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THE CANTUS FIRMUS OF ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S "KOL NIDRE"

SAM WEISS

When one thinks of secular, or concert, versions of the ***Kol Nidre*** melody, the work by Max Bruch comes immediately to mind. Nevertheless, this work merely exploits the "sweetness" of the melody, without ever getting involved in the further implications — even on a musical level — of the chant. A much more meaningful work of this genre, both compositionally and emotionally, is Arnold Schoenberg's ***Kol Nidre,*** written in 1938 for narrator, chorus and orchestra.

Although not popularly performed, the piece has been recorded (Columbia #M2S 709), and close analysis of it reveals a richness of thematic development which should not surprise us, coming, as it does, from the pen of a master like Schoenberg. What may be surprising, however, is the spiritual intensity (shall we call it "Jewish"?) that is brought to bear on the material, and is evoked from the listener.

Schoenberg wrote this piece during the period immediately following his reconversion to Judaism, and he intended it as a testimonial to his conviction. The traditional significance of the ***Kol Nidre*** prayer-text, that of renouncing forced conversions, is thus revitalized by the composer and poignantly conveyed to the listener.

In trying to present the liturgical chant on which Arnold Schoenberg based his musical elaboration, we are met with the fact that there is no one chant that could have served as the model, for we are not dealing with a "melody" in the conventional sense. In the synagogue, the musical rendition of the ***Kol Nidre*** consists of a series of beginning, central and concluding motives that are -connected, expanded and embellished according to the skill and temperament of the individual cantor. Further, even the basic motives are subject to geographical variants, as well as to variations due to the particular words or accentuation selected.

Example 1 lists variants of the basic opening and central motives as well as a common concluding motive.

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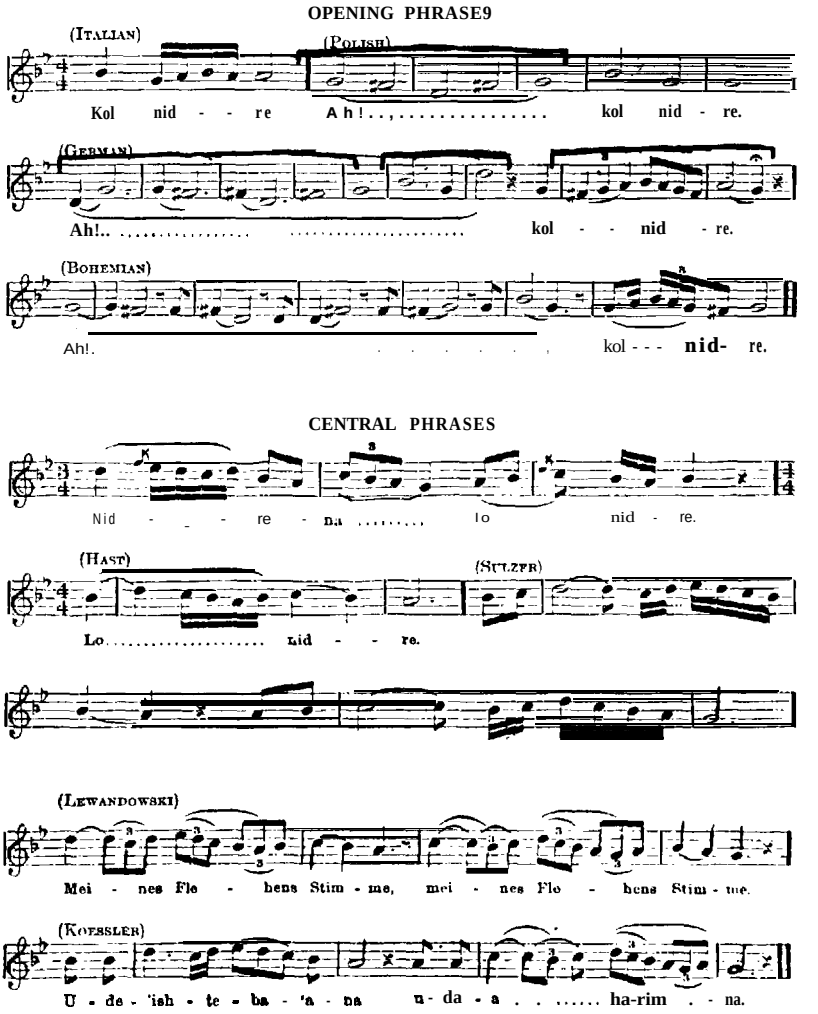
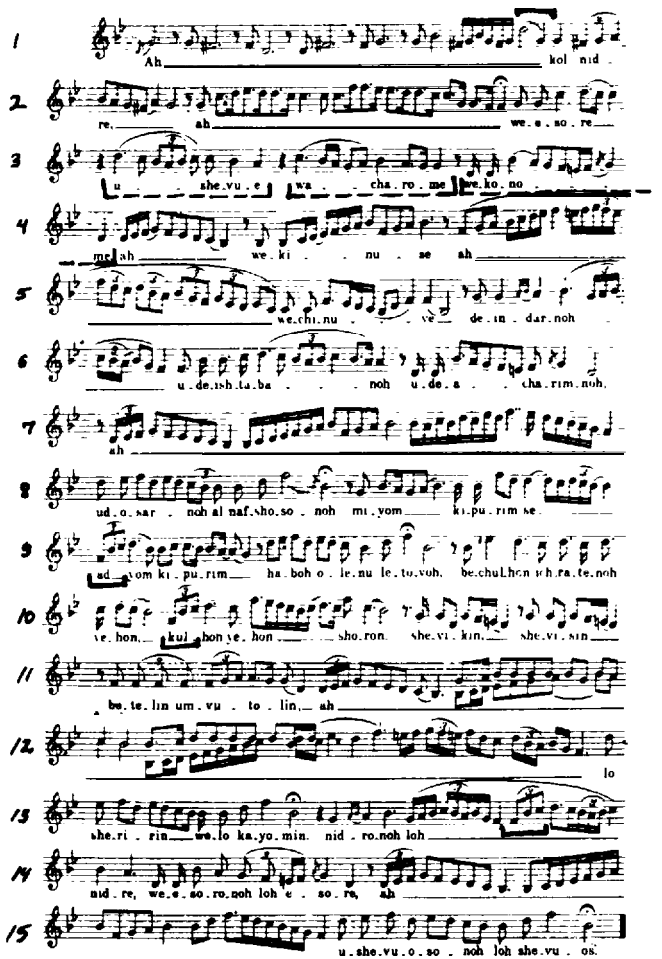


Example 1. ***Kol Nidre*** **chant.**

Quoted from the Jewish ***Encyclopedia, N.Y.*** **1914, S.V. Kol Nidre.**

In Example 2 we give one complete traditional rendition of ***Kol Nidre,*** which illustrates the developmental treatment of the basic motives.

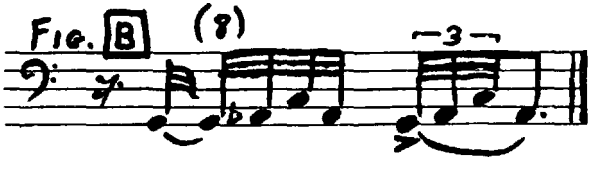


Example 2. Eastern Ashkenazi version of *Kol Nidre.*
From the *Encyclopedia Judaica,* Jerusalem, 1973, S.V. ***Kol Nidre.***

For instance, the falling fifth in Example 2, line 1 foreshadows the basic concluding motive as it will later appear on lines 5, 8, etc. Line 3, on the other hand, reveals a sequential pattern. In compar-

ing this anonymous cantor's version of the *Kol Nidre* with Schoenberg's conception, we shall see that the latter was just as concerned with transmitting the free, melismatic, "personal" character of the synagogal chant, as he was with weaving a strict musical elaboration of the motivic material.

Schoenberg's opening motive (Fig. A), identified as the *Kol Nidre* "theme" in the minds of most listeners familiar with the chant, forms the basis for his prelude, comprising the first 26 measures of the work. In the initial three measures the motive is presented "statically" by the upper cellos, disguised as an inner harmonic voice. This motive is identical to the "Polish" variant in Example 1. The sustained Bb in the flutes gives way to a stylized "cantorial" sextolet (m. 5) which, in turn, reintroduces the motive in the flutes' lower register — audible amid the orchestral texture only because it is flutter-tongued. In measure 8 we find the inverted motive in diminuition as a cello pedal (Fig. B), while the original motive in augmentation is played by the winds in mm. 12-14.

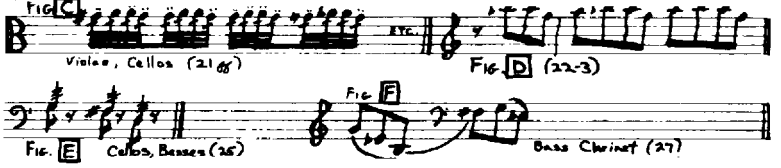


Of course, in these and other instances the "theme" is not highlighted; rather, it is woven into the rich orchestral fabric of countermelodies in constantly shifting tonality. (Indeed, Schoenberg is seeking to avoid the "cello-sentimentality of Bruch, etc."[1] often associated with the *Kol Nidre* melody. What he has succeeded to do, is to underline the cumulative "masculine" effect of the chant.) For example, the wind augmentation just mentioned (mm. 12-14) is fragmented

[1] ". . . **Eine meiner Hauptaufgaben war, die Cello-Sentimentalitat der Bruch, etc., wegzuvitriolisieren und diesem Dekret die Würde eines Gesetzes, eines Erlasses, zu verleihen." (Arnold Schoenberg, *Ausgewählte Briefe* Mainz, 1958; letter of November 22, 1941 to Paul Dessau).**

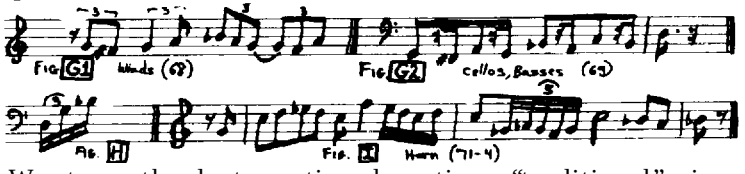
at measure 14, where it is continued by the solo cello into the next measure, while the rest of the orchestra introduces a lyrical "second theme" in the violins derived from the ***Kol Nidre*** motive. This is accompanied by a trumpet figure consisting of the inverted ***Kol Nidre in*** diminuition + the ***Kol Nidre*** motive — which figure the tuba plays simultaneously in augmentation (mm. 15-18). At the same time, the violas have a different ***Kol*** Nidre-derived phrase, while the clarinet comments with its sextolet flourish.

The prelude is brought to an end with an inversion in extreme diminuition of the theme's characteristic semitone interval (Fig. C), while the theme in eighth-note motion is contracted by the violins into Fig. D, and finally reiterated by ***pizzicato*** lower strings as in Fig. E.



In the introductory passage for narrator (mm. 27-57) the ***Kol Nidre*** motive is not as conspicuous, although this section's "leit-motif" (Fig. F) is obviously a transformation of it.* Moreover, this section, which immediately precedes the adaptation of the ***Kol Nidre*** text, ends with the characteristic descending semitone interval in the upper winds (mm. ***56-57).***

Starting from m. 58 the narrator is involved in a dialogue with the orchestra, which intones the basic ***Kol Nidre*** opening phrase as it appears in Example 1, line 3 ("Ah!"), as well as various other motives from the liturgical chant. (These motives will later be developed in the final section of the work, mm. 94-186, marked by the use of the chorus.) The quasi-dodecaphonic string accompaniment at the beginning of this section (mm. 58-62) derives its two rhythmic components from the traditional motives that Schoenberg will quote in measures 68 and 69, respectively (Figs. G1 and G2).



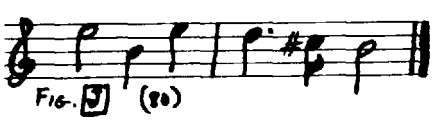
We term the last-mentioned motives "traditional" since they may well appear in a traditional synagogal rendition of the ***Kol***

2 **Interestingly enough, line 5 of Example 2 contains a similar idea.**

Nidre. *Or,* to use a different yardstick, to the liturgically trained ear these motives will evoke the *Kol Nidre* chant even when produced out of context. If we examine these motives more closely, they turn out to be variants of Example 1, line 2 *("Kol Nidre")* and Example 2, line 7 (quoted by Schoenberg in measures 70 and 86, respectively). Moreover, a motive such as the one in Fig. H, appearing in mm. 137-141, finds its counterpart on line 9 of Example 2 *("ad"* et al.); on the other hand, the "traditional" sextolet at the beginning of Example 2 would pass for one of Schoenberg's own transformations. All of which raises the question: Is Schoenberg quoting traditional variants, or is he varying selected motives traditionally? The answer, of course, is irrelevant, and merely points to the composer's skill in preserving an important facet of the chant within the contemporary musical idiom.3

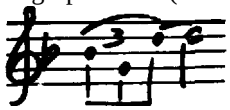
In measure 71 of the horn initiates a motive (Fig. I), quickly imitated by the lower winds and strings, complete with an embelleshing cantorial melisma. With tongue somewhat in cheek, however, Schoenberg has transposed this melisma down a minor second, while retaining the rest of the phrase intact. This phrase, later given a fugal development by the chorus in mm. 113 ff., is nothing more than a simplified version of the run found in Example 2, line 2 ("ah"). Besides being a more simplified version, it is also a traditionally more correct version, cadencing as it does on Bb rather than on C.

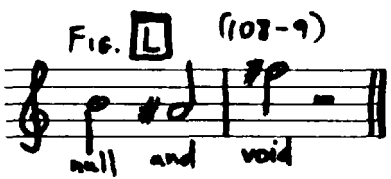
The motive marked "Lewandowsky" in Example 1 is quoted exactly by the cello in measure 74. Among the many other motives that are quoted in this "exposition" section 4 we find a variation on Example 2, line 10 ("shevikin") and a new version of the *Kol Nidre* motive (Figs. J and K, respectively).



3 Schoenberg also captures the cantorial flavor in several rhythmic figures, such as the wind line in m. 18, or the miniaturized "vocal" run for the flute in m. 43.

4 We have in this piece a formal dichotomy: On the one hand. there is an introduction. followed by the narrator's exposition, and the chorus' development. From the orchestral point of view, however. we have seen that the more rigorous "development" of the k.n. motive in the prelude ***precedes*** the exposition.

The melody sung by the chorus (from m. 94) starts off with the straightforward "German" opening phrase (Example **1)** deriving from its half-cadence the figure  on the word "unfathomable". Inserted, however, starting with the words "wherewith we pledged," is a line based on an expansion of a motive first introduced in measure 64 (cf. also Example 2, line **13 "loh")** Among the interesting devices used in this section is the octave displacement of the ***Kol Nidre*** motive (Fig. L) and a series of "open" fifths in measures **131-134** that are at once a distillation of Fig. G2, as well as quotation of the traditional final cadence (Example 1, and Example 2 ***passim).***



In conclusion, we have a Schoenberg's Op. 39 a thoroughly modern treatment of a venerable ***cantus firmus*** that exhibits a unique fidelity to the spirit of the chant and, to a great extent, to its letter as well. Hand in hand with his interest in the integrity of the text (the composer collaborated in the English adaptation of the Aramaic prayer), Schoenberg brings forth all the implications of the melody.

THE MUSICAL LEGACY OF HAZZAN GERSHON EPHROS

PINCHAS SPIRO

Hazzan Gershon Ephros passed on to his eternal reward on the 23rd day of Sivan, 5738, (June 28, 1978), at the age of 88. His entire adult life was devoted to the enhancement of the music of his people. It was an active, creative and prolific life in which he enriched the treasure house of Jewish music immeasurably. His death is mourned by his many friends and students, and by the countless numbers of Jewish musicians whose work was affected to a large degree by the many-facetted legacy of Gershon Ephros. The passing of Gershon Ephros has left a great void in the field of Hazzanut, and Jewish music in general, a void that will not easily be filled.

Gershon Ephros devoted himself to several diverse areas in the field of Jewish music, and in all of them he excelled and acquired renown. To begin with, he was a practicing hazzan, beloved and admired by his congregation, Beth Mordechai of Perth Amboy, N.J., where he served with distinction for thirty years, until his retirement, in 1957, at the age of 67.

He was a gifted composer who wrote many original compositions, both liturgical and secular, that won him critical acclaim from some of the most distinguished music critics, including Olin Downs and Howard Taubman of "The New York Times."

He was a music educator whose influence on the Jewish musicians of his time was exceedingly great not only because of his creative ideas, interesting innovations and experimentations, but also because of his soft-spoken and unassuming ways and because of his pleasant and captivating personality.

Above and beyond all of his other great accomplishments Gershon Ephros is known internationally as the compiler and editor of the six-volume "Cantorial Anthology" which is a collection and distillation of some of the finest liturgical compositions, the legacy of the Jewish people from its early history to the present clay. It is this monumental task, to which he devoted 60 years of his life, which has earned Gershon Ephros an everlasting honored place among the great Jewish musicians and musicologists of all time.

Pinchas Spiro is the hazzan of Tifereth Israel Synagogue of Des Moines, Iowa. He is a frequent contributor to well known Jewish periodicals and writes in Hebrew as well English.

To appreciate fully the herculean effort involved in the compilation of the "Cantorial Anthology," one has to take into account the many aspects that were involved in its preparation. Consider the following:

(a) Examining the enormous amount of printed material (some available for purchase, but much of it stored in the rare book sections of public and private libraries) and selecting from among it the best and most suitable examples;

(b) Investigating, hunting down and finding worthy manuscripts of unpublished music, editing and purifying them from foreign influences;

(c) Searching out reputable old ***ba'aley t fillah*** and learning from them the ancient melodies which they had learned from their parents and mentors as an oral tradition, then sifting out that material and preserving the precious parts of it for generations to come;

(d) Convincing the great living Jewish composers to contribute original material for the Anthology;

(e) Arranging many of the ancient melodies for choir and/or adding to them organ accompaniment;

(f) Composing original compositions for every one of the six volumes of the Anthology.

The most difficult problem involved in the preparation of an Anthology of that magnitude is that of selecting one from among many, and the need to make constant judgements. It is obvious that some of the decisions were influenced by the personal taste of Gershon Ephros. But, for the most part, the decisions were based on accepted musical standards and on a deep understanding of the special character of the Hebrew melos and its historical development. While some hazzanim and choir directors may question the inclusion of several pieces and the exclusion of several others, the consensus is that the Anthology as a whole stands as a towering beacon and guiding light for future generations of Jewish musicians.

In 1972, the N.B.C. radio network dedicated one of its "Eternal Light" programs to Gershon Ephros in honor of the completion of 60 years work on the Cantorial Anthology. The prgram consisted of a dramatization of several interesting and charming episodes in Gershon Ephros' early childhood and adolesence. At the conclusion

of the program, Hazzan Max Wohlberg summarized the life and achievements of the honoree as follows: "Three crucial periods affected the evolution of Jewish music in recent times. The first of these took place in Eastern Europe where our people created an astonishingly rich repertoire of Jewish music. The second significant event was the confrontation in Israel of long separated Jewish communities of East and West. After centuries of isolation, Sephardim and Ashkenazim were exposed to each other's customs and melodies. The third momentous era took place in the United States where, living in liberty and worshipping in freedom, the Jewish composer was, for the first time, faced with the novel challenges of the modern world. It was Gershon Ephros" good fortune to be exposed to the effects of these three historic periods and to be an active participant in their evolution."

Gershon the son of Abraham Abba Ephros was born in 1890 in Serotzk, a suburb of Warsaw. His father, a Hebrew teacher and a competent *ha'al k'i'ah,* died at the age of 40 when Gershon was only ten years old. Some time afterwards, his mother married her cousin, Cantor Moshe Fromberg, who had also lost his mate about the same time. The relations between Gershon and his step-father were unusually warm and affectionate. Cantor Fromberg discovered in young Gershon a rare musical talent and a beautiful voice. He took him into his choir and taught him the rudiments of musical theory and sight-singing. On many occasions in his later life, Gershon Ephros would tell about the tremendous influence that his step-father had on his musical development and on his entire future. Ephros included his arrangements of Cantor Fromberg's compositions in several volumes of his Cantorial Anthology. Two such compositions, ("Ovos for the High Holy Days and *"Lo Omus"* from Hallel), which were included in the recording in honor of Gershon Ephros' 70th birthday, are excellent examples that testify eloquently to Cantor Fromberg's remarkable musicianship.

In the year 1909, at the age of 19, Gershon Ephros emigrated to Palestine as a pioneer. It was there that he came under the influence of Abraham Z. Idelsohn, one of the greatest modern Jewish musicologists, who was a cantor in Jerusalem and established there a Jewish Music Institute *("Machon L'shirat Yisrael")* Idelsohn recognized the native musical talents of young Ephros. He appointed him as Assistant-Cantor and conductor of his choir. Idelsohn taught him musical theory and harmony, and cultivated in him a passion for researching the ancient roots of Jewish music. Idelsohn and his

devoted young disciple traveled all across the country with a primitive recording-machine, recording and transcribing the secular and sacred chants of many of the oriental Jewish communities that had settled in Palestine. His work with Idelsohn constituted the second important stage in the musical development of Gershon Ephros. It seems to be the decisive stage that determined his musical personality and to a great extent influenced the nature of his creative musical activity for the rest of his blessed life.

In 1911, Gershon Ephros emigrated to the United States, ‘and a short time later married Rose Hurvitz whom he had met while still in Jerusalem. In New York, Ephros became the first Music Director of the Bureau of Jewish Education, organized and directed by the legendary educator, Dr. Simon Benderly. In 1918, Ephros was appointed cantor in Norfolk, Va. and later at Temple Beth Elohim in the Bronx. During that time, Ephros continued to be occupied with the musical research which he had started in Jerusalem with his mentor, Professor A. Z. Idelsohn. This was also the period in which he started his collection of selected compositions by the finest Jewish composers. In addition to that, he began to assemble and to purify the traditional chants based on the prayer modes, to harmonize them and to add organ accompaniments. Ephros labored on this unique collection for over 10 years, but without practical results. Only in 1927, when he was appointed cantor of the celebrated synagogue Beth Mordecai of Perth Amboy, N.J., did his dreams and hopes for Jewish music start to materialize and take a practical turn. In 1929, two years after assuming his position with Beth Mordecai, Gershon Ephros published, with the help of generous congregants, the first volume of his Cantorial Anthology, a volume of selected compositions for Rosh Hashanah. (This is perhaps as good a place as any to note that the title “CANTORIAL ANTHOLOGY” is actually a misnomer, since the majority of the compositions in the Anthology are for choir.) The introduction to the trail-blazing first vlume was written by Professor Abraham Z. Idelsohn. The following is a partial quote:

“It gives me great pleasure to write these lines in commendation of my pupil. Would that that there were many cantors of his calibre in Israel. In both his selection and arrangement he shows a profound insight into the traditional Hebrew liturgy. Like precious gems, these sacred songs were picked from the treasure-house of Jewish melody and arranged in the form of a complete service in the genuine spirit of Hebrew music. This Anthology will considerably facilitate the work of cantors and choir leaders, both here

and abroad. Many of them do not have at their disposal the musical material from which to make a judicious selection and are thus hampered in arranging an effective service. Cantor Ephros' compilation will, no doubt, help them to create an atmosphere of reverence and solemnity, because he is fully qualified for his self-imposed task by virtue of his musical training and his impeccable taste."

Compared to the Cantorial Anthology volumes that followed it, the first volume now seems rather modest in its contents and in its goals. In his Preface to Voluve I, Cantor Ephros states simply: "My objective is to introduce into the modern synagogue the finest of cantorial and choral music, and I am referring to music that is rooted in our sacred tradition, and at the same time also has a true artistic form and an oriental charm. I have sought to find a synthesis between the ancient Hebrew melos and the modern harmonic tendencies."

Volume I represents only the initial phase of Gershon Ephros' emergence as a Jewish composer and musicologist. Most of the material in Volume I consists of compositions written by well-known 19th century Jewish composers, and even the few compositions by 20th century composers that were included had been written in the 19th century musical style. What is even more significant is that Gershon Ephros' own harmonic language (for both his original compositions as well as for his arrangements of the ancient modal chants) is basically that of a Western musician,

The second volume of the Cantorial Anthology ("Yom Kippur"), was published in 1940, eleven years after the publication of Volume I. The second volume reflects a giant step in the musical development of Gershon Ephros and in the formulation of his musical credo and his plans for the future. During this period he came under the influence of the great Jewish composer Joseph Achron who became his guide, his inspiration and his motivating force. His studies with Joseph Achron and his close relationship with him have brought to full bloom Ephros' creative musical abilities. In retrospect, it is easy to see how the musical personality of Gershon Ephros has been nurtured, shaped and formed by his three great teachers:

(a) Cantor Moshe Fromberg, his step-father, who raised him since early childhood on the purity of the ancient Jewish musical tradition, and from whom he learned that "the great Jewish liturgical composers from generations past achieved great heights and inspired ideas only when they were true and faithful to their Hebraic 'self' and did not compromise it."

(b) Abraham Z. Idelsohn, the pioneer musicologist who taught him that the ancient Hebrew chants of the 11th and 12th centuries are rooted in the scriptural cantillations which, in turn, are the basis of our earliest musical heritage.

(c) Joseph Achron, the celebrated composer who helped him to find a way to harmonize the ancient Hebrew' chants without destroying their original character. To do so, it was necessary to discard the conventional Western harmonic concepts and rigid rules and to base his music on quartal (as opposed to triadic), harmonies. It seems that this discovery released composer Ephros from his frustrations and pointed him on the road to the future. Ephros exultantly stated: "I stand now firmly based on the solid ground of a Hebrew tradition which is free from foreign influence."

While the preparation of Volume I (Rosh Hashanah) lasted 12 years, and that of Volume II, (Yom Kippur), lasted 11 years, the work on Volume III, (Three Festivals), lasted 8 years, the work on Volume IV, (Shabbat), lasted 5 years, and the work on Volume V, (Weekdays and Special Occasions), lasted only *4* years. The main innovation of volumes III, IV and V was the inclusion of a considerable number of compositions by contemporary Jewish composers. Gershon Ephros was so persuasive that almost all the great Jewish composers graciously granted his request for their music. Some, like Ernest Bloch and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, wrote music specifically for the Cantorial Anthology.

The appearance of the fifth volume in 1957, was supposed to complete the Cantorial Anthology in accordance with the master plan which Ephros laid out in his introduction to the first volume. It was, therefore, a surprise when a sixth volume appeared in 1969, devoted in its entirety to unaccompanied recitatives for Rosh Hashanah. It was probably the beginning of a new project — companion volumes of hazzanic recitatives to each of the original five volumes. In his Preface to Volume VI, Gershon Ephros reiterates his long-held views that the prayer modes, "in their refreshing simplicity, are based on the Biblical cantillations, and that the artistic, free-flowing, modulating, improvisational Recitative, (which is nurtured and inspired by the ***Nusah Hat fillah),*** represents the most original contribution that the cantors throughout the ages have made to the Jewish music treasure-house, ancient and revitalized."

Despite the fact that Hazzan Gershon Ephros lived to 88, he was a sickly man most of his life and suffered from many physical

ailments. At the age of 53, he underwent major surgery for cancer which left him with life-long debilitating effects. He underwent a similar operation at the age of 70. What is amazing is that his illnesses and his physical pain and discomfort did not slow down the pace of his work. In fact, his musical creativity seemed to increase. It seems that he found in his work a purpose to his life and a balm to his suffering. When he was 67, Ephros retired from his position as cantor of Congregation Beth Mordecai. This marked the beginning of the most creative period in his life, a period devoted to his own original musical compositions. Among the works which he created during this period are the acclaimed sets of worship services: ***"Selichot," "Lel Shabbat," "L'Yom Hashabbat"*** and ***"Hallel V'zimrah."***

I was privileged to have enjoyed a most cordial and warm friendship with Hazzan Gershon Ephros, a friendship that started almost on the very first day we met, some 25 years ago, at one of the Cantors Assembly annual conventions. We happened to be sitting next to one another at the same dinning-room table at Grossinger's, and I can still remember clearly the contents of our first conversation. He wanted to know where 1 had received my basic hazzanic training, and when I told him that it was at the ***"Shirat Yisrael"*** Hazzanic Institute under tutelage of Reb Zalman Rivlin, he became very excited. He related to me how he and Cantor Zalman Rivlin had been Professor Idelsohn's protégés when he established the "Shirat Yisrael" Hazzanic Institute. Cantor Ephros and I spent that whole afternoon together. We discussed the merits and the practical difficulties of Cantor Rivlin's dream of creating a new genre of congregational chant — one that would be a synthesis of the style of the Sephardic-oriental communities, (especially the Yemenite), with that of the Ashkenazic-East European communities.

Since then, we corresponded often, (always in Hebrew; and what a delightful Hebrew style he had!), concerning various matters in the area of Jewish music and especially hazzanut. Whenever I published an article, I was sure to receive a letter from him with constructive comments and encouragement. Although I had never attended any of Gershon Ephros' classes as his student, nevertheless I always addressed him in my letter by the title, "Mori ***V'Rabi,"*** because I truly regarded him as my teacher from whom I learned so much directly and indirectly. From my conversations with colleagues in the cantorate, I have come to the conclusion that there are many practicing hazzanim, young and old, who feel the same way towards the late Cantor Gershon Ephros.

When Gershon Ephros celebrated his 70th birthday, I wrote an article about him in the Cantors Assembly's old publication, "The Cantor's Voice." The following is an excerpt, from that article: "There is one point of total agreement among Orthodox, Conservative and Reform hazzanim, and it is the admiration that we all have for this great scholar and musician, and out feeling of indebtedness to him for all he has clone for hazzanut. While some hazzanim, depending on their background and training, may have certain reservations concerning some aspects of his musical innovatios, (Hazzan Ephros himself made revisions in his theories from volume to volume), we are all so overwhelmed by his scholarship and talent, and we have so much respect for this great and yet so humble and lovable personality that we do not allow ourselves to pass judgment, and we are ever eager to be shown and to be convinced."

In the summer of 1968 I received a letter from Cantor Ephros in which he shared with me the joyous news that he was about to publish an additional, sixth, volume to his Cantorial Anthology. The letter contained an unexpected request; he asked me to compose for that volume an ***"Avinu Malkenu"*** melody for cantor and congregation. I replied that, I did not regard myself as a bona fide composer since all of my past, work had been for children's choirs and youth congregations. He replied: "I hasten to write and to encourage you. It is precisely the fact that your main creative efforts have been in the educational field that qualifies you to compose something worthwhile for cantor and congregation. Do so with utter simplicity and don't resort to so-called tricks. Write something in an oriental style or in a hazzanic style, and perhaps in a mixture of the two." I am sorry now that I did not fulfill his request. The mere fact that I was asked by the great Gershon Ephros to contribute to his Anthology will always be taken for me a supreme honor.

The outstanding quality that most typifies Gershon Ephros' sojourn on earth was his studiousness and his firm belief that a person must continue to develop and to grow as long as the breath of life is in him. This was Gershon Ephros' way of life from his early childhood to the very day of his death. He was the typical "Eternal Student' who believed that "Who is wise? He who learns from every person." This last quality goes well with the quality of sincere modesty which characterized this pleasant and lovable man. Whenever he concluded a new composition, he would send it to some of

his colleagues and former students, requesting them to look through the material and to give him their reactions and comments.

I was privileged to be one of these whom Ephros consulted regarding his latest original work. ***"Shiron Chadash,"*** a new songster intended for use by Hebrew Day Schools. He sent me the material in rough manuscript form and asked for my constructive comments, which I gladly gave. The new songster, which will soon be published. consists of two volumes and contains 130 original melodies. The tests — all in Hebrew — are by contemporary Israeli and American poets. The first volume consists of sacred songs for all the holidays of the year. The second volume, entitled: "The Child's World," consists of secular songs. Most of the songs are arranged for two-part singing, unaccompanied, and are based on the Hebrew melos in its purest form — indeed a work of art,! The children who will he fortunate enough to learn from the new songster will derive much enjoyment from the delightful melodies. Along with pleasure of singing, they will acquire a basic acquaintance with most of the ancient prayer modes, the ***"missinai"*** melodies, the Biblical cantillations and the special melodies that lend each Jewish holiday its very own flavor.

A few months before his death, Cantor Ephros wrote me: "I am delighted to tell you that Volume I of my new songster is now being printed in Israel. I hope that the book will he ready for the schools both here and in Israel for the new season . My children and I have spared no effort to make sure that this book which is dedicated to the blessed memory of my life's companion will be printed in the finest possible manner." It is worth noting that the last creation by Gershon Ephros, a work for children, was dedicated to the memory of his beloved late wife, Rose, who passed away in 1975. By coincidence, his first important published work, "A Children's Suite" (a group of I6 delightful short gems for voice and piano, written to the children's poems by Chayim Nachman Bialik), had also been dedicated to his devoted wife, his "life's companion."

Gershon Ephros was among the few creative artists who were fully recognized and appreciated during their life-time for their genius and for their works. It is no exaggeration to state that there are few active hazzanim and Jewish choral conductors today who have not been influenced to some extent by the monumental work of Gershon Ephros. In addition to the large treasure of published

compositions, Gershon Ephros has left behind a legacy of many original compositions in manuscript form that still await publication. Just as he left his influence on many generations during his life-time, so will the influence of Gershon Ephros continue for many generations to come, and his memory will serve them as a blessing.

20

MUSIC AND PRAYER IN REFORM WORSHIP

STEPHEN RICHARDS

A friend of mine, who is a musician, used to ask me why great music is not heard in the synagogues of America. "After all," he would point out, the same people who attend the synagogue services are those who support the symphony orchestras, go to chamber music concerts, attend and support the opera, spend a fortune on procuring the best music teachers for their children, and own and use the most expensive and sophisticated high-fidelity equipment *yet* devised. They know what is good and what is great; yet when they come to the synagogue, either regularly or on special occasions, they neither demand nor expect great music, or even very good music. They don't support it, or attach much importance to it, and even discourage attempts to bring it into the worship service."

My friend, the musician had succeeded in embarrassing me by his questions and comments, especially since I am a musician whose career is in the field of synagogue music, and I know that he is right in his observations. And then, if he really wanted to hurt me, he would cite the enormous body of great music that has poured out of the churches, and the names of hundreds of great composers who wrote regularly for the Catholic and Protestant liturgies, and how all this music really became the basis for the music of the secular world from the Rennaissance through the Classical periods.

My initial responses were from an historical viewpoint. The reason for the avoidance of instrumental music in the synagogue for centuries, as being related to the mourning for the destruction of the Temple and our living in "galut", is, according to musicologists today, probably not accurate. More likely is the conclusion that the Temple was hierarchic, and used art music that was prepared and performed by an elite group, while the emerging synagogues at the time were democratic, and used stylized folk music. With the destruction and dispersion, there was no longer a need for the use of instruments or art music, and the skills of constructing the instruments and the techniques of playing them became lost and forgotten. The "mourning for the Temple" became a convenient rationale for the lost art. Thus, centuries passed with few attempts at art music in the synagogue.

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With the birth of the Reform movement, and the introduction of the organ into the synagogue, there were no traditions of instrumental music to draw upon, so the music and musicians of the churches became our source. It is only in the last century or so that, a significant body of music has been composed for our synagogues, and used there, and most of that has not been written or performed by the best Jewish musicians. Today, our synagogues and other Jewish institutions give little or no encouragement to Jewish musicians to involve themselves with the music of the synagogue; either to create it or to achieve high level performances of it.

"All right," my musician friend comments, "you got a late start. But, what is stopping you now? Jewish communities that give millions to U.J.A., that build and support, multi-million dollar buildings, are neither willing nor able to support and commission great music for our synagogues."

This is the heart of the matter, and really requires an examination of what we want, our music to be in the worship service; what is its function, and what. do people expect of it,

The first, assumption is that music in the synagogue is ***primarily*** a function of prayer. It is there because of the prayers, and without these prayers, would exist, somewhere else — perhaps in the concert hall or on a recording. And, Jewish prayer has very special functions.

Jewish prayer is both an inward and an outward reaching. One interpretation of the Hebrew word for prayer, ***"tefila,"*** is that it is derived from the root-word, ***"palol,"*** which is a legal term meaning to judge, or plead a case. The word, ***"tefila"*** is a noun based upon the reflexive case of that verb — ***"hitpallel"*** — to judge, or to plea to oneself. Whether or not this is accurate etymologically, it is an indication that prayer is a very personal, individual experience, reaching inwards to effect, a person's deepest feelings. But prayer is also, as Dr. Henry Slonimsky expressed it, "the expressions of our needs and aspirations, addressed to a great Source of help — a ***'Shomei-tefila'*** — One who listens to prayer; for such things as health or food, or even life itself ... or on another level, for forgiveness of sin or wrongdoing, and that all the great and good causes of the human heart. shall come about — the poor and oppressed shall be comforted; wrongs righted; justice done and goodness prevail."[1]

Expressed in still another way, the inward and outward reaching

1 **From Henry Slonimsky, "Essays" (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press. 1967) as reprinted in "Gates of Understanding edited by Lawrence A. Hoffman (New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1977) p. 72.**

of prayer is the desire, even the need, to enter a spiritual experience; to elevate oneself — to surmount the ordinary, the secular — to strive towards holiness. So, in order to pray, the Jew enters the sanctuary, the "mikdash" or holy place, and then what? Wait for something to happen? Expect someone else to do the praying? How can each person effect the transformation towards holiness or transcendance? How can we prepare ourselves for that inward reaching; the self-examination, and the expressions of our needs and aspirations to the Shomei-a tefila? It requires something from each person who enters into a place of worship, but it also requires something of the nature of the service itself — the liturgy, as well as the music.

The prayer of the Jew is directly linked to our covenant with God. While there are many purposes to prayer, one of the main thrusts it to inspire action — to join in partnership with God to repair and perfect the world around us. This is summed up in every worship service by the second paragraph of the Aleinu: "We pray with all our hearts: let violence be gone; let the day come soon when evil shall give way to goodness, when war shall be forgotten, hunger be no more, and all shall at last live in freedom. 0 Source of life: may we, created in Your image, embrace one another in friendship and in joy. Then shall we be one family, and then shall Your kingdom be established on earth, and the word of Your prophet fulfilled: 'The Lord will reign for ever and ever.' "2

The "kingdom of God on earth" is the ultimate aim of Jewish prayer. This is not a private matter between one person and God, as Dr. Eugene Borowitz has pointed out, "but something that must be accomplished, not only with the Jewish people, but with all peoples."3 We are required, through the mitsvot and the prayer services, to train ourselves to be an example to others — an "or *lagovim"* — a light unto the nations. The individual Jew cannot understand himself and his purpose outside of the context of all humankind, and all history. To paraphrase the translation of Hillel's famous statement: If I don't pray for myself, who will pray for me; if I pray for myself alone, what am I, and if I don't pray now, when shall I?

2 As freely translated in "Gates of Prayer," edited hy Chaim Stern (New York: C.C.A.R., 1975) p. 618.

3 Eugene B. Borowitz. "The Individual and Community in Jewish Prayer," from "Rediscovering Judaism," edited by Arnold Jacob Wolf (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965) as reprinted in "Gates of Understanding (see above), p. 59.

Prayer can lead us to a realization of the nature and purpose of our being; it can help us join into partnership with God in the quest for a more perfect world. It must start with the self, and then reach out to others. It is an active, participating experience If a congregant comes into a service expecting to get something out of it without putting something into it, or the music of the service ignores the worshipper's need to participate actively in the prayer, or the goal of the cantor or music director is only to make beautiful music. or to interest or challenge the performers. without involving the "pray-or". then the effectiveness of the prayers will be diminished. There are even worse situations where the music in some synagogues still imitates the sounds of the church or the opera house, and totally ignores the concepts and goals of Jewish prayer.

Dr. Eric Werner recently stated that "art music sets itself higher aims, and uses different means than folk music. The music of the synagogue however, is not art music. but by definition functional music, based on elements of st ylized folksong." 4

Many congregations have tried to stimulate active participation in worship by converting the sanctuary into a camp, where the song-leaders have been so successful involving our young people in singing together. Everyone stomps and claps. in an effort to shed the years, and recapture the odour of the pine trees. The hazzan is replaced by a song-leader, or attempts to imitate one. or the rabbi tries to set an example for the congregation by singing loudly: the organ gives way to a guitar. or. even worse tries to mimic the guitar or accordion style accompaniments which is totally unfitting for the instrument.

There are other. better ways to inspire people to participate in the service. There are combinations of sounds most organ.; are capable of. that neither overwhelm nor sound like a commercial, yet can sensitively and rhythmically provide a background for people to sing to. The formal designs of most of the sanctuaries of Reform Temples don't lend themselves easily to the camp atmosphere. and for good reason. The attempt to make the conversion usually results in a secularization of the service and this works against the striving for holiness. "Da lifneimiatah *omeid"* is written over the ark in many of our Temples — "Know before Whom you stand." The service is not for our enjoyment it is to serve God's purposes. When we use music in the synagogue that was written for the cabaret or the campfire, the ambiance is secular. It may provide a pleasant socialogi-

4 From an interview with the author

cal experience, or even a nice sensual feeling, but is the worshipper participating in a religious experience? Is it an experience directly related to the prayer, and a striving towards holiness? Participation may not be the ultimate goal, even though prayer cannot exist well without it.

Historically, sacred and secular music have always borrowed from one another and influenced each other, both in Judaism and in Christianity. But, when secular tunes found their way into church music, as they did in the cantatas of Bach, for example, they were infused with an *attitude of the holy* — a seriousness; an acute awareness of and respect for the prayers, and their position in the overall structure of the worship.

This happened in Jewish music as well. The songs of Provencal and Spain wove their way into the Sephardic tradition; German folksongs were introduced into our "Misinai tunes" — tunes supposed to have been handed down from Sinai! But these secular tunes have been adapted and transformed to give the worshipper a religious experience; to be sung with or listened to in a participating way that strives to be holy. Sometimes great technical skills and sensitivity to the prayers were necessary to achieve this transformation.

Today, many Reform synagogues have a choir made up of congregants. Here is one approach to the problem of inspiring participation in an artistic way. The members of the choir are participating fully and regularly in the worship experience, often with fervor and sensitivity and understanding. They strive to render the music of the service in as beautiful way as is possible, and yet it is not removed from the congregation. It is the essence of the worshipper actively praying; it maintains the connection between the institution and its members, and can become an attracton to the synagogue for new members, old ones who have strayed away, and converts to Judaism. Music has the power to bring people together in a common bond and purpose, and the volunteer choirs in our synagogues bring people together in a most holy common purpose. These are amateurs in the best sense of that word — those who do something because they love it. These are Jews who fulfill the mitsvah of prayer in the best way, because they bring so much of themselves into the act.

Instrumental music, other than the organ, is becoming more and more prevalent in Reform synagogues. Again, here is a way someone can actively combine praying and striving for beauty. But, not each of us can sing well, or play an instrument, or even feel comfortable

singing. Is that person automatically excluded from prayer? Even though I am a musician, I have never enjoyed participating in community singing, and I'm sure many others share my reluctance. Perhaps it is not necessary to sing a prayer, or even say it aloud in order to participate in it. Perhaps one can pray by listening intently to a beautiful rendering of a cantor or reader or choir. People participate in the *"Kol Nidrei"* prayer without singing along. People *actively* are involved in a funeral or wedding without feeling the need to join in the *Sheva Brachot* or the *El Male* prayers.

Music should be an important part of synagogue life, and actively involve people of all ages — sometimes singing, sometimes listening; sometimes contributing time or money, sometimes complaining or praising, but involved, and the sanctuary doesn't have to be converted into a camp, or even a Mitch Miller singalong. Maybe the music of the synagogue, because of our theology, will never aspire towards the greatness of a Bach cantata or a Mozart Mass. If it does, it will only happen on a special event. Synagogues will always keep music subservient to the texts and spirit of Jewish prayer. In order for the music of the synagogue to be effective, this must be so, and the music must involve as many people as possible in the congregation.

It must be steeped in the liturgical and musical traditions of our people, yet infused with all the technique and art we can muster, still seeking primarily to involve the worshipper and capture the moods and spirit of the prayers.

As the years have passed, the questions of my friend the musician have changed. He no longer asks the original question about great music in the synagogue, but the quest now is for the proper balances and relationships between prayer and music; between art music and stylized folk music in our worship; between active, vocal participation on the part of the congregant, and active, participatory listening.

My friend, the musician, was myself many years ago, and the questions he raised were the questions that sent me into the field of synagogue music. I hope that these questions will continue to be asked by young Jewish musicians, and that they probe as I am still doing for the answers.

Special thanks to Dr. Eric Werner and Dr. Lawrence Hoffman, both of Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, for their advice in the preparation of this article for publication.

SURVIVING FUTURE SHOCK

SAMUEL ROSENBAUM

I would like to talk with you tonight about, the essence of our calling. About the core, the center, the focus, the heart from which all other duties, privileges and responsibilities flow. I want to talk about the *sh'lihut* which we call hazzanut.

I think that any hazzan, of whatever sect of Judaism, who does not see himself as the bearer of a sacred mandate to lead his congregation *to* prayer and *in* prayer may have serious questions to confront about his life and his calling.

Hazzanut is a sanctity of Jewish life. It is intimately and eternally bound up with the mystical, mysterious process which we call prayer. It is both the message and the medium of the mirror to which we hoId up our souls. It is the sacred crystal through which we can see the world as we want it to be. It is the window through which we can call out in pain or in joy to our Creator. **It** is the light by which we may, in a rare moment of incandescence, catch a glimpse of Him who is the Hearer of prayer.

And like the condition of all things, the condition of the state of prayer is changing. Historians like to be ahle to pinpoint the exact moment when great. events first began to take shape. They tell us that the year 489 marks the beginning of the downfall of the Roman Empire, or that 1742 marks the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

That may be, but it is quite probable that people living in those times may not have been aware that they stood at a crossroad. For them, life did not seem to be undergoing any radical change. It is only in retrospect that we can point our finger to one particular date on the calendar and say, "That day is when this or that era in human history came to an end and a new era was begun.

So it is with us. We are not aware that we are at a crossroad; perhaps we have already passed that point. But if we are at all sensitive to developments in our profession we must be aware that changes continue to take place, that in our time, these changes have begun to proceed at an ever-increasing rate.

Samuel **Rosenbaum** is the hazzan of Temple Beth El. Rochester New York. Executive Vice President of Cantors Assembly and Managing Editor of the "Journal of Synagogue Music." "Surviving Future Shock" is a talk delivered at the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Cantors Assembly on May 8, 1979 and is reprinted here at the request of that hotly. The talks by Hazzan David Tilman and Hazzan Charles Davidson, both of Philadelphia given in response, will appear in the Proceedings of the 32nd Annual Convention to be published early next year.

It would seem appropriate, therefore, to talk about hazzanut, about prayer, about a life devoted to sanctity, and about how we feel about these things, here in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Those of you who saw the recently honored war film, "Coming Home" will remember a very telling scene of which I would like to remind you.

A brave Marine captain leaves for Viet Nam as for a glorious adventure, firmly convinced that our country is in the right, prepared to make every sacrifice to bring the war to a successful conclusion. After a few months in the thick of the battle, he gets a few days away from the fighting and his wife joins him for his R & R in Shanghai. She finds him changed, disturbed and uneasy. He has gnawing doubts about the rectitude of America's position. He is filled with revulsion at how brutalized he and his men have become. He is certain that she can never understand, just as he had not really understood until he was in the midst of it. She tries to tell him that the war was being reported nightly on TV and that she knew what it was like.

"No," he tells her, "TV shows you what it is. You will never know what it's like."

Like the unhappy Marine captain, we may know what the situation is, but we need to talk about what it's like. How we feel about what is happening, how fulfilling and how meaningful is our calling for us, for our families and for the families whom it is our responsibility to serve.

While my position may expose me to more data on this subject than the average hazzan, I did not want to jump to any conclusions based on my own experience in Rochester, overlayed with a heavy dose of the troubles of colleagues who call with all too great frequency to share their problems and to talk them out with me.

And so, on January 19, I wrote to each member of the Assembly asking that he: "write a one-page report on what has happened to the liturgy and the music of the Friday evening and Sabbath morning services. What omissions, if any, are made? What replaces the omitted prayers? What is the effect of popular Israeli-hasidic folk material on the music of the service? Who participates in the service: Hazzan, rabbi, bar/bat mitzvah, junior cantors, children's choirs, professional chorus, etc."

"In short," I concluded, "we would like to know, as clearly as possible, the nature of the services as they exist today in the Conservative Synagogue."

As you can see, I did not prepare the usual "Check the box" survey, requiring only a "yes" or a "no." That may be alright in determining which brand of peanut butter you prefer. But our concerns are matters requiring careful judgment, which often cannot be reported in one-word answers.

A yes-no survey, or one requiring short answers to very specifically framed questions creates an atmosphere of what the lawyers like to call "prior restraint." That is, before you can ever answer the question, your area of response has been circumscribed. Questions like: "Do you have a Friday night service; Yes or No? Do you repeat the Shaharit Amidah; Yes or No?" do not give you any room for explanation and in our case would have given us very little useful information.

I am taking the time to explain all this because I want you to understand how to evaluate the answers, or at least how I evaluated them.

We have a membership of some 380. Well over 120 are retired, some 20 are in the last year or two of their careers and are even slower than the average to respond. Imagine my surprise, and delight, when I received 108 responses. Roughly one-half of the men most involved in hazzanut, with a great preponderance of younger members.

And the responses!

It was as though I had touched some secret sensitive point in the minds of our men, and the answers poured forth in a flood. Not only in numbers, but in content. Very few were satisfied with a one page answer; most wrote at least three pages; one fine letter ran to seven pages.

Almost without fail every respondent expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share what he was doing, what he was suffering or what he was enjoying. We do not realize how starved we are for the opportunity to talk shop, to compare notes, to tell someone who will listen how it is with us, what it is like with us, and how we long to hear from others how it is with them.

If we learn nothing else, we must learn this: Somehow, we must make such opportunities available in greater number. I know most of us meet on some regular basis with regional colleagues. But I have the feeling that, those meetings are, necessarily, organizationally oriented and structured. What is needed are additional settings for informal small group discussions. Such get-to-gethers may result in something worthy of being passed on to regional and national attention. Whether the discussions are fruitful or not, they will provide

something equally important: a low-key opportunity for a man to tell a friend what is in his heart. It is in such quiet moments, when the ego is put aside and the need to maintain the professional mask of imperturbability comes off, that the real truths in our lives can emerge.

The older I get the more I understand the nature and meaning of Elijah's discovery of God; not in the wind, nor in an earthquake, nor in the fire, but in a still small voice.

We have been taught that, Elijah will appear to announce the coming of the Messiah. But the Midrash adds an interesting note:

Elijah will not come to the world, our sages say, all at once, with a great trumpeting noise. The doors of the world will not be flung open to welcome him.

Elijah will come to a hidden city which no other city knows. He will speak, not before gathered throngs, but to one person at a time and he will not know that any other person has been spoken to.

When Elijah has convinced those to whom he has spoken, then the Messiah may come.

If we take upon ourselves Elijah's assignment, even if he doesn't appear, perhaps the Messiah will come.

Now to the results.

From what I have already said, you must understand that I have no hard figures to give you. So many do this, so many do this. What I can give you is the sense of what is happening. The feeling or impression I have gotten from reading your letters over and over again. The facts are there, but. the situation in each congregation is unique and special, as is every human being and it is difficult to catalogue or categorize them. But careful study does bring out a pattern, a pattern that emerges, dimly at first, like a Polaroid print taking shape. And it is on that emerging pattern that I can report to you.

I. What is the nature of the Sabbath eve service?

Two services are reported; the traditional ***Kabbalat-Shubbat Maariv,*** held presumably at sunset, and the late Friday eve service.

Most traditional sunset services are just that, traditional. In the larger congregations a ***hazzan-sheni*** or an adult layman officiates. In some, the hazzan officiates. When he does, it is generally in a straightforward ***baal-tefillah*** style, with the same kind of chant-accompaniment by the worshippers familiar to an orthodox service. The congregation may join in ***L'cha Dodi, V'Shomru, Kaddish*** and ***Kiddush*** in addition to the formal responses.

In some congregations the sunset service is led by post-bar mitzvah youngsters who have been trained singly or in a group to chant the traditional service. What differentiates these ***baalei tefillah*** from the layman or ***hazzan sheni*** is **only** the difference in age. A number of hazzanim report that they may invite a bar mitzvah to chant that service. The general feeling is that ***Kabbalat-Shabbat-Maariv*** is one service which was traditionally led by laymen, and that there is nothing new or disturbing in what they are doing.

The late Friday evening service, which was Conservative Judaism's response to the socio-economic conditions of Jews in the 30's has noticeably deteriorated in the last ten years, in number, in content and in importance.

At its height, the late service was held each Sabbath eve from the end of Sukkot to Passover. The hazzan, assisted by the professional or volunteer choir, officiated. For the rabbi, it was the occasion when he delivered his major sermon of the week.

When the ceremony of bat mitzvah became popular, the more traditional congregations celebrated these on Friday evening. Because the basic Sabbath eve service is relatively short, and because the time when it is held, 8, 8:15, 8:30, immediately following a hastily eaten Sabbath meal, the service had to be limited to no more than an hour or an hour and a quarter. What with the sermon and the Bat. Mitzvah ritual, the time left for ***davening*** gradually shrank. The service deteriorated slowly from a praying continuum that ran with few interruptions from ***Barhu*** through ***Kiddush,*** to a put-together series of prayer-like items in which the hazzan gradually became a lesser and lesser participant.

As the vogue for more participation in the leadership of the service by the bat mitzvah grew stronger, both the formal sermon and hazzanic chant had to give way.

By now, where the later service still exists, the bat mitzvah has taken over much of the bits of the service. It cannot be called "clavening." because it is as far from that as painting-by-number is from the Mona Lisa. The hazzan is reduced to "doing one cantorial solo." To my mind the cantorial solo in this context is not "davening, it is not an act of a ***sheliah tribbur.*** At best, it is the act of a sacred entertainer. Reading between the lines I gather that some men delude themselves into thinking that they are davening when they "do" the opening hymn, the one cantorial solo and lead in some Israeli or quasi-hasidic tunes, a mish-mash which may or may not have any relationship to the ***matbeah shel tefillah*** of the Sabbath eve service.

Some men are terribly unhappy about this. One colleague writes, after describing such a service:

"I have never put this down on paper before. I am angry and frustrated by it. I am rendered powerless to correct it. At this point, after many years here, I find it difficult to leave the creature comforts offered me and mine and therefore I remain here looking for an opportunity to return to our more musically creative services of the past."

Yet, another colleague, from the same state, writes:

"Your request for a survey of liturgical encroachments is interesting and to me somewhat amusing ... I find myself inviting encroachments. People learn by doing. If making Kiddush in the synagogue will lead a bar mitzvah, or his father, to make Kiddush at home, let him do it! The more nusah and the more hazzanut the members of our congregations know, the more valuable they are to the cantor. If we encourage lay participation instead of "hogging" the *nmud* too much, the lay BaaI Tefillah will be more likely to live on — and with him the synagogue service as we know it."

It would have been helpful had this colleague sent along an outline of his services so that we might know what he means when he speaks of "lay participation," and what he does, but he did not.

Another colleague, whose services have remained reasonably untouched by the kind of changes I described above, feels secure for the moment, but adds:

"With the general trend in many other congregations to abrogate the traditional role of the hazzan, there may come a time in the future when I will also he questioned on the role of the hazzan. As of now. however, I feel fortunate in that I am completely in control of the situation and I hope that it will continue."

Not all the men articulated their feelings as explicitly and you have to learn to read hetween the lines. I would say that we are divided about two to one. For every hazzan who seems pleased at the way things are, tuo are not.

So much for the participants. What about the quality of the service?

In most cases, where there is some kind of choir, the music is not much different than it was thirty years ago. There are excep tions. These are mostly in the larger. more affluent suburban, smaller city congregations, who are, again for the most part. served by superior hazzanim who devote time and effort and have the budget to prepare music for the service that is of a high quality.

One that suggests variety and shows a real attempt to create the difficult synthesis of good music and prayer.

But in the majority of cases reported, what has happened is best described by our colleague, Cantor Stephen Richards, Editor of Transcontinental Music Publications, in an article which he has sent me for publication in the June issue of the "Journal of Synagogue Music." He speaks primarily of Reform congregations, but the responses I received lead me to conclude that his assessment holds true of our congregations as well:

"Many congregations have tried to stimulate active participation in worship by converting the sanctuary into a camp, where song-leaders have been so successful in involving young people in singing together.

"Everyone stomps, or claps, in an effort to recapture their youth and the aroma of pinetrees. The hazzan is replaced by a song-leader, or struggles to imitate one. The rabbi tries to act an example for the congregation and sings **loudly.** The organ gives way to the guitar, or even worse, is re-registered to imitate the guitar or accordion."

Our congregants have gotten it into their heads that so long as a song has a Hebrew text, it is somehow a sacred song and appropriate for inclusion in a prayer service. Camp-fire songs are meant for camp fires. Zionist songs for Zionist events. Hasidic tunes are for hasidim.

If someone wants to experience the ecstasy of a hasid's dialogue with the ***Ribbono SheI Olam*** let him live like a hasid, let him believe in the Rebbe, let him rule his life by the standards set by the Rebbe. The ecstacy of the hasid is internal, it grows out of faith. Faith does not grow out of ersatz ecstacy. One does not learn to play the violin by imitating Itzhak Perlman's physical hand and finger movements. Those are the result of a lifetime of devotion and study and practice. Would-be hasidim should take note.

It is not only the quality of the music that I lament, but the death of prayer that this music must in the end bring about.

In Hebrew, ***lehitpalel*** is in the reflexive mood, derived from ***palol,*** to judge. Rendering it in the reflexive makes of prayer an act of self-judgment,, self-evaluation. Prayer is a mystical process into which one does not. go cold. Prayer is a state of mind t.o which one comes by gradually dropping off the burdens of the environment and losing oneself in thought and meditation. Our tradition is wise. It does not rely on us to improvise stimuli to meditation.

It has provided us with a prayerbook, a prayerbook that sees the world in constant need of repair, in constant need of the human touch to make peace, to erase poverty, injustice and oppression, to provide sustenance, to offer love and forgiveness and an opportunity for repentance. A prayerbook that sees man in all his potential and yet recognizes his imperfections, that acknowledges the Master of all Creation, yet invites man to become a co-worker with Him in renewing creation each day. A prayerbook that knows how to praise God and the works of man.

To understand this we need a spiritual atmosphere that matches the grandeur of the issues. ***Hevenu Shalom Aleichem, Havah Nagilah*** and even ***Yismechu HaShamayim*** will not measure up.

But we live in an age where humanity does not seem concerned with these issues, and perhaps for that reason we chose ***Hava Nagilah*** rather than a prayer from the prayerbook. Ours is a time of extreme narcissism. We spend most of our waking hours looking at ourselves in the mirror, taking our medical, emotional, social, sexual and cultural pulse every hour on the hour. Interested in neither the past nor the future, the commercial vendors of nostalgia can package it and sell it to us with ease.

My responses indicate that the synagogue is not immune. We are as much on the run from reality in the synagogue as we are in the home or in the market place. Our voices grow daily more strident, our needs more exotic, our concerns more limited to what satisfies and glorifies us, our lives more hedonistic, our roles more confused, our families more divided, and ultimately our mental institutions more overcrowded.

II. The Sabbath morning service.

If I had to generalize, I would say that the service is either very good or very bad, if you define "good" as well attended, generally led by the hazzan and where the ambiance is that of Jews at prayer. By "bad," I mean, poorly attended, led by an assortment of adults, junior cantors, bar mitzvah's, etc.; and most important, where you do not get the feeling that this is a prayer experience in which an intelligent and reasonably knowledgeable Jew can become involved.

The Sabbath morning service seems to be generally a more traditional one, perhaps because the more traditional and observant Jew is likely to attend.

Most colleagues report a bare minyan attendance when there is no bar or bat mitzvah.

Here the ***matbeah shel tefilah*** is adhered to a bit more consistently, at least in outline. There is some form of ***P'sukei d'zimra,*** from their entirety all the way to one or two paragraphs. The liteurgy from ***Shokhen Ad*** until the ***Amidah*** is almost always left intact.

The more traditional congregations repeat both ***amidot,*** but even there we have signs that on occasions the repetition of one or the other ***amidah*** is omitted. In a good percentage of congregations the omission of the repetition of both ***amidot*** is automatic.

The question of the participation of the bar mitzvah was answered in many ways. A number of men reported proudly that they lead the entire service, but that ***some b'nai mitzvah*** could chant ***P'sukei d-timra,*** the Torah Service, ***(Ein Kamocha,*** etc.) and the conclusion of the ***Musaf (Ein Kelohenu, Adon Olam).*** It rarely failed, however, that a respondent would add — shamefacedly, or as an afterthought, that there were ***b'nai mitzvah*** who ***were*** permitted to chant as much as the entire service. But, the colleague usually added, under his designation and direction.

The more traditional congregations reported larger attendance and more of the service led by the hazzan. As the traditionalism increased, the bar mitzvah participation in ***tefilah*** decreased in favor of the hazzan. In all cases bar and bat mitzvah candidates were free to read as much of the Torah and the Haftorah as they could manage to learn. No one reported that ***b'nai mitzvah*** read the entire ***sidrah,*** but I know from other sources, including my own experience, that this is an option open to the bright student, and also to one who comes from a more traditional family.

There were also a good number of hazzanim who reported that they trained and used junior choirs on Sabbath mornings to assist in the service, and perhaps, to increase attendance.

Attendances ranging from a struggling minyan to over one thousand on an ordinary Sabbath were reported. These figures increase with the traditionalism of the congregation. It is of some interest that none of the congregations (of those reporting) that are known to be left-wing and willing to experiment with new prayer techniques and formats reported any remarkable attendances. There were no comments at all on the effort on attendance, if any, from granting aliyot or minyan-membership status to women.

If you were to ask me to describe an average Sabbath morning service from the survey, I would say that it is one in which the traditional ***matbeah shel tefilah*** is followed, although some individual ***tefillot*** may be omitted. At least one ***amidah*** is not repeated.

A bar mitzvah can, and usually does officiate for up to one half of the liturgy.

I gather that there is still some sense of prayer continuity and that very little outside material is added, except perhaps some special readings by the rabbi for special occasions.

Insofar as the music of the Sabbath morning service is concerned, all colleagues report a strict adherence to nusah in their chanting. In the few cases where there are choirs, the music is predictably of the Sulzer, Lewandowski, Nowakowski genre.

What is still a great unknown is the nature of the tunes used for congregational singing. Many colleagues report singing some "Israeli and hasidic" tunes, whatever these may be. All claim to have developed considerable congregational singing, but with little indication as to the kind of melodies favored by the hazzan and congregation.

There you have such facts as I could filter out of the over 100 responses which I received. The purpose of the survey was to get a reading on where we are at. No, we are not at a cross-road, nor are we in a crisis. In an ever more quickly changing world it is appropriate to take time, every so often, to get a reading on where we seem to be heading. After due and deliberate consideration we can decide whether a mid-course adjustment is necessary, whether we have moved badly in the wrong direction, or whether we are on course and we need only nod our heads approvingly and go right on doing what we are doing.

To come to any decision regarding how true our course is, we must look to the past. Not because it helps to predict the future, nor because it is necessarily a good guide on how to live in the present, but because it is a standard against which we can determine who we are, where we are, how we got here; and most important, to learn from the past what is lasting and what is a flash in the pan.

Because ultimately, for reasons of our individual uniqueness, we will each have to evaluate our own progress and determine our own future conduct, our discussions must necessarily be personal and subjective. And I believe that this is as it should be.

Perhaps, in earlier years, I might have been more certain that I could speak for and to a broad entity called Conservative hazzanut. The longer I live the more I realize how impossible that is. I really can speak only for myself. If you find my opinions match yours, then you might consider acting as I plan to act. If they differ from

mine, remember that I am not licensed to predict the future, and your guess is probably as good as mine.

I hope that such an uncontroversial stand will not be interpreted as a waning of either courage or energy, but rather as a slight increase in wisdom.

Let me then share with you my feelings about the survey.

Hazzanut, the art of leading a service, is at present for many hazzanim, at a low ebb. I, personally, feel — about myself — the exact opposite but I cannot overlook the very real fears and doubts expressed to me in the survey.

I think, however, that many of my unhappy colleagues are unhappy for what are ultimately the wrong reasons. They are unhappy because their "exposure," their "visibility" has either been reduced or is in danger of being reduced. I can understand this, and I can appreciate that any leader who wants to lead must have an ego, and must be "visible" and "exposed" if he is to succeed.

But I am afraid that this complaint cannot be successfully defended to a concerned layman. It is too easily summed up as an ego-trip. Even some of our colleagues alluded to that danger.

I am concerned when a hazzan is not given an opportunity to practice his sacred craft. Not because his feelings are hurt, but because if it is allowed to continue, intentionally or not, the ancient and treasured special kind of Jewish prayer will die. Jews can only pray, really pray, in the mesmerising age-old ***sprich-stime*** chant tuned by ***nusah*** to the calendar, expanded or contracted, simplified or elaborated upon by reason of the condition of the ***davener's*** soul. To daven, to put on tallit and tefillin and to recite ***Shaharit,*** whether in private at home or in the company of others in the synagogue is to set in motion a whole syndrome of activity: reading, remembering, chanting, singing, swaying, a mystic casting off of the here and now and an inevitable mysterious union with the past. For me, remembering and the reunion with the past are strongest when I ***daven,*** whether at the ***amud*** or at home, and as I grow older that magnetism, that pull of the past to be remembered, grows stronger.

When a Jew davens with a skilled ***baal tefillah*** these evocations come more easily, more beautifully, more spontaneously. That is what I consider my task to be. If I am not permitted to perform my task, how will my congregants even know how to daven? In the past, they could learn from a father, a grandfather, a neighbor, even a pious ***melamed*** or rebbe. Today, there are few pious ***melamdim;*** fathers and even grandfathers stumble over ***aliyah brakhot*** at chil-

dren's and grandchildren's bar mitzvahs. Where will the young generation learn this act, this skill, this precious skill, if not from us.

If you have any doubts about my evaluation, let me pose one question. You all have seen Jews ***shokl baym davenen,*** sway in in prayer. If you want to know whether what is going on in a synagogue is ***davening*** or worship, look to see whether anyone ***shokl't zikh.*** I'll wager no one, not even the most loyal congregant, ***shokl't zikh*** while reading Page 18 in the Siddur: "True and certain it is that there is one God, and there is none like unto Him."

So it is prayer and not exposure we should focus on. I have some thoughts on how we might proceed, but I would like to save those for the discussion.

What about hazzanic style?

From what I have already said in the first part of my talk, you may have gathered that I think very little of the aforementioned "cantorial solo." It sits like some exotic creature in the midst of a mundane setting. No matter how beautifully chanted, can a real old-fashioned recitative, or even a modern imitation of an old fashioned recitative have any meaning for a listener (not ***davener)*** who does not understand the words, either the literal and the implied meaning. Perhaps the time could be better used for some other form of hazzanic skill.

Where there is no core of ***daveners*** in a synagogue the hazzan must find some way to educate his congregants, young and old, to bring them up to a level of understanding and appreciation from which point they can be moved by a ***Hashkivenu.***

In a talk given at the second annual Cantors Assembly Convention, February 1949, Adolph Katchko, made a point which is worth repeating:

"It is of special importance in the modern Conservative and Reform congregation that the Hazzan make an effort to utilize the correct ***nusah*** because in these synagogues where the Jew is skilled in prayer and accustomed to pray ***b'kol rom,*** out loud, the prayer has already been ***"davened,"*** its ***nusah*** enunciated by the ***daveners,*** before the hazzan gets to it, and the hazzan can hardly sing another ***nusah.*** But in the synagogues where there is no prior ***davening,*** where the congregation is largely a silent one, it becomes the duty of the hazzan to be secure in his ***nusah*** and not stray from it. Otherwise, there is the risk that many of our beautiful traditional melodies may be forgotten because of disuse.

"A beautiful voice and talented singing are by themselves not sufficient to arouse the spark of religious emotion. More than a

voice is required for that. It is the authentic ***nusah*** that must go with the voice, because deep down, even in the most reformed Jew there glimmer sparks of ***nusah*** here and there, which only the hazzan can hope to revive."

What the survey says to me, in a general way, is that some of us have drifted in prayer style, in content, in our sense of liturgical propriety away from the foundations on which hazzanut evolved. We have come almost full circle away from an authentic hazzan-congregation relationship and have put something ersatz in its place. Maybe we need to reexamine our tendency to give in too easily to a popular, catch tune because we know it will make a hit.

Not too long ago we were all convinced that Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock who wrote the music and lyrics to "Fiddler" had managed to create a new folk-song in our time. There was not a Jewish wedding celebrated anywhere where "Sunrise-Sunset" was not heard. If not in the service then certainly at the dinner that followed. Like it or not, we thought, here was a "traditional folk song" created right before our eyes. Yet today, it is rarely heard. But "Oyf'n ***Pripitshok"*** by Mark Warshavski remains a living classic.

Today you won't get an argument when you say that ***"Oseh Shalom"*** is a modern ***mi-Sinai*** tune, created in our own day. Hardly a service where it is not heard. But it, too, will fade, while Sulzer and Lewandowski remain popular, even with younger congregants who did not grow up in a German-Jewish congregation.

I think that this should be a guide in choosing congregational tunes, choir music, hazzanic chants, etc. I know this seems to fly in the face of everything some of us who have preached contemporary music have been saying. But circumstances change cases.

Our congregations are not all peopled with vulgar, selfish illiterates. There is a growing number of young marrieds who are graduates of Hebrew camps, who have had a Hebrew education, who do have a warm feeling for Judaism and who are, person for person, a good 100% more cultured and educated than were their parents.

Strangely, you will not find them in the ultra-liberal wing of your congregation, but. in the traditional wing. They are in the synagogue because they are seeking an oasis of serenity, a focus for spiritual meaning in their lives, a remembrance and revival of the way things used to be.

You see it, this desire to be old-fashioned, somewhat exaggerated, in the far out fashions and fads of the young.

There is, too, a growing body of retired people, people with more leisure time. I'm not including here those who move from

their home-town to Floridian or Californian retirement centers, but those who remain close to their roots. They, too, are seeking a spiritual quality in their lives and they hope to find it in the synagogue. We have over 100 such men and women who attend every lecture, every class, every service. Obviously, they find something satisfying there. These two generations, each in their own way, are looking for support, for self knowledge and emotional and religious security in the synagogue.

They come in search, if you will, of the past, of nostalgia. Instead of ersatz, why not try to provide a genuine response. If they are interested in the past, why not give them the tried and true.

And to my dear friends, the composers of contemporary music, the protagonists of moving with the times philosophy, I say: "I'm sorry. For the moment I must ask you to step aside. Before our people can deal with new and innovative things they must be at home with the traditions of the past.

I know you will tell me that I am not being realistic. That if it is true that we face highly educated and sophisticated congregations, how can we expect them to turn back the clock when they enter the synagogue? How can we ask a Thursday night Philharmonic concert-goer to scale down his musical tastes from Ives and Schoenberg to Sulzer and Lewandowski and Goldfarb when they come to the synagogue on Friday night? I used to ask that question myself.

I think I can do that because Friday night is ***Shabbes*** and all that the word evokes, and Thursday night is concert night. I look for different things on each of these nights. I have even made peace with the idea that we do not have any Beethovens or Mozarts or Handels in Judaism. We know why we don't. The ***goyim*** never permitted us to have them. But certainly we have had a whole century of freedom in which to catch up, why haven't we caught up?

Maybe it is because the Jewish people in its wisdom, finds that music, beautiful as it is, irrelevant to davening. It is good to listen to but you can't ***daven*** to it.

Perhaps, in some years, if the younger generation of which I spoke is not sidetracked, if it matures in its Jewishness and in its knowledge we may have to reconsider, but for the moment, it is time for nostalgia. Let us give them the genuine thing.

Finally, what about the kids? What is our responsibility to them? Are they a threat?

I think we owe kids everything we can reasonably give them. Most of them are deprived of a Jewish home-life, of Jewish inspira-

tion and of a Jewish perspective. Of course, they should be taught to ***daven,*** even with a ***nigun.*** But taught to ***daven*** as any layman in by-gone years could ***daven*** — as a layman. I do not think, that they should be taught to be hazzanim — unless they aspire to that. In which case they should be directed, at the proper time, to the Cantors Institute.

I know that we are caught in a dilemma. On the one hand parents and rabbis push us to place the kid at the ***amud,*** and we know that for many of them this is the first and last time they will be there. On the other hand, should we really fear the competition of a well-trained young boy hazzan? And as a matter of fact, how many of us were not at one time, boy-hazzanim?

If the training of children to officiate as a hazzan is required of us, I am speaking now, not of ***davening*** as an ordinary Jew — if we must, then we must make the requirements of sincerity and preparation for kids as high as they are for anyone whom we would invite to occuy the ***amud.*** This will serve two purposes. It will discourage the dilettante and will improve the service and the prayer.

No, I do not think we have anything desperate to fear from boy-hazzanim. We have more to fear from fearful and short sighted hazzanim who do not know how to deal with an issue before it develops. The wise hazzan will try, as diplomatically as possible, to hold off indiscriminate granting of permission for boys to officiate. By coming in with some reasonable plan beforehand, a solution can be found on terms more appropriate to the needs of the congregation and the needs of the hazzan.

I know that I have not dealt at all with, or examined or discussed the critical forces which many hazzanim believe are responsible for the changes which we have found in hazzanut. This is not by oversight but rather because it was not within the scope of the survey, although it did creep in through comments and through reading between the lines. I am, of course, speaking of the role which rabbis and synagogue governing bodies have played in bringing about the situation which exists. It is also not possible to deal with all the sociological, economic, demographic, theological and philosophical ramifications of this complicated subject in one session. The aim of the survey was to focus on our own contributions to this state of affairs. While the other issues must be dealt with, it was our feeling that we might better first get our own house in order, get our own perspectives straight and our own priorities sorted out. Since a good number of men are pleased with the way hazzanut has developed these last ten years, it is obvious that they do not

feel put upon and that they have had a hand in bringing these developments about.

This may cause some dissatisfaction with those hazzanim who feel deprived and who are opposed to things as they have developed, but I learned from a concentration camp survivor that the first order of business for him and for those who suffered with him was to survive. The very act of breathing in and out was in a very real way an act of resistance to those forces whose explicit intent was to snuff out their lives.

Fortunately, we are not in such a situation, but I think the lesson we can learn is well taken. If, indeed, there are those in the American Jewish community who are jealous of the stature of the hazzan and for their own reasons would rather see him reduced to that of an ordinary employee, then the first duty of such a hazzan is to survive as a hazzan. So long as hazzanim remain in place and are considered ***klei kodesh,*** and do have a part in leading in prayer then there is still the hope and the possibility of one day returning ***hatzanut*** to its proper place. We have seen greater miracles come to pass.

We must not be discouraged.

REVIEW OF NEW MUSIC

Richard Neumann: "Yo ***M'enamori D'un Aire"*** arranged for medium voice and guitar No. 991025,

"Unu ***Matica ReDuda"*** arranged for medium voice, flute and guitar, No. 991026, Trancontinental Music, New York

Mr. Neumann and Transcontinental are to be congratulated for these two welcome additions to the present catalogue of twelve Ladin songs (with nine more soon to be released.) Both love songs are skillfully arranged vocally and instrumentally and offer attractive alternatives to the hazzan planning a special music program. These Sephardic offerings should be called to the attention of the voice faculties of local university music departments for their students' study and performance.

Simon A. Sargon: Yismechu for Cantor (medium mixed choir and organ, No. 991030, Transcontinental Music, New York

Approached with simple, hasidic sentiment, this Sabbath Eve setting is quite accessible to volunteer choirs. While offering no new revelations, its construction (reminiscent of Lazar Weiner's "Hasidic Service") is certain to produce a pleasing response.

Samuel Adler: ***Chatsi Kaddish*** for Cantor, choir and organ, No. 991029, Transcontinental Music, New York

Dr. Adler's contribution to synagogue music may be classified into two areas: Affective extensions of the liturgy through sophisticated, dramatic compositions and utilitarian new arrangements of traditional melodies. This piece falls into the latter category. By creating an appropriately conservative melodic minor accompaniment and a correct rhythmic notation of the melody, Adler has provided the Conservative or more traditional Reform service with a "meat and potatoes" setting. In question is the C natural used in ***"ve-i-me-ru"*** as opposed to the more frequently heard C sharp. Of special interest is the extended choral Amen which the composer always does well.

Maurice Goldman: 0 ***Mighty Hand*** for SATB chorus with keyboard accompaniment. Hebrew words by Theodore Herzl, English words by Miriam Kressyn, No. 991033, Transcontinental Music, New York

Beginning with unison singing and culminating in homophonic choral strength, Mr. Goldman's setting reminds us of the passionate Zionist music of the fifties which was soon replaced by watered-down Israeli folk-rock. It is a refreshing reminder; and one that is unashamedly bold and patriotic. Goldman's forte is choral arranging and this anthem lies well for either volunteer or professional ensembles. It is highly recommended for Yom Ha-atsmaut services or any program that focuses on love of the Jewish homeland.

Maurice Goldman: ***Lecha Dodi*** for Tenor Cantor, SATB chorus with keyboard accompaniment, No. 991016, Transcontinental Music, New York

This is a curious setting. There are seven repetitions of the chorus, inclusion of only the third verse and then seven more repetitions of the chorus. While the melodic and harmanic treatment is interesting enough, why all this redundancy?

Speaking of excessive repetition, how many more versions of ***Lecha Dodi*** can we expect from Transcontinental? There must be ten to twenty settings of this text gathering dust in every hazzan's music file. Why not commission a collection of contemporary Shabbat poetry for future musical consideration? Given a fresh text, Maurice Goldman would be a fine composer to provide such a work.

Herbert Fromm: Sonata for ***Piano, No.*** 991042, Transcontinental Music, New York

Dr. Fromm provides us with a vision that only an artist of his stature can create. It is an abstract development of a literal source (a Sephardic hymn tune) into an intimate, reflective fabric bearing the composer's personal stamp.

There are three movements to the work: Allegro-Allegretto, Slow, and Fantasy Fugue. After a brief introduction the theme is stated and immediately undergoes interval and textural transformation. The second movement alludes to the introductory material and further explores ideas of melodic and rhythmic expansion. The final movement is a freely shaped fugal structure that recalls several ideas from former movements with episodic return **to** the fugal subject. It is a challenging work for a pianist but by today's standards certainly not extreme. While Dr. Fromm's intellectual fascination with smaller musical units precludes the presence of a

larger melodic line, his contrapuntal and rhythmic sense sustains continuous interest.

Why not promote a piano recital of Jewish music in your community? Transcontinental now offers twenty-seven separate piano solo listings ranging from easy piano pieces for children to the maturity of the Fromm Sonata. The promotion of these recitals can encourage the creation of new instrumental works and breathe freshness into a community's Jewish musical experience.

Judith M. Berman: *Set Me As A Seal,* A wedding song for low voice and keyboard accompaniment, No. 991027, Transcontinental Music, New York

Lillian V. Klass: *Ha-am Haholchim Bachoshech* for high voice No. 991034 and medium voice, with keyboard accompaniment, No. 991035, Transcontinental Music, New York

Among the composers represented in Transcontinental's latest publications are two Los Angeles women. Judith Berman is the founder and music director of the Musart Singers — an amateur women's chorus of about twenty voices. Formerly music director of University Synagogue in Brentwood, she and her singers are active in performing music of Jewish content. Mrs. Berman has taken the traditional text "Set me as a seal" and has set it in a mildly romantic manner. While the music reflects the words appropriately, the harmonies are rather stagnant. The metronome marking seems to work against the instruction: "with warm feeling and quiet motion." Mrs. Berman has also composed a full Friday Eve Service.

Lillian Klass, formerly music director of Temple Israel in Hollywood for twenty-seven years, studied with Castelnuovo-Tedesco and accompanied Cantors Leib Glantz, Moshe and David Kousivitsky and Sholom Katz. She has set an interesting text from Isaiah 9. Responding to a Methodist Minister's request for a Hebrew setting of this Midnight Mass declaration ("For Unto Us a Son is Given") she has created a solo (published in high and medium versions) that will certainly find a life in churches and offers the creative programmer new material for Synagogue sponsored interfaith services.

Both women are to be congratulated for their good work and encouraged to add their talents to a field that is now dominated by men.

Program fashioners should seek out and encourage women in the community with compositional ability to write for the synagogue. The "women composer" concert that might be planned as a novelty can offer very real revelations about musical talents that have not fully received a proper forum as of yet.

Michael Isaacson

Members of the Cantors Assembly:

Ahai adirey hazimrah, pifiyot sheluhey amkha bet Yisrael.

It was my good fortune to be present at the 32nd Annual Convention of the Cantors Assembly, the largest and most influential association of cantors in the world and I would like to take this means of greeting you and of expressing some thoughts which this visit raised in my heart.

At the end of the ***Avodah*** on Yom Kippur we say: ***"Ashrey ayin raatah kol eylah, ashrey ozen sham'ah hameshorerim v'khol miney shirim." These*** are precisely my feelings. I thank you for the invitation to be present as your guest and it is my privilege to bring you the best wishes of the Cantors Association of Israel and the personal good wishes of its chairman, Cantor Benjamin Ungar. I am proud that a former chairman of that group, Hazzan Shabtai Ackerman, was honored by his congregation and by your organization with the establishment of a scholarship in his honor.

This was your 32nd convention. In ***gematriu, 32*** is ***Lev,*** heart, and I feel that there is a great heart in all your activities. Everything that you have done is with, ***Lev*** and with special care and respect for our ancient heritage, the music of the prayers.

I need not remind you that there is another ***Lev*** in Jewish life today, the State of Israel. I would hope that the Cantors Assembly would make a commitment that as an outgrowth of the 32nd, the ***Lev*** Convention, there will grow a new bond between the Cantors Assembly and the State of Israel with a decision to make a Shalom Tour to Israel in a group as the Cantors Assembly. It is also my hope that students of the Cantors Institute will be afforded the opportunity, just as rabbinical students are, to spend a year of study in Israel.

May the Almighty send His best wishes to all of you.

God Bless you.

Shalom, Shalom!

Akiva Zimmermann
19 Pinkas
Tel Aviv
Israel

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

To the Editor:

May I first thank you for the privilege of having my article, "Haftarah for the Off-Key Singer" published in the March issue of the *Journal of Synagogue Music.*

I should like to call your attention to a transcription error on page 9 which may have confused your readers. The corrected section of the paragraph involved follows:

There is another aspect of listening. When you sing a two-syllable word such as *mi-kol*, on one tone, your student may hear each syllable on a different tone. He may say that the tone of *mi* was higher than the tone of *kol*, or vice versa. Either answer may be interpreted as indicating very keen hearing. The reason he has heard two tones, however, is that he listened to the speech formants instead of the fundamental of the sung tone. The *ee* of *mi* has a higher formant than the *ŭ* of *kol*. If he heard *mi* lower than *kol*, he at least heard that the two formants were different.

Lottie Hochberg