many students, meek and bold
With music, through the ages told.

Some talk and talk 'till they reveal
A problem with which they must deal.

Some are quiet, circumspect
This we must learn to respect.

Yet everyone deserves a voice
In this matter there's no choice.

And if my precious vocal chords
Get strained as I shout out these words.

I shall not worry, shall not pout,
So long as you grasp what it's all about!

At the conclusion of the class, Benji approached me, and said he wanted to try to make the classroom "conflict-free." I asked Benji where he thought might be the best place to start. He replied, "I have to stop teasing Beth." I promised Benji that he and I would be partners in sharing this responsibility and in performing this mitzvah. I elucidated that he would be helping me to accomplish *Tikkun Olam*—making the world a little bit better than it was when we found it. Benji looked at me in genuine surprise, and a gentle, shy smile lit up his face. It was the first time I had observed anything gentle or shy in Benji's demeanor! Slowly, sometimes almost imperceptibly, he was able to accomplish this difficult self-imposed directive.

At this juncture, I decided to work on the concept of harmony. I asked the class for definitions of this word—both musical and non-musical; many interesting responses ensued. I eventually offered my concept of harmony—not only in the tonal sense but also in the original meaning of the word: "to fit together." I spoke about dissonance, and the fact that

> dissonance means not fitting. Dissonance is an inability to be flexible. It is the root of all disease. The physicist David Bohm speaks of health as the essence of non-obstructed, indivisible, flowing movement of the self's inner harmony transcribed into the external world. When the internal and the external are at odds with each other—dissonant—the result is disease or a break in harmony.[40]

This concept generated more discussion; Benji said he was getting more "*harmonized*!" Beth ventured that Benji was "like a piano that was getting tuned!"

Her amazing response could not go unnoticed; I decided to react immediately. I suggested that each student come up to the piano and *compose* (I emphasized that each was to present an original composition) a short piece using any or all of the eighty-eight keys. Some were quick to approach the piano (Benji); others held back (Beth). The responses were enormously varied; some experimented with the components of music —dynamics, harmony, melody, rhythm, pitch, tempi, and timbre. I was delighted to see this, for "with its own unique attributes, properties, and qualities, each component can be used for the therapeutic purpose of reflecting and affecting emotional and/or physical states of an individual, as well as the prevailing mood of the group."[41] Eventually every student composed a piece. There was much hilarity and joy in the classroom—there was also a great deal of musical *cacophony*! All agreed that the exercise was a lot of fun because each was free to create as he/she saw fit, with no external judgments being imposed. One class member asked if there was any way to repeat the exercise in a way that would allow for *harmony*! This was exactly the type of question for which I was hoping. It served to reinforce my belief that all children should have the opportunity to engage in music in this free-flowing and holistic manner.

I suggested that we could be experiential, using only the black notes of the piano—the "Black-eyed Pentatonic"—and see where that led us. Wearing my music *therapist* hat, I pointed out that this would be a somewhat more structured endeavor, but that sometimes structure is very important—even crucial, to the ultimate outcome. I reminded the class that, "it is through the mastery of small disciplines that we become capable of greater things and, indeed, anything."[42] Benji *raised his hand*, and when I acknowledged him

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[40] John Beaulieu. *Music and Sound in the Healing Arts* (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, Inc.), 1987:126.

[41] Edith H. Boxill. *Music Therapy for the Developmentally Disabled* (Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, Inc.), 1985:112.

[42] Matthew Kelly. *The Rhythm of Life* (New York: Simon & Shuster), 2005:243.

(I was incrementally taking more and more time in responding to him!), he announced that, "sometimes discipline feels really good!"

Had I been wearing my music *pedagogue* hat, I probably would have examined the concept of the pentatonic scale with the class. I would have explained that a pentatonic scale is one of five notes per octave; that there are different types of pentatonic scales; and that this scale is used the world over. I might have gone on to explain that various pentatonic forms are found in the tuning of: the Ethiopian krar; the Indonesian gamelan (these pentatonic scales are named *slendro* and *pelog*); the melodies of African-American spirituals; the music of 19th and 20th century composers Frederic Chopin, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. Depending upon the level of the class, I might have also discussed hemitonic and anhemitonic pentatonic scales, and probably have explained and experimented with the *Blues Pentatonic*—the minor pentatonic with an additional lowered fifth (another form of "blue note," along with the flatted major third).

Instead, I again asked for volunteers to approach the piano, and to create original compositions using only the black keys. There was a sense of awe and wonder in the classroom as it became clearly obvious that no discord could be heard! This led to much discussion and further experimentation. I subtly suggested that two students come up at a time, and compose duets. I maneuvered the situation so that Benji and Beth would come up together. As I had feared inwardly, Benji immediately sat down at the lower range of the piano, giving Beth no choice as to her preference. Their composition was totally overshadowed by bass sounds. The class commented on this; I asked Benji and Beth what they thought they could do *as a team* to rectify this dilemma. Amongst many other good answers, they decided that they could switch places on the piano bench. I was thrilled! They proceeded to create a new piece. At the conclusion, there was spontaneous, generous applause. They were thrilled! Harmony and dissonance became a huge subject for discussion in our classroom. Beth was allowing her voice to be heard more and more.

She was reminding me, in no uncertain terms that, "music is a potent power that can alter our awareness. This relationship between music and consciousness, both in the individual and the group, has been known from ancient times."[43]

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[43] Robert J. Stewart. *Music and the Elemental Psyche* (Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books), 1987:32.

There is general agreement that those with special needs often have difficulties with the *rhythms of their lives,* and that specific exercises devoted to the concept of rhythm can produce long-term results in a variety of areas. I felt that this was the next element of music with which to engage the class. Rhythm work is also an excellent methodology for instilling the importance of silence. I introduced a few rhythm games to the students. I would clap a four beat sequence, and ask the class to repeat it; then I would tap a four-beat sequence, or hum a four-beat sequence, or hop a four-beat sequence—and each time ask the students to copy my pattern. When they became adept at this, I introduced many variations—altering the tempi, the rhythms, the patterns, introducing silences, etc. Eventually, we came to the point where I would start the second sequence at the same time as the class was copying my first sequence (i.e. overlapping sequences). This involves a great deal of concentration, as well as eye-hand coordination and the ability to take turns. It proved difficult for many students, including Benji and Beth—but they all persevered. Some subsequently agreed to be the leader, and came up with many creative patterns. We were becoming a cohesive group!

As both Benji and Beth received more praise and less criticism in music therapy groups, other areas of their lives improved substantially as well. Many teachers were reporting a more cooperative spirit in their classes. Benji was able to wait for his turn; Beth was able to smile! *And—they were being encouraged by their classmates!* Not only these two adolescents, but the entire group of cohorts were re-evaluating previously held beliefs.

Now I felt that the class was ready to tackle the subject of *applause.* Benji and Beth were receiving their fair share; at this stage, I wanted to be certain that it was justly earned. Unfortunately, applause is sometimes not a genuine expression of appreciation; rather the pleasure is "in the activity of applauding and not in what should have occasioned it."[44] If this type of applause is allowed to persist in the classroom, a mood of carelessness and indiscrimination may be encouraged, and this will impinge upon the working spirit being built. I discussed with the class that applause is of worth only when it is a meaningful expression of recognized accomplishment—then it is of great value for all.

Whereas the possibility of a Bar Mitzvah for Benji and a Bat Mitzvah for Beth had at one time been but a remote and dismissed thought, it was now becoming an exciting consideration. They entered their year's preparatory

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[44] Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins. *Music Therapy in Special Education*, (Saint Louis: Magnamusic-Baton, Inc.), 1983:45.

classes and proceeded in a reasonable fashion. I was in contact with their teachers; when it was felt that either one needed a boost, they left school early to work on their Bar/Bat Mitzvah portions *before* the rest of the class arrived. I have found that this type of intervention is far more successful than trying to catch up *after* the fact!

Benji and Beth went on to become Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Their pride was palpable; their demeanor composed. I could sense their fellow students applauding *silently* in an unheard roar of appreciation! And in all honesty, I felt that every one of the students I taught in that class deserved to take an offstage bow, for their remarkable journey had truly been the result of a *concerted effort.*

Case C:

The sight-impaired chorister's story

Quite recently, I was asked by a member of the Cantors Assembly for my recommendations regarding a sight-impaired lady who wished to be a member of the choir in that hazzan's synagogue. I would like to share this running e-mail conversation in order to provide a global view of that which music therapy can accomplish in the area of pedagogy, for *teaching* is at the heart of choral directing, whether with children or adults.

QUESTION:

How many of you have had a blind congregant ask to join the choir? Two years ago she asked to sing at High Holy Day services. She has some sight, so I enlarged the music for a couple of pieces, but she wasn't able to read it. I made recordings of what would be her part, but her pitch memory is not that great. Obviously, she wouldn't be able to follow my conducting, and she is not much of a musician, so that's a problem. We also do fairly complex music. But it is a congregational choir for the most part, and she asked to join, or rather she told me that she was joining. We do have a congregant manager. She and I have discussed the problems and can figure out a way to avoid this until August. But it will then be a problem once again. I'm thinking of making a CD of her part for a couple of pieces and suggest she start slowly and learn just those pieces for now. HELP!

ANSWER:

I am only too happy to offer whatever expertise I am able, off the top of my head (yet, from the depths of my heart). Firstly, we bump right into a basic

difference between music therapy and music pedagogy. I must admit that when I first entered the music therapy program, this concept provided me with plenty to question…coming as I did from a performing and teaching background. Now, I am perfectly "in tune" with this dichotomy between therapy and pedagogy. Music pedagogy involves itself with the musical outcome: pitch, range, tempo, etc., and with as much perfection as can be achieved. With this in mind, it would probably be difficult to find a place for this woman in the choir as you describe it. As you state, the "problem(s?)" can be avoided until August, at which time the "problem(s?)" will resurface. Is the fundamental concern about the choir or about the sight-impaired person who wants to be a part of it? In music therapy, the individual is the primary concern, and the music can be viewed as a type of catalyst to achieve certain predetermined goals and objectives.

Musicality, per se, is not of particular importance, and the quality of the music is never as important as the result for the individual. In fact, it is often very difficult for trained musicians to relinquish the artistic aspects of music. This is due to the fact that music initially activates the right side of the brain, just above the ear. Subsequently, and only after the development of music literacy, tonal discrimination, and performance interpretation, does the frontal area of the left lobe begin to dominate the musical experience. I believe researcher Don Campbell explains this phenomenon best when he states,

> for five years I served as music critic for a newspaper. I was concerned with the quality of performance, interpretation, and historical accuracy. I remember many times when I was irritated with a performance that fell short of my standards. Yet the person sitting next to me was having a transformative experience through emotional rapport with the music. I was the loser. My knowledge stood in the way of deeper, more powerful aspects of the music."[45]

As a music therapist, I know it is incumbent upon me to always keep in mind that *if the individual is putting forth her very best effort, that is "perfection."*

My experience has been that, in general, when it comes to those with "disabilities" within our Jewish community, we need to do some soul-searching! I also believe that labeling an individual as "disabled" is not encouraging in terms of further development and involvement. Rather, if we look at someone such as this lady as a person with underdeveloped abilities, we are able to

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[45] Don G. Campbell. *The Roar of Silence* (Wheaton, Ill: The Theosophical Publishing House), 1990:66.

reach so much farther! If she is sincere in her desire to join the choir, then as a music therapist it is my belief that the entire choir needs to take responsibility in making this a most positive experience for *all*! Although this lady is deemed to have poor pitch memory, nevertheless, music is often a great comfort and consolation to the blind and/or visually impaired. Philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860) once stated, "Music is quite independent of the visible world, is absolutely ignorant of it, and could exist in a certain way if there were no world; which cannot be said of the other arts."[46]

From a practical point of view, this woman should be placed between two strong singers, somewhere in the centre of the section. If her sense of rhythm is adequate, perhaps she could play a rhythmic instrument (if instruments are a possibility) or clap in a demonstrative fashion. This might give her a sense of having a "solo" of sorts. Perhaps she could introduce some of the music and/or give a little "blurb" about some of the pieces. For example, at the outset of a particularly difficult piece, she could be standing at a distance from the choir (but still in a prominent place) and *speak about it*—using Braille if necessary—but not sing it.

Additionally, some of the other choir members might be encouraged to work with her in excess of the regular rehearsals; this I strongly advocate, for one of the primary objectives of music therapy is to promote socialization through the use of music. This can also provide feedback to the choir members in terms of allowing them to examine their own reactions and personal responses to this potential member. As for not being able to see the conductor, perhaps someone standing next to this lady could tap out the downbeat for her into her hand. Or, should the piece call for it, a swaying motion by the choir would certainly aid in establishing the tempo for this chorister. Choir members holding colorful ribbons (two persons per ribbon) and moving them in some choreographed pattern could also help establish the beat, while providing visual interest.

Sometimes, ear training and repetition of the various modes used in synagogue music—especially the exotic-sounding *Ahavah Rabbah*: C-Db-E-F-G-Ab-B-C—can prove helpful. Games might be improvised, such as each choir member singing a different sequential note of that mode as it appears in a particular piece of the choir's repertoire (even if the lady in question cannot sing "her" note correctly, she will still benefit from the exercise.) You might explain that because the *Ahavah Rabbah* mode sounds so typically Middle

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46 *The World as Will and Idea* (1819), cited in Shapiro, *An Encyclopedia of Quotations about Music*, 1977:198.

Eastern, it is the one chosen for the sound tracks of almost every epic biblical movie. It is also heard in the seductive Bacchanale dance just before the final climactic scene of the opera *Samson et Dalilah*.[47] Interestingly, this can be sung as a "nigun," without words.

You might suggest that choir members view adapting to this aspiring chorister as teamwork rather than as dealing with a problem. It is a fact that in the right formation, the lifting power of many wings can achieve twice the distance of any bird flying alone.

I wholeheartedly endorse your idea of using recorded music to help this person; I would record all of it, and encourage her to listen as often as possible. Without having had the pleasure of meeting with this woman, there is no way for me to gauge her ego, her anxiety level, her musicianship (which, as a music therapist, I find of far less importance than most of the other issues), etc. Should stress or anxiety be an issue, the *entrainment* process would be one to consider. The word "entrainment" finds its roots in the *Isos* ("equal") principle of ancient Greece, a methodology expressed in Aristotle's dictum that "like acts on like." He felt that "it is in rhythms and melodies that we have the most realistic imitations of anger and mildness as well as of courage, temperance and all their opposites of moral qualities generally. This we see from experience, as it is by listening to such imitations that we suffer a change within our souls."[48] In 1665 the Dutch physicist Christiaan Huygens identified the entrainment process, and it was widely applied in mathematics and the biological and social sciences. Only in the 1990s did modern day music therapists begin to apply an entrainment model in which rhythmic processes *within* the listener synchronize with (i.e., entrain to) cues in the external musical sound.

The music therapist (or in this case, the hazzan, choir leader or music teacher) sings or plays a piece of strongly metered music, using tempi in the range of 50-60 beats per minute, with the intention of encouraging entrainment. Musical stimuli are deliberately kept relatively simple—and strongly metered—so that they require little attentional energy to follow, and can eventually serve as a "carrier" for other learning tasks. On the primary level, music is matched directly to the physical or cognitive behavior of the client. Once synchronized, modulation of the music causes change in personal behaviors.

[47] Camille Saint-Saëns, "Bacchanale" from *Samson et Dalilah* (1877), EMI Angel LP recording S-36210, Georges Prêtre and the Paris Opera Orchestra, 1962.

[48] J.C. Weldon, ed., *The Politics of Aristotle* (London: MacMillan), 1888, Book 5:237.

Neurologist Oliver Sacks picks up this thread, clearly illustrating the importance of *rhythmic modality* when he writes that even those with extreme problems in motor competency and great bewilderment are able to move regularly to music. Sacks observed the same phenomenon in patients who suffered from severe frontal lobe damage and could not walk, yet showed every sign of normal intelligence. When motor sequences were done to musical accompaniment these patients displayed perfect retention. He concluded that music has the power to organize what purely abstract strategies cannot.[49]

Don Campbell suggests that a

> good music therapist often entrains with a client—that is, he or she makes the same leap and matches the new rhythm, movements, and breath, thus creating a reassuring continuum. Entrainment can lead to a profound encounter between therapist and client. In general, the stronger party sets the tone. But, like the law of gravity, entrainment involves a mutual attraction and reciprocal response.[50]

The therapist must strive to move at the pace of the client, with the objective of eventually drawing him/her into a more balanced rhythm. Entrainment offers an explanation as to how and why brain waves, heart rhythms, respiration, emotional tone, timing, pacing, and other organic rhythms are affected by the music to which one listens.

Research on regimens such as that described above has confirmed that certain music will aid in relieving stress, facilitating relaxation, and developing a positive attitude. Usually, if the heart can be entrained to beat at about 60 beats per minute (professional athletes normally aim for about 72 beats per minute), the person will enter a state of relaxation wherein learning can take place at an optimal level. The slow movements of the great works of the sixteenth-to-eighteenth century Baroque composers (Bach, Corelli, Handel, Telemann, Vivaldi, to name but a few) are often somewhere in the vicinity of 60 beats per minute, and possibly some of the choir music in question might be at this tempo. Perhaps this lady could be encouraged to listen to her recorded music at bedtime on a routine basis…subsequent to the entrainment process.

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[49] Oliver Sacks. *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (New York: Harper & Row), 1985:185-186.

[50] Don G. Campbell. *The Mozart Effect* (New York, New York: Avon Books), 1997:125.

EXAMPLES FOR ENTRAINMENT:

Bach: *Air on a G String*, Suite No. 3

Boccherini: *Minuetto*, String Quartet in E, Opus 13, No. 5

Fasch: Guitar Concerto, 2nd Movement

Handel: Harp Concerto, 1st Movement

Haydn: *Serenade Andante Cantabile*, String Quartet in F, Opus 3, No. 5

Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 21, 2nd Movement

Schubert: *Trout Quintet*, 4th Movement (piano and strings)

Telemann: Concerto in D, *Adagio* (trumpet and strings)

Vivaldi: *Four Seasons*, Winter – *Largo*

Vivaldi: Flute Concerto in D, 2nd Movement

Vivaldi: Guitar Concerto in D, *Largo*

Zipoli: *Adagio* (cello, oboe, organ, and strings)

I know of a Bar and Bat Mitzvah teacher in Montreal (she passed away a few years ago) who worked with blind and sight-impaired adolescents in conjunction with a Braille teacher, and apparently these young people made great strides. Perhaps a Braille expert could be consulted regarding this situation. I wonder if a student majoring in music might be willing to volunteer to work with this lady as a means of gaining teaching experience. Or, perhaps a music therapy student might work with her as part of the internship process (in Canada, 1,000 hours of internship are required prior to accreditation.)

I think we need to be reminded from time to time of Plato's words: "Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, and life to everything."[51] Do we have the authority to exclude anyone from this experience who has the ambition and desire to be a part of it?

RESPONSE:

This person teaches at a school for the sight and hearing impaired in the area and is quite self-sufficient. She is a storyteller/maggid. If she thinks it is too difficult to join the choir (I won't make the decision), the suggestion to have her introduce pieces is a really good one. Thank you.[52]

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[51] Shapiro. *An Encyclopedia of Quotations about Music*, 1977:237.

[52] Editor's note: The Cantors Assembly member, Hazzan Pamela Sawyer of Temple Israel in Alameda, CA, appears to have struck gold partly as a result of this ongoing dialogue with Ava Lee Millman Fisher. The natural role of narrator—one of many expedients

Postlude

I would like to end where I began—in *rondo* fashion—by sharing with you a little more about my eldest son. At three years of age, he commenced Suzuki[53] violin lessons. This method is based on the "Mother Tongue Approach", wherein a child learns to play an instrument—totally by ear—just as he learns his mother tongue. Later, he switched to the viola. Concurrently, he studied the Orff[54] and Kodaly[55] early childhood music education methods (Orff focuses on work with melodic and percussive instruments; Kodaly focuses on much singing, plus learning to read music notation). This early music regimen helped him (and also my other three sons) to develop an excellent ear—and this is not to be underestimated! When the increasing tics made it impossible for him to continue on the stringed instruments, he studied voice. He had progressed in a reasonable manner; nevertheless, I felt that he had not undergone any *transformative* experiences. He certainly had learned a great deal about the elements of music—but did not really understand how this information could or would help him cope with his particular existential life.

It was only when he commenced studying with the remarkable Torah Reader and Bar/Bat Mitzvah teacher, David Rubin (who passed away during the writing of this article), that he began to show visible excitement about music in general, and synagogue music in particular. At this time his Tourette ticks were significant (he was diagnosed one week prior to his Bar Mitzvah). His developing interest in music prompted me to attend many cultural events with him; ballets, operas, plays, symphonies, etc., and amazingly—during the entire programs of the first three listed—most of his tics abated. Better yet, when we attended a symphony concert, there was not one tic throughout the entire evening!

I had to wonder if this had something to do with the power and purity of the music being unobstructed by lyrics, dance movements, acting, etc. It was brilliantly clear that each and every time we attended a symphony concert, he was having an experience of *ecstasy!* I had heard and read about this phe-

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suggested by our music therapist, and now hopefully embraced by her sight-impaired lady chorister—gives evidence of turning into a joint venture that will have motivated the group to enable one of their own, as well as themselves.

53 Shinichi Suzuki. *Nurtured By Love* (Miami: Summy-Birchard Inc.) 1986.

54 Konnie Saliba. *Accent on Orff* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall) 1990.

55 Lois Choksy. *The Kodaly Method* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice Hall) 1988.

nomenon—but during these concerts, I was witnessing it with my own eyes! I had my own version of proof that music can be *transcendent.*

> Music makes us larger than we really are, and the world more orderly than it really is. We respond not just to the beauty of the sustained deep relations that are revealed, but also to the fact of our perceiving them. As our brains are thrown into overdrive, we feel our very existence expand and realize that we can be more than we normally are, and that the world is more than it seems. This is cause enough for ecstacy.[56]

Subsequently (after the tics had abated almost completely—with the help of medication and music), my son became a knowledgeable volunteer for the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Appreciative of the significant role music was now playing in his life, he suggested that he might be successful in procuring complimentary "House" tickets for some of the adolescents with whom I was working at the time. I agreed that this was a thoughtful and delightful idea, and he did succeed in getting a number of tickets for an afternoon concert.

I am a staunch believer in the Hierarchy of Human Needs theory posited by psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1954. This hypothesis states that before aesthetic needs can be satisfied, physiological needs must be met.[57] One might visualize this as a pyramid. The needs at the base of the triangle must be satisfied before an individual is able to focus on the next level, and so forth—up to the pinnacle. Our most basic requirement is for *Physiological Survival*—drink, food, shelter, warmth. When this need is met, we are able to address the next need, which is for *Safety*—security, stability, freedom from danger, absence of threat. The individual then moves up the pyramid to the next levels of need: *Belonging*—friends, peers, cohorts, business partners, colleagues, spouse. As one climbs this pyramid, the next level to be encountered is *Self-Esteem*—achievement, mastery, recognition, respect. The level at the very pinnacle of the pyramid is *Self-Actualization*—the ability to pursue inner talent, creativity, and fulfillment Some theorists are of the opinion that few individuals reach *Self-Actualization.*

I therefore explained to the group that at the completion of the concert we would go to a nearby shop for donuts, juice, and chatter. I was hoping to attract a few adolescents for whom I felt that aesthetics, which so many of

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56 Robert Jourdain. *Music, the Brain, and Ecstasy*, (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc.), 1997:331.

57 W. Huitt, "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," *Educational Psychology Interactive* (Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University), 2004.

us take for granted, was greatly lacking in their lives. I had my eye on one girl in particular—a recent Russian Jewish immigrant whom I suspected was struggling greatly with her impoverished life (and I do not mean this in purely a financial sense). She finally agreed to join the group—I believe more for the promise of food than for any other reason. Off we went to the Orpheum Theatre, the orchestra's gorgeous home. At the concert's conclusion, this young lady was weeping profusely. My initial reaction was that symphonic music had again woven its magic, and so, I requested that she tell me about the thoughts and feelings she was experiencing. Through tears, she said—over and over again—"I did not know people could do things like this; I never knew, I never knew." I asked if she could tell me which piece or part of the music had brought on such a response. Her answer: "The music was beautiful, but it was not only the music; it was also the magnificently painted ceiling of the Orpheum Theatre!"

This response caught me somewhat off guard! It also served to reinforce the idea that, as musicians and educators, we have the ability and responsibility to open the door to so many potent and promising experiences for those whom we serve. Sometimes, we may be privileged to open it into something grander and more wondrous than we ever anticipated when we started out: into ecstasy! As has often been said, music—particularly *wordless* music—does seem to be the most immediate of all the arts,[58] and therefore the one most often capable of inducing a state of ecstasy. This is huge! Ecstasy is more than extreme pleasure; ecstasy melts the boundaries of our being, reveals our connection with the external world, and engulfs us in emotions that are truly immense. Ecstasy happens to our *selves.* It is a transformation of the knower, not simply a transformation of the knower's experience. What greater gift can we bequest to our students!

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[58] The early hasidic master, Shneur Zalman (1745-1813) of Liadi in White Russia, taught that, "Melody is the speech of the soul, but words interrupt the stream of emotion;" Abraham W. Binder, *Jewish Encyclopedia Handbooks* (New York: Central Yiddish Cultural Organization), 1952.

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Everyone is Physically Fit

by Lawrence A. Hoffman

What a difference a revolution makes. We Jews have managed many revolutions in our history, but none is more far-reaching than the substitution of the synagogue for the Temple, prayer for sacrifice, and rabbis for priests. In the first few centuries C.E., the groundwork was laid for a Judaism that would last (we pray) forever. How did we do it?

A revolution: that's how. Not militarily—by storming the barricades—but conceptually.

Yes, we carried off a conceptual revolution, which is no where as clearly proclaimed as in the radical rabbinic understanding of Parashat Emor (Leviticus 21:1-24:23).

Just a cursory look reveals fault lines between Judaism as the Bible saw it and as we now practice it. The most striking evidence comes from the regulations governing priestly physical requirements. In this age of wheelchair access and attention to general disablement, it is difficult to imagine an earlier time when the leaders of society, the priests, had to be physically perfect.

Yet that is the way it was.

"No one with a defect," says the Torah, "shall be allowed to offer God's offering."

But many centuries before our own recognition of the injustice implicit in this regulation, the rabbinic revolution already had ruled otherwise. The Temple was gone, but the synagogue had survived. Synagogue was likened to Temple; the central prayer called the Amidah was likened to sacrifice; prayer, as the "offering of our lips" (Hosea 14:3), replaced the offering of animals; a prayer leader called sheli'ah tsibbur took over the role of the priestly sacrifice; kohanim (priests) retained some symbolic recognition, but not much more.

And the rule about defects got changed. One of the earliest responsa in Jewish history is a ninth-century legal decision by the Gaon of Sura, Natronai ben Hilai (Louis Ginzberg, *Gaonica*, volume I, 1909:119-120), permitting a blind man to lead prayers.

"Defects"? The very word has problems. What is "defective" about someone without sight or hearing, or with just one arm, not both? They may be unable to perform precisely as most others do, but they do function in their own way,

and they may even function better in some areas of life: understanding the human condition, perhaps; or acting with empathy toward others.

So the rabbis decided that the physical barriers to priestly status should not apply to synagogue prayer leaders. I call that a revolution.

Behind their decision was a further insight. The priestly rule was an extension of the regulations that governed the sacrifices offered by priests. Every one of the strictures on priests is paralleled by a similar stricture on the sacrificial animals, offered up by the very fittest humans.

The rabbis denounced all of that. God wants the proper intentions: God wants each of us to care, to wish, to hope, and to do what we can in the world, regardless of whether we sit in a wheelchair, cannot read with university-level understanding, or do not hear or see well.

That means God does not care, really, what our prayers are. Sure, we have evolved a complex liturgy over the centuries. But what if some people are not up for that? The Hasidim reminded us that God hears the prayers of all of us, if they are well intentioned.

I am referring to the well known tale of an illiterate child who, as his form of prayer, blows a whistle in the synagogue, leading the Baal Shem Tov—the very founder of Hasidism—to proclaim the gates of heaven to open, as a result. I once hated that story; I thought it disparaged knowledge as inconsequential. But it didn't. I had missed the point.

It tells us that true prayer is not like true sacrifice. Sacrifice once had to be with physically perfect animals, offered by physically (and mentally) perfect priests. But prayer is different. The rabbis who revolutionized Judaism were screaming a huge truth for us to hear. God does not judge our physical and intellectual state. God (as we should have guessed) looks much deeper.

God looks into our soul. Yes, we do have one. It is not visible, measurable or otherwise comparable to bodies and brains, but is what God cares about and it is all that matters. We may be unable to read the whole Amidah, even unable to say the word amidah. The people who lead us in prayer may have missing limbs, broken bones or distorted countenances. God does not care.

God, it turns out, is a revolutionary, enlisting us to continue a revolution that still has a long way to go. Some legal opinion, for instance, still prohibits prayer leaders whose disabilities might distract worshipers — the solution for which, we ought to say, is not to punish the prayer leaders but to educate the worshipers.

The rabbinic expectation that we treat the physically and mentally disabled as the fully "ensouled" human beings they are, has yet to be played out fully.

We can be the next revolutionaries.

If we are not, we have failed to be the Jews God and the rabbis wanted.

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Jewish Views on Disability: The Mosaic Example

by Scott M. Sokol

A few years ago, walking to shul on a cold New England morning, I slipped on the ice and sprained my wrist. This resulted in my wearing a hand splint for a couple of weeks. During Kiddush the next Shabbat, a congregant came up to me to express his concern over my hand. Once I told him it was fine, he commented half in jest, "you know, if you were a Kohen, you wouldn't be allowed to serve." He was referring to the prohibition of participating in the Temple Service to *ba'alei moom*, those with blemishes, a text which we'll examine in a moment. As it happens, this was a very knowledgeable congregant, a physicist who happened also to be an expert on bible and liturgy.

The irony of his comment did not escape me; it was ironic because despite this individual's own scholarship and erudition, he is also profoundly hearing impaired and as such would himself be excluded from serving as a ritual functionary according to the strictest halakhic interpretations. In a similar vein, I once heard a story on the radio about a rabbi who was visiting a community the day of the yahrtseit of one of his parents. He constituted the tenth member of the minyan, but still the sheliah tsibbur waited to begin. When the visiting rabbi asked what the hold-up was about, he was told that he could not be counted in the minyan because he was deaf. His status as a rabbi apparently didn't enter the equation nor innoculate against this exclusion.

And of course, these examples from the deaf-and-hearing impaired are just one of several domains of disability which often place people on the fringes of the Jewish community. In my own synagogue until quite recently, our facility was not handicap-accessible, which prevented untold numbers of congregants (including our revered rabbi emeritus) from entering the building.

More broadly, the issue of our faith's accessibility to Jews with disability is an issue of great concern to all of us, and particularly to me as a sheliah tsibbur. I therefore welcome this opportunity to engage our tradition on the topic of disability, beginning with a detailed look at the verses on *ba'alei moom* that I just referenced. In Leviticus 21:16-21 we encounter the following text:

> And God spoke to Moses saying: Speak to Aaron, saying: any man of your offspring throughout the generations who has a blemish cannot come forward to make an offering to God. For every man on whom there is a blemish shall not come forward — including the blind, the lame, the flat-nosed or one with a shortened limb. Or a man who has a fractured leg or hand. Or crook-backed, or a dwarf, or who has a blemish in his eye, or has scurvy, or is scabbed or has a testicular injury. No man of the

> seed of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come close to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire. He has a blemish; he shall not come near to offer the bread of his God.

The commandment repeats in slightly different form a total of three times, as if once weren't enough. And the commentators tell us that this is not even intended to be an exhaustive list, since the restriction is understood to include any *discernible* blemish.

So what exactly is intended here? The restriction itself appears pretty clear, and from the sound of it, seemingly pretty yet, there must be some message aside from wanting our priests to be worthy of adorning the cover of *GQ*. Why must these blemished priests, these full-blooded Kohanim be excluded from Holy Service?

Samson Raphael Hirsch, in his Torah commentary, tries to provide an answer. He states that the analogy one can draw is to animals who are not acceptable as sacrificial offerings, due to their own blemishes. Anything that comes before God must be as perfect as we can find. But the regulation goes beyond mere aesthetic beauty. The need for near-perfection has to do with what sacrifices are all about. The Hebrew word for sacrifice is *korban*, which derives from the root meaning "to draw near." Sacrifices are therefore the way in which human beings drew near to God in the days before and while both Temples stood. Not only do we want those things by which we draw near to God to be perfect aesthetically, but also physically and spiritually, because only if we are willing to sacrifice that which is whole and vital are we truly making a sacrifice. Hirsch puts it this way:

> Life and strength, not death and weakness, live at the Altars of God. They demand the surrendering of the *whole* human being to make man flourish in every phase of human life.

And then Hirsch cites what he takes to be a proof-text of this opinion, a text which coincidentally or not comes from *Parashat BeShalah* (Exodus 15:36).

> "If you will diligently hearken unto the voice of your God, and do what is right in His eyes, and give ear unto His commandments and observe all his statutes, then all of the illness that I placed within Egypt I will not place upon you, for I am the Lord your Healer." So runs the very first sentence on the meaning and the power of God's laws; if you give up the whole of your life to fulfilling the whole of God's Laws, then these laws will be the best prophylactic medicine against all physical and social ills which oppress the rest of mankind, this Torah will protect you: *ki ani Adonai rof'ekha* (for I am the Lord, your Healer). And it is this promise

> — and the conditions attendant to it — which priests and offerings have continuously to illustrate and give a clear idea of, in the Sanctuary of this Torah. That is why it must be perfect, complete men — not *ba'alei moom* — who have to perform the offerings in the Sanctuary of this Torah... for a "broken man" cannot represent Man in the proximity of God.

Perhaps, then, there is some rationale for this law that goes beyond surface beauty. And yet, I am still not satisfied. I'm not satisfied because although I very much value the aesthetically pleasing and the notion of *hiddur mitzvah* ("beautifying the observance of a commandment"), I do not automatically equate blemish — or more to the point—disability, with inability to serve God. Put another way, just as disability is by definition not the norm, neither is perfection. And this is the crux of the point I would like to bring out in this article.

Judaism is a religion that values *all* individuals, and indeed has more safeguards than most to protect those who might be easy societal prey. In addition to the usual strictures about protecting the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, we also know that we are supposed to protect and respect those with disability. Consider the very famous following text:

> You shall not insult the deaf or place a stumbling block before the blind. But fear your God, I am the Lord. (Leviticus 19:14).

Most people think of the prohibition in this *pasuk* (verse) against putting a stumbling block in front of the blind as representing a halakhic principle, that is, that we should avoid *piskei halakhah* — legal rulings — that might cause those who don't understand a halakhah to violate it. But let's consider this *pasuk* in its original form. Why are we told not to insult the deaf or to put a stumbling block before the blind?

The obvious answer is that those are bad things to do. But why are they particularly bad? They are particularly bad to my mind because they are cowardly acts. They harm the victim, and the perpetrator remains anonymous, at least to the victim. They are also acts which, by their very nature, cannot be defended against by the victim. That is, the deaf victim may not know that she has even been insulted, yet there will be an effect felt, perhaps harming her character. Or in the case of the blind, he will not know that something has been purposely placed in his path to harm him. He may just think he was clumsy, thus damaging his self-image as well as his body. And again, he can't defend himself against an unseen offender.

The *pasuk* warns, however, that although the victim may not know who caused him harm, God certainly does. We are thus told not to commit these acts, but rather to fear God, the One Who sees and hears all things.

It is important to note the fact that this law being "on the books" in Torah implies that such dastardly acts were not uncommon in the cultures surrounding Israel. Remember that many of the moral laws in the Torah are there to set Israel apart from the evils perpetrated by those around them: child sacrifice; sexual vices; and idol worship. Thus, Jewish law is taking a stand on the issue of the treatment of those with disability. They are to be treated humanely and respectfully.

The Babylonian Talmud (*Shekalim*, 15a) relates a story on this very point about the noted sage, Rabbi Hoshayah, who apparently had hired a blind tutor for his son

> Rabbi Hoshayah was accustomed to dine with the teacher every day to honor him. One time, he had guests and did not come to dine with the teacher. In the evening, Rabbi Hoshayah went up to the teacher to apologize, saying to him "please Master, do not be angry with me. I had guests today who do not know you, and I said to myself that they should not dishonor my Master on this day [i.e., on account of the tutor's disability]. For that reason, I did not dine with you today." The blind teacher said to him, "You have appeased one who is seen but cannot see; may He Who sees but cannot be seen accept your appeasement."

The Talmud goes on to relate a similar story (with paraphrased tag) about Rabbi Eliezer who is said to have sat each day next to another blind man in a submissive position so that others said "If this were not a great man, then Rabbi Eliezer would not be sitting beneath him." As a result of the honor Rabbi Eliezer had bestowed upon the blind man, the community provided that individual with a source of livelihood. When the man realized the reason for his sudden good fortune, he said to Rabbi Eliezer, "You have bestowed kindness upon one who is seen but cannot see; may He Who sees but cannot be seen bestow kindness upon you."

These aggadic passages help us a bit with our current questions. The first story about the blind teacher points out one of the reasons often cited for not letting blemished priests serve, that is, *mar'it ayin* – others' perceptions of individuals or situations. In this case, *mar'it ayin* refers to the fact that others might perceive those with disability not to be worthy to serve, regardless of their actual abilities. It takes a rare individual the likes of a Rabbi Hoshayah or Rabbi Eliezer to see past the disability to the more important qualities a person possesses. More generally, we learn from these stories that Judaism

requires us to treat all individuals with respect and consideration. Finally, the stories reiterate the caveat from Leviticus 19 quoted above — that God sees what others may not be truly "seeing," that God is the ultimate judge in matters of behavior *bein adam la-ḥavero* ("between one person and another").

But what about the issue of leadership? Even if we limit Temple service to the unblemished, what does our tradition say about the possibility of other forms of Jewish leadership for the disabled? Quite a lot, actually. Indeed, the issue of disability and leadership is confronted in the story of none other than Moses, the greatest of all our leaders. In *Parashat Shemot*, Moses expresses his reluctance to act as the Israelites' spokesperson before Pharaoh. His exchange with God is one from which I think we can learn a great deal, and is the last of the texts I'd like to consider Exodus 4:10-12):

> And Moses said to the Lord, "Please, God, I have never been a man of words, not yesterday nor the day before, nor will I be one now that you have spoken to Your servant, because I am of heavy lip and tongue." And God said to him, "Who placed the lips upon man or who makes one mute or deaf, seeing or blind? None but Myself, God. Now go, and I will be with you as you speak and I will teach you what to say."

This passage implicitly teaches several important lessons. First, it asserts the critical Jewish value reflected in many rabbinic teachings that we are expected to emulate God's ways. For example, we are told that we must visit the sick, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, etc., because God does all these things (Babylonian Talmud, *Sotah*, 14a). In the same way, this passage implies that we must help those with disability to see beyond their apparent handicap and help them learn how to compensate and/or accommodate in order to lead fulfilling and successful lives (i.e., "and I will be with you as you speak and I will teach you what to say"). I believe *this passage serves as a proof-text for the mitzvah to provide special education.*

The second — more general — point I believe is equally important, though it is also theologically more difficult .It has to do with God's hand in disability. This text asserts (with no equivocation) that God is the cause of *disability* just as He is the cause of *ability*. It says, "who makes one mute or deaf, seeing or blind? None but Myself, God." This statement is comforting and provocative at the same time. The history of human response to disability is fraught with misplaced blame and guilt. How many parents of disabled children have asked if they somehow caused (genetically, environmentally or otherwise) their child's disability? The scientific community and society at large also contribute to these views. Let's not forget, for example, that autism was thought for years to be the fault of bad mothering. Placing the responsibility

for disability firmly on God's shoulders removes the guilt (at least on some level) and admits our lack of control over such vagaries in life. But at the same time, it begs the question of why? Why would God purposely create individuals with disability?

One answer might be that it is a reminder of what we each subconsciously know — that we are all flawed, that we all have limitations, and that our purpose is to live the best lives we can, despite those limitations. That's an important lesson, but I think an overly simplistic reading of this passage.

To get at what might be a more satisfying answer, we need to think about the development of Moses' leadership and of his character, from this point in *Shemot* all the way to *Parashat BeShalaḥ* and Moses' Song at the Sea — *Shirat haYam.* Moses' task was an impossibly difficult one, but one which he ultimately accomplished: to bring a downtrodden slave people up and out of their physical and spiritual bondage, and to defeat the inclinations of an evil Pharaoh all at the same time. Moses accomplished all of this and more, and it would be natural when one is so unusually successful as Moses proved to be, to think that all or at least a significant part of the success was due to his own innate abilities — his dynamism, his zeal, his leadership skills. And that is perhaps why God chose Moses, a man with an obvious speech and language impairment. The choice underscores the fact that it is *God's* might that brought about the miracles surrounding the Exodus from Egypt, not Moses' ability to overcome Pharaoh's will through his oratory or dynamism. In other words, it is the fact of Moses' disability itself that makes it less likely for him to be seen as the cause of the Israelites' victory. This is also the implicit rationale for Moses not being mentioned even once in the redemptive story of the Haggadah during the Passover Seder. The emphasis is on divine — not human — agency.

Considered in this way, there is a very important lesson to be learned here. The biblical view of Moses' disability inverts the typical (albeit incorrect) perception that one who is disabled is somehow unable to serve as well as someone without disability.Indeed, in this instance it is Moses' *disability* that serves God, at least in large part.Moreover, the story of Moses' ultimate success stands as an historic reminder that disability need not be equivalent to handicap, and that we must look past apparent disability in appreciating a person's true worth.If God had not chosen Moses with all of his imperfections, we never would have benefited from his critical leadership, and we might still be living in the straits of *Mitsrayim.*[1]

[1] The Hebrew name for Egypt—*Mitsrayim*, unvocalized in Torah scrolls—can also be read as *metsarim*: "a distressful place."

From this perspective we can now confront *Shirat haYam* in a new light. When Moses exclaims

> *Ozi ve-zimrat yah vayhi li liyshuah*
> The Lord is My Strength and Song,
> and He has become my salvation,

we perceive a fresh nuance in his exultation. God was Moses' strength when he had none, the One Who said "I will teach you how to accomplish what you need to accomplish." God had confidence in him when Moses had none in himself, and ultimately God's confidence enabled Moses not only to speak but to sing.

The preamble to *Shirat haYam* states

> *Az yashir Moshe u-venei Yisrael **et** ha-shirah ha-zot la'Adonai*
> Thus sang Moses **and** the children of Israel this song to God.

The commentators observe: this statement comes to teach us that all of Israel sang to God along with Moses.In a comment on a related passage Rabbi David Kimkhi (RaDaK) states that it is incumbent upon each of us to compose and sing our individual song of praise to God for each miracle that He has performed for us.No two songs will therefore ever be the same.Each person has his or her own voice, and it's no doubt true that not every voice will appear on the surface to be as beautiful as every other one.Yet, this fact does not release us from the responsibility to sing, to learn and to serve.May each of us come to find our unique voice, and together may our human chorus come to serve as a true *korban*, drawing us nearer to God's divine eminence.

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Bar/Bat Mitzvah Training for Special Needs—A Case in Point

by Ruth L. Ross

I recently had the privilege of working with a handicapped child who was preparing for Bar Mitzvah. This was a young man who suffers from a genetic defect that allows him almost no voluntary movement, and what movement he can manage is fairly uncontrolled. He and his younger brother were to celebrate their religious coming of age in one day, and I had two goals for each boy.

For the older boy I wanted to make sure that his voice would be heard; he does not speak but he can vocalize. As I worked with him it became clear that he could in fact match a pitch or an interval intentionally, but only after trying for a period of fifteen or twenty minutes. For the purposes of the service we moved to plan B. I recorded the trills, scales and grunts he produced, and brought them to a sound engineer. The engineer isolated the pitches and created a CD with the Shema melody in this boy's voice. He really did it as a deed of loving-kindness; the charge was in no way reflective of the time he spent. We played that recording during the Torah service; you could hear a pin drop.

My second goal for this young man was to get the boy's father to let go of the wheelchair. He is an exceptionally dedicated Dad, his son's primary caregiver, and he often speaks on his son's behalf. It took a lot of gentle encouragement to persuade him that his job at the Bar Mitzvah ceremony was to sit by his wife and kvell; on that day the community would take this boy in as their own. The Torah service was a beautiful illustration of that. We bound our smallest scroll to the tray of the wheelchair and as we walked around the synagogue and the congregation patted and stroked his shoulders and head, it was as though he was being passed from hand to hand.

For the younger boy I also wanted two things. Obviously, I wanted him to be as well prepared as any of my students. But in addition, it was very important to me that *his* day not be overshadowed by his brother's. I spoke to him often about that, and I told him how much I respected him and how much the congregation admired him for his decision to share the day with his brother in such a kind and caring way. He went far beyond our shul's requirements for leading services, and he clearly felt that this was his day, too.

Finally, I was looking for a way to provide the family with a sense of dignity, something that is so often lacking when home life revolves around a handicapped family member. We removed several rows of seats, set up a low-standing podium so that both boys could be seen, and used an additional Ark on the floor level so both boys could be involved in taking out and putting away the scrolls. We did everything we could think of to make the place accessible, and it paid off in spades.

The family was thrilled, the congregation was deeply moved, and I would do it again a heartbeat. What a wonderful experience!

Ruth Landau Ross is hazzan at Temple Beth El, the largest Conservative synagogue in Maine. She lives in Portland with her husband David and four children: Samuel, Mierka, Nathan and Abraham.

Training Children with Pitch Problems for Bar/Bat Mitzvah

by Sam Weiss

Rather than encourage children with pitch problems to read their entire haftarah in a monotone instead of chanting it, I would teach them at the very least to phrase the words in appropriate trope groups, pause variously at Katon, Etnahta and Sof Pasuk, as well as count the number of pulses on different syllables — so that the distinction between melismatic and syllabic tropes is communicated. Recognizing these characteristics, I believe, is much more essential to chanting than is the singing of correct pitches.

To take this issue a step further, in thirty years of teaching B'nei and B'not Mitzvah I have not had a single tone-deaf student (including several with Down's Syndrome) whose actual singing I could not improve to some degree. The challenge lies in enabling them to create different pitches without the aid of tone imitation, often the one tool that they lack. (Certain true monotones may lack the physical ability to modulate their voice altogether, which is definitely a special case.) My normal approach is built on the following four steps.

1- Strengthening their ability to distinguish loud from soft, which I gradually carry over into distinguishing and reproducing different pitches via their intonation of English sentences. Simulating the process of calling someone in another room is very useful, since even among tone-deaf children this increase in volume is almost always accompanied by a rise in pitch. Having them listen closely to their own intonation of English sentences (with syllable stresses within individual words as well as tonal variations that indicate surprise, disdain, inquiry, etc.) is the next step in developing their sense of pitch.

2- Relating pitch changes to physical sensations in their throat rather than to sounds—not unlike the process of sensitizing a singer to different vocal registers—and then forcing them to sing everything in a "skinnier" voice. Often, tone-deaf children can hear pitch differences in another's voice, but they can't hear it in their own. This ability improves radically once they hear themselves "sing" in a register even slightly different from their normal speaking voice.

3- Totally abandoning the terms "high" and "low" in favor of skinny/thick, light/heavy, girl/man, etc. Thus I will ask them to imitate a

woman's voice, followed by a man's voice. Or I may ask, "What is the skinniest sound you can make?"

4- Using body motions like standing/sitting, arm-raising/lowering to accompany singing. (Cheironomy meets Kodaly.) With many students the arm motions become a regular feature of their singing, and I advise them to do it at home as well.

I would take a different approach with children who have the ability to hear pitch differences but cannot transfer that ability to their own singing. It is unfortunate that in common parlance this rather mild condition is often given the name "tone deaf." (This mild condition becomes more and more typical with each and every year that American Pop music continues to be an exercise in rhythm and volume rather than melody.) A more useful term for this average type of student would be "poor singer," keeping in mind that no matter how poor a singer, this is *not* a tone-deaf child.

The distinction between these two cases is analogous to the difference between not knowing the words "aquamarine, turquoise, emerald, olive," and being color blind. Our job is to distinguish between the two cases. As any good voice teacher would tell us, thinking of pitches in terms of "up and down" or "high and low" only relates to reading Western musical notation. It may make some sense when playing an instrument (but why shouldn't a pianist think of "right and left"?) and is essentially irrelevant to singing—and disadvantageous to the professional singer. These terms are quite arbitrary, so that, by testing a child on them we may really only be testing their vocabulary.

With a "poor singer" I will therefore do quite a bit of falsetto work (including recording their assigned parts in falsetto) to help them recognize different vocal registrations. In my earlier teaching I would ask children to sing something they knew (like "Row, Row, Row your Boat"); these days it is miraculous if they can sing anything exceeding a range of three or four notes—the typical "scale" of music that they are regularly exposed to. This is why many are so afraid of singing "high" (i.e., normally), and why I often teach and record in falsetto for a few sessions.

I believe the fruits of such labors are much more rewarding to the child, to the family and to the teacher, than having a musical student merely do what comes naturally.

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Planning to Succeed in Teaching Prayer and Song in Afternoon Religious Schools

by Sheldon Levin

Teaching songs and prayers in Afternoon Religious Schools succeeds or fails from congregation to congregation. In the Conservative Movement each congregational afternoon school is a separate entity. The Education Department of United Synagogue does not require that every school teach the same prayers or songs. While many schools have well-developed curricula, others have few guidelines for their teachers. In some schools, teachers select which prayers or songs they will review or introduce each year. In other congregations the Cantor, Educational Director, Rabbi or Education Committee carefully oversees what prayers and/or songs they expect the children to learn.

Why teach prayer and music?

With the number of Afternoon Religious School hours so limited, educators and lay leaders must make difficult decisions regarding what to teach and what not to include. For most American congregations, synagogue participation is a very high priority. The Hebrew that is taught is rarely meant for conversation, but used instead to familiarize the students with prayers and blessings. The more comfortable the children are with leading prayers and participating in congregational services the better they tend to do with Bar and Bat Mitzvah skills. These skills will hopefully carry them into becoming participating adults as well.

The question of music is more controversial. When children spend a few minutes a week singing Israeli or Holiday songs, is this time taken away from Bible or Hebrew text study well spent? The more children enjoy coming to Religious School, the better they will learn. Students will be positively impacted through the time they spend singing. Through Israeli songs they will help develop a closer affinity with the people and country of Israel. Through *Ruah* songs they will be able to joyfully and energetically participate at summer camps, youth group activities, Religious School assemblies and programs. Some children will learn more Hebrew vocabulary through the songs they sing voluntarily than from the texts they will be required to read.

From Holiday selections they will be encouraged to celebrate Jewish ceremonies and will remember many historical and cultural facts. From musical programs, choir concerts, skits and plays based on Jewish themes, and quality age-appropriate songs, the children will feel pride in their people. Parents generally experience great joy when seeing their children perform; concerts

featuring the kids are usually the best attended programs at any shul. And if the congregation should present a Cantorial concert with its children's choir singing a few songs — by themselves and/or with the cantors—even better! The children and their parents will learn to appreciate that repertoire as well. I have often heard that "a singing school is a happy school" and I sense that a school without any music would indeed be a sad one. Hopefully, the joyful spirit that the students feel about being Jewish through the songs of our people will remain with them through their teen and adult lives.

Why have prayer-or-song goals?

This article discusses goals for each grade of the school. Yet, it does not prescribe a curriculum, which implies detailed guidelines of what to teach and how to teach it. The "goals" simply list the prayer or song that is to be covered, without stating how they are to be taught. If we have no goals, there is no way of insuring that children will learn a wide breadth of prayers and songs and it is likely that many important prayers or songs will not be covered. A famous axiom states: "Those who fail to plan, plan to fail." Without a carefully crafted plan as to which prayers or songs will be taught in which school years, chances are some will be reviewed many times and others will not be taught at all.

Do we already have set curricula?

In the last few years, the Jewish Theological Seminary Education Department has been testing a curriculum for Middle School age students. The *Etgar* ("challenge") Project was, in large part, co-authored by Cantor Marcy Wagner, under the direction of Dr. Steven Brown, Dean of the Davidson School of Education. This clearly designed curriculum, which includes detailed lesson plans, as well as broad goals, is being tested in twenty afternoon schools. When the Seminary and United Synagogue Education Department, together with leaders of the Jewish Educators Assembly, have studied the results of the work of these pilot schools, the plan is to offer this program to all afternoon Religious Schools.

In 1974 the United Synagogue Education Department published a comprehensive set of curricula, know as the Rainbow Curriculum.Each school was to select one area of expertise to spend most of the limited afternoon Religious School hours. Each section was in a different color, thus the "Rainbow" name.Dr. Saul Wachs, a graduate of the Cantors Institute, wrote the lessons for schools that selected prayer as their primary focus. Through teaching prayer the students would also learn Hebrew skills, Israel identity and Jewish history. Very few schools have accepted the premise and though

this curriculum includes brilliant ideas, it has not brought the many schools of our Movement together.

The United Synagogue has recently developed the Framework For Excellence models. There are several ways a school can include enough hours or programs to be considered a "Framework" school. One school might meet six hours, three days each week while another school meets two days but includes a monthly Shabbaton. Some schools meet fewer hours in the primary grades but retain more students in a well-designed Hebrew High School. Each school accepted in the Framework must demonstrate the quality of its programs, curricula, staff, lay and professional leadership (including the role of the Hazzan in the school). The Framework includes suggested curricular goals for many subject areas. There are no specifics for song goals, and the prayer goals are very general ("Students should learn Shabbat Evening and Morning Prayers"). Those generalities need to be defined, and the Education Committee of the Cantors Assembly has volunteered to help write specific prayer goals. We will be working with leaders of the Education Department of both the United Synagogue and the Jewish Theological Seminary to further set those goals nationally.

What is currently being taught?

While many schools do have carefully crafted prayer goals for each grade of their schools, many others do not. It is often left to each teacher to decide what is taught. Some teachers have more interest in teaching prayer than do others. If a student has a teacher who is non-observant, he or she may spend an entire school year and learn no new prayer texts, meanings or skills. In a school that has three different "Aleph" classes, it is possible that each group of children will learn different prayers, depending on their teacher's expertise and interests.

In many congregations the curriculum follows the textbooks that are used. Each publisher or text author decides which tefillot are included in which years. A school that uses Torah Aura's *S'fatai Tiftah* series teaches different prayers than a school that uses Berhman House's *Hineni* textbooks and materials. These and other texts include many prayers, but clearly, our Movement lacks consistency from school to school.

Moving from place to place

In today's mobile society it is not unusual that a family will move several times during their children's school years. It would be ideal to know that a child who attended a Religious School in New York through second grade would be ready to enter third grade in a new home in Nevada. Similarly, a

student who completed fifth grade in California would hopefully learn enough Hebrew and prayer skills to easily transfer to a congregation in Pennsylvania for sixth grade.

Ideally, when children attend Camp Ramah or a USY encampment or summer programs, they will have learned the same prayer skills and songs that are taught in a Conservative Afternoon Religious School (Day School students will always have more opportunities to learn more skills, prayers and songs).

Anecdotally, it is embarrassing how little Afternoon Religious School students learn or remember past their Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations. This past year I served as one of the chaperones on a trip to Washington for Jewish students, run by *Panim El Panim* to instill ethical values. Of the sixty students in our group — from ten different Conservative Afternoon Religious Schools — only one school's eleventh and twelfth graders were able to chant the complete *Birkhat HaMazon*, lead a morning service or chant Torah parts. Most of those kids honed their skills at USY encampments or Wheels trips around the country or to Israel. Clearly, more of our Afternoon Religious Schools and Hebrew High Schools can be doing a better job of teaching these prayers and skills.

Keva or Kavvanah?

One obstacle we face with a fixed set of prayer-or-song goals is how to avoid monotony and find opportunities for teaching new melodies. In 1992 the Reform Movement published its *Manginot* curriculum with specific songs to teach in certain age ranges. In 2004 Reform totally revised the list of selections and published materials in *Manginot* Volume II. Some songs that were deemed as essential a few years earlier were removed and conversely, some new songs have recently been composed that the publishers now believe should be included.

How can a school — or a movement — select which prayers and songs to include and which do not make the cut? The Cantors Assembly Education Committee has begun surveying the current practices in Conservative afternoon schools and hopes in the next year to work together with leaders of the United Synagogue and the Jewish Theological Seminary in listing which age appropriate prayers should be taught in all of our congregational schools.

How do we keep the classes interested, yet cover all of the needed materials? One solution for teaching prayers is to expose the students to more then one melody (if multiple tunes are available). For example, the third graders could learn the Lewandowsky melody for *Lekha Dodi* while the fourth graders learn

a different setting of the same prayer, by Craig Taubman. Fifth graders could learn a hasidic version. Then, for a monthly Family Service, the older grades could help select which tune they wished to use that month.

This same system could apply to many other prayer texts. Besides helping to review the text while keeping the learning process fresh, it offers several other positive benefits. If children visit another congregation, chances are they will be able to more easily participate, regardless of which tunes are used. If students go to a summer camp or USY program they will similarly feel included. When they become adults they will hopefully not say, "Cantor, you are using the wrong tune," since they will have discovered early on that there are at least three different settings for many of the prayers.

For song goals, there should be a basic list of Holiday and Israel songs that the younger grades are taught, and additional ones taught as the students mature. By Middle School the kids should be able to pick from a list whatever songs they wish to sing. This helps empower them. Teachers or cantors could then alternate between the new selections they wanted to teach (or old ones they felt needed reviewing) and the choices made by the students. Schools could present a special Holiday or Israel concert to perform either the new selections or the students' favorites, or a combination of the two.

What to do until we have national goals?

Since the process I've outlined above is far from complete, it is premature to list prayer or song goals at this time. We hope within a year to be able to share these lists with all cantors and educational directors. Until communal standards are accepted and adopted, I would encourage each Religious School to design a list of prayer and song goals that works for its situation. One could start with the textbooks that are currently in use, looking at the prayers that are included there. Then one could brainstorm with teachers, rabbi and cantor concerning which prayers must be completed by seventh grade, and work to teach some of these each year. It is important to review prayers and songs taught in previous years, or students will forget them. If they learn the Shabbat evening Kiddush in third grade but never sing it at home or in school again, they will need to re-learn it for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. It would be better to find opportunities to sing the Kiddush every year many times.

It is also helpful to share the list of prayers and songs that one compiles with faculty and parents. Each class might post a chart listing their prayer and/or song goals for the year, with places for each child to "get a star" when he or she can read or chant that prayer or song. Weaker students who needed

extra help could work with a teen or adult volunteer, CD player or *hevrutah* partner to learn the prayers that proved difficult for them.

Students need many opportunities to use these prayers in actual services. Schools should plan Junior Congregation, Family Services, *Shabbatonim*, Youth Group programs, Class Services and in-school prayer experiences. For the songs, *Zimriyot* (Song Festivals), concerts, assemblies and community or school-wide programs can be planned for holiday-and-Israel oriented events. Sing-Downs (song contests) can be played in school to excite kids about singing Hebrew songs. Regular *Ruah* programs are easily scheduled in school, with lots of enthusiastic singing. Exciting music can be played in halls and classrooms (the Spirit Series CDs, with an entire CD devoted to one theme, are great for this purpose).

I've tried to show that the congregational Afternoon Religious School enjoys many opportunities to turn children on to prayer and song. As we work toward a unified set of goals for all of our congregations, we can hope that each school will do its best to teach as many prayers and songs as wonderfully as it can.

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Masters of the London Blue Book—Marking 350 Years Since the Resettlement of Jews in England

by Charles Heller

David Kusevitsky once summarized his experiences as a hazzan in London: "They had a blue book that they gave you, and they tell you, 'use it as much as possible.'"[1] (This was just one of several perceived indignities, which included having to *leyn* and having to take direction from the choirmaster.)

It is the mysterious "blue book" that I wish to discuss here. Although the printers have long changed the original bright blue cover to black, the volume is still known as the Blue Book to British synagogue musicians, amongst whom it retains its venerable position at the heart of the repertoire. In this article I hope to show why that is, focusing particularly on the achievements of its three editors: Rabbi Francis L. Cohen, D. M. Davis and Samuel Alman.

The Voice of Prayer and Praise

The Blue Book[2] started life in 1889 as a slim volume, *Shirei Knesset Yisrael/A Handbook of Synagogue Music for Congregational Singing*, edited by Francis L. Cohen and B. L. Mosely. It was intended not just for choirs but also for the average worshiper (who was assumed of course to be able to read music) so that they could sing along with the choir, a point which is stressed in the original Preface and again in the Preface to the 1948 reprint. In 1899 the *Handbook* was expanded into its Blue Book form with the additional title: *Kol Rinnah VeTodah / The Voice of Prayer and Praise* under the joint editorship of Cohen and D. M. Davis, published by the United Synagogue (London; i.e., British Orthodox). The third edition (1933) was further expanded by about twenty per cent through the addition of a "Supplement" section edited by Samuel Alman. Since then the volume has remained in print. It is now also available on-line at www.shulmusic.org.

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[1] Mark Slobin. *Chosen Voices—the Story of the American Cantorate* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press), 1988:85.

[2] Cohen, F.L. and Davis, D.M., eds., *Kol Rinnah VeTodah/The Voice of Prayer and Praise* (London: United Synagogue), 1933.

The Blue Book is an anthology of choral and congregational music for the Orthodox service, ranging from the two chords of *Amen* (in different modes for the different nus-ha'ot of the whole year) to elaborate motets such as Mombach's *L'Adonai Ha'arets* and Salaman's *Mah Yedidot* (which was originally published by Novello with organ accompaniment).[3] Let us now look at various noteworthy aspects of this volume and at the particular achievements of its editors.

Nusah

The first topic to discuss is the adherence of the Blue Book to nusah (meaning of course British nusah, which closely follows German nusah). We should clarify here exactly what we mean by *nusah*. To some people, it means little more than singing a familiar tune. But there is far more to it than that.

Briefly, nusah is the application of traditional modes which are specific to each prayer. The main characteristics of nusah are that it is *appropriate* and *uniform* — it is appropriate to the liturgical occasion, and because it is uniform, everyone accepts it. The Blue Book indicates which service each selection is intended for. There are separate responses (*Mi-Khamokha* etc.) for Friday night, Shabbat morning, Festivals and High Holydays, Ma'ariv and Shaharit. There are settings of congregational responses such as the Shirah and *Ashrei ha'am yod'ei teru'ah*. There are separate Yigdals, Hodus etc., etc., for each holiday, and there are specific melodies for the Sefirah period. And each different melody is another gem.

The Ashkenazi community in London's East End grew up beside the Spanish-Portuguese community which was centered in the historic synagogue of Bevis Marks, and adopted many of its beautiful melodies. There has always been a close relationship between these two London communities: my late father Otto Heller z"l was just one of many Ashkenazi choristers who periodically sang at Bevis Marks. Similarly in Germany, Baer and other Ashkenazi hazzanim made use of melodies from the Spanish-Portuguese Temple in Hamburg.[4] As in the Ashkenazi community, the Spanish-Portuguese melodies are carefully apportioned out to their appropriate service, and woe betide anyone who mixes them up. Although intended for the Ashkenazi community, The

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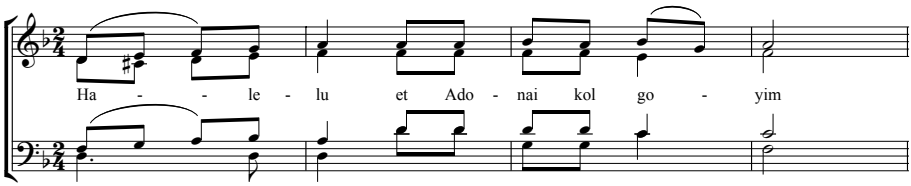
[3] These two fine pieces in their original (not Blue Book) versions may be heard on the CD: *The English Tradition of Jewish Choral Music*, performed by the Zemel Choir of London. Olympia OCD 647 (1997).

[4] See: Seroussi, Edwin, *Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue Music in 19th Century Reform Sources From Hamburg: Ancient Tradition in the Dawn of Modernity* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, Hebrew University), 1996, Yuval Monograph series 9.

Blue Book has made good use of these Spanish-Portuguese melodies, which were first published in 1857 in the volume *The Ancient Melodies*, expanded and re-issued by the Society of Hesha'im / Oxford University Press in 1931 as *Talelei Zimrah/Sephardi Melodies: being the Traditional Liturgical Chants of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, London*.[5] As an example of this repertoire, here is the still-familiar *Hallelu (**Example 1**)* as given in



Example 1. ***Hallelu*** *as given in the Blue Book.*

The Blue Book,[6] borrowed from *The Ancient Melodies* (i.e. it was considered "ancient" in 1857) (NB: please bear in mind that The Blue Book uses Ashkenazi pronunciation, although I am using standard Israeli pronunciation in this article).

Choral Settings

The Blue Book throughout is designed for an *A Cappella* SATB choir, with some pieces scored for hazzan and choir. There are no solo cantorial pieces. The SA parts were intended to be sung by boys, and indeed they were so performed until the last boys faded away around the 1970s. Nowadays most Orthodox choirs are men's choirs, and the SA parts are sung by tenors and baritones. There was however the occasional nominally Orthodox choir which had women singers, the last holdout being the Hampstead Synagogue where Alman himself was choirmaster. There is a story that the Chief Rabbi once visited a London synagogue and was concerned whether there was a mixed choir. The choirmaster replied: "We have men and women who sit together, but they do not really sing together, although during your sermon they may sleep together."

To understand the psycho-dynamics involved, it must be stated that the London United Synagogue, which was the model for Solomon Schechter and the United Synagogue of America, was far more liberal when founded in

[5] This volume is discussed in: Seroussi, Edwin, "Ha-Manginot Ha-atikot", *Pe'amim - Studies in Oriental Jewry*. Ben Zvi Institute, Jerusalem, Vol. 50, Winter 5752: 99-131.

[6] Page 42.

1870 than it is today. This liberal attitude is reflected in the readiness of the Blue Book editors to borrow material from the Reform community, such as Psalm 121—*Essa Einai*—by C. G. Verrinder.[7] The Blue Book was designed to be conservative (with a small "c") and "English," as opposed to the Orthodox Eastern European style of the immigrant community, which of course was growing rapidly at the end of the nineteenth century. The British Chief Rabbi is connected with the United Synagogue; despite his title he has no jurisdiction over those numerous fellow Jews who belong to the Federation of Synagogues (Orthodox), Liberals, Masorti, Spanish-Portuguese etc. Over the years the United Synagogue has gradually become more Orthodox so that it now bears no relation to its Conservative (capitalized) American namesake.

One feature of the Blue Book which always puzzles Americans is the use of "tonic sol-fa" notation for the SA parts (in addition to staff notation). In Victorian times tonic sol-fa was routinely taught in schools, so that it was expected that boys could read it. Tonic sol-fa notates music using the "do-re-mi" names, but unlike "solfege" it works on the principle that "do" is the tonic note, not necessarily the note C. If the music modulates to a new key, then you indicate which new note is now "do". This is easy to learn, and relates to what you actually hear. Far from thinking it weird, experienced educators today know that it is an essential tool in training children.[8]

Francis Lyon Cohen

Rabbi F.L. Cohen (1862-1934) was a consummate musician and musicologist as well as a minister. He was also the music authority for the old *Jewish Encyclopedia* (1901-1905), still prized today. Like his co-editors, he did not just "edit"; he polished both traditional melodies and the rough work of other composers into finely-crafted gems; and he paid meticulous attention to Hebrew accentuation (in the words of the Preface, "…eradicating that excessively faulty treatment of the Hebrew by which some Anglo-Jewish choirs have been invidiously distinguished"). Some examples of his work follow.

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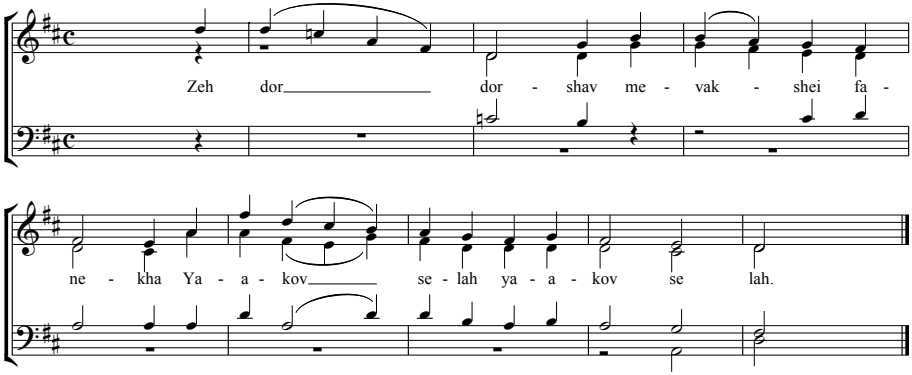
[7] *Kol Rinnah VeTodah*, page 311. In the original 1889 *Handbook*, F. L. Cohen thanked Verrinder for supplying his harmonization of traditional pieces used at the (Reform) West London Synagogue, where he was the organist. Charles Garland Verrinder (died 1904) was a church organist and composer, whose published work included seven volumes of synagogue music, both original compositions and settings of traditional tunes. His *Essa Einai* is a simple yet dignified piece which is still very current in British services. His church appointments included St Giles in the Fields, London, famous for its outreach to the beggars and down-and-outs in London's notorious no-go area, the "Rookery" of Seven Dials. See: John MacLachlan Gray, *The Fiend in Human* (N.Y.: St Martin's Press), 2003.

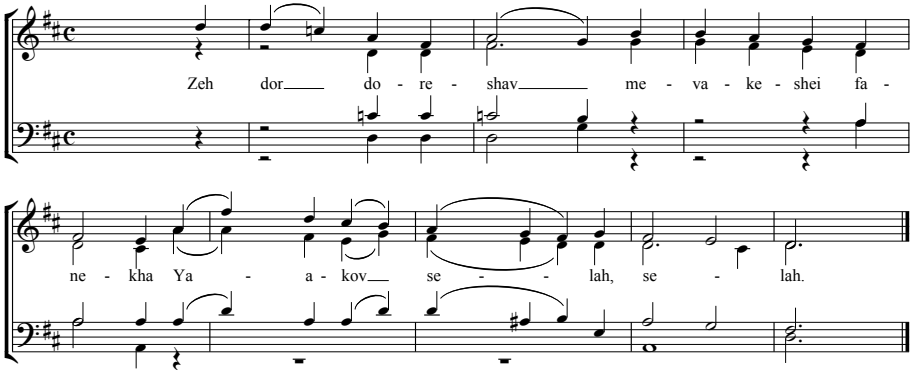
[8] Bartle, Jean Ashworth, *Sound Advice: Becoming a Better Children's Choir Conductor* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press), 2003:80.

Here is part of Mombach's *La'Adonai Ha'arets* (Ps. 24; **Example 2**) as originally published (although we must bear in mind that this version itself went through the editorship of the Rev. M. Keizer).



Example 2. *Mombach's* ***La'Adonai Ha'Arets*** *as originally published.*

Here is how Cohen gives it (**Example 3**):[10]



Example 3. *Cohen's version of Mombach's* ***La'Adonai Ha'Arets****.*

Here is the beginning of Cohen's setting for a "traditional" *Shema Koleinu* (**Example 4**),[11] which until today has never failed to move the congregation:

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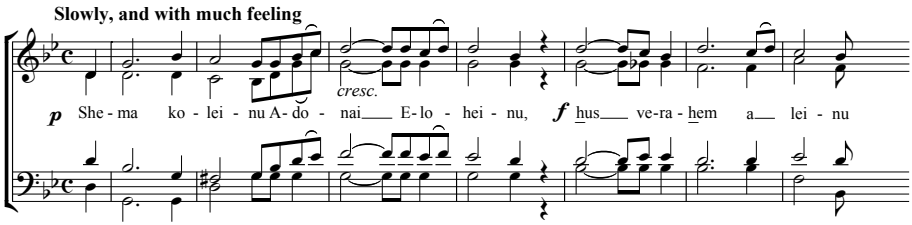
[9] Mombach, Israel Lazarus, ed. Keizer, M., *The Sacred Musical Compositions* (London), 1881:128.

[10] *Kol Rinnah VeTodah* (the Blue Book), page 147.

[11] Ibid., page 201.

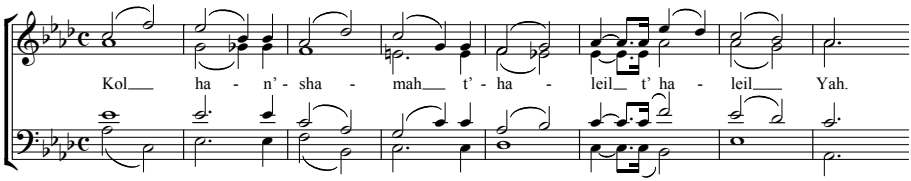


Example 4. *Cohen's setting for a "traditional"* ***Shema Koleinu****.*

The reader is also recommended to look at the Shavuot *Yigdal* (pp.110-111).

D. M. Davis

David Montague Davis (1872-1932)[12] was choirmaster and organist at the New West End Synagogue, London, whose rabbi was Rev. Simeon Singer — his edition of the standard British Orthodox siddur (*The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*) is still called "Singer's." The synagogue's members included Herbert Samuel, the first High Commissioner of Mandated Palestine, and the family of the scientist Rosalind Franklin, whose X-ray work was essential for Watson and Crick's elucidation of the structure of DNA.[13] " D.M.D." (as he is still called) was also active as an educator and conductor in the non-Jewish sphere — it is said that he sometimes played organ at St George's Church, Hanover Square, where Handel himself had worshipped. The main contribution of D.M.D. is his corpus of original compositions. They are all marked by a simplicity of style, being easy to perform and pleasingly tuneful such as the highly serviceable *Halleluyah* (**Example 5**).[14]



Example 5.*D. M. Davis' highly serviceable* ***Halleluyah****.*

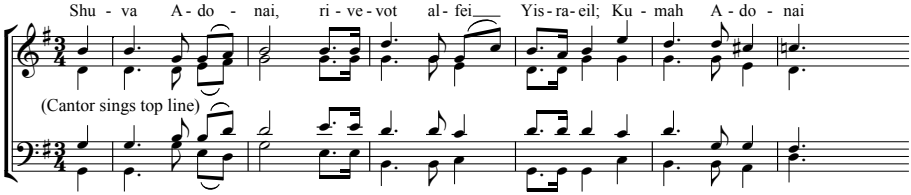
[12] For biographical details, see his obituary in the *Jewish Chronicle*, December 9, 1932:12.

[13] There is a thorough description of the New West End community in: Maddox, Brenda, *Rosalind Franklin: The Dark Lady of DNA* (London/New York: HarperCollins), 2002.

[14] *Kol Rinnah VeTodah*, pages 243-244.

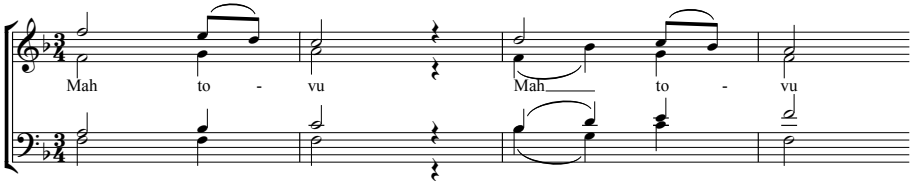
Samuel Alman

Samuel Alman (1877-1947) is best known today for his two volumes of synagogue compositions, but he had many other works for organ, choir etc. published, much of it by Oxford University Press. In 1947 a proposal was made that the United Synagogue should create a special position for him to devote himself to composition, but he died shortly after.[15] He brought to the Blue Book some of his own compositions and a considerable number of classics which he ingeniously re-scored for A Cappella SATB choir, as we see in this very useful and beautiful choral accompaniment to the cantorial recitative in Lewandowski's Uvenuḥo Yomar[16] (originally scored with organ accompaniment).



Example 6. *Alman's A Cappella accompaniment to Lewandowski's* ***Uvenuḥo Yomar****.*

Not all of Alman's improvements were successful, however. He corrected Lewandowski's familiar *Mah Tovu* (**Example 7**):[17]



Example 7. *Lewandowski's familiar* ***Mah Tovu****.*

to agree with the rules of milel/milra accentuation, but the result sounds clumsy (**Example 8**):[18]

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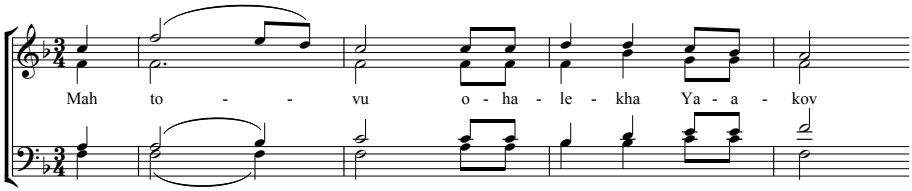
[15] Apple, Raymond, *The Hampstead Synagogue 1892-1967* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell), 1967:59.

[16] *Kol Rinnah VeTodah*, page 268.

[17] Lewandowski, L. *Todah W'Simrah* Vol.1 (Re-issued: New York: Sacred Music Press/HUC, 1954), p.3.



Example 8. *Alman's "corrected" version of Lewandowski's* ***Mah Tovu****.*

The fact is that no British choir has ever sung Alman's version of this piece despite their noses being stuck in his Blue Book for seventy years. There are three possible reasons: choristers choose to sing Lewandowski's original; or they have preserved an oral tradition of Lewandowski's original; or they have difficulty reading the music in the Blue Book. My suspicion is a mixture of all three.

Alman also "improved" Lewandowski's *Zakharti Lach*, and its inclusion in the Blue Book must have contributed to its popularity. I was formerly the choirmaster at the New Synagogue, London (so called because it was new when it was founded in 1760).[19] When the choir was about to sing *Zakharti Lach* on Rosh Hashanah, Mr. Hinden — the *shammes* — would suddenly appear in the choir loft in his customary top hat, white tie and tails, and he would sing the second tenor part effortlessly. Ever since then I have always told my singers that Lewandowski's music is so basic to our repertoire that every *shammes* knows the second tenor parts…

One of Alman's more successful improvements is his version of Adon Olam[20] by David Aron De Sola, the original co-editor of the *Ancient Melodies*. De Sola's composition, which itself contains echoes of other Spanish-Portuguese melodies such as *Avarekh*[21], has been neatly pruned and given some dramatic shifts of harmony in the last verse.

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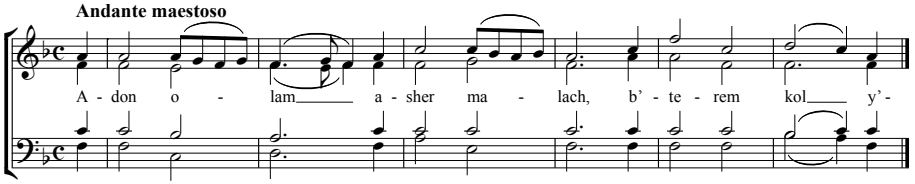
[18] Ibid., page 252.

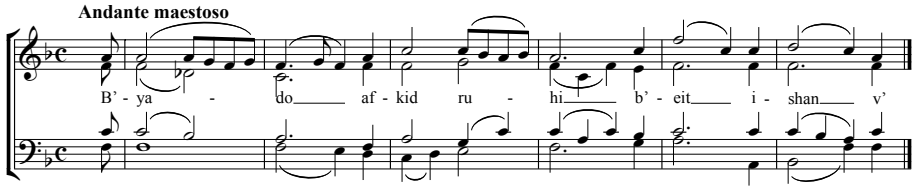
[19] The New Synagogue's historic building is now used by Bobover Hasidim. It is not to be confused with the present New London Synagogue (Masorti).

[20] *Kol Rinnah VeTodah*, pages 276-277.

[21] This and other pieces from *The Ancient Melodies* are performed by Cantor Louis Danto with Rivka Golani (viola) on the CD *I Heard A Voice From Heaven* (Cadenza Records LRCD 110, 1996).



Example 9. *De Sola's Spanish-Portuguese melody for* ***Adon Olam****.*



Example 10. *Alman's more dramatic harmonization of De Sola's* ***Adon Olam****.*

Conclusions

The Blue Book is an under-valued resource bequeathed to us by high-principled Victorian masters. It unquestionably has a British flavor — or perhaps I should say *flavour*. It exploits British nusah; its musical style is modeled on Mendelssohn (there are even some pieces by Mendelssohn , most notably the chorus *Open the Heavens* from *Elijah* (arranged by D.M.D. to fit the response *Va'anahnu* and sung to this day); and it is steeped in the British traditions of exemplary choral writing.

But the enemy is at the gate. In April 2005 the *Jewish Chronicle*[22] reported that with the retirement of its longtime hazzan, Stanley Brickman, the Hampstead Synagogue will depart from tradition. The warden-president said: "We're moving away from the Blue Book…We can't stay in the nineteenth century. We've got to give people what they want." The new "modern, participatory style" is aimed at those members of the congregation who "want to see the average age decrease." Is this then the Secret of Youth: abandon the Blue Book?

Acknowledgements

For their invaluable assistance it is a pleasure to thank Rabbi G. L. Shisler, New West End Synagogue, London; Elkan Levy, past president, the United Synagogue; and Keith Feldman of the *Jewish Chronicle* library. I am writing

[22] "Hampstead to Depart from Tradition with New Cantor," *Jewish Chronicle,* 12 April 2005:25.

this article about London on July 7, 2005, a dark day in London's history, which has seen centuries of bombs, Blitzes and massacres.[23] Leonard Bernstein said after the assassination of John F. Kennedy that the only response was for everyone to resolve to do their own job to the best of their ability, which for singers would mean sing as well as you can.

Charles Heller is choir director at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, Toronto, and a consulting editor for the Cantors Assembly. His choral arrangements have been published by the Toronto Council of Hazzanim and by Kjos (San Diego). His latest book, titled ***What to Listen For in Jewish Music,*** *is about to be published by Ecanthus Press (please contact the author for information: charlesheller@rogers.com).*

[23] The massacre of London Jews at the coronation of Richard I in September 1189 was described at the time as a "holocaust;"see Ackroyd, Peter. *London: The Biography* (London: Chatto and Windus), 2000:55.

The Processes and Politics of Engaging Cantors in Alsace: 1818-1871

by John H. Planer

Introduction: Citizenship and the Consistory System

In the nineteenth century, the French government paid salaries of Jewish and Christian clergy, legislated minimum qualifications for these state-salaried rabbis and cantors, and provided the structure for Jewish communal self-governance. To understand the processes and politics of engaging cantors in Alsace, we must understand the consistorial system and the legislation affecting cantors.

Under Napoleon Jews became French citizens. Prior to 1806, Jewish communities, called the "Jewish nation," negotiated individual treaties of toleration with local nobility or landowners for specified periods at specified rates of taxation. Granting Jews citizenship was a novel idea; many individuals and communities, particularly in Alsace, protested vigorously. Napoleon convened a Jewish "Sanhedrin" to determine whether Jews could indeed be integrated as French citizens; on the basis of their carefully worded responses to his carefully written questions, Napoleon proposed legislation granting citizenship.

Modeled after the Catholic diocesan hierarchy and a similar structure for Protestants, the consistorial system was a Jewish hierarchy linked formally with the French government. Individual synagogues were governed by one of seven departmental consistories consisting of elected members and a "Grand Rabbi." Each consistory had a "consistorial synagogue," where the Grand Rabbi presided. A Central Consistory supervised the seven departmental consistories; its Grand Rabbi was Chief Rabbi of France. The Central Consistory reported directly to the French minister of religion. This legislation formalized a religious hierarchy: the Chief Rabbi of France, seven Grand Rabbis, communal rabbis, cantors (called *Ministres officiants*), and the *Shochetim* and *Mohelim*. Before 1844 the departmental consistories appointed *Commissaire surveillants* to administer each community; after 1844, each community elected its own *Commission administrative* (synagogue board) and president.

The consistory system was advantageous, for it integrated Jewish self-government within the French national government. The government feared dual-national Jews who accepted citizenship and then might actively undermine the government. The Consistory assured the government that the Jewish community would enforce French religious and secular laws—that

the Sanhedrin's assertions, which resulted in citizenship, would not be empty promises.

Jewish communities too benefited from the consistorial system. (1) The structure granted Jewish communities autonomy to exercise self-governance. Each superior level in the hierarchy had coercive powers, subject, of course, to appeal. (2) The consistorial system formally recognized Judaism and granted it authority comparable to that of Catholics and Protestants. (3) The consistorial system granted access to governmental funds to pay salaries of rabbis and cantors, to build synagogues, and to fund the French rabbinic seminary.

Laws Affecting Cantors

The *Règlement* of 1806 created the consistorial system, specified the process for electing consistory members, and set rabbinic qualifications and salaries. Cantors are not mentioned.

The *Ordonnance* of 20 August 1823 modified the details of the consistorial system. In the consistorial synagogue, the Consistory itself nominated the cantor; in non-consistorial synagogues, a commission, nominated by the Consistory and presided by the *Commissaire surveillant*, elected the cantor, subject to Consistorial confirmation.

The *Ordonnance* of August 6, 1831 established state-supported salaries for communal rabbis and cantors comparable to Catholic and Protestant clergy. In the consistorial synagogue in Paris the cantor received an annual salary of 2,000 francs; in the departmental consistories, the cantor received 1,000 francs. In small communities of 200 to 600 Jews, the annual salary of a rabbi or cantor was 300 francs; in a community of 601 to 1,000 Jews, 400 francs; in communities larger than 1,001 Jews, 1,000 francs. To become eligible for state-supported positions, the community wrote to the departmental Consistory, which requested a certified census of the Jewish adults and children in the town or in a district of several close towns. The Consistory then submitted the request for approval to the minister of religion.

The *Ordonnance* of May 25, 1844[1] specified that *ministres-officiants* be at least twenty-five years old, have a certificate of competence signed by the Grand Rabbi of the département, and be French citizens. In the consistorial

[1] An *Ordonnance* of 1839, which was projected but never enacted, further elaborated the hierarchy of clergy and the salaries for rabbis and cantors.The Grand Rabbi examined the religious knowledge of cantors before approving them to serve, and supervised the cantors in his district.The proposed legislation required that all cantors

synagogue, the Consistory named its cantor directly. In other synagogues, the Consistory appointed a committee of local residents, presided by the president of the *Commission administrative* or the *Commissaire administrateur*. The community then sent a formal statement of election to the departmental Consistory with supporting documents (birth certificate and statement of competence), to be forwarded to the Central Consistory for confirmation. Approval by the Central Consistory and authorization to install the cantor then returned down the hierarchy to the community. The congregation then sent a formal statement of installation to the departmental Consistory, Central Consistory, and Préfet to initiate the state salary. This paper trail documents basic information about French cantors.

Hiring Cantors

In Strasbourg the hiring process began with a vacancy occasioned by the death of the previous cantor, his retirement, or his resignation/dismissal. Cantors usually resigned to accept another position, but on occasion a cantor decided that resignation was preferable to dismissal. Resignation or dismissal for cause could result from a violation of civil or criminal law, including illegal residence status of aliens; physical or mental illness, including loss of voice; and moral turpitude. In Strasbourg, where the *Premier ministre-officiant* was a public representative of the community, even the hint of scandal concerning the cantor or his wife usually prompted the community leaders to counsel, if not coerce, resignation.

Formal publication of the vacancy was in major Jewish newspapers and periodicals, but word also spread quickly informally, for the annual state-salary of 2,000 francs attracted outstanding candidates. Interested cantors often inquired about specifics of the position and then formally indicated their candidacy by letter. That letter might also include attestations of competence from rabbis, letters of recommendation from prominent cantors, and perhaps supporting letters from community members.

On the basis of these letters and opinions of those who had heard the applicant officiate, the community invited its choices to a *concours*—a public audition-competition; the cantor officiated at Shabbat services and usually read from the Torah. The community paid travel, food, and lodging for candidates it was courting; when an applicant was not a top choice, the community did not offer to pay expenses.

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know French and that those serving in Alsace and Lorraine—Bas-Rhin, Haut-Rhin, Meurthe, Moselle—also know German.

The Strasbourg community preserved many documents of the various stages of candidacy but little information about the actual processes of selecting among candidates, perhaps because community members had different priorities in engaging a cantor and because effective politics often necessitated secrecy. Obviously a strong audition was necessary, for the *premier ministre-officiant* was not only the representative of the community in prayer but also a jewel, shown with pride to other Jewish communities and to the Christians of Strasbourg. The Grand Rabbi checked with rabbinic colleagues to confirm the candidate's morality, religious knowledge, and character; administrators checked with their counterparts. Supporters of a candidate sometimes circulated petitions and sent them to the Consistory, which examined them to assure that all names were indeed eligible members of the community. On occasion the Consistory asked the *commission administrative* or the community to vote its preference before making a decision, and to submit a certified statement of election. This process assured that the Consistory, not the local *commission administrative*, hired the cantor; when tensions with the local president or with the *commission* arose, the cantor appealed or resigned to the Consistory.

Of the three criteria for state-subsidized cantors—age of twenty-five or older, French nationality, and competence—occasional problems with the French government arose on issues of age and nationality. Issues of religious competence rarely arose: candidates certified by the Grand Rabbi were usually competent. On occasion, however, a man younger than twenty-five applied for a state-subsidized position; the minister of religion granted few exceptions.

On the issue of nationality, however, numerous areas of contention arose. Many cantors came to Strasbourg from Germany—particularly Silesia. The law of 1844 was the first to specify that state-salaried cantors must be French citizens; non-French cantors hired before 1844 were grand-fathered. Although the legislation provided means for approval of rabbis and cantors younger than twenty-five, no exceptions were available for non-French nationals. A foreign cantor, therefore, had to apply for and receive French nationalization.

The minutes of the Strasbourg Consistory and the *Commission administrative* of its consistorial synagogue contain examples of irregular cantorial appointments. In 1831 the position of cantor in the consistorial synagogue was vacant; Jonas Reiss, then age 62, was nominated to receive a salary of 2,000 francs.[2] One week prior to his nomination, Reiss formally promised

[2] Archives of the Central Consistory in Paris (hereinafter ACC)ICC-14; Lettre de 30 décembre 1831No. 2313 de Registre de Correspondence, from the CBR to the Consistoire Central at Paris.

to donate half his salary to communal charities;[3] should he fail to do so, he consented to be dismissed immediately and to reimburse the Consistory or community all expenses. Reiss's generosity was not voluntary but rather a condition of employment. A state-salaried cantor relieved the Strasbourg Jewish community and the Consistory not only of a paying a salary but also afforded a means of augmenting charitable coffers. [4] Once *Obercantor* Maurice Loewe was hired, Reiss returned to his prior salary as *sous-chantre*. [5]

Some irregularities were illegal. In several small communities one person received the state-salary while another actually served as cantor. On occasion, again in rural Alsace, a cantor in a state-subsidized position would resign, but the community would not formally report his resignation—thus his state-salary would continue to be paid and cashed.

On several occasions jurisdictional conflicts between the community and the Consistory arose in appointing the cantor in the consistorial synagogue. In 1823, for example, Josée Morel, the *Commissaire surveillant* at Strasbourg, opposed the Consistory over engaging a cantor from Darmstadt[6] — the first of many disputes about cantors at Strasbourg.

In October 1823 the Consistory wrote to Morel.[7] "We are astonished that you have assembled a number of Jews of the community to engage a foreign cantor. We remind you that in light of the law of 20 August 1823, the Consistory

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[3] Strasbourg: Synagogue de la Paix, Bibliothèque Victor Marx, File folder entitled "Ministres-officiants." This dossier was microfilmed by the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People at Jersualem, HM 5525.

[4] One indication of payment made to Reiss and to the chorists appears in the minutes of the *Commité d'Administration* of the consistorial synagogue in Strasbourg (hereinafter CAS) of 5 September 1833, pp. 33-35: Expenses from 1 Sept 1832 to 1 Sept 1833. *Conciérge* Haller received an annual *traitement/salaire* of 1,083.85 francs; 20 francs were awarded *aux choristes*; a gratification of 12 francs was paid to Reiss. Thus the community and consistory might have felt that an annual salary of a thousand francs was inappropriate for Reiss, particularly since a concours for a new cantor was being considered and since in December 1831 Reiss would be sixty-two years old.

[5] Strasbourg: Commité d'Administration, Procès-verbaux for 18 décembre 1833, p. 41.

[6] These letters are preserved in the ACC in Paris.

[7] ACC: ICC-14, Letter dated 12 octobre 1823, No. 1530 in the Registre of Correspondence of the Consistoire du Bas-Rhin. We do not know whether this register is extant.

is responsible for nominating the cantor.[8] Consequently you are not to meddle in this matter; if a cantor presents himself, the Consistory will meet with him; if the community has opinions, they should address the Consistory—not the *Commissaire Surveillant*. We, who are charged with executing the laws and ordinances of our religion, invite you not to exceed your authority."

But Josée Morel persevered. The Strasbourg Consistory then complained to the Central Consistory: "Today we learn, again indirectly, that despite our warning, the gathering took place; after reading our letter, M. Morel harangued the assembly arguing that the law need not be respected, that the Consistory had no right to meddle in community affairs, that the community should never lose its sovereignty, and that he would continue to try to hire the cantor from Darmstadt despite the law, despite the Grand Rabbi, the Consistory, and all powers spiritual and temporal. Some of the assembled, finding this proposition ridiculous, counseled doing nothing without checking in advance with the Consistory. But most of the assembled, being less well informed, composed of those who had never read the laws and ordinances, agreed with Morel and hired the cantor on the spot at their own risk."[9] The Consistory dismissed Morel and appointed a new *commissaire surveillant*.[10]

Letter of Service and Salary

A formal contract, called a "letter of service," specified the terms of employment: the services at which the cantor would officiate—usually Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, festivals, weddings, and synagogue services for national holidays. Travel outside Strasbourg was permitted with prior approval from either the *commissaire surveillant*, the *Commission administrative*, or the Consistory. A four-week vacation was also accorded, subject to approval of the date and location by the synagogue board or Consistory. If the Consis-

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[8] See Phyllis Cohen Albert, *The Modernization of French Jewry:Consistory and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Hanover, New Hampshire: Brandeis University Press, 1977), pp. 350-51.

[9] ACC: ICC-14, letter of 13 octobre 1823, number 1531 in the register of correspondence of the Consistoire du Bas-Rhin.

[10] The last record of this dispute is a response of the Consistoire du Bas-Rhin to the Central Consistory dated 27 October 1823.(ACC: ICC-14, letter of 27 octobre 1823, number 1536 of CBR register.) In reply to a letter from the Central Consistory, they affirm that no need exists for the local authorities to enforce "l'ordonnance Royale au sujet de la nomination du Chantre. Le plus gran nombre des Israélites de cette ville a fait justice de la conduite peu mesurée—d'une minorité turbulante dont le S. Morel s'est fait le Coryphée." [sic]

tory anticipated areas of concern, the letter of service might specify a system of reprimands, fines, and even suspension for flagrant, repeated offenses. Usually the letter of service mentioned the cantor's conduct in general terms, such as being above reproach, but occasionally the Consistory or *Commission administrative* felt constrained to specify improper conduct: smoking on Shabbat and festivals; attending concerts and the theater; applauding a female singer in a cabaret; giving voice lessons to young men *and women*; appropriate morality of the cantor's wife; and avoidance of illegal activities. These letters do not refer to a retirement or pension program: there was none.

Although the cantor's salary in Strasbourg was set by legal ordinance, the actual salary was higher if congregants, the synagogue board, or the Consistory supplemented it. For officiating at weddings, the cantor (as well as the choir members, *shamashim*, and organist) received supplementary payment from the family; a cantor might also give private voice lessons. In the mid-nineteenth-century, housing for the *ministre-officiant* became part of his remuneration. The cantor might also have additional sources of income, such as a music store; the cantor's wife might be engaged in commerce acceptable to the community.

Trial or Probationary Period

Most cantors were hired for a probationary period, usually one or two years, with options for non-renewal by both parties.[11] The provisional appointment revealed a cantor's character and abilities. If a *concours* were not decided definitively, the provisional contract provided an opportunity for factions to undermine a cantor's chance for long-term employment. For an incautious or unsuitable cantor, problems often arose during the first year.

Eduard (Elias) Grün asked to audition in Strasbourg in April 1844 and was hired provisionally to be *premier ministre-officiant*. The following month he inadvertently initiated a power struggle between M. Blum, the *commissaire-surveillant*, and M. Weill, the president of the *commision administrative* over who should instruct the cantor about local traditions—in this case, singing *Adon olam*. President Weill fined the *commissaire* five francs, but Blum affirmed that the president had no authority to fine him and refused to pay. The president arose and threatened to toss the *commissaire* out of the synagogue. The minutes relate that a lively altercation followed, which the Consistory eventually resolved by finding both parties at fault. By mid-July thirty-eight

[11] When Maurice Loewe was rehired by the Strasbourg community, this probationary period was waived.

members of the community signed a petition asking that Cantor Grün be released because he was incapable of exercising his duties in a synagogue like Strasbourg.[12] In September the synagogue board called assistant cantor Dennery to task for critical comments against Grün and for showing little enthusiasm assisting him. Dennery replied that he could not support Grün, who was just as irreligious as his predecessor.[13] In January 1845 Grün was suspended from his duties.[14] A Consistory member cited the deplorable (*facheuse*) impression of legal proceedings against Grün's *wife* in a matter involving M. Oppenheimer; while no responsibility fell on Grün himself, the situation placed him in a position incompatible with his public religious duties in the synagogue. Grün was suspended with pay.

The six-month probationary appointment of Maurice Pereles, a choirboy under Salomon Sulzer, was most contentious. The synagogue board wanted Pereles out; the Consistory supported him firmly. In December 1848 the synagogue board invited Pereles to its meeting "to express its discontent at the conduct (albeit private) of his wife which, instead of enhancing the brilliance of our faith can, to the contrary, debase it in the eyes of the entire world."[15] In January the board's rhetoric heated up: "Each day unfortunately adds to the more and more reprehensible conduct of that one, who does not fear to demean the respectable character of his position. The presence of this man before the holy ark is an outrage to religion; his bad conduct, which manifests itself as much in his private relationships as in his religious duties as *Ministre officiant*, has become such that all the faithful are scandalized and demand repeatedly his resignation."[16] The *commission administrative* won round one:

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[12] CBR: PV 17 July 1844.The original petition is in the Bibliothèque Victor Marx in the Synagogue de la Paix, Dossier "Ministre-officiants." A draft of a letter from the Consistory is response to the petition is preserved in the same file.

[13] The synagogue board promptly suspended Dennery from his duties. CAS: Procès-Verbaux, 8 September 1844, p. 157.

[14] The Consistoire du Bas-Rhin: Procès-Verbaux (CBR: PV) 2 October 1844 mention that the CAS transmitted a copy of Grün's letter of resignation to the Consistory. Either the resignation was effective at the end of a year or else the resignation was withdrawn.

[15] CAS: PV 9 December 1848, p. 282.The *commission administrative* announced its discontent with Pereles on 18 June 1848; it noted, in particular, Pereles's high salary and cited financial difficulties in the community, in addition to citing Pereles's weaknesses: inadequate instruction of the choir and insufficient capacity and knowledge to fulfill

in February Pereles was fired. But the Consistory then immediately dissolved the synagogue board and appointed two provisional administrators.[17]

Strategies

The strategies for a cantor and a community differed in the hiring game. The cantor enjoyed the advantage of being a single person and a free agent. In general the first applicants at Strasbourg were rarely chosen, perhaps because early application gave the community a long period to discover areas of dissatisfaction; engaging a cantor was quicker once communal fatigue had begun. The most effective strategy was to concentrate numerous important references within a short period near the end of the *concours*. Usually the cantor also could dangle offers of other positions to urge prompt action. The wise candidate usually avoided playing factions. Only *after* the community made had offered the position could a letter of service—that is, a contract—be negotiated. A cantor was well advised to behave above reproach until his probation ended—that is, subordinate to the Grand Rabbi, President of the board, *commission administrative*, and Consistory. And the cantor's spouse too.

The community wielded primary power in the employment process for it offered the position, access to a considerable state-supported salary. Its main disadvantage was the number of community factions that had to be pleased. The Grand Rabbi was a decisive force; his opposition easily doomed a candidacy. For example, early in his first tenure at Strasbourg,[18] Maurice Loewe once spoke inappropriately to Grand Rabbi Arnaud Aron, who suspended Loewe for fifteen days and proposed that the *commission* fine him twenty francs, which they did. Later, when Loewe was rehired, Grand Rabbi Aron refused to sign two letters from the Consistory making his appointment definitive for reasons concerning his religious practices.[19]

Conclusion

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the office of cantor. CAS: PV 18 June 1848, pp. 265-66. In July 1848 four choirboys quit; one of the four boys claimed that Pereles had slapped him. The *commission administrative* pressured the parents to compel their sons to rejoin the choir. CAS: PV 13 and 16 July 1848, pp. 269-70.

[16] CAS: Correspondence 111 of 15 January 1949 and 15 February 1849.

[17] CAS: PV 16 February 1849, p. 290.

[18] CAS:PV 22 June 1837, p. 102.

[19] CAS: PV 3 November, 10 November, 17 November, 15 December, 20 December

The serious study of synagogue musicians—*Oberkantoren*, *Hilfskantoren*, cantorial assistants, choir directors, choir members, and organists—has not yet begun. Most literature involves rabbis and histories of communities; most cantorial biography, like rabbinic biography, resembles hero-worship—it is often inaccurate—perhaps because of Jewish teaching that we not dishonor the living or speak ill of the dead. Consequently we have bad history—inaccurate, distorted knowledge which idealizes complex personalities and ignores serious conflicts. Bernard Malamud notes in "The Magic Barrel" that exaggerating the positive departs from truth and therefore ultimately demeans. Nineteenth-century cantors served in difficult public positions with complex levels of interaction with rabbis and communal factions. That political process and the personalities underlying those complex interactions—particularly the conflicts and their resolutions—merit sympathetic yet serious study.

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1849, pp. 306-12.CAS: Correspondence, No. 145 of 23 December 1849 to the Consistory.

Beautiful Harmonies - A Choir Director Revives the Western European Cantorial Tradition in Munich

by Philipp Grammes

Shema Yisroel begins vibrantly, growing louder, developing into a four-part chorale, echoing through the synagogue, whirling its way upward - and abruptly terminating. *Kodaush!* shouts Barry Mehler and looks sternly at his thirteen singers: "with an *au,* German Ashkenazic pronunciation!" He gives them a new tone, signals them to start, and again the four-voiced *Shema Yisroel* fills the room. Mehler stops them again, still not satisfied with the *Kodaush.*

This is not just any choir rehearsing, but Germany's first Orthodox synagogue choir since the Shoah. They're not just singing any Shema Yisrael, but an arrangement by Emanuel Kirschner, Munich's great composer of cantorial music. Kirschner served as Chief Cantor of Munich from 1881 to 1938 and didn't speak Modern Hebrew, but rather a special variety with a German tint. This is why Barry Mehler is making every effort to teach them the authentic old Kodaush." The Ashkenazic Hebrew pronunciation is particularly difficult for my Israeli singers," says Mehler and laughs." They're continually trying to figure out what they're singing."

Mehler is actually choir director in Amsterdam, but due to his ambition to revive Western European cantorial Music he travels once a week to Munich." My dream is to keep the Western European Tradition alive." In order to accomplish this, he established a foundation: The European Cantorial Foundation, whose goal is to reconstruct, document, publish and perform Western European cantorial Music. Today, sixty years after the Shoah, many liturgical compositions of German-Jewish cantors have largely fallen into oblivion.

Germany was the catalyst for the reformation of Western European cantorial music (hazzanut). In the beginning of the 19th century German and Austrian cantors began to introduce the western "chorale" form into synagogue services for the first time." They took traditional melodies, some of which more then a thousand years old, and made new arrangements for four-part choirs, later adding organ accompaniments for Liberal communities," explained the choir director. Since only the texts of psalms and prayers are holy, the music could be changed and further developed.

The quantity, variety, and quality of Western European hazzanut show us the extent of its legacy today. Every large community had its own repertoire of compositions and arrangements that were strongly influenced by their non-Jewish neighbors - as Jewish music in every country was influenced by

its local environment. Barry Mehler had found music from his grandmother who was soloist in Bonn's synagogue choir. That group sang works composed primarily in Berlin and Frankfurt." A few works were written by composers from Bonn, and sound (surprise!) a lot like Beethoven." However, he wasn't the only well known composer who influenced Jewish music. "I'm not yet that familiar with the Munich repertoire, but I am certain that we will find echoes of Bavarian songs in this collection."

This mutual interchange went so far that Schubert wrote a setting of Psalm 92 for the inauguration of the Seitenstettengasse Synagogue of Vienna in 1826, while in 1910 Cantor Yossele Rosenblatt wrote a new composition for the 80th birthday of the Austrian Emperor Franz Josef." For this, he took a famous melody and intertwined it in the traditional prayer," says Mehler and smiles. This famous melody was the hymn from Joseph Haydn's *Emperor Quartet* of 1797 (Opus 76) - which would become Germany's national anthem in 1922. Traditional hazzanut was developing into music of concert quality.

Munich was not the forerunner of this development, but Kirschner's compositions gave Munich the most advanced and harmonious hazzanut tradition in all of Germany. Cantor Meyer Kohn initiated this development in 1839. He built the bridge from the traditional to more modern forms of hazzanut in Munich. There are examples of melodies in oriental style simply accompanied by a bass and boy-soprano, but Kohn also included examples of four-part chorale settings. His successor, Max Löwenstamm, composed and arranged only in four-part harmony. Emanuel Kirschner, who succeeded Löwenstamm, included appealing harmonies in romantic style within his works, and gave the organ and choir more independent voices. The difference between classical and liturgical music could no longer be distinguished in Kirschner's compositions.

After the Second World War, the Western European traditions of the German communities were replaced by those of Jews who had emigrated from Eastern Europe. This is how the works of the great cantors of Munich were lost - until Barry Mehler tracked them down in libraries and private archives throughout the world: "We've found all of the Published works of Munich's cantors. Among these are five volumes of Kirschner, four of Löwenstamm, and additionally, valuable manuscripts from which we'll be able to reconstruct the service, for example, the musical transition from individual prayers and psalms."

Rabbi Steven Langnas also would like to take advantage of this opportunity to bring back the pre-war traditions. "We want to continue the Western European tradition, because in the meanwhile there are many community

members who are not that experienced with the synagogue service. For them, the Western European tradition is more 'user-friendly,' as they will recognize and appreciate the melodies which sound classical in nature."

Barry Mehler has a dream: In the collection of music and manuscripts he found a composition of a psalm that Max Löwenstamm had composed in 1887 for the opening of Munich's Great Synagogue. He would like to sing this psalm with the choir when the new synagogue is inaugurated. Then these all but forgotten melodies will once again fill a newly built sanctuary, in authentically Ashkenazic Hebrew. And with the old Western European tradition as its foundation, a new tradition will hopefully be re-established in Germany.

However, that goal is still a long way off. In order to publish and record (a portion) of Munich's hazzanic heritage, monetary support will be needed. Furthermore, the choir lacks a name. Barry Mehler's favorite is Shema Koleinu: "Hear our voice!" The choir can be heard in the Reichenbachstrasse Synagogue where, among other prayers, it regularly sings Kirschner's *Shema Yisrael-Ehad Eloheinu* (**Example 1.**) with a Germanically pronounced *Kodaush Schemau.*

*Editor's Note: this article first appeared in the **Jüdische Allgemeine-Wochenzeitung** (Munich: April 28, 2005), and is reprinted with permission here, after a translation by Barry J. Mehler. Ironically, the passage that Barry Mehler was rehearsing so assiduously with his choir of "Israelis" is the one that Emanuel Kirschner singled out for special mention in the Preface to his **Tehillot Le-Eil Elyon,** Volume II (Munich: January 1898, p. 23; Example 1.).*

> *The well justified request of congregants to afford them the opportunity for active participation, even in synagogues with a reformed liturgy, led me to provide a broad range of congregational songs. I was eager to base the majority of their melodies on the spirit and character of both traditional and more recent synagogue usage. This applied not only to the responses, but equally important, to parts of solo songs. Thus, recitatives to be chanted by the cantor without choral or organ accompaniment are quite in accord with the old prayer modes. In reworking the Torah Service, however, I used in part an existing newer melodic approach, with the exception of Shema Yisrael and Ehad Eloheinu.*

Cantor Kirschner, who had officiated at the Munich Synagogue's Dedication ceremony in 1881, led its final service fifty-seven years later, just before it was demolished on Hitler's order—four months before —because of its proximity to a Nazi cemetery. Overcome with grief, he fell sick and died shortly after.[1]

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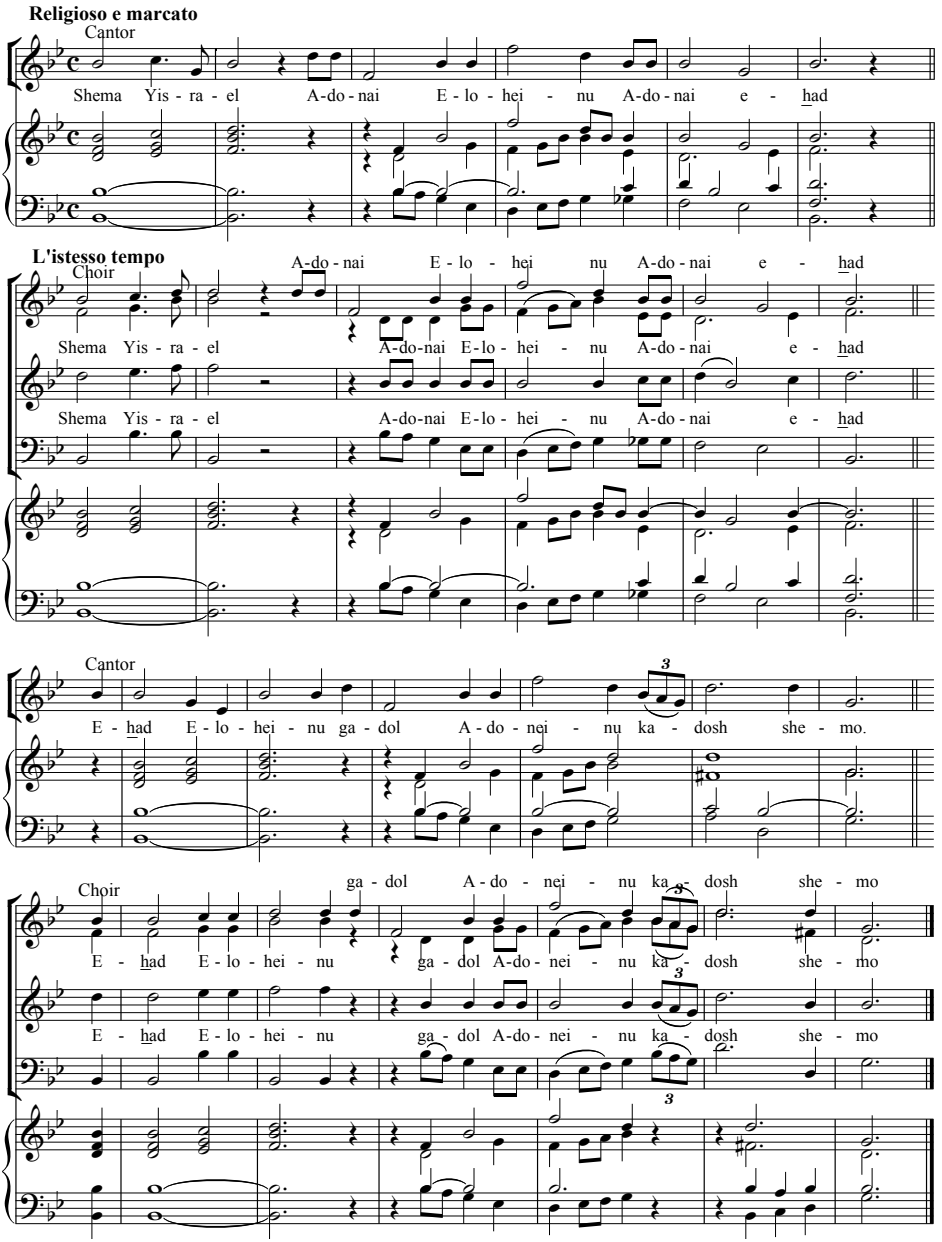
1 Akiva Zimmermann. BeRon Yahad (Tel Aviv: Central Cantorial Archive, 1988:110), citing Die Shul Un Die Khazonim Velt (Warsaw: May 1939).



Example 1. *Emanuel Kirschner's* ***Shema Yisrael*** *and* ***Ehad Eloheinu*** *— "in accord with the old prayer mode."*

Opinion Piece: Is the German Tradition Viable for Today's Synagogue?

By Erik Contzius

Something that is "classic" is considered to have lasting significance or worth—in other words, it is enduring. I have therefore always found it ironic that the Sacred Music Press should publish something it calls *Out of Print Classics.* For one thing, if the material will again be in print why is it called out of print? But more significantly, for a classic to be deemed out of print seems like an oxymoron, especially when the music contained in these volumes is so enduring.

Most of the *Out of Print Classics* come from the Reform German rite of the mid- to-late 19th century, and bear the authorship of the likes of Louis Lewandowski, Solomon Sulzer,[1] Emmanuel Kirschner, and others, captured the hearts and minds of Jews everywhere for nearly 200 years. When faced with the term "traditional" in the synagogue, the *nusah ha-tefillah* of our Eastern European great-grandparents speaks to one part of the Jewish psyche, but the German rite has infiltrated the entire Jewish world, from the Americas to Europe and even the black Jews of Uganda. When Salomon Sulzer Westernized the melismatic flourishes of the *Alte Weise* (Old Prayer Modes), he brought together East and West, preserving one tradition, but creating it anew.

And it is this newly crafted tradition which has become sacrosanct in practically every American synagogue. Hazzanim, rabbanim, shlihei tsibbur and songleaders have all tried to bring new melodies into the prayer service, and yet on Friday evening, there is almost no household or shul where the strains of Louis Lewandowski's gently flowing melody sanctifying the Sabbath's arrival over Kiddush wine are not heard. Modify a congregational *Shema* all you want, but when it comes to the Torah service, Sulzer's tunes prevail.

Why should we be surprised that this music can and certainly does still speak to us? For one, it is music composed by cantors who stood on the shoulders of Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann, a musical tradition that still thrills audiences today for its classic nature (here I use the term to mean enduring, and not in a musicological sense). As well, the German synagogue tradition marked the first time in Jewish history that the effects of the Enlightenment and Emancipation really held sway in Jewish culture. It was the first time that the Jews developed a musical expression that spoke to the modern Jewish soul as well as to the timeless Jewish spirit.

[1] Sulzer was Austrian, just as Lewandowsky was raised inthe Polish tradition of Posen, but I include them both – stylistically and idealistically – in the German rite.

This is something that the would-be innovators of today think they are doing because they imagine it has not been done before. There are many trying to bring more progressive musical idioms into the Jewish sanctuary: Rock, folk, pop, jazz, New Age... even gospel (which—as an aside—I have a great problem with, for that idiom—for me—embodies a religiosity which is not a part of my faith tradition, but I digress). Their efforts seem to hold sway for a year or two...or sometimes a decade or two. And yet, some 150 years after Sulzer published his two-volume *Schir Zion,* his music is still used as spiritual expression in the modern synagogue. Why?

I believe the reason can be found in the form. Where present day innovators have sought to bring a popular, and by definition ephemeral, musical form into our worship, Sulzer and his peers brought a classical musical form into the synagogue. As praying Jews, we have sought more permanence in our lives, looking for everlasting truths in Torah and Tradition. The prayer book remains relatively unchanged in structure, but the music that expresses the prayers contained therein has been tinkered with over millennia. When a language speaks only to one generation at one point in time, the next generation needs to develop a new language with which to dialogue with the eternal. When one uses a language that can be heard and understood by all to contain elements of beauty, elegance, grandeur, and holiness, it can be understood at any point in time or in one's life.

The challenge, however, is that in past generations, we had worshipers who were musically literate. They could read music; they regularly sang. There was no television or internet with which musical performance at home had to compete. Today, people experience music like most other cultural offerings of the 21st century—in a cursory fashion, embraced today and glossed over tomorrow. They are unsure how to embrace something that has been called a classic all too often. There is no longer a frame of reference.

What, then, of the German tradition's viability in today's synagogue? Is it to be abandoned in favor of the "soup of the day" music that will eventually become passé? I think not, for several reasons.

First, regardless of an individual's musical exposure or education, the choral music of the Reform German rite has a hymn-like quality that can and often does engender congregational singing.

Second, the musical language itself, being something much more than a hastily tossed amalgam of notes, speaks to us across time, for intrinsic in many of the Germanic offerings is a solid musical structure which, as exemplified in the work of J.S. Bach and others, has a musical logic, allowing us to hear

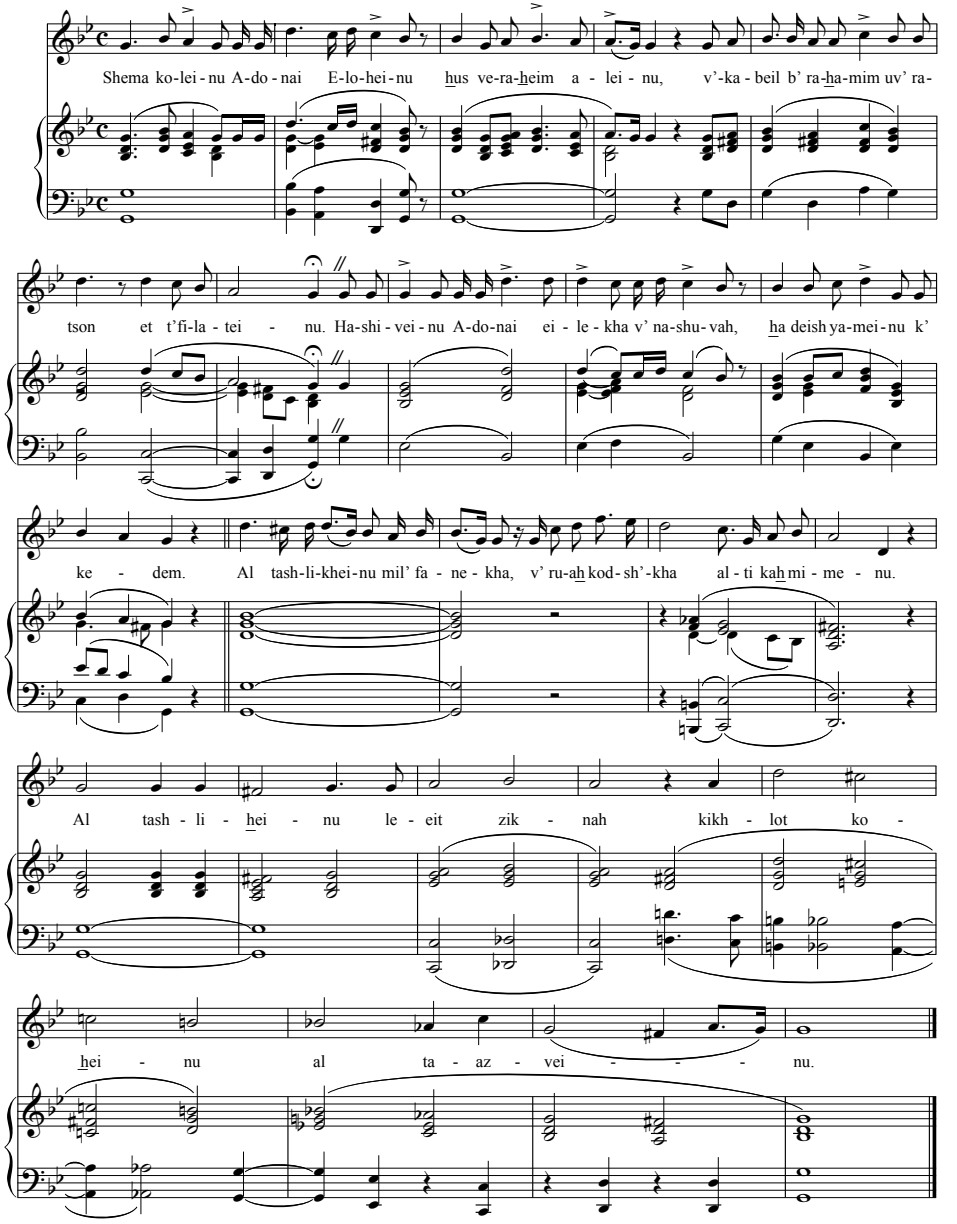
the eternal within the notes. To my ear, what is lacking in the popular music of the synagogue is that lasting element of holiness, sadly sacrificed in favor of a simple tune.

Third, there is a Jewish musical subconscious that runs like a deep vein through most American congregations. In Sulzer's day, that vein was made up of *nusah hatefillah.* Today, when *nusah hatefillah* has all but disappeared, the common element is made up of the music of Sulzer and his contemporaries. It is a safe and comfortable musical place in which to pray. As a child, I remember clearly having gone to only a few Shaharit LeShabbat services and hearing the Sulzer Kedushah responses (although I was a synagogue regular in my youth, my synagogue's main service was Kabbalat Shabbat, and Saturday services were rarely held). As an adult, I can still conjure those strains as easily as a lullaby from my childhood. For many others as well, the German rite still holds a place, although that place may be shrinking.

I would suggest that the German rite deserves to be re-examined closely, for not only is there considerable breadth to the repertoire, there is also redeeming musical and spiritual value. Its many settings that invoke the old nusah hatefillah connect us to the distant past, and its Late Romantic harmonies reflect the more recent European childhood of many of our parents and grandparents. And there's no denying that its well-structured hymns do engender the congregational singing that seems to be all the rage nowadays, and do so without resorting to complicated syncopation or grating chords. Finally, for any congregation seeking to bolster its choir's repertoire, one need look no further than the entire set of *Out of Print Classics* to discover (or rediscover) a treasure of music which was born out of a once vibrant tradition that continues to thrive.

To my mind, Lewandowsky's 1883 setting for cantor and optional organ accompaniment of *Shema Koleinu* (Hear Our Cry; **Example 1**, transposed from E minor), from the Yom Kippur liturgy, represents the very best of what might be called a Pan-European nusah.

Erik Contzius is cantor at Temple Israel of New Rochelle, New York, a prolific composer and well-travelled concert artist. He has led services at the Great Synagogue of Göteborg, Sweden, soloed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and at the Leo Baeck Institute in Manhattan. In 2005 he was featured in Munich, Germany in a concert titled ***Vergessene Musik—the Forgotten Music of the German Jewish Reform Movement.*** *Although he enjoys stage performance, Cantor Contzius feels most at home in the pulpit, leading prayer.*



Example 1. *Louis Lewandowsky's "Pan-European" setting of* ***Shema Koleinu.***

Cantor Jakob Dymont and His Friday Night Service, Berlin 1934 — Part One—A Rabbi's Observations

by James Baaden

During the 1980s I had occasion to visit Berlin a number of times. I became acquainted there with its two Jewish communities – one, by far the larger, in the Western half, the other in East Berlin. "Larger" is purely relative: at this time, the Jewish population of Berlin as a whole was around 6,000 - but a shadow of the community of 170,000 which had lived there before the Holocaust. Nearly all of those 6,000 Jews lived in West Berlin, where organized community life was focused on a modest, functional *Gemeindezentrum* (community centre) which had been built on the ruins of the imposing Fasanenstrasse synagogue in the 1950s. (It remains the headquarters of the Berlin Jewish community today.) On the other side of the Wall, meanwhile, the situation was yet bleaker. Here, according to the statistics produced by the German Democratic Republic (the GDR, i. e. East Germany) of which East Berlin was the capital, there were barely 200 Jewish residents. An organised community existed for this handful of souls, though it kept a very low profile. Religious services took place at one site: the mighty Rykestrasse (Ryke Street) synagogue, dedicated in 1904 with seating for 2,000 worshippers – a capacity ten times the size of East Berlin's tiny Jewish community.

It had been built at the beginning of the 20th to serve the needs of the (then) growing Jewish population in the Prenzlauer Berg district on the northern side of the city centre, and though obviously a very substantial structure, it was constructed in effect within the centre of a city block, surrounded by residential buildings of several stories. This circumstance was to prove its salvation, for although the Rykestrasse synagogue was set alight at the time of the Nazis' *Kristallnacht* ("night of broken glass") pogrom in November 1938, the fire was quickly put out – owing to the proximity of the other buildings. Rather amazingly, as World War II broke out and ever more extreme forms of persecution were introduced, the community was nevertheless permitted to make repairs to the synagogue and it was again used for services in the years 1939-1943. During this period, nearly all Jews who had been left in Berlin at the war's outbreak (tens of thousands had managed to emigrate from Germany in the 1930s) were deported to concentration camps, and in May 1943 remaining officials of the Jewish community were forced to sell the building to the district council of Prenzlauer Berg – just before they them-

selves were deported. It was then put to military uses that remain unclear; the latest sources suggest that there is no truth in the long-established story that the army used it as a stable.

When Jewish worship was restored in the Rykestrasse synagogue after Nazi Germany's defeat in July 1945, Berlin – now subject to the administration of the Allied Powers—lay in ruins. Rykestrasse was in the Soviet Sector, and eventually the Russian military authorities and the government of its satellite, the newly founded GDR, backed a full renovation of the synagogue, which was rededicated in 1953. The peculiar enthusiasm of Stalinist officialdom for this project may perhaps be explained in part by the new name given to the synagogue – the *Friedenstempel*or "peace temple". To be sure, it was a synagogue (and indeed the largest in Germany, East or West), but it was supposed to fulfill a symbolic purpose as well, alongside a variety of other buildings and monuments in East Berlin which were all intended to celebrate the triumph of Communism over Nazism. This particular "triumph" ran its course within four decades, the Wall came down, Germany was reunited, and the two Berlin Jewish communities were again fused into one body. Most recently, the arrival of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union has boosted Berlin Jewry, more or less doubling the community to about 12,000 today – and the Rykestrasse synagogue plays an important role in community life. To be sure, its 2,000 seats are never filled by Jewish worshippers attending a religious service (in fact, services take place in a smaller "side sanctuary"), but on other occasions – such as concerts and state commemorative functions – it is often full, and those present can have an idea of its glory a century ago.

I was not a Rabbi at all when I visited Berlin in the 1980s and became acquainted with the Rykestrasse synagogue. However, now, in the first decade of the 21st century, I am the Rabbi of a British congregation - South London Liberal Synagogue – and one of the members of my community, Paul Mindus, is the grandson of Jakob Dymont (1881-1956), a notable cantor and choirmaster whose liturgical compositions were heard to much acclaim in the Rykestrasse synagogue during its last years before closure in the Nazi era. Each year at my synagogue, we organise an event called the John Rich Memorial Event, named after a late president of the congregation, and last year Paul suggested to me that we might use this occasion to organise a performance of one of his grandfather's works. Fortunately, his mother, the concert pianist Lily Dumont, had retained an original handwritten score of her father's *Erev Shabbat* liturgy – first heard in the Rykestrasse synagogue in February 1934 and then (as far as we were aware) never again. To say that the music was "heard" in the Rykestrasse synagogue does not do justice to the occasion in

1934, which attracted widespread attention in the Jewish press at the time – the early years of the Third Reich – and which finds a chapter of its own in a recent history of the synagogue published in Germany in 2004 to mark its centenary. The author Hermann Simon stresses the unique qualities of Jakob Dymont's composition: written for unaccompanied male voices, it embodied a more traditional Orthodox form, yet the music itself was marked by challengingly modern tonalities. Press reports from 1934 in particular attest to the sensation which this created, not just in the Rykestrasse congregation, but more widely in the Berlin Jewish community: commentators explicitly dwelt on the return to traditional Jewish (and non-German) forms as a vitally necessary departure from existing musical styles and likewise highlighted the challenging harmonies in the music as symbolic of the times and circumstances in which Germany's Jews were living.

Born in Lithuania (then part of the Russian empire), Dymont underwent a conventional Eastern European Orthodox training as a *ḥazzan* but also acquired a Central European knowledge of classical music and composition. By the early 1930s, he was the choirmaster at an unusual congregation in Berlin, no great distance in fact from Rykestrasse: the Adass Jisroel synagogue. This was an Orthodox community that had officially separated from the general Berlin Jewish community earlier in the 20th century, securing its own independent status in law in pre-Nazi Germany. Jewish communities in Germany were not organized according to denominational affiliations; there were no bodies corresponding to our present-day unions of Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist congregations. Instead, each city had as a rule one single Jewish *Einheitsgemeinde* – or "unitary community" – comprising all of the officially registered Jewish residents of that city; and it was up to those community members to determine what type of religious services took place in its synagogues. Generally speaking, by the second half of the 19th century, most communities solidly opted for a *liberal* style of liturgy – and it is worth noting that the German Jewish idea of *liberale Judentum* was quite different from the British movement known as Liberal Judaism to which my own synagogue belongs. Whereas our Liberal Judaism here in Britain is quite close to North American Reform Judaism, the *liberale* (the German adjective is specifically meant in this context) movement in Judaism in Germany had more in common with certain strands of Conservative Judaism in the English-speaking world. Although the accompanying organ, for instance, was widely in evidence, services were relatively long, men and women were seated separately and prayer books included various elements associated with traditional Judaism. In Berlin, however, there were two al-

ternative options for those who were not happy with the happy medium: the *Reformgemeinde* and the Adass Jisroel community. The first of these, seen as radical and innovative in the Germany Jewish world of a century ago, had mixed seating and employed the German language throughout its service – not surprisingly, the term it preferred, namely *Reform*, was the term which prevailed in due course in like-minded synagogue communities in the US. Meanwhile, the Adass Jisroel congregation was unsatisfied with the existing arrangements for Orthodox worshippers in the Berlin *Einheitsgemeinde*, and duly went its own way.

Thus, Dymont was associated with a highly Orthodox community which had made plain its rejection of the German Jewish status quo of the early 20th century – as represented by the Rykestrasse synagogue. This is perhaps slightly unfair, in that Rykestrasse, according to Hermann Simon, had always tried to occupy its own special position, reflecting a "synthesis" of classical *liberal* and more traditional elements. Nonetheless, details of the synagogue's dedication in 1904 are revealing: the event began with a Prelude by Handel and men and women were seated together. Interestingly, the Adass Jisroel synagogue was dedicated on the same day in 1904; though we may safely assume without either a Handel prelude or mixed seating. On the other hand, Rykestrasse did not have an organ. This was a perplexing omission, not least for the Ryekstrasse worshippers, who had voted 690 to 38 in favour of the instrument. But a dispute within their elected congregational council had become so bitter that the organ question was put to one side. (Strangely enough, an organ *was* installed many decades later, after the Holocaust, during the GDR period in the early 1960s; it was only rarely played and is now in very bad repair.)Meanwhile, Confirmation (rather than Bar/Bat mitzvah) was the order of the day, Kol Nidre was not recited at all, and distinguished rabbis representing the Progressive/Liberal tradition were employed. Nonetheless, the absence of an organ gave the synagogue a "more traditional" feel, and set Rykestrasse apart from the Berlin synagogues with which it otherwise shared numerous key similarities.

The year 1934 marked the 30th anniversary of the synagogue's founding. The silver jubilee in 1929 had been celebrated with some modest festivity, but in 1934 the mood was obviously very different. It is not clear whether Dymont's Shabbat Evening service was composed in connection with the 30th anniversary – contemporary accounts mention both, namely music and date, without expanding on any more specific relationship between the two. The title page of the score names the composition in German as "*Rinat Yaakov* – A Friday Evening Liturgy for Cantor and Male Choir composed

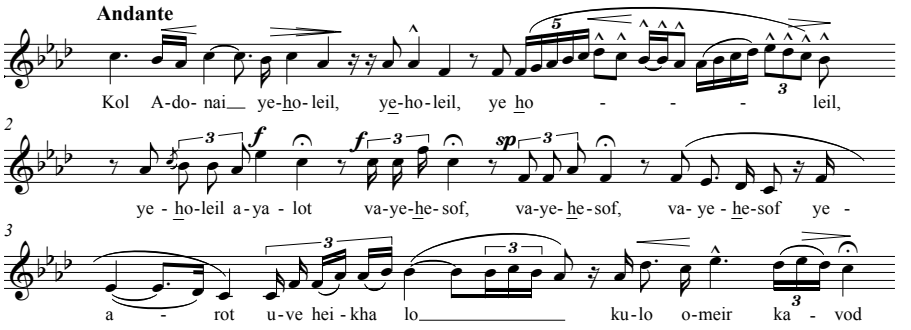
by Jakob Dymont. "In an introductory note, Dymont said that the work was intended to "enhance the uniformity of the exterior musical apparel of our liturgy," expressing the wish that it could eventually be "a building block in the renewal of synagogue music. "Altogether 50 pages in length, the score is divided into various liturgical elements, all named in Hebrew (handwritten by Dymont himself):

Mah Tovu	
Minhah	*Ashrei, Hatsi Kaddish, Shmoneh Esreh, Kedushah, Kaddish*
Kabbalat Shabbat	*Lekhu Neranenah, Kol Adonai, Lekhah Dodi, Tov LeHodot, Adonai Malakh*
Ma'ariv	*Barekhu, Hashkiveinu, VeShamru, Hatsi Kaddish, Vaikhulu, Retseh, Kiddush, Oseh Shalom, Aleinu*

Although his Table of Contents is entirely in Hebrew (transliterated above), Dymont used the transliteration of Hebrew common in German in his day for romanized transcription of the liturgical text throughout the ensuing 49 pages: e. g. *"Mah towu oholecho jaakow", "L'cho dodi", "Tow l'hodoss", "Bor'chu",* etc. I myself am not a musician. Nonetheless, when the score came into my hands, I was at least able to discern that some of it was illegible. Thus I had to make a selection of items to be sung. I chose 7 sections of the service, arriving at my selection purely on the basis of legibility, first of all, and secondly, my desire to offer a representative collection of the better-known elements of the *erev Shabbat* liturgy – such as *Mah Tovu, Lekhah Dodi, Hashkiveinu* and *Kaddish.* Next, I had to find singers. In my ignorance, I thought that a score seemingly marked for alto, soprano, tenor and bass parts should (or could) be sung by men and women, although I had seen Dymont's notation that the service was for *Maennerchor* – a men's choir. A knowledgeable female singer put me right – the upper voices would sound bizarre sung by women, she said: it was a work for male voices and needed to be sung by men. With the help of Christopher Dee, an experienced professional musician here in London with substantial knowledge of synagogue music, an ensemble of male singers was assembled – and the music was transcribed (by Mr Dee) into a more manageable printed form. Then, 71 years after it had premiered in the Rykestrasse synagogue, Jakob Dymont's evening service was heard again, this time at South London Liberal Synagogue, in September 2005. I am glad to say that his daughter, Lily Dumont Mindus— in her 95th year – was present.

Due to my own lack of musical knowledge, any effort on my part to comment on the character of the music would most likely prove embarrassing. However, as mentioned above, we can turn to voices from 1934 to find out

what musically knowledgeable Jewish listeners made of Dymont's composition. We read that the Rykestrasse synagogue was full on February 16th of that year. The cantor's part was sung by the resident cantor, Leo Ahlbeck, and the male voice choir directed by the synagogue's choirmaster, Kurt Burchard. Dr. Oskar Guttmann (1890-1943), then choirmaster at Berlin's most illustrious synagogue, the *Neue Synagoge* in the Oranienburger Strasse, wrote in one of the main German-language Jewish periodicals of the day: "From the first note, we know we are in a world of sound more attuned to us as Jews, and we feel ourselves to 'be in *shul*'" (**Example 1**).



Example 1. *Cantorial solo,* ***Kol Adonai*** *(Psalm 29:9) from Jakob Dymont's Friday Night Service, Berlin, 1934.*

The choice of words is significant, given that Guttmann was the author. The Oranienburger Strasse synagogue – as its gilded dome and front façade (the only surviving parts of its original structure) once again testify – was a place of some magnificence, associated with the name Louis Lewandowski: not the sort of place Jews went "to be in *shul.* "And indeed Guttmann went on to stress that Dymont's music was a break from the rich neo-Romantic choral sound of Lewandowski, Guttmann's own predecessor at Oranienburger Strasse – though interestingly, he gently criticised Dymont for not being entirely capable of "wresting himself free from the German Romantic style which still remains predominant in synagogue music. "Another commentator, Ludwig Altmann, noted the "modern-complicated harmonies" and suggested that these did not always accord satisfactorily with the more traditional character of the music, though he hailed Dymont's composition as a "serious and artistically valuable" example of a much-needed "attack" aimed at achieving a comprehensive "renewal of the liturgy". Finally, we can hear from Kurt Burchard himself, the Rykestrasse choirmaster. Writing a week after conducting his choir in Dymont's evening service, he set the scene for his readers in 1934 in terms that speak to us today:

> For some considerable while now, efforts have been made in interested circles to make our services more full of life, giving them new blood. Of course, to speak but of Berlin, we have our entire annual cycle of liturgy by Louis Lewandowski, a gigantic and in the main truly valuable body of work which has shown a unique success in anchoring itself in the hearts of our older generation. But we must consider that this music, which was published in two volumes between 1871 and 1882, was entirely rooted in the contemporary musical style of that era – the feeble swan song of the Romantic epoch of Mendelssohn and Schumann – and that, especially in its choral dimensions, it had precious little Jewish content to show for itself.

Yet, continued Burchard, "what a miracle" that contemporary Jewish composers should be emerging in his own day, 1934, full of zeal to set about a thoroughgoing renewal of synagogue music – mentioning Alexander Weinbaum, Leo Kopf and finally Jakob Dymont. Turning his attention to Dymont's Friday Evening service, he praised the "reverent piety [and] deep sincerity" which characterised the whole composition, though observing that it occasionally reached moments of intensity which were perhaps excessive: nonetheless, Burchard stressed that this was achieved "not by artificially emotive, sickly-sweet melodies" but by "harmonies which grow to an intensity and sharpness which only too accurately reflect the nature of our times. "

Soon, the "intensity and sharpness" of the times were to grow lethal, silencing Rykestrasse, forcing Dymont into exile – and bringing about Burchard's death in Auschwitz in 1942. In 2005, as we listened to Dymont's composition in my synagogue in London, we pondered Kurt Burchard's words: what we were hearing was not only evidence of an attempt to contend with the challenges of the times in an age of tyranny but a concerted endeavour to renew synagogue music by returning to traditional forms whilst at the same time exploring innovative, even difficult new sounds.

Rabbi James Baaden grew up in the US and Canada, and enjoyed careers in journalism and Social Services before studying for the rabbinate at London's Leo Baeck College and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The minister of South London Liberal Synagogue since his ordainment in 2000, he has a strong commitment to interfaith relations.

Cantor Jakob Dymont and His Friday Night Service, Berlin 1934— Part Two–A Daughter's Observations

by Paul Mindus

After my mother, Lily Dumont, heard the recital of selections from her father's 1934 service at South London Liberal Synagogue in September 2005, I read aloud some remarks that she had written for the occasion. Recalling her own youth as a child practicing to become a concert pianist in Weimar-era Berlin of the 1920s, my mother once characterized this era in her life as one of steadfastness and innocence. From the observations which she jotted down about her father, Jakob Dymont, I think you'll understand where the spirit that brought her to the ripe young age of 95 came from.

> Jakob Dymont was born in 1881 a small village in Lithuania where families shared their gardens and news with friends. My father was physically quite strong, muscular with beautiful dark curly hair. There were more brothers and sisters, but none of them shared my father's interests. As a youngster, he worked very hard in school. Beside the normal courses, he showed early special interest for German and English. Fishing and reading were his main hobbies.
>
> It was his great dream to go to Germany and study there. Secretly he searched his surroundings for young trees which were easy to shape into a raft for his plans. He prepared the craft very carefully and announced to his parents his plans to go to Berlin. This was his great dream. He was 15. He kissed his parents goodbye and left. The trip took him along the Baltic coast and eventually to Berlin. At that time, Kaiser Wilhelm had a great reputation for his interest in helping the unending stream of travellers who came through the city. The Kaiser built many houses where young clean-cut people who spoke German could find room and board without any charge. Since the conditions suited my father beautifully, he gratefully moved in. He was a nice looking boy with dark curly hair, well dressed and very polite.
>
> My father was a natural high tenor, his voice was flexible, had a beautiful timbre, and his ability to change harmonies quickly helped him enormously. His ability to pick up any key made him quickly quite popular. Opportunities were offered to sing solos and, gradually, his success grew. He also began to save some money which he lovingly sent to his parents. Around this time, he was perhaps 17 years old, and already busy with small, but paid, engagements. It was his gift that he could repeat a melody he heard only once, but immediately and correctly.

My father began to study theory and with his beautiful tenor voice he was also appearing in operas and on the stage, without ever being recognised. He studied music theory, languages and old synagogue melodies along with Jewish history and music history. His early compositions were encouragingly received.

My father's approach to religious music was to carefully preserve old traditions, which he treated with great respect. I have to make it clear how sincere he was in this regard. There was no sentimentality, Jakob Dymont was only devoted to authenticity, right down to the last chord. He recited prayers very carefully, making sure every point and comma were carefully observed. He shaped prayer words into music.

"The music has to be completely convincing," he said. "Each setting should convince those who pray of the seriousness of what it is expressing. In fact the music has to be even more convincing than the words. Jewish thought can be destroyed by those who oppose it. Therefore, the music has to show creative conviction without any effort, to make clear how convincing and strong God is against the lies of all the others. "

When Paul Mindus came from New Bedford, MA to London in 1990 to head Reuters' Corporate Communications department, the sudden proximity to Berlin helped him to learn a great deal about his family, as both sets of grandparents had lived in the German capitol before the War. One set—Paul and Johanna Mindus—stayed there and died in a concentration camp, while the other set—Jakob and Rosa Dymont left in 1938 and came to the United States. Paul's mother, pianist Lily Dumont, passed away in March of 2006, six months after she had attended the commemorative performance of her father's Friday Night service.

From Study of Scripture to a Reenactment of Sinai: the Emergence of the Synagogue Torah Service

by Ruth Langer

The rabbis of late antiquity, with their constant engagement in the study of the Torah text itself and their focus on regularizing other elements of their new liturgical system, did not find it necessary to make elaborate ritual statements about the meanings inherent in the ritual reading of Scripture. Instead, they focused exclusively on clarification of procedures such as the frequency, language, extent, and type of participation appropriate for reading. But with time, some of the meanings implicit in the rabbinic system received voice and an elaborate liturgical moment evolved. While these meanings by no means remained static, a close reading of the early texts in light of themes which emerge later in the medieval and modern rites enable us to interpret the symbolic role and little voiced (liturgically at least) centrality of the ritual Torah reading in the synagogue. This article focuses on the emergence of this elaborate ceremonial and its increasingly explicit statement of the meanings embedded in it, up to the point where we begin to have any significant manuscript record of actual rites, in the twelfth century. Future studies will trace and analyze the differences among the various medieval and modern rites and the reinterpretation over time of the meanings that have emerged in this earlier period.

It is highly likely that the ceremonial surrounding the Torah reading was not elaborate in the period of the early history of the synagogue. The only early rabbinic descriptions of Torah ceremonies are actually situated in the Jerusalem Temple. We find in *Mishnah Sotah* 7:7-8:[1]

> How does the High Priest recite his blessings [on the Day of Atonement, towards the conclusion of his sacrificial functions]? The officiant of the synagogue takes the Torah scroll and hands it to the president of the synagogue, and the president of the synagogue gives it to the adjutant high priest and the adjutant high priest gives it to the High Priest, and the High Priest stands and receives it and reads Leviticus 16:1-34 and 23:26-32. Then he rolls the Torah and, embracing it in his bosom, says: More than

[1] Translation mine. Compare *Mishnah Yoma* 7:1.

> what I have read to you is written here. Then he recites Numbers 29:7-11 by heart, and recites eight blessings over [the Torah]: for the Torah; for the worship; for the thanksgiving; for the forgiving of sin; for the Temple; for Israel; for the priests; and for the rest of the prayers.
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> How is the king's portion performed? On the conclusion of the first festival day of Tabernacles, on the eighth year of the sabbatical cycle, they make a platform of wood for him in the courtyard (of the Temple), and he sits on it, for it is said, "At the conclusion of seven years during the festival..." (Dt. 31:10f) Then the officiant of the synagogue takes the Torah scroll and gives it to the president of the synagogue, and the president of the synagogue gives it to the adjutant high priest, and the adjutant high priest gives it to the high priest, and the high priest gives it to the king, and the king stands and receives it and reads it sitting. King Aggripas stood and received it and read it standing, and the sages praised him... He reads from the beginning of Deuteronomy to *Shema*, and *Shema* (Dt. 6:4-9) and Dt. 11:13-21, 14:22-29, 26:12-15, and the Portion of the King (Dt. 17:14-20), and the blessings and curses, until he completes the entire chapter (Dt. 28). The blessings that the high priest recites, the king also recites, except that he substitutes that of the festivals for the forgiving of sin.

A close reading of these descriptions is highly illuminating. The preparation for the ceremony of the king's post-sabbatical reading requires the building of a simple wooden platform, probably in the larger "Courtyard of the Women." This deliberately echoes the wooden tower built near the city gate for Ezra's public reading of Scripture recorded in Nehemiah 8:4. This erection of a special structure was itself an announcement of a significant event. However, one should note also that, according to the *Mishnah Sukkah* 5:1-4, this was the same location as the elaborate nightly celebration during Tabernacles of the *Simḥat Beit Hasho'evah*, the water drawing festival, complete with numerous golden candelabra, torches, instrumental music, singing and dancing. In contrast, this ceremony of Torah reading was apparently austere, lacking physical ornamentation, instrumental accompaniment, or song. A similar observation might be made about the High Priest's reading on the Day of Atonement, which, although also taking place in the courtyard, lacks even a special platform. *Mishnah Yoma* 7:1-3 indicates that, in order to fulfill this obligation of reading, the High Priest simply stepped aside from the main, sacrificial work of the day which continued in his absence. Unlike his sacrificial duties, this reading required no special vestments and was not the sole focus of Temple activities. These observations lend support to claims that these Scripture readings were possibly foreign or late interpolations into the Temple cult; their native locus was in another social setting.[2]

[2]See the discussion in Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Pat-*

Both Torah reading ceremonies include a procession of sorts, but the texts record no musical or liturgical accompaniment to the performance. In both cases, the practical object of the procession was to bring the scroll to its place of reading, and here, also to the reader. After taking the scroll from an undisclosed place,[3] the officers of what was, at least later, the scroll's normal realm, the synagogue, pass it to the officers of the realm of this ceremonial reading, the priests, and in the second case, then to the king. As the Talmud recognizes,[4] there is a symbolic message encoded in this movement. It is an act of deliberate deference to the High Priest and the king, expressed not only in the chain of transmission of the scroll, but also in the very fact that the scroll is brought to the reader. Indeed, the Palestinian Talmud indicates that normally, readers go to the Torah scroll, but in this case, the scroll was brought to the king, as an indication his elevated stature. It also reports, and a later Babylonian chronicle verifies, that the Babylonian Jews continued to honor their civil ruler, the exilarch, in this way. The Babylonian exilarchs, like the Israelite king, claimed royal Davidic descent.[5]

The center of the performance, the reading, lies for these particular instances only in the realms of the priest and king. Both show deference to the scroll by standing to receive it. The priest continues to stand for the reading, and the sages applaud the king who humbles himself similarly despite the extreme length of his reading. Rabbinic law required that every reader stand.[6] In the hierarchy of symbols, Torah reigns supreme over all human beings, including kings.[7]

Apparently, the High Priest and the King did not even preface their reading with a blessing. Following the reading, however, both recited a series of eight benedictions. This is particularly curious; rabbinic liturgical law establishes on principle that a blessing precedes the fulfillment of any divine commandment. The rabbis had to struggle to justify only the blessing after the reading,

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terns, trans. Richard S. Sarason (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 126 and n. 9 there, citing Samuel Krauss, *Synagogale Altertümer* (Berlin-Vienna, 1922), 70.

[3]Commentaries assume this to be the synagogue situated on the Temple mount near the courtyard. While locating a Torah scroll somewhere in the priestly precincts on the Temple Mount is not problematic, the assumption that this was in a "synagogue" may well be an anachronistic retrojection of later rabbinic norms onto an earlier period.

[4]*BYoma* 69a; *BSotah* 40b, 41b.

[5]*PSotah* 7:6, 22a. For the later Babylonian custom, see below.

[6]See below.

[7] This relationship is implied in the rulings of Dt. 17:18-20, in the requirement that

basing it on an analogy to the laws of table rituals.[8] Obviously, at the time of these Temple ceremonies, the concept of framing the Torah reading with blessings was not yet established.

Little can be said about the content of these eight blessings, for, typically, the *Mishnah* itself lists only their topics, and the talmudic traditions provide little additional detail. It is possible that, at this period, only general forms and topics were fixed, and the person performing the ritual had the freedom to improvise within the established ideational and syntactic structure. While the blessings listed in the *Mishnah* show every sign of fitting into the general patterns which emerge in rabbinic prayer, this particular sequence of themes never appears together in known rites, and many of the individual blessings find their parallels in liturgies distinct from the Torah rituals.[9] As we shall see below, later Jewish communities will come to understand the presence of the Torah itself to create an opportunity for efficacious prayer and special access to God. Two arguments can be made against that being the case here: first, these ceremonies took place on the Temple Mount in reasonable proximity to the Holy of Holies, the most reliable point of contact with God for Jews, making this later, post-destruction function of the Torah scroll as yet unnecessary; and second, if these blessings were understood to have this function, one might expect them to have been preserved or imitated in this locus in later rites.

The mishnaic description of these Temple rituals does not record anything about the return of the Torah to its place and the movement of the various ritual actors on to their next tasks. The picture which emerges, in spite of the ceremonial of the setting, is one of a very functional, unembellished ritual moment. The Torah itself had a sanctified status, deserving of special respect, but it is not evident that this status was articulated in any marked way.

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the king constantly study the Torah which is to be with him at all times.

[8] *PBerakhot* 7:1, 11a; *PMegillah* 4:1, 74d; comp. *BBerakhot* 48b. Compare also *Deuteronomy Rabbah*, Lieberman ed., *Nitzavim* 1:2 (Vilna ed. 8:2), which derives the blessing after the reading from the order of Moses' addresses to the people in Deuteronomy, where his blessing, Ch. 33, follows his song, Ch. 32. Although the exegetical basis of the answer is different, the question eliciting the responses is the same.

[9] *BYoma* 70a; *BSotah* 41b; *PYoma* 7:1, 44b; *PSotah* 7:6, 22a. Heinemann, *Prayer...*, 126, 227-8, understands this series of benedictions to be an independent and early prayer, derived from the same formal structures as that which led to synagogue prayer, but independent of it. A general thesis of his work is that prayer texts were not fixed in this period.

Other literary and archaeological sources from the late Second Temple and early rabbinic periods clearly indicate the centrality of Torah reading in the synagogues of Israel and the diaspora. There is room to question, though, as we will see below, whether this early Torah reading was simply communal study of the sacred text, or if it had already become a liturgical rite. At Qumran, although study of Torah was indeed a highly valued and even a ritualized activity of the community, it seems to have been more similar to the rabbinic study of Torah than to the synagogue's public reading of the text. Although one text found at Qumran mentions prayer and study together, it does not suggest an actual liturgical setting for the study itself.[10] This sense of reading as an act of study rather than an act of ritual is only reinforced by the extant descriptions of synagogal reading of Scripture. We have little or no indication that there was any liturgical accompaniment to the reading, suggesting that there was no need to mark a transition into a ritual moment or to express meanings embedded in the symbolism of that moment. The most expansive New Testament description, Luke 4:16ff., describing Jesus' actions on a Sabbath in the synagogue in Nazareth, simply reports:

> He stood up to read the lesson and was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the scroll and found the passage which says,... He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. He began to speak...

Here we lack any blessings at all, for Torah or, in this case, Haftarah. That the scroll is handed to the reader may not have special significance, as Judaism does not assign prophetic texts the same degree of sanctity as the revealed Torah. In addition, the requirement that a ritually fit Torah scroll contain all five books in a single scroll made it a much bulkier and less easily handled book.

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[10] See Steven D. Fraade, "Interpretative Authority in the Studying Community at Qumran," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 44 (1993): 46-69. Fraade, 56, cites 1QS 6.6-8, which dictates that "...the Many shall watch together for a third of every night of the year, to read the book, to study (communal) law, and to pray as a Community." This combination of study and prayer does perhaps reflect the same merger of activities which becomes the norm in the rabbinic synagogue, but the prayer and study could equally well be read as separate, sequential activities. But Fraade, in this article makes the larger, and for us, significant point, that the "concluding of the nightly study sessions with a liturgical practice suggests that communal study was itself a religious performance..." (57-8). The transition from ritualized study to ritualized reading need not have been difficult. See too, Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Emergence of Institutionalized Prayer in Israel," in *The World of Qumran from Within, Collected Studies* (Jerusalem - Leiden: Magnes Press, E.J. Brill, 1989), 241.

Yitzhak D. Gilat, among others, suggests that, based on the evidence of the early rabbinic texts and of Philo, the idea of a cyclical and systematic reading of all of Torah did not emerge until the period following the destruction of the Temple, and its mechanics were still being clarified in the early second century. Indeed, the earliest readings seem to have been functional, reminding the community of its obligations pertaining to a particular holiday.[11] This movement to a regular, complete reading of all of Torah is consistent with a move to an elevated conception of Torah as the single object best connecting the community with God's revelatory voice. Instructional reading, while still important, fades in the synagogue setting in comparison to the Sinai overtones.[12] While the Jerusalem Temple still stood, a Jew could reliably access God there. In the absence of the Temple, new routes had to be forged. Study of Torah, and at a more richly symbolic level, the ritual reading of Torah, was a way to fill this gap.

The blessings that come to frame the Torah reading are the most direct expression of this meaning. Although we do not find explicit definitions of the texts of these blessings in the talmudic literature, there is no doubt that blessings were recited. There is no significant documentable variation in the texts of these blessings as they have come down to us in the various rites; and the familiar blessing texts begin to appear explicitly in the post-talmudic discussions of the Torah reading.[13] Both blessings evoke Sinai. They both conclude praising God as the Giver of Torah. The opening blessing speaks of God's choosing Israel and giving it the Torah; the concluding blessing speaks of God's giving Israel the Torah, implanting the source of eternal life in its midst. While neither speak specifically and exclusively to Sinai, both

[11] *Studies in the Development of the Halakhah* [Heb.] (Bar Ilan University Press, 1992), 356f. See also Ezra Fleischer, "Annual and Triennial Reading of the Bible in the Old Synagogue," [Heb.] *Tarbitz* 61 (1991/2): 29f. Fleischer traces in the early rabbinic texts evidence for the apparent transition from a reading devoted solely to the didactic needs of the moment to a cycle in which the entire Torah is read seriatum.

[12] It retains some rank through the Palestinian institutions of the sermon, of liturgical poetry, and, in Aramaic speaking communities, through the institution of the *targum*, the often interpretive translation of the text into that language.

[13] *Massekhet Soferim* 13:6 (Higger ed.) provides an alternative blessing to precede the reading as well as the conventional blessing afterwards, but this explicitly pertains to an individual's reading when no quorum is present. For the earliest, most historically reliable appearance of these blessing texts in their standard setting in the geonic literature, see the tenth-century *Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon*, 359. If the blessings had been the subject of any dispute, we would be more likely to find discussion.

highlight the relationship which began there. These themes are reiterated in the blessings surrounding the *haftarah*, the prophetic reading.[14]

However, these blessings would seem to be insufficient to express the profound meaning of the ritual of Torah reading. They are brief, and they are recited only in direct proximity to the actual reading. Initially, they were recited only once, before the first reading and after the last, but because of "the people coming and going," the custom was adjusted so that each person called to the Torah recited the full set.[15] One might wonder whether, rather than simply a response to communal irresponsibility, as the Talmud suggests, this liturgical adjustment deliberately emphasized the meaning of the entire rite through the reiteration of its basic spiritual underpinning. This explanation, of course, would depend on these blessings having existed in their current formulation, or in similar formulations, at the point of the adjustment. This cannot be demonstrated.

If correct, this observation points to very early evidence for a tendency to make more explicit the symbolic significance of this meaning-laden reading. In much of Jewish liturgy, in marked contrast to the rites of other religions, there is a tendency to avoid explicit statement of the mythic referent of the ritual. The *amidah*, the "Eighteen Blessings," for example, gains much of its centrality and significance from the fact that it corresponds to and, in the absence of the Jerusalem Temple, replaces, the biblically ordained sacrifices.[16] Yet, except in the additional service on Sabbaths and holidays, there is no mention at all of this purpose. The move to repetition of the blessings by each reader may be interpreted as a device to enhance the growing symbolic role of Torah in the Jewish world as the embodiment of the Sinai revelation, the sacred myth on which all of Judaism stands. Torah reading, as it moved to a sequential reading of the entire text, whether over a year or a period of approximately three and a half years, became the ritualized recitation of the central myth of the Jewish people, the heart of the liturgical experience. Its reading reenacts Sinai, and, over time, tells the story of Sinai too. No longer really an act of study or instruction, it has become a ritualization of the myth in sacred time, or in Paul Bradshaw's categories developed to describe the Christian liturgical use of Scripture, it has moved from a "didactic" to an "anamnetic" reading.[17]

[14]Heinemann, *Prayer...*, 227-9, identifies this series of blessings as one which may well have antiquity predating the emergence of rabbinically standardized prayer.

[15] 15. *BMegillah* 22a.

[16]*BBerakhot* 26a-b.

[17]"The Use of the Bible in Liturgy: Some Historical Perspectives," *Studia Liturgica*

A final point regarding the early description of Torah readings deserves discussion. We noted that the High Priest stood to read the Torah, the king who did so was praised by the rabbis, and when Jesus read in the synagogue, he too stood. While this might seem simply a logistical ideal enabling the reader to project his voice and receive the congregation's attention, the rabbinic discussions would suggest otherwise. *Mishnah Megillah* 4:1 begins: The one who reads the scroll of Esther may stand or sit. To this the Babylonian Talmud comments, "It is taught [in a tannaitic tradition]: which is not the case with the Torah." The later, amoraic talmudic discussion then asks:

> What is the [biblical] source for this? Rabbi Abbahu (Palestine, c. 300) said, "From the fact that the verse says [recording the words God spoke to Moses at Sinai], `And you stand here with Me [and I will tell you all the commandments and laws]' (Dt. 5:28)." And Rabbi Abbahu also said, "Had Scripture not phrased it in this way, it would be impossible to utter it, but it is as if even the Holy One, blessed be He, was standing."[18]

Standing to read the Torah is much more than a logistical necessity or an expression of respect. According to this interpretation, by standing, the reader emulates, not Moses who stood to receive the Torah, but God who revealed it. The ritual reading of the Torah then, is not simply an act of study, but a reenactment of Sinai itself. The tradition recorded in the Palestinian Talmud does not go quite this far, but it does rebuke the reader who leans against the table while reading, saying that this is forbidden because "just as [the Torah] was given with fear and reverence, so too we need to treat it with fear and reverence."[19] While, in this more conservative understanding the reader represents Moses, or perhaps the Israelites, who received the Torah, the public reading is still a reenactment of Sinai and is to be treated as such.[20]

22 (1992): 36-41. I would argue strongly, based on the evidence presented in this paper, against Bradshaw's characterization of the synagogue reading as primarily "doxological." (42) While there is undoubtedly a doxological quality to the liturgical reading of Scripture in Judaism, this is tertiary at best to the "didactic" and "anamnetic" qualities. Bradshaw is correct in pointing out that the rabbis consider(ed) study a form of worship, but this applies primarily to non-liturgical study, *limud torah*, and not to the ritual reading of Torah, *qeriat hatorah*. A more detailed comparison of the development of these traditions and their possible cross-influences is a desideratum.

[18] *BMegillah* 21a. The continuation of this passage tries to determine what postures are suitable for the teaching of Torah in both its written and oral forms. There is agreement that even though, ideally, all study and teaching should be performed standing, human weakness makes this impractical.

[19] *PMegillah* 4:1, 74d.

[20] This understanding did create a tendency among various groups of Jews through-

The architecture of the synagogue itself helps us to map this shift to heightened symbolic meanings. In the earliest synagogues, in Palestine at least, there is no permanent housing for the Torah ark. Like the original ark housing the Ten Commandments, the Torah ark was a mobile furnishing, brought into the synagogue when it was needed. This was perfectly functional, especially in small communities where the Torah scroll was needed both for regular study in other buildings and for the ritual reading in the synagogue. However, even this mobile ark formed a ritual focal point, as the early rabbinic tannaitic texts identify the person leading the recitation of the *amidah* as the "one who goes down before the ark." But evidence from synagogues from the fourth century on points to the permanent housing of the Torah scroll in an elaborate niche on the Jerusalem-facing wall, sometimes displacing the earlier synagogue's doors which opened towards that sacred city. Not only was the ark the architectural focus of the synagogue, but it also came to mark the direction of prayer. Any prayer which needed to be recited facing Jerusalem now was physically mediated by the Torah scroll. This became a universal feature of synagogues throughout the world. In Palestine, by the sixth century, some synagogues marked the sanctity of the Torah scroll even more dramatically, setting it apart from the rest of the synagogue's space by a set of chancel screens.[21] The Torah and its housing have moved from merely representing the Sinai revelation in its mobile housing, to representing the permanent housing of that ark in the Jerusalem Temple itself. This does not detract from the centrality of Sinai, for after that unique event, "Torah shall come forth from Zion and the word of the Eternal from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:3.) Like the Temple, these synagogues marked off their most sacred space

out history to extend the requirement to stand during the reading to the entire congregation. See, for instance, the comment of Joseph Karo in his *Beit Yosef*, OH 141, who criticizes this custom. Is the Christian custom of standing to hear the gospel is a related phenomenon? On various early medieval customs for standing during the processionals to bring the Torah to or from its ark, see Mordecai Margulies, *The Differences Between Eastern and Palestinian Jews* [Heb.] (Jerusalem, 1938), #49, 173-4.

[21]See Steven Fine, "From Meeting House to Sacred Realm: Holiness and the Ancient Synagogue," in *Sacred Realm: The emergence of the Synagogue in the Ancient World*, ed. Steven Fine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 21-47; and Rachel Hachlili, "Synagogues in the Land of Israel: THe ARt and Architecture of Late Antique Synagogues," in the same volume, 106ff; Shmuel Safrai, "The Synagogue," [Heb.] in *The Ancient Synagogue: Selected Studies* [Heb.], ed. Zeev Safrai (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 1986), 31-32. On the chancel screens, see Joan R. Branham, "Sacred Space Under Erasure in Ancient Synagogues and Churches," *Art Bulletin* 74 (1992): 375-394 and "Vicarious Sacrality: Temple Space in Ancient Synagogues," in

with architectural barriers. This holiest of places is explicitly the locus of God and of God's revelation.[22]

It is impossible to know whether any further liturgical texts accompanied the Torah service in the talmudic period. Because these liturgies lay outside of the realm of the legal concerns of the *halakhah*, talmudic texts had no compelling reason to discuss them. In addition, the early liturgies were likely not fixed, and they almost certainly were not written down in any authoritative fashion. The first Jewish prayerbooks date only from the ninth century. As a result, we have very limited knowledge about the details of the liturgy of the early synagogue. However, by the twelfth century, the point from which we begin to have prayerbook manuscripts in any number, very rich and very varied liturgies have emerged which do enrich and express the performance of this reenactment of Sinai.

From the intervening period, we have only three descriptions of any detail, each problematic in its own way. The *Seder* or order of prayers of Rav Amram Gaon is an invaluable resource, but unfortunately, we possess no manuscript in which the prayertexts (as opposed to the extensive discussions of the rules about prayer) can be demonstrated to be original. Because the text was such an important source of liturgical law, copyists rewrote it to conform to their own rites, substituting their own liturgical variants where necessary. Hence, for the purposes of understanding the development of the liturgies accompanying the geonic Torah reading, this text is not a reliable source.[23] The two other texts, the narrative of Nathan the Babylonian and a section of *Massekhet Soferim*, deserve detailed treatment. Both of these demonstrate continuity with some of the themes discussed above and give first witness to themes and meanings which will continue to accompany the Torah reading to the present day.

Ancient Synagogues: Historical Analysis and Archaeological Discovery, ed. Dan Urman and Paul V.M. Flesher (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1995), 319-345. The antiquities gallery of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem houses a reconstruction of the chancel screens and ark from Khirbet Susiya, pictured in plate 18b in the Urman and Flesher volume.

22 This theme has vast implications, extending to the contemporary custom of opening the ark for the recitation of various important prayers, especially on the High Holy Days.

23 See the introduction to E.D. Goldschmidt's critical edition of this text. Other geonic texts, like the *Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon*, and the legal compendia like *Halakhot Gedolot* include extensive discussions of various legal issues concerning the Torah reading, but indicate no liturgical framework beyond the simple blessings.

The narrative of Nathan the Babylonian records the service of installation for a new exilarch in wonderful detail.[24] As for the mishnaicly described Torah reading of the king, a special wooden platform is constructed, this one specifically seven cubits high by three cubits wide. Unlike the king's platform, though, this one is completely draped with the richest of cloths, disguising its humble structure. A canopy of rich cloth is also suspended over this platform, an addition perhaps made possible by the indoor setting of the ritual, and one which certainly accentuated the royal Davidic descent of the exilarch. Hidden under this platform, from the beginning of the service, sits a boys' choir. The exilarch himself only appears after the completion of the morning prayers, accompanied and escorted by the heads of the Babylonian academies of Sura and Pumbedita, the geonim; the three of them seat themselves on this platform. Preceding the Torah reading, the leader (the cantor) of the synagogue offers a *soto voce* blessing to the new exilarch, and then the exilarch and the geonim deliver sermons which are received with immense reverence. This entire section of the installation stands alone and is concluded with the *kaddish* prayer,[25] an ancient marker of the completion of a period of study. This is followed by blessings offered by the leader to the new exilarch and to the two geonim, and a recognition one by one of the (probably Jewish) representatives present from other places.[26] All of this points to an unusual, elevated ritual. However, we do not have sufficient information to identify where it might deviate from the pattern of a normal Sabbath service.

The description of the Torah reading itself is mostly unremarkable, except in the special treatment accorded to the exilarch. Nathan reports:

> And then (the officiant) takes out the Torah scroll, and the priest reads, followed by the levite. Then the officiant (lit. the cantor of the congregation) lowers the Torah scroll to the exilarch while all the people stand. He (the exilarch) receives the Torah scroll in his hands and stands to read in it. The heads of the academies (the geonim)

[24] A. Neubauer, ed. *Medieval Jewish Chronicles and Chronological Notes*, Vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895): 83-84.

[25] Modified only slightly to recognize the occasion, reading, "in the lifetime of our prince, the exilarch, and in your lifetimes and in the lifetime of all the house of Israel."

[26] The text reads "states," and Neubauer suggests that this should be read "academies." The context supports his reading, as it suggests that these are communities that contribute to the upkeep of the Babylonian academies. It would make less sense to suppose that the non-Jewish nations paid attention to this event to the extent of being required to sit through an hours-long service which was largely in Hebrew.

> stand with him, and the head of the academy of Sura provides the Aramaic translation. Then (the exilarch) returns the Torah scroll to the officiant who returns it to the reading desk.[27] After (the officiant) reaches the reading desk, he sits down in his place and then all the people sit in their places. Then the *roshei kallah* (the heads of the semi-annual academy sessions) read, followed by the students of the heads of the academies, but the heads of the academies themselves do not read because others have preceded them.[28] When the reader reads the prophetic portion, a wealthy and important man should provide the translation, and he should be greatly honored by this. When he finishes, he (the officiant, the reader, or the translator of the prophetic portion?) should continue by blessing the exilarch with the Torah scroll, and all of the prayer leaders (lit. the representatives of the congregation) who are practised and expert in leading prayers stand around the reading desk and respond "amen." After that he blesses both of the heads of the academies. Then he returns the Torah to its place and they pray the additional service and leave.[29]

Absent in this description, as from all others seen to this point, is any liturgical accompaniment to the movement of the Torah scroll from the ark to its place of reading and back again. Given the wealth of detail in Nathan's account, we must assume either that this movement was accomplished without liturgical marking or, less likely, that it was accompanied only by some standard texts that therefore required no notice. Otherwise, this ceremony continues to echo that of the ritual Torah reading of the king, in that the scroll is brought to the exilarch to read from his special platform. However, because this ritual occurs in the setting of a Sabbath service run by the conventions of rabbinic Judaism, seven individual readers must participate. The exilarch may not be the only reader. That the other readers come up to the reading desk while the scroll is carried to the exilarch who remains on his throne-like platform, decisively marks his extraordinary status.

Finally, we have here the germ of what will become standard practice in conjunction with Sabbath and holiday Torah readings, the blessing in one

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27 The technical term used here is *teivah*, which can also refer to the ark in which the Torah is housed. This is clearly not the intent here.

28 The precise intent of this phrase is obscure, but it seems to refer to issues of rank and its privileges.

29 Neubauer, 84.

form or another of the heads of the community, both secular and religious, in conjunction with the presence of the Torah scroll itself.[30] Indeed, it is not happenstance that these leaders are blessed at this point in the service. Nathan says that the exilarch is blessed *with* the Torah scroll. The very presence of the scroll enhances the power or the efficacy of the blessing. This happens, I suggest, because the scroll itself becomes not merely an icon of the Sinai experience, but the very embodiment of it. It is the word of God, forever communicating. As such, the presence of the scroll ritually marks God's presence.[31] A prayer offered in proximity to it has an enhanced opportunity for efficacy. The ritual expression of this concept goes well beyond the prayer for the exilarch, encompassing eventually all "*mi sheberakh*" prayers[32] offered for those called to the Torah, for the sick, for the congregation, and for naming baby girls; and the blessing recited by one released from danger, memorial prayers for the dead, and the announcements of the new month or fast days.

[30] On the history of the prayer for the secular government, see: Joseph Fenton, "Prayer for the Government (Rashut) and Permission (Reshut) for Prayer," [Heb.] *East and Maghreb* 4 (1983):7-21, and S.D. Goitein, "Prayers from the Geniza for the Fatamid Caliphs, the Head of the Jerusalem Yeshiva, the Jewish Community and the Local Congregation," in *Studies in Judaica, Karaitica, and Islamica* (Leon Nemoy Festschrift), ed. Sheldon R. Brunswick (Bar-Ilan University Press, 1982): 47-57, who give some early examples; Barry Schwartz, "*Hanoten Teshua* ` The Origin of the Traditional Jewish Prayer for the Government," *HUCA* 57 (1986): 113-120; and for a concise summary of the former and an investigation of more recent materials, see Jonathan D. Sarna's forthcoming article, "Jewish Prayer for the United States Government: A Study in the Liturgy of Politics and the Politics of Liturgy," in the the David Brion Davis Festschrift, *Moral Problems in American Life: New Perspectives in Cultural History*, ed. Karen Halttunen and Lewis Perry (Cornell University Press). Less up to date in its questions and methodology but more directly relevant to this prayer for the exilarch is C. Duschinsky, "The Yekum Purkan," in *Sefer Hazikaron Likhvod Hadoktor Shmuel Avraham Poznanski* (Warsaw, 1927; rpt. Jerusalem, 1969), Vol. II, 182-198.

[31] This needs to be compared in more detail to the Christian use of the Bible as "a sacramental expression of Christ's presence in the assembly." See Bradshaw, "The Use of the Bible...," 35.

[32] This type of prayer, commonly recited in conjunction with the Torah scroll (although not exclusively so) begins "May He who blessed our ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless so-and-so with ... because..." Often when the prayer is offered for a woman, the matriarchs are also listed. For an exhaustive collection of the varieties of this prayer, see Avraham Yaari, "Mi Sheberakh Prayers," [Heb.] in *Kiryat Sefer* 33 (1958):118-130, 233-250; 36 (1961): 103-118; and the comments and additions made by Daniel Cohen in 40 (1965): 542-559.

Outside the context of formal prayer, various private petitions, especially those of women, and even oaths were also recited in deliberate proximity to the scroll. This is a theme deserving of much greater elaboration. Nathan the Babylonian's account gives only our first hints of the appearance of this theme in a ritual context.

In contrast with the apparent lack of ceremony surrounding the Torah's movements in Nathan's account of the exilarch's installation, *Massekhet Soferim* describes an extended liturgy. *Massekhet Soferim*, a post-talmudic tractate often printed with the Talmud, prescribes protocols for creating Torah scrolls, and then, almost incidentally, the rituals surrounding them. The text's provenance and dating are unclear; theories place it anywhere from the sixth to the twelfth centuries anywhere between Babylonia and Europe. In many aspects, including those of interest here, the text of *Massekhet Soferim* clearly represents traditions which do not conform to those of the then, or soon to be, dominant Babylonian rituals. Scholars used to assume that anything from this period that was not Babylonian was necessarily Palestinian. The fact that no manuscripts of this tractate have appeared in the Cairo *geniza* makes this assumption questionable.[33] Additionally, we know that medieval copyists often inserted the prayer texts of their own rites into passages like the one of interest here. In spite of the fact that Higger's critical edition gives no evidence of such tampering, we must be somewhat suspicious. But whatever the provenance of this passage, whether it is original or not to the tractate, the form in which we and those few who cite it in the medieval world received it seems to be the first witness to liturgical elements surrounding the Torah reading which persist in the later rites. Yet, this text apparently describes its Torah ritual as the prayers to be recited by the reader of the prophetic portion, the *maftir*. As we shall see, it is not obvious that *Massekhet Soferim* describes a real situation. The text reads:[34]

[14:4] ...How does he begin?

A. Happy are they who dwell in Your house...(Ps. 84:5.)[35]

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[33] I am indebted for this perspective to Rabbi Debra Reed Blank, who is completing a dissertation on this tractate at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

[34] My translation follows Michael Higger's critical edition in text and numbering (New York: Debei Rabbanan, 1937). The narration of the author/ editor appears in boldface. Bible translations are based on the new translation of the Jewish Publication Society unless the liturgical use demands otherwise.

[35] Commonly prefixed to Ps. 145, which is recited in various rites as a prelude to returning the Torah to the ark. This is not necessarily the context here.

Then the reader of the prophetic portion stands and says:

B. There is none like you among the gods, O Eternal One, and there are no deeds like Yours. (Ps. 86:8.)

C. Who is like you among the gods, O Eternal One, who is like You majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders. (Ex. 15:11.)

D. Your kingship is an eternal kingship; Your dominion is for all generations. (Ps. 145:13.)

E. The Eternal One is king, the Eternal One was king, the Eternal One will reign forever and ever. (Elaboration on Ex. 15:18.)

F. The Eternal was pleased for His righteousness' sake, to make the Torah great and majestic. (Isaiah 42:21.)

G. The Eternal will give strength to His people, the Eternal will bless His people with peace. (Ps. 29:11)[36]

H. You alone are the Eternal One, you made the heavens, the highest heavens and all their host, the earth and everything that is on it, the seas and all that are in them. You keep them all alive, and the host of heaven prostrate themselves to You. (Nehemiah 9:6.)

[14:5] Immediately, the reader of the prophetic portion goes in and holds the Torah and chants:

I. Hear O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One. (Dt. 6:4, *shema*.)

And even the people repeat after him, and he repeats and says:

J. One is our God, great is our Lord: holy. One is our God, merciful is our Lord: holy.One is our God, great is our Lord: holy and awesome is His Name - **corresponding to the three patriarchs, and there are those who say that this corresponds to the three "holies."**[37]

K. Your beneficence is high as the heavens, O God, for You have done great things; O God, who is like You? (Ps. 71:19.)

L. O Eternal, Your name endures forever, Your fame, O Eternal through all generations. (Ps. 135:13.)

M. Let everyone ascribe might to our God and ascribe glory to the Torah.

N. Exalt the Eternal with me, and let us extol His name together. (Ps. 34:4.)

He must lift up the Torah during "Hear O Israel," and during the three declarations of God's unity, and during "Exalt the Eternal with me."

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[36] Commonly understood in the midrashic traditions to describe the giving of the Torah at Sinai. "Strength" is Torah.

[14:6] Additionally, he must recite:

O. For everything,[38] let the glorious and awesome name of the King, the king of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, be exalted, sanctified, praised, (seven additional synonyms), in the worlds which He created, in this world and in the world to come, according to His will and according to the will of those who revere Him and according to the will of all His people the House of Israel. Let His majesty be revealed and seen among us speedily, and let Him rebuild his house in our days, and may He, in His great mercy and with much lovingkindness favor our remnant and the remnant of all His people the House of Israel with favor, lovingkindness, mercy, life, and peace, and may He have mercy on us and on all His people the House of Israel for the sake of His great name, and let us say "Amen."

[14:7] After this he lifts the Torah up high and says:

P. One is our God, great is our Lord, holy and awesome is His name forever and ever.

And he begins to chant, saying:

Q. The Eternal is God (1Kings 18:39), the Eternal is His name. (Ex. 15:3.)

And the people answer after him, repeating and doubling his (words), and they answer after him twice.

[14:8] Immediately he unrolls the Torah scroll to (show) three columns, and lifts it up and shows its writing to the people standing to his right and left, and he turns it frontwards and backwards, for it is a commandment for all the men and women to see the writing and to bow and say:

R. This is the Torah which Moses set before the Israelites. (Dt. 4:44.)

Additionally he says:

S. The Torah of the Eternal is perfect, renewing life; the decrees of the Eternal are enduring, making the simple wise; the precepts of the Eternal are just, rejoicing the heart; the instruction of the Eternal is lucid, making the eyes light up; the fear of the Eternal is pure, abiding forever; the judgements of the Eternal are true, righteous altogether; more desirable than gold, than much find gold; sweeter than honey, than drippings of the comb. (Ps. 19:8-11.)

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[37] Either the threefold repetition of the word "holy" in Isaiah 6:3, or the three modes in which this verse is embedded in the synagogue liturgy.

[38] Naphtali Wieder suggests that these words, "*al hakol*" which appear in this form in the vast majority of appearances of this prayer, are actually a mistranscription of the common Judeo-Arabic instruction to recite the prayer "*haqol*." He points out that the Spanish rite seems to know this opening without the word "*al*." See his "Marginal Comments to the Article `Research on the Text of the *Amidah* in the Early Babylonian Rite,'" *Sinai* 78 (1976):279-280.

[14:9] **And the reader of the prophetic portion gives it (the Torah scroll) to the prayer leader, and he girdles the Torah to cover the heads of the readers, for it does not honor the Torah for it to be alone in the hands of a single prayer leader...**[39]

Chapter 14 of *Massekhet Soferim* begins with laws for the *megillah* reading. Our scenario appears in the context of a commentary on *Mishnah Megillah* 4:5, which like *Massekhet Soferim* moves from issues of reading Esther to the larger issue of Torah reading. But *Massekhet Soferim* presents a rather peculiar reading of this *Mishnah*. Rather than understanding it to mean that "One who **may read** the prophetic portion may (also) lead the recitation of (*pores al*) *shema*...," *Massekhet Soferim* interprets it as "The one who **reads** the prophetic portion also leads the recitation of *shema*." While the first understanding discusses the qualifications for prayer leaders, a theme which receives further elaboration in the continuation of the *Mishnah*, this second reading presupposes some combination of only the first two rituals listed in the *Mishnah*; inexplicably excluded from this is the continuation of the list: the leading of the *amidah* and the priestly benediction. This second reading is supported neither by the readings of either *Talmud* nor by the various commentary traditions, all of which consistently interpret this *Mishnah* as discussing the qualifications of the prayer leader. *Massekhet Soferim*'s reading and its consequent question, "To which *shema* does this refer?" is thus very bizarre.

The bizarre nature of this passage is only heightened by the fact that my preliminary research in the medieval prayerbook manuscripts indicates that *shema* only very rarely appears in the rituals surrounding the Sabbath Torah service of any rite, and even within a particular rite, its appearance in the medieval prayerbooks is irregular.[40] This is such an integral part of *Massekhet Soferim*'s discussion that we cannot dismiss it as a gloss or copyist's addition. There seems to be no justification for claiming broad familiarity with

[39] This last instruction is obscure, most likely because the textual tradition is corrupt. The words that I have translated as "girdles" and "to cover" are extremely unusual in this context. Higger lists a significant number of variants, none of which make more sense, all of which are the preferred readings of significant commentators on this passage. Most of them read some variation on "and he returns the Torah to the first of the readers" or "in order to count or appoint the readers." Higger explains his text in light of the continuation of the passage, saying that this refers to the traditions of having three people stand at the reader's desk at all times for the Torah reading.

[40] In a survey of the collection of hundreds of microfilmed prayerbook manuscripts of the Institute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and Uni-

Massekhet Soferim's assumption that there is a *shema* connected to the Torah reading which was to be recited by the *maftir*. The few traditions that include *shema* may well simply rely on *Massekhet Soferim*. This may be inferred from the absence of this *shema* in any weekday Torah service, pointing to its linkage to services including a prophetic reading, thus preserving some remnant of *Massekhet Soferim*'s system. In addition, even if we posit that *Massekhet Soferim* is recording the actual rite of a community, we cannot posit that this rite is the direct ancestor of any known later rite, as this *shema* does not appear

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versity Library in Jerusalem, I found this *shema* appearing in the following twelfth to seventeeth century manuscripts:

- *Sephardi (Spanish) rite*: Of eighteen manuscripts checked, only in a fifteenth-century Sicilian *siddur*, Ms. Parma 1741 (570). It does not appear in today's Spanish-rite prayerbooks.
- *Italian/Roman rite*: Of twenty manuscripts checked, only one, produced in 1420 in Ortona, Ms. Vatican Ebr. 545. This manuscript surrounds *shema* with many of the verses found in *Massekhet Soferim*, but not found in the other Italian rite manuscripts. The edition of this prayerbook produced by Samuel David Luzzato in 1829 does not include this *shema*.
- *Ashkenazi (German) rite*: Of twenty-one manuscripts checked, only three: Ms. Parma 2225 (898), from the 12-13th c.; Ms. Cambridge Dd.13.7(13), dated 1387; and Ms. Vatican Ebr. 323, from the 13-14th c. It also appears in the rite recorded by Rabbi Isaac son of Moses of Vienna (d. mid-13th c.) in his *Sefer Or Zarua*, who explicitly justifies his custom on the precedent of *Massekhet Soferim*, but notes that the Jews in the Rhineland do not include it. It does not appear in the rite of *Mahzor Vitry*. Note, though, that *shema* is a standard and most dramatic feature of today's Ashkenazi rite. This transformation requires further study.
- *Romaniot (Balkan) Rite*: Of nine manuscripts checked, only three: Ms. Parma 1791 (435), a 13-14th c. Greek prayerbook; Ms. Alliance Israelite Paris H.58.A, a 15th c. Romaniot prayerbook; and Ms. Parma 2587 (947), a 15th c. Greek prayerbook.
- London, British Museum Or. 10516, 16-17th c. prayerbook) contains liturgy for a Sabbath Torah reading, and this includes *shema*. *Shema* also appears in a geniza manuscript of uncertain origin, Ms. TS NS 150.168, and in Ms. *Eastern Rites*: Of the four manuscripts checked of the Persian rite, only one (Ms. Cincinnati 407, a prayerbook from fifteenth-century Aleppo.
- *French Rites*: *Shema* does not appear at all in the five prayerbooks checked. It also does not appear at all in the manuscripts checked from *Yemen, Corfu*, and *North Africa*.

uniformly in any family of manuscripts and it is never lead by the *maftir*. It is more likely that individual communities which accepted *Massekhet Soferim* as a source of legitimate liturgical guidance[41] used it as a partial model for their own liturgies, adding from it to their pre-existing traditions.

Brief mention must be made of another ambiguity in this text. As *Massekhet Soferim* only implies the connection of this ritual to a Torah reading, scholars have debated whether its placing this ritual in the hands of the *maftir* really means that this ritual occurred, not before the reading, but rather after it, at the point when the Torah was to be returned to the ark. The description of the ritual is, in any case, incomplete; it fails to state clearly where the Torah scroll is before the reader takes it and it only hints at its location at the end. Therefore, one cannot conclusively state that this describes either the taking the Torah from the ark or its return there, or, alternatively, some movement in the middle of the entire service. What can be said, though, is that all later liturgies derived from or otherwise similar to that recorded here have these prayers during the ceremony in which the Torah scroll is removed from its ark and brought to the reader's desk. It seems most likely that the placing of this ritual in the hands of the reader of the prophetic portion derives only from *Massekhet Soferim*'s strange interpretation of the *Mishnah*; it may be wisest not to read it as a record of actual practice.[42]

The wide variations from one community to the next, the lack of direct duplication of *Massekhet Soferim*'s liturgy in the liturgy of any known community on what was apparently, to it, a very important point, and the very fact that so many sources, including prayerbooks, have no recorded liturgy for bringing the Torah from its ark to its place of reading and back again all speak to the non-halakhic status of this moment of the liturgy. Anything that was said fell into the category of simply beautifying the moment; it was not mandatory or legislated. On the other hand, this opened this liturgical moment to freer and more poetic expression of its meanings. At this level, *Massekhet Soferim* does serve as a model and/or as a witness to the emerging patterns of Torah liturgies in the medieval Jewish world.

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[41] The authority of this text was not universally accepted. See, for example, its influence on the question of whether the individual may recite the *kedushah* in the morning *yotzer* prayer, discussed in my *The Impact of Custom, History and Mysticism on the Shaping of Jewish Liturgical Law* (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, 1994), Ch. 7, especially 402-405, 423ff.

[42] For a summary of the arguments on this matter and an argument for this being a liturgy following the Torah reading, see Heinemann, *Prayer...,* 259-60, n. 18.

The most obvious characteristic of *Massekhet Soferim*'s liturgy to find echo in all later rites is its use of biblical verses, mostly in direct citation, but occasionally in elaborated form. The stringing together of biblical verses to create liturgical compositions is known in Judaism, but it is also not characteristic of the central prayers. This form appears in such likely post-talmudic prayers as the *birkat hapesukim* (the blessing of the verses, the third blessing after *shema* in the evening in most rites), in collections of verses included in the morning *pesukei d'zimra* (verses of song, mostly from Psalms), and, in a slightly different way, at the conclusion of major segments of the Palestinian compositions of liturgical poetry. It is also the outstanding characteristic of the liturgy of the Karaite Jews who, rejecting the official forms of rabbinic prayer and turning deliberately to biblical models, may have simply accepted this available pattern for liturgical language instead. Although there is no absolute proof, these observations suggest a post-talmudic but fairly early geonic origin for this liturgical structure. The specific combination of verses that appears in *Massekhet Soferim* does not appear without modification in other rites. Communities obviously generated their own liturgies, probably based on some combination or gradual modification of existing models. Addition of new verses or entire passages was not restricted, and these liturgies gradually expanded over the centuries.

The prayer beginning "For everything" (O) is the only really significant exception to this use of biblical language. Once again, *Massekhet Soferim* is the earliest witness to this prayer, and this prayer does appear, with some modification, in every rite. From a form-critical perspective, it is obvious that this prayer belongs to the type that Joseph Heinemann identifies as "study house" prayers. It is largely a Hebrew variant of a *kaddish* prayer, with the characteristic "study house" language which addresses of God in the third person, as the King of Kings, and as the Holy One blessed be He, and requests redemption.[43] In these features, the prayer is unremarkable. As Heinemann indicates, it is not at all strange to find prayers associated with the study house and its rituals retained in connection with the synagogue's ritual reading of Torah, especially as it may be surmised that the ritual reading grew out of the study context. Given that we have demonstrated the lack of influence of *Massekhet Soferim* on the later rites, we must assume that it here is recording a text that was well-known and widespread. It is possible, although not necessary, that the prayer itself has some real antiquity.

[43] Heinemann, *Prayer...*, 259, 271. Note that Heinemann's list of the rites in which this prayer occurs is incomplete. I have found it in every rite I have examined.

This prayer acquires specific meaning through its inclusion and placement in the Torah service. Although there is not a single verse in *Massekhet Soferim*'s liturgy which explicitly proclaims a reenactment of Sinai, this theme is nonetheless present and voiced. The verses recited by the *maftir* move from general to specific praise of God as the giver of Torah (F,G). In this context, the reader holds the Torah and proclaims God's oneness, both with *shema* (I) and with the direct declarations of God's unity which follow (J). Then, with some intervening praises, the reader proclaims the anomalous, non-scriptural line, "Let everyone ascribe might to our God and ascribe glory to the Torah" (M). Torah is thus the abiding symbol of God's presence among the people. It is the perpetuation of Sinai, its covenant, and its theophany. This then creates a particularly auspicious moment for praise of God and for request for that event most desperately hoped for by the Jewish people, redemption (O). The intensity of this moment is only heightened by what follows: a reiteration and intensification of the "unification" (P) and references to the responses to two additional biblical demonstrations of God's presence and providence, Elijah's at Mt. Carmel, and the Israelites' at the Sea (Q). At this point the revelation actually occurs. The scroll is opened, and its text is displayed to the entire people, men and women, who must see its essential aspect, its words. The people respond with the explicit declaration that this scroll is the Torah revealed at Sinai (R); the verses from Ps. 19 that follow simply respond to this (S).

Later liturgies rearrange the parts, adding and subtracting specific verses, but they maintain the basic concepts and symbols embedded here. By the time that the known rites emerge in the medieval world, Torah reading has moved from an almost entirely unadorned study of Scripture to a ritual which establishes the Torah reading as a primary and symbol-rich moment of the Jewish liturgical cycle. The authoritative texts of the rabbinic literature apparently still reflect, for the most part, the unadorned rite. As a result, later texts derivative of these in their content and structure also pay little attention to the richness of meaning which emerges – and which, as prayerbook manuscript evidence suggests, clearly has emerged in a fairly mature form by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This tradition of non-attention continues in modern academic studies of Jewish liturgy, belying the fact apparent to the most uninformed observer of a Sabbath morning service: the emergence of the Torah scroll from its ark, its presence in the midst of the congregation before, during and after its reading, forms the ritual highpoint of the service. Far from being a routine reading of the book, these liturgies have emerged as expressions of the deep symbolic significance of the ritual. The Torah itself is

approached with the greatest of reverence, for it embodies the theophany at Sinai, the core myth of the Jewish religious experience. Its treatment ritually is at many levels a reenactment of Sinai, recreating, not the fearful awareness of God's immense power loose in proximity to the human community, but the awesome, beloved grandeur of a providential God who speaks to Israel and who listens to their prayers. It took centuries for this liturgical statement to be recorded at all in any detail; it took many more centuries for it to reach a degree of fixity and authority, but that is the subject of another study.

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Psychological Time and Improvisational Technique in Jewish Music

by Stephen Lorch

A Point of Departure: The Aesthetics of Imperfection

The aesthetic principle underlying Jewish music is unique in that its goal is different from that of Western music. Although both Jewish and Western music are expressive, they differ in their expressive content. An ancient midrashic source, *Heikhalot Rabbati*, proves an insight into the expressive character of Jewish music:

> Rabbi Ishmael said: Blessed is Israel– how much dearer are they to the Holy One than the servant-angels: since as soon as the servant-angels wish to proceed with their song in the heights, rivers of fire and hills of flame encircle the throne of glory, and the Holy One says: Let every angle, cherub, and seraph that I created be silenced before Me, until I have heard and listened to the voice of song and praise of Israel, My children.[1]

That human song takes precedence over the song of the heavenly hosts indicates that the ideal of angelic music, abstract beauty, is not the model on which Jewish music is based. By contrast, the quest of the Christian Church for pure and flawless music, as well as the increasing inclination in Western music through the nineteenth century toward instrumental music and hence a cleaner, more precise sound, points toward an espousal of the concept of abstract beauty in imitation of the angelic choirs.

The Jewish attitude toward musical aesthetics is attested to in numerous sources spanning two millenia. A medieval pietistic text, *Sefer Hasidim*, develops further the notion of human vocal imperfection as a positive aesthetic element:

> You should never say: My voice is not agreeable...Speaking this way, you complain against Him who did not make your voice beautiful. There is nothing that induces man to love his Creator and to enjoy His love more than the voice raised in an extended tune.... If you are unable to add something (of your own to the prescribed test], pick out a tune that is beautiful and sweet to your ears. Offer up your prayer in such tunes,

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[1] Adolph Jellinek, ed. *Bet Hamidrash*, 6 vols. (Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 1967), Vol. 3, cited in Hanoch Avenary, S.V. "Music," *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter) 1972, 12: 580.

> and it will be full of kavvanah, and your heart will be enchanted by the utterings of your mouth...[2]

Spiritual heirs to this tradition were the mystics of Safed, whose aesthetics called for "prayer song from everybody– regardless of the beauty of the tunes and the agreeability of the voice; only the intention and the devotion of the singer count." [3] Lest it be inferred that the aesthetics of human imperfection is only a mystical and midrashic phenomenon foreign to the mainstream of rabbinic tradition and life, it should also be noted that the criterion of voice quality is only a tertiary one in the appointment of a musical functionary in the Jewish community, ranking behind personal conduct and reputation as well as physical bearing.[4] In fact, even the capacity to grow a full beard takes precedence over vocal quality.[5]

Is this penchant for imperfect vocal quality simply an inversion of Western aesthetic taste, or does it attest to an alternative aesthetic criterion which overshadows abstract beauty and which furnishes an insight into the deep structure of Jewish music? The association of vocal imperfection and "extended tune" which was presented most clearly in *Sefer Hasidim* provides the first clue on the road to the discovery of a fundamentally different psychological goal in Jewish music.

Psychological Time

Avenary is drawn off base by the element of free rhythm that is characteristic of all Biblical and liturgical chant; he concludes that any music which lacks regular rhythm also contains no element of time whatsoever.

> The differentiation of long and short syllables is foreign to the Hebrew language. It was, rather, the intensity of enunciation that provided the poetic "weight" (*mishkal*); It may be seen, for instance from Yose b. Yose's *Darkekha Eloheinu le-Ha'arikh Appekha* that the singer had to utter one, two, or three syllables, as the case may be, between the accents; this precludes a regular beat and meter, and the tune had to be either psalmodic or in free rhythm. It can be said that this poetry did not include the dimension of time as an object of aesthetic configuration.[6]

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[2] Judah ben Samuel he-Hasid. *Sefer Hasidim*, ed. Jehuda Wistinetzki (Frankfurt a.M.:M.A. Wahrmann Verlag, 1924), 11, pp. 8-9.

[3] Ibid., p. 613.

[4] *Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayim* 53:5.

[5] Ibid., 53:6, 8.

[6] Hanoch Avenary, s.v, "Music," *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter), 1972, Vol. 12:594.

A somewhat different conception of Jewish musical time may be found in the theoretical treatise of Weinfeld. For him, the psychological impact of time irregularities brings ancient prophetic experience to the fore,

> so that the reader may understand the wonder, the rebuke, the supplication, the equanimity, the skepticism, and the like...From their cantillation, you can understand as if the prophet is standing before you face to face.[7]

The telescoping of millenia over which the historical experience is relived is a function of the free rhythm of the cantillation. Moses Maimonides explains, in a different context, the obligatory nature of re-experiencing and the human capacity to arouse, by exposure to symbolic experiences, an empathetic response to the historical agent:

> In every generation, man is required to demonstrate himself as if he personally had escaped Egyptian bondage right now.[8]

Of critical importance is the word "demonstrate" (*lehar'ot*), for it represents a subtle departure from the talmudic formulation "see" (*lir'ot*). The implication is that man can control his powers of historical empathy through symbolic experience.[9] For Weinfeld, musical experience, particularly that of free rhythm, serves the same psychological function as symbolic experience does for Maimonides.

The Integral Structuralists discuss the aspect of Jewish musical time, which evokes such a strong psychological response. While in the auditory interpretative context, time is represented as a cycle of present/non-present, in which non-present includes both past and future; and while, in the visual interpretation context, time is represented as a segmented line of past–present–future, "the integral context suggests a temporal structure which permits the interpretation of self and world not in terms of moments (spatial) but as 'presence' of world in an a-perspectival manner."[10] *Presence implies a struc-*

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[7]Samuel Judah Weinfeld. *Ta'amei Hamikra* (Jerusalem: Eshkol) 1972:12, quoting Solomon ben Abraham Ibn Parḥon, *Maḥberet Ha'arukh* (Salerno, 1161).

[8] Moses Maimonides. *Mishneh Torah*, Zemanim, Ḥametz u-Matzah 7:6.

[9]Parenthetically, this dynamic, interactive approach to historical experience is unusual in itself. In reference to Christian religious experience, Mickunas notes, "In brief, it can be said that the audial context, which assumes a circular time with the predominance of past to be repeated and announced to subsequent, generations which in turn live in the rhythm inspired by 'memory,' is made pesent in the artistic creations of mythological people;" Charles Mickunas, "Contexts and Dimensions of Art Interpretation" (Ohio University: mimeographed), p. 17.

[10] Ibid., p. 26.

turing to time psychologically rather than chronologically. The conception of time and presence "opens up possibilities of non-successive interpretation and interdependence of linguistic phrases[11] and of entire sections – hence the biblical hermeneutic principle, *ein mukdam ume-uḥar baTorah* (the order of events in the Torah is not based on temporal sequence). This is also what Gebser means by when he discusses the timelessness of integral consciousness:

> A person who has such an Integral consciousness is no longer dependent on his ego: His ego, with all its passions, no longer dominates him; rather, he governs his ego. Then the world as a correlate of ego – a world that confronts us with all its conditions of time and space – becomes a shared world, a world of participation in that which, like the divine or the spiritual, is not linked to time and space because it is, by its very nature, timeless and spaceless.[12]

Leonard Bernstein alludes to the concept of "virtual time," terming it Aesthetic Time, and claiming it as a property of Western music. He maintains that this is so precisely because the musical lines in counterpoint produce a simultaneous ambiguity, while in poetry, for example, the ambiguity constructed in the reader's imagination is based on consecutive understandings of the text.[13] We can see that this criterion results from a Western surface structure in both music and poetry in which the aesthetic object is enslaved to the clock, so that multiple perceptions of the ambiguities imbedded in the piece must, of necessity, be perceived simultaneously, or else the listener will fall behind in his following (what constrictive perspectival implications this word has!) of the piece.

In contrast, Jewish music is more closely suited to an integral structure incorporating psychological time, allowing the piece–and the listener-performer– to breathe, so that the ambiguities and other implications of the music may be taken in before one is pushed into new sections and their multiple meanings. The only imaginable Western music parallel to the virtual time built into Jewish music would be if the New York Philharmonic spent an hour analyzing the first twenty-one bars of each Mozart symphony before playing it.

Improvisational Technique

[11] Ibid., p. 29.

[12] Jean Gebser, " The Integral Consciousness, " in *Main Currents in Modern Thought*, Vol. 30, no. 3:108.

[13] Leonard Bernstein. *The Unanswered Question* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1976:113.

The concept that lurks just beneath the surface of our argument is improvisational technique. Without it, very short pauses between musical episodes interfere with the continuity of the music; with it, if used appropriately by a well-trained and sensitive Jewish musician, even a long structural break contributes to the specification and elaboration of structural meaning. It is on account of the improvisational material inserted by the performer that the multiple perspectives of the music and text are brought to the fore. Each improvisational choice entails the acceptance of one possible elaboration as more appropriate, on the balance, than all other alternatives, in terms of all their functions within the textual and musical context. This, then, is the critical significance of free rhythm in Jewish music: to facilitate the introduction of improvisational technique for the purpose of presenting multiple perspectives of the music.

> The most advanced Jewish music form, in terms of its improvisational demands, is liturgical chant. The hazzan must command a good measure of musical creativeness. He does not simply reproduce a pre-conceived piece of music, but must give final shape to the general outlines of a theme by an improvisation of his own.[14]

The only minutely determined elements of liturgical chant are, in each piece, a prescribed mode or predominant tetrachord and a number of obligatory motives. It is the task of the hazzan to improvise the sequence of motives, the repetitions — if any — and the linking material which is frequently of greater length and intricacy than the compulsory figures, such that the improvisation heightens the structural clarity and unity of the piece and presets a well-formed, coherent interpretation of the text in accordance with the functional implications of the compulsory material. In this way, psychological time is exploited in liturgical chant almost to the exclusion of chronological time, for the elapsed time between two prescribed motives in a piece ranges from fractions of seconds to several minutes, depending on the hazzan's interpretation of the musical requirements of the text.

To a lesser extent, Biblical cantillation also has flexibility and an allowance for improvisation to convey a meaning or mood deemed important by the performer.

> The musical rendition of the text in conformity with the accent signs is based on the convention of each sign or group of signs representing a certain melodic motive. The graphic symbol does not stand for an absolutely predetermined sequence of tones. As in all music cultivated by oral tradition, the motives exist as "ideals" to be realized in performance,

[14]Avenary, op. cit., page 589.

> within certain margins of flexibility. Preservation of the "ideals,' i.e. the style, is assured by several factors; the support of the well-defined and strict doctrine of the grammatical and syntactical function of the accents; the deliberate teaching by which the tradition is handed on from generation to generation; and the constant public practice of the system in the synagogue, where not only the layman's rendition (when "called up to read") but even that of the specialized reader, *ba'al keri'ah*– not always, and in some communities never, identical with the hazzan – is always subject to the critical ear of the more learned members of the community. The margin of flexibility, on the other hand, makes it possible to link, or rather blend, the motives as they are recalled and enunciated by the reader so as to create a melodic organism. The style itself remains constant, but each reader may interpret it with a certain individuality and will never repeat his previous performance precisely when he reads the same passage upon another occasion.[15]

A truly proficient *ba'al keri'ah* can render a passage in numerous ways, thereby lending support in each case to a multiplicity of semantic approaches to the text. This feat is all the more remarkable because the time permitted for improvisation within and between motives is rigorously circumscribed and limited to fractions of seconds.[16] Tempo, dynamics, and the selection of an appropriate melodic motive for each accent from a handful of closely related variations– these are the only improvisational techniques at the *ba'al keri'ah*'s disposal. The articulation of nuance in spite of the dearth of improvisational repertoire is, to my mind, the consummate Jewish musical art.

Point of Return: The Aesthetics of Total Involvement.

In the light of our treatment of psychological time and improvisational technique as the structural core of Jewish music, we may now return to the two musical features — *imperfect vocality* and *extended tune* — which were apparently inexplicably linked in the mystical *Sefer Hasidim.*[17]

The Jewish music practitioner is urged to improvise his own extended introduction and intermezzi (" ... pick out a tune...") which, by virtue of their appropriateness to the text, will contribute to the meaning and to the reader's understanding ("... it will be full of kavvanah."). In fact, the power of these improvisational interludes to confer new and diverse semantic perspectives

[15] Avigdor Herzog, s.v. "Masoretic Accents: Musical Rendition," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter), 1971, 11:1103.

[16] It is critical to the understanding of the deep structure of Jewish music as integral, that improvisational license never totally be eliminated.

[17] See above, pp. 1-2.

on a text is so great that *they are equivalent to adding something of one's own* to the prescribed text and avoiding, through independent, totally involving contribution of new meaning, a mechanical, perfunctory reading.[18] For the identical reason, human imperfection is also a prescribed aspect of Jewish musical performance, because abstract beauty is irrelevant to the aesthetics of improvisation, or nearly so, and because the vocal quality reinforces the structural impact of psychological time.

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[18] Babylonian Talmud, *Avot* 2:13, cf. *Tif'eret Yisrael* ad loc.

The Problems a Modern Jew Faces in Prayer

by Avraham H. Feder

I have been a rabbi for forty years and a hazzan for well over fifty years. As such, I have had a long and abiding professional interest in the parameters of the Jewish prayer experience, particularly the experience of *tefillah betsibbur*—public worship.[1] As rabbi and hazzan I have taught courses over the years examining and discussing aspects of the davening experience, ranging from the theology of Jewish prayer to the aesthetics and mechanics of *nusah hatefillah*. But it is from my existential experience as a *sheli'ah tsibbur*, leading or trying to lead Jews in prayer *in the moment of prayer*, that I come to a consideration of the problems that our contemporary Jewish worshiper faces. Looking back, I suppose that I have been struggling all of my life as a *sha"ts* to pinpoint these problems.

I suggest four major areas of concern which inhibit many a modern Jew from deriving the appropriate cathartic value from his participation in public worship:

1. the absence of an ongoing *will* to *pray*;
2. the need to appreciate the particular dramatic staging of the Jewish prayer experience;
3. the lack of knowledge of the structure of the liturgy and the meanings and contexts of individual prayer texts; and
4. the near total ignorance of the rich and complex musical component of the worship.

* * * * * *

The Will to Pray

Psalm 69:14 has the worshiper appealing to God:

> As for me, may my prayer come to You, O Lord, *at a favorable time*; O God, in Your abundant faithfulness, answer me with Your sure deliverance.

[1] My family background is Ashkenazic. My hazzanic training and education was also Ashkenazic, having begun under the tutelage of my father Hazzan Louis Feder, z"l, and the composer Joshua Weisser, z"l. Over the years I have officiated in Conservative and Orthodox congregations in North America and Israel where the *nusah hatefillah* has been Ashkenazic. Whatever I have to say in this article, particularly regarding the musical component of worship, is obviously conditioned by my Ashekenazic experience.

"At a favorable time" is a free translation of the Hebrew *eit ratson*, which literally means "the time of will." The traditional explanation given is that we pray that our words will reach God as a moment when His "will" will be favorably disposed to us. For our purposes, however, I suggest that *eit ratson* should point initially to the indispensability of the *worshiper's* will being favorably disposed to the experience of prayer. Rabban Gamliel's instruction in *Pirkei Avot* 22:4 is relevant:

> *Aseh retsono kirtsonakh kedei sheya'aseh retsonakh kirtsono*
>
> Do His will as you would your own will,
> so that He may do your will as He does His own will.

Without the committed *will* of the human worshiper to praise God and to petition Him, how can he dare to expect that God's will should be in tune with his!

The question is whether or not all the strategies and tactics used to induce our fellow Jews to join regularly and enthusiastically in public worship have any positive effect if the *will* isn't there! All the homiletics and other pedagogical techniques, all the aesthetic effects including hazzanut at its best, together with a rich diet of folk tunes spicing up the nusah, will not inspire a Jew to pray more than sporadically and listlessly if he doesn't *want* to, if he isn't *ready* to.

It isn't that our people are opposed unalterably to exposing themselves to spiritual/aesthetic experiences. On the contrary, many Jews will commit themselves on a regular basis to serious theater and to the concert hall, even though their knowledge of sophisticated drama and music may be no deeper than their knowledge of Jewish liturgy. Jews—along with non-Jews—will be aficionados of Shakespeare and will get season tickets to the Stratford Festival regardless of which plays are being presented and whether or not they understand the nuances of Elizabethan English.[2] Jews—and non-Jews—will subscribe year after year to the local symphony with no deeper appreciation of Beethoven and Brahms—let alone Mahler and Bartok—than a child in elementary school. Yet they go *religiously*! Whatever their motives for going, whether these be at some level cultural or inspired by nothing more than a vulgar Philistinism, they *will* themselves to go. The Jew who prays regu-

[2] I purposely mention "Stratford" because in the years when I myself was a frequent visitor to that Shakespeare Festival in Ontario, Canada, I noted that the company felt duty-bond to present some of the Bard's lesser-known works along with his masterpieces. They wouldn't have if they hadn't counted on the audience being *religiously committed* to Shakespeare whether it was *Hamlet* or *Titus Andronicus*.

larly—whether *biy'hidut* (privately) or *betsibbur* (publicly)—does it because he *wills* himself to do so.

There is a proverb found in several places in the Talmud, which states:

> *Gadol hametsuveh ve'oseh mimi she'eino metsuveh ve'oseh*
>
> Greater is he who performs because he was commanded than he who performs although not commanded.[3]

The proverb is arguing that in halakhic terms it is preferable to do the mitzvah out of a sense of obedience to the Almighty than out of personal impulse. The Jew who has been praying regularly for a long time may have so internalized the initial *outer* command that his motivation to pray at this point in his life is autonomous. But whether the motivation to pray is heteronomous/thonomous (commanded by God) or autonomous (commanded by self), in both cases the worshiper is certain that he is *commanded*. And the command inspires his will. Whether he obeys the Outer Voice or his inner voice, he *wills* himself to pray regularly. His readiness to pray is not dependent on the unpredictability of his feelings. Not that his feelings aren't real! They are real and psychologically authentic. But feelings are also notoriously fickle; as such they are hardly a reliable foundation for assuring the disciplined regularity of traditional Jewish prayer.

It may be argued that one's will to pray is dependent upon the strength of one's belief in God, a God, moreover, who is reputed to be *shomei'a tefillah*, Who listens to prayer. I would not discount the importance of such a theological given. Nevertheless, most Jews who don't pray regularly do not claim they are atheists or agnostics. If there are some who do mount cogent philosophical arguments as to why they don't pray, equally convincing arguments may be mobilized against their claims. Furthermore, many a Jew who does pray regularly is not embarrassed to admit that from time to time he himself may have theological doubts. When at such time he nevertheless wills himself to pray, he follows the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's advice regarding the necessary "willing suspension of disbelief" which must undergird one's commitment to various types of aesthetic experience, e.g., poetry, fiction, drama—in our case—prayer. But does not the act of praying demand more commitment to true belief than the imaginative suspension of disbelief which Coleridge is calling for?

The answer is certainly, Yes! The Jew who prays regularly truly believes in the validity of what he is doing because he truly believes that there is a God Who is attending to his prayers. Nevertheless, in considering the cir-

[3] BT *Kiddushin*, 31a; *Bava Kamma* 38a, 87a; *Avodah Zarah* 3a.

cumstances of true belief and willing suspension of disbelief, what would we make of Maimonides' instruction to the worshiper regarding the proper *kavvanah* (intention) in prayer? In his *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilkhot Tefillah* 4:16 Maimonides asks:

Keitsad hi hakavvanah

What is the proper intention?

shey'faneh et libo mikol hamahashavot

the worshiper is to turn his heart from all thoughts

veyir'eh atsmo ke'ilu hu omeid lifnei haShekhinah

and see himself *ke'ilu* — as if — he is standing before God's indwelling Presence.

What does the word *ke'ilu* — as if — mean? Does it mean that the Shekhinah is there in truth? To the worshiper, to the believer who is the worshiper, of course God's shekhinah is there in truth. The essence of the believer's belief is that God's Shekhinah *is* there in truth. But then, why say *ke'ilu* — as if?

Maimonides is always afraid of anthropomorphism. He uses the term *ke'ilu* as a stage direction, an exhortation to us to move our selves—*so to speak*—into God's "sight" and "hearing." We *will* ourselves to believe that God is there and is attentive to our prayers. At the same time, for us to imagine—with our human limitations—that we can talk to God, is tantamount to hubris, to arrogance. What then is this *ke'ilu*—as if—other than a necessary form of serious play-acting? By play-acting, I mean taking ourselves out of our mundane everyday situations and assuming an alternative formalized posture in order to perform a particular specialized act: the act of prayer![4]

Is then prayer an act? It is—except that unlike theatrical make-believe, the worshiper truly believes that what he is doing is *real*! But in both cases the *ke'ilu* stage direction requires the player or prayer to *will* him self into the required posture. If he is not ready to assume the role of worshiper, if he is not *willing*, then he will not pray. He will certainly not pray privately. But even if he finds himself in a synagogue ostensibly participating in public worship, unless he has *willed* himself to *pray*, he will not be praying. He may

[4] The word *ke'ilu* is the key word in the central spiritual-historical instruction of the Passover Seder [editor's emphasis]:

Bekhol dor vador hayyav adam lir'ot et atsmo ***ke'ilu*** *hu yatsa miMitsrayim*

In every generation one is obligated to see himself **as if** he went out of Egypt.

Here as well we are being asked to play-act our total empathy with that generation of the Exodus.

be mouthing words along with other congregants. He may be joining in the congregational singing, sitting and standing when the congregation sits and stands. He will nevertheless only be a spectator of Jewish worship—not yet a worshiper.

The Dramatic Staging of the Prayer Experience

A number of years ago I had an illuminating experience as a non-professional worshiper in a Masorti synagogue in Jerusalem. That particular Shabbat morning I was serving neither as *sheli'ah tsibbur* nor as officiating rabbi on the bimah. And so I found myself sitting within the congregation trying to daven. Seated next to me was a tourist couple—husband and wife—who were obviously not familiar with the siddur being used nor with its order of prayer. But what I found particularly annoying was their constant fidgeting. They were trying to see what was taking place on the bimah. Because the synagogue was crowded that Shabbat morning and taller-than-average people happened to be sitting in front of our row, my immediate tourist neighbor—the lady—kept straining herself this way and that way while complaining to her husband — "I can't see"—I had a mild epiphany! It struck me as never before that someone sitting or standing in a shul looking to see what is going on around them, trying especially to take in what is happening on the bimah, has the dramatic staging all wrong! Such a worshiper is behaving as one who is in the audience at a theatrical or concert performance looking appropriately to see—and to hear—the performers on stage. In Jewish worship, however, it is the *worshiper* who is performing "on stage." And God, it is hoped, constitutes the audience!

This is not to say that worship or sacred theater in many cultures does not present the model that my tourist couple and many other Jews expect when they attend synagogue. In ancient times pagan audiences looked to their worship as an opportunity to peer into the lives of the gods, to imitate them, to participate vicariously somehow in the lives of these gods. The ethical monotheism of biblical Judaism rebelled against such worldviews and their accompanying worship practices. Yet, there is enough evidence in biblical literature to underscore the universal human temptation to try to *see* the transcendent. Doesn't Moses ask to see God? And God responds: "Man may not see Me and live!" (Exodus 33:18-20). Nevertheless, the Psalms provide us with examples of the worshiper yearning to see God, e.g., Psalm 63:3.

> *Kein bakodesh hazitikha lir'ot uz'kha ukh'vodekha*
>
> I shall behold You in the Sanctuary, and see Your might and glory.

Of particular interest is Deuteronomy 16:16:

*Shalosh pe'amim bashanah **yir'eh/yeira'eh** kol zekhurkha*
Three times a year all your males shall **appear** [editor's emphasis]
et penei Adonai Elohekha bamakom asher yivḥar
before the Lord your God in the place that He will choose.

The four letters comprising the Hebrew word for "appear"—*Y-R-E-H*—make more grammatical sense being read as *yir'eh* (will see). But then the text would read: "Three times a year all your males **shall see** God in the place that He will choose." For the rabbis such a reading was unacceptable. And so, the masoretic vocalization of the Bible preferred the passive *yeira'eh* (**will be seen**). It is clear that the theological sensibility of the rabbis would not countenance any human pretence at seeing God.[5]

As long as the Temple stood and the focus in its worship rite was on the performance of the priests assisted by the Levites, then in some respects the Judean worshiper could be described as the audience looking on at the priestly staging of prayer. But long before the destruction of the Second Temple, the democratization of Jewish worship had begun and would eventually alter the staging of the Jewish prayer experience decisively. For millennia now, the epicenter of the Jewish prayer experience has switched from the priest and the sacrificial order to each individual worshiper as he joins himself to a minyan (quorum) of other worshipers. And the prayerful activity of this minyan constitutes the dramatic performance of Jewish worship. It is this minyan which is on stage! It looks to no other stage. And each individual member of this minyan feels commanded to act his best before an ultimately critical audience—the Lord of the Universe, the God of Israel.

The question still stands: Even if we are on stage, if what we are doing in prayer is real and not make-believe, why do I insist that we are *acting*? We know that professional actors play different roles from week to week, day to day, moment to moment, if need be. And their audience is made up of people who are moved, entertained, sometimes uplifted by a performance or by the capacity of the actor and the playwright to evoke with particular keenness a truth about the human condition. Are we saying this about ourselves standing *ke'ilu* before God? Why must we consider ourselves actors? Why are we not standing before God as *ourselves*? Because our day to day, moment to moment selves *may not be our best selves*! And the existential moment of prayer requires us to be our best selves as we act out our beliefs in a sacred drama in which we proclaim our devotion to God and to his covenant.

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[5] Max Kadushin. *Worship and Ethics* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press), 1964:163-166.

One of the most serious moments in classical theater is Hamlet's famous soliloquy. It is a *heshbon hanefesh*, a self-examination focused on a profoundly human question:

> To be or not to be, that is the question; whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing, end them.

Hamlet's question is in essence whether to live or not to live in a world that for him has become Sodom. Hamlet never does decide; and in a final paroxysm of despair he lashes out and destroys the world around him along with himself. We in the audience who watch Hamet on stage have a rich vicarious experience in that we watch an actor playing a human being who is struggling to discover meaning in his life, enough to motivate him to oppose the "outrageous fortune" which has crippled his will.

But we human beings—we Jews—living out in excruciatingly vivid terms, personally and collectively, the question "to be or not to be," have more to look for in our own life than tragically afflicted Hamlet. We, acting ourselves, our best selves on stage in prayer, are proclaiming our belief in a God who has created us and revealed to us a path which will give us redemptive meaning. The audience facing the *ke'ilu* stage of our prayer is the God of Israel Who has assured us a long time ago that there is a reason for being. At the burning bush (Exodus chapter 3) He answered the question "to be or not to be" with *ehyeh asher ehyeh*—I will be, I will be—with you My people as a people and as individuals belonging to this people no matter what sea of troubles may engulf you.

Furthermore, once we appreciate that as worshipers we are the central performers on the liturgical stage, and that ever since the suspension of animal sacrifices verbal prayer is our normative mode of expression in worship, then everything we say is of critical importance. Has it ever been more eloquently and poignantly expressed than in Psalm 19:15,

> May the words of my heart and the prayer of my heart
> be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.[6]

Again, God is the audience—and He can't be seen. But we stand on our *ke'ilu* stage hoping that He is listening. We risk the very meaning of our existence as Jews on our *emunah* (faith) that He is indeed listening.

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[6] This verse appears in the liturgy as part of the postlude to the Daily Amidah, *the* prayer. Another verse from psalms—51:17—serves as the prelude for every Amidah. An invocation, it expresses the same inadequacy before God: O Lord, open my lips and let my mouth declare Your praise.

Words, meaning and Liturgical structure

In an essay entitled *Lekha Dumiyah Tehillah*[7] Andre Neher contrasts two verses from the Psalms which summarize opposing views as to the efficacy of words in prayer:

Lema'an yezamerkha khavod ***velo yidom*** *Adonai elohai le'olam odeka*

So that my glory may sing praise to you **and not be silent**;

O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto You forever (Ps. 30:13 [author's emphasis]);

Lekha ***dumiyah*** *tehillah Elohim beTsiyon*

Praise for You, O God of Zion, is **silence** (Ps. 65:2).

The contraposition of these two verses reflects a theological paradox: How can man dare to think that words which he creates will speak to God or interest God? Isn't devoted **silence** (*dumiyah*) the most authentic prayer? And yet, man must speak words if he is to **express** in prayer his most authentic feelings and thoughts (*velo yidom*).

I suggest two possible responses to the paradox. As one response we can admit that the language of prayer is a language constructed by man to talk to God whether or not the language has any correspondence to ultimate reality. With such an admission, the language of prayer can include even nonsense syllables as long as the worshiper is sincere in his *kavvanah* to use these speech-sounds as prayer. During the debate in the Catholic Church decades ago over the continued use of Latin in the liturgy — a dead language understood by practically no one in the pews — the Catholic theologian Evelyn Underhill made a case for the *mystery* of liturgical texts as singularly appropriate for the worship experience. To underscore the mystery, she argued, it was preferable *not* to understand the words.[8] Such an argument is not entirely absurd in the context of the practical situation found in diaspora synagogues where most of the congregants do not understand Hebrew, yet participate regularly or irregularly in prayer. Nevertheless, considering the intellectual grounding of Jewish tradition, it is difficult to sustain an argument which would accept as a desideratum total liturgical illiteracy. It is fair to suggest that most Jews—even in the diaspora—who pray every day or at least every week understand enough of the words of the *matbei'a shel tefillah* (the statutory prayers) to make of the service more than a mumbo-jumbo exercise.

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[7] This was the opening address at the 16th Conference of Jewish Art, held in Jerusalem, Pesah 1984.

[8] Evelyn Underhill. *Worship* (New York: Harper & Row), 1936: chapter 6.

A second response to the theological paradox makes more sense in that it reflects the actual content of the traditional prayer book. It is clear that most of the prayers which make up the *matbei'a shel tefillah* are excerpts from the Bible or are derived from verses and half-verses in the Bible. The most obvious example is the generous selection of Psalms and pieces of Psalms that appear throughout the liturgical landscape. But verses from the Torah and the Prophets are regularly quoted as well. And those prayers that are not biblical are biblically inspired. It is safe to suggest that the rabbis who arranged and edited the traditional order of prayers—Amram Gaon, Saadiah Gaon et al—were certainly sensitive to the theological paradox. In their humility they were reluctant to insert their own words into the prayers. They didn't dare to! They could feel comfortable, however, with *God's* words! It was as if—*ke'ilu*—they were saying to God as they prepared to compose the order of prayers: "O Lord, how can we presume to invent words of prayer with which to address You? What we *can* do is to quote Your own biblical words, thoughts and ideas as the core content of our prayers."

J. D. Soloveitchik is alluding to the same idea when he talks about prophecy and prayer being two sides of a theological dialogue. In prophecy God speaks and we in silence listen; in prayer we speak and God in silence listens. But *the same words, thoughts and ideas are being spoken by God and by us*.

In his essay *HaMeyahlim LiTefillah*—Those Yearning to pray—Eliezer Schweid describes prayer as "the art of the repeated word."[9] Again, because of our awe in the face of the challenge to find the proper words with which to talk to God, we prefer repeating words that have already been spoken to God by greater people than us. Let us take a particularly dramatic example of this technique. On the Day of Atonement all of us who make up the House of Israel are looking to have our sins forgiven. On Yom Kippur Eve, in particular, the synagogues are filled with people listening to Kol Nidre. Yet, it is the well-known *music* of this legal formula that dominates the liturgical moment. The text of Kol Nidre serves as a *hatarat nedarim*—an absolution of [unfillable] vows. It is meant to offer comfort to the worshiper who feels that he can be released in the coming year from those vows that he may make foolishly or under *force majeure*. But following the Kol Nidre paragraph is an even more dramatic passage made up of verses from the Book of Numbers. The passage is a flashback to the enormous sin of the *Dor HaMidbar*—the Wilderness Generation—the sin of the Spies and their refusal to go on to face their destiny in settling the Promised Land. The sin is compounded when

9 Eliezer Schweid, "HaMeyahlim LiTefillah," in *Emunat Am Yisrael VeTarbuto* (Jerusalem: S. Zack & Co.), 1976:96-108.

the Spies influence all of Israel to join them in their retreat from fulfilling the promise of the Covenant.

The sin is, at first, unforgivable in God's eyes. He is prepared to destroy all of Israel. But Moses, the *meilits yosher*—the honest advocate—the pre-eminent *sheli'ah tsibbur* of our people, pleads with God to forgive this stiff-necked Israel:

> Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to Your great kindness,As You have forgiven this people ever since Egypt (Numbers 14:19).

The passage continues:

> And the Lord said, "I pardon, as you have asked" (Numbers 14:20).

Congregations of Jews gathered together on Kol Nidre Night—intimidated, so to speak, about finding the right words with which to appeal to God to forgive *their* contemporary sins—repeat verbatim Moses' words offered at one of the most critical junctures in all of Jewish history. And when these congregations of Jews daven aloud the words:

> *Vayomer Adonai salahti kid'varekha*
>
> And the Lord said, "I pardon, as you have asked,"

They are joining themselves to that earlier generation who—despite the enormity of their sin—*were forgiven*!

This is but one small—though important illustration of the structuring of Jewish liturgy. To attempt to discuss the meticulousness with which the larger services are structured would take us far afield. Suffice it to say that the prayer book is a tribute to theological comprehensiveness and pedagogic thoroughness, structured with a keen sense of aesthetic form and literary suggestiveness. Any of the services, e.g., Shaharit, Minhah and Arvit, whether for weekdays, Sabbaths, Festivals or High Holy Days, can only be appreciated when the worshiper begins to see things such as the focus of the blessings surrounding the Shema (God the Creator, Revealer and Redeemer) or, as Max Kadushin has pointed out, the "conceptual continuum" found in the Amidah and the Birkat HaMazon. If the worshiper is deaf to these subtle aspects of the structure of Jewish prayer, to the meanings of words and phrases and their allusions to other contexts in Jewish literature and history, how can he be expected to continue praying regularly with a freshness of spirit born of a deepening sensibility!

The Musical Dimension

No matter how little Hebrew one knows, no matter how insensitive one may be to the ideas expressed in the prayers and the aesthetic subtleties of the various orders of worship, one does have available these days prayer books with contemporary translations along with instructions and commentaries. With the *will* to make an effort, one does not have to be at a total loss for lack of knowledge of the liturgy and lack of experience in davening. Where the musical dimension of the Jewish prayer experience is concerned, however, we face a different kind of challenge.

At first look, the musical dimension ought to be less problematic. Unless one is tone-deaf or temperamentally prejudiced against the sound of music, there is sheer pleasure—some would say *magic*—in the setting of the words of prayer to music. In *Man's Quest for God*, Abraham Joshua Heschel quotes the Kotzker Rebbe on sorrow.

> There are three ways in which a man expresses his deep sorrow: the man on the lowest level cries; the man on the second level is silent; the man on the highest level knows how to turn his sorrow into song.

How much more redemptive of the human spirit is the "song" when its stimulus is not sorrow, but joy! Commenting on the Song of Moses and Israel following their victory over the Egyptians at the Sea of Reeds, the Tosefta (6:5) says: "As Israel was singing their Song at the Sea, the angels were commenting critically, 'What is man that You have been mindful of him…' At that moment God said to the angels: 'Go and appreciate the song which *My children* are chanting before Me.' The angels promptly joined in with the singing!"

Indeed, no matter how ignorant a worshiper may be of cantillation, of nusa<u>h</u>, of the subtleties of <u>h</u>azzanic art, there is a captivating quality to the musical dimension of davening, which lifts one emotionally beyond where one would be if there were no music. What, then, is the problem?

Simply stated, as attractive as the music is within the format of Jewish communal worship, it is nevertheless only a surface attraction. Ignorance of what is really going on musically within the prayer experience, limits—and at times aborts—the spiritual, aesthetic and even socio-moral impact of the music upon the worshiper. The average synagogue attendee doesn't know that Jewish public prayer—*tefillah betsibbur*—is an integrated folk-art experience in which three musical elements—each different in style from the others—lend the words of prayer an extra dimension of transcendence. These three elements are:

1) the sacred order of cantillation chanted to those Torah and other biblical portions prescribed for public worship, along with the traditional order of *nusaḥ hatefillah* which provided the prayers with stability, familiarity, continuity and coherence;

2) the ḥazzanic art which lifts the *nusaḥ hatefillah* and the total prayer experience towards a rainbow of emotional and spiritual radiance; and

3) the folk song or folk tune which intentionally welcomes popular expression into the prayer experience, opportunity for the entire congregation to join together in simple, uncomplicated evocations of communal joy.

All three of these musical elements must be *integrated* with an ideational and musical coherence so that the entire prayer service becomes a multi-colored but single tapestried celebration. (These comments regarding the integration of musical elements are intended chiefly for Sabbath, Festival and High Holy Day services, although there is some relevance even for the short, quick davening of weekdays.) Musically speaking, there must be integration. For if a service consists only of cantillation and nusaḥ (#1), then public worship eventually becomes monotonous and lifeless. If a service is dominated by the art of ḥazzanut (#2), the worship becomes idolatrous and in the long run, degenerate, spiritually. If a service is exclusively an unbroken mélange of folk tunes (#3), it may be stimulating but is no more spiritually uplifting than a campfire *kumzits*.

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The chief responsibility of the professional ḥazzan and capable amateur *sheli'aḥ tsibbur* is to "teach" these three musical styles and their integration by *example*! Obviously, classes and lectures that explain in workshop fashion what is going on musically in the service is an auxiliary responsibility of these same individuals. A brief guideline of suggested emphasis is in order.

1) Whether one is talking about cantillation and the chanting of prescribed biblical texts or nusaḥ and its use in chanting prayer texts, the idea of *keva*—a fixed order — is critical. The regular repetition of motifs in cantillation is understood by every 13-year-old Bar or Bat Mitzvah. He or she understands very quickly that there is a musical order to the chanting of the Torah, Haftarot and Megillot. Moreover, alert students of any age learn that there is variety within the system, e.g., the six separate orders of cantillation among the Ashkenazim, not to mention the different musical traditions of other ethnic groups among our people. The same principle — of variety within *keva*—applies to the rich, kaleidoscopic system of prayer *nus-ḥa'ot* used on different occasions: *nusaḥ le-ḥol*; *nusaḥ le-Shabbat*; *nusaḥ leShalosh Regalim*; and *nusaḥ leYamim Nora'im.* The 12th-century *Sefer Ḥasidim* (paragraph 302) records the principle that

Kol nigun kemo shehu metukkan…sheha-kol halakhah leMoshe miSinai Shene'emar (Shemot 19:19): …vehaElohim ya'anenu bekol…

Every melody which has become acceptable is to be treated as if given from Sinai, as it is written in Exodus 19:19, "…and God answered with the sound."

2) The congregant needs to learn enough to know that the true art of the hazzan is manifested when he transcends his virtuosity. He is before all and after all a *sheli'ah tsibbur*. As such he is always leading a congregation in worship. Should he ever forget his principal function, then he will have been described millennia ago in the Book of Jeremiah (12:8): "My own people acted toward me like a lion in the forest; she raised her voice against Me—therefore I have despised her." But as an authentic *sheli'ah tsibbur* with the special gifts of the artist, the hazzan will bring to the prayer:

a) a beauty of sound;
b) an expert musicianship;
c) a mastery of the *nus-ha'ot*;
d) interpretive insights into the text;
e) a readiness to bring the congregation regularly and often into the music;
f) a capacity to bring all these attributes together in an artistic whole; and then
g) the yearning to reach beyond, aiming for that aesthetic rainbow which points—if one is worthy—to the Gates of Heaven (*sha'rei shamayim*).

3) Every Jew—man and woman—is commanded to pray. Communal prayer is a reflection of the yearnings and anxieties of *amkha*, that is, the folk. And a worship service that doesn't express the Jewish folk spirit—notwithstanding the sacred order of cantillation and nusah along with the artistic sophistication of hazzanut—is deficient, if not spurious. Folk melodies of every origin—Jewish and non-Jewish—have always crept into the liturgy. Some were welcomed universally. Others were condemned by authorities for their vulgarity; but many of these "vulgar" melodies survived in the worship and became "traditional." With great wisdom the Hasidim developed a theology of sanctification for these questionable melodies, "redeeming" them, so to speak, from their "impurity" to be sung *davka* (precisely) within the prayer experience. In any given generation, there is an abundance of available tunes. The current Carlebach Craze, as welcome as it may be, is only one source among many. To be alive in an era when our State of Israel provides us with hundreds of delightful tunes that are easily adaptable—with taste, of course—to liturgical

texts within prayer is a glorious opportunity for a symbiosis of art and folk in the service of Jewish worship as well as Zionist fellowship.

When the integration of these three styles of musical expression is achieved within a service and the worshiper has developed some sense of the creative effort and ingenuity which has been required to attain this integration, his experience of prayer will not only have been deepened, ennobled and enriched. He will feel himself transported to a sphere of understanding in which he will sense that he has fulfilled the loftiest hopes of the Psalmist, having truly offered his total self—body and soul—in the worship of God, as it is written:

*Kol **atsmotai** tomarna Adonai*

All my bones [i.e., my **body**] shall proclaim, 'O Lord…' (Psalms 35:10);

*Kol **Haneshamah** tehallel Yah, Halleluyah*

Let every **soul** praise the Lord, Halleluyah (Psalms 150:6;) [author's emphasis].

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In the face of the four areas of concern that I have suggested are impediments to a rich experience of prayer for many of our congregants, we dare not be despondent. Good sense and determination dictate that if we can uncover the "whys" of a problem, we can also find the solutions to it. At the very least we will be better able to cope with the problematic situation. Our fundamental attitude must always be to thank God for the privilege and opportunity to lead our fellow Jews in prayer *wherever they happen to be* on the ladder of worship skills and sensitivities. As it has always been, our task remains two-fold:

1) to address these four concerns with persistent and imaginative pedagogic input in classes, lectures and workshops; and

2) in our own service as *shelih<u>h</u>ei tsibbur* to keep growing, to keep investing in ourselves—musically and intellectually, ethically and spiritually.

As *<u>h</u>azzanim* and as rabbis with an abiding faith in the efficacy of the prayer experience, our pre-eminent model—as he has always been—is Moshe Rabbeinu, our teacher, our *sheli'a<u>h</u> tsibbur*, our incomparable *Oheiv Yisrael* and *Eved Adonai*.

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Klezmer and Hazzanut—Uncovering the Connections

by Mark Kligman

I am a native Californian and accept that with pride. I grew up at Temple Ramat Zion in Northridge, where Cantors Jerry Hoenig, Farid Dardashti and Lance Tapper were very instrumental in my Jewish music education. I feel the necessity to express my thanks to those who really helped get me started, because they led me to a very interesting journey. I never dreamed of being a Professor at Hebrew Union College. After growing up Conservative, I went to college and started studying music at Yeshiva University in Los Angeles. On the way, I was the Music Director at a Reconstructionist Synagogue and now I work in a Reform institution. So I guess I am a demonstration of Jewish pluralism in some ways, and my work is always about connecting things.

That, in a way, is the approach I want to share with you in looking at klezmer and hazzanut. Admittedly, neither one is my formal area of research, so I am reporting on the research of others but doing so in a way that interests me. I'll explore connections between the two not only by showing musical similarities but also by looking at the meaning and the function of the music as well.

For me, ethnomusicology is a field that, unlike musicology, is one that looks at how people are involved: the cultural processes, the ideas, contexts for the music and how things connect. That, in a sense, is my primary purpose. The connections are not ones that are abstract, because the people we are looking at are real people who came from the same place — Eastern Europe. There are various klezmer genres, and by offering examples of them, I will demonstrate some of the interesting connections we can make to cantorial music.

My purpose in making these connections is that I feel history has separated music that was really once together. In my view, Judaism in 19th-century Eastern Europe worked because the music of the synagogue—hazzanut, Yiddish songs, klezmer music, and even hasidic music, all stemmed from the same source. They were all closely related at that time but are now considered different genres of music. I do not believe that they are different *genres* of music; I believe that they are just different *contexts* of music, and contexts fade and move in different directions. Over time, these have come to be considered almost separate worlds. Putting them together may *seem* antithetical, but I don't think it is.

I'll share with you, the reader, why this is the case. As our primary source, let's focus on the klezmer music of the 1920s and 1930s, as well as the hazzanut of that period, so there is some control to this comparison. At the same

time, I want to describe what has been revived and what we can learn from what is known as the "Klezmer Revival."

We begin our story in the so-called Pale of Settlement between 1881 and 1906, the prime area where Eastern European Jews lived. This is, of course, was the main seed of Jewish culture from what is now modern-day Poland and going into parts of Russia. This is the area where all of the famous cantors were from, as well as the various well-known klezmer musicians. One thing to note at the beginning of this comparison is that we do not have a plethora of musical sources. We do not have notated Jewish liturgical music until 1750. The amount of notated music picks up in the early 1800s. Notated kezmer music appears much later, coming originally from various oral sources.

Research in Russia has spawned various scholars who discovered the archives. Think about the life of A. Z. Idelsohn; someone who we all know. We have his books, and we study them. His 10-volume *Thesaurus* and his 1929 book *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* are liturgically based; almost to the extent that there is a bias. For him, Jewish music is liturgical music. In fact, as far as klezmer music goes, in volume 8 of his *Thesaurus*, which covers Eastern European music, he has virtually no coverage of klezmer music. In addition, *Jewish Music in Its Historical Development* devotes only five pages to the study of various Klezmorim. Idelsohn's opposite is Moshe Beregovski, who lived between 1892 and 1961. He, too, was a European scholar who went on all kinds of expeditions, learning about various forms of Jewish and non-Jewish music such as Moldavian, Rumanian and Russian folk song. His publications in this field are quite significant. Many klezmer musicians today view him the same way as we, who work in the synagogue field, view Idelsohn. In many ways, contemporary bias about the separation between liturgical and secular styles began in the early 20th century with Idelsohn's and Beregovski's research. I will return to that subject later.

We know that Klezmorim were playing in the Medieval period.[1] Etymologically, the term Klezmer is a contraction of two Hebrew words—*klei zemer*— *klei* meaning "vessel" and ze*mer* meaning "song". So, Klezmer signifies using the instrument as a vessel of song. This is a wonderful metaphor, for what klezmer musicians talk about, particularly the ones who have studied with old timers, is that the purpose of playing your instrument as a Klezmer is to make your instrument *sing*.

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[1] Israel Abrahams. *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* (New York: Meridian Books), 1958:127.

We know a good deal about this music through wedding celebrations. A part of them that has become the modern-day *badekn* ("veiling") was once a very long ceremony in which Klezmorim would accompany the bride to her *bazetsn* ("seating") where she was veiled (*badekn*), sung to (*bazingn*), in a way that often brought her to tears (*bevein'n*). Today, any part of that process is called *badekn*, with the *klezmorim* and sometimes a *badkhn* ("rhymester") playing a pivotal role. In the 19th century, klezmer instruments were divided about equally between strings (multiple violins with a bass) and winds (two flutes and a clarinet, two trumpets and a trombone).[2] Certainly *"Fiddler on the Roof"* is our image of 19th-century Klezmer, where the violin was the main instrument, and this was true of the early-20th century as well, up until the Jazz era of the 1920s; witness Marc Chagall's 1911 sketch of a "Jewish Violinist at a wedding," the only instrumentalist in sight.[3] The dominant solo clarinet in a klezmer ensemble is really an American phenomenon.

We tend to think of the Klezmer as the downtrodden, poor peasant, and that certainly used to be true in Europe. But, poor as they were, Klezmorim not only played in the *shtetl* environment but also in bigger cities as well. Paintings dating from the 1860s show weddings of the aristocracy, with klezmer musicians clearly in evidence:

One of the most useful sources to learn about klezmer music is a book by Seth Rogovoy called *The Essential Klezmer*.[4] In it, he makes the following distinction in terms of the different periods of klezmer music: During the 18th and 19th centuries we really did not know a lot about the music; just what people remembered. Then began what he calls the "immigration of classical Klezmer." This is virtually iconized in our minds by 78-rpm recordings of the 1920s and 1930s. Of recordings that were done for the Jewish market during that period, about 80%, were cantorial. Klezmer music represents only about 20%, but that 20% has been thoroughly mined by the Klezmer Revival of the late 1970s — 1990s. People relearned the music from the recordings and attempted to recreate it. Most people who are scholars in this music refer to it as the "Klezmer Renaissance."

Two clarinet virtuosos of the 1920s and 1930s define the music of the Klezmer Revival in America, Naftule Brandwein and Dave Tarras. A wonderful

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[2] Nathan Ausubel. *Pictorial History of the Jewish People* (New York: Crown Publishers), 1961:238; photo of "A Patriarchal Family of *Klezmer* in Tsarist Russia."

[3] *The Jewish World—History and Culture of the Jewish People*, Elie Kedourie, ed. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Publisher), 1979:127.

[4] Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2000.

program about Yiddish radio was done by NPR a couple of years ago. Here is a short excerpt where Brandwein and Tarras Are discussed.

Paul Pinkus: Hello, I'm Paul Pinkus, and I'm a klezmer musician. I've got to interrupt Claire Barry for just a couple of moments to talk about the Yiddish melodies and swing bandstand. Listen to the clarinet (music plays). That tune is the "Bridegroom Special." On clarinet: Dave Tarras, possibly the greatest klezmer clarinet player of the 20th century. "Possibly," because of one other clarinet player, but we will get to him in a second. For now, let us listen to what Pete Sokolov, Dave Tarras' last piano player, and Henry Sapoznik, who chronicled the Klezmer Revival, have to say about Tarras.

Pete Sokolov: Dave was a total and complete master and he played the dickens out of everything

Henry Sapoznik: He played like he had twenty-two fingers on each hand. Dave was the disciplinarian, a real strict bandleader. Only the best could be on a Dave Tarras bandstand.

Pinkus: Dave had a very severe way about him, when he came on with, "Young man, know your place, you are in the presence of royalty!" But there was another contender for the crown; Dave Tarras' arch rival, Naftule Brandwein. I'm one of the only guys alive who played with both of them.

Sokolov: Brandwein was brilliant; he had this command, this edgy kind of sound.

Sapoznik: With Naftule, you always got this feeling that he was just about to fall into some flaming abyss.

Sokolov: He was a total and complete alcoholic, he was a drunk.

Sapoznik: He was the preferred bandleader for Murder Inc.

Sokolov: Dave used to say that all of his friends were bums; they were gangsters, lowlifes…

Sapoznik: Well, they were. Whoever he was playing poker with the night before, they were up on the bandstand the next day whether they played an instrument or not.

Sokolov: He would take chances with things the others wouldn't dare; he was like the Charlie Parker of his music. Charlie Parker took every chance that was possibly imaginable to take, and that was Naftule as well.

Sapoznik: You listen to these records today and it still takes your breath away. Naftule had a suit like an Uncle Sam costume, made up of Christmas tree lights, that he would wear.

Sokolov: … with the…stars and stripes, tall hat...

Sapoznik: …the blue swallow-tailed jacket with the stars and the red and white striped pants...

Sokolov: …wrapped in Christmas lights, plugged into a wall. One day he was going hot and heavy and he began to sweat and all of a sudden you hear "zzzt, zzzt" and you begin to see sparks coming out of the Christmas lights, while he is playing.

Sapoznik: Lights start popping, smoke starts emanating, there is sizzling…

Sokolov: …he doesn't stop—he's drunk and he's boogying away and the steam is coming out of the wires and the other guys in the back, they see this — they come running out and throw blankets on top of him to draw the smell of the fire.

Sapoznik: Somehow they manage to put him out, and in typical Brandwein fashion, he just keeps on playing like nothing happened.

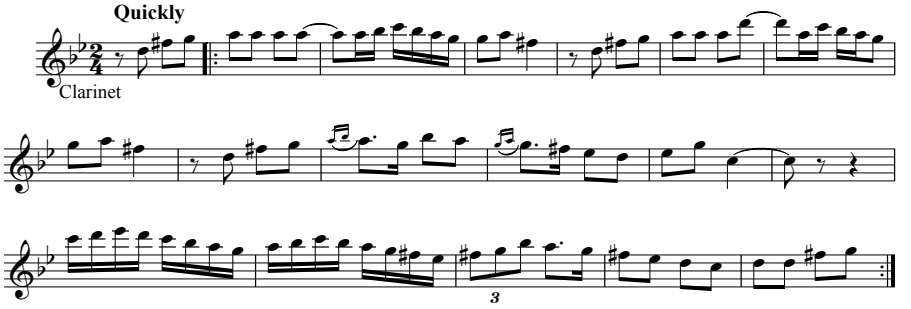
Sokolov: He was one of a kind.

The way in which these people remember and retell the stories is the same way that people have wonderful personal memories of various great cantors. One of the best documentaries on the revival of klezmer music is called *A Jumping Night in the Garden of Eden,* featuring Hankus Netsky. It shows how people were reinventing the music and how seriously they took it.

Hankus Netsky: Back in 1980, I was already teaching at the New England Conservatory of Music where there was a very creative musical environment. A lot of students there were fair game for just about any kind of exciting music, although very few of them had heard or played any Jewish music and I played very little of it myself. My own connection to Klezmer actually comes from my family in Philadelphia. I was down in my grandmother's basement, poking around for old relics when I chanced upon a large photo of my grandfather's band. My Uncle Sam was one of the clarinet players in that photo. I put on that first Naftule Brandwein record and that was it. That really was it! It took a tremendous amount of effort to really hear all of the instruments. But, in fact, it was very much worth it because I did not grow up hearing music played this way…and every ornament and every trill, for me, is something that I have to study.

If we look at various klezmer genres, there are two major categories – rhythmic and non-rhythmic. The rhythmic genres are made of several different beat patterns: The Bulgar, the Hora and the Turk, and there are distinct non-rhythmic styles as well, chiefly, the Doina. If we look at cantorial music, we know we must make the same sorts of differentiations. We have a series of rhythmically oriented musical styles and also different forms of non-rhythmic hazzanut. The *Kaleh Bazetzn*, I think, is similar to the cantorial neo-hasidic style, and the recitative style that we call hazzanut is similar to the klezmer

Doina. In terms of the basic rhythmic patterns that are found in klezmer music, there are three main ones: The Bulgar rhythm is made up of an eight-beat pattern in two groups of three and a group of two (**1**-2-3-**1**-2-3-**1**-2). The Hora rhythm stresses beats on counts one and three, as does the Turk. The Bulgar, from a 1923 Brandwein recording (**Example 1.**), offers a good illustration of the energy level of klezmer music; yet the distinctive rhythm pattern does not manifest itself in the accompaniment, which is simply an *oompa-oompa*.



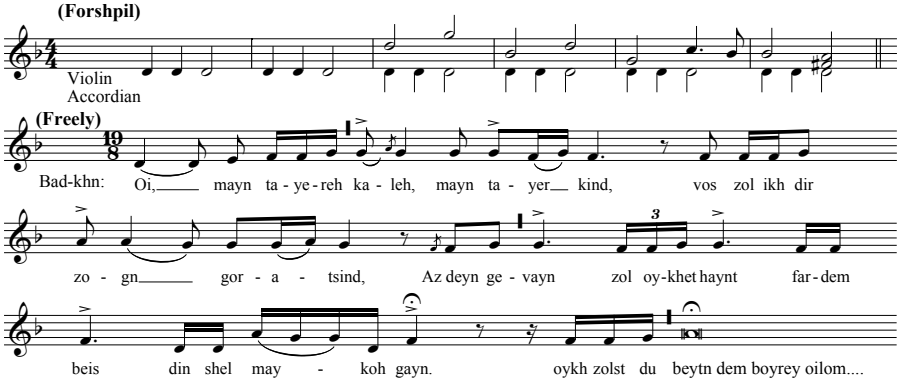
Example 1. ***Heisseh Bulgar****, From a 1923 Naftuleh Brandwein recording*

Now we come to the Klezmer Revival, whose four main performing groups are: The Klezmorim; Kappelye; The Klezmer Conservatory Band; and Andy Statman. The Klezmorim were the first ones, starting in Northern California in 1976. In the Klezmer Renaissance, people not only want to faithfully revive the music, but also to do something *different* with it. There are hundreds of bands today, but these four are the trendsetting ones, even when performing the identical piece. The Klezmer Conservatory Band will fill out the sound, often by inviting guest artists like violinist Itzhak Perlman on the violin. Their recording *In the Fiddler's House* is from 1995, but played in the 1980s revival style. The popular Klezmatics group will often use only drums and clarinet, with the drums supplying the underlining pattern. That innovation is subtle, yet it shows a high level of musical thinking, of doing something different with the music. They are returning the music to its roots simply by playing an underlining rhythm that we do not hear when listening to the original recording of a given tune.

The first among non-rhythmic genres is the *Kaleh Bazetsn*, when instrumentalists and vocalists accompany the Bride. There is a group called Budowitz that recreated the music of a wedding—on a recording[5]— using the musical

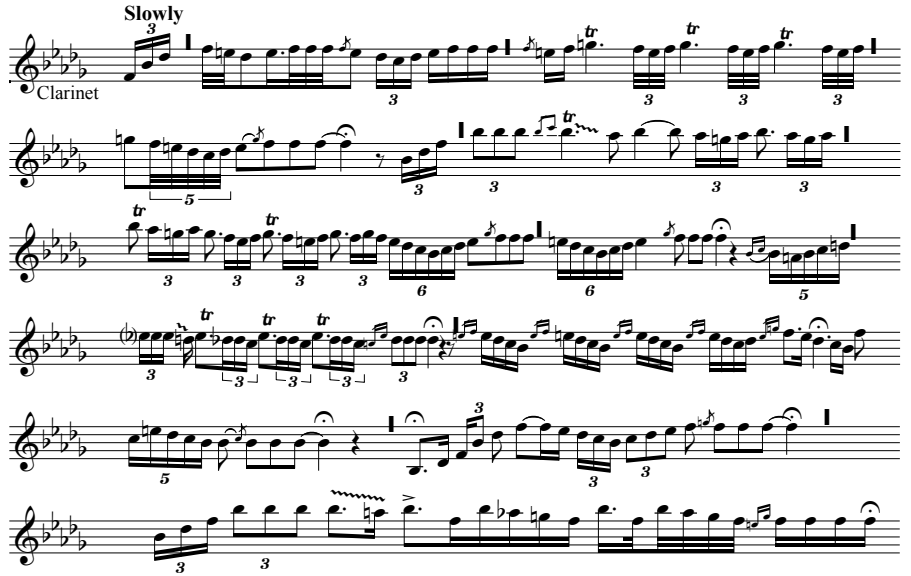
[5] *Wedding Without A Bride* (London: Essential Music CD), 1999:4.

style of Piotrkov, a particular region in Poland. In the Budowitz *Kaleh Bazetszn* (**Example 2.**, with an instrumental prelude or *forshpil*), the *badkhn* (rhymester) makes use of the *Lern Shtaiger* ("Study mode"), in this case, motifs of the *Magen Avot* prayer mode. It sounds just like an old-fashioned *baal tefilah* davening, with different cadential patterns at the end of each phrase.



Example 2. *Budowitz Group's* ***Kaleh Bazetsn*** *in Study Mode.*

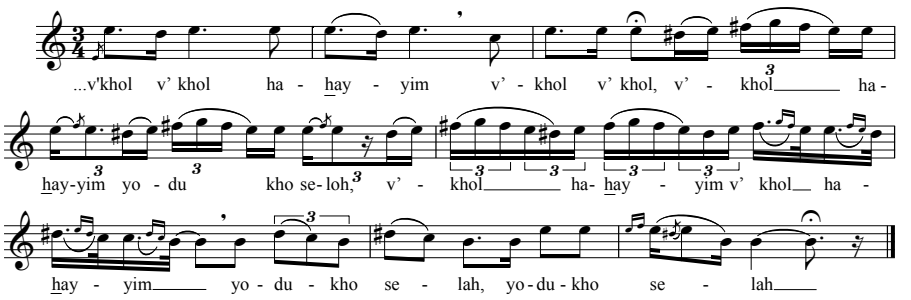
The Doina (**Example 3.**) is a genre where klezmer musicians get to show off their musical virtuosity. The Doina contains mixed components, includ-



Example 3. *Dave Tarras'* ***Doina***

ing an improvisational one. All the Jewish Doinas use the Ukrainian Dorian (a.k.a. *Mi SheBeirakh*) mode, in minor with its fourth and sixth scale degrees raised a half-step. In addition, about 60-70% of the time, they briefly visit the subdominant. This is also common in the *Ahavah Rabbah* prayer mode, where the visit often lasts long enough to warrant being called a modulation. Notice how often the motifs repeat at different pitch levels.

Clearly, there are similarities here to hazzanut. Since Brandwein and Cantor Pierre Pinchik were roughly contemporaries, and since Tarras and Cantor David Kusevitzky were also comparable in terms of their dates, they were looking at the same things, musically speaking. Consider the use of repeated phrases in David Kusevitzky's recitative, *VeKhol Ha-Hayyim* ("Let All the Living Praise You"). This type of extended composition typically begins with an opening section in one particular mode, then a development section which may or may not be in another mode. Next comes w hat's called the *d'veikah* ("clinging" to God, a supplication) section (**Example 4.**),[6] typically in a mode that will be greatly expressive in relation to the mood of the previous section. It might be in a major-like *Adonai Malakh* mode or continuing in Ukranian Dorian, but on a higher reciting level. It's generally followed by a calmer section,[7] and depending on length of prayer text, the entire sequence may repeat, either fully or partially.



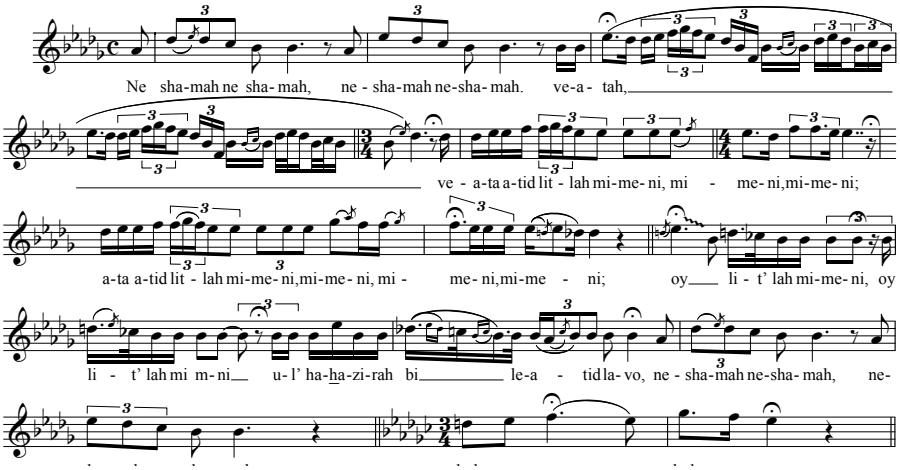
Example 4. The D'veikah section of David Kusevitzky's recitative, ***VeKhol Ha-Hayyim***

Pierre Pinchik's *Elohai, Neshamah* ("My God, the Soul You Gave Me is Pure") represents, for me, one of the greatest achievements of cantorial mu-

6 *The Golden Age of Cantors*, transcribed & edited by Noah Schall (New York: Tara Music Publications), 1991:135.

7 Gershon Ephros. "The Hazzanic Recitative—A Unique Contribution To Our Music Heritage," *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Vol. 6, No. 3, March 1976.

sic—in the way it is organized and structured. Pinchik uses a recurring motif to frame the structure of the entire piece—the repeated words "neshamah, neshamah." In the *d'veikah* section (**Example 5.**),[8] we see how these words have risen to Bb minor from their original key a fourth below: F minor. The repeated words *ve-Atah atid litlah mi-meni* ("and in the future, You will demand it back from me") then carry the chant to Eb minor, a fourth higher still, and back down to Bb minor in *Ahavah Rabbah*. The original framing words *neshamah, neshamah* then close this section in Bb minor, setting the stage for yet another *d'veikah* that will begin on Bb *Ahavah Rabbah*—all in all, a stunning juxtaposition of prayer modalities.



Example 5. The d'veikah section of Pinchik's ***Elohai, Neshamah****—rising and descending via the same motif but via different prayer modalities*

The use of repeated phrases is certainly a stylistic similarity between klezmer music and hazzanut, as are the modal changes that articulate each rise and fall in the reciting or playing level. There are other comparisons that one can make about the "vocal" style employed by klezmer clarinetists, mainly a limpid *mezza di voce* ("half-voice")—not quite a falsetto—that many 20th-century hazzanim imitated with varying degrees of success.

Among recent recordings from the Klezmer Renaissance, those of an Eastern European group called Khevrisa tries to get Klezmer music back to its roots. Khevrisa plays only on period acoustic instruments, and uses music from sources that are not part of the 1920s and 1930s, but comes from

[8] *The Golden Age of Cantors*, 1991:41.

scholars like Moshe Beregovsky,[9] who actually wrote out various authentic versions of Doinas and other pieces. With many of these musicians, there is both a direct attempt to sound like the old klezmer musicians in the ways that they play, and also a tendency to look into ḥazzanut for the expressive nuances within the music. In doing so, klezmer musicians become true *klei zemer*; they make their instruments sing.

The Budowitz group has an accordion player named Josh Horowitz who plays an instrument with buttons instead of an upright piano keyboard. On the CD *Wedding without a Bride*, where they recreated an entire traditional wedding, there is one track called the Horowitz *Zogakhts* ("recitation"). When a ḥazzan is called a *zoger*, he is reciting like a *baal tefillah.* On this track, Horowitz tries particularly to make his accordian sound like a ḥazzan. Frank London, another popular klezmer recording artist, tried to recreate the style of cantorial music on the trumpet. For one album, he made the recording in a synagogue, with the accompaniment played on a pump harmonium. For many musicians, klezmer music provides the entry point—but the way they are turning to ḥazzanut may be far different from the path taken by many readers of this article.

For many musicians who are attracted to klezmer, the attraction is not only to Jewish music, but it is a way *into* Judaism—through the music—the music provides the sensibility to be involved in Judaism. As Alicia Svigals, one of the violinists who used to play for the Klezmatics says, "I'm trying to recreate a soundtrack for a new Jewish life." That is her purpose for writing music as well as playing it. She wants Judaism without obligations, pretty much the attitude that prevails today in our synagogues. For Alicia and many like her, the music is providing a way into Judaism.

While I do not personally subscribe to that approach, for some, this is where their music is coming from. One of the things that always fascinates me when I work and talk with klezmer musicians is their deep attachment to what they have created. I marvel at their accomplishments. They have taken a music that pretty much died out, and by listening to recordings, they have brought it back to life. They continue to make new recordings, perform concerts and conduct workshops and run programs such as Klez Camp and Klez Canada. Any band playing weddings in the United States needs to include klezmer in their repertoire. Even the term "klezmer" has become significant. Recording companies say that if you put the word klezmer on an album cover you are

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9 *Old Jewish Folk Music*, Mark Slobin, ed. (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press), 1982.

sure to sell recordings because klezmer has a certain cool buzz to it. In my last 15 years in academia, over a dozen people have approached me, wanting to write their doctorates on the subject and go on to study and play klezmer music. There are three recent doctorates on klezmer music, and more and more books are coming out on the subject. There is a lot to learn here.

I wish I could say that about the cantorate. I wish that we could get scholars in academia, outside of synagogue life, to be interested in synagogue music. We need to take this problem seriously, and convince others to take it seriously as well. One thing that is talked about in contemporary folklore and ethnography is the aspect of *heritage* music: how music is able to help people access their heritage. To do this, one must go beyond the sensibility of looking at music as an object. Music is not simply a sound, music is about *life*—the people who created it, the people who are reconnecting to it, and the people who are recreating it as well. I think that the explosion of klezmer music in so many different places is something we can all learn from, and then we'll hopefully be inspired to look further and deeper into what *we* do.

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The Seduction of Crossover Music – How a Successful Composer Sees It

by Michael Isaacson

An old adage suggests that there are two ways to destroy the Jewish people; with great evil or with great kindness. Great evil, as Hitler proved, almost eradicated an entire European Jewish culture. Great kindness, however, the kind of carte blanche acceptance currently being "enjoyed" by American Jews, is far more insidious and, ultimately, the most effective because the largesse we feel shown to us by our Christian host majority lulls us into joining with them as full blooded Americans (without a Jewish-hyphen in front). We eventually diminish, then destroy ourselves through forgetting and abandoning our own uniqueness, making intermarriage an accepted norm, and enthusiastically adopting Christian mores and traditions (no matter how seemingly innocent).

One of the "kindnesses" floating about in our midst (one that demands our vigilance) is the concept of crossover music. Crossover music is a type of music originally used for one purpose and later adapted for another purpose; e.g. "Michael Row Your Boat Ashore" was first a Christian hymn and then became a folk song.

Styles can also "crossover." Dance forms used in popular culture now can be heard in sacred music. Pop bands that once played for casual dances now play for Jewish services. Pretty soon "we" will have enthusiastically become "they".

This is the real issue underlying the growing difference of opinion between guitar-playing song leaders versus trained cantorial leadership. Underneath the "easy" economics, the "keeping up with the times" and bringing in fresh sounds, is the real issue (unpleasant as it is to fully admit); the desire on the part of today's post war Jewry – an American Jewish generation born after Viet Nam and, thank God, mostly knowing American prosperity and relative serenity, to "crossover" and pattern our worship more closely on Christian worship. We buy generics in our medicine, television programming, why not in our worship?

When Hebrew is replaced by English, when an entire text is replaced by a brief motto, when the depth of a text's meaning is replaced by a "funky" riff, when the performance supercedes the prayer, when we rapturously wave our hand over our heads as we sing, and when a Jewish text setting seems it could

be equally at home in a church service as a Temple service, you can bet your guitar you've been seduced by a crossover song.

The irony is compounded when rabbis (especially those planning "model" services in this new century) endorse these sounds erroneously as the new "God Songs" that will save our dwindling attendance, and lethargic observance. Sometimes, I honestly feel that Jews for Jesus could not do a better job of obfuscating Jewish identity and promoting Christian fellowship.

Should we retreat to shtetl melodies and the nineteenth-century choral style of Nowakowsky? Those readers familiar with my music and its exploration of contemporary usage know that that is the last strategy I would recommend. However, I've always put musical style secondary to the illumination and thoughtful interpretation of the liturgical or biblical text being set. I don't hear this in crossover songs. I see solo performers selling singable ditties with little or no illumination of the text's deeper meaning. Today, generic bliss has become sufficient.

Please communicate this to your congregations. It's not that choral music is better than folk songs; though it's often more thoughtfully conceived. It is not that a cantor is better than a song leader; though a cantor brings a historicity and Jewish knowledge and subtext of meanings to a performance that a lesser-trained singer simply does not.

Jewish music is not only meant to be sung by the congregation, it is also meant to be actively listened to in a thoughtful manner; one that calls our Jewishness to the fore for meditation, examination, improvement and repair. After all, don't we sit quietly and listen to a rabbi's sermonic wisdom; why have we curtailed the cantor's ability to affectively teach through music?

Sure, crossover songs may be catchy and irresistible, but are we taking the time to ask ourselves what have we lost and who's traditions and values have we adopted when we are seduced into using them? Are "we" becoming they; and are we rapidly losing a sense of "us"?

Will nothing be sacred?

Dr. Michael Isaacson, a prolific composer, conductor and producer, is founding Music Director of the Israel Pops Orchestra and the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music. His two-volume ***Michael Isaacson Songbook*** *is published by Transcontinental, and he recently completed thirty-six Seder songs for a new sight-and-sound Haggadah. His most recent Journal Article,* ***"Music on the Balanced Bimah,"*** *appeared in the 2005 issue.*

The Golden Age of Cantors

by Velvel Pasternak

Although little documentation of the period commonly refered to as the "Golden age of Cantors" is available, it is possible to piece together information from articles printed in cantorial souvenir journals and personal interviews. In the early 1900s, the few American cantors with permanent synagogue positions were to be found primarily in New York City. Although remuneration at the time was quite low, these cantors were able to exist on meager compensation because many of the amenities we now take for granted were not available. Electricity, steam heat, refrigeration (and their costs) were not yet in widespread use, even in wealthier homes, and, if a cantor was frugal, he could live modestly on a yearly salary of $500-$800.

Synagogues large and small were able to hire a year-round cantor and often a choir to accompany him. The synagogues on the Lower East Side of New York City engaged the most recognized cantors of the period. Among them were: Pinchas Minkovsky, K'hal Adath Yeshurun Synagogue (Eldridge Street); Israel Cooper, Attorney Street Synagogue; Israel Michilovsky, Beth Medrah Hagodol, (Norfolk Street); Yechiel Karniol, Oheb Zedek (Norfolk Street), Permanent cantors and mixed choirs also officiated in a number of Liberal temples whose membership consisted primarily of German Jews.

The massive European-Jewish immigration of two and a-half million had not yet peaked and there were daily arrivals. Most of the immigrants were from the shtetl where they had lived their entire Jewish lives in a religious atmosphere. On the first Sabbath after their arrival in America, relatives and friends would take them to the synagogue to pray and to hear the cantor. It is likely that this experience influenced many of these immigrants to remain synagogue worshipers for the rest of their lives.

During those early days, a number of prominent cantors issued a warning to their colleagues that they should unite and form an organization which would protect their welfare. Although many cantors heeded this warning and joined an organization known as The Cantors Association of America, this was not a professional entity. The Association was more like a club for cantors where members would come together to discuss their profession, its difficulties and its rewards. The leadership of the organization was in the hands of cantors from synagogues established by German Jews, and the meetings were held in Germanized Yiddish, with the minutes recorded in German.

In 1903 the infamous Kishinev Pogrom took place in Russia and it was followed in 1905 and 1906 by similar types of attacks on Jews. The wary Jewish population began to look to emigration as the only solution, and hundreds began arriving on America's shores. This immigration affected the established synagogues and especially their cantors. Orthodox synagogues began to grow in membership, and the latest immigrants, with their strong bent towards tradition, helped develop synagogue life in America. Although immigration expanded rapidly, the European cantors were not yet willing to give up their positions in order to emigrate. Due to this unwillingness, the maturing of the American cantorate was delayed, and many cantorial positions remained vacant. In addition, as the Jewish inhabitants of the Lower East Side improved their economic situation, they found their living quarters small and cramped. They began to look for alternative housing, which they found in more upscale areas, especially Harlem and its surrounding communities.

Within a relatively short period the Jewish inhabitants of these Uptown neighborhoods began building new and often luxurious synagogues and temples. Many Gentiles felt encroached upon and moved out of the neighborhoods, leaving their churches empty. A number of these edifices were purchased and transformed into Jewish houses of worship, and the new synagogues began hiring cantors and choirs. When an adequate cantor could not be found, a well-known European hazzan would be invited. High salaries were offered, and, when American currency translated into Russian Rubles or German Marks, it offered an additional incentive to leave home and come to the *Goldene Medine (*Golden Land). This lasted until 1914.

With the outbreak of the First World War, Jews suffered terribly, especially in Russia where they became the scapegoat for the defeat of the Czarist armies. After pogroms in the Ukraine, mass emigration took place, not only from Russia but also from many countries in Europe. Along with the new immigrants came an influx of cantors, many more than were needed. Following the war, and perhaps partially due to the war, America entered a period of prosperity,

and many individuals became wealthy. Jews also found themselves in higher economic brackets and with additional wealth came the desire to build new places of worship. Synagogues costing a quarter of a million dollars and more were built with relatively small amounts of up-front cash collected from the newly rich. Large mortgages and financing were secured from banking and loan institutions. How these loans would be repaid did not seem to present a major problem. The coming financial crisis in America and the crash on Wall Street, although lurking in some dark corner, was not yet foreseen. These newly established synagogues gobbled up the immigrant cantors; the larger the synagogue, the more prestigious the cantor desired.

Suddenly, almost overnight it seemed, the United States became the world center of cantors and cantorial art. Word spread that some hazzanim were paid as much as $10,000 a year, and cantors began streaming into the United States from all parts of Europe. Although the situation for star cantors was favorable, the cantorate in general did not benefit. Each synagogue desired a star cantor of its own in order to compete with other synagogues. In addition, when a cantor received a decent salary, demands were made on him to be as good as, if not better than, the star cantors. That many *hazzanim* received one-tenth the salary of the star cantor did not seem to enter the equation.

Gradually the new immigrant *hazzanim* from Poland and Russia became members of the Cantors Association of America, whose leadership they now assumed. Meetings were conducted in Yiddish and a determined effort to form a professional organization was undertaken. However, there were now distinct groups of cantors within the organization. The Reform cantors, who primarily served German-Jewish temples, were against making the organization professional. Since they were treated well, by and large, they did not feel the need for a unionized type of organization. A new group, who held positions in the recently established Conservative synagogues, also felt that they did not gain necessarily from a professional organization since their synagogues treated them relatively well. The real problems lay with the largest body, the Orthodox cantors. Their plight did not seem to be of great concern to the cantors of the other movements. Along the way, three distinct organizations developed - none of them professional, and after a number of years, the three groups amalgamated into The Jewish Ministers and Cantors Association or, as it was familiarly known, the *Khazonim Farband.*

During the 1920s, European *hazzanim* continued to arrive in the United States. It was a period of prosperity and synagogues hired cantors on yearly contracts. Many were supported with professional choirs conducted by first-rate musicians such as Zavel Zilberts and Meyer Machtenberg. The American

Jew looked forward with great anticipation to Sabbath services in the synagogue. All week long, he worked tirelessly to provide for his family's needs. *Shabbos* was the time to forget the week day travails and to be enraptured by the improvisational artistry and *neshamah* (soul) of the cantor. To sit in the synagogue until early afternoon was a joy.

Cantorial competition, however, was very keen. Many *hazzanim* were not rehired after their contracts expired, and synagogue search committees set auditions, known as *probes*, to find the next star cantor for their synagogue. Applicants would lead services on Sabbath without receiving compensation. A synagogue might sometimes go for months without hiring a permanent hazzan, contenting itself with auditioning new candidates every week, gratis. Cantorial agents became managers and served as a liaison between cantor and synagogue. After a successful hiring and a signed contract, the managers were rewarded with a percentage of the cantor's first year salary. Often, agents would help a synagogue dismiss its cantor after the year so that they could place another star in his place and thus collect a percentage of the wages of the newly hired cantor.

Outside the synagogues, cantors were becoming full-fledged artists for recording companies like Columbia and RCA Victor. Cantors appeared regularly on radio programs devoted to liturgical music and Yiddish folksongs. Concert halls and Vaudeville theaters throughout North America also featured programs devoted to cantorial artistry. However, the widespread economic devastation of the Great Depression wreaked havoc with the cantorial profession. Many synagogues were forced to curtail expenditures; cantors and choirs were let go in order to relieve financial pressures, and large-scale concerts were rare.

During this period, new Orthodox congregations were formed, and as these synagogues began to proliferate, they did not hire cantors but used their own members to lead services. Many began to feel that the synagogue service, with cantors singing long, intricate liturgical recitatives, was beyond the patience of the majority of the membership. The lay *baal tefillah* was, for them, a better solution. With few exceptions this has continued to be the case in Orthodox synagogues. In Conservative and Reform synagogues, the cantor, along with the rabbi, has remained an integral part of the worship service.

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he founded and still serves as President. This article first appeared as a chapter in his book, ***The Jewish Music Companion*** *(2002), and is reprinted here with permission.*

The 1916 cartoon that follows shows ***Josef Rosenblatt*** *being pursued by the Chicago Grand Opera Company to sing five performances of* ***La Juive****, at a thousand dollars a night, an offer which he refused on religious grounds. That gesture earned him the title "King of Cantors." The newspaper in which this cartoon first appeared is unknown, as is the artist who has signed it, "Lola."*[1]

[1] Samuel Rosenblatt. *Yossele Rosenblatt – A Biography* (1954), reprinted by the Cantors Assembly as *The Immortal Cantor* (New York:2005), page 182d.

The Future of Hazzanut in America

by B. Shelvin

If someone picked up an American newspaper prior to the High Holy Days or a Yom Tov, he or she might mistakenly think that hazzanut is in an extremely flourishing state.

Daily notices tell us that Hazzan X or Hazzan Y made a tremendous hit with his Kabbalat Shabbat, that the shul was packed and that the crowd was so enraptured that it totally forgot where it was, and applauded the hazzan just like in a concert hall. It's also frequently reported that this or that hazzan, newly arrived from Europe, was approached by an affluent congregation and promised a fabulous salary which instigated a bidding war among a half-dozen other synagogues, all of whom had hoped to hire him.

You no longer have to attend services in order to hear a hazzan. All that's needed is to arrange a benefit concert in a hall, list his name as guest artist, and people will come running. Whichever direction you turn, you'll hear a juicy piece of gossip about hazzanim, and very often you'll have the pleasure of seeing their pictures plastered on wall posters as well. Whether you like it or not, this hazzanic boom is bound to give you the impression that hazzanut is currently undergoing its golden age.

Is hazzanut really in such a brilliant state at this point in time? Unfortunately, the answer is a negative one. The golden age of hazzanut is long past, and its so-called "boom" in America is really no more than a beautiful sunset whose gilded rays blind us temporarily. In a short while their intensity will have faded into twilight.

The true golden age ended when young people stopped davening and synagogues were left in the hands of an older, dying generation. The decrease in the number of daveners diminished the influence of synagogues in the community, and the field of cantorial activity dwindled in direct proportion. The lessened interest in synagogues automatically reduced interest in hazzanut which then ceased being a valid market commodity. Once that happened, the impulse to promote the Old Style waned, and it goes without saying that the urge to achieve anything new vanished.

Among the thousands of men who sang in synagogue choirs here and in Europe during their boyhood, many were inspired to go on and become hazzanim. Today's meshorerim—and even a number of established hazzanim—would rather become singers on the world's stages. Few of them succeed at this or have anything to show for their efforts. Yet, to them, an

appearance under the worst circumstances on a concert stage is preferable to an appearance under the best circumstances at the prayer Amud.

The Amud no longer attracts a great flow of new recruits, It is therefore natural that hazzanut should gradually fade from the scene and that even those who devote themselves to it should contribute only negligibly to its development. Wherever competition is lacking, the creative spirit is also absent. That is one reason why the hazzanut of recent years is of little artistic value; it's being produced by a lesser number of truly creative spirits.

Every year the number grows smaller and the level of hazzanut drops. The Eastern European Jewry that once produced the best hazzanim no longer has the economic capability to carry the burden of full-time hazzanim. Thousands of communities were impoverished by the Great War of 1914-1918, and a huge portion of them were completely obliterated. Those that survived have concerns more pressing than that of supporting hazzanim. Communities like Odessa, Minsk, Berdichev, Warsaw, Vienna, Budapest and Bucharest cannot afford the spiritual luxury of a hazzan.

The hazzanim of all those places typically wound up fleeing to America where the public's love affair with them usually heats up for a short while until it overcooks, and then the cantorial fad goes the way of all fads on the Jewish Street.

And should this particular fad defy all odds and last a long time, hazzanut can still not count on America for its salvation. It's become too commercialized. And it exists in a Jewish vacuum with no native soil in which to grow freely. Hazzanut always drew its nourishment from Jewish life, from the Jewish soul, from Jewish thought and feeling, from Jewish tears and laughter. None of these exist in America. Most of all there is no Jewish atmosphere here. In its place we find a faint reproduction of the rich Jewish life in Europe, not nearly vivid enough to inspire hazzanut or any other form of cultural creativity.

In a country where women can learn hazzanic recitatives and parade successfully as "khazntes"[1] while real hazzanim are forgotten, it's hardly likely that a native-born Rozumni or Nisi Belzer or Boruch Schorr will suddenly appear.

Hazzanut is different from what it was, here and in Europe. It lacks the creative spark generally and the improvisatory impetus particularly. Today's hazzan is not as inventive as his predecessors, and when he occasionally tries to be, the result doesn't ring true. It may be skillfully done but it simply

[1] Literally "cantor's wives," but commonly used for "female cantors."

doesn't sound like the genuine kind of hazzanut one expects to hear at the Amud. Few and far between are the places in America where a hazzan is not forced to cheapen his art for the sake of pleasing congregants utterly lacking in taste.

In America the chief moulder of opinion regarding hazzanut is the know-nothing who in European towns would stand by the door of the Shoemakers' Shul or the Tailors' Shul or the Butchers' or Bakers' Shul, holding forth for all who would listen. This vulgar individual understands not one word of the prayers, has no idea of their content nor the slightest notion of how a hazzan can take a simple word and inflect it in a way that refracts its meaning in every direction like sunlight passing through a diamond.

Under these conditions, American hazzanut must inevitable slide from bad to worse. That is because rivalry drives hazzanim to pander after popular taste instead of educating the public and attempting to raise its standards. It is the reason why hazzanut is in rapid decline at the same time that its practitioners are able to maintain themselves materially quite adequately.

Rampant popularization reveals itself in the form that cantorial notices take in newspapers. It's hardly necessary to note that in European cities the greatest hazzanim never allowed their promoters to place the screaming-types of advertisements to which we've become accustomed in America. Here, it is the hazzanim themselves who supply the copy.

Unlike Eastern Europe, this country is capable of supporting the cantorial profession into the distant future. The Jewish population here has become more and more conservative and synagogue-affiliated as it has grown. And having a cantor is a draw for many congregations. Yet, something must be done to assure that hazzanut does not sink any deeper into crass materialism—during the years ahead—than it already has in the brief time it's flourished and peaked here. If not, many are convinced that hazzanim will shortly be killing the goose that lays their golden egg.

This is the most challenging problem that the Khazzonim Farband[2] must solve. Until now that organization has had to concern itself mainly with preserving the integrity of the cantorial profession. In great measure that meant assuming responsibility for the shameless self-promotion that American hazzanim have lately indulged in, along with a breakdown of ethics regarding colleagues who had attained a greater degree of professional success.

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[2] Jewish Ministers Cantors Association of America.

The Khazzonim Farband must also undertake to publish and distribute the best of its members' musical compositions. A readily available repertoire of cantorial literature can only help in prolonging the viability of hazzanut. It will allow younger current practitioners of the art as well as future generations to familiarize themselves with true hazzanic creativity as it was performed in its heyday.[3]

Should the Khazzonim Farband's present milestone usher in a new era that witnesses the changes mentioned above, then American cantors will have more reason to celebrate than over anything else their organization has achieved in the thirty years of its existence.

B. Shelvin was Music Editor of the Yiddish daily newspaper, ***The Morning Journal****, in New York. This article, "****Die Tsukunft fun Khazones in Amerikeh****," is reprinted from* ***Die Geshichte fun Khazones*** *(The History of Hazzanut), issued to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Jewish Ministers Cantors Association of America (New York: Agudas Ha-Khazonim D'Amerikeh VeKanada, 1924). It is translated by Joseph A. Levine.*

[3] The author may have had in mind the published works of Z. Kwartin, P. Minkowsky, J. Rappaport, J. Rosenblatt, Z. Rovner, S. Weisser and Z. Zilberts, among others, all of whom were active members In 1924 (Editor's note: Minkowsky died later that same year).

Recalling Max Wohlberg's Skill at Impropvisation

by Mark Slobin

As part of a three-year study of the American cantorate which I directed,[1] Max Wohlberg was interviewed several times. Wohlberg's longtime teaching position at the Cantors Institute (Jewish Theological Seminary) had made him a major force in the molding of younger American-trained cantors, and his experience and insight earned him the title of doyen of American cantorial music. Giving graciously of his time and knowledge, Wohlberg elucidated many points of interest and, in a final session, consented to sing a sample of improvised sacred song. We requested that he concentrate on *Hashkivenu*, since several other cantors interviewed had spoken of that focal night prayer. Not only did Wohlberg oblige, but somewhat to his own surprise, he offered three spontaneous versions, each quite different. The present article uses this material for modest commentary on the structural principles of cantorial improvisation in the spirit of Hanoch Avenary's work.[2] A broader account of the concept of nusah and the nature of improvisation as understood in America today can be found in my book-length study (Slobin, 1989). The Wohlberg variants demonstrate the viability of hazzanut as an improvisatory art in the United States at the end of the 20th century, a fact which emerged from sampling not only a few veterans but a cross-section of 93 cantors of all ages and backgrounds.[3]

In his pioneering study, "The Cantorial Fantasia," Hanoch Avenary (1968) expressed the view that "the art of improvising a Fantasia...took refuge in Eastern Europe," and suggested further research on hazzanut in Eastern realms. In a preliminary way, I would like to address three points Avenary raised in his article, using the Wohlberg material as an example of more general trends. Two are stylistic and one is what he calls "semantic." The first points out that the cantorial fantasia is "of its nature melismatic" and "is composed of single themes each of which is a closed unit, and the composition itself is a string of such self-sufficient members." The second proposes that "a full review of the ornamental element in cantorial song demands a separate effort of investigation," while the third states that " the uncovering of the spiritual foundations of specific cantorial singing habits is a task as yet almost untouched." I can take only a couple of steps along the path Avenary has pointed out, concentrating on the compositional process as implied by the structure of three successive settings of the same prayer.

Briefly put, my approach is to imagine an improvised version of a set text as a set of choices about how to combine the parameters of performance to project the singer's conception of the spiritual essence of the words. The choices made created a series of rather free-standing segments of text (Avenary's "closed units"). While the range of possible combinations is not broad, it yields a striking variety of patterns in a kaleidoscopic manner. I will concentrate on just five parameters of performance, listed in **Figure 1.** for the three Wohlberg variants of *Hashkivenu*:

1. length of segment (where the "final word" of segment falls, which involves the decision of how to mark off units of test;
2. tonal orientation, dealing with internal relationships of pitches within a segment;
3. "rhythmic type," or basic rhetorical approach to expounding the text (discussed in ore detail below);
4. degree of ornamentation, concentrating only on how melismatic a segment is; and
5. location of highest pitch level.[4]

As **Figure 1** shows, I feel all three variants consist of five segments, labeled A through E. Of course, all such decisions are arbitrary, but there is no question that the singer thinks of the overall text setting as having distinct, differentiated units, as discussion with Wohlberg and other cantors showed. An analysis of each parameter follows:

Length of segment

Within an apparently understood notion of five segments, the variants do not agree at all as to their boundaries. Thus, 1 and 2 agree on segment A's end, but not segment B's cadence, where 2 and 3 end B at the same place. Variant 1 ends C where variant 3 ends D, and so forth.

Tonality

Without getting into the vexed discussion of the tonal orientation ("modes?") of liturgical music, it is safe to say that the segments do tend to have obvious tonal axes. Broadly put, it is clear that the natural minor and what cantors call *freigish* (featuring the G-Ab-B-C tetrachord) predominate, but, surprisingly, variant 2 ends in a strongly declaimed major. Within segments, there may be some shifting, exemplified twice by an opening in *freigish* and closing in minor.

Worth a closer look is the distribution of this narrow range of possibilities within the overall pattern of a setting. Here we find no agreement at all

among the three variants, underscoring the universal remark made by many cantors interviewed, that tonal orientation is important only at the end of prayer texts, not at the beginning or in the middle, since the piece "must end in the proper nusah." However, even the ending is not uniform here, illustrating the cantors' point that some items in the flow of a given service are more "nusah-bound" than others.

Degree of melisma

Another arena for choice is how heavily ornamented a segment can be. There seem to be three possibilities: non-melismatic, occasionally melismatic, and heavily melismatic. As before, the distribution of choices across a variant differs markedly from setting to setting, showing no clear preference.

Location of highest pitch level

In the interview, before singing, Wohlberg suggested that *Hashkivenu* should start moderately, rise to an emotional high point, then subside, suggesting an arched contour:

> An analysis of the text will show us that the *Hashkivenu* consists of at least 4 elements. One is the introductory, where one introduces the *Hashkivenu* lyrically or otherwise. Number 2, where the emotional element will come to the fore and is sort of a climax. The Element number 3 would be where I would leave this warm-spirited element and go back to the original style of introduction or just calm down in a diminuendo from the excessive emotion. Finally would come the conclusion, the ending.

So the location of the highest pitch level is of some interest to us, while variant 2 suggests the arch contour, 1 doubles the arch (two high points), while 3 has both a midpoint and final surge, belying Wohlberg's own generalization.

Rhythmic type

What I mean by this term is a group of four "mindsets" about rhythmic orientation frequently found in any large corpus of improvised text settings. Briefly, I feel these embody the singer's notion of the rhetoric of performance: how to convey the meaning of a sacred text to the congregation. One is what I call a "reciting" style, which features no melisma, and frequent strings of syllables on the same pitch. A second is "parlando-rubato," using Bela Bartok's term for folksong performance. This implies an elastic rhythmic sense ("rubato") combined with strong interest in text projection ("parlando"). The third possibility incorporates pitches underscoring the singer's interest in calling attention to a certain phrase of the prayer. The fourth approach is the use of metric tunes to organize passages of text.

Wohlberg uses all four rhythmic types, with just a bit more consistency than for the other parameters cited above, perhaps indicating that the rhetoric of text presentation is a paramount parameter. In our three variants, the declamatory seems reserved for endings and the metric for middle sections. Still, what cantors call a *lidl* (metric tune) falls in two different places, showing the singer's freedom to decide where to introduce this approach even within a general sense of its appearing neither at the beginning nor at the end of a text setting.

Having surveyed five of the basic parameters of performance, we can step back a bit to view the larger picture, approaching, albeit tentatively, Avenary's question of the "spiritual significance" of the cantorial fantasia, or what cantors call a cantorial "recitative," Wohlberg himself supplies a good point of departure here:

> Since the musical elements of the recitative consist of a limited number of motifs and their variations...it is in their selection, combination and emphasis that the individuality of the [cantor] composer appears. Thus, the recitatives of Kwartin are pleading, those of Rosenblatt are melodic, Roitman's are intricately plaintive" (Wohlberg 1979:85).

I find this area of rhetorical presentation of the text setting particularly suggestive in understanding how cantors construct their improvised performances. For it is not just the great cantors of the past who thought this way, as shown by the following remark of a veteran cantor, taped in l985:

> *Hashkivenu* to me...this great prayer for peace, and to take away *oyev, dever, veḥerev vera'av;* I have no difficulty with that. I have all I can do to stop from breaking down. When I look at the news pictures on television and I see these little African children, I have no trouble tearing my heart out.

Though this may fall short of Avenary's broad and deep notion of "spiritual significance," it is as close as one can get through asking today's sacred singers about this work, as we did with some 130 American cantors.

Even a brief foray into the creative world of the cantorate convinces one of the importance of the points raised by Avenary, but also of the need for a close look at the technique of live performance, not just the notions of the past. The literature on Eastern European Ashkenazic sacred song in practice is woefully small compared to the significant bibliography which has built up on communities of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern origin. The present article is meant only to show the power of the material rather than to present definitive conclusions, as well as to demonstrate how much more needs to be done in defining the basic concepts of ḥazzanut in action.

Figure 1. *Summary Table of Five Parameters in 3 Variants*

Variant 1

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
Final word of segment	shlomekha	tastirenu	rahum atah	olam	
Tonality	minor	freigish	minor	freigish	minor
Rhythmic type	reciting	p-r*	metric	p-r	p-r
melismatic?	medium	strong	no	strong	no
highest range	1		1		

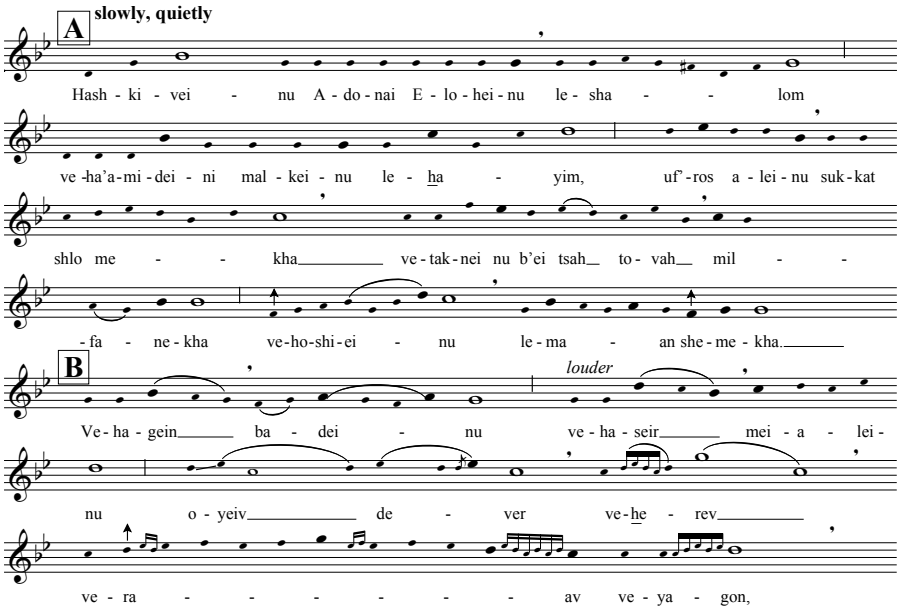
* p-r = parlando-rubato

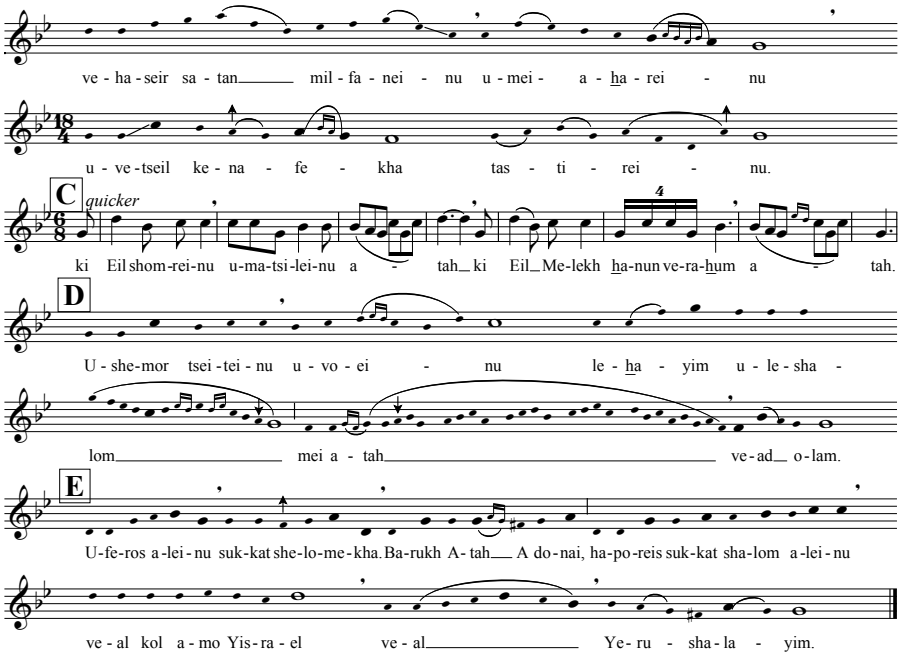
Variant 2

	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**
Final word of segment	shlomekha	shemekha	rahum atah	shlomekha	
Tonality	minor	minor minor	freigish/	minor	major
Rhythmic	p-r	p-r	p-r	metric hint	declama-tory
melismatic?	no	medium	no	no	no
highest range			!		

Variant 3

	A	B	C	D	E
Final word of segment	le-hayim	shemekha	tastirenu	rahum atah	
Totality	freigish	freigish	minor	minor	freigish/ minor
Rhythmic type	p-r	p-r	p-r	metric	reciting/ declama-tory
melismatic?	medium	strong	strong	no	strong
highest range			!		!

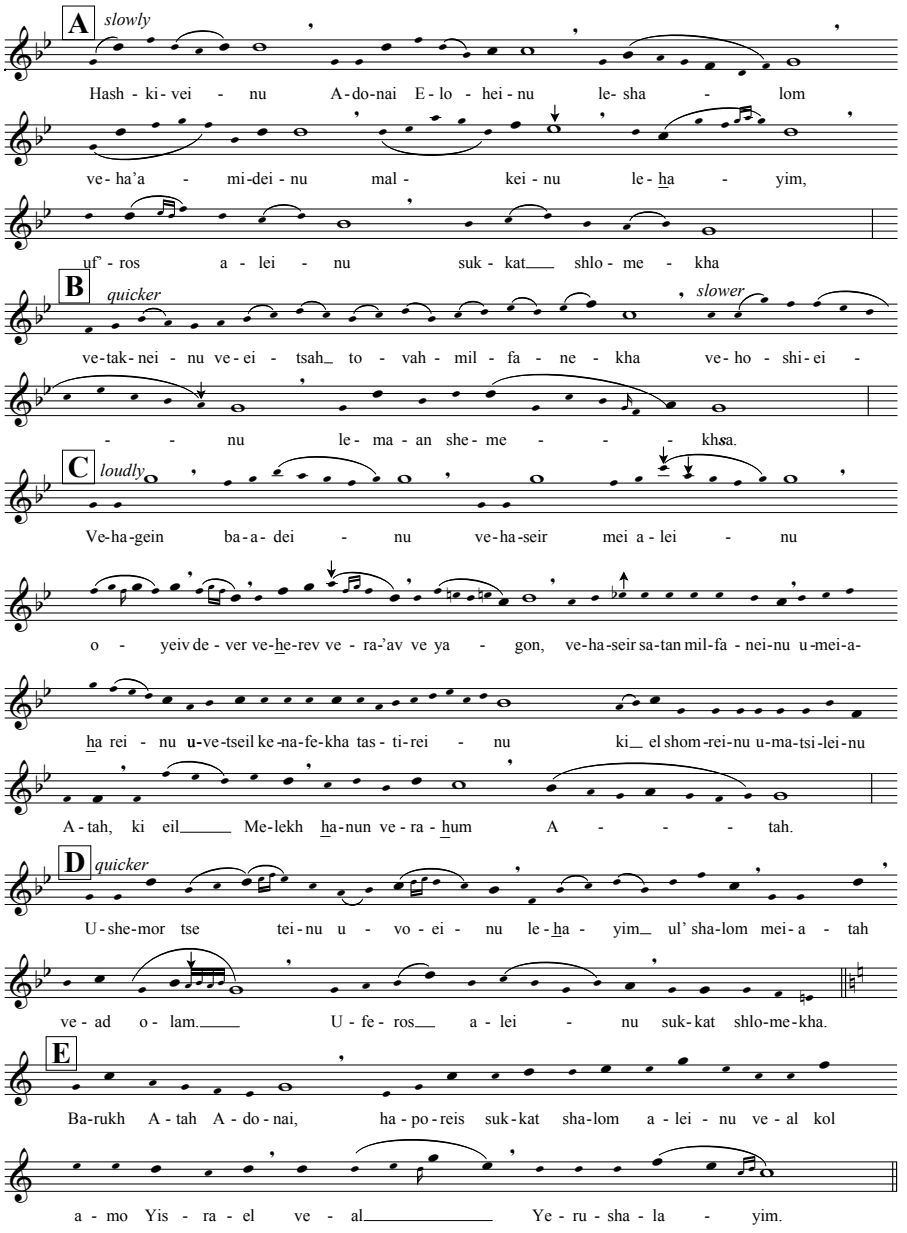




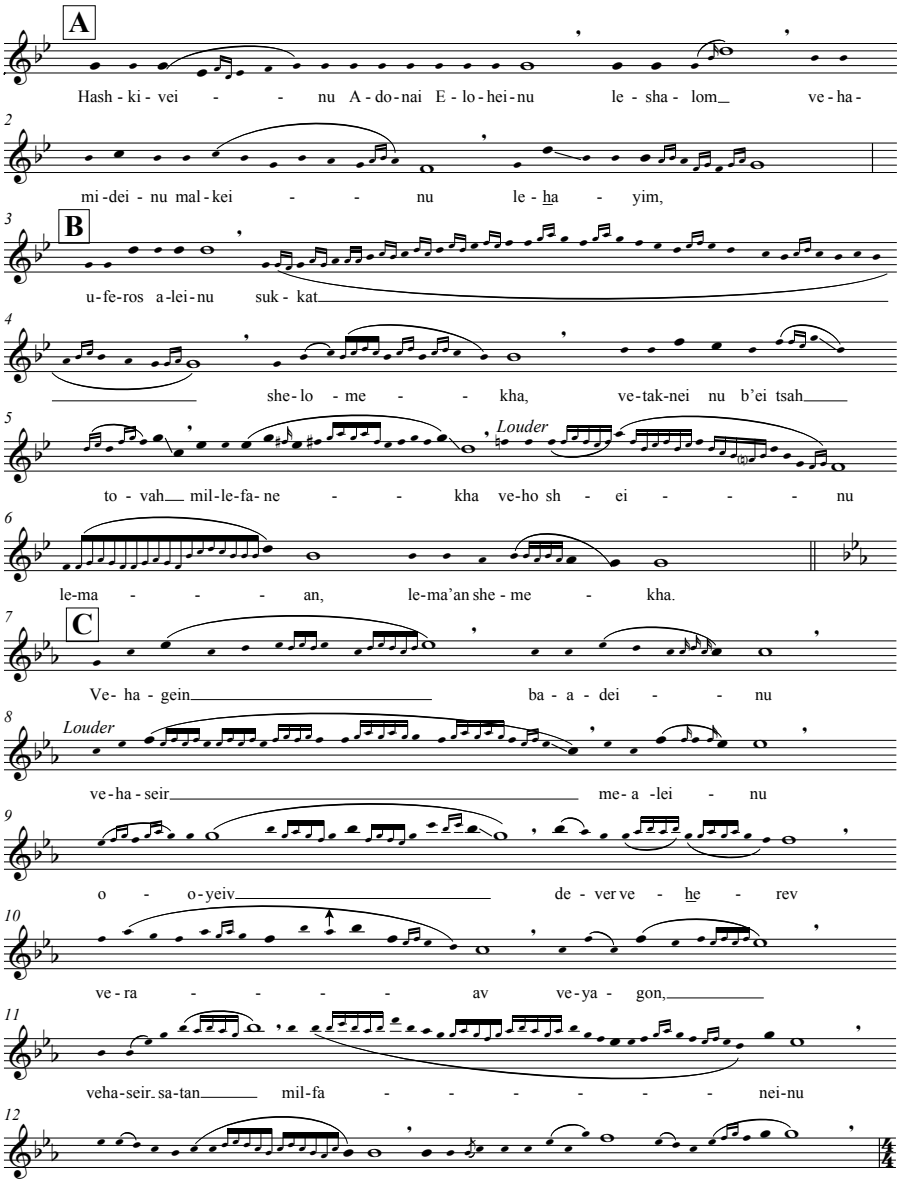
Example 1. *Musical transcription of Wohlberg's* ***Hashkivenu*** *improvisations, Version One (see key of transcription symbols located below).*

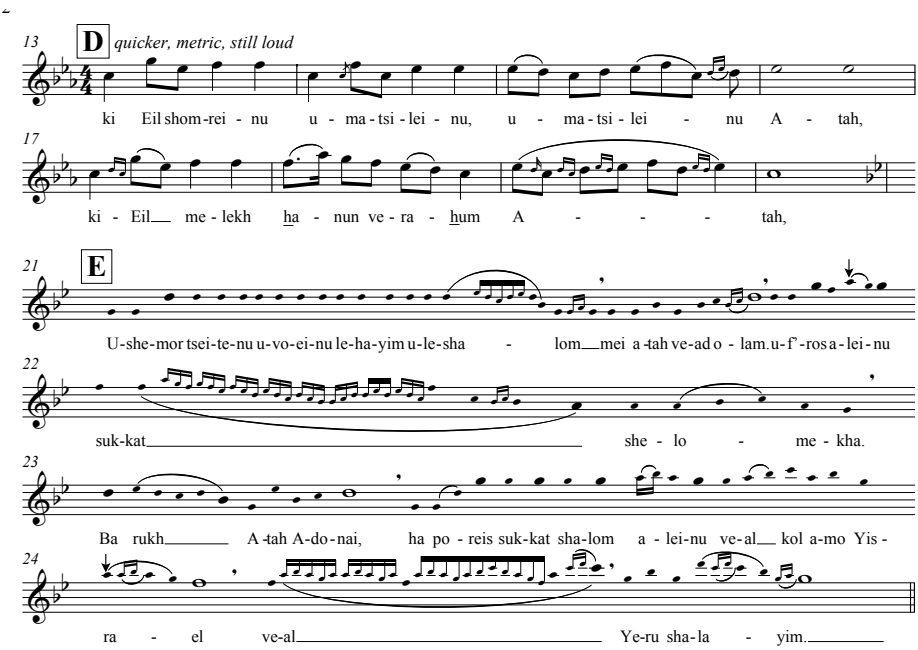
Transcription symbols

𝅘𝅥𝅯	=	very short notes
𝅘𝅥	=	short note
𝅗𝅥	=	longer note
𝅝	=	very long note
,	=	breath
↑	=	slightly higher than written
↓	=	slightly lower than written
/	=	glide



Example 2. *Musical transcription of Wohlberg's* ***Hashkivenu*** *improvisations, Version two (see key of transcription symbols located after version one).*


A
Hash - ki - vei - - nu A - do - nai E - lo - hei - nu le - sha - lom ve - ha -
2
mi - dei - nu mal - kei - - nu le - ha - yim,
3
B
u - fe - ros a - lei - nu suk - kat
4
she - lo - me - - kha, ve - tak - nei nu b'ei tsah
5
Louder
to - vah mil - le - fa - ne - - kha ve - ho sh - ei - - - nu
6
le - ma - - - - an, le - ma'an she - me - kha.
7
C
Ve - ha - gein ba - a - dei - - nu
8
Louder
ve - ha - seir me - a - lei - nu
9
o - o - yeiv de - ver ve - he - rev
10
ve - ra - - - - av ve - ya - gon,
11
veha - seir sa - tan mil - fa - - - - - - - nei - nu
12
u - mei - a - ha rei - - nu u - ve - tseil ke - na - fe - kha tas - ti - rei - nu



Example 3. *Musical transcription of Wohlberg's* ***Hashkivenu*** *improvisations, Version three (see key of transcription symbols located after version one).*

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Max Wohlberg (1907-1996) helped found the ***Cantors Assembly of America*** *and the Jewish Theological Seminary's* ***Cantors Institute.*** *He spent a lifetime researching and collecting synagogue melodies and was a beloved teacher of nusah to almost two generations of cantorial students until his death.*

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Miriam Gideon Remembered on Her 10th Yahrzeit and 100th Birthday

by Neil W. Levin

Miriam Gideon was not a woman composer. She rejected and resisted that demeaning label consistently throughout her life. She was a woman; she was American; she was Jewish; and she was a composer—a superbly gifted, emotionally and intellectually secure, exceedingly modest, and justifiably distinguished composer. She ranked with such doyens of the intelligentsia of American composers as George Perle, Milton Babbitt, Elliot Carter and William Shuman, who had the utmost regard for her talents and considered her simply a colleague. To earn their respect on that level was no easy feat for any composer, and few did so. Miriam did.

"I didn't know I was a woman composer until 'the movement' in the 1960s," she reminisced in the mid-1980s. "I knew I was a young composer, and then, suddenly, an older composer. But never a woman composer." Not for her any of the belligerent whining about supposed gender-related obstacles that became so politically convenient for others, and she emphasized on many occasions that she had never felt hindered in her career. "I've always had my fair share of recognition," she insisted.

Miriam disapproved heartily and vocally of concerts, broadcasts, and recordings devoted specifically or exclusively to music by women, as if that constituted a genre of its own, and she refused to permit her music to be included in such formats. "I don't care for isolating musical activity by gender and would caution against it," she said, further explaining that such musical isolation and identification is a tactical mistake that "makes it difficult to judge the music on its own merits."

For those of us who are deeply immersed in the rather closed world of Judaically related music and whose primary personal association with Miriam was through her longtime service on the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cantors Institute, it has always been tempting to claim her as "ours"—as a Jewish, or Jewish music, composer. That was only part of her story, of course, but I am certain she would forgive our proprietary inclination. She was not only a beloved teacher and colleague, with whom all of us felt at ease, but also that rare phenomenon today and even then: a thorough modernist who was at the same time a grand lady in the old manner. For years after she taught her last class, and even after she had passed away, many of us could close our eyes and imagine her, decked out in her signature broad-brimmed

or cartwheel hat, ascending the steps to the Seminary for another day devoted to imbuing students with her unconditional love of music.

In 2001, as artistic director of the Milken Archive, I was in London to supervise the recording of Miriam's Sabbath Eve Service by the chorus of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields. Joseph Cullen, its conductor at the time, actually expressed embarrassment at not having known previously of Miriam or her music. "She must be very famous in America," he remarked, basing his assumption on the quality of her work. "*Lu y'hu*—it should only be—" I had to reply lamentably. On the other hand, that situation is hardly unique, and Miriam remains in the good company of many under appreciated American composers.

In his eulogy at her funeral ten years ago, Rabbi Morton M. Leifman, dean of the cantorial school from 1973 until 1998, drew some poetic parallels between Miriam Gideon the composer and King David the psalmist and musician according to tradition:

> His playing soothed even the tempestuous emotions of highly volatile chieftains and kings. He was a romantic charmer, a devoted friend, a person whose influence was international in scope.
>
> Eventually King David became old and ill; and yet, 'til death's door he retained his royal bearing. He was always David the King.
>
> Miriam was a long time dying—illness and pain and memory loss; but until nearly the end she remained a royal figure, one who reacted regally to sounds, to language, to poetry, to people, and, of course, to music and ideas—almost to the end.

And Rabbi Leifman read an ancient poem that had been translated from the Japanese and which Miriam had set to music, because he felt that it reflected her "incredible optimism—that hint at not giving in, even to the reality of death":

I have always known
That at last I would
Take this road, but yesterday
I did not know it would be today.

Miriam Gideon was born in 1906 in Greeley, Colorado, where her father—an ordained Reform rabbi who chose Western parameters of academia over the pulpit—was a professor of philosophy and modern languages at the Colorado State Teachers College (the forerunner of the University of Northern Colorado). Her family's cultural orientation was informed by the sophisticated orbit of German Jewry. Her grandparents on both sides had come from the

area around Bayreuth, and typical of many highly educated second and even third generations of German Jewish immigrants at that time, German was spoken along with English in her home.

Uprooted several times over the next several years by her father's successive teaching appointments, in Wyoming, California, and Chicago—where she began piano lessons with a cousin—the family resettled in Yonkers, New York, by the time Miriam was ready to begin high school. She was enrolled at the local music conservatory, where she studied with Hans Barth, a Leipzig-born pianist and composer who had been a pupil in Europe of Carl Reinecke and Ferruccio Busoni.

After one or two summers in Boston studying music with her paternal uncle, Henry Gideon—the music director and organist at Temple Israel, one of the city's leading Reform synagogues, and editor of an early-20th-century Reform hymnal—her parents allowed her to stay in Boston to finish high school, so that she could avail herself more intensively of his tuition. He taught her piano and theory as well as organ, which she played on occasion for services at the synagogue.

Meanwhile, her interest in composition—begun in childhood as an ancillary, experimental, and almost private activity—had started to blossom, and it soon became the primary focus of her creative energies. At Boston University, where she earned her bachelor's degree with a major in French literature and a minor in mathematics, Miriam continued to study music, and when she returned to New York after graduation, she took several music courses at New York University with a view toward a career in public school teaching. But the urge to compose absorbed her more and more, and after about a year she abandoned that path in favor of university level involvements that would leave her more time for composition.

One of the most important imprints on Gideon's future direction as a composer was her association and private study, for several years during her late twenties, with the now fabled émigré Jewish composer from Russia, Lazare Saminsky. One of the principal players in the forging of the new national school of Jewish art music in Russia, and an active participant in the Gesellschaft für Jüdische Volksmusik in St. Petersburg from its founding in 1908, Saminsky was then the music director and organist at New York's Temple Emanu-El. "Saminsky was an invaluable influence for many years," Gideon recalled some twenty-five years later in an interview. "To begin with, he was most perceptive in coordinating my previous training in harmony, counterpoint, and composition. As for my excursions into Jewish music, he

showed the same understanding for my attempts at personal expression." Later, in 1945, he commissioned her to write a piece—*The Hound of Heaven*, based on a poem by Francis Thompson—in celebration of Temple Emanu-El's centenary.

After a few years of private lessons, Saminsky suggested that Gideon study with the esteemed American composer and composition teacher Roger Sessions, who had been a pupil of Ernest Bloch's. Saminsky facilitated the introduction, and Miriam worked with Sessions for eight years, joining the prestigious list of his students that has included such luminaries as Milton Babbitt, Edward Cone, David Diamond, Leon Kirschner, and Vivian Fine. Through her work with Sessions, Gideon gradually emancipated herself from her previous, completely tonal orientation and developed her distinctive and deeply expressive combination of extra-tonal and pan-tonal idioms that was to define her music thereafter.

In 1946 Gideon earned her master's degree in musicology from Columbia University with a dissertation on Mozart's string quintets, but even before matriculation she began teaching at Brooklyn College. A few years later (1949) she married Frederic Ewen, a member of the English department there and a scholar of European history and 18th-century European literature.

Ewen's unmasked left-wing political associations and activities and even—for those days, socialist leanings—to which he adhered benignly and in principle throughout his life (dignitaries from the old left such as Ossie Davis spoke at the memorial meeting for him in 1989)—had their affect on Miriam's career in the fear-soaked climate of the late 1940s and early 1950s. She always felt that her termination (in the form of non-renewal) from Brooklyn College in 1954 was owed to her husband's perceived political persona and affiliation. And, as she related in a 1991 interview, she resigned from City College of New York (CCNY, where she had begun teaching in 1947) in 1955 rather than cooperate in identifying faculty with suspected leftist or so-called procommunist sympathies.

But her severance from CCNY (where she returned on a part-time basis in 1970, long after the dust of panic had settled) turned out to be to her advantage. And it was certainly to the benefit of the next two generations of American cantors within the Conservative movement and to Jewish music in general. For it was that same year, in the wake of her new availability, that the eminent composer and intellectual, Hugo Weisgal, who chaired the faculty at the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cantors Institute and Seminary College of Jewish Music (now the H. L. Miller Cantorial School), invited her to teach there. Thus began her most fruitful, rewarding, and mutually beneficial af-

filiation, and for some forty years, until age and ill health forced her to retire, the Jewish Theological Seminary was her home base. Notwithstanding other concurrent teaching positions, and apart from her principal commitment to composition, her tenure there and her relationship with her students was the closest to her heart of all her professional activities. She taught theory and harmony, composition, and introductory surveys of the Western musical canon, and she gave unstintingly of her time and energies to individual students and to the life of the school. Weisgal became a fervent champion of her music, and in 1970 she earned her doctorate (Doctor of Sacred Music) from the Seminary under his guidance.

As in Weisgal's case, Miriam's musical range and interests extended well beyond Jewish works to form a lasting contribution to serious 20th-century American music. Yet on an emotional plane, both she and Weisgal attached special and personal value to their Jewish works, which they considered among their most important creations. And, also like Weisgal, Miriam had a particular affinity for literature and its expression as vocal music, which amounts to more than half of her oeuvre—although in some ways she was more comfortable than her mentor with purely instrumental, non-programmatic composition. She was fascinated by words and literary constructs, and she once said that she was "moved by great poetry and great prose almost as much as by music." As George Perle, the composer and ardent admirer of Gideon's music, once observed, the musical structure of her verse settings usually runs parallel to the basic "sense of the poem" and its intrinsic verbal interrelationships, rather than concentrating on the external formal poetic features. And her concern for declamation of text was always paramount.

Apart from her secular as well as sacred choral works and her opera, *Fortunato*, Miriam was especially prone to set literature in the context of vocal chamber music—voice with small instrumental ensembles—in which the vocal line often functions as one of the instruments. In such pieces the voice carries forward and supports the text as the principal melodic material, simultaneously constituting an individual yet interdependent part of the overall musical structure. To this category belong such works as *Nocturnes* (1976, on poetry by Shelley); *The Condemned Playground* (1963, with words by Horace, Milton, Akiya, Spokes, Baudelaire, and Millay); *Spiritual Madrigals* (1965, with words by Ewen, Susskind von Trimberg, and Heine) and its reworking in 1979 as *The Resounding Lyre*; *Rhymes from the Hill* (1968); and *Five Sonnets from Shakespeare*, among others. Even more remarkable in terms of its individuality was Gideon's fondness for dual-language and even multilingual settings—either an English text juxtaposed against words in

other languages from other poetry, or a text (or parts of a text) in its original language together with English translation. In her *Steeds of Darkness* (1986), the original Italian of the text is set, without translation, alongside an English poem with similar sentiments and imagery, so that the two texts reinforce each other. In her setting of a poem about Hiroshima, on the other hand, she had the original English poetry translated into Japanese for her setting. "I'm particularly fascinated by setting the same poem in the original language and also in translation," she once remarked. "The challenge of finding a different musical garment for the same poetic idea, with all the subtleties of color and connotation that each language represents—the right clothing to drape on the same skeleton and at the same time resolving this diversity into an integrated whole—is a never-ending source of creative interest to me."

* * * * * *

Gideon's first Jewish work was her English setting of Numbers 24:5 and other verses, from Psalms—known liturgically in its original Hebrew as *Mah Tovu*, a text used frequently as an optional introduction to formal worship, but composed and published by her as *How Goodly Are Thy Tents* (**Example 1**).[1] Written for women's voices only because the competition for which it was intended specified that medium, it won the Ernest Bloch Choral Award in 1947 (shared with a piece by Norman Lockwood). Then came her first Hebrew setting—*Adon Olam*—in 1954, scored for soloists, mixed chorus, and chamber orchestra (with alternative organ accompaniment). It was commissioned and premiered by Hugo Weisgal at the Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Baltimore, where Weisgal directed the Chizuk Amuno Choral Society and where his father, Abba Yosef [Adolph Joseph] Weisgal was *ḥazzan. Three Masques* for organ followed in 1958, commissioned by composer and virtuoso organist Herman Berlinski, who received the Jewish Theological Seminary's first doctorate in composition—under Weisgal's supervision. Gideon based that work on cantillation motifs for the annual Purim rendition of the Book of Esther. "I used those motifs as a basic vocabulary," she later explained to colleagues, "and then transformed them rhythmically and intervalically to characterize the persons who dominate the three sections of the work: Haman, Esther, and Mordecai." Her cantata *The Habitable Earth* (1965) can also be included among her Judaically inspired works, based as it is on the Book of Proverbs.

Gideon's two Jewish *magna opera,* however, or the twin yet very distinct achievements constituting her magnum opus in terms of Judaic music, are

[1] Out of print, SSA version available at the JTS Library.

unquestionably her two artistically sophisticated Sabbath services. The first, *Sacred Service (for the Sabbath)*, was commissioned in 1971 by The Temple in suburban Cleveland, an heir to one of the major mid-western Reform synagogues founded in the 19th century by German Jewish immigrants and their families. This work, premiered there in 1971, was scored for baritone and tenor soloists, with mixed chorus and an ensemble of six wind and string instruments together with organ. There is no specific cantorial role, since at that time The Temple still followed the so-called classical American Reform format that, in many cases (especially away from the Eastern Seaboard), eliminated the separate role and function of a cantor altogether. The performance took place at a Sunday morning service, since the congregation still adhered to the now mostly antiquated practice in some classical American Reform synagogues—dating to the 19th century—of holding Sabbath morning services on the Christian Sabbath, for various professed practical and sociological reasons, while still conducting the Sabbath Eve services on Friday nights.

Substantial excerpts of the *Sacred Service* have been recorded by the Milken Archive of American Jewish Music for future release in its historic recorded anthology, sung by the Rutgers Kirkpatrick Choir under the direction of Patrick Gardner. Gideon's second service, comprising principal elements of the liturgies for *Kabbalat Shabbat* and Sabbath Eve (*ma'ariv*), is titled *Shirat Miriam L'shabbat*. Commissioned and premiered by Cantor David Putterman for the annual Friday evening service of new music at New York's Park Avenue Synagogue in 1974, it is scored more conventionally for tenor cantor, mixed choir, and organ. It too has been recorded by the Milken Archive at sessions in London, and awaits release.

As she began to compose her first service, Gideon allowed her consciousness of Ernest Bloch's famous *Avodat Hakodesh* to guide her—not so much musically, as she discussed with her colleagues even before the work was completed, but conceptually, with regard to his treatment of the prayer texts, and, even more significantly, in terms of Bloch's artistic concept of the service as a larger, cohesive formal unit. "I have tried to view it [the service] as fresh and powerful poetry," she observed, explaining that she had chosen not to use or rely directly on any traditional melodic material or formulas. What emerged was indeed a unified work of skillful harmonic and melodic inventiveness within the framework of her own personal approach and uncompromised modernity, which offered new insights to the words. "It was as though we were encountering the prayers for the very first time and discovering new implications in them," wrote the learned Jewish musicologist and critic Albert Weisser following the New York premiere the next year at the

New School for Social Research—an event whose venue he also lamented as symbolizing the decline in taste and aesthetic curiosity among New York synagogues, since none had seen fit to provide so important a work its local premiere. Weisser was also convinced that Gideon's service could be considered the most important advance in that liturgical art form since Milhaud's *Service Sacré* of nearly a quarter century earlier—a compliment that could hardly be surpassed.

In fashioning her Friday evening service, *Shirat Miriam L'shabbat*, Gideon accepted some of Cantor Putterman's well-meant advice to consider tradition a bit more than she had done in her first service—not so much for the sake of the Park Avenue Synagogue performance or that congregation, but so that the work would stand a better chance of a life afterward. Indeed, she did draw upon some thematic melodic and modal elements of Ashkenazi synagogue tradition, and she even employed a recurring thematic device derived from a Palestinian shepherd song—but in no less an artistically original and harmonically sophisticated conception than that of the *Sacred Service*. *Shirat Miriam* is infused with transparent lyricism and a highly skilled, judicious brand of appropriate simplicity. Especially innovative as well as imaginative was her use of quartal harmony. Weisser thought this service was "the closest thing to a genuinely populist work that Miriam Gideon has achieved … a living religious experience." Of course, Weisser was referring not to the present connotation of the label "populist" in terms of pandering to unschooled tastes, but to the ease of access and appreciation of this work by reasonably cultured congregants and audiences, and to its power—through hints at familiarity—to sustain interest.

Taken together, these two services, despite their specific function as music for worship, provide a composite illustration of the techniques, style, musical language, and idioms that permeate much of Gideon's wider oeuvre. They demonstrate her refined craft, her ability to express emotional depth and strength with subtlety, and the power of her exquisite economy. George Perle, in assessing her music much earlier on, wrote that to Miriam, "the inherent ambiguity of pitch-functions in the contemporary tone material means that one must be more careful than ever, and this sense of the significance of every note pervades her work." Miriam was fond of relating how, upon hearing her *Seasons of Time*, a critic once remarked to her that he had "never heard so many right notes."

Gideon's tonal and harmonic fabric grew out of the Second Viennese School, but she rarely if ever adhered completely to its rigors, and she never abandoned tonality altogether—enriching it instead with a combination of

diatonic and chromatic expansion, free pitch choice, and artistic license. She accepted the characterization "free atonality" as the only applicable technical term for her music. At the same time, she felt that defined considerations of sonorities and technical devices, while they might attract the interest of contemporary music performers and ensembles, wrongly mask the more important matters of emotional impulses—with which she believed there was insufficient concern in postwar 20th-century music. She cautioned that many composers were so eager to demonstrate facility that they didn't allow themselves to become personally involved in their own music. "As far as I am concerned," she said, "I must see whether what I am writing comes from a musical impulse, and whether I am responding to it. What I write has to mean something to me…. It has to seem new. I have to be surprised by it, and it must register as feeling."

Miriam was blessed with extraordinary patience and quiet tenacity, not only in her painstaking musical choices as a composer, but as a teacher—often to cantorial students at the Seminary with widely differing backgrounds, attitudes, and abilities, who required varying degrees of encouragement and diplomacy. In fact, she was always quick to underscore how much she learned from students as well as from colleagues at the Seminary, and how beneficial that relationship was to her in broadening her musical and spiritual—especially Judaic—horizons.

Nearly all of Miriam's students at the Seminary had the single aim of becoming cantors, and very few had even thought previously about composing on a serious level. Yet she insisted that every cantorial student, regardless of background or professed musical interests (or lack of same), take her composition class and try, eventually, to produce whatever he could. She was convinced that, given some technical tools and a measure of positive reinforcement, some dormant creativity could be coaxed out of most students. And though she knew that in most cases, this would not "make them composers," she felt that hands-on exposure to the composition process would at the very least deepen their overall understanding and appreciation of music, and would contribute, even if only indirectly, to their musicianship and expressivity as performers. She also suspected instinctively—and correctly—that there would be some undiscovered talents. So great was the administration's regard for her that it acquiesced and made that course a requirement for graduation. It was a courageous experiment that worked, and she proved herself right.

Miriam would come to faculty meetings armed with her old reel-to-reel tape recorder and demand with glowing pride that we listen to samples of her students' pieces that she had recorded in class. Naturally, some of those

results were primitive, but she would always remind us of the personal achievement involved. In many cases, however—and in most cases in some semesters—we were amazed along with her at what the students had been able to produce. She succeeded indeed in drawing out creative forces where none might have been imagined.

For those students who arrived at the Seminary with some demonstrated talent for composition, Miriam provided invaluable inspiration and tutelage. It is largely owing to her that a respectable number of Conservative cantors today compose seriously and even successfully, and a few have achieved substantial recognition as composers.

After Miriam's last semester teaching at the Seminary, that very special course was eliminated from the curriculum as a requirement. (Although composition as an elective course remained, it was obviously geared to those who had already been composing before entry to the school.) For many of us, it is sorely missed to this day. But apart from the problems of more complicated student schedules and necessarily denser course requirements in other areas, it would require a teacher of her unique blend of gifts and her ultimate faith in untapped student talents. It would require another Miriam Gideon, and there is none.

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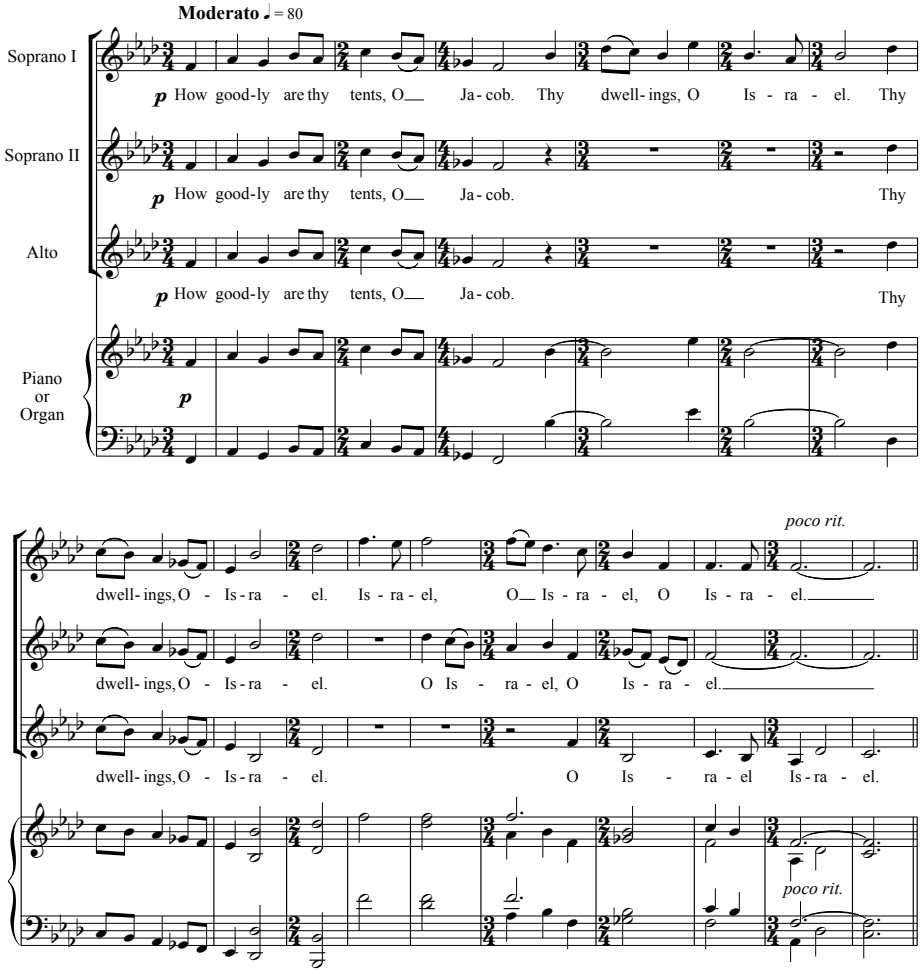


Example 1. *The opening section of Miriam Gideon's first Jewish piece,* ***How Goodly Are Thy Tents,*** *1947.*

When Sirota was Chief Cantor at the Tlomatzka Synagogue in Warsaw

by Samuel Vigoda

Selihot was the only one of the High Holy Day services to which admission was free (to all the other services a ticket was required). On such an occasion, Hasidim from all the *shtiblekh* (small, unpretentious places of worship) came in droves. Garbed in their Kaftans, Kapotes and Bekeshes (typical long coats) and the rabbinical Kapelyush (velvet headgear), they pushed their way into the overcrowded synagogue, intent on hearing the great cantor. They would occupy every seat, and the modern synagogue took on the appearance of the *Kloiz* (study house) of a wonder rabbi.

On the High Holy Days, usually there were riots in front of the gleaming white marble temple on Tlomatzka Street. To be able to secure a ticket was a rare privilege, and the chief sexton, Gonsher, used his office to great pecuniary advantage. Successful businessmen used to come from faraway cities purposely to spend the holidays in Warsaw. But they rarely succeeded in buying a ticket. Weeks before the High Holy Days there were already hardly any to be gotten for loved or money. There was only one man to turn to: Gonsher. He was besieged by these anxious customers who knew how to court his favor by bringing him expensive presents like fine Bielitz textiles, silver and gold goblets, and other rare objects. In return, he secured for them the much-coveted pasteboard that enabled them to hear the golden voice of Gershon Sirota (1874-1943) in his High Holy Day prayers.

The superintendent of the synagogue, Frant, the deputy sexton, Rosenbehr, and the five assistant sextons were also in on the deals. All those who were active in some capacity around the synagogue had good reason to look forward to the High Holy Day season as the most lucrative in the year for each of them. People were ready to pay whatever they had to, rather than miss Sirota's services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Here is an excerpt from a newspaper report picturing the scenes around the synagogue on the Holy Days.

> Several hundred people besieged the building and repeatedly attempted to storm the entrance and force their way into the main auditorium. They met with strong resistance on the part of the police squads, both on foot and on horseback, who surrounded the building determined to beat back the onslaught and disperse the mob.
>
> Inside the temple the people were packed like sardines. The stuffiness was unbearable. Over four thousand people stood one on top of the other; there was no air to breathe; many fainted, and were carried out into the street where efforts were made to revive them.
>
> The worst part of the resultant confusion was that a lot of pick-pockets managed to get into the synagogue. Taking advantage of the over-crowding and disorder, they had a field day and were able to carry out their nefarious operations most efficiently. Several dozen worshipers went home much lighter than they were when them came. For they were relieved of their watches and wallets (if they carried any), and a great many women went home minus their handbags and their jewelry.

Why were these people ready to put up with all these inconveniences just to have the privilege of hearing Sirota? There must have been a potent reason; and there most certainly was. His voice was one of nature's wonders. It overwhelmed the listener with its diapason (fullness) of range and volume. It was as though his voice consisted of two or three voices joined into one, a true leonine voice, the color, quality and luster of which was like velvet, powerful yet mellow, full and soft. There was no parallel to such a high, dramatic, heroic tenor possessing such a dark-shaded baritonal-colored middle register, which sounded like a cello. In addition, his voice was evenly adjusted in all registers. He was blessed with a wonderfully agile, naturally flowing coloratura and he sang in the *Bel Canto* style. Some dissenting critics characterized it as "can belto," yet he was a warm, impressionable singer with such an effervescent temperament that it seemed as if he wanted to infect and imbue everyone and everything about him with his own burning fire.

Leo Leow, his choir leader, characterized his voice as without a beginning and without an end.

> His voice stretched over three octaves, and he traversed this range easily without strain. With a little effort, he could 'shoot out' an E and F about the high C. The latter was for him child's play and he could belt it out immediately upon opening up his eyes after a night's sleep, while still lying horizontally in bed.

He was especially unparalleled in his High Holy Day prayers. His assistant cantor, Pinchas Sherman wrote, "The prayers *Unetaneh Tokef-Berosh Hashanah* and *Ki Keshimkha* he sang with such bravura that he deserved to be

paid his whole yearly salary for them alone." While reciting the prayer *Atah Nigleita*, when he came to the words *Kolot Uv'rakim* (thunder and lightning), Leow— in a reflex motion—used to instinctively duck his head as if to hide from being hit by the vocal bombs which he knew were coming. The whole congregation trembled at the tremendous *staccatos*, that sounded as if they were shot out from heavy Howitzer artillery, and the walls of the large synagogue shook and vibrated. Every *berakhah* (benediction) at the conclusion of the Malkhuyot, Zikhronot and Shofarot sections of Musaf he used to end with a cadenza so high and mighty that it could have wakened the dead.

However, not always did his prayers consist of thunder, lightning and earth tremors. Where a different approach was called for by the text, he could also sing in a lyrical vein with touching soft feelings and sentimental intensity.

Another cantor in his place would, after such an exerting tour de force be exhausted, fatigued and hoarse, but not Sirota. His stamina and physical staying power were remarkable. As if nothing had happened prior to it, he proceeded to the pulpit for the Neilah (concluding) service of Yom Kippur, fresh and unaffected, as if he were just about to begin Kol Nidre. As if to show the congregation that they had not yet heard anything, he only now began to sing in earnest. With renewed vigor and inexhaustible power, he went to town showering them with real atomic bombs that made everything that went before look like child's play–and he made the audience forget entirely that they were hungry after fasting for 24 hours. They could have sat there all night and listened to their wonderful cantor.

* * * * * *

A special occasion to which his congregants used to look forward was the *Shabbat Rosh Hodesh* (when Sabbath coincided with the beginning of the Hebrew month); then they had the privilege of hearing Sirota's *Atah Yatzarta* (You Fashioned Your World as of Old). When he stormed the phrase

> *Horva ireinu ve-shameim beit mikdasheinu*
>
> our city had been laid waste, our sanctuary destroyed,

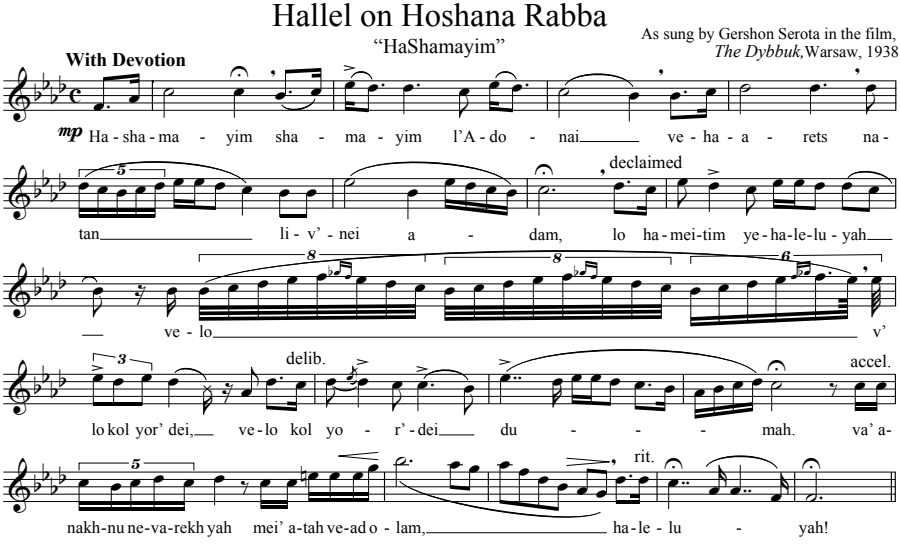
it went through the souls of all listeners and broke their hearts, so that tears glistened in many eyes.

At the Tlomatzka Synagogue, Tishah Be-Av (the 9th day of the Hebrew month, Av)—date of the destruction of the Holy Temples in Jerusalem—was very impressive. The façades of the marble Holy Ark and pulpit were draped in black, with only two lamps relieving the somber darkness with their faint, glimmering light. The assistant cantor (Tchiz, Hershman and later on

Sherman) recited the age-old Kinot (laments), while the chapter of Eikhah (Lamentations) beginning: *Eikhah Yu'am Zahav* (how is the gold become dim) belonged to Sirota. He did not cry, he only recited the sad lament with resignation and deep feeling. His calm interpretation, nevertheless, was so full of meaning and so effective that it penetrated deeply into the hearts of the mourning worshipers, moving to tears even hardened assimilationists.

Polish-born Samuel Vigoda (1894-1990) studied at Yeshivot and conservatories in Hungary, becoming chief cantor at the ***Arena Temple*** *in* ***Budapest*** *while still in his teens. Later he succeeded Yossele Rosenblatt at* ***First Hungarian Congregation Ohab Zedek*** *in* ***New York****. This vignette of Gershon Sirota in his prime is reprinted from* ***Legendary Voices*** *(1981), Vigoda's collected translations of cantorially related articles that he had written for various periodicals here and in Europe during his long career.*

HaShamayim, a musical example of Serota's idiosyncratic prayer chant follows, transcribed from ***"Hoshana in the Old Synagogue,"*** *a scene from one of the last Yiddish films made in Warsaw in 1938: The* ***Dybbuk.***



Two Poems

by Jaqueline Osherow

Yom Kippur Sonnet, with a Line from Lamentations

Can a person atone for pure bewilderment?
For hyperbole? For being wrong
In a thousand categorical opinions?
For never opening her mouth, except too soon?
For ignoring, all week long, the waning moon
Retreating from its haunt above the local canyons,
Signaling her season to repent,
Then deflecting her repentance with a song?
Because the rest is just too difficult to face—
What we are—I mean—in all its meagerness—
The way we stint on any modicum of kindness—
What we allow ourselves—what we don't learn—
How each lapsed, unchanging year resigns us—
Return us, Lord, to you, and we'll return

My Version: Medieval Acrostic

Jealousy? Homage? Longing? Superstition?
All I know is, I want to join those guys
Calling God's name, writing their own
Quietly, in steady pieces, as if praise
Unmasks the giver as it goes along,
Existing and singing simultaneous.
Let me in guys—even if I'm wrong:
I'm not fit for unremitting chaos.
Nudge me when another cornered word
Escapes as firmament the moment it's uttered….

Jacqueline Osherow is Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Utah, and the author of five books on poetry, most recently ***The Hoopoe's Crown*** *(BOA, November, 2005).*

Shabbat as a Foretaste of Eternity

by Richard Wolberg

> *Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth; on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in our soul.*
>
> *Abraham Joshua Heschel*[1]

Shabbat is one of the best known and least understood of all Jewish observances. People who do not observe it may think of Shabbat as a day filled with stifling restrictions, or as a day of prayer like the Christian Sabbath. But for those who observe Shabbat it can be a precious gift from the Almighty. Shabbat, after all, is the only ritual observance instituted by the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15), and the very first element of Creation that God declared "holy" (*vaykadeish oto*; Genesis 2:3). Ahad Ha'am[2] wrote that "more than the Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews."

The Kabbalists of sixteenth-century Safed portrayed Shabbat in nuptial terms; the Friday Night hymn *Lekhah Dodi* exhorts, "Come, my beloved, to meet the Sabbath bride."[3] They went out into the fields to greet the Sabbath with a series of psalms (95-99; 29). In the Zohar, a major compendium of Kabbalah, Shabbat is called a time when the entire arrangement of the order of the worlds is changed. The supernal Light that was there In the Beginning descends like dew from the upper to the lower worlds and from there flows in abundance to all of Creation.

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[1] *The Sabbath* (New York: Harper Torch Books), 1962:13.

[2] Pen name of Asher Ginsberg (1856-1927); in a magazine article occasioned by an early-twentieth century protest in Berlin against the growing trend of Reform synagogues to move Shabbat to the Christian Sunday (Hillel Halkin, "You Don't Have to be Orthodox to Cherish the Jewish Sabbath," *Jewish World Reviews*, Dec. 13, 2002).

[3] Written by Shlomo Alakabetz, based on BT *Shabbat*, 119a.

> When Sabbath arrives, the Shekhinah is in perfect union with the Heavenly King and is separated from the Powers of Evil from the Other Side. All the potencies of stern judgment are severed from the Sabbath, she being in closest union with the Holy Light and crowned by the Holy King. All the Powers of Severity and all the lords of stern judgment flee from her. No other domination reigns—in any of the worlds—except her.[4]

Shabbat is considered the most important day of the Jewish calendar, even more important than Yom Kippur. This is clear from the fact that more aliyot to the Torah are apportioned on it than on any other day. Shabbat involves two interrelated injunctions: to remember (*zakhor*); and to observe (*shamor*).

We are commanded to remember (*zakhor*) Shabbat, but remembering means much more than merely not forgetting to observe the day. It also means to remember the Sabbath's dual significance as: "a reminder of Creation" (*zikaron le-ma'aseh v'reishit*); and "to recall the Exodus from Egypt" (*zeikher li-y'tsi'at mitsrayim*).[5] During the week, we are slaves to our jobs and to our need to provide for ourselves and our loved ones; on Shabbat we are freed from these concerns, much as our ancestors were freed from slavery in Egypt.

We are also commanded to observe (*shamor*) Shabbat. This applies mainly to work that is forbidden on the Sabbath. Certainly, if God's work can be set aside for a day of rest, our own work can be set aside temporarily. The Torah prohibits *melakhah* (Mem-Lamed-Aleph-Khaf-Heh), which is usually translated as "work," but does not mean precisely the same thing as the English word. To understand the Sabbath restrictions we should define *melakhah*. It refers to the kind of work that is creative, or that exercises control or dominion over our environment. The quintessential example of *melakhah* is the work of creating the universe, work from which God ceased on the seventh day. Note that this type of work did not require a great physical effort: God spoke; and it was done.

> Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah says: On Shabbat eve, on the sixth of the month, during the sixth hour of the day, the Jewish people received the Ten Commandments. During the ninth hour of the day they returned to their tents, and a two-day supply of Manna was ready for them. This is why they rested on that Shabbat, rejoicing in the joy of the holiday on which they heard the voice of the Holy One, Blessed Is He, as it says (Deuteronomy

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[4] *Zohar*, Part II, *Terumah*, 135a-b, recited in the Hasidic rite as prelude to the Maariv service on Friday night; *Siddur Tefillat Yisrael LeKhol Yemot HaShanah* (Jerusalem: Eshkol), n.d. pp. 180-181.

[5] *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals*, Leonard Cahan, ed. (New York: The Rabbinical Assembly), 1998:49.

4:23): "For who is there among all peoples [but you], who has heard the voice of the living God." (*Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer,* chapter 46).

Shabbat gives us a glimpse of the World To Come: Olam Haba. It is therefore a custom to view each day of the week as a prelude to the coming Shabbat. Symbolically, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday belong to the previous Sabbath, its "Remembrance" aspect. If one has forgotten to recite the *Havdalah* prayer—which marks the end of Shabbat—on Saturday night, one may still remember—and recite it—until Tuesday night. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, however, pertain to the Sabbath's "Observance" side; symbolically, they are the days spent in preparation for observing the coming Shabbat. In this way, every day of the week gives us a glimpse of eternity.

An eighth-century Aggadah

Acting as an advocate for the first man, Shabbat came and said to God: "Sovereign of all the worlds; during the first six days of creation no one was killed. Will You start death with me? Does this express the holiness of Shabbat and is this its blessing?" So, in honor of the Sabbath, Adam was saved from the punishment of hell. When Adam saw the power of the Sabbath he said: "Not without good reason did the Holy One, blessed is He, create Shabbat and hallow it." He then began to sing to the Sabbath day, as it says (Psalms, 92): "A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day." Rabbi Yishmael said, This psalm was first recited by the first man, and was subsequently forgotten through the generations until Moses renewed it, as it states (Mishnah *Tamid*, 7.4): "A psalm, a song for the Sabbath day, for the day when it will be entirely of the Sabbath and repose of the life of the World to Come (*Pirkei DeRabbi Eliezer* chapter 18).

A second-century Mishnaic commentary

On the first day of the week what did the Levites sing in the Holy Temple? "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof..." for He created it and He will judge the world... On the sixth day of the week what did they sing? "God is sovereign, crowned in splendor; He reigns, robed in strength; He set the earth on a sure foundation, He created a world that stands firm." This implies that God completed His work and ascended and sat in the highest realms. On Shabbat the Levites said: "A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath Day," for the day that will be entirely Sabbath and the repose of the World to Come, when there will no longer be eating or drinking or workaday concerns. Rather, there will be a state in which the righteous sit with crowns of glory on their heads and derive their sustenance from the radiance of the Divine Presence (*Avot DeRabbi Natan*, 1:8).

A nineteenth-century midrash[6]

Rabbi Simon Schreiber of Cracow, son of the renowned Hatam Sofer, was also a member of the Austrian Parliament. Once, he was invited by Emperor Franz Josef to visit him at the Imperial Palace in Vienna on a Sabbath afternoon. The Emperor handed Rabbi Schreiber a cigar, which the rabbi was naturally obliged to accept. On account of the Sabbath law which prohibits a Jew from handling or lighting fire on that day, the rabbi kept it unlighted in his hand.

Graf von Pfuffendorf, a notorious anti-Semite who also happened to be present, thought he saw an opportunity for embarrassing the rabbi. He lit a match and approached the rabbi, saying: "I know you are accustomed to smoking, Rabbi; will you not have a light?"

"No, thank you,"answered the rabbi.

"Perhaps," said Von Pfuffendorf, "the Emperor's cigar is not good enough; His Majesty will then order some better ones."

At this remark the Emperor himself glanced up with surprise. But the rabbi did not wish to raise the Sabbath law as an excuse, as it would imply that the Emperor had been lacking in tact by offering him a cigar on the Jewish day of Rest. Rabbi Schreiber therefore turned to Graf von Pfuffendorf and said: "Honorable Graf, would you think it right for me to let His Majesty's gracious present vanish in smoke?" Putting it away in his pocket with great care, he added: I will keep it for an everlasting remembrance."

Richard Wolberg is the hazzan of Temple Beth El in Fall River, MA. He chairs the Cantors Assembly Ethics Committee, Conflicts and resolutions Committee, and shares his broad knowledge of Torah regularly with his colleagues on the Hazzanet and with readers of ***The American Rabbi***, ***Avodah***, *and* ***The Orchard****. He is also involved in Medical Ethics and reviews of Research, and he chairs the Clinical Trials and Reviews Committee of his community.*

6 *The Emperor's Gift*; related by S. M. Neches.

Minḥah LeShabbat as the Yom Kippur-Equivalent of our Week

By Joseph A. Levine

How do we go about reclaiming the MiSinai[1] moments—those ancient-sounding interludes that made people tremble—within Jewish worship? How ironic that previous generations' familiarity with these melodies has led to our generation's contempt for them along with anything that is old and revered. Congregational singing—formerly cherished by synagogue goers like peanuts in a box of Crackerjacks because of their rarity—now coats all prayers like syrupy popcorn, and we are forced to go searching for even one deliciously satisfying moment of ḥazzanut.[2]

Where is that traditional element now to be found within a watered-down ritual that veers between responsive English mumbling on the one hand and mindless nursery tunes on the other? I submit that within the given limits of an unaccompanied liturgy (in all Orthodox, most Conservative, and some Reconstructionist synagogues), without benefit of instrumental or even choral reinforcement, cantors can still lead us back to that place in the forest of our innermost being where each generation must ultimately go to find itself. In every chanted (as oppose to sung-along) text lies the potential for setting up meaningful allusions to other ritual moments in our lives and the lives of our forebears over the course of three millennia. Take, for instance, the "simple" Half-Kaddish[3] of Shabbat afternoon, just before Torah reading during the Minḥah service. It is actually a mini-catalogue of MiSinai Motifs, all drawn from the High Holy Days and charted in the book, *Synagogue Song in America*.[4]

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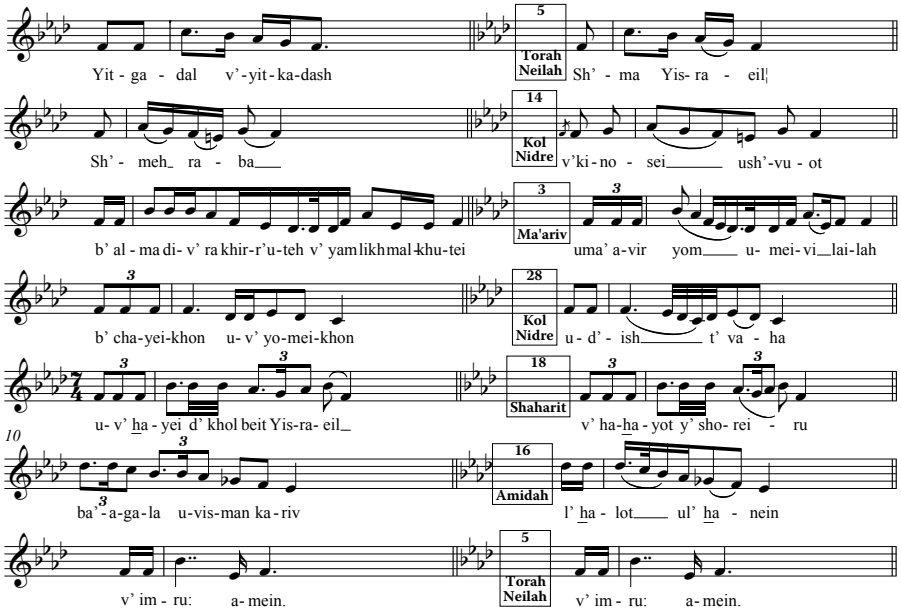
[1] "From Sinai;" a stratum of melodic fragments thought to be so ancient that they were handed down to Moses along with the other 613 commandments; now identified with motifs used for cantillating scriptural material by Ashkenazic communities along the Rhineland between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.

[2] "Cantorial art;" through which "the cantor breaks open the heart of the people in joy or yearning to the influx of the Divine" (Herbert Bronstein, "The Elu V'Elu ((both/and)) of Synagogue Music," *CCAR Journal,* Summer 1998, p. 79).

[3] After Abraham Baer, *Baal T'fillah* (1877). Reprinted by Sacred Music Press (New York: Hebrew Union College and the American Conference of Certified Cantors, 1953), No. 694.

4 Joseph A. Levine, *Synagogue Song in America* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson),

Shabbat Minḥah-Kaddish Phrases	**High Holy Day MiSinai Motifs**
Yitgadal v'yitkadash	#5–(Torah; Neilah): *Sh'ma Yisra'eil*
sh'meh rabah	*#14*–(Kol Nidre): *v'kinusei ush'vu'ot*
b'alma div'ra chir'uteh	*# 3*– (Ma'ariv): *uma'avir yom umeivi lailah*
v'yamlikh malkhuteh	
b'ḥayeikhon uv'yomeikhon	*#28*–(Kol Nidre): *ud'isht'vana*
uv'ḥayei d'chol beit yisra'eil	*#18*–(Shaḥarit): *v'haḥayot y'shoreiru*
ba'agala uvizman kariv	*#16*–(Amidah): *l'ḥalot ul'ḥanein*
v'imru: Amein	*# 6 -* (Torah; Neilah): *Adonai eḥad*



What do Minḥah LeShabbat and Yom Kippur have in common? They both partake of an autumnal quality, a sense of approaching darkness. Not for nothing did the thirteenth-century poet Mordekhai ben Shabtai refer to the ancient Temple's late-afternoon sacrifice as *Minḥat Arev*, "Eventide's Offering."[5] Just as Yom Kippur can be considered the Minḥah-time of our year, so

2001, pp. 44-54; numbered and cross-referenced with sources and parallels in Appendix C, pp. 217-227.

5 "Mas'at Kappai," *Siddur Beit Ya'akov,* Part I, compiled and annotated by Rabbi Jacob Emdin, with commentary by Rabbi Shlomo Kluger (Lemberg: Joseph Schlesinger, 1923), page 210.

too can the Minhah service of Shabbat afternoon be understood as the Yom Kippur-equivalent of our week, a time for reflection on the past and of hope for future redemption. That theme colors the liturgy preceding and following the Shabbat Minhah Amidah:[6]

VeHayyei olam nata betokheinu.....hayyim ad ha'olam

Who implanted eternal life within us.....may there be life forever.

Hence, the Hatsi Kaddish nusah's fleeting High Holy Day references, ignored on any conscious level of awareness. But they are picked up by the scanning mechanism of our subconscious, which enables them to join a host of otherwise unutterable feelings that lie buried deep in our psyche. Only when a link with those feelings is forged—through music—can our hearts and minds enter that transformed world that contemporary liturgist Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman envisions in his much-discussed work, *The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only*[7] He calls that world "a continuum between a sacred past that we identify as our own, and a vision of the future that we hope to realize as the logical outcome of our lives."

Joseph A. Levine earned a doctorate in Sacred Music at the Jewish Theological Seminary. He taught Liturgy and Jewish Music History there, at the Academy for Jewish Religion and at the University of London's School of Jewish Liturgical Music. He is editor of the Journal of Synagogue Music and serves on the Rabbinical Assembly's Mahzor Committee. His ***Emunat Abba—the Sacred Chant of Abba Yosef Weisgal*** *has just been republished by the Cantors Assembly in a 25th Anniversary edition.*

[6] U-Va LeTziyon and Psalm 133, *The Complete ArtScroll Siddur,* Nosson Scherman, ed. (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications), 1984:50-507; 542-543.

[7] Lawrence A. Hoffman. *The Art of Public Prayer:* Not for Clergy Only (Washingon, DC: The Pastoral Press) 1988, pp. 241-242.

Subject: JSM

January 16, 2006

Joe:

The Congregational Singing issue is a fabulous Journal. One of the best, if not the best, in my memory. It should be required reading for every cantorial student—with faculty-led discussion groups around it.

May I request that you send me an extra copy, if you have any extras? My son writes a column on Jewish music for the Jerusalem Post. When I told him about the 05 Journal, he requested a copy.

Best wishes.

Josh Jacobson

Professor of Music, Northeastern University

Author of ***Chanting the Hebrew Bible***

Founding Director, Zamir Chorale

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Singing and String Playing

February 1, 2006

Dear Joe,

Please excuse the brevity of these notes from our phone conversation of last May; I've been recuperating from surgery these past few months…

In the 19th century there were only two great violin soloists—Winiawsky and Joachim—and none from Russia. In the 20th century most great violin soloists were Russian, and most of them were Jews.

Why? Social reasons. Because of Russian restrictions, the only way a Jew could get into Moscow or St. Petersburg was with special permission. Since higher education was a closed door for Jews, the natural detour was via the arts, whose patrons—through their connections—could talented young Jewish violinists (easier to carry around than a piano) into the big city conservatories, salons and halls.

Why are there so few great Jewish violinists today? We've already made it in America, economically and socially. Compared to the fortunes to be made in industry—including entertainment—musical careers don't pay.

Israel in the 1950s was like America at the turn of last century, so the European tradition of violin playing as a key to social climbing still prevailed. Hence: Izthak Pearlman, Pinchas Zukerman and Gil Shaham. And Pearlman didn't really blossom until he appeared on Ed Sullivan's show, got a Juilliard scholarship and studied with Ivan Gallamian.

In my own childhood (ca. 1930), when Jewish immigrants were beginning to make it economically, my *zeide* nixed a musical career for me: "there will be no *klezmorim* in this family!"

But singing came naturally, so I became a child hazzan in Los Angeles, where I grew up, even though what I wanted most was to study violin. Ironically, this push/pull worked well for me throughout my career as a professional musician/clergyman. Violinists always considered me a cantor, while cantors always thought of me as a violinist. Result: no professional jealousy!

As for the connection between singing and string playing, when the cellist Lynn Harrell was starting out on his career, he confessed to his teacher that he just couldn't bring out the tone of his instrument. The teacher advised him to go buy a record by Cantor Pierre Pinchik, called *Raza DeShabbat* (The Mystery of the Sabbath). When Harrell played it for the first time, he broke into tears at the passage, *ve-khol shultanei rugzin u-marei de-dina* (and all the forces of evil and powers of severe judgement; **Example 1.**).[1] When he related this to his teacher he was told: "It's not the technique—fingering and bowing in your case—that should concern you. Pinchik wasn't interested in whether or not his coloratura was perfectly even or whether he should be singing *forte* or *piano*; he sang from his soul, and this is the secret that all great artists know."

[1] "Raza DeShabbat," *The Repertoire of Hazzan Pinchik*, Vol. I (New York: The Cantors Assembly of America), 1964: 86-87.

I heard Pinchik daven one Pesah, and all through Shaharit, Hallel and the Torah service the man did nothing. But in the prayer *U-Mipnei Hata'einu* (Because of Our Sins) of Musaf he took worshipers to a different world. In eight minutes he had that congregation eating out of the palm of his hand,

My friend Abe Salkov (z"l), who was cantor at Beth Am in Los Angeles, later introduced me to Pinchik: "Khazn, I want you to meet a *menagen godol* (great musician). I asked Pinchik: "What do you look for in a concert?" Pinchik answered: "What *not* to do."

What ties singing to string playing is the flow, the legato (literally: "tie"). After Lynn Harrell had played Pinchik's *Raza DeShabbat* a dozen times he told me: "I don't go anywhere without taking a tape of that recording with me; every night it's at my bedside and I listen to it before falling asleep." In fact, Harrell always tells students at his master classes: "Now play it again, and this time, *sing* with it."

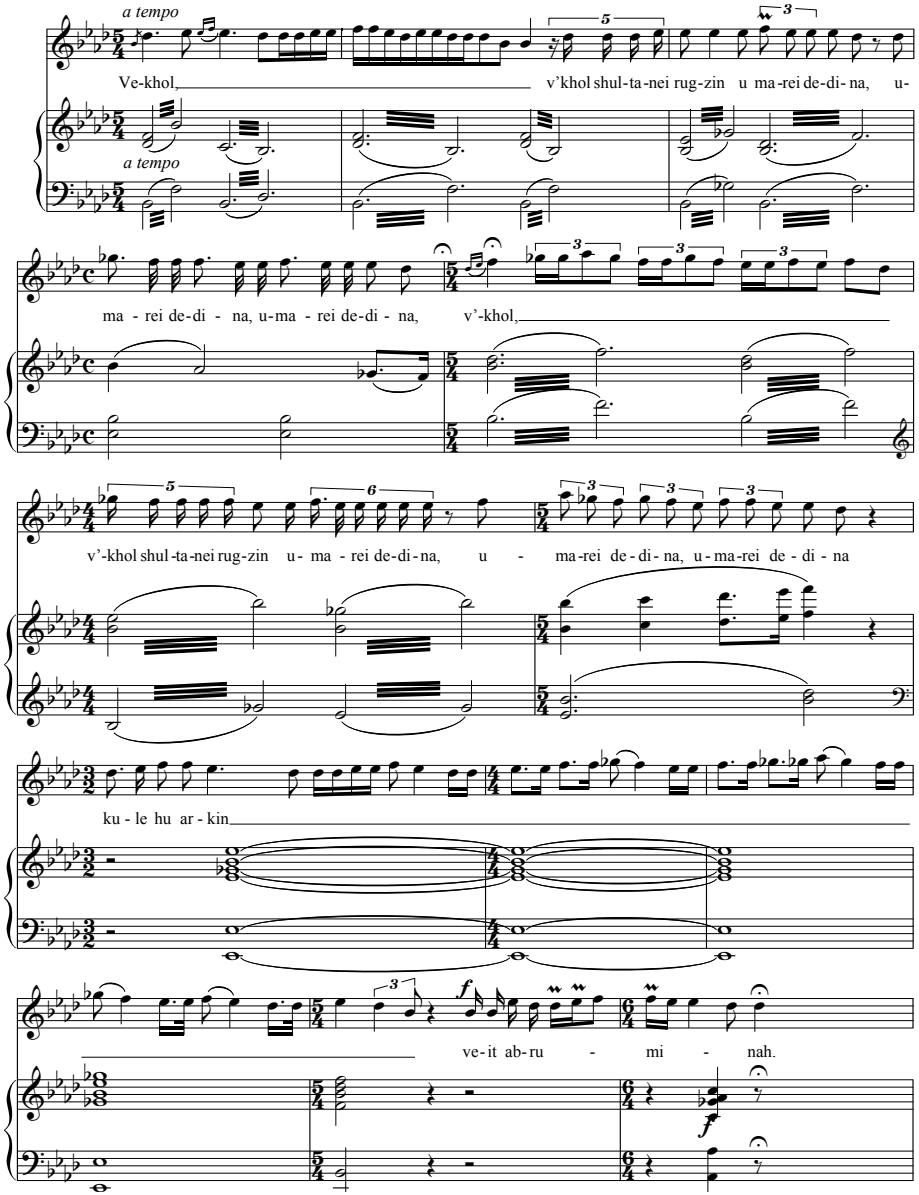
The reverse is true of voice teachers; they usually tell young students to think of a violin while singing…

Be well,

Sam Fordis

Cantor Emeritus, Congregation Adat Shalom

Concertmaster Emeritus, Santa Monica Symphony



Example 1. *The passage in Pierre Pinchik's* ***Raza DeShabba****t where many first time hearers break into tears.*

Sholom Kalib's *The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue, Volume Two, in Four Parts: The Weekday Services*, Syracuse University Press, 2005.

Reviewed by Laurence D. Loeb

Wow! Colossal! Monumental! Little did I know when I agreed to review volume two of Sholom Kalib's massive compendium of East European liturgical music, what I had bargained for. Why did the author not continue with the rich nusah of Shabbat or the holidays? Who really cares about the ordinary, everyday, minyan davening? Vokhedik music, Yemot haHol…it sounds well, mundane. When I was a student of fourth year nusah with Max Wohlberg z"l at the Seminary, I remember this *nusah* being approached almost with disdain. Following Shabbat, Yamim Nora'im and Shalosh Regalim—the exciting, creative core of hazzanut—what more could there be? While I recall doing very well in that class and the material was certainly usable, much of the more interesting music was for all-but-forgotten occasions like Yom Kippur Katan, the eve of Rosh Hodesh.

Others of you practitioners of hazzanut, scholars or students trying to comprehend and assimilate Ashkenazic liturgical music, who are of like opinion, be advised that Sholom Kalib has collected and carefully analyzed a corpus of material demonstrating how wrong we are. I have spent several months poring over nearly 1400 pages of musical examples and 400 pages of annotation in this almost encyclopedic masterpiece. There is a wealth of material here! Furthermore, I am now of the opinion that Weekday nusah is far more important as basis of hazzanut than I had thought previously.

So what is contained in these four parts of Volume II? And how are they to be used? The first three tomes contain musical examples. Part I focuses on the weekday service, Shaharit, Minhah and Ma'ariv. Part II contains Rosh Hodesh, Fast days, Yom Kippur Katan, Purim and Hanukkah. Part III has Tikkun Hatsot, Tisha B'av, Brit Milah, Wedding and Funeral nusah. The examples are drawn from published and unpublished musical works, commercial and

private recording transcriptions, and taped services of, and interviews with, leading hazzanim. Musical "snippets" of incipits to paragraphs of liturgy and conclusions, berakhot, full length recitatives, pieces with accompaniment, choral settings—but surprisingly few "congregational melodies"— illuminate this liturgical thesaurus. The focus is the "Eastern European" manner, but examples are drawn from Western Ashkenazic, Central European, and Lithuanian as well as Southern and Eastern European.

The material follows the customary order of the siddur. Each text has one or more examples. Most texts have multiple versions—some have many. In this sense, it is somewhat reminiscent of Abraham Baer's classic *Baal T'fillah* of 1877. For comparative purposes, each set of examples is transcribed in the same key signature, unless it has already been published elsewhere, e.g., Sulzer, Lewandowski, etc. So, like Baer's work, Kalib's could serve as a comprehensive text. In his Introduction, The Author makes some important suggestions about using this as a text, and these should be carefully heeded. Volume II would not be a simple self-study guide for the novice.

What makes it all work is the fourth part, designated: "Annotative Commentary." If the music is the "heart" of this collection, the commentary is its' essence, the neshamah. Here is a rich glossary of terms, a biographical note on the composers, and bibliography of sources. Do not be put off by its format, which at first glance seems to be a collection of footnotes. Every single prayer text evokes a comment. Often, the Author concisely conveys the critical intent of the text and then explains how certain hazzanim convey specific sentiments musically. Were this somewhat expanded and meticulously consistent, we would have here what I believe could be the first example of a hazzanic-approach text on liturgy. I found the implications very exciting.

I quickly learned that what I thought I knew about Weekday nusah, was at best simplistic. I was not aware of the subtle stylistic differences between the simpler nusah of Shaharit, which rarely enjoyed the leadership of a professional hazzan, and Ma'ariv, which was sometimes led by hazzan with choral and even instrumental accompaniment. I have now learned to appreciate the Volhynian tradition which I knew from some examples, but had never really comprehended. Textual differences and musical implications of *Nusah Sefarad* are carefully noted. Kalib distinguishes the musical complexity of examples by labeling simple rendering of the text: "incipent khazzonus;" this would be suitable for a lay *ba'al tefillah*. Musically sophisticated illustration at a professional level is designated: "advanced khazzonus."

Many questions of musical/liturgical practice asked in the Cantors Assembly's Hazzanet correspondence are answered here with extensive comments

and examples; e.g., the numerous opportunities to interpolate alternative trop or dramatic elaboration in reading Megillah on Purim, variations on chapter 3 of Eikha during Tisha B'av, the introduction of High Holyday trop at the congregational response verses during the reading for Fast Days—all are presented with examples. A trove of "new" material for brit milah, wedding, funeral and memorial services, tips for chanting Tehillim on various occasions, and gems from recorded hazzanut not available elsewhere are all here to savored and studied.

A key methodological device used in all the analyses are motivic patterns from scriptural cantillation. Kalib explained and made extensive use of this approach in Volume I and continues this in Volume II. I was not fully convinced of the utility of this approach in Volume I, but in this latest work, I better understand how helpful it can be. Being visually oriented, however, I would have really appreciated summary charts or comparison tables to help delineate styles, variations, etc. This leads to my one quibble— about the author's use of certain terminology which was rather vexing. For ostensibly good musicological reasons, the nusah modes that hazzanim have standardized by terms: *Ahavah Rabbah, Magein Avot, Selihah, Adonai Malakh,* etc. are either ignored or here designated by reference to medieval church modes such as major-third phrygian, or specific usage/context such as "Sabbath morning mode." Arguably, the usage of the scales, cadences, reciting tones and figures in nusah modes are modified by context, but I found use of these substitute terms disconcerting. I found myself constantly translating Kalib's usage back to familiar terminology. Furthermore, I am not certain that this "translation" of mode was always accurate! Reference to and explication of the customary model designations would have been very useful. I would have also preferred: defining modes with reference to their scalar note values and variations; and melodic types isolated, identified and classified by occasion and location. This is the manner suggested by contemporary scholars of Indian *raga*, Persian *dastgah* and Arabic *maqam* systems— whose theory and construction often parallel nusah, derived, perhaps, from a common ancient source.

Must one be familiar with Kalib's Volume I (published in 2002) in order to use this set? Surprisingly, no! I was able to manage mostly without consulting the introductory set, even though I often wanted to go back to it (and occasionally did). If you do not have volume I, let me urge you to obtain it as well. There is probably no greater bargain for hazzanim than these two volumes. It is highly unlikely that anything will ever compete with this pioneering masterpiece, because no one will again benefit from the personal access Kalib has had to the last great practitioners of a Weekday hazzanic tradition that is possibly on the verge of disappearing forever.

Lest you think I typically review with tenderness and praise with hyperbole, I assure you that of the scores of books I have reviewed professionally, many, if not most, have been skewered with criticism. So what makes Kalib's study so exceptional? It is a work so imbued with respect and love that even the painstaking detail of comparative analysis, delineation of mode, motif, and reference to cantillation phrase, feels like a devotional caress. The scholarship is impeccable, though different interpretations and methods of analysis may one day yield alternative conclusions concerning our hazzanic Mesorah—as our rabbinic Mesorah joyfully demands.

While *The Weekday Service* collection should have appeal for libraries, musicologists, conservatories etc., Sholom Kalib has really written these tomes for those among us who constitute the practicing and teaching cantorate. I can hardly wait for what is to follow. Own a set, study it carefully, use it and *kvell*!

Laurence D. Loeb has served as hazzan of Congregation Kol Ami in Salt Lake City for twenty-six years and is Associate Professor of Anthropology—and also teaches at the Middle East Center—at the University of Utah. He is currently preparing a study on the Jews of South Yemen. His last contribution to the Journal was the Review, ***"Two CDs of Victorian Era Music in British Synagogues,"*** *in 2005.*

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Ketonet Yosef: Genesis and Beyond!

Joseph A. Levine's *Hazzanic Compendium for the Entire Year*, Compiled for the H.L. Miller Cantorial School of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Volumes I and II, 2000

Reviewed by William Lieberman

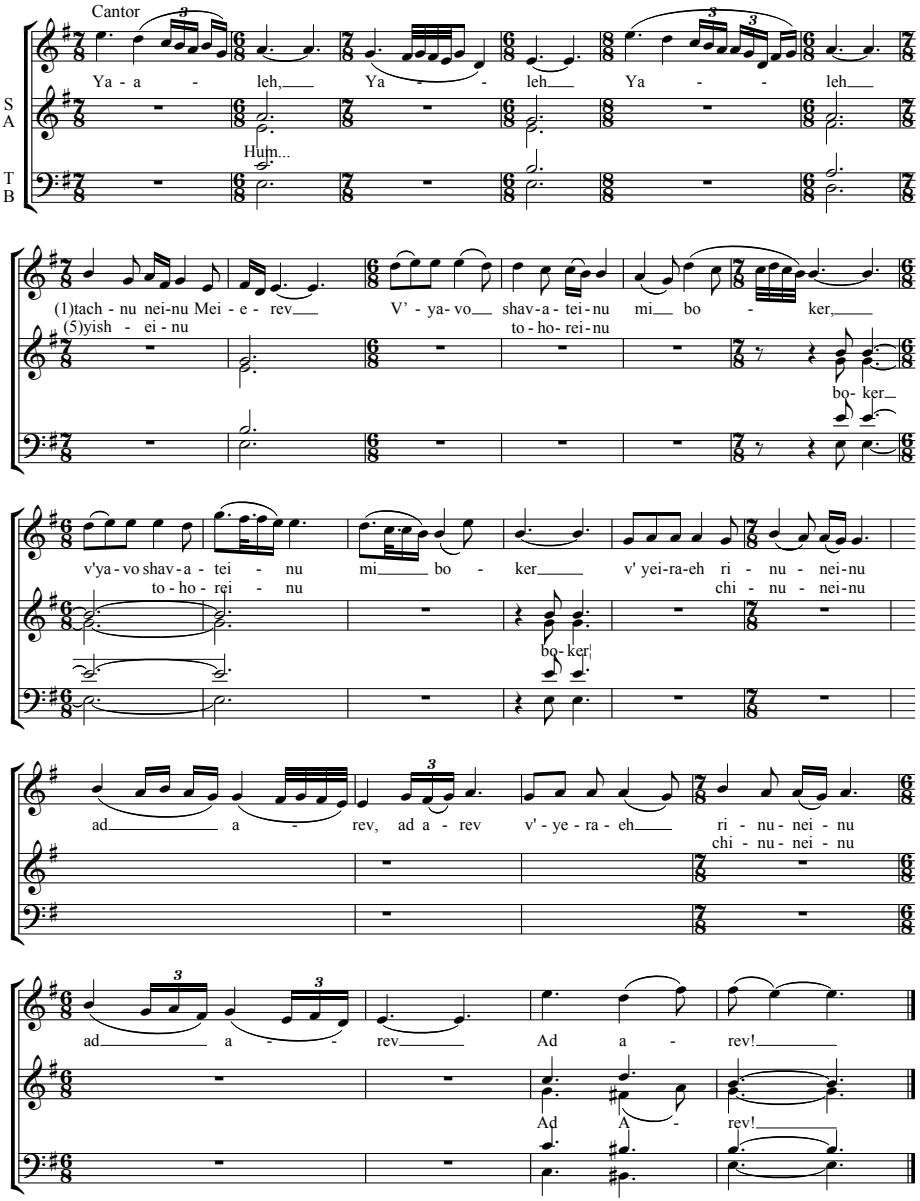
I was fortunate during my undergraduate years at the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary (1975-1979), to study and develop my craft and cantorial tastes with a number of hazzanim/mentors. The synagogues they served were vibrant. There was a healthy, competitive spirit, innovative programming, and a solid commitment on the part of the worshipers to their cantors. All of this encouraged an environment of scholarship and creativity,

which in turn, had a long-lasting beneficial effect on their students. Speaking personally, as a native "Brooklyn Boy," it was a refreshing, eye-opening experience- a unique glimpse into the modern American cantorate and my own future as a ḥazzan.

It was in my first year at the Seminary that one of my mentors, Joseph Levine, asked me and a fellow student to accompany him to a Detroit synagogue for the Yamim Nora'im, as his *meshorerim.* It seemed ideal for both of us students, since we were not yet ready to take on our own High Holiday positions. Hopefully, the experience would give us a foundation and confidence for the years ahead. Levine would coach us through the hundreds of pages of music—a formidable task for all involved, requiring many trips to his home in suburban Philadelphia. The relationship proved very rewarding. We benefited greatly from his guidance and from the family's gracious hospitality during the many hours of rehearsals in their home. For the task involved, Levine relied on his vast library of hand-written two-and three-part music for cantor, tenor, and baritone. It reinforced his mission to create a usable repertoire of standard recitatives—arranged for ḥazzan & two-part choir—that could easily be sung by students in his classes at the Cantors Institute. The seeds, as it were, for his *Ketonet Yosef* were planted.

As for me, this fateful encounter between teacher and student would lead to public as well as professionally recorded performances of Levine's scholarly endeavors, spanning well into the first part of my professional career. They included: *Adventures of a European Cantor:* the life, music and career of Joe's mentor, Abba Yosef Weisgal of Baltimore; *Synagogue Song in America*, a textbook that took apart nusaḥ like a swiss watch & put it back together again; and numerous synagogue collaborations during my early years as a ḥazzan, which we called *Classic Shabbatot* (*or Festival*) *Services in the Traditional Style.*

From all these collaborations, I began to amass a large collection of materials arranged by Levine. My first pulpit in New Jersey had a professional choir and I immediately integrated much of his Shabbat, Festival, and High Holiday music into the service. I continue this practice today, especially during the Yamim Nora'im, with a sixteen-voice volunteer adult choir in south Florida. The music has been warmly received, in large part because it is singable, memorable, and creates those sought-after spiritual moments that are so hard to come by. As expressed by of one of my congregants, "the listener is transported to an earlier time by its (the music's) authenticity and stirring character." One such example is Levine's arrangement of Cantor Sholom Katz's *Ya'aleh* in Rumanian Doina style for SATB and cantor soloist. (**Example 1**; Volume II, page 1054)

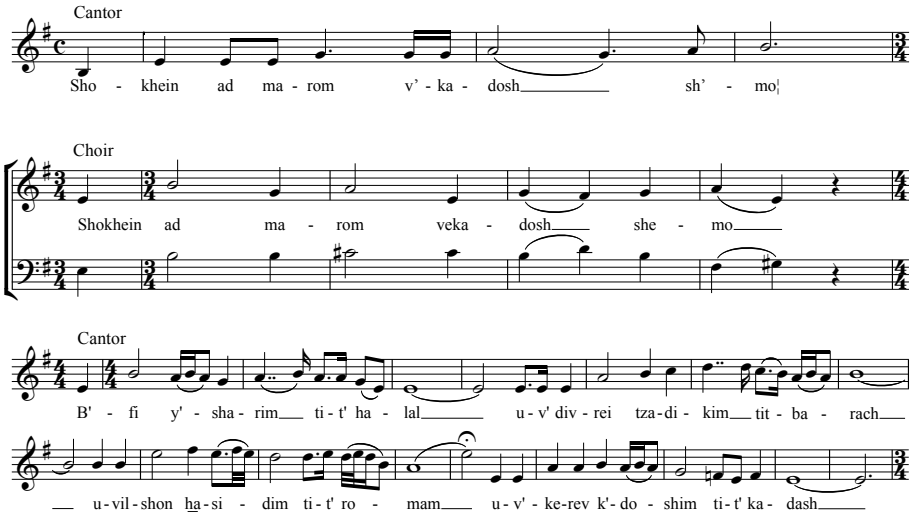


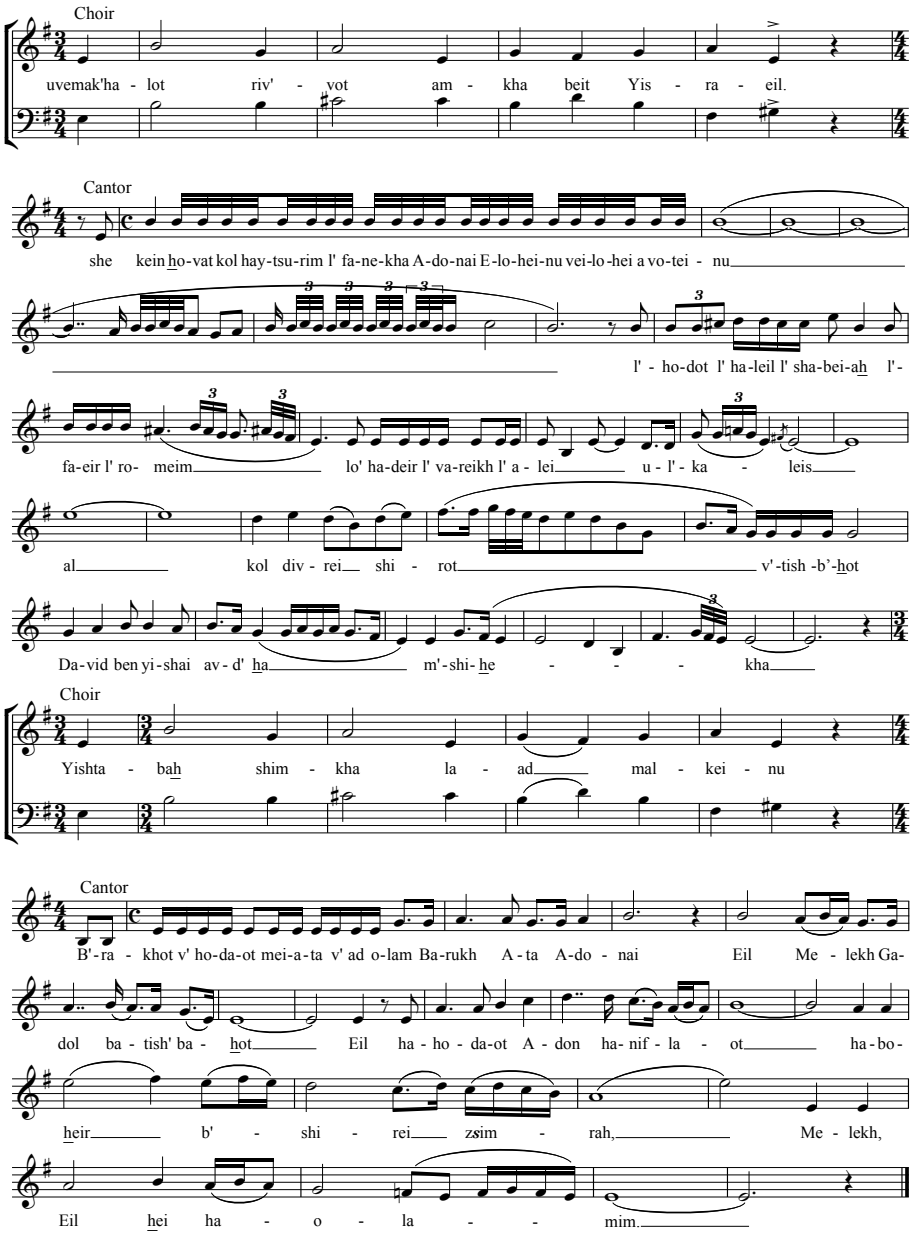
Example 1. *Sholom Katz's* ***Ya'aleh*** *in Rumanian Doina style for SATB or 2-part choir and cantor soloist.*

By 1999, succeeding generations of Levine's transcriptions, which had been successively copied, semester after semester, and distributed to his practicum

classes, were almost unreadable. So, when Henry Rosenblum, Dean of J.T.S.'s H.L. Miller Cantorial School, requested from Levine new replacements of the original spiral-bound volumes to supplement the students' curriculum, I was among those able to locate original materials. It is important to note and commend Levine's dedication and determination, years after he had stopped teaching at the Seminary, which led to the focus of this review, the creation or "genesis" of *Ketonet Yosef,* a monumental 1112- page compendium of hazzanic literature for the entire year. He states in its Foreword, referencing what he had learned from his two master teachers, Weisgal and Max Wohlberg, "…I determined to make (their) written scores conform to the common *hazzanic* practice I remembered hearing as a youngster, a convincing juxtaposition of concise declamation with periodic flights of fancy." Levine's pedagogical purpose and motivation is clearly stated at the outset: "This is my gift to cantorial students— past and present—who must keep a constant vigil for *singable* material."

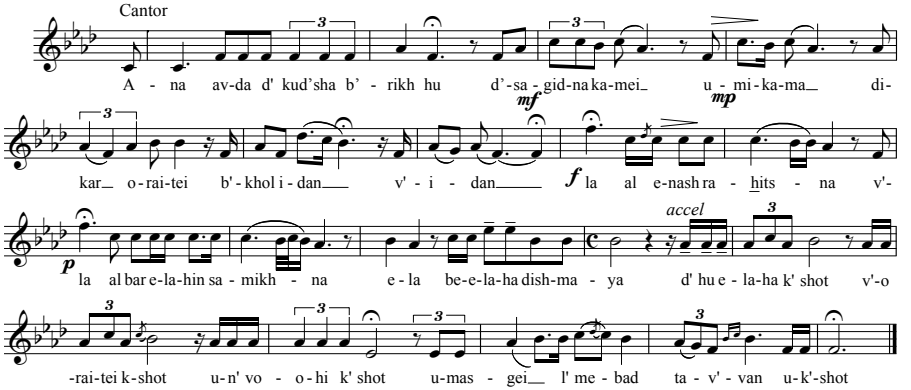
Joe Levine's innate sense of choosing singable, lyrical repertoire, creatively and meticulously reworking recitatives and choral arrangements, and making them vocally accessible to students as well as to more experienced hazzanim, is a hallmark of his contribution to our profession and a great strength of *Ketonet Yosef*. A good example is his transcription of Jo Amar's *Shokhein Ad* section of Shaharit for Shabbat and Festivals (**Example 2**; Volume I, page 235),where we see a creative blend of Western choral refrain wrapped around a beautiful Moroccan-style recitative. In my own experience, tyhis piece has worked most successfully in establishing the right mood and an immediate connection between cantor and worshippers onShabbat morning.





Example 2. *Jo Amar's* ***Shokhein Ad*** *section for Shabbat and Festivals: Western choral refrains wrapped around Moroccan-style recitative.*

Another opportunity for an immediate connection with one's congregants has been during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, using Levine's arrangement of the *Ein Kamokha* sequence (Volume I, pages 291-293). Here he combines elements of Sulzer and Dunayevsky. My adult choir participates, and everyone seems to enjoy the familiar melodies. As this section continues, another spiritual moment is presented for solo hazzan in Levine's transcription of a Zalman Rivlin's recitative *Ana Avda* (**Example 3.**; Volume I, page 294), leading into the congregational anthem Bei Ana Raheits. Other examples of this kind that have worked well for me over the years have been Levine's arrangement of Max Helfman's *Hashkivenu* (Volume I, page 122), and Arthur Yolkoff's *May the Words (*Volume I, page 136), from *Shirat Atideinu.*



Example 3. *Zalman Rivlin's recitative,* ***Ana Avda****, leading into the congregational anthem Bei Ana Raheits.*

I am pleased to find the inclusion of modern works by Michael Isaacson, and especially an arrangement of Debbie Friedman's *Mi Shebeirach* for cantor and children's choir. What are also needed are additional materials from their contemporaries on the synagogue circuit, such as Craig Taubman, for example. Also, unlike Levine's *Synagogue Song in America,* there are no CD's available to illustrate performance practice. Those of us who had the opportunity for "live and in person" coachings can draw from that experience; but how will later generations of students deal with this issue. With so much material to absorb, I would suggest some kind of companion guide with an audio component.

For nearly thirty years, I have used many of the musical arrangements and compositions contained in *Ketonet Yosef.* In writing this review, I hope to have piqued the interest of my colleagues and especially the students, who might want to use it beyond the present time and into the future. To touch

on each individual section and genre, a monumental task, must be left to a future reviewer. All I can hope is that this work finds its way to those who wish to challenge themselves and reward their listeners as well.

William Lieberman holds a Masters degree in Music Therapy and is ḥazzan at B'nai Aviv Congregation in Weston, Florida.

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The New Rabbinical Assembly Maḥzor's *Evening Service for Yom Kippur*: Prayer Book or Prayer Prep.?

Reviewed by Alan M. Smolen

Whenever Jews truly want to make a statement, we do not take out ads in newspapers, draft position papers, write philosophical treaties or produce statements of principles. We publish prayer books. In the 20th century, Mordechai Kaplan was a fine example. Most people paid little attention to his work until he published a siddur containing his liturgical revisions. Then and only then, in 1945, did the Union of Orthodox Rabbis burn *The Reconstructionist Prayer Book*, sound the shofar and excommunicate Kaplan.

Why is the prayer book such a powerful medium, inciting some to extreme response? I believe this is a complex issue, but in short, the siddur/maḥzor is the script (more accurately, the point of departure) for the human–Divine encounter. In the hands of Jews looking for a better understanding of themselves and a connection with God and one's fellow Jews around the globe and throughout history, no other genre of our literature has the potential impact of the prayer book. According to Dr. Avraham Holtz of JTS, "Liturgy is that which lends significance to time."

Apparently, it is time in the eyes of some to create the next expression for Conservative Jews for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, as the Rabbinical Assembly has released its "Preliminary Edition For Review And Comment" of an *Evening Service for Yom Kippur* from its complete Maḥzor for the High Holy Days, due out in 2008. I was privileged to have sent suggestions to previous publications, but do not recall ever seeing an invitation comparable to the one on the cover of this one. My cantorial colleagues have reacted informally to it on the Internet, but it seems from their comments that several may not be aware of the history and development of Conservative liturgical publications. Some, in fact, connect *Yamim Nora'im* only to their continued use of

the Silverman Mahzor. It's understandable that to them, reading through this excerpt from the planned 2008 mahzor and discovering how far Conservative liturgy has traveled since 1939 might be quite a revelation.

* * * * * *

The title of this work, *Mahzor le-Yamim Nora'im* (Mahzor for the High Holy Days) retains the Hebrew title from the 1972 RA publication (edited by Jules Harlow), except that there the English subtitle was "…for *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur* – A Prayer Book for the Days of Awe." This new edition sepecifies *Yamim Nora'im*, the phrase currently in vogue for collective reference to *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*. I think it is a fine choice, but have to ask: will it later call for a revision, similar to the changes made in the 1985 edition of *Siddur Sim Shalom* when *Shabbat Shuvah* became the "*Shabbat* before *Yom Kippur*" and returned to being *Shabbat Shuvah* in the 1998 edition: *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals*?

Is there a fear among 21st century American Conservative Jews of confronting the phrase *Yamim Nora'im*—"Days of Awe"? I might also mention that the 1998 edition of *Siddur Sim Shalom* had already moved to using the Hebrew itself and not transliteration for Hebrew terms in its rubrics. *ESYK* generally follows suit, with certain inconsistencies: where it states on English p. 36 that "It is customary to beat one's heart with one's fist when we say the words 'We have sinned.'" The identical instruction on Hebrew page 36 should conclude with the phrase "*Al heit*." Anyone worshiping from the Hebrew on p. 36 will not be saying "We have sinned;" rather, they will say "*Al heit*." The instructions on a given page—be it Hebrew or English—should consistently reflect what is happening on that page. I also believe there needs to be consistency with transliteration. If it is a long "e" vowel (as in "weigh") that we want people to say, then "ei" should be used more frequently for the Hebrew *tsei'rei* vowel, i.e. it should read "*l'hit'a'teif*," and not "*l'hit'a'tef*." (see examples on pp. 1, 3, 4 and others).

Two rather nice features greet worshipers right at the start. The first is a greeting that quotes words from the Haftarah of Yom Kippur Morning: *Shalom shalom, la-rahok v'la-karov, amar Adonai* (Is. 57:19). The second is an original meditation for putting on the white *kittel*, giving some measure of meaning to this liturgical garment, with another appropriate quote from Isaiah (1:18): Be your sins like crimson, they can turn snow-white. Texts and rituals that may have been more readily appreciated in other generations are given context through these additions.

The Amidah (pp. 12 – 20) offers some interesting features as well. A symbol has been introduced to let the worshipper know where to bend the knees and bow the head at the opening and closing of the Avot and Hoda'ah blessings (pages 12-13 and 16-17, the same symbol appears in the Aleinu, p. 45). The Amidah's opening page presents both the traditional and the matriarch-inclusive version of *Avot* (Ancestors). Both appear on the same page in a vertical-read format, which may not be entirely clear to the worshiper. I presume this is because some stigma attached to the separate-page format of the 1998 *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals*. I hope this new format will not be confusing or reconsidered for revision. The word *"avoteinu"* is translated as "our ancestors" in the Avot blessing, where the second column pairs all four matriarchs with their husbands. In other places, where the patriarchs are not named, neither are the matriarchs. Instead, the format has been changed to "*Eloheinu veilohei avoteinu* ***ve-imoteinu***" (Our God and God of our fathers **and our mothers** [reviewer's emphasis] – see pp. 21, 32, 33, and 34), and this only for the first of a series in the same paragraph, to preserve some semblance of continuity in the text.

The poetic selihah *Omnam Kein* ("Indeed, an evil inclination rules us") and the line *K'ra Ro'a G'zar Dineinu* ("annul the evil decree," from *Avinu Malkei'nu)*, and some other selections fondly recalled from earlier pre-1972 volumes were already missing from in the 1972 RA mahzor. So, for those who daven from Silverman, Birnbaum or some other traditional *Ashkenazi mahzor*, much of that material has been gone for at least a generation. Our comparison, therefore, needs to be with the 1972 RA mahzor. Our liturgical heritage has a tremendous fluidity at times and especially with regard to piyyut. A plethora of Creation piyyutim (Yots'rot) exists, but who is utilizing anything other than *Eil Adon* on Shabbat morning these days? At one time, there was a new offering every week, to keep things fresh.

The decision of the RA to essentially be loyal to the Ashkenazi rite and yet not be limited by it, to bring in selections from other rites as well, is enriching. And our congregations often include Jews from other communities as well, let alone colleagues from around the globe. Yet, many of the piyyutim from all traditions need a dry erase board and a few hours to truly appreciate – they are not always written for the average congregant today, even though in past ages people may have found them more meaningful. Today, I think that when people hear *Lekhu Neran'nah*—in the "Mercy" verses that introduce the Selihot section in traditional mahzorim—most will associate those words with Kabbalat Shabbat and not with Yom Kippur. For that reason *ESYK* wisely omits that particular verse. Has the *matbei'a shel t'fillah* (body of statutory prayer)

been disturbed by its omission? Prayer books are not published capriciously; they are published when there is a genuine need to be addressed.

And why is it that previous generations could manipulate the prayer book but it is considered *khutzpadik* for us to do so? Amram and Sa'adyah Ga'on, the Ramba"m, etc. often had shorter versions of texts than we do today. As is pointed out in the commentary to the "*Al Heit*" (p. 36), Sa'adyah had 6 lines, Amram had 12 lines and Maimonides had 22 lines. Is our 44-line version better than theirs? (The commentary mistakenly says 54 lines – it is a double acrostic today: 22 x 2 = 44.) Do we really believe that when Sa'adyah recited what he considered *Birkat HaMazon* (much shorter than today's "full" version, *à la* the 1977 Conservative Movement laminated publication) he had not fulfilled his obligation to recite *Birkat HaMazon*? Longer is not always better. The range of Moses' prayers extends from *Shirat HaYam* (Exodus 15: eighteen verses) to *Eil Na R'fah Na Lah*" (Numbers 12: a single verse). There is a time to be lengthy and a time to be brief. We also have an obligation to determine what is best for our time. It will be interesting to see if this mahzor continues the tendency to gradually reduce the *Al Heit* recitations over each of the Yom Kippur services (as per the 1972 edition), or whether it restores the 44-line version in each service, as in earlier editions.

A major concern with *ESYK*'s 4-column layout is the balance between prayers and commentary. The main text does not feel likes it is swimming in the commentary, although there is a decision to be made here: Will this volume prove better for study and preparation, e.g. *Or Hadash: A Commentary on Siddur Sim Shalom* (Reuven Hammer, editor, 2003) or will it be used primarily during prayer, by the masses? That decision should be made by each individual congregation—by an appropriate combination of professional and lay leadership. The commentary includes traditional and contemporary sources, providing the worshipper with additional levels of understanding beyond the cursory meaning one may achieve on one's own. Size and weight of the book will also be final factors, not possible to be considered from this paperback excerpt of a single service. I believe the fonts and colors may need to be revisited, to ensure that the final one chosen is easiest on the eyes. I am sure we have all heard our share of complaints from congregants about purple Shabbat-insertion pages in the 1972 edition.

There is concern that the five new piyyutim which appear in *ESYK*, whether adapted from other rites or written as contemporary material, will either be skipped or become options for English readings. Let us remember something: Over the centuries, new poems were constantly introduced, for which the hazzanim of that era had to create new music; had they not done so, those

those piyyutim would never have achieved the status they have today. Do you think *Un'taneh Tokef* was a hit the first time out? Aside from its moving language, two things helped it reach the top of the charts: 1) a great legend (successful items often have a good story with them); and 2) great music. And there is still great music being written, but for the canonical liturgy. Why don't newer selections inspire (more) composers to write settings for them, so they aren't merely read responsively or skipped entirely? Some of the new texts could potentially turn into this generation's *U'n'taneh Tokef*! True, there is not a lot of financial incentive to compose synagogue settings for new texts, but that has rarely been the real obstacle. Those who create liturgical music do so because it is in their souls; this is how their creative impulse finds expression, and coincidentally contributes to the aesthetic of synagogue worship.

Why did the term "Hazzan" become "Leader" in *ESYK*? There was a wonderful statement of intent by the RA in other publications, to recognize the value of the cantorial profession and of the professionals who practice it. I know there were also plans to use a term other than "Hazzan" in *Siddur Sim Shalom for Weekdays* because the presumption was that lay people would more likely lead during the week. But on the High Holy Days, who did the RA Mahzor committee think would be chanting Kol Nidrei and leading the Ma'ariv service on Yom Kippur Eve? To its credit the committee did include a transliteration of Kol Nidrei is in the book, knowing that many worshipers are moved to follow along with the hazzan's chant, *sotto voce*. As a matter of fact, Sephardic mahzorim specify—about three-fifths of the way through Kol Nidre—that the congregation should respond aloud with the remainder of the prayer: *Veha-Kahal Onin—kul'hon yehon sharan, shevikin shevitin…*—until the end.

To my knowledge, the greeting—*LeShanah Tovah Tikateivu VeTeihateimu*— at the end of *ESYK* is incorrect (p. 49). That is the greeting for Rosh HaShanah Eve only. To wish that for someone after Rosh HaShanah Eve is to imply their fate has not been already sealed in the Book of Life. According to a midrash, on the first night of New Year all the righteous and all the evil are immediately sealed in their respective books. It is those in the middle who have to wait. Our Sages, of blessed memory teach that wishing *LeShanah Tovah Tikateivu VeTeihateimu* after the first night could imply that we think our family and friends are not among the righteous already sealed. The proper greeting for Yom Kippur, of course, is "*G'mar / Gimri / Gimru Hatimah Tovah*.

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Overall, I believe this will be another fine addition to the liturgical publications of the Movement. And while our colleagues Joseph Levine and Ken Richmond are valued members of the Mahzor committee, when will the day come when the Rabbinical Assembly and the Cantors Assembly will *jointly* produce such publications? To date, these works are either the efforts of the RA alone or jointly with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. In other words, rabbis and congregants have produced these most crucial books, while hazzanim have merely been consulted on the projects. As the ones who have a great deal invested in how a prayer book might best function along with knowledge and expertise in the art of prayer, it would seem natural for members of the Cantors Assembly to play a more active and prominent role in the production of liturgical publications for the Conservative Movement.

May the *Mahzor for the High Holy Days*, of which *Evening Service for Yom Kippur* is a promising harbinger, inspire our generation to prepare and participate most effectively in the drama of the New Year and Day of Atonement, so that "repentance, prayer and good deeds may annul the severity of the decree" during the Penitential season, and motivate us during the remainder of the year to aspire to the most noble aspects of our heritage and of the human spirit.

Alan M. Smolen is the recently appointed hazzan of Beth Judah Congregation in Ventnor City, NJ. He has served on the production team for the CA –USCJ ***"Spirit Series" CDs*** *for the Cantors Assembly since 2003.*

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The Milken Archive of American Jewish Music: Recordings in the Naxos American Classics Series

Reviewed by Bernard Jacobson

Questions are much more interesting and rewarding than answers. To say, then, that my immersion in the Milken series has set me to thinking about many of the former without necessarily providing much in the way of the latter is in no sense a complaint. This collection of recordings provides an inestimable boost to the catalogs, while offering the opportunity of discovering or rediscovering a number of musical gems, and it is my obvious first duty to commend those associated with the project, including the Archive's founder, Lowell Milken, and its artistic director, Neil W. Levin, as well as the

Naxos company, for the massive undertaking they have conceived and come close to completing.

Whether the execution matches the conception is one of the questions I have to consider; in doing so, I have been listening in recent weeks to a representative 21of the 40 CDs so far released (out of a planned set of 90). A more fundamental question is what that conception is–on the Milken side, what exactly is "American Jewish Music," and, for Naxos, what is a "classic"? These may seem like fairly simple questions, but they contain complex elements. In addressing them, I shall be as brief as possible, and I hope you will forgive me for the necessarily autobiographical component in my treatment of them.

For a start, what is "American music"? It was, I think, Virgil Thomson who proposed, as one answer: music by Americans. That, however, begs a still more basic question: what is "an American"? You may think this a silly question, but I can assure you that, when I worked for the Philadelphia Orchestra and tried to make lists of American repertoire either performed or crying out for performance, I met with considerable disagreement on how to categorize the various composers who came to the United States in the 20th century as the result of political or other pressures in Europe: how long did they have to have been here before their music could be considered American, and to what degree did their assimilation of American cultural characteristics assist toward that judgement? (On the most elementary level, for that matter–are you accustomed to calling Dvorák's "New World" Symphony an American work?)

And then, what is a "classic"? The word, it seems to me, is partly descriptive and partly evaluative: I think of it as meaning something that has been around for a long time, and that deserves to have been. But one dictionary I consulted defines a classic as a literary or artistic work "generally recognized as excellent, authoritative, etc." This seems to omit any appeal to longevity, unless "generally" is to be understood as projected back in time to imply recognition by many judges in more than one period. In any case, that "generally" clearly signals one reason why answers are not going to be easy to come by in any consideration of the subject: how many persons constitute a generality? For my part, I confess to an initial instinctive resistance to applying the term "classic" to such works in the Naxos series as were created very recently. But if the word helps such masterpieces–now there's another provocative word for you!–as William Bolcom's *Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience* or the symphonies of William Schuman to be recorded and marketed, well, then, its proleptic use to signify a work that is sure to be around for a long time is perhaps justifiable.

The element in those initial questions, however, that I find thorniest is, what is "a Jew"? In the review *Beyond the Fringe,* Jonathan Miller told us, "I'm not a Jew; I'm just Jew-*ish* . . . I don't go the whole hog." It was a wonderful line, but we need a more serious answer, and in seeking one I cannot avoid an autobiographical touch. Growing up as an atheistic Jew in England, I found it hard to answer the question, "Are you a Jew?" It took me a long time to realize that this is a question to which there can be no one answer, and that the word "Jew" is close to being unique in this respect. Yes, "American" has a variety of meanings, but most inhabitants of the United States, at least, can say without hesitation or ambiguity whether or not they are American. Yes, even "English" was used by my mother to mean "non-Jewish," but in general usage the word "Englishman" has a certain clarity of reference. At the same time, such questions as "Are you a Catholic?" or "Are you a Muslim?" need hardly provoke equivocation, even if at certain times in history they may have called for dissembling in the cause of survival. "Jew," and "Jewish," are the only words that in this context demand dual answers.

I couldn't accurately respond with either a simple "yes" or a simply "no." In the end, the answer I framed took some such form as, "Yes, I'm an ethnic Jew but not an observant one." It's a long and perhaps somewhat pompous answer to a short question, but it served. In responding to what must have been a similarly thorny complex of questions, Neil Levin, in the prefatory note printed in all the Milken Archive series booklets, arrives at a comparably comprehensive answer. He describes the Archive's content as "all born of the American Jewish experience or fashioned for uniquely American institutions," and, further, as having been "created by native American or immigrant composers." He and Lowell Milken, moreover, clearly indicate that the works in the Archive and the series range through both the sacred and the secular fields.

If all this leaves unanswered my questions about "American," "Jewish," and "Classics," I hope I have said enough to illustrate just why answers are elusive. So it is time to offer some description and some evaluation of the series under review. I mentioned "gems." There are plenty of them to be found among the more than 100 pieces contained in my 21 discs, and they do not all crop up where I expected to find them. There are fine works by such well-known figures as Leonard Bernstein and Lukas Foss, but some of the best works come from the pens of composers many music lovers may not yet have heard of. On the other hand (to get the negatives out of the way before going into more detail), Ernst Toch, Kurt Weill, Hugo Weisgal and Yehudi Wyner are

widely respected composers, yet their contributions here have left me largely indifferent, or worse.

Toch, in particular, is represented by a *Cantata of the Bitter Herbs* that is almost unrelievedly banal and features positively nonsensical word-setting. And whoever, in writing the blurb on the back of the box, opined that one of its movements "recalls the beauty of the famous trio from *Der Rosenkavalier"* ought to take a lesson the negative effect of exaggerated claims. (If Toch's vocal writing can be said to recall that of Strauss, it can only be in the sense of the remark an uncle of mine used to make to his wife: "You remind me of Marilyn Monroe–you're so different.") Weill was a bigger talent than Toch, but you would not think so on the basis of his voluminous pageant/music-drama/theatrical extravaganza, *The Eternal Road,* or at least of the excerpts recorded here: the seemingly endless succession of four-measure phrases in square time had me longing for a triple meter, but relief was not to be found, and the stiffness of the line-by-line text-setting reminded me of that overrated American opera, Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah,* in its fatal lack of progression from idea to idea–nearly every line in the music seems to stop dead, instead of leading persuasively to what follows. The trouble with the disc of works by Hugo Weisgal, a composer whose high reputation I have never understood, is not so much rhythmic as harmonic, though I suppose really the harmonic problem leads inevitably to the rhythmic one. The besetting pan-chromaticism in the language of Weisgal's *T'kiatot: Rituals for Rosh Hashana,* for example, produces a total absence of real movement. In such an idiom, you can flail around all you like, but the music is still likely not to go anywhere; *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,* and the ostensibly fast music sounds in consequence just the same as the slow. There is a tiny beautiful passage for the strings near the end of this work, and the composer's earlier *A Garden Eastward* starts well and has its moments, but these consolations are too little and too late in my estimation. Yehudi Wyner (born 1929) comes off much better than those three of his late colleagues. His narrative piece *The Mirror* is enjoyable for its unpretentious fluency and a degree of charm. Its style, however, depends a shade too much on the example of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* and indeed of the better, cabaret-ish side of Weill. In the three Wyner works recorded, indeed, I find little trace of an overarching individual personality–and the booklet note's quotation of Bernard Holland's idea about "consciously Brahmsian textures" in the second movement of *Tants un Maysele* leaves me flabbergasted. If this essentially static music can be related in any positive sense to Brahms's always-propulsive textures, I am the Pope.

Leaving these, and even less satisfactory works like Jacob Weinberg's Second Piano Concerto (all gesture, with no substantial musical content), Jan Meyerowitz's grossly overblown *Midrash Esther* Symphony (with a grotesquely silly finale, and again with no real difference between fast and slow music), and Joseph Achron's more attractive but still ultimately trivial First Violin Concerto (where the essentially static nature of the cantillations he draws on yet again inhibits any real movement), I pass, at long last, and with compensatory enthusiasm, to the many pieces in the series that have given me renewed or previously un-encountered pleasures. One disc couples four works by Lukas Foss (born 1922) with *The Heavenly Feast* by Robert Beaser (born 1954). Foss demonstrates triumphantly that it is possible to put a wide range of styles to use and still project an unmistakably personal identity. The legendary tone of *Song of Anguish,* for baritone and orchestra, is worlds removed from the gamelan-like sonorities and gait of *Lammdeni,* for chorus and percussion. Yet Foss stands before us, individual and uncompromising, in both works, as he does also in the no less different and piercingly beautiful setting for tenor, chorus, and organ of *Adon Olam*–a miniature perhaps—at its five-minute duration, yet, I am tempted to suggest, worth the price of admission all by itself. Beaser is among the more talented composers of the middle generation, and his cantata about Simone Weil has character and some powerful scale-like build-ups in the orchestra, but coming on the heels of Foss' luminous rapture, his music seems less consistently individual, and there are rather too many threatening timpani crescendos that in the end don't seem to lead to anything.

Bruce Adolphe, just a year younger than Beaser, seems to me an exceptionally impressive talent. He is represented by two works and an excerpt from a third, and all of them are beautiful, unfailingly well crafted, and unassuming yet profound. His disc begins with *Ladino Songs of Love and Suffering,* set for soprano with guitar and horn, and poignant in its blend of passion and understated loneliness, and ends with the equally piquant *Out of the Whirlwind,* based on Yiddish songs by Holocaust victims, which is scored for mezzo-soprano, tenor, wind orchestra, piano, harp, and bass. In between, we are given just one scene, but a magical one, from Adolphe's opera *Mikhoels the Wise.* Mel Gordon's libretto, by turns touchingly poetic, sophisticated, and funny, recounts the story of a leading Yiddish theater star and Jewish spokesman in the Stalin era. Adolphe makes something deeply moving of an encounter between Mikhoels and a Korean girl who has identified with the sufferings of the Jews. Superficially, his line-by-line textual treatment might be said to resemble the methods I have criticized in Weill and Floyd; yet, where they are

stiff, he manages to secure an irresistible forward flow, and his chamber-style handling of the orchestra is full of character and charm.

Paul Schoenfield (born 1947) is another composer currently enjoying considerable success, and his exuberant and rhythmically inventive *Klezmer Rondos,* for flute, tenor, and orchestra, demonstrates why, but I found the disc devoted to three of his other works relatively conventional if not devoid of momentary beauties. More rewarding is the three-movement string-orchestral *Shirat Sara* by Sheila Silver (born 1946), which is coupled, on a disc titled "Jewish Tone Poems," with the Meyerowitz work already mentioned and with *Four Biblical Tableaux* by Aaron Avshalomov, a good composer but less arrestingly gifted than his son Jacob. Silver's finale is on the bitty side, but her dark and concentrated idiom compels attention from the start; there is real imagination at play in her piece, the notes matter (which ought to go without saying, but is not always the case), and the music is strongly personal, even if mildly reminiscent of the sound of Karl Amadeus Hartmann's string writing.

Along with all these composers still active today, the series embraces some broadly varied work by those no longer with us. A whole slew of them may be found in the *Genesis Suite,* a curious Hollywood composite from the 1940s that brings together such widely disparate composers as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Milhaud, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Toch, Tansman, and Nathaniel Shilkret. Schoenberg's Prelude and Stravinsky's concluding *Babel* are both rather undistinguished pieces, leaving Shilkret, with whom I was previously unacquainted, and the others to bask in a relatively favorable limelight, but the work as a whole is too short of striking ideas to stay vividly in the ear or mind. Milhaud is heard to better advantage in his *Service Sacré,* a surprisingly gentle and often radiant work that deserves to be heard more often. It is, however, outshone by the *Sacred Service for the Sabbath Eve* of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, who emerges as a far more major talent than I had ever suspected. Like the cantata *Naomi and Ruth* that precedes it on the disc, Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *Sacred Service* has real counterpoint, real harmony, lots of character, and genuine pace: there are elements of cantillation, which in other hands, I have suggested, can lead to stasis, but Castelnuovo-Tedesco sets them against a background of harmonic change that prevents the music from ever bogging down. And the work concludes with another beautiful setting of *Adon Olam.*

Two other distinct categories represented by the series are songs from the Yiddish theater and specifically liturgical works, including a two-disc set of *S'lihot* for the First Day, billed as "The Entire Midnight Service According to

Orthodox and Traditional Ritual." This latter is stirring and compelling stuff, a far cry (even literally) from the etiolated "deahly-beloved-bwethwen" manner that I associated in my youth with the Church of England tradition. And the discs of theater material–"Great Songs of the Yiddish Stage," volumes 1 and 2, featuring a broad swathe of composers headed by Abraham Ellstein, and including such old favorites as *Bai mir bistu sheyn* and *Abi Gezunt,* are a delight, covering the gamut of mood and expression from sentimentality and lyricism to infectious humor and consuming energy.

Then there is Leonard Bernstein to be taken into account (as if, in living memory, he ever wasn't). Two discs in the series present this multifarious musician, whom I once saw referred to as "house genius to Columbia Records," in many different aspects. The one entitled "A Jewish Legacy" is, I think, the less successful, juxtaposing as it does attractive chips from the composer's workbench like his *Hashkivenu* setting with such inconsequential pieces as *Halil,* given here in its chamber version for flute, percussion, and piano, in which I can find little but noodling and banality.

The coupling, on the other hand, of the composer's Third Symphony, *Kaddish,* with his *Chichester Psalms* may justly be described as revelatory, even if these two works are already well known. The *Psalms* I have always loved, since even before I got to know the work from the inside by actually singing in it. With *Kaddish* my first experience was decidedly negative, but that was largely for textual reasons, since the lengthy spoken part included a number of decidedly embarrassing passages. The 1977 revised version recorded for the Milken series is a great improvement, and seems to liberate the whole symphony to make its impact as a work of irrepressible invention–harmonic and rhythmic alike, choral and orchestral alike–and of gigantic personality. Here, more than in any of the other works recorded except for a few I have singled out, is an authentic voice, the same voice we know also from Bernstein the performer, Bernstein the teacher, and, yes, Bernstein the political activist and social provocateur.

Where Bernstein the composer was concerned, that voice, utterly individual for the most part, was also at times closely related to the voice of Aaron Copland–but not here, because Copland wrote, aside from *Vitebsk,* little in the way of recognizably Jewish music: his genius was mostly bestowed on manifestations of such traditions as Shaker piety and Western country life. Bernstein mined that vein also in some of his works, but in *Kaddish* and the *Chichester Psalms* he comes close to answering my earlier question about what "American Jewish Music" is.

The difference with Copland may be said to justify his omission from the 50 discs of this CD series. Other omissions, to come now to some points of relative dissatisfaction, are harder to explain. There is no Shapey to be found here, though Ralph Shapey was one of the most gifted composers of his time, and wrote many identifiably Jewish works. There is at present no Wernick, though Richard Wernick's *Visions and Terror and Wonder* and several of his other works would surely be an adornment to the series. (His *Oracle II* was actually recorded for the project at least seven years ago, but has still not been issued or even definitively edited.) There is no Walden, though Stanley Walden's chamber symphony, *After Auschwitz,* would surely be a natural for inclusion. Any of these composers would add materially to the presence of one Jewish characteristic–intellectual toughness–that is perhaps underrepresented in the repertoire so far chosen.

While I am on the subject of deficiencies, I have to say that, particularly coming from an archival source, the series is blemished by some quite serious weaknesses in presentation. The program notes, most of them contributed by Neil Levin himself, are indeed of archival stature, but by virtue of that very fact they tend to concentrate at great length (and with subordinate clause piled on subordinate clause like Pelion on Ossa[1]) on the cultural, textual, or ritual underpinnings of the works recorded, to the relative neglect of the music itself. The decision, for works sung in Hebrew or Aramaic, to print translations but no transliterations of the original is in my view deeply regrettable, for it makes it much harder to follow the progress of the music with proper attention to its meaning. And there are far too many misprints and omissions in the booklets, in some cases neglecting biographies of certain soloists while including those of others with no larger part in the proceedings, and frequently omitting even to tell us who is playing or singing what. I also question the wisdom, in some cases, of offering excerpts rather than complete works. I could happily have done without some of the less attractive music in the series if I had been given, for example, not just a scene from Adolphe's *Mikhoels the Wise,* but the whole score.

Where I have very little complaint is in the matter of the actual performances and recordings. There is some superb singing to be heard. The baritones James Maddalena in Foss and Nathaniel Watson in the Adolphe excerpt, the soprano Yvonne Kenny in Bernstein's *Kaddish,* and the mezzo-soprano Phyllis Pancella

[1] (Editor's note: Two mountains in ancient Greece, which the rebellious giants known as Aloadae piled one atop the other in a fruitless attempt to reach heaven.)

in the latter composer's *Out of the Whirlwind,* are outstanding among a large array of fine voices. Of the speakers, Willard White, again in *Kaddish,* is the most majestic (one or two of the other speakers have somewhat unimpressive voices, and one participating rabbi seems surprisingly lacking in *gravitas*). And for the Yiddish songs, mostly done in effective new arrangements, as well the liturgical works, the line-up of voices is headed by the cantors Simon Spiro and Benzion Miller. Miller's mastery of a device in cantorial art very similar to the repeated-note *trillo* in early Baroque Italian music had me wondering what it might be like to hear him as, of all unlikely characters, Monteverdi's Orfeo.) There are marvelous performances from some instrumentalists in the chamber settings, including guitarist Eliot Fisk and horn-player David Jolley in Adolphe's *Ladino Songs* and clarinetist Richard Stoltzman on the Wyner disc. At least equally impressive is the work of the various choruses and orchestras involved. Among the latter are the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic in Bernstein's *Kaddish* and *Chichester Psalms,* the Berlin Radio Symphony, Czech Philharmonic, and Barcelona Symphony in several works, and the Seattle Symphony in by far the largest number of recordings.

For me personally it has been particularly rewarding to encounter the series just at the moment when my wife and I have moved from Philadelphia to the Seattle area, for the contribution of the local orchestra, and of its music director, Gerard Schwarz, has clearly been crucial to its success. With his own Seattle and Liverpool orchestras and with other ensembles, Schwarz, who also serves on the Archive's editorial board, conducts no fewer than 18 of the works I have listened to, including almost all of the most substantial ones, and the dedication, stylistic commitment, expressive intensity, and sheer polish of execution he and his players have consistently achieved in works that are often complex and challenging is beyond praise.

What, then, is "American Jewish Music"? Explore these recordings, and see if you can find out.

London-born and Oxford-educated, Bernard Jacobson was, until recently, a Contributing Editor of Fanfare Magazine and has spent periods as music critic of the Chicago Daily News, promotion director for Boosey & Hawkes music publishers, program annotator and musicologist for the Philadelphia Orchestra (where he worked for eight years with Riccardo Muti and created the orchestra's chamber-music series) and artistic director of the Residentie Orkest in the Hague. In addition to books on Brahms, on conducting and on the 20th-century ***Polish Renaissance (Phaedon, 1996),***

his publications include entries in ***Encyclopedia Britannica*** *and* ***The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians****.*

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MEDITATION ON THE MODES:
Jeffrey Melnick's *A Right to Sing the Blues— African Americans, Jews and American Popular Song,* Harvard University Press: 1999.

Reviewed by Gershon Friedlin

From the dust jacket: "Jeff Melnick means to displace the narrative of the Black-Jewish political alliance. He goes back instead to the central role of Jews vis-a-vis African Americans and African-American music in popular culture, and how, finally, Jews developed new identities as American Jews through their relation to real and imaginary African Americans and their music."

Look what I see here: an insight, apparently from out in left field, touching upon our ubiquitous quest for *Nusah* (or, *Minhag*) *America*. To me it makes sense that "the American Rite" is concerned not only with whether we should say, "Keser!" (Keter) during Kedushah or even with which fork to eat gefilte fish in Poughkeepsie, but also with whatever styles and content we have borrowed in our move away from being – as Miss Liberty states – "the wretched refuse of your teeming shore."

Say I: if absorbing Jazz or Blues motifs into our souls has been part of our acculturation, then this act of absorption becomes part of Ritus Americanus.

To develop his account, Melnick examines the careers of major American Jewish theater composers – especially Irving Berlin and George Gershwin – whose works form part of the Jazz, Standard and Popular repertoire. The book contains oodles of relevant lore – some of which makes one cringe. To wit, author Samson Raphaelson's preface from the mid-1920s to the stage version of *The Jazz Singer*: "Jazz is Irving Berlin, Al Jolson, George Gershwin, Sophie Tucker ... Jews are determining the nature and scope of jazz more than any other race – more than the negroes, from whom they have stolen Jazz and given it a new color and meaning."

Melnick, who teaches American Studies at Babson College in Wellesley, MA, does not generally cite what Jews in Pop culture have done to promote awareness of the Black contribution to American culture. So, I'll cite a few of

those Jews – especially from around the time that *A Right to Sing the Blues* covers. (No Examples from today are needed: no one in his right mind believes that either Jazz or Blues does not derive primarily from Afro Americans.)

Irvin Berlin himself, in 1933, brought Ethel Waters down from Harlem to appear in the hit Broadway musical, *As Thousands Cheer*, at a time when it was not common for Blacks to appear on stage with whites. Berlin even composed an anti-lynching song for Waters – half a decade before Abel Meeropol, a Jewish high school teacher from New York, who later adopted the orphaned sons of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg was so shaken by the news photo of a Southern lynching that he fashioned the poem *Strange Fruit*, made famous as a hit song by Billie Holiday. Holiday's venue for introducing that song was the Jew, Barney Josephson's Café Society. And, who first featured Holiday as his band's girl singer? Artie (a.k.a. "Avrom Yits-khok") Shaw.

Enough examples? I didn't think so. On the East Coast: George Wein, founder of the Newport Jazz Festival. On the West Coast: Norman Granz, producer of Jazz At The Philharmonic. Both these venues gave Black Jazz musicians well-attended and well-paid outlets, as did Granz's record labels: Verve and Pablo. Thus, whatever rip-off there may have been of Black artists, there certainly was compensatory activity, too.

My primary interest, as I think about Melnick's book, is not the political or social connection between Blacks and Jews, but the musical one, that between the Blues and the melodies the major American Jewish theater composers heard as they grew up and cavorted about New York (Gershwin, gleefully on roller skates; Berlin, on the benches of Lower East Side saloons where he slept). It pays to bear in mind that both Gershwin and Berlin, as well as Harold Arlen ("Stormy Weather," "My Funny Valentine," "Over the Rainbow") who also relied heavily upon Black musical lore and motifs, had significant exposure to the modes we associate with East European hazzanut. Berlin's and Arlen's fathers were immigrant cantors, and Gershwin was close with the Tomashevsky musical theater family. He was recommended by composer and cantorial choir director Joseph Rumshinsky, to become his co-successor as Tomashevsky's music director. (Boris Tomashevsky, back in the Ukraine had been "Borukh Sopran" – boy soprano in the famed choir of Cantor Nissi Belzer.)

There is a musical connection between the Blues scale and the Ahavah Rabbah (AR) and Ukrainian-Dorian (UD) modes prominent in the Shabbat Morning services. Each features one-and-one-half step intervals, though in different parts of the scales. The motifs of all three modes would have been familiar to the three aforementioned Jewish-American theater composers.

It is worth noting that, whereas UD in Shabbat a.m. services is largely an auxiliary mode, in theater music it comes to the fore. As in, "Chosn-Kalleh Mazltov," "Yidl Mitn Fidl," "Grineh Kuzineh," "Sfelt Ir Dee Rozhinke" and "Attorney Street."

The famed East-European-derived composers stood on AR/UD - ground and looked out onto the Blues; Blacks and Jews are also connected by the Blue Note, the sometimes-flatted third in a major mode. Whatever sensibility in both immigrant listeners and composers that made it so forms part of the process of *Nusah̲ America*. Does that connection apply to the immigrant and first generations only, or, is there still more to be mined here for further filling out the American Rite?

There is. Two highly regarded twentieth-century Jewish composers – one for the theater, the other for the synagogue – used the Blues in arrangements for prayer. In the Friday Night Kaddish that Kurt Weill composed and dedicated to the memory of his father (1950), Weill featured the idiom throughout – in the traditional mode for this prayer – Adonai Malakh. In Max Helfman's *Sh'ma Koleinu* ("Hear Our Cry") for Yom Kippur, also written close to the end of his life (1959), the composer drops Blues effects into UD as well as the "Danny Boy" mode he had borrowed earlier from a Friday Night service ("Kiddush," 1957). I have occasionally heard skilled *baalei kri'ah* (Scripture readers) – who were not composers – use Blues ornamentation quite convincingly in their Torah cantillation. This has long-term importance but does not stand out dramatically.

What does, is now a landmark of the American Rite: the emergence of women as cantors, with a concomitant need for 1), enhanced text and melodic repertoire; and 2), models for female pulpit vocal styles. The need, at least for text repertoire, was nicely touched upon in *The Journal of Synagogue Music*'s Winter 2001 issue where a woman h̲azzan (ed. Note: Estelle Epstein) rewrote the Hineni text – having called attention to its praise for the cantorial beard.

I don't see either opera or American Folk, Pop or Theater styles being readily adaptable to the bimah. Listen to some of the finer Blues singers, and learn: Bessie Smith giving a Blues inflection to Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime band," which I'd been accustomed to hearing belted sans subtleties by Al Jolson. Or, to Aretha Franklin's chromatic and Bluesy embellishments on "At Last" - hitherto, a syrupy ballad made famous by the Glenn Miller Band. A treasured association comes to me with Bessie's and the Rev. Franklin's daughter's deliveries of these songs: *gedavnt*!

The Black-Jewish modal connection lives on and will continue – I hope – to work its way into *Nusah America.*

*An earlier review by Rabbi Gershon Freidlin — "**Is There Tefillah after Daven'n**" — appeared in the Journal's Fall 2005 issue. He thanks his three sons for guiding his knowledge of Black lore into a new era.*

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Victor Tunkel's *The Music of the Hebrew Bible: The Western Ashkenazic Tradition*
Tymsder Publishing, 2006, 155 pages
PO Box 16031, London NW3 6WL

Reviewed by Joshua R. Jacobson

Victor Tunkel is an amateur in the best sense of the word. A London law lecturer by profession, he is neither an invested cantor nor does he hold degrees in Jewish Studies or ethnomusicology. But Tunkel is passionate about the Western Ashkenazic tradition of cantillation, and he has set out to protect this endangered species from disappearing under the hegemony of the ubiquitous Eastern Ashkenazic tradition. In *The Music of the Hebrew Bible: The Western Ashkenazic Tradition,* published in 2006, Tunkel brings together a bit of history, a bit of theory, and a transcription into staff notation of his tradition for cantillating the Pentateuch.

In the introduction, Tunkel relates that his primary aim is to provide Torah readers and Bar Mitzvah teachers with a basic explanation of the hierarchical system of the *te'amim*. Decrying the fact that many "teachers themselves have no more than their own Bar Mitzvah-level knowledge" (p. 8), he sets out to provide a new pedagogical model. In this, Tunkel's reach exceeds his grasp. He correctly notes the lack of systematic logic in the classic "*zarqa* table." But his proposed substitution (p. 78), while certainly an improvement, still has some flaws.

For example, why is *shalshelet* followed by *pazer gadol*, and why did he omit the combination *merekha pashta*? His other chart ("A Scheme of Disjunctives" on p. 39) altogether omits *shalshelet* and *yetiv*, and grossly overstates the predictability of the "companions" to the "level-III clause enders." When

explaining the difference between *merekha tevir* and *darga tevir*, he provides an excellent suggestion: since *darga tevir* is sung only when there are at least two unstressed syllables between the accents, he proposes singing the *te'amim* on the words, *darga utevir*. The only problem there is that the *sheva* after the *shuruk* is *sheva nah*, so the proper pronunciation is *darga utvir*.

Tunkel's explanation of the system of disjunctives and conjunctives leaves something to be desired. Had he digested Breuer's seminal work, which he cites in his bibliography, perhaps he might have avoided some basic errors. In one diagram Tunkel shows *revia* and *pashta* as having equal disjunction (*revia* is always stronger), and *tevir* and *tippeha* as having equal disjunction (*tippeha* is always stronger) (p. 31). Tunkel cannot explain the fact that there is a disjunctive *ta'am* on the word לְעֵינֵי in לְעֵינֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Num 20:12; p. 34). He has trouble explaining the *te'amim* in Numbers 1:3 מִבֶּן עֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה (p. 35), apparently ignoring the concept of remote conjunctives (a string of conjunctives that can precede a *pashta* or *tevir*). And again (p. 41) his difficulty explaining the pashta before *zakef* in Gen. 22:3 וַיְחַבֹּשׁ אֶת־חֲמֹרוֹ suggests that he has not considered the "upgrading" of *munah* to pashta before *zakef* (or *munah* to *tippeha* before *etnahta*, or *munah* to *zarka* before *segol*).

He champions a "radical new approach" by David Robinson, which "dismisses the dichotomy theory and even dispenses with the disjunctive/conjunctive distinction" (p. 33). Yet Robinson's theory, as Tunkel presents it, seems to be no different from the dichotomy theory as advanced in the standard texts.

Tunkel's explanation of the musical realization also reveals a few lacunae. On page 86 he introduces the reader to many of the "special rules and occurrences," but omits the special melodies for Torah reading on fast days and Simhat Torah. On page 74 he states, "*Munah* has one basic tune. This is quite acceptable in every context." Yet that is obviously untrue and contradicted by his own chart on page 106. On page 79 Tunkel suggests that one should interpret *meteg* as a "rest," but *meteg* is actually a slight lengthening or dynamic reinforcement of the syllable.

Armed with quotations from Werner, Avenary and Kalib, Tunkel passionately argues for the superiority of the Western Ashkenazic tradition over its Eastern counterpart. But I cannot help wondering why he didn't also argue for the preservation of the Western Ashkenazic *pronunciation* of Hebrew.

Tunkel's notation of the realization of the *te'amim* is a valuable tool for practitioners of the Western Ashkenazic tradition, but it is a pity that he didn't have access to a better music notation program. Hyphens and syllable extenders are missing or misplaced, and the final notes of disjunctive *te'amim*

are often lacking a fermata (or some other way to indicate their rhythmic gravity). One of the highlights of Tunkel's book is to be found in the appendix: a biography of William Wickes, the first great English explicator of the system of the Biblical accents.

Despite the errors, despite the inconsistent transliteration, and despite the sometimes confusing prose, Victor Tunkel deserves credit for his enthusiastic contribution to the study of Western Ashkenazic cantillation.

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The Works of a Master Cantor—Moshe Taubé's Latest CD

Reviewed by Stephen J. Stein

This recording offers listeners a sampling of the unique musical tradition that prevailed at Beth Shalom Congregation in Pittsburgh over the past four decades. Made shortly before Moshe Taubé's recent retirement from the full-time cantorate, the CD focuses on the Shabbat service. The recording demonstrates that Hazzan Taubé was one of the leading pulpit artists of the second half of the twentieth century.

While Moshe was well known for his seductive lyric tenor voice, few may be aware that he composed virtually all of the nusah, recitatives, choral pieces and refrains presented in his congregation. Beth Shalom was blessed to have had this gifted hazzan and composer in its midst for so many years, and the recording should serve its members as a fond reminder of the sacred music that touched their lives. Having grown up in Pittsburgh, this reviewer saw first-hand how Moshe's international fame was a source of great pride not only to his congregation, but to an entire city.

The all-male choir that accompanied him each Shabbat, Festival and High Holy Day became an integral part of the congregation's worship experience. For thirty years, Pittsburgh attorney Maurice Tito Braunstein served as choir director. The six-voice ensemble is prominently featured on this recording. True, the recorded selections are accompanied by organ, yet it is easy to imagine how these pieces might have sounded on a typical Shabbat, sung *A Cappella*.

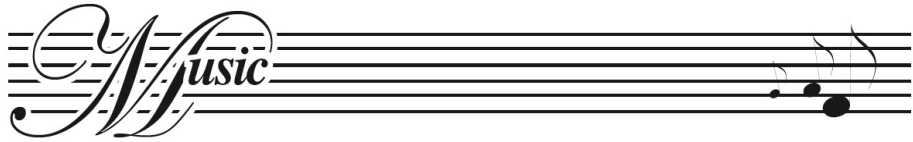
Several wonderful selections that I do not recall having heard before are featured on this new recording, including a setting of *Ve-Al Kulam*. Typical of Taubé's compositions, it incorporates a refrain, in this text to the words *yeshu'ateinu ve-ezrateinu selah*. Perhaps another reason I was drawn to this piece is that there are not an abundance of recitatives or cantor/choir compositions for this passage.

Settings for the texts *Kadosh*, *Mimkomkha, Mi She-Asah Nissim* and *Tikanta Shabbat* are classic Taubé compositions with new twists. For example, in *Mi She-Asah Nissim*, a solo composition previously recorded on his well-known album, "Synagogue Masterpieces," the congregational melody for *Haveirim Kol Yisrael* is beautifully harmonized for choir as well. *Mimkomkha* is given a new refrain, as is the middle section of *Tikanta Shabbat*—"Az MiSinai" to "Shabbat, Ka-ra'ui"—which also introduces a few subtle changes in phrasing.

One of the unique elements that make listening to this recording so gratifying is that in addition to Moshe's sweet, well-preserved legato singing, his coloratura remains as precise as it has always been. It's no secret that Moshe Taube fell under the spell of Leib Glantz early on in his career. It is therefore not surprising that, as with Glantz, an aura of mysticism pervades many of the selections heard on *The Works of a Master Cantor*. Taubé builds this mood chiefly by highlighting the augmented-fourth interval both melodically and harmonically. In addition, virtually every piece contains an instantly singable refrain, which—in this age where congregational participation is so vital—should appeal to professional and lay listeners alike. The CD is available for purchase under a private label through Beth Shalom Congregation's gift shop or from Pinsker's Judaica in Pittsburgh.

Yishar Kohakha to Moshe on a job well done. May he continue to inspire us all with his artistry, in the best of health, for many years to come.

Stephen J. Stein serves as hazzan at Beth El Congregation in Akron, Ohio, and as Executive Vice President of the Cantors Assembly.

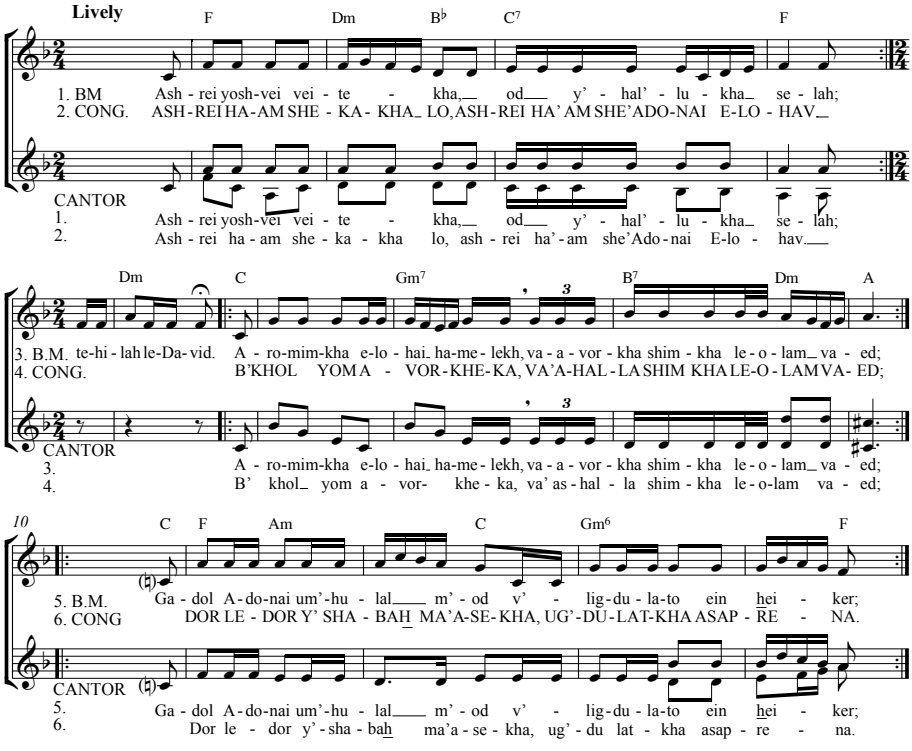


Shabbat Morning Solos for Treble Voice (Bar/Bat Mitzvah), with Congregational Refrains and Cantorial Obbliggati.

Ashrei

Shaḥar Avakeskha, 1974

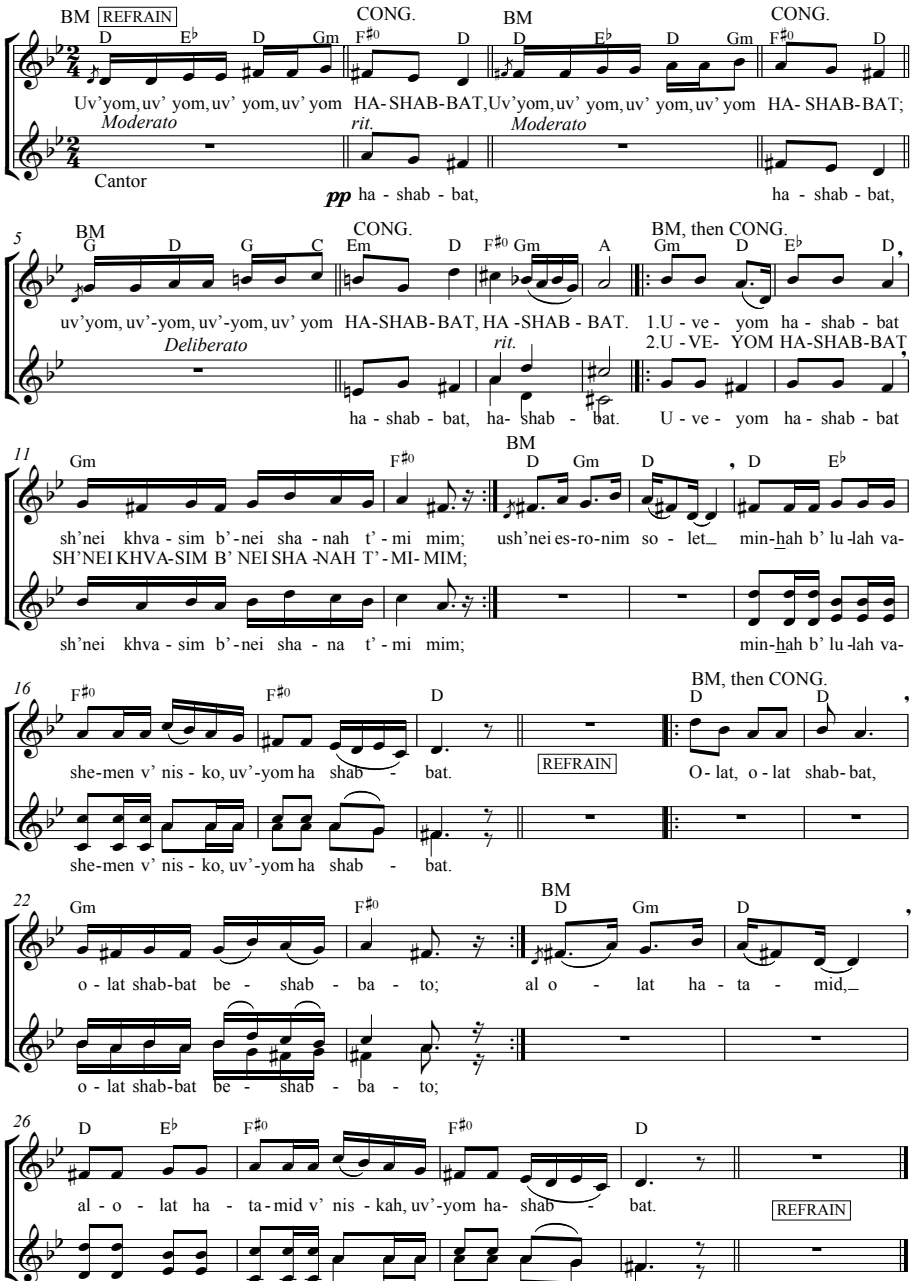
Max Wohlberg



Uv'Yom Ha-Shabbat

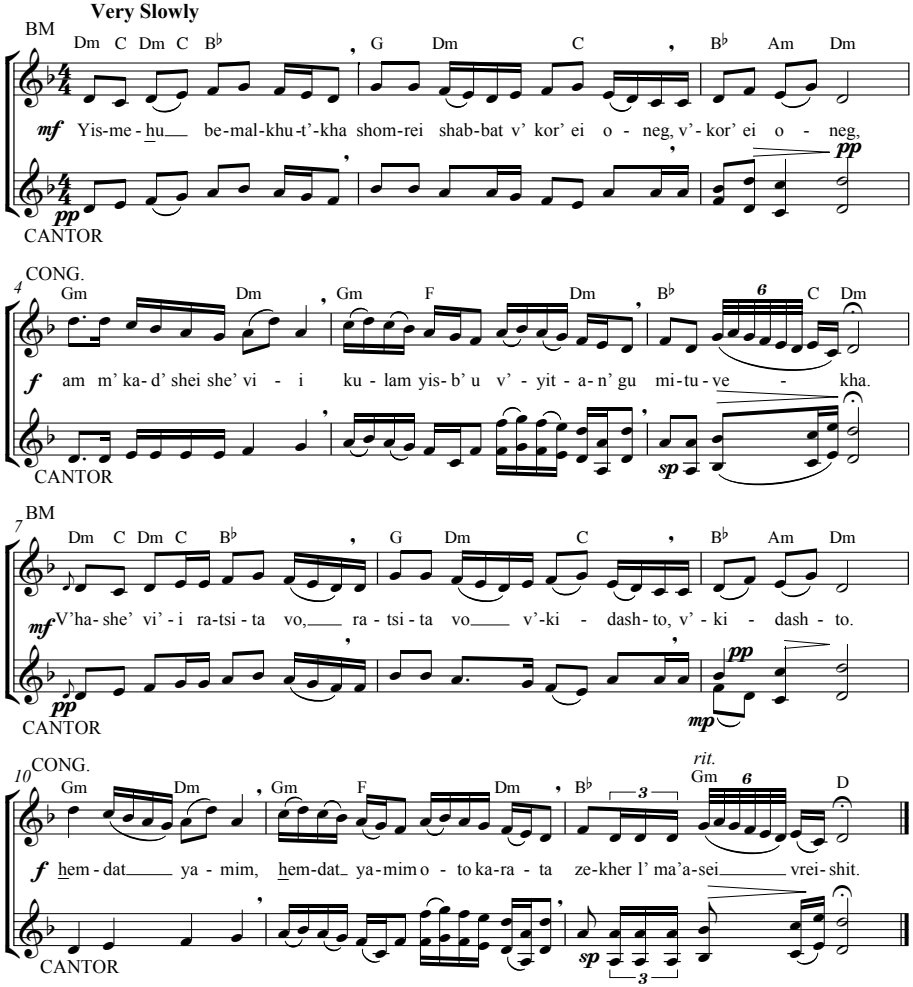
NATHAN MENDELSON, 1955

Deliberately



Yismehu

Abba Yosef Weisgal, 1942



Eloheinu... Kad'sheinu

after Herman Wohl, 1918
Yevonim Nikbetsu Alai

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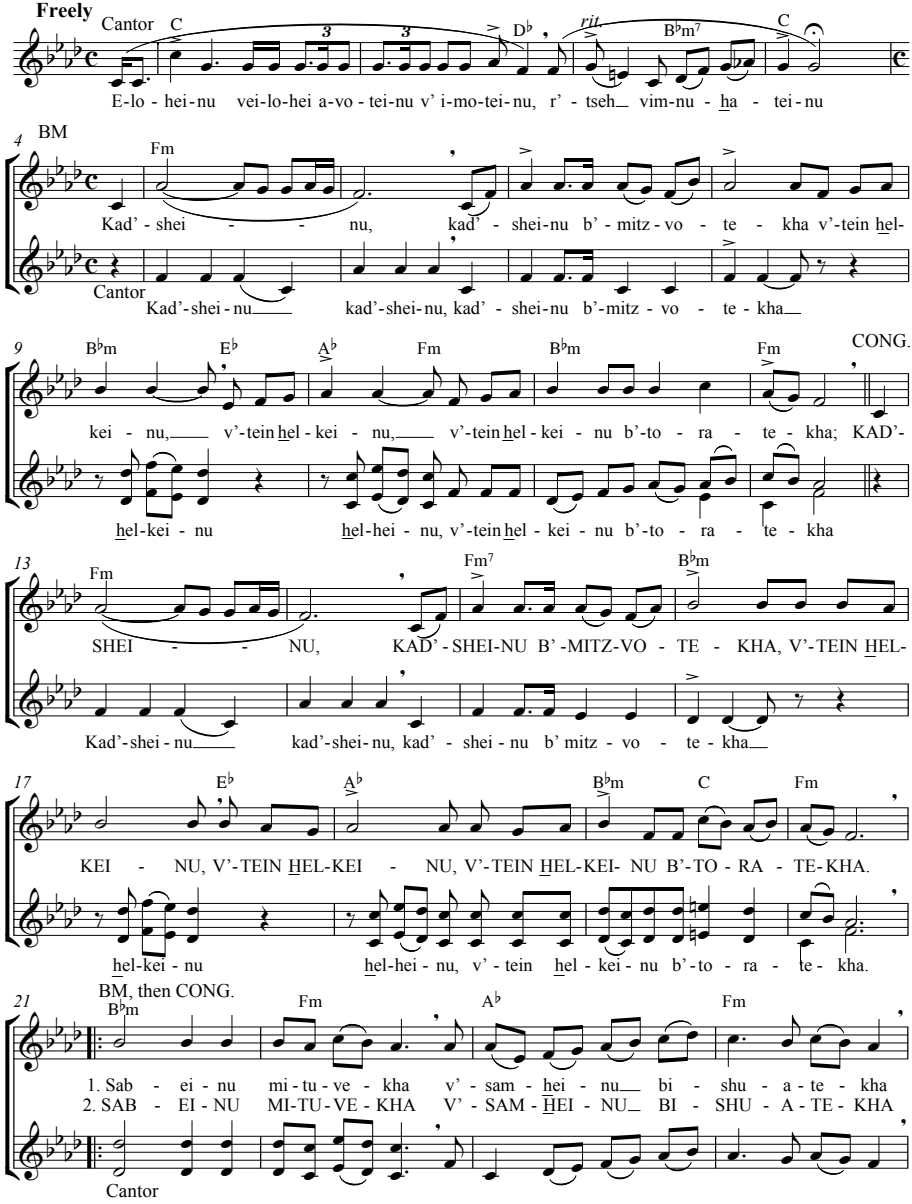
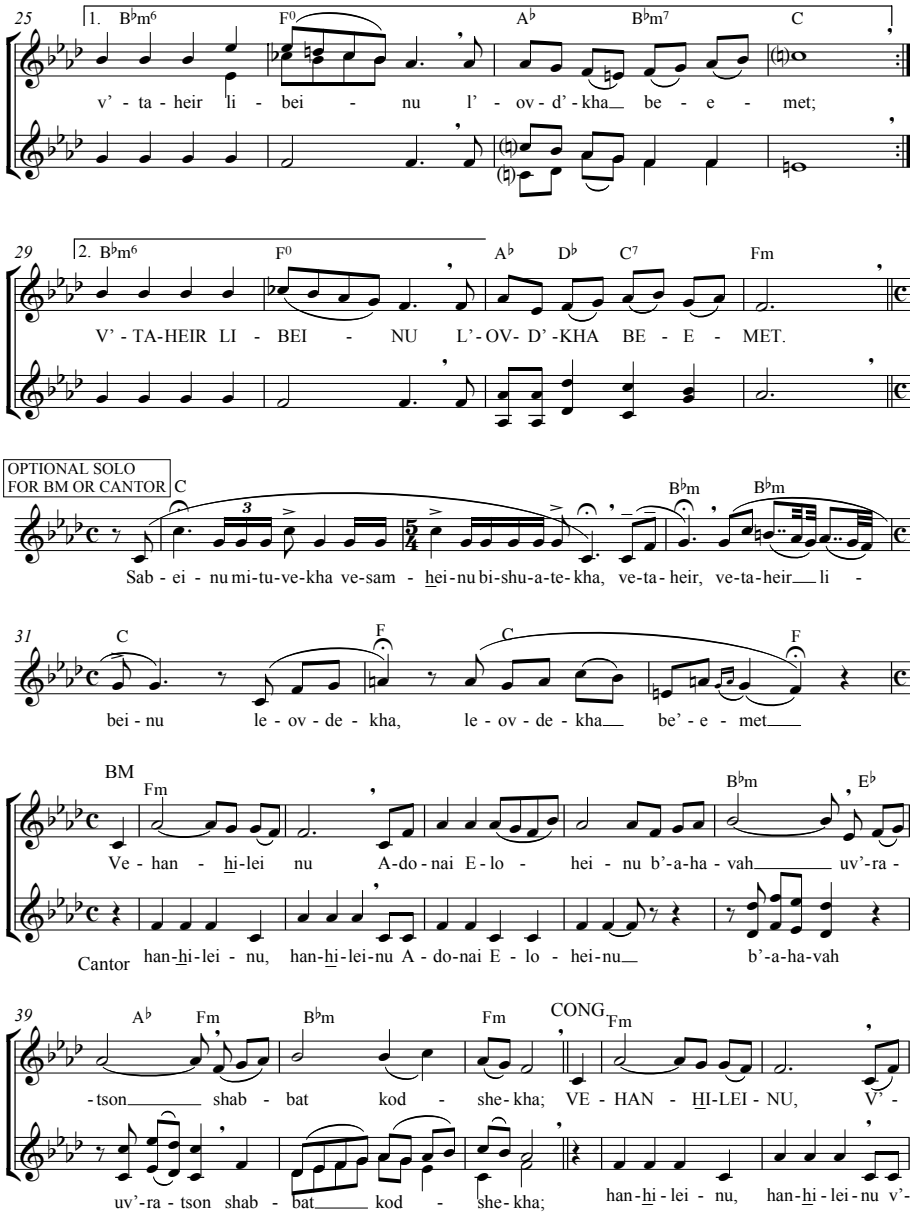
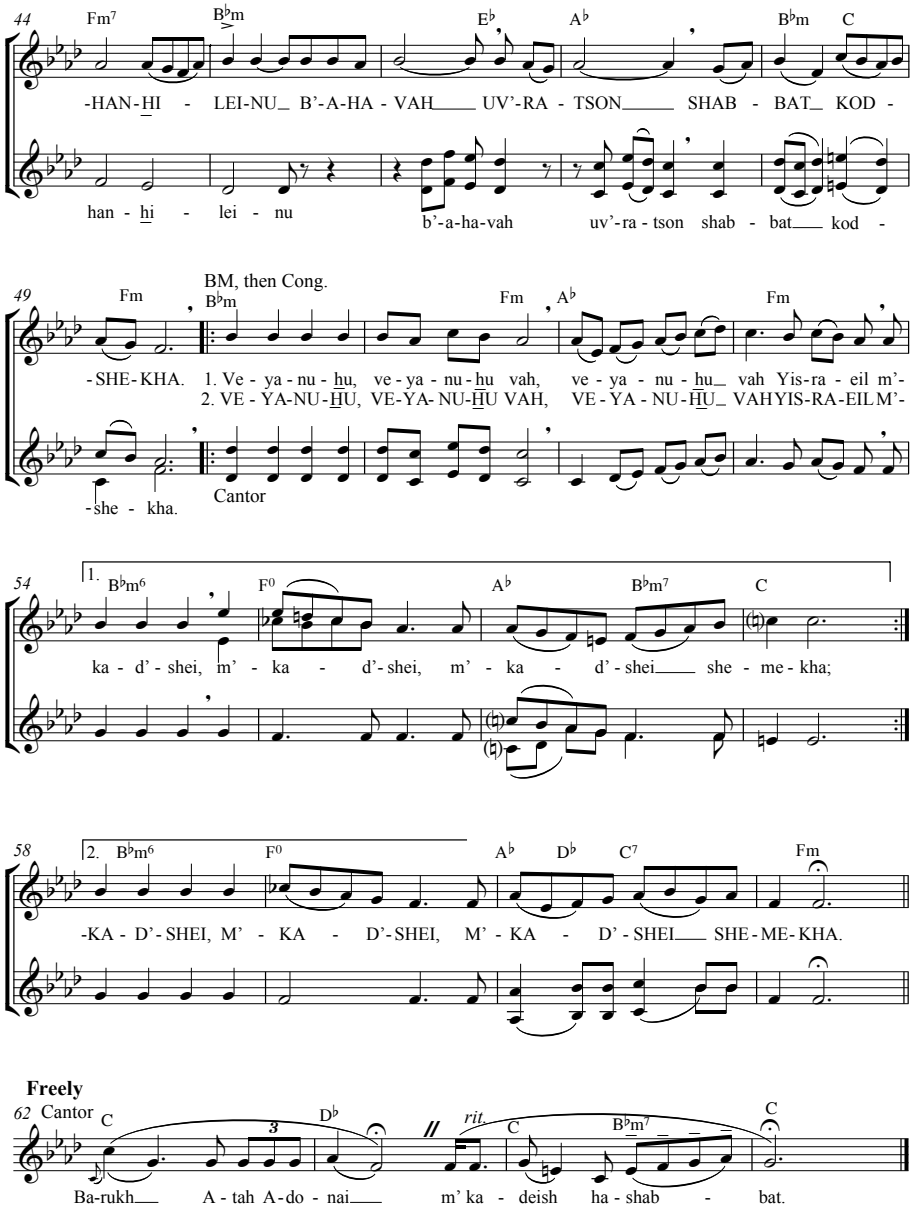


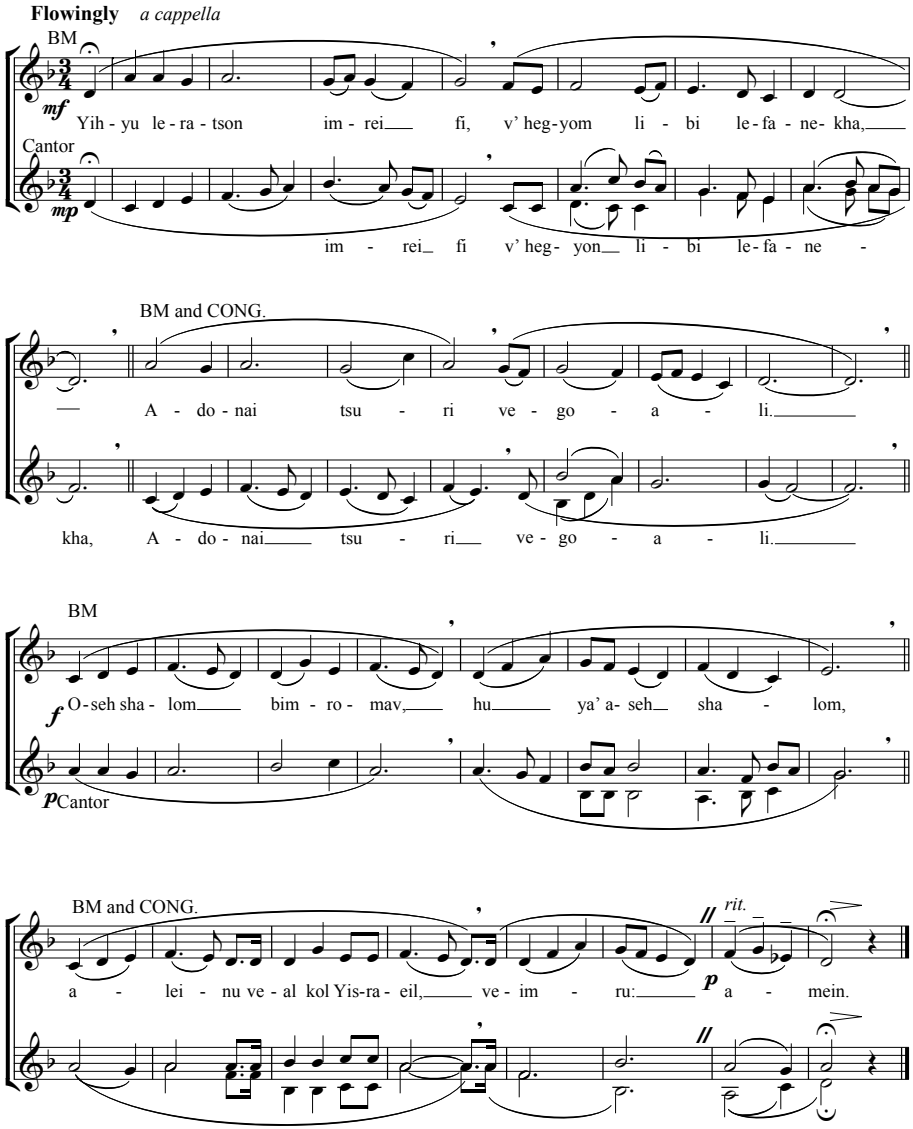

25
1. B♭m6
F0
A♭
B♭m7
C
v' - ta - heir li - bei - nu l' - ov - d' - kha be - e - met;
29
2. B♭m6
F0
A♭
D♭
C7
Fm
V' - TA-HEIR LI - BEI - NU L' - OV- D' - KHA BE - E - MET.
OPTIONAL SOLO
FOR BM OR CANTOR
C
B♭m
B♭m
Sab - ei - nu mi-tu-ve-kha ve-sam - hei-nu bi-shu-a-te-kha, ve-ta-heir, ve-ta-heir li -
31
C
F
C
F
bei - nu le - ov - de - kha, le - ov - de - kha be' - e - met
BM
Fm
B♭m
E♭
Ve - han - hi-lei nu A-do-nai E-lo - hei - nu b'-a-ha - vah uv'-ra -
Cantor
han-hi-lei - nu, han-hi-lei-nu A - do-nai E - lo - hei-nu b'-a-ha-vah
39
A♭
Fm
B♭m
Fm
CONG
Fm
-tson shab - bat kod - she-kha; VE - HAN - HI-LEI - NU, V' -
uv'-ra - tson shab - bat kod - she-kha; han-hi-lei - nu, han-hi-lei-nu v'-


44
Fm7
B♭m
E♭
A♭
B♭m
C
-HAN-HI - LEI-NU_ B'-A-HA - VAH____ UV'-RA - TSON____ SHAB - BAT_ KOD -
han - hi - lei - nu
b'-a-ha-vah
uv'-ra - tson shab - bat___ kod -
49
Fm
BM, then Cong.
B♭m
Fm
A♭
Fm
-SHE-KHA.
1. Ve - ya - nu - hu, ve - ya - nu - hu vah, ve - ya - nu - hu_ vah Yis-ra - eil m'-
2. VE - YA-NU-HU, VE-YA- NU-HU VAH, VE - YA - NU-HU_ VAHYIS-RA-EIL M'-
-she - kha.
Cantor
54
1.
B♭m6
F0
A♭
B♭m7
C
ka - d' - shei, m' - ka - d'-shei, m' - ka - d' - shei___ she - me - kha;
58
2.
B♭m6
F0
A♭
D♭
C7
Fm
-KA - D' - SHEI, M' - KA - D'-SHEI, M' - KA - D' - SHEI___ SHE-ME-KHA.
Freely
62 Cantor
C
3
D♭
rit.
C
B♭m7
C
Ba-rukh___ A - tah A-do - nai___ m' ka - deish ha - shab - bat.

Yihyu LeRatson

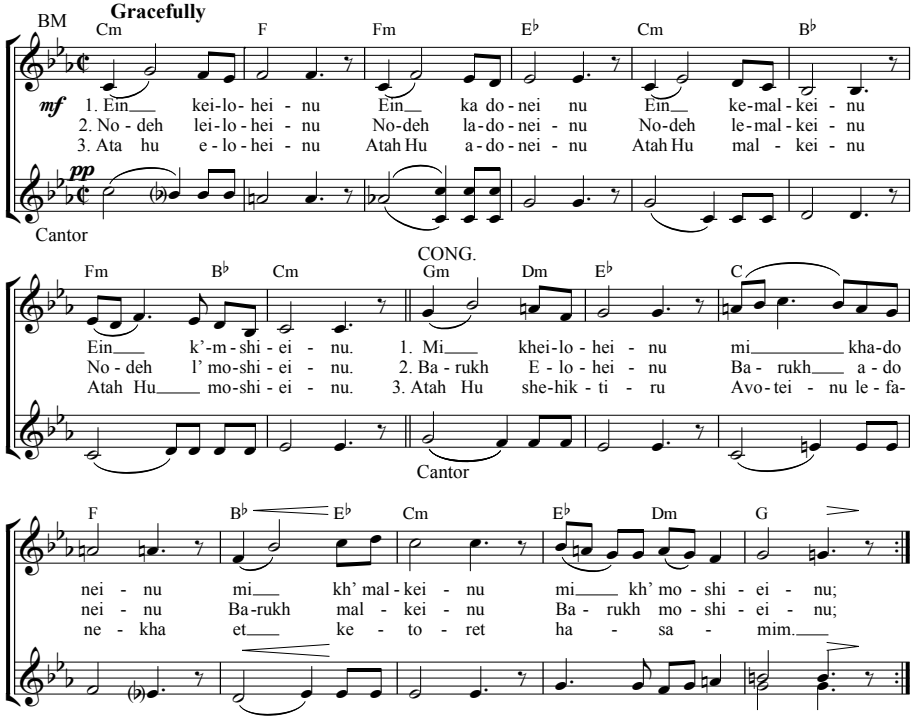
After Arthur Yolkoff

Shirat Atideinu, 1967
("ShehaShalom Shelo")



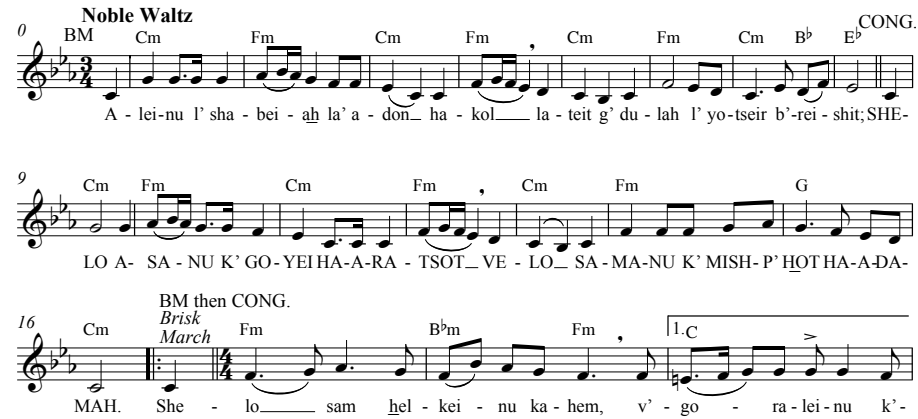
Ein Keiloheinu

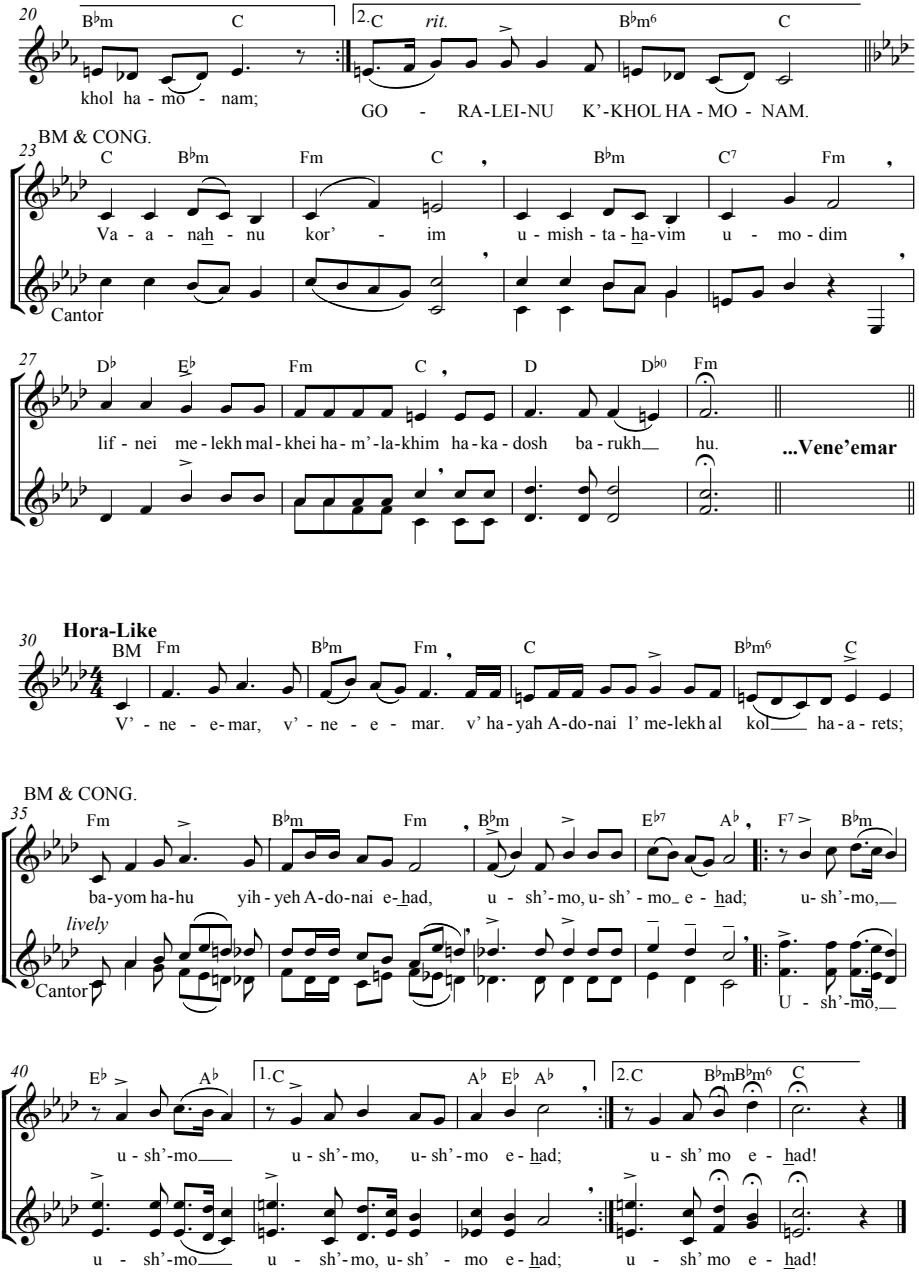
Tzvi Talmon — **Rinat HaHeikhal,** 1965



Aleinu

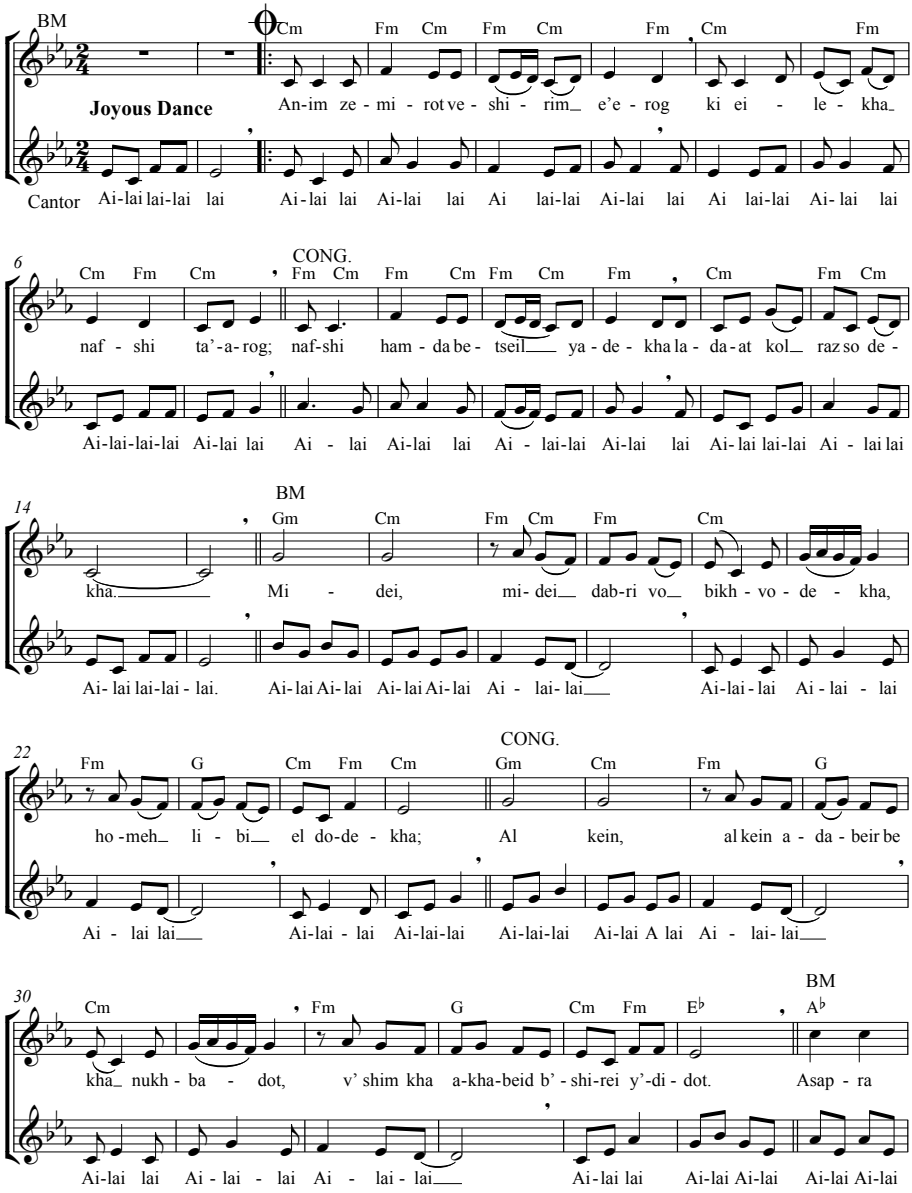
Arthur Yolkoff — **Cantors Institute Project,** 1958

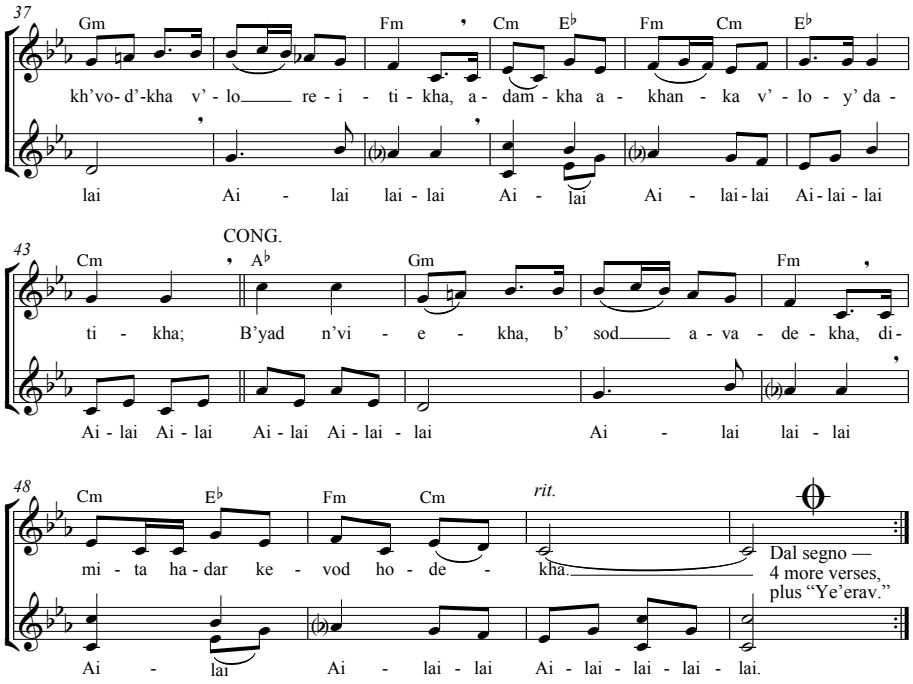



20
B♭m C
2.C rit. B♭m6 C
khol ha - mo - nam;
GO - RA-LEI-NU K'-KHOL HA - MO - NAM.
BM & CONG.
23
C B♭m Fm C B♭m C7 Fm
Va - a - nah - nu kor' - im u - mish - ta - ha-vim u - mo - dim
Cantor
27
D♭ E♭ Fm C D D♭0 Fm
lif - nei me - lekh mal - khei ha - m'-la-khim ha - ka - dosh ba - rukh hu.
...Vene'emar
Hora-Like
30
BM Fm B♭m Fm C B♭m6 C
V' - ne - e - mar, v' - ne - e - mar. v' ha - yah A-do-nai l' me-lekh al kol ha - a - rets;
BM & CONG.
35
Fm B♭m Fm B♭m E♭7 A♭ F7 B♭m
ba-yom ha-hu yih - yeh A-do-nai e-had, u - sh'-mo, u-sh' - mo e - had; u-sh'-mo,
lively
Cantor
U - sh'-mo,
40
E♭ A♭ 1.C A♭ E♭ A♭ 2.C B♭m B♭m6 C
u - sh'-mo u - sh'-mo, u-sh'-mo e - had; u - sh' mo e - had!
u - sh'-mo u - sh'-mo, u-sh' - mo e - had; u - sh' mo e - had!

An'im Zemirot

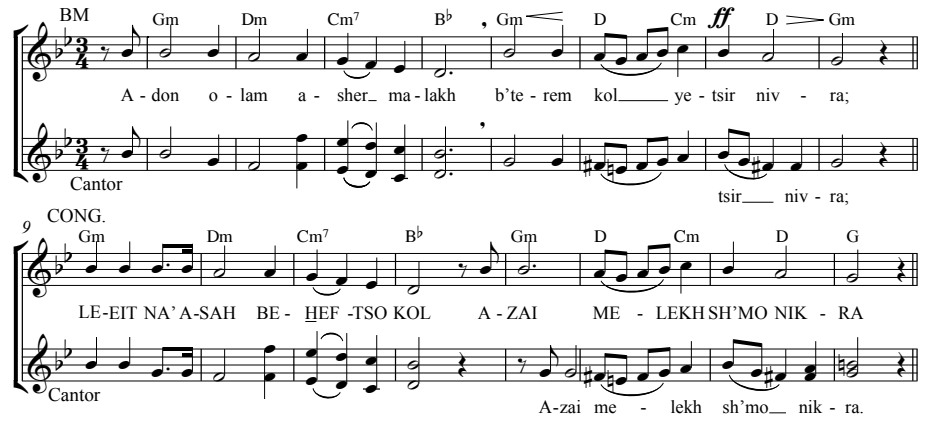
Nigun Simḥah (Lubavitch)

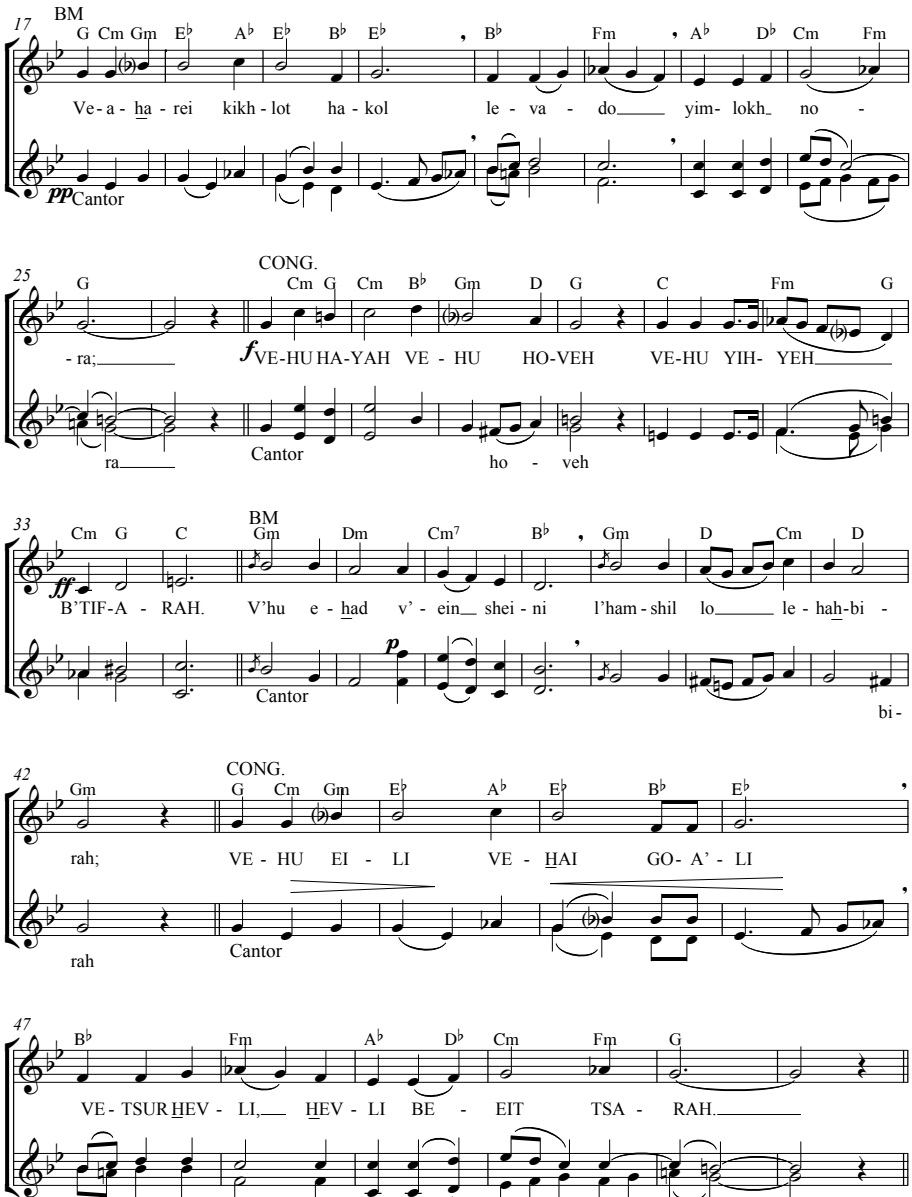


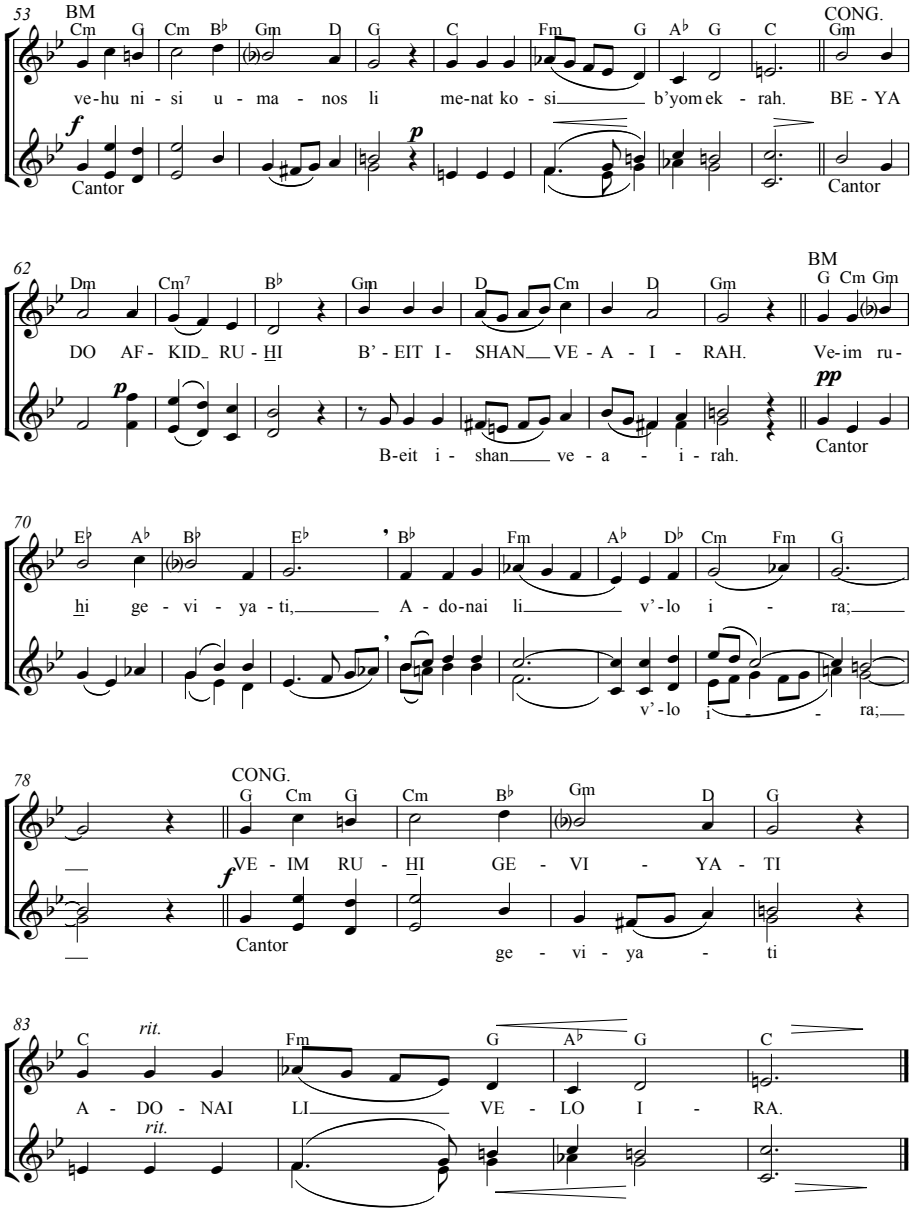


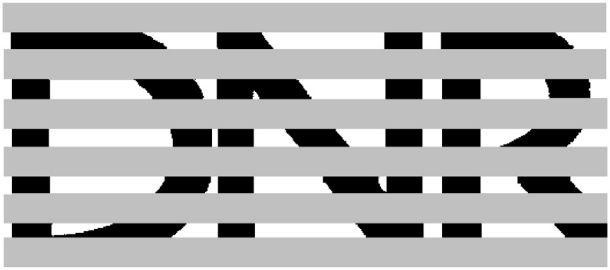
Adon Olam

Salamone Rossi *HaShirim Asher LeShlomo,* 1623




17
BM
G Cm Gm E♭ A♭ E♭ B♭ E♭ B♭ Fm A♭ D♭ Cm Fm
Ve-a-ha-rei kikh-lot ha-kol le-va-do yim-lokh no-
pp Cantor
25
G
CONG.
Cm G Cm B♭ Gm D G C Fm G
-ra; f VE-HU HA-YAH VE-HU HO-VEH VE-HU YIH-YEH
ra
Cantor
ho-veh
33
BM
Cm G C Gm Dm Cm7 B♭ Gm D Cm D
ff B'TIF-A-RAH. V'hu e-had v'-ein shei-ni l'ham-shil lo le-hah-bi-
p
Cantor
bi-
42
CONG.
Gm G Cm Gm E♭ A♭ E♭ B♭ E♭
rah; VE-HU EI-LI VE-HAI GO-A'-LI
rah
Cantor
47
B♭ Fm A♭ D♭ Cm Fm G
VE-TSUR HEV-LI, HEV-LI BE-EIT TSA-RAH.


53
BM
Cm G Cm B♭ Gm D G C Fm G A♭ G C
CONG.
Gm
ve-hu ni-si u-ma-nos li me-nat ko-si b'yom ek-rah. BE-YA
f
p
Cantor
Cantor
62
Dm Cm7 B♭ Gm D Cm D Gm
BM
G Cm Gm
DO AF-KID-RU-HI B'-EIT I-SHAN-VE-A-I-RAH. Ve-im ru-
p
pp
B-eit i-shan ve-a-i-rah.
Cantor
70
E♭ A♭ B♭ E♭ B♭ Fm A♭ D♭ Cm Fm G
hi ge-vi-ya-ti, A-do-nai li v'-lo i-ra;
v'-lo i-ra;
78
CONG.
G Cm G Cm B♭ Gm D G
VE-IM RU-HI GE-VI-YA-TI
f
Cantor
ge-vi-ya-ti
83
C Fm G A♭ G C
rit.
rit.
A-DO-NAI LI VE-LO I-RA.



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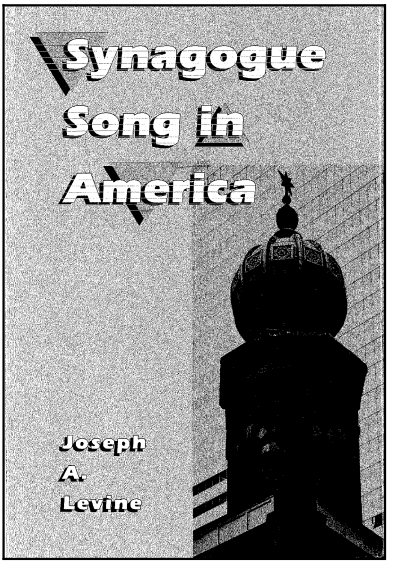

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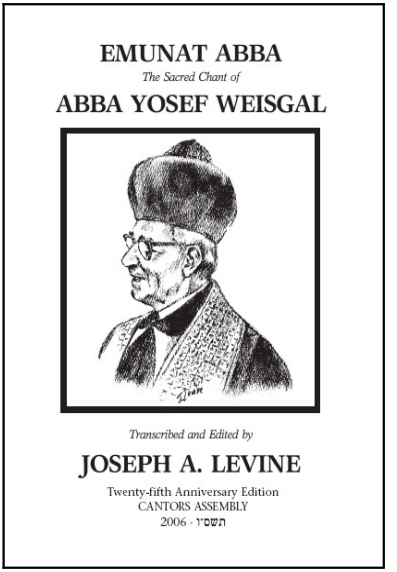

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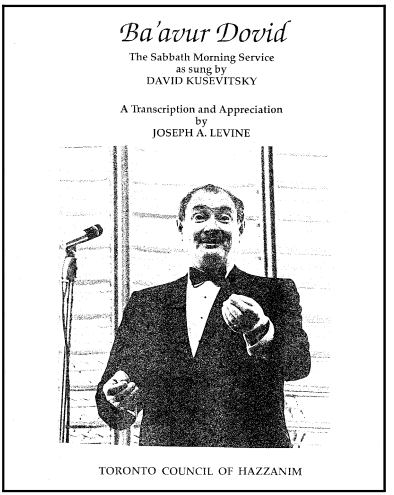

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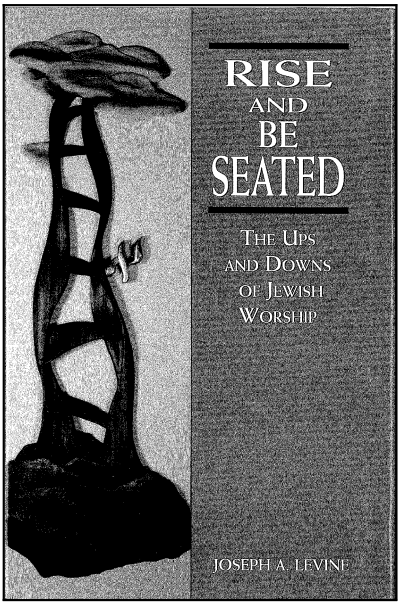

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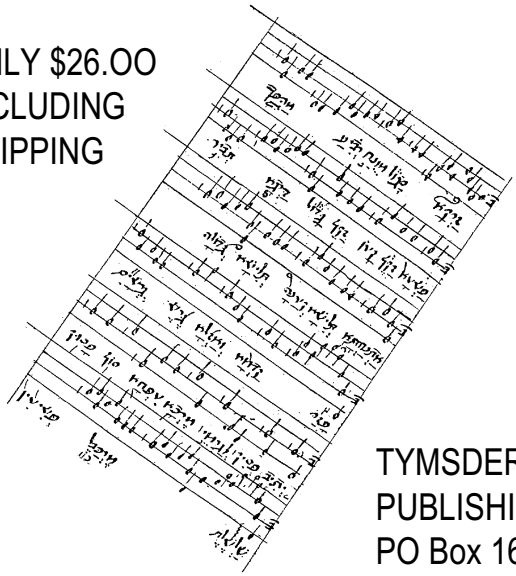

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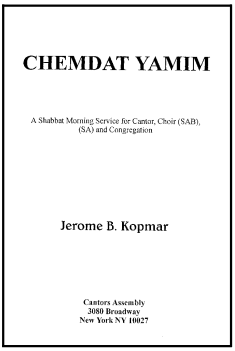

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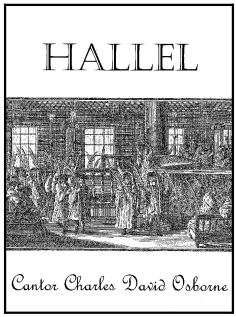

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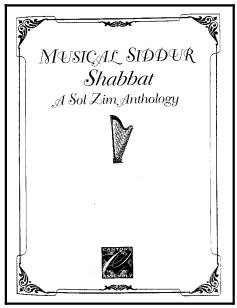

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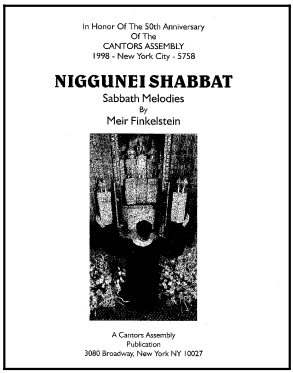

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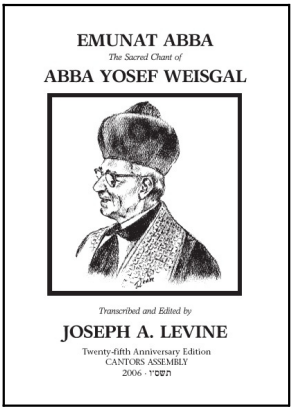

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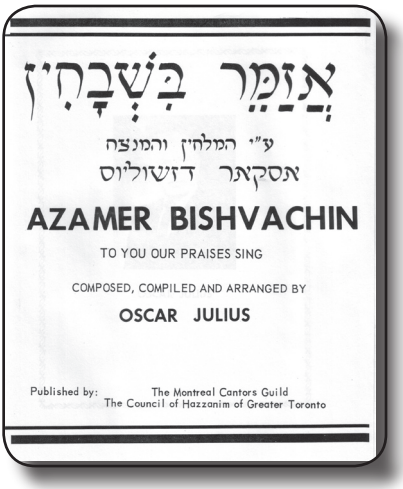

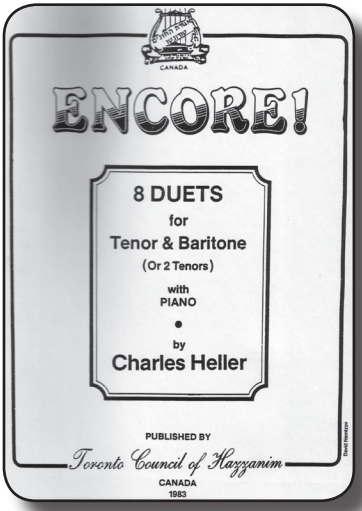

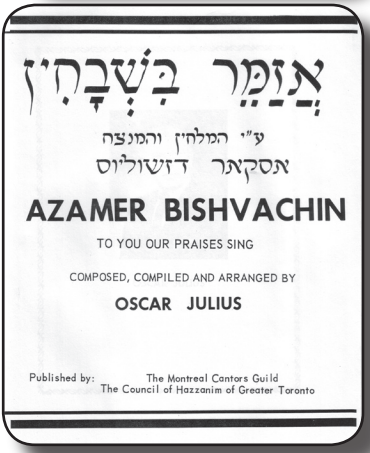

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