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A JEWISH MASS OR A CATHOLIC MITZVAH?

JACK GOTTLIEB

The verdict is in. Even though there are voices yet, to be heard from, it is safe to say that the critical reception to Leonard Bernstein's new "Mass," written for the opening of the Kennedy Center, has resulted in a hung jury. The New York press has damned it, while the Washington contingent shouted hosanna! (Provincialism, perhaps?)

Time magazine says that the music "reflects a basic confusion," but, Newsweek calls it "inspired on all counts." The first nighters were determinably more cool than the less uptight preview audiences. But in all the brouhaha about this great split decision of 1971, only passing mention has been made of a remarkable fact: that a distinctive Jewishness pervades this Catholic work.

This is not because it is historically the first mass ever to be written by a Jew, but that it could have never been conceived by a "dyed-in-the-Agnus-Dei" Catholic in the first place. Those who would dismiss it, however, as a "show-biz" mass have a fundamental misconception, since it is not a mass that incidentally uses theatrical devices, but as the composer subtitles it: "A Theater Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers" that uses the mass structure as its point of departure.

It is Bernstein's first theatrical effort since "West Side Story" (1957), although there have been two aborted attempts since then: one based on Thornton Wilder's "The Skin of Our Teeth" and the other on Bertolt Brecht's "The Exception and the Rule," parts from both having found their nesting place in the "Mass." Not only is the massive "Mass" more musically sophisticated than the 1957 landmark musical, but it also dims the lustre of the more recent "Jesus

Jack Gottlieb was born in New Rochelle, New York. He was first encouraged in composition by the late Max Helfman. His formal study began with Karol Rathaus at Queens College in New York. He went on to study with Irving Fine at Brandeis University and with Burrill Phillips at the University of Illinois from which he received the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts. From 1958-1966 he was Assistant to Leonard Bernstein at the New York Philharmonic. In 1970 he was appointed Music Director at Temple Israel in St. Louis, Missouri. His liturgical works include three services: "Love Songs for the Sabbath," "New Year Service for Young People," "Torah Service for the Family Service." He has also composed an opera based on the entire biblical, "Song of Songs."

This article was first published by the St. Louis Jewish Light in October 1971.

Christ Superstar.” At the same time it certainly is lower than the angels when compared to Beethoven’s exalted “Missa Solemnis” or the austere “Mass” by Stravinsky, composers whose presences are felt in the Bernstein work.

Nothing like it has ever been witnessed and experienced in a church or, for that matter, on a Broadway stage.

But the reasons why a Roman Catholic composer could not or would not have given birth to this mass go beyond its non-liturgical aspects, since most intriguingly, Bernstein has imposed upon it a decidedly Jewish *weltanschauung*. And in order to accept this, the listener first had to decide for himself if a musician, in the fullest sense of that word, is qualified also to be a theologian. Or is this man a victim of a kind of megalomania?

In any case, the roots for the philosophic theme date from his “Kaddish” Symphony of 1963 (dedicated to the memory of John Kennedy) which has a spoken text written by the composer. The Speaker, representing humanity, says of the Divine, “Together we suffer, together exist and forever will recreate each other.” This Jewish view of life, of an ongoing interaction between God and Man, is like Martin Buber would have put it: the “I” is part of the “Thou” and vice versa. God thus is seen as a never-ending creative force, overcoming chaos in cooperation with man; and the composer’s text for the “Mass” vividly dramatizes this on-going process.

If one regards classical Judaism as a religion of law and traditional Catholicism (that is, prior to Vatican II) as a religion of dogma, it might then be said that the one tells us what to do, while the other tells us what to believe. Blind faith is not as acceptable to the Jew as it has been to the Catholic. The Latin Missal ironically, then, is a more commodious vehicle for Bernstein than the Hebrew Siddur since it affords him the doctrinal targets for doubts, questions and even ridicule. But it must also be made clear that parts of the worship format, as used by him, are already passe since the house cleaning of Vatican II. Catholics in 1971, therefore, would be less likely to take offense at the so-called “blasphemies” than they would have before that innovative Council took place in 1962-63.

Sections of church prayer do, of course, originate in synagogue prayer. Psalm fragments liberally dot the landscape in “Mass,” for example, in the prefatory sequence; and the De Profundis (part of the Offertory in “Mass”) is Psalm 130 in its entirety. The Lord’s Prayer is derived from the Kaddish prayer, the Te Deum from the Aleinu, and the Sanctus grows directly out of the Kedushah. Bernstein explicitly stresses this latter kinship in a magical transformation from Latin

to Hebrew — a particularly poignant moment that is both stunning for its theatricality and religiously moving for its unexpectedness.

During the Offertory scene, some golden ritual artifacts are brought to the front of the stage, and just as the mice will play while the cat's away, a bacchanalian dance develops around them, only to be stopped dead in its tracks by the arrival of Big Daddy, the central character of the Celebrant. Could it be the dance around the Golden Calf and the sudden appearance of Moses? This Celebrant, who has been characterized as everything from a Christ-figure to a symbol of the Establishment, and who dissolves from innocence of belief (in blue jeans) to madness, as he loses grip on that belief (now richly clad in his props of burdensome robes) later on reinforces the Moses idea by smashing these same artifacts (not a crucifix as some viewers have reported) at the height of his disintegration. The tablets of the Ten Commandments hurled down from Mount Sinai?

But there is more subtle Jewish content than this. Leading up to that hair-raising moment of destruction, the climax of the "Mass," there is a chilling metamorphosis that seemingly twists the slogan of "war is hell" into "peace is hell." The stage writhes in a Dante-esque kind of infernal nightmare as the entire company goes hysterical with the plea: "dona nobis pacem" (give us peace).

One group screams: "We're fed up with your heavenly silence, and we only get action with violence," a couplet that might have come right out of the Book of Job (19: 7) : "Behold, I cry out: 'Violence!' but I am not heard I cry aloud, but there is no justice." Another group proclaims: "We're not down on our knees, ... We're not asking you please; We're just saying: give us peace now!"

Such a demand, not a request, is in the Judaic tradition of the Biblical Prophets and the series of personal confrontations with their Maker. Furthermore, there is the famous Judgment Against God by Rabbi Levi Isaac of Berditchev (18th century Ukranian) who declares to God: "I will not stir from this spot until there be an end to our persecution."

The Credo is set in mechanistic formula writing, using **12** tone procedures and sung in Latin by a stuffed-shirt type of choir in robes, while juxtaposed to it is a rock style Non-Credo, sung in English by Street People in mod clothing, which has the chutzpah to say: "You, God, choose to become a man, To pay the earth a small social call; I tell you, Sir, you never were a man at all. Why? You had the choice when to live, when to die, and then become a God again."

This kind of Talmudic disputation is further substantiated by male choral responses of “possibly yes, probably no.” One is strikingly reminded of hassidic disciples at the feet of their beloved Rebbe wrangling over details of Biblical law and interpretation.

This Jewish penchant for playing with words is exploited, through the form of acrostics and puns, by Bernstein and his collaborator, Stephen Schwartz (who, along with the conductor Maurice Peres, form a Trinity of Jews in the “Mass” hierarchy). Thus the musical syllables of “mi” and “sol” become “me” and “soul” (surely a more meaningful punning than Oscar Hammerstein’s saccharine: “Do, a female deer,” etc.). In the hauntingly beautiful mad scene (oddly reminiscent of the mad scene in Britten’s “Peter Grimes”) “Amen” is transformed into “I’m in” (“a hurry”) “If it all ends today” (read as ‘De’) “Profundis” and the Hebrew word for Lord, “Adonai” (read as ‘I’) don’t know, I don’t no”-(that is, ‘know’)-“his, misere nobis.”

There are musical puns also. The composer quotes a phrase from his “Kaddish” Symphony in one of the opening Kyries. He takes a Chilean folk song (Mrs. Bernstein was raised in Chile) called “Versos por la Sagrada Escritura” (Verses for the Sacred Scripture) as a setting for the Epistle reading, proclaiming loud and clear: “You cannot imprison the word of the Lord.” This also gives him the opportunity to quote actual letters from a conscientious objector and a member of the Catholic left (Daniel Berrigan? The Director of “Mass,” Gordon Davidson, incidentally, directed “The Trial of the Catonsville Nine,” a play about the travails of the Berrigans). An orchestral meditation, later incorporated into the mad-scene, is a passacaglia on the prophetic 11-tone sequence from the last movement of Beethoven’s “Ninth Symphony” (with reference, naturally, to the idea that “all men are brothers.”)

The music obviously, then, is highly eclectic. But this is nothing new with Bernstein; his output has always been thus. Nor is eclecticism in art a dirty word anymore these days. So-called “quote-pieces” abound. Lukas Foss’s “Phorion is based on Bach’s E Minor “Partita.” Luciana Berio interweaves a movement from Mahler’s Second Symphony in his Symphony. Wesley Bolk’s opera “Faust Counter Faust” is filled with previous Faustian musicalizations. In the “Mass” there are also unintentional evocations of Kurt Weill (in “World Without End,” an ecological plea), Gershwin’s “Porgy and Bess” (in the taunting “Half of the People” and a Sporting Life kind of song called “Easy”), Mahler (the motive for “Kadosh, Kadosh”), Marc Blitzstein (in the song “Thank You”) and others.

But the interesting thing is that Bernstein quotes mostly from himself. The opening psalm “A New Song” uses a tune not unlike one found in the first movement of his violin concerto “Serenade.” The clarinets which accompany the song “I Go On” remind us of the opening of the “Age of Anxiety” (although the sung melody unfortunately comes out sounding like the pop song “I Remember You”). One of the dances suggests the “Profanation” Movement of the “Jeremiah” Symphony; another breaks into a phrase straight out of the “Candide Overture.” The Gospel-Sermon “God Said” is a close relative of “Gee, Officer Krupke” from “West Side Story,” Part of “Things Get Broken” could trace its ancestry to the aria “There Are Men” from “Trouble in Tahiti.” The “Sanctus” sounds like harmonic sequences used in his incidental music to “Peter Pan.”

Bernstein has somewhat justified all this melange by stating that everything that he has composed up to the time of the “Mass” was, in some way, a preparation. His accomplishment is truly a spectacular triumph of mind over matter. For despite its incredible diversity (which no other composer could have technically handled so well) and even in spite of its moments of questionable taste, he has succeeded gloriously in his intention “to communicate as directly and universally as I can, a reaffirmation of faith,” and, one might add, of tonality.

Because of my professional relationship with Bernstein over the years, I have had to restrain myself to be as coolly objective as possible in this report. But if the reader will allow me to throw caution to the winds, I cannot help but say that “Mass” is the most significant breakthrough in the musical theater of our time. Amen, brother, Amen.

THE INCONGRUITIES OF THE TRANSLATIONS IN THE ENGLISH BIBLES OF THE HEBREW MUSICAL TERMS IN THE TANACH

ALFRED SENDREY

There are, in the English Bible translations, bizarre and incongruous misinterpretations of many simple and easily understandable musical terms which, with a little logical (and musical!) thinking, could easily be reproduced in English, so that the original Hebrew is not "raped." The crux of the matter is that most of these translations were made by persons who had only a smattering of musical knowledge. But to translate musical terms, one must have at least an elementary familiarity with music.

Of course, a translation cannot always give the correct meaning of a term or a phrase. Ben Sirach realized this when he stated in the introduction to the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus:

"For the same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them."

He spoke of translations from Hebrew to Greek, made by earlier as well as contemporary writers. The time span between Biblical Hebrew and the English tongue did not facilitate matters either. Translations from other languages into English sometimes rendered bizarre results. The following translations from classical Greek into English will illustrate my point.

The famous Greek poetress Sappho (born about 630 before the Common Era) lived on the island of Lesbos. She founded there, together with other literary colleagues, a movement for the revival of Greek poetry. She wrote a poem in which she eulogized the instrument generally used at those times as an accompaniment to lyric poems.¹ Her poems were translated into English by a number of illustrious English poets, among them Henry Wharton in 1877, and, after him, by Edwin Cox, J. M. Edmonds, David Robinson, and more recently by De Vere Stockpole.

This is how Wharton translated Sappho's poem:

"Come now, divine shell, become vocal for me."

Edmonds, 50 years later, interpreted it as:

"Up, my lute divine, and make thyself a thing of speech."

Robinson had another idea; he translated:

1. The quotations from Paul McPharlin, *The Songs of Sappho* (New York, 1942).

“Come now, divine tortoise, mayest thou become endowed with speech for me.”

Cox came back to the shell, thus:

“Come, o come, divine & shell,
And in my ear thy secrets tell.”

Thus, the shell, not the lute or tortoise was made to utter Sappho's words.

Stockpole used another metaphor:

“Singing, a shell divine,
Let now thy voice be mine.”

Thus, the shell, not the lute or tortoise was supposed to utter Sappho's words.

None of these illustrious Hellenists sensed that the instrument with which Sappho and the other poets of the epoch accompanied their poems, was the widely used kithara.

Why do I compare the English translations of Biblical terms with the fate that befell Sappho's poem? Simply to illustrate how a relatively simple and well known instrument of the Greek musical practice could be so grievously misunderstood by five learned interpreters. Now, there are a dozen or more English translations of the Biblical books, which offer much more opportunity for errors and misinterpretations than that found in a single Greek poem. And such errors are galore.

The first English translation made by John Wycliffe, and shortly after him, in a corrected version, by John Hereford, both in the 14th century, follow basically the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate translations of the Hebrew original. After these pioneers, a host of other English translations cropped up, destined for Protestant, Catholic and Jewish usage, always supposedly improved, but nevertheless full of misconceptions and erroneous translations, as far as musical terms are concerned. Ten of the numerous English translations were scrutinized by me. This is what I found, among others.

Let's start with the earliest mention of music in the Old Testament, in Genesis 4: 21, where Jubal is said to have been the patron “of all such as handle the harp and the organ.”

Now, in classical Greek language all musical instruments are termed *organon mousikon* (in Latin *organum musicum*), sometimes with, and sometimes without the qualification referring to music. Thus nothing was more simple than to translate the Hebrew *ugab* as “organ.” What all these translators did not realize was that at the beginning of Hebrew musical history, and long before Biblical

times, such a complicated mechanism as the organ could not have existed. To build an organ-like instrument, even in its primitive form, required many centuries of experimentation as well as technical know-how, which the ancient Hebrews in their nomadic existence could not have acquired. Nevertheless, the "organ," this anachronistic term, perpetuated by the classical Protestant Bible in the King James Version (publ. 1612), persisted almost until the present time.

Other bizarre interpretations of the Hebrew **ugab** were: "kithara," "flute," "syrinx," "hydraulis" (the Greek water-organ), and only occasionally "pipe," which is the correct English equivalent for **ugab**.

Take the word **kinnor**, the ancient Jewish lyre, mentioned together with **ugab** in Genesis 4:21. It is called alternately "psaltery," "harp," "zither," "lute." Even the authoritative Jewish translation, following the Masoretic text,² still calls the **kinnor** "harp." Only in its most recent, 1962 edition, is **kinnor** correctly translated as "lyre."

The **nebel** was the harp of Biblical times. It is translated alternately, "nabla," "naula," "nablion," (using the Greek and Latin forms of the original), as well as "kithara," and "psaltery."

In later translations it was identified with the Arabian "santir," and with a medieval instrument, the "dulcimer." This was a flat sounding board, on which strings were stretched, and played by being struck with small sticks. Idelsohn, the great Jewish scholar, who should have known the exact meaning of the Biblical musical terms, identified the **nebel** as a "bagpipe," despite the fact that bagpipe-like instruments appeared many centuries later. Other manifestly erroneous interpretations of the **nebel** in the English Bibles are "lute," "gittern" (the medieval term for "zither"), and in one instance "viol," an instrument played with a bow, despite the fact that the bow for stringed instruments did not exist in Biblical times.

I have to skip the Biblical terms to which a double meaning was attributed, some translators considering them as being musical instruments, others giving them extra-musical interpretations. Such terms are: '**gittit**,' considered by some interpreters as an "instrument from Geth (or Gath) ," a city in which King David was exiled for some time. Others interpret "**gittit**" as a "vat", in which the grapes were

2. **Published by the Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1917.**

trodden. The *sabbekah*, *sumponyah*, *kathros*, *mashrokita*, and *pesanterin*, mentioned only in the Book of Daniel (3: 5 ff), are manifestly foreign, heathen instruments, not used in Jewish musical practice. — *Neginot*, alternately rendered as a “stringed instrument,” “a song,” or simply “music.” *Shushan* is interpreted in most diversified manners; sometimes as the initial word of a song, but also as “trumpet,” “flute,” “cymbal,” but mostly as the flower “lily.”

Other terms with a double meaning are: *nekeb*, interpreted by many Biblical expounders as “flute,” by others, as a “hollow cavity” of jewels, in which precious stones were set. — Then the terms *nehilot* and *mahol*, rendered by some translators as “flutes,” but others doubt this meaning and maintain that both refer rather to “dancing,” while a third interpretation is that of “inheritance,” referring to the land that the Hebrews “inherited.” So, take your choice!

Alamot and *sheminit* have so many different interpretations that simply to mention them would by far exceed the space allotted to this paper. Suffice to mention that *alamot* refers to *almah*, “young maiden,” or to the range of the female singing voice, while *sheminit*, to the contrary, refers to the sound of men’s voices.

The same fate as befell *ugab* befell the other pipe-like instrument of the Hebrews, the *halil*, and its later variant, the *abub*. Both were almost unanimously rendered as “flutes,” sometimes as “double-flutes,” the two pipes of which were attached either in a parallel manner, or at a certain angle, but blown simultaneously by a single mouthpiece.

Nothing would have been simpler for the translators than to render the *hazozerot*, blown in the liturgy by the priests as their exclusive privilege, as what they really were, the “trumpets” of the Hebrews. We find such variants in our translations as “trump,” “tromp,” “bugle,” “cornet,” even “shawn,” which was a medieval oboe-like woodwind instrument. But this last rendering would have required some historical knowledge, which was evidently not the province of the Bible translators.

The *shofar* is rendered variously as “horn,” “ram’s horn,” “wild goat’s horn,” which are all correct in themselves, but it cannot be understood why a term so familiar to the Jews should have three different renderings in our English Bibles. A uniform term, “horn,” or “ram’s horn” would be appropriate.

The translations of *keren*, the horn made of the bovine cattle is not differentiated in our English Bibles from that of the shofar, although they are manifestly different instruments. Consequently,

keren should be distinguished from the shofar by terming it “neat’s horn.”

The same applies to *yobel*, the big horn that was blown to introduce the fiftieth year of the Jewish calendar. It is almost unanimously translated as shofar, despite the fact that it was manifestly a different instrument, different in construction as well as in sound. The *yobel* was provided with a metal resounding bell, which could be put on and taken off from the instrument, as we know from the Mishnah. This bell acted as a megaphon, increasing considerably the sound of the instrument. It would be therefore proper to translate it as a “high-sounding horn,” or, as the “horn of the Jubilee,” a quality derived from the Latin translation of the term.

Among the Biblical percussion instruments, *solel*, the *tof*, the “hand-drum,” received adequate and almost uniform translations, as “tabret,” or “timbrel.” Its rendering as “tambourine” is an anachronism, because the hand-drum with small metal plates in the frame is not known prior to the 12th century, and then under the name of “tambour de basque.”

The *meziltayim* and *zelzelim*, the brass cymbals of the ancient Hebrews, were sometimes translated as “castanets,” an evident misnomer, since anybody familiar with the Biblical text should know the difference in the material: the cymbals were made of metal, whereas the “castanets” were clappers of wood.

The correct meaning of *shalishim* is still shrouded in mystery. Some expounders translate them as “three-stringed instruments,” others as “castanets,” some even as a “dance of three steps.” Their strong onomatopoeic name suggests a shaking instrument, such as the Greek “seistron” or the Latin “sistrum.” Therefore, the most appropriate translation would be that of the Latin term. Yet, there are numerous erroneous interpretations, such as “timbrel” “triangle,” “cymbals,” even “trumpet,” and “cornet.”

The term *mena'an'im*, derived manifestly from the Hebrew verb *nusa*, “to shake,” alludes to a shaking instrument, such as we find in Egypt and other Near-Eastern civilizations. Nevertheless, many commentators maintain that it was a wind instrument, and indeed the older English Bibles translate it as “trumpets,” “cornets,” even as “castanets,” and “rattles.” A correct translation would be “sistrum,” as for the “shalishim.”

The *pa'amonim* were the little golden bells which adorned the lower seam of the high priest’s garment. They were a remnant of primitive magic destined to protect the bearer against harmful influences. Once a year, the high priest had to enter the “Holy of the

Holies,” God’s own dwelling in the Temple. But if he inadvertently happened to see God, this would mean his instant death, as had happened to the men of Beth-Shemesh, who made an attempt of looking into the ark, and were smitten by God. The sounds of the bells served to warn the deity to make Himself invisible when the high priests approached, in order to spare the life of his servant. The The English Bibles translation for these *pa^aamonim* are uniformly, “golden bells,” “samll bells,” and “little bells.”

The *mezillot* were also bells, but larger in size than the *pa^aamonim* and were made of base metal, which were hung on the neck of domestic animals. Their purpose was to protect these useful animals from the influence of evil spirits and demons. This practice likewise was a remnant of an ancient superstitious belief that evil spirits could be chased away by noise, in this case the tinkling of bells. Their translations in the older Bible editions as “bridle,” or “rein” is manifestly erroneous.

I have restricted myself to the mistakes in the translations of the musical terms of the Tanach. The many errors in the translations of the musical terms in the early rabbinical literature, the Midrashim, the Mishnah, the Talmudin and the Gemara, and others, would require a separate investigation, which I perhaps shall undertake at a later period. Here it would unnecessarily lengthen my paper.

If there are so many erroneous translations in the Bible itself, it is not surprising to find blunders in the works of the early commentators on the Biblical text. The most egregious among them is the 17th century Abraham da Portaleone, author of an encyclopedic work about Jewish mores and customs of Biblical times, which he published at Mantua in 1612. In describing Solomon’s Temple and its functionaries, he calls the *shofar* “a kind of flute,” a strange definition of one who must have heard the *shofar* many times in the religious services of his days. Among others of his numerous misconceptions I mention the *magrephah*, which he identifies with a “clapper,” and the *zilzal*, as “wind instruments.” Among his other bizarre statements, he believed that the Levites of Ancient Israel were taught theoretically and practically from textbooks, an assertion without any historical basis, of course.

There are a multitude of “wrongdoers” among the interpreters of Biblical terms, but none exerted so great an influence upon a whole generation of exegetes as Athanasius Kircher (17th century), who published an important musicological treatise, “Musurgia Universalis” (Rome 1650), in which he describes, and gives even an “illustration” of, the *magrephah*, which he calls an instrument “similar to our

church organ." This is, of course, the result of pure imagination, because there are no historical records whatsoever about the **magrephah**. Nevertheless, quite a number of later musico-historical writers accepted Kircher's statements as facts.

Among other incongruities in Biblical translations let me mention one more, which belongs to our own period. James Moffat provided a Bible translation (publ. 1922), in which he called the students of Samuel's School of Prophets, coming from the daily religious services, "a band of dervishes." According to Webster, dervishes are a Moslem religious order, dedicated to a life of poverty and chastity. What a bizarre idea to identify a Jewish religious group with a Moslem order! Well, as far as the lives of Samuel's students are concerned, — poverty, perhaps, — chastity, never! This would contradict God's own commandment. "be fruitful and multiply." The prophets were God's messengers, disseminating and carrying His words everywhere. They certainly obeyed this command, for there were many married men with children among the pupils of Samuel. But is it permissible for a modern translator of the Bible to misinterpret the simplest and most obvious of statements? Such appears to be the case with Moffat's grotesque translation.

It would be most desirable to discuss these, and many other incongruities in a public forum, in the hope of dissipating the most glaring discrepancies found in the translations of the Hebrew musical terms. There is little hope to establishing uniform terms to replace the many errors "Tradition" has imposed and which have "ossified" with the passage of time. Despite the fact that it would be difficult to arrive at an unequivocally satisfactory solution, it would be nevertheless meritorious to attempt to purify the English Bibles of the numerous incongruities which still prevail where the translations of musical terms are concerned.

I feel that the Cantors Assembly is the best body to initiate such an effort. There are many scholars among the American cantors who might be glad to co-operate in such an undertaking. The results of such collaboration could be submitted to all publishers of Bibles in the English language, with the resulting improvement of the Biblical text.

It is my ardent hope that the Cantors Assembly will take up this challenge in the very near future.

MUSIC IN THE AMERICAN SYNAGOGUE

SAMUEL H. ADLER

The dilemma of the musician working in the synagogue today is a rather desperate one. Despite veritably feverish creative activity, the renaissance of Jewish liturgical music which started about thirty-five years ago in America has lost its momentum and is, in fact, steadily losing ground. The very promising movement for the advancement of Jewish music that began here in the early 30's had both creative and performing goals. It was an inception of new ideals that raised great hope of establishing an exciting new concept of synagogue music based on ancient tradition but infused with contemporary spirit and performed with great fervor and devotion. What has happened? If the past thirty-five years are honestly surveyed, one could draw the following conclusions: On the credit side, we have today two or three schools of sacred music which are doing a commendable job of training cantors; we have a small movement afoot to start and expand a children's choir program in many congregations throughout the country; and we do have a handful of contemporary composers who have turned out fine works for our worship services. On the debit side, however, there are dangerous shortcomings. No Jewish institution in America has been able to train successfully an appreciable number of Jewish organists and music directors. No movement for volunteer synagogue choirs of any size has been initiated with the exception of possibly three or four choirs belonging to large congregations. All other congregations in America are still perfectly content to pay four, eight, or perhaps even 16 singers to "perform" their music for them. Last but certainly not least among the shortcomings is the failure of the American Jewish community to attract to the Jewish liturgical field more than three or four of the large number of Jewish composers graduated from our colleges and music schools annually.

I am sure that if this trend continues, the music of our synagogues will once again become completely dormant. This time, however, it cannot revert to German Romanticism or to Italian 19th

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century opera, but the music of the American synagogue will slip and deteriorate to an abysmal cultural low dominated by music of New York's Second Avenue Yiddish Stage, the semisecular Chassidic folk culture of Eastern Europe, and most of all by the pseudo-modern Victorian church music which is flourishing today both in America's Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.

These statements are not meant so much to reflect the ravings of an angry young man as the facts seen by one who has been much involved in Jewish music for the greater part of his life. Critical examination of our problems and of our creative efforts has failed. Whenever I see a critical statement about a work written for the American synagogue or about the general state of its music, it is either a summary of platitudes (since only such a small group of composers is concerned, it may seem necessary to encourage anyone), or it represents a new fad cultivated by critics in the field, namely the complaint that the twelve tone technique or other avant-garde techniques are not sufficiently employed in Jewish music. This kind of criticism merely encourages more busy activity which has no direction — a mad scramble in the dark.

Where is the principal blame to be placed for the great difficulties which have faced the conscientious musician engaged in the synagogue — may he be Jewish or non-Jewish? What has happened to the music of the people of the Book; to the music of the "Sweet Singer of Zion" who sang a "new song" unto the Lord; to the musical expression of that ancient people who long ago decreed that all prayers to God must be chanted so as to differentiate between the speech of man to his fellowman and that of man to his God? Possibly some light may be shed upon these questions by briefly examining the history of Jewish musical experience and practice.

The problem of Jewish music begins with the fact that for hundreds of years the system of musical accents (tropes) in the Hebrew Scriptures was passed down by word of mouth. This system arose and reached a semblance of the form which we know today during the period 500-800 A.D. Three variants evolved: (1) The Tiberian, (2) The Babylonian, and (3) The Palestinian. Today we commonly utilize the Tiberian manner of accents which uses dots, strokes, and parts of circles sometimes above and at other times below the consonant on which the accent falls. The musical accents were first notated by the 15th century German theorist Johann Reuchlin. However, his presentation does not tell the whole story, for the *neginot* (tropes) sung by the Oriental and African Jews differ from those chanted by the European Jews, adapting characteristics of music

heard in their particular environment. The great musicologist A. Z. Idelsohn distinguishes in his comparative table of accents 13 ways in which the *negivot* were chanted in 13 different locales, proving that they are related, and that the differences arise from the differing communities in which the Jews lived.

The second fact which has had an adverse effect on Jewish music is, I believe, the injunction that all instrumental music was to be banished from use in a Jewish religious service as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Possibly the rabbis of the time based this injunction on two Biblical verses, *Isaiah 24:8* "The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth." and *Hosea 9:1* "Rejoice not, O Israel, unto exultation like the peoples." The latter quotation suggests a possible reason why instrumental music was prohibited, namely the contempt which the rabbis felt for musical instruments that were used in martial or sensuous ceremonies and rituals of the pagan peoples living around the Jews of Palestine. A quotation from a Sibylline oracle summarizes these reasons very curtly. As translated by Eric Werner it reads "They (the faithful) do not pour blood of sacrifices upon the altar; no tympanon is sounded, nor cymbals, nor the aulos with its many holes, instruments full of frenzied tones, not the whistling of a pan's pipe is heard, imitating a serpent, nor the trumpet calling to war in wild tones."

It must be stated that this prohibition in itself was not the cause of the setback of Jewish liturgical music, but rather of the results which it seems to have caused. According to the Bible, the Levites had always provided the instrumental as well as the vocal music during the days of the ancient Temple. With the break-up of the caste system after the destruction of the second Temple in 70 A.D., the choral singing as well as the instrumental presentations of the Levites seem to have been discontinued: the early descriptions of the first synagogue services no longer mention choral singing and we must conclude that this injunction brought a cessation of all organized choral as well as instrumental performance.

The third blow from which our liturgical music is still reeling is one which was not self-inflicted but rather imposed by the peoples of Europe and Asia among whom the Jews were scattered during the past 2000 years. While the liturgical music of Christianity flourished through the Middle Ages, the Ars Nova, the Reformation, the Baroque, and the Classical periods, Jewish music was confined in ghettos and not allowed to share in the cultural growth of the larger community. When church music made its greatest strides, from the

12th to the 18th century, the development of Jewish liturgical music was paralyzed.

On the other hand, whenever Jews were allowed to live peaceably with their neighbors, we immediately find the traces of mutual musical influences. Even the most conservative Jewish circles participated in the sciences and the arts flourishing in the country of their sojourn. We find in the “traditional” song of the Sephardic (Spanish) Jews traces of Arab and Spanish song stemming from the period before 1492 when friendship blossomed among these peoples. Similarly we find traces of central European folk song and even of the *Minnelieder* in the “traditional” melodies of the Ashkenazic (German or central European) Jews. But for the most part, segregation was reflected in the nature of Jewish music; the music of the synagogue was extremely simple and the singing confined to a soloist called first a precentor and later a hazzan. As time passed, it became customary to have the singing of the hazzan reinforced — usually by no more than two voices, namely a high voice and a low voice which attended to the tasks of accompaniments and responses. During the 16th century, one bright spot appeared in the rather gloomy picture of Jewish liturgical music. We possess a collection of Psalms and Prayers for three to eight voices composed by Salomone Rossi of Mantua (1570-1628) who called himself “L’Ebreo.” These were published and, from all accounts, used in the synagogue in that Italian city.

Before leaving the discussion of the institution of the ghetto synagogue and its music, a brief comment is necessary concerning the position of the hazzan. At first, he was the man most highly honored in the community. He is described by Rabbi Judah in the Talmud as “a man who has heavy family obligations, but who has not enough to meet them; who has to struggle for a livelihood, but who nonetheless keeps his house clean and above reproach; who has an attractive appearance, is humble, pleasant, and liked by people; who has a sweet voice, and musical ability; who is well-versed in the Scriptures, capable of preaching, conversant with *Halacha* (Law) and *Agada* (Folklore) ; and who knows all the prayers and benedictions by heart” — indeed a description of a saint, and a description almost impossible to meet. This position was quickly modified, the essential quality remaining that of a sweet voice which was considered a divine gift capable of moving and inspiring the people to devotion. Since the lot of the Jews during these centuries was a tragic one, the hazzan’s prayers to God more and more echoed the lament of the people and frequently moved the congregation to tears. It is this

aspect of Jewish liturgical music which, regrettably, most Jews and most non-Jews still look upon as representing a genuine tradition. In my estimation this mistaken notion has dealt the harshest blow to the growth of a new synagogue music which would appropriately reflect contemporary life.

With these factors in mind, let us examine that time in Jewish history which precedes the large Jewish immigrations to the United States. After the French Revolution, the ghetto walls crumbled in Central Europe and the spirit of the Enlightenment quickly enveloped both the Church and the Synagogue. After many centuries of enforced isolation the Jewish people reacted violently to their sudden freedom. Many left the faith altogether, others tried to alter their Judaism so radically as to almost lose all tradition. However, it was the moderate reformers of Central Europe, particularly in Germany, who brought about a first strengthening of Jewish liturgical music. They did not reject the role of the hazzan, but they added mixed choir and organ to enhance the music of the Service. These additions were, of course, fought everywhere by orthodox Jews, but they prevailed especially in America, since the first large immigration of Jews coming about 1848 consisted of Reform Jews from Central Europe. (A small group of Spanish-Portuguese Jews had come to America in the 17th century.) The 19th century immigrants brought tunes influenced by German chorales, mostly written by 19th century Protestant church composers of rather modest talents and harmonized according to a somewhat diluted Mendelssohnian idiom. We look in vain for indigenous Jewish features in this music; but if we examine it closely we find wholesale borrowings not only of German chorale melodies but also of Italian opera excerpts. This mixture became the traditional music of the Reform Jewish community of 19th century America. Among the names of 19th century Jewish musicians and composers those of Sulzer, Lewandowsky, Weintraub, and Naumbourg are noteworthy, for these represent the romantic style of the reform movement in Europe. This style contained no trace of the fluid Oriental recitative; its choral songs contain almost no hint of the tropes passed down orally through the ages. Much could be said for and against these musicians, organists, and hazzanim of the Reform movement in Central Europe, but in our short resume all that can be pointed out is that they tried to lend dignity to the roles of the cantor and the choir in their "new" services and that they were very conscious of the opinion expressed by non-Jewish musicians.

The large Jewish population of Eastern Europe was also greatly affected by this reform of Jewish liturgical music, even though the

ghetto walls remained intact much longer in Poland, Russia and the Balkans than in Central Europe. The larger and wealthier congregations of Eastern Europe sent their hazzanim to Vienna, Munich, Berlin, and other centers of Jewish musical learning to be trained in the new style. It is evident from their works, that such men as Nowakowsky, Shestapol, Blumenthal, and Schorr were to some extent influenced by the German song, but completely taken with the operatic style of Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini, and that they found it easy to adopt it in the florid improvisation of their cantorial song.

Two more important sources of Jewish liturgical music must be mentioned before we turn to its modern practice in America. One of them is the Chassidic movement and its music. The Chassidim (meaning the pious) represented essentially a mystic movement, a reaction against the rather decadent legalism which had grown up around the code of the Shulchan Aruch. This code had set down a program of daily practice for the purpose of keeping before the people the religious and ethical intent of the Commandments. It had, in the course of time, become an end in itself rather than a means of achieving spiritual goals. It was against this type of emptiness that the Chassidim first led by the 18th century Baal-Shem-Tov (the possessor of the good name) rebelled. With its mysticism and message of spiritual enlightenment to the common people, the movement spread especially to the smaller communities of Eastern Europe. The Chassidim set piety before learning and regarded the expression of joy and exuberance as a chief religious duty. The leaders of this movement were convinced that singing was the best medium for rising to salvation. The following quotations by Nachman of Bratslav demonstrate the profound enthusiasm which the Chassidim felt for music — “Through song calamity can be removed ... Music originates from the prophetic spirit, and has the power to elevate to prophetic inspiration.” One might envision some very lofty music stemming from such ecstatic sayings, but it must be remembered that this was a folk movement and did not aim at anything more than “melody which is the outpouring of the soul.” Some of the Chassidic songs were melodies sung merely to syllables, others were melodies for refrains, for the music was used on occasions when the faithful would gather at the house of a Chassidic leader who would improvise the verses while everyone joined in the refrain. The musical material was derived from Ukrainian or Slavic folk songs and from Cossack dances and marches, as well as from a mixture of oriental elements and synagogue modes.

Besides the Chassidim, mention must also be made of a group

of singers and jesters called Badchonim, and a group of instrumentalists called Klezmorim. Both were active in the ghettos as entertainers for semi-religious functions (weddings, ritual plays and dances) and for the theater. They produced a literature of songs drawn from synagogal modes, and during the early part of the 20th century these songs were collected and arranged by a group of young Jewish composers. A "Society for Jewish Folk Music" was founded in St. Petersburg in 1908 and among the men who promoted the work of the society were Arno Nadel, M. Milner, Joseph Achron, and Lazare Saminsky.

This article will be continued in the next issue.

A. M. BERNSTEIN (1866-1932):
AN EXPLORATION IN FORM OF A CHRONOLOGY

ALBERT WEISSER

Introductory Note:

Abraham Moshe Bernstein, cantor, composer, musicologist, pedagogue and writer, was one of the most prominent and influential figures in the musical and cultural life of the extraordinary Jewish community of Vilna — affectionately called the Jerusalem of Lithuania — during roughly the first third of this century. Although he is mainly remembered today for his valuable collection of Hasidic folksongs, *Muzikalisher Pinkes* and a handful of art songs and liturgical pieces, he was a figure who commanded enormous respect from his fellow cantors for his artistic integrity, scholarship and the very highest ideals he held for hazzanut. Literary circles, too, admired him for his writing gifts and as one of the first composers to set contemporary Hebrew and Yiddish poetry. Certainly an unusual hazzan, he remains a most interesting and even somewhat perplexing figure. Dealt with harshly toward the end of his life in a way which haunts the imagination of every hazzan, his very real and manifold talents were for some reason only partially fulfilled.

Sometime after Bernstein's death, his family deposited his musical remains in the *Yiddish Scientific Institute* (YIVO is the abbreviation of the Yiddish name) in Vilna. Following the Second World War the collection arrived at YIVO in New York. In 1969 I was commissioned by YIVO to sort out all the Bernstein papers and to prepare a catalogue of the entire contents for its permanent archives. What I found was as follows: (1) Printed musical work by Bernstein; (2) printed material about Bernstein; (3) musical manuscripts by Bernstein — sacred, secular, children songs, partially finished works and works in progress, musicological works, transcriptions and arrangements; (4) works possibly by Bernstein; (5) Fragments, stray pages, unidentified works; (6) Literary works by Bernstein in manuscript; (7) choral volumes and part books in manuscript used by Bernstein and his choir at *Taharat Hukodesh* Synagogue, Vilna; (8) music, printed and in manuscript, not by Bernstein, but quite obviously from his personal library and collected by him over a lifetime.

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So as to better facilitate my work, and anticipating certain basic factual and biographical discrepancies, I had unvaryingly encountered in researching the life and works of other hazzanim I decided as a preliminary device to compile an exhaustive, documented chronology of Bernstein's life. I had hoped, too, that this documentary form might prove useful to other musicologists as a prototype in the pursuance of similar inquiries. What follows then is, with continuing and even recent emendations and additions, the final result. My entire project was in the main completed towards the end of 1969, and the catalogue and its contents may now be consulted in the musical archives of YIVO, New York.

My thanks to YIVO for its kind permission to publish this extended excerpt from the larger work.

I. MATERIALS CONSULTED

- AP-Ayznshtat. David and A. Prager, editors. *Algemayner Muzik Lexikon* (Universal Music Lexicon), Warsaw, 1935-36, 3 vols., see "A. M. Bernstein," Vol. III, pp. 131-132. (Yiddish).
- BAM-Bernstein, A. M. "Di Muzik in Vilna Far Der Tzayt Fun Di Okyupatzye" (Music in Vilna During the Time of the Occupation) in *Pinkes: Far Der Geshikhte Fun Vilna in Yorn Fun Milkhome un Okyupatzye*, Vilna, 1922, pp. 683-688. (Yiddish).
- BARA-Bernstein, A. M. "Yidishe Shul Muzik un R. Y. Rabinovitch" (Jewish Synagogue Music and R (aphael) Y (ehudah) **Rabinowitch**), *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw (Bernstein number), 1-7 (May, 1934) 4-8. (Yiddish).
- BARO-Bernstein, A. M. "Vi Azoy Ikh Bin Gevorn Dirigent Bay Rosovskyn" (How I Became Rosowsky's Choir Master), *Di Khatonim Velt*, Warsaw. I-9. July, (1934), 15-17. (Yiddish).
- BAS-Bernstein, A. M. "Di Ershte Trit Fun Yosef Shvartz" (The First Steps of Joseph Schwarz), *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw. II-19 (May, 1935), 13-14.
- BM-Bernstein, Maier. "A. M. Bemshtayn: Zikhroynes Iber Mayn Bruder" (A. M. Bernstein: Memories of My Brother), *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw. I-9. July, (1934), 15-17. (Yiddish).
- FA-Fater, Isaschar. *Yidishe Muzik in Poyln: Tzvisshn Beyde Velt Milkhomes* (Jewish Music in Poland Between the Two World Wars), Tel Aviv, 1970, pp. 60-70. (Yiddish).
- FR- _____ "Fule Reshime Fun A. M. Bernshtayns Kom-

pozitzyes” (Complete list of the musical works of A. M. Bernstein). *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw, (Bernstein number) I-7 (May, 1934), 8-10. (Yiddish). Although this article is unsigned I have been assured by A. M. Bernstein’s daughter, Mrs. Segula Kovarsky, that it is largely her work.

LNYL-*Lexikon Fun Der Nayer Yidisher Literatur* (Lexicon of the New Jewish Literature), New York, 1956. Vol. 1, pp. 403-405.

RE-Reisen, Zalman, editor. *Lexikon Fun Der Yidisher Literatur* (Lexicon of the Jewish Literature), Vilna, 1926, Vol. I, pp. 367-369. (Yiddish).

SE-Sendrey, Alfred. *Bibliography of Jewish Music*, New York, 1951. (English).

SH-Sherman, Pinkhos. “A. M. Bernshtayn: Tzu Zayn Tzveyten Yortzayt” (A. M. Bernstein: On the Second Anniversary of his Death). *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw. (Bernstein number), I-7 (May, 1934), 1-3. [Yiddish].

SHA-Shalita, Israel and Hanan Steinitz. *Entsiklopedyah, Lemuzikah*, (Musical Encyclopedia), Tel Aviv, 1950, pp. 164-166, (Hebrew).

SHM-Shalit, Moshe. “Preface” to A. M. Bernstein’s *Muzikalisher Pinkes*, Vol. I, 1927, n.p. (Yiddish).

SK-Mrs. Segula Kovarsky. A. M. Bernstein’s youngest daughter, now living in New York City.

STN-Stolnitz, Nathan. *Negine in Yidishen Lebn* (Music in Jewish Life). Toronto, Canada, 1957. See “Negine in Lite” (Music in Lithuania), pp. 17-19; “Vilner Khor Shul *Taharot Hakodesh*,” pp. 20-21; “Avraham Moshe Bernshtayn” (A. M. Bernstein), pp. 22-24; *passim.*, pp. 25, 30. (Yiddish).

STO-Stolnitz, Nathan. On *Wings of Song*, Toronto, Canada, 1968. See “Reminiscences of Hazzanim and Hazzanut,” pp. 44-54. (English).

WO-Wohlberg, Max. “Foreword” to reprinted edition of A. M. Bernstein’s *Muzikalisher Pinkes*, The Cantors Assembly of America, New York, 1958, n.p. (English).

YIVO-YIVO Institute for Jewish Research-Archives, 1048 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10028.

ZAF-Zaludkowski, Eliyahu. "Fun Mayne Zikhroynes," (From My Memoirs), *Di Shul un Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw, III-24/28 (Feb. 1939), 19-21; III-30/50 (April, 1939), 15-17. (Yiddish).

ZAK-Zaludkowski, Eliyahu. *Kultur Treger Fun Der Yidisher Liturgye*, (Culture Bearers of the Jewish Liturgy), Detroit, Mich. 930, pp. 255-256, 292. (Yiddish).

II. ICONOGRAPHY:

- (a) *A. M. Bernstein*: FA, pp. 60, 64; RE, p. 367; SH pp. 1, 3.
- (b) Vilna Choral Synagogue *Taharot Hakodesh*: SH, p. 2; STN, p. 20; STO, p. 40.

III. CHRONOLOGY:

1866-Abraham Moshe Bernstein born (in 1526) on Tisha B'Av, July 21 in Shatzk in the province of Minsk, Western White Russia. Sixth child of moderately well-to-do parents (BM, SK, WO). His exact birthdate has been a matter of confusion. LNYL proposes August 5, 1865, RE states "Shabat Nahamu," 1865, ZAK, 1865. All other sources agree on 1866 (AP, FA, SH, SHA), but SH gives the date as July 9. Pending further scrutiny, it seems to this writer that the date given by Bernstein's brother is most probably the correct one. His article is so vividly detailed and knowledgeable about Bernstein's early life, and my check on the Hebrew and civil calendars has convinced me of its veracity.

1870-Bernstein sent to "kheyder" (elementary religious school) in town of birth. Is so put upon by its autocratic teachers and clamorous and wailing atmosphere, that he becomes literally ill. (BM).

1871-Allowed to study in the town "Bet Midrash" (prayer house), where he makes remarkable scholarly strides. First begins to show musical aptitudes in assisting his father, an amateur cantor, during weekly and holiday services (BM, **SH**) .

1875-Is recognized as something of a scholarly prodigy because of his erudition in Biblical and Talmudic studies. Attends Yeshiva in Minsk (BM, **SH**) .

1876-Death of Bernstein's mother, to whom he was extremely devoted, on Tishah B'Av, his tenth birthday. While in Minsk, he became an enthusiast of the cantor *Yisroelke Minsker der*

Khazn, a legendary “Baal Telfilah”, who was renowned for his sweet hazzanut and exemplary diction. Became a member of *Yisroelke’s* choir, but was troubled by the taunts and “vulgar” behaviour of his fellow choir members (BM, SH, WO).

1879-Enters the famous yeshiva in Mir, Poland (BM).

1881-Leaves yeshiva in Mir. Wanders from town to town in Poland. Great dissatisfaction with the prevailing lack of idealism, musicality, style and religious devotion in the hazzanic circles he encounters. Extreme economic deprivation. Search for cantor to whom he could be apprenticed with confidence and dedication (BM).

1884-Arrives in Kovno, Russia. Befriends Hazzan *Raphael Yehudah Rabinowitch* of the Kovno Choral synagogue, with whom he undertakes intensive cantorial studies. Bernstein is convinced that he has found what he has been searching for. Rabinowitch has an enormous influence over him (BARA). Rabinowitch possessed that rare combination of hazzanut, musicality, scholarship and esthetic values (SH). Bernstein becomes member of his household and undertakes secular studies. Does extensive reading in Yiddish, Hebrew, German and Russian literature (BM). He is made second hazzan and choir master to Rabinowitch (ST). Attends music school in Kovno and works with diligence to master music theory and general music history. His voice develops into a fine lyric tenor and he excels in operatic arias and lieder (RE). Begins to compose in earnest — finishes songs *Am Olam* (text by Mordecai Tzvi Mane), and *Zamd un Shtern* (text by Shmuel Frug), (BM).

1888-Becomes cantor at second choral synagogue, *Adath Yeshurun*, in Bialistock (BM, SH).

1889-Becomes member of *Hoveve Zion* organization. “Bene Moshe”, (FA).

1891-Engaged by Cantor Barukh Leib Rosowsky to be his choir master at the choral synagogue in Riga. (5651). Remains there for a year and a half (BARO, **BAS**).

1893-Engaged as cantor of Vilna Khor Shul *Taharat Hakodesh*, 35 Zavalna Street (AP, BM, SH, SHA, WO). Other sources make the year of this event 1891 (LNYL, RE, ZA). This is obviously incorrect. Marries Lina Ansell December 25, in Riga. Six children. (SK).

- 1898-Publishes in Vilna the song *Am Olam* as No. I of the collection *Neginot Yisrael: Liedersammlung aus der Hebraischen Poesie Nebst Tonzeichen Zum Gesang mit Klavierbegleitung* (Hebrew). Some sources list 1893 as the publication date of this song (LNYL, RE). I have not been able to trace any published copy prior to 1898 (YIVO, SE).
- 1900-Publishes in Vilna the songs *Al Harerei Tziyon* (text by Menahem Mendel Dalitzky) and his subsequently very popular *Zamd un Shtern* (text by Shmuel Frug) under one cover, the first in Hebrew, the second in Yiddish. Some sources list 1893 as publication date (LYNT, RE), others 1898 (FR). I have found no earlier publication than 1900 (5660). (YIVO).
- 1901-Publishes children's songs *Hasheleg* (text by Zalman Shneyur) and *Shirat Haaviv* (text by Yavitz) in Vienna publication *Olam Katan, No. I.* (Hebrew), (LNYL, RE, SE).
- 1903-Birth of son Abiasaf Bernstein, gifted composer and pianist, who settled in Israel in 1935 and died there Nov. 5, 1957 (AP, SHA, SK). Publishes song *Hot Rakhmones: Nokhn Kishinyever Pogrom* (text by Shmuel Frug) in supplement of the publication *Der Fraynd*, St. Petersburg, 142 (June 28), 5-6. (Yiddish) (LNYL, RE, SE).
- 1904-Publishes song *Zemer L'Purim* in Warsaw journal *Hatzofeh* (LNYL, RE). Hazzan Gershon Sirota makes first recording of Bernstein's *Hashem, Hashem, K'El Rakhum Vekhanum*. This piece is said to have been highly praised by Rimski-Korsakov, (SH).
- 1905-Birth of son, Shmuel Bernstein, gifted violinist and pedagogue now residing in Israel and teaching at the Rubin Conservatory. (AP, SK).
- 1908-Important notice of Bernstein's works in St. Petersburg publication *Birzhevia Vyedomosti*, by the music critic Nikolai Feopemptovich Solovyov — "the compositions of A. M. Bernstein's deserve close attention because of their religious ecstasy and the beauty of their oriental elements." (RE).
- 1914-Publishes in Vilna Parts I and II of *Avodat Haboreh, collections* of liturgical pieces for cantor solo (recitatives), and cantor and four-part mixed choir, no accompaniment, by A. M. Bernstein and some of his contemporary cantor-composers (Nissan

Blumenthal, Pirikhos Minkowsky, David Nowakowsky, A. M. Rabinowitz, Abraham Ber Birnbaum, Barukh Leib Rosowsky, Joseph Gottbeter, Moritz Henle). No publication date. The New York Public Library – Jewish Division, in its catalogue dates these volumes, with a query, as 1912 (?). Most other sources, 1914. (FA, LNYL, RE, SE).

1915-1918-German occupation of Vilna. Bernstein conducts *Hazamir Choir* and the student choir of the professional School *Hilf Durkh Arbet*. His setting of Y. L. Peretz's dramatic poem *Dos Fremde Khupah Kleyd* is performed several times on local stages (BAP). Readies for publication a collection of 150 Hebrew and Yiddish children's songs and a solfeggio manual for children (YIVO). *Zamd un Shtern* reprinted in New York by J. P. Katz, Publishers, 1916. Sets Shmuel Ansky's poems *Mayn Lid* and *Der Shnayderl*. Publishes *Tzu Herzl's Yortzayt: Troyer Lid*, for mixed choir and piano accompaniment (text by Shiva), 1917, in supplement to Vilna publication *Unzer Osed*. Musical director of Vilna Jewish musical organization, *Bene Asaf*. Receives its first award. (BAM, RE, LNYL, SK).

1919-Publishes in Vilna the song *Tzum Hemerl* (Ah! Hemerl, Hemerl, Klap), (text by Avraham Reisen), solo voice with or without choir (Yiddish). Attends first meeting on February 23 of the music section of the *Vilna Jewish Historico-Ethnographical Society in the Name of Shmuel Ansky*; its organization, goals and activities devised by Bernstein (SHM).

1920-On December 20 Bernstein participates in a "troyer ovnt tzu shloshim nokhn toyt fun Shmuel Ansky" (memorial evening for the playwright, poet and folklorist Shmuel Ansky). Choir under his direction performs his settings of Ansky's poems *Mayn Lid* and *Der Shnayderl*. Also performed is Lazare Saminsky's setting of Ansky's *Di Nakht*. (Program of this event in YIVO Archives, New York).

1921-Resigns his position as cantor of *Taharat Hakodesh* (SK). Other sources say he was dismissed (BM, SH, WO). The exact nature of this affair, which at the time caused considerable intense emotion and partisanship, has never been divulged. Quite obviously there were sharp disagreements with the "gabaim" (synagogal managerial heads), because of their petty bickering and musical insensitivity. The congregation as a whole and the

Vilna community, however, remained deeply devoted to Bernstein.

There seems to be some uncertainty also as to the exact date of his departure from *Taharat Hakodesh*. Most sources state that his duration there lasted for thirty years (BM, FA, SH). This would put his date of leave-taking in 1923, but this is very tenuously documented. I find much more convincing the date 1921 as given by Bernstein's successor at *Taharat Hakodesh*, Hazzan Eliyahu Zaludkowsky, who describes most graphically his "probe" (test audition) and engagement there during that year. (ST, ZAF, **ZAK**) .

1922-1926-A period of deep disappointment, anguish and hardship for Bernstein. Teaches music in Vilna Hebrew schools and such secular institutions as *Mefirtze Haskalah* where he structures special musical curricula. Organizes male choir at *Vilnu Teachers Academy*. Publishes article "Singing in the Public School," *Tarbut*, Warsaw, I, 2 (1922), 31-35 (Hebrew), (SE). Writes musical criticism and articles for various publications. Composes children's operetta *Snow White* (text in Hebrew), (fragments in YIVO).

1927-Publishes in Vilna *Muzikalisher Pinkes*, a collection of 243 religious folk songs, mainly of Hasidic origin, one voice, no accompaniment, considered Bernstein's best scholarly work. Published under auspices of *Vilnu Jewish Historico-Ethnographical Society in the Name of Shmuel Ansky*. Translates *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) into Yiddish (YIVO). *Tzum Hemerl* reprinted by Metro Music Co., New York.

1931-Translates *Shir Hashirim* (Song of Songs) into Yiddish (SH). Publishes Vol. III of *Avodat Huboreh* for cantor solo and four-part mixed chorus, no accompaniment. (Includes a work by David Nowakowsky) (YIVO) .

1932-Dies June 76 in Vilna (LNYL).

1933-Bernstein, A. M. "Mayne Taynes Tzu Khazones" (My Complaints About the Cantorial Art), *Di Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw I-1 (Nov. 1933) 19-20 (Yiddish).

1934-Bernstein, A. M. "Brokhe un Klole" (A Blessing and a Curse) 1-4 (Feb. 1934), 18-19; "Khazones Oifn Oylem Hoemes" (The Cantorial Art Upon the Realm of the Dead), 1-7 (May, 1934), 10-12; *Av Harahamim Shokhen Meromim*, I, 7 (May, 1934),

supplement, 5 p. for cantor (tenor) and four-part mixed chorus, no accompaniment; “Di Tragedye Fun Ershten Varshaver Khazn (Jacob Leib) Veys” (The Tragedy of the First Warsaw Cantor Jacob Leib Weiss) 1-9 (July, 1934), 3-4; “Al Hazzanut” (About the Cantorial Art) II-14 (Dec. -934), 24-25. All in Di *Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw.

1935-Bernstein, A. M. Tziyona (To Zion), for four-part mixed chorus, no accompaniment, (text by Heikel Lunsky), Di *Khazonim Velt*, Warsaw, II-11 (April, 1935), 20.

1936-Bernstein, A. M. “Sifre Zimra” (Song Books), *Di Shul un Khazonim Velt*. Warsaw. III-2/22 (Dec. 1936), 3.

1937-Tzum *Hemerl* republished in an arrangement by Boris Levenson for four-part mixed chorus, White and Smith Publishers, Co., New York, Yiddish and English text.

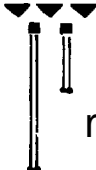
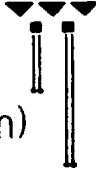
1958-Bernstein’s *Muzikalisher Pinkes* republished by the Cantors Assembly of America, New York, with a foreword in English by Hazzan Max Wohlberg, and Table of Contents in English prepared by Hazzan David J. Putterman.

1970-Four of Bernstein’s compositions published in Isaschar Fater’s volume, *Jewish Music in Poland Between the Two World Wars*, Tel Aviv, pp. XXIV-XXX. “Zamd und Shtern”; “Peale-Tzion Shvue” (text by Yehoshua Felovitch) ; “Yismah Moshe,” cantor and four-part mixed chorus, no accompaniment; “Tzum Hemerl.”

MUSIC SECTION

זמירות לאל חי:

S' rniroth l' El chaj
 SYNAGOGENGESÄNGE

 für Solo, Soli und Chor 
 mit Orgelbegleitung (ad libitum)

 von 

MAX G. LÖWENSTAMM

weiland Obercantor an der Synagoge zu München.

I. HEFT.

Frei tag Abend-Gottesdienst.

2. Auflage.

Verlag von A.W. Kaufmann, Leipzig.



Max G. Lowenstamm was born on October 25th, 1814 in Trebitsch, Moravia. He pursued his early Hebrew studies in Prague and later in Nagy Kanizsa, Hungary, where he was called upon to substitute for the local cantor who was taken ill. There he also attended the Polytechnium in preparation for studying medicine. Having developed a beautiful *heldentenor* he abandoned his plans to study medicine and went to Vienna to study with Sulzer. There he helped to sustain himself by becoming an assistant in the Hebrew School of Dr. Mannheimer, while at the same time attending the National Conservatory. He served as Cantor in Prague, Papa (Hungary) and in Budapest. While serving in Budapest he became one of 23 candidates for the post of Cantor in Munich in the synagogue previously served by Sanger and Kohn. He was elected to the post and during his long tenure he managed to adapt his "Polish" style of hazzanut to the *minhag* of South Germany with great success.

He was also a competent composer. His compositions, of which the Friday Evening Service here included is only a small sample, were published posthumously by his son. He died in 1881 and was succeeded by Emanuel Kirschner.

Max Wohlberg

Ma tówu.

Max G. Löwenstamm.

Moderato assai, quasi Andante.

Sopran.
Alt.
Tener.
Bass.

Orgel.

mf
ped.

Ma.
p

to wu ó ho le cho ja a kow misch kónó se cho jis ro el wa a ni berówehas

o wu we se cho

de cho o wó we se cho o wó we se cho esch ta cha weh, esch.

o wó we se cho o wó we se cho

o wó we se cho

tr. tranquillo

crescendo be . jir . o . se . cho be . jir . o . se cho

tachaweh el he . chal kódsch cho be . jir . o . se . cho be . jir . o . se . cho

crescendo be . jir . o . se . cho be . jir . o . se cho be . jir . o . se . cho

crescendo be . jir . o . se . cho be . jir . o . se . cho

Andantino.

Cantor. a . dó . noj o . haw . ti ma . ón be . se . cho u . ma kómmischka ká . wó .

Man.

da . cho wa . a . ni esch . ta . ché weh wa . ech . ro . oh

Poco piu mosso.

Chor. ow re cho lif ne a . dó . noj ó . si wa . a . ni se . fil . lo si lsecho a . dó .

se . fi . lo . si

noj es ro zón uló him br row chas. de cho
 es ro zón uló him
 lecho a. dó. noj es ro. zón uló him

3 Stimmen.
Moderato.

Sopran I. II. *p* a. ne -
 Alt. *p* a. ne ni a. ne ni a. ne

dim. ni be. mes jisch. e cho be. mes jisch. e cho
dim. ni *poco ritard.* *p* a. ne

Chor. *p* a. no. ni be. mes *acresc.* *p* *pp*
 a. ne ni *mf* be. mes jisch. e cho be. mes jische chojisch. a. cho.
mf a. ne ni be. mes *decresc.* *poco ritard.* *pp*
 a. ne. ni be. mes *decresc.* *p poco ritard.* *pp*
 Pod. *pp*

Lechu nerannenoh.

Moderato, quasi Recit. *)***)

Cantor.

Lu . chu neran . ne . noh la . dó . noj no . ri . joh le zur jisch . e . nu

Lento. *dolce*

Orgel.

Zwischenspiel I.

Cantor.

a scher nischba ti be . ap . pi im jr . wo . un el me nu . cho . si

*)Die nächstfolgenden Sätze werden in derselben Weiss ausgeführt.

• +)Das Zwischenspiel II, ist für jene Gemeinden bestimmt, bei deren Gottesdienst die folgenden Psalmen nicht laut vorgetragen, sondern a la „stille Andacht“ bet rachtet werden.

Molto lento, e legato.

Zwischenspiel II.

Adónojamabbul joschow.

Poco lento.

Cantor. a. dó. noj lamabbul jo. schow wa. jeschewa. dó. noj melech le. ó. lom

Man.

L'istesso tempo.

Chor. a. dó. noj ós le. am. mó jitten a. dó. noj j. wo. rech es am. mó bascho lóm.

pp

Ped.

Lechoh dódi.

Andante.

Cantor. Lechohdó. di li. ke. ras kal loh pe. ne schab. bos ne. kab be. loh.

Man.

L'istesso tempo.

Chor. Lechoh dó. di li. ke. ras kal loh pe. ne schab. bos ne. kab be. loh.

mf

Ped.

Cantabile.

Schomór weschór.

Cantor. Scho-mór we-sachór be-dib-bur e-chod hischmi o-nu el hamme-ju chod a-dó.

Man. *p* *espressivo* *espressivo*

noj e-chod u-sche-mó e-chod le-schem u-le-sif e-res we-lis-se-hil-loh:

mf *dimin.* *p* *dim.* *p*

Recitativ.

Likeras schabbos.

Chor rep. Lecho dodi.

Cantor. Li-kras schab-bos le-cho we-ne-le-cho ki hi me kór hab-be-

Man. *p*

ro-cho me-rósch mik-ke-dem ne-su-choh sóf ma-a-se-be-ma-che scho wo te-

decrecendo *decrecendo*

chil-loh: mik-dasch me-lech ir me-lu-choh ku-mi ze-i mit-tóch ha-be-fe-choh

p *mf a tempo* *rit. a tempo*

dolce *p* *cresc.* *molto rit.*

raw loch scho wes be . e . mek hab . bo . cho we . hu ja . cha . mól o . la . jich chem loh

Risoluto. **Hisóreri.** *Chor rep. Lecho dodi.*

Cantor. His - ó - re - ri his - ó - re - ri ki wo ó - rech

Man.
Listesso tempo.

Chor. His ó re - ri his ó re - ri ki wo ó - rech ku mi ó - ri u - ri u - ri
Tenor hervortretend.

Ped.

schir . dab . be ri kewód
schir . dab . be - ri kewód a - dó noj adó . noj o . la - jich níg - loh
schir . dab . be - ri kewód a - dó . noj

Chor rep. Lecho dodi.

Religioso.

Bóiwesholóm.

Chor.

Bóiwescho, lóm te res ba loh gam. E si me cho u wr.

p

p

espressivo

Ped.

zo he loh gam be si me cho u wr zo he loh

rit.

Molto moderato.

p

tóch mu ne
Tenor hervortretend.

rit.

Molto moderato.

am se gul loh

Cantor.
Bó i chal loh bó i chal

p

p

Cantor.
loh bó i chal loh bó i chal

mf

Cantor.
i chal loh bó i chal loh

mf

rit.

rit.

Chor rep. Lecho dodi.

Lechoh dódi.

Andantino.

Cantor. *mf*

Le - choh dó - di li - ke - ras kal - loh pe - ne schab - bos ne kab - be loh.

Man.

Listesso tempo.

mf

Le - choh dó - di li - ke - ras kal - loh pe - ne schab - bos ne kab - be loh.

mf

Ped.

Schómor wesochór.

Andante.

Cantor. *p*

Scho - mór we so - chór be - dib - bur e - chod hisch - mi o - nu el ham - me - ju - chod.

Man.

Chor. *f*

a - dó noj e - chod u - sche - mó e - chod le - schem u - le - sif e - res we lis - ez - hil loh.

f

Ped.

Chor rpp. Lecho dodi.

Likeras schabbos.

Cantabile, lento. poco lento

Cantor.  *Man.*

likras schabbos le - chu wa - ne. le - cho ki hi ma - kór. habbs. ro — cho merósch mik.

 *mf*

ke - dem az - su - choh sóf ma - a - se ba - macha - scho - wo ta - chil loh: mikdasch

 *ten.*

me - lech ir ma - lu - choh ku - mi z - i mit - tóch ha - ba - fe - cho

cresc. mf f

 *dolce p cresc.*

raw loch schewes ba - é - mek hab - bo - cho wa - hu ja - cha - mól o - la - jich chem - loh.

p cresc.

Chor. rep. Lecho dodi.

Risolut. **Hisóteri.**

Chor. His. ó - ru - ri his ó - re - ri ki wo ó rech ku - mi ó - ri

u - ri u - ri schir dab be - ri ke wód adó - noj o - la jich nig loh.

Lento. **Bói weschólóm.** *Chor rep. Lecho dodi.*

Bó i we - scho lóm te - res ba - loh gam ba - si - ma - cho

a - té - res ba - a - loh

si - ma - cho u - we - zo - hu - loh

gam besi - ma - cho u - we - zo - hu - loh

molto moderato

l'och z mu ne am se - gul - loh Cantor. Bó i chal.
 Tenor hervortretend. *p.*

molto moderato

loh bó i chal loh bó i chal loh bó i chal loh bó i chal loh: *p.* *mf* *ff*

Cantor. *p.* *mf* *ff*

Chor rep. Lecho dodi.

Tów Izhódós.

Psalm 92.

Andante maestoso.

Tów Izhódós Izhódós u - le - sam - mer le - schi - me - cho ei -

Chor. u - le - sam - mer le - schi - ma - cho ei -

u - le - sam - mer le - schi - me - cho ei -

Ped.

jón le hag - gid bab - bó - ker chas de - cho we - e - mu no - se - cho bal - le lós
 jon a -

pp *pp* *pp*

le o - sór wa - a - le no - wel a -
 le o - sór wa - a - le no - wel a - le hig - gi -
 le o - sór wa - a - le no - wel a - le hig - gi -

Soloquartett.
meno mosso

le hig - go - jón bechin - nor Ki sim - mach - tan - ni adó - noj
 jón bechin - nor Ki sim - mach - tan - ni a - dó - noj befo - o - le
 jón bechin - nor Ki s i m - mach - tan - ni adó noj
dim. e rit.

pp *pp*

dolce *poco cresc.*

be fo - e - le - cho ki sim mach - tan - ni - a dó - noj be fo - e - le

cho

be fo - e - le - cho

Tutti.

cho br - ma - a - seh jo - de - cho a - ran - nén

br - ma - a - seh jo - de - cho a - ran - nén

br - ma - a -

rit. *molto ritard.*

ma - a - sé jo - de - cho jo - de - cho a - ran - nén aran - nén aran - nén.

ma - a - sé

sé

aran - nén aran - nén

riten.

attacca

Mah god^e la massecho.

Freie Vortragsweise.

Cantor.

Mah god^e la maⁿ. se. cho a. dó . noj me. ód o . me . ku machszé wó . se . cho

p

Man.

isch ba . ar ló . jé . do u . che . sil ló jo . win es sos

bif . ró . ach re . scho . im ke . mó *ten.* é . sew waj . jo . zi . zu kol pó . a . le

o . wen lhi scho . me dom a . dé ad . weat . to mó . róm ló . lom a . dó . noj.

Chor.

Ped.

attaca

Listesso tempo.

Ki hinchóje wecho.

Cantor.

ki hinnehó . je . we . cho a . dó . noj ki hin . nehó . je . we . cho jó . wé . du jis po . re . du kol po . e . le

Man.

o . won wat . to . rem ki . re . ém kar . ni bal . ló . si be . sche . men ra . a . non

wat . tab . bét é . ni be . schu . roj bak . ko . mim o . laj me . ré . im tisch . ma . noh os . noj zad .

dik kat . to . mor jif . roch ke . e . res bal . e wonón jis . geh schu . sulim be . wés a . dó . noj be . cha . ze .

rós e . ló . hé . nu jaf . ri . chu ód je . nu wun be . sé . woh deschénim wra . a . nan . nim

ji . he . ju l'hağ . gđ ki jo.schor a . dó .noj za . ri . w:łó aw . lo . soh bó

attacca.

Adónoj moloeh.

Psalm 93.

Andante maestoso.

Chor.

a . dó .noj mo .loch gę .us lowesch, lo . wesch a . dó .noj os his .as.sor

Ped.

kón af.tikkón tę.wél bal tim .mót no .chón kis .a . cho me .

af . tik .kón té . wél bal tim .mót no .chón kis .a . cho me .

af . tik .kón té . wél bal tim .mót no .chón kis .a . cho me .

os me. ó. lom ot - toh
 os me. ó. lom o toh no. se. u nehorós á. dó noj no. se.
 os me. ó. lom ot toh no. se. u nehorós á. dó noj
 os me. ó. lom ot toh no. se. u ne. ho rós . a. dó noj no. se. u

f. *crsc.*

u ne. ho. rós kó. lom ji. se. u ne. ho. rós doch. jom mik. kó.
 ne. ho. rós kó. lom ji. se.
 ne. ho. rós kó. lom ji. se. u ne. ho. rós doch. jom mi. ko. los

f.

lós ma. jim rabbim ad. ti. rim mischerei jom ad. dir bamme róm adó noj
 lós ma. jim rabbim ad. ti. rim mischerei jom ad. dir bamme róm adó noj
 lós ma. jim rabbim ad. ti. rim mischerei jom ad. dir bamme róm adó noj

molto rit. *Più lento.* *pp*

attaca

Solo. Quartett.

Andante. p dolce

E - dó - se - cho ne - em - nu me - ód - le wé - se - cho no - a - woh kó - desch

poco rit.

Chor.

poco piu mosso

adó - noj leó - rech jo - mim adó - noj leó rech jo - mim

adó - noj adónoj leó rech jo - mim

rit.

Mi chomócho.

Chor.

Moderato assai. p

Mi cho mó - cho bo - é - lim a - do - noj mi ko -

poco cresc.

Man.

mó - cho ne dor bak kó - desch nó - ro - se - hil lós

nó - ro - se - hil lós

se fo leh no ro se hil los o se fe leh.

dimin.

dim.

Wajechulu.

Frei vorzutragen.

Cantor. *ten.*

Wa - je - chu - lu hascho - ma - jim we ho - o - rez we chol zu -

Orgel

p

Man.

wo - om wa - je - chal e - lo - him ba jom hasche - wi - i me - lach - to a .

mf

pp

p

scher o - soh wa - jisch - bos ba - jom hasche - wi - i mik - kol me - lach - to a .

mf

pp

scher o soh wa je woroch e lo him es jom haschu wi i wa je

ten.

p *cresc.* *dimin.*

ka . dësh o . so ki wo scho . was mik kol me lach . to a .

ten.

p *pp*

scher bo - ro e lo - him la a - sos.

molto riten.

p *molto riten.*

Haschkiwenu.

Cantor. *Assai lento, quasi largo, sempre pp*

Hasch - ki - wé - nu a . dó . noj e lo - hé - nu le - scho

sempre pp *pp*

Man.

lom wsha . ami . dé . nu ma lu . ké . nu le cha

pp lento

P(ad libitum)

jim u . fu . ros o . lé . nu suk . kas scha lo . me cho we . sa . ke . né .
 nu be . é . zo to . woh mi . le . fo . ne . cho we
 ho . schi é . nu le ma an . scha . me . cho .

Adón ólom.
 Schlussgesang.

Andante.
 Chor. A . dón ó . lom a . scher mo .
 rit.

tranne
tranquillo

p
lach be - te - rem kol je zir niw ro *leés* na - a - so be *leés*

leés
tranquillo

portamento *f* *pp amabile e lento*

chef - zó *portamento* kol asaj melech asaj melechsche mó nik ro *pp* wea - cha - ré kiche *pp* wea - cha - ré *pp* wea - cha - ré *lento*

lós hak - kól *lewad* dó jim - lóch nó - ro *ff*

attacca

Moderato.
p dolce

Sopran
Alt.

Soli.

Tenor.
Bass.

wə hu ho joh wə hu hó wəh wə hu ji he jeh beai o roh

f *rit.*

Con affetto.

Cantor.

wə hu e chod wə en sché ni laham schil lóh le hach bi

p *rit.*

Man.

roh beli ré schis beli sach lis wəló ho os wə ha mis roh

mf *p*

espress. *mf* *p*

Moderato.

Sopran I. II.

Soli.

Alt. I. II.

wə hu e chod wə en sché ni laham schil lóh le hach bi roh

Lento.

beli ré schis beli sach lis wəló ho os wə ha mis roh wə hu e li wə haj gó a li

wəló ho os wə hu e li

wə zur chə w li be os zo roh wə hu ni si a mo nos li manos kə si be

cresc.
jóm ek-ro wehu nis-si u-mo-nós li mehos kó-si be-jóm ek-ro
cresc. *molto ritard.* *p* *pp*

Chor.

Moderato. *decresc.*
wehu é li wechaj gó-a-li wezur chow-li bees zo-roh wehu nis-
p *decresc.*
p *decresc.*
Man.

poco rit. *p* *rit.*
si u-mo-nós li mehos kó-si be-jóm ek-ro
poco rit. *pp*
poco rit. *p*

Chor.

Andante. *pp* *f* *p*
b-jo dó af-kid ru-chi bees i schon wep-i-ro weim ru-
p *pp* *f* *p*
p *pp* *f* *p*
Ped.

chi ge wi jo si adó noj li we lo i ro adó noj li we lo i ro

molto cresc. f

*) *Poco mosso.* *attacca*

Chor.

a. dónoj li we lo i ro adó noj li we lo


Ped.

a. dónoj li we lo i ro adó noj li we lo i ro a. dónoj

ro adó noj li we lo i ro adó noj li we lo i ro

i ro a. dónoj li we lo i ro a. dónoj li we lo i ro

Ped.

*) Wird dieser Satz nicht genügen, so springt es vom Zeichen * bis 

a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro
 li we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj a . dó . noj
 ro we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj
 lo i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló

a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i .
 li we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i .
 li we . ló i . ro we . ló i . ro
 i . ro we . ló i . ro a . dó

ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro *riten.*
 ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro we . ló i . ro a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro
 a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro
 noj a . dó . noj li we . ló i . ro *riten.*

Adagio.
Lento.
ff - ppp
p
ff - ppp
riten.
Lento.
Adagio.
ff - ppp

REVIEW OF NEW MUSIC

BERLINSKI: *Psalm XXX* for Alto, choir S.A.T.B., Two Trumpets, Shofar and Organ.

Transcontinental Music Publications, TCL 618.

Dr. Berlinski has composed a rousing, rhythmic, rondo that lacks both integrity and imagination. This harsh view is taken in light of the way the composer deals with the issues of prosody, instrumentation and performance practice.

The first disappointment is the inclusion of the Hebrew text "Mizmor Shir Hanukat HaBayit L'David" in an otherwise all English setting. To achieve this the practical approach of designing a melodic *tune* that fits both the Hebrew and English had to be utilized. Fortunately, this commercially conceived, unartistic ploy reveals its innate weakness when the alto is asked to sing a misaccented "Ba-yit" merely to accommodate a juicy tritone in the original melody tailored in English. Composers should stick to their guns. A piece conceived in one language deserves to be performed in the original. Souping up rhythms to, force a foreign prosody can only weaken the overall effect.

Secondly, while the organ writing is safely idiomatic, and the shofar writing predictable, the use of the two trumpets sounds stereotyped and painfully unimaginative. Given that the shofar represents a clear martial sound, what is the reason for confining the two trumpets to triquet fanfares throughout the entire experience?

On the contrary, the lines:

"Lord, My God, I cried unto Thee and Thou didst heal me."

and "Weeping may tarry for the night but joy cometh in the morning"

conjure up a myriad of dramatic

brass figures which could enhance the poetry of this Psalm.

Finally, the inexcusable error in judgement can be found at the heading of the piece. Before the trumpet and shofar staves is found the infamous marking "ad.Lib." Why does the composer forfeit the possibility of these instruments use so arbitrarily? Surely if so little value is placed in their role within the ensemble another plain old organ and choir piece could be tolerated. The whole concern of integrity comes into play. A composer must write what he hears and music directors (like Dr. Berlinski, who should know better) are charged with performing the music with precise regard for the composer's creative vision. If synagogue music is to reach the heights of master works in the Christian literature, we must learn to become critically aware of what is essential to artistic composition and strictly required of a professional performance.

RICHARDS: *Psalm 137, By the Waters of Babylon.* Recitative and Aria for Voice and Organ. Transcontinental Music Publications - TV578.

Cantor Richards development as a composer is an interesting one and a brief awareness of it is pertinent to an understanding of why this psalm setting is musically vital.

The son of a successful song writer, born and raised in New York City, Richards, in his twenties, was an active enthusiast of music and theatre. He was a rehearsal pianist, a director in summer stock, a tenor in concert choruses and recording groups and even wrote a musical comedy. Sometime later he felt the need to study "serious" music and received a Masters degree in composition from Columbia University where he worked with Henry C. Cowell and Otto

Luening. In his early thirties, a further religious calling led him to the cantorate. Cantor Richards is now music director of the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation.

What has all this to do with Psalm 137? Just this; its setting is a compact distillate of all the passions of a younger Richards outlined above. It has the clean, dramatic lyricism of musical theatre. The more advanced harmonic background of a "serious" composer in transition and yes, the textual insight and understanding of a more settled, religious personality.

The piece is divided into two sections: recitative and aria. The recitative is restless, fragmented and urgently searching as it ends on the text "How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" In contrast, the aria is at once calming yet passionately embryonic in its long lined romanticism. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem. ." builds itself to the very end answering and affirming the questioning and doubts of the earlier section This setting is a miniature drama of tension, release and repose. Richards is still very much a man of theatre and brings this facet of his personality to the genre of religious music.

The work is successful in its realization that there is a great deal of theatre in the psalms and its resoluteness in underscoring this element within the greater drama which is religion and the synagogue.

Because he is a man of dynamic tension and capable of artistic growth, Cantor Stephen Richards should be watched with great interest. At this point, his knowledgeable, searching style seems to offer a viable alternative to the hackneyed, tired writing of an older generation of synagogue composers. Transcontinental is to be commended for its publication of this music.

Michael Isaacson

STARER: *Sabbath Eve Service*
MCA Music Publishers.

The service, commissioned in 1968, by the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York, contains introductory performance notes which tell us a good deal about Robert Starer's awareness of synagogue music.

First, there is a desire for the congregation to become an integral part of the worship by singing along with unison choir sections in response to melodies sung initially by the Cantor. Secondly, we are informed that the *Festival Prelude* for organ (written as a toccatta-like piece more for the organist than the congregation) is published separately. This wise decision reveals Starer's understanding of both the compulsion for organ preludes and their realistic impact upon the total worship experience. Last, the composer has included a pronunciation guide of the Hebrew transliteration which is perhaps a comment on the ignorance of many non-Jewish vocalists employed by synagogues throughout the United States.

The inclusion of settings of "L'chu Neranenah," "Tov Lehodot" and "Eloheinu Velohei Avoteinu," gives this service a compatibility with both Reform and Conservative Liturgies.

Especially impressive is the interpretation of "Mi Chamocha" with its affect of love of Cod as opposed to awe, and the construction of "May The Words" in its utilization of Hebrew and English simultaneously. The "Kiddush," in contrast, is disappointing in its unimaginative use of descending parallel fifths as the main harmonic fabric.

On the whole, this service is a quiet, thoughtful addition to the literature. We look forward to continued contributions by this Jewish composer of note.

THE HUSH OF MIDNIGHT, “A Rock-Cantorial Prayer Experience” based on the liturgy of the S’lichot Service and additional poems by Ruth F. Brin, composed by Cantor Charles Davidson, sung by Cantor Ray Edgar and The Zamir Chorale under the direction of Stanley Sperber, Amim Records 425-A.

Let me begin with a positive.

Unlike other colleagues who are involved in creating traditional music for the synagogue, I honestly believe that Rock music can have its place in a worship experience. The only qualification I insist upon is that it be the best representation of its style; a qualification I would make for any other style of music as well. The major problem with the Rock settings offered us these days is not that they are necessarily inappropriate or un-mindful of the aural tradition, but that they are cloying examples of inept composition. To compound the felony, recordings of these travesties are issued with the most bizarre performances imaginable. The result is the obvious reception by the “old-guard” composers who still create out of years of a finely developed craft. Can compositional procedures and materials used in Rock be learned as one goes about mastering fugue? Yes, they can. Cantor Davidson would do well to return to his Alma Mater, the Eastman School and witness what Rayburn Wright is doing to codify usage of contemporary “pop” materials; for the fact is that Cantor Davidson does not understand what makes Rock music work.

Perhaps, some observations on the nature of today’s “pop” music will be of some aid to him as well as to any other composer who feels compelled to write in this idiom.

The presence of a continuous beat found in most Rock demands relief. This is often achieved through a con-

trasting stabilizing rhythm over the basic beat, or a relaxed coloration of sounds either in the music or in the lyric. To squeeze a setting of the text into a parallel pattern as in the *Ashre* on this recording is both clumsy and uncharacteristic of good Rock.

Texts or lyrics are an integral part of the Rock Sound. The words linguistically complement the instrumental vocabulary. Listen to a rehashing of a Beatles tune by an instrumental ensemble and see if you don’t miss that certain legitimacy that the words supply. While the poems and prayers stand by themselves as literary pieces, they just do not fit into the Rock style which Davidson imposes on them.

Vocal performance in Rock is as specialized as any other performance style. Just as one would not expect a “lead singer” to succeed in opera or oratorio it is equally ludicrous to expect Cantor Edgar’s voice to work in this style. Cantor Edgar sounds most secure and comfortable in the unaccompanied, unmetered cantorial segments. During these moments his rich voice is most truly appreciated.

Finally, Rock works best when it does not take itself seriously. While “Sergeant Pepperites” may violently argue this point and claim that there are all kinds of symbolism in this music, the best sounds are always the half-kidding musical sprees that happen in loosely structured recording sessions. The only esthetic question that one must raise in regard to this concept is whether Cantor Davidson’s music does justice to the seriousness of the occasion for which it was designed. I think not. While too serious to work as Rock, it is hill-billyish and embarrassingly flip about the penitential preparation which is S’lichot. For these reasons, “The Hush of Midnight” seems to doubly miss its mark. It’s a shame, because I believe in the

potential of all musical sounds. To paraphrase Ferlinghetti, I am still waiting for the rebirth of freedom in our synagogue music.

MICHAEL N. ISAACSON

ISAACSON: *Hegyon Libi, The Meditations of My Heart. A new Sabbath Eve Service for Cantor, Two-Part Choir, String Quartet and Organ, by Michael Zsaacson, Transcontinental Music Publications.*

Michael Isaacson's new Sabbath Evening service, for Cantor, two part choir, string quartet and organ, is one of the most tuneful and effective liturgical compositions to come along in recent years. Its sounds are a welcome breath of fresh air in the synagogue, and the reviewer can attest to its warm reception by worshippers at two pre-publication hearings: Washington's Hebrew Congregation, and Brooklyn's Union Temple.

Isaacson, who is completing his doctoral studies in composition at Eastman School of Music, (B.S. Mus. Ed. Hunter College; M.A. Brooklyn College) has also studied with Robert Starer and Samuel Adler in this country, and with Israel Adler and Amnon Shiloach in Israel. His work reflects thorough workmanship in his choral and instrumental writing, along with deep understanding of text and of synagogal service structure. Added to these is a rare blending of Western and Middle Eastern musical style which give it an undeniable stamp of authenticity.

The melodic treatment of the cantorial solos is along traditional lines, although pleasantly demanding in its octave-and-fifth range (C to G). There is continual invention and variety in rhythmic and harmonic treatment. Unlike other less inventive services Isaacson's score provides continual listener involvement, from the first sounds of the Candlelighting Prayer, to the rousing Adon Olam.

The format follows the Union Prayer Book, and there is frequent use of English narration, judiciously interspersed. There are numerous melodic gems (L'cha Dodi, Yih'yu L'ratson) which, I predict, will become part of many a Sabbath service. For me, the highlight is a lilting Shalom Aleichem which underscores the "heritage-cum-youth appeal" approach, here so successfully combined.

Hegyon Libi is a most valuable addition to our repertoire.

PAUL KWARTIN

FROMM: FIVE OPENING ANTHEMS FOR THE SYNA-GOGUE. Transcontinental Music Publications, N.Y. 1971.

Written in his usual direct and solid style, Mr. Fromm's Anthems are written for Cantor, Choir and Organ and include *Mah Tovu*, three Psalms (122, 5, 36) and *Lecha Dodi*. Strictly composed, they serve to remind us that interesting and warm synagogue music is entirely feasible while using self-limited amounts of musical materials. They will rehearse without too much difficulty and will be rewarding.

ROSENBERG: S H A B B A T NUSACH S'FARD. Transcontinental Music Publications, N. Y. 1970.

Mostly harmonizations by Emanuel Rosenberg of Sephardic and Oriental tunes culled from "Liturgie Sephardie" and other sources, this service for Friday Evening is written for Cantor, Choir and Organ. It was commissioned by the Creative Arts Fund of The Metropolitan Synagogue of New York.

HORVIT: MEDITATION FOR ORGAN. Transcontinental Music Publication, N. Y. 1971.

Mr. Horvit has written a simple and nicely wrought work for organ solo. Relatively unassuming and quite

linear, one might long for some variants in harmony, dynamics or rhythm, unless the piece has been intended for use as music of a meditative nature, perhaps during the worship service, in which case it would be quite satisfactory. The style of the piece seems reflective of some similar pieces by Samuel Adler. One wonders if that composer's work at the Eastman School of Music is bearing Jewish fruit. Nevertheless, it stands on its own quite nicely.

CHARLES DAVIDSON

BOOK REVIEW

THE MUSIC OF THE JEWS IN THE DIASPORA: by *Alfred Sendrey*. A Contribution to the Social and Cultural History of the Jews, up to 1800. Thomas Yoseloff, New York. 1970. 483 pp. \$15.

Dedicated to the University of Judaism in Los Angeles, Dr. Sendrey's masterful study of the musical life of the Jew in the 1800 years of the dispersal among the nations, adds much to our knowledge of what has been, to this point, a greatly neglected area

The beautifully bound volume serves as a "contribution to the history of civilization of the Jewish people" rather than a scholarly tome intended for use only by the professional musician. It is highly readable, presents a formidable mass of material in a logical and precise manner, and, to this reader, seems to be quite accurate in relation to specifics. In the sense of being all-inclusive, one might feel that some hypothesis have been omitted. For example, Dr. Johanna Spector's in-

triguing Suggestion concerning the origin of the "Kol Nidre" tune, among others. But some omissions are understandable in view of the enormous number of original sources quoted by Dr. Sendrey, indeed, as one might expect from the author of the invaluable "Bibliography". Here, at last, are not only quotations but, document4 with the source materials available. Most important are Sendrey's valuable comments on the musical style of the period and its influence upon the Jewish music-makers of the time.

The author has assembled data, photos, reproductions of manuscripts from literally thousands of sources. From books, pamphlets and articles scattered throughout the world. He does indeed present a convincing case for the musical activity of the Jews during an epoch when Jews and Jewry have long been thought to be devoid of their own musical culture. In this respect he has put into a readable volume much of what he himself, Dr. Eric Werner and Professor Israel Adler have been saying and teaching for years. The Music of post-Biblical Jews, Jews under Arabic influence, the early hymns of the Synagogue, music in the Ghetto, Purim plays with music, the beginnings of Hazzanut are all discussed with care and thought.

The only flaw this reviewer detects is a somewhat stilted English narrative style which will not prevent "The Music of the Jews in the Diaspora" from proving to be a highly readable and illuminating book, for the layman, for courses in Jewish Music, and for the Hazzan.

CHARLES DAVIDSON