The background of the cover is a black and white image of musical notation on staves. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano), 'mf' (mezzo-forte), and 'dol.' (dolce). Interspersed with the musical notation are Hebrew lyrics in a white, sans-serif font. Some of the visible lyrics include 'to-w', 'ma', 'wa', 'cho jiss-ro', 'el, wa ä - ni', 'wa ä - ni brow chass d' cho', and 'ni brow chass d' cho'.

NUSAH WARS

JOURNAL OF SYNAGOGUE MUSIC

MARCH 2015

VOLUME 40 //



NUSAH WARS

March 2015

Volume 40

Number 1

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WHERE WE STAND

The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue: Anachronism or Foundation for an American Jewish Musical Tradition of the 21st Century?

By Sholom Kalib

The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue represents one of the great sacred musical traditions of the world. During the period it flourished, from c. 1675 to c. 1960, it rendered inspired musical expression to the liturgy of the group which constituted the largest community within world Jewry from the 17th century until World War Two. It was by far the primary liturgical-musical tradition in the United States and lands of the former British Empire, as well as all other lands emigrated to by the masses of Jews who began abandoning their generations-old homes in the Czarist Russian Empire during the 1880s in search of new lands of opportunity, free of persecution.

In the aftermath of a century which witnessed the cataclysmic events of the Russian Revolution of 1917, World War Two, the Holocaust, as well as the forces of acculturation and sociological revolution in the new lands of opportunity, the little which has survived of that once glorious musical tradition remains the essential basis of the intonation of prayer in the majority of synagogues worldwide at the turn of the millennium.

Among the synagogal musical traditions in Jewish history, the Eastern European, which evolved during the course of the seventeenth century, is the youngest. Current trends, attitudes and circumstances affecting the musical tradition of the synagogue in all branches of Judaism from liberal to Orthodox, threaten to make it the last, as the quality of musical tradition in each continually deteriorates to the point of threatened extinction.

All synagogal musical traditions of the past were formed and maintained through a depth of reverence for all aspects of prayer, including its musical content and performance. The Talmud already stipulates requirements of prayer leaders, which include precision in textual pronunciation as well as appropriate standards for their quality of voice and melody. The 10-volume *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies* by Abraham Z. Idelsohn (1932) clearly indicates the extent to which established prayer modes were adhered to by Jewish communities throughout the world.

The Ashkenazic community of Southwest Germany, from the tenth to sixteenth centuries, developed special prayer modes as well as melodies for selected texts, a substantial portion of which came to be accepted and maintained throughout the Ashkenazic communities of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, and in the late-19th and 20th centuries, the world over. The Eastern European Ashkenazic community

retained much of the synagogal musical heritage of its primary parent tradition, that of West-Central Europe, "easternized" some modes and melodies, and developed some new ones of its own. In addition, the Jewish sociological climate in Eastern Europe led to the communal desire for the hazzan (cantor), and in the 19th century assisted by choir, to musically expand upon the mood of prayer. Though not relished by all, the masses in general sought out and demanded of the hazzan and choir development of the moods of exultation, petition and/or supplication implicit within the prayers. These extended renditions, effected through a broadened approach to *khazonus* (Yiddish: the cantorial art of improvised chanting), served to deepen the meaning of the liturgical occasion and the specific text being chanted; they served to add beauty to the interpretation of both, and enhanced the inspiration derived from the total musical-religious experience.

Thus a continuous historical chain linking the early formation of prayers and their modes of intonation to the emergence of the office of the hazzan and subsequently to his art of *khazonus*, and in Eastern Europe, to the development of the underlying "language" of the emotions communicated between the hazzan and his *kahal* (community of congregants), continued to exist to varying extents beyond the middle of the twentieth century. That chain slowly began to erode, first in Eastern Europe during the latter half of the 19th century, ironically coinciding with its zenith period, but continued to deteriorate at an ever accelerating pace in the new lands of opportunity during the course of the 20th century. The various stages of acculturation and sociological revolution led to the gradual decline in the perceived importance of Jewish values and education, resulting in an ever diminishing desire to attend and the capability on the part of the young to participate in synagogue services. These developments led in turn to the liberalization of one-time Orthodox synagogues as, one by one, they joined the Conservative movement in trend fashion. The spirit of the times brought about a more anglicized type of service which dampened the traditional Hebraic flow and ambience heretofore common in the synagogue.

With the gradual attrition of the older congregants from Eastern Europe, succeeding native American generations with little and often no Jewish education, lacked the background and knowledge to fully participate, and in many cases, to even follow a traditional Hebrew service, as the influence of acculturation continued to dilute their perceived values of religious observance as a whole. Within this process, the line of communication between the devotional chant of the hazzan and the understanding, responsive, God-fearing *kahal* of Eastern Europe continued to wither and break down to the point of practical non-existence.

The Eastern European Ashkenazic community retained much of the synagogal musical heritage of its primary parent tradition, West-Central Europe, "easternized" some modes and melodies, and developed some new ones of its own. In addition, the Jewish sociological climate in Eastern Europe led to the communal desire for the hazzan (cantor), and in the 19th century assisted by choir, to musically expand upon the mood of prayer. Though not relished by all, the masses in general sought out and demanded of the hazzan and choir development of the moods of exultation, petition

and/or supplication implicit within the prayers. These extended renditions, effected through a broadened approach to *khazonus* served to deepen the meaning of the liturgical occasion and the specific text being chanted; they served to add beauty to the interpretation of both, and enhanced the inspiration derived from the total musical-religious experience.

In an effort to stem the tide of acculturation and assimilation in the liberal Jewish community, a resurgent Orthodox community has emerged and grown significantly since the 1960s. Succeeding in educating over an entire generation in Jewish prayer, scripture, Talmudic and other sacred literature, it has brought about a renaissance of strict Orthodox Jewish observance in general and of intense prayer in particular. However, while the liberal-synagogue community has lost its ability to understand and appreciate the function and role served by the hazzan historically, a resurgent Orthodoxy has failed to re-discover it, preferring almost uniformly intonation by lay prayer leaders, devoid of professional delivery, embellishment or beautification. As a result, the understanding for, and perceived need of the function of the artist-hazzan, the central figure within the musical tradition of the Eastern European synagogue for over three centuries, has in essence ceased to exist in today's Orthodox as well as liberal synagogues.

To be sure, there have been periods of decline in synagogue musical tradition in the past, as attested to by the appearance of a number of published services within the West and Central European Ashkenazic traditions during the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Those, however, did not at all compare to the severity of the current situation, primarily due to the then existent and vibrant Eastern European Jewish community. It is precisely the depth of today's bleak status of synagogue music universally, which is at its lowest ebb in a number of essential aspects since the middle ages, that makes the work from which this article is excerpted so compelling a necessity.

Although the immediate parent tradition of the Eastern European synagogue is, liturgically and musically, that of the medieval Ashkenazic community of Southwest Germany, the history of the Eastern European Synagogue tradition, as well as all other Jewish liturgical traditions, begins in the Middle East. For there, in the ancient land of Israel lies the cradle of the Jewish people, its faith, its modes of religious observance in general and of worship in particular. The beginning and early developmental stages of the synagogue and its liturgy, rituals and music took place there and in the lands of dispersion from at least the time of the second Temple through the Talmudic period and beyond. Primary elements include: the basic sacred texts central to Jewish faith; the place and structure of worship; the evolvement of the office of *sh'liah tsibbur* (community representative in prayer, i.e., prayer leader); cantillation of Biblical texts and the chanting of prayers; the evolvement of the concept of *nusah* (traditional chant) in terms of cantillation and prayer modes; prototypes of services, growth of the liturgy, and the emergence of *piyyut* (liturgical poetry), the office of hazzan and the first siddur (prayer book); the vocal and general musical style of the

Middle East; contributions after the rise of the Ashkenazic community; and attitudes which were to affect Jewish prayer and its intonation for 2,000 years.

Elements of the general musical style of our Middle Eastern ancestors passed down and retained by West-Central as well as Eastern European Ashkenazic Jewry include: their unmetered rhythm; their unaccompanied vocal style of chant, which is varied and embellished in the improvisatory process, and handed down from generation to generation through oral tradition; their vocalisms, such as nasal and/or glottal executed grace notes and appoggiaturas of various types; and their scale-bases upon the major, natural minor or phrygian modes, though performed in the Middle East with microtonic inflection. That microtonality, however, is still heard in cantillation and prayer chant by non-Western trained practitioners in the Occident as well as the Orient to this day.

Above and beyond these characteristics of Middle Eastern musical style in general as well as the structure and nature of cantillation and prayer modes, a few melodic fragments close to identical to prominent ones within the musical tradition of the Ashkenazic synagogue are cited in Volume One of *The Musical Tradition of the Eastern European Synagogue*. Together with their Middle Eastern modes of performance, one perceives an unmistakable kinship which adds a living musical motivic link – in addition to those of philosophy, texts, place and format of Jewish prayer – with their historical source in ancient Israel.

In addition to the various aspects of prayer and religious observance as a whole, fundamental values and attitudes established in the Bible and Talmud relating to that observance played a dominant role in sustaining the Jewish people throughout its 2,000 year exile. These directly affected the approach and quality of prayer and its mode of expression through intonation. Uppermost among these was *yir'at shamayim* (fear of heaven), the assumption that God, though invisible, is ever-present, observes the actions and knows the momentary thoughts of every being. He is awesome and omnipotent, bestowing reward for those who obey His commandments and metes out punishment to those who fail to do so. He is just in all His ways and benevolent to all His creatures. The long exile, as well as societal and/or individual suffering, were His just punishments for a sinful nation and/or persons. Though God is the Father in heaven, He is also easily approachable to the sincere penitent, to all who fear and love Him with a faithful heart. In accordance with the dictum in the Talmud, the day had to begin with prayer before partaking of food or engaging in work of any kind. It was necessary to prepare one's mind and mood for communion with God, and to approach Him with a penitent contrite heart.

Whereas all Jewish musical-liturgical traditions originate and derive significantly from that of the ancient land of Israel, the Eastern European derives more directly from its immediate parent tradition, namely, that of West-Central Europe, particularly Southwest Germany. This is by virtue of the fact that the prayer book and ritual of the latter, known as *Nusah ashkenaz* (the Tradition of

German Jewry), its Biblical cantillation modes as well as the great majority of its prayer chants and melodies constitute the prototypes for most of those of Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, the differences in emphases, detail and style between the two traditions are great. In comparison to the musical tradition of the Eastern European synagogue, the Western could be described generally as more classical and emotionally reserved, and choices of texts which are highlighted and musically embellished by the hazzan are those of particular liturgical significance rather than those which voice more immediate sociological and nationalistic aspirations and concerns of the Jewish community, as is the case in the Eastern European tradition. Nevertheless, the derivation of the Eastern European musical-liturgical tradition from the Western is clear and fundamental.

Perhaps the most significant achievement of West-Central European Jewry was its development of musical prayer modes and special chants for a select group of individual texts. Its contrasting modes for Biblical cantillation alone already served to render a distinct atmosphere to the occasions on which each was intoned, as the congregants associated the special Pentateuch mode for the High Holidays with the solemnity of those days, or the Esther mode with the unique joyousness of Purim, or the *Eikhah* (Lamentations) mode with the tragic destruction of the ancient Temple on Tishah B'Av. Contrasting prayer modes and chants, however, effected all the more in arousing religious inspiration for the specific liturgical significance of the occasions for which they were created. The prayer modes were designed to intone the texts of a section of a service, such as the Ma'ariv (Evening) service from *Bar'khu* (The Call to Prayer) until the Amidah (Standing Devotion), the *P'sukei d'zimra* (Verses of Song) of the Shacharit (Morning) service, the section from the blessing *Yotseir or* (Bringer of Light) up to the Amidah, or the *hazarat hashatz* (Amidah Repetition), etc.

The special chants and melodies for individual staple texts or poetic *piyyutim*, also created in order to highlight the significance of the liturgical occasion which inspired their creation, came to be termed *Missinai* (from Sinai) and treated as such. The prayer modes were loosely referred to as *Skarbove nusakh* (sacred traditional chant) in Yiddish, the evolved Germanic-Jewish language of the Jews of medieval Germany. Once established and familiar, all were looked forward to, expected and required by the congregation, and when chanted by the hazzan, evoked fond memories and deep religious feelings associated with the corresponding liturgical occasions within each congregant, thereby bringing him utmost spiritual elevation on the cherished holy days.

Their creation, taking place in Germany, coincided in time with the rise of Western music in general, including the period of the Minnesingers from the 12th through 15th centuries and the Renaissance and Baroque periods in the 16th and 17th centuries, which witnessed colossal strides in the development of the musical art within Western civilization. The formation of the Ashkenazic cantillation and prayer chants thus resulted in a mixture of contemporary melodic elements from the non-Jewish environment together with older Jewish ones.

A striking feature of the prayer modes and *Missinai* chants is their mosaic melodic structure resembling that of the cantillation modes. Moreover, they include subtle and at times varied as well as direct quotes of its trop melodies. Most often, the trop melodies employed are not necessarily from a single mode, but rather from individual ones, e.g., from the Pentateuch mode, side by side others from other cantillation modes or the chant used to intone the study of Talmud, known as the Study Mode. The new modes and melodies enhanced the beauty of the chanted texts not only from the aesthetic point of view, but also meshed and blended the foreign and native elements into a mixture which transformed them into a new totality and character, capable of effectively serving the liturgical function for which they were created.

This type of recitative-style melodic mosaic structure inherently allows for a wide range of variation and embellishment, which in turn enables the practitioner to render intense devotional expression to the sentiments voiced in the texts. As a result, however, wide variance was inevitable between individuals even within a single community. It is therefore not surprising that significant differences arose between the traditions of various cities and regions.

As is true of its liturgical poetry (*piyyut*), not all Ashkenazic prayer modes and chants were adopted by all its communities. On the other hand, some were adopted locally only while some enjoyed wider acceptance, and still others achieved universal acceptance. In other instances, when a particular new version or mode was introduced in a community, which impressed as superior to its own in terms of beauty and appropriateness for a particular text and/or liturgical occasion, it became adopted. Even in those which gained universal acceptance, there are, as a rule, varying extents of differentiations, substitute motives, and the like. Nonetheless, to one intimately familiar with any single version of the tune, all are identifiable as traditional despite the variations, through the perception of the basic ‘nusah.’ This term, when applied to the intonation of sacred texts denotes the presence of characteristic staple motives, general style and mood, and as a rule, though by no means always, scale basis. Always present, however, is the polarity between freedom of embellishment, enhancement and beautification on the one hand, and preservation of the basic nusah on the other.

The foremost rabbinic authority of late-14th and early-15th century Germany, Jacob Halevi Moellin, known as the Maharil (1365-1427), noted for his meticulous recording of all customs and halachic opinions governing Ashkenazic Jewry up to his day, also greatly influenced the formation of Ashkenazic ritual and its music. He called for the solicitous retention of *nus-ha’ot* (plural of nusah), stating in effect that melodies which have become Minhag (religious custom) within a community should be faithfully preserved as such. In practice, these melodies or rather a particular version of them, once established as traditional within a community, were held sacred. They permeated the synagogue environment into which generations of Jewish people were born and raised, and became common knowledge to elders and peers. They were perceived as an integral part of the prayers themselves, and created for the Jew an ambience of holiness inseparable from the texts.

From the 12th century on, when ritual, liturgy and music of the Ashkenazic community was in the process of development and growth, it was beset by a series of continuous acts of persecution and terror for the ensuing several centuries, which mark this period as one of the blackest in Jewish history. One consequence of these events was the evolvment of the Jewish community of Eastern Europe.

Beginning in the year 1096, in response to the call by Pope Urban II for a crusade to retake the Holy Land from the Mohammedans, local bands on the march, who saw no purpose in proceeding to the Middle East as long as Jewish infidels resided in their midst, led mob attacks upon entire Jewish communities, often offering them the choice of baptism or death. While relatively few chose baptism, thousands in that situation chose martyrdom and death. Similar second, third, fourth and fifth Crusades were embarked upon between 1147 and 1216, wreaking havoc and destruction an entire Jewish communities and thousands of helpless inhabitants. In 1348, the so-called Black Death epidemic swept Germany, claiming the lives of thousands. Rumors to the effect that Jews had poisoned the wells, led to mass reprisals, new massacres and widespread expulsions from the cities and towns throughout Germany. When the epidemic had subsided, and out of designs for bolstering local economies through excessive taxation of their Jewish populations, Jews were invited to return to their former homes, but were now required to reside in confined ghettos.

Victimized in addition by humiliation, being forced to wear a yellow badge on their clothing (by a 1215 edict), and through plunder, confiscations, blood libels, ritual murder charges and massacres which could occur at any time, they lived in constant terror, never knowing which misfortune could come next, or when.

The centuries-long accumulation of such continuous misery resulted, however, in bringing Jewish people together, creating a feeling of mutual dependence on one another. The Jewish community became a town within a town, characterized by profound respect and loyalty for Jewish tradition, piety and Torah study. As in previous periods, Jews blamed their misery only on themselves, for failing to live up to the requirements of a pure life according to the Torah, and continually pleaded to the Almighty for His forgiveness. Their absolutely indomitable spirit and depth of faith can be seen in a *s'lihah* (penitential prayer) included on the fifth of the Ten Days of Repentance between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It was composed by Eleazar ben Judah ben Kalonymos (1176-1238), who lived through the first crusade, in which his wife, two daughters and a son are said to have been among the martyred victims. An excerpt reads

We are confounded because of our iniquities, we are ashamed because of our deeds, which we lament; O our God, how can we speak? How can we justify ourselves? O our Father, our Creator, reward us not according to our sins; forsake us not when our strength fails. We know we have sinned, but... Gracious One, look not to our wickedness to declare it, but remember Your servants, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... hear our urgent prayer, our imploring chant, (as we cry) – The Lord, the Lord, is a merciful and gracious God.

In those times, it was only in the synagogue where the Jew could experience momentary refuge, unload his anguished heart and soul to his Creator, and receive inspiration and hope from the traditionally chanted prayers. In the Preface to his book, *Der Frankfurter Kantor*, ("The Frankfurt Cantor"), the notation of the musical-liturgical tradition of Frankfurt am Main, 1912; 2nd ed., 1926), S. Scheuermann describes their balming effect: "The sacred melodies depict for us the suffering and struggles of our fathers. We perceive in them the laughing and crying of our ancestors, who sought and found in them consolation and their only source of lift and comfort in the dark period of the Middle Ages."

Despite the fact that during the weekdays the Jew was made the object of scorn and derision, on Friday Evening when he stepped into his House of God and the hazzan sounded the old traditional modes, then all misery and distress disappeared through the simple, yet sublime melodies, which brought joy to their hearts and tranquility to their souls. Indeed, through the veracity and authenticity of these melodies, and through their dignified execution by the cantor, there awakened in the congregants feelings of solace which carried those of lost courage and despair, and those grieved and death-defiant, to soaring heights of spiritual elevation.

By the 15th century, expulsions and extreme persecutions had diminished, but centuries of accumulated hate and resultant impoverishment through excessive taxation, restrictions and deprivations in every avenue of economic activity made life hardly bearable. The only recourse available to the downtrodden Jews of late-Medieval and Renaissance Germany was to emigrate eastward.

As early as the year 1069, Jews of Southwest Germany had begun abandoning their homes, emigrating eastward across the Danube river into Austria, Bohemia and Poland. King Boleslav the Pious of Poland, recognizing the potential benefit to the economy and society of his kingdom, issued a charter in 1264, offering favorable opportunities for Jews to settle in his country. In 1344, King Casimir the Great issued another charter which even expanded the protective conditions offered in the Boleslav charter. Particularly following the terror and massacres inflicted upon the Jewish population during the Black Death epidemic in Germany, Jews responded to these invitations, fleeing in waves to Poland throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. During the 16th century, continuing migrations brought Jews still farther east into Lithuania and the Ukraine.

In these areas, the Ashkenazic Jews encountered other Jews who had settled there earlier from older Middle Eastern communities. One group from the Balkan Peninsula, originating in Byzantium, gradually migrated northward, toward the Carpathian region and Poland, while another group from the Crimea merged with descendants of the Khazar kingdom which had converted to Judaism in the 8th century, and had prospered until its destruction by the Muscovite Russians in 1016. This latter group, fleeing westward in the Ukraine from the invading Tartars in the mid-13th century, migrated toward Lithuania, Poland, and the Carpathian region as well. The level of culture and Jewish knowledge of

these Jews was decidedly inferior to those of their West-Central European brethren. As a result the language, customs, traditions and synagogue song of the Ashkenazic Jews prevailed, and their rabbis and *hazzanim* became the leaders and teachers of the evolving new Jewish community in Eastern Europe.

Inasmuch as the cultural level of the non-Jewish environment was as yet undeveloped, the Jewish community was able to flourish unchallenged by competing outside influences. Though not forced to live together as in Germany, Jews had become conditioned through centuries of persecution to feel more secure living together. A communal structure was organized as in earlier historical Jewish communities, consisting of an elected head and committee of *gabba'im* (officers) who looked after the needs of the community, such as the establishment and maintenance of facilities for Jewish education, a synagogue, *mikvah* (ritual bath house), *beit din* (religious court), cemetery, *hevra kadisha* (group who assisted in the burial of the dead), charity for the poor, care for the ill and/or aged, etc. In the relatively secure new environment, the Eastern European Jewish community developed into a stronghold of Jewish piety and learning.

It was considered sinful not to study Torah. Every village engaged a *m'lamed* (elementary-level instructor in religious education), and every Jewish boy, beginning from ages 3 to 5, began attending Kheder (elementary religious school), typically in the home of the *m'lamed*, from early morning until late evening, in some instances as long as ten to twelve hours a day. To parents and the community, such intense religious education was of utmost importance. Tables were set up in synagogues for the adult male population to study, especially between *Minhah* and *Ma'ariv* services. *Y'shivot* (Religious Academies) were established and maintained in numerous cities, many of which attained fame for their high standards of Torah scholarship, and from the 16th century developed into the new world center of Judaism, and remained so beyond the first quarter of the 20th century.

From the 16th century on, the existence and development of printing technique enabled synagogues and *batei midrashim* (chapels for Jewish study and prayer) to build up libraries of volumes of the Talmud and commentaries thereon, and for the average family to own copies of at least such basic sacred texts as prayer books, the Pentateuch and/or the *Tanakh* (complete Hebrew Scriptures). Even the least educated in this society could recite prayers and portions of the *Tanakh* by heart, and many were even familiar with portions of the Talmud.

Yiddish, the vernacular of the German Jews became the *mommeh losh'n* (mother tongue) from the fourteenth century on. By the 17th century, Slavic words, expressions and nuances had become assimilated into the basic Germanic folk jargon. Hebrew remained the *l'shon ha-kodesh* (sacred language), reserved for the sacred texts.

Though the liturgy and religious tradition of the West-Central European Ashkenazic community, including its cantillation and prayer modes became the basis of those of the Eastern European synagogue, significant changes in style gradually set

in. In place of the more reserved style of prayer in the West-Central European synagogue, in the East a new style developed whereby individuals recited or chanted congregational prayers on their own, reciting portions silently, or intoning numerous words or phrases on a reciting tone. When a particular passage or verse aroused a person emotionally, he would chant aloud entirely unrestrained. The sound volume generated by hundreds of people praying in this manner simultaneously was overpowering and awe-inspiring, and became characteristic of the Eastern European synagogue.

As mentioned, the general cultural level of the non-Western Jewish as well as non-Jewish population was lower than that of the German Ashkenazim. Nevertheless, elements of the musical style of the former affected that of the latter, in a manner comparable to the way the originally Germanic Yiddish language absorbed features of the Slavic environment. They gradually left their imprint on the cantillation, study and prayer modes as well as the *Missinai* tunes of the West-Central European Ashkenazic tradition. Moreover, the general vocal-musical style of the East affected the tone of Eastern European synagogue chant, and strongly influenced the emerging style of *khazonus*, which came to be the most characteristic feature of the music of the Eastern European synagogue. These developments are believed to have resulted in the formation of a new musical tradition, independent of its West-Central European model, by the first quarter of the 17th century, and to have acquired the features of well documented 19th-and-20th century renditions toward the end of the 17th century.

The term *khazonus* has come to denote virtuosic cantorial chant. However, it is in fact operative on every level of chant ranging from the most elementary to the most sophisticated. A pious Jew, inspired by a sacred text he is about to intone, perceives its specific mood and instinctively draws upon motives of the chant which have come down to him as traditional. Momentary inspiration moves him to create extemporaneously mosaic-motivic musical structures as he intuitively applies the component opening, linking and cadential motives of a given mode to his text; and as the spirit moves him, he may place stress, embellish and/or combine motives on individual words or syllables which, within the flow of his chant, impress him as requiring special emphasis.

These feelings would vary according to the liturgical occasion and the specific relevance of the text at hand to that occasion. All these could become either more or less intensified by current or recent political events affecting the economic and/or sociological status of the Jew, personally and/or collectively.

Despite the relative security enjoyed by the Jews of Poland as a result of the protective charters issued by the benevolent kings Boleslav and Casimir "the Great" in the 13th-and-14th centuries respectively, resentment and hostility by elements of the native Polish population against the Jewish led to a number of riots, beginning near the turn of the 15th century. Social and political circumstances in Poland from the last quarter of the 16th century placed Jews of the Ukraine in the position of resident overseers and tax-collectors for their Polish landlords. In this role, resentment and

hatred for the excessive taxes on the Ukrainian peasants by the Polish nobility focused on the Jewish middlemen.

Beginning in the year 1648, a band of Ukrainian Cossacks organized by one Bogdan Chmielnicki, and with the assistance of a group of Tartars, vent their pent-up rage against the Jewish and Polish populations in continuous savage attacks on community after community for three years. Shortly thereafter, in the Russo-Swedish war, beginning in 1654 with a Swedish invasion of White Russia and Lithuania, Jews were charged by the Poles of collaborating with the Swedes, resulting in new pogroms against the Jewish populations by the Poles. The aftermath of over a decade of these slaughters left about 700 Jewish communities totally ravaged, with victims conservatively estimated at well over 100,000, and with surviving Jewish communities remaining entirely destitute.

These circumstances led to an ever deepening feeling of interdependence among Jewish people, to greater loyalty to Jewish piety, learning, values and tradition, and to intensified supplication in prayer, similar to the manner in which the German Jewish community responded to the terrors of the late Middle Ages. This, in turn, led in Eastern Europe to the evolvement of a style of *khazzonus* which rendered utmost depth of expression to the sentiments of a dispersed people, persecuted for centuries by its surrounding neighbors, but which was unique to the Jewish community of Eastern Europe.

Consequent to the Chmielnicki massacres in Poland, masses of Jews fled to various new locations. Many immigrated to Germany, including rabbis and *hazzanim*, where their style of prayer chant and *khazzonus* had great appeal to the German congregants, and influenced German synagogue song. Polish-style *khazzonus* became popular in Germany to the extent that only through it could a hazzan be successful there. In some instances, Polish-tradition synagogues were established, and the prevalence of their *nus-ha'ot* (plural of *nusah*) throughout Germany is attested to by their presentations throughout Abraham Baer's documentation of the liturgical-musical tradition of Germany, entitled *Baal T'fillah* (1877). Though the German synagogues held fast to their local *nus-ha'ot* through their *ba'alei t'fillah* (lay prayer leaders), in accordance with the 14th-century dictum of the Maharil, cited above, elements of the Polish style crept in nevertheless. It is undoubtedly this influence which brought the Eastern European major-third Phrygian and augmented-fourth Dorian scales into German synagogue song.

Whereas the musical tradition of the Eastern European synagogue, by far, derived most of its cantillation, prayer modes and *Missinai* melodies from those of West-Central Europe, it was now lending to its parent tradition much of its own newly acquired scale-bases, vocal style and some *nus-ha'ot*. Inasmuch as there is very little musical notation of West-Central European synagogue music before the 18th century, it becomes difficult and often impossible to identify Eastern European influence on West-Central liturgical chant, or vice versa. The various influences and counter

influences have blurred the lines of demarcation and identification. Moreover, the emergence of the 19th-century West-Central European idiom of the moderate Reform movement was to bring still further cross fertilization between the two worlds of Ashkenazic synagogue music, of Eastern and West-Central Europe.

The Reform movement itself was a by-product of the 18th-century spirit of the Enlightenment, which was introduced to the German Jewish community by Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786). Through his writings and activities, the Haskalah ("Enlightenment") movement was ushered into Jewish history. Its aim was to expose the Jewish masses in the ghetto to secular language, philosophy and culture. As part of that program, Mendelssohn translated the Pentateuch and several other Biblical writings into German, thereby exposing Jewish masses in the ghettos to pure, literary German as opposed to the Yiddish jargon, which was viewed by Mendelssohn and his followers as an obstacle to absorption into the native culture.

In the wake of the French revolution, the ghetto walls were broken down and Jewish emancipation was proclaimed in the early years of the 19th century. The desire among Jewish people to be accepted professionally, socially, and culturally became widespread, and hope for that realization now appeared attainable to the masses. Many converted to Christianity, including Mendelssohn's own children. Others harbored similar aspirations, but were unwilling to abandon their Jewish cultural heritage. Nevertheless they considered it in consonance with the spirit of the age to strip the centuries-old tradition of Rabbinic Judaism of what they viewed in it as outdated Oriental ancient and medieval concepts, customs and mores.

The primary targets of the reform-minded element in early-19th century German Jewish community included:

- a) lack of decorum and dignity in the traditional Orthodox synagogue;
- b) kabbalistic influence on the liturgy;
- c) the medieval *piyyut*; d) the exclusion of the vernacular in the service;
- e) the length of the service; and
- f) the Oriental recitative style of cantillation and prayer chant.

The engagement of Salomon Sulzer as cantor (1804-1890) of the moderate Reform Seitenstättengasse temple in Vienna in 1826 resulted in the creation of an approach to synagogue music which was to exert a profound impact on its history in general, with significant influence on the future course of West-Central as well as Eastern European synagogue music.

On the one hand, the influence of the Eastern European style is seen in Sulzer's occasional usages of the Eastern European major-third phrygian and augmented-fourth dorian scale-bases and coloratura. On the other hand, his dignified, relatively reserved, classical approach was characteristically West-Central European in style. The blend was new and extremely impressive. In his use of the four-voice mixed choir of boys and men in cantorial-choral compositions, Sulzer introduced

two innovative approaches: one consists of choral interludes within cantorial recitative; the other involves a fixed cantorial line supported harmonically by the choir. All these were emulated in the *Khor-shul* ("choral", i.e., modern, western-modeled synagogue) of Eastern Europe, which rose in the 1840s, and later -- in varying degrees--in the mainstream Eastern European synagogue.

Another vital force which heavily influenced the style and character of Eastern European synagogue music is one which arose within the Jewish community of Eastern Europe itself.

In the period following the Chmielnicki massacres (1648-1660), Jewish communities in Eastern Europe were left decimated, dejected and in abject poverty. Their misery was compounded by the appearance of a succession of false self-proclaimed "messiahs," most notably Sabbatai Tzvi (b. 1626), who fanned the hopes of redemption in the masses, which were soon dashed by the ultimate exposes of each of the fraudulent imposters. Moreover, the common man, lacking the opportunity of acquiring knowledge of even the basic sacred texts as a result of prevalent economic and social conditions, felt deprived of the hope of even meriting a place in the World-to-come. Did not the Talmud state, "the ignorant man cannot be pious"? Only the educated pious could have a portion therein. Thus the common man imagined himself condemned to a life of misery in this world, and in the hereafter, as well.

It is against this historical backdrop that the founder of Hasidism, Israel ben Eliezer, later known as the "Baal Shem Tov," was born in 1700. Sensitive to the plight of his brethren, and a devotee of the mystical literature of the Kabbalah, as formulated by the 16th-century rabbi Isaac Luria (known as the Ari) of Safed, Palestine, Israel Baal Shem Tov developed an approach to Judaism, though not in contradiction to traditional rabbinic interpretation, nevertheless emphasized mystical and humane principles within it in a novel manner which was to serve as a potent spiritual antidote to the abysmal circumstances of the Jewish multitudes in Eastern Europe. His philosophy, known later as *Hasidut*, or Hasidism, also produced as a by-product a style of song which owed considerable elements of its content to the music of the synagogue. That song, together with the spiritual ambience engendered by hasidic thought and meditation would in turn impact significantly Eastern European synagogue song.

At the "court" of the Rebbe (revered charismatic hasidic leader), between courses of festive meals and at the conclusion of a sacred discourse, the Rebbe would introduce a *niggun*, a Hasidic tune, with or without words, in which he would be joined by his followers, the Hasidim. The Hasidim would then bring these *niggunim* home, where they were learned and disseminated.

The Rebbe, who composed the *niggunim*, was believed to have received them from heavenly inspiration. Those who lacked musical ability, however, engaged a court-singer, whose function was to compose and sing *niggunim* which would inspire the Rebbe. The musical source material for the *niggunim* includes modes of Eastern

European synagogue music, as well as the style and frequently the very content of folk song and dance of the non-Jewish environment. The Baal Shem Tov himself, as well as his followers, were not only not averse to borrowing or adopting a non-Jewish melody, they considered it religiously meritorious to "capture" a melody and sanctify it by usage for a sacred purpose.

Each hasidic court had its own style of *niggunim*. Some favored those of slower, more expressive, lyrical and/or meditative character, in metered or in recitative style. Others favored *niggunim* that were lively, strongly rhythmic, often syncopated, dance or march-like, which could elevate one to a state of spiritual ecstasy.

Texts were applied to the *niggunim*: verses from scripture or prayers. Some included interjected Yiddish, Hebrew or Russian words. Shneur Zalman, the first Lubavitcher Rebbe, felt that words tend to interrupt the stream of emotions, hence textless melody is preferable to melody with text; that whereas text-based melody ends with its text, textless melody soars on unendingly. Thus many a hasidic melody is sung on neutral syllables, such as *ay, ay; ay-di-di-day; la, la: aha, aha; day, day; oy, vey: bim, bam; biri, biri, bam;* and the like.

Shneur Zalman also felt that one cannot begin in a state of ecstasy, but rather it is reached only in stages, beginning with an outpouring of the soul, leading to several stages of spiritual awakening until the final stages of ecstasy are reached. Therefore the *niggunim* reflect one or more stages of spiritual elevation.

The influences of mainstream synagogue music on hasidic song are seen in their common scale-bases as well as melodic gestures derived from scriptural cantillation and the Study mode. In addition, the influence of more advanced *khazonus* on hasidic song is seen in the extensive use of tear-like appoggiaturas and mordent-like grace-note groupings derived from Slavic and Middle Eastern song, as well as the inclusion of the style of the Romanian *volekhl* (pastoral song) The latter, however, may have been adopted by the Hasidim before or simultaneously with mainstream *khazonus*. Another element in mainstream *khazonus* and numerous *niggunim* is that of word repetition, which in both styles is, as a rule, employed:

1. to complete a musical unit or phrase, and/or
2. to emphasize textual content.

This, too, may have originated by Hasidim or simultaneously by them and mainstream *hazzanim*.

Influences of hasidic song on mainstream synagogue song are seen in:

1. the occasional inclusion of hasidic-style *niggunim* and marches;
2. occasional textless introductions and, rarely, postludes;

3. inserted interjections of expressions commonly used in Yiddish, such as *oy, oy vey, Riboynoy shel oylom, nu-nu*;
4. meditational-style intonations of the Rebbe;
5. the warm, personal, spiritually inspired pleading tone of chant;
6. the sublimity of mystical expression;
7. familiar-style declamatory utterances; and
8. word repetition.

The musical tradition of the Eastern European synagogue reached its zenith period during the second half of the 19th century. By that time it had absorbed the influences described in the preceding sections, and was thriving at an unprecedented level by virtue of an abundance of talent within the cantorial as well as synagogal-choral domains. Perhaps more significantly, the tradition thrived as a direct result of social and historical conditions which made its essence a most vital and demanded entity and priority. Its audience consisted of a *kahal* thoroughly familiar with the sacred texts and *nus-ha'ot* as well as the religious significance of every liturgical occasion, and which understood and relished every nuance of the hazzan. Ever-present economic and political insecurity caused those congregants to be spiritually comforted and ecstatically elevated by the inspiring renditions of the prayers by the lay as well as professional hazzan and choir.

The music, in terms of basic nusah as well as its techniques of embellishment, elaboration and/or expansion via *khazonus* was handed down by oral tradition, from father to son, and from the environment of the synagogue through exposure to the chanting of congregants, individually and collectively, and to the typically heartfelt renditions of *ba'alei t'fillah* and *hazzanim*. In view of the very nature of oral tradition in general, and in view of the long history of Jewish persecutions, expulsions and wanderings from place to place, it is not at all surprising to find the extensive degree of differences between individual intonations of *nus-ha'ot*. By the same token, however, when one observes the degree of adherence to a scale-basis, common background motives, common style of vocal performance, and not infrequently identical deployments of motives and occasionally of phrases by individuals across the broad expanse of the entire Eastern European Jewish community, the phenomenon of the extent of coincidental agreement is astounding. The fact that no conference was ever held, nor any halakhic charge or legally authorized body ever called upon to create, select, codify or establish a uniform approach to the melody of prayer, yields profound testimony to the uncanny power of the faith and piety of those generations and the depth of importance they attached to prayer and all aspects of its mode of performance.

The extemporaneous deployments of nusah and *khazonus* constituted their most moving and impressive feature. Their formations at the moment of inspired prayer rendered qualities of spontaneity and immediacy to each rendition. Even the breaths taken between phrases conveyed an intense silence which linked phrases in a manner which would never be precisely duplicated in any other situation. Until the late-19th century, this was the only approach to synagogal chant, as a result of nearly universal

musical illiteracy among *hazzanim* in Eastern Europe. This situation changed very gradually from the latter part of the 19th century to well beyond the first third of the twentieth, as individual *hazzanim* began learning elements of rudimentary musical theory from a local klezmer musician. In rare instances, some even received a conservatory education in a large city in the East or in West-Central Europe.

Written recitatives, however, are either notations of a once-improvised and memorized rendition, or a prepared composition in recitative style. The advantage of the latter lies in the fact that not every improvised effort is necessarily successful, let alone optimally effective, and not every hazzan was endowed with the gift of impromptu creativity. In such cases, a recitative could be composed, edited or revised as needed. This type of creation was more compatible with the style of service in the *khoshul* (synagogue featuring a chorally oriented service), in which the hazzanic recitative was relatively reserved in tone, though many *hazzanim* in those positions were highly effective improvisers. There were, however, great *hazzanim* who could reproduce a prepared recitative in intense emotional style so convincingly, it could not be distinguished from a genuinely improvised creation. There were also great hazzanim whose improvised renditions yielded little in terms of musical interest or novelty in approach, but whose depth of emotion and conviction of delivery were sufficiently overpowering to be more effective than even fine renditions of recitatives of far superior musical content.

As stated at the beginning of this article, the seeds of decline already appeared at the very time and place the zenith period was unfolding. In the final analysis, it appears to have begun with the dilution of the ages-old absolute faith. The fundamental source of inspiration for prayer – the sine qua non for the musical-liturgical experience of the Eastern European synagogue – was the centuries-perceived, literally-present *yir'at shamayim*, expressed in prayer texts such as:

U-mipnei hata'einu galinu mei-artseinu
("Because of our sins we were exiled from our land");

U-v'khol zot shimkha lo shakhahnu, na al tishkakheinu
("despite all this, we have not forgotten Your Name; please do not forget us");

L'kha adonai ha-ts'dakah, v'lanu boshet ha-pannim...
ma nit'onein u-mah nomar mah n'dabbeir u-mah nitstadak...
k'dalim u-kh'rashim dafaknu d'latekha...
Na al t'shiveinu reikam milfanekha
("To You, O God, belongs righteousness, but to us shame of face...
With what shall we complain? What can we say?... and how
can we justify ourselves?... not with virtue nor with good deeds do
we appear before You, but like the poor and destitute we knock
at Your door... turn us not away empty handed from Your presence... ").

The assumptions expressed in these prayers had been basic from the historical beginnings of the Jewish people through the formation and development of the

Ashkenazic community of West-Central Europe and its transference to Eastern Europe--until the 19th century.

The breach into that heretofore impenetrable absolute faith was effected by the combined thrusts of three overlapping developments:

1. the spirit of the Enlightenment emanating from the west;
2. persistent persecution, intensified by continuous anti-Jewish decrees by the Russian czars of the 19th century;
3. the industrial revolution.

The combination of these trends resulted in the questioning of faith, particularly among the younger generation, and to the lure of alternative philosophies and seemingly more practical approaches to their dismal circumstances, as well as to life itself. What had centuries of absolute faith brought them? What hope did its continuance offer in terms of acceptance into the non-Jewish world to which they appeared so different, other-worldly and so totally resistant to adaptation? There was other knowledge besides the sacred literature, and more to life than the constant study of the holy writ and the milieu of the *beit midrash*.

The spirit of the time thus made 19th-century Eastern Europe fertile ground for the Enlightenment movement of Western Europe. Inspired by its ideals, gifted writers in Eastern Europe began creating a secular literature in a modernized Hebrew, which included criticism of continued adherence to the letter of Talmudic law, portraying it as backward, antiquated, and as an obstacle to progress. This movement came to be known as the Haskalah, from the Hebrew word *seikhel* ("wisdom"), and its followers Maskilim (intellectuals). As early as the 1820s and 1830s, Haskalah schools were set up in a number of major Eastern European cities, which emphasized Hebrew as a modern literary language, and in which sacred texts were taught simply as literature, and Jewish history from a secularist point of view. A secular literature was also created later in Yiddish, and in the latter quarter of the century the first Yiddish theater was founded by Abraham Goldfaden in Jassy, Romania.

Though the trends of modernity were on the rise and continually gaining ground, their adherents were relatively few, and their penetration into the historic fortress of Jewish faith and tradition was very gradual and unflinchingly resisted by the older generation as a whole, by the Yeshivah milieu and especially the Hasidim and their Rebbes, in whom the masses had greatest trust and belief. The latter part of the 19th century witnessed still newer forms and expressions of the ideals of the Haskalah. The industrial revolution, which had swept Western Europe in the early and middle-19th century, reached Eastern Europe by the latter part of the century, especially during its final decade. As factories and railroads were being built, trade unions were formed, leading to strikes and ideological clashes between labor and capital interests, and ultimately to the spread of Marxian Socialism. One Jewish group, inspired by the hope of assimilating into the native culture espoused the abandonment of Hebrew and Yiddish in favor of Polish or Russian, and allied itself with the fermenting socialist trends of the pre-revolutionary Russian environment.

A Yiddishist group with similar but more leftist inclination was formed in 1897, known as the Bund, or the Jewish Labor Alliance. Others, abandoning any hope for Jewish acceptance or future within any scenario in the Russian empire, embraced the ideal of Zionism: to build a new life in the ancient Jewish homeland. Toward the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, various mixtures of the concurrent ideologies took place: socialist and Zionist aspirations combined in the formation of the nascent Po'alei Tziyon Labor-Zionist party in 1901; religious tradition and Zionism combined in the formation of the nascent Mizrahi religious-Zionist party in 1902; and the religious Labor-Zionists later formed the Hapoel Hamizrahi party.

Despite these developments, for decades the zenith period in synagogue music proceeded in full bloom. For the masses of *amkho* (the common folk), the synagogue remained the hallowed place for spiritual replenishment and an oasis from agitation within and without the Jewish orbit, with the hazzan and choir filling the central role. To be sure, the original *khorshtul* had been a by-product of the Haskalah, in that it sought modernity of tradition, and was the brainchild of synagogue-attending *Maskilim*. And in its undiluted form, it was rejected by the masses. Perhaps ironically, however, its formal style, four-voice mixed choir, elements of its classical approach to *khazonus* and part of its choral repertoire, when applied as supplementary to mainstream *hazzanut ha-regesh* (of the emotion), took hold with the *amkho*, and consummated the blend of styles which represented the musical tradition of the Eastern European synagogue at its zenith. And how many among the *Maskilim* could and did identify with the religious message conveyed through the *khazonus* of cantorial prodigies such as Boruch Schorr (1823-1904), Solomon Rozumni (1866-1905), Gershon Sirota (1874-1943), Zavel Kwartin (1874-1952), etc.

Toward the turn of the century, however, the effects of continuous persecution, pogroms and decades-long activities of the combined Haskalah-inspired movements reached the mainstream synagogue. Increasingly more *hazzanim* who no longer possessed the spirituality, Jewish knowledge and tradition of the older generation, replaced inspiration with exhibitionism and poor imitations of what had previously been genuinely heartfelt prayer chant. This spiritual decline, however, was followed shortly by the outbreak of World War One in 1914, which led to the total destruction of Jewish life in Russia and to the deep impoverishment of the remainder of Eastern Europe.

Continuous social and economic persecution, poverty and pogroms, particularly in the 19th century, forced the conclusion for tens of thousands that there was no future for Jewish people in Eastern Europe, particularly in the Czarist empire. All previous cruel anti-Jewish measures and decrees, however, were dwarfed by the so-called May laws issued by Alexander III in 1882, which were deliberately designed to eliminate one-third of the Jewish population by conversion, one-third by emigration, and one-third by starvation. By the thousands, Jewish people abandoned their native homes, emigrating in waves to new lands of opportunity. Some left for Western European countries; others to lands of the British Empire, to Canada, South

Africa and Australia, as well as England proper; and others to countries of South America. The overwhelming majority, however, opted for the United States.

At the time the mass immigration began from Eastern Europe, there had been approximately 250,000 Jews in the United States. These included two groups of earlier immigrants: descendants of refugees from the Spanish-Portuguese Inquisitions, and immigrants and descendants of escapees from revolutionary and anti-Jewish agitation in Central Europe during the middle of the 19th century, who were mostly German speaking. The predominant \ religious practice of this group was essentially that of the extremist Reform Judaism of the Berlin and Hamburg temples. By 1914, however, over two million Jews had immigrated to the United States, whose religious background was almost exclusively Orthodox.

Anxious to establish Jewish places of worship in the tradition of the "old home," synagogues began to mushroom during those years. In large cities, Jews from the same country, areas or towns in Eastern Europe formed fraternal organizations, called *landsmanshaften*, many of which built synagogues named after their places of origin. Hence synagogues arose named the *Russishe* (Russian) *shul*, the *Poylishe* (Polish), the *Litvishe* (Lithuanian), the *Ungarishe* (Hungarian), the *Rumanishe* (Roumanian), etc. Others were named after cities, e.g., the *Varshaver*, Pinsker, Vilner, Kovner, Odesser, Zhitomirer, and many others named after smaller towns.

Despite the difficult life in pursuit of livelihood in the new world, and perhaps because of it, masses among the immigrant generation experienced pains of longing and nostalgia for the spiritual life of their youths in the old country. The single most favored vehicle for evoking reminiscences and familiar feelings of their past was the voice of the hazzan in prayer. His sacred renditions rekindled the spark in the old message of the prayers, re-awakened the cherished memories and soothed the immigrant's yearning desire. The resultant need and demand for the hazzan led to a dynamic extension of the zenith period in the music of the Eastern European synagogue, which lingered until the middle of the 20th century despite the persistent extraneous forces continuously pressing the trends of decline.

Within the immigrant generation in the new world, through the 1940s, there was the demand for *hazzanut ha-regesh* to the extent that the most outstanding *khazonim* were expected to deliver renditions which at times exceeded the scope of those heard in the old home. In some instances, the amount of word repetition, frequency and extent of coloratura would have been perceived as excessive by the most discerning connoisseurs of the European synagogue. Moreover, due to the larger number of lesser educated among the immigrant-generation synagogue attendants in the new world, greater use of lighter Hasidic-style metrical melody was included by many *khazonim* than would have been the case in Eastern Europe.

While the immigrant generation experienced spiritual fulfillment through attendance at the synagogue, and was enraptured and enthralled by the inspiring renditions of the hazzan and choir, the awareness of a significant problem persistently

loomed in every synagogue: the absence of young people. Among the many factors which changed the life of the Jew in the new world was its broad freedom and open society, which for many, perhaps most, tended to make religious observance and Jewish education seem relatively unimportant. As a result, the only Jewish education, if any, for most Jewish children consisted of the poorly organized afternoon Hebrew schools, which as a rule, failed to provide even fluency in Hebrew reading, let alone comprehension. Hence the later adult generation of that afternoon Hebrew School education was woefully unprepared to follow a synagogue service. Some would come to honor the memory of a loved one by reciting Kaddish during the eleven-month period of mourning, or to observe a *Yahrtzeit* (anniversary of death).

Often, however, a *shammos* (sexton) or other regular synagogue attendant would be paid by the mourner to recite the Kaddish in his absence. Young adults would, however, attend a Yizkor service to memorialize a deceased parent on the three festivals. Out of respect for parents' wishes, many would come and sit next to a parent or grandparent during High Holiday services. Generally, almost every aspect of the content and procedure of the service was unfamiliar. One non-comprehended prayer was little if any different from another.

The nusah in individual prayer, intoned at their seats by fathers and grandfathers, was unfamiliar, and the ability or perceived need to emulate it was practically nonexistent. Consequently, whichever way the *ba'al t'fillah*, hazzan or choir intoned the prayers may have appealed to a young congregant through a general appreciation for fine musical rendition or through effectively communicated emotion in performance. But knowledge of any specifics, which was automatic to generations of Eastern European Jews, was a totally closed book to the young natively-born American generation. Prayers and chants of exultation did not exult; prayers and chants which evoked tears of *yir'at shamayim* from parents and grandparents hardly moved the young generation, who no longer experienced it and could not identify with the feeling. Their neglected education and the secular-materialist environment combined to sever the centuries-old line of communication between the hazzan and the new generation within the congregation. Its lack of background and knowledge made the service content seem essentially irrelevant, including the liturgical occasions themselves, the prayer texts, the *nus-ha'ot* and their musical elaborations.

But the question continued to be voiced in practically every congregation: "What can be done to attract Jewish youth into the synagogue?" The predominant response consisted of the search for ways to modernize the service, in order to make it more palatable to the younger generation.

The Conservative movement originated in 1886 with the Jewish Theological Seminary of America's founding. It was established in response to the perceived radical positions adopted by the American Reform movement, with which the founders of Conservative Judaism had been affiliated. Though theologically pluralistic, with practices ranging from near-Reform on the left to near-Orthodox on the right, Conservative philosophy was popularly perceived as a blend of tradition and

modernity. And during the course of the first half of the 20th century, one Orthodox synagogue after another officially joined the United Synagogue, the organization of Conservative congregations. Even among those that did not, many sought to emulate much of their style in synagogue service in the hope of appearing more modern to the upcoming generation.

The most important first step was the engagement of an English-speaking rabbi who could effectively communicate and identify with the native Jewish- American psyche. One of the early attempts at reaching out to that group was the late Friday evening service. Whereas the traditional Friday evening service took place at sundown, the time of which varied according to season, the late service took place after working hours. It offered the possibility of attracting young people to what might develop into a weekend activity, and was tailored to appeal to congregants with little or no background. In time, all aspects of its innovative approach came to be applied to every other liturgical service in Conservative synagogues, and some of them in numerous Orthodox congregations as well.

In contrast to the traditional service, a dynamic interaction between the hazzan and *kahal* – uninterrupted by any extraneous elements – the late Friday Evening service was first of all abbreviated, that is to say, with varying numbers of prayers omitted. The rabbi now directed the service through regular announcements of page numbers in the prayer book, and through instructions for the manner of executing various prayers: These included a slow unison reading of one prayer in Hebrew, a unison reading of an English translation of another, an English translation of yet another through responsive reading of alternate verses between the rabbi or lay person and the congregation, and a silent reading in "Hebrew or in English" for the rest. Commentary on prayers might be added by the rabbi at any point of the service; additional non-traditional English readings could be included at will; and at various places in the service, the hazzan would lead the congregation in "community singing", i.e., the unison singing of simple, tune-like melodies. Perhaps the main feature of the service was a sermon by the rabbi, which could be on any subject deemed timely by him, ranging from the weekly Torah portion or other religious topics to current events or other general areas of human interest.

Indeed this type of service enabled all to follow, and experience involvement in the service regardless of one's level of Hebrew background or education. Even many of the older generation enjoyed the innovative service as a form of modernized Oneg Shabbat (pleasurable Sabbath activity). Its obvious advantages, however, also carried with them long-range adverse consequences for the synagogue service and its musical expression, as had been heretofore known and assumed for centuries.

First of all, the new-style service did not enable the Hebraically uneducated to participate in the manner practiced by centuries of generations of ancestors. In fact, it perpetuated and bred a *kahal* that could not function as those of preceding generations, and which could therefore not provide the partnership in prayer with the hazzan, upon which the age-old liturgical-musical tradition had thrived and depended. Moreover, the

new-style service indirectly educated the new *kahal* to assume equal validity of the newly innovative approach to the heretofore hallowed, traditional one. It destroyed the ambiance of synagogue worship as it had been known, replacing it with one which, by contrast, rings artificial and anglicized. The omission of prayers, in the interest of abbreviation, communicated to the Hebraically uneducated the legitimization of whimsical changes in the traditional structure of the service, as established by Minhag. Similarly, the aura of reverence achieved by the traditional prohibition against speaking within various sections of services was violated by continuous announcement of pages, instructions and/or explanations by the rabbi.

Whereas congregational unison and responsive singing existed in the synagogues of the Middle East and Germany, it was essentially non-existent in Eastern Europe. Its introduction into the American synagogue of Eastern European tradition c. 1915, however, carried with it seriously negative consequences for the music of the synagogue, as it had heretofore existed. To begin with, nusah as perceived in the Eastern European tradition is extremely subtle, particularly its qualitative aspects, i.e., extra-musical, those which affect the mood and spirit of a musical entity. Community singing is not. The latter, therefore, often mars the subtlety of moods of dignity, solemnity or majesty, etc., called for by the texts and their *nus-ha'ot*. Moreover, the desire was so great to give the congregant every possible opportunity to join, in some instances melodies were even in direct contradiction with the nusah of their texts in terms of their quantitative (i.e., musical), let alone qualitative aspects.

Despite the vast philosophical gulf that separates the Orthodox and Liberal communities in Judaism, in the synagogues of both at the dawn of the 21st century, the office of hazzan and the role of *nusah ha-t'fillah* – as known historically – have sunken to an unprecedented low ebb. The hazzan, in both Orthodox and liberal congregations at the turn of the millennium is forced, in varying degrees, to compromise the fundamental musical-liturgical integrity of what once constituted the primary role of the cantorate. In the overwhelming majority of situations, the function of the hazzan has been reduced essentially to one of a song-leading *ba'al t'fillah*, in the meanest sense of the term, who fulfills the most elemental function of prayer leader, bridging the intervals from one congregational tune to the next, with the distinguishing element of the professional calling – *khazonus* – being practically phased out. The office is thus reduced to what resembles that of the lower-level hazzan of the small towns in Eastern Europe, or of the *shammos* of old, both of which consisted of tending to a host of congregational and communal needs – but categorically outside the primary domain of the hazzan.

The vacuum created by the general elimination of *khazonus* is filled in both Orthodox and liberal congregations today by a profusion of simplistic congregational tunes, which lower the musical-liturgical standard in general, and weaken the effectiveness and frequently displace traditional *nusah hat'fillah* altogether. Neither community is aware of the depth of the resultant shallowness and cheapness in the quality of its musical-liturgical expression, nor how unworthy their banal tunes are of

being used to intone the sublime texts of the liturgy, especially vis-a-vis the glorious synagogue music of the zenith period. Consequently, it is not a matter of concern to either.

Indeed, recordings and publications of a wide gamut of Jewish music and general studies continually appear in great profusion. And yes, *khazonus* is heard from the most gifted and outstanding *hazzanim* of the contemporary generation – at cantorial concerts. At these concerts, one might be led to think that the zenith period of the tradition is still thriving, and that all is well. Unfortunately, it is not.

Cantorial concerts date back to the closing years of the 19th century in Eastern Europe. There they served to provide communities with a musical performance in addition to that of the synagogue service. Though the occasion of the concert was not a service, the hazzan nevertheless communicated to his knowledgeable audience the liturgical, sociological and emotional message of the prayer--whether from the Sabbath, holiday or any other liturgical setting – through its nusah, embellished through *khazonus*, and through the *krekhts* (emotional catch in the voice) breathed through his rendition. Even when concerts began to include Yiddish folk songs, the primary thrust of the concert remained *khazonus*.

Cantorial concerts today include, in addition to hazzanic selections, a considerable portion of popular-style Hasidic tunes, Yiddish folk songs of a decidedly light vein, popular Israeli songs, operatic arias, and other semi-classical selections. Moreover, hazzanic selections typically concentrate on spectacularly high vocal tessituras and ranges. Hence the average attendant at a cantorial concert today perceives in hazzanic selections very little, at best, of its totality. Enjoyment lies primarily in the Jewish ethnic expression in the concert as a whole, and in the vocal prowess displayed by the artist. This was certainly also true of the audiences in Eastern Europe. The difference, however, lies in the fact that the primary factors in *khazonus* – namely, the treatment of nusah and depth of interpretation of the texts – spoke directly to the hearts of the audiences of old, but are, unfortunately, totally outside the knowledge, perception and/or experience of today's audiences.

Of utmost importance, however, is the fact that *khazonus* evolved, developed and flourished in the synagogue, at live services – not on recordings nor in concerts. Its natural habitat, as it were, was the pulpit, where it was communicated at the moment of religious inspiration and prayer, to a congregation emotionally and intellectually capable and ready to fully participate in the experience. And as long as that is non-existent, *khazonus* at concerts in no way constitutes any meaningful form of continuity.

Rather, the old unwritten codes of *nusah ha-t'fillah*, which once linked them inseparably to the sanctity of the sacred texts and liturgical occasions upon which they were intoned, together with the unwritten quantitative and qualitative parameters which once guarded the standards of *khazonus* have been swept away by the currents

of time. No longer is there any standard, in terms of musical propriety, in either the contemporary Orthodox or Liberal synagogues. Thus the office and primary function of the hazzan, as known historically, has veritably become an endangered species. Whereas the Orthodox community perceives nothing lacking in its services, least of all its music, religious leaders and professional musicians in the Liberal community are ever endeavoring to discover new approaches, which will address the perceived needs of a laity which clamors for what it considers substantive participation in services, compatible with contemporary concepts of the Divinity and prayer.

In observing the contemporary scene, most apparent are its characteristic restlessness and iconoclastic tendencies. As such, it lacks the stability to create a meaningful replacement for the hallowed musical-liturgical tradition of the past. What seems an exciting innovation today is felt time-worn within a decade or less. More relevant is the need to recognize the deep void of the present as symptomatic of a historically unprecedented affluent society, and that the first requisite of any true further development would require a re-discovery of the spiritual depth of the old, and the regaining of a full understanding of its essence. In the words of composer/choir director Louis Lewandowski, no less appropriate today than when stated in 1871:

If this [tradition] is to be preserved, we must not deride and belittle it, as is unfortunately the case with most of our co-religionists. The musical expression of our prayers is a sacred heritage, created not through musical training or critical research, but only out of a pious, direct flow of sacred inspiration. And if we have forgotten the language of our fathers, we must regain an appreciation for their and our glorious melodies, preserve them and cherish them. For who does not hear in them the very history of our people!

If there is hope for the future of maintaining or recreating a meaningful liturgical-musical experience in the synagogue rooted in our centuries-old traditions, it lies in the cooperation between a knowledgeable, certified hazzan committed to the tradition and history of nusah and *khazonus*, together with a rabbi and lay leadership sympathetic to that interest, both of whom recognize that the final determination as to what constitutes music appropriate to the synagogue service lies within the domain and best judgement and expertise of the hazzan. If *hazzanim*, rabbis and laity, individually and collectively – in individual synagogues and in cantorial and rabbinic training institutions – are desirous of bringing this about, the future of synagogue music may be brighter than it appears currently.

The author hopes that this history and appreciation may serve to propel the common interests of all in that direction. He also wishes to express his grateful acknowledgement to Syracuse University Press for permission to publish the included excerpted material, to Cantor Jack Chomsky and to the Journal's editor, Joseph Levine, for their assistance in the preparation of this article.

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TO THE LEIPZIG CHURCH AUTHORITIES IN JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH'S TIME, THE INSERTION OF MUSIC INTO THE LUTHERAN SERVICE CARRIED WITH IT THE FEAR THAT IF IT WERE TOO LONG (OR TOO ENTERTAINING, TOO FRIVOLOUS OR TOO 'OPERATIC'), IT WOULD BE A DISTRACTION FROM GOD'S WORD AND PROVIDE A PRETEXT FOR DISORDER AND UNRULY BEHAVIOR OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER.

(John Elliot Gardiner, *Bach: Music in the Castle of Heaven*, 2014.)

INTERESTINGLY, A SIMILAR TENSION BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES AND LITURGICAL MUSIC PREVAILED CENTURIES LATER IN EAST EUROPEAN SYNAGOGUES, WHERE HAZZANUT REGULARLY FEATURED CONGREGATIONAL MELODIES. DOCUMENTATION OF THIS PERVASIVE RABBINIC SUSPICION COMES FROM THE 1937 REPRINT IN A WARSAW PERIODICAL (*Die shul un die khazonim velt*), OF A MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT ENTITLED *Warnings to cantors*. ECHOING A LONG LINE OF PRIOR ADMONITIONS, THE ANONYMOUS AUTHOR'S VERY FIRST CAUTION CONCERNS THE UNDUE PROLIFERATION OF MELODIES, LEST EVEN A SINGLE WORSHIPER SEIZE UPON THE GENERAL SINGING AS A PRETEXT FOR CONVERSING.

(Akiva Zimmerman. *Sha'arei ron*. 1999.)

Chant In the Daily Liturgy Of The Synagogue

By Victor A. Grauer

One evening in summer I was driving through the woods on my way home with an empty wagon. My head was bent, my heart was heavy. The little horse, poor thing, was barely dragging its feet. "Ah," I said to it, "crawl along, *shlimazl*! If you are Tevye's horse you too must know the pangs of hunger..." Strange, faraway thoughts filled my mind, and before my eyes passed the images of people a long time dead. And in the midst of it all I thought of my home and my family. And I thought, "Woe unto us all."

But in spite of everything, we are still Jews. When evening comes we have to say our prayers. You can imagine what the prayers sounded like if I tell you that just as I was about to begin *Shemoneh Esreh* my horse suddenly broke away as if possessed by the devil and ran wildly off through the woods. Have you ever tried standing on one spot facing the east while a horse was pulling you where *it* wanted to go? I had no choice but to run after him, holding on to the reins and chanting, "*God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob.*" A fine way to say *Shemoneh Esreh*! And just my luck, at a moment when I was in the mood to pray with feeling, out of the depths of my heart, hoping it would lift my spirits...¹

Be assured that this episode in the life of Tevye of Dairyman, a favorite character of the Yiddish author, Sholom Aleichem, turns out well in the end. As a matter of fact, Tevye's wayward horse leads him to discover two wealthy women who have lost their way. Tevye good-naturedly offers to take them home and is amply rewarded for his good deed. So amply, in fact, that Tevye is able to buy a cow with the reward, and goes into the dairy business. The little episode quoted above is of use to us because it contains a reference to a certain kind of musical practice. It may be somewhat disconcerting to find a paper of a scholarly nature citing a reference from so unscholarly a source. What, after all, does a man like Sholom Aleichem, for all his wisdom and wit, know about music?

I have two answers to this objection. The first is that the kind of musical practice to which I refer is hardly mentioned, if mentioned at all, in scholarly works dealing with Jewish music. It is, or was, so common that no one found it very challenging to study. My second answer is that this practice is so deeply bound up with other elements of Jewish life that a purely musical description and analysis could not do it justice. The colorful world of Yiddish literature can tell us more about this kind of music than all the books on Jewish music put together. As a matter of fact, any Jew who devotes himself to the old customs of his people is an expert on this topic, though most would deny that they knew anything at all about music.

¹ Sholom Aleichem, *Selected Stories*, ed. Alfred Kazin (New York: The Modern Library, 1956), pp. 49 and 50.

Now that we have asserted the validity of our source, let us examine it and see what we can learn. At first glance, it would seem as though the episode has nothing whatever to do with music. A poor man rides home in a wagon and decides to say his prayers. As he is about to begin one of the prayers called *Shemoneh Esreh*, his horse bolts and he is forced to follow it, hanging on to the reins, running, and praying, all the while doing the best that he can to face East. Surely, one might say, this is a description of a religious custom, and nothing more. It is, of course, true that Sholom Aleichem makes use of the religious obligation of the Jew to recite his prayers while facing East, combining it with the additional rule that the *Shemoneh Esreh* may not be interrupted, to produce an effect both comic and touching simply by adding a runaway horse to the situation. This, however, is not the whole picture. Much of the meaning of the incident is lost if the reader is not acquainted with the manner in which Tevye is accustomed to recite his prayers. A clue to this is the fact that Tevye describes his manner of praying as "chanting"; but what does he mean by "chanting," and how does his "chanting" sound?

The answer to this question must, of course, be in terms of the Hebrew language, for this is the language in which the Jews have traditionally recited their prayers, but the answer must be in terms of music also, for the difference between speech and chant, in any language, is related to song; the organization of speech in terms of discreet rhythm and pitch. Tevye's harried chanting is then, to some extent, a kind of musical expression, a kind of singing, in that it is more than mere speech. We learn more about the way his chanting sounds from the last sentence quoted: "and just my luck, at a moment when I was in the mood to pray with feeling, out of the depths of my heart, hoping it would lift my spirits." This tells us that there are at least two ways in which Tevye is in the habit of chanting: with feeling or without feeling. What are the changes that Tevye will make in his chant when he wants to pray "with feeling"? Do they involve matters related to music, or will the changes be purely of an "emotional" nature? We are drawn, again, to an unscholarly source for aid in supplying an answer.

In "Kabbalists," a story by the Yiddish author, I. L. Peretz, an old man, the master of a Yeshiva, or Jewish religious school, discusses this very matter with his only pupil, Lemekh. "The true melody," he says, "sings without voice, it sings within, in the heart and bowels."² This is a sentiment that is not foreign to most people, whether Jewish or gentile, who have at any time responded to music. It serves to remind us that our ways of expressing ourselves in language force us to distort the reality of things by imposing categories whose boundaries are often ephemeral or nonexistent. Is there really a line, real or imaginary, distinct or indistinct, which can be drawn between the emotion of music and the music of the emotions? I wish that it were possible to throw off the shackles of language and speak in a new way about these things. If only

² I. L. Peretz, "Kabbalists," *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories*, ed. Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg (New York, Meridian Books, 1958), p. 220.

we could dispense with "music," how much better would we be able to discuss, heart to heart, that which moves us so profoundly. But it is, in all likelihood, impossible. We would have to proceed by means of hints and deviations, scheming and shrewdness, if we would want to make this language speak some truths. And these, alas, are the methods of the poets; we will have to proceed in a scholarly manner, doomed from the start to falsify and misrepresent the wonders of this world in the interests of science.

In any event, we are aware that there is no such thing as the "purely" emotional or the "purely" musical. If there are "musical factors" involved when Tevye chants "with feeling," they are bound to the "feeling" and the "feeling" is bound to them. This is more than a mere "relationship" between two distinct entities. It is even incorrect to speak of the "fusion" of the two, for this implies the idea of a duality which is foreign to the nature of what happens. No one thing is "fused" with one other thing. Tevye's chant is a single event, an entity in itself, and although it may have emotional, religious, sociological, cultural, and musical overtones, these are mere overtones, implications, which we ourselves find in the event in an effort to understand it, or, more accurately, to graft a meaning onto it which is acceptable to us.

If the study of ethnomusicology has not yet taught us to dispense with the term "music," it has made us extremely cautious with the use of the term "musician." The commonly held idea that music is the sole property of certain people who specialize in it, has given us a distorted idea of the nature of music. The effect of this distortion is most pronounced among musicologists, who tend to ignore anything that is not produced by a bona fide, trained, musician. This applies to the field of folk music as well, where the investigator is anxious to seek out performers of repute who are often professionals of sorts, rigorously and self-consciously trained by other "professionals" in the musical esoterica of their culture.

In most cultures there is a body of people such as this who are entrusted with the culture's musical traditions. Their preoccupation with these traditions causes them to be identified with them to such an extent that the scholar in search of authoritative material is immediately informed by all and sundry that "so and so or such and such is the man to see if you're interested in our music." What the scholar is doing in such a case is letting the members of a culture direct him to those who represent the self consciously manifested ideals of the culture. If he allows himself to be directed in this manner, the folklorist may find material of value, but of limited interest as folklore. A great deal is learned about the consciously manifested tastes of the "folk," but little is learned about the musical impulse of the culture in general. As a result, the people themselves are presumed to have no musical impulse at all, or else this impulse is considered primitive and undeveloped, therefore unsuitable for serious study.

This view is, of course, justified by the perfectly valid assumption that music is an art, and, as such, is the province of the artist. There is no point in denying that this is so, nor can we ignore the fact that some people are better musicians than others. Music, being an art, is the product of self-conscious study on the part of the artist, an "artificial" process that must be

learned. Yet, everything "artificial" must spring from a "natural" impulse. The self conscious process of learning to sing "well" must be accompanied by the desire to sing, and if this desire can safely be assumed to precede the artificial learning process then we must agree that singing is more basic than the art of song, that behind and around all art, there is that which is not art, but from which all art springs. If then, we want to learn something about the sources of musical art, we must delve beyond art and beyond music itself, to that hidden place. Perhaps, once we find it, we will be so enchanted that we will forget about art altogether and study the strange thing for its own sake, rather than for what it tells us about that which is secondary.

The kind of thing we shall discuss here, and which the fragment of Sholom Aleichem serves to illustrate, may not be the "source" we have in mind, but it is closer to the source than anything which can unequivocally be called "music." Tevye is not a musician in any sense of the word. He is a poor peddler at the beginning of the story and at the end he is a poor dairyman. He is also, and this is more important, a Jew, born and raised in an atmosphere in which the practice of the Jewish religion and the fulfillment of the commandments of the Bible are part and parcel of the daily life of the people. His chant is not "music," but prayer. The practice of chanting in this manner was common among the Jews of Europe, who, up until the catastrophe of the Second World War, lived a secluded life among themselves where they were free to indulge in the ancient traditions of their people without the danger of strong acculturation. Not only was chant the usual method of reciting prayers, but it also was employed in the study of any Hebrew texts. It may be said that, until its adoption as the national language of Israel, Hebrew was chanted more often than it was spoken. Spoken recitation was the exception, not the rule, a fact aptly illustrated by a passage in I. J. Singer's story, "Repentance," where a fanatically ascetic Rabbi is described:

And when he studied he did not follow the traditional custom which bids the student set his repetitions to a sweet chant; this he considered a sinful concession to the lust of his ears. He muttered the words dryly under his breath.³

Describing Synagogue Services

Now that we know something of the circumstances surrounding Hebrew chant, we are left with the problem of what it sounds like, and how it is organized. The former problem is no problem at all since anyone interested in hearing this chant has only to enter an orthodox synagogue at a time of day in which a service is being held. If he attends during the Sabbath service (Friday night and Saturday morning) or during a holiday service, the chances are good that a professional singer known as a cantor will be leading the service with a kind of singing which is peculiar to cantorial art and does not lie within the province of what we have referred to as Hebrew chant. If he listens carefully, however, the visitor will hear that many of the worshippers are praying softly to themselves at certain points in the service. If the visitor is a musician he will notice that

³ I. J. Singer, "Repentance," *ibid*, p. 351.

much of this praying is intoned on notes of definite pitch involving the use of a more or less consistent scale. This kind of intonation is a simple example of the kind of chant in which Tevye was planning to engage when his horse ran away with him.

If the visitor should come during what is known as a "daily" service (a service held on days other than the Sabbath or holidays), the chances are good that a cantor will not be leading it. In his place there will be, in all likelihood, a man who is a layman from both a religious and musical point of view. His duty is to lead the congregation in prayer by chanting portions of the religious texts aloud. His chant is an elaborate version of the more subdued snatches of chant intoned by the rest of the congregation. Since he is not heir to the traditions learned by the cantor, he is not at all self-conscious about the way he sings. He knows no more of scales, modes, and cadences than does Tevye, but is concerned only with repeating the text accurately and quickly, so the congregation can go home, or to work, as soon as possible. He need be endowed, moreover, with no special talents, and, despite the fact that men with a clear voice are usually chosen, almost any member of the congregation could take his place as prayer-leader.

The structure of this kind of chant presents a problem in that it is amenable to musical analysis yet is not, strictly speaking, music. We have already discussed the basic integrity of the impulse that gives birth to this expression, and the dangers of attempting to deal with it piecemeal, first from a musical point of view, next from a cultural point of view and so on. If, however, we try to approach it as a total experience of the individual, we may find ourselves at a loss for words and other tools of analysis, or worse, we may fall into vague and almost useless generalities. In the face of these difficulties, the best approach seems to be some kind of meaningful compromise. Since the chanting invites musical transcription and analysis, we can take this approach as a starting point. From here, we can proceed to investigate the chant from other points of view, touching on each as it seems relevant. Instead of a purely musical, purely cultural, purely linguistic, or purely psychological investigation, I will attempt to amalgamate all of these into a method of analysis which respects the relevance of each point of view, and at the same time recognizes that these are only points of view, tools for our use in understanding the phenomenon, not explanations of it. The special interest of this material lies in the fact that it is almost totally un-selfconscious, an example of that which is absorbed through long familiarity, rather than consciously valued and carefully passed on through training. As such, it can be of value to our understanding of unconscious factors in music, tradition, and the learning process.

Jewish Music and Liturgy in General

An aspect of the motivic structure of Jewish liturgical song is its enormous variability in terms of length. A particular text may take anywhere from a few seconds to a quarter of an hour to perform, depending on the number and complexity of the motives involved. *Melisma* (the singing of two or more notes to one syllable) plays an important role in this, as does the practice of repeating certain words, phrases, and larger sections of the text. A cantor, on an important holiday, may want to give full sway to his inventive and expressive powers by "stretching" a

comparatively short verse into a complete musical composition, full of melismas, embellishments, and repetitions. On the other hand, a prayer leader, during a daily service, may be in such a hurry to get the service over with that he uses only one or two motives, no melismas, and no repetitions, chanting most of the text at top speed on a single note. As a general rule, the more elaborate melismas and repetitions are reserved for cantorial performance on Sabbaths and holidays, with a simple, largely syllabic style prevailing on weekdays.

The flexibility with which the text may be treated is demonstrated by two performances in which the same text is used, as well as the same mode. The first is that of a professional cantor, the second is by a layman with no musical training. The text is from *bameh madlikin*, a portion of the Sabbath service. The layman, for whom I played my recording of the cantor's performance, objected to the frequent repetition of words in which the cantor indulged. Since he claimed to be familiar with the "melody, I asked him to sing it as he thought it should be done. He objected at first, modestly denying that his voice was good enough to compete with that of the cantor, but finally was persuaded to sing the same passage. His objection to the cantor's performance, we may add, was not on musical grounds, but due to the fact that he felt the repetition of words tended to obscure the meaning of the text.

The contrast between the two performances may be seen from the following two transcriptions (**Examples 1 and 2**), transposed so they both have the same "final." Both use essentially the same scale, the cantor converts his F natural to F sharp in the fifth phrase, and some scale tones are absent in the layman's performance. Both share similar motives, such as the D-F relationship at the opening, and the B flat-A-G-A-F (F sharp) pattern in the third phrase of the layman's performance and in the fifth, sixth, ninth, and tenth phrases of the cantor's version.

Both performances have the identical range of an octave and a perfect fourth, with the highest note of each version (d¹) occurring at the same point in the text (on the words "*rabbi yose*"). From these similarities, it seems clear that both men have the same basic mode and melodic outline in mind. Yet the performances are of a totally different nature. The cantor employs several repetitions of fragments of text, repeating and augmenting the accompanying motive on each repetition; he employs a new motive with the appearance of different words.

There are several elaborate melismas in the cantor's performance, invariably occurring at or just before a cadence point. His shift from F to F sharp is a somewhat subtle touch, changing the flavor of what follows. In addition, he uses more notes than does the layman, whose scale contains gaps, and extends his range to a fairly high point sooner than the layman, whose range does not exceed an octave until the highest note is reached at the end of the excerpt. The layman's performance is more straightforward, with only two 2-note melismas, occurring at cadence points, and no repetitions of the text. His phrases are much shorter than those of the cantor, apparently another result of his desire to make the text as clear as possible.

These two versions of the same text serve to illustrate something of the concept of melody and musical organization in Jewish liturgical music. The "melody" has a definite text, a set mode, and something of a fixed melodic contour (if the high D on *rabbi yose* is more than a mere coincidence), yet the shape of the performance can be altered considerably at the will of the singer. Unlike the Western idea of a melody, in which the "tune" is fixed in time and the length of the piece can be prolonged only by the repetition of the same melody over and over again to different words, the Oriental practice is to concentrate on small units, motives, combining and repeating them in various ways upon a text that can be stretched by melisma or repeated in fragments or simply chanted syllabically at top speed. Needless to say, improvisation is the hallmark of the latter style.

Example 1. *Bameh madlikin*, as sung by a cantor.

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of ten staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, beams, slurs, and dynamic markings like *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *f* (forte). There are also triplets indicated by a '3' over a group of notes. The lyrics are in Hebrew, with some words underlined. The score ends with a double bar line.

mp

Ha-m'-kha-beh et ha-neir, ha-m'-kha-beh et ha - neir, ha-m'-

kha-beh et ha-neir mi-p'-nei she-hu mi-t' - ya rei mi-p'-nei

go - yim mi-p' - nei

li - s'-tim mi-p' - nei ru-ah ra ah; ha-m'-kha-beh et ha -

neir mip-nei she-hu ya-rei - mi-p'nei *f* go - yim *f* mi p'-nei li - s'-tim

mi-p'-nei ru-ah ra ah o bi-sh' - vil ha - ho - leh,

mp o bi-sh'-vil ha - ho - leh she-yi-shan pa-tur. K' - has al ha - neir k' -

has al ha-she-men k'-has al ha-p' - ti lah hay - yav. Rab-bi yo-sei

Example 2. *Bameh madlikin*, as sung by a layman.

The musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes, with English translations in parentheses. The tempo/mood is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano).

Staff 1: Ha-m'-kha-beh et han - neir — mi-p' - nei she-hu — mit-ya - rei mi-p'-

Staff 2: nei go — yim, mi-p'nei — lis - tim mi-p'-nei ru-ah ra - ah,

Staff 3: o bi-sh'-vil ha-ho - leh — shey - yi-shan, pa - tur. K' - has al han-neir, —

Staff 4: k' - has al ha-she-men — k' - has al ha-p'ti-lah — hay - yav. Rab-bi yo - sei... etc...

The relationship between the musical "setting and the meaning of the text in these examples is highly interesting. The text, in English translation, reads as follows:

He who extinguishes the light, [on the Sabbath] because he is in fear of heathens, of robbers, or of an evil spirit, or to enable a sick person to sleep, is absolved; if his object is to save the lamp, the oil, or the wick, he is guilty of a breach of the Sabbath law. Rabbi Jose (absolves from such guilt in every case except in that of the one whose object is to save the wick, because by thus extinguishing it, he converts it into a coal.)⁴

The passage, drawn from Rabbinical writings dealing with rules for the observation of the Sabbath, is surprisingly cerebral and doesn't seem to fit into the Western idea of what a "prayer" should be. It is, we admit, not at all typical of the texts to be found in the liturgy, yet its presence there tells us something about the Jewish attitude toward what could be called "the minutia of theological interpretation." If we are surprised at the presence of the passage in the liturgy, we must be astounded at the manner in which it is sung; for, in the cantor's performance, at least, the words take on a dramatic significance that seems completely out of place. The climax on the words *rabbi yose* would lead us to believe that they have some highly emotional significance to the singer, yet all they mean is "Rabbi Jose," the name of the Rabbi whose opinion is about to be presented.

One explanation is the possibility that the cantor is just showing off his voice and is not particularly concerned with the meaning of the text, an attitude which the composer Rossini

⁴ Dr. M. Stern (ed.), *Daily Prayers* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., 1928), p. 141.

revealed when he claimed he could set any text, even a laundry list. Another, more revealing, explanation merges from an understanding of the traditional Jewish attitude toward theology. This attitude is, simply, that there is no such thing as "theology," if we take the word to mean the "theory" of religion. To the Jew of the ghetto, brought up in an atmosphere where his religion is an indistinguishable element of daily life, everything about his faith is a matter of passionate concern. Since the Bible is the "word of God," every portion of it is of equal importance and deserves an equal measure of love and devotion. Since the rabbinical commentaries are efforts to interpret the meaning of the Bible, even in sections seemingly of little importance, they too are revered, loved, and passionately discussed.

This goes a long way in explaining not only the character of the cantor's singing in this instance, but the general tendency of Hebrew chant to remain at the same emotional level throughout the recitation of the liturgy, regardless of the meaning of the words (though, as we have seen, the sentence structure does affect the musical organization to a high degree).

The rhythmic element in such chanting is usually described as 'free,' i.e., "it does not obey any ready-made metric pattern or the measures of beaten time."⁵ In another sense, the rhythm of the chant, as well as other forms of Hebrew song, is not at all free, since it is almost entirely dependent on word rhythms. There are exceptions, however, and a certain amount of purely musical rhythm does occur, now and then, to overrule the words at cadence points. The transcriptions presented here are far more reliable as to pitch than rhythm for the very reason that the chant is so closely bound to the rhythms of the text.

Though Jewish music had its origin in the Near East, the music of the European Jew has been strongly influenced by Western norms. In the singing of the cantor especially, the influence of Italian opera can be felt. Some cantors use passages from well known operas as motives when they sing from the liturgy, though this practice is sometimes frowned upon. The tone quality of the cantor's voice is often an interesting combination of Eastern and Western practice, since the cantor may well have studied voice under an opera coach, yet will employ embellishments and rich vibrato, foreign to *bel canto* style, in deference to age old cantorial tradition. There are countless examples of Western influence in much of Jewish music, some quite obvious, others subtle and difficult to pin down.

The Hebrew chant with which we shall deal is probably the least affected by Western music by virtue of its lack of self-consciousness. Since many of the Western qualities of Hebrew music were introduced as conscious attempts at "modernization" of the liturgy, they were applied to those elements considered consciously as "song." No one considered the chanting of the daily service prayer leader to be "song," therefore, no one bothered to "modernize" it. Some Western influence has crept in, however, albeit quite unconsciously, via the song of the cantor, which did

⁵ Curt Sachs, *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World East and West* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1943), p. 90.

undergo "modernization." The most obvious instance is the presence, in some versions of Hebrew chant, of a cadence pattern involving a leap to the final, from the note a perfect fifth above. This pattern, foreign to the cadence pattern of the Orient, is probably due to the influence of the Western "perfect cadence," in which a chord based on the fifth note of the scale is followed by a chord based on the tonic note.

Mourner's Kaddish

The Mourner's *Kaddish* – or Sanctification of God's Name – is chanted by the entire congregation (all of whom are reciting Kaddish in memory of a departed relative) in a highly interesting manner. At first, almost everyone speaks the Kaddish in rhythm, but without recognizable pitch. Only one man in the congregation is singing at the outset; the others follow his general pitch with speech tones but do not sing. On the seventh phrase, however, the prayer leader begins to sing in unison with this other man. Soon the others begin to sing, also in an exact unison; by the final cadence, everyone is singing in both rhythmic and tonal unison.

In this Kaddish, given in **Example 3**, the pitch level of the one man who is singing from the beginning is indicated with notes that have "X" for note-heads. When the rest of the congregation joins in the singing, the note-heads become normal. The gradual transition from speech to song is most interesting. The solemn recitation, set to a specific rhythm so that all are speaking together, seems to call for intonation. The subtlety of the change from speech to tone can only be appreciated upon actual hearing. The effect is not simply one of change from "speech" to "song," but of a gradual heightening in intensity from beginning to end.

Some of the mystery in the relationship of speech and song seems to be clarified in this passage. One may say that the use of specific pitch tends to ritualize speech; the speakers, in this instance, sensed the ritual nature of their act and responded by singing what they had been speaking. As soon as they began to sing, the chant became organized in terms of mode, complete with scale, motive structure, and cadence pattern. One cannot say, therefore, that speech gives way first to a simple, patternless intonation on one note, then to musical patterns organized along musical lines. Once pitch is introduced, all the apparatus of musical organization comes into play along with it. Yet the transition from speech to song is so subtle that we are forced to conclude that speech itself obeys "musical" principles, or principles often thought to be confined to music alone. An analysis of speech in terms of "musical" patterns such as mode would be most interesting and profitable from a linguistic and musical point of view. Both language and music have too much in common for us to continue to regard them as distinct phenomena.

Example 3. Mourner's Kaddish of Afternoon service.

Cong. Speaking:

Yit - gad - dal v' - yit - kad-dash sh'-meih rab - ba

b' - a - l' - ma di v'ra khir - u - teih. v'-yam - likh mal-khu - teih

b' - hay - yei-khon uv' - yo - mei-khon uv'-hay - yei d' - khol beit yis - ra - eil,

ba - a - ga - la u - viz-man ka - riv v' - i - m'ru a - mein.

Y' - hei sh'meih rab - ba m' - va-rakh l' - a - lam ul' - al' - mei al - ma - ya.

Yit - ba-rakh v'-yish-tah-bakh v'-yit - pa - ar v'-yit - ro - mam v' - yit - na - sei

Cong. Begins to Chant:

v' - yit-had-dar v'yit - a - leh v'yit-hal-lal sh'meih d' - kud-sha b'-rikh hu l' - eil-la min kol bir -

kha-ta v'-shi-ra-ta tush-b'-ha - ta v'-ne-he- ma - ta da-a-mi-ran b'-al'-ma, v'-im-ru a-mein. Y' -

heih sh' - la - ma rab - ba min sh'-ma - ya v' - hay - yim, a - lei - nu v' -

al kol yis - ra - el, v' - im - ru a - mein. O - seh sha-lom bim-ro-mav,

hu ya'a - seh sha-lom a - lei - nu v' - al kol yis - ra - el, v'-im-ru a - mein —

Congregational interaction with the prayer leader

The snatches of chant heard from the congregation are of interest and reveal something of the manner in which the prayer leader's chant affects that of the other worshippers. **Examples 4a and 4b** present two such portions of chant heard during the pauses between sections of Mr. Morton Shlien's recitation of *Birkhot ha-shahar* and *P'sukei d'zimra* (Preliminary Morning Benedictions and Verses of Song). In Example 4a, the singer is flat, roughly a half tone below that of Mr. Shlien. (For purposes of comparison, we have raised the pitch to Mr. Shlien's level.) The singer has, in this instance, not conformed to the prayer leader in that his final is F sharp rather than C sharp. He is affected, however, by the motive structure of another layman's chant, as can be seen from his cadence, motive A of Example 4a, transposed up a fourth to conform to the higher final. The presence of this motive suggests the man has been influenced by the prayer leader, at least to a degree.

Example 4a. Morton Shlien's mode for *Birkhot ha-shahar* and *P'sukei d'zimra*

Scale:  Central Tone: Final:

Opening Motives: I 

II  III 

IV 

Intermediate Motives: A  B  C 

Cadence A  Cadence A1  Cadence A2 

Cadence B  Cadence C  Cadence D 

Example 4b is a snatch of accidental counterpoint sung by two members of the congregation. Both sing on the same pitches Mr. Shlien is using, and, in the more important tones, at least, use the same scale. The man who enters first chooses low G sharp for his final, however, and his motives are different from those of Mr. Shlien. The other man adopts the same final as Mr. Shlien (C sharp) and his initial motive is motive IV of Example 4a; his cadence is different, however, and his use of E sharp as an inflection at the end of motive IV has no precedent in Mr. Shlien's chant. These examples illustrate the kind of influence the prayer leader exerts on the congregation, and, in view of its completely unconscious nature, may serve to reveal something of the emotional and social relationships involved. The common bond may perhaps be represented by the general uniformity of pitch and scale. Other elements are more variable, however, and each member of the congregation may in fact be singing in his own mode. The unity is, therefore, not complete. Each man is an individual, chanting for the most part to himself, under his breath, and never listening to the chanting of the others, not consciously, at least. Certain aspects of his chant will reveal the influence of the prayer leader or of the congregation as a whole. Other aspects may well be affected by his own personal response to Jewish tradition. The degree to which he conforms to the norm offered by the prayer leader may tell us something about his social adaptability.

Example 4b. Samples of chant by congregation during *Birkhot ha-shahar* and *P'sukei d'zimra*.

(Rhythm Approximate)

The musical notation consists of three systems. The first system is a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It begins with a half note, followed by a triplet of eighth notes, and then a phrase marked 'A'. The second system consists of two staves. The top staff has a half note followed by a phrase marked 'IV'. The bottom staff has a triplet of eighth notes followed by a series of eighth notes. The third system also consists of two staves, with eighth notes and a half note.

Relationship between pitch and accented syllables

An interesting phenomenon occurs in Mr. Auerbach's chanting of the Amidah, something noticeable in the other versions, but not in such an obvious way. In his chanting, almost every movement to a higher tone takes place on an accented syllable, in such a way that the accent pattern of the text has an effect not only on the rhythm of the chant, but also the melodic structure. The fact that Mr. Auerbach was making an effort to chant the text clearly, for my benefit, may be significant. To emphasize the accent pattern, he placed the accents on higher tones; under normal circumstances the principle behind this practice (word accent equals higher tone) may have remained latent, numerous exceptions occurring due to the hurried nature of most of the chant. His careful presentation for my sake reveals an aspect of this chant that may have escaped our notice. That it is significant is attested to by the fact that Gregorian Chant, so similar in many ways to Hebrew liturgical music, exhibits the same tendency. According to Gustave Reese,

Gregorian melody is built on the grammatical accents of the liturgical text. Melodic peaks generally coincide with the tonic accents of the words. The accented syllable of each word is normally higher than the one that precedes it.⁶

A glance at **Example 5**, in which the first benediction, in Mr. Auerbach's version, is given, along with a transliteration of the words with accents indicated, will reveal how consistently he follows the above principle. The fact that this practice can be found in the singing of an untrained Jewish prayer leader as well as in the sophisticated composition of the Gregorian melodies, reveals a most interesting relationship between language and music, a relationship that must, in view of the musically unselfconscious nature of the Hebrew chant, exist at a pre-conscious level. The phenomenon, as it appears in Gregorian chant, might have been explained as a deliberate attempt on the part of the composers to create a relationship between text and chant that was purely artificial, and, perhaps, a bit pedantic. The appearance of the same device in the chanting of a layman proves that it is a genuine expression of something inherent in the nature of language itself. That this device did not appear more clearly in the chanting of the other men is most likely due to the fact that they were chanting at such a rapid pace. The general outlines of the motives, therefore, took precedence over the more specific demands of each syllable. The men were thinking phrase by phrase, rather than word by word. Nevertheless, a review of their chanting would probably reveal that the principle exists in latent form.

⁶ Gustave Reese, *Music in the Middle Ages* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1940), p. 166. Many other traits of Gregorian Chant are given in this section of the book (p. 164 et seq.) revealing a distinct resemblance to Hebrew liturgical music. For a comparative study of Hebrew and Christian music, which attempts to demonstrate their common origin, see Eric Werner, *The Sacred Bridge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

Example 5. Samuel Auerbach, first Amidah Benediction: relationship of melody to word accents.

Ba - rukh a - tah a - do - nai e - lo - hei - nu vei - lo - hei a - vo - tei - nu, e - lo -

hei av - ra - ham e - lo - hei yits - hak, vei - lo - hei ya - a - kov, ha - eil hag - ga - dol hag - gib -

bor v'ha - no - ra, eil el - yon, go - meil ha - sa - dim to - vim v' - ko - neih ha - kol, v'zo -

kheir has - dei a - vot, u - mei - vi go - eil li - v' - nei v' - nei - hem, l' - ma'an sh' - mo b' - aha - vah.

Me - lekh o - zeir u - mo - shi - a u - ma - gein. Ba - rukh a - tah a - do - nai, ma - gein av - ra - ham.

Prayer modes as articulated by laymen

Since the daily chant is most often performed by volunteer lay leaders, it may appear simple compared to what the cantor does on holy days, in fact it is regarded as mere "recitation." This attitude has persisted since the 6th century C.E. when the roles of *hazzan* (synagogue overseer) and *sh'liah tsibbur* (prayer leader) were combined.⁷ However, when properly performed, the daily chant exhibits not only a regard for discrete pitch, but a consistent treatment in terms of mode, along with characteristic motive patterns. These characteristics offer ample evidence that is indeed "musical" and can be studied from a musical point of view.

Example 6 summarizes all the scales represented in the chants cited herein, transposed so the final of all is the note C. To the right of each scale is the central melodic tone of the mode of which the scale is a part. Disregarding the characteristic motives, and judging only from the scale and the relation of the central melodic tone to the final, we find seven different modes. **Mode 1** occurs five times (if we count the "neutral" third of Mr. Shulman's scale as E flat, and if we disregard the fact that some of the scales are incomplete) in the chanting of three different men.

⁷ Hyman I. Sky, *The Development of the Office of Hazzan Through the Talmudic Period*, (Doctoral Dissertation at the Dropsie University, Philadelphia, PA, 1977: 172-182).

Its scale is similar to that of the "Pentateuch" mode cited by Idelsohn, but the relation of central melodic tone to final does not seem to be the same.⁸

Mode 2 is found twice in the chanting of two different men. Interestingly enough, it is used both times in the chanting of the *Amidah*. Its distinguishing trait is the fact that the central melodic tone and the final are the same. The scale seems similar to that given by Idelsohn as the "mode of the Prophets," but again, the relation of final and central melodic tone is not the same.⁹

Mode 3 occurs four times in the chanting of three different men. It is characterized by a central melodic tone that lies a fifth above the final. Otherwise, it is like mode number 2, with the exception of Mr. Shlien's version, which seems to be a combination of modes 1 and 3, in that it is in Idelsohn's "Pentateuch" scale, yet has a central melodic tone that is a fifth above the final.

Mode 4 occurs only once, in the chant of Mr. Eshwege. The central melodic tone is a fifth above the final, like mode number 3, but the presence of the major third above the final is sufficient to give it an entirely different character. Its scale is similar to that of Idelsohn's "Viddui" mode. Again, the relation of central melodic tone to final is not the same.¹⁰

Mode 5 also occurs only once. It is distinguished from modes 3 and 4 by the presence of the major third and augmented fourth above the final. The scale is not given by Idelsohn as characteristic of any of the modes of traditional synagogue song.

Mode 6 occurs only once, also. It is almost the same as 3, but the augmented fourth above the final occurs as often as the perfect fourth, and gives the scale a special character. This scale is not cited by Idelsohn.

Mode 7 is found only once, also. Its scale is given by Idelsohn as characteristic of the "Ahavoh-Rabboh" mode,¹¹ but again, none of Idelsohn's examples show a central melodic tone identical to the final, as in mode 7.

Notwithstanding that so many of the scales cited resemble those given by Idelsohn, yet other characteristics of the modes differ, we might venture to say that this chant is founded largely upon traditional scales which receive special treatment, treatment in line with the special nature of the chant. We have too few examples to make generalizations about the effect of the singer's place of origin on the structure of the mode, but the three men of *Sephardic* origin use scales in which the major third above the final occurs, none of *Ashkenazic* origin use scales with this characteristic (unless we interpret the neutral third of Mr. Shulman's chant to be major).

⁸ Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, (New York: Tudor, 1948) p. 39, 8.

⁹ Ibid, p. 50, 9.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 78, 10.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 84 et seq.

Motivic Structure

The motives used in this chant tend to arrange themselves according to their function in the passage as a whole. For this reason, we have been able to group them into opening, intermediate and closing motives. For the most part, this method of grouping proved highly adequate and revealing; the motives at the beginning of a passage tended to have melodic outlines different from those in the middle and at the end; the same tended to be true of the intermediate and ending motives. In very long passages, the functions were applied to the paragraph structure, opening motives occurring at the beginning of the paragraph, intermediate motives occurring in the middle, and ending motives occurring in the last sentence.

Exceptions did occur, however, and there were instances in which opening motives were used in the middle and at the end, and intermediate motives at the beginning of a passage or paragraph. The segment of each passage that tended to be most free of exceptional motives was the ending; almost all the passages and paragraphs analyzed ended with motives completely distinct from the opening and intermediate ones. Moreover, there tended to be fewer different ending motives than intermediate or opening motives in each mode. These characteristics seem to indicate that the ending, or cadence point, is the most rigidly handled in terms of motivic function.

Regardless of the fact that seven of the scales given in Example 6 have a range of an octave or more, the majority of motives do not exceed the range of a fifth. In many cases, the opening motives have a higher tessitura than the intermediate ones, which, in turn, tend to be higher than the closing motives. This does not occur so often as to constitute a general rule, but there is a strong tendency for each passage to begin high and end low, so the melodic contour of the passage or the paragraph as a whole is that of a gradual descent from the highest tones of the scale to the lowest. The necessity for a descending contour may, partially at least, determine the function of each motive; high motives would be needed at the beginning, low motives at the end, in order for the characteristic contour of the chant to be observed.

The element of an overall melodic descent as well as that of motive function presents itself as a foil to what I have called the "mosaic" ordering of the motives. A "mosaic" of motives can be constructed only if it will result in an overall melodic descent, which, moreover, is in accordance with the function of each motive used for the "mosaic." In connection with the descending quality of the passage as a whole, it should also be mentioned that most of the individual motives exhibit a descending contour in themselves; this is especially true of the ending motives, which, in almost every case, represent a melodic descent from the third, fourth or fifth, to the final. Idelsohn observed that an ascending melodic line is a characteristic of Jewish liturgical music in general;¹² therefore, the descending nature of the passages and motives

¹² A. Z. Idelsohn, *Der Synagogengesang der Osteuropäischen Juden*. Vol VIII: *Hebraisch-Orientalischer Melodienschatz* (Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1914-1932), p. xii.

found in this chant represents an exception which places this chant in a category by itself. Since a descending contour is found in most “primitive” and “folk” music of the world, due, it is thought, to the fact that it is easier to sing a high note when the lungs are full, we may assume that our chant conforms more closely in this respect to other examples of unselfconscious song than it does to the more sophisticated song of its own culture. The presence of an ascending melodic line may well denote a stylized form of music, in which the natural tendency of the voice in connection with the lungs is resisted.

Example 6. Laymen's prayer modes reduced to scales

Scale

Mode 1

Hookman

Center Tone

Shulman

Friedman

Mode 2

Hookman

Auerbach

Mode 3

Shulman

Lehrer



Pitch and the structure of a text

As discussed above, one way in which the chant can reflect the punctuation of the text is through an ascending pitch. In the early part of the afternoon (*Minhah*) service, on the other hand, the last syllable of each sentence in Mr. Hookman's version was chanted on a note one whole step *lower* than the note on which the rest of the sentence had been chanted. This lower tone was the singer's response to the fact that the sentence had ended, the musical equivalent of a comma, or period. This same device occurred at other times as well, and the principle behind it -- that the chant will reflect the sentence structure of the text -- has been shown to dominate its musical construction in almost every instance.

The snatches of fragmentary chant, in which only a small portion of the text is chanted aloud, could well have been constructed along purely musical lines, the motives functioning according to whether they came at the beginning, ending, or middle of the fragment. Our analyses of the Amidah, however, along with the series of benedictions that opened the two Morning services, *Birkhot ha-shahar* and *P'sukei d'zimra*, showed that the motive functions were grammatical as well as musical, that certain kinds of motives appeared at the beginning, not of the passage, but of each paragraph; that other motives came only at the end of the paragraph, and that still other motives had a special function due to the fact that they were connected with certain phrases of the text that were repeated in each paragraph.

The motivic functions, therefore, serve to clarify the outlines of the text. The benedictions of the morning service, for instance, are arranged so that a single line of text is repeated word for word in each benediction, followed by a brief bit of text that is different in each benediction. In the chants studied here, the repeated line was, with one exception, sung to exactly the same notes each time. The short ending of each benediction was given its own motive, a melodic outline that varied rhythmically according to the length and accent pattern of the words. In both versions, the ending motive of the very last benediction was differentiated from the others, an indication, in musical terms, that the set of benedictions had come to an end.

The most consistently handled motive is the one connected with the blessing formula, *Barukh atah adonai* ("Blessed are You, *Adonai*"). The other motives seem to group themselves around this one, so the motive which precedes it and the motive which succeeds it can generally be more or less predicted. The other important point, as far as motivic functions are concerned, is the very beginning of each benediction, which usually has one or two fairly consistently handled motives. It is clear from these descriptions that the motive functions of the chant are intimately connected to the functions of each sentence and phrase of the text. This suggests that speech also may have characteristics similar to motive function, in order to bring out more clearly the structure of what one is saying or reading.

We know that many languages are "tonal"; that is to say that the relative pitch of a word will affect its meaning quite radically. We know also, that other languages, including English, depend a great deal on relative pitch, so we can communicate certain kinds of meaning while speaking that cannot be communicated in writing.¹³ The most important parts of the sentence, from the point of view of pitch, are the clause endings, which, in English, can be either rising, level, or falling. This could be seen as a parallel to the important role of the cadence in Hebrew chant, also a means of indicating an ending. As far as we know, the relationships of relative pitch complexes, as they occur in spoken language, have never been studied thoroughly in connection with sentence structure. Such a study, combined with a comparison of the motive functions of sung, as well as spoken, pitch, could be of great value to our understanding of both language and music.

Text and the mood of a chant

This is another way in which the text influences the chant. Each section of the liturgy has its own "mood," not so much by virtue of the "meaning" of the text (since there are many different kinds of text in each section), as in relation to the general overall "quality" of the section and its relation to the other sections. This change in the "mood" of the liturgy is very often accompanied, in the chant, by a change in mode, so that the scale, the motives, or the relation of central melodic tone to final (or, in some cases, all three) will change at the point in the text

¹³ See H. A. Gleason, Jr., *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), p. 46 et seq., for an analysis of pitch phonemes in the English language.

where a new section of the liturgy appears. This appears to be a confirmation of the whole concept of "mood" in relation to modal music and serves to illustrate how the distinctions made in the more self-conscious areas of Hebrew liturgical music, with regard to the use of certain "prayer modes" on certain specific occasions, could have their foundation in the more spontaneous, unconscious chant of the layman, and are not, as one might be tempted to suppose, mere artificialities, having no connection with the natural relation of song to liturgical "mood."

Though not, in itself, a separate section of the liturgy, the Kaddish tends to have its own "mood" and mode as well. Since the prayer is so common, so distinctive, and so important, the mode connected with it seems to be quite widespread and somewhat predetermined. We have already seen how the Kaddish will often be repeated, note for note, each time it occurs in the liturgy. We have also seen how many of the versions of the Kaddish, as sung in different congregations, tend to have the same basic structure, founded upon the tone a fourth above the final, with a drop to the tone a third above the final toward the end of each phrase. Though there are many exceptions to this rule, including at least one case in which the Kaddish is sung in the same mode as the section of the liturgy which immediately follows it, the chanting of the Kaddish tends to be somewhat differentiated from the rest of the liturgy, with elements that appear to be almost universal.

Rhythm of the chant

We have not given much attention to rhythm for the very reason that, in this repertoire, it seems entirely dominated by the accents of the text. This is a general feature of Jewish (and oriental) music, but is even more apparent in this type of chant because of its syllabic character. In the singing of the cantor, who, in the Sabbath and holiday services, has plenty of time, the use of melisma can produce independently conceived rhythms. In the weekday service, however, the prayer leader is pressed for time, is not expected to present an elaborate chant, and consequently, rarely uses melisma at all. The only time, therefore, when a certain rhythmic pattern becomes important, is when certain words are repeated, as in the formula of the Amidah. Since the words have a fixed accent pattern, the rhythm of the chant will always be the same when they are sung. With the exception of these, somewhat rare, occasions, the motives define a melodic contour only, and are quite flexible as to rhythm and length. Those who claim that melody and rhythm are one and the same, and that a melodic outline with a different rhythm is a different melody, are speaking in terms of Western music; in the orient, and in Hebrew chant, melody (or, more accurately, motive) is one thing, rhythm something else.

Socio-cultural aspects

Especially interesting from a socio-cultural perspective, is the relationship between prayer leader and congregation. As we already know, all of the worshippers, including the prayer leader, must face east while they pray. Thus, the prayer leader does not face the congregation, as does, for instance, the Rabbi, when he delivers a sermon. Moreover, during the daily services the prayer

leader is standing on the same level as the rest of the congregation, unlike during Sabbath and Festival services, when the cantor sings from an elevated platform. As far as position is concerned, therefore, the prayer leader does not seem to dominate the rest of the congregation.

The chant, however, tells a different story. The prayer leader typically determines the pitches on which the rest of the congregation chants, and, in many cases, has an influence on the mode and motives sung by the rest of the congregation, as they chant to themselves. The prayer leader may also unconsciously try to dominate the congregation by singing at a higher pitch than they, or distinguish himself from the group by waiting and chanting the same lines by himself, after they are done. There are, in addition, more complex interactions between prayer leader and congregation, as discussed above, where the former reacted to the response of the latter, unconsciously producing a modulation from one mode to another. Such interactions show the worshippers to be psychologically in touch, through the prayer leader's chant, which serves to unite them from time to time into a single body, as they react to one another at various points in the service.

The relation of chant to text, as described above, also has meaning from a cultural point of view. As we have shown, the chant is a response on the part of the singer to the structure of both text and liturgy. The motivic functions are related to the sentence and paragraph structure of the text; the sections of the liturgy are differentiated from one another by the use of different modes for each. Nowhere in the chant, however, do we find evidence that the singer is responding to the meaning of the words themselves, or that the emotional quality of his chant corresponds to the emotion expressed by the meaning of the particular words he happens to be chanting at any given time. His emotions seem to be in response to long sections of text in which many different kinds of feeling may be expressed, and, as we have seen, he may present a highly dramatic and emotional rendering of a text that seems rather dry.

These aspects of the chant reflect a structural approach to language which may be a characteristic of the traditional Jew in general. A study that was made in the Lower East Side of New York City, in 1937, comparing the characteristic gestures of traditional Jews with those of Italians, seems to bear this out. The authors found that Italians tended to make gestures that were pictorial, i.e., intended to represent the subject matter being discussed. The Jewish gestures, on the other hand, were,

predominantly of the discursive or "ideographic" type, seeming to be, as it were, a kind of gestural portrayal, not of the object of reference or thought, but of the course or "curve" of the ideational process itself. [There was a] general tendency to re-enact each turn or detail of the logical process with a sort of inflection in the accompanying movement...¹⁴

¹⁴ David Efron and John P. Foley, Jr., "Gestural Behavior and Social Setting," *Readings in Social Psychology*, ed. Theodore M. Newcomb, Eugene L. Hartley, et al. (New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1947), p. 37.

The Hebrew chant under consideration here appears to have much the same function in regard to language as the gestures described above. It is also interesting to note that the tropes--diacritical signs placed over and under the written texts of the scriptures as musical notations for their public reading--are thought by many scholars to be graphic representations of hand gestures, which, originally, served to indicate the order of the tropes.¹⁵ Both the gestures and the chant then, seem to emphasize the structure of the text, rather than its referential meaning, a cultural trait of some importance.

Conclusion

We have shown that the type of Hebrew Chant considered here is not to be taken for granted, as though there were nothing in it especially worthy of study. By revealing its musical underpinnings, we have sought to demonstrate that it can indeed reward detailed examination. The tools of musical analysis have revealed musical concepts, pre-artistic and relatively simple, but basic by virtue of the primal impulse which produces them. Moreover, because it is an essentially unselfconscious act, this practice also has the potential to tell us much about the workings of the unconscious mind in relation to language, culture, and tradition. Many of these aspects have been touched upon here, but there are no doubt many others yet to be discovered. No attempt has been made to deal exhaustively with the many social, cultural and psychological implications to which this study has led. I have considered it sufficient to concentrate upon the chant itself, hoping that such an investigation will lead to further research on this type of musical expression and other phenomena of its kind, with a view to promoting a deeper understanding of the many unconscious factors at work, shaping language, culture, and the arts.

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This article is excerpted from the writer's unpublished Masters thesis in Ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, 1961.

¹⁵ Werner, *The Sacred Bridge*, p. 107 et seq.

Why We Are at War

By Charles Heller

Although no official Declaration was ever made, clearly we have been at war for some time. For what are we fighting? The preservation of the sound and meaning of the ‘traditional’ service. Who is with us? All those who sense that the meaning of a ‘traditional’ service is promoted by its sound and structure, who use a siddur with ‘traditional’ elements (such as the Musaf service—we might call such elements ‘Orthodox’ or ‘near-Orthodox’). We are limiting our campaign to the ‘traditional’ service since nusah can hardly be applied to a reformed liturgy; once it is reformed, there are no longer any rules, you make your own. Who is the enemy? The musically-challenged and the liturgically-challenged: rabbis, administrators and anyone else who is tone-deaf; anyone who is unfamiliar with our liturgy, such as cantors who themselves grew up cheated of any knowledge of nusah and wish to infantilize the congregation through their own ignorance.

The Perfect Storm

We have now the perfect storm: from the left, the influence of cantors who grew up with no awareness of the structure and function of nusah, combined with, on the right, the elimination of the professional cantor.¹ The ‘democratic’ encouragement of untrained laymen is an administrative cover-up for the cancellation of the position of cantor in order to save money in harsh economic times made harsher by declining membership in a secular age.

What role have rabbis played in these developments? It is a truism that rabbis and cantors often don’t get along. Sometimes the rabbis actually sabotage the nusah.² This tension is explained by the dichotomy in a service between the rabbinic *message* and the cantorial *atmosphere*, the theological instruction we are supposed to learn versus the feelings we experience when davening together.³ This dichotomy is symbolized by Moses and Aaron: Moses hears God’s instructions and transmits them verbatim, but only Aaron can communicate them by leading the people in performing the attendant ritual.

Do rabbis actually feel that music is a barrier to prayer? Maybe the rabbi doesn’t respond to music anyway. People who do not respond to music tend to hold positions of authority over musicians. There are various reasons: music is essentially a corrupting, life-changing activity, as well as being unpredictable and noisy, causing problems of control for administrators. Of

¹ Cantor Sherwood Goffin reports that in the 1960s the Belz Cantorial School (Yeshiva University) placed over 100 cantorial positions a year, whereas today the number is around 15. (Interview dated June 2011, archived in the Dartmouth Jewish Sound Archive, Dartmouth College, NH).

² Sholom Kalib, “Charles Davidson’s *Sefer Hadrakhah*,” *JSM* 37 (2012), p. 220. Other cases I have heard of include the elimination of such liturgical benchmarks as *V’ha-kohanim* (“When the Priests and people stood in the Temple courtyard”) and *L’eil oreikh din* (“Let us crown the Sovereign Who probes all hearts”), just because congregational demand for them and participation in the ritual was so great that it was mistakenly perceived by some rabbis as a threat to their authority.

³ This and many other topics in this paper are discussed in my book *What To Listen For in Jewish Music* (www.ecanthuspress.com).

course, there are many music-loving rabbis (some of whom joined the rabbinate after years of frustration in the cantorate). School administrators constitute another professional class which promotes hostility to music. And there have always been tone-deaf intellectuals who tried to persuade people that music is something to be gotten rid of, a barrier to truth (Immanuel Kant and Theodor W. Adorno, to name just two examples; Kant by asserting that knowledge does not come through our senses,⁴ and Adorno by removing sound from music⁵).

***Ameratses* (Yiddish: ignorance)**

The democrat is also our enemy. He believes that anyone is entitled to lead a service, no training required. When a cantor tells a layman what is and is not acceptable, the layman replies “My style is different from yours, and my opinion is as valid as yours.” Well, no it isn’t, your opinion is based on *ameratses*. Infrequent worshipers are also part of the problem; they don’t know what is expected since the order of prayers keeps changing. To pander to infrequent worshipers, rabbis will promote sing-along tunes, especially Shlomo Carlebach tunes (which were never intended for synagogue use, but as a way of creating a Jewish presence in Haight-Ashbury). Sadly, the infrequent worshiper won’t even know the Carlebach tunes.

Allowing untrained laymen to conduct services is a well-known factor in the erosion of nusah. A person who attends Shabbat regularly is given the chance to lead a weekday service, and promptly uses the only nusah he knows—Shabbat nusah. So now weekday sounds like Shabbat, and Shabbat sounds like—just another weekday!

The layman wouldn’t let an untrained person act as his lawyer, so why should we let him lead our service? Conducting a service should not be a learning moment for a layman--the leader is nothing less than the congregation’s Defense Attorney before God. Many synagogues offer classes in nusah. Tell your layman: “You want to lead the service? That’s great! Did you attend the free course we offered?” As a friend of mine put it, losing a parent makes you an *aveil* (mourner), not a hazzan. Can you lead a service if you are tone-deaf? Perhaps, if you know what to do. But you cannot do it first and then learn afterwards. If we insisted on standards, the layman would say: “I am glad I have been judged worthy to do this mitzvah.” Perhaps we can even find halakhah to support us: while the *Hatam sofer* rules that a cantor may be retained by public acclamation even though he has faults, the *Hoshen mishpat* rules that his flaws, which we could take to include ignorance of nusah, render him unfit for service.⁶

What is nusah that we should save it?

The actual nusah that you use is whatever you are accustomed to. It has evolved over time and place and comes in many varieties. But despite this variety, it retains certain core properties: it is used *consistently* and is *appropriate* and *uniform*. Eric Werner described nusah as the “unifying idea in every service,” promoting “style and dignity.”⁷ It acts as a leitmotif—a characteristic melody that is identified with a particular season or service (or character in an opera, as we shall discuss below). To a knowledgeable congregation, the correct nusah brings out the feelings

⁴ Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*, “The Critique of Pure Reason.”

⁵ T. W. Adorno, *Towards a Theory of Musical Performance*, 2006:162.

⁶ *Hoshen Mishpat*, the section that deals with Labor Employment, under “Yom Kippur,” based upon Maharil’s commenting on *Sefer minhagim*; I thank Daniel B. Schwartz for this guidance to halakhah.

⁷ Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard* (Pennsylvania University Press, 1976), p.18.

appropriate to the season. By providing musical material which is *uniform* across the Jewish community, it restrains the cantor from indulging in his individual tastes which might not match those of other worshipers. There is little opportunity for radical innovation, or for singing in a way that is too elaborate or too monotonous. Everyone is satisfied and no-one is offended. This is something like dressing professionals, say bus drivers or policemen, in a uniform—their clothes demonstrate that they are more interested in carrying out a specific job than in asserting their own personality, being neither flashy nor shabby. This clothing metaphor is quite helpful: using incorrect nusah should be as obvious and unacceptable as wearing inappropriate clothes. I was once at a summertime Sabbath Morning service where the guest cantor sang Kedushah to the nusah for *Geshem* (Prayer for Rain, recited in the fall)—and yes, the congregation laughed out loud, just as they would have done if his pants were part of a baseball uniform.

Nusah operates through improvisation within specific *modes*, which are applied at regulated times. Each mode has its own *ethos*, a specific emotional association: for example, one mode will relate to the ethos of pleading for divine help, another to the celebration of victory, etc. Nusah-based synagogue chant was described by Werner as “stylized folksong.”⁸ It is *folksong* because it is the result of *cultural selection*; and it is *stylized* in that certain features once established, such as the use of specific modes and melodies for specific occasions, remain fixed and are preserved by professionals.

It is useful to compare synagogue music and church music. The cantor is not a priest: priestly music in the church developed into western art music which is hostile to the preservation of tradition and demands constant development. The cantor is part of the laity, the common people, whose art developed through selection, yet always conforming to the relatively undeveloped tastes and skills of the masses (Yiddish: *amkho*—“Your people”).

The *function* of nusah is to make us aware of the time and place we are in. We are present at a communal event whose purpose is to ‘sanctify’ the day. We can’t ‘sanctify’ it (make it special and meaningful) if we don’t know what day it is, and we won’t know what day it is if we don’t hear the right cues. Cantor Naftali Herstik has summarized the structure and function of nusah as follows: Nusah is loyal to the laws of Hebrew grammar, syntax and pronunciation and the laws of prayer; it is not complicated, but rich in musical motifs; it arouses the feelings of the congregation and motivates them to contemplate the meaning of the prayers.⁹

An objection will still be made that nusah is not a useful concept since it sounds different in different places: in Romania it will sound Romanian, and in the USA it will sound like...who knows? Moreover, the idea expressed in *Sefer hasidim* #302 that “every acceptable melody is treated as if it came from Sinai,” is based on their being within appropriate modes reflecting the appropriate ethos. But note that this presupposes a set liturgy; if you just have a collection of songs and readings, nusah cannot work. Instead of feeling, for example, that the prayers on a Shabbat have been imbued with the ethos of Shabbat, you will instead find yourself watching just another show that might well be called “Shabbat: The Musical.”¹⁰

⁸ Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard* (Pennsylvania University Press, 1976), p.18.

⁹ Preface to *T'fillah zakah* vol.1 (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv Cantorial Institute, n.d.).

¹⁰ Sarah Heller, personal communication, October 29, 2012.

Nusah changes

We are not claiming that there is a universal nusah, but that there is a universal *concept* of nusah. In some cases, what one congregation will revere as time-hallowed nusah will be regarded by others as “narrow pseudo-tradition.”¹¹ For example, the (Orthodox) United Synagogue of London, following the custom of the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue, used to have a very severe regime of *Yigdals* and *Hodus* (as given in *The Blue Book*)¹², but these tunes only date from the eighteenth-and-nineteenth centuries. There was at one time even festival-specific nusah for the “long tune” of the *Kohanim*.¹³ Even the revered “Hasidic Kaddish” of the High Holidays (made famous in Herman Zalis’s arrangement for a recording by David Kusevitsky)¹⁴ has changed its Religious Calendar location, which was originally the Shalosh Regalim. These changes over time mean that nusah cannot simply be dismissed as “old-fashioned,” as its enemies claim: rather, it is “timeless.”

What nusah can do for you

Nusah will give you, through your participation (yes, participation!—see below) a sense of being present in a communal event whose purpose is the sanctification of the day, deriving joy from the prayers, feeling, in Chaim Grade’s words, “like the sky cleared of rain clouds!”¹⁵

A tone licked clean

Nusah has evolved through selection. It has survived because it is adapted to the needs of worshipers. The selection process guarantees the worth of the end product. The combined efforts of countless cantors and *ba'alei t'fillah* over countless centuries have resulted in the polished, trusted end product we know today as our nusah. The poet James Merrill put it memorably: “a tone licked clean over the centuries by mild old tongues.”¹⁶

Lines in the sand

We know what we are fighting for. The war is not yet lost. Debbie Friedman, whose widely popular music “married traditional Jewish texts to contemporary folk-infused melodies,”¹⁷ studied nusah in her later years. We hear that Reform cantors are now taught trop, whereas in former times the Haftarah was read in English--this means that Reform cantors will be more at home in nusah, which incorporates trop motifs.

What are we prepared to negotiate? Consider the case of *Yankee Doodle*. Would anyone object to applying this tune to *Adon olam* on Simhat Torah? I doubt it—simply because the liturgical occasion encourages hilarity as part and parcel of its celebration. But I have heard *Yankee Doodle* applied to *Yah eili* (“O Lord, my God”; a *piyyut* for the Shalosh Regalim Torah

¹¹ Eric Werner’s withering phrase, from the preface to Adolph Katchko, *Services for Sabbath Eve and Morning and Three Festivals* (NY: Hebrew Union School of Education and Sacred Music), 1952.

¹² F.L. Cohen and D.M. Davis, eds., *Kol rinnah v'todah--The Voice of Prayer and Praise* (London: United Synagogue), 1933 (reprinted many times).

¹³ Francis L. Cohen, “A Famous Passover Melody,” *Jewish Chronicle*, April 1, 1904, pp.20-21.

¹⁴ David Kusevitsky--*Gems of the Synagogue*, Tikvah Records LP T-55, side A, track 1 (ca. mid-1960s).

¹⁵ Chaim Grade, *The Yeshiva*, Vol. 1, translated by Curt Leviant (Indianapolis and NY: Bobbs Merrill Company, 1976), p. 257.

¹⁶ James Merrill, *The Book of Ephraim*, included in his book *The Changing Light at Sandover*.

¹⁷ Margalit Fox, “Debbie Friedman, Singer of Jewish Music, Dies at 59,” *The New York Times*, January 11, 2011.

service), which cannot be acceptable. What's the difference? Firstly it is poor taste, and taste is the indefinable, unteachable but essential quality that every cantor must have. Secondly, since the purpose of nusah is to promote the meaning of the prayers, if an inappropriate tune is used, the prayer loses its meaning. *Yankee Doodle* is the wrong mode and has the wrong associations for *Yah eili*. Now consider *Torna al Surriento*¹⁸ applied to *Mimkomo* ("From God's abode") in the Musaf Kedushah. Is this bad taste? Probably. Is it bad nusah? Maybe not--its mode and general melos conform to what we expect for *Mimkomo*. The tune is too widely known to have particular associations that would jar with the text. Our verdict: We wouldn't do it ourselves, but we will let it go for now.

Gospel Friday Night music? I have heard very exciting performances of the Friday Night service with a true Gospel spirit, and other synagogues wanted to copy the program. There is only one problem—the cantor had experience on Broadway—and he had a fine band to back him up. Not every *shul* can do this. What would you rather have—an embarrassing Jewish version of Gospel singing or an authentic Friday Night service which made you feel that yes, you were present in *shul* and it really felt like Friday night?

Accommodating the non-musical worshiper

We have to recognize that our congregation will include people who do not respond to music. (We have referred above to the particular case where such people are in positions of authority).¹⁹ What can we do to make non-musical people feel comfortable when surrounded by others who are actually moved by music? Give them opportunities to participate (see below), but not at the expense of the nusah. It may be that we can use musical tricks to hold the attention of the musically-challenged while retaining enough elements of the nusah to make the authentic musical structure endure. Recall that Mozart's librettist, Emanuel Schikaneder, filled his performances of *The Magic Flute* with conjuring tricks and thought that was why the opera enjoyed such popularity. Two hundred years later his tricks are forgotten but the opera endures thanks to its authentic, deep message of human liberty. Nusah is also based on a deep message, the prayers themselves. People may come for the happy-clappy cheap tunes, but so long as we retain the nusah itself, they will eventually come to stay for the authentic core of nusah-driven liturgy.

The function of the service and the role of nusah

In order to strengthen our ranks, we have to identify the difficulties that nusah presents to our enemies. Is it listening in general? Do they want to get out as soon as possible? Is it the intellectual challenge of learning and identifying different tunes for different occasions? Do they want to be entertained but not challenged?²⁰ What are the needs of congregants? Why do we go to *shul* anyway?

The ostensible reason that we go to *shul* is to daven, to pray, to express our hopes and fears. But we all know that this is not the whole story. People go to *shul* to meet and chat. Talking during

¹⁸ Words by Giambattista de Curtis, music by Ernesto de Curtis.

¹⁹ Note that being unmusical is not the same as being tone-deaf; I have heard tone-deaf people lead a service more successfully than a person with an ear but no knowledge.

²⁰ This question goes to the heart of the question of why we have art at all--why are Cézanne's apples more satisfying than Norman Rockwell's apples? Is art a form of communication, a message that wants us to respond, or is it something we buy at Toys "R" Us?--the issue raised by Naomi Klein in her book, *No Logo* (Toronto: Knopf Canada), 2000:178.

the service is proverbial. It is such an essential part of the synagogue experience that rabbis have been complaining about it for centuries.

We have to recognize that people have different personalities which create different approaches to the service. Rabbi Neil Gillman identified three types: the *intellectual* who wants to study, the *spiritual* who wants a satisfying emotional experience, and the *behaviorist* who enjoys carrying out rituals.²¹ These three categories match the three “domains” identified by educator Benjamin S. Bloom to distinguish the ways people approach their tasks—cognitive (Gillman’s *intellectual*), affective (Gillman’s *spiritual*) and psychomotor (Gillman’s *behaviorist*).²² Not everyone in our congregation is “spiritual-musical.” Non-musical people will try to cut down on the time spent listening to a cantor. But this should still leave space for nusah itself. The beauty of nusah, properly applied, is that it is flexible enough to satisfy the needs of everyone present.

The synagogue service developed as a substitute for the Temple service and was modeled on Temple practice, for example using a Psalm to start worship (and not an Invocation from the rabbi). The synagogue service actually provides us with an historical connection to the Temple. Every service refers to Temple ritual whose schedule was highly structured so that each day throughout the year had its distinctive flavor. This is the basis of our liturgy and hence nusah (for example, as demonstrated by the rules governing when we recite Psalm 100). If we replace the set liturgy with an assemblage of more-or-less arbitrary readings we destroy this historical connection along with the musical practice that supports it.

Who wants opera?

There are those who object to cantor-led services as being too ‘operatic.’ The fact is, they are quite right, and their dislike of opera is a matter of much regret. As with opera, a cantor-led service based on nusah is indeed “hard to follow” and “elitist” (i.e., requires the congregation to be familiar with the tradition). A service, or opera, requires prior knowledge, good listening skills and the ability to concentrate over a long period of time. These difficulties can be overcome: prior preparation and repeated exposure will lead to a more meaningful experience for the congregant/opera patron. I am writing this in the Wagner Bicentennial year of 2013, and (with the reader’s kind indulgence) it strikes me that there are three remarkable similarities between Wagnerian opera and cantorial liturgy. Firstly, they both fill long time periods--the Rosh Hashanah Musaf section alone may last two hours, which is half the playing time of *Tristan und Isolde*). Secondly, they both rely on leading musical motives (the above-mentioned ‘leitmotifs’ – Wagner’s term – each associated with a particular theme of the liturgy or the opera). Thirdly, they both are presented through “endless melody” (also Wagner’s term), which subtly underlines and explicates words of the text.

Hazzanut and opera, with their elaborate texts and their demanding vocal technique, are both sophisticated art forms--indeed opera is so sophisticated that even the composers don’t get it right (I have read critics who claim that Britten didn’t understand his own creation, the title character of his opera, *Peter Grimes*). And like the best opera, the aim of *hazzanut* is not showing off but presenting the thought behind the artwork which will transform the listener. It is understood that opera and great theater demand preparation and concentration. It would be absurd if one went to a performance of Shakespeare and halfway through a rabbi came onto the stage and said, “We are going to cut out the

²¹ *Proceedings of the Cantors Assembly Convention*, 1997, pp. 80-86.

²² *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Benjamin S. Bloom, ed., Handbook 1, “Cognitive Domain” (New York: David McKay Co., Inc.), 1956.

next scene because the words are too hard, instead I want you to join in with me and sing *Yabi-babi bam*.” Yet we accept this in a synagogue service.

The role of the cantor is to steer the congregation musically and intellectually. He or she prompts them and then summarizes their prayers, making a running commentary of song to expound the text and direct the trend of thought of the congregation, exactly as leitmotifs are used by opera composers. Cantorial art is a “living, developing and creative musical structure,” in Eric Werner’s words.²³ But we don’t come to *shul* primarily to be entertained with a concert, although certainly we will be elevated by an artistic rendition of the liturgy. Rather, we come to immerse ourselves in a communal experience which is activated by nusah. Within the nusah, an inspired cantor can provide opportunities for “thoughtful listening.”²⁴ Professor Edwin Seroussi²⁵ has described these moments as “artistic spaces’ along one’s personal journey of worship.

Responses and Participation

The mention of “participation” strikes a chill into the heart of everyone trying to preserve traditional nusah. It has come to mean congregational singing of simple melodies as a substitute for correct nusah. The melodies may be inappropriate “cheap tunes,”²⁶ whose lack of connection to nusah flattens the mood, making each service sound like every other service; or adapted from nusah itself, with more or less success.

But there are abundant opportunities in an authentic nusah-rich service for participation. The most obvious case is the simple kind of response that actually dates back to the Temple itself, such as *Halleluyah* and *Hoshana*. The Psalms were composed to be responsive. How depressing it is that this tradition of response has been lost completely. For example, when a *ba'al t'fillah* begins Minhah with the expected “*Ashrei yosh'vei veitekha*” or Ma'ariv with the customary “*V'hu rahum*,” and is answered with silence; it is evident that no one in the congregation knows they should respond by reciting something. In some places they don’t even know to answer “*Amen*.” They are just waiting to be told when to sing the next song.

The concept of response, “so characteristic of synagogue tradition,”²⁷ is based on a universal human impulse. We can get further insight into this from Afro-American culture.²⁸ To give just one spectacular example, consider the immortal last speech of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which is structured on the rhythm (Ambrosian meter) of the hymn he quotes as the climax of his speech, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*. The rhythm of Dr. King’s speech allows for regular responses from his listeners--this is no longer a speech, it is liturgy. (For a more Jewish example, I recall recently attending a lecture on Yiddish poetry in which every other statement made by the professor was answered with “*Dot's rright!*” from the audience.)

The old-time cantor knew that his job was to provide musical cues for responses, for example with a dramatic modulation just before a congregational phrase such as *U-kh'tov*

²³ Eric Werner, *A Voice Still Heard*, p. 29.

²⁴ Michael Isaacson, *Journal of Synagogue Music*, 2010, p. 234.

²⁵ “In the Footsteps of ‘The Great Jewish Composer’,” *MinAd* (Israeli Studies in Musicology), 2004, p. 12 [on-line article].

²⁶ Zavel Kwartin’s phrase, quoted by Sholom Kalib, “Charles Davidson’s *Sefer Hadrakhah*,” p. 219.

²⁷ Eric Werner, *In the Choir Loft*, pp. 53-54.

²⁸ See for example Julius Lester, *Look out Whitey! Black Power’s Gon’ Get Your Mama!* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1969).

l'hayyim on *Shabbat shuvah* (between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur). Today's cantor has to know how to clap in 7/4 so that the congregation can sing the songs. But the songs have to be learnt by the congregation as carefully as authentic nusah does--even singing "upbeat"²⁹ songs requires training, as you will hear if you have the misfortune to attend a Carlebach service where most of the congregation do not know the melodies. The erroneous concept of "participation" has regrettably permeated what was previously a fortress of nusah and tradition, the (Orthodox) United Synagogue of London. In a recent interview, the organization's President, Stephen Pack, claimed that it was "a great trend" to have informal, participatory, member-led "hands-on" services with new tunes.³⁰

The Influence of Reform

The loss of nusah has largely resulted from the tremendous influence on modern services by Reform Judaism. In the nineteenth century Reform Judaism provided a "license to let go of Hebrew."³¹ By the mid-twentieth century the style was fixed: The rabbi would read aloud, the congregation responded in English, and the cantor and (often non-Jewish) choir "performed" in Hebrew. (This could lead to embarrassing moments: Eric Werner was forced to explicitly remind choir leaders that the *Gloria Patri* had no place in the synagogue).³² From this foundation the modern nusah-challenged cantor has arisen. We now find ordained rabbis stating that synagogue services are "boring," "stale" and "sterile";³³ "no congregations I knew of ever sang";³⁴ "Debbie Friedman taught us how to sing."³⁵ Decisions about liturgy are now made by "outsourcing" the congregation for their preferences, regardless of their background, knowledge or skills.³⁶ As a result, many cantors reared in this environment of a liturgy bearing little relation to the nusah-rich one that has been refined by centuries of cultural selection are nusah-challenged or even nusah-intolerant.

To arms!

Our age-old nusah-rich musical liturgy is under attack for reasons of expediency--people who never learned it are encouraged to ignore it because it's too "boring"; hiring cantors is too expensive; while any untrained person is told that leading a service is easy, and it's democratic to allow them to have a try. Our hope that a purposeful, meaningful, selection-based ("licked clean") tradition would so sensitize the congregation that they would laugh out loud when it was performed incorrectly, has gone unfulfilled. What have we got to lose by waging war against this capitulation to the lowest common denominator?

*A frequent contributor to JSM, Charles Heller is the award-winning author of **What to Listen For in Jewish Music** (www.ecanthuspress.com). His comments on "Un-Jewish Music" appeared in the 2014 issue, and it was this article that suggested the current issue's title.*

²⁹ This term is not merely a tempo indication, but has pejorative connotation as used, for example, by Sholom Kalib ("Charles Davidson's *Sefer Hadrakhah*, JSM, 2012, p. 22).

³⁰ Simon Rucker, "Enter the pop-up shuls," *Jewish Chronicle*, January 13, 2012.

³¹ Rabbi John Moscovitz, personal communication, April 30, 2012.

³² Werner, *In the Choir Loft*, p. 52.

³³ Rabbi David Wolpe, in his Introduction to Craig Taubman, *Friday Night Live Songbook* (Westwood, CA: Sinai Temple), 1999; Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, interview in *Canadian Jewish News*, December 19, 2012.

³⁴ Rabbi Eric Yoffie, speech at Debbie Friedman *Shloshim* (30-day Memorial) concert, Toronto, 2011.

³⁵ Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, speech at Debbie Friedman *Shloshim* concert, Toronto, 2011.

³⁶ Interview with Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, *Canadian Jewish News*, October 18, 2012.

D'VAR N'GINAH

Study Chant of the *Melamed*, Khayim-Itzik

***From the Yizkor Book of Horodets (Gorodets), Belarus
Akiva ben Ezra, Editor: 115-117***

The *kheder* teacher Khayim-Itzik never learned pedagogy, but to a certain degree he was a natural pedagogue who understood the physical and mental structure of a child. For example, he nailed a strip of wood between two legs of the table so that the children could rest their feet on it. He set the inkwells in sardine-cans and fastened them one to the other so that the children would not overturn them.

Khayim-Itzik's teaching was done sweetly, with singing. (Khayim-Itzik had a beautiful voice, he was aslo a *ba'al t'fillah*.)

The children are sitting around the long table. There are noodles on the table. The *Melamed* himself has prepared them. A small lamp hangs over his head and Khayim-Itzik teaches the Sedra *Vay'hi*. This is the verse: "And as for me, when I came from Padan" (Genesis 48:7), where Father Jacob apologizes to Joseph for having buried his mother Rachel in the middle of a field as he escaped with the family from his father-in-law Laban. The *Melamed's* eyes grow misty and in a low voice he begins:

Va'ani—"And I, although I now bother you with the details of my own imminent burial, I could not do the same for your mother Rokhl. I did not bury her in the Cave of Makhpeilah, and she was not even carried to Bethlehem. Yet all this was according to God's command. When Nevuzradan¹ will expel and exile the Jews, they will pass by Rokhl's burial place—and Rokhl will rise up crying out and asking for mercy. A voice from Heaven will answer: *Yeish sakhar lif'ulateikh* (Jeremiah 31:15-16)—"Your efforts shall be rewarded and your children shall return to their border!"

At these last words the *Melamed's* voice chokes up and the children start crying. The childish hearts know why they are crying: they and their parents are in exile...

This excerpt was submitted by regular JSM contributor Helen Winkler of Toronto, webmaster for Helen's Yiddish Dance Page. It was translated from the Yiddish by Hannah Kadmon. Khayim-Itzik's Study-mode chant, quoted here in its entirety from the Yizkor Book, is based on the Lithuanian tradition for cantillating Haftarah.

¹ Captain of the Guard for Babylonian Emperor Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:8-12).

Ler'n gezang

After Genesis 48:7

Melody based upon Lithuanian Haftarah Chant

Va - a - ni, khotch ikh bin dikh mat-ri - akh mit mayn ke - vu-roh, un tsu dayn mut-ter

ro - khl hob ikh nit a - zoy ge - ton. Ikh

hob zi nit ba - gro - ben, in der me - o - ras ha-makh-pey - loh, un zi a -

fi - lu nit ge-firt keyn beys le - khem. O - ber dos iz al - les ge-ven al pi ha - dib-bur, a -

zoy hot gott ge - hey - sen. Az ne - vuz - ra - don vet far - tri - ben di yi - den in

go - lus a - rayn, ve - len zey far-bay - geyn ro - khlz key - ver, un ro - khl vet oyf-shteyn,

shray - yen un vey - nen un be - ten ra-kha-mim. Vet ent-fe-r'n a bas kol: Yeish

so - khor lif - u - lo - se - kho, es iz do ge - tsolt tsu dayn tu - ekhts, un es

ve-len zikh um-ke-ren di kin - der tzu ze - yer gre-nits, v'-sho-vu vo-nim lig-vu — lom.

RECENT ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The Raw Material of European and Arab Music are Almost Identical

By David Muallem (translated by Yosef Zucker)

Scale systems and the scales that derive from them are the *raw material* of music. Over the years, I have asked many of my acquaintances who are familiar with European classical music if they know what the relationship is between the raw material of European music and that of Arab music. The answers I received indicated that the majority of my responders had never really considered the question and did not know how the raw material was used in “other music.” Among the answers I heard, for example, was that there are no scales in Arab music, or that there are not complete scales of eight tones in Arab music, but rather only microtones. Only a few knew that scales also exist in Arabic music.

Even those familiar with Arab music did not believe that both its musical system and that of European music are in any way close to each other, and certainly not *identical*. I too was surprised when, during research for the Hebrew edition of *The Maqām Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes*,¹ I discovered the closeness of the scale systems of both cultures. As a result, I changed the order of the chapters, and started with a discussion of European music. When I presented my findings to an audience of scholars of European music, one could sense the feeling of surprise in the room, as well as a certain disagreement with my declaration.

I was born in Baghdad and lived there until 1950, studying European classical violin for three years with Sando Albu, a Romanian musician who had settled there. Albu eventually received an appointment as the director of the European music department of the Institute of Fine Arts, where I had the good fortune to study during my last year in Baghdad. That year we founded an orchestra called The First Baghdad Philharmonic, and performed one public concert before I left for Israel. Even with this experience under my belt, I did not recognize the similarity between European and Arab musical culture until many years later.

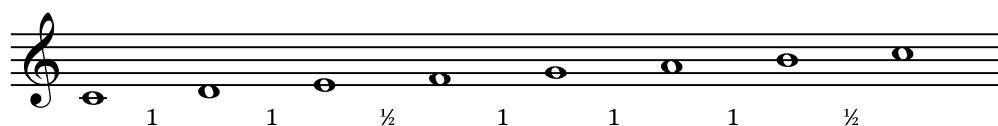
Before discussing the topic, I would like to point out that the religious music of Jews in Middle Eastern Arab countries (where synagogue prayers, including *piyyutim* and scriptural chanting) is based on the rules of the *maqām* just like Arab art music. All that is learned about Arab music in general can be applied to the synagogue music of Jews from Arab countries.

¹David Muallem, *The Maqam Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes* (Kfar Sava, Israel: OR-TAV), 2010. The original Hebrew edition was published in 2006 as הסולם והמקאם במסורת המוסיקלית הערבית (Kfar Sava, Israel: OR-TAV).

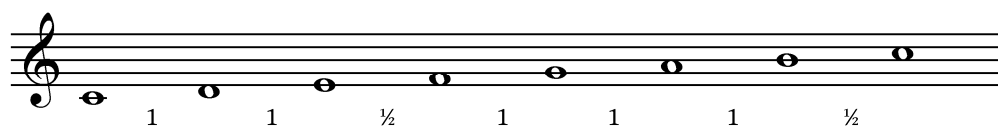
Nature did not give humanity music, nor is there music in nature. However, all the known tones are present in nature, and as far as I know, humanity did not add to them even a single tone. It was human beings who arranged the tones into music, and thus music is defined as an “organization of sounds.” The tones that are present by nature are not unlimited, but are spread over the range of an octave. Beyond the octave, each of the pitches repeats itself. Many cultures took advantage of this fact and built their scales in the framework of an octave. The ancient Greeks built a system of diatonic scales from which they derived the seven ancient Greek modes by reposition² of the tonic. In both European and Arab cultures, the Greek modes became known once the different musical systems developed. In Europe, for the most part only two of the ancient Greek modes were adopted, the Ionian (major) and Aeolian (minor). Arab culture adopted at least five of the modes, to be discussed below. We commence with a comparison of the scalar systems in both cultures, with the object of demonstrating their similarity. All of the examples that follow are discussed in detail in my previously mentioned book.

Example 1 gives two identical scales: C major; and ‘Adjam, an important *maqām* (mode).

C major scale:



Scale of maqām ‘Adjam:



Example 1: C Major and ‘Adjam scales

Notice that both of the scales are heptatonic (seven intervals, i.e., seven seconds), both are tonal (in the sense that both have a tonic), both are modal (in that they are built on modes in the form of scales), and both are diatonic products of the diatonic scale system. The ‘Adjam scale

² Reposition: the practice of moving, or *repositioning*, the tonic of a scale to one of its other notes, without changing the scales intervals, in order to create a new scale.

is also cyclical (cyclical scales repeat the same pitches in each octave). To make things easier from the start, I would like to point out that all the scales in Arab culture are heptatonic, tonal, and modal, with only a few exceptions that are not relevant to this discussion.

But there is further similarity between these scales. In European music, each mode is divided into two tetrachords. The lower tetrachord starts on the tonic, and the upper tetrachord starts on the fifth scale degree, or dominant. Thus the dominant is always the fifth scale degree and in both systems, the European and the Arab, it is always located on the scale degree where the second tetrachord starts. The two tetrachords are separated by a major or minor second.

Example 2 contains a chart of ancient Greek modes as well as the tetrachords (Greek *adjnas*, plural of *djins*) upon which they are built:

Ionian

Dorian

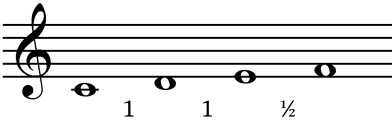


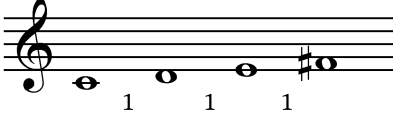
Phrygian

Lydian

Mixolydian

Aeolian

Locrian

Major or Ionian tetrachord	
Dorian tetrachord	
Phrygian tetrachord	
Lydian tetrachord	

Example 2: Ancient Greek modes and tetrachords

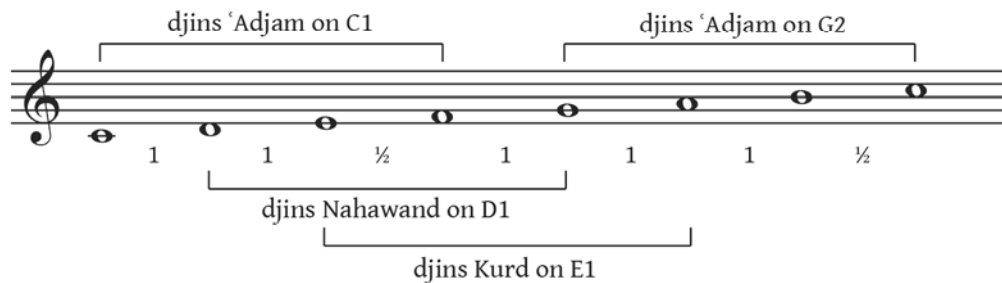
Example 3 shows the Arab **Maqām ‘Adjam**, its scale, *adjnas* and its similarity to the European C major scale (details follow):

The Scale



Intervals: 1–1– $\frac{1}{2}$ –1–1–1– $\frac{1}{2}$ (tones)

Analysis of the Scale

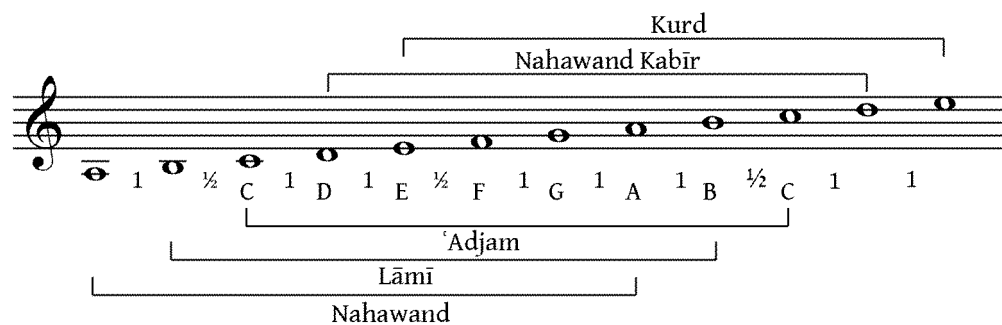


Example 3: Maqām ‘Adjam

Djins, the term for tetrachord in Arab culture, derives from the Greek word *genus* meaning “a species” or “a type.” For the moment, we can ignore the two *adjnas* that are marked under the staff. These are secondary *adjnas* particular to each scale, that are used primarily for modulation, the movement from one scale to another within a musical work, an essential element in Arab music.

We see that the scale of maqām ‘Adjam is divided into two *adjnas*, each consisting of four pitches, with an interval of a tone between them. As in European music, the second *djins* is always placed on the dominant, and the dominant is the fifth scale degree. (In Arabic, the dominant is called *ghammāz* or *ghammāz al-maqām*. The meaning of *ghammāz* is “wink” or “hint,” as it hints to another maqām that can be created from making it the tonic of another scale.) Finally, maqām scales also have leading tones (Arabic *zahir al-maqām*, meaning “the back” of the maqām). The similarities are self-evident.

Previously we said that Arab music adopted at least five of the diatonic modes and derived its maqām scales from them. **Example 4** demonstrates the connection:



Example 4: Five maqām scales derived from the diatonic mode

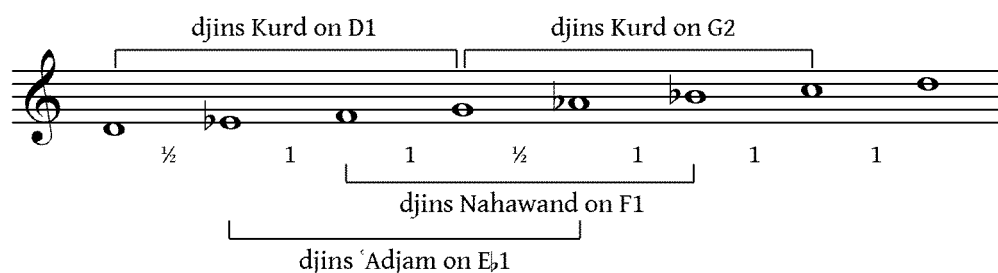
‘Adjam (Ionian), Nahawand (Aeolian), Lāmī (Locrian), Nahawand Kabir (Dorian), Kurd (Phrygian): all of these maqāmat, with the exception of a single scale to be discussed below, match the intervallic construction of the scale of maqām ‘Adjam shown in Example 1. We now consider **maqām Lāmī**, the lone exception to the rule (**Example 5**):

The Scale



Intervals: $\frac{1}{2}$ -1-1- $\frac{1}{2}$ -1-1-1 (tones)

Analysis of the Scale



Example 5: Maqām Lāmī

We have stated that Lāmī is identical to the Locrian mode in that its upper *djins*, if positioned on the fifth step of the scale, will be a Lydian tetrachord, which is a tritone. The tritone is not in use in European music nor in Arab music; in fact, there is not even a word for it in Arabic, it simply does not exist. In the notation of the scale of maqām Lāmī (example 5, above) we will notice that the second *djins* (i.e., the tetrachord) is repositioned backwards one note, and becomes *djins* Kurd (Phrygian tetrachord). In this case, the second *djins* is not separated from the first *djins*: rather they coincide on the fourth scale degree, and the remaining second is transferred to the end of the scale. Of course, the *ghammāz* or dominant is moved to the fourth scale degree, since it is a hard-and-fast rule that the upper *djins* must always be positioned on the *ghammāz*. Thus a new scale is formed which gives birth to a new maqām. This is a very exceptional phenomenon that is not found in European modes, but is found not infrequently in Arab music. Later we will see that the *djins* can be not only a tetrachord, but also a trichord or pentachord.

If Arab music was limited to the diatonic modes analyzed above, we could establish that the raw material of both systems is completely identical. However, in Arab culture one finds other scales which are not diatonic. Some are cyclical and derived from a system which is not diatonic, and others are not cyclical and perhaps not derived from a system at all. In my book, the scales in Arab music are classified into three categories:

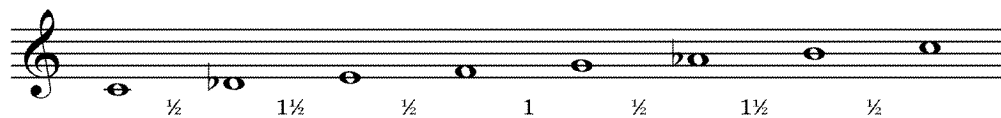
1. Scales that are derived from a diatonic system (which we discussed above)
2. Scales that are derived from a sequence of semitones but are not diatonic
3. Scales that include quartertonal (microtonal) intervals (for example, a second of $\frac{3}{4}$ tone and in rare instances of $\frac{5}{4}$ tone)

All the scales currently used in Arab music, in all three categories, include the elements which we identified as common to European scales in our above analysis of diatonic scales.

Scales on the Sequence of Semitones that are not Diatonic

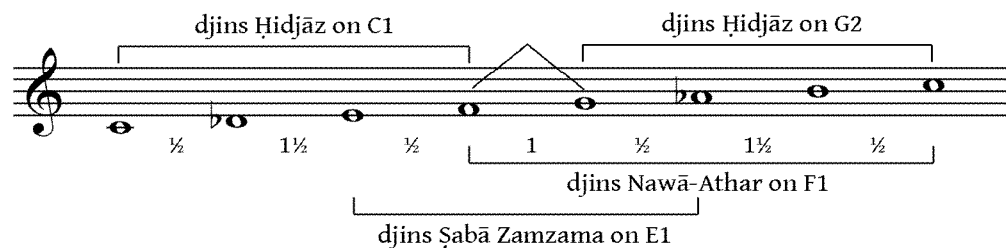
This type of scale will be represented by maqām Ḥidjaz-Kār (*kar* in Arabic means “work” or “business”). **Ḥidjāz-Kār** is a “worked over” Ḥidjāz (**Example 6**):

The Scale



Intervals: $\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ – 1 – $\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ (tones)

Analysis of the Scale



Example 6: Maqām Ḥidjāz-Kār

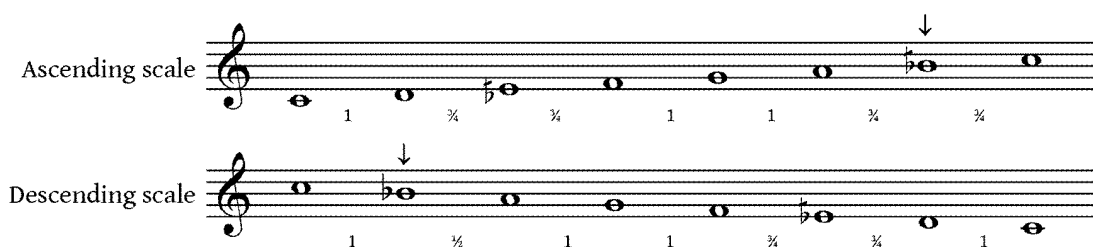
The outstanding feature of this scale is the presence of two augmented seconds. The *djins* that includes augmented seconds ($\frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$) is called *djins Ḥidjāz*; it is typical of emotional

maqāmat, and is used especially in the more complex maqāmat. We take note that this scale shares the basic characteristics of scales in European and Arab culture that were outlined above. Moreover, this scale has been used not infrequently by European composers, for example: Saint-Saens in the overture to his opera *Samson and Delilah*, Paul Ben-Haim in the second movement of his oratorio *Yoram*, and the Russian composers generally.

Scales that Include Microtones

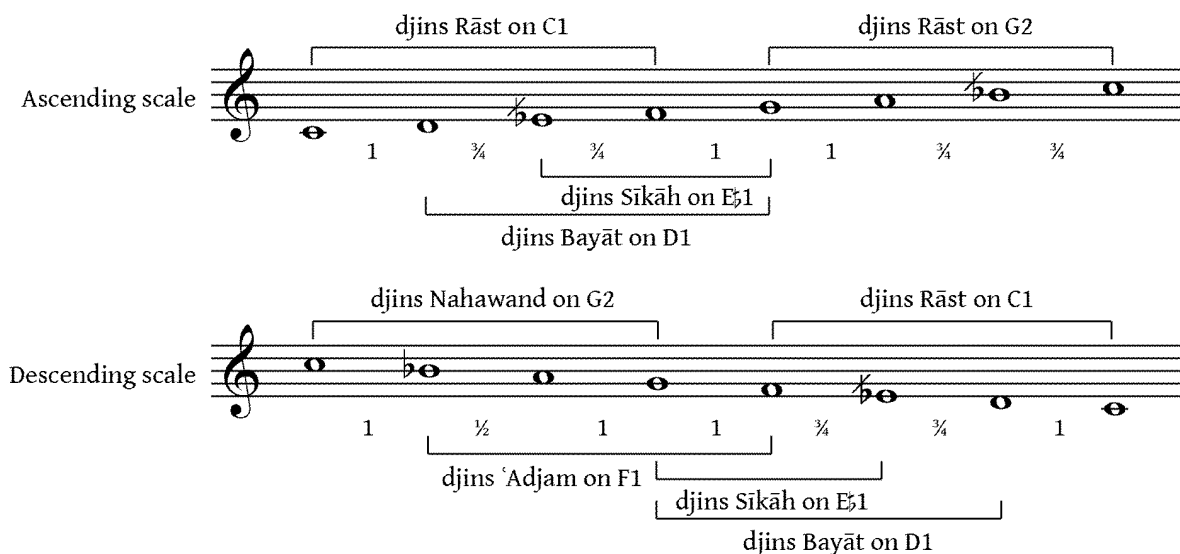
In Arab music, the octave is divided into 24 quartertones, and maqām scales which include quartertones are important in Arab culture. An example of such a scale is **maqām Rāst**, regarded as the father of this type of scale (**Example 7**):

The Scale



Intervals: ascending scale: 1-¼-¼-1-1-¼-¼ (tones)
 descending scale: 1-¼-¼-1-1-½-1 (tones)
 (ascending with B♭2; descending with B♭2)

Analysis of the Scale



Example 7: Maqām Rāst

Rāst is a cyclical scale – every reposition of the tonic on the sequence of pitches of the scale will bring us to another maqām scale, for a total of seven. The appearance of $\frac{3}{4}$ -tone seconds is always in pairs, and is most often produced by lowering the *lower* pitch of the semitone of the scale by a quartertone. If we look at the notation of maqām Rāst and imagine that it is a C major scale, we will immediately see that the third scale degree, E, and the seventh, B, are lowered by a quartertone, thus creating two pairs of $\frac{3}{4}$ -tones (signified by a “w” after the note): D-E w-F and A-B w-C. This observation is important to the student or performer and makes it easier for them to find and remember the location of these altered seconds in the scale.

If both systems, the European and the Arab, are so similar in the use of scales and scale systems, why do they sound like they came from different worlds? Even though the building blocks are made from the same material, the functions given to the various elements in each culture are different, an issue which we will discuss in a future article. Most of the reasons for the major differences between Arab and European music are not rooted in the scale system, but in other forces, essentially cultural. In this article, I desired only to demonstrate my position that the scale systems of both cultures are very similar.

*David Muallem, a retired judge in Israel, is the author of **The Maqām Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes**. The original Hebrew version of this book has become widely accepted in Israel, studied by students of both Arab instrumental music and *hazzanut*, and has recently been approved for use in high school music programs by the Israeli Ministry of Education. David Muallem dedicates most of his time to promoting the understanding of Arab music among musicians and music lovers alike. The Journal thanks Yosef Zucker, of OR-TAV MUSIC PUBLICATIONS, for translating this article from the Hebrew.*

ORIENTAL MUSICIANS THINK IN TERMS OF MELODIC LINE, THE DOMINANT FORCE IN MIDDLE EASTERN MUSIC, AND NOT IN TERMS OF HARMONY OR POLYPHONY AND VERTICAL STRUCTURE AS WESTERN MUSICIANS DO. THE MORE ELABORATE THE EMBELLISHMENTS, INTERVALLIC FINESSE AND COMPLEX RHYTHM OF THE MELODIC LINE, THE MORE INTERESTING AND SATISFYING TO THE ORIENTAL MUSICIAN.

(Johanna Spector, “Musical Tradition and Innovation,” 1957)

MAILBOX

Re: JSM *Tehillim* issue

September 8, 2014

Each year, the Jewish Community Choir of Central New Jersey, which Cantor Anna West Ott and I co-direct, selects a theme to unify our programs and attract an audience for our annual concert. This past year every song we sang had a text from *Tehillim*, for which purpose we chose a wide variety of composers, styles, periods and languages. When possible we paired two very different settings of the same text such as Palestrina's "Sicut Cervus," with the recent rhythmic, "K'ayal Ta'arog" by Nick Page. After singing the third movement of Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" which ends with "Hinei Ma Tov," we had the audience sing Mickey Pauker's new setting of that verse in his popular "Ee Oh" song.

We brought in a rhythm band to energize especially lively Psalm settings by Stephen Glass, Noah Aronson, Jeremiah Klarman and Andrew Bleckner, among others. We even adapted the music of Pharrel Williams' pop hit "Happy" to selected words from *Ashrei*. Serious settings by Rossi, Naumburg, Lewandowski, Palestrina and Bernstein rounded out the program. Many of the pieces are now on YouTube. All in all, it proved to be an uplifting evening for performers as well as audience, and I'd like to share with JSM readers a list of the selections that helped make it so.

Sheldon Levin

Edison, NJ

PSALM ENCHANTED EVENING

Conductors: Cantors Sheldon Levin, Ann West Ott
Piano: Dave Schlossberg Clarinet: David Goldfarb
Percussion: David Schiff, Kevin Werbe, Dana Stein, Margo Wolfson

***S'u Sh'orim* (Ps. 24)**

Samuel Naumbourg

***Adonai Ori* (Ps. 27)**

Jeremiah Klarman

***Mizmor l'David* (Ps. 29)**

Shlomo Carlebach, arr. Jacobson

***K'ayal Ta'arog* (Ps. 42)**

Nick Page

***Sicut Cervus* (Ps. 42)**

Giovanni da Palestrina

Elohim Hashivenu (Ps. 80)

Sing For Joy (Ps 84)

Happy-*Ashrei* (Ps. 84, 144, 115)

L'chu N'ranena (Ps. 95)

Mi Y'malel (Ps. 106)

Hallelu (Ps. 113)

Halleluyah-Va'anachnu N'varech Ya (Ps. 115)

Atzabehem Kesef V'Zohov (Based on Ps. 115)

Od'cha (Ps. 118)

Total Praise (Ps. 121, 118)

Chichester Psalms (Ps. 131, 133)

Psalm 150

FINALE: Psalm 150

Salamon Rossi

Theodore Morrison

Pharrell Williams, arr. Levin

Rob Raede

Chodorov, Ben-Melech, arr. Levin

Solomon, Sussman, arr. Epstein

Noah Aronson

Folk, arr. Levin

Stephen Glass

Richard Smallwood, arr. Barrett & Rao

Leonard Bernstein

Andrew Bleckner

Louis Lewandowski

IN JUDAISM, THE REGULAR RENDERING OF PSALMS SERVED... AS A FULFILLMENT OF THE DIVINE COMMANDMENT, "THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD"... FOR LET US NOT FORGET THAT THE HEBREW TERM FOR THE PSALTER IS *SEFER T'HILLIM*: THE BOOK OF PRAISE.

(Eric Werner, *The Sacred Bridge*, 1959)

MUSIC

Opening section of a Ma'ariv Service at the 2008 Cantors Assembly Convention

Sung by: Moshe Taubé

Transcribed by: Joseph Levine

V'hu rahum

ppp V' - hu ra - hum y'-khap - peir a - von v'-lo, v' - lo

7 v'-lo yash - hit; v'-hir - bah,

11 v'-hir - bah, v'-hir -

15 bah l'-ha - shiv, l'-ha - shiv ap-po v' - lo ya - ir, v' - lo ya - ir, v' - lo

19 ya - ir v'-lo ya - ir kol ha - ma - to;

23 v'-hu ra - hum y'-khap - peir a - von v' - lo yash - hit, v'-lo yash - hit, v'-

27 lo yash - hit v'-hi - r' - bah l'-ha - shiv ap -

31 po, l'-ha - shiv ap - po v'-lo, v' - lo, v' - lo ya - ir, v'-

36 lo ya - ir, v' - lo ya - ir, v'-lo ya - ir kol,

40 *ppp*

kol ha - ma to. ³ A-do - nai ho-shi - a

44 ³ ha-me lekha ya-a - nei nu, ha ³ me - lekha ya-a -

47 nei ³ nu; ha - me - lekha ya-a - nei - nu, ya a - nei nu, ha -

51 me - lekha, ha-me-lekha ya-a - nei - nu b' - yom kor - ei nu.

Bar'khu

55 Ba - r' - khu et a-do-nai ha-m' - vo rakh, ba -

58 rukh a-do-nai ha-m' - vo rakh l' - o - lam va ed.

U-ma'avir yom

62 U - ma - a - vir yom u - mei vi lai-lah u-mav-dil bein yom u-vein lai lah, a-do-

66 nai ts' - va - ot sh' - mo, eil hai v' - kay-

69 yam ta - mid yim-lokh a - lei-nu l' - o - lam va-ed. Ba-rukh a-tah a - do - nai,

73 ha-ma-a - riv a - ra vim

76 V'ahavat'kha

V' - a - ha - vat - kha al ta-sir mi-me - nu l'o - la -

79 mim. Ba - rukh a - tah, a - do - nai o -

82 heiv a - mo yis - ra - eil.

85 Sh'ma

Sh' - ma yis - ra - eil, a - do - nai e - lo - hei - nu, a - do - nai e - had.

Moshe Taubé is Cantor Emeritus at Congregation Beth Shalom in Pittsburgh, a former adjunct professor of Voice and Vocal Literature at Duquesne University, and a former faculty member of the Cantors Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary. “Being a Holocaust survivor gave me some notoriety,” he says. “Being No. 22 on Schindler’s list made me a bit of a celebrity... After the film was released (in 1993), I became a personage in much demand.”

When asked which notoriety Taube preferred--being a musician or Schindler survivor--Taubé quickly chose the former. “It pays better.” He recalled how at age 17, he first observed Schindler, a gruff man dressed in a white shirt who constantly smoked and discarded each cigarette after a single puff. But, Taubé explained, this was another of Schindler’s surreptitious heroic acts--while the Germans perceived Schindler’s discarded cigarettes as garbage, deprived Jewish prisoners quietly gathered his strewn “trash” and enjoyed the smokes, convinced that Schindler was a God-sent emissary. While Taubé came from a traditional home, he became more religious in the camps where, despite all, he felt the presence of God.

(After Adam Reinherz, “Holocaust Survivor Moshe Taubé,”
The Jewish Chronicle, Pittsburgh, December 25, 2014)

IN MEMORIAM

REB ZALMAN SCHACHTER-SHALOMI (1924-2014)

A professor at three different universities, he was sought out for consultation by the Dalai Lama, authored 26 books and was an emissary to college campuses during the 1950s with Reb Shlomo Carlebach. He had a huge influence on the Havurah movement, and founded the Jewish Renewal movement. As Reb Zalman can hardly be summed up in a single page, the editors have chosen to let his own words speak for him: part of his answer to a rabbinic colleague who asked him how well his neo-Hasidic approach had worked with teenagers at Camp Ramah, where he was a formative teacher (JSM vol. 34, Fall 2009, pages 139-40):



Photo: Yehudit Goldfarb, 1987

First of all, I had to listen to what they meant when they were saying particular words. Very often they used the expression, “and all that jazz.” It really meant they were afraid of *feeling*. In this case the kids wanted to find out what *daven’n* “and all that jazz” was all about... I was not offended by these words, because I knew that they were really groping underneath the words to come to terms with a warmth which they did not want to admit.

I knew that with patience, there was a great deal that could be done. During a camp experience it is very difficult to isolate a group of kids and sit with them at the *Shabbesdiker tish*—the Sabbath table... You know what happens in a camp dining room. Yet on Shabbat we found a place where we could sit, sing some *Z’mirot*, and give them a model to take back to their homes. I was satisfied not to try and sell all my *s’khoyre*—merchandise—because in that situation it was a buyer’s market.

REVIEW

Rabbi Zalman M. Schachter-Shalomi's

Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer

--with Joel Segal--Jewish Lights Publishing, 2012

Reviewed by Sam Weiss

The late Reb Zalman taught, wrote and re-wrote the contents of this book—under various titles and with various collaborators—throughout his trail-blazing and influential career. To pick but two of many such publications: The pamphlet “First Steps: A Devotional Guide,” reprinted in 1965 in *The First Jewish Catalog*, popularized some of his lessons on meditation, *kavvanah*, and the inner Jewish spiritual life; his 1993 book *Paradigm Shift* contains, within its varied chapters, his many far-ranging creative solutions to the “problem of the Siddur today.” Calling attention to the novelty of these approaches, he branded them collectively as “Davvenology.” As recently as 2010 he published his *Gates of Prayer: Twelve Talks on Davvenology*.

It is significant, then, to consider what might distinguish this particular end-of-life book from previous similar works. I believe that dwelling on the word “Jewish” in the title of *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer* may offer an answer. With this latest book the author is no longer shifting paradigms but clearly anchoring his writing in earlier classically Jewish paradigms. It is as if Reb Zalman’s regular appropriation of ideas and principles of other religions and philosophies in crafting his system of Jewish Renewal had mostly run its course. It was now time to turn inward, to briefly become again the straightforwardly Jewish spiritual advisor that the Lubavitcher Rebbe had intended him to be.

True, the reader will come across Sufi masters, Zen, Rolfing, Catholicism, Gospel singing, *pranayama* breath control, etc., but only in brief allusions. Where the book truly reverberates is in the *t’fillot* themselves, in the teachings of hasidic masters, in Torah and Talmud references, and most of all in Kabbalistic thoughts filtered through Chabad ideology. Although in a sidebar called “Dealing with Distractions” (pp.174-75) Reb Zalman does discuss his discovery in other spiritual traditions of what he thought was unique to Chabad (or even Judaism), in this book that ecumenical sidebar itself feels like a distraction. Reb Zalman’s famed ecumenicism is intimated by the front cover image of a nylon Rainbow Tallit; for me, however, the book more readily recalls the heavy woolen black-and-white Tallit in which Reb Zalman was laid to rest.

The meaningfulness and guiding hand that are tantalizingly proffered by the book’s title are somewhat undermined by the first brief chapter called “Whisper Language,” as well as by the final eighth chapter (“Advanced Practice: Prolonged Prayer”). The former informs us that beyond mere meaning and significance, what Reb Zalman is actually trying to reveal to us are the *secrets* of davening. In the latter chapter he soberly reminds the initiate that the necessary

methodology and skills can truly be attained only by imitating “expert” (preferably Chabad) daveners—of whom there are very few remaining today. Let us nevertheless try to get a taste of the remaining six chapters.

Intention: Davening with *Kavvanah*

The book’s introduction has already warned us that prayer is the hardest Jewish practice, just as it is the hardest practice in any religious tradition. This chapter discusses why it is so difficult: “A mind that seeks to catch itself at ‘minding’ has tied itself in knots... the more aware we are of our own *kavvanah*, the more distracted we have become” (p.15). One of the several solutions suggested is for one to practice meditating at length on a single thought or religious maxim (*shiviti ha-shem l’negdi tamid, davar b’ito mah tov*, etc.) and let this “practice mantra” sharpen, deepen, and expand one’s focusing skills towards more complex prayers and higher levels of *kavvanah*.

A higher level of direction and intention—or meta-*kavvanah*—can be more important than the more elusive specific or contextual *kavvanot*. Reb Zalman compares the resulting totality of intentions to “...a whirlpool: the water that goes through the vortex changes every second, yet the vortex holds its shape—not a solid shape, but a dynamic and active form” (p.25).

For those not familiar with his writing, the chapter on focusing the mind will introduce, ironically, Reb Zalman’s anecdotal, compulsively autobiographical, and sometimes rambling style. His Yiddish-inflected vocabulary reminds us that we are often reading a transcript of a rebbe’s oral discourse rather than a methodical exposition of ideas. “The flotsam and jetsam of the mind *khop* you” (i.e. “grab you”) is an example of his charming but arbitrary use of Yiddish. A glossary at the end of the book quaintly lists such Yiddish expressions along with the technical Hebrew and Aramaic terminology contained in the text. Even more interesting are the Yiddishisms overlooked by the editor, e.g. “this morning I came across a beautiful *word* in one of the Pearls of hasidic Wisdom”—by which he means a beautiful aphorism or interpretation (p.2).

According to Reb Zalman, *kavvanah* mediates between the left brain (exoteric, halakhic, discursive) side of Jewish prayer and its right brain aspects (esoteric, aggadic, contemplative). This mediation—and the very process of *kavvanah*—is greatly aided by the element of melody.

Niggun! A Soul in Song

The third chapter of *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer* should be read by all cantorial school students, and savored by everyone else. It is a sensitive kaleidoscopic account of how music in all its breadth, depth, and varieties animated the author’s *neshomeh*—his own davening and his prayer-leading—as well as a manifesto for allowing it to do the same for us. As befits the son of a Belzer Hasid, Reb Zalman (who “converted” as a teenager to Chabad Hasidism) does give pride of place to the vast storehouse of authentic hasidic *niggunim*, but he also incorporates many other musical experiences, including being a choirboy in Vienna’s *Polnische*

Tempel, a devotee of classical music, a penny whistler and clarinetist, and a partner with Shlomo Carlebach in their early days of riding the college circuit.

Above all, the word “Niggun!” in the chapter title also embraces *nusah ha-t’fillah*, which Reb Zalman rightly understands as conveying liturgical information and signals to the congregation, besides conveying beauty and emotion. **In sum, nusah is to davening what intonation is to speech.** But music is not just the constant companion of Jewish prayer, clothing the words: “Even the simplest niggun can serve as a prayer if sung with the right *kavvanah*” (p.30). The point of *n’ginah* in prayer is to take one to a level of “soul-vibration.” Consequently, the davener—whether musically inclined or not—is encouraged to create impromptu *niggunim* or short snatches on which to meditate or to help carry the words along.

Davening in the Four Worlds: A Deep Structure of Prayer

This title says “A Deep Structure of Prayer” as opposed to “**The** Deep Structure of Prayer,” but in Reb Zalman’s *Weltanschauung* it is clear that the latter is closer to the truth, and indeed the chapter’s first sub-heading reads “The Deep Structure of Prayer.” From this point onward the book dives into the contents of actual prayers, focusing on *shaharit l’hol*. The “Four Worlds” refers to the Kabbalah’s *arba’ah olamot* doctrine of layered reality—*atsilut* [“Emanation”], *bri’ah* (“Creation”), *y’tsirah* (“Formation”), *asiyah* (“Action”)—reflecting God’s creative process. These four categories are subjectively interpreted through a Chabad lens and paired with various sections of the service. Our task as *daveners* is to guide our soul’s journey through these stages and aid in its transformation. Reb Zalman puts great stock into the ideas contained in this chapter (which is why he counter-intuitively teaches this deep-structure level of the *shaharit* prior to the surface-level guide presented in the next chapter), but I must confess that they don’t speak to me personally. Nevertheless, his rabbinic and cantorial disciples have carried this methodology forward into the New Age through their own understanding and reinterpretations.

Following the Map: A Traveler’s Guide

This “nuts and bolts” part of the guide offers many novel suggestions for personalizing the davening experience. First of all are the choices for an overall approach to the task, which may include:

1. Daven with or without a siddur; in a synagogue or on your own.
2. All in Hebrew, a little Hebrew, or no Hebrew.
3. Choose the *d’oraita* [Statutory] prayers first, filling in the rest when the mood strikes.
4. Pick only a single line that speaks to your current emotional state.
5. Go straight through a service from Page 1 for a few minutes each day, until completed.

One working model that is suggested is the siddur as a loose-leaf binder to be organized as needed, including a section for taking notes after davening to track your spiritual progress. Another is “davening on a budget” which shrinks and expands to match your available time and other resources.

Next Reb Zalman takes us sequentially through the sections that make up the *shaharit*, with a plethora of personal interpretations for each. These include his usual clever analogies and *bons mots*, the sharing of autobiographical experiences, as well as idiosyncratic free-verse English restatements of some prayers. He prefers these to mere translations, which may be just as inscrutable or “un-prayable” in English as in Hebrew.¹ The sheer variety of sparkling possibilities revealed in every prayer he treats makes this chapter a liberating and enriching experience for both the novice and experienced davener alike.

The “Traveler's Guide” shows how the *birkhot ha-shahar* (including private prayers like *Asher yatsar*) can unite body and soul through movement and groundedness; he encourages a God-intimate understanding of the *p'sukei d'zimra* as songs of the heart; he vivifies the Temple service in Psalm 150 and similarly underscores the overall dynamic shifts in tone and intensity throughout the *t'fillot*—including a perceptive analysis of the switching of *sh'lihei tsibbur* at *yishtabeh* (p.103). Having engaged our body, soul, and heart, we come now to the *sh'ma u-virkhoteha*, which encourage meditation and contemplation. Here is an example of Reb Zalman's creative approach:

... moving up and down the spiritual ladder, like the angels in Jacob's dream, is especially true and important in this section of the davening. The angels could have said *kadosh* only once. Instead they say it three times. Why? In the past I used to think of it this way: There's a *kadosh*, a holiness that we feel in the body. When you're present at a death or a birth, you feel this kind of awe; Catholics might cross themselves at that point... The second *kadosh* is our best understanding of *kadosh*, the highest degree of holiness that we can possibly grasp. And the third one is: “If *kadosh* were only what I can understand, it would not be *kadosh*.” The third *kadosh* has to be beyond our understanding....

Now I go the other way also. I start with the highest *kadosh*... It emanates from the *s'raphim*, [who] live in the world of *b'ri'ah*, on fire with desire to gaze upon God's presence. Then I come down a little lower, to the *hayot ha-kodesh*, the signs of the zodiac, the holy creatures who populate the world of *y'tsirah*. Finally, I come down to the *ofanim*, the planets turning in their orbits in the world of *asi'ah*. At that point, addressing *Adonai ts'va'ot*—the God of multitudes, the God of infinite diversity—makes sense. Saying that “the whole earth is full of God's glory” is logical (p.108).

Continuing his meditation on numbers, he suggests reciting the Sh'ma declaration four times:

1. Imagining Moshe Rabbeinu saying it to all of us, then and until the end of time.
2. Hearing Moshe addressing only you, over all that distance of time and space.
3. As if you are addressing the people who are important to you.
4. As if on your deathbed, you are encapsulating all the Sh'ma declarations of your lifetime—which will come to your aid. (p.112)

¹ Readers may find that these prayer interpretations suffer from being *too* personal, even as they play fast and loose with the Hebrew original. More examples of them can be found in the author's *Sh'ma: A Concise Weekday Siddur for Praying in English*. His original English *piyyutim* are collected in *All Breathing Life Adores Your Name: At the Interface between Poetry and Prayer*.

Some sleight of mind is exercised to rationalize the concepts of *m'hayeih ha-meitim* (p.117) and *binyan beit ha-mikdash* (p.125), but Reb Zalman recasts and colloquializes the rest of the Amidah more forthrightly. This does make it more meaningful on a personal level, but it has the disadvantage of individualizing an important prayer which was famously composed in the collective plural. Another example of his favoring the trees over the forest are the mystical reasons he provides for the four Kaddish forms, without hinting at their simpler structural explanations (p.130).

At Home in *Shul*: The Synagogue Experience

The fact that the synagogue is only fully introduced well beyond the midpoint of the book is telling of its philosophy. In certain ways “At Home in *Shul*” is more about your own head in the context of the *shul* than it is about the *shul* and its congregation: Be comfortable, look around, pray what you want, let your mind wander, pick up an inspirational book from the back shelves, listen to the Torah and Haftarah readings for metaphors that speak to your own life, etc. Besides being you-centered, the “Synagogue Experience” can also be highly God-centered, e.g. the saying of *amein* as a spiritual practice (p.149). But rarely is it us-centered—i.e. saying *amein* for the reasons we normally associate with this custom and Halakhah.

One might expect that Reb Zalman, a world-famous leader of prayer communities, would convey some of the meaning and importance of this functionary, but in this chapter he deconstructs the role of the *sh'liah tsibbur* in a manner that is overly Zalman-centered. He confesses:

Many times I have felt torn between my role as a leader and my role as a davener, a person who needs and wants to talk to God... When you see me with the *tallis* over my head... then you have to understand that I'm not focusing on you. I'm focusing on God. (pp.150-51).

His paraphrase of the High Holiday piyyut *Heyeih im pifiyot* is strangely skewed as well. He suggests that whenever you are in a synagogue you might pray:

Dear God, I hope the *sh'liah tsibbur* will be a messenger for my soul and my issues as well. Please help her in this way, so I might feel that she represents me as well (p.152).

Who Am I to Give Blessings?

Of course, Zalman-centeredness characterizes much of Rabbi Schachter-Shalomi's writing, and one learns to accept, for example, an occasional egocentric passage about humility or a bit of discomfiting inner exhibitionism: “My entire life and everything I do are nothing but God Godding Godself as Zalman” (p.179). The necessary tug-of-war between a healthy ego and a proper humility is the subject of many sermons and classic hasidic homilies—as well as the subject of the brief sixth chapter on allowing oneself to be a conduit for blessing. It discusses the responsibilities of being a *kohein*, a rebbe, or a *sh'liah tsibbur*, and balancing the ideas of exceptionalism and egalitarianism.

In a 1970s quip often attributed to Rav Elazar Shach (1899-2001), modern-day Chabad Hasidism was described as “the religion closest to Judaism.” This was a prescient jab at its dabbling in messianism even decades before the Lubavitcher Rebbe’s death in 1994. Chabad’s massive programs of outreach—of which Reb Zalman was among the earliest exemplars—eventually served as his pathway out of traditional Judaism.² Although Chabad rejected him in the 1960s, this traditional iconoclast never rejected its teachings; he only built new edifices upon their foundations. It is only fitting, then, that Reb Zalman, a Lubavitch-ordained rabbi, would base his final book on its teachings.

The term “neo-hasidic” has gone through many iterations and applications, principally describing the use of hasidic concepts by non-Orthodox thinkers and leaders, from Martin Buber to Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and others. In recent years, however the “neo-hasids” are more likely to be yeshiva-educated Modern Orthodox young men and women who are seeking to fill a void in their Judaism— particularly in their davening—through the teachings of classic hasidic texts. I believe that the ideal reader of *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer* may not be the liberal Jews envisioned by the author, but these seekers who know full well Reb Zalman’s maxim “theology is not prayer.” They would do well to supplement their new-found appreciation for the hasidic masters with this small very accessible Guide which describes how “a prayer truly prayed is the beginning of its own answer” (p.119).

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² In the eyes of some observers, Jewish Renewal may even represent an exit from Judaism proper. See Shaul Magid, *American Post-Judaism: Identity and Renewal in a Postethnic Society* (Indiana University Press, 2009).



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The Journal of Synagogue Music is published semi-annually. Current and past issues are accessible through a link on the website: www.cantors.org

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ISSN 0449-5128