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I INDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE HA77AN

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UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE HAZZAN

ABRAHAM LUBIN

"The Cantor — An Historic Perspective"

A study of the origin, communal position and function of the Hazzan - By Leo Landman, Yeshiva University, N. Y. 191 pages.

The role of the Hazzan in the Jewish community is one of the earliest and most colorful institutions in the entire history of Jewish communal life. Yet very little is known about the importance and significance of this institution on the part of the general Jewish community including many of its lay leaders and synagogue officials. It is after all they who are often called upon to make judgment upon the quality and worth of their spiritual leadership and it therefore behooves these people to familiarize themselves with the historic past and development of the respective roles of the rabbanim and hazzanim of their communities.

Although the role and status of the contemporary Hazzan in the Jewish community has changed drastically since its earliest beginnings almost 2000 years ago, nevertheless, a clearer understanding and appreciation of the Hazzan's multi-faceted and multi-functional role can be achieved through a closer investigation of the historic development of this institution.

Leo Landman, in his recent publication, *The Cantor-An Historic Perspective*, sets out to trace the origin of the institution of the Hazzan in the community during its earliest formative period. Special emphasis is placed upon the period of the Middle Ages with a somewhat cursory treatment of the contemporary scene.

Although Landman's volume is far from being exhaustive on the subject in terms of pure research, he, nevertheless, has given us a fairly thorough examination of the many important sources and treatises which deal in one way or another with the subject at hand. Impressive is the list of over 200 sources which are represented in his bibliography; a fact which only whets our appetite still further in order to have as clear a description as possible of the many vicis-situdes of the Hazzan during the two millenia of his existence.

It seems to me that any institution or social experience which maintains a permanence of its existence over a long period of time is certainly worthy of serious consideration and close examination. It

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is, therefore, rather astonishing and appalling a fact that we have to regard Landman's volume as a rare contribution in this field. Admittedly, many references and even lengthy articles may be found on the subject of the Hazzan (and/or his hazzanut) in various periodicals and books on Jewish music, this however is the only example I know when the subject was treated exclusively in one complete volume. For this the Jewish community must be grateful to Dr. Leo Landman for undertaking this important task.

What are some of the salient facts of history relating to the institution of the Hazzan? What lessons are to be learned from these facts? What meaning, if any, does its history have for us in this day and age, and what possible steps may we take in order to assure its continuity in a religiously positive and culturally contributive fashion?

"The most permanent and continuous synagogue office, one which underwent relatively few changes after the early Middle Ages, was that of the Hazzan," wrote Salo W. Baron. It is the remarkable fact of historic permanence and entrenchment that seems to be the refrain in the pages of Landman's volume. This is true, perhaps, because it reflects and mirrors the classic role that prayer has played in the life of the Jew, from time immemorial. If throughout its history the prayerbook served the Jewish people as a textbook of Judaism, then the Hazzan must be credited as being the guardian and custodian of this sacred and spiritual tract. More than that, even before the term Hazzan was applied to him, the Talmud often referred to the Hazzan as a *Shliach Tzibbur* — "messenger" or "emissary of the community" before God, in the sacred act of worship and prayer. What greater responsibility or more fulfilling an act is there than to be the representative of the Jewish community during its most profound and hallowed hour, the period of public worship?

It is, therefore, no wonder that in view of the enormity and sanctity associated with the traditional tasks of the Hazzan, we find in as early a source as the Mishnah, various qualifications to be sought in the ideal Hazzan. Although some of these qualifications listed may be considered today as somewhat unrealistic, nevertheless, in large measure they indicate the seriousness that the Rabbis of the Talmud, as well as the later authorities, attached to the task of selecting a qualified Hazzan to serve as a *Shliach Tzibbur*.

For example, the Mishnah in *Taanit* lists the following qualities that are required of the Hazzan. He must be one:

"burdened by labor and heavy family obligations but one

who has not enough to meet them, one who has his labor invested in the field and who house is empty, whose youth was unblemished, who is meek and is acceptable to the people, who is skilled in chanting with a pleasant voice, and possesses a thorough knowledge of Scripture, the Prophets and the Hagiographa, who is conversant with the Midrash, Halakhot, and Agadot, and all the Benedictions."

At a glance these requirements are still quite realistic and relevant today as they were when they were first formulated. The possible exception being the requirement of having to be "burdened by heavy family obligations" and not having "enough to meet them". As Tevye would say: "I realize of course that it's no shame to be poor, but it's no great honor either." Anyhow, today's steady rise in the cost of living, coupled with the economic inflation, should take care of this requirement to enable most candidates to qualify.

There is here, however, a much more serious question which I would like to raise for our consideration.

What are presently the criteria by which are gauged the qualifications of a prospective Hazzan in a contemporary American synagogue? What indeed are the requirements to qualify as a bonafide candidate for a vacant hazzanic post in a modern congregation? What are the practices of some congregations and what ought to be our goals with regard to this rather complexing problems?

Before we attempt to answer these thorny questions, let us review, with the help of our author Leo Landman, what historically were the qualifications of the Hazzan. Landman writes: "Learned cantors abounded in medieval times. Their names were famous and their mere mention apparently was sufficient to bring recognition. Their names are mentioned in the writings of rabbis and scholars of different countries and throughout the centuries." The author also cites Maimonides in a responsa wherein reference is made to a famous Hazzan Pinkus Shatz, who actually had the authority to reverse a ritual custom relating to the liturgy that was in practice in Alexandria. The original custom was first initiated by one Rabbenu Elazar, prior to the arrival of the Hazzan. There is an abundance of examples throughout the Middle Ages pointing to a tradition of scholarship, learning and piety among hazzanim. Landman further "The same situation was prevalent in the states in his thesis: France-German centers. Cantors were referred to as *Harav* and titles such as Tzaddik were used to describe some cantors. Others were even asked to sign Takkanot issued for their communities."

The status of the Hazzan reached a very high level of prominence during the Geonic period and although today there is a clear distinction between the function of the Rabbi and the Hazzan, during the Middle Ages it was quite common for these roles to be interchanged. The Rabbi often acted as Hazzan and the Hazzan would be called upon to preach.

This image of the Hazzan. as has been correctly pointed out by our author, changed dramatically during the 17th and 18th centuries. A greater emphasis was placed upon the vocal and musical capacities of the Hazzan, and although the qualities of scholarship, learning and piety were still desirable, they were not quite as essential any more.

In light of the above observations we begin to see the complexity of the role of the Hazzan in historic terms. But on the other hand we can take note of some subtle facts which ought to guide us in our pursuit of elevating the status of the Hazzan and making his present position historically relevant, religiously constructive, artistically creative and communally fulfilling.

We can now proceed to examine the question posed earlier relative to the role of the Hazzan today. What should be our requirements? What should constitute a Hazzan's qualifications? What ough we to set as our goals in the future with regard to the sacred calling of the Hazzan?

It is quite obvious that with the disappearance of Jewish life in Europe as well as the collapse of many Jewish communities in Asia and Africa, the Jewish community in America has become almost the sole heir to the great musical traditions of our past. It was, therefore, crucial for the American Jewish community to develop schools for the training of hazzanim within the framework of already existent major rabbinical seminaries in the United States. Thus it is gratifying that in 1951 the Cantors Institute and the Seminary College of Jewish Music were founded within the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. With the help and support of the Cantors' Assembly, the national organization of hazzanim who serve Conservative congregations throughout the United States, Canada and Israel, this school was able to thrive and grow during these past two decades.

Earlier, in 1947, the School of Sacred Music under the auspices of the Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion was established with the support of the Reform movement. At Yeshiva University, the Cantorial Training Institute was also established in 1951, serving the Orthodox community in America.

With the establishment of these cantorial schools as well as professional associations of hazzanim, we find that the role of the Hazzan has become much better understood and greatly enhanced. Our author suggests that: "Today, in many respects, the Hazzan has returned to his former role of the Middle Ages. He is engaged in a variety of musical and educational programs. The Cantor, always an integral part of the Jewish community, has in recent years solidified his status. The cantorate has been and is now a permanent and vital institution in Jewish life."

Yet despte the progress noted, we find that on too many occasions there is an utter irresponsibility in the procedures of selecting hazzanim for congregations. Too often, congregations settle for candidates whose qualifications are questionable and whose backgrounds are totally unsuited for the sacred tasks for which they are engaged. In some cases, we find that congregations decide to do without the services of a Hazzan and consider the remuneration saved as ample reward. This shows a total disregard for the dignity and sanctity of the office as well as a total neglect of the spiritual needs of the congregant whose membership in a given congregation entitles him to the proper "services" and spiritual fulfillment. Now that there are cantorial schools and recognized professional organizations, it behooves synagogue leaders to seek candidates for hazzanic positions through the proper addresses. Gone are the days when store front synagogue would suddenly open its door for High Holy Days services, complete with operatic stars to provide the sensational thrill of their voices. The title Hazzan must not be lightly designated to anyone who can simply raise his voice in song. The requirements must be stringent and many, in view of the fact that it takes from four to five years to receive the diploma of Hazzan at the various schools for hazzanim. The qualified Hazzan must then dedicate his entire life to the sacred tasks of his vocation, pouring out his soul in behalf of his people and in glory to his God. In the words of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel of blessed memory, "for the voice of a person, particularly when in song, is the soul in its full nakedness. Indeed, a Cantor standing before the Ark reveals all his soul, utters all his secrets. The art of being a Cantor involves the depth, richness and integrity of personal existence."

It is this integrity which Heschel refers to, that should be of great concern to all of us. Too often we are willing to settle for what is cheap and convenient. In matters of holiness and of the spirit, we must be careful not to use the same set of scales used in the market place. Nothing less than ideal is good enough; at least the

ideal should be our goal even if we cannot always attain it. In this respect I must strongly disagree with the author, Leo Landman, who in the last pages of his book, when he speaks of the future of the modern cantorate, makes this incredible comment about young cantors today: "Some are so overtrained that there is neither spontaneity nor warmth in their prayers." I cannot conceive of the possibility of being overtrained in the study of one's craft. To the contrary, when it comes to study and training, we ought to adhere to the dictum in the Haggadah: *Vechol hamarbeh harey ze meshubach* -paraphrasing it we might say-the more the training and study, the more the praise. I also fail to see the connection between being "overtrained" and spontaneity and warmth in the prayers. Frankly, I was surprised to read this somewhat careless comment in the midst of much revealing reading culled from a variety of authoritative and original sources.

In conclusion it would be fair to state that Leo Landman essentially succeeds in what he sets out to do. That is, to give us "an historic perspective" to the understanding of the role and status of the Hazzan. He thus has made a very important contribution towards a greater appreciation of a hirtherto much misunderstood subject. Landman quotes the eleventh century *payetan* Yekutiel B. Moses, who understood well the true spirit of a dedicated Hazzan, when he composed this prayer:

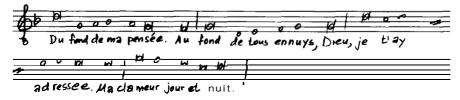
"With the trepidation I pour forth my fervent plea as I rise to be seech Thee, awe some and exalted God. Because of my insignificant deeds I am seized with apprehension; lacking wisdom, how dare I hope? My Creator, grant me the wisdom to transmit my holy inheritance. Strengthen and fortify me against weakness and vacillation. May my whispered plea be as acceptable to you as rare incense, and may my sacred utterances be to you sweeter than pure honey. Accept them as uttered in sincerity and not to deceive. Let those who have made me their emissary find atonement and forgiveness."

Indeed, let this be the motto of the modern Hazzan as he looks to a future of ever greater service to God and to his community.

ORIGINS AND ASPECTS OF EARLY AMERICAN PSALMODY CLAIR POLIN-SCHAFF

The earliest **American** settlers, although diverse in religious and cultural backgrounds, shared a common high regard for the Old Testament, in particular, the Book of Psalms. This reverence for the Bible and desire to perpetuate its study through musical expression led to the creation of an unusual religious-musical experience we call psalmody. With the first popular translations of the Bible, musical devotions were placed within the common man's province.

When the Catholic poet, Clement Marot (d.1544) presented the first metrical translation of the Book of Psalms to the French court, little did he foresee the influence which his *oeuvre* would exert over European and, later, American religious education. So popular were his early efforts that composers of note (LeJeune, Jannequin, Bourgeois, even Lassus) joined the Duphin in composing settings for them. The Protestants, especially Huguenots, were equally captivated by them, encouraging their children to memorize the metrical lines by means of anthem-like tunes. Calvin, distrustful of the "demoralizing" effects of part-singing, still permitted the singing of simple, melodic lines (without bars or time-signatures) to express the Divine word in song.



EXAMPLE 1 Psalm 130, Calvin's First Psalter, Strasbourg, 1539 Observe how the imposed metricalization attenuates the French translation from the Hebrew.

שִׁיר הַפַּצְבַלוֹת. מִפַּצְמַקִּים קְרָאתִיף יְהֹוָה. אַדֹנֵי שִׁמִעָה בִקוֹלִי, תִּהְיֵינָה אָזנֵיך קַשָּׁבוֹת לִקוֹל תַחֲנוּנָי.

Clair Polin-Schaff is a flutist, composer, lecturer, teacher and musicologist who has been a member of the music faculty of Rutgers University since 1958. She received her doctorate in music from the Philadelphia Conservatory in 1955. She is the recipient of a number of distinguished awards for her compositions and her articles on music and ethnomusicology have been widely published. She has been a Special Lecturer on American music in Wales, England, France and Israel and on early Welsh music in the United States.

Music found in various psalters of this period, particularly in the famed Geneva Psalter (1551), inclines towards modal and minor tunes. By the following century one can observe a preference for the major. Interestingly, Sephardi melodies of this era seemed to split into two styles: the English, Dutch, Italian ones reflecting the strengthening preference for major modes, while the Mediterranean and eastern melodies retained the earlier modal flavour.

The Sternhold and Hopkins Psalter, published in 1562, was brought to America by the Puritans, who soon replaced it with the Ainsworth version, printed a half-century later in Amsterdam. So ubiquitous was its use in colonial times that Longfellow naturally referred to it as the Psalter in "The Courtship of Miles Standish". It contained 39 different melodies of English, French and German origins to which all 150 psalms could be sung. Rhythmic patterns were determined by the metrical words, and thus organized for the learner's benefit into **short, common** and **long** patterns, comprising groups of 6686, 8686, and 8888 syllables per stanza, respectively. These numbers, together with the old fa-sol-la "shape-notes" (each pitch designated by a circle or triangle, square, etc. to aid the later musically-illiterate to read music) are still to be found in many hymnals and psalters in present-day communities of the South.

Stilted meanings and forced rhymes characterize these early metrical translations. Compare the flowing poetic Hebrew of Psalm 24 with the Ainsworth: שָׁאַרִים רָאשִׁיכִם

וָהְנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם, וְיָבוֹא מֱלֵךְ הַכְּבוֹד.

Lift up, ye gates, your heads and ye Dores of eternal aye; Be lifted up so that the King Of glory enter may."

Or contrast the Hebrew or even classical St. James version of Psalm 23 with the 1698 edition of the Bay Psalm Book:

"The Lord to me a shepherd is, Want therefore shall not I.

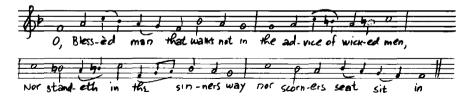
He in the foulds of tender grass

Doth make me down to ly."

Yet, by the same token, a certain angular strength appears in the simple musical line to fortify the odd-sounding words.



EXAMPLE 2 Psalm 21, Bay Psalm Book. (Note metres from Ainsworth Psalter.)



EXAMPLE 3 Psalm 1 Bay Psalm Book (1651 version) quoted in Tufts "Introduction to Singing Psalm Tunes", 1726.

The publication of the first native psalter in 1640 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony set a pattern for concision and variety. Based largely upon the Ravenscroft Psalter (London, 1621), only six different metres were shown, capable of suiting the 39 different settings in four-part harmony. Chiefly based on the music of Tallis, Dowland, Farnaby and Morley, these retained the medieval practice of the tenor carrying the melody. Revised editions followed until a veritable stream of psalm-tune publication ensued. Noteworthy are the collections of Croft, Tufts, Tans'ur, and particularly, Lyon, whose "Urania" collection was much favoured. Published in 1761, its 70 psalm settings contained many "fuging" tunes (a popular contrapuntal device which often followed the anthem-like psalm-tune.). It included a setting of the favourite Psalm 100 by the Philadelphia composer, Francis Hopkinson, who in turn compiled a collection of psalm-tunes for Christ Church.

Of great significance were the works of William Billings, a Boston tanner who was musically self-taught. Regarded as the greatest exponent of the "fuging" technique, his psalm settings are interesting for their contrapuntal style. Paul Revere printed Billings' "New England Psalm-Singer" in 1770, a sizeable volume comprising over 260 tunes and anthems on Biblical subjects. His setting of words was imaginative and witty, far advanced of his day, as is evident in the unusual division of a single word, "as the hart *pants*" into a vividly programmatic "pa-a-ants". A dedicated patriot, he not only wrote the rousing Revolutionary War march, "Chester", but sorrowfully recollected the Boston defeat with a parody of Psalm 137:

"By the waters of Watertown, we sat down,

Yea, we wept as we remembered Boston."

Despite the influx of foreign-language groups in the late eighteenth century, psalmody continued to grow. The German-Bo-

hemian immigration to Pennsylvania encouraged independent religious sects, which relied upon the Bible for devotional materials. The Moravians and Schwenkfelders considered psalmody a requisite for religious education and they published superior metrical versions of the Book of Psalms. At Ephratat Cloisters, a Sabbatarian sect published a collection of psalm anthems. Unfortunately, while of intrinsic value musically, these works left little influence upon the American scene because they were published exclusively in German.

A second foreign-language group were the colonial Welsh settlers of Pennsylvania and Ohio who were deeply attached to the Bible. The Ravenscroft Psalter contains several Welsh hymns although with English metrical words. By ancient tradition, the Welsh consider themselves descendants of Noah's grandson, Gomer, and so great. is their interest in the Bible, that a Welsh scholar-preacher spent a lifetime writing on the origins of medieval Welsh words which he believed to be derived from Hebrew. Welsh poetry does demonstrate alliterative and internal rhyme very similar to Biblical poetry. A composite hymn in English by the great Welsh poet, Panycelyn, demonstrates the Bible-orientation, for each verse is derived from a Psalm-line:

"Guide me. 0 Thou great Jehovah	Ps. 31:3
Pilgrim through this barren land,	107: 34
I am weak but Thou art mighty,	6:2
Hold me with Thy powerful hand"	89: 13

In late colonial times, disparate influences caused psalmody to wane. In the Revivalist period, only the simplest hymns were sung by a musically semi-literate society whose knowledge of the Bible had also waned. Creative psalmody was destined to slumber until momentarily revived by the great turn of the century genius, Charles Ives, whose creativity extended to unique settings of psalms. It remains an interesting speculation whether psalmody in America will ever play as significant a role as it once did in colonial times.

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USING RECORDINGS CREATIVELY IN THE CLASSROOM

IRA GOLDBERG

In an age of sound reproduction, wherein music in myriad forms and timbres reaches our ears, one would imagine the ability to listen to music would be enhanced by our many experiences with recorded sound. Unfortunately, such is not true at all. In an era described by author Clifton Fadiman as one of a "Decline of Attention," our sensitivity to sounds has waned, even while they have increased in variety and intensity.

It is necessary, therefore, for us to develop the skill of listening in our students. Even among professionals, there has often been a failure to listen, as attention has waned only scant minutes after the music has begun. This discussion presents an approach, whereby it should be possible to listen to recordings in an organized and satisfying manner.

The record discussed is "Silent No More," a recording of freedom songs of Soviet Jewry, based on tapes smuggled out of the U.S.S.R.' The record is a moving one, and is especially useful because of current concern for the plight of Russian Jews. The first lesson is for side one of the record, while lesson two is for the second side.

The plan provides a framework for listening. Its supportive structure makes it possible for the listener to understand the recording heard. Furthermore, the lesson plan may, with some modifications, be utilized as a model for other lessons that use recordings in the classroom.

1. Motivation

In this opening section of the lesson, I "set the stage" for the recording, by gaining student interest through various devices - a

 "Silent No More." Sung and narrated by Theodore Bikel; arranged and conducted by Issachar Miron. A 33½-LP record, produced by Star Record Co., New York, N.Y. 10036. Available from the American Jewish Congress, 15 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. Price: \$4.95.

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banner, protest buttons, and a poem about one of the Russian Jewish writers purged by the Soviet regime.

I first hung on the wall, a Svoboda (Freedom) Banner, a large flag that symbolizes the struggle of Russian Jews for freedom. The banner, forty inches by forty-four inches, has, in its center, a nineteen-inch high Magen David. Under the Star is the Russian word Svoboda, meaning freedom. There are two, two-inch-broad stripes running the length of the flag, one at the top and the other at the bottom. Each strip is a few inches from the edge of the flag and the Magen David, the word Svoboda and the two stripes are all red, against a white background.

I then showed the class various protest buttons, worn on different occasions, at rallies and parades, protesting the persecution of Soviet-Jewry. 2

In previous years, Soviet Jews had fallen victim, I explained to the class, for various reasons. Jews were eliminated from Russian life for teaching Hebrew, for desiring to settle in Israel. Jews were persecuted for writing Yiddish poetry. For supporting Jewish culture in the U.S.S.R., one of those purged, in 1948, was Peretz Markish, Soviet Jewish poet.

The Yiddish poet, Binem Heller, born in Warsaw, Poland, and now living in Israel, wrote a poem in memory of Markish, and after distributing a copy to each student, I read the poem to the class:

The Poet's Death — For Peretz Markish"

They led the singer to his death
With his eyes bandaged, blind
His hands with ropes were pinioned;
So he dropped in the pit behind.
He wanted to ask a question.
For worse than death was not knowing why this wrong.
But this earth was to him now a stranger
It refused to understand his Yiddish tongue.
So he stood with bandaged eyes,
Facing the execution squad.
They levelled at him their rifles

- The buttons and banner are available from The Student Struggle For Soviet Jewry, 200 West 72d Street, suites 30-31, New York, N.Y. 10023.
 A much smaller Svoboda banner is also available.
- 3. The Golden Peacock, A Worldwide Treasury of Yiddish Poetry, Joseph Leftwich, compiler and editor. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961. pages 493-4.

And he fell dead, in his blood. A shudder went right through me It was more than I could bear. In the shots I heard him singing His song rang through the air.

2. Transition.

After having motivated the class, I prepared the students for the songs of freedom of Russian Jews by explaining that songs were often the vehicle of protest. Songs were often sung by the oppressed, against tyranny and slavery, expressing their longing for freedom. I asked if the students knew songs that spoke of freedom, and many were familiar with the song of the civil rights movement, We Shall Overcome; one pupil mentioned the spiritual, Let My People Go.

I concluded this section of the introduction to the recording by explaining to the pupils that Russian Jews had many songs of freedom, too. We would be hearing these freedom songs along with the words of Russian Jews about life in the Soviet Union.

3. Focus.

To give the students a means, whereby they might be enabled to understand the vital points of the recording, I felt it necessary to give each of them a guide, listing important points that were worthy of notice in the recording. In this way, the listening of the students would be directed and an aimless hearing of the recording, that frequently leads to no listening at all, would be avoided.

I first listened to the record and jotted down the list of vital points to be gained from listening. These were then indicated for the students through a series of questions, which were printed and distributed to each pupil under the heading, Focus For Listening. Before listening to the record, we went over the questions together, enabling me to explain the procedure as well as any points that were somewhat obscure.

Focus For Listening

- 1. What languages do you hear on the record?
- 2. On what holiday do thousands of Russian Jews come out to celebrate?
 - 3. How do Russian Jews learn of news from Israel?
- 4. What is one father's comment to the question about his daughter's knowledge of Yiddish or Hebrew?

- 5. Judging from his comments, would you describe it as easy or difficult to study Hebrew or Yiddish in the U.S.S.R.?
- 6. What instruments did you hear in the accompaniments for the songs?
- 7. From the songs and the spoken words, of what country do Russian Jews speak with love and longing?
- 8. If they were free to do so, what do you think, from this first side of the record, Russian Jews might do to solve their problems as Jews living in the Soviet Union?

4. Listening.

Students now listened to side one of the record, with pens or pencils in hand, answering the eight questions of the Focus For Listening page.

Discussion.

At the conclusion of the listening, we answered the eight Focus questions together. Most of the students did well in hearing the salient points of the record, but occasionally, there was some confusion caused by inadequate attention to the recording. Disagreements were easily cleared up, however, and the pupils arrived at a complete understanding of the record's content, filling in and correcting their answers wherever necessary.

6. Evaluation.

At the end of the class, the final five minutes were set aside for evaluation of the record itself. A one-page form was distributed, and each student swiftly filled out the answers, giving his or her reaction to the record, as determined by answering the question sheet. This simple questionnaire was then collected, to be evaluated before the next lesson.

The questions on the evaluation form were:

- $\ensuremath{\mathtt{1}}$. Did the record help you to understand the problems of Soviet Jews?
 - 2. Did the record seem accurate and real to you?
 - 3. Did you find the record interesting?
 - 4. Could you hear the record clearly?
 - 5. Were the sound effects and music, appropriate and effective?
 - 6. Were you able to understand the words?

- 7. What parts of the record were especially interesting to you?
- a. What parts were especially uninteresting to you?
- 9. What parts, if any, would you like to hear again?
- 10. Would you like to learn any of the songs, to sing, or play?

In the second, hour-long class meeting, side two of the recording was heard and presented in a manner similar to that of side one.

1. Motivation.

In this opening section, the Svoboda Banner and protest buttons were placed on display once again. They were briefly discussed, as a reminder to the students of their significance in the struggle for freedom for Soviet Jewry.

I then went on to tell my students that Russian Jewish protest had become more daring in recent years, as Soviet Jews had taken up their right to leave the U.S.S.R. for Israel.

One of those who had voiced his desire to leave had been a hero during World War II, when the Red Army had fought against the German invaders. Grisha Feigin of Riga, in the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, had participated in the liberation of Warsaw and Berlin. He had been wounded twice and received seven decorations.

In protest against Soviet treatment of Jews, he returned his medals to the regime, and was put into an insane asylum. Yet, his desire to leave persisted and finally, in 1971, he was allowed to leave Russia.

In writing to the Supreme Soviet, highest Russian legislative body, he had written: $\mathbf{4}$

I hereby declare that I do not consider it possible to wear the distinctions granted to me by a government which does not honor my rights and which is hostile in its policies towards my own country. I ask you to deprive me, in accordance with the relevant procedure, of all the distinctions I have been awarded and I appeal to you: Let my people go home!

Each student received a copy of the statement, while I read it aloud to the class, after which the students silently continued to read his appeal:

 Cohen, Richard (Ed.) Let My People Go, New York: Popular Library, page 48. It is the appeal of the blood shed by a free people headed by Maccabeus who fought for national independence.

It is the appeal of those who revolted against slavery ... under the leadership of Bar-Kochba ...

It is the appeal of our ancestors who were burned on the fires of the Inquisition \dots

It is the appeal of women and children who perished at the hands of the "Black Hundreds" of Czarist Russia.

It is the appeal of millions of Jews whose ashes are scattered throughout Europe.

It is the call of those who rose in the Warsaw Ghetto.

It is the appeal of my brethren who died on the gallows in Baghdad.

It is the voice of my people who are building a new life in their own land.

It is the voice of my mother who calls her son to her.

After explaining some of the references in the statement above, such as the "Black Hundreds" and others, that were unclear to the students, I went on to discuss the world-wide protest movement for Soviet Jewry, that had developed in the past few years. Typical of the expression of support for Russian Jews was a resolution, adopted by the Knesset, the Parliament of Israel, after Russia imposed a head-tax on Jews desiring to emigrate. Every student was given a copy of the resolution, which each read quietly in class.

- 1. The Knesset notes that the head-tax imposed by the Soviet authorities on Jews holding university degrees in the Soviet Union who desire to emigrate to Israel is an infringement of human rights and a trampling underfoot of human morals, an attempt to prevent the immigration of Jews to their historic homeland. This device aims at cutting off the Jewish community in the Soviet Union from the Jewish people and from the State of Israel.
- 2. The Knesset appeals to the Government of the Soviet Union to repeal this shameful decree which is aimed only at the Jewish citizens and recalls the czarist, anti-Jewish legislation.
- 3. The Knesset takes note with deep appreciation of the great response all over the world amongst peoples, parliaments, governments, progressive organizations, scientists and religious leaders who all raised their voices in protest against the ransom and demanded its cancellation.
- 4. The Knesset appeals to all governments, parliaments and international institutions and organizations as well as to the en-

lightened public opinion in all countries, to work towards the abolition of the head-tax imposed on the Jews in the Soviet Union who wish to return to their historic homeland.

- 5. The Knesset calls upon the Jewish people to mobilize its strength, neither to rest nor to cease their efforts until the "Diploma Levy" is abolished and the freedom of emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is insured in effect.
- 6. The Knesset calls upon scientists of all nations to rise to the defence of the human and national rights of their colleagues in the Soviet Union.
- 7. The Knesset sends its good wishes and its hope that they might continue their good fight to our brethren in the Soviet Union, who are struggling for their human rights and their affinity with our people. The Knesset declares that the people in Israel as well as the Jewish nation the whole world over will not rest until the head-tax is abolished
- 8. The Knesset takes note of the Government statement as delivered by the Prime Minister at the special session on Wednesday the 13th of Elul5732 (August 23,1972). 5

2. Transition.

After having motivated my students, I moved to prepare the class for listening by recalling that songs of protest, and songs of freedom were part of the heritage of many peoples. We knew of the song, We Shall Overcome, sung in the United States, and had heard freedom songs of Russian Jews. We would hear the other side of the record, I continued, and in order to listen to the record in an expert way, would use a series of questions that were concerned with the highlights of the record.

3. Focus.

Each student received a copy of the list of questions, developed from the highpoints of the second side of the record. We went over the questions together, quickly, while I explained any words or ideas that seemed to present difficulties. The questions were:

Focus For Listening

- 1. According to one Russian Jew, the Soviet government has done many things that strike at the very ability of Soviet Jewish
- 5. The Jewish Frontier (New York), September, 1972, page 9. The resolution is appended to an article on Soviet Jewry, "A Cynical Advice," by Golda Meir, pages 7-9.

culture and Judaism to survive. What are these things?

- 2. One of the songs we hear on side two is the song, Dayenu (It Is Enough for Us). It is sung a bit differently from the version most of us know. Why are songs from the Haggadah especially appropriate in singing about Jews who live under the Soviet regime?
- 3. Give the name of the Israeli hero, mentioned in one of the songs sung by Soviet Jews.
- 4. To what city, in what country, are these Russian Jews prepared to go?
- 5. In the songs we hear, one singer sings the words, Bashana Habaa Birushalayim-The Next Year in Jerusalem. We, in America, read the sentence, L'Shana Habaa Birushalayim-The Next Year in Jerusalem, at the end of a narrative, or story.

Give the name of the narrative from which this sentence is taken. During what Jewish holiday do we read this narrative?

- 6. According to the Soviet Jew we heard speaking on the record, what is the one theme of the songs that Russian Jews sing?
- 7. In the last song, we hear the phrase, Am Yisrael Chai. What does this Hebrew phrase mean? Why is it so appropriate for this recording of the words and songs of Soviet Jews?

4. Listening.

The class now listened to side two of the recording, and answered the Focus questions distributed to each pupil.

As at the previous lesson, we discussed our answers to the Focus questions and wrote down the correct answers, making corrections wherever necessary.

6. Evaluation.

As at the conclusion of the first lesson, a printed evaluation sheet was given to each student. Pupils were asked to fill out the sheet, the same as the first one distributed and return it to me. This time, however, the sheet was filled out early, leaving us time for an additional activity, not part of the previous lesson.

7. Action.

The struggle for Soviet Jewish rights, I explained, has been clearly explained in the words and songs heard on the record we have heard. We better understand, I went on, the world-wide struggle for the right of Jews to leave the U.S.S.R. and settle in Israel.

6. Available from the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry.

Along with our fellow-Jews throughout the world, we seek means of helping Russian Jews and, I continued, I am distributing among you now, a list of activities to aid Soviet Jewry, proposed by the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. Entitled, Action For Soviet Jewry, 6 the list should be read by you now. Consider three or four activities you might like to participate in, either as an individual or together with others in the class, so that we may organize activities as part of our contribution, to the world-wide campaign for Soviet Jews. With the organization and discussion of such activities, this two-part lesson, based on our recording, came to an end.

Guidelines for the use of recordings in the classroom:

- 1. The teacher must be fully prepared for the lesson. The instructor must have heard the recording before playing it for the students, and prepared printed material wherever appropriate, as well as explanations and short motivating introductions where necessary.
- 2. The room must be prepared as well. Outside noises and distractions should be eliminated as much and as carefully, as possible so that the recording will be heard to its fullest impact by all listeners.
- 3. The record playing equipment must, finally, be ready too. The instructor should have the phonograph set up, at the proper playing speed and correct volume, ready to play.
- 4. The record chosen should be appropriate for the situation in which it is used. It should be chosen with the composition of the class in mind-age level, attention span of the students, its relation to the subject being studied, quality of the recording, etc. The record may be utilized to introduce a subject, conclude the study of a subject unit, introduce songs, a speaker, or in many other ways, make classroom study more vital to the students.
- 5. The lesson should be carefully planned and structured by the instructor, so that the student is enabled to listen intelligently, without becoming "lost" as he becomes unable to understand the recording being played for him. This was done in the sample lesson through various sections of each lesson part (one and two):
- a. Motivation. Arousing interest in the student through poetry, song, a picture, button, banner, flag, etc.
- b. Transition. Further preparing the students to listen to the recording by relating the material to be heard to music already known and understood by them.
- c. Focus. Giving the students a printed sheet on which the highlights of the recording, *from near the beginning to the end*, are elicited through questions printed for each pupil. Through answer-

ing these questions, each pupil comes to understand the highlights of the record.

- d. Listening. Listening to the recording, with the Focus questions at hand, so that they may be answered as the record is played.
- e. Discussion. Discussion of the Focus questions, with students answering the questions and making corrections wherever necessary.
- f. Evaluation. Consideration of the recording's technical and content aspects, on a printed sheet. Answered by each pupil, the sheets form a written evaluation, kept on file by the instructor.
- g. Further activities, growing out of the listening experience. In this case, the organization of protest activities was appropriate. In another situation, a totally different activity might be desired.
- 6. Motivation-see 5a-is especially important in a short recording, as a longer recording tends to build its own motivation, as the record is played for the class.
- 7. It is desirable to have classroom discussion--see 5e--directly after the record is played. Postponing class discussion to a future meeting of the students almost invariably leads to a decline in interest, loss of notes, mood, etc. It is far better to get the students to discuss the record at the moment of greatest interest.

BEN STEINBERG

WEINER: *Shir L'yom Hashabos*, Sabbath Eve Service for Cantor, Choir and Organ (Piano).

Transcontinental Music Publications, TCL 885.

There are many elements in this Service which make it useful to the synagogue musician. Chief among these is the organ work, which this writer finds uniformly practical and effective. A brief opening prelude moves from a soft beginning to a forte finish, with sections of open fifths in contrary motion, alternating with a rapid, single-note melody in a more free cantorial style. The more linear fragments of organ work during the silent devotion and just before the Kaddish similarly maintain interest and accompaniments throughout the work are rarely doublings, but consistently manage to add their own contribution to the whole.

Much of the Service is simply written, using cantorial chant alone (as in the almost purely modal Adonai Moloch or the Oleynu) or alternating with unison choir (as in the L'Chu N'ran'noh and Vay'-chulu). Some selections contain more choral work (L'Cho Dodi, Mi Chomocho, Yih'yu L'rotson) while others are "davened" in a more traditional manner (V'ne-emar, Chatzi **Kaddish)**.

Singing congregations will try in vain to join in on much of this Service. Other than the Adon Olom, which is a good congregational setting, the Service is largely designed for trained choral, cantorial and instrumental forces. It grants the congregation only a token musical role.

For this writer, it is strange to still find synagogue services published in the old Ashkenazic pronunciation. To so many familiar with modern Hebrew, the words and especially their accentuation now seem odd. Moreover, if his congregation is knowledgeable in Hebrew, a musician must often face the choice of tampering with the composer's accentuation or foregoing the work. In the case of a composer of Weiner's calibre, foregoing the use of his work is too great a price to pay. The pencils come out, therefore, and the music gets marked up, sometimes with the consequence of rhythmic distortion.

Shir L'yom Hashabos is a soundly written work, containing

Ben Steinberg, born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, a son of the late Cantor Alexander Steinberg, is presently Music Director of Temple Sinai in Toronto. He has lectured extensively on Jewish music history and has served as Director for Jewish Music Programming for the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

variety and interest. It will offer rewarding performances to many synagogues.

BERGER: *Preserve Me*, *0 God* (Psalm 16) for mixed chorus and soprano (or tenor) solo. (Organ accompaniment optional.) Transcontinental Music Publications, TCL 634.

Berger has written a fine piece for a good choir. It "sings" easily and, in understanding hands, can achieve a gratifying choral chant effect. An optional accompaniment is provided but is not needed, since the harmony is interesting and full throughout. The style of the piece is consistent-perhaps so much so that the performers may lose their audience's attention at certain moments during the piece. The "quasi recitativo", if taken sufficiently freely, offers a rhythmic change.

At two points the soprano part gives way to a tenor solo which is accompanied by the rest of the chorus humming or on an open vowel. This tenor solo, although it is marked "ad lib", is essential. One gets the impression that without this change of texture the piece could develop a monotony or a "mother" texture.

There is also the concern that this text is a hymn of joy and that if a conductor treats the piece literally and metronomically it could come off rather slowly and pensively at times. Carefully treated however, it can be most effective.

NEUMANN: *Noches, Noches; Cuando El Rey Nimrod; Scalerica de Oro; Los Bilbilicos* Ladino Folksong settings for Voice and Piano.

Transcontinental Music Publications, WJ406, WJ401, WJ402, WJ405.

These melodies are, in a word, delightful. Ladino folksong is one of the most neglected treasures in the Jewish musical field and it is good to see an increasing exposure of this charming music. The unusual wedding of cantorial and Spanish song styles makes this music highly practical for a cantorially trained voice to negotiate.

Neumann's accompaniments are impressive in that they reflect the style of the music accurately and do not get in the way of the melodies. The piano parts are decidedly guitar-like and provide little running conversation-like comments on the singer's phrases.

All in all, this is a fine, musically sound contribution, but lacking in the background information which would make it so much more useful for a performer. Translations are desperately needed as well as a pronunciation guide. For example, few would know that

"bilbilicos" is from the Persian word "bulbul" meaning nightingale. "Noches, Noches" similar to "La Soledad" (another well-known Ladino folk song) describes with great passion the mysterious Iberian night. Thus, a Spanish melody probably from the Middle Ages, combines flamenco modality with cantorial style and a folk song emerges which is fraught with meaning but must be interpreted by the singer.

This otherwise tastefully presented set of folk songs which could add much interest and colour to a singer's program is rendered much less useful through the lack of translation and background information.

ISAACSON: *Kol Sason (A Sound of Joy)*, A Marriage Service. Transcontinental Music Publications, TCL 695.

Imaginative writing is always rare and to encounter a fresh sound designed for, of all things, a marriage service is a pleasant surprise. Isaacson, one of the most gifted young Jewish composers today, offers his freshness of approach in this work chiefly in the areas of texture and rhythm.

To the usual combination of cantor (tenor) and organ, he adds a viola, a recorder and some small percussion instruments. Thus, the traditional sound of the marriage service is given added colour and excitement through musical forces which are financially feasible for many weddings.

The purely instrumental parts (processional, recessional) are bright. Part of their charm is due to Isaacson's scoring, which avoids "block" treatment, but passes both melody and rhythm about from one part to the other. The texture is light and transparent, and the percussion part is kept delicate and complimentary. There is an alternating six eight-three four rhythm which is scintillating. Altogether, there are at least a dozen moments in the processional and recessional alone when the listener is caught with the charm of the renaissance-like sound of the ensemble. This is of course, a "chamber music" approach and an organist would have to be sufficiently sensitive to this idea in order to balance the ensemble and not overpower the more important flute and viola parts.

The viola commentary in the benediction is especially interesting because of the composer's understanding of the cantorial freedom necessary in a prayer of this type. The organ chords softly while the viola weaves a melody of responses, either playing along with the cantor or responding to his phrases, never attempting a complex counter melody, which would be superfluous in this case.

The readings before the Birchat Erusin and the Seven Blessings

were selected by Cantor Samuel Rosenbaum and are both tasteful and appropriate.

This is a worthwhile work; different, yet easily enjoyed by an audience; intriguing, yet easily negotiable by musicians.

It deserves much use.

WEINER: Three Biblical Songs

Transcontinental Music Publications; *Isaiah* TV 542, *Ezekiel* TV 541, *Ruth* TV 540.

Lazar Weiner's song accompaniments are rarely mere supports for a melody, but usually provide a musical character of their own. The piano parts for these three songs are no exceptions and, while rhythmically they are solid and compliment the voice part, they provide a welcome harmonic and melodic contrast to the melody in each case. The focus is upon the singer nevertheless, and the texts are treated in a dramatic manner. Rhythm follows words and all the pieces have many time signature changes, in keeping with this approach.

Each setting is in English. The first is from Isaiah (II: 2,3,4) and is for a medium voice range (D - F) with an optional high G flat. The second is from Ezekiel (37: l-6) and is written at a slower tempo. Although the range here is from low C to high G, the tessitura is decidedly of a medium voice range as well. The third song is taken from the Book of Ruth ("Entreat me not ...") and contains a slightly higher tessitura with a range from E to G, including an optional high B flat.

These are three fine compositions from the pen of an acknowledged master. That they are all in English renders them more universally useful but of course also adds the inevitable burden of a striving for "Jewish" style in what is essentially a foreign language. The songs are quite accessible to the singer. The piano parts, while technically not difficult, demand sympathetic treatment in the hands of an understanding accompanist,

BERLINSKI: In Memoriam, Prelude for Organ.

Transcontinental Music Publications, TI 198.

This is a tight little piece and, like all of Dr. Berlinski's pieces, organistically well-written. It will be easily followed by the listener; an Andante section opens the piece, establishing a steady eighth note rhythm against which a reed solo is played. There is a longer middle section built on a sort of sixteenth note figure rising to a minor third

which is played and expanded first by one hand, then by the other, then by the pedal. There follows a variety of harmonic and tonal colours with rhythmic pauses. The first section then returns with a few minor changes and a little extension.

This is altogether a well-written and useful piece. Yet, if it is intended as a memorial, this reviewer finds it a bit bombastic in its triple forte markings at the close of the middle section.

The synagogue, if it is to make intelligent use of the organ as an instrument of worship, desperately needs well-written organ material which contains, if not many recognizable Jewish motifs, at least a nod in the direction of our tradition. Nowhere else is this as essential as in the organ which, whatever may be the case now, was identified with the church for centuries. Dr. Berlinski's organ compositions are significant, not merely for their own merit, but because there is a tremendous dearth of organ writing in synagogue style and he is almost the only trained Jewish organist consistently writing such material. If the organ in the synagogue is to survive and to remain stylistically alive, more of our Jewish composers should be encouraged, through commissioning and any other available means, to write for the organ.



MUSIC SECTION

Bezalel Brun (1860-1918) was born in Zlatopel, the son of a well known Baal Tefillah, Yitzhak Isaac Brun. After receiving a thorough Hebrew and musical education he served as choir director in Nikolayev. His collection of high holy day music from which the following Rosh Hashanah sections are taken show Brun to have been an extremely fine musician and talented synagogue composer.

The first section of his work was published in the April 1970 issue (Volume II, Number 4) of the Journal of Synagogue Music.



















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mim



kol

















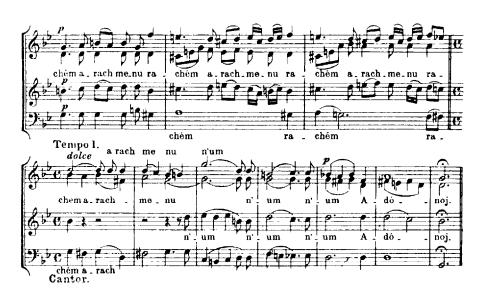


Vál jédé (sichrónós.)



















Halelujo. (Psalm 150)







