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*Cover Montage: A Half-century of Key  
Figures in Synagogue Music*



## **Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year**

**March 2017**

**Volume 42**

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### **RECENT ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH**

#### **On the Proper Accentuation of Hebrew Prayer: A Comparative Approach**

Jacob Adler .....2

#### **Comparing *Nusah ha-t'fillah*, Arabic *Makamat* and Hindustani *Ragas***

Neil Schwartz.....32

#### **The Raw Material of European and Arab Music Are Almost Identical—Part II**

David Muallem .....49

#### **Sometimes a *munah pasek* is just a *munah pasek***

Joshua R. Jacobson .....63

### ***N'GINAH L'MA'ASEH***

#### ***B'tal'lei orah* – an Alternative *Tal* from the Sephardic Tradition**

*Siddur Lev Shalem*, page 376 .....68

Music: Benjamin Z. Maissner; Arrangement: Sid Robinovich .....69

(Click anywhere on the first page of the music to access the audio file)

### **REVIEWS**

#### ***Anthology of Classic Jewish Folk Songs*, edited by Velvel Pasternak**

Sam Weiss.....80

#### ***The Rabbinical Assembly's Siddur Lev Shalem***

Laurence D. Loeb.....86

### **IN MEMORIAM**

**André Hajdu (1932-2016)**.....90

# RECENT ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL RESEARCH

## On the Proper Accentuation of Hebrew Prayer: A Comparative Approach

*By Jacob Adler*

Though this journal is aimed at a Jewish audience, readers might be familiar with the beloved hymn of our Christian brothers and sisters, “Abide with Me:”<sup>1</sup>

*Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.  
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, Lord, abide with me!*

Most readers have, however, probably never noticed—indeed, even Christians who sing the hymn week-in and week-out have probably never noticed—that in the first line alone there are three places where the accents have been displaced from the syllables where they would fall in spoken English. When speaking the first line, we would say,

*a-BIDE with ME, FAST falls the E-ventide.*

The hymn, however, has us sing:

*A-bide with ME fast FALLS the even-TIDE (Ex. 1a).*

Ex. 1a: Abide with Me



Now that this fact has been pointed out, we can imagine some ambitious young music minister making the necessary “corrections”:

*a-BIDE with ME, FAST falls the E-ventide (Ex. 1b).*

Ex. 1b: Abide with Me - “corrected”



<sup>1</sup> This hymn has in fact been used as a part of Jewish worship. See Walter Ehrlich, *Zion in the Valley: The Jewish Community of St. Louis*, 2 vols. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997), vol. 1: 297, n. 29. Presumably the one Christological stanza was omitted. See also Charles Wallach, “The Mother’s Son,” <http://www.faithinitiative.co.uk/article.php?issue=1331800908>, accessed 26 October 2014.

But any music minister who ventured such a change on a Sunday morning would on Monday find himself summoned before the church's Worship Committee. The hymn is correct as it is. The displaced accents are perfectly acceptable, and no change is needed. Indeed, "Abide with Me" is justly ranked among the classics of hymnody, whereas the proposed changes are bizarre and grotesque. Our Christian brothers and sisters would not put up with any such nonsense.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, many readers of this Journal have likely cut their musical teeth on Schubert Lieder, such as those comprising the wonderful song-cycle, *Die Winterreise*. Such readers probably failed to notice that in the very first line of the first song (*Gute Nacht*) there occurs a word whose accent is displaced from its usual position in spoken German...

*Fremd bin ich ein-ge-ZO-gen* . . . (Ex. 2a),

Ex. 2a: Schubert, *Die Winterreise*, "Gute Nacht"



...rather than the usual accentuation, *EIN-ge-zo-gen*. We can imagine some clever vocal music student "correcting" this anomaly (see Ex. 2b); it is harder to imagine a music teacher tolerating it.

Ex. 2b: "Gute Nacht" "corrected"



A somewhat different example: probably fewer readers have attempted to sing the beloved French song, *La Vie en rose*, though many will have heard Edith Piaf's famous recording of it. When the title words are sung, Piaf pronounces the word *rose* in two syllables, contrary to the norm in spoken French. The anomaly is easily "corrected." Piaf herself is dead and can no longer change what she did, but we can imagine that an English-speaking student, in the process of learning French, might suppose that Piaf had made a mistake and should have sung the word as a monosyllable. Such a student, of course, would be displaying his or her ignorance, not knowledge, of French. What Piaf sang is correct as it is, and no change is needed.

Yet changes of just the sort suggested above in "Abide with Me" and *Gute Nacht* are being imposed on Jewish worshippers. Nor is this a new phenomenon. The great Salomon Sulzer practiced it in Volume 2 of his magnum opus, *Schir Zion*, and in this practice was succeeded by his son, Joseph, who edited a later edition Volume 1 with the same principle in mind. As Joseph Sulzer wrote, "[I]n a number of songs from Volume 1, for the sake of a more

<sup>2</sup> Not that the problem has been entirely absent from Christian hymnody. See Robert Bridges, "About Hymns," in his *Collected Essays*, vol. 9 (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), pp. 67-73, at pp. 70-71.

correct accentuation of the syllables of the Hebrew text, some emendations have been made; in so doing the oral instructions of the Master, as well as his works—volume 2 of *Schir Zion* and *Duda'im*—have served as guidelines.”<sup>3</sup> According to one biographer, S. Sulzer was the *first* to try to correct (according to his own lights) the accentuation of Hebrew in liturgical music.<sup>4</sup> A direct line can likely be drawn from these efforts of the Sulzers to the contemporary attempts to correct what are perceived as mistaken accents.

Boaz Tarsi has done a great service to cantors and other *ba'alei t'fillah*, as well as Jewish worshipers in general, by pointing out this fact in his excellent article,<sup>5</sup> which appeared some time ago in the pages of this Journal. Tarsi quite thoroughly covers the Hebrew side of the question, and I can find little to add regarding that aspect of things.<sup>6</sup> The changes that Tarsi flags as unnecessary do indeed seem to me unnecessary and detrimental. Yet Tarsi's article leaves one question unanswered: Why are such unnecessary changes being made in Jewish liturgical music? After all, the people making the changes—the *hazzanim* and arrangers—are presumably well-educated, artistically sensitive musicians. Why would they do such a thing?

I wish in this paper to propose an answer: First, to a native speaker of Hebrew, such as Tarsi, the unaltered versions of the melodies cited in his paper simply *sound* right. Musically sensitive native speakers can use their intuitive perception to determine such things. The revisers, on the other hand, are mostly not native speakers of Hebrew.<sup>7</sup> They (and I include myself here) must rely on a knowledge of the rules of musical prosody to know what changes are

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<sup>3</sup> Joseph Sulzer, “Vorwort zur neuen Ausgabe des Werkes Schir Zion,” in Salomon Sulzer, *Schir Zion*, revised by Joseph Sulzer (Frankfurt: J. Kauffmann, 1922), p. 10. My translation. Salomon Sulzer refers obliquely to what is clearly the same process in his *Denkschrift* to the Vienna *Kultusgemeinde*: among the three first tasks he set for himself in the restoration of the cantorial art was to “emend the pronunciation of the Hebrew, inasmuch as it was impossible to introduce the pronunciation of the Sephardic Jews, which has become strange to the German ear.” (Salomon Sulzer, *Denkschrift an die hochgeehrte Wiener israelitische Cultus-Gemeinde* [Vienna: Winter, 1876; rpt. in *Kantor Salomon Sulzer und seine Zeit*, ed. Hanoch Avenary [Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1985], p. 175). Clearly he would have wished to do the latter if it had been possible, but made do with introducing the Sephardic accentuation of words, while retaining the Ashkenazic pronunciation of vowels and consonants.

<sup>4</sup> Eric Mandell, “Salomon Sulzer 1804-1890,” in *The Jews of Austria: Essays on their Life, History and Destruction*, ed. Josef Fraenkel (London: Valentine, Mitchell, 1967), p. 229. Mandell unfortunately does not provide a specific citation to document this claim; he merely refers the reader to the Eric Mandell Library of Jewish Music and the Hebrew Union College Library.

<sup>5</sup> Boaz Tarsi, “On the Placement of Hebrew Accents,” *Journal of Synagogue Music* 29.1 (2003):1-30.

<sup>6</sup> I would add to Tarsi's article only the Biblical Hebrew phenomenon of *Nasog ahōr*, according to which, when two accented syllables come together, the accent of the first word is retracted to the next-to-last syllable. So for example in Genesis 1:5, the words *kara laylah* (“He called [it] night”) are accented *KA-ra LAY-lah*. The word *kara*, usually accented on the last syllable, has its accent retracted. I take this to be a primarily musical phenomenon, though we cannot know the original function of the *t'amim* (Biblical neume symbols). See H. F. W. Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, ed. E. Kautzsch, trans. A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910), § 29f-g.

<sup>7</sup> Aside from those whose biographies are available online, one may get some sense of the arrangers' origin from their diasporic names.

required and what tunes are acceptable as they are. Unfortunately, they apply the wrong rules. There seem to be two rules at play in their minds:

1. The accentuation of Hebrew as sung should coincide with the accentuation of Hebrew as spoken.<sup>8</sup>
2. The musical accent must always coincide with the accent of the words as they would be spoken.

To show the problems with these rules, I use some informal comparative linguistics. As the examples above show—and the examples below will show—if we apply those two rules to English-language song, we would make changes that are unnecessary—often indeed bizarre and hilarious.

I concede from the beginning the general point that many Jewish liturgical composers have been—alas, many still are—insufficiently acquainted with Hebrew to avoid errors. In such cases, we have good reason to correct their mistakes, if we can do so without undermining the whole piece; or else we must find something else to sing. I concede also that in some cases, the changes have been well and artfully done. A good example can be found in Abraham Binder’s “Kindling of the Sabbath Lights.”<sup>9</sup> In this case, the chant-like nature of the setting allows the reviser to make the changes without damage to the artistic quality of the whole. My point here is that many things that have been identified as errors are really not errors at all, and that for English-speakers a comparison with English will help avoid such overcorrections.

The case of “Abide with Me” shows the nature of the problem. Most of those who sing or listen to the hymn are native speakers of English. As such, we have an intuitive awareness that the hymn is correct as is. Indeed we don’t notice anything odd about it. We have so thoroughly internalized the principles of English musical prosody that we apply them without conscious awareness and realize that there is no problem. In particular, we know intuitively that English allows a certain degree of accent displacement in the language as sung, as compared with the spoken language. We are no more aware of this fact than we are of the fact that the “t” in “tea” is pronounced differently than the “t” in “steam.”<sup>10</sup> In a similar way, unless we focus our attention on the issue, we have no conscious knowledge of the principles that permit certain accent displacements in English song. When we sing them, we displace the accents and the songs simply sound right to us.

When we turn to Hebrew song, we Anglophones have neither a native speaker’s intuitive sense of what is allowable, nor are we consciously aware that there are principles governing

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<sup>8</sup> See below, note 16 and accompanying text.

<sup>9</sup> Original as in Abraham Binder, *Kabbalath Shabbath* (New York: Bloch, 1940), pp. 2-4; revised version in *Gates of Song* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1987), no. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Though every native speaker correctly aspirates the first *t* and refrains from aspirating the second, most of us are totally unaware of any difference between the two sounds unless we pay careful attention to them. The difference can be *felt* more easily than it can be heard: if one places one’s hand in front of one’s mouth while pronouncing the two words, one feels a puff of air accompanying the “t” in “tea,” but not the “t” in “steam.”

what is allowable (since we have no comparable conscious knowledge in English). We therefore come to believe all too easily that the word accent must always coincide with the musical accent. Such is not the case.

If I may adduce a bit of anecdotal evidence, I once found myself speaking with a person involved in editing Jewish liturgical music<sup>11</sup>—one of the people making the changes under discussion here. When asked the reason, he said it was important that children should learn correct Hebrew, and that by singing songs with displaced accents, they would be learning to make mistakes in Hebrew. I pointed out to him that in English-language song, accent is often shifted from the place where it would usually fall in the spoken language. I sang as an example the second stanza of “Tell Me Why” (see Ex. 6 a-b below). He confessed himself surprised, and said he had not realized that such things occurred in English-language song. I mention this not as an example of ignorance—for this was a knowledgeable person—but to show that our knowledge of when one can shift accents in English-language song is largely subconscious, and this subconsciousness leaves us unaware that any such shifts are taking place.

It may be a truism, but singing is not the same as speaking. I know of no language—I would venture to say that there is no language—in which the words of song receive exactly the same pronunciation, rhythm, and accent as the same words would receive in ordinary speech. In fact, if we look at English, not merely is this the case with regard to sung as opposed to spoken words: it is readily seen that a word in isolation may be pronounced and accented differently than the same word as part of a sentence.<sup>12</sup> These differences are part of what one learns when one learns a language. Thus our imaginary student of French must learn that the *e mute*, though silent in spoken French, may be pronounced in French song.

Indeed, unless we are dealing with recitative or chant, the rhythmic and accentual features of song *must* differ from those of the spoken word. No one ordinarily speaks in 3/4 or 4/4 time, or in any other such pattern (unless it is a matter of reciting poetry). It is therefore impossible to make the rhythmic and accentual features of song coincide exactly with those of ordinary speech. Anyone who tries to do so is applying an inappropriate and impossible standard, and the results are bound to be distorted. If one somehow manages to make them coincide exactly, the musical qualities of the song will be badly undermined.<sup>13</sup> And if one were

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<sup>11</sup>I am no longer certain of the person’s name, and would in any case suppress it, since I would not want to confront a person in print with words spoken in a casual conversation. I do, however, believe that this person’s reaction is representative of what happens generally.

<sup>12</sup> See Morris Halle and Jean-Roger Vergnaud, *An Essay On Stress* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1987), §7.9, pp. 263-276.

<sup>13</sup> A similar point is made by Robert Bridges, “On Hymns,” in *Collected Essays, Papers, &c.*, 10 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1927-1936), vol. 9, pp. 70-71. Bridges was Poet Laureate of Great Britain from 1913 to 1930, as well as a musician—he edited *The Yattendon Hymnal*, an influential English hymn book—facts that (to my mind) give considerable weight to his words on this subject. An excerpt from Bridges’ essay is worth quoting here: “[O]ne of the proper questions that would first arise would be . . . whether the accented notes in the tune require always a corresponding accent in the words. I think that the intelligent hymn-singer is getting much too squeamish on this head. I do not find that an

to speak metrically in 3/4 or 4/4 time, it would be thought bizarre. Each language has its own ways of accommodating words to music. French, as we have seen, allows one to lengthen words by way of the *e mute*. Italian allows one to shorten them by elision (merging: *l'amore*). In Venda song, spoken-word-accent gives way to musical accent.<sup>14</sup> English and, as Tarsi has shown, Hebrew allow for a certain degree of accent-shifting.

Obvious though this fact may be, it seems to be ignored by many of those who edit and perform our liturgical music. There is little written documentation of this process. One of the few places where it is documented is in Judah Cohen's dissertation, later embodied in a book, a study of Reform cantorial training. Cohen notes that "students and faculty would merely use Sephardic Hebrew speech patterns as their model [for appropriate singing], and make their determinations accordingly."<sup>15</sup> They are thus doing in Hebrew things that they would never dream of doing in English. I hope, by examining English examples, to bring this point home to native speakers of English.

First, however, I wish to look at a French case, since in French (and some other languages) the differences between the sung and spoken language actually enter the written text (at least in musical scores), and so are easier to document and more consciously evident to speakers of the language.<sup>16</sup> The English differences are apparent only to the ear (and even then only to the attentive ear), not the eye. In French, as we have seen, the "mute e," which is silent in ordinary speech, is often pronounced in poetry and song. Thus one speaks the words *frère Jacques* in two syllables, but sings them in four: *frè-re Jac-ques*. This phenomenon occurs at all levels, from the National Anthem through opera through popular song through ditties like *Frère Jacques*. Thus we sing:

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occasional disagreement between accent of words and of music offends me in a hymn. A fine tune is an unalterable artistic form, which pleases in itself and for itself. The notion of its giving way to the words is impossible. The words are better suited if they fit in with *all* the qualities and accents of the tune, but it is almost impossible and not necessary that they should. Their *mood* is what the tune must be true to; and the mood is the main thing. . . [T]he enormous power that the tune has of enforcing or even of creating a mood is the one invaluable thing of magnitude, which overrules every other consideration." I have standardized Bridges' eccentric spellings.

<sup>14</sup> For documentation of this fact in French and Italian, see Paul F. Zweifel, "Son-ne Trompette Eclatante!" (article in English) ([http://www.pzweifel.com/music/son\\_ne\\_trompette\\_eclatan\\_te.htm](http://www.pzweifel.com/music/son_ne_trompette_eclatan_te.htm)). For Venda, see John Blacking, *Venda Girls' Initiation Schools* (Belfast: Queen's University, Department of Social Anthropology, 1998), the chapter entitled "Venda Music" ([http://www.era.anthropology.ac.uk/Era\\_Resources/Era/VendaGirls/VendaMusic/Mu\\_SpT\\_Text.html](http://www.era.anthropology.ac.uk/Era_Resources/Era/VendaGirls/VendaMusic/Mu_SpT_Text.html)).

<sup>15</sup> Judah M. Cohen, *Becoming a Reform Cantor: A Study in Cultural Investment*, Ph.D. thesis, Harvard 2002, p. 256; cf. Cohen, *The Making of a Reform Jewish Cantor: Musical Authority, Cultural Investment* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), p. 139. More strictly speaking, one should say *Israeli* Hebrew rather than Sephardic, since the former is what results when Ashkenazim adopt some but not all traits of actual Sephardic speech.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g., Jason Nedecky, *French Diction for Singers* (Brampton, Ont.: Printed for the Author), p. 3.

*Allons enfants de la Patri-e!*

with *patrie* sung in three syllables, rather than the two it has in speech. An opera singer sings

*Bel-le nuit, O nuit d'amour,*

with *belle* in two syllables, not one as in speech. In a cabaret we may listen to

*la vie en ro-se,*

though when speaking we say the last word in one syllable. This is part of what one learns when learning French, and someone who insisted on singing the *Marseillaise* with *patrie* in two syllables, far from demonstrating his knowledge of French, would (as we have noted) be flaunting his ignorance.<sup>17</sup>

It is important to note that this process is not random, but rule-governed. A person who tried pronouncing other silent letters would be making a mistake or a joke: the rule does not permit such things.

### Accent-Shifting in English

Let us turn then to English. The relevant standard is, I suggest, the reactions of competent native speakers. If competent native speakers sing or listen to a song without noticing anything out of the ordinary, we may say that the language usage in the song is perfectly correct. If they find something odd but acceptable, we may consider it a permissible deviation from perfect correctness.

Looking back at the first line of our hymn, we notice that we say *E-ventide*, but in the hymn we sing *even-TIDE*. When we sing the word this way, we notice nothing amiss. If we were to speak it this way, it would sound odd. Why the difference? It stems from the fact that in sung English, the accent of three-syllable words moves rather freely from the first to last syllable. Thus we say *tennes-SEE*, but we sing the *TEN-nessee WALTZ* (Ex. 3a).

Ex. 3a: Tennessee Waltz



<sup>17</sup> French has not been free of the problem parallel to the one under discussion here. Some singers of French opera have been eliminating this silent *e*. See Paul F. Zweifel, "Son-ne Trompette Eclatan-te [*sic*]" [http://www.pzweifel.com/books-Bridge/son-ne\\_Trompette\\_Eclatan-te.htm](http://www.pzweifel.com/books-Bridge/son-ne_Trompette_Eclatan-te.htm), accessed 4 November 2014. A propos Frère Jacques, it is interesting to note a shifted accent in the Hebrew version: the third line is *hap-PA-amon m'-TSAL-tsel* ("the bell is ringing"); in speech, one would say *hap-pa'amon m'tsal-TSEL*.

Nor would we improve the song if we “corrected” the accent (**Ex. 3b**).

Ex. 3b: Tennessee Waltz "corrected"



Similarly:

*In some en-CHANT-ed ren-dez-VOUS  
That over-LOOKS the a-ven-UE.*

In speech, we would say *A-venue*. If we said *aven-UE* listeners would find it odd. Similarly:

*Why she HAD to go, i don't KNOW, she wouldn't SAY.  
i said SOME-thing wrong, now i LONG for yes-ter-DAY.*

In the spoken language, we would say *YES-ter-day*.

Or take this case:

*My WILD I-rish ROSE  
The SWEET-est FLOW'R that GROWS.  
You may LOOK ev'-ry-WHERE, but NONE can com-PARE  
To my WILD I-rish ROSE,*

with *ev'-ry-WHERE* in place of the usual spoken *EV'-ry-where*.

And in Handel's *Messiah*,

*And HE will pu-ri-FY,*

with a grand melisma on *-FY*. Some other examples of this sort:

*i get no KICK from cham-PAGNE  
mere al-co-HOL does-n't THRILL me at ALL*

with *al-co-HOL* instead of *AL-co-hol*. In the seventh (the next-to-last) stanza of “Abide with Me,” one sings, *WHERE is death's STING? Where, GRAVE thy vic-to-RY?* (*vic-to-RY* instead of *VIC-to-ry*). The popular song “Tenderly,”<sup>18</sup> from the film *Torch Song*<sup>19</sup> has the vocalist sing not *TEN-der-ly* but *tend-der-LY*. Indeed, the word occurs repeatedly in a very prominent position. And when the United States Marines fight their country's battles, they do so from the halls of

<sup>18</sup> *Tenderly*, words by Jack Lawrence, music by Walter Gross, ©1946, 1947 Edwin H. Morris & Co., a division of MPL Communications, Inc. Can be found at [http://www.mplcommunications.com/song\\_display.asp?SongNum=2143](http://www.mplcommunications.com/song_display.asp?SongNum=2143).

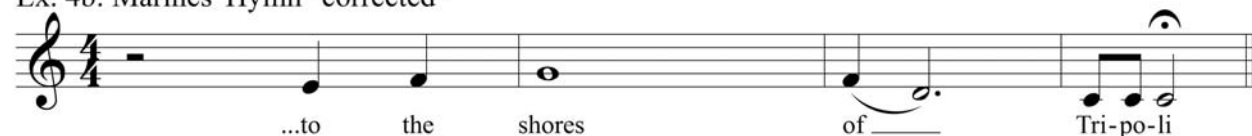
<sup>19</sup> *Torch Song*, dir. Charles Waters (MGM, 1953).

Montezuma to the shores not of *TRIP-o-li* (as we pronounce the word when speaking) but of *trip-o-LI*. If we were to try to “correct” this anomaly, the result would be odd indeed (see **Ex. 4a-b**). Similarly, we may speak of our darling CLEM-en-tine, but we sing of Clem-en-TINE.

Ex. 4a: Marines' Hymn



Ex. 4b: Marines' Hymn "corrected"



Note that we could not move the stress of a three-syllable word from the beginning or end to the middle syllable: In “Cocktails for Two,” for example, we may sing *a-ven-UE* to rhyme with *ren-dez-VOUS*, but we could not sing *a-~~V~~EN-ue* to rhyme with *MEN-u*.

*as we per-USE the tempt-ing MEN-u*  
*and o-ver-LOOK the broad a-~~V~~EN-ue*

The rules of English musical prosody do not allow for this change.

Another regularity: We also find that it is sufficient if the syllable with primary word-accent is paired with a secondary musical accent. Thus the children’s ditty

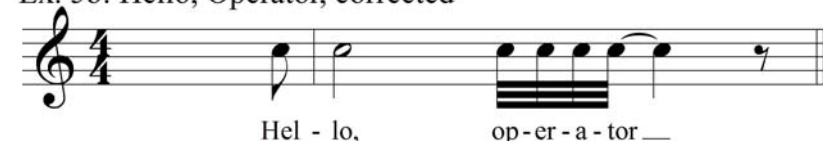
*HEL-lo OP-e-RA-tor, GIVE me NUM-ber-NINE<sup>20</sup>. . .*

Although we say *OP-e-RA-tor*, with the primary accent on the first syllable, we can sing this (see **Ex. 5a-b**).

Ex. 5a: Hello, Operator



Ex. 5b: Hello, Operator, corrected



<sup>20</sup> “Hello, Operator,” also known as “Miss Susie,” as heard from Lawrence Moses, Cranston, R.I., 1963.

Likewise,

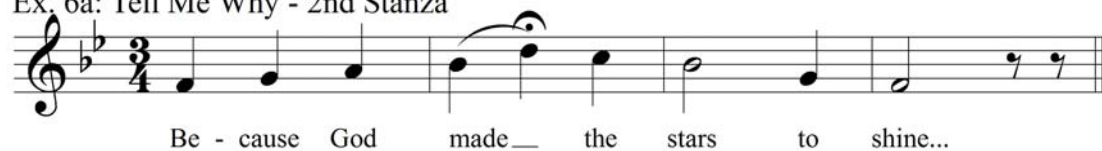
*HELP me IF you CAN i'm FEEL-ing DOWN  
and i DO ap-PRE-ci-ATE your BE-ing ROUND,*

i.e., ap-PRE-ci-ATE in place of, ap-PRE-ci-ATE, with the primary and secondary accents interchanged.

We also find that in most cases, stress may be displaced at the beginning of a line, and even more so at the beginning of a song, since no musical rhythm has been established. The ear can therefore hear the customary word accent, since it at yet has no musical data to contradict the expected word accent. This explains *A-bide with ME*. Likewise, in the second stanza of *Tell Me Why*, we sing

*BE-cause God MADE the STARS to SHINE.  
BE-cause God MADE the I-vy TWINE,  
BE-cause God MADE the SKY so BLUE,  
BE-cause God MADE you that's WHY i love YOU (see Ex. 6a-b).*

Ex. 6a: Tell Me Why - 2nd Stanza



Ex. 6b: Tell Me Why - 2nd Stanza "corrected"



This does admittedly sound slightly odd, but that in a way proves the point: Native speakers in this case do notice something out of the ordinary, yet even so no one seems to be tempted to “correct” the problem, which could be done easily enough by setting the syllable *be-* to a pickup note. The above examples illustrate the following points:

1. In all cases, the stress of the word as sung differs from that which it would receive in the same line were spoken. If the lines were spoken with the indicated accents, native speakers would find the results odd or incorrect.
2. When the same lines are sung, native speakers notice nothing at all out of the ordinary, let alone anything wrong.
3. Far from being incorrect, some (though not all) of the lines are drawn from songs that many would consider models of excellence to be held up for emulation by aspiring songwriters.
4. If one were to change the lines in question so as to make musical accent coincide with spoken accent, the modified line would in every case be worse than the unmodified line—in most cases, much worse.

5. The lines are drawn from a variety of genres, periods, and levels. The accent-shifting is not a characteristic of some particular, limited type of song.

I strongly recommend that readers go through the examples listed above and actually see what changes could be made to “correct” the shifted accents.

I have multiple examples here, including everything from oratorio through popular music to children’s ditties, because there is a tendency to dismiss any single example as a special case.<sup>21</sup> Even these examples are merely suggestive; it would be desirable, if time and space permitted, to adduce many more examples. Short of that, I can only recommend that before making attempts to “correct” accents in vocal music, a person should go through a hymn-book, a Handel oratorio, a “fake book,” or a collection of Schubert Lieder, and highlight all the words where the accent of the words as sung differs from that which would be used in the spoken language. I can only predict that the one who undertakes such an exercise will find his or her highlighter busy enough to bring up second thoughts regarding the wisdom of the indiscriminate attempt to make musical accent and spoken word-accent perfectly coincide.<sup>22</sup>

By contrast with these cases of acceptable accent shifting, when a truly erroneous shift occurs, native speakers feel a strong desire to correct it, and, if circumstances permit, they do correct it. Thus in one very popular elementary school song book that many readers may remember, we find the song “Goin’ to Leave Ol’ Texas,” with the following pair of lines (**Ex. 7a**):

Ex. 7a: Goin' to Leave Ol' Texas



They've plow'd and fenc'd my cat-tle range, and the peo - ple there are all so strange.

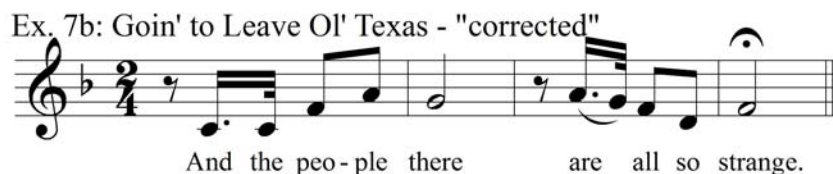
The rules of English prosody, flexible though they may be, do not allow for the word *people* to be accented on the second syllable. When this song is sung, one therefore usually hears

*And the people THERE are all so STRANGE*,<sup>23</sup> (**Ex. 7b**),

<sup>21</sup> In conversations with advocates of the changes, I have presented such examples, only to be told that the example is a special case—used by a skilled composer, applicable only to a very formal style of music (or only to a very informal style), only relevant in the past, and so on.

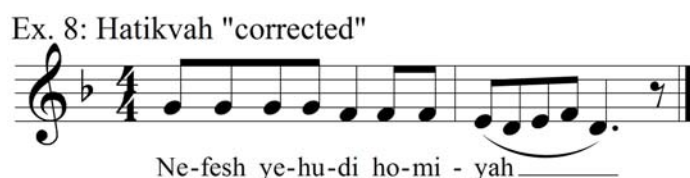
<sup>22</sup> Those lacking a Christian hymnal may wish to consult the website [www.cyberhymnal.org](http://www.cyberhymnal.org). Looking through the first dozen or so hymns, I found that about half had at least one case of the kinds of accent-shifting described above.

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., *McGuinn's Folkden* (<http://www.ibiblio.org/jimmy/folkden/php/search/individ.php?mid=28>) and *Gitarrehamburg.de* (<http://www.gitarrehamburg.de/FreieDownloadangebot/oldtexas.PDF>). On the *Gitarrehamburg* site the correction has been effected by dropping the word “the,” so that the line reads “And people there / are all so strange.”



which takes care of the problem. So, indeed, the kind of changes proposed by many revisers of Jewish liturgical music do make sense in principle: it is just that the number of cases where such changes are called for is far, far smaller than what they suppose.

Even in the cases where errors occur and can be corrected, there is often an artistic price to be paid. In many cases, the perceived flaw is Ashkenazic accent on the next-to-last syllable. Correcting this typically results in what we may call the “hurry up and wait” syndrome: the pretonic syllables must be rushed, and when one finally gets to the accented syllable, a melisma is often necessary, resulting in rhythmic oddity. In congregational singing, these melismata are especially undesirable, since (in my experience) non-professional singers often perform them with an unattractive trombone-like slide. Consider, for example, an attempt to correct the second line of *Hatikvah*, where the last syllable of the word *homiyah* would have to be stretched over five notes (see Ex. 8). Teaching my b’nai mitzvah students to avoid such slides is a perennial issue.



If there are many words to be corrected, the result may be jerky (if the accents are randomly distributed)<sup>24</sup> or bizarrely offset (if one has to correct a consistent Ashkenazic penultimate accent). The result in the latter case reminds me of the parodic version of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game,” in which the whole song is offset by one or two syllables (Ex. 9).<sup>25</sup>



Finally, in the case of congregational singing, there is the problem of imposing change on a familiar song. Congregants may feel confused and embarrassed when they hear the *hazzan* or song-leader singing in a different way; they may decide to avoid this feeling of confusion and embarrassment by falling silent—not the desired result for most *hazzanim*. That is not to say that congregants can’t learn new ways of doing things; but this is one more weight on the pan of the

<sup>24</sup> See the discussion below of the song *Shabbat ham-malkah*.

<sup>25</sup> See <http://boards.straightdope.com/sdmb/archive/index.php/t-355338.html> (accessed 12 February 2014), the entry for 08-02-2003, 08:16 PM.

scale in favor of retaining the familiar. If the change is only a marginal improvement, one may as well let the congregation continue in its way.

## Hebrew Examples: Unnecessary Change

Thus far we have considered English examples. Does the same phenomenon occur in Hebrew? Boaz Tarsi adduces numerous examples to show that it does. No doubt the principles of Hebrew musical prosody will not be found to be *exactly* the same as those of English musical prosody, but there is no lack of accent displacement.<sup>26</sup>

I will proceed here by suggesting English parallels, putting English words to some familiar Hebrew liturgical tunes. Not being myself a native speaker of Hebrew, I present these, and other Hebrew examples, only as suggestive, not definitive; but I believe they are correct.

Salomon Sulzer's *Bar'khu* can often be heard in a form close to that of the second edition of *Schir Zion*<sup>27</sup> (Ex. 10a).

Ex. 10a: Bar'khu, S. Sulzer 1865



Joseph Sulzer, however, believed the word *m'vorakh* to be wrongly accented; indeed, the accentuation of *m'vorakh* is ambiguous, so much so that in the American edition (1904) it is notated to make the accent appear to be on the middle syllable, -vo- (Ex. 10b).<sup>28</sup>

Ex. 10b: Bar'khu, S. Sulzer, 1904 - American Edition



<sup>26</sup> There seems to be little written about this, but with regard to Hebrew metrical poetry, see the article "Prosody, Hebrew," by Benjamin Hrushovsky, in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 13: 1195-1239, especially the section on the Modern Period, cols. 1228-1237. Note in particular the following statement: "[I]t is rare, especially in Hebrew poetry, that the actual stresses in the language of a line constitute a neatly ordered pattern, copying exactly the metrical scheme. There is a discrepancy between the units of the language and the units of the meter: stress and word boundaries on the one hand and metrical accents and feet on the other. A meter exists in a poem if its actual stresses and word boundaries meet certain rules of correlation with the underlying metrical scheme" (cols. 1230-1231).

<sup>27</sup> Salomon Sulzer, *Schir Zion*, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Jacob Schlossberg, 1865), p. 23.

<sup>28</sup> Spelled in the English transliteration: *Shir Zion* (New York: Bloch, 1904), p. 12

In the 1905 edition of *Schir Zion*, Joseph therefore changed the ending to *rakh* (Ex. 10c):<sup>29</sup>

Ex. 10c: Bar'khu, S. Sulzer, arr. J. Sulzer 1905

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

A person without a native speaker's knowledge of Hebrew might well think the change is necessary to provide for proper accentuation.<sup>30</sup> But let us consider an English parallel. We may sing the following words to the same tune:

My dad used to play jazz on the trombone.

Nothing at all seems wrong if we sing it as in Ex. 11.

Ex. 11: (After S. Sulzer, 1904)

My dad used to play jazz on the trom - bone

The brain is able to perceive the second syllable of *trombone* as sufficiently accented to avoid any sense of oddity. This is not incorrect, but to my ears it seems musically inferior. It suffers from what I have called the “hurry up and wait” syndrome: one must rush through *on the trom-* in order to have a slow melisma on *-bone*, as we have just seen in Ex. 11.

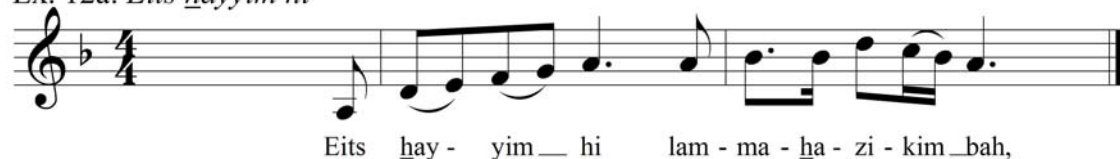
Note that this example would not work as well if we used the word *bassoon* instead of *trombone*. Part of what makes the setting acceptable is that the first syllable of *trombone* is heavy, whereas the first syllable of *bassoon* consists merely of a consonant and a *sh'va*. Now, is there any significant way in which the *Bar'khu* differs from this made-up English example? It seems that there is not. The key word, *m'vorakh*, has a long vowel, a *holam*, in the next-to-last syllable; as with the first syllable of *trombone*, it can bear the weight of a musical accent. The unmodified *Bar'khu* is not in need of change; as with my made-up English example, the changed version, though also acceptable, seems aesthetically inferior.

Similarly, rather than the common beginning of *Eits hayyim* (Ex. 12a),

<sup>29</sup> Salomon Sulzer, *Schir Zion*, ed. Joseph Sulzer (Leipzig : M. W. Kaufmann, 1905), p. 43.

<sup>30</sup> See Boaz Tarsi's observation on a similar tune for the *Bar'khu* in “On the Placement of Hebrew Accents,” p. 25, Example 18, the second item in the example. Tarsi finds no need to make the kind of change in the *Bar'khu* under consideration here.

Ex. 12a: *Eits hayyim hi*



one now often hears an altered version (Ex. 12b).<sup>31</sup>

Ex. 12b: *Eits hayyim hi* - "corrected"



But let us imagine the same tune with English words, *And because we have changed the words of the song*. If we sing it as in Ex. 13a, it is perhaps odd, but no more so than English phrasing of the opening song of Act II in Humperdinck's 1893 opera *Hansel and Gretel* (see Ex. 13b):

Ex. 13a: *Eits hayyim hi* - to English words



Ex. 13b: *Eits hayyim hi* - "corrected"



If we sing it as in Ex. 13a, it is perhaps odd, but no more so than the similar phrasing of "Tell Me Why" (Ex. 6b above) in which the word *because* is likewise accented on the first syllable. Ex. 13b is more awkward since the second syllable of *because* is drawn out in a very unnatural way. To tell the truth, this common setting of *Eits hayyim* is not particularly elegant, either in the original or altered version; but the proposed change is no improvement. One needs to pronounce quickly *Eits hay-*, creating an ugly juxtaposition of the *tsadi* and *het*. In the original version, one has more time to pronounce these two syllables, enabling the singer to avoid the clash of consonants. There are in fact so many out-of-place accents in the traditional *Eits hayyim* that correcting them all would be well-nigh impossible. As Salomon Sulzer himself notes, Biblical poetry is very hard to set to tunes familiar to the Western ear, since its rhythmic

<sup>31</sup> Traditional version as in Harry Coopersmith, *Songs of My People* ([Chicago:] Anshe Emet Synagogue, 1937), p. 94; altered version as in *Gates of Song* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1987), no. 96.

structure is very different,<sup>32</sup> and *Eits hayyim* is a good illustration of the difficulty. One either needs to accept the displaced accents or discard the tune.

### Accent Shifting as a Musical Device

Not only is accent-shifting a regular and proper feature of English vocal music; it can in the hands of a skilled composer be used to excellent musical effect. Consider, as an example, the song “Return Again,” by the late Shlomo Carlebach, with lyrics by Rafael-Simkha Kahn:

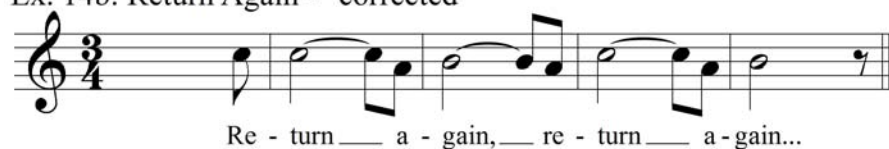
*RE-turn a-GAIN, RE-turn a-GAIN.*  
*re-TURN to the HOME of your SOUL*<sup>33</sup> (Ex. 14a).

Ex. 14a: Return Again (Kahn/Carlebach)



In the first line, we sing *RE-turn* rather than *re-TURN*. Now, this could be “corrected” with no problem at all by setting the first syllable to a pickup note, so that the rhythm and accent of *return* exactly matches those of *again* (Ex. 14b).

Ex. 14b: Return Again - "corrected"



The result, however, is that we take an interesting and attractive song and turn it into a trite and banal one. The conflict between musical accent and spoken accent is precisely what gives the song its interest, creating an interesting tension which is then relieved in the second line, when *return* is sung with its usual accent. (The same technique is used with *abide* in “Abide with Me.”) The shifted accent is one of the things that gives “Return Again” its interest.

A comparison with poetry is instructive. Look at a sonnet or play of Shakespeare. The meter is iambic pentameter, but an exceedingly great number of lines deviate from the theoretical model of this meter, which may be represented-- where W = weak and S = strong--as follows:

W S / W S / W S / W S / W S /,

Thus, for example, in

<sup>32</sup> Salomon Sulzer, “Vorwort” to *Schir Zion*, 2nd ed. (Vienna: Jacob Schlossberg, 1865), p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Return Again*, in Unitarian Universalist Association, *Signature Songbook 3* (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1990), p. 31.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love  
 That alters when it alteration finds  
 Or moves with the remover to remove. . . .

the first two lines match up only loosely with the theoretical structure of iambic pentameter. Now, there seem to be only two possibilities:

- (1) Shakespeare, out of incompetence or ignorance, wrote many prosodically improper lines.
- (2) The lines are in fact proper, and the definition of iambic pentameter is more complicated than simple adherence to a (weak-strong) W S / W S / W S / W S / W S / pattern.

Statement (1) is so absurd as to hardly admit consideration; therefore (2) is true. Indeed, consensus is that such complications in metrical poetry are, in the hands of skillful writers, a desirable feature. This is what the literary critics usually call “tension” and the linguists “complexity.” Complexity in iambic pentameter has been extensively studied.<sup>34</sup> Among other advantages, complexity in metrical verses prevents the jingly, relentless rhythmic quality that results when word stress matches perfectly the implicit stress of the verse form (as is often the case in limericks).

Now, as I have mentioned, poetry is not the same as song. But the same problem occurs if we set a poem in iambic pentameter to a melody in 2/4 (or other duple meter): the irregular stresses of the verse will also be irregular with respect to the melody.

The same phenomenon can occur within totally instrumental music. Brahms makes excellent use of accent-shifting in his *Intermezzo* in A major (Op. 118, no. 2),<sup>35</sup> measures 17-24 (Ex. 15).



For a time, the listener can hardly tell where the downbeat is, a tension delightfully relieved when the actual accent and the underlying metrical accent once again coincide. One could “correct” this, too, imagining that Brahms had simply made a mistake; but the attempt would be laughable.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Morris Halle and Samuel Jay Keyser, *English Stress: Its Form, Its Growth and Its Role in Verse* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 164-180.

<sup>35</sup> In *Klavierstücke von Johannes Brahms* (Berlin: Simrock, 1893).

Many arrangers apparently wish to deny Jewish liturgical composers the right to use this valuable musical resource of stress displacement. In English we would not stand for any such limitation. Why should Jewish liturgical composers be expected to accept it?

A liturgical example of this use may be found in the traditional Ashkenazic setting of the confession, *Ashamnu* (“We Have Sinned”). As frequently heard, the accent appears to be on the first syllable of the word *ashamnu* and at least some of the following words: *A-shamnu*, *BA-gadnu*, and so forth (Ex. 16a):<sup>36</sup>

Ex. 16a: *Ashamnu* - Traditional Ashkenazic



As mentioned above, the slow and regular pace of the Confession makes this accentuation unobjectionable, though perhaps odd. Nonetheless—evidently to remedy this perceived mis-accentuation—some more recent publications insert an eighth-note pickup note for the first syllable (Ex. 16b).<sup>37</sup>

Ex. 16b: *Ashamnu* - with pickup inserted

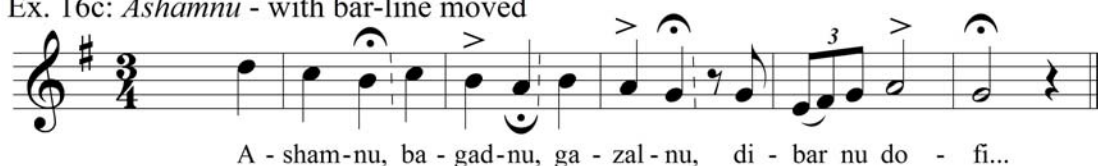


Interestingly enough, Abraham Baer, in his classic collection *Ba'al Tefilah* notates this passage differently (see Ex. 16c): he retains the original rhythm, but solves the problem simply by moving the bar-line, thus making the *sham* of *ashamnu* fall on the downbeat. Baer's setting seems to be only a notational variant of Ex. 16a: unless there is some strong instrumental accompaniment to persuade the ear otherwise, Baer's version as sung will sound just like Ex. 16a. The existence of these variants—Ex. 16a and 16c—shows the ambiguity of the setting: one can't really tell where the downbeat is, and this ambiguity contributes to the beauty and effectiveness of the setting.

<sup>36</sup> See for example, Judith Kaplan Eisenstein, *Heritage of Music* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1972), p.59. One can hear it sung this way by many online performers, whose renditions can be found by doing a video search for *ashamnu*.

<sup>37</sup> See, e.g., *Zamru Lo* vol. 3, ed. Moshe Nathanson (New York: Cantors Assembly, 1974), pp. 198-199. A slightly different setting making a similar rhythmic change can be found in *Shirei t'shuvah: Songs of Repentance* (New York: Transcontinental Music Publishers, 2000), pp. 278-279; this setting was adapted by Don Gurney and arranged by Mary Feinsinger. I have not seen any setting that makes this change, earlier than 1974.

Ex. 16c: *Ashamnu* - with bar-line moved



The effect is the same as the one created by the above-mentioned passage from the Brahms *Intermezzo*—an interesting tension resulting from the conflicting accents. In most versions of the *Ashamnu* (such as Eisenstein’s), as with Brahms, the tension is resolved by the end of each phrase, when word accent and musical accent once again coincide. Now, this ambiguous accentuation can hardly be a simple application of Ashkenazic pronunciation. Ashkenazim, after all, do not accent *ashamnu*<sup>38</sup> or *bagadnu* on the first syllable. Rather, it is best considered an example of tone-painting appropriate for the confession. People confessing their sins—hoping but not assured of forgiveness—are indeed in an ambiguous state, suspended between hope and despair. The resolution of the accentual ambiguity models the hoped-for resolution of the suspense in favor of forgiveness. To change this feature, as proposed by *Zamru Lo* and *Songs of Repentance*, is to efface a significant artistic effect.

## Dialectal and Archaic Language

Some readers may recall the great radio comedian, Stan Freberg. Among his masterpieces of humor was a routine called “Elderly Man River,” in which Freberg tries to sing Kern and Hammerstein’s “Ol’ Man River” but is constantly interrupted by a man identifying himself as “the censor from the Citizens Radio Committee,” one Tweedly. Tweedly relentlessly “corrects” the dialectal language of the song, using a raucous horn to interrupt the singer, insisting, for example, that the Freberg character must change “he don’t say nothin’” to “he doesn’t say anything.” Freberg protests: “But that’s authentic, ‘somethin’, somethin’,’ that’s the way people talk down there,” but Tweedly is unmoved: “I’m sorry. The home is a classroom, Mr. Freberg. . . . Keep in mind the tiny tots.” The Freberg character is so unsettled that he resorts to overcorrection, changing the word *cotton* to *cotting* and *forgotten* to *forgotting*.<sup>39</sup> The humor of the routine obviously depends on the fact that the dialect is an intrinsic part of the song. Tweedly is completely—hilariously—out of line.

The issues raised in jest by Freberg are the same as those raised in all seriousness by some revisers of synagogue music. Much of our inherited synagogue music stems from the Ashkenazic tradition, and many of the “mistakes” that current editors try to “correct” are features of the Ashkenazic pronunciation tradition of Hebrew. Traditionalist cantors point out the

<sup>38</sup> Or, *Oshamnu*, as Ashkenazim pronounce it.

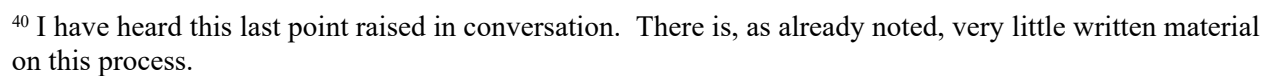
<sup>39</sup> Stan Freberg, “Elderly Man River,” from the *Stan Freberg CBS Radio Show*, Episode 6 (Aug. 18, 1957), transcribed by Dave and Eric Hullquist on *The Stan Freberg Page* ([http://freberg.westnet.com/text/elderly\\_man.html](http://freberg.westnet.com/text/elderly_man.html)), accessed 4 November 2014, corrected by reference to “Stan Freberg,” *en.wikipedia.org*, accessed 4 November 2014. A recorded performance is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLITIYfqQV4>, accessed 4 November 2014.

Now, depending on one's point of view, one may consider Ashkenazic features as either obsolete or dialectal features of Hebrew. Let us see how such features treated in English-language song. In "Ol' Man River," we accept the working-class Southern dialect. To have the characters sing in standard literate English would be inappropriate. Some of the most relevant points can be better illustrated by reference to the Scottish song, *Annie Laurie*:

The last half-line, in contemporary American English, would be spoken,

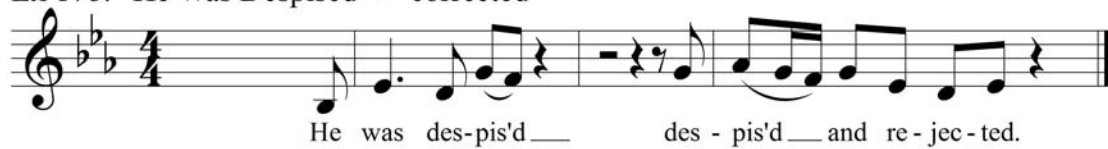
But no one would attempt to sing the song that way. It spoils both the rhythm and the rhyme of the original. We accept it as a Scottish song with Scottish dialect features, some of which cannot be changed without spoiling the song. Not that we try to reproduce Scots English in every respect. We may, for example, say *falls* rather than *fa's* in the first line, and no harm is done, nor do we try to reproduce the pronunciation that would be given by an actual Scot. But the rhyme and rhythm would be so upset by changing the last line that no one would venture to do so.

Ex. 17a: "He Was Despised" - from Handel's *Messiah*



21

Ex 17b: "He Was Despised" - "corrected"



It is hard to consider this example with an open mind, since the current trend in music is towards authenticity, including period instruments and performance styles; and people are reluctant to change what the great Handel has done. Bracketing this trend, however, let us try to ask without preconceptions whether it would be an improvement to change *despisèd* into *despis'd*. It does not seem that anyone would think so. The vocal and instrumental parts of the aria are premised on the trisyllabic pronunciation of both words, *despisèd* and *rejected*. The change would undo the parallelism that Handel took pains to insert.

Yet *hazzanim* and *ba'alei t'fillah*, to say nothing of congregants, are now told that we must purge our repertoire of dialectal and archaic features.

Of course, as we have seen, not every feature of the dialectal or archaic language has equal aesthetic significance. Some can be changed without any ill effect, such as the word *fa's* in "Annie Laurie." In singing Ashkenazic texts it is not necessary to pronounce the *holam* as *oi* and the *kamats* as *o*. But when the dialectal or archaic features are intrinsic to the aesthetics of the song, it is better to keep them, and preserve the song's artistic value, rather than change them to agree with the standard, current dialect, and lose artistic value.

Indeed, early modern accentual-syllabic Hebrew poetry written with Ashkenazic accent presents a dilemma for speakers of Israeli Hebrew. Does one use an unfamiliar accent and retain the poetic meter, or forgo the poetic meter and speak in familiar ways? If one opts for the latter option, the result is something scarcely recognizable as poetry, so much so that Yehoash (pen name of Solomon Bloomgarten) wrote:

The problem of retaining in the Sephardic accent the rhythm of Hebrew songs composed originally in the Ashkenazic pronunciation will be very hard for the devotees of the *ha-havarah ha-s'fardit* [Sephardic pronunciation] to solve. Yet practically all residents in Eretz Yisroel use exclusively this latter. The most sonorous strophes of [Chayyim Nachman] Bialik and [Zalman] Shneur must naturally lose the greater part of their melody when uttered in the Sephardic pronunciation.

Yet some Jewish liturgists seem to be willing to let artistic value fall by the wayside. A particularly egregious example is the song *Shabbat ham-malkah* "The Sabbath Queen," with lyrics by Bialik. Israel Goldfarb and Israel Levinthal had the happy idea of introducing this song into the liturgy of the late Friday evening service.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, some subsequent arranger had the unhappy idea of "correcting" the Ashkenazic accentuation of the song to meet Israeli Hebrew

<sup>42</sup> Israel Goldfarb and Israel Herbert Levinthal, *Song and Praise for Sabbath Eve*, 13th ed. (Brooklyn: n.p., 1958), pp. 84-87. It seems that this song made its first appearance in the 6th edition (1935).

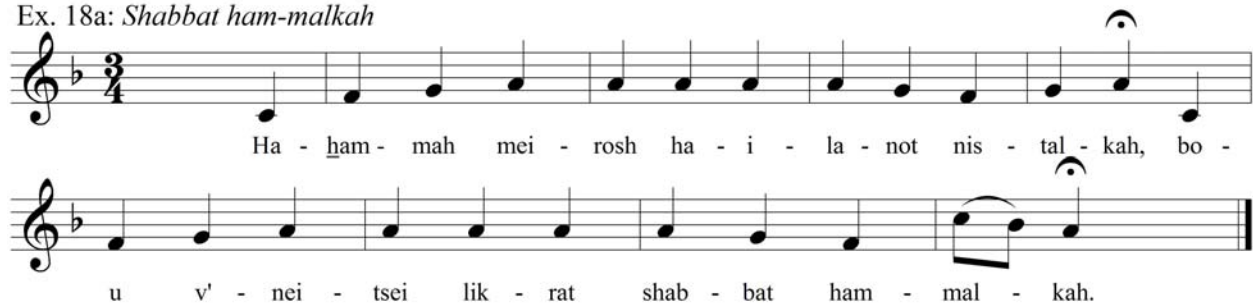
standards. The original poem is written in a definite meter—amphibrachic tetrameter-- where “W” stands for “weak” and “S” for “strong,”<sup>43</sup>

W S W / W S W / W S W / W S W /:

*ha-HAM-mah mei-ROSH ha-i-LA-not nis-TAL-kah,  
bo-U v'-nei-TSEI li-krat SHAB-bat ham-MAL-kah.  
hi-NEIH hi yo-RE-det, hak'-DO-shah, ha-B'RU-khah,  
v'-IM-mah mal-A-khim, tsva SHA-lom um'-NU-hah.*

The original setting, by Pinchos Minkowsky is a musical embodiment of the poetic rhythm, which brings about a happy marriage of words and music (**Ex. 18a**).

Ex. 18a: *Shabbat ham-malkah*



The result is a fine and pleasant song—perhaps not quite on the level of a Schubert *Lied*, but still well and competently written. Now, in rhymed, metrical poetry (to belabor the obvious) the rhyme and meter are essential aesthetic aspects of the poem. Yet a subsequent arranger of the song (as found in *Gates of Song*)<sup>44</sup> does not hesitate to destroy both rhyme and meter (**see Ex. 18b**). The idea, of course, is to accentuate the poem as in Israeli Hebrew. In doing so, the meter is lost more or less completely: the words of the poem, as they would be spoken in Israeli Hebrew, are of no particular meter:

*ha-ham-MAH mei-RO'SH ha-i-la-NOT nis-tal-KAH  
BO-u v'-nei-TSEI lik-RAT shab-BAT ham-mal-KAH  
hin-NEIH hi yo-RE-det, hak'-do-SHAH, ha-b'ru-KHAH,  
v'-im-MAH mal-a-KHIM, Tsva sha-LOM um'-nu-HAH.*<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The lines *Bo'i, bo'i hak-kalah / Bo'i, bo'i ham-malkah* are, of course, in a different meter.

<sup>44</sup> *Gates of Song: Music for Shabbat*, congregational ed. (New York: Transcontinental Music Company, 1987), no. 158, as arranged by H. Fromm.

<sup>45</sup> This would work much better set to reggae beat than to the triple rhythm of the song setting.

Ex. 18b: *Shabbat ham-malkah* - "semi-corrected"

Ha - ham - ma mei - rosh ha - i - la - not nis - tal - kah,  
bo - u v' - nei - tzei lik - rat shab - bat ha - mal - kah.

Now, one can, by way of procrustean songcraft, shoehorn the words, so accented, into the Minkowski tune, but the rhythm of the tune then does not at all match the rhythm of the words. Instead of a happy marriage of words and music, it seems, in this revised version, that the words and music are constantly bickering, and on the verge of divorce. The original setting is suffused with a spirit of calmness achieved in part by setting the stanzas so that no syllable is set to anything shorter than a quarter-note (in some cases, a melisma of two eighth notes). In the revised version, the Israeli accentuation pattern is accommodated by the free use of eighth notes, giving the tune a jerky and jittery spring. Indeed, even the modernist arranger has refrained from changing the first line as written by the composer, but he changes the second and subsequent lines. As a result, the first two lines come out as follows:

*ha-HAM-mah mei-ROSH ha-i-LA-not nis-TAL-kah,*  
*BO-u v'-nei-TSEI lik-RAT shab-BAT ham-mal-KAH.*

We thus forgo not only the rhythm, but the rhyme, too. One can rhyme *nis-TAL-kah* and *ham-MAL-kah*, or one can rhyme *ham-mal-KAH* and *nis-tal-KAH*. *Nis-TAL-kah* and *ham-mal-KAH*, however, one cannot rhyme, any more than one can rhyme a similar pair in English, such as *lucky* and *a key*. Although the final *sounds* match, the conventions of accentual-syllabic poetry, whether Hebrew or English, require that the *accents* must also coincide if the words are to rhyme.<sup>46</sup> The arranger thus makes exactly the kind of change that we would reject as bizarre in “Annie Laurie”: there, to preserve the rhyme, we say *lay me doon and dee*, making no attempt to “correct” *dee* to *die*. This is exactly the kind of change that makes the poor singer an object of ridicule in Stan Freberg’s version of “Ol’ Man River.” Indeed, if a student in a songwriting class

<sup>46</sup> Imagine a limerick writer who began:

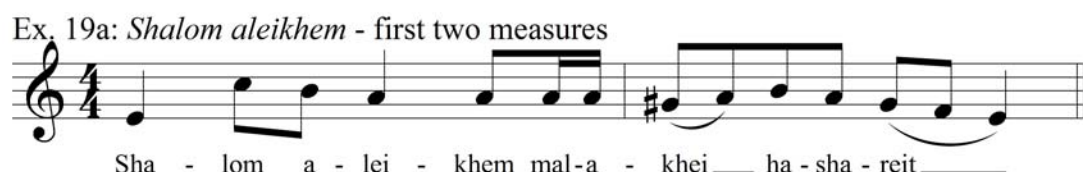
*There ONCE was a MAN from ken-TUCK-y,*  
*Who was SEARCH-ing in VAIN for a KEY.*

One would have to consider this simply a mistake. To produce a rhyme, one would have to find a word or phrase in which both sound and accent coincide, such as *LUCK-y* or *PLUCK-y*. In linguists’ terms, the ‘rhymeme’ begins with the last accented syllable of a line of poetry, and extends to the end of the line. (In English, the rhymeme begins with the last accented *vowel*.) If the rhymemes are different, the words do not rhyme. Thus, surprisingly, we can take a pair of words such as *adult* and *insult*, both of which can be accented on either syllable (the latter being accented one way as a verb and the other way as a noun), and create or destroy the rhyme by changing the accent. *In-SULT* rhymes with *a-DULT*, but *IN-sult* does not rhyme with *AD-ult*. Modernist poetry, of course, allows a much greater variety of rhyme and assonance, but that is not in question here.

were to submit a song in which the rhythm of words and music were so badly mismatched and the rhyme of the text flouted, he or she could expect to receive no high grade. Yet some arrangers seem to feel that aesthetic considerations must be sacrificed on the altar of Israeli Hebrew, and seem to expect *hazzanim* and *ba'alei t'fillah* to sing the result with a straight face.

Far better to admit that some Ashkenazic songs, particularly those based on metrical poetry, are so deeply Ashkenazic that they cannot be changed to Sephardic accentuation without serious aesthetic damage. The most famous example of this is *Hatikvah*, which is even now sung with Ashkenazic accentuation, though it is the national anthem of a country where Israeli Hebrew is the spoken language.<sup>47</sup> If Israelis find nothing objectionable, why should we?—unless, perhaps, the idea is that we must be *plus catholique que le Pape*.

There is also the case of Israel Goldfarb's classic setting of *Shalom aleikhem*, which uses Ashkenazic accentuation. Even this tune—which one musicologist has rightly called (along with *Havah nagilah*) the icons of Jewish music<sup>48</sup>—has not been spared the arranger's blue pen. In an otherwise excellent anthology one finds a “corrected” version (**Example 19a—first two measures**).



Even the reviser of this version has hesitated to tamper with the setting of the first two words, *Shalom aleikhem*. This incomplete transformation makes the Ashkenazic accentuation of these words stand out more prominently. Why not just go ahead and make a thoroughgoing change? It is, after all, not so hard to do (see **Example 19b**).



The result, however, strikes this writer as bizarre; the effect is almost exactly like the accent-shifted version of “Take Me Out to the Ball Game” (see Ex. 9 above).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> The manner of singing *Hatikvah* has indeed been changed so as to bring it *slightly* more in line with Israeli Hebrew. Many older persons may remember the line that says, *ha-tikvah sh'not alpayim*. This is now usually heard as *ha-tikvah bat sh'not alpayim*, a text that throws the accent of *ha-tikvah* onto the last syllable, in consonance with Israeli Hebrew.

<sup>48</sup> “*Seimel l'musikah y'hudit*”: Eliyahu Schleifer, “Shalom aleikhem: ha-laḥan ha-m'kubal v'ha-malḥin ha-nishkakh,” *Dukhan* 16 (2005): 308-325, at p. 312

<sup>49</sup> We might also mention here Shlomo Carlebach's setting of *Esa einai*: original setting in *Harvard Hillel Sabbath Songbook*, pp. 140; altered setting in *Gates of Song*, no. 142.

Again the point recurs: In English, when we encounter songs written in dialects other than our own, or in archaic English, we retain the dialectal and archaic features if removing them would cause aesthetic damage. As our examples show, we find the attempt to “correct” such features an occasion for ridicule. Why, then, should we treat Jewish liturgical music differently? We would never insist on changing *lay me doon and dee* or *he was despised*. Why would someone insist on changing Bialik’s *SHA-bat ha-MAL-kah* to *shab-BAT ha-mal-KAH*? Or why tamper with Goldfarb’s classic?

Let us take these question seriously, not merely rhetorically: why is it that musicians who would never dream of changing *lay me doon and dee* or *He was despised* or “The Banana Boat Song” (better known as “Day-O”) or “Ol’ Man River” show such alacrity in wielding the editorial blue pencil upon Ashkenazic liturgical compositions?

There is, no doubt, a variety of reasons.

Part of the problem seems to be simply a sort of anti-Ashkenazic prejudice. Consider by contrast the example already discussed above, Handel’s air, “He Was Despised.” Part of the reason we do not change *despised* to *despis’d* is that we do not think Handel was making a mistake in using the trisyllabic pronunciation of *despised*: we believe he was correctly using the English of his day, which—though our current speech differs—we preserve when singing Handel. By contrast, some people who are involved in Jewish music proceed from the assumption that earlier Jewish liturgists were ignorant of proper Hebrew. Judah Cohen quotes one Reform cantorial faculty member as saying,

We can put it to bed today: if the accent is wrong and you can change it, *change it*. *You* control the text. Don’t let it be controlled by *ba’yamim hahem . . .*, when it didn’t matter.<sup>50</sup>

No doubt there were then (as there are now) composers ignorant of proper Hebrew. But are we really to believe that (for example) Bialik’s Ashkenazic accentuation is the result of ignorance or indifference to proper Hebrew? That hypothesis is scarcely to be entertained. The original motive seems to have been a stigmatization of Ashkenazic Hebrew as a low-status, indeed corrupt, dialect. We can see clearly Salomon Sulzer’s admiration for Sephardic Hebrew. If he couldn’t introduce Sephardic Hebrew wholesale, he could at least introduce the Sephardic accentuation of Hebrew words. As Ismar Schorsch writes,

[T]he ultimate motivation of this unnatural and self-conscious appropriation of Sephardic Hebrew [in the liturgy] was the desire to distinguish the sound of the sacred tongue from that of Yiddish, which these alienated Ashkenazic intellectuals regarded as a non-language that epitomized the abysmal state of Jewish practice.<sup>51</sup>

Schorsch is referring to German synagogues that adopted the Sephardic pronunciation wholesale, which Salomon Sulzer considered impossible; but the motivation for introducing the Sephardic

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<sup>50</sup> Cohen, *The Making of a Reform Jewish Cantor*, p. 140.

<sup>51</sup> Ismar Schorsch, “The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy,” in *From Text to Context* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1994), p. 77.

accentuation was the same. Ashkenazi Hebrew was in fact by some dismissed as simply incorrect and ungrammatical.<sup>52</sup>

This motivation may account for the trend towards hypercorrection. Some tunes in their original form are ambiguous—one can perceive the accentuation as either Ashkenazic or Israeli, as we saw with S. Sulzer’s *Bar’khu*. A skillful *hazzan* can make subtle changes in emphasis to have it come out sounding either way. If the goal is not simply to sing with Israeli accentuation but to reject Ashkenazi accentuation, these ambiguous passages must, however, be eliminated and replaced by settings that are *unambiguously* Israeli—such as J. Sulzer’s revision of the *Bar’khu*. The Sulzer *Bar’khu* is only one such example. The version of *Eits hayyim hi*, quoted above has similar ambiguity, as do many other unaltered versions of liturgical tunes: the change serves to eliminate the ambiguity and to show clearly that one is not singing Ashkenazically.<sup>53</sup>

Of course, contemporary linguistics rejects the stigmatization of languages and dialects as corrupt or ungrammatical. That kind of judgment can have no scientific basis. Still, it seems that some such sentiment persists with regard to the Ashkenazic pronunciation of Hebrew. One sometimes hears the argument that even speakers of Ashkenazic Hebrew really know that the correct accentuation is the one found in Israeli Hebrew. The evidence adduced is that when chanting the Torah or Haftarah, Ashkenazim observe the accentuation indicated by the trope, not their accustomed Ashkenazic accentuation. But this argument shows nothing of the sort. It proves only that speakers of Ashkenazic Hebrew have the flexibility to chant ritually an ancient text using a pronunciation different from that of their daily speech.<sup>54</sup> It is no different than the case of an English speaker who uses an archaic pronunciation when reciting Chaucer. For example, to read properly the first line of the “Canterbury Tales”—

*Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote—*

one must pronounce *Aprille* in three syllables. But no one would now speak that way, outside of a recitation of Chaucer; it would be considered bizarre if anyone now went around pronouncing *Aprille* in three syllables; such a person would likely be the object of ridicule, no less than a person in an Ashkenazic-speaking community who attempted to use Israeli accentuation.<sup>55</sup> Even when reading Scripture, it is only when chanting the Torah or Haftarah in the synagogue that speakers of Ashkenazi Hebrew apply the accent indicated by Biblical trope. When Scripture is read in other contexts, the usual Ashkenazic accentuation is retained. Thus, for example, a speaker of Ashkenazi Hebrew, when chanting the second verse of the Shema from a *sefer Torah*

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<sup>52</sup> Schorsch, “The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy,” pp. 89-90, n. 22.

<sup>53</sup> On the ideological rejection of Ashkenazi pronunciation, see Shelomo Morag, “The Emergence of Modern Hebrew: Some Sociolinguistic Perspectives,” in *Hebrew in Ashkenaz: A Language in Exile*, ed. Lewis Glinert (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 213.

<sup>54</sup> The Sages of the Talmud already knew their Hebrew was no longer the Hebrew of the Bible, and that one should not judge the former by the standards of the latter. See b. *Hullin* 137b: The Torah uses its own language and the Sages their own.

<sup>55</sup> For a description of such an incident, see Lawrence Bush, “Prayer Block,” *Tikkun* 10.5 (September-October 1995): 44-48, at p. 45, where one reads of an unfortunate young man who is humiliated to the point of tears for saying *Yom kee-POOR*, rather than *Yom KIP-per*.

would sing *ve-o-hav-TO*, accenting the last syllable as indicated by the trope; yet when reciting the Shema in prayer, the same speaker would say *ve-o-HAV-to*.<sup>56,57</sup>

In any case, Biblical Hebrew accentuation does *not* always coincide with that of modern Israeli Hebrew. There is the phenomenon of *nasog achor* (as in *u-VO-rei hoshekh*; see note 6). There are also pausal forms that occur at the end of a verse or half-verse, requiring one to say, for example, *A-tah* rather than *a-TAH* when chanting the word that means “you.” Both these phenomena occur in siddur Hebrew as well.

There are perhaps also sociological factors that are difficult to quantify that are driving this rejection of Ashkenazic accentuation, even for texts that are clearly Ashkenazic. Many Jews want to identify with Israel, and speaking Israeli Hebrew is one way to do so: witness the flight to Israeli Hebrew in religious schools and synagogues that took place after the Six-Day War. But this hypothesis, even if true, explains only a part of the phenomenon. After all, very few North American *hazzanim* try to duplicate the guttural *resh* or palatalized *lamed* that typify Israeli speech: the idea again seems to be not acquisition of Israeli pronunciation, but rejection of Ashkenazi.

In addition, Ashkenazi pronunciation has been retained by many Orthodox congregations,<sup>58</sup> and rejection of this pronunciation may be one way of saying, “We’re not Orthodox.” To do this, one need not speak exactly like a Sabra; it is enough to avoid the most

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<sup>56</sup> The form of *ve-ahavta* with accent on the last syllable does not exist in Modern Hebrew, and in fact it is hard to get speakers of Modern Hebrew to pronounce it correctly.

<sup>57</sup> Though this essay is hardly the place for an extended discussion, I would not want to omit mention of the evidence that many features of the Ashkenazic pronunciation of Hebrew—including the retracted accent—accurately preserve ancient pronunciation traditions. The retracted accent characteristic of Ashkenazic Hebrew also characterizes the Samaritan and in some cases the Yemenite pronunciation of Hebrew (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, ed. Fred Skolnik [Detroit: Macmillan, 2007] s.v. *Pronunciations of Hebrew*, vol. 16, p. 561) as well as the Syriac and Babylonian pronunciations of Aramaic (Theodor Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, trans. James A. Chrichton. [London: Williams & Norgate, 1904; rpt., Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2001], p. 40; Shelomo Morag, “The Study of Mishnaic Hebrew—The Oral Evidence: Nature and Appraisal,” in *Studies in Mishnaic Hebrew*, ed. Moshe Bar-Asher, Scripta Hierosolymitana 37 [Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1998], pp. 43-57, at p. 53); it’s not just something invented by uncouth *Ostjuden*, but a phenomenon common to various Northwest Semitic dialects. There is even evidence that the stress retraction characteristic of Ashkenazic Hebrew begins to appear during the Mishnaic period (Morag, “The Study of Mishnaic Hebrew,” p. 47, § 2.1.1.2.c). See the extensive discussion in Mark Steiner, “On the ‘Yeshivishe’ Pronunciation of Hebrew,” *Mail.Jewish Mailing List* 21.54 (Sept. 22, 1995), [http://www.ottmall.com/mj\\_ht\\_arch/v21/mj\\_v21i54.html](http://www.ottmall.com/mj_ht_arch/v21/mj_v21i54.html), accessed 2 December 2014. Of course, even if the retracted accent were shown to be an independent East European development, that would be no reason to stigmatize Ashkenazic Hebrew as incorrect, any more than historic changes in the pronunciation of English lead us to say that our way of speaking is incorrect, and that we must revert to the purity of Old or Middle English.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, the transliterations found in the *Artscroll* prayer book series.

prominent aspects of Ashkenazic Hebrew. Israeli Hebrew also seems “up to date,” and Ashkenazic Hebrew outdated or obsolete. So speaking with Ashkenazic accent can be perceived as a way of being behind the times. Singing *despisèd* in Handel's air, by contrast, is so far out of date that it strikes the listener as a sophisticated awareness of original performance practice: it's not a mistake that someone could make by inadvertence or ignorance.

There is also the matter, already mentioned, of teaching proper Hebrew to children, not an unworthy goal. But Stan Freberg's Tweedly character, with his appeal to the education of “tiny tots,” may be the best refutation of this argument. If children are to learn proper Hebrew, one thing they need to know is that Hebrew is pronounced in various ways, and that Hebrew as sung is pronounced differently than spoken Hebrew, just as a learner of French must know that one says *Frère Jacques* but sings *Frè-re Jac-ques*. One may respond that that is a lesson to be learned later: first learn standard spoken Hebrew, then the musical or dialectal variants. Fair enough; but are adult worshipers then to be forced into an elementary-school Dick-and-Jane form of Hebrew?

## Conclusions

Summing up these results, we see that in English, for various reasons, the accentual pattern of the language as sung differs from that of the spoken language. At the most basic level, the rules for accenting English-language song simply differ, in particular ways, from those of spoken English. The shifting of accent is also used to good effect by composers and musicians. We recognize that there are various dialects of English—Scots, Caribbean, Southern American, and so on—and we preserve the distinctive features of those dialects (contrary to our own speech practice) if they are intrinsic to the artistic value of the song. Finally, we preserve archaic features that may be found in the language of older vocal music when these features are intrinsic to the artistic value of the song. Changes in any of these English-language cases would be considered unnecessary at best—more likely, they would be considered detrimental or even laughable. Someone who insisted upon making such changes would be demonstrating not knowledge, but ignorance of English.

Barring some profound difference between Hebrew and English accentuation, it therefore seems that the same conclusion can be applied to Hebrew. The examples presented in Boaz Tarsi's article (mentioned above), as well as nearly endless other examples that readers can find, show amply that Hebrew works similarly to English in this regard. Here we can make good use of Hillel's maxim: What is hateful to yourself, do not do to others. Let us not inflict on the Hebrew language things that we Anglophones would never do in English.

In a practical sense, what can one do? First, nothing I have said here undermines the general principle that one should correct incorrect accent when possible—assuming it really is incorrect. If a musically sensitive native speaker finds the accent improper, then there is reason to change, provided the gain in correctness is not outweighed by a greater artistic loss. In English, as we have seen in “Goin' to Leave Ol' Texas,” there are cases where such changes are needed and can be successfully made. I have mentioned above Binder's “Kindling of the Sabbath Lights.” Our conclusions show, however, that there are fewer cases amenable to such change than one might at first think.

Secondly, the criterion for judging Hebrew stress should be the considered judgment of musicians whose native language is Hebrew. Only a native speaker (or the rare non-native who has totally assimilated the language) has adequate knowledge of which accent displacements are acceptable and which are not. Not that we all have instant access to such a person, but such is the standard by which we should judge our work in this area. Short of that, we need to take into consideration the cases where accent-shifting is acceptable, as summarized above, with awareness of the way sung and spoken language actually work, not a misguided attempt to reproduce in metrical song the rhythmic patterns of the spoken word. If we are singing for an ephemeral occasion, a moderately Hebrew-literate performer can use his or her own judgment: hopefully, the performer will change only what needs to be changed, but if an error is made, little harm will result. If, however, we are doing something whose result is permanent, such as teaching a song to many people or arranging it for publication, then the judgment of a knowledgeable and musical native speaker can hardly be dispensed with. Scrutiny by such a musical native speaker will often show that the shifted accents are perfectly acceptable, and not at all mistaken, just as is the case with English.

Thirdly, a certain degree of imperfection can be tolerated out of respect for the composer's integrity, for the sake of preserving musical values, or for the sake of retaining familiar tunes. The latter consideration seems to have received little mention, but is deserving of some thought. As mentioned above, if we confront congregants with altered versions of familiar songs, they are likely to feel embarrassed and insecure about their own ability to sing, and they are therefore likely not to sing, which is—as we have noted-- the opposite of what most *hazzanim* wish to accomplish. Of course, congregants can learn new things, but here there's an implicit insult involved: one is telling the congregation, in effect, "You're doing it wrong." It is like when someone corrects the grammatical errors of people that he speaks with: even if he's correct and they're mistaken, it may be the better part of discretion to hold one's tongue and not embarrass them; and all the more so when *they* are correct and *he* is mistaken. Moreover, even if congregants learn a new way of singing, the old ways persist in other venues, causing confusion when people come in from such places.<sup>59</sup>

Fourthly, there are inherent difficulties to the task of rectifying truly improper accents. If the composer was an Ashkenazic speaker, the composition will likely show Ashkenazic patterns throughout. If the composer was, alas, simply ignorant or neglectful of Hebrew accentuation of any sort, the composition will likely reflect that ignorance or neglect throughout. In any of these cases, any attempt to correct or Israelify the accent will involve major surgery, and the patient is unlikely to survive. It is as if one were to take a suit made for a short, fat person and alter it to fit a tall, thin one: it may be possible, but it's unlikely that the suit will ever look good on its new owner. If, on the other hand, one corrects only some of the incorrect accentuations, the remaining ones stand out all the more prominently by contrast.

There seem to be only two major cases where the attempt to correct mistaken accents is likely to be successful. (1) The more common case consists of music in free rhythm, sung more

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<sup>59</sup> The congregation that I serve sings the unaltered version of the Sulzer *Bar'khu* (the first line) and the similarly unaltered version of the Lewandowski response. This is happening more than 100 years after Joseph Sulzer made his proposed change.

or less as a recitative, as in Binder's "Kindling of the Sabbath Lights." In such cases, the rhythm of the piece is free enough to absorb many changes without harm. (2) Less commonly, there is vocal music with strong metrical rhythm containing some incorrect accentuations, but not too many. In such cases, a skillful hazzan or editor can likely make the required changes without undermining the structure of the piece.

Much of our legacy of liturgical music will lie outside these guidelines: in such cases, changes are either not possible or not necessary. In any case, let the standard by which changes are made be a native speaker's knowledge of the actual workings of Hebrew song and an awareness of the differences between singing and speaking.

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**PROPER PRONUNCIATION OF HEBREW ONCE BECAME A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH IN BIBLICAL ISRAEL. JUDGES 12 (1-6) RELATES HOW THE WARRIOR JEPHTAH THE GILEADITE, AFTER VANQUISHING THE ATTACKING AMMONITES, CHALLENGED HIS TRANSJORDAN-DWELLING CORELIGIONISTS—THE MEN OF EPHRAIM—FOR NOT HAVING ANSWERED HIS SUMMONS TO JOIN IN THE CRITICAL BATTLE. IN RESPONSE, THE EPHRAIMITES THREATENED JEPHTAH, WHEREUPON HE FOUGHT AND DEFEATED THEM AS WELL. HIS MEN WERE THEN POSTED AT THE FORDS OF THE JORDAN, AND IF AN EPHRAIMITE ATTEMPTED TO INFILTRATE, THEY DEMANDED THAT HE SAY THE WORD *SHIBBOLETH*. NOT BEING ABLE TO PRONOUNCE IT CORRECTLY, HE WOULD SAY "*SIBBOLETH*," AND WAS EXECUTED ON THE SPOT. THE BIBLE STATES: "FORTY-TWO THOUSAND EPHRAIMITES FELL AT THAT TIME."**

# Comparing *Nusah ha-t'fillah*, Arabic *Maqamat*, and Hindustani *Ragas*

*By Neil Schwartz*

## Scope and Boundaries

This article is a preliminary discussion of similarities among musical modes that underlie the sacred chant within the religious and cultural contexts of Jews, Muslims and Hindus. It will discuss some of the common basic structures and functions among the musical modes of Jewish prayer known collectively as *Nusah ha-t'fillah*, Arabic *maqamat* and the Hindustani *ragas* of Northern India.

While the Middle-Eastern musical modes of Persian *Dastgah* and Turkish *Mugam* are briefly mentioned, this article concentrates on the generally-accepted families of Arabic *maqamat* as reflected in easily-available literature. The Carnatic *ragas* of Southern India are intentionally excluded, because their more complex structure and their large numbers are too complicated for useful comparison herein with Arabic *maqamat* and the modes underlying *Nusah ha-t'fillah*.

Nor does this preliminary study extend to the modal music of Southeastern Asia beyond the mouth of the Ganges River or to the music of the Far Eastern music of China, Japan and Korea. While enough preliminary research has been done to see some similarities with Christian Plainchant in general and the chants of Eastern Christianity in particular, much more work awaits to give this vast repertoire the intense exploration that it deserves. Therefore, preliminary thoughts on similarities of Christian sacred chants with *nusah*, *maqamat* and *ragas* will be mentioned only in passing.

## Historical Influences and Interactions

**1 - Significant trade interactions** occurred among the ancient inhabitants of Eurasia since the earliest times,<sup>1</sup> before recorded history. Archeologists have found evidence of trade relations among far-flung groups that may go back thousands of years. Trade routes extended from the Far East, through Central Asia and the Middle East, to Europe<sup>2</sup> along large river valleys and across the vast Eurasian steppe-lands long before the establishment of nations and empires that later struggled for control of overland and sea-borne trade routes.

**2 - The migration of populations** from Central Asia into Europe<sup>3</sup> and other areas of Eurasia took place in Eurasia during many millennia. New theories about the spread of Proto-Indo-European and Semitic languages<sup>4</sup> indicate some of the possible geographic aspects of these

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<sup>1</sup> Cunliffe, Barry, *Europe Between the Oceans*. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press), 2008, pp. 141-159.

<sup>2</sup> O'Brien, Patrick, ed., *Oxford Atlas of World History*. (London: Oxford Univ. Press), 2007, pp. 20-21 & 36-37.

<sup>3</sup> O'Brien (2007), *ibid*, pp. 50-53.

<sup>4</sup> Haywood, John, *The Great Migrations* (London: Quercus), 2008, pages 30-33.

migrations. Modern tools of DNA analysis are now being employed to track the movements of large populations even further back in time.

**3** - A third historical influence on the spread of cultures and religions throughout Eurasia is the history of **invasions and conquests**<sup>5</sup> among nations and empires. Geographic “pivot-areas” or “gateways” such as Persia, Egypt, and the Balkans<sup>6</sup> may have had a strong influence on India, the Middle East, and much of Europe, controlling the movements of populations and armies.

**4** - The **spread of religions** provided another vehicle for cultural interactions. Early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium C.E., when Muslims controlled the area from Northern India and Persia through North Africa into Spain, the Crusades inadvertently facilitated exchanges of knowledge between Muslims and Christians. These areas would come to have large Jewish populations, including Spanish and Portuguese Jews who would be expelled in 1492 and 1497, finding refuge throughout the Ottoman Empire. Jewish communities facilitated trade wherever they became established. The other major group that moved fairly freely across Eurasia is the Roma (also known as Gypsies). The long-range overland movements of Jews and the Roma during migrations and trade may have fostered the interchange of musical styles and modes among disparate populations.

### Overview of Similarities in the Modal Chants under Discussion

The musical modes of Arabic *maqamat* and Hindustani *ragas* function similarly to the way modes of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* function in Jewish Liturgical Chant. This comparison can be extended to the modal music of the Roma (Gypsies), Persian *dastgah*, Turkish *mugam*, Byzantine Tones, and the Medieval Church Modes. Most of this modal music is vocal rather than instrumental,<sup>7</sup> and avoids any conscious attempt to add harmony. It is **monophonic** (single-line), with some groups using microtones more than other groups. For music (and sometimes for texts), oral tradition has been a primary vehicle of transmission, since not all cultural groups had methods of music notation.<sup>8</sup>

When instruments are used, they often present a single line of melodic motifs rather than the Western concept of chords, unless a specific function of a particular instrument is to provide a “drone” undertone. We shall present an “underlying skeleton scale” of intervals used in the musical motifs of a particular musical mode, and this “identifying modal scale” will usually be built upon a lower tetrachord (four-note scale) and an upper tetrachord.

Characteristically, musical motifs that make up the modes in these religious and cultural traditions are usually transmitted orally. Microtones are used extensively in Arabic *maqamat*, less so in Hindustani *ragas*, and even less so in *Ashkenazic* sacred chant. Microtones do appear in the sacred chant of *Eidot ha-mizrah* (Middle Eastern) Jewish communities. Many, perhaps

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<sup>5</sup> Masselos, Jim, *The Great Empires of Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 2010, pp. 106-113.

<sup>6</sup> Haywood, John, *The New Atlas of World History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 2011, pp. 26-47.

<sup>7</sup> Levine, Joseph, *Synagogue Chant in America* (Crown Point, IN: White Cliffs Media), 1989, pp. 82-83.

<sup>8</sup> Muallem, David, *The Maqam Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes*, translated by Yoram Arnon, edited by Yossi Zucker (Kfar Sava, Israel: Or-Tav Music Publications), 2010, p. 30.

most, musical modes are time-bound relative to the seasons, times of the week and times of day.<sup>9</sup> There are also “affective” or emotional components implied in musical motifs and modes, and some cultures also perceive visual colors as related to the musical modes.

## Beginning with the Familiar

To facilitate any comparison of “underlying musical modes” for *Nusah*, *maqamat* and *ragas*, it is useful to begin with the Medieval modes associated with sacred music of the Medieval Church. These are generally described as “all the white keys on a keyboard from X to the same X an octave higher” and the octaves repeat identically above and below the core octave.

Thus from C to upper C is the *Ionian* mode, better known as the Major scale in Western music. From D to upper D is the *Dorian* mode, still evident in the music of folk traditions such as the Celtic. From E to upper E is the *Phrygian* mode, with its characteristic lowered 2<sup>nd</sup> scale degree. From F to upper F is the *Lydian* mode, seldom used in standard Western music. From G to upper G is the *Mixolydian* mode, with its characteristic lowered 7<sup>th</sup> scale degree. From A to upper A is the *Aeolian* mode, better known as the Natural Minor scale in Western music. From B to upper B is the *Locrian* mode, seldom used in standard Western music.

These seven Medieval modes (as defined by their “octave skeleton”) serve only as a starting point to provide a “common language” of reference. Each of them consists of whole-step and half-step intervals in a specific sequence.<sup>10</sup> By keeping these scalar intervals the same, a musician can transpose a mode to a different finalis – or end-note. For example, one might refer to “chanting the *Dorian* mode in G.”

There is at least one other aspect that these Medieval modes have in common with the “skeleton musical modes” that underlie the musical structure of *nusah*, *maqamat* and *ragas*, namely, the concept of **tetrachords**. Briefly, this approach to the underlying structure of modes posits that the lower four notes of an “octave skeleton scale” are the “lower tetrachord,” and the next four notes are the “upper tetrachord” of that same scale. One can move within a family of *Maqamat*, for example, by keeping the intervals within the “defining” lower tetrachord the same, while changing the intervals within the upper tetrachord.

Among differences between Western music and *nusah*, *maqamat* and *ragas* is the use of “microtones” in the latter. Another difference is the fact that in Western music, whatever defining intervals exist within a particular “octave skeleton scale” for a given mode, the same intervals appear in lower and upper octaves. In the musical modes that underlie *nusah*, *maqamat* and *ragas*, there can be different intervals below the “core octave scale” and also different intervals above this “skeleton scale.”

<sup>9</sup> Rubin, E. & Baron, J., *Music in Jewish History & Culture* (Sterling Heights, MI: Harmonie Park Press), 2006: 88.

<sup>10</sup> Here are the scale intervals for these musical modes: the *Ionian* mode is the same as the Western Major scale (1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1 – 1 – 1/2), the *Dorian* mode is like Minor but with a raised 6<sup>th</sup> (1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1), the *Phrygian* mode has a lowered 2<sup>nd</sup> (“1/2 – 1 – 1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1”), the *Mixolydian* mode is like Major with a lowered 7<sup>th</sup> (1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1), and *Aeolian* mode is the “Natural Minor” (1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1 – 1/2 – 1 – 1).

Perhaps these different intervals above-and-below the core octave scale can be most easily seen by comparing the Medieval *Mixolydian* mode with the Jewish *Adonai malakh* mode on G. Moreover, preliminary research indicates that not only does the *Mixolydian* mode appear prominently in *nusah*, but also in *maqamat*, *ragas*, Plainchant and other Church music. As described above, “straight *Mixolydian*” is a G Major scale with an F natural as the lowered-7<sup>th</sup> scale degree. In American popular culture, it is familiar as the underlying scale for “*If I Were a Rich Man*” from the hit Broadway musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*.

The *Adonai malakh* mode is more complicated than “straight *Mixolydian*,” and it does not replicate itself above or below the “core octave.” Above the octave (the high G), the *Adonai malakh* Mode has the notes G–A–B $\flat$  rather than the G–A–B $\sharp$  that are *within* the basic octave scale. Below the octave (the low G), the *Adonai malakh* mode has E–F $\sharp$ –G rather than the E–F $\flat$ –G that are *within* the main octave of the modal scale. From *three notes below* the octave to *three notes above the octave*, the notes in the underlying scale of the *Adonai malakh* mode are: E–F $\sharp$ –G–A–B $\flat$ –C–D–E–F $\flat$ –G–A–B $\flat$ .

To summarize: in the musical modes of the cultures and religions under discussion, the chant presents itself as a chain of *musical motifs* built from the underlying modal “core skeleton scales.” For the *Nusah ha-t’fillah* modes of Jewish sacred chant, this concept can be stated as follows: **A “Musical Prayer-mode” of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* may be deemed “a group of musical motifs that define the intervals of a scale.”**

Another way of expressing this same point is: **“a specific musical mode of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* is a combination of modal musical motifs whose intervals can be presented in the form of their underlying modal scale.”** The above statements are based on the writings of Abraham Idelsohn<sup>11</sup>, Max Wohlberg<sup>12</sup>, Baruch Cohon<sup>13</sup>, Charles Davidson<sup>14</sup>, Joseph Levine<sup>15</sup>, Andrew Bernard<sup>16</sup> and other colleagues working in the field of *nusah*. Similar underlying principles apply to the modal music of *maqamat* and *ragas*.<sup>17</sup>

## Use of Microtones in Modal Music

One way to think of *microtones* is that they lie “in the cracks between the keys” of a piano keyboard, and therefore they are smaller (or larger) than a “half step” or semi-tone. The most common microtones among many cultures are a “quarter-flat” interval and a “quarter-sharp” interval, with the “quarter-flat” predominating.

<sup>11</sup> Idelsohn, Abraham Tzvi, *Jewish Music* (NY: Henry Holt, 1929 / Schocken), 1967 reprint.

<sup>12</sup> Wohlberg, Max, “The History of the Musical Modes of the Ashkenazic Synagogue and Their Usage” (1954), reprinted in *Journal of Synagogue Music*, Vol. 4, Nos. 1-2, April 1972, pp. 46-57.

<sup>13</sup> Cohon, Baruch, “The Structure of the Synagogue Prayer-Chant,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Spring 1950, pp. 17-32.

<sup>14</sup> Davidson, Charles, *Immunim Be-Nusah Ha-Tefillah* (Elkins Park, PA: Ashbourne Music, 1996), 2004, 2010.

<sup>15</sup> Levine, Joseph, *Synagogue Song in America* (Crown Point, IN: White Cliffs Media), 1989.

<sup>16</sup> Bernard, Andrew, *The Sound of Sacred Time* (Charlotte, NC: self-published), 2005.

<sup>17</sup> White, Emmons, *Appreciating India’s Music* (Boston: Crescendo Pub. Co.), 1971, p. 22.

The symbol used herein for a “ $\frac{1}{4}b$ ” is  $\flat$ , and for a “ $\frac{1}{4}\sharp$ ” is  $\sharp$ .

In Western music (e.g. on a piano keyboard) there is only one possible note between  $C\sharp$  and  $D\flat$  -- called either  $C\sharp$  or  $D\flat$  -- depending on the key signature for its scale. However, with quarter-tones, there are three possible notes between  $C\sharp$  and  $D\flat$ :  $C\sharp$ ,  $C\sharp$ -or- $D\flat$ ,  $D\flat$ . If one considers microtones that are even smaller than quarter-tones, the theoretical number of microtones between these two notes increases exponentially, although how many can be detected by the human ear is debatable.

To measure microtones more accurately, Dr. Johanna Spector – Founder and Director of the Ethnomusicology Department at the Jewish Theological Seminary (1962–1985), taught the concept of “Ellis cents” as a way to be specific about the “size” of a given microtone. 100 Ellis cents are equal to a semi-tone, and 50 Ellis cents are equal to an exact quarter-tone. However, within the practice of Arabic music, quarter-tones are not exactly equal<sup>18</sup> to each other, depending on the mode. In Arabic *maqamat*, E and B seem most often to sound as quarter-tones, usually “quarter-flat”.

The Hindustani *ragas* of Northern India feature fewer microtones than most Arabic *maqamat*. In fact, one difference between them and the Southern Indian Carnatic *ragas* is the extent to which microtones appear. The *Nusah ha-t’fillah* modes of *Ashkenazic* Jewish Liturgical Chant generally use even fewer microtones.

As a rule, Jewish communities whose sacred music characteristically contains microtones are the ones situated among Arab communities in Yemen, North Africa (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt), the Levant (Syria, Lebanon), Asia Minor and Southeast Europe (Turkey, Greece, the Balkans), Mesopotamia (Iraq, Kurdistan), Persia (Iran, Afghanistan), the Caucasus Mountains and Central Asia (especially Uzbekistan). Most members of these ancient *Eidot ha-mizrah* communities now live in Israel, where their music continues to enrich aspects of modern Israeli music, particularly the chanting of *piyyutim* (Medieval religious poems).

## Tetrachord Structure in Modal Scales

Tetrachords are “building blocks” which combine to form the scales that underlie musical modes. They are defined by the intervals found in the musical motifs of each mode. A “tetrachord” is a series of four consecutive scale degrees, and two tetrachords of four notes each are “stacked” consecutively to make up the underlying octave of a modal scale. In some modes there are three-note and five-note groupings; that is beyond the scope of this article.

In any study of Arabic *maqamat*, it is striking to see how clearly the musical structure of each *maqam* depends upon the tetrachords from which it is built. The lower tetrachord defines which “family” of *maqamat* is generally used for a given text. A given combination of tetrachords yields one particular *Maqam* within a general “family” of *maqamat*, and changing just one of those tetrachords (usually the “upper” one) yields a different (and related) *maqam*.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Muallem (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 64.

<sup>19</sup> Muallem (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 82.

One of the musical modes of Jewish sacred chant, called *Ahavah rabbah*, is closely related to the Arabic *maqam Hijaz*<sup>20</sup>. Technically, *maqam Hijaz* is a “modified *Phrygian* mode” because its “raised-3<sup>rd</sup> scale degree” is not part of the medieval *Phrygian* mode. The lower tetrachord of *maqam Hijaz* has four notes whose scale degrees are *Do–bRe–#Mi–Fa*.

The “scale intervals” for this tetrachord translate into  $\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ , which is a striking modification of the first tetrachord in Medieval *Phrygian* ( $\frac{1}{2}$ –1–1). Combining the lowered 2<sup>nd</sup> scale degree of *Phrygian* with a raised-3<sup>rd</sup> scale degree gives the unique “step-and-a-half” interval in the lower tetrachord that is characteristic of *maqam Hijaz* in Arabic music, *raga Bhairav* in the music of Northern India, and the *Ahavah rabbah* mode in *Nusah ha-t’fillah*. There is a haunting or yearning ambience in this interval progression.

This “yearning” step-and-a-half interval, influenced by the lower tetrachord of the Arabic *maqam Hijaz*, is important in Jewish Liturgical Chant. The *Ahavah rabbah* mode in which this interval primarily appears has two forms. In Weekday prayer, its chant dwells largely in the lower tetrachord so as to not lengthen the duration of morning and evening services. On holy days when worshipers are not hastening to work, its chant expands to include the upper tetrachord – especially in passages that beseech God’s help. During those moments of intense prayer, when the chant can rise an octave or more, the step-and-a-half interval of yearning enters the upper tetrachord, making it essentially a duplicate of the lower tetrachord, a fourth higher in pitch. The same phenomenon recurs on the High Holy Days, when the *S’liḥah* (“Forgiveness”) leitmotif dominates the prayer chant, but that “step-and-a-half” is between *bMi* and *#Fa*.

This phenomenon of a “modal-family-defining” lower tetrachord and a “mode-specific” upper tetrachord occurs in the first two phrases of *Miserlu* (“The Egyptian Girl”), a Greek folk-dance melody from the 1920s, whose origins are unclear.<sup>21</sup> The first line of music is the Arabic *maqam Hijaz* on E, with its lower tetrachord in *Hijaz* with the characteristic “step-and-a-half” or “augmented second” between its *b2<sup>nd</sup>* and *#3<sup>rd</sup>* notes. However, its upper tetrachord is in a different *maqam*, *Nahawand*, which has no augmented-second step.



Example 1. “Miserlu” in *maqam Hijaz* on E, and *maqam Nahawand* on B.

The second line of music is entirely in *maqam Hijaz-Kar*, which presents both lower- and upper-tetrachords in *maqam Hijaz*. The characteristic “step-and-a-half” appears between the mode’s *b2<sup>nd</sup>* and *#3<sup>rd</sup>* notes in the mode’s lower tetrachord, and also between its *b6<sup>th</sup>* and *#7<sup>th</sup>* notes in the upper tetrachord.

<sup>20</sup> *Hijaz* is a geographic area in western Saudi Arabia along the Red Sea, with the cities Mecca and Medina.

<sup>21</sup> Transcribed by the author from common practice.



Example 2. “Miserlu” in *maqam Hijaz-Kar* on E.

To summarize: we have seen that the modal music of Hindustani *ragas*, Arabic *maqamat*, and Jewish *Nusah ha-t’fillah* share the possibility of changing the intervals above and below the underlying scale of the basic core octave. They also share the concept of tetrachords as the “building blocks” of these underlying core scales. It is possible that these three types of modal music might also share the concept of “authentic” and “plagal” modal versions, a concept to which we turn next.

### Authentic and Plagal Versions of Musical Modes

This concept is related to the preceding discussion about tetrachords. For the core scales of many musical modes, there is an *authentic* version whose chant moves between scale degree 1 to scale degree 8, known as the *finalis* of the mode. Using the scale degrees of the authentic version, the chant of a *plagal* version moves between scale degree 5 below the mode’s *finalis* and scale degree 5 above its *finalis*. To state this in terms of “movable-Do” *Solfeggio*, an *authentic* version of a mode moves between its lower *Do* and its upper *Do*, while a *plagal* version of a mode moves primarily between the *Sol* below *Do* and the *Sol* above the same *Do*.

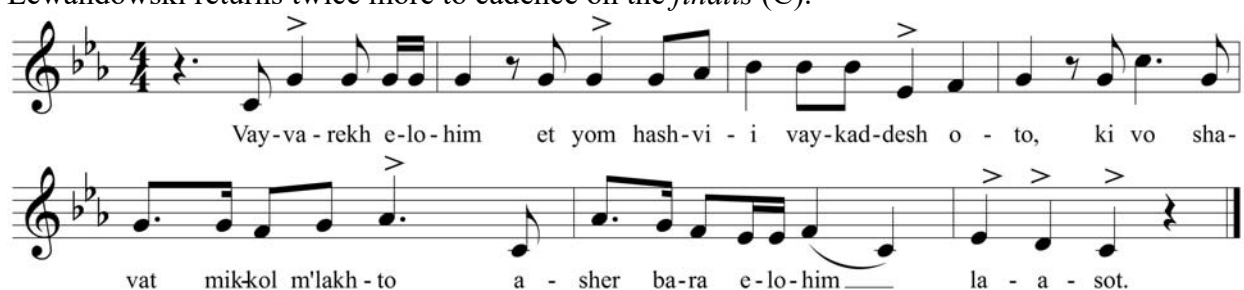
A given musical mode of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* can exist in both *authentic* and *plagal* forms. A good example of this is the *Magein avot* mode, whose underlying scale is the same as the *Aeolian* mode or “Natural Minor” scale of Western music. *Magein avot* is named for a prayer in the short set of paragraphs immediately after the silent *Amidah* (Standing Devotion) in the Friday Evening service. Our example – *Vaikhullu* (“Heaven and Earth were finished”)<sup>22</sup> – opens this section. At that point the chant is in an “authentic” form of the *Magein avot* mode that extends from its lower *finalis* to its upper *finalis* (C in both cases, an octave apart), with a “resting tone” on its 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree (G). It makes an excursion to the relative Major mode on its 3<sup>rd</sup>-to-5<sup>th</sup> scale degrees (Eb-Bb), and then rests again on the 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree (G).



Example 3. Lewandowski’s *Wajchulu* (sic) —in “authentic” *Magein avot* mode on C

<sup>22</sup> Louis Lewandowski, *Kol Rinnah U’ T’fillah* (Berlin: Bote & Beck, 1882), “Wajchulu,” No. 26, pp. 19-20. Reprinted as Volume 9 in the Out-of-Print Classics series (New York: Sacred Music Press), 1954.

Lewandowski returns twice more to cadence on the *finalis* (C).



**Example 4. Ending of Lewandowski’s *Wajchulu*, (sic) on its lower *finalis* (C).**

Earlier on Friday evening, as part of *Sh’ma u-virkhoteha* (the *Sh’ma* Declaration of Faith, with its surrounding Blessings) of the *Arvit* service proper, the *Magein avot* mode appears in its “plagal” form. As such, the upbeat note for most musical phrases of this liturgical section—will be its lower 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree (C), and its *finalis* on F. We see this in our next example, *U-ma’avir yom* (“Who causes the day to fade”) – the opening blessing of the *Sh’ma u-virkhoteha* section, according to anthologist Gershon Ephros’s notation of the Lithuanian tradition that has prevailed for over a century in most North American synagogues.<sup>23</sup>



**Example 5. Opening phrase of *U-ma’avir yom* for Friday Night *Ma’ariv* proper, in the Lithuanian tradition of a “plagal” *Magein avot* mode within the same range (C-C<sup>1</sup>).**

An ensuing motif – “pausal” in function – climbs a note higher to Bb, the plagal mode’s upper 4<sup>th</sup> scale degree, before again descending to its *finalis*, F.



**Example 6. Ensuing (pausal) phrase of *U-ma’avir yom* for Friday Night *Ma’ariv* proper, in the Lithuanian tradition of a “plagal” *Magein avot* mode.**

Eventually, no matter how much the chant motifs may center around (or pause upon) its lower 5<sup>th</sup> scale degree (C), the entire prayer will cadence on its 1<sup>st</sup> scale degree – this plagal mode’s *finalis* – (F).



**Example 7. Concluding phrase of *U-ma’avir yom* for Friday Night *Ma’ariv* proper, in the Lithuanian tradition of a “plagal” *Magein avot* mode.**

<sup>23</sup> Gershon Ephros, *Cantorial Anthology*, vol. IV (NY: Bloch Publishing), 1953: 85 – Lithuanian Tradition.

A relationship exists between the “authentic” versus “plagal” structure of the *Magein Avot* mode and the discussion about tetrachords that preceded it. In its “authentic” Friday Night version of *Vaikhulu* on C, the mode’s lower tetrachord consists of C–D–Eb–F and its upper tetrachord consists of G–Ab–Bb–C, with C being its *finalis*. In the “plagal” version of this same mode, *U-ma’avir yom* on F, the underlying notes remain the same, but play different roles as degrees within the particular mode. The “plagal” mode’s **lower** tetrachord again consists of G–Ab–Bb–C, and its **upper** tetrachord again consists of G–Ab–Bb–C. But in its “plagal” form on C, the *Magein Avot* mode’s *finalis* is no longer C, but F. This distinction of “authentic” and “plagal” versions of musical modes may also be at work in Arabic *maqamat* and in Hindustani *ragas*, but much more subtly, and bearing a different terminology.

### Modes Indicate Sacred Times and Moods:

Three important functions for *Nusah ha-t’fillah* are to identify the “liturgical occasion” in terms of time of year, month, week and day; to identify the section of liturgy being chanted within each worship service; and to use the phrasing of the mode’s characteristic musical motifs to help express the meaning of the underlying Hebrew texts. There are similar characteristics of being time-bound and carrying feelings of specific moods in the modal music of other Eurasian religions and cultures, especially in *maqamat*<sup>24</sup> and in *ragas*.

George Ruckert<sup>25</sup> and other scholars<sup>26</sup> of Hindustani *ragas* stress this point: “Certain moods are usually associated with each *rag*, and a time of day or season of the year.” It is no longer well-known among synagogue attendees that the musical motifs of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* reflect the “mood” of Jewish worship experiences, in the context of their time-bound nature. Music as an indicator and agent of “mood” is a powerful cultural and religious phenomenon. Religious and cultural modal music of Northern India (*ragas*), the Middle East (*maqamat*), and Europe (Church Tones) are related to specific times of day for the chanting of specific musical modes<sup>27</sup>, as are the modes of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* in Jewish Liturgical Chant.<sup>28</sup>

One source relates *raga Bhairava* most closely with the months of September and October<sup>29</sup>; a different source connects this same *raga* with the winter season<sup>30</sup>. “This *raga* is performed in the morning. In the opinion of Pandit Ravi Shankar, this *raga* imparts morning invocation expression. He believes that *Bhairava* represents the mood for prayers and invocation, *Bhairava* being a morning *raga* imparts an energetic mood, as morning symbolizes energy<sup>31</sup>.” He continues, “a clear relationship between the *Ragas* and the time and season during which they should be played... just like the sun rises from the infinite in the morning and is fresh and energetic, similarly *Sa* [C] is infinite. The *Re* [D♭] of *Bhairav* rises from this infinite *Sa* [C] and

<sup>24</sup> Muallem (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Ruckert, George. *Music in North India* (New York: Oxford University Press), 2004, p. 56.

<sup>26</sup> White (1971) *op. cit.*, p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> Swarup, Rai Bahadur. *Theory of Indian Music* (New Delhi: Asian Pub. Serv.), 1932/1997, chap. 15.

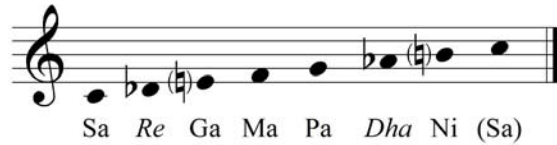
<sup>28</sup> Levine (1989) *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>29</sup> Ranade, *Hindustani Music*, *Op cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>30</sup> Ranade, Ashok. *Concise Dictionary of Hindustani Music* (New Delhi: Promilla & Co.), 2006, p. 239.

<sup>31</sup> Mahajan, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

thus *Bhairava* is a morning *raga*<sup>32</sup>.” “*Bhairava* is a *raga* that is ideally chanted during the first quarter of the day, beginning at sunrise<sup>33</sup>. Depending on individual musical motifs within this *raga*, the moods (*rasa*) may range from melancholy to contented to joyful”<sup>34</sup>. Here are the underlying notes of *raga Bhairava* on C.<sup>35</sup>



**Example 8. Underlying Notes of *Raga Bhairava* on C.**

Some of these cultures have *colors* associated with specific times of day and musical modes, especially in the *ragas* of Northern India<sup>36</sup>. While this does not seem prevalent in Jewish and Christian sacred modal music, there are specific *colored vestments* worn by some Christian priests and ministers during certain “liturgical seasons” of a religious-year cycle. This seems to indicate that color is associated with sacred time and sacred music in some types of Christianity. In traditional Judaism, the use of the color *white* on *Yom Kippur* reflects the soul striving for purity, as prayers are chanted asking for forgiveness.

Within *Ragas*, the emotional aspects of the constituent scale notes affect the mood of a given *Raga*, and this concept is called *Rasa*. However, the specific concept of color has multiple interpretations, as reflected in this quote: “Each of the notes of the scale has its own kind of expressions and a distinct psychological or physical effect, and so it can be related to a colour, a mood, a metre, a deity or one of the subtle centres (*chakras*) of the body.”<sup>37</sup> [British spelling is the author’s.] “Mood [*rasa*] is an essential part of the musical experience in India, and was discussed in the earliest writings on music ... sadness, joy, valor, laughter, peace ... in the old classifications systems you will find the notes associated with birdcalls, animal sounds, colors, seasons, and planets. The difficulty is that **no two writers seem to agree** on which notes go with which particular natural phenomena – the note *Pa*, for instance, may be described as the color gold in one place and blue in another ...<sup>38</sup>”. [Bold emphasis added to this direct quote.]

Pioneering Jewish ethnomusicologist Abraham Zvi Idelsohn is quoted as saying: “A mode... is composed of a number of motives... within a certain scale. The motives have different functions. There are beginning and concluding motives, and motives of conjunctive and disjunctive character.”<sup>39</sup> These motives that form the building blocks of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* have impact beyond showing the syntax of Hebrew prayer-texts through rhetorical pauses that reflect their meaning. Other functions are similar to how musical motifs are used in *maqamat*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 101.

<sup>33</sup> Roychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>34</sup> Daniélou, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 – 133, a section about 9 individual *ragas* within the *Bhairava* Group (*Thaat*).

<sup>35</sup> Mahajan, Anupam. *Ragas in Hindustani Music* (New Delhi: Gyan Pub. 2010), p. 85.

<sup>36</sup> Daniélou, Alain. *The Ragas of Northern Indian Music* (London: Barrie & Rockliff), 1968, pp. 92-93.

<sup>37</sup> Daniélou, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>38</sup> Ruckert (2004), *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>39</sup> Idelsohn, Abraham Tzvi, *Jewish Music in its Historical Development* (NY: Henry Holt), 1929, p. 24.

and *ragas*.<sup>40</sup> We identify an underlying modal scale **based on the intervals within functional constituent motifs**, and the *affective* functions of a mode are based on these musical motifs.

Every *change of liturgical text* in every Jewish holy day is reflected through *changes in the liturgical chants* of those texts. It is the **chanting** of Jewish liturgical texts in the traditional modes and motifs of each religious occasion that *signals* and **identifies these changes in texts** to the congregation. In addition, the same prayer-text may be chanted with different modal musical motifs on different religious occasions, and the **modal chant defines those occasions**.

Each “musical prayer-mode” of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* is composed of many musical motifs within an underlying scale structure. These reflect the general liturgical occasion, the time in which a Weekday, Shabbat, or Festival worship service is being chanted, and which part of each service is being chanted. It is the musical **motifs within each mode** of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* that are unique to each liturgical occasion, each worship service, and each section within the liturgy.

Abraham Joshua Heschel said, “The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space.”<sup>41</sup> His entire slim book *The Sabbath* shows **how** and **why** Judaism brought to the world the concept that *sacred time* takes precedence over *sacred space*. “New in the teaching of Judaism was that the idea of holiness was gradually shifted from space to time, from the realm of nature to the realm of history, from things to events.”<sup>42</sup>

It could be said that were this not the case, Judaism may not have survived the 1,900 years of exile from the Land of Israel. It is the concept of *sacred time* that is totally portable, no matter where Jewish communities are established throughout the world. This is reflected in the ways that Jewish liturgy portrays *sacred time*, and in the ways that Jewish liturgical chant identifies a particular period of *sacred time* through sacred rituals and specific liturgical texts.

One of the main functions of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* and its musical motifs is to **identify the liturgical occasion** in terms of time of year, time of month, of week, and of day. The musical motifs and their underlying modes of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* help to make sense of the cycle of liturgical occasions, just as the various Trope systems and their underlying modes indicate what Biblical books are chanted for which Jewish holy days. In a sense, **trope and nusah work together to identify Jewish sacred time**.

A *second* main function of the *modes* within *Nusah ha-t’fillah* and their musical *motifs* is to **identify the sections of liturgy** being chanted within each type of worship service. A service can be as short as 15 minutes on a Weekday afternoon or as long as four hours on *Yom Kippur* morning. The “musical clues” of the traditional modes and motifs must be presented in a way that congregants can *sense a flow* within the liturgical texts throughout a worship service.

The *third* main function of the *modes* within *Nusah ha-t’fillah* and their musical *motifs* is to help **identify the Hebrew phrases** and thereby to **express the meanings** of the

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<sup>40</sup> Touma, Habib Hassan. *The Music of the Arabs* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press), 1996, pp. xx & chap. 3.

<sup>41</sup> Heschel, Abraham. *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (NY: Farrar, Straus & Giroux), 1951, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, Chapter 9, p. 79.

Hebrew texts as they are used in Jewish liturgy. This is a *function of the musical motifs within* musical *nusah* modes, just as combinations of conjunctive and disjunctive Trope help to express the meaning in biblical texts.

The musical modes of *Nusah ha-t'fillah* reflect the many *moods* intrinsic in Jewish liturgical occasions. Various moods inherent in the musical modes of *Nusah ha-t'fillah* reflect the changing moods of the 24-hour *Shabbat* time period, and the moods of the extended High Holy Days period covering the month of Tishrei.

Here is a short summary of the “mood-indicating” aspects inherent in *Nusah ha-t'fillah* modes. *Adonai malakh* (“God Reigns”) is usually laudatory and optimistic, while the *S'liha* mode conveys a plaintive solemnity. *Ahavah rabbah* (Abundant Love”) has a perfunctory Weekday version and a celebratory *Shabbat* version. *Magein avot* (“Protector of Our Ancestors”) is the heroic Prophetic mode. The Study mode is suited for teaching the wisdom of our sages, while Ukrainian Dorian coloring in any prayer mode expresses pain and suffering.

This section has reviewed many *musical structures* of *Nusah ha-t'fillah*: musical motifs, scales, intervals, tetrachords, authentic and plagal forms, pausal- and resting-points. These characteristics have been briefly compared with *maqamat* and *ragas*. The *functions* of *Nusah ha-t'fillah* were also enumerated: **identifying sacred time** within the Jewish yearly, weekly and daily calendar; **specifying sections of the liturgy**; and **showing the meanings and moods** of prayer-texts through musical phrasing and expressive modal motifs. We next turn to comparisons with the musical modes of Arabic and Hindu religious cultures.

### Similar Musical Modes Among Some Eurasian Cultures

A striking musical similarity among some musical modes of *Nusah ha-t'fillah*, *maqamat* and *ragas* is the “augmented second” in the lower tetrachord of the “modified *Phrygian*” mode. This appears in *maqam Hijaz* (and *Hijaz-Kar*), *raga Bhairav*, and *Ahavah rabbah* mode. Here are two charts comparing these musical modes.

#### Names of the basic notes in the underlying scales of *maqamat* and Hindustani *ragas*<sup>43</sup>

Western notes	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
<i>solfeccio</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Re</i>	<i>Mi</i>	<i>Fa</i>	<i>Sol</i>	<i>La</i>	<i>Ti</i>
Indic <i>Ragas</i>	<i>Sa</i>	<i>Ri</i>	<i>Ga</i>	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>Da</i>	<i>Ni</i>
Arab <i>Maqamat</i>	<i>Rast</i>	<i>Dukah</i>	<i>Sikah</i>	<i>Djaharkah</i>	<i>Yakah</i>	<i>Ushayran</i>	<i>Adjam\Iraq</i>

#### Comparing the *Ahavah rabbah* Mode with *Maqam Hijaz-Kar* and *Raga Bhairava*

Western notes	C	D $\flat$	E	F	G	A $\flat$	B	C	= <i>Bhairav</i> and <i>Hidjaz-Kar</i>
<i>Raga Bhairava</i>	<i>Sa</i>	<i>Re<math>\flat</math></i>	<i>Ga</i>	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>Dha<math>\flat</math></i>	<i>Ni</i>	<i>Sa</i>	matches <i>Maqam Hidjaz-Kar</i>
<i>Maqam Hijaz</i>	D	E $\flat$	F $\sharp$	G	A	B $\flat$	C	D	ascend = B $\frac{1}{4}\flat$ , descend = B $\flat$

<sup>43</sup> Daniélou (1968), *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<i>Hijaz-Kar</i>	C	D $\flat$	E	F	G	A $\flat$	B	C	1½ -step in both tetrachords
<i>Ahavah Rabbah</i>	E	F	G $\sharp$	A	B	C	D\#	E	D = <i>Hidjaz</i> , D $\sharp$ = <i>Hidjaz-Kar</i>

In Hindustani music, the underlying scale of *raga Bhairava* contains the same “step-and-a-half” intervals as *Maqam Hijaz* and our *Ahavah rabbah* mode. Here is the underlying scale of *Bhairava* beginning on C<sup>44</sup>. In its most basic form, this underlying scale matches that of *maqam Hijaz-Kar*, which has the augmented 2<sup>nd</sup> in both the lower and upper tetrachords (between the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> scale-degrees). Using the Sanskrit syllables listed above, the *Bhairav Thaata* (“family group”) is indicated as Sa – Re – Ga – Ma – Pa – Dha – Ni (C – D $\flat$  – E – F – G – A $\flat$  – B)<sup>45</sup>.

Two musical modes in particular are ubiquitous across the length of Eurasia from Northern India through the Middle East and across Europe. These are the *Mixolydian* mode (like a Major scale with a lowered 7<sup>th</sup>) and the *Aeolian* Mode (the natural Minor scale). In any given cultural and religious tradition, specific musical motifs within these modes will differ. The *Mixolydian* and *Aeolian* modes are chanted in synagogues on *Shabbat* for the *Torah* and *Haftarah* Readings, respectively.

Here are musical modes in various cultures, whose underlying core modal scales are similar to the *Mixolydian* and *Aeolian* modal scales. For a few, there are different notes above and below the octave which do not match the intervals within the core octave scale. Also, the frequent use of microtones in Arabic *maqamat*, especially the “quarter-flat”, results in “approximations” of these Medieval modes in comparison to their underlying core modal scales.

***Mixolydian*:** Northern India (*Raga Khamaj*), Persia (*Dastgah Homayun*), Arabia (*Maqam Rast*), Turkey (*Mugam Rast*), the Tones and Plainchant of Orthodox, Ukrainian Catholic, and Roman Catholic sacred music, and the *Adonai malakh* mode of Jewish *Nusah ha-t’fillah*.

***Aeolian*:** Northern India (*Raga Asavari*), Persia (*Dastgah Dashti*), Arabia (*Maqam Nahawand*), Turkey (*Mugam Bayati*), somewhat in the Tones of Orthodox and Catholic sacred music, and the *Magein avot* mode chanted in *Nusah ha-t’fillah*.

One way to summarize similarities among the underlying scales of these various modes is to present them in the order of the Medieval modes. This is presented according to “authentic” versions (scale degrees 1 – 8) in note-order from “C” upwards. This “scalar” approach is for ease of comparison only – bearing in mind that a **musical mode is a collection of motifs that give rise to and define intervals reflected in the underlying “core scale” octave**. These musical modes can be transposed, and for many of these modes there can be differing scalar intervals above and below the core octave.

<sup>44</sup> Daniélou, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>45</sup> Mahajan, Anupam. *Ragas in Hindustani Music* (New Delhi: Gyan Pub.), 2010, p. 85.

### Comparing underlying scales for *maqamat*, *thaats/ragas*, *nusah*, and medieval modes

Medieval	Range	<i>Maqam</i>	<i>Thaat/Raga</i>	<i>Mugam / Dastgah</i> <sup>46</sup>	<i>Nusah</i>
<i>Ionian</i>	“C” to “C”	<i>Ajam</i>	<i>Bilaval</i>	<i>Mahur</i>	Pentatonic
<i>Dorian</i>	“D” to “D”	? <i>Husseini</i> ?	<i>Kafi</i>	<i>Husseini / Neva</i>	
<i>Phrygian</i>	“E” to “E”	<i>Kurd</i>	<i>Bhairavi</i>		
<i>Lydian</i>	“F” to “F”	? <i>Sikah</i> ?	<i>Kalyan</i>	<i>Yaman</i>	<i>Adonai malakh</i>
<i>Mixolydian</i>	“G” to “G”	? <i>Rast</i> ?	<i>Khamaj</i>	<i>Rast</i>	
<i>Aeolian</i>	“A” to “A”	<i>Nahawand</i>	<i>Asavari</i>	<i>Ussak / Bayati</i>	
<i>Locrian</i>	“B” to “B”	? <i>Iraqi</i> ?			<i>Magein avot</i>
raised 3 <sup>rd</sup>	( <i>Phrygian</i> )	<i>Hijaz</i>	<i>Bhairav</i>	<i>Hijaz</i>	
raised 4 <sup>th</sup>	(Ukr. <i>Dorian</i> )	<i>Nakriz</i>	? <i>Todi</i> ?		

(Note: “?” indicates microtones within a mode which may be close to the Greek comparison.)

The next list concentrates on Hindustani *thaats*, or “scale-types” that each underlie a “family” of *ragas* having specific motifs.<sup>47</sup> This is similar to the system of Arabic *maqamat* that will be presented below, but there is one important difference. In a *maqam*, the lower tetrachord defines each “family” of *maqamat*, and the building of the family relies primarily on changing the upper tetrachord (in addition to modulations / repositions / transpositions that lie beyond the parameters of this article).

### Hindustani *thaats* (scale-types) compared to Medieval modes having similar intervals

<i>Kalyan</i>	C – D – E – F# – G – A – B – C	<i>Lydian</i>
<i>Bilaval</i>	C – D – E – F – G – A – B – C	<i>Ionian</i>
<i>Khamaj</i>	C – D – E – F – G – A – B $\flat$ – C	<i>Mixolydian</i>
<i>Bhairav</i>	C – D $\flat$ – E – F – G – A $\flat$ – B – C	<i>Ahavah Rabbah</i> \ <i>Hidjaz-Kar</i>
<i>Purvi</i>	C – D $\flat$ – E – F# – G – A $\flat$ – B – C	(no equivalent)
<i>Marva</i>	C – D $\flat$ – E – F# – G – A – B – C	(no equivalent)
<i>Kafi</i>	C – D – E $\flat$ – F – G – A – B $\flat$ – C	<i>Dorian</i>
<i>Asavari</i>	C – D – E $\flat$ – F – G – A $\flat$ – B $\flat$ – C	<i>Aeolian</i>
<i>Bhairavi</i>	C – D $\flat$ – E $\flat$ – F – G – A $\flat$ – B $\flat$ – C	<i>Phrygian</i>
<i>Todi</i>	C – D $\flat$ – E $\flat$ – F# – G – A $\flat$ – B – C	raised 4 <sup>th</sup> (like Ukr. <i>Dorian</i> )

<sup>46</sup> Gautam, M.R. *Evolution of Raga and Tala in Indian Music* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharial), 1989, p. 8.

<sup>47</sup> Wade, Bonnie. *Music in India* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall), 1979, p. 80.

## Glossary<sup>48</sup> of terms that apply to characteristics of Hindustani *Ragas*

<b>Arohana</b>	=	Ascending format within a <i>that</i> or <i>raga</i> that may be different descending. <sup>49</sup>
<b>Avarohana</b>	=	Descending format within a <i>that</i> or <i>raga</i> that may be different ascending.
<b>Bhakti</b>	=	Religious Devotion; an attitude in the discipline of Indian classical music.
<b>Bhava</b>	=	Expression; the task of the performer is to bring out the <i>bhava</i> of a given <i>raga</i> .
<b>Dhrupad</b>	=	Temple sacred music; according to times of the day and seasons of the year. <sup>50</sup>
<b>Gamak</b>	=	Ornamentation; a pitch rapidly repeated with a neighboring note (like a trill).
<b>Gharana</b>	=	A musical style taught through a lineage of <i>gurus</i> , often family generations.
<b>Jati</b>	=	Type; melodic <i>jatis</i> classify scales, and rhythmic <i>jatis</i> classify rhythm pulses.
<b>Khyal</b>	=	Imagination; a vocal style of recent centuries that encourages variety. <sup>51</sup>
<b>Raga</b>	=	Literally “mood”; melodic ideas [ <u>motifs</u> ] interwoven with scalar motions.
<b>Rasa</b>	=	Literally “juice”; used in Indian music to describe the nine basic moods.
<b>Sargam</b>	=	Names of the pitches in Sanskrit, similar to <i>solfeggio</i> in Western music.
<b>Sruti</b>	=	Intervals between notes used in <i>ragas</i> – these may also be microtones.
<b>Thats</b>	=	Ten scale-types, in which Hindustani <i>ragas</i> are organized into groups. <sup>52</sup>
<b>Vadi</b>	=	Tonal center within a <i>raga</i> , a 4 <sup>th</sup> or 5 <sup>th</sup> apart from the “ <i>Samvadi</i> ” center. <sup>53</sup>

Just as *thaats* give rise to “families” of Hindustani *ragas*, so too do *adjinas* (lower tetrachords) give rise to “families” of Arabic *maqamat*. By changing the upper tetrachord, different *maqamat* are related to each of the “*maqam* families” below. These derivative *maqamat* reflect differences in moods, emotions, time of day or season, and other affective characteristics.

### *Adjinas* (lower tetrachords) that define the *maqam* “families”<sup>54</sup>

<b>Adjam</b>	C – 1 – D – 1 – E – ½ – F	<i>Ionian</i>
<b>Nahawand</b>	C – 1 – D – ½ – E $\flat$ – 1 – F	<i>Aeolian</i>
<b>Kurd</b>	C – ½ – D $\flat$ – 1 – E $\flat$ – 1 – F	<i>Phrygian</i>
<b>Hidjaz</b>	C – ½ – D $\flat$ – 1½ – E – ½ – F	<i>Ahavah Rabbah</i>
<b>Nakriz</b>	C – 1 – D – ½ – E $\flat$ – 1½ – F $\sharp$	<i>Ukrainian Dorian</i>
<b>Rast</b>	C – 1 – D – ¾ – E $\flat$ – ¾ – F	? <i>Mixolydian</i> ?
<b>Bayat</b>	C – ¾ – D $\flat$ – ¾ – E $\flat$ – 1 – F	? <i>Locrian / Dorian</i> ?
<b>Sikah\Siga</b>	C – ¾ – D $\flat$ – 1 – E – ¾ – F	? <i>Lydian</i> ?
<b>(Saba)</b>	C – ¾ – D $\flat$ – ¾ – E $\flat$ – ½ – F $\flat$	no equivalent
<b>(Huzam)</b>	C – ¾ – D $\flat$ – 1 – E $\flat$ – ½ – F $\flat$	no equivalent <sup>55</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Ruckert (2004), *op. cit.*, pp. 89 - 95 (selected, with additional sources as noted for specific terms).

<sup>49</sup> White (1971), *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>50</sup> Beck (2006), *op. cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>51</sup> Gautam, M.R. *The Musical Heritage of India*. (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications), 1980, p. 33.

<sup>52</sup> Wade (1979), *op. cit.* pp. 80-81.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid*, p. 56.

<sup>54</sup> Mellul, Eli. *Songs of the Jews of Morocco*. (New York: Tara Publications), 1996, p. 60.

The scale underlying *maqam Hussein* is “one of the most common... in Arab music.”<sup>56</sup>. It belongs to the “family” of *Maqam Bayat*, based on the fact that its lower tetrachord has the intervals  $\frac{3}{4} - \frac{3}{4} - 1$ . Here is a note-by-note comparison of this *maqam* with the *Dorian* mode, which provides a good illustration of how the microtones provide a challenge for drawing any conclusions about trying to “match” the underlying scales of *maqamat* with other modes.

<i>Hussein</i>	D – $\frac{3}{4}$ – E $\flat$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ – F – 1 – G – 1 – A – $\frac{3}{4}$ – B $\flat$ – $\frac{3}{4}$ – C – 1 – D
? <i>Dorian</i> ?	D – 1 – E – $\frac{1}{2}$ – F – 1 – G – 1 – A – 1 – B – $\frac{1}{2}$ – C – 1 – D

### Glossary<sup>57</sup> of terms that apply to characteristics of Arabic *ragas*

<i>Djawab</i>	= Response; Octave Note (reinforces the tonal center).
<i>Djin</i>	= Species; Tetrachord (from Greek “ <i>genus</i> ”) (pl. <i>adjinas</i> ).
<i>Ghammaz</i>	= Pivot Note; such as Dominant or Fourth.
<i>Layali</i>	= Nights; vocal improvisational genre in motif phrases of a <i>Maqam</i> .
<i>Maqam</i>	= Place; scale <u>and</u> motifs of a mode (pl. <i>maqamat</i> ).
<i>Qarar</i>	= Base; Tonic Note, which defines a <i>maqam</i> .
<i>Saltana</i>	= Control; ability to move from one <i>maqam</i> to another in vocal music.
<i>Sayr</i>	= Behavior; melodic progression that organizes the presentation of a <i>maqam</i> .
<i>Sullam</i>	= Ladder; the group of notes and intervals in the “core scale” of a <i>maqam</i> .
<i>Taqsim</i>	= Division; Improvised non-metric music in motif phrases of a <i>maqam</i> .
<i>Zahir</i>	= Assisting; Leading Note, usually from below, may be a microtone.

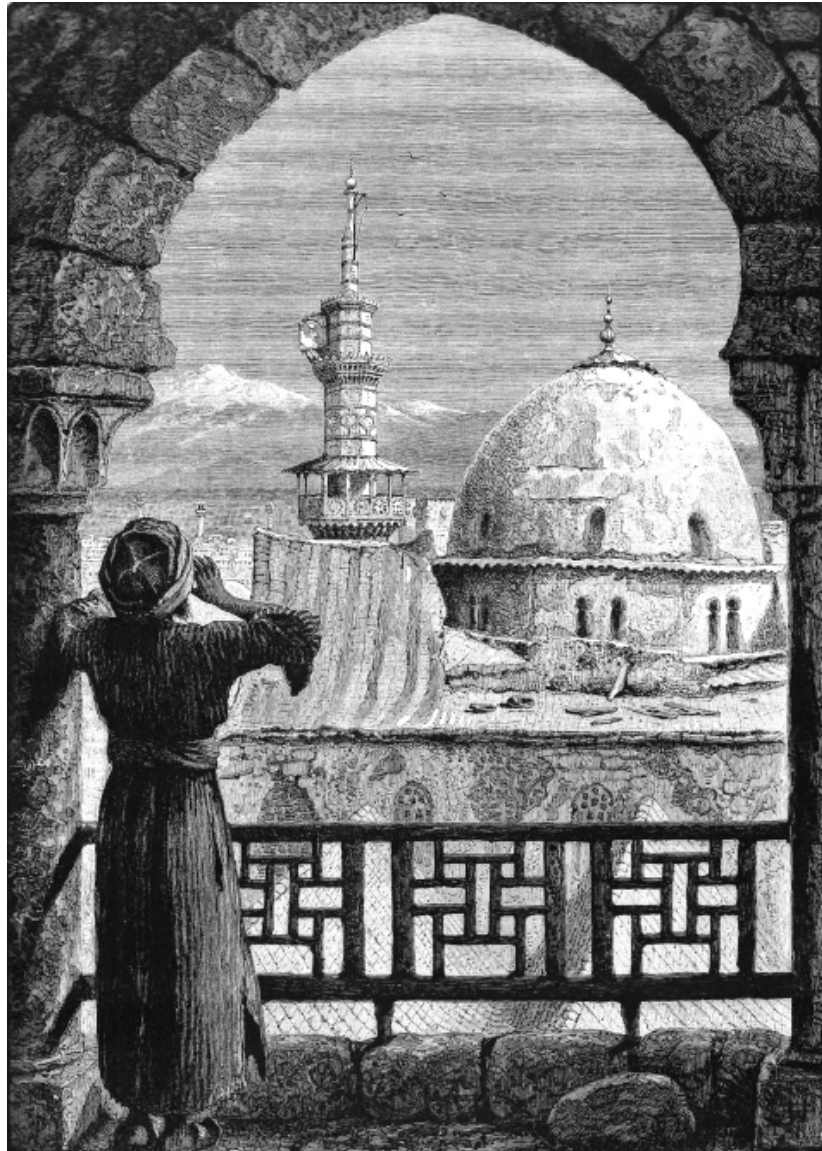
This article is intended to heighten readers’ awareness of the concept that our sacred music is much more complex than it seems at first glance. Jewish liturgical chant has internal structures and layers of functions that are not apparent to most congregants, and even to many prayer leaders. Through comparison of *Nusah ha-t’fillah* with the modal music of *maqamat* and *ragas*, we can begin to appreciate how musical motifs function in Jewish liturgy to delineate textual punctuation, and thus meaning, and to reflect the additional affective aspects of mood and emotion that are clear in Arabic and Hindu modal music. It is the author’s hope that knowledge of modal music’s internal structures that are briefly considered herein can enrich the davenning experience of both *Sh’lihei tsibbur* and those they lead in worship.

<sup>55</sup> Cohen, Dalia & Katz, Ruth. *Palestinian Arab Music* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press), 2006, p. 21.

<sup>56</sup> Muallem (2010), *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 227 - 233 (selected).

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**Muezzin chanting the Call to Prayer from the Great Mosque in Damascus, woodcut by Sir Charles Wilson; *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai and Egypt*, Volume II, 1880:147.**

# The Raw Material of European and Arab Music are Almost Identical-- Part II

*By David Muallem*

[The reader is advised to read Part One of this article (*Journal of Synagogue Music*, March 2015, p. 60) before the current sequel, which is a direct continuation of the previous essay.]

## Preface

The theory of *maqām* and other characteristics of Arab music are not the sole inventions of this culture; many Middle Eastern cultures have adopted *maqām* theory in one form or another, and they share many characteristics with Arab music. The Turkish musical system is almost identical to the Arab system and is also called “*maqām*.” In various Central Asian countries, the system is called “*sheish-maqām*” because there are six *maqāmāt*. In Persia/Iran, the musical system is organized into 12 scales that are called “*dastgāh*.”

Undoubtedly anyone studying the Arab musical system will also learn many other elements of these cultures as well. However, in the current discussion I deal only with Arab music because it is my current area of interest; if in the process we acquire knowledge that will make it easier to understand the other cultures, that would be all to the good.

In Part One, I attempted to demonstrate that the raw material of music, musical tones and scales, in classical European culture and Arab culture are nearly identical. Both cultures constructed their scales within the range of an octave (in Arabic: *dīwān*). In both, scales are heptatonic because the octave is divided into seven intervals (seconds; Arabic: *ab‘ād* singular: *bu‘d*; Greek: *hefta*, meaning 7); both systems are tonal because they have adopted the tonic (*qarār*), the first tone of the octave and the octave or eighth tone (*djawāb*) which closes the scale. In both, the scale is divided into two groups of tones (tetrachords in European music; *adjnās* in Arab music, singular *djins*) and both have a leading tone (*d’ahīr* or *d’ahīr al-maqām*). I noted that Arab and Western cultures have adopted parts of the ancient diatonic modes. The West adopted primarily the Ionian (major) and Aeolian (minor) modes. Arab culture adopted not only the Ionian (known in the East as ‘*Adjam*) and the Aeolian (*Nahāwand*) but also three additional diatonic modes: the Dorian (*Nahāwand Kabīr*), the Phrygian (*Kurd*) and the Locrian (*Lāmī*). Moreover, Eastern cultures developed many additional scales that are non-diatonic but share the common traits enumerated above.

At the end of the aforementioned analysis I asked: if these two systems are so similar to each other why are they as far from each other as the East is from the West? Why do they sound and feel as if they came from different worlds?

The differences between the two systems originate in factors unrelated to scales, but rather are dependent on culture and performance practice. In this part of the article I will analyze those elements in Arab music that differ from European practice without explaining European practices at length, because they are more universally and widely understood. To better understand the differences that are

primarily dependent on culture and see how Arab music developed into what it is today, we shall begin with a brief survey of the rich history of the Arabs.

## Historical review

The Arabs' roots may be found in the Arabian Peninsula, prior to the rise of Islam in 622 CE. The region features broad swaths of desert populated by Bedouin who crossed the expanses using their principal means of transportation, the camel. They did not lack for time, and all of their daily activities were undertaken slowly and with patience. The sun and moon were their constant companions, and the environment implanted within them particular emotions and special loves, dreams and hopes that are not necessarily shared by peoples from elsewhere. The music of the desert was primitive and originated, to the best of our knowledge, in the melodies sung by camel drivers to encourage the camels on their way through the deserts. These melodies are called *hadul jamal*, apparently "camel goads."

All of these conditions influenced the substance of the culture born there and its development after the rise of Islam and subsequent conquests.

The period prior to the rise of Islam is referred to as "*djāhiliyya*" which is Arabic for "the period of ignorance," a reference to the widespread ignorance that prevailed in the Arabian peninsula prior to the rise of Islam. However research has shown that by the end of the pre-Islamic period a relatively developed culture was already present, particularly regarding music and literature. Neighboring Persia was a major cultural power at the time and the Arabian Peninsula was in direct contact with Persian culture, with Persians regularly visiting Arabia. It is particularly significant to note that the women known as *qāynat* (singular *qayna*) were educated and knowledgeable in music and literature, and performed and composed original songs and music. In general, they had authority in the various royal courts and some were also knowledgeable in science. The majority of the *qāynat* were Persian.

For studying Arab literature and the exceptionally rich Arabic language, scholars focus on six long poetic works written in the *qasida* form by six different local poets. The language in these poems is extraordinary, far richer than modern Arabic. Known as the "Suspended Odes," these poems were displayed on the wall in Mecca. However when I asked Prof. Sasson Somekh (an internationally known scholar on Arab culture and Arabic language, and retired department chairman at Tel Aviv University) how such a rich language developed during the *djāhiliyya*, I was shocked to hear him say that he does not believe these poems date from an early period. Rather, he believes that they were composed after the rise of Islam, and the language developed quickly in the last quarter of the first millennium.

We do not know much about the music of this period, and there is little information concerning the musical system of these times, since there is scarcely any surviving documentation. The lack of

documentation is also true for the music of later times, which developed in the cultural centers of Baghdad and Andalusia after the rise of Islam and the subsequent conquests. Nevertheless, there are many sources written by scholars, philosophers, musicians, and theorists who lived in the last centuries of the first millennium CE and the first centuries of the second millennium. These sources describe the rich musical life in the Arabian peninsula, and especially those traditions that flourished after the rise of Islam. These sources, which are sometimes phenomenal in terms of depth and scope, describe in detail the musical systems and *maqāmāt* of those times, but they do not supply enough detail to enable us to envision how this music might actually have sounded, or what the performance practice was.

The great flourishing of Arab culture in all its varieties, including music, came after the Arab conquest of the Middle East and the rise of the Umayyad Caliphate in Baghdad (661 CE), followed by the Abbasid Caliphate (700 CE). The greatest musicians in Arab history lived between the rise of Islam and the fall of Granada in Spain, 1492, which led to a period of cultural paralysis. The great musicians flourished during these caliphates, and had a decisive influence on the formation of Arab music. They founded and developed the “Great Musical Tradition” on which Arab music and its methodology are based to this day.

One of the most talented musicians of the Abbasid period, Ziryāb, was actually not of Arab origin. Forced to leave the court of the Caliph in Baghdad because of colleagues’ jealousy, he went first to North Africa and then to Granada in Andalusia where the Umayyads ruled, having moved their realm of control from the East to the West (Spain). In Granada, Ziryāb established the Andalusian school of Arab music, which had tremendous influence on the musical tradition and instruments, leaving behind a unique musical culture which after the fall of Granada moved to North Africa. This part of the Islamic world is known as *al-Maghrib al-‘Arabī*, “the Arab West” in contrast to *al-Mashriq al-‘Arabī*, “the Arab East,” which refers to the Middle East and eastern basin of the Mediterranean.

The music of the Arab East was subject to many influences, especially those from the Persian and Byzantine musical traditions and later from Turkish culture. Persia was a major cultural power and the influence of its culture on Arab culture in the region, particularly music, has been the subject of much study and research for understanding the Great Musical Tradition from which Arab music developed into its current form. It is quite likely that the genre known as *al-maqām al-‘irāqī*, the Iraqi *maqām*, which is unique to Iraq and not shared by other Arab countries, originated in Persia, where a genre with a startlingly similar structure is also found. This genre was absorbed into Iraq from its Persian neighbor with which it shares a long border. The names of most tones, scales and *maqāmāt* in Arab countries and Turkey are Persian.

However, the Arabs maintained the Arab nature of their music and it continues to this day to be a tradition with a unique, distinctive content that deserves to be known as “the Arab tradition.”

The Ottoman-Turkish Muslim Empire ruled a large area of the Middle East and Europe for over 400 years until its fall in the First World War. The Ottomans, who were also influenced by the Persian musical culture and the Arab Great Musical Tradition, attained a new level of artistic quality in their music, developing both the modal system and the *maqāmat*, and created new musical forms. However, the nomadic Turkish tribes who roamed central Asia for long before the Ottoman Empire was established, also had a decisive influence on the development of the region's culture as a whole. They brought with them an outstanding culture that draws from both the Persian tradition and the Arab Great Musical Tradition, as noted above.

After the fall of Granada, the Arabs entered a period of stagnation in all cultural and political areas that continued until the nineteenth century. At the end of the eighteenth century, there were major changes in the balance of power; many areas that were under Islamic rule were conquered by European colonial armies. Very quickly, nationalistic movements emerged in Arab countries that sought to break free from the bonds of stagnation and return to the splendor of the past in all cultural realms, including music.

The music of the time, which was still deeply rooted in the Great Tradition, and had been influenced by both the Turkish-Ottoman and Persian cultures, was newly influenced by its encounter with European culture. The musical terms “*qadīm*” (old) and “*djadīd*” (new) were used to differentiate between the older musical style and the more modern ones that were developing. It should be stressed that these new influences and the growing preference for innovation and change were merely influences demanded by the times, which did not cause the old traditions to be abandoned. To the contrary, there is now a conspicuous effort to preserve these older traditions, and the most recent generations have shown great enthusiasm for this task.

In the mid-1920s, a new spirit began to stir. It started in Egypt where there was a desire to imitate large Western orchestras; this necessarily led to changes in style that were somewhat removed from the music's Arab-eastern musical roots. The style that developed was basically Arab with a hint of westernization that connected the East and West. In any case, this new development foreshadowed the style that would later develop after the Second World War and in the late 20th century, which attempted to integrate a range of musical cultures, from both East and West, and referred to itself as Ethnic Music or World Music.

The foregoing survey is intended to shine a light on some of the factors that influence the creation of Arab music's special characteristics that have made it a true cultural asset for its inheritors.

### **The Special Characteristics of Arab Music -- Monophonic versus polyphonic**

Arab music is monophonic. Harmony is not part of its world. Each composition presents a single melodic line for all of the musical instruments. In the past, musicians learned the piece without the use of notation; they learned directly from the composer who taught the performers by example, demonstrating on his instrument. When composers began to commit their

compositions to writing, they recorded only a single melodic line that was common to all instruments. It was not important to them which instruments were used in the performance. Generally, the notation did not include any instructions regarding dynamics (volume) or tempo, etc. These elements were developed while the performers learned the piece with the composer. This does not mean that all of the instruments were necessarily playing the same tone at any given moment, as will be explained below.

### *Improvisation versus precise performance*

Arab music is improvisational, not only in the sense that moving beyond the framework established by the written notes and improvising freely is permitted, as in jazz. This type of free improvisation does exist in Arab music, where it is called “*taqsīm*,” which will be discussed below. Indeed, *taqsīm* is rarely omitted because it is considered a key element of Arab music. Rather the essence of Arab music is that various instruments depart from the written text, and while doing so play a variety of ornaments and special improvisations, while maintaining the melodic line at the composition’s core. These improvisations are the music’s soul. Therefore, different performances of a piece can be played and preserved, yet each one will necessarily be somewhat different from the others, which is refreshing. This may, in part, explain the cultural phenomenon of people in the audience suddenly shouting out or applauding in the middle of a performance and demanding that the singer or ensemble repeat a section.

### *Small ensembles versus large orchestras*

Arab music is primarily performed by small ensembles of as few as two or as many as six or seven instruments, each represented by only one player. We do not know what came first. Did the small ensembles lead to the development of a music style based on improvisation, or did the improvisational style in which the performers were immersed require keeping the size of the ensemble small? In larger ensembles, with more than one player on each instrument, it is difficult to sustain and perform improvisational music of this type. In the twentieth century there were many efforts to establish large orchestras with several sections with multiple players on an instrument, such as the violin. In an ensemble of this type, the violinists have no choice but to play in unison, making improvisation impossible.

Be that as it may, improvisation remains an essential, dominant component of Arab music.

### *Melismatic (ornamented) performance (in the East) versus syllabic performance (in the West)*

Sounds and syllables can be joined in two different ways:

- Syllabic performance in which each syllable is sung to a single note, which is concentrated on that syllable;
- Melisma (plural: melismata) in which the syllable is colored by many notes.

Before I continue, allow me to cautiously correct a misconception. “Melisma” is a borrowed concept taken from European music that refers to one syllable being sung to a series of notes (more than four or five). However, the successive sounds are focused and follow each other independently. This performance practice (the word is derived from the Greek word μέλισμα meaning “song”) is used in religious music. For some reason, this term infiltrated into Arab music, where it is applied to an entirely different performance practice. I will now attempt to correct this misunderstanding.

Performers of Arab music ornament notes when moving from one note to the next (either higher or lower) not by jumping from pitch to pitch, but rather by sliding a finger (either the index finger or another) between the pitches. Clearly, the ornament has style, methods and limitations, etc. that are incorporated in performance according to the musical tradition and the taste of the performer. However, the character of Arab music, both vocal and instrumental, would be lacking if it were omitted. This schema is unfamiliar to an ear trained in European music.

In order to delve deeply into the difference between melismatic performance in the West and the Eastern ornamentation, first let us note that it is technically impossible to play an ornament of this type on a piano, because sliding is impossible and each note stands alone, at its place on the scale. Conversely, sliding is clearly possible on the violin, one of the most important instruments for Eastern ornamentation.

Therefore I suggest not using the word “melisma” for Arab music, but rather “curling” or “waving.”

This ornamentation is foreign to European ears, as are many other Arab performance practices.

### *Cooperation between members of the ensemble*

Considering that Arab music is improvisational and that the limited group of players in the ensemble are permitted to improvise and ornament the music in a variety of ways during the performance, one might expect a certain level of performance chaos. Each member of the ensemble could potentially be surprised by the others, which would be detrimental to the harmony between them. But that is not the case. Rather, because the ensembles are small and work together over a long period of time, the players are able to develop an intuitive understanding and

ability to anticipate what may occur onstage. The players maintain eye contact with each other and know how to switch roles, who will play the melody (sometimes played in unison), who will ornament it and who will maintain the rhythm, etc. Indeed, it is the improvisation during a performance that raises the spirits of the audience, and causes them to express their satisfaction with applause and calls of encouragement, even attaining the emotional state known as *tarab*, an amalgam of deep musical and emotional excitement.

### *Vocal music versus instrumental music*

Arab music is, on its most fundamental level, vocal. Singing and song are the heart of musical creation. The Arabs sang constantly, with and without accompaniment. It can be assumed that they sometimes sang with the accompaniment of primitive instruments like the *rebab* or some sort of percussion. When musical activity expanded, small ensembles were created. We will have more to say about ensembles below. Before Arabs began to compose instrumental music that was not intended to accompany a singer, the ensemble served to support the vocal artist and serve as a background for his singing, as well as filling the time when the singer was not on stage.

It goes without saying that a singer was free to develop his song, improvise, repeat sections etc. and that these performance practices were adopted by instrumental music. This is my understanding of the process. All of these developments and the unique performance practices that developed in Arab music became its major assets while other factors, also to be discussed below, were added to make Arab music sound as if it came from a totally different world than European music. It should be emphasized that the role of the singer was to sing a song, performing music that included text that presumably was based on popular poetry or stories, in order to spread them.

### *The influence of Arab poetry on the style of music*

Arab poetry was always based on meter and rhyme, and constructed of balanced lines, whether few or many. The line of metered poetry is divided in two—right and left—and the meter of the two parts is identical. Arab poets use approximately 16 different meters. When a composer sets such a poem to music, the meter of the music must match that of the text. Scholars are convinced that the rhythms of Arab music are poetic. Effectively, the composer, whether of a song or of instrumental music, must first determine which of the known rhythms available in the system will be most appropriate for the particular composition, and then select one of them.

While Western music has a relatively small number of rhythms, Arab music has dozens, which are quite varied. Few of them would be familiar to a European ear without previous exposure to Oriental music. This is reminiscent of the rhythms used by tribes in Africa, to whom people now travel

especially to learn about their rhythms. There is no doubt that the rhythms used in Arab culture contribute to the uniqueness that makes its music “different and mysterious” to outsiders.

Conversely, the role of rhythm and rhythmic percussion playing in Arab culture is different than their role in Western culture. In Arab culture they lead, not merely ornament. They determine the framework for the melodic line, the tempo and when other players in the ensemble enter and exit. Effectively they are the conductors. Undoubtedly, changing the rhythm of a particular composition can change its timbre and the spiritual effect it has on the listener. This also explains why composers who make new arrangements of existing compositions often challenge themselves by changing the rhythm as well.

### ***Most Arab music, both vocal and instrumental, is a rondo***

**T**he rondo is the most common form of Arab music, both vocal and instrumental. This is also true of music from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is considered modern. The first stanza always serves as the refrain, which follows each stanza in the form A-B-A-C-A-D-A. The stanzas following the refrain are not necessarily equal in length.

Even in instrumental forms that do not have a vocal line, the first musical phrase usually serves as a refrain. Again, subsequent phrases in instrumental music are also of varying length. Moreover, the composition does not necessarily conclude with the refrain. There are classical forms of Arab music, for example *samā'ī*, in which the refrain is the second phrase, so the form can be depicted as A-B-C-B-D-B. These schemata are foreign to the Western ear and can be heard only if the requisite attention and effort are invested.

### ***Momentary (Eastern) versus overall (Western) directionality***

**I**n *East and West in Music* (Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, p. 44), Prof. Dalia Cohen wrote about momentary and overall directionality:

The feeling of momentary directionality is created when a particular event reasonably emerges from its immediate predecessor, according to a defined relationship between the two. Conversely, overall directionality arises from the overall structure of the entire composition, which is carefully defined by the clear, convincing beginning and end, so that momentary events are not perceived only as themselves but also in the context of their location and function in the overall entity. In momentary directionality, unlike overall directionality, the smaller components are more prominent and are perceived as a perpetuation of the moment...

As a result, momentary directionalities are surprising and each one is felt individually. In light of the improvisatory nature of Arab music, we can understand the significance of the audiences' frequent response by applauding or calling out encouragement during performance.

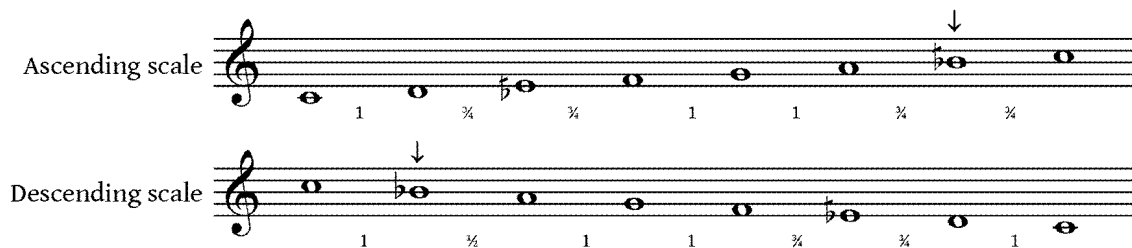
Clearly this schema is unfamiliar to listeners for whom Arab music and culture is foreign, and sounds to them as bad music or out of tune.

### *The Arab 24-quartertone octave versus the Western octave of 12 semitones*

This element of music theory is closely related to the issue of musical raw materials discussed in Part I of this article, but has direct bearing on the current subject: Why does Arab music sound to an unfamiliar ear as if it came from another world? Early musicologists studying Arab music did not always divide the octave into 24 quartertone intervals. We have transcriptions of scales from Arab culture that are based on semitones. The establishment of the 24 quartertone octave has been attributed to two Syrian-Lebanese theoreticians of the Arab modes (*maqāmāt*) who included seconds of three-quartertone size in their heptatonic scale (which still had seven seconds).

Although Part one previously presented and analyzed the scale of *maqām Rāst*, we will give it here again for our readers' convenience.

#### The Scale



Intervals: ascending scale: 1- $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -1-1- $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  (tones)  
 descending scale: 1- $\frac{3}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -1-1- $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 (tones)  
 (ascending with B $\flat$ 2; descending with B $\flat$ 2)

Truth be told, researchers have been unable to explain if the performance practice of Arab vocalists required this re-division into quartertones, or if this division fit the performance practice into the framework it created. In the next section, on intonation in Arab music, we will see that the performance of the various *maqāmāt* does not strictly comply with the three-quartertone interval (and sometimes not with the whole tone or semitone intervals either). Instead, *Arab music developed into what it is today* through the common practice of performers who had performed the *maqāmāt* using a

received intonation, and internalized that intonation as it was transmitted from father to son. This unbroken chain forged a performance practice that became accepted as the classical intonation.

At the Congress of Arab Music in 1932 in Cairo, Western musicologists proposed equalizing the three-quartertone seconds in all of the *maqāmāt* scales. That they made this proposal testifies, in my opinion, to its formulators' lack of understanding of Arab music and the *maqām* phenomenon within it (which will be discussed below). The proposal was not adopted, and the world of Arab music continued to use perform the *maqāmāt* according to the traditional intonation.

The westerners learned about the quartertone phenomenon (also called “microtonal”) and considered it to be the primary difference between Arab music and Western music, even referring to Arab music as “quarter-tone music.” This is indeed a fundamental difference, but in my opinion it is not the principle difference. If we gave a Western violinist a transcription of *maqām Rāst*, the main *maqām* using microtones, and he were to play it using European performance practice, it is doubtful that he would produce anything resembling Arab music. This will become clearer below.

### ***Intonation and Arab music***

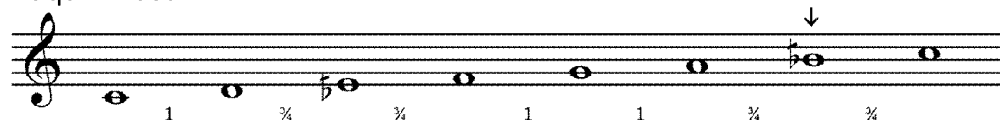
**T**his is a complex but important topic. The term “intonation” refers to determinations of pitch and differences in pitch, particularly as regards fine changes in tuning. Thus, for example, we would say that a person who sings out of tune has imprecise intonation. In Western music, the problem of intonation was almost entirely eliminated with the introduction of equal temperament (Dalia Cohen, *East and West in Music*, p. 75).

Early theorists divided the whole tone into 9 equal parts called “commas,” so that a whole tone has nine commas. It follows that a sharp in European music includes five commas and a flat, four commas. In European music there were attempts to equalize the semitones beginning in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, and these became universal in the first years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The tempered scale resulted in the sharp and flat meeting in the middle of the semitone, each 4 1/2 commas from the main tone.

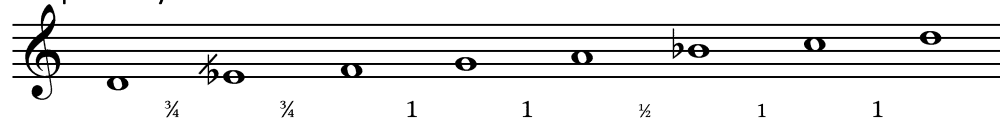
At the above-mentioned Congress of Arab Music (Cairo, 1932), where prominent musicians and musicologists from both Arab and Western countries discussed Arab music and its problems, some of the Western experts suggested that quartertones also be equalized or tempered so that the microtones in *maqāmāt* scales would all be true quartertones, with four equal quartertones in each tone. It is unclear if an actual decision was made, but it is known that Arab musicians rejected the idea on the spot, and continued to use the intonation they had learned by ear and can perform precisely.

Arab music cannot be fully understood without giving some examples. The following scales of *maqām Rāst*, *maqām Bayāt* and *maqām Sīkāh* are taken from my book, *The Maqām Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes*:

### Maqām Rāst



### Maqām Bayāt



### Maqām Sīkāh



Note that in these three scales the E is lowered slightly (note the half flat sign ♭). As a result, the second between D and F equals two seconds of three quartertones each. However the intonation E♭ is not in exactly the same place in all three scales. In *maqām Rāst* it is higher than the tempered quartertone, in *maqām Bayāt* it is slightly lower than in *maqām Rāst*, and in *maqām Sīkāh* it is lower than either of the other two. It should also be noted that in all three scales, the two successive seconds occur within a trichord of a tone-and-a-half of the natural scale.

In Arab culture, these three *maqāmāt* are all on one tonal axis and are dependent to a large degree on the same differences in pitch of the E♭. Arab musicians were not interested in the issue of the size of the quartertone, and how it differs in each of these scales. Generations of musicians learned by ear how to produce the intonation of each *maqām* which was embedded in their consciousness.

The augmented second (1½ tones) is not actually played at that interval. In most cases it is performed as a 1¼ tone by raising the second note of the tetrachord, ½ – 1½ – ½ by a ⅛ tone and lowering the third tone by an ⅛ tone. Otherwise this tetrachord sounds “dry,” while the charm of a tetrachord played according to the tradition (called *Hidjāz*) would be diminished.

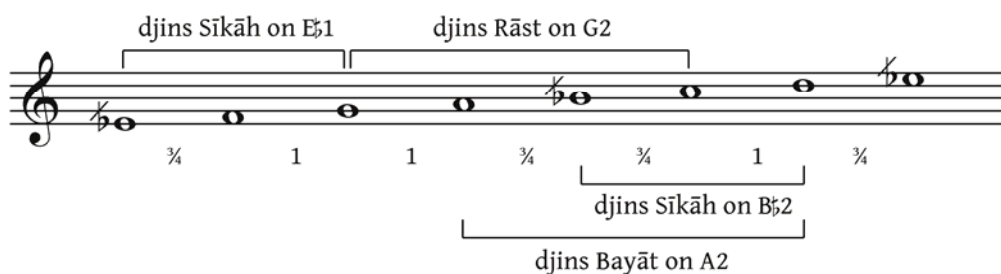
Clearly this nuance would not be heard by a listener educated in European music, for whom it would not sound at all similar to his music, even in the structure of the scale.

### *Ghammāz and djins (Arab) versus the dominant and tetrachord (European)*

Part One of this article explained that the *ghammāz* of Arab music is parallel to the dominant tone of Western music, and just as the Western scale is divided into two tetrachords, the Arab scale is divided into two segments known as *djins* (plural: *adjnās*). Like European music, the second *djins* of Arab music always sits on the *ghammāz* (dominant) of the scale which is the first tone in that *djins*.

However, the diatonic adopted by European music requires the dominant always be the fifth tone in the scale, and the tetrachords, as their name indicates, always have four tones. Arab musicians adopted several scales of the ancient modes and structured them as in the West (the *ghammāz* is the fifth tone, there are two *adjnās* of four tones with the second one starting on the *ghammāz*, which is the fifth tone). This is explained in further detail in Part One of this extended article. The *maqāmāt* with scales of this type include ‘*Adjam*, which is parallel to Western major scales and *Nahāwand*, which is parallel to Western minor scales. On the other hand, there is indeed a difference between the two cultures, derived from the multiplicity of scales in Arab culture, which results from the division of the octave into 24 quartertones and from the *maqām* phenomenon in Arab culture, which we will discuss below.

In Arab music, the *djins* can be three, four or five tones, depending on the particular *maqām*. The example below shows the scale of *maqām Sīkāh*. In the *Sīkāh* family of scales, for example, the first *djins* is three tones, and is called *Sīkāh*. The second *djins* of the scale is a four-tone *djins* known as *djins: Rāst*. It should be noted that the second *djins* does not start on the fifth tone of the scale as it would in a diatonic scale, but rather on the third tone, sharing that tone with the first *djins*. The third tone of *maqām Sīkāh* is the *ghammāz* of the scale because the second *djins* of all scales start on their dominant tone.



The scale of *maqām Sīkāh* is also an example of two *adjnās* that are connected in this scale, unlike diatonic scales in which the two tetrachords are always separated by a second. It is understandable that “exceptional” scales like these sound foreign when Western ears unfamiliar with the music of other cultures hear them without prior preparation.

This subject is one of the most interesting and important in Arab music, but—as we have attempted to show—it is also quite complex and deep.

### The *Maqām* phenomenon in Arab musical culture

The *maqām* phenomenon, which appears in various types of Middle Eastern music, is the most important characteristic of Arab music. Without it Arab music could be anything but what it is today. All other elements and phenomena in Arab music are subordinate factors that support

the *maqām* phenomenon. Try to imagine the harmonic theory of European classical music without the element of harmony on which it is based and you will be propelled centuries into the past, but the result would remain music that can be heard in European culture. However if the *maqām* phenomenon is removed from Arab music, nothing that people inside that culture call ‘Arab music’ would remain.

Although I initially considered discussing this issue at the beginning of Part One, because of its great importance for understanding the difference between Arab and European musical culture, I decided that good pedagogy first required an explanation of the tools used by the *maqām* before discussing the *maqām* itself.

Every *maqām* has its own musical scale. However this scale is not the *maqām* itself but rather the collection of tones available to the *maqām*, organized by pitch and designating its tonic and octave. Therefore, scales are not known by the name of the *maqām* but rather as the “scale of *maqām* X.” The *maqām* itself is the special way that the *maqām* uses these tones to express itself. Each *maqām* has its own identifiable methods for self-expression. In order to concretize this idea, note that some scales are used by more than one *maqām*. How then are they different? Because each *maqām* uses a different method than the others. For example, a particular *maqām* begins at the *ghammāz*, descends to approximately the tonic and then ascends to the second *djins* and the octave. Another *maqām* using the same scale might begin at the octave and then descend to the first *djins* and the tonic. Thus, we again stress, each *maqām* has its own typical melodic direction, by which it expresses itself and by which it is identified by listeners.

Once I was visited by an Israeli colleague, a musicologist specializing in European music, whom I met through the Israel Musicological Society. At the meeting, she expressed concern because she had been assigned to teach a certain subject at one of the Arab conservatories in northern Israel, and did not know what a *maqām* is. I invited her to my study and explained that I wanted her to listen to a musical selection. I asked her to focus on a single question: did she recognize the scale in which it was composed? After a few seconds she blurted out the answer: “Amazing, it is a major scale.” She was not wrong because this particular piece was written in *maqām* ‘*Adjam*, and the scale of *maqām* ‘*Adjam* is identical to a European major scale. She had no trouble identifying it as soon as she made the effort to listen carefully.

“Excellent,” I told her and said that I would play the piece a second time, asking her to focus on the melody and tell me what she heard. She listened a second time and again answered almost immediately that the melody descended from the octave to the tonic. Yes, I confirmed that is the nature of *maqām* ‘*Adjam*, which is at its best when descending. This piece was indeed composed in *maqām* ‘*Adjam*. Then I told her I would play a *taqsīm* (improvisation on solo *qānūn*) and she should tell me what she heard. After listening, she had no difficulty declaring happily that the piece was written in *maqām* ‘*Adjam*. She later told me that she was very moved by the demonstration and it was very helpful for her understanding of the Arab music system. I have no doubt that after this brief training,

that lasted perhaps 10 minutes, Arab music began to attract her attention, at least enough to discover the moves of the melody of the piece being played.

Obviously, I made it easy for my colleague by beginning with *maqām* ‘Adjam, because its scale is identical to a major scale and she was familiar with the system of major and minor all her life. It would be easier for her to understand all of the *maqāmāt* whose scales are drawn from the ancient modes. However, her way of listening to Arab music will change for the other *maqāmāt* as well, until she eventually becomes fully familiar with this musical culture.

All the issues discussed above should make it clear why Arab listeners hear and understand European music more easily than European listeners understand Arab music. It is simply because Arab music includes Ionian modes (major - ‘*Adjam*) and Aeolian modes (minor - *Nahāwand*). Therefore, their ear starts out already familiar with these modes.

## Conclusion

The two parts of this article do not present a complete exposition of all of the non-scalar elements of Arab music that make it so different from European music—even though the basic raw material of the two cultures, as explained in the first article—are quite similar. There are many additional factors including the different instruments used in each culture, the greater sensitivity of Arab music and the light touch of musicians on the instrument, such as the strings of the ‘*ūd* or violin, etc. However, in order not to burden readers, especially those for whom this is their first exposure to Arab music, we have allowed them to enter the “mysterious” world of Arab music step-by-step.

In *The Maqām Book: A Doorway to Arab Scales and Modes* I emphasized that Arab music (and Oriental music in general) should first be heard and then studied. Or, if you prefer, listening can be done together with studying, but **the music should be heard**. Try it.

*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 ḥazzanut, and has recently been approved for use in high school music programs by the Israeli Ministry of Education. The English edition is starting to be adapted for university-level courses as well. David dedicates most of his time to promoting the understanding of Arab music among musicians and music lovers alike. As with Part One of this article, the Journal thanks Yosef and Shoshana Zucker of OR-TAV MUSIC PUBLICATIONS for translating this sequel from the Hebrew.*

## Sometimes a *munaḥ pasek* is just a *munaḥ pasek*

By Joshua R. Jacobson

As every experienced cantillator knows, a מונה followed by a vertical line | has two possible interpretations. In most cases the word marked with מונה is conjunctive, leading to a word marked with a disjunctive *ta'am*, such as *zakef* or *etnaḥta*; and the vertical line is פסקו, a marking that indicates a subtle pause, something like a sixteenth-note rest in Western musical notation.

The Masoretes marked disjunctive *t'amim* on words that ended a verse or a clause or a phrase. Consequently, we chant those words with a subtle lengthening, or we raise the volume, or we pause slightly after these disjunctive words. The Masoretes marked all other words with conjunctive *t'amim*, indicating that they should be connected without a pause to the word that follows.

The *ta'am pasek* is neither conjunctive nor disjunctive. But it is found exclusively after words marked with conjunctive accents. It never follows disjunctive words, since a disjunctive *ta'am* already demands a slight pause. Most scholars agree that *pasek* was added to the text after the other Masoretic accents had been codified. It was used to further refine the system. Typically, *pasek* is found in the following circumstances (Ben-Asher, 135, 244-246):

1. *Pasek* is used to separate the pronunciation of two words, where the second begins with the same phoneme with which the first one ends. For example, in Song of Solomon 4:12 the *pasek* ensures clear enunciation by separating the two [n] sounds — גן | נעול אחתי כלה.
2. *Pasek* is used to put a slight pause between identical or nearly identical words. For example, in Genesis 22:11 the *pasek* divides the repetition of “Avraham” — ויאמר אברהם | אברהם. And in Genesis 17:13 the *pasek* divides between two forms of the word מול — המול | ימול יליד ביתך ומקנת — בספק.
3. *Pasek* is used to distance the name of God from other, less holy words. For example, in Deuteronomy 4:32 the *pasek* serves to distance “God” from “humanity.” — למן-היום אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא — אֱלֹהִים | אָדָם.
4. *Pasek* is used to indicate a subtle syntactic disjunction between words that had been joined by a conjunctive accent. For example, in Song of Solomon 1:13 the *pasek* indicates that הַמָּר is more closely connected to צִיּוֹר than it is to דּוּדִי לִי — צִיּוֹר הַמָּר | דּוּדִי לִי — “My beloved is to me like a bag of myrrh.”
5. *Pasek* is used to call attention or to emphasize a word. Wickes (122) calls this “*pasek emphaticum*.” For example, in 1 Samuel 14:45 the name יונתן is given emphasis — וַיֹּאמֶר הָעָם — אֶל-יִשָּׂאֵל הַיּוֹנָתָן | יְמוּחַ. And in Ezekiel 33:25 the word דם is emphasized — עַל-הַדָּם | תֹּאכְלוּ.

The other interpretation of מונה followed by a vertical line | is the compound *ta'am*, לְגַרְמָה, or to give its full name, מוֹנֵחַ-לְגַרְמָה. In nearly every case, מוֹנֵחַ-לְגַרְמָה is found immediately before two words marked with רִבְעִי. For example, Exodus 26:8 הַיְרִיעָה הָאֵחָת | אֶרֶב. There are few exceptions. *Legarmeh* is found three times before *pashta*, once before *t'vir*, and eleven times in place of *t'lisha ketana* before *geresh* (Jacobson, 236-7).

But then the question arises, what about the 67 occurrences in the Tanakh (excluding, of course, Psalms, Proverbs and Job) where *munah*+*pasek* occurs immediately before *r'via*, without an intervening *munah*? For example, וְהָיָה יָדְךָ לְפָסֵק (Exodus 13:30). Do we treat that combination as *legarmeh* or as *munah* followed by *pasek*? The authorities give different answers to that question.

Curiously, the oldest treatise on the *t'amim*, Aharon Ben-Asher's *Sefer dikdukei ha-t'amim*, doesn't even mention *l'garmeh*. What we now call *l'garmeh* may be what Ben-Asher called *nagda*, or is listed under examples of *pasek*.

Wickes (p. 129) considers the sequence *munah*-*pasek*-*r'via* to be interpreted as *l'garmeh*-*r'via*. He writes, *l'garmeh* “stands in the place of *pasek*, when this latter sign is due before *r'via*” (119). But then he adds, “The object of the change was simply musical... *l'garmeh* was musically admissible, and was preferred to the simpler melody of *munah*-*pasek*” (119). Wickes also provides a comprehensive “list of *l'garmehs*, which take the place of *pasek* before *r'via*” (129).<sup>1</sup>

Heidenheim also concludes that *l'garmeh* can be found immediately before *r'via*. “This is the way it is: you will never find *legarmeh* coming except with a *shofar* [i.e. *munah*] and *makel* [i.e. *pasek*] between two words, and every *l'garmeh* in the Bible comes before *r'via*...other than a few places ... and you will never find a *pasek* before *r'via* (in the middle of a verse), with a single exception in the Bible, namely בּוֹרֵא הַשְּׁמַיִם וְהָאֵל הַיָּהּ (Isaiah 42:5)” (7b—the present author's translation).

Yeivin writes, “[T]he conjunctive *munah* generally appears between *l'garmeh* and *r'via*,” but “sometimes *l'garmeh* stands immediately before *r'via*.” And “Where *pasek* is expected immediately before *r'via*, it is converted into *l'garmeh*” (214). Then he concludes, “Thus every case of *munah* followed by the *pasek* stroke occurring before *r'via* is *l'garmeh*, except for that at Isaiah 42:5” (215).

Breuer is a bit more circumspect. “A simple segment ending with *r'via* is divided often by *l'garmeh*—even if both words are short” (117—the present author's translation). But “The *l'garmeh* that serves in a simple segment is different from the usual *l'garmeh*, which serves in a longer segment. Generally *l'garmeh* cannot come on a word that is immediately before *r'via*, and therefore *l'garmeh* must be transformed into a conjunctive in every case where the next word is *r'via*” (118). “Therefore in every case where *l'garmeh* comes immediately before *r'via* or *pazer*, it makes sense to say that it's not *l'garmeh* at all, rather it's *munah* followed by *pasek*; since *munah* serves also as the normal conjunctive before *r'via* and *pazer*.” (119).

Perlman implies that *l'garmeh* cannot appear without an intervening *munah*. He writes, “*munah l'garmeh* is a minor disjunctive that comes before *r'via*. Between it and the *r'via* appears *munah*, the conjunctive of *r'via*.” (212—the present author's translation). And in his parsing diagrams, Perlman consistently shows *munah*+*pasek* immediately before *r'via* as a conjunctive.

Neeman agrees: “*Munah l'garmeh* essentially comes on the third word [inclusive] before the word marked with *r'via*” (31—the present author's translation).

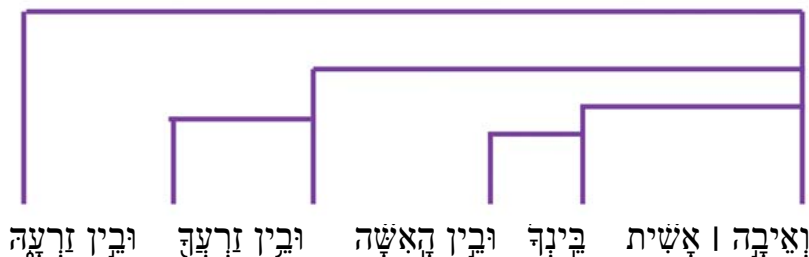
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<sup>1</sup> In the interest of consistency, the editor has changed all transliterations to conform to the standard for this journal.

Price likewise follows the same interpretation.

The name *l'garmeh* means “break” or “to itself.” The accent mark combines two marks. ... Together they resemble the combination of *munah* followed by *pasek*. ... Whenever *pasek* follows a word accented with *munah*, it is possible to confuse such a figuration of accents with *l'garmeh*. This confusion could happen before any disjunctive accent that admits *munah* as a preceding conjunctive. Several criteria distinguish true *l'garmeh* from its counterpart *munah*+*pasek* (which I have labeled *pseudo-l'garmeh*): (1) *l'garmeh* only appears before *r'via* and occasionally before *pashta* and *geresh*; (2) *l'garmeh* occasionally has its own preceding conjunctive *mer'kha*; (3) *l'garmeh* never intervenes between a disjunctive accent and its lawful conjunctives; (4) *pasek* always immediately precedes a disjunctive accent and intervenes between the disjunctive and its preceding conjunctives...” (118, 122-123)

Let us examine several of these controversial cases. The first occurrence of this combination is in Genesis 3:15.



Parsing this verse, we note that the first segment comprises only two words, וַאִיבָהּ אָשִׁית. According to the binary system of syntactic parsing, we divide each verse into two parts, and continue dividing each resulting segment into two parts, until the smallest segment has two or fewer words. At that point there is generally no further need to subdivide. The last word in each segment is disjunctive, and, if there are two words in the segment, the first is conjunctive.

The first segment in this verse therefore consists of a conjunctive word וַאִיבָהּ followed by a disjunctive word אָשִׁית. The only reason for subdividing a minimal segment of two words would be if either or both of the words is long, in which case they would both be marked with disjunctives. This occurs, for example in the domain of *zakef*. Normally in a two-word segment, if the second word is marked with *zakef*, the word before it would be marked with its expected conjunctive, *munah*. However, in some cases where the *zakef* word is long, the word preceding it is “upgraded” from the conjunctive *munah* to the minor disjunctive, *pashta*. We see this in Numbers 24:20 — וַיִּרְא אֶת-עַמֶּלֶק. Is this practice of substituting a disjunctive for a conjunctive found in the domain of *r'via*? Only extremely rarely: in two cases the expected *munah* is upgraded to *geresh* (Leviticus 18:17 and Deuteronomy 34:11). But even if *munah* were to be upgraded to *l'garmeh* in the domain of *r'via*, we would expect to find it only in cases where the words are long, such as Ezekiel 12:35 אֶת-כָּל-נִאֲצוּתֶיךָ שְׁמַעְתִּי.

On the other hand, returning to the first words of Genesis 3:15, there is a good reason why we would indeed expect a *pasek* in this segment. It is likely that the Masoretes wanted to emphasize the strong word איבה (enmity), and therefore used the *pasek* to set it off.

In other cases, we see the well-established principle of *pasek* separating two words to avoid eliding a common phoneme. In Numbers 7.13 the *pasek* separates the two [m] sounds — שְׁנֵיהֶם מְלֹאִים.

*Pasek* is also used to create a subtle division between two identical or nearly identical words. This example from 2 Kings 2:12 — אָבִי אָבִי | אָבִי is analogous to the example in 2 Kings 13:14 — אָבִי אָבִי |. In one case *pasek* is in the domain of *r'via*; in the other case the *pasek* is in the domain of *zakef*. There seems to be no justification for calling one *l'garmeh* and the other *munah+pasek*.

We have seen that *pasek* is often summoned to set off the name of God. That is the case in this familiar phrase from Numbers 10:35 — קוֹמָהּ | ה' וְיִפְצֹז אֲנִיָּהּ.

*Pasek* can be summoned in cases where syntactic separation is called for after a conjunctive word. In Joshua 5:14 there was a perceived need to set off the word לא. Here the *pasek* serves as a colon. It pushes לא away from the word ויאמר and into the quotation itself. Note the difference between ויאמר לא in the first half of the verse and ויאמר לו in the second half.

וַיֹּאמֶר | לֹא כִי אֲנִי שָׂר־צָבָא־הָ עֲתָה בָּאתִי וַיִּפֹּל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־פָּנָיו אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה אֲדֹנָי מְדַבֵּר אֶל־עַבְדּוֹ:

We see a similar construction in Genesis 18:15, where the *pasek* intervenes between *mer'kha* and *tipp'ha* — וַיֹּאמֶר | לֹא כִי צָחֲקָתָּ.

So what is the bottom line? Should we follow Wickes, who writes, “The object of the change was simply musical... *l'garmeh* was musically admissible, and was preferred to the simpler melody of *munah-pasek* ” (119)? Or should we heed Breuer, who tells us “in every case where *l'garmeh* comes immediately before a *r'via* ..., it makes sense to say that it's not a *l'garmeh* at all, rather it's *munah* followed by *pasek*...” (119)? Each reader can decide for him- or herself. But this author is convinced that *l'garmeh* cannot stand before *r'via* without an intervening *munah*.

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*Dr. Jacobson is shown conducting a workshop -- "Singing Salomone Rossi" -- during the 1999 Cantors Assembly Convention held at Kutshers Resort near Monticello New York. The piano accompanist is Tova Morcos in this pen and ink sketch by Joseph A. Levine.*



**IN OUR HANDS ARE A NUMBER OF MOTIFS--A TRADITION--PASSED FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION...AT WHOSE APPEARANCE IN THE OLD PRAYER CHANT, WORSHIPERS TREMBLE ...AND IF THIS IS TRUE FOR PRAYER, HOW MUCH MORE SO FOR BIBLE CHANT.**

(Yehoshua Leib Ne'eman, *Ts'lilei ha-mikra*, 1955)

# N'GINAH L'MA'ASEH

## B'tal'lei orah

An alternative *Tal*, poetic Prayer for Dew recited on the First Day of Pesah, author unknown, from the Sephardic tradition;

*Siddur Lev Shalem*, page 376.

Our God and God of our ancestors:  
may the land be brightened with luminous dew;  
may the land be granted the blessings of dew;  
may the land be made happy with gladdening dew;  
may the land be made merry with joy-filled dew;  
may the land be ennobled with glorious dew;  
may the land be improved with quintessential dew;  
may the land burst forth with dew-filled song;  
may the land be revived with life-giving dew;  
may the land be bettered with goodly dew;  
may the land be redeemed with the dew of deliverance;  
may the land be nourished with nurturing dew.

אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ [וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ]  
בְּטַלְלֵי אוֹרָה, תְּאִיר אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי בְּרָכָה, תְּבַרֵךְ אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי גִילָה, תְּגִיל אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי דִיצָה, תְּדַשֵּׁן אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי חוֹד, תְּחַדֵּר אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי וַעַד טוֹב, תְּוַעַד אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי זִמְרָה, תְּזַמֵּר אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי חַיִּים, תְּחַיֶּה אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי טוֹבָה, תְּסִיב אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי יְשׁוּעָה, תּוֹשִׁיעַ אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.  
בְּטַלְלֵי כִלְכִּלָּה, תְּכַלְכֵּל אֶדְמָה. אָמֵן.



*Photo by Donna Harlev*

# N'GINAH L'MA'ASEH

## B'tal'lei orah

A Prayer for Dew recited on the first day of Passover in the Italian rite, is of unknown origin

(Click anywhere on this page to access the audio file)

Sephardic "Gevurot"  
Piyyut, 1st Day Pesah  
Siddur Lev Shalem:376

Music: Benjamin Z. Maissner  
Arrangement: Sid Robinovitch

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes staves for Cantor, Oboe, and Organ. The Cantor staff is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It begins with a whole rest, followed by a half rest, and then a quarter note G4. The Oboe staff features a melodic line with a slur and a '5' indicating a quintuplet. The Organ staff has a whole rest followed by a half rest, and then a chord of G4 and B-flat4. The second system includes staves for C (Cantor), Ob. (Oboe), and Org. (Organ). The C staff has a '4' above the first measure, indicating a fourth. The lyrics are: 'hei - nu vei-lo - hei a - vo-tei - nu v'i - mo-tei -'. The Ob. staff has a '5' above the first measure, indicating a quintuplet. The Org. staff has a '6' above the first measure, indicating a sextuplet. The Organ part consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand.

7

C

8

nu. B' - ta - l'-lei o-rah, b' - ta - l'-lei o-rah, ta - ir, ta - ir

Ob.

Org.

11

C

8

a - da - mah. (Cong. Amen) B' - ta - l'-lei vra-khah, b' - ta - l'-lei vra-khah

S

Ah... t' - va - reikh

A

Ah... t' - va - reikh

T

8

Ah... t' - va -

B

Ah... t' - va -

Ob.

Org.

15

(Cong. Amen)

C

8

B' - ta - l' - lei gi - lah ta -

S

a - da - mah, t' - va - reikh a - da - mah.

A

a - da - mah, t' - va - reikh a - da - mah.

T

8

reikh a - da - mah, a - da - mah.

B

reikh a - da - mah, a - da - mah.

Ob.

Org.

19 *(Cong. Amen)*

C  
8  
gil a-da-mah. B' - ta - l' - lei di-tsah, b' - ta - l' - lei di-tsah

S  
Ah... t' - da - shein

A  
Ah... t' - da-shein

T  
Ah... t' - da -

B  
Ah... t' - da -

Ob.

Org.

23

(Cong. Amen)

C

8

B' - ta - l' - lei - hod t' -

S

a - da - mah, t' - da - shein a - da - mah.

A

a - da - mah, t' - da - shein a - da - mah.

T

8

shein a - da - mah, a - da - mah.

B

shein a - da - mah, a - da - mah.

Ob.

Org.

27

C

8

had - deir a - damah,

S

t' - had - deir — a - da - mah, t' - had - deir —

A

t' - had - deir a - da - mah, t' - had - deir

T

8

t' - had - deir a - da - mah, a -

B

t' - had - deir — a - da - mah, a -

Ob.

Org.

The musical score is written for a choral ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and instrumental accompaniment (Oboe and Organ). The lyrics are in French. The music is in 2/4 time. The Soprano part begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts enter with a similar melodic line. The Oboe part plays a melodic line. The Organ part provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

31

(Cong. Amen)

C

B' - ta - l' - lei zim-rah t' - zam - meir, t' - zam - meir \_

S

a - da - mah.

A

a - da - mah.

T

da - mah.

B

da - mah.

Ob.

Org.

35

(Cong. Amen)

C

a - da - mah. B' - ta - l' - lei to - vah tei -

S

B' - ta - l' - lei hay - yim t' - hay - yeh a - da - mah. Ah...

A

B' - ta - l' - lei hay - yim t' - hay - yeh a - da - mah. Ah...

T

B' - ta - l' - lei hay - yim. Ah...

B

B' - ta - l' - lei hay - yim. Ah...

Ob.

Org.

39

C

8

tiv\_ a-da-mah.

S

tei - tiv, tei - tiv\_ a - da - mah, tei - tiv, tei - tiv\_

A

tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, tei - tiv, tei - tiv

T

8

tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, a -

B

tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, a -

Ob.

Org.

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 39-42. The vocal parts (C, S, A, T, B) are in a choir setting. The lyrics are: C: 'tiv\_ a-da-mah.'; S: 'tei - tiv, tei - tiv\_ a - da - mah, tei - tiv, tei - tiv\_'; A: 'tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, tei - tiv, tei - tiv'; T: 'tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, a -'; B: 'tei - tiv, tei - tiv a - da - mah, a -'. The Oboe (Ob.) plays a melodic line in measures 39-40 and 42. The Organ (Org.) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

43 *(Cong. Amen)*

C  
8  
B' - ta - l' - lei y'-shu - ah, — y' - shu - ah to - shi a

S  
a - da - mah. to - shi - a

A  
a - da - mah. to - shi - a

T  
8  
da - mah. to

B  
da - mah. to

Ob.

Org.

47 *rit.* (Cong. Amen)

C  
8 a - da - mah, t' - khal - keil a - da - mah.

S  
t' - khal - keil a - da - mah.

A  
t' - khal - keil a - da - mah.

T  
8 t' - khal - keil a - da - mah.

B  
t' - khal - keil a - da - mah.

Ob.

Org.

Our God and God of our ancestors:  
 may the land be brightened with **luminous** dew;  
 may the land be granted the **blessings** of dew;  
 may the land be made happy with **gladdening** dew;  
 may the land be made merry with **joy-filled** dew;  
 may the land be ennobled with **glorious** dew;  
 may the land be improved with **quintessential** dew;  
 may the land burst forth with **dew-filled** song;  
 may the land be revived with **life-giving** dew;  
 may the land be bettered with **goodly** dew;  
 may the land be redeemed with the dew of **deliverance**;  
 may the land be nourished with **nurturing** dew.

## REVIEWS

### *Anthology of Classic Jewish Folksongs*

Edited by Velvel Pasternak

*A Review-essay by Sam Weiss*

Velvel Pasternak's career as a collector, transcriber, arranger, editor, compiler, publisher, recording producer of Jewish music—and its all-around champion—has spanned nearly half a century. From his 1968 hard-cover *Songs of the Chassidim* to the latest eBooks and single-song PDFs, Pasternak's Tara Publications has released hundreds of titles and collections of vocal, choral, and instrumental works in all of the Jewish genres, with an emphasis on popular music. Since popular musicians and many cantors favor the lead sheet style, Tara's songbooks have mostly reflected this predilection. Those who use the piano-vocal format for entertainment and concertizing, however, were always on the lookout for material in this format from Tara, to supplement the offerings from Transcontinental Music Publications or other sources.

The title of Tara's recently published 300-page *Anthology of Classic Jewish Folksongs* (*ACJF*) is somewhat misleading. Neither the name nor the cover suggests that this is a compendium of piano-vocal settings. The titles run the gamut from Kol Nidrei to Di Grine Kuzine to Hatikva;<sup>1</sup> they evoke the home, the synagogue and the stage, with themes ranging from the Holocaust to the Holidays. Perhaps a more descriptive title for this capstone of Tara's piano-vocal books might have been *Anthology of Jewish Music Classics*—had not Pasternak already used the title *Jewish Music Classics* in 2005 for a smaller compilation very similar to this one.

One senses the anthologist's struggle over what to call the book in that his brief foreword refers to it by another title entirely: *Great Jewish Classics Anthology*. The name *Great Jewish Classics*, in turn, should be familiar to our readers from the seven slim volumes comprising ninety-six treasured out-of-print Yiddish and liturgical titles reprinted by Tara in the course of nearly a decade beginning in 1981. Indeed, the music in this *Great Jewish Classics* (*GJC*) series forms the backbone both of the 2005 *Jewish Music Classics* and of the 2015 *ACJF*. Thirty pieces in this volume—twenty-six of them in Yiddish—had their Tara debut in *GJC*.<sup>2</sup>

It is not by accident that 1981 marked the beginning of Pasternak's foray into Jewish piano-vocal masterpieces. Just one year earlier he had partnered with Tzipora Jochsberger to produce Tara's first book of freshly commissioned piano-vocal settings. The seventy-four

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<sup>1</sup> Song titles in this article follow the transliterations in *ACJF*.

<sup>2</sup> A noteworthy supplement to the *GJC* series was Tara's reprint of eleven exquisite Yiddish piano-vocal settings by the prolific composer and arranger Janot Roskin which were originally published in Berlin in 1923. Tara titled the booklet *Great Jewish Folksongs*.

predominantly Hebrew titles in *A Harvest of Jewish Song* were arranged for intermediate piano by a number of musicians teaching in Jochsberger's Hebrew Arts School. Also in 1981, Tara published thirty-four more interesting arrangements by Richard J. Neumann for voice, piano, guitar and/or flute in *The Nico Castel Ladino Song Book*. Albert Rozin contributed thirty-six rudimentary *Favorite Hebrew Songs for Piano* to the Tara catalogue in 1984, while Sarah Feigin's *The Israeli Piano Book* (1984, 23 pieces) and her even simpler *Festive Songs For Piano* (1992, 14 pieces) round out this category of accompanied popular songbooks.

Alongside his reprints of famous accompanied cantorial compositions, in 1989 Pasternak published *The Music of Yossele Rosenblatt*, a book of new piano settings by Henry Rosenblatt of thirteen of his father's recitatives—some of which had never been released in Yossele's lifetime. Two years later Tara again offered a significant cantorial book, *The Golden Age of Cantors*. Of course, the twenty-seven liturgical masterpieces (including six for voice and piano) were not new, but neither were they reprints. Rather, they were meticulous transcriptions by Noah Schall in a handsome volume containing a wealth of biographical and historical material by Irene Heskes and Velvel Pasternak. A companion CD of the original Golden Age recordings added appreciable value to this package.

In 1997 Tara again turned its attention to original popular piano settings and published two volumes of Edward Kalendar's *The World's Most Popular Jewish Songs*; their combined contents were included and then nearly doubled in the 1998 Kalendar collection, *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book*. Only twenty of the 113 melodies in the latter volume also appear in *A Harvest of Jewish Song*, a sign that Tara coordinated the contents of these two books.<sup>3</sup> Examining the arrangements of the standard repertoire songs they have in common<sup>4</sup> highlights the overall differences between the two approaches. While the piano part in neither book is elaborate or difficult, Kalendar's settings clearly have the singer in mind: the vocal line is less obviously duplicated in the piano's right hand and more interestingly supported by both hands; the chord symbols are more varied, thus more useful when a guitar replaces the piano; the solo parts are usually preceded by two or four measures of piano introduction.<sup>5</sup>

Two important reprint collections were also published in 1998. Twenty-five mostly Yiddish masterworks of *The St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music* were provided by Irene Heskes, who wrote a complete introduction to the book by that title. As a whole, the artistic level of these piano settings was higher than that of any previously offered by Tara. Of equal interest was Tara's *The Yiddish Anthology: Classic Folksongs for Voice and Piano*. Half of these forty songs are rarities of a special plaintive pseudo-liturgical character (Af B'ri, Avremele

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<sup>3</sup> Further evidence of this type of coordination is the choice of different melodies for identical core texts like Yigdal and L'cha Dodi.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Avinu Malkeinu, Eliyahu Hanavi, Erev Shel Shoshanim, Ma'oz Tsur, and others.

<sup>5</sup> Examining the titles of the songs that they do not have in common might prove useful in a study of how tastes in popular Jewish music shifted between 1980 and 1998: The small percentage of token Ladino songs remains the same in *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book*, including the two identical titles Cuando El Rey Nimrod and Los Bilbilicos. The percentage of Yiddish songs increases (12% vs. 5%) with two of the usual suspects in common: Oifn Pripitchik and Rozhinkes Mit Mandlen. Finally, there are significantly fewer songs from the early years of *Eretz Yisrael* like Laila Laila, Ana Halach Dodech, etc. Interestingly, the latter category of songs starts to make a comeback in *The Best of Jewish Folksongs* of 2010.

Melamed, Az Moshiah Vet Kumen, etc.), typified by the songs attributed to Rabbi Levi-Yitzchok of Berdichev (A Din Toire Mit Got, A Dudele, etc.). These were reprinted from the 1944 publication entitled *Folks-Gezangen as Interpreted by Chaim Kotylansky*.<sup>6</sup> Ten other songs in *The Yiddish Anthology* had already appeared in Tara's *GJC* series, while the remaining ten were reprints from other sources.

Having accumulated a critical mass of original as well as reprinted piano-vocal scores, Tara Publications entered more fully into the "repackaging" phase of production which had been signaled by *The Yiddish Anthology*. The fifty-three songs in the above-mentioned *Jewish Music Classics* (2005) and the fifty-five in *The Best of Jewish Folksongs* (2010) were all previously published by Tara. Nine of the sixteen pieces in the 2007 book *Liturgical Classics* were repeats from the *GJC* series.

The twenty titles in *Jewish Nostalgia—Beloved Yiddish Folk Songs for Voice & Piano* (2011) are all selected from one out-of-print book (*Yiddish Folk Songs: 50 Songs for Voice and Piano* by S.P. Schack and E.S. Cohen, first printed in 1924), although Tara had already used some of them in earlier books. Repackaged piano-vocal books continued to emerge in 2012 (*The Festival Songbook, Mammeloshn, Album of Jewish Songs*) and 2014 (*A Treasury of Yiddish Song*).

The marketing of previously published music is certainly a widespread practice in the industry, and should not be viewed in a negative light. Old titles are often included in the mix of a new collection, whether in order to reflect what is currently popular, to appeal to a new cohort of customers, or simply to create a bigger collection. The above history of Tara's piano-vocal books is presented both as a consumer's guide to what is available, and as background for reviewing the latest *Anthology of Classic Jewish Folksongs*.

In the *ACJF* Velvel Pasternak was unstinting in giving us his largest package yet of piano-vocal titles previously published by Tara. The 108 classics in Yiddish (63), Hebrew (39), Ladino (3), and English (3) far exceed in number the seventy-one contained in the closest runner-up, *The Festival Songbook* of 2012. For one just starting to acquire a library of this musical genre, purchasing *ACJF* should be an easy decision. No other collection has this range and scope of material taken from so many sources.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, such a novice would be hampered by its shortcomings as well. Some of these are inherent in the nature of the varied original sources, but others could have been avoided by the editor.

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<sup>6</sup> The original Kotylansky book was further subtitled *A Collection of Chassidic Songs and Chants, Yiddish-Ukrainian Folk Songs and "Shtetger-Lieder."* Unfortunately, twenty-two selections (including all the wordless nigunim and the macaronic Yiddish-Ukrainian songs) remained on Velvel Pasternak's cutting-room floor. Considering Kotylansky's charming preface, explanations, transliterations, and translations of the songs—as well as the worthwhile piano settings by Dan Michaud, Aron Pressman, and Henry Russotto—a straight reprint of the book *in toto* would have been a noble project.

<sup>7</sup> Although there is some overlap in songs that have been repackaged more than once, these are the major source books and the number of their songs in *ACJF: Great Jewish Classics* (30), *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book* (21), *A Harvest of Jewish Song* (19), *A Treasury of Yiddish Song* (12), *Thirty Songs of the Ghetto* arranged by Henech Kon (7), *The NY Times Great Songs of the Yiddish Theater* (4), miscellaneous (15).

Obviously, one would expect a wide range of piano styles and difficulty levels depending on the source collection, from the rudimentary “piano solo” pieces by Sarah Feigin to the virtuoso piano-vocal arrangements by Lazar Weiner and Leo Low taken from the *GJC* series. There are also two Ladino song accompaniments (Cuando El Rey Nimrod, Los Bilbilicos) that are actually written for guitar, while three pieces (Kol Nidre, Shehecheyanu, Main Rue Platz) assume a chorus.

Something taken in stride by the accomplished singer of Hebrew and Yiddish but which will confound the beginner is the mishmash of transliteration schemes used by different publishers over the years, and therefore spread throughout *ACJF*. For example, the “ey” vowel is indeed spelled “ey” in the few Yiddish songs taken from publications that adhere to the official YIVO standard (Yidl Mitn Fidl, A Brivele Der Mammen) but the same sound also appears variously in seven other forms: **e**, **ei**, **ë**, **é**, **ě**, **ai**, **ä**.<sup>8</sup> In a similar vein, the lyrics in several Yiddish songs retain the antiquated Germanicized spellings like *hertz*, *fon*, *und* instead of the authentic Yiddish equivalents *harts*, *fun*, *un*.<sup>9</sup>

While straightening out the orthography is well-nigh impossible barring large expenditures on the part of the publisher, *ACJF* is also marred by faulty production—not typical of Tara’s other products—that cannot be so easily ignored. There are numerous pages with faded print on relatively modern music with clean source material available; these give the impression of third-generation copies instead of professional printing. Almost all of the inside margins are swallowed up by the binding, in some cases along with part of the music. More surprisingly, there are several missing or transposed pages.<sup>10</sup> There are also typographical and other errors that individually might not raise an eyebrow, but cumulatively reveal an overall lack of quality control.<sup>11</sup>

Having well-thought-out title categories in the table of contents can distinguish an anthology from a random collection. Tara’s *A Harvest of Jewish Song* could have served as a model in this regard. Its seventy-four pieces are divided into eleven descriptive categories. Eight table of contents headings give a definite structure to the 113 songs in *The Ultimate Jewish*

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<sup>8</sup> Other vowels have fewer variants, and consonants still fewer, but the consonant “y” does appear as the letter “i” in the song V’ulai (*be-ia-mim a-ru-kim ve-iok-dim*).

<sup>9</sup> To Pasternak’s credit, he addresses this issue in the book’s preface by referring the reader to Tara’s 1985 publication *Singing in Yiddish* by Arthur Graham and Howard Aronson. This useful guidebook provides general guiding principles and also tackles the challenges in 67 specific Yiddish songs. Only 28 of the 63 Yiddish songs in *ACJF*, however, are included in Graham and Aronson.

<sup>10</sup> Only the first page of Donna Donna appears; Page Two is the missing second page of the song immediately following, Jerusalem Is Mine. Shein Vi Di Levone also has only one page printed, followed by the last page of Tumbalalaika—a song which is not even part of this anthology. The single page of Yossel Yossel is followed by the last page of the *GJC* version of Bai Mir Bistu Sheyn, i.e. not the version included in this anthology.

<sup>11</sup> A few examples: A number of Hebrew lyric errors in *A Harvest of Jewish Song* and *The Ultimate Jewish Piano Book* could have been corrected in the reprinting. Instead, they persist, e.g. in Amen Shem Nora the latter word is spelled twice with a *heh* instead of an *aleph*; in the song Hitrag’ut the first word in the phrase *v’lo g’zuztra shel eitz* (“and it has a wooden deck”) is spelled with an *aleph* instead of a *holam-vav*, becoming “and there is no wooden deck.” The song title Ana Halach Dodech becomes Ana Halach “Doded” in the table of contents and on the music page, even though the Hebrew and transliterated lyrics have “Dodech.”

*Piano Book*. By contrast, we have only four weakly-defined categories in the *ACJF*: (1) Israeli Classics, (2) Theater Classics, (3) Liturgical Classics, and (4) Jewish Nostalgia Classics.

The sixteen songs listed as Israeli Classics include five that do not belong, but instead beg to have their own heading, Sephardic Classics.<sup>12</sup> The three true Israeli classics Hafinjan, Ana Halach Dodech, and Erev Shel Shoshanim, moreover, have wandered into categories (2) and (3). Theater Classics includes quite a few songs that are not theater pieces,<sup>13</sup> and Liturgical Classics also holds a few surprises, like Erev Shel Shoshanim, Donna Donna, and Jerusalem Is Mine.

About a dozen songs associated with the Holocaust are sprinkled throughout the largest section, Jewish Nostalgia Classics. Here they rub shoulders with sundry comic and—yes—nostalgic Yiddish songs.<sup>14</sup> The Yiddish language is just about the only aspect that unites these forty selections, so perhaps the word “Jewish” in the heading is being used euphemistically or inaccurately for “Yiddish.” One notices peculiarities in the order of other songs as well. The peppy Siman Tov is sandwiched between the two cantorial heavyweights Kol Nidre and Rochel M’vako Al Boneho. One can’t help thinking of Shabbat Chanukah in encountering the following sequence: Ma’oz Tsur, Kiddush, Haneros Halolu, Shalom Aleichem—that is, until closer inspection reveals that this Kiddush is the one for Shalosh Regalim!

The first three volumes of Pasternak’s *Great Jewish Classics* are lacking in one respect: the original end-pages with the complete Yiddish or Hebrew lyrics are not reproduced. True, most of those pieces are through-composed, so a singer could probably find all of the text in the notated pages, but since most Yiddish transliterations are notoriously inconsistent, seeing the original text is extremely helpful. But in fact, some of the *GJC* selections are strophic songs which do require a separate lyrics page.<sup>15</sup> This defect was corrected in Vols. 4-7 by printing most of the separate lyrics even for non-strophic songs.

Regrettably, the lyrics problem re-emerges in *ACJF* and is compounded even further. All of the separate lyrics pages are now gone from all of the reprints, whether from the *GJC* or other sources, and irrespective of whether or not all of the words appear in the music. Singers will thus find dozens of songs—including most of the poignant Holocaust ballads—abridged with no hint of the missing verses.<sup>16</sup> In some woeful cases the music will indicate “repeat 3x” or “repeat 4x” and leave one wondering why.<sup>17</sup> Not only lyrics, but the music of entire verse-sections of some

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<sup>12</sup> Ocho Kandelikas, Cuando El Rey Nimrod, Amen Shem Nora, Los Bilbilicos, Mi Pi El.

<sup>13</sup> Achtzig Er Un Zibetzik Zi, Mo Asapro, Chazonim Oif Probe, Dos Yiddishe Lied, Sholem Tantz, and the Peter, Paul and Mary song Light One Candle.

<sup>14</sup> One would expect the publisher of the inspired volume *Songs Never Silenced* (2003) to provide the Holocaust songs with their own category.

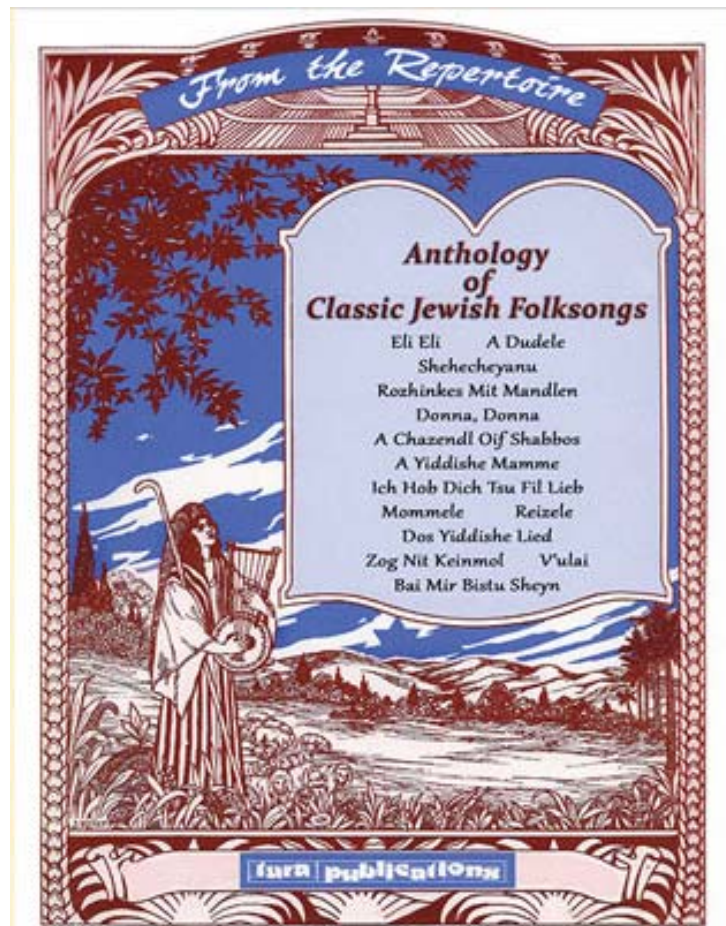
<sup>15</sup> An attempt was made in Volume 3 to include one supplemental lyrics page to cover the entire book, but it only had room for partial lyrics to ten of the fifteen songs. For example, Reizele, a song of eight verses, has only four stanzas in the music, of which two are also on the lyrics page.

<sup>16</sup> Space-saving cannot always account for this. The last page of Belz, for instance, is mostly blank, with no lyrics. In A Brivele Der Mammen and Moshele Main Fraind some of the lyric lines are erased from the original music, leaving strangely wide spaces between staves. Inexplicably, complete lyrics of English songs like Mommele, Jerusalem Is Mine and L’chi Lach are given in the music and are repeated in full on the page right after the music.

<sup>17</sup> Zog Nit Keinmol is a conspicuous example: The music enumerates and gives lyrics for the first, second and fifth verses, but the third and fourth verses are nowhere to be found. Another is the mysterious cue notes that appear

Yiddish theater pieces are deleted.<sup>18</sup> Not actual verses per se, these essential measures either precede or follow the “famous part” of the songs (termed “refrain” for convenience) and cannot justifiably be cut out.<sup>19</sup>

Despite these flaws, a collection of this scope is a welcome arrival. Throughout its history, Tara Publications has not only reflected, but also helped shape the Jewish musical fare consumed by audiences the world over. Performing artists looking for sure-fire hits provided with accompaniments now have a wealth of material to choose from in *ACJF*. It has few rivals as an index to representative pieces that moved Jewish audiences in the twentieth century, and will continue to do so in the twenty-first. Velvel Pasternak is to be commended for producing an album as incomparably comprehensive and useful as the *Anthology of Classic Jewish Folksongs*.



throughout the melody line of the ghetto song Yisrolik. The mystery is solved, however, by a glance at the original source material (Shoshana Kalisch, *Yes We Sang!* New York, 1985) which has a second lyric line of English translation.

<sup>18</sup> Abi Gezunt, Belz, Glick, Ich Hob Dich Tsu Fil Lieb, Yisl Mitn Fidl, Belz.

<sup>19</sup> A book that anthologized God Bless America, without the section beginning, “When the storm clouds gather...” would surely be guilty of serving the icing without the cake.

## The Rabbinical Assembly's *Siddur Lev Shalem* – for *Shabbat and Festivals*--2016

*Reviewed by Laurence D. Loeb*

It is probably not totally coincidental that over the past decade English speaking mainstream movements in Judaism have been inundated with fresh editions of prayer books including the Reform movement's *Mishkan T'filah* [2007], the *Koren Siddur* [2009], the *Expanded ArtScroll Siddur* [2010], the *Koren M'sorat Harav Siddur* [2011], *Siddur N'hallel* [2013], and, most recently, *Siddur Lev Shalem* [2016].

An extensive review essay comparing these in detail would be invaluable, but will probably never happen. However, each of these publications bring their special qualities to the fore with strengths and weaknesses that should be of interest to *Sh'lihei tsibbur*. Prior to reviewing *Lev Shalem*, I will briefly comment on what I have gleaned from using all of these prayer books over a period of time.

The *Expanded ArtScroll Siddur* [2010] is classic in design, a compendium to be used all year, for all occasions, In addition to all of the basic services, *Ma'ariv*, *shaharit*, *minhah* [and *Musaf* for Sabbath, Festivals, etc.] Weekday and Festival Torah readings, the Five *M'gillot*, *t'hilim* and Home prayers and blessings, included here are the texts for Yom *kippur katan*, special *Yots'rot* and *K'rovot* for minor holy days, etc. You could just about manage everything you need to daven aside from *Yamim nora'im* just from this volume. There is adequate though not inspirational English translation of most prayer texts, minimal commentary and a short compilation of laws concerning *T'fillah*. Yet aside from its completeness and clear printing, there is little here to recommend its preference over other such texts, both earlier and more recent.

The *Koren Siddur* and its variations, The Sachs *Siddur*, The *Mesorat ha-rav Siddur* [2011] and the *Lobel Shabbat Siddur* are not only beautifully printed with exceptional English translation and commentary, but include a special innovation for focused *davening*, i.e., the Hebrew is on the left rather than the right page leaf. The rationale here is that when you turn the page from left to right, the eye naturally views the left side first. I am not totally convinced how important this really is, but it does merit consideration by other *Siddur* publishers. Like the *ArtScroll*, the other complete *siddurim* listed above are quite comprehensive.

The *Nehallel Siddur*, for Sabbath worship, has a unique goal. It does not enable the smooth flow of *davening*, nor does it attempt to enhance through *hyyun t'fillah*. It might be said that its message is contemplative and its method is the linking of photography to specific lines of text to stop your routine recitation of text and put you "in-the-moment." It is very effective, though I am doubtful everyone would be comfortable using it week after week.

*Mishkan T'filah*, the successor to *Sha'arey T'filah*, continues the Reform trend towards more traditional Hebrew text and more transliteration combined with more alternative English

prayers. Its expansive use of open space makes all the texts very easy to read. There is also some minimal commentary.

While the compilers of *Siddur Lev Shalem* were to some extent aware of these predecessors, the approach taken here is modeled on *Mahzor Lev Shalem* [2010] and is derived from the Rabbinical Assembly's previous efforts, including *Siddur Sim Shalom* and its later edition limited to Shabbat and holiday liturgy [1998], popularly referred to as "Slim Shalom." One of the justifications for the latter edition was that *Sim Shalom* was both too large and too heavy. It is kind of strange, therefore, that *Lev Shalem* is larger still than *Sim Shalom* and just as heavy--even though it lacks the weekday liturgy. Only *Mishkan T'flla* surpasses it in size and weight, though like the original *Sim Shalom*, it includes the weekday liturgy.

As *Sim Shalom* adjusted text, both Hebrew and English, to accommodate new trends in practice and philosophy from the Conservative Movement in its departure from the older more tradition-bound Silverman *Siddur*, *Lev Shalem* reflects the thinking and evolving practice of a younger generation.

What does this effort represent? How do the liturgical changes impact the *sh'liah tsibbur*? What, if any, are the effects on choral and congregational singing and *davening*? Successive editions of the Conservative Mahzor have eliminated many traditional *piyyutim* and lovely settings have along with them disappeared from the High Holiday repertory. The substitution of a few Sephardic *piyyutim* and new texts for Yamim nora'im has so far not compensated for the extensive loss. Were any of these concerns reflected in *Siddur Lev Shalem*? What is the intent here, and to what extent might it succeed in achieving its goals?

On first opening the Siddur, one is reminded of the innovative page format that was formulated earlier in *Mahzor Lev Shalem*: Hebrew text on the right-hand page, commentary in the right margin and below, English translation on the left hand facing page, *d'rash* or inspirational message in left-hand margin, relevant instruction in orange italics interspersed on both English and Hebrew pages and transliterated text [if any] in orange imbedded in relevant position on the English page.<sup>1</sup> This impresses the worshipper's perception of looking at a study text, thereby reinforcing the rabbinic emphasis that prayer and study are one.

Without commenting here on the quality of the comments and text enhancements, it should be said that *Siddur Lev Shalem* responds to at least two elements lacking in earlier Conservative siddurim: *Iyyun t'fillah* – the Siddur has long been understood as a critical study text for understanding Jewish theology; and *Kavvanah* – both in the sense of ritual intention and in raising connectedness to the community and the Almighty in prayer. The commentary is, I believe, helpful to the davener, although it is not nearly as deep as the Sachs or the Rav's commentaries in the Koren siddurim or the impressive commentary of Reuven Hammer in *Or*

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<sup>1</sup> In *Mahzor Lev Shalem* the transliterated texts were italicized but not here. The transliterated text of the *Avot*, *G'vurot* and *K'dushah* for *Shaharit* and *Musaf* are found at the back of the Siddur [p. 466].

*Hadash* [2003] on *Siddur Sim Shalom*, published as a companion volume by the RA. It appears to be aimed more at raising spiritual awareness and familiarity with the liturgy than meeting some purely scholarly need. The inspirational messages in the left-hand margin are from traditional rabbinic sources, more contemporary scholars and creative writers and poets. The comments and the extra-liturgical writings are well chosen and effective... of course they also interrupt the flow of the praying experience when the *davener* chooses to explore them. That *siddurim* of all “persuasions” have moved in this direction confirms for me that this is a “good,” thing but raises the question of how the *sh'lich tsibbur* can use it advantageously.

The translation of liturgy and text appear to be much better than in *Siddur Sim Shalom*. Visually, the siddur strikes several compromises. I remember Max Wohlberg z”l<sup>2</sup> remarking that siddurim which vary text size and/or styles for paragraphs and special texts are very helpful in leading worship. It reduces monotony and helps maintain place. Properly placed punctuation helps organizing improvisation though part of the joy of davening is finding a variety of meanings in the same text. *Siddur Lev Shalem* varies text size, darkens some text, e.g., congregational responses and acrostic letters in liturgical poetry, indents alternatives texts, columns some poetic acrostics, paragraphs stanzas... all good. But the actual color of much text--or perhaps the thinness of the font which makes it appear almost grey -- does not always provide adequate contrast with the cream-colored paper. The font size is fine. There is a subtle lengthening of the *kammats katan*. The use of orange text for instructions and transliteration and very small type is sometimes difficult to read. Arguably, all of this interferes with the goal of fuller participation for non-Hebrew readers.<sup>3</sup> Line separation is adequate -- though *Siddur Hadash* [Prayer Book Press, 2000] beats them all on this marker.

Some effort has been taken to visually enhance use of the text. For example, in the *Hoshannot* for Sukkot, the text layout effectively separates and delineates the responses.

The Introduction examines a number of concepts important for worshippers. Yet there is no overall explanation for why a new siddur is needed -- nor what the editors’ goals are. Also lacking is any rationale for choices made to add to or subtract from the traditional text and rarely are sources for added texts referenced. For example, why is *Av harahamim shokhein m’romim* eliminated from the Torah service and relegated to a section called “Memorial and Thanksgiving Prayers,” (pg. 446) with the last verse eliminated? A few *piyyutim* [some totally unfamiliar] for the festivals are a welcomed addition/restoration to the liturgy but sources are not given, e.g., from what book or manuscript is the text *Shir hadash a-shir* [p. 362] taken?<sup>4</sup> Most of the marginal texts are referenced; why not the liturgical ones? While I would have liked to see restoration of *Bda’to* and *Af bri* to *Tal* and *Geshem*, it is nice to see versions of *B’rah dodi* and *Yom l’yabashah* return to the Passover liturgy.

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<sup>2</sup> Max Wohlberg was Professor of Nusach at JTS for several decades and a living encyclopedia of Ashkenazic synagogue practice and liturgical music.

<sup>3</sup> The old Silverman *Siddur* used a light purple for special texts, but *Siddur Sim Shalom* dropped it. Orange text appeared in the *Or Hadash siddur* and seems to have emerged as the preferred choice for Conservative prayer books.

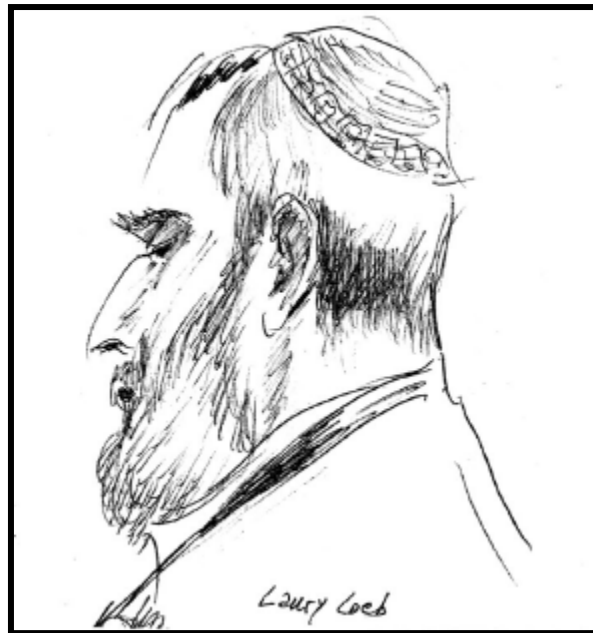
<sup>4</sup> In my extensive encounter with Iranian *nusah hat’fillah*, to which community this poem is attributed, I never came across this text. What is its source?

It appears that each iteration of a Conservative Prayer book finds texts eliminated, altered and, I dare say poetically mutilated, as was the case with *Eileh ezkerah* in the Yom Kippur *Musaf of Mahzor Lev Shalem*. Furthermore, the addition of texts from other traditions, e.g. Sefardic or Yemenite while meaningful, sometimes appears to be done at the expense of Ashkenazic texts; a questionable choice at best. At worst, it has meant the loss of a vast musical repertory of Ashkenazic *Hazzanut*, choral music and congregational participation from the Conservative synagogue.

Where to find items? The layout of the siddur is fine until you get to the special prayers. Here a complete index would be most beneficial. With respect to the special *piyyutim*, would most Conservative *Hazzanim* know how and where to place them? There are no accompanying instructions. By contrast, the old DeSola Pool Siddur simply referenced included traditional *piyyutim* in the appropriate insert location.

*Megillat Esther* is here [p. 418], excerpts from *Kohelet* are found [p. 426] and the first two chapters of *Shir ha-shirim* [p.7] as well. With this being such a hefty volume anyway, Torah readings for *Minhah l'shabbat* and/or Torah/Haftarah readings for the Festivals would have been a marvelous addition. Oh well. In 20 years or so the next generation may take another shot at this.<sup>5</sup>

All in all, *Siddur Lev Shalem* offers much. As its use becomes widespread, traditionalists and the innovative will find all kinds of opportunity to plumb its depths. *Hazzanim* will create anew, and old sources will provide musical connection from the past to restored liturgy. *Kol ha-kavod* to the many who labored so diligently to produce this notable result.



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<sup>5</sup> Maybe a new compilation of *S'lichot* could be the next project.

## IN MEMORIAM

André Hajdu (1932-2016)



**H**ungarian-born André Hajdu studied musicology under Zoltan Kodály at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. He immigrated to Israel in 1966, and the following year started teaching composition at the Tel Aviv Academy of Music. In 1970, Hajdu founded the Department of Musicology at Bar-Ilan University, where he was appointed Professor in 1978. Starting with his first year in Israel, Hajdu was involved with researching Hasidic and Klezmer music at the Jewish Music Research Centre at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Renanot—The Institute of Jewish Music.

In 1976, he produced with Yaakov Mazor a landmark recording of *Hassidic Tunes of Dancing and Rejoicing*. Among their liner notes, the two musicologists noted the following information, not generally known at the time:

The function of *Niggunei simḥah* (Tunes of Rejoicing) is mostly undefined. They may be sung on Shabbat and holidays in the home and in the synagogue... *Niggunei rikkud* (Dance Tunes), on the other hand, are used only to accompany dancing, which plays a central role on... Simhat Torah, weddings and Lag Ba'omer, when Hassidim in the hundreds gather at the tomb of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai in Meron, Israel.

The project marked the first time that the music sung and played by the *Hasidim* at Meron—*Niggunei meron*—was preserved for posterity. It also first brought before a wider public the painstaking research of teacher, performer and composer André Hajdu—whose brilliant showpiece—*T'ruat melekh* (“Fanfare for a King,” *Jewish Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra*), would shortly be popularized by Giora Feidman on a global scale. His liner notes for the 2009 album—*Kulmus ha-nefesh: a Musical Journey into the Hassidic Niggun*—set forth Hajdu’s ethnomusicological credo:

Our approach follows... Bartok [who] faithfully presented the versions of the original tunes... available to them [while] contributing their own elaborations in the spirit of their own generation and personality.”

In his memory we offer a two-part arrangement of *Niggun simḥah l'rabbi aharon* (“Rav Aaron’s Tune of Rejoicing”—track 6), which first appeared in JSM 2008. [JAL]

Text: Attributed to  
Judah of Regensburg (d. 1217):  
*Shir Ha-kavod*

Music: Joseph A. Levine  
after Andre Hajdu's instrumental  
arrangement of *Niggun simhah  
l'rav aharon* (Lubavitch)

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

**Cantor**

8

15

22

29

**CONG.**

**B/M:**

Chords: Cm, Fm, Gm, C, Eb, G

Lyrics: An-im z' - mi - rot v' - shi rim e'e - rog ki ei -  
Ai-lai-lai lai lai Ai-lai lai Ai-lai lai Ai lai-lai Ai-lai lai Ai lai-lai  
le - kha naf - shi ta' - a-roq; Naf-shi ham - dah b' tseil yad de - kha la -  
Ai-lai lai Ai-lai-lai-lai Ai-lai-lai Ai - lai Ai-lai lai Ai - lai-lai Ai-lai lai  
da - at kol raz so - de - kha. Mi dei, mi-dei  
Ai-lai-lai-lai Ai - lai-lai Ai-lai lai-lai - lai. Ai-lai-Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai - lai-lai  
dab-ri vo bikh - vo de - kha, ho-meh li - bi el do-de - kha;  
Ai-lai - lai Ai - lai - lai Ai - lai lai Ai-lai - lai Ai-lai lai  
Al kein, al kein a - da - beir b' - kha nich - ba - dot, v'-shim-kha  
Ai-lai lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai - la - lai Ai-lai lai Ai lai - lai Ai - lai - lai

**BM:**

36 G Cm Fm Eb , Ab Gm Fm ,

36 a-kha-beid b' shi-rei y'-di dot. Asap - rah kh'vo-d'-kha v' lo r'-i ti - kha, a-

Ai-lai lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai-lai lai Ai - lai lai - lai

**CONG:**

43 Cm Eb Fm Cm Eb Cm , Ab Gm

43 dam kha a-khan - kha v' lo y'-da ti - kha; B'yad n'vi - e - kha b' - sod a-va-

Ai - lai Ai - lai-lai Ai-lai - lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai-lai Ai-lai - lai Ai - lai

50 Fm , Cm Eb Fm G Cm

50 de-kha, di mi - ta ha-dar k' - vod ho - de - kha. (Repeat for 4 more verses, plus "Ye'erav")

lai - lai Ai - lai Ai lai - lai Ai-lai-lai-lai - lai.

These older *niggunin* are endowed with *kavvanah* (“intent”), maintaining the spirit... of early generations of Hasidism. They drastically differ in their style from current perceptions of Hasidic music. Reflection and meditation on the Divinity are regarded by the Lubavitch as the most important tool for attaining communion with God and awakening the soul to the love and fear of God. In order to achieve this state, the Lubavitch Hasidim felt a necessity to speak at length about the Hasidic way of life, explaining it to others and making their world-view known to all Jews and not just among a selected minority... *Niggun* played a major role in this process of dissemination.

(Andre Hajdu, *Kulmus ha-nefesh* liner notes, 2009.)

# *Journal of Synagogue Music*

OUR SEPTEMBER 2017 ISSUE WILL FEATURE THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES:

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- A Nearly Forgotten *U-n'taneh tokef*
- A New Look at the Mystery-word, *Selah*
- Music and Meaning in Torah Cantillation
- English Leyning: Bringing Meaning to the Torah Service
- Scenes from the Great Synagogue in Kassel (1897-1899)
- Abba Weisgal's *Hazzarat amidat shaharit l'pesah*—with Audio File



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